

Date: 3.17.21  
To: **Hudson Planning Board**  
Betsy Gramkow, Chair  
Larry Bowne, Laura Margolis, Stephen Steim, Clark Wieman, John Cody, Theresa Joyner  
From: **Hudson Conservation Advisory Council**  
Hilary Hillman, member,  
Michael O'Hara, Chair,  
David Konigsberg, Shannon Dosemagen, Tom O'Dowd, Marie Balle, members  
Re: **Proposed Prospect Parking Lot (CMH)**

Dear Planning Board:

Thank you for all that you do in reviewing developments and proposals for the city; with your respect for the past, concern for the present and eye toward the future your work is extremely important and pivotal in the progress of Hudson.

Regarding the proposed design for the Columbia Memorial Health parking lot on Prospect Avenue:

- Is a parking lot the highest, best use of the property? it may well be.
- Is this the best design for a parking lot in 2021? No, we do not believe so. There are many better ways to design for now and for the future.

#### **Storm Water Run-off**

Although the applicant states in the EIS that the adjoining properties will not be affected by storm water run-off, it is our position that any large expanse of asphalt being considered in the City of Hudson plan for a future of more and more torrential storms. Maybe making a parking lot there will not create a worse storm water run-off situation, but the design does nothing to improve an existing storm water problem, and there is opportunity to do so.

We feel that this parking area could be much better designed with the future of the city and the hospital needs in mind. There are many ways to plan parking lots to mitigate, and in fact, absorb storm water right at the site. Such mitigations could include **bioswales**. A bioswale is a 12" deep ditch between parking rows with vegetation that allow capture of the storm water, they divert the water into the ground and away from the sewer system. Thus, not adding the over-burdened city's water treatment facility. It is possible to include bioswales between parking rows and surrounding the lot without loss of parking spaces and without creating snowplowing obstacles. Please see attached examples.

#### **Heat Islands**

Parking lots covered in asphalt and metal cars create "Heat Islands". The cars absorb and give off the heat, as does the asphalt. This is not good for the environment; it adds to global warming. To mitigate the heat generation while absorbing Co2, it is strongly recommended, and fervently hoped for, that CMH will plant native species trees in and around the parking lot. This would require selecting areas in the bioswales that have appropriate depth into the earth that have been filled with **structural soil** which will both sustain the trees and have the rigidity to withstand the parking lot use.

#### **Asphalt alternatives**

There are also asphalt alternatives. One could choose structural soil and porous pavers. To see a good example of this, one just need drive north on Route 66 and check the parking lot at the Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District (1024 NY-66, Ghent, NY 12075). Also please see examples attached.

### **Consider E-vehicles**

As people upgrade their private vehicles more and more they are choosing hybrids or 100% electric cars. It is our hope that CMH will keep this in mind and have charging stations for their staff. Since there is already electric on site and it will be needed for lighting, there will not be a huge cost to plan e-vehicle charging stations from the get-go; it will be more expensive to do it later.

### **Generating Some Juice**

While the site in this application being reviewed at this time would not be ideal for a **Solar Panel Carport**, we include the option here to illustrate possibilities for other CMH properties. Solar panel carports reduce the heat island effect that the paving and cars create; while sheltering and shading the cars the solar panels generate electricity for the facility, the lighting of the lot and the E-vehicle chargers. CMH could consider this concept for the top level of their patient parking garage or many of their other properties.

### **Neighborhood and Aesthetics**

One of the best aspects of living in Hudson is that CMH is right here, in our neighborhood, wherever one lives in this small city, CMH is “in the neighborhood”. Columbia Memorial Health creates jobs, is there in an emergency, offers wonderful health services and is a great member of the community.

We ask that CMH please keep in mind the nature of our shared “neighborhood” with appropriate sidewalks, street crossings, landscaping and lighting to retain the sensibility of this is a neighborhood, “people live here”, as opposed to “cars park here”.

The building on the site is not a special example of mid-century architecture, it is one *of* a million, not one *in* a million. The edifice was a cookie-cutter, cost-effective solution to a need that happened to be built in the mid-century. We assume that the structure drains money from CMH operating costs at a good clip. Surely, it cannot be properly and cost-effectively brought up to current code to meet energy efficiency and health standards of 2021. Well designed parking could be the best use of the land. It is allowed, CMH deems it is necessary, many residents would deem a CMH parking lot necessary, *but let's get it right, let's encourage building with the grandchildren of our grandchildren in mind.*

The demolition will be expensive, building a state-of-the-art parking lot will be expensive. There is savings in not having the old building to maintain and we are urging that Columbia Memorial consider a better, future oriented, environmentally friendly solution to the parking need. For cost savings CMH can also explore **NYS DEC Green Infrastructure** incentives such as the **Green Innovation Grant Program** that has a sub-category for Green Stormwater Infrastructure.

As we build out, renew or repurpose properties we must set aside short-term savings and think of long-term investment in our community, we must think about the health of the planet and the health of our citizens.

