

### **3.1 Land Use and Zoning**

#### **3.1.1 Existing Land Use Conditions**

##### Introduction

The Village of Monroe was incorporated in 1894 in order to form a fire protection district. Original settlement patterns were influenced by proximity to the Ramapo River. The River was used as an energy source to provide power to mills located along the river.

Development in the Village was influenced by construction of the New York State Thruway and the Route 17 Quickway during the late 1950's. These major transportation routes considerably shortened the travel time to the major employment areas in Northern New Jersey, Westchester County and New York City. The excellent regional transportation provided by the junctions of routes Interstate 87, State Route 17 and State Route 17M encouraged the development of regional employment centers in Orange County. The convergence of these transportation routes has facilitated the development of major regional shopping in nearby Woodbury and Harriman. Development throughout Orange County tends to be concentrated along these transportation corridors, surrounded by large areas of undeveloped land.

##### General Land Use

These development trends have led to continuing residential development in the area. The proposed project is one of the few remaining parcels of land available for development within the Village of Monroe. It is the goal of the Village Board to preserve the character of the Village of Monroe as a small town community, while meeting the needs of the area.

The Village of Monroe is located in the northern portion of the Town of Monroe. The Village is designated as an urban area as part of the Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan. The Orange County Plan calls for an Urban/Rural growth concept, whereby the need for housing and related services is met within urban areas, thus leaving large parcels of Orange County open to preserve the mountains and lakes that make up it's picturesque nature. The intent is to provide a range of residential densities to facilitate various housing types and prices that enable both future and existing citizens of the Town and Village of Monroe, and greater Orange County, to reside within the area. Specific land uses on roads in immediate proximity to the site are discussed in greater detail in the following section.

##### Land Use & Zoning in the Site Vicinity

The project site is a 29.3-acre parcel of vacant wooded land located on the west side of County Road 40 (Freeland Street) north of Forshee Street. The site is generally surrounded by a combination of single-family residential use and vacant land. The land to the north, south and east of the site are single family residential. Land parcels to the northwest of the project site are vacant. The project site is located in close proximity to the Village business district. It is also situated to take advantage of the commercial development located along Route 17M.

The entire project site is zoned UR-M. Lands to the north and west are also zoned UR-M and are largely undeveloped with the exception of the end of Clark Street which is developed as small lot residential. Immediately west of the project site is Forshee Street which is zoned

SR-10 and developed in small lot single family residential. To the east, the land is zoned SR-20. Portions of this area are residentially developed. Seamanville Cemetery is located immediately northeast of Spring Street in the vicinity of the project area. This area is zoned SR-20. Lands to the south are zoned SR-10 and are residentially developed as single family.

An in-field assessment of community character was conducted in the site vicinity and is presented in DEIS Section 3.10. The analysis extended to the immediate vicinity of the site, encompassing all properties within 500 feet of the subject property boundary as outlined in §200-92 of the Village of Monroe Code (Criteria for recommendations of the Architectural Appearance Review Board). The following summarizes the character of the land uses found in the study area.

Immediately north of the project site is Clarke Street development, a dead end local road with its cul-de-sac at the northern property line of the subject site. Clarke Street is a narrow two-lane road off of Maple Avenue. At the south end of Clarke Street are several single-family homes on small lots. A parcel owned by the Village of Monroe containing the Village's Highway Department facilities is located northwest of the site along Clarke Street.

The right of way for Consolidated Rail Corporation abuts the property to the northeast. The railroad has been abandoned in this area, and the raised right-of-way is part of the Orange County Trailway system. There is a strip of land between the trailway and Spring Street containing several single-family homes on lots of varying sizes.

To the south of the project site is Freeland Street (County Route 40), a heavily traveled collector road. Land use along Freeland Street in the vicinity of the site (between Forshee Street and the Village Line at the County Heritage Trail) is single family residential on lots of varying sizes.

Forshee Street is a dead end local road located immediately west of the project site. Forshee Street is a narrow two-lane road with small single family residential lots. Additional land to the west is vacant and wooded.

The development along these roadways is generally complete. Only a small amount of infill development appears possible. The applicant is not aware of any development proposals for the nearby vacant land.

### **3.1.2 Potential Land Use Impacts**

The applicant is requesting site plan approval to allow for construction of 149 multifamily residential units in the UR-M district. The applicant is requesting a consolidation of lots 7, 8, 9, and 11.1 in Section 214, Block 1, to accommodate the proposed project.

Water would be supplied by a connection to the Village of Monroe's municipal water system. There is an existing water main in Freeland Street. A connection is proposed in the area of the proposed access drive, known as Hidden Creek Road. The multifamily residential units are proposed to be tied into the Orange County Sewer System. There is an existing sewer main which runs along the northern portion of the property paralleling the Ramapo Stream. Connections to the sewer main are proposed in the area of Cluster A and Cluster G of the multifamily residential development.

