

Comprehensive Plan

Town of Wappinger, New York



**Adopted
September 27, 2010**

Town of Wappinger, New York

This Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Town Board on September 27, 2010

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Introduction

I. INTRODUCTION

The Wappinger Comprehensive Plan is a document that reflects the hopes and expectations of the people of Wappinger, with specific objectives and recommendations about how to guide growth so as to preserve important environmental resources and improve the quality of life of the residents, workers, and visitors in the community.

The New York State Legislature, in Town Law Section 272-a, finds that, “among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens.” While a comprehensive plan is not in itself a law or a regulation, it sets the stage for laws and regulations affecting a town’s development by examining current conditions, existing regulations, and recommending regulatory changes. It helps to ensure that land use controls are based upon a factual understanding of a community’s needs.

This Plan recognizes that the Town of Wappinger is one of many municipalities guiding development in southwest Dutchess County. Indeed, the Town has participated in two rounds of inter-municipal planning and cooperation with neighboring communities, once in 1962, and again in 1973. The regional position of the Town is highlighted in the next section of this introductory chapter.

The section titled “Inventory and Analysis” explains the research that informs this plan and refers to a separate, companion document that includes more extensive detail than the Plan before you. Following that section is a summary of the major issues and opportunities currently facing the Town. These items are explored more thoroughly in the associated chapters in the body of the Plan. This is followed by the “Goals and Objectives” section, which provides a list of all the major initiatives contained in each of the chapters in one convenient location. These goals and objectives seek to address the issues and opportunities that are before the Town.

Following these items is an explanation of the methods used to solicit a high level of public involvement in identifying both issues and preferred solutions to planning problems, from developing Town park facilities to improving traffic flow on the major roads in Town. Finally, the section entitled “Implementation” explains how community members and public leaders can make use of this Plan, which represents a compilation of the best information available to date on how the Town can guide growth in a way that is most beneficial to community members and to the environment as a whole.

Regional Perspective

The Town of Wappinger is located in the Hudson River Valley 55 miles north of New York City in the southwest quadrant of Dutchess County. The area has experienced rapid population growth over the last four decades, with approximately 100,000 additional residents in the County since 1960. Most of the development associated with this population increase has occurred in the southwest portion of the County, in the Towns of Fishkill, East Fishkill, Wappinger and Poughkeepsie, and in the Cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie. This growth has been possible because the structure of the regional economy shifted from agriculture and small mills in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to an integrated metropolitan economy with industries and large employers, such as I.B.M., located throughout the suburban periphery, where land costs were lower and transportation more convenient.

This Plan acknowledges the comprehensive plans of the Towns of Fishkill, East Fishkill, LaGrange and Poughkeepsie; the Village of Wappingers Falls; the City of Beacon; and the regional plans of Dutchess County and the Regional Plan Association for the New York Metropolitan Area. As in this Plan, a review of the plans of neighboring municipalities finds that these communities are working towards accommodating the demand for housing and other forms of development within a framework that seeks to preserve the qualities that make these communities attractive: convenient transportation, natural beauty, and community character. These plans generally seek to focus new development in existing developed areas, encourage clustered development that protects open space, and higher aesthetic standards for commercial development.

In particular, the Town of Wappinger seeks to work closely with the Village of Wappingers Falls to improve the function and appearance of the Route 9 corridor. The Town also anticipates working with neighboring municipalities for the purposes of developing greenway corridors along the Hudson River, Wappinger Creek, and Sprout Creek, protecting water quality near surface waters and aquifers, and meeting water supply and sewage treatment needs through inter-municipal cooperation.

Inventory and Analysis

This Plan is based both on technical studies and the input of residents, committee members, and Town officials. As a foundation for the planning effort, the consultants, Frederick P. Clark Associates, studied the Town's position regarding its regional position, land use, demographics, housing, environmental resources, transportation, and other community services and facilities. These studies explored both the spatial and the temporal components of these aspects of the Town. The results of this research are presented in full in a report entitled Inventory and Analysis, which shall function as a companion document to this Plan. The sections titled "Existing Conditions" within each

chapter in this Plan are generally excerpts and summaries of the findings in the Inventory and Analysis.

Issues and Opportunities

Environmental Resources

1. Scattered land development throughout the Town has fragmented habitat. If effective regulatory action is taken, open space corridors can be preserved along the Hudson River, Wappinger Creek and Sprout Creek.
2. Opportunities exist to improve the protection of ridgelines, steep slopes, streams and wetlands through land use regulations and permitting procedures in the Town.
3. Relatively impermeable soils covering much of the Town often result in septic unsuitability, less rainwater percolating into the ground, and more wetlands. Ten percent of septic systems are failing or marginal, and these pollute surface water and groundwater.
4. There is a relative mismatch between the capacity of the land to absorb waste water and the allowable density of dwelling units in the northeastern part of the Town.
5. Roadway and parking lot design standards, such as street width, width of right-of-ways, cul-de-sac turn-arounds, roadside drainage, and parking ratios all have an impact on the amount of impervious surface in the Town. For instance, unnecessarily wide street widths contribute to the creation of impervious surfaces in neighborhood subdivisions, which reduces water quality.
6. Poorly managed earthwork and excavation sites pollute surface water with silt and sediment. DEC Phase II stormwater regulations are in the process of implementation in the Town. There is a need for strict enforcement of regulations.
7. Road salt and water softener salts are sources of water pollution in the Town. Careful attention to the methods and materials used for de-icing roads and encouraging the use of widely available improved technologies for water softening and purification can substantially reduce the water quality impacts associated with these uses of salt.
8. The Town is home to a number of threatened and endangered species, including the Blanding's Turtle, and plants such as Blazing Star, Rattlebox and Violet Wood Sorrel.

9. The Town is a member of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Compact, which encourages inter-municipal cooperation and policies consistent with Greenway principles, including natural and cultural resource protection, public access, and environmental education. Membership gives the Town enhanced access to grants that help implement Greenway principles.

Population and Housing

1. Housing costs have increased at a rate far greater than incomes.
2. There is a growing mismatch between the trend of smaller household sizes and the large three-or-more bedroom homes that have been built and will be built under current zoning.

Economic Base

1. The economic base of the Town is relatively small compared with the number of employed persons residing in the Town and the number of homes in the Town.
2. This uneven distribution of jobs and housing results in secondary impacts of long commuting times for employed residents and a higher proportion of property taxes paid by the residential sector.
3. The high cost of housing in the Town has become a limiting factor on existing local businesses and on potential new businesses.
4. Commercial, industrial, and office land uses currently comprise approximately 500 acres of land in the Town. Approximately 400 developable acres are zoned for these uses and are currently undeveloped. Also, several existing commercial properties offer opportunities for reuse and/or additional development.
5. There is a strong consensus in the Town that any future development of commercial land uses should be well designed to fit in with the sites and should preserve and promote positive neighborhood/district features, so that community character is protected and enhanced. The Route 9 Corridor in particular is a high priority, and is discussed further in the following chapter on Community Appearance and Character.

Community Appearance and Character

1. The existing pattern of development in the Town is primarily one of fragmented low-density housing developments and strip commercial development along Route 9.
2. Other than the Village of Wappingers Falls, which regulates itself and its lands separately from the Town, Wappinger does not have a town center.
3. The Old Route 9 area from Old Hopewell Road through Middlebush / Myers Corners Road to U.S. Route 9, and the Hughsonville, Chelsea, New Hackensack, Swartoutville and Myers Corners Hamlets are existing centers of activity that can be enhanced and redesigned to promote community character in the Town.
4. Farm fields and forested lands, which provide natural resources and a rural or semi-rural character to the Town, are threatened by the continued development of housing, commercial, and institutional sites in the Town. Fields and forests also help define the edges and shape the identities of settled areas.
5. The Wheeler Hill Historic District is the only protected historic feature in the Town. Other important historic resources may be lost or degraded without regulatory protection.
6. Billboards on Route 9D are inappropriate for the area, and detract from the appearance of the roadway.

Transportation

1. There is a high level of traffic congestion on Route 9 during peak hours, especially between Meyers Corners Road and New Hackensack Road.
2. Service roads designed to alleviate traffic congestion in this area have been planned since 1974, but have not been implemented, due to the difficulty of acquiring control of certain properties, physical constraints, fiscal constraints, and the additional requirement of coordination between the Town and the Village of Wappingers Falls, plus State and County authorities. The 2004 Survey shows that there is public support for the condemnation of land to build new roads to improve traffic within the Town.
3. The 2004 Survey shows that 84 percent of Town residents support using local tax dollars to fund roadway improvements to improve traffic flow (with 13 percent neutral and only 3 percent opposed). When residents were asked to identify the

single-most important investment the Town should make, this was the highest-ranking item.

4. Traffic congestion on Route 9 and Route 9D induces drivers to seek alternate routes, resulting in higher levels of traffic and higher speeds than are appropriate on local roads.
5. Moderate but increasing levels of congestion occur during peak hours on Myers Corners Road by Ketcham High School, at the intersection of Old Hopewell Road with Route 9D, at the intersections of the major east-west collector roads (New Hackensack, Meyers Corners and Old Hopewell Roads) with Route 9 (particularly westbound in the morning peak hours) and with All Angels Hill Road (County Route 94).
6. Use of public transit has increased, but opportunities for travel by pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit modes are limited and not fully integrated.

