

**PRELIMINARY DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR THE
PROPOSED ADOPTION OF THE 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
AND CHAPTER 57 ZONING AMENDMENTS
FOR THE
TOWN OF MONROE**

Town of Monroe

Orange County, New York

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A. INTRODUCTION

A.1. Procedure

The Town of Monroe Town Board is currently completing the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Chapter and Map Update. The Comprehensive Plan Update (referred to as the “CPU”) document and the updated zoning chapter and map (referred to collectively as the Zoning Amendments) will guide land use and policy decisions over the next several years.

The New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR 617 state that the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Amendments is likely to require a thorough review of environmental, social and economic impacts. Further, this can be accomplished through the preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). A GEIS is first prepared in the form of a Draft GEIS (DGEIS). This document is intended to serve as a DGEIS for the evaluation of the impacts associated with the adoption of the draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments. The Town Board, which is lead agency and project sponsor under SEQRA, is responsible for preparing the document and making sure it is adequate for public review.

Once the Town Board determines that the DGEIS is adequate for public review, the Board will adopt a notice of Completion of the DGEIS and post the DGEIS on the internet and make it available to the public for review at Town Hall. The Town Board will hold a public hearing on the DGEIS and draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments and solicit public comment for no less than 30 days from the first DGEIS filing or 10 days following the public hearing (whichever occurs later). All substantive comments received on the DGEIS will be responded to in a Final GEIS (FGEIS).

The FGEIS is the second phase of a GEIS. It comprises responses to all substantive comments on the DGEIS and contains any necessary revisions to the DGEIS based on comments received. The FGEIS will contain the information upon which the Town Board will make its findings on whether or not to adopt, or adopt with revisions, the proposed draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments.

This process is intended to aid the Town Board in making its decisions regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments in a manner that considers environmental, social and economic impacts, and balances those impacts against the public need and benefits. This document is intended to be read along with the draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments and will be made available to the public for review along with those documents.

A.2. SEQRA History

As per the regulations implementing the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), the adoption or update of a Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Amendments is

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classified as a Type I action, or an action which is likely to require an environmental impact statement (EIS). However, New York State General Town Law encourages the development of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement rather than a traditional site specific EIS, which is further supported by SEQRA at §617.10(b) and the Town Board has elected to undertake such a task. This GEIS document is intended to address broad areas of environmental relevance in accordance with 6 NYCRR §617 (SEQRA).

In 2005, the Town of Monroe began a review and comprehensive update of its Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP), which was adopted subsequently on May 19, 2008. In 2015, the Town Board confirmed that Chapter 57 was in need of amendment to become consistent with the 2008 CMP update, and that a rezoning process had been in effect for over half a decade. In 2015, a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) was prepared to evaluate the proposed 2015 Chapter 57 Zoning Amendments. However, since the 2017 draft CPU and Zoning Chapter amendments are entirely new and significantly different from the 2015 zoning effort, the previous SEQRA process has been officially terminated. Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan Update with implementing zoning amendments began in 2016, and is a separate Type 1 action, subject to this SEQRA review.

At the June 19, 2017, Town Board meeting, the Monroe Town Board accepted the DGEIS as complete for purposes of SEQRA review. Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments is a Type 1¹ action pursuant to SEQRA. A Positive Declaration requires preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) - the nature and structure of the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments is such as to in part provide a template and forum for the consideration of environmental factors and that no further scoping is required.”

This document is intended to accompany the proposed draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments for the Town of Monroe as suggested under General Town Law §28-a(9) and thereby satisfy the requirements of 6 NYCRR 617 (SEQRA).

A.3. Preparation of Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments

In order to prepare the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments for the Town of Monroe, the Monroe Town Board appointed the planning consultant Nelson, Pope & Voorhis (NP&V), to assist the Town Board in this endeavor. The consultants and Board led an open house session, a number of public workshops and conducted an online survey to gather public opinion. Based on the input received, the Town Board (through its consultants) prepared a preliminary draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments for the Town of Monroe. This preliminary draft of The Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU) was referred to the Planning Board for its comments in March 2017. The

¹ A Type 1 action is an action identified in 6 NYCRR 617 (SEQR) that is likely to require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

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preliminary draft of the Zoning Chapter and Map Update (collectively referred to as the Zoning Amendments, which includes amendments to the text of Chapter 57 of the Town of Monroe Code, as well as to the Official Zoning Map) was referred to the Planning Board for its comments in June 2017. The Town Board revised the preliminary draft CPU. The Zoning Amendments and draft CPU were made available as drafts for review by the public on June 5, 2017. Said documents are incorporated into this DGEIS by reference, and are available for review at <http://www.monroeny.org/index.php/gov/document-center/comprehensive-plan> . A preliminary draft of this DGEIS (also prepared by consultants NP&V) was accepted by the Town Board as adequate in scope and content to commence public review on [REDACTED], 2017.

A.4. Format of this DGEIS

This DGEIS document is intended to address broad areas of environmental relevance. It is structured as follows:

1. Executive Summary: A summary description of the Comprehensive Plan Update, Zoning Amendments, potential impacts, and proposed mitigation measures;
2. Description of the Proposed Action: The specific recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Update and provisions of the Zoning Amendments are listed, and changes from the existing Plan, Map and Chapters are discussed generically;
3. Environmental Setting, Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures: The Baseline Inventory in the 2017 CPU serves as the existing conditions analysis for this DGEIS. Any potential generic significant adverse impacts are considered in the topic-based chapters. Mitigation measures, if any, are also proposed;
4. Alternatives: The No-Action Alternative to the adoption of the Proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments is considered;
5. Adverse impacts which cannot be avoided are discussed;
6. The irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources is discussed.

A.5. Project Location

The Town of Monroe is located strategically within Orange County, New York, and is within one-half hour drive or train trip to the New York-New Jersey border. The Town of Monroe consists of unincorporated and incorporated areas. The Villages of Monroe, a portion of Harriman (the remainder being located in the Town of Woodbury) and Kiryas Joel represent the incorporated areas of the Town. Most of the unincorporated area is located south of the three villages – the villages are in close proximity to the New York State Route 17 (Quickway) transportation corridor.

A location map can be found in Figure I-1 of the Comprehensive Plan.

B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

B.1. Summary of the Proposed Action

The Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments seek to manage future growth; to enhance the character of the community and its neighborhoods; complement existing densities² and development patterns; and balance a mix of uses to create a self-sustaining community.

B.1.a. Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU) Implementation Actions Summary:

Conceptual Land Use Plan

- Revise Zoning Map to be Consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan. Four alternative options were included for the corner of the Town north of Route 17 and west of the Village of Kiryas Joel, and Option 2 was selected for evaluation in this DGEIS.
- Update Use Tables to be Consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan

Environmental Framework

- Adopt cluster subdivision regulations
 - Establish minimum amount of undeveloped land within developments
 - Allow solar installations accessory to residential and nonresidential land uses
 - Redevelop the Town landfill for a solar farm
 - Acquire parcels for open space protection
 - Prohibit clearcutting and amend Chapters 44 and 46
 - Adopt Tree Preservation Law
 - Adopt net density environmental regulations
 - Adopt stream protection regulations
 - Adopt a watershed protection overlay
 - Adopt terrain adaptive provisions
-

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- Adopt biodiversity study requirements
- Adopt provisions to assess impact on Ramapo River Sole Source Aquifer
- Update Chapter 56 to address wetland buffer regulations

Community Character Framework

- Adopt local historic preservation law
- Create historic preservation board, or give planning board authority, to regulate activities affecting designated historic resources
- Develop a plan for rehabilitation and occupancy of Checkerboard Inn
- Require the preparation of cultural resource surveys
- Establish Architectural Review Board, or give the planning board authority to conduct architectural review.
- Develop Scenic Road standards
- Develop architectural design guidelines for commercial corridors
- Adopt a Ridgeline Protection Overlay
- Establish standards for viewshed analysis
- Develop and adopt architectural design guidelines
- Adopt landscape design standards
- Adopt landscape design standards
- Adopt adaptive reuse provisions

