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The Miller Planning Group
Land Use Solutions

April 6, 2021

Town of Salisbury Planning and Zoning Commission
Salisbury, CT 06068

Re: Application for special permit approval for a twelve-unit residential community development of real property know as 11 Holley Street, Salisbury, Connecticut.
Applicant: Salisbury Housing Committee, Inc.

Dear Chairman Klemens and Members of the Commission;

I would like to take this opportunity to address several questions and issues raised at the public hearing meeting of March 15, 2021.

Parcel Boundaries and Inland Wetlands at 414 Millerton Rd.

A map has been prepared utilizing the Regional Map Viewer on the website of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments. (Attachment A) It shows that there is a small area on the southwest corner of the property that is within the wetlands, away from the existing house.

Alternative Sites

A brief analysis of two alternative sites; the Pope Property and 414 Millerton Rd., was included within our presentation and analysis to demonstrate that the development of the Bicentennial Park parcel is not an all or nothing approach to affordable housing development. Our intent was to demonstrate that the goals for affordable housing in the 2018 Affordable Housing Plan can be met without the development of this site. We were able to do this was based upon the extensive work done in the preparation of the Affordable Housing Plan.

The discussion of alternatives was included because the proposed development would replace two existing uses: the historic park and the parking on that parcel. None of the other recommended sites would displace any uses important to the community.

The suitability of the Pope Property and the 414 Millerton Rd. was discussed in several public documents and meetings. Excerpts from these have been included below:

Pope Land Committee

The Pope Land Committee was established in March 2018 by the Salisbury Board of Selectman, with the following charge, as stated in the final report:

“The committee will meet at least bi-monthly (minimum of 6x per year) to review uses for the 59-acre former Pope property on Salmon Kill Road. Uses may include housing, conservation, recreation, economic development, agriculture, and other uses as suggested by the citizens of the Town. The committee will meet in duly noticed public meetings and will report to the Board of Selectmen semi-annually and the Town Meeting annually. The Selectmen will elect the first Chairman and the town will provide secretarial and administrative services. It is likely that the committee would elect a Vice Chairman in the early meetings.”¹

The work done by the Committee was included in the General Overview within the report, as indicated below:

“Topical meetings were planned by the committee to explore potential uses. Those included: a presentation from the Salisbury Historic District Commission; reviews of soil and survey maps; presentations by four (4) Salisbury Housing Organizations; overviews from the Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, Economic Development Committee, and a review of the CT DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base Map (NDDDB).”

“In addition to understanding the land uses of the Pope property, the PLC emphasized opportunities throughout the term of the Committee to solicit ideas from citizens of Salisbury for additional uses... The public was invited to attend the meeting so the Committee could hear from the citizens of Salisbury with suggestions for uses in addition to recreation, conservation, housing, and agriculture. Additional ideas that arose from the public meeting were enclosed tennis courts, a YMCA-type facility, opening up and maintaining more hiking trails, as well as a number of comments about the need for affordable housing.”²

The charge of the Committee did not include a specific recommendation for the use of the property, and one was not included within the report. However, it did identify “Non-Wetland

¹ Pope Land Committee Report; January 12, 2021; Page 2

² Pope Land Committee Report; January 12, 2021; Page 2 & 3

Area Under Review for Future Uses,” on the Pope Site, indicating that the soil conditions are conducive to residential development. (Attachment B)³

The report also included the opinions of the members of the Committee, and statements of other stakeholders. Excerpts from these comments presented below:

1. PLC Report to Board of Selectmen

Prepared by Jim Dresser

Member, Salisbury Affordable Housing Commission Page 8

“All four housing organizations expressed strong interest in utilizing a portion of the Pope property because it can accommodate ideal sites for affordable housing, including being within walking distance of the Village of Salisbury and on Town water and sewer. They stressed that the paucity of affordable land is their main impediment.”

“They stated that the construction of units on portions of the Pope property would assist them in meeting the goals of the Salisbury Affordable Housing Plan, which was proposed by the SAHC and adopted by the Board of Selectmen in 2018, after public forums in 2017 and 2018, attended by more than 100 citizens each.”

2. The Soils Report dated May 23, 2018 by Pat Hackett included a map which identified a large area with soils which did not limited for dwellings. (Attachment C)

The statements within the report showed some competing visions for the use of the property, but the overall report confirmed the suitability of the property for the development of affordable housing.

Minutes of the Salisbury Affordable Housing Commission

January 20, 2015

414 Millerton Road. Explore additional AH at this site now that the new Transfer Station has opened and passed permits. E. Slotnick

February 4, 2021

Questions and answers as described the minutes of the meeting; numbering corresponds to the minutes.