The proposed activities would result in a change in use of the project site from existing, private wooded property to a residential development with landscaped areas and open space. A total of 5,600 lineal feet of new access roadway right-of-way would be constructed within the proposed subdivision. The proposed site plan is shown in Figure 2-1, and in greater detail in Figure 2-1A, included in Section 2.0.

The proposed project is a clustered multifamily residential development and is generally compatible with, and supportive of, the land use goals and policies established in the Village of Monroe Master Plan, the Town of Monroe Master Plan, the Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan, and the Monroe Woodbury Harriman Comprehensive Development Plan. Goals for this area call for a continued emphasis on the residential nature of the area providing a variety of housing options, while at the same time protecting open space and the park like setting with numerous lakes, streams, hills meadows and wooded areas, that are characteristic of the area. Preservation of these resources is critical to the future of the region. This goal is to be accomplished by encouraging development in the designated Urban areas of Orange County, such as the Village of Monroe, and limiting development in the rural areas of the County.

To meet the demand for housing, the Applicant intends to develop the project site for 149 multifamily residences. This development reflects the continued need and public demand for quality housing in the Village of Monroe and in greater Orange County. The projected selling price of \$175,000 to 225,000, provides relative affordability of housing compared to a typical single family selling price in the area of \$350,000. The nearest existing homes adjacent to the site are 100 feet from the closest proposed multifamily residential units, buildings 8, 9, and 15. Most of the existing residences are at distances greater than 150 feet from the site boundary. The site's active outdoor recreation area will be located at least 300 feet from any neighboring residence and 500 feet from the Orange County Trailway. Apart from construction of the pedestrian footbridge, the nearest area of construction on the project site would be more than 150 feet from the Orange County Trailway. None of these existing surrounding land uses will be adversely effected by the proposed project. The existing Village garage, located more than 500 feet from the proposed project, will not be incompatible with the residential use of the project site.

### **3.1.3 Potential Impacts as a Result of Construction**

The proposed project will result in construction activity taking place. It is anticipated the project will be built out over a period of up to three years, with the main road and building clusters "A" and "B" to be constructed first, followed by building clusters "C", "D" and "G", in addition to the recreation area. In the third phase, the remaining residential townhouses will be constructed and the road will be finished.

It is anticipated that a stabilized rough grade of the proposed Hidden Creek Road will serve as access for the project during construction. This access is off of Freeland Street, shown on the proposed site plan. All construction vehicles will use this access for ingress and egress. Construction vehicles and employees will park on-site at all times possible. Equipment storage and material stockpiling will be located on site.

Construction traffic consists primarily of construction vehicles arriving at the beginning of the construction period, trucks carrying and delivering supplies, and daily trips of construction workers. Construction workers typically arrive and depart the site prior to standard commutation peak hours. Trucks delivering construction supplies would generally arrive and leave during the day.

Due to the size of the site development, construction traffic to and from the site is not expected to be excessive, as building will generally be constructed in small clusters. The heaviest volume of construction traffic is expected to occur at the beginning of the construction, as site clearing and rough grading is conducted, and when asphalt and building materials are transported to the site. Based upon engineering estimates, it is anticipated that material will be imported for construction of the road beds. It is anticipated that most construction trips would travel to and from the site via Route 17M to Freeland Street.

Site construction activities will comply with Village ordinances, such as the noise ordinance, with regard to construction restrictions. Construction-generated dust will be controlled by the following procedures: i) minimizing the extent of soil that is left unvegetated at any one time; ii) the use of fast-germinating seed with mulch or other temporary soil cover; iii) spraying water on unpaved areas and areas of construction traffic when needed; and, iv) covering construction vehicles used to transport soil.

Road surfaces will be cleaned at the end of each work week to remove tracked soil from truck movements, unless more frequent cleaning is needed. If more frequent cleaning is needed, the road surfaces will be cleaned on an "as needed" basis, in addition to the cleaning at the end of each work week. Any damage attributed to construction traffic on local roads from this site will be repaired.

Construction personnel may be used to manually control traffic movements at the construction entrance on Freeland Street and, in the unlikely event that it is needed, at the intersection of Freeland Street and Route 17M.

#### Erosion Control During Construction

The greatest potential impact associated with this project relative to soils disturbance would be from erosion and sedimentation during construction. An Erosion Control plan is provided in the set of submitted site plans. The written portion of the Soil Erosion Control Plan is provided as part of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan in Appendix C.

The primary aim of this plan is to reduce soil erosion from areas exposed during construction and prevent silt from reaching the on-site wetlands and areas downstream. All soil erosion and sedimentation control practices have been designed according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Stormwater Management Design Manual. These devices would be installed and maintained in accordance with the approved plans, manufacturers' recommendations, and as directed by Village representatives including the Village engineer, highway superintendent, and building inspector.

The main objectives of the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan are the following:

- control erosion at its source with temporary control structures,

- minimize the amount of sediment-laden runoff from areas of disturbance, and control the runoff prior to discharge to off-site areas.
- deconcentrate and distribute stormwater runoff through natural vegetation or structural means before discharge to critical zones such as streams or wetlands.

