

APPENDIX 11

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

for the

Windham Mountain Sporting Club

Prepared for:
Tuck Eastside Partners, LLP

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View of Cave Mountain from Mitchell Hollow Road

November 2011

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Visual Impact Assessment Photos, Models and Simulations

VP#-EX-OFF	Each Viewpoint, Existing Conditions, Leaf-off
VP#-EX-ON	Each Viewpoint, Existing Conditions, Leaf-on
VP#-M-OFF	Each Viewpoint, Model of Development Conditions, Leaf-off
VP#-SIM-OFF	Each Viewpoint, Simulation of Development Conditions, Leaf-off
VP#-SIM-ON	Each Viewpoint, Simulation of Development Conditions, Leaf-on



1. Visual Impact Assessment – General

A. Background

Visual impact is assessed in terms of the anticipated change in visual resources, including whether there would be a change in character or quality of the views with respect to significant scenic and aesthetic resources.

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) evaluates two aspects of the project's potential visibility. The first aspect deals with the extent of the area within a five-mile radius study area from where the project may be visible. The second aspect is an evaluation of the character and significance of the project's visibility from the areas identified in the limits of visibility analysis. The first aspect is a quantitative analysis, the second aspect is more a qualitative assessment of the character of the project's visibility. VIAs are performed to assess potential changes in views from vantage points that are accessible to the public. Vantage points from private property are not included in VIAs.

Typically a VIA is conducted for an area within a five mile radius of a project site. The rationale behind the five-mile radius is based on the accepted literature which states that beyond 5 miles color values, detail and contrast are decreased toward uniformity and individual visual features and details become less apparent, (USDA, 1973). NYSDEC's Policy Statement on Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts (DEP-00-2, 2000, p.5) cites to this USDA publication when discussing the acceptability of the five mile radius study area when performing a VIA.

The distance between the observer and the target has a great deal of influence on the level of significance regarding how a change in the landscape may be perceived. A view that looks off into the distance can be divided into three generalized zones and includes the foreground, middleground and background (USDA, 1973). The foreground is usually considered to be located from the observer to about a ½ mile away. The middleground zone encompasses the distance from ½ mile to approximately 3 miles away. Finally, the background zone extends from about 3 miles and outward.

In addition to distance, vegetation also affects visibility. In general, the changes in the way vegetation affects visibility helps to define the three distance zones. Vegetation in the foreground zone is seen in detail including individual leaves and branches. When foreground vegetation gets altered, the changes to a view are more readily apparent due to the more obvious change to the viewshed as compared to when viewed from a further distance. For example, if existing tree cover adjacent to a roadway were removed, the change is readily apparent and the viewshed gets expanded beyond the immediate road corridor and extends back to the new tree line. In the middleground zone vegetation is more defined by groups or masses of trees defined by differences in texture and color. Between ½ and 3 miles that is the middleground, vegetation is seen as a mosaic of different coverts, such as coniferous forest, deciduous forest and areas of herbaceous vegetation such as pastures. For forested coverts it is still possible to discern where views might include either more canopy or more tree trunks based upon whether the observer is looking downward from a superior position in the landscape (more canopy visible) or looking upward from an inferior position in the landscape (more tree trunks visible). In the

background, over 3 miles away, the texture of the vegetation is diminished and is viewed more in terms of color on the landform.

For vegetation during leaf-off conditions the study area has the potential to be more visible because the deciduous trees lose their leaves. In accordance with the SEQRA scoping document, the visual assessment was conducted during leaf-off conditions. For some of the viewpoints assessed in this VIA views during leaf-on conditions are also provided to demonstrate how the views, and the visibility of the project, can be expected to vary seasonally.

Contrast, one of the principal influences which allows one to recognize an object, is created primarily by color values, and since this affect decreases with distance, the significance of the visibility of a project in the background zone is greatly diminished as it merely blends into the background.

B. Visibility of the Built Environment

In general, visibility is controlled by the object or objects being viewed - the size and shape of a structure, its color, density and texture, the character of the structure's surroundings, landform, slope and type, size and condition of vegetation (dormancy or leaf-out). Visibility is also affected by factors affecting the viewers - the frequency of view or number of view locations, the duration of the view, the number of viewers, the angle of the vista (vista width), and the vertical angle and the horizontal viewing angle to travel/view direction.

In order to access the potential visual impact of the project, an understanding of the factors that contribute to visibility must be first described. Visibility of a structure occurs due to the interaction of a number of factors including:

- Structure size and form
- Structure color and material
- Slope of the site
- General topography of the area
- Distance to the view point
- Density, height and location of vegetation

None of the above factors in themselves absolutely control the degree of visibility.

The varying degree of visibility is evident within the existing study area. A white house is typically more visible than a brown house. Higher visibility is due to a more prominent position on the top of a ridge. A view of a house that breaks a ridgeline is more prominent than a view of a house that is below a ridgeline. Topography and landform combined with vegetation also affect visibility. Reduced visibility is afforded by gentler slopes and the presence of tree cover. Tree cover, in particular, plays an important role in reducing visibility, due to its screening effect and maintenance of a consistent vista. Structures at greater distances are less visible even with insufficient screening due to the distance. Vegetation is only most effective when it forms a screen between the view point and the structure. If the vegetation does not form a dense screen, then distance between the view point and structure may compensate.

In addressing appropriate positions of structures to be constructed and areas to be developed a number of seemingly conflicting needs must be balanced. These include the desirability of maintaining the setting for those who look toward the project as well as providing views to the setting below for those who occupy the development. This balance can be achieved by providing a program of limited view development that will accomplish the above goals without substantially disturbing the natural profile of the existing terrain.

The degree of clearing necessary to allow for construction of each individual building is dependent on the size and the shape of the building as well as the existing topography of the location where the building is proposed.

C. Sequential Analysis Process

The visual impact assessment process is sequential. First the extent of visibility is estimated through the limits of visibility mapping. Secondly, the visibility mapping is taken into the field to verify their accuracy and to locate and describe the potential visibility of the project through narratives and photography from known locations. The final step is to present a characterization of the significance of the project's visibility through narrative descriptions and the use of photo rendered visual simulations.

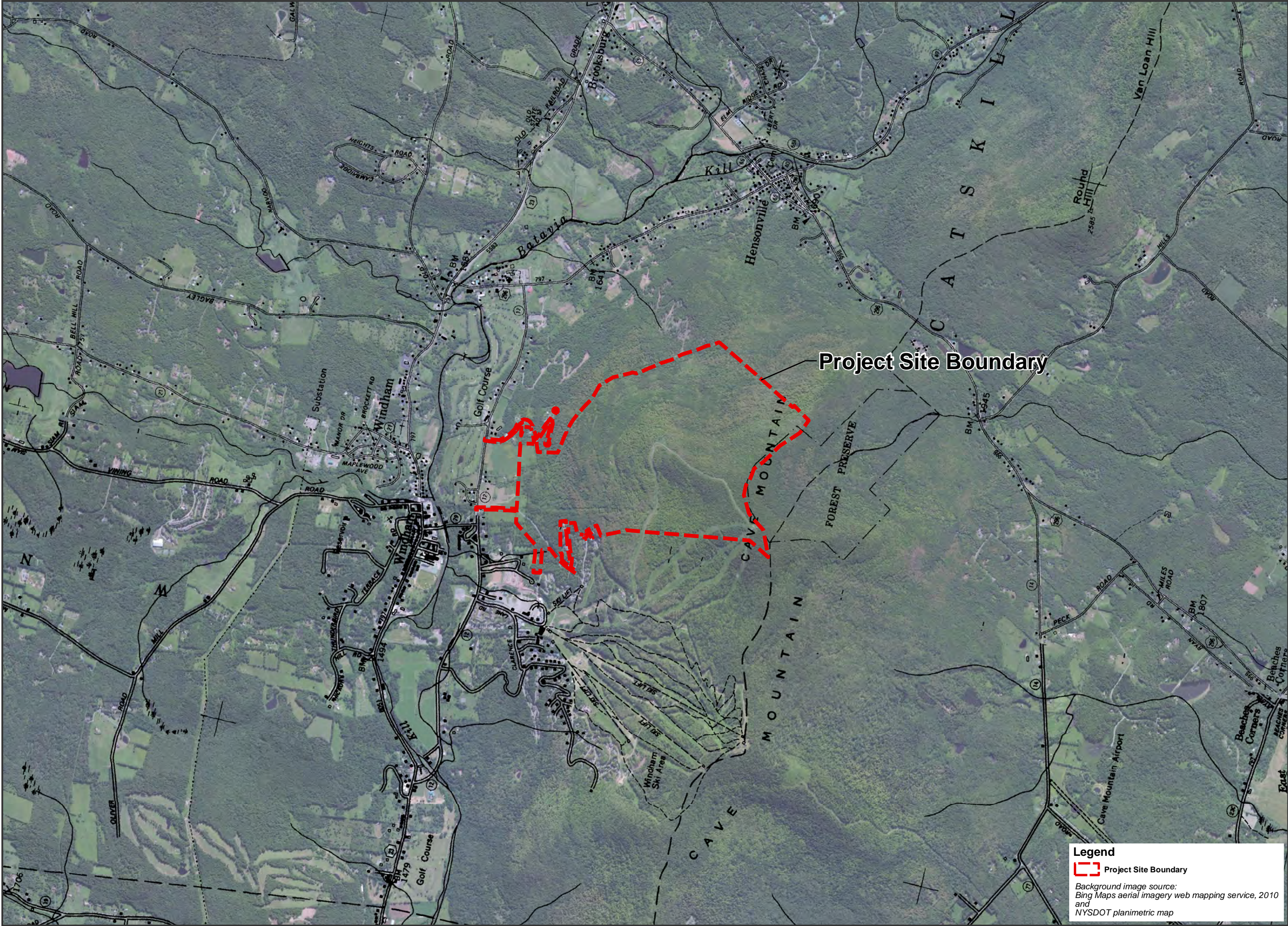
The process of visual assessment requires the selection of two distinct sets of points for consideration. The first set of points represent the *target* locations at the proposed project to be viewed. The second set of points represent the *observer* locations from which the project is being viewed. The target points for the project include proposed structures located throughout the site, not just the largest structures, i.e. the lodge buildings. The observer points have been selected as the result of the initial limits of visibility analysis, field verification work and directives from the Lead Agency and their Consultant for the review of the VIA. The selection of the observation points, or viewpoints, is intended to either be representative of views from a general area or represent specific known points of concern such as public use areas, parks and roadways.

2. Project Description


A. Project Site

The Windham Mountain Sporting Club (WMSC) club is proposed on a 464.6 acre site in the Town of Windham. The site is located south of South Street (Greene County Route (CR) 12) and to the east of Windham Mountain ski area. See Figure 1, Site Location Map. The project site and Windham Mountain ski area are located on the landform known as Cave Mountain.

The project site is also located within a region known as the Catskill Park. The Catskill Park is an area of approximately 1,100 square miles that is a mix of privately owned lands and publicly owned lands. The publicly owned lands in the Catskill Park include NYS Forest Preserve lands which comprise about 41% of the Park, and New York City owned watershed lands which comprise approximately 6% of the Park.



Legend

 Project Site Boundary

Background image source:
Bing Maps aerial imagery web mapping service, 2010
and
NYSDOT planimetric map



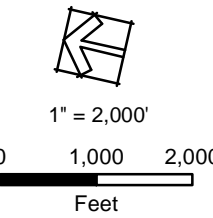
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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
Site Location Map



Project: 08077
Date: 11/11/2011
Figure:
1

Elevations of the WMSC property range from a low of 1600 feet near the intersection of Panorama Lane and South Street to a high of 3060 feet near the top of the east peak express quad ski lift. For reference, other elevations include 1660 feet where the property abuts the open field (Cammer property) to the north, the former meadow in the northeast corner of the property is approximately 2240 feet, the existing lean to on the property is at 2330 feet, and the bend in the Wanderer ski trail is at an elevation of 2630 feet. Topography on the property can be considered typical of hillside areas in the central and northern Catskills – a series of alternating steeper slopes and flatter benches.

