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Sent: Thursday, January 7, 2021 2:33 PM

To: Chappaqua Forward <chappaquaforward@mynewcastle.org>; PublicComment <PublicComment@mynewcastle.org>

Subject: FBC Comment #17

Attached is my FBC Comment #17 explaining why the Town of New Castle Chappaqua Forward project is not only permitted to name, and most certainly should name, the New York State Parks and Recreation as an interested agency as part of the SEQRA process even if there is no requirement to do so. Thank you. Ed Frank, Chappaqua resident.

New York State Parks and Recreation Was Not Listed As An Interested Agency

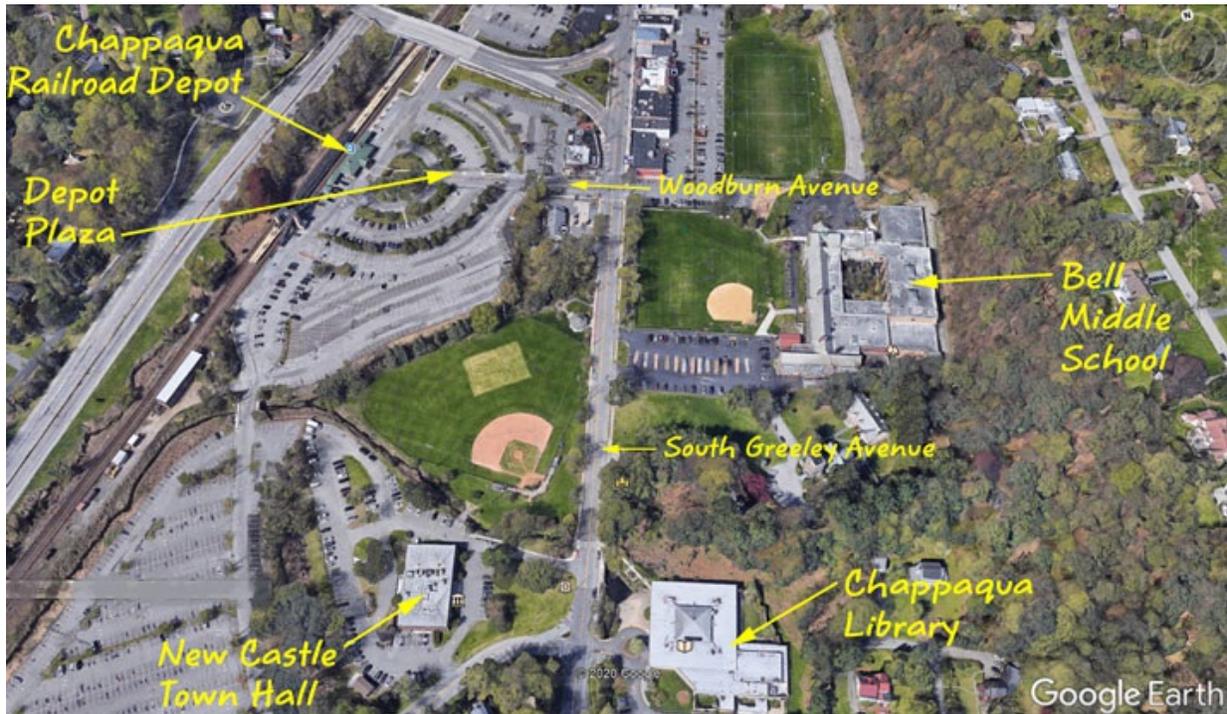
Both the Chappaqua Railroad Depot and Depot Plaza are listed on the National Park Service of Historic Places. Adoption of the Form Based Code will permit the future construction of five story F-5 apartment buildings located directly adjacent to these two Historic Places.

Although the Town of New Castle Chappaqua Forward project is not required to name the New York State Parks and Recreation as an interested agency as part of the SEQRA process, it is permissible to name the New York State Parks and Recreation as an interested agency.

There is good reason why the New York State Parks and Recreation agency should be listed as an interested agency in view of the fact that the New York State Parks and Recreation reviewed and forwarded the documentation to the National Park Service that listed the two Historic Places on the National Park Service Register of Historic Places. In fact, two persons of authority in the New York State Parks and Recreation have expressed concern to me regarding the Form Based Code plan to locate five story F-5 buildings in close proximity to the two Historic Places.

Please refer to the New York State Parks and Recreation 01.03.2021 document that resides on the Town of New Castle Chappaqua Forward Public Comments website. This document was submitted to grant placement of the Chappaqua Railroad Station and Depot Plaza on the National Park Service Register of Historic Places.





The construction of F-5 five story high buildings in close proximity to, and in direct view of, and encroaching upon the 200 foot radius Depot Plaza, fails to comply with Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's proviso of green open space when she gave her gift to the Town of New Castle.

- As quoted in the NYS Parks and Recreation document, "The land for the depot site and plaza was a gift from Horace Greeley's daughter, Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin. A proviso was that the plaza be kept as a public park. This gives a unique feeling of green open space to the busy downtown section of Chappaqua. (The nearby streets. So. Greeley Avenue. & King St. are now main shopping streets.)"

The construction of F-5 five story apartment buildings located in close proximity to the Depot Plaza would wrongfully extend the busy downtown section of Chappaqua to the Depot Plaza in violation of Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's proviso that the plaza be kept as a public park to provide a unique feeling of green open space.

