

APPENDIX U

Housing Needs Study

Housing Needs Assessment

Patrick Farm

Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, New York

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**Town of Ramapo
Housing Market Analysis**

Introduction

The Applicant, Scenic Development LLC, is proposing the construction of 497 residential units including 87 single family homes and 410 multifamily units composed of 314 market rate townhouse units for sale, 72 workforce condominium flats for sale and 24 rental units to meet the needs of community service workers. The 208.5 acre project site, known locally as Patrick Farm, is located southeast of US Route 202 and west of NYS Route 306 in the unincorporated Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, NY. The entire portion of the site to be developed is currently zoned R-40. The project sponsor is requesting a zone change on 61.3 acres in the center portion of the site to provide multifamily housing, consistent with the need for a diversity of housing unit types and price points to meet the needs of the general population including workforce and community service workers. The project concept includes an envelope of single family homes along the perimeter of the site designed to serve as a transition between the surrounding single family neighborhoods with the proposed multifamily housing units proposed in the center of the project site.

Purpose of the Project Sponsor

It is the purpose and objective of the project sponsor to construct a high-quality mixed density development that would provide varied opportunities of both housing type and price point, in the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, through the construction of multifamily attached and single family detached dwellings. The site is well suited for residential development due to its proximity to major transportation corridors, and the availability of public water, sewer, and other infrastructure.

Public Need

Table 1 summarizes select US Census population characteristics for the Town of Ramapo. The Town of Ramapo had a population of 108,905 persons in 2000. Based upon the American Community Housing Survey published by the US Census, the 2007 population was estimated at 112,980.

Table 1 Town of Ramapo Population Statistics			
Population Characteristic	2000	2007*	Percent Change
Total Population	108,905	112,980	+ 3.7 %
Total Households	31,561	31,676	+ 0.4%
Average Household Size	3.37	3.49	+ 3.6 %
Average Family Size	3.82	4.04	+ 5.8 %
Total School-Age Children	29,323	29,700	+ 1.4 %
Total Housing Units	32,422	33,434	+ 3.1 %
Percent Single Family Units	62.5%	61.2%	- 2.1 %
Median Value - Single Family Owner Occupied Housing unit	\$229,619	\$469,300	+ 104 %
Median Household Income	\$60,352	\$68,388	+ 13.3 %
Median Family Income	\$67,004	\$80,745	+ 20.5 %
Source - US Census Bureau; *American Community Survey 3-Year estimate			

As can be seen from a review of Table 1 the population of the Town has grown by approximately 3.7% since the 2000 census which would equate to approximately one half of one percent annually. The average family size has grown by almost six percent indicating that family size has experienced a modest increase in this area. The single unit housing type comprises more than 60 percent of the current housing stock in the Town of Ramapo. The most notable change since the 2000 Census, is the increase in median value of a single family home which has doubled since 2000. Comparatively, median income has grown by less than 21 percent.

As defined in the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Ramapo has a need for a variety of housing. The Comprehensive Plan states " While the diversity of housing stock has increased slightly over the last decade, there is still a growing need to significantly increase the variety of housing within the unincorporated area of the Town, ...Many families cannot afford to purchase or rent a home within the unincorporated area of Ramapo, partly due to the relatively little diversity in the housing stock."

The Patrick Farm project is intended to meet some of the Town of Ramapo's need for additional housing, including an increased diversity of housing unit types and price points to meet the needs of the general population. The diversity of housing and the range of purchase prices proposed at Patrick Farm will provide housing for a wider range of income levels than currently exists.

Market Overview

The Town of Ramapo is located in the Hudson Valley Region, a popular residential area due to its proximity to both New York City and northern New Jersey. As shown in Table 2, Ramapo is the largest town in Rockland County and includes more than one-third of its total population.

Rockland County's growth rate between 1990 and 2000 was among the highest in the state. Ramapo's central location and excellent access makes it an attractive choice for residents of the suburbs north and west of New York - New Jersey Metropolitan Region.

The 2007 American Community Housing Survey reported a population of 295,682 for Rockland County, a 3.11 percent increase over the 2000 population of 286,753. As previously mentioned, and shown in Table 2, the population of the Town of Ramapo grew at slightly more than this percentage rate during this time period from 108,905 in 2000 to 112,980 in 2007.

