

### 3.8 Cultural Resources

#### **3.8.1 Visual Quality**

##### Existing Visual Character and Views into the Site

The project site is located in a setting of rolling topography and rural/suburban development, where views are generally limited by nearby hills, woods vegetation and the curvilinear roadway network. The project area consists of a heavily used transportation corridor (Route 6) to the south of the site, developed with commercial/retail uses and surrounded by wooded hillsides with a pattern of low density rural residential development. The moderate density developments that exist in the immediate project vicinity -- single family residential development including Kelly Ridge Road and Everett Road and Centennial Golf Club to the northwest, golf course to the north and east, and predominantly commercial to the south (including US Route 6) -- all have very limited views of the site due to the existing vegetation and topography.

Visual resource field surveys were conducted from local roads in the project area in September and December 2003 to identify locations in the vicinity where the project site may be visible from roads and properties with public access. In September, leaves were on the trees, although the topography of the area allowed for clear assessment of potential visual exposure. Revisit of the project area in December confirmed the assessment. During times of year when leaves are off the trees, the project site would potentially have the greatest visibility from off-site locations, as discussed further below. The extent of the field survey was initially determined by inspection of United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps with the aid of 3D viewing computer software (Terrain Navigator Pro), which reveal the potential visibility of the project site based on topography. Thus, the initial survey established the *potential viewshed* of the proposed project site. The field survey refined this assessment based on factors limiting the actual visibility of the site, including topography, vegetation, and buildings. The field survey identified the *actual viewshed* of specific locations in the site vicinity where the site and the proposed project would be visible.

The field survey included identification of any prominent land forms, land cover types, and the visual character of the site and local area. The survey also identified natural areas of significant scenic value in the vicinity of the project, if any.

Currently, most of the site is heavily wooded, with a mix of large deciduous trees and a mixed understory of small trees and herbaceous cover. There are no unique or unusual visual features present. A small southern portion of the site contains old field vegetative cover, including mixed shrub and grassy vegetation. In general, topography on the site slopes from a western ridge down to the eastern and southern site boundaries. Relatively level topography forms the northeastern edge of the property, where an area of wetland is found. The western portion of the site includes the highest elevations and steepest topography on the property. Elevations range from approximately 757 feet at a high point (known as Mount Pisgah) at the northwestern corner of the Gateway parcel to approximately 400 feet in the southwest corner of the Gateway Summit parcel. On The Fairways parcel, elevations range from approximately 675 feet at a high point along the western boundary to approximately 480 feet on the southern boundary of the parcel.

While the regional geological land forms generally trend in a north-south direction, the rolling terrain of the area contains hilltops and valleys of similar elevations to the project site. Mount

Pisgah is of similar height to other hilltops in the local vicinity. The slopes on the project site primarily face a valley within the eastern portion of the site, with opposing hillsides nearby immediately to the east. Thus, the topography of the local region renders potential views of the site only from points generally north and south of the site. Potential visibility of this site is limited to generally within 0.8 mile of the property, or less. No single view point was identified from which the entire project site would be visible. Key Map Figure 3.8-1 shows the locations of various sight line profiles that were drawn to illustrate the visual character of the site area. The figures that follow Figure 3.8-1 are drawn to scale and depict the actual ground line profile and tree cover along the line of sight from critical viewpoints in the site vicinity.

#### *The Fairways Site*

At its northern end, there are no views into The Fairways site from Kelly Ridge Road or Everett Road due to the topography. A minor topographic ridgeline interrupts views to the site from these roads. There are likely some views from the rear of the residential lots on these roads that reveal perimeter portions of the site, limited by intervening vegetation on near and far sides of existing golf fairways. There are likely some views from the golf course that reveal perimeter portions of the site, limited by vegetation. The site is not visible from Simpson Road to the east due to intervening wooded topography. None of The Fairways site is visible from Route 6 or other local streets south of the property due to topography.

