

To: Guilderland Planning Board

From: Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council

Applicant(s): John Phelan, III; 2 Lot Minor Subdivision – 6061 Ostrander Road

Proposed Subdivision: The applicant is proposing a 2 lot subdivision of 25.5 acres of land located in the RA3 District. **Lot 1** will consist of 22.1 acres and contains an existing single-family residence. **Lot 2** will consist of 3.03 acres of land and is currently undeveloped.

Location: Property is located in the center of the Town, with the eastern property line running along Ostrander Rd. The property sits in between the Penn Central Railroad Line and the Guilderland Army Rifle Range.

Zoning: RA3

Site Inspection Summary:

Site Inspection Date: February 14, 2026

Meeting Attendees: (February 9, 2026) – Applicant, John Phelan, III. GCAC Members Elizabeth Markham, Sindi Saita, Steven Sawiki, Brigitte Fortune, James Gaughan, and Caitlin Ferrante, Chair.

Inspected by: Applicants Representative, Dave Ingalls; GCAC Members Elizabeth Markham, Brigitte Fortune, Sindi Saita, Jim Gaughan and Caitlin Ferrante, Chair.

Conclusions:

After inspecting this site and reviewing information about the property GCAC does not feel that there would be much, if any, negative impact on the environment resulting from 2 lot subdivision. The applicant has indicated that the only development will be a house on proposed Lot 2, ensuring the wetlands on Lot 1 are not disturbed. The development of proposed Lot 2 would require minimal tree removal as well. It is worth noting that during the site visit, the GCAC and the Applicant Representative noted the potential for a blind driveway as the plans are currently laid out. The intersection of Wormer Road and Ostrander Road occurs right at the southeastern corner of the property. The GCAC would recommend the Planning Board discuss this as the subdivision application moves forward.

Submitted by:



Caitlin P. Ferrante – GCAC Chair, 02/24/2026

INSPECTION DETAILS

Applicant(s) – John Phelan, III

Address: 6061 Ostrander Rd, Altamont, NY 12009 (Tax ID#: 50.00-2-27.5)

Background: According to the Applicant, his daughter and son-in-law currently own the property (Kelsie Phelan and Rishi Malik). The family is planning to subdivide the property into two lots, where the applicant plans to build a home on proposed Lot 2 (3.03 acres). Ownership was confirmed by Albany County's website. According to the Applicant, no further development is planned for proposed Lot 1 (22.1 acres). Currently, there is a home owned by the property owners on Lot 1.

Topography: The elevation of the property peaks at 422 ft Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL) in the southeastern corner, gradually descending to 342 ft AMSL in the southwestern corner of the property. The elevation gradually descends across the remainder of the property, as you move from east to west, from Ostrander Rd to the western most property line.

Vegetation/Trees: As observed by the GCAC on the site visit, the area where the Applicant has proposed development is fairly open with lots of invasive brush growth including bittersweet, buckthorn, fox grape., and multiflora rose, which the Applicant would remove. There were several trees in the area of proposed development in Lot 2, but the Applicant has expressed interest in saving as many trees as possible for privacy and to serve as a sound barrier. Of note, the GCAC observed oak and other trees lining the edges of the property - an old technique used by farmers to delineate property lines. Other trees noted during the site visit: birch, hickory, white pine.

Soil: A review of the Albany County Interactive Mapping site shows that the property contains five different soil types – NuB, BuB, BuA, NuC, and In. The majority of the property contains **BuB** soils, weaving across the property from west to east. **NuB** soils make up roughly $\frac{1}{5}$ of the property, running north to south along the entire eastern portion of the property that abuts Ostrander Rd. This is also where the proposed new development and property will be located (proposed Lot 2). Please see the notes at the end of this report for the soil details, but specifically note: *“The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Foundation drains and interceptor drains upslope from construction sites divert runoff and lower the water table...The main limitation affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table and the slow percolation in the subsoil and substratum. Installing a drainage system around the absorption field and diversions to intercept runoff from the higher areas will reduce wetness. Enlarging the absorption field or the trench below the distribution lines will improve percolation.”* **BuA** soils make up a larger sliver of land in the middle of the property, running from north to south almost the entire length of the property. A very small sliver of **NuC** soils runs along the southern property line, near the southeastern corner of the property. The remaining soils are **In**, in a thumb-shaped sliver which includes the wetlands in the back western portion of the property.

