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January 25, 2024

VIA EMAIL AND FEDEX

Ms. Jamilet Baquerizo Vite, Planning Board Clerk
Township of West Orange
66 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052

**Re: Essex County Country Club
Amended Site Plan Application Half-way House – Supplemental ABC Information
350 Mt. Pleasant Avenue - Block 156, Lot 1**

Dear Ms. Baquerizo:

As you are aware, this office represents the Essex County Country Club (the “Applicant”) in connection with an application for amended final site plan approval for construction of a half-way house building on the existing golf course located at 350 Mt. Pleasant Avenue and designated as Block 156, Lot 1 (the “Property”), which is pending before the Township of West Orange Planning Board (the “Planning Board” or the “Board”).

The Applicant previously appeared before the Planning Board at a public hearing conducted on November 29, 2023, where the Applicant sought amended site plan approval for various improvements on the Property including a proposed half-way house (formerly identified as a “comfort station” by the Applicant) (the “2023 Application”). During the November 2023 hearing, an objector appeared and presented expert testimony from a professional planner, Mr. Peter Steck, who acknowledged that golf courses along with customary accessory buildings and structures thereto were permitted uses within the R-2 Zoning District where the Property is located. He proffered, however, that the Applicant failed to demonstrate the “customary” nature of a half-way house on a golf course, and particularly one that may serve alcoholic beverages out of the structure. Out of an abundance of caution, the Applicant withdrew its request to construct the half-way house as part of the 2023 Application, and the Board voted to approve the remainder of the application.

On January 17, 2024, the Applicant filed a separate amended site plan application wherein the sole relief requested was to construct the half-way house on the Property. This matter is scheduled for a public hearing before the Planning Board on February 7, 2024. In support of the “customary” nature of a half-way house serving alcohol at a golf course, please accept a copy of an Open Public Records Request filed with the State of New Jersey Law and Public Safety/Division of Alcohol Beverage Control by Lisa Barata, Esq., and the responsive documents thereto.

Pertinent to the subject application, we draw your attention to the following information contained within the responsive documents:

Country Club Name/Applicant	Municipality	Relevant Licensed Structure	Relevant Portion of Responsive Document
Montclair Golf Club at Rock Spring	West Orange	Half-way house (snack shack)	Amendment Application #119574, dated June 29, 2016, Page 3, Building 3 of 3 to be licensed “Halfway House (snack shack)” (page 19 of the PDF entitled “0722-33-053-001 to 003 Rock Springs Montclair Golf and DPG Edison-Redacted”)
Echo Lake County Club	Westfield	Kyle house	Diagram of Kyle House 23’ x 29’ structure containing two restroom facilities and counter (page 10 of the PDF entitled “Echo Lake County Club_Redacted”)
Basking Ridge Country Club	Basking Ridge	Half-way house	Application filed April 8, 2022, Page 3, Building 2 of 4 to be licensed “Halfway House” (page 6 of the PDF entitled “Basking Ridge Country Club_Redacted”)
Baltusrol Golf Course	Springfield	Half-way house	Diagram of Halfway House containing two restroom facilities and snack bar (page 33 of the PDF entitled “Baltusrol_Redacted”)
Plainfield Country Club	Edison	Half-way house	Page 3, Building 5 of 5 to be licensed “Halfway house” (page 10 of the PDF entitled “Plainfield Country Club_Redacted”)
Canoe Brook Country Club	Summit	Half-way house	Diagram of South Course – Areas of Concern “South Course Half-way House” (page 14 of the PDF entitled “Canoe Brook Country Club_Redacted”)
Upper Montclair Country Club	Clifton	Half-way house	Description of licensed premises, in part, “adjoining half-way house” (page 18 of the PDF entitled “Upper Montclair Golf Club Redacted”)

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Please note that the within information is being provided to the Planning Board only to support the customary nature of the proposed half-way house structure. It is the Applicant's position that the power to control and regulate the sale of alcohol within the structure is reserved for other regulatory bodies pursuant to the New Jersey Alcoholic Beverage Control Act, N.J.S.A. 33:1-1 et seq. (the "ABC Act"), and the Planning Board lacks jurisdiction to control same. With that said, should the Planning Board be inclined to approve the application, the Applicant would agree that as a condition of approval it would receive the appropriate licensing in accordance with the ABC Act prior to the sale of alcoholic beverages within the proposed half-way house.

Should you have any questions regarding the enclosures, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours

/s/ Lisa A. John-Basta

Lisa A. John-Basta
Member

LAJ:bs
Enclosures