Prior to the commencement of any phase of this project that would result in the disturbance of soils, erosion and sediment control measures would be established in accordance with the specifications attached to final construction drawings. The installation of these control features would begin with the most down stream device and progress up gradient in order to minimize the migration of sediment off site.

A number of Best Management Practices were chosen to be used as part of this project, to help mitigate against possible erosion impacts. Details of these measures are shown on Sheet 8 of 8 with the attached plan set. Temporary measures to be used during construction include filter fabric silt fence, diversion swales, sediment traps, and existing vegetated filter strips. To stabilize areas of steep slopes and drainage channels, a combination of seed, straw mulch, jute netting, and riprap will be utilized. These would be left in place until permanent vegetative cover is established. A crushed stone tracking pad will be installed on the upper entrance to the Hidden Creek site to protect roadways from dust accumulation during construction. The strategic placement of all these features is depicted in the attached Erosion Control Plans (Sheet 5 of 8).

The total project area consists of 29.3 acres, subtracting 5.9 acres for the flood plain, 2.3 acres for wetland areas outside of the flood plain, 0.3 acres for utility easements and 0.3 acres for areas of steep slope, the adjusted buildable area of the project is 20.5 acres. After accounting for these environmental constraints, the proposed project would yield an overall net density of approximately 7.27 units per acre, less than the 8 units per acre, for one bedroom units and 7 units per acre for two bedroom units, allowed for development of multifamily residences as a conditional use in the UR-M zoning district. .

Overall, in the applicant's opinion, the proposed land use is not envisioned to cause significant adverse impact to the existing character of the community and surrounding neighborhoods. The residential nature of this project will be compatible with the surrounding residential land use. While there is no development known to be proposed for nearby vacant land, this project is intended to address existing demand for multi-family housing in the region, which will provide both variety and affordability to the housing stock. No incompatibility with development trends in the area have been identified.

As described in more detail in DEIS Section 3.7, no significant adverse impact on community resources is anticipated from this project.

### **3.1.4 Existing Zoning**

Figure 3.1-1 shows the existing zoning of the project site and the surrounding area. The project site is wholly contained in the UR-M zoning district. Portions of the site are included in the ES (Environmentally Sensitive) overlay district, described in greater detail below.

As noted earlier, land to the west is also zoned UR-M and is largely undeveloped with the exception of the end of Clark Street which is developed as small lot residential. Immediately west of the project site is Forshee Street which is zoned SR-10 and developed in small lot single family residential. To the east, the land is zoned SR-20. Portions of this area are residentially developed. Seamanville Cemetery is located immediately northeast of Spring Street in the vicinity of the project area. This area is zoned SR-20. Lands to the south are zoned SR-10 and are residentially developed as single family.

#### *UR-M Zone*

This district comprises the entirety of the project site and most lands to the north and west of the site. Multifamily residential uses are permitted when central water and sewer facilities are provided. The maximum number of dwelling units is based upon the bedroom count of the units. The maximum density allowed is 8 units per acre for one bedroom units, and 7 units per acre for two bedroom units.

UR-M Zoning allows the following permitted uses:

- Community Recreation and/or park (noncommercial)
- Ambulance Service
- Daycare
- Fire-Protection Service
- Library
- Religious Assembly
- School
- Convenience Store

UR-M Zoning allows the following Conditional Uses subject to Site Plan approval of the Village Planning Board:

- Parking lot or structure
- Public utility structure or right-of-way
- Mobile home court
- Multifamily Residential
- Town or Row Housing
- Conversion of an existing dwelling to multifamily dwellings
- Convalescent home

Accessory uses allowed include customary residential accessory uses, private garage or parking area, signs, noncommercial social, recreational and cultural facilities, including community centers, daycare and solar energy systems.

#### *Environmentally Sensitive (ES) Overlay District*

Portions of the project site lie within the Environmentally Sensitive (ES) Overlay District. The Village of Monroe Zoning Code defines ES areas as water bodies having a certain mean depth; wetlands that are protected; year round or intermittent streams; designated floodplains; stormwater retention areas; and alluvial and organic soils. Ramapo Creek and its floodplain areas around the creek, including protected wetland areas, fall within the definition of an ES

Overlay District. The Ramapo Creek runs along the northeastern boundary of the site, and areas around the creek are located within a designated 100 year floodplain. The floodway/floodway fringe is incorporated, along with other environmentally sensitive areas including protected wetlands into the Environmentally Sensitive Overlay District. The ES Overlay District is superimposed on the Village Zoning Map. The floodway/floodway fringe is established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to regulate areas subject to flooding and to protect property with aesthetic and recreational values and other natural resource values associated with the floodplains and wetlands of the Village.

According to the Village of Monroe Zoning Code, multifamily residences are allowed as a conditional use within the ES Overlay District subject to the Code requirements of the underlying district.

Permitted uses within the ES Overlay District are:

- Agricultural/Horticultural
- Community Recreation and/or park, including conservation and related uses.

