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Tritec Bay Shore project

The former Touro law school site between Union and Mechanicsville is a huge opportunity for redevelopment in downtown Bay Shore. This block is almost entirely surface parking that does not contribute to the surrounding community. It is located in a spot that connects the train station to Main Street and has the potential to fill a large hole in the neighborhood. Vision is happy to see a development proposal that can help to fill this hole, but it needs some modification in order to connect with the surrounding neighborhood.

The Tritec proposal is ambitious with 418 Units on the almost ten acre site. Rental units walkable to both the train station and Main Street have the potential for enormous benefit to the community. In order to maximize this benefit, the units should be arranged in order to maximize its “walk-appeal” to minimize car trips and encourage walking and biking. Connectivity is key to encouraging walking over car travel. This block is very large and should be broken into smaller components in order to allow it to connect the neighborhood rather than act as a barrier. Adjacent streets such as Richie Court and Cortland Place could be extended into the site to allow connections to adjacent neighborhoods and developments. Allowing pedestrians multiple ways to get from place to place gives them shorter routes to get to where they are going and makes for a more interesting walk. This block is two to three times the size of most blocks in the area and by making it impenetrable turns it into a barrier between neighborhoods on opposite sides.

Allowing several ways through the site not only can improve walkability, but can also reduce the apparent size of the development. While the actual footprint of the building is not very large in comparison to the site, because it is arranged in a continuous loop without breaks, from the outside it appears to be massive in comparison to the surrounding buildings in the area. The four story height isn't necessarily out of scale as there is a historic four story building across the street to the south, but the unbroken façade that wraps two thirds of the site adds to the perception of it being out of scale with the surrounding community.

Breaking this building up into a number of smaller buildings with either driveways or walking paths between them will reduce its apparent size and allow it to fit better within the community. It will make the changes in architectural style more logical and it is easier to make buildings attractive when they are a more manageable size.

The architecture of this proposal is attractive and well proportioned. It appears to be a bit more of a Mid-Atlantic to Southern Coastal vernacular, but some small modifications to the materials and a reduction of some of the extra elongated proportions can help it feel more northeastern and more fitting in Bay Shore.

The exterior entrances on the façade that faces the single family homes to the east helps the buildings connect with the street and provides some activity along the

sidewalk. This detail should also be carried through across the street from the Cortland Place development to mirror the street facing entrance there as well.

The incorporation of garage parking accessible from interior parking lots is a good way to make some of the parking not in surface lots while also screening garage doors from the sidewalk which would reduce the quality of the pedestrian realm. In addition, landbanking some of the parking spaces is a good way to reduce surface asphalt especially when parking requirements may be excessive for the location. The large parking lot at the north end of the site is detrimental to the pedestrian realm that surrounds it. It is understood that it currently is a large parking lot, but this does not improve the situation. Residents of this development would have to cross driveways and walk past parking lots on their way to the train station which is not a comfortable experience. The sitting area in the middle of the lot is also not a place that would be comfortable for people. If the buildings are broken into smaller elements, more of this parking can be screened behind them and it can help to improve the pedestrian experience while walking past the northern part of the site. The seating area can be moved into a place with some sense of enclosure between an active façade and the sidewalk to make it more attractive to use.

Overall, development on this site can be a significant asset to the community of Bay Shore, but it needs to be configured so that it fits in and connects with the neighborhood rather than a monolith that creates barriers to the surrounding neighborhood.

Vision Long Island advances more livable, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible growth on Long Island through Smart Growth. Smart Growth focuses on infill, re-development, and open space preservation. It supports mixed-use, mixed-income communities that are convenient, attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and that make affordable housing and public transportation desirable and realistic.

Over the past 20 years Vision has counseled downtown Villages and Towns, and has been a resource for the County, State, and Federal governments, as well as the business and civic community on downtown revitalization, planning and infrastructure.

Vision has made over 2400 presentations, performed over 25 community visionings and advanced over 100 public and private planning projects towards implementing the goals of Smart Growth. Over 13,000 units of transit oriented development have been approved in our local municipalities with the support of Vision Long Island.