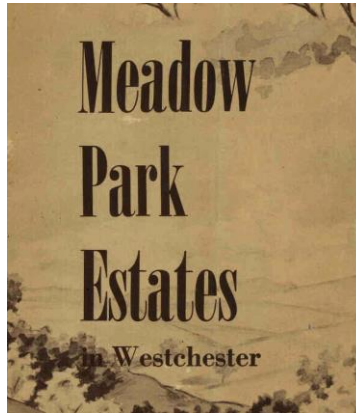


**Meadow Park
Neighborhood Association**
**Serving Meadow Park for
Over 60 Years**



President
Joseph Lombardo

Vice-President
Cheryl Roppa

Secretary
Donna DeCicco

March 9, 2018

Chris Burdick
Town of Bedford Supervisor
Bedford Town House
321 Bedford Road
Bedford Hills, NY 10507

Dear Supervisor Burdick:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the residents of Meadow Park who wish to detail their concerns with the proposal to place the Family Bike Area – Pump Track Facility on the Zema Property as indicated in your “What’s New” email to Town residents on February 16th, 2018. Although residents have not been informed explicitly why the first and second proposed locations for this facility were rejected, we have reviewed the memorandum sent to you by Mr. McCabe, Chairman of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee, at a neighborhood meeting held last Sunday. Simply put, based on this memorandum, we cannot see how any objective reader cannot equate the entirety of its contents to the Zema Property. To an objective reader, the Zema Property is a non-starter, and no additional Town time or resources should be expended in pursuing it as a viable location for this facility.

A Review of Mr. McCabe’s Memorandum of August 18, 2017

The following is an excerpt from the above-reference memorandum, emphasis added:

“In preparing their report for the Town Board Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee (RPAC) relied heavily on the updated Katonah Memorial Park Master Plan (Master Plan) completed in the spring of 2012 by the Chazen Companies of Poughkeepsie, New York. The Master Plan was the outcome of many stakeholder meetings which included KMPA, several Town departments, a number of neighborhoods that border the park as well as the many user groups of the park...

In the Master Plan report under section 2.0 Inventory and Analysis in 2.1 Overview, there is a reference noted on page 8 of the strong identification to “our park”, residents enjoying the park as it is and the high value placed on the undeveloped wooded areas and trails. The Master Plan cautioned the Town against introducing major new facilities that would alter the character of the park. In

section 3.0 “Synthesis and Mission” found of page 26, it is noted that the park should continue in its role as a community park for the residents of Katonah and that the park should not serve as a regional facility nor should any major new facilities be constructed.

Also under section 3.0 “Synthesis and Mission”, the mission statement refers to Katonah Park retaining its rural character and continuing to be a good neighbor to nearby residents while providing recreational opportunities for residents of Katonah, as well as the rest of the Town.”

Town funds were spent on the Katonah Memorial Park/Zema Property Master Plan. A comprehensive report with input from multiple stakeholders was developed and approved. Nothing has changed except for a handful of Family Bike Area - Pump Track facility proponents with the time and resources to develop a proposal, a video, and a website to impose such an extraordinarily *ad hoc* facility into a well-developed Master Plan.

Summary Table of Issues and Their Direct Applicability to the Zema Property

The following is a summary, on an issue-by-issue basis, of the issues listed in Mr. McCabe’s memo of August 18, 2017, on the Katonah Park Facility, and their direct applicability to the Zema Property.

Issues Raised in Mr. McCabe’s Memo to the Town Supervisor of August 18, 2017 Regarding the Katonah Memorial Park Location for the Family Bike Area - Pump Track Facility	Katonah Memorial Park	Zema Property
Environmental Impact		
Tree clearing and loss of habitat	✓	✓
Impact to tree roots	✓	✓
Potential for soil erosion	✓	✓
Potential for degradation of water quality	✓	✓
Location of the project site within the NYC DEP Watershed	✓	✓
Significant environmental restraints associated with location	✓	✓
Significant environmental degradation	✓	✓
Significant long term maintenance costs	✓	✓
Engineering Impact		
Significant potential costs of design, construction and maintenance of a storm water treatment plan for the area to the Katonah Memorial Park District	✓	✓
Impact on Trees		
Potential for decline or death of trees within 10 feet of a path	✓	✓
Town Insurance Impact		
Liability concerns/costs	✓	✓
Any future claims as a result of injuries sustained while utilizing this area could have the potential of significantly increasing the Town's premiums in the future.	✓	✓
RPAC Considerations		
Fit/appropriateness of the Family Bike Area - Pump Track in the any of the three hamlet parks based on recommendations under the master plans of all three hamlet parks and significantly constrained space - the parks are "built out".	✓	✓

