



wayne sumple &lt;wsumple@gmail.com&gt;

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**Letter for April 27 P & Z public hearing re Geissler's project**

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m.abrahamson@cox.net m.abrahamson@cox.net &lt;m.abrahamson@cox.net&gt;

Mon, Apr 19, 2021 at 7:27 PM

Reply-To: "m.abrahamson@cox.net m.abrahamson@cox.net" &lt;m.abrahamson@cox.net&gt;

To: planningzoningcomments@southwindsor-ct.gov

Cc: wsumple@gmail.com, michaelmcmath@mac.com

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

I am writing to express my opposition to the zoning change that will permit the apartment and retail development of Geissler's strip mall. As originally described, the project sounded like it would result in a substantial improvement to the Sullivan Ave property. However, as it is unfolding, I believe that too much is being crammed into a small space, resulting in overly high buildings being planned for too close to our Strawberry Fields condominiums. If the development proceeds as now planned it will adversely impact Strawberry Field's quality of life because an overly tall 3 and one-half story building will be erected so close to our condominiums as to be visible across much of the property. I also worry about attendant noise and traffic.

I am hoping that P & Z will insist that the development be scaled back or reconfigured in such a way that it will have a less adverse impact upon my home and my neighbors' homes. Thank you.

Mark Abrahamson

Dear Commission Members,

We are writing to express our thoughts concerning the Sullivan Avenue Plaza Project proposal which is currently under study by the Planning and Zoning Commission. We took a drive down Sullivan Avenue proceeding southbound from Main Street to the terminus of Sullivan Avenue when it enters Manchester.

The Sullivan Avenue Plaza is by far the largest eyesore along the entire route of Sullivan Avenue in South Windsor. We are highly in favor of a refurbishment of the plaza to bring it up to the standards of other properties in town.

During this drive we noted several other high-capacity residential properties, specifically:

- The Residence of South Windsor Farms
- Harbor Chase Assisted Living
- Evergreen Crossing Retirement Community and,
- Tempo Evergreen Walk Luxury Rentals

While all these structures are two and three story buildings, none of them are located near any other residential communities. We would like to see a similar standard applied to the Sullivan Ave Plaza project.

We recognize that because there is a much smaller buffer between our property and theirs than the above listed properties we would like to see some adjustments in their current proposal, such as relocating the three story buildings further from Strawberry Fields, and some noise abatement techniques put in force to reduce the noise issues coming from the pool area.

We are generally in favor of the success of this project and feel that it should have been refurbished fifteen to twenty years ago.

However, if we cannot see some concessions to address our concerns we could not support it at this time.

We also have some concerns about increased levels of traffic coming down Sullivan Avenue as these new residents try to make their way toward Interstate 84. It is difficult at times to make a left turn out of Strawberry Fields to proceed northbound on Sullivan Avenue or to make a left hand turn into Strawberry Fields

against opposing traffic. I can only imagine how much more difficult it will be with several new residents and the increased shopping activity at an upgraded plaza.

We thank you for your consideration in this matter and ask you to consider our concerns when investigating the proposal.

Regards,

John and Diane Hawkins  
703 Dzen Way  
South Windsor, CT 06074



*Certified Public Accountant*

STEVEN E. HINTZ

1330 SULLIVAN AVENUE  
SOUTH WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06074  
860-644-9453 • FAX 860-644-9486

April 25, 2021

PZC Chairman  
Mr. Bart Pacekonis  
Town of South Windsor

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I would like to voice my support for the Geissler's Plaza renovation and the proposed apartments.

I have been a South Windsor resident for over 50 years and a SW business owner for over 30 years. My father, Ernest Hintz, owned South Windsor Pharmacy, which was located in that same plaza. I grew up as a kid working there and that used to be a bustling plaza, which housed the Town library as well as many other diverse businesses.

In its current state, it is an embarrassment to the Town of South Windsor. I still shop at Geisslers, and it's depressing every time I pull in there to see the dilapidated conditions of what was once the center of Town activities. My thoughts may be a bit skewed because I grew up working there and know what that plaza was once like, however new people to town and people passing through have to look at the state of that entire area and say to themselves - "how can a place like this be in such disrepair when the Town of South Windsor is ranked in the Top 50 of Money magazines places to live"

The Town needs this project/renovation and the PZC needs to figure out a way to make it work with the apartments so the project can move forward. It is in the best interests of the people living in this town, both long timers and new families moving in.

Please do not hesitate to call if you would like to discuss further.

Sincerely

Steven E Hintz, CPA

**From:** Maureen Miller maumlr46@gmail.com  
**Subject:** April 27, 2021 SAP Public Hearing - General  
Plan of Development - Sullivan Avenue  
Plaza  
**Date:** Apr 23, 2021 at 1:13:50 PM  
**To:** Planningzoningcomment@southwisndor-  
ct.gov  
**Cc:** Matt Miller millermattthe@gmail.com, 1004  
Sumple Coreen csumple@gmail.com,  
Wsumple@gmail.com

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**To whom it may concern:**

My husband Matthew and I are homeowners at 1202 Dzen Way, within the Strawberry Fields Development. We purchased our property in 2019, with part of that purchase decision being the evaluation of the overall pristine maintenance of the Strawberry Fields development, as well as the close-knit, quiet neighborhood.

