



September 20, 2006

Bret Martine
Studio JAED
20 E. Division Street
Dover, De 19901

RE: PLUS review – PLUS 2006-08-07; Milford School District - Bridgeham Avenue

Dear Mr. Martine:

Thank you for meeting with State agency planners on August 30, 2006 to discuss the feasibility of a school site on a 31.75 acre parcel located on Bridgeham Avenue in Milford. It is noted that part of this parcel already occupied by the Lulu M. Ross Elementary School.

These comments reflect only issues that are the responsibility of the agencies represented at the meeting. The developers will also need to comply with any Federal, State and local regulations regarding this property. We also note that as the City of Milford is the governing authority over this land, the developers will need to comply with any and all regulations/restrictions set forth by the City.

The following are a complete list of comments received by State agencies:

Office of State Planning Coordination – Contact: David Edgell 739-3090

This proposed school site is located in Investment Level 1 according to the *Strategies for State Policies and Spending*. Investment Level 1 reflects areas that are already developed in an urban or suburban fashion, where infrastructure is existing or readily available, and where future redevelopment or infill projects are expected and encouraged by State policy. This site is also located within the City of Milford. Public facilities, such as

schools, are desirable in Investment Level 1 areas where they are located near infrastructure, public services, and the populations they serve. The State supports this location for new school construction.

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs – Contact: Alice Guerrant 739-5685

Nothing is known within this parcel. The 1918 USGS 15' topographic Cedar Creek map shows a building within the parcel near the pond. There may be archaeological remains associated with this house. There are areas of medium potential for prehistoric-period archaeological sites. The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs has no objections to the use of this site.

If this site is chosen, The DHCA would appreciate the opportunity to examine the area for any archaeological sites to learn something about their location, nature, and extent prior to any ground-disturbing activities.

Department of Transportation – Contact: Bill Brockenbrough 760-2109

Because the subject site is accessible only by City-maintained streets, DeIDOT comments are limited. From their perspective, placing a school on this site that would complement the grades served by the Ross Elementary School would provide a benefit to area residents in that their children could continue to walk to school

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control – Contact: Kevin Coyle 739-9071

Soils

The Sussex County soil survey shows that both well-drained (Sassafras & Rumford soil) and a poorly-drained (Johnston) soil mapping was mapped on this parcel. Statewide Wetland Mapping Project (SWMP) maps indicate that wetlands border the entire eastern boundary of this parcel, closely mirroring the mapped location of the poorly-drained Johnston soil mapping unit.

Water Resource Protection Areas

The Water Supply Section has determined that project site falls partially within an excellent ground-water recharge area (see attached map). Excellent Ground-Water Recharge Areas are those areas mapped by the Delaware Geological Survey where the first 20 feet of subsurface soils and geologic materials are exceptionally sandy. As such, these soils are able to transmit water very quickly from the land surface to the water

table. Consequently, ground water in these areas may very readily be adversely affected by land use activities or impervious cover.

The Water Supply Section recommends that the portion of the new development within the excellent ground-water recharge area not exceed 20% impervious cover. Some allowance for augmenting ground-water recharge should be considered if the impervious cover exceeds 20% but is less than 50% of that portion of the parcel within this area. However, the development should not exceed 50% regardless. A water balance calculation will be necessary to determine the quantity of clean water to be recharged via a recharge basin. The purpose of an impervious cover threshold is to minimize loss of recharge (and associated increases in storm water) and protect the quality and quantity of ground water and surface water supplies.

Ideally, relocating any open space areas to the part of the parcel within the excellent ground-water recharge area would decrease the total impervious area. Augmenting the groundwater recharge with clean rooftop run-off systems are another alternative to maintaining the quality and quantity of water recharging the aquifer. In addition, because the excellent ground water recharge area can so quickly affect the underlying aquifer if contaminants are spilled or discharged across the area, the storage of hazardous substances or wastes should not be allowed within the area unless specific approval is obtained from the relevant state, federal, or local program.