Infrastructure Framework

- Create standard to extends sewer and water in manner consistent with the Plan Update
- Work with transportation agencies to mark trail crossings
- Plan and Map an interconnected trail system
- Develop an interconnected trail system

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- Review road specification standards and encourage private road subdivision standards
- Review road specifications and adjust them to reflect development locations and density of development
- Establish a formal town role in decisions related to the OCSD

B.1.b. Zoning Chapter 57 Update Actions Summary:

- New and expanded definitions
- Updated district naming and adjustments to standards
- Updated Use Table
- Net residential density requirements
- Cluster developments with open space preservation standards
- Standards for ridge preservation overlay
- Standards for water supply protection overlay
- Standards for places of worship
- Landscaping and screening standards
- Scenic road standards
- Lighting standards
- Architectural review
- Historic review
- Improved site plan review process
- Tree plans
- Timber harvesting and clearing standards

B.1.c. Zoning Map Update Actions Summary:

- In the southern area of the Town, south of the Villages of Monroe and Harriman, The Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been redesignated as the Open Space Residential (OSR-3) District, and its area has been significantly increased by 1,071 acres, replacing portions of the existing RR-1AC and SR-20 Districts.
- Near the border with the Town of Chester, on the east side of Lakes Road, south of Neptune Drive, a small area of the Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been changed to Suburban Residential (SR-20) District to better reflect the existing size of lots in that location.
- A Water Supply Protection Overlay district has been added to further protect the southwest portion of the Town from denser development that may degrade water supply sources.
- A Ridge Protection Overlay district has been added throughout the Town within 300 feet of prominently visible ridgelines.
- A large area of the Heavy Industry (HI) District east of Bakertown Road, has been changed to Light Industry (LI). The eastern most portion of this new LI district has been rezoned to a Planned Business Park Overlay.
- A small area east of Walton Lake has been changed from SR-20 to the RR-1 district.
- A row of lots on Lakes Road, across the street from Walton Lake, have been changed from Waterfront Recreation to SR-15 to be consistent with the zoning of adjoining parcels.
- A small area east of Round Lake, between Lakes Road and Cedar Cliff Road, has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1.
- On the east side of Lakes Road, between the intersections with Cedar Cliff Road and Center Hill Road, a small area has been changed from SR-10 to RR-1.
- A residential area around Schunnemunk Road, southeast of the exit 130 interchange on the Route 17 Quickway, was changed from RR-1 to SR-10.
- On the south side of Route 17M, between the intersections of Harriman Heights Road and Eden Road, a small area has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1.
- At the intersection of Routes 17 and 17M, a small part of the GB District has been changed to Neighborhood Business.
- On the west side of Seven Springs Road, an area now zoned RR-3 has been changed to SR-10.

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- Along Seven Springs Mountain Road (County Route 44), west of the Village of Kiryas Joel, an area now designated RR-3 has been changed to RR-1.
- The Route 17M Buffer Overlay shown on the current, adopted zoning map has not been transferred to the new amended map. No standards for this overlay district, nor any mention of this district is found in the current zoning text.

A table with the acreages of each map changed may be found in Table 1.

Generally, the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Update and the Zoning Amendments are intended to: protect the established character of the Town; to promote economic growth; to provide new housing choices (especially for young adults and seniors); to reduce traffic congestion; and to promote protection and enhancement of the environment.

B.2. Summary of Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigation Measures

The overwhelming majority of Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendment recommendations will result in positive environmental, social and economic impacts on the Town. The DGEIS identifies the following specific environmental impacts as a result of the Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations. The impacts are grouped by category:

B.2.a. Comprehensive Plan Update

Conceptual Land Use Plan

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: Compared to the previously adopted Comprehensive Plan (2008) currently in effect, this plan greatly increases the detail of its recommendations for future land uses. The 2008 Plan (section XIX – “The Plan for Land Use”) described desired land use patterns with text only and did not illustrate the proposed locations for intended uses. This CPU provides far greater support for the Zoning Chapter with a greatly expanded text, augmented by a Conceptual Land Use Map (Figure II-1). The increased areas designated for Open Space Residential, especially the large expansion in the southern portion of the Town, will lead to lower overall densities (See Table 2 for the buildout analysis). Recommended small expansions of suburban residential and non-residential areas to reflect historical growth around developed areas that has already occurred are offset by recommended expansions of Open Space Residential. Therefore no mitigation measures are necessary, in terms of potential future buildout.

Environmental Framework

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: Strengthened cluster development regulations will preserve open space and minimize land disturbance. The Plan also

recommends that sensitive environmental areas be excluded from the density calculations determining the “yield,” or maximum number of allowable dwellings, on any property, whether or not the development is clustered. The Water Supply Protection Overlay will minimize the amount of allowable impervious surfaces, protecting drinking water supply watersheds. Buffer protection around freshwater wetlands will also be strengthened. Given the lack of negative impacts, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Community Character Framework

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The CPU recommends that local historic preservation regulations be adopted to protect designated historic buildings and places for the first time. In order to implement protections, historic preservation will be incorporated into development review procedures, either by assigning review duties to the Planning Board, or to a new Historic Preservation Board (the proposed zoning has assigned the responsibilities to the Planning Board). It is also recommended that all new multifamily residential and non-residential developments be subject to architectural review, either by the Planning Board or a new Architectural Review Board (assigned to the Planning Board in the proposed zoning). The CPU also recommends new scenic road buffer standards, ridgeline protection, and lighting standards. Given the entirely positive set of impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Infrastructure Framework

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The CPU recommends that sewer and water service should only be extended consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan. Such service will prevent damage to groundwater from septic systems, and eutrophication of lakes. Road specifications are recommended to be reduced to lessen stormwater runoff impacts, and to be more context sensitive in rural areas. Given the positive set of impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

B.2.b. Zoning Chapter 57 Update

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The zoning chapter text implements a comprehensive program to lessen the environmental impacts of new development. Recommendations from the CPU are put into regulatory language, including but not limited to:

- Net residential density regulations, lowering density on sites with sensitive environmental resources including wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes.
- The RR-1 zoning district will allow a density of one dwelling unit per ne acre, regardless of whether a lot is served by central water or sewer. At this time,

this zone, intended for one acre lots, allows 25,000 square foot lots with central sewer.

- The multiple dwelling provisions which allow multiple dwellings in the SR zoning districts has been eliminated. The Town recently adopted an accessory apartment law to provide additional housing opportunities.
- Mandating cluster developments when context appropriate, that preserve open space, limit land disturbance, preserve wildlife habitats, while allowing the development of the same number units with shorter access roads.
- New standards for ridge protection and water supply protection with new overlay zones.
- Scenic road standards that preserve tree buffers along designated corridors.
- Lighting standards that preserve the darkness of the night sky, benefiting wildlife and saving energy resources.
- Tree plans, timber harvesting and clearing standards to minimize tree cutting and land clearing to the greatest practical extent.

Given the positive set of impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

B.2.c. Zoning Map Update

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The zoning map update allows for future residential development at higher densities at the edges of villages while decreasing density in environmental sensitive areas, particularly in the southern part of the Town, for a balanced and environmentally sound land use pattern. The overall effect will be a net decrease in density for the entire town (See Table 2, Buildout Analysis).

Specific provisions of the updated map that will result in lower residential density or less intensity of development compared to the existing map include:

- In the southern area of the Town, south of the Villages of Monroe and Harriman, the Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been redesignated as the Open Space Residential (OSR-3) District, and its area has been significantly increased by 1,071 acres, replacing portions of the existing RR-1AC and SR-20 Districts. This will result in lower density in this area.
- A Water Supply Protection Overlay district has been added to further protect the southwest portion of the Town from denser development that may degrade water supply sources.

