



**INTEROFFICE MEMO
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

DATE: March 9, 2026

TO: James Corriveau, ZBA Chairperson

FROM: Geoffrey Urda, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: 111 Breen Avenue
Parcel Number 8-01-214.100
Zoning – Commercial
Petition for an Area Variance to reduce the minimum landscaped buffer requirements along a street Right-of-Way (ROW) and along the side property lines
File #614

UPDATE (April 3, 2026): At the March 18, 2026, meeting, the ZBA tabled this application pending 239-m review by the Jefferson County Planning Board. At its March 31, 2026, meeting, the Jefferson County Planning Board adopted a motion finding that the requested Variance is a matter of local concern only. A copy of the correspondence from Jefferson County appears below.

As discussed at the March 18, 2026, ZBA meeting, because the applicant has not yet developed a formal Site Plan application, as the Variance decision will influence design choices, there is no risk of segmentation and no need for a coordinated review. The ZBA will need to complete Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) and make a determination of significance pursuant to SEQRA, after which it will be free to act on the Area Variance request.

----- ORIGINAL TEXT FROM MARCH 9, 2026 MEMO -----

This petition, presented by Puccia Olive Oil Company LLC., is to vary the requirements of Section 310-83 of the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the minimum landscaped buffer requirements along a street Right-of-Way (ROW) and along the side property lines.

The applicant plans to apply for Site Plan Approval at a future Planning Commission meeting for a parking lot expansion that would create shared parking with the neighboring parcel at 710 Arsenal Street (Marcy Spa). This arrangement would require pavement up to and across the shared property line between the two parcels.

To accommodate the desired additional parking spaces, as well as internal circulation, the applicant is seeking relief from the following landscaping requirements to facilitate the proposed layout:

- Reduce the required landscaped buffer along a street Right-of-Way, as required by Section 310-83 (C)(1) from 15 feet to 7.5 feet, a 50 percent reduction.

- Reduce the required landscaped buffer along a side property line, as required by Section 310-83 (D)(1) from 10 feet to 0 feet along the east property line, a 100 percent reduction.
- Reduce the required landscaped buffer along a side property line, as required by Section 310-83 (D)(1) from 10 feet to 8.7 feet along the west property line, a 13 percent reduction.

Granting this Variance to reduce the above landscaped buffer requirements represents an Unlisted Action pursuant to SEQRA. However, it is part of a “whole action” that also includes the Site Plan Approval. To avoid segmenting the review, all involved agencies must consider the aggregate environmental impacts of the proposed redevelopment as a single “whole action.”

As the Planning Commission has jurisdiction over the Site Plan Approval, this will also be a coordinated review. At its April 6, 2026 meeting, Staff will recommend that the Planning Commission adopt a motion acknowledging the coordinated review and declaring itself the Lead Agency pursuant to SEQRA. **Staff recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals adopt a motion** acknowledging the necessity for a coordinated review and stating that it has no objection to the Planning Commission designating itself as the Lead Agency.

If the ZBA, as an Involved Agency, has environmental comments that it deems necessary to communicate to the Planning Commission for it to consider in its Lead Agency review, the ZBA should impart those comments to Staff at the March 18, 2026 ZBA meeting, so that Staff can include them in its subsequent memorandum to the Planning Commission. After the Planning Commission adopts a Negative Declaration pursuant to SEQRA, the ZBA will be free to vote on the request at its April 15, 2026 meeting.

Finally, as the proposed action occurs within 500 feet of New York State owned land, it will require county review pursuant to Section 239-m of New York State General Municipal Law. Staff will refer this application to the Jefferson County Planning Board ahead of its meeting on March 31, 2026.

cc: ZBA Members
File

Department of Planning and Community Development

175 Arsenal Street, 3rd Floor
Watertown, New York 13601
Phone: (315) 785-3144
Fax: (315)785-5070

Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer, AICP
Director

Alicia M. Dewey
Deputy Director



April 1, 2026

Geoffrey Urda
City of Watertown
245 Washington St
Room 305
Watertown, NY 13601

Re: Puccia Olive Oil Company LLC, Area Variance, 111 Breen Avenue, JCDP File # C 3 - 26

Dear Geoff,

On March 31, 2026, the Jefferson County Planning Board reviewed the above project, after it was referred to the County for comment. The Board determined that the proposal does not raise significant county-wide or intercommunity concerns and is therefore mainly a local matter for your board to decide.

