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September 1, 2022

## VIA EMAIL AND HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Neal Zuckerman, Chair  
and Members of the Planning Board  
Town of Philipstown  
2 Cedar Street  
Cold Spring, NY 10516

Re: Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival – SEQRA Draft Scope

Dear Hon. Chair and Members of the Planning Board,

On behalf of our clients, the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival (“HVSF”) and Garrison Properties, LLC, we are submitting for the Planning Board’s review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) the attached Draft Scope prepared by Kellard Sessions Consulting for the proposed permanent relocation of HVSF to the Garrison Golf Club property (the “Project”). Once a Final Scope is approved, it will serve as a guide for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) that the Applicant will prepare and submit to the Planning Board. The primary goal of the SEQRA scoping process is “to focus the EIS on potentially significant adverse impacts and to eliminate consideration of those impacts that are irrelevant or not significant.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the Draft Scope has been prepared based on the Positive Declaration issued by the Planning Board on July 21, 2022, the July 6, 2022 memorandum from the Planning Board’s environmental consultant AKRF, and an August 18, 2022 draft memorandum from AKRF about specific items that should be included in the Draft Scope.

Since the issuance of the Positive Declaration, the design for the Project has evolved and the Proposed Action that will be evaluated in the DEIS includes two significant changes from the version of the Project that was most recently evaluated by the Planning Board. First, the proposed design for the theater itself is no longer based on the white or light-colored tensile structure that was evaluated in the Environmental Assessment Form (“EAF”) process. The new design would be lower in profile than the previously proposed tensile structure and would be constructed using a palette of materials with the textures and muted colors of stone, slate and wood that mimic and blend with the surrounding natural landscape. The new design presents a thin ground-hugging profile and uses a floating timber framed roof whose shallow horizontal curves echo the ridge lines behind and around it. In addition, under the new design, to help avoid potential visual impacts, the multiple buildings originally contemplated around the tent have been consolidated into a single structure which will be surrounded on three sides by year-round vegetative screening.

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<sup>1</sup> 6 NYCRR 617.8(a)

Consistent with HVSF's commitment to sustainability, the new design would also be the first purpose-built theater in the country to achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design ("LEED") Platinum designation. Solar panels, rainwater capture, reduced embedded carbon and other design elements are proposed to help minimize climate impacts and better protect the theater from extreme weather and wear. Studio Gang, the Project architect, has prepared initial visual renderings for the new design, attached hereto, in order to give the Planning Board and the public an idea of what the new proposed theater would look like. Visual studies of the new design will be included in the DEIS as part of the Proposed Action. The previously proposed tensile structure theater design will be continue to be evaluated in the DEIS as an alternative to provide a basis for comparison with the new design.

The second major change in the Proposed Action is the elimination of the previously proposed new two-way access driveway off Snake Hill Road and associated span bridge. Instead, the Proposed Action includes the continued use of the existing entrance at Snake Hill Road for one-way ingress/egress from the property as it has been used during HVSF's 2022 theater season at the Garrison and for decades before that serving the former golf course, banquet hall and restaurant. The DEIS will evaluate the previously proposed Snake Hill Road entrance and bridge as an alternative.

As required by SEQRA, the Draft Scope also includes the evaluation of a No Action alternative. The No Action alternative will evaluate the full buildout of the property under the current Garrison Golf Club Planned Development District ("GGCPDD") zoning, including the existing use of the property as a wedding venue and restaurant and the addition of a 40-room hotel with destination spa and amenities as contemplated by the GGCPDD. Such development represents the "site changes that are likely to occur in the reasonably foreseeable future"<sup>2</sup> in the event that the Proposed Action does not move forward and the property is sold. While a future developer could seek to change the zoning of the property to permit more intensive uses of the property (for example, in order to develop a residential subdivision), such an alternative is more speculative and less appropriate for use as a No Action alternative and would not allow the DEIS the benefit of using existing site data about the wedding venue and restaurant as a baseline for SEQRA purposes.

We look forward to working with the Planning Board on the development of a Final Scope in the upcoming weeks.

Respectfully Submitted,



Adam Stolorow

Encl.

Cc: S. Gaba, Esq.

