# 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been prepared in response to a Positive Declaration issued by the Village of Chestnut Ridge on June 18, 2020, in connection with a Mixed- Use Planned Unit Development (PUD) Zoning application by Equestrian Estates, LLC, the "Applicant" and owner of the subject property. The proposed project is located on Red Schoolhouse Road in the Village of Chestnut Ridge, Rockland County, New York.

This DEIS has been prepared to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed mixed-use development. The DEIS has been prepared in accordance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and Part 617 of the regulations implementing SEQRA. The content of this DEIS was established by a scoping outline adopted by the Village of Chestnut Ridge, Village Board, acting as the SEQRA lead agency, in coordination with all other involved agencies, and after a public hearing and public comment period. The Village Board adopted the scope for the DEIS at its meeting on October 22, 2020. The adopted scoping outline is included as Appendix A of this DEIS.

## 2.1 Regional Site Location

The project site is located in the incorporated Village of Chestnut Ridge, contained within the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, New York. Rockland County is located on the west side of the Hudson River in the lower Hudson Valley region. The Village of Chestnut Ridge is located in the southerly portion of the County. Chestnut Ridge adjoins the Village of Airmont to the west, the Town of Clarkstown to the east, the Unincorporated Ramapo and Village of Spring Valley to the north, and the Town of Orangetown and the Borough of Montvale, New Jersey, to the south.

The project site is less than one-half mile south of the Garden State Parkway Extension to the New York State Thruway. (see Figure 2-1).

## 2.2 Equestrian Estates Site Location

As shown in Figure 2-1, the mixed-use project site is located on the east side of Red Schoolhouse Road in the Village of Chestnut Ridge. The site consists of six parcels in the southerly portion of the Village adjacent to the Village's boundary with Orangetown. The 39.6 acre mixed use project site includes the following Tax Lots, as shown on the tax map of the Town of Ramapo:

- 68.09-2-9
- 68.09-2-10
- 68.09-2-11
- 68.09-2-12
- 68.09-2-22
- 68.13-1-6

# 2.3 Description of Proposed Action

The project sponsor has a vision for the southwestern area of the Village of Chestnut Ridge. The goal is to create a beautiful hamlet community that incorporates retail development, multifamily residential housing and senior housing resulting in the creation of a nucleus of the Village of Chestnut Ridge.

The development proposal includes up to 62 duplex townhouse units; plus 84 rental flats above the retail building on Red Schoolhouse Road; up to 118 senior residential rental units (limited to those aged 55 and older); and two single family homes in the vicinity of Gary Drive. Thus, the project proposes a total of 266 residential units on 39.6-acre site resulting in an overall density of less than 7 units per acre. The development includes approximately 38,000 square feet of retail/commercial space along Red Schoolhouse Road on the first floor of the building that houses the rental flats, plus a stand-alone pad of 7,500 square feet, for a total of 45,500 square feet of commercial space. The proposed layout is shown in Figure 2-2.

Entities having overlapping ownership with the Sponsor also own properties on the west side of Red Schoolhouse Road; and have entered into a contract for development of properties south of the proposed action; but these properties are not part of this proposed action.

The project sponsor has requested a Zoning Code Amendment to create a new Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone which includes a diversity of residential housing for a variety of demographic groups and includes retail and commercial space to meet their needs forming an integrated community.

As shown in Figure 2-2, the project includes 62 duplex townhouse units which comprise Club Estates. Each unit has its own front and rear yard. There is a significant amount of green space surrounding the units. As can be seen in the Architectural Renderings provided in Section 3.9, it is the applicant's intention to make this the most attractive development in the region by virtue of unique architectural details such as European style roofing, high end finishing materials, and substantial landscaping. The site plan is being presented after careful consideration of the setting of the individual buildings to allow for a serene park-like setting.

The duplex townhouse units will be constructed in up to 31 duplex townhouse buildings, each containing 2 dwelling units, for a total of 62 duplex townhouses for sale. Each townhouse will have its own front and rear yard with a two-car garage and a front apron, and will have approximately 3,000 square feet of floor area. The interior layout is an upscale, open design concept that will appeal to today's entry-level home buyers and empty nesters.

