



STATE OF DELAWARE  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
STATE PLANNING COORDINATION

December 11, 2006

David R. Ruff  
Town of Blades  
20 West Fourth Street  
Blades, DE 19973

RE: PLUS review – PLUS 2006-11-01; Town of Blades Comprehensive Plan  
Amendment

Dear Mr. Ruff:

Thank you for meeting with State agency planners on November 21, 2006 to discuss the proposed Town of Blades Comprehensive plan amendment.

According to the information received, you are proposing to amend your 2002 comprehensive plan to rezone a parcel from I to R and NB to support the redevelopment of this parcel.

Please note that changes to the plan, other than those suggested in this letter, could result in additional comments from the State. Additionally, these comments reflect only issues that are the responsibility of the agencies represented at the meeting.

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

**Office of State Planning Coordination – Contact: Bryan Hall 739-3090**

**Certification Issues:**

There are no certification issues noted in the plan amendment.

**Recommendations:**

1. Before accepting an application for the proposed development, it is recommended that the Town examine its code to make sure that adequate buffering requirements exist to protect residents from noise and vibration associated with the railroad. Similarly, the Town should examine its code to make sure that adequate safety that is fencing, requirements exist to protect residents, or more likely their children and pets, from straying onto the right-of-way.
2. The Town should review any recommendations from the other agencies and work to address their issues.

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

The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is not opposed to the rezoning and plan amendment for this parcel. It is within the National Register-eligible Blades Historic District, which is not yet listed. While this area has good potential for prehistoric-period and historic-period archaeological sites, the previous industrial development and clean-up has most likely disturbed most of the area. The project could have an adverse effect on the district, although the neo-traditional layout and scale of the houses proposed may fit well with the historic district. Robin Bodo, the DHCA National Register Coordinator and architectural historian would be happy to discuss any questions the developer or the town may have about minimizing any adverse effect on the district through the project's design.

**Department of Transportation – Contact: Bill Brockenbrough 760-2109**

- 1) The DelDOT comments concern the proposed plan amendment and rezoning. They will comment separately on the plan for the development when that plan is available.
- 2) The proposed development would be located adjacent to a major north-south railroad line. DelDOT understands that with the shift from railroad to highway freight traffic, rail access has become less important for industry than highway access and the subject site has therefore become less valuable as industrial use. Indeed, if an industrial use were proposed DelDOT would be concerned about the impacts of truck traffic on the local roads in Blades. However, land next to an active railroad line is not especially desirable for residential use either. Before accepting an application for the proposed development, it is recommended that the Town examine its code to make sure that adequate buffering requirements exist to protect residents from noise and vibration associated with the railroad.

Similarly, the Town should examine its code to make sure that adequate safety that is fencing, requirements exist to protect residents, or more likely their children and pets, from straying onto the right-of-way.

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

### **Wetlands**

The Town should not grant any permits or approvals without the applicant/developer demonstrating compliance with State and federal wetlands and State subaqueous lands laws and regulations.

### **Water Supply**

The link for Regulations for Water Wells is:

<http://www.dnrec.state.de.us/water2000/Sections/WatSupp/Library/Final1998LicRegs.PDF>

### **Water Resource Protection Areas**

The DNREC Water Supply Division has reviewed the Town of Blades Request for Change of Zoning for parcel 132-1.15-16.00 from its current zoning of Industrial (I) to Residential (R) and Neighborhood Commercial (NB) to support the redevelopment of this parcel as part of the Town's continued comprehensive plan implementation efforts.

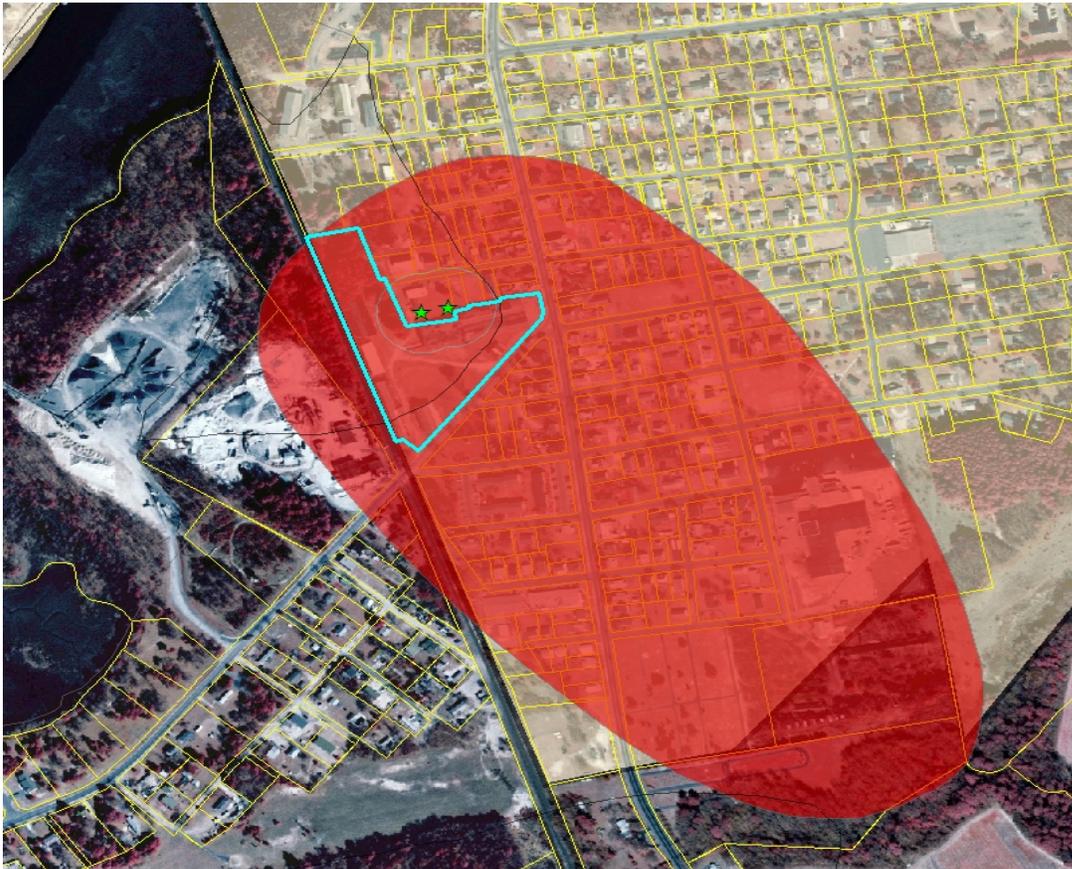
The entire parcel submitted for review lies within a wellhead protection area (see following map and attached map). Wellhead protection areas are surface and subsurface areas surrounding a public water supply well where land use activities or impervious cover may adversely affect the quantity and quality of ground water moving toward such wells. The review did not find any excellent groundwater recharge areas. Because the wellhead protection area is the source of public drinking water, 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.

The DNREC Water Supply Section delineated the wellhead protection area for the Town of Blades that covers a large area within the municipal boundary. This delineation was completed for the two the supply wells that serve the Town and the assessment was provided to the Town of Blades in January of 2002.

The Town's Land Development Ordinance Section 12-2 Water-Resource-Protection Areas is incomplete. The Section defines both wellhead and excellent groundwater recharge potential but does not contain Regulations. The document states that the section is reserved pending development of State guidance.

DNREC strongly encourages the Town of Blades to update their ordinances to include language to protect wellhead protection and excellent recharge areas to insure a sufficient supply of clean drinking water. State Guidance may be found in the DNREC publication *Source Water Protection Guidance Manual for the Local Governments of Delaware* and *A Compendium of Federal, State, and Local Regulatory Authorities that Support The Source Water Assessment and Protection Program in Delaware*. These documents are available online. The links are listed in the reference section below.

**The Town of Blades (PLUS 2006-11-01).** Map of proposed development as it impacts the wellhead protection area. The dark red area shows the wellhead protection area with affected parcels are in light blue. The green stars show the location of the public drinking water supply wells.



#### References

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. (1999). *The State of Delaware Source Water Assessment Plan*: Dover, DE, 301 p.  
<http://www.wr.udel.edu/swaphome/publications.html>

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. (2002). *A Compendium of Federal, State, and Local Regulatory Authorities that Support*

*The Source Water Assessment and Protection Program in Delaware*. Electronic Version 02.02]. Retrieved November 8, 2006, from:

<http://www.wr.udel.edu/swaphome/publications.html>

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (2005): Source Water Protection Guidance Manual for the Local Governments of Delaware: Dover, DE., 144 p.

[http://www.wr.udel.edu/publications/SWAPP/swapp\\_manual\\_final/swapp\\_guidance\\_manual\\_final.pdf](http://www.wr.udel.edu/publications/SWAPP/swapp_manual_final/swapp_guidance_manual_final.pdf)

### **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. Land disturbance related to the remediation of the site in accordance with the voluntary cleanup plan will be reviewed by the Sediment and Stormwater Program. Land disturbance for the redevelopment of the parcel, once the Site Investigation and Restoration Branch (SIRB) has approved the site cleanup, will be reviewed and approved by the Sussex Conservation District. Contact the Sussex Conservation District at (302) 856-7219 for details regarding submittal requirements and fees.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activity must be submitted to the Division of Soil and Water Conservation along with the \$195 NOI fee prior to plan approval.

Applying practices to mimic the pre-development hydrology on the site, promote recharge, maximize the use of existing natural features on the site, and limit the reliance on structural stormwater components, such as maintaining open spaces, should be considered in the overall design of the project as a stormwater management technique. Green Technology BMPs must be given first consideration for stormwater quality management. Each stormwater management facility should have an adequate outlet for release of stormwater.

It is strongly recommended that you contact the reviewing agency to schedule a preliminary meeting to discuss the sediment and erosion control and stormwater management components of the plan. The site topography, soils mapping, pre- and post-development runoff, and proposed method(s) and location(s) of stormwater management should be brought to the meeting for discussion.

**Department of Agriculture - Contact: Scott Blaier 698-4500**

The Department of Agriculture has no objections to the proposed rezoning request as it is within the incorporated area of the Town of Blades and in an area designated as Investment Level 1 under the *Strategies for State Policies and Spending*.

**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.

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

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 asks that a MOU be established between the DE State Fire Marshal's Office and the Town of Blades. The State Fire Marshal's Office would be issuing approvals much like DelDOT, Kent Conservation, and DNREC. 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 the zoning amendments.**

**Delaware State Housing Authority – Contact: Vicki Walsh 739-4263**

The Town of Blades is proposing an amendment to their Comprehensive Plan to change the zoning classification on 5.73 acres from Industrial (I) to Residential (R) and Neighborhood Commercial (NB). DSHA supports that this proposed amendment is for high density mixed residential housing units. While higher densities encourage affordability, it is not a guarantee. The most recent 2003 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, as well as recent real estate information indicates that there is a need for housing to support low- and moderate-income households. We recommend that the Town of Blades, as part of this amendment, also include incentives that ensure long-term affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons.

**Department of Education – Contact: John Marinucci 739-4658**

The DOE supports the State Strategies for Policies and Spending, to the extent possible and practicable within the limits of the Federal and State mandates under which the Department operates.

1. In its review of Comprehensive Plans and Comprehensive Plan Amendments, the DOE considers:
  - Adequate civil infrastructure availability within the region to accommodate current and future educational facilities.
  - Transportation system connections and availability to support multimodal access within the community, to include but not limited to walk paths, bike paths, and safe pedestrian grade crossings.
  - Transportation road system adequacy to accommodate bus and delivery vehicle traffic to current, planned or potential educational facilities.
  - Recreation facilities and opportunities within the community and their respective proximity to current and planned or potential education facilities. The DOE also recognizes the potential that the educational facilities are to be considered recreational facilities by and within the community.
2. The DOE *typically* considers industrial/commercial development incompatible with educational facilities, however, residential development and educational facilities *are typically* considered to be compatible. As a result, the DOE is interested in the proximity of current and planned or potential education facilities to commercial/industrial development zones.
3. The DOE recognizes the integral role of educational facilities within communities. As such, the DOE seeks to assure that residential growth, that generates additional demand on educational facilities, is managed with adequate educational infrastructure being made a part of sub-division plans as appropriate.
4. The DOE has no comments or objections to the proposed plan amendment.

**Sussex County – Contact: Richard Kautz 855-7878**

The Sussex County Engineer Comments:

The Sussex County Engineering Department has no comments regarding the comprehensive plan amendment.

Please note that a Sanitary Sewer Concept Plan for a proposed project must be submitted to the Sussex County Engineering Department for review and approval. The Sussex County Engineer must approve the connection point. Sussex County requires design and construction of the collection and transmission system to meet Sussex County sewer standards and specifications. A checklist for concept plans is attached.

Following receipt of this letter the applicant shall provide a written response to the Office of State Planning Coordination responding to comments received as a result of the pre-application process, noting whether comments were incorporated into the comprehensive plan before adoption. As no certification issues were noted, the Town can move forward with the adoption of the revised plan. Once adopted, please notify this office so that we can issue a re-certification letter.

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