



Discovery
LAND COMPANY

December 2, 2020

RE: Lewis Road PRD

The Honorable Carrie Meek Gallagher
Chairwoman
New York State Pine Barrens Commission
624 Old Riverhead Road
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978

Subject: Lewis Road PRD Subdivision

Dear Chairwoman Gallagher and Commissioners:

I am a partner in the privately held Discovery Land Company and we are the applicant for the Lewis Road Planned Residential Development. From the beginning, our planning and design process, as evidenced by our application, has utilized a total conformance approach. We are committed to providing a project consistent with the Town of Southampton's Comprehensive Plan and conforming to all applicable rules, codes, and laws. We are most appreciative that The Pine Barrens Commission will provide objective review of our project relative to the review of the Commission which is simply for conformance to the Standard and Guidelines of the Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). The record demonstrates that our project is conformance with these standards and guidelines.

My two partners and I started our company over 20 years ago with a goal of creating multi-generational resort communities where families can come together, recreate, enjoy nature and build community. We have built over twenty wonderful communities across the United States, Mexico and the Caribbean. Each community has been designed to conform with all local regulations, to fit in to the local culture and landscape, and to be a supportive resource to the general community in which it is located. These communities are celebrated by our local governmental partners as we always work to be the gold standard for development, environmental stewardship and community support. I have included a few letters from local leaders within these communities for your information.

In the case of the Lewis Road PRD, we have taken the same approach of environmental stewardship and total conformance. The Town's Comprehensive Plan, in which the Commission was an involved agency, proposes a development for our property just like the Lewis Road PRD - seasonal residential housing and a golf course. We conform to all of the Town's subdivision, open space and aquifer protection overlay district requirements. We conform to all of the Standards and Guidelines of the Central Pine Barrens Commission's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). We will also conform to all other involved agency requirements. We have made a significant commitment to open space preservation, to

maintaining the rural character of the area, to protecting wildlife habitat and to protecting groundwater quality.

To meet all of these requirements and to demonstrate our commitment to environmental stewardship, we have taken a modern, environmentally sensitive approach to subdivision design. We have traded the more traditional approach of large individual lots with large lawns and distributed amenities on each lot for a shared, community focused plan with a shared recreational area and a golf course. All of these areas use the most advanced, environmentally sensitive design techniques. Our golf course, for example, includes significant natural areas maintained in and around it. Our lots maintain significant natural areas. Our total development areas with a roof or a road on it is only about 30 acres or less than 5% of the property. We utilize rain gardens to purify storm water runoff. We minimize hard surfaces. We maximize the preservation of natural vegetation. The community is designed to be very walkable to minimize the use of vehicles. Our entire property will be governed by a professionally managed integrated turf health management program (ITHMP) that limits the use of water, pesticides and herbicides, similar to the ITHMP at Sebonack Golf Club. Our project will have a water quality monitoring program in conjunction with the Town of Southampton, similar to the program for Sebonack Golf Club. This approach is far better for the environment than a standard subdivision as demonstrated in the complete Hills EIS record.

This design will also provide the Lewis Road PRD with a very unique opportunity to use proven technology to clean groundwater (i.e. "pump and treat"). The project is down-gradient of extensive agricultural activities which, while beneficial in many ways, have the downside of negative impacts on groundwater. Professional testing shows that groundwater in this area has very elevated nitrogen amounts making the shallow SCWA wells in the Spinney Road well field area, very difficult to use for the public. This also means that this groundwater travels over time to Shinnecock Bay with negative impacts to sea life. Just like in other areas in the United States, we can reuse water that has been impacted by other offsite activities and purify it before it returns to the water shed. This plan, which makes our project net nitrogen-negative, would otherwise not be possible without our design and the bio-filtration of the golf course. We are thrilled that we can be a part of what could be more sustainable farming in East Quogue for years to come.

We have also taken great care to understand how best to support the local ecology by maintaining very large blocks of contiguous open space, connected to adjacent protected open space. We also understand the importance of connectivity of open space, elimination of barriers for wildlife movement, the need to minimize disturbance and the need for natural buffer zones between areas of development and natural vegetation. We have done extensive ecological studies as evidenced in our EIS record and we will provide comprehensive wildlife and ecological stewardship plans to the Town of Southampton as part of our Final Plat Process. These will include specific transplanting plans, wildlife preservation plans and care for rare, endangered and other species. Wildlife will have very few barriers within this project as only about 5 percent of the property will have a hard surface.

Now, I would like to take this opportunity to address some of the falsehoods that have been proffered by those opposed to our plan, including lack of mitigation, process concerns, quantification concerns, project visibility, workforce housing and policy related concerns.

First, our project has undergone an extensive environmental review by both the Town of Southampton's Town Board and the Town of Southampton's Planning Board. The CPBC has been an involved agency in all of these reviews. All on site mitigation has always been a part

of the project as reviewed in the EIS including the onsite STP, a fertilizer cap on top of the limit of 15% fertilized vegetation, the implementation of the ITHMP and water monitoring protocols. Several community benefits, which were environmental in nature, were not part of mitigation calculations nor considerations.

Second, the SEQRA process was followed with integrity. It seems that the opposition is spending more time arguing process and policy now that they see that our project, which has already received Preliminary Subdivision Approval, meets the Standards and Guidelines of the CLUP. Regardless, the Commission is doing its part as an involved agency in conducting a thorough review for conformance and providing its own SEQRA Findings Statement.

