

Town of Darien
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, Connecticut 06820

December 1, 2015

Mr. R. David Genovese
Baywater Properties
1019 Boston Post Road
Darien, CT 06820

Re: *Corbin Drive Project*
Summary of November 17, 2015 ARB Meeting

Dear David:

Thank you for bringing the Corbin Drive Project team to meet with the Architectural Review Board (ARB) for an informal discussion on November 17. It was beneficial for all of us to see the progress and changes made to the project since our joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission over the summer. The likelihood of such a vast development plan occurring in downtown Darien again anytime soon is slight. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the project be planned and designed with sensitivity and consideration acknowledging the inherent characteristics and history of Darien. Over the years, the concern of the ARB has always been that any new architecture have a quiet simplicity to it and not look too contrived in a downtown that was never fancy or over-designed.

The ARB members were gratified to see that the proposed height of the entire development had been reduced. Topping off the buildings facing the Post Road at three stories will make the transition from the neighboring existing buildings to the new less abrupt. Your team's having designed a variety of ground level storefronts, potential signage locations, and specifying a mixture of architectural colors and materials will contribute to the concept of Darien's commercial area having evolved over time. The Board found the new brick building on the Bank of America site most appropriate as it reflects the classic 1920s commercial style found in other existing structures along Boston Post Road. The need to have a strong gateway at this end of the development was emphasized by the Board. The distinct curve at the intersection of the 95 off-ramp and the Post Road could be a great opportunity for public art.

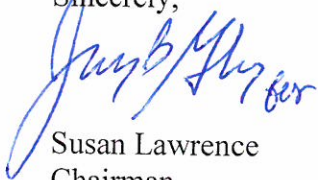
The concept of an open space and all the activity it would generate was met with enthusiasm. But how to best meld this space and the architecture surrounding it has engendered the most comment from ARB members. One member noted that perhaps the term "market park" would be more descriptive since "town green" connotes a distinct architectural and planning concept which never occurred in Darien. The suggestion of a town green automatically leads one to envision a civic or church building as the focal point. In the proposed project, it is this building, the Market Building, which has been thought of as the weak link. As we discussed in our November 17 meeting, it could easily be re-designed to better reflect, from the exterior, the retail use being planned for its interior. Some of the suggestions to achieve this included enlarging the windows, eliminating the large entrance portico, and entering at grade level. Another idea was to position the to-be-relocated Post Office at one end of the building. The concept of the sister buildings with facing porches having

been designed as part of an ensemble with the Market Building was understood and appreciated, but there was a comment concerning the slight awkwardness of the 2-story Boston Post Road gable ends set against the 3-story Dutch gambrel roofs.

The Board expressed its opinion that the Office Building location along Corbin Drive would be an exciting and appropriate site for a more modern building which would look to be of a different hand and time, looking forward rather than backward to a previous precedent. With skill and sensitivity, a light and airy structure with an emphasis on the fenestration could be a wonderful counterpoint to the historic character of the rest of the development and would only serve to enhance the other new, more traditional buildings.

The ARB is appreciative of your vision and enthusiasm for this project. We, of course, would be happy to meet with your team at any time before you make a formal application outlining more final design development, color and material selection, street furniture, signage, lighting, and landscaping details. The ARB certainly applauds your proposal to bury all power lines along the development's stretch of the Post Road.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Susan Lawrence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" being the most prominent part.

Susan Lawrence
Chairman

Cc: Robert F. Maslan, Jr., Esq.