8) What is the issue with the Salmon Kill property, why not now, why later on? J. Kronholm Clark answered that the need is to build on multiple parcels of land to meet the town’s goals and not count on one location. J. Dresser answered that the Pope property is

³ Pope Land Committee Report; January 12, 2021

an unknown, that it sounds good because no one has spoken up against it yet and there are other competing uses for it. J. Ayer answered that based on the support for Holley Block through the public forums in 2017 and 2018; the SHC has taken out a big pre-development loan to develop this project and can't just move it to another site.

10) Why is Holley Block superior to Salmon Kill? J. Kronholm Clark answered that it is not superior; they need to do both. J. Dresser answered that they are at totally different stages of investigation; units at both sites are needed.

27) What was the difference in the votes for Holley Block versus the Pope property? J. Ayer did not have those numbers available for this meeting.

11) Susan Galluzzo commented on the negative impact of the Holley Block project on the parking available to existing businesses and the need to support businesses that already exist. She questioned the guarantee of parking spaces being available at the Holley Block project. She also mentioned that the land behind 3 of the buildings is private property and is not available to the Holley Block project. J. Ayer responded that they do meet the parking requirements of the zoning regulations. They will present the parking study again at the P&Z public hearings.

Conformance of the Proposal with the Plan of Conservation and Development

The sections of the 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development which are specifically relevant to this application are, Enhance Village Centers and Provide for Housing Operations. The Commission is requested to consider the following excerpts from the 2012 POCD in their consideration of this application.

The goals for the Village Centers are stated on Page 26 of the POCD.

Goals for our Village Centers include:

- Increase ease of pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation, and **parking**. (Emphasis added.)
- Incorporating more varied housing in the Village Centers, and
- Improving overall aesthetics.

The goals recognize parking as an important component of the Village Centers. The POCD did not indicate a priority of uses between affordable housing, existing parking areas and parks. Each have their importance and place within the fabric of the Village Center.

Our position is that the removal of the parking component is likely to have negative impacts upon several businesses, possibly leading to their relocation from Lakeville Village.

It is also important to note that the removal of or closing the parking area is likely to have a negative impact upon three dwelling units within the existing buildings adjacent to the site.

Although these units do not meet the State's narrow definition of "affordable housing," they are low-cost units that are affordable to much of the same group likely in the state recognized affordable housing units. These apartments would be less livable, without the use of the parking areas. Apartments above a store have long been a source of affordable housing within the traditional town centers of New England.

The "Provide for Housing Options" section of the POCD is from the Informal Task Force on Affordable Housing (2007) and the subsequent study completed by the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, (Preserving Salisbury's Vitality: Housing for Tomorrow, June 2010), which recommended:

- Increasing the number and range of housing units in Salisbury,
- Encouraging the development of accessory apartments in existing structures,
- Establishing cluster housing to preserve open space,
- Endorsing the practice of mixed-use properties in the village center (to provide for second-story apartments over existing businesses), and
- Encouraging the conversion of existing buildings in the village centers into multi-unit housing.

None of the goals or recommendations was site specific, regarding the use of the subject property.

Flexibility of Affordable Housing Plan

There was a question asking if the denial of the subject application would require an increase in the number of units planned for the Pope Property. The answer is no, the 2018 Affordable Housing Plan had ranges of the number of units potentially appropriate at each of the sites. The minimum figure of the range was enough to create the planned 75 units, but a greater number up to the maximum was feasible.

The following chart is based upon information within the Affordable Housing Plan. It shows the minimum and maximum number of units for each of the sites identified in the Affordable Housing Plan, except for the Holley Block

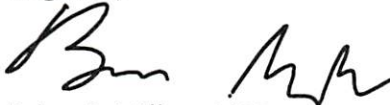
Recommended Sites and Development Potential ⁴

Site	Minimum # Units	Maximum # Units
Pope	33	64
East Railroad Ave.	14	18
Perry St.	2	4
Grove St.	4	4
414 Millerton Rd.	1	4
Sarum Village III	10	10
Total	64	104

The table shows that even without the Holley Block, up to 104 units could be constructed at these sites.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information.

