

R. RUSSELL ZIEMBA

The following comments are taken from a letter dated April, 1996 from Russell Ziemba. A copy of the letter is provided in Appendix 1.

1. Comment:

When the Study Area is described on Page I-1, many of the various uses are mentioned but the Albany Pine Bush Preserve is omitted. Areas recommended to be added to the Preserve or kept as open space are also omitted. This oversight is revealing of a mind set that regards land that is not put to some type of active human use as vacant or undeveloped land rather than wild or natural areas or open space.

Response:

Not specifically mentioning the Albany Pine Bush Preserve on page I-1 is not an indication that the Town of Colonie does not recognize the importance of undeveloped land, especially land that is part of the Preserve. As a member of the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, the Town Of Colonie supports the efforts of the commission to preserve and protect this resource. To that end, the DGEIS discussed the importance of the Preserve in numerous sections, including II.B. Land Use and Zoning; II.C. Geology, Topography, and Soils; II.D. Vegetation, Wildlife, and Wetlands; II.K. Historical and Archaeological Resources; II.L. Recreation and Open Space; and II.N. Visual Resources.

2. Comment:

On Page II-22 it is stated that "Today, there are approximately 2,000 to 2,500 acres of Pine Bush left. What does this mean? Does it mean that there are 2,000 to 2,500 acres in the Preserve? The total amount of acreage for the Pine Bush that is protected by the Preserve or still at risk from development is more likely about 6,000 acres, discounting islands of habitat cut off by major manmade obstacles.

Response:

Refer to the response to comment Q.5.

3. Comment:

In Figure No. II-C-1, Surficial Geology, the areas that are labeled QS, wind blown sand and lake sand, cover most of the Study Area. A hard look must be given at preserving all of the undeveloped lands south of Albany Street. This is where most of the native Pine Bush species remain and where large open areas that were once or are presently used agriculturally could relatively easily be reseeded with lupine and other native species, providing excellent habitat for the Karner Blue Butterfly.

Response:

The comment is noted.

4. Comment:

The undeveloped areas along Albany Street, south to the Guilderland town line should be zoned conservation. Where working farms exist, those parcels should be zoned agricultural until they cease to be farmed and then they should be zoned conservation. All of this area should eventually over the next 20 years be added to the Albany Pine Bush Preserve (see Figure No. II-D-2, Vision for the Albany Pine Bush Preserve).

Response:

In accordance with LUMAC's recommendations, the Town of Colonie recognizes that rezoning those lands that are part of the Albany Pine Bush Preserve to conservation would provide an additional level of protection. For further discussion, refer to the response to comment B.9.

5. Comment:

If you change the zoning in Large Lot Residential and Medium Density Residential to allow for "grandmother or mother-in-law apartments," single relatives could live with their families, new couples could start out small, or financially strapped home owners could have extra income. This would reduce the demand for separate residences.

Response:

Although the comment is appreciated, the Town of Colonie does not have plans to revise the residential zones to allow for "in law" apartments.

6. **Comment:**

In Retail Commercial, renters or owners could live over or in back of stores. By allowing for increased density in these areas, residential growth can occur without a net loss of open space. Not only do these units cost less to build, in habit, and maintain but they place less of a demand on the infrastructure and on the taxpayer of the Town. These types of living arrangements would also put fewer cars on the roads. Walking, bicycling, ride sharing, and buses would be viable options to the necessity of every adult owning a car and using it every time they wanted to leave their house.

Response:

The comment is noted.

7. **Comment:**

Figure No. II-L-1, Existing & Potential Recreational facilities, is a very vague and minimalist view of future parks in the Study Area. Is the sum of all future Pine Bush preservation some tennis courts, swings, and a ball field at the corner of Kings Road and Cordell Road? Although I agree that this corner should be acquired, I believe it should be purchased along with the State and potential federally regulated wetlands directly north of it that extend into the City of Schenectady. These upper Lisha Kill wetlands are an area that owners might readily sell or sell development rights to because it is quite wet.

The area north of the corner of Morris Road and Kings Road, Number 52 in the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission's Implementation Guidelines also has large areas of State and potential Federally regulated wetlands and could also be purchased with State and Federal funds.

Response:

The recommendations included in Section II.L. of the DGEIS for the development of additional pocket parks were not intended to reflect the Town of Colonie's intent for preserving the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. As evidenced by its ownership of a 50 acre parcel west of Rifle Range Road, the Town of Colonie is committed to the purchase of land for inclusion in the Preserve as land acquisition and funding opportunities develop.

8. **Comment:**

It is important to adequately take in the natural and historic features of a place or its essence will be diluted or lost. Tangible links to our past like the nearby

Traux family cemetery and the Jacob Weaver Dutch barn, both of which are on the verge of being lost need urgent protection.

Response:

Refer to the responses to comments C.2 and C.3.

9. Comment:

On pages ES-23, 24 it was stated that the no growth scenario would have an adverse impact on local and regional economies. But this is partly true at best because the downtowns of Schenectady, Albany, and Troy would benefit if the commercial and residential activity occurred there and not in the more rural areas of the Town of Colonie. Since the cities are part of the region and in need of revitalization, a no growth scenario for this part of the Town could be a real benefit to local and regional economies.

Response:

The comment is noted.

10. Comment:

Although it is not included in the DGEIS as a possible future, I believe that for the area south of Albany Street a negative growth scenario would be a good idea. What I mean by that is that there are some properties in this area that over the next 20 years will fall into disrepair and warrant demolition or for one reason or another owners will want to sell their properties. If these properties are adjacent to preserve lands or adjacent to parcels recommended for protection or open space, then they should be considered for acquisition and addition to the Preserve.

Response:

The comment is noted.

11. Comment:

The Cordell Road Lisha Kill Connector Road and the Cordell Road Extension should not be built. Both roads would further fragment this area and encourage more traffic and development. Roads encourage as much traffic as they can bear.

Response:

The comment is noted.

12. Comment:

The colony of Federally Endangered Karner Blue Butterflies which live in the northwest corner of the Town of Colonie was not examined for the DGEIS. It wasn't even mentioned! The first flight season is still a month away.

Response:

Refer to the response to Comment A.9. and A.24.

13. Comment:

Although the DGEIS talks about the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission's Management Plan, it doesn't attempt to incorporate the vision of the Plan into the future of the Study Area. The recommendations of the DGEIS are inconsistent with the Implementation Guidelines of the Commission (see Figure No. II-D-2).

Response:

Refer to the response to Comment A.1.