
RESOLUTION AND RECORD OF DECISION

SEQRA Negative Declaration
Mohonk Preserve Foothills
Site Plan and Subdivision
Applicant/Owner: Mohonk Preserve, Inc.

AT a duly noticed meeting of the Planning Board of the Town of New Paltz, held on May 23 2016, the Planning Board, acting pursuant to NYCRR Part 617 and the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"), considered the applications of Mohonk Preserve, Inc. ("applicant"), owner of the real property, for approval of a site plan entitled "Mohonk Preserve Foothills Project", prepared by Barton and LoGuidice consisting of 19 sheets, dated April 2014, as last revised January 2016 (the "site plan" application); and a subdivision plan, entitled "Subdivision and Lot Line Revision of Lands of Mohonk Preserve, Inc." prepared by Brooks & Brooks Land Surveyors, P.C., consisting of 4 sheets, dated March 20, 2014 and last revised April 22, 2016, (the "subdivision" application).

For purposes of making its determination of significance pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.7(b), the Board considered both the site application, with its supporting documents and the subdivision application, with its supporting documents, as the SEQRA action before the Board for the purpose of complying with 6 NYCRR Part 617.7 and making its determination of significance, as lead agency, with respect to preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS).

With respect to the site plan, the Board also considered a SEQRA Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF), including Part 1, prepared by Barton & Loguidice on behalf of the applicant, as last revised January 20, 2016, Part 2 of the FEAF, as reviewed at various Planning Board meetings starting on October 26, 2105, and the Part 3 Narrative prepared by the designated Town engineer, as last revised and adopted by the Planning Board on May 23, 2016, and the documentation set forth in the Part 3 Narrative.

With respect to the subdivision plan, the Board also considered a SEQRA FEAF, including Part 1, prepared by Brooks & Brooks on behalf of the applicant, as last revised February 24, 2015. On March 16, 2015, the applicant withdrew its request to have the subdivision approval segmented and reviewed independently of the site plan, and the SEQRA review was consolidated. The consolidated SEQRA review included Part 2 of the FEAF, as reviewed at the Planning Board meeting on January , 2016, the Part 3 Narrative prepared by the designated Town engineer, as last revised May 23, 2016, and the relevant documentation set forth in the Part 3 Narrative.

To require an EIS for a proposed action, a lead agency must determine that the action may include the potential for at least one significant adverse environmental impact. To determine that an EIS will not be required, the lead agency must determine either that there will be no adverse environmental impacts or that the potential adverse environmental impacts that have been identified will not be significant.

This Resolution and Record of Decision documents the basis for the Planning Board's determination that the proposed action does not have the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact and that preparation of an EIS will not be required.

The SEQRA Action

The SEQRA action before the Board involves two land use applications.

Subdivision plan: The applicant proposes to subdivide a 856.6 acre parcel of land, identified as S/B/L #86.1-1-40.1 on the Town Tax Map to: (1) create the 836 acre lot (the Foothills parcel) located in the A-1.5 and the A-3 Zoning Districts of the Town of New Paltz, and in the Lake Mohonk House Complex – Mohonk Preserve Foothills Historic Landscape (NR District 73001280); (2) create a 19 acre building lot (the Hillside Lot) that would allow one single family home, with a private well and private sanitary system, in the A-1.5 Zoning District, which allows single family residences as a permitted use. The proposed Hillside Lot is not located within the Lake Mohonk House/Foothills Historic Landscape district, but abuts it. The Preserve proposes to impose a restrictive covenant on the lot that will limit disturbance, prohibit further subdivision and include restrictions intended to minimize visual impacts on the historic landscape; and (3) transfer 0.6 acres of land by a lot line change to the adjoining owner (Jenkins Properties LLC) to clear an existing deed discrepancy. No new building lot will be created and no use is proposed in connection with the transfer of that land.

Site plan: The applicant request site plan approval to allow construction of improvements (off-street parking areas, trail and landscaping improvements, bathrooms, and education and recreational facilities in two areas (the Testimonial Gateway area and the Hasbrouck House) of the 836 acre Foothills parcel, generally bounded by Butterville Road to the east, Route 299 to the south, the Catskill Aqueduct to the west and private lands to the north. As noted, the site is located in the Lake Mohonk House/Foothills Historic Landscape district. Some proposed improvements would be located in proximity to the Testimonial Gateway, a locally designated historic structure, and some in proximity to regulated wetlands and watercourses.

Each land use application will require permits and/o approvals by other agencies, as shown in the EAF Part 1.

SEQRA status

The Planning Board had previously:

- (1) determined that the applications were complete for purposes of commencing its review;
- (2) determined that the applications were subject to SEQRA review, determined that the SEQRA action was a Type I action [6 NYCRR 617.4 (b)(6)(i); 617.4 (b)(8); 617.4 (b)(9)] for purposes of SEQRA review, issued Notices of Intent to be lead agency to involved and interested agencies on March 23, 2015, and thereafter assumed lead agency status and conducted a coordinated SEQRA review of the applications;
- (3) opened a duly noticed public hearing on the subdivision and site plan on September 16, 2015, and closed the hearing on the site plan on April 11, 2016, allowing 10 business days for the submission of written comments, while leaving the public hearing on the subdivision plan open pending completion of the SEQRA review;
- (4) made site visits to the property on various dates, primarily to consider the proposed areas of disturbance in the vicinity of the Testimonial Gatehouse and existing conditions and proposed improvements along Butterville Road, Pine Road and Gatehouse Road, particularly with regard to the potential for the proposed action to adversely impact the adjacent residential areas or the aesthetic and historic resources on the site; and
- (5) referred the site plan and subdivision to Ulster County Planning Board for the required GML-239 review, which was completed on March 2, 2016, and subsequently received a comment letter.

Motion for SEQRA Determination

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has thoroughly reviewed the aforesaid applications, the site plan and subdivision, the Full Environmental Assessment Forms, including Part 1, Part 2 and the Part 3 Narrative prepared by the designated Planning Board engineer;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board opened a public hearing on the proposed site plan and subdivision that constitute the SEQRA Action described above to receive comments and concerns from the public on that Action;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has reviewed and considered those documents prepared by the applicant and its consulting engineers and submitted in connection with the application, together with supplemental reports and documents submitted with the application, and revised plans that incorporated modifications of the plan by the applicant to address concerns identified by the public in the course of the public hearing on this application, as well as by the Planning Board, its consultants, and other involved and interested agencies, as noted in the Part 3 Narrative;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board also considered the review memoranda and reports of the Board's designated engineer, consulting traffic engineer, historic preservation consultant, and environmental and wetlands consultant, the comments of the public, and the representations of the applicant and his consulting engineer throughout the review of this action, the reports and recommendations of involved and interested agencies, and the comments of the public;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board, as SEQRA Lead Agency, has considered the proposed action against the criteria of Part 617, as set forth in Parts 2 and 3 of the Full EAF;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board is mindful that the Action is a Type I action, and that SEQRA presumes it is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and that such actions may therefore require preparation of an EIS, as stated in 6 NYCRR 617.4(a)(1), and that a lead agency must make its determination of significance by comparing the impacts which may be reasonably expected to result from the proposed action with the criteria listed in 6 NYCRR 617.7(c) .

WHEREAS, the Planning Board is also mindful that that presumption is rebuttable, and that an applicant may propose modifications to its application that mitigate potential environmental impacts identified in the course of review;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has taken a hard look at the potential for the Action to have one or more significant adverse impacts and has not identified any adverse environmental impact that is significant, within the meaning of SEQRA;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has considered a draft SEQRA Determination of Significance with respect to the Action prepared by its legal counsel, which includes a draft Appendix setting forth the reasons for its determination of significance;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Planning Board finds and determines that this action, as modified by the applicant in response to the concerns of the lead agency, other involved and interested agencies, and the public, in the course of this application review, will not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment for the reasons stated in Appendix A to the Determination of Significance, and adopts the Determination of Significance, including the appendices thereto;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Planning Board Chairman is authorized to sign and file the draft Determination of Significance, revised in accordance with this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board's Determination of Significance shall be filed in accordance with the requirements of 6 NYCRR 617.12;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in making its SEQRA determination, the Planning Board relied upon voluntary agreements and representations of the applicant, as set forth in the Part 3 Narrative and Appendix A, and in the submissions made by the applicant, which shall be incorporated as relevant into any approval resolutions granting approval to the site plan and final subdivision plan. The final site plan and final subdivision plan must be consistent with this determination before it will be signed by the Planning Board chairperson.

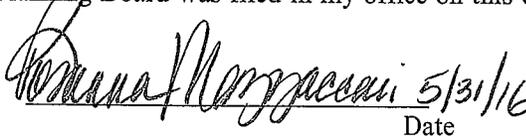
Said determination was adopted upon motion of Member Nolan, seconded by Member Yearwood, and the affirmative vote of 6 members, the negative vote of 0 members, the abstention of 1 members, no members being absent.

The Planning Board hereby directs the Secretary of the Planning Board to file a copy of this SEQRA determination in the office of the Town Clerk and mail a copy of the decision to the applicant, and, as applicable, file and circulate it to the applicant and all involved and interested agencies, pursuant to the requirements of SEQRA and the Town Law.


Michael Calimano, Chairman 31 May 2016
Date

• END •

I, Rosanna Mazzaccari, the Town Clerk of the Town of New Paltz, hereby certifies that the foregoing Resolution of the Planning Board was filed in my office on this date.


Date 5/31/16

Full Environmental Assessment Form
Part 3 - Evaluation of the Magnitude and Importance of Project Impacts
and
Determination of Significance

Part 3 provides the reasons in support of the determination of significance. The lead agency must complete Part 3 for every question in Part 2 where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.

Based on the analysis in Part 3, the lead agency must decide whether to require an environmental impact statement to further assess the proposed action or whether available information is sufficient for the lead agency to conclude that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact. By completing the certification on the next page, the lead agency can complete its determination of significance.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

To complete this section:

- Identify the impact based on the Part 2 responses and describe its magnitude. Magnitude considers factors such as severity, size or extent of an impact.
- Assess the importance of the impact. Importance relates to the geographic scope, duration, probability of the impact occurring, number of people affected by the impact and any additional environmental consequences if the impact were to occur.
- The assessment should take into consideration any design element or project changes.
- Repeat this process for each Part 2 question where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.
- Provide the reason(s) why the impact may, or will not, result in a significant adverse environmental impact
- For Conditional Negative Declarations identify the specific condition(s) imposed that will modify the proposed action so that no significant adverse environmental impacts will result.
- Attach additional sheets, as needed.

Determination of Significance - Type 1 and Unlisted Actions

SEQR Status: Type 1 Unlisted

Identify portions of EAF completed for this Project: Part 1 Part 2 Part 3

Upon review of the information recorded on this EAF, as noted, plus this additional support information identified in the Part 3 Narrative

and considering both the magnitude and importance of each identified potential impact, it is the conclusion of the Town of New Paltz Planning Board _____ as lead agency that:

A. This project will result in no significant adverse impacts on the environment, and, therefore, an environmental impact statement need not be prepared. Accordingly, this negative declaration is issued.

B. Although this project could have a significant adverse impact on the environment, that impact will be avoided or substantially mitigated because of the following conditions which will be required by the lead agency:

There will, therefore, be no significant adverse impacts from the project as conditioned, and, therefore, this conditioned negative declaration is issued. A conditioned negative declaration may be used only for UNLISTED actions (see 6 NYCRR 617.d).

C. This Project may result in one or more significant adverse impacts on the environment, and an environmental impact statement must be prepared to further assess the impact(s) and possible mitigation and to explore alternatives to avoid or reduce those impacts. Accordingly, this positive declaration is issued.

Name of Action: Mohonk Preserve Foothill Site Plan and Subdivision

Name of Lead Agency: Town of New Paltz Planning Board

Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: Michael Calimano

Title of Responsible Officer: Chairman

Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: *Michael Calimano*

Date: *31 May 2016*

Signature of Preparer (if different from Responsible Officer)

Date:

For Further Information:

Contact Person: Micheal Calimano, Chairman

Address: Town Hall, 3 Clearwater Road, New Paltz, NY 12561

Telephone Number: (845) 255-0102

E-mail: planningzoning@townofnewpaltz.org

For Type 1 Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a copy of this Notice is sent to:

Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located (e.g., Town / City / Village of)

Other involved agencies (if any)

Applicant (if any)

Environmental Notice Bulletin: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/enb.html>

PRINT FULL FORM

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1 **Impact on land resources: reference Section 1, Part 3 Narrative**

2 1. As discussed more fully in Section 1 of the Part 3 Narrative (“Narrative”), the proposed action involves
3 construction on and physical alteration of land. The total land disturbance amounts to approximately 6.4
4 acres of the total 857± acre Foothills parcel or less than 1% of the site (0.75%). Approximately 2.10 acres
5 of the disturbed area would be converted to impervious surface, representing 0.25% of the entire property.
6 The land alteration includes minor clearing and grading; the creation of two site access and parking areas,
7 trail development and restoration (stone dust, mowed vegetation, and elevated walkway); and installation of
8 11 new accessory structures totaling 2732 ft². In determining the significance of the action, the adverse
9 impact to land is considered to be small as the actions do not exceed any Type I threshold and the areas of
10 disturbance have been minimized to the extent practicable.

11 2. The components of the overall action involving land disturbance were individually analyzed in Section 1
12 of the Narrative.

13 3. The activities in the Testimonial Gatehouse area will result in 2.90 acres of disturbance, including
14 approximately 1.5 acres of disturbance for the parking area and access. Limits of clearing and grading
15 activities will be delineated on the site plan to maintain a vegetated buffer area of undisturbed land along
16 the Route 299 and Gatehouse Road frontage.

17 An alternative point of access using Gatehouse Road was considered by the applicant and rejected to avoid
18 safety issues and impacts on residences along Gatehouse Road. The applicant did modify the parking
19 area that was initially proposed to address concerns identified in the course of application review, first by
20 relocating 20 parking spaces, including parking for horse trailers and a bus, to the Hasbrouck House site
21 and then further reducing the number of spaces at the Gateway parking area to 80 spaces. The parking
22 area has been designed to incorporate green areas within the area of disturbance and the area of
23 disturbance will also accommodate a vegetated dry swale and two vegetated bioretention features for
24 stormwater control, which will provide stormwater controls while breaking up the open parking area and
25 softening the visual impact. The applicant evaluated the use of porous pavement to further reduce
26 disturbance due to the need for stormwater management was evaluated and rejected due to poor in situ
27 soils and the high volume of leaf litter which would render the system ineffective.

28 4. The activities in the Hasbrouck House area will result in 2.82 acres of disturbance includes realignment
29 of the Hasbrouck Lane driveway onto Route 299 to improve safe access, a 20 car parking area, restrooms,
30 a rustic education cabin, and other accessory structures. While the elevated marsh walkway has minimal
31 impact on land due to its pile supported construction method, it was considered as part of the total of land
32 disturbance.

33 Disturbance in the Hasbrouck area has also been modified and reduced in response to comments,
34 particularly regarding impact to the former Wawarsing Turnpike (as discussed in Section 10 – Historic and
35 Archaeological Resources). However, safety improvements to the previously disturbed portion of the road
36 providing access to Route 299 are considered unavoidable given implementation of this secondary lot.

37 5. The River to Ridge Trail connection requires the construction of 0.7 miles of trail on the Foothills
38 property and the Hillside lot, connecting the existing trail system on the Foothills parcel to the proposed OSI
39 River to Ridge trail. Land disturbance associated with this connection includes approximately 0.2 miles of
40 stone dust trail and an additional 0.5 miles of mowed agricultural trail; the latter results in no significant
41 disturbance to land but has been incorporated into the total area of disturbance. The 0.7 miles of new trail
42 along with roughly 1.5 miles of existing trail and including Pine Road will make up the Foothills 2.2 mile
43 “free loop”, and will form the connection between the OSI River to Ridge Trail and Preserve lands. Minor
44 disturbance associated with this connection trail includes an intermittent stream crossing and supplemented
45 landscape buffer areas.

46 6. Pine Road. An additional entry booth and orientation kiosk are proposed off Pine Road within currently
47 disturbed areas.

48
49 7. Hillside Lot. Part of the proposed action includes the subdivision of the 19± acre Hillside Lot from the
50 Foothills parcel. In order to demonstrate that the lot created by the proposed subdivision of the Hillside Lot

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51 is buildable, the subdivision plan shows a building envelope that would accommodate a single family
52 residence well, septic, septic reserve and driveway within the area of disturbance. Such development would
53 result in an insignificant increase in the overall impact to land. No land disturbance is proposed by the
54 Mohonk Preserve application. Any future application for a use of the property other than agricultural or
55 single family residential use would require site plan approval and full SEQRA review of such use. Both the
56 Mohonk Preserve and OSI have agreed to the restrictive building envelope and related map notes shown
57 on the plan, and to include notes on the plan that prohibit further subdivision of the 19+ acre lot or lot lines
58 changes that create additional building lots and permit principal and accessory residential structures only
59 within the established restrictive residential building envelope, and to incorporate those notes and
60 restrictions into a restrictive covenant to be recorded when the subdivision plan is filed,

61 8. Cumulative impacts. The River to Ridge trail will provide an additional 3.4 miles of trail, including land
62 within the floodplain. Considered with the Foothills project, the total physical alteration of land amounts to
63 over 10 acres, a SEQRA threshold. However, the total land area associated with the combined projects
64 amounts to over 1150 acres, thus the cumulative impact to land remains at less than 1%. The OSI project
65 consists of the creation of 3.4 miles of non-motorized, multi-use, natural stone surfaced trails and
66 reconfiguration/resurfacing of an existing parking lot, all which will have minimal impact on the land. The
67 trails are largely located in a linear corridor that traverses existing agricultural and crop buffer lands,
68 avoiding impact on the existing uses of those lands. The combined projects are considered to have no
69 significant adverse impact to land.

70 **Land resources: determination**

71 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
72 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
73 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 1 of the Narrative, the Planning**
74 **Board finds that the impacts to land described above, have been reduced to the extent feasible, and**
75 **when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the action, are small,**
76 **and that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse**
77 **impact on land.**

78 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that:

- 79 1. it will address the concern that increased use of trails may result in additional erosion potential by
80 continuing its trail management policy of routinely inspecting trails for such issues and restricting access to
81 areas where impact has been identified until repair has been made and stabilization has occurred.
- 82 2. it will utilize specific construction techniques to minimize impact in ecologically sensitive areas, as
83 described in Section 1 of the Narrative.

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85 **Impacts on surface water resources: reference Section 3, Part 3 Narrative**

86 1. As explained in Section 3 of the Narrative, the proposed action has the potential to impact surface water
87 resources on the Foothills site, but the anticipated adverse impact is small as potential impacts have been
88 satisfactorily avoided or minimized.

89 2. The applicant identified existing surface waters and wetlands within the Foothills project area in
90 accordance with federal and state wetland regulations and the Wetlands and Watercourse Law of the Town
91 of New Paltz, Chapter 139 of the Town Code. The applicant's submissions were reviewed by the Town
92 engineer and the Town's Wetland Inspector, following several site visits. The project area contains a
93 variety of regulated areas, include 3 NYSDEC mapped perennial streams (Humpo Kill, Kleine Kill and
94 Mohonk Brook), 7 unmapped tributaries and drainage features, the NYSDEC regulated Humpo Marsh, and
95 8 natural and manmade wetlands which includes the former Gateway ponds.

96 3. When evaluating the project against Part 2 thresholds, potential impacts were found to pertain only to
97 water quality and ecology. The project will not result in the creation, elimination or alteration of depth,
98 volume or surface area of any water body. Similarly no water will be withdrawn and, other than stormwater,
99 no water will be discharged as a result of this project.

100 4. Wetlands and water bodies have been avoided in all situations excepting where access to the aquatic
101 resource is the intent, specifically the installation of an elevated walkway within the Humpo Marsh, and the
102 Phenology Trail construction adjacent the northern Gateway Pond.

103 5. Testimonial Gateway area. A nature trail partially established around the Gateway Ponds in the mid
104 1960's will be expanded and improved. As portions of this Phenology Trail are situated in close proximity
105 to wetland boundaries, the Preserve will utilize the US Forest Service's Encapsulation technique within the
106 wetter portions of this trail.
107

108 6. Hasbrouck House area. An elevated walkway will be established within Humpo Marsh, mitigating
109 potential impact on aquatic resources through use of a helical pile support system to support the walkway.
110 Additionally, the Humpo Marsh walkway will be installed near the wetland fringe, not within the broad
111 expanse of wetland or the edge habitat; all vital habitat will be maintained and the naturally progressing
112 transition to the adjacent upland habitat will not be impaired. In order to accommodate for seasonal
113 wetness, a small section of trail which runs from the bird blind area northward may also be constructed
114 using the encapsulation technique.

115 7. River to Ridge Trail connection. A small bridge will be constructed over an intermittent stream opposite
116 the Hillside lot. The bridge will be similar in construction to the elevated walkway and will not impact the
117 water course. No wetlands exist in this location.
118

119 8. All improvements in regulated areas will be installed in accordance with regulatory requirements,
120 including Chapter 139 of the Town Code, the Wetlands and Watercourse Protection Law. Town wetland
121 consultant Norbert Quenzer of Bagdon Environmental has inspected the site, verified wetlands and wetland
122 boundaries, and has concurred with the anticipated impacts and need for the above mentioned approvals.

123 9. The project may cause soil erosion or otherwise impact water quality which may affect water bodies. It
124 will be required to obtain coverage under the DEC *General Permit for Storm Water Discharges from*
125 *Construction Activity*. The applicant has developed the *Mohonk Preserve Foothills Storm Water Pollution*
126 *Prevention Plan* (SWPPP), which was revised in 2016 as site plans, particularly the Hasbrouck access and
127 parking lot areas, were modified in response to concerns and recommendations of the Town HPC and its
128 independent historic resource consultant, Larson Fisher and Associates.

129 10. The Foothills SWPPP analysis of pre and post development conditions indicates that the project will
130 comply with required permit conditions. Discharge of stormwater, post development, will be substantially
131 the same with regard to volume and discharge patterns as that which currently exists. The slight increase
132 in the volume of runoff resulting from the additional 2.1 acres of impervious surface (Testimonial Gateway
133 and Hasbrouck access and parking facilities) will be treated onsite, via green infrastructure practices, in

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134 order to ensure water quality and attenuate peak flow, addressing concerns raised during the public hearing
135 about the potential impact on drainageways running along Jacob's Lane.

136 11. The Foothills SWPPP identifies and defines the erosion and sediment control practices to be installed
137 and maintained on site, which will include preservation of existing vegetation, bioretention basins, rain
138 gardens, a green roof, and use of crushed stone/gravel for parking lot surfacing, silt fence/fiber rolls, swales
139 with check dams, stabilized construction entrances, designated staging areas with foam berms, and good
140 housekeeping practices.

141 12. While the proposed Foothills project has a potential for minor impact to surface water resources, that
142 potential is mitigated by the limited area of disturbance, careful design and siting of proposed
143 improvements, and implementation of the SWPPP. As proposed, a very small impact to aquatic resources
144 and their buffers is associated with construction of the Phenology trail, the elevated walkway, wetland
145 crossing north of the bird blind, and minor buffer area disturbance in vicinity of the Hasbrouck House.
146 These impacts do not involve alteration to drainage or flow patterns, loss of aquatic habitat, change to water
147 chemistry, or modification in function of the system.

148 13. Cumulative impacts. When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI's River to Ridge
149 trail project, the cumulative impacts do not have the potential for any significant adverse impact upon
150 surface waters.

151 14. Surface water impact resulting from creation of the OSI trail will cross federal and Town regulated
152 waters and Town regulated buffers in four locations. The crossings are designed to avoid fill wetlands and
153 watercourse, avoid alterations of water flow or the functions of those resources, minimize the disturbance of
154 those areas and minimize post-construction impacts on wetlands and watercourse, in accord with best
155 practices and applicable regulations. The crossings are necessary to allow passage between the Wallkill
156 River and Lewis Lane outside of active agricultural areas.

157 15. While these necessary features will not result in any significant fill to the aquatic resources and,
158 authorization under Section 139 of Town code and Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act is required.

159 16. As the OSI project involve more than 1 acre of disturbance, a SWPPP with erosion and sediment
160 controls will be necessary to obtain coverage under the NYSDEC *SPDES General Permit for Storm Water*
161 *Discharges*. A Town floodplain permit will also be required. The nature of the OSI project along with strict
162 compliance with the OSI Trail SWPPP, and the conditions of the Town floodplain permit and wetlands
163 permit will ensure no significant adverse impact to aquatic resources.

164 **Surface water resources: determination**

165 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
166 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
167 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 3 of the Narrative, the Planning**
168 **Board finds that the potential impacts to surface land described above, have been avoided or**
169 **reduced to the extent feasible, and when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall**
170 **context of the action, are small, and that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential**
171 **for any significant adverse impact on surface water resources.**

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172 **Impacts on groundwater resources: reference Section 4, Part 3 Narrative**

173 1. As described in Section 4 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will have no significant adverse
174 impact upon groundwater resources as the project involves no new demand for water, no onsite wastewater
175 disposal, no bulk storage or hazardous wastes, nor anticipated use of applied chemicals.

176 2. The proposed action will provide restrooms that use premanufactured waterless vaulted toilets to meet
177 sanitary waste disposal requirement in accordance with Health Department standards. The facilities will be
178 monitored by Preserve staff and have regularly scheduled pumping and offsite disposal. The schedule may
179 be modified if needed. Leakage or pumping accident would result in a small and short term impact as the
180 area would be promptly and properly cleaned. The possibility of such accidental discharge is unlikely to
181 occur yet acknowledged.

182 3. Stormwater from parking areas will be treated by water quality practices that meet DEC standards to
183 minimize any impact upon groundwater. There may be minor impacts associated with those discharges,
184 but the limited volume of additional stormwater generated as a result of plan implementation along with the
185 mitigating measures required by the SWPPP avoid any potential for significant impact to groundwater.

186 4. No development of the Hillside lot is proposed by the Mohonk Preserve. In the event that a single family
187 house is built on that 19+ acre lot, it would be supplied by a private well, which would result in a slight yet
188 insignificant impact to groundwater (est. 130 gpd per bedroom).

189 5. The OSI's River to Ridge Trail project does not propose any wells or facilities that require a water
190 supply, and therefore will have no impact upon groundwater resources.

191 Therefore, there will be no significant cumulative impact groundwater resources.

192 **Groundwater resources: determination of significance**

193 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
194 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
195 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 4 of the Narrative, the Planning**
196 **Board finds that the impacts to groundwater resources described above, have been reduced to the**
197 **extent feasible, and when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the**
198 **action, are small, and that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential for any**
199 **significant adverse impact on groundwater resources.**

200 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that the onsite
201 waterless sanitary facilities will be available to visitors during normal hours of operation, regularly inspected
202 by on-site staff and regularly maintained and serviced by a licensed hauler, and that any spills or leakage
203 will be promptly remediated.

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205 **Impacts on flooding: reference Section 5, Part 3 Narrative**

206 1. As explained in Section 5 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will have no significant adverse
207 impact upon flooding. No disturbance or improvements are proposed within a designated floodway, 100-
208 year floodplain, or 500-year floodplain. The SWPPP developed for the site has shown that while drainage
209 will be slightly altered from that which currently exists, there will be no net increase in the rate of discharge
210 and the 0.25% increase in impervious surface will not alter drainage from the site or increase the potential
211 for downstream flooding in the vicinity of the Gatehouse as a result of the proposed site changes.

212 2. Cumulative impact. When considered in conjunction with OSI's River to Ridge trail project, the
213 cumulative impacts of this action on flooding remain small. Although nearly half of the OSI project area,
214 from the Walkkill River to Lewis Lane, is situated within a designated FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area
215 boundary (100 year) that experiences frequent flooding, the proposed trail improvements have been
216 designed to withstand such flooding. The Town engineer has reviewed the design of the proposed trails
217 and has advised that the addition or replacement of culverts will not significantly or adversely impact the
218 lands natural ability to store, absorb, release and allow passage of flood waters.

219 3. In accordance with the Town's Flood Damage Prevention Law, construction of the OSI trails will require
220 that all fill placed within the floodplain district be offset by excavating a hydraulically equivalent volume of
221 material from below the base flood elevation. A Town Floodplain Development Permit and Village
222 Floodplain Development Permit are both required.

