



TOWN OF GUILDERLAND PLANNING BOARD SITE PLAN APPROVAL FINDINGS STATEMENT

NAME OF ACTION:

**RAPP ROAD RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN APPLICATION
222 APARTMENT & TOWNHOUSE STYLE UNITS / 3,900 SQUARE FEET OF COMMERCIAL**

LEAD AGENCY:

Town of Guilderland Planning Board
Guilderland Town Hall
5209 Western Turnpike
Guilderland, New York 12084

APPLICANT:

Rapp Road Development, LLC
4 Clinton Square
Syracuse, NY 13202

CONTACT PERSON:

Kenneth Kovalchik, AICP – Town Planner

DATE OF APPROVAL:

October 28, 2020

THE TOWN OF GUILDERLAND PLANNING BOARD, hereby makes the following findings and determinations:

- 1. The Rapp Road Residential Site Plan is in substantial compliance with the Town of Guilderland Comprehensive Plan, Westmere Corridor Study and Transit Oriented Development District Zoning, as follows:**

The Town of Guilderland's [Comprehensive Plan](#), completed in 2001, identifies the following recommendations as some of the priorities for the Westmere neighborhood where the projects have been proposed.

First, the Comprehensive Plan recommends that higher density development should be concentrated within densely populated areas such as the Westmere/McKownville area. The higher density development is most suitable where public transportation is available, where both essential and non-essential services/products are available, and where pedestrian linkages to shopping, recreation, and cultural resources are well developed. Westmere and McKownville provide the most services and the best access to public transportation, but are lacking in recreational facilities and a pedestrian environment.

Second, the Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Town use incentive zoning (bonuses) and financial incentives to help facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment of vacant/underutilized frontage properties along Route 20.

Finally, the Comprehensive Plan suggests that Crossgates Mall Ring Road should be considered as a bypass around congestion on Route 20/Western Avenue, perhaps with a physical linkage over the Northway to Stuyvesant Plaza.

In 2015 and 2016, implementing the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations to develop neighborhood specific plans, the Town engaged a consultant to develop the [Westmere Corridor Study](#), and formed a committee of interested agencies to assist, including representatives from the NYS Department of Transportation, Capital District Transportation Committee, Albany County Department of Public Works, Capital District Transportation Authority, Guilderland Planning Board, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, Westmere Corridor business owners, and Guilderland Industrial Development Authority.

The study was intended to develop a neighborhood plan for the area along Western Avenue between Church Road on the east and State Farm Road and New Karner Road on the west. The study was a year-long planning process that included multiple public meetings and significant involvement from the public.

In December 2016, the Town of Guilderland Town Board (Town Board) accepted the Westmere Corridor Study, the last of the neighborhood studies envisioned by the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Study was based upon public meetings where residents, local business owners, professional planners, and regional transportation and planning representatives discussed goals and objectives for the Study and provided detailed recommendations.

The Study's area included Western Avenue from the Northway on the east to Route 155 on the west, including parcels with frontage on Western Avenue, and, in particular, the "Crossgates Mall Ring Road, due to its importance to the commercial and traffic characteristics of the area."

Among the Study's core recommendations was the creation of a [Transit Oriented Development \("TOD"\) District](#) in the area of Crossgates Mall which would provide a mix of housing, shopping, entertainment and employment within walking distance (1/2 mile) of the transit center at Crossgates Mall which is planned to be enhanced with a bus rapid transit service. The proposed permitted uses included "a wide range of residential, institutional, retail, service, entertainment and employment uses found in the 'General Business' (GB) District." The Study discouraged, in the area's interior, auto-dependent uses, "such as car dealerships, car rentals, car washes, service garages, drive through windows and other like uses."

At a public hearing on June 5, 2018, the Town Board adopted Local Law No. 4 for the new TOD district recommended in the Study. The TOD's area matched the area recommended in the Study. The TOD imposed regulations to protect existing residential neighborhoods such as requiring additional setbacks from existing residential uses, height limitations, density limitations, and prohibiting commercial uses in certain areas of the TOD.

2. The Rapp Road Residential Site Plan application meets the criteria for issuance of Site Plan approval pursuant to §280-53(H) of Town Zoning Law, as follows:

- a) Full conformance of the site plan with the provisions of this chapter, including site plan guidelines set forth in [§280-39](#) of the Town of Guilderland Town Code.*

Based on the complete [Rapp Road Residential/Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Projects](#) EIS record and Findings Statement for the EIS, the site plan has been prepared to be in substantial conformance with §280-39 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code related to building and design standards, parking guidelines, access management and pedestrian circulation, and landscaping.

- b) Adequacy and arrangement of vehicular traffic access and circulation, including intersections, road widths, transit accommodations, and traffic controls. Consideration*

will also be given to the project's impact on the overall traffic circulation system of the neighborhood and the Town.

The site plan demonstrates adequate arrangement of vehicular traffic access and circulation, including intersections, road widths, transit accommodations, and traffic controls, and consideration for project's impact on the overall traffic circulation system of the neighborhood and the Town. Access to the project site is provided by two driveways from Rapp Road. The southern, main access, was modified from the original plan to address comments communicated by the Westmere Fire Department. During the SEQRA process, numerous traffic improvements were identified to accommodate traffic in connection with the combined development of the Rapp Road project and the Costco development. The Planning Board's SEQRA Findings Statement notes that improvements to Crossgates Mall Road, including a roundabout at the flyover ramps, will be constructed and operational prior to the opening of Costco to customers. Improvements to Rapp Road included the implementation of Alternative 9 which would be necessary upon the completion of both the Costco and Rapp Road Residential developments. However, the Planning Board has determined that Alternative 9 be implemented in connection with the development of the Rapp Road Residential Project.

A new CDTA bus stop is proposed at the intersection of Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road, a few hundred yards from the project site. The CDTA transit center stop at Crossgates Mall is approximately ½ mile away. Rapp Road will be redesigned near the intersection of Gipp Road to implement traffic mitigation measures. The traffic mitigation will reduce the number of vehicles traveling through the Rapp Road corridor and encourage vehicles to utilize Crossgates Mall Road.

c) Adequacy of fire lanes and other emergency zones, traffic circulation and system of fire hydrants.

