

Section 3.5 Cultural Resources

Comment 3.5-1-26D: Cultural Resources. This section 9.2 is curiously defining "cultural resources" only to mean a limited piece of regional history, with no comprehensive treatment of history, nor with any mention or appreciation of nearby amenities, nor of the specifics of the site itself. (Why not mention Amenia's fabled views, 6 historic hamlets, a synagogue and chapel on the State Registers of Historic Places, an authentic Historical Agricultural Crossroads Hamlet, etc.). If the concern is to avoid criticism for effectively trying to build a new "traditional hamlet" with culture and commerce to compete with the existing ones, that criticism is difficult to avoid without specific measures designed to support the existing resources. [Sharon Kroeger, Letter, March 24, 2008, Comment D, page 2]

Response 3.5-1-26D: In accordance with SEQR, the Town is required to analyze the potential impacts of the proposed development on any pre-historic or historic buildings or sites within or substantially contiguous to the project site. Cultural resources investigations undertaken for the proposed Silo Ridge project included Phase I Archaeological Survey work and a Phase II Site Evaluation. These reports are included in Appendix 9.2 of the DEIS. Please also see Response 3.5-2-GP8.

The Phase I report prepared in April 2006 includes a section discussing the historical context of Amenia (pages 19-20) and also identifies properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see Table 3 of that report), including the Beth David Synagogue and the St. Thomas Episcopal Church. The Beth David Synagogue is approximately 1.0 miles from the project site and St. Thomas Episcopal Church is located approximately 3.5 miles from the project site in Leedsville. Given the distance of these structures from the project site, the proposed development would have no impact on them.

The Silo Ridge development is not intended to create a new hamlet. In the Applicant's opinion, the development of a resort community at the Silo Ridge site will serve to bolster the economy of Amenia and its other hamlet areas. Tourists, guests, and residents will patronize local businesses and take advantage of the tourism opportunities that exist within the area, in part because of its natural beauty and historic character.

Comment 3.5-2-GP84: The applicant should provide correspondence from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) regarding their review of the Cultural Resource Assessment report completed for the site. We are unable to locate such correspondence in the DEIS or the Appendices. Additional information regarding Phase 1 and 2, information on the site of the proposed

