

# Lange Planning and Consulting

Land Use, Environment, & Sustainability Planning



**Date: June 25, 2024**

**To: Village of Montebello**

**Re: Response to Long Form EAF part II potential moderate to large impacts**

Background: The proposed action is a 12 lot subdivision of single family homes on 16.68 acres located on the east side of Spook Rock Road, opposite the Spook Rock Golf course. The potential impacts have been categorized as aesthetic and historic impacts and traffic impacts

## POTENTIAL IMPACTS: AESTHETIC AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

1. Proposed Action may be visible from any officially designated federal, state, or local scenic or aesthetic resource
2. The proposed action may be visible from publicly accessible vantage points: Seasonally (e.g. screened by summer foliage but visible during other seasons).
3. The situation or activity in which viewers are engaged while viewing the proposed action is: routine travel by residents, including travel to and from work.
4. The proposed action may cause a diminishment of the public enjoyment and appreciation of the designated aesthetic resource.
5. The project contains a farmstead identified as a historic and scenic resource identified in the comprehensive Plan

RESPONSE: The Village of Montebello enacted zoning controls based upon the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive plan which established a Rural Preservation Overlay District which requires a 200 foot setback from Spook Rock Road. The proposed action complies with that requirement and as such, the view into the site will remain essentially the same as it exists today except for the entry drive which will be improved, but remain within the slightly modified existing driveway entrance. No sidewalks currently exist or are planned so that visibility is solely from automotive traffic. Drivers travelling at 30 mph will find the changes to the view virtually impossible to detect over the roughly 30 seconds of passby time. The locations of the 11 additional homes to the rear of the lot are additionally buffered by the change in slope as the site drains both to the east and south. The change in elevation is from 512 feet to 502 feet buffering as much as 10 feet of the view depending upon location. The fact that street lights are not part of the plan further prevent nighttime visibility. The entrance to the site will be constructed over the existing driveway minimizing changes to the view. The new entrance preserves trees to the maximum extent and provides curbs and pavement for stormwater collection. Seasonal changes to the foliage will also remain virtually identical. The 200 foot setback effectively buffers the site from Spook Rock Road. With preservation of the

first 200 feet as is, virtually no diminishment of the appreciation of this resource will occur. The preservation of the homestead buildings also blocks views internal to the site. Further, the farmstead will also remain preserving both the view and the resource.

#### CONCLUSIONS:

- All development will occur on the east side of Spook Rock Road; as such, it will not impact the views of the Ramapo Mountains looking west of Spook Rock Road.
- The proposed project conforms to the guidelines and requirements of the rural preservation Overlay district. The existing farmhouse is preserved and the 200 foot preservation area has been preserved.
- All proposed single family dwellings are located at least 200 feet from Spook Rock Road with actual measurements indicating that the closest structure to Spook Rock Road is 237.2 feet. The next closest single family homes are more than 300 feet from Spook Rock Road.
- The public enjoyment and appreciation of the views along Spook Rock road will not be diminished by the proposed project as the views remain virtually unchanged when viewed from a motor vehicle.
- The farmstead will remain as preserved on one lot of the project. The surrounding landscape and fences will not change as part of the project.

#### POTENTIAL IMPACTS: TRAFFIC

1. Projected traffic increase may exceed capacity of the existing road network
2. The proposed action may alter the present pattern of movement of people and goods
3. New Homes in the project will add vehicle trips to Spook Rock road, and new pedestrian traffic from the project entrance to the Golf Course Park and Pool

RESPONSE: Spook Rock Road consists of two lanes (one in each direction). It is categorized as a County Highway with a posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour. The project site is served by an existing macadam driveway varying in width from 22 to 30 feet. Three traffic reports were prepared over the project's history. The first was for a 12 unit single family development almost identical to the proposed project in 2018. The second and third traffic reports were prepared by Colliers Engineering and Design in August of 2021 for a total of 19 homes. A revised traffic report was prepared in November of 2023. The traffic reports all concluded that:

- The proposed residential development is not expected to have a significant impact on area roadways.
- The previously approved 12 single family homes would generate similar Site Generated Traffic Volumes as the current development plan (the 19 unit plan)
- The previous use of the property (Stonehedge Horse Farm) contributed significantly more traffic than the proposed residential developments

#### CONCLUSIONS:

- Using the latest available traffic count data, the increase in traffic to and from the site during peak hours is limited to 4-6 vehicles or of inconsequential impact.
- Traffic impacts are far below SEQRA thresholds which supports the conclusion that there will be no moderate, large or significant increase in traffic from the project.

- With the new road positioned in the same location as the existing driveway, there is no change to the existing pattern of movement of vehicles and therefore no impact.
- With no pedestrian traffic improvements, there is no change to the character of the pedestrian environment, road or stated goals of the historic and scenic road district.

SUMMARY: Based upon the design compliance with the historic district overlay regulations, the twelve single family homes as presented will not comprise any significant moderate to large negative impacts to aesthetics or existing traffic flows and patterns.

Kind regards,

John F. Lange  
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