Water Supply and Sewage Treatment

1. Water availability within the Town is constrained by a bedrock aquifer that is diminishing in volume, and limited access to the sub-surface sand and gravel aquifers associated with Sprout Creek and Wappinger Creek. Town wells have the capacity to meet existing and future development within existing water districts, but future service to additional districts would be limited to roughly 400 additional homes. One-quarter of all residents that participated in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey reported some kind of supply problem regarding their individual wells. The Town will need to access alternative water supplies in order to meet future demands outside of existing service areas.
2. Nearly two-thirds of the Town have soils that provide severe limitations to septic suitability, and most of the remainder provide moderate limitations. One in ten households participating in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey reported failing or marginal septic systems, and most had systems that had been replaced at least once.

Land Use

1. This land use plan includes changes designed to improve the function and appearance of existing community centers, including the Hamlets of Chelsea, Hughsonsville, New Hackensack, Swartoutville and Myers Corners, and the proposed Old Route 9 District.

2. Currently, there is a mismatch between the capacity of the land to absorb waste water and the allowable density of dwelling units in the northern part of the Town. The Town can correct this mismatch by rezoning lands not currently within a sewer district to lower densities, and by rezoning lands outside of areas planned for sewer service to even lower densities.
3. Other areas recommended for a change to low-density residential are an area south of McFarland Road and east of Route 9, and an area on Route 9D south of Ketchamtown Road.
4. Other areas to be changed to high-density residential to make existing trailer parks more conforming in terms of zoning include three areas in the Route 9 Corridor (on Cooper Road, on Osborne Road, and on Route 9 and Smithtown Road) and one area at the junction of Pye Lane and Montfort. An existing trailer park on New Hackensack Road northeast of Lakeside Road is currently zoned RMF-3 but the density of dwelling units on the site is approximately 4.7 units per acre. This site should be changed to RMF-5 zoning to make the site more conforming.
5. The Route 9 Corridor consists of a patchwork of Highway Business, Highway Office, and Highway Design zoning districts, and the northern section is partially under the control of the Village of Wappingers Falls. The Town should initiate a discussion with the Village of Wappingers Falls with the goal of coming to a consensus on the use of land in the northern section of the Route 9 Corridor. In the southern section, the Town has an opportunity to create uniform standards regarding setbacks, landscaping, and access to sites which could improve the character and function of the Corridor.

Goals and Objectives

Environmental Resources

Goal: Encourage the preservation of environmentally significant features.

Objectives:

- A. Establish, preserve and/or restore open space corridors including riparian buffers along Wappinger Creek, Sprout Creek and the Hudson River, and improve access to these resources.

- B. Regulate the development of floodplains, wetlands, stream corridors, steep slopes and ridge lines to ensure minimal disruption of their environmental functions and scenic qualities.
- C. Preserve the quality and quantity of the Town's surface and groundwater resources through land use regulation, monitoring, testing and promotion of water-saving systems.
- D. Protect surface water quality through regulation of stormwater runoff, particularly during new construction, and through rigorous enforcement.
- E. Develop a system of central utilities that will protect water resources by reducing the number of failing septic systems.
- F. Protect the Town's biodiversity through protection of endangered species and threatened plant and animal populations, as well as through control of invasive species.
- G. Educate stakeholders, contractors, public works employees, and the public about local environmental issues and best practices.
- H. Cooperate with adjoining and area municipalities to address regional environmental issues, such as the Wappinger Watershed Intermunicipal Council.

Population and Housing

Goal: Improve housing choice in the Town by encouraging a balance of housing types and sizes that meet the needs of existing and future Wappinger residents and employees.

Objectives:

- A. Affordable / Workforce housing. Encourage a sufficient supply of homes within economic reach of Town residents.
- B. Accessory apartments. Continue to allow the development of accessory apartments in appropriate conditions on single-family lots.

- C. Variety of housing types. Require that certain percentages of large, new developments be comprised of a variety of housing types (such as attached single-family homes, duplexes and apartments).
- D. Development in existing centers. Encourage new higher density residential development in existing centers that can be most economically served by existing roads, utilities and community facilities. Any new higher density residential development should occur in relation to existing centers.
- E. Variety of architectural styles. Encourage a variety of architectural styles (such as Colonial, Arts and Crafts, Modern/Contemporary, etc.) in new single-family housing developments.

Economic Base

Goal: Encourage a balanced economy with diversified employment opportunities.

Objectives:

- A. Promote regional cooperation in economic development planning.
- B. Improve business opportunities within the framework of improved community character and appearance.
- C. Promote well-designed office research parks and similar uses that offer good jobs and wages in appropriate locations.

Community Appearance and Character

Goal: Encourage development with high aesthetic standards to provide a visual and natural environment that will promote economic stability, enhance community character, and will be compatible with surrounding land uses.

Objectives:

- A. Improve the appearance of the Route 9 corridor.

- B. Develop the Hughsonville, Chelsea, New Hackensack, Swartoutville and Myers Corners Hamlets, and the Old Route 9 District as vibrant, traditional town/village centers.
- C. Protect important landscapes through open space and farmland conservation.
- D. Protect historic buildings and sites.
- E. Regulate signage to promote appealing streetscapes and to protect important landscapes.

Transportation

Goal: Encourage the development of a transportation system consistent with Town land use patterns and objectives, including public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle systems.

Objectives:

- A. Improve traffic conditions on Route 9 and Route 9D.
- B. Use transportation improvements as a positive factor in shaping growth.
- C. Require service roads, internal connections and combined parking lots, where appropriate.
- D. Minimize the number of access points on major and collector roads.
- E. Develop a sidewalk network and bikeway system connecting community facilities, centers and schools.
- F. Improve street connectivity between neighborhoods as new areas are developed.

Water Supply and Sewage Treatment

Goal: Continue the development of a system of central utilities to address the needs of existing developed areas with water supply and sewage treatment problems, and to achieve land use goals and objectives.

Objectives:

- A. Extend utilities at the lowest cost feasible by serving the highest number of users per linear distance of utilities.
- B. Encourage public involvement in planning decisions associated with municipal sewer and water service.

Recreation and Community Facilities

Goal: Develop recreational and cultural facilities and programs that are adequate to serve the Town's current and future populations.

Objectives:

- A. Anticipate future needs and provide appropriate locations for facilities, services and programs. Locate recreational facilities in such a way that they are compatible with Town development patterns.
- B. Maximize community use of existing facilities.
- C. Develop Greenways along the Hudson River, Wappinger Creek and Sprout Creek for public recreation.
- D. Develop additional trails throughout the Town to meet public demand for nature and walking trails in cooperation with the Wappinger Greenway Trail Committee, which is an intermunicipal group comprised of the Towns of Wappinger and Poughkeepsie and the Village of Wappinger Falls.

Goal: Maintain and enhance the Town-wide comprehensive recycling program.

Objectives:

- A. Encourage increased rates of recycling.
- B. Encourage proper disposal of hazardous wastes.
- C. Monitor recycling rates, solid waste disposal rates, and hazardous waste disposal rates through objective measurements.

Land Use

Goal: Guide the development of the Town in a way that preserves environmentally significant features, improves housing choice, and encourages a balanced economy.

Objectives:

- A. Designate areas of the Town intended for low-density residential development, farmland protection, and open space.
- B. Designate areas of the Town that are well situated for medium- and high-density residential development.
- C. Designate areas of the Town that, due to transportation links, the intensity of proximate land uses and other features, are appropriate for current and future use as Town centers.
- D. Designate areas of the Town where only commercial, industrial, or institutional land uses are appropriate.

Survey

An extensive 58-question survey was sent to every household in the Town of Wappinger in 2004, seeking the opinion of residents in relation to the development of a new Comprehensive Plan. Of the approximately 10,000 surveys mailed, about 2,500 were returned, representing a very high response rate. The survey asked residents to prioritize planning issues, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Town, and identify recreational preferences. Many questions were open-ended, allowing respondents to write in responses, and these responses were recorded as text into the survey database by Town employees. In addition to questions about issues and opportunities facing the Town, the survey also included questions regarding the respondents' age, employment, most frequent modes of transportation, household composition, household income, housing costs, housing tenure, and the number of years residing in the Town. This means that the Town has the opportunity to cross-tabulate survey responses regarding issues according to these socio-economic factors in order to better understand the community and respond to specific planning decisions in the future.

Public Meetings

The Town Board appointed a Comprehensive Plan Committee in the spring of 2003 composed of residents of Wappinger, as well as members of the Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals. The Committee has met diligently through over a dozen meetings. By the time the Plan is adopted, it will have been before the Town Board as the subject of a public hearing on at least two occasions, as required by State law.

Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan represents not only a product of much time and effort, but also the beginning of a process which involves changing existing conditions, regulations, and procedures in the Town. Sustained public involvement is necessary to bring the items in this plan to fruition. The following are preliminary implementation strategies that the Comprehensive Plan Committee has identified for the Town to consider following completion and adoption of this Comprehensive Plan:

1. Require copies to be distributed to all Town Board members and staff.
2. Place copies of the Comprehensive Plan and the Town Code on the Town web site.
3. Ensure that copies of the Comprehensive Plan document and large scale presentation maps are available at every Town Board meeting for easy reference.
4. Develop a policy that all memos, reports, studies and resolutions affecting capital and planning decisions include reference to applicable Comprehensive Plan objectives and recommendations.
5. Prepare a priority list/matrix of the objectives and recommendations identifying:
 - Planning topic (e.g., Community Character; Environmental Resources; Land Use; Transportation, etc.).
 - Objective (numbered by chapter).
 - Recommendation (numbered by chapter, e.g., Objective #3-13, etc.).