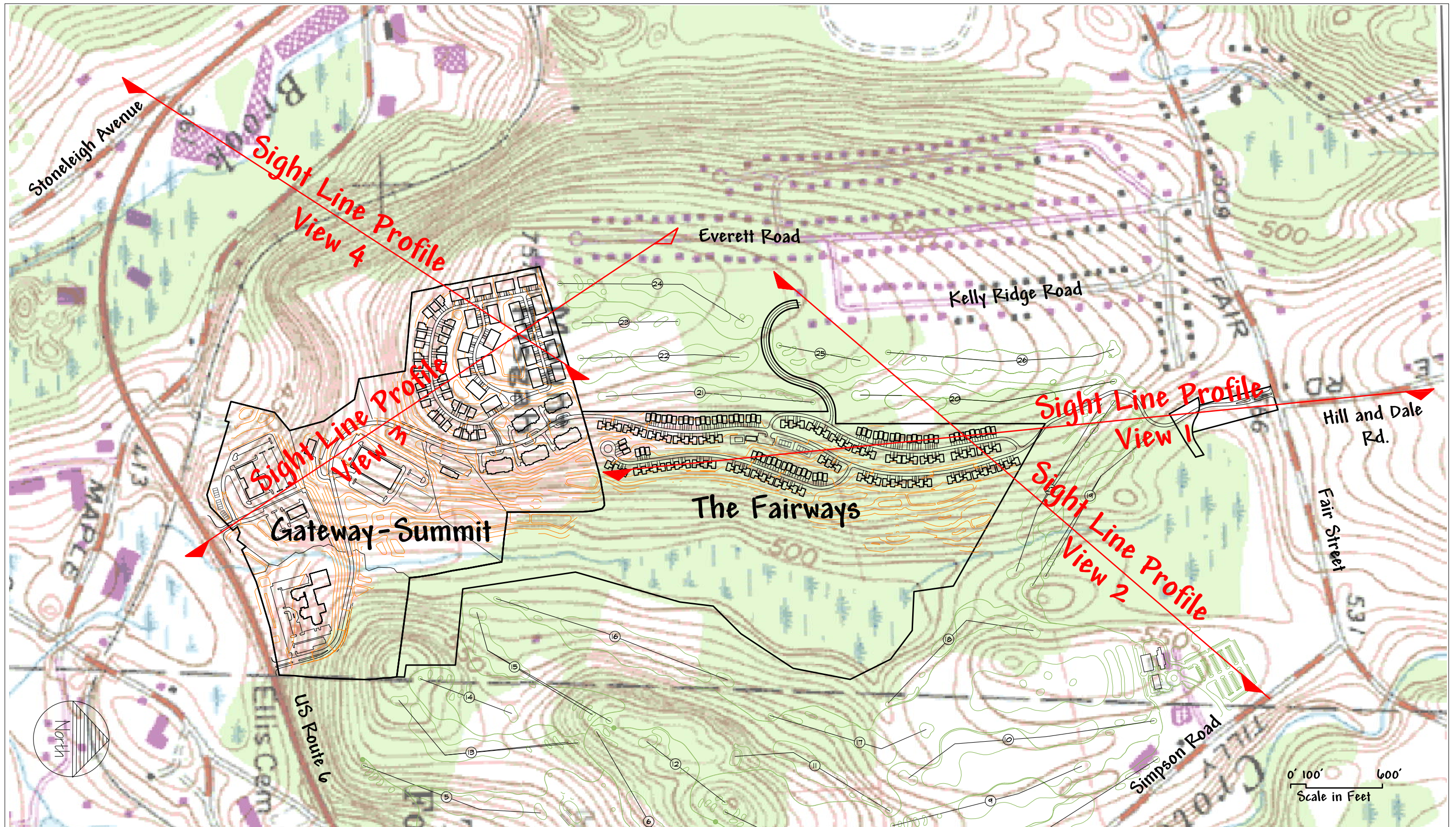
Approaching Fair Street on the southern end of Hill and Dale Road and from the area of Duke Drive and Elena Court (off of Hill and Dale), the tree line of the site can be seen near the horizon over a distance of approximately one-half mile. The site is visible to some extent from a short portion of Fair Street in the vicinity of Simpson Road, although the angle of view limits the extent of exposure. No views into The Fairways parcel were identified from any other roads or other public places in the site vicinity due to the intervening topography and vegetation of the area and the fact that it has no existing road frontage.

#### *The Gateway Summit Site*

At its northern end, there are no views into the Gateway Summit site from Kelly Ridge Road, Everett Road or Fair Street due to the topography. The peak of Mount Pisgah at the northwest corner of the parcel interrupts views to the site from these roads. There are likely some views from the golf course that reveal perimeter portions of the site, limited by vegetation. The site is not visible from Simpson Road to the east due to intervening topography. At the present time, only the perimeter of the southern end of the parcel is visible from Route 6 along the site frontage due to dense woods cover. Potentially (with the absence of trees on the site), the south-central portion of the Gateway parcel would likely be visible from Route 6 along the site frontage.

No views of the site were possible from Route 6 east of the site due to topography. Trees on the minor ridgeline that falls from the peak of Mount Pisgah toward the south of the parcel are evident as a horizon line as viewed from Route 6 west of the project site above the roof tops of buildings within Putnam Plaza Shopping Center. This view covers a distance of approximately one-half mile.

No views into the Gateway Summit parcel were identified from other local roads or public places in the site vicinity due to intervening topography and vegetation of the area.



