

K. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

EXISTING CONDITIONS

An analysis of the potential occurrence of historic and prehistoric archaeological resources was conducted for the Study Area. Because of their considerable experience in completing historic and archaeological survey's specific to the Pine Bush Area, Hartgen Archaeological Associates was commissioned to supervise the completion of this study. Their report is attached as Appendix 4. A summary of the report is included herein.

Hartgen Archaeological Associates' analysis involved review of existing available literature; including NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) files, NYS Museum files, previous cultural resources surveys, maps, and information from the local historian; a windshield survey; and a sensitivity assessment. The purpose of this analysis was to identify those portions of the Study Area exhibiting characteristics conducive to the presence of cultural resources, as well as to inventory known historic and prehistoric sites.

Prehistoric Period

Human populations entered the Hudson Valley sometime after the retreat of the glacial ice sheet, probably about 10,000 years ago. The environment of this period was primarily a coniferous forest of spruce and pine, with open land and meadows. A mixed forest environment, favorable to human occupation, was probably present in the Hudson Valley about 8,000 year ago. This is the Archaic Period where people shared a hunting-gathering subsistence lifestyle. This period lasted to about 3,000 years ago when humans began to settle down to a horticultural village

life. This is the Woodland Period, defined by the presence of pottery on archaeological sites.

Historic Period

The construction of Fort Nassau in 1614 in the Westerlo Island area began the first extended occupation of the region by the Dutch. In addition to river transportation, early trails west from the Hudson River soon became well traveled. The Pine Bush area became an important trade route. The importance and degree of transportation through the Pine Bush increased as settlements west of Albany formed and began to grow. Schenectady (founded 1661) was joined with Albany in 1663 by the King's Highway.

This route may have approximated a long established Indian portage used to avoid the Cohoes falls of the Mohawk River near its confluence with the Hudson. The Schoharie Road was originally cut through the Pine Bush in 1712 by Palatine Germans on route to the Schoharie Valley in search of more prosperous lands. This road originated at a point on the King's Highway and may have passed through the Study Area. During the period 1799 to 1806, the Great Western Turnpike (Route 20) and the Albany-Schenectady Turnpike (Route 5) were constructed. They were paved with either wood planking or corduroy.

During the 18th century, taverns began to open along the King's Highway. In the 1750s, Isaac Jacob Truax opened a tavern on the King's Highway five miles west of the City of Albany; and in 1790, his son opened another tavern three miles east of his father's.

Pitch pine was cut for stockades in Albany during the late 17th and 18th centuries as border conflicts and, eventually, the French

and Indian War pervaded the community's activities. By the mid-18th century, the wood resources of the Pine Bush were threatened by depletion and hostilities between Albany and Canada made passage unsafe through the area.

A glass factory was established in the Pine Bush in 1785, near Foundry Road and Route 20 in the Town of Guilderland. By the time the glass factory was established, the area was regaining usable wood and contained plentiful sand, used in the glass factory.

During most of the 19th century, use of the area decreased. A few farms existed in the area but soil conditions were not favorable to most agriculture. Moulding sand was mined from the area at various times; some is still mined today. Wood was cut from the area to fuel the new steam powered river boats. During the 20th century, communities grew within the study area, converting much of the land to residential and commercial use.

Archaeological Resources

Review of NYSOPRHP files revealed three archaeological sites located in the Study Area. Four additional sites have been inventoried by the NYSM. These sites are described in Table II-K-1 and located on Figure II-K-1.

Historic Resources

A comprehensive survey of structures 50 years old or older which appeared to meet eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register was conducted for the Town of Colonie in 1980-1981. The result of the survey was the Town of Colonie Multiple Resource Area (MRA), listed on the National Register in 1985. Several structures that were inventoried during the survey but are not part of the National Register listing are located within the Study

Area and identified in Table II-K-2 and located on Figure II-K-1.

