original



Town of Aurora Zoning Board of Appeals 300 Gleed Avenue, East Aurora, New York 14052

Zoning Board of Appeals Application Form

I. TYPE OF REQUEST
X AREA VARIANCE SPECIAL USE PERMIT USE VARIANCE INTERPRETATION
II. APPLICANT/PETITIONER
Applicant's Name Sammie Trent Representing Guiding Earth Montessori School Address 12 76 Mill Road City East Aurora State NY ZIP 14052 Phone 71 x N/A Email Ger h. Org Interest in /purchaser/developer) 12056
III. PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION (If different from applicant information.)
Property Owner(s) Name(s) Christopher Trent Address 261 farkclale Aue City East Aurora State DY ZIP 14052 Phone Fax DIA Email chri 11.com
Property Address 1276 Mill Road EA, NY 14057 SBL# 187.000-2-18 Property size in acres 2.6 Property Frontage in feet 378 Zoning District RI/A Surrounding Zoning RI/A Current Use of Property Educational - School
IV. REQUEST DETAIL (check all that apply) X Variance from Ordinance Section(s) # 116 -19 A Permit goots in Zoning Special Use Permit for: Use Variance for: Interpretation of

Q A A	
Signature of Applicant/Petitioner	
Summellan Trend	
Print name of Applicant/Petitioner	
State of New York; County of Erie	
On the Orday of July in the year 2023 before me, the above individual appeared, personally known to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the individual whose name is subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same for the purposes therein stated. Notary Public	
(Notary stamp) JACOB D. MELOON Notary Public, State of New York Qualified in Eric County Reg. No. 01ME6443736 My Commission Expires Nov. 7, 2020	
Office Use Only: Date received: $\frac{7/10/23}{}$	# 100 Ck 994 Receipt #: 568399 (XA)
Application reviewed by:	
ECDP ZR-1 form sent to EC:	Hearing publication date:
PREVIOUS APPEAL(S):	
A previous appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals ()	has () has not been made with respect to this property.
Previous appeals:	
Date: Type of Appeal:	Granted Denied
Date: Type of Appeal:	Granted Denied

V. SIGNATURES (*This application must be signed by the applicant/petitioner. If the applicant is not the owner of the property, a separate owner authorization form must be submitted – see pg. 5)*

PETITIONER'S LETTER OF INTENT

•	ted and any additional information that may be helpful to the Zoning Board of Appeals in deciding this: (attach additional pages if needed)
	Please see attached
<u>то в</u>	ECOMPLETED ONLY WHEN A USE VARIANCE IS BEING REQUESTED: N/A
	Variance is requested because the applicable regulations and restrictions in the Zoning Code of the of Aurora have caused unnecessary hardship as demonstrated by the following:
1)	I cannot realize a reasonable return on my property for each and every permitted use allowed in the current zoning classification as demonstrated by the accompanying financial evidence (provide financial evidence to support your argument).
	Financial Evidence Provided Yes No (financial evidence is required per NYS Town Law)
2)	Describe why your alleged hardship relating to the subject property is unique and does not apply to other properties in the zoning district or neighborhood:
-	
3)	Describe why you believe that the essential character of the neighborhood/community will not
	change if the Zoning Board of Appeals grants you a use variance:
43	
4)	Is your need for a use variance a result of you own actions (is your difficulty self-created)? Please
expia	n:
(Attac	n additional pages if needed)

Town of Aurora 300 Gleed Avenue East Aurora, NY 14052 www.townofaurora.com

Notary Public

Zoning Board of Appeals Application Owner Authorization

The undersigned, who is the owner of the premises know as:
1276 Mill Road East Aurora, NY 1467 dentified as Tax Map (SBL)# 18.7.000 - Z - 18
hereby authorizes
() special use permit () use variance () interpretation before the Town of Aurora Zoning Board of
Appeals for review and potential approval. The undersigned further permits the Town or its authorized
representative(s) access to the property to review existing site conditions during the review process.
Christopher Trent Owner (print) 7-10-23 Date
Unruly Turante (signature)
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
STATE OF NEW YORK) SS
COUNTY OF ERIE)
On this 10th day of, 2023, before me, the undersigned, a notary public in and for said state, personally appeared, personally known to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the individual(s) whose name(s) is (are) subscribed to the within instrument and
acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their
signature(s) on the instrument, the individual(s), or the person upon behalf of which the individual(s) acted,
executed the instrument.
JACOB D. MELOON Notary Public, State of New York

