

To: Guilderland Planning Board
From: Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council
Date: May 27, 2011
Re.: Giardina, 3131 Old State Rd. E, Schenectady, NY 12303

APPLICATION

Applicant(s): Bernadette Giardina, 403 Vincent Dr., Schenectady, NY 12303

Proposed Subdivision: A proposed four lot subdivision of 4.5 acres.

Location: Approximately six tenths of mile east of intersection of Carman and Old State Roads, on the north side of Old State Road East.

Zoning: R-15.

Site Inspection Summary:

Site Inspection Date: May 19 and 21, 2011

Meeting Attendees: (May 16, 2011) Presenter Nick Costa, Applicant Bernadette Giardina; GCAC Members Stephen Albert, David Heller, Herbert Hennings, Gordon McClelland, Stuart Reese, Steven Wickham and John Wemple, Chair.

Inspected by: (May 19, 2011); GCAC Members Stephen Albert and Stuart Reese.
(May 21, 2011) Applicant Bernadette Giardina and spouse Anthony; John Petrucco of Sipperly & Associates; and GCAC Members David Heller, Herbert Hennings, Gordon McClelland, Steven Wickham and John Wemple.

Conclusions: It should be noted that according to Presenter and Applicant, there is no plan to sell Lots # 2 and # 4 in the immediate future and that the Giardina would stay as is so long as the Applicant lives at the present address on Vincent Drive.

While the Conservation Director of the Pine Bush Preserve Commission notes that comments he submitted in a letter of April 26, 2011 are speculation by him of the opinion of the Commission, he does note that (1) the landscaping plan for this property should attempt to retain as much of the existing native vegetation as possible, eliminate known non-native invasive plants (ex. Black locust, barberry, phragmites and purple loosestrife) and incorporate locally derived native species plantings throughout the proposed development; (2) any available sand excavated during development be donated to the Commission to assist with the restoration of protected Pine Bush lands and to offset impacts associated with the development of this property and associated permanent loss of open space resources; and (3) the impact of outdoor lighting should be limited by using downward facing, enclosed high-pressure sodium vapor lights rather than mercury vapor lights. These concerns were brought to the attention of the Applicant and Presenter at the May 16th GCAC meeting.

Reportedly neighbors have been caring for part of the Giardina property which adjoins their back yards; thus, caution needs to be taken to avoid confusion over property lines.

It should be noted that GCAC feels that the Planning Board's suggestion related to moving the border between Lots # 2 & 4 is an important one to minimized impact on the dune. GCAC sees no objections to this four lot subdivision especially if this line change is incorporated in the final plan.

Submitted by: _____
John G. Wemple, Jr. - Chair

INSPECTION DETAILS: May 19 & 21, 2011

Applicant(s): Bernadette Giardina
Address: 3131 Old State Road East
Schenectady, NY 12303

Background: Early in the presentation by Nick Costa, he was joined by Applicant, Bernadette Giardina, whose remarks are incorporated in those of the Presenter. According to Presenter, the Applicant bought this property last fall from the previous owner Frank Moscinski. County Clerk's website shows Mrs. Giardina bought property from Mr. Moscinski 11/18/09 for \$250,000. Mr. Moscinski reportedly had owned the property for a long time along with a vegetable garden; but due to his going in a senior residential facility, there were concerns by Mr. and Mrs. Giardina that a developer might over develop the property and of a density issue. Presenter noted and had a drawing showing a cul-de-sac conventional layout which he said would allow a seven lot development. He further noted that a preferred layout is a four lot subdivision with less than one lot per acre, of which one lot has the existing residence on lot # 3, which is on the market. The plan is to have a four lot subdivision, market lots 1 and 3, which are along Old State Road and to leave lots 2 and 4 as is. In order to reduce disturbance of the dune on lot #2, at the suggestion of the Planning Board, the west lot line dividing lots #2 and # 4 will most likely be moved approximately 15 feet to the east which will enable the proposed residence on lot #2 to be located further from the dune. Presently there is a horseshoe driveway for Lot #1. There would be an additional curb cut for lot # 3 and a dual to accommodate the long driveways for the keyhole lots # 1 and #4.

Topography: According to the contour lines on the site drawing for the concept plan, there is a dune along the west portion of the property rising from an elevation of 284 feet Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL) at the rear of the existing residence on lot #1 to an elevation of 320 ft. AMSL near the southwest corner of Lot # 2. This dune decreases in elevation from this point on Lot # 2 towards the northeast and decreases in slope to an area where it is much less pronounced which would be the possible site of a residence on Lot # 2. Lot # 3 is relatively flat with only about a foot or two difference in elevation. Lot # 4 is about 280 ft. AMSL at the front with a gradual rise to 284 ft. AMSL near the rear. On the rear 100 feet of Lot #4, the elevation rises ten feet with the north west corner of lot #4 being at an elevation of approximately 297 ft. AMSL.

The presenter noted that there would be a minimal amount of grading and he does not envision erosion in this plan. At both site visits, GCAC had no problem finding suitable areas for building envelopes on each of the proposed new lots. At the May 21st visit, Mr. Petrucco did not see the need to move the building line as noted above. This would in turn have possibly pushed the residence on that lot closer to the Applicant's. GCAC walked along or near to the outer boundaries as well as the inner part of the property. And found no problem with the proposed plan for possible development. The impact on the dune would be minimal since there would be very little need to disturb much of the lower portion of it. One low area near the front portion of Lot # 3 was noted where there was an accumulation of standing water apparently from the large amount of recent rainfall.

