

The Issue of Parking Areas
for
Wuhala Woods
prepared
for the
Environmental Commission
Borough of Chatham, NJ

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by

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The Issue of Parking Areas for Wuhala Woods

BACKGROUND:

One of the line items on the Bid Proposal Request from the Environmental Commission was to investigate some candidate areas where a parking area(s) could be designed and installed for the various Open Space sites.

APPROACH:

On July 28, 2009, we made a site visit with Environmental Commissioner Dick Ligertwood to inspect a number of locations for entrance parking areas to the Western Sector of the Wuhala Woods.

We parked in the parking lot of the Swim Club at the end of Princeton Street and walked through the Woods to the opposite streets. We examined the existing parking conditions at the ends of Cornell and Harvard Streets as shown in the photos below.



Figure 1 Looking out to Cornell Street from inside Wuhala Woods



Figure 2 Showing Stormwater Catch basin at end of Cornell Street



Figure 3 End of Harvard Street with Wuhala Woods in background

The Map below shows the locations of these potential parking areas. The Cornell Street and Harvard Street sites are on the top of the map with the Wilson Street on the left side..

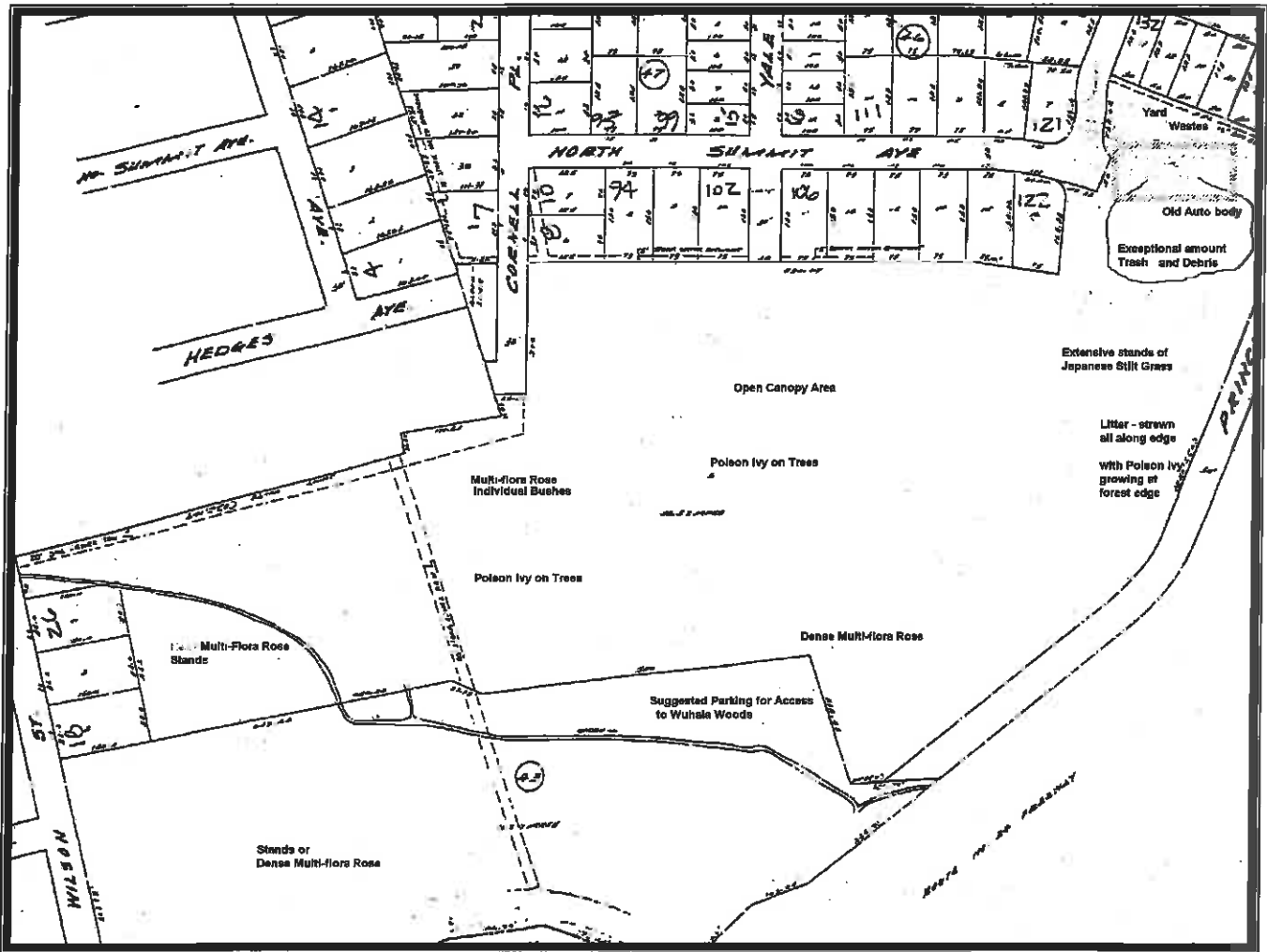


Figure 4 Map of possible parking sites for the Western Sector of Wuhala Woods

The Wilson Street site suggested as a possibility by Dick Ligertwood was visited by Antonio Pasquini at a later date.

Eastern Sector

The only reasonable parking access for the Eastern Sector is at the end of Rutgers Street as shown on the Map below.

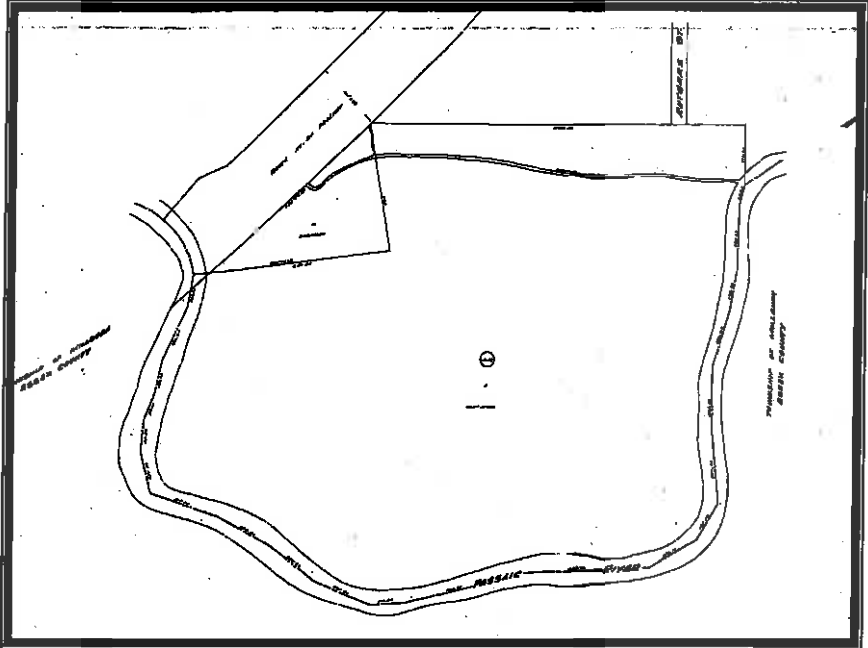


Figure 5 View of Wuhala Woods Eastern Sector entrance at end of Rutgers Street

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:

Our recommendation for parking at both the Western and Eastern Sectors is to use existing parking available at the ends of Cornell, Harvard and Rutgers Streets mainly for the following reasons.

Both tracts of the Wuhala Woods as shown below are listed in the NJDEP's Landscape Project as being Forested Wetlands meaning that the NJDEP considers these area to have value as critical habitat.



Figure 6 Wuhala Woods shown as Forested Wetlands on NJDEP iMAP web site.