Qualified in Erie County Reg. No. 01ME6443736

My Commission Expires Nov. 7, 20 26

Guiding Earth Montessori School

1276 Mill Road East Aurora, NY 14052 (716) 525-0594 gems@guidingearth.org

July 10, 2023

Zoning Board of Appeals 575 Oakwood Ave East Aurora, NY 14052

Dear Zoning Board of Appeals,

Guiding Earth Montessori School (GEMS) is interested in getting therapy and farm goats for our school as well as a shed and fence to house them. The goats are coming from Rowandale Therapy Goat Farm, they are incredibly well natured and sweet through the hard work and energy of their breeder, who has most recently been on the channel 7 news for her therapy programs with the goats. They will add incredible benefits for our students and staff here at GEMS.

The shed will be 10x16 in brown, photo attached, pre-constructed and placed on property by a shed mule. The shed will be placed within our agriculturally zoned part of the property, at 25 feet away from the property line and over 20 feet from the building, as shown in our attached drawing/survey in yellow. Although we would like the goats to have access to further areas of the property outside of the agriculturally zoned area as shown by the pink fence areas on the map. This allows them more opportunities to graze a wider area, as well as interact with more students, and run and play freely with our students during class times.

We are requesting a variance from ordinance section #116-19A. Although we are a R1 residential zoned area, our lot does not have a residential structure, it has a classified E educational structure to be used for school purposes. Montessori education highly values the opportunities for farm life, real world experiences and natural exploration. We find it of great importance to allow farm life to exist on our property for the benefit of our students and staff.

Our property has 1 residential neighbor to the south side who is in support of our procurement of goats and proposed housing and grazing areas. The town should be receiving notice from them on their support, as the only property that could see the goats regularly due to the location of the shed. On the north is an unimproved property, and a horse farm slightly further than that. To the east is a property with a large acreage with a house on Blakely through a large area of dense woods and over a pond. Across the street to the west is the non-residential scenic

overlook and a residential meat farm that has pigs, chickens and turkeys. The residential farm across the street has been permitted to have their animals outside of their designated agricultural zone such as we are requesting, and that has little to no impact on other neighbors. It is not unusual to have farms and large acreages in our section of Mill, making it more of a rural residential feeling area than a residential 1 area.

We wish to place our shed behind the building on our property to house the goats, and have them fenced within two parts of the property, depending on time of day and season they would have access to these different parts of the property. Having goats and a shed on our property would not impact our neighbors. The particular goats we are getting are bred as therapy animals in miniature breeds and as such they are docile, have little to no smell or noise, and their manure would be used promptly for composting and other agricultural pursuits of the school. Additionally the proposed location is set within visual barriers of the woods. You can reference the attached photos on the view of the space from the road.

Goats are considered browsers, and will eat a variety of greenery, not just grass. Usually grass is last and they will eat items considered a nuisance to us humans, like poison ivy, weeds and more! They are a great benefit to have on a property with small children and gardeners. In relation to the size of the property in question, our 1.5 acres we intend to use for primary grazing will allow the goats to have a variety of nutritional items. It will generally take 8-10 miniature breeds of goats 1 month to turn over 1 acre of land. Leaving the 1.5 acre the goats have access to within the fence line as plenty of room and space to grow for up to 12 goats while allowing the goats freedom to pasture where they please. Our intention is to start with 4 goats, who will be joining us as weaned kids. Within the next year or two we will breed the goats, so that they can be used for milk, and learning opportunities for our students. Our intention is to only keep does or weathered males, so as to keep the noise, smell and gentleness of the goats at an appropriate level.

Attached you will find photos of the view of our property from the road from different angles and seasons, as well as information about the importance of the goats to our school, our students, and why we are requesting they are able to be housed and pastured within a more readily used area of our property.

