



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Hurley Planning Board

FROM: Bonnie Franson, AICP CEP, PP

RE: **150 High Rocks Road – Metheny Visual Assessment**
(SBL – 7.2-5-2.100)

DATE: March 27, 2024

CC: Maggie Colan, Planning Board Clerk
John Lyons, Esq./Kim Garrison, Esq., Planning Board Attornies

We are in receipt of the following items:

- Siting Study (PB-1.2), dated February 13, 2024, prepared by Barry Price Architecture (not updated to reflect March submission date), received 3/19/24;
- Viewshed Study with Visual Simulations (4 Sheets), undated, prepared by Barry Price Architecture
- Project Narrative, dated March 7, 2024, prepared by Barry Price Architecture

Summary



The Applicant, Pat Metheny, proposes alterations to the property located at 150 High Rocks Road, which would include conversion of an existing single-family residence into a recording studio, construction of a new dwelling in the current location of a pool which would extend to connect to an existing garage, and construction of a barn for storage, along with other improvements. The parcel on which the improvements are located is within the A-4 zoning district, and the buildings are situated on Ohayo Mountain. The property borders the Town of Woodstock along its northerly boundary. A tennis court is present on the site, although not shown on the plot plan. The Building Inspector has determined that two of the proposed buildings are subject to visual assessment – the new barn and the new dwelling) including barn to be attached

to it). The Building Inspector has determined that the existing structure is not subject to Planning Board review. See our comments below.

General Comments

1. Home occupation. We have previously raised the question as to whether or not the studio is subject to home occupation review. The Planning Board should discuss. Further, the new barn, as a new structure, is subject to A-4 visual assessment review. The most recent plans do not include this structure. The Applicant and Planning Board are reminded that the cumulative impact on the viewshed is to be considered. Based on the images, the new dwelling will be visible albeit farther back from the escarpment.
2. Simulations. The applicant has submitted photographs and renderings of the proposed new structure and change in coloring of the existing home. The proposed home location has been moved to the north of the existing home in an effort to keep it out of the viewshed although it is still within 100 feet of the escarpment. The applicant should submit further details of the submitted images, such as the focal length, where the photo was specifically taken (show on the viewshed map), and the methodology of creating the simulated color and buildings. The visual simulation maps should be labeled as to the vantage point from which they are taken – they are not labeled to correspond to 1,2, and 3. We could not confirm the locations from which they were taken. Specifically, should the reference to Boulevard be Old Route 28? Old Route 28 has a posted speed limit of 35 mph as shown in the photos. Generally, the images are grainy when enlarged which does not benefit the review.
3. Reviewing the photos, we believe the viewshed would be mitigated by planting trees where possible close to the escarpment, as well as behind the dwellings to create, over time, a vegetative backdrop so the clearcut at the dwelling is not so obvious.
4. We note that in the simulations, the dwelling is not as dark as was shown on prior submissions. The Applicant should discuss whether the simulation actually reflects the proposed color scheme.

Visual Assessment

Note that the comments below include comments which were not addressed in recent submissions. We expect the Applicant will submit once the dwelling location and other improvements are further refined.

1. In general, there needs to be more information provided in terms of what exists presently in the location where the proposed pool and pool deck are located. Are trees being removed? The pool deck includes stairs that will be constructed down the slope to reach a fire pit. The Siting Study appears to rely on trees being retained although it is unclear from the submission.
2. It is unclear what grading, if any, will occur to accommodate the improvements and how close the grading is to the edge of the escarpment. Comment remains. This is especially important regarding existing trees/tree stands.
3. The plot plan should show the topographic contours up to at least the property line in front of the existing and new residences. Are all the existing trees within the footprint of improvement shown? Comment remains.
4. What is the PRF fence? Is additional fencing being added along the escarpment? Comment remains.
5. As a general comment, if the tennis court remains, it should be shown. Comment remains.
6. It should be confirmed that all solar panels are on the rooftops of the structures. The panels, given the buildings' location, should shed the least amount of glare. Information on the solar panels should be provided. Comment remains.
7. Hammam. It is unclear from the submissions where the Hammam is proposed. A new Hammam is referred to on the Siting Study – the label is next to the garage.
8. Are any structures going on top of the vegetated roof deck? What is the box that is shown in the storage area attached to the studio along the southern wall? Comment remains.

9. In general, what exterior light fixtures are being installed and where? Comment remains – need to indicate on the plans.
10. What kind of glass is being used? Will it be mirrored/reflective? Comment remains- need to indicate on the plans.
11. While colors are specified, please indicate what materials are being used in the improvements. Comment remains – need to indicate on the plans.
12. Are trees being removed for the expanded septic system? Comment remains- need to indicate on the plans.
13. Is any landscaping proposed? Comment remains.

SEQR

1. Type of action. We previously indicated that the action may fall under the Type II (exempt from SEQR) list of actions. The Planning Board Attorney should opine.

Process

1. It is recommended that the plot plan be updated to address comments. **Comment remains.**
2. The Planning Board should discuss its recommendations.