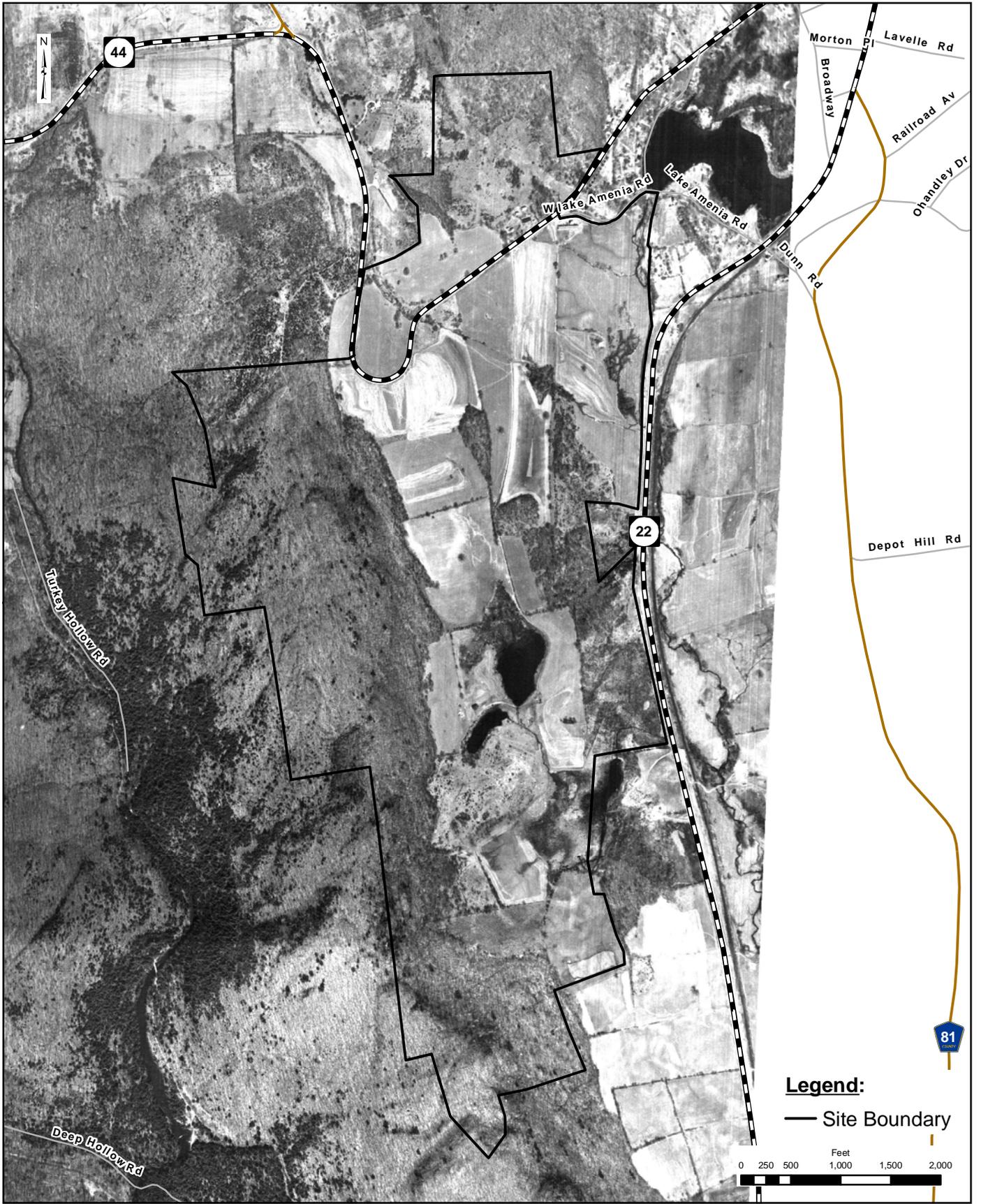
WWTP for the preferred alternative and coordination with OPRHP should be described in the FEIS. [Greenplan, Inc., Letter, April 6, 2008, Comment #84, page 14]

Response 3.5-2-GP84: A Phase 2 site investigation conducted in the location of the charcoal hearth features (Site A02701.000081) recovered no significant cultural artifacts. Based on this investigation, the site is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and no further work is necessary. The Applicant has avoided disturbance to the historic/modern artifacts near West Lake Amenia Road by relocating the wastewater treatment plant to the north side of US Route 44.

The DEIS was submitted to the NYS OPRHP in early October 2007. In response to a request for additional information (see Appendix E, Correspondence) photographs were sent to OPRHP in January 2008.

OPRHP sent a letter in response to the DEIS dated June 18, 2008 (see Appendix E). The letter concurs that no further work is necessary in the area of the charcoal hearth features. OPRHP recommends avoiding the existing wetlands and ponds on the site, as they may be former iron ore pits. The Applicant reviewed an aerial photograph from 1955 to determine whether the existing ponds existed prior to the construction of the golf course (see Figure 3.5-1). It appears from the photo that the irrigation pond and the "Island Green" pond were both present then and could conceivably be former iron ore pits. The Applicant is not proposing any disturbance to the irrigation pond and will ensure that it is avoided during construction. However, the Island Green pond was modified from its original shape over the years and is fairly shallow, so it is unlikely that it is a mining pit.

The letter also recommends expanding the site boundary of the West Lake Amenia historic site to include all positive shovel test pits and to prepare an avoidance plan for the site. The site boundary will be revised as requested and the avoidance plan will be developed during site plan review and included on all construction drawings to ensure that the site is avoided during construction.



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Silo Ridge Resort Community

1955 Aerial Photograph

Town of Amenia, Dutchess County, New York

1 inch equals 1,333 feet

**Figure
 3.5-1**

Source: 1955 Aerial photograph provided by Dutchess County Office of Computer Information Systems, 2008.

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