

**Taconic Tract Development  
Mount Pleasant, New York**

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**Lead Agency:**

Town of Mount Pleasant Planning Board  
Hon. Michael McLaughlin, Chairman  
Town Hall  
1 Town Hall Plaza  
Valhalla, NY 10595

**DEIS Preparation:**

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(914) 761-3582

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Michael McLaughlin  
1 Town Hall Plaza  
Valhalla, NY 10595

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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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### **A. Introduction**

This document is a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Taconic Tract single-family subdivision in Mount Pleasant.

This DEIS is submitted in compliance with the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the regulations and procedures of the Town of Mount Pleasant. This project is considered by the Planning Board as a Type I Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

### **B. Description of the Proposed Action**

Taconic Tract Development, LLC (the “Applicant”), proposes to subdivide 30.00 acres located between the Taconic State Parkway (east), Washburn Road (south), Todd Lane (west) and Carlton Avenue (north) as 17 lot subdivision with one existing lot and sixteen new lots. The property to be subdivided consists of three existing parcels: (i) a 21.45-acre piece of property containing private trails, fronting on and with existing driveway access from Washburn Road; (ii) a 0.97-acre single family lot fronting on and with access from Washburn Road; and (iii) the 7.58-acre former Waterhouse Estate parcel (referred to as Lot 17 on the Subdivision Plan), now owned by the spouse of a principal of the Applicant and occupied by them. The parcels described in (i) and (ii) are existing vacant parcels; the parcel described in (iii) is an improved estate parcel and is included in this application solely because a small portion of an access road from and to Lots 1 through 16 and Carlton Avenue traverses a small corner of that Lot 17.

The site is located in the Town of Mount Pleasant in an R-40 zoning district. The Applicant proposes to subdivide the three parcels into a total of 16 building lots, two of which already exist, for a total of 14 new building lots. The supplemental information provided in this executive summary is based upon the scope of studies recommended by the Planning Board<sup>1</sup> and relates mainly to proposed Lots 1 through 16. As noted above, Lot 17 is included in this application solely because of the access road.

The proposed construction includes construction of 16 single-family residential dwellings, access roads, driveways and landscaping. Additionally, a stormwater detention facility is proposed for the site. The project could ultimately disturb approximately 10.01 acres or 33.4% of the total acreage.

There are two design alternatives for consideration: the Conventional Layout and the Conservation Layout; refer to **Appendix A: Conventional & Conservation Layout Plans**. The Conservation Layout also proposes the construction of 16 single-family residences; however, 8 of the 16 homes will be clustered with smaller lot sizes. The homes on these lots will contain smaller 3-bedroom units (versus 4-bedroom) and occupy a smaller footprint.

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the list of studies proposed by the Applicant and approved by the Planning Board is included in Appendix I.

This is the preferred alternative since the “clustered” subdivisions reduce some of the environmental and community impacts, such as disturbed area, utility use and tree removal.

**C. Required Approvals**

**Table I-1  
Approval/Reviews Required**

Agency	Approval/Review
Mt. Pleasant Planning Board	Subdivision Approval/Steep Slopes permit
Village of Briarcliff Manor	Extension of Water Service
Westchester County Planning Board	Advisory role under GML 239m
Westchester County Dept. of Health	Water and Sewer connections
NYDEC	SPDES Permit, Freshwater Wetlands Permit for Sewer Mains Construction
NYSOPRHP	Historic and archaeological resources review

**D. Summary of Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures Proposed**

**1. Land Use and Zoning**

The Proposed Action includes the construction of a 16-unit, mixed detached single-family and townhouse (attached single-family) development. The Applicant proposes a cluster development based on the statutory authority for cluster developments provided by New York State. Under Town Law 278, Village Law 7-738, and General City Law 37, the New York State expressly provides that local legislative bodies may authorize the local Planning Board to use cluster development as part of their subdivision review process. The Planning Board is authorized to approve the cluster development based on a site plan approval and subdivision approval. The primary purpose of the cluster development is to enable and encourage flexibility of design and development of land in such a manner as to preserve the natural and scenic qualities of open lands. The proposed development will utilize approximately 10.01 acres of the 30-acre site, including an existing single-family house on the property. The cluster development will provide approximately 8.5 acres of passive open space. The balance of the area will be devoted to roads, utilities, and other necessary uses.