- Involved and responsible parties (Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, staff/consultants, special committee, Local Development Agency, adjoining municipalities, other agencies).
 - Effort and cost required (low, medium, high or rough approximation in dollars).
 - Time required (6 months, 1-2 years, 2+ years, ongoing, etc.).
 - General priority (e.g., low, medium, high).
6. Schedule a review of the priority list/matrix with an annual report on status of implementation projects and progress. The review/report could be made part of a report to Town residents to show progress and to reinforce the public's interest and awareness of the role and importance of the Comprehensive Plan.
 7. Schedule a review of the Comprehensive Plan at least once every five years.
 8. Establish special implementation committees (by interest and topic), perhaps with an oversight committee.
 9. Public outreach and meetings on topics and issues of local concern (e.g., Hughsonville Concept Plan, re-use of former Fairchild Plant, etc.).
 10. Create or improve application and development plan review forms and checklists. The forms and checklists would query applicants, staff and boards to verify review of and compliance with the relevant portions of the Comprehensive Plan, its maps and recommendations.

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Environmental Resources

II. ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

All of the activities and investments that take place in the Town are closely related to the Town's natural resources, from the land itself as a surface for buildings and roads, to the soils of the land, the water underground and above ground, and the plants and animals that inhabit the landscape. The Town's transportation systems, economy, development patterns and potential development are all influenced by the natural features of the Town. In addition, the Town has an interest in preserving important natural features, for practical reasons, for aesthetic reasons, and for the sake of preserving biodiversity in the region.

The Town is a relatively populous suburban center within the metropolitan New York region because of its proximity to the Hudson River. Although the river no longer serves as a primary mode of transportation, the plains and gradual hills of the river valley still contain most of the transportation routes and population centers in the area. The Town's drinking water comes from bedrock aquifers through individual wells, and from subsurface soil and gravel aquifers that are part of the Wappinger Creek and Sprout Creek drainage basins. The relative impermeability of most of the soils in Wappinger has had an effect on the settlement pattern of the Town, limiting density through natural constraints on the proper functioning of individual waste water disposal systems (septic systems). Impermeable soils have also led to an abundance of wetlands in the Town, which present both barriers to development and opportunities for connected wildlife and open space corridors.

The 2004 Town Survey showed that environmental issues are important to Town residents. With 96 percent of respondents rating the preservation of environmental resources as "important" or "very important," it was the highest-ranked issue facing Wappinger today. Other highlights include:

- 59 percent supported the Town using tax money to acquire undeveloped land to preserve and protect community character. Thirty-five percent said it was the single-most important investment the Town could make. Fifty-six percent would support a modest increase in taxes if this objective was achieved. (This objective was the second most popular proposed use of tax money in the Town.)
- Scenic beauty was one of the three top reasons why people choose to live in Wappinger.
- 79 percent of survey respondents supported preserving open space resources as the Town continues to grow.

- 50 percent favored conservation or cluster development of new subdivisions, versus 20 percent opposed and 30 percent unsure or not responding.
- Of the recreational amenities that respondents said they would like to see more of, nature preserves and trails were the two top items. “Nature enjoyment,” walking or hiking and picnicking were the three most popular activities chosen from Question 30 of the survey.
- 69 percent supported the Town actively pursuing the extension of a regional Greenway walking trail system along the Hudson River.

Issues and Opportunities

1. Scattered land development throughout the Town has fragmented habitat. If effective regulatory action is taken, open space corridors can be preserved along the Hudson River, Wappinger Creek and Sprout Creek.
2. Opportunities exist to improve the protection of ridgelines, steep slopes, stream corridors and wetlands through land use regulations and permitting procedures in the Town.
3. Relatively impermeable soils covering much of the Town often result in septic unsuitability, less rainwater percolating into the ground, and more wetlands. Ten percent of septic systems are failing or marginal, and these pollute surface water and groundwater.
4. There is a relative mismatch between the capacity of the land to absorb waste water and the allowable density of dwelling units in the northeastern part of the Town.
5. Roadway and parking lot design standards, such as street width, width of right-of-ways, cul-de-sac turn-arounds, roadside drainage, and parking ratios all have an impact on the amount of impervious surface in the Town. For instance, unnecessarily wide street widths contribute to the creation of impervious surfaces in neighborhood subdivisions, which reduces water quality.
6. Poorly managed earthwork and excavation sites pollute surface water with silt and sediment. DEC Phase II stormwater regulations are in the process of implementation in the Town. There is a need for strict enforcement of regulations.
7. Road salt and water softener salts are sources of water pollution in the Town. Careful attention to the methods and materials used for de-icing roads and

encouraging the use of widely available improved technologies for water softening and purification can substantially reduce the water quality impacts associated with these uses of salt.

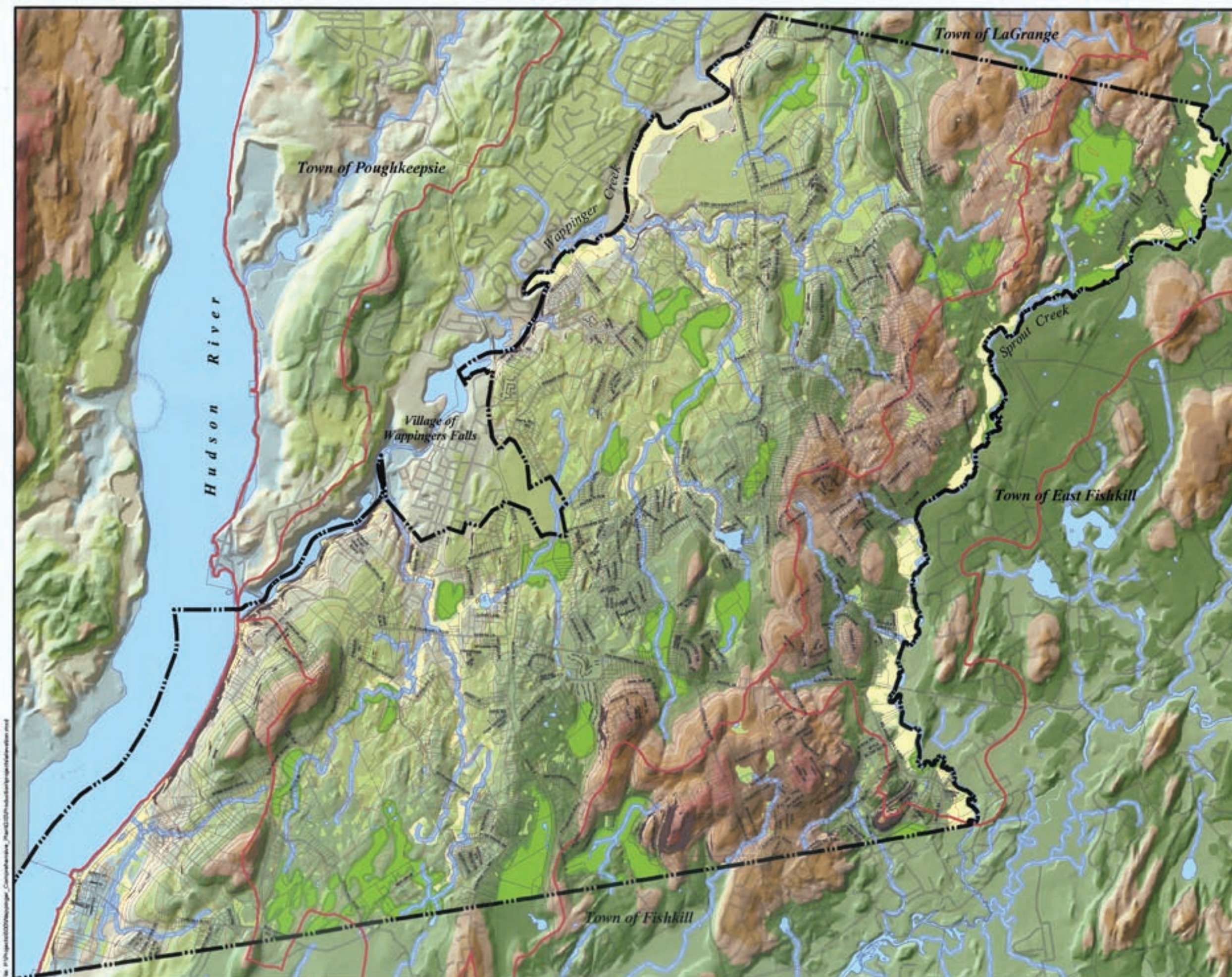
8. The Town is home to a number of threatened and endangered species, including the Blanding's Turtle, and plants such as Blazing Star, Rattlebox and Violet Wood Sorrel.
9. The Town is a member of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Compact, which encourages inter-municipal cooperation and policies consistent with Greenway principles, including natural and cultural resource protection, public access, and environmental education. Membership gives the Town enhanced access to grants that help implement Greenway principles.
10. *Groundwater Resource Report Dutchess County Aquifer Recharge Rates & Sustainable Septic System Density Recommendations*, prepared in 2006 by Russell Urban-Mead of the Chazen Companies should be used as a guide for implementation of appropriate zoning amendments.