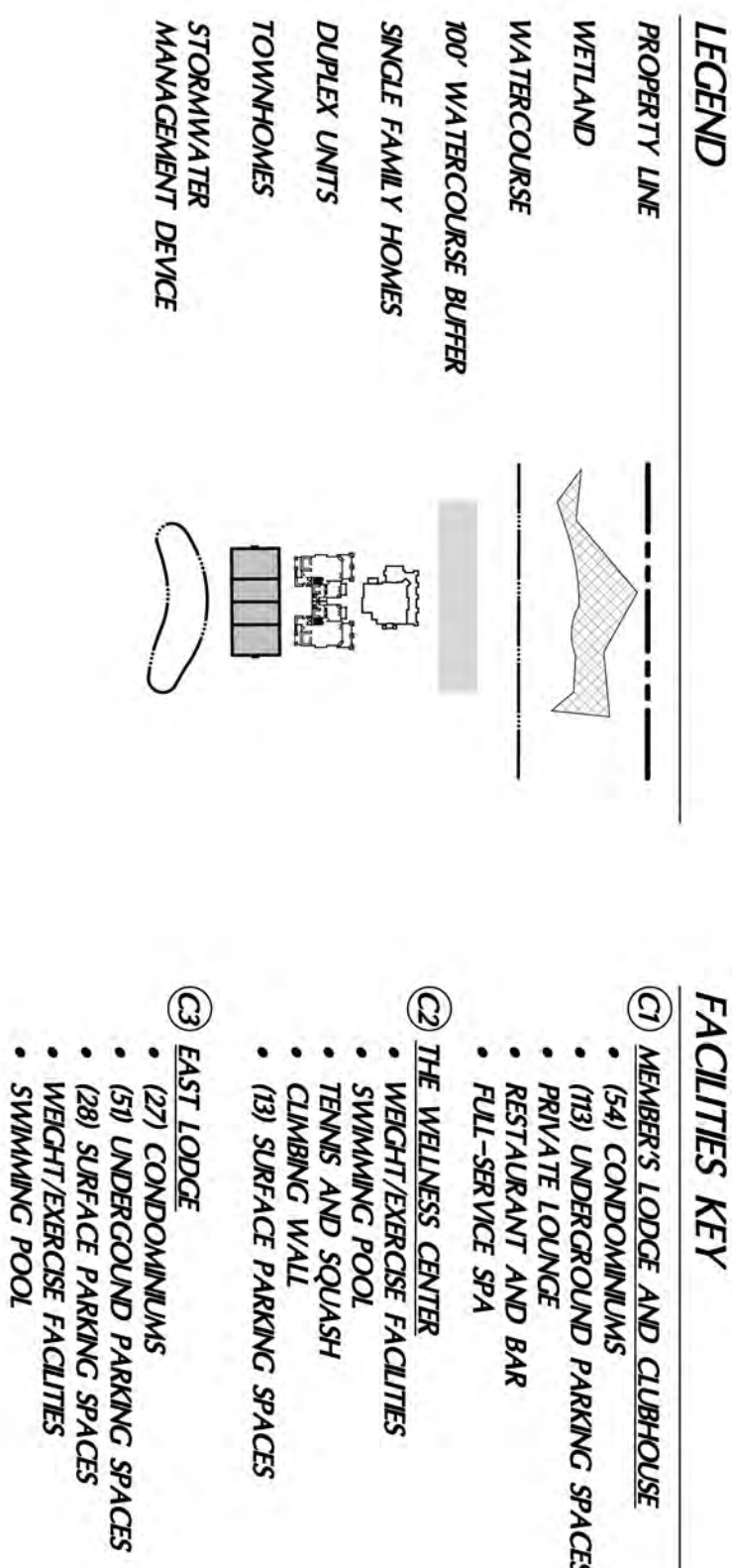
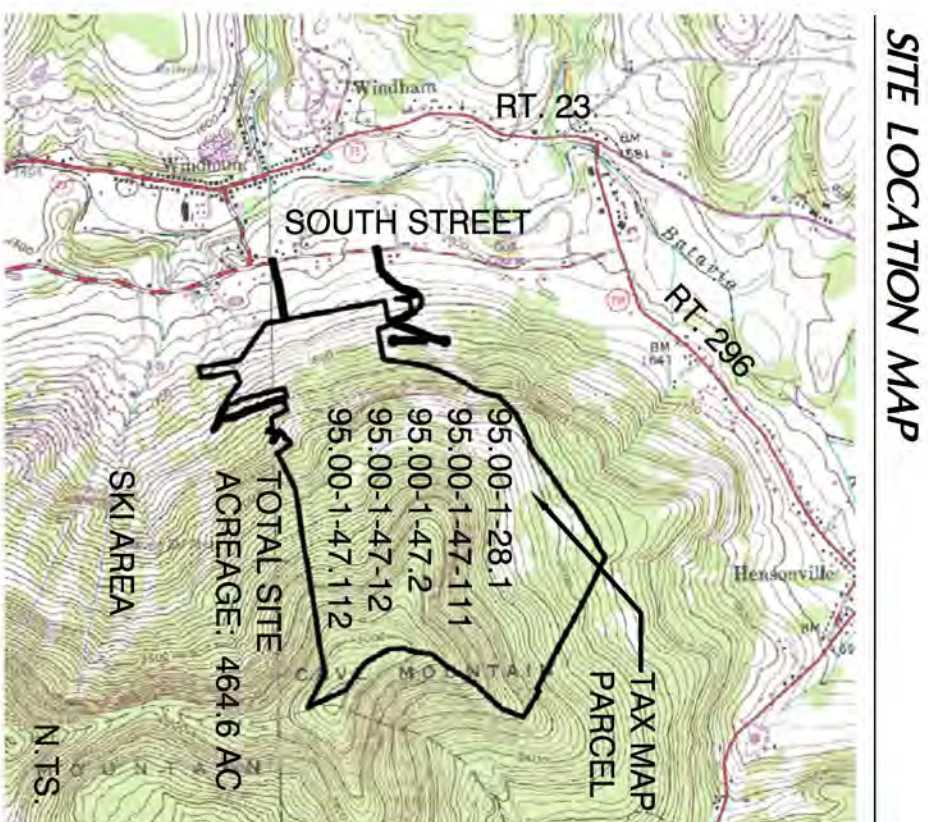
It is important to note for this VIA, that, while the site includes lands that extend up to 3060 feet in elevation, no buildings are proposed to be built above an elevation of 2500 feet.

The vegetation of the project site consists mainly of upland forests composed of sugar maple with smaller amounts of other hardwood trees. Smaller areas are covered with forest dominated by eastern hemlock and other trees. It is evident that these forests have been managed on a regular basis, for log skidder trails are found throughout, and the forest canopy is somewhat more open than would be expected in a forest allowed to grow naturally. Evidence of previous agricultural activity on the site is present in the form of non-forested areas that vary from fields covered mainly with grasses and broadleaved herbs to areas dominated by shrubs and tree saplings. These areas were apparently cleared of forest to create pastures or hayfields, were later abandoned, and are in the process of ecological succession that will re-establish forest. Reportedly, such open areas in the eastern part of the property were once used for grazing sheep.

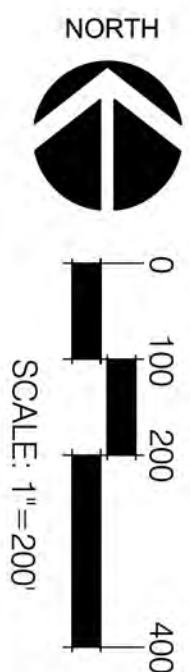
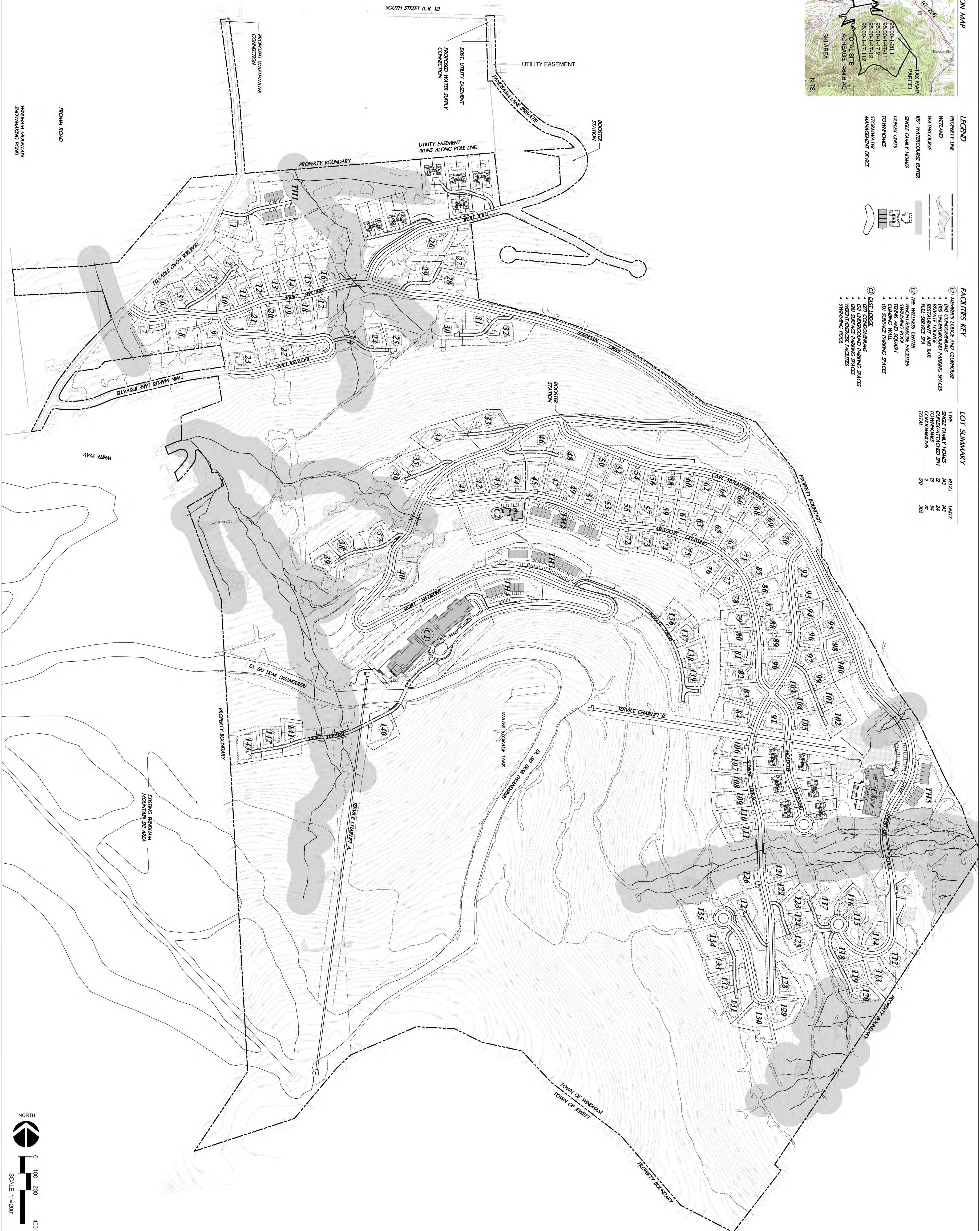
Existing development on the site is limited to ski trails of Windham Mountain ski area. Windham Mountain currently holds easements of 15.69 acres of WMSC land which are currently used for portions of the existing ‘Wanderer Trail’ – Windham Mountain’s eastern-most and longest novice trail, as well as smaller sections of ‘Why Not’ and ‘Wing ‘N it’ trails. The highest part of the site contains the top of the East Peak Express Quad ski lift with a small lift building and a ski patrol building located at the top of the lift.

B. Proposed Development

The WMSC is a proposed private sporting club development that will offer its members multiple recreational and amenity offerings as well as a variety of residential offerings including single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses and condominiums. No ski trails are proposed, but there are two transport lifts included in the project that will bring skiers to and from the project residential areas to existing Windham Mountain ski trails. See Figure 2, Project Master Plan.



LOT SUMMARY		
TYPE	BLDG.	UNITS
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES	143	143
DUPLEX/ATTACHED SHH	12	24
TOWNHOMES	13	34
CONDOMINIUMS	2	81
TOTAL	170	302

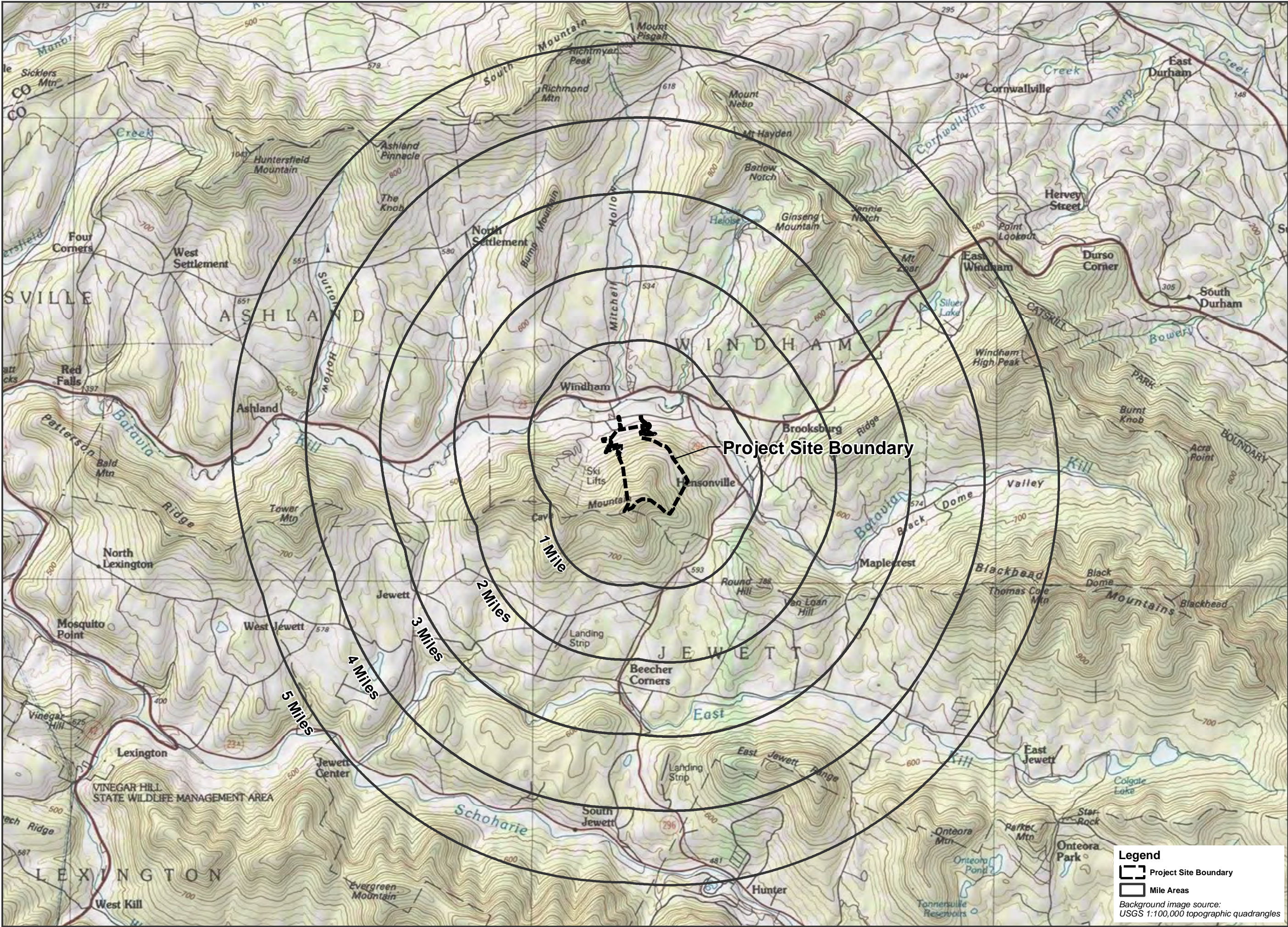


More specifically, the project includes the following:

- 143 Single Family Homes
- 24 Duplex Units in 12 Buildings
- 54 Townhome Units in 13 Buildings
- 81 Condominium Units in 2 Buildings
- Members Lodge and Clubhouse, that includes
 - Private Lounge
 - Restaurant
 - Bar
 - Kitchen
 - Ski Storage
 - Full Service Spa
 - Condominiums
 - Underground Parking
 - Adjacent Ski Lift “A” connecting to Windham Mountain
- Wellness Center, that includes
 - Tennis Courts
 - Swimming Pool
 - Indoor Exercise Area
 - Climbing Wall
 - Squash Courts
 - Aerobics/Pilates Area
 - Surface Parking
- East Village Lodge, that includes
 - Grill/Restaurant
 - Heated Pool & Hot Tub
 - Weight/Exercise Room
 - Locker Room
 - Underground and Surface Parking
 - Adjacent Ski Lift “B” connecting to Windham Mountain
- Privately constructed, owned and maintained project roads with project access from Trail Side Road
- Privately constructed, owned and maintained central water and sewer collection systems with connection to existing Town of Windham systems in South Street.

3. Regional and Local Landscape

The Town of Windham is located a short distance west of the northeast escarpment of the Catskill Mountains in the sub-region of the Catskills known as the Mountaintop. The landscape in the study area is typical Catskills geography of relatively broad, steeply-sloping mountains dissected by narrow river, creek and stream valleys generally trending east and west with many steep contributing north-south hollows. See Figure 3, Five-Mile Study Area.



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Title
Five Mile Study Area



0 0.5 1
Miles

Project: 08077
Date: 11/15/2011

Figure:

The Batavia Kill is one of those east to west trending streams and the Batavia Kill valley essentially bisects the five mile study area into a northern half and a southern half. Schoharie Creek is a similar east to west feature that is located in the very southern end of the study area. Almost all of the study area identified as having views into the project site is located north of the Batavia Kill.

Because the landscape within the five-mile study area for the project is predominantly forested with steep mountains cut by narrow valleys and steep hollows, distant views of the project site from the valleys and hollows are restricted by the sharply dissected topography. The visual character of the landscape at higher elevations is mostly of unbroken forest, while in the lower ridges and valleys it is natural for the observer to see a patchwork of developed, cleared areas that contain a variety of structures. As discussed more below in Section 5, the eastern portion of the study area contains areas of NYS Forest Preserve, and there are some areas in the northern part of the study area that are State Forest lands, but not within the Forest Preserve. The major exception to the overall character of the forested higher elevations within the study area is Windham Mountain with its high elevation ski slopes running up and down the north face of Cave Mountain. Agricultural lands, either active or fallow, are present in the study area primarily in the hollows north of the project site, as well as in the Batavia Kill valley, primarily west of the hamlet of Windham.

In general, the study area is relatively sparsely settled except for the hamlets in Windham, Hensonville and Maplecrest. Larger areas developed for recreational uses in the study area, besides Windham Mountain, include Windham Country Club located in the Batavia Kill Valley between Main Street (NY Route 23) and South Street and Christman's Valley and Mountain golf courses located west of the hamlet of Windham in the valley and on the north side of the valley respectively.

The major roadways in the study area are NY Route 23 and NY Route 296. NY Route 23 runs east to west through the study area starting in East Windham near Point Lookout and extending west past the hamlet of Ashland. Much of the development in the hamlet of Windham is located along NY Route 23 (Main St.). NY Route 296 is a north-south road connecting NY Route 23 in Windham to the Village of Hunter (NY Route 23A) to the south. The hamlet of Hensonville is located along NY Route 296 to the east of the project site. County Route 40 extends east off of NY Route 296 and into the hamlet of Maplecrest. County Route 12, to which the project connects, is also named South Street, and is seasonally a heavily traveled road when Windham Mountain ski area is in operation. Church Street, or County Route 79, is a short road connecting NY Route 23 and South Street, and functions as an important connection between the hamlet of Windham and Windham Mountain. Mitchell Hollow Road is an important connector road between the hamlet of Windham and lands to the north.

4. Mapping, Resource Inventory and Field Documentation

This part of the VIA evaluates existing conditions and conducts an inventory of visual resources within a five-mile radius of the project site in order to provide the baseline for an assessment of the anticipated change in visual resources, including whether there would be a change in character or quality of the view with respect to significant scenic and aesthetic resources. The methodology used for the evaluation of potential visual impacts follows NYSDEC's 2000 *Visual Resources Assessment Policy* (NYSDEC Program Policy DEP-00-2) and the Adirondack Park Agency's 1992 *Visual Analysis Methodology* policy.

A. Study Area and Zone of Potential Visibility Mapping

The five-mile study area was established by extending out five miles from the project site boundary. This is typical for a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA). The rationale behind the five-mile radius is based on the accepted literature which states that beyond 5 miles color values, detail and contrast are decreased toward uniformity and individual visual features and details become less apparent. (USDA, 1973.) NYSDEC's Program Policy on Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts (DEP-00-2, 2000, p.5) cites to this USDA publication when discussing the acceptability of the five-mile radius study area when performing a VIA.

Proposed structures as set forth on the project master plan were selected as target points for use in the digital elevation model in accordance with the project Master Plan (Figure 2), and were used to produce a composite zone of potential visibility mapping for all structures. The locations of the target points used for this VIA are illustrated on Figure 4, "Zone of Potential Visibility Map". Elevations of the buildings and the limits of proposed clearing for the project were taken from the architectural drawings and project grading plans that accompany the DEIS.

The estimate of the areas from which the project components may or may not be seen was developed through the use of digital elevation models or DEMs. The DEMs allow the user to view the topography of a given area in a three-dimensional computer model. It essentially creates a surface which represents the terrain of the study area. The surface can then be rotated and viewed from any direction and lines of sight assessed from anywhere inside the study area. A DEM is actually a grid composed of thousands of smaller grid cells, 30 feet on a side. The limits of visibility maps are generated by a computer program which assesses whether or not each cell within the study area can either see or not see the proposed project. The analysis is performed for each individual cell in the study area and the limits of visibility are defined.

DEMs were used to analyze potential visibility instead of line-of-sight profiles. This is consistent with DEC's Policy System which states "Small scale, low budget projects should not be burdened with the costs of sophisticated visual analyses. In these instances it is generally more effective to reserve applicant investments for mitigation rather than complex visual assessments. Simple line-of-sight profiles may suffice for revealing impacts and potential mitigation strategies". The Policy also recognizes "more sophisticated visual simulations and digital viewshed analysis" as being appropriate for larger, more complex projects. The use of DEM's for this Project is specified in the project scoping document.

The source of the data to create the DEMs was derived from USGS mapping with an accuracy estimated to be one half of the contour interval. The interval for the USGS quadrangles is 20 feet so the vertical accuracy is estimated to be plus or minus 10 feet.

Two DEMs were developed in order to identify two zones of potential visibility. These two zones are illustrated on Figure 4, “Zone of Potential Visibility Map”.

The first DEM was based solely on topography without any consideration given to possible screening provided by vegetation. Using the proposed structures as target points, and assuming that there was no tree cover on the site and no tree cover within the five-mile study area, a potential zone of visibility based upon topography only was generated. The topography-only zone of potential visibility is shaded tan on Figure 4.

The topography-only DEM was then revised by adding in tree cover. Tree cover on the site as per the project grading plans was added. For the five-mile study area tree cover was added in to those areas that were indicated as vegetated on the USGS quadrangles. A tree canopy height of 40 feet was established for both on-site and off-site vegetated areas. This height was considered to be a conservative estimate with a tendency to indicate more area of potential visibility than if the trees were modeled at a greater height. The areas from which the project could potentially be visible when considering both topography and tree cover are shown in red on Figure 4. As discussed in the previous section, the vast majority of the area within the zone of potential visibility is within and north of the Batavia Kill and the valley in which it is located.

B. NYSDEC Visual Policy Resource Inventory

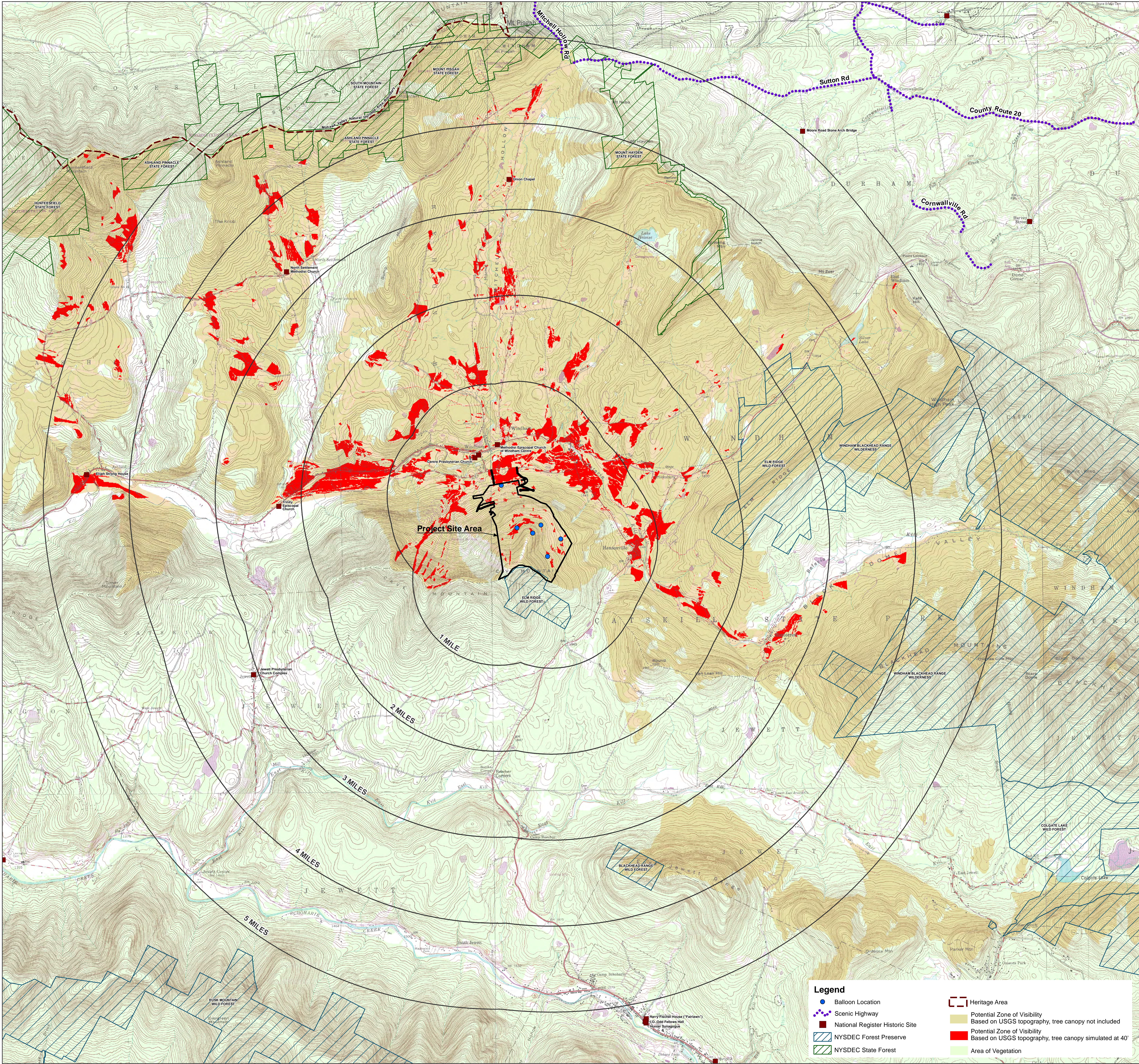
Section V.A of NYSDEC’s Program Policy DEP-00-2, “Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts”, lists 15 categories of aesthetic resources of statewide significance that need to be considered when assessing potential visual impacts. This report section addresses the inventory of such resources located within the project study area (i.e. within a five-mile radius of the project site). They include:

- (1) A property on or eligible for inclusion in the National or State Register of Historic Places

According to information obtained from NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), there are four National Register Historic Sites within the study area. These are the West Settlement Presbyterian Church, the North Settlement Methodist Church, Union Chapel, and the Centre Presbyterian Church. The locations of these sites are shown on Figure 4.