As part of its review, the Planning Board identified the following requirements:

- In reviewing the area variance, the local board should consider the benefit to the applicant as weighed against the detriment to the health, safety, and welfare of the community, using the five factors for an area variance as stated in NYS General City Law.
- The local board should ensure that the NYS Department of Transportation is consulted if there is any proposed work in the right-of-way.

In addition, the Board offers the following advisory comment to assist your review:

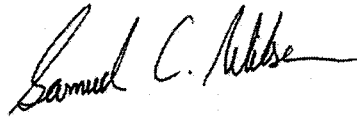
- The local board should ensure there is a shared access agreement to use the existing driveway on NYS Route 3.
- The local board should require the site plan to depict the location of the dumpster.

Please note that the advisory comments are not a condition of the County Planning Board's action. They are listed to assist the local board in its review of the project. The local board is free to make its final decision.

State law requires that the County Planning Board be notified of your board's action within thirty (30) days after a final decision.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samuel C. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Samuel C. Wilson
Community Development Coordinator



25 February 2026

Mr. Michael A. Lumbis
Planning and Community Development Director
City of Watertown
245 Washington Street, Room 305
Watertown, NY 13601

RE: Pete's Trattoria Parking Lot Expansion Variance Request

Tax Map P.N. 8-01-214.100

111 Breen Avenue

Sto Geo File: 2017-015.04

Mr. Lumbis –

On behalf of our client, Puccia Olive Oil Company LLC (POC – Geoff Puccia), Storino Geomatics, PLLC is submitting for approval of an Area Variance of City of Watertown Tax Map P.N. 8-01-214.100 (111 Breen Avenue). We understand that approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals will be required for an area variance at both side lot lines and front lot line of the portion of the property that abuts Arsenal Street for a proposed parking lot improvements project.

Project Description – As seen in the attached Conceptual Site Development Plan, the project includes improvements to property to increase the parking capacity for the existing “Pete’s Trattoria” restaurant. Currently the business relies on an easement on an adjoining parcel (across Breen Ave.) to fulfill its parking lot needs, and this parking lot expansion allows the restaurant to own their parking lot. Additionally, the adjoining business to the east of the proposed expansion, will utilize a portion of this expansion to facilitate parking for their business (shared parking agreement). The project will enter the Site Plan Approval process with the City of Watertown Planning Commission in the coming month.

Variance Request - Two (2) side yard parking and one (1) front yard Landscape and Buffer Requirement variances to support the project. As seen in the attached, the easterly side yard Landscape Buffer will be 0-feet to support the shared access and parking arrangement. The westerly side yard buffer will be 8.7-feet and the front yard parking lot buffer will be 7.5-feet and in alignment with the adjoining parking lot.

We are of the opinion that there will be no detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood or community if an area variance for these buffer requirements is granted. The following summarizes our understanding and opinion of applicable hardship tests for the action:

1. The variance will not produce or create an undesirable change in the character of the neighborhood or a detriment to nearby properties.
2. The benefit sought by the applicant (parking lot expansion) cannot be achieved by any other feasible alternative methods, other than an area variance.

3. The requested area variance is not substantial.
4. The proposed variance will not have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district.
5. The difficulty/action is self-created.


Attached please find the following for the Zoning Board of Appeals review (Note that these deliverables have been submitted electronically, through the City of Watertown's Portal, and will not be submitted as hard copies):

- Area Variance Application Form;
- Letter of Authorization;
- Conceptual Site Plan with variance requests clearly noted;
- Short Environmental Assessment Form;
- Project Parcel Deed;
- Existing Conditions Survey Plat, and
- Annotated Tax Map.