Environmental Conditions

Approximately one-third of the Town, consisting of about 5,000 acres, is currently undeveloped land. About 970 acres are protected as parkland or conserved lands, representing about 6 percent of Town lands. An additional 1,080 acres of wetlands are protected as habitat through NYS DEC regulation.

The main topographic features of the Town are the Wappinger and Sprout Creek valleys. Central Wappinger is characterized by a mixture of large flat areas and low undulating hills typically rising up to 50 feet above the surrounding land surface. Lowlands along the Wappinger Creek define most of the western boundary of the Town, changing abruptly to steep slopes along the Hudson River. Hills just west of Sprout Creek range along the eastern side of Town, forming the drainage divide between the two main watersheds in the Town. Elevations range from 540 feet at the top of Cedar Hill just east of Smithtown Road to near sea level along the Hudson River. Wappinger contains several long ridgelines; many high points with excellent panoramic views; and significant areas of steep slopes that provide scenic quality as well as severe constraints to development.

With the exception of areas generally within the floodplains of Sprout Creek and Wappingers Creek that have sandy, gravelly and excessively well drained soils, most of Wappinger soils are characterized as poorly drained, clay and/or rocky. The result is that there is a very large and extensive system of surface waters and wetlands throughout the Town, and relatively little, or very slow, groundwater recharge in most areas of Town.



LEGEND

- Streams
- 100-Foot Buffer Around Streams
- Waterbodies
- Subwatershed Boundaries
- Slopes between 15% and 25%
- Slopes greater than 25%
- DEC Wetlands
- DEC 100' Wetland Buffer
- NWI Wetlands
- 100-Year Floodplains

Elevations in Feet

- 0 - 50
- 50 - 100
- 100 - 150
- 150 - 200
- 200 - 250
- 250 - 300
- 300 - 350
- 350 - 400
- 400 - 450
- 450 - 500
- 500 - 550
- 550 - 600

Note: This map is for general planning purposes only
 Sources: Dutchess County EMC, Dutchess County Office of Real Property Tax, FPCA GIS

TOPOGRAPHY AND SURFACE HYDROLOGY

TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY

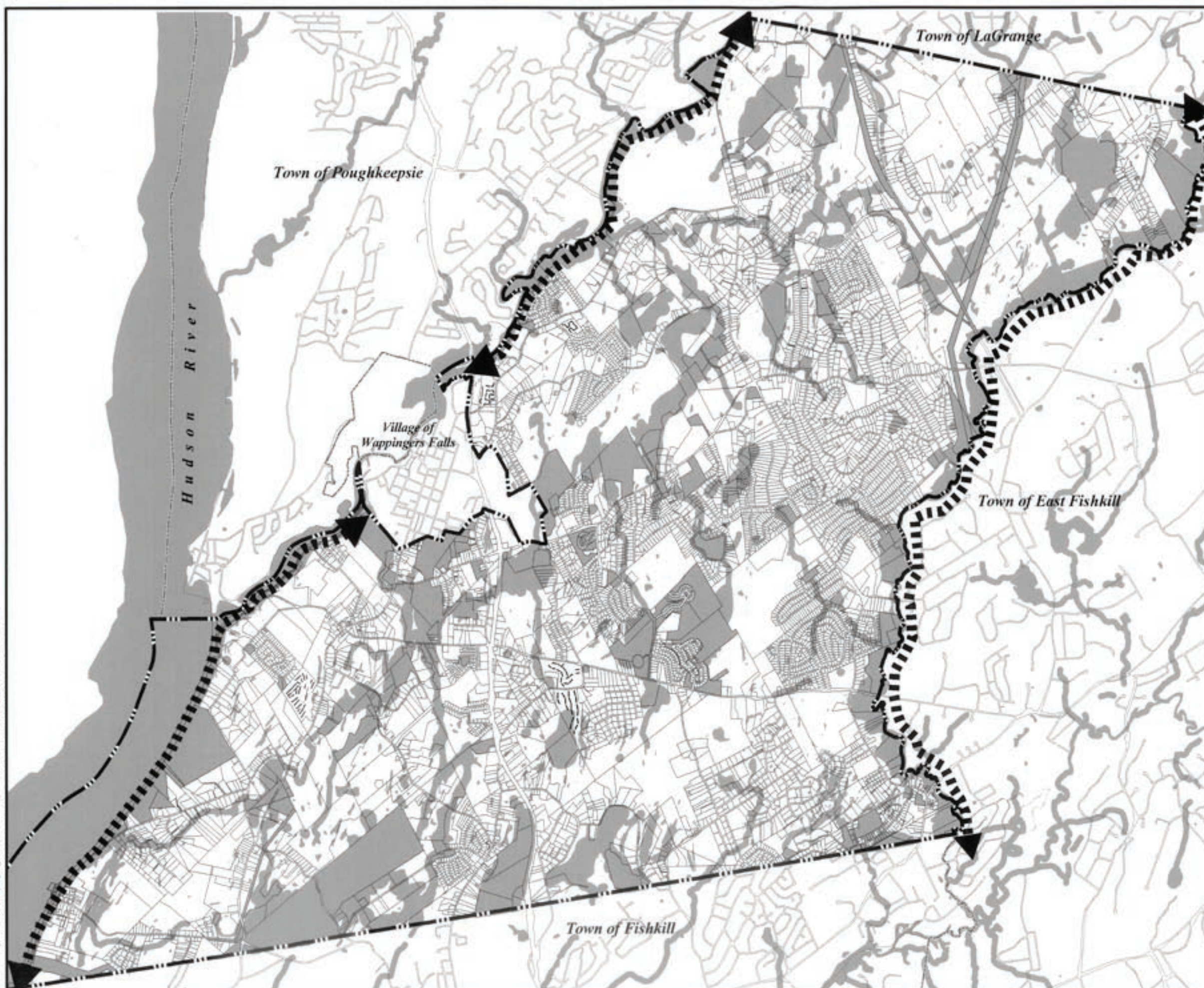
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN

FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



May
2005

Figure
II-1



Legend

- Proposed Greenway
- Parcel Boundaries
- Open Space Components

Note: Open Space Components include: streams and 100-foot buffer around streams, waterbodies and 100-foot buffer around waterbodies, NYS DEC wetlands and 100-foot buffer around wetlands, NWI (federal) wetlands and 100-foot buffer around wetlands, 100-year floodplains, slopes greater than 15%, recreation areas, conserved lands, and publicly owned lands.

Note: This map is for general planning purposes only.
Sources: Dutchess County EMC, Dutchess County Office of Real Property Tax, FPCA GIS

OPEN SPACE CORRIDORS

TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY

COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN



May
2005

FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



Figure
II-2

Wetlands are extensive, interconnected, and essential to control of flooding, water quality, groundwater recharge and wildlife corridors. Pollution, contamination, filling or degradation of wetlands may affect neighboring communities, the environmental health of the ecosystem, and the quality of life of residents.

The Town of Wappinger contains habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species. Continued efforts are required to protect local plants and animals and their habitats, and to diminish the presence of invasive species in order to encourage biological diversity. Habitat fragmentation is a constant threat, particularly to animals that need large areas of habitat to sustain their activities. Currently, the deer population is considered a nuisance by many Town residents. Deer populations are cause for increased concern due to tick borne diseases such as Lyme's Disease, and concentrated populations become a nuisance and safety hazard for residents and drivers. Under-story vegetation in wooded areas is being denuded and causing harm to the natural balance of native species.

For more detailed information regarding baseline environmental conditions of the Town, please consult the companion volume to this Plan, Inventory and Analysis.

Goal

Encourage the preservation of environmentally significant features.

Objectives and Recommendations

- A. Establish, preserve and/or restore open space corridors including riparian buffers along Hunter's Creek between Town Hall/Reese Park and Stonykill Farm, Wappinger Creek, Sprout Creek and the Hudson River, and improve access to these resources.

Preservation of open space can serve several important purposes including:

- Protecting and strengthening ecological functions;
- Providing habitats for increasingly rare and endangered species;
- Preserving community character;
- Protecting lands for parks and passive recreational uses; and
- Providing economic benefits such as enhanced land values.

