

Town of New Paltz
Environmental Conservation Board
February 22, 2017
Community Center
7:30pm

Participants: Mike Domitrovits, Andy Ashton, Ingrid Haechel, Mike Merridan, Amanda Gotto from New Paltz Planning Board and Susan Wile to take notes.

Public Comment: Chris Ransom

PUBLIC INPUT: No new information from Chris, though she mentioned her house borders the entrance, which is odd.

FERRIS WOOD General Discussion:

The current plan uses every square inch of developable land. There are no new drawings of the development and a number of issues continue to be unresolved.

- Consensus that no one understands how wetland inspector doesn't feel there is reason to be concerned. The assessment by wetlands inspector Norbert Quentzer in November indicated no impact on wetland. There is also the question about the size of the wells, and whether they will be oversized to sell water back to the town.
- Traffic is also a concern as are the number of parking spaces, which are insufficient. The owner of the carwash is reluctant to give the developer a right of way or easement and it could back up to 299. We are unsure if it is illegal to make a left turn out of the lot. Excess traffic could back up on 299 with a turning lane, but this would require DOT and state for approval.
- EnCB has been waiting for inspectors input to comment. Ingrid walked the site. She may call Quentzer to request an explanation of how he reached his conclusion and to confirm that he is working from the current plan. Quentzer original assessment is too broad. While developer may not be building in wetlands, they are violating the law that requires the buffer.
- Open question is that while development meets B2 zoning criteria, traffic discharges into A1. The A1 zoning violates the B2 development. This could require a use variance.

SITE VISIT DISCUSSION:

- Ingrid provided synopsis of site visit. She came in from back area and walked along an old path. The building site appears more elevated from the wetland than she thought. Habitat is red cedar woodland, grey dogwood--a successional habitat, which is declining in region and not protected. She walked through the middle of proposed building. Buffer is staked and the corner of buildings appear staked and seem right up against wetland. Visually there's the wells, a bit of scrub and the wetlands. The area where wells would go has been bushhogged. A waiver has been applied to with dept. of health to get wells closer to buildings.
- Eastern side of property is less desirable for location of wells. Letter to Planning Board was sent Feb. 3. From Carol Knapp of Aspen Environmental - Additional Wetland Buffer Impact Justification in which "The tight fit is acknowledged," and acknowledging the wetlands are

expanding. There would be greater disturbance to wetland even though it is not in the buffer. Wells could be put in now, but in 10 years they might be in wetlands. Current well site is more likely to produce the volume they need and wetlands on the eastern side are more significant. Better to avoid impact on that side of property.

- If there are going to be wells on site, the proposed location would be better than disturbing other side of property due to habitat quality. But current location may have greater impact on current wells. EnCB advised Chris Ransom that she and any neighbors should get in on any pump test.

WILDBERRY DISCUSSION:

Revised Wildberry plans reviewed.

- Optimized plan removed the big water feature and climbing wall. Revised plan is for 90-room hotel with option to expand to 120. Includes a stand-alone restaurant, 10,000 foot conference center and 3,000 foot conference center with butterfly garden and outdoor amphitheater. All amenities will be available to the public. This plan has different traffic pattern, different usage.
- Still uses entire space, but greatly reduced. Boardwalks appears through wetlands. Doesn't indicate buffers. Existing wetlands have road through it. Entrance on 299 with exit on S. Ohioville. They cannot put planning board in the position to approve it. Appears they want application approved before moratorium goes in.
- This packet is insufficient to make a determination. We should be provided a point by point reduction to compare previous plan to new plan. Comments will be forthcoming.

Budget discussion tabled for next meeting.

Need to settle on meeting which day of the week to accommodate most members.

Neil sent letter about urbanization re tree planting grant. Wanted confirmation that Encb supports. Mike says he would send letter supporting.

9:57 meeting adjourned.