The 84 rental flats will each have two bedrooms and approximately 1,100 square feet of floor area. These market-rate rental apartments will be located over approximately 38,000 square foot of first floor retail/commercial space. (There is an additional commercial pad located north of the mixed-use buildings to accommodate a single-story building of up to 7,500 square feet. No flats will be located in the pad building.) (Refer to Figure 2-2 Proposed Site Layout Plan). The apartments will be located above the commercial space in Building A1 and A2 and will have elevator access. As shown, the buildings will have three floors of apartments above the retail level. Parking for these residential uses is provided on grade to the east of the building at a rate of 2 spaces for each 2-BR unit. There is a potential for shared parking utilization with the

commercial space where parking demand is lower when residential parking demand is at its peak, such as overnight.

The senior residential portion of the site contains two buildings each with three floors of residential units for a total of up to 118 two-bedroom apartment units. There is a potential for 2 of the senior units to be 1 bedroom. Up to half of the total units will be restricted to persons 55 years of age or older (per 24 CFR Part 100), but all the units will be designed to accommodate a senior lifestyle. The senior community includes recreation and community space in each building. Each apartment is on a single floor and elevator service is provided in each building. The majority of parking for the senior complex is to be located indoors under each of the buildings. There is also surface parking in proximity to the entrance doors which may be used by residents and guests. Parking for these residential uses is provided at a rate of 1 space for each 1-BR unit and 1.5 spaces per unit for the 2-BR units, which constitute the majority of the development.

The Equestrian Estates Development includes a 4,000 square foot club house which is provided for community recreational use by all of its residents. The site also includes interconnected walkways, undisturbed open space and park and pond areas. In this manner the entire development will have an opportunity to socialize as a community.

Also shown on Figure 2-2, the continuous pedestrian promenade and park landscaped boulevard, known as Club Drive, is the backbone which binds this community together. Club Drive provides an entrance from Red Schoolhouse Road, through the retail / apartment area leading to the senior housing and the duplex townhouse development. Elements on Club Drive will include sidewalks, benches, decorative lighting fixtures and attractive landscaping to create a sense of place. A convenient pedestrian walkway will provide connectivity within the development. The development will have a second access to be known as Equestrian Way, which will provide access to a Village public road known as Loescher Lane, which connects to Red Schoolhouse Road. Equestrian Way will have an additional emergency access connection with Gary Drive to the east, providing emergency access only, to Pascack Road.

The entire development will be serviced by municipal water and sewer. Electric and gas service will be provided by Orange and Rockland Uutilities. All internal access roads would be constructed by the applicant and will be a minimum of 24' wide and will remain private roads to be maintained via private contractors. Internal roads will be privately maintained by a Home Owners Association (HOA) and/or Master Association to be formed upon construction. Municipal garbage pick-up does not service dwellings located on private roads, thus the Homeowners Association and rental management agency will be responsible for contracting for private garbage pick-up service.

As shown on the Overall Site Layout Plan, the site design will include numerous small detention basins and bioretention areas to handle any increase in the rate of stormwater runoff emanating from the development of the project site. The design will meet the zero net incremental rate of discharge requirement of the Village and the NYS DEC. The stormwater management facilities will be privately maintained by a Home Owners Association (HOA) and/or Master Association to be formed upon construction. Details pertaining to stormwater management are provided in Section 3.2 of this DEIS and in the Preliminary Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan included as Appendix D.

Based upon preliminary engineering estimates, development of the Site Plan would involve a total of approximately 80,700 cubic yards of cut, 115,700 cubic yards of fill resulting in the need for approximately 35,000 cubic yards of material to be imported onto the site, this effort would

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require an average of approximately 13 truckloads daily of soil be transported to the site over a three month period of rough grading.

The applicant estimates that the selling price for the market rate duplex townhouse units will average approximately \$550,000. Monthly rents for the apartment flats will average \$2,500, which will be affordable to households with incomes of \$99,000 or more. Monthly rents for the senior apartments are expected to range from approximately \$1,800 to \$2,200. Actual market pricing and rental values will be established based upon market conditions at the time of occupancy.

The road and residences could be built over a 12 to 18 month period after all approvals and permits are received. The final residential construction schedule is subject to market conditions.

## 2.4 Description of Proposed Zoning

As discussed, the project sponsor has requested a Zoning Code Amendment to create a new Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone.<sup>1</sup>

A PUD development looks at a system of uses that complement one another and places them in a single project. This gives the municipality an opportunity to look at the entire scheme that is proposed and decide if the development is appropriate for their community. In Chestnut Ridge, the Village's planners have recommended a PUD be created in this area and that it be implemented as a floating zone. This provides the Village an opportunity to review a development proposal that meets the stated criteria and determine if they are interested or not. Only after the Village has reviewed the development proposal would they then proceed to map the floating zone in an area that has been determined to be acceptable. The Village would have a choice to determine if it is the right mix of uses for a particular area in advance of making any decision.