Best regards,

Sammie Trent

Head of School, Guiding Earth Montessori School

SUPERVISOR James J. Bach (716) 652-7590 jbach@townofaurora.com



TOWN CLERK
Martha L. Librock
(716) 652-3280
townclerk@townofaurora.com

TOWN OF AURORA

Aurora Municipal Center

575 Oakwood Avenue, East Aurora, NY 14052 www.townofaurora.com

TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Charles D. Snyder csnyder@townofaurora.com

Luke Wochensky

July 11, 2023

Sammie Trent 1276 Mill Road

James F. Granville

lwochensky@townofaurora.com

East Aurora, NY 14052

jgranville@townofaurora.com

Joseph M. McCann jmccann@townofaurora.com

Sammie:

The Building Department has reviewed your request to have goats at 1276 Mill Road (SBL 187.000-2-18). The request has been denied because it fails to meet the requirements for allowable animals in an R-1 zoning district.

SUPT. OF HIGHWAYS David M. Gunner (716) 652-4050 highway@townofaurora.com

Section 116.19A

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Required: No goats shall be kept, harbored or maintained in R-1 zoning district.

Elizabeth Cassidy

Requested: 12 Goats on school property in the R-1 zoning district.

(716) 652-7591

Variance: 12 goats

building@townofaurora.com

ASSESSOR Roger P. Pigeon assessor@townofaurora.com (716) 652-0011 This letter serves as notice that we have received the application and fee for the Zoning Board of Appeals. You will receive notification from the Town Clerk with the date and time of the next available hearing. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 652-7591.

