



April 14, 2025

South Kingstown Planning Board  
c/o Jamie Rabbitt, Director of Planning  
180 High Street  
Wakefield, RI 02879

RE: The Village at South County Commons  
Buildings 26 & 28  
South Kingstown, RI  
DE Project #: 0267-059-A10

Dear Planning Board Members:

Following up on discussions and comments from the Planning Board at the meeting on March 25, 2025, please see the following additional information for clarification on areas of concern that were raised:

1. Parking Lot Lighting – it was questioned if the existing parking lot is bright enough to be at a safe level.

Response: During the original design of South County Commons, the Town Staff and Planning Board held meetings on how the main street and parking lots should be lit. Marc Pfeifer (Lighting Designer) was brought on as a consultant and worked with the town and developer on creating an appropriate lighting design that conformed to the Route 1 Special Management District requirements and the desire of the Planning Board not to have the parking lots over lit. The direction of the Planning Board and town staff at that time was to have only the minimal lighting necessary and the board was concerned that the parking lots would be too bright. That resulted in the hundreds of period lights that are located throughout the commons with a few higher and slightly brighter optically programmed “shoebox light fixtures”. The lighting designer established guidelines and lighting standards for the Pedestrian, Accent, Architectural, and Signage of the site. The standard in the parking lots was to be an average of 2 foot candles (fc) or less. The original light fixtures were metal halide lights. Over time, almost all of the lighting has been converted to LED with the same lumens.

We inquired with the hotel management staff on 3/26/25 what their experience has been with the parking lot lighting. They told us that they typically have about 22,000 – 24,000 rooms filled per year. They request feedback from each guest on check-out on how their stay was, and guests are sent surveys requesting feedback and reviews. The hotel also has regular inspections by Hilton of the property. They have received little to no negative feedback on the parking, lighting, or exterior safety around the building and consider it safe and appropriate. They believe that the parking lot and lighting conforms to Hilton brand standards and have received only positive comments on the exterior including the parking lots. The applicant as the future manager of the proposed apartments will continue to monitor the lighting and take all appropriate actions to have it conform with generally accepted lighting standards without creating an over lit parking lot that the Planning Board wanted to avoid.



## DiPrete Engineering

2. Parking Management – We heard the comment from the abutters and the Planning Board that although there appears to be enough parking overall at South County Commons, how is it going to be managed so that there is convenient parking for the future residents of the apartments and the patients of Narragansett Bay Pediatrics in the ground floor of Building 25? The proximity of the buildings could create conflicts.

Response: We understand the comment and have met with the South County Commons management team, who have met with the Narragansett Bay Pediatrics management team. The proposed resolution is:

- The management staff of the apartments will be registering all cars of the apartment tenants.
- All of the apartment leases will contain language on the managed parking and the restrictions.
- Fifteen (15) spaces along Fieldstone Drive on what today is open parking will be designated and signed to be for the patients of the medical office building between 8:30 am and 5:30 pm with a 2-hour maximum.
- In addition, 8 other spaces are available to be set aside during operations of the medical office building if a greater number of preferred parking spaces become necessary.
- The South County Commons management team and the hotel management team believe that this will create convenient parking for the pediatrics group and leave plenty of open spaces for the apartment tenants, employees of the pediatric group, and other office tenants, and the hotel. The areas of the preferred parking and anticipated primary parking are shown on the attached Shared Parking Exhibit.

3. Construction Phasing, Access, and Site Management – it was questioned about the specifics of the sequence of construction, where materials and equipment will be stored, and how the construction traffic will access the site.

Response: We have met with the construction management team who will be building the apartments to discuss these matters. The current plan is to fence off about 3/4's of the overflow parking lot to the west of the hotel which includes proposed Building 28. Accessways will be maintained for the hotel. This fenced off area will be the staging area for the construction of both buildings and include the office trailers, construction worker parking, and materials storage area. The Building 26 foundation will be started late this summer and the Building 28 foundation will start about a month after. The Building 26 vertical construction will begin ahead of the Building 28 vertical construction. The subcontractors will be directed to have their employees take a left immediately upon entering South County Commons and access the construction area by the hotel. The South County Commons management team and the apartment construction management team believe this will be sufficient to protect the tenants, residents, and guests on the property.

