

Ulster County Co-Housing

Rosendale, NY

Completed 2006

Walter Cudnohufsky Associates, Inc.
Ashfield, MA

with

Coldham Architects
Amherst, MA

and

Hudson River Design
Saugerties, NY

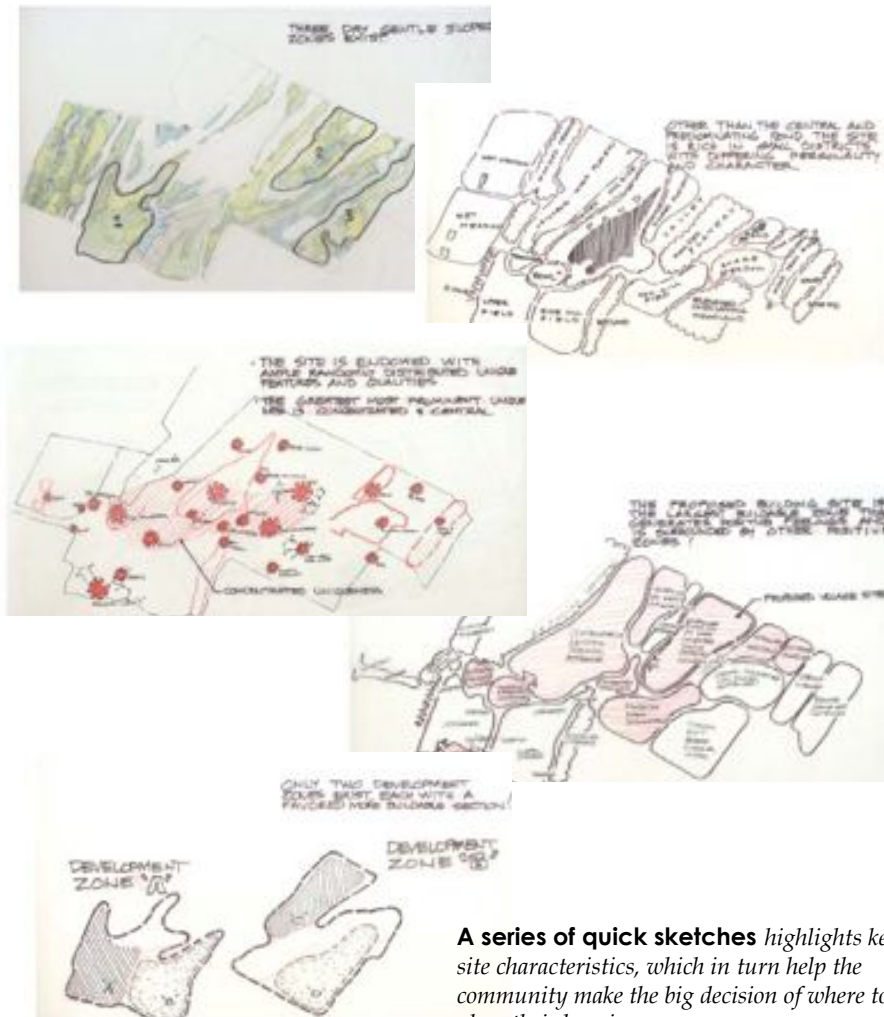


Open pond, mature trees, historic stone walls and working agricultural land will be protected in the revised co-housing site plan.

The 65-acre property acquired by the Ulster County Co-Housing group in Rosendale, NY, has a bit of everything: working farmland with outbuildings, steep wooded hillsides, streams, wetlands and a three-acre pond. When the group hired the architectural team to design the buildings, they had chosen a five-acre farm field overlooking the pond for the building site. Brought in to assess the land and review their site plan, WCA took a close look at the entire site and developed criteria to evaluate that location as well as three other possible building sites.

At a design charrette in April 2006, the community voted unanimously to move the neighborhood from the working farmland – a rare and valued land use in Ulster County – to a 3.3-acre knoll overlooking the pond and embraced by mature pine woodlands. In addition to saving the agricultural soils, preserving the view of farmland from the road, and minimizing impact on the wetlands and pond, this location provided greater privacy for the community, reduced the footprint of the development, minimized the impact of cars on home privacy, and placed the central common house at the high point of the property.

Access to the building site makes use of an existing farm lane and wetland crossing, with a parking area at the base of the knoll. Additional parking, grouped in three garage structures, gives each resident one sheltered place closer to home, served by two narrow one-way loops that also provide emergency and fire access. Pavement is kept to a minimum, with a network of footpaths embracing interior open space. Three sheltered outlooks perch at the top of steeper slopes, to enjoy views over the surrounding lowlands.



A series of quick sketches highlights key site characteristics, which in turn help the community make the big decision of where to place their housing.