- As quoted in the NYS Parks and Recreation document, "Shops and public buildings like the Bell School, Town Hall and the new library now line South Greeley Avenue. And yet, thanks to Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's foresight in specifying that the depot plaza remain a public park, there is still a pleasant green oasis in its midst."

The construction of F-5 five story apartment buildings located in close proximity to the Depot Plaza would wrongfully despoil Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's specification and expectation that the Depot Plaza remain a public park with a pleasant green oasis in its midst by extending the busy downtown section of Chappaqua to the Depot Plaza.

The referenced NYS Parks and Recreation document that was submitted for Historic designation, noted that the fact that large buildings like the Bell School, Town Hall and the new library on South Greeley Avenue, as shown on the image above, that are far from Depot Plaza, were even considered in the assessment, bears witness to the fact that large buildings were taken into consideration during the assessment and were determined to be quite far enough away from the Historic Places to not adversely affect Gabrielle's proviso of green open space and a pleasant green oasis amidst the mentioned large buildings that are nowhere near the two Historic Places.

However, the Form Based Code proposal for the construction of large F-5 five story buildings that directly encroach upon Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's forever gift of green open space to the Town of New Castle is a violation of the trust, and infringes upon the faith that Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin placed in the Town of New Castle to preserve her gift.

The proposed F-5 five story buildings would create a significant visual derogation thereby disrupting the coherent natural landscape of the Chappaqua Railroad Depot and Depot Plaza, its historic character, and its value. The proposed five story buildings would offer no visual coherence and no visual integrity with the adjacent Chappaqua Railroad Depot and Depot Plaza. The proposed F-5 five story buildings would disrupt the existing landscape, would not integrate with the setting created by the two Historic Places, would disrupt the harmonious view of the two Historic Places, and thus would be a visual encroachment upon the two Historic Places by wrongfully extending the busy downtown section of Chappaqua to the Depot Plaza.

The two properties and their cultural value were designated as historic sites because they represented a significant and distinguishable entity and they embodied the historic nature in which the sites were conceived. The land for the historic Chappaqua Railroad Depot and the adjacent designed semi-circular serene Depot Plaza garden that is full of sunshine, was part of Horace Greeley's farm was donated by the Greeley family with the proviso that the Chappaqua Railroad Depot and surrounding Depot Plaza landscape would remain as designed for residents and visitors alike to enjoy for generations to come ad infinitum. The property was donated by the Greeley family which also reflects upon the importance of Horace Greeley as the editor and publisher of the New York Tribune newspaper and as a former presidential candidate.

The Greeley name is deeply embedded in the history of Chappaqua, the Horace Greeley home is now the New Castle Historical Society, North Greeley Avenue and

South Greeley Avenue are main streets within the hamlet, and Horace Greeley High School has national prominence. In addition Woodburn Avenue, the street leading from South Greeley Avenue to the Chappaqua Railroad Depot, was named after a Greeley family member. Additionally, one of the several national Horace Greeley statues is located in Chappaqua.

The Depot Plaza was designed as a pleasant location where residents (and visitors) can eat, relax, reflect, and read a newspaper or a book (and these days use a cell phone). In addition, the annual Town of New Castle Memorial Day parade that honors our fallen veterans concludes with speeches at the Depot Plaza and is most often attended by our present and former National, State, and County politicians including Governor Cuomo, former President Clinton and former Secretary of State Clinton (both Chappaqua residents).

The proposed Form Based Code did not adequately consider the landscape and the visual detractor of F-5 five story buildings directly surrounding Depot Plaza because the Town of New Castle did not name the NYS Parks and Recreation as an interested agency to provide an environmental impact study and provide a visual impact assessment including viewsheds and the impact of tall building shadows upon the serene Depot Plaza garden that is full of sunshine. Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's proviso of green open space and a pleasant green oasis for residents and visitors alike to enjoy for generations to come ad infinitum must be maintained to adhere to the proviso associated with her gift to the Town of New Castle.

Constructing F-5 five story buildings in close proximity to these Historic Places with their aesthetic historical significance would visually impair their ability to convey their historical significance and would impair the intended ability of people to enjoy and appreciate the historical significance of these Historic Places in an open environment unimpeded by the distraction and shadow of dominating tall buildings. Tall adjacent buildings would be a visual blight upon the intended purpose for which the Greeley family gifted their property to the Town of New Castle.

Although there is no requirement for the Town of New Castle to name NYS Parks and Recreation as an interested agency as part of the SEQRA process, naming the NYS Parks and Recreation as an interested agency is not only permissible but as demonstrated above, there is more than sufficient reason to name NYS Parks and Recreation as an interested agency as part of the SEQRA process.

Based upon my conversations with two persons of authority in NYS Parks and Recreation, both expressed concern with F-5 five story buildings situated in close proximity to the Chappaqua Railroad Station and Depot Plaza for reasons detailed above. It is both urgent and advisable to obtain an opinion other than that provided by the Town Historian (which I sadly and respectfully disagree with based upon the above).

Based upon the above, will the Town of New Castle name the New York State Parks and Recreation as an interested agency and if not why not. Please be very specific in your reply annotating why you disagree with the above cogent reasoning other than a generic, the Town Historian said so.

Thank you for your concerned attention to preserve Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's gift to the Town of New Castle respecting her proviso. Please keep in mind that dishonoring the terms under which Gabrielle Greeley Clendenin's made a gift to the Town of New Castle would set a very poor example for future donors who may consider providing a gift to the Town of New Castle not knowing if the provisos associated with their gift would be honored ad infinitum.

Ed Frank
Chappaqua Resident
01/07/2020