



May 15, 2017

Mrs. Florence Keenan McGuinness, Co-Chair
Goose Creek Association
Middleburg, VA

Dear Lori,

Thank you for the opportunity for our team to meet with the Goose Creek Association board to review our project, and we appreciated the time for constructive feedback. While we understand there are legitimate rural scale concerns, we have taken the density and water impact measures that are commensurate with a boutique investment, and trust the board will take all aspects of this key commitment on our part into consideration. We believe in being entirely transparent with our plans for Blackthorne Inn, and we are quite concerned about the ongoing misrepresentation of the scope and impact of our investment. Our hope is to get ahead of misrepresented facts to open up productive communication for constructive feedback, similar to our meeting earlier this week. Exaggerated and inflammatory assumptions and ignored facts cloud this process, and our goal is to have meaningful communication with the community as we are open to meaningful and positive changes to elements of the project.

We are truly looking forward to being involved in the Upperville community and supporting the organizations that are integral to our neighbors. We have a successful track record of being committed to responsible investment in the rural communities and environments, and we are proud to take part in the environmental and historic preservation initiatives at Blackthorne Inn which we have detailed in our plans. The sense of place of this agricultural land is the core to our identity as a luxury destination resort. We are dedicated to preserving the natural beauty that surrounds us. Our ultimate goal is to provide an agritourism experience that provides our guests with an authentic, rural retreat inspired by the unique landscape.

The changes we have made to our project scope changes are a direct result of our due diligence, the input of neighbors, and commitment to propose what is appropriate for the rural nature of the land and is economically sustainable. We are not developers, we are long-term owners. Through a transparent, open and proactive agenda, we are focused on formulating the correct balance that will allow Easton Porter as the owner and operator of the New Blackthorne Inn to be an active member of the community for years to come. We are invested in an Albemarle County farm in a conservation easement farm and have a six year positive relationship with the community and the county.

We understand the concern of the Goose Creek Association regarding the county's limited resources to enforce codes or ordinances, particularly on the weekends. Policies need to be in good faith or have a structure in place to supply reports or independent contracts. We totally support that Individual property's water treatment systems need to be thoroughly engineered and have a structure in place to conduct reports with independent contractors and engineers. We agree to keep Goose Creek Association informed about our five-year contract for maintenance services for the non-conforming bio-retention secondary treatment systems along with access to testing reports. We have years of successful experience

with these de-nitrification systems and operate them with detailed quarterly preventative maintenance plans.

Our non-conventional water treatment systems are designed to return 90 - 95% of the total water used to the aquifer, provide minimal disruption to the rural landscape, and help us protect and retain more legacy trees. The new systems are replacing outdated, failing technology that currently poses a pollution risk. Our new system will be treating to nearly a potable level of water before any distribution and absorption into the ground.

The underlying economic feasibility of our investment proposal focuses on the long-term sustainability and health of the business. This focus allows for full-time/year-round employment and operation while having the ability to withstand an economic downturn because of its multi-profit center approach - High-End Weddings, small Corporate Retreats, Restaurant Business and Leisure Hotel Guests. This is a single phase project. Easton Porter will not be coming back in the future to ask for additional approvals that would increase the size or density of the business.

The Hillside events barn square footage proposed is three rooms with 9,053 square feet of public meeting space, with a total of 18,096 square feet that includes required support areas such as offices and kitchens. The opposition infers that it is a 19,000 square foot public space facility to suggest over 100 large and concurrent annual events. We have limited our annual Class C events to only 34 with a maximum of 250 guests which would be primarily private weddings and celebrations. We have a further 30 much smaller events, primarily for guests staying with us in the resort. The Blackthorne Inn was doing 32 events per year, with approvals for 200 guests, so the net increase in the larger events is not substantial. Moreover, 70 of the guests for events will be staying with us, further reducing the impact on traffic. The total Class C events equate to 1.2 average per week. We will be removing the existing events space and barn totaling 5,000 square feet, so the increase in square footage is partially offset. The smaller events hosted at Blackthorne Inn will be self-contained, meaning the vast majority of guests will be staying on property.

The Salamander and Mt. Airlie Resorts came up in our discussion with the board. The Salamander has 185 guestrooms and Mt. Airlie Resort has 150 guestrooms. In comparison, we are proposing 38 guestrooms.

Below is a chart showing our boutique hotel proposal scope of events compared to the other properties.

Resorts / Acreage		Indoor			Outdoor		
Resorts	Acres	Sqft	Max Guests	Public Meeting Rooms	Sqft	Max Guests	Public Meeting Spaces
Salamander	340	15,686	1,225	10	48,597	949	4
Airlie	300	12,985	861	12	6,400	600	3
Blackthorne	57	9,103	250	3	3,469	0*	2

*Outdoor event space is sold with the indoor space and will not have an increased occupancy.

It is important to us to have a positive working relationship with all community members, and Greystone in particular. Easton Porter has met with representatives of the Greystone community four times in person with many follow-up phone calls and emails. We have met in person with 10 members of the neighborhood and will continue to do so as we finalize our plans.

Specific feedback from the neighbors has been taken into account resulting in several changes to accommodate the concerns and needs:

- ❖ Addition of a 25 ft native species green buffer to screen views from Greystone.
- ❖ Privacy and perimeter farm fencing added to create a physical barrier to block light.
- ❖ Review the road topography to reduce the chance of headlight wash.
- ❖ Commitment to use Dark Sky lighting standards for our landscape lighting.
- ❖ Moving of the Hillside Events Barn away from the edge of the property to a more central location to preserve their privacy.
- ❖ Facing of the barn away from the neighbors, with the entry facing across the valley to limit any direct noise issues.
- ❖ Elimination of outdoor amplified music at the Stone House Restaurant.
- ❖ Conversion of the vineyard to organic, and reduction in size to 4 acres, from 16 originally.

We are in the process of a repositioning exercise for the Hill Side Event Barn to see if it can be relocated further away from their property and out of the Greystone view shed.

The impact and 'scale' of our proposed boutique resort has been exaggerated and worded less than complimentary language. The facts are:

- ❖ The proposed development density of the total buildings is less than 2% of the 57-acres
 - The Fauquier code requires 85% open land for a site our size in rural areas and we are 98% open land.
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- ❖ We are improving the previously abandoned woodlands and polluted pond.
- ❖ Two out parcels of the Blackthorne site have been purchased, property lines will be abandoned and brought back into the original estate, further reducing the density of the 57 acre site by removing two home sites.

As we mentioned we have a third-party company performing a traffic study. These will be added to the county filing once the study is completed.

If there are additional questions or concerns, we are open and available to meet and discuss this at any time.

Best regards,

Dean Porter Andrews
Managing Partner
Easton Porter Group

Brandon Davis
Director of Business Development

CC:
Goose Creek Association Board
Holly Geary - Executive Administrator, Goose Creek Association