ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM
PARTS 2 & 3
Melville Crossing 75 Maxess Road

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject 16.6-acre property is located at 75 Maxess Road in the Melville Town Center Overlay District (MTCOD). The property is currently developed with a 170,000 s.f. office/industrial building and the associated parking area and landscaping. The proposed action involves the demolition of the existing building and parking area, and redevelopment of the site into a mixed-use community consisting of 400 residential units, a 6,300 s.f. clubhouse, 37,300 s.f. of retail/food/service use, 83,600 sq. ft. of overall commercial space, civic spaces, amenities and the associated parking.

The MTCOD allows for mixed-use development subject to the availability of public sewer. The subject property is already connected to the Southwest Sewer District. The proposed development and the larger MTCOD will provide a mix of retail, office, commercial service, residential uses and community public space. This development's primary frontage is along Maxess Drive, with secondary frontage along Corporate Center Drive.

The proposed mixed-use development, and future development in the MTCOD, is intended to serve the existing Melville community. Existing office and industrial buildings already bring a significant number of people to the area, and by establishing a variety of land uses, the plan aims to reduce trip generation or vary the lengths of those trips so that the community is able to function better. While some new residents will be drawn to Melville by this new construction and future development, they will help contribute to the success of the plan for the area by supporting the new commercial uses outside of normal business hours when local streets are quiet.

The mixed-use proposal will result in the construction of eleven (11) new buildings and the associated parking, as described below:

- **Residential/Mixed-Use Buildings:**
    - Two four-story residential/commercial buildings (77,840 GFA per building; 19,460 s.f. footprint each), each containing 65 apartments, including live/work units.
    - One four-story mixed-use building (77,840 GFA; 19,460 s.f. footprint), containing 60 apartments, including live/work units, and ground floor commercial space.
    - Three four-story residential buildings (56,000 GFA per building; 14,000 s.f. footprint each), each containing 27 condominiums.
    - One four-story residential building (61,880 GFA; 15,470 s.f. footprint), containing 29 condominiums.
    - Four three-story mixed-use buildings (32,430 GFA per building; 10,780 s.f. footprint each), each containing 25 apartments and ground floor commercial space.
- **Retail and Amenities:**

- Two one-story retail buildings, 1,500 s.f. each.
- Two retail kiosks, 150 s.f. each
- One one-story retail building, 5,000 s.f.
- One one-story clubhouse and pool, 6,300 s.f.

- **Parking:**
  - Five one-story garages:
    - One 2,592 s.f. garage with 9 spaces
    - Two 2,880 s.f. garages with 10 spaces each
    - One 3,744 s.f. garage with 13 spaces
    - One 4,032 s.f. garage with 14 spaces
  - 484 on-site surface parking spaces
  - 153 in-building parking spaces
  - 16 on-site surface handicapped accessible parking spaces
  - 72 on-street parking spaces (including two handicapped parking spaces)

The MTCOD will allow for mixed-use buildings/sites that consist of up to seventy-five (75) percent residential use and at least twenty-five (25) percent, but no more than forty (40) percent professional office use or commercial use. The proposed mixed-use portion of the site (excluding proposed condominiums) contains approximately 74.2 percent residential use and 25.8 percent ground floor commercial use.

The first floor of buildings fronting on Maxess Road and Corporate Center Drive is proposed for retail, commercial or office use. The proposal includes four mixed-use buildings and two retail buildings along Maxess Road and one mixed use building, one retail building and the side of one residential building along Corporate Center Drive. Suitable commercial uses in the MTCOD include retail, personal service shops, food shops, bistros, bars, restaurants and day care. Additional permitted uses include breweries, brewpubs, wineries and distilleries where the products are manufactured, warehoused, and/or served on premises, and commercial athletic, recreation, and training facilities. Specific uses for commercial spaces are not proposed at this time. Multiple buildings may be permitted on a single lot. Vape/cannabis stores, drive-through windows, self-storage facilities, manufacturing and warehousing facilities are expressly prohibited.

The live-work units are only proposed for interior sections of the property and are not proposed along the public road frontages. The Town of Huntington has not previously reviewed proposals for buildings constructed as live-work units and does not have specific Zoning Code requirements for this building type. Further details and analysis will be developed with the preparation of building floor plans and elevations at the site plan review phase of the application.

The Town Board will determine whether these are appropriate as designed in their consideration of application approvals.

The height, area and bulk requirements for buildings in the MTCOD allow for a maximum building height of fifty (50) feet and four (4) stories of occupied space. According to the Expanded Environmental Assessment (EEA), the proposed buildings have a maximum building height of 50 feet and four stories. The minimum allowable building height is twenty-five (25) feet and two (2) stories. The current proposal includes three one-story retail buildings and two retail kiosks. The proposal may require relief or revision during site plan review to comply with height requirements.

The maximum permitted building lot coverage is ninety (90) percent. According to the EEA, the proposed building lot coverage is approximately 26.21 percent. The floor area ratio (FAR) in the MTCOD is not to exceed 3.6. The FAR of the proposal is .65.

A minimum of fifteen (15) percent of the site must be comprised of usable civic, recreational, and/or open space that is available to the general public, including but not limited to trails, paths, parks, sidewalks, public art or gathering spaces. Such spaces may be provided within required yard setbacks. According to the EEA and Preliminary Site Plan, the proposed development provides 17 percent of civic/open space, including a .6-mile walking trail loop, retail plaza and promenade, totaling approximately three acres.

Required parking may be provided underground or in parking structures. All structured parking garages shall be located, designed, and/or screened in order to improve their appearance and minimize their visibility from neighboring streets. As described above parking is provided in garages, which are screened from rights-of-way, surface on-site parking spaces, in-building spaces and on-street spaces. Parking provided complies with Town Code requirements. Parking is required at a rate of one (1) space per studio or one (1) bedroom unit and .5 spaces for each additional bedroom. Based on this requirement, the residential portion of the proposed development, consisting of 29 studios, 279 one-bedroom apartments and 92 two-bedroom apartments requires a total of 446 spaces. Residential uses typically generate parking demand at different times than commercial uses, which does present benefits when both uses are able to share the same parking areas.

Properties on Maxess Road and Corporate Center Drive must contain frontage buildings with buildings set back no more than thirty (30) feet from the front property line to help establish a walkable commercial neighborhood. The site plan complies with this requirement. The Town Board wants to see commercial development in this Overlay District occur along the road frontages before it will consider development deeper into lots, and the rear areas should be developed as complementary buildings oriented towards the “Main Street” development.

The minimum residential unit sizes in the MTCOD shall be 600 square feet for a studio, 700 square feet for a one (1) bedroom unit, and 800 square feet for a two (2) bedroom unit. The proposed unit sizes comply with these requirements, providing 631 square feet for studios, 775 square feet for one-bedroom units, and 1,105 square feet for two-bedroom units. No commercial

tenant space within the MTCOD shall exceed 20,000 square feet. The proposed development complies with this requirement, as no individual commercial tenant will exceed the maximum permitted square footage.

As the subject proposal includes 400 residential units, the Town Board has paused the acceptance of new applications for mixed-use development within the MTCOD to assess the cumulative impacts of such developments on traffic, emergency services, and educational services. This review is intended to ensure that development pursuant to this amendment does not exceed the capacity of these services. The Town Board will also cap the total number of new residential units approved cumulatively in the MTCOD to one-thousand-five hundred (1,500).

Applicants proposing new mixed-use development within the MTCOD are required to pay a one-time impact fee of $1,500 per residential unit for each unit exceeding 25, and $2.50 per square foot of commercial space for any area exceeding 25,000 square feet. According to the EEA and Preliminary Site Plan, the subject development will include 400 residential units, resulting in an impact fee of $562,500 (375 units × $1,500), and 83,600 square feet of commercial space, resulting in an impact fee of $146,500 (58,600 square feet × $2.50). The total impact fee is therefore $709,000.

