

3.11 Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services

3.11.1 Existing Conditions

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on existing police, fire, emergency services and health care facilities in the Town of Amenia and surrounding communities. Information is based on conversations with and correspondence received from service providers and available online resources. Refer to Appendix C for correspondence letters inquiring about all services discussed below and Appendix C for documentation received in response allowing conclusions about the adequacy of existing police, fire and emergency medical services.

Police Services

The Town of Amenia does not have a police force of its own. Police services are provided to the Town of Amenia by the Dutchess County Sheriff and by the New York State Police. As discussed below inquiries were made to each law enforcement organization and a letter was received from each describing their service and are contained in (Appendix D7).

- Sergeant Jonathan C. Hughes of the Dutchess County Sheriff Department dated May 21, 2007.
- Captain Laurie Wagner, Records Access Officer, the New York State Police.

In both the case of the Dutchess County Sheriff and the New York State Police, the Agencies have law enforcement authority and provide additional police services to jurisdictional areas far larger than the Town of Amenia. As such, their physical facilities, equipment, human resources and programmatic activities are based upon a broader budgetary and operational model that is less sensitive to incremental site specific demographics.

New York State Police

The NYSP is comprised of 4,600 sworn Troopers serving the law enforcement needs of New York State. Services are organized around ten (10) geographic "Troops". Troop K serves Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester Counties.

In a letter dated May 21, 2007, Captain Laurie Wagner, a Records Access Officer with the New York State Police, indicated that their disclosure of responses to the proposed project's inquiries to them about their police services would endanger the lives and safety of the public and the police force's members. Questions regarding average response time, existing deficiencies in staff and facilities, and proposed plans to expand or improve services were not answered.

The information provided stated that the New York State Police maintain a post on Route 22 in Dover Plains, that covers the project area and that there are overlapping shifts, including 7:00 am to 3:00 pm, 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm, 11:00 pm to 7:00 am, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, and 7:00 pm to 7:00 am.

Dutchess County Sheriff Department

In addition, according to an April 27, 2007 letter from Sergeant Jonathan C. Hughes of the Dutchess County Sheriff Department, the department maintains unmanned sub stations one mile south of the intersection of State Route 22 and State Route 44 in Amenia and on Main Street in Poughquag. Deputies respond to emergency calls and calls for service via direct calls or calls through the Dutchess County 911 center. Calls can be received 24 hours per day 7 days per week.

The jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Department is the entirety of Dutchess County which they consider to be a large suburban and rural county comprising 841 square miles, including the Hudson River. The Sheriff's Department website states that, "Particular attention will be in those areas of the county in which the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office is the primary law enforcement agency."

It is the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office's mission to keep the County free of crime. Although this remains an ideal, it is the office's mission to ensure every resident of Dutchess County is well protected from any and all crimes. The mission of the law enforcement division of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office is to enforce city, town and village ordinances, the State Laws of New York, maintain peace and order in the county; protect property and the personal safety of its citizens and generally assist citizens in varied situations.

For the last decade Dutchess County has been one of the fastest growing Counties in New York State. As such, on a County-wide basis the Sheriff's Department has grown as a result of their mission of providing law enforcement services as authorized. Individual projects in areas for which the Department provides primary services are flexible as to the deployment of personnel and services as required.

Fire Services

In a letter dated May 7, 2007, Amenia Fire Company Recording Secretary and Rescue Squad 1st Lieutenant Stephanie Murphy provided the following information regarding fire protection and EMS services in the Town of Amenia. Attached to the letter is commentary provided by the Amenia Fire Company Chief Shawn Howard. The information regarding fire and EMS services has been compiled from Ms. Murphy's letter, Mr. Howard's attachment, and from the Fire Company's website, <http://departments.firehouse.com/dept/ameniany>. See Appendix E.

Amenia Fire Company No. 31 operates one station that protects a primarily rural area of approximately 3,000 people living in an area of 36 square miles. The fire company is a public department staffed exclusively by volunteer members. As of May 2007, there were 103 members of varying ages and activity levels, with approximately 60 active members. Of these, 30 are qualified as interior fire fighters. The department celebrated 100 years of 100% volunteer service to the Town in 1995 and recently switched to an enhanced-911 operating emergency system.

The fire department is regularly upgrading old equipment and vehicles. Its current fleet includes three engines, two brush trucks and one rescue truck, and a new 1,000-gallon fire engine with a foam system is slated to replace one of the existing, aging trucks. The three engines currently

in service have 1,500-, 1,000-, and 750-gallon tank capacities, and 4,000 feet of 5" diameter hose.

