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Memo: Initial comments from the Albany County Department of Public Works on the traffic impact study and related materials within the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Rapp Road Residential / Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Projects.

Concept Plan

1. The following comments apply to the driveways on Crossgates Mall Road:
 - a. There is a substantial crest vertical curve about halfway between the Mall Road/Rapp Road intersection and the main driveway. Has sight distance been evaluated?
 - b. Unless the raised median is extended to the main driveway, violations of the left turn prohibition will be common. Drivers headed west or south may be unwilling to go around the block to make the turn.
 - c. Has moving the main entrance to the ring road been considered, perhaps at the Gabriel Terrace location? With the center turn lane, left turns out of the site could be provided.
 - d. Care needs to be taken to make sure the right-in driveway is far enough from the Western Avenue intersection to prevent conflicts.
2. Since 4-to-3 lane conversions result in crash reductions from 19 to 47%, this treatment should be investigated for all four-lane segments of Crossgates Mall Road, not just the area proposed.
3. Low-cost interim improvements should be prepared for the mall road/flyover ramps intersection in case the BusPlus Purple Line project is delayed. Possibilities include signal retiming and skew reduction of the channelized right turn lanes (see Figure 9-19, 2018 Green Book).
4. If available, Costco should provide actual parking utilization rates from comparable stores rather than relying on parking minimums. This may allow impervious surface reduction.

Traffic Impact Study

Page Comment

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| 11 | The discussion of the 1700 Designer Residences states the Town could prohibit left turns. NYSDOT has that authority, not the Town. Is there an acceptable alternate access for left turns? |
| 13-14 | At the Rapp Road/Mall Road intersection, was conversion to a single-lane roundabout considered? There is plenty of room, and a 78% crash reduction can be expected (Highway Safety Manual Table 14-4, suburban one-lane roundabout). The discussion of removing the channelized right turns should include the intent and expected effectiveness. |
| 18 | The Washington Avenue Extension frontage road should be realigned to the south at Springsteen Rd, providing more separation from the W.A.E. mainline. |

- 29 According to Highway Safety Manual Table 14-2, aligning Gabriel Terrace to the east to provide two three-leg intersections can reduce injury crashes by one third compared to the proposed four-leg intersection. This assumes the Gabriel Terrace and the Crossgates driveway AADTs will be over 30% of the Crossgates Mall Road driveway. The projected peak hour volumes support this assumption.

VHB Safety Evaluation Memorandum

DPW appreciates the effort, since safety evaluations are usually left out of traffic impact studies.

1. This analysis should include predicted traffic and safety effects of the development on surrounding roadways and intersections, based on AASHTO Highway Safety Manual or FHWA IHSDM methodology. Instead, it is limited to a reactive analysis of one intersection. As a minimum, the analysis should include safety effects of:
 - a. Driveway placement effects on crash frequency. Are the proposed locations acceptable? Would alternate configurations be safer?
 - b. Gabriel Terrace alignment – four-way vs offset T intersections
 - c. Safety effectiveness of the proposed changes to the Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road intersection
2. We have the following comments on the Crossgates Mall Road/Rapp Road intersection:
 - a. ATR counts should have been taken on all four approaches, so that the crash rate could be calculated. Comparing it to state averages and nearby intersections could indicate whether safety interventions are warranted.
 - b. Page 3: “All of the contributing factors ...involved ... driver error.” Did the analyst consider whether the intersection design contributed to user errors?
 - c. Left turn and right-angle crashes are the most common crash types at this location, and are probably over-represented. NYSDOT average crash rates show that rear-end crashes are typically the most common type at signalized intersections. Mitigation measures should be taken, such as signal head conspicuity improvements, protected left phasing for the two approaches that lack it, and tree removal on the inside of the curve on the southbound Rapp Road approach.
 - d. Night crashes are over-represented at 45% of all crashes. Intersection lighting is needed.
 - e. A crash pattern involving the channelized right turns was not found, yet removing them is suggested as a safety improvement. Removal could be justified as eliminating the maintenance cost of the unneeded pavement. We note that the three lane conversion will require removal or skew reduction of the northbound to eastbound channelized right.

Pedestrian Access Plan

1. This should have been included in the Traffic Impact Study, since the Vehicle and Traffic Law says pedestrians and bicyclists are traffic, too.
2. The crosswalk at the end of the northbound to eastbound channelized right turn could cause problems. Crosswalks of channelized right turn roadways should be near the beginning of the roadway, to maximize visibility of the crossing. Make sure that adequate stopping sight distance is provided to the crosswalk. Better yet, eliminate the channelization, as discussed in the traffic impact study.
3. The multi-use path termini should connect bicycle parking near mall entrances to signalized crosswalks where people on bicycles can safely cross Western Avenue and Crossgates Mall

Road. Attention to getting bicyclists riding in the contraflow direction back to the right side of the roadway is needed.

4. A multi-use connection from the Washington Avenue south frontage road to the mall entrance by Uno's would be useful.