As proposed, there are general requirements that a proposed PUD development must adhere to. At the Village's discretion, the Planned Unit Development Zone Designation may be applied to properties in the Village that meet the following criteria;

- Minimum Lot Size: 25 acres
- Minimum Lot width: 250'
- Must have municipal water and sewer service available.
- Must be located along a NYS or County Road
- Must be located in an area served by public transportation.
- Must be located within 0.5 miles of an interchange for an Interstate Highway, as measured along a New York State or Rockland County Road.

(This last requirement will specifically locate PUD opportunities in the southern portion of the Village; and preclude them from the central portion along Route 45.)

As illustrated in Figure 2-1, the Applicant proposes to combine lots 68.09-2-9, 68.09-2-10, 68.09-2-11, 68.09-2-12, 68.09-2-22 and lot 68.13-1-6 and develop approximately 39.6 acres into a Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (PUD) on three new lots. The new PUD zone will permit development of a mixed use residential/commercial project that includes a continuum of residential housing options which function as a neighborhood. The combination of residential and retail/office uses in a single development will result in a walkable, compact integrated community.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Planned Unit Developments are expressly authorized by NY Village Law § 7-703-A.

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As shown in the bulk table on CS 100 for the Mixed-Use PUD Requirements, the project complies with the following PUD Requirements;

- Minimum Lot Size: 25 acres; The project site is 39.6 acres.
- Minimum Lot width: 250'; The lot width provided is 860 feet.
- Must have municipal water and sewer service available.; The site has municipal water and sewer service available in Red Schoolhouse Road.
- Must be located along a NYS or County Road. The site is located on County Road 41 (Red Schoolhouse Road) with additional access provided to Red Schoolhouse Road via Loescher Lane.
- Must be located in an area served by public transportation; The Transport of Rockland (TOR) currently serves the Red Schoolhouse Road Corridor on Route 92 which provides service between Spring Valley and Nyack, with transfer service available to connecting Routes. The provision of transit service is a function of the availability of ridership generators. It is highly likely that upon the completion of the Equestrian Estates Development additional TOR services will be provided.
- Must be located within 0.5 miles of an interchange for an Interstate Highway, as measured along a New York State or Rockland County Road; The project site is located within 0.4 miles of the GSP southbound exit Ramp and within approximately 0.2 miles of the GSP northbound entrance ramp, as measured along Rockland County Route 41 (Red Schoolhouse Road).

Currently, lands to the east of Red Schoolhouse Road are zoned Laboratory Office (LO) and R-35 Medium Density Residence District closer to South Pascack Road, as shown in Figure 2-3, Existing Zoning. The proposed mixed use community will serve as a transition between the existing residential neighborhoods in Chestnut Ridge and the potential future development along Red Schoolhouse Road.

## 2.5 Description of Existing Site Conditions

As can be seen in Figure 2-3, the mixed-use project site is composed of several generally rectangular lots and is somewhat shaped like a boot. The site is heavily wooded and predominantly vacant. There is one single family house on the large lot in the center of the site and the northern lot along Red Schoolhouse Road is currently being used for automobile storage.

The topography of the site is characterized by rising elevations from west to east. There is an on-site stream which traverses the site from west to east with steep banks, particularly to the north of the stream. There are no NYS DEC wetlands on site. The 1.5-acre stream corridor and its bed and banks are regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). There is one additional wetland area on the site along Pascack Road, to the south of Gary Drive which is also regulated by the ACOE The current plan calls for minimal intrusions, (less than 0.1 acre) into these wetlands.

Existing easements on the property are shown in Figures 2-4 for the northern part of the property; Figure 2-5 for the southern part of the property and Figure 2-6 which shows the easements overall.

The site environs consist of common suburban land uses -- single family houses on small lots and other community uses. There is undeveloped wooded land immediately to the west of the

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western triangle parcel, which backs up to the Garden State Parkway extension to the NYS Thruway.

Red Schoolhouse Road is a Rockland County Road (Route 41). It is a major north-south arterial, leading from the New Jersey border northward to Chestnut Ridge Road (N.Y.S. Route 45). North of the site, there is a northbound access interchange with the Garden State Parkway Extension of the New York State Thruway. All public utilities, together with municipal storm sewers, are available in Red Schoolhouse Road.

