



VILLAGE OF NEW SQUARE

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Village of New Square, Rockland County, New York Adoption of the Village's Comprehensive Plan and Implementing Zoning Code and Map Amendments

SEQR Findings Statement

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Village of New Square is located on the east side of the Town of Ramapo in Rockland County, New York. It borders New City and the Town of Clarkstown to the east.

The Village is approximately 36 miles northwest of New York City by automobile and is approximately 1.2 miles from exit 11 of the Palisades Interstate Parkway, the main north-south arterial in Rockland County. The Village consists of approximately 232 acres, of which almost eighty (80%) is already developed.

In creating a Comprehensive Plan, it is the goal and intent of the Village of New Square to guide development and provide parameters for the Village to consider in a planned update of the Zoning Code (as last significantly amended in 2007 by Local Law # 1 to accommodate the Bush Lane and Reagan Road Extension projects). The Village is considering this Comprehensive Plan pursuant to authority granted in New York State Law Village Law §7-722, which defines a Comprehensive Plan as “the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the village.” The effect of adopting this Comprehensive Plan is that a village’s land use regulations, which provide a mechanism to implement the village’s vision, must be in compliance with its plan. In addition, all plans and projects to be developed in the Village and considered by other governmental agencies must also consider the plan.

This Findings Statement, prepared pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law and 6 NYCRR Part 617 (State Environmental Quality Review or “SEQR”) is the conclusion of the SEQR process for the consideration and adoption of an amended Comprehensive Plan and subsequent consideration and adoption of implementing zoning for the Village of New Square, the first unified and comprehensive evaluation of land use and settlement patterns within the Village of New Square since its creation in 1954. In order to ensure compliance with SEQR, the Village Board chose to prepare a generic EIS (“GEIS”) for this proposed action since the 2022 Proposed Comprehensive Plan is a plan having wide application, defining the range of future projects within the Village and the basis for new and modified zoning code and map amendments. Therefore, it is the intent of the Village Board to have this Findings Statement also serve as the SEQR document for the proposed zoning code and map amendments, as the adoption of this Plan and the implementing zoning are inextricably tied together. Thus, it is the Village Board’s intention to adopt this Findings Statement and Comprehensive Plan, simultaneously, and zoning code and map amendments in the near future, as a unified expression of the Village’s future development goals and policies.

This Comprehensive Plan is a Village-wide policy document. The adoption of detailed proposed zoning changes and other code and map amendments, which will follow the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, are legislative actions, which do not directly result in any site-specific physical changes to the environment. However, the adoption of this Plan and the implementing zoning will commit the Village to review and approve plans in conformance with this Comprehensive Plan and, thereby, the Village is required to identify and analyze any potential

environmental impacts associated with the broad-based action of the adoption of this Plan and the subsequent implementing zoning.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (the “NYS DEC”) SEQR handbook defines GEISs as a “type of EIS that is more general than a site-specific EIS, and typically is used to consider broad-based actions or related groups of actions that agencies are likely to approve, fund, or directly undertake... A GEIS differs from a site or project specific EIS by being more general or conceptual in nature....” As noted above, the GEIS that is incorporated into the proposed 2022 Comprehensive Plan will also be used as the SEQR document that guides and analyzes the impact of any subsequent implementing zoning amendments (which are also subject to SEQR). If any such implementing zoning amendment is contrary to the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan and the findings herein, this will trigger required reexamination of this Comprehensive Plan and additional SEQR review.

II. PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is the adoption of the 2022 Village of New Square Comprehensive Plan (the “Comprehensive Plan” or “2022 Proposed Plan”) and the subsequent adoption of implementing zoning code and map amendments in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. This Comprehensive Plan will become the primary land use policy document of the Village, guiding all future land use decisions and providing concrete recommendations for zoning amendments and other implementation strategies for achieving the desired vision of the Village. The 2022 Proposed Plan includes discussions of the uses to be permitted throughout various areas of the Village; recommends potential future zoning code revisions and policies to achieve objectives; identifies important elements of the natural resource base as well as existing and projected cultural features, patterns, and character; assembles relevant and material facts upon which policy recommendations are made; analyzes the significant environmental impacts that are likely to occur as a result of the proposed policies; analyzes the future development options as a result of the proposed policies; analyzes in general terms hypothetical scenarios that are likely to occur with and without the adoption of the Plan, including how the accompanying zoning regulations will help implement the proposed policies; and sets forth specific conditions and/or criteria under which future actions will be undertaken or approved, including in some cases requirements for future compliance with SEQR.

A Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (“DGEIS”) is incorporated directly within this Comprehensive Plan, and includes an analysis of any identified potential generic environmental impacts that could result because of the adoption of each strategy advanced by this Comprehensive Plan and accompanying zoning code and map amendments, including an analysis of cumulative impacts and alternatives considered.

III. SEQR PROCESS AND HISTORY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PREPARATION

The Village of New Square adopted its zoning law in 1967, which was last modified in 2007. A traditional, stand-alone Comprehensive Plan has not been adopted. This Comprehensive

Plan is the result of several years' worth of planning research and analysis to understand the current issues, and guide in addressing future issues, facing the Village.

Since 1967, development and the population of the Village have steadily increased while the geographical parameters of the Village have stayed roughly the same. It is therefore the intent of this Comprehensive Plan to guide development and provide parameters for the Village to consider in its planned update of the zoning code and other code and/or ministerial actions that may be desirable to supplement the zoning revisions.

In 2017, the Village Board began work with its consultants to review the Village's current land use, zoning, and related regulations and the Village's infrastructure, resources, services and other matters in preparation for the creation, consideration and adoption of a Comprehensive Plan. The Village Board and its consultants convened over several years to review the existing land use and planning issues facing the Village before embarking on a multi-phased public outreach approach, which was intended to provide a full range of perspectives on planning and development issues prior to preparing the Comprehensive Plan.

During this time, the Planner prepared and compiled a number of maps, statistics, and other documents for review by the Village Board and its Legal Consultants:

- Village Land Use Map;
- Village Zoning Map;
- Topography, Wetlands, and Watercourses Map;
- Census Population Data in Rockland County, Ramapo, and New Square (1980 to 2016);
- Census Household Income Data for New York State, Rockland County, Town of Ramapo, and Village of New Square);
- Means of Transportation to Work in the Village of New Square;
- Means of Transportation to Work in Rockland County; and
- Residential Housing Stock in the Village of New Square.

These documents were later made part of the Comprehensive Plan and associated DGEIS. During this time, the proposed land use and zoning map and zoning code updates were also made publically available in order to allow the public to obtain a full perspective on the Village's intended overhaul of its zoning code, land use regulations, and other code provisions.

On June 18, 2019, the Village Board declared itself as the lead and only involved agency pursuant to SEQRA and adopted a positive declaration of environmental significance determining that a GEIS would be prepared with the Comprehensive Plan to identify and analyze the potential adverse generic environmental impacts associated with the consideration and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and all implementing code and map amendments.

Since the Comprehensive Plan incorporates environmental discussions of all policy recommendations so that the plan would advance policies that consider the environment, all while balancing economic, social, and other appropriate considerations, the Village Board determined that the draft Comprehensive Plan would include the necessary analysis so that it could serve as its own DGEIS to accomplish this very purpose.

A public scoping session was held on July 18, 2019, during which the Comprehensive Plan and zoning adoption procedure was described and the Village Board and its consultants discussed the written scoping comments received with those members of the public in attendance. The scoping effort was intended to garner oral and written feedback from the public at the earliest stage of the Comprehensive Plan adoption process. This effort culminated in the acceptance of a final scope by the Village Board on August 12, 2019.

The Comprehensive Plan/DGEIS was thereafter prepared by the Village Board. As the Village Board acts as the Village Planning Board, no referral to the planning board is necessary. After considering and reviewing the DGEIS, the Village Board—determined that the DGEIS was complete and adequate for public review pursuant to SEQR.

The Village Board, pursuant to §722(6)(a) of the Village Law and SEQR § 617.9, the Village Board duly filed a Notice of Completion on September 3, 2019 and noticed and scheduled a public hearing for the dual purpose of considering the DGEIS and taking comments regarding the substance of the Comprehensive Plan and proposed zoning amendments on September 25, 2019.

The Village Board, pursuant to § 722(5)(b) of the New York State Village Law and § 239-m(3)(i) of the New York State General Municipal Law, referred the proposed Comprehensive Plan/DGEIS to the Rockland County Division of Planning (“RCDP”) for review and recommendation. Notice was also provided of the Comprehensive Plan/DGEIS to all adjoining municipalities for review and comments. On October 18, 2019, RCDP submitted its recommendation of Local Determination with advising comments, which were considered and responded to in the Final GEIS (“FGEIS”). Comments were also received from the adjoining Town of Clarkstown, which were also responded to in the FGEIS. Therefore the FGEIS, which was also transmitted to the County Planning Department and adjoining municipalities, constitutes the report of the action taken.

The Village Board conducted a duly convened public hearing, on September 25, 2019 and continued to accept written comments of the DGEIS up to October 7, 2019. Thereafter, the Village Board gathered all comments from interested and involved agencies and the general public, which it reviewed with its consultants and provided responses to in the FGEIS. Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the FGEIS responses (found on pages 10-20 of the FGEIS) and Findings shall be submitted to RCDP and shall constitute the final report of the action taken.

The Village Board reviewed the FGEIS and 2019 Proposed Plan in depth and requested revisions to the FGEIS and Proposed Comprehensive Plan. Where required and deemed necessary by the Village Board, the FGEIS incorporates edits as suggested by said interested and involved agencies. In addition, after the public comment period had ended, the Village Board received additional comments from the public (specifically The Refuah Health Center, which suggested several typographical corrections and other non-substantive changes to be made to the FGEIS and Proposed Comprehensive Plan).

After this review period, the FGEIS was accepted and filed on December 9, 2019.

IV. PROPOSED LAND USE POLICIES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

A. Comprehensive Plan and Zoning

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide development and all future land use decisions by providing concrete recommendations for the corresponding zoning amendments and other implementation strategies for achieving the desired vision of the Village. The Village, as an existing densely developed community, envisions that any future growth in the Village should be encouraged but regulated as to ensure development is compliant with the goals and objectives of the Village's Comprehensive Plan and simultaneous zoning code, zoning map, and code amendments.

B. Land Use and Zoning

Adopting this Comprehensive Plan/FGEIS and the associated zoning code and map amendments is the foundational step the Village is taking to update its land use and zoning regulations. This action was carried out in order to take a thorough and updated look at the community's past, current, and future land development trends with the express intention of updating the existing zoning code. In recent years, many development applications have required numerous variances, especially in the already built-out sections of the Village, as development constraints have prevented many applicants from complying with the existing zoning code.

Going forward, it is the intent of the Village to create a land use regulatory scheme and zoning code that better reflects the Village's development needs due to the scarcity of open land and Village residents' hope to be able to house successive generations within the community itself. Specifically, the Village seeks to amend its zoning so as to not greatly increase the permitted density in the residential district but still allow for flexibility in housing stock. Instead of only permitting multifamily dwellings under condominium ownership via a special permit, which has created much of the Village's increased density, the new zoning code forgoes this requirement and allow for individual ownership of zero-lot line, single-family attached multi-family dwellings as a permitted use within all districts, with accompanying bulk table regulations. The Village envisions that this zoning scheme will help reduce the number of variances that the Village Zoning Board (and special permits that the Village Planning Board) must review and then grant or deny, increase zoning compliance, and-most importantly-ensure the reasonable and sustainable growth of the Village.

C. Other Considerations

The Village Board is also cognizant that the countywide needs and regulations of agencies outside the Village have changed since the adoption of its original zoning code, including state building and fire code, SEQR, state wetlands, and utility, water, and sewer regulations. It is the intent of the village to create a Comprehensive Plan and updated zoning code and map that fully complies with these outside regulations and to have the code enforced throughout the application review process and subsequent building permits.

In addition, the Village recognizes that it is part of the larger Rockland County community sharing resources such as roads, water, and sewer capacity with adjoining and distant neighbors. However, it is important to also recognize that in many ways, the Village consumes these scarce resources at a much smaller amount per capita than the average Rockland County resident. For example, a much higher percentage of Village residents work at home or walk to work than the average County resident, meaning they have a much lower per capita number of vehicle trips, contribute significantly less to road congestion, and therefore have a correspondingly lower carbon footprint. The road system within the Village is therefore much more efficient than in the less densely populated County, which results in less stormwater runoff, smaller heat sink effects, and less capital costs in road development and maintenance. In addition, water consumption rates are also much lower per capita in the Village than in the County because of the smaller Village lots, which require less water to support lawns and landscape plants. The Village intends to support the inclusion of water-saving toilets, faucets, and other fixtures in all new construction in the Village. Finally, any necessary expansions to sewer facilities due to population increases in the Village will be financed by a fee as agreed upon by the Rockland County Sewer District.

The Village Board finds that the execution of these and other land use policies identified in this Comprehensive Plan through corresponding implementing zoning, for reasons more fully discussed hereafter, will serve to minimize adverse environmental impacts to the area while still providing ample opportunity for diverse housing and commercial opportunities within the Village. The Board further finds that due to this balancing and consideration of all objectives, adoption of this Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies, which are echoed in the proposed implementing zoning code and map updates, will result in beneficial impacts to environmental resources and current zoning and land use regulations for the Village.

V. IMPACTS CONSIDERED

In the course of preparing and reviewing the Draft and Final GEISs, the Village Board in its role as Lead Agency pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617 assessed the likelihood of environmental impacts occurring as a result of these policies and recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan and associated proposed implementing zoning code and map amendments. Below are the findings of the Village Board regarding the identified cumulative potential impacts of the adoption and implementation of the proposed land use policies and recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan and zoning code and map amendments. Additional detailed findings regarding the adoption and implementation of those specific recommendations for which the Village Board has identified the potential to create some moderate to large impacts are also discussed.

1. *Land Use and Zoning* – Currently, the Village of New Square consists mainly of residential uses (single-family, two-family, and multifamily structures). Future growth will be constrained to vacant land, which is located primarily in the northern part of the Village centered around the Bush Lane and Regan Road subdivisions, and is anticipated to be residential. Public uses, such as the Yeshivas, girls and boys schools, Village offices, and EMS, are scattered throughout the Village. While most of the businesses cater to uses primarily serving Village residences, including grocery, toy, and jewelry stores, there are a few commercial uses in the west side of the Village that attract consumers from outside the Village.

Although the Village Board received some comments that the adoption of these proposed Comprehensive Plan and related zoning amendments will increase the permitted density of future development, and thus these documents have the potential to create a moderate to large environmental impact, the Village Board finds that any potential impact will be appropriately mitigated to the fullest extent possible via the adoption of corresponding bulk regulations. The 2022 Proposed Plan inventories the existing zoning and land use, which consists of eight zoning districts: the original 1967 districts (R-1 One/Two Family Residential, R-2 One/Two/Multifamily Residential, C-1 Retail Business, C-2 Central Business) and the four added in 2007 (NS Neighborhood Shopping, GB General Business, LDR Multifamily, and HDR Multifamily) and then recommends changes to be made in the forthcoming proposed zoning code amendments. The main difference is that this Comprehensive Plan will condense all residential uses into one residential use category, which will allow a variety of residential formats, e.g. single-family, two-family, townhouses, and multifamily apartments, assuming the use meets the bulk standards that will be codified in the upcoming zoning code amendments. Therefore, the new zoning will consist of five districts: R Residential, P Public, NS Neighborhood Shopping, and C Commercial.

The zoning amendments, which primarily address the types of residential uses allowed and encouraged within the Village to reflect historic and future development patterns, therefore in and of themselves will not likely increase or decrease the permitted density of future development. This is because a majority of the Village is already built out with multifamily developments, many of which have been granted variances from the existing zoning code provisions. Instead of granting numerous special permits, or piecemeal variances from a zoning code that has not been comprehensively updated to adequately reflect the Village's pressing need to accommodate growth, this Comprehensive Plan and the proposed corresponding code amendments will streamline the review process by regulating Village land use and zoning by number of units per lot size, instead of merely by housing type. This regulatory change will allow the Village to more uniformly regulate residential land use and zoning, as regulating by number of units per lot more accurately determines items such as utility and community service usage.

During this years-long comprehensive planning process, the Village Board has concluded that regulating by housing type is not useful for a unique setting such as the Village, as regulating by housing type merely means regulating by property ownership rather than actual use and occupancy of the property. Instead, regulating density based upon number of units per lot size will streamline the municipal review process and provide a clearer way to inventory and analyze zoning and actual land usage within the Village, without inherently increasing or decreasing the permitted density of future development. In addition, the Village Board finds that regulating by number of units per lot size will allow greater flexibility in housing stock, which will help ensure that this Comprehensive Plan and associated zoning code updates adequately accommodate reasonable and sustainable future growth patterns in the Village.

Therefore, the Village Board finds and determines that the implementation of the policies discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and proposed zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts to land use and zoning, and that any potential impacts will be appropriately mitigated to the extent practicable via the corresponding bulk zoning standards in balance with the Village's need to guide yet accommodate future Village growth.

2. *Environment, natural resources, and flora/fauna* – The Village of New Square is already approximately 80 percent developed (meaning it is already developed or in the process of being developed). Remaining new development area is concentrated in the northern part of the Village and accounts for about 17.7 acres, or about 7.6 percent of the total area of the Village (around 232 acres). The Village is not encumbered by steep slopes. There are two minor streams and a federally regulated wetland, located in the northeast corner of the Village. Most areas abutting the stream corridors have already been developed. The majority of the Village has been cleared of significant natural vegetation and street trees, yard trees, and smaller woody and herbaceous vegetation comprise most of the plant material found in the Village today. There is a densely wooded area remaining along the northeastern edge of the Village, which is directly connected to the wooded areas of the Palisade Parkway corridor. Due to the urban development of the Village, only species that have adapted to human presence and activity remain, including small woodland mammals like squirrels and chipmunks and birds.

As such, the 2022 Proposed Plan notes there are few remaining natural features that pose constraints to future development. However, the Village seeks to encourage environmentally sound development practices through (1) the planting of street trees on streets lacking vegetation; (2) requiring detailed landscaping plans for new or redevelopment, including a diversity of tree and shrub species; and (3) provision for adequate stormwater drainage and detention in accordance with New York State and federal regulations. Chiefly, when and if the northwest corner of the Village is ever developed, the Village recognizes that the federal wetland will need to be taken into consideration to ensure all state and federal wetlands regulations are followed.

Therefore, the Village Board finds and determines that the implementation of the policies discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and proposed zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts associated with the environment, natural resources, flora, or fauna, and that any potential impacts will be appropriately mitigated to the extent practicable in balance with the need of the Village to grow to accommodate future generations.

3. *Historic and Cultural Resources* – There are no Village properties located on the New York State or National Historic Registers. This is because the Village is a relatively new municipality, dating back to the early 1950s and incorporated in 1961. However, there is one historic property—the New Hempstead Presbyterian Church and Schoolhouse—located to the north of the Village. In addition, the Palisades Interstate Parkway, which runs generally north-south just east of the Village, is on the National Register of Historic Places, the NYS Register of Historic Places, and the Register of National Scenic Byways.

Although the Village abuts the Parkway right-of-way for a short distance at the northeast corner of the Village, this area is a forested wetland, which provides a visual buffer of the Village community from the Parkway.

There are several cultural resources with local significance to Village residents, including the Ateres Charna Wedding hall, Ichaim Catering, Yeshiva of New Square, Beer Yakov Talmudic Seminary, and the Congregation Mishpat Tzedek and Congregation Zihron Yakov. These cultural resources are embedded in the existing land use of the Village and are not expected to be impacted adversely by the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and its implementing zoning code, map, and code amendments.

There are no known archeological resources within the Village. There are also no sites identified as sensitive by DEC.

Therefore, the Village Board finds and determines that the implementation of the policies discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts associated with historical, archeological, or aesthetic or existing community or neighborhood character, and that any potential impacts will be appropriately mitigated to the extent practicable in balance with the need of the Village to grow to accommodate future generations.

4. *Population and Housing* – In its short existence as a municipality, the Village has grown from its initial establishment as a single property in the mid-1950s to the most rapidly growing community in Rockland County (at approximately five times the rate of the county as a whole). Its population continues as a predominantly Skverer Hasidic sect who wish to maintain a Hasidic lifestyle, including speaking primarily Yiddish, while keeping outside influences to a minimum. According to Table 6-1 in the Comprehensive Plan, a population of 9,455 is projected for 2020, while a population of 11,032 is projected for 2025. The average family size in the Village ranges from 5.72 to 6.98 persons per household, which indicates the need for approximately 44 to 54 additional housing units per year to accommodate this population growth. As such, the FGEIS/Comprehensive Plan inventories and plans for this need to accommodate sustained growth through the proposed zoning code, map, and code amendments while to the extent practical balancing such growth in a manner that will minimize potential adverse environmental impacts.

Although the Village Board received some comments that the adoption of these proposed Comprehensive Plan and related zoning amendments will increase the permitted density of future development, and thus these documents have the potential to create a moderate to large impact on housing, the Village Board finds that any potential impact will be appropriately mitigated to the fullest extent possible via the adoption of corresponding bulk regulations. Following the discussion found above in “Land Use and Zoning,” the Village Board’s goal in adopting this Comprehensive Plan is to provide a range of housing stock options regulated by unit number per lot size, rather than housing type, in order to provide increased flexibility to current and future generations of Village residents as the population continues to grow. By regulating housing and therefore Village population allocation in this way, the Village Board will consequently be better able to assess, inventory, and plan

for correlating usage of and impact upon community services, utilities, transportation infrastructure and systems, historic, cultural, and environmental resources, and general land use within the Village. The Village Board reiterates it has no particular preferred type or percentage of housing type, but merely desires that all future development conform to this Comprehensive Plan and associated zoning law and implementing code amendments taking into account lot size.

Therefore, the Village Board finds and determines that the implementation of the policies discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts associated with population and housing, and that any potential impacts will be appropriately mitigated to the extent practicable in balance with the need of the Village to grow to accommodate future generations.

5. *Community Services* – Because of the rapid and sustained population growth which is expected to continue, the existing Village will need to continue to build upon its strong existing system of community services. The New Square community was established to support a lifestyle based upon its' members unique cultural practices compared to the general population living in the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, and the New York Metropolitan region. Their precepts are centered on family life and religious devotion, while the population seeks to live as an enclave amid the larger regional population. The Village seeks to provide all necessary community services at a level that is commensurate with the values placed on community life and in a manner that is in keeping with the cultural traditions and norms of the Hasidic community. Based upon religious norms which preclude women from driving and which limit automobile use, along with the large population of children, Village residents rely heavily on pedestrian movement and mass transportation. These norms will not change as a result of the adoption of the 2022 Proposed Plan and zoning code and map amendments.

Community services currently provided include public safety services (the Village is served by the Town of Ramapo Police Department), fire protection (the Village is served by Hillcrest Fire Company No. 1 of the Moleston Fire District), ambulatory and health services (New Square Volunteer Emergency Medical Services, New Square Hatzolah, and Refuah Health Center), and private religious educational institutions. Building upon the discussions found above in “Land Use and Zoning” and “Population and Housing,” anticipated Village population increases will impact the allocation of such community services. As such, the Village Board has determined it is even more important that the goals of this Comprehensive Plan and the proposed zoning code amendments be implemented, as regulating residential development—wherein the majority of community service usage is generated—via unit number per lot size rather than by housing type will allow the Village and surrounding community service providers to better gauge current usage and future need of such services.

Community services are expected to respond to the growing population in accordance with contemporary standards by adding staff, facilities, and/or equipment and associated infrastructure as necessary. The increase in tax revenue as a result of additional

development will serve to offset the cost of an increased need for new equipment and, potentially, building expansions.

Therefore, the Village Board finds and determines that the implementation of the policies discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and the proposed zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts associated with the provision of community services, and that any potential impacts will be appropriately mitigated to the extent practicable by working actively with the community service providers to assess future Village need.

6. *Traffic and Transportation* – This Comprehensive Plan recommends the implementation of an amended zoning code, map, and land use policies that encourage short-term and long-term improvements to the Village’s traffic and transportation system. Specifically, the Plan recommends the creation of additional access points to the Village to improve travel into and out of the Village, widening Washington Avenue, and improvements to the Washington Avenue intersection with NYS Route 45, among other areas. The Plan also includes recommendations with regard to the extensive pedestrian and mass transit system throughout the Village, including the maintenance of sidewalks (including ensuring that intrusions such as hedges, branches, and parked cars do not impede traffic), construction of access ramps, conduction of a comprehensive lighting audit by Orange & Rockland Utility, consideration of a traffic control officer during special/religious events, and the construction of a northbound bus stop with shelter and turn out on the northeast side of the Washington Avenue intersection. The Village Board finds and determines that the implementation of the policies and recommendations discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and the proposed zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts associated with traffic or transportation and, in fact, will provide benefits to both Village residents and surrounding outside population that travels in and around the Village’s borders.
7. *Utilities* – Although population is expected to increase within the Village, and consequently demand for utilities will increase, the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, and amendments to the zoning code and map, will not affect the rate of growth that is occurring in New Square, nor induce growth, and consequently, will not directly affect utility demand in the Village. However, and building upon the discussions found above in “Land Use and Zoning,” “Population and Housing,” and “Community Services” sections, anticipated Village population increases will impact the *allocation* of such increased utility demand. As such, the Village Board has determined it is even more important that the goals of this Comprehensive Plan and the proposed zoning code amendments be implemented, as regulating residential development—wherein the majority of everyday utility usage is generated—via unit number per lot size rather than by housing type will allow the Village and surrounding utility service providers to better gauge current usage and future need for utility service provision.

The Village of New Square is served by Orange & Rockland, Utility, which has been notified of the proposed zoning changes and is expected to have capacity to serve any

additional electricity needs that arise. The Village is committed to working with Orange & Rockland to ensure there is an adequate electricity supply.

The Village of New Square's water is currently served by Veolia New York, Inc. About 70% of the company's water supply comes from 60 groundwater wells located throughout the county, and the remaining 30 percent comes from surface water drawn from the Lake DeForest (Clarkstown) and Letchworth reservoirs. The Hackensack River Watershed is the source of the surface water supply. Veolia treats both groundwater and surface water to remove impurities to meet the state's drinking water standards. Veolia has provided documentation to the Village, dated December 12, 2018, that the existing 5 water mains servicing the Village are sufficient and that no future water capacity issues are anticipated. The Village intends to continue to work with Veolia to ensure the adequate supply of water.

The Village is located at the center of the Rockland County Sewer District #1, which also serves the towns of Ramapo and Clarkstown and several parcels in the Town of Orangetown. As of 2007, a study indicated that the average wastewater generation per capita in the Village is about 95 gpd/person. With a projected population increase of about 300 persons per year, an additional 28,500 gpd of wastewater will be generated. The addition of housing units will be covered by the sewer hookup fee those units as already discussed with the Sewer District and noted in the FGEIS. The Sewer District has also noted, to which the Village wholeheartedly agrees, that the drastic reduction of ZBA applications for variances and Planning Board special permits will reduce the overall number of land use applications sent to the District for technical review. The Village agrees that this reduction in reviews will have a beneficial impact on conserving human resources at the County and Village level.

The Village Board therefore finds and determines that the implementation of the policies and recommendations discussed above and within the 2022 Proposed Plan and the proposed zoning code and map amendments will not result in any adverse environmental impacts associated with utility usage and, instead, will allow the Village to better assess, inventory, and prepare for a steady and reliable allocation of both current and future utility services.

VI. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Throughout the course of preparation and consideration of this Comprehensive Plan and proposed zoning code and map amendments, the Village Board considered alternatives to the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan/DGEIS. However, it was determined that the lack of a clear Village planning document has contributed to the fact that the existing zoning and land use policies have not kept up with the needs of the community as development increases. Instead of adopting piecemeal land use and zoning regulations, or other code amendments, to address issues, the Village Board has determined it is much more sensible to create a Comprehensive Plan and updated Land Use Plan and thereafter adopt associated implementing zoning code, map, and code amendments.

