

**TOWN OF NISKAYUNA**  
**Conservation Advisory Council**

**A G E N D A**  
**March 2, 2022**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**VIA HYBRID FORMAT**  
**IN PERSON (TOWN HALL) AND VIRTUAL (GOOGLE MEETS)**

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - 1. February 2, 2022
- IV. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**
- V. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM REFERRALS**
  - 1. 2022-2 Historic Preservation Code
- VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
  - 1. One Research Circle – GE Global R&D Center – site plan application for the construction of a new building.
- VII. REPORTS**
  - 1. Natural Resource Inventory
  - 2. Pesticide Outreach Update
  - 3. Low Mow / Biodiversity Initiatives Update
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Next Meeting: April 6, 2022**  
**AT 7 PM, Hybrid Format**

**TOWN OF NISKAYUNA**  
**CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
Meeting Minutes  
February 2, 2022

Members Present: Dart Strayer, Chairman  
Ellen Daviero  
Ashok Ramasubramanian  
Chelsea Rattner  
Ryana Sarcar

Also Present: Laura Robertson, Town Planner  
Clark Henry, Assistant Planner

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Strayer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mr. Burkholder and Ms. Vysohlid were absent / excused tonight.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. December 1, 2021

Chairman Strayer asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes. Hearing none – he made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Daviero. All were in favor.

2. January 5, 2022

Chairman Strayer asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes. Ms. Daviero stated she thought the minutes were very thorough and appreciated them. Chairman Strayer made a motion to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Ms. Daviero. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**IV. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Mr. Ray Thorton and Ms. Ruth Bonn were present to discuss and advocate for the low mow initiative and associated signage at Blatnick Park. Ms. Daviero discussed the signs that have been designed and are waiting for production. Mr. Thornton offered to help design a few more ideas. Ms. Robertson displayed multiple designs created by Ms. Daviero. The Council discussed the best way to produce visible, effective signs. Mr. Stayer asked Ms. Robertson to bring all the different sign designs back for final approval at the next CAC meeting.

**V. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM REFERRALS**

**1. EAF 2022-1 1930 Hillside Ave – Special Use Permit for Daycare within a place of worship**

Ms. Robertson stated this is a basic tenant change that will require no exterior changes to the building. The council reviewed each question of part 2 of the short EAF and found for each question that there would be no or a small environmental effect. The project wasn't changing any impervious surfaces or external things to the building, so no wildlife or forest was impacted. They did note a small increase in traffic and utility consumption but that the traffic would be spread out over multiple hours and the site existed as a daycare before, so these were small impacts.

Chairman Strayer asked for any more discussion on the project. Hearing none, Ms. Ramasubramanian made a motion for a recommendation to the Planning Board of a Negative Declaration regarding environmental impacts. They Council voted unanimously for a negative declaration recommendation for 1930 Hillside.

## **2. EAF 2022-2 Historic Preservation Code**

Chairman Strayer stated he still is concerned that if they adopt the code as is, it will be difficult to change later and it will not protect historic homes from demolition. The Council felt very strongly that the code should have the ability for the Town Board to deny a demolition under limited circumstances. After a discussion, Ms. Robertson asked the Council if they would like to recommend the code as it exists or have it return to the Town Attorney for adjustments. Ms. Daviero asked who would make the changes to the code. Ms. Robertson stated former Town Attorney Paul Briggs felt the denial could be added to the Code, but the current Town Attorney Alaina Finan will need to add it into the Code. She stated they are still waiting on the legal department guidance.

Mr. Henry asked if the CAC puts in a condition that the code must include a firm denial of demolition permits, and the Town Board does not adopt such a condition, if it nullifies the SEQR determination. Chairman Strayer stated he would be more comfortable seeing the final language prior to taking any action on the Historic Code. The Council agreed that this Code should come back for at least the March Meeting. Mr. Strayer asked Ms. Robertson to look at the Town of Bedford Historic Code again.

## **VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **1. 1748 Union St -- Sketch Plan for parking supporting 1742 Union St.**

Ms. Robertson stated that she put this project up for discussion though the project is in its preliminary stages. She stated the applicant owns the property at 1748 in Niskayuna and the adjacent property at 1742 in Schenectady. A quick serve restaurant is proposed for 1742 Union St with the majority of the parking lot to be at 1748 Union St. Ms. Robertson proposed the CAC look at the site in general and thinks about whether or not it could be parking lot for Union Street with EV parking added or they would like to see a new building.

The Council agreed to go and research the property and surrounding area to see how the proposed changes could affect Union St and Eastern Parkway residents and businesses and the commercial district. Ms. Daviero suggested a strong visual buffer of plantings to help the surrounding homes. Chairman Strayer discussed removing the existing building on the Niskayuna side and building the proposed building on the Niskayuna side with more greenspace and possible outdoor seating. The Council felt outdoor seating would be beneficial to the "life" on the street and was supportive of creating spaces for people to gather and strongly encouraged additional greenspace as well.

## **VII. REPORTS**

### **1. Climate Smart Communities Grant**

Ms. Robertson stated the Climate Smart Community Grant was accepted by the Town Board at the last meeting and she is still working on the Climate Smart Certification for the Town.

### **2. Natural Resource Inventory**

Ms. Robertson stated there is a Community Forest Conservation DEC grant that she would like to also tie into the Natural Resources Inventory in addition to the grant that has already been received. Mr. Strayer asked if anyone was able to attend the webinar about the grant. Mr. Ramasubramanian stated both he and Ms. Robertson were able to attend. Mr. Robertson stated the main takeaway is that the State is looking to

84 conserve privately owned forest land to increase public access to it and help mitigate climate change. She  
85 stated the parcel has to be over 10 acres and it is required to have a binding letter that the land will be sold  
86 pending the grant approval. It also needs to have public access. Mr. Ramasubramanian stated April 23<sup>rd</sup> is  
87 the deadline and volunteered to help right the grant. Ms. Robertson stated it would be helpful to have the  
88 NRI make a recommendation on the land the Town targets for acquisition. Mr. Strayer asked to set up a  
89 separate virtual meeting to discuss ideas about possible land parcels in the next week.

90  
91 Mr. Ramasubramanian stated he is continuing to work with the NRI subcommittee and feels that  
92 community involvement is the key to this inventory. He stated the next subcommittee meeting in 2/10.

## 93 **2. Pesticide Outreach Update**

94  
95 Ms. Daviero stated she has done more research regarding lawn care companies that provide a pesticide free  
96 option. Through her research, she found a limited number of companies that seems to offer this. One of the  
97 companies that could be offered to the Niskayuna residents is a company called Grasshopper and for  
98 businesses called Peak Environmental. Ms. Daviero stated she would love to get a list together for residents  
99 and businesses to refer to so they could begin requesting pesticide free lawn services.

## 100 101 **3. Low Mow / Biodiversity Initiatives Update**

102  
103 Ms. Robertson stated the low mow initiative was discussed at length at the beginning of the meeting and she  
104 will bring back signs for the next meeting.

## 105 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

106 Mr. Ramasubramanian made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Ms. Rattner. The meeting was  
107 adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.



# TOWN OF NISKAYUNA

## CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

### AGENDA STATEMENT

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AGENDA ITEM NO. V. 1

MEETING DATE: 2/28/2022

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**ITEM TITLE:** EAF 2022-02 Historical Adoption

**PROJECT LEAD:** David D'Arpino

**APPLICANT:** Town of Niskayuna

**SUBMITTED BY:** Laura Robertson, Town Planner

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**REVIEWED BY:**

☒ Planning Board & Zoning Commission ☐ Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) ☐ Town Board  
☐ OTHER

**ATTACHMENTS:**

☐ Resolution ☐ Site Plan ☐ Map ☐ Report ☐ Other:

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

Dr. Denis Brennan, Town Historian, has proposed a new chapter of the Code of the Town of Niskayuna which would include historic preservation sections.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The proposed Historical Code addition to the Town Zoning Code continues to be reviewed and refined. A copy of the code is attached for reference for review and recommendation by the CAC.

## Proposed Local Law C (2022)

### Historic Preservation Code

#### § 130-1 Purpose

It is hereby declared as a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, and perpetuation of landmarks and historic buildings is necessary to promote cultural and educational opportunities for the public. It is the intent of the Town of Niskayuna to follow the terms of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which established a national historic preservation policy and authorized the National Park Service to oversee the Act. Additionally, we will follow the mandates of the New York State Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Preservation Office. In as much as the identity of a people is founded on its past and recognizing that Niskayuna has many significant historic, architectural, and cultural resources which constitute its heritage, this article is intended to:

- (1) Protect and enhance the buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts which represent distinctive elements of Niskayuna's historical, architectural, and cultural heritage;
- (2) Foster public knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for the character of Niskayuna and promote civic pride in the character and accomplishments of its past;
- (3) Protect and enhance Niskayuna's attractiveness to its residents and visitors, as well as the support and stimulus to the economy thereby provided;
- (4) Promote and encourage continued private ownership and stewardship of historic structures;
- (5) Identify as early as possible conflicts between the preservation of structures/landmarks/districts and alternative land uses;
- (6) Determine the effective resolution of any conflict between the preservation of structures/landmarks/districts and alternative land uses;
- (7) Ensure harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth by integrating future development of Niskayuna with our historic past: and
- (8) Establish a Historic Preservation Commission, as outlined below in Subsection 2, available to provide guidance and technical assistance to owners of landmark properties when restoration work is being contemplated.

#### § 130-2 Historic Preservation Commission

There is hereby created a Commission to be known as the "Niskayuna Historic Preservation Commission."

- (1) The Commission shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, including the Town Historian, appointed by the Town Board for staggered four-year terms.
  - (a) Members shall have a demonstrated significant interest in, competence about, knowledge of, or commitment to historic preservation.
  - (b) To the extent possible, Commission members shall be drawn from the disciplines of architecture, history, archaeology, historic preservation, or closely related fields.
- (2) The Chairperson of the Commission shall be appointed by the Town Board for a one-year term.
- (3) The purpose of this Commission shall include:
  - (a) Conducting inventories of significant historic buildings, structures, objects, sites, and historic districts within the Town. A record of these inventories shall be kept at Town Hall.
  - (b) Establishing the criteria for selection of historic buildings, structures, objects, sites, and historic districts in the Town of Niskayuna to be placed on the Town Register of Historic Places.
  - (c) Recommending to the Town Board suggested buildings, structures, objects, sites, and historic districts which should be listed on the Town Register of Historic Places.
  - (d) Recommendations to the Town Board as to those areas of the Town which should be designated as Town Historic districts.
  - (e) Increasing public awareness of the value of preserving historic buildings, structures, objects and sites by developing and participating in public education programs, conducting preservation workshops, and providing assistance to owners of historic properties.
  - (f) Making recommendations to the Town Board concerning utilization of state, federal, or private funds to promote the preservation of historic buildings, structures, objects, and sites within the Town of Niskayuna.
  - (g) Serving in an advisory capacity to the Town Board, Planning Department, Planning Board & Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Architectural Review Board on all matters that affect or impact identified or designated Historic places or historic districts.
- (4) The Commission shall meet at least monthly and a quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of one or more than one-half of the Commission's members.