By [letter dated June 9, 2020](#) Chief Anthony Carrow of the Westmere Fire District confirmed that the Westmere Fire Department determined there will be no significant change in service level required by the Department to serve the proposed uses. They reviewed the plans and determined that the Department "has the necessary personnel, resources, equipment and facilities to support the development".

d) Adequacy and arrangement of pedestrian access and circulation, including, but not solely limited to, separation of pedestrians from vehicular traffic, control of intersections and overall pedestrian convenience, including access and facilities for bicycles.

The Applicant is proposing to construct a 10' wide multi-use trail that will extend from the intersection of Rapp Road/Gipp Road to Western Avenue. The trail will be located on the west side of Rapp Road to the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road. The trail will then cross to the east side of Rapp Road at the intersection and continue to Western Avenue on the east side of the road. The Applicant is proposing to remove the existing Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road 5' wide sidewalk and replace it with the 10' wide multi-use trail. This trail will also link to the existing multi-use trail at the hotel site further to the east.

The Applicant is proposing a 5' sidewalk on the west side of Rapp Road that will extend from the Capital City Diner on Western Avenue and link to the 10' wide multi-use path at the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road.

The Applicant is also proposing a 5' wide concrete sidewalk extending from the proposed 10' wide multi-use trail just north of the proposed apartments, and will connect to Crossgates Mall on the north side of Macy's.

The proposed sidewalks and multi-use trails will allow not only residents from the proposed apartments and townhouse style units, but also residents from surrounding neighborhoods on Gipp Road and middle and northern sections of Rapp Road to safely and efficiently traverse through this area via a separated pedestrian network. Where the sidewalks or multi-use trails are required to cross roadways, the applicant is proposing to install crosswalks and flashing pedestrian crossing signs.

The pedestrian improvements proposed as part of the Rapp Road residential project will [create a walkable neighborhood](#), which is one of the 10 principles and foundation of a smart growth approach to development. The proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities are encouraged by, and in compliance with, §280-18.1.G.2 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code to promote the purposes of the TOD District.

e) Location, arrangement, design and general site compatibility of buildings, lighting and signs. As much as it is possible, consideration should be given to noise sources, privacy, prevailing wind directions and seasonal sun movements when locating structures, patios and open spaces on parcels, exhaust fans and outdoor waste disposal locations.

The site plans were modified to accommodate comments from the residents of Westmere Terrace to provide significant screening and noise reduction between that neighborhood and the development. The project meets the area and bulk requirements in the Town Code and is consistent with TOD requirements. Additional in-fill planting is also provided along the western perimeter which will screen and provide additional landscape buffer to the Paden Circle neighborhood.

The two-story buildings proposed on the western side of the site will act as a transition from the existing residential uses on Paden Circle to the 5-story apartment buildings. The five story buildings are situated in closer proximity to Rapp Road and comply with the additional setback requirements from the Westmere Terrace residential district, and is consistent with the TOD building height and setback requirements.

During operation, consistent with Town Code lighting requirements, the parking lot lighting will not exceed 16 feet in height from finished grade and shall have cutoff type luminaires to prevent light above the fixture. The Applicant will install light poles that are no higher than 12-feet in the southern most area closest to Westmere Terrace.

As a result, the location, arrangement, design and general site compatibility of buildings, lighting and signs and gives consideration, as much as it is possible, to noise sources, privacy, prevailing wind directions and seasonal sun movements when locating structures, patios and open spaces on parcels, exhaust fans and outdoor waste disposal locations.

f) Location, arrangement and setting of off-street parking and loading areas.

A total of 333 parking spaces are required and the Applicant is proposing to install 362 parking spaces (278 surface parking spaces and 84 indoor parking spaces). The boulevard driveway will provide 12 parallel parking spaces adjacent to the 5-story buildings.

The location, arrangement and setting of off-street parking and loading areas shown on the site plan is acceptable. The parking facilities meet the minimum and maximum number of spaces required in the Town Code and are appropriately arranged for convenient access of future occupants of the buildings, and pursuant to the landscaping plan, will be more aesthetically appealing

g) Adequacy, type and arrangement of trees, shrubs and other landscaping.

The potential use of native “Pine Bush” species for screening atop the existing and proposed berms is not proposed at this time. Because the purpose of the proposed landscaping is to act as a visual screen between the project and the existing neighboring residential properties, low level “Pine Bush” vegetation species is not preferred. Maintaining the currently existing thick vegetation in the northern berm will encourage wildlife species to continue to migrate to the north and west of the site and act as a buffer to the land uses to the north. It is not the intent of the project to attract endangered species away from the established Pine Bush

Preserve area located to the north of the site with native plantings, but such plantings may be incorporated into the project landscaping.

The Applicant will avoid removal of on-site mature trees near the southern property boundary unless necessary for building development and site improvements so that these existing mature trees will act as a natural buffer to existing residential uses on Westmere Terrace

h) In the case of an apartment building, multiple-dwelling complex or PUD, the adequacy of usable open space for playgrounds and informal recreation.

The site plans indicate a pool will be provided on the north side of the apartment buildings and will be available for all tenants to use. A 10' wide multi-use trail will be constructed along the front portion of the property and will provide pedestrian trail links along the Rapp Road and Crossgates Mall Road corridor. The Applicant will pay an Open Space, Parks and Parkland fees in the amount of \$500.00 per unit to the Town of Guilderland.

i) Adequacy of provisions for the control of stormwater and drainage, sanitary waste and sewage, water supply for fire protection and general consumption, solid waste disposal and snow removal storage areas.

See item 'M' below for discussion of stormwater and drainage. Based on consultations with the Town Department of Water & Wastewater Management, the Town's sewer service possesses adequate capacity to meet the current and future needs of the Town and accommodate the proposed development. Engineering details for the collection, distribution, and treatment of the Project's discharges will be coordinated in consultation with the Town of Guilderland Water/Wastewater Department and the Town Designated Engineer (Delaware Engineering).