Seventy-five (75) percent of the total fee, or $531,750, will be allocated to a Town fund supporting the creation and operation of Town Center parks within the overlay district, while the remaining twenty-five (25) percent, or $177,250, will be allocated to the Fire/Emergency district.

Alternatively, applicants may satisfy the Parkland portion of the fee by dedicating property to the Town that furthers the objective of creating Town Center Parks. The Town Board has full discretion to determine whether a property dedication meets the fee requirement.

For new mixed-use developments in the MTCOD the Town Board shall find in granting approval that the proposal is of high quality and visually appealing from adjacent streets and surrounding areas, with an emphasis on building placement and orientation that complements adjacent properties; has an appropriate mix of uses as defined in the respective permitted uses schedule; has open spaces, parking areas, pedestrian walks, signs, lighting, landscaping and utilities that are well related to the site and arranged to achieve a safe, efficient and contextually sensitive development; when appropriate, contributes to a central public gathering space that may be used for community events; shows high inter-connectivity between proposed uses and adjacent areas; and promotes walkability, pedestrian scale lighting and ground floor activity among business and residential uses. Each of these criteria are fully evaluated in the Consistency with Community Character section of this Part 3.

The MTCOD is part of the area generally referred to as the Melville Employment Center (MEC) in the Town of Huntington Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan. As described in the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan, *"The Melville Employment Center is a suburban, automobile-oriented commercial district that is poorly designed for pedestrians. While most streets do have sidewalks, the distance between buildings, wide roads with heavy traffic volumes, and a general lack of amenities create an environment where very few people walk. There are few community services in the district, which forces employees to use their automobiles during the course of the workday. This extra driving activity, in turn, generates a third peak-congestion period around*

the lunch hour. These conditions contribute to high levels of traffic congestion and other quality of life issues."

The Comprehensive Plan recommends that, *"The Town should also promote the development of small, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use "town centers" at strategic locations in the Melville Employment Center. Such centers would contain retail and restaurant offerings as well as recreation, business services, and entertainment opportunities. Workforce residential units could also be considered in these locations."* The Comprehensive Plan further states, *"Future development in the Melville Employment Center should seek to retrofit the existing pattern in order to promote pedestrian accessibility and limit the need for employees to drive during the workday. There are several ways to achieve this goal, including encouraging a mix of land uses, establishing stronger design guidelines for buildings and walking paths…"*

The proposed mixed-use development features a network of walkways, sidewalks and a trail that create a pedestrian-friendly environment throughout the site and along the main thoroughfares. Ground floor commercial uses, together with the retail plaza and promenades, provide a vibrant and engaging experience for residents and visitors, consistent the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

SEQRA CLASSIFICATION: ***Type I.*** Although the Type I list in 6 NYCRR Section 617.4 describes project as solely residential or commercial, it does appear proper to classify this as a Type I action due to the combination of subsections (5)(iv), (6)i), (6)(vi), and (10).

SEQRA RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the proposed development be issued a *Negative Declaration* pursuant to SEQRA, as the action has been determined not to result in any significant potential impacts due to the limitations established in Town Code. The potential site impacts associated with the proposed action have been considered. The proposed mixed-use development is not expected to cause significant impacts to surface water, groundwater, plants and animals, open space and recreation, Critical Environmental Areas, transportation or community character and is consistent with community plans. The analysis of the relevant SEQRA criteria is provided as follows:

> (i) a substantial adverse change in existing air quality, ground or surface water quality or quantity, traffic or noise levels; a substantial increase in solid waste production; a substantial increase in potential for erosion, flooding, leaching or drainage problems;

These criteria are reflective of the EEA and EAF Part 2, and where necessary, more information is provided in this Part 3. The proposed development is not expected to result in any significant impacts on air quality, erosion, or drainage, as the site is already developed and many of these conditions do not exist now. Minor changes in traffic and noise levels are expected and are discussed in this document.

> (ii) the removal or destruction of large quantities of vegetation or fauna; substantial interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species; impacts on a significant habitat area; substantial adverse

impacts on a threatened or endangered species of animal or plant, or the habitat of such a species; or other significant adverse impacts to natural resources;

The subject property and surrounding area have been previously disturbed and do not contain areas of substantial native vegetation or undisturbed habitat. No threatened or endangered species, or their habitats, have been identified on or adjacent to the site.

(iii) the impairment of the environmental characteristics of a critical environmental area as designated pursuant to section 617.14(g) of this Part;

See Impact on Critical Environmental Areas below. The subject property is not located within a Critical Environmental Area. All sanitary wastewater will be conveyed to the Suffolk County Southwest Sewer District. The groundwater divide lies north of the Long Island Expressway, so any water recharge in this neighborhood will not travel northward to the West Hills-Melville Special Groundwater Protection Area. Both of these are the same as existing site conditions.

(iv) the creation of a material conflict with a community's current plans or goals as officially approved or adopted;

The most recent Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Town of Huntington was the Horizons 2020: Comprehensive Plan Update. This Plan is quoted throughout this document, but especially relevant are the recommendations for the Melville Employment Center (MEC) in Chapter 10, including "*mixed-use hamlet center(s) to meet local needs for retail and services and reduce traffic (e.g., in the vicinity of the Maxess Road/Ruland Road intersection)*" and "*new hamlet center (mixed-use) zone (possibly modeled after new zoning district recommended for existing hamlet centers)*". Accordingly, the proposed development is consistent with the Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan.

(v) the impairment of the character or quality of important historical, archeological, architectural, or aesthetic resources or of existing community or neighborhood character;

There are no known historical, archaeological, or aesthetic resources in this area of Melville. The subject property is improved with an existing approximately 170,000 square foot office/industrial building that is not of architectural significance. The building is not listed on, or eligible for listing on, the State or National Registers of Historic Places. The property has been previously disturbed and is located outside of any archaeological sensitivity areas identified in the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS). Accordingly, no significant adverse impacts to historic or archaeological resources are anticipated.

(vi) a major change in the use of either the quantity or type of energy;

While the proposed development will result in some energy use, uses in the existing industrial zone such as manufacturing have the potential to use far more energy than commercial or residential uses.

(vii) the creation of a hazard to human health;

No potential hazards to human health have been identified. The existing site, currently mostly covered by the building and parking lot, will be redeveloped with new construction, and none of the new allowable uses are known to be hazardous.

(viii) a substantial change in the use, or intensity of use, of land including agricultural, open space or recreational resources, or in its capacity to support existing uses;

The subject property is fully developed with a 170,000 square foot office/industrial building and the associated parking area. It does not contain any agricultural, open space or recreation resources. Potential impacts associated with the change in intensity of use from the proposed mixed-use development are evaluated throughout this Part 3.

(ix) the encouraging or attracting of a large number of people to a place or places for more than a few days, compared to the number of people who would come to such place absent the action;

The proposed mixed-use development, and future development in the MTCOD is intended to serve the existing Melville community. Existing office and industrial buildings already bring a significant number of people to the area, and by establishing a variety of land uses, the plan aims to reduce trip generation or vary the times of those trips so that the community is able to function better. While some new residents will be drawn to Melville by this new construction and future development, they will help contribute to the success of the plan for the area by supporting the new commercial uses outside of normal business hours.

(x) the creation of a material demand for other actions that would result in one of the above consequences;

The purpose of this Part 3 is to identify whether any additional actions that may be triggered by the proposed project could result in significant environmental impacts. None have been identified. The changes to allowable uses in the MTCOD do not change the physical environment, and any potential impacts have been determined to be minor. This is a neighborhood of already intense human activity, particularly during peak travel periods, due to the existing zoning and land use.

(xi) changes in two or more elements of the environment, no one of which has a significant impact on the environment, but when considered together result in a substantial adverse impact on the environment; or

The only changed environmental issues that relate directly to each other are the ones behind the intent of the overlay district, which was to change neighborhood character by bringing more activity to Melville outside of typical work hours, resulting in some noise and light impacts, and changes to traffic patterns.

