

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter considers the potential of the proposed Four Seasons at Hamptonburgh project to significantly affect the primarily rural and agricultural visual character of the areas surrounding the project site.

The visual quality of an area is a composite of different elements—from the type, size, and use of buildings; to street patterns and road characteristics; topography; the presence or absence of natural resources; and visual resources such as view corridors, vistas, and views of prominent natural resource features. For a project to have a significant visual impact on the visual quality and character of an area, it would have to significantly change the overall appearance of the area, making it substantially different from that which currently prevails.

Due to topography, vegetation, and the size of the project site, views of the site vary throughout the surrounding area and from within the site itself. For the most part, views of the site are limited to the immediately adjacent areas. Therefore, this discussion considers visual character and views within the site's immediate environs—the areas bordering Route 416, Neelytown Road, and Quarry Road—where visual impacts would be expected to occur (see Figure 3.2-1). This discussion also considers views of the project site from Eager Road, which runs through the northern portion of the site; Thomas Bull Memorial Park located west of Route 416; Hill-Hold Museum, which lies across Route 416 from the southeast corner of Thomas Bull Memorial Park; and Interstate 84. Although the Scoping Outline for the proposed project stipulates that views from Hill-Hold will be assessed, that location has no visual relationship with the project due to distance, intervening vegetation, and topography. Therefore, the project is not expected to have any visual impact on Hill-Hold, and views from that location are not considered in this analysis, as discussed further below.

## **B. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **PROJECT SITE**

The majority of the project site (Parcels A and B, totaling 364 acres) is located on the east side of Route 416, between it and the railroad tracks that are near Neelytown Road to the east. The remainder of the project site consists of one parcel (Parcel C, totaling 9 acres) on the west side of Route 416, opposite Parcels A and B. The visual character of the project site is described below.

#### *PARCELS A AND B*

The main body of the project site—consisting of Parcel A south of Eager Road and Parcel B north of the road—is characterized by rolling topography covered in woodland and open fields. Eager Road traverses the site's northern edge between Route 416 and Neelytown Road, and a north-south ridge line runs through the central portion of the site. In general, the site consists of

## **Four Seasons at Hamptonburgh**

---

meadows, pastures, and woodland. The eastern half of the site is more wooded. A large pond is located in the approximate center of the site, and a small creek runs north-south near Route 416, passing under Eager Road. On the ridge line, Lazy Lane runs south from Eager Road for approximately 2,000 feet to the two farmhouses and stable of Top Call Farm. Two additional horse farms are located on the north side of Eager Road—one near Route 416 and one at the northeast corner of the site.

Gently rolling open fields cover most of the western half of the project site (see Figures 3.2-2 through 3.2-5). Along Route 416, tall wood utility poles carry transmission lines, wood slat fencing borders the full length of the site, and there are a few thin stands of trees (see Figures 3.2-2 through 3.2-4). Denser patches of trees are located eastward toward the base of the ridge line, and some additional wood fencing is found in the site's interior. Woodland also covers the southwest corner of the project site.

At the northeast corner of the intersection of Route 416 and Eager Road, there is a low-lying rectangular stable with a pitched roof (see Figure 3.2-5) surrounded by corrals. Wood slat fencing encloses the property on Eager Road—where an entrance gate is located—and on the east next to the small creek, which runs in a low gully. A wood fence also borders the southern side of Eager Road across from the stable. Some additional farm outbuildings are located north of the stable. Near these outbuildings, the creek veers northwest and runs under Route 416 toward the Wallkill River. At the northern edge of the project site, just east of Route 416, there is another large, pitched-roof wood stable surrounded by corrals. Just south of that stable, the creek reenters the project site, having branched back from the river to pass again under Route 416.

Where the landscape begins to rise eastward to form the ridge line, dense tree coverage borders Eager Road, which winds across the site (see view 8 of Figure 3.2-6). On top of the ridge line, Lazy Lane, a private road to Top Call Farm, runs south bisecting the project site, and open fields border the pockmarked dirt drive. A few trees sit adjacent to Lazy Lane, and the bordering fields slope downward to woodlands (see view 9 of Figure 3.2-6 and view 10 of Figure 3.2-7). The Top Call Farm, a horse farm, consists of two 2½-story wood houses with gabled roofs and porches and a one-story stable. The larger house has a one-story stone addition with a gabled roof, and the stable is a long rectangular wood building. A tree-lined drive connects the houses, and corrals enclosed with wood fences surround the stable. A wood fence also encloses a portion of the field west of Lazy Lane. Open fields characterize the project site south of the farm, a large pond is located to the east where the woods begin; and branch of Lazy Lane cuts west across the site to connect with Route 416, while another winds to the east towards the railroad tracks.