If you have any questions, comments, or require any additional information please contact me at

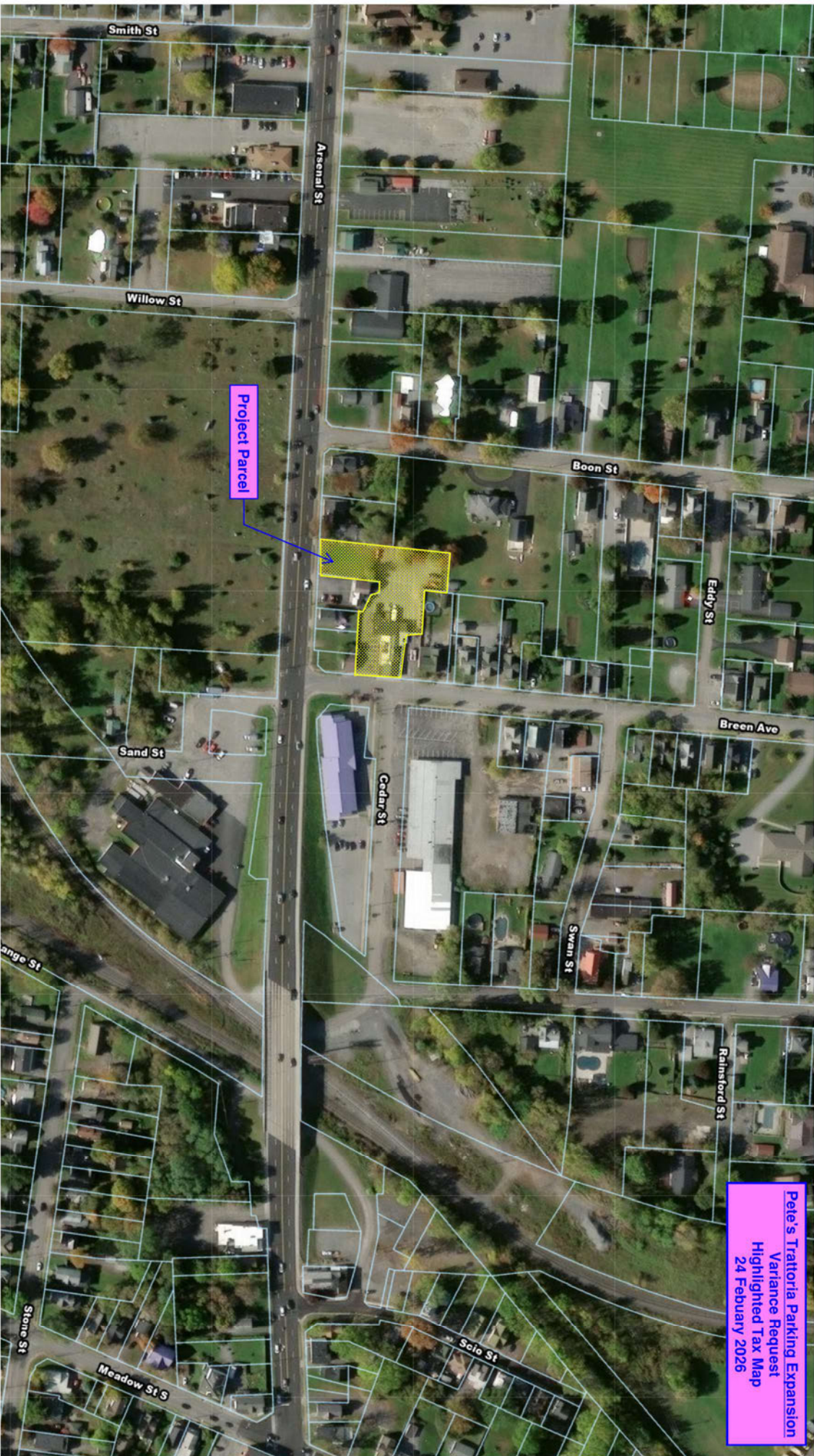
[REDACTED]