- A Ridge Protection Overlay district has been added throughout the Town within 300 feet of prominently visible ridgelines.
- A large area of the Heavy Industry (HI) District east of Bakertown Road, has been changed to Light Industry (LI). The eastern most portion of this new LI district has a Planned Business Park Overlay. The elimination of heavy industrial uses will lessen environmental impacts. In addition, the zoning emphasizes ratable land uses that will generate employment and tax revenues.
- A small area east of Walton Lake has been changed from SR-20 to the RR-1 district, lowering density in this area.
- A row of lots on Lakes Road, across the street from Walton Lake, have been changed from Waterfront Recreation to SR-15, changing from business uses to less intensive residential uses. The SR-15 zone is consistent with adjoining zoned properties.
- A small area east of Round Lake, between Lakes Road and Cedar Cliff Road, has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1, lowering density in this area.
- On the east side of Lakes Road, between the intersections with Cedar Cliff Road and Center Hill Road, a small area has been changed from SR-10 to RR-1 lowering density in this area.
- On the south side of Route 17M, between the intersections of Harriman Heights Road and Eden Road, a small area has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1, lowering density in this area.
- At the intersection of Routes 17 and 17M, a small part of the GB District has been changed to Neighborhood Business, lessening environmental impacts.

Specific provisions of the updated zoning map that will result in higher residential density or more intensity of nonresidential development compared to the existing map include:

- Near the border with the Town of Chester, on the east side of Lakes Road, south of Neptune Drive, a small area of the Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been changed to Suburban Residential (SR-20) District to reflect existing nonconforming, denser development. This will reflect the existing pattern of density and have little negative impact.
- A residential area around Schunnemunk Road, southeast of the exit 130 interchange on the Route 17 Quickway, was changed from RR-1 to SR-10, to allow greater density in this small area of higher activity near villages and the major transportation route.

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- On the west side of Seven Springs Road, an area now zoned RR-3 has been changed to SR-10, to allow greater density in this small area of higher activity near villages and the major transportation route. The area is located in the Orange County Sewer District.
- Along Seven Springs Mountain Road (County Route 44), west of the Village of Kiryas Joel, an area now designated RR-3 has been changed to RR-1, increasing density in this area so that the existing lots in this zone will be conforming.
- Along Larkin Drive, land will be rezoned to Light Industrial use, and retail and other service commercial uses will not be allowed so as to encourage office, light industrial, and similar uses. Big box or large scale retail uses will continue to be allowed in the Business Park Overlay district.

Given the net positive set of environmental impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

B.3. Significant Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided if the Project is Implemented

No significant adverse impacts were identified as a result of the Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations and the Zoning Amendments.

B.4. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update and its implementing zoning amendments does not commit the Town to expend any irreversible or irretrievable resources.

B.5. Growth Inducing Aspects

The Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, and the Zoning Amendments, when viewed in their entirety, would generally result in a decrease in the maximum potential residential density of the Town. No significant increase in the amount of nonresidentially zoned lands is anticipated as a result of the Zoning Amendments (See Table 2, Buildout Analysis). The Town does not propose the expansion of central sewer or water districts that would induce growth.

B.6. Alternatives to Proposed Action

This DGEIS analyzes the impact of the No-Action alternative. Under the no action alternative, the Town would not adopt any Comprehensive Plan Update and the current land use regulations would remain in place. The result would be that the Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, which recommend implementation of the environmental protections set forth in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, would not be adopted. Without the adoption of this 2017 CPU and zoning amendments, there would be no environmental

benefits associated with ridgeline protection, water supply protection, scenic road protection, reduction in density on parcels with sensitive environmental resources, changes in allowable uses which better align with the town's residential neighborhoods and nonresidential areas, historic preservation review, architectural review, or elimination of uses within zoning districts that are no longer appropriate. The proposed buildout of the Town and existing acreages by zoning district would remain as shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

B.7. Future Site-Specific Proposals

Future development applications that comply with the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and the Zoning Amendments would still be required to undergo individual project reviews as part of the site plan, special use permit, or subdivision approval processes. These project reviews will be subject to the provisions of SEQRA and site-specific impacts and mitigation measures would be identified and implemented at that time.

C. THE PROPOSED ACTION: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE AND ZONING AMENDMENTS

This DGEIS is intended to evaluate the generic impacts of the Proposed Action³, which is the adoption of the Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments, and the no-action alternative to this Proposed Action, which is continuation under existing land use policies and regulations.

For purposes of conciseness in review, only a brief summary of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments is provided. Full copies of the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments are available on the town website at:

<http://www.monroeny.org/index.php/gov/document-center/comprehensive-plan> ,

and are on file at Monroe Town Hall⁴.

C.1. Summary of Comprehensive Plan Update

C.1.a. Conceptual Land Use Plan - Recommendations and Impacts (Corresponds with the recommendations of Chapter II.D of the Comprehensive Plan Update):

1. Open Space and Conservation (Comprehensive Plan Update page II-10)

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Natural Resource Preservation” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. This land use area includes land that is either protected for open space or recreation by conservation ownership or easement, or is owned by public agencies for conservation, parks or recreational purposes. New minimum lot area calculation methods are recommended that subtract environmental features that constrain development.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, these areas dedicated to the open space and conservation category will be developed at lower overall densities, fragile environmentally sensitive areas will be avoided, and the overall negative impacts of this action will be reduced.

³ SEQRA term meaning the action under review.

2. Residential Land Use Areas (Comprehensive Plan Update page II-11)

Compared to the current Comprehensive Plan, the recommendations for cluster developments are clarified and strengthened, to prevent clear cutting of sites, and promoting development that blends harmoniously with the wooded rural landscape. Clustering allows the developer to gather the allowed units closer together on the site, in order to avoid environmentally sensitive areas, and to provide open space and undisturbed areas for passive recreation and protection of ecological habitats. Conservation easements will be required to protect the open space in perpetuity.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, residential land use areas will be developed at lower overall densities, fragile environmentally sensitive areas will be avoided, and the overall negative impacts of this action will be reduced.

- Open Space Residential

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Conservation-Residential” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. This land use area includes land for existing or proposed neighborhoods that are or will be developed at the lowest density for residential uses, with single family detached dwellings. Developments will be designed and laid out to preserve open space and existing woodland areas, as clustering will be mandated in appropriate settings by the Planning Board. Lands in this category are outside any sewer service area. The overall area assigned to this category has increased, compared to the current Comprehensive Plan.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, open space residential land use areas will be developed at lower overall densities, fragile environmentally sensitive areas will be avoided, and the overall negative impacts of this action will be reduced.

- Rural Residential

This category of conceptual land use is named the same way in both the current Comprehensive Plan and in the Comprehensive Plan Update. This land use area includes rolling lands, generally with less steeply sloping terrain and generally with lower average topographic elevation than the Open Space Residential category. It is a transitional area located generally between the environmentally constrained Open Space Residential Land Use Area and the Suburban Residential Areas which generally adjoin and are extensions of the residential neighborhoods within Monroe’s Villages. Cluster development recommendations are strengthened for this category with higher specificity on

the types of housing permitted. When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, rural residential land use areas will be developed at one dwelling unit per one acre, regardless of whether central sewer service is available or not. With new net density calculation methods, fragile environmentally sensitive areas will be avoided, and the overall negative impacts of this action will be reduced.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, rural residential land use areas will be developed at lower overall densities, fragile environmentally sensitive areas will be avoided, and the overall negative impacts of this action will be reduced.

- Suburban Residential

This category of conceptual land use is named the same way in both the current Comprehensive Plan and in the Comprehensive Plan Update. This land use area includes mostly developed land with higher density single family detached residential development, as well as several smaller scale townhome and multifamily residential developments. This category includes lands that are developed at densities that are higher than one dwelling unit per one acre, including large neighborhoods formerly intended for seasonal use, but that have since converted to year-round use. These lands may have sewer service or may lie just outside existing sewer service areas and can lack central water service.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, suburban residential land use areas will be developed at comparable densities as the existing SR districts. With new net density calculation methods, fragile environmentally sensitive areas will be avoided, and the overall negative impacts of this action will be reduced.

- Urban Residential

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Neighborhood Residential” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. This land use area includes lands directly adjacent to, or having convenient access to, areas similarly zoned in adjoining villages, or adjacent to existing commercial uses.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, the existing URM districts will remain the same in size and in close proximity to the existing Villages. By locally concentrating newly allowed areas for development at Village edges, impact from traffic, land disturbance, and stormwater runoff will be reduced overall.

