



February 6, 2015

Supervisor Chris Burdick, and
Members of the Town Board
Town of Bedford
321 Bedford Road
Bedford Hills, New York 10507

Re: Conservation Development
118 Acres at Crusher Road and Old Post Road

Dear Supervisor Burdick and members of the Town Board:

Wilder Balter Partners, Inc. ("WBP") is proposing to develop a master-planned community on the 118 acres located south of Old Post Road, including and east of Crusher Road. Our working title has been Bedford Farm but we intend to settle on a final name in the coming months. The purposes of this letter and submission are: 1) to submit our application for a Conservation Development special permit for this development; 2) to request to be placed on your February 24th Town Board agenda and 3) to describe our proposed Conservation Development Plan.

The Property consists of 3 parcels: 1) 113 acres of land formerly approved as the Bedford Ponds Subdivision (and later proposed as the Rippowam Cisqua High School); 2) a contiguous ¼ acre lot at the intersection of Vinton Avenue and Old Bedford Road and 3) 5 acres at the intersection of Crusher Road and Old Post Road (known to many as "the Ruti property").

While the Property lays out well for a zoning compliant 58 lot Conventional Subdivision, we believe that there are many advantages to instead develop the property as a Conservation Development. The Town Board Special Permit for a Conservation Development approval would give the Planning Board the option to consider the Bedford Farm development as a Conservation Development rather than a Conventional Subdivision. The intent of the Conservation Development provisions is set forth under section 125-51 of the Bedford Zoning Code:

"It is the purpose of this article to enable and encourage flexibility of design and development of land in such a manner as to preserve its natural and scenic qualities, protect areas of meaningful ecological value, reduce flood hazards, facilitate the adequate and economical provision of streets and utilities, minimize negative environmental impacts, improve the aesthetic quality of new residential developments, expand the variety of housing opportunities, encourage the conservation of energy, increase recreational opportunities and otherwise promote the planned and environmentally desirable use of land..."



Bedford Farm will be an age-targeted residential community with an integrated affordable housing component. The land plan, homes and amenities are being designed to attract those selling their existing homes but wanting to stay in the Bedford area. We expect our buyers to come predominantly from Bedford and other Northern Westchester communities. Our residents will choose to live here because of their desire to live in beautifully designed, low-maintenance, energy efficient homes - most with first floor master bedroom suites, that are part of a master-planned pedestrian oriented community with many on-site and nearby amenities. Our on-site amenities will include a large and well-appointed clubhouse that will offer concierge services for the convenience of our residents, a heated pool, several gazebos and sitting areas, formal and informal walking paths, gardens, approximately 70 acres of adjacent open space, and a 4 acre neighborhood farm that will grow produce for our residents and other local people and restaurants. The A&P shopping center is across the street and Bedford Village is a ten-minute walk.

Specifically, our Conservation Development plan will consist of the following elements:

1. An age-targeted community of 70 single family and attached homes (in two unit buildings) plus 9 affordable homes distributed throughout the site.
2. The affordable homes will be in compliance with both the Bedford Affordable Housing Provisions of section 125-29.6 of the Bedford Zoning Code and the Westchester County Fair and Affordable Housing guidelines.
3. High performance construction standards. Many WBP communities include one or more of the following: LEED, Energy Star, Solar arrays, geothermal HVAC and green stormwater practices.
4. A 5,000 square foot clubhouse with features such as: a gym, personal training space, catering kitchen, great-room, billiards room, bathrooms, screening room and possibly an indoor pool.
5. A four-acre neighborhood farm that will grow local produce for our residents, other local residents and restaurants. A full time farmer will live in a single family affordable home on the farm.
6. Over four miles of sidewalks and trails.
7. Approximately 70 of the 118 acres will be preserved as open space, including the lands bordering the Mianus River, a class AA special river. We will work with the



community to develop an appropriate preservation plan while at the same time make the open space available to the Farms neighborhood and our future residents.

8. A wastewater treatment facility.
9. A community water system. Through the previous applications for this property there have been high production wells developed that have been demonstrated to not draw down the aquifer and not negatively effect any neighboring wells. We may also discuss with the Town requesting that WBP improve the water supply capacity of the Farms Water District and extend the District to serve this development instead of our creating our own community water system.
10. Road improvements on one or more sections of Old Post Road that abut the Bedford Farm property.

Enclosed are the following items for your board's consideration:

1. A completed Special Permit Application Form.
2. A colored, zoning compliant Conservation Development Plan with 79 homes (70 market rate and 9 affordable).
3. Illustrations depicting the architecture and character of our proposed community.
4. A zoning compliant Conventional Subdivision Plan with 58 single family lots (6 homes would be affordable), a wastewater treatment facility and a community water system.
5. An overlay plan that illustrates the Conservation Development Plan's additional buffers and preserved open space beyond those provided by the Conventional Subdivision Plan (note the legend on the top right of the drawing).
6. A preliminary planning and environmental analysis of the subject property.

Planning Purposes and Benefits of the Conservation Development Approach

1. From a planning perspective, the "flexibility of design and development of land" allows Bedford Farm to be a pedestrian friendly community that fosters the



personal connections possible when each home does not have to be on one or two-acre lots.

2. While the Conventional Subdivision Plan is zoning compliant and could be built to “preserve the natural and scenic qualities, protect areas of meaningful ecological value” and mitigate negative environmental impacts, the residential development area of the Conventional Plan is approximately 30% larger than the Conservation Development Plan resulting in the Conservation Development Plan providing further opportunities for environmental protection and scenic buffering. Specifically:
 - a. The Conservation Development Plan allows the creation of this special master-planned residential community with all of the elements described above.
 - b. The Conservation Development Plan creates larger buffers to surrounding neighbors in the Farms, neighbors across Crusher Road and from the A&P shopping center.
 - c. The Conservation Development creates more affordable housing integrated on site in a truly unique setting, thereby furthering the goal of the Town of Bedford as exemplified in recent legislative enactments. We have confirmed with Westchester County that these affordable homes would count toward the Town and County’s obligation to provide fair and affordable housing.
 - d. The Conventional Subdivision Plan protects the on-site vernal pool in a way that would not require a wetland permit but the Conservation Development Plan provides much greater buffers around the vernal pool.
 - e. The Conservation Development Plan preserves approximately 70 acres of the property and makes publically available more than 50 acres of open space as a community amenity, visible and accessible to all our future residents as well as available for walking to other Bedford residents. In contrast, the Conventional Subdivision Plan makes the ponds and open space accessible to only our 13 new lots that abut it.
 - f. The Conservation Development allows for the creation of the 4-acre neighborhood farm.



We have had many conversations with stakeholders including boards and individuals such as: the Bedford Planning Board, Blue Mountain Housing Development Corporation, the Mianus River Gorge, the Westchester Land Trust, Bedford's Open Space Committee, neighbors and other local residents and several local business operators. We look forward to working with the Town and the many stakeholders on this exciting project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Balter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William G. Balter
President

Enc.

cc: Bedford Planning Board
Bedford Conservation Board
Bedford Wetlands Board
Bedford Open Space Committee
Blue Mountain Housing Development Corporation