DIR. OF RECREATION Christopher Musshafen (716) 652-8866 chris@townofaurora.com

> TOWN ATTORNEY Brigid M. Maloney

TOWN JUSTICE Jeffrey P. Markello Anthony DiFilippo IV

HISTORIAN Robert L. Goller (716) 652-7944 historian@townofaurora.com

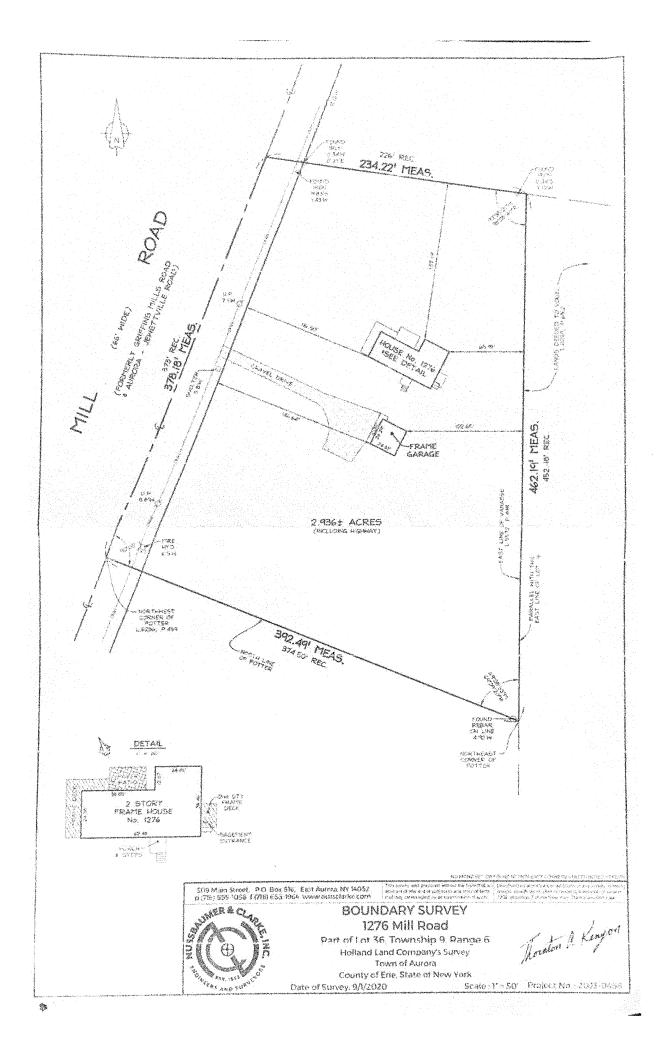
FAX: (716) 652-3507

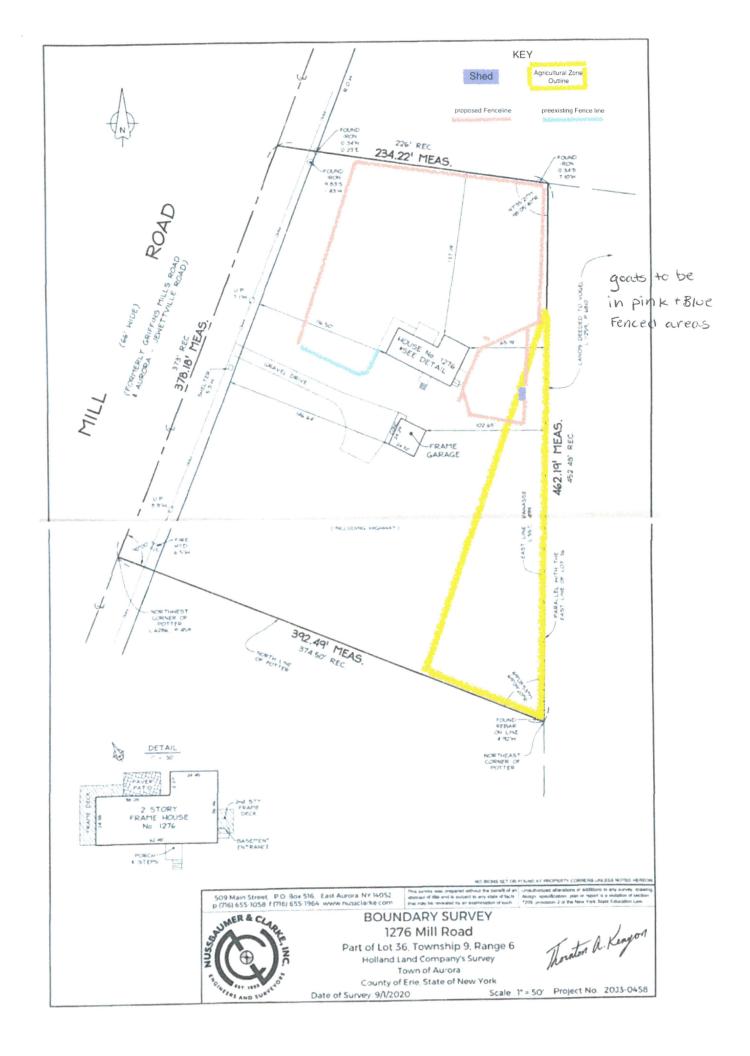
Sincerely,

Richard Miga

Asst. Code Enforcement Officer

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.





The following is an excerpt from a newsletter about our school's intentions with regards to the goats. Please use this information as to the reasoning behind permitting the goats in a more used area of our school's property.

The power of caring for an animal and playing a role in the animal's well-being can be very meaningful for a young child. Especially in their early years, children are busy trying to understand how they are capable and competent. Giving children the opportunity to participate in meaningful caring activities for a vulnerable creature can build tremendous confidence.

Our goats will be coming from Rowandale Therapy Goats.



Left is Jade: A female Nigerian

Dwarf and Mini-lamancha mix. The
youngest of the 4, and very sweet
and mellow.

Goats from Rowandale Therapy
Goats are well handled from birth to
love people, and be in tune with
them. Each goat spends hours and
hours with humans from the
moment they are born, teaching and
training them how to react with
humans. They instinctively know

what we need, much like a dog does, but do need some help with manners. These goats are Mini-Lamancha, Nigerian dwarf and cashmere breeds and have exceptional temperament and are very sweet. Our 4 goats are hand picked and handled by our Head of School and some staff and students each week before they make their way home to our school. Already in tune with us, they will make a transition to our school with grace when they are around 12 weeks old. This familiarity helps with their ability to fit in at GEMS.

Bringing Goats to our school stems from our belief in the transformative power of animals, particularly goats, in facilitating meaningful learning and therapeutic experiences for our students. By integrating goats into our educational environment, we aim to provide unique opportunities for hands-on work, enriching experiences, and therapeutic benefits, fostering the holistic development of our students.



Therapeutic Benefits:

Left is Onyx: A wethered male Mini-Nubian and Nigerian Dwarf mix, very affectionate and loves to snuggle for long periods. Tends to have a calming nature around more active children.