Conditional uses within the ES Overlay District are:

- Public Utility Structure or Right-of-way.
- All uses normally permitted in the underlying zones as permitted, conditional or accessory uses subject to meeting requirements of other regulations of the Village of Monroe or other regulatory agencies as appropriate.

Accessory Uses within the ES Overlay District are:

- Parking area
- Signs
- Solar energy systems
- Customary nonresidential accessory uses and structures.

#### Conditional Use Requirements for the UR-M District

Under the Village of Monroe Table of Use requirements for the UR-M District, multifamily residences are listed as a conditional use. Conditional uses are subject to the general guiding principles and standards for site plan approval, as presented in §200-59 and §200-86B of the Village Zoning Code. The conditional use requirements for multifamily residences are detailed in §200-63 of the Village zoning code. It is the purpose of §200-63 to provide the opportunity for the creation of multifamily units designed to serve the present and future housing needs of those persons living and working in the Village of Monroe, including both elderly and young households, families of moderate income, small families and other house holds who may need or desire, for whatever reason, to live in multifamily housing. The conditions which need to be met are outlined below:

- w Normal site plan and/or subdivision review and approval.
- w Applicant shall submit a written description indicating the staging and completion of the development, type of ownership, the number of habitable rooms and bedrooms, the floor space per dwelling unit, the amount of nonresidential floor space, if any, the number of off-street parking

## **Land Use and Zoning**

November 14, 2003

spaces, and acreage to be devoted to open spaces, as well as the types of planned recreation facilities, proposals for the construction, operation and maintenance of all utility systems and the methods of ownership, control and planning by which the proper continued future operation and maintenance of all buildings, recreation facilities, open space, parking areas, walkways, utilities and other common lands and facilities will be assured.



- The maximum number of dwelling units shall be determined on the basis of the number of bedrooms in each unit after subtracting the following restricted areas from the gross area:
  - a. Lands presently utilized by public utilities or structures, rights-of-way, easements and streets.
  - b. Water bodies, wetlands, marsh areas, streams, floodplains, stormwater retention areas, and alluvial and organic soils.
  - c. Slopes equal to or greater than 20%.
- w After deducting the above listed restricted land areas, the maximum number of dwelling units permitted shall be derived on the basis of the following densities for the resulting net area:

Type/Number of Habitable Rooms in the Dwelling Unit	Number of Dwelling Units per Acre
Efficiency	10
1 bedroom	8
2 bedrooms	7
3 bedrooms	6

- w The site shall be served by Village water and sewer systems.
- w At least 15% of the total area of the site shall be composed of land which is used for recreational purposes and/or preserved as open space. The Planning Board may require up to 30% in order to preserve environmentally sensitive land, to preserve vistas or to create needed recreational facilities.
- w Trees and landscaping shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of §200-43 of the Village Zoning Code, Trees and Landscaping.
- w The design shall assure aesthetics and privacy by taking into consideration the scale of buildings, setbacks, rear yards and semiprivate areas, such as patios.
- w The development of the site shall be designed and arranged in such a way as to promote energy efficiency and assure solar access.
- w The project shall meet the Village requirements for Stormwater collection and control.
- w All power and communication lines shall be installed underground.
- w Television hookups shall be either cable or central antenna.
- w Cooling systems shall be designed so as to minimize adverse aesthetic impact.
- w An adequate means of collecting and storing refuse between collections shall be provided.
- w Signs are permitted in accordance with Article XII of the Code.

Table 3.1-1 shows the Bulk Zoning regulations for multifamily residential in the UR-M zoning district, and shows compliance by the proposed Hidden Creek Project.

<b>Table 3.1-1 UR-M Zoning District, Bulk Zoning Regulations - Multifamily Residential</b>		
	<b>UR-M Zone</b>	<b>Hidden Creek Project</b>
	<b>Minimum With Central Water &amp; Sewers</b>	<b>Minimum Provided</b>
<i>Lot Area</i>	5 Acres	29.3 Acres
<i>Lot Width</i>	150 feet	+/- 1640
<i>Front Yard</i>	40 feet	40 feet
<i>One Side Yard</i>	30 feet	30 feet
<i>Both Side Yards</i>	50 feet	50 feet
<i>Rear Yard</i>	30 feet	30 feet
<i>Off-Street Parking Spaces / Dwelling Unit or SF</i>	1.11 per unit	2 per unit plus 98 spaces
<i>Livable Floor Area/ Dwelling unit</i>	1,200 sf	1,390 sf
	<b>Maximum Permitted</b>	<b>Maximum Provided</b>
<i>Building Height</i>	2.5 stories or 35 feet	2.5 stories or 35 feet
<i>Lot Coverage*</i>	20%	11%
<i>*Lot Coverage = The percentage of the lot area that is occupied by the area of the building or group of buildings.</i>		
SOURCE: Village of Monroe Zoning Code and Pietrzak & Pfau, project engineer.		

### 3.1.5 Zoning Impacts

There is no change to the existing zoning proposed as part of the project. The project has been designed to meet the requirements of the UR-M district as a conditional use. All construction activities proposed in the ES Overlay District will be undertaken according to permitted, conditional and accessory use restrictions in the Village Code. The consolidation of lots 7,8,9, and 11.1 will create a single lot. No setback or other variances would be required for the construction of the proposed project.

