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ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT**
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Date: October 21, 2022
To: Town Board, Town of Orangetown
From: Planning Board, Town of Orangetown.
Subject: **Comprehensive Plan Comments**

1) Comments in reference to Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

- a) Chapter 2, page 42, references the TOD plan prepared by Pace Law School's Land Use Law Center which states that the area around the train station in Pearl River could accommodate a greater mix of housing types including condominiums, town houses and other dwelling types, higher density of land use and taller buildings based on their 2018 survey of residents. Then again in Chapter 5, page 144 the Plan supports higher density housing around the train station and higher density of land use including taller buildings. TOD philosophy is based on high density housing around train stations, reduction in vehicle use and reduction in single family home zoning areas and the Complete Streets Policy.
- b) A Graph contained in the report indicates a small minority support this view and a majority either wants no change or opposes it. The residential development graph on page 60 shows 61% either discourage or have no change views while 25% encourage this development. Similar views were held for commercial development with 28% in favor while 60% opposed (page 61). The graph on page 57 rated factors considered important by residents. The preservation of neighborhood character category was considered important or very important by 75% of the respondents compared to 11% who considered it not important at all.
- c) A development of this type of project as seen in Park Ridge, NJ changes the character of the town. As the graphs indicate the residents of Pearl River appear to want to maintain the character of the town.
- d) We recommend that the Town Board set a height limit (number of floors) for new construction in downtown areas to a three-level maximum to maintain the Town's character.

- e) A TOD program requires consistent train service. On page 111, the Plan states the Pascack Valley line operates up to four trains per hour during peak hours. The schedule for the Pascack Valley Line shows that only eight trains run during the peak AM period southbound and six trains northbound during the PM peak time (NJ Transit Schedule 7/24/2022). Further, this Line does not operate 24 hours a day and has been inconsistent in the past.
- f) The Plan suggests meeting with transit officials to improve service. Rockland County as well as Orange County have tried on several occasions without success.
- g) The Plan in Chapter 4, Transportation, Mobility and Parking recommends the conversion of large existing parking areas to bilevel garages in Pearl River and South Nyack (page 121). This would provide additional parking capacity to encourage commuters to use public transportation and bring weekend visitors to downtown by expanding Park and Ride facilities (pages 116 and 122). The use of bilevel parking garages could negatively impact the visual environment of the downtown area and the current town. Consideration should be made for the fact that the MTA parking facilities in downtown Pearl River are never filled nor even close to capacity.
- h) We recommend the Town Board review this suggestion and the overall impact on the visual character of the downtown and the residents.

2) Comments in reference to Economic Development and PAC

- a) Chapter 5, Economic Development, page 126, shows that the over fifty-five cohort has increased from 26.5% of Orangetown's population in 2000 to 32.8% in 2020. The Plan does not address the use of PAC zones in downtown areas such as Pearl River which provides public transportation, restaurants, shops, parks, a library, and other amenities for their age group. This zoning would bring other businesses into a fully developed PAC zoned area for example, medical facilities, condominiums, rentals, and a dedicated senior center.
- b) We recommend the consultants develop specific recommendations for the PAC zoning concept in downtown areas.

3) Comments in reference Sustainability and Climate Resiliency.

- a) Chapter 7, page 220, reduce carbon emissions and promote healthier air quality section, states that the hamlet of Orangeburg is especially affected by truck deliveries, and residents have reported concerns over the increasing truck volumes that exacerbates traffic, noise and emissions.
- b) As continued development will add to truck volumes, we recommend that a moratorium on warehousing be put into place while a new route 303 sustainability study and traffic study be completed to include GPS truck routing. (copy of the 2002 Route 303 Sustainability Study is enclosed as well as the NJ State Planning Commission, Distribution Warehousing and Goods Movement Guidelines for reference)

- c) Chapter 7, page 222, recommends to limit the use of fossil fuels as a source and prioritize renewable sources for electricity and encourage green building technologies, it also recommends updating the town's municipal buildings for high energy efficiency. However, there should be a backup alternative source of energy, a plan to implement these strategies and a review of the projected financial impact on the town budget, the town residents and local businesses.
- d) We also recommend that the town look at other municipalities that have also implemented such programs and their experiences to fully understand the impact.