

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND PARKS COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF MONTEBELLO WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2021 ON ZOOM. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:04 P.M. FOLLOWED BY THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Present:	Lisa Levin	Chairperson
	Dorice Madronero	Member
	Rosemary Mocio	Member
	Matt Moetzinger	Member
	Robert Israel	Member
	Josh Goldstein	Member
	Tony Piazza	Member
Others Present:	Warren Berbit	Village Attorney
	Regina Rivera	Planning & Zoning Clerk
Absent:	Bill Ellsworth	Member
	Craig Long	Village Historian/HPPC Advisor

**Montebello Gateway LLC—Site Plan, Special Permit
34 North Airmont Road, Montebello, NY**

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Montebello Gateway, LLC, PO 782, Monsey, NY 10952. The Applicant is proposing the construction of a 3.5 -story, 46,400 square-foot office building with 227 parking spaces. The parcel is located at 34 North Airmont Road, on the northwest side of Airmont Road at the intersection of Montebello Road in the Village of Montebello, which is designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Section 55.07 Block 1 Lot 3 in the LO-C Zone.

Present were the Applicant, Berel Karniol and his associate Ari Klein, the Applicant’s attorney Paul Baum, engineer Joseph Nyitray of Brooker Engineering, PLLC, and architect Gabe Einhorn of AB Design.

Mr. Berbit described the project and explained that the proposed building will be out of the buffer zone of the Scenic and Historic Road District, which begins in the center of Montebello road and extends 250 feet to either side. However, the parking lot will encroach into that buffer necessitating a Certificate of Appropriateness from this Board. He then gave a brief history of the parcel and past proposed projects.

Mr. Berbit noted that the property is unusual because it is bound by front yards on three sides. The Village Code, mindful of the many restrictions of this parcel, allows the Planning Board to issue waivers for buffers to the three roads at their discretion. The Applicant is also seeking three variances from the Zoning Board of appeals for Ingress/Egress within 300 feet of residential district [required 300 feet, proposed 99 feet], Maximum Height [required 30 feet, proposed 36 feet], and Floor Area Ratio [required .20, proposed .24]. Primarily, he continued, this Board’s main consideration is the impact of the view looking south from Montebello Road and whether any impact has been fully mitigated with natural and additional vegetative buffers, berms and the like.

Chairperson Levin read the public hearing into the record, attested that hearing was properly posted and published on Monday April 18, 2021 and confirmed submission of the following by the Applicant:

- An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness received on April 12, 2021
- Narrative from Paul Baum dated March 18, 2021
- Pages 1 and 2 of the site plan dated February 11, 2021 with a latest revision date of March 19, 2021 from Brooker Engineering, PLLC.
- Page 7 of the site plan entitled “Lighting Plan” from Brooker Engineering, PLLC.
- Sheet No. L-701 entitled “Planting Plan” with a latest revision date of March 23, 2021 from Yost Design Landscape Architecture.
- Sheet No. L-801 entitled “Details Sheet” from Yost Design Landscape Architecture

Mr. Berbit noted further that the Planning Board was Lead Agency for SEQR, adopted a Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact (Neg Dec) on March 9, 2021, and granted all requested waivers for reductions of the front yards, the number of loading berths and the buffer to the residential zone.

The Board having been properly briefed on the history of the application, Member Madronero made a motion to open the public hearing, seconded by Member Mocio and upon vote, all were in favor.

Mr. Baum explained that this project has gone through several iterations during its time in front of the Planning Board. Initially, the building faced North Airmont Road and was within the buffer of the Historic and Scenic Road Overlay District along Montebello Road. Throughout several Planning Board meetings, the project evolved and is now oriented out of that District and designed as an extension of the Executive Boulevard corporate drive.

Mr. Baum said that while the building is out of the buffer, some parking encroaches. Robust landscaping on all three front yards is proposed and the existing trees will remain, all helping to minimize the visual impact from Montebello Road as well as from the residential zone.

The Planning Board completed its SEQR review by issuing a Neg Dec, and the ZBA is considering the three requested variances he said. The ZBA’s only issue thus far is a letter from the Tallman Fire Department dated July 2020 in which they request access to the site through Montebello Road. The Fire Department has since clarified in their letter dated April 19, 2021, that this access road is not necessary, he said.

Chair Levin asked if any of the plantings will be evergreen, noting that deciduous trees will not screen as well in the winter. Mr. Nyitray directed the Board to the planting schedule on the landscaping plan that was submitted showing some evergreens and explained that there will be berms with plantings on top on the residential, Montebello Road and North Airmont sides which will mitigate visual impact of the building and parking and will shield the headlights from those areas.