- (5) Official actions by the Commission shall require an affirmative vote by not less than a majority of the full membership of the Commission.
- (6) Coordinate efforts with other agencies on local, county, state, and federal levels to aid in projects for classifying historical landmarks.

§ 130-3 Designation of Historic Buildings, Structures, Objects, Sites, and Historic Districts on the Town Register of Historic Places

- (1) Pursuant to Town Board Resolution No. 2020-244, the Commission may recommend, for designation by the Town Board, a building, structure, object, site, or historic district for the Town Register of Historic Places if it:
  - (a) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Niskayuna's history; or
  - (b) Is identified with historic personages or the lives of persons significant in Niskayuna's history; or
  - (c) Embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
  - (d) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information in prehistory or history.
- (2) Each building, structure, or object added to the Town Register of Historic Places will be eligible to receive a plaque acknowledging placement on the Register.
- (3) The Town of Niskayuna Register of Historic Places is strictly a local honorary listing. Properties placed on the Register are given only Town-wide historic recognition.
- (4) Owners of properties on the Historic Register have no restrictions on the use or maintenance of their property as a result of this designation.
- (5) Each site or Historic District added to the Town Register of Historic Places will be eligible to receive a historic road marker acknowledging its history and placement on the register.

§ 130-4 Demolition of any building or structure more than 49 years old.

- (1) Prior to issuing any demolition permit on a building or structure more than 49 years old, the Town of Niskayuna Building Department shall notify the Historic



Preservation Commission, by providing 30 days' written notice, identifying the building or structure for which such permit is sought by address and name of owner or owners, unless, in the opinion of the Building Department, the structure poses an imminent danger to health and safety.

- (2) The Historic Preservation Commission shall evaluate and document the building or structure for historic or architectural significance appropriately, as may be necessary, during the thirty-day notice period prior to issuance of any such demolition permit.
- (3) In the event that the Building Department has received no comment from the Historic Preservation Commission within 30 days after such notification, or if within 30 days the Historic Preservation Commission notifies the Building Department in writing that it has no objection to the issuance of the requested permit for demolition, then the demolition permit may be issued, if the same is otherwise deemed appropriate.
- (4) In cases where additional or more extensive research may be required prior to making a determination, the Historic Preservation Commission, in conjunction with the Building Department, shall notify the applicant of his/her right to submit evidence and proof in support of the demolition application. Once this information is received, the Commission shall fix a reasonable time to hold a public hearing on each application for a demolition permit. Notice of the public hearing shall be published at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing in an official newspaper of the Town and shall be mailed by the applicant at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing to all owners of lots within five hundred (500) feet of the perimeter of the subject lot. The Commission, applicant, and any interested parties may present testimony or documentary evidence at the hearing which will become part of the record regarding the historic, architectural, archeological or cultural importance of the subject building.
- (5) The determination of the Commission shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Town Clerk, Town Board, Building Inspector, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the applicant within thirty (30) calendar days from the close of the public hearing.
  - (a) If the Commission determines that the demolition permit should be issued, its determination shall so state and set forth its reasons for such determination.
  - (b) If the Commission determines that the demolition permit shall be issued with conditions, its determination shall so state and set forth its reasons for such determination. Failure to comply with such conditions shall result in revocation of the demolition permit.
- (6) If the Commission determines that the demolition permit should not be issued, it shall so state and set forth its reasons for such determination. In arriving at its determination, the Commission shall consider, in addition to any other pertinent factors, the following criteria in assessing whether the historical, architectural, archeological or cultural significance of the subject building outweighs any special

circumstances or potential hardships posed to the applicant:

- (a) Whether the subject building is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, United States history, New York history or locally significant history.
- (b) Whether the subject building is associated importantly with the lives of persons significant to United States history, New York history, or local history.
- (c) Whether the subject building represents some great idea or ideal of the American people.
- (d) Whether the subject building embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction, or that represents a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (e) That is composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance, or outstandingly commemorate or illustrate a way of life or culture

(7) Appeals.

- (a) Town Board Review Any determination, decision, or order of the Commission made pursuant to or within the scope of this Article may be reviewed by the Town Board at the request of any person aggrieved thereby provided that such review is commenced by the filing of a notice of appeal to the Town Board within thirty (30) days after the Commission files with the Town Clerk its determination. Such notice of appeal shall specify the grounds for seeking review.
- (b) In making its determination on the appeal, the Town Board shall review the written determination of the Commission in conjunction with the permit application and the criteria set forth in § 130-4 (7), and consider the appropriateness of the demolition, as well as the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the Town, with particular attention given to the needs of the residents and industries within the historic area or any special circumstances or hardship that the applicant may choose to bring forward.
- (c) Based on its determination of appeal, the Town Board shall issue a written determination directing the Building Inspector to issue or deny a demolition permit to the applicant.
- (d) If no person appeals, the determination of the Commission becomes final and binding upon the applicant and Building Inspector.

## § 130-5 Definitions

When used in this article, unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context, the terms listed below shall have the following meanings:

### **ARCHITECTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The quality of a building or structure based on its date of erection, style, and scarcity of same, quality of design, present condition, and appearance or other characteristics that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

### **BUILDING**

Any construction created to shelter any form of human use, such as a house, garage or barn, and which is permanently affixed to the land, including public buildings such as schools, shops, railroad stations, etc. Building may also refer to a historically related complex, such as a house and a barn.

### **COMMISSION**

The Niskayuna Historic Preservation Commission.

### **HISTORIC DISTRICT**

An area which contains or possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The identification, study, documentation, protection, acquisition, restoration, rehabilitation, management, maintenance and use of buildings, structures, objects, sites and historic districts, significant in the history, architecture, or culture of the Town of Niskayuna, the State of New York or the United States.

### **HISTORIC PROPERTY**

Any building, structure, object, site, or district that is of significance in the history, architecture, archeology, or culture of the Town of Niskayuna, the State of New York, or the United States, included on, or potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **INVENTORY**

A list of historic properties determined to meet specific criteria of significance.

### **NATIONAL REGISTER**

The National Register of Historic Places authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

**PLANNING BOARD & ZONING COMMISSION**

The Planning Board & Zoning Commission of the Town of Niskayuna.

**STATE REGISTER**

The State Register of Historic Places established pursuant to § 14.07 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law.

**TOWN BOARD**

The Town Board of the Town of Niskayuna.

**TOWN REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

The Town of Niskayuna Register of Historic Places established pursuant to Town Board Resolution No. 2020 – 244, is a local honorary listing of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and historic districts deemed by the Commission to be of significant historic value. Owners of property on the Historic Register have no restrictions on the use or maintenance of their property because of this designation.



# TOWN OF NISKAYUNA

## CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

### AGENDA STATEMENT

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AGENDA ITEM NO. V. 1

MEETING DATE: 2/2/2022

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**ITEM TITLE:** One Research Circle – GE Global R&D Center – site plan application for the construction of a new building

**PROJECT LEAD:**

**APPLICANT:** Town of Niskayuna

**SUBMITTED BY:** Laura Robertson, Town Planner

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**REVIEWED BY:**

☒ Planning Board & Zoning Commission ☐ Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) ☐ Town Board  
☐ OTHER

**ATTACHMENTS:**

☐ Resolution ☒ Site Plan ☐ Map ☐ Report ☐ Other:

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

Corrie Whalen, acting on behalf of the General Electric Company, submitted an Application for Site Plan Review for a proposed new building on the campus at the intersection of KW Rd. and Discovery Drive. The proposed building is approximately 16,000 sq. ft. with a footprint of 80' wide x 220' long x 55' high.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The 522 acre property at 1 Research Circle lies within I-R Research and Development zoning district.

A 12-page document package was submitted with the application. Eight (8) of the pages were entitled "GE Cryo Schenectady, NY" by American Buildings Company dated 2/21/22 with no subsequent revisions. All 12 pages were stamped "Received Feb 23 2022 Planning Office Niskayuna, NY".

Mr. Whalen stated that the proposed new building will replace two existing buildings currently on the site. One of the existing buildings contains a piece of special equipment. The special equipment will be relocated to the proposed new building and the existing building will be demolished, along with one other additional building.

Niskayuna Zoning Code Section 220-10 District Regulations H Research and Development District (1) Permitted principal uses includes: (a) Research, experimental and testing laboratories. The main Global Research and Development building is therefore a permitted principal use in the I-R zoning district.

Schedule I-F Part 1 C-S and I-R Districts Schedule of Supplementary Regulations Column 8 Additional Use Regulations, Prohibitions, Notes, Other Provisions and Requirements 1 states: "Other portions of this chapter notwithstanding for lot areas of 5 acres or larger, at the discretion of the Planning Board, 1 principal use may be contained in more than 1 principal building on the lot". Therefore the Planning Board may consider the proposed new building that is intended to contain a special piece of research and development equipment an additional building of the research, experimental and testing laboratories permitted principal use.

Niskayuna Zoning Code Section 220-17 Height regulations A states: "No building or structure shall exceed a height of 35 feet above the average finished grade adjoining the building unless otherwise specified in this chapter....."

As proposed the new building has a maximum height of 55 feet above finished grade. Therefore a variance of 20 feet ( $55 - 35 = 20$ ) of building height is required.

The applicant is appearing before the Planning Board and Zoning Commission this evening to present the project and answer any questions that arise.

The Planning Board is reviewing the project to consider calling for a recommendation to be made to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) at the next Planning Board meeting (3/14/22).

This is a preliminary look at the project for the CAC. The EAF should be forthcoming – the CAC should be prepared to ask questions and consider the introduction of the project.



# TOWN OF NISKAYUNA

One Niskayuna Circle  
Niskayuna, New York 12309-4381

Phone: (518) 386-4530

## Application for Site Plan Review

### Applicant (Owner or Agent):

Name GE RESEARCH

Address 1 RESEARCH CIRCLE  
NISKAYUNA, NY 12309

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

### Location:

Number & Street 1 RESEARCH CIRCLE

Section-Block-Lot 157 - 1 - 2

Zoning District I-2

### Proposal Description:

BUILD NEW RESEARCH BUILDING ON CAMPU.S.  
PRELIMINARY DESIGN INCLUDES ~16,000 GSF  
BUILDING, 60FT HIGH, WITH NEW NITROGEN BULK  
SYSTEM.