3. Commercial and Light Industrial Land Use Areas (Comprehensive Plan Update page II-18)
 - Neighborhood Business

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Neighborhood Commercial” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. This land use area is limited and includes small existing and future neighborhood convenience locations that are located distant from the Town’s primary commercial corridor, NYS Route 17M, and are intended to serve immediately adjoining residential neighborhoods. To be consistent with adjoining residential neighborhoods, building footprints will be limited in size – “big box” establishments and other large-scale anchor and destination tenants would not be permitted.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, some existing areas already developed as Neighborhood Business will be designated, and will become conforming. Properties presently zoned WR, Waterfront Recreational Business, will be rezoned to reflect their current residential status. These very small changes will have negligible environmental impacts.

- General Business

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Corridor Commercial” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. This land use area includes a limited number of properties within the unincorporated area that maintain frontage along the Route 17M corridor and adjoin lands in the Villages of Monroe and Harriman. Land uses suited to this category include a mix of general office, medical office, and other general business uses.

Most of the properties in this land use category are already developed with nonresidential uses, including automotive related uses. Thus, residential uses would not be allowed in the district, to also further the Town’s economic development goals. In addition, as the community supports strong downtowns associated with the Town’s villages, retail and similar uses are not be encouraged, that could draw activity away from their downtown centers.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: Although there is a slight increase in area for lands designated as “General Business,” note that it includes lake area which cannot be developed and previously unclassified in any zone. No impacts are anticipated.

- Multiple Use-Mixed Commercial Center

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Business/Industrial Park” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. With the completion of Larkin Drive connecting County Route 105 and New York State Route 32, the Town allowed the construction of a retail and commercial center with multifamily residential development. Although referred to as the “Harriman Business Park”, the development that has occurred along Larkin Drive consists of strip commercial retail uses, fast food restaurants, bog box retailers, and a multifamily complex called Meadow Glen. This Plan Update acknowledges that these uses will continue. However, no further expansion of the retail or residential uses along Larkin Drive is recommended. Future retail, entertainment, and personal service commercial uses should be directed to the village centers or the Route 17M corridor where they already exist.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, they will largely acknowledge and bring into conformity large areas of existing development. By directing future development of retail, entertainment and personal service commercial uses to Village Centers, adverse environmental impacts are minimal, and will help support Village Centers economically.

- Light Industry / Heavy Industry / Office

This category of conceptual land use replaces the “Light Industrial/Service” category in the current Comprehensive Plan. The Light Industry/Office land use area encompasses areas zoned Light Industry and Heavy Industry at present. It includes the remaining lands along Larkin Drive that have yet to be developed, and lands on the west side of Freeland Street, adjoining NYS Route 17. Lands in the Heavy Industry zoning district have been developed with not-for-profit uses and uses which serve exclusively residential uses, which is inconsistent with the intent of this land use area. The future uses for this area will be office, manufacturing, assembly and light industrial uses. Residential uses, and other uses which exclusively serve residential uses, will not be allowed, especially as there are no other lands in the Town which can accomplish the Town’s economic development objectives. This land use area would allow light industrial, office, manufacturing uses whether or not they are part of a coordinated business “park” plan.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: When zoning amendments are adopted consistent with these Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations, vacant areas now zoned for heavy industry will be limited to a mix of office, manufacturing, assembly and light industrial uses. These

changes will lower the potential adverse environmental impacts as this area develops.

4. North of Route 17 Land Use Options. (Comprehensive Plan Update page II-20)

During preparation of the Comprehensive Plan Update, various residents and stakeholders expressed a number of land use options for the area located within unincorporated Monroe located on the north side of Route 17, and to the west of the Village of Kiryas Joel's borders.

The following criteria served as input into the options that were developed. The options promote different levels of potential density, based on presence of existing development, location within the Orange County Sewer District, presence of environmentally sensitive resources, and other considerations. In particular:

- Undeveloped lands have composite resource value as per the Highlands Assessment (Figure IV.B-5);
- There is a prevalence of steep slopes in excess of 25 percent on the west side of Seven Springs Road (Figure IV.B-9). Shallow depth to bedrock also limits some of the areas on this side of the Road (Figure IV.B-11);
- In terms of land use, accessory apartments and use variances have been sought within the Mountainview Drive neighborhood (Figure IV.C-3);
- Certain lands are potentially visible from the Appalachian Trail and the Long Trail and development would affect overall community character (Figure IV.D-3);
- Much of the area along Seven Springs Road and to the east of it is located within Orange County Sewer District No. 1, but is not served by central water;
- A portion of this area adjoins the high density Village of Kiryas Joel, and also adjoins the lower density areas of the Village of South Blooming Grove.

Based on these foregoing, four options were developed. It should be noted Option 2 was chosen by the Town Board and is the subject of the Buildout Analysis contained in Table 1.

Option 2

Option 2 shows the area within the Orange County Sewer District service area being developed as a Suburban Residential land use area. The area on the west side of Seven Springs Road located outside the sewer district boundary would remain mostly in the Open Space Residential, given its environmental constraints. The area along Seven Springs Mountain Road, and west of its intersection with Seven Springs Road, would be within the Rural Residential

land use area, reflecting the existing development density that already exists, but consistent with adjoining neighborhoods in the Village of South Blooming Grove.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations:

C.1.b. Environmental Character Framework (Corresponds with the recommendations of Chapter III.A of the Comprehensive Plan Update): Because the area along Seven Springs Road is either sewerred or within a sewer district, coupled with the fact that most of the area on the east side of the road is already developed at suburban residential densities, impacts will be minimal. Only two sizeable vacant parcels are located along Seven Springs Road, on the east side at the intersection with Seven Springs Mountain Road, and on the west side, just north of Route 17 that are vacant. The area on the north side of Seven Springs Mountain Road adjacent to the Village of South Blooming Grove is already developed at rural residential densities. No mitigations are proposed or recommended given the low level of impacts when considered cumulatively with the other zoning revisions elsewhere in the Town. Environmental Framework (Corresponds with the recommendations of Chapter III.A of the Comprehensive Plan Update):

The Environmental Framework lays out a series of recommendations to adopt a wide range of regulatory tools to more aggressively mitigate potential future adverse environmental impacts from future land development in the Town. Recommended tools include:

- Cluster Development. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-1) Require developers to submit both conventional and cluster development layouts, with Planning Board final determination of the design choice.
- Context Sensitive Residential Development. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-2) Require a percentage of undisturbed woodland is integrated into all new neighborhoods.
- Sustainable Energy Options (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-2). Encourage solar farm construction on the former Town landfill, and encourage solar energy options at individual commercial and residential properties.
- Open Space Acquisition. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-2) Acquire key properties that link open spaces and fulfill natural resource, scenic and historic protection goals.
- Prohibit Clearcutting. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-3) Strengthen sanctions, and reduce density of future development if clearcutting occurs.
- Tree Preservation. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-3) Adopt Tree Chapter to the Code from Conservation Commission.

- Net Density. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-4) Subtract areas of floodplains, wetlands, streams, steep slopes, from density calculations.
- Stream Protection. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-4) Establish 25-foot stream buffers.
- Watershed Overlay. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-4) Limit impervious surface coverage in watersheds of public drinking water supplies.
- Terrain Adaptive Development. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-4) Minimize grading and clearing on steep slopes, avoid excessive creation of lawn areas with cutting and filling.
- Biodiversity Protection. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-5) Require applicants to perform ecological surveys.
- Ramapo Sole Source Aquifer. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-5) Enact strict stormwater management controls from light industrial activities.
- Freshwater Wetland Regulations. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-5) Clarify allowable levels and types of disturbances with mandated buffers.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: Taken as a whole, this set of environmental recommendations would greatly reduce the adverse environmental impacts of future development. Given the lack of negative impacts, no mitigation measures are necessary.

