

"My name is James Zemaitis, I live at 58 Corey Lane, and I am speaking tonight as Vice Chair of the Historical Preservation Committee. On behalf of my colleagues on the HPC, I would like to read into the record the following statement, to which we have unanimously agreed, without exception, following a special meeting held on Sunday, August 28th: "We, the Historical Preservation Committee, call attention to the fact that two of the township-owned Green Acres open space tracts included in the proposal submitted by Mendham Mushrooms, which are Buck Hill Tract Natural Area, and a section of forest known as the Leddell Preserve, are inside the boundaries of the Tempe Wick Road-Washington Corners Historic District, and therefore fall under our review.

Buck Hill preserve, which can be accessed via a gate on Tempe Wick Road, includes a three-acre lake which was constructed in the 1700s as a mill pond. There appear to be fragile, lichen-covered archaeological sites which border the forested side of the pond. The property, which lies within the headwaters of the Passaic River, includes rolling hills of hardwood forests, streams and springs, untrodden mossy manmade paths from an earlier era, and lowland swamps. Apart from the swampland and the heavy brush which grows between the pond and Tempe Wick Road, the site is remarkably free of invasive plant species. Currently undeveloped by contemporary trail infrastructure, Buck Hill's overall landscape might be described as scenic, historic and relatively undisturbed for many decades.

The Leddell preserve, which is further down Tempe Wick Road near the borders of Lewis Morris Park and Jockey Hollow, is a tract of forest located across the road from Leddell's Pond and its prominent ruins of an 18th Century grist and lumber mill. Noteworthy for its natural slope of native ferns along the roadside, the Leddell forest has no trail infrastructure of any type. It is currently unknown if there are any archaeological sites there. It might be described as exceptionally scenic

and undeveloped and an essential part of the preserved historical landscape which marks the entrance to Mendham Township, after Tempe Wick Road passes through the Morristown National Historical Park, site of the 1779-80 winter encampment of the Continental Army.

It is the opinion of the HPC that any proposed agricultural projects or infrastructure (including Morris County trails grants) on public lands which fall within the boundaries of a Historical District, especially in a district of such national significance as Tempe Wick, require detailed study, analysis, and the advice of the HPC itself. We are alarmed by the lack of clarity in the Mendham Mushrooms proposal regarding the exact location and construction of test sites within these open spaces. If there are no contemporary trails which lead into these forests, how does Mendham Mushrooms propose to gain access to these sites? Will the fragile forest floor and archaeological sites be damaged by proposed fencing, storage containers and newly cut trails? Will these sites or their access roads be visible from Tempe Wick Road?

The HPC hereby requests the following: Should the Township Committee vote in favor of partnering with Mendham Mushrooms on this agricultural business in time for Mendham Mushrooms to submit grant applications in the coming months, it is imperative that the Buck Hill and Leddell forests and any other site on public land located within a Historical District be removed from grant proposals submitted by Mendham Mushrooms until these sites can be subjected to a thorough review by the HPC.