East of Lazy Lane, open fields border Eager Road. To the north, the landscape gently rolls away from the foot of the ridge line, which roughly corresponds to Eager Road (see view 11 of Figure 3.2-7). A wood and wire fence encloses the field to the north, and thick tree coverage lines the southern side of the road—another large field is found south of these trees (see view 12 of Figure 3.2-8). The fields are part of a horse farm that occupies the northeast portion of the site (see view 13 of Figure 3.2-8). The farm consists of a house and three stables. The 1½-story, side-gabled wood house is situated close to the road on the north side. It is somewhat run down in appearance, but distinguishing features include a corbelled brick chimney and remaining side lights from the altered Greek Revival-style entrance. A large, low-lying metal stable with a gabled roof sits behind the house, with a smaller open structure located farther to the north. Corrals encircle the stable. Located north across Eager Road from the house, the third stable is a boxy structure with a pitched roof. Where Eager Road crosses the railroad tracks at the eastern edge of the site, there are open fields enclosed with fences and scattered trees (see Figure 3.2-9).

South of Eager Road, woodlands form the eastern edge of the site along the railroad tracks (see view 16 of Figure 3.2-10).

#### *PARCEL C*

Parcel C of the project site are located on the west side of Route 416, opposite Parcels A and B. The Wallkill River forms the western boundary of each tax parcel. The nine-acre Parcel C is opposite Eager Road, and it is an approximately rectangular parcel that extends west toward the Wallkill River. This portion of the site consists of open meadow and pasture, and a private dirt drive runs perpendicular to Route 416 along the parcel's northern edge (see view 17 of Figure 3.2-10 and view 18 of Figure 3.2-11). Wood post fences with wire mesh border the pastures along Route 416 and both sides of the private drive. Trees line the drive that leads to some farm outbuildings. A small shed and tall metal silo are located on the south side of the drive.

The scattered farm outbuildings on Parcel C and those between the two western portions of the project site are part of the horse farm located north of Parcel C.

Across Route 416 from Parcel B and north of Parcel C there is a horse farm comprised of a house, large barn, several stables, and a tractor shed (see view 19 of Figure 3.2-11). The creek that runs across Parcels A and B and under Route 416 travels toward the Wallkill River. A branch of the creek runs around the north side of the farm complex and crosses under Route 416 to run across the northern edge of Parcel B.

#### *VIEWS AND VIEWERS*

From within the project site, publicly accessible views are only available from Eager Road as it passes through the site, and views are variable due to topography and intervening vegetation. Interior views of the site are the most extensive from the western portion of Eager Road toward Route 416, where southward views are long over the open fields of the site. Where the topography rises eastward to form the ridge line, woodland bordering Eager Road obstructs deep views into the site. At the intersection with Lazy Lane, views south toward Top Call Farm are limited due to the rise in topography away from Eager Road. Top Call Farm itself and the large pond are not visible from Eager Road. Views north and northeast in the vicinity of Lazy Lane are long over open fields. In the northeastern portion of the site, views are of open farmland, with southward views somewhat short due to woodland in the distance.

Viewer groups within the project site include motorists on Eager Road and residents and workers on the horse farms. Vehicular traffic on Eager Road moves at a relatively slow speed, as it is a narrow winding road. Therefore, motorists have moderate viewing spans. Residents and workers at the horse farms also have variable views of the site that are largely limited to the farm environs.

#### **PROJECT SITE ENVIRONS**

The following discussion describes the existing visual character of the project site's environs along the four roads that roughly border the site—Route 416, Eager Road, Neelytown Road, and Quarry Road—and from the adjacent Thomas Bull Memorial Park. The visual character of the area is rural and agricultural, with more suburban type low-density residential development along Quarry and Neelytown Roads. This discussion also describes views of the project site from the adjacent roads and park, as well as from Interstate 84 to the west.