**2. Visual Resources**

The Project Site is heavily wooded with trail system scattered throughout the Site’s ±30 acres. The Project Site ranges in elevation from approximately 250 feet to 380 feet. This change in elevation and dense vegetation limit views of the Project Site from lower elevations to the southeast. Homes abutting the Project Site to the north have at least partial views of some of the 16 residences clustered on the northeast half of the Site.

From the abutting sites the rear and side yards of proposed residences would be visible on the Project Site. The character and size of the proposed residences would be similar to the existing neighborhoods to the north of the site.

### 3. Soils, Topography and Slopes

The topography of the site generally slopes to the east and south and contains areas of steep slopes including very steep (topographical gradient of 25%-35%) and excessively steep (greater than 35%). The existing slopes are shown on the **Steep Slope Plan – Existing Conditions** in **Appendix D: Site Topography Analysis**.

The site has been planned with a Conventional Layout in a manner to follow or blend with the natural contours of the land. The property layouts were arranged to utilize the flatter areas for the main building footprint, the area in which most disturbance will occur, wherever possible, while still providing for the desired square footage. The alignments of Proposed Roads A and B were configured so that the impact to the steeper slopes would be minimal. Slopes at intersections, driveways and along roads have been designed to be in compliance with the Town of Mount Pleasant regulations. In order to minimize slope disturbance retaining walls have been proposed. These retaining walls were designed in accordance with Town requirements to prevent excessive grading to meet the existing elevations. The Conventional Layout is shown on the **Steep Slope Plan – Conventional Layout** in **Appendix D**.

All measures for the control of erosion and sedimentation, both temporary and permanent, are consistent with NYSDEC standards and are discussed in **Appendix C: Stormwater Management Plan**.

An alternative to the Conventional Layout has been designed to further mitigate impacts to the existing steep slopes of the site; refer to the **Steep Slope Plan – Conservation Layout** in **Appendix D**. This Conservation Layout “clusters” the properties in a different arrangement which results in less disturbed area. The comparisons between the conventional and Conservation Layouts are tabulated in the **Slope Disturbance Table** in **Appendix D**. The table reveals that the Conservation Layout disturbs less overall area by 1.14 acres. More importantly, the steeper slopes are being impacted significantly less.

### 4. Flora and Fauna

No rare, threatened, or endangered plant species were identified on the Site, and no threatened, endangered, or special concern wildlife species were observed on-site.

The Applicant has obtained a tree survey for the property. The survey identified all trees 6-inches dbh and greater. The inventory of existing trees provides the type, location, and size of all trees. A site plan showing the trees to be saved has been provided in Appendix E. As addressed in that Section, the density requirements of the reforestation plan are met with the Proposed Project.

## 5. Surface Water and Stormwater Management

The purpose of the Stormwater Management Plan is to outline design and operational measures of drainage facilities that will meet the requirements of the New York State Department of Environmental Protection (NYSDEC) Phase II Stormwater Regulations to mitigate stormwater runoff quality and quantity impacts, as well as impacts from erosion and sedimentation during site construction. Refer to **Appendix C: Stormwater Management Plan** for the complete report.

Stormwater runoff has been computed for both the existing and proposed conditions. A detention basin will be constructed to maintain the pre-developed stormwater runoff amount, along with infiltrator chambers for those lots that do not drain to the detention basin (i.e. Lots 13, 14, 15, and 16 for conventional layout and Lots 6 and 7 for conservation layout). Drainage facilities and erosion and sedimentation control measures will be designed and implemented, in accordance with *New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual* (NYSDEC, Aug. 2003) and the *New York State Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control* (NYSDEC Aug. 2005), as well as the requirements for a SPDES General Permit GP-0-08-001 for Stormwater Discharges From Construction Activities.

In order to control and contain erosion and sedimentation, there will be no more than 5-acres of area disturbed at any one time. In addition, there will be structural and vegetative measures used during construction, such as silt fences, storm drain inlet protection, check dams and temporary seeding for temporary erosion and sediment control. Permanent erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented to stabilize all disturbed areas and control runoff velocities.

