

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main body of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been written around a site development plan hereinafter referred to as the “Proposed Action.” The “Proposed Action” is the plan that the Applicant originally intended to pursue when the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) process was first initiated in 2005. However, through the course of the SEQR review process and as a result of input from the Planning Board and the Town’s consultants, an alternative site plan known as the “Traditional Neighborhood Alternative” plan developed by Robert A. M. Stern Architects (RAMSA) has become the Applicant’s preferred alternative for development.

In accordance with the Planning Board’s direction, Sections 2.0 (“Project Description”) and 3.0 (“Existing Conditions, Potential Impacts, and Proposed Mitigation Measures”) of this DEIS describe and evaluate the Proposed Action, respectively, while Section 5.2 (“Traditional Neighborhood Alternative”) describes and evaluates the potential impacts of the Applicant’s preferred alternative. The reader should refer to Section 5.2 for a detailed description of the Traditional Neighborhood Alternative and a full environmental analysis of its potential impacts. Please consult the “Existing Conditions” portion of Sections 3.1 through 3.19 for a description of existing environmental conditions at the project site, which are relevant under any development scenario.

Project History and Background

The Silo Ridge Resort Community project has been before the Town for several years. A prior proposal for the project was submitted to the Town of Amenia Planning Board on or about May 2003. Subsequently, the Applicant submitted a revised proposal in June 2005 with proposed text amendments to the Town of Amenia Zoning Code¹ and a revised site layout, which was more sensitive to the character of the landscape. This revised site plan positioned buildings and units along existing landforms, vegetation and ridgelines, thereby maximizing the use of the existing landscape and topography as a visual buffer and reducing impacts to viewshed corridors. This June 2005 plan became the basis for the Proposed Action.

Upon proper circulation of a “Notice of Intent” to declare itself Lead Agency for the SEQRA review, the Planning Board declared itself Lead Agency on September 1, 2005 and issued a Positive Declaration on September 15, 2005, requiring the Applicant to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

¹ It should be noted that the Applicant’s proposed text amendment to the Zoning Law is no longer necessary because the Town adopted a new Zoning Law and Comprehensive Plan on July 19, 2007. See Section 3.8.

A public scoping session was held on October 6, 2005, at which time the public was given the opportunity to comment on the proposed contents of the Draft EIS (DEIS). A Final Scoping Document was adopted by the Planning Board on November 17, 2005 (see Appendix 9.1) that outlined the potential significant impacts to be analyzed in the DEIS. Upon adoption of the Final Scope, the Applicant embarked on the preparation of the DEIS and commissioned the following plans, reports, and studies, including, but not limited to:

- Engineering Plan Set
- Preliminary Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
- Cultural Resources Survey
- Visual Analysis
- Traffic Impact Study
- Wetland Delineation Report
- Habitat Assessment Report
- Wastewater Report
- Water Report
- Fiscal Impact Analysis

In addition to the foregoing plans, reports and studies, the Final Scope also required the Applicant to consider alternatives to the Proposed Action, including a “Traditional Neighborhood Alternative.” Therefore, consistent with Section 5.2 of the Final Scope, the Applicant considered an alternative plan as part of the DEIS that presents a more compact development, emphasizes walkability, and is more sensitive to the visual character of the site. Based upon the environmental analysis undertaken and presented herein, the Traditional Neighborhood Alternative has, with very minor exceptions, fewer environmental impacts (and no significant impacts) and more benefits than the Proposed Action, fulfills the intention of the “Traditional Neighborhood Alternative” as outlined in the Final Scope, and as more fully set forth below, offers a superior design to the Proposed Action. The proposed development program of this Alternative is shown below. See Section 5.2 of the DEIS for a full description and analysis.

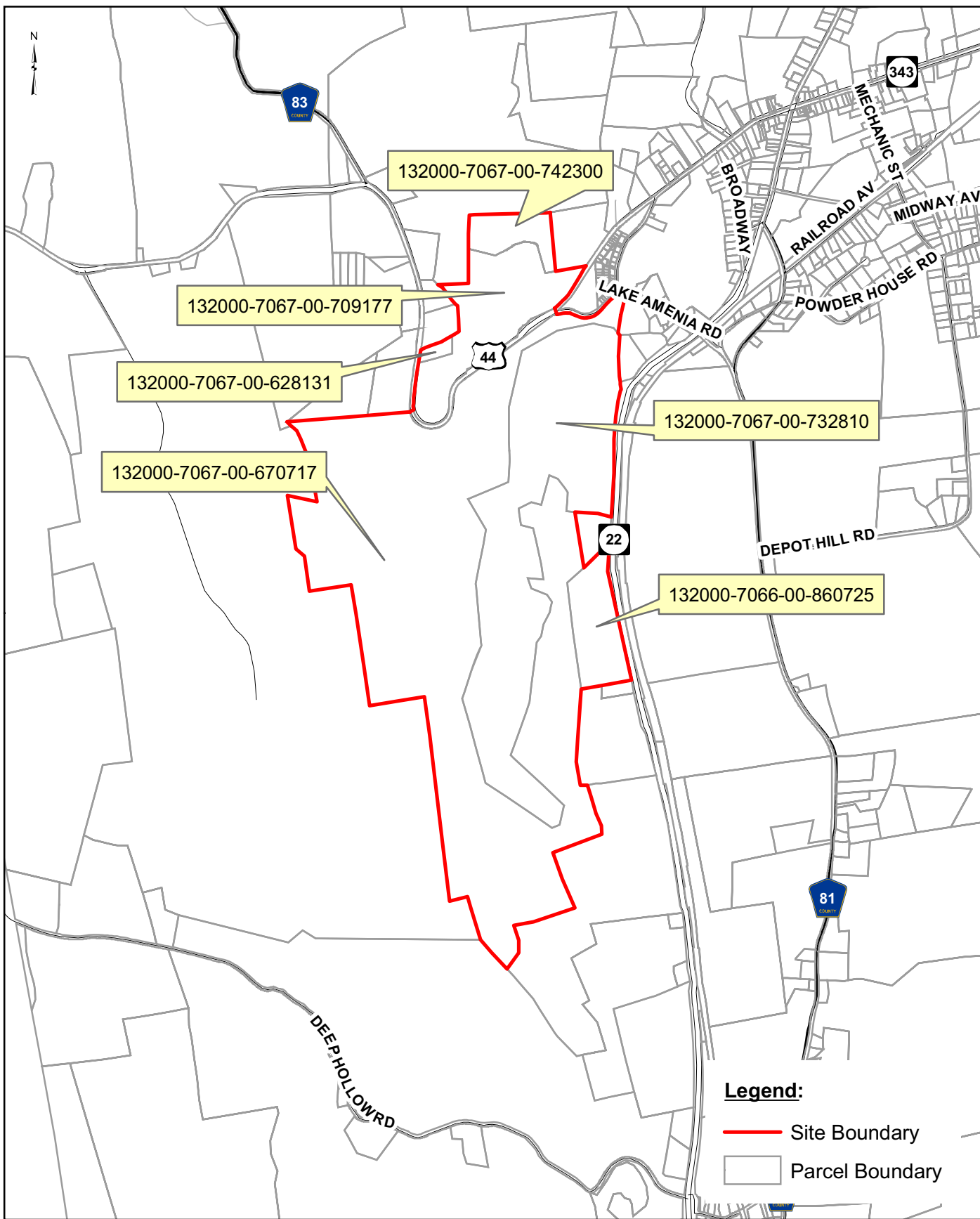
**Table 1-1 Traditional Neighborhood Alternative
Development Program**