The applicant has submitted the site plan to the Village Planning Board for review and approval. This DEIS shall serve as the written description of the proposed project, and includes the staging and completion of the development, type of ownership, number of residential dwelling units (according to the allowable density), the number of habitable rooms and bedrooms, the floor space per dwelling unit, the number of parking spaces proposed, acreage of open space, planned recreational facilities, construction, operation and maintenance of utility systems.

The future operation and maintenance of all units, recreation facilities, open space, roads, parking areas, walkways, and other common lands will be taken care of through the

Homeowners Association to be set up as part of the proposed project. Upon completion of construction of the water and sewer facilities these facilities will be offered for dedication to the Village. A sample Homeowners Agreement has been included as Appendix J.

The maximum allowable density on the project site was determined by subtracting the restricted areas applicable to this site (floodplain, wetlands, utility easements, and slopes 20% and greater) from the total area to determine the net buildable acreage. The following tabulation is taken from the engineer's existing conditions plan:

- 29.3 acres total
- 5.9 acres of lands subject to flooding
- 2.3 acres for wetlands located outside of the floodplain
- 0.3 acres within utility easements
- 0.3 acres of slopes > 20%

The net buildable acreage available is thus 20.5 acres. Under the Village Code for multifamily residences, the maximum density of one-bedroom units is 8 units per acre and the maximum density of two-bedroom units is 7 units per acre. The proposed project will consist of 44 one-bedroom units (requiring 5.5 acres) and 105 two-bedroom units (requiring 15.0 acres). In compliance with the Village Code, the net acreage required (20.5 acres) equals the net acreage available. The proposed 149 units yields a net density of 7.27 units/acre.

As part of the proposed project, 21.74 acres is being set aside for recreation, open space, and green space. The 21.74 acres is comprised of .85 acres as an active recreation area, 8.89 acres of additional landscaped areas and 12.0 acres of undisturbed area. The 12.85(12.0+.85) acres of open space represents almost 44 percent of the total site area, which is significantly greater than the 15% minimum area of open space required by the zoning regulations for multifamily residential under Section 200-63 of the Village Code.

With the site largely wooded, the proposed project will require removal of slightly less than 14 acres of trees. Pursuant to the Village of Monroe Zoning Code § 200-43, trees greater than 8" diameter breast height have been tagged and identified as illustrated in Figure 2-4, and as shown in the full scale drawing at the rear of the DEIS. A total of 1017 trees were tagged. Of these 706 'regulated' trees will need to be removed. A total of 709 trees are proposed to be planted to provide sufficient replacement of the trees removed. Details have been provided in the Landscape Plan included at the end of the DEIS. This plan identifies the locations, species and sizes of the proposed plantings as well as a planting and maintenance schedule.

The project has been designed to meet the zoning criteria for architectural interest and thus prevent undue similarity. A multi-family project of this type results in similar building styles to a large degree. The architecture of the buildings is intended to display a uniform character for the project as a whole while providing a variety of architectural details between the buildings as viewed from any particular location. Proposed landscape treatment will further distinguish one portion of the project from another.

A Lighting Plan has been developed (located at the rear of the DEIS) to address the outdoor lighting needs of the proposed project.

The project has been designed in such a way as to promote energy efficiency and assure solar access, as required in Code §200-63H. Heating and air conditioning units to be installed within

each residence will be modern, energy efficient units, and the building construction will meet contemporary building code standards for insulation to minimize heat loss. The provision of attached units also provides for reduced energy loss in the overall development since there will be fewer outside walls. The variety of building orientations proposed will provide varied solar exposure to all units throughout the development. This project, however, does not rely upon solar access as a primary means of space heating, as in this climate, such a goal is not fully practicable.

With the proposed tree clearing needed to develop the project, sufficient solar exposure into the project site will occur to provide a healthy environment for both the residents and the landscape plantings proposed.

Cooling systems will be designed to minimize adverse aesthetic impact, as required in Code §200-63L, by providing screening to the outdoor compressor units and covering the leader tubing with a color to match the exterior paint of the units. Cooling units will generally be placed on the rear sides of the buildings so as not to be visible from the street.

Refuse collection will be contracted by the Homeowners Association. Collection will be provided at least once per week by a private carter. Dumpsters will be centrally located within each building cluster and appropriately screened to minimize visual impacts, as required in Code §200-63M. A typical detail of the dumpster enclosures proposed is shown on the full size engineering drawings, which provides a 6-foot high solid screen around the dumpster pad.

Signs will be posted in accordance with the regulations set forth in zoning section 200-63N. An entrance sign naming the Hidden Creek development will not exceed 24 square feet in area, and will not be used for advertising or promotional purposes. Street signs and unit numbering signs will be placed as appropriate within the development, and are subject to review by the Village Board.

