



DELIVERY VIA EMAIL

August 1, 2024

Council President Elizabeth Kazinskas
City of Gardner
City Hall, 95 Pleasant Street, Room 121
Gardner, Massachusetts 01440

Dear Madam President and Honorable Councilors:

Thank you for listening to our proposal to operate the current farm with a new turf racetrack at 827 Green Street and holding the public hearing last week.

We heard loud and clear the specific concerns from Gardner's water quality to infrastructure. We appreciate everyone who came out and spoke, those who have emailed and called us, and shared comments online. We took your input and re-evaluated the Host Community Agreement to be better partners with you and the City of Gardner.

We significantly increased our financial commitment, guaranteed even stronger environmental protection with quarterly water testing and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection oversight, and addressed the concerns of Stone Street residents.

We increased the guaranteed yearly payment to \$700,000, due to an additional monetary pledge from the New England Horsemen's Benevolent Protection Association. Additionally, we agreed to increase our initial payment from \$50,000 to \$650,000 upon the granting of all licenses and approvals.

We know the City Council approved the creation of a Capital Improvement Stabilization Fund back in May. We have committed in the HCA that all \$700,000 of the yearly payment go directly into this new fund to help Gardner advance the projects needing the city's attention. This money means you'll be able to bond and immediately receive \$14 million to kickstart projects, such as the outdoor pool, Waterford Community Center renovations, upgrade the wastewater treatment plant, the bridge over Route 140, and make city buildings more accessible to all, among other projects.

Twenty-three people spoke out about water quality concerns during the public hearing. We hear and share in their concerns, which is why we are implementing the highest environmental standards on site. Three of the most renown, widely respected environmental firms are on our team. They will use their expertise, best practices, and latest technology to ensure 827 Green Street is the most environmental secure location in Gardner. We will test our water every quarter. MassDEP will review all the project plans, and they can inspect our location at any time. And we will be required to secure a Water Quality Certificate from DEP. We take this issue very seriously, and will do everything to be a benefit, not a distraction.

From day one, we have said we want to be good neighbors. Baystate shall work with neighbors to minimize any impact of festival days on the neighborhood, including but not limited to, hiring a police detail for the end of Stone Street to ensure that the public does not use or park on Stone Street on Festival days.

The proposed Host Community Agreement between Baystate Racing and the City of Gardner gives you the opportunity to hold us accountable, outline certain guarantees, and place regulations and guidelines for our operations. It is a legally binding document. We must and will follow it directly.

We have received a few questions about our investors. Sagi Genger, who has appeared at every City Council meeting when you have discussed our proposal, is the lead investor. I am one of the investors, as well. This project, like all development projects, will be financed through additional investors and traditional financing. This is standard procedure. We expect, if this project advances, more individuals will sign on as investors. A list of all investors will be submitted and vetted by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

We believe we can make a difference and assist the City of Gardner in solving this important problem.

Sincerely,

John A. Stefanini

Attachments

CC: Mayor Michael J. Nicholson
City Clerk Titi Siriphan
Assistant City Solicitor Vincent Pusateri, II