



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 31, 2025

To: Town of Shelter Island Town Board
Attn: Kristina Martin Majdisova

From: Kim Gennaro-Oancea, AICP CEP, Vice President
Katelyn Kaim, AICP, Senior Environmental Planner

Re: Site Plan Application – Review of Natural Resources, Cultural Resources and Pavement
Sylvester Manor Educational Farm, Inc., dba Sylvester Manor
Sylvester Manor House Exterior and Interior Restoration, and Site Improvements
80 North Ferry Road, Shelter Island, NY 11964

This firm has reviewed the above-referenced application for the purpose of assisting the Town of Shelter Island Town Board with site plan review under §109-3 of the Town Code. Specifically, the following documents have been reviewed:

- Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Approval (in part) of Special Permit dated October 27, 2025
- ZBA Application and various supplemental documents
- Site Plan Application with Short EAF dated August 7, 2025
- Sylvester Manor House Building Plans submitted August 13, 2025 (with various revision dates), as prepared by Architectural Preservation Studio, DPC
- Sylvester Manor Survey Base Map, last revised July 1, 2025, as prepared by TSPE

Site and Project Information

The subject property is approximately 236 acres and zoned AA Residential and B Business with the western portion of the site within the Near Shore and Peninsular Overlay District. The proposed action is to primarily occur on that portion of the site zoned AA Residential (with exception to underground utilities extending to Manwaring Road. The subject property is within the Peconic Bay and environs critical environmental area (CEA), contains and is adjacent to State-regulated tidal wetlands, and within the Sylvester Manor Historic District with three buildings listed as historic on the State and National Register of Historic Places (i.e., Sylvester Manor [10307.000758], Shelter Island Windmill [10307.000009] and Sylvester Manor: Creek Cottage [10307.000235]). The property is also located in Suffolk County NY Agricultural District 1.

As submitted by the applicant, Sylvester Manor Educational Farm, Inc. is a nonprofit organization formed in 2009 and has been granted numerous approvals from the Town supportive of ongoing operations and uses, including education, farming, cultural programming, residential, historic interpretation and preservation, land conservation, public access, and nonprofit administration.



The proposed site plan application includes exterior rehabilitation and interior renovations at the Sylvester Manor House for the purpose of accessibility requirements and modern building code regulations, including:

- (1) asbestos abatement.
- (2) removal of the 1960 cabana addition (north side of Sylvester Manor House).
- (3) upgrades to the mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire detection and suppression systems.
- (4) updates to the rear 1908 addition for modern and efficient program and residential spaces artists and scholars in the Sylvester Manor Center for History and Heritage.
- (5) construction of ADA-compliant access entrances (external and internal), including new exterior ramp.

The proposed site plan application also includes the following site improvements:

- (6) replacement of the existing conventional sanitary system with Innovative/Alternative On-site Wastewater Treatment System (I/A OWTS) tank utilizing the existing leaching pools.
- (7) installation of three (3) ADA spaces (van [1] and standard [2]).
- (8) replacement-in-kind of select portions of existing brick paver walkways as well as installation of new brick paver walkways to the north side of the Manor House.
- (9) removal of parking area to be seeded as well as removal of select landscaping and trees (Boxwoods, Japanese Yew, and privet).
- (10) removal of existing propane tank and all subgrade units.
- (11) relocation of existing generator, diesel fuel tank, heat pump condenser unit, and transformer.
- (12) proposed temporary stabilized construction access road and contractor parking area.

Pursuant to the Short EAF dated August 7, 2025, the total land disturbance is approximately 0.5 acre. Pursuant to the site development plans, the proposed action includes tree and landscape protection, construction fencing, silt fencing and hay bales for erosion and sedimentation control.

Based on information provided by the application at the initial review meeting held October 29, 2025, a grant has been awarded to the application for the installation of a new entry driveway with adequate width to accommodate entering and existing traffic. This improvement project is being considered separately as it is subject to review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). As part of this application, the existing access would be utilized in its current configuration.

