

Update on Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement

The Amherst Town Board has begun its formal review of the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the new Westwood, our plan to redevelop Westwood Country Club into a traditional neighborhood in the heart of Amherst, in accordance with the vision and objectives of the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan.

Required by the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act, a DGEIS provides for the comprehensive evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with a development proposal and requires mitigation planning for any significant impacts. It has been submitted to the lead agency, in this case, the Town of Amherst, for their initial review and coordination with interested and involved agencies. While the DGEIS includes a complete listing of all interested and involved agencies, a few examples include the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York State Department of Transportation.

At its meeting on Sept. 8, 2014, the Amherst Town Board discussed the "Determination of Completeness" of the DGEIS. As lead agency, the Board is responsible for determining whether the DGEIS contains sufficient documentation and consideration of all potential environmental impacts and is "complete" enough for release to the general public for their review and comment.

It was the determination of the Town Board that the document was in fact "incomplete" and required further documentation within certain sections and components of the DGEIS.

"We fully expected this," said Andrew J. Shaevel, managing partner Mensch Capital Partners, LLC, developers of the Westwood site. "It is standard operating procedure for a lead agency to request additional information and clarification for a project the size and scope of Westwood."

"We now will address the comments of the Town Board's initial completeness determination, as well as the letters issued by interested and involved agencies, by editing the existing initial DGEIS in consideration of those items. Following our review and edit of the DGEIS, we will re-submit the document to the Town Board. Assuming the issues raised are resolved to their satisfaction, they will be in a position to accept the DGEIS as complete and officially release the document for public review and comment."

Shaevel said he looks forward to working with the Town and other parties in the development of Westwood.

Sept. 30, 2014