

THE WOODS AT WEST MOUNTAIN PLANNED RESORT DEVELOPMENT
SUGGESTED PART 3 NARRATIVE TO BE INCLUDED IN PART 3B
PART 3

Three of the Part 2, EAF Questions were responded to with a “Yes”, they are:

- Question 1 – Impact on Land,
- Question 3 – Impact on Surface Waters, and
- Question 9 – Impact on Aesthetic Resources.

While potential adverse impact to these resources may occur due to the proposed project, any such impacts will be avoided and/or substantially minimized as follows due to project mitigation measures which are proposed by the applicant and/or required by the Town of Queensbury Planning Board, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and/or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

QUESTION 1 – IMPACT ON LAND

- **Sub-Questions “b” pertains to actions that may involve construction on slopes of 15% or greater.**

Analysis of this issue that was provided in Part 2 recognized the fact that some portions of the project will occur on slopes of 15% or greater. Specifically, most such slopes are on the mid-elevations of the site approximately between 500 and 650 MSL. The proposed access roadway traverses this area, and several home sites are located on areas where such slopes are present. However, the access roadway has been carefully routed to avoid such slopes wherever possible. Additionally, while individual subdivision lots may possess some areas of such slopes, each such lot has suitable land areas with lesser slopes where driveways, houses, and amenities are proposed, thereby, avoiding slopes of 15% or greater.

Most important, however, the proposed project is subject to review and approval of an “Individual Stormwater Permit” by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The project grading and drainage plan, stormwater management plan, erosion and sediment control plan, and construction details will be subject to an extensive review by the DEC. The review must conclude that the DEC is prepared to issue the “Individual Stormwater Permit” for the project. In doing so, the DEC recognizes that appropriate mitigative measures, site planning, and engineering have been employed to avoid and/or substantially minimize any significant adverse environmental impacts on land, otherwise, the permit will not be a candidate for issuance.

- **Sub-Question e. The proposed action may involve construction that continues for more than one year or in multiple phases.**

The Five Phase Project is anticipated to be implemented over a 10± year period. However, the Phase 1 Project which includes the Base Area Alpine Village with apartments and condominiums, new ski lift, parking and miscellaneous outdoor amenities and the Phase 2 Project which includes the duplex townhouse cluster and boutique hotel/conference center constitute over 80% of the proposed construction. The Phase 1 Project will be substantially completed in one year.

The remainder of the project, Phases 3, 4 and 5, include exclusively single family residences. These phases are subject to build-out as market demands. The Phase 3, 4 and 5 Project areas are on the mountain and substantially away from any surrounding existing residential uses to the east of West Mountain Road. Distance will effectively buffer these areas from any construction activities in these phases. Additionally, not all of the proposed 64 new single family homes will be constructed in any one year. As such, the construction of only several homes at any one time will occur and will essentially include normal light activities as is normal for any other subdivision in the Town of Queensbury.

QUESTION 3 - IMPACTS ON SURFACE WATER

- **Sub-Question d. The proposed action may involve construction within or adjoining a freshwater or tidal wetland, or in the bed or banks of any other water body.**

Analysis of this issue that was provided in Part 2 recognized that two water features have been reported to exist on the project site, a Federal Wetland and a NYSDEC Regulated Stream (DEC No. 941-397).

As stated in Part 2, the Federal Wetland is “isolated” in that it has no surface water inlet or outlet, nor is it attached to or proximate to another wetland that is regulated. Isolated wetlands have been de-regulated as being jurisdictional by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The wetland is also not regulated by the NYS DEC. Therefore, any proposed activities, such as excavation, filling, etc., do not require a permit and are exempt from such jurisdiction or regulation.

Stream No. 941-397 is a Class C(T) water body and is regulated by the NYS DEC. Review of the original 1”=200’ scale Concept Plan for the Woods at West Mountain illustrated infringement on the stream corridor by the parking lot for the Base Area Alpine Village. As such, a stream disturbance permit from the NYSDEC would have been required.

As stated in Part 2, following initial Town Planning Board review of the preliminary project plans which identified this issue, the applicant and Studio A Landscape Architecture and Engineering prepared more detailed plans for the parking lot area at a scale of 1”=40’. This allowed for an accurate re-design of the Base Area Alpine Village parking lot. The revised design maintains the stream corridor as an “open channel.”

