

Feasibility Analysis Results Schuyler Business Park



Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency

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FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS RESULTS

SCHUYLER SITE – *Schuyler Business Park, Town of Schuyler, NY*

(Herkimer County)

The marquis site of this study, this site features 188 acres in the recently-expanded Schuyler Business Park. Building upon preliminary studies, the project team completed the following strategic planning and feasibility efforts in 2019-2020 to position the Schuyler site for national, global, and local business attraction:

- Site Survey
- Topographic Survey
- Limited Transportation Study
- Geotechnical Investigation
- Environmental Resources, Critical Habitat, and Threatened & Endangered Species evaluation
- Soils Investigation & Percolation Testing for on-site wastewater treatment
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Wetlands Evaluation
- Cultural & Historic Resources Review
- High-Definition Drone Imagery and Digital Terrain Model
- Evaluation of utility capacity and fiber connectivity
- Conceptual Site Plan Alternatives
- Marketing Materials & Web interface

Schuyler Site Findings

The study considered two conceptual development alternatives. Alternative A envisions a scenario in which the parcel will be subdivided into three lots; with possible 1,000,000 sf, 500,000 sf and 200,000 sf buildings on an 188 acre parcel. Alternative B envisions a scenario where the entire site is occupied by one owner; accommodating a 2,000,000 sf distribution center. Both scenarios include the extension of utilities and the construction of new public roads for access and egress. **The study concludes that the environmental conditions for SEQR review for the site should have minimal impacts for property development.**

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Advantages: The vast acreage, easy grade, well-drained soils, flexible zoning, and absence of environmental liabilities all combine to make this site competitive for business attraction on the local, national, and global stage. Additionally, proximity to and visibility to the NYS Thruway (I-90) is a significant advantage to high-profile end-users. The site can support a range of development scenarios – ranging from multiple medium-to-large projects to one mega-project. At its highest capacity, the Schuyler Site can support up to a 2 million square foot facility, including requisite parking, stormwater, and wastewater.

Limitations: The absence of municipal sewer at the site limits the type and intensity of industries – especially food processing or advanced manufacturing. However, studies have been completed that outline a path forward, if a project lead required sewer connections. Extensive soil and percolation testing has revealed that the site can, in fact, handle large-scale septic systems to easily support warehouse and low-intensity manufacturing operations.

Environmental Conditions Summary (Schuyler)

Environmental features that would be addressed as part of an Environmental Assessment process for NYS DEC SEQR include the descriptions of natural environmental conditions, manmade impacts and historical features.

Cultural & Historic Resources. The site is located within the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor by the NYS Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The corridor identifies the centuries of history, from Native American through European settlement, colonial wars, the Erie Canal and Industrialization. This area is within an a Historically Sensitive area along the southern edge of the property by the NYS Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation CHRIS maps. During the next phase of development coordination with SHPO should determine if further investigation or a Phase 1 Archeological survey should be conducted.

Wetlands, Floodplains, & Ecology. Federal wetlands have been identified near the project site along Sterling creek which extend into the business park property. A Wetland Biologist will perform a final survey in the Spring of 2020. According to FEMA mapping the site is not located in a 100 yr Floodway or 100yr and 500yr floodplain. The map shows floodplain along Sterling Creek which does not encroach into the Business Park property. The Stratified Drift Aquifer is located beneath the property and is identified as a principal aquifer that is a productive water supply source. NYSDEC stormwater protection guidelines should be followed for the protection of stormwater on site.

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Threatened & Endangered Species and Unique Habitat. There are no protected animal species or plant species of special concern identified within the property.

Soils & Geotechnical Evaluation. In general, the site appears to have acceptable geotechnical aspects for development. The sand and gravel layer present from approximately 4 to 14 feet below the ground surface layer is capable of supporting a shallow foundation system for buildings up to three stories in height. The silty clay in the uppermost four feet of ground can be re-utilized in green areas and a sealing layer. The sand and gravel layer should provide good infiltration for stormwater management features. Groundwater was encountered at a relatively shallow depth in two of the test borings. However, it appears that there is sufficient topographic relief to install subsurface drainage features to facilitate development.

Environmental Quality. A Phase 1 Environmental Report as prepared for the property which found several agricultural related chemicals from previous farming practices. These items can be mitigated and have minimal impact on the development. Prior use as a certified organic farm mitigates the impacts of any previously applied commercial pesticides and herbicides – owing to the fact that the organic certification process requires a minimum of three (3) years without application of pesticides and herbicides.

Zoning, Land Use, and Special Districts. The site is currently leased as an organic corn farm. The Zoning for this property is Planned Development, and amenable to a wide array of warehouse, logistics, manufacturing, and other commercial/industrial uses and site plan options. *The purpose of the Planned Development District is to provide a means of developing those land areas within the Town considered appropriate for new residential or business use, or a satisfactory combination of these uses, in an economic and compatible manner, while encouraging the utilization of innovative planning and design concepts or techniques in these areas.* This property is in an Agricultural District Herk001 – which does not preclude industrial development (rather, incentivizes agricultural use).

Utilities. Schuyler Business Park is currently served by:

- **Electric.** National Grid 3-phase 46 kV power lines on the park. 115 kV lines <2 miles from site.
- **Natural Gas.** National Grid 4" gas main @ 35 psi on the park.
- **Telecom.** The park is served by Spectrum broadband. Dedicated, independent Northland 10G fiber optic lines <2.5 miles from site.
- **Water.** Mohawk Valley Water Authority 10" Water Main on the park.
- **Sewer.** N/A. See *Percolation Test results, indicating high capacity for on-site treatment systems.*

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Transportation. At full build-out for a logistics/distribution center, the primary areas of impact will be focused on the Route 5 / Dyke Road / Newport Road intersection for westbound vehicles, as well as the Drive-In Road access/egress. The NYSDOT is studying the Dyke Road intersection for potential improvements; while the Drive-In Road impacts can be mitigated with reconstruction to a standard "T" intersection with turning lanes on Route 5.

Climate. Herkimer County New York, on average, has 105" of snowfall per year, but when it comes to natural disasters, it's a very safe place to be. Massive flooding is rare. If flooding is experienced, it is nothing compared to the severity of flooding in other parts of the nation. Tornadoes are fairly uncommon in the area. Hurricanes are non-existent, as well as volcanos, earthquakes, droughts or wildfires. While many states experience mild changes in weather patterns, Herkimer County residents are lucky enough to experience four distinct seasons.

Next Steps for the Schuyler Site

The project team continues to advance location intelligence at the Schuyler site.

- ✓ Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination of State and Federal Wetlands (Spring 2020)
- ✓ Amendment to the boundary survey to meet ALTA/NPS standards (Spring 2020)
- ✓ HCIDA will coordinate with SHPO to determine if a Phase I Archaeological Survey is required.
- ✓ Restructure HCIDA web site to host a more accessible, robust, and mobile friendly user interface for Schuyler Business Park (Summer 2020)
- ✓ HCIDA will continue to collaborate with National Grid to partner for physical infrastructure development at the Schuyler Site.