

TOWN OF YORKTOWN CONSERVATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
November 5, 2020

Board Members Present: Co-Chair Phyllis Bock, Co-chair Diane Dreier, Peter Alduino, Robert Waterhouse, Patrick François, Justin Pruyne
Kim Hughes - Secretary

Board Members Absent: Walt Plankl

Guests: Ella Wynn, Kim Fasnacht, Joe Riina Site Designs, Marc Blanchard, Dawn McKenzie, Eric Redding, Websly Darbouze, Sean Murphy, Dennis Phayre, Jim Martorano

Phyllis Bock called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The meeting took place via Zoom Conference Call.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting: Done

Communications Received: None

Chair Persons Report: None

Reports from Other Committees: None

New Business:

- **IBM Solar Parking Canopy 1101 Kitchawan Road:**

The Board requests a landscape plan be submitted for review. We recommend a mixture of native deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs to replace the trees that will be taken down when the parking islands are removed to build the solar installation over the employee parking area.

- **3D Development fka Yorktown Golf & Baseball 2710 Lexington Ave:**

The Conservation Board reviewed site plans with Marc Blanchard of 3D Development for a plan to redevelop the site as a staging area for storage and transport of new vehicles on the synthetic turf at 2710 Lexington Avenue. The site is adjacent to a major wetland complex and Sylvan Glen Park. The Board advises against the proposed use of the existing synthetic field as a staging area. The use will have a significant adverse impact on the environment. The storage of over 600 new vehicles and the ensuing movement of transport trailers in and out of the site will compact the sub surface drainage compromising the system. Synthetic turf is not meant for vehicular use. In time repeated movement of cars over the synthetic turf will result in deterioration of the surface and cause dislodged fibers to filter into nearby wetlands and adjacent land. No treatment was provided should the stored vehicles release gas, oil or other fluids on to the turf. We advised the following: The applicant completely removes the existing turf and use a more suitable substrate such as item four gravel. The applicant provides screening from adjacent properties, especially Sylvan Glen preserve. Establish a plan to treat any fluids emitted by the vehicles during storage and transport on and off site. Develop best practice measures for erosion control and stormwater management to protect adjacent land and wetland..

Old Business:

- **Colangelo aka Featherbed Properties 1805 Jacob Road:**

The Conservation Board has reviewed the site plans and is in favor of the project moving forward.

- **NY Self Storage – 621 Bank Road Jefferson Valley:**

The Conservation Board has reviewed site plans with Dawn McKenzie of Insite Engineering for a proposed site plan for NY Self Storage and has the following comments and/or recommendations: The Conservation Board sees no adverse environmental impact and is in favor of the project moving forward.

- **Solar Farm – Foothill Street:**

The Conservation Board met with representatives from Bergmann PE to review applications for a large-scale solar farm located in the northern part of town on a parcel bordered by Lockwood Rd and Foothill St. The Board has the following comments:

- The Conservation Board reemphasizes our view shared in previous memos that while renewable power sources such as wind and solar present green solutions to cutting carbon emissions, solar farms should be located on sites that have few negative environmental impacts. The recent proposed plans for installations of large-scale solar installations on former agricultural land, and on parking areas meet these criteria. The Foothill St. location presented to the board which is heavily wooded, necessitating the removal of 15+ acres of trees, does not.
- The Mohegan Outlet stream bisects the parcel, cutting a scenic gorge through the property. The removal of over 15 acres of trees adjacent to a vital stream corridor, will have lasting impacts to the area. It will change the ecological dynamic of this area from a forested habitat to an industrial zone. A change of this type will result in a fragmented forest, open up the stream buffer, and over time degrade this parcel irreparably. Fragmentation leads to a loss of biodiversity, a reduction in water quality and the introduction of invasive plants, pests and pathogens. The forested habitat that now exists, provides a link to other contiguous parcels in the area, reaching into Putnam County. Wildlife travel along the stream corridor, canopy specific birds use the woodlands for nesting, food and protection, and amphibians seek out the moist leaf litter to hibernate and lay eggs. Forest fragmentation also leads to isolated islands of patchy woods, and edge effects. In this case the installation of a solar farm will result in changes in light, temperature, humidity and wind bringing the edge of a highly disturbed area to within 100 ft of a protected stream corridor.
- In 2006 and again in 2020 the Advisory Committee on Open Space rated the Lockwood parcel highly (17 out of a possible score of 18) due to its connectivity, feel of open space, biodiversity, physical features and wetlands. It is one of 4 properties that ACOS recommended for purchase

and preservation by the Town.

- The applicant should provide a tree survey and plans for mitigation. The functions of woodlands of this size cannot be adequately replicated by on-site mitigation nor by donation of funds to the tree bank.
- The applicant detailed plans for a stormwater basin which should be reviewed by engineering.
- No plans were shared with the Conservation Board on restoration of this site when the site is decommissioned. It is the feeling of this board that in 25 years' time the change to this property will be so severe that bringing it back to its current condition is not a reasonable expectation.
- Overall the adverse effects of this project are very significant and warrant further environmental review. The Conservation Board advises against granting of the special use and tree permits.

Meeting Ended 9:45 PM with a motion from Phyllis Bock and second from Peter Alduino.