C.1.c. Community Character Framework (Corresponds with the recommendations of Chapter III.B of the Comprehensive Plan Update):

The Community Character Framework advocates sustainable placemaking, intending to preserve the Town's scenic beauty and history including:

- Historic Preservation Law. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-7) Adopt historic inventory and historic preservation regulations.
- Historic Preservation Board (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-7) Designate Planning Board or Establish a new board to review procedures for historic preservation applications. The draft zoning proposed that the Planning Board take on this role.
- Checkerboard Inn. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-8) Develop a plan to restore and use this town-owned vacant historic building.
- Cultural Resource Survey. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-8) Identify historical and archaeological resources throughout the Town.

- Architectural Review Board (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-8) Review architectural details of all multifamily residential and all non-residential developments.
- Scenic Roads. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-8) Protect the scenic character of designated roads with standards for buffering and screening, driveways, stone wall preservation, and building and parking placement.
- Commercial Corridor Design. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-9) Use Orange County Design Manual for design guidance to improve the appearance of the Town’s major commercial corridors.
- Ridgeline Protection. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-9) Adopt regulations to preserve views of ridgelines, as well to prevent grading and erosion in these sensitive areas.
- Viewshed Analysis. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-9) Protect identified views from incongruous development. Mitigate visual impacts of developments seen from the Appalachian Trail, scenic roads, and historic buildings.
- Architectural Review Design Guidelines. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-10) Use Orange County Design Manual – see architectural review board above.
- Landscaping Standards. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-10) Require landscape plans to improve the diversity, stormwater retention capacity, and ecological value of landscaped areas with emphasis on the use of native plant materials.
- Lighting Standards. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-10) Require lighting plans that minimize light pollution, and meet International Dark Sky Association standards..
- Adaptive Reuse. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-11) Allow adaptive reuses of historic buildings when proposed use can be accommodated.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The CPU recommends that local historic preservation regulations be adopted to protect designated historic buildings and places for the first time. In order to implement protections, historic preservation has been incorporated into development review procedures, by assigning review duties to the Planning Board. It is also recommended that all new multifamily residential and non-residential developments be subject to architectural review, either by the Planning Board or a new Architectural Review Board. The CPU also introduces new scenic road buffer standards, ridgeline protection, and lighting standards. Given the entirely positive set of impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

C.1.d. Infrastructure Framework (Corresponds with the recommendations of Chapter III.C of the Comprehensive Plan Update):

The goal of all infrastructure decisions in the Town is that they must support the other goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan Update, particularly the Conceptual Land Use Plan. Recommended infrastructure actions include:

- Sewer and Water. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-12) Utility extensions should occur only in accordance with the Land Use Plan and cannot increase density beyond plan recommendations.
- Trail Improvements. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-12) Provide improved pavement striping and signage at trail crossings.
- Alternative Routes. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-12) Establish pedestrian trails and bike routes linking major parks and village centers.
- Private Roads. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-13) Allow private road development to lower Town maintenance costs when new projects are developed, but with size and density limits.
- Road Specifications. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-13) Consider lowering road specification standards considering the drainage and land use context for the project.
- OCSD Administration. (Comprehensive Plan Update page III-14) Require establishment of a formal framework for Town input into decision-making at Orange County Sewer District no. 1.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The CPU recommends that sewer and water service should only be extended consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan, and does not increase the overall density of development. Such service will prevent damage to groundwater from septic systems, and eutrophication of lakes. Road specifications are recommended to be reduced to lessen stormwater runoff impacts, and to be more context sensitive in rural areas. Given the entirely positive set of impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary. Further, the Buildout Analysis demonstrates that adoption of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update would result in fewer residential dwelling units, and minimal changes to nonresidential land uses, as these areas are not significantly expanded.

C.1.e. Enforcement (Corresponds with the recommendations of Chapter III.D of the Comprehensive Plan Update)

This section of the plan recommends the need for providing adequate resources to follow up with prior approvals to ensure compliance with the documents and plans on file.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: No adverse environmental impacts would arise from these recommendations, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

C.2. Summary of Zoning Chapter 57 Update

- New and expanded definitions were added to section 57-3.
- Updated residence, nonresidential and overlay district names were added to section 57-8.
- Expanded procedures for Special Uses were added to Article V, and expanded special use standards were added or amended for the following uses in section 57-13:
 - Adaptive reuse of a historic building
 - Animal kennel or veterinary hospital
 - Automotive service or automotive filing station
 - Child day camp
 - Hotel
 - Place of Worship
 - Public or private school
- Procedures and Submission Requirements for Site Plan Approval were clarified and expanded in Article VI.
- New net acreage calculations for determining minimum lot area were added in section 57-21.1.
- New standards for a new Ridgeline Protection Overlay (RPO) District were added to section 57-21.2.
- New standards for a new Watershed Supply Protection Overlay (WSPO) District were added to section 57-21.3

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- New standards for preserving scenic roads were added to section 57-21.4.
- New standards for landscaping and screening were added to section 57-21.5.
- New lighting standards were added to section 57-21.6.
- New procedures and design standards for cluster development were added to section 57-21.7
- Article IX was amended to contain a new section on architectural review, with procedures, application submission requirements, and design standards. Existing standards requiring dissimilarity of single family dwellings were clarified and moved into this section.
- A new section 57-32 was added with procedures, application submission requirements and standards for historic review, with criteria for approval of a certificate of appropriateness.
- A new limit on shoreline clearing and disturbance was added to the standards for lots abutting a lake or stream in section 57-43.
- Standards for the expansion of nonconforming summer cottage developments were eliminated from section 57-62. Nonconforming summer cottage developments will no longer be expanded.
- Extensive new standards have been added to Article XX for Tree Preservation, including the submission of tree plans as part of site plan, special exception permit, or subdivision approval procedures. These standards have been developed with extensive involvement of the Monroe Environmental Management Commission (EMC).
- New sections 57-87 and 57-88 provide standards for removal of trees on public land, and control for trees impacted by public utilities.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The zoning chapter 57 amendments implement a comprehensive program to lessen the environmental impacts of new development. Recommendations from the CPU are put into regulatory language, including but not limited to:

- Net residential density requirements lowering density on sites with sensitive environmental resources including wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes.
- Mandating cluster developments when context appropriate, that preserve open space, limit land disturbance, preserve wildlife habitats, while allowing the development of the same number units with shorter access roads.

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- New standards for ridge preservation and watershed supply protection with new overlay zones.
- Scenic road standards that preserve tree buffers along designated corridors.
- Lighting standards that preserve the darkness of the night sky, benefiting wildlife and saving energy resources.
- Tree plans, timber harvesting and clearing standards to minimize tree cutting and land clearing to the greatest practical extent.

Given the positive set of impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

C.3. Summary of Zoning Map Update

- In the southern area of the Town, south of the Villages of Monroe and Harriman, The Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been redesignated as the Open Space Residential (OSR-3) District, and its area has been significantly increased by 1,071 acres, replacing portions of the existing RR-1AC and SR-20 Districts.
- Near the border with the Town of Chester, on the east side of Lakes Road, south of Neptune Drive, a small area of the Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been changed to Suburban Residential (SR-20) District to reflect existing lot sizes.
- A Water Supply Protection Overlay district has been added to further protect the southwest portion of the Town from denser development that may degrade water supply sources.
- A Ridge Protection Overlay district has been added throughout the Town within 300 feet of prominently visible ridgelines.
- A large area of the Heavy Industry (HI) District east of Bakertown Road, has been changed to Light Industry (LI). The eastern most portion of this new LI district has a Planned Business Park Overlay.
- A small area east of Walton Lake has been changed from SR-20 to the RR-1 district.
- A row of lots on Lakes Road, across the street from Walton Lake, have been changed from Waterfront Recreation to SR-15.
- A small area east of Round Lake, between Lakes Road and Cedar Cliff Road, has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1.
- On the east side of Lakes Road, between the intersections with Cedar Cliff Road and Center Hill Road, a small area has been changed from SR-10 to RR-1.

