

**Answers to Questions From Residents – regarding Baltimore Ridge Project
From the Village Board – March 3, 2021**

Intro – The Board realizes that some individuals are opposed to the growth of the Village of Marcellus, as some were when the property was annexed back in 1978. However, residents should also be aware that growth is inevitable and that a municipality can best protect the interests of its citizens by insuring that development is done in an orderly, beneficial manner. It is this type of development that is proposed for the Village of Marcellus, and by working together we will be able to reserve the integrity and character of the Village. The Board feels that this will be a great addition to the community, enabling many families to move into our community, families in the mold of those who have settled in Marcellus in the past, such as those who built homes in the Wilson Tract beginning in 1945.

Why is there only one (1) proposal for this development? This development is for a privately owned parcel of property in the village. What has been proposed involves 20 acres of land that is owned by a private person and because it is in the Village, the Village protects the interests of its citizens to ensure that the development is done in an orderly, legal and beneficial manner. The Village is not collaborating with the owner of the property, nor is it conspiring with the developer (i.e. the owner of the property). The Village cannot dictate what a property owner does with his/her own property, but it can make sure that all proper and legal steps are followed. This is how development takes place, and the Village could hardly ask that a RFP (Request for Proposal) be required for property that it does not own.

Will the Town be asked to weigh in on it under a coordinated review? Yes there will be coordination between the Town and the Village and with the County in particular, since South Street Rd is a County highway. Since this is a Type 1 action for SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review Act), a coordinated review is required. To start that process, the Planning Board would be the one to declare its intent to be Lead Agency on this project. Once that happens, coordination packages need to be provided to involved and interested agencies, such as the DEC, County DOT, County Planning, etc. These agencies then have 30 days to respond as to whether they have any objection to the Village declaring their intent to be Lead Agency. If after 30 days there is no objection, the next step would be for the Village to pass a resolution to be Lead Agency and continue the SEQR process.

Will there be construction oversight/acceptance documentation on behalf of the Village? Jim Oberst of MRB Group is the Village Engineer and his services as well as those of Village Attorney, Jeff Brown, have been and will continue to be utilized.

What will be the effect on property tax revenue? From the Village's perspective, we are compiling the numbers, and should be able to explain the tax revenue that can be generated upon full development. There is no doubt that this will introduce new revenue to the Village and would substantially increase rather than decrease the value of nearby properties.

Will the project cause taxes in the Village, already very high, to increase? Village property taxes have not increased since 2016. In 2011, the tax was \$6/1000 and since 2016 the tax has been \$6.85/1000. Compared with other villages in the County, the tax in Marcellus Village is relatively low. In B-Ville it is \$7.52/1000, in nearby Camillus it is \$7.36/1000, in Jordan it is \$8.01/1000, in Liverpool it is \$12.45/1000, in Minoa (probably the best comparable) it is \$9.23/1000. Nearby Skaneateles has a very low tax rate of \$3.12/1000 but this can be attributed to the fact that the assessed property valuation is \$496,286,700 while in Marcellus it is \$87,152,881, or 5 times that of Marcellus. This project would help

to maintain the tax rate as it is, as well as enable the Village to maintain and perhaps upgrade its infrastructure without raising taxes substantially or going into debt by borrowing for projects.

Isn't the Village sewer system overtaxed, as we are reminded all the time in every Village newsletter? First, the sewer system is not overtaxed ever since it was upgraded in 2013 with a major reconstruction and relining of the sanitary sewer line, a \$700,000 project for which the Village was able to obtain a NYS grant. In addition, in 2013-2014 the Village began a sump pump inspection program, which was most effective in reducing non-sewage inflow into the Village's treatment plant. Because of these two projects, the treatment plant's capacity has been increased significantly and will easily absorb not only the sewage generated from this project but from future development that might occur in the Village. The issue of an overtaxed sewer system has not been mentioned in any Village newsletter since 2013. What has been a subject of concern in every newsletter in recent years and which has caused sewer rates to increase considerably, was the mandate by the NYS DEC to reduce the level of phosphorus from the treatment's effluent. This was an order by the State of New York and although we fought it for a number of years, the Village was forced to upgrade the plant to the tune of \$8 million. By law, it is only from the sewer rates that treatment plant upgrades can be funded. The Village sewer rate (which is not a tax) is still lower than almost every other treatment plant in the County, including Metro.