By [letter dated February 11, 2020](#), the Town Department of Water and Wastewater Management has indicated that sufficient excess water and sewer capacity exists to accommodate the proposed action, contingent on the sewer being redirected to the Nott Road Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Numerous snow storage areas are indicated on the site plans and should be able to adequately accommodate on-site snow storage.

j) Protection of adjacent properties against noise, glare unsightliness or other objectionable features.

The two neighborhoods closest in proximity to the proposed Rapp Road project are Westmere Terrace, located to the south, and Paden Circle, located to the west. During the early stages of the site plan review process, the Applicant and Town officials engaged the residents in the nearby neighborhoods in a dialogue to address site plan concerns. This resulted in development of site enhancements that includes extensive landscaping, additional berms, and fencing to provide a visual screen and mitigate to the maximum extent practicable any visual and noise impacts for the existing neighborhoods near the project including, but limited to, the following site designs:

1. A new cul-de-sac will be constructed on tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.2 (28 Westmere Terrace), which is owned by the applicant. The relocated cul-de-sac, berm and plantings will be constructed prior to construction taking place for the Rapp Road apartment/townhome project.
2. A 20-foot high berm along the southern boundary of Rapp Road project is proposed to mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to the Westmere Terrace residences, which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
3. A double row of 12-15 foot tall trees will be planted on top of the berm referenced above, along the southern boundary of the Rapp Road project, to mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to Westmere Terrace residences, which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
4. A double row of 8-10-foot tall pine trees will be planted along the northern boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.1 (24-26 Westmere Terrace), which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
5. A 6-foot high solid panel vinyl fence will be constructed in the following locations to further mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to surrounding existing residential uses:
 - i. Along the top of the 20-foot berm at the southern boundary of the Rapp Road apartment/townhome project; the fence will run from the northwest boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.2 (28 Westmere Terrace) to the northeast boundary of parcel number 52.10-16 (31 Westmere Terrace).
 - ii. Along the western boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.2 (28 Westmere Terrace).

- iii. Along the northern boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.1 (24-26 Westmere Terrace).
 - iv. Along the northern boundary of tax map parcel number 52.10-1-6 (31 Westmere Terrace).
6. The existing wood fence along the western boundary of tax map parcel number 52.10-1-25 will be replaced with a 6-foot high solid vinyl fence.
7. The Applicant will install light poles that are no higher than 12-feet in the southern most area closest to Westmere Terrace. The exterior lighting will conform to [§280-28\(C\) \(2\), \(3\) and \(4\) of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
8. The Applicant will avoid removal of on-site mature trees near the southern property boundary unless necessary for building development and site improvements so that these existing mature trees will act as a natural buffer to existing residential uses on Westmere Terrace.
9. The berm along the western border of the project site, which contains existing trees, will be planted with additional 12-15 foot tall double row of trees to further mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to residents on Paden Circle, which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
10. The two-story buildings proposed on the western side of project site will act as a transition from the existing residential uses on Paden Circle to the 5-story apartment buildings. The five story buildings are situated in closer proximity to Rapp Road and comply with the additional setback requirements from the Westmere Terrace and Paden Circle residential districts, and is consistent with the TOD building height and setback requirements.
11. Parking lot lighting will be located and screened without intruding upon the environment or adjacent residential properties. Based on the proximity of the proposed project to the Albany Pine Bush Preserve, sodium vapor lighting is proposed so as to reduce the attraction of such lighting on insects. The lighting will be at least 200 feet south of the established Albany Pine Bush corridor located north of Gipp Road and will conform to the 0.2 foot-candle limit set in the lighting standards of [§280-20 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#). The existing trees and vegetation on the 2.4-acre buffer area, just south of Gipp Road, will not be disturbed and will further serve to provide mitigation for any impacts to existing residential uses north of Gipp Road, in the City of Albany.

12. Additional mitigation measures that will be employed on the project site include:

- i. Construction equipment will be properly muffled in accordance with all applicable regulations.
- ii. Equipment will be required to be properly maintained to reduce noise and vibration.
- iii. The site will be required to be maintained in an orderly manner during all construction periods. Crews will be responsible for daily maintenance/cleaning of the site.
- iv. All packaging, demolition and construction debris will be promptly removed from the site by a private waste-hauler and disposed of in an approved construction and demolition debris landfill.
- v. Demolition of the structures will be in accordance with all state and local laws, rules and regulations.
- vi. Dust suppression measures will be implemented as required.
- vii. Erosion control measures will be implemented in accordance with the approved SWPPPs.

k) Retention of existing trees and vegetation for protection and control of soil erosion, drainage, natural beauty and unusual or valuable ecology, and whether the impacts to sensitive environmental areas have been avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

The Applicant will avoid removal of on-site mature trees near the southern property boundary unless necessary for building development and site improvements so that these existing mature trees will act as a natural buffer to existing residential uses on Westmere Terrace.

The site plan provides for retention of existing trees and vegetation for protection and control of soil erosion, drainage, natural beauty and unusual or valuable ecology, and demonstrate that the impacts to sensitive environmental areas have been avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable. The site plan maintains the secondary growth woodlands (containing numerous invasive species and filled soils) vegetated 200-foot northern buffer area and the western buffer area, totaling 4.84 acres +/- . The B. Laing Associates Vegetation, Wildlife and Soil Conditions Report Rapp Road Residential Project found that the proposed development of the site does not contain any Albany Pine Bush habitat in its existing condition and soil investigations determined that the site is dominated by Colonie and Elnora, upland soils which have been heavily disturbed over time.

l) Necessary easements and/or construction of sidewalks or bikeways consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Applicant is proposing to construct a 10' wide multi-use trail that will extend from the intersection of Rapp Road/Gipp Road to Western Avenue. The trail will be located on the west side of Rapp Road to the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road. The trail will then cross to the east side of Rapp Road at the intersection and continue to Western Avenue on the east side of the road. The applicant is proposing to remove the existing Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road 5' wide sidewalk and replace it with the 10' wide multi-use trail. This trail will also link to the existing multi-use trail at the hotel site further to the east.

The Applicant is proposing a 5' sidewalk on the west side of Rapp Road that will extend from the Capital City Diner on Western Avenue and link to the 10' wide multi-use path at the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road.