(xii) two or more related actions undertaken, funded or approved by an agency, none of which has or would have a significant impact on the environment, but

when considered cumulatively would meet one or more of the criteria in this subdivision.

The prior Part 3, prepared for the changes to the Zoning Code that allowed mixed-use developments in the MTCOD, considered the cumulative impacts of the legislation and the potential new development reasonably expected to result from those amendments. While no significant impacts were identified, it was acknowledged that some minor impacts could result from new development proposals. The Code required that all such proposals undergo their own SEQRA review. All potential impacts of the subject proposal are fully evaluated in this Part 3 and have been determined to be minor.

This report has been prepared to serve the Town Board's review of the specific action's environmental consequences. This review is based on an EAF Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment, and the EEA prepared by VHB Engineering.

IMPACT ON SURFACE WATER

3. The proposed action may affect one or more wetlands or other surface water bodies. (e.g. streams, rivers, ponds or lakes).

*No. The proposed action will affect one or more wetlands or other surface water bodies.

The proposed action will not affect the water quality of downstream water bodies. There are no surface water bodies that receive runoff from this property. Town Code requires that all mixed-use projects within the MTCOD are connected to public sewers in accordance with Suffolk County Department of Health Services policy. The subject proposal will connect to the Southwest Sewer District. Wastewater from the development will be conveyed to the Bergen Point Wastewater Treatment Plant, where it will be treated in accordance with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) requirements and released into the Atlantic Ocean. Proper treatment of wastewater from new mixed-use development in the MTCOD is expected to mitigate potential impacts to surface water. The project represents a miniscule portion of overall public sewer flow.

IMPACT ON GROUNDWATER:

4. The proposed action may result in new or additional use of groundwater, or may have the potential to introduce contaminants to groundwater or an aquifer.

*Yes. The proposed development will result in the additional use of groundwater. The MTCOD is served by the South Huntington Water District (SHWD). Future development in the area is not expected to exceed the pumping capacity of the water district. The project already has a Letter of Water Availability.

Town Code requires that all mixed-use projects within the MTCOD are connected to public sewers. All such projects will connect to the Southwest Sewer District. Wastewater from new mixed-use developments will be conveyed to the Bergen Point Wastewater Treatment Plant, where it will be treated and discharged into the Atlantic Ocean. As a result, the proposed development will not introduce any sanitary waste into groundwater, removing a source of nitrogen and other potential pollutants. Public sewer systems are the most effective means of quality wastewater treatment.

The proposed development is not expected to deplete groundwater resources. According to Dr. Chris Gobler, of the Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, *"And again, I would ask all of you, you know, the USGS is a Federal agency that's very well-funded. They just completed an incredible model and study of all of Long Island's groundwater that concluded that there's great excess to that water going out. Suffolk County Water Authority could also tell you, they're administering water to us. There's great excess in Suffolk County. We're not going to run out of – we're not going to deplete our aquifer, even at full build out."*

Dr. Gobler further states, *"So in Suffolk County we have about 1,000 people per square mile. In Nassau County there's more than 4,000 people per square mile. So there's just tremendously more water use in Nassau County. Despite that fact, there's still plenty of water that's discharging into surface waters, right. And then in here the excess is enormous, right. And so -- and just for further perspective, in New York City, Brooklyn and Queens the population is about 24 to 30,000 people per square mile, depending on the County you pick, right. So we're like one-twentieth or one-thirtieth of what's happening in New York City where they actually depleted their water. And that's why we're in no danger of depleting our aquifer here in Suffolk County. Again, refer to the experts. USGS report, you know, Suffolk County Water Authority. These are the people who are – you know, this is their job and they'll tell you the same exact thing."* [Minutes of Suffolk County Legislature Meeting of July 25, 2023]

Consistent with the above assessment, regional modeling and long-term data from the USGS further support the conclusion that groundwater resources remain abundant. The USGS Simulation of Groundwater Flow in the Long Island, New York Regional Aquifer System for Pumping and Recharge Conditions From 1900 to 2019 states, *"The aquifer system underlying Long Island is nearly 2,000 ft deep in some areas; recharge rates to the aquifer generally are high, and aquifers are extensive and transmissive, indicating that there generally are abundant water resources underlying the island. Much of western and central Long Island is densely populated, and large-scale groundwater withdrawals have occurred in the aquifer since the early 20th century, resulting in a change in freshwater volume in the aquifer system only by about 5 percent since the onset of large-scale pumping in 1900."* The USGS further states, *"The decadal change in the freshwater volume was largest during the early and mid-20th century, corresponding to the largest historical pumping, but that volume change did not exceed 1 percent."*

Further reinforcing these findings, local water supply authorities have reached the same conclusion regarding groundwater sustainability. With regard to groundwater depletion, Tyrand Fuller, the Director and Lead Hydrologist for the Suffolk County Water Authority, stated: *"I reviewed the materials on the groundwater concern. These questions have been previously addressed, most recently in the 2016 LICAP State of the Aquifer Report. The claim that Long Island is going to run out of groundwater is not supported. The report explains that Nassau and Suffolk together have more than 65 trillion gallons of groundwater in storage within the aquifer system, with roughly 6.5 trillion gallons considered available for extraction. It also states that precipitation adds about 300 billion gallons of recharge annually, while total annual pumpage is only about 150 to 200 billion gallons. In other words, more water is going into the aquifer system each year than is being withdrawn.*
allons of recharge annually, while total annual pumpage is only about 150 to 200 billion gallons. In other words, more water is going into the aquifer system each year than is being withdrawn.

The same conclusion is reflected by the USGS, during discussions on the sustainability project being done in conjunction with the NYSDEC. It was stated by that after 113 years of pumping, groundwater storage depletion was about 500 billion gallons, or roughly a 7-foot decline in storage, and not a lot of change in volume in total aquifer. It was also explicitly stated that groundwater depletion is not a big driver in sustainability.

So the central point is straightforward: the available technical information does not indicate that Long Island groundwater is going to run out. The data shows a very large aquifer system with annual recharge exceeding withdrawals, and long-term depletion has not been identified as the main concern." Based on the foregoing analysis and supporting studies, the proposed action is not expected to result in the depletion of groundwater resources in the project area.

According to the Town of Huntington Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan, *"The Melville Employment Center displays many of the characteristics of older suburban office centers, including large, low buildings set behind expansive parking lots. The effect of this development pattern is that most of the available land area has been consumed by buildings and parking lots, leaving little room for landscaping and open space. In addition to negative visual impacts, the impervious parking lot surfaces contribute to stormwater management problems."* Runoff from impervious surfaces has the potential to carry pollutants that could adversely affect surface water or groundwater quality.

The Comprehensive Plan describes the need for *"Area-wide stormwater management, including sustainable practices such as vegetated areas and swales to promote infiltration, and pervious pavement."*. The current proposal adds impervious surface areas compared with existing site conditions. Accordingly, during site plan review, the applicant will be required to incorporate into the project design additional landscape features and green infrastructure practices, including environmentally sound irrigation and fertilization practices to account for the reduction in pervious areas.

To further reduce the potential impact of new development on groundwater quality, the project shall incorporate design measures that minimize pollutant loading and promote on-site recharge. Such measures may include minimizing proposed lawn area, utilizing native drought-tolerant plant species, and implementing green infrastructure practices such as rain gardens, green roofs and permeable pavers/pavement. These revisions are necessary to mitigate potential impacts to groundwater resources and to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The Town Conservation Board states, *"Many areas are ill-equipped to handle repeated, training rainfall events which appear to be dominating an increasing fraction of precipitation on Long Island and elsewhere. Therefore, systems that more effectively capture and store peak stormwater flows from structures such as rooftops may be effective in capturing runoff during these durations, reducing direct runoff and further promoting recharge."*

Comments have been made at the public hearings raising concerns about the loss in groundwater recharge from the use of public sewers in Melville in place of septic systems. They are proposing that the treated wastewater that is discharged into the ocean instead be discharged into the ground. The argument is that groundwater quantity is more important than groundwater quality. However, this is not supported by existing water cycle planning studies. The most important water planning document is the Long Island Comprehensive Wastewater Treatment Management Plan, colloquially

known as the "208 Study" after the section of the authorizing federal legislation. Concern #27 of this study stated that *"The quality of water, rather than the quantity of water, is the relevant problem for the supplying of potable water from Nassau and Suffolk's aquifers* (Vol. 1, pg. 203). The study based its water recommendations on a projected maximum Nassau and Suffolk County population of **4 million residents** at full build-out under existing zoning (Population Estimates and Projections 1975-1995, pg. 8). The Town of Huntington was projected to reach a population of 244,759 by 1995 (pg. 5). As of the 2020 Census, Huntington's population is 40,000 lower and Long Island remains **more than one million residents under its zoned capacity**.