The potential for DEC wetland permits remains but only for two vehicular stream crossings which can be accomplished by a short bridge or pipe arch culvert. Additionally, the main access road from West Mountain Road to the Phase 2, 3 and 4 areas will need to be encased in a pipe. However, the stream at this point is already partially encased in a pipe and only in need of a short extension. Two foot bridges are also proposed over the stream to provide access from a parking lot to one of the apartment buildings. The above mentioned bridges can be accomplished without impacting the bed or banks of the stream.

In addition, the open channel stream corridor through the parking lot will be landscaped with plant materials indigenous to the area and wet stream corridors.

The above re-design will both preserve the integrity of the stream corridor as well as require only minimal permits from the NYSDEC. Setbacks from the stream, as may be required by the Town for adjacent parking lot construction, can also be maintained.

QUESTION 9 – IMPACT ON AESTHETIC RESOURCES

- Sub-Questions “a,” “c,” “d,” and “e” explore issues of potential visibility of the project from designated scenic resources, public vantage points, the situation or activity in which viewers are engaged while viewing the proposed action, and whether usability of the proposed action may diminish public enjoyment and appreciation of the designated resource.

Analysis of this issue that was presented in Part 2 recognized the fact that some portions of the project in Phases 3,4 and 5 may be visible from limited, distant areas to the east of the project site. Designated historic resources are noted to exist along the Hudson River in the vicinity of Hudson Falls and Fort Edward (see attached map). All of these resources are at, or very near, the five mile limit of visibility. This constitutes the “Far,” or “Background” view where objects, at 3 to 5 miles become less discernable to the human eye. In addition, views to West Mountain from these designated resources are, as noted in the Part 2 discussion, blocked by intervening vegetation, topography, and/or development (buildings, etc.).

Several recreation resources are also noted to exist to the east of the project site east of the Northway I-87 according to the Town of Queensbury “Open Space Vision” and include Hovey Pond, Crandall Park, Coles Woods, Bid Cedar Swamp and the Feder Canal Trail. Again, as noted in Part 2, views to the site from these vantage points are either blocked by vegetation, topography, and/or development.

It should also be noted that the project site is zoned RC (Recreation Commercial). PRD’s (Planned Resort Development) are an allowed use in the RC Zone District and are intended to include a mix of recreational, commercial, and residential uses.

As such, the proposed Woods at West Mountain Resort is designed so that +/-80% of the actual development is located at the base of the mountain and below elevation +/-500 MSL. There is no potential for these areas of the site to be visible from any of the above mentioned historic recreational or aesthetic resources since the views to the site are blocked by either vegetation, topography or existing built conditions.

The Phase 3 and 4 portions of the project consist of single family homes from elevation 500 to 750+/- MSL. Again, these portions of the proposed project site will not be visible from the above mentioned aesthetic resources due to intervening vegetation and existing off-site built conditions.

No clear cutting to establish views will be allowed. A filtered view development plan will be prepared during Site Plan Review for the Phase 3 and 4 areas that will be the basis for any tree pruning and removals. This plan will be incorporated into deed restrictions and covenants that will be included in the Homeowners Association Agreement for the project.

The Phase 5 development area consists of 15 single family home lots (1 lot has an existing building). All of these lots are located below the West Mountain Ridge Line with potential houses at an elevation below the ridge line elevation so that no roof line will exceed the ridge line height. Of these 14 potential house sites, 11 are on the west facing slope of the ridge line (facing away from Glens Falls) and 4 are on the east facing slope (1 already built on). None of

the above potential home structures will protrude above the ridge line as viewed from the east. In addition, vegetation clearing restrictions, as discussed above, will allow for the structures to be well buffered from view from off-site receptors.

The proposed use will, therefore, will be buffered and/or not be visible from any officially or unofficially designated federal, state historic or local scenic, recreational, or aesthetic resources.

QUESTION 5 – IMPACT ON FLOODING

While Question 5 – Impact on Flooding, was suggested to be responded to with a “No”, the Town of Queensbury Planning Board at their meeting on April 10, 2025, approved a resolution to “Make Favorable Recommendation on Behalf of the Planning Board to the Town Board for Planned Resort Development 1-2024 and Petition of Zone Change 1-2024.” In that resolution, the Planning Board stated that “due to the size of the project, the scope of the project, the duration of the project predicted at 10 years from concept to completion time, and the nature of the property, concerns about stormwater and traffic have been expressed” by the public and their concerns should be reviewed by the Town Board as SEQR Lead Agency.