- (2) State Parks

There are no state parks in the study area (<http://www.stateparks.com/ny.html>).



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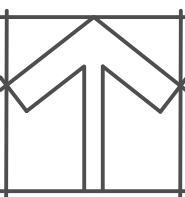
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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club

Town of Windham, Greene County, New York

Zone of Potential Visibility Map



1" = 2,000'

0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Project: 08077

Date: 11/15/2011

Figure:

(3) Urban Cultural Parks (now State Heritage Areas)

According to NYSOPRHP, the very northwestern portion of the study area contains a very small portion of the Mohawk Valley Natural Heritage Area. See Figure 4.

(4) The State Forest Preserve

As per mapping obtained from NYSDEC, the study area contains the Elm Ridge Wild Forest unit and portions of the Windham Blackhead Range Wilderness unit. The extent of Forest Preserve Lands within the study area is shown on Figure 4.

(5) National Wildlife Refuges, State Game Refuges, or State Wildlife Management Areas

There are no national wildlife refuges within the study area according to the USFWS (<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/refugeLocatorMaps/NewYork.html>)

New York does not have separate areas called Game Refuges. All wildlife areas are listed as Wildlife Management Areas. There are no Wildlife Management Areas within the study area (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7768.html>).

National Natural Landmarks

There are no National Natural Landmarks in the Study Area according to the National Parks Service (<http://www.nature.nps.gov/nnl/pdf/RevisedRegistryJune2009.pdf>)

(6) The National Park System, Recreation Areas, Seashores, Forests

There are no National Park System Recreation Areas, Seashores, or Forests in the Study Area according to mapping provided by the National Atlas of the United States, December 2005 (<http://nationalatlas.gov/atlasftp.html?openChapters=chpbound#chpbound>)

(7) Rivers designated as National or State Wild, Scenic or Recreational

There are no such designated rivers in the study area.

(8) A site, area, lake, reservoir or highway designated or eligible for designation as scenic

There are two designated scenic highways in the study area according to mapping provided by NYS DOT (<https://www.nysdot.gov/display/programs/scenic-byways/maps>). These are two very short segments of Mitchell Hollow Road and Sutton Road. See Figure 4.

(9) Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance

There are no Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance based on the most recent information available from the NYS GIS Clearinghouse.

(http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gisdata/metadata/dos.scenic_dos.html)

(10) A State or federally designated trail, or one proposed for designation

Designated State hiking trails in the study area include the Escarpment trail and Black Dome trail in the Windham Blackhead Rand Wilderness Unit within the study area.

A portion of the Long Path Trail, while not a State or federally designated trail, exists within the Mount Hayden State Forest that is within the study area.

(11) Adirondack Park Scenic Vistas

None of the study area is located in or near the Adirondack Park.

(12) State Nature and Historic Preserve Areas

There are no State Nature and Historic Preserve Areas in the study area according to mapping provided by NYSDEC. (<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gisdata/metadata/nysdec.declands.xml>)

(13) Palisades Park

The study area is not located in or near the Palisades Park

(14) Bond Act Properties purchased under Exceptional Scenic Beauty or Open Space Category

There are no Bond Act Properties purchased under Exceptional Scenic Beauty or Open Space Category in the study area according to mapping provided by NYSDEC.

(<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gisdata/metadata/nysdec.declands.xml>)

C. Field Study

Field studies were conducted in accordance with the findings of the zone of visibility mapping and the NYSDEC Visual Policy Resource Inventory.

C.1. Evaluation and Documentation of the Zone of Visibility Mapping and Views Into the Project Site

The next step in the VIA was to perform a field study to examine the zones of potential visibility (topography only and topography plus vegetation) to document the locations where views into the project site actually exist and to photograph these views for possible use when preparing the view simulations.

In early April 2009 reconnaissance of the roadways within the study area was performed to confirm the locations of views into the project site in accordance with zone of potential visibility mapping.

A field survey was conducted on April 24, 2009 under spring “leaf off” conditions. The weather on April 24, 2009 started clear, with light to no winds and ended with limited high clouds and light winds, 5-10 mph.

In accordance with the scoping document, large, visible balloons were flown at approximate building heights, with additional locator balloons flown above the tree line. Balloon locations were predetermined based on building location and were field located using GPS equipment. Balloons were utilized for field personnel site definition but not necessarily for viewshed modeling. (There was no need to rely on balloon locations for viewshed modeling due to (1) existing landscape features on and around the project site including the ski trails at Windham Mountain, and (2) having GPS coordinates of the photograph locations in conjunction with geo-referenced site plans.)

The balloon locations and heights during the field studies were as follows:

Table 1. Leaf-Off Visual Analysis April 24, 2009

Balloon Location	Tether Length	Balloon Color
Northernmost Residential Near Trailside	100' (locator)	Red
	35'	Red
Member's Lodge & Clubhouse	150' (locator)	Red
	35'	White
Mid-Site Residential	150' (locator)	Orange
	35'	White
East Lodge	100' (locator)	Red
	55'	White
Southernmost (east) Residential	100' (locator)	White
	35'	Orange
Ski Lift Tower Near Bend in Wanderer Ski Trail	100' (locator)	Red
	25'	White

During the balloon flight on April 24, 2009 three teams of LA Group staff drove and hiked within the study area to verify and document the zone of potential visibility and to photo-document views into the project site. An additional team hiked a portion of the Escarpment Trail on April 29, 2009. Photographs were taken to document the results of the field survey at both 50 mm and 80 mm lens settings. For more distant views documentation also included some areas being photographed at higher lens settings such as 100mm or 300mm in order to assist in the interpretation of the 50mm photographs that are used in the simulations. GPS coordinates were taken at all photograph locations.

Table 2 lists the locations that were photographed following the mapping of the zones of potential visibility. Also, see Figure 5, Photo Location Map. Visibility was evaluated based primarily on landscape position and location landmarks (i.e. Windham Mountain Ski Trails, particularly Wanderer, and the open fields between the site and South Street) and did not rely solely on the visibility of the balloons that were flown.



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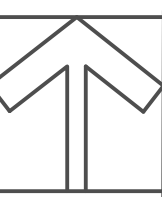
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DARIEN, CT 06820

The Windham Mountain Sporting Club

Town of Windham, Greene County, New York

Photo Location Map



1" = 2,000'

0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Project: 08077

Date: 11/15/2011

Figure:

5

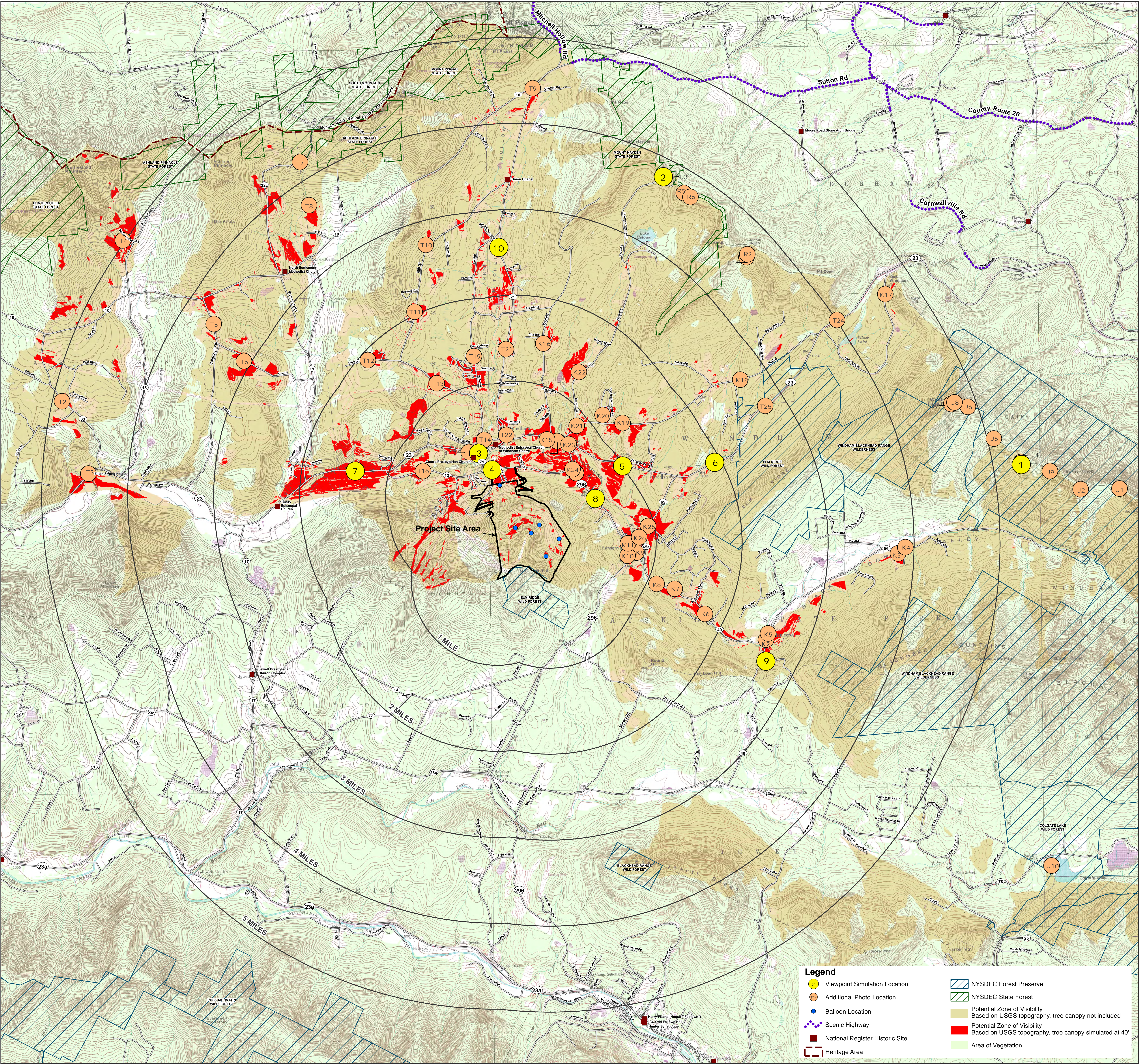


Table 2. Photograph Locations

Figure 5 Viewpoint ID #	Location	Significance (NYSDEC Inventory)	Potential Visibility of Site	Photo Simulation Viewpoint #
T1	West Settlement Methodist Church	historic	no	
T2	CR 63 above Muller Road		screened	
T3	Route 23 Ashland near quarry entry		screened	
T4	Edsell Partidge Rd		screened	
T5	Case Rd upper		screened	
T6	Case Rd lower		yes	
T7	CR 32C upper		screened	
T8	CR 32C lower		yes	
T9	Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Gun Club Rd.		yes	
T10	Mill St. near Pleasant Lane		yes	
T11	Mill St. near Huckleberry Lane		screened	
T12	Oliver Rd		screened	
T13	Mill St. near Homestead Lane		yes	
T14	Mill St. Near Main St.		yes	
T15	Route 23 near Christmans & Settlement Rd		partial	VP7
T16	South St. west of Ski Area		screened	
T17	WJ School Entrance off Main St.		partial	
T18	Church Street north of the bridge	historic	partial	VP3
T19	Vining Rd. near Windham Ridge Rd.		yes	
T20	Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Larsen Rd.		yes	VP10
T21	Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Brookhollow Ln		yes	
T22	Maplewood Ave Near Main St.		yes	
T23	South St. near Trailside Rd.		yes	VP4
T24	Route 23 east of High Peak Rd		yes	
T25	Route 23 near Cross Road		no	
T26	Route 23 near Pelham Lane		yes	VP6
T27	Route 23 across Police Camp field		yes	VP5
K1	Maplecrest Rd. (CR 40) at Barum Rd.		yes	VP9
K2	Maplecrest Rd. at Big Hollow Rd.		no	
K3	Spruce Drive off Maplecrest Rd. (CR 56)		no	
K4	Legendary Lane and CR 56		no	
K5	Maplecrest Post Office		no	
K6	Maplecrest Rd. near Julie Meadow Rd.		yes	
K7	Maplecrest Rd. west of Schaefer Drive		yes	
K8	Maplecrest Road more west of Schaefer		yes	
K9	296 and Maplecrest, Ocean Grille		screened	

Figure 5 Viewpoint ID #	Location	Significance (NYSDEC Inventory)	Potential Visibility of Site	Photo Simulation Viewpoint #
K10	CR 65 near Route 296		screened	
K11	Route 296 at church/fitness concepts		yes	
K12	Route 296 at Cuomo's Cove		yes	VP8
K13	296 and South Street - WM Outfitters		yes	
K14	Route 23 at Old Road		yes	
K15	Route 23 at Begley Road		yes	
K16	Begley Road		yes	
K17	High Peaks Road		screened	
K18	Old Road at Cross Road		screened	
K19	Old Road at Andys Road		yes	
K20	Cambridge Heights Road		yes	
K21	Nauvoo Road and Old Road		screened	
K22	Nauvoo Road		screened	
K23	Route 296 bridge over Batavia Kill		screened	
K24	parking lot Red Roof South Street		yes	
K25	Elm Ridge Rd and CR 65		yes	
K26	CR 65 and CR 65A		screened	
R1	Long Path Trail below 3rd gate		upper	
R2	Long Path Trail above gate (off trail)		screened	
R3	above Lake Heloise	NYS forest	screened	
R4	above Lake (2) going to Mt. Hayden	NYS forest	yes	VP2
R5	30 yards off Long Path Trail	NYS forest	screened	
R6	Long Path Trail just below R5	NYS forest	screened	
J1	herd path off Acra Point	forest preserve	no	
J2	Burnt Knob (1) herd path	forest preserve	no	
J3	Burnt Knob (2) rock at end of herd path	forest preserve	yes	VP1
J4	Burnt Knob (3) rock at end of herd path	forest preserve	yes	
J5	trail between Burnt Knob and Windham	forest preserve	screened	
J6	trail towards Windham High Peak	forest preserve	screened	
J7	Windham High Peak just off trail	forest preserve	screened	
J8	Windham High Peak (2) on trail	forest preserve	screened	
J9	Burnt Knob lookout just off trail	forest preserve	screened	
J10	high point in field W of Colgate Lake	forest preserve	no	

C.2 Evaluation and Documentation of NYSDEC Program Policy Resource Inventory Findings

The following describes the results of the field study, as they relate to the resources of statewide significance required to be addressed under NYSDEC's Program Policy DEP-00-2 (described in section 4.B above).

