

### 3.9 Aesthetic Resources

**Comment 3.9-1 (Mr. Suied, 395 Old Route 202, Public Hearing Transcript, June 4, 2009):** ..if we do not want this project, what's the next project gonna look like?

*Response 3.9-1: The applicant has prepared a significant presentation of the anticipated views of the proposed project included in the DEIS as Figures 2-7 and 3.9-2 to 3.9-23. These Figures illustrate what the proposed project is going to look like, how the topographic cross sections are going to impact the views of the development, and what the long range view of the project site will be from the Ramapo Mountain Overlooks.*

**Comment 3.9-2 (Mr. Sternhell, 7 Antoinette Court, Public Hearing Transcript, June 4, 2009):** Most of the homes have large setbacks from nearby roads, which will minimize there impact on views. Along most of Route 202 and Route 306 you'll hardly be able to see the houses at all.

*Response 3.9-2: Comment noted. In an effort to mitigate impacts to the Scenic Road Corridor, the Applicant has voluntarily doubled the set backs of the single family homes along US Route 202.*

**Comment 3.9-3 (Mr. Cook, Public Hearing Transcript, June 4, 2009):** ..looking at this site plan that's posted there, it looks like Fort Dix.

*Response 3.9-3: Comment noted.*

**Comment 3.9-4 (Mr. Rakower, 2 Quince Lane, Public Hearing Transcript, June 4, 2009):** ..the majority of homes planned, the town houses and condominiums, will be located in the center of the property, where they won't be visible from the -- from nearby homes or roads. This is a creative solution that let's the developer build the homes allowed on the property, while minimizing the impact on the environment and on the landscape.

*Response 3.9-4: The applicant has proposed the project with a peripheral ring of single family homes surrounding the multifamily development to reduce the visual impact of the proposed housing. The applicant has further committed to using natural tone building materials which will further mitigate views of the site.*

**Comment 3.9-5 (Ms. Solomon, 28 Scenic Drive, Public Hearing Transcript, June 4, 2009 and Letter #2, June 30, 2009):** I bring with me a man who was the first to preserve parks and recreational spaces, promoted the conservation movement, emphasized efficient use of natural resources. He was a naturalist, a historian and explorer. He appears through a quote from one of the national parks, in the Grand Canyon Arizona has a natural wonder which so far as I know is in its kind absolutely not paralleled. Leave it as it is. You couldn't improve on it and man can only mar it. What you can do is keep it for your children, your children's children, and ll those who come after you. Theodore Roosevelt.

Although the quote refers to on of the most majestic natural wonders, the Grand Canyon, the advise given is easily applied to the Patrick Farm. The comparison is justified in terms of what the Patrick Farm represents to Ramapo

*Response 3.9-5: Comment noted.*

**Comment 3.9-6 (Ms. Fisher, Route 202, Public Hearing Transcript, June 4, 2009):** I see a lot of trees on all these pictures here of the homes that are going to be built by this same developer, but I defy anybody to show me a tree that anywhere on Mariner Way. Can you find one? Can you find a tree that's more than six inches in diameter?

*Response 3.9-6: The applicant acknowledges that the trees in the renderings are mature trees. It is typical that a new development would be planted with smaller plantings which are intended to fill out as time passes.*

**Comment 3.9-7 (Mr. Drennen, Public Hearing Transcript, June 8, 2009):** The ambiance of the area. I know, I would love to see Patrick Farm remain untouched. But I'm realistic. It's privately owned. They have a right to develop it. However, this is over development.

*Response 3.9-7: The applicant has provided a sensitive design which leaves 45 percent of the project site undisturbed as open space and provides a transitional buffer of single family homes around the perimeter of the site.*

**Comment 3.9-8 (Letter #5, Susan H. Shapiro, Attorney at Law, July 22, 2009):** The DEIS states that approximately 450,000 cubic yards would be moved. The result will change a beautiful, historic and environmentally sensitive site of trees, bushes, slopes, valleys, etc., into a stripped pool-table like site with mass produced 4-bedroom townhouses and apartments, and 5-bedroom houses. It would look like Route 306, north of Maple Ave. in Monsey, except approximately 10 times larger.