Vegetation/Trees: Presenter noted that the rear portion of the property is fairly wooded by locust, cherry and maples. He further noted that there would be a minimal amount of tree cutting; but he did note that the Planning Board suggested that a little more clearing at the rear of Lot #4 would afford space for a back yard on that lot. GCAC noted that the lots have stands of pine, locust, maple, and birch as well as cherry trees and thorny brush. The property was easily walked with ground vegetation, including lilies of the valley on E. Old State Road side, covering most of the ground. Lot # 3 does have a garden, which reportedly was cared for by previously owner, but

the garden is not active at this time.

Soil: According to presenter, soil is sandy, a class B in the HSG group with high percolation rate. Sandy soil was observed by GCAC. A review of Sheet Number 11 in the publication “Soil Survey of Albany County, New York” by James H. Brown (1992) as well as USDA / NRCS Web Soil Survey map show that there are two types of soil on this property (EnA and CoC). According to Sheet No. 11 all of Lot # 1 has EnA ; likewise, all of Lot #2 has EnA soil with the exception of a small wedge of CoC soil at the rear which starts near the north west corner and extends about 50 ft. into the lot at the north east corner. Approximately two thirds of Lot # 3 has EnA soil, a triangular shaped area covering the north east third of the lot has CoC soil. Almost one half of Lot # 4 has EnA soil with the remaining half being covered by CoC soil which covers a wedge at the rear which is similar to the CoC wedge described for Lot # 2 but a mirror image thereof. The other area of this soil is in the shape of an arch extending a little less than 2/3 down from the north east corner and a little less than 2/3 of the distance in from the east boundary line. A description of these two soils and some of their limitations is as follows:

EnA – Elnora loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes. This nearly level soil is very deep and moderately well drained. Seasonal high water table is at a depth of 1 ½ to 2 feet from February to May. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Installing foundation drains, applying protective coatings to basement walls, and diverting surface water away from dwellings help prevent wet basements. Main limitations for local roads and streets are moderate frost action potential and seasonal high water table. Adequate drainage of surface water and constructing the road on a coarse textured subgrade or base material help overcome these limitations. The main limitations of this soil on sites for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table and a poor filtering capacity. The soil is rapidly permeable and a poor filtering capacity. This soil is rapidly permeable and is a poor filter for effluent. Consequently, ground-water contamination is a hazard. The author notes that a specially designed septic tank absorption field or an alternative system will adequately filter the effluent. Other less sandy soils in the higher landscape positions are better suited to this use.

CoC - Colonie loamy fine sand, rolling – This is a rolling soil which is very deep and well drained to somewhat excessively drained. Slopes range from 8 to 15 percent. The seasonal high water table in this Colonie soil is at a depth of more than six feet, but it may fluctuate to within 3 ½ feet of the surface for very brief periods in early spring. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. Permeability is moderately rapid or rapid. The available water capacity is low, and surface runoff is medium. The main limitation of this soil on sites for dwellings with basements is the excessive slope on rolling topography. Designing dwellings to conform to the natural slope or landscaping helps overcome this limitation. The main limitation of this soil for local roads and streets is the slope. Grading and excavation costs are higher than in lesser areas of Colonie soils. Constructing roads on the contour wherever possible or landscaping and grading help overcome the slope limitation. The main limitation affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields is a poor filtering capacity. The soil has moderately rapid or rapid permeability and so is a poor filter of effluent. Consequently, ground-water contamination is a hazard. A specially designed septic tank absorption field or an alternative system will properly filter the effluent. Other soils that have a moderate permeability rate are better suited to this use.

Drainage/Wetlands: According to the presenter, there are no wetlands and no streams on the property. Natural drainage appears to be in an eastward and southerly direction. Presenter noted that run off would be handled by dry wells and dry swales. No watercourses observed on the property. Only standing water, after recent period of rain, was on front portion of Lot #3 in a

small low area.

Septic/Wells: Plan is to hook up to Town water and sewer systems but they haven't yet spoken to the Town regarding this.

Visual Impact: According to Presenter, the plan is to have the same aesthetic theme as exists. GCAC feels that if the residence on Lot #3 along E. Old State Road is in line with the existing house and similar in size, there will be minimal visual impact if any. Since there is no immediate plan to develop the rear lots, impact would be none. Even if and when those two lots are developed, the impact should be slight since they are keyhole lots and would be partly hidden by the dune and trees.

Endangered Species: Presenter said he was not aware of any and that there are no Indiana bats or Karner Blue butterflies. No endangered species seen at time of site visits.

Historical Considerations: None known to the presenter since he noted that much of the site has already been disturbed. From the plan, it does not appear that much of the site will be disturbed. Plan is to avoid disruption of the dune which covers much of the west and some of the rear portion of the property. Presenter noted that dune hooked into the dune which is to the east of the property and that some of the dune may have been mined for soil for other developments. Plan is to attempt to preserve the dune. It was suggested by one of the GCAC members to have it written into the contract that the dune be preserved to which the presenter appeared to be agreeable. Other than the dune, nothing of historical significance was observed by GCAC at time of site visits.

Submitted by: _____
John G. Wemple, Jr. - Chair