



VILLAGE OF SAUGERTIES  
43 PARTITION STREET  
SAUGERTIES, N.Y. 12477  
PHONE: 845-246-2321 FAX: 845-246-0887

Planning Board Meeting and Public Hearings  
July 12, 2023  
**Minutes**

**Present:** Planning Board –Mike Karashay, Dara Ellenbogen, Anne Meiswinkel, Bill Barr, Rae Stang, Others: Ben Neidl, Scott Roebert, Christopher Coleman, Eyal Saad,

**Absent:** Doug Mulqueen

**Chairman Mike Karashay** opened the Planning Board Public Hearing and Meeting at 6:30pm.

**Public Hearing Struzzi Properties LLC 310 Main Street Special Use Permit**, Mike Karashay requested if anyone was present to speak at the Public Hearing. Mike asked the residents to keep comments to five minutes. Please be respectful of the people in the room and respectful to the applicant.

**Carlos Vidal 157 Washington Avenue -** speaking against 310 Main Street, Struzzi Properties, seven-bedroom complex to add to Diamond Mills. The Village is giving away valuable properties to Struzzi, we are losing in tax revenue because of all these special permits. Diamonds Mills was on sale for \$14 million, had a change of heart putting more money into it. New label Blackbarn for the tavern. I don't think it's enough for the Village to just give away to him to do whatever he wants. One day he will sell for more money, whoever owns the hotel, and he will be left without his good name.

**Steven Whistler 110 Market Street -** I don't know enough about the situation and would like to know more about it, is there someone here to speak about it before I weigh in. Chairman advised that they could write a letter or come to the next public hearing when Struzzi Properties have a representative to speak. Ben Neidl suggested going to the Village of Saugerties office requesting a copy of the plans for 310 Main Street.

**Jackie Russell 11 West Bridge Street –** Please see attached letter

**Niki Swarthout – 17 Robinson Street –** I really don't have any more to add to what Jackie has already said. I do stand in solidarity with her viewpoint and was so simply stated.

**Jen Hicks – 11 Jane Street –** I agree with Jackie and support all that has been said. I have a particular point of view. I have lived on Jane Street for many years, I have businesses and I know that there is a satellite hotel that Struzzi is building. Traffic, noise, traffic going down the wrong way, trucks blocking my driveway. Just voicing my concern.

**Marcy Pollitt - 27 Oakledge Park –** I am a psychotherapist and I work with children, office 15 years on the corner of West Bridge Street and Main St. I had to sit on the DPW truck to ensure the crosswalk got painted. My experience working with children they were terrified to pass the parking lot and the top of West Bridge Street. This project has no regard for this community with children. A community where kids should be able to walk to

school. We can't even the Town to paint a crosswalk. When they finally did, I had to stop them, they were going to leave, and I had to get them to paint the white line at the stop sign. Everyone uses West Bridge as a thoroughfare to get to the Thruway. This is going to add more traffic and less people who care. Who will be staying at the soon to be hotel and who is protecting our kids? Who are these strangers living in our community? Who's there tomorrow, the next day. These strangers not part of the fabric of the community. Think about your kids, think about your grandchildren. I completely think this is not a community-based project.

**Ruth Hersh** – Thank you all for coming out tonight, we could all be home watching Ted Lasso. Thank you, Jackie, for writing so well and to everyone else and everyone here who is a volunteer. We need people to volunteer, fire department or elsewhere. We need people here; we are going to wait and see what happens. I didn't know about the hearing in March. The houses, this is an office building, have been taken and I can't even it that the kitchens have been taken out to create bedrooms. We have a crisis; where are working families going to live. My family were nursing aids, and, in the trades, we would not be able to live here today. Taking mores houses out of the market is so distasteful. We need more housing for working people and not less. I am sorry not to have known this is happening. Maybe we can hold off on this one, even if it is kept as office. Thank you.

