

5.0 ALTERNATIVES

The New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) requires a discussion of Alternatives to the project. SEQRA calls for:

“a description and evaluation of the range of reasonable alternatives to the action that are feasible, considering the objectives and capabilities of the project sponsor. The description and evaluation of each alternative should be at a level of detail sufficient to permit a comparative assessment of the alternatives discussed. The range of alternatives must include the no action alternative. The no action alternative discussion should evaluate the adverse or beneficial site changes that are likely to occur in the reasonably foreseeable future, in the absence of the proposed action.”

Site alternatives may be limited to parcels owned by, or under option to, a private project sponsor. The following alternatives are addressed herein:

1. No Action
2. Freeland Street - Two Access Points
3. Multi Road Frontage Access
4. Clarke Street Access

As discussed below, these alternatives would have environmental impacts that differ somewhat from the proposed project. Table 5-1 at the end of this chapter provides an impact comparison between the proposed project (149 units), No Action alternative, and other alternatives discussed in this chapter.

5.1 No Action

The No Action alternative considers the scenario that would occur if no development were to take place at the site. The site would remain in its current state. There would be no physical changes to the property under this alternative and no physical impacts.

Under the No Action alternative, there would be no increase in housing inventory, which provides diversity and affordability to the housing stock of the region. Nor would the Village's expectations for the site (as set forth in the Village's zoning code) be realized.

Increases in tax revenues to the Village and the school district which would occur under the proposed action would not be realized as a result of this project. Unlike the proposed action, the No Action alternative will not help to satisfy the high demand for housing opportunities. Compared to the proposed action, the No Action alternative would result in the following:

- Property value, tax assessments and associated tax revenues and costs to the municipality and school district generated by the property would continue to be relatively low.
- The majority of the site would remain as open, disturbed, undeveloped space. No impacts related to site disturbance would occur.

- Under the No Action alternative, the site would continue to be available for the uses that are permitted under the existing zoning.

5.2 Freeland Street - Two Access Points

The recommendations of this alternative have been included as part of the project as proposed with the addition of an secondary access to Freeland Street, opposite Half Hollow Road.

5.3 Multi-Road Frontage Alternative

As requested by the Village of Monroe Planning Consultant, GreenPlan, an alternative site configuration showing the following features has been included as part of the DEIS, shown in Figure 5-1. Complete specifications for this alternative are included in the Final Scoping Document located in Appendix A.

- i. Off street parking located at the rear of the residences, in garages or parking areas accessed by lanes or alleys.
- ii. Residences designed to emulate traditional historic buildings in the Village of Monroe.
- iii. Residences sited so they front directly on to streets or greens (rather than parking areas), with a uniform build-to line that establishes the front yard setback along the street when the residences front onto the street.
- iv. Front yards a minimum of 15 feet and a maximum of 20 feet, consisting of lawn planted between the building and the sidewalk.
- v. Sidewalks on both sides of the street.
- vi. On-Street Parking

Figures 5-2 through 5-4 show Representative Elevations, Representative Garages, and Representative Sidewalks, which demonstrate siting of the units directly on streets or greens, which illustrate the placement of sidewalks, and which represent how the alleys to access the detached garages may be set up. Some of these features have been included in the project as proposed. The main difference between this alternative and the project proposal is the detached rear accessed garages. This alternative provides for access to the automobile to be removed from the main residential structure, and places more of an emphasis on pedestrian movement through the use of sidewalks and pedestrian access to the garage structures. The streets in both the proposed project and this alternative are wide enough to accommodate on-street parking. It is likely that on-street parking will be more prevalent in this alternative than in the proposed project, due to the distance between the main entrance and the garage area.

Another difference between this alternative and the proposed project is a very uniform build to line creating the sensation of a single building mass, fronted on a sidewalk, typical of a village

street. This varies from the project proposal which provides more of an undulating building line, refer to 3.5-3 Proposed Architectural Styling.

Building materials in these elevations show a combination of brick and vinyl siding similar to the proposed project. Building mass will be de-emphasized through variety of materials, variations in roof lines and differences in entry treatments, similar to the proposed project.

Since this alternative provides for the garage structure to be a separate building, the calculation of impervious area was analyzed based upon a 22 foot wide residential unit instead of the 25 foot wide unit, as proposed. This resulted in slightly less site disturbance and impervious surface area of attributable to construction of the more narrow residential unit, a decrease of .33 acres. The scale of the buildings shown in Figure 5-1 is representative and does not indicate the reduced bulk based upon the more narrow unit. However the reduced impact was factored into the calculations in the Table 5-1, Alternative Impact Comparisons.

Overall disturbance from this alternative, including the alleyways and detached garages is 20.26 acres compared to 17.3 acres for the project as proposed, and the impervious area is 10.81 acres, as compared to 8.51 acres for the project as proposed.

