

## **5.0 ALTERNATIVES**

Section 617.9(b)(5) of the regulations implementing SEQRA requires that a draft environmental impact statement include a description and evaluation of a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action which are feasible, considering the objectives and capabilities of the project sponsor. The range of alternatives must include the "No Action" alternative.

In addition to the No Action alternative, the Scoping Document for this SEIS requires an analysis of one other alternative, DEIS Plan Alternative.

These two alternatives are described and evaluated below. A summary matrix of the varying impacts associated with each alternative is provided as Table 5-1.

A discussion of a code compliant version of the current proposal for the Haverstraw portion of the development is also provided. .

### **5.1 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative is the scenario that would occur if the site were to remain undeveloped except for the existing automotive repair garage which would continue to operate. A summary of impacts of this alternative, as compared to the proposed Minisceongo Park development, is presented below. Under the No-Action alternative, none of the impacts identified in this report, whether adverse or beneficial, would occur.

*Soils and Topography:* No grading to or disturbance to the site would occur. There would be no reclamation of this formerly mined site and no construction-related impacts associated with surcharge, site work, or building construction phases would occur.

*Surface Water Resources:* There would be no increase in the amount of surface water runoff from the site. There would be no decrease in the rate of stormwater runoff which is projected to occur as a result of the construction of the stormwater detention basins associated with the Minisceongo Park project. There would be no impacts to streams or wetlands; the proposed action similarly proposes no impacts to wetlands or streams.

*Ecology and Wetlands:* There would be no disturbance to the successional old fields found in the previously disturbed upland portions of the project site. The site would continue to provide marginal habitat and cover for local wildlife. No disturbance of wetlands or their regulated areas would occur under the No Action alternative as is also the case with the proposed action. There would be no revegetation of the site, which is proposed to be planted with a mixture of deciduous and evergreen plantings.

*Land Use and Zoning:* There would be no changes in the existing vacant land use of the project site. The existing automotive repair garage would continue as a nonconforming use in the MU-2 zoning district. There would be no mixed use development as envisioned by the Ramapo Comprehensive Plan. There would be no zoning amendments under the No Action alternative.

*Transportation:* Existing traffic conditions would remain the same.

*Historic and Archaeological Resources:* No historic or archaeological resources are present on the formerly disturbed portion of the project site. Thus, no impacts to historic or archaeological resources would result under the No action alternative or the proposed action.

*Community Facilities and Utilities:* No demand would be placed on community services or utilities under the No Action Alternative. There would be no increase in school enrollment, which is considered a beneficial impact by the East Ramapo Central School District. There would be no calls to police, fire, and emergency service providers under the No Action Alternative. There would also be no significant increase in municipal property tax revenues generated by the project site to fund community services as compared to the proposed Minisceongo Park.

*Fiscal Impacts:* Annual property tax revenues would continue to accrue to various taxing jurisdictions serving the project site (see Fiscal Section of this SEIS).

*Noise and Air Resources:* There would be no introduction of noise sources in the No Action alternative. Existing ambient noise levels at the site would remain unchanged. No changes to air quality resulting from site activities would occur. Short term impacts associated with construction, including dust and pollutants from construction traffic and construction-generated noise, would not occur.

*Visual Resources:* There would be no change to the visual environment as a result of this alternative. The site would remain in its current state as a mostly vacant lot. The automotive repair garage and old successional fields would continue to be visible from Route 202. The same would be visible from Quaker Road and the PIP southbound access ramp, the Long Path trail, and Gurnee Park.

*Construction Related Effects:* There would be no construction-related effects under the No Action alternative. There would be no additional clean fill brought to the site for fill operations. The site would not be surcharged and compacted to make it beneficial as a developable site. There would be no short-term changes in ambient noise levels. There would be no positive economic benefits from construction expenditures and employment.

Given the viability of this site for development under the existing zoning, and the ongoing tax burden associated with the vacant land, the No Action Alternative is not a likely alternative. It should be noted that with the proposed development plan, and with each alternative presented below, a substantial amount of land would remain as undeveloped open space and the existing wetlands would not be disturbed.

## **5.2 DEIS Alternative**

This alternative would consist of 279 multifamily and one-family attached (i.e., townhome) dwellings, and two commercial building sites with frontage on Route 202 in the Town of Ramapo see Figure 5-1). Of the total dwelling units, 115 dwellings would be located in Ramapo and 164 units would be located in Haverstraw. Only townhomes would be constructed in Haverstraw. In Ramapo, a mix of 96-multifamily dwellings and 19 townhome dwellings would be constructed.