The 208 Study examined the potential water withdrawal from Long Island's aquifers and weighed the pros and cons of the various wastewater treatment options. Due to water quality concerns, the study found that public sewering would always be the preferred alternative when the development density exceeded five units per acre (Long Island Comprehensive Wastewater Treatment Management Plan Vol. 1, pg. 143). The Plan had a specific recommendation to sewer the portion of Melville south of the Long Island Expressway where existing development exceeded a density of three dwelling units per acre, or new development would exceed two units per acre, a density at which the Suffolk County Department of Health Services would allow septic systems to be used (pg. 182). These sewering recommendations were based on a conclusion that *"among the water quality problems least reversible, and therefore of greatest concern, are high organic chemical contaminant levels in groundwater, nitrate contamination of groundwater, changes in stream and wetland water levels, and changes in bay salinity patterns*" (pg. 141-142). The fact that Melville would connect to the Southwest Sewer District, with the ocean outfall of the Bergen Point Sewage Treatment Plant, was likely a strong factor in promoting sewer use.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the impact of the subject development, as well as the larger MTCOD, on saltwater intrusion. According to the USGS, *"The negligible change in freshwater volume suggests that saltwater intrusion as of 2019 was limited at an island-wide scale but continues to occur in local areas of Queens and Nassau Counties, adversely affecting current water supplies and limiting future water supplies for affected communities"* (Simulation of Groundwater Flow in the Long Island, New York Regional Aquifer System for Pumping and Recharge Conditions From 1900 to 2019, pg. 2). Additionally, the Town Conservation Board states, *"The NYSDEC Phase 1 Report for the Long Island Groundwater Sustainability project suggests to the Board that while salt water intrusion has long been observed due to sustained localized groundwater withdrawals well in excess of a safe yield in Queens, and some streamflow losses have been observed during prolonged drought conditions in western portions of Long Island, groundwater withdrawals in Suffolk County are an exceedingly small fraction of regional recharge. In this part of the county deep recharge area, and a water table elevation in excess of 100 feet, direct groundwater flow impacts to southern streams would not be anticipated."*

The preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, connection of the proposed development to public sewers, increase of permeable surface area, planting of vegetation in the civic, recreational and/or open spaces, and installation of green infrastructure will help minimize potential impacts to groundwater.

IMPACT ON PLANTS AND ANIMALS:

7. The proposed action may result in a loss of flora or fauna.

*Yes. The subject property is fully developed with a 170,000 square foot office/industrial building and the associated parking. The proposal would likely result in the removal of all existing vegetation, except for vegetation along the eastern property line. The quality of existing vegetation, and any potential removal of invasive species and replacement with native species, will be evaluated during site plan review. While many trees on the property are native to the region, much of the remaining vegetation is non-native and potentially invasive. Removal of invasive vegetation will prevent its spread to surrounding properties. The proposed Landscape Plan includes primarily native species, which provide greater ecological benefits than existing vegetation. Furthermore, during site plan review additional landscape features beyond those currently shown on the plan will be required. The proposal must comply with landscaping requirements included in the Town Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations.

All of the MTCOD is located within the Central Long Island Asian Longhorned Beetle Quarantine Area. Because the beetle has been identified in the area, future development will require planting of native trees that are unlikely to serve as a host to the beetle. Recommended species include oaks (*Quercus* spp.), honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.), and magnolia (*Magnolia* spp.). Most species of maple trees (*Acer* spp.) should not be planted in this area.

During site plan review, the applicant will be encouraged to minimize lawn areas, plant native drought-tolerant plants, and incorporate green infrastructure measures, such as rain gardens, bioswales and green roofs. These actions will enhance biodiversity on the property.

According to the NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper, portions of the MTCOD are located within three miles of a known summer occurrence of the Northern long-eared bat, which is listed as endangered at both the federal and state levels. The subject property is not located within the area, and therefore is not subject to the associated clearing restrictions. All properties in the MTCOD that fall within three miles of a known summer occurrence of the bat must comply with all applicable NYSDEC requirements related to the Northern long-eared bat.

The removal of existing non-native and invasive vegetation, planting of native species, planting of tree species unlikely to host the Asian longhorned beetle, minimization of lawn areas, and installation of green infrastructure are expected to result in no significant impacts on plants and animals.

IMPACT OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION:

11. The proposed action may result in a loss of recreational opportunities or a reduction of an open space resource as designated in any adopted municipal open space plan.

*Yes. A majority of the Town designated Open Space Index (OSI) parcels within the MTCOD have already been developed. The subject parcel is part of OSI parcel #SW-24 on the OSI Map, which the OSI narrative identifies as a former sod farm at Pinelawn and Baylis Roads. No portion of the sod farm remains.

OSI parcel #SW-24 is classified in the index as a Priority 5 parcel, defined as *"property of value as open area because of its proximity to parks, schools or other locational reasons."* The OSI

indicates that the decision to preserve Priority 5 parcels should be made by government agencies during the land use planning process.

The subject property is fully developed and will not affect remaining open space in the area. Furthermore, because it is located in the MTCOD, a minimum of fifteen (15) percent of the site shall be comprised of useable civic, recreational, and/or open space that is available to the general public including but not limited to trails, paths, parks, sidewalks, public art or gathering spaces. The proposal provides 17 percent of civic/open space, including a .6-mile walking trail loop, retail plaza and promenade, totaling approximately three acres. These improvements will enhance open space in the area.

IMPACT ON CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS:

12. The proposed action may be located within or adjacent to a critical environmental area (CEA).

*No. The MTCOD is located near the West Hills Melville Special Groundwater Protection Area (SGPA) CEA, which was designated as a CEA with the purpose of protecting groundwater. According to the NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper, the subject property is located approximately 1,370 feet west of the CEA at its closest point.

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Long Island Depth to Groundwater Viewer, the estimated depth to groundwater at the subject property ranges from approximately 40 feet to 50 feet. The EEA further states that, *"Based on site specific data and soil boring taken at the subject property in July of 2021…the depth to groundwater is 45.2 feet below ground surface."*

The Melville industrial area predates the establishment of the SGPA, and the borders of the SGPA were drawn around it for this reason. The Long Island Special Groundwater Protection Plan notes on Page 3-32 that the agricultural uses that predated the industrial uses had negative impacts on groundwater quality. Some industrial uses also present groundwater concerns, which is why much of this area has been connected to the Southwest Sewer District.

Town Code requires that all mixed-use projects within the MTCOD be connected to public sewers. All potential projects will connect to the Southwest Sewer District. Wastewater from new mixed-use developments will be conveyed to the Bergen Point Wastewater Treatment Plant where it will be treated before being discharged into the Atlantic Ocean. As a result, the proposed development will not introduce any sanitary waste into groundwater.