## 6. Groundwater Resources

There are no wetlands on-site. A small area in the southeast corner of the site is regulated as a wetland buffer area. The wetlands buffer will be disturbed for the installation of the sewer main connection to the County trunk line.

## 7. Utilities

### *Water Service*

The project site is currently not within a water district. Water mains are situated on the roads adjacent to the site that are part of the Village of Briarcliff Manor's (Village) Water District. The project however, lies beyond the corporate limits for the Village, which will require the establishment of a water district to serve the subdivision, with its own meter and billing. The proposed water main will connect at Washburn Road, run along proposed Road A, head west at the intersection with Road B and connect at Carlton Road; this establishes a loop between two existing mains within the Village's water system that currently is missing. The looping of water mains is desirable so that water service can be maintained if sections of the system are shut down due to breaks or for maintenance. The project has the benefit of providing such a loop. In order to provide for accurate readings for water use to the development, a secondary service line with its own water meter would branch off of the looped water main to serve the homes in the

subdivision (see Appendix D). This will require a parallel line to run in Road A to service the lots along that Road.

#### *Sanitary Service*

Sanitary service will be provided by way of a gravity-fed connection to an existing main in the Saw Mill Sanitary Sewer District east of the site. There are two possible alternatives for the connection.. Both alternatives direct the proposed flow from the site to Washburn Road, continuing east toward the Taconic State Parkway. Alternative 1 proposes turning south off Washburn Road and connecting to the existing sanitary manhole that lies in the middle of a NYSDEC regulated wetlands along the Taconic. This is not the preferred alternative due to all corresponding issues with disturbing wetlands. Alternative 2 utilizes the existing pipe alignment of a water main abandoned by the Village of Briarcliff Manor that currently runs under the Taconic. This would require the jacking of the sewer line beneath the Taconic. By using an existing pipe corridor, the potential for problems with jacking, such as encountering rock, is greatly diminished. This pipe layout is approximately 160 feet less than Alternative 1. Both connections are feasible as per existing and proposed elevations and will allow the sanitary sewer to operate as gravity to the existing main

#### *Water and Sanitary Service Demands*

The water and sanitary sewer demands of the proposed subdivision have been calculated based on design flow per bedroom per day. Therefore, it is understandable that the Conservation Layout, which has nine fewer bedrooms, results in less loading for both the sanitary and water usages.

Household water use was calculated based on a design load of 150 gallons per bedroom per day. In addition to the general household use, lawn irrigation was calculated based on 1" irrigation per week as recommended by Cornell University Department of Horticulture. The total water demand for the Conventional Layout is 39,426 gallons versus 37,026 gallons for the Conservation Layout. Considering an average of 30 days per month, the Conservation Layout utilizes 40,500 gallons less per month than the Conventional Layout.

The wastewater design flow per bedroom per day was determined to be 150 gallons as per the *The Design of Small Water Systems*, "A New York State Department of Health, for a subdivision dwelling on an individual well. The design load of residential usage for the Conventional Layout is 13,065 gallons per day and 10,665 gallons per day for the Conservation Layout, which equates to 72,300 gallons less in an average 30-day month.

The Applicant's engineering and legal consultants met with the Village Manager, Building Inspector and head of the Department of Public Works for the Village of Briarcliff Manor to discuss connections to the Village's Water System and to the County Sewer Main within the Village. The Village representatives expressed a willingness to allow sewer and water service to be provided as proposed provided all legal and technical issues are worked out (e.g. formation of a water district in the Town of Mount Pleasant to include the site and compliance with all technical design requirements for the sewer

connection). The Applicant undertook to keep the Village officials informed of the project's status and to submit all sewer and water design material to the Village.

## **8. Traffic and Transportation**

The primary access to the subdivision will be through a new private access road, "Road B" from Carlton Road to the north. "Road A", from Washburn Road to the south and "Road B" to the north will serve as an emergency route between the Washburn and Carlton Roads, if needed, but is not intended or planned to be available for general public use.