The Applicant is also proposing a 5' wide concrete sidewalk extending from the proposed 10' wide multi-use trail just north of the proposed apartments, and will connect to Crossgates Mall on the north side of Macy's.

m) Compliance with standards for stormwater management and erosion and sediment control contained in Chapter [241](#) of the Town Code, unless exempted under § [241-23](#).

The project will disturb greater than one acre of land and is therefore subject to the requirements set forth in the NYSDEC Stormwater Management Design Manual (SWMDM) and the NYSDEC SPDES General Permit from Construction Activity (GP0-20-001). A [Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan](#) was prepared which also contains the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan to be implemented during construction, and a long-term Operation & Maintenance Plan to be followed after construction is complete

As part of these requirements, stormwater from the site is required to be captured and treated based on the qualifications of new development versus redevelopment. The project proposes infiltration practices for stormwater management. Infiltration practices standard stormwater management with the NYSDEC and all practices will be designed to requirements set forth in the NYSDEC SWMDM. By following such requirements, stormwater will meet or exceed the water quantity and quality requirements set forth in the NYSDEC SWMDM.

Infiltration practices will reduce the amount of stormwater entering the Town of Guilderland municipal storm sewer system by promoting groundwater recharge over off-site discharge.

The application materials demonstrate compliance with standards for stormwater management and erosion and sediment control contained in Chapter 241 of the Town Code, unless exempted under §241-23. As noted above, the application includes a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that will be implemented for construction and during operation of the project.

3. Response to Albany County Planning Board NYS General Municipal Law 239-m, n recommendation dated May 13, 2019.

ACPB Recommendation 1. The proposed project is in a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District. A TOD tries to “support and incentivize development that adequately protects nearby residential neighborhoods and utilizes resources within and near the TOD's (including) direct vehicle access to the interstate highway system and a nearby local business community.” The proposed project fails to comply with the stated goals of TOD in multiple ways:

a. The proposed obstruction of traffic at Gipp Rd. cuts off access to the highway system and business community and is a deviation of typical TOD traffic calming measures.

Town Response: The traffic mitigation alternative selected by the Planning Board does not obstruct traffic at Gipp Road as evidenced by the site plan and traffic mitigation design. One of the purposes of establishing the TOD was to encourage utilization of the Crossgates Mall Road and decrease traffic on Western Avenue, which was highlighted in the Westmere Corridor Study. Once on Crossgates Mall Road, there is ready access to the Northway and NYS Thruway (I-87/I-90) and Washington Avenue Extension.

The US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration defines [traffic calming](#) as follows:

“The primary purpose of traffic calming is to support the livability and vitality of residential and commercial areas through improvements in non-motorist safety, mobility, and comfort. These objectives are typically achieved by reducing vehicle speeds or volumes on a single street or a street network. Traffic calming measures consist of horizontal, vertical, lane narrowing, roadside, and other features that use self-enforcing physical or psycho-perception means to produce desired effects.”

Traffic calming improvements that will be implemented include, but may not be limited to, the following:

1. Rapp Road Traffic Mitigation – As a result of the analysis of the numerous potential traffic alternatives, as described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, several alternatives were determined by the Planning Board to be feasible, reasonable alternatives that address the existing commuter traffic concerns and mitigate traffic

from the projects to the maximum extent practicable by limiting traffic between the Town of Guilderland and the City of Albany.

The site plans show that the Planning Board has selected [Alternative 9](#) as the preferred traffic mitigation option. Alternative 9 discourages traffic from using the southern section of Rapp Road as a means to travel through the middle and northern sections of Rapp Road and Rapp Road Historic District, and was analyzed as part of the [Rapp Road Residential/Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Environmental Impact Statement](#). A connection between Rapp Road and Crossgates Mall Road would insure that City residents on Pine Lane and Wilan Lane would have access to Washington Avenue Extension east-bound by way of the Crossgates Mall Road. Rapp Road is proposed to be terminated near the intersection of Rapp Road/Gipp Road, on the Town of Guilderland side of the municipal boundary with the City of Albany. All traffic would be effectively discouraged from travelling through the Rapp Road Historic District by the inconvenient route required, and the availability of more efficient travel routes. Existing traffic that utilizes Rapp Road to travel to Washington Avenue Extension would also be discouraged from taking the Rapp Road route.

Emergency vehicle access will still be allowed to travel from the north and south of the Rapp Road corridor by using the Crossgates Mall Road and proposed connector road from the mall road to Rapp Road.

On balance, Alternative 9 will mitigate traffic impacts from the projects in the Rapp Road Historic District to the maximum extent practicable and have the added benefit of reducing existing commuter traffic in the Rapp Road corridor. The Final Environmental Impact Statement provided a traffic diversion summary for Alternative 9 as follows:

“The Alternate 9 re-routing of a portion of Rapp Road south of Gipp Road would encourage “existing” traffic that currently uses Rapp Road between Western Avenue and Washington Avenue Extension to use other travel routes such as NYS Route 155 (depending on their origin and destination) or the Crossgates Mall Ring Road and existing I-87/I-90 ramp system. In addition, the Alternate 9 layout would also reduce traffic along Rapp Road through the historical district from the proposed residential and proposed Costco. This alternative could potentially divert 30 - 65 existing vehicles through the historic district during the Weekday Peak AM, Weekday Peak PM and Saturday Peak Hours and reduce the number of vehicles from the proposed residential and proposed Costco development by 13 – 28 vehicles.”

The Town Designated Engineer (GPI) reviewed the traffic diversion summary and in a letter dated [October 7, 2020](#) stated “We feel the applicants Diversion Summary presents a reasonable and conservative estimate of the traffic diversions that could occur with the implementation of the modified Alternative No. 9.”

Alternative 9 is located entirely within the jurisdiction of the Town of Guilderland and can be implemented without any approvals and/or permits from the City of Albany.