08/23/04  
 Scale: 1" = 600'

FS: Gateway-Fairways\Drawings\visual assessment\Gateway-Fairways visual.dwg: keymap

This Figure depicts the locations of sight line Views shown in accompanying Figures.

Figure 3.8-1: Key Map to Views  
 Gateway Summit - The Fairways EIS  
 Town of Carmel, Putnam County, New York  
 Source: Putnam Engineering & USGS Lake Carmel Quad

*Aesthetic Resources*

No visually prominent land forms or land cover types were identified in the site vicinity. Land in the site vicinity is characterized by its rural/suburban development within a backdrop of wooded hillsides and numerous lakes and reservoirs. The project site, which is predominantly wooded at the present time, is a typical part of this regional landscape. No officially designated aesthetic resources were identified in the project area. No natural areas of significant scenic value were identified within the site viewshed that would be sensitive to changes in the visual environment.

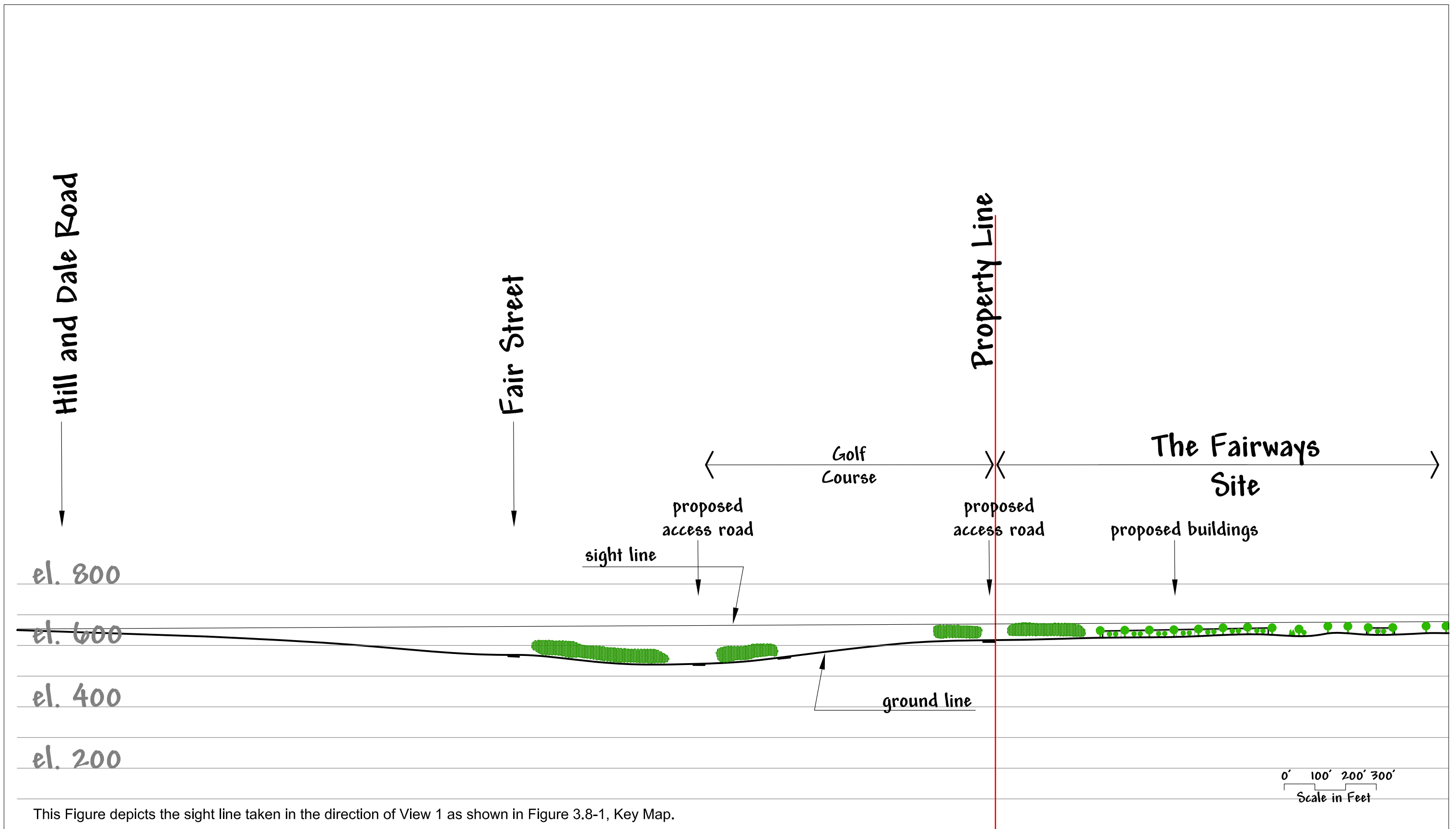
The subject site abuts several golf holes of the Centennial golf course, a 27-hole public course with three 9-hole layouts. The Centennial golf course is considered to be a local recreational and scenic amenity, although not officially designated as such. The course was designed by Larry Nelson, a renowned designer of championship golf courses. The 340-acre course is oriented around natural features including rolling hills, ponds, and rock outcroppings.