While we are very much in favor of the refurbishment of the Sullivan Avenue plaza, with a focus on retaining the Geissler's Supermarket in conjunction with some type of residential development, we do have key concerns with the current proposal as follows:

1. The height and proximity of the building closest to the Strawberry Fields property line
2. The possibility of additional foot traffic through Strawberry Fields to access the Donnelly Nature Preserve

- 3. Potentially significant increase in vehicle traffic**
- 4. Impact to resale value if key concerns are not addressed**

**In order for us to provide support for the proposed development, we would ask that the above listed concerns be clearly addressed as part of an updated proposal with a focus on the following changes:**

- 1. Increase the distance between the proposed apartment building(s) and the Strawberry Fields property line**
- 2. Decrease the height of the closest building(s) proposed to two (2) stories**
- 3. Install an appropriate and visually attractive barrier, of appropriate length, to prevent foot traffic from the Sullivan Avenue property through Strawberry Fields**
- 4. Ensure adequate traffic management is implemented to reduce impact to Strawberry Fields resident access to/ from Sullivan Avenue**

**Thank you for your consideration,**

**Matthew and Maureen Miller  
1202 Dzen Way  
South Windsor, CT 06074**

## NOTES

Letter to Zoning Board

As a resident and voter of South Windsor, I am very concerned about the development at Geisler's Plaza. The property was in need of improvement, but the current plans are too big for the size of the property. So many things

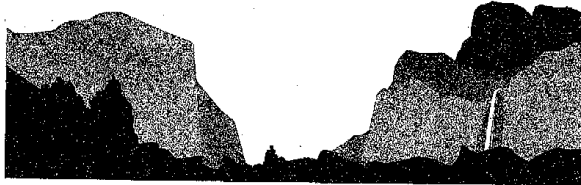




NOTES

will be impacted, especially  
noise and traffic. A  
scaled down version would  
be much more acceptable.

Ruth Preston  
1003 Dzen Way  
Strawberry Fields



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**From:** Jim Greeson <greeson1@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 26, 2021 11:04 AM  
**To:** PlanningZoningComments <PlanningZoningComments@southwindsor-ct.gov>; Lipe, Michele <Michele.Lipe@southwindsor-ct.gov>  
**Subject:** [External]Comments on Sullivan Ave. Plaza Zone Change (21-11P)

Dear Commission Members & Michele Lipe,

I appreciate your consideration of my comments as part of the April 27 hearing on the subject application.

The pages in the attached file illustrate my concerns relative to my Strawberry Fields community.

In summary:

- That the various revisions of the SAP plan have moved the apartment buildings ever closer to our community - now only 120 ft. away.
- That the building height allowed in the SAMUD-OZ was an issue debated by the PZC and that buildings next to single family zoning were “protected” by establishing building height limits of 2 ½ stories.
- That the home owners in our community will be negatively impacted by the proximity and height of the proposed 3 ½ story buildings.
- That we feel we should be afforded the same “protection” as owners of single family homes.
- That we feel that the existing trees in the buffer zone, even when supplemented with evergreen plantings, will be totally inadequate to conceal the building from our view.

Thank you for your consideration,

James Greeson  
1102 Dzen Way

# Impact of the Proposed Sullivan Avenue Plaza Proposal on Residents of Strawberry Fields

The following pages illustrate:

- That the various revisions of the SAP plan have moved the apartment buildings closer to our community - now only 120 ft. away.
- That the building height allowed in the SAMUD-OZ was an issue debated by the PZC and that buildings next to single family zoning were “protected” by establishing building height limits of 2 ½ stories.
- That the home owners in our community will be negatively impacted by the proximity and height of the proposed 3 ½ story buildings.
- That we feel we should be afforded the same “protection” as owners of single family homes.
- That we feel that the existing trees in the buffer zone, even when supplemented with evergreen plantings, will be totally inadequate to conceal the building from our view.