Table 2 Rockland County Population by Town				
	2000	2007	Population Growth	Percent Growth
Rockland County	286,753	295,682	8,929	+ 3.11 %
Town of Ramapo	108,905	112,980	4,075	+ 3.74%
Town of Clarkstown	82,082	82,376	294	+ 0.35%
Town of Orangetown	47,711	52,057	4,346	+ 9.11 %
Town of Haverstraw	33,811	33,778	-33	- 0.1 %
Town of Stony Point	14,244	n/a	n/a	n/a
Source: US Census and American Community Housing Survey				

For the purpose of this study, data for the Town of Ramapo, including all villages, was reviewed to determine housing needs. It is acknowledged however, that the market area for any housing project in this region extends outside the boundaries of the Town, and most likely, outside the boundaries of Rockland County.

Town of Ramapo Population and Household Trends

Table 3 shows existing population data from the 1990 and 2000 census, and current 2008 population estimates which were projected to the year 2013 to determine future population trends in this area.

Table 3				
Town of Ramapo* Population Projection 2000 - 2013				
Population Characteristic	1990	2000	2008	2013
Total Population	93,861	108,905	114,808	117,801
Total Households	28,554	31,561	32,965	33,827
Average Household Size	3.2	3.37	3.40	3.40
Average Family Size	3.65	3.82	3.89	3.90
Total School-Age Children	31,184	39,750	41,101	40,759
Total Housing Units	29,794	32,422	34,146	35,162
Median Value - Single Family Owner Occupied Housing unit	\$216,214	\$220,619	\$417,559	\$430,262
Median Household Income	\$48,523	\$60,406	\$78,768	\$97,719
Average Household Income	\$59,362	\$77,233	\$106,192	\$142,910

*Includes all Villages
 Source; US Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing ESRI Forecasts for 2008 and 2013

Population growth, which has been experienced in this area, is expected to grow to a projected Town of Ramapo population of 117,801 in 2013, representing an 8.2 percent increase over 2000. Between 2000 and 2008, the number of Ramapo households increased from 31,561 to 32,965, an increase of 4.5 percent. By 2013, the number of households is expected to increase by over 7 percent to 33,827.

It should be noted that Rockland County has successfully challenged the Census Bureau's population estimates for the past three years as being too low. Rockland County data, based upon building permit and Certificate of Occupancy information, indicate the official County population estimate should be increased by more than 500 persons. Thus, the census data for the Town of Ramapo may be slightly understated.

As Table 3 shows the population in this area has steadily increased over the past eight years and is projected to continue to increase at approximately 0.5 percent annually resulting in a Town of Ramapo population of 117,801 persons in 2013. This equates to a population increase of approximately 3,000 persons over the next five years. Based upon the current average household size of 3.4, which is expected to remain constant through 2013, an additional 880 households would need to be accommodated in the Town of Ramapo. Current homeowner vacancy rates range from two to three percent indicating for all practical purposes, full housing occupancy.

Table 3 illustrates that the number of school age children and the average family size have been increasing and are expected to continue to remain at these levels. According to the US Census, as shown in Table 4, the total school age population represents more than 35

percent of the total population in the Town of Ramapo. Persons of childbearing age, ages 20 to 54 represent more than 42 percent of the population, thus 78 percent of the population are either children or persons of childbearing age.

Table 4 Population by Age Town of Ramapo 2000-2008							
	2000	Percent	2008	Percent	2013	Percent	2000-2013 Percent Growth
Total	108,905	100%	114,808	100%	117,801	100%	8.2%
Age 0 to 4	10,346	9.5%	11,366	9.9%	12,251	10.4%	15.6%
Age 5 to 9	10,455	9.6%	10,103	8.8%	10,013	8.5%	(4.2)%
Age 10 to 14	10,237	9.4%	10,103	8.8%	9,424	8.0%	(7.9)%
Age 15 to 19	8,712	8.0%	9,529	8.3%	9,071	7.7%	4.1%
Total School Age Population		36.5%		35.8%		34.6%	
Age 20 to 24	6,534	6.0%	7,807	6.8%	8,246	7.0%	26.2%
Age 25 to 34	12,960	11.9%	13,318	11.6%	14,490	12.3%	11.8%
Age 35 to 44	15,356	14.1%	13,892	12.1%	12,840	10.9%	(16.4)%
Age 45 to 54	14,049	12.9%	14,466	12.6%	14,961	12.7%	6.5%
Total Population 20 to 54		44.9%		43.1%		42.9%	
Age 55 to 64	9,257	8.5%	11,481	10.0%	12,251	10.4%	32.3%
Age 65 to 74	6,099	5.6%	6,544	5.7%	7,304	6.2%	19.8%
Age 75 to 84	3,485	3.2%	4,248	3.7%	4,476	3.8%	28.4%
Age 85 +	1,634	1.5%	2,067	1.8%	2,356	2.0%	44.1%