Land Use	Number/Size
Residential Units:	359 Total
Flats (All 2 Bedrooms)	153 (1,100 to 1,900 sf)
Townhouses (All 3 Bedrooms)	146 (2,000 to 2,700 sf)
Single Family/Villa Units	
3-Bedroom Units	31 (3,000 – 4,400 sf)
4-Bedroom Units	23 (3,500 – 5,400 sf)
5-Bedroom Units	6 (6,000 sf)
Hotel and Amenities:	
Condo Hotel Units	300
Restaurant & Lounge	150 seats
Cafe	30 seats
Banquet Area	300 seats
Conference Space	145 seats
Golf Clubhouse ² :	25,000 sf
Restaurant	80 seats
Lounge/Bar	40 seats
Golf Shop	1,355 sf
Spa/Fitness/Health & Wellness	81,490 sf
Retail Space	18,700 sf
Winery:	5,000 sf
Restaurant	80 seats

1.1 Description of the Proposed Action

The Applicant, Higher Ground Country Club, LLC, is proposing the development of a resort community on a 670±-acre site to be known as the Silo Ridge Resort Community. The project area is located west of New York State (NYS) Route 22 in the Town of Amenia, Dutchess County, New York, and is comprised of six parcels identified as Parcel Numbers 7066-00-732810, 7066-00-860725, 7066-00-742300, 7066-00-670717, 7067-00-709177, and 7067-00-628131 by the Town of Amenia Tax Map (see Figure 1-1). The site is currently developed with an 18-hole golf course and clubhouse on an approximate 170±-acre parcel. There is also an unoccupied residence on a 2.2-acre parcel north of US Route 44.

² The existing golf clubhouse is proposed to be demolished and a new building of approximately the same size will be constructed in the same location. The new clubhouse is anticipated to house the same uses as the existing clubhouse.



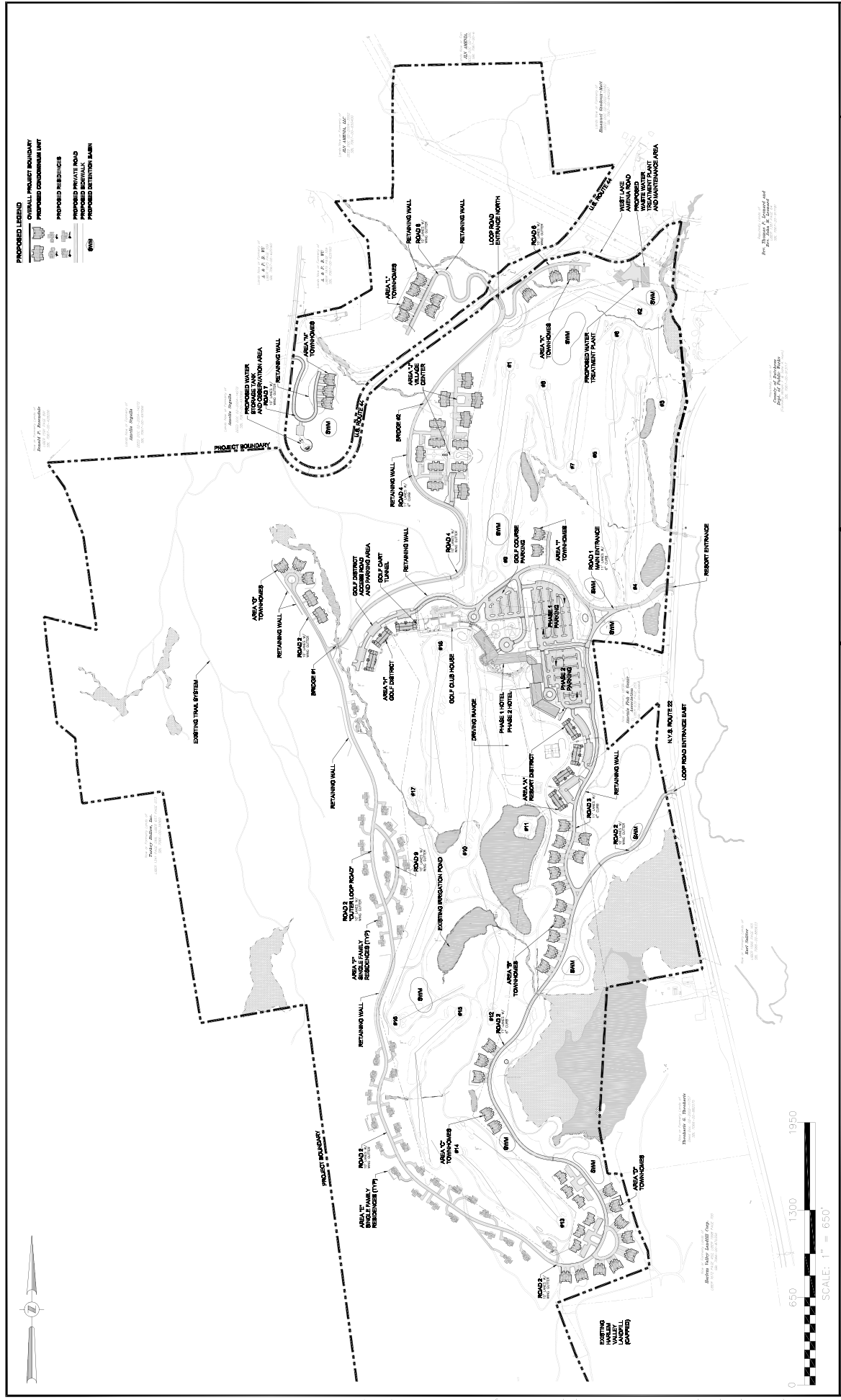
The proposed development will consist of a maximum of 369 homes, including a mix of townhouses and single-family units, in addition to a resort hotel, banquet space, restaurants, conference space, and a spa and fitness center (see Figure 1-2). It should be noted that the Proposed Action differs slightly from what was originally described in the Final Scoping Document adopted by the Town of Amenia Planning Board on November 17, 2005. The Final Scoping Document describes the proposed project as consisting of “328 townhome units, 41 single-family homes, two resort hotels with a total of up to 320 rooms, banquet space, two restaurants, conference space, and a spa and wellness center.” Since adoption of the Final Scoping Document, the Applicant has made small changes to the proposed development program to better match anticipated market demands. Only one hotel is proposed, operated by a single hotel operator, but it is proposed to occupy two separate buildings. In addition, the Applicant recently acquired a 2.2±-acre parcel north of Route 44 and contiguous to the project site, so the total acreage of the project site is now 670± acres. A detailed description of the revised development program is provided in Section 2.0, “Project Description,” and any areas where the proposed program differs from that in the Final Scoping Document are noted. The existing golf course will also be upgraded and improved. Construction will occur in three or more phases; however, for the purposes of the environmental analysis presented herein, the potential impacts will be evaluated on the project as a whole.