Opposers to our project are making comments about standards that are not relevant to the review of our project although your professional staff seems to have this all sorted. In particular, we have seen comments about the nitrogen-nitrate goal which is related to projects in the vicinity of ponds and wetlands. Our development area is not in the vicinity of ponds and wetlands so this standard is not applicable to our project. Nevertheless, we are very proud of our net-nitrogen negative plan as mentioned earlier in this letter. Even before our water purification plan using impacted groundwater is calculated, our impact is one-tenth of the recommended concentration for areas which are actually near ponds and wetlands.

Another comment relates to buffers and project visibility. Our project will not be visible from Sunrise Highway due to the distance from the highway and elevation of the development. It has extensive buffers as required by the Town of Southampton along with additional design considerations which means that the nearest house lot off that could be seen off of Lewis Road is almost a half a mile from that road, screened by area farms and at least 300 ft of natural vegetation and landscaping on our property. The nearest structures that could be seen off of Lewis Road are at least 750 ft from the roadway and are designed to fit in with the local rural vernacular. Our barns will look like other neighboring barns.

We have heard concerns about the proximity of our workforce housing rental apartment building to our voluntary waste water treatment facility. First, we are happy to help provide workforce housing as requested by the Town of Southampton. According to the Town's Housing Development Director, there is a significant shortage of available rental units. We placed the apartment building near Lewis Road for easy access to local services. We also created a small village area with an adjacent HOA building to provide for a compatible area to work and live. It was only long after that design was created, during this Commission's review, that the Town of Southampton asked us to move the treatment area to the southernmost area on the property, adjacent to a cemetery. While we appreciate the negative social optics of such proximity, we are confident that our Village design for the rental apartment building and HOA building, with significant screening, a communal area, natural preserved space all around and the distance from the screened in STP Barn, that this will truly be a great place for people to work and live.

At the hearing on November 18, 2020, I heard Assemblyman Thiele, Bob Deluca from the Group for the End End and others cite policy concerns relating to our project. They are suggesting that by our project conforming to the CLUP that we are harming the integrity of the CLUP. This is only a logical claim if we did not conform. However, as stated in the opening paragraphs to this letter, we are in complete conformance.

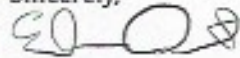
I have read the CLUP, Article 57 from New York State, The APOD restrictions, the EQGEIS and other relevant policies and studies. We have designed our project to conform to all of these significant studies. We have eschewed emerald green lawns for an environmentally friendly, compact golf course which provides a significant benefit in the protection of the quality of

surface and groundwater. We have a tightly clustered, compact development with a thoughtful master plan. We will preserve and protect the vast majority of our property in large, contiguous blocks.

Our environmental planner, Chic Voorhis of Nelson, Pope, and Voorhis, has provided all of the details around conformance to each Standard and Guideline over the course of this application's review process, and the Staff Report dated November 18, 2020 shows that your Staff is able to document this complete conformance based on the significant, detailed record.

Thank you for your thoughtful and unbiased view of our project which I hope all of the Commissioners are completing. I am personally committed to seeing this project through to completion, demonstrating total conformance, and contributing to the responsible and planned economic development and prosperity for the Town. We look forward to the results of your objective review.

Sincerely,



Ed Divita
Partner
Discovery Land Company

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AGRICULTURE
ARTS AND CULTURE
HUMAN SERVICES
MATERIALS
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



SUSAN SERINO

Senator, 41st District

December 1, 2016

Southampton Town Board
116 Hampton Road
Southampton, NY 11968

Dear Town Supervisor and Town Board Members:

I am writing to convey my appreciation of the partnership between Discovery Land Company and Silo Ridge to undergo such an ambitious project, all while taking into consideration the concerns of a wide range of stakeholders within our communities.

The Silo Ridge project was a massive undertaking and will certainly be an economic boon for Dutchess County, especially the Town of Amenia. This development will provide a tremendous source of tax revenue to the county, town, and local school and fire districts, thereby reducing the tax burden on our community members. In addition to that, Silo Ridge will be bringing in much needed jobs to the area—not only during construction, but permanently as well.

However, there is more that needs to go into consideration of any project than just the revenue being generated, and that is the impact such a project could have on the community and especially the environment. This is where I feel Discovery Land Company truly showed their desire to be a thoughtful, engaging and proactive partner. Silo Ridge did not happen overnight, rather it was the result of years of collaboration between the developers, community members, advocates and experts.

Environmental groups were brought in on the discussion of how to go about this project in a way that would be economically beneficial while also being environmentally friendly. As a result of that collaboration, the developers set aside 80% of the property for space preserved by conservation easement, reduced the initial proposal of waste water generation from 65% to 40%, limited the maximum height of buildings to 35 feet and arranged for them to be placed on the flattest land possible to mitigate steep slope disturbances. Additionally, the developers worked hard to ensure the protection of the surrounding area by increasing natural wetland buffers.

I truly appreciate the care and thoughtfulness that was put into this project by Discovery Land Company and all the parties involved. The Silo Ridge project is a great example of how thoughtful collaboration can lead to outcomes that are not only agreeable, but beneficial to all stakeholders and community members involved.

Sincerely,

Sue Serino
New York State Senator
41st District

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