223 **Flooding: determination of significance**

224 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
225 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
226 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 5 of the Narrative, the Planning**
227 **Board finds that the impacts on flooding described above have been reduced to the extent feasible,**
228 **and that those impacts are small, when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall**
229 **context of the action, and that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential for any**
230 **significant adverse impact on flooding.**

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232 **Impacts on air resources: reference Section 6, Part 3 Narrative**

- 233 1. As described in Section 6 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will not have a significant
234 adverse impact upon air quality. Air emissions associated with the Foothills project are predominantly
235 transient in nature and associated with transportation of visitors to and from the Foothills parcel. The
236 anticipated emissions do not exceed any of the Part 2 thresholds. Using guidance developed by the
237 National Park Service (50 metric tons of any pollutant generated annually), the level of increased emissions
238 anticipated through creation of parking for up to 103 passenger vehicles and up to 4 total buses is not
239 anticipated to result in any significant deterioration to air quality. The Board notes that a portion of
240 individuals using the parking areas are anticipated to be Preserve members, who likely are already visiting
241 Preserve lands, which will further offset any anticipated air quality impacts.
- 242 2. Any transient emissions associated with construction activities will be minimized by the Town's standard
243 site plan conditions prohibiting extended idling of equipment or vehicles and requiring equipment to be
244 maintained in proper operating condition. There may also be incidental emissions from the wood burning
245 fireplace and back up propane heater that will be used at the educational cabin on an intermittent, as
246 needed basis during the winter months. These sources will result in only temporary and insignificant
247 impacts to air quality.
- 248 3. The Preserve proposes to install five electric vehicle-charging stations, encouraging visitor use of no
249 emission electric vehicles and low emission hybrid vehicles.
- 250 4. Cumulative impacts. The OSI's River to Ridge trail project involves no emission sources, other than
251 minor and temporary construction activities and shared use of an existing parking facility at the Village boat
252 launch. While vehicular use may increase as visitors may opt to park within existing Village lots in order to
253 access the new OSI and Mohonk Preserve trails, it is anticipated that many users will come from the Walkkill
254 Valley Rail Trail, SUNY New Paltz and other locations from within the Village, and will thus not utilize
255 motorized transportation. When considered in the aggregate, the impact on air quality does not exceed
256 any of the Part 2 or NPS thresholds, and is therefore not considered significant.

257 **Air resources: determination of significance**

258 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
259 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
260 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 6 of the Narrative, the Planning**
261 **Board finds that the impacts on air resources described above are small, and when considered in**
262 **light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the action, that the proposed action**
263 **therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse impact on air resources.**

264 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that it will install
265 equipment to allow five EVs to charge, and ensure that those spaces are reasonably accessible for that
266 purpose.

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268 **Impacts on plants and animals: reference Section 7, Part 3 Narrative**

- 269 1. As explained more fully in Section 7 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will have an impact
270 upon resident flora and fauna.
- 271 2. Plants and animals within the proposed areas of disturbance will be removed or displaced within 6.4
272 acres of the site. However, the areas of disturbance have been extensively studied to determine what
273 species and habitat areas are present. The reports submitted by the applicant and reviewed by the Town's
274 consultants identified NYS identified rare and special concern species, provided site specific evaluations of
275 federal and state protected species and significant natural communities, described formerly existing pied
276 billed grebe habitat, habitat resources for protected bat species, and referenced US F&W Section 7
277 consultation as required by the federal wetland permit process. The Town's ecological consultant, Norbert
278 Quenzer of Bagdon Environmental, advised that the applicant submissions have accurately represented the
279 plant and animal resources and the anticipated project impacts.
- 280 3. The adverse impact is considered to be small due to the minimal area of disturbance; preservation of
281 over 99% of existing habitat; careful siting of improvements so as not to impact critical and significant
282 habitats; the lack of reported endangered and threatened species in the project area; and timing of
283 construction activity. Potential impact to wildlife will also be mitigated by the maintenance and preservation
284 of essential habitat and biodiversity including historic forest and legacy trees, wetlands and open fields.
- 285 4. Endangered, threatened or special concern species. As more fully described in the Narrative, the
286 proposed Foothills will not result in a reduction in population, loss of individuals, or reduction or degradation
287 of habitat critical to any Federal or NYS listed endangered, threatened or special concern species.
- 288 5. Overall, the small areas of disturbance required by this action will minimize habitat loss, as 99% of
289 existing habitat will remain untouched. Additionally, no federal or state protected species have been
290 identified within the project area. Although the areas of disturbance do include forested areas commonly
291 used for foraging and travel by protected bat species, no critical roost or hibernation habitat for those bat
292 species has been identified within the project area. Tree removal has been minimized and will be
293 voluntarily restricted to the period between October 31 and March 31 in accordance with US F&W
294 guidelines. This seasonal cutting restriction will also serve to protect breeding and nesting birds.
- 295 6. The site plan has been voluntarily designed by the applicant to avoid key habitats it has identified on the
296 property, including a white oak forest and the Humpo Marsh. The site plan has also been designed to avoid
297 fragmentation of habitats. For example, necessary fencing is designed to allow wild life to pass through.
298 During the construction phase, the Mohonk Preserve will provide trained personnel to survey all areas to be
299 disturbed immediately prior to construction activity in order to assure that no protected species will be
300 impacted; if any animal, protected or not, is discovered in a construction area those personnel will attempt
301 to relocate the individual out of harm's way.
- 302 7. Pesticide and herbicide use. The Mohonk Preserve does not currently use pesticides or herbicides on
303 any of its lands. In the event that the Preserve determines that the use of such is required to control
304 nuisance species, it has agreed to utilize principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to control such
305 species. It further agreed to develop an IPM plan that preferentially uses non-toxic pest management
306 (NPM) principles that utilizes natural, non-toxic and biologic practices, and, as last resort, least toxic
307 management options. Should the Preserve determine that a pesticide must be used, the application of
308 such will be subject to all regulations applicable at that time including the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide,
309 and Rodenticide Act, Environmental Protection Agency regulations in 40 CFR, Occupational Safety and
310 Health Administration regulations, and state and local laws.
- 311 8. It is worth noting the abundance of information regarding plant and animal species and habitat which
312 were considered in both the determination of need and the development of the Mohonk Preserve Foothills
313 project plan. Ecological studies performed relative to the LAMP, 2012 Testimonial Gateway BioBlitz, 2013
314 Humpo Marsh biodecathon, 2014 implementation of the Phenology Project, several bird censuses and
315 forest studies by SUNY New Paltz were evaluated in the siting of proposed improvements within the
316 Foothills parcel.

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317 9. Cumulative impacts. The OSI's River to Ridge trail project is located on lands that have been utilized for
318 agricultural purposes or disturbed by flooding. The updated Threatened and Endangered Species
319 Assessment performed by the Mohonk Preserve incorporated the OSI area into its regulatory agency query
320 and the two additional species identified were included in the Preserve's evaluation with no impact
321 identified. OSI's own evaluation of species and habitat identified no protected species, indicated a
322 proposed alteration of only 4.1 of nearly 300 acres of habitat, predominantly agricultural in nature, and
323 concluded that no significant adverse impact to plants or animals as anticipated. Accordingly, cumulative
324 impacts to species and habitat due to these projects are not considered to be significant.

325 **Plant and animal resources: determination of significance**

326 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
327 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
328 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 7 of the Narrative, the Planning**
329 **Board finds that the impacts on plants and animal resources described above are small, and when**
330 **considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the action, that the proposed**
331 **action therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse impact on plant and animal**
332 **resources.**

333 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that it will:

334 1. provide trained personnel to survey all areas to be disturbed immediately prior to construction activity in
335 order to assure that no protected species will be impacted, and that appropriate measures will be taken, if
336 possible, to relocate any animal, protected or not, found in that area out of harm's way.

337 2. continue its practice of avoiding the use of pesticides or herbicides, but in the event that it determines
338 the use of such is required to control nuisance species, it will use an Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
339 plan to control such species, and preferentially uses non-toxic pest management (NPM) principles that
340 utilizes natural, non-toxic and biologic practices, and, as last resort, least toxic management options.

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342 **Impacts on agricultural resources: reference Section 8, Part 3 Narrative**

- 343 1. As explained in Section 8 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will not have any adverse
344 impact upon agriculture.
- 345 2. Projects greater than 2.5 acres in size situated within designated agricultural districts are identified as
346 Type 1 actions as they are presumed to result in more than a small impact to agricultural resources. The
347 Foothills parcel is situated within Ulster County's Agricultural District #2 but the proposed actions will not
348 result in the loss of any significant area of agricultural soils or adversely affect existing agricultural uses on
349 or adjacent to the Preserve lands.
- 350 3. The Foothills project has limited impact on agricultural land, as only 0.6 acres of meadow near the
351 Hasbrouck House will be converted to parking, which constitutes approximately 0.1% of the site's prime
352 agricultural soils. The remaining meadows will be actively managed by the Preserve by routine mowing.
353 While open agricultural lands not suitable for productive agricultural use at this time will evolve to shrub and
354 forest lands, mitigation of loss is provided through preservation and active management of the balance of
355 such resources. Therefore, the action will not result in any significant impact to agricultural resources.
- 356 4. Additionally, the project will not sever, cross or limit access to agricultural lands, will not result in the
357 excavation or compaction of soils of active agricultural land, and will not disrupt or prevent installation of
358 any agricultural land management system. The project will not result in increased development pressure on
359 farmland.
- 360 5. The project is consistent with the Town of New Paltz Farmland Preservation Plan, which promotes
361 conservation of active farmlands and agricultural heritage. The plan is also consistent with the Town of
362 New Paltz Open Space Plan which calls for the conservation of active farmlands.
- 363 6. The Hillside lot is to be transferred to OSI with no impact to agricultural resources by the Mohonk
364 Preserve.
- 365 7. In summary, none of the soils within the proposed areas of disturbance are actively farmed and all lands
366 upon the Foothills parcel currently in agricultural production will remain so. The impact to agricultural
367 resources amounts to just over one half acre, which is considered to be minor, particularly with regard to
368 the agricultural preservation of the balance of the site.
- 369 8. Cumulative impacts. OSI's River to Ridge trail project, also located within Ulster County Agricultural
370 District 2, will also have a minor impact upon agricultural resources. However, the cumulative adverse
371 impact of the two separate projects on agricultural resources remains small.
- 372 9. Approximately half of the nearly 300 acre OSI site is in active crop production and will remain so. The
373 River to Ridge trail project will convert approximately 3 acres of farmland to crushed stone trails, a non-
374 agricultural use. The total impact of the two projects to agriculture amounts to roughly 3.5 acres of 730
375 acres of farmland or roughly 0.5%, a small portion of the prime soils on the site.
- 376 10. Compatible uses of agricultural lands include agri-tourism and outdoor recreation (multi-use trails). The
377 trails have been designed to generally follow existing farm roads and travel ways and to avoid active
378 cultivation to the greatest extent practicable; the project will not impair continuation of farm activities in the
379 area. All remaining farmland will be maintained as such. Should future circumstances warrant, trails can
380 be removed and the land returned back to agricultural use.
- 381 11. A portion of the Hillside lot is maintained as meadow; it is not used for active crop production. Potential
382 impact to agricultural resources should the lot be developed by OSI would be limited to the portion of the
383 deed restricted building envelope which is currently field. This area would not constitute a significant
384 increase to agricultural impact. Cumulatively, the impact to agricultural resources given implementation of
385 both the Mohonk Foothills and OSI River to Ridge trail project is considered small.

386 **Agricultural resources: determination of significance**

387 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
388 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**

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389 public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 8 of the Narrative, the Planning
390 Board finds that the impacts on agricultural resources described above are small, and when
391 considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the action, that the proposed
392 action therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse impact on agricultural
393 resources.

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395 **Impacts on aesthetic and visual resources: reference Section 4, Part 3 Narrative**

396 1. As described in Section 9 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will have a small adverse
397 impact upon aesthetic resources as site access, the two parking areas, and some of the new structures and
398 trails may be partially viewed from a limited number of locations, including the Shawangunk Mountain
399 Scenic Byway (Route 299), some immediate neighbors and from within the parcel itself, particularly during
400 seasonal leaf off periods. However, the project will preserve important aesthetic resources, particularly the
401 iconic Testimonial Gatehouse, and the Oak Allee, along with the overall character of the surrounding
402 landscape.

403 2. With respect to Part 2 thresholds, the impact of the project on aesthetic resources is considered to be
404 small. The proposed improvements will occupy less than 1 % of the overall parcel, will be spread among
405 several discreet locations and will be only partially visible. The project will not obstruct or eliminate any
406 scenic view and will have no adverse impact upon views from publically accessible vantage points.
407 Structural improvements are consistent with the existing structures and rural character of the area, and
408 small in size, ranging from roughly 30ft² (kiosks) to approximately 1200 ft² (rustic educational structure).
409 The scale and architecture is similar to the amenities at other Mohonk Preserve sites, which are also
410 designed to blend in with the landscape. No views will be obstructed by any proposed improvements.
411 Where fencing is needed for agricultural purposes, the applicant will typically provide a wire type fence
412 where appropriate to minimize impact on views.

413 3. The applicant did consider alternate sites for the parking facilities and associated improvements during
414 its initial land planning process, which resulted in the LAMP, and included significant public participation.
415 The alternate sites were not considered further due to visual impacts. The initial proposal for a single
416 parking area at the Gatehouse location that would provide approximately 140 spaces was modified to
417 reduce the number of parking spaces and divide then into two lots. Subsequent modifications made in
418 response to comments included the further size reduction of the Gateway parking lot and the movement of
419 horse trailer parking from Gateway to the secondary Hasbrouck lot.

420 4. All proposed improvements have been sited out of direct view from surrounding public highways, take
421 full advantage of existing natural features in order to limit their visibility, and do not appear to significantly
422 impact the visual integrity of the area. The Historic Preservation Commission has provided an advisory
423 report stating that modifications proposed by the applicant have satisfactorily addressed concerns by the
424 Commission and its historic preservation consultant about visual impacts on the historic landscape and the
425 Gatehouse. Visibility of the proposed improvements, including the Testimonial Gateway parking facility,
426 appears to be further mitigated by existing vegetative screening, topography, a significant rock outcrop and
427 distance to potential receptors.

428 5. The bulk of the trails, as well as the parking facilities and Hasbrouck Lane, will be finished with a
429 crushed stone surface consistent with the local and historic carriage roads. Such surfacing will limit visual
430 impact as it blends in with the natural landscape. As the parking areas will close no later than one hour
431 after sunset, they will not be illuminated.

432 **Testimonial Gateway area**

433 1. The Gateway parking facility, the most apparent of the proposed improvements, is located a minimum of
434 150' from Route 299. At this nearest point, the lot is situated roughly 8' in elevation higher than Route 299.
435 The nearest residential structure (2 Jacobs Lane) is roughly 500' distant on the opposite side of Route 299
436 with significant vegetation in between.

437 2. The siting and elliptical shape of the Testimonial Gateway parking area was designed to allow for
438 preservation of the entire white oak forest and quality vegetation within the central ellipse. Legacy trees
439 and second growth evergreens will also be preserved along the periphery. Additional plantings are
440 proposed between the parking area and the Testimonial Gateway structure and may be supplemented as
441 necessary.

442 3. Based on the Board's site visits, Board members familiarity with other Preserve parking facilities, and its
443 review of the site plan and visual profile information provided by the applicant, it does not appear that the
444 Testimonial Gateway lot, as currently proposed, will be substantially visible from the road or neighboring

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445 residences; portions of the elliptical shaped clearing, as well as the entrance and contact station, will be
446 visible but these do not appear to be appreciably out of character. For example, the area of clearing for the
447 Gateway parking facility is comparable in size and configuration to the cleared areas on several of the
448 neighboring residential lots on Jacobs Lane.

449 4. Two shielded, downward directed LED luminaires will be used at the Testimonial Gateway area: one at
450 the entry point, and one at the rest room facilities. These lights are to be turned off automatically one hour
451 after sunset.

452 5. A modest “Mohonk style” summer house (gazebo), 400 ft² in size and designed to accommodate only 6-
453 10 people, will be tucked into the corner of the meadow south of the Oak Allee and west of the Gateway
454 ponds. It will be visible from portions of Lenape Lane and at a distance from Gatehouse Road and possibly
455 from some of the upper Foothills trails. The structure has been designed, sized and sited so as to blend in
456 and conform to existing local character.

457 6. Restoration of the historic Gatehouse, removal of the Gatehouse Road end of Lenape Lane and the
458 landscaping of this area, and restoration of the Oak Allee with resurfacing and replacement of dead and
459 dying oak trees will benefit the aesthetic value of the Gateway area.

460 Hasbrouck House area

461 1. Access to the Hasbrouck House lot area will be via an existing albeit improved road. The lot is tucked
462 into the far north corner of the open field, taking full advantage of the natural screening of topography,
463 woodlot vegetation, viewing angles and distance. Additional trees will be planted on the south side of the
464 lot to further shield that area from view. One shielded, downward directed LED luminaire will be provided
465 at the Hasbrouck House entry point. It will also be turned off automatically one hour after sunset.

466 2. The rustic educational structure has also been tucked into the woodlot adjacent open fields and the
467 former Wawarsing Turnpike to reduce visibility from the Turnpike and the upper Foothills trails. Its scale
468 (1200 ft² which includes two porch areas), design and construction material will allow it to blend into the
469 landscape. The structure is not anticipated to be visible from outside of Preserve lands. Use of solar panels
470 to provide electricity to the structure was dismissed due to potential viewing of the panels from within the
471 site.

472 3. The proposed bird blind overlooking the Humpo Marsh will be small (400 ft²), constructed of natural
473 materials and employ a green roof. Immediately surrounding vegetation will be maintained and trimmed
474 only to the extent necessary to allow for adequate viewing from the structure. Such design features will
475 limit the visual salience of this structure.

476 River to Ridge Trail connection

477 Trails have been predominately sited on existing travel pathways (Lenape Lane, Wawarsing Turnpike) and
478 along the edge of agricultural fields. Buffers will be maintained between the trails and residences along
479 Butterville to the extent practicable (typically limited by active agriculture). Vegetative buffers may be
480 enhanced near residences as needed (ie. at road crossing from OSI trail). Trails within agricultural areas
481 will be maintained as mowed vegetated trails.

482 Lenape Lane Bridge Restoration

483 The Lenape Bridge restoration component of the project will replace the deteriorating overpass portion of
484 the existing structure, facilitating the passage of emergency service and Town highway vehicles. Since
485 parking is not legally allowed on the paved portion of highways, site restoration will eliminate the use of
486 much of the informal off-road parking area in the vicinity of the Bridge. Both will result in significant
487 aesthetic and safety improvements over existing conditions.

488 Visual impact

489 1. Visual simulations of all aspects of the project have been provided and are part of the public record. The
490 simulations appear to reasonably represent visual impact. However, it is acknowledged that computer
491 generated images in wooded areas often depict greater visibility of a project than anticipated, as tree
492 density and canopy cover need to be reduced to allow for such simulations.

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493 2. The areas where improvements are proposed, particularly the parking locations, were inspected in 2015
494 during leaf off conditions by Planning Board members, who concluded that “visibility of the proposed
495 improvements during seasonal leaf-off periods is not possible at a majority of visual receptors due to the
496 density of standing timber proposed to be retained”.

497 3. This Part 3 determination that the project, particularly the Testimonial Gateway area, will not be in sharp
498 visual contrast to existing conditions is also based on recent inspection of the site, principally the Gateway
499 parking area, as well as inspections of the Preserve’s other parking facilities, parking lots within in the Town
500 and Village and open areas in the immediate vicinity.

501 4. The Foothills project addresses many elements of the New Paltz Open Space Plan, specifically the need
502 for management of open areas to protect significant viewsheds and the need to protect and expand access
503 to scenic vistas and historical and cultural resources.

504 5. In summary, while there will be impacts to aesthetic resources associated with the project, the adverse
505 impacts are not found to be significant, particularly in the context that the Part 3 evaluation is to be of a
506 proposed action as seen from a scenic resource or as a part of a scenic resource. The elements of the
507 project seen from or against the backdrop of the Foothills do not adversely impact the aesthetic resource.
508 The view of passing motorist and from neighboring parcels is predominantly of a woodlot, not the
509 designated scenic element. The impact is considered to be small.

510 6. Proposed restoration and maintenance of several key visual elements sited within the parcel is
511 considered to be significant mitigation, including restoration of the iconic Testimonial Gateway building and
512 grounds, restoration of the Oak Allee including the replacement of dead and dying trees, and replacement
513 of the aerial portion of the Lenape Lane Bridge. Additional historically significant structures upon the parcel
514 will also be maintained in order to preserve the visual integrity of the area.

515 7. Cumulative impacts. When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge
516 trail project, the cumulative impacts will not have any significant adverse impact upon aesthetic resources.
517 The OSI trail project involves only at grade trails, trail signs, pavement markings at crossings and a few
518 benches. The visual impact will predominantly be of people walking and biking through the landscape.
519 Potential development of the Hillside lot, as per existing zoning and restrictions, will not cause significant
520 aesthetic impact as the site is situated in the valley and is not visible from important viewing areas. It is
521 also adjacent to several residential lots so any allowable development would not be out of character or
522 result in a considerable visual impact. The potential impact of these actions is considered to be small.

523 **Aesthetic and visual resources: determination of significance**

524 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
525 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the**
526 **public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 9 of the Narrative, the Planning**
527 **Board finds that the impacts on aesthetic resources described above are small, and when**
528 **considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the action, that the proposed**
529 **action therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse impact on aesthetic**
530 **resources.**

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532 Impacts on historic and archeological resources: reference Section 10, Part 3 Narrative

533 1. As explained in Section 10 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project is located within the Lake
534 Mohonk Mountain House National Historic Landmark District, a historic district on the National Register. It
535 also includes the Testimonial Gateway, a locally designated historic property.

536 2. The Narrative describes at length the assessment of potential impact on these historic and archeological
537 resources that were considered during the review of this action. As the action was designated a Type I
538 action because of the presumption that it may have a significant impact on those resources, archeological
539 and historic resource assessments were performed on the project area by Alliance Archeological Services
540 in 2013, with an addendum in 2014, by Strata Cultural Resource Management in 2015. At the request of
541 the Planning Board and the Town Historic Preservation Commission, an independent consultant, Larson
542 Fisher Associates (LJA), also performed an assessment in 2015. Relative to the Part 2 thresholds, the
543 findings and recommendations of the various studies indicate that the proposed action will not result in a
544 significant adverse impact to historic and archaeological resources.

545 3. The Historic Landscape. The proposed action will largely occur within the Lake Mohonk Mountain
546 House and its associated support lands, which does not include the Hillside lot on Buttermilk Road. The
547 *Assessment of Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources with Proposed Mitigation Measures*,
548 performed by LJA in 2015, and herein referred to as the LJA assessment, provided an extensive impartial
549 analysis of the potential impacts to historic buildings, landscapes and settings utilizing standards set forth
550 by the US Secretary of the Interior for historic preservation projects. The LJA assessment focused on
551 potential impacts to the historically significant Testimonial Gateway and Hasbrouck House structures, the
552 Wawarsing Turnpike, old Gatehouse Road, and the historic landscape.

553 It concluded that “as presented, the Mohonk Preserve Foothills Project has been carefully planned to avoid
554 potential adverse impacts to historic resources” within the Mohonk historic district. The assessment cited
555 several amendments which the Preserve has adopted, which “would lessen the potential impacts, but in
556 both cases the benefits of public access and the restoration of the exterior of the Testimonial Gateway are
557 considerable mitigations. As a result, the extent of the potential adverse impacts to historic resources
558 {resulting from the project} is not significant. These impacts are sufficiently addressed and mitigated in the
559 EAF to make an environmental Impact statement unnecessary.”

560 4. Testimonial Gateway area. The LJA assessment recommended changes to the plans which would shift
561 the congregation area and visitor services (restroom, informational kiosk, bike rack) further from the
562 Gatehouse, provide increased vegetative screening to effectively block any adverse visual impact of the
563 project amenities from the historic structure, and alter the trail location in order to allow for more consistent
564 use of the desired planned entry points with their focal advantages and to better prevent trailblazing. It will
565 also restore Lenape Lane consistent with historic surfacing of the Oak Allee, maintain the Gateway Ponds
566 in their current location, unless restoration is necessary to maintain the pond ecology or conserve habitat.
567 The applicant voluntarily incorporated those modifications into its proposed plan.

568 5. Hasbrouck House area. Although an alternative location for an access drive to the parking area at
569 Hasbrouck was recommended to avoid further impact to the existing site access, thus eliminating use of a
570 portion of the historic Wawarsing Turnpike, that access drive location was evaluated by the Preserve and
571 found to result in far greater disturbance and impact due to necessary grading and sight distance
572 requirement.

573 As described in the EAF Narrative, the Hasbrouck plan was modified in various respects to incorporate
574 suggestions by LJA and the HPC, include moving the proposed parking area and reconfigure it to provide
575 more distance between the proposed improvement and the historic Wawarsing Turnpike. The Mohonk
576 Preserve has committed to maintaining the only remaining intact portion of the Wawarsing Turnpike and
577 providing interpretive signage in order to inform and educate users of this historic feature.

578 6. Town Historic Preservation Commission. On January 20, 2016, the HPC held a duly noticed public
579 hearing on a certificate of appropriateness for the Foothills application. The HPC then issued an advisory
580 report to the Planning Board that concluded that the Mohonk Preserve Foothills project “has been carefully
581 planned to avoid potential adverse impacts to historic resources” and that “plan changes made in response

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582 to our concerns adequately mitigate any potential impacts cited”. The HPC indicated that it anticipated
583 issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Foothills project at the conclusion of the SEQRA process.
584 7. While the LJA assessment found the project to be acceptable as proposed with regard to identified
585 historic resources, the Board notes the applicant has addressed all recommendations to the greatest extent
586 practicable and the resultant modifications avoid or minimize the potential impact on historic
587 resources. Project elements acknowledged as substantial mitigation include rehabilitation of the
588 Gatehouse, rehabilitation and restored usage of Old Gatehouse Road (Lenape Lane and the Oak Allee),
589 installation of an oak nursery from which to replace dead and dying trees along the Oak Allee, trails and
590 interpretive signage, the summer house, and rehabilitation of the Lenape Lane Bridge. HPC concerns were
591 addressed by making the restoration of Lenape Lane consistent with the historic Oak Allee, modifying the
592 Hasbrouck site improvements to be more respectful of the historic Wawarsing Turnpike and minimizing any
593 impact to the former Gateway Ponds.

594 8. Archeological sites. The proposed action will occur within an area designated as sensitive for
595 archaeological sites. A literature and document review and sensitivity assessment (Phase IA) and field
596 reconnaissance survey (Phase IB) were performed on portions of the site to be impacted by access,
597 parking and structures. The field evaluations performed resulted in no finding of significant artifacts. The
598 study concluded that no further archeological investigations were necessary. These studies and their
599 conclusions were submitted to SHPO. A consolidated response from SHPO indicated that the Phase 1A,
600 1A Addendum and 1B archaeological studies were reviewed, and concluded that “SHPO has no further
601 concerns regarding the Project’s potential effects to archaeological resources, and it is SHPO’s
602 recommendation that no additional archaeological work is necessary.”

603 9. Cumulative impacts. When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge
604 trail project, the cumulative impacts have no significant adverse impact upon archeological and historic
605 resources. The OSI trail project passes through significantly disturbed active and passive agricultural areas
606 as well as areas subject to periodic substantial flooding. These areas are typically not considered to be
607 archaeologically sensitive. Additionally, the OSI project involves only trail installation, with no significant
608 earthwork to be performed. Trail improvements will result in only minor changes to the historic landscape,
609 consistent with its scenic, rural and agricultural character. No historic structures will be impacted. In its
610 review of the OSI River to Ridge Trail project, the OPRHP has concluded that the project would have no
611 impact on archaeological and/or historic resources listed or eligible for listing.

612 10. Conclusion. The impact of the Foothills project upon historic and archaeological resources has been
613 fully evaluated. The literature review and sensitivity assessment (Phase IA) and field reconnaissance
614 survey (Phase IB) concluded that the action will have no adverse impact on historic and archaeological
615 resources. The studies submitted by the applicant, and the independent LJA study, as well as review of the
616 proposed action and those studies by the HPC, concluded that the potential impact to historic resources
617 due to implementation of the Foothills project is not significant, and that the project satisfactorily mitigates
618 any potential impact though project modifications that avoid or minimize impacts on the historic landscapes
619 and historic resources, and the proposed restoration and maintenance of key historic elements.

620 **Historic and archaeological resources: determination of significance**

621 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
622 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, the Town Historic Preservation**
623 **Commission, its historic resource consultant and the public, and on consideration of the reasons**
624 **set forth in Section 10 of the Narrative, the Planning Board finds that the impacts on historic and**
625 **archaeological resources described above are small, and when considered in light of the Part 2**
626 **thresholds and the overall context of the action, that the proposed action therefore does not have**
627 **the potential for any significant adverse impact on historic and archaeological resources or the**
628 **viewshed.**

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629 **Impacts on open space and recreation resources: reference Section 11, Part 3 Narrative**

630 1. As discussed in Section 11 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will have a beneficial impact
631 upon both open space and recreation; it will not result in any loss or adverse impact.

632 2. The Preserve's acquisition of the Foothills parcel allows the Preserve to protect a significant area of
633 open space landscape from development. This was a priority goal of the Town's 2006 Open Space Plan.
634 The Board recognizes that active management of fields, pastures and meadows that provide open space,
635 by continuing agricultural practices and periodic mowing, is often necessary to maintain important
636 viewsheds, rather than allowing a natural reversion to forest. As discussed in Sections 10 and 11, the
637 proposed site modifications and amenities are not considered to have an adverse impact on the existing
638 areas of open space on the Foothills parcel. Consistent with the character of the open spaces, they will
639 provide safe and manageable access to the recreational opportunities offered by Foothills parcels, provide
640 users with enhanced facilities and amenities not currently available, and alleviate concerns about the
641 existing road side parking by Mohonk Foothills users.

642 3. Trails on the Foothills parcel will provide opportunity for short and/or leisurely strolls, with nearly level
643 trails for very young, elderly and disabled visitors, and varied settings including open field, marsh, pond,
644 and woods, and historic/cultural features not available on other lands, whether Preserve or publicly owned.