*Response 3.9-8: The proposed multifamily portion of the project is built upon less than 30 percent of the total project site. The multifamily buildings have been situated to lie within the contours of the land, resulting in a stepped building, to increase the visual interest of the building design.*

**Comment 3.9-9 (Letter #15, Salvatore Corallo, Commissioner, County of Rockland Department of Planning, July 24, 2009):** On Page 3.9-3, the existing visual character of the site is described as rural, consisting of woodland, a large wetland along NYS Route 202, and scattered older single-family residences. The nearby Ramapo Mountains in Harriman State Park are recognized contributing to the overall rural and scenic character of the area.

*Response 3.9-9: The Ramapo Mountains location on the opposite side of US Route 202 from the project site is a significant asset to the Town of Ramapo which will remain unchanged. However there is a distinction between rural vacant land and dedicated parkland. Virtually every bit of Ramapo, Pomona, Wesley Hills and the surrounding areas are fully built out with the exception of dedicated park lands.*

**Comment 3.9-10 (Letter #15, Salvatore Corallo, Commissioner, County of Rockland Department of Planning, July 24, 2009):** It appears that several variances from the Scenic Road District Law may be required. Lot 79 does not meet the double side and rear yard setback requirements. It is difficult to evaluate the extent of this deficiency since the match lines for Section 1 and 2 of the March 17, 2009 maps run directly through Lot 79. This lot is steeply sloped and has a very linear configuration. It is also isolated from the other single-family residences and is in close proximity to multi-family units.

*Response 3.9-10: The applicant has voluntarily met double setback requirements for all single family lots along US Route 202 with the exception of Lot 79. There are space*

*limitations on Lot 79 which preclude additional set back areas. In lieu of additional set backs the applicant proposed to install significant evergreen screening of the single family structure to be built upon lot 79 as shown on the Conceptual Landscape Plan included with the DEIS.*

**Comment 3.9-11 (Letter #15, Salvatore Corallo, Commissioner, County of Rockland Department of Planning, July 24, 2009):** Given that historic resources are located on Lots 8 and 51, it should be clarified that they meet the double side and rear yard setbacks required in Scenic Roads District Law. The DEIS only indicates that an access easement will be provided on Lot 8 for the Elias Conklin cemetery and on Lot 51 for the J. Mather farmhouse stone foundation.

***Response 3.9-11:** The Conklin Family Cemetery and the J. Mather Farmstead will remain completely undisturbed and will be accessible to the public as cultural resources. The site plan has been modified to increase the area of nondisturbance around the entire J. Mather Farmstead as shown in Appendix D. A letter from the NYS OPRHP indicating their acceptance of the revised site plan to accommodate the entire J. Mather Farmstead is also included in Appendix B.*

**Comment 3.9-12 (Letter #15, Salvatore Corallo, Commissioner, County of Rockland Department of Planning, July 24, 2009):** While the common driveways proposed for Lots 1, 2 and 3, 13 and 22, and 67 and 69 do reduce intrusions into the open space areas, they also enable the applicant to create building lots that could not have been accessed individually without great difficulty. The proposed development layout cannot be considered a cluster subdivision which is the preferred residential, land development type within, adjacent to, or affecting the character of the Scenic Road District. It is unclear whether the 15 to 120-foot undeveloped area proposed along Routes 202 and 306 meets the requirement to preserve existing vegetation to screen structures from public view within the Scenic Road District. Variances will be required for the removal of all trees exceeding 8" dbh and cutting of contiguous areas of existing woods exceeding 20,000 SF. The extent to which this is required must be quantified.