# Current Proximity of Strawberry Fields to Sullivan Ave. Plaza





# June 2019 Plan Presented To Strawberry Fields



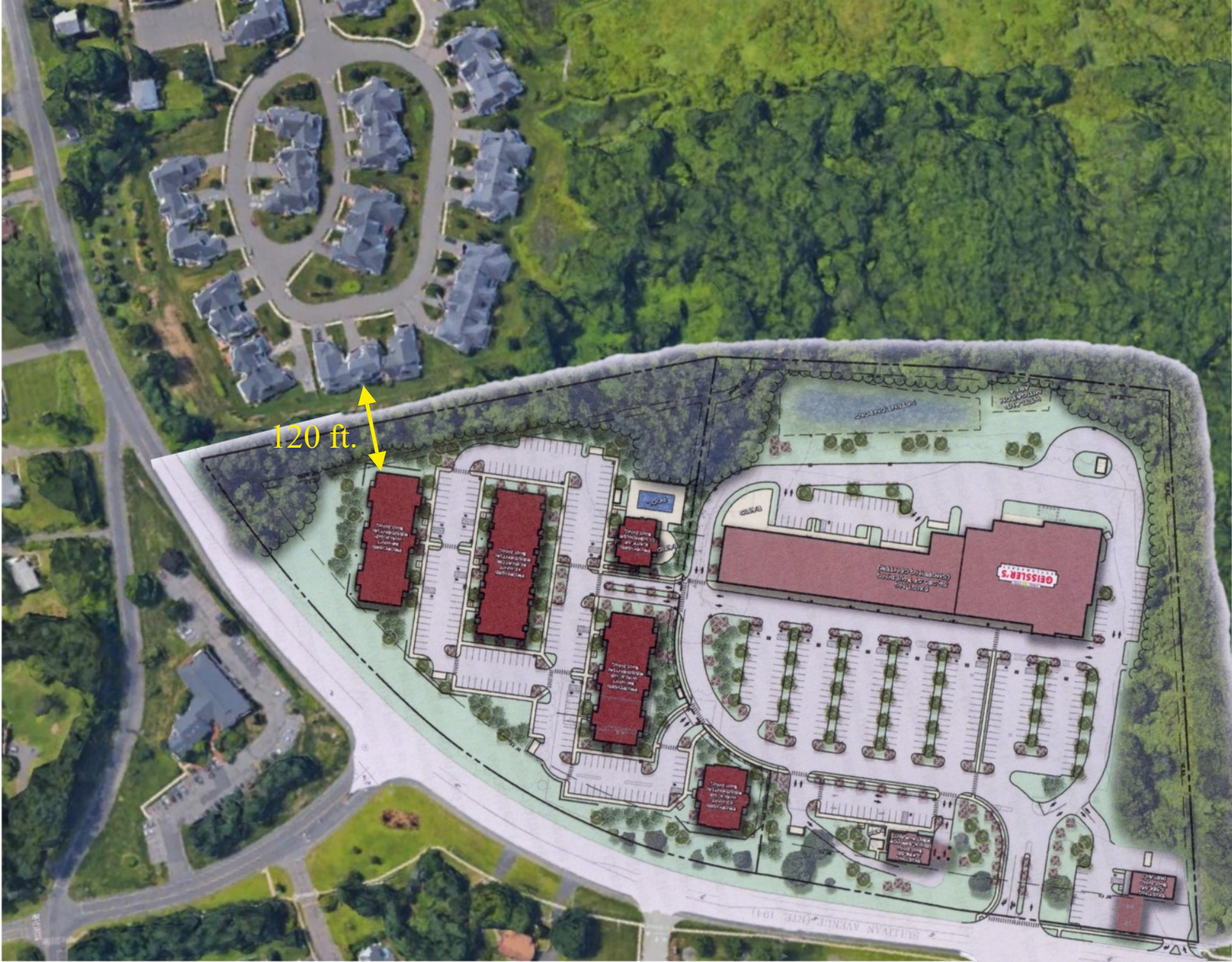


November 2019 Plan Circulated by Geissler's





February 2020 Plan Presented to PZC



# Permitted Building Height in SAMUD-OZ

“Maximum stories in a building shall be three (3), maximum commercial or commercial / residential (buildings containing both uses) impervious coverage shall be 65%, maximum residential impervious coverage shall be 60%, maximum lot coverage shall be 40%, and maximum building height shall be 45 feet. Residential buildings adjacent to a single family zone or development shall not exceed 2 ½ stories.”

During the review and approval process, the height of the residential buildings was a concern to the Town Planner and several commission members but ultimately the height restrictions above were adopted.

The commission apparently felt that single family homes should be “protected” from the visual appearance of nearby tall apartment buildings.

*Even though Strawberry Fields is zoned MF, we strongly feel that the nature and quality of our community deserve the same “protection” from nearby tall apartment buildings.*