### *ROUTE 416 AND THOMAS BULL MEMORIAL PARK*

Route 416 is a slightly winding two-lane road with gentle changes in elevation. In the vicinity of the project site, it is bordered by horse farms and open fields, woodland, Thomas Bull Memorial Park, and scattered houses. As described in Chapter 3.1, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” Route 416 and land within 1,000 feet of it fall within the Gateway Road Overlay District. Encompassing part of the project site, the overlay district seeks to preserve the agrarian setting of the Route 416 corridor and defining features that include historic buildings, trees and woodland, fields, vistas, and stone walls.

North of the project site, there are some large, boxy non-descript industrial buildings around County Route 99. Where Route 416 is contiguous to the project site, it is bordered by open fields and horse farms (see Figures 3.2-2 through 3.2-4). Wood fences and tall utility poles carrying transmission lines are found on both sides of the road. A few hundred feet south of Eager Road, Grove Street runs west from Route 416. This narrow, winding road leads to the Thomas Bull Memorial Park Arboretum and to several farms and detached single-family houses. Trees, utility poles carrying transmission lines, wood fences, and fields border Grove Street (see view 20 of Figure 3.2-12). The houses along the street are set within large yards with driveways, and they are typically one- and two-story structures clad in wood with gabled roofs, front porches, and brick chimneys. The small buildings of the Arboretum are set well back from Grove Street within encircling open land, and a tall metal fence encloses the property (see view 21 of Figure 3.2-12). There is a stand of trees between the Arboretum and the field to the east that borders Route 416.

Between Grove Street and Quarry Road to the south, both open fields and woodland border Route 416. Tree coverage is heavier toward Quarry Road and the southwest corner of the project site. Roughly midway between Grove Street and Quarry Road, Lazy Lane, a private unpaved drive, leads eastward from Route 416 through the project site to Top Call Farm. Adjacent to Lazy Lane, a small schoolhouse occupies a parcel on the east side of Route 416. This parcel is contiguous to the southwest corner of the project site, but is not part of it. The schoolhouse is a one-story wood building with a pitched roof and a square bell tower (see view 22 of Figure 3.2-13). A more recently constructed two-story addition is to the rear. Connected to the older schoolhouse by a one-story entranceway, the addition also has wood siding and a pitched roof but is distinguished by a relative lack of windows. Woodland surrounds the school property (see view 23 of Figure 3.2-13), and on the west side of Route 416 in the vicinity of Lazy Lane, the topography rises rather steeply.

South of the schoolhouse, detached single-family houses sit on both sides of Route 416. Widely spaced from each other and surrounded by trees, most of the houses are one-story ranch and bungalow types set back from the road. However, one architecturally notable house is located at 498 Route 416 near the intersection with Quarry Road. It is a two-story, Greek Revival-style house on the west side of the road. Clad in wood with a stone foundation, the house has a double-height porch with square columns, a side-gabled roof, and a central brick chimney (see view 24 of Figure 3.2-14). A concrete garage is located to the south. Around the house, the ground slopes upward to the west and there are some rock outcroppings.

Thomas Bull Memorial Park is located southwest of the project site across Route 416. As described above, the Arboretum is located off Grove Street and set back from Route 416 beyond an open field and trees. The main body of the park is southwest of Quarry Road. Near Route 416, the terrain is hilly, and the park includes a large pond, picnic grove, softball fields, a tennis building, a golf and ski area, and a day camp area with a shelter building, playground, picnic tables and grills, and parking. Winding drives lead through the park, and the main entrance off

Route 416 is located south of Quarry Road. Fronting on Route 416 at the park entrance is a two-story, Colonial Revival-style former house that serves as the park headquarters. The former house has a side-gabled roof and small front porch with a hipped roof. There is an adjacent parking lot.

Across Route 416 from the southeastern edge of Thomas Bull Memorial Park is the Hill-Hold Museum, housed within a Greek Revival-style stone farmhouse. The house is part of a larger former farm complex that includes several outbuildings. A field visit was conducted, and it was determined that, there are no, or only extremely limited, views of the project site from this visual resource, due to the relatively large distance (over one mile) to the project site, intervening vegetation, and topography.

#### *EAGER ROAD*

The small stretch of Eager Road that winds east from the project site to Neelytown Road is developed on the north side with three detached single-family houses (see Figures 3.2-15 through 3.2-17). An open field overgrown with tall grasses is located to the south. The topography is relatively flat. As mentioned above, the railroad tracks bordering the project site run through woodland.