2. Removal of Slip Ramps – The existing north bound and south bound slip ramps at the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road will be removed as part of the Costco project, if approved. The existing slip ramps allow vehicles to travel through this intersection at a high rate of speed, which is unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists. With the removal of the slip ramps, which will be completed as part of the construction of Costco, all vehicles will now have to utilize the signalized intersection, at a slower rate of speed, which will increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
3. Street trees will be planted within the existing medians on 3 of the 4 legs of the Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road intersection, as part of the Costco project. Field studies have confirmed that when trees are present along streets, there is a change in motorists' behavior with a traffic calming effect. Streets having a [landscaped center strip or median](#) planting may alter drivers' perception of lane width and therefore reduce driving speeds by way of a psychological effect." This psychological effect, also known as an "edge effect," cues motorists to drive more slowly; slower vehicle speeds are associated with fewer crashes and less severe injuries.
4. Complete Streets – A Complete Streets design will be incorporated on Crossgates Mall Road, from the hotel driveway to the vicinity of the Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road intersection, and will be reconfigured from four lanes to three lanes and a center turn lane will be added, as part of the Costco project.

[Complete Streets](#) are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient. Complete Streets approaches vary based on community context. They may address a wide range of elements, such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus lanes, public transportation stops, crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, modified vehicle travel lanes, streetscape, and landscape treatments. Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle related crashes and pedestrian risk.

5. Roundabout – A [roundabout](#) will be constructed at the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Fuller Road Alternate (I-87/I-90 Ramps) as part of the Costco project. A roundabout is a circular intersection where drivers travel counterclockwise around a center island. The circular shape is designed to control the direction of traffic and reduce speeds to 15 to 20 mph. There are no traffic signals or stop signs in a roundabout. Drivers yield at entry to traffic in the roundabout, then enter the intersection and exit at their desired location. Studies by the Federal Highway

Administration have found that roundabouts can increase traffic capacity by 30 percent to 50 percent compared to traditional intersections.

The roundabout will be designed to accommodate vehicles of all sizes, including emergency vehicles, buses, and truck and trailer combinations. The circular shape is designed to control the direction of traffic and reduce speeds to 15 to 20 mph, thus creating a traffic calming effect by the vehicle speed reduction. It also reduces the likelihood of t-bone or head-on collisions. A main feature of the roundabout is the raised central island. The central island of the roundabout will include a truck apron, a raised section of concrete that acts as an extra lane for large vehicles so the back wheels of an oversize vehicle can ride up on the truck apron to easily complete the turn. The raised portion of concrete also discourages use by smaller vehicles. In addition to the central island, the roundabout will feature triangular splitter islands designed to slow and direct traffic.

The roundabout has been part of the [Capital District Transit Authority \(CDTA\) Bus Rapid Transit \(purple line\)](#) for several years and has been previously examined by CDTA from a SEQRA perspective. The roundabout will be constructed and operational prior to the opening of Costco to customers. The Costco site was examined as one of the three sites as part of the Environmental Impact Statement.

6. Pedestrian Crossings – Crosswalks and flashing pedestrian signs will be installed at numerous intersections including Crossgates Mall Road and intersection with the Macy's parking lot driveway, multi-use trail crossing at Rapp Road and connector road to the Crossgates Mall Road, and the intersection of Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road.

The 6 traffic calming examples described above show the improvements that will be implemented as part of the Rapp Road project and Costco to increase safety for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. Additionally, the traffic calming improvements should also increase vehicle safety by slowing vehicle speeds through the corridor which should decrease the number of accidents that are vehicle/vehicle and vehicle/pedestrian related.

The facts presented above show the Town Planning Board more than adequately addressed pedestrian linkages, improved non-automobile oriented modes of transportation, supports mixed use buildings, adequately protected adjacent neighborhoods and implemented traffic calming measures to slow vehicle speeds and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety. All of these proposed improvements proves the Planning Board and applicant have taken steps to implement improvements encouraged by the stated goals of the TOD District.

- b. The proposed project is not appropriately concentrated near existing mass-transit.

Town Response: It is a basic planning tenant that one of the purposes of a TOD is to encourage higher density development within a close distance to a transit center (i.e. one-half mile). A new CDTA bus stop is also proposed at the intersection of Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road, which is

in close proximity to the Rapp Road residential project. Additionally, the Rapp Road project is located approximately ½ mile walking distance to the existing transit center at Crossgates Mall, one of the busiest transit stops on CDTA's system.

c. The proposed project does not adequately protect the character of historical and non-historical adjacent neighborhoods.

Town Response: All buildings proposed meet the required setbacks in the TOD District. The 5 story buildings are at least 150' away from the nearest residential district, and the two-story buildings are at the closest 124' away and at the farthest 236' from the property line. The nearest occupied home in the historic district is approximately 700 feet away from the closest proposed structure on the site and separated by a 200-foot wide 2.5+/- acre densely vegetated buffer, Gipp Road and Pine Lane. No structure on the site will be visible from any occupied home in the historic district. Implementation of traffic Alternative 9 will reduce traffic travelling through the City of Albany's Rapp Road Historic District.

d. The proposal does not sufficiently address the preservation of bicycle and pedestrian traffic through a dead end.

Town Response: Multiuse paths and sidewalks are provided as part of the proposed development from the project site to Western Avenue, as well as to Gipp Road at the municipal boundary with the City of Albany. The Applicant has reaffirmed its commitment to work with CDTA to site a new bus stop at a mutually convenient location near the Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road intersection to accommodate the project site and the public.

e. The proposed project drastically exceeds the total number of parking spaces required by Town of Guilderland Zoning requirements.

Town Response: A total of 333 parking spaces are required and the applicant is proposing to install 362 parking spaces (278 surface parking spaces and 84 indoor parking spaces). The Town of Guilderland parking requirements provide for a maximum of 125% of the minimum required parking spaces. The project complies with the parking requirements by providing approximately 108% of the minimum required parking spaces.

ACPB Recommendation 2. The solution to dead-end Rapp Road at Gipp Road is problematic:

a. An approved emergency access plan for both municipalities should be submitted with the application.

b. Further traffic studies are needed. It is unclear which percentage of traffic will be diverted to Gipp, and which to the Crossgates Ring Road.

c. The Albany County Planning Board agrees that traffic deterrent initiatives are vital in preserving The Rapp Road Historical District. However, it remains unclear if dead-ending the road at Gipp will result in less traffic through the Historic District.

