

**FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation  
Rye, New York and Fairfield, Connecticut

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July 28, 2008

Mr. Jeremy Ginsberg  
Planning and Zoning Director  
Darien Town Hall  
Planning and Zoning Office  
2 Renshaw Road  
Darien, Connecticut 06820



**Subject      Traffic Access and Site Plan Review – Leroy-West Senior Residence,  
77 Leroy Avenue, Darien, Connecticut**

Dear Mr. Ginsberg:

As requested, we have reviewed the most recent Site Plan submitted by the Applicant, Hammons LLC, dated July 12, 2008 and a response letter with traffic issues prepared by DLS Consulting, dated July 15, 2008. The Site Plan and the DLS Consulting letter include responses and modifications to the document and Site Plan as per the July 2, 2008 review letter prepared by our office.

The Applicant's Traffic Consultant has responded to most of the comments from the Clark July 2, 2008 review letter, which includes additional traffic volume surveys, expansion and review of additional accident data, capacity analyses, a sight line analysis and review of vehicle queues and pedestrian activity. Also, the response traffic letter and Site Plan include responses to delivery truck access and unloading/loading and other pertinent information included our letter.

The items below follow the same subjects, as included in the Clark letter and includes the same numbering system to assist in the Town's review.

1. *Roadway Network* – The Applicant has provided additional information, with regard to the location of sidewalks, crosswalks and additional information to

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(914) 967-6540

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(845) 297-6056

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(516) 364-4544

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determine if there are any pedestrian signals at the signalized intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue.

The Applicant notes that there are no sidewalks located along the site frontage, which include the southerly side of West Avenue and westerly side of Leroy Avenue. Existing sidewalks are located across the street in both cases.

Crosswalks are located at the signalized intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue; however, these crosswalks are not located near the site corner, which is the southwest quadrant of the intersection. The Applicant notes that the existing traffic signal does not include any pedestrian signals.

It is also important to note that there are no sidewalks located between the site frontage and the southeast corner of the intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue, which provides access to the Train Station and the Business District in Downtown. Based on this evaluation, it was identified that there are currently no crosswalks at the intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue to accommodate the seniors expected to reside in this building, if approved. There are no sidewalks directly related to this development other than the sidewalks proposed by the Applicant along its frontage on West Avenue and Leroy Avenue. The Applicant should consider providing crosswalks/handicap ramps at this intersection to tie the site into the crosswalks and sidewalks available to provide access to the Train Station and the Business District in Downtown.

The existing traffic signal does not include any pedestrian signals, which would be appropriate for this proposed land use and the safety of its senior citizens.

2. *Traffic Volumes* – The Applicant provided additional traffic counts and data to analyze the operation of the signalized intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue, which is located immediately adjacent to the subject property. Results of the analysis are based on traffic data obtained in December 2007 and July 2008.

At the public hearing there was concern from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the general public that the level of traffic on West Avenue and Leroy Avenue can be significant and is directly related to traffic congestion,

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accidents and other issues related to Interstate 95, Boston Post Road/U.S. Route 1 and other local roads. In many cases the level of traffic is significantly higher on days when there are significant issues related to traffic congestion and accidents on Interstate 95 and/or U.S. Route 1.

The Town has found and identified that during certain time periods and days large tractor trailer trucks and other trucks will use West Avenue to avoid traffic congestion and bridge height limitations on U.S. Route 1 in the Downtown area. Tractor trailer trucks and commuters will exit Interstate 95 at either exit 10 or 11 and access the West Avenue/Leroy Avenue intersection to avoid the Downtown conditions on U.S. Route 1 or the low height (10' 9") restriction underneath the railroad bridge on U.S. Route 1. This results in significant traffic delays and congestion, as well as safety concerns along the site frontage.

