

# KALA

Karen Arent Landscape Architect

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**To:** Chairman Donald Serotta and the Town of Chester Planning Board

**From:** Karen Arent, Landscape Architect

**Date:** August 5, 2020

**Subject:** 1251 Kings Highway, Plans, site visit

**Consultant:** Arden Consulting Engineers

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## COMMENTS:

### General Comment

1. A note on the plans lists ryegrass (annual or perennial) as a slope stabilizer. Roundstone seed Mix 201 - Native Strip Mine & Gas Production Site Mix should be used instead. (888-531-2353 / 270-531-3034). Mix 201 contains 7 native grass species and 7 native wildflower species which will provide habitat and nutrition for native pollinators (including birds). A nurse crop is recommended for this mix. For fall through spring, 20 to 32 Pounds of Oats per acre or 2 to 4 Pounds of Annual Rye per acre are recommended. For summer, 6 to 8 Pounds of Brown Top Millet per acre is recommended.

### Building 1:

Existing hedgerows will help screen the building and parking area. Although there are gaps in the hedgerow on Kings Highway, they will be sufficiently filled in by the proposed screening. We have the following concerns with regard to the proposed landscaping:

2. There are concerns that *Betula nigra* will not thrive on upland areas. The cultivar 'Dura-heat' is recommended for uphill locations. Also, replace half of the proposed *Betula nigra* with *Nyssa sylvatica*.
3. *Pinus strobus* between the entrance and parking lot should be moved downhill toward the building 65' or so, from the stormwater management basin south. This will enable the proposed deciduous trees to grow larger and the downhill evergreen screening to grow larger and unimpeded, providing future winter screening for the parking lot and building.

4. Five (5) *Nyssa sylvatica* should be planted between the stormwater management basin and the parking lot to provide screening of the building from views from Kings Highway at the entrance. Ten (10) *Thuja plicata* 'Green Giant' should be planted on the curve near the driveway entrance on building side of the stormwater management basin to provide screening coming south on Kings Highway. An additional 2 or 3 *Nyssa sylvatica* should be planted along the driveway curve closest to Kings Highway.
5. The row of proposed screening along Kings Highway should end at the location of the existing sign along Kings Highway to screen the views of the building and parking lot while driving north on the road. Fifteen (15) *Pinus strobus* along Kings Highway should be planted further downhill, approximately 15' from the parking lot, in a staggered placement by the south west end of the building to screen the building and parking lot from the road and to maintain the rest of the existing view corridor.

## **Building 2:**

Existing hedgerows will help screen the building and parking lot. At eye level the hedge rows on Bellvale Road are thin and have many gaps. We have the following concerns with regard to the proposed landscaping:

6. The applicant should keep the proposed *Pinus strobus* in their current location and replace *Acer rubrum* with *Pinus strobus*, two-by-two in the row closest to the property line. Proposed *Betula nigra* should be planted behind the row closest to the property line.
7. Proposed *Pinus strobus* should be interspersed with 30 large-growing native shrubs which are deer resistant and tolerant of clay soils such as *Hamamelis virginiana*, *Aronia melanocarpa*, *Rhus glabra*, and *Sambucus canadensis*.
8. Proposed *Acer rubrum* should be moved downhill toward the proposed building by 45', maintaining staggering and separation to give the trees more room to grow and become thick and full. Twenty-five (25) percent of the proposed *Acer* species should be *Acer saccharinum*, which should be placed where extra screening height is needed.
9. Most of the hedgerow will not remain around the proposed entrance. Screening should be reinforced following the same planting pattern as the rest of the proposed screening.
10. Screening should be highly reinforced along the property nearest to the railroad crossing, on the project-side of the wetlands from the corner of the property to the

edge of the proposed building. This should follow the same planting pattern as the other proposed screening.

11. Three trees should be planted in a cluster by the driveway entrance. *Nyssa sylvatica* may be used at 2"-2.5" maximum size.