

ULSTER COUNTY
BLUE RIBBON HEALTHCARE SERVICES ADVISORY PANEL
LONG TERM CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

SITE OBSERVATIONS

The Committee made multiple visits to the Golden Hill nursing home and had a very extensive and detailed tour of the facility by the Facility Administrator, Sheree Cross. The Golden Hill facility is well maintained. It is clean and seems to be well run. The Committee was impressed with the Administrator's knowledge, caring and compassion for the Golden Hill residents, and for her ability to balance the fiscal needs of the County with the delivery of a high quality of care, all within the existing regulatory structure.

The Golden Hill facility does have some major structural issues, which are detailed in engineering studies completed in 2004, prepared by Rhinebeck architect Paul Vosburgh, which the Committee reviewed and that are included in this report. The architect felt that there are major issues that must be addressed. An older facility, Golden Hill was designed when nursing home care was delivered on two levels – a skilled nursing level and a health-related level. Today, the health-related level has been reclassified as a different type of service and is no longer available in nursing homes. Therefore, the physical layout of Golden Hill has become very inefficient, caring for residents at opposite ends of the facility (which are connected by a Service section of the building that houses Administration, the kitchen, support services, etc.).

Regulations, physical plant layouts and the philosophy of how to care for seniors in a nursing home setting have changed dramatically. Nursing homes are now smaller in function, and are usually set up as pods of small numbers, in order to achieve a more home-like atmosphere. This layout is more efficient and is useful in making residents feel more secure. The Committee reviewed modern

nursing home facility plans with Architect Mark Lyons of Rochester, NY. The new designs provide a much less “institutional” look and feel.