Respectfully Submitted,

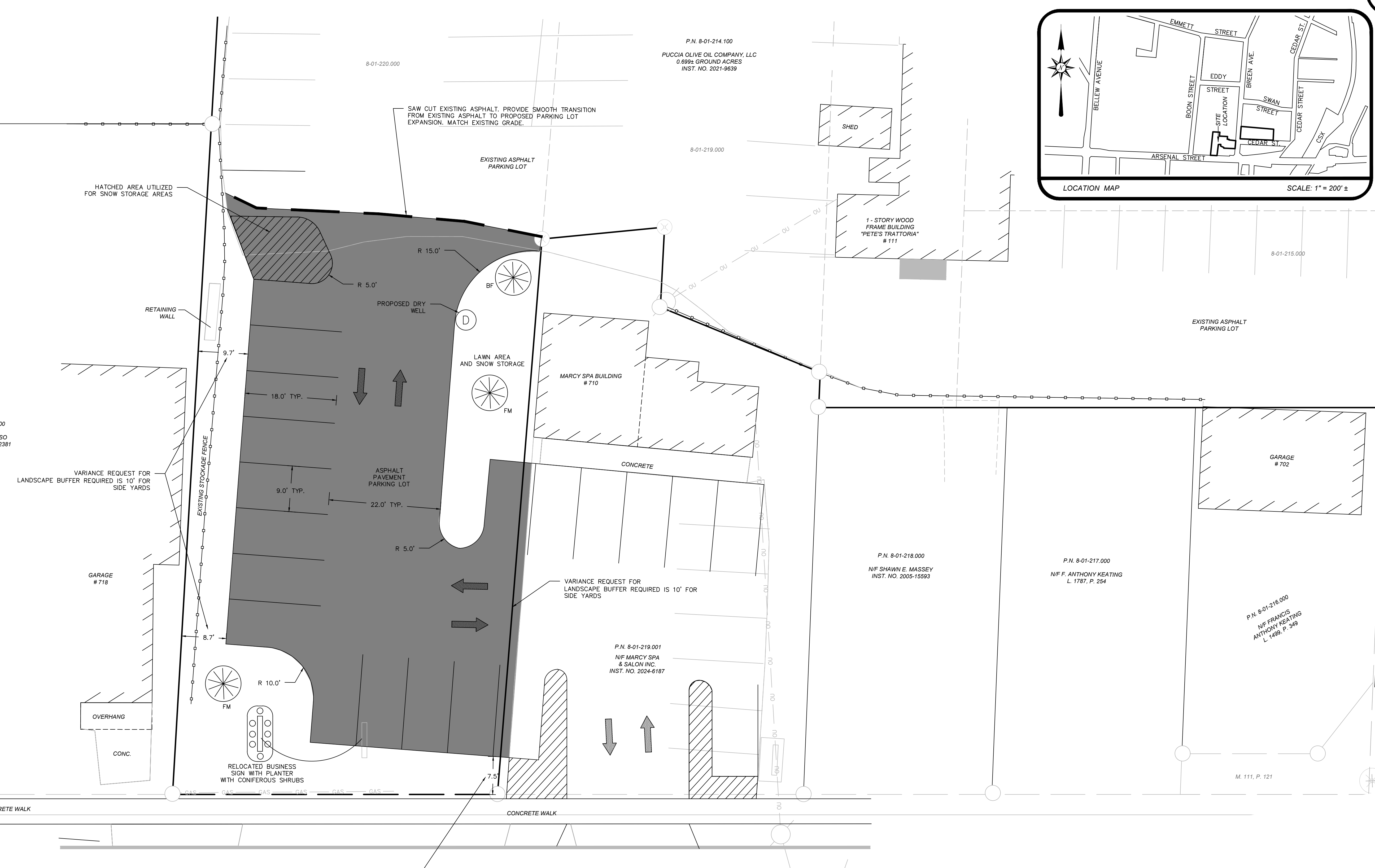
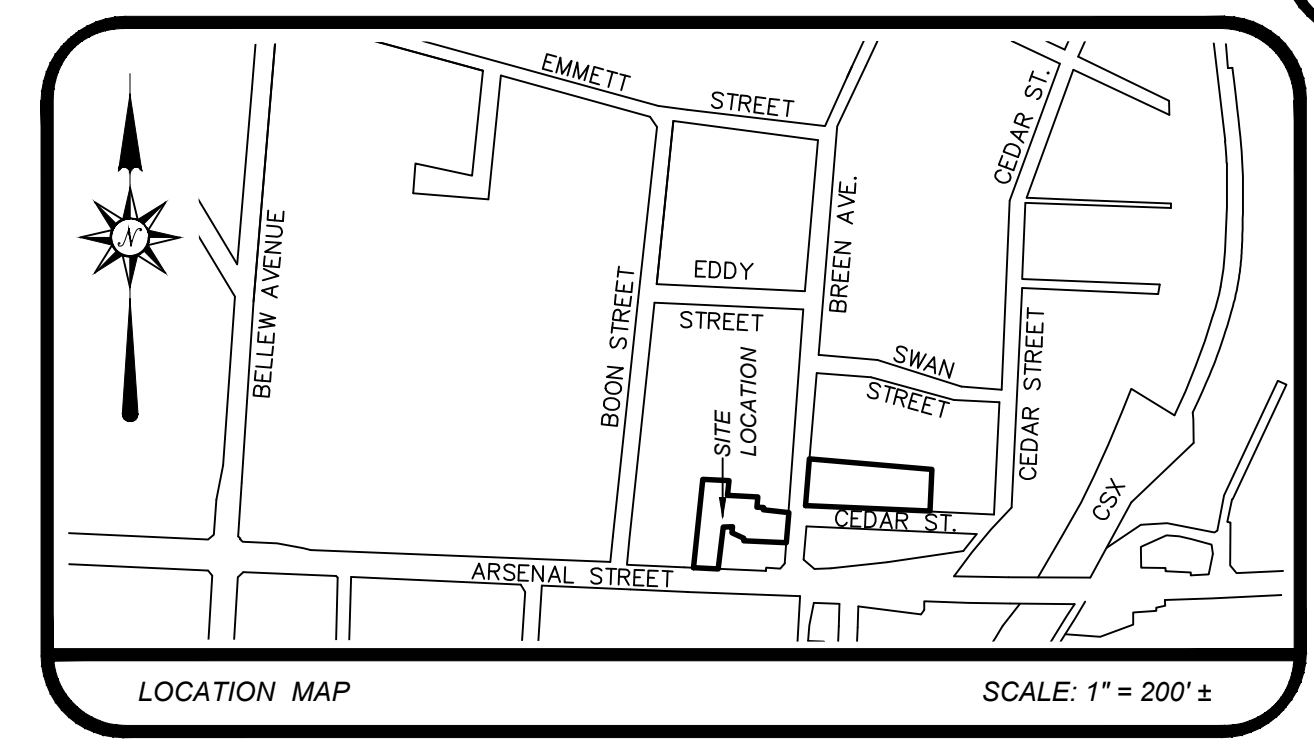
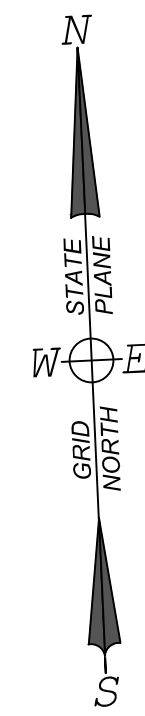