The easterly commercial building would be 10,000 sf and the westerly building would be 4,200 sf. Both would have ancillary parking and would obtain access from the internal boulevard

road, not Route 202. An on-site recreational complex would be located almost entirely in the Haverstraw portion of the site.

*Soils and Topography:* Grading and disturbance impacts would be similar in the SEIS plan and the DEIS plan. There would be 35.6 acres of the site disturbed and reclamation of this formerly mined site, slightly more disturbance than required for the SEIS plan.

For the DEIS Alternative, fill would need to be imported to the site in order to construct the project. The surcharge program would require 7 feet of surcharge above the finished elevations of the townhomes for a period of approximately 3-4 months. The plan would require clean fill to be imported onto the site during the surcharge and site work phases.

*Surface Water Resources:* In the DEIS Alternative, no roads, buildings or other direct impacts to existing surface water features are proposed. There would be no disturbance to the 100-year floodplain. A pipe would be installed within the 100-foot buffer of the NYSDEC-regulated wetland so that flows from Pond #1 could drain to the Minisceongo Creek. Impacts to surface water resources would be from the indirect effects resulting from changes to stormwater runoff.

The proposed overall increase in impervious coverage and changes to the existing drainage patterns of the site would be offset by the design of a stormwater management system including three stormwater management basins (ponds) and associated dry swales. Post-development peak outflows from the basins and lower the overall site peak runoff would be reduced to less than the pre-development peak runoff of the unconstrained watersheds (Table 3.2-3), thus satisfying the "zero net increase of peak flow" provisions of state stormwater regulations.

*Ecology and Wetlands:* The site has been heavily disturbed by soil mining and existing vegetation has been removed, thus, the DEIS Alternative, like the SEIS plan would have little impact to natural resources. The portions of the site with conservation value, i.e., freshwater wetlands and the south branch of Minisceongo Creek, would be undisturbed by the DEIS Alternative development and would remain as open space.

*Land Use and Zoning:* The DEIS Alternative would require rezoning the project site in the Town of Haverstraw from "C" to the "RG" District. In addition, text amendments would be required to allow the construction of single-family attached dwellings exclusively on the Haverstraw portion of the project site. The rezoning would preclude any future commercial development on the Haverstraw portion of the project site.

*Transportation:* The DEIS Alternative indicates that that proposal would generate 195 AM peak hour trips and 369 PM peak hour trips. The project would generate less traffic during the Saturday Peak Hour than during the weekday peak PM hour. Thus, the Saturday traffic conditions would be less critical than the weekday peak PM hour. Impacts to intersections would be similar to the impacts in the proposed plan, including the widening of a section of U.S. Route 202 at Ramapo Plaza and the coordination of the traffic signal at the Minisceongo Park Development.

*Historic and Archaeological Resources:* No historic or archaeological resources are present on the formerly disturbed portion of the project site. Thus, no impacts to historic or archaeological resources would result under the DEIS alternative or the proposed action.

*Community Facilities and Utilities:* The DEIS Alternative proposed 279 units that would be projected to increase the population of the Haverstraw and Ramapo by 794 persons -- 493 for the Town of Haverstraw and 301 for the Town of Ramapo This would include 103 school age children in the East Ramapo Central School District. No adverse impacts to school, police, fire, or other emergency services would be anticipated as a result of this Alternative. Adequate recreational facilities would be available in the Towns and County for the additional population.

There is adequate capacity in the existing sewer treatment system estimated 60,970 gallons of wastewater daily effluent that the DEIS Alternative would generate. The total water usage would be approximately 59,550 gallons per day. The commercial uses would generate approximately 1,420 gallons per day. The development would be served by United Water New York. According to the project engineer, United Water New York has sufficient capacity to serve the project site.

Taxes generated by the DEIS Alternative would be anticipated to offset the costs of additional services required.

*Fiscal Impacts:*

Annual property tax revenues would be expected to increase under the DEIS Alternative as shown the table below, based on projections made based on tax rates for 2006.

<b>Table 5-1 Projected Tax Revenues - DEIS Alternative Minisceongo Park Town of Haverstraw</b>		
	Rate (per \$1,000 AV*)	Property Tax Revenues
<b>Taxing Jurisdiction</b>		
Rockland County	\$20.9000	\$106,587
Town General Tax	\$55.3400	\$282,227
Town Police	\$13.9200	\$70,990
Part Town	\$4.1500	\$21,164
Highway	\$8.2600	\$42,125
Moleston Fire	\$7.4200	\$37,841
Lighting	\$0.8400	\$4,284
Sewer 2	\$1.1700	\$5,967
Water District	\$1.0500	\$5,355
Haverstraw Ambulance	\$3.9600	\$20,196
Solid Waste Disposal	\$2.0405	\$10,406
East Ramapo Central School District	\$239.1700	\$1,219,737
Library	\$11.6700	\$59,516
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,886,395</b>
Source: Town of Haverstraw, Tax Receiver's Office; Tim Miller Associates, Inc.		
* - Assessed Value. Values rounded to the nearest dollar.		