The components of the National Register listed Town of Colonie MRA include properties from the 1980-81 survey that were deemed the most intact, representing the history of the Town between c.1720 and the 1930s, and whose architectural and historical significance could be established from available research. Other properties included in the survey, such as those listed in Table II-K-2, may be eligible for listing on the National Register if additional information becomes available to substantiate their significance.

The J.V.A. Lansing house, a component of the MRA, is located within the Study Area at 225 Consaul Road (NYSOPRHP #001-04-0220). The Billsen family cemetery and a prehistoric archaeological site are also included in the MRA. The cemetery is located at 219 Consaul Road. Varied findings from the prehistoric site suggest the site may have a multicomponent occupation from the Late Archaic/Early Woodland and Late Woodland/Early Historic periods.

Archaeological Assessment

Based on the archaeological sensitivity evaluation by NYSM, the Study Area is considered to have a higher than average probability of producing prehistoric archaeological data. This rating is based on the location of recorded sites within the Study Area and its physiographic characteristics.

The physiographic characteristics of the Study Area are mixed. A higher than average probability of prehistoric occupation or use is suggested for areas near streams or wetlands. These represent potential food and water sources for people who may have inhabited the area. Reported sites are indicated along the

Lisha Kill and its tributaries within the Study Area. A low probability is suggested for areas of steep slope.

Two cultural resource surveys recently conducted in the Study Area located scattered prehistoric materials in the northern and southern portions of the Study Area. Scattered finds such as these are typical of sites found in the Albany Pine Bush. Extensive collections of prehistoric materials are associated with the National Register listed V.A. Lansing house and the Veeder house, both located on Consaul Road. Prehistoric material also have been reported outside the Study Area at nearby developments including Shaker Run, Crossgates Mall, and Wembly Square; the latter located immediately east of the Study Area. The presence of the scattered materials and the larger recorded sites in areas similar to that of the area indicate the potential for locating prehistoric sites within the Study Area.

Historic sensitivity was investigated through available information on known historic sites and review of several historical maps. The 1757 Bleeker map of the Rensselaer Manor shows the King's Highway running through the Study Area and three structures, including the Isaac Truax tavern, located in the northwest portion of the Town, in or adjacent to the Study Area.

Landowner maps from the 19th century show road development in the area and provide names for structures located along the roads. The earliest landowner map examined was the 1850 Witbeck map of the Town of Watervliet. Some of the major roadways that exist within the study area today are shown as developed when the map was made. These roadways include Curry Road, Kings Road, Morris Road, Albany Street, Central Avenue, Consaul Road, Lisha Kill Road, and Watervliet-Shaker Road.

Slightly more than one dozen structures are shown within or immediately adjacent to the Study Area, although development in this region is not as extensive as in other areas, such as in the eastern portion of the Town. The Hudson & Mohawk River Railroad, the earliest railroad in the State, is shown crossing the Study Area. The 1854 Gould and the 1866 Beers maps of the Town of Watervliet show slight increases in the amount of development within the Study Area. Changing road patterns are prominent when comparing the maps with mid-20th century topographic maps.

Examination of historic maps indicates that transportation reflects a major theme of human activity in the region. The earliest settlements were taverns or public houses used by people traveling between the Hudson, Mohawk, and Schoharie valleys. Nineteenth century atlas maps indicate that several structures were located within and adjacent to the Study Area. Land in the vicinity of these structures is considered to be highly sensitive to the presence of historic materials.

It is possible that additional historic deposits are located along the courses of the many historic roads that either once traversed the study area or still exist today. The presence of previously unrecorded structures and historic sites within the Study Area cannot be discounted, especially along older roads. Therefore, the first 200 to 300 feet of land along the early roads of the area should be considered sensitive to the presence of archaeological deposits associated with initial settlement in the Study Area.