The proposed development is not expected to deplete groundwater resources. As stated by Dr. Chris Gobler of the Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, *"And again, I would ask all of you, you know, the USGS is a Federal agency that's very well-funded. They just completed an incredible model and study of all of Long Island's groundwater that concluded that there's great excess to that water going out. Suffolk County Water Authority could also tell you, they're administering water to us. There's great excess in Suffolk County. We're not going to run out of – we're not going to deplete our aquifer, even at full build out."*

Dr. Gobler further states, *"So in Suffolk County we have about 1,000 people per square mile. In Nassau County there's more than 4,000 people per square mile. So there's just tremendously more water use in Nassau County. Despite that fact, there's still plenty of water that's discharging into surface waters, right. And then in here the excess is enormous, right. And so -- and just for further perspective, in New York City, Brooklyn and Queens the population is about 24 to 30,000 people per square mile, depending on the County you pick, right. So we're like one-twentieth or one-thirtieth of what's happening in New York City where they actually depleted their water. And that's why we're in no danger of depleting our aquifer here in Suffolk County. Again, refer to the experts. USGS report, you know, Suffolk County Water Authority. These are the people who are – you know, this is their job and they'll tell you the same exact thing."* [Minutes of Suffolk County Legislature Meeting of July 25, 2023]

Consistent with the above assessment, regional modeling and long-term data from the USGS further support the conclusion that groundwater resources remain abundant. The USGS Simulation of Groundwater Flow in the Long Island, New York Regional Aquifer System for Pumping and Recharge Conditions From 1900 to 2019 states, *"The aquifer system underlying Long Island is nearly 2,000 ft deep in some areas; recharge rates to the aquifer generally are high, and aquifers are extensive and transmissive, indicating that there generally are abundant water resources underlying the island. Much of western and central Long Island is densely populated, and large-scale groundwater withdrawals have occurred in the aquifer since the early 20th century, resulting in a change in freshwater volume in the aquifer system only by about 5 percent since the onset of large-scale pumping in 1900."* The USGS further states, *"The decadal change in the freshwater volume was largest during the early and mid-20th century, corresponding to the largest historical pumping, but that volume change did not exceed 1 percent."*

Further reinforcing these findings, local water supply authorities have reached the same conclusion regarding groundwater sustainability. With regard to groundwater depletion, Tyrand Fuller, the Director and Lead Hydrologist for the Suffolk County Water Authority, stated: *"I reviewed the materials on the groundwater concern. These questions have been previously addressed, most recently in the 2016 LICAP State of the Aquifer Report. The claim that Long Island is going to run out of groundwater is not supported. The report explains that Nassau and Suffolk together have more than 65 trillion gallons of groundwater in storage within the aquifer system, with roughly 6.5 trillion gallons considered available for extraction. It also states that precipitation adds about 300 billion gallons of recharge annually, while total annual pumpage is only about 150 to 200 billion gallons. In other words, more water is going into the aquifer system each year than is being withdrawn.*

The same conclusion is reflected by the USGS, during discussions on the sustainability project being done in conjunction with the NYSDEC. It was stated by that after 113 years of pumping, groundwater storage depletion was about 500 billion gallons, or roughly a 7-foot decline in storage, and not a lot of change in volume in total aquifer. It was also explicitly stated that groundwater depletion is not a big driver in sustainability.

So the central point is straightforward: the available technical information does not indicate that Long Island groundwater is going to run out. The data shows a very large aquifer system with annual recharge exceeding withdrawals, and long-term depletion has not been identified as the main concern." Based on the foregoing analysis and supporting studies, the proposed action is not expected to result in the depletion of groundwater resources in the project area.

According to the Town of Huntington Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan, *"The Melville Employment Center displays many of the characteristics of older suburban office centers, including large, low buildings set behind expansive parking lots. The effect of this development pattern is that most of the available land area has been consumed by buildings and parking lots, leaving little room for landscaping and open space. In addition to negative visual impacts, the impervious parking lot surfaces contribute to stormwater management problems."* Runoff from impervious surfaces has the potential to carry pollutants that could adversely affect surface water or groundwater quality.

The Comprehensive Plan describes the need for *"Area-wide stormwater management, including sustainable practices such as vegetated areas and swales to promote infiltration, and pervious pavement."* The current proposal does not include green infrastructure measures. Additionally, according to the Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF), the current proposal would add 2.23 acres of impervious surface area compared with existing site conditions. Accordingly, during site plan review, the applicant shall be required to revise the project design to incorporate additional pervious areas, including landscape features and green infrastructure practices.

To further reduce the potential impact of new development on groundwater quality, the project shall incorporate design measures that minimize pollutant loading and promote on-site recharge. Such measures include, but are not limited to, minimizing proposed lawn area, utilizing native drought-tolerant plant species, and implementing green infrastructure practices such as rain gardens, green roofs and permeable pavers/pavement. These revisions are necessary to mitigate potential adverse impacts to groundwater resources and to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

The SGPA Plan notes that *"the retention of the existing open space and the watershed protection it provides constitutes the single most important concern"* for protecting the SGPA. Over the past fifty years the edges of the MEC have been the location of numerous applications for alternative housing developments due to product demand, the availability of public sewers, and the character of the neighborhood. This horizontal spread of development threatens the remaining open space in the area. Encouraging redevelopment, like that proposed, reduces development pressure on open space properties

The connection of all new mixed-use projects in the MTCOD to public sewers, increase of permeable surface area and planting of vegetation associated with civic, recreational and/or open spaces, and installation of green infrastructure will alleviate potential impacts to the West Hills Melville Special Groundwater Protection Area CEA.

IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION:

13. The proposed action may result in a change to existing transportation systems.

*Yes. As described in the Town of Huntington Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan *"The Melville Employment Center is a suburban, automobile-oriented commercial district that is poorly designed for pedestrians. While most streets do have sidewalks, the distance between buildings, wide roads with heavy traffic volumes, and a general lack of amenities create an environment where very few people walk. There are few community services in the district, which forces employees to use their*

automobiles during the course of the workday. This extra driving activity, in turn, generates a third peak-congestion period around the lunch hour. These conditions contribute to high levels of traffic congestion and other quality of life issues."

The Comprehensive Plan also states, *"Future development in the Melville Employment Center should seek to retrofit the existing pattern in order to promote pedestrian accessibility and limit the need for employees to drive during the workday. There are several ways to achieve this goal, including encouraging a mix of land uses, establishing stronger design guidelines for buildings and walking paths…"* The proposed development is consistent with these objectives, as it includes a network of walkways, sidewalks and a trail that create a pedestrian-friendly environment throughout the site and along the main thoroughfares.

The proposed mixed-use development will provide a mix of retail, office, commercial service, residential uses and community public space. The proposed amenities will meet many of the daily needs of residents and workers on-site. Mixed-use development can help reduce traffic impacts by enabling residents and workers to access goods and services without relying on an automobile or by encouraging shorter automobile trips.

Furthermore, as stated in the Comprehensive Plan, "*There are few community services in the district, which forces employees to use their automobiles during the course of the workday. This extra driving activity, in turn, generates a third peak-congestion period around the lunch hour. These conditions contribute to high levels of traffic congestion and other quality of life issues.*" By providing a range of uses in close proximity residences and workplaces, residents and workers will be less likely to leave the area by automobile and travel to and along the Route 110 corridor. Additionally, the ability to walk to nearby uses will further reduce reliance on vehicles and minimize potential traffic impacts within the MTCOD.

Parking requirements for residential uses within mixed-use developments in the MTCOD are calculated at one (1) space per studio or one (1) bedroom unit, and .5 spaces for each additional bedroom. Based on this standard, the residential portion of the proposed development, consisting of 29 studios, 279 one-bedroom apartments and 92 two-bedroom apartments, requires a total of 446 parking spaces.

All other parking within the MTCOD is required to comply with underlying zoning requirements. According to the Preliminary Site Plan, the proposed 32,000 s.f. of commercial (non-restaurant) space requires 162 spaces, while the 5,000 s.f. restaurant space requires 100 spaces. It is noted that the Town of Huntington has strict restaurant parking requirements and that parking variances for restaurant uses are frequently granted upon presentation of professional parking estimates. In total the proposed development requires 708 parking spaces. The plan depicts 709 on-site parking spaces, and 72 on-street spaces, for a total of 781 proposed parking spaces.