**Rae Stang makes a motion to keep the Public Hearing open for Struzzi Properties LLC 310 Main Street Special Use Permit. Bill Barr seconds the motion to keep the Public Hearing open for Struzzi Properties LLC 310 Main Street Special Use Permit. 3 in favor, 1 not in favor. The motion carried.**

**Public Hearing 105-107 Partition Street LLC Special Use Permit** – No residents signed up to speak at the Public Hearing for 105-107 Partition Street LLC. A letter from Deena Turner was submitted to the board. Please see attached.

**Rae Stang makes a motion to keep the Public Hearing open 105-107 Partition Street LLC Special Use Permit. Bill Barr seconds the motion to keep the Public Hearing open for 105-107 Partition Street Special Use Permit. 3 in favor, 1 not in favor. The motion carried.**

#### REGULAR MEETING

**Mike Karashay presented the meeting minutes from the June 14, 2023, Planning Board meeting. Anne Meiswinkel made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 14, 2023, Planning Board meeting. Rae Stang seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 14, 2023, Planning Board meeting. All in Favor. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mike Karashay advised the Board that both applications for 310 Main Street and 105-107 Partition Street are awaiting Ulster County Planning Board Response.

Mike Karashay started a discussion around the residence's feelings and concerns. The Planning Board reviewing the Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF) Part 2 Impact Assessment for 310 Main Street. (copy attached) The purpose of the SEAF document is for the Planning Board to answer the 11 questions and then determine if anything further is needed from the applicant. The form was not filled out at this time. Eyal Saad stated the applicant's property is private property, not policed, not public parking lot. The applicant's property was purchased and was not given to the applicant. The applicant could do without a Special Use Permit a restaurant, offices, retail store, school, and commercial recreation facility. FAQ documents could be created for public

understanding of what the definition of special use permits is and what is the responsibility of the Planning Board. The Planning Board discussion questions on SEAF No or small impact may occur or moderate to large impact may occur. Question 1 – no or small impact may occur, Question 2 – table with the discussion, Question 3 - leaning no or small impact may occur, Question 4 – no or small impact may occur, Question 5 - Discussion of short-term rental and hotel rooms, safety aspect, trash, lighting, assigning parking all in the Planning Board purview including ingress and egress plan needed of the property. Question 6 – no or small impact may occur, Question 7 – no or small impact occur, Question 8 – no or small impact occur, Question 9 – no or small impact may occur, Question 10 – no or small impact may occur, Question 11 – no or small impact may occur.

Andrew Zink – this is a good idea; would you like me to report back to the Village Board? The Planning Board FAQ would be responsible for writing the document. The Village Board would review for approval to distribute as needed.

**105-107 Partition Street** – Scott Roebert updated the Planning Board that they were given the lighting plan and just waiting on response for the Ulster County Planning Board. Christopher Connor stated last month asked if there were any issues or concerns and that once the response from the UCPB that we would be Are there any other issues we can address now when we come back for a vote?

Ben recapped parking requirements for in review Village Board in February voted on the idea to increase number of parking spaces in the residential zoning. They did not adapt to the local law and filed with Secretary of State. Mayor was presented with options such as who is grandfathered and who is not. One possibility the Village Board has it written from now on this is the rule current, but the following people are grandfather in current property occupiers and anyone who has a special use permit, or only people who have not broken ground or present only occupiers only people who have not broken ground are on their own.

If the Planning Board approves the special use permit, can give them the go ahead. The Village Board at some point will write a local law that could grandfather them or not. If they are not grandfathered there will litigation about whether they achieved a vested right by virtue of the investments they made already with the Zoning Board, Planning Board.

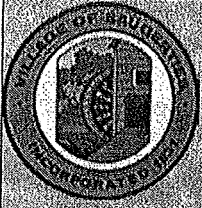
Discussion on Chairman Karashay requesting to move the meeting for next month to schedule Wednesday August 23, 2023 at 6:30PM.