Source: 2000 US Census of Population and Housing; ESRI Forecasts for 2008 and 2013
Numbers may not add due to rounding

There are two school districts which serve the students in the Town, East Ramapo Central and Ramapo Central. A review of data from these two school districts confirm that the population of school age children is more than 30,000 students. Table 5 shows the school enrollments for both public and private schools for the Ramapo and East Ramapo Central School Districts over the past three years. The East Ramapo School district is unique in that more than 67 percent of the students attend private schools.

Table 5 Town of Ramapo - School Enrollments					
East Ramapo Central Schools			Ramapo Central Schools		Total
School Year	Public School Students	Private School Students	Public School Students	Private School Students	Total Students
2005-2006	8,765	16,178	4,975	883	30,801
2006-2007	8,665	15,999	4,937	852	30,453
2007-2008	8,394	16,765	4,954	1,189	31,302

Source: New York State Department of Education, Three Year Enrollment Summary

Average family size in Ramapo is increasing from 3.65 in 1999 to a projected 3.9 in 2013. As shown in Table 6, in the Town of Ramapo in 1990, the average family size was 3.65 persons. By 2000, it was 3.82. It is currently 3.89 in 2008 and it is projected to be 3.9 by 2013. Families are growing in Ramapo and therefore the commensurate need for housing to accommodate larger families.

Table 6 Town of Ramapo - Average Family Size	
Year	Average Family Size
1999	3.65
2000	3.82
2008	3.89
2013	3.90

Housing Market Trends

The Ramapo Housing Market has grown since 2000. The number of residential building permits between 2000 and 2008 for Town of Ramapo and for Rockland County are shown in Table 6. The current housing stock in Ramapo is predominantly single - family (over 61 percent). New home construction has consisted primarily of detached single family homes. This illustrates both the continued demand for housing in this area and the lack of alternatives in the housing options available (i.e. multifamily options).

Table 6 Residential Building Permits Individual Units 2000 - 2008 Town of Ramapo* and Rockland County		
	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
	Total Units	Total Units
2000	60	n/a
2001	81	n/a
2002	42	n/a
2003	71	n/a
2004	72	312
2005	86	313
2006	77	411
2007	261	468
2008	186	277

Source: 2000 US Census. and Tim Miller Associates
 *Unincorporated Town only
 n/a - data not available for the selected time period.

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the vacancy rate in Rockland County in 2000 was 2.4% for owner occupied units and 0.4% for rental units. Locally in the Town of Ramapo the vacancy rate was 2.7% for owner occupied units and 0.8% for rental units. At that time, there were only 861 units, owned or rented, vacant in the Town that were not for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This is an extremely ‘tight’ market. Nationally, vacancy rates have been in the range of 10% in recent years according to the National Association of Home Builders.

In 2000, median housing value in Ramapo was \$220,619, which was close to double the national average median value of \$119,600. In Ramapo, by 2008 the estimated median housing value had jumped to \$417,559, representing a 189 percent increase compared to 2000. During this same period median family income grew from \$60,406 to \$78,768, or by about 30 percent. With housing costs far outstripping growth in income, more affordable housing options are increasingly important. The Town of Ramapo has a real opportunity to provide more diversity in the housing unit type and price point while meeting the needs of the general population.

Table 7 shows that 58.4% of the housing stock in the Town of Ramapo was built before 1970. Nationally, less than 50% of the housing stock was that old at the time of the 2000 Census. Construction in the County and Town have not kept pace with the national growth of new housing stock in the last three decades. In the County and Town about 41% of the total housing stock was built between 1970 and March 2000. Nationally, more than half the housing has been built since 1970.

Table 7 Housing Units by Year Built, Rockland County and Town of Ramapo Compared to the United States			
	Rockland County	Ramapo	United States
Housing Units by Year Built	94,973	32,422	115,904,641
1999 to March 2000	0.9%	1.3%	17.0%
1990 to 1998	8.8%	8.9%	17.0%
1980 to 1989	10.8%	9.4%	15.8%
1970 to 1979	20.8%	22.0%	18.5%
1960 to 1969	25.6%	31.2%	13.7%
1940 to 1959	19.5%	16.2%	20.0%
1939 or earlier	13.6%	11.0%	15.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, and Tim Miller Associates, Inc.