The average response time from the time of dispatch by Dutchess County is 10 minutes or less. Mutual aid for fire and EMS is received from neighboring fire districts of Northeast, Wassaic, Millbrook, Stanfordville, Dover Plains, Pine Plains, and Lakeville and Sharon, CT. Mutual aid can also come from Northern Dutchess Paramedics (NDP), a private emergency medical service.

Emergency Medical Services

Seven members of the Amenia Fire Department are EMTs and provide Basic Life Support and ambulance services to the Town. The Amenia Fire Company operates one NYSDOH-certified ambulance which is able to carry and treat two patients at one time under the NYS DOH basic life support (BLS) protocols.

NDP is dispatched automatically by the Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response to handle Priority 1 and 2 calls. NDP is a private ambulance service with 13 ambulances, 3 fly cars and 6 ambulettes. They have 6 stations, including Station #2 at 5609 Route 22 in Millerton, which specifically serves the Town of Amenia. They provide services for more than 30 communities in Dutchess, Columbia and Litchfield Counties. NDP can be dispatched by the County 911 service at the request of local fire, police and rescue squad for Advanced Life Support Services. NDP also provides transfer services between hospitals and standby services at events such as fairs and festivals.

Life Star and Stat Flight air transport services are available, depending on weather and demand for helicopter services. Life Star operates out of Hartford Hospital, and Stat Flight is based at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, NY.

Sharon Hospital in Sharon, CT, is the nearest hospital at approximately 10 minutes from Amenia, and its emergency department is staffed 24 hours a day. It is owned by Essent Health Care, a for-profit, private group. Its emergency department is expanding, but it is not ranked by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) as a trauma center. St. Frances Hospital in Poughkeepsie is an Area (Level II) Trauma Center, and is approximately 45 minutes from Amenia. Amenia is approximately 1.5 hours from a New York State Regional (Level I) Trauma Centers at either Westchester County Medical Center in Valhalla, NY or Albany Medical Center Hospital in Albany, New York.

3.11.2 Potential Impacts

The state police and county sheriff had no comment on the adequacy of the existing patrols to meet future demand. In both cases the law enforcement agencies provide police services for a jurisdiction much broader than the Town of Amenia. In that Dutchess County has been one of the fastest growing Counties in NYS for over 10 years, both NYS and Dutchess County law enforcement agency budgeting and programmatic planning would have incorporated Dutchess County's growth.

In their letter, the Amenia Fire Company indicates that volunteer EMTs are in short supply, and that the Town is looking to form an ambulance protection district in conjunction with neighboring communities that would ensure daytime coverage for emergency medical services. Paid EMTs would offset the lack of volunteers available during work hours, but, according to the letter, it is rumored that start-up costs for a paid ambulance service would be \$400,000. At the time the letter was written, the Fire Company was in the process of purchasing land to build a new fire house. The letter says of the existing fire house that it is “quite old and becoming more expensive to maintain, we’re running out of storage and equipment space, apparatus specifications are much larger and we are trying to comply with current codes.” In February, 2008, the fire department closed on a parcel of land on Cascade Road, and is currently developing plans and raising money to build the new firehouse at this location.¹ Despite the shortcomings of the existing staff and facilities, the Amenia Fire Company states that its “facilities, services, staff and equipment are able to adequately handle the increased demand of the proposed development but a new developer should be aware of our plans and EMT shortage.” (See Appendix C 13.)

Ms. Murphy, of the rescue squad, requested that, in the event of an emergency occurring during construction, specific directions be given to the site, and a worker from the site should be available to direct ambulance personnel to the scene of the incident. Roadways on site should be clearly marked, and 911 house numbers should be posted clearly by the roadside on both sides of a post or mailbox, and again on the front door of the house.

Changes in Demand for Emergency Services

The Development Assessment Guidebook, by Burchell and Listoken (1994) provides planning standards that can be used to evaluate new and existing demand for EMS, police and fire services, based on the size of the community served. Table 3-52 shows the existing demands expected in a community the size of Amenia, and increases in emergency service demands as a result of development of 137 new homes.

¹ Izkson, Shaw Israel. “Fire Company keeps new location in its sight.” *The Millerton News*, September 25, 2008, accessed at: http://www.tcextra.com/news/publish/amenia/Fire_company_keeps_new_location_in_its_sight/672500.shtml

**Table 3-52
Existing and New Emergency Services Demand**

EMS	PS*	Existing Demand	New Demand	TOTAL
EMS calls (per 1,000 pop per year)	36.5	156.5**	18.6	175
EMS vehicles (per 30,000 population)	1	0.1	0.1	0.2
EMS full-time employees (per 30,000)	4.1	0.6	0.1	0.7
Police				
Personnel (per 1,000 pop)	2	8.6	1.1	9.7
Vehicles (per 1,000 pop)	0.6	2.6	0.4	3.0
Facilities (SF per 1,000 pop)	200	857.8	101.4	959
Fire				
Personnel (per 1,000)	1.65	7.1	0.9	8.0
Vehicles (per 1,000 population)	0.2	0.9	0.2	1.1
Facilities (SF per 1,000 population)	250	1,072.3	126.8	1,199

*PS – Planning Standard, derived from Burchell & Listokin, 1994. Figures used are applicable to communities with fewer than 10,000 residents.

