

To: Guilderland Planning Board

From: Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council

Date: December 30, 2013

Re.: Albany Country Club, 300 Wormer Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186

APPLICATION

Applicant(s): Albany Country Club, 300 Wormer Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186

Proposed Subdivision: A proposed four lot subdivision of 386 ± acres.

Location: This relatively small portion of the country club is located in the south part of the Town to the west of State Farm Road (Route 155).

Zoning: RA-3.

Site Inspection Summary:

Site Inspection Date: December 21, 2013

Meeting Attendees: (December 16, 2013) Presenter Anthony Stellato; GCAC Members David Heller, Gordon McClelland, Stuart Reese, Steven Wickham and John Wemple (Chair).

Inspected by: Bill Aperance ACC General Manager; GCAC Members Stephen Albert, Gordon McClelland, Stuart Reese and John Wemple (Chair).

Conclusions: GCAC does not see any large negative environmental impact if this subdivision is approved since it is pretty much isolated from the rest of the neighborhood other than the Club's Superintendent who resides next door. This is provided that whomever develops the lots works closely with the County Health Department in construction of the well and septic systems. Likewise, it is anticipated that the developer will respect the boundaries of the wetlands and will also have an appropriate stormwater management system as part of the plan for development. Since there is a relatively high amount of wetlands on the site, it is recommended that the developers of these lots be cognizant of the need to protect these areas. A suggestion by the Presenter, which GCAC fully agrees with, is the possibility of having fences to protect the wetlands with "do not disturb" signs, or tree markers or permanent surveyor type markers which are fiberglass and tamper resistant carrying a similar message. On Lot 2, it will need to be determined if there is sufficient room for the driveway to be located just beyond the rear of the wetlands and still stay within the tree line to avoid visual impact on the golf course. GCAC is concerned over the culvert near the northwest corner of Lot 1, and feels that the Planning Board should explore this with the Applicant as to whether or not this culvert is the source of the water which has created the wetland areas.

Submitted by: _____ 12/30/13

John G. Wemple, Jr. - GCAC Chair

INSPECTION DETAILS

Applicant(s): Albany Country Club

Address: 300 Wormer Rd., Voorheesville, NY 12186

Background: According to Presenter, the portion of the acreage owned by the Country Club is adjacent to the golf course. The Club wishes to sell a few lots on the fringe of the course to help the Club with their finances and to help keep member fees low. The Presenter noted that the three lots are odd shaped due to the existing course. Lots are across from Hole # 10. To the rear of Lots 2 and 3 is Hole # 13. Lot 1 is next to Club Superintendent's residence. Club plans to keep a sixty foot wide strip between Lots 1 and 2 for possible future access road to the south to Relyea Road. He further noted that Lot 2 will utilize an existing path for a driveway.

Topography: Presenter noted there are some slopes off Wormer Road and that lots 2 and 3 will have views of the golf course. When walking the site, GCAC noted that Lots 1 and 3 had the most noticeable slopes, with the slope on the forward portion of Lot 3 being more so than on the other lots. Elevation, as noted by a review of the contour lines on the Concept Plan drawing, is close to 420 feet AMSL along the Wormer Road border of all three lots.

On Lot 1, heading southward, the elevation drops down to about 414 ft. AMSL about 30 to 40 feet from the front of the lot. It stays close to the 414 mark along the east and west boundaries and along the edge of the eastern wetland area but then rises toward the middle of the lot, where the proposed house would be built where the elevation is about 418 ft. AMSL. From this mid section, the terrain slopes slightly downward to the southwest and south resulting in an elevation of 410 ft. at the west corner where there is an area of wetlands and also an area at an elevation of 412 ft. at the southeast corner of the lot where there is also wetland.

On Lot 2, the elevation is at 420 ft. AMSL at the northwest corner but heading toward the south it drops down to 418 ft. which is the elevation for most of this lot with the exception of an area along the east border where the elevation drops off from the adjoining lot from 426 ft. to about 420 just forward of the midsection of the lot where the driveway passes through. Just beyond the middle of the lot, the elevation rises to 420 ft. which is the area of the proposed house and septic system.

Lot 3 - A short distance from Wormer Road, the property rises from 420 ft. AMSL to 434 and then declines toward the rear and the wetlands which are at 416 ft. and cover a sizeable area near the rear of the property. Beyond that wetland area, the elevation of the lot rises to an elevation of 422 ft. at the middle of the south lot line. The proposed house would be built possible in the south side of the hill on the front half of the lot.

Vegetation/Trees: Presenter noted the area for development is densely treed but plan is to remove as few trees as possible. Vegetation on the lots includes a notable amount of Federal Wetlands. At time of site visit, it was noted by GCAC that there are pine along the front of the lots bordering Wormer Road as well as pines at the rear of Lot 2 with deciduous trees on the middle portion of lot 2 and rear of lot 1. There are large areas of wetlands with what appears to be wetland vegetation.

Soil: According to Presenter, soil on the portion to be developed is Burdett and Nuda silt loam. A review of soil survey map on the USDA website indicates the following soils on the portion to be subdivided as follows – BuA, BuB, NuB and NuC. A description of these soils and some of their limitations is taken from "Soil Survey of Albany County, New York" -1992 – James H. Brown. The front portion of all three lots has NuB soil extending in approximately 60 to 100 feet from the road. Lot 1 – To the south of this NuB strip most of the mid section contains BuB

soil which extends back along the northwest side approximately ninety feet from the west corner where there is an area of BuA soil which extends about sixty feet along the southwest boundary line. To the south of this area is a relatively small wedge shaped area of BuA soil. There is a very small wedge of NuB soil at the south east corner of Lot 1. The NuB soil along the front of this property extends about 90 to 100 feet into the property. South of this along the east side of this lot there is a strip of BuA soil which extends inward from the west boundary approximately ninety feet where it starts and tapers down to about twenty-five feet near the south east corner. The proposed residence, well and septic system would all be on the large area of BuB soil.

Lot 2 – To the south of the front NuB soil is an area of NuC soil which extends in an almost triangular shape with a diagonal line running from about 45 feet south of the NuB front border on the west side to about 260 feet from this NuB area along the east side. To the south of this NuC area there are two areas of approximately the same size containing BuA and NuB soils. The midsection of the lot has BuA and the south section has NuB. The proposed residence appears to come close to straddling the line that marks where the BuA and NuB soils meet. Proposed well would be on BuA soil and the septic system would be on NuB soil.

Lot 3 – Central area, where the proposed residence, well and septic system would be located, has NuC soil. The south portion has an area of BuA soil running across it starting about 150 feet from the southwest corner to about sixty feet from the south corner with a possible narrow sliver of NuB soil running along about 4/5 of the south border of the lot.

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.

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.

NuC – Nuna silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes. - This strongly sloping soil is very deep and moderately well drained. The seasonal high water table in this Nunda soil 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 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 roadways. 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.

Drainage/Wetlands: According to the Presenter, drainage is toward the wetlands, toward the road, and to the southwest. At time of site visit, GCAC noted culvert near the northwest corner of Lot 1. Presenter noted wetlands were recently delineated and are classified as Federal Wetlands with no required setbacks. A review of proposed plan is to have about forty feet setbacks from the possible buildings. Wetlands are noted on the Concept Plan for each of the three lots with the plan being to locate houses and driveways in such a way to avoid disturbance of these wetlands. See also Wetland Delineation Report of 12/13/13 for details of CHA findings.

Septic/Wells: According to Presenter, plan is to investigate depth of ground water for septic system. He noted location of well on Lot 3. He further noted that there have been no percolation test yet since the Club is just selling the lots. He said he would recommend that the developer do

more than the minimum testing for quality of water. Site drawing shows the possible location of the three houses and driveways as well as possible location of water and septic systems.

Visual Impact: Presenter feels the subdivision will enhance the property and that the golfers will see two planned houses which would be upscale and blend in with the character of the site. GCAC does not see much visual impact since provided trees are kept as a buffer for the houses.

Endangered Species: Presenter noted that although a habitat assessment has not been done, the site is a potential habitat for Karner Blue, Carey's Smartweed, bog land turtle and Northern long-eared bat. Additionally included is the Indiana Bat due to dead apple tree near the corner of Lot 1 along Wormer Road. Also, see NHA's correspondence of Nov. 27 from NYS DEC which includes a Nov. 25 report from US Dept. of Interior regarding endangered and threatened species. The correspondence from DEC also notes Blunt-lope Grape Fern as a possible threatened plant in the Town. GCAC did not observe any endangered species at time of site visit but this could be due to the amount of snow coverage on the proposed lots. GCAC did note that there is a dead tree on Lot 1, near the site of the proposed house location, which could attract Indiana Bats. The apple tree at the northeast corner of this lot appears to be live and fruit bearing. GCAC also noted that there are numerous bird feeders on the site. There were signs of deer on the area of the three proposed lots.

Historical Considerations: Presenter did not know of any Revolutionary War cemetery on the site for development and GCAC did not observe anything of historical note on the proposed new lots at time of site visit.

Submitted by: _____12/30/13

John G. Wemple, Jr. - GCAC Chair