The site is served by Transport of Rockland Route 92, which provides direct access to the Pearl River train station operated by New Jersey Transit and to the Spring Valley Transit Center.

The site is predominantly zoned Laboratory Office (LO) with a portion of the site zoned R-35 along the eastern boundary. The LO zone has been largely unsuccessful in the Village and is under consideration in the Comprehensive Plan for alternative uses that could utilize the potential of these properties in a way to benefit the Village.

#### 2.6 Construction Sequence

The following describes the general sequence of activities that would occur to construct the project.

- 1. Install temporary erosion controls
- 2. Remove trees and stumps
- 3. Strip and stockpile topsoil
- 4. Rough grading
- 5. Install utilities and stormwater facilities
- 6. Stabilize disturbed areas with paving or permanent erosion control measures
- 7. Construct residences/commercial space as detailed below.

Steps 1 through 6 involve construction of the roads and stormwater management facilities and would be completed prior to construction of the residences/commercial space.

Figure 2-7 Illustrates a general plan for Construction Sequencing. The following list is construction phasing as it is currently envisioned. This may be subject to change subject to site conditions or unforeseen circumstances.

- Road Improvements along Red School House Road
- Internal Road Grading near apartments
- Construct Building A
- Internal Road grading near some portion of the Townhouses
- Construct 10 to 15 Townhouse buildings
- Construct Community Building
- Road grading near Senior Housing
- Construct 1st senior Building.
- Install walkways as necessary
- Construct Building B
- Internal Road grading near next portion of the Townhouses
- Construct 10 to 21 Townhouse buildings

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- Construct 2nd senior Building.
- Install Landscaping & Finishing site wide.

The project will be constructed in phases to limit disturbance on the site to no more than 5 acres at any one time. Refer to Figure 2-7 Construction Sequencing, which demonstrates general compliance with NYS DEC regulations for disturbance limits of 5 acres or less at any one time. An Erosion Control Plan will be prepared prior to site plan approval to provide for temporary and permanent stabilization of disturbed areas in accordance with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation best management practices ("BMPs").

As required by the Village subdivision regulations, the applicant will post a bond or other monetary guarantee to ensure the satisfactory completion of all required improvements.

# 2.7 Project Purpose and Need and Benefit

# 2.7.1 Project Purpose and Need

The mixed use multifamily/retail development is being proposed to provide a core nucleus to the Village of Chestnut Ridge. It is the applicant's objective to provide quality market-rate multifamily housing in order to provide a choice of new housing options in the Village. Thus, the project is composed of a mix of housing types including market rate duplex townhouses; market rate rental units to accommodate the needs of millennials, other young professionals and others who prefer rental housing; and market rate senior rental housing in two adjacent buildings to foster socialization among the senior residents. There is a continued demand for the quality of life and maintenance free lifestyle that accompanies townhouse and rental living.

The senior residential rental housing is being proposed to meet the rising demand for this type of housing appropriate for a population on a fixed income. The senior development will offer moderately priced senior citizen housing in the Village of Chestnut Ridge and the Rockland County region.

This project will also address the unmet need for upscale low maintenance residential housing in the Village of Chestnut Ridge and the region. This type of housing is sought-after by both millennials and empty-nesters.

The proposed flats will address the unmet need for smaller rental apartments for individuals and couples. The retail component will provide needed convenience shopping and services for the southern portion of the Village.

The site is well suited for development due to its proximity to the NY State Thruway access and public transportation.

The project has been designed to meet the following needs:

- Directly responds to the community growth goals and specific site usage set forth in the anticipated Village Comprehensive Plan; *and*
- Generates substantial tax revenue for the Village and the East Ramapo Central School District, in addition to other municipal service districts including emergency services (see Section 3.5 Demographics & Fiscal Resources)

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This project is being proposed to address the need for quality market-rate duplex townhouse dwellings and market-rate and affordable senior rental apartments in a location that has access to major transportation routes of the region. The intent of the applicant is to provide this housing while minimizing potential impacts to the greatest extent possible.

# 2.7.2 Project Benefits

The Equestrian Estates development has been designed to meet the planning objectives expressed by the Village of Chestnut Ridge:

- Providing a mix of market-rate and rental housing to provide a diversity of housing from being exclusively single-family residential development in the Village;
- Provide senior rental apartments designed to specifically accommodate the needs of a senior community; and
- Provide an increase in tax rateables to help fund the provision of services by the Village to its residents.

