

To: Guilderland Planning Board
From: Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council
Date: Dec. 6, 2011
Re.: Warner & Martin, Helderview Dr., Altamont, NY 12009

APPLICATION

Applicant(s): Lawrence Warner & Michael Martin, 10 Peachtree Ln., Albany, NY 12205

Proposed Subdivision: A proposed two lot subdivision of one acre.

Location: On the north side of Western Avenue on the upper north west corner of Western Avenue and Helderview Drive between French Mill and Fuller Station Roads approximately 4/10 mile west of the former Bavarian Chalet.

Zoning:R-20

Site Inspection Summary:

Site Inspection Date: Nov. 26, 2011

Meeting Attendees: (Nov. 21,2011) Applicants Lawrence Warner and Michael Martin. GCAC Members Stephen Albert, David Heller, Herbert Hennings, Gordon McClelland, Stuart Reese, Steven Wickham and John Wemple (Chair).

Inspected by: Same as at meeting - the Applicants and full GCAC council.

Conclusions: GCAC sees no negative impact to the environment resulting from this subdivision provided the Applicants take the necessary steps to create an appropriate storm water management plan which hopefully will resolve the problem of standing water on the property without displacing it to someone else's property. As noted in the soil portion of the write up, the two types of soil on the property do pose a problem in the construction of residences, especially on Lot 1 where most of the soil is Raynham which may prove to be better suited to a dwelling without a basement.

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

INSPECTION DETAILS

**Applicant(s): Lawrence Warner &
Michael Martin**

**Address: Helderview Dr., Altamont, NY
12009**

Background: According to Applicants, they are neighbors in Colonie, just purchased property recently and plan on either using the subdivided lots for themselves or selling them. Plan is to have residences located at the center of each lot. Applicant noted that there are no easements on the property.

Topography: According to Applicants, the property is fairly flat with slight slopes to the rear and driveways sloping down from the roadway. At time of Nov. 26th site visit, it was noted that the property is generally flat. There is a small drop in elevation from the residence on its north east side. There is about a 2 ½ to 3 foot drop from the roadway to the front of both Lot 1 and Lot 2. According to Applicant, Lot 1 is 160 ft. wide and 150 ft. deep. Lot 2 is almost 140 ft. wide and 150 ft. deep.

Vegetation/Trees: According to Applicant, this treed lot is 90 % pine. It was observed at time of site visit that the trees appear to be fairly young and tall. Besides the pine trees, there is a small area at the south corner which reportedly is Town property that has cattails. Applicant plans to keep a tree line along Western Ave. as well as along the rear, the northeast side and at the middle.

Soil: As far as the Applicant knows the soil is sandy dirt with no clay or anything like that. A review of Sheet Number 11 in "Soil Survey of Albany County New York" by James H. Brown (1992) identifies the two soils on this property – ScA and Ra. Lot 1 has Ra soil on all but a triangular shaped area of ScA soil at the north corner that is approximately 50 ft. along the north west side and 100 ft. the north east side. Lot 2 has ScA soil on all but triangular shaped area of Ra at its south corner that is approximately 50ft. Along the south west side and 35 ft. along the front (south east) side.

A brief description of these soils and some of their limitations are as follows.

ScA - Scio silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes. This nearly level soil is very deep and moderately well drained. Seasonal high water level is at a depth of 1 ½ to 2 feet from March to May. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. Permeability is moderate in the surface layer and subsoil. The available water capacity is very high, and runoff is slow. Main limitation for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Installing foundation drains with adequate outlets will lower the water table. Erosion is a hazard during construction. Excavations and cutbacks cave or slough easily. Main limitation for local roads and streets is the frost action potential.

Constructing roads with coarse textured fill material and installing surface and subsurface drainage reduces the frost-action potential. Cutbacks cave or slough. The main limitation affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields is the seasonal high water table. Installing drainage around the field and intercepting runoff from the higher areas will reduce wetness.

Ra - Raynham very fine sandy loam. This nearly level soil is very deep and poorly drained. The seasonal high water table in this soil is at a depth of ½ foot to 2 feet from November to May. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. Main limitation on sites for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. Foundation drains and interceptor drains upslope from construction sites divert runoff and help prevent the damage that the seasonal high water table

causes. Soil is better suited to use as sites for dwellings without basements. Main limitations effecting local roads and streets are the seasonal high water table and frost action potential. Constructing roads on coarse textured fill material will reduce the frost action potential. Raising the level of the fill will reduce wetness.

Drainage/Wetlands: Since the front of the property is below street level, there may be a natural drainage from the road to this area. At time of site visit, there was a narrow strip of water running along the south east edge of Lot 1. Since the property is so level, there was a high amount of standing water at the time of the site visit at the middle as well as at the rear. There is also moss on areas of the property. Applicant is of the opinion that the wetness of the property may be the result of a buildup of leaves from the trees. Plan is to have the property cleared of this and see if this results in better drainage down the soil; and if this does not resolve the problem plan will call for use of fill. It is the opinion of GCAC that the water on this property is not from a buildup of leaves. The root system of the trees is very exposed, like what you may see in a wetland. It is questionable how clearing trees will improve the situation and bringing in fill will only displace the water to other properties. It appears that the property has become the defacto drainage area for the neighborhood because of lack of property stormwater management policies in the past. Because of the slope down from the roadway, plan is to have raised driveways with culvert to accommodate the stormwater drain off which will run along the front edge of the property toward Western Avenue. At the Nov. 21st meeting Applicant noted that they did not have a storm water management plan but would contact Town regarding it the next day. There is also a sizable drainage ditch along the right of way between the property and Western Ave. GCAC is concerned with how building on these lots will push the water into the existing drainage along Western Avenue and where it will go once it leaves the property.

Septic/Wells: Plan is to hook up to Town water and sewer. According to Concept Plan drawing, there would be a low pressure sewer line along the front of Lot 1 with laterals, near the west corner of that lot, going in the direction of both proposed residences. Applicant said there would be a gravity pump for the sewer line. Applicant noted that water line is on the other side of the roadway.

Visual Impact: Applicant feels the new residences on the property will be in the character of the existing house in the neighborhood. Since this horseshoe street is already pretty well developed, the addition of two more residences on this property should have no negative visual impact on the neighborhood.

Endangered Species: Applicant did not know of any Karner Blue or Indiana bats on the property. At time of site visit, no endangered species were observed by GCAC.

Historical Considerations: Applicant did not know of any grave sites on the property and nothing was observed by GCAC that would be of historical significance.

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