645 4. The proposed improvements, such as the elevated walkway and bird blind at Humpo Marsh, the
646 summer house (rustic gazebo) and rustic educational shelter, will enhance recreational opportunities such as
647 birding and wildlife watching, photography and nature study. "Citizen scientist" activities sponsored by the
648 Preserve will benefit from access to resources such as the Phenology Trail, which facilitates study of
649 seasonal and cyclical changes in species and habitat. The horse trailer parking area at the Hasbrouck
650 House will provide recreational opportunity to the equestrian population.

651 5. As discussed more fully in the Narrative, the proposed action will beneficially impact recreational
652 opportunities. In addition to providing public access to the Preserve's trail system by means of a day pass
653 or membership, the Preserve will provide a free 2.2 mile loop within Preserve lands that will connect to
654 OSI's proposed River to Ridge trail system, providing an extended multi-use trail from the Wallkill River
655 bridge into the Foothills parcel.

656 6. Visitor experience will be enhanced by directional signage and kiosks containing relevant information
657 about trail location, wildlife, habitat and local history. For example, the Preserve has committed to
658 preservation of the last remaining portion of the historic Wawarsing Turnpike, with relevant signage about
659 the feature. Parking areas with handicap parking and ADA compliant restrooms, which do not currently
660 exist, will provide opportunities to utilize the Foothills parcel for those with disabilities and the elderly.

661 7. The proposed parking areas will be managed by Preserve staff, which will manage parking and handle
662 emergency situations as well as assist visitors and enforce use regulations. The Preserve has provided
663 copy of its lot management plan, which addresses procedures to be followed at trailhead/parking lot areas
664 and the responsibilities of staff. The Preserve has also provided the Town information regarding its Search
665 and Rescue procedures, training and capabilities. The Preserve has agreed to maintain an open dialog
666 with the Town and will review such plans periodically with the Town in order to address any operation
667 concerns which the Town may have. The Preserve has indicated that it will also periodically review its plan
668 with Minnewaska Park officials to help ensure that the facilities are adequately respectful of local
669 communities.

670 8. With regard to concern over the possible overuse of the Foothills parcel, it is important to note that
671 Preserve lands are not public; they are privately owned with usage permitted to members and day pass
672 holders. Proper maintenance is in the best interest of the Preserve. However, such maintenance, including
673 potential limitation of use of areas determined to be adversely impacted, is at the discretion of the Preserve.

674 9. The Preserve will continue its practice of allowing limited hunting by private permit on portions of the
675 Foothills parcel west of Butternut Road as part of the Preserve's land management plan.

676 10. Cumulative impacts. OSI's River to Ridge trail project provide additional opportunity for recreation with
677 3.4 miles of free access, multi-use trails, providing access to the Foothills from the Village and the Wallkill

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678 Valley Rail Trail is along Route 299, Springtown, Butternville and Mountain Rest Roads. It will eliminate
679 potential conflict between vehicle and non-motorized usage by providing a safe, off road alternative.

680 For those reasons, the combined Mohonk Preserve Foothills project and OSI River to Ridge Trail project will
681 have no adverse impact on either open space or recreation.

682 **Open Space and Recreation: determination of significance**

683 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
684 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, the Town engineer, the Board's**
685 **consultants and the public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 11 of the**
686 **Narrative, the Planning Board finds that the impacts on open space and recreation resources**
687 **described above are small, and when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall**
688 **context of the action, that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential for any**
689 **significant adverse impact on open space and recreation resources.**

690 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that:

691 1. it will provide a free 2.2 mile loop within Preserve lands that will connect to OSI's proposed River to
692 Ridge trail system, providing an extended multi-use trail from the Walkkill River bridge into the Foothills
693 parcel;

694 2. the proposed parking areas will be managed by Preserve staff, which will manage parking and handle
695 emergency situations as well as assist visitors and enforce use regulations.

696 3. The Preserve will review its plans periodically with the Town in order to address any operation concerns
697 which the Town may have, and also periodically review its plan with Minnewaska Park officials to help
698 ensure that the facilities are adequately respectful of local communities.

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700 **Impacts on transportation resources: reference Section 13, Part 3 Narrative**

- 701 1. As explained in Section 13 of the Narrative, the proposed Foothills project will result in a change to
702 existing transportation conditions.
- 703 2. Traffic Generation. On consideration of the potential impact that project traffic could have on the
704 surrounding road network, the Board finds that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse
705 environmental impact. In making that determination, the Board considered that the resulting impacts have
706 not been found to exceed any of the identified Part 2 thresholds: the anticipated increase in volume will not
707 exceed capacity of the existing road network, will not result in the construction of paved parking for 500 or
708 more vehicles, will not alter existing transit access, will not degrade existing pedestrian and bicycle
709 accommodations and will not significantly alter the present pattern of movement of people or goods.
710
- 711 4. The traffic report prepared by the applicant's traffic engineer, and reviewed by the Planning Board's
712 consulting engineer and the involved agencies with jurisdiction, evaluates No-Build and Build scenarios and
713 takes into account certain mitigation measures offered by the applicant. As more fully set forth in the Part 3
714 EAF Narrative, the traffic study shows that existing levels of service in the vicinity of the project will be
715 maintained in the Build scenario, with the exception of a LOS change at the Gatehouse/299 intersection
716 from level B to C, which remains an acceptable LOS. The analysis indicated that the proposed project
717 entrance drives could operate satisfactorily as proposed, without further mitigation and that the additional
718 traffic volumes will not degrade the performance of the existing adjacent transportation networks.
- 719 5. NYS DOT and Ulster County DPW, the agencies with jurisdiction over the operation of the Route 299,
720 the highway providing the principal access to the proposed Project, have reviewed the plan and have not
721 indicated any concern about the impact of project traffic on the road network.
722
- 723 6. Safety. On consideration of concerns raised regarding the potential for project traffic to adversely affect
724 safety on the road network, the Board finds that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse
725 environmental impact on safety on the road network.
- 726 7. Sight distance analyses were conducted on the approaches to both the Testimonial Gateway and
727 Hasbrouck area entrances. As more fully described in the Narrative, adequate sight distance is available at
728 both entrances to provide safe ingress and egress. The applicant has represented that it will cooperate
729 with the agencies with jurisdiction over Route 299 to ensure that any right of way clearing necessary to
730 maintain adequate sight distance is conducted.
- 731 8. The applicant has submitted accident survey data that indicates intersections along the Route 299
732 corridor west of the Wallkill River have higher than average accident rates. The Board notes that this is an
733 existing condition, that the available data indicate a variety of causes may contribute to those higher rates,
734 and that the design and sightlines of some intersections may also affect accident rates. On review of the
735 data, the Town's consulting traffic engineer reported that a small increase in accidents proportionate to the
736 volume of traffic from the Foothills project may occur, the Foothills project would not have a significant
737 adverse impact on the existing accident rate given the relatively small volume of traffic generated by the
738 site, the adequacy of the proposed site driveway improvements and active management of traffic during
739 busy periods.
740
- 741 9. Independent of the proposed action, the Town Highway Superintendent has identified an opportunity to
742 improve the Gatehouse Road/Route 299 intersection to improve safety and the Preserve has voluntarily
743 offered to provide land if necessary. That improvement will address an existing concern about the
744 geometry of this intersection and would proceed independently of the Project to realign the intersection of
745 Gatehouse Road with Route 299 to correct the existing condition at that intersection by improving sightlines
746 and providing a safer turning movement for traffic turning onto Gatehouse Road.
747
- 748 10. The Board notes that there has been longstanding concern about the 55 MPH speed limit on Route
749 299 between the Wallkill River Bridge and Route 44/55 in the Town of Gardiner. In the past, the speed limit
750 had reportedly been reduced by DOT to 45 MPH but then was raised back to 55 MPH. It was suggested by
751 the applicant, and various members of the public, that the accident survey submitted by the applicant

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752 warrants a reduction in the speed limit to 45 MPH. The Board notes that the speed limit is under the
753 jurisdiction of NYS DOT and UC DPW, the agencies with jurisdiction over that highway. While the Town's
754 traffic consultant recommended that the Town make a formal request to those agencies to investigate
755 whether a speed reduction is warranted, any decision would be based on State safety standards. The
756 prevailing speeds on those portions of Route 299 which have information available do not suggest speeds
757 are excessive. Although there is no available information about prevailing speeds on that portion of Route
758 299 in the vicinity of the two Project entrances to support a reduction request, the Town will work with Ulster
759 County to obtain funding for a study.

760 11. Concerns about the impact of the project on accident rates were raised during the public hearing on
761 this application. The Board understands the concern that the existing speed limit on Route 299 may
762 contribute to higher accident rates, but notes that the Town's consulting traffic engineer reports that further
763 study would be necessary to demonstrate to DOT that a speed reduction is warranted. The Town Board
764 has indicated it would pursue a reduction in speed for this particular stretch of Route 299, if warranted, and
765 the applicant has agreed to support such a request. However, as noted in the Narrative, the traffic study
766 analyzed sight lines at both access points using a vehicle speed of 60 MPH for traffic on Route 299 and
767 found that adequate sight distance was available at those intersections if vegetation within an existing sight
768 easement is maintained at a proper height, and the Town's traffic engineer agreed. The applicant provided
769 information from other locations it manages, such as the Trapps Bridge parking area on Route 44/55,
770 indicating that those locations have had few, if any, reported traffic accidents. The Town's traffic engineer
771 considered the accident data and the concerns raised during the public hearing on the site plan, and
772 concluded that the project traffic will not have a significant impact on the existing accident rate or other
773 safety concerns, and that the two proposed access sites on Route 299 comply with sight distance
774 standards for the prevailing speeds and are appropriately designed for access.

775 12. Parking Facilities. On consideration of the proposed parking facilities against the Part 2 standards, the
776 Board finds that they result in a small impact to existing conditions. As the applicant has modified its site
777 plan to preserve legacy trees by reducing the number of parking spaces at the Gateway parking area to 80
778 spaces, the overall plan will provide 103 vehicle spaces, which is substantially less than the Part 2
779 threshold of 500 spaces. As the record amply demonstrates, the lack of off-street parking area has
780 resulted in frequent parking on local roads, particularly along Gatehouse Road and Butterville Road.

781 13. The proposed parking areas are anticipated to provide an adequate number of spaces to allow
782 Preserve members and the public to use safe, managed parking to access the Foothills trail system. The
783 proposed parking is anticipated to reduce, if not eliminate, the number of vehicles parked on local roads
784 and will improve overall safety for vehicles and pedestrians using the Foothills. The proposed parking will
785 also help to address the concerns of local residents about parking on Gatehouse Road.

786 14. The applicant has offered to install guiderails adjacent to the edge of pavement to reduce the
787 opportunity for parking adjacent to Town highways, and has indicated that it would support action by the
788 Town to designate "no parking" areas along Gatehouse Road.

789 15. Transit facilities. The project will not adversely impact access to mass transit facilities. The applicant
790 has offered to cooperate with any initiative to provide shuttle bus service to the project and the other
791 recreational areas along the Shawangunk Ridge. If public transportation was made available to the area,
792 the project trailhead access drives are designed to accommodate school bus circulation; therefore, other
793 transit vehicles could be accommodated.

794 16. Local transportation systems. No modifications to the local transportation network are required as the
795 result of the proposed action, thus there will be no impact on the existing pattern of movement of people or
796 goods. However, the applicant has offered to facilitate action by the Town to improve the Route 299 and
797 Gatehouse Road intersection in response to concerns about the existing intersection that were discussed
798 during this SEQRA process, and to support a reduction in the speed limit for the portion of Route 299 from
799 the Carmine Liberta Bridge to Jenkins Road.

800 17. Seasonal traffic management. The Preserve will prepare a formal traffic management plan for use at
801 the Testimonial Gateway and Hasbrouck entrances, based on the procedures currently in use at its other

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802 lots to prevent excess stacking of vehicles on peak use days. The parking facility at the Testimonial
803 Gateway has also been designed with a 'pass-by' lane that would be used to alleviate queuing on Route
804 299 during peak usage. The applicant has represented that it will provide sufficient trained staff to
805 effectively implement that plan on anticipated high volume days, monitor occupancy at both lots, and when
806 necessary to avoid congestion in the public right of way, use staff and temporary signage to direct arriving
807 drivers to alternative parking areas.

808 18. The Preserve's peak day traffic management plan will be provided to the Town; the Preserve will meet
809 with the Town for periodic review of the traffic management plan, its effectiveness, and any identified need
810 for modification of the plan. During peak season, the Preserve, in cooperation with management of
811 Minnewaska State Park, will disseminate information concerning alternative routes from the ridge area
812 southward in order to help alleviate congestion through the Village.

813 19. Seasonal traffic congestion. On consideration of the potential impact on seasonal traffic congestion,
814 the Board finds that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact;

815 20. The Board recognizes that residents are concerned about travel delays experienced during periods of
816 peak traffic volume due to seasonal visitors who use Route 299 to access the many existing recreational
817 resources west of the Walkkill. The resulting periods of traffic congestion are inconvenient, but as they
818 result from general traffic conditions, the responsibility for alleviating those conditions cannot be imposed on
819 one individual sponsor of an action.

820 21. However, the Board recognizes that there may be value to increased coordination by the public and
821 private project sponsors and agencies responsible for transportation infrastructure regarding the general
822 traffic conditions in the area and the development of methods to avoid or minimize those impacts, such as
823 developing a tourism oriented shuttle bus, alternative means of access, such as the River to Ridge trail,
824 coordinating activities or identifying road improvements that can increase capacity in the network.

825 22. Access to emergency services. On consideration of the potential impact on access to emergency
826 services, the Board finds that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact.

827 23. With respect to emergency access concerns, the Board notes that the applicant has represented that
828 staff with basic emergency response skills will be available at the Gatehouse trailhead and the Hasbrouck
829 House during periods when those facilities are in greatest use. Available information indicates that activities
830 at these sites will have no unusual injury risk, and provide adequate access for emergency services to
831 respond in a reasonable time.

832 24. The applicant has modified its proposed site plan to provide for an eight-foot (8') wide by 150-foot long
833 gravel shoulder along the westbound side of NYS Route 299 to provide a pull-off area for emergency
834 vehicle access to the parking area.

835 25. While periods of congestion can slow access along the Route 299 corridor, the Board notes that is an
836 existing condition, typically of limited duration, that the traffic volumes associated with the proposed action
837 are not anticipated to significantly affect existing traffic volumes, and that emergency service providers have
838 not expressed concern about providing access to the proposed sites. Even when vehicles are stopped in
839 traffic, they can still drive forward onto the shoulders to allow emergency service vehicles passage, as
840 required by the Vehicle and Traffic Law.

841 26. Cumulative impacts. On consideration of the potential for cumulative impacts, the Board finds that the
842 proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact.

843 27. In response to concerns identified during the public hearing, the applicant provided a revised report that
844 analyzed the cumulative impact of the traffic from the project and other identified projects along the Route
845 299 corridor. A sensitivity analysis estimated cumulative traffic impacts associated with the Hampton Inn,
846 CVS/Five Guys, and Wildberry Lodge projects and concluded that intersection delay increases would be
847 less than one half-second per vehicle.

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848 28. Analysis of the data found that there would be no significant adverse impact on the traffic network. The
849 0.4 second delay increase when exiting the Testimonial Gateway resulted in the only change in LOS; this
850 small change does not impact the transportation network, and the conclusions of the original traffic study
851 remain unchanged. In addition, the applicant has proposed to reduce the Gatehouse parking by ten
852 spaces, which would further mitigate that small impact.

853 29. The study was reviewed by the agencies with jurisdiction over Route 299 corridor, and by the Board's
854 consulting traffic engineer, who confirmed the findings of that analysis.

855 30. The OSI traffic and parking assessment indicated that the OSI project is not anticipated to generate
856 additional vehicular traffic, that ample parking accommodations exist within the Village for non local users,
857 and that the OSI component may reduce parking needs of Foothills users. Additionally, the River to Ridge
858 Trail project will provide a safe alternate route to the Foothills and Shawangunk Ridge from the Village of
859 New Paltz and the Walkkill Valley Rail trail, reducing bicycle and pedestrian use of local roads, particularly
860 the heavily used Route 299 flats, thereby making all transportation modes in the immediate area safer.
861 The OSI Project is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impact on transportation.

862 31. For those reasons, no significant cumulative adverse impact on transportation resources is anticipated
863 to occur as a result of those projects.

864 32. Construction traffic. On consideration of construction related traffic, the Board finds that the proposed
865 action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact. In making that determination, the Board
866 notes that traffic peaks associated with construction workers will generally occur outside of peak traffic
867 hours, limiting any potential impact on the road network. Cleared areas on the site will be improved as
868 necessary to provide parking for construction workers and vehicles, and to stage construction equipment.
869 Delivery of materials to the site would be coordinated as necessary to avoid or minimize traffic during
870 anticipated periods of traffic congestion on the road network.

871 33. Pedestrian and bicycle access. On consideration of pedestrian and bicycle access, the Board finds
872 that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact.

873 34. The project will not impact any existing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The project includes
874 improvements to facilitate access by pedestrians and bicyclists to the Foothills, particularly with the
875 proposed connection to the OSI River to Ridge Trail. The project will provide accommodations such as new
876 surfaced trails, signage, bike racks and restroom facilities at the Gatehouse and Hasbrouck House lots, as
877 well as improved access to existing trails. Handicap parking and ADA compliant facilities will benefit visitors
878 with disabilities.

879 35. The Board notes that the proposed action includes installation of a pedestrian crosswalk on Butternut
880 Road, subject to approval by the agency with jurisdiction, and that other crosswalks are proposed as part of
881 the OSI project.

882 36. The project sponsor has also represented that it is willing to cooperatively explore action to facilitate the
883 provision of shuttle bus service to access recreational resources along the Minnewaska Ridge.

884 37. In summary, according to the traffic related studies performed by the Preserve and its engineers, and
885 verified by the Town's transportation consultant, the Foothills project will not have a significant adverse
886 impact upon the existing transportation network. Review of the submitted accident data indicates that
887 existing conditions in the Route 299 corridor may contribute, independently of the Mohonk project, to
888 accident rates that exceed State averages for similar intersections. That data does not indicate any such
889 conditions will be exacerbated by the Foothills project. However, the Town will continue to work with the
890 agencies with jurisdiction over Route 299 to investigate these conditions utilizing data obtained from the
891 Mohonk analyses and identify appropriate safety improvements, including the realignment of Gatehouse
892 Road, reduced speed limit along Route 299, and modified and improved traffic signage.

893 **Impacts on Transportation: determination of significance**

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894 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
895 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, the Town’s consulting traffic engineer,**
896 **the Town Highway Superintendent, agencies with jurisdiction over Route 299. the Board’s other**
897 **consultants and the public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 14 of the**
898 **Narrative, the Planning Board finds that the impacts on transportation described above are**
899 **moderate, and when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the**
900 **action, that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse**
901 **impact on transportation.**

902 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that:

- 903 1. it will install guiderails adjacent to the edge of pavement to reduce the opportunity for parking adjacent to
904 Town highways, and support action by the Town to designate “no parking” areas along Gatehouse Road;
- 905 2. it will cooperate with any initiative to provide shuttle bus service to the project and the other recreational
906 areas along the Shawangunk Ridge;
- 907 3. it will facilitate action by the Town to improve the Route 299 and Gatehouse Road intersection in
908 response to concerns about the existing intersection that were discussed during this SEQRA process;
- 909 4. it will support a reduction in the speed limit for the portion of Route 299 from the Carmine Liberta Bridge
910 to Jenkins Road;
- 911 5. it will prepare a formal traffic management plan for use at the Testimonial Gateway and Hasbrouck
912 entrances, based on the procedures currently in use at its other lots to prevent excess stacking of vehicles
913 on peak use days and provide sufficient trained staff to effectively implement that plan on anticipated high
914 volume days, monitor occupancy at both lots, and when necessary to avoid congestion in the public right of
915 way, use staff and temporary signage to direct arriving drivers to alternative parking areas;
- 916 6. it will meet with the Town for periodic review of the operation of traffic management plan, its
917 effectiveness, and any identified need for modification of the plan;
- 918 7. it will, in cooperation with management of Minnewaska State Park, disseminate information during peak
919 season concerning alternative routes from the Ridge area southward in order to help alleviate congestion
920 through the Village; and
- 921 8. It will have staff with basic emergency response skills available at the Gatehouse trailhead and the
922 Hasbrouck House during periods when those facilities are in greatest use.

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923 **Noise, odor and light impacts: reference Section 15, Part 3 Narrative**

- 924 1. As described in Section 15 of the Narrative, noise, odor and light may have a small impact potential
925 impact on surrounding residences, but those impacts are considered minor due to the nature of the project,
926 the strategic siting of site facilities, the applicant's representations with respect to use, maintenance and
927 operation of the site, the topographic and vegetative screening that will be maintained between the potential
928 sources of noise, odor and light and other properties, and restrictions on site usage to daylight hours only.
- 929 2. Noise. A small increase in noise and odor will occur during construction. The impact is anticipated to be
930 small due to the limited duration and scope of work at the individual construction sites.
- 931 3. The parking area at the Gatehouse may result in a slight increase in vehicular noise and human noise
932 over that which currently exists. That impact has been mitigated by the applicant's reduction in size of the
933 parking area, the maintenance of the natural vegetation to provide a substantial buffer along Gatehouse
934 Road and Route 299, and the distance and topography between the parking area and residences on
935 Jacobs Lane and Gatehouse Road. Other proposed improvements will be restricted to non-motorized
936 activities that do not generate nuisance noise.
- 937 4. Odors. The project is not anticipated to generate off-site odors. To the extent on-site odors may occur,
938 they will only be evident in close proximity and for short duration.
- 939 5. Lighting. Two LED luminaires will be provided on the Testimonial Gateway parcel: one at the entry point
940 and one at the restroom area. Another LED luminarie will be provided at the Hasbrouck entry point.
941 These lights will be shielded and downward directed and are to be automatically turned off one hour after
942 sunset but may be noticeable, for a short time, as no lighting currently exists. The parking lots will not be
943 illuminated.
- 944 6. Events. In response to concerns about the noise and light impacts of events at the site, the Preserve
945 has represented that it will not make the Testimonial Gateway site available for non-Mohonk Preserve
946 events such as private parties, weddings and after sunset events for members. It will utilize the Foothills
947 sites, particularly the Gateway area, for a limited number of its own sponsored, mission-related gatherings
948 and events. The Preserve will conduct such events at a scale appropriate to the site, and it would plan to
949 avoid or minimize any off-site noise or light impacts and confine events to the hours in which the Preserve
950 operates, ending no later than one hour after sunset. The Preserve may also make limited use of the site
951 for guided and monitored photography or film shoots, which would be permitted by the
952 Preserve on a case by case basis following thorough review of the applicant and committed compliance
953 with the Preserve's site protection and minimum impact guidelines.
- 954 7. As the OSI River to Ridge project will not generate any significant impact due to nuisance noise, odors
955 or lighting, no cumulative impacts will result.

956 **Noise, Odor and Light: determination of significance**

957 **Based on its review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications**
958 **made to the plan in response to comments from the Board, the Town engineer, the Board's**
959 **consultants and the public, and on consideration of the reasons set forth in Section 15 of the**
960 **Narrative, the Planning Board finds that the noise, odor and light impacts described above are**
961 **small, and when considered in light of the Part 2 thresholds and the overall context of the action,**
962 **that the proposed action therefore does not have the potential for any significant adverse impact as**
963 **a result of noise, odor and light generated by the project.**

964 In making its determination, the Board relies on the following representations of the applicant that:

- 965 1. it will not make the Testimonial Gateway site available for non-Mohonk Preserve events such as private
966 parties, weddings and after sunset events for members.
- 967 2. Use of the Foothills, particularly the Gateway area, will be allowed for a limited number of its own
968 sponsored, mission-related gatherings and events, but the Preserve will conduct such events at a scale
969 appropriate to the site, and they will be planned to avoid or minimize any off-site noise or light impacts and
970 confined to the hours in which the Preserve operates, ending no later than one hour after sunset. The

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971 applicant agrees to review any unanticipated impacts of such activities on adjoining properties with the
972 Planning Board and adjust such activities as the Planning Board finds necessary to avoid or minimize such
973 impacts.

974 3. The Preserve may make limited use of the site for guided and monitored photography or film shoots,
975 which would be permitted on a case by case basis following thorough review of the applicant and
976 committed compliance with the Preserve's site protection and minimum impact guidelines. The applicant
977 agrees to review any unanticipated impacts of such activities on adjoining properties with the Town and
978 adjust such activities as the Town finds necessary to avoid or minimize such impacts.

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979 **Impacts on Human Health: reference Section 16, Part 3 Narrative**

980 1. As discussed in Section 16 of the Narrative, the proposed action will not result in any adverse impacts
981 due to exposure to solid or hazardous wastes, hazardous substances or contaminants.

982 2. In response to questions raised during the public hearing and application review about the potential use
983 of pesticides or herbicides, the applicant has represented that its existing policy and practice is to avoid the
984 use of pesticides, herbicides or similar chemical applications on any of its lands, and has represented it will
985 follow that practice on the Foothills parcel. As discussed more fully in Section 7, above, in the event future
986 circumstances require a deviation from that policy, the applicant has represented that it will utilize IPM and
987 NPM practices to address those circumstances. In the event the applicant determines the use of other
988 control practices is necessary, the applicant represents that use of such practices will be restricted to
989 minimize the area and duration of application and comply with all requirements and guidelines of regulatory
990 authorities with jurisdiction over the use of pesticides, herbicides or similar chemical applications, as
991 discussed in Section 7. For those reasons, any such use is not anticipated to have a significant impact on
992 human health.

993 3. In response to questions raised during the public hearing and application review about the potential
994 health impact of traffic congestion, the Board notes that the Environmental Conservation Board advised the
995 Board that its initial concerns about the potential for air quality impacts on health were satisfactorily
996 addressed by the applicant. The Board further notes that the action is not anticipated to significantly
997 increase the volume, extent or duration of the periods of seasonal traffic congestion that presently occurs
998 during summer and fall weekends, particularly as the result of unrelated activities at the Ulster County
999 Fairgrounds. For those reasons, the anticipated increase in traffic associated with this action is not
1000 anticipated to have a significant impact on human health.

1001 4. The primary impact on health of the proposed action will be beneficial, resulting from increased
1002 opportunity for outdoor recreation.

1003 **Human Health: determination of significance**

1004 **Based on the review of the criteria of significance set forth in 6 NYCRR 617.7(c), Part 2 of the EAF,**
1005 **Section 16 of the Narrative, and the materials submitted by the applicant in support of the**
1006 **application and the representations of the applicant, the Board finds and determines that the**
1007 **proposed action does not have the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact on**
1008 **human health.**

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1010 **Impacts on community plans: reference Section 17, Part 3 Narrative**

- 1011 1. As discussed at length in Section 17 of the Narrative, the proposed action is consistent with the Town's
1012 Comprehensive Master Plan, Open Space Plan, and Farmland Preservation Plan, as well as county and
1013 state plans that address land use in the Butternut Canaan Foothills and Shawangunk Mountains. The
1014 activities proposed on the site plan are permitted uses in the Town's A-3 Zoning District, and meet all
1015 zoning requirements without the need for variances. The proposed action is consistent with surrounding
1016 land use patterns and will not result in population growth, secondary development, or the need for new or
1017 expanded infrastructure. The proposed activities also comply with local laws related to signage, protection
1018 of trees and wetlands.
- 1019 2. The proposed action addresses, in part or in whole, many of the principles, objectives and goals of the
1020 local, regional and state plans calling for safe and managed recreation facilities, particularly pedestrian and
1021 bicycle pathways within and connecting to the Foothills and Shawangunk Ridge; the provision of such with
1022 minimal fiscal burden on the community; greater handicap accessibility to recreational opportunities; and
1023 the restoration and preservation of key historic elements.
- 1024 3. The proposed access and parking facilities at the Gatehouse and Hasbrouck House are anticipated to
1025 provide safe off road parking opportunities for the public, minimizing the present practice of parking along
1026 the right of way of public highways which has resulted in complaints from property owners and safety
1027 concerns for pedestrians during times of peak use of Preserve lands; provide supervised access to new
1028 and existing trails by trained staff, minimizing the impact on community services, provide educational
1029 facilities, viewing structures, interpretive signage, and ADA compliant amenities. The proposed action will
1030 make available accessible trails, providing increased outdoor recreational opportunities for families with
1031 small children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.
- 1032 4. In those respects, the Foothills plan complies with:
- 1033 • Town of New Paltz Master Plan policy 7 - to provide adequate...recreation facilities and minimize the
 - 1034 fiscal burden of such services on the existing community;
 - 1035 • Town of New Paltz Master Plan policy 9 - to promote pedestrian circulation and freedom of movement
 - 1036 by the establishment of footpaths, sidewalks and bike paths for non vehicular travel;
 - 1037 • New York State Open Space Conservation Plan goal - to provide accessible quality outdoor recreation
 - 1038 and open space for all New Yorkers;
 - 1039 • New York State Open Space Conservation Plan goal - to protect habitat to sustain traditional pastimes
 - 1040 of...wildlife viewing.
- 1041 5. The proposed action is also consistent with regional proposals by the County and State to encourage
1042 the regional connectivity of trails, such as the Wallkill and Hudson Valley Rail Trails, to facilitate non-
1043 motorized access to the Mohonk and Minnewaska trails and points west.
- 1044 6. The plan, particularly the formalized site access and parking, elevated marsh walk, bird blind, Phenology
1045 Trail and education cabin also furthers the goal of the NYS Open Space Conservation Plan to provide
1046 places for education and research relating to ecological, environmental and cultural resources. Those
1047 facilities will also support public-private conservation and stewardship educational events on the Preserve
1048 land, including the John Burroughs Historical Society/Audubon sponsored breeding bird studies, SUNY
1049 forest study, New York Phenology Project and nationwide database, and the Preserve sponsored Bio-Blitz
1050 and Bio-decathlon.
- 1051 7. As noted in Section 10 above, the Town's Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed the revised
1052 site plan, which was modified by the applicant to address concerns raised by the Planning Board, the
1053 Commission and its historic preservation consultant during the course of the application review, and has
1054 conducted public hearing on the applicant's request for certificates of appropriate with respect to the
1055 proposed Gatehouse site improvements and the overall impact on the National Register Historic
1056 Landscape. The Commission has issued an advisory letter with a favorable recommendation on the
1057 proposed action. The action is therefore consistent with:

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- 1058 • Town of New Paltz Master Plan policy 6 - to foster and preserve the community's heritage by protecting
1059 historic structures and sites;
1060 • New Paltz Historic Preservation Law intent - to protect and enhance the landmark and historic district
1061 which present distinctive elements of the historic, architectural and cultural heritage of the Town;
1062 • New Paltz Historic Preservation Law intent - to focus attention on and foster civic pride in the historic
1063 resources of the Town.