**Dara Ellenbogen made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting. The motion to adjourn the Planning Board was seconded by Anne Meiswinkel. All in Favor. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.**

The date of the next Public Hearing and Planning Board meeting is **Wednesday, August 23rd at 6:30pm.**

Submitted by Peggy Melville

July 19, 2023



VILLAGE OF SAUGERTIES  
PLANNING BOARD  
PUBLIC HEARING  
Sign in Sheet

Meeting Date: July 12, 2023

Facilitator: Mike Karashay

Struzzi Properties LLC 310 Main Street

Name	Address	
Carlos Vidal	157 Washington Ave.	✓
Stephen Whistler	110 Market St.	✓
Jackie Russell	11 W. Bridge St.	✓
Niki Sweetheart	17 Dobson St	✓
Jen Hicks	11 Jay St	✓
Sara Malha	12 Partition ← Sign → IN not speaking	✓
MARCY POLLITT	89 OAKLEGE AVE	✓
Ruby Hirsch	18 Caroline Island	✓

Jacquelyn Russell  
11 West Bridge Street  
Saugerties, NY 12477

July 12, 2023

Village of Saugerties Planning Board  
43 Partition Street  
Saugerties, NY 12477

Re: Special Use Permit for 310 Main Street

Dear Planning Board Members:

I spoke at the public hearing for this proposed project on June 14, 2023. As it was my first encounter with the Planning Board, I didn't know what to expect and was not adequately prepared so I have composed this written letter to expound on what I previously stated and share new insights.

While we were waiting for the last meeting to begin, the members were talking among themselves and one of them stated, concerning the subject property, "I think we are pretty much finished with this one. We're just waiting for the environmental review." The last meeting was the first opportunity for people to make public comment to address issues. How is it that a project of this scope was ready to be rubber stamped without public input?

It is also my understanding that the Planning Board is here, not just to review a compliance list, but to evaluate the impact of a project and to protect the public interest particularly with regard to responsible growth of the Village. Responsible growth requires striking a balance between generating revenue and preserving quality of life for the residents.

Concerning traffic: The exit of this project is onto Jane Street, a one way street, and then onto West Bridge Street. I routinely see cars driving the wrong direction on Jane Street and they often have out of state license plates. The intersection at West Bridge Street is a dangerous one and I've witnessed many close calls there. Inviting more travelers and vehicles into the Village only exacerbates the problem.

Concerning parking: It's no secret that lack of parking in the Village is and has been a serious issue for several years. For the last 20 years, Struzzi Properties has been very lenient with respect to parking on the private property. Despite notices left on people's cars months ago, many continue to park there. I pass through the lot daily in the early morning when walking my dogs, and there are normally about 8-10 cars there. For the most part, I recognize the cars and the people who own them. They live in apartments on Main, Jane, and Partition Streets. These people continue to park there because they have no where else to go. When the subject property functioned as office space, there was a symbiosis of sorts. The residents parked there during the night leaving for their jobs in the morning, and the office workers parked there during the day leaving in the evening.

Additionally, I witness many day trippers and locals parking there to conduct business in the Village. If approved, this parking would be usurped by the hotel. Valuable parking area would be eliminated. While it is within Mr. Struzzi's right to disallow others to park there and this issue is not his problem, it is a huge problem for the Village. How will this be addressed?

Concerning suitability: This project has been described as a "satellite" to the Diamond Mills Hotel. The subject property is in no way comparable. Diamond Mills caters to a clientele with discerning taste and a sophisticated palate offering dramatic views from the promontory of the Esopus Creek and the Saugerties dam. This location offers a view of the Speedy Mart and M&T parking lots. Additionally, as can be seen from the site floor plan, Bedroom 2 doesn't even have a bathroom. This means an occupant would need to walk down the hall and traverse the entryway in order to access the bathroom for any and all personal needs including using the toilet in the middle of the night. One's personal effects couldn't be left in the bathroom as they would be accessible to anyone else in the building. The building simply isn't suited to be a hotel.

The subject property is conveniently located in the center of the village, however, in addition to the traffic and parking issues I've already addressed, this area is often not conducive to a good night's rest. There is constant disturbance especially on summer weekends. There are altercations in the streets, deafening motor cycles, competing outdoor music, early morning waste haulers, and the escapades of late night revelers. It is not well suited as a hotel location.

As I pointed out in the last meeting, the local hotels I contacted, Howard Johnson's, Comfort Inn, Holiday Inn and the Diamond Mills itself all maintained they have room availability, albeit limited, even during peak season. Clearly, there is no need for additional capacity. Granting a special use permit of this nature sets a precedent and opens the door for similar development. At what point do we stop? At what point have we reached saturation?

