

# \$85 Million Crossgates

## Guilderland Site Plan Will Preserve Habitat of Butterfly

GUILDERLAND — Updated plans for the proposed Crossgates Mall, including extensive new road construction and the preservation of the breeding grounds of the Karner Blue butterfly, have boosted the estimated cost of the massive project from \$50 million to \$85 million, the developer said.

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The latest proposal for a shopping mall, the second such plan for the Pine Bush site, includes six "anchor" department stores and more than 150 other shops and restaurants.

If all government approvals are met, construction of the 90-acre mall could begin in December, with a projected opening of October 1980 for the first phase that will include four of the six major tenants and parking for 7,000 cars, he said.

The developer this week filed an environmental impact statement and permit applications for review by such agencies as the state Department of Environmental Conservation (EnCon), the state and federal transportation departments and the Guilderland Town Zoning Board of Appeals.

James Vlasto, a spokesman for Crossgate Group, said state hearings on controversial environmental questions could begin as early as mid-July.

Among the modifications in the new proposal is a plan to set aside five-acre nature preserve in the northern part of the parcel for protection of a breeding ground for the Karner Blue butterfly, listed as an endangered species.

The new plan also addresses a state Department of Transportation (DOT) request that transportation patterns be modified to divert traffic away from Western Avenue (Route 20).

The developers expect the

SCHENECTADY GAZETTE, FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 1979

## Mall Proposed

mall to add \$50 million per year in personal income for the area based on an estimated \$258 million in the mall's annual gross receipts, according to Sproul, managing director of Crossgates Group, the developer.

Among the major tenants mentioned for the mall are the J.C. Penney Co., Filene's, Jordan Marsh and Montgomery Ward.

Sproul has not announced the signing of any tenant leases. Sproul said this week two of the departments stores are expected to be from out of the state.

Crossgates Group is composed of the Pyramid Mall Companies, developer of about

25 shopping malls in the nation, including those in Saratoga Springs, Glens Falls and Plattsburgh; the Joseph Muscarelle Development Co. Inc. of Maywood, N.J., owner of the 135-acre parcel; and Malden Properties of Albany, represented by William Strong.

Muscarelle, Strong and others, incorporated as Crossgate Joint Venture, in 1974 unsuccessfully proposed another version of mall on the same site. Features of the earlier plan not mentioned in the current proposal with plans that include office buildings, professional offices, a convention hotel and facilities for manufacturing and distribution.

The proposed mall site is bounded by the Washington Avenue Extension, the Thruway, Western Avenue (Route 20) and Rapp Road.

For the current proposal, the developers worked out with the state DOT a design for connecting the mall with the Adirondack Northway (I-87) and the Washington Avenue Extension.

The reconstruction of Rapp Road (to be renamed Wellspring Road) also is proposed.

Emil (Skip) Skoglund, assistant regional planning engineer for DOT said the latest designs are closer to what he expects his department to approve.

"The connections there right now are getting very close, if they get through all the other approvals," he said. He noted DOT requires a developer to show a benefit to the traveling public, as well as to the users

of the project.

The project has sparked opposition from downtown Albany merchants who contend the mall would siphon off their business; from environmentalists fearing destruction of the Karner Blue butterfly's Pine Bush natural habitat, and from some town residents who petitioned against the addition of another shopping mall to the area.

The environmental impact statement is required to

The Crossgates Group also is prepared to dedicate 60 acres of "underdeveloped" Pine Bush land near Old State Road, about a mile from the mall, for preservation, according to Sproul.

Since the mall will provide most of its own public services, the developer said it will affect public budgets only minimally.

It is intended to attract shoppers particularly from Massachusetts and Canada and to keep local money in the area.

# Environment Data Released for Mall

By BARBARA HEINS  
Gazette Reporter

ALBANY — Increased water flow and a change in Krum Kill headwaters course into the McKownville Reservoir, increased noise and air pollution and removal of 145 acres of vegetation are among the "adverse impacts which cannot be avoided" if construction of the proposed Crossgates Mall is approved.

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Developers for the mall yesterday filed a draft environmental impact statement whose purpose is to define the affects of the mall upon the surrounding areas to both the human and wildlifes. It is expected that the state Department of Environmental Conservation will take approximately 30 to 40 days to review the impact statement before scheduling public hearings on the statement. Developers said that they expect the hearings may begin as soon as July or August.

Mall developers have set a target for the start of construction for sometime in December with completion of the first mall phase to be in October 1980.

According to the impact statement, "the project would alter the headwaters of the Krum Kill, removing its natural channel upstream of the McKownville Reservoir. All on-site water courses of an intermittent nature would be replaced by storm sewers, open channels and detention basins." The detention basins are proposed to control on-site storm-water flow.

Also, the project is expected "to increase the total volume of water into the Krum Kill by reducing vegetation" and "drainage facilities would alter the flow patterns of the Krum Kill by concentrating a larger volume of runoff over a shorter time."

Although the report contends, there would not be a violation of air pollution standards, carbon monoxide level concentra-

tions would increase. It was also predicted that the "several locations within 400 feet of construction activity" where "truck traffic to and from the project site and erection and finishing of the building will generate noise." According to the report, "there are no local numerical standards in local noise ordinances."