A common concern about infill development is that it may increase traffic and reduce parking availability. However, in this case the new development is replacing an existing traffic generator, although the traffic study did not take the current site's potential into account, providing a safely conservative look at traffic impacts. The traffic study proposes signal timing mitigation at several intersections to improve traffic flow, with the most significant alteration requiring a timing change of no more than three seconds, so that other movements are not significantly impacted. The

proposed mixed-use development also allows for shared parking. Residential parking demand typically peaks in traditional non-working hours, while office parking peaks during the day. Additionally, residential development typically generates fewer vehicle trips, per square foot during peak traffic hours than office development. This proposal should actually reduce traffic during the peak AM and PM weekday hours from the previous office use on the property. A good portion of the traffic produced by the residential units will be travelling in the opposite direction of the dominant office traffic of the neighborhood, placing less stress on impacted intersection movements.

The requirement for on-site parking for the residential component will reduce the likelihood that residents of the development will rely on on-street parking. Furthermore, because on-site parking will be provided, residents will be less likely to search for parking in the surrounding area, thereby minimizing potential impacts on traffic congestion in the area near their residences. In order to be conservative with parking demand, the EEA did not consider any potential for shared/overlap parking when preparing the parking analysis for this project.

The subject proposal requires a special use permit from the Town Board. In order to receive a special use permit, Town Code requires that the applicant prove that a proposed use will not create significant traffic and/or safety impacts. The applicant submitted a traffic impact study specific to the subject property as Appendix N to the EEA. The Traffic Impact Analysis states, *"The level of service evaluation shows that some of the signalized study area intersection will require timing adjustments to maintain No-Build LOS. No physical mitigation is required at any of the existing signalized intersections."* The analysis concludes by stating, *"Based on the results of the capacity analysis, the Proposed Project will not have an adverse impact on the study intersections or roadway network, and only signal timing mitigation in addition to improvements to facilitate the site access are necessary to accommodate the Project's site generated traffic."* The proposal has been reviewed by the Town Department of Transportation and Traffic Safety for conformance with County, Town, State and Federal standards, as well as the Town Highway Department, New York State Department of Transportation, and Suffolk County Department of Public Works.

As a further safeguard against potential traffic impacts, the Town Board will pause the acceptance of new applications upon submission of applications totaling four-hundred (400) residential units, and after each successive submission(s) totaling four-hundred (400) units. In addition, the Town Board has capped the number of new residential units constructed via Special Use Permits in the MTCOD to a total of 1,500. These pauses will allow the Town Board to assess the cumulative impact of development on traffic conditions and ensure that roadway capacity is not exceeded.

The requirement for on-site parking, review of the submitted parking/traffic analysis, mixed-use nature of development, ability of the Town Board to pause new mixed-use development after each four-hundred (400) units, and limit of a total of 1,500 units will allow the Town to minimize potential impacts on transportation.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY PLANS:

17. The proposed action is not consistent with adopted land use plans.

*No. The proposed action is consistent with community plans.

The Town of Huntington Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan was adopted on December 9, 2008 in association with SEQRA Findings. The Findings specify, "Outreach efforts, planning and assessment of issues, and development of regulations and enforcement measures that are consistent with the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan shall not require further SEQRA review. Key to a consistency determination in the findings is Principle #1: ***Zoning and related development regulations shall be revised to maintain consistency with the Comprehensive Plan***. The Town Board found that the major policies of the Comprehensive Plan shall be considered the conditions and the individual topic area subpolicies, strategies and action steps shall be recognized as thresholds for consistency determination pursuant to SEQRA.

The policies contained in the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update that support the proposed Code changes that create new regulations, standards, and requirements are identified below:

Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.2
Protect Huntington's water resources.

Strategies
A.2.3 Require/encourage stormwater management practices that minimize impacts on surface water, groundwater, and other natural resources.

- Filtering and recharge designs for stormwater management facilities that blend into the existing landscape
- Use of pervious surfacing to reduce runoff

Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.5
Permanently preserve Huntington's unique environmental resources.

Strategies
A.5.3 Promote protection of native species and prevention/removal of invasive species.

Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.8
Preserve open space within new developments.

Strategies
A.8.1 Require a minimum open space set aside (e.g., 20-30%) within new developments, together with standards to ensure that the open space is meaningful (e.g., central greens or greenway linkages) and publicly accessible.

Community Character Policy B.5
"Raise the bar" on the visual character of private development through improved design standards and regulations and through targeted redevelopment.

Strategies
B.5.1 Enact improved design standards for developments that exceed designated thresholds (e.g. size limits, exclusion for single-family homes). These standards should be appropriate to the local context and address design elements such as:

- Placement of buildings and parking areas in relationship to each other, public streets and adjacent properties
- Building design (e.g., orientation, façade articulation, garage location and mass/height; materials if appropriate to local context)
- Landscaping
- Access and connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit services as well as vehicular traffic

B.5.4 Prepare and implement strategies to redevelop deteriorated and obsolescent areas.

Community Facilities Policy C.2
Address the impacts of new residential developments on schools and other community facilities.

Strategies
C.2.3 Identify opportunities to meet community facility needs through the land development process (e.g., monetary contributions to meet facility needs or dedication of land for school sites in exchange for density increases or lot size reductions).

Community Facilities Policy C.3
Work with service providers to pursue a variety of approaches to address community facility and service costs.

Strategies
C.3.1 Promote compatible economic development projects that strengthen the commercial tax base. (This is particularly important in school districts with proportionally higher dependence on residential property assessments.)

Land Use Policy D.2
Major Commercial Corridors and Centers Manage change to achieve Comprehensive Plan goals and policies in major commercial corridors and centers that will experience obsolescence and pressures for redevelopment, including the Melville Employment Center, Jericho Turnpike, and Route 110 south of Jericho Turnpike (see Section 10.3 of the Geographic Focal Areas chapter for more detail).

Strategies
D.2.2 Prepare and implement an integrated land use, circulation, and infrastructure plan for the Melville Employment Center.

Land Use Policy D.6
Development Regulations: Modernize and update development regulations for greater consistency, predictability, and effectiveness.

Strategies

D.6.1 Strengthen standards for design character and quality (scale of commercial development, façade/architectural treatment, access management, corridor landscaping, single-family residential compatibility, etc.) to improve economic viability and encourage walkable centers.

D.6.3 Develop a model mixed-use hamlet center zoning classification(s) to create walkable centers with higher standards for design quality.

D.6.4 Incorporate provisions to implement other plan policies (e.g., minimum open space set asides and conservation subdivisions that cluster development per Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.8).

Transportation Policy F.2
Coordinate land use and transportation planning and implementation.

Strategies
F.2.1 Promote land use patterns that reduce automobile usage (e.g., compact, walkable mixed-use nodes rather than linear ("strip") commercial development along highway corridors).

F.2.3 Require developments exceeding designated thresholds to conduct traffic impact studies and identify mitigation measures to supplement the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process.

Transportation Policy F.5
Provide for public and private parking that is adequate to meet needs and is compatible with established community character.

F.5.2 Review off-street parking standards to ensure that they match needs, including consideration of the following approaches:

- Credits for shared and/or off-site parking

Transportation Policy F.6
Improve environmental quality through transportation strategies that reduce automobile and fossil fuel usage.

Strategies
F.6.2 Promote compact, mixed-use development patterns that reduce the need to drive (see Transportation Strategy F.2.1).

F.6.4 Establish standards to reduce the environmental impacts of parking lots (improved landscaping requirements, sustainable stormwater solutions such as pervious pavement, etc).

Housing Policy G.3
Promote the diversification of housing stock to meet the changing demographics of Huntington's population.

Strategies

G.3.2 Implement thresholds and standards for the location and design of higher density housing to ensure compatibility with adjacent established land uses and minimize or avoid impacts on traffic, neighborhoods, school districts, and sensitive environmental resources.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY CHARACTER:

18. The proposed project is inconsistent with existing community character.

*Yes. The proposed development is **purposely** inconsistent with community character, **in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan**.

