



February 2020

Harbor Consultants Recommended removing impediments to development of rail dependent businesses in the economic development zone.

March 2020
Jens Riedel Natural Systems Utilities managing engineer for **Diamond Chip Realty, (DCR)** LLC held a pre-application meeting about elements of the proposed project at 33 Demarest Drive.



April 2020

Email from Jens Riedel o/b/o Diamond Chip Realty, LLC (“DC”) to Highland Council regarding the subject of the “Sparta Warehouse Project” acknowledging that the site will require an amendment to the on-site WQMP from the County and will therefore need to obtain County and Highlands consistency determination. He asks to clarify the process in Sussex County



May 2020

A Sussex County committee meets an application concerning a site-specific wastewater management plan for property located off of Demarest Road in Sparta, NJ. The Sparta Twp. Engineer (Stan Puszc) is a member of the county committee at the time.

April 2020
DC informed by SCWQM that no decision can be made by Highlands Council until approved by NJDEP



**Timeline
2020**

July 2020

Josh Hertzberg, Director of Business Operations for the International Longshoreman’s Association, publicly announces that he is stepping down from the Sussex County Commissioners to run again for Sparta Town Council.



His replacement was Chris Carney, a member of Operating Engineers Local 825.



September 2020

Email from NJDEP to Mike Green re: Permit Extension Act Request by DCR seeking to extend the 5/11/15 expired NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands LOI



October 2020

The attorney and engineer for the Sparta Twp. Planning Board (“PB”) discuss “Rail Dependent Uses ordinance amendment and other issues”.

Consultants working for Diamond Chip, LLC (“DC”) communicate with Sparta Twp. professionals regarding any prior wetland mitigation project at the site on behalf of NJDOT.

October 2020

PB Attorney, Collin’s 1 hour conf. call w/ PB Engineer, Stan Puszcz regarding “Rail Dependent Uses ordinance amendment and other issues”



Timeline 2020



October 2020

Email from DC’s Engineer Tony Diggan to Dave Simmons confirming their conversation from today and asking for information concerning DC’s site and any a wetland mitigation project at it on behalf of NJDOT. DC’s reps and Mike Gross are copied.



Timeline 2021

November 15, 2021
DCR applied for preliminary site plan approval



October 26, 2021
Town votes on resolution without any discussion.



November 4, 2021
Sparta Planning Board approves Ordinance 21-01 which allows the construction of warehouses in the Economic Development District. Planning Board unanimously approves

April and May 2021
Sparta professionals meet with DCR to review WQMP Amendment submitted by Riedel



June & August 2021
More meetings between Sparta Twp professionals and DCR

February 23, 2021
Ordinance 21-02 is introduced to amend stormwater management rules. Councilman Chiariello is the only "no" vote.

February 2021
Sparta Twp passed the ordinance change with only Councilman Chiariello voting "No"



"little changes that can be made that are just common sense, that will help the business community and the taxpayer," Councilman and Planning Board member Josh Hertzberg commented.

February 26, 2021
Resolution 9-1 for the Professional Services Agreement with the Engineering Contracting Firm. Councilman Chiariello requested a cost benefit analysis, but other council members proceeded with the motion without a study.



March 24, 2021
Bill Close announces retirement as Township Manager. Chief Spideletto takes over as Acting Manager with support from Deputy Manager, Sam Rome.



Timeline 2022
1st QRT

February 2022
Residents Raise Concerns about 880,000 square foot warehouse in advance of Planning Board Meeting



January 2022
TapIntoSparta reviews plans and published first article on January 20, 2022



March 2, 2022
211 attendees on Zoom for Planning Board hearing about the DCR Logistical Park. The public was not heard.

March 2, 2022
Dash challenged the developer and board about the definition of the project as a “warehouse” versus definition of a trucking terminal as set forth in the ordinance.”



March 2, 2022
DC’s attorney and owner admit that 21-01 was specifically passed for its mega-warehouse



March 24, 2022
New Jersey Herald reports “Top NJ Lawmakers in no rush to regulate warehouse sprawl.”