1064 8. Cumulative impact of OSI action. The Board has considered the potential for cumulative impacts on
1065 community plans due to the pending OSI application for site plan approval of the River to Ridge Trail, and
1066 the proposed conveyance of the Hillside Lot to OSI. The River to Ridge Trail is consistent with community
1067 land use and recreation plans for the reasons previously discussed, including the provision of biking and
1068 hiking trails that are available to residents of the community at no cost. The use of the 19+ acre Hillside lot
1069 as a building lot for a single family residence is consistent with the existing zoning, the existing use and
1070 character of the area, and applicable land use plans. The applicant has offered to impose a restrictive
1071 covenant that will limit use, limit the area of disturbance to create a building envelope with buffers that will
1072 avoid or reduce visual impacts on surrounding property, and prohibit subdivision of the Hillside parcel and
1073 prohibit lot line changes that create new building lots.

1074 9. For those reasons, the Board finds that the cumulative impact of the proposed OSI action will not create
1075 any significant adverse environmental impact.

1076 **Consistency with Community Plans: determination of significance**

1077 **Based on the review of the criteria of significance set forth in 6 NYCRR 617.7(c), Part 2 of the EAF,**
1078 **the Narrative, and the materials submitted by the applicant in support of the application and the**
1079 **representations of the applicant with respect to issues identified by the Board and the public as**
1080 **potential concerns, including the revised site plan, which incorporates modifications offered by the**
1081 **applicant in response to comments from the Board, other involved and interested agencies, the**
1082 **Town's consultants and the public, the Board finds and determines that the proposed action is**
1083 **consistent with the overall community character and land use plans of the Town of New Paltz, and**
1084 **does not have the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact on community plans.**

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1086 **Impacts on community character: reference Section 13, Part 3 Narrative**

1087 1. As described in Section 18 of the Narrative, the nature and extent of the activities that constitute the
1088 proposed action was carefully evaluated against community character and was not found to be inconsistent
1089 with the overall community character of the Town and Village of New Paltz, or the individual neighborhoods
1090 in which components of the overall action are located.

1091 2. The community character of the Town and Village of New Paltz is defined in significant respects by the
1092 Shawangunk Ridge and the longstanding pattern of active outdoor recreational and educational activities
1093 related to the Mohonk Mountain House and other uses on the Ridge. The balanced pattern of land uses
1094 and land preservation established during the development of the Mountain House has been continued for
1095 over a century, and is now reflected in the Town's zoning and local, regional and state land use plans, as
1096 discussed in Section 17 above.

1097 3. In considering the project against the thresholds of significance set forth in Part 2 of the EAF, the
1098 potential impacts to community character do not exceed any of the Part 2 thresholds. The scale and
1099 context of the proposed action, taken as individual components as well as the overall Foothills project, are
1100 consistent with the portions of the Preserve property that will not be disturbed, as well as the surrounding
1101 area. The property will continue to be used in a manner consistent with its historic uses, including a trail
1102 system for passive, non-motorized outdoor recreation, educational activities, environmental research, and
1103 the preservation of aesthetic features and open space appreciation.

1104 4. The aggregate area of the site that will be disturbed by construction or converted to parking is limited to
1105 6.4 acres, which is less than 1% of the site. The proposed parking facilities which address existing
1106 problems with parking on the Town highway's in the area, and allow for safer and more manageable use of
1107 the Foothills site by pedestrians.

1108 5. The structural components are of an architecture style typical of the area. The landscape will not be
1109 adversely affected, rather it will be improved by the restoration components of the project, particularly the
1110 Testimonial Gateway and the Oak Allee. The Foothills project is consistent with many community goals
1111 and plans specific to the Foothills, as previously indicated. Accordingly, the Foothills project does not
1112 appear to rise to the level of a moderate or significant adverse impact and appears to be fully consistent
1113 with community character.

1114 6. Impact on historic resources. As described in Section 10 of the EAF Narrative, the proposed action will
1115 not replace or eliminate any existing facilities, structures, or area of historic importance to the community.
1116 The Mohonk Preserve will maintain the overall character of the Foothills parcel through restoration and
1117 preservation of key historic components, particularly the iconic Testimonial Gateway structure, Old
1118 Gatehouse Road and the Oak Allee (Lenape Lane), and maintenance of agricultural structures and open
1119 space landscapes through habitat management. The Town's independent consultant on historic resources
1120 has determined that the project will be beneficial in that items of historic significance will be properly
1121 restored, maintained, and opened for appreciation and enjoyment by the general public.

1122 7. Impact on community services. The proposed action may result in a small demand for additional
1123 community services, however, any potential increase is anticipated to be minor. Local emergency
1124 responders have not expressed concern about potential impacts on fire, police or emergency services, and
1125 other existing community facilities appear adequate to provide any anticipated services required by the
1126 project. Use of lands of the Mohonk Preserve, excluding the Trapps area, has reportedly not resulted in an
1127 increase in community provided emergency services. The New Paltz Rescue Squad reported only a single
1128 mutual aid call to the Preserve property in 2014, with no reported calls in 2015. The passive recreational
1129 uses of the Gatehouse and Hasbrouck House areas are not anticipated to significantly increase the need
1130 for such services. Additionally, the Mohonk Preserve has its own trained rescue personnel which both
1131 provide emergency services and assist local emergency providers within the Preserve. No adverse impact
1132 on the Town's budget has been identified.

1133 8. While the action will not adversely impact schools, the proposed improvements will offer additional
1134 educational opportunities for all levels of education.

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- 1135 9. The Board notes that the Mohonk Preserve is a private entity, not funded directly by tax payer dollars.
1136 While its tax exempt status is acknowledged, improvements for the Foothills parcel proposed by the
1137 Preserve will provide additional outdoor recreational opportunities that are available to the general public.
1138 While access requires a user fee, that opportunity does not depend on the allocation of local property taxes
1139 to construct and maintain public parks and facilities; this is in line with one of the objectives of the Town of
1140 New Paltz Master Plan. The Preserve has also committed to the restoration of local historically significant
1141 features, particularly the iconic Testimonial Gateway structure.
- 1142 10. Consistency with local architectural character. The proposed action is consistent with the predominant
1143 architectural scale and character. Proposed structures will be of the familiar Mohonk rustic character seen
1144 on the Mohonk Mountain House property and throughout the Preserve. These features are designed to
1145 blend naturally into the landscape. Based on several site visits by members of the Board and on review of
1146 visual impact analyses provided by the applicant, the Board finds that the proposed structures are
1147 consistent with existing character of the area, and will not be visually salient from the perspective of passing
1148 traffic and local residents.
- 1149 11. Signage. Minimal signage will be installed so as to provide for safe and managed access to the
1150 Foothills site. The design of signage is to be consistent with existing trailhead entrances and will conform to
1151 New Paltz Signage Code, State Code and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Internal
1152 directional and interpretive signage, currently in use throughout the Preserve, shall also conform to local
1153 signage regulation. Location and sign example is provided on the plan set details.
- 1154 12. Hillside Lot. There is no current plan for the Hillside lot other than its transfer to OSI and its inclusion,
1155 in part, in the River to Ridge trail. Any future development of the parcel would require compliance with the
1156 A-1.5 zoning regulations which are intended to maintain the rural character of the area. Voluntary
1157 restrictions placed on the parcel by the Preserve and to remain with the lot in perpetuity have been
1158 discussed in previous sections.
- 1159 13. Natural landscape. The proposed action will result in a small impact to the character of the existing
1160 natural landscape. Site improvements will modify 1.5 acres of forests and 0.6 acres of meadows or less
1161 than 0.25% of the 857 acre Foothills parcel. A minimal number of trees will be cut and nominal grading will
1162 be required. Neither structural nor non-structural features will significantly impact the landscape, with most
1163 improvements at ground surface. Impact areas have been carefully sited, sized and reduced in accordance
1164 to comment and concerns. As noted, the proposed Improvements will be reasonably screened by existing
1165 topography, vegetation and structures and appear appropriately distanced from viewing locations, given the
1166 desired proximity to critical project elements and restrictions imposed by significant habitat.
- 1167 14. Modifications in response to public comment included the siting of parking lot access off the primary
1168 road rather than secondary roads, dispersal of the parking facilities in order to avoid a large centralized
1169 facility, reduction of the total number of parking spaces created, relocation of horse trailer parking,
1170 movement of facilities further from historic resources, conscientious placement of parking, trails and other
1171 amenities in order to screen from views, maintenance of "legacy" trees and the planting of additional
1172 vegetation. The proposed improvements may be visible from isolated locations on the Ridge and from
1173 portions of the Shawangunk Mountain Scenic Byway. However, they are located in the mid-range
1174 viewshed of an observer, relatively small at that district and designed to minimize visual intrusion on the
1175 landscape. Therefore, they are not considered to be substantially noticeable against the existing scenic
1176 backdrop.
- 1177 15. The applicant's evaluation, ultimate siting and design of parking at the Testimonial Gateway, the single
1178 largest area of impact due to the adjacent residential area, is considered appropriate relative to its potential
1179 impact on community character. The Board notes that the proposed location and configuration followed an
1180 analysis of several alternative layouts, and with opportunity for significant community input.
- 1181 16. Specifically, eight locations were evaluated prior to development of the current plan. The evaluation
1182 criteria involved visibility, proximity to neighbors, surrounding vegetation, sight distance, proximity to
1183 sensitive areas and terrain. Conceptual plans included 120 parking spaces with an additional 30-50
1184 overflow spaces. In response to community input, the wooded location south of the Gatehouse was chosen
1185 over alternatives along Gatehouse Road and other locations and the size was initially reduced to 120

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1186 spaces. The applicant has now reduced it to 80 spaces, with parking for 20 automobiles and horse trailer
1187 parking moved to the Hasbrouck House. Access directly off the State highway, as opposed to the
1188 secondary Gatehouse Road, was determined to result in safer ingress and egress and less disturbance to
1189 local residents. These modifications were made in accordance with evaluated site conditions and additional
1190 public comment.

1191 17. Proximity to neighbors as well as vegetation and topography appear to reasonably mitigate direct
1192 potential impact. Residential structures closest to the proposed Testimonial Gateway parking lot on Jacobs
1193 Lane are situated roughly 350' distant the Route 299 curb cut and 550' from the contact station; along
1194 Gatehouse Road, the nearest residential structures are roughly 500' from the lot. Residential parcels are
1195 also separated from the Gateway lot by significant vegetation and rolling topography. A site visit during
1196 leaf off conditions by several Planning Board members confirmed that the proposed improvements would
1197 not be visible at the majority of visual receptors and that visual impact would be minimal. The extent of
1198 clearing required to accommodate the lot is consistent with the size and configuration of the cleared areas
1199 on several residential lots on Jacob's Lane.

1200 18. The provision of onsite parking is also expected to offset the current use of local roads for parking,
1201 thereby improving the character of the existing landscape by reducing, if not eliminating roadside parking
1202 along Gatehouse and Butternville Roads.

1203 19. While the Foothills project may result in some localized impacts, as expressed in public comments,
1204 those impacts can be addressed in the course of site plan review. None of the publicly identified potential
1205 impacts now appear to meet the thresholds for significance.

1206 20. In addition to trails within the Gateway and Hasbrouck areas, a short distance of stone surfaced trail
1207 and nearly ½ mile of mowed grass trail will run through agricultural fields and woods set back from the west
1208 side of Butternville Road, opposite several residential structures. While the new trails will likely bring
1209 additional visitors to the Foothills area, many existing users walk or ride along Butternville Road. Moving
1210 people off the roadways and onto the trail, and further distanced from the residences, is anticipated to
1211 benefit area residents as well as hikers.

1212 21. Guest policy posting at the contact station or kiosks, and Preserve staff/ranger presence will aid in the
1213 prevention of potential on-site activity impacting neighbors, including the requirement for all users to remain
1214 on Preserve lands. The Preserve provided the Town with its Rules of Use, Peak Day Management Plan,
1215 and Search and Rescue Plan for Town review. The Preserve has further indicated that it would meet
1216 regularly with the Town to discuss any concerns the Town may have with operation and use of the site; the
1217 Preserve would work with the Town to modify such policy should the Town indicate a need.

1218 21A. The Preserve has represented that it will not make the Testimonial Gateway site available for non-
1219 Mohonk Preserve events such as private parties, weddings and after sunset events for members. It will
1220 utilize the Foothills sites, particularly the Gateway area, for a limited number of its own sponsored, mission-
1221 related gatherings and events. The Preserve will conduct such events at a scale appropriate to the site,
1222 and it would plan to avoid or minimize any off-site noise or light impacts and confine events to the hours in
1223 which the Preserve operates, ending no later than one hour after sunset. The applicant has advised the
1224 Board that it intends to continue to allow use of the property for the annual "Rock the Ridge" charity running
1225 event, which has included use of the Gatehouse property for event parking. The proposed Gatehouse
1226 parking area would continue to be used for the Rock the Ridge event outside the general hours of dawn to
1227 one hour after sunset. The Gatehouse parking area would provide limited parking for race organizers and
1228 volunteers who help monitor and control the event. All race participants would continue to park at the Ulster
1229 County Fairgrounds, and will use a shuttle from the Fairgrounds to the site. The new Testimonial Gateway
1230 trailhead lot, once installed, will be used to provide a safer and more efficient drop off point for the shuttle,
1231 replacing the current practice of using a drop off point on the roadside of Route 299 near the intersection
1232 with Gatehouse Road. Preserve staff will monitor the parking area and grounds during the event and
1233 ensure that the use of the parking area is orderly, that noise or disruptive activity on the site is avoided and
1234 that the parking areas are promptly closed after participants and staff have left the parking area, mitigating
1235 any potential impact of this once a year activity.

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1237 22. The impact to community character with regard to traffic has been appropriately analyzed through traffic
1238 studies. While it is acknowledged that there will be a slight increase in traffic volume on Route 299 during
1239 fall weekends and when fair events are held, the resulting traffic does not and will not exceed the threshold
1240 of a significant impact.

1241 23. In summary, potential adverse impact upon community character does not appear to be significantly
1242 adverse or rise above a small level. The use is allowable by zoning and is both consistent and encouraged
1243 by numerous community plans. The proposed improvements are designed, sized and sited in
1244 consideration of the natural and manmade elements of the area and appear to be respectful of neighbors
1245 and local residents. Public input has resulted in numerous modifications to the plans and potential adverse
1246 impacts have been properly addressed and minimized. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated
1247 which would significantly affect community character.

1248 24. Cumulative Impacts. The OSI River to Ridge Trail project demonstrates an awareness, appreciation
1249 and thoughtful use of the land while simultaneously providing protection and preservation of the resource.
1250 It appears to be fully consistent with community character.

1251 25. With regard to potential impact, the OSI project will not replace, eliminate or significantly alter any
1252 natural or manmade feature. The plans have been designed respectful of neighbors, existing users and
1253 travelers of local roads. The proposed use is not discordant with the existing or potential use of the parcel
1254 or adjacent parcels. As the OSI trails are predominantly located within existing agricultural fields, a
1255 substantial distance from all but a single residential lot on Charles Lane, their use will likely be noticed by
1256 local residents and drivers but will not result in a significant impact upon quality of life of the local
1257 community. Similarly, the project will blend into the landscape, not diminishing anyone's perception of it.

1258 26. In summary, none of factors considered rise above a small impact and the combined impact of the
1259 Mohonk Foothills project along with the OSI River to Ridge Trail project is not anticipated to result in any
1260 adverse impact to community character.

1261 **Community Character: determination of significance**

1262 **Based on the review of the criteria of significance set forth in 6 NYCRR 617.7(c), Part 2 of the EAF,**
1263 **the Narrative, and the materials submitted by the applicant in support of the application and the**
1264 **representations of the applicant with respect to issues identified by the Board and the public as**
1265 **potential concerns, including the revised site plan, which incorporates modifications offered by the**
1266 **applicant in response to comments from the Board, other involved and interested agencies, the**
1267 **Town's consultants and the public, the Board finds and determines that the proposed action is**
1268 **consistent with the overall community character of the Town of New Paltz, and the community**
1269 **character of the areas in the vicinity of the proposed improvements, and does not have the potential**
1270 **for a significant adverse environmental impact on community character.**

1271 In making its determination, the Board relies on the representations of the applicant that:

1272 1.it will maintain adequate Preserve staff/ranger presence during hours of operation to provide proper
1273 management of activities on the site, provide assistance to visitors and assist first responders. In particular,
1274 Preserve staff will aid in the prevention of on-site activity by visitors with the potential to impact neighbors,
1275 including the requirement for all users to remain on Preserve lands, and the Preserve staff will meet
1276 regularly with the Town and emergency service providers to address any concerns about the operation of
1277 the site, and modify its use policies, if necessary, to address Town concerns about the management of
1278 activities on the site.

1279 2. the Preserve will be responsible for the maintenance of all site improvements shown on the site plan,
1280 including any improvements that may be located within the Town right of way.

Mohonk Preserve Foothills Project

FEAF Part 3 Introduction

In order to satisfy its obligation under SEQRA, the Town of New Paltz Planning Board, acting as Lead Agency for review of the Mohonk Preserve Foothills Project, must identify "the relevant areas of environmental concern, [take] a 'hard look' at them, and [make] a 'reasoned elaboration' of the basis for its determination" regarding potential adverse environmental effects resultant the proposed action, as per ECL 8-0109 {1}.

In its capacity as Lead Agency, the Planning Board identified potential environmental impacts of the Foothills Project in its EAF Part 2 Analysis. The purpose of the EAF Part 3 is to build upon evaluations of potential environmental impact made during the Part 2, to decide how significant the Part 2 moderate to large impacts are, and to determine if further information is needed in an environmental impact statement.

Factors such as magnitude, importance, probability of occurrence, duration of impact, irreversibility of impact and geographic scope in the context of the site and community were considered during the Part 2 analysis in order to determine if an impact was small, or moderate to large. This Part 3 evaluates those features in a more comprehensive manner to determine if a potential impact is significant or not. In its Part 3 analysis, the Planning Board has also considered cumulative impacts, specifically the action proposed by the Mohonk Preserve along with the River to Ridge project proposed by Open Space Institute, which will connect with the trail network proposed on the Preserve property. Finally, while the Part 3 is only required to evaluate those impacts identified through Part 2 as being moderate to large, the Planning Board's determination of significance concerns both a Type I Action and a proposal for a large parcel that is important to the residents in the immediate vicinity of that property as well as the entire New Paltz community. Therefore, the Board is utilizing this Part 3 Narrative to set forth the rationale for its decision making in the environmental review of the overall SEQRA Action before it. Taken together, Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the FEAF, and supporting documents, constitute the Board's 'hard look' at the action, as well as at the environmental concerns raised by the public, which are identified and summarized in the narrative. The Mohonk Preserve Foothills project is identified as a Type 1 action as it exceeds certain established thresholds, specifically,

- (617.4(b)8): an unlisted action which includes a non-agricultural use occurring wholly or partially within an agricultural district and which exceeds 25% of any threshold established in this section;
- (617.4(b)9): an unlisted action occurring wholly or partially within, or substantially contiguous to, any listed item or item proposed to be listed on either the National or State Registers of Historic Places; and
- (617.4(b)6(i): when taken in conjunction with the OSI River to Ridge trails project, the total physical alteration exceeds the 10 acre threshold.

While type I actions are presumed "likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and may require" an environmental impact statement, that presumption is rebuttable. Preparation of such a statement is not a per se requirement for a type I action. A lead agency may issue a negative declaration, thereby obviating the need to prepare an environmental impact statement, if the agency has determined that the action, as proposed, will result in no adverse environmental impacts or that the identified adverse environmental impacts will not be significant.

A determination of significance must be made by the lead agency after thorough review of the EAF, all technical studies and filings submitted by the applicant, and input from involved and interested agencies, organizations and the general public. The lead agency must evaluate the significance of the action by comparing the impacts reasonably expected to result with criteria set forth in section 617.7(c), (ie., substantial

44 adverse change in air quality, ground or surface water quality, traffic, species and habitat, community
45 character and goals). The analysis is to include reasonably related long-term, short-term, direct, indirect and
46 cumulative impacts. The significance of a likely consequence is to be further assessed as to its magnitude and
47 importance. Magnitude reflects not merely size, but scale and context, severity and intensity. Importance
48 relates to how many will be impacted, duration and probability of impact.

49 In making a legally sufficient determination regarding significance, the lead agency must:

- 50 • identify all relevant environmental impacts,
- 51 • thoroughly analyze these potential impacts, and
- 52 • provide a written explanation of its reasoning in concluding that the proposed action may cause, or
53 will not cause, significant adverse environmental impacts.

54 With regard to the Mohonk Foothills project, the Planning Board has performed a thorough review of all
55 documentation submitted to the Board. An evaluation of impact due the project was conducted for each of
56 the 18 sections identified in the SEQR Handbook. Reviewed documentation included the Full EAF Part 1,
57 project narrative, plan set, all individual studies (subsurface, wetlands and surface waters, species and habitat,
58 historic and archaeological resources, and transportation), SWPPP, Mohonk Preserve LAMP, Preserve
59 procedure and protocol submissions, Mohonk’s website (www.mohonkpreserve.org), letters to and from
60 involved and interested agencies, and letters and hearing comments from the general public. Independent
61 studies and reviews were also evaluated.

62 **Application History.** The present Foothills project application is the result of a pre-application planning
63 process by the applicant, followed by review of the initial application, which has been modified by the
64 applicant to address issues identified during the public hearing on this application and incorporate
65 mitigation measures proposed by the applicant.

66 The steps that led to the modified application, which is the SEQRA action analyzed in this Narrative, are
67 summarized as follows:

- 68
- 69 • The applicant developed the Mohonk Preserve *Land Access Management Plan* (LAMP, 2012), a
70 conceptual plan that used historical knowledge, ecological study and public input to develop the
71 Preserve’s framework for the mixed use/conservation of the Foothills parcel and which the Preserve
72 has used to guide its planning and design for the action it currently proposes;
- 73 • Conceptual review application of 2/18/2014 by the Mohonk Preserve to accomplish “key goals” of
74 the LAMP on the OSI owned Foothills parcel, including development of managed public access,
75 parking (145 spaces) and supporting facilities at Testimonial Gatehouse and Marshlands
76 (Hasbrouck);
- 77 • Site plan/special use application of 5/7/2014 by the Mohonk Preserve for the OSI owned Foothills
78 parcel. The application proposed subdivision (537 acres to be conveyed to the Preserve; 319 acres
79 to be retained by OSI, including the 19 acre Hillside lot), a 0.6 acre lot line revision to resolve dispute,
80 and site plan upon the larger lot for improvements previously proposed as conceptual. This
81 application was considered Phase 1, indicated a reduction of parking and commenced the initial
82 review of the Foothills project. The subdivision was intended to separate the agricultural leased
83 lands but was not acted upon;

- 84 • Subdivision application of 11/17/2014 by OSI to create a 19 acre lot separate from the remaining
85 837 acre parcel and a 0.6 acre lot line revision. No improvements proposed for the 19 acre Hillside
86 lot;
- 87 • OSI conveyed the 857 acre parcel to Mohonk Preserve (December 2014);
- 88 • Subdivision application of 1/16/2015 by Mohonk Preserve (as previously submitted by OSI) to create
89 a 837 acre parcel and separate 19 acre parcel, and 0.6 acre lot line revision. The 19 acre Hillside lot
90 is intended to be conveyed back to OSI for development of a single family residence;
- 91 • Revised site plan/special use application of 1/23/2015 by the Mohonk Preserve for 837 acres of the
92 857 acre Foothills parcel now owned by the Preserve. The application, including Full EAF, narrative
93 and site plans, generally identified and described the current action, but remains conceptual.
94 Subdivision and lot line revision remain under separate application.
- 95 • Submission of additional application materials (April 2015) including studies of stormwater,
96 transportation, wildlife, archaeology, and subsurface assessments. Application remains conceptual
97 and public input into development of the plan is acknowledged;
- 98 • Revised site plan/special use application of 7/6/2015 provide detail of the proposed improvements
99 to Testimonial Gateway, Hasbrouck House/Humpo Marsh and Farm Pond areas and included a
100 revised SWPPP and trail connection to the proposed OSI River to Ridge trail. Site plans were
101 included yet plans remain conceptual.
- 102 • Revised site plan/special use application of 1/20/2016 which incorporates the site plan and separate
103 subdivision application as a single application. The application also includes revised species and
104 wetland studies and transportation analysis supplements. Plans for the Farm Pond area withdrawn.
105 This is the complete submission currently before the Board.

106 **Public Participation.** The Board notes that applicant has provided opportunities for public participation and
107 input in development of the Foothills project and application. The July 6, 2015 submission described the
108 Mohonk Preserve Foothills Communications and opportunities for public comment beginning with parcel
109 acquisition by OSI from Smiley Brothers Inc. in October of 2011, presentation of the draft LAMP in 2012,
110 and presentations, neighbor meetings and community engagement sessions held throughout 2013, 2014
111 and 2015. The Planning Board opened a Public Hearing for the proposed action in September 2015; the
112 Hearing remained open through April 11, 2016, further allowing opportunity for both verbal and written
113 public comment on the proposed action. The Historic Preservation Commission conducted a public hearing
114 on the application for certificates of appropriateness with respect to the proposed action. The Board has
115 received extensive correspondence regarding both the merits and concerns of the proposed Foothills
116 project. This Part 3 evaluation reflects such public input.

117 **Response to Comment and Mitigation.** The Board also acknowledges that the applicant has responded to
118 concerns identified by the public, involved and interested agencies, and the lead agency by voluntarily
119 incorporating various project modifications as proposed mitigating measures. Those measures were not
120 conditions unilaterally imposed by the lead agency, but adjustments made to the plan during its
121 development that were voluntarily incorporated by the project sponsor to mitigate the concerns identified
122 by the public and the reviewing agencies. Those mitigation measures have been considered by the Board
123 in the course of an open and deliberative process, which has provided opportunity for public review and
124 comment. Where appropriate, this Part 3 narrative identifies such measures and evaluates whether these
125 measures adequately addressed the potential adverse effects of concern to the extent that a determination
126 of non-significance would be warranted.

127 **Project Area Consideration.** Finally, many of the conservation, preservation, recreation and education
128 related goals and objectives of the Mohonk Preserve, shared by many levels of government and numerous
129 publically committed agencies and organizations, have been accomplished simply through acquisition and
130 ownership of the Foothills parcel by the Mohonk Preserve. However, the impact of preservation and
131 management of the overall Foothills parcel is not expressly factored into this Part 3 analysis. Rather, the
132 action referred to as the Foothills Project is limited to a small portion of the 857 acre parcel, consisting of
133 the areas about the Testimonial Gatehouse and Lenape Lane, Hasbrouck House and the northern end of the
134 Humpo Marsh, the remnants of the Wawarsing Turnpike, and limited acreage along Butterville Road. As
135 deemed appropriate, the following Part 3 analysis focuses on the potential impacts of the areas of
136 disturbance that are associated with the proposed actions, which are generally immediate to those areas,
137 and not the overall Foothills parcel, the bulk of which will remain unchanged by the proposed action.