<b>Table 5-2 Projected Tax Revenues - DEIS Alternative Minisceongo Park Town of Ramapo</b>		
	<b>Taxes Generated</b>	
	Rate (per \$1,000 AV*)	Total Property Tax Revenues
<b>Taxing Jurisdiction</b>		
Rockland County	\$8.3520	\$66,086
Town Police	\$16.2864	\$128,867
General Fund	\$7.7352	\$61,205
Part Town	\$4.2575	\$33,688
Ambulance District # 1	\$1.1125	\$8,803
Moleston Fire District	\$3.1379	\$24,829
Sewer District RR	\$5.0623	\$40,056
Sewer District RR	\$181.7601	tbd
Solid Waste Disposal Ch	\$0.6781	\$5,366
Solid Waste Disposal Ch	\$14.7000	tbd
Water NR # 1	\$0.7727	\$6,114
East Ramapo Central School District	\$89.3929	\$707,328
Finkelstein Memorial Library	\$4.3629	\$34,522
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,116,862</b>
Source: Town of Ramapo, Tax Receiver's Office; Tim Miller Associates, Inc.		
* - Assessed Value. Values rounded to the nearest dollar.		

The taxes generated for jurisdictions in the Town of Haverstraw would be approximately \$500,555 and for the jurisdictions within the Town of Ramapo \$308,926. For the East Ramapo Schools, the taxes generated by the project would be projected to be \$1,927,065, of which \$1,219,737 would be from the Haverstraw portion of the development, and \$707,328 from the Ramapo portion. For Rockland County \$172,673 in taxes from the project would be projected, \$106,587 from the parcels in Haverstraw and \$66,086 from those in Ramapo. Taxes generated by the DEIS Alternative would be anticipated to offset the costs of additional services required.

*Noise and Air Resources:* The DEIS Alternative would be expected to have short term impacts associated with construction, including dust and pollutants from construction traffic and construction-generated noise. Construction activities would comply with the Towns' noise ordinances. After construction, the project would generate noises typical of residential neighborhoods. Sources of noise would include operating vehicles driving through the development, residents involved in recreational activities, and common area maintenance activities (e.g., lawnmowers). The two commercial pads oriented to the south and adjacent to Route 202 would be primarily related to operating vehicles.

*Visual Resources:* There would be a change to the visual environment as a result of this alternative. The vacant lot and automotive repair garage would be replaced by a residential development with associated parking and landscaping. Since the site is mostly visible from Route 202, the impact of on visual resources would be most notable from this location. The proposed commercial buildings would front to Route 202 and be setback from it in accordance with MU-2 zoning district requirements. Parking areas to be installed within the front yard would be screened from view with hedges and shrubs. Overall, views of the new development would

not anticipated to have a significant impact on aesthetic resources, as this area is suburbanized and presently strip commercial in character.

*Construction Related Effects:* In the DEIS Alternative additional clean fill would be brought to the site. The site would be surcharged and compacted to make it beneficial as a developable site. There would be short-term changes in ambient noise levels. There would be positive economic benefits from construction expenditures and employment.

### **5.3 Code Compliant Alternative**

The applicant is proposing a site plan layout that would require variances from a number of zoning requirements, including those associated with the minimum number of parking spaces, parking stall dimensions, and parking aisle width in the Town of Haverstraw. At the lead agency's request, the site plan layout was evaluated to determine what effect adherence to parking standards in the Town of Haverstraw would have on the overall project layout and size.

The following site plans were evaluated for purposes of estimating the amount of retail space that could be accommodated and meet parking requirements:

- Commercial/Mixed Use Alternative presented in the DEIS as Figure 5-1;
- A site plan for the Pomona Shopping Center dated June 20, 1986, illustrating a commercial shopping center on both the Ramapo and Haverstraw portions of the site.

Based on a review of the foregoing, as well as the layout of the current proposal, it is estimated that 150,000 square feet of retail space could be accommodated on the Haverstraw portion of the site, providing 1 parking space per 150 square feet of gross floor area, parking aisles 25 feet wide, and parking spaces dimensioned at 10 x 20 feet. The total number of parking spaces that could be accommodated would total 1,000 spaces. Retail space in the Town of Haverstraw would be reduced by 104,000 square feet gross floor area. The following narrative provides a comparison of the impacts associated with the code compliant versus the proposed action. In the Town of Ramapo, 200 multifamily dwellings would be constructed, in addition to 27,200 square feet of commercial space.