# How Building Height & Proximity Impacts Us

## Proposed 3 1/2 Story Apartment Building



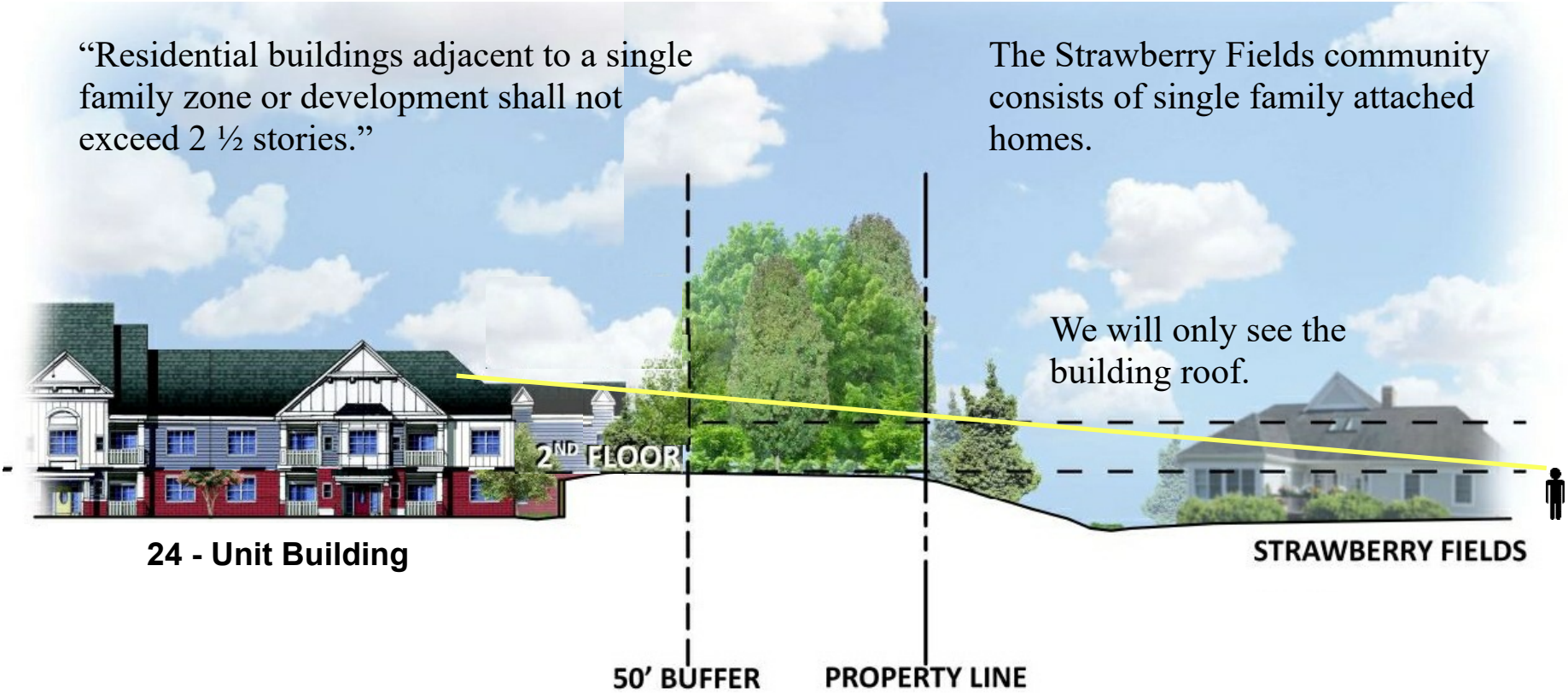
Due to the height (45 ft.) and proximity (120 ft.) of the proposed apartment building that is closest to Strawberry Fields, the building will be very visible through the buffer zone which is populated by a sparse stand of trees in declining health and scrub undergrowth. Any supplemental plantings of evergreens on the berm to provide improved screening will take 10 to 15 years to substantially obscure the building.

# What a Lower Building Height Will Mean To Us

## A 2 1/2 Story Apartment Building Will Reduce Visibility from Strawberry Fields

“Residential buildings adjacent to a single family zone or development shall not exceed 2 ½ stories.”

The Strawberry Fields community consists of single family attached homes.



24 - Unit Building

2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR

50' BUFFER

PROPERTY LINE

We will only see the building roof.

STRAWBERRY FIELDS

# What is a Single Family Residence?

*Even though we are zoned as a multi-family community, we feel that we should receive the same consideration from the PZC as that offered to adjacent single family residences. After all, we are a high quality community that pays \$360,000 a year in property taxes.*

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a single-family house is one that may be fully detached, semi-detached, a row house or a town home. However, for a dwelling that's attached to other homes to be considered a single-family home, it "must be separated from the adjacent unit by a ground-to-roof wall," they note. Also, units that are attached in some way to another must not share heating or air-conditioning systems or utilities, nor have units located above or below.

From Cornell Law School: The term single-family dwelling means a structure designed for residential use by one family, or a unit so designed, whose owner owns, directly or through a non-profit cooperative housing organization, an undivided interest in the underlying real estate, including property owned in common with others which contributes to the use and enjoyment of the structure or unit.

From [www.uslegal.com](http://www.uslegal.com): Single family residence means a structure maintained and used as a single dwelling unit. Even though a dwelling unit shares one or more walls with another dwelling unit, it is a single family residence if it has direct access to a street or thoroughfare and does not share heating facilities, hot water equipment, nor any other essential facility or service with any other dwelling unit.

From [www.lawinsider.com](http://www.lawinsider.com): Single-family residence means a structure maintained and used as a single dwelling unit. Notwithstanding that a dwelling unit shares one or more walls with another dwelling unit, it is a single family residence if it has direct access to a street or thoroughfare and shares neither heating facilities, hot water equipment nor any other essential facility or service with any other dwelling unit.