Signature of applicant:  Carrie Whalen Date: 2/23/22

Signature of owner (if different from applicant): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Carrie.Whalen@ge.com

RECEIVED

FEB 23 2022

PLANNING OFFICE  
NISKAYUNA, NY



**Each site plan application shall be accompanied by:**

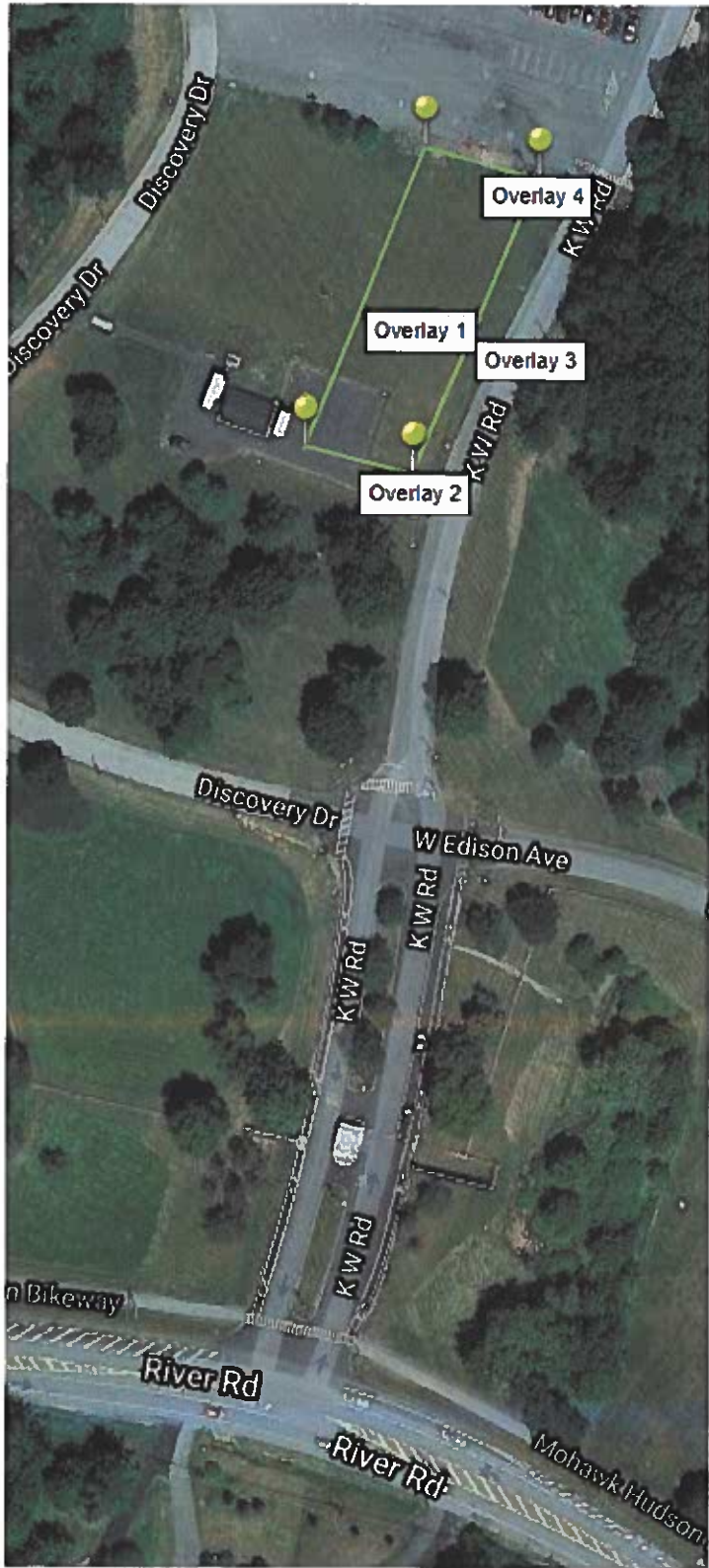
- ✓ 1. Digital copies in pdf format of all application forms and supporting documents.
2. A digital copy in pdf format and three (3) full size copies of any large scale plans or maps prepared by a licensed engineer, architect or surveyor.
- ✓
- a. The site plan shall include the following: the title of the drawing, including the name(s), address(es), phone and fax numbers of the applicant and the name address, phone and fax number of the person, firm or organization preparing the map.
  - b. The North point, date and scale.
  - c. Boundaries of the property.
  - d. Existing watercourses and direction of existing and proposed drainage flow.
  - e. The location of all proposed site improvements; proposed water and utility facilities; a description of the method of sewage disposal and location of such facilities; the location of all proposed signs; and location of proposed areas of vegetation.
- EXEMPT?
2. A digital copy in pdf format of a lighting plan showing the lighting distribution of existing and proposed lights, specifications, photometric data, and catalog cuts of the proposed fixture(s) which meet the requirements of Article VIIIB of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Niskayuna entitled "Guidelines for Lighting of Outdoor Areas under Site Plan Review".
- SITING -  
MAYBE UNNEEDED  
NOT TYPE I OR  
TYPE II
3. One (1) copy of the short or long Environmental Assessment Form (EAF), as required by 6NYCRR Part 617, "State Environmental Quality Review", and Chapter 95, "Environmental Quality Review" of the Code of the Town of Niskayuna.
4. If the application is being made by someone other than the current property owner, the applicant or the agent for the applicant must provide proof that they are authorized to pursue this site plan approval. Such proof may be in the form of a contract for sale or letter by the current owner that the applicant/agent is authorized to proceed with this application.
5. Administration Fees: An application for site plan approval shall be submitted to the Planning Board at least ten (10) business days prior to a regular meeting of the Planning Board. Each petition shall be accompanied by a minimum fee of **\$200.00** plus an additional fee based on the square footage of new building construction. Fees are payable to the Town of Niskayuna.
6. Consulting Fees: The cost incurred by the Town for the review of an application by the Town Engineer, consulting engineering firm or other consulting fees, in connection with a Board's review of a proposed application shall be charged to the applicant. The Board to whom the application is made shall obtain an estimate from any designated consultant of the amount sufficient to defray the cost of such services and shall collect from the applicant the estimated charges. Any portion of the estimated charges so collected, which are not expended by the Town, shall be returned to the applicant. Any such costs incurred by the Town beyond the estimated charges initially collected from the applicant, shall be collected from the applicant prior to final action upon the application.