138

139 **1. LAND**

140 The Foothills project will involve construction on and physical alteration of land. However, in determining
141 the significance of the action, the adverse impact to land is considered to be small as such impact has been
142 avoided and minimized to the extent practicable. Total land disturbance resulting from implementation of
143 the Foothills project amounts to approximately 6.4 acres of the total 857± acre Foothills parcel or less than
144 1% of the site (0.75%)¹. Total conversion to impervious surface amounts to approximately 2.10 acres or
145 roughly 0.25% of the site². Permanent land alteration includes minor clearing and grading; surfacing
146 associated with the creation of two site access and parking areas, trail development and restoration (stone
147 dust, mowed vegetation, and elevated walkway); and installation of 11 new structures totaling 2732 ft².
148 Land disturbance is further broken down as follows:

149 **Testimonial Gatehouse area**

150 2.89 acres of disturbance includes site access; a 80 vehicle parking facility with accommodations for up to 3
151 buses; stormwater management facilities sited within the lot itself; an entry booth (32ft²); double vaulted
152 restroom (168 ft²); orientation kiosk (100ft²); two trails leading from the parking facility to Lenape Lane,
153 both east and west of the Gatehouse; a rustic summer house (400ft²); the Phenology Trail; and realignment
154 of Lenape Lane at Gatehouse Road, which will be an improvement with regard to transportation safety and
155 aesthetics in this area and will result in the removal of 1481 ft² of impervious surface.³ The restoration of
156 the balance of Lenape Lane is not considered disturbance as it involves only the addition of surfacing
157 materials. Minor excavation is also anticipated within the oak nursery and along the Oak Allee in order to
158 replace dead and dying trees; this disturbance is intended to occur only as necessary and in perpetuity.

159 The site access and parking area at Testimonial Gateway accounts for the project's single largest area of
160 impact at roughly 1.5 acres of disturbance. This area has twice been reduced in response to public
161 comment. As currently proposed, just over 1 acre of this area's disturbance (44,015 ft²) will be converted
162 to impervious surface. The balance will be vegetated features. Specifically, the lot has been designed with
163 a central ellipse which is to remain relatively undisturbed. While included in the total area of disturbance,
164 only dead, dying and invasive vegetation will be removed from this 9500 ft² area (0.22 acres) with native
165 plantings supplemented, if deemed necessary. A 10' wide vegetated dry swale is to be sited between the
166 central ellipse and the impervious parking area, and two vegetated bioretention features are proposed at
167 the eastern end of the lot. These parking lot features add to the area of disturbance but have been included
168 in the design for both function and aesthetics, as they both reduce and accommodate stormwater, break
169 up the open parking area and soften the visual impact. The use of porous pavement to further reduce
170 disturbance due to the need for stormwater management was evaluated and rejected due to poor in situ
171 soils and the high volume of leaf litter which would render the system ineffective.

172 **Hasbrouck House area**

173 2.82 acres of disturbance includes improvements to Hasbrouck Lane; a 20 car parking lot with
174 accommodation for 2 horse trailers and a single bus; stormwater management facilities within the lot; an
175 entry booth, double vaulted restroom and orientation kiosk (32ft², 168ft² and 100ft², respectively); trails;
176 the bird blind (400ft²); and a rustic education cabin, the largest structure proposed (1200ft²). While the
177 elevated marsh walkway will have minimal impact to land due to its pile supported construction method, it
178 has been included in the total of land disturbance.

¹ FEAF D.1.b.b.

² FEAF D.2.e.i.

³ Narrative p.7,8,13

179 Disturbance in the Hasbrouck area has also been modified and reduced in response to comments,
180 particularly regarding impact to the former Wawarsing Turnpike (as discussed in Section 10 – Historic and
181 Archaeologic Resources). However, safety improvements to the previously disturbed road including the
182 slight widening of the access road and realignment of the junction with Route 299 to form an appropriate
183 “T” intersection with a widened curb cut, are considered unavoidable given implementation of this
184 secondary lot.⁴

185 **River to Ridge Trail connection**

186 Roughly 0.7 acres of disturbance will result from construction of an equivalent distance (0.7 miles) of trails
187 upon the Foothills site (excluding the Hillside lot) which will connect to OSI’s River to Ridge trail. According
188 to the narrative, land disturbance associated with this trail connection includes approximately 0.2 miles of
189 stone dust trail and an additional 0.5 miles of mowed agricultural trail; the latter results in no significant
190 disturbance to land but has been incorporated into the total area of disturbance. The 0.7 miles of new trail
191 along with roughly 1.5 miles of existing trail and including Pine Road will make up the Foothills 2.2 mile free
192 loop, and will form the connection between the OSI River to Ridge Trail and Preserve lands.⁵ (Trail distance
193 is erroneously reported in the narrative but is accurately provided in the OSI documentation; an addendum
194 correcting this section of the narrative will be provided by the applicant.) Disturbance associated with this
195 connection trail also includes an intermittent stream crossing and supplemented landscape buffer areas.

196 **Pine Road**

197 An additional entry booth (32ft²) and orientation kiosk (100ft²) are proposed off Pine Road within currently
198 disturbed areas.

199 **Hillside Lot**

200 No land disturbance is proposed by the Mohonk Preserve. Part of this action includes the subdivision of the
201 19± acre lot from the Foothills parcel with intended transfer to OSI (discussed in the OSI Addendum).

202

203 The following Part 2 thresholds for land impacts were considered; the impact to land is determined to be
204 small.

205 **a., c.)** Improvements will involve only minimal and shallow excavation and will not encroach groundwater
206 or bedrock⁶; stormwater facilities have been adequately designed to accommodate existing conditions (See
207 Section 3 – Surface Water); and pre manufactured, self- contained, waterless toilet facilities will be utilized.

208 **b.)** No activity is proposed on slopes of 15% or greater. Proposed development upon such slopes at the
209 Farm Pond location has been withdrawn, due in part to potential impacts.

210 **d.)** Cut and fill will be minimal and nearly balanced as impact areas are nearly level.

211 **e.)** Construction impact is considered to be minor as the total area of disturbance is minimal, is dispersed
212 over several discreet locations, and will occur over a period of 24 months. Construction related impact of
213 the Testimonial Gatehouse structure restoration may be extended beyond 24 months as the necessary
214 funds become available. Replacement of trees lining the Oak Allee may occur in perpetuity, as needed.

215 **f.)** Potential for land erosion is considered quite small due to the nature, size, setting and design of the
216 proposed improvements. Direct impact is limited to 6.4 acres (< 1% of the site), only a third of which will

⁴ Narrative p.8,9,13

⁵ Narrative p.9,10,13

⁶ FEAF E.2.a and d.

217 be converted to impervious surface. Improvements have been sited on nearly level land, grading is minor
218 and removal of existing vegetation appears to have been minimized to the maximum extent practicable.
219 However, as the project involves more than one acre of land disturbance, a Storm Water Pollution
220 Prevention Plan, in accordance with NYSDEC’s *SPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges from*
221 *Construction Activity (GP-0-15-002)*, has been developed. The *Mohonk Foothills Storm Water Pollution*
222 *Prevention Plan (SWPPP)*, is discussed in Section 3 – Surface Water. No construction activity may commence
223 until the SWPPP has been accepted and the SPDES permit issued. Finally, while enhanced access to and the
224 subsequent increased use of the trails may result in additional erosion potential, the bulk of the Foothills
225 trails are maintained as carriage roads which are routinely inspected for such issues. It is reportedly the
226 Preserve’s policy to restrict access to areas where impact has been identified until repair has been made
227 and stabilization has occurred.⁷

228 **h.)** Minor impact to land is associated with the various trails to be constructed. Within ecologically sensitive
229 areas, the Preserve has proposed specific techniques to minimize impact. Specifically the elevated walkway
230 within Humpo Marsh will be supported by helical driven piles. The supports are installed without heavy
231 machinery thus minimizing impact to soils, vegetation and habitat. Construction of portions of the
232 Phenology Trail will utilize the US Forest Service’s approved encapsulation technique which limits
233 disturbance as well as subsequent maintenance needs. Nearly ½ mile of trails, nearest residential
234 development along Butterville Road, will be maintained as mowed agricultural trails with virtually no impact
235 to land. An equal amount of trail, the former Lenape Lane, will be restored to preexisting conditions with
236 only surface material application.

237 As indicated, a minor impact to land will be associated with the replacement of dead and dying oaks within
238 the historic Oak Allee with those in the oak nursery.

239 In summary, it is determined that the impacts to land do not rise above a small level. Disturbance is limited
240 in size to less than 1% of the site (6.4 acres) and is distributed over a large area. The areas have also been
241 reduced through the course of the SEQRA process, in response to comments and concerns. The location of
242 each of the improvement areas appears to have been carefully sited, taking into consideration all existing
243 land conditions including current and past usage, topography, vegetative cover, the location of water
244 resources and neighboring uses. Clearing, grading and soil compaction appear to have been minimized to
245 the greatest extent practicable given the project elements. The creation of impervious surface in the form
246 of crushed stone surfaced parking areas also appears to be unavoidable yet minimized given existing site
247 conditions and implementation of the plan. Use of porous materials was not found to be beneficial due to
248 existing site conditions. Land disturbance is thus considered to be minimized and impact is considered to
249 be insignificant, particularly in relation to the balance of the parcel which will be preserved. The SWPPP
250 analysis of pre and post development conditions appears to have resulted in proper accommodations for
251 stormwater and approval and strict adherence to the SWPPP will be required.

252 Further reduction in size of the parking facilities, particularly at the Testimonial Gateway, would result in
253 less impact. However, it has been noted by the applicant that further reduction in the size of parking
254 facilities would likely result in a failure to accomplish key safety objectives of the Foothills project. The
255 applicant has stated that the parking areas have been reduced to the minimum size capable of providing
256 sufficient off-road parking for Preserve users; failure to provide the 110 user space proposed would likely
257 result in continued roadside parking along with its neighborhood impact and potential for vehicular and
258 pedestrian incidents.

259 In a letter from the Ulster County Planning Board dated March 2, 2016, the County concurred, indicating its
260 belief that the proposed parking is “right sized”. The County Planning Board cautioned against further

⁷ Glenn Hoagland, February, 2016

261 reduction as such “is likely to jeopardize the ability of the lot to serve the lands it was designed for with the
262 result of circling traffic or congestion at the entrance”. The Town’s transportation engineer has also
263 confirmed the suitability of the parking capacity based on expected peak demand (see Section 13 -
264 Transportation), thus the area of land disturbance is considered appropriate. *(Note: these statements*
265 *pertained to the proposed 110 total space capacity which was further reduced in May 2016 to 100.)*
266

267 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
268 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the public, it is**
269 **recommended that the Board consider the impacts to land resources to be small and that the Foothills**
270 **project will not result in significant adverse impact to such resources.**

271 References:

- 272 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
- 273 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016);
- 274 • *Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan* (January 2016);
- 275 • *Subsurface Investigation Report* (July 2014);
- 276 • *Wetland Delineation Report* (December 2015);
- 277 • *USFS Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook* (2007), pp. 70, 76-80;
- 278 • *Letter from Ulster County Planning Board to the New Paltz Planning Board* (March 2, 2016);
- 279 • *Preliminary Site Plans, OSI River to Ridge Trail* (February 2016).

281 **OSI Addendum**

282 When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge trail project, the total
283 physical alteration of land amounts to over 10 acres, a SEQRA threshold. However, the total land area
284 associated with the combined projects amounts to over 1150 acres, thus the cumulative impact to land
285 remains at less than 1%.

286 The OSI project consists of the creation of 3.4 miles of non-motorized, multi-use, natural stone surfaced
287 trails and reconfiguration/resurfacing of an existing parking lot, all which will have minimal impact on the
288 land. The trails will be spread out over a vast area of existing agricultural and crop buffer lands. The
289 combined projects are viewed as having no significant adverse impact to land.

290 Although not proposed, potential future development of the 19± acre Hillside lot by OSI for a single
291 residential use, is permitted by zoning. Such development would result in an insignificant increase in the
292 overall impact to land. As per subdivision requirements, the Hillside lot has been shown to include a single
293 residential building, well, septic, septic reserve and driveway. Both the Mohonk Preserve and OSI have
294 agreed to indicate a restrictive building envelope and restrictive notes on the lot. The notes are to indicate
295 that the 19+ acre lot cannot be further subdivided to create additional building lots and that residential
296 structures, both primary and accessory, shall be permitted only within the established restrictive residential
297 building envelope. Such restrictions must be approved by both Mohonk, OSI and the Planning Board prior
298 to final approval.

299

300 **2. GEOLOGICAL FEATURES**

301 According to NYSDEC and the NYS Museum – Office of the State Geologist, neither the Foothills parcel nor
302 any adjacent sites contain unique geologic features. According to the National Park Service, neither the
303 Foothills parcel nor any adjacent sites have been identified as a National Natural Landmark.

304 Some glacial erratics (boulders) are situated upon the lower Foothills parcel. The majority will be left
305 undisturbed. However, as with the use of such boulders in the construction of the Testimonial Gatehouse,
306 smaller boulders may be relocated and incorporated as seating areas, retaining walls and access control
307 measures.

308 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
309 **the impacts to geological resources to be insignificant.**

310 References:

- 311 • <http://www.dec.ny.gov/imsmaps/ERM/viewer.htm>;
- 312 • *National Registry of Natural Landmarks,*
- 313 *National Natural Landmarks Program* (June 2009), p. 67;
- 314 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
- 315 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016).

316
317 **OSI Addendum**

318 The OSI River to Ridge trail project lies predominantly within active and abandoned agricultural lands, also
319 void of unique geologic features. As with the Preserve project, glacial erratics located within the parcel may
320 be relocated as design features.

321 When considered in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge trail project, there will be no significant adverse
322 impact upon geological features.

323

324 **3. SURFACE WATER**

325 It has been determined that the proposed action may have a small effect on surface water resources of the
326 Foothills site, but that any such adverse impact to surface waters is small as potential impacts have been
327 satisfactorily avoided and minimized.

328 Existing surface waters and wetlands within the Foothills project area were located and evaluated in
329 accordance with federal, state and local regulations. These resources were identified in the *Wetlands*
330 *Delineation Report* dated March 2015, and the revised report dated December 2015. The revised report
331 was expanded in response to comments and includes an evaluation of additional locations (Lenape Lane,
332 Farm Pond and the River to Ridge Trail site) and resources regulated solely under the New Paltz Town code
333 (Section 139).

334 The project area contains 3 NYSDEC mapped perennial streams (Humpo Kill, Kleine Kill and Mohonk Brook),
335 7 unmapped tributaries and drainage features, the NYSDEC regulated Humpo Marsh, and 8 natural and
336 manmade wetlands which includes the former Gateway ponds. All such aquatic resources are protected
337 under various law; activity within and in some cases adjacent requires authorization as stated below.

338 When evaluating the project against Part 2 thresholds, potential impacts were found to pertain only to
339 water quality and ecology. The project will not result in the creation, elimination or alteration of depth,
340 volume or surface area of any water body. Similarly no water will be withdrawn and, other than stormwater,
341 no water will be discharged as a result of this project.

342 **d., e.)** Wetlands and water bodies have been avoided in all situations excepting where access to the aquatic
343 resource is the intent, specifically the installation of an elevated walkway within the Humpo Marsh, and the
344 Phenology Trail construction adjacent the northern Gateway Pond.

345 **Testimonial Gateway area**

346 In order to expand opportunity for the ongoing study of seasonal or cyclical changes of species and habitat,
347 a nature trail partially established around the Gateway Ponds in the mid 1960's⁸ will be expanded and
348 improved. As portions of this Phenology Trail are situated in close proximity to wetland boundaries, the
349 Preserve will utilize the US Forest Service's Encapsulation technique⁹ within the wetter portions of this trail.
350 This method involves encasing in situ soils within a geotextile to prevent migration followed by surfacing
351 with a stone material. Construction in this manner protects the adjacent aquatic resource while minimizing
352 trail deterioration and maintenance due to wet conditions. A 6'x8' dock extending into non edge habitat
353 will also be installed within the northern Gateway Pond with no adverse impact.

354 **Hasbrouck House area**

355 An elevated walkway is to be established within Humpo Marsh. Aquatic resource impact due to this
356 proposed trail will be mitigated through use of a helical pile support system upon which the walkway will
357 be suspended¹⁰. Such systems are most appropriate for environmentally sensitive areas, particularly
358 wetlands, as the installation method involves no heavy equipment intrusion into the wetland and minimizes
359 temporary construction related impacts as well as permanent impacts.

360 Specifically, support piles will be augered into the subsurface with minimal and temporary loss of vegetation
361 and wildlife habitat, only slight compaction of soil immediately surrounding each piling, and no alteration
362 in water flow. Within the marsh, a small but temporary increase in turbidity in the immediate vicinity of the
363 construction activity may occur. Additionally, the Humpo Marsh walkway will be installed near the wetland
364 fringe, not within the broad expanse of wetland nor the edge habitat; all vital habitat will be maintained
365 and the naturally progressing transition to the adjacent upland habitat will not be impaired. In order to
366 accommodate for seasonal wetness, a small section of trail which runs from the bird blind area northward
367 may also be constructed using the encapsulation technique.

368 **River to Ridge Trail connection**

369 A small bridge will be constructed over an intermittent stream opposite the Hillside lot. The bridge will be
370 similar in construction to the elevated walkway and will not impact the water course. No wetlands exist in
371 this location.

372 **Regulatory Compliance**

373 Installation of the elevated walkway through Humpo Marsh, as well as the Hasbrouck area improvements
374 which lie within the NYSDEC regulated adjacent area will require review and authorization by NYSDEC under
375 Article 24 of the NYS Environmental Conservation Law.

376 Any Phenology Trail improvements which occur within areas considered wetland will require authorization
377 under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act. Nationwide permit authorization must be obtained
378 following pre construction notification to the US Army Corps of Engineers.

379 Review and authorization by the Town of New Paltz is required of all improvements within the aquatic
380 resources, as well as their appropriate buffer areas, as indicated in Chapter 139 of the Town Code, the
381 Wetlands and Watercourse Protection Law. Town wetland consultant Norbert Quenzer of Bagdon

⁸ LAMP, p.17

⁹ Site Plans, Sheet G 5.6

¹⁰ Ibid

382 Environmental has inspected the site, verified wetlands and wetland boundaries, and has concurred with
383 the anticipated impacts and need for the above mentioned approvals¹¹.

384 **h., i.)** The project may cause soil erosion or otherwise impact water quality which may affect water bodies.
385 The proposed Foothills project involves greater than one acre of disturbance; therefore, a NYSDEC issued
386 *SPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges from Construction Activity (GP-0-15-002)* is required.
387 Accordingly, the applicant has developed the *Mohonk Preserve Foothills Storm Water Pollution Prevention*
388 *Plan (SWPPP)*¹². The Foothills SWPPP was generated in July 2015 and revised in 2016 as site plans,
389 particularly the Hasbrouck access and parking lot areas, were modified in response to concerns and
390 recommendations of the Town HPC and its independent historic resource consultant, Larsen Fisher and
391 Associates.

392 The Foothills SWPPP analysis of pre and post development conditions indicates that the project will comply
393 with required effluent limitations. Discharge of stormwater, post development, will be substantially the
394 same with regard to volume and discharge patterns as that which currently exists. The slight increase in the
395 volume of runoff resulting from the additional 2.1 acres of impervious surface (Testimonial Gateway and
396 Hasbrouck access and parking facilities) will be treated onsite, via green infrastructure practices, in order to
397 ensure water quality and attenuate peak flow.

398 The Foothills SWPPP identifies and defines the erosion and sediment control practices to be installed and
399 maintained on site, as per *New York State Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control*,
400 and the site plans indicate the siting of these measures. Green methodologies to be employed under the
401 Foothills project include preservation of existing vegetation, bioretention basins, rain gardens, a green roof,
402 and use of crushed stone/gravel for parking lot surfacing. Traditional methods to be used include silt
403 fence/fiber rolls, swales with check dams, stabilized construction entrances, designated staging areas with
404 foam berms, and good housekeeping practices. The use of porous pavement at both the Testimonial
405 Gateway and Hasbrouck House areas was considered but ultimately ruled out due to in situ soil conditions
406 and high leaf litter.

407 The SWPPP also lays out construction sequencing, as well as inspection, maintenance and reporting
408 schedules. As an MS4 community, Town approval of the SWPPP is required prior to issuance of the SPDES
409 permit. Construction activity may not commence until such permit is obtained and compliance with all
410 provisions of the SWPPP is required through completion of the project and termination of the permit.

411 A pre-construction site conference with Preserve officials, Town representatives and site contractors is also
412 to be required as per the SWPPP.

413 In summary, while the proposed Foothills project has a potential for minor impact to surface water
414 resources, it is believed that the limited area of disturbance, careful design and siting of proposed
415 improvements, and implementation of the SWPPP have satisfactorily reduced potential impact. As
416 proposed, a very small impact to aquatic resources and their buffers is associated with construction of the
417 phenology trail, the elevated walkway, wetland crossing north of the bird blind, and minor buffer area
418 disturbance in vicinity of the Hasbrouck House. These impacts do not involve alteration to drainage or flow
419 patterns, loss of aquatic habitat, change to water chemistry, or modification in function of the system.
420 Appropriate wetland permitting is also required.

421 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
422 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, Town consultants and the public, it**

¹¹ Memo, N. Quenzer to M Calimano, (undated) regarding inspections of 9/14/15 and 9/24/15; and email, 2/5/2016

¹² Mohonk Foothills Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, January 2016, Barton & Loguidice

423 **is recommended that the Board consider the impacts to surface water resources to be small and that the**
424 **Foothills project will not result in significant adverse impact to such resources.**

425 References:

- 426 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
 - 427 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016);
 - 428 • *Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan* (January 2016);
 - 429 • *Wetland Delineation Report* (December 2015);
 - 430 • *USFS Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook* (2007), 70, 76-80;
 - 431 • Memo N. Quenzer of Bagdon Environmental regarding inspections of 9/14/15 and 9/24/15;
 - 432 • Email N. Quenzer of Bagdon Environmental, 2/5/2016.
- 433

434 **OSI Addendum**

435 When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge trail project, the cumulative
436 impacts are viewed as having no significant adverse impact upon surface waters.

437 Surface water impact resulting from creation of the OSI trail will involve the crossing of federal and Town
438 regulated waters and Town regulated buffers in four locations. Specifically, two existing pipe culverts within
439 intermittent drainage channels will be replaced, a new precast concrete box culvert will be installed within
440 the Snook Kill, an unregulated water course, and a pedestrian foot bridge will be installed over a low lying
441 portion of field. These crossings account for minimal impact but are necessary to allow passage between
442 the Wallkill River and Lewis Lane outside of active agricultural areas.

443 While these necessary features will not result in any significant fill to the aquatic resources and will not alter
444 flow or function of the systems, authorization under Section 139 of Town code and Section 404 of the
445 federal Clean Water Act is required.

446 Additionally, trails are not typically considered impervious for stormwater calculations as they do not tend
447 to concentrate pollutants. However, as the OSI project will involve more than 1 acre of disturbance, a
448 NYSDEC issued *SPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges* will be required. The nature of the OSI
449 project along with strict compliance with the OSI Trail SWPPP will ensure no significant adverse impact to
450 aquatic resources.

451

452 **4. GROUNDWATER**

453 The proposed Foothills project will have no significant adverse impact upon groundwater resources as the
454 project involves no new demand for water, no onsite wastewater disposal, no bulk storage or hazardous
455 wastes, nor anticipated use of applied chemicals.

456 Pre manufactured waterless vaulted toilets to be utilized on site will have regularly scheduled pumping and
457 offsite disposal. The schedule may be modified if needed. Leakage or pumping accident would result in a
458 small and short term impact as the area would be promptly and properly cleaned. The possibility of such
459 accidental discharge is unlikely to occur yet acknowledged.

460 Stormwater may have a slight impact upon groundwater. However, the limited volume of additional
461 stormwater generated as a result of plan implementation along with the mitigating measures as defined in
462 the SWPPP adequately minimize potential for significant impact to groundwater.

463 No development of the Hillside lot is proposed by the Mohonk Preserve.

464 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
465 **the impacts to groundwater to be small and that the Foothills project will not result in significant adverse**
466 **impact to such resources.**

467 References

- 468 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
- 469 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016);
- 470 • *Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan* (January 2016).

471

472 **OSI Addendum**

473 The OSI's River to Ridge trail project will have no impact upon groundwater resources.

474 Potential future development of the Hillside lot with a single residential structure, well and septic, would
475 result in a slight yet insignificant impact to groundwater (est. 130 gpd per bedroom).

476 Cumulative effects on groundwater are viewed as insignificant.

477

478 **5. FLOODING**

479 The proposed Foothills project will have no significant adverse impact upon flooding as none of the project
480 improvements will be situated within a designated floodway, 100-year floodplain, or 500-year floodplain¹³.
481 The SWPPP developed for the site has shown that while drainage will be slightly altered from that which
482 currently exists, the 0.25% increase in impervious surface will not result in altered drainage from the site
483 nor increased flooding to proposed site conditions.

484 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
485 **the impacts to the potential for flooding to be insignificant.**

486 References:

- 487 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
- 488 • *Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan* (January 2016);
- 489 • *Flood Insurance Rate Map* (September 2009), Ulster County panels 595, 615, 735, and 755.

490

491 **OSI Addendum**

492 Considered in conjunction with OSI's River to Ridge trail project, the cumulative impacts on flooding remain
493 small. Nearly half of the OSI project area, from the Wallkill River to Lewis Lane, is situated within a
494 designated FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area boundary (100 year). The installation of trails and the addition
495 or replacement of culverts will not significantly or adversely impact the lands natural ability to store, absorb,
496 release and allow passage of flood waters. Trail design and construction materials reportedly will not
497 impede flow.

¹³ Ulster County, NY Flood Insurance Rate Map, September 2009, panels 595, 615, 735, 755, FEMA

498 In accordance with Town code, construction of the OSI trails will require that for all authorized fill placed
499 within the floodplain district, a hydraulically equivalent volume of material is to be excavated from below
500 the base flood elevation¹⁴. OSI Trail construction activity reportedly will result in the net reduction of 130
501 cubic yards of material from within the floodplain.¹⁵ A Town Floodplain Development Permit and Village
502 Floodplain Development Permit are both required.

503

504 **6. AIR**

505 The proposed Foothills project will not have a significant adverse impact upon air quality. Air emissions
506 associated with the Foothills project are predominantly transient in nature and due to transportation of
507 visitors to and from the Foothills parcel.

508 Utilizing a threshold established by the National Park Service (50 metric tons of any pollutant generated
509 annually), the level of increased emissions anticipated through creation of parking for up to 103 passenger
510 vehicles and up to 4 total buses is not considered to cause significant deterioration to air quality. This is
511 based on comparison with park service data from Mesa Verde National Park, with over three times the
512 annual visitation, a resort lodge and 400 campsites. Year 2000 park wide emission from visitor vehicles at
513 Mesa Verde was determined to generate pollutants below the threshold of significance¹⁶. Implementation
514 of the Foothills project will generate significantly less, accordingly, the impact to air due to the Foothills
515 project is considered to be small.

516 Emissions will also be generated through construction of site improvements and by the wood burning
517 fireplace and back up propane heater, both to be used at the educational cabin on an intermittent, as
518 needed basis during the winter months. These sources will result in only temporary and insignificant
519 impacts to air quality.

520 The Preserve proposes to install four electric vehicle-charging stations.

521 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
522 **the impacts to air to be insignificant.**

523 References:

- 524 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
- 525 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016);
- 526 • *NRR-2011/289 Technical Guidance on Assessing Impacts to Air Quality in NEPA and Planning*
527 *Documents.*

528 **OSI Addendum**

530 The OSI's River to Ridge trail project involves no emission sources, other than a minor and temporary
531 construction element and continued use of a small parking facility associated with the Village boat launch.
532 Local vehicular use may increase as visitors may opt to park within existing Village lots in order to access the
533 new OSI and Mohonk Preserve trails. Conversely, it is anticipated that many users will come from the
534 Wallkill Valley Rail Trail, SUNY New Paltz and other locations from within the Village, and will thus not utilize

¹⁴ Town of New Paltz Town Code, Chapter 82-14.B.2.c., 2010

¹⁵ River to Ridge FEAF Part 2 Supplemental Narrative, February 1, 2016, Open Space Institute, p.8

¹⁶ NRR-2011/289 Technical Guidance on Assessing Impacts to Air Quality in NEPA and Planning Documents

535 motorized transportation. Regardless, impact to air quality due to the OSI trail project is viewed as
536 insignificant, as are the cumulative impacts of the projects combined.

537

538 **7. PLANTS and ANIMALS**

539 The proposed Foothills project will have an impact upon resident flora and fauna, particularly the plants and
540 limited mobility animal species located within the 6.4 acre footprint of the project. However, adverse
541 impact is considered to be minor due to the minimal area of disturbance; preservation of over 99% of
542 existing habitat; careful siting of improvements so as not to impact critical and significant habitats; the lack
543 of reported endangered and threatened species in the project area; and timing of construction activity.
544 Potential impact to wildlife is also mitigated through the project's element of maintenance and preservation
545 of essential habitat and biodiversity including historic forest and legacy trees, wetlands and open fields; and
546 continued and increased usage of the site for education and research of species.

547 The Foothills project was developed in consideration of habitat and conservation species findings as detailed
548 in the LAMP. Subsequent site specific evaluations of federal¹⁷ and state¹⁸ protected species and significant
549 natural communities were performed as provided in the *Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment*
550 *Report*, dated April 2015. In response to comments, a revised report was issued, dated September 2015.
551 The revised report included the evaluation of additional areas (Lenape Lane, Farm Pond and the River to
552 Ridge project location), and included a new Natural Heritage Program query and evaluation of additional
553 plant species noted in the expanded area. Additionally, the revised report included NYS identified rare and
554 special concern species as discussed in the LAMP, provided further discussion of the formerly existing pied
555 billed grebe habitat, included conservation elements regarding protected bat species, and referenced US
556 F&W Section 7 consultation as required by the federal wetland permit process.

