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LAND USE OFFICE
Salisbury, CT

March 17, 2021

Via email

Michael Klemens, Chairman
 Planning & Zoning Commission
 Town of Salisbury
 Town Hall
 P.O. Box 548
 27 Main Street
 Salisbury, Connecticut 06068

ORIGINAL

Re: Appropriateness of the Design of New Building in Historical Context
**Special Permit #2021-0123 for a 12-Unit Multifamily Housing in PKSQ and APA
 Salisbury Housing Committee - 11 Holley Street**

Dear Chairman Klemens and Members of the Commission:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Salisbury Housing Committee to better define the appropriateness of the design of the proposed "Holley Block" building at 11 Holley Street in Lakeville.

I am a historic architect licensed with the State of Connecticut as recognized by the State Historic Preservation Office. For nearly 40 years I was a partner in Smith Edwards McCoy Architects, a firm that is widely recognized for its work on the preservation and restoration of historic structures, and for its design of new buildings in historic contexts. These include the exterior restoration of the Connecticut State Capitol, the Old State House, and the Long Walk at Trinity College. Our recently completed restoration of the Wadsworth Atheneum received a preservation award from AIA Connecticut. Examples of new building in historic contexts include an addition to St. Anthony Hall in Hartford, a Dining Commons addition and new library at the Renbrook School in West Hartford, as well as the award-winning Ninth Square project (with Newman Architects) in New Haven. In 2009 we received the Governor's Award in recognition of our work in historic preservation.

In addition, I live in the Historic District in Collinsville, Connecticut and served for 10 years on its Historic District Commission, chairing the Commission for two of those years. Our mandate was to review proposed changes, additions, and new construction for appropriateness to historic context of the district.

I find that the design of the proposed Multifamily Housing to be built at 11 Holley Street is appropriate to its architectural context. It is a modern, energy-efficient building that takes advantage of the many advanced materials and methods that have come into being over the past couple of centuries, while stylistically satisfying the donor's request that the building "shall have exterior design in keeping with the Federal... image of our villages." This is accomplished by incorporating the elements, massing, and scale of other village buildings, notably the neighboring Shannon Building, which sits across the street from the site on the corner of Millerton Road and Holley Street.

At the same time the building avoids being a historic re-creation and is simplified in its details while respecting the overall massing and proportions of neighboring buildings. In this way it satisfies the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for additions and related new construction, which recommends using the same forms, materials, and color range as the surrounding historic buildings in a manner that does not replicate the historic structures but distinguishes the new construction from the historic buildings.

The massing of the building is appropriate to its context. It is a two-story building with a domered third



floor and is physically shorter than the neighboring Shannon building to the east. Its façade is broken up by a residential-scale pedimented entrance porch and a gabled central bay with two flanking wings. This successfully reduces the building's elevation along Millerton Road into smaller, residential-scale units and reflects the typical gable and intersecting "ell" configuration of many of the neighborhood buildings. As you move down Holley Street to the south side of the building, its height again is less than the neighboring buildings at Pocketknife Square, and its repetitive fenestration is reminiscent of these industrial buildings.

Likewise, the materials and details of the proposed building are compatible with and appropriate to their context. The fan light in the attic of the central gable refers to the fan light in the Holley-Williams house directly across the street. Again, while it references the neighborhood context it does not directly copy it. The pilasters that flank the central gable of the building respect the proportions of the pilasters that frame the gable end of the neighboring Shannon building.

It is wrong to think that the historic context of Lakeville is limited to Federal or Colonial-style single-family houses. What is clear architecturally, and was certainly important to the village's listing on the National Register, is that it is a relatively intact mill town. It retains its historic mill buildings, its workers' housing, its grand mill owner's houses, and some of its commercial structures. Missing is the original Holley Block building, a large mixed-use building that stood on the site until it was razed in 1967. In historic photographs of the Holley Block, one can sense the former vitality of Millerton Road when a series of shops and offices made up this commercial corner.

In my opinion, the new building proposed at 11 Holley Street is correctly scaled and detailed for its location and would be an appropriate and welcome addition to the village center. Its presence would help to recreate the density and vitality that the district once enjoyed, and is much more compatible with the historic streetscape than the paved parking lot currently occupying most of the site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kenton C. McCoy'.

Kenton C. McCoy, AIA
Historic Architect and Associate Principal, QA+M Architecture