Town Response: The traffic mitigation alternative selected by the Planning Board is not dead-ending Rapp Road as evidenced on the site plan and traffic mitigation design. In a letter dated October 7, 2020 the Town's designated traffic engineer (Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.) for the Environmental Impact Statement provided the following traffic diversion summary:

Alternate 9 re-routing of a portion of Rapp Road south of Gipp Road would encourage "existing" traffic that currently uses Rapp Road between Western Avenue and Washington Avenue Extension to use other travel routes such as NYS Route 155 (depending on their origin and destination) or the Crossgates Mall Road and existing I-87/I-90 ramp system. In addition, the Alternate 9 layout would also reduce traffic along Rapp Road through the historical district from the proposed residential and proposed Costco. This alternative could potentially divert 30 - 65 existing vehicles through the historic district during the Weekday Peak AM, Weekday Peak PM and Saturday Peak Hours and reduce the number of vehicles from the proposed residential and proposed Costco development by 13 – 28 vehicles.

As part of the SEQRA coordinated review process, the Town coordinated with the City of Albany and the Rapp Road Historic District, Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission and other stakeholders on multiple occasions regarding potential traffic alternatives to alleviate existing and potential future traffic in the City of Albany. A total of twelve alternatives were given consideration. The SEQRA Lead Agency (Planning Board) identified Alternative 9 as a feasible alternative that mitigates potential adverse traffic impacts to the maximum extent practicable, which will be implemented by the applicant.

ACPB Recommendation 3. New York State General Municipal Law §96-a. Protection of historical places, buildings, and works of art states:

"In addition to any power or authority of a municipal corporation to regulate by planning or zoning laws and regulations or by local laws and regulations, the governing board or local legislative body of any county, city, town, or village is empowered to provide by regulation special conditions and restrictions for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, works of art, and other objects having a special character or special historical or aesthetic interest or value. Such regulations, special conditions and restrictions may include appropriate and reasonable control of the use or appearance of neighboring private property within public view, or both. "

Town Response: Comment noted. As discussed previously, no structure on the site will be visible from any occupied home in the historic district.

ACPB Recommendation 4. The Rapp Road Historic District was designated to the Nation's list of properties worthy of preservation in 2002. The Director of New York State's Technical Preservation Bureau within the State Historic Preservation Office, has advised that the impact of traffic and high density development as having an adverse impact on the historical preservation of the Rapp Road historical community.

Town Response: The existing deed restricted vegetated buffer area adjacent to Gipp Road will not be disturbed as part of the proposed development. This buffer area restricts views from the historic district to the project site. Additionally, the Applicant is conveying 8.4 acres of land in the City of Albany on the east side of Rapp Road, between the project site and the historic district, to the Pine Bush Preserve Commission, which will further buffer the historic district to the project site.

The Applicant and Town officials have had numerous meetings and discussions with representatives from the Rapp Road Historical Association. The purpose of these discussions was to better understand the traffic issues the neighborhood is dealing with and to provide a traffic mitigation alternative to reduce vehicles traveling through the neighborhood to the greatest extent practicable. Based on comments made by representatives from the Rapp Road Historical Association in recent meetings the members appear to be generally supportive of the efforts of the Town and the applicant to mitigate traffic.

September 16, 2020 Pine Bush Neighborhood meeting. At around the 45-minute mark of the meeting is when the discussion starts regarding the proposed traffic mitigation on Rapp Road. The meeting can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

September 30, 2020 Friends of the Pine Bush Community meeting. At around the 1-hour mark of the meeting is when the discussion begins related to the Rapp Road Historical Association history with Pyramid and speak relatively positive about their most recent interactions related to the proposed development, as well as noting the support they've received from the Town of Guilderland in regards to traffic on Rapp Road. The meeting can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

ACPB Recommendation 5. The origin of the Historical Rapp Road community is an African American community that migrated from Shubuta, Mississippi during the Great Migration. The community is singular in the Albany County in its living presentation of the agrarian lifestyle that remained intact through a community's chain migration to the north and the subsequent five generations. Multiple decedent families from the original property owners still live on Rapp Road. The Great Migration was the largest migration of United States citizens in American History that culminated in the mass urbanization of most of the migrants. The historical Rapp Road community provides an alternate and unique oral and living history that is increasingly hard to maintain as development and density continues to encroach.

Town Response: The Rapp Road Historical Association has been generally supportive of the Town and applicant in the efforts to mitigate traffic through the historic neighborhood. This is evidenced by comments made by members of the Rapp Road Historical Association in the two meeting videos provided above.

ACPB Recommendation 6. Two 5 story buildings, with +/- 3,900 of ground floor commercial space are antithetical to the community character that currently exist along Rapp Road now. The degree of difference in height and density between the proposed development and existing residential development with frontage on Rapp Road is significant.

Town Response: The uses proposed as part of the Rapp Road project are permitted uses under the Town's TOD zoning district at this site, and complies with all area and bulk requirements in the TOD district.

ACPB Recommendation 7. Sections C.2.b., E.2.n., E.2.0, E.2.p., E.3.c, E.3.h, and D.1.b.b. on the Full Environmental Assessment Form is incorrectly filled out and provides inaccurate information.

Town Response: Comment noted and has been addressed.

ACPB Recommendation 8. The application should include the results of a coordinated SEQR review, including a DEIS.

Town Response: The Planning Board, as lead agency, completed an Environmental Impact Statement for the [Rapp Road Residential/Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Projects](#).

The applicant also provided a response to the ACPB recommendations in a [letter dated July 3, 2019](#).

4. Conditions of Site Plan Approval:

Town Highway Superintendent Approval
Town Water and Wastewater Superintendent Approval
Town Designated Engineer Approval

Based on the FEIS and [SEQRA Findings Statement](#), the Planning Board requires the following mitigation measures identified during the SEQRA process be implemented as conditions of development of the Rapp Road Residential project.