The three 9-hole layouts of Centennial golf course include the Fairways Course, the Meadows Course and the Lakes Course. The golf course abuts The Fairways project site to the north, east and west, and partially abuts the Gateway Summit project site on its northern and eastern borders. The closest golf holes that are adjacent to proposed development on the project site include hole #9 on the Fairways Course, located to the north of The Fairways project site; holes #2 and #3 on the Fairways Course located to the west of The Fairways project site (north and south of the proposed emergency access drive, respectively); and, holes #4, #5 and #6 on the Fairways Course located north of Lot 5 of Gateway Summit. Golfers play hole #9 in a west-to-east direction, with The Fairways project site and partial wooded areas of the golf course situated to their right. Holes #2 and #3 are played in an north-to-south direction with The Fairways project site and a mix of wooded areas, water features and sandy areas situated to the left. The green for hole #3 backs onto a wooded area on the golf course property abutting the Gateway Summit project site. Hole #4 reverses direction and is played in a northerly direction, with the Gateway Summit project site to the backs of golfers as they tee off. Like hole #3, hole #5 is played in a north-to-south direction with the tee backing onto a wooded area on the golf course that abuts the Gateway Summit project site. Hole #6 reverses direction, with golfers teeing off with their backs to the Gateway Summit project site.

As indicated above, wooded lands exist along the common property lines of the project sites and the golf course, extending onto both the Centennial golf course site and the project site, with the general exception of approximately 400 feet of sandy area at the western property line of The Fairways site near the site's southern end (portion of hole #3), and several hundred feet of open area along the northwestern property line of Gateway Summit abutting proposed Lot 5 (rear of tee of hole #6).

The adopted Land Use Plan for the Town of Carmel (1978) mentions concerns for preservation of natural and scenic qualities of the Town but lacks designation of any aesthetic resources. While it has not been accepted by the Town Board in its present form, the Town of Carmel Draft Comprehensive Plan (2000) cites plan goals relating to environmental protection, including the following goal relating to landscape aesthetics:

There are many areas of the Town with significant elevations and steep slopes. These features add to the natural beauty of the area. Setting standards to protect the ridge line today will ensure harm to the local landscape is minimized.



This Figure depicts the sight line taken in the direction of View 1 as shown in Figure 3.8-1, Key Map.

Figure 3.8-2: Line of Sight Profile from Hill & Dale Rd. - View 1

Gateway Summit - The Fairways EIS  
 Town of Carmel, Putnam County, New York  
 Source: Tim Miller Associates, Inc.

07/01/04  
 Scale: 1" = 300'

FS: Gateway-Fairways\Drawings\Gateway-Fairways visual.dwg: view1a

The Draft Comprehensive Plan identifies slopes of 15% and greater (“steep slopes”) as areas of environmental concern. The Fairways parcel contains large areas of such slopes, although as described above, none of this portion of the project site is visible from any roads or public places. The Gateway Summit parcel also contains steep slopes which are generally located along the southwestern boundaries of the parcel and in the north-central area, internal to the site. These areas are also not visible from off-site locations.

### Potential Impacts to Aesthetic Resources and Proposed Mitigation Measures

#### *The Fairways Site*

Construction of The Fairways project as proposed will remove portions of existing woods from the site and replace them with housing and roads, thus potentially creating a change to the visual character of the site area. Following construction of The Fairways project, a portion of the hillside may appear more open with the removal of the tree canopy as viewed from the area to the immediate north (south end of Hill and Dale Road and Duke Drive residential neighborhood). As illustrated in Figure 3.8-2, the potential line of sight is intercepted at the tree line, and would pass over the top of proposed residential buildings on The Fairways site. In winter months, it is possible that glimpses of roof tops of the new buildings may be seen from the area to the immediate north. Given the distance of the potential viewer from the project site, this view would appear as a small portion of the broader view of the nearby and distant landscape. Thus, the view from the nearest public roads to the north will not change significantly due to the wooded buffer that is proposed to remain on the project site and the distance from the viewer, as well as intervening foreground trees and buildings. (See Appendix Q for Building Elevations of senior housing.)