The combination of residential and retail/office uses in a single development will result in a walkable, compact integrated community. The community center will offer recreation opportunities for the residents of all the housing types encouraging socialization among all residents fostering a sense of community. The retail center will provide goods and services to support the needs of residential development and the residential population will provide a ready market to support the various retail establishments. Development in this area is well positioned based upon the excellent access provided by the NY Thruway and the Garden State Parkway connection in close proximity.

When combined with the 2.6-acre nature preserve in the northeast portion of the project site, and the ribbons of open space in the Club Estates Duplex Townhouse area, plus the undisturbed area allocated to preserving the integrity of the stream corridor, the site design creates a park like setting.

In addition to fulfilling planning goals, at today's tax rates, the mixed use PUD development, is estimated to generate total annual real property tax revenue of approximately \$2,544,170 of which approximately \$116,000 would go directly to the Village. The funds would represent more than a ten-fold increase in the property tax revenue currently collected by the Village on these parcels and equates to about 6.1% of the Village's total revenue from real estate taxes. An additional \$1.2 million in tax revenue would be generated to support the East Ramapo Central School District.

## 2.8 Approvals, Reviews and Permits

As the Lead Agency, the Village of Chestnut Ridge Village Board has primary responsibility for for reviewing a zoning amendment and determining its conformance with the Village's Comprehensive Plan and further determining the project proposal meets the requirements for the newly adopted zone. The proposed action will require approvals from the involved agencies listed below:

### Involved Agencies

New York State & Federal

Commissioner – Notice Only NYS Department of Environmental Conservation 625 Broadway Albany, NY 12233

Regional Permit Administrator - SWPPP Approval NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Region 3 21 South Putt Corners Road New Paltz, NY 12561

US Army Corps of Engineers, NY District - Wetland Jurisdictional Determination Attn: Regulatory Branch, Room 16-406 26 Federal Plaza New York, NY 10278-0090

#### Rockland County

Patricia Schnabel Ruppert, Commissioner of Health – Board of Health Approval Rockland County Department of Health Robert L. Yeager Health Center Building D, 50 Sanatorium Road Pomona, NY 10970

Charles Vezzetti – Superintendent of Highways – Highway Work Permit Rockland County Highway Department 23 New Hempstead Road New City, New York 10956

Charles Vezzetti - RC Drainage Agency Permit Rockland County Drainage Agency 23 New Hempstead Road New City, New York 10956

Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 – Sewer Permit 4 Route 340 Orangeburg, NY 10962

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#### Town of Ramapo

Town of Ramapo Department of Public Works 16 Pioneer Avenue Tallman, NY 10982

#### Village of Chestnut Ridge

Rosario Presti Jr., Mayor & Board of Trustees – Zone Amendment Chestnut Ridge Village Hall 277 Old Nyack Turnpike Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

Allan Rubin – Chairman and Members of the Planning Board Chestnut Ridge Planning Board – Site Plan Approval Chestnut Ridge Village Hall 277 Old Nyack Turnpike Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

#### Interested Agencies

Building Inspector – Village of Chestnut Ridge Chestnut Ridge Village Hall 277 Old Nyack Turnpike Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

Martin Spence – Consulting Engineer Chestnut Ridge Village Hall 277 Old Nyack Turnpike Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

Douglas Schuetz, Acting Commissioner – GML Review Rockland County Planning Department Robert L. Yeager Health Center Building T, 50 Sanatorium Road, Pomona, NY 10970

