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BY E-MAIL & BY HAND DELIVERY

Chairperson Eva Alligood  
and Members of the Planning Board  
Village of Hastings-on-Hudson  
Municipal Building  
7 Maple Avenue  
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706

RE: Electric Owl Holdings, LLC  
Site Plan (including Tree Removal), Subdivision, and Steep Slope  
Application & Architectural Review Board Referral  
Site: One South Broadway, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

Dear Chairperson Alligood and Members of the Planning Board:

On behalf of Electric Owl Holdings, LLC (the "Applicant"), we respectfully submit the Applicant's request for Site Plan Approval (including a Tree Removal Permit), Subdivision Approval, and Steep Slope Permit Approval to permit the construction of a multi-media production studio on the above-referenced Site consistent with the January 30, 2024 action by the Village's Board of Trustees adopting a Negative Declaration under the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA") and amending the Zoning Ordinance to establish the Multimedia Production Studio Overlay District, which then was mapped on this Site.

The adoption of a Negative Declaration by the Board of Trustees constituted a finding that this project would result in no significant adverse environmental impacts. (A copy of the Negative Declaration is enclosed as **Exhibit F**). As you know, the Planning Board, as an Involved Agency, was integral to the SEQRA process. The Applicant attended meetings with the Planning Board, which provided comments to the Board of Trustees throughout the year-plus review process.

**THIS MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION STUDIO COMBINES SUSTAINABILITY AND CREATIVITY**

For more than a century this Site, comprising approximately 25-acres of land, was operated exclusively as the Graham-Windham School residential campus, a not-for-profit residential school. As exempt property, no real estate taxes were paid by the School to the Village, or to any other taxing authorities. However, the Multimedia Production Studio will subdivide a 17.3-acre portion of this Site for this Studio use (the "Studio Site"), thereby placing it on the Village's tax rolls.

The Applicant has committed to developing the Studio using sustainable design and operating in a comparable manner. The Site Plan for the Studio includes the following key components, consistent with the plans shown to the Board of Trustees and Planning Board during the past year:

- Three (3) Studio buildings with sound stages that are situated along the southerly portion of the Studio Site.
  - The southerly walls of these three (3) buildings are staggered.
  - The façades of these three (3) buildings have been further articulated from the plans provided before adoption of the Zoning Amendment to address comments from the Board of Trustees.
  - The mechanical equipment on the roofs of the three (3) buildings has been shifted to the northerly roof areas farther from Dudley Street, as requested by the Board of Trustees.
  - The Studio buildings are designed with solar panels on the roofs to offset demand for electric power to the Studio use.
  - Because the terrain varies from east-to-west along this side of the Studio Site, the apparent heights of the buildings vary when viewed from the south, as illustrated in the elevations provided with this Application.
- Two (2) Mill and one (1) Wardrobe buildings will have Semi-Intensive Green Roof Meadows installed on an approximately 6-inch-deep soil base that will be planted with a native planting mix.<sup>1</sup>
- This expansion of the green roof systems on the Wardrobe and Mill buildings substantially increases the stormwater management infrastructure to be provided on the Studio Site, given that approximately 43,390 square feet of combined roof areas will manage approximately 106,000 gallons of stormwater via the proposed 6-inch-deep semi-intensive green roofs in comparison to only about 36,000 gallons via 1.5-inch-deep sedum green roofs. Detailed information, including calculations, is set forth in the enclosed Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (“SWPPP”), prepared by KimleyHorn, a copy of which is enclosed with this Application.
- A 4-level parking structure, which is excavated into the grade to minimize its height and exposure. The lower level will be available to the School, only. The upper 3-levels will be

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<sup>1</sup> While the final selection of plant species and percentage of seed mix will be determined later, some of the following plants are likely to be included: *Asclepias tuberosa* (Butterfly Weed); *Symphotrichum laeve* (Smooth Aster); *Aster ericoides* (White Heath Aster); *Liatris aspera* (Rough Blazing Star); *Monarda punctata* (Spotted Beebalm); *Ruellia humilis* (Wild Petunia); *Dalea purpurea* (Purple Prairie Clover); *Lupinus perennis* (Wild Lupine); *Solidago speciosa* (Showy Goldenrod); *Verbena urticifolia* (White Vervain); *Geum canadensis* (White Avens); *Penstemon digitalis* (Tall White Beardtongue); *Rudbeckia hirta* (Black Eyed Susan); Native Grasses: *Bouteloua curtipendula* (Sideoats Grama); *Koeleria macrantha* (Junegrass); *Schizachyrium scoparium* (Little Bluestem); and *Sporobolus heterolepis* (Prairie Dropseed).



accessible only to the Studio with each of those levels interconnected for vehicular circulation or access.