The Comprehensive Plan describes the MEC as, *"a suburban, automobile-oriented commercial district that is poorly designed for pedestrians. While most streets do have sidewalks, the distance between buildings, wide roads with heavy traffic volumes, and a general lack of amenities create an environment where very few people walk. There are few community services in the district, which forces employees to use their automobiles during the course of the workday."* The Comprehensive Plan also states, *"The Town should also promote the development of small, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use "town centers" at strategic locations in the Melville Employment Center. Such centers would contain retail and restaurant offerings as well as recreation, business services, and entertainment opportunities. Workforce residential units could also be considered in these locations."*

The proposed mixed-use development, together with future development in the MTCOD, will provide a mix of retail, office, commercial service, residential uses, and community public spaces, creating a walkable environment for residents and workers.

When considering new mixed-use developments, Town Code requires the development be of high quality and visually appealing from adjacent streets and surrounding areas, with an emphasis on building placement and orientation that complements adjacent properties. The subject proposal will redevelop a functionally obsolete and underutilized commercial site into a new mixed-use development. In the MTCOD, Town Code requires the first floor of buildings fronting on Maxess Road or Corporate Center Drive are limited to retail, commercial or office use. The proposal includes four mixed-use buildings and two retail buildings along Maxess Road, as well as one mixed use building and one retail building along Corporate Center Drive. Three of the four proposed four-story residential buildings are interior to the site away from Maxess Road and Corporate Center Drive, while a fourth is located along Corporate Center Drive. The Town Board will have to consider whether this design complies with their intent in drafting the Overlay District requirements.

Town Code also requires each mixed-use proposal to have an appropriate mix of uses, as defined in the permitted uses of the Special Use Permit. Suitable commercial uses include retail, personal service shops, food shops, bistros, bars, restaurants and day care. Additional permitted uses include breweries, brewpubs, wineries and distilleries where the products are manufactured, warehoused, and/or served on premises, and commercial athletic, recreation, and training facilities. Specific uses for commercial space are not proposed at this time. Uses will comply with those listed above, or will require relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

The MTCOD allows mixed-use buildings or sites to consist of up to seventy-five (75) percent residential use and at least twenty-five (25) percent, but no more than forty (40) percent professional office or commercial use. According to the EEA, the total GFA of the mixed-use site is 323,600 s.f., with 83,600 s.f. of commercial space proposed, resulting in commercial uses representing approximately 25.8 percent of the total GFA.

Mixed-use developments in the MTCOD are required to provide open spaces, parking areas, pedestrian walks, signs, lighting, landscaping and utilities that are well related to the site and arranged to achieve a safe, efficient and contextually sensitive development. A minimum of fifteen (15) percent of the site must be comprised of usable civic, recreational, and/or open space that is available to the general public, including but not limited to trails, paths, parks, sidewalks, public art or gathering spaces.

According to the EEA and Preliminary Site Plan, the proposed development provides 17 percent of civic/open space, including a .6-mile walking trail loop, retail plaza and promenade, totaling approximately three acres. Lighting will be required to comply with Town Code. In accordance with Dark Sky recommendations all lighting will be LED with a color temperature of 3,000 K or warmer and shall be noted as such on the photometric plan that is submitted with the site plan application. The installation of 3,000 K or warmer LED lighting will save energy and lessen the impact of the proposed lighting on human health and the environment.

Sidewalks and landscaping will be oriented to provide a connected pedestrian friendly environment. The site will contain 500 on-site and 72 on-street surface parking spaces, 56 spaces in five one-story above ground garages and 153 in-building parking spaces.

Additionally, where appropriate, the mixed-use development should contribute to a central public gathering space for community events. The proposed development includes a promenade along Maxess Road and Corporate Center Drive, as well as a retail plaza at the northeast corner of Maxess Road and Corporate Center Drive, which will serve as a central gathering space for community residents.

Finally, proposed developments must demonstrate high inter-connectivity between proposed uses and adjacent areas, promote walkability, and include pedestrian scale lighting and ground floor activity among business and residential uses. The proposed mixed-use development includes a network of walkways, sidewalks and a trail that create a pedestrian-friendly environment throughout the site and along the main thoroughfares. Ground floor commercial uses, together with the retail plaza and promenades, provide a vibrant and engaging experience for residents and visitors.

The Height, Area and Bulk Regulations for the MTCOD and proposed development are summarized in the chart below:

Zoning Requirement	Required	Proposed
Maximum Building Height	4 Stories/50 Feet	4 Stories/50 Feet
Minimum Building Height	2 Stories/25 Feet	1 Story/## Feet
Maximum Building Lot Coverage	90%	26.21%
Minimum Percent Public/Open Space	15%	17%
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	3.6	.65

Front Yard	30 Feet	30 Feet
Rear Yard	25 Feet	25 Feet
Side Yard	0 Feet	10.94 Feet
Street Side Yard	30 Feet	30 Feet
Minimum Lot Area	3 Acres	16.62 Acres
Minimum Lot Width	250 Feet	250 Feet
Minimum Lot Frontage	150 Feet	150 Feet
Maximum Building Lot Coverage	90%	26.21%

The zoning requirements in the MTCOD create a more vibrant and walkable neighborhood with improved amenities for people who live and work in the area. The Height, Area and Bulk Regulations will in part encourage a transformation from the antiquated suburban office park development model to more sustainable walkable development.

Applicants proposing new mixed-use development within the MTCOD are required to pay a one-time impact fee of $1,500 per residential unit for each unit exceeding 25, and $2.50 per square foot of commercial space for any area exceeding 25,000 square feet. According to the EEA, the subject development will include 400 residential units, resulting in an impact fee of $562,500 (375 units × $1,500), and 83,600 square feet of commercial space, resulting in an impact fee of $146,500 (58,600 square feet × $2.50). The total impact fee is therefore $709,000.

Seventy-five (75) percent of the total fee, or $531,750, will be allocated to a Town fund supporting the creation and operation of Town Center parks within the overlay district. The remaining twenty-five (25) percent, or $177,250, will be allocated to the Fire/Emergency district.

Alternatively, applicants may have the option of meeting the fee requirement for the creation of Parkland by dedicating property to the Town that furthers the objective of creating Town Center Parks. The Town Board has full discretion as to whether the property dedication meets the fee requirement.

New mixed-use development within the MTCOD has the potential to increase the number of school aged students in the Half Hollow Hills Central School District (HHHCSD). According to the EEA, *"Based on the PSAC multipliers derived from the four studies evaluated in the Environmental Assessment for the MTCOD, the Proposed Action is projected to generate approximately 14 to 36 students."* Enrollment in the HHHCSD has declined steadily since the 2005-2006 school year, decreasing from 10,196 students to 7,302 students in the 2021-2022 school year, a reduction of approximately 28%.

A study commissioned by the Long Island Regional Planning Council called *"Multifamily Housing Development Impacts in Long Island Communities"* published in March of 2021, found that, in all districts analyzed *"the projects generate a net positive financial benefit to the school district."* While the referenced study did not evaluate mixed-use development like is proposed, the inclusion of commercial components would likely provide additional tax benefits and further reduce the likelihood of occupancy by children.

According to the EEA, *"Using the average per student program cost funded through property taxes of $25,485, the cost to educate the estimated 14-to-36 PSAC (Public School-Aged Children) that would be generated by the Proposed Action would be approximately $356,790-to-$917,460 per year."* Furthermore, the EEA states, *"According to the 2024-25 Town of Huntington Property Tax Record for the two parcels on the Subject Property (Appendix M), the Subject Property currently generates $384,797 in property taxes to the HHH CSD. According to property tax projections prepared by Forchelli Deegan Terrana LLP, the Proposed Action is expected to generate approximately $636,424 in PILOT revenue to the HHH CSD in FY 2028-29 (i.e., the first year the proposed development is expected to be occupied), an increase of $211,673 compared to the projected revenue without redevelopment."*

The applicant plans to apply for a Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT). While the applicant states the PILOT may not fully cover instructional costs if more than 24 students inhabit the residential units, PILOT payments to the HHHCSD would increase by 9% in the 2029-2030 school year, and between 6 and 9 percent every year until the PILOT is phased out in 2045-2046. Payments to the district are expected to exceed district costs by the 2033-2034 school year. When the PILOT is phased out and the property is fully assessed, revenue provided to the district will far exceed the education costs of students generated by the development.