Orange & Rockland Utilities, Inc 390 West Route 59 Spring Valley, NY 10977

SUEZ – NY Operations 162 Old Mill Road West Nyack, NY 10994

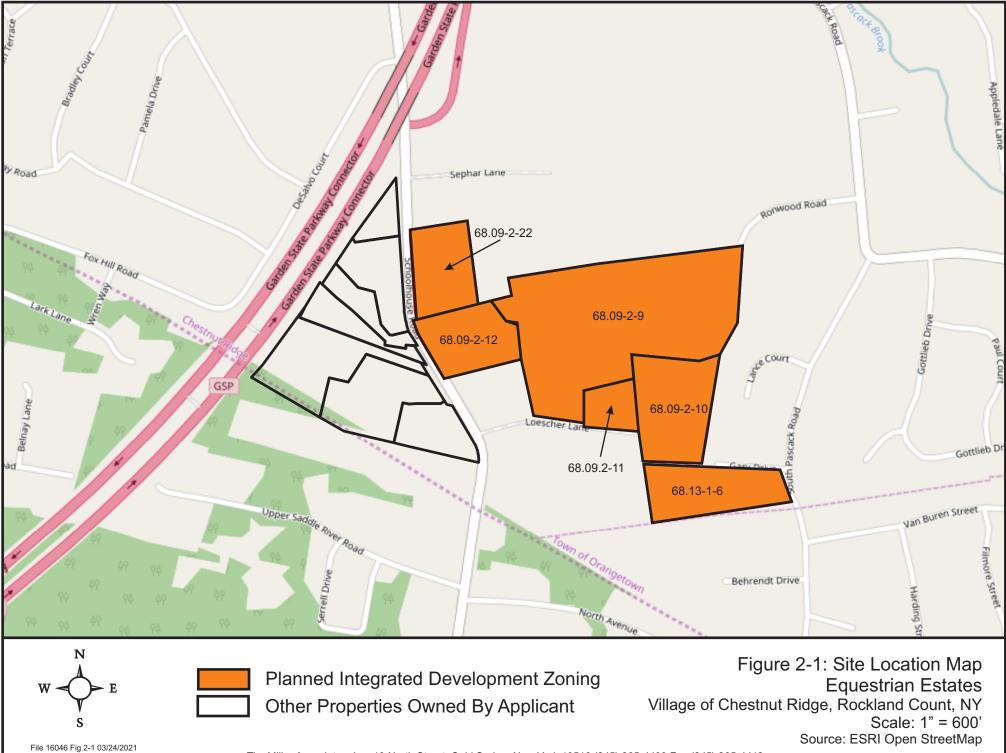
Chief Ramapo Police Department 237 Route 59 Suffern NY 10901

# September 2, 2021

Chief South Spring Valley Fire Department 26 Red Schoolhouse Road Spring Valley, NY 10977

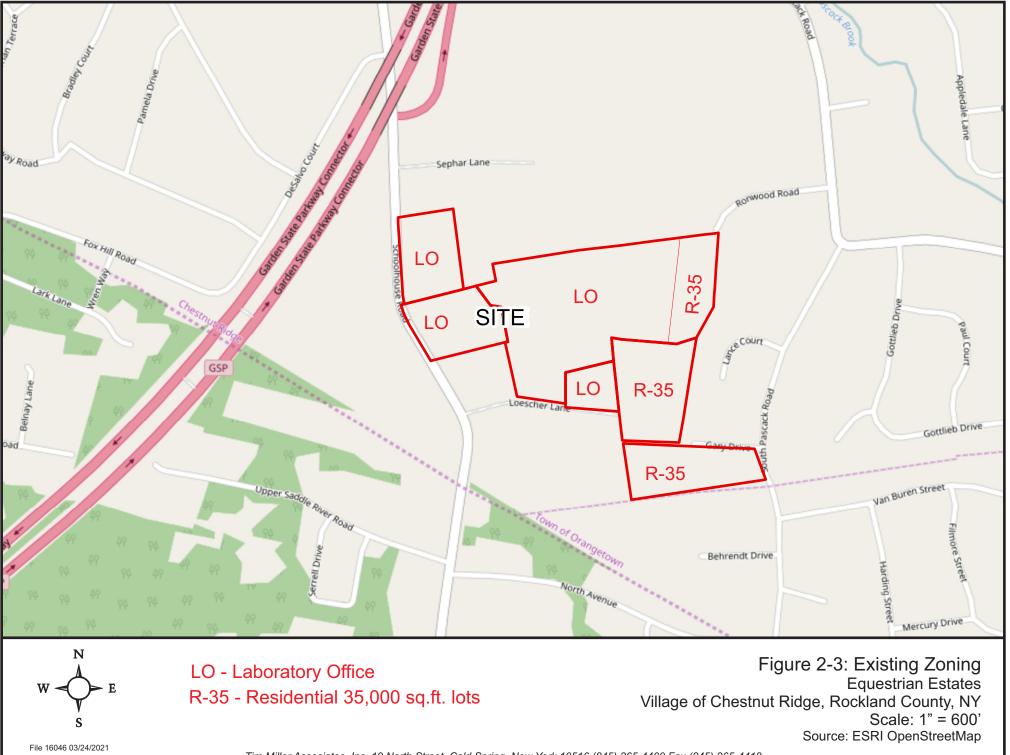
William Faist Volunteer Ambulance 3 Red Schoolhouse Road Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