A. Westmere Terrace.

In order to provide a visual screen and mitigate to the maximum extent practicable any noise impacts for the existing neighborhoods near Site 1:

- A new cul-de-sac will be constructed on tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.2 (28 Westmere Terrace), which is owned by the applicant. The relocated cul-de-sac, berm and plantings will be constructed prior to construction taking place on the Site 1.
- A 20-foot high berm along the southern boundary of Site 1 is proposed to mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to the Westmere Terrace residences, which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
- A double row of 12-15 foot tall trees will be planted on top of the berm referenced above, along the southern boundary of Site 1, to mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to Westmere terrace residences, which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#)
- A double row of 8-10-feet tall pine trees will be planted along the northern boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.1 (24-26 Westmere Terrace), which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
- A 6-foot high solid panel vinyl fence will be constructed in the following locations to further mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts to surrounding existing residential uses:
 - (i) along the top of the 20-foot berm at the southern boundary of Site 1; the fence will run from the northwest boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.2 (28 Westmere Terrace) to the northeast boundary of parcel number 52.10-1-6 (31 Westmere Terrace).
 - (ii) along the western boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.2 (28 Westmere Terrace).
 - (iii) along the northern boundary of tax map parcel number 52.09-4-43.1 (24-26 Westmere Terrace).
 - (iv) along the northern boundary of tax map parcel number 52.10-1-6 (31 Westmere Terrace).
- The existing wood fence along the western boundary of tax map parcel number 52.10-1-25 will be replaced with a 6-feet high solid vinyl fence.
- The Applicant will install light poles that are no higher than 12-feet in the southern most area closest to Westmere Terrace. The exterior lighting will conform to [Town Code §280-28\(C\) \(2\), \(3\) and \(4\)](#).
- The Applicant will avoid removal of on-site mature trees near the southern property boundary unless necessary for building development and site improvements so that these existing mature trees will act as a natural buffer to existing residential uses on Westmere Terrace.

- The berm along the western border of Site 1, which contains existing trees, will be planted with additional 12-15 foot tall double row of trees to further mitigate to the maximum extent practicable visual and noise impacts, which is in compliance with and encouraged by [§280-18.1.G.3 of the Town of Guilderland Town Code](#).
- All construction work will comply with the Town’s Noise Ordinance.
- Construction hours for building construction and site work on the site near Westmere Terrace shall be between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday and 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Saturday with no construction activities on Sundays or holidays (New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas).
- The parking lot lighting will not exceed 16 feet in height from finished grade and shall have cutoff type luminaires to prevent light above the fixture. The Applicant will install light poles that are no higher than 12-feet in the southern most area closest to Westmere Terrace. The exterior lighting will conform to [Town of Guilderland Town Code §280-28\(C\) \(2\), \(3\) and \(4\)](#).
- In an attempt to mitigate traffic concerns of Westmere Terrace residents exiting to Western Avenue, the Applicant and Town offered to construct a one-way exit road at the northern end of Westmere Terrace to Rapp Road, a Town Road. The residents of Westmere Terrace rejected this alternative and this mitigative measure will not be implemented. A Westmere Terrace resident had discussed this same issue of exiting Westmere Terrace to Western Avenue with the NYS Department of Transportation in 1994. In a letter dated [October 7, 1994](#), the NYSDOT recommended a similar mitigation option of a one-way exit road from Westmere Terrace to Rapp Road. The residents of Westmere Terrace rejected this option in 1994. This sentiment was also recently expressed by the residents of Westmere Terrace in an email dated September 9, 2020.

B. Traffic Improvements.

1. The November 14, 2018, Maser Consulting Traffic Study performed in connection with the Rapp Road Residential project found that this project would not result in significant traffic volumes traveling north and south on Rapp Road. The Traffic Study concluded: the project “will not significantly affect area roadways. Similar Levels of Service and delays will be experienced under Future No-Build and Future Build Conditions.”
2. Regarding the Rapp Road Residential Apartment project, Part 3 of the Full Environmental Assessment Form stated: “Based on the information in Parts 1 and 2 and the entire record before the Planning Board, including expert environmental reports, the proposed action consisting of the development of 222 apartments... will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment.”
3. The Planning Board’s SEQRA Findings Statement which analyzed the Rapp Road Apartment Project, and the Costco development and potential future development on

Site 3, evaluated the cumulative potential traffic impacts and multiple traffic alternatives to Rapp Road in an effort to decrease existing and future traffic volumes on upper Rapp Road. The Findings Statement states: “several alternatives were determined by the Planning Board to be feasible, reasonable alternatives that address the existing commuter and development related traffic concerns by limiting traffic between the Town of Guilderland and the City of Albany. Of the ... five alternatives, **Alternative 9 is the only one located entirely within the Town of Guilderland and will be implemented in the absence of an agreement with the City of Albany to implement one of the other Alternatives partially located within the City.**”

4. On balance, Alternative 9 will mitigate traffic impacts from the projects in the Rapp Road Historic District to the maximum extent practicable and have the added benefit of reducing existing commuter traffic in the Rapp Road corridor. The reduced traffic in the vicinity of the Karner Blue Butterfly migration corridor would also be an environmental benefit.
5. The Planning Board determines, notwithstanding the November 14, 2018 Traffic Study’s conclusion that there will be no adverse traffic impacts resulting from development of the Rapp Road Residential Project on traffic volumes travelling north-south through the Rapp Road Historic District or on Levels of Service at nearby intersections, as part of the Rapp Road Residential Project the applicant shall construct and implement traffic Alternative 9, which will mitigate traffic impacts on upper Rapp Road to the maximum extent practicable when considering the potential cumulative traffic impacts from development on Sites 1, 2 and 3.
6. Rapp Road Traffic Mitigation – As a result of the analysis of the numerous potential traffic alternatives, as described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, several alternatives were determined by the Planning Board to be feasible, reasonable alternatives that address the existing commuter traffic concerns and mitigate traffic from the projects to the maximum extent practicable by limiting traffic between the Town of Guilderland and the City of Albany.

The site plans show that the Planning Board has selected [Alternative 9](#) as the preferred traffic mitigation option. Alternative 9 discourages traffic from using the southern section of Rapp Road as a means to travel through the middle and northern sections of Rapp Road and Rapp Road Historic District, and was analyzed as part of the [Rapp Road Residential/Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Environmental Impact Statement](#). A connection between Rapp Road and Crossgates Mall Road would insure that City residents on Pine Lane and Wilan Lane would have access to Washington Avenue Extension east-bound by way of the Crossgates Mall Road. Rapp Road is proposed to be terminated near the intersection of Rapp Road/Gipp Road, on the Town of Guilderland side of the municipal boundary with the City of Albany. All traffic would be effectively discouraged from travelling through the Rapp Road Historic District by the inconvenient route required, and the availability of more efficient travel routes. Existing

traffic that utilizes Rapp Road to travel to Washington Avenue Extension would also be discouraged from taking the Rapp Road route.