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- A residential area around Schunnemunk Road, southeast of the exit 130 interchange on the Route 17 Quickway, was changed from RR-1 to SR-10.
- On the south side of Route 17M, between the intersections of Harriman Heights Road and Eden Rd, a small area has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1.
- At the intersection of Routes 17 and 17M, a small part of the GB District has been changed to Neighborhood Business.
- On the west side of Seven Springs Road, an area now zoned RR-3 has been changed to SR-10.
- Along Seven Springs Mountain Road (County Route 44), west of the Village of Kiryas Joel, an area now designated RR-3 has been changed to RR-1.
- The Route 17M Buffer Overlay shown on the current, adopted zoning map has not been transferred to the new amended map. No standards for this overlay district, nor any mention of this district, is found in the current zoning text.

A table with the acreages of each map changed may be found in Table 1.

Generally, the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Chapter and Map Update are intended to: protect the established character of the Town; to promote economic growth; to provide new housing choices (especially for young adults and seniors); to reduce traffic congestion; and to promote protection and enhancement of the environment.

Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: The zoning map update allows for future residential development at higher densities at the edges of villages while decreasing density in environmental sensitive areas, particularly in the southern part of the Town. The overall effect will be a net decrease in density for the entire town (See Buildout Analysis, Table 2).

Specific provisions of the Zoning Amendments that will result in lower residential density or less intensity of development compared to the existing map include:

- In the southern area of the Town, south of the Villages of Monroe and Harriman, the Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been re-designated as the Open Space Residential (OSR-3) District, and its area has been significantly increased by 1,071 acres, replacing portions of the existing RR-1AC and SR-20 Districts. This will result in lower density in this area.
- A Water Supply Protection overlay has been added to further protect the southwest portion of the Town from denser development that may degrade water supply sources.

- A Ridge Protection Overlay district has been added throughout the Town within 300 feet of prominently visible ridgelines.
- A large area of the Heavy Industry (HI) District east of Bakertown Road, has been changed to Light Industry (LI). The eastern most portion of this new LI district has a Planned Business Park Overlay. The elimination of heavy industrial uses will lessen environmental impacts within an area overlying the Ramapo River aquifer.
- A small area east of Walton Lake has been changed from SR-20 to the RR-1 district, lowering density in this area in order to reduce potential development within its watershed.
- A row of lots on Lakes Road, across the street from Walton Lake, have been changed from Waterfront Recreation to SR-15, changing from business uses to less intensive residential uses.
- A small area east of Round Lake, between Lakes Road and Cedar Cliff Road, has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1, lowering density in this area.
- On the east side of Lakes Road, between the intersections with Cedar Cliff Road and Center Hill Road, a small area has been changed from SR-10 to RR-1 lowering density in this area.
- On the south side of Route 17M, between the intersections of Harriman Heights Road and Eden Road, a small area has been changed from SR-15 to RR-1, lowering density in this area.
- At the intersection of Routes 17 and 17M, a small part of the GB District has been changed to Neighborhood Business, lessening environmental impacts.

Specific provisions of the zoning map update that will result in higher residential density or more intensity of development compared to the existing map include:

- Near the border with the Town of Chester, on the east side of Lakes Road, south of Neptune Drive, a small area of the Rural Residential (RR-3AC) District has been changed to Suburban Residential (SR-20) District to reflect existing smaller lots. This will reflect the existing pattern of density and have no impact.
- A residential area around Schunnemunk Road, southeast of the exit 130 interchange on the Route 17 Quickway, was changed from RR-1 to SR-10, to allow greater density in this small area of higher activity near villages and the major transportation route.

- On the west side of Seven Springs Road, an area now zoned RR-3 has been changed to SR-10, to allow greater density in this small area of higher activity near villages and the major transportation route.
- Along Seven Springs Mountain Road (Cty. Rt. 44), west of the Village of Kiryas Joel, an area now designated RR-3 has been changed to RR-1, increasing density in this area. However, this area is already developed with single family dwellings on lots smaller than 3 acres, and these lots would be made more conforming.

Given the net positive set of environmental impacts from these recommendations, no mitigation measures are necessary.

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Table 1. Size Comparison of Existing to Proposed Zoning Districts				
Existing Zoning		Proposed Zoning		Difference (negative numbers indicate decrease in size)
Zoning District	Acres	Zoning District	Acres	Acres
GB	88.03	GB	113.08	25.05
HI	448.85	HI	38.33	-410.30
LI	146.48	LI	584.04	437.56
NB	6.78	NB	5.39	-1.39
RR-1.0 AC	3,717.37	RR-1	2,962.54	-754.83
RR-3.0 AC	3,647.05	OSR-3AC	4,717.64	1070.59
SR-10	362.71	SR-10	547.96	185.25
SR-15	751.45	SR-15	769.42	17.97
SR-20	738.85	SR-20	224.71	-514.14
UR-M	329.66	UR-M	329.66	0
WR	52.54			-52.54
		Business Park Overlay	439.63	439.63
		Utility Tower Overlay	127.92	127.92
		Ridgeline Protection Overlay	1,282.00	1,282.00
		Watershed Supply Protection Overlay	2,413.22	2,413.22
Total	10,289.77	Total (not including overlays)	10,289.77	n/a

D. EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS, POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Section IV of the 2017 Plan Update serves the Existing Conditions section for this DGEIS. Readers should reference the Comprehensive Plan Update (2017) Chapter IV, pages IV-1 to IV-114 in the discussion below. The analyses rely on the potential buildout under existing and proposed land use policies and zoning regulations.

A buildout analysis was performed to compare the development potential under the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments, compared to the no-action scenario of keeping the current planning and regulatory framework in place. Then the potential impacts of the proposed actions could be determined.

Comparison of Residential Development Potential on Vacant Parcels, With or Without New Zoning. The development potential under the existing and proposed zoning of all vacant parcels was conducted, which took the overall gross area of each parcel, and divided it by the minimum lot area for the applicable zoning district, with additional adjustments as described below. The potential density (units per acre) assigned to each vacant parcel was based on the underlying zoning permission, as well as whether or not the parcel was in a sewer service area (regardless of whether the sewers had yet been extended).

In addition, for the analysis of the development potential under existing zoning, we included the buildout of the existing WR zoning district, which allows single family dwellings by special use permit based on RR-1 zoning requirements. This zoning district, and its buildout potential, was not evaluated in the proposed CPU. Also, the analyses did not consider any already-developed land. Pre-existing nonconforming lots were also excluded, as these would require one or more discretionary variances for construction.

Yield Under Existing Zoning. Under the existing zoning, it is estimated that 1,804 dwelling units could be constructed on these vacant parcels (those that are not presently the subject of a major development application). Under the proposed zoning, 1,943 dwelling units could be constructed. See Table 2 below.

A rule of thumb is to further reduce the total number of potential units by 25 percent for inefficiencies in laying out subdivisions. Once this 25% reduction for inefficiencies was factored, the yield from the vacant land was lowered to 1,353 dwelling units under the existing zoning, and 1,457 dwelling units under the proposed zoning.

Environmental constraints were not subtracted out of the existing zoning buildout, as the Town's land use regulations do not eliminate these sensitive features when determining lot yield. However, under the proposed zoning, environmental constraints would be deducted with the new net density calculations mandated in the Zoning Amendments. Using a conservative order of magnitude of 10 percent reduction, the buildout of the vacant parcels under the proposed zoning of vacant parcels would be 1,263 dwelling units.

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Next approved units in the development “pipeline” were added to the buildout analysis. Under the existing zoning, the conditionally approved (but yet unbuilt) developments listed in Table IV.C-10 of the CPU (see page IV-60) would occur as presently configured, which would add an additional 616 dwelling units to the Town’s housing stock. However, under the proposed Zoning Amendments, the unit yield of these development applications would be lowered, with one exception. For purposes of this analysis, the BMG (Smith Farm-Gilbert Street) property has the same buildout under the proposed Zoning Amendments, as the Town has entered into an agreement to allow them to proceed under the plan approved by the Planning Board.

Thus, including the developments noted in Table IV.C-10, the potential buildout is estimated to be approximately 616 dwelling units under the existing zoning, and 403 under the proposed zoning.

In total, the existing zoning would yield 1,969 dwelling units, and the proposed zoning would yield 1,665 dwelling units (see Table 2).