Inventory Category 1: National Register Historic Sites

During the initial site reconnaissance it was determined that there are no views into the project site from the West Settlement Methodist Church, the North Settlement Methodist Church or the Union Chapel. There is a filtered view into the project site from near the Centre Presbyterian Church which is photo location T-18 on Figure 5. As per the table above, this location was chosen to be Viewpoint 3 evaluated in this VIA.

Inventory Category 3: Natural Heritage Area

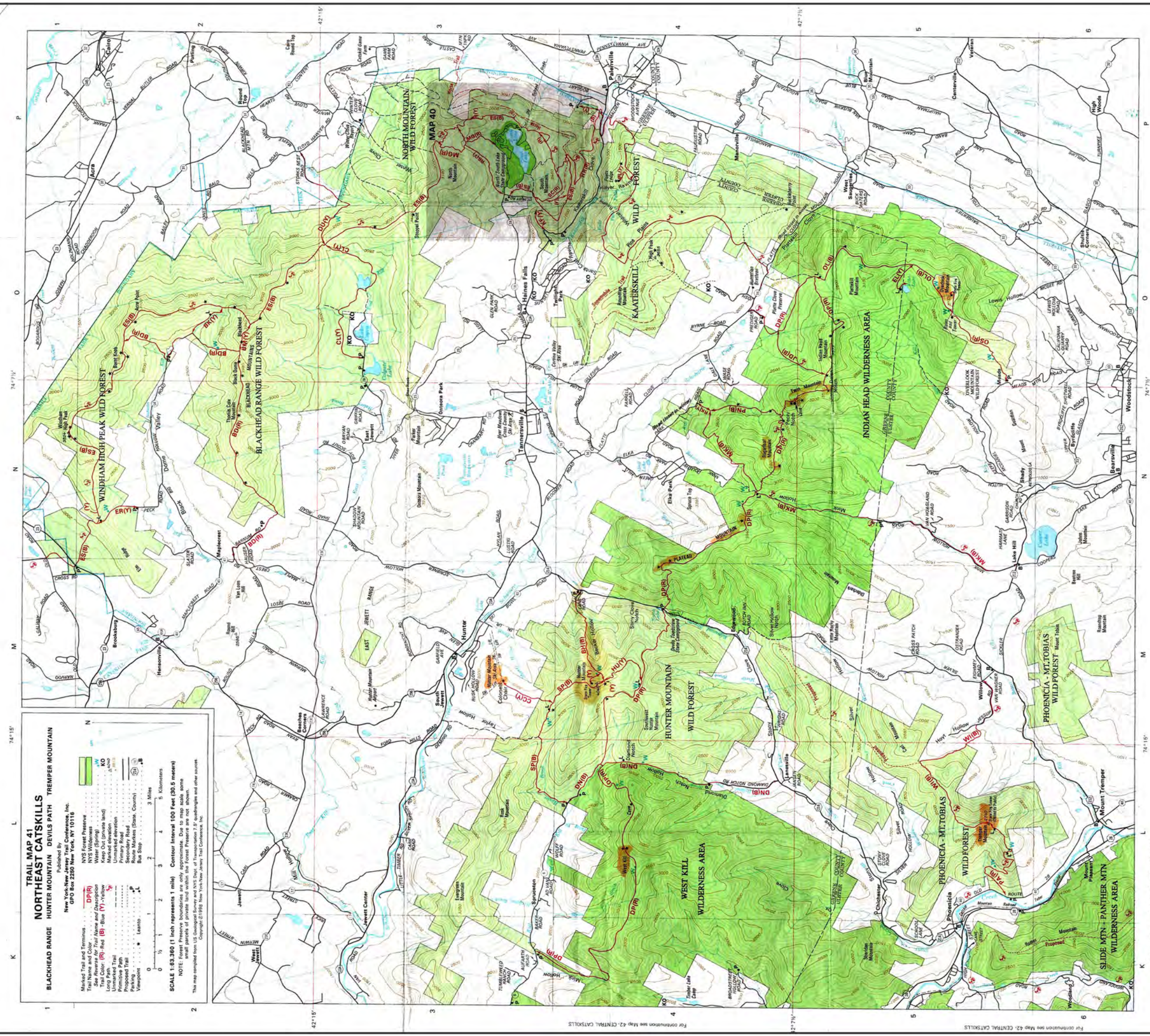
Within the study area the boundary of the Mohawk Valley Natural Heritage area is located along the drainage divide that defines the Mohawk River watershed. There are no views into the project site from the very small portion of this Natural Heritage Area.

Inventory Category 4: New York State Forest Preserve Lands and New York State Forest Lands, and Inventory Category 11: Designated Trails

The following materials were utilized when performing this portion of the VIA.

1. New York New Jersey Trails Map #41, Northeast Catskills (see Figure 6)
2. *Guide to Catskill Trails* 2nd edition, Adirondack Mountain Club
3. Catskill Park State Land Master Plan (CPSLMP), August 2008
4. NYSDEC Unit Management Plans for Forest Preserve lands within the study area.

The study area includes parts of the Windham Blackhead Range Wilderness, Elm Ridge Wild Forest, and Colgate Lake Wild Forest units. The study area also includes the area of State Forest designated as "Greene 2" in the 2008 CPSLPM. This area is also known as Mount Hayden State Forest.



TRAIL MAP 41
NORTHEAST CATSKILLS
HUNTER MOUNTAIN DEVILS PATH TREMPER MOUNTAIN

Published by
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Inc.
GPO Box 2250 New York, NY 10116

Marked Trail and Terminus
See Reverse for Trail Name and Description
Long Permitted Trail
Unmarked Trail
Primary Road
Route Markers (State, County)
Bus Stop
Viewpoint

NYS Forest Preserve
NYS Wilderness
Water (Spring)
Keep Out (Private Land)
Long Permitted Trail
Unmarked Trail
Primary Road
Route Markers (State, County)
Bus Stop
Viewpoint

Scale: 1:63,360 (1 inch represents 1 mile)
Contour Interval 100 Feet (30.5 meters)
NOTE: Forest Preserve boundaries are only approximate. Due to map scale some
features may not be shown. This map is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a warranty of any kind. The map is not to be used for navigation or other purposes.
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Town of Windham, Greene County, New York

Title
NY/NJ Trails Conference Map 41

Project: 08077
Date: 11/15/2011

Figure:
6

Forest Preserve

The potential for views towards the project site from the State Forest Preserve involved the section of Escarpment Trail that includes Acra Point, Burnt Knob and Windham High Peak. Along this section of trail there are 8 viewpoint locations identified on the New York New Jersey Trails map. This is consistent with the January 1994 Unit Management Plan (page 20) for the then-called Windham High Peaks Wild Forest unit that lists a total of 9 scenic vistas, one of which is listed as the parking area on NY Route 23 in East Windham. The January 2009 Elm Ridge Wild Forest UMP Amendment to the 1994 Windham High Peaks UMP also lists this parking area (and no others) as viewpoints within the unit. There are a number of identified viewpoints along the Blackhead Range ridgeline trail, but none of these have views towards the project site (*Guide to Catskills Trails*). These include Caudal with a south view towards Devil's Path, Camel's Hump with views to the southeast towards Belleayre and north to Windham High Peaks, Thomas Cole with no views north and views south towards Oneonta Mountain, Black Dome with views ranging from 150 to 260 degrees and Yellow Jacket Outlook with views to the east.

On April 29, 2009, during leaf-off conditions with clear and sunny weather, personnel from the LA Group accessed the Escarpment Trail starting from the parking area at the end of Big Hollow Road. The trail between Acra Point and Windham High Peak was hiked and investigated for views towards the project site located 5 to 6 miles to the west. In addition to the marked trail itself, herd paths leading off of the trail to the west were also investigated for potential views towards the project site.

A total of 9 viewpoints were investigated and photographed. These viewpoints are labeled J-1 through J-9 on Figure 5, "Photo Locations Map". A description of these follows.

- J-1, herd path off Acra Point, view southwest to Blackhead Range
- J-2, herd path 1 Burnt Knob, view across Batavia Kill Valley towards Blackhead Range
- J-3, herd path 2 Burnt Knob, view west towards project site
- J-4, herd path 3 Burnt Knob, view west towards project site
- J-5, trail between Burnt Knob and Windham High Peak, view towards site highly screened by foreground vegetation
- J-6, trail closer to Windham High Peak, view towards site highly screened by foreground vegetation
- J-7, Windham High Peak just off the trail, view towards site highly screened by foreground vegetation
- J-8, Windham Peak 2 on trail, view towards site highly screened by foreground vegetation
- J-9 Burnt Knob lookout just off trail, view towards site screened by foreground vegetation

It was possible to confirm that the views towards the project site from J-3 and J-4 were accurate because remnant snow was present on the upper trails of Windham Mountain located just to the west of the project site.

On the same day LA Group personnel visited the area around Colgate Lake. There are no views into the project site from the open field area around Colgate Lake.

Mount Hayden State Forest

On April 24, 2009 personnel from the LA Group accessed Mount Hayden State Forest via the section of Long Path Trail between the gate on Jennys Notch Road and the densely wooded southern slopes of Mount Hayden itself. Only a portion of this route is actually within the State Forest. Within the State Forest there is a relatively open area to the northeast of Lake Heloise. Leaf-off filtered views into Windham Mountain ski trails and the project site were taken from locations R-3 through R-6 that are shown on Figure 5, "Photo Locations Map". Leaf-on views from this location were also photographed on October 6, 2011.

Inventory Category 9: Scenic Highways

The two small sections of State-designated scenic highways in the northernmost part of the study area have views to the east and the north and not in the direction of the project site which is located to the south.

5. Description of Selected Viewpoints

In accordance with the project scoping document and consultations with the Lead Agency, 10 of the viewpoints analyzed during the April 2009 field study were chosen for assessment. The 10 viewpoints selected were:

1. J-3 – along the Escarpment Trail in NYS Forest Preserve.
2. R-4 – near the Long Path (hiking) Trail on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve).
3. T-18 – Church St. near the church (National Register Historic Site).
4. T-23 – South St. at Trailside Road.
5. T-27 – Route 23 westbound at Police Camp.
6. T-26 – Route 23 westbound near Pelham Lane.
7. T-15 – Route 23 eastbound near Settlement Rd.
8. K-12 – Route 296 at Cuomo's Cove.
9. K-1 - Maplecrest Rd. at Barnum Rd.
10. T-20 – Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Larsen Rd.

The locations of these viewpoints are shown on Figure 5, Photo Location Map. In accordance with the Final Scoping Document, these locations were confirmed by the Windham Planning Board at their September 15, 2011 meeting as being the appropriate locations to be examined in this VIA.

The rationale for choosing these locations and a description of the existing view from each of the locations are as follows. Photographs of existing conditions during leaf-off conditions follow the descriptions of the individual viewpoints and views (Figures VP#-EX-OFF). Leaf-on photographs are also included for a few of the viewpoints (VP2, VP3 and VP7) to demonstrate the seasonal differences in views due to screening by vegetation (VP#-EX-ON).