- A green vegetated wall element has been added to the westerly and northerly façades of the parking structure to enhance screening.
- Four (4) existing structures will be retained on the Studio Site, including the architecturally significant Administration Building, which will be utilized for administrative purposes with a dining area and food services provided in the lower level.
- Access and parking for two (2) uses on the Site have been separated with the Studio use having discrete vehicular access to the south, and the School use having a new driveway constructed to the north.
- Sufficient sightlines will be maintained along South Broadway for each of the two (2) uses.
- There will be no significant increase in vehicular traffic along South Broadway (as noted in the Negative Declaration at pages 16-18).
- Pedestrian access along South Broadway will be improved by the construction of a new sidewalk on the westerly side of South Broadway from the driveway for the Studio Site northerly to the Church driveway, although the Studio use does not generate meaningful walking traffic (which installation is subject to the Applicant securing consent of adjacent landowners, and further is conditional on approval from the New York State Department of Transportation). See Section 295-109(E).
- Sufficient parking will be provided for both the Studio Site and School uses, with flexibility being available through the use of valet parking, recognizing that demand for Studio parking varies throughout a production cycle. See Section 295-109(F).
- Detailed landscaping plans show the planting of 429 trees, 569 shrubs, and 9,515 perennials, mitigating impacts from the removal of 277 trees, 27% of which are dead, dying, or in poor condition, and 66% of which are invasive. See Section 273-7.

The enclosed set of plans has been expanded to better illustrate the details of the buildings and architecture for the Studio Site including, among other things, the following visuals:

- Updated renderings of the buildings on the Studio Site and illustrations of the overall project layout.
- Elevations of the buildings as seen from South Broadway and throughout the Studio Site.
- Renderings of the Semi-Intensive Green Roofs proposed on the Wardrobe and Mill buildings.
- Building floor plans to inform the Board regarding the use and operation of these buildings.
- Two (2) options for the façades of the Studio and Wardrobe buildings facing the southerly boundary of the Studio Site, which show differing architectural treatments of the façades and alternative colors.

- A material board is also provided to illustrate architectural details.

### **THE PROPOSED SITE PLAN IS FULLY COMPLIANT**

The Site Plan Application fully conforms with the dimensional criteria for the Multimedia Production Studio Overlay District. Moreover, the proposal before the Planning Board complies with the pertinent criteria set forth in the Village Code for Site Plan, Tree Preservation, Steep Slope, and Subdivision Approvals.

Nevertheless, as noted in the initial Application to the Board of Trustees, pursuant to Section 295-85.2(D)(h) of the recently adopted Zoning Amendment, a waiver for the setback of two (2) Studio buildings along the southerly portion of the property is requested from this Board, as these buildings will be setback 31.7 feet from the southern property line, where 50-feet is required absent the granting of the waiver. As discussed previously, this portion of the Site is the location of Studio Buildings 5 & 6 that are located between 120 feet and 175 feet from Dudley Street and contiguous to a perpetually dedicated open space lot, which is not developed. This physical distance from Dudley Street and any developed lot substantially mitigates potential impacts that could arise from a reduced setback. Moreover, these structures will be shielded from uses to the south with vegetation and colors and fenestrations that render them less visible. Further, the buildings are designed to take advantage of the topography and are recessed to minimize their visual impact. As such, we respectfully request that this Board grant the requested waiver.

The design and configuration of the proposed buildings and structures focus on maintaining a campus feel, which incorporates the iconic Administration Building and three (3) other existing structures (which altogether will only comprise 24% of the Studio Site's lot area). See Section 295-109(A) and (B). Substantial setbacks and landscaping will minimize the visibility of the buildings from neighboring properties, which will also utilize vegetated screening, subdued colors that blend in with the natural setting, including but not limited to, green-walls, and green roofs. See Section 295-109(A).

The Site currently lacks stormwater management for quality and quantity of run-off. The stormwater management plan for the Studio Site has been designed to utilize green roofs, while keeping impervious coverage below 40%. The pre- versus post-stormwater volumes will be reduced by approximately 30%, as more particularly detailed in the SWPPP. See Section 295-109(C). The stormwater management will substantially improve water quality and reduce negative impacts to adjacent properties in the area.

A Steep Slope Permit has been requested to permit the disturbance of 15-acres having slopes of zero-15%, 0.65 acres having slopes of 15-25%, and 0.95 acres having slopes in excess of 25%. In order to avoid any adverse impacts on steep slopes, existing topsoil will be removed and stockpiled for later reuse, grading will blend into natural contours, temporary soil stabilization measures will be utilized during construction, and erosion controls will be implemented. See Section 249-7.