IT’S UP TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS





**Timeline
2022
Continued**

SRD’s mission is to join together concerned citizens to encourage responsible development that protects our people, our environmental resources, and our future.



March 23, 2022
Clark met with the New Jersey Highlands Coalition and the grass-roots organization Sparta Responsible Development (SRD) was formed.

March 31, 2022
Public Presentation on Warehouse Sprawl held at LMCC.



Sparta Township's future development must be driven by engaged and thoughtful discussion amongst its stakeholders. It should not proceed without engaging the community and weighing environmental, social, and long-term cost benefits.

APRIL 2022

Clark and Dash recently filed an application before the Sparta Zoning Board



asking for an interpretation of the Ordinance under which DCR filed its site application to determine whether the use proposed by DCR is a permitted use within the Economic Development Zone.



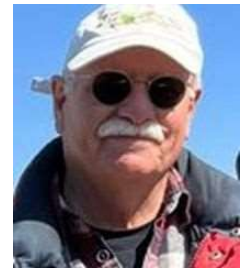
APRIL 2022

Volunteers start live streaming Planning Board meetings and demand transparency



April 2022

Councilman Josh Hertzberg said “me and Chris called each other because we saw it on Facebook and as members of the planning board we were both taken aback that we hadn’t heard about it...I didn’t think it was real and that somebody was getting it before we did.”



APRIL 2022
SRD raised enough funds to hire first expert Peter G. Steck Town Planning



**Timeline
2022
Continued**

APRIL 4th 2022

DCR Hearing at Sparta
Twp Planning Board



APRIL 2022

Residents write letters
and sprout garden signs



MAY 2022

DASH/CLARK filed an
application for
interpretation before the
Zoning Board challenging
the use sought by DCR.

The ZB summarily denied
Dash/Clark the opportunity
to present their
interpretation application
claiming the Planning
Board had already taken
jurisdiction.



MAY 2022

DASH/CLARK Engage
Herald Law to Object to
the DCR APPLICATION

DCR Hearing at Sparta
Twp Planning Board

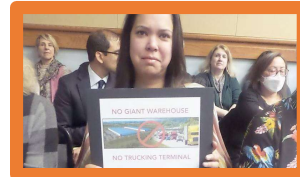
JUNE 2022

DCR Hearing at Sparta
Twp Planning Board



JULY 2022

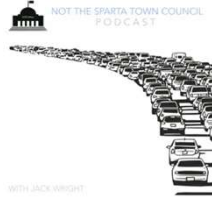
DCR Hearing at Sparta
Twp Planning Board





Timeline
2022
Continued

MAY & JUNE 2022
Education Station Events



Journalist Jack Wright creates podcast interview talk-show with residents of Sparta Township

July 4, 2022



July 5, 2022



SRD raised enough funds to retain Forensic Environmental Services, Tom Maguire



July 6, 2022

Planning Board sends DCR back to drawing board. Needs to fit the Campus like setting ordinance and prove rail-dependency for new ordinance benefits.



AUGUST 2022
Neill steps away from SRD to run for Town Council



Anand Dash becomes President of SRD



Timeline 2022 Continued

SEPTEMBER 2022

DCR files a motion to dismiss Residents' Lawsuit

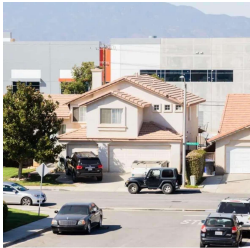


NJ State Planning Commission issues Warehousing Siting Guidelines

Township Engineer leaves. Interim Twp Engineer hired.

OCTOBER 2022

NY TIMES front page article on residents pushing back on Warehouse Sprawl



Residents have grown increasingly frustrated with the proliferation of warehouses in the region.



OCTOBER 2022
Planning Board Subcommittee considers State Planning Guidance; recommend warehouses capped at 175,000 sq ft and approximately 25 trucking bays

OCTOBER 2022

DCR Submits new plans 4x larger than the subcommittee recommendations



The plan was endorsed by Local 825 Labor Management Fund

NOVEMBER 2022

New Sparta Twp engineer rejects DCR plans for 'significant deficiencies'



Voters elected three new Town Council members who ran on an "On Your Side: no mega-warehouse" platform.