The houses on Eager Road are all set back from the street within large yards and are widely spaced from each other. In addition, they all have driveways. The house closest to the railroad tracks is the William Eager House, a Queen Anne-style building with a hipped roof, corner turret, bay window, and porch (see view 26 of Figure 3.2-15). The house is clad in wood shingles, the turret has a conical roof, and the porch is ornamented with slender carved posts, a balustrade, and latticework. Several decrepit wood outbuildings are located around the house. Located to the east, the most visible is a barn with a steeply pitched roof. A stone retaining wall is adjacent to the barn.

The other two houses are a modern bungalow and a duplex to the east of the William Eager House. They are small, low-lying buildings with pitched roofs (see view 27 of Figure 3.2-16). Close to Neelytown Road on the north side of Eager Road, a vacant house in an advanced state of ruin lies partially hidden in the trees (see view 28 of Figure 3.2-16). It is a side-gabled building with a tin roof and dormers. Most of the windows are missing.

#### *NEELYTOWN ROAD*

Neelytown Road is a narrow rural road that runs roughly southwest-northeast to the east of the project site. At the project site's southeast corner, the road is within a few hundred feet, but at the intersection with Eager Road it is more than 1,000 feet from the site. Scattered houses and farms front on the road, and, in general, dense woodland covers the terrain between the road and the project site. Open fields, grassy residential parcels, and patches of woodland are found on the east side of Neelytown Road. Tall wood utility poles carry transmission lines along the roadside.

To the north of Eager Road, Neelytown Road traverses through scrubby, vacant land (see view 31 of Figure 3.2-18). Farther north toward County Route 99, there is some light industrial development and the Neelytown East and West Cemeteries. Located on each side of the road on slightly elevated ground, the two cemetery properties are enclosed within stone walls and contain a range of older tombstone and monument types. Woodland surrounds the cemeteries.

A few hundred feet south of the intersection with Eager Road, the Windfall Farms property at 301 Neelytown Road is located on the west side of the road. This farm consists of a Greek

## **Four Seasons at Hamptonburgh**

---

Revival-style house, a two-story barn, and approximately four plastic-covered modern greenhouses (see view 32 of Figure 3.2-18 and view 33 of Figure 3.2-19). The 2½-story, wood house is located relatively close to the road within a lawn with trees. The ornate house has a porch with carved columns and a balustrade, windows with projecting lintels, an entablature, and a side-gabled roof. A driveway leads to the house. Located behind the house, the two-story barn has one-story side additions and a pitched roof with a decorative barge-board. The low-lying greenhouses are placed around the house and barn.

Slightly south of Windfall Farms is a modern ranch-style house on the west side of Neelytown Road. This low-lying brick structure is set within a landscaped lawn, and a driveway leads to the attached garage that is a defining feature of the house. Across the road to the east is a large cornfield. In the distance beyond the field is a farm complex located on a low hill (see view 34 of Figure 3.2-19). The farm at 398 Neelytown Road consists of a farmhouse, three tenant houses, a large barn with a gambrel roof and ventilator cupola, a garage, and a shed. Farther south on Neelytown Road are additional ranch and bungalow-style houses. Two notable structures are found on the west side of the road toward the southeast corner of the project site. Part of the same property at 155 Neelytown Road, these structures are a tall two-story wood barn and a two-story Colonial Revival-style house. The barn is located close to the road and is a wood structure with a steeply pitched roof and a stone foundation (see view 35 of Figure 3.2-20). The house is set farther back from the road to the southwest of the barn. It also has a steeply pitched roof, dormers, two brick chimneys, and a front porch (see view 36 of Figure 3.2-20). A detached garage is behind the house. The surrounding landscape is heavily wooded.

Southeast of the project site, Neelytown Road runs through wooded, rolling terrain to Quarry Road (see view 38 of Figure 3.2-21). Some recently constructed, suburban-type houses on the east side of the road are set back within large lawns with few trees—these houses have pitched roofs, attached garages, and oversized entrances (see view 37 of Figure 3.2-21). A stone quarry is located northwest of the intersection with Quarry Road, but it is not visible from Neelytown Road due to distance and intervening trees. From Neelytown Road, a private service road leads west to the quarry, which is southeast of the project site.