Why are the sewer lines being installed at Baker and Dunlap, rather than down the new access road to South Street? There are stubs at Baker and Dunlap and these lines are more than adequate, having been relined back in 2013. In addition, if the new road were used, a new manhole and sewer line would have to be installed down the new access road and another north to the existing sewer line on South Street. Also, the elevation on South Street is rather low and would probably require a new pump station to reach the proper elevation for gravity flow.

What about Sidewalks? The Village has sidewalks in much of the Village and our desire is to continue to promote a walkable community. To ensure continuity of the sidewalks located throughout the Village, it would be a costly to extend from the current sidewalks through the existing neighborhood, and into the new development, a cost that would fall to the municipality. However, since there are not sidewalks in the adjacent existing development, the Village will not require them as part of this development as is and has been the case in the Wilson Tract since 1945. In addition potential sidewalk installation in the future might be considered, perhaps from the increased tax revenue that is expected from the project. Also, the Village line ends at the Loewer property, and extending new sidewalk on the west side of South Street would mean negotiating with the Town to install such.

Won't additional traffic from the project eliminate safe walkways especially for school children in the nearby tract? At present, school children do not need to walk in the road on their way to school since busses pick up school children in the Wilson Tract. Since this development is proposed to extend off of an existing residential community the likelihood of through traffic is anticipated to be minimal and the speed limit will be very low.

What about privacy in a neighborhood that is a "closed circle" and offers a quiet and safe community for residents and kids and pedestrians? In a village setting, such as Marcellus, homes are usually smaller in size, and privacy can be a concern for many, unlike those beyond the Village. The Village Comprehensive Plan confirms that all new development will respect and complement existing surroundings by encouraging targeted types of development to locate in preferred areas in and around the Village and ensuring that street and pathway connections link existing Village neighborhoods.

Eliminating dead end streets by looping them with adjacent roads should be a goal. New development adjacent to existing neighborhoods should be tied to the Village by a system of street, bicycle, sidewalk and pedestrian ways. Such facilities would be established as new development occurs and, in existing areas, as funding becomes available. The entire Village might be looped with sidewalks, and priority should be given to the installation of sidewalks in those areas of the Village where they are conspicuous by their absence. A number of street in the Village are dead-ended. However, older maps of the Village originally did not call for dead ends streets. For example, Highland Drive was supposed to extend south all the way to Reed Street and Second Street was supposed to connect with Kelly Ave. Chrysler and Paul Streets led to what was once the Upper Mill, and were more a pedestrian walkway for mill workers to and from home rather than an automobile route. In the future, these, combined with Bradley Street might become connected with the new Creekwalk as pedestrian pathways once again. As for Academy Green, that is a private driveway and not a Village street.

What about the removal of so many trees? Keeping trees should be a priority and this is a serious concern of neighbors and residents. An appropriate strategy for developing (clearing and grubbing) the lots and street right of way will be incorporated into the SWPPP. Also, there is concern with the stumps and debris from clearing and grubbing – taken off site or buried on site – the former is preferred. There should be no dumpsite in the development, as there was on Kinderwood.

What about proposed streetscape landscaping requirements in the 60' ROW?

Any streetscaping in the row would be the responsibility of the developer and will be something that the Planning Board will evaluate during the review process. We agree that streetscaping would enhance this development, however, it is important that any proposed trees be located in such away so as not to conflict with new utilities, lighting and a corridor for a potential future sidewalk.

Why is the number of homes being considered for this development so many and the size of the lots so extremely small? The number of homes is that which conforms to the original 1978 covenant and the lots proposed are various in sizes to allow for different buyer price points. In the Wilson Tract, nearby homes on Hillside, Baker and Dunlap average about 16,500 sq. ft. In the new development, lot sizes average about 17,000 sq. ft.

What are the negative drainage impacts from this development on surrounding properties?

Storm water drainage is a critical issue in the Village and this development will create a lot of new impervious surfaces. It will be important that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be developed that is well thought out so that there are no negative impacts from this development to surrounding properties. Much of the land in this and the surrounding area is running sand and some residents have installed drainage tiles to take water away from the house, as has been the case in other parts of the Village - the Village, after all, lies in a valley. This is why the installation of an in-ground pool might be a problem and back yards remain wet even during the summer. This may also be an opportunity to potentially mitigate some existing drainage issues if there are any that currently exist in that area. A SWPPP for the entire development (east and west) should be developed before anything is done in the area.