Additionally, in looking at the site floor plan, it does not look as though there is a front desk. According to the terminology provided in the zoning code, this meets the definition of a hotel, however, it raises a variety of questions. If approved without a front desk, how will business be conducted? Will there be anyone in attendance to supervise the location? If not, how will the safety and security of occupants and neighbors be ensured? Is this functioning as a hotel or is it an AIRBNB? The definitions currently in use in the zoning code were determined in 1985, have not been revisited, and are vague, at best. If this type of arrangement for satellite hotels and AIRBNB's is to be our future, these definitions need to be more succinct and other classifications added to address present situations. This project and those similar should not be approved without established legal definitions of parameters for use and operations.

A project of this nature will change the character of the neighborhood and the village at large. Already we are losing our sense of community with the influx of transients as Saugerties becomes less accessible to its permanent residents. What kind of a burden does this place on the infrastructure, water, sewer and roads? How much of a strain will this place on our municipal services? How often is the volunteer Fire Department called to Diamond Mills?

The concept of satellite hotels pursued here is the new business model that seeks to maximize profits. It has no regard for the long-term benefit of the Village and its inhabitants. This project is designed to benefit a few at the expense of many.

Because the structure and location are not suitable as a hotel and there is not a necessity for more capacity, I question the financial viability of this venture. If it is not successful, it will be sold. It was not very long ago that Diamond Mills was for sale. Once it is a hotel, it will be a hotel forever. What good is a hotel that is unappealing and unoccupied? What will become of it? This building has functioned ideally as office space for as long as I can remember, and it is my strong conviction that it should remain as such.

I ask that you consider denying this special use permit. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Angela Galetto  
8 Hilton Place  
Saugerties, NY 12477

Town of Saugerties  
4 High Street  
Saugerties, NY 12477

July 6, 2023

Dear Planning Board Members:

I am writing to express my strong opposition of the issuance of a special use permit to allow the destruction and/or renovation of 310 Main Street into larger-scale hotel lodging accommodations.

I have lived in Saugerties for nearly 35 years and I have seen it transition from a quaint, small town where everyone knows one another, into somewhat of a tourist destination. To an extent, I have been glad to see a responsible increase in tourism for the benefit of local business. However, we must draw a line when it comes to exploiting the charm and character of the town for personal financial gain, while taking away from locals that have lived here for decades (or more often than not in Saugerties, for their entire lives).

In Saugerties, we have been relying on tourism and hotels too heavily in the last few years. Soon, the town will have no roots left and will turn into just another suburb at the will of seasonal New York City residents. We need diversity of business—opportunity for loyal residents to continue to live here contently—not just attractions for out-of-towners.

The location at issue is just a few minutes from my home. It is in the heart of the village and, as I'm sure you know, is surrounded by historic buildings—some dating back to the 1700s. A commercial inn or hotel in this location would be a terrible eyesore and greatly detract from the rich history and charm of Saugerties.

An issuance of a special permit will undoubtedly and irrevocably change the character of the neighborhood. It will increase traffic in an already congested area, where you can't even turn left off of West Bridge Street on a weekend already, and deduct from the already scarce parking spots available to town residents. More activity and noise in this area will cause a decline in the quality of life experienced by actual Saugerties residents who don't just come here for a weekend, but have poured their money and time into this town for a lifetime. What a shame it would be to draw out the families that have built this town...

I ask you to strongly consider the long-term impacts once the property is sold. Once it becomes a hotel, it will forever be a hotel, and the character of the village of Saugerties will forever be changed.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Best,  
Angela Galetto

Thomas Clapper  
10 Esopus Drive  
Saugerties New York 12477

July 12, 2023

Re: Special Use Permit, 310 Main Street

Dear Distinguished Members of the Planning Board:

I have been a resident of Saugerties for sixty plus years, a past member of the Village Board of Trustees, a past member of the Village Water Advisory Board and a concerned citizen that takes pride in calling Saugerties my home. I support thoughtful and well-planned growth and understand the important role growth has in maintaining a viable community. The proposed project for 310 Main Street is concerning as it doesn't seem to align with the needs of our community or the needs of its residents. I respectfully request the following issues be considered by the Planning Board:

**Traffic:**

As any resident of Saugerties can attest to, the traffic in the area of Main Street and West Bridge Street is heavily congested. Daily lines of vehicles on Main Street from the Market Street light to the West Bridge Street intersection and beyond form as local folks attempt to support the Village business. Further, due to this congestion, motorists avoid the area by "shortcutting" through the residential neighborhood of First, Livingston and Elizabeth Streets in an effort to save time. This action causes safety issue along those streets as vehicles quickly move through and further compound the congestion issues when attempting to merge into Ulster Avenue. This alternative route, with its safety issues, also has a negative impact on Village businesses as the folks circumvent the business district to patronize entities outside our community.

The transient nature of the 310 Main Street Project will aggravate this issue and cause it to worsen. Does the proposal address this and will the development group expend resources to remedy the issue with a solution that supports the needs of the community?

**Parking:**

Again, residents can attest to the lack of parking in the Village. This property does have parking, but it's currently used by folks living in the area during non-business hours. The transient nature of the 310 Main Street proposal will cause hardship on the residents of Main and Jane Street as well as Village businesses whose hours are evening and night such as restaurants.

Since the parking will be needed by the transient patrons of this proposed project will the development group still allow local parking? Has the development group offered any solutions? Will the burden of the solution be on the Village of Saugerties and its residents and to what expense?

**Housing:**

With the advent of and unbridled growth of short-term rentals the month to month apartment rental and housing market has been stressed beyond the breaking point. Local citizens that work daily in our community and support the local businesses can't find or afford housing. This proposed 310 Main Street project adds to the transient inventory, which by many accounts is already bloated, but does nothing to alleviate the real crisis in our community.

Are we, as a community, condoning the housing crisis in lieu of thoughtful and planned growth? Does this project support the notion that transients have greater value then community members?



This proposed project and others like it are changing the nature of our community, are we willing to sacrifice the needs of the community for the gains of a few? Are we, as a community, willing to sacrifice our identity as a friendly place to live and raise families? Is transient commerce more important to us then community spirit and finding thoughtful and well planned solutions for our residents?

In light of these concerns, I respectfully request a moratorium regarding the approval of any transient based projects, inclusive of the 310 Main Street proposed project, for one year as to allow for The Village of Saugerties to evaluate and create solutions that support our community needs and thoughtfully regulate the short-term rental market.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Clapper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'T'.

Thomas Clapper

Mary Sauer  
134 W. Bridge St.  
Saugerties, NY

July 10th, 2023

Village of Saugerties Planning Board  
43 Partition St.  
Saugerties, NY

Re: Special Use Permit for 310 Main St.

To the Planning Board:

I recently found out that you will be considering a special use permit to be granted for a 7 unit hotel at 310 Main St. I am concerned about the impact this will have not just on Main Street but the surrounding streets as well. As a resident on W. Bridge St., I am very concerned about more traffic. The traffic in the past 5 years has steadily increased to nightmarish proportions here on W. Bridge. I assume it will also impact the parking there at M & T.

Is there truly a need for 7 more rental rooms? On W. Bridge Street alone, I know of 4 Air B and B's. (there could be more) I would not consider this to be an ideal spot for hotel rooms, across from the convenience store and looking out on a parking lot.

As a village resident, I am concerned that this will lead to more special permits.

Thank-you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mary Sauer

## Peggy Melville

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**From:** Myra Lotto <mlotto@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023 10:54 AM  
**To:** Peggy Melville  
**Subject:** Special use permit for 310 Main Street

To whom it may concern:

I write regarding the application for a special use permit for 310 Main Street which I understand will be used as additional hotel rooms for Diamond Mills. I am an owner in Saugerties Village, residing at 4 Willow Lane. 310 Main Street is not near my property, but I remain concerned about its use as a hotel, and object to the granting of this special use permit.