***Response 3.9-12:** The applicant has proposed to provide landscaping along Routes 202 and 36 in order to provide sufficient screening. The applicant will seek any required variances from the Planning Board prior to final site plan approval.*

**Comment 3.9-13 (Letter #15, Salvatore Corallo, Commissioner, County of Rockland Department of Planning, July 24, 2009):** On Page 19-8, the changes in views from nearby locations are discussed. New landscaping, combined with existing trees, is proposed as a means of mitigating the view. A naturalistic or a more manicured landscaping style will be determined during the DEIS review process to be compatible with the natural setting. By definition, manicured landscaping styles are not compatible with the natural setting.

***Response 3.9-13:** The applicant has the option to provide landscape screening in either a manicured landscaping style or a more naturalistic style. The applicant will defer to the preference of the Planning Board and/or the Architectural Review Commission on this matter.*

**Comment 3.9-14 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** There are visual impacts associated with the design as proposed. The private roads and buildings are aligned with long double sided perpendicular parking spaces. This proposed garden apartment style design would be partially visible from the site's proposed single family neighborhood and Route 202. Although this would mostly affect the interior site aesthetic, it may also be visible from outside the site. The applicant may wish to consider revising parking areas where practicable. The visualizations show large trees surrounding the multifamily dwellings where the site planning maps show that these trees have been removed.

*Response 3.9-14: The applicant has amended the site plan to include landscape islands which will serve to break up the proposed parking areas and to serve as bio-retention areas as well. These areas will be attractively landscaped to provide an aesthetic asset to the multifamily area of the site. The applicant is also considering providing a portion of the units with garages to moderately reduce the external parking areas.*

**Comment 3.9-15 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** Blasting as noted on top of high points should be avoided as should any destruction of the ridge line. The ridge line should be treated sensitively and avoided where possible. It is noted that the Applicant has included project modifications to preserve the top of the ridge line and that the rest of the ridge in the southwest portion of the site remains undisturbed.

*Response 3.9-15: It is the applicant's intent to preserve the ridge line to the extent practical. Blasting on top of high points will be avoided. As noted, the prominent ridge in the southwest portion of the site will remain undisturbed.*

**Comment 3.9-16 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** The visual impacts were assessed in terms of the Scenic Roads District restrictions as required and approvals for any impacts to this area would be subject to approval during the site review process. Existing stone walls and fences have been preserved where feasible, again subject to site plan review.

*Response 3.9-16: Comment noted.*

**Comment 3.9-17 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** The photographs shown of the site from the Scenic Overlooks in Palisades Park should show more clearly the impact of removing 60 acres of trees. The image renderings of the views did not appear to show the large cleared areas that will result from the project. Some simulation work was completed from the Scenic Overlooks. Once the multifamily buildings are constructed and that portion of the site is cleared, a clearing of 60 acres as proposed may be visible.

*Response 3.9-17: It is acknowledged that the developed multifamily area will be visible in a panoramic view of the site from the Scenic Overlooks in Palisades Park. However, the Patrick Farm development will be only a small portion of the overall panorama, which includes views of the largely built out areas of Ramapo, Pomona Wesley Hills and Haverstraw.*

**Comment 3.9-18 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** Internal visuals were provided which do not appear to adequately assess the loss of mature trees as planned. Significant plantings including large and diverse trees will be required.

***Response 3.9-18:** Significant plantings including large and diverse trees will be provided as required.*

**Comment 3.9-19 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** Although a number of cross sections are provided showing site lines from outside the site additional illustrations of internal views should be needed for this aspect of visual assessment. Large and long parking lots with residences behind are not in keeping with the character of the area. The cross sections should show the view planes more clearly. Vertical differentiation will help to soften the geometry thus reducing the visual impact.

***Response 3.9-19:** The applicant has incorporated a stepped building design which follows the topography of the site to soften the streetscape of the multifamily areas. Planting areas within the parking lots have also been added to further add to the aesthetics of the multifamily development.*

**Comment 3.9-20 (Letter #19, John F. Lange, Senior Associate for Planning, Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.):** Applicant should consider alternate layouts for stepped building designs in an effort to preserve mature trees and minimize impacts to slopes.

***Response 3.9-20:** The applicant will incorporate stepped buildings to preserve mature trees and minimize impacts to slopes as far as practical.*