

# HALF HOLLOW HILLS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

OF HUNTINGTON AND BABYLON

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June 22, 2017

Supervisor Rich Schaffer  
Members of the Town Council  
Town of Babylon  
200 East Sunrise Highway  
Lindenhurst, NY 11757

Dear Supervisor Schaffer and Members of the Town Council:

The Board of Education of the Half Hollow Hills Central School District has reviewed the State Environmental Quality Review and Completion of Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, dated May 18, 2017; in which a zoning change is requested, from A Residence to Multiple Residences (MR), in order to construct 264 MR rental units on the Wade Farm property in Wheatley Heights.

Upon completion of the proposed project, the property would be redeveloped with multi-family dwellings, resulting in a significant increase in resident population, including school aged children. In order to determine the number of school aged students generated by this project, the Site Developer used a 2006 study by Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research Residential Demographic Multipliers - Estimate of the Occupants of New Housing (Residents, School Aged Children, Public School-Aged Children). The study uses 20 year old information from the 1990-2000 census and concludes that 228 One Bedroom Units would yield 34.20 School-Aged Children and 36 Two Bedroom Units would yield 3.24 School-Aged Children. The total number of school aged students residing in 264 rental units is projected at 38, of which 6 are anticipated to be Special Education Students.

We are skeptical about the accuracy of the number of school aged children this project is estimated to yield. Based on the 2014-2015 estimated instruction costs, which are three years old, the Developer states that it will cost \$13,873 to educate a regular education student and \$32,669 per special education student. Thus, using this outdated information, the proposed projected cost to the School District is anticipated to be \$639,950. The total school tax revenues identified in Section 3.4.2.1 of the Developers plan would be approximately \$763,924. The Developer states that, "The proposed action is expected to have a net positive fiscal impact of approximately \$123,491." That is of course, only if one accepts the notion that 264 rental units will only generate 38 students, of which 6 will be Special Education Students.



We question the accuracy of this information, as it does not account for the Property Tax Levy Cap formula. In addition, the most recent information from NYSED on estimated per-pupil expenditures are: \$16,913 (K-6 regular ed) and \$19,951 (7-12 regular ed) and \$44,261 (K-6 special ed) and \$47,299 (7-12 special ed). Considering this updated, more accurate information, there will no longer be a "positive fiscal impact" on the school tax revenues reflected in Section 3.4.2.1. Rather, the School District would be faced with a deficit and negative tax revenues. This would truly be a hardship for the School District. We would anticipate that at the very least, the full tax associated with this project would be paid to the District and that no special tax accommodations/reductions/PILOTS are provided to the development. We are concerned about the unintended fiscal distress this project will cause.

In order to provide insight into the number of students generated by rental units, we are providing examples of several community developments located within our School District and the number of students currently attending District Schools.

- Avalon Court - 100 Avalon Court Drive, Melville - Built 2000 - **153 Units - 66 Students**
- Avalon Court North - 100 Court North Drive, Melville - Built 2001 - **340 Units - 87 Students**
- Millennium Hills - 101 Paumanok Hills Court, Melville - **84 Units - 53 Students** (Mixed Ownership/Rental)
- Bethpage Park Apartments - 1233 Melville Road, Melville - **70 Units - 17 Students** (Co-Op and Rental)
- Villas Circle-Fairfield-Villas Circle, Melville - Built 1986 - **68 Units - 25 Students**

As you can see from the information provided, the new development proposed is likely to yield far more than 38 students, resulting in the Half Hollow Hills community bearing the burden of the additional costs.

Additionally, when describing our School District in Section 3.4.1.2, the Site Development Plan states, "The CSD currently operates seven elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools." However, since the start of the 2014-2015 school year, we have operated with five elementary schools. The statement that we currently operate seven elementary schools is inaccurate and should be revised. While the Site Development Plan mentions declining enrollment several times, an accurate number of school aged students entering our School District, the additional impact on existing bus routes and the identification of which of our school buildings the students would attend, are all facts that we would need in order to assess the long term impact of this plan. The proposed egress into and out of the proposed development, as well as the resulting traffic flow in and around the surrounding community will significantly impact the District's ability to effectively and efficiently transport students.

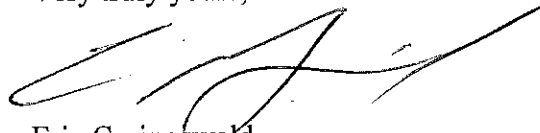
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We believe that the forecasted impact of a proposed development needs to be as accurate as possible. The data used is outdated and may result in significant financial repercussions. We are respectfully requesting an accurate estimate of the number of Public School-Aged Students 264 rental apartments will generate, as this would assist us in making critical decisions that will in turn, impact the entire Half Hollow Hills Central School District.

We welcome a discussion with you on this issue and appreciate your consideration of our concerns.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Geringswald", written over a horizontal line.

Eric Geringswald  
Board of Education President  
Half Hollow Hills Central School District