** Existing demand is based on the Planning Standard, not on reported count or data supplied by the Amenia Fire Company or Northern Dutchess Paramedics.

Depot Hill Farm itself would not increase the demand for new services significantly – according to the planning standards, for instance, the town currently requires less than one EMS vehicle (which it has) and less than one EMS full-time employee (which it does not have yet), and the number of residents anticipated at Depot Hill Farm does not create a greater demand. The fire company, with its three engines and several auxiliary vehicles, is well-prepared to meet increased demand for fire vehicles stemming from the proposed development. Police services cannot be properly evaluated due to the lack of information provided by the New York State Police and the County Sheriff’s department, but based on planning standards and the information provided by the Amenia Fire Company and Rescue Squad, the services available are adequate to serve the new demand created as a result of development at Depot Hill Farm, and the Fire Company has a realistic understanding of its growing needs.

However, Silo Ridge, which will be developed concurrently with the development at Depot Hill Farm, predicts a population that may be as large as twice that of Depot Hill, as well as increased tourist activity. The paragraph below, prepared on behalf of Silo Ridge and included in its DEIS, describes a scenario in which a stronger police presence may be required of the county sheriff’s office:

Under the unlikely worst-case scenario where all residential units are occupied on a year-round basis, the proposed project is projected to increase the existing population of the Town of Amenia by 1,079 people. Therefore, demand for emergency services will likely increase due to the increased population. An increase in calls is anticipated by the

Dutchess County Sheriff's Department, which may necessitate additional personnel at the deputy level to accommodate the increase; however, the Sheriff's Office does not foresee any negative impacts to their operations as a result of the proposed development. While the Sheriff's Office will respond to all 911 emergency calls, an agreement with the Town will be required to allow the Sheriff's Office to enforce local community laws, such as traffic, parking and pedestrian safety laws. The New York State Police did not express concern regarding the ability of the existing staff and equipment to address increased demand from the project.²

EMS and firefighters will have adequate vehicles to serve the community, but an upgraded fire house and paid EMT position may become an immediate necessity, rather than a far-off goal.

3.11.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures

As is demonstrated in the fiscal analysis section of this DEIS, the new development at Depot Hill would allow the town to collect tax revenue that is disproportionately high compared to the burden placed on the town by the proposed development. Table 3-53 A and 3.53 B provide a summary of the additional taxes that the town would collect from Depot Hill Farm for the fire district if it were part of the current tax rolls:

**Table 3-53 A
Fire District Spending and Tax Revenues, Post-Development
Condominium Ownership**

FIRE DISTRICT		
	New Revenues	\$26,365
	New Costs	\$21,920
	NET IMPACT	\$4,445

**Table 3-53 B
Fire District Spending and Tax Revenues, Post-Development
Single Family Home Ownership**

FIRE DISTRICT		
	New Revenues	\$53,080
	New Costs	\$21,920
	NET IMPACT	\$31,160

While the fiscal analysis cannot predict future conditions for the town's fiscal health, the table above suggests that the additional property taxes collected would enable the town to expand its emergency response facilities without raising tax rates for other members of the community. Section 3.19 includes a detailed discussion of all fiscal impacts.

²Chazen Companies, Silo Ridge Resort Development DEIS, Chapter 3.10 Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services, p. 3-10.4, October 2007.

The Fire Chief did not answer specific questions relating to water supply design and road design, although a water system is proposed that will be designed to provide hydrants at appropriate spacing and water pressure to accommodate fire flows. Water system modeling, discussed in Section 3.15, indicates that the proposed water storage tanks and water mains, will meet National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requirements for fire flow demands for fire events while maintaining water system pressure at or above the minimum required pressure of 20 pounds per square inch. Roads have been preliminarily designed, based on site bulk grading (which assesses the 10-foot contour interval) to have slopes equal to or less than 15%. Detailed road grading will be completed during the design phase of the project. Hammerhead style turnarounds are located at the end of Neighborhoods 1, 2, and 3. Roadways will be paved to a width of 18-feet in the neighborhood to provide smooth and stable road surface. Parking will not be permitted along road shoulders thus making the entire 18-foot width available for resident and/or emergency service vehicular traffic.

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