A brief description of these soils and their limitations according to the Albany County Interactive Mapping is described as follows. For more detailed descriptions of soil types from “Soil Survey of Albany County, New York” -1992 – James H. Brown, see “Notes” section at end of report.

BuB: Burdett silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes; Grade of Slope: 5; Drainage Classification: Somewhat poorly drained; Farmland Suitability: Prime farmland if drained.

NuB: Nunda silt loam; 3 to 8 percent slopes; Grade of Slope: 5; Drainage Classification: Moderately well drained; Farmland Suitability: All areas are prime farmland.

BuA: Burdett silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes; Grade of Slope: 2; Drainage Classification: Somewhat poorly drained; Farmland Suitability: Prime farmland if drained.

NuC: Nunda silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes; Grade of Slope: 12; Drainage Classification: Moderately well drained; Farmland Suitability: Farmland of statewide importance.

In: Ilion silt loam; Grade of Slope: 0; Drainage Classification: Poorly drained; Farmland Suitability: Farmland of statewide importance.

Drainage/Wetlands: The County Interactive map and Town of Guilderland Interactive map show several Freshwater Ponds that are part of the National Wetlands Inventory, as well as several informational wetlands all in Proposed Lot 1. The Applicant does not intend to develop in this portion of the property, with no intended disturbance to the wetlands.

Septic/Wells: No public water or sewer are available in this area of town. The applicant is proposing to install a private well and septic system in Lot 2. According to the Town Planner Memo, this system will need to be reviewed and approved by the Albany County Department of Health. The well and leach field locations are shown on [proposed Lot 2](#). The GCAC and Applicant Representative noted on the site visit that the topography of the property might better suit placement of the septic system and absorption field to the left of the proposed dwelling, instead of the right, as currently proposed. This would mean shifting the location of the dwelling to the right (if facing the proposed property from Ostrander Road), and placing the septic system to the left. This shifting could also potentially address the driveway issue the GCAC raised in the “Conclusions” earlier in the report.

Visual Impact: The Applicant noted that subdivision will have minimal visual impact. Due to the nature of the proposed development and the Applicant’s desire to preserve as many of the trees on proposed Lot 2 as possible and the plan to not disturb Lot 1, the GCAC does not anticipate that there would be much, if any visual impact.

Endangered Species: Applicant stated that none are known to be located at the property. GCAC did not see any endangered species at time of site visit. It should be noted that Question 15 of the SEQR EAF indicates the Northern Long Eared Bat (NLEB) may be present on the site. As noted in the Town Planner memo, any tree cutting associated with the construction of the proposed home would need to occur within the hibernation season from November 1 to March 31, unless it can be shown that no hibernacula are present on the property. Tree removal is prohibited within 0.25 miles of known hibernacula and within 150 feet of known occupied maternity roost trees. The GCAC did not see any trees during the site visit that would fit the description of NLEB roosting sites.

Other wildlife: The Applicant indicated he has seen deer, turkey, fox, rabbit, chipmunks, squirrel, songbirds, etc on the property. The GCAC and Applicant representative observed hawk and other songbirds, as well as signs of fox, rabbit, and deer on the site visit.

Historical Considerations: The Environmental Assessment Form submitted with the subdivision application had checked “yes” to question #12b: *is the project site, or any portion of it, located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for archeological sites on the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archeological site inventory?* At the time of the GCAC February meeting and site visit, the Applicant indicated he still needed to get in touch with New York’s State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the property. As recommended by the Town Planner in his memo: “The applicant should upload the project information to SHPO’s CRIS system to allow review by SHPO and obtain a letter of no impact.”

Submitted by:



Caitlin P. Ferrante – GCAC Chair, 02/24/2026

Notes – Detailed Soil Descriptions:

BuB – Burdett silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes - This gently sloping soil is very deep and somewhat poorly drained. The seasonal high water table in this Burdett soil is perched on the clayey subsoil at a depth of ½ foot to 1 ½ feet from December to May in most years. Permeability is moderate in the surface and subsurface layers and slow in the subsoil and substratum. Available water capacity is high. Surface runoff is medium. County soil survey notes that most of the acreage of this soil is used as hayland, pasture, or woodland. The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Installing foundation drains and applying protective coatings to basement walls help prevent wet basements. Land grading and properly placed diversions will remove surface water. The main limitations for local roads and streets on this soil are the seasonal high water table and frost-action potential. This soil is soft when wet and causes the pavement to crack under heavy traffic. Constructing roads on raised fill material will reduce wetness and prevent the road damage that the seasonal high water table causes. Providing a coarse textured subgrade or base material and providing surface or subsurface drainage will reduce the frost-action potential and enhance soil strength. The main limitations affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table and the slow percolation in the subsoil. A specially designed septic tank absorption field or an alternative system will properly filter effluent. An alternate system will include a drainage system around the filter field to lower the water table, diversion ditches to intercept water from the higher areas, and an enlarged trench below the distribution line to improve percolation.