Other Considerations. Beyond single family detached dwellings, several parcels in the UR-M and SR zoning districts are large enough to submit an application for special use permit approval to accommodate multiple dwelling groups under the existing zoning. Development of multiple dwelling groups in the SR zoning districts has been eliminated in the proposed Zoning Amendments, thus the development potential under the proposed zoning is further reduced.

Also, it is acknowledged that there are large lot residential properties which could be redeveloped. However, it would be speculative to anticipate the development of properties that are already developed with existing uses at this time. Most of these larger lots are located in the southern portion of the Town, and would be zoned RR-1 and OSR-3.

Note that these are approximations, to provide an order of magnitude comparison. The proposed zoning could potentially result in additional parcels by determining yield based on gross acreage alone. However, the additional proposed regulations, including the exclusion of environmental constraints when calculating density, limitations as a result of the regulations applicable to the Water Supply Protection and Ridge Protection Overlay zoning districts, and removal of certain uses, including multiple dwellings in the SR zoning districts, the proposed zoning will yield at least 303 fewer dwelling units, and at least 909 fewer people at a full buildout, as compared to the current zoning, based on the 2010 average household size for the Town of Monroe. No mitigation of the proposed action is needed as adverse environmental impacts will be lowered. It is acknowledged that households from the adjoining Village of Kiryas Joel, who are expanding their residence into the unincorporated area, have larger households than the typical household size. It would be speculative to assign a larger household number to the potential population, as it is unknown to what degree this in-migration into the unincorporated area will occur⁵. Regardless, as specified in the proposed site plan regulations contained in the Zoning Chapter, the Planning

⁵ The unincorporated area has an average household size of 3.0, and the Village of Kiryas Joel has an average household size of 5.5 in 2010.

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Board, during site-specific review, will consider the typical average household size when conducting SEQRA evaluations, and potential site-specific impacts.

	No Action	Action
	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
Vacant Parcel Buildout	1,804 units	1,943 units
Deduct for Inefficiencies of Layout (25%)	-451 units	-486 units
Deduction for Environmental Constraints (10%)	0	-194 units
Net	1,353 units	1,263 units
Existing Developments	+616 units	+403 units
Final Buildout Estimated Additional Total Housing Units	1,969 additional units	1,666 additional units
Final Buildout Estimated Additional Population (based on current unincorporated area household size = 3 persons)	5,907 additional persons	4,998 additional persons

Existing Zoning	Parcels	Acres	Proposed Zoning	Parcels	Acres	Change
GB	5	10.73	GB	7	34.85	24.12
HI	14	152.15	HI	5	22.94	(129.21)
LI	2	40.11	LI	15	175.24	135.13
NB	0	-	NB	1	0.09	0.09
RR-3AC	47	672.00	OSR-3	49	883.04	211.04
RR-1.0AC	182	558.82	RR-1	183	442.22	(116.60)
SR-10	130	54.86	SR-10	142	116.71	61.85
SR-15	264	73.39	SR-15	278	78.89	5.50
SR-20	19	162.39	SR-20	1	0.34	(162.05)
UR-M	30	194.79	UR-M	30	194.79	-
WR	18	29.88	WR	0	being removed from zoning map	
	711	1,949.12		711	1,949.12	

D.1. Demographic Trends - Population, Housing & Income

D.1.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.A of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews existing conditions and trends in demographic data, including population, housing, household size, median age, population density, and per capita income. See pages IV-1 to IV -7.

D.1.b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

As set forth in Table 2 above, it is estimated that 1,804 dwelling units could be constructed on vacant parcels under the existing zoning. Under the proposed zoning, 1,943 dwelling units could be constructed. Once this 25% reduction for inefficiencies is factored, the yield from the vacant land was lowered to 1,353 dwelling units under the existing zoning, and 1,457 dwelling units under the proposed zoning. Under the proposed zoning, environmental constraints would be deducted with the new net density calculations mandated in the Zoning Amendments. Using a conservative order of magnitude of 10 percent reduction, the buildout of the vacant parcels under the proposed zoning of vacant parcels would be 1,263 dwelling units. Including the developments noted in Table IV.C-10, the potential buildout is estimated to be approximately 616 dwelling units under the existing zoning, and 403 under the proposed zoning. In total, the existing zoning would yield 1,969 dwelling units, and the proposed zoning would yield 1,665 dwelling units (see Table 2). Beyond single family detached dwellings, several parcels in the UR-M and SR zoning districts are large enough to pursue a special use permit to accommodate multiple dwelling groups under the existing zoning. Development of multiple dwelling groups in the SR zoning districts has been eliminated in the proposed Zoning Amendments, thus the development potential under the proposed zoning is further reduced.

Note that these are approximations, to provide an order of magnitude comparison. The proposed zoning could potentially result in additional parcels by determining yield based on gross acreage alone. However, the additional proposed regulations, including the exclusion of environmental constraints when calculating density, limitations as a result of the regulations applicable to the Water Supply Protection and Ridge Protection Overlay zoning districts, and removal of certain uses, including multiple dwellings in the SR zoning districts, the proposed zoning will yield at least 303 fewer dwelling units, and at least 909 fewer people at a full buildout, as compared to the current zoning, based on the average household size for the Town of Monroe. No mitigation of the proposed action is needed as adverse environmental impacts will be lowered.

The trend in the unincorporated area will be for single-family detached housing units to be constructed, except within any URM zoned areas.⁶ New single family detached dwellings, regardless of zoning district, may be located on smaller lots if the Planning Board deems it necessary to approve a cluster development for a property with environmentally sensitive features. It is anticipated that comparable to the existing Town's housing stock, most dwelling units will be three (3) bedrooms and larger in size. The Town will continue to allow accessory apartments as an affordable housing option within the unincorporated area, and has previously adopted new regulations which limit the overall size of an accessory apartment to a percentage of the overall single family detached dwelling size, in order to ensure the apartment remains "accessory" as intended.

For most of the Town, the overall housing density will be decreased. As noted previously, approximately 1,071 acres of land will be added to the OSR-3 district, which will allow single family detached dwellings on three acre lots (unless clustered). In addition, lands zoned SR-20 will be reduced, as these are being converted to OSR-3 zones, or RR-1 zones. Similarly, the loss in the RR-1 zoned lands is primary a result of the increase in OSR-3 zoned lands. The SR-10 zoned lands (increase of 185 acres), which will allow a density of one dwelling unit per 10,000 square feet (if sewerred), will increase density. The bulk of this newly zoned SR-10 area is located on the west side of the Village of Kiryas Joel and north of the Village of Monroe, and represents a transitional area between the higher density Village settings, and adjoining areas in the unincorporated area.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed action.

D.2. Natural Resources

D.2.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.B of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews existing conditions of geology, topography and soils, ecology, groundwater, and surface water resources, See pages IV-8 to IV-37.

D.2.b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

Adverse Impacts;

In general, the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments create a new land use planning and regulatory system that greatly reduces adverse environmental impacts compared to the no-action alternative. Only three

⁶ *The former Town Board and the Village Board of Kiryas Joel approved an annexation of 164 URM zoned lands into the Village. The annexation is currently the subject of a court appeal.*

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areas were subject to intensified zoning in the Zoning Amendments: (1) a portion of the east side of Lakes Road; (2) Schunnemunk Road near the exit 130 interchange on the Rt. 17 Quickway; and (3) the west side of Seven Springs Road.

Mitigations are summarized as follows:

- See section C.1.a above. Comprehensive Plan Update, Chapter II.D Conceptual Land Use Plan Land Use Areas: The Land Use Areas designated as Open Space and Conservation, Open Space Residential and Rural Residential have been strengthened.
- See section C.1.b above. Comprehensive Plan Update, Chapter III.A, Environmental Framework: The following environmental policies have been justified, with recommendations for new regulations:
 - Cluster Development.
 - Context Sensitive Residential Development.
 - Open Space Acquisition.
 - Clearcutting Prohibitions and Tree Preservation.
 - Net Density Calculations.
 - Stream Protection standards, Watershed Supply Protection Overlay.
 - Terrain Adaptive Development.
 - Ramapo Sole Source Aquifer Protections.
 - Freshwater Wetland Regulations.
- See section C.2 and C.3 above. Zoning Chapter 57 Update, The following environmental regulations have been added to the Zoning Amendments:
 - New net area calculations for determining minimum lot area in section 57-21.1.
 - New standards for a new ridgeline protection overlay in section 57-21.2.
 - New standards for a new watershed supply protection overlay in section 57-21.3.