Regards,



Brian J. Miller; AICP

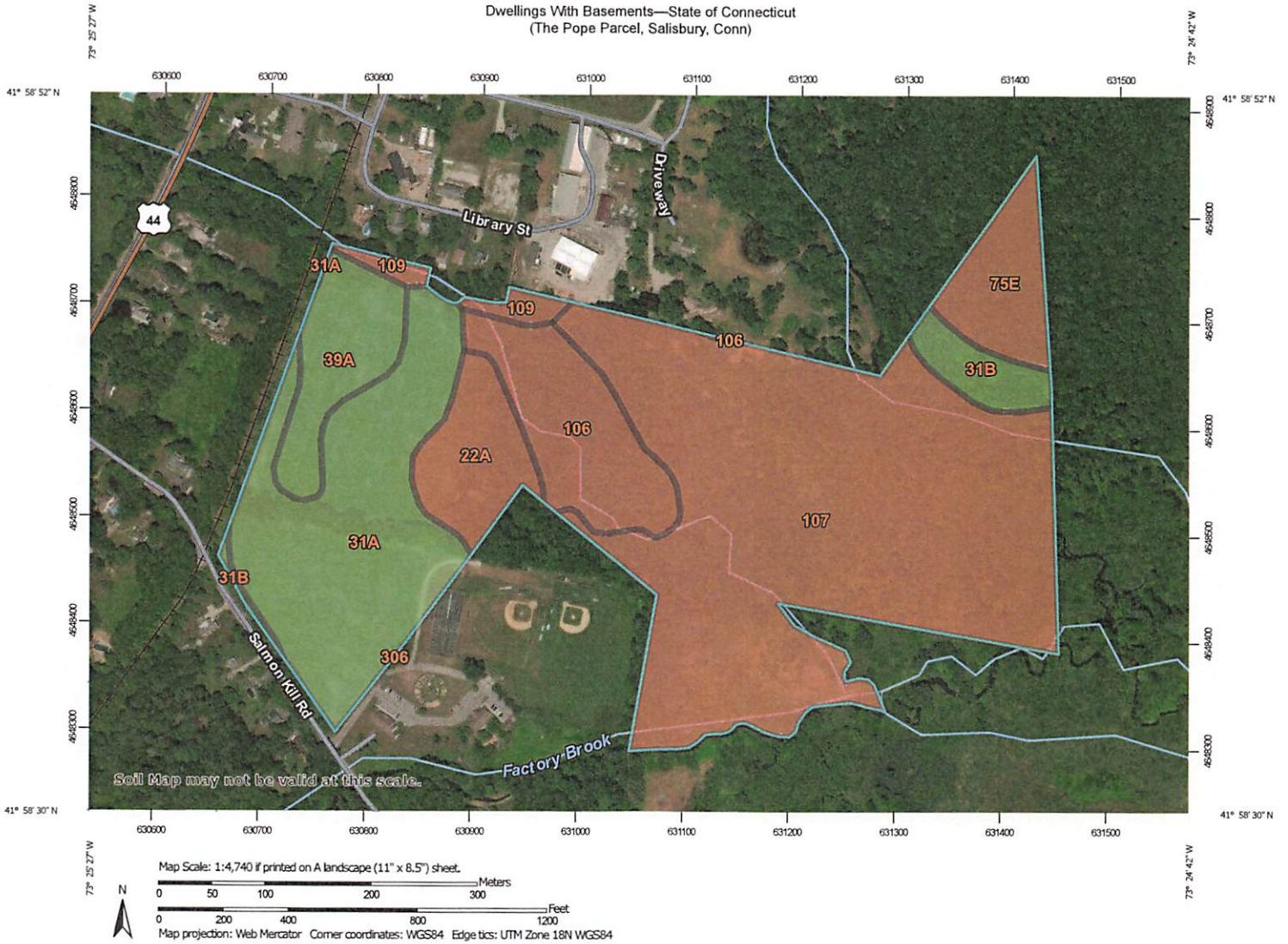
⁴ 2018 Affordable Housing Plan

Attachment A




















Attachment C

Dwellings With Basements—State of Connecticut
(The Pope Parcel, Salisbury, Conn)



Dwellings With Basements—State of Connecticut
(The Pope Parcel, Salisbury, Conn)

MAP LEGEND

- Area of Interest (AOI)**
 Area of Interest (AOI)
- Background**
 Aerial Photography
- Soils**
- Soil Rating Polygons**
-  Very limited
 -  Somewhat limited
 -  Not limited
 -  Not rated or not available
- Soil Rating Lines**
-  Very limited
 -  Somewhat limited
 -  Not limited
 -  Not rated or not available
- Soil Rating Points**
-  Very limited
 -  Somewhat limited
 -  Not limited
 -  Not rated or not available
- Water Features**
-  Streams and Canals
- Transportation**
-  Rails
 -  Interstate Highways
 -  US Routes
 -  Major Roads
 -  Local Roads

MAP INFORMATION

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:12,000.

Warning: Soil Map may not be valid at this scale.

