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CAPE COD  
COMMISSION

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

FROM: CAPE COD COMMISSION STAFF

SUBJECT: SPRINGHILL SUITES LR/TR14017  
DRAFT LIMITED DRI DECISION FOR RECOMMENDATION TO FULL  
COMMISSION

DATE: JULY 29, 2015

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The subcommittee will deliberate and make certain findings on the above-referenced project at its upcoming meeting July 30, 2015, sufficient to direct staff to draft a Limited DRI decision for the subcommittee's further consideration and recommendation to the full Commission.

In order to grant DRI approval for a project, the Commission must determine, among other things, that a project is consistent with the Regional Policy Plan (RPP), and that the probable benefit from a project is greater than its probable detriment. This project has been limited in scope to review under the single RPP issue area of Heritage Preservation/ Community Character by decision issued January 22, 2015 and adopted as final by the Committee on Planning and Regulation.

Staff suggests that the project is consistent with the Heritage Preservation/ Community Character issue area of the RPP, as discussed in further detail, below. Staff recommends that if the subcommittee finds the project consistent with the Heritage Preservation/ Community Character issue area of the RPP, and if it finds that the probable project benefit is greater than its detriment, then the subcommittee should direct staff to draft a Limited DRI decision that approves the project with conditions (including standard conditions, those that may be articulated by the subcommittee, and those contemplated in the project's DRI Scoping Decision), subject to the subcommittee's further consideration of and formal vote to recommend the decision to

the full Commission at a subcommittee public hearing to be held on August 6, 2015, 3 PM, at the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates Chambers.

Of particular emphasis at its July 30 meeting, the subcommittee will deliberate and make findings on:

- project consistency with the RPP's applicable Heritage Preservation/ Community Character goals and minimum performance standards;
- relative project benefits and detriments suggested in testimony and other information received;
- whether, overall, the probable project benefit is greater than the probable project detriment; and finally,
- whether, based in large part on the foregoing points of deliberation, the subcommittee should recommend a draft decision to the full Commission that either approves the project with conditions, or denies the project.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH RPP ISSUE AREA OF HERITAGE PRESERVATION/ COMMUNITY CHARACTER (HPCC)**

Staff suggests that the Project is consistent with HPCC Goal1 (Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources) and minimum performance standards thereunder. The project will not impact existing historic structures or cultural landscapes, and the structures currently on site are not historically significant. Due to the existing developed and disturbed nature of the project site, no archaeological resources are expected to be impacted. The Applicant submitted a project notification form to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and in Commission staff's communications with MHC, no concerns or issues were identified.

HPCC Goal 2 (Community Character/Site and Building Design) and its associated standards generally encourage redevelopment.

Minimum Performance Standard (MPS) HPCC2.1 does not permit the creation or extension of strip development. Staff suggests that the proposed redevelopment does not create or extend strip development, as the project use is single purpose, the building has a shallow setback to the street, the project facilitates pedestrian activity and properly relates to and emphasizes the streetscape, and the site parking is not between the building and the street line.

Staff suggests that the project's design is consistent with the context and character of the surrounding commercial area in terms of its orientation to the street, scale, and architectural details that relate to traditional Cape Cod forms, consistent with MPS HPCC2.4 (Consistency with Regional Context or Surrounding Distinctive Area). The height of the building and its multiple stories is consistent with larger buildings in the area, and with the town's goals for the Business Redevelopment district. The project is not located in a distinctive area such as an historic district, nor does the project site

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contain any historically significant building. The proposed shallow building setback from the street maintains pedestrian activity and the enclosed character of the street edge. The east building, which is the larger of the two, provides pedestrian-scale architectural details and an active entrance on its front facade. The west building, which includes parking on the first level, covers its inactive facade with an articulated landscape screen to shield the parking behind. The subcommittee could consider including a condition in a draft decision that recommends DRI approval to require continuation of the green screen around some portion of the sides of the western building's first floor façade.

Staff suggests that the contemporary glass-dominated design of the connection between the two buildings is allowed under and consistent with MPS HPCC2.4. While this element does not relate to local building traditions, it is set back from the front facades of the building (approximately 30 feet) and is not a prominent part of the facade or the design, and this element facilitates the use of two distinct building massings. The RPP supports including contemporary designs when they do not conflict with distinctive architectural styles or areas of established character. Since the surrounding commercial neighborhood does not have a single consistent or distinctive historic or architectural style, there is room for a variety of materials and designs.

MPS HPCC2.5 (Footprints over 15,000 Square Feet) prohibits building footprints over 15,000 square feet unless they are designed as multiple distinct massings differentiated by variations in building roofline and footprint, or is fully screened. The Project has effectively designed two separate building masses to reduce the scale of the building, and their scale appears further reduced by stepping back the upper stories and including façade, materials and roof variations. As proposed, the west building has a footprint slightly less than 15,000 square feet, so it complies with this standard. The east building's footprint is closer to 25,000 square feet, but its narrow scale at the street front, the ell-shape of this building, and the various step-backs and changes in roofline effectively break down this single massing into components that meet this standard.

The other MPS that addresses large building facades is HPCC2.6 (Building Forms and Facades), which requires varied roof forms and facades, specifically calling for at least 10 feet of setback or projection for every 100 feet of facade length. Both the east and west buildings are over 225 feet in length on their longest side. That requires over 40 feet of facade variation to meet the standard. The east building clearly meets this standard, providing more than 80 feet of variation along its east-facing facade, and approximately 40 feet of variation along its interior west-facing facade. It also provides the required 20 feet of variation along its front facade (106 feet long). The west building provides very little variation on the ground level of its facades, though staff would suggest that the western building meets this standard because there is adequate setback and projection and roofline change in the upper floors, and variety is provided with the articulated green screen along the ground floor of the western façade.