No grouping of units will exceed six units. Many of the units proposed contain three, four or five units in order to provide for diversity in site planning, building appearance and location. The building's varied location and landscaping is intended to prevent undue similarity.

All utilities, power and communication lines will be installed underground.

The project meets the Village requirements for stormwater collection and control, details are provided in Section 3.3 Surface Water Resources.

The conservation areas will be owned by the Homeowner's Association and preservation of the conservation areas will be under the jurisdiction of the Homeowner's Association. A sample Homeowners Agreement has been provided in Appendix J. Documentation for the formation of the Homeowner's Association will be submitted for approval to the Village of Monroe Planning Board.

### **3.1.6 Compatibility with Local and Regional Plans**

A Master Plan for the Village of Monroe was prepared in 1960. Additionally, planning for the Village of Monroe is guided by the overall principals for sound planning in the Town of Monroe Master plan, last updated 1996 with minor revisions through to 1998.

The Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan, and the Monroe Woodbury Harriman Comprehensive Development Plan also provide guidance for the planning in this region. As part of the Orange County, Urban/Rural concept, the Village of Monroe is designated as an urban area, and identified as an area to provide multifamily housing options. The goal is to meet the housing needs of the region, in the designated urban areas, and retain the overall park like setting throughout the rural areas of Orange County.

#### Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan

The most recent version of the Orange County Comprehensive Plan, Strategies for Quality Communities was released on-line, in draft form, dated January 2003. The latest published Orange County Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 1987. The Urban Rural-Growth Concept was the basis for the original Orange Comprehensive Development Plan released in 1980, and continues to be the guiding concept in all subsequent plans. This remains true in the Strategies for Quality Communities.

The Urban /Rural concept calls for siting future growth in housing, business and industry in and around cities, villages, and urbanized areas where major highways are nearby and where central water and sewer services are available. The basis of this concept is that the economy of the existing facilities will be maximized, public transportation will be supported, and it will provide the most economical and environmentally sound form of development.

Additionally, major portions of Orange County can remain undeveloped thus preserving the County's open areas. The plan also speaks to "urban serviced" areas. These are areas where, by virtue of the concentration of population, services can be provided more economically, specifically water and sewer services. Additional services, such as the R-U OK program sponsored by the Village of Monroe Police Department, in which the Village police call daily to registered senior citizens to check on their well-being, can also be offered in areas of concentrated population.

The goal of these collective plans is to provide a basis for decisions on land use , including residential development, major economic development, mass transportation policies, road construction projects, recreational facilities and programs, and utility needs, whereby development takes place in the "urban-service" areas, areas where water, sewer, and transportation services exist. Development in the urban areas will facilitate retaining large areas of undeveloped land throughout Orange County. Major ridge lines and prominent vistas will be able to be preserved and natural resources will be able to be protected. The goal is to balance the overall need for development while protecting environmentally significant resources.

The Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan also speaks to residential housing. "It is intended that a wide variety of housing types be available, at densities sufficient to economically support services and facilities necessary to a center of population. The range of housing offered should be such that all income groups have the opportunity to obtain housing in the County." The Village of Monroe is described as located in the southern part of the County and served by excellent highway and public transportation systems. Residential and commercial development is encouraged to continue at its present intensity and within the area of the recently completed Orange County Sewer District, OCSD #1, which includes all of the

Village of Monroe. The plan encourages low density development and conservation outside areas not serviced by central water and sewer and other supportive services.

Compatibility with Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan

The proposed project is compatible with and supportive of the policies established in the Orange County Comprehensive Development Plan. The Village of Monroe has been designated an Urban Area in Orange County. "The role of the urban area is that of the provider of housing, as well as the center of public and commercial services and facilities. New growth requiring central services should be channeled into urban areas to the exclusion of those areas which are rural." Strategies for Quality Communities states "Land development patterns will continue to be shaped by available water supplies and sewer treatment facilities." Formation of the OCSD#1, and construction of the sewer in proximity to the Hidden Creek site made prime residential development possible.

The Hidden Creek project as proposed provides an alternative to single family housing, meeting the need for diversity in housing. In Orange County today approximately 69 percent of all housing is single family residential. The price of housing has grown faster than the income in the area. The need for affordable and varied housing types has been stated in all the regional plans for the area. Table 3.1-2 shows the relative proportion of housing types in the Orange County for 1990 and 2000.

Table 3.1-2 Percent of Housing Unit Types			
Housing Type	Orange County		Village of Monroe
Year	2000	1990	1990
Total Housing Units	122,754	110,814	2,270
Single Family	68.9%	66.8%	88%
2-9 Units per Structure	22.0%	22.1%	12%
10 or more units per Structure	6.2%	6.2%	
Mobile Home/Trailer /Other	2.9%	4.9%	
Source: U.S. Census Data, Village of Monroe Tax Office			

<b>Table 3.1-3 Median Household Income</b>			
	<b>Orange County</b>		<b>Village of Monroe</b>
Year	2000	1990	1990
Median House Hold Income	\$52,058	\$39,198	\$47,609
Source: U.S Census Data			

The median value of housing units in Orange County according to the 2000 census is \$144,500. This represents the midrange of the entire spectrum of housing prices throughout the County. Table 3.1-3 shows that the median income in 1990 for the Village of Monroe is more than \$8,400 higher than the median income level for Orange County as a whole. The southeast quadrant of Orange County, including the Village of Monroe, based upon excellent transportation access, and a location within 50 miles of metropolitan New York and environs, has higher price real estate values and income levels compared to Orange County as a whole.