The project area has sloping terrain and contains approximately 47± acres of ponds, streams, and wetlands. The Proposed Action will have two access points from NYS Route 22, including the existing entrance to the Silo Ridge Country Club, and three access points from US Route 44. The proposed development will be served by onsite community water and wastewater systems. The project site is designated as Rural Agricultural (RA) with a Resort Development Overlay (RDO) on the Town of Amenia Zoning Map (adopted July 19, 2007). The RDO District allows resorts and a range of residential and other uses.

Existing Access

The project site is currently accessible via a main entrance on NYS Route 22. This entrance provides access to the existing Silo Ridge Country Club and golf course. The 2.2-acre residential parcel north of US Route 44 is accessed via a single driveway; the other two parcels north of Route 44 are undeveloped and have no designated vehicular access points.

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Existing Site Character

The project area is comprised of approximately 670± acres, including a 170± acre golf course, 47± acres of ponds, streams, and wetlands, and 12± acres of roads, buildings, and other paved surfaces. The remaining 440± acres are primarily undeveloped land. The project site has varied topography, with elevations ranging from approximately 480 to 1,100 feet above mean sea level (msl).

Land uses in the vicinity of the project site are a mix of residential, agricultural, and commercial uses, public and community service uses, and undeveloped land (see Figure 3.8-1, “Existing Land Uses,” in Section 3.8). Land uses north of the site consist primarily of single-family residences and vacant land. The hamlet of Amenia lies approximately one-half mile northeast of the project site. This small, relatively densely developed area is comprised of uses typical of a town or village center, encompassing a mix of residential, community and public service, and recreational lands.

Vegetative Conditions

Vegetation on the project site consists largely of mowed grass associated with the golf course and forested land, particularly in the hillsides on the western portion of the site. Wetland vegetation is also found within and around the several onsite wetlands.

Ten plant communities were identified within the Silo Ridge property as defined in *Ecological Communities of New York State*.³ Refer to Section 3.3, “Vegetation,” for details on each community.

- Successional southern hardwood forest/oak hickory forest
- Beech-maple mesic forest
- Chestnut oak forest
- Shallow emergent marsh
- Red maple swamp
- Shrub swamp
- Highbush blueberry bog thicket
- Common reed/purple loosestrife marsh
- Successional old field

³ The Chazen Companies, *Habitat Assessment Report for the Silo Ridge Resort Community*, May 2006, revised February 2007. See Appendix 9.7.1.

- Mowed lawn

Easements Affecting the Site

A 100-foot wide easement granted to the New York State Electric & Gas Corporation traverses a small part of the project site and encompasses a total of approximately 4.75 acres. As shown on the Existing Conditions Plan, SP1 (see "Engineering Drawings" at the end of this document), the easement crosses the northeastern-most corner of the site near the proposed wastewater treatment plant, then crosses West Lake Amenia Road and Route 44 and runs across the northern-most section of the parcels north of Route 44. There is also a 66-foot wide abandoned roadway, identified on the site survey as "Former Turnpike Road," that crosses a portion of the project site near the hairpin turn on Route 44.

Beneficial Effects

The Silo Ridge Resort Community will provide a maximum of 369 residential units in the Town of Amenia. This will increase and diversify the housing stock with opportunities that will enhance the housing choices within the community. The development will revitalize the tourism industry in Amenia by upgrading the existing golf course, adding a resort hotel, banquet space, restaurants, conference space, and a spa and wellness center.

The project will also produce long-term economic benefits with respect to annual tax revenues from the property and additional jobs for area residents, as discussed in Section 1.6, "Socio-Economic Benefits." The visitors and residents of the Silo Ridge Resort Community will provide additional revenues to local businesses through spending on food, entertainment, recreational activities, and shopping.

Abutting Properties

As required by the Final Scoping Document, Table 1-2 lists tax parcel identification numbers and names and addresses of adjacent property owners obtained from the Town Assessor.