557 **a-f.)** The proposed Foothills will result in no reduction in population, loss of individuals, or reduction or
558 degradation of habitat critical to any Federal or NYS listed endangered, threatened or special concern
559 species.

560 Overall, habitat and species impact have been significantly avoided as only 1.5 acres of forest and 0.6 acres
561 of meadow will be eliminated¹⁹; 99% of existing habitat will remain untouched. Additionally, no federal or
562 state protected species have been identified with the project area.

563 With regard to habitat of protected species, forested areas commonly used for foraging and travel by the
564 protected Indiana bat (US-E) and the northern long eared bat (US-T) were observed within the project area.
565 However, no critical roost or hibernation habitat for either bat species has been documented by NYSDEC or
566 identified by the Preserve to exist within the project area. The forest habitat to be eliminated, associated
567 with the Testimonial Gateway access and parking area, is predominantly second growth forest with an
568 abundance of small and shrub type vegetation and evergreens. Due to tree species, size, and orientation
569 within the landscape, the limited forest to be removed is not considered to provide quality or typical bat
570 roost habitat and no impact to the protected species is anticipated. Several trees will also be removed in
571 for construction of the educational structure. While the removal of a small number of trees, particularly
572 non typical habitat trees is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or result in the
573 destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat, the Preserve will restrict tree cutting from March 31
574 to October 31, in accordance with US F&W guidelines. Such voluntary restriction on tree removal outside

¹⁷ US Fish & Wildlife Service's Information, Planning and Consultation (IPaC) System, 2015

¹⁸ NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program, 2015

¹⁹ EAF E.1.b.

575 of the hibernation period for local bat populations is intended to avoid potential direct impact to the
576 protected Indiana and long eared bats. This seasonal cutting restriction will also serve to protect breeding
577 and nesting birds.

578 Previously existing on-site habitat for the pied billed grebe (NY-T) has reportedly been destroyed by
579 naturally occurring past events²⁰ and no longer exists. Transient sightings of the red-headed woodpecker (NY-
580 SC) have occurred within the project area²¹. Breeding locations for the protected woodpecker are
581 reportedly found within the off-site portions of the Humpo Marsh, south of Preserve lands, and not within
582 the project area. No impact to these species is expected.

583 No designated significant natural community exists within the Foothills project area. Having separately
584 identified key habitats with the same area, the Preserve has proposed development which avoids such
585 unofficial significant resources, particularly the white oak forest. The location and configuration of the
586 Testimonial Gateway parking area allows for the avoidance of the white oak forest with several outlier trees
587 incorporated into the lot design. Also recognizing the important habitat provided by the Humpo Marsh, the
588 Preserve has strategically sited its bird blind and designed it with a vegetated green roof. Access via the
589 elevated walkway at the marsh's northern fringe will not fragment the habitat, prevent species passage,
590 impact migration patterns or use of the site by any species.

591 Additional potential impacts to wildlife have been considered. Specifically, no habitat will be fragmented
592 by the proposed project. Necessary fencing will allow for pass through by wildlife. Shading of aquatic
593 habitat beneath the walkway, dock and bridge will not result in a permanently shaded condition which could
594 cause impairment; conversely, the partial shading may benefit some inhabitants. No continuing or
595 significant sources of noise, light or odor will result from the project. Erosion and sediment control
596 measures will be implemented and maintained so as to not adversely impact any downgradient habitats.

597 Finally, during the construction phase, the Mohonk Preserve has committed to providing trained personnel
598 to survey all areas to be disturbed immediately prior to construction activity in order to assure that no
599 protected species will be impacted; findings of any animal, protected or not, will result in an attempt to
600 relocate the individual out of harm's way.

601 i.) The Mohonk Preserve does not currently use pesticides or herbicides on any of its lands. The Preserve
602 may, at some future time, determine that the use of such is required to control nuisance species.
603 Recognizing that there are environmentally sensitive areas on the site including wetland and significant
604 habitats, the Preserve will utilize principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to control pests should it
605 become necessary to do so. As with standard practices utilized by the County and Town upon their own
606 lands, Mohonk's IPM plan will emphasize non-toxic pest management (NPM) which utilizes natural, non-
607 toxic and biologic practices, and, as last resort, least toxic management options. The choice of pest
608 management is to be based on a thorough analysis of the pest and its environment, the best available pest
609 control methods, and the impact to human health, property and the environment. The analysis is to include
610 all available chemical, physical and biological options, as well as the option of taking no action. Should the
611 Preserve determine that a pesticide must be used, the application of such will be subject to all regulations
612 applicable at that time including the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act²², Environmental
613 Protection Agency regulations in 40 CFR, Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations, and
614 state and local laws.

²⁰ Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment Report, September 2015, Barton & Loguidice, p.8

²¹ Mohonk BioBlitz Report, 2012

²² 7 USC 136 et seq.

615 It is worth noting the abundance of information regarding plant and animal species and habitat which were
616 considered in both the determination of need and the development of the Mohonk Preserve Foothills
617 project plan. Ecological studies performed relative to the LAMP, 2012 Testimonial Gateway BioBlitz, 2013
618 Humpo Marsh biodecathlon, 2014 implementation of the Phenology Project, several bird censuses and
619 forest studies by SUNY New Paltz were evaluated in the siting of proposed improvements within the
620 Foothills parcel.

621 In an email of 2/5/2016, the Town’s ecological consultant, Norbert Quenzer of Bagdon Environmental,
622 indicated that the applicant appears to have accurately represented the plant and animal resources and the
623 anticipated project impacts.

624 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
625 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, Town ecological consultant and the**
626 **public, it is recommended that the Board consider the impacts to plants and animals to be small and that**
627 **the Foothills project will not result in significant adverse impact to such resources.**

628 References:

- 629 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012), 43-61;*
- 630 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
- 631 • *Project Narrative (January 2016), 5-6;*
- 632 • *Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment Report (January 2016);*
- 633 • *2012 Bioblitz Report, Mohonk Preserve;*
- 634 • <http://www.mohonkpreserve.org/sites/default/files/images/2012%20Bio%20Blitz%20at%20the%20Testimonial%20Gateway.pdf>.
- 635
- 636

637 **OSI Addendum**

638 Considered in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge trail project, the cumulative impacts to plants and
639 animals remains insignificant. The OSI project, specifically the installation of multi-use trails within
640 predominantly active and passive agricultural areas, is considered to have a very small potential for impact.
641 The updated Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment performed by the Mohonk Preserve
642 incorporated the OSI area into its regulatory agency query and the two additional species identified were
643 included in the Preserve’s evaluation with no impact identified. OSI’s own evaluation of species and habitat
644 identified no protected species, indicated a proposed alteration of only 4.1 of nearly 300 acres or habitat,
645 predominantly agricultural in nature, and concluded that no significant adverse impact to plants or animals
646 as anticipated. Accordingly, cumulative impacts to species and habitat due the Mohonk Preserve and OSI
647 projects are not considered to be significant.

648

649 **8. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

650 The proposed Foothills project will have no adverse impact upon agriculture.

651 Projects greater than 2.5 acres in size situated within designated agricultural districts are identified as Type
652 1 actions as they are presumed to result in more than a small impact to agricultural resources. The Foothills
653 parcel is situated within Ulster County’s Agricultural District #2 but the potential for significant impact to
654 agriculture is rebutted.

655 According to Ulster County GIS data, roughly 430 acres or 50% of the 857 acre parcel consists of highly
656 productive agricultural soils²³. 323 acres are in active agricultural use (Glynwood) and will remain so after
657 implementation of the project. The remaining 107 acres of prime farmland is considered meadow or
658 abandoned agriculture, not actively farmed but managed through routine mowing. Three quarters of this
659 lies within the project footprint.²⁴

660 The Foothills project will result in the loss of 0.1% of the site's prime agricultural soils as 0.6 acres of meadow
661 near the Hasbrouck House will be converted to parking.²⁵ The remaining meadows will be actively managed
662 by the Preserve as without routine mowing, the open agricultural lands will evolve to shrub and forest lands.
663 The loss of roughly one half acre of meadow edge is not determined to be significant, and mitigation of loss
664 is provided through preservation and active management of the balance of such resources.

665 Additionally, the project will not sever, cross or limit access to agricultural lands, will not result in the
666 excavation or compaction of soils of active agricultural land, and will not disrupt or prevent installation of
667 any agricultural land management system. The project will not result in increased development pressure
668 on farmland.

669 With regard to development, the Hillside lot is to be transferred to OSI with no impact to agricultural
670 resources by the Mohonk Preserve.

671 In summary, none of the project area's prime soils are actively farmed and all lands upon the Foothills parcel
672 currently in agricultural production will remain so. The impact to agricultural resources amounts to just
673 over one half acre, which is considered to be minor, particularly with regard to the agricultural preservation
674 of the balance of the site. Further reduction would likely result in the elimination of this lot.

675 The project is consistent with the Town of New Paltz Farmland Preservation Plan, which promotes
676 conservation of active farmlands and agricultural heritage. The plan is also consistent with the Town of New
677 Paltz Open Space Plan which calls for the conservation of active farmlands.

678 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
679 **the impacts to agricultural resources to be small and that the Foothills project will not result in significant**
680 **adverse impact to such resources.**

681 References:

- 682 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan* (2012), 82-83;
- 683 • *Site Plans* (January 2016);
- 684 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016), 1-2, 4-6, 10-11;
- 685 • *Agricultural Data Statement* (January 2016);
- 686 • *Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan* (January 2016);
- 687 • *Town of New Paltz Farmland Protection Plan*.
- 688

689 **OSI Addendum**

²³ FEAF E.3.a. and b.

²⁴ Response to FEAF Part 2 Questions, Barton and Loguidice

²⁵ FEAF E.1.b.

690 OSI's River to Ridge trail project, also located within Ulster County Agricultural District 2, will also have a
691 minor impact upon agricultural resources. However, the cumulative adverse effects of the two separate
692 projects to agricultural resources remains small.

693 Approximately half of the nearly 300 acre OSI site is in active crop production. A small portion along the
694 field and property fringe is abandoned agriculture/successional old field or wooded and the balance is
695 hayed. The River to Ridge trail project will result in the conversion of approximately 3 acres of farmland to
696 crushed stone trails, a non-agricultural use. The total impact of the two projects to agriculture amounts to
697 roughly 3.5 acres of 730 acres of farmland or roughly 0.5%, a small portion of the prime soils.

698 According to the New York Planning Federation, compatible uses of agricultural lands include agri-tourism
699 and outdoor recreation (multi-use trails)²⁶. The trails have been designed to generally follow existing farm
700 roads and travel ways and to avoid active cultivation to the greatest extent practicable; the project will not
701 impair continuation of farm activities in the area. All remaining farmland will be maintained as such. Trails
702 are also surficial features which could easily be removed and the land reverted back to agricultural use.

703 A portion of the Hillside lot is maintained as meadow; it is not used for active crop production. Potential
704 impact to agricultural resources should the lot be developed by OSI would be limited to the portion of the
705 deed restricted building envelope which is currently field. This area would not constitute a significant
706 increase to agricultural impact. Potential health impacts due to agricultural operations are discussed in
707 Section 16 – Human Health).

708 Cumulatively, the impact to agricultural resources given implementation of both the Mohonk Foothills and
709 OSI River to Ridge trail project is considered small.

710

711 **9. AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

712 The proposed Foothills project will have a small adverse impact upon aesthetic resources as site access, the
713 two parking areas, and some of the new structures and trails may be partially viewed from a limited number
714 of locations, including the Shawangunk Mountain Scenic Byway (Route 299), some immediate neighbors
715 and from within the parcel itself, particularly during seasonal leaf off periods. However, a critical
716 component of this project is the preservation of important aesthetic resources, particularly the iconic
717 Testimonial Gatehouse, and the Oak Allee, along with the overall character of the landscape. Aesthetic
718 resources are not believed to be significantly or adversely impacted by implementation of the Foothills
719 project.

720 With respect to Part 2 thresholds, the aesthetic impact is considered to be small. The proposed project will
721 occupy less than 1 % of the overall parcel, will be spread among several discreet locations and will be only
722 partially visible. The project will not obstruct or eliminate any scenic view and will have no adverse impact
723 upon views from publically accessible vantage points. Structural improvements are consistent with the
724 existing structures and rural character of the area, ranging in size from roughly 30ft² (kiosks) to nearly 1200
725 ft² (rustic educational structure). They are also of similar scale and architecture to those amenities at other
726 Mohonk Preserve sites, and are designed to blend in with the landscape. No views will be obstructed by
727 any proposed improvements. Where needed for agricultural purposes, fencing will typically be a wire type
728 fence so as not to impede views.

²⁶ New Paltz Farmland Preservation Plan, p. 103

729 Siting of the parking facilities and associated improvements began during development of the LAMP in 2012
730 and included significant public participation. Plan modifications resulting from early public comment
731 included the dismissal of several plans primarily due to visual impact²⁷ and the division of parking into two
732 lots rather than a single large facility at the Gatehouse location. Subsequent modifications made in response
733 to comments included the further size reduction of the Gateway parking lot and the movement of horse
734 trailer parking from Gateway to the secondary Hasbrouck lot.

735 All proposed features have been sited out of direct view, take full advantage of existing natural features in
736 order to limit their visibility, and do not appear to significantly impact the visual integrity of the area.
737 Visibility of the proposed improvements, including the Testimonial Gateway parking facility, appears to be
738 reasonably softened by existing vegetative screening, topography, a significant rock outcrop and distance
739 to potential receptors.

740 The bulk of the trails, as well as the parking facilities and Hasbrouck Lane, will be finished with a crushed
741 stone surface consistent with the local and historic carriage roads. Such surfacing will limit visual impact as
742 it more reasonably blends in with the natural landscape. The parking lots will not be illuminated.

743 **Testimonial Gateway area**

744 The Gateway parking facility, the most apparent of the proposed improvements, is located a minimum of
745 150' from Route 299. At this nearest point, the lot is situated roughly 8' in elevation higher than Route 299.
746 The residential structure closest to this point (2 Jacobs Lane) is roughly 500' distant and on the opposite
747 side of Route 299 with significant vegetation in between.

748 The siting and elliptical shape of the Testimonial Gateway parking area allows for the preservation of the
749 entire white oak forest and quality vegetation within the central ellipse. Legacy trees and second growth
750 evergreens will also be preserved along the periphery. Currently, additional plantings are proposed
751 between the parking area and the Testimonial Gateway structure and additional vegetation may be
752 supplemented as necessary.²⁸

753 As currently proposed, it does not appear that the Testimonial Gateway lot will be substantially visible from
754 the road or neighboring residences; the elliptical shaped clearing as well as the entrance and contact station
755 will be visible but these do not appear to be appreciably out of character. Furthermore, the area of clearing
756 for the Gateway parking facility is of similar size and configuration as several of the most immediate
757 neighbors on Jacobs Lane.

758 A single, shielded, downward directed light will be used at the Testimonial Gateway contact station and at
759 the Gateway orientation kiosk area. These lights are to be turned off one hour after dark.

760 A small "Mohonk style" summer house (gazebo), 400 ft² in size and designed to accommodate only 6-10
761 people, will be tucked into the corner of the meadow south of the Oak Allee and west of the Gateway ponds.
762 It will be visible from portions of Lenape Lane and at a distance from Gatehouse Road and possibly from
763 some of the upper Foothills trails. The structure has been designed, sized and sited so as to blend in and
764 conform to existing local character.

765 Restoration of the historic Gatehouse, removal of the Gatehouse Road end of Lenape Lane and the
766 landscaping of this area, and restoration of the Oak Allee with resurfacing and replacement of dead and
767 dying oak trees will benefit the aesthetic value of the Gateway area.

²⁷ Mohonk Preserve Testimonial Gateway Project, Public Introduction Meeting presentation, October 17, 2013 and
Parking Locations Evaluated

²⁸ Glenn Hoagland; February 2016

768 **Hasbrouck House area**

769 Access to the Hasbrouck House lot area will be via an existing albeit improved road. The lot is tucked into
770 the far north corner of the open field, again taking full advantage of the natural screening of topography,
771 woodlot vegetation, viewing angles and distance. Additional trees will be planted on the south side of the
772 lot further shielding it from view. A single light, shielded and directed downward, will be located at the
773 Hasbrouck lot contact station. Like the two lights at the Gateway lot, this light is to be turned off one hour
774 after dark.

775 The rustic educational structure has also been tucked into the woodlot adjacent open fields and the former
776 Wawarsing Turnpike in order that it may be less visible from both the historic road as well as the upper
777 Foothills trails. Its scale (1200 ft² which includes two porch areas), design and construction material will
778 allow it to blend into the landscape. The structure does not appear to be visible from outside of Preserve
779 lands. Use of solar panels to naturally provide electric to the structure was dismissed due to potential
780 viewing of the panels from within the site.

781 The bird blind will be of small size (400 ft²), constructed of natural materials and will employ a green roof.
782 Immediately surrounding vegetation will be maintained only to the extent to allow for adequate viewing
783 from the structure. Such design features will limit noticeability of this structure.

784 **River to Ridge Trail connection**

785 Trails have been predominately sited on existing travel pathways (Lenape Lane, Wawarsing Turnpike) and
786 along the edge of agricultural fields. Buffers appear to have been maintained between the trails and
787 residences along Butternutville to the extent practicable (typically limited by active agriculture). Vegetative
788 buffers may be enhanced near residences as needed (ie. at road crossing from OSI trail). Trails within
789 agricultural areas will be maintained as mowed vegetated trails.

790 **Lenape Lane Bridge Restoration**

791 The Lenape Bridge restoration component of the project will replace the significantly deteriorating aerial
792 portion of the existing structure. To the extent that such cannot extend off Preserve property and into the
793 Town right of way, site restoration will also eliminate much of the off road parking area which has developed
794 at this location over time. Both will result in significant aesthetic improvements over existing conditions.

795 Visual simulations of all aspects of the project have been provided and are part of the public record. The
796 simulations appear to reasonably represent visual impact. However, it is acknowledged that computer
797 generated images in wooded areas often show greater visibility of a project as tree density and canopy
798 cover must be underplayed to allow for such simulations.

799 The proposed feature sites, particularly the selected parking locations, were inspected in 2015 during leaf
800 off conditions by the Town Engineer (D. Clouser) and Planning Board members; Town representatives
801 concluded that “visibility of the proposed improvements during seasonal leaf-off periods is not possible at
802 a majority of visual receptors due to the density of standing timber proposed to be retained”.²⁹

803 This Part 3 determination that the project, particularly the Testimonial Gateway area, will not be in sharp
804 visual contrast to existing conditions is also based on recent inspection of the site, principally the Gateway
805 parking area, as well as inspections of the Preserve’s other parking facilities, parking lots within in the Town
806 and Village, comparable lots at other facilities (Locust Grove and St. Anne’s lot - Marist College, both in
807 Poughkeepsie), and open areas in the immediate vicinity.

²⁹ Narrative, January 2016, Barton & Loguidice (p.15, 16)

808 The Foothills project addresses many elements of the New Paltz Open Space Plan, specifically the need for
809 management of open areas to protect significant view sheds and the need to protect and expand access to
810 scenic vistas and historical and cultural resources.

811 In summary, while there will be impacts to aesthetic resources associated with the project, the adverse
812 impacts are not found to be significant, particularly in the context that the Part 3 evaluation is to be of a
813 proposed action as seen from a scenic resource or as a part of a scenic resource. The elements of the project
814 seen from or against the backdrop of the Foothills do not adversely impact the aesthetic resource. The view
815 of passing motorist and from neighboring parcels is predominantly of a woodlot, not the designated scenic
816 element. The impact is considered to be small.

817 Proposed restoration and maintenance of several key visual elements sited within the parcel is viewed as
818 significant mitigation. Specifically, necessary repair and continued maintenance of the iconic Testimonial
819 Gateway will pose a minor and temporary impact to the aesthetic value of the area. Restoration work,
820 approved by the Town Historic Preservation Commission, will preserve this resource and its important
821 aesthetic and historic value. Without such repair, the structure will continue to degrade. Restoration of
822 the historic Gateway structure is also recognized as substantial mitigation of impact as is the restoration of
823 the Oak Allee including the replacement of dead and dying trees, and replacement of the aerial portion of
824 the Lenape Lane Bridge. These were conclusions drawn by an independent analysis of significant historic
825 resources including the view shed³⁰ (as discussed in the following section-10). Additional historically
826 significant structures upon the parcel will also be maintained in order to preserve the visual integrity of the
827 area.

828 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
829 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, its consultants and the public, it is recommended**
830 **that the Board consider the impacts to aesthetic resources to be small and that the Foothills project will**
831 **not result in significant adverse impact to views.**

832 References:

- 833 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
- 834 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
- 835 • *Project Narrative (January 2016);*
- 836 • *Assessment of Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources with Proposed Mitigation*
837 *Measures, Larson Fisher Associates (September 2015).*
- 838

839 **OSI Addendum**

840 When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI's River to Ridge trail project, the cumulative
841 impacts are similarly viewed as having no significant adverse impact upon aesthetic resources. The OSI trail
842 project involves only at grade trails constructed of natural stone materials, with several trail signs, pavement
843 markings indicating crossings and a few benches. Furthermore, these are situated predominantly within
844 active and passive agricultural lands with the pavement markings on public roadways. The visual impact
845 will predominantly be of people walking and biking through the landscape. Potential development of the
846 Hillside lot, as per existing zoning and restrictions, will not cause significant aesthetic impact as the site is
847 situated in the valley and is not visible from important viewing areas. It is also adjacent to several residential

³⁰ *Assessment of Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources with Proposed Mitigation Measures, September 12, 2015, Larson Fisher Associates*

848 lots so any allowable development would not be out of character or result in a considerable visual impact.
849 Any potential impact is considered to be small.

850

851 **10. HISTORIC and ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

852 The proposed Foothills project will occur within a historic resource and will have an impact upon historic
853 and archeological resources. Siting of the project within an area registered as both a national and state
854 historic resource results in the identification of the project as a Type 1 as it is presumed to result in more
855 than a small impact to historic and archeologic resources. As such, several archeological and historic
856 resource assessments were performed on the project area, specifically by Alliance Archeological Services in
857 2013, with an addendum in 2014³¹, by Strata Cultural Resource Management in 2015³², and, at the request
858 of the Planning Board, by an independent third party, Larson Fisher Associates, also in 2015³³. Relative to
859 the following Part 2 thresholds, the findings and recommendations of the various studies indicate that the
860 project will not result in a significant adverse impact to historic and archaeological resources.

861 a.) The proposed action will occur within an area listed on the National Register of Historic Places,
862 specifically the Lake Mohonk Mountain House and its associated lands, including the Foothills Parcel on
863 Butterville Road. The Testimonial Gatehouse is not specifically included in the designation although it is
864 contained within the substantial contributing property.

865 The *Assessment of Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources with Proposed Mitigation Measures*,
866 performed by Larson Fisher Associates in 2015 and herein referred to as the Larsen assessment provided an
867 extensive impartial analysis of the projects' potential impacts to historic buildings, landscapes and settings
868 utilizing standards set forth by the US Secretary of the Interior for historic preservation projects.³⁴ The
869 Larsen assessment focused on potential impacts to the historically significant Testimonial Gateway and
870 Hasbrouck House structures, the Wawarsing Turnpike and old Gatehouse Road, as well as the projects
871 impact to the historic landscape.

872 The Larson assessment concluded that "as presented, the Mohonk Preserve Foothills Project has been
873 carefully planned to avoid potential adverse impacts to historic resources" within the Mohonk historic
874 district. The assessment cited several amendments which the Preserve has adopted, which "would lessen
875 the potential impacts, but in both cases the benefits of public access and the restoration of the exterior of
876 the Testimonial Gateway are considerable mitigations. As a result, the extent of the potential adverse
877 impacts to historic resources {resulting from the project} is not significant. These impacts are sufficiently
878 addressed and mitigated in the EAF to make an environmental Impact statement unnecessary."³⁵

879 **Testimonial Gateway area**

880 With regard to the Testimonial Gateway area, the Larsen assessment recommended changes to the plans
881 which would shift the congregation area and visitor services (restroom, informational kiosk, bike rack)
882 further from the Gatehouse. The assessment also recommended increased vegetative screening to
883 effectively block any adverse visual impact of the project amenities from the historic structure, and a slightly

³¹ *Phase IA Archaeological Background and Literature Report of the Proposed Historic Mohonk Gatehouse Trailhead Planning Project*, Alliance Archeological Services, December 12, 2013, and Addendum, May 13, 2014

³² *Phase 1B Archaeological Fieldwork, Mohonk Preserve Foothills Project*, Strata Cultural Resource Management, January 2015

³³ *Assessment of Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources with Proposed Mitigation Measures*, Larson Fisher Associates, September 12, 2015

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Ibid

884 altered trail location in order to allow for more consistent use of the desired planned entry points with their
885 focal advantages and to better prevent trailblazing. These modifications have been included in the currently
886 proposed plan.

887 In further response to recommendations, the Preserve will also restore Lenape Lane consistent with historic
888 surfacing of the Oak Allee, as per the *Restoration and Maintenance Manual for the Shawangunk Carriage*
889 *Road Systems*, previously adopted by the Preserve, Mohonk Mountain House, and Minnewaska State Park.
890 Additionally, the Gateway Ponds will not be altered from their current state as per HPC request, although
891 the Preserve reserves the right to perform some future restoration should improvements to pond ecology
892 or habitat conservation become necessary. The northern Gateway Pond area will be improved only through
893 rehabilitation of former trails about the ponds and the creation of the Phenology Trail, an interactive
894 educational and interpretive footpath within the pond complex.

895 **Hasbrouck House area**

896 With regard to the Hasbrouck House area, this secondary access and parking area was selected in response
897 to a community request that parking not be concentrated at the Testimonial Gateway; subsequent
898 evaluation of the potential impacts of several parking area options resulted in the Hasbrouck site selection.
899 The Larsen assessment suggested an alternative location for the parking area at Hasbrouck in order to avoid
900 further impact to the existing site access, a portion of the historic Wawarsing Turnpike. The location
901 suggested by Larsen was subsequently evaluated by the Preserve and found to result in far greater
902 disturbance and impact due to necessary grading and sight distance requirement. The Preserve, however,
903 did modify its plans in the Hasbrouck area in response to recommendations.

904 The current plans show that the Hasbrouck parking area has been moved and reconfigured in order to
905 provide more distance between the proposed improvement and the historic Wawarsing Turnpike. The
906 plans also show a nominal width to be added to the portion of Wawarsing Turnpike which will continue to
907 serve as an access drive; the adjusted width reportedly conforms to previously existing conditions and is the
908 minimum required to comply with local transportation code. The Preserve has further indicated that it will
909 surface the improved road in accordance with the carriage road restoration and maintenance manual. The
910 10' wide adjacent dry swale will be planted with suitable native meadow grass in order that it may blend in
911 with the adjacent field and the swale will be maintained only as necessary. Finally, the Mohonk Preserve
912 has committed to maintaining the only remaining intact portion of the Wawarsing Turnpike and providing
913 interpretive signage in order to inform and educate users of this historic feature.

914 **Town Historic Preservation Commission**

915 In May of 2015, the Town's HPC issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for renovation of the Testimonial
916 Gateway structure; such repair and renovation of the historic structure was previously separated from the
917 Foothills project.

918 On January 20, 2016, the HPC held a duly noticed public hearing on the Certificate of Appropriateness on
919 the Foothills application. At this meeting, the HPC indicated that its concerns regarding the Foothills project,
920 as identified in the Larsen assessment and reiterated in a letter to the Planning Board dated October 14,
921 2015, had been fully addressed through the response letter from site engineer (Barton & Loguidice) dated
922 November 25, 2015, and plan modifications as discussed above.

923 By letter dated March 8, 2016, the HPC concluded that the Mohonk Preserve Foothills project "has been
924 carefully planned to avoid potential adverse impacts to historic resources" and that "plan changes made in
925 response to our concerns adequately mitigate any potential impacts cited". The HPC approved the plans as
926 presented. Upon completion of the SEQRA review, it is anticipated that the HPC will issue a Certificate of

927 Appropriateness for the Foothills project. Certification is required for implementation of the Foothills
928 project.

929 In summary, while the Larsen assessment found the project to be acceptable as proposed with regard to
930 identified historic resources, the applicant addressed all recommendations to the greatest extent
931 practicable and the resultant modifications are reportedly acceptable³⁶. Project elements acknowledged
932 as substantial mitigation include rehabilitation of the Gatehouse, rehabilitation and restored usage of Old
933 Gatehouse Road (Lenape Lane and the Oak Allee), installation of an oak nursery from which to replace dead
934 and dying trees along the Oak Allee, trails and interpretive signage, the summer house, and rehabilitation
935 of the Lenape Lane Bridge. Concerns of the HPC have also been satisfied, specifically, the restoration of
936 Lenape Lane consistent with the historic Oak Allee, modifications to the Hasbrouck site improvements to
937 be more respectful of the historic Wawarsing Turnpike and minimal impact to the former Gateway Ponds.