Recommendations

1. Revise the Town's Subdivision Regulations to require or encourage that any areas established for open space be designed to connect with other open space parcels to form continuous open space corridors.
2. Enhance open space in and around Robinson Lane Park, through possible expansion to adjacent undeveloped properties, and through connections to other adjoining open space resources, including:
 - Existing Sprout Creek trail system in East Fishkill;
 - Proposed Rail Trail on former Maybrook railroad line;
 - Further west to NYSEG rights-of-ways; and/or
 - 40-acre open space parcel with 3,000 feet of frontage along Sprout Creek in the Blackwatch Farm.
3. Increase connectivity of open space for passive recreation through public use of trails on utility easements and rights-of-ways. There are over 24 miles of such easements in Wappinger (see Recreation Areas map). Although some sections would not be appropriate to use as trails, such as where they pass through established subdivisions, other sections may be well suited to the purpose. In recent discussions with NYSEG, its representatives stated that they do not have objections to such use.
4. Integrate the Dutchess Rail Trail with the proposed open space corridor along Sprout Creek.
5. Consider in the future increasing the 100-foot buffer requirement for wetland and watercourse buffers in proposed open space corridors (along the Hudson River, Wappinger Creek and Sprout Creek) to facilitate habitat protection and wildlife migration through these corridors.
6. Pursue easements for passive recreation on lands in proposed open space corridors, and/or public acquisition of land.
7. Study and document through maps and other means the migration of existing wildlife and the locations of all important wildlife corridors in the Town.
8. Promote the amendment of New York State law so as to make it easier for landowners to receive agricultural assessments on lots smaller than seven acres in size.

- B. Regulate the development of floodplains, wetlands, stream corridors, steep slopes and ridge lines to ensure minimal disruption of their environmental functions and scenic qualities.

The terrain within the Town of Wappinger is distinctive and varied and includes ridge lines, hillsides with panoramic views, and numerous interconnected wetlands. These sites lend value to the semi-rural and scenic character of the Town and, if not protected or given special consideration, may lose the qualities which make them special due to poorly designed development. Ridgelines are visually prominent within the Town. Development along visually prominent ridgelines, including the removal of trees, can have significant impacts and should be limited and/or guided.

Recommendations

1. Re-evaluate and consider strengthening the Town's Wetlands Protection Law on a regular basis to ensure that it is current relative to the appropriate protection of the environment.
2. Protect significant natural features such as wetlands, streams, steep slopes and ridge lines through better management of information systems, including GIS, to enhance the evaluation during the development review and approval process.
3. Review zoning regulations regarding steep slopes, and consider limiting development in areas with gradients exceeding 25 percent and regulating development in areas with slopes between 15 and 25 percent. In this intermediate steep zone, regulations should include consideration of soil types, vegetation and terrain in guiding development to minimize impacts, particularly erosion.
4. The Town should consider zoning amendments to limit or prevent new construction and the removal of trees along all prominent ridgelines. The Town should consider mapping all important ridgeline features to aid in the protection of these features.
5. Consider amending the Town Subdivision Regulations to ensure that the design of new subdivisions preserve the visual and landscape quality of prominent ridgelines within the Town. Regulations should ensure that the construction of roads and the positioning of building envelopes are appropriate within visually prominent settings.

6. Consider preserving key sites on ridgelines through public land acquisition or by obtaining scenic easements.

- | |
|--|
| C. Preserve the quality and quantity of the Town's surface and groundwater resources through land use regulation, monitoring, testing and promotion of water-saving systems. |
|--|

A major component of this objective is to ensure that development in areas not expected to be served by central utilities occurs at densities low enough to protect water resources and public health. Seventy-two percent of respondents in the 2004 Town Survey supported reviewing and amending the development standards of residential districts to reflect environmental constraints. In the northeastern part of the Town there is a mismatch between the capacity of the land to absorb waste water and the allowable density of dwelling units. Specific recommendations addressing this situation are found in the Land Use chapter.

Recommendations

1. Encourage street and parking lot designs that minimize impervious surfaces, as outlined in the *Town of Wappinger Recommended Model Development Principles for Conservation of Natural Resources in the Hudson River Estuary Watershed* (June 2006).
2. Regulate land uses in aquifer recharge areas (along Wappinger and Sprout Creeks, near the Dutchess County Airport and in the New Hackensack area) through an Aquifer Protection Overlay District to prevent overuse and contamination of groundwater resources.
3. Establish a water quality monitoring program for the natural water bodies in the Town, particularly the Sprout Creek, Wappinger Creek, Wappinger Lake, Lake Oniad and the Hudson River.
4. Promote efficient use and re-use of water in domestic and commercial plumbing systems. The collection of roof water for domestic uses may be appropriate for properties not served by Town water. While not likely to be viable as drinking water, rainwater collection systems are feasible for irrigation, landscaping, car-washing and flushing toilets.

- D. Protect surface water quality through regulation of stormwater runoff, particularly during new construction, and through rigorous enforcement.

Recommendations

1. Consider the need for additional and/or higher fees to fund enhanced enforcement efforts.
2. Develop a Town ordinance controlling stormwater, erosion and sedimentation in accordance with DEC Phase II stormwater regulations.

- E. Develop a system of central utilities that will protect water resources by reducing the number of failing septic systems.

Ninety-eight percent of the Town's surface consists of relatively impermeable soils. Individual septic systems built in soils with poor porosity have a high rate of failure, and failing septic systems constitute an ongoing source of point-source pollution in the Town. This objective was included in this chapter as a means of highlighting and strengthening the connection between the Environmental, Land Use, and Water and Sewer elements of this Plan. For specific recommendations regarding this issue, consult the Water and Sewer section in the Community Facilities chapter of this document.

- F. Protect the Town's biodiversity through protection of endangered species and threatened plant and animal populations, as well as through control of invasive species.

Recommendations

1. Conduct a Town-wide assessment and survey of environmental resources such as properties with important natural features and areas with threatened and endangered species. Knowledge of the presence of such resources is essential in their protection.
2. Work with landscape suppliers to discourage use, stocking and sale of invasive species, and to encourage the use, stocking and sale of native species. Lists of discouraged invasive and encouraged native species should be incorporated into the Town's regulations; made available on Town website; and shared, updated and promoted with landscape suppliers, professionals and homeowners as part of an educational program.

3. Consider creating a Tree Protection Law to protect adjoining property owners from adverse aesthetic and environmental impacts resulting from removal of trees near a property line; to prevent clear-cutting that may destabilize slopes and soils or adversely impact water resources such as wetlands and streams; to protect ridgelines; and to protect sensitive or special trees of significance. The Tree Protection Law should also provide guidance and protection to the utility industry on the maintenance of trees within rights-of-ways. Currently there are no Town controls against inappropriate tree removal and clear cutting except where development is proposed on property and in cases where there are stipulated prohibitions against such associated with approved development.

G. Educate stakeholders, contractors, public works employees, and the public about local environmental issues and best practices.

Recommendations

1. Work with local legislators and representatives to ensure that local power plants (the Danskamer and Roseton Power Plants) are in full compliance with emissions standards and requirements, particularly regarding mercury and particulate emissions. Encourage disclosure and monitoring of emissions.
2. Educate the public about the use and misuse of pesticides and fertilizers, which can have significant independent and cumulative impacts on local environmental resources.
3. Educate the public about the economic and environmental benefits of modern water softener and purification technologies through such means as an addendum to the Town water bill.
4. Explore the use of less caustic road salts and/or reduced application of road salt in sensitive areas.

H. Cooperate with adjoining and area municipalities to address regional environmental issues, such as the Wappinger Creek Watershed Intermunicipal Council and Fishkill Creek Watershed Association.

Population and Housing

III. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Housing is essential to the quality of life of every individual, family and community. Housing, food and water, and the means to achieve these (employment) are the foundations of life. As part of the overall goal of this plan of improving the quality of life of the residents of Wappinger and people who work in Wappinger, this chapter outlines the basic challenges confronting the community in terms of housing, and describes the goals and objectives developed in order to achieve measurable improvements in housing opportunities for existing and future residents.

Issues and Opportunities

The housing challenges confronting the community are twofold:

1. Housing costs have increased at a rate far greater than incomes.
2. There is a growing mismatch between the trend of smaller household sizes and the large three-or-more bedroom homes that have been built and will be built under current zoning.

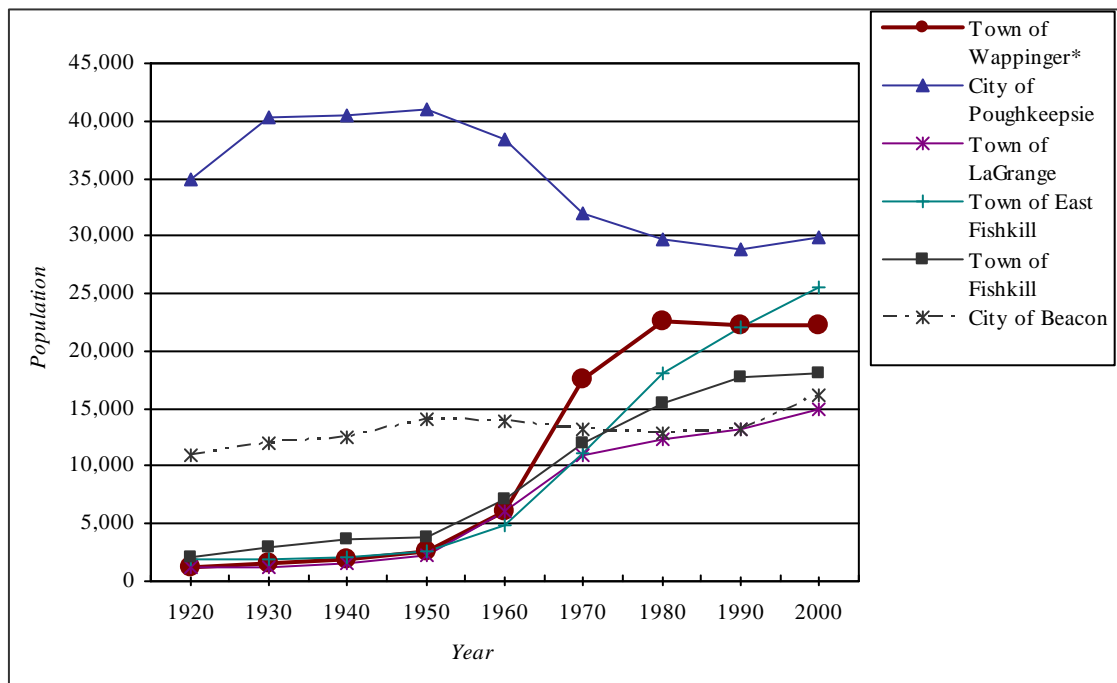
These challenges threaten the quality of life of all members of the community, including residents, business owners and employees. The escalating housing costs hinder efforts to achieve a better jobs-housing balance, and result in less time spent by individuals in the community, less disposable income available for non-essential goods and services, and more traffic in the Town and throughout the region. The housing mismatch has contributed to high housing costs, since small families or single people may be paying for a larger home than they really need. The housing mismatch also makes it difficult for small families, seniors, and young adults to remain in the community, and for those who work in Wappinger to move to the Town. What follows is a deeper analysis of the facts and figures behind these findings, including an analysis of the demographic changes that have set the stage (for yet more detailed data and documentation, please refer to the companion volume to the Plan, the Inventory and Analysis).

