ADK Wild calls for Jay developer to resubmit resort proposal

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Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve, a Niskayuna-based environmental advocacy organization, is calling for a Miami-based developer to resubmit the first part of his proposal to build a resort-style development on 355 acres in the town of Jay.

Adirondack Wild Managing Partner David Gibson said Thursday that he believes developer Eric Stackman’s proposal doesn’t consider the land’s resources and wildlife enough, and he thinks the APA should require Stackman to resubmit the first part of his plan.

Stackman could not be immediately reached for comment Thursday.

Stackman wants to build residential homes, townhomes, hotel facilities and possibly some mansions on the property. Initial public comments submitted to the Adirondack Park Agency, which is reviewing the developer’s plans, are mostly opposed to the development. Public comments on the plan are being accepted until Dec. 3. The plans Stackman has submitted so far can be viewed at https://www.apa.ny.gov.

APA Public Information Officer Keith McKeever said Monday that the first set of plans submitted for large-scale residential subdivisions in the park are meant to be conceptual so the developer doesn’t have to invest time and resources into a project, only to find out that what they’re proposing wouldn’t work. He could not immediately be reached for comment Thursday, Veterans Day.

The APA’s application process for a large-scale residential subdivision requires that the first proposal include “maps depicting resources and existing features, a project narrative, and conceptual design drawings of the proposal and potential alternatives.” The application also states that “the conceptual design of the proposed project should avoid impacts to the resources on and off the project site.” In a news release Thursday, Gibson said he believes Stackman’s first proposal doesn’t meet those criteria.
“The applicant leaves out requested information about mammals, birds, other sensitive animal and their habitats, and connections between habitats,” Gibson said in a statement Thursday. “Also left out is requested information about areas of scenic significance, aquifers and natural habitat corridors. Worst of all, the composite maps requested by the APA to identify areas most suitable for development or valuable for significant resource and open space protection are not provided.”

Gibson also said he thinks the proposal doesn’t consider affordable housing objectives and that “more exclusive resort development like this drives up real estate prices for everyone within small, rural towns like Jay.”

Gibson, on behalf of Adirondack Wild, is asking the APA to revoke the proposal’s status as “received” until Stackman provides the resource information and composite maps the APA asked for. Gibson also left a public comment on the project proposal asking the APA to educate Stackman about “conservation development objectives and strategies.”

In a phone interview Thursday, Gibson said he hasn’t heard from the APA about his request and doesn’t expect to hear anything until after the public comment period for part one of the proposal, which ends on Dec. 3. In the meantime, he said the public is left debating the lack of data in the proposal instead of analyzing the quality of the data.