Table II-K-1
Lisha-Kill Kings Road Areas DGEIS
Prehistoric Archaeological Sites

Map Ref.#	NYSOPRHP Site #	NYSM #	Site Identifier	Site Description
1	A001-04-0068		reported site	prehistoric; form cites the NYSM files, however, NYSM does not indicate a site in this location
2	A001-04-0347		Oakridge Estates	3 chert flakes; this site was found along the Lisha Kill during a cultural resources survey for the Oakridge ESTATES residential development
3	A001-04-0354	6293	no information	presumed prehistoric since NYSM generally inventories prehistoric sites
4		316	Karners	prehistoric
5		2774	ACP Alb-11	prehistoric village site reported by Arthur Parker in the 1920s. Parker sites are generally not field checked but do indicate a general sensitivity to the presence of prehistoric deposits
6		7098	VALansing	site findings are dated to the Late Archaic, Transitional, Late Woodland and Historic periods
7		1721	ACP Alb-38	prehistoric camps reported by Parker
8	001-04-0221	Veeder Farm	288 Consaul Rd	ca.1840-1850; structure form indicates prehistoric materials found on the property; built by Lansing family
9	001-04-0222	Kabalian house	301 Consaul Rd	ca.1850; built by Lansing family

Source: Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. 1996 (Appendix 4)

Table II-K-2
Lisha-Kill Kings Road Areas DGEIS
Historic Sites

Map Ref.#	NYSOPRHP #	Structure Name	Street Address	Date/Description
10	001-04-0211	Stekeur house	3991 Albany St	ca.1880 tenant house
11	001-04-0243	Tate house	18 Morris Rd	ca.1914 Arts & Crafts style bungalow
12	001-04-0237	Wyczachowski	1061 Kings Rd	ca.1880 farmhouse
13	001-04-0334	Lishakill Dutch Reformed Church	2131 Central Ave	1854
14	001-04-0340	Ostram house	2150 Central Ave	ca.1760-1790; 1825
15	001-04-0220	J.V.A. Lansing house	225 Consaul Road	"L" plan Greek Revival residence
16	---	Karner	Southeast corner of Study Area	Village of Centre, grew around railroad station after 1831
17	---	Rudd's Beach		Site of early gristmills
18	---	Pine Bush School	Corner of Morris and Curry Road	site of rural schoolhouse; mid-19th to mid-20th centuries
19	---	Isaac Truax Tavern	Kings Road	19th century tavern