Member Madronero asked the height of the berms. Mr. Nyitray said the berms will be three or four feet high. Member Madronero noticed that ornamental grasses planted on the berms will help with erosion but will likely be trimmed back in the winter leaving the views exposed. This area is the gateway to the Village, she continued, and how it is seen is important. It is vital that the nature of the road be preserved.

Mr. Baum clarified that the decorative grasses will be on the Executive Boulevard side and the deciduous and evergreen trees will be on the other three sides, but more coniferous trees can be added.

The Applicant is willing to work with the Board in any way necessary to enhance the landscaping to their liking, he said. Member Madronero asked if the fallen trees in the preserved buffer will be cleaned up. Mr. Nyitray said they will be removed and cleaned up, and the existing stone walls will be repaired and restored.

A discussion ensued regarding the waivers given by the Planning Board. Mr. Nyitray explained that the front yard requirement is 50 feet but it is measured from the landscaped buffer. The Planning Board is allowed to waive or decrease these front yards at their discretion they have granted them, as noted earlier. Member Madronero asked about the sloping to the parking lot. Mr. Nyitray explained that the land slopes down from North Airmont to the parking lot, which will be nine feet approximately below the road. From there it will slope about 5% on the way down to the Executive Boulevard entrances, and near the residential areas, there will be additional sloping by about 5%.

Member Israel wanted to know the color and aesthetics of the proposed building. Mr. Nyitray shared his screen and showed a rendering of the glass building and explained that the original building in the overlay district needed to compliment the surrounding architecture such as Village Hall. Once it was moved out of the district and oriented towards Executive Boulevard, the aesthetics changed to compliment the commercial buildings there.

Member Goldstein remained concerned that the building will be seen clearly through the buffers on Montebello Road. Mr. Baum reiterated the vegetative measures proposed and posited that the building is not within this Board's purview since it is not in the overlay district. The focus is on impacts from Montebello Road to the Parking lot, a concern that that Planning Board shares, he said.

Mr. Berbit said that the building is outside the buffer, but the effect the building has on the view from Montebello Road is relevant and within this Board's purview, and he suggested that a rendering from Montebello Road looking south toward the building through the filter of trees would be helpful. He surmised that this issue, and the non-deciduous trees are the only points of hesitancy for this Board. Chair Levin agreed and requested that the rendering include the stone wall, the buffer behind that and the building beyond. Mr. Berbit said that once these materials are received, the Board may be in a position to act. Mr. Baum said he will give the directive to the landscape architect and noted that the building architect is on the line and available for questions.

Mr. Goldstein asked if the building will be a "green" building with things like solar panels. Architect Gabe Einhorn said that all mechanical systems will be energy-efficient according to the latest building codes, and that the team of designers were focused on making the building harmonious with nature by reflecting the clouds and sky. Member Madronero worried that birds will fly into the building and Mr. Einhorn assured her that it will not be mirrored. Member Madronero asked if the interior lights will remain on which could be a problem especially in the winter because this Village is averse to light pollution. Mr. Baum said that will be determined by the occupants of the spaces and was unsure of how much control the Applicant would have. The Board discussed their concerns over the lighting plan in general and light installations on the building and in the parking lot. Mr. Baum said the lighting plan is part of the site plan and assured the Board that he will relay all their concerns to the Planning Board.

No one else wishing to comment, Mr. Berbit recommended that the public hearing be continued pending submission of the requested renderings and plantings and consideration of more coniferous trees.

Member Goldstein made a motion to adjourn the public hearing to the May 26, 2021 HPPC meeting, seconded by member Mocio and upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the March 2021 HPPC meeting minutes

Member Mocio made a motion to approved ____ [meeting date] ____ meeting minutes, seconded by Member Madronero and upon vote all were in favor.

Seedlings for Lake Road; volunteers; need to read the grant instructions on how and where to plant; Dorice said someone from this Board should be there to witness, document and share with the village. Dorice clarified that the tree seedlings are under Parks jurisdiction because the Lake Street lots are deemed open space.

Zumba in the Park: for July and August outside by the Gazebo.

Signs on the trees in Kathy Gorman Ponds Park: tree signs on trees in the park that the lamination is coming loose. Make a list of each trees and she will re-order them.

Discussion about Village-owned open space; any parcel 5 acres or more should be named; an inventory of these parcels should be taken, perhaps there should be signage, and shared with all Village residents on the website; Board should take a fieldtrip to all the sites.

Rochambeau project: Warren and Craig have not yet completed the resolution. Warren will remind Craig.

Brochure of historic homes: Map spreadsheet is still in progress, crosschecking surveys and with historic photos. The Board hopes to reconvene with projections on narratives and photo captions, which houses to feature, etc. Once COVID restrictions ease, Board will meet with Jonathan Lockman.

Member Madronero made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. seconded by Member Moetzing and upon vote, all were in favor.