
**Exhibit 2 – Narrative Providing Justification
for Amherst IDA’s Financial Assistance**

EXHIBIT 2

NARRATIVE PROVIDING ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUESTED AMHERST IDA ASSISTANCE

I. Description of the Proposed Mixed Use Project:

The proposed project consists of the redevelopment of 6770 Main Street as a three-story mixed use building consisting of approximately 6,915 sq. ft. of first floor commercial space (maximum of 5,000 sq. ft. of 1st floor retail space) and 12 upper floor attached residential units along with all proposed site improvements (total building size of 20,745 sq. ft.) including 23 new parking spaces, access aisles, a driveway connection to Caesar Boulevard, storm water improvements, lighting, landscaping, and utility connections and improvements. The project also includes the installation of 3 single-story garage buildings.

The Project Site was former utilized as a building with a photography studio. The Project Site is properly zoned for the mixed-use project and is also located in the Transit Road 485-b Enhancement Area.¹

A copy of the Site Plan [Drawing C-100] and Landscape Plan for the mixed-use project are provided at Exhibit “3” and a color building rendering prepared by Sutton Architecture PLLC is provided at Exhibit “4”. The proposed mixed-use building has been deliberately located along the Main Street frontage of the Project Site based on input received during the project review process such that all of the parking spaces will be located behind the building and also to encourage a pedestrian friendly environment along Main Street.

All of the required project approvals from the Town municipal boards have been obtained including Site Plan Approval from the Planning Board. A copy of the resolution adopted by the

¹ A color copy of the map of the Transit Road 485-b Enhancement Area is provided at Exhibit “6”.

Planning Board on April 23, 2020 granting Site Plan Approval for the mixed-use project is provided at Exhibit “7”.²

II. The Mixed-Use Project is Eligible Pursuant to Countywide Industrial Development Agency Uniform Tax Exemption Policy:

The mixed-use project is eligible for IDA incentives pursuant to the Countywide Industrial Development Agency Uniform Tax Exemption Policy (“UTEPA”). The Project Site is located within the Transit Road 485-b Enhancement Area. The first floor of the mixed-use building consists of commercial space but the maximum amount of retail space will not be exceed 5,000 sq. ft., thereby ensuring that the retail component will not exceed one-third of the project cost.

III. The Mixed-Use Project is Consistent with the Adopted Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan:

In connection with its decision granting Site Plan Approval for the mixed-use project on April 23, 2020, the Planning Board issued a finding that the proposed site plan is generally consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.³ Figure 6 of the adopted Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan (“Comprehensive Plan”) consists of the Conceptual Land Use Plan for the Town of Amherst. The Conceptual Land Use Plan is intended to communicate the overall direction of future development in the Town. Figure 6 designates the Project Site as being appropriate for “Commercial/Mixed Use” as a result of the Project Site being located along an older segment of Main Street a short distance west of Transit Road.

² The mixed-use project has also been the subject of environmental reviews pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”). The Zoning Board of Appeals issued a negative declaration pursuant to SEQRA on January 28, 2020 and a copy of its negative declaration is provided at Attachment “2” of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (“Short EAF”) provided at Exhibit “1” of this Application. The Planning Board issued a negative declaration pursuant to SEQRA on April 23, 2020 and a copy of its negative declaration is provided at Attachment “2” of the Short EAF provided at Exhibit “1” of this Application.

³ A copy of the resolution adopted by the Planning Board on April 23, 2020 granting Site Plan Approval for the mixed-use project is provided at Exhibit “7”.

Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive Plan is titled “Plan Concept” and includes the Vision Statement and Key Initiatives to achieve the Vision Statement. One of the four Key Initiatives is “Revitalization” of older neighborhoods and commercial areas through creative use of investment incentives. The text provides on Page 2-6 of the Comprehensive Plan specifically states that providing tax incentives for reinvestment, revitalization and redevelopment of commercial properties and housing in older areas of the Town is appropriate.

Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan is titled “Land Use and Development” and the Goal for Land Use and Development as set forth on Page 3-4 is “An interconnected mix of land that includes revitalized older neighborhoods and commercial centers and corridors, quality new developments, vibrant activity centers, agriculture, and green spaces throughout the community.” One of the policies for implementing the above goal consists of “Expand provisions and incentives for mixed-use development of commercial centers.” On Page 3-4 of the Plan, there is specific mention of the mixed-use development consisting of ground level commercial space and residential units on the upper stories. It is also important to mention that within Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan, there are numerous references to mixed-use being a preferred form of development and resulting benefits of infill mixed-use development including active street frontage, compactness, parking being located behind buildings, creation of a pedestrian friendly environment, etc. The proposed mixed-use project encompasses all of the benefit of mixed-use development as described in Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan is titled “Economic Development” and provides support for the IDA granting incentives for the proposed mixed-use project. Section 5.2 of the Comprehensive Plan sets forth the economic goal of the Town as including creation of a strong tax base and providing development in convenient and accessible locations. One of policies as set

forth on Page 5-3 of the Comprehensive Plan in implementing the Town's economic goal and policies is as follows: "Target economic development policies, programs, capital expenditures, and incentives to attract and retain higher paying employment and promote desired forms and locations of development and redevelopment."⁴

Mixed-use infill redevelopment projects are encouraged at suitable locations by the Comprehensive Plan as such the proposed mixed-use project at a location that has been designated as appropriate for Mixed-Use represents is a desired form of redevelopment. Policy 5-6 of the Comprehensive Plan consists of "[A]dopt commercial development standards for neighborhood compatibility with context sensitive design guidelines."

The mixed-use project has deliberately designed based on consideration of neighborhood compatibility and this is reflected by the mixed-use building being located along the Main Street frontage, the extensive landscaping and screening on the back portion of the Project Site and the effort that was made by the Applicant in discussing the mixed-use project with nearby residential neighbors during the lengthy project review process. The architecture of the mixed-use building as designed by Sutton Architecture PLLC is context sensitive by including various high quality materials and both horizontal and vertical relief. A color rendering of the proposed mixed-use building is provided at Exhibit "4".

IV. Conclusion:

The Applicant respectfully requests that the Board of Directors approve the requested incentives for the eligible mixed-use project for the reasons described within the Application including this supporting narrative.

⁴ See Policy 5-1 for Economic Development.