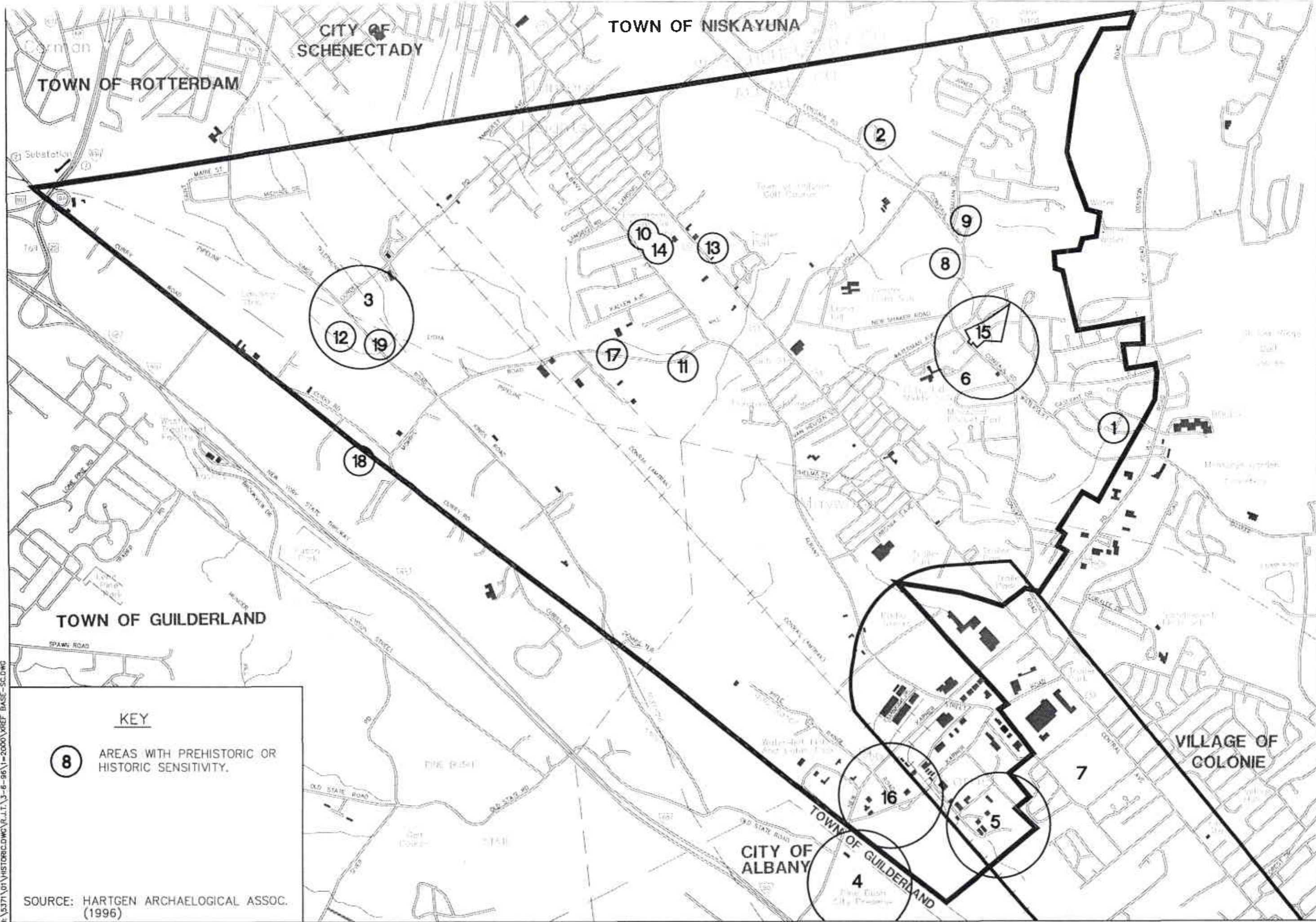
Source: Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. 1996 (Appendix 4)

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Based on the proximity of known prehistoric sites, the physiographic characteristics of the area, review of historic maps, and the sensitivity evaluation provided by the NYSM, the Study Area is considered to be highly sensitive to the presence of historic and prehistoric cultural resources. Particular areas of high sensitivity for prehistoric sites are located along the Lisha Kill, its tributaries, and adjacent to wetland areas. Development in the existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas has resulted in extensive disturbance, limiting the archaeological sensitivity. However, much of the area south of Central Avenue remains relatively undeveloped and

should be considered highly sensitive. Land in proximity to old roads, existing or historic, should be considered sensitive for historic resources.

Based on the high sensitivity for the presence of historic and prehistoric cultural resources within the Study Area, each proposed project should be evaluated to determine if it would impact sites identified on Figure II-K-1 and any sites identified on future updates to the State Historic Sensitivity Maps as maintained by NYSOPRHP. In some cases, significant disturbance of the property may preclude the need for a Cultural Resources survey. However, this should be documented and confirmed with NYSOPRHP prior to commencing site work.



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KEY

8 AREAS WITH PREHISTORIC OR HISTORIC SENSITIVITY.

SOURCE: HARTGEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOC. (1996)

AREAS WITH PREHISTORIC OR HISTORIC SENSITIVITY
LISHA KILL - KINGS ROAD AREA
GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



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ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS, PLANNERS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
111 WINNERS CIRCLE - ALBANY, NEW YORK 12205
 FIGURE NO. II-K-1 SCALE: 1" = 2000'