



May 15, 2024

Charles J. Voorhis
Principal
Nelson Pope & Voorhis
70 Maxess Road
Melville, New York 11747

RE: Lewis Road PRD, East Quogue, Southampton Town
Conservation Management Plan
Central Pine Barrens

Dear Mr. Voorhis:

Robert T. Calarco
Chairman

Timothy C. Hubbard
Member

Maria Z. Moore
Member

Daniel J. Panico
Member

Edward P. Romaine
Member

On April 30, 2024, the Central Pine Barrens Commission office received the Conservation Management Plan proposed for the Lewis Road Planned Residential Development. The project provided for development of certain portions of a 608 acre site in Southampton and protection of other areas of the site.

The Commission issued a decision finding the project was consistent with the provisions of the Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan. As part of the application, the sponsor of the project offered to record covenants and restrictions (C&Rs) against the project site. The sponsor reserved the right to manage portions of the protected area if the sponsor submitted a Conservation Management Plan (CMP), for the entire site detailing the management activities reserved to the sponsor. Before implementing any portion of the CMP, the sponsor was required to obtain Commission approval of the same. The CMP discusses the sponsor's proposal to manage 23 areas, totaling 5.8 acres, the protected areas.

The Commission has reviewed the CMP, prepared by Nelson, Pope and Voorhis, and submitted to the Commission on April 30, 2024. The CMP identifies the range of activities that the sponsor may implement in the 23 areas targeted for restoration and invasive species management. The CMP proposed two principal management techniques; self-heal restoration in 21 areas and active restoration in two areas.

The Commission offers the following for each management technique.

Self-heal Restoration

Self-heal restoration will be employed in 21 areas. Only monitoring will occur to confirm restoration progress in these areas. The CMP states the areas "do not contain invasive species and were damaged by ATVs and related activities."

No timeframe is specified for self-heal to occur. Please provide the proposed timeframe to allow for self-heal restoration. The CMP explains that active planting with native species will occur if the areas do not exhibit progress through natural restoration.

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Monitoring

Monitoring is authorized in the 21 self-heal restoration areas. Not authorized is active revegetation, unless and until necessary. If the Applicant deems it necessary to implement active planting to promote re-growth in these areas, notification must be made to this office. It must include a rationale for abandoning the self-heal approach and employing active restoration. Therefore, after an unspecified timeframe, if no self-heal restoration occurs, the Applicant must notify this office that active planting is recommended and plans must include a monitoring schedule, annual reporting and survival requirements. This decision will be subject to review and approval.

Active Restoration

Active restoration will occur in the fall 2024 planting season with two areas intended to target removal of invasive species. This activity aims to minimize the spread of invasives on the Project Site and improve habitat quality. The two areas targeted for active restoration are identified as RV 9 and RV 10. The areas contain 16,951 square feet and 15,517 square feet, respectively, or a total of 33,638 square feet or 0.75 acre. A list of target species is provided.

Removal methods

The preferred removal methods discussed include repeated hand cutting and mechanical use of a mini excavator. Caution is recommended when using machinery in areas adjacent to the restoration area to avoid disturbance to the natural habitat.

Effective removal methods use herbicides, according to the CMP. However, the CMP will avoid the use of chemicals in the Central Pine Barrens. The Applicant will use non-chemical removal methods in restoration efforts described in the CMP.

Inspections

Prior to commencing active revegetation, the areas RV 9 and RV 10 must be delineated and inspected by Commission staff. Notify this office at least one week prior to commencing this work to perform an inspection of each area.

A post-planting inspection is also required. Notify this office within one week of completion of work to perform an inspection of each area. Recommendations and suggestions that may modify elements of this proposal are reserved until after inspections occur.

Please be reminded, the C&Rs stated, "Open Space Areas shall remain in their current, undisturbed, natural state." No other activity is permitted in conservation easements. If methods or activities change, please notify this office in writing and approval is subject to review.

Upon the incorporation of the conditions of this letter into the CMP and submission of the same to the Commission, the CMP will be deemed approved. If the conditions are not incorporated to the Commission's satisfaction, the CMP is not approved.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Julie Hargrave
Policy and Planning Manager

cc: Judy Jakobsen, Executive Director, Central Pine Barrens Commission
John C. Milazzo, Counsel for the Commission
Jessica Insalaco, DLV