

Mayor Gary Bassett and the Trustees of the Village Board  
Village of Rhinebeck  
76 East Market Street  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572

March 26, 2024

Dear Mayor Bassett and Trustees of the Village Board:

To just refresh everyone's memory, I am a resident of South Street in the Village of Rhinebeck. As such, I have been following the development of the proposed project for 6 Mulberry St. I am writing in regard to this project as both a neighbor, a design professional, and as a follow up to my letter which I submitted in January of this year.

I have a comment on the document which I received entitled A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND THE ZONING CODE OF THE VILLAGE OF RHINEBECK TO CREATE THE BULKELEY SCHOOLHOUSE OVERLAY DISTRICT.

I would like to address Section 4 Item C8:

8. Front entrances. Each single or multi-family home in the district shall have a front entrance or porch facing the street where the home is located, to better connect such residences with the outside neighborhood and its character. For the Bulkeley Schoolhouse the Planning Board may waive or vary this requirement and instead require an outdoor sitting area disconnected with the building if clear and convincing evidence indicates that a front entrance or porch is impractical, would lead to substantial adverse impacts or is unnecessary for consistency with historic preservation.

In my opinion, as a designer of multi-family residences and many other building types, a front porch or sitting area disconnected from a front door may be pointless and a waste of resources. The goal of a front door in a building such as this is to give the residents a chance to interact more directly with the community and engage in what is so special about village life. The pedestrian nature of the Village and the chance for spontaneous interactions with neighbors are what make village life so special. Creating only a side or back entrance to the school really hampers the ability to make the building more residential in appearance, and is inconsistent with the historical character of the Village. I would argue that the 4 to 5 foot corridor that I proposed which would bisect the front two apartments can be reworked to have little or no financial impact on the developers ability to rent the these two apartments. The notion that this cannot be made handicap accessible is also not accurate.

I would be happy to offer up some consulting services gratis if that would help.

Please reconsider eliminating the requirement for a front door on 6 Mulberry. Once this "door" is opened it will create a precedent for future developments.

Regards,



David Ashen

54 South Street.