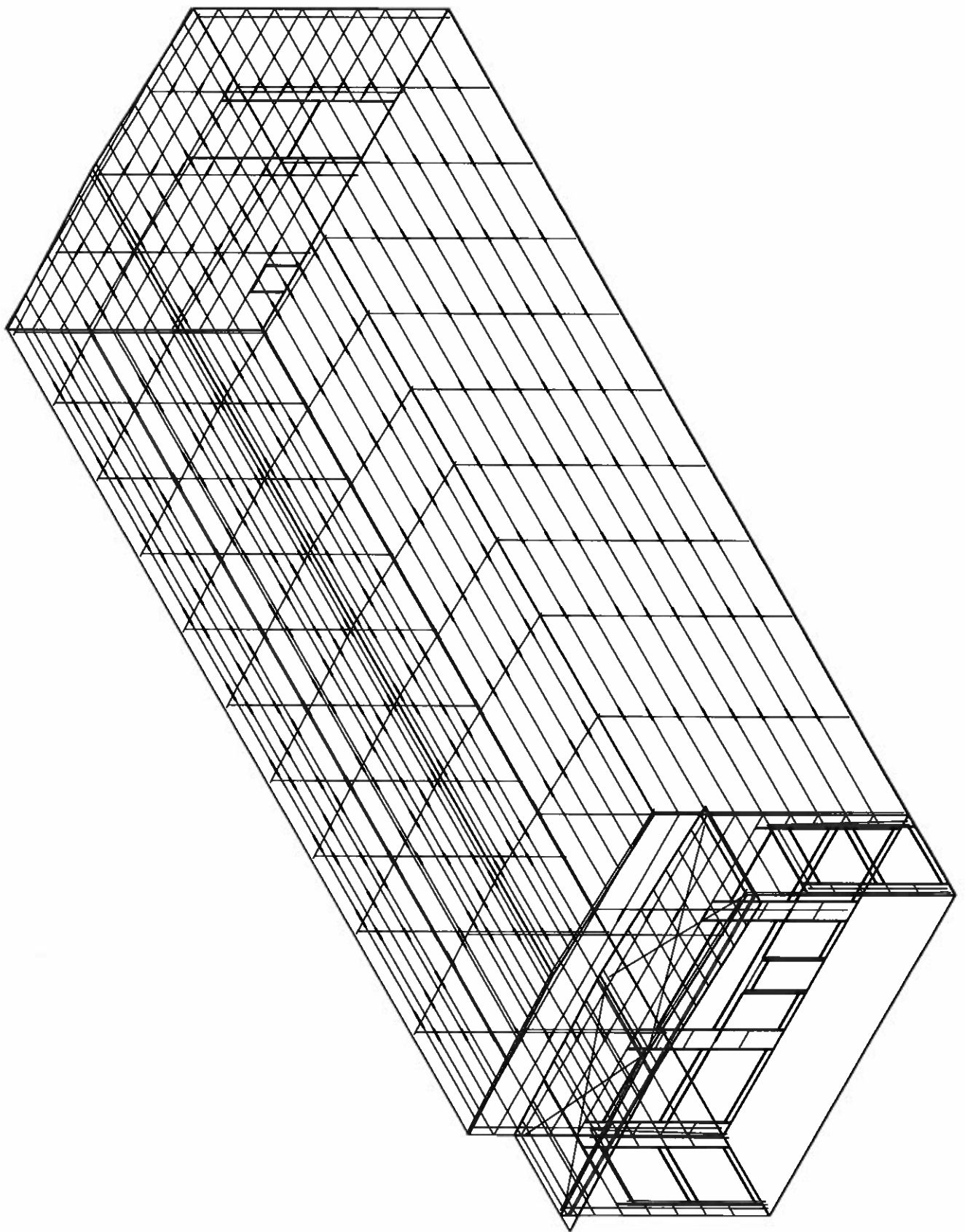
RECEIVED





FEB 23 2022

PLANNING OFFICE  
NISKAYUNA, NY

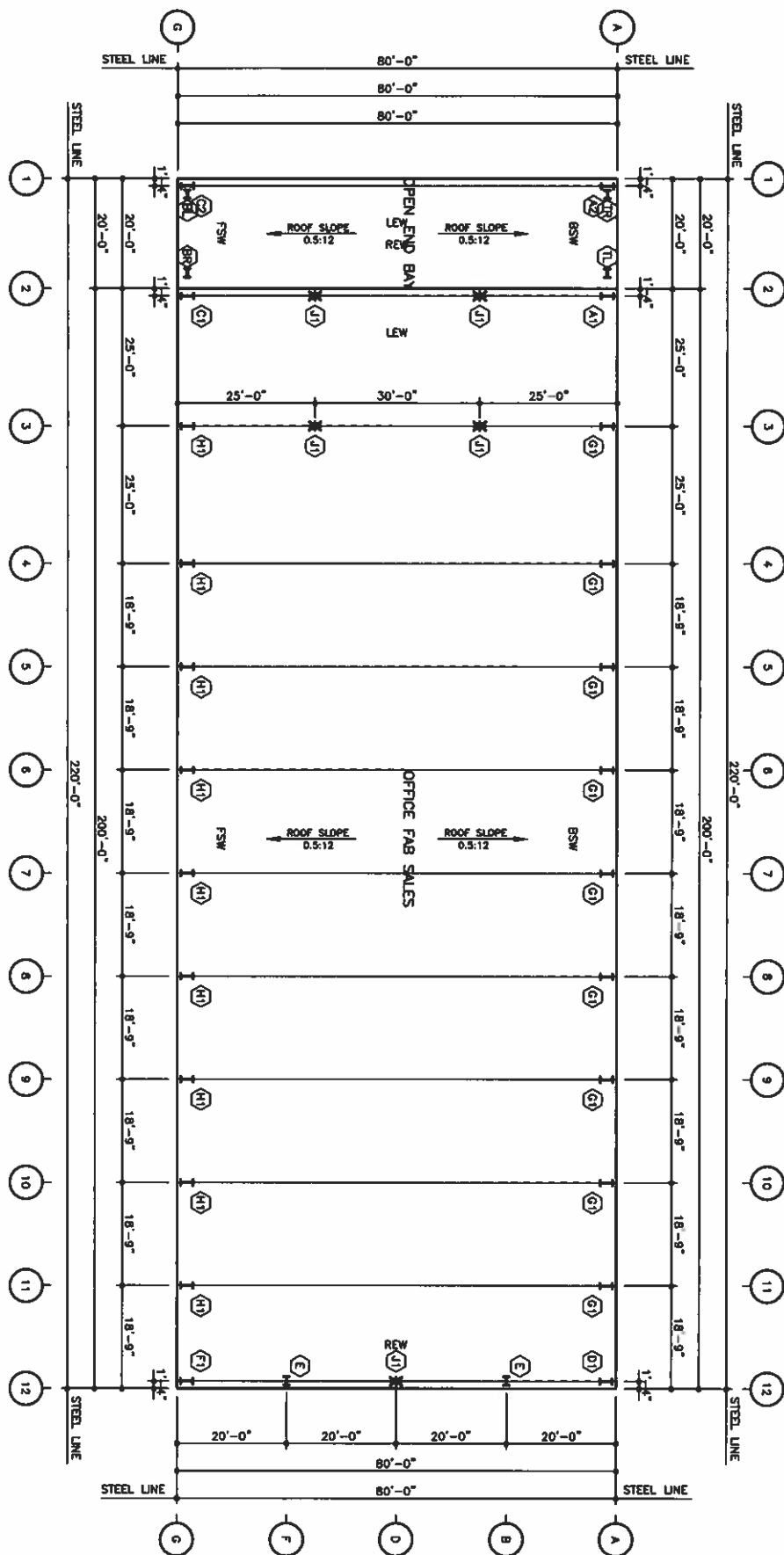






DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION		PROJECT NAME: GE CRYO	 AMERICAN BUILDINGS COMPANY A PULSIFER COMPANY
SHEET TITLE: 2/21/2022 2:57 PM PRELIMINARY FLOOR PLAN		SCHENECTADY, NY	
SHEET NUMBER: FP1	QUOTE NUMBER: 2-21	CUSTOMER NAME: SNK ENTERPRISES TROY, NY	Drawing Generated by   

Finish floor elevation assumed to be 100'-0" unless noted otherwise. (Pier, Tube, or I-Shape) and will be determined at final design.

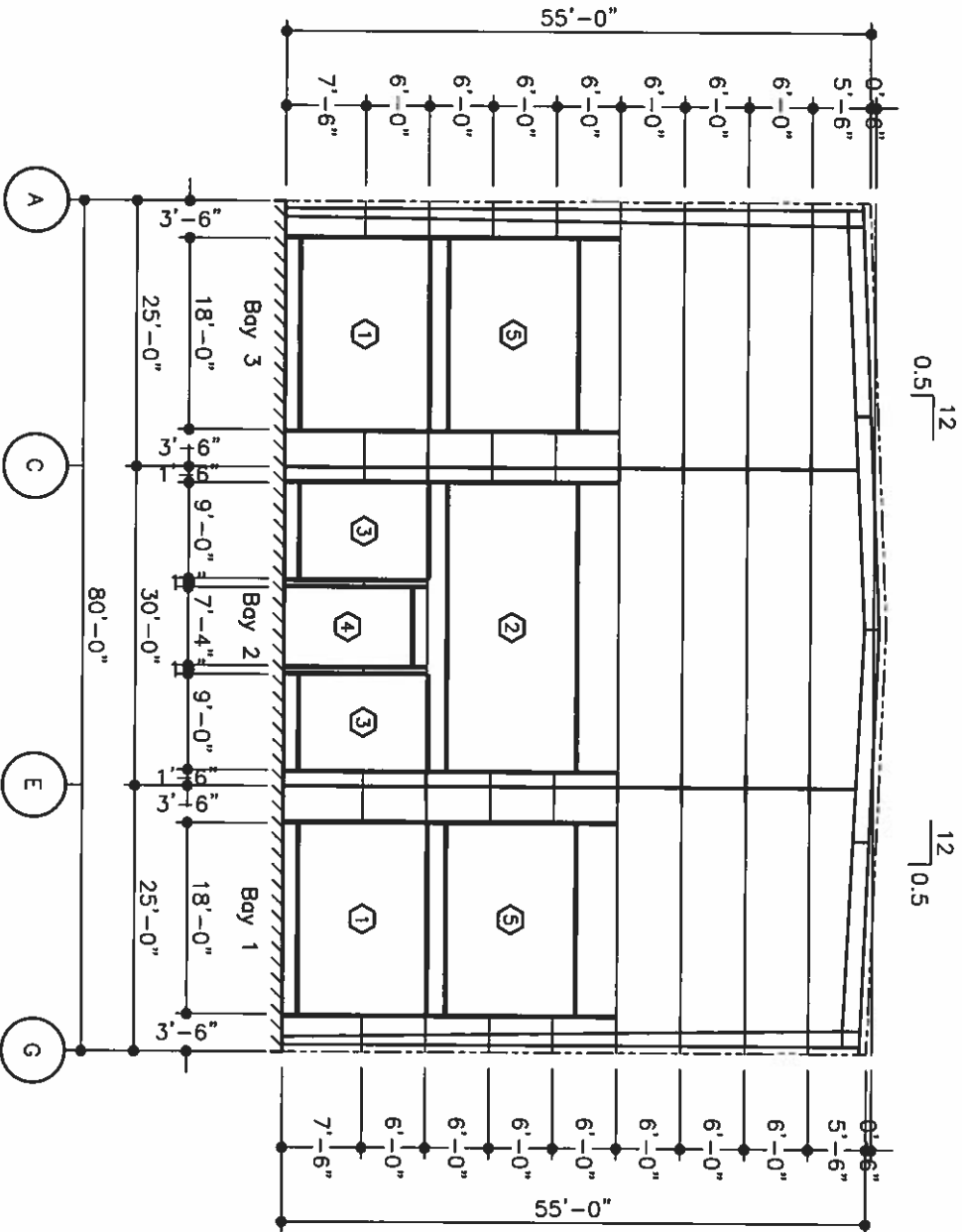


DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION		PROJECT NAME: GE CRYO		 AMERICAN BUILDINGS COMPANY A PULBRO COMPANY  Selling Software by  eQuote 
SHEET TITLE: PRELIMINARY ANCHOR BOLT PLAN		2/21/2022 2:57 PM SCHENECTADY, NY		
SHEET NUMBER: AB1		CUSTOMER NAME: SNK ENTERPRISES		
QUOTE NUMBER: 2-21		TROY, NY		

# KEY PLAN

OPEN END BAY/FICE FAB SALES

FRAMED OPENING SCHEDULE				
QTY	WIDTH	HEIGHT	SILL HEIGHT	LOCATED
1 2	18'-0"	12'-0"	1'-6"	FACTORY
2 1	27'-0"	12'-0"	15'-6"	FACTORY
3 2	9'-0"	12'-0"	1'-6"	FACTORY
4 1	7'-4"	12'-0"	0'-0"	FACTORY
5 2	18'-0"	12'-0"	15'-6"	FACTORY



ELEVATION AT LINE 2

DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION

SHEET TITLE: 2/21/2022 2:57 PM

PRELIMINARY STRUCTURAL ELEVATIONS

SHEET NUMBER: ST5

QUOTE NUMBER: 2-21

PROJECT NAME:

GE CRYO

SCHENECTADY, NY

CUSTOMER NAME:

SNK ENTERPRISES

TROY, NY



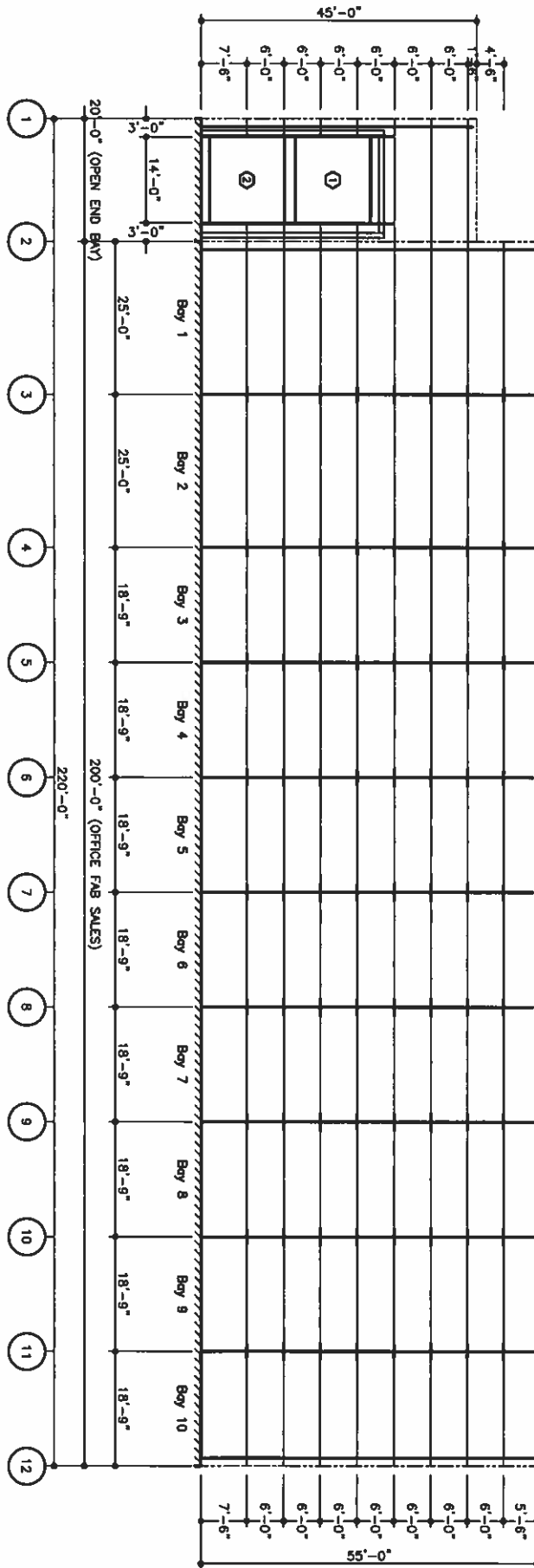
AMERICAN BUILDINGS COMPANY  
A PARAGON COMPANY

Being Created By  
eQuote



OPEN END BAY OFFICE FAB SALES

KEY PLAN



NO.	QTY.	WIDTH	HEIGHT	SILL HEIGHT	LOCATED
1	1	14'-0"	12'-0"	13'-0"	FACTORY
2	1	14'-0"	12'-0"	1'-0"	FACTORY

DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION

SHEET TITLE: 2/21/2022 2:57 PM  
PRELIMINARY STRUCTURAL ELEVATIONS

SHEET NUMBER:  
ST6

QUOTE NUMBER:  
2-21

PROJECT NAME:

GE CRYO  
SCHENECTADY, NY

CUSTOMER NAME:

