



Kenneth Kovalchik &lt;kovalchikk@togny.org&gt;

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**Rapp Road Residential /Western Avenue Mixed Use Redevelopment Projects**

1 message

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**C. Sullivan** <cathyandcharlessullivan@gmail.com>  
To: kovalchikk@togny.org

Tue, May 26, 2020 at 10:02 AM

To: Kenneth Kovalchik, AICP, Town Planner, Guilderland Town Hall,  
[5209 Western Turnpike \(Route 20\), Guilderland, New York 12084](#)

- In March 2020, Pyramid Companies illegally began to clear and prepare land before the public comment review process was over. The review for this site should be delayed at least nine months to permit the Town to reassess these violations, and consider an outright permanent injunction against Pyramid Companies from developing on this site. At the very least Pyramid Companies should be fined for this violation of process.
- The Town of Guilderland zoning code requires that all trees over 12" in diameter be mapped and accounted for, and that tree clear cutting be avoided. This action directly affects the carbon footprint of this project. Will the Town hold Pyramid companies to this standard?
- An independent and impartial storm water expert should be hired to do all reports and for section 3.2 of the DEIS, "Water Resources." The expert should specifically address effects that the additional runoff waters will have on the section of Western Avenue that currently floods in front of Stuyvesant Plaza. The report must also state how a principal aquifer currently on the development site will be affected. As is professional practice, water engineers for the Town of Guilderland and the City of Albany must formally approve of the plans contained within the DEIS. Transformation of greenspace at this scale into impervious surfaces will undoubtedly affect runoff and sewage overflows within the City of Albany during heavy rain events.
- The DEIS states that sites selected for development are already disturbed and there will be no impact on flora and fauna. The DEIS

should examine the broader local environment and impact of development on species within the Pine Bush ecosystem. The overall long-term effect on the Pine Bush must be documented.

- Section 5.0 - "Reasonable Alternatives Analysis", the DEIS states that "The alternative site layout will consider rearrangement of the proposed uses within the Sites that meet the Project Sponsor's objectives." As is becoming painfully obvious, it is likely that some retail stores within Crossgates Mall will not survive the unemployment and other impacts of COVID-19. During this time of PAUSE (as ordered by Governor Cuomo), Pyramid would be wise to take a step back from this development, view these negative retail impacts and adjust the plan accordingly. The effect upon the Pine Bush ecosystem would be greatly reduced if COSTCO could be established within already existing retail locations within Crossgates.
- A large new development of this size should include specific measures to conserve energy and move toward use of greener energy. Section 8.0, "Effects on the Use and Conservation of Energy Resources", should include considerations such as increased insulation to achieve energy efficiency, installation of solar panels and use of passive solar strategies to reduce energy consumption.
- The Town of Guilderland's failure to prevent the cutting of trees by the developer raises grave concerns about the Planning Board's ability to administer the SEQR process. The Sierra Club Hudson Mohawk Group believes that the actions by the Town of Guilderland in this development raise serious legal concerns and the Town should be replaced as lead agency. We would recommend replacement by the Albany County Dept. of Planning or the NYCDEC, both of which have a broader and more informed view of environmental impacts. As stated above, we have serious concerns regarding the negative environmental impacts upon the Pine Bush and surrounding areas due to the scale of this project. We would like to see alternatives seriously considered and implemented and look forward to a serious re-analysis of these sites after the nine-month break in any activity as we recommended in our initial statements.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Sullivan

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