Table 1-2 Abutting Property Information

Tax Parcel Number	Owner
13200-7067-20-911218	Kevin R. Dunlop 67 Lake Amenia Road Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-20-861211	Vincent A. and Megan Carr 35 Lake Amenia Road Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-00-840297	Emanuel Gradoux-Matt 340 East 93 rd Street Apartment 10M New York, New York 10128
13200-7066-00-345640	Turkey Hollow, Inc. 4754 Route 44 Millbrook, New York 12545
13200-7067-00-428206	Donald P. Rosendale 4848 Route 44 Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-00-611263	Cyril V. Farley C/o Patricia Bristol DeLavernne Hill Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-00-620205	Arlouine and Peter Bartlett Wu 434 East 52 nd Street New York, New York 10022
13200-7066-00-969308	Whalen Leasing Co. 207 Rombout Road Pleasant Valley, NY 12569
13200-7066-00-910219	Queenie Luther P.O. Box 184 Wassaic, New York 12592
13200-7067-00-625160	Arlouine and Peter Bartlett Wu 434 East 52 nd Street New York, New York 10022
13200-7067-00-566092	Amelia Segalla 299 Leedsville Road Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-00-913117	County of Dutchess C/O Commission of Finance 22 Market Street Poughkeepsie, New York 12601
13200-7067-00-497066	Amelia Segalla 299 Leedsville Road Amenia, New York 12501

13200-7066-00-854868	Amenia Fish and Game P.O. Box 149 Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7066-00-885633	Karl Saliter Jackson Hill Road Sharon, Connecticut 06069
13200-7066-00-882575	Theoharis G. Theoharis 1568 Route 292 Holmes, New York
13200-7066-00-977875	Walter and Eleanor Culver 654 Old Route 22 Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-20-932218	James and Helene Carroll 75 Lake Amenias Road Amenia, New York 12051
13200-7067-00-840207	Amelia Segalla 299 Leedsville Road Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-20-917181	Leonard, Rev Thomas P. and Rev. John 213 West 82 nd Street New York, New York 10024
13200-7067-00-974260	Gail Hermosilla – Town Clerk Town of Amenias Town Hall Amenia, New York 12501
13200-7067-00-650400	JLN Amenias, LLC 1450 Broadway New York, New York 10018
13200-7166-00-051601	Richard Allen Sand and Gravel, Inc. 41 Pleasant Ridge Road Poughquag, New York 12570
13200-7066-00-605146	Allan Shope 78 Sinpatch Road Wassaic, New York 12592
13200-7166-00-074464	Washed Aggregate Resource P.O. Box 425 Wassaic, New York 12592
13200-7166-00-060250	Metro Transit Authority 347 Madison Avenue New York, New York 10017
Source: Town of Amenias Tax Assessor, October 2005.	

1.2 List of Involved Agencies

Below is a listing of all Involved Agencies, their addresses, and required approvals and permits they are responsible for granting with respect to this project.

Table 1-3 List of Involved Agencies and Permit/Approval Authority

Agency	Permit or Approval Authority
Town of Amenia Town Board 36 Mechanic Street Amenia, New York 12501	Authorization of Sewer and Water Transportation Corporations
Town of Amenia Planning Board 36 Mechanic Street Amenia, NY 12501	Special Use Permit for Master Development Plan Site Plan/Subdivision Approval
Town of Amenia Water District Washington Court Amenia, NY 12501	Water Connections
Dutchess County Department of Health 387 Main Street Poughkeepsie, NY 12601	Wastewater Treatment Plant and Water Connections
Town of Amenia Highway Department 8 Borden Lane Wassaic, NY 12592	West Lake Amenia Road – Road Access
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Environmental Permits Region 3 Office 21 South Putt Corners Road New Paltz, NY 12561	Stormwater State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) Permit Wetland Disturbance Permit Stream Disturbance Permit Water Supply Approval Permit
New York State Department of Transportation Region 8 Office Eleanor Roosevelt Office Building 4 Burnett Boulevard Poughkeepsie, New York 12603	Highway Work Permit(s) Road Access – NYS Route 22 and NYS Route 44
Dutchess County Department of Public Works 38 Dutchess Turnpike Poughkeepsie, NY 12603	Highway Work Permit(s)
Dutchess County Department of Health 387 Main Street Poughkeepsie, NY 12601	Water Treatment Plant Wastewater Treatment Plant
New York State Health Department Bureau of Water Supply Protection Flanigan Square, 547 River Street Troy, NY 12180-2216	Approval of Plans for Community Water Supply Improvement Water Quality and Treatment

Table 1-3 List of Involved Agencies and Permit/Approval Authority

Agency	Permit or Approval Authority
New York Secretary of State New York State Department of State 41 State Street Albany, New York 12207	Authorization for Transportation Corporation
United States Army Corps of Engineers New York District – Regulatory Branch 26 Federal Plaza, Room 1937 New York, NY 10278-0090	Nationwide Wetland Permit

1.3 List of Interested Agencies

The following Agencies have been identified as responsible for reviewing and commenting on all or a portion of the proposed project:

Town of Amenia Town Supervisor
36 Mechanic Street
Amenia, New York 12501

Town of Amenia Town Clerk
36 Mechanic Street
Amenia, New York 12501

Town of Amenia Engineering Consultant
Rhode, Soyka, Andrews
40 Garden St # 3
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Town of Amenia Planning Consultant
Greenplan, Inc.
302 Pells Road
Rhinebeck, New York 12572

Town of Amenia Conservation Advisory Commission
36 Mechanic Street
Amenia, New York 12501

Amenia Fire Company
Mechanic Street, P.O. Box 166
Amenia, New York 12501

Webutuck Central School District
194 Haight Avenue
Amenia, New York 12501

Dutchess County Planning Department
27 High Street
Poughkeepsie, New York 12601

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Field Service Bureau
Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Metro North Customer Service
420 Lexington Avenue, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Chairman John Culligan
Amenia Fire District #1
Board of Fire Commissioners
36 Mechanic Street
Amenia, NY 12501

Mr. Michael Segelken
Town of Amenia Building Inspector/Fire Inspector
36B Mechanic Street
Amenia, NY 12501

Ms. Nancy Brusie
Town of Amenia Zoning Administrator
36B Mechanic Street
Amenia, NY 12501

Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council
Capitol Building
Capitol Station, Room 254
Albany, NY 12224

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1.4 Summary of Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following table summarizes the potential impacts and mitigation measures for the Proposed Action. Please note that the Traditional Neighborhood Alternative, with very few exceptions, has fewer environmental impacts (none of which are significant) and greater positive benefits, than the Proposed Action. Refer to Section 1.5 for a summary of this Alternative and to Section 5.0 for a detailed discussion thereof.