The limited view of the site from Fair Street will change to some extent as a result of the project development. From this vantage point (Fair Street at Simpson Road), the clearing of trees and portions of the new buildings on the site will be visible. The intervening landscape will limit visibility. It is expected that the proposed landscape treatment within the developed project, including installation of shade trees throughout the project to create a new canopy of tree cover, as well as careful selection of architectural treatment of the buildings (for example, building colors and varied rooflines), will minimize any potential adverse effect of the visual change. It is also noted that this view would be briefly experienced by people in moving vehicles rather than from stationary view points. Some limited views of the project through the site entrance from Centennial golf course to the north may also be available and would be unavoidable.

As stated above, no views exist of the developed portion of the site from other local roads to the north and east. Figure 3.8-3 illustrates the intercepted sight lines to the project site from Simpson Road and from Kelly Ridge Road. There will possibly be some evidence of the proposed clearing of the existing tree canopy from the rear of the residential properties on Kelly Ridge Road. Due to the existing intervening topography, however, potential sight lines from these properties to the proposed buildings will be obscured.

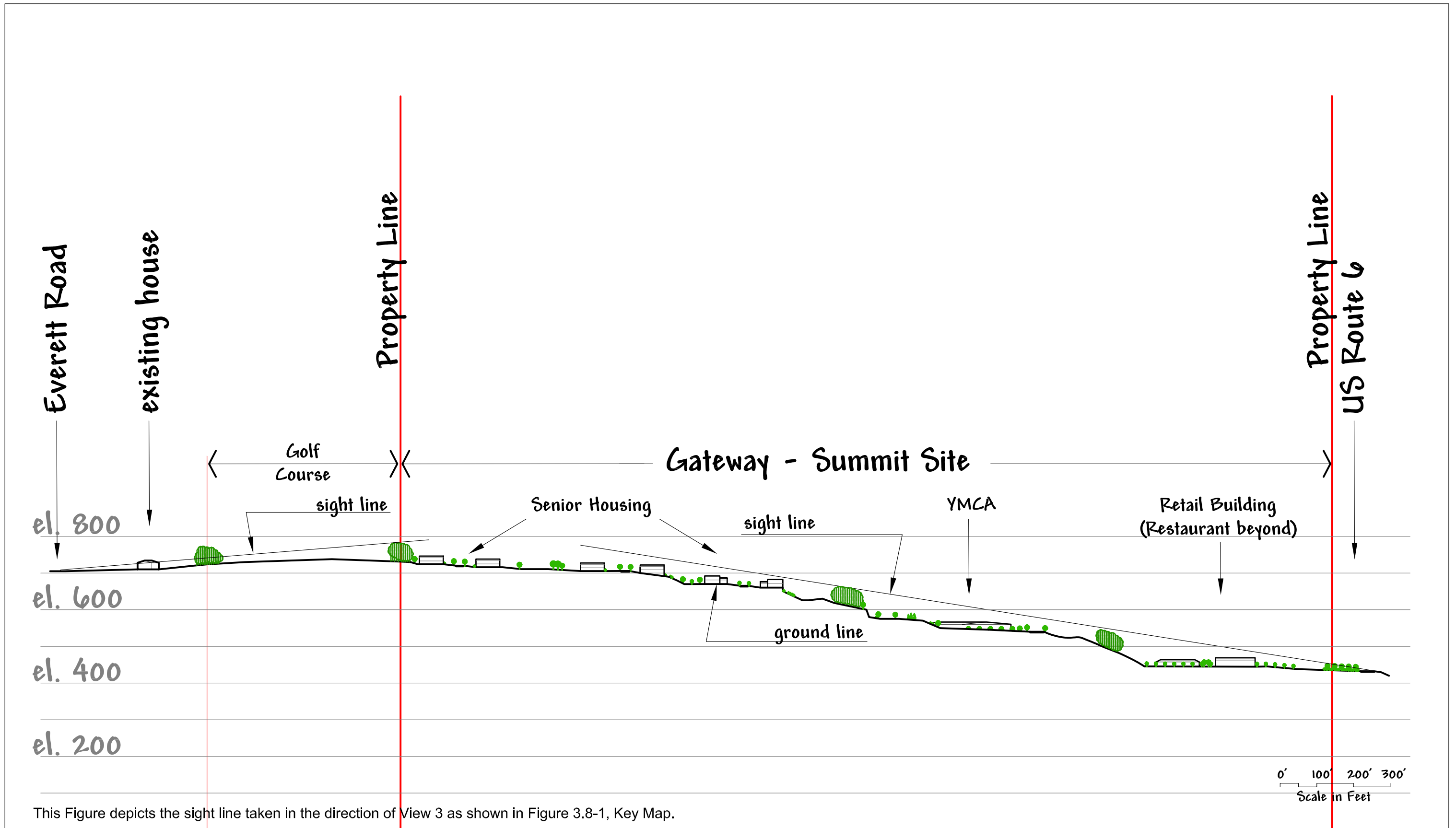
Figure 3.8-6 illustrates the existing wooded buffer between Centennial golf course and the proposed project and wooded areas of the project site that are proposed to remain. With the exception of approximately 400 linear feet along the western border of The Fairways near its southern end where a sandy area exists, views of the project for users of the golf course would be generally limited by existing vegetation on the golf course property. Golfers would experience direct views of the proposed senior housing through the sandy area only briefly as