VP1: J-3 – along the Escarpment Trail in NYS Forest Preserve

Viewpoints J-3 and J-4 are the only locations on or near Forest Preserve hiking trails with an unobstructed view in the direction of the project. The viewpoints are just over 5 miles away from the project site. Views from the 2 locations are essentially identical. The view from J-3 includes the southwest end of Elm Ridge in the right foreground and flood control pond along the Batavia Kill in Maplecrest in the left middleground. Rooftops of some structures in and around Hensonville are visible as are some rooftops in the Batavia Kill Valley near the hamlet of Windham. Portions of some of the Ski Trails at Windham Mountain are also visible. It is the eastern portion of the project site that is visible from this vantage point.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
View Point 1 - along the Escarpment Trail in
NYS Forest Preserve
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP1-EX

VP2: R-4 - near the Long Path (hiking) Trail on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve)

Although not in Forest Preserve, and technically not on the NYSDEC Program Policy list of potentially sensitive resources, this viewpoint is located on lands of NYS and it contains a section of the Long Path Trail. It was felt that even though this location is not inside the Catskill Park blue line, the potential exists that views of hikers using the Long Path trail could be affected and that this viewpoint should be evaluated to determine to what degree this view could be affected by the project. The view from this location is screened by foreground vegetation, but there is a view into the project site and Windham Mountain when looking out from a relatively open area along the trail and over Lake Heloise located below the viewpoint. This view is almost entirely obscured during leaf-on conditions.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York

Title
View Point 2 - near the Long Path (hiking) Trail
on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve)
Existing View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP2-EX-OFF

VP3: T-18 - Church St. near the church (National Register Historic Site)

Church Street is the road that connects Main Street in Windham with South Street. Church Street provides a connection between the hamlet and Windham Mountain, and will provide a connection between the hamlet and the project. The photograph from VP3 is from in front of the Centre Presbyterian Church which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The view from this location includes the bridge over the Batavia Kill in the foreground along with the single story building to the left of and before the bridge. Wanderer ski trail is visible on the project site and the view is mainly into the mid-level and upper level elevations in the center portion of the site.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Existing View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077

Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-EX-OFF

VP4: T-23 – South St. at Trailside Road

This is an immediate foreground view into the site across the open field on that portion of the Cammer property south of South Street. South Street contains a mix of residential, commercial and recreational parcels and provides access to Windham Country Club to the east of the site and Windham Mountain to the west of the site. The section of South Street in front of the project site experiences high traffic volumes during the times when Windham Mountain ski area is operating. The view into the site is across the open field and up Trailside Road into the lower elevations of the very northern portion of the project site as well as the mid and upper elevations of the western part of the project site.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
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Title
View Point 4 - South St. at Trailside Road
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP4-EX

VP5: T-27 – Route 23 westbound at Police Camp

This view occurs just prior to arriving into the hamlet of Windham when traveling from the east, and has a view into the eastern and southeastern portion of the project site. This is currently agricultural land used for cutting hay, and the land slopes away from the road and in the direction of the site. This low vegetation and sloping topography produces the essentially unobstructed view into the eastern part of the project site. The roof of a building that appears to be located off of NY Route 296 is visible from this viewpoint, as is a small portion of the Wanderer ski trail.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
View Point 5 - Route 23 westbound at Police Camp
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP5-EX

VP6: T-26 – Route 23 westbound near Pelham Lane

This is the first sustained view into Cave Mountain when traveling west on NY Route 23. There is an initial view further east near Point Lookout, but it is very brief. This viewpoint is approximately 2 miles from the project site, and the view is down the highway corridor into the east end of the project site. The view includes some foreground residential buildings, including some of the Crystal Pond townhouses (just beyond where the road turns to the right and out of view). A portion of Wanderer ski trail is also visible in this view.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
View Point 6 - Route 23 westbound near Pelham Lane
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP6-EX

VP7: T-15 – Route 23 eastbound near Christman’s Valley Golf and Settlement Rd.

Visibility into the project site from NY Route 23 eastbound is fairly limited, and this viewpoint shows the best study area view into the site from this direction. Some of the upper trails on Windham Mountain are visible in the photo from this viewpoint, but the site to the east is mostly screened by nearby structures and vegetation. Screening of views into the site is more pronounced when leaves are on the trees in the foreground of the photo.



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Title
View Point 7 - Route 23 eastbound near
Christman's Valley Golf and Settlement Rd.
Existing View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP7-EX-OFF

VP8: K-12 – Route 296 at Cuomo’s Cove

This is the viewpoint along NY Route 296 from which the site is most visible. There are some views into the site closer to the middle of Hensonville, but building mass in the hamlet usually blocks most of the views from these locations (i.e. locations K9 and K11 in Table 2 and Figure 5). The view from this viewpoint is of the southeast portion of the project site with the Cuomo’s Cove office/residence building in the foreground.



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Title
View Point 8 - Route 296 at Cuomo's Cove
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP8-EX

VP9: K-1 - Maplecrest Rd. at Barnum Rd.

This appears to be the best location for a view into the project site in and around the hamlet of Maplecrest and the County Route 40 corridor. The view is actually from Barnum Road heading downhill towards County Route 40. The view is limited by intervening vegetation to the upper portion of the southeast portion of the project site. Other locations in and around Maplecrest (K2, K3, K4 and K5) have no views into the project site.



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Title
View Point 9 - Maplecrest Rd. at Barnum Rd.
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP9-EX

VP10: T-20 – Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Larsen Rd.

This viewpoint was chosen to be representative of locations where views into the project site are possible from the northern part of the study area. There were 3 locations along Mitchell Hollow Road where views into the site are possible (T9, T20 and T21), and T20 was chosen because of its combination of elevation and distance provides the best view into the site. The view from this viewpoint includes much of Windham Mountain and the western part of the project site.



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Title
View Point 10 - Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Larsen Rd.
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP10-EX

The selected viewpoints represent foreground, middleground and background views as follows.

Table 3. Landscape Position of Selected Viewpoints

Foreground Views (0 – ½ mile)
1. VP3: T18 Church Street - <1/2 mile
2. VP4: T23 South Street - <1/2 mile
Middleground views (1/2 – 3 miles)
1. VP5: T27 Police Camp – 1 mile
2. VP6: T26 Route 23 near Pelham – 2 miles
3. VP7: T15 Route 23 near Christman's – 1.5 miles
4. VP8: K12 Cuomo's Cove – ¾ mile
5. VP9: K1 Maplecrest – 2.5 miles
6. VP10:T20 Mitchell Hollow – 2.5 miles
Background Views (>3 miles)
1. VP1: J3- Windham High Peak – 5.5 miles
2. VP-4: R4 – Long Path Trail – 3.75 miles

6. Evaluation of Potential Impacts (Methodology)

The evaluation of potential visual impacts incorporated the following:

- photographs into the site from the specified viewpoints;
- a 3-dimensional model of the existing project site and the project site plans that included buildings and proposed clearing limits; and
- current preliminary architectural plans/renderings of the proposed buildings.

A. Site Photographs

GPS coordinates were recorded at the locations from which photographs were taken. This provides a precise position of the observer and the affected view. Almost all photographs were taken with Canon Rebel XTi digital SLR cameras. The photographs used in the VIA are for a lens setting of 50 mm as per the project scoping document (page 27). Data sheets were completed at all photo locations.

B. Building the 3-Dimensional Model

General

The project site plans that are included with the DEIS are created using software that works in three dimensions, the “x” and “y” planes which, generally speaking, are north-south and east-west dimensions respectively, along with the “z” plane, or “z” dimension, which is the vertical dimension.

With these spatial capabilities it is possible to electronically build a model of the existing conditions, much the same way as someone physically building a display model would use the same three-dimensional information. Once the model of existing conditions is built, it is “draped” over the image in the photographs to insure an accurate fit. For example, the clearing limits of the Wanderer ski trail are located on the existing conditions plan. Using the “x” and “y” layout of the ski trails along with the “z” dimension (elevation) of ski trail, it is possible to accurately fit the drape of the entire project site over the landform. Once this drape is set it is possible to accurately create a view into the site from any view location, due to the 3-dimensional capabilities of the software.

A model of the proposed conditions can be developed in the same way. The proposed conditions include building footprints (“x” and “y”) along with their heights (“z”). Similarly, clearing limits are defined by their outlines and the height of the remaining vegetation that is specified and incorporated into the model of the proposed conditions.

The graphics included in Section 7 of this VIA include the model developed for each viewpoint under leaf-off conditions (VP#-MOD-OFF). Each model is draped over the existing condition photograph. Bright colors are used to accentuate the proposed tree lines to remain as well as the visible ground floor, and these bright areas are then rendered (see C. below) to create the actual simulation of the view of the developed condition.

Technical

The building of the models used in the VIA were done in accordance with the methodology spelled out in the Final Scoping Document, Section V.11.

AutoDesk Land Desktop and AutoCAD software were used to create a 3-D wire frame model by taking all 2-dimensionally accurate site plan information included in the site plan drawings such as existing and proposed contours, locations of tree clearings, locations of buildings, etc. and incorporating known and given elevations to each component to generate an accurate 3-dimensional model that can be viewed from any angle and location.

Surveyed 3-dimensionally accurate topographic information was utilized to create a model of the existing 3-dimensional landform. The proposed grading was incorporated into the existing landform model by assigning elevations to all proposed contours, then tying them into the existing landform to create the proposed landform model, or ground plane surface. The proposed tree clearing and vegetation to remain was represented by isolating the 2-dimensional polygon on the proposed site plan that represents all vegetation to remain. The part of the 3-dimensional landform model that is within the vegetation polygon was copied to create a surface that will represent the tops of the trees and relates to the existing topography. This surface was given an elevation above the ground plane based on existing tree heights, and then vertical faces were created that connect the tree top surface to the ground plane. This created the 3-dimensional polygon that represents trees to remain.

The proposed buildings located in 2-dimensions on the site plans were transformed into 3-D models. The 3-D building models were then given elevations that correspond to the proposed finish floor elevation indicated on the grading plans. The GPS coordinates at the locations of the photographs that capture the views to be simulated were incorporated into the AutoCAD file that contains the site plan and the 3-D model, so the photo locations were horizontally and vertically accurate within the context of the site plan and the AutoCAD file. The digital image of the proposed conditions was created and saved using AutoCAD, which is a “snapshot” of the 3-D model from each specific photo location.

C. Producing Renderings of the Proposed Conditions

In the section that follows, each viewpoint is illustrated (1) in its existing condition, (2) in the existing condition with the aforementioned 3-dimensional models fitted in their proper locations, and (3) in the proposed condition, or the visual simulation.

In going from the models to the visual simulations it is necessary to “render” the elements that will be visible in the simulation. Rendering is simply the process of adding color and texture to the visible elements. In order to produce the renderings, the following techniques were used.

- The project buildings were rendered using a specific earth tone color taken from renderings of buildings representative of those that will be constructed as part of the project. This color was chosen as a realistic representative exterior building color, **however**, while the applicant is committed to using earth tones for building exteriors in order to mitigate potential visual impacts (see the mitigation measures in section 7.B of this VIA), they are not committed to using the exact color/shade used in the visual simulations.
- Where views of ground surfaces exist the colors used for the ground surface in the simulations are the same as the color for similar ground floor areas from the existing conditions photographs.
- Similarly, the colors and textures of the proposed tree lines were taken directly from the tree lines in the existing conditions view.

Technical

Simulations were prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Final Scoping Document as follows.

Adobe Photoshop graphic software was used to transpose the digital snapshot of the proposed conditions over the existing conditions photograph of the same view. Features and/or landform within the digital snapshots were aligned with the features and/or landform within the existing condition photograph to position the overlay as accurately as possible. Elements of the proposed condition shown in the digital snapshot that are anticipated to be screened from view due to intervening foreground vegetation or topography were then removed from the view. The model of the proposed condition was then rendered as needed with appropriate colors and textures. The final results are the simulations that represent the views of the proposed condition, while maintaining the context of the existing surroundings.

7. Results – Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures

A. Results

The following are descriptions of how the views into the project site are expected to change as a result of the project being built as per the plans included in this DEIS. Following the description of each viewpoint are figures based on the 50 mm photographs, and these include existing conditions, the wireframe models, and the rendered simulations for the viewpoints.

VP1: J-3 – along the Escarpment Trail in NYS Forest Preserve

This view is from within the Windham Blackhead Range Wilderness Area, formerly Blackhead Range and North Mountain Wild Forests, and portions of Windham High Peak and Black Dome Valley Wild Forests (CPSLMP, August 2008).

The view was obtained by actively searching out views towards the project site located 5 to 6 miles to the west when hiking on the Escarpment Trail between Acra Point and Windham High Peak. In addition to the marked trail itself, herd paths leading off of the trail to the west were also investigated for potential views towards the project site. This view is from the end of one of those herd paths. There are no views into the project site from the actual designated hiking trails in this area.

Along this section of trail there are 8 viewpoint locations identified on the New York New Jersey Trail Conference map. This is consistent with the 1994 Unit Management Plan (page 20) for the then-called Windham High Peaks Wild Forest unit that lists a total of 9 scenic vistas, one of which is listed as the parking area on NY Route 23 in East Windham. (Note: NYSDEC's website (http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html#A-Z_UMP_Index) lists the 1994 UMP for the Windham High Peaks Wild Forest as the UMP for the Windham Blackhead Range Wilderness Area.) The January 2009 Elm Ridge Wild Forest UMP Amendment to the 1994 Windham High Peaks UMP also lists this parking area (and no others) as viewpoints within the unit. Included in the scenic vistas listed in the 1994 Windham High Peaks UMP are "views of the Catskill Valley and Albany City to the north."

Elements of the project will be visible from this location, and these elements include Transport Lift B, the East Lodge, and numerous residential buildings (primarily roofs) both to the southeast of the East Lodge and to the northwest of the Lodge. While these elements will be within the view it will be very difficult to discern what they are from this viewpoint that is over 5 miles away. This is very similar to the existing development to the right of the project in the view – you can tell that there is something in the view in the Batavia Kill valley in Windham, but you can't tell what it is.