For more information refer to the Final Source Water Protection Guidance Manual for the Local Governments of Delaware

http://www.wr.udel.edu/swaphome/Publications/swapp_manual_final/swapp_guidance_manual_final_2005_05_02.pdf

and

Ground-Water Recharge Design Methodology

http://www.wr.udel.edu/swaphome/Publications/swapp_manual_final/swapp_guidance_manual_supp_1_2005_05_02.pdf

Water Supply

The project information sheets state that water will be provided to the project by a central public water system. DNREC records indicate that the project is located within the public water service area granted to The City of Milford under Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity number 91-CPCN-09. It is recommended that the school district contact the City of Milford to determine the availability of public water. Any questions concerning CPCNs should be directed to the Public Service Commission at

302-739-4247. The Division of Water Resources will consider applications for the construction of on-site wells provided the wells can be constructed and located in compliance with all requirements of the Regulations Governing the Construction and Use of Wells. A well construction permit must be obtained prior to constructing any well(s).

Should dewatering points be needed during any phase of construction, a dewatering well construction permit must be obtained from the Water Supply Section prior to construction of the well points. In addition, a water allocation permit will be needed if the pumping rate will exceed 50,000 gallons per day at any time during operation.

All well permit applications must be prepared and signed by licensed water well contractors, and only licensed well drillers may construct the wells. Please factor in the necessary time for processing the well permit applications into the construction schedule. Dewatering well permit applications typically take approximately four weeks to process, which allows the necessary time for technical review and advertising.

Should you have any questions concerning these comments, please contact Rick Rios at 302-739-9944.

Sediment and Erosion Control/Stormwater Management

A detailed sediment and stormwater plan will be required prior to any land disturbing activity taking place on the site. The plan review and approval as well as construction inspection will be coordinated through the Division of Soil and Water Conservation Sediment and Stormwater Program. Contact Elaine Webb with the Sediment and Stormwater Program at (302) 739-9921, for details regarding submittal requirements and fees.

Parts of the site may be restricted by depth to seasonal high groundwater when considering infiltration as a stormwater management method.

Drainage

The Drainage Program requests that the engineer take precautions to ensure the project does not hinder any off site drainage upstream of the project or create any off site drainage problems downstream by the release of on site storm water. The Drainage Program requests that the engineer check existing downstream ditches and pipes for function and blockages prior to the construction. Notify downstream landowners of the change in volume of water released on them.

Floodplains

A small portion of the site is within the 100-year floodplain. Construction should be kept outside of the floodplain and above the base flood elevation.

Rare Species

DNREC has not surveyed this property; therefore, it is unknown if there are state-rare or federally listed plants, animals or natural communities at this project site that would be affected by project activities. We do have records of Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*), a State-Rare bird, along the Mispillion River. Both of these species may utilize the forested riparian buffer along Deep Branch and efforts to maintain this buffer should be made. We recommend that the school and associated infrastructure be placed on the non-forested portion of this property to protect these and other species of wildlife that utilize riparian forests. There should be at least a 100-foot buffer between site plan features and this buffer.

Nuisance Geese

If stormwater management ponds are constructed, they may attract nuisance waterfowl like resident Canada geese and mute swans. High concentrations of waterfowl in ponds create water-quality problems, leave droppings on lawn and paved areas and can become aggressive during the nesting season. Because manicured lawns are attractive habitat for geese, we recommend that athletic fields and other lawn areas not be located directly adjacent to ponds. We recommend native plantings, including tall grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees at the edge and within a buffer area (at least 50 feet) around ponds. Geese do not feel as safe from predators when their view of the area is blocked and will be less likely to take up residence in the pond. These plantings should be completed as soon as possible as it is easier to deter geese when there are only a few than it is to remove them once they become plentiful.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife does not provide goose control services, and if problems arise, the school district will have to accept the burden of dealing with these species (e.g., permit applications, costs, securing services of certified wildlife professionals). Solutions can be costly and labor intensive; however, with proper landscaping, monitoring, and other techniques, geese problems can be minimized.