Emergency vehicle access will still be allowed to travel from the north and south of the Rapp Road corridor by using the Crossgates Mall Road and proposed connector road from the mall road to Rapp Road.

On balance, Alternative 9 will mitigate traffic impacts from the projects in the Rapp Road Historic District to the maximum extent practicable and have the added benefit of reducing existing commuter traffic in the Rapp Road corridor. The Final Environmental Impact Statement provided a traffic diversion summary for Alternative 9 as follows:

“The Alternate 9 re-routing of a portion of Rapp Road south of Gipp Road would encourage “existing” traffic that currently uses Rapp Road between Western Avenue and Washington Avenue Extension to use other travel routes such as NYS Route 155 (depending on their origin and destination) or the Crossgates Mall Ring Road and existing I-87/I-90 ramp system. In addition, the Alternate 9 layout would also reduce traffic along Rapp Road through the historical district from the proposed residential and proposed Costco. This alternative could potentially divert 30 - 65 existing vehicles through the historic district during the Weekday Peak AM, Weekday Peak PM and Saturday Peak Hours and reduce the number of vehicles from the proposed residential and proposed Costco development by 13 – 28 vehicles.”

The Town Designated Engineer (GPI) reviewed the traffic diversion summary and in a letter dated [October 7, 2020](#) stated “We feel the applicants Diversion Summary presents a reasonable and conservative estimate of the traffic diversions that could occur with the implementation of the modified Alternative No. 9.”

Alternative 9 is located entirely within the jurisdiction of the Town of Guilderland and can be implemented without any approvals and/or permits from the City of Albany.

7. Removal of Slip Ramps – As provided in the FEIS and SEQRA Findings Statement, in the event that Costco is approved, the existing north bound and south bound slip ramps at the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road will be removed. The existing slip ramps allow vehicles to travel through this intersection at a high rate of speed, which is unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists. With the removal of the slip ramps, which will be completed as part of the construction of Costco, all vehicles will now have to utilize the signalized intersection, at a slower rate of speed, which will increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
8. As provided in the FEIS and SEQRA Findings Statement, in the event that Costco is approved. The street trees will be planted within the existing medians on 3 of the 4 legs of the Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road intersection. Field studies have confirmed that

when trees are present along streets, there is a change in motorists' behavior with a traffic calming effect. Streets having a [landscaped center strip or median](#) planting may alter drivers' perception of lane width and therefore reduce driving speeds by way of a psychological effect." This psychological effect, also known as an "edge effect," cues motorists to drive more slowly; slower vehicle speeds are associated with fewer crashes and less severe injuries.

9. Complete Streets – As provided in the FEIS and SEQRA Findings Statement, in the event that Costco is approved, a Complete Streets design will be incorporated on Crossgates Mall Road, from the hotel driveway to the vicinity of the Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road intersection, and will be reconfigured from four lanes to two lanes with a center turn lane will be added.

[Complete Streets](#) are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient. Complete Streets approaches vary based on community context. They may address a wide range of elements, such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus lanes, public transportation stops, crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, modified vehicle travel lanes, streetscape, and landscape treatments. Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle related crashes and pedestrian risk.

10. Roundabout – As provided in the FEIS and SEQRA Findings Statement, in the event that Costco is approved, a [roundabout](#) will be constructed at the intersection of Crossgates Mall Road/Fuller Road Alternate (I-87/I-90 Ramps). A roundabout is a circular intersection where drivers travel counterclockwise around a center island. The circular shape is designed to control the direction of traffic and reduce speeds to 15 to 20 mph. There are no traffic signals or stop signs in a roundabout. Drivers yield at entry to traffic in the roundabout, then enter the intersection and exit at their desired location. Studies by the Federal Highway Administration have found that roundabouts can increase traffic capacity by 30 percent to 50 percent compared to traditional intersections.

The roundabout will be designed to accommodate vehicles of all sizes, including emergency vehicles, buses, and truck and trailer combinations. The circular shape is designed to control the direction of traffic and reduce speeds to 15 to 20 mph, thus creating a traffic calming effect by the vehicle speed reduction. It also reduces the likelihood of t-bone or head-on collisions. A main feature of the roundabout is the raised central island. The central island of the roundabout will include a truck apron, a raised section of concrete that acts as an extra lane for large vehicles so the back wheels of an oversize vehicle can ride up on the truck apron to easily complete the turn. The raised portion of concrete also discourages use by smaller vehicles. In addition to the

central island, the roundabout will feature triangular splitter islands designed to slow and direct traffic.

The roundabout has been part of the [Capital District Transit Authority \(CDTA\) Bus Rapid Transit \(purple line\)](#) for several years and has been previously examined by CDTA from a SEQRA perspective. The roundabout will be constructed and operational prior to the opening of Costco to customers. The Costco site was examined as one of the three sites as part of the Environmental Impact Statement.

11. Pedestrian Crossings – Crosswalks and flashing pedestrian signs will be installed at numerous intersections including Crossgates Mall Road and intersection with the Macy's parking lot driveway, multi-use trail crossing at Rapp Road and connector road to the Crossgates Mall Road, and the intersection of Rapp Road/Crossgates Mall Road.

Conclusion

During the past 2 years the Planning Board has dedicated one year to conduct an extensive and thorough environmental review, as shown by the SEQR Positive Declaration and subsequent preparation of the Rapp Road Residential/Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Projects Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Findings Statement for the EIS was completed and published on August 28, 2020. The record shows the Planning Board has taken a hard look at the environmental impacts, mitigated those impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and have incorporated site plan designs based on the EIS Findings Statements and comments received from the public and interested and involved agencies. The Applicant incorporated site plan designs that comply with recommendations from the Town Comprehensive Plan, Westmere Corridor Study and TOD District zoning regulations.