Table 1-4 Summary of Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Resource	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Soils and Geology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will disturb 274± acres of the site, including 124± acres of steep slopes (slopes 15% or greater). ▪ Blasting may be necessary at certain locations on the project site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impacts to soils and geology will be minimized through erosion control measures and the establishment of Best Management Practices (BMPs), as outlined in the <i>New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual</i> (2003) and New York Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control (August 2005). Refer to the Preliminary SWPPP located in Appendix 9.5.1 and the Grading Plan (SP3). ▪ Any blasting operations that are necessary will adhere to New York State ordinances governing the use of explosives. Applicable blasting certifications will be obtained and blasting will comply with all safety requirements. A rock excavation concept plan has been prepared for the project and is included in Appendix 9.13.
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Proposed Action will disturb 0.09 ± acres of wetlands (0.06 acres of which are impacts to unregulated isolated wetlands) and 2.02 ± acres of wetland adjoining (buffer) area. Approximately 210± linear feet of intermittent Stream QQ are proposed to be disturbed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stormwater runoff from the proposed development will be collected and conveyed to the quantity and quality control systems through a network of catch basins, drainage manholes, high density polyethylene (HDPE) piping, roadside ditches and HDPE culverts which have been designed to convey the 50-year and 100-year storm events.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The project will alter the rate and path of stormwater runoff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All stormwater BMPs have been designed in accordance with requirements outlined in the 2003 <i>New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual</i>. Post-development peak stormwater runoff rates are less than or equal to pre-development conditions.▪ The proposed project will comply with applicable wetland permitted regulations required by the NYSDEC and the ACOE.▪ The project will also implement the recommendations of the Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) prepared by Audubon International (see Appendix 9.11), which includes stormwater controls, Integrated Pest Management, and specific monitoring requirements for surface water and groundwater.
Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Implementation of the proposed project will disturb a total of 274± acres of the site, including approximately 44 acres that have not experienced previous disturbance. Approximately 27 of the 44 acres are located at the base of the hillside in the western portion of the project site.▪ No endangered, rare, or threatened plant communities have been identified on the project site.▪ Approximately 500 acres or 75% of the site will remain undeveloped or as open space, including the golf course which will continue to function as a mowed lawn habitat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Vegetation removal will be mitigated to some extent with landscaping including around the proposed hotel, homes, roadways, parking areas and site amenities. Native plant species will be used as much as possible in accordance with the NRMP (see Appendix 9.11).▪ The cluster of shagbark hickories located along the edge of the golf course above the southwest bank of Wetland L/L will be preserved as potential Indiana bat summer roosting habitat.▪ The gravelly/sandy bank along the southwest edge of Wetland L/L will be preserved, as this area serves as a nesting area for turtle and snake species.▪ The “island forest” habitats on the south end of the site will be preserved to allow habitat connectivity between Wetland L/L and the western slopes.▪ A minimum 500-foot buffer will be maintained between Wetland U (vernal pool) and the proposed development to ensure sufficient protection of potential amphibian breeding habitat.

<p>Wildlife</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rare, endangered, or threatened fauna species have been identified onsite. Disturbance associated with the construction of roads, driveways, utilities, residences, hotel facilities and golf course improvements will result in the removal of some habitat, which could result in the loss or migration of individual animals during the land clearing and construction phases. Land clearing activities would likely cause more mobile species to relocate off site, while less mobile species would be expected to move to areas on the site not affected by development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project will preserve the 230±-acre hillside and ridge in the western portion of the site as contiguous open space, which will provide for wildlife habitat and movement. The undeveloped portion of the site will continue to provide habitat for those wildlife species that currently utilize this property. Vegetation removal in the proposed development area will be partially mitigated by replacement plantings using native species where possible. The project will implement the recommendations of the NRMPP, which include maintenance of buffers around wetlands, streams, and ponds,
<p>Cultural Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the project may result in potential impacts to charcoal hearth features in the western portion of the site along the base of the ridge and a concentration of historic/modern artifacts located in the north eastern corner of the site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Phase 2 site investigation conducted in the location of the charcoal hearth features (Site A02701.000081) recovered no significant cultural artifacts. Based on this investigation, the site is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and no further work is necessary. The Applicant is avoiding disturbance to the historic/modern artifacts by relocating the wastewater treatment plant to the north side of US Route 44. Based on the comprehensive Phase I investigations for the disturbance area and the Phase II results, the proposed project is expected to have no impact on cultural resources and no further work is required.
<p>Visual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project will add a new hotel and residential uses to the site, which will be visible, to varying degrees, from the surrounding area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the site, the development has been designed to follow existing landforms, topography, masses of vegetation, and ridgelines where possible.

Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will not adversely impact the Level of Service (LOS) on roadways and at intersections in the vicinity of the project site. All roadways and intersections analyzed will maintain at least a LOS B upon full buildout of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As the proposed project is not anticipated to create any safety issues, no mitigation measures are necessary. ▪ The Applicant intends to formally petition the NYSDOT, via its highway work permit process, to request that signalization of this intersection be permitted as part of the overall project. Signalization would likely include the addition of designated turn lanes on both the northbound and southbound sides of Route 22 for entry into the project site.
Land Use and Zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site layout has been designed to make use of the site's natural topography and vegetation. The site design takes advantage of the existing slope by stepping down the hotel buildings so that they appear smaller from certain vantage points. The majority of the residential uses will be tucked back into vegetation along the periphery of the golf course, reducing the project's visual impact from surrounding viewpoints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will not have a significant impact on land use; therefore, no mitigation is necessary. ▪ Under the Town's Resort Development Overlay (RDO) District, the Proposed Action would require waivers from the height provision for the hotel and most of the residential buildings. Variances would also be required for relief from the open space and impervious coverage requirements.
Local and Regional Plan Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project is consistent with the majority of the goals and objectives of applicable local and regional plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mitigation is not necessary.
Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The demand for police, fire, and emergency medical services will likely increase due to the increased population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will provide approximately \$200,000 in net revenue to the Town of Amenia, including for police and fire services, which could be used to cover the cost of increasing staff and/or purchasing new equipment to adequately service the project. ▪ Exterior lighting will be used throughout the site to enhance visibility at pedestrian and vehicular intersections and to provide security in public spaces.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All roads within the development will be sufficiently wide enough to accommodate two 8.5 foot wide fire trucks side-by-side.
<p>School District Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project is expected to introduce a maximum of approximately 128 students to the WCSD, which will require an additional \$1,365,250± in revenues to meet the cost of these additional students. ▪ The evaluation of potential impacts to school district resources is based on a worst-case scenario involving year-round residence for all proposed residential units at the Silo Ridge Resort Community; however, the proposed development is being marketed as a “second home” community and therefore, it is anticipated that the number of school children generated by the project would be considerably less than the worst-case maximum presented herein. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will be significantly fiscally positive to the school district, providing a conservative estimate of approximately \$2,140,400 in surplus revenue to the WCSD. This will more than offset the operational cost of the project-generated students. No mitigation is required.
<p>Recreation, Open Space, and Tourism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Town will continue to meet the NRPA criteria for recreational needs of its citizens even with the addition of 1,079 new residents from the Silo Ridge Resort Community. In accordance with Section 105-23(D), Parks and Open Space of the Town Code, Silo Ridge will preserve approximately 500± acres of open space and existing recreational opportunities, such as the hiking trails and golf course. In addition, the Applicant proposes to upgrade the existing golf course and driving range and provide onsite recreational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As there will be no impacts to recreational and open space resources in the Town of Amenia as a result of the Proposed Action, no mitigation measures are necessary. Further, as previously stated, it is anticipated that project will enhance the local and regional tourism economy by providing additional guests rooms, dining opportunities, and recreational resources.

	opportunities for Silo Ridge residents and guests.	
Utilities – Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The estimated water demand for the proposed project is approximately 217,420 ± gallons per day (gpd), or 302 gallons per minute (gpm). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Six new water supply wells will be installed to serve the proposed project; however, combined water production with the largest well out of service is of these wells is only 283 gallons per minute. Therefore, the Applicant will need to drill for additional sources of water onsite to satisfy the groundwater demand of the proposed project.
Utilities - Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will generate approximately 219,000± gpd of wastewater. ▪ A new onsite wastewater collection and treatment system will be designed and constructed to accommodate flows from the proposed development. ▪ The proposed WWTP will discharge to an unclassified onsite intermittent stream that drains to onsite Class C irrigation ponds. ▪ The WWTP is proposed in a location that has been identified to contain historic/modern cultural artifacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed WWTP will include a comprehensive odor control strategy, including full enclosure in a dedicated building, appropriate ventilation, and aeration of various process tanks to prevent septic conditions. ▪ The wastewater treatment technology for this project will be selected to meet all effluent quality requirements as required by NYSDEC. ▪ The Applicant is avoiding potential impacts to the historic/modern cultural artifacts that were identified on the project site by relocating the WWTP to a site on the north side of US Route 44.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed development is not expected to cause notable increases in sound levels from present levels and will not have an appreciable effect on noise receptors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No mitigation is necessary.
Fiscal Impact Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A conservative estimate of the proposed project's potential fiscal impacts results in an annual surplus of approximately \$2,140,400 in revenue to the WCSD and \$200,000 to the Town of Amenia. Therefore, the project will more than 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project will be fiscally positive to all local taxing jurisdictions and no adverse impacts would occur.

	offset the increase in public service costs it will generate.	
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to a maximum of 1,079 people could be generated by the proposed project under the worst-case scenario of year-round occupancy of all onsite homes. However, since the proposed project is intended to be heavily marketed as a second-home resort-style community, the actual permanent increase in population of Amenias will likely be considerably smaller than that provided above. The future residents and users of the proposed project are not expected to significantly change the demographics of the Town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mitigation is necessary.
Community Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is anticipated that the proposed project will not have a negative effect on the community character of area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To harmonize with the landscape, the existing topography was utilized to reduce the visibility of the proposed project where possible. The extensive open space areas preserved on the project site are consistent with surrounding community character.

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1.5 Summary of Project Alternatives Considered

Reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action that are feasible were considered and balanced with the objectives and capabilities of the Applicant. In accordance with the Final Scoping Document, the following alternatives to the Proposed Action have been considered:

1. No-Build Alternative;
2. Traditional Neighborhood Alternative;
3. Reduced Scale Alternative;
4. Conforming Zoning Alternative;
5. Alternative Energy Option.

Please refer to Chapter 5.0, Alternatives, for a full description and comparative analysis of impacts associated with each alternative, including the No Build scenario. A brief discussion of each is provided below:

No-Build Alternative

The “No-Build” Alternative is the scenario that would occur if no development were to take place on the project site. Without development of the site as a resort facility, the site would remain a golf course and country club for the time being; however, there is no guarantee that the project site would not be developed at some point in the future. Furthermore, the existing golf course is currently operating a loss and would likely close without the support of the proposed development. This alternative is not consistent with the objective of the Applicant, which is to develop a world class golf course and resort community.

Traditional Neighborhood Alternative

In accordance with the Final Scoping Document’s direction for a “Traditional Neighborhood Alternative,” the Applicant commissioned renowned architectural firm, Robert A. M. Stern Architects, to develop a site plan focused on creating a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly resort community while preserving important scenic and environmental resources (see Figure 5-2). The layout provides a pedestrian-oriented core of hotel and residential uses in conjunction with a golf course and spa. The hotel, spa, retail uses and 215 residential units have been concentrated within a ¼-mile radius, making it easier for people to walk from the units to the golf course and other amenities. Retail uses and dining facilities have

been incorporated into the site to provide additional onsite entertainment, shopping, and recreational opportunities. Parking for the hotel has been placed underground, reducing the amount of paving onsite and improving the aesthetics of the site.

As compared to the layout in the Proposed Action, interior relationships in this alternative are better planned from an environmental and pedestrian perspective, and the landscape has an improved aesthetic due to the enhanced clustering of units and variety of building masses, heights, rooflines and architectural features. The site design favors pockets of density that create areas of green space and small “neighborhoods.” With this Alternative, the approximately 230-acre wooded ridge in the western portion of the site remains undeveloped and there is more open space and less impervious coverage than under the Proposed Action.