Staff suggests that the project is consistent with the intent of MPS HPCC2.7 in its use of finish materials. The proposed building materials are man-made, but are designed to look like traditional materials. Cementitious siding, PVC trim, fiberglass railings, and asphalt roof shingles are all materials that the CCC has allowed on non-historic structures in the past, and staff suggests the selected materials are appropriate in this project given the proposed commercial use, specific finish materials proposed, and the finish treatments on surrounding commercial properties. Given the proposed use and context, the durability of the proposed materials should assist in maintaining the good upkeep and appearance of the building. Also, based on information from the applicant, use of recycled/ man-made materials assists the project to achieve LEED certifiability. The subcommittee could consider including a condition in a draft decision that recommends DRI approval to require some natural finish materials on the front, street façade of the building, which is more visible to the public.

Standard HPCC2.8 (Parking to the Side or Rear of Buildings) requires parking to the side or rear of buildings to limit visibility of large expanses of asphalt. The proposed design meets this standard through creative design of interior parking areas. Incorporating two parking areas within the first floor of the building footprint significantly reduces the amount of parking visible on the site. The proposed green screen is generally effective at screening the enclosed parking area.

The project meets MPS HPCC2.9 (Landscape Improvements for Redevelopment) by significantly improving the visual character of a blighted site. The project's landscape plan meets MPS HPCC2.10 (Landscape Plan Requirements) by enhancing the building architecture of the project, using native plant species, and providing buffers to parking on site and to neighboring properties. While the Project does not include significant LID design principles, the proposed structured infiltration is appropriate given the density of the site redevelopment within a downtown commercial area. A draft landscape maintenance agreement has been provided by the applicant meeting the intent of this standard.

The Project's lighting design meets MPS HPCC2.11 (Exterior Lighting) through the use of 90-degree cutoff light fixtures of appropriate design that provide for full cutoff at the lot lines. MPS HPCC2.12 (Signage) is met through the proposed limited number of down-lit wood signs. Pursuant to HPCC2.13, all utilities for the project are proposed to be placed underground.

### **PROBABLE PROJECT BENEFIT/ DETRIMENT**

The following is a summary of some probable project benefits and detriments that have been suggested throughout the review and hearing process to date. The subcommittee should find whether any or each of the following constitute probable project benefits or detriments, as currently articulated below or as might be amended by the subcommittee. The subcommittee should also consider whether it finds other probable benefits or detriments different from and in addition to those articulated below, though

if it does so, the subcommittee should focus on benefits or detriments with a regional or broad perspective, rather than localized site concerns.

After it finds the probable project benefits and detriments, the subcommittee should weigh them against one another qualitatively to find overall whether, based on the totality of information that has been presented to the subcommittee, the probable project benefit is greater than the probable project detriment (i.e. the subcommittee should not merely determine whether the listed detriments exceed the listed benefits in number, or vice versa).

If the subcommittee finds that the probable project benefit is greater than the probable project detriment, and the subcommittee finds that other standards for DRI approval have been satisfied, then the subcommittee should direct Commission staff to draft a Limited DRI decision approving the project with conditions, for the subcommittee's further consideration and recommendation to the full Commission.

If the subcommittee finds that the probable project benefit is **NOT** greater than the probable project detriment, the subcommittee should direct Commission staff to draft a Limited DRI decision denying the project on this basis, for the subcommittee's further consideration and recommendation to the full Commission.

Suggested probable project benefits:

- 1) Would further the goal of redeveloping the eastern end of Main Street
- 2) Would improve the character of an underutilized and blighted site through infill redevelopment
- 3) Would rebuild sidewalk and road infrastructure along Main Street and site access to Lantern Lane
- 4) Would support tourism through additional accommodations for leisure and business travelers
- 5) Would employ local contractors, workers and suppliers during and after construction
- 6) Would improve stormwater issues existing on site and off site
- 7) Would create year round jobs
- 8) Would have a positive impact on local businesses
- 9) Is consistent with the goals of the Business Redevelopment District
- 10) Would increase property and room tax revenue to the Town, which assist the Town in furthering capital and infrastructure projects

Suggested probable project detriments:

- 1) Would detrimentally impact community character through large building size and design inconsistent with local development patterns in the area, including that the proposed building and site structures occupy too much of the project site
- 2) Is insensitive to abutting properties by being insufficiently screened & buffered. Note, that the local zoning review process will determine whether the project is substantially detrimental to neighboring properties, including to properties within residential neighborhoods to the north of the project site.
- 3) Proposes a use incompatible with neighboring properties, inappropriately sited on this portion of Main Street
- 4) Is not consistent with the intent of the local Business Redevelopment zoning
- 5) Would hurt locally-owned commercial accommodation businesses
- 6) Would not effectively engage the public along Main Street
- 7) Would negatively affect the flow of traffic on Main Street compared with current, actual conditions and uses on site
- 8) Would not pay workers a living wage, as based on employment data provided in the application materials
- 9) ~~Would increase groundwater levels off site through on-site infiltration of stormwater\*~~

*\* Staff suggests that credible evidence has not been submitted to the Commission to support such a finding.*