As shown in Table 3.1-2 approximately 88 percent of the housing supply within the Village of Monroe is single family residential. Information was provided by the Monroe Realty Center of the typical resale value for properties within the Village of Monroe, and surrounding areas. Single family housing in this area is in the price range of \$300,000 to \$400,000. The proposed selling price of the townhouse style units at Hidden Creek, at \$175,000 to \$225,000 represent both diversity and affordability in the area's real estate market. The density of development is one of the factors which enables the unit price to be "affordable" to the unaddressed market of "elderly and young households, and families of moderate income" in Monroe and greater Orange County.

This 29 acre site, is presently vacant, wooded and supports wetlands, and floodplains. One of the Orange County Comprehensive Plan goals is to "balance the development capacity of the piece of land while protecting environmentally significant resources." This project will result in the removal of 14 acres of trees (none of which have been deemed to represent a unique resource), in order to provide a moderate density residential development site in an area supported by good infrastructure, and in an area designated by the County as an Urban Serviced Area. It will require minor filling of wetlands. On the other hand, the project avoids environmentally sensitive areas and retains approximately 12 acres of undisturbed open space providing wildlife habitat, and passive recreational opportunities. In this regard, every attempt has been made for balancing environment and development, in accordance with the County's goals.

#### Village of Monroe, Master Plan

The Village of Monroe Master plan was last prepared in 1960 during an active development period which took place after the construction of the New York State Thruway and the Route 17 Quickway. These transportation corridors considerably shortened travel time to the major employment areas of Northern New Jersey, Westchester County and Metropolitan New York City.

The 1960 Master Plan noted that single family residence is "the" land use in the Village of Monroe. In 1960, poor soils were viewed as the major factors affecting the development of the Village, particularly as it related to high density development. It was anticipated that new home be built on lots of ample size, the avoiding trouble with individual sewage disposal systems.

With respect to higher density development, the 1960 Master Plan states, "In future years, after the sewage treatment plant is operating, it will be desirable to permit multiple family residences of the garden apartment type on some of the vacant tracts in the sewered area. These will provide rental units, particularly for recently married couples and for very senior couples whose children have grown up and moved away. Garden apartments will thus balance the housing supply by meeting the needs of these two vital groups the social pattern of the community."

#### Compatibility with the Village of Monroe Master Plan

Based upon the predominance of single family housing in this area, in combination with an average selling price of a single family home in the area of \$350,000, the Hidden Creek project as proposed offers diversity in the housing stock, and provides an affordable alternative to single family housing.



Table 3.1-2 provides a list of the single family homes on the market in and around the Village of Monroe. The average selling price based upon this sample is \$350,000.

<b>Table 3.1-4 Village of Monroe Single Family Housing Inventory - Market Value</b>			
<b>Location</b>	<b>Housing Type</b>	<b>Number of Bedrooms</b>	<b>List Price</b>
Barnett Road	Single Family	3	\$239,000
Freeland Street	Single Family	3	\$239,899
James Street	Single Family	3	\$239,900
Elm Street	Single Family	3	\$239,900
James Road	Single Family	3	\$249,900
King Street	Single Family	3	\$259,000
James Road	Single Family	3	\$259,900
Mid Oakes Drive	Single Family	3	\$269,900
West Jeanibo Road	Single Family	3	\$284,900
Washington Road	Single Family	3	\$285,000
West Barnett Road	Single Family	3	\$289,000
Dorothy Drive	Single Family	3	\$289,900
Fredrick Drive	Single Family	3	\$289,900
Webb Ct	Single Family	3	\$294,900
Pearsall Drive	Single Family	3	\$294,900
Half Hollow Turn	Single Family	3	\$299,000
Sutherland Drive	Single Family	3	\$299,000
Orchard Terrace	Single Family	3	\$299,900
Knight Street	Single Family	3	\$299,999
Talmadge	Single Family	3	\$309,900
Colony Drive	Single Family	3	\$309,900
Oakland Avenue	Single Family	3	\$314,000
Half Hollow Turn	Single Family	4	\$314,900
Lakes Road	Single Family	5	\$319,000
Elm Street	Single Family	3	\$319,900
Peter Bush Drive	Single Family	4	\$329,900
Letts Circle	Single Family	4	\$339,000
Amy Tott Drive	Single Family	4	\$339,900
James Road	Single Family	3	\$342,500
O'Sullivan Lane	Single Family	4	\$349,900
Crescent Place	Single Family	5	\$349,900
Cunningham Drive	Single Family	3	\$359,000
Cunningham Drive	Single Family	4	\$379,900
Mid Oakes Road	Single Family	5	\$397,000
Briarwood Avenue	Single Family	4	\$399,900
Mill Street	Single Family	4	\$419,900
Lues Drive	Single Family	4	\$419,900
Davenport Ct	Single Family	4	\$439,000
Rye Hill Road	Single Family	4	\$449,500
Winchester Drive	Single Family	4	\$449,900
Maple Ave	Single Family	5	\$485,000
Stage Road	Single Family	4	\$449,900
Gilbert Street	Single Family	5	\$499,900
Coffee Road	Single Family	4	\$549,900
Summit Street	Single Family	5	\$570,000
Coffee Road	Single Family	5	\$659,000
<i>Source: Monroe Realty Center, June 2003</i>			