### *QUARRY ROAD*

Quarry Road—a narrow, winding rural road—runs south of the project site between Neelytown Road and Route 416 in a roughly southeast-northwest direction. Traversing a mostly wooded landscape, Quarry Road comes no closer to the project site than approximately 500 feet, and for the most part is farther south than that. At the Neelytown Road intersection, Quarry Road is more than 2,000 feet from the project site. At this location, the railroad tracks cross the road, there is a grassy traffic island, and several pitched-roof, suburban-type houses with synthetic siding are located on the south side of the road within large open lawns (see view 39 of Figure 3.2-22).

For most of its length, Quarry Road winds through wooded areas, passing scattered houses (see Figures 3.2-22 and 3.2-23). Tall wood utility poles carry transmission lines through the area. House along the road vary in their siting—from being set far back from the road behind large open parcels, to being mostly hidden from the road by trees, to being located close to the road in yards with some tree coverage. Houses tend to be newer with designs that play with standard features of the older farmhouses in the area—gabled roofs, porches, brick chimneys, and dormers (see Figures 3.2-24 and 3.2-25). Most are clad in synthetic siding and have attached garages. Near Route 416, Quarry Road straightens out and the adjacent houses tend to be small

bungalows (see Figures 3.2-26 and 3.2-27). At the southeast corner of the intersection with Route 416, the surrounding yard of a small hipped-roof ranch-style house is enclosed within a wood fence (see view 50 of Figures 3.2-27).

#### *INTERSTATE 84*

Interstate 84—a high speed, limited access, east-west Interstate Highway—runs west of the project site, to the west of the Wallkill River. Portions of the Interstate 84 corridor offer panoramic views of the rolling terrain and hillsides in the distance. In the vicinity of the project site, Interstate 84 borders wooded lands, open meadows, and sporadic large-scale commercial and industrial development nearest the exits. East of Interstate 84, toward the project site, the terrain consists of rolling hillsides and the Wallkill River valley. Interstate 84 is approximately 1,000 feet from the nearest portion of the project site.

#### *VIEWERS AND VIEWS TO THE PROJECT SITE*

Views into the project site from the adjacent roadways and Thomas Bull Memorial Park are variable due to distance, topography, and intervening vegetation. From Neelytown and Quarry Roads, there are no views, or only extremely limited ones. At their closest points to the project site, both roads are located at least 500 feet away, and, for the most part, they are no closer than around 1,000 feet. Further, extensive woodlands between the project site and Neelytown and Quarry Roads obscure views. (see view 33 of Figure 3.2-19, view 36 of Figure 3.2-20, view 46 of Figure 3.2-25, and view 50 of Figure 3.2-27). It is possible that there are extremely limited views into the east portion of the project site from circumscribed locations on Neelytown Road and into the southwest portion of the project site from Quarry Road in the vicinity of Route 416. These views consist of glimpses obscured by intervening vegetation and topography.

Along Route 416 where it is adjacent to the project site, views of Parcels B and C are extensive and each relatively small parcel is fully visible. Although views of Parcel A are extensive from the roadway, they do not encompass the entirety of the main body of the site (see Figures 3.2-3 and 3.2-4). These eastward views do not extend farther than the north-south ridge line running through the site, which blocks views of the site's eastern half. In addition, views of the fields and Top Call Farm on top of the ridge line are obscured by intervening tree coverage on the hillside. South of Lazy Lane, views into the project site from Route 416 are extremely limited—they are confined to the site's perimeter by the thick woodlands covering the southwest portion of the site (see view 23 of Figure 3.2-13). The curve in Route 416 also shortens the northward view corridor to the site (see view 24 of Figure 3.2-14). From north of Eager Road, there are no sweeping vistas of Parcel A due to distance, topography, and intervening vegetation and farm buildings.

Within the large Thomas Bull Memorial Park, views of the project site are limited (or non-existent) from most areas. In the vicinity of the Arboretum off of Grove Street, there are some views of the ridge line and the open fields bordering Route 416. However, tree coverage between the Arboretum and Route 416 obscures sweeping vistas (see view 20 of Figure 3.2-12). There are no views from within the main body of the park south of Quarry Road due to distance and intervening trees, even though portions of the park are elevated.