Dr. Clarence Ellis - Superintendent East Ramapo Central School District 105 South Madison Avenue Spring Valley, NY 10977

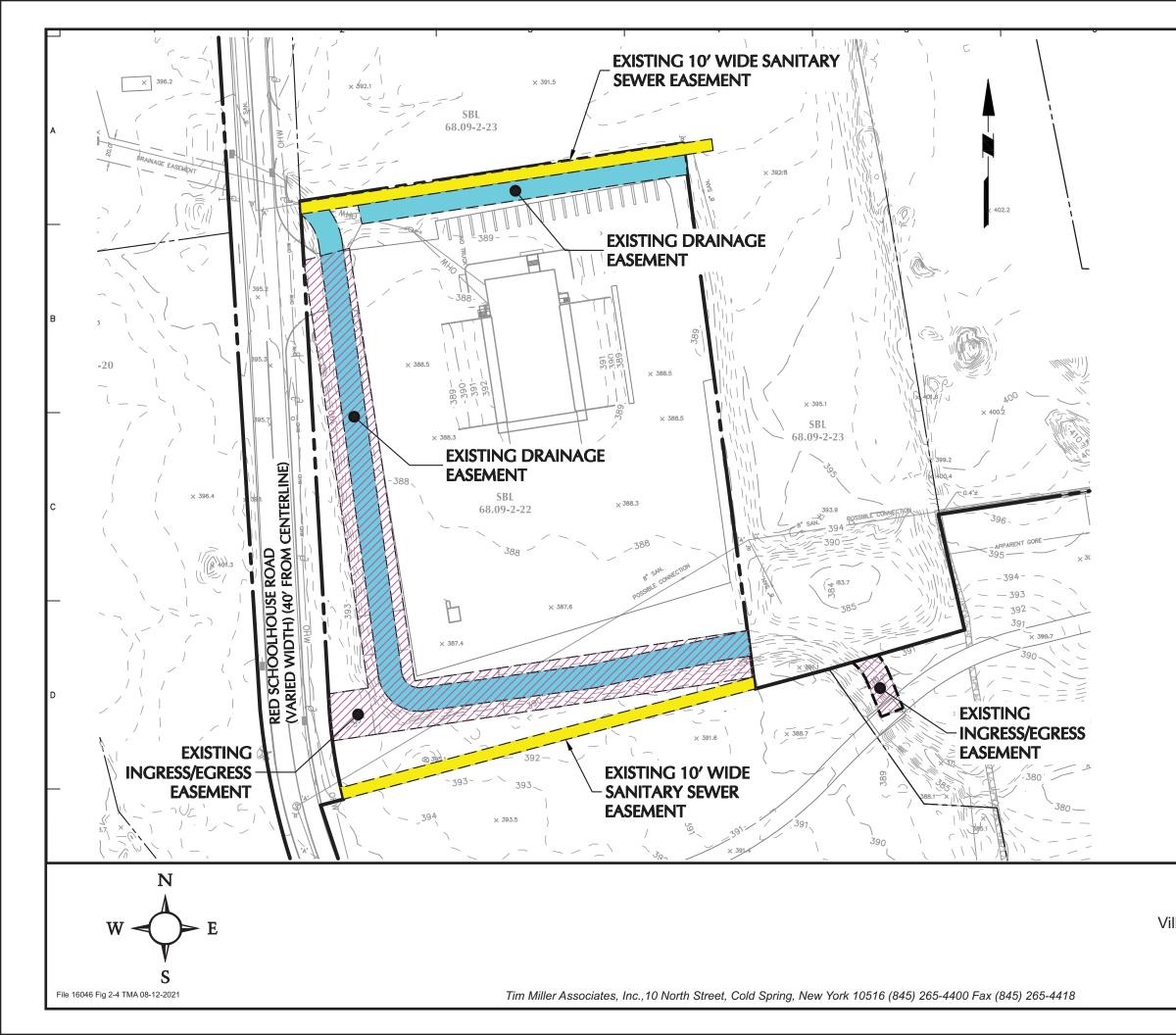


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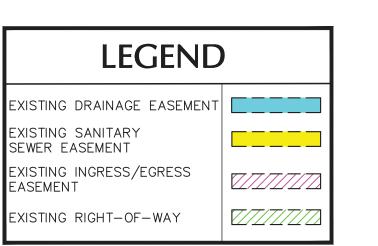
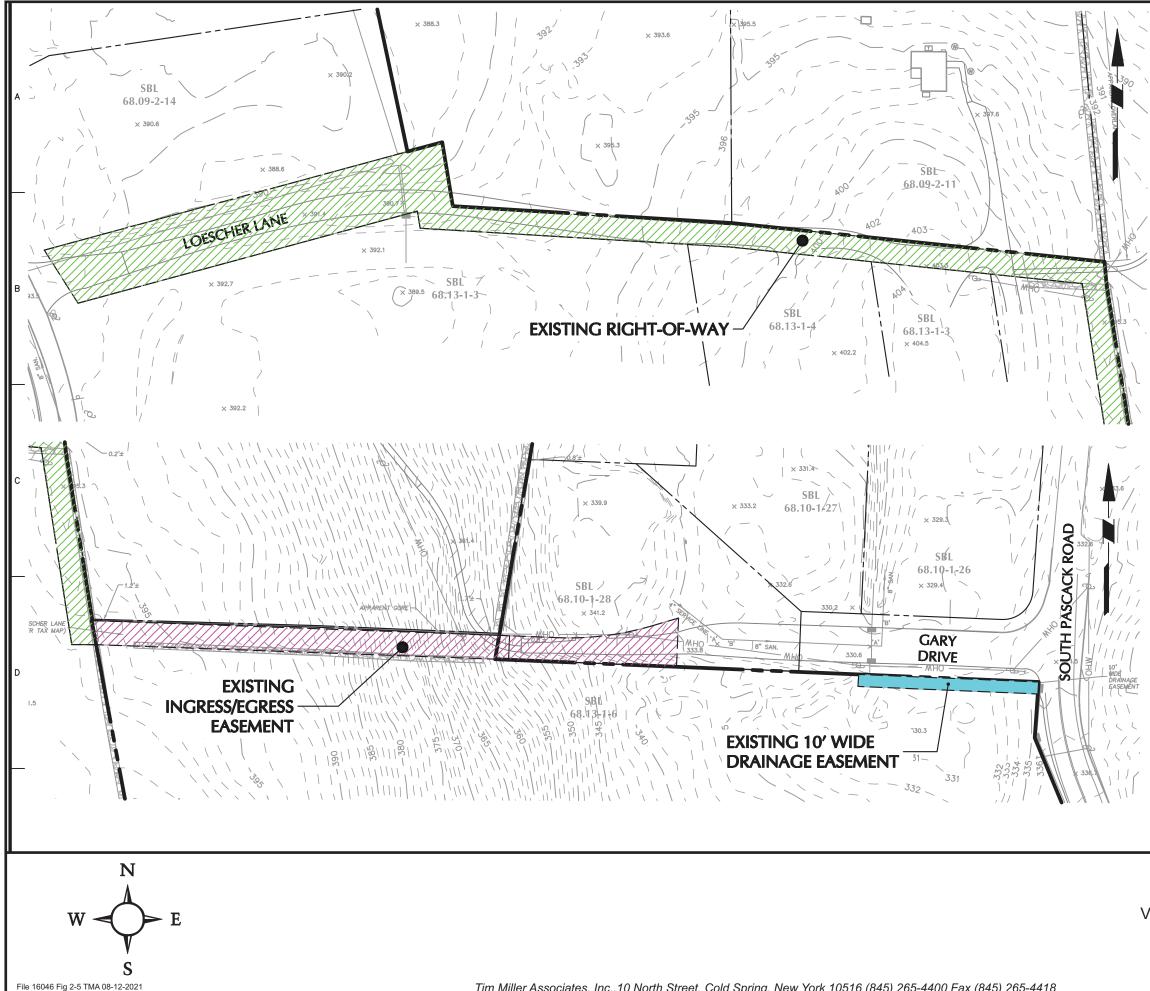


Figure 2-4: Existing Easements, North Equestrian Estates Village of Chestnut Ridge, Rockland County, New York Source: Langan Engineering, Environmental Services, Landscape Architecture, and Geology



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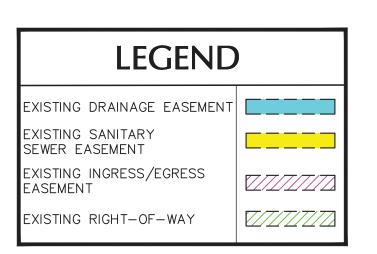


Figure 2-5: Existing Easements, South Equestrian Estates Village of Chestnut Ridge, Rockland County, New York Source: Langan Engineering, Environmental Services, Landscape Architecture, and Geology