Underground Storage Tanks

There is one active and one inactive LUST site(s) located near the proposed project:

Roberts Service Station, Facility # 5-000102, Project # S9406149
Rumpstitch Machine Works, Facility #5-000668, Project # S9107138

No environmental impact is expected from the above inactive/active LUST site(s). However, should any underground storage tank or petroleum contaminated soil be discovered during construction, the Tank Management Branch must be notified as soon as possible. It is not anticipated that any construction specifications would need to be changed due to petroleum contamination. However, should any unanticipated contamination be encountered and PVC pipe is being utilized, it will need to be changed to ductile steel with nitrile rubber gaskets in the contaminated areas.

State Fire Marshal's Office – Contact: Duane Fox 856-5298

These comments are intended for informational use only and do not constitute any type of approval from the Delaware State Fire Marshal's Office. The DE State Fire Marshal's Office has the responsibility to review all commercial and residential subdivisions for compliance with the DE State Fire Prevention Regulations. This Agency's approvals are based on the DE State Fire Prevention Regulations only.

The DE State Fire Marshal's Office has no objection to this site location. Once a site is picked and conceptual site plans are developed this office would be able to make more technical comments.

Preliminary meetings with fire protection specialists are encouraged prior to formal submittal. Please call for appointment. Applications and brochures can be downloaded from our website: www.delawarestatefiremarshal.com, technical services link, plan review, applications or brochures.

Department of Agriculture - Contact: Scott Blaier 698-4500

The Delaware Department of Agriculture has no objections to the proposed application. The *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* encourages environmentally responsible development in areas within Investment Level 1. The Department prefers redevelopment and infill within the existing city limits where possible to accommodate schools.

Public Service Commission - Contact: Andrea Maucher 739-4247

Any expansion of natural gas or installation of a closed propane system must fall within Pipeline Safety guidelines. Contact: Malak Michael at (302) 739-4247.

Department of Education – Contact: John Marinucci 739-4658

The DOE supports locating school facilities on parcels with existing or reasonable access to civil infrastructure to include but not limited to:

- Roads, pedestrian walkways and shared use paths
- Waste water/sewerage and domestic water
- Electric, and telecommunications
- Storm water drainage and conveyance

School sites with public water and sewer utilities or access to public water and sewer utilities are recommended by DOE over sites requiring on-site facilities. This school site appears to offer access to adequate public civil utilities.

The DOE supports the State Strategies for Policies and Spending. When considering school facility locations, the DOE considers proximity and access to basic support services as a high priority. The school location under consideration appears to be in investment level 1, as well as a residential location within the City of Milford incorporated limits and as a result basic support service levels will reflect a commensurate level of service associated with investment level 1 within an incorporated local jurisdiction.

The DOE supports locating school facilities strategically within the geographic region and/or community the facility is intended to serve in order to:

- Encourage non-student pedestrian access to the school facility in an effort to reduce vehicle miles traveled to the extent practical
- Encourage student pedestrian access to the school facility, in order to contain the school's life-cycle operating costs associated with student transportation, as practicable
- Create education campuses by co-locating educational facilities and services in an effort to reduce life-cycle costs as a result of the co-located schools sharing common spaces, facilities and services.

The school location under consideration appears to be strategically located geographically within the community it is intended to serve. This site will also establish an education campus providing opportunities for co-located and shared common use facilities and services.

As a result, the DOE supports this site as a potential school site for the Milford School District.

The comments in this letter are offered as advisory comments to help the school district determine the feasibility of this property for a school site. If the district chooses to move forward with this site, the Budget Office, the Department of Education, and the State Planning Office would need to approve this location. In addition, the site plan for the proposed school would need to be reviewed through the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS).

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 302-739-3090.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Constance C. Holland".

Constance C. Holland, AICP
Director

CC: City of Milford