A conscious effort has been made to move buildings and other improvements away from environmental, visual, and archeological resources. This Alternative eliminates impacts to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) wetland on the project site, as well as to the wetland’s 100-foot adjacent area. The proposed wastewater treatment facility has been relocated to the north side of US Route 44 to avoid impacts to archeological resources, which were identified during the course of the Phase 1 cultural resources investigation of the project site. Visual impacts are lessened with the introduction of more interesting clustering of buildings, and breaking up the masses of buildings with different heights, roof lines, and architectural features. Townhomes originally proposed on DeLavernge Hill in the Proposed Action are eliminated in this Alternative and replaced with a small winery, which will provide tourism benefits to the Town and serve as a public vantage point for views down the valley.

There is also no longer a complete loop road around the perimeter of the golf course in this Alternative; rather, an emergency access road connects the east and west sides of the development, which also allows for pedestrian and bicycle use of the road. The single-family homes that were proposed along the south end of the loop road in the Proposed Action have also been eliminated. This eliminates the intrusion of buildings into the viewshed across the golf course and down into the valley below.

This Alternative would generate 178 fewer residents and 37 fewer public school children than the Proposed Action, and would in turn generate less solid waste and wastewater and demand less water. It would also generate nearly \$1.4 Million more in annual surplus tax revenue to the Town of Amenia than the Proposed Action, as well as over \$3.6 Million more in annual surplus tax revenue to the Webutuck Central School District, as the fewer residents and school children place less cost burden on the Town and School District and the improved golf course and amenities

and luxury resort hotel significantly increase the market value of the residential units.

In addition to the increased tax revenue, as part of this Alternative the Applicant is proposing to construct the project's WWTP with the additional capacity needed to serve the hamlet of Amenia. The Applicant previously anticipated that the WWTP would be sited to allow for the Town to construct an expansion to the facility in the future, the cost of which would have been borne by the Town and residents of the hamlet of Amenia through sewer assessments. However, the Applicant now intends to construct the WWTP with the capacity necessary to serve the Town, and will bear all such construction costs. This is a significant benefit to the Town, in that it represents savings of approximately \$2 Million for Town residents.

Reduced Scale Alternative

In accordance with the Final Scoping Document, the Reduced Scale Alternative reduces development on steep slopes (>15%) and visual impacts from DeLavernge Hill. To achieve these objectives of the Final Scoping Document, the Reduced Scale Alternative proposes 20 fewer hotel units and 190 fewer residential units than the Proposed Action. By eliminating 50% of the residential units and the loop road around the southern end of the golf course, this Alternative substantially reduces the visual impact of the development. Most of the remaining residential units as well as the non-residential uses are concentrated in the central portion of the site, reducing the amount of slope disturbance. The townhouses that were proposed on DeLavernge Hill in the Proposed Action were also removed in this Alternative and replaced with a small winery and observation, which reduces the visual impact to DeLaverne Hill itself.

Because of the reduced number of residential units, this Alternative would generate 510 fewer people and 64 fewer public school children than the Proposed Action. Consequently, municipal and school district costs would be lower, resulting in a more fiscally positive development than the Proposed Action. This Alternative would generate approximately \$288,000 more in annual surplus tax revenue to the Town of Amenia and about \$716,000 more in annual surplus tax revenue to the Webutuck Central School District.

However, even though the Reduced Scale Alternative would generate fewer residents and school children than the Traditional Neighborhood Alternative, it would not be as fiscally positive to the Town or the School District. As shown in Table 5-1 in Section 5.0, the Traditional Neighborhood Alternative would produce approximately \$291,000 and \$1,732,000 more in annual surplus tax revenue to the Town and School District, respectively, than the Reduced Scale Alternative.

The reduced unit count would warrant a smaller WWTP; however, the cost of building the WWTP is not expected to be reduced by the same percentage. Most likely, the per unit cost of building the WWTP would be higher for the Reduced Scale Alternative and it is unlikely that the Applicant would be in a position to donate the WWTP (including capacity needed to serve the hamlet of Amenia) to the Town. Furthermore, the Reduced Scale Alternative does not meet the Applicant's objectives for developing a world-class golf resort, as further described in Section 5.3.

Despite reductions in impacts to steep slopes and visual resources, the Reduced Scale Alternative does not incorporate as many elements of the traditional neighborhood concept and is not as focused on walkability or compact development, which are features that have emerged through the design process as important to the Town.

Conforming Zoning Alternative

This Alternative consists of a conventional development of 41 detached single-family dwellings on minimum lots of five acres and 648 townhomes, consistent with the RA Zoning District. The existing 18-hole public golf course would not be retained under this Alternative.

This Alternative would generate 905 more residents than the Proposed Action development, all of whom are likely to be year-round residents due to the fact that the development would be a conventional subdivision without a resort component. It would also in turn generate more traffic, solid waste, and wastewater. It would also demand more water and create a greater demand for public services such as police, fire, and emergency medical services. This Alternative would also generate 89 more public school children than the Proposed Action (217 public school children in total).

Without retention of the golf course, the Conforming Zoning Alternative preserves significantly less open space than the Proposed Action (approximately 300 acres compared to approximately 500 acres in the proposed plan). It should also be noted that the Conforming Zoning Alternative does not meet the Applicant's desired objectives.

Alternative Energy Option

The Applicant has evaluated the potential for and feasibility of using alternative energy resources at the proposed Silo Ridge Resort Community, including the potential for wind power, solar energy, groundwater heat pump sources, and the use of methane from the Harlem Valley Landfill.

The use of geothermal energy to supplement conventional heating methods for the proposed project does not appear to be feasible on the project site, as it would be

cost-prohibitive for a project of this size. Wind power is not practical on this site, as it requires large amounts of land for windmills. In addition, there would be significant visual impacts from the number of windmills that would be necessary to provide a source of energy for a project of this size. Use of methane from the Harlem Valley Landfill is not feasible as a source of energy for the proposed project because the quantity available would be insufficient to meet the demands of the proposed project.

The use of solar energy as an alternate energy source may be possible in some areas of the site and will be considered when the project moves forward in the design phase.