Market Area Demand - Town of Ramapo

Housing tenure characteristics from the Census are shown in Table 8. Owner occupancy in Ramapo County has remained relatively constant and is expected to continue at approximately 65 percent. The United States average for owner occupancy was 66.2 percent in 2000.

Table 8 Household Characteristics Town of Ramapo - 2000 to 2013				
	1990 Total	2000 Total	2008 Estimate	2013 Projection
Total Households	29,794	32,422	34,146	35,162
Owner-Occupied	64.6%	63.9%	65.6%	64.5%
Renter-Occupied	31.2%	35.1%	30.9%	31.7%
Median Owner Occupied Housing Value	\$216,214	\$220,619	\$417,559	\$430,262
Median Household Income	\$48,523	\$60,406	\$78,768	\$97,719

Source: 2000 US Census of Population and Housing; ESRI Forecasts for 2008 and 2013

Homes built at Patrick Farm will likely be marketed to people from a wider locale than simply the Town of Ramapo, and would include greater Rockland County, and the regional area of New York-New Jersey. In Rockland County, 71.7 percent of housing units were owner occupied at the time of the 2000 Census. In the Town of Ramapo the percentage was 63.9. Based upon previous trends in home ownership in this area, it is reasonable to assume that potential occupants would choose home ownership if it fit within their household budget.

It is generally recommended that no more than 30 percent of the household income be spent on home ownership costs (mortgage principal, interest, taxes and insurance know as PITI) The 2000 Census reports that in Ramapo 33.2 percent of the households spent more than 30 percent of their household income on home ownership costs. The multifamily units are proposed to sell for \$500,000 dependent upon market conditions. The workforce condominium flats are proposed to sell for \$295,000 without any restrictions on income level. Construction of housing at these proposed price points will enable a wider segment of the population to achieve owner-occupancy.

Using financial mortgage calculators available at the website, www.bankrate.com, and depending upon the amount of the down payment, at the proposed price point of \$500,000 for market rate condominiums, and assuming that the residents would pay approximately 30% of their gross income to cover home ownership costs, the annual gross incomes necessary would range between \$75,000 and \$99,000 to purchase market rate condominiums. Thus, households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more would be considered potential residents for the development.

According to population projections, there is an expected increase of more than 3,800 households with income levels of more than \$75,000 in the Town of Ramapo by the year 2013. The proposed development would have to capture 8.2 percent of these income qualified households to be fully occupied. When the greater region is taken into consideration there are many more eligible home owners within the market area of the project. Considering the low vacancy rates for housing in the Town of Ramapo, and the small market share of the Town alone required to fully occupy the proposed development, full occupancy of the proposed Patrick Farm multifamily units can be expected to occur.

Similarly, at the proposed price point of \$295,000 for the workforce condominium flats, and assuming that the residents would pay 30% of their gross income to cover home ownership costs, the annual gross income necessary would range between \$50,000 and \$75,000. Thus, any workforce worker with an annual income of \$50,000 or more would be considered potential residents for this portion of the development. As shown in Table 10, In 2008 there were 5,670 workers in this income category. By 2013 growth within the town is projected to be to 5,784 workers or an increase of 114 persons in this income category. Given the attractive price point of these units, the limited availability of other units in this price range and the low vacancy rates, full occupancy of these units is expected.

The Community Service worker apartments are anticipated to rent for \$1,100 per month. As noted elsewhere, the vacancy rate for rental housing in Ramapo at the time of the 2000 Census was 0.8%. There were 11,348 units in the Town that were specified as renter-occupied units. Of these, 3,812 or about a third had gross rents of \$750 to 999 and another 20 percent were rented in the \$1,000 to \$1,500 range. Assuming that the vacancies were evenly spread over the range of apartments available, there would have been only 50 units available in the \$750 to \$1,500 price range in 2000.

It is the project sponsor's objective in providing rental apartments to meet the need for housing to accommodate volunteer community service workers, specifically fire and ambulance workers. Fire and ambulance protection are provided to the Town, including the Patrick Farm project site, by volunteers. The Hillcrest Fire Company currently has 115 volunteers with 75 active members and ambulance service is provided by 50 active ambulance corp. members. Without housing to meet the needs of these civic minded volunteers, the potential for the Town to have to provide these services at great taxpayer expense increases. At the proposed rents of \$1,100 per month, assuming that the residents would pay 25 percent of their gross income to rent these apartments, the annual gross incomes necessary to afford these rental units would be approximately \$55,000.