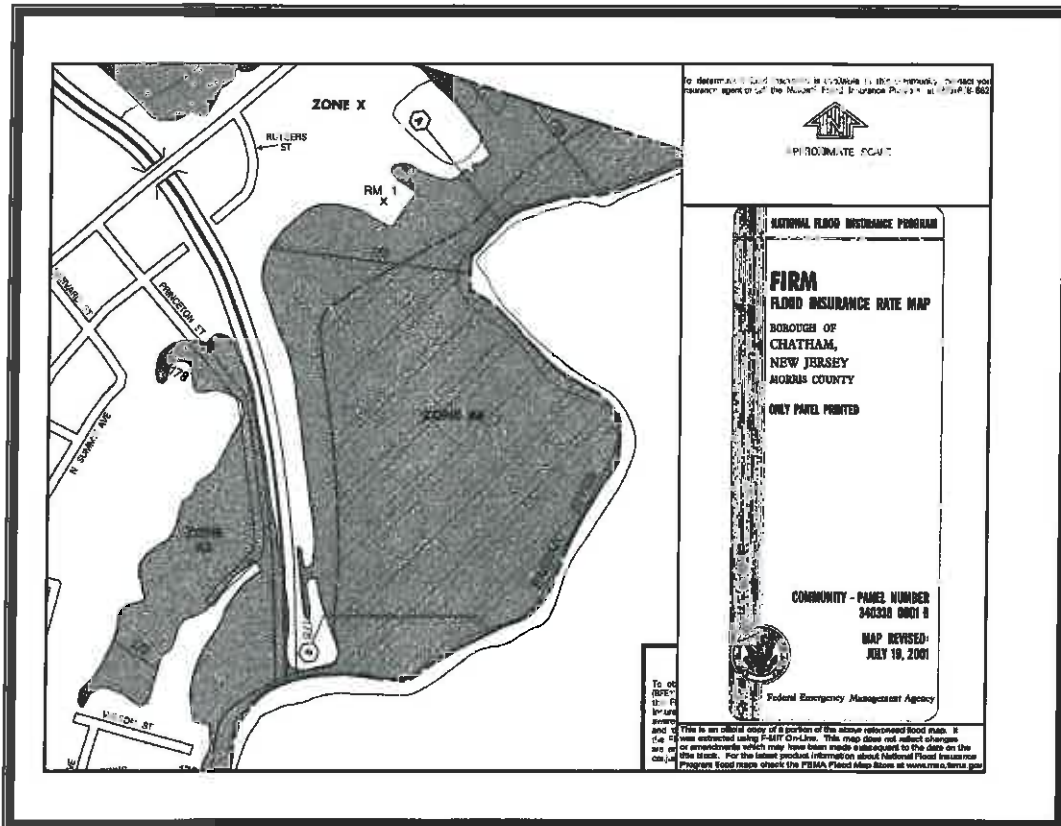


Figure 7 FEMA Flood Hazard Area designation for Wahula Woods

Zone AE designation means that these areas are subject to inundation by the 100-year flood determined in a Flood Insurance Study by detailed methods. Base flood elevations are shown within these zones. The striations indicate the area with Zone AE considered to be the actual Floodway of the Passaic River.

Zone X are areas that have been identified in the community flood insurance study as areas of moderate or minimal hazard from the principal source of flood in the area. However, buildings in these zones could be flooded by severe, concentrated rainfall coupled with inadequate local drainage systems.

The above designations by FEMA indicate that these areas lie within the regulated areas addressed in the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:13-10.4). Construction of Parking Areas within these designated areas or within 300 ft of these areas will require applying for a permit from the NJDEP. This activity is not covered by a permit-by-rule or general permit and will require an Individual Permit as outlined in N.J.A.C. 7:13-9,10 and 11.

The restrictions and constraints likely to be imposed by the NJDEP (the first of which will be to prove the absolute necessity of having such a structure within the regulated area) by the Wetlands Act and the Flood Hazard Area Control Rules are such that we feel that using the existing options of on-the-street parking until usage of the Wuhala Woods requires constructing on-site parking facilities is the most sensible course of action.