1.6 Socio-Economic Benefits

The proposed project will provide a maximum of 369 residential units in the Town of Amenia, which will increase and diversify the housing stock within the community. In addition, the purchasing power of the proposed development will have significant economic benefits. The Silo Ridge Country Club currently makes approximately \$1.8 million in purchases annually, approximately half of which occurs within Dutchess County. Future purchasing associated with the proposed development is expected to more than double, and is likely to be even greater. The Applicant expects that approximately half of those purchases will continue to be made through businesses, suppliers, and providers within the County, which will contribute to growth in employment and earnings in the areas in which these businesses operate.

The development will also enhance the tourism industry in Amenia by upgrading the existing golf course, adding a resort hotel, banquet space, restaurants, conference space, and a spa and wellness center, which will also have a significant positive economic impact for the Town and region. For example, according to a 2002 study by Marist College Bureau of Economic Research,⁴ out-of-region visitors⁵ within a ten-county region (including Dutchess County) spend an average of \$108 on meals/food, \$45 on transportation/gas, and \$81 on shopping (on retail goods other than souvenirs and books) per trip. These figures are good estimates of tourism spending for the region. As applied to future visitors to Silo Ridge, assuming an average hotel occupancy of 50% and an average length of stay of three nights, Silo Ridge hotel guests are projected to spend approximately \$2 million on meals and food, \$820,000 on transportation and gas, and \$1.5 million on retail goods annually, much of which is expected to occur locally and within the region.

⁴ Davis, Dr. Ann, 2002. Report of Interviews at Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Marist College Bureau of Economic Research.

⁵ While visitors to heritage sites may differ from those going to golf resorts, the survey data appears to be the only available source for tourism spending that is both recent and applicable to the region.

Furthermore, the hotel component of the development will provide additional economic benefits to Dutchess County through the County's hotel occupancy tax, currently at 4% of the daily hotel room rate. Based on an average occupancy of 50%, the proposed hotel will generate approximately \$219,000 annually in hotel tax revenues for the County for each \$100 charged in average room rate. This will result in a significant positive contribution to the County's revenue stream.

The project will also create employment opportunities both during construction and during the long-term operation of the project. Based on an industry average of 9.2 labor hours per \$1,000⁶ in construction cost and a total construction value of approximately \$300 million, the project will generate an estimated 1,400 construction jobs. Once fully operational, the project is expected to employ 228 full-time equivalent people in positions ranging from management, marketing and finance, to grounds, facilities, housekeeping, and food service.

The new jobs generated by the Silo Ridge Resort Community will indirectly generate additional jobs within the local area and region. Each new construction job will generate an additional 0.74 jobs in the local and regional economy as construction firms and employees buy goods and services locally and regionally.⁷ For every new hotel, lodging and golf related job, 0.86 additional jobs will be created, much of which will be within the local area and the County. For every new food service job, 0.33 additional jobs will be generated, much of which will also be within the local area and region.

Property tax levies are typically the most significant source of income to public service jurisdictions, and the Proposed Action will produce long-term economic benefits to the Town and School District with respect to tax revenues from the property. The project site currently has an assessed value of \$5,785,300 and, as shown in Table 1-5 below, generates an annual total of \$160,715 in taxes to relevant taxing jurisdictions. Upon full buildout, the project will have an estimated assessed value of \$180,984,000± and will generate an annual total of \$5,027,700± to relevant taxing districts.

Table 1-5 Estimated Revenues Generated by the Project

Taxing District	2006 Property Tax Rate per \$1,000 Assessed Value	Current Taxes	Projected Taxes	Increase in Tax Revenues
Dutchess County	\$3.83	\$22,158	\$693,169	\$671,012
Town of Amenia	\$3.92	\$22,678	\$709,458	\$686,780
Amenia Fire District	\$0.66	\$3,818	\$119,450	\$115,631
Webutuck Central School District	\$19.37	\$112,061	\$3,505,663	\$3,393,602
TOTAL		\$160,715	\$5,027,740	\$4,867,025

2005 assessed value = \$5,785,300. Projected total assessed value upon full build-out = (approx) \$180,984,000. Please refer to Appendix 9.10 for supporting documentation.

⁶ Urban Land Institute, *Development Impact Assessment Handbook*, 1994.

⁷ Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, RIMS II Multipliers, 2004.

Table 1-6 provides a comparison of the project's estimated municipal and school costs with its respective property tax revenues. The Proposed Action will generate approximately \$829,000± in annual tax revenues to relevant Town taxing districts, including the Fire District, and with a total municipal cost of approximately \$629,000, will result in a total tax revenue surplus of \$200,000± to the Town annually.

With respect to potential impacts to the Webutuck Central School District, the Proposed Action will generate approximately \$3,505,700± in annual property tax revenue to the School District, while the total cost to the District for the maximum of 128 students is estimated to be \$1,365,250±. Therefore, assuming that the combination of State aid and other revenue sources increase proportionately with the increase in School District enrollment, the Proposed Action will contribute a surplus of approximately \$2,140,400 annually to the School District.

Table 1-6 Cost / Revenue Comparison

Project Generated Population		Cost Per Person / Unit		Project Generated Cost			Project Generated Tax Revenue		Project Generated Surplus or Deficit	
People	School Children	Per Person	Per Pupil*	Municipal		School District	Municipal**	School District	Municipal**	School District
				People	Commercial					
1,079	128	\$562	\$10,707	\$606,235	\$22,760	\$1,365,250	\$828,907	\$3,505,700	\$200,000	\$2,140,400

* Cost per Pupil to be Raised by Property Taxes.
 ** Municipal revenues include taxes paid to Town and Fire District. Surplus includes an estimated \$42,000 to Fire District.⁸

In addition, the project will also generate sales tax revenues through operation of the golf course, hotel, and retail facilities onsite, including restaurants, the spa, and the golf pro shop. Moreover, the significant number employment opportunities provided by the project, ranging from hourly positions to management and professional-level positions, will contribute to an increase in household spending in the region, which, in addition to the revenue generated by the retail and sales components of the project and spending by visitors staying at the resort, will produce an economic multiplier effect throughout the local and regional economy.

⁸ To estimate the surplus to the Fire District, a per capita cost for fire services was first assigned using the total fire district budget (including that for Wassauc Fire District for simplicity) and the total Town population. Then a project cost was determined and a surplus calculated based on projected revenues and the estimated project cost.

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