The potential impacts on traffic and transportation conditions surrounding the proposed subdivision were evaluated and have been compiled in the traffic report, refer to **Appendix B: Traffic Impact Assessment**. The study area for the analysis included: Carlton Road at Chappaqua Road, Carlton Road at Route 100, Carlton Road at Todd Lane, and Todd Lane at Pleasantville Road. Current traffic conditions were assessed at these intersections and analyses of future conditions with (referred to as the "2009 Build" condition) and without (referred to as the "No Build" condition) the proposed project were completed.

The study data indicates that there will be an increase in traffic volumes under both the 2009 Build and the 2009 "No Build" scenarios; however, the increased volume will not significantly impact traffic conditions at the study intersections. The analysis shows that under existing conditions, all intersections and their approaches, with the exception of one approach, operate at a level of service (LOS) of A. The exception, the southbound approach on Pleasantville Road to Todd Lane, operates at a LOS of C. In the "No Build" scenario, the intersections remain at a LOS of A except for the southbound approach to Todd Lane which will experience a LOS of D. In the "Build" scenario the intersections will operate at the same levels of service as the "No Build" scenario. This is the case whether or not the project is completed.

There exists minimal pedestrian traffic in the study area and thus the increase in vehicular traffic will not have a significant effect on pedestrian operations and safety.

## **9. Socio-Economic and Demographics**

It is estimated that the Proposed Action will result in a population increase of 51 persons, this results in a percent increase of total population of 0.24 percent based on 2000 Census data. The projected increase is not considered significant. The total estimated projected property tax revenue equals \$530,000, including an estimated \$410,000 tax generation for the Briarcliff School District.

## **10. Community Facilities**

### *Police, Fire, EMS*

This DEIS documents the existing resources of the local community's emergency services. The Proposed Project will provide new tax revenues that will help address the incremental increase in demand for police and fire services. The Applicant proposes to provide a security service to patrol the proposed residential community throughout the course of the day and to provide all new structures with sprinklers.

### *Parks and Recreation*

The proposed action will preserve approximately 8.5 acres of common open space that will include a path system for project resident use. The common open space area is equivalent to approximately 28.7 percent of the total lot area.

### *Schools*

The Proposed Action calls for eight of the sixteen proposed units to be marketed towards empty nester couples. However, for determining worst-case conditions, impacts were assumed that all units were sold as market rate units. Under this scenario a generation of 9 public school-age children was anticipated. The analysis included in this DEIS finds that the increased tax generation for the school district would exceed the cost of servicing these additional students.

## **11. Historic and Cultural Resources**

A Phase 1A Archaeological Assessment has been completed for the Project Site, addressing the potential archaeological sensitivity of the parcel for both precontact and historical resources. There is no prior known pre-contact usage of the immediate area surrounding the Project Site. Research identified that the main house on the property dates to sometime around the late 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Area of Potential Effect does not contain potentially sensitive conditions for both pre-contact and historical archaeological deposits. Potential visual impacts to the Taconic Parkway can be mitigated through site design and landscaping.

## **12. Air Quality/Noise**

The standard methodology for determining whether there will be air quality impacts relates to roadway conditions, specifically failed conditions at critical intersections. As there are no failed intersections reported as a result of the Proposed Action, there is no other specific threshold to warrant the preparation of further air quality analysis.

As noted in the Construction Section of this DEIS, there will be some temporary noise and air quality related impacts to site improvements and residential construction. Construction activities will conform to Section 139 of the Code of the Town of Mount Pleasant, related to construction activities.

## **13. Construction**

Short-term construction impacts that cannot be avoided will result from the project including construction noise, maintenance of site, and construction-related traffic.

Local ambient daytime noise is expected to increase in the project vicinity during construction of the proposed project, specifically during site clearing and construction of the proposed buildings, as well as interior roads and utility infrastructure. Construction activities and the operation of construction equipment are an expected and required consequence of any new construction project and cannot be avoided. All mechanical construction equipment will be maintained in good working order to minimize noise

levels. Noise levels will diminish in intensity as site preparation, excavation work, and foundation development are completed.

Construction shall be limited to the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to noon on Saturdays; with no construction activities occurring on holidays. There may be instances when construction hours may need to exceed these parameters, but construction will always be in accordance with the Town of Mount Pleasant requirements. Noise during construction will be primarily from diesel engines that power the equipment. Exhaust noise is usually the predominant source of diesel engine noise. It is important to note that noise resulting from construction activities is a temporary impact, and will cease upon project completion. Equipment will employ noise-dampening devices to minimize the impact on surrounding properties.