NuB - Nunda silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes– This gently sloping soil is very deep and moderately well drained. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of 18 to 24 inches from March to May. Depth to

bedrock is more than 60 inches. Permeability is moderate in the surface layer and in the upper part of the subsoil and slow to very slow below. The available water capacity is high, and runoff is medium. The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Foundation drains and interceptor drains upslope from construction sites divert runoff and lower the water table. The main limitation of this soil for local roads and streets is the frost-action potential. Constructing roads on coarse textured fill material provides drainage away from the roadway. The main limitation affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table and the slow percolation in the subsoil and substratum. Installing a drainage system around the absorption field and diversions to intercept runoff from the higher areas will reduce wetness. Enlarging the absorption field or the trench below the distribution lines will improve percolation.

BuA - Burdett silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes - This very deep soil is nearly level and somewhat poorly drained. The seasonal high water table in the Burdett soil is perched on the clayey subsoil at a depth of ½ foot to 1 ½ feet from December to May in most years. Permeability is moderate in the surface and subsurface layers and slow in the subsoil and substratum. Available water capacity is high, and surface runoff is slow. County soil survey notes that most of the acreage of this soil is used as hayland, pasture, or woodland. The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Installing foundation drains and applying protective coatings to basement walls help prevent wet basements. Grading the land surface to divert runoff from the higher areas also helps reduce wetness. The main limitations for local roads and streets on this soil are the seasonal high water table and the frost-action potential. When wet this soil is soft and causes the pavement to crack under heavy traffic. Constructing the road on raised fill material will reduce wetness and prevent the road damage that the seasonal high water table causes. Providing a coarse textured subgrade or base material and installing surface or subsurface drainage will reduce the frost-action potential and enhance soil strength. The main limitations affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table and the slow percolation in the subsoil. A specially designed septic tank absorption field or an alternative system will properly filter effluent. An alternate system will include a drainage system around the filter to lower the water table, diversion ditches to intercept water from the higher areas, and an enlarged trench below the distribution lines to improve percolation.

NuC – Nunda silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes– This strongly sloping soil is very deep and moderately well drained. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of 18 to 24 inches from March to May. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. Permeability is moderate in the surface layer and in the upper part of the subsoil and slow or very slow below. The available water capacity is high, and runoff is medium or rapid. The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Foundation drains and interceptor drains upslope from construction sites divert runoff and reduce wetness. Erosion is a hazard during construction. Maintaining the vegetative cover adjacent to the site and diverting runoff from the higher areas help control erosion. The main limitation of this soil for local roads and streets is the frost-action potential. Constructing roads on coarse textured fill material provides drainage away from the roadway. Erosion is a hazard if these sloping soils are left unprotected. The main limitations affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table and the slow percolation in the subsoil and substratum. A drainage system around the absorption field and diversions to intercept runoff from the

higher areas will reduce wetness. Enlarging the absorption field or the trench below the distribution lines will improve percolation.

In – Ilion silt loam - This nearly level soil is very deep and poorly drained. The seasonal high water table in this Ilion soil is perched at a depth of less than 1 foot from November to May. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. Permeability is moderate or moderately slow in the surface layer and is slow or very slow in the subsoil. Available water capacity is high. Surface runoff is very slow. County soil survey notes that most of the acreage is used as woodland or brushland. The seasonal high water table or ponding is the main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements. Foundation drains, subsurface drainage systems, and protective coatings for basement walls help overcome these limitations. Grading to move surface water away from dwellings and diverting runoff from the higher areas also reduce wetness. The main limitations of this soil for local roads and streets are the seasonal high water table, ponding, and the frost-action potential. Wetness softens this soil most of the year and causes the pavement to crack under heavy traffic. A coarse textured subgrade or base material and surface or subsurface drainage away from the road site lower the water and reduce frost action. The main limitations affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table, ponding, and slow percolation in the subsoil. Other nearby soils are better suited to this use. A specially designed septic tank absorption field or an alternative system will properly filter effluent. A drainage system around the filter field and diversions to intercept water from the nearby higher areas will reduce wetness.