Between Route 416 and the railroad tracks, Eager Road provides clear views of varying length and scope into the project site. Adjacent to the northwest corner of the site, Eager Road provides views of Parcel B and sweeping southward views of the open fields on the western half of Parcel A and of the ridge line (see Figure 3.2-5). Views of Top Call Farm and the open fields on the

## **Four Seasons at Hamptonburgh**

---

ridge line are not obtainable due to intervening trees. Toward Lazy Lane, as Eager Road passes through woodland, views into the site are blocked by the adjacent vegetation (see view 8 of Figure 3.2-6).

At Lazy Lane, views south toward Top Call Farm are limited, because of the upward rise in elevation away from Eager Road—Top Call Farm is not visible from Eager Road (see view 51 of Figure 3.2-28). From this location, views northeast of the horse farm on Eager Road are clear. Adjacent to the northeast portion of the site, Eager Road provides mostly unobstructed views of the fields on the north side of the road and of the vistas to the north (see view 12 of Figure 3.2-8 and view 14 of Figure 3.2-9). Views south are limited due to woodland (see view 13 of Figure 3.2-8 and view 15 of Figure 3.2-9).

From east of Lazy Lane, there are no views from Eager Road to the western portion of the site and only limited views of the ridge line. East of the railroad tracks, Eager Road only provides limited views into the northeast corner of the project site. The curve of the road and intervening tree cover obscures more extensive views (see view 29 of Figure 3.2-17). Closer to Neelytown Road, there are no views of the project site from Eager Road (see view 30 of Figure 3.2-17).

Motorists on Route 416 and Eager Road are the primary viewer group of the project site. Although motorists have clear views of certain portions of the project site from these roads, views are passing and of brief to moderate duration. Other viewer groups include visitors and workers at the Arboretum, residents of the houses on Grove Street closest to Route 416, and workers on the project site horse farms. These viewer groups have views of the project site limited to their immediate surroundings. In addition, motorists on Interstate 84 have limited, obscured views of the project site—their views are further limited to short durations given the speeds of travel along the Interstate.

### **C. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

In the future without the proposed action, no changes to the project site are expected to occur and it would remain in its current condition.

Within the project study area, there are four projects under consideration or currently under construction along Neelytown Road. These industrial and commercial projects will alter the largely rural and agricultural character of the road's setting.

East of the project site on the west side of Neelytown Road, there are two projects currently under consideration by the Planning Board. The first is an industrial subdivision of five office and warehouse buildings that would be located south of the Greek Revival-style house at 301 Neelytown Road. The second project is an office and warehouse building located farther to the south.

East of the project site's southeast corner, two site plans on the east side of Neelytown Road were approved by the Hamptonburgh Planning Board. These projects are an office building and garage and a facility for the manufacture of pallets and wood chips.

### **D. POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

#### **PROJECT SITE**

The proposed project would develop approximately 115 acres of the 370 acre project site with a residential community of 232 detached single-family houses that would range in size from 1,500

to 2,500 square feet and 68 attached townhouses of approximately 2,400 square feet each. The project would also include a clubhouse, swimming pool, tennis courts, putting greens, and walking paths. Located on portions of Parcel A, the residential development would be laid out in an asymmetrical plan of house clusters and curved roads. The remainder of the project site, approximately 255 acres, comprising portions of Parcel A and the entirety of Parcel B would remain as open space. A wastewater treatment facility would be constructed on Parcel C, and a water storage tower and water production wells would be constructed on Parcel A.

Most of the development would be sited on the north-south ridge line running through the approximate center of Parcel A, and the existing open fields and woodland on the western half of the site would remain undisturbed. Primary access to the proposed development would be located on Eager Road through a gated entrance, and a curved street, lined with some detached houses, would lead southeast to the main spine of the development. The clubhouse, pool, and tennis courts would be located where the entrance street connects to the primary street running along the ridge line. One residential nodule, consisting of a ring of detached houses around a central cluster of detached houses and townhouses, would be located near Eager Road in the approximate location of Lazy Lane. An approximately 35-foot high water tank would be located in this area near Eager Road. The main street running through the development would be lined with a mix of houses, and curved streets would branch off to the west. A central green and a dense cluster of townhouses and detached houses would be sited at the southern end of the project site. From the green, a curved street would wind eastward to a small cluster of detached houses at the eastern edge of the site and a larger nodule of detached houses encircling a central cluster of townhouses. The latter component of the development would be located northeast of the existing pond on the site. Emergency entrances to the proposed development would be located on Eager Road and Route 416.