Construction activities on the site could potentially cause an increase in airborne dust on the site and the immediately adjacent properties. To minimize dust generated during construction, dust control measures and other best management practices will be employed, including dust covers on construction trucks, regular watering down of exposed areas and minimization of disturbance areas. Erosion and sediment control measures are discussed in the Stormwater Management Plan for this project and are in compliance with the *New York State Standards and Specifications of Erosion and Sediment Control*.

There will be temporary, short-term impacts to traffic in the surrounding area, due to construction-related vehicles arriving and departing the site. The quantity and frequency of truck traffic will vary depending on the nature of the construction operation. Earth moving equipment, such as bulldozers and loaders, will be brought to the site by flatbed trucks during the beginning stages of the project. This equipment will most likely remain on site until the completion of construction. It can be expected that various trucks will be making deliveries of construction materials during daytime hours. Because relatively few truck trips are anticipated during peak hours, significant impacts from construction vehicles are not expected.

Blasting will be avoidable wherever practicable and will generally be limited to those areas requiring rock removal of greater than four feet in depth. Excavation equipment or mechanical means of rock removal will be employed to remove rock, where practical. The potential effects upon nearby building foundations and local aquifers can be minimized by employing proper blasting techniques. These techniques minimize the amount of vibration from the blast that can impact structures and local aquifers. Damage from flying debris can also be avoided through the use of proper blasting techniques. Any necessary blasting will adhere to applicable state and town regulations.

There are no significant long-term adverse environmental impacts that cannot be avoided and all potential impacts will be adequately mitigated when construction begins.

#### **14. Alternatives**

See Attached table.

**Table I-2  
Comparison of Impacts**

<b>DEIS Review Items</b>	<b>Proposed Action</b>	<b>Conventional Layout</b>	<b>Conservation Layout with All Homes Clustered</b>	<b>Alternative Site Access (No Through Road)</b>	<b>Reduced density subdivision that avoids steep slopes, ridgelines and other site constraints</b>
<b>Site Disturbance</b>	• ±10.01 acres of total disturbance	• ±11.56 acres of total disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ±10.01 acres of total disturbance</li> <li>• ±0.99 acres of disturbance on slopes greater than 25%</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disturbance would occur on any slopes greater than 25%. Therefore, no roads would be constructed throughout the site, prohibiting access to any land that may be used for lots, preventing any development on the site.</li> </ul>
	• ±0.99 acres of disturbance on slopes greater than 25%	• ±1.74 acres of disturbance on slopes greater than 25%			
<b>Taxes/Socio-Economic</b>	• Taxes Generated would be \$535,000	• Taxes Generated would be approximately \$621,448	• Taxes Generated would be approximately \$547,408		
<b>Traffic and Transportation</b>	• Trip generation Peak AM is 23	• Trip generation Peak AM is 23	• Trip Generation would be similar to the Proposed Action	• Trip generation Peak AM is 22	
	• Trip generation Peak PM is 22	• Trip generation Peak PM is 22	• Trip Generation would be similar to the Proposed Action	• Trip generation Peak PM is 19	
<b>Land Use and Zoning</b>	• R-40 Single-Family Residential	• R-40 Single-Family Residential	• 16 new units - based on capacity of conventional plan	• 14 new units	
	• 16 new units - based on capacity of conventional plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As-of-right 16 lots</li> <li>• Would utilize a road configuration comparable to the one contemplated for the Proposed Action with the exception of new Road C to access the proposed empty-nester residences</li> </ul>			
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>	• Approximately 8.6 acres of open space	• Approximately 1.37 acres of open space	• Approximately 10.7 acres of open space	• Approximately 5.06 acres of open space	
	• Approximately 51 new residents	• Approximately 58 new residents	• New Residents would be similar to Proposed Action	• Approximately 52 new residents	
	• Approximately 9 new public-school school-aged children	Approximately 14 new public-school school-aged children	• New public-School school-aged children would be similar to Proposed Action	Approximately 13 new public-school school-aged children	