938 Finally, during the SEQRA review of the subdivision of the Mohonk Foothills from the Mohonk Mountain
939 House lands in 2011, the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (SHPO) recommended
940 that any future development be subject to SHPO review, but their role is only advisory where HPC oversight
941 is established by ordinance. The Larsen report to HPC was filed with SHPO.

942 **b.)** The proposed action will occur within an area designated as sensitive for archaeological sites (NY SHPO
943 inventory). A literature and document review and sensitivity assessment (Phase IA)³⁷ and field
944 reconnaissance survey (Phase IB)³⁸ were performed on portions of the site to be impacted by access, parking
945 and structures. No evaluation of trail locations was performed as these low impact features require little if
946 any subsurface disturbance. The field evaluations performed resulted in no finding of significant artifacts.
947 The study concluded that no further archeological investigations were necessary.

948 These studies and their conclusions were submitted to SHPO. The May 8, 2015, a consolidated response
949 from SHPO indicated that the Phase 1A, 1A Addendum and 1B archaeological studies were reviewed. "SHPO
950 has no further concerns regarding the Project's potential effects to archaeological resources, and it is SHPO's
951 recommendation that no additional archaeological work is necessary."³⁹

952 **d.)** The Mohonk Preserve has indicated that additional structures, particularly barns on the Foothills parcel
953 will be maintained as needed in order to preserve them and the character of the area. Additionally, without
954 management of the land, the diverse historic landscape will undergo natural succession, much becoming
955 forest. The Preserve intends to maintain the diversity of habitat, thus the historic landscape through careful
956 land management.

957 In summary, the level of study necessary to determine impact of the Foothills project upon historic and
958 archaeological resources has been performed. The literature and document review and sensitivity
959 assessment (Phase IA) and field reconnaissance survey (Phase IB) resulted in the conclusion that the
960 Foothills project will have no adverse impact on historic and archaeological resources. The independent
961 study performed at the request of the Town of New Paltz Planning Board and focusing on historically
962 significant buildings and landscapes also concluded that the potential impact to historic resources due to
963 implementation of the Foothills project is not significant and that the project satisfactorily mitigates any
964 potential impact though its proposed restoration and maintenance of key historic elements.

965

³⁶ HPC meeting, January 20, 2016

³⁷ Alliance, Phase IA, 2013, and Phase 1A Addendum, 2014

³⁸ Strata, Phase 1B, 2015

³⁹ SHPO Consolidated Response for 15PRO01814, Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS), May 8, 2015

966 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
967 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, the Town Historic Preservation Commission, its**
968 **historic resource consultant and the public, it is recommended that the Board consider the impacts to**
969 **historic and archaeological resources to be small and that the Foothills project will not result in significant**
970 **adverse impact to views.**

971 References:

- 972 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016);
- 973 • *Phase 1A Archaeological Background & Literature Report*, Alliance Archeological Services,
974 (December 2013), 4, 7, 14-15;
- 975 • *Addendum Phase 1A Archaeological Background & Literature Report*, Alliance Archeological
976 Services (May 2014), 4, 16, 20;
- 977 • *Phase 1B Archaeological Fieldwork*, Strata Cultural Resource Management (January 2015), 9,
978 17, 22;
- 979 • *Certificate of Appropriateness* (May 2015);
- 980 • *Historic Resources Assessment Report* (September 2015);
- 981 • *SHPO Review Response*;
- 982 • *Assessment of Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources with Proposed Mitigation*
983 *Measures*, Larsen Fisher Associates, September 12th, 2015;
- 984 • *Letter from Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C., to John Orfitelli, Chair of the Town of New Paltz Historic*
985 *Preservation Commission* (January 4, 2016);
- 986 • *Letter from John Orfitelli, Chair of the Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission to*
987 *Town Planning Board* (March 8, 2016).
- 988

989 **OSI Addendum**

990 When the Foothills project is considered in conjunction with OSI's River to Ridge trail project, the cumulative
991 impacts have no significant adverse impact upon archeological and historic resources.

992 The OSI trail project passes through significantly disturbed active and passive agricultural areas as well as
993 areas subject to periodic substantial flooding. These areas are typically not considered to be
994 archaeologically sensitive. Additionally, the OSI project involves only trail installation, with no significant
995 earthwork to be performed. Trail improvements will result in only minor changes to the historic landscape,
996 consistent with its scenic, rural and agricultural character. No historic structures will be impacted.

997 In its review of the OSI River to Ridge Trail project, the NYSOPRHP has concluded that the project would
998 have no impact on archaeological and/or historic resources listed or eligible for listing.⁴⁰

999

1000 **11. OPEN SPACE and RECREATION**

1001 The proposed Foothills project will have a beneficial impact upon both open space and recreation; it will
1002 not result in any loss or adverse impact.

1003 Through acquisition of the Foothills parcel, the Mohonk Preserve protected a significant area of open space
1004 landscape from development, a priority goal of the Town's 2006 Open Space Plan. Active management of

⁴⁰ Letter from R. Pierpont, NYSOPRHP to E. Meade, AKRF, August 25, 2015

1005 open space within a parcel is necessary to maintain the land as open rather than allowing it to naturally
1006 transition to forest. Such open space management through the continuation of passive agricultural
1007 practices and periodic mowing include portions of the project area. Direct impact to open space resulting
1008 from this project includes installation of parking lots, access lanes and trails and amounts to approximately
1009 2 acres or 0.25% of the 857 acre parcel. Impact also consists of the addition of 11 structures totaling 2732
1010 ft². Considered to be of insignificance due to both their individual as well as cumulative size, particularly
1011 relative to the size of the overall parcel, the structures have been designed to blend in with the natural
1012 surroundings. Such site modifications and amenities are not considered to be an adverse impact upon open
1013 space. Rather, the project components are intended to provide safe and manageable access to the
1014 recreational opportunities offered by Foothills parcels, provide users with enhanced facilities and amenities
1015 not currently available, and to alleviate issues and potential associated with road side parking by Mohonk
1016 Foothills users.

1017 The proposed improvements will beneficially impact recreational opportunities. Two parking lots will be
1018 created to allow for safe and managed parking for 100 passenger vehicles and up to 4 buses and two horse
1019 trailers (plus 3 residence spaces at Hasbrouck). It is intended and believed that these lots will be utilized
1020 primarily by those currently parking along Town roads. In response to early public comment regarding
1021 aesthetic impact, the parking was divided into two areas which could more easily blend into the landscape
1022 and allow for access into two different resource environments. The project will result in additional multi-
1023 use trails which can be utilized to meander entirely within the foothills parcel, to access other areas of the
1024 Preserve's property, particularly the ridge trails, and, in coordination with the OSI project, points east

1025 According to the Preserve, the Foothills parcel is intended to serve a somewhat different demographic. The
1026 Preserve's existing trailheads are located upon the ridge and in areas of substantial topographic change;
1027 accordingly, usage tends to be of a more strenuous or aggressive nature. Trails are predominately wooded
1028 and scenic vistas are typically noted at clearings and cliffs. Conversely, the Foothills will provide opportunity
1029 for short and/or leisurely strolls, with nearly level trails for very young, elderly and disabled visitors, varied
1030 habitat including open field, marsh, pond, and woods, and historic/cultural features not available on other
1031 lands, Preserve or publicly owned.

1032 Passive recreational opportunities such a birding and wildlife watching, photography and nature study will
1033 be enhanced by project components including restored historic features, the elevated walkway and bird
1034 blind at Humpo Marsh, the summer house (rustic gazebo) and rustic educational shelter. The Phenology
1035 Trail will allow for additional participation in the study of seasonal and cyclical changes in species and
1036 habitat. Improved access and parking opportunities will also directly benefit those participating in ongoing
1037 studies by SUNY New Paltz as well as participants of the Preserve's sponsored "citizen scientist" activities.

1038 Parking for horse trailers will be permitted at the Hasbrouck House parking area only, thus providing
1039 recreational opportunity to the equestrian population.

1040 As a component of the project, the Preserve has also included a free 2.2 mile loop within Preserve lands.
1041 This loop will connect with OSI's River to Ridge trail system thus allowing for a total 5.6 miles of free access
1042 trails associated with the project.

1043 Foothills user experience in intended to be enhanced by directional signage and kiosks containing relevant
1044 information about trail location, wildlife, habitat and history. In particular, the Preserve has committed to
1045 preservation of the last remaining portion of the historic Wawarsing Turnpike, with relevant signage about
1046 the feature. Parking areas with handicap parking and ADA compliant restrooms, which do not currently
1047 exist, will provide opportunities to utilize the Foothills parcel for those with disabilities and the elderly.

1048 Staffing is to be present and sufficient to manage parking and handle emergency situations as well as assist
1049 visitors and enforce use regulations. The Preserve has provided copy of its lot management plan, which
1050 addresses procedures to be followed at trailhead/parking lot areas and the responsibilities of staff. The
1051 Preserve has also provided the Town information regarding its Search and Rescue procedures, training and
1052 capabilities. The Preserve has agreed to maintain an open dialog with the Town and will review such plans
1053 periodically with the Town in order to address any operation concerns which the Town may have. The
1054 Preserve has indicated that it will also periodically review its plan with Minnewaska officials to help ensure
1055 that the facilities are adequately respectful of local communities.

1056 With regard to concern over the possible overuse of the Foothills parcel, it is important to note that Preserve
1057 lands are not public; they are privately owned with usage permitted to members and day pass holders.
1058 Proper maintenance is in the best interest of the Preserve. However, such maintenance, including potential
1059 limitation of use of areas determined to be adversely impacted, is at the discretion of the Preserve.

1060 No hunting on the Foothills parcel will be permitted other than that which is currently authorized on the
1061 Glynwood leased parcel as part of the Preserve's management plan.

1062 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
1063 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the public, it is**
1064 **recommended that the Board consider the impacts to open space and recreation to be small and that the**
1065 **Foothills project will not result in significant adverse impact to such resources.**

1066 References:

- 1067 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
- 1068 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
- 1069 • *Project Narrative (January 2016).*

1071 **OSI Addendum**

1072 OSI's River to Ridge trail project will have no adverse effect on open space.

1073 It will provide additional opportunity for recreation with 3.4 miles of free access, multi-use trails. Combined
1074 with the 2.2 mile Foothills loop, combined free access trails associated with the two projects amounts to
1075 5.6 miles. Additionally, the OSI trail will provide a trail link from the Village of New Paltz and the existing
1076 Wallkill Valley Rail Trail to the Foothills parcel and Shawangunk Ridge trails. The OSI River to Ridge trail will
1077 also play a major role in the regional goal of connecting the area's eastern rail trail system, including the
1078 Hudson Valley Rail Trail and Walkway Over the Hudson, to lands of the Preserve and beyond.

1079 Additionally, current non motorized transport to the Foothills from the Village and the Wallkill Valley Rail
1080 Trail is along Route 299, Springtown, Butternville and Mountain Rest Roads; the OSI trail will eliminate
1081 potential conflict between vehicle and non-motorized usage by providing a safe, off road alternative.

1082 The combined Mohonk Preserve Foothills project and OSI River to Ridge Trail project will have no adverse impact
1083 to either open space or recreation.

1084

1085 **12. CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS**

1086 The proposed Foothills project will have no adverse impact to officially designated Critical Environmental
1087 Areas as the site is not within or adjacent to any area designated as such. The nearest is the Shawangunk
1088 Ridge in the Town of Shawangunk.

1089 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
1090 **that there will be no impact to critical environmental areas.**

1091

1092 **OSI Addendum**

1093 Cumulatively, the Mohonk Preserve and OSI projects will not result in any adverse impact upon critical
1094 environmental areas.

1095

1096 **13. TRANSPORTATION**

1097 The proposed Foothills project will result in a change to existing transportation conditions. However, the
1098 resultant impact has not been found to exceed any of the identified Part 2 thresholds. Specifically, the
1099 anticipated increase in volume will not exceed capacity of the existing road network, will not result in
1100 construction of paved parking for 500 or more vehicles, will not alter existing transit access, will not degrade
1101 existing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and will not significantly alter the present pattern of
1102 movement of people or goods. Although not required, a traffic analyses was performed which concluded
1103 that the project's influence on traffic would be small.

1104

1105 a.) The Foothills project will have a small impact on local traffic as a minor additional volume will be
1106 generated by the project. Such additional traffic will not degrade the performance nor the safety of the
1107 existing adjacent transportation network as the existing roads have the capacity to handle that level of
1108 traffic without reconfiguration. These are the conclusions reached through the transportation analyses
1109 performed by the Preserve's transportation consultant and substantiated by the Town Planning Board's
1110 independent traffic review engineer.

1111

1112 A Transportation Evaluation Study⁴¹ (TES) was voluntarily conducted by the Preserve with study parameters
1113 and methodologies approved by the Town Planning Board's transportation review engineer, Creighton
1114 Manning (CM). Additional parameters were subsequently requested including volume generated by the
1115 Samuel Pryor Campground and additional intersections, incident analyses and sensitivity analysis.⁴² The
1116 study utilized peak traffic volumes as taken on Saturday, October 18, 2014; parking counts from Columbus
1117 Day weekend taken at various on and off site locations; and hourly data recorded at various intersections
1118 using automated traffic counters. The study estimated an additional 94 trips will be generated at peak hour
1119 (Saturday afternoon, fall season) attributable to the proposed project⁴³. This equates to an estimated
1120 3% of the existing peak hour traffic baseline (note that peak volume does not occur during typical
1121 weekday rush hour time frames). Anticipated peak volume falls below the 100 trip threshold which
1122 would require a traffic study as levels below 100 are typically not found to result in any significant
1123 increases in traffic. More typical off peak traffic generation are safely assumed to be significantly less.

⁴¹ Transportation Evaluation Study (TES), Barton & Loguidice, April 6, 2015

⁴² Email between K. Wersted (CM) and M. Calimano; November 24, 2015

⁴³ TES, p. 13

1124 The capacity and level of service (LOS) analysis⁴⁴ was performed comparing weekend, peak hour impact at
1125 the time of opening of the facility (evaluated to be 2017), and at 2022 (5 years post opening). The analysis
1126 indicated that the current LOS at each of the intersections in the study area will remain the same with no
1127 significant reduction in service due the project. Year 2017 delay increases were calculated to be less than
1128 one second per vehicle. A delay increase of roughly 0.3 seconds in 2022 results in a LOS change at the
1129 Gatehouse/299 intersection from level B to C, the only level reduction calculated 5 years out. The analysis
1130 indicated that the proposed project entrance drives could operate satisfactorily as proposed, without
1131 further mitigation. CM concurred with these findings. No traffic control measures such as turning lanes
1132 were evaluated. *(Note: a 150' long 8' wide gravel shoulder along Route 299 westbound was added to the*
1133 *site plan in May 2016.)*

1134 A sensitivity analysis was provided which estimated cumulative traffic impacts associated with the Hampton
1135 Inn, CVS/Five Guys, and Wildberry Lodge projects⁴⁵. In concert with these other projects, intersection delay
1136 increases were found to be less than one half-second per vehicle. The 0.4 second delay increase when
1137 exiting the Testimonial Gateway resulted in the only change in LOS; this does not impact the transportation
1138 network and the conclusions of the original TES remain unchanged. Potential adverse impact to traffic
1139 volume and conditions was determined to be small.

1140 Sight distance analyses were conducted on the approaches to both the Testimonial Gateway and Hasbrouck
1141 area entrances.⁴⁶ Using an average vehicle speed of 60 mph (5 mph above the legally indicated speed limit),
1142 sight distance in the vicinity of the Gateway access exceeded recommendations following Town
1143 maintenance of the DPW right of way (RoW) west of Jacobs Lane. Sight distance at the proposed realigned
1144 Hasbrouck area entrance was also found to exceed recommended site distance given brush clearance.

1145 Safe ingress and egress at the proposed Foothills access locations could be impacted at higher levels of
1146 speed should Right of Way vegetation near these access points not be maintained. The Preserve's
1147 management plan should include periodic inspections of these areas for site distance encroachments and
1148 the Preserve should recommend maintenance to the Ulster County or the Town should RoW maintenance
1149 be deemed necessary. County DPW approval is also required for curb cuts from Route 299, specifically at
1150 the proposed entrance to the Testimonial Gateway area and the modified Hasbrouck Lane entrance.

1151 An analysis of accidents from the Carmine Liberta Bridge west to Jenkins Road⁴⁷ found accident rates in the
1152 project area to be higher than statewide averages. Nearly 40% of these collisions involved animals, with
1153 rear-end and left turn accidents (vehicles only) accounting for 16%. Three of the 142 reported accidents
1154 involved bicyclists. The TES/Supplement concluded that the accidents were not attributed to roadway or
1155 intersection geometry⁴⁸. CM found insufficient data to support such a determination, citing several physical
1156 characteristics of Route 299 and the intersecting roadways that may be contributing to the elevated
1157 accident rates. CM agreed that the Foothills project would not exacerbate the existing accident conditions
1158 given the adequacy of the proposed site driveway improvements and active management of traffic during
1159 busy periods⁴⁹. According to the analysis, a slight increase in accidents relative to the volume increase only
1160 can be expected. The Preserve has supported, and in light of the accident analysis, the Town is pursuing a
1161 reduction in speed for this particular stretch of Route 299.
1162

⁴⁴ TES, p. 15-16, and Traffic Sensitivity Analysis p. 2, Barton & Loguidice, January 21, 2016

⁴⁵ Traffic Sensitivity Analyses supplement, Barton & Loguidice, January 21, 2016

⁴⁶ TES, p. 17-20

⁴⁷ TES - Accident Analysis Supplement, Barton & Loguidice, January 6 2016

⁴⁸ TES, p. 21

⁴⁹ Letter from Creighton Manning to Planning Board dated January 25, 2016

1163 **b.)** The new parking facilities will result in a small impact to existing conditions as previously discussed. A
1164 total of 103 vehicle spaces will be provided (80 at Testimonial Gateway; 20 plus improvements to 3 resident
1165 spaces at Hasbrouck. The Gateway parking area may also accommodate 3 buses while 1 bus and two horse
1166 trailer spaces will be made available at Hasbrouck). The SEQR threshold is 500 spaces. The provision of
1167 proposed parking is intended to reduce, if not eliminate, vehicles parked on local roads near the base of the
1168 Foothills. Such off road parking has been identified as a concern of local residents. In the vicinity of the
1169 Lenape Lane bridge, where off road parking is a significant issue, the existing gravel pull off will be reclaimed
1170 with landscaping and stone bollards will be installed to further deter roadside parking. (See Plan Sheet G
1171 1.1) Bridge area parking will be eliminated to the extent that modifications will be made to Preserve
1172 property and not within Town right of way lands.

1173 With regard to parking lot capacity, the TES indicates that new trips to be generated by the proposed
1174 facilities along with lot retention after turnover yields 97 vehicles, or 85% of the peak hour design capacity
1175 of 113 spaces; 85% is a typical industry standard for parking lot design capacity. Utilizing a separate
1176 approach, the Town's transportation engineer indicated that a suitable parking capacity would be the
1177 expected peak hour parking demand generated by the project plus 10 to 15%, which similarly equates to
1178 106 to 112 vehicles.⁵⁰ Three of the proposed spaces are for residential use at the Hasbrouck house. (*Note:*
1179 *in May 2016, parking was further reduced to 103 total parking spaces as 10 spaces were removed from the*
1180 *Testimonial Gateway due to additional tree preservation.*)

1181 As previously indicated, both the Preserve and County Planning have indicated that further reduction in the
1182 size of the parking may jeopardize both the intent and ability of the project to provide for safe, managed
1183 parking for the Foothills and to eliminate or reduce roadside parking.

1184 The Preserve has indicated that it supports Town posting of “no parking” signs along Gatehouse Road, and
1185 other areas, so long as the signs are not visually obtrusive. It has also indicated a willingness to provide
1186 enforcement, should the Town both post the roadways and provide certain Preserve personnel with legal
1187 enforcement capabilities, as it has reportedly done in other Towns.⁵¹ (*Note: the May 2016 plan also includes*
1188 *timber guiderails along portions of Gatehouse and Butterville Roads to discourage road side parking.*)

1189 **c.)** The project does not create a demand for transit facilities, or remove or degrade access to transit. If
1190 public transportation was made available to the area, the project trailhead access drives are designed to
1191 accommodate school bus circulation; therefore, other transit vehicles could be accommodated.⁵²

1192 **d.)** The project will not degrade existing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Conversely, these are the
1193 activities for which the proposed improvements are designed. The project will provide accommodations
1194 such as new surfaced trails, signage, bike racks and restroom facilities as well as improved access to existing
1195 trails. Handicap parking and ADA compliant facilities will benefit visitors with disabilities.⁵³

1196 **e.)** There will be no modifications to the local transportation systems as a result of the Foothills project,
1197 thus no impact on the existing pattern of movement of people or goods. However, in response to issues
1198 discussed during this SEQRA process, modifications to the Route 299 and Gatehouse Road intersection are
1199 being explored by the Town. The Town has also indicated its desire to petition for a reduction in the speed
1200 limit for the portion of Route 299 from the Carmine Liberta Bridge to Jenkins Road. The Preserve supports
1201 both the reduced speed limit and the realignment of the intersection of Route 299 and Gatehouse Road,
1202 and has indicated that it is open to providing land near the intersection to the Town so that it may properly

⁵⁰TES, email from K Wested to T Kolankowski, 2/5/2016

⁵¹TES, p.23, and PB meeting comments from G. Hoagland

⁵² Narrative p. 11-12, Plan Sheets G 1.1 and G 2.1

⁵³ Plan Sheets G 1.1 and G 2.1.

1203 address this safety issue. The Preserve will also realign the intersection of Hasbrouck Lane at Route 299 so
1204 that it complies with existing safety standards. Approval by Ulster County DPW for the two proposed access
1205 drives will be required.

1206 **f.)** The Preserve has established a formal traffic management plan which is currently in use at its other lots
1207 and which it intends to use at the Testimonial Gateway and Hasbrouck lots. Components of this plan to
1208 prevent excess stacking on peak use days include use of a two person system to process incoming cars; the
1209 posting of a “lot full” sign, orange road cones and personnel at the road to be sure that cars pass the lot
1210 entrance when capacity has been reached; and radio contact with other trailheads in order to direct cars to
1211 an alternate lot, if spaces are known to be available elsewhere, or to other local attractions.⁵⁴ The parking
1212 facility at the Testimonial Gateway has also been designed with a ‘pass-by’ lane designed for use by Preserve
1213 rangers; this lane may be used as a “speed pass” lane for members to alleviate queuing on Route 299 during
1214 peak usage.⁵⁵ Copy of the Preserve’s traffic management plan will be provided to the Town; the Preserve
1215 has further agreed to meet with the Town for periodic review of the traffic management plan, its
1216 effectiveness, and any identified need for modification.

1217 During peak season, the Preserve, in cooperation with management of Minnewaska, will disseminate
1218 information concerning alternative routes from the ridge area southward in order to help alleviate
1219 congestion through the Village.⁵⁶

1220 No construction related traffic issues are anticipated. However, as a typical practice of the Planning Board
1221 during site plan review, the Board may require that the Preserve enter into a Developer Agreement with
1222 the Town to ensure that construction traffic will be properly managed in order to avoid and minimize
1223 impacts on the local transportation system.

1224 In summary, according to the traffic related studies performed by the Preserve and its’ engineers, and
1225 verified by the Town’s transportation consultant, the Foothills project will not have a significant adverse
1226 impact upon the existing transportation network. Through review of the submitted data, the Town has
1227 determined that conditions exist along a portion the 299 corridor which, independent of the Mohonk
1228 project, have an adverse impact on transportation. Data does not support that any such conditions will be
1229 exacerbated by the Foothills project. However, the Town is investigating these conditions utilizing data
1230 obtained from the Mohonk analyses and is pursuing improvements. These improvements include the
1231 realignment of Gatehouse Road, reduced speed limit along Route 299, and modified and improved traffic
1232 signage.

1233 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
1234 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town traffic engineer, Town engineer, and the**
1235 **public, it is recommended that the Board consider the impacts to transportation to be small and that the**
1236 **Foothills project will not result in significant adverse impact to such.**

1237 References:

- 1238 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
- 1239 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
- 1240 • *Project Narrative (January 2016);*
- 1241 • *Transportation Evaluation Study (April 2015);*

⁵⁴ Email from G Hoagland to T Kolankowski, 1/19/2016

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Memorandum, G. Hoagland to M. Calimano, February 8, 2016

- 1242 • *Transportation Evaluation Study – Supplemental Accident Analysis (January 6, 2016; misdated*
1243 *2015);*
1244 • *Transportation Evaluation Study – Traffic Sensitivity Analysis (January 21, 2016; misdated 2015);*
1245 • *Letter to Michael Calimano from Barton & Loguidice, (January 6, 2016).*

1246

1247 **OSI Addendum**

1248 The OSI traffic and parking assessment indicated that the OSI project is not anticipated to generate
1249 additional vehicular traffic, that ample parking accommodations exist within the Village for non local users,
1250 and that the OSI component may reduce parking needs of Foothills users. Additionally, the River to Ridge
1251 Trail project will provide a safe alternate route to the Foothills and Shawangunk Ridge from the Village of
1252 New Paltz and the Wallkill Valley Rail trail, eliminating bicycle and pedestrian use of local roads, particularly
1253 the heavily used Route 299 flats, thereby making all transportation modes in the immediate area safer.
1254 While no parking lots are to be created, the River to Ridge Trail project proposes to reconfigure a small
1255 existing parking lot on the OSI parcel near Springtown Road. The OSI Project is not anticipated to have any
1256 significant adverse impact on transportation

1257 Connectivity of non-motorized transportation corridors, those existing as well as envisioned, is discussed in
1258 subsequent sections on recreation and community.

1259

1260

1261 **14. ENERGY**

1262 The proposed Foothills project will not result in a significant use of energy as only several low energy use
1263 features are included in the plan for the 857 acre parcel. Energy usage is primarily due to lighting at the two
1264 parking lot contact stations and at the Gateway lot congregation area. Three high efficiency LED lights will
1265 be used as necessary during daytime and are to be turned off each day one hour after dark. Additional
1266 energy expenditure will result from visitor use of the four electric car charging stations provided and the
1267 occasional heating of the 1200 ft² rustic education structure via wood burning stove and/or propane heater.
1268 Ongoing energy usage is estimated to be slightly over 1000 Kw hours annually.⁵⁷

1269 A minor amount of energy usage will be related to construction activity; this will be temporary and short
1270 term. Vehicular travel to and from the Foothills site will increase over that which currently exists. While
1271 considered to be a permanent impact given the project, it is not considered to be significant.

1272 The Preserve is investigating the use of solar power to provide for its minimal lighting needs. Solar has been
1273 rejected at the rustic educational cabin due to its potential visual impact from the upper Foothills.

1274 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
1275 **the impacts to energy to be small and that the Foothills project will not result in significant adverse impact**
1276 **to such resources.**

1277 References:

- 1278 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
1279 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
1280 • *Project Narrative (January 2016).*

1281

⁵⁷ FEA F D.2.k.i.

1282 **OSI Addendum**

1283 The OSI project has no energy requiring facilities and only minor construction activity. Adverse impact to
1284 energy remains insignificant when considering the Foothills project in conjunction with OSI’s River to Ridge
1285 Trail project.

1286

1287 **15. NOISE, ODOR and LIGHT**

1288 A small impact may be expected relative to these nuisances. Potential impact is considered to be minor due
1289 to the nature of the project as well as strategic siting of each of the amenities, maintenance of topographic
1290 and vegetative screening, the limited number of parking spaces provided, and site usage during daylight
1291 hours only.

1292 A small increase in noise and odor will occur during construction, predominantly from the transport of
1293 surfacing material to the site. Construction related impact will be restricted to close proximity of the
1294 activity, will occur during daytime working hours, and will cease upon completion.

1295 Once completed, increased visitation of the area may result in a slight increase in noticeable vehicular noise
1296 and human noise over that which currently exists. Such potential impact is believed to be largely mitigated
1297 by distance to and natural screening of sensitive receptors such as residences, but may be noted at times.
1298 The Testimonial Gateway parking lot is located approximately 500’ distant from the nearest residential
1299 structure on Jacobs Lane. Jacobs Lane also lies on the opposite side of the State Highway and at a
1300 significantly lower elevation than the proposed Gateway improvements. Natural screening, as discussed
1301 previously, is believed to sufficiently mitigate potential visual and noise impact from the parking facility on
1302 this residential neighborhood. Other improvements closest to residential parcels include the Phenology
1303 Trail, to be located several hundred feet from residences off Gatehouse and Woodlot Road, and the River
1304 to Ridge Trail connection, separated from seven residences along Butterville Road by the road itself. Along
1305 Butterville, trails are set back a minimum of 50’ from the road; two lots are provided further separation by
1306 a 150’ trail to road setback as per an existing easement. This separation is substantially greater than the
1307 distance between such residences and those currently walking and riding along Butterville Road. Distance,
1308 roadways, and existing and proposed agricultural style fencing along Butterville are also intended to
1309 alleviate roadside and trail entrance at non intended locations.

1310 The project will not generate odors. Proposed restroom facilities are equipped with ventilation systems,
1311 however, a malfunction or overload may result in very localized and short term noticeable odors until the
1312 problem is corrected. Equestrian use of the Foothills facilities may also result in occasional noise and odor,
1313 but only in close proximity and for short duration. u

1314 A total of 3 lights will be added to the parcel. Shielded, downward directed LED lighting will be utilized at
1315 each of the two lot contact stations (Testimonial Gateway and Hasbrouck); an additional light will be used
1316 at the Gateway congregation/orientation kiosk area. These lights are to be turned off one hour after dark
1317 but may be noticeable, for a short time, as no lighting currently exists. The parking lots will not be
1318 illuminated.