Under SEQR § 617.9(5)(v), the “No Action Alternative” must be considered in order to “evaluate the adverse or beneficial site changes that are likely to occur...in the absence of the proposed action.” If no Comprehensive Plan is adopted, there will no overarching planning guidance for the Village to consider when adopting land use, zoning, and code amendments in the very near future. The Village Board does not consider this a viable option in light of the increased development pressure facing the Village.

VIII. THRESHOLDS FOR FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PURSUANT TO SEQR

The consideration of environmental impacts made in accordance with SEQR included implementation of the Plan through amendments to the Village Zoning Code and Zoning Map along with any other amendment to the Village of New Square Village Code or any other policy, rule and/or regulation of the Village of New Square adopted in conformance and consistent with this Comprehensive Plan shall not require further environmental review.

As future development or redevelopment occurs, said proposals will be appropriately considered pursuant to SEQR, and in so doing, will demonstrate how any such development is or is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and zoning. Any site-specific impacts must be analyzed consistent with SEQR and should address, on a site specific level, those areas of environmental analysis which were generically studied in the DGEIS and FGEIS including, but not limited to, specific generation of population, transportation and traffic impacts, utility needs, and economic implications as well as specific land use concerns and environmental impacts.

When any development is proposed that exceeds the density levels or is not consistent with use or bulk requirements found in the corresponding proposed zoning code and map amendments or the stated goals of this Comprehensive Plan, environmental impacts should be revisited by the appropriate agency. Where it is consistent, the level of SEQR review will be appropriately followed. That being said, and as noted throughout this document, the DGEIS, the FGEIS, and all referenced documentation, the Village’s future development potential is constrained because of the Village’s current urban development patterns and the unique need of this Village to accommodate growth for future generations.

VIV. CERTIFICATION OF FINDINGS TO APPROVE THIS 2022 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ASSOCIATED ZONING CODE AND MAP AMENDMENTS

WHEREAS, the Village Board for the Village of New Square is considering the adoption of the 2022 Proposed Plan and related zoning code and map updates as an updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code for the Village of New Square (the “Action”); and

WHEREAS, the Village Board as Lead Agency has given due and thorough consideration to its consultants’ review of the Village’s land use and related regulations and inventory of the Village’s infrastructure, resources, services, and other matters, the Draft and Final Generic Environmental Impact Statements, the transcripts of the public hearings, all written agency and public comments received, and all comments submitted by the Rockland County Division of Planning; and

WHEREAS, the Lead Agency considered all of the above-mentioned information with regard to the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts that may be expected from the adoption of the draft Comprehensive Plan and Village proposed Zoning Code and Code Amendments not in conflict with the adopted 2022 Proposed Plan; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT DETERMINED that the Lead Agency, consistent with the requirements of 6 NYCRR Part 617, makes the following findings:

1. The procedural requirements of Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law of New York State, and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder (6 NYCRR, Section 617) have been met and complied with in full;
2. Consistent with social, economic, and other essential considerations under SEQR and from among the reasonable alternatives thereto, the Proposed Action is one that minimizes or avoids significant adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable;
3. The Proposed Action is one that appropriately balances potential adverse impacts against potential beneficial impacts in the forms of providing for, guiding, and regulating future Village development, the creation of additional housing opportunities, the regulation of land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens, and promoting the quality of life of Village residents.

These findings, and all actions set forth herein, shall be incorporated in any further approvals related to the Proposed Action and shall be deemed a part of any related approvals.

These findings shall be filed with the Clerk of the Village of New Square and any person who requests a copy.

A Copy of the Findings shall be maintained in the office of the Village Clerk, and on the Village's website www.newsquare.us so that they are readily accessible to the public and made available on request.

Certified by the Village of New Square Board of Trustees by Resolution adopted on November 14, 2022.

November 15, 2022

Mayor Israel Spitzer