DECEMBER 2022

Court dismissed lawsuit brought by Clark/Dash. Anand Dash and Neill Clark file an appeal.



Town Council passed 22-21 to adopt new warehouse guidelines issued by Planning Board subcommittee.

The Sparta Twp manager resigned.



Timeline 2023

JANUARY 2023

Neill Clark
takes name off lawsuit.



Swearing in of
New Town Council

FEBRUARY 2023

DCR files new plans



MARCH 2023

Environmental
Commission meeting with
Great Waters NJ



Town Council sets policy
to LiveStream their
meetings via Youtube.

APRIL 2023



EARTH DAY EVENT
Sponsored by
Environmental
Commission

JUNE 2023

DCR files new plans



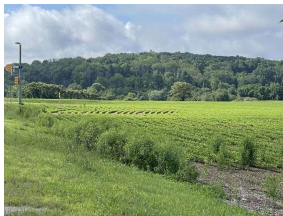
**New Township Engineer
hired**



Timeline 2023

AUGUST 2023

Town Council considers ordinance change to PCED zone. Residents voice their concern the ordinance doesn't do enough to stop the over development on Rt 15. Landowner files "petition of protest" asks the town not to make a decision.



JULY 2023
Sparta Twp Planning Board rejects DCR plans for not meeting multiple criteria

Special Joint Board Presentation by the NJ Highlands Council to Sparta Council, Planning and Zoning Boards



SEPTEMBER 2023
DCR files new plans with Planning Board & Files lawsuit claiming 8 planning board members are conflicted

OCTOBER 2023
Highlands Council presents Water Conservation Plan with CDM Smith Engineers to Sparta Town Council



Planning Board holds a concept hearing so the Wilson Family can inform the planning board of what they would like to do with their land and how the PB recommended changes to the PCED Zone, such as the environmental buffer, will have impact.



OCTOBER 2023
SRD Honored by the NJ Highlands Coalitions for volunteer work in advocating for protection of resources, sustainable development and capacity based planning.

NOVEMBER 2023
North Village accident knocks out light pole



**Timeline
2024**



1/16/24
SRD encourages participation in NJDEP invite for public comments on WQMP

2/13/24
Town Council issues unanimous resolution disapproving DCR WQMP



2/14/24
SRD announces fundraiser partnership with NJHC to send Anand OverTheEdge for Environmental Awareness



2/19/24
Inaugural Master Plan Committee Meeting



2/20/24
Sinkhole opens on Rt 15 in Lafayette

2/20/24
Sussex County Denies DCR Site Plan



Timeline 2024

2/26/24

NJDEP Regulator
Officer joins SRD FB
Group as a
participant



2/28/24
County
Commissioners
have the DCR
WQMP
Amendment on
their agenda with
a consent
resolution as part
of the packet.

2/28/24

SRD encourages
participation at the
County
Commissioner's
Meeting.



2/28/24

County
Commissioners
REMOVE
DCR WQMP
Amendment from
the Agenda as
their first order of
business

3/4/24

Recognizing Public
Interest,
NJDEP Scheduled an
extended public
comment period and a
**hearing for WQPM
Amendment**



3/23/24

The Sussex County
Commissioners approved the
Sussex County Municipal
Utilities Authority (SCMUA)
endorsement of Diamond Chip
Realty's WQMP.



**The Diamond Chip Realty
WQMP resolution was not on
the public's agenda prior to the
commissioners' vote.**

**Commissioner Carney
did not recuse himself.
Commissioner DeGroot was the
only No Vote.**

3/28/24



The Court ruled in the DCR vs
Sparta Planning Board case. The
ruling is partially in favor of
Diamond Chip Realty finding
that 8 of the 11 Planning Board
members are conflicted
because they are "members" of
Sparta Responsible
Development and because SRD
was created to object to the
Mega Warehouse application.

Hearings will resume in 45 Days.