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December 3, 2021

**VIA E-MAIL**  
**AND HAND DELIVERY**

Town Supervisor Art Bassin  
and Honorable Members of the Town Board  
Town of Ancram, Town Hall  
1416 County Route 7  
Ancram, New York 12502

Re: JSG Farms, LLC, P&M Farms, LLC, RSG Farms, LLC, and SSG Farms, LLC  
Petition for Zoning Map Amendment – Iron Star Retreat Center  
Premises: 2540 New York State Route 82 (SBL 205.-1, Lots 24.4, 24.5, 24.6, and 24.7)

Dear Supervisor Bassin and Members of the Town Board:

On behalf of JSG Farms, LLC, P&M Farms, LLC, RSG Farms LLC, and SSG Farms, LLC (collectively, the “Petitioners”), we respectfully submit this Verified Petition for a Zoning Amendment to the Zoning Map of the Town of Ancram to remap a 13.27+/- acre portion of the above-referenced Premises from the Ancram Hamlet Residential (“AH-R2”) Zoning District to the Agriculture (“Ag”) Zoning District, in accordance with the Town of Ancram Zoning Law. The Premises are located on the south side of New York State Route 82, south and west of Wiltsie Bridge Road, northwest of Roche Drive and east of Poole Hill Road. The majority of the Premises is classified in the Town’s Ag Zoning District, with a portion of the Premises classified in the AH-R2 Zoning District. The property is also located in a Columbia County Agricultural District 1.

The Petitioners propose to establish a Retreat Center on the Premises, and in order to accomplish same, the Petitioners submitted an application for Special Use Permit, Site Plan and Lot Line Adjustment (Subdivision) Approval to the Town of Ancram Planning Board. As a part of the proposed Iron Star Retreat Center, the Petitioner intends to make certain improvements to the Premises that includes the Proposed Remapped Land, which is presently classified in the AH-R2 Zoning District. These accessory uses include a proposed organics building, farm machinery building, roadway, horse path, and parking area, two (2) infiltration basins and two (2) affordable one-bedroom units for farmworkers. The Town’s Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer determined that these related and accessory uses are not permitted specifically in the portion of the Premises presently classified in the AH-R2 Zoning District, leading to this Petition. Notably, the existing zoning classification boundary of the Proposed Remapped Area *does not* follow any current or known prior lot boundaries. The proposed remapping would result in the Premises being zoned wholly within the Ag Zoning District, and will create district boundaries in line with the property boundaries and consistent with the surrounding area.

As set forth more fully in the Verified Petition for Zoning Amendment to the Zoning Map, the



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Petitioners proposed to adaptively reuse the existing residence located on Lot 24.5 on the Premises for an inn with five (5) guestrooms and a restaurant. The Iron Star Retreat Center will also include the development of four (4) separate lodging cottages (“creek houses”) for overnight accommodations (including three (3) separate buildings for associated recreational support uses on the east side of the Premises). The Retreat Center will also feature a camping area (also referred to as glamorous camping or “glamping”) with twenty-two (22) individual camping structures, seventeen (17) of which will provide overnight accommodations with bathrooms, and five (5) of which will provide recreational uses for the campers and an organic farming operation. The Retreat Center will offer farming and mountain experiences to guests, with guests including business and wellness professionals who have a goal of reconnecting to each other and the land through services offered both on-site and in the area. The Retreat Center will also include affordable farmworker housing, proposed parking areas, access roads, private wells, individual sewage disposal systems, stormwater infrastructure, a well house, composting bathhouse.

Further, the proposed remapping of the above-described Proposed Remapped Land into the Ag Zoning District is consistent with the spirit of keeping Ancram the same, but better, while furthering the intent of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and in keeping with the standing zoning classifications in the area. The requested zoning map amendment will allow for the establishment of the proposed Iron Star Retreat Center, which will preserve open space, promote agricultural uses, attract visitors, create jobs and affordable farmworker housing, all goals of the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan as updated through 2019. Additional details regarding the benefits of the proposed rezoning request, and in turn the proposed Retreat Center, as well as the information required under the Town’s recently passed “Policy on Petition for Zoning Amendments” are provided in the enclosed Petition.

In support of this request, please find forty (40) copies of this letter, the referenced Petition, and the following Exhibits as referenced in the Petition:

- Exhibit A.** GIS Map, Google Map, and Google Map Street View Photos of Premises;
- Exhibit B.** Survey of Premises;
- Exhibit C.** Past Approval Resolutions for Premises;
- Exhibit D.** Excerpt of Town of Ancram Zoning Map (dated July 19, 2012);
- Exhibit E.** Excerpts of Site Plan Drawings for Proposed Retreat Center Highlighting Proposed Remapped Land, including sheets entitled: *Existing Conditions Plan* and *Site Plan*, dated December 22, 2021, prepared by Hudson Land Design Professional Engineering, P.C.;
- Exhibit F.** Town of Ancram Zoning Law Schedule of Permitted Uses;
- Exhibit G.** Town of Ancram Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer’s Interpretation;
- Exhibit H.** Draft of Proposed Amendment (with Legal Description of Land to



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- be Rezoned);
- Exhibit I.** Excerpt from Town of Ancram 1972 Zoning Map; and
- Exhibit J.** Updated Full Environmental Assessment Form, revised November 22, 2021, prepared by Hudson Land Design Professional Engineering, P.C., in compliance with SEQRA.

In addition, this submission includes a check made payable to the Town of Ancram in the amount of \$50, representing the application fee for the proposed zoning map amendment. Additionally, the Petitioners already established a Town Consultant review escrow, which is on file with the Planning Board. However, if additional or a separate consultant review escrow is required by the Town Board in connection with this Petition, the Petitioners will submit same upon request by the Board.

We respectfully request that this matter be placed on the Town Board's December 16<sup>th</sup> Agenda for introduction of the Petition and referral to the Planning Board and any other board, agency or official that the Town Board deems appropriate for formal recommendations. In the interim, should the Town Board or Town Staff have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration in this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TP', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Taylor M. Palmer

Enclosures

cc: John Lyons, Esq., Grant and Lyons, LLP, Planning Board Attorney  
Nan Stolzenburg, AICP, CPEA, Planning Board Planning Consultant  
Raymond J. Jurkowski, P.E., CPL, Planning Board Engineering Consultant  
Town of Ancram Planning Board  
Edward M. Ferratto, Town Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer  
Hudson Land Design Professional Engineering P.C.  
Wesley P. Chase, L.S.