



September 15, 2017

Kenneth Kovalchik, Town Planner
Town of Guilderland Planning Board Guilderland Town Hall
P.O. Box 339
5209 Western Turnpike
Guilderland, NY 12084

Dear Mr. Kovalchik,

On behalf of People of Albany United for Safe Energy, the following items should be included in the Scoping document for the development known as the “Rapp Road Residential Development and Additional Lands”

We request an evaluation of the impact on climate change if the approximately 20 acres of Pine Bush ecosystem is removed from the natural environment and developed into 222 apartments and parking spaces along with the infrastructure that is necessary for this kind of project. We are in the midst of a climate crisis, and removing any natural area will impact climate change

This proposed development is in the newly zoned “Transit Oriented District”, which was created to be more oriented to Mass Transit. Over 200 outdoor parking spaces are proposed for the 222 units — added to the indoor parking spaces, more than one parking space is offered per unit. For a transit-oriented district, this is a lot of parking. The Scoping should include how the project will encourage the use of other forms of transit besides the automobile, and detail what forms of transit will be available. The Scope should include a realistic evaluation of the use of public transit, and whether residents will have safe and convenient access to bus and other public transit.

The Scope should include the impact of paving such a large area of land for parking on the aquifer, storm water runoff, and how paving such a large area will affect the Pine Bush ecosystem. Alternatives, such as smaller parking areas, or locating the project on land that is already paved or developed, should be considered.

The Scope should include the impact of building on climate change, specifically on how the paving and non-permeable surfaces will cause a rise in temperature as compared to leaving the land as it currently is.

At this point in our run-away-train-wreck-waiting-to-happen-climate-meltdown, we MUST not disturb anymore natural areas to build more unsustainable, human habitat. There are alternatives that will work, and these alternatives must be considered as the only options. These areas are protected for very crucial reasons, far more crucial to society as a whole, than building in the most convenient place for the developers to make the most money.

Furthermore, any new construction HAS to be SUSTAINABLE: evaluating and using technologies such as ground-source heat pumps, solar, passive solar, and high-tech sustainable building products to minimize the energy consumption of the project. Our old way of “growing and expanding” has dug a hole so deep we may not be able to get out. This project literally digs the hole deeper, and this could be the one that causes the walls to collapse in on us.

Proceeding with this project without an intense environmental impact study is reckless, irresponsible and immoral.

Sincerely,

Diana L. Wright
Facilitator of PAUSE