It is noted that the applicant is not proposing this alternative and does not find it to be consistent with his development goals for the site. From the applicant's perspective, this alternative is excessively costly and inefficient, produces an excess of pavement and impervious surface area

on the site, is inconvenient to the future residents of the project (with detached garages) and limits opportunities to maintain affordability of unit sales.

Table 5-1 provides a quantitative comparison of this alternative with the proposed project.

Other technical subject areas reviewed in the Draft EIS are discussed in turn below.

Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy: Impacts on land use, zoning and public policy, would be similar to the proposed project. The same number of units would be proposed.

Soils and Topography, and Surface Water: Site disturbance associated with this alternative would be greater than the proposed project. Total construction disturbance would be 20.26 acres compared with 17.3 acres under the proposed project. The number of units would remain the same, however the amounts of pavement and impervious surface would increase to 10.81 acres (37% of the overall project) as compared to 8.51 acres (29%) under the proposed project. This project would generate higher amounts of runoff and have greater volume of first flush runoff that would need to be treated from the increased area of impervious surfaces.

The layout of this alternative requires each residential unit to be double loaded with roadway access, a segment of roadway in the front of the unit and a segment to provide access to the detached garages. The disturbance to steep slopes would be also be greater than the proposed project

Wetlands / Flood Plain / Vegetation & Wildlife: Impacts on wetlands, the 100 year flood plain, vegetation and wildlife would increase as compared with the proposed project. There would be an additional 2.24 of upland woodlands that would need to be removed.

There is no disturbance to the 100 year flood plain under the proposed project. Under the Multiple Road Frontage Alternative .45 acres of the 100 year flood plain would need to be disturbed in order to accommodate the additional roadway areas for access to the garage units or alternatively the project would need to be reduced in size.

Total wetland disturbance would be .79 acres, an increase of almost half an acre over the .31 acres of wetland disturbance in the project as proposed. A wetland disturbance of .79 acres is over the .5 acre threshold for a National Wetlands Permit, thus an individual wetland area permit would have to be procured from the Army Corp of Engineers. Alternatively, the project would need to be reduced in size.

Aesthetics: The Aesthetic nature of this alternative is significantly different from the proposed project. The unit clusters are laid out in more of a row fashion, as compared to the clustered nature of the project proposal. The garage units are detached from the townhouse unit creating two sets of buildings for each residence. The townhouses face onto the main road while the garages face onto alleyways, thus creating two sets of roads for each set of units. This alternative creates an alleyway in closer proximity to the single family homes on Forshee Street, with less vegetated buffer between the two uses. Units would have front doors very close to the internal road with thin front yards and rear window, doors and/or patios would face the detached garages. The site would appear more densely developed with additional buildings and streets as compared to the proposed project.

Historic / Archeological Resources: As there are no known or documented historic or prehistoric resources within the project site. Thus no impacts would be anticipated, similar to the proposed action.

Community Facilities: In this alternative the units are not grouped into clusters, instead they are spread out in a linear arrangement in order to access the back alley ways for vehicle access to the garages. This layout utilizes more land area. The linear arrangement eliminates the central location for an on site recreation area. As such the residents needs for a pool, basketball court, playground and community facilities would have to come from other areas in the Village of Monroe. If a recreation area were to be provided, four to six units would need to be eliminated, spreading the costs of the recreation facilities over fewer number of residences.

Traffic: This alternative is projected to generate the same number of approximately 66 vehicle trips in the AM weekday peak hour and 80 vehicle trips during the PM weekday peak hour periods as the proposed project. Internal circulation patterns would be different than the proposed project. There are 21 internal intersections in the Multi Road Frontage Alternative as compared to 13 in the proposed project.

Air Quality and Noise: With an a similar trip generation of traffic, this alternative would result in impacts to air quality and noise to the surrounding area, similar to the proposed project. The increase in road length, and the additional number of internal intersections may result in an increase of impacts to air quality and noise internal to the site compared to the proposed project.

Community Character: This alternative places more emphasis on the pedestrian than the proposed project. The units are arranged with a uniform build to line in an effort to emulate a village feel as opposed to the intimate clusters in the proposed project. Sidewalks

are located on both sides of the street throughout this alternative project, as compared to sidewalks on one side of the central loop road in the project proposal.

Fiscal Conditions: Since there are no community recreation facilities proposed for this alternative, it can be expected that the cost of meeting the recreational needs of the residents of Hidden Creek would result in an increase in municipal expenditure when compared to the proposed project.

Overall, this alternative will increase in road and building areas and increase in impervious surface and storm water runoff. In combination with the increased disturbance to both the wetlands on the project site and the areas of 100 year flood plain, it is the opinion of the Applicant that this alternative is not environmentally advantageous compared to the proposed project. Additionally, the increased cost of construction for this site plan alternative will have an effect on the comparative affordability of the units, again rendering it undesirable from the Applicant's perspective.