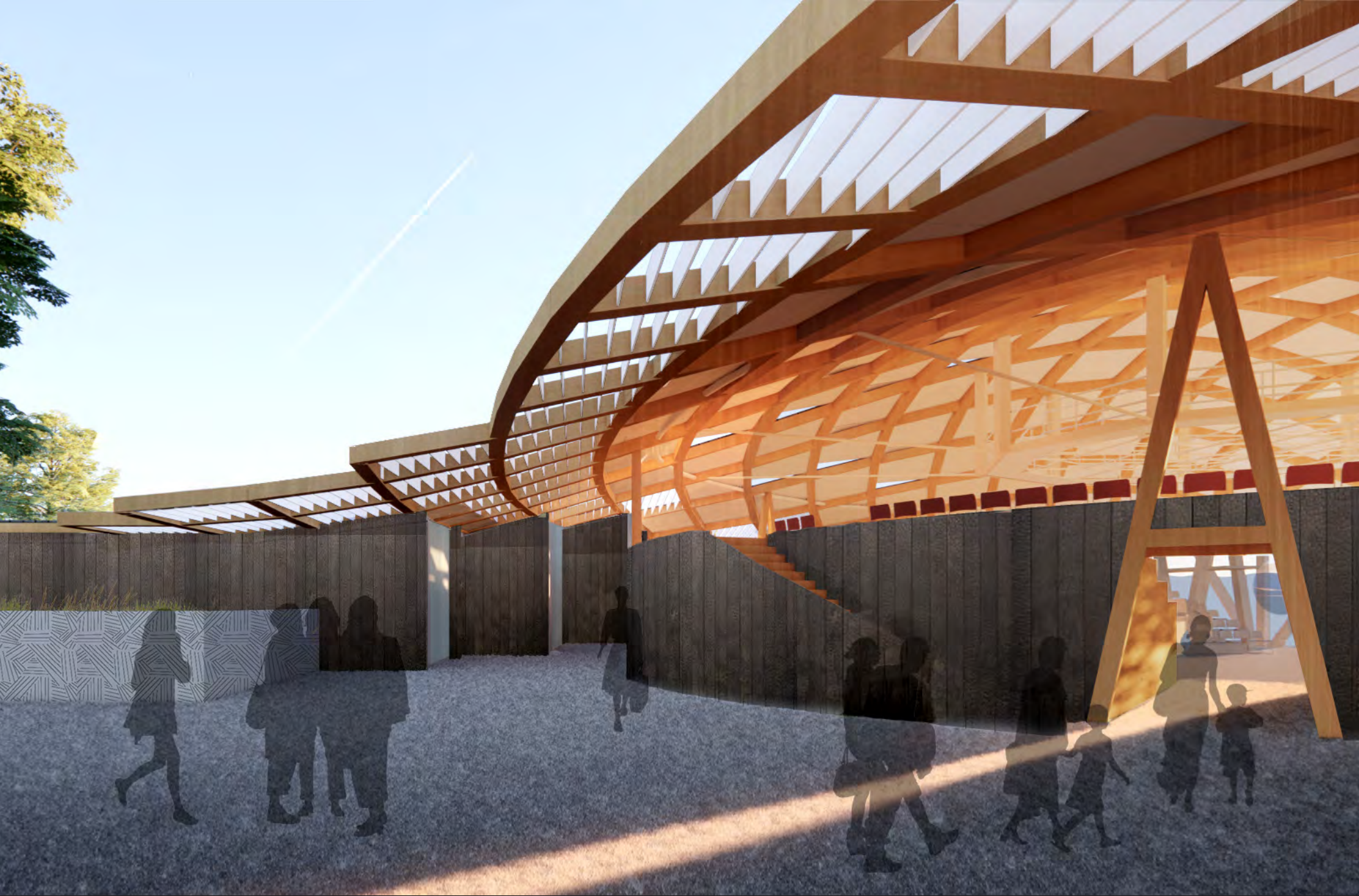
A. Werner

R. Gainer

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<sup>2</sup> 6 NYCRR 617.9(b)(5)(v).







## Structural Development

Scheme B - columns separated from actors' balcony