4. Snow Management and Storage – a comment was made that the pad site for Building 26 has been used for snow storage in the past and how will this be dealt with? Also, snowplow equipment is parked in the vicinity of future Building 28, and how will this be dealt with? There is a sand/salt storage area in the vicinity of future Building 28 and how will this be dealt with?

Response: According to the South County Commons management staff, they used the pad at Building 26 this past year and occasionally in the past for snow storage, but it was not a consistent practice and they have plenty of other areas to push and store snow. During the



## DiPrete Engineering

winter months, parking demand is low and there are numerous areas dispersed throughout the property to store snow. The management team has provided us with a marked-up plan showing some of these areas which is attached as Snow Management Exhibit

We have met with the South County Commons management team on the current management practices for sand/salt use and storage, and options for the future. The onsite management staff shared a strong opinion that due to the amount of pedestrian use in South County Commons, it is essential to have a ready and quickly available supply of sand/salt on the property. The onsite maintenance and winter subcontractors maintain approximately 7,400 linear feet of sidewalks that are used by gym patrons, office tenants, medical patients, hotel guests, and other visitors and residents of the commons. They are also mindful that there is a high percentage of elderly people on the property. The maintenance staff continuously monitors and responds to needs of deicing during the winter, and often times on a quick respond basis. Without having the necessary material onsite, their ability to quickly meet the needs of the people they are working to protect from slip and falls would suffer. All of the sand/salt material stored on the property is an accessory and necessary use to maintain the property. None of it is stored onsite for other properties. This practice has been in place for about 20 years and met the appropriate regulations at the time it was implemented. The RI DEM now has water quality rules and BMP's that address the necessary storage of sand/salt mix. The BMP in place today requires:

- The storage be over an impervious base.
- The runoff from the operational area be controlled by BMP's.
- And a secured durable, waterproof covering be supplied.

From conversations with the management staff and observations of the current practice, it is apparent that the first two requirements are in place, and that the covering, although in place, has been difficult for the management team to continuously maintain through storms and different vendors accessing the storage area.

To better address this issue, we have redesigned a relocated sand/salt storage area to the south of the current location. The relocated and new storage area will:

- Also be over an impervious base.
- Also allow the runoff to be controlled by BMP's (all of the runoff flows through the stormwater basin).
- A new and more durable and permanent cover has been incorporated into the storage facility.

The relocated sand/salt storage area is shown on the attached Sand/salt Storage Exhibit. The covering will be a durable vinyl cover on a frame and colored green. There will also be landscaping added around the sand/salt storage area. This will be added to the Final Plan submission. This design exceeds the town's requirements for sand/salt storage facilities located in a Groundwater Protection Overlay District even though this site is not in a GPOD.



## DiPrete Engineering

5. Alignment of Parking Spaces and Intersection between Hotel Drive and Fieldstone Drive – we heard from Planning Staff and Planning Board members that the alignment could be better in this area with concerns about cars backing out into the intersection.

Response: We have reconfigured the curb lines, parking, landscape island, stop bar/signage, and surface material to create a textured roundabout in this area. We believe the appearance of the textured pavement, and shape of the roundabout will be a significant improvement and more appropriate for the front entrance to Building 28. It also makes the pedestrian connections better. This new roundabout and reconfigured parking and curb lines are shown on the Shared Parking Exhibit and will be added to the Final Plan submission.

6. South County Commons Entrance – a few abutters mentioned concerns about the entrance to South County Commons at the Route 1 signalized intersection and whether additional consideration can be made to increase functionality of circulation and turning movements in the area.

Response: Paul Bannon, a traffic engineer with Crossman Engineering, was engaged to review the existing intersection and collect recent crash data from the South Kingstown Police Department and to seek a better understanding of the potential validity of the concern. Mr. Bannon will be present at the April 22<sup>nd</sup> Planning Board meeting and will provide additional details into his findings and be available to answer questions.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,  
DiPrete Engineering Associates, Inc.

Eric Prive, PE  
Senior Project Manager  
eprive@diprete-eng.com