Issues Raised in Mr. McCabe's Memo to the Town Supervisor of August 18, 2017 Regarding the Katonah Memorial Park Location for the Family Bike Area - Pump Track Facility	Katonah Memorial Park	Zema Property
Concerns about whether or not a single acre of land is sufficient for this type of recreational opportunity.	✓	✓
Serious concerns regarding the "good neighbor" impact to those residents on Wildwood Road. The opinion of RPAC and Department staff is that Wildwood Road would experience increased traffic. There are concerns about safety issues related to the increased traffic on the road.	✓	✓ ¹
Concern about adequate parking should the Family Bike Area - Pump Track be built.	✓	✓
The potential for bikers going "off course/trail" into undesignated areas of the wooded areas as well as onto the trails. The concern being the greater impact to the wooded area with newly created "bike trails" and other bike "features"...	✓	✓
Concerns about the level of supervision this new park feature would require. While appropriate signage would be part of the requirement for the area, we anticipate the need for some level of supervision/oversight through spot checks, potential permitting processing and permit checks.	✓	✓
Concerns on the type and level of maintenance the Family Bike Area - Pump Track would require. The designer thought it was reasonable to assume 7-10 hours every two weeks would be required for routine inspections and maintenance. Weather (heavy rains, freeze thaw impacts) and facility use would dictate the need for additional maintenance. It also is reasonable to assume there would be pre- season preparation work required for the area.	✓	✓
Concerned about the impact this new park feature would have on Katonah Memorial Park District's operating budget and doubts current staffing levels would be adequate to provide the anticipated maintenance requirements.	✓	✓
The Town Blue Collar Teamster leadership was presented with the Family Bike Area- Pump Track proposal for their feedback on the volunteer utilization aspect of maintaining the area. While very supportive of the concept and proposal the Teamsters felt that once built the care and maintenance of the facility was their "work/responsibility". Volunteer cleanup /maintenance events would require teamster involvement and cost. This could potentially be a person for person (teamster/volunteer) match staffing requirement.	✓	✓

Here below is RPAC's Conclusion from the memorandum, emphasis added:

"While the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee and Recreation and Parks Department staff support the concept of a Family Bike Area - Pump Track they do not see the fit of this new park amenity in any of the Town of Bedford Parks especially in Katonah. The Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee and Recreation and Parks Department recommend that the Town Board consider reaching out to neighboring communities to gauge interest in a regional Family Bike Area -

¹ Wildwood being replaced by Anderson, Whitlockville and other adjacent roads.

Pump Track facility as well as engaging Westchester County Parks Recreation and Conservation about the possibility of featuring a Family Bike Area - Pump Track at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation.”

Why continue to form Advisory Committees if the Town Supervisor and its Board are going to ignore the time, energy, experience, and insight that its members bring if a particular Advisory Committee’s conclusions are not politically or otherwise expedient?

Additional Points from Meadow Park Residents

1. There will be an increase in traffic on all the local roads near the site - Whitlockville and Anderson Roads - the roads that surround our neighborhood. Almost all users of the facility will need to drive to the facility on these very narrow roads. There are obvious safety issues with increased traffic on these roads, issues that the Town should consider as negative “good neighbor” impacts.
2. The property requirement will more likely be three acres. There is insufficient/non-existent parking at the Zema Property. It would appear that an improved access road and ample parking for a number of cars needs to be provided. An environmental impact study similar to that undertaken for the Katonah Memorial Park, as well as the full site specific study recommended by Ms. Evans, would need to be undertaken on the parking area as well as the facility.
3. The Zema Property is composed of a large amount of natural wetlands. Adding this facility to the property would violate the Town’s own Wetlands Codes. See “Code of the Town of Bedford, Chapter 122, Wetlands”.
4. The Zema Property was acquired by the Town with monies from the Open Spaces Fund. See “Code of the Town of Bedford, Chapter 85: Open Spaces and Areas”. A facility such as this added to this space does not satisfy the legislative intent of this fund as it will jeopardize the protection of both the ground water and surface water:

“Within the Town there is a compelling need to acquire, preserve, protect, improve and maintain real property, and interests or rights in real property, for the preservation of Open Spaces and areas, for active and passive park and recreational uses and for surface water and groundwater protection in order to enhance general quality of life and the environment in the Town...”.