Due to the nature of the uses occurring on the subject property, a special permit was sought from the ZBA. On October 27, 2025, the ZBA approved the special permit under §133-7(D)(5), in part, for only those uses that are of the same general character as an educational institution that are permitted under §133-7(D)(2). The ZBA approval includes a table of the permitted uses and excluded uses (easter egg hunt, wellness programs, and private events [small and large gatherings]).

Review of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) indicates that the proposed project, assigned as "25PR00274 - Sylvester Manor House Exterior Restoration and Interior Adaptive Reuse as the History and Heritage Center" has been reviewed, and the CRIS indicates the project as "closed." Pursuant to the OPRHP correspondence dated March 7, 2025, the proposed action will have no impact on historic properties. As provided by the applicant, the proposed rehabilitation of the Manor House was awarded the NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) Parks and Historic Perseveration and National Park Service *Save America's Treasures* grant. Further, it is subject to review by SHPO and will result in a 25-year NYS Preservation Covenant.



It is acknowledged that the proposed project has been reviewed for its impact on historic resources; however, as the subject property is also within an archaeological sensitive area, the applicant should provide earlier correspondence from OPRHP that may have addressed this issue.

The site plan includes a 100-foot (ft) wetland setback delineation from the tidal wetlands noted as flagged on November 9, 2023, with all proposed activity to occur landward thereof. As the wetlands are tidal, the State jurisdictional area is either 300 ft or to the 10 ft contour. Pursuant to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Letter of Non-Jurisdiction dated April 29, 2024, the proposed renovations to the Manor House shown on page C-2 of plans dated April 10, 2024, would occur landward of the 10 ft contour and, therefore, outside the limit of NYSDEC jurisdiction. The proposed site plan shows that contractor parking is proposed within an area just outside the 100 ft setback line and landward of the 12 ft contour. The applicant should provide the site plan that was provided to the NYSDEC in order for the Town Board to confirm that all elements of the proposed action have been presented to NYSDEC.

The NYSDEC Non-Jurisdictional Determination identifies the potential presence of the Northern Long-Eared Bat, which restricts the removal of trees to occur only between December 1 and February 28. It is noted that the Project Landscape Plan – Removal indicates select trees for removal on the west and south sides of the building that are not identified on the Project Landscape Plan – Existing.

Comments as they related to Natural Features, Cultural Resources, and Pavement:

1. The potential presence of the Northern Long-Eared Bat restricts the removal of trees to occur only between December 1 and February 28.
2. Applicant should provide earlier correspondence from OPRHP to confirm that the proposed land disturbance has been reviewed and a no impact determination for archaeological resources has been obtained from OPRHP.
3. Applicant should provide the site plan that was reviewed by the NYSDEC in order for the Town Board to confirm that all elements of the proposed action have been presented to the NYSDEC.
4. The Project Landscape Plan – Removal indicates select trees for removal on the west and south sides of the building that are not identified on the Project Landscape Plan – Existing.



SEQRA Classification

The proposed action before the Town Board includes building renovations and other site improvements for the approved special permit use (i.e., "educational programming and workshops focused on arts, culture, and history"). The proposed projects appear to be classified as Type II pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.5(c)(1), (2), (8), (13) and (18) (and §60-13 of the Town Code), as they consist of:

(1) maintenance or repair involving no substantial changes in an existing structure or facility;

(2) replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or facility, in kind, on the same site, including upgrading buildings to meet building, energy, or fire codes unless such action meets or exceeds any of the thresholds in section 617.4 of this Part;

(8) maintenance of existing landscaping or natural growth;

(13) extension of utility distribution facilities, including gas, electric, telephone, cable, water, and sewer connections to render service in approved subdivisions or in connection with any action on this list; and/or

(18) reuse of a residential or commercial structure, or of a structure containing mixed residential and commercial uses, where the residential or commercial use is a permitted use under the applicable zoning law or ordinance, including permitted by special use permit, and the action does not meet or exceeds any of the thresholds in section 617.4 of this Part.

cc: Thomas Crouch, Esq. (via electronic mail)