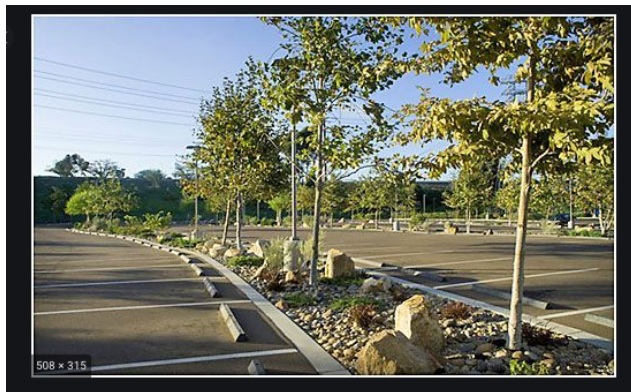
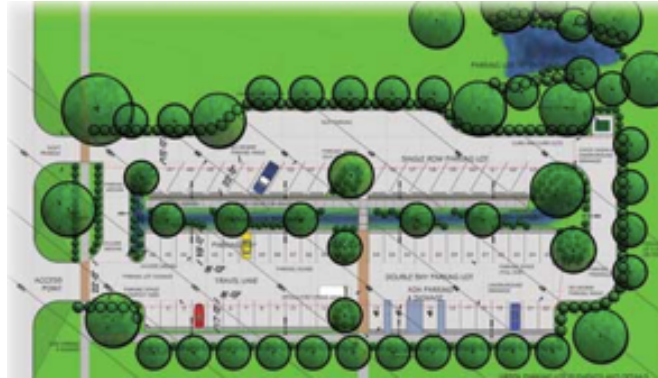
CMH spends a lot of ad dollars to create the image of “Green” and “Health”; this project could be a showcase of putting that into solid practice. An eco-friendly parking lot design will garner respect and be a very positive, pro-active capital improvement.

### **Thank you,**

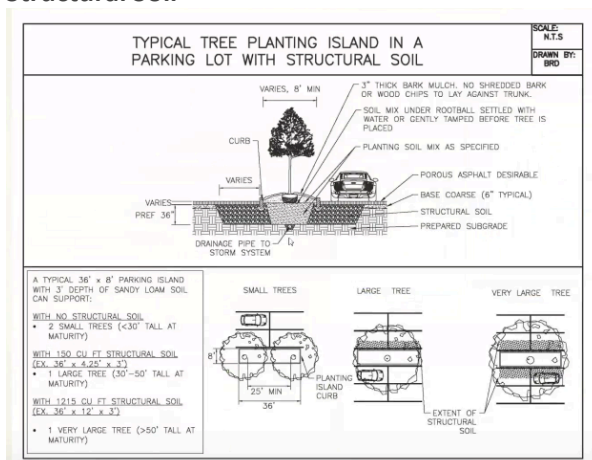
Hilary Hillman, Michael O'Hara, David Konigsberg, Shannon Dosemagen, Tom O'Dowd & Marie Balle  
City of Hudson Conservation Advisory Council

Please see attached photos on the next pages.

## Bioswales

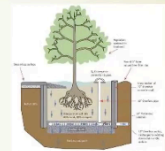


## Structural Soil



## Building a Better Parking Lot – Control Heat and Drought Stress


- Require adequate soil volumes and quality
- Require increased planting area (25%)
  - Give incentive for upgrades
- Suggest Storm Water Swales
- Suggest Structural Soil and Porous Pavement





## Permeable Pavement





# Permeable pavement

Feel at home with an environmentally friendly driveway

Next time it rains, look out your window and watch the water and contaminants from the road drain into the sewers and contaminate our water supply.

"Green pavement," a relatively new concept in green building, is a permeable and porous pavement that absorbs rainwater instead of repelling it. It combines the load-carrying capacity we expect of paved areas with the water-infiltration qualities of natural ground cover.

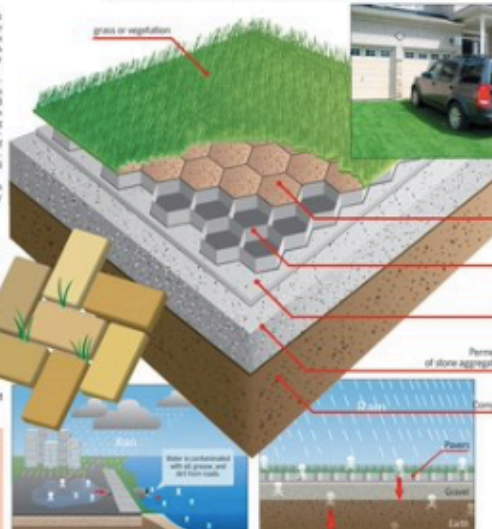
Here's a look at how this environmentally friendly setup works.

**There are three types of permeable pavements:**

- 1. Plastic pavers:** A plastic hexagonal grid in which grass or other vegetation can grow.
- 2. Concrete pavers:** Concrete blocks with spaces in between them for better drainage.
- 3. Asphalt/concrete:** Fine particles are left out of it to make it more porous.

**Cons of green pavement**

- Pavers can be a problem for snowplows. Plastic blades can catch on corner of pavers and rip it up.
- Prone to chipping.
- Porous pavement is more expensive than traditional pavement.



**Common uses for permeable pavement:**

- Driveways
- Emergency access lanes
- Public parks
- Alleys
- Parking lots
- Bike or walking paths.

**Did you know?**

Green pavement is strong enough to hold a helicopter. A 100-sq-ft area of lawn at Buckingham Palace was replaced with a turf system for a helicopter landing pad. Helicopters, which had been previously landing on the lawn, were causing considerable damage to the area which required constant repair.

**Pros of green pavement**

- Green pavement is permeable and porous — absorbs water instead of repelling it.
- Water is returned to the ground instead of being washed into the sewers.
- Many green pavement products are made from recycled materials.
- Can alleviate the need for gutters and storm sewers.
- Doesn't ice up as quickly in the winter as water does not pool on the surface.

**Traditional Pavement**


Rainfall (Water runs to roads that run into the sewers)

• Contributes to heating, erosion, water pollution or water depletion

• Contributes to ground subsidence from soil compaction, soil salts

**Permeable Pavement**

Water penetrates, so it is difficult when it rains through the pavement to a storm sewer or ground. The grid or stone acts as a buffer while allowing the water to infiltrate.



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## Solar Carport