SNK ENTERPRISES  
TROY, NY

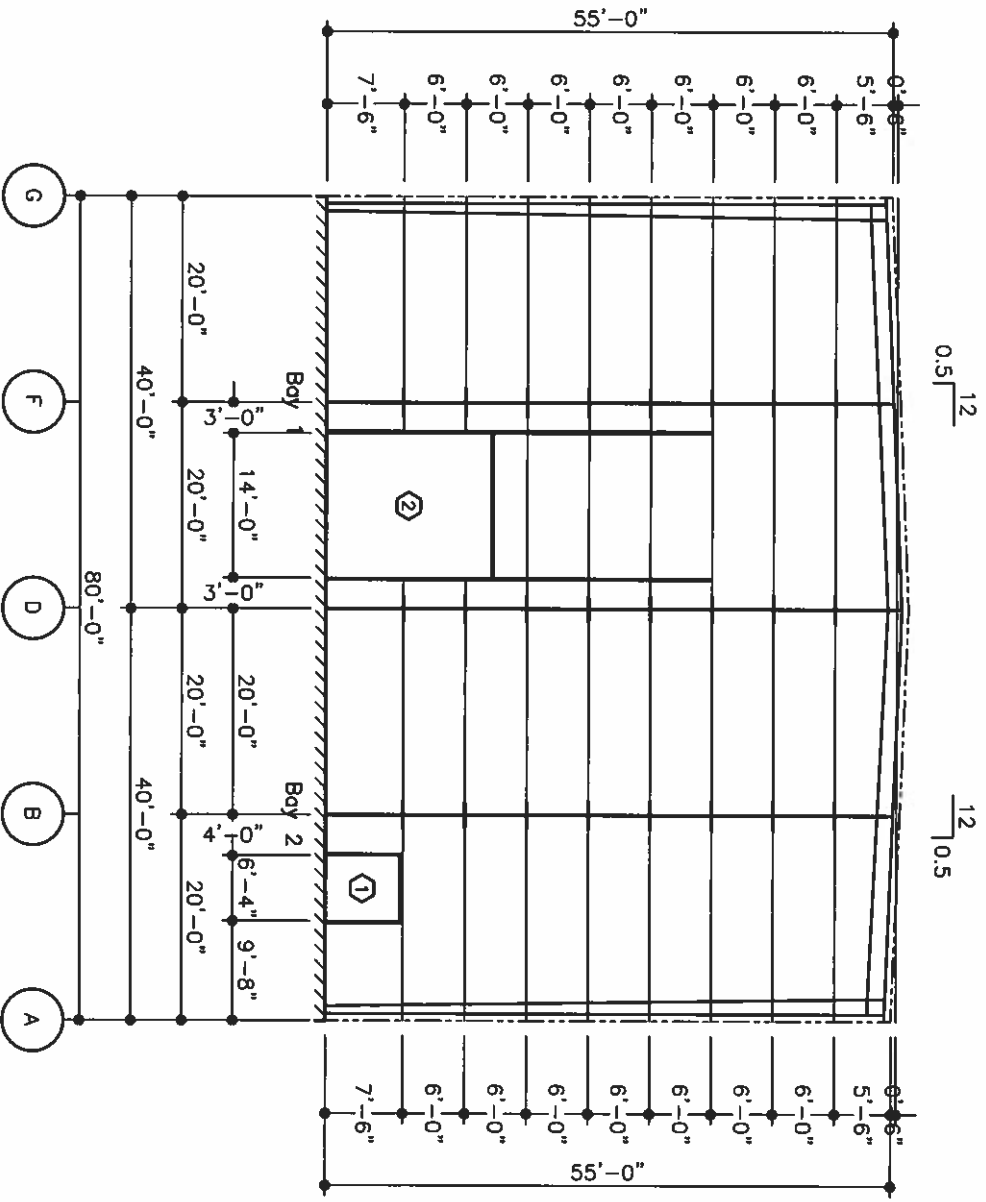
AMERICAN BUILDINGS COMPANY  
A PALMERBROS COMPANY

Being Provided by  
eQuote



OPEN END BAY OFFICE FAB SALES

KEY PLAN



ELEVATION AT LINE 12

FRAMED OPENING SCHEDULE				
ID	QTY	WIDTH	HEIGHT	SILL HEIGHT
1	1	6'-4"	7'-2"	0'-0"
2	1	14'-0"	16'-0"	0'-0"

DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION		PROJECT NAME: GE CRYO		 AMERICAN BUILDINGS COMPANY A HUBBARD COMPANY 
SHEET TITLE: PRELIMINARY STRUCTURAL ELEVATIONS		SCHEDULED DATE: 2/21/2022 2:57 PM		
SHEET NUMBER: ST7		CUSTOMER NAME: SNK ENTERPRISES		
QUOTE NUMBER: 2-21		TROY, NY		

OPEN DO OFFICE FND SALES

FRAMED OPENING SCHEDULE				
QTY	WIDTH	HEIGHT	SILL WEIGHT	LOCATED
1	14'-0"	12'-0"	1'-6"	FACTORY
2	14'-0"	12'-0"	15'-6"	FACTORY



