

# Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation

December 7, 2021



Ms. Tamie Ehinger, Chair, Design Review Commission  
City Hall  
474 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

## RE: 269 Broadway – New Construction

Dear Tamie,

The Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation reviewed the revised plans for the proposed mixed-use development at 269 Broadway.

As the Foundation has stated in previous letters, it is pleased that there is a plan to redevelop the vacant parcel. The architectural design of the building is a statement of its own time. Therefore, the Foundation does not object to the style and the materials of the proposed building.

The Foundation strongly objects to the height, scale, and mass of the structure because it is not in keeping with the neighboring structures.

Per the applicable sections of the Design Considerations of the City of Saratoga Springs Zoning Ordinance, 7.4.9 for review for this project (underlines added for emphasis):

### A. Height

The Commission shall consider whether the height of the proposed structure is compatible with the historic form and context of the site and neighboring properties and with any specific zoning district intent.

### B. Scale

The Commission shall consider whether the scale of the proposed structure is compatible with the relationship of the building and its architectural elements to neighboring structures, and character of historic setting.

### C. Mass and Open Space

The Commission shall consider whether the relationship of the dimension and mass of a building to the open space between it and adjoining buildings is compatible with the character of the neighboring area and with any specific zoning district intent.

### G. Front Setback

The front yard setback for the building line of all new construction shall be compatible with neighboring buildings and any specific zoning district intent.

Per the Historic District Design Guidelines for New Construction – New Buildings (underlines added for emphasis):

- Building height and scale should be consistent with the existing streetscape and neighboring building patterns. Historic streetscapes often have variation in

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building scale and massing that contribute to the visual interest and unique historic character of the street. Variation is promoted, but extreme differences should be avoided.

- Buildings with large, uninterrupted massing should be broken into smaller visual components consistent with neighboring buildings.

The proposed structure is surrounded by two-story buildings with the exception of the building located at 268 Broadway. The applicant provided a site analysis of similar large-scale developments with similar relationships to neighboring buildings. The examples provided are not similar. Two of the examples provided are not located in historic districts – Embury Apartments, an Urban Renewal redevelopment project, and Embassy Suites Hotel. Therefore, they are not relevant to the proposed project. Congress Park Centre and 385 Broadway are located in the downtown core where there is historic precedence of large scale development on the sites – the Grand Union and the United States hotels. Lastly, the building located at 268 Broadway uses varying heights, setbacks, and window sizes as well as balconies and changes in building materials and colors to reduce the height, scale, and mass of the building, provide a more human scale, and be respectful of the surrounding neighborhood - whereas the proposed structure does not.

While the Foundation appreciates that the applicant set-back the sixth floor, the Foundation does not believe that it reduces the overall height, mass, and scale of the building, in part because the wide-overhanging roof extends to the façade of the building, thus defeating the intended purpose. The Foundation continues to strongly recommend that the overall height, mass, and scale of the building be reduced. Should the sixth floor remain, the Foundation recommends that the overhang of the roof be removed or significantly reduced.

The Foundation continues to be concerned about the exterior mechanical equipment on the roof and elevator tower. While the Foundation does not typically comment on interior mechanicals, it has concerns that with the full-height windows, the interior mechanicals will be visible from the exterior.


The Foundation appreciates that the primary entrance on Broadway was changed to be at street level. However, the retail/restaurant spaces still remain below grade. The Foundation remains concerned that there is a lack of engagement at the street level because the entrance appears to lead to a long hallway and the interior spaces are below grade. Furthermore, the Foundation objects to the proposed signage on the south side of the building since that is no longer the primary entrance of the building.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Adam N. Favro  
President



Samantha Bosshart  
Executive Director

Cc: Gerard Moser, LLC, Owner  
Michael Toohey, Agent  
Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner