

Date: November 16, 2023

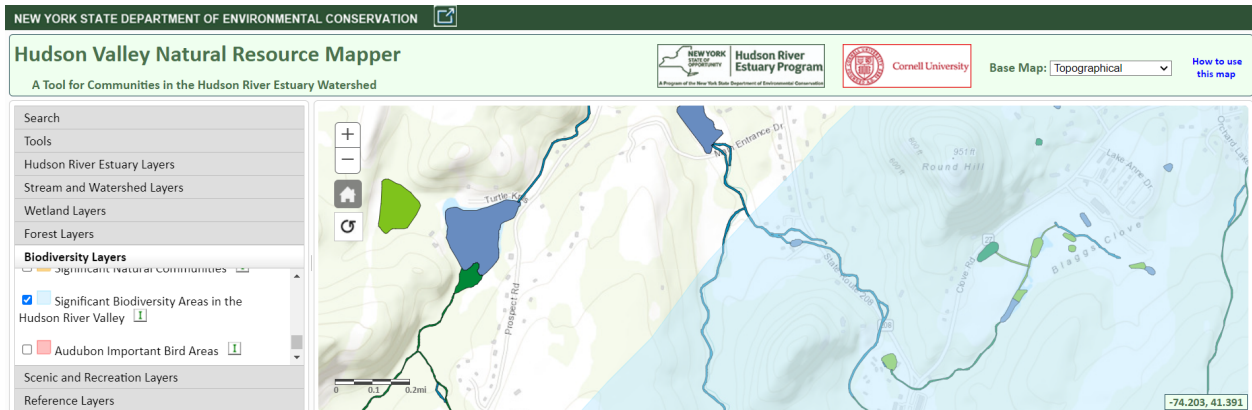
To: South Blooming Grove Planning Board

From: Ryne Kitzrow
120 Round Hill Rd

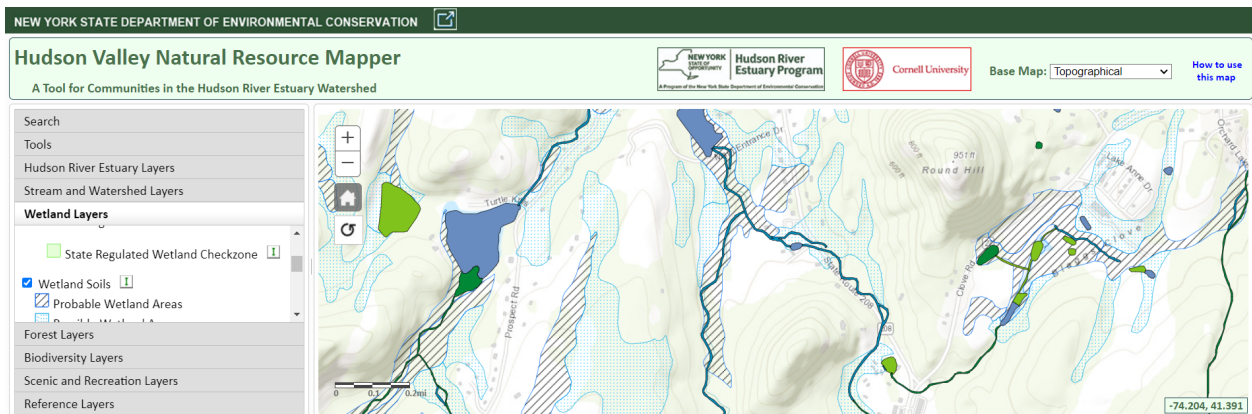
RE: Public Hearing for Prospect Acres

Context of the “Prospect Acres” property

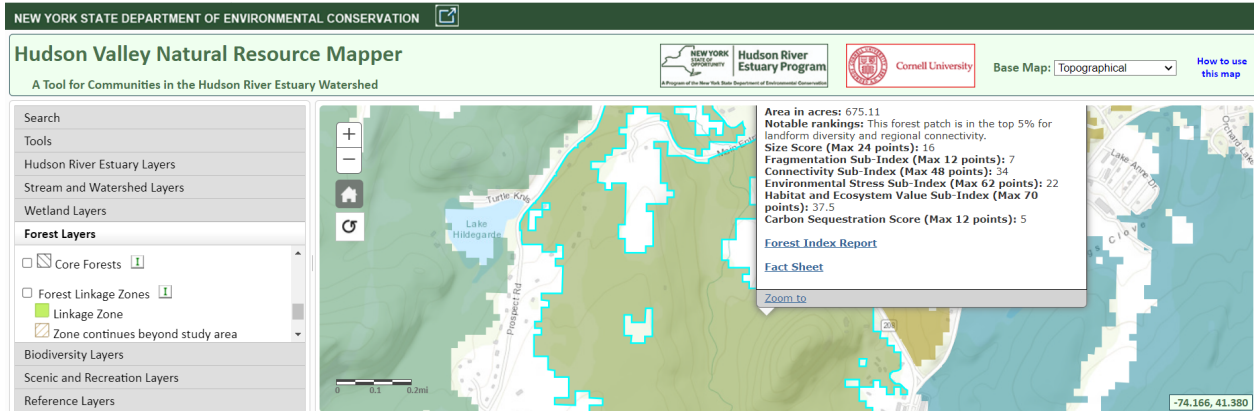
- Habitat of endangered species including Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat
- Listed as a “Significant BioDiversity Area” by the DEC’s Hudson Valley Natural Resource Mapper



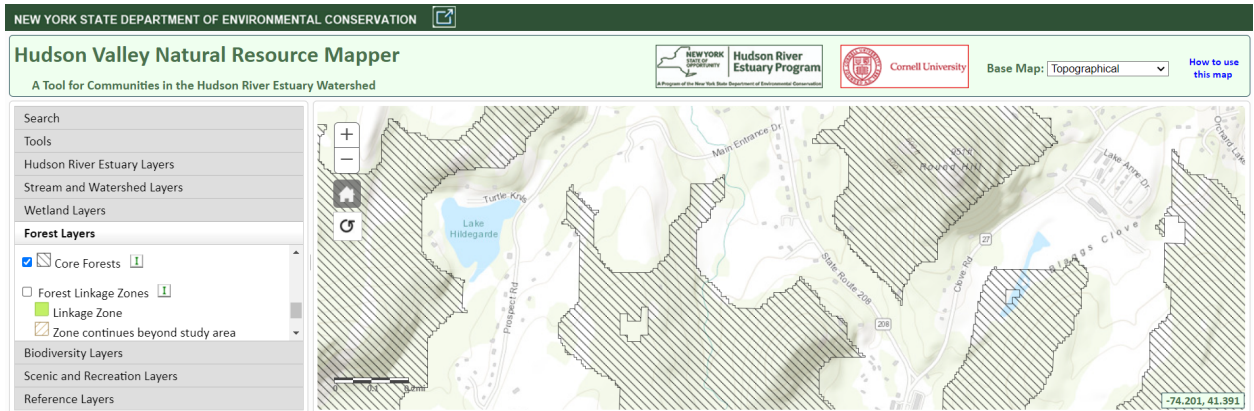
- Listed by the DEC as having “Probable and Possible Wetland Areas



- Listed by the DEC as a forest patch that is within the top 5% land landform diversity and regional connectivity



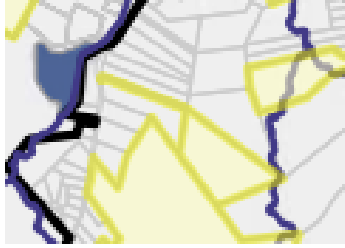
- Listed by the DEC as a “Core Forrest”



- Listed as a “Priority Parcel” for Moodna Creek & Tributaries in the 2020 Town of Blooming Grove Preservation Plan