Estimating the number of children has been raised as a concern by the school district to help it determine its capacity to handle more students. It is common on Long Island to use a published paper colloquially referred to as the "Rutgers study", which is actually titled "Residential Demographic Multipliers – Estimates of the Occupants of New Housing", 2006. This used Census data for New York State to calculate residential unit occupancy based on building size, style, ownership, and cost. For the Melville industrial redevelopment projects we would expect most or all buildings to contain 5+ units for rent, which would be estimated to produce market units with .08 students per 1-bedroom unit, 0.23 students per 2-bedroom unit, and 1 student per 3-bedroom unit according to the study, with the smaller units two to three times more likely to have elementary students than high school students, and affordable units two to three times more likely to have students.

Rutgers followed up this initial publication with "School-Age Children in Rental Units in New Jersey: Results from a Survey of Developers and Property Managers" in 2018. The new study investigated the difference between apartment types based on age of construction with the idea that apartments built in the modern era have a different intended market than apartments built in the last century. It also looked at the effects of building height on student generation. The new Rutgers study showed that projects built before the year 2000 had 2.5 times more students in market-rate units than projects built after 2000. The average new market-rate project produces .1 student per unit among its mix of bedroom sizes. That number reflects the high market price of most new construction, and the most common type of building being a mid-rise structure with a mix of 1- and 2-bedroom units. Taller buildings produced significantly fewer children than shorter buildings, and 1-bedroom units produce significantly fewer children than larger units. A 3-bedroom market-rate apartment in a short building is 150 times more likely to have a student than a 1-bedroom unit in a tall building.

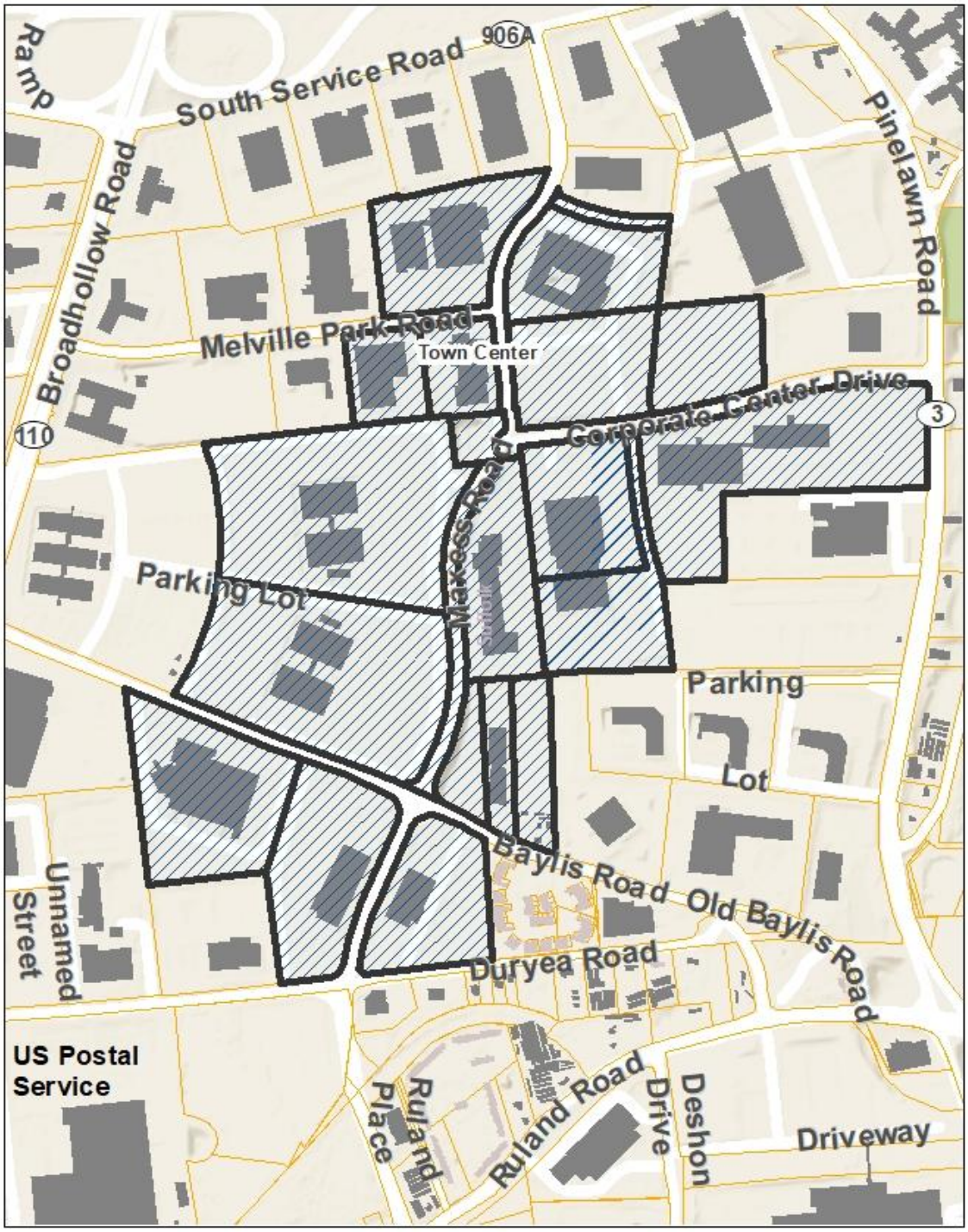
The 2018 study showed the importance of building age when it calculated a student generation of .069 from affordable 1-bedroom units in post-2000 construction, which was less than the .08

students per one-bedroom unit in construction of all ages from the 2006 study. Another planning document that looked into detailed school generation numbers was the *"Portland Public Schools Enrollment Forecasts 2014-15 to 2028-2029"*. One of the unique features of this study was that it took a separate look into brand-new buildings. They looked at 1,007 apartment units that were less than two years old and found that those units generated 20 schoolchildren, a generation ratio of .02, not accounting for unit size. The Portland study also had specific calculations for four-story buildings, and both all-residential and residential over ground-floor commercial had student generations of .03 per unit.

Another look at local school generation was completed by The Real Estate Institute at Stony Brook University in 2019. Their paper, "Market Rate Apartment School Aged Children Study", surveyed 14 apartment complexes built since 2003 on Long Island. The four mid-rise projects in walkable downtown neighborhoods had student generations of .09, .07, .07, and .04. Two tall residential buildings in downtown Mineola had student generations of .05 and .03. Projects in a more residential setting, like the three in the Coram/Middle Island region, had higher generations of .16, .10, and .17 students per unit.

So, based on the relevant sources discussed above, the current proposal is expected to generate between 12 and 28 students. To be conservative we will work off of the highest number, 28 students. With the last reported enrollment of the School District as 7,202 students, the projected added students from this project would represent less than half of one percent of the overall student population. Past enrollment numbers show that this is less than the annual change in student enrollment experienced by the District over the past ten years due to natural population changes. This minor level of change should not result in any need for additional instructional expenditures. Many speakers at the public hearings have claimed that the quality of the School District would lead to more students than forecasted. While the studies show that this can be true for certain housing types such as single-family homes, the 2018 Rutgers study found that this was not the case in larger apartment-style buildings among higher-income tenants in market-rate units. This reflects a market by choice for non-single-family units among wealthy households without schoolchildren.

Melville Town Center



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Town of Huntington
Department of Planning and Environment
GIS Division
4/8/2026

Legend

Melville Town Center