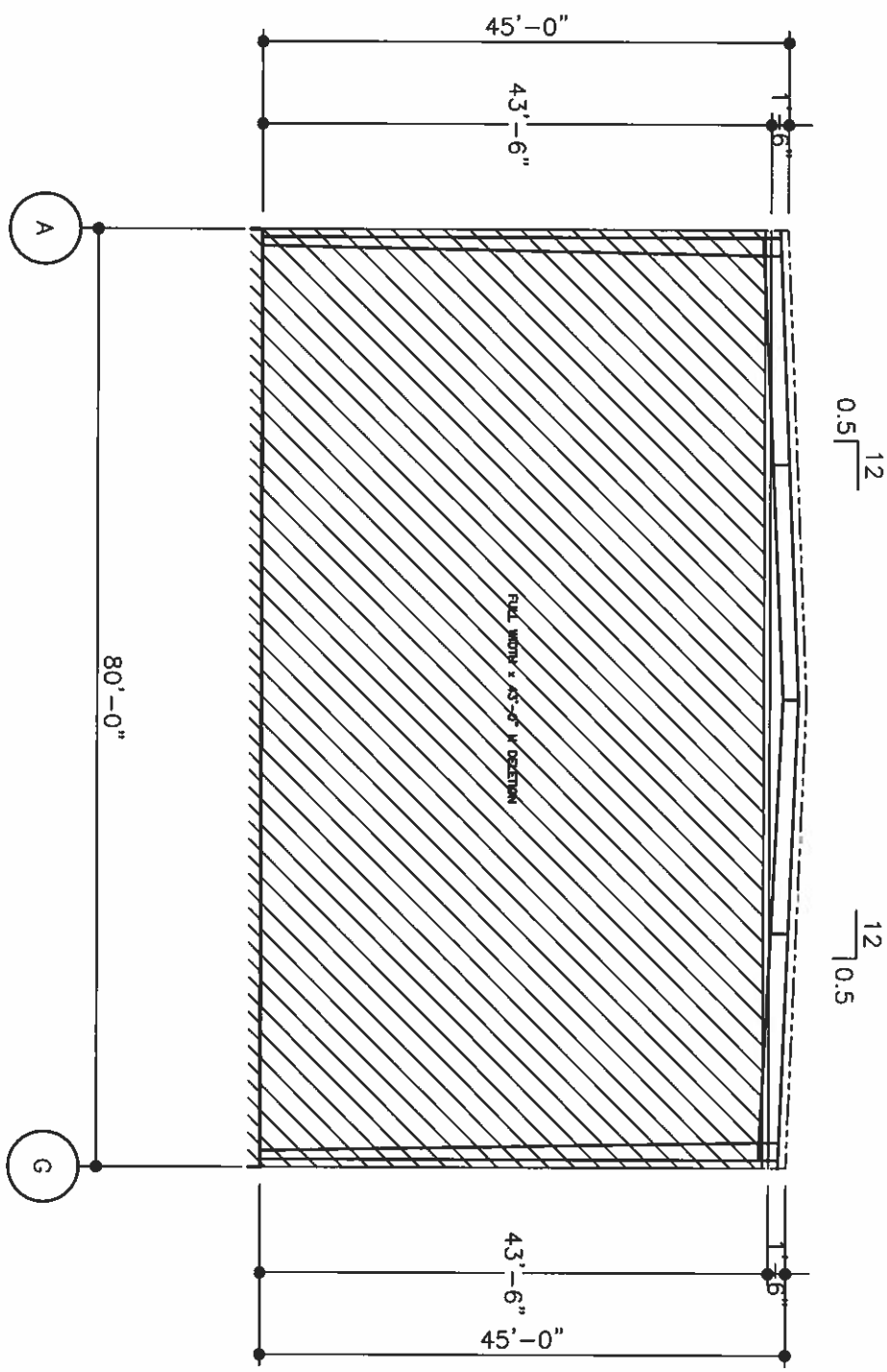
**Bring Quotes to  
eQuote**





KEY PLAN

OPEN-~~END~~ BADOFFICE FAB SALES

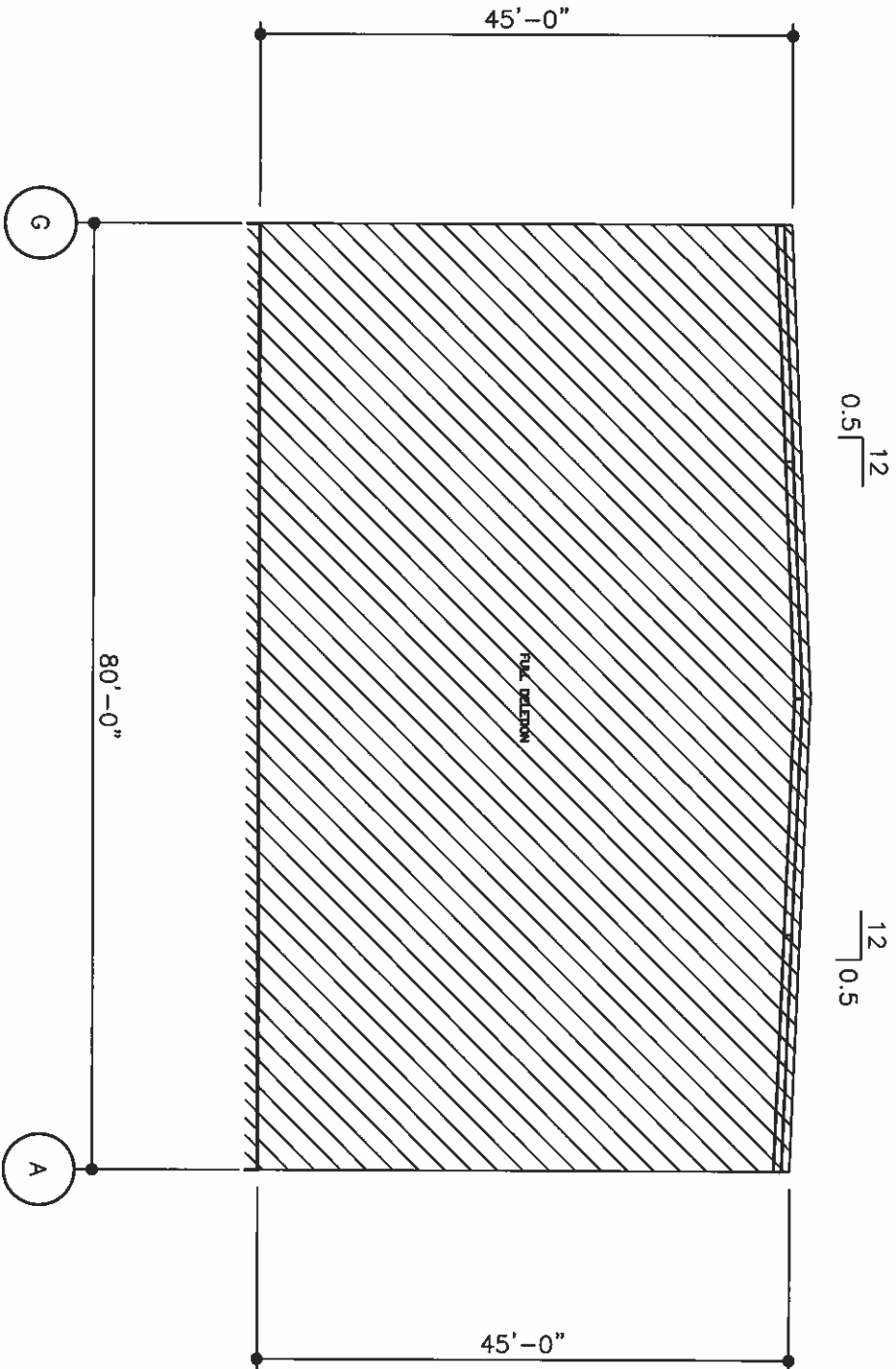


ELEVATION AT LINE 1

DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION		PROJECT NAME: GE CRYO	 AMERICAN BUILDINGS COMPANY A POLARIS COMPANY   
SHEET TITLE: 2/21/2022 2:57 PM		SCHENECTADY, NY	
PRELIMINARY STRUCTURAL ELEVATIONS		CUSTOMER NAME:	
SHEET NUMBER: ST9		SNK ENTERPRISES	
QUOTE NUMBER: 2-21		TROY, NY	

KEY PLAN

OPEN END BAY/OFFICE FAB SALES



DO NOT USE FOR FINAL CONSTRUCTION

SHEET TITLE: 2/21/2022 2:57 PM

PRELIMINARY STRUCTURAL ELEVATIONS

SHEET NUMBER:

ST11

QUOTE NUMBER:

2-21

PROJECT NAME:

GE CRYO

SCHENECTADY, NY

CUSTOMER NAME:

SNK ENTERPRISES

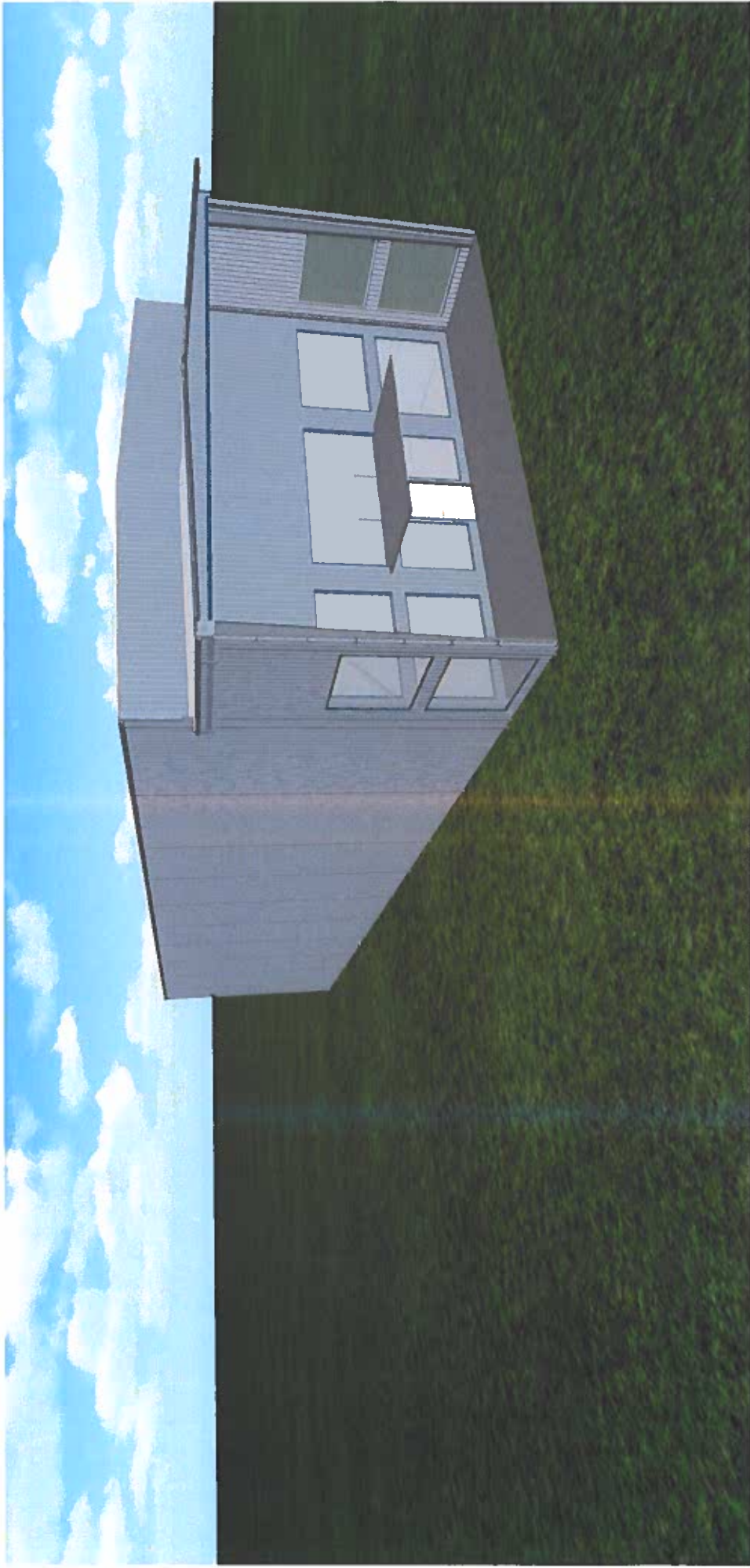
TROY, NY

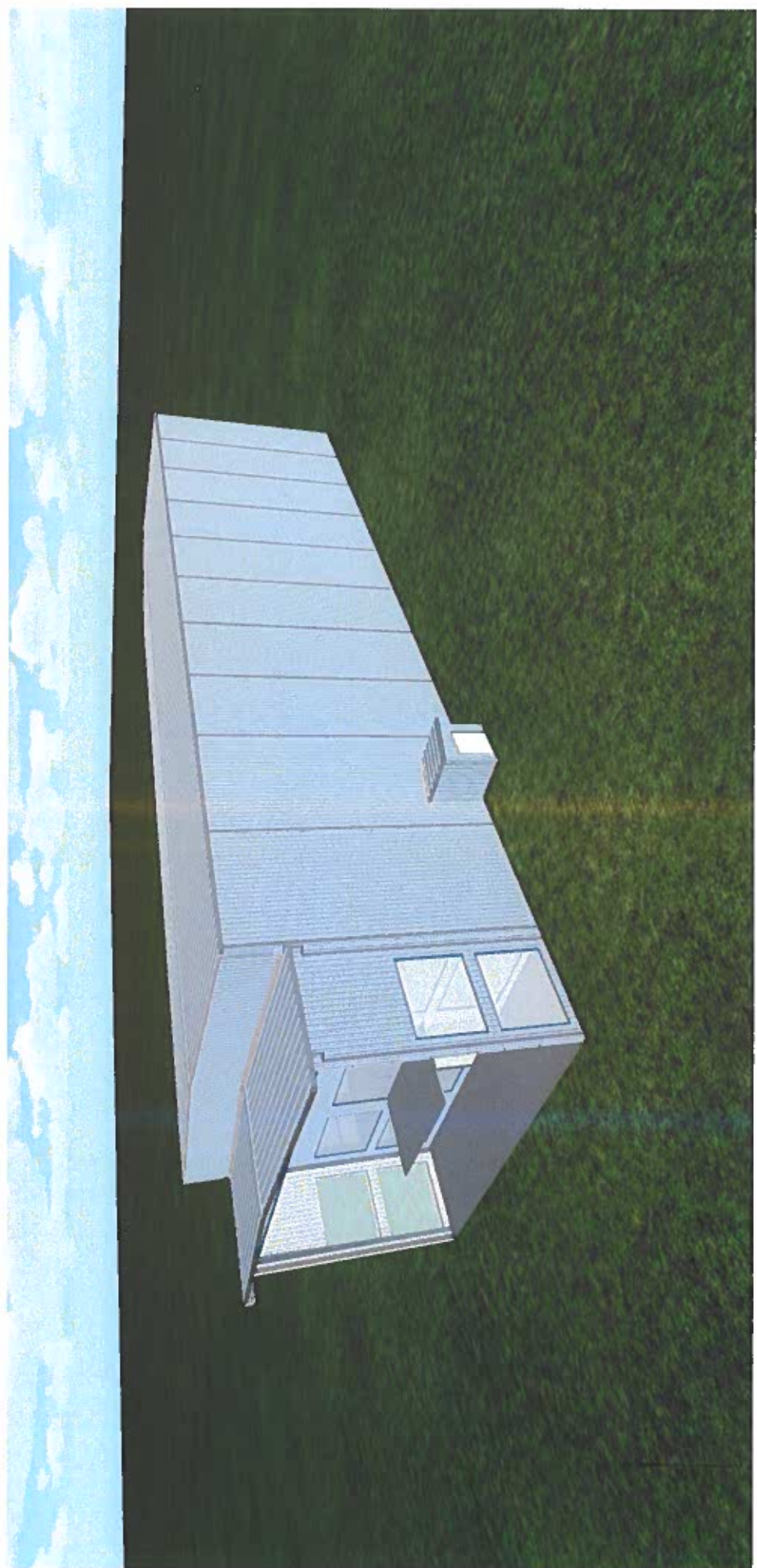


Exclusively Available By

eQuote







## ZONING COORDINATION REFERRAL

For Use By SCDEDP

### SCHENECTADY COUNTY DEPT. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

Recommendations shall be made within 30 days after receipt of a full statement of the proposed action.

Received \_\_\_\_\_

Case No. \_\_\_\_\_

Returned \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Legislative Body  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Planning Board

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_

**TO:** Schenectady County Department of Economic Development and Planning  
Schaffer Heights, 107 Nott Terrace, Suite 303  
Schenectady, NY 12308

(tel.) 386-2225

(fax) 382-5539

**ACTION:** Zoning Code/Law Amendment  
Zoning Map Amendment  
Subdivision Review  
Site Plan Review

Special Permit  
Use Variance  
Area Variance  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**PUBLIC HEARING OR MEETING DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT:**

**REQUIRED ENCLOSURES:**

1. Public hearing notice & copy of the application.
2. Map of property affected. (Including Tax Map I.D. number if available)
3. Completed environmental assessment form and all other materials required by the referring body in order to make its determination of significance pursuant to the state environmental quality review act.

1. This zoning case is forwarded to your office for review in compliance with Sections 239-l, 239-m and 239-n of Article 12-B of the General Municipal Law, New York State.
2. This material is sent to you for review and recommendation because the property affected by the proposed action is located within 500 feet of the following:  
  
the boundary of any city, village or town;  
the boundary of any existing or proposed County or State park or other recreation area;  
the right-of-way of any existing or proposed County or State parkway, thruway, expressway, road or highway;  
the existing or proposed right-of-way of any stream or drainage channel owned by the County or for which the County has established channel lines;  
the existing or proposed boundary of any County or State-owned land on which a public building or institution is situated;  
the boundary of a farm operation located in an agricultural district, as defined by Article 25-AA of the agriculture and markets law. The referral requirement of this subparagraph shall not apply to the granting of area variances.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_





Laura Robertson  
Town Planner

## **TOWN OF NISKAYUNA PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

One Niskayuna Circle  
Niskayuna, New York 12309-4381  
(518) 386-4522  
FAX: (518) 386-4592

### **BUILDING AND ZONING PERMIT DENIAL**

**Address: One Research Circle  
GE Global Research  
Niskayuna, NY 12309**

**Application Date: 2/23/22**

---

GE Global Research  
One Research Circle  
Niskayuna, NY 12309  
corrie.whalen@ge.com

Dear Mr. Whalen:

You are hereby notified, as required by Section 220-67 F of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Niskayuna, that your Application for Site Plan Review for a proposed new building on the GE Global Research campus at One Research Circle has been denied by reason of failure to comply with the provisions of Niskayuna Zoning Code Section 220-17 Height regulations. The property is located in the I-R Research and Development Zoning District.

A 12-page document package was submitted with the application. Eight (8) of the pages were entitled "GE Cryo Schenectady, NY" by American Buildings Company dated 2/21/22 with no subsequent revisions.

Your application is denied based upon the following requirements of the Zoning Ordinance:

Niskayuna Zoning Code Section 220-17 Height regulations A states: "No building or structure shall exceed a height of 35 feet above the average finished grade adjoining the building unless otherwise specified in this chapter. The finished grade of artificial berms or similar earthen structures created for insulation or other purposes adjacent to the building shall be disregarded in the determination of average finished grade".

As proposed in the aforementioned document package the new building measures 55' high. Therefore a 20' ( $55' - 35' = 20'$ ) area variance for the height of the building is required.

Under the provisions of Section 220-69 the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Niskayuna you may appeal this decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals and the undersigned within 60 days.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Robertson".

---

Laura Robertson, Deputy Code Enforcement Officer

2/28/22

Date

# Grassland Habitat



Savannah Sparrow



Bobolink



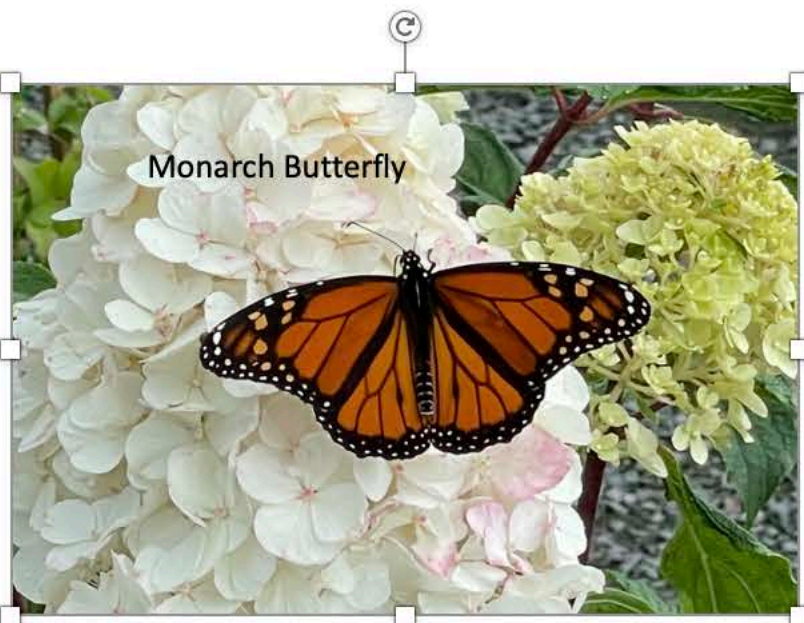
Bumblebee

**Niskayuna has committed to improving habitat for endangered grassland birds, butterflies, and bees.**

- ❖ Bobolinks and Savannah Sparrows are two of the ground nesting birds needing undisturbed tall grass from late Spring through mid-Summer.
- ❖ Butterflies, bees, and other insects need wildflowers throughout the Spring, Summer, and Fall.

**Enjoy the opportunity to observe, learn, and teach young people.**

**Please walk only on the mown trails and keep pets out of the tall grass and wildflowers.**



Monarch Butterfly



Niskayuna Conservation  
Advisory Council





# Why is the grass taller here?

This area has been designated as a

## Low-Mow Zone

**The Town of Niskayuna has committed to:**

Improving habitat for birds, butterflies, and bees

Saving energy and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

Promoting sustainable landscapes

Encouraging native plant growth

Providing an environment for natural observation



[www.niskayuna.org/low\\_mow\\_initiative](http://www.niskayuna.org/low_mow_initiative)



## Laura Robertson

---

**From:** Roy Thornton  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 20, 2022 12:02 PM  
**To:** Ellen Daviero  
**Cc:** Laura Robertson  
**Subject:** Possible wording for the CAC page describing the Low-Mow Initiative:

I hope this writeup can provide a starting point. If you need more backup information, please let me know.

Roy

The Town of Niskayuna and its Conservation Advisory Council have begun a *Low-Mow Initiative* to provide a wildflower meadow next to the golf driving range at Blatnick Park for wild and domestic bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.

The goal of improving the habitat for pollinators is to help stem the loss of many insect species which are in steep decline caused by overuse of pesticides, loss of habitat from development, and changes in farming practices.

Pollinators are critically important to the health of New York's environment and the state's agricultural economy. Many of the state's leading crops, such as apples, cabbage, berries, pumpkins and several other fruits, rely heavily on insect pollination.

This *Low-Mow* area will not be mowed during the growing season to let wildflowers sustain pollinators and other insects. Wildflower seeding will increase diversity of plants. Insecticides will not be used. Herbicides will only be used sparingly if invasive plant species cannot be controlled by mechanical methods.

A diversity of wildflowers and grasses provides food for a variety of insects over the entire growing season. For example, milkweed provides nectar for Monarch butterflies and food for their caterpillars. Goldenrod provides pollen and nectar for a variety of bees in late summer.

However, flowering plants in brushy and forested areas are also needed for a healthy diversity of insects; and homeowners can help by planting native shrubs, trees, and flowers around their houses. Homeowners can also help by opting to not use pesticides on their lawns.

Information on and planting guides for suitable plants and seed mixtures is available from the Xerces Society, [www.Xerces.org](http://www.Xerces.org), and from the Ernst Seed Co., [www.ernstseed.com](http://www.ernstseed.com). Searching the internet with terms such as "pollinator habitat" and "pollinator garden northeast" yields a wealth of information.

Please enjoy walking the mown trails through the meadow and observing how the bees and butterflies thrive there.





# Grassland Birds, Pollinators, and Closed Landfills



**Roy Thornton**  
1337 Regent St.  
Niskayuna, NY 12309  
518-393-8052  
[Shivaree18@gmail.com](mailto:Shivaree18@gmail.com)

February 2022



## An Opportunity for Niskayuna



To Make This a Haven for Pollinators and Ground-Nesting Birds



## Concerns About Grassland Birds

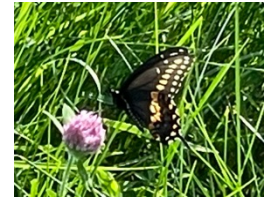


- Bobolinks are in decline in the Northeast because of changing habitat.  
Male Bobolink singing: <https://youtu.be/Rgtm6SxHkQk>
- Other grassland birds in decline in NY include:  
Henslow's Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow,  
Vesper Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, Horned Lark,  
Eastern Meadowlark, Savannah Sparrow, and Northern Harrier.
- The net result has been an 80-99 % decline in abundance of each species in NY in just four decades.
- Mowing during nesting season (5/15 through 8/15) can kill about 95% of young birds.

The capped landfill can provide the tall grass, enough acreage, and undisturbed nesting needed for successful nesting.



## Pollinators are in Trouble (and so are we)

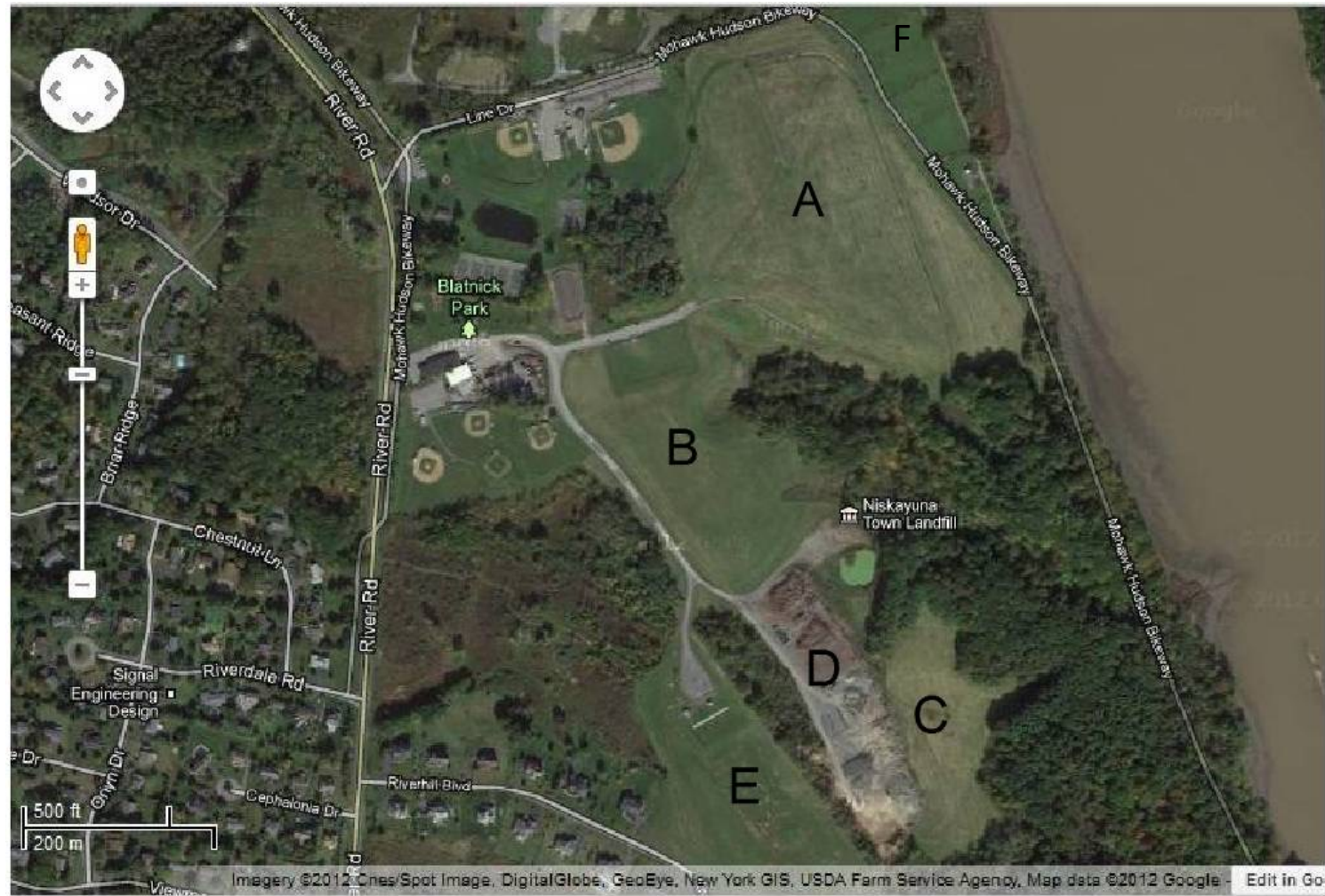


- Butterflies, native bees, honeybees, moths, and other insects are stressed.
- We and much wildlife depend on pollination for food.
- Stressors
  - Loss of habitat
  - Parasites (honeybees)
  - Pesticides
- Mowing in the growing season
  - Kills insects immediately.
  - Destroys food sources.

The capped landfill can provide pesticide-free living and dining.



# The Closed Niskayuna Landfill



A. Cap with gas vents

B. Cap w/o gas vents

C., F. Present areas for grassland

D. Composting

E. Golf Driving Range



## Why Bobolinks?



Bobolinks are marker species for grassland birds

- In June 2012, there were bobolinks on the capped Niskayuna Landfill, but they disappeared after repeated close mowing.
- I asked the Town in 2012/2013 if mowing could be limited. Two small areas were selected for once-yearly mowing.
- Frequent mowing of the landfill cap continued until last summer.
- Last spring, bobolinks and meadowlarks were again seen displaying.

Mowing stopped because of broken mowers.





## Why the Landfill?



Capped landfills can make excellent grassland habitat

- Acreage is large enough to support grassland birds.
- Mowing can be limited while meeting EPA requirements.
- The site is free of herbicides and insecticides.
- Limited mowing allows wildflowers for pollinators and butterflies.

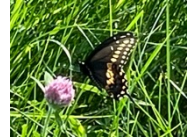
For grassland birds, do not mow between mid May and mid August.



## Wildflowers for Pollinators



- To maintain wildflowers, do not mow between the start of growth in the spring and the first freeze in the fall.  
(Once every three years would keep brush and trees off the cap.)
- Plant disturbed areas with native grasses and wildflowers.
- Seed parts of the landfill caps and the Low-Mow area using a no-till seeder available from the Schenectady County Soil and Water Conservation District.



## Challenges and Compromises In Niskayuna

- Public perception that the tall grass and wildflowers is messy. Informational signs are needed.
- Current recreational uses of the capped landfill—disc golf, walking.
- Possible limitations of existing mowing equipment.

Max height of cut of gang mowers is 6 inches.

Possible difficulty with tall grasses.

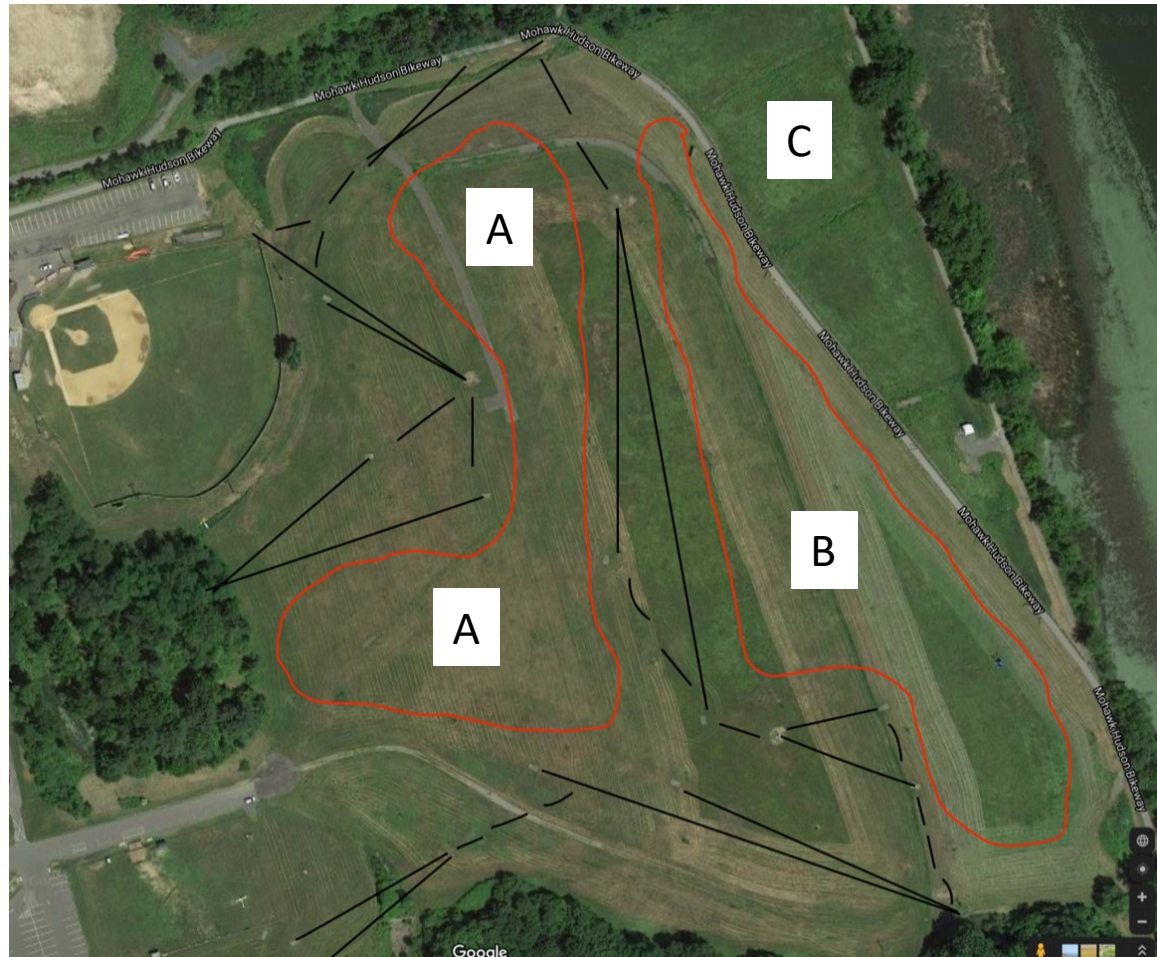
Operator safety—traction, hidden obstacles.

Brush hog machine is narrower and requires more time to mow.

But, tradeoff might be favorable.



## Part of the Disc Golf Course



Areas A and B are suitable for grassland bird and pollinator habitat even if mowing of disc golf fairways is needed.

Area C is now mowed once a year and is great pollinator habitat.



## Progress in Niskayuna



- Niskayuna committed two small areas for reduced mowing in 2013. Local Girl Scouts planted a wildflower bed near the composting facility.
- In 2013, the Town and the Parks Committee cooperated with the Audubon Society of the Capital District in 2013 to design and install signs describing a joint project.
- Audubon Society of the Capital Region conducted five 1-hr workshops on birds for the Town's 2013 summer youth camps.
- In 2021, the Town left a large part of the landfill cap un-mowed during the summer and early fall.
- The Town has agreed to the Low-Mow Initiative, a wildflower meadow next to the golf driving range. Signs are being designed.
- Dr. Ramasubramanian, CAC member, is spearheading a Natural Resources Inventory for Niskayuna starting with Blatnick Park.



# Low Mow - Pollinator Habitat Initiative - Blatnick Park





## Benefits to Niskayuna

- Good publicity for promoting wildlife habitat conservation
- Natural outdoor venue for student learning and projects
- Additional opportunities for bird- and pollinator-watching
- Enhanced summer youth programs
- Reduced mowing costs

Wildlife habitat at Blatnick Park is a treasure to be protected and made better.

# Supporters of enhancing the grassland habitat at Blatnick Park

**Roy Thornton and Nancy Thornton**, Niskayuna residents, birding including Blatnick Park

**Ruth Bonn**, President of ECOS, Niskayuna resident

**Sarah Celik**, Secretary to the Board of Directors of ECOS

**Josh Bennett**, ECOS V.P., /chair of the Niskayuna Trails Committee, Niskayuna resident

**Arden Rauch**, ECOS Board Member, Niskayuna resident

**Janet Hollocher**, ECOS Member, Niskayuna resident

**Juliana Post-Good**, past ECOS board member, Niskayuna Resident

**Nick Klemczak**, Executive Director, Schenectady County Soil and Water Conservation District

**Ken and Nancy Rimany**, Niskayuna residents (Ken is on the board of Adirondack Wild)

**John Good**, Birding including Blatnick Park

**Carol McCord and Jim McCord**, Niskayuna residents

**Karen Munoz**, Niskayuna Resident

**Jan Altschuller**, Niskayuna Resident

**Rich White-Smith**, Niskayuna Resident

**Bill Lee**, Niskayuna resident, member of the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, former CAC member

**Ashok Ramasubramanian**, Associate Professor of Mech.Engineering, Union College,

Member of CAC and head of the Natural Resource Inventory

**Ann Yunick**, Niskayuna resident

**Robert Yunick**, Member of the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club and licensed bird-bander (has banded over 221,000 birds of over 200 species in the US and Canada)

**Monica Schwarz and Otto Schwarz**, Niskayuna residents

**Valerie Sargrad and Robert Bradley**, Niskayuna residents, members of the Audubon Society, birding including Blatnick Park

**Margaret Blohm and Steve Stoessel**, Niskayuna residents

**Ann and Joe Gotwals**, Niskayuna residents

**Sue McKinney**, Niskayuna resident, birder

**Sara Felix and Russell Scott**, Niskayuna residents

**Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club** as authorized by the executive committee, Tristan Lowry, President

**Carol Douglas**, Niskayuna resident

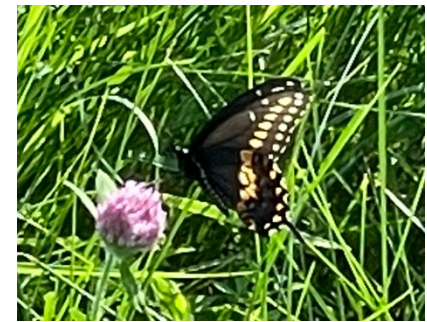
**Beth Williams**, Niskayuna resident

(Roy Thornton has confirming emails from all of the supporters.)



# What are these supporters hoping for?

- That the Town designate most of the large landfill cap as wildlife habitat for pollinators and grassland birds.
- That no mowing of this habitat be done between May 15 and September 15.
- That walking paths through the habitat be limited in number and width.
- That signs be placed to inform the public of the purposes of the habitat and to delineate the areas of limited mowing.



## What else could Niskayuna do?

- Publicize your efforts on habitat enhancement.
- Utilize the resources of ECOS and Schenectady County SWCD.
- Enlist youth (scouts, schools) to plant wildflower patches.
- Approach ASCR again for summer workshops on birds.
- Establish pollinator plantings along town roadsides.