Because of the distance between the viewpoint and the project, the change in this view as a result of the project borders on imperceptible, and is not considered to be significant.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
View Point 1 - along the Escarpment Trail in
NYS Forest Preserve
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP1-EX



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Model View

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Figure:
VP1-MOD



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NYS Forest Preserve
Simulated View

Project: 08077
Date: 11/03/2011

Figure:
VP1-SIM

VP2: R-4 - near the Long Path (hiking) Trail on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve)

The view into the project is partially screened by foreground tree branches during leaf-off conditions and the view is totally screened during leaf-on conditions. In the leaf-off simulation some of the lower elevation units are visible as is development higher up on the site that includes the Members' Lodge and Clubhouse, Transport Lift A, the nearby townhouse units, and some of the single-family homes extending out to the east. Note that these structures will not appear out of context as almost all of the trails and lifts at Windham Mountain will also be within this view. Because of the distance between the viewpoint and the project, 3.75 miles, the seasonal nature of the availability of the view, and the currently developed context within the view, the change in the view as a result of the project is not considered to be significant.



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Title
View Point 2 - near the Long Path (hiking) Trail
on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve)
Existing View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP2-EX-OFF



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Existing View - Leaf-On Conditions

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Figure:
VP2-EX-ON



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View Point 2 - near the Long Path (hiking) Trail
on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve)
Model View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP2-MOD-OFF



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Simulated View - Leaf-Off Conditions

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Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP2-SIM-OFF



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View Point 2 - near the Long Path (hiking) Trail
on NYS lands (non-Forest Preserve)
Simulated View - Leaf-On Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP2-SIM-ON

VP3: T-18 - Church St. near the church (National Register Historic Site)

Elements of the project that will be visible from this location are Transport Lift A near the “Why Not” trail in the upper right hand side of the view, the Members’ Lodge and Clubhouse and the townhouse units to the east. These structures are of significant size, but the changes in the roof lines and the articulations of the buildings, along with earth-tone colors, soften the visibility of these structures. During leaf-on conditions the added texture of the surroundings further softens the visibility. The overhead utilities in the foreground also break up the view.

Roofs of a few of the project’s single family homes will also be visible. Some of the rooflines on the left side of the view barely break above the existing tree line. Over time it is expected that with the cessation of logging on the property, the treeline height in these areas will increase and trees will backdrop these structures.

Having structures in the viewshed from this location is not something new. A series of photographs looking out in different directions from this same viewpoint are presented after the simulations on the pages that follow. Surrounding uses and buildings are commercial and residential along the Main Street and Church Street corridors.

The project will introduce some additional significant structures into the view from this viewpoint. However, it is believed that these additional structures will not significantly impact the overall view from this viewpoint given the currently developed nature of its surroundings.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
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Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Existing View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-EX-OFF



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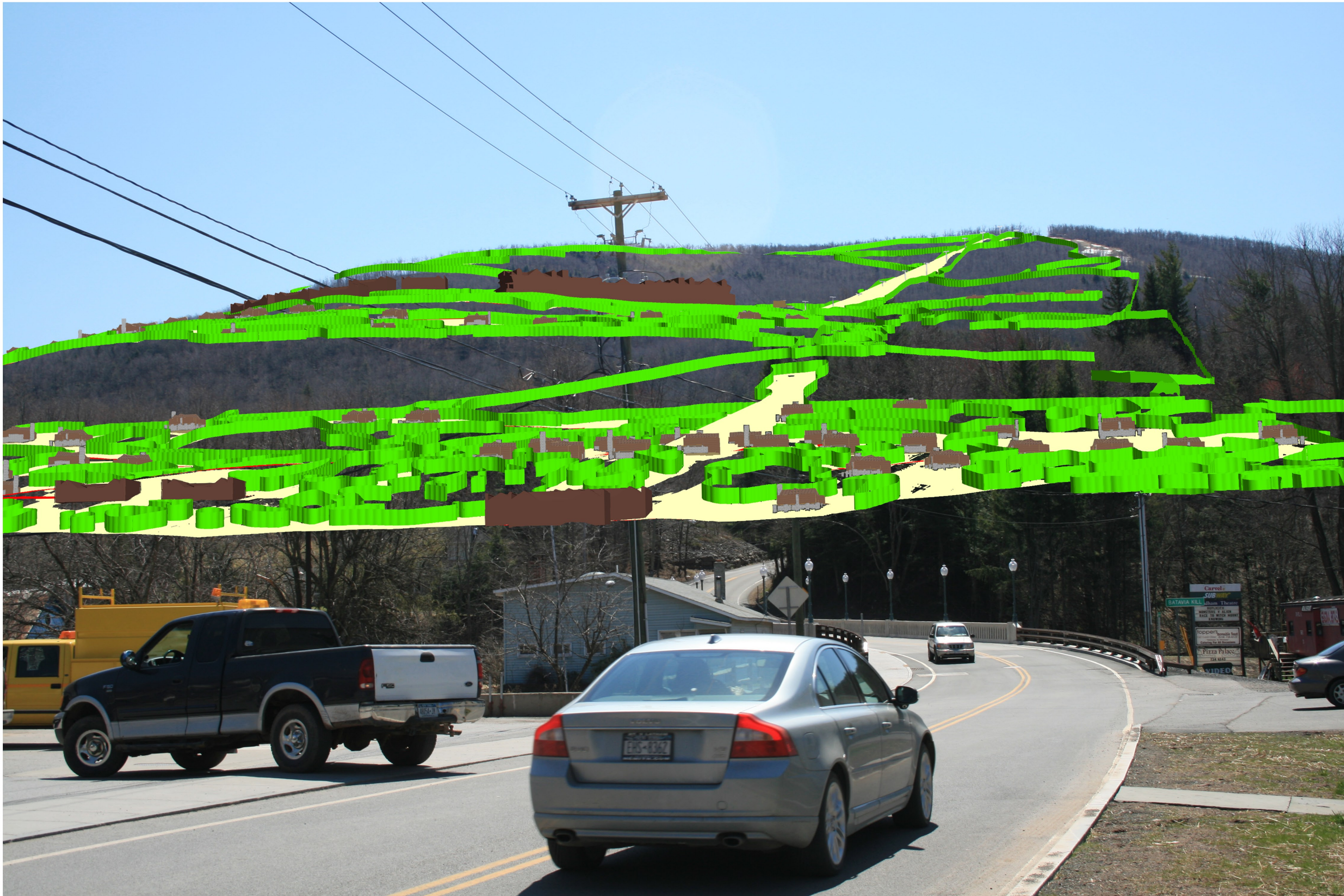
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Existing View - Leaf-On Conditions

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Figure:
VP3-EX-ON



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Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Model View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-MOD



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Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Simulated View - Leaf-Off Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-SIM-OFF



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Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Simulated View - Leaf-On Conditions

Project: 08077

Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-SIM-ON



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
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Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Surroundings

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-SUR1



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Title
View Point 3 - Church St. near the church
Surroundings

Project: 08077

Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP3-SUR2

VP4: T-23 – South St. at Trailside Road

As expected, project components in the west side of the project will be visible from South Street because of its proximity and because of the unobstructed views into parts of the site. The townhouses are closest in the right-center of the view. Behind them are some of the single family homes located off of Sheridan Drive. To the left in the view are some of the duplex units near Panarama Lane, and above them are some additional single family homes. The Members' Lodge and Clubhouse and the very upper portions of the townhouse buildings to the east are visible higher up the hill, as is a portion of Transport Lift A as it runs up the hill towards the "Why Not" trail visible in the view. None of the upper buildings extend above the existing treeline and all are backdropped by vegetation.

Also within the view is an existing single family home on Two Trees Lane (left side of the view) and the roofs of some existing homes on Twin Maples Lane (right side of the view above the project's single-family homes).

This view probably exaggerates to some degree what drivers and passengers will actually observe when traveling on South Street. The view into the site from South Street shown in the following graphics is perpendicular to the direction of travel, not in the direction of travel.

The project will result in a significant change in the view from this viewpoint, but the change will be consistent with existing development and currently approved, but not yet constructed, development on the South Street corridor and adjacent to Windham Mountain. The change will also be consistent with the Town's land use planning. As the Town Board has noted, "As part of our SEQRA Findings on the Generic Environmental Impact Statement the Town Board determined that the construction of new residential units in the vicinity of South Street (Co. Rte. 12) is a critical component to the sustainability of the community." (letter from Windham Town Board to Windham Planning Board, April 6, 2011).



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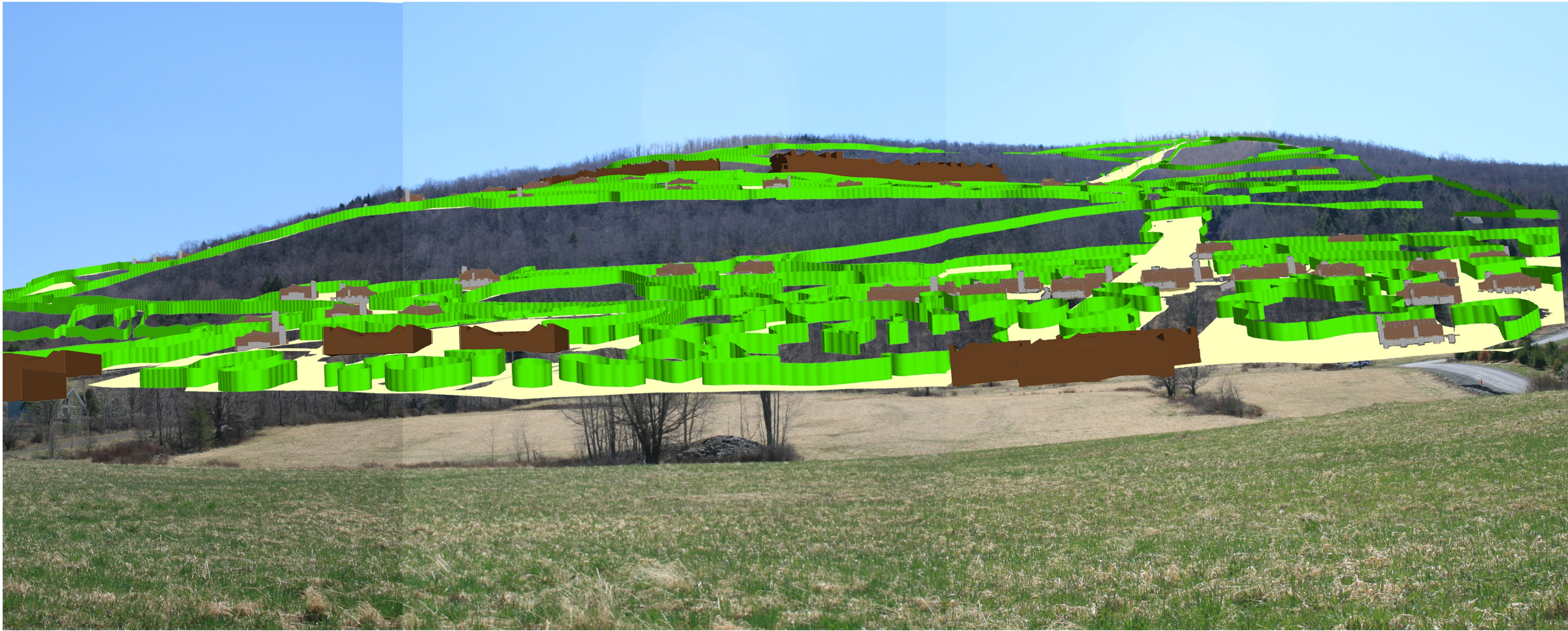
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Title
View Point 4 - South St. at Trailside Road
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP4-EX



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Title
View Point 4 - South St. at Trailside Road
Model View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP4-MOD



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Title
View Point 4 - South St. at Trailside Road
Simulated View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP4-SIM

VP5: T-27 – Route 23 Westbound at Police Camp

The view from this viewpoint includes a fairly good portion of the project site and project development components. However, because of the orientation and elevation of the viewpoint relative to the project, for the most part, it is only the roofs of some of the project components that are visible. The upper floor of the East Lodge is visible in the left side of the view as are the sides of a few single family homes towards the center of the view. Some of the townhouses located east of the Members' Lodge and Clubhouse have their building sides just to the left of the telephone pole in this view. For the most part the visible elements are the roofs of single family homes. The effectiveness of using earth tones for roof materials is evidenced in this view via the contrast between the simulated roofs of the project homes and the bright/reflective roof of the existing home located lower on the slope in the left side of the view on what appears to be the adjacent Maliadis property.

A portion of Transport Lift B is visible as is the bend in the Wanderer trail which is where this lift will offload skiers.

None of the project elements in the view extend above the ridgeline, and most are well below.

This view from Route 23 occurs as people are arriving in the hamlet of Windham. Based on video taken during the field work for the VIA, approximately 15 seconds later when driving on Route 23 and looking in the direction that the VP-5 photo was taken, one gets a clear view into the red roof of Windham Mountain Outfitters as well as the plaza across NY Route 296. In another 15 seconds one has a view into the Thompson House, Albergo Allegría, and their surroundings and the upper slopes of Windham Mountain prior to reaching the Route 296 bridge and entering into downtown Windham. The view into the project from VP-5 extends the duration of the view and sense of arrival time when coming into Windham from the east, but the view is not inconsistent with the destination-oriented character one gradually experiences when arriving in Windham from the east on NY Route 23.