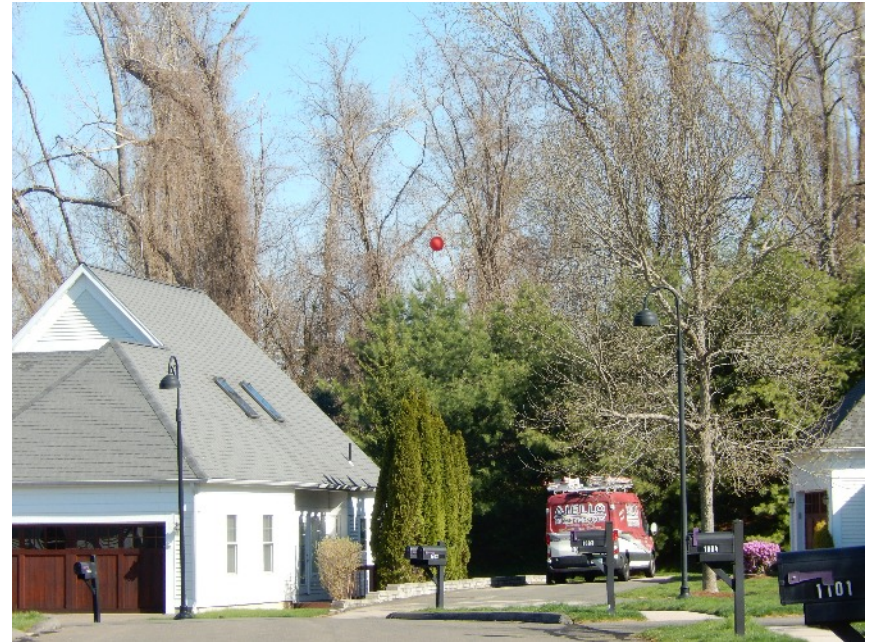


# Buffer Trees



## Current Plan

The presented plan suggests a stand of tall trees with very full foliage that you cannot see through.



## Reality

Many trees in this view will be removed by the project. Trees remaining are in decline and will not obscure the building at this time nor in the future.

# What Do We Want From the PZC?

Please strongly consider the impact on Strawberry Fields of the proposed large apartment building that is closest to the property line.

Please instruct the applicant to modify the site plan to minimize the visual impact on the owners of Strawberry Fields homes.

Please do not approve the zone change until our concerns have been substantively addressed.

Please require that the plantings (existing and supplemental) in the buffer zone conceal the apartment building from our view.

Please require that the buffer zone work (excavation, grading, tree removal, tree planting) be completed before construction is allowed start.

**Thank you for your consideration!**

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From: Shauna Raupach [shaunaraupach@yahoo.com]

Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2021 4:29 PM

To: PlanningZoningComments

Subject: [External]Support of Geissler's and the new Sullivan Ave Plaza. Attn: PZC chairman Bart Pacekonis

Hello Mr. Pacekonis,

I am unable to attend the planning and zoning commission virtual hearing but would like to express that I would be in favor for this wonderful upgrade to the South Windsor Geissler's and the new Sullivan Avenue Plaza and apartments.

Kind Regards,

Shauna Raupach

Sent from my iPhone

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Submitted on Sunday, April 25, 2021 - 6:34pm

Submitted by anonymous user: 32.214.61.105

Submitted values are:

Subject: For Planning / Zoning / Wetlands

Message:

Dear Mr. Bart Pacekonis,

I live in Broad Brook, CT next town over from South Windsor and do a lot of shopping on the Sullivan Ave. roadway. I don't know if my support means anything not being a taxpayer in SW but I completely support this proposal.

Geissler's Plaza has been such an eyesore and it doesn't have a nice hometown feeling.

I have always wondered why it didn't get the attention the rest of South Windsor gets and am so happy to see the proposed plans! How can the plans not enhance beautiful South Windsor?

The apartments look like the new ones about to open next to Sophia's Plaza in East Windsor. They look very nice and again, it is about time.

I will be watching the progress in SW for this great proposal.

Best Regards,Nora Santos

==Please provide the following information==

Your Name: Nora Santos

Your E-mail Address: [norasantos1992@gmail.com](mailto:norasantos1992@gmail.com)

Organization: EW resident

Phone Number: 860-712-5570

==Address==

Street: 45 Highland Avenue

City: Broad Brook

State: Connecticut

Zipcode: 06016

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.southwindsor-ct.gov/node/2/submission/45456>

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**From:** wayne sumple [wsumple@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 26, 2021 12:18 PM  
**To:** PlanningZoningComments  
**Cc:** Wayne; Coreen Sumple; Lipe, Michele  
**Subject:** [External]Comments for April 27, 2021 Public Hearing Re: Development of Sullivan Avenue Plaza

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Dear Commission Members,

This communication supplements two other letters we have sent to the Commission and reiterates our concerns that the two apartment buildings on the southern border of the SAP property are too high and too close to homes within the well-established Strawberry Fields neighborhood. Two new perspectives are offered below.