Demographic Changes

Highlights:

1. The Town of Wappinger has experienced no population growth over the past 20 years, while nearby communities have grown.
2. The senior population is projected to grow considerably over the next 20 years.
3. The number of school-aged children has decreased by approximately 14% over the last 10 years.

The Town of Wappinger experienced rapid population growth in the 1960s and '70s, which leveled off at approximately 22,500 persons from 1980 through 2000. Neighboring communities and the county continued to grow over the same period, as can be seen in the chart below. Wappinger's population appears to be relatively stable for the time being, and is not expected to change substantially in the next 10 years.

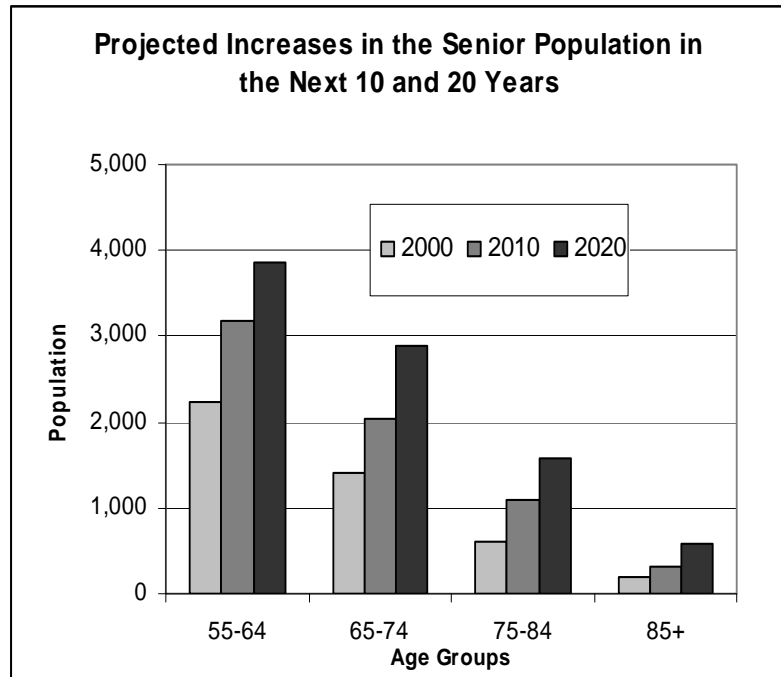


* Does not include the Village of Wappinger Falls.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Dutchess County Department of Planning.

Prepared by Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.

The senior population, which has grown in the 1980s and '90s, is expected to continue to increase. The 55-64 age group will increase by 75% in the next two decades (from approximately 2,250 to 4,000 persons) and the 65-74 age group will double (from approximately 1,400 to 3,000 persons) in the same 20 years. Larger numbers of seniors living in the community will increase the demand for smaller housing units, senior housing such as assisted living, and other products and services.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Dutchess County Department of Planning.
Prepared by Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.

The number of school-aged children in the Town of Wappinger may drop slightly in the coming five to 10 years due to fewer children ages 0-5 than in previous Census counts. There were 1,427 0-5 year-olds in 2000, versus 1,649 in 1990, a drop of 222 persons, or 14%. The current numbers of 5 to 9 year olds and 10 to 14 year olds confirm a likely drop in the population of school-aged children in the Town, which will have an impact on the school system, the use and market for existing housing, and the demand for new housing.

Housing Trends

Highlights:

1. The median price of a single-family detached home in Wappinger has nearly doubled in the past four years, rising from \$179,000 in 2000 to \$300,000¹ by the end of 2004. Rents have increased by 6½% per year, rising from \$750 in 1998 to \$1,030² in 2003 for a typical two-bedroom apartment.
2. The Town's housing stock is currently comprised of 64% single-family detached units and 36% multi-family units, condominiums or mobile homes. However, housing

¹ Source: New York State Office of Real Property Services.

² Source: Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, Rental Housing Survey (2003).

types and sizes have failed to meet the needs of households with changing demographics for the past 20 years, and the mismatch between needs and production has grown more acute.

3. While there has been no population growth in the Town since 1980, 2,834 acres of land have been consumed for housing since 1986 (a 59% increase). Multi-family housing uses less land on a per unit basis, preserves more open space and creates less impervious surface than single-family detached housing. Over 3,000 multi-family housing units fit into just 9% of residential land.
4. One-quarter of the households in the Town (about 800 renters and 1,100 owners) have a high housing burden (meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income for housing).
5. Preliminary results from the 2004 Town-wide Survey show that housing is one of two single-most important issues for Wappinger residents. There is strong support for a greater diversity of housing types and sizes, and one-third of residents responding to the survey said they would prefer to live in well designed, low maintenance housing such as townhouses, condominiums or apartments if such housing was available in the Town.

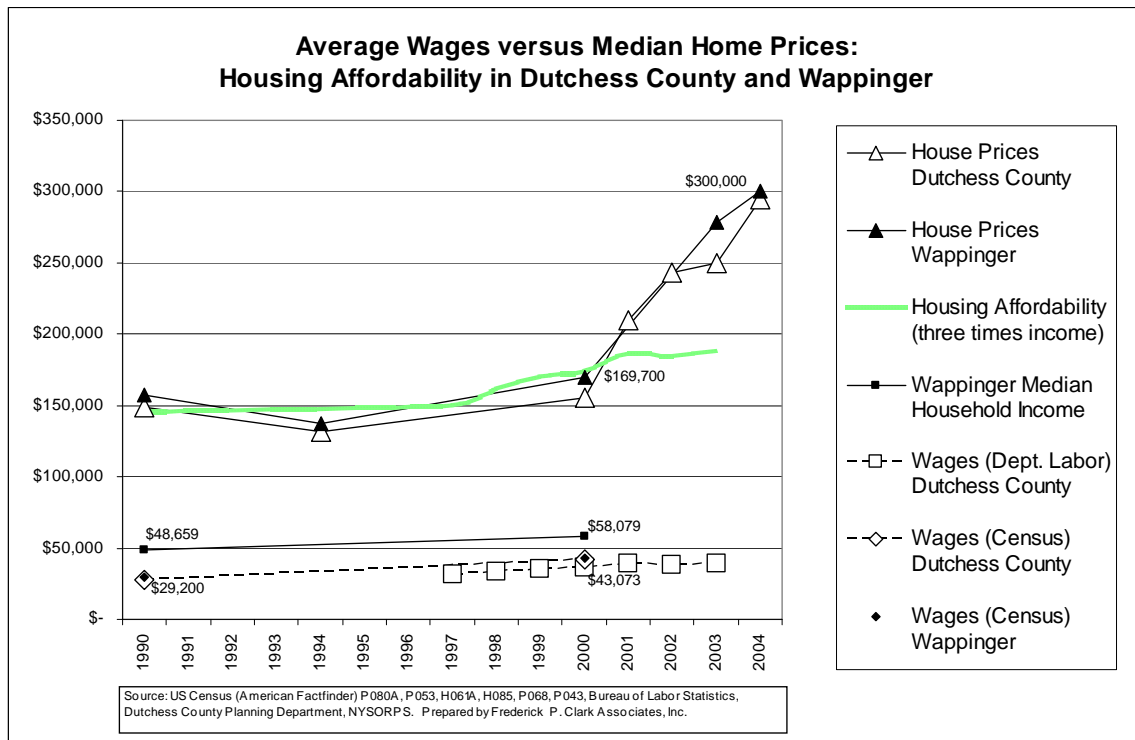
Background. At the time of the 2000 Census, there were 8,466 housing units in the Town of Wappinger. (Unless stated otherwise, figures are for the Town exclusive of the Village of Wappingers Falls.) Of these, 5,407 (64%) are single-family detached units and 3,059 (36%) are multi-family units, condominiums, or mobile homes. Single-family detached homes dominate the residential landscape of the community, with over 7,000 acres (91% of residential land).