1319 With regard to use of the site for other than typical day pass or member use, the Preserve has indicated
1320 that unlike the Slingerland Pavilion in Marbletown and Visitor Center in Gardiner, the Testimonial Gateway
1321 site will not be made available for non Mohonk Preserve events such as private parties, weddings and after
1322 dark events for members. However, use of the Foothills, particularly the Gateway area, will be allowed for
1323 a limited number of the Preserve’s own, mission-related gatherings and events. The Preserve will hold such

1324 events at a scale appropriate to the site and during the hours in which the Preserve operates, ending no
1325 later than one hour after sunset. These occasional events will be planned and conducted to avoid or
1326 minimize any off-site noise or light impacts.

1327 The Preserve has advised the Board that it intends to continue to allow use of the property for its annual
1328 “Rock the Ridge” charity running event, which has included use of the Gatehouse property for event parking.
1329 The proposed Gatehouse parking area would continue to be used for the Rock the Ridge event outside the
1330 general hours of dawn to one hour after sunset. The Gatehouse parking area would provide limited parking
1331 for race organizers and volunteers who help monitor and control the event. All race participants will
1332 continue to park at the Ulster County Fairgrounds, and will use a shuttle from the Fairgrounds to the site.
1333 The new Testimonial Gateway trailhead lot, once installed, will be used to provide a safer and more efficient
1334 drop off point for the shuttle, replacing the current practice of using a drop off point on the roadside of
1335 Route 299 near the intersection with Gatehouse Road. Preserve staff will monitor the parking area and
1336 grounds during the event and ensure that use of the parking area is orderly, that noise or disruptive activity
1337 on the site is avoided, and that the parking areas are promptly closed after participants and staff have left,
1338 thereby mitigating any potential impact of this once a year activity. The applicant agrees to review any
1339 unanticipated impacts of such activities on adjoining properties with the Town and adjust such activities as
1340 the Town finds necessary to avoid or minimize such impacts.

1341 Additionally, limited use of the site for guided and monitored photography or film shoots would be
1342 permitted on a case by case basis following thorough review of the applicant and committed compliance
1343 with the Preserve’s site protection and minimum impact guidelines.

1344 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
1345 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the public, it is**
1346 **recommended that the Board consider the impacts with respect to noise, odor and light generated by the**
1347 **project to be small and that the Foothills project will not result in significant adverse impact regarding**
1348 **such.**

1349 References:

- 1350 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
- 1351 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
- 1352 • *Project Narrative (January 2016).*

1353

1354 **OSI Addendum**

1355 A temporary increase in noise will be noted for the anticipated three month period of construction. A slight
1356 increase of noise after that time may be noticed due to usage of the trail. Such impact is not anticipated to
1357 increase above the level currently generated by agriculture activity on the site, will occur during daylight
1358 hours only and, with the exception of a single residence, is adequately distanced from residences. No
1359 lighting or odor causing amenities are proposed.

1360 Cumulative impacts with regard to noise, odor and light are considered to be insignificant.

1361

1362

1363 **16. HUMAN HEALTH**

1364 The project will not result in any adverse impacts due to exposure to solid or hazardous wastes, hazardous
1365 substances or contaminants. The Preserve does not currently use pesticides, herbicides or similar chemical
1366 applications on any of its lands. Future use of such, if determined to be necessary, will follow IPM and NPM
1367 practices and will comply with all applicable regulations, as discussed in Section 7. Any such use may have
1368 a small impact on human health.

1369 The primary impact on health given implementation of the Foothills project will be beneficial, resulting from
1370 increased opportunity for outdoor recreation.

1371 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
1372 **the impacts to human health not to be adverse.**

1373 References:

- 1374 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
- 1375 • *Project Narrative (January 2016).*

1376 **OSI Addendum**

1377 Cumulatively, the Mohonk Preserve and OSI projects will not result in any significant adverse impact to
1378 human health. The impact to health of the OSI River to Ridge Trail project is also primarily beneficial in that
1379 the OSI project will provide additional opportunity for outdoor recreational activity, free of charge.
1380 However, unlike the Foothills project, OSI's trails will run adjacent and through active agriculture.
1381 Accordingly, when fields are being actively plowed or when chemical controls are being applied to the field
1382 and/or crops, a potential impact situation may be created. In response, the trails may be temporarily closed
1383 and posted for a period of 24 hours following any chemical application, mitigating potential impact.
1384 Discussions continue regarding the posting of MSDS or material safety data sheets indicating the chemical
1385 composition of the application material and exposure hazards which caused the trail closure.

1386

1387 **17. CONSISTENCY with COMMUNITY PLANS**

1388 With respect to consistency with community plans, the project will not result in negative impacts, rather, it
1389 is consistent with a multitude of adopted land use plans for the Butternut Canaan Foothills and Shawangunk
1390 Mountains. The proposed plan is a permitted use, consistent with the Town's A-3 Zoning code, and meets
1391 all requirements without the need for variances. The parking lots are considered an accessory use to the
1392 primary 'Philanthropic Institutional Use' or 'Private Recreational Use' allowed in the A-3 Zone. The proposal
1393 is further consistent with surrounding land use patterns and will not result in population growth, secondary
1394 development, or the need for new or expanded infrastructure. The project also complies with local laws
1395 related to signage, protection of trees, stormwater and wetlands.

1396 Apart from the acquisition and management of the overall 857 acre parcel, the Foothills project achieves,
1397 in part or fully, many of the principles, objectives and goals of numerous local, regional and state plans. The
1398 following is a partial list of community plans with which the Foothills plan is consistent:

- 1399 • Town of New Paltz Comprehensive Master Plan (1995);
- 1400 • New Paltz Open Space Plan (2006);
- 1401 • New Paltz Farmland Preservation Plan;
- 1402 • New Paltz Historic Preservation Law;
- 1403 • Ulster County Open Space Plan (2007);

- 1404 • NYS Open Space Conservation Plan (2009 and 2014 Draft);
- 1405 • Shawangunk Mountains Regional Open Space Plan (2008);
- 1406 • Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (2005);
- 1407 • Ulster County Non Motorized Transportation Plan;
- 1408 • Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012).

1409 In general, these community plans call for the provision of safe and managed recreation facilities,
1410 particularly pedestrian and bicycle pathways within and connecting to the Foothills and Shawangunk Ridge;
1411 the provision of such with minimal fiscal burden on the community; greater handicap accessibility to
1412 recreational opportunities; and the restoration and preservation of key historic elements. A vision of a
1413 number of community plans also relates to a regional connectivity of trails, particularly the Wallkill and
1414 Hudson Valley Rail Trails and points east to the Mohonk and Minnewaska trails and points west.

1415 The following indicates several unique aspects of the Foothills plan and some, but not all of the policies,
1416 objectives and goals of key community plans which are supported or accomplished by the Foothills project.

1417 The access and parking facilities are proposed to provide for safe off road parking, managed access to new
1418 and existing trails, an educational facility, viewing structure, interpretive signage, and ADA compliant
1419 amenities. Additionally, unlike the trails typical on Preserve lands, the Foothills trails are situated upon
1420 open, nearly level lands, thus providing opportunity for a separate demographic including small children,
1421 the elderly, and those with disabilities. These provisions of the Foothills plan comply with:

- 1422 • Town of New Paltz Master Plan policy 7 - to provide adequate...recreation facilities and minimize the
1423 fiscal burden of such services on the existing community;
- 1424 • Town of New Paltz Master Plan policy 9 - to promote pedestrian circulation and freedom of movement
1425 by the establishment of footpaths, sidewalks and bike paths for non vehicular travel;
- 1426 • New York State Open Space Conservation Plan goal - to provide accessible quality outdoor recreation
1427 and open space for all New Yorkers;
- 1428 • New York State Open Space Conservation Plan goal - to protect habitat to sustain traditional pastimes
1429 of...wildlife viewing.

1430 The plan, particularly the formalized site access and parking, elevated marsh walk, bird blind, Phenology
1431 Trail and education cabin also accomplishes:

- 1432 • New York State Open Space Conservation Plan goal – to provide places for education and research
1433 relating to ecological, environmental and cultural resources.

1434 With such amenities, the Foothills project will provide for better access to assist the numerous conservation
1435 and stewardship educational events which support the scientific study of plants and animals such as the
1436 John Burroughs Historical Society/Audubon sponsored breeding bird studies, SUNY forest study, New York
1437 Phenology Project and nationwide database, and the Preserve sponsored Bio-Blitz and Bio-decathlon.

1438 The proposed facilities with handicap designated parking, restrooms and trails will also allow more persons
1439 with disabilities to enjoy and participate in the Preserve, outdoor recreational activities and nature related
1440 educational programs, an objective of numerous community plans.

1441 Restoration of the Testimonial Gateway structure, Oak Allee, and preservation and interpretation, through
1442 installation of informational signage, of the last remaining intact portion of the Wawarsing Turnpike
1443 complies with:

- 1444 • Town of New Paltz Master Plan policy 6 - to foster and preserve the community's heritage by protecting
1445 historic structures and sites;
1446 • New Paltz Historic Preservation Law intention - to protect and enhance the landmark and historic district
1447 which present distinctive elements of the historic, architectural and cultural heritage of the Town;
1448 • New Paltz Historic Preservation Law intention - to focus attention on and foster civic pride in the historic
1449 resources of the Town.

1450 Overall, the Foothills plan with its planned access, parking, trails, cultural and educational elements, is also
1451 consistent with:

- 1452 • Ulster County Open Space Plan principle - to create, preserve, enhance and provide managed access to
1453 parks, hiking trails, active and passive recreational facilities and historic resources;
1454 • Ulster County Open Space Plan principle - to safeguard priority biological diversity areas by promoting
1455 biologically sensitive land use and increasing research and understanding.

1456 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, it is recommended that the Board consider**
1457 **the project to be consistent with community plans with no adverse impact with regard to such plans.**

1458 References:

- 1459 • *Mohonk Preserve Land Asset Management Plan (2012);*
1460 • *Site Plans (January 2016);*
1461 • *Project Narrative (January 2016);*
1462 • *Town of New Paltz Comprehensive Master Plan (1995);*
1463 • *New Paltz Open Space Plan (2006);*
1464 • *New Paltz Farmland Protection Plan (Not Dated);*
1465 • *Ulster County Open Space Plan (2007);*
1466 • *Ulster County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2008);*
1467 • *NYS Open Space Conservation Plan (2009);*
1468 • *Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (2005);*
1469 • *Shawangunk Mountains Regional Open Space Preservation Plan (2008).*
1470

1471 **OSI Addendum**

1472 Through the River to Ridge Trail, the OSI project will further progress the locally and regionally important
1473 goal of providing additional outdoor recreational opportunity in the area, particularly within the Wallkill
1474 Flats and Foothills region. It also accomplishes the wide reaching goal of establishing a connection from the
1475 Wallkill Valley Rail Trail to the Mohonk and Minnewaska Trails. The plan also plays a key link in the ultimate
1476 goal of connecting the trails of the Shawangunks with the Walkway Over the Hudson and trails east. The
1477 OSI River to Ridge plan also provides an alternative to pedestrian and bicyclist use of Route 299 for access
1478 to the Foothills and Ridge, as desired under many community plans.

1479 Potential development by OSI of the separate Hillside lot with a single residential dwelling is allowable by
1480 zoning (A-1.5) and is not inconsistent with existing use and character of the area or community plans.
1481 Restrictive covenants regarding use, the extent of a buildable envelope, and further subdivision of the
1482 Hillside parcel have been offered by the Preserve as previously discussed.

1483 The OSI trail project, in conjunction with the Mohonk Foothills project, is consistent with a plethora of
1484 community plans and cumulatively will not have an adverse impact with regard to community plans.

1485 **18. CONSISTENCY with COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

1486 The Foothills project was carefully evaluated against community character and was not found to be
1487 inconsistent.

1488 Community character can be described as the sum of all attributes and assets which make a community
1489 unique. This community's uniqueness is predominantly its setting within the Butternut Canaan Foothills
1490 and the Shawangunk Mountains, its association with "Mohonk", and the community's continued
1491 recognition of the intrinsic value of these lands, beginning over a century ago. The community's connection
1492 with its lands is evidenced by the plethora of community action plans which focus on it, as identified in the
1493 last section.

1494 While the project may result in impacts to community character, such impacts do not exceed any of the Part
1495 2 thresholds indicated. The scale and context of the proposed action, taken as individual components as
1496 well as a single inclusive project, are consistent with the surrounding area. The project will not introduce a
1497 different land use or type of activity as the area is currently maintained for recreation and educational
1498 activities, aesthetic features and open space appreciation. Altered land use is primarily limited to the
1499 proposed parking facilities which will allow for safer and more manageable use of the Foothills site than
1500 that which currently exists. The structural components are of an architecture style typical of the area. The
1501 landscape will not be adversely affected, rather it will be improved by the restoration components of the
1502 project, particularly the Testimonial Gateway and the Oak Allee. The Foothills project is consistent with a
1503 multitude of community goals and plans specific to the Foothills, as previously indicated. Accordingly, the
1504 Foothills project does not appear to rise to the level of a moderate or significant adverse impact and appears
1505 to be fully consistent with community character.

1506 a.) The proposed action will not replace or eliminate any existing facilities, structures, or area of historic
1507 importance to the community. The Mohonk Preserve will maintain the overall character of the Foothills
1508 parcel through restoration and preservation of key historic components, particularly the iconic Testimonial
1509 Gateway structure, Old Gatehouse Road and the Oak Allee (Lenape Lane), and maintenance of agricultural
1510 structures and open space landscapes through habitat management. The Town's independent consultant
1511 on historic resources has determined that the project will be beneficial in that items of historic significance
1512 will be properly restored, maintained, and opened for appreciation and enjoyment by the general public.⁵⁸

1513 b.) The proposed action may result in a small demand for additional community services, however, any
1514 potential increase is anticipated to be minor. Use of lands of the Mohonk Preserve, excluding the Trapps
1515 area, has reportedly not resulted in an increase in community provided emergency services. The New Paltz
1516 Rescue Squad reported only a single mutual aid call to the Preserve property in 2014⁵⁹, with no reported
1517 calls in 2015. The additional passive recreational use anticipated (walking, biking, nature study,
1518 photography) is not likely to result in a significant increase in the need for such services. Additionally, the
1519 Mohonk Preserve has its own trained rescue personnel which both provide emergency services and assist
1520 local emergency providers within the Preserve. Copy of the Preserve's Search and Rescue Plan and
1521 description of its coordination with emergency services has been provided to the Town.⁶⁰

1522 The project will not result in the need for additional schools, but the proposed improvements including
1523 parking, trails and an education structure will offer additional opportunity to service all levels of education.

⁵⁸ Larsen Assessment, Larson Fisher Associates, September 12, 2015

⁵⁹ Letter from New Paltz Rescue Squad Chief of Operations Jason Conway, 9/24/15

⁶⁰ Memorandum, G. Hoagland to M. Calimano, February 8, 2016

1524 The Mohonk Preserve is a private entity, not funded directly by tax payer dollars. While its tax exempt
1525 status is acknowledged, improvements for the Foothills parcel proposed by the Preserve will provide for
1526 additional outdoor recreational opportunity to be made available to the general public without the tax
1527 burden to construct and maintain local, publically owned parks and facilities; this is in line with one of the
1528 objectives of the Town of New Paltz Master Plan.⁶¹ The Preserve has also committed to the restoration of
1529 local historically significant features, particularly the iconic Testimonial Gateway structure.

1530 c.) The project have no direct or indirect effect on affordable or low-income housing.

1531 d.) The Foothills property is not a public resources; it is privately held by the Mohonk Preserve which permits
1532 use of its lands on a membership or day fee basis.

1533 e.) The proposed action is not inconsistent with the predominant architectural scale and character.
1534 Proposed structures will be of the familiar Mohonk rustic character as seen upon the Mohonk Mountain
1535 House property and throughout the Preserve. These features are designed to blend naturally into the
1536 landscape and will not be visible from a majority of the visual receptors. (Impacts due to access and parking
1537 lots have been discussed in previous sections with additional comments regarding such provided in sub
1538 section f.), immediately following.)

1539 Minimal signage will be installed so as to provide for safe and managed access to the Foothills site. The
1540 design of signage is to be consistent with existing trailhead entrances and will conform to New Paltz Signage
1541 Code, State Code and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Internal directional and interpretive
1542 signage, currently in use throughout the Preserve, shall also conform to local signage regulation. Location
1543 and sign example is provided on the plan set details.

1544 There is no current plan for the Hillside lot other than its transfer to OSI and its inclusion, in part, in the River
1545 to Ridge trail. Any future development of the parcel would require compliance with the A-1.5 zoning
1546 regulations which are intended to maintain the rural character of the area. Voluntary restrictions placed on
1547 the parcel by the Preserve and to remain with the lot in perpetuity have been discussed in previous sections.

1548 f.) The proposed action will result in a small impact to the character of the existing natural landscape. Site
1549 improvements will modify 1.5 acres of forests and 0.6 acres of meadows or less than 0.25% of the 857 acre
1550 Foothills parcel.⁶² A minimal number of trees will be cut and nominal grading will be required. Neither
1551 structural nor non-structural features will significantly impact the landscape, with most improvements at
1552 ground surface. Impact areas have been carefully sited, sized and reduced in accordance to comment and
1553 concerns. Improvements appear reasonably screened by existing topography, vegetation and structures
1554 and appear appropriately distanced from viewing locations, given the desired proximity to critical project
1555 elements and restriction imposed by significant habitat.

1556 Modifications in response to public comment included the siting of parking lot access off the primary road
1557 rather than secondary roads, dispersal of the parking facilities in order to avoid a large centralized facility,
1558 reduction of the total number of parking spaces created, relocation of horse trailer parking, movement of
1559 facilities further from historic resources, conscientious placement of parking, trails and other amenities in
1560 order to screen from views, maintenance of "legacy" trees and the planting of additional vegetation. The
1561 proposed improvements may be minimally visible from isolated locations in the mountains and from the
1562 Shawangunk Mountain Scenic Byway. However, they are not considered to be substantially noticeable
1563 against the existing scenic backdrop. All site improvements appear to be respectful of the landscape, being

⁶¹ New Paltz Master Plan

1564 sized and sited in order to minimize impact to the greatest extent practicable given implementation as
1565 proposed.

1566 The applicant's evaluation, ultimate siting and design of parking at the Testimonial Gateway, the single
1567 largest area of impact within an area recognized as having the highest residential density, is considered
1568 appropriate relative to impact to community character. The proposed siting and configuration followed an
1569 analysis of multiple options and included significant public input.

1570 Specifically, no less than eight locations were evaluated prior to development of the current plan. The
1571 evaluation criteria involved visibility, proximity to neighbors, surrounding vegetation, sight distance,
1572 proximity to sensitive areas and terrain. Conceptual plans included 120 parking spaces with an additional
1573 30-50 overflow spaces, an amount shy of the 200 spaces reportedly desired by County Planning. Respectful
1574 of comments from the community, the wooded location south of the Gatehouse was chosen over
1575 alternatives along Gatehouse Road and other locations and the size was reduced to 120 spaces. Access
1576 directly off the State road as opposed to the secondary Gatehouse Road was determined to result in safer
1577 ingress and egress and less disturbance to local residents. The Gatehouse parking plan was further reduced
1578 to 90 spaces, with parking for 20 automobiles and horse trailer parking moved to a secondary location near
1579 the Hasbrouck House. *(Note: the May 2016 plan shows that the Gatehouse parking lot has been further*
1580 *reduced to 80 cars in an effort to preserve additional "legacy" trees; visitor parking spaces to be provided by*
1581 *the project now totals 100.)* These modifications were made in accordance with evaluated site conditions
1582 and additional public comment.

1583 Proximity to neighbors as well as vegetation and topography appear to reasonably mitigate direct potential
1584 impact. Residential structures closest to the proposed Testimonial Gateway parking lot on Jacobs Lane are
1585 situated roughly 350' distant the Route 299 curb cut and 550' from the contact station; along Gatehouse
1586 Road, the nearest residential structures are roughly 500' from the lot. Residential parcels are also separated
1587 from the Gateway lot by significant vegetation and rolling topography. Following a site inspection during
1588 leaf off conditions, Town representative including the Town Engineer and several Board members confirmed
1589 that visibility of the proposed improvements is not possible at the majority of visual receptors and that
1590 visual impact would be minimal.⁶³ The size of the clearing to accommodate the lot is also not inconsistent
1591 with the size and configuration of the cleared areas of several of the nearest residential lots off Jacobs Lane.

1592 The provision of onsite parking is also expected to offset the current use of local roads for parking, thereby
1593 improving the character of the existing landscape by reducing, if not eliminating roadside parking along
1594 Gatehouse and Butterville Roads.

1595 g.) The Foothills project may result in other localized impacts as expressed in public comments. The process
1596 followed in development of the Foothills plans appears to have adequately addressed these concerns and
1597 none of the publicly identified potential impacts now appears to meet the threshold for significance.

1598 In addition to trails within the Gateway and Hasbrouck areas, a short distance of stone surfaced trail and
1599 nearly ½ mile of mowed grass trail will run through agricultural fields and woods set back from the west side
1600 of Butterville Road, opposite several residential structures. While the new trails will likely bring additional
1601 visitors to the Foothills area, many existing users walk or ride along Butterville Road. As with the intended
1602 removal of roadside parking, moving people off the roadways and onto the trail, and further distanced from
1603 the residences, is intended to benefit users as well as area residents.

⁶³ Narrative, January 2016, Barton & Loguidice, p.15,16

1604 The impact to community character with regard to traffic has been appropriately analyzed through traffic
1605 studies.⁶⁴ While it is acknowledged that there will be a slight increase in road volume, specifically on Route
1606 299, on weekends during the autumn season and when fair events are held, the studies performed
1607 concluded that the resultant traffic does not and will not exceed the threshold of a significant impact.

1608 The Foothills project is designed to add 100 user parking spaces for a total of 520 parking spaces available
1609 throughout the Preserve (*as per May 2016*). Given the 80 proposed spaces at the Testimonial Gateway,
1610 15% of the Preserve's total available parking will be made available in this location. The ratio of additional
1611 parking relative to the additional acreage of Preserve land due to the Foothills acquisition appears
1612 appropriate.

1613 As demonstrated through the creation of parking facilities upon the Ridge, compliance with roadside parking
1614 restrictions will likely continue for some time. Roadside parking may also increase during peak volume
1615 periods. The Preserve cannot ban nor is it currently authorized to enforce any ban of roadside parking as
1616 such is the responsibility of the Town of New Paltz. While the plan is intended to help alleviate roadside
1617 parking, the Mohonk Preserve is willing and able to support the Town, including enforcement, should the
1618 Town determine that additional measures to address roadside parking are necessary.

1619 The SEQR process has also resulted in discussions on improvement of the Route 299 and Gatehouse Road
1620 intersection by the Town and actions toward a request for a reduced speed limit on 299 in the vicinity of
1621 the project. Again, the Preserve supports such efforts. It has provided data to the Town which will be used
1622 in County and State analysis associated with the speed reduction request and has indicated a willingness to
1623 donate property to the Town for realignment of the Gatehouse Road intersection.

1624 Guest policy posting at the contact station or kiosks, and Preserve staff/ranger presence will aid in the
1625 prevention of potential on-site activity impacting neighbors, including the requirement for all users to
1626 remain on Preserve lands. The Preserve will provide the Town with its Rules of Use, Peak Day Management
1627 Plan, and Search and Rescue Plan for Town review. The Preserve has further indicated that it would meet
1628 regularly with the Town to discuss any concerns the Town may have with operation and use of the site; the
1629 Preserve would work with the Town to modify such policy should the Town indicate a need.

1630 In summary, potential adverse impact upon community character does not appear to be significantly
1631 adverse or rise above a small level. The use is allowable by zoning and is both consistent and encouraged
1632 by numerous community plans. The proposed improvements appear to have been designed, sized and sited
1633 in consideration of the natural and manmade elements of the area and appear to be respectful of neighbors
1634 and local residents. Public input has resulted in numerous modifications to the plans and potential adverse
1635 impacts have been properly addressed and minimized. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated which
1636 would significantly affect community character.

1637 **Based on the review of materials submitted by the applicant, design of the plan and modifications made**
1638 **to the plan in response to comments from the Board, Town engineer, its consultants and the public, it is**
1639 **recommended that the Board consider that the plan is consistent with community character and will not**
1640 **result in significant adverse impact to such.**

1641 References:

- 1642 • *Site Plans* (January 2016), Sheets G 5.1-5.6;
1643 • *Project Narrative* (January 2016), 10-13;
1644 • *Certificate of Appropriateness* (May 2015);

⁶⁴ TES, Accident Analysis, Sensitivity Analysis supplements, 2016

- 1645 • *Mohonk Preserve Search and Rescue Plan.*

1646 **OSI Addendum**

1647 Like the Mohonk Preserve Foothills project, the OSI River to Ridge Trail project demonstrates an awareness,
1648 appreciation and thoughtful use of the land while simultaneously providing protection and preservation of
1649 the resource. It appears to be fully consistent with community character.

1650 Like the Foothills project, the proposed OSI trail will comply with local zoning regulations, land use plans
1651 and community goals for the area. With its 3.4 miles of non-motorized, multi use trails, the OSI project will
1652 provide for opportunity for use and enjoyment, specifically outdoor and recreational activity, aesthetic
1653 appreciation and health benefits, with no significant adverse environmental impact. The project will also
1654 further those benefits by linking the Village and Wallkill Valley Rail Trail with lands of the Preserve, and will
1655 serve as a vital link in future goals for regional trail connectivity.

1656 With regard to such linkage, the OSI trail may result in an increased number of visitors to the Mohonk parcel.
1657 However, as available parking for the OSI trail is either off Springtown Road or within the Village, nearly 3
1658 miles distant one way, as an internal loop is provided near the western end of the OSI trail, and as the OSI
1659 trail provides an even closer view of the scenic vista, increased foot usage of Preserve lands from the OSI
1660 trail is not anticipated to be significant. An increase in bike or other use is acknowledge but foot users make
1661 up the bulk of existing trail use. The OSI component will also result in safer access to the Foothills for users
1662 who currently walk or ride bicycles from the Village or Rail Trail, along Route 299, as well as Springtown,
1663 Gatehouse and Buttermilk Roads.

1664 With regard to potential impact, the OSI project will not replace, eliminate or significantly alter any natural
1665 or manmade feature. The plans have been designed respectful of neighbors, existing users and travelers of
1666 local roads. The proposed use is not discordant with the existing or potential use of the parcel or adjacent
1667 parcels. As the OSI trails are predominantly located within existing agricultural fields, a substantial distance
1668 from all but a single residential lot on Charles Lane, their use will likely be noticed by local residents and
1669 drivers but will not result in a significant impact upon quality of life of the local community. Similarly, the
1670 project will blend into the landscape, not diminishing anyone's perception of it.

1671 In summary, none of factors considered rise above a small impact and the combined impact of the Mohonk
1672 Foothills project along with the OSI River to Ridge Trail project is not anticipated to result in any adverse
1673 impact to community character.

ENB - Region 3 Notices 6/1/2016

Public Notice

Ulster County - The Town of New Paltz Planning Board, as lead agency, has determined that the proposed Mohonk Preserve Subdivision and Site Plan will not have a significant adverse environmental impact. The action involves a proposal by the applicant to subdivide a 856.6 acre parcel of land to create two lots: (1) a 836 acre lot (the Foothills parcel) located in the A-1.5 and the A-3 Zoning Districts of the Town of New Paltz, and in the Lake Mohonk House Complex - Mohonk Preserve Foothills Historic Landscape (NR District 73001280); and (2) a 19 acre building lot (the Hillside Lot) that would allow one single family home, with a private well and private sanitary system, in the A-1.5 Zoning District, which allows single family residences as a permitted use. The proposed Hillside Lot is not located within the Lake Mohonk House/Foothills Historic Landscape district, but abuts it. The Preserve proposes to impose a restrictive covenant on the lot that will limit disturbance, prohibit further subdivision and include restrictions intended to minimize visual impacts on the historic landscape. The subdivision will also transfer 0.6 acres of land by a lot line change to the adjoining owner (Jenkins Properties LLC) to clear an existing deed discrepancy. No new building lot will be created and no use is proposed in connection with the transfer of that land.

The applicant requests site plan approval to allow construction of improvements (off-street parking areas, trail and landscaping improvements, bathrooms, and education and recreational facilities) in two areas the Testimonial Gateway area and the Hasbrouck House of the 836 acre Foothills parcel. As noted, the site is located in the Lake Mohonk House/Foothills Historic Landscape district. Some proposed improvements would be located in proximity to the Testimonial Gateway, a locally designated historic structure, and some in proximity to regulated wetlands and watercourses. The proposed action, including mitigation measures incorporated by the applicant, was reviewed by the Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, which advised that the project would not have any substantial negative impact on historic resources.

The project is generally bounded by Butternut Road to the east, Route 299 to the south, the Catskill Aqueduct to the west and private lands to the north in the Town of New Paltz, New York.

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