

Submission of Peter J. Regna To Honorable Town of Tuxedo Council

Re: SDEIS “Proposed Modifications 2009”

Thank you Honorable Council and congratulations to those recently elected and re-elected.

We all appreciate your service.

Two procedural matters:

- a.) All of us understand your need to condense these P.H. sessions. However, to announce a “4-minute limit” only 1 minute before opening the Oct. 26th Hearing was a bit restrictive, especially to those who had studied the 200+ page document, and who best understood it.
- b.) Just moments before the Oct. 26th Hearing opened, the Council announced they did not want to hear “repetition” of the same topic from multiple speakers. Again, understanding the Board’s heavy work load and your near-“volunteer” wages, it is still *harsh* to deny any interested person a chance to express his views at a *Public* Hearing. Many attendees on Oct 26th signed up to speak, but declined when called upon because portions of their statements might have overlapped others’. Repetition is a very *important* part of expression, and we all pay more heed to corroborated information than to single data points.

I respectfully request the “muzzling effect” of a “no repetition” policy be abandoned and that everyone be granted his 3 or 5 minutes, redundant or not.

THANK YOU

Archeology Chapt. 4 DSEIS

I was moved by Chief Dwayne Perry of the Ramapo-Lenape Indian Nation, when he spoke of his concerns for tribal artifacts and possible burial sites on TR's 1200 acre Southern Tract. Remember, TR purchased this land from the Chairman of the Tuxedo *Historical* Society and TR has pledged funding to upgrade the Society's quarters. It would seem both parties share an initiative to preserve and/or document historic elements both at the site and through the Historic Society's Archeology displays.

But Chapt. 4 of the SDEIS reveals that only the basic "walk around" and "shovel test" archeological inspections were performed, and only at selected locations.

Even so, the TR document reveals some surprising uncoverings on their property:

- a.) iron mines and mine shafts
- b.) remains of the old Smith-Jefferson Homestead, predating Tuxedo Park
- c.) a boulder quarry with large cut stones still in situ
- d.) very early "pre-contact" artifacts
- e.) the right-of-way of the old Continental Road used by the Revolutionary Continental Army
- f.) evidence of the old Tuxedo Park South Gate House
- g.) a quartz quarry

and "bags of artifacts" from all 3 of the TR's "Phased" building areas.

One would expect the DSEIS to propose a *plan* for preserving, recording or photographing these, and potentially other buried remains or archeological elements on the property. Instead, the developer's conclusions, for nearly every "find" were:

"no further investigations of these areas are recommended"

"site lacked integrity and was not considered significant"

"wetlands and slopes over 12% not tested"

"Nat. Register eligibility . . . is beyond the scope of this research"

"location was judged to be disturbed . . . no additional findings investigations are recommended"

"findings ... are outside the limits of disturbance. . . no further investigation is required"

Oddly, 2 cave-like rockshelters near the Bog Meadow and Mountain Lake were not reported at all. Two of these features were in fact photographed by a Botanist working at the site, for Tuxedo Reserve. According to his colleague Archeologist Ed Lenik, who is also familiar with these sites, one shelter had been professionally studied some time ago, but the other, near Bog Meadow had not. Lenik noted that the later rockshelter has been looted, but still has potential to be professionally investigated. He further observed another rockshelter near Bog Meadow, and one at the northern end of Mountain Lake, both of which have been looted, but retain potential research value. While these rockshelters may not be located directly within an area of disturbance, they will be located very close to new homes. In the case of the photographed rockshelter near Bog Meadow, it will be only feet away. Once this occurs, and these sensitive sites are inevitably frequented by curious neighbors and amateur archaeologists, any valuable information and artifacts will likely be lost forever.

In addition to the rockshelters, this same Botanist observed bulldozers working on site to uncover an old roadway constructed of cedar logs, the signature characteristic of the "Continental Road" purported to be engineered by George Washington himself during the Revolutionary War. Once again, no mention was made of this discovery, which is of obvious significance to the history of Tuxedo.

I submit that TR's 1200 acre tract deserves a much more thorough archeological inspection. Also, a conscientious program to protect, preserve and catalog Tuxedo's history should be proposed and acted upon long before 1194 units and 3000 new residents occupy the space!

Honorable Council, Thank you for your kind attention.

Peter J. Regna

Tuxedo Resident, 30 years

Member Natl. Trust for Historic Preservation, 20 years