As illustrated by the statistics presented in this report there is a continued need for housing in the Town of Ramapo including the need for single family homes. The single family homes are proposed to start at \$800,000 depending upon market conditions at the time of sale.

At the proposed price points of \$800,000 for single family homes and assuming that the residents would pay 30% of their gross income to cover home ownership costs, the annual gross incomes necessary would be more than \$200,000 to purchase the single family homes proposed. According to the Census, by 2103, there will be 5,683 households in the Town of Ramapo that would have the necessary income level, an increase of 2,617 from eligible households in 2008. Patrick Farm would have to capture less than 4 percent of this market in the Town alone to be fully occupied.

Table 10						
Households by Income - Town of Ramapo						
Ramapo	2000	Percent	2008	Percent	2013	Percent
Household Income Base	31,608	100%	32,965	100%	33,827	100%
< \$15,000	4,172	13.2%	3,000	9.1%	2,097	6.2%
\$15,000-24,999	2,592	8.2%	2,176	6.6%	1,658	4.9%
\$25,000-34,999	2,592	8.2%	1,978	6.0%	1,421	4.2%
\$35,000-49,999	3,888	12.3%	3,000	9.1%	2,063	6.1%
\$50,000-74,999	5,816	18.4%	5,670	17.2%	5,784	17.1%
\$75,000-99,999	4,141	13.1%	3,527	10.7%	4,195	12.4%
\$100,000-149,999	5,120	16.2%	7,615	23.1%	6,461	19.1%
\$150,000-199,999	1,833	5.8%	2,901	8.8%	4,465	13.2%
\$200,000 +	1,486	4.7%	3,066	9.3%	5,683	16.8%
Average Household Income	\$77,233		\$106,192		\$142,910	

Source: 2000 US Census of Population and Housing; ESRI Forecasts for 2008 and 2013

Conclusions

Consistent with the Town of Ramapo Comprehensive Plan, the Patrick Farm development would accommodate additional population growth while preserving the site's existing natural resources, specifically on-site wetlands and steep slope areas. Patrick Farm would consist of a mix of residential uses. It would represent a well designed and landscaped neighborhood. A mix of single family residences, and multifamily units composed of townhouses, multifamily workforce housing, and apartments dedicated to community service workers are proposed. All units would be for sale with the exception of the community service worker apartments which would be for rent. The site includes a pedestrian promenade around the farm pond. Sidewalks shall be installed adjacent to all public roadways and in proximity to all of the

multifamily units to enable pedestrian accessibility throughout the site. The pedestrian pathway system would link the various areas of the development, and the site would be generously landscaped as shown on the Conceptual Landscape Plan thus providing a pleasant and usable pedestrian environment. The project is consistent with the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan in meeting the need for providing a diversity of housing and in meeting the need for workforce and community service worker housing.

The project sponsor believes there is a demand for a diversity of housing including high-quality single family housing and townhouse development that satisfy the need for housing for a wider economic range of the population. There is also significant demand of housing for couples and families with young children looking to purchase their first home who would find the proposed multifamily dwellings relatively affordable compared to single family housing. In addition, the multifamily units will address the needs of empty nesters who do not desire to maintain a single family property. There is a continued need to provide housing to accommodate families in a relatively affordable manner in this area, the proposed Patrick Farm project help to address this need.

The current conditions in the U.S. economy are unusual and have altered the nature of the real estate industry in the United States. Certain areas of the country have been harder hit than others. There have been multiple failures of financial institutions, restrictions on lending, a reduced flow of money in the economy and a high rate of housing foreclosures. The recent difficulty in getting mortgages has slowed real estate sales in the area and has interfered with the closing of pending real estate transactions.

The New York region maintains substantial diversity of businesses and industries in comparison to other areas of the country. New York housing prices have escalated over the past decade because of the availability of easy mortgage money and the great economic engine that is New York City, however mortgage money is no longer as easy to secure and the impacts on Wall Street have had a ripple affect in the region. It is expected that there will be an adjustment in the housing market in reaction to the changes in lending practices and the lower demand that has accompanied the economic climate in the past year. Given the diversity of the economy in the NY metropolitan region, there is less likelihood that the NY metropolitan area will experience the degree of housing foreclosures or vacancies which have occurred in other areas of the country. Housing prices have dropped and demand is also lower. The length of time for this area to recover is not known, however, the applicant believes that the forces that have always been in place, population growth and a robust economic base, will continue to occur in the New York metropolitan area.