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- New procedures and design standards for cluster development in section 57-21.7.
- New limits on shoreline clearing and disturbance in section 57-43.
- New standards for tree removals, and submission of tree plans in Article XX.
- Expansions of Open Space Residential District.
- New Water Supply Protection and Ridge Protection Overlays.
- Reduction of Heavy Industry Zone, with areas replaced by the Light Industry Zone.
- See Table 1 above. There are net reductions in rural residential lands zoned for one acre density, and increased size of the new Open Space Residential -3 acre District with cluster developments mandated when appropriate.

D.3. Land Use and Zoning

D.3.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.C of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews existing conditions of current land use patterns, zoning, property valuation trends, and existing residential development potential. See pages IV-38 to IV-61.

D.3.b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

See the detailed discussion of the Buildout analysis in section D.1.b. above. Due to the reduced potential for future development the additional proposed regulations, including the exclusion of environmental constraints when calculating density, limitations as a result of the regulations applicable to the Water Supply Protection and Ridge Protection Overlay zoning districts, and removal of certain uses, including multiple dwellings in the SR zoning districts, the proposed zoning will yield at least 303 fewer dwelling units, and at least 909 fewer people at a full buildout, as compared to the current zoning. No mitigation of the proposed action is needed as adverse environmental impacts will be lowered. The overall housing density pattern will be to shift development away from the southerly portions of the Town, which is adjacent to environmentally sensitive parklands and habitat, and allow some limited increase in residential density in close proximity to Village centers, where infrastructure, including roads, sewer, and water are more readily available. The Business Park Overlay district acknowledges the existing area of residential and retail development on Larkin Drive, but the new revisions strictly intend that the Larkin Drive corridor be an economic development generator for

the Town, with these areas allowing offices, light industrial and other uses that will generate employment within the Town, and will support the tax base.

The Neighborhood Business and General Business zones will continue to exist as at present, along the Route 17M corridor.

Based on the proposed changes in overall land use pattern densities, no significant adverse environmental impact is anticipated.

D.4. Historic and Scenic Resources

D.4.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.D of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews existing historic resources and scenic resources. See pages IV-62 to IV-78

D.4.b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

In general, the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments create a new land use planning and regulatory system that greatly reduces potential future adverse impacts to historic and scenic resources compared to the no-action alternative. See section C.1.c above for more detailed descriptions.

Policies for mitigating the impacts to historic and scenic resources are found in the Comprehensive Plan Update Community Character Framework, Chapter III.B. Proposed regulatory mitigations are found in the Zoning Chapter 57 Amendments as follows:

- New standards for preserving scenic roads in section 57-21.4.
- New standards for landscaping and screening in section 57-21.5.
- New standards for lighting in section 57-21.6.
- New processes and standards for architectural review in Article IX.
- New processes and standards for historic review in section 57-32.

D.5. Utilities

D.5.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.E of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews existing wastewater facilities, water supply, and stormwater management, See pages IV-79 to IV-93.

D.5.b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

In general, the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments create a new land use planning and regulatory system that greatly reduces adverse impacts to water supply resources and enhances stormwater management, compared to the no-action alternative. Wastewater system expansions are generally limited to areas adjacent to the villages. See section C.1.a above for more detailed descriptions.

Policies for mitigating the impacts to wastewater facilities, water supply and stormwater management resources are found in the Comprehensive Plan Update Infrastructure Framework, Chapter III.C. Provisions for limiting extensions of centralized sewer and water services to areas surrounding villages can be found in the Comprehensive Plan Update Conceptual Land Use Plan, in the definitions of the Suburban Residential and Urban Residential Land Use Areas. Proposed regulatory mitigations to mitigate impacts from stormwater runoff are found in the Zoning Amendments as follows:

- New net acreage calculations in section 57-21.1.
- New cluster development standards in section 57-21.7.
- New limits on shoreline clearing and disturbance in section 57-43.
- The addition of the Water Supply Protection overlay in Chapter 57.

D.6. Transportation

D.6.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.F of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews current transportation planning, commuting patterns, roads, passenger rail service, bus transportation, air transportation, and pedestrian systems. See pages IV-94 to IV-104.

D.6.b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

In general, the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments create a new land use planning and regulatory system that reduces adverse impacts to transportation systems, compared to the no-action alternative. A reduction in the proposed buildout will likely reduce vehicle miles travelled. The provision of cluster developments instead of traditional subdivisions can reduce vehicle miles travelled by school buses, snow plows, sanitation trucks and other service or delivery vehicles, from shorter road systems within new residential developments. Reduced road specification standards in rural subdivisions and certain cluster developments will reduce grading, clearing, and lessen stormwater runoff compared to exiting full road standards.

D.7. Community Services and Facilities

D.7.a. Existing Conditions

Section IV.G of the Comprehensive Plan Update reviews current town governmental services for general governance, emergency services, recreational facilities, public educational facilities, and library services. See pages IV-105 to IV-114.

D.7b. Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

The proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendments review of community services and facilities did not lead to any recommendations with adverse environmental impacts so no mitigation measures were necessary. The reduced buildout will reduce demand for community services and facilities.

E. Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided if the Project Is Implemented

No significant adverse impacts were identified as a result of the proposed action. Any site-specific project will be subject to site-specific land use and environmental review, and any impacts appropriately mitigated, as necessary.

F. Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitment of Resources

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Chapter and Zoning Map Updates does not commit the Town to expend any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources.

G. Growth Inducing Aspects

As stated several times throughout this DGEIS document, the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Amendment provisions viewed in their entirety would generally result in a decrease in the maximum potential residential density of the Town, and will not result in a significant change in the potential nonresidential buildout as there are no large increases in nonresidential zoned lands. The decrease in potential comes from reductions in allowable units per acres from changes to mapped zoning districts, particularly in the Open Space Residential Zone, as well as from new methods for net residential density calculations that subtract out environmentally sensitive areas. With reductions in size of the Heavy Industry Zone, potential for the amount of nonresidential floor area will be reduced. Furthermore, no changes in the boundaries of sewer or water district service areas are recommended that would induce growth.

H. Alternatives to the Proposed Action

H.1. No Action Alternative

Under the no action alternative, the Town would not adopt any Comprehensive Plan Update and the current land use regulations in the Zoning Chapter and the current Zoning Map would remain in place.

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Under this alternative no major zoning change would be implemented, only minor amendments and ad hoc changes to keep the code up to date with established land use patterns or in response to applications by individual property owners could be expected.

Without the proposed action, the following activities would continue under the current land use planning and regulatory system, leading to potential adverse impacts:

- Sprawling patterns of residential subdivision with significant grading, land clearing, and open space consumption, as traditional developments come online rather than cluster developments.
- Inappropriately high density residential zoning in areas adjoining state parkland and sensitive ecological habitats, which would degrade biological resources.
- Acreage for new development will continue to occur at higher densities, without the enactment of net residential density calculations that require land developers to subtract environmentally sensitive areas from their yield.
- Continued degradation of scenic and historic resources as the Town would continue to operate without architectural standards, historic preservation standards, scenic road preservation standards, or screening and buffering requirements.
- Continued degradation of the Town's forested and woodland character, in the absence of Tree regulations.
- Continued potential degradation of the potable surface waters located in the Town, in the absence of a Water Supply Protection Overlay district.

I. FUTURE SITE- SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

Future development proposals that comply with the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and the updated Zoning Chapter and Map would still be required to undergo individual project reviews as part of the site plan, special use permit, and subdivision approval process. These project reviews will be subject to the provisions of SEQRA and any site-specific impacts and mitigation measures would be implemented at that time.