Thomas H. Ross

Attachments



Pete's Trattoria Parking Expansion
Variance Request
Highlighted Tax Map
24 February 2026



FOR APPROVALS ONLY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

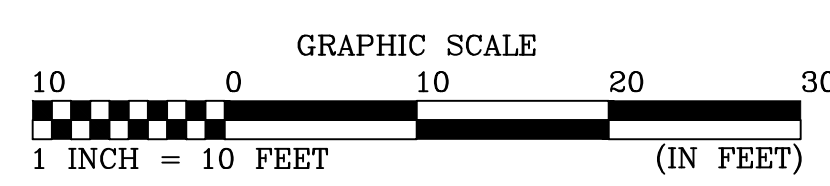
SITE AND LANDSCAPING PLAN
PETE'S TRATTORIA PARKING LOT EXPANSION

TAX MAP P.N. 8-01-214.100

111 BREEN AVENUE
COUNTY OF JEFFERSON

CITY OF WATERTOWN
STATE OF NEW YORK

- PROPOSED:**
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
 - LIGHT POLE
 - MAJOR CONTOUR
 - MINOR CONTOUR
 - UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC LINE
 - EDGE OF BRUSH / WOODS
 - SPOT ELEVATION
 - STORM CULVERT
 - TREES



LANDSCAPING TABLE

SYMBOL	TREE NAME - BOTANICAL AND/OR COMMON	SIZE
FM	ACER X FERMANNI / FREEMAN MAPLE	2" CALIPER
BF	ABIES BALSAMEA / BALSAM FIR	2" CALIPER



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HAYWARD BRADFORD ARTHUR
P.E. NO. 110862

STORINO GEOMATICS, PLLC
PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS
165 MULLIN STREET, WATERTOWN, NY 13601
STORINOGEOMATICS.COM

NY · NJ · PA · VT

DATE: 02/06/2026
SCALE: 1" = 10'
DRAWN BY: THR
CHECKED BY: THR/AMS/HBA
FILE NO. 2017-015.04
DWG. NO.
C101
1 OF 1

Short Environmental Assessment Form

Part 1 - Project Information


Instructions for Completing

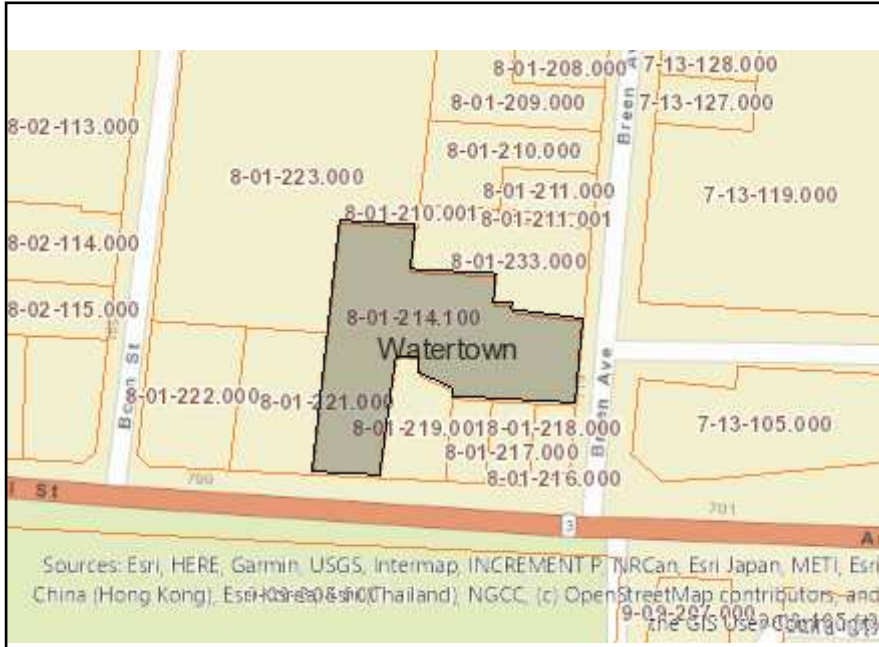
Part 1 – Project Information. The applicant or project sponsor is responsible for the completion of Part 1. Responses become part of the application for approval or funding, are subject to public review, and may be subject to further verification. Complete Part 1 based on information currently available. 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			
Name of Action or Project: Pete's Trattoria Parking Lot Expansion Project - Area Variance			
Project Location (describe, and attach a location map): 111 Breen Avenue - Watertown NY			
Brief Description of Proposed Action: The proposed project consists of the construction to expand the existing parking lot servicing Pete's Trattoria, a long standing restaurant in the City of Watertown NY. The project includes landscaping, site lighting, storm water utilities, among other appurtenances. This action is specifically for the area variances (3 total) required for the project.			
Name of Applicant or Sponsor: Puccia Olive Oil Company, LLC - Geoff Puccia	Telephone: [REDACTED]	E-Mail: [REDACTED]	
Address: 111 Breen Avenue			
City/PO: Watertown	State: NY	Zip Code: 13601	
1. Does the proposed action only involve the legislative adoption of a plan, local law, ordinance, administrative rule, or regulation? If Yes, attach a narrative description of the intent of the proposed action and the environmental resources that may be affected in the municipality and proceed to Part 2. If no, continue to question 2.		NO	YES
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the proposed action require a permit, approval or funding from any other government Agency? If Yes, list agency(s) name and permit or approval: Jefferson County Planning Board, City of Watertown Planning Commission, NYS DOT		NO	YES
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. a. Total acreage of the site of the proposed action? _____ 0.20 acres			
b. Total acreage to be physically disturbed? _____ 0.20 acres			
c. Total acreage (project site and any contiguous properties) owned or controlled by the applicant or project sponsor? _____ 0.64 acres			
4. Check all land uses that occur on, are adjoining or near the proposed action:			
5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural (non-agriculture) <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential (suburban)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic <input type="checkbox"/> Other(Specify):			
<input type="checkbox"/> Parkland			