In relation to the above stormwater concerns, some members of the public have stated that stormwater runoff from West Mountain and the proposed project will cause flooding in nearby residential neighborhoods downstream and to the east. It should be noted that currently there are no stormwater management practices in place at the proposed project site.

The existing Woods at West Mountain PRD application included a “Concept Stormwater Management Plan.” The plan presented an overall management strategy for mitigating any potential impacts from development and subsequent stormwater runoff. The plan is based on the 1”=200’ Concept Plan for the project.

In response to public comments made at various Planning Board meetings and the Planning Board Recommendation to the Town Board to consider stormwater management as SEQR Lead Agency, the applicant and Studio A Landscape Architecture and Engineering, have prepared an update to the Concept Stormwater Management Plan.

The updated Stormwater Management Plan incorporates a Hydro-CAD analysis of stormwater conditions at the site, both existing conditions and proposed conditions following development of the proposed Woods at West Mountain project. The plan incorporates stormwater management practices for all 5 Phases of the development. Based on the conclusions and results of the updated Stormwater Management Plan, the project will not cause an increase in runoff from the project site. It will, due to the implementation of the proposed stormwater management practices, actually result in a reduction of stormwater over existing runoff leaving the project site.

Implementation of the project, therefore, which proposes a Stormwater Management Plan where no such practices exist today at the site, will actually result in a positive environmental

condition relative to stormwater runoff. The updated Stormwater Management Plan is attached.

As such, applicant stands by its suggestion that Question 5 – Impact on Flooding, be responded to ‘No’ in Part 2 of the Full EAF.

QUESTION 13 – IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION

While Question 13 – Impact on Transportation, was suggested to be responded to with a “No”, in Part 2, the Town of Queensbury Planning Board at their meeting on April 10, 2025, requested that Full Environmental Assessment Form, Part 1, D.2. Project Operations, j. “Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic levels above present levels or generate substantial new demand for transportation facilities or services” be checked “Yes.”

As such, applicant respects the Planning Boards request and has amended the Full EAF appropriately and responded to the related “sub-questions.” (see Amended Full EAF, Dated April 16, 2025, attached).

At this April 10, 2025, Planning Board Meeting, a resolution was approved to “Make a Favorable Recommendation on Behalf of the Planning Board to the Town Board for Planned Resort Development 1-2024 and Petition of Zone Change 1-2024.” In that resolution, the Planning Board stated that “due to the size of the project, the scope of the project, the duration of the project predicted at 10 years from concept to completion time, and the nature of the property, concerns about stormwater and traffic have been expressed” by the public and these concerns should be reviewed by the Town Board as SEQR Lead Agency. In addition, a letter from Town Designated Engineer, LaBella, dated May 21, 2024, was attached to the resolution and entitled “Traffic Assessment Review.”

The LaBella letter included comments on the November 1, 2022 “Traffic Assessment Report” for the Woods at West Mountain that was prepared by Creighton Manning Engineering, LLP. The LaBella letter requested additional information and/or clarification on “Vehicle Trip Generation” and “Level of Service (LOS).” However, at the conclusion of each request, LeBella stated:

- For Vehicle Trip Generation
“It is noted that trip generation data is not expected to significantly affect the conclusions of the traffic analysis;” and
- For Level of Service (LOS)
“It is noted that volume changes are not expected to significantly affect the conclusions of the traffic LOS analysis.”

As such, the LeBella review letter under “Completeness” concluded that:

“The below discrepancy items were identified and will require responses. However, given existing and projected volumes, and available intersection capacity we do not expect the new trip generation assignments to significantly affect the assessment conclusions of the traffic analysis.”

In response, the applicant requested Creighton Manning Engineers to prepare the requested responses to the LaBella review letter. Creighton Manning Engineers responses dated May 6, 2025, are attached and support their initial conclusion that “The Level of Service analysis at the study area intersections indicates that they will continue to operate adequately after full build-out of the site with minimal increase in delay during the peak hours.”

As such, applicant stands by its suggestion that Question 13 – Impact on Transportation be responded to “No” in Part 2 of the Full EAF.