The results of the queuing analysis indicate that there will be occasions when the proposed access drive will be blocked by waiting vehicles at the existing West Avenue/Leroy Avenue traffic signal. Further analyses by DLS Consulting and discussions by others indicate there are queuing delays on southbound Leroy Avenue, which will also block the driveway. These traffic conditions are related to Train Station activity, as well as general daily commuter traffic. These delays will have an impact on entering and exiting the subject property, which is located approximately 140 feet south of the signalized intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue.

3. *Accident History* – The Applicant obtained accident data from the Darien Police Department, which resulted in the identification of twice as many accidents than previously obtained from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) data.
4. *Sight Distance* – It was requested that sight lines be incorporated into the updated Site Plan for the proposed access drive on Leroy Avenue. The Applicant's Engineer only included notes of sight lines on the plan, but did not show specifically where these sight lines were measured from and to ensure the intersection sight distance meets the criteria set forth by ConnDOT and used by the Town of Darien in its review. The intersection sight distance analysis is

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necessary to clearly understand if there are physical restrictions and/or safety concerns. This was not provided.

The Applicant notes that there is adequate intersection sight distance on the approach of Leroy Avenue at West Avenue, as well as on the West Avenue eastbound approach at Leroy Avenue. However, there is no reference to Section 363-Visibility at Residential Street Intersections – to show a clear zone at the intersection for new development. The Applicant has not provided this clear zone analysis on the Site Plan.

An evaluation of this clear zone analysis superimposed on the Site Plan indicates that the corner of the proposed structure will result in 128 square feet of the building will be located in this area. This obstruction will have a significant negative impact on the safety of this intersection. See the July 24, 2008 memo from the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

The proposed building will not meet the standards of the requirement. Although there is a signal at this intersection, a clear sight area should be provided for motorists and pedestrians. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and ConnDOT provide similar standards.

5. *No-Build Traffic Volumes* – There are no additional comments with regard to other development and traffic related to these other developments.
6. *Site-Generated Traffic* – There are no other comments related to the anticipated level of site traffic to be generated by this type of development.
7. *Capacity Analysis* – The Applicant has provided additional information, with regard to results of capacity analyses of the signalized intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue. Results of the analysis indicate this intersection will operate at acceptable Levels of Service; however, there will be certain times during the peak hours when there will be vehicle queues on the Leroy Avenue northbound approach. In addition to this vehicle queue, the Applicant also provided a vehicle queue for southbound movements on Leroy Avenue just south of the subject property. Results of the analysis and field surveys indicate there

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will be short periods of time when the proposed access drive will be blocked by waiting motorists in both directions. As noted above, this could result in an impact to access to the site for both residents senior citizens and emergency vehicles.

### Other Considerations

1. *Site Access Drive* – The proposed driveway is shown to be 24 feet wide and now includes a paved area for delivery trucks, 1 handicap space and 1 regular space and a turnaround area for delivery trucks.

This modification to the site access drive is in response to comments from the Town and Clark Associates related to the location for parking of delivery trucks and limitations to the height of the parking garage.

Delivery truck heights vary. It is our understanding that the proposed parking garage will have a height of nine feet. Therefore, it is unlikely that most delivery trucks (FedEx, UPS, etc.) will be able to access the parking garage. It is also unlikely that a delivery truck will enter this garage since there is no area to turnaround in the garage and the garage may or may not have access restrictions.

Any delivery truck will need to use the loading area and turnaround. There is concern with the arrival of two delivery trucks. The second truck would park on Leroy Avenue. This will create sight line restrictions for the residents exiting the site, congestion and possibly unsafe conditions along Leroy Avenue. The Applicant should address the issue of moving trucks, access to the loading area and impact to other delivery trucks.

The proposed turnaround area in the driveway may accommodate these delivery trucks; however, these trucks will require multiple turns to complete the turnaround so that the delivery truck could exit the driveway forward to Leroy Avenue. It is important to note that this activity will occur in an area where residents and pedestrians will be walking to access the building. This could be an unsafe condition.



