



April 18, 2019

Ms. Laura Trivison (*via electronic mail only*)
Senior Planner
Albany County Planning Department
112 State Street
Albany, NY 12207

RE: 222 Unit Rapp Road Residential Development

Dear Ms. Trivison,

In anticipation of the April 18, 2019 Albany County Planning Board meeting I offer the following comments as a supplement to the Commission's January 25, 2019 letter regarding the Rapp Road Residential Development proposed in the Town of Guilderland.

Since January, Commission staff had have 3 productive meetings with the applicant, regarding methods of offsetting potentially negative impacts summarized in our earlier letter to the Town of Guilderland. As a result, it is our understanding the applicant is proposing the following:

- Voluntarily conveying three parcels in the City of Albany for addition to the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. These total 8.4 +/- acres (tax parcel #'s 52.02-1-16, 52.6-2-35 and 52.6-2-29.1) and are within Full Protection Area 62, identified in the 2010 Albany Pine Bush Management Plan and FEIS. Area 62 is recommended for addition to the preserve and is documented as supporting highly restorable pitch pine-scrub oak barrens and several rare wildlife species including the endangered Karner blue butterfly, NYS threatened frosted elfin butterfly, eastern hognose snake and several rare birds. Protecting Area 62, north of the Karner Blue Butterfly Preserve will improve the long-term conservation of the both the globally rare inland pine barrens ecosystem and these rare wildlife species.
- Enhanced education and outreach opportunities within and outside of Crossgates Mall including:
 - An indoor kiosk space for Albany Pine Bush-related exhibits and materials
 - An Albany Pine Bush-related wall mural to update and replace the current Karner blue butterfly display in the mall
 - Outdoor signage recognizing the Albany Pine Bush

The Commission anticipates that if these protection and education/outreach measures are employed, in addition to those already outlined, and/or proposed (e.g. traffic control on Rapp Road, 200 ft buffer to Gipp Rd.) as part of municipal approval for the proposed project, the most significant potentially adverse environmental impacts outlined in our January 25, 2019 letter may be avoided, and the loss of Partial Protection Area 57 mitigated.

I anticipate attending the 3:30PM Planning Board meeting, but if you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for considering our comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Neil A. Gifford
Conservation Director
Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission

Encl: Southeast Pine Bush Context Map

cc: APBPC Technical Committee
Mr. Keith Goertz, APBPC Chair – NYSDEC Region 4 Director
Mr. Christopher A. Hawver, APBPC Executive Director
Ms. Robyn Niver, Endangered Species Biologist, USFWS – NYS Field Office
Ms. Kathy O'Brien, Endangered Species Biologist, NYSDEC
Ms. Trisha Gabriel, NYSDEC Environmental Analyst – Region 4
Mr. Michael Clark, Regional Wildlife Supervisor, NYSDEC-Region 4
Mr. James Soos, Director of Development, Pyramid Management Group, LLC

Citations:

APBPC. 2017. Management Plan Update for the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. Albany, NY. (www.albanypinebush.org)



Southeastern Pine Bush