What about development on the steep slopes on the proposed western parcels? Development would be on some fairly steep slopes and the developer has addressed this somewhat during the sketch meetings with the planning board. However, the board needs to pay particular attention to how what is proposed is to be developed. Unless done correctly, this could turn into a long term stormwater and

erosion control issue for these future homeowners, who will eventually show up at a Village Board meeting (well after the developer is gone) asking the Village to help address their issues – similar to Highland Drive issues

Who will own the storm water management area parcel and who will provide long term O&M for ensuring performance? Is the Village requiring a storm water maintenance and access agreement for the long term O&M of the drainage system consistent with DEC requirements? It is assumed that the developer will propose that this pond be dedicated to the Village, which means that the Village takes on the responsibility and costs for annual maintenance. This is something the Village will need to decide if they want to take on. If the pond is kept under control by the developer (for example through an HOA) then it would be recommended that there be a stormwater maintenance agreement in place which allows the Village to perform maintenance on the pond should the responsible party fail to do so (with any Village costs then back charged to the responsible party).

Why is the proposed development being accessed through Baker and Dunlap Ave as well as off South Street Road? What is the logic behind why Baker Road and Dunlap Avenue are even being considered as access roads to the proposed development? It certainly can't be for emergency vehicles, as Wilson Road (Baker, Dunlap, Hillside), Flower Lane, Park Street, Chrysler Street, Paul Street, Bradley Street and Academy Green have no multiple access roads. So, clearly, it's not NEEDED in the proposed development. The CEO contacted the Department of State Division of Building Standards and Codes (DBSC) and was told that even though the new portion of the development (24 new units) does not exceed 30, the total number of (56 + 24) 80 units in the development far exceeds the 30 units allowed without a second FAAR (Fire Apparatus Access Road). The second access road is needed in case one access road for any reason becomes unusable. This requirement is not surprising and it will be constructed to village standards. In addition, it might also be maintained as a "creek walk" style access road to South Street. Also, the 1978 Covenant calls for the extension of Baker and Dunlap as well as the construction of a new access road from South Street. That is why there are paved extensions into the new development.

Isn't there a sight distance issue with regard to the access road off South Street into the development? Yes, the road intersection onto South Street may have a sight distance issue which could potentially require some clearing or re-grading of the banks on the north (Dean) side. Since this portion of South Street is a County Road, the County DOT will have the ultimate jurisdiction on review, approval and permitting of any curb cut on South Street. Similarly, drainage discharges off site / down South Street will need to have the flow path evaluated and upgraded, as necessary, to assure that there are no negative impacts.

Will developer be required to provide a performance bond for Village streets in order to ensure construction is consistent with Village standards and will MRB oversee construction/acceptance testing? The developer will be required to provide a performance bond for Village streets in order to ensure construction is consistent with Village standards and MRB will oversee construction/acceptance testing. Improvements will probably be required on the existing Baker (especially) and Dunlap Streets leading into the subdivision. The adjacent neighborhood will emphasize this point. So as to prevent use of Baker and Dunlap during construction, these roads should be blocked off and all access should be from the new road off South Street.

Are streetlights proposed? Does the Village wish to require street lights here, consistent with the standard that is in place in other portions of the Village? Street Lights will be required consistent with the historic light poles that are in place in other portions of the Village, possibly a double head at the access road at South Street.

What about walkway access to Baltimore Woods through this new development? It is and has often been used in the past to enjoy nature, hiking, bird watching, to walk dogs, etc. It is certainly an environmental treasure that is and has been privately owned for over 40 years. It has been enjoyed by many over the years, including young people who have found it to be a welcome and private gathering spot and by some who have viewed it as a public preserve, rather than private property.

What about the Marcellus Village Codes, particularly Chapter 73, Environmental Protection? Chapter 73 of the Village Codes does call for environmental protection overlay districts, but the Chapter is a Reserved Chapter, which means that a space in the Code Book is reserved for future use. This is typically done when it is conceivable that an amended version might be forthcoming and it is desirable to keep the numbering system intact so that there will not be a need to create a 'new' statute or section. In other words, Chapter 73 is not an enforceable part of the Village Codes but could be in the future.

Will there be an increase in refuse/trash rates because of the new development? No. Trash rates, which are quite low compared with other communities, are negotiated every three years and the new residents will absorb the cost of adding 24 new residential homes.

What about any endangered species or historic sites in the proposed development that need protection? The long environmental assessment form of the SEQRA will determine if there are any endangered species within the property. SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office), an arm of the NYS Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Department will determine if there are any potential impacts to historic sites located near this development.