Multi-family homes use land more efficiently, squeezing over 3,000 housing units into just 685 acres (9%) of residential land. This mix of housing is typical of Dutchess County as a whole, but includes considerably more multi-family housing than the neighboring communities of LaGrange and East Fishkill, and substantially less multi-family housing than Poughkeepsie and Fishkill. Overall, land developed for housing has increased 59% from 4,868 acres in 1986 to 7,733 acres in 2003, consuming 2,834 acres of land, yet population growth has been zero over the same time period.

Owner-occupied housing accounts for 71% of the occupied housing, and renters for 29% (similar to the owner/renter ratios for Dutchess County, at 69% and 31%, respectively). Vacancy rates decreased overall between 1990 and 2000, indicating a tighter housing market (4.0% in 1990 versus 2.8% in 2000). The vacancy rate of rental units dropped from 6.3% to 1.0% over the decade, and the vacancy rate of houses for sale remained at about 1%. While there were 450 new households residing in the Town in 2000, there were only 366 new housing units.

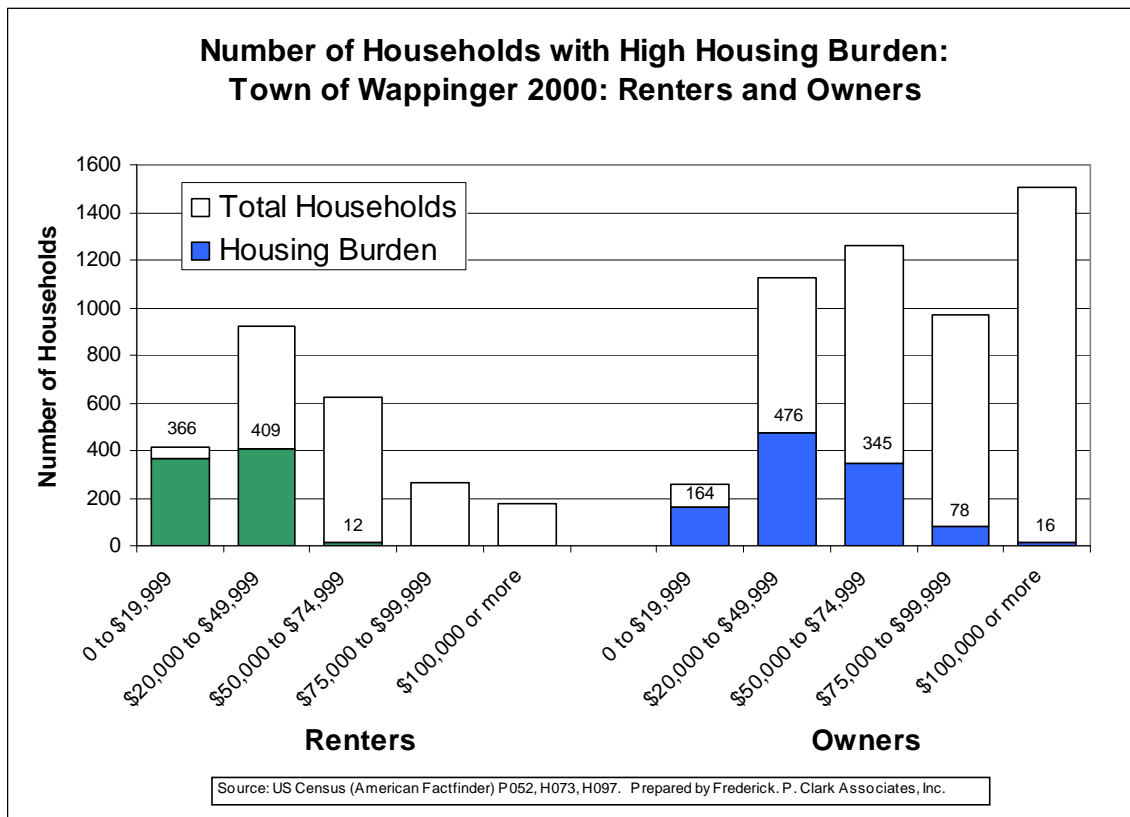
Housing Cost. The impact of increasing housing costs on residency, transportation, employment and economic development was one of two single most important issues to the residents of Wappinger, based on preliminary results from the 2004 Survey. Ninety percent of residents said that this issue was either important or very important, representing a remarkable consensus on the subject. Housing prices, both in terms of renting and owning, have risen at rates considerably higher than that of incomes between 2000 and 2004. The median price for a house in 2000 was about \$179,000; it had risen to \$300,000 by the end of 2004. At these prices, many Wappinger residents would not be able to afford to buy the home they currently live in today.

The graph below illustrates the relationship between the increasing housing prices and local median incomes, with an additional line showing the median household's ability to afford a home, based on a price three times the annual median household income.



According to the rental housing survey conducted annually by the Dutchess County Planning Department, rents have increased about 6½% per year from 1998 to 2003, climbing from about \$750 for a two-bedroom apartment in 1998 to about \$1,030 in 2003. Average wages in Dutchess County increased at a much lower rate (3.9% per year) over the same period. Average rents in Wappinger are generally the same as average rents County-wide. According to preliminary results of the 2004 Survey, 34% of renters hope to purchase a home in the Town of Wappinger.

At the time of the 2000 Census, a total of 1,866 households (about one-quarter of all households in the Town) had a high housing burden, meaning that they were paying more than 30% of their income for housing. About 40% of these households were renters, and about 60% were owners. We can assume that the number of households with a high housing burden has increased among renters (who are paying higher rents now than in 2000) and among homeowners who have recently purchased or refinanced a home. The number of households with a high housing burden is an indicator of housing affordability. Households throughout Dutchess County are under similar circumstances.



New housing construction in nearby communities in Dutchess County in 2000 averaged twice the median sales price of all homes in each community, according to the Dutchess County Smart Growth Housing Task Force Report (December 2001). This is partly because new single-family housing is generally much larger than it was mid-20th century. According to the report, housing built in the 1950s in Wappinger had a median square footage of 1,296, versus a home built in the 1990s with a median of almost twice the size, at 2,268 square feet. Likewise, the average single family home in Wappinger the '50s stood on a ½ acre lot, versus 1.3 acres in '90s.

According to the most current information available, housing costs are likely to continue to increase in the short term (“Housing Market Is Still Going Strong,” NY Times, February 6, 2005). Increasing housing prices were a concern in the 1988 Wappinger Town Plan as well. At that time, two-thirds of Dutchess County households could not afford to purchase a median priced house in Wappinger. In 2000, incomes had caught up somewhat with housing prices, and less than half of Dutchess County households would have found home prices unaffordable, but by 2004, again, more than two-thirds of Dutchess County households are priced out of the Wappinger housing market. Housing costs are once again a primary concern for Wappinger.

Housing Mismatch. There is a mismatch between the need for smaller housing units for more non-traditional households and seniors, and the market’s supply of large housing units with three or more bedrooms. The Town bears some responsibility for this as well. Under current zoning, virtually all future residential growth (96% of all possible housing units) will be single-family detached housing. Current zoning would support a projected 80 to 100 additional multi-family units (of approximately 2,000 potential housing units total) before reaching ‘full build-out.’ Very few alternatives to single-family detached homes have been built in the Town over the past 20 years.

The average household size has declined steadily since 1970, when it was 3.39 in Wappinger and 3.14 in the U.S. as a whole, to 2.67 and 2.59 respectively. There are fewer households composed of a married couple with children (30% in 2000, down from 35% in 1990) and the percentage of senior, single-parent or childless households has increased and is expected to continue to grow. The 1988 Plan found that, “More than 43 percent of households consist of only one or two persons, yet 60 percent of housing units have three or more bedrooms.” This trend in housing mismatch has only gotten worse: now even more households are only one or two persons (54%), yet more housing in the Town consists of three or more bedrooms (64%). The housing mismatch has contributed to higher housing costs, since small families or single people may be paying for a larger home than they really need or want.

A majority of Wappinger residents responding to the 2004 Survey (58% of preliminary results) supported a greater diversity of housing types and sizes to meet the changing needs of the community. Thirty-five percent of residents responded that they would prefer to live (either now or in the near future) in well designed, low maintenance housing such as townhouses, condominiums or apartments if such housing was available in the Town. Since only 24% of the population currently lives in townhouses, condominiums, or apartments, the difference (11%) represents a potential demand of 2,500 people for such housing currently or in the near future.

Water and Sewer. Housing development entails water and sewage disposal systems, and Wappinger faces specific constraints with regard to local water supplies and the timeframe of sewer line construction, as is detailed in the chapter on community services

and facilities. If multi-family housing options are to be expanded, extending water and sewer service may be necessary. Multi-family and commercial development can help make such links economically viable. Due to limited drinking water resources in the Town (estimated to supply 400 additional homes), and to the layout of existing systems, the Town will probably need to work with neighboring municipalities (Wappinger Falls, the Town of Poughkeepsie and the Town of Fishkill) for further development of utilities in the water and sewer district.