Figure 3.8-3: Line of Sight Profile from Simpson Rd. - View 2  
 Gateway Summit - The Fairways EIS  
 Town of Carmel, Putnam County, New York  
 Source: Tim Miller Associates, Inc.

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 Scale: 1" = 260'

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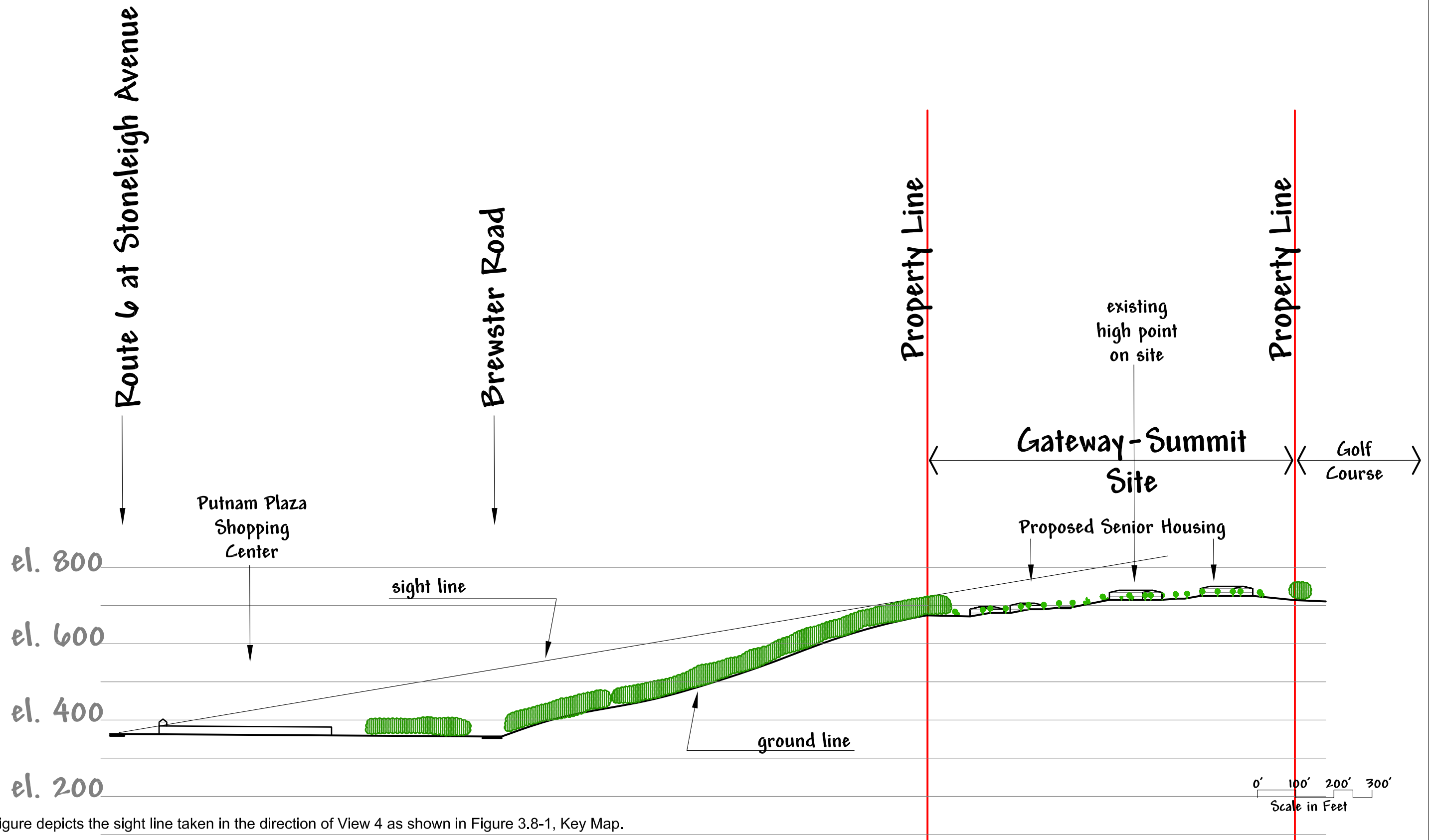


This Figure depicts the sight line taken in the direction of View 3 as shown in Figure 3.8-1, Key Map.