Enlargement of maps beyond the scale of mapping can cause misunderstanding of the detail of mapping and accuracy of soil line placement. The maps do not show the small areas of contrasting soils that could have been shown at a more detailed scale.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Web Soil Survey URL:
 Coordinate System: Web Mercator (EPSG:3857)

Maps from the Web Soil Survey are based on the Web Mercator projection, which preserves direction and shape but distorts distance and area. A projection that preserves area, such as the Albers equal-area conic projection, should be used if more accurate calculations of distance or area are required.

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: State of Connecticut
 Survey Area Data: Version 16, Sep 15, 2017

Soil map units are labeled (as space allows) for map scales 1:50,000 or larger.

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Jul 2, 2015—Oct 5, 2016

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Brian J. Miller, AICP - Principle

The Miller Planning Group

RESUME

Principle TMPG, LLC

Previous Experience

- Director of Development Services, Town of Berlin
- Comprehensive Planner, City of Longmont, CT
- Consulting Planner, CT Towns of Oxford, Middlebury, Hamden, Beacon Falls, Orange

Consulting Assignments

- Economic Development Strategies
- Land Use Strategies
- Development Permitting
- Municipal Planning
- Community Revitalization

Education

- BA Economics, University at Albany
- Masters Urban Planning University of Illinois

Other Positions

- Cheshire Economic Development Com.
- Connecticut Blue Ribbon Commission on Affordable Housing 1999
- Cochairman of Legislative Committee of CT Chapter American Planning Association

Brian Miller has 40 years of planning experience throughout the tri-state area, but particularly in the State of Connecticut. He is the president and owner of The Miller Planning Group, LLC.

Brian has served as the staff planner for the Towns of Woodbury, Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Stafford, Oxford, and Orange, Connecticut. He has extensive experience with the preparation of Plans of Conservation and Development for numerous Connecticut municipalities such as Beacon Falls, North Branford, Groton, Tolland, Oxford, West Haven and Marlborough. He recently completed the Plan for East Haven and has worked on Comprehensive Plans for Poughkeepsie in New York as well as the Boroughs of Little Falls and North Haledon in New Jersey.

Economic development has been a component of municipal planning. He has worked with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) as an Economic Development Consultant, Brian assisted and coordinated the statewide municipal economic development efforts. There he also part of a team which formulated an action strategy for revitalization of downtown Willimantic, a business retention strategy for the City of Meriden, and a Municipal Economic Strategy for Tolland, Connecticut. A recent assignment has been the update of the East Have Plan of Conservation and Development, with an emphasis on economic development in certain important areas of the Town. His experience includes drafting revisions to Zoning Regulations for communities throughout Connecticut, including East Haven, Stafford, Orange, North Branford,

Oxford, Beacon Falls, Tolland, and Berlin.

There have also been many assignments for private sector clients. This includes market analysis, fiscal impact analysis, neighborhood impact analysis, design and preparation of applications for zoning amendments. He has also worked on plans for areas and neighborhoods, such as a study for the Town of Orange for the Edison Road – Marsh Hill Road area, re-use of the Baltic Mill property in Sprague, downtown Beacon Falls, Plainville and Willimantic and the Blue Hill Avenue Corridor of Hartford.

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FIRM DESCRIPTION

The Miller Planning Group (MPG) is a land use, economic development and community planning firm with an office in Wallingford, Connecticut. Our roots in land use planning go back forty years and include a broad range of land use and development issues.

Our practice includes governmental and private clients throughout the northeast, working with developers, attorneys, cities, towns, on a wide range of planning issues. We accomplish the objectives of our clients through comprehensive analyses, based upon our experience in “real world” situations. MPG works with a network of other professionals, to provide a full range of services to our clients.

For private sector clients, MPG offers planning and development services from project inception to project approval. Our services include land planning and site feasibility studies, housing analysis, community and fiscal impact analyses, zoning analysis, market analysis and feasibility studies, and economic development. A keen understanding of the public sector allows MPG to assist developers obtain the approvals necessary to complete their residential, industrial and commercial projects in a timely fashion.

For the public sector, MPG provides comprehensive planning, zoning ordinance revision and preparation; redevelopment, housing and community development; affordable housing planning and implementation; site and subdivision plan review; economic development and revitalization. The firm has been retained by municipalities and public agencies to provide planning expertise on specific projects as well as on a continual basis. Our public clients have range from small rural communities to established urban centers.

MPG and its associates are aware of the sometimes-conflicting goals between various interests. The firm’s extensive experience operating on each side of the review table gives us the ability to provide insightful solutions helping to bring these conflicting goals in harmony with one another. We utilize this perspective on behalf of our clients within the planning and development processes, expediting the process to save money, time and effort for all interests, achieving solutions that are in the public interest.