Implications. The trends described above have significant implications for the quality of life of all members of the community, including residents, business owners and employees. Escalating housing costs will push individuals to work further from home and longer hours, resulting in less time spent in the community and more traffic in the Town and throughout the region. Many households will respond simply by cutting spending on all non-essential expenses, which will have negative impacts on local and regional businesses and markets. Homeowners with middle or low incomes may find that they must sell, or struggle to remain in place. The high cost of purchasing a home also means that many families currently renting in Wappinger may not be able to fulfill their dream of someday buying a home of their own in the community. The housing mismatch will continue to make it difficult for small families, seniors, and young adults to remain in the community, and for those who work in Wappinger to move to the Town.

Goal

Improve housing choice in the Town by encouraging a balance of housing types and sizes that meet the needs of existing and future Wappinger residents and employees.

Wappinger should be a community where housing of the right size and type, at a reasonable cost, is available to everyone in the community at every stage of life. People should have the opportunity to live out their lives in Wappinger, surrounded by friends and family. Housing and employment opportunities should be available in close proximity, making commuting easier, and businesses more efficient. With housing costs at reasonable levels and shorter commutes, residents will have both more time and money to contribute to the community, and also more opportunities to enjoy the recreational and social benefits of living in Wappinger.

Objectives

- A. Affordable / Workforce housing. Encourage a sufficient supply of homes within economic reach of Town residents.

Town residents, regardless of age or income level, need a decent place to live. A sufficient supply of housing that is affordable to average-income working households provides opportunities to local businesses to expand and for new business to locate in the region, thereby improving the local economy. Affordable housing is about individuals and families not experiencing housing costs as a burden. Since housing costs have climbed so rapidly in the New York metropolitan area, solutions to affordable and workforce housing issues are now much more diverse and innovative than subsidized housing.

- B. Accessory apartments. Continue to allow the development of accessory apartments in appropriate conditions on single-family lots.

Accessory apartments can make more efficient use of existing housing stock, by converting underused spaces to additional living quarters. The visual impact of an accessory apartment on the neighborhood can be mitigated through regulating building height, setbacks, number of bedrooms, parking and design, so that the apartment blends into the fabric of the neighborhood. By encouraging the construction of accessory apartments, the Town is helping to provide a better housing mix, specifically by encouraging the development of smaller units. Accessory apartments provide opportunities for families as they grow and change. They can allow teenagers and young adults to begin living independently next door to the family home, and provide extra income through rent when the children are grown. As the senior members of the household age, they can retire to the smaller quarters of the accessory apartment if they choose, and making room for grown children and grandchildren in the main house, or they can rent the main house to cover living expenses. The ability to rent out a portion of the property on a single-family lot can make the difference between staying or being forced to leave for seniors with limited incomes.

- C. Variety of housing types. Require that certain percentages of large, new developments be comprised of a variety of housing types (such as attached single-family homes, duplexes and apartments).

A majority (58%) of Wappinger residents want a greater diversity of housing types and sizes to meet the changing needs of the community, according to preliminary results of the 2004 Survey. About one-third of respondents said that they would like to live (either now or in the near future) in well designed, low-maintenance housing such as townhouses, condominiums or apartments if such housing was available in the Town. Increasing the variety of housing types and sizes will help to alleviate the problem of a housing mismatch in the Town.

- D. Development in existing centers. Encourage new higher density residential development in existing centers that can be most economically served by existing roads, utilities and community facilities. Any new higher density residential development should occur in relation to existing centers.

Town residents support traditional, walkable Town and hamlet style development with two- to three-story buildings and a mix of retail, office and residential uses in existing centers and in particular, locating new multi-family development close to existing commercial areas and services, and in areas with existing sewer and water service. Application of this objective to the future development of the community will allow the Town to grow without consuming a disproportionate share of the undeveloped open space in the rural areas of the Town. It will also help keep taxes down, by adding to the tax base while minimizing the demand for municipal services.

- E. Variety of architectural styles. Encourage a variety of architectural styles (such as Colonial, Arts and Crafts, Modern/Contemporary, etc.) in new single-family housing developments.

The residents of Wappinger expect the best in new housing construction, and aesthetics are important to the life and spirit of a community. The Town has a legitimate interest in ensuring that new housing is well-designed, including a sufficient variety of styles, and that it fits in with the history and character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Recommendations

The housing situation in the region is complex and interconnected with the economy, land use, environmental impacts and with transportation. A successful approach will incorporate the multiple aspects of the problem through the objectives outlined above, and each objective, in turn, requires the implementation of a variety of tools and mechanisms on the part of the Town. The specific recommendations that follow are organized according to the objectives above, with the addition of a look at the effectiveness of existing housing-related provisions of the Town Code.

An Evaluation of Existing Tools

The Town already has in place a variety of provisions designed to meet the housing needs of the community while minimizing conflicts involving neighborhood character. These provisions are outlined below, including the location of the provisions in the Town Code,

an analysis of the success and usefulness of each provision, and proposals for improving the effectiveness of the provisions.

Accessory Apartments (for family members). This provision allows for a second, smaller dwelling unit to be located on the premises of a single family home, with occupancy restricted to family members. Among the tools listed in this section, this provision has been the most frequently used and successful in terms of meeting housing needs while maintaining neighborhood character. It has withstood the test of time, having been in the zoning regulations (as Section 240-53) for the better part of two decades. The Town is considering allowing the accessory apartments to be occupied by a non-family senior citizen(s) in the case of the death of the family member occupant(s), as a way of expanding affordable and senior housing opportunities.

Guest House and Caretaker Dwellings. This provision (Section 240-61) allows construction of a second, smaller dwelling on properties of 10 or more acres. This allows the owners of farms and estates to maintain their properties intact, while providing additional housing within the community. This provision has been utilized occasionally over the past 10 years in the Town. The Town is considering reducing the minimum lot size of this provision, as a way of expanding affordable housing opportunities.

Conversion of large single-family homes with over 3,000 square feet of floor area to multi-family use. This provision allows one additional unit per 20,000 square feet of lot area over 20,000 square feet for houses built prior to 1962. Each dwelling unit must have a separate entrance, and no more than two entrances are permitted in front of the building. Only one property has been redeveloped through the existing Town Law (Section 240-56) over the past 10 years. This provision is no longer appropriate for the Town and should be removed from the Town's zoning.

Senior Housing. The Town allowed the conversion of an existing hotel/motel to a congregate care facility in 1998. This has been a successful use, meeting the housing needs of community residents, and the Town should encourage similar conversions if and when they become available.

ECHO (Elderly Cottage Housing Opportunity, Section 240-60). This provision has not been used or applied for since its inclusion in the Town Code. The mandate that the elderly housing unit be temporary has likely been a major deterrent, since even the most basic conversions of small existing structures to residential use are costly. This provision should be repealed following the adoption of a more inclusive accessory apartment regulation.

Planned Residential Development (Section 240-39). This provision was intended to provide greater flexibility to developers, by allowing for a diversity of housing types and land uses offering employment and shopping, all as a part of a single large development. This provision has not been used since its inclusion in the Town Code. The application process is complicated and requires considerable investment in design without offering much certainty of approval. The Town may consider amending the code to streamline the process, and investigating similar codes and conditions in neighboring communities where such provisions have been utilized successfully. The Town should also consider amending the Code to specify water and sewer service requirements necessary for site plan approval.

Mixed Use. While there are several non-residential zoning districts that permit residential use as principal or special permit uses (including the HB, MU, HM, NB, GB and SC Districts), there has been very little residential construction in these zones in the last 10 years. Possible deterrents are requirements for elevators and fire separation, additional water and sewer demands, floor area ratios and parking requirements. The Town should study this further, with the objective of removing or ameliorating deterrents to the development of residential uses in these districts.

Mobile Homes. Mobile homes are permitted at the same density as single-family homes in most Wappinger residential districts. There are at least four mobile home parks in the Town, all of which are pre-existing non-conforming uses. Mobile home parks generally have a higher population density than single-family housing, offering similar advantages and constraints as multi-family housing. There have been no new mobile home parks in the past 10 years in the Town because the low density permitted by the Code is a substantial disincentive to develop lower-cost housing on relatively high-value lots. The Gables in Poughkeepsie is a good example of a new, well-designed manufactured housing/mobile home development.

Implementation Strategies

A. Affordable / Workforce Housing

Affordable / Workforce and Senior housing overlay districts. In an effort to keep housing affordable, the 1988 Plan recommended establishing an unmapped *floating* zone for affordable housing. This option has not been acted upon by the Town, partly because it entails a rezoning each time it is used, and would subject both the applicant and the Town Board to controversial public hearings on each occasion in which a developer applies for inclusion into such a zone. The floating zone offers a lower than average degree of certainty to a would-be developer of affordable housing, and is not strongly recommended at this time.

The Town is instead considering the establishment of specific mapped affordable/workforce and senior housing *overlay* districts over a very limited number of single-family districts that would permit a developer to apply for density bonuses in exchange for providing affordable/workforce housing or senior housing in conservation/open space subdivisions on sites located within the districts. In these cases, development below the R-20 District requirements would not be permitted and the projects would each need to include a substantial open space component.

Density bonuses. The Town is considering amending the multi-family zoning districts to offer a density bonus for developments that include a certain percentage of affordable/workforce and senior housing units. The density bonus must be carefully tailored to the capacity of the zoning district and the realities of the housing market in order for