Figure 3.8-4: Line of Sight Profile from Route 6 - View 3  
 Gateway Summit - The Fairways EIS  
 Town of Carmel, Putnam County, New York  
 Source: Tim Miller Associates, Inc.

08/23/04  
 Scale: 1" = 250'

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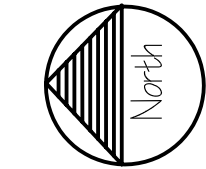


This Figure depicts the sight line taken in the direction of View 4 as shown in Figure 3.8-1, Key Map.





Figure 3.8-5: Line of Sight Profile from Route 6 - View 4  
 Gateway Summit - The Fairways EIS  
 Town of Carmel, Putnam County, New York  
 Source: Tim Miller Associates, Inc.

08/23/04  
 Scale: 1" = 250'

FS: Gateway-Fairways\Drawings\Gateway-Fairways visual.dwg: view4



**LEGEND**

-  Potential Direct Visual Connection between Centennial Golf Course and Proposed Development
-  No. 1 Hole Number
-  Green
-  Wooded Area to Remain

**Figure 3.8-6: Areas of Potential Visual Connection to Centennial Golf Course**  
**Gateway Summit/The Fairways**  
 Town of Carmel, Putnam County, New York  
 Source: Putnam Engineering, PLLC., Revised 08-25-04  
 Fax (845) 265-4400 Fax (845) 265-4418 Scale: 1 inch = 300 feet

they play hole #3. The proposed emergency access connection to Kelly Ridge Road is surrounded by wooded land and would not significantly impact views from the golf course.

Approximately six-to-ten of the proposed homes closest to the common property line near the site's southern end would briefly be visible from hole #3 of the Centennial golf course, through the above-described sandy area that extends for approximately 400 feet. However, the low scale and architectural treatment of the buildings will minimize any potential adverse effect of the visual change.

#### *The Gateway Summit Site*

Views from Route 6 along the property frontage will change in the post-development condition. Existing tree cover on the site, which provides a canopy over the roadway as well as woods cover on the subject property, will be removed over much of the frontage. Views will extend into the site from Route 6 in the vicinity of the two site access points revealing portions of the proposed buildings facing Route 6 and new areas of clearing. Figure 3.8-4 illustrates the sight line profile taken from the westerly site access point on Route 6. As shown, the development on the lower portion of the property will be within view from Route 6. It is expected that architectural design and materials of the new buildings, and landscape treatment in the project site, will create an attractive development that will complement the visual character of the existing Route 6 travel corridor.

Steeper portions of land located within the project site, including some 350 lineal feet located at the center of the Route 6 frontage, are planned to be left in woods cover. Due to the existing topography of the site in relation to the Route 6 corridor along the site frontage, some of the sight lines to the higher elevations of the property will be intercepted by trees proposed to remain on the site. Vistas to portions of the new development on the higher areas of the site will occur, broken by trees to remain or new landscaping and further limited by the low profile of the proposed buildings. Low scale senior housing proposed near the crest of Mount Pisgah and built around a village green will be set below the potential sight line of this area from Route 6. It is noted that the views from Route 6 would be experienced primarily by people in moving vehicles rather than from stationary view points.

Landscaped boulevard entrances proposed at both points of access from Route 6, along with ornamental signage and entrance features, and landscape plantings along the site frontage, are expected to create an attractive visual statement without adverse visual impact to the Route 6 corridor.

Potential views toward the project site from points on Route 6 west of the site were also evaluated. Figure 3.8-5 shows a line of sight profile taken from the intersection of Route 6 and Stoneleigh Avenue. From this and other locations along Route 6 in the vicinity of Putnam Plaza Shopping Center, the wooded hillside immediately west of the project site is prominent in the view. The project site development itself, however, will occur beyond the tree line that will remain on the property. Given the low profile of the buildings on the site in relation to the site topography and trees to remain, no direct view of the development area within the project will occur from this area of Route 6. The line of sight is some 98 feet above the ground line, as shown on Figure 3.8-5. While it is possible that during the winter months when leaves are off the trees, glimpses of the buildings may be observed through the tree cover, no adverse visual effect is expected.

No views of the proposed site development project at Gateway-Summit will occur from other roads in the local area due to existing tree cover and topography. There will likely be some evidence of the proposed clearing of the existing tree canopy from the rear of the residential properties on Everett Road. Due to the existing intervening topography, however, potential sight lines from these properties to the proposed buildings will be obscured.

