

My name is Alison Hickman, I live at 6454 Red Keel, just off Cardinal Lane, and frequently take the three minute walk to the village center with my small children, who are 3 and 5-years old and learning how to bike. I'll try to be brief. I am testifying in support of adding residential housing to the village center and re-doing the village center- including specifically the proposed height, mass and quantity of units. I believe the residential as designed is modern and aesthetically friendly and will enhance and support the other uses at the village center, creating a more vibrant environment and more opportunities for me to live, work and play in my neighborhood. The retail landscape is changing rapidly with significant competition from online shopping and our village center should be able to evolve, including the addition of a residential component at a substantial enough number of units to provide enough foot traffic for stores and restaurants to stay competitive.

I am pleased that the Hickory Ridge Village Board has reconsidered its opposition to the Village Center renovation. I'm aware of the struggles of long reach village center and grateful that Kimco is getting ahead of the massive shifts occurring in retail. It is my hope the zoning board and by extension the council recognize these shifts and the urgency to adapt. The addition of Amazon Prime grocery delivery means that many young families like mine sometimes don't set foot in a grocery store for weeks. The long-term economic success of the village center is important to me as a community member and county taxpayer and I believe these changes- specifically the onsite multifamily foot traffic positively contribute to its economic viability. I'm in support of the scale and quantity of units proposed – I'd love to make sure there is enough foot traffic to support some vibrant restaurants, cafes and shops in our community. Grocery and retail as anchors won't get us there alone in the evolving online climate.

The height of the proposed residential seems appropriate to me and I am a very perplexed by the attachment to 36 feet as an appropriate number.. I'd hate to require that they reduce height to 36 feet and end up with a cookie-cutter suburban garden apartment design. Allowing the building to be over 36 feet enables ground floor retail to be woven into the apartments (as that first floor now needs to be higher to accommodate the ground floor retail) and enhances the blending of the building into the design of the overall village center. The clean modern lines of the design as proposed and the variability in height is very attractive. I like the open air, modern look of the village center and want to add that I do not favor a covered canopy from the rain which would be dark and not look modern and clean. Regarding the redesign of the open space and the comparison to the current avenue – as a resident of the village since 2012, I find the current avenue not to be very functional or utilized except for the rare Halloween event. It is sorely in need of modernization and I'd urge the zoning board not to focus on absolute square footage comparisons to the current outdated, underutilized avenue or other metrics and instead focus on utility and a clean, modern forward-looking design.

An in closing – one final consideration that I think is worthy of reflecting on. When neighborhoods allow nearly exclusive single-family zoning, it limits housing types and puts further pressure on communities to address challenges related to housing affordability (in other words, reflect on our recent redistricting challenges) and constitutes a form of exclusionary zoning. The irony is not lost on me that approving this development, allowing the construction of this apartment building in an exclusively single family zoned area, would further the goals of what CR 112-2019 originally sought to achieve in the context of redistricting the schools. If the council is serious about wanting to integrate schools by socioeconomic factors, allowing diversity of housing types into an exclusively single-family zoned neighborhood is a logical first step.

Zoning Case 1119 M

Applicant/Protestant

Supporter's Exhibit # 3 Date 1/29/20