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Planning Board, Town of Ramapo
237 Route 59
Suffern, NY 10901

Re: Hillside Mikvah – Village of Airmont comments

Dear Members:

We represent the applicant in the above matter. We have reviewed the comments of the Village of Airmont, as expressed in a memorandum from that Village's planning consultant, Valerie Monastra of Nelson Pope Voorhis dated February 5, 2021, and offer the following responses. We have omitted the introductory material that describes the project and the SEQRA status of the project, and will focus on the substantive comments in the memorandum.

- 1) The Project Site is 3.08 acres, and 2.5 acres of disturbance is proposed. It is recommended that Applicant provide a draft Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to the Ramapo Planning Board as part of the land use approval process to ensure that stormwater runoff and erosion and sediment control are incorporated appropriately into the proposed project.*

A draft SWPPP, dated Dec. 30, 2018, last revised January 2021, has been prepared by the applicant's engineer and submitted to the Town for review.

- 2) The Applicant checked yes to Question 17 of the short EAF which asks, "if stormwater discharges flow to the neighboring property." This is a concern to the Airmont Planning Board. It is recommended that the Applicant provide additional information as to what neighboring property it proposed to receive the stormwater discharge and to investigate alternatives to contain the stormwater on the Project Site to the extent possible.*

The stormwater will discharge to the onsite stream which flows south towards New Jersey. This follows the existing conditions. All stormwater management has been reviewed by the Town Engineer to make sure it complies with state and local stormwater codes.

- 3) *There is a stream that traverses 77 Hillside Avenue. This stream is a tributary to the Saddle River. The drainage plan has a drainage point close to the stream. While there is quantity or volume of discharge consideration given by means of an underground detention system on the Project Site, no consideration is given to stormwater quality design. The drainage system will be fed stormwater from the 60-space parking area which will then discharge in the direction of the stream. It is recommended that stormwater management practices to improve the water quality of the discharge to the stream should be considered. In addition, there is a concern from the Airmont Planning Board on sediment runoff into the stream during construction. A concrete wash out area is proposed very near the stream. This wash out area should be moved further from the stream. The Village of Airmont has a 100-foot regulated setback required from the bank of this stream to protect the quality of water. The Ramapo Planning Board may want to consider a similar requirement on this project.*

Based on comment 1, above, it is apparent that the Village of Airmont was not aware of the draft SWPPP. These issues are addressed in the draft SWPPP and in the Grading, Drainage and Utilities Plan (Sheet 3) and Erosion Control Plan (Sheet 4) last revised January 28, 2021.

- 4) *The documents provided to the Airmont Planning Board do not include architectural renderings and do not provide details on the square footage or height of the proposed building. What is the total square footage and height of the proposed building? The documents acknowledge that zoning variances will be required for the minimum front yard setback and front yard as well as development coverage. These requested variances indicate that the proposed building will be large and potentially out of scale with the existing character of the neighborhood. It is recommended that consideration to the scaling and neighborhood character be made during site plan review. When renderings are submitted to the Town of Ramapo the Airmont Planning Board will review those rendering and provide additional comment.*

The building is approximately 18,520 SF. The building has been shifted closer to Hillside Avenue (creating front setback/front yard variances) in an attempt to keep the building further away from the neighbors in New Jersey and further from the onsite stream. The impact to Hillside Avenue will be mitigated through plantings.

- 5) *The documents provided to the Airmont Planning Board include a lighting plan. The current lighting plan indicates that the proposed lighting will encroach onto the properties across the street within the Village of Airmont. The Airmont Planning Board recommends dark sky principles should be considered in the lighting plan and no light from the proposed project should encroach onto the neighboring properties. The proposed lighting is more than necessary for a residential district and a reduction in the amount and intensity should be*

considered. Additional landscaping would also assist with the buffering of site lighting on neighboring properties.

The lighting plan will continue to be modified based on the feedback received and to incorporate the landscaping.

- 6) *Each of the three properties have an existing residential dwelling. The site plan should clearly state only one residential dwelling will remain and the other two dwellings are to be removed.*

This will be clarified on the next revision of the plans. The houses on lots 62.18-2-1.1 and 62.18-2-1.2 are to be removed. The house on lot 62.13-2-3 is to remain as a caretaker's residence.

- 7) *Hillside is two lane narrow roadway. The proposed project will have two access points on Hillside Avenue. There will be an internal circulation loop. Fifty-nine spaces are required, and 60 are provided, plus 10 reserve spaces. Within the last year a proposal for a new school building located at 98 Hillside Avenue, which is in close proximity to the Project Site, has come before the Airmont Community Design Review Committee. The Airmont Planning Board recommends that a traffic study be undertaken for the proposed project and that the study incorporates the potential school at 98 Hillside for any cumulative effects on the traffic.*

A traffic assessment was prepared by Harry Baker Associates on behalf of the applicant, and is currently being reviewed for completeness by the Town's traffic consultant. However, it should be noted that the proposed mikvah will operate only during evening hours, with the earliest opening hour at 4:00pm. School activities will likely be ended by the time the mikvah opens, and so there is little likelihood of traffic conflict.

We trust that the foregoing is responsive.

Very truly yours,
EMANUEL LAW PC


By: _____

Ira M. Emanuel

CC: Client