5. Is the proposed action,	NO	YES	N/A
a. A permitted use under the zoning regulations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape?	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Is the site of the proposed action located in, or does it adjoin, a state listed Critical Environmental Area? If Yes, identify: _____	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	
8. a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Are public transportation services available at or near the site of the proposed action?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available on or near the site of the proposed action?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
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 <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
10. Will the proposed action connect to an existing public/private water supply? If No, describe method for providing potable water: _____ _____	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Will the proposed action connect to existing wastewater utilities? If No, describe method for providing wastewater treatment: _____ _____	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	
12. a. Does the project site contain, or is it substantially contiguous to, a building, archaeological site, or district which is listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or that has been determined by the Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to be eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places? b. Is the project site, or any portion of it, located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for archaeological sites on the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeological site inventory?	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
13. a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, contain wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, state or local agency? b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody? If Yes, identify the wetland or waterbody and extent of alterations in square feet or acres: _____ _____ _____	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

14. Identify the typical habitat types that occur on, or are likely to be found on the project site. Check all that apply:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Shoreline <input type="checkbox"/> Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural/grasslands <input type="checkbox"/> Early mid-successional <input type="checkbox"/> Wetland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban		
15. Does the site of the proposed action contain any species of animal, or associated habitats, listed by the State or Federal government as threatened or endangered? Indiana Bat, Northern Long-...	NO	YES
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16. Is the project site located in the 100-year flood plan?	NO	YES
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Will the proposed action create storm water discharge, either from point or non-point sources? If Yes, a. Will storm water discharges flow to adjacent properties? b. Will storm water discharges be directed to established conveyance systems (runoff and storm drains)? If Yes, briefly describe: _____ _____	NO	YES
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Does the proposed action include construction or other activities that would result in the impoundment of water or other liquids (e.g., retention pond, waste lagoon, dam)? If Yes, explain the purpose and size of the impoundment: _____ _____	NO	YES
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the location of an active or closed solid waste management facility? If Yes, describe: _____ _____	NO	YES
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the subject of remediation (ongoing or completed) for hazardous waste? If Yes, describe: _____ _____	NO	YES
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE</p> <p>Applicant/sponsor/name: <u>Puccia Olive Oil Company, LLC - Geoff Puccia</u> Date: <u>02/24/2026</u></p> <p>Signature: <u></u> For Puccia Olive Oil Company, LLC Title: <u>Owner</u></p>		



Disclaimer: The EAF Mapper is a screening tool intended to assist project sponsors and reviewing agencies in preparing an environmental assessment form (EAF). Not all questions asked in the EAF are answered by the EAF Mapper. Additional information on any EAF question can be obtained by consulting the EAF Workbooks. Although the EAF Mapper provides the most up-to-date digital data available to DEC, you may also need to contact local or other data sources to confirm data provided by the Mapper or to obtain data not provided by the Mapper.



Part 1 / Question 7 [Critical Environmental Area]	No
Part 1 / Question 12a [National or State Register of Historic Places or State Eligible Sites]	Yes
Part 1 / Question 12b [Archeological Sites]	No
Part 1 / Question 13a [Wetlands or Other Regulated Waterbodies]	Digital mapping data are not available or are incomplete. Refer to EAF Workbook.
Part 1 / Question 15 [Threatened or Endangered Animal]	Yes
Part 1 / Question 15 [Threatened or Endangered Animal - Name]	Indiana Bat, Northern Long-eared Bat
Part 1 / Question 16 [100 Year Flood Plain]	Digital mapping data are not available or are incomplete. Refer to EAF Workbook.
Part 1 / Question 20 [Remediation Site]	No