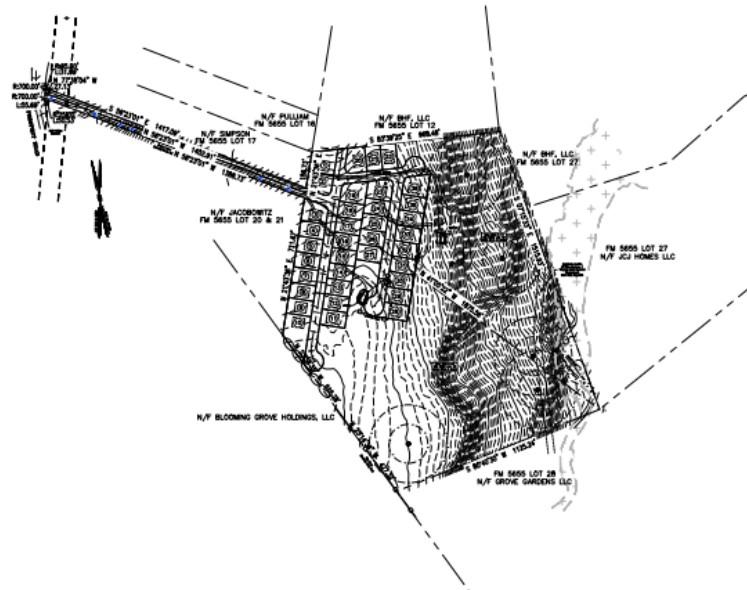


- Listed as a “Priority Parcel” for Agriculture in the 2020 Town of Blooming Grove Preservation Plan



Comments about the proposed site plan for “Prospect Acres”

- This project, in association with the neighboring development of “Prospect Gardens” is causing habitat fragmentation, preventing wildlife from migrating east to west, from Schunemunk Mountain to Tomahawk Lake. This project is causing habitat fragmentation because development is being proposed for the entire width of the property, leaving no ability of animals to migrate.



- The proposal involves developing and removing trees from what the DEC considers a “Core Forest” and a top 5% forest in landform diversity and regional connectivity
- The proposal of 30+ homes is within an area with known water issues and active development which is stressing existing water conditions. The neighboring property of “Prospect Gardens” recently had to reduce their lot count to approximately 30 units because their wells could not support greater density. Those well tests were done without any additional draw from “Prospect Acres”. Any well testing done for “Prospect Acres” should include simultaneous testing from the neighboring development of “Prospect Gardens” to ensure that wells from these neighboring projects do not cumulatively over draw water

- “Prospect Acres” and the neighboring “Prospect Gardens” are both planning to discharge waste water into Satterly Creek. There is concern that this cumulative discharge will cause severe negative impacts to the water, including to protected freshwater eels which have been observed in Satterly Creek. As a resident who lives downstream of this project site on Satterly Creek, I am also concerned that this volume of wastewater will impact the quality of my well water, and the quality of water in Satterly Creek at my house, which I use to water my garden.
- The “Prospect Acres” development is disproportionate in size with residential development currently on Prospect Road. Prospect Road currently contains homes on lots of 2 acres or more, and this proposal is putting homes on .25 acre lots. All traffic from these homes will flow onto Prospect Road, a small old farm road, because no entry or exit to Route 208 is currently being proposed. Increased traffic produced from these homes along with others being proposed in neighboring developments, such as “Prospect Gardens” will have significant negative impacts to existing residents of Prospect Road and neighboring roads that take traffic from Prospect Road, such as Peddler Hill Road and Round Hill Road.

Recommended site plan changes for “Prospect Acres”

- Given the environmental significance of the project site, the Planning Board should use an independent third party to validate that all wetlands have been properly recorded on the project site. The Planning Board may want to consider asking the Town’s Conservation Advisory Commission to perform this task
- Given the environmental significance of the project site, the Planning Board should ensure that the applicant proposes alternative uses for the site that require less clearing, disturbance, and habitat fragmentation.
- Site plan should be amended so that the disturbed area, including homes and roads, do not completely fragment the migratory habitat of animals going east to west in the migratory corridor. This may or may not require reducing lot counts.
- The site plan should be amended so that lot sizes are more comparable with the 2+ acre lots that are pre-existing along Prospect Road
- The engineer should add an outlet to Route 208 so that traffic is not funneled entirely onto the rural Prospect Road.
- The engineer should ensure that well testing for the site is done considering the anticipated draw from the neighboring “Prospect Gardens” development

- The engineer should look at alternatives that do not require discharging wastewater into Satterly Creek, which is used by neighboring residents for farming and gardening, and may impact wells that are positioned close to the Creek.
- The engineer should incorporate and show how the project can retain mature tree stands located on the project site. The Planning Board should not permit the applicant to clear cut the project site until the planning process is complete. It is in the best interest of the future residents of the site and the Planning Board to collaboratively plan trees and landscaping with the applicant prior to the start of any clearing, landscaping, or development.
- In order to mitigate flooding to those downstream of this proposed site, the engineer should reduce paved areas as much as possible and should consider using permeable surfaces for sidewalks and driveways.
- In order to minimize light pollution, the Planning Board should prohibit street lights and flood lights in the project site, which is also consistent with existing lighting on Prospect Road.