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The 131 acres of vegetation on the site and an additional 14 acres that are connected with off-site transportation improvements would no longer be "natural systems," with approximately 56 acres of hardwood trees to be removed. An additional eight acres of mixed forest trees and two acres of the pitch pine-scrub, which is predominant in Pine Bush areas, would be "directly affected" or "removed."

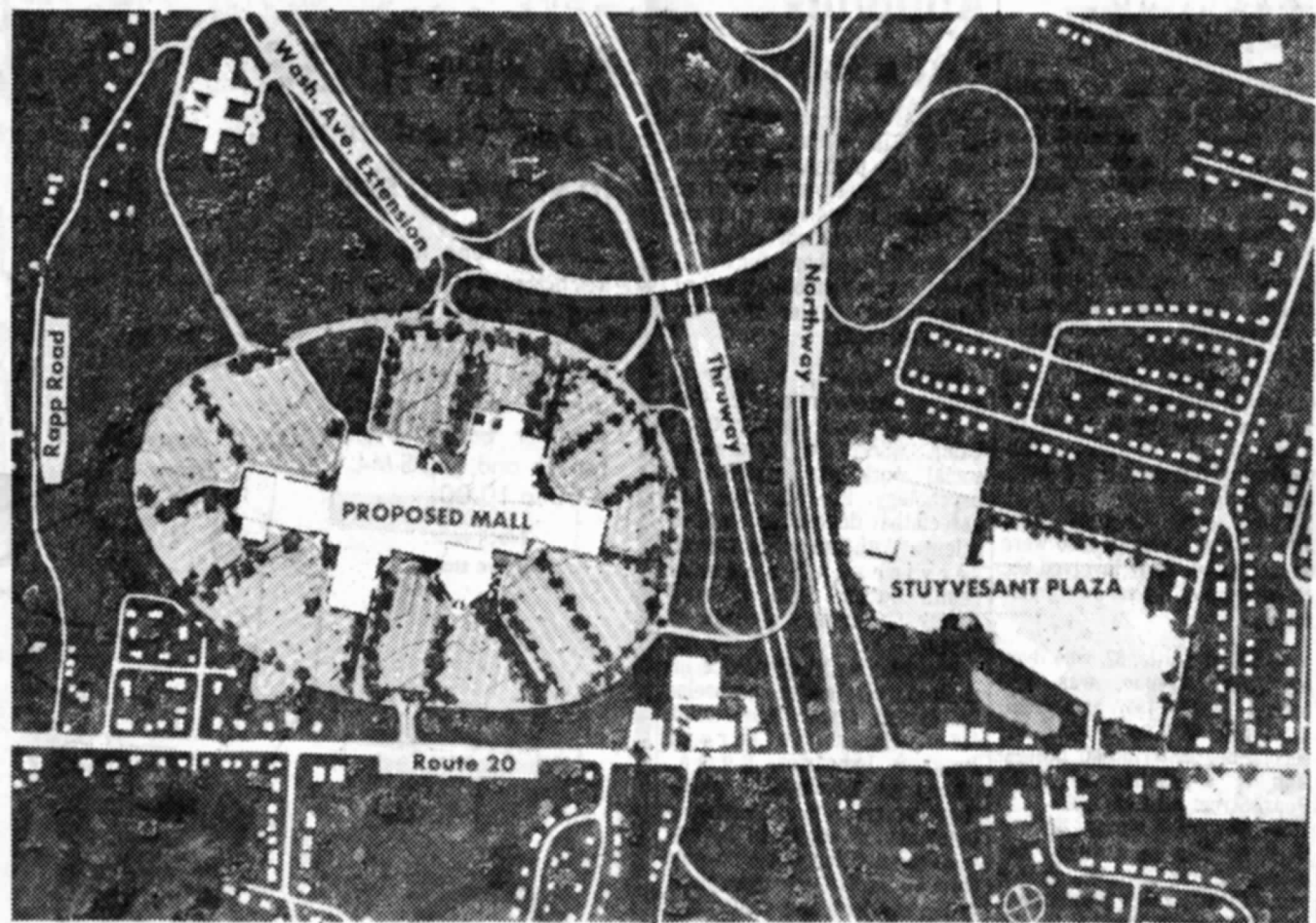
It was also stated that smaller mammals, such as woodchucks, skunks, mice, squirrels and some reptiles and amphibians would remain in the undeveloped areas while "all species would be reduced in th population on the site, however, due to lack of detailed data on the existing populations, it is not possible to estimate which species would be absent after the project."

A five-acre breeding ground for the Karner Blue butterfly, which is on the state EnCon list of endangered species, will be set aside.

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Although the mall developers will employ its own security force, it was predicted "the processing of criminal complaints associated with the project operations may contitute a burden on the " Guilderland Police Department.

It was also projected that the actual mall construction would generate 2,783 full-time construction jobs and permanent employment for 2,505 persons once construction is completed. Also, \$2.7 million in annual tax revenues are said to be generated from the proposal.



**CROSSGATES AT CROSSROADS** — Aerial view of an artist's rendering shows the proposed Crossgates Mall in the Pine Bush area of Guilderland in an area bounded by

the Washington Avenue Extension on the north, the Thruway, Western Avenue (Route 20), and Rapp Road.