

To: Town of Lewisboro Planning Board

From: Paul Lewis



44 Twin Lakes Road  
South Salem, NY 10590

Date: February 23, 2014

Re: **Petrucelli Application** for subdivision and wetland permit  
Oscaleta Road, South Salem, NY

Dear Chairman Kerner and Members of the Planning Board:

Wildlife Concerns

The wetland between Lakes Oscaleta and Waccabuc is a valuable piece of land with regard to its natural features and wildlife habitat.

In fact, it is unique in this region of N.Y. State in that it has many characteristics of a northern bog. Carol Reschke's description of a Red-maple -Tamarack Peat Swamp in her Ecological Communities of New York State, Second Edition, fits this swamp well. This type of wetland is more prevalent in the more northern portions of the state.

The wetland and buffer in which the Petrucelli lot is located provides habitat for a wide variety of avian, amphibian, reptilian, and mammalian creatures. Some of them reside there; others use the area as a safe corridor to and from the wetland and lake area to upland areas, as animals need both wetlands and uplands for feeding, resting, and nesting. They rely on the cover of native vegetation for protection. Wildlife Preserves owns a portion of the wetland and it enables transit of birds and other animals to other parcels they own, and then on to Mountain Lakes Park.

Many mammals such as Otter, Beaver, Min, Fisher, Red Fox, Muskrats, Deer and Squirrels use this area.

For many years I have kept a list of birds I have seen in this wetland. They include three species of herons - Great-blue Heron, Green Heron, and occasionally the Black Crowned Night Heron. Neo-tropical migrants I have seen, to name a few, include Northern Waterthrush, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellow-throat, Baltimore Oriole, Red-wing Blackbird, Eastern Kingbird and Veery.

The wetland also hosts a number of amphibians including Green Frog, Bullfrog, Spring Peeper, Wood Frog and Grey Tree Frog.

While it is difficult to specify which of these creatures use Mr. Petruccelli's property, it is certain that the entire lot is either wetland or wetland buffer and also serves as a buffer area for wildlife from developed lands. It should be treated as such. It is part of the larger wetland that provides a safe haven for the birds and animals. The local wetland has some Vernal Pool characteristics and does host Spring Peepers in the Spring. It is possible it may host Wood Frogs some years; these frogs are a vernal Pool obligate species.

Reptiles, specifically Snapping Turtles, have been seen in adjacent areas in the vicinity and could conceivably traverse this parcel on their way to a nesting site. They, and other animals, don't recognize property lines!

This valuable wetland is unique in this part of the State and must not be encroached upon.