The design of the proposed project references older, traditional residential developments through the clusters of different housing types, varied building arrangements, and the asymmetrical street plan of curved and relatively straight streets. In keeping with the principles of more traditional residential developments, each street would provide a variety of architectural styles and house types to create a pedestrian-oriented street experience and an enlivened visual character. Certain features of the design would encourage interaction between pedestrians and residents, reinforcing the community character of the development—most houses would have front porches, streets would be short with houses clustered closely together, houses would be placed close to the tree-lined streets without large front yards, and landscaped greens would provide public spaces for social interaction. Further, the site plan of closely spaced houses on small lots would provide significantly more open space on the site, preserve rural vistas from within the site, and preserve much of the project site's existing natural features.

#### *LIGHTING AND LANDSCAPING*

The internal roadway system would be lit with streetlights. Though the design of the streetlights has not yet been determined, the lighting design and locations will be chosen to minimize light pollution to the night sky.

The proposed project would complement the existing vegetation to be preserved with appropriate landscaping, including abundant street tree plantings and screening plantings, where necessary.

**PROJECT SITE ENVIRONS**

In general, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse effects on the visual character of the largely rural and agricultural areas surrounding the project site. Views of the proposed project would only be partially visible from Route 416 and Eager Road, and these views would be limited by existing vegetation, topography, and the project's site and landscape design. The project would not significantly change the overall appearance of the area, and the visual character of the Route 416 corridor would be preserved. Further, the limited visibility of the project from the surrounding area would not significantly affect the public's ability to view and enjoy the area and its visual features.

*ROUTE 416 AND THOMAS BULL MEMORIAL PARK*

From Route 416, it is expected that the proposed residential development would only be slightly visible to passing motorists, as well as to some residents on Grove Street. The bulk of the development would be sited on the ridge line and the eastern half of Parcel A, and the existing tree coverage between the ridge line and Route 416 would remain as a scenic buffer, obscuring most views (see Figure 3.2-29). It is possible that some houses would be visible through existing trees, but they would be background objects in the vista as seen from the roadway (see Figure 3.2-30). Near the intersection with Eager Road, there would be some views of the small number of houses located off the main, gated entrance (see Figure 3.2-30). Located within the Gateway Road Overlay District, these houses would not detract from the area's agrarian setting or significantly change the open vista seen from Route 416. The houses would be located east of Route 416 and designed in architectural styles consistent with those of existing houses along Route 416 and Grove Street. Also, landscaping would lessen the presence of these houses as seen from the road. In addition, from Route 416 near the intersection with Eager Road, there would be limited views of the houses farther in the distance on the ridgeline (see Figure 3.2-30). From south of the emergency access drive to the project from Route 416 (located in the approximate position of Lazy Lane), there would be no views of the proposed development due to intervening vegetation. Therefore, views of Parcel A from Route 416 would only slightly change as a result of the proposed project. The vistas of open fields, scattered trees, and wood fences on the western half of Parcel A would be largely preserved.

Deed restrictions could be placed on the open space portions of Parcel B to restrict further development, limiting any future use to agricultural uses. By preserving Parcel B, and the western half of Parcel A, as open space, the scenic corridor along Route 416 would be protected. Although a wastewater treatment plant would be constructed on Parcel C, it would be located at the western end of the parcel, accessed by a small roadway paralleling the location of the existing drive off of Route 416. The treatment plant would be a low-lying building and landscaping would obscure views of it from Route 416. Overall, views along Route 416 would remain similar to existing views, with vistas of open fields and woodland to the east and west, and there would be no significant adverse effects to the visual character of the Route 416 corridor, and the project would be in keeping with the Gateway Road Overlay District.

As described above, views of the project site are extremely limited from within Thomas Bull Memorial Park. From the vicinity of the Arboretum, there are some views through intervening trees of the open fields on the western half of Parcel A and of portions of the ridge line. From the main portion of the park to the south, there are no views, even from the elevated sections. Therefore, views of the proposed project from within the park would be non-existent or similar

to the views from Route 416, and there would be no significant adverse affects to the visual character of the park and its views.

