



# STRATEGIC LAND VENTURES

March 13, 2025

John F. Trefethen  
Chair, Ashland Zoning Board of Appeals  
101 Main Street  
Ashland, MA 01721

*Re: Response to MDM Inquiry/recommendation on proposed Driveway Alignment with Pleasant Street Intersection*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I wanted to respond to a MDM Transportation comment in its **Peer Review Letter** about the need to consider aligning the proposed Main Street point of egress with the Pleasant Street intersection/traffic light.

As part of our concept planning and initial site design development, we considered all design alternatives including the aforementioned driveway alignment. It was quickly determined that a driveway alignment was not feasible for many reasons. As the Town is aware, we are limited in possible site planning options by various Town requests and insistence that we maintain a portion of the historical structures; thus, we are not creating a site plan and architectural program from a blank slate. In addition, there are several environmental and conservation considerations that needed to be considered that will be factored into the eventual design.

A driveway alignment would negatively impact the proposed program in the following way:

1. It would necessitate the architectural program being broken down into two separate and distinct buildings. This would yield a far less efficient design program. For example, there would need to be a duplication of utilities, trash facilities, fire protection systems, loading areas and other building features singularly supported by the current design.

In addition, driveway alignment would disrupt the cohesiveness of the currently contemplated development plan not only horizontally, but also vertically as there is 10+ feet of elevation change to navigate from the front to rear of the property making the construction of a covered parking garage extremely challenging from a design perspective, while also being cost prohibitive.

2. The planned resident program would be compromised with several amenities, both interior and exterior, needing to be reduced or in some cases altogether eliminated.



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3. It would also result in more inefficient garage parking and a significant loss of parking spaces.
4. The proposed design provides access aisles around the entirety of the property which not only provides resident vehicles better access, but also allows emergency vehicles including fire trucks an ability to circumnavigate all of the buildings. Driveway alignment would eliminate this condition and fire trucks would not have access to all building sides.
5. A significant and unsightly exterior wall would need to be constructed. This wall would be costly, without providing any additional benefit to the residents or the project aesthetic.

In conclusion, we would also note that the project driveways have been redesigned in the manner that has been recommended by MDM to include turn restrictions at the Main Street South Driveway, as well as realigning the Myrtle Steet driveway to ensure that emergency vehicles and delivery trucks can access and circulate within the site in an unimpeded manner. In addition, the transportation analysis has confirmed that proper sight lines are afforded such that both driveways can function in a safe manner, and that safe and efficient access is being provided to the project without needing to compromise and degrade the site layout, building function and resident amenities, which are all a critical component to viability of the project and overall resident experience.

We appreciate your attention to this application. We look forward to continuing the public hearing process in the near future.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Engler  
SLV Ashland, LLC