5. As outlined in detail by Mr. McCabe’s memorandum of August 18, 2017, the facility proposal does not conform to the recommendations of the Katonah Memorial Park and Zema Property Master Plan adopted in 2012. Section 4.5 of this Plan states:

“The Zema Property is a valuable open space in the hamlet and also provides drainage and flood control benefits...The property may also provide an opportunity to retain drainage from the Park, alleviating downstream flooding problems during heavy rainfall events...”

6. The Department of Environmental Conservation requires the Zema Property to be of “low impact use”.
7. In 2011 the Town established that the Zema Property was to be for “passive use”.
8. The Zema Property contains a significant Woodland Pool (or Vernal Pool) that is vital to the surrounding area’s ecosystem. According to the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation the abundance of life associated with these relatively small wetlands has earned them the moniker, "the coral reefs of Northeastern forests." Woodland pools provide critical breeding habitat for a number of amphibians and invertebrates that have adapted to their unique conditions. In the Hudson Valley, these include the mole salamanders, wood frogs, and fairy shrimp. Blue Heron use the Woodland Pool on the Zema Property as well.
9. The Zema Property is also home to foxes, snapping turtles (one is 65 years old), rabbits, deer, and opossums.
10. Without full-time paid supervision, and fencing, which would wreak further damage on the environment there is no way to guarantee that this delicate ecosystem, along with the two streams that feed through the property, are not adversely affected.
11. A Department of Environmental Protection review and Stormwater Pollution Protection Plan must be undertaken as the Zema Property lies within Katonah Memorial park which itself is within the Croton River Basin Drainage Area. From the memorandum from Town Environmental Consultant, Ms. Evans, to Supervisor Burdick dated July 20, 2017:

“Location of Project Site Within NYC DEP Watershed - Katonah Memorial Park lies within the Croton River Basin Drainage Area, which is part of the NYC DEP watershed. Current regulations require that projects which result in land disturbance more than 5000 square feet within the NYC DEP watershed must have a full Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prepared in accordance with the SPDES General Permit (GP-0-15-002) and the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual (January 2015) published by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water. As there are currently no stormwater collection or treatment facilities in place in the Park, stormwater management must occur at the Bike Area. Although stormwater practices are briefly discussed (rain gardens beside the track and sheet flow through the wooded areas), no formal design for stormwater measures for this project have been done. It is my experience that once stormwater measures have been factored into the design, the overall project impact footprint and maintenance costs will likely be much greater than those described in the informational materials.”

Ms. Evans’ memorandum also clearly indicates the high potential for increased costs, increased maintenance, increased soil erosion, degradation of water quality, and loss of habitat.

12. A Department of Environmental Conservation review must be requested/undertaken.
13. A review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be undertaken, as applicable.
14. The Town of Bedford Wetlands, Planning, Conservation, and Parks and Recreation Boards must all formally review and submit their written findings on this location.
15. If further considered, the proposal should be presented at no less than three open Town meetings, as was previously done for the other site, along with input from all of the same companies, consultants, and a SWPPP, along with a submission to the County Planning Board. It therefore seems that the third week of March deadline for receiving a comprehensive recommendation about the facility on the Zema Property is a grossly inadequate if not impossible time frame to complete the same exhaustive evaluation as was undertaken for the Katonah Memorial Park site.

Thank you for taking the time to read our neighborhood's concerns with the proposed facility on the Zema Property. We trust there is enough objective information of the sort that clearly disqualified the Katonah Memorial Park site from consideration that you and the Town Board Members will decide to no longer pursue the Zema Property as a viable third choice for the proposed facility.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Joseph Lombardo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph Lombardo
President, Meadow Park Neighborhood Association

cc: Town of Bedford Town Board
William Heidepriem
Brian McCabe
Kitley Covill
George Latimer
Sean Patrick Maloney
Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Cynthia Garcia
Joe Battista