As described above, across Route 416 from the southeastern edge of Thomas Bull Memorial Park is the Hill-Hold Museum. A cross section was examined that showed views of the project site from Hill-Hold. Although Figure 3.2-30a indicates that rooftops of some of the proposed buildings may be visible from the Hill-Hold Museum, a field visit was conducted and revealed that substantial intervening forest vegetation, including trees immediately surrounding the museum, blocks views of the project site and restricts views from Hill-Hold to the interior landscaped area contained within the forested perimeter of the project site. However, should rooftops be visible, they would be a distant and minor landscape element due to the intervening distance of over 1.5 miles between Hill-Hold and the project site. Therefore, although it is unlikely that the project would be visible from Hill-Hold, any potential views of the proposed project that may occur would not be considered an adverse impact.

#### *EAGER ROAD*

Sections of Eager Road would provide the clearest views of the proposed residential development, but only those houses located close to the road would be visible. In the vicinity of the primary entrance, Eager Road would provide views of the houses lining the entrance street, (see Figure 3.2-30) but most views of the community would be obscured by intervening tree cover and/or topography. In the vicinity of the existing intersection of Lazy Lane and Eager Road, there would be views of the northernmost residential cluster and the water tank. These views, however, would be partially obscured by a landscape buffer, and the upward rise in the landscape away from Eager Road would preclude views farther south into the residential development (see Figure 3.2-31). Due to the curve of Eager Road and intervening vegetation, the 35-foot-tall water tank would only be visible for short distances to the east and west on Eager Road. Views of the residential cluster in the northeast corner of the site would be similarly obscured by existing vegetation (see Figure 3.2-32).

East of the railroad tracks, there would only be limited or non-existent views of the proposed residential development due to intervening vegetation—as described above, views of the project site are extremely limited from the section of Eager Road between the railroad tracks and Neelytown Road. Although portions of the two northernmost residential clusters would be visible from Eager Road, there would be no significant adverse effects to the area's visual character. Landscaping would soften the presence of new houses, blending them into the site and environs, vegetative buffers would obscure views, and existing wood fences along the road would be preserved. Further, views from Eager Road would be limited to passing motorists, who would only have temporary views.

#### *NEELYTOWN ROAD*

As the project site is not currently visible from Neelytown Road (or only barely visible from circumscribed locations), the proposed residential development would not be visible, or only slightly, from Neelytown Road (see Figures 3.2-33 and 3.2-34). Existing woodlands between the project site and the road would remain, and portions of the existing woodlands at the eastern edge of the project site would be preserved. It is possible that some of the houses on the ridgeline may be visible in the distance beyond intervening woodland, but they would appear as background objects. Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly affect the visual character of the project site environs along Neelytown Road.

*QUARRY ROAD*

As the project site is not currently visible from Quarry Road, the proposed residential development would not be visible from it. Existing woodlands between the project site and the road would continue to block views (see Figure 3.2-35), and most of the residential development would be sited far from the road, which does not abut the site. If the residential cluster at the southern end of the project site were to be visible from Quarry Road, it would be seen as a group of houses partially obscured by intervening trees. Further, if visible from Quarry Road, these houses would be in keeping with the existing residential character along the western end of the road. Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly affect the visual character of the project site environs along Quarry Road.

*INTERSTATE 84*

As Interstate 84 currently provides only limited, partially obscured views of the project site, the proposed residential development would not be clearly visible from it. Further, the speeds of travel along Interstate 84 and the distance to the project site would significantly reduce the likelihood that a motorist would see the proposed project. If visible from Interstate 84, only a small portion of the project site would be visible, and only for a short, passing duration. Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly affect the visual character of the project site environs along Interstate 84.

**E. MITIGATION**

As it is not expected that the proposed project would have any significant adverse effects on the visual character of the surrounding area, no mitigation measures are proposed. The proposed project has been specifically designed to minimize its visibility from the surrounding area and to harmonize it with the area's existing visual character—by utilizing existing topography and natural features as scenic buffers, tightly clustering houses, siting the development on portions of Parcel A that are currently not visible, or only somewhat visible, from the surrounding roadways, providing new landscape buffers, and providing substantial open space on the project site. Further, the design aims to protect the scenic corridor along Route 416 and preserve the area's agrarian setting.