**A TWO-LOT SUBDIVISION IS REQUESTED AS PART OF THIS APPLICATION**

As a part of this proposal, the Applicant is requesting approval of a Subdivision to create two (2) lots, each with a distinct tax parcel designation: (a) one lot of approximately 17.3-acres for the Studio Site, as described above; and (b) the other lot of approximately 6.7-acres for the School that will remain in operation. The subdivision will ensure the Village will be able to enforce the Zoning Code for each of these uses and enable each lot to be separately owned and operated. As noted previously, the Studio Site will be placed on the Village's real estate tax rolls. All drawings associated with this request for a Subdivision Approval are enclosed, as required under Article XIII of the Zoning Code.<sup>2</sup>

**THE PROJECT COMPLIES WITH CRITERIA CONSIDERED BY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**

The Applicant respectfully requests that this Application be referred by the Planning Board to the Village's Architectural Review Board, pursuant to Section 101-13(C) of the Village Code. The proposal complies with the review criteria of the Architectural Review Board. The design of the Studio Site preserves the campus feel of the Site, incorporating four (4) historic buildings. The architecture utilizes subdued colors and natural screening. It also situates the buildings in a manner compatible to and benefited by the topography achieving a balance that is compatible to surrounding buildings. See Section 101-13(D)(1). Through the utilization of grading and screening, including green vegetated walls, the proposed structures will not be significantly visible from public viewpoints – this will be furthered through the use of green roofs on the roofs of the Mill and Wardrobe buildings. See Section 101-13(D)(2). The architectural treatment of the façades of the Studio, Mill, and Wardrobe buildings will minimize any impact to adjacent properties, while the placement of mechanical equipment on the northerly segments of the roofs of the Studio buildings will minimize visibility from Dudley Street. See Section 101-13(D)(3). These design elements are focused on preserving the public welfare and neighboring property values. See Section 101-13(E). It is noted that in the Negative Declaration, the Board of Trustees stated that the proposed architectural design of the project reflects the existing character of the Site. See Negative Declaration at page 13.

**ENCLOSURES AND CONCLUSION**

For this Board's review and consideration, we respectfully submit the enclosed documents and the plans/drawings listed thereon:

Exhibit A: List of Plans/Drawings Enclosed;

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<sup>2</sup> The two (2) lots to be created by this Subdivision comprise approximately 17.3-acres for the Studio Site and 6.670-acres for the School. There is a slight discrepancy in the acreage detailed on the Preliminary Subdivision Plat as compared to the other site plan drawings, but that discrepancy is believed to be a rounding error of no substantive impact. The discrepancy promptly will be resolved and clarified to this Board.

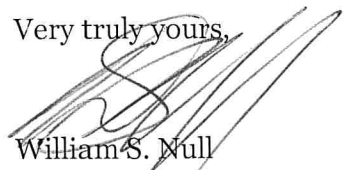
- Exhibit B: Completed Planning Board Application Form with Proof of Owner Authorization;
- Exhibit C: Completed Site Plan Application Checklist;
- Exhibit D: Completed Steep Slope Permit Application Checklist;
- Exhibit E: Completed Architectural Review Board Application Form;
- Exhibit F: SEQRA Negative Declaration, adopted January 30, 2024;
- Exhibit G: Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan dated January 31, 2024 (attached separately);
- Exhibit H: Building Materials Binder;
- Exhibit I: Lighting Specifications Binder; and
- Exhibit J: Steep Slope Impact Mitigation Statements.

Separate cover checks previously were delivered to the Village each made payable to "Village of Hastings-on-Hudson" in the respective amounts of \$3,400 and \$700, as payment of the relevant Site Plan Application Fees. Also, previously delivered was a check payable to "Village of Hastings-on-Hudson" in the amount of \$200, representing the Architectural Review Board review fee.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Village to enable Electric Owl Studio to be completed on the Studio Site and respectfully request that this Application be placed on the Planning Board's next available Agenda with such meeting being conducted as Public Hearings for the Subdivision, Site Plan Approval, and Steep Slopes Permit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



William S. Null

Enclosures

cc: Mary Beth Murphy, Village Manager; Anthony Costantini, Village Clerk; Linda Whitehead, Esq., Village Attorney; Patrick Cleary, Village Planner; Douglas J. Hahn, P.E.; Michael Hahn & Dan Rosenfelt, Electric Owl Holdings, LLC; Granoff Architects; Griffco Design Build; Kimley-Horn Engineering and Landscape Architecture of New York, P.C.; New York Green Roofs LLC; Maximillian R. Mahalek, Esq.; and Graham Windham School