Goats have been known to provide therapeutic benefits to individuals of all ages. Interacting with goats can have a calming effect, reduce stress, and promote emotional well-being. Our students will have the opportunity to experience the soothing presence of goats during designated times, as well as during our outdoor time if weather and goat's needs afford us playing all together. These times may involve gentle interaction, such as petting and brushing the goats, which can promote relaxation and enhance social-emotional development. The therapeutic benefits of goat interactions can also support students with sensory processing challenges, providing sensory stimulation and aiding in self-regulation.

Hands-on Animal Care and Practical Life works:

Caring for goats will become an integral part of our students' daily routine. Under the guidance of their teachers, students will actively participate in feeding, grooming, and tending to the goats' well-being. These responsibilities will teach them important life skills such as empathy, responsibility, and nurturing. Students will learn to observe and

respond to the goats' needs, gaining a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between humans and animals.

Environmental Sustainability:

Our students will have the chance to engage in environmental sustainability practices through their interactions with the goats. They will learn about the goats' dietary needs and contribute to the preparation of nutritious and sustainable meals. Additionally, students will explore regenerative farming practices and how goats can play a role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Through composting and utilizing goat manure as natural fertilizer, they will discover firsthand the importance of environmental stewardship.



Left is Jasper: A female Mini-Lamancha and Nigerian Dwarf mix, very cuddly and loves getting pets. She is often found sleeping next to or in the arms of people. She seems to intuitively know when others are scared, anxious or in need of calming down and is nearby to offer her calm presence.

Scientific Observation and Documentation:

Introducing goats to our school will create a valuable opportunity for scientific observation and documentation. Students can closely observe the goats' behaviors, communication, and social dynamics. They will record their observations, create field journals, and participate in discussions to deepen their understanding of animal behavior and biology. Through this process, students will develop critical thinking skills and strengthen their abilities to make evidence-based conclusions.

Collaborative Design and Construction:

Our students will actively participate in designing and constructing suitable habitats for the goats. Through collaborative projects, they will learn about architectural principles, materials, and considerations for creating safe and comfortable spaces. Students will apply their knowledge of sustainability, utilizing eco-friendly materials and incorporating natural elements to ensure the well-being of the goats. This hands-on experience will foster creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.



Left is Opal: A Female Cashmere and Nigerian Dwarf mix. She is very soft, and very calm, sweet and well mannered. Here she is pictured with her mom.

Goat-Related Arts and Crafts:

Integrating goats into our curriculum will also inspire artistic expression. Students can

engage in various art forms, including painting, drawing, and sculpture, capturing the beauty and uniqueness of goats. They can explore the textures of goat wool and create fiber arts projects. Additionally, students may express their experiences and feelings through creative writing, poetry, or storytelling, connecting their encounters with the goats to their personal narratives.

The introduction of goats to our school promises an array of enriching experiences, therapeutic benefits, and valuable work for our students. Through hands-on animal care, environmental sustainability practices, scientific observation, collaborative design, and artistic expression, students will develop essential skills, deepen their connection to the natural world, and experience the therapeutic effects of interacting with goats. We are excited to witness the positive impact these experiences will have on their personal growth, fostering empathy, creativity, and emotional well-being!

Images supplied from Google Street View Summer photos are current Autumn photos are a few years old however the foliage is relatively the same

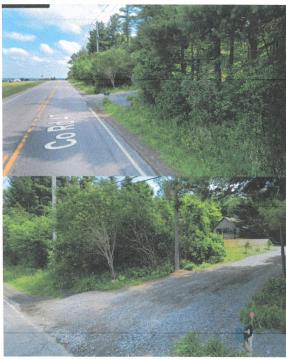
Approach to our property area in question on Mill Road from the North in Summer



Direct view from road to our property area in question in Summer



Approach to our property area in question on Mill Road from the South in Summer



Approach to our property area in question on Mill Road from the North in Autumn



Direct view from road to our property area in question in Autumn



Approach to our property area in question on Mill Road from the South in Autumn



Short Environmental Assessment Form Part 1 - Project Information

Instructions for Completing

Part 1 - Project Information. The applicant or project sponsor is responsible for the completion of Part 1. Responses become part of the application for approval or funding, are subject to public review, and may be subject to further verification. Complete Part 1 based on information currently available. If additional research or investigation would be needed to fully respond to any item, please answer as thoroughly as possible based on current information.

