

HOT TOPICS: CORONAVIRUS Submit a letter to the editor

Route 28 steel plant developers, opponents present competing arguments ahead of meeting

By William J. Kemble, correspondent news@freemanonline.com 21 hrs ago Comments

This aerial photo of the property at 850 Route 28 in the town of Kingston, N.Y., taken in April 2020, shows crane company equipment being stored at the site.

File/Provided by Mid-Hudson Group of the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter



TOWN OF KINGSTON, N.Y. – Developers for 850 Route 28 LLC and environmentalists are gearing up for a new round of arguments over the proposed steel and concrete fabrication plant that would be surrounded by the Bluestone Wild Forest.

Competing documents have been filed during the past two weeks in anticipation that the town Planning Board will add the project to their agenda later this month.

Among new filings was a noise study from the developer that attempts to address findings in a report last year from a town consultant.

"Based on the results of the field measurements and projections of the future noise levels the project will result in some increased noise levels over those that are currently being experienced at the area receptors during the site preparation and construction process," wrote engineers for Maser Consulting, who were hired by the developers. "The use of berms and other measures identified above and as depicted on the (revised application) sound barrier plan will be implemented to mitigate any impacts."

The application proposes to construct two 120,000-square-foot buildings for a manufacturing facility that produces steel and precast concrete bridge decking. A potential third building is noted in the application but has also been described by a project engineer as a "hypothetical" 120,000-square-foot structure included at the request of the state Department of Transportation to evaluate traffic.

The project by 850 Route 28 LLC would support the town of Ulster business operated by 2-4 Kieffer Lane/U.S. Crane. It has previously been criticized by the town consultant for minimizing the impacts of plans to clear 21 acres of trees, blast 405,000 cubic yards of rock, and construction activity that is expected to involve nearly 12,500 trucks over a five-year period.

Project opponents contend the measures proposed for noise mitigation are not nearly enough to offset the impacts of blasting, rock crushing, building construction and traffic that will be going on at the same time people are trying to enjoy the forest preserve trails that abut the 850 Route 28 property.

Claudia Brayer, an attorney representing Woodstock Land Conservancy and Catskill Mountainkeeper, said the developers continue to "lack detail on key questions" and have not provided answers to several issues that have been raised early in the process.

Brayer wrote that problems include "use of on-site water, and inability of the aquifer to support the proposed project, toxic byproducts and dust impacting on-site water and drainage into area, wetlands and other waterways, whether the applicant is proposing an on-site concrete batch plant, and ... magnitude of the excavation of overburden and minerals from the site, and how and where those materials will be transported and stored."