The construction of the project would thus alter the existing view of travelers along Route 23 by making several of the project's structures visible. The visibility of the project has been mitigated to the maximum extent practicable, as described in section 7.B. below.



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Title
View Point 5 - Route 23 westbound at Police Camp
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP5-EX



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Title
View Point 5 - Route 23 westbound at Police Camp
Model View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP5-MOD



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Title
View Point 5 - Route 23 westbound at Police Camp
Simulated View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP5-SIM

VP6: T-26 – Route 23 westbound near Pelham Lane

The view from this viewpoint, also from NY Route 23, and approximately 2 miles from the project site, will include project elements in the eastern part of the project including the East Lodge, Transport Lift B and some single family homes (primarily roofs). The view is down NY Route 23 and includes existing residential development, including the Crystal Pond townhomes in the left center of the photograph. With the exception of the transport lift that connects with the Wanderer trail, a portion of which is visible in the center of the photograph, all of the visible project elements appear at a relatively low elevation on the Cave Mountain landform.

This view is experienced approximately 1 ½ minutes before the previously described VP-5 at the entrance to the hamlet of Windham. Between the two locations viewers pass by Crystal Pond and the Quads, second home residential developments along NY Route 23. Similar to VP-5, the view from VP-6 slightly extends the time period when one starts to gain the sense of arrival into the destination character of Windham, but it is not significantly out of character given the context of the existing second home developments east of the hamlet.

The construction of the project would thus alter the existing view of travelers along Route 23 by making several of the project's structures visible. The visibility of the project has been mitigated to the maximum extent practicable, as described in section 7.B. below.



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The Windham Mountain Sporting Club
Town of Windham, Greene County, New York
Title
View Point 6 - Route 23 westbound near Pelham Lane
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/27/2011

Figure:
VP6-EX



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Figure:
VP6-MOD



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Figure:
VP6-SIM

VP7: T-15 – Route 23 eastbound near Christman’s Valley Golf and Settlement Rd.

The western portion of the project will be visible during leaf-on conditions but will be screened by intervening foreground vegetation. A portion of Transport Lift A leading up to the “Why Not” ski trail visible in the photo (along with the Wing’n It, Wicked and Wedgie ski trails) will be visible in the break in the foreground treeline. The view of project elements will be fully blocked during leaf-on conditions. The change in view, even during leaf-off conditions, is not considered to be significant given the screened nature of the view and the context of the existing ski trails as well as foreground structures.



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View Point 7 - Route 23 eastbound near
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Existing View - Leaf-Off Conditions

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Figure:
VP7-EX-OFF



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Existing View - Leaf-On Conditions

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP7-EX-ON



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Figure:
VP7-MOD



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Figure:
VP7-SIM-OFF



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Figure:
VP7-SIM-ON

VP8: K-12 – Route 296 at Cuomo’s Cove

Almost no elements of the project will be visible from this viewpoint. A few residential roofs may be partially visible as will a section of Transport Lift B. Due to the very limited nature of project visibility and the developed context of the foreground of this view, the change in view will be insignificant from this section of NY Route 296.



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Title
View Point 8 - Route 296 at Cuomo's Cove
Existing View

Project: 08077
Date: 10/28/2011

Figure:
VP8-EX



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Figure:
VP8-MOD



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Figure:
VP8-SIM

VP9: K-1 - Maplecrest Rd. at Barnum Rd.

During leaf-off conditions the view from this viewpoint will include the East Lodge, Transport Lift B and some of the residential development in the eastern portion of the project site. Based upon the branching configurations of the foreground trees, it is expected that this view will be highly screened, if not almost entirely blocked, during leaf-on conditions. Nonetheless, during leaf-off conditions the change in this view is not considered to be significant due to the small size of the project elements as viewed from this distance (2.5 miles), and also because the duration of this view is expected to be very short for drivers and passengers traveling down Barnum Road before making the sharp downhill right hand turn in the left side of this view. As stated previously, other locations in and around Maplecrest (K2, K3, K4 and K5 on Figure 5) have no views into the project site.



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View Point 9 - Maplecrest Rd. at Barnum Rd.
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Figure:
VP9-EX



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Figure:
VP9-MOD



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Figure:
VP9-SIM

VP10: T-20 – Mitchell Hollow Rd. near Larsen Rd.

In the simulation from this viewpoint, Transport Lift A is the most evident component of the development that will be visible, since it is directly in line with the angle of the view. Also within this view are the Members' Lodge and Clubhouse and a few residential roofs. This view is in the context of all but the easternmost trails and lifts on Windham Mountain. This change in view is not considered significant given the limited amount of project elements that will be visible and the context of the existing view.



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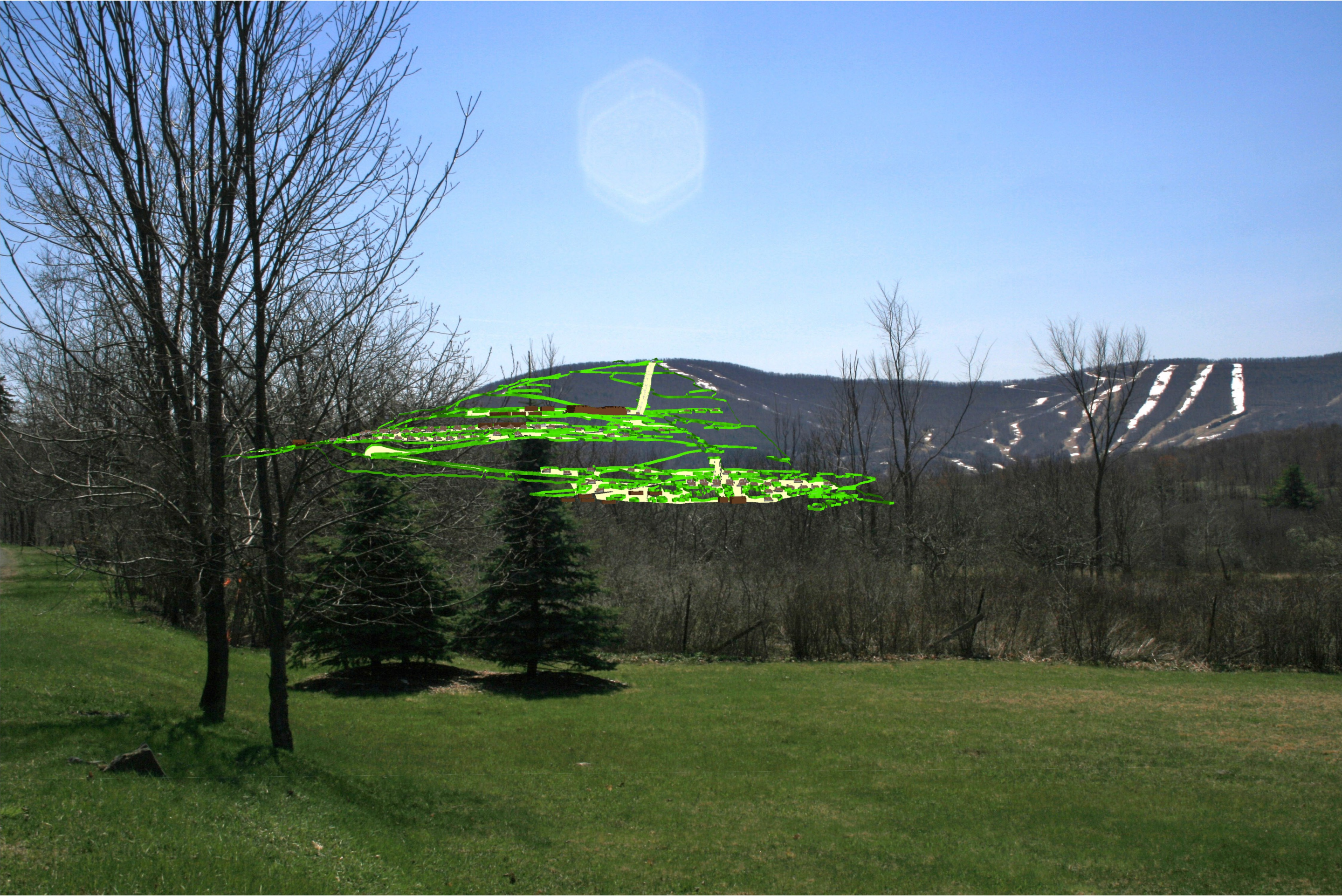
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Figure:
VP10-EX



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Figure:
VP10-MOD



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Figure:
VP10-SIM

B. Mitigation Measures

The following restrictions come from the Architectural Review Board Design Guidelines, and provide measures to mitigate potential visual impacts.

1. Careful preservation of existing vegetation is one of the most important considerations of the ARB.
2. In selecting the “footprint” (geometrical boundary) of a new house and other improvements or of an addition to an existing home, Owners and their architects are strongly urged to minimize the removal of large massings of existing vegetation and minimize overall environmental intrusion on site.
3. All areas to be protected shall be appropriately marked and fenced for review with the ARB prior to start of construction. No clear cutting of trees will be permitted within any building envelope.
4. No construction activity or clearing and grubbing shall occur until the applicant’s final Construction Documents have been approved in writing by the ARB and any conditions of approval have been fulfilled.
5. There are three Landscape Zones on each Lot. Zones 1 and 2 are within the Building Envelope. Zone 3 is outside of the Building Envelope and within defined setbacks identified on the Final Plats. Owners may remove up to 20% of the total number of existing trees (in excess of 6 inch caliper) within these areas to provide selective views from the primary residence subject to review and approval by the ARB.
6. In Zones 1 and 2 no trees with a 4-inch or larger diameter measured at a height of eighteen inches above ground level (“protected tree”) may be removed without specific approval from the ARB.
7. Unauthorized removal or cutting of trees is subject to fines and requirement to replace said tree with another of same type and size at the discretion of the ARB.
8. Limited areas of turf planting (maximum of 1,000 square feet in size) may be allowed by the ARB if the proposed areas are limited in size and screened from off-site views.
9. All site drainage and grading must be done with the goal of minimum disruption to the lot and adjoining lots. Excessive cut and fill is discouraged.

10. A schematic grading, erosion control and drainage plan shall be submitted with the plans submission in order to provide the ability to review the site work in association with the building plans. The primary reason to incorporate site grading is to help provide screening for enhanced landscape zones.
11. All utility extensions must be underground.
12. No single-family, townhouse, or duplex residential structure shall exceed forty (40) feet above finished grade, as measured at any point on the lot from existing grade straight up to the ridge line.
13. Building designs should provide for changing wall planes and roof forms to give diversity and visual interest and to assist in conforming to existing natural slopes. Every attempt should be made to minimize the actual and visual impact of the residence.
14. All exterior lighting shall be conservative in design, with a low intensity concealed bulb that is shielded to direct the light downward to minimize glare. All exterior lighting shall be “dark sky” compliant.
15. It is important that all roof materials be of a color that blends naturally with its setting. All roofing materials and colors are subject to approval by the ARB.
16. Only timber, logs, horizontal or vertical wood siding (individual boards), shingles, board and batten, native rock (appropriately colored), and stone shall be used for exterior finishes.
17. Exterior wall colors shall harmonize with the site and immediately-surrounding natural landscape at all times, with the maximum low light-reflective value as determined by the ARB. The Residence color shall be warm, earthy hues—the colors of the forest—whether in the natural patina or weathered color of the wall surface itself, or in the color of the paint, stain, or other coating. In general, darker colors shall prevail.
18. Interior window treatments, decorative or for the purpose of privacy or sun shielding, shall take into consideration the exterior view of the structure. Contrasting color, when viewed from outside the structure, should be avoided. Reflective materials will not be allowed.

8. Summary and Conclusions

The Windham Mountain Sporting Club project is proposed in the Town of Windham on the lower elevations of Cave Mountain just to the east of Windham Mountain Ski Area. The project site is located on the south side of the Batavia Kill Valley which is the defining topographic/geographic feature in the five mile study area used in the VIA.

Digital elevation modeling was used to create zones of visibility mapping for the built project, and views into the project site were taken from numerous locations during leaf-off conditions in April 2009 based on this mapping. Views towards the project site were photographed from 69 locations. A total of 10 of these locations were selected in conjunction with the Windham Planning Board to be used for simulations of the built condition. The ten locations included views from the Escarpment Trail in State Forest Preserve and the Long Path on State (non-Forest Preserve) lands, the view from the Center Street Church which is a Historic Register Site, and roads in the study area that represent foreground, middleground, and background views. Photo locations also included views from in and around the hamlets of Windham, Hensonville and Maplecrest, as well as from NY Route 23, South Street and Mitchell Hollow Road.

The visibility of the project varies in the viewpoints that were analyzed. In many instances intervening vegetation and/or distance limit project visibility, and this limited visibility is eliminated at some of the viewpoints during leaf-on conditions. In some instance some of the project elements are quite visible from viewpoints. Even though project elements are visible from these viewpoints, it is not believed that the project will result in significant visual impact when the views are considered in the context of the existing viewshed, surrounding land uses, and the Town's land planning goals expressed in its recently completed GEIS.

A number of measures will be implemented in order to mitigate potential visual impacts. These measures are enforceable through the implementation of the Architectural Review Board's adherence to its Design Guidelines during their detailed process for reviewing and approving project buildings.