Proposed buildings on Lot 5 of the Gateway Summit site that abut the Centennial golf course to the north would be largely obscured by intervening wooded buffer on the golf course property. Four of the proposed senior housing units would potentially be visible near the western end of the site's northern property line where an opening in the wooded buffer on the golf course exists (see Figure 3.8-6). These direct views would be partially visible to golfers approaching the green of hole #5. While this open area of the common property line is located closest to hole #6, golfers tee off for hole #6 in a northerly direction, with the most prominent views for hole #6 being those of the golf course to the north, and not the project site to their backs.

#### *Landscaping, Lighting and Architecture*

Site landscaping and lighting designs will be part of the construction documents approved for both The Fairways and Gateway Summit developments. The landscape plan for each development will include a street tree pattern for roadways and parking areas, shade trees and ornamental flowering trees around building areas, and buffer planting where appropriate between buildings and uses. The plan must conform with Town of Carmel Code, §63-10C regarding landscaping of parking areas.

The lighting plan for each development will be designed to provide overall nighttime illumination on all primary roadways and parking areas within the project to minimum light levels adequate for public safety and security. The overall lighting plan will include street lights of a standard design selected for the project and located on the site plan to create an optimal lighting pattern while minimizing glare and off-site stray light. Lighting of the individual lots of Gateway Summit will be designed specifically for the individual uses and controlled by the individual lot occupants, while lighting of the primary roadways of both projects will be laid out as an integral design for all-night illumination. It is expected that lighting on the individual lots of Gateway Summit will include all-night security lighting.

It is expected that night lighting in this project will produce levels of illumination that would create neither a nuisance to nearby residences nor an objectionable nighttime "glow" over the project site. Lighting will include appropriate shields, if needed, near sensitive receptors, to limit stray light, and will be designed such that energy is not wasted by illuminating nonessential surfaces. No significant adverse effect of night lighting is expected from this project.

While the architecture of the buildings has not been developed at this time, it is anticipated that the residential buildings will be of a traditional design in general keeping with the older residential architecture in the Carmel area, while providing for modern needs of its residents. Architecture of the proposed commercial buildings at Gateway Summit is expected to be more contemporary, reflecting the needs of the individual lot users.

Based on the anticipated needs of a future hotel developer at Gateway Summit, and in order to create an aesthetically pleasing roof line for a hotel on this site, it is expected that the height of the proposed hotel on Lot 1 would slightly exceed the maximum permitted height of 40 feet in the Commercial/Business Park District. The roof line would be expected to rise to a total height

of 48 feet, with the height of the building, per Town Code Article III definition, being 42 feet (to the average height of the gable). Each of the hotel building's three stories would be 12 feet in height. No adverse visual impacts are expected as a result of this slight exceedance of the maximum permitted height in the Commercial/Business Park District.

*Summary*

The described changes in views of the site will not result in a stark contrast in visual character as compared with the surrounding landscape, either in terms of type of use or in the makeup of buildings and landscape treatment. The project as proposed will not dominate the rural/suburban view from any publicly accessible location. To the contrary, the combination of residential development, subdivision of lots for commercial uses and public facilities, and intertwining areas of wooded open space will complement the developed residential and commercial character that exists in the project vicinity. Additionally, the innovative development plan incorporates a variety of measures and development styles, including clustering of developed areas and protection of wooded hillsides as open space, and a conservation area located to the east of the primary site entrance off Route 6, addressing important goals of the Town of Carmel.

As no significant adverse change to visual character of the project site has been identified from local roads or from other publicly accessible land, this project is not expected to have adverse visual impact. No views from significant aesthetic resources have been identified that will be adversely affected by this project. The rural/suburban character of the site area will be maintained by preserving vegetation at the perimeter of the site and in large contiguous areas in the center and the higher elevations of the property. The proposed development will be visually compatible with surrounding developed and undeveloped land.

A landscaping plan will be part of the construction documents approved for both The Fairways project and Gateway Summit. Since provisions to preserve the visual character of the site are part of the project design, as identified above, further mitigation measures are not required.

**3.8.2 Historical and Archeological Resources**

A Stage 1A Cultural Resources Survey was conducted in 1995 for the Centennial Golf Club project by Environmental Consulting Associates. This survey included The Fairways parcel, which is part of the Centennial Golf Club property. This survey identified no significant cultural resources, buildings or structures on The Fairways parcel. While the Gateway Summit parcel was not surveyed at that time, it is also not believed to have supported any culturally significant buildings or structures, as it is similarly comprised of second growth woods on a hillside that was farmed in the past. Portions of the site in the vicinity of the former Town Highway Department Building have been excavated in the past to extract soils that were used to cap a nearby landfill.

As no historical or archeological resources are known or suspected on the project site, no impacts to historical or archeological resources are anticipated due to development of the site.