*Soils and Topography:* It is anticipated that the same amount of grading and disturbance of the site would be required. However, there would be less building impervious surface area, and additional parking impervious surface area.

*Surface Water Resources:* It is anticipated that the amount of surface water runoff from the site would be comparable for the proposed action and the code compliance alternative, as the total amount of impervious surface area would be comparable.

*Ecology and Wetlands:* The limited disturbance to ecology and wetlands would be comparable to the proposed action. To accommodate stormwater runoff, a discharge pipe would still be required and slight disturbance to the 100-foot regulated area is still anticipated. The marginal habitat and cover for local wildlife would be removed. The project site would be revegetated with a mixture of deciduous and evergreen plantings.

*Land Use and Zoning:* The alternative would not require various area variances from the Town of Haverstraw's parking requirements, i.e., parking stall dimension, aisle width, and number of required spaces.

*Transportation:* As the amount of retail space would be reduced, vehicular trips generated by the retail space would also be reduced. A reduction of 104,000 square feet of gross floor area would result in a reduction of 634 vehicular trips during the Saturday peak hour.

*Historic and Archaeological Resources:* No historic or archaeological resources are present on the formerly disturbed portion of the project site. Thus, no impacts to historic or archaeological resources would result under this alternative.

*Community Facilities and Utilities:* There would continue to be demand placed on community services and utilities, although said demand would be lessened as a result of the reduction in retail space. There would be no change in anticipated school enrollment, as all of the multifamily development in the Town of Ramapo would still be constructed.

*Fiscal Impacts:* Annual property tax revenues generated by the Haverstraw portion of the project site would be less than with the proposed action as a result of the reduction in retail space. Specifically, the loss of 104,000 square feet gross floor area would result in a reduction of \$6,032,000 in the market value of the retail space. Revenues to the Town's general fund would be reduced by approximately \$44,417 annually. Likewise, revenues to the other applicable taxing jurisdictions would be reduced.

*Noise and Air Resources:* Short-term construction-related noise and air impacts would be comparable as the same amount of ground disturbance is anticipated. During long-term operation of the facility, effects to ambient noise and air quality would be lessened due to the reduction in retail space - less traffic would be generated, a source of noise and air pollutants.

*Visual Resources:* Overall, changes to the visual environment would be comparable, as the formerly mined site would be converted to retail use and parking. The size and massing of the retail space in Haverstraw would be reduced and there would be an increase in the amount of surface parking visible.

*Construction Related Effects:* These effects would be comparable, as a comparable amount of the project site would be disturbed.

The applicant contends that reduction of the retail space located in the Town of Haverstraw is not an economically feasible option due to the construction costs necessary to bring infrastructure to the project site and make necessary transportation improvements. Thus, variances for parking are being sought as described in Section 3.4.2.

#### **5.4 Impact Comparison**

Table 5-3 below summarizes the impacts associated with the Proposed Action, the No Action, Code Compliant and the DEIS Plan.

<b>Table 5-3 Alternative Impact Comparisons</b>				
	<b>Proposed Plan</b>	<b>No Action Alternative</b>	<b>DEIS Plan</b>	<b>Code Compliant</b>
<b><i>Residential Units</i></b>				
Ramapo	219	0	115	200
Haverstraw	0	0	164	0
Total Units	219	0	279	200
<b><i>Developed Area</i></b>				
Impervious Surfaces (acres)	25.5	1.0	17.9	25.3
Lawn/Stormwatermanagement (acres)	10.0	0	17.7	10.2
<b><i>Natural Resources</i></b>				
Total Site Area	53.3	53.3	53.3	53.3
Total Construction Disturbance (acres)	32.4	0	34.5	32.2
Slopes disturbance < 25% (acres)	0.4	0	0.3	0.4
Wetland Disturbance (acres)	0	0	0	0
Total Undisturbed area	20.9	0	17.7	21.1
<b><i>Community Resources</i></b>				
Population Ramapo	394	0	301	376
Population Haverstraw	0	0	493	0
School-age Children	31	0	103	28
<b><i>Utility Demand</i></b>				
Sewer/Water Demand (gpd)	113,550	0	60,970	112,670
<b><i>Traffic</i></b>				
Traffic Generation (Total PM peak hour trips)	1044	0	369	718
(Total AM peak hour trips)	325	0	195	229
Source: Tim Miller Associates, 2009. Atzl, Scatassa, Zigler, P.C., 2009.				