

Traffic Increases Mean More Than Lost Time

Driver and pedestrian safety and home values among concerns

Developer's Claim

- According to The Landing's traffic study, 18,000 more cars at peak times would travel on local roads in Ponckhockie and East Kingston neighborhoods (see chart below). No mitigation is proposed for these local roads. Instead the developer's plan to handle increased traffic focuses on Route 32, where they propose five new traffic lights, adjusting timing intervals on existing lights and restriping lanes. Shuttles also would be offered to the Rhinecliff Amtrak Station.

Reality Check

- The Landing's poor connections to the regional road network would require that after the project's first phases, 18,000 more cars at peak times would travel on residential streets. Neighborhood streets now shared by a few hundred cars and children riding bikes and playing in front yards would be transformed into busy thoroughfares. Streets would be dominated by traffic at 10 times today's levels, according to the developer's own numbers. Research shows that interactions among neighbors and property values suffer when traffic sharply increases.

Daily Traffic Volumes

	Existing	Projected 2011 (% increase) After Phase 1D	Projected 2015 After Phase 1H
North Street (north of Delaware Ave.)	400	6,000 (+1,400%)	7,000 (+1,650%)
First Avenue (north of Delaware Ave.)	900	4,000 (+344%)	2,500 (+178%)
Main Street (southeast of Route 32)	900	8,000 (+789%)	4,000 (+344%)
Devil's Lake Road	400	7,000 (+1,650%)	3,000 (+650)
Delaware Avenue (west of North St.)	600	6,000 (+900%)	7,000 (+1,067%)
Delaware Avenue (west of First Ave.)	3,500	<u>12,000 (+243%)</u> 888% average increase	<u>11,000 (+214%)</u> 684% average increase

* Totals cannot be calculated by adding up car trips on each street because car trips will typically occur on more than one street and should not be counted more than once. Figure of 18,000 cars is based on total of a.m. peak, p.m. peak and Saturday peak.

Source: Traffic Impact Study, The Landing at Kingston and Ulster, John Meyers Consulting, July 11, 2005
Analysis by BFJ Planning, November 2005

More facts

- Delaware Avenue is narrow, steep and winding. Narrow sidewalks are used by children walking to school. Traffic will more than double along Delaware Avenue.
- How to mitigate the traffic? Fewer units and a connection to Route 32. Create safe, convenient connections from the development to Kingston's City Bus system. Restore the trolley to the Rondout. Run shuttles and water taxis to the Rhinecliff Amtrak Station. Consider developer funded-parking improvements at Rhinecliff station.

Research findings

- Residential streets should not carry more than 3,000 to 4,000 cars daily. Beyond this threshold, residential character, safety, and value of homes will suffer, according to renowned traffic expert Donald Appleyard, author of *Liveable Streets*, University of California Press.
- Chronic traffic noise can stress children and raise their blood pressure, heart rates and levels of stress hormones, stated a report in the *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*.
- Areas with busier streets were associated with increased risk for pedestrian injuries, per a 1985-86 study in Kings County, Washington.

Quotes

“Longtime Hudson Valley residents don't need traffic counts to tell them area roads and highways are getting busier and busier. The fact more people are using local highways should come as no surprise. The populations of Dutchess and Ulster counties grew by about 8 percent from 1990 to 2000. Poughkeepsie Journal, Fact Book, “Road Congestion Getting Worse,” May 1, 2005

“When heavy traffic forces residents to retreat into the backs of their homes and away from the street, the areas in front of homes – that could be vibrant places for children to play and neighbors to socialize – are left empty of street-life.”

Bruce Appleyard, National Coalition for Bicycling and Walking Forum, March 2005

“We found that older women who feel their neighborhoods are favorable for walking are up to 100 percent more physically active than those who see their neighborhoods as unfavorable for walking.” Wendy King, lead author, University of Pittsburgh study, *American Journal of Health Promotion*, September 2003