**1. Evolution of Project**

In 2019, we became aware of a proposal to develop SAP as a combined commercial/residential parcel of land. An agent of the property owner came to Strawberry Fields and did a presentation about the proposed commercial/residential development. We were provided with an artist’s rendering of what the development would look like. It included several small apartment buildings that were between 220 and 275 feet away from the closest homes in Strawberry Fields, and were a maximum height of 35 feet. Based upon this presentation, we saw no threat to our little neighborhood. Fast forward to the Zoning Commission voting 5:2 on the SAMUD text amendment that would allow the property owner’s proposal to move forward, and shortly thereafter, the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic. Over the last year, the SAP property owner acquired a small pie-shaped piece of land immediately adjacent to the Strawberry Fields neighborhood, and the original conceptual drawings for 112 apartments with a maximum height of 35 feet morphed into the current proposal to build 125 units that will be in excess of 45 feet tall. Two of the four apartment buildings will be very close, and very visible to homes in Strawberry Fields, which is a neighborhood of predominantly one-story attached homes.

**2. Putting the Apartment Buildings into Perspective**

One of the proposed three-story apartment buildings on the southern part of the SAP property will be 120 feet from the back wall of homes in Strawberry Fields. The building proposed for the southwestern corner will be 190 feet away, but the topography of the land on the southwestern border drops off and will make the second building seem just as close. To put the distance into perspective, consider that 120 feet is less than the distance from home plate to second base on a major league baseball field! To bring the comparison home to South Windsor, please consider the dimensions of the vacant bank building at 1645 Ellington Road that was proposed for use as the new Town Hall.

| Property            | Width     | Depth    | Height                                    |
|---------------------|-----------|----------|---|
| 1645 Ellington Road | 112 feet* | 56 feet* | 39 feet to gutter; 48 feet to roof peak** |



|                |             |            |                                   |
|----------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| SAP Apartments | 180 feet*** | 61 feet*** | 45 feet to middle of roof line*** |
|----------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------------------|

\*based upon SW GIS property card

\*\*measured using range finder because height is not reflected on property card

\*\*\*based upon information from owner's agent

Since a picture is worth a thousand words, we have attached three photographs of the bank building at 1645 Ellington Road. The first is a view of the bank building from the street. The second photo is the side view of the rectangular portion of the bank building and does not include the angled extension at the rear of the building. The third photo is of the side of the building, taken from 120 feet away. Imagine making the bank building 50% wider, and placing two buildings that size on the southern border of the SAP property. Does the Commission really think that placement of these two enormous apartment buildings won't have a negative impact on the neighborhood and quality of life that homeowners have enjoyed since Strawberry Fields was built almost 20 years ago?

In closing, we want to reiterate that we are not opposed to the development of the SAP. It will be an improvement enjoyed by the whole South Windsor community, and will address the need for rental apartments in our town. We do, however, vehemently oppose the construction of buildings that will loom over our neighborhood regardless of whatever bushes/trees are planted on the buffer. We strongly encourage the Commissioners to do the right thing, and not approve the zoning change until and unless the petitioner amends the plan to address the fundamental problem that two of the apartment buildings are too big and too close to homes in the existing Strawberry Fields neighborhood.

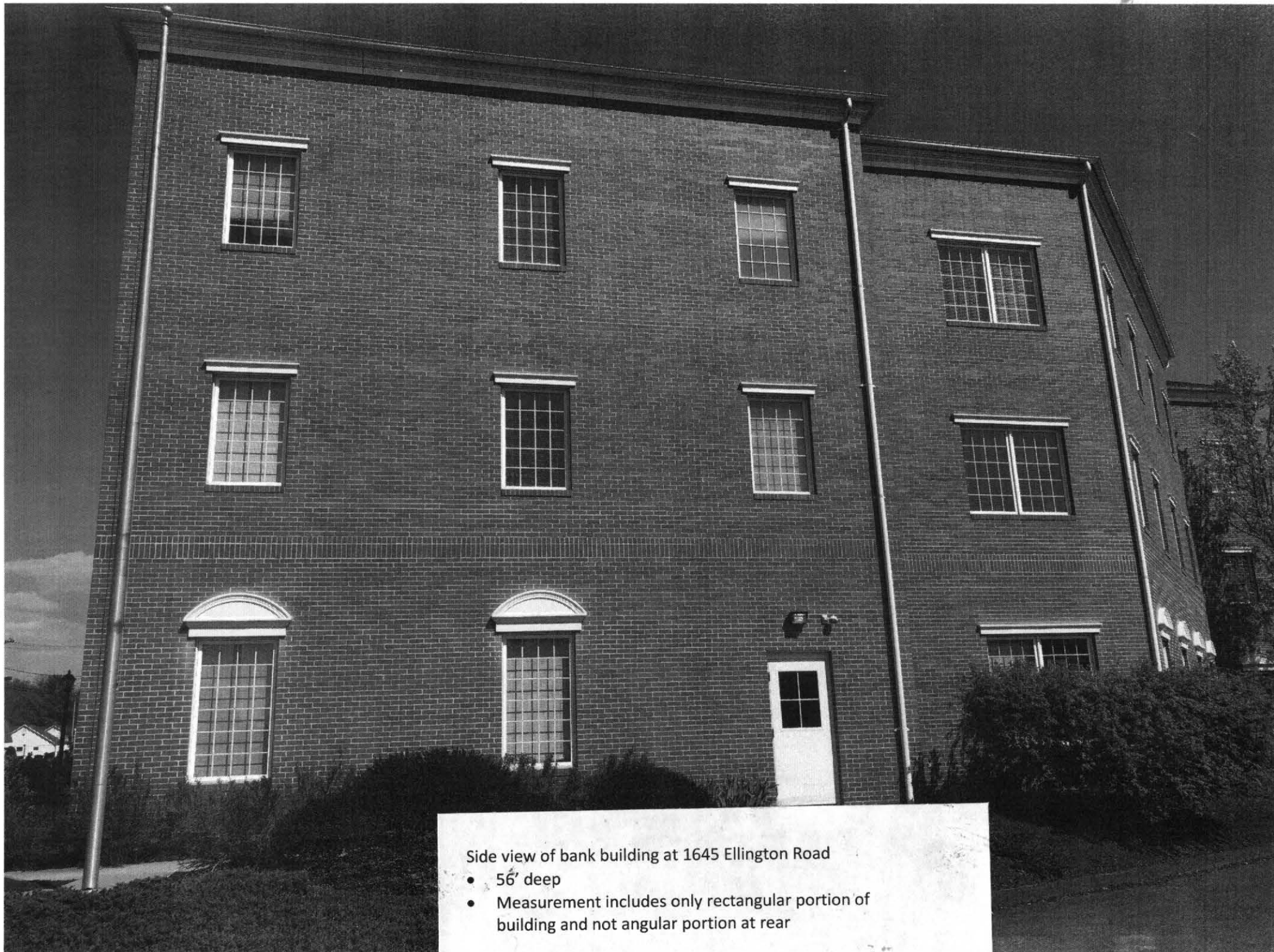
Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully submitted,