5.4 Clarke Street Access

The Clarke Street Plan alternative is presented in response to comments provided by the traffic consultant to the Village of Monroe on the proposed project. This alternative shows a 285 foot long, 20 foot wide road connection to Clarke Street as an additional means of access to the proposed development. Similar to the proposed project, it provides a clustered plan with small loop roads creating a Village-type atmosphere for the development.

In this alternative, the proposed footbridge connection to Clarke Street is replaced by new road access, crossing the 100 year flood plain across from the Clarke Street dead end. The Clarke Street Access Plan, shown in Figure 5-2, is similar to the proposed project, except for the new road connection.

This alternative utilizes the area of a foot path connection to Clarke Street in the project as proposed. This alternative would require the crossing of the 100 year flood plain on box culverts or bridge abutments.

Construction of this second access road, would increase the amount of construction disturbance by 0.18 acres over the proposed project. In addition, the amount of flood plain disturbed and, the amount of wetlands disturbed would increase by 0.13 acres over the proposed project. Impervious surfaces would increase by 0.13 acres over the proposed project.

Table 5-1 provides a quantitative comparison of this alternative with the proposed project.

Other technical subject areas reviewed in the Draft EIS are discussed in turn below.

Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy: Impacts on land use, zoning and public policy, would be similar to the proposed project.

Soils and Topography, and Surface Water: Site disturbance associated with this alternative would be slightly greater than the proposed project. The building footprint would remain the same, however, and the amounts of pavement, impervious surface and disturbance to steep slopes would be greater than the proposed project.

Wetlands / Flood plain / Vegetation & Wildlife: Impacts on wetlands, the 100 year flood plain, vegetation and wildlife would increase as compared with the proposed project. There is no disturbance to the 100 year flood plain under the proposed project. The connection to Clarke Street would cross the flood plain in a wetland area increasing disturbance by .15 acres.

Aesthetics: Impacts on the Aesthetics would be similar to the proposed project.

Historic / Archeological Resources: As there are no known or documented historic or prehistoric resources within the project site, no impacts would be anticipated.

Community Facilities: Since the population would not increase as a result of this alternative as compared to the proposed project, there would be no increase in the need for community facilities as a result of this alternative.

Traffic: This alternative is projected to generate the same number of vehicle trips during the peak hour periods as the proposed project. However the traffic distribution would be slightly different. It is anticipated that up to 10 percent of the trips generated might use the Clarke Street Access for entering and exiting the proposed project site. This would represent an increase of approximately 8-10 trips during the PM peak hour to the Clarke Street residents, compared to no traffic impact under the proposed project.

The level of service analysis indicates that the proposed intersection of Hidden Creek Road with Freeland street would operate at the best levels of service A to C. Under these conditions a decrease of 8-10 trips during either peak hour would not represent a significant change in operating conditions, nor would there be expected to be significant improvements at other locations studied.

Air Quality and Noise: With an increase in traffic in the vicinity of Clarke Street, this alternative would result in added noise in the vicinity of Clarke Street as compared to the proposed project, with slightly higher exposure to roadside auto emissions.

Community Character: Impacts on the Community Character of this alternative would be similar to the proposed project

Fiscal Conditions: Since the population would not increase as a result of this alternative as compared to the proposed project, no change in the fiscal impacts is anticipated as compared to the proposed project.

A comparison of the No Action alternative with the proposed action and other alternatives is provided below in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1 Alternative Impact Comparisons				
Area of Concern	Proposed Action	Multi Road Frontage Access	Additional Clarke Street Access	No Action
Building Development Areas				
Pavement (acres)	5.45	8.11	5.58	.25
Building Footprint (acres)	3.06	2.70	3.06	0.03
Lawn/ Landscaping (acres)	8.89	9.72	8.95	2.27
Construction Disturbance				
Total Construction Disturbance (acres)	17.3	20.26	17.48	0
Impervious Acreage (acres)	8.51	10.81	8.64	0.28
Natural Resources Disturbance				
Wetlands (acres disturbed)	.31	.79*	.44	0
Upland Woodland (acres disturbed)	13.61	15.85	13.61	0
Flood plain (acres disturbed)	0	.45	.13	0
Residential Units				
Residential Units	149	149	149	2
Community Resources				
Population	261	261	261	0
Peak Traffic (trips/hour)	83	83	83	0
Water Demand/Sewage Flow (gpd)	19,575	19,575	19,575	0
School-age Children	21	21	21	0
Costs to School District	\$186,858	\$186,858	\$186,858	\$ 0.00
Revenues to School District	\$606,924	\$606,924	\$606,924	\$14,093
Village Taxes	\$133,926	\$133,926	\$133,926	\$3,130
Notes: Areas listed above are approximate. Source: Pietrzak & Pfau, Engineering and Surveying; Tim Miller Associates, Inc. * Wetland disturbance over .5 acres is not eligible for a National Wetland Permit.				