

Building construction at Mattituck marina will require 4,500 hauler truck trips through Riverhead to remove excavated soils



Image: Dunn Engineering Associates Traffic Impact Study

By **Denise Civiletti**

Mar 15, 2023, 4:12 pm

Southold Town is studying the potential adverse impacts of a controversial proposal to build two large storage buildings at Strong's Yacht Center on Mattituck Inlet that will require the transit of 135,000 cubic yards of excavated materials by tractor-trailers through the Town of Riverhead.

The excavated materials will be transported from the development site in 4,500 total trips by 30-yard hauler trucks over a period of approximately six to seven months, according to the developer's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The truck routing plan states that trucks carrying excavated materials would leave the development site, head west on Sound Avenue to Northville Turnpike, then

south on Northville Turnpike to Route 58, and west on Route 58 to the westbound entry ramp of the Long Island Expressway at its terminus. Empty trucks would return to the site along the same route, in reverse.

The Southold Planning Board on Monday accepted the revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Strong's Yacht Center as adequate for public review and comment. The board also scheduled a May 15 public hearing on the DEIS at Southold Town Hall. (See DEIS below.)

The site plan application of Strong's Yacht Center seeks approval to construct two boat storage buildings of 52,500 square feet and 49,000, along with associated improvements, to support the existing operations of the facility.

The applicant proposes to excavate and remove soils from a wooded sloped area on a presently undeveloped portion of the 32.6-acre site, to eliminate a "significant elevation change" of ± 43 feet, and level the grade of the site, according to a Southold Planning Department staff report. That will require the excavation and removal of 135,000 cubic yards of materials.

The materials removal will take place on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. by 40 trucks per day, with a projected start date of mid-December 2023 and a projected end date in June 2024, according to the DEIS, which was prepared by P.W. Grosser Consulting of Bohemia.

While the truck traffic generated by the construction of the site will be "substantial," the DEIS states, "The route is within the capacity of the roadways to carry the truck traffic."

"It should be recognized that trucks are already using the roadways that make up the project's designated truck route," the DEIS states.

The trucks that will be used to haul excavated material from the site will have an overall length (the truck and trailer) of 55 feet, the document states. The width of the vehicle will be eight feet, which is the maximum allowed by state law. The haul

vehicles will have an empty weight of 32,000 pounds (16 tons) and a gross vehicle weight of approximately 107,000 pounds (53.5 tons), according to the DEIS.

Riverhead Police Chief David Hegermiller, who heads the town's traffic safety committee, was unaware of the project but said he would be sure to review the DEIS to evaluate the proposal's potential impacts on local roads.

"I'm definitely concerned about increasing truck traffic on Sound Avenue," Hegermiller said in an interview. "I'd much rather they use state roads," he said.

The size and weight of the vehicles is a concern for wear and tear on Sound Avenue, Hegermiller said, as well as the potential to contribute to congestion at the already-difficult intersection of Sound Avenue and Northville Turnpike. The intersection of the narrow, two-lane roads is a persistent bottleneck, the chief noted. However, he said, oil trucks to and from United Riverhead Terminal in Northville negotiate the intersection every day.

The actual time of year the excavation takes place will be a big factor in its local impacts, Hegermiller said. "If it ends up being done in the fall, it would be bad, because that's the peak traffic time on Sound Avenue," he said. The developer's plan is currently to haul excavated materials from December 2023 to June 2024, but the actual dates will likely depend on when final approvals might be issued by Southold Town.

The Town of Riverhead is an interested party in the application and was provided with copies of the documents required by the State Environmental Quality Review Act during the course of Southold Town's review of the application to date, according to correspondence from the Planning Board in the application file. The file is available in its entirety on the Southold Town website, where all town records are posted by the town clerk.

Copies of the draft scope of review and the final scope of review approved by the Southold Planning Board were provided to the Riverhead town supervisor in

October 2020 and February 2021, respectively, according to the correspondence in the file. There is no record of any comment from the Town of Riverhead in the record.

Riverhead Supervisor Yvette Aguiar did not respond to requests for comment for this story.

The adopted scope of review (see document, below) did not require the developer to consult with the Riverhead Town highway superintendent or chief of police in preparation of its DEIS.

The truck routing plan, which traverses the length of the Town of Riverhead, reflects the “assumed route” of truck traffic during the excavation phase of the project, because the disposal destination for the excavated materials has not yet been determined. The destination will depend on the quality of the material and its ability for reuse, according to the DEIS. However, the document states, it is “assumed that all material will be transported to points west” of the development site.

According to the DEIS, truck traffic will not “cause vibrations that would impact adjacent historical structures or residential homes.”

The DEIS concludes that “the proposed action would not result in significant adverse traffic, noise, or vibration impacts associated with construction-related activities or operations.

“Additionally, mitigation measures have been identified for the protection of structures and avoidance of impacts to roadways.

“Overall, based on the above, no significant adverse community character impacts would result from the proposed action,” it states.

Public comments on the DEIS should be submitted to the Southold Town Planning Board, P.O. Box 1179, Southold, NY 11971. According to state SEQRA

regulations, the public comment period must remain open for at least 10 days after closing of the public hearing on the DEIS.

The survival of local journalism depends on your support.

We are a small family-owned operation. You rely on us to stay informed, and we depend on you to make our work possible. Just a few dollars can help us continue to bring this important service to our community.

Support RiverheadLOCAL today.



Denise Civiletti

Denise is a veteran local reporter, editor, attorney and former Riverhead Town councilwoman. Her work has been recognized with numerous awards, including investigative reporting and writer of the year awards from the N.Y. Press Association. She is a founder, owner and co-publisher of this website. [Email Denise.](#)