Complete all items in Part 1. You may also provide any additional information which you believe will be needed by or useful to the lead agency; attach additional pages as necessary to supplement any item.

Part 1 - Project and Sponsor Information						
Guiding Earth Montessori School						
Name of Action or Project:	*************					
GEMS Goats					1	
Project Location (describe, and attach a location map):						
1276 Mill Road East Aurora, NY 14052, map and survey attached						
Brief Description of Proposed Action:						
Allowing goats to live and graze outside of the zoned agricultural area for the property.						
Name of Applicant or Sponsor:	Teleph	none: 716.525.0549				
Sammie Trent	E-Mai					
Address:	<u> </u>	gems@guidingearti.o	<u>'</u>			
1276 Mill Road						
City/PO:		State:	Zip	Code:		
East Aurora		NY	1405	2		
1. Does the proposed action only involve the legislative adoption of a plan, l	ocal law	, ordinance,		NO	YES	
administrative rule, or regulation? If Yes, attach a narrative description of the intent of the proposed action and may be affected in the municipality and proceed to Part 2. If no, continue to			hat	√		
2. Does the proposed action require a permit, approval or funding from any	other go	overnmental Agency?		NO	YES	
If Yes, list agency(s) name and permit or approval:				√		
3.a. Total acreage of the site of the proposed action? b. Total acreage to be physically disturbed? c. Total acreage (project site and any contiguous properties) owned or controlled by the applicant or project sponsor?	1	.5 acres 0 acres 3 acres	.		L	
_ ` ` ` /	nercial	Residential (subur	ban)			

5. Is the proposed action, a. A permitted use under the zoning regulations?	NO	YES	N/A
			Щ
b. Consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?		V	Ш
6. Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape?		NO	YES VES
7. Is the site of the proposed action located in, or does it adjoin, a state listed Critical Environmental Ar	rea?	NO	YES
If Yes, identify:		V	
8. a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?		NO	YES
		\checkmark	
b. Are public transportation service(s) available at or near the site of the proposed action?		✓	
c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available on or near site of the proposed ac	tion?	✓	
9. Does the proposed action meet or exceed the state energy code requirements? If the proposed action will exceed requirements, describe design features and technologies:		NO	YES
does not include anything requiring an energy code			\checkmark
10. Will the proposed action connect to an existing public/private water supply?		NO	YES
If No, describe method for providing potable water:			
11 10, describe method for providing potable water.			
11. Will the proposed action connect to existing wastewater utilities?		NO	YES
If No, describe method for providing wastewater treatment:		V	
12. a. Does the site contain a structure that is listed on either the State or National Register of Historic Places?		NO	YES
b. Is the proposed action located in an archeological sensitive area?			
	······	<u> </u>	1777
13. a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, conta wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, state or local agency?	ın	NO V	YES
b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody?	,	7	同
If Yes, identify the wetland or waterbody and extent of alterations in square feet or acres:	-		
14. Identify the typical habitat types that occur on, or are likely to be found on the project site. Check		t apply:	-li
☐ Shoreline ☐ Forest ☐ Agricultural/grasslands ☐ Early mid-success ☐ Wetland ☐ Urban ☐ Suburban	ional		
15. Does the site of the proposed action contain any species of animal, or associated habitats, listed		NO	YES
by the State or Federal government as threatened or endangered?		V	一
16. Is the project site located in the 100 year flood plain?		NO	YES
17 Will the grant of the state		V	
17. Will the proposed action create storm water discharge, either from point or non-point sources? If Yes,		NO	YES
a. Will storm water discharges flow to adjacent properties?		V	
b. Will storm water discharges be directed to established conveyance systems (runoff and storm drai If Yes, briefly describe:	ns)?	:	
		1	1.

18. Does the proposed action include construction or other activities that result in the impoundment of water or other liquids (e.g. retention pond, waste lagoon, dam)?		
If Yes, explain purpose and size:	√	
19. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the location of an active or closed	NO	YES
solid waste management facility?		
If Yes, describe:	\checkmark	
20. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the subject of remediation (ongoing or completed) for hazardous waste?	NO	YES
If Yes, describe:	7	
11 165, describe.	V	
I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE B	BEST O	F MY
KNOWLEDGE		
Applicant/sponsor name: Sammie Trent Date: 7/10/2023		
Signature: Service (2015)		