Coreen & Wayne Sumple  
 1004 Dzen Way  
 South Windsor CT 06074

Cc: Michele Lipe, AICP, Director of Planning for the Town of South Windsor

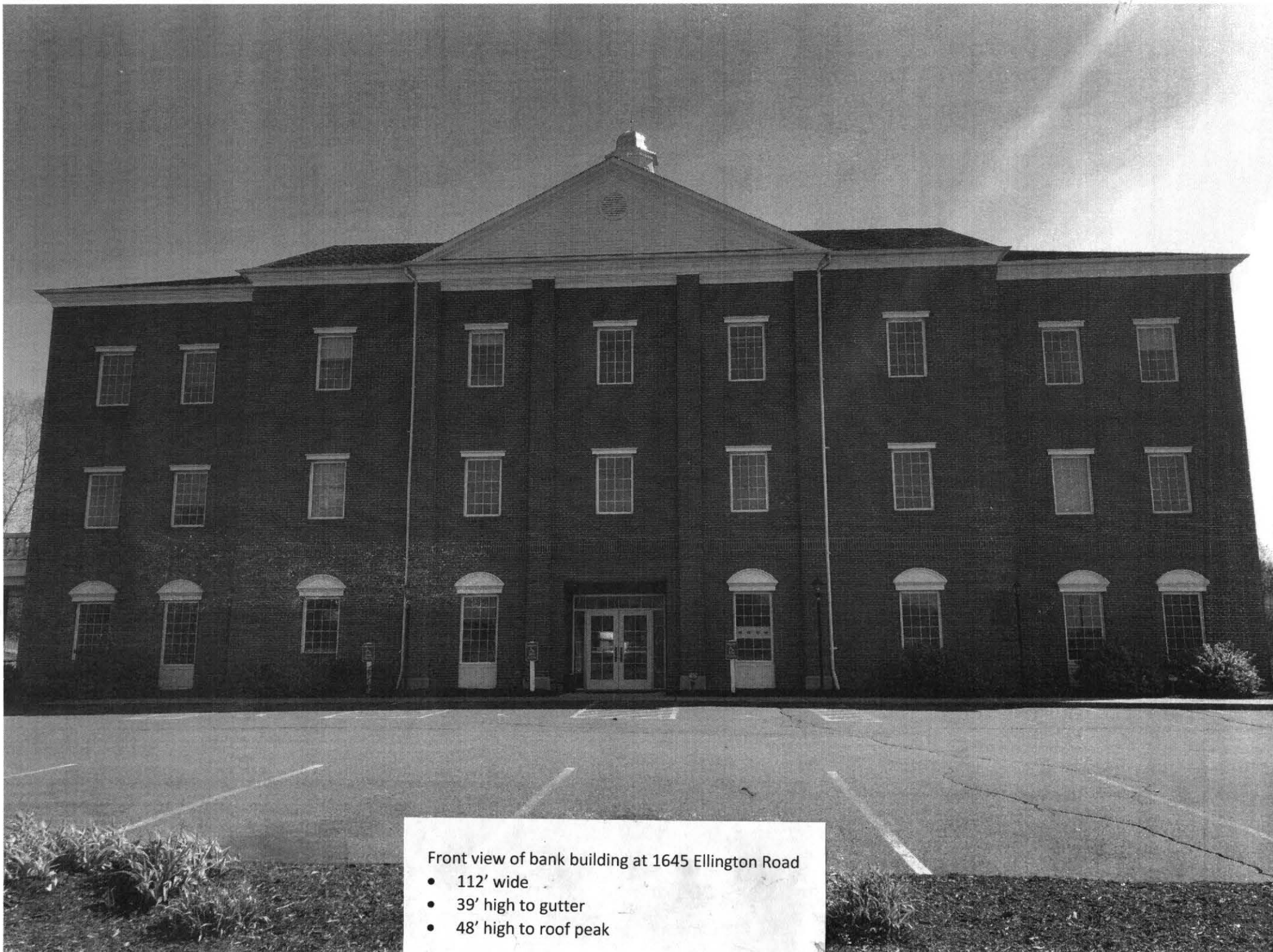
**Attachments (3)**



Side view of bank building at 1645 Ellington Road

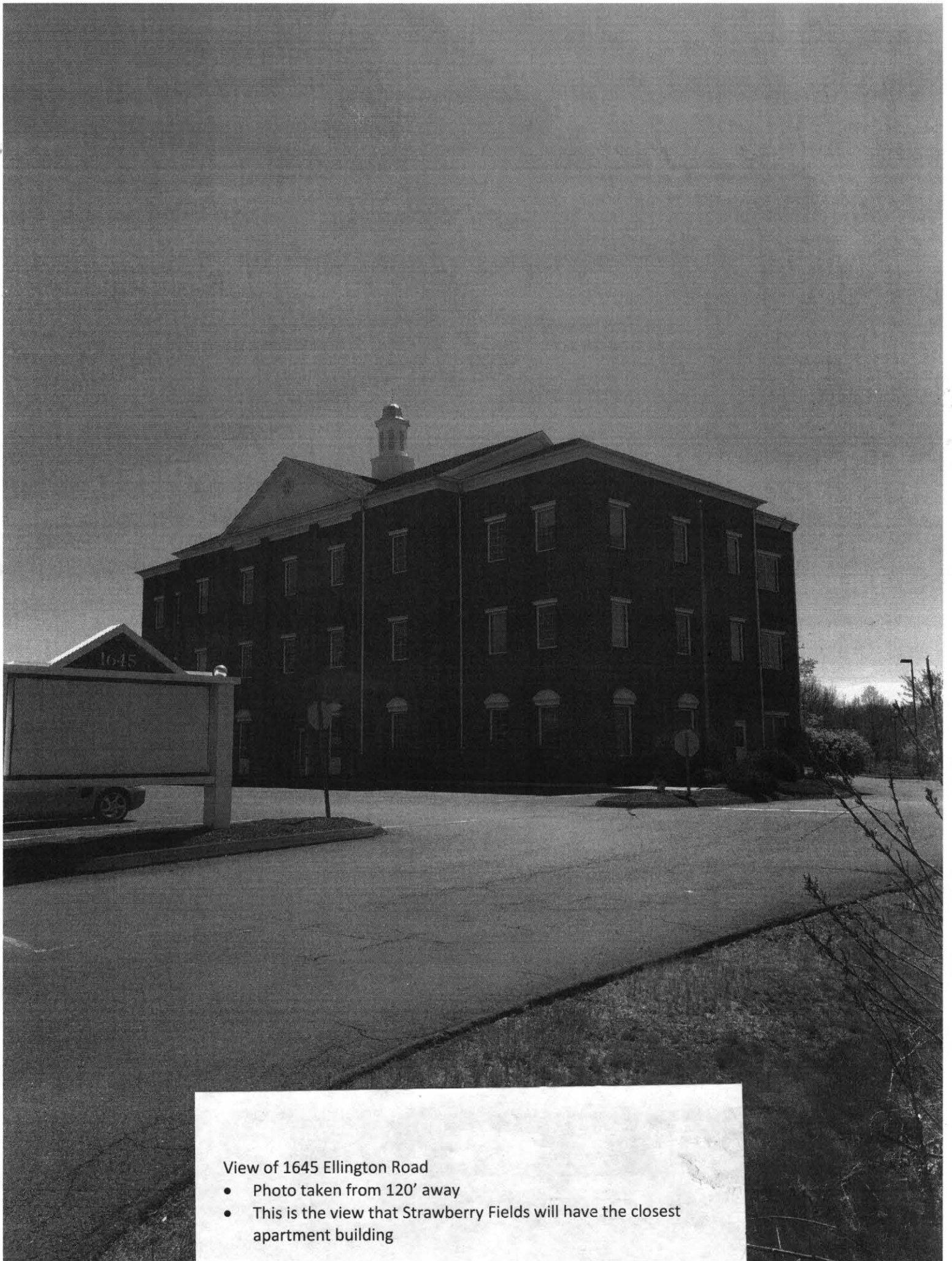
- 56' deep
- Measurement includes only rectangular portion of building and not angular portion at rear





Front view of bank building at 1645 Ellington Road

- 112' wide
- 39' high to gutter
- 48' high to roof peak



View of 1645 Ellington Road

- Photo taken from 120' away
- This is the view that Strawberry Fields will have the closest apartment building