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September 1, 2021

Ipswich Planning Board  
Town Hall  
25 Green Street  
Ipswich MA 01938

**Re: 55 Waldingfield Road, Ipswich MA 01938**  
**Special Permit and Site Plan Review Application**

To the Planning Board of the Town of Ipswich,

As an immediate abutter (across the river at 44 Mill Road) to 55 Waldingfield Road, I am highly supportive of the above referenced project under the Great Estate Bylaw. It is a great solution for this historic property and for the Town of Ipswich. Having said that, I do have a few comments on the pending application.

First of all, and most important, I believe that the Planning Board must address the entire scope of future development of the site. It is not enough for the applicant to suggest, without detail, possible future phases. The history of the past great estates projects in Ipswich makes clear that provision needs to be made now not only for the attractive and thoughtful present proposal now before the Board but also for what might happen at the site decades from now under what could well be a different owner. Little will be gained in approving what's before the Board now if we find that ten years from now we are looking at an entirely different project somewhere within the considerable remaining developable area of the property. It is understandable that the present applicant cannot present

detailed architectural plans for as yet undefined future phases but surely they could at least address proposed uses, density, building envelopes and similar generalized objectives. Alternatively, I assume that it is within the power of the Planning Board to make clear the limits of the approval granted under the present application. The worst thing for the future would be silence or ambiguity.

Second, the existing riverfront conservation restriction in favor of Greenbelt addresses preservation of that area but grants no public access. Thus, the proposed new easements running in from Waldingfield Road are ineffective unless linked to a new access easement granted over the waterfront area. Further, all these easements are of limited value without effective public access. This means that appropriate off-street parking should be provided appurtenant to the easements. Otherwise, the only way for most Ipswich residents to access the property will be by parking along Waldingfield Road in an area clearly not appropriate for parking.

This access problem exists presently at the east end of the property. First of all, the "parking" provided for the Bird Reservation consists of a few spaces barely carved out of Waldingfield Road at the front of the reservation. Second, the right of way over the Waldingfield property to the Bird Reservation is blocked by a prominent gate which, even if unlocked, gives the clear but incorrect impression that access is not permitted along the right of way. The result is that a "public" reservation of more than 30 acres is almost invisible and inaccessible except for the couple of cars

squeezed in along Waldingfield Road. I mention this problem at this moment precisely because the Bird Reservation plays a prominent role in feasibility of this project. Its existence is what justified the recently approved change to the Great Estates Bylaw permitting this project to proceed on a more limited parcel of land. If the Bird Reservation forms the basis for this worthy project going ahead, let's make sure that the Reservation is as a practical matter actually accessible to the public.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. L. Hiltz". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The first part "T. L." is written with a large, sweeping stroke, and "Hiltz" follows in a more compact, cursive style.