Because 310 Main sits at the edge of residential properties and not squarely in the center of the village's commercial properties, I am concerned about the expansion of the village's commercial, retail, and hotel boundaries. While we all enjoy a vibrant village community with increasingly thriving retail and commerce, when we expand the borders of the village center and allow commerce to encroach on residential areas of the village, we disrupt the peace we take for granted.

Although I have been tempted to rent my home when I am traveling, I have not done so out of respect for my neighbors and the love of our village. While you generally cannot choose your neighbors, in this one case, you can choose whether or not to invite a rotating cast of temporary neighbors to inconvenience the permanent residents of our village.

**Hotels in the village should not share property lines, parking, and entry/egress avenues with private residences.** Please consider denying this special use permit. As a courtesy to my neighbors who are like family, I won't rent my home out, short term, to strangers. Likewise, please do our residents the courtesy of not renting out their neighborhoods to turn a profit.

Sincerely,  
Myra Lotto

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Myra Lotto  
(m) 212.787.2980

## Peggy Melville

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**From:** deena turner <deenaraet@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 5, 2023 1:13 PM  
**To:** Peggy Melville  
**Subject:** Number of units at 105-107 Partition St

(Please read this email at the meeting on 7/12. Thank you)

My name is Deena Turner and I've lived in Saugerties since 2000.

In discussions the community at large is having about the proposed addition behind 105-107 Partition St, several urgent issues facing Saugerties keep coming up.

There is a crisis both in affordability and availability of housing that is not being addressed. Young working people are unable to secure housing and are leaving altogether or having to live farther away from their jobs. Many people, especially younger and older people, want to live in a Village setting, within walking distance of groceries, a pharmacy, restaurants, sports and gyms, and cultural activities. Young people especially are taking seriously the repercussions of car ownership and fossil fuel dependence on their futures and the climate. Often being under-employed, they are also vulnerable to the expenses of car ownership and fuel. The board, as a planning board, has an obligation to the citizens to try and solve these housing issues. When proposals such as the one for 105-107 Partition are put forth by the private sector, the community would benefit from the board doing a broad analysis of the complete housing picture of Saugerties. Some compromises may need to be made for the good of the community. We won't get out of this housing crisis by changing nothing.

I am not naive. I know that developers will get market value for their long term rental units. But I also know that here in the Village 10 people are competing for each available studio or 1 bedroom apartment because of a lack of long term rentals. That alone keeps rents artificially high.

I think it may be ill-advised, since the three story addition is going ahead anyway, to mandate that instead of nine residential units there be only 4, plus commercial spaces on the ground floor. There are numerous empty storefronts and Ebay storage storefronts in the Village. It is residential units we are desperate for, not commercial. The four proposed apartments will be larger and the rent higher than would have been the case with 9 proposed units.

I believe making this about parking, at a time of housing crisis, is prohibitive and not helpful to the citizens needing housing.

Which brings me to the other issue. Enacting a parking space minimum statute alone does nothing to fix the crushing need for parking in the Village. I know young working people who have to scramble for parking every work day because they can't find village housing (which they would much prefer) from whence they could walk. Cars are continually being hit while parked along Partition street. It is notorious.

But the right to housing cannot be subordinate to parking. Optimally we should be *minimizing* car usage, not *minimizing* housing. And the Village Board recently opting out of the Housing Smart Communities Initiative certainly sends a clear message to those needing housing that help is NOT on the way.

TOGETHER, as a community, we should be thinking proactively to address housing AND parking: Could the dead zone behind the Stella's block of Partition be ecologically turned into a parking deck? Could we turn tax-defaulted buildings into community owned housing using State funds? I don't know.

But what I do know is Woodstock waited too long, and Kingston has a mess on its hands. Here before us we have an actual offer from the private sector that we MAY be able to creatively and thoughtfully work with to address this local housing crisis of ours immediately. We should also seek state-funded solutions. But we know that those take time, and won't address the immediate need. In short I'm asking: How can we expediently affect improvements for the working class *now*? Saugerties is, after all, primarily a working class town.

I implore the Village Planning Board to not kick the can down the road on housing, here in Saugerties.

Deena Rae Turner  
Graphic Design Consultant

## Peggy Melville

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