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The proposal for the driveway is to incorporate a five-foot radius on each corner of the approach driveway to Leroy Avenue. This will not be sufficient to accommodate delivery trucks and require the delivery truck to make a wide turn into the driveway into the exiting lane of the driveway. Furthermore, the exiting movement from the driveway by a delivery truck will require the delivery truck to pass over the centerline of Leroy Avenue into oncoming traffic. These turning movement conditions were not addressed by the Applicant. This could be an unsafe condition. Existing movements by trucks would be further restricted with vehicle queuing on Leroy Avenue in front of the access drive.

As previously noted the Applicant has not provided any specific intersection sight distance measurements at the proposed driveway, but only has provided notes to the availability of sight lines.

The Site Plan does not include a dumpster. This should be included, as well as access to this area for pick up. The plan should reference a typical size refuse truck and show the turning template for access, turnaround area, etc.

### **Summary**

Although the Applicant has provided a significant amount of additional information to respond to comments from both the Planning and Zoning Commission, Town Staff and its Consultants, the Applicant has not provided sufficient information to clearly identify the available intersection sight distance at the proposed access drive or at the corner of the intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue. Furthermore, the proposed access drive may provide an area for delivery trucks; however, the area to turnaround is considered tight and will require a truck to back up in an area where pedestrians may be walking towards the front entrance to the building. This is not considered a safe condition.

The delivery truck will likely be required to turn over the centerline on Leroy Avenue to exit the property and need to turn into the exiting lane on the driveway to enter the property. The Applicant has not provided sufficient radius at the corners of the driveway to accommodate delivery trucks.

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It is unlikely delivery trucks can enter the garage and will not be able to turn around within the garage if they do access the garage.

Certain sized delivery trucks will not be able to pass under the railroad bridge on Leroy Avenue (10' 4"), which is located to the immediate south of the subject property. Therefore, many of these vehicles would be required to turn left when exiting the site and this would require waiting for the vehicle queues to clear.

The analysis, which is based on data obtained in December and July and based on generally high volumes of traffic for Leroy Avenue and West Avenue, may not have specifically addressed significant traffic conditions related to traffic congestion and delays typically found on Interstate 95 and U.S. Route 1 to the Business District.

It is the Town's experience that motorists and tractor trailer trucks typically exit Interstate 95 and in some cases U.S. Route 1 (to avoid the low railroad bridge crossing) and use Leroy Avenue or West Avenue to travel east of the Downtown area. These large trucks have a significant impact on the overall operation of these intersections near the site and have been found to create unsafe conditions since many of these roads have not been designed or specifically designated to accommodate large trucks.

The analysis shows that motorists do eventually experience delays on Leroy Avenue due to traffic congestion and the timing of the traffic signal at West Avenue. Furthermore, motorists experience delays traveling southbound on Leroy Avenue towards the railroad bridge. These queues will have an impact on operations of the access drive into the subject property, which will have limited sight distance especially to the north due to the placement of the new building in the close proximity to the corner of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue. An exiting motorist, whether it is a resident, visitor or delivery truck, may not have an adequate sight line of a motorist traveling eastbound on West Avenue and turning right onto Leroy Avenue to travel southbound. If there was a delivery truck parked on the sidewalk or at the curb at the same time there would be an added concern regarding overall safety in this vicinity.

In summary, the Applicant has not provided sufficient information, with regard to intersection sight distance at the proposed driveway. The Site Plan shows an area that is considered tight for delivery trucks. This area is also designed to accommodate residents

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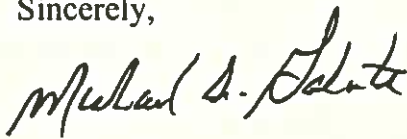
and pedestrians walking to the front entrance to the building. It will also function as a drop off/pick up and result in parked vehicles.

The Applicant has identified the availability of crosswalks and sidewalks, but has not offered any recommendations to increase the safety of pedestrians walking to and from the site, access to the existing sidewalks, and/or existing crosswalks.

\* \* \* \* \*

We trust this information will assist the Town Planning and Zoning Commission in its ongoing review of this Application. We are available to discuss this further, as necessary.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Galante  
Executive Vice President