Monroe-Woodbury-Harriman Comprehensive Development Plan

The Monroe-Woodbury-Harriman Comprehensive Development Plan was developed in 1998 as a result of regional impacts of population and job movement to Orange County and the Monroe-Woodbury-Harriman area. The plan evaluates patterns and trends which existed at the time of publication and provides guidance to municipalities to determine the best approach for their physical, economic and social development.

The plan presents goals and objectives for various types of development. Policies for residential development include the following items:

- A variety of housing types should be offered at varying price and rental levels throughout the region;
- Residential densities should relate to the character and density of surrounding undeveloped areas, topography and natural features, utilities, and other community services and facilities;
- Natural features and open spaces should be incorporated into residential developments; Community facilities for education, recreation, and public safety should be provided for all areas appropriate to their densities;
- Residential facilities should be convenient to commercial and employment areas and located so as to be easily accessible to those areas.

Compatibility with Monroe-Woodbury-Harriman Comprehensive Development Plan

The proposed project is compatible with and supportive of the goals and objectives established in the Monroe-Woodbury-Harriman Comprehensive Development Plan, as follows:

- Residential facilities should be convenient to commercial and employment areas and located so as to be easily accessible to those areas.
- A variety of housing types should be offered at varying price and rental levels throughout the region;

The cluster residential development provides moderately priced townhouses in multiple dwelling buildings. Based upon the predominance of single family housing in this area, in combination with an average selling price of a single family home in the area of \$350,000, the Hidden Creek project as proposed offers diversity in the housing stock, and provides an affordable alternative.

- Residential densities should relate to the character and density of surrounding undeveloped areas, topography and natural features, utilities, and other community services and facilities;

The proposed density is higher than that which exists in the surrounding neighborhood, but nonetheless consistent with the Village's zoning designation, and therefore, its comprehensive

plan. The site plan is designed to respect local topography and utilizes existing utilities in the area.

- Natural features and open spaces should be incorporated into residential developments;

As a cluster development, the proposed project will preserve open space while avoiding environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes, wetlands and flood plains. Approximately 12 acres of the site would be preserved as undisturbed open space. The Orange County Trailway located in this area provides opportunity for passive recreation. Additionally this area provides valuable wetland functions and wildlife habitat.

#### Town of Monroe Master Plan

The proposed project is generally compatible with and supportive of the land use goals and policies established for the Town of Monroe.

The land use goals and policies set forth in the Town of Monroe Master Plan include the following:

- Substantial areas of permanent open space should be fostered for the protection and conservation of natural resources.
- Natural resource areas such as wetlands, lakes, ponds, etc., should be protected by restricting development within these areas and adjacent to these areas;
- A range of residential densities are designated to facilitate various housing types and prices that enable both existing and future citizens of the Town of Monroe, the opportunity to continue to reside within Monroe.
- Innovative development techniques should be encouraged wherever appropriate, to protect the environment and to achieve community land use goals. Clustering of development could be used to preserve open space and protect environmental features.

The proposed project has been designed as a cluster development to preserve open space and natural features to the greatest extent possible and to avoid wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas. As outlined earlier, upon completion approximately 12.0 acres of the site would be preserved as undisturbed open space. The Proposed Tree Plan shows development avoiding existing trees to the greatest extent possible. The Orange County Trailway located in this area provides opportunities for passive recreation. Additionally this area provides valuable wetland functions and wildlife habitat.

Throughout Monroe, and greater Orange County, the demand for a variety of housing, affordable to all income groups is expected to continue to grow in this decade and thereafter, the proposed project will help to meet this need.

### **3.1.7 Potential Effects on Future Development Trends**

The Hidden Creek project site represents a significant component of the remaining vacant land in the Village of Monroe. The development of the project site would commit a currently vacant site to residential use in an area that is near the fringe of suburban development. This could tend to direct future interest and development activities to the Village, however additional development opportunities are limited.

The overall pattern of residential development in Monroe is already established with moderate residential dwelling densities prevailing. The proposed intensity of use of the project site is slightly higher than surrounding residential areas. The cost benefit of construction of higher density units relates directly to the relative affordability of these units.

### **3.1.8 Land Use and Zoning Mitigation**

No potentially adverse effects on land use and zoning have been identified. Therefore, no mitigating measures are proposed.