

To: Guilderland Planning Board

From: Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council

Date: March 28, 2014

Re.: Guzzo – 7000 Fuller Station Road, Schenectady, NY 12303

APPLICATION

Applicant(s): Colleen and Mario Guzzo, 7000 Fuller Station Road, Schenectady, NY 12303

Proposed Subdivision: A proposed two lot subdivision of 7 acres.

Location: Property is on the east side of Fuller Station Road about ¾ mile north of West Old State Road in the northern portion of the Town.

Zoning: R-40.

Site Inspection Summary:

Site Inspection Date: March 22, 2014.

Meeting Attendees: (March 17, 2014) - Applicant Mario Guzzo; GCAC members Kevin Connolly, Jacob Crawford, Sean Maguire, Gordon McClelland, Stuart Reese, Steve Wacksman and John Wemple (Chair).

Inspected by: Applicant Colleen Guzzo; GCAC members Kevin Connolly, Jacob Crawford, Gordon McClelland, Stuart Reese, Steve Wacksman and John Wemple (Chair) on 3/22/14; and subsequently by Sean Maguire.

Conclusions: Due to the long 400+ foot driveway to reach the building envelope of this proposed keyhole lot, it could prove to be a handicap to the local fire district if they were needed in an emergency. If the driveway can be wider, it may be preferred by the Fire Department especially since this area is not on hydrants and a water shuttle would be hard to manage along this long driveway. Other than this, GCAC does not see much adverse environmental effect of this new lot provided tree cutting is kept to a minimum, appropriate steps are taken to develop appropriate water and septic systems and that an appropriate stormwater plan is developed to avoid unwanted drainage down the ridge toward the planned new residence.

Submitted by: _____

John G. Wemple, Jr. - Chair

INSPECTION DETAILS:

Applicant(s): Colleen and Mario Guzzo

Address: 7000 Fuller Station Road,
Schenectady, NY 12303

Background: According to Applicant, Colleen Guzzo, they purchased the property in 1986 and built a house that same year. Subsequently they have subdivided the original twenty acre lot, and currently are seeking approval for a two lot subdivision of the seven acres remaining. The proposed subdivision would contain their existing residence on one lot and a new key hole lot containing a building envelope to the rear. Plan is to sell this key hole lot to the son or daughter of a close friend.

Topography: According to Applicant, the property is level with a small ridge behind the house which continues to the southeast across the far back yard. A review of topo map on TopoQuest website which showed USGA Map indicates the area of the property is relatively flat with only a slight difference between the front and rear portion of the property. At time of 3/22 site visit, GCAC observed that the area of the proposed new lot is relatively flat with a slope downward toward the rear; but to the south of this new lot, there is a ridge on the rear back lot which rises upward between ten and fifteen feet to another relatively flat area.

Vegetation/Trees: Applicant states the property to the rear of the house is heavily treed and includes oak, maple, wild cherry, pine and hemlock. She feels that the person developing the key hole lot most likely would not cut down too many trees for the sake of privacy. Since there was a considerable amount of snow on the ground at time of 3/22 site visit, GCAC did not determine the type of vegetation on the carpet of the wooded area. In general the diameter of the trees are in the range of about eight to ten inches other than a few which are much larger beside some that are very small. Trees identified on the new lot include beechnut, oak, pine, maple, beach and a few ash. To the south on the far back yard on the existing lot are more trees including pine oak and hemlock.

Soil: At time of 3/17 presentation Applicant noted the soil is sand. Due to the amount of snow coverage at time of the 3/22 site visit, it was difficult to determine the type(s) of soil on the lots. A review of the soil survey map from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services website (Web Soil Survey) indicates that the soil on the main portion of the proposed new lot is Gr soil. Heading east, the long driveway leading to this lot initially has EnA soil for 90± feet, then CoC for the next 150± feet and then the same soil as the main portion of that lot (Gr) for the final 160± feet. The front portion of the lot where the existing residence is located has EnA soil on the north area which extends between 60 and 100 feet to the east. South of this is a smaller area which extends back about 125 feet along the south side of the lot. To the east of these two front areas is CoC soil which extends back about 155 feet along the driveway and goes east diagonally to a point where the property meets the northeast corner of the neighbor's lot to the south. This CoC soil continues diagonally across the property to a point where it touches the south boundary. At the southwest corner of this rear area of the existing lot is a triangle of Gr soil. The remainder of the existing lot has Gr soil, the same as the main portion of the proposed lot with the exception of a small area of EnB at the southeast corner and possible a very small area of EnB along the rear boundary south of the proposed lot. Below is a brief description and some of the limitations of these soils as noted in "Soil Survey of Albany County, New York" by James H. Brown (1992).

CoC – Colonie loamy fine sand, rolling – This 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.

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 course 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. 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.

EnB- Elnora loamy fine sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes - This gently sloping soil is very deep and moderately well drained.– 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 course 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.

Gr – Granby loamy fine sand - This nearly level soil is very deep and poorly drained to very poorly drained. The seasonal high water table is at a depth less than one foot from November to June. Bedrock is more than 60 inches deep. Permeability is rapid. The available water capacity is moderate, and surface runoff is very slow or ponded. The surface layer and subsoil are moderately acid to neutral. The seasonal high water table causes shallow root development, which results in seedling mortality and windthrow hazard. Main limitations on sites for dwellings with basements are the seasonal high water table and ponding. Similar limitation for local roads and streets due to the high water table and ponding. Installing drainage will lower the water table near road sites. Constructing roads on raised fill material will also reduce wetness. The main

limitations affecting the use of this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields are the seasonal high water table, ponding, and poor filtering capacity. Other nearby soils are better suited to this site.

Drainage/Wetlands: Applicant indicated they have good drainage and that there are no wetlands on the parcel. Because of the sandy soil, she noted that precipitation just goes into the ground. Applicant provided GCAC with a copy of a NYS DEC memorandum dated 6/6/1985 which noted the wetland boundary is about 40 feet south of the southeast corner of the Guzzo property. From GCAC's observation of the property at time of 3/22 site visit, it appears that the natural drainage be toward the rear of the property in a east and northeast direction.

Septic/Wells: According to Applicant, plan is to have private well and septic. She does not see any problem with either and indicated there is sufficient room for septic system. Applicants will need to look toward County Health Department for assistance with any problems they may have regarding appropriate septic system and water supply.

Visual Impact: Due to the area of the new lot as well as the area to the rear of the existing residence being heavily wooded, Applicant does not feel the development of the new lot would have any visual impact on the neighborhood and she feels if there is an impact it would be in a positive way. GCAC agrees that there should be minimal adverse visual impact of developing the new lot provided cutting of trees is kept to a minimum.

Endangered Species: In the same 6/6/1986 DEC memorandum as noted above in the Drainage/Wetlands section, at the time a sizable patch (30' by 20') of wild blue lupine was found right adjacent to Fuller Station Road pretty much where Mr. Guzzo intended to put his house. Subsequently Applicant attempted to maintain suitable environment for the lupine but currently she has not seen any endangered species; nor has she seen any Indiana bats. At time of 3/22 site visit,, Mr. Guzzo recounted to GCAC that he attempted to transplant the lupine plants but without success.

Historical Considerations: None known to Applicant and nothing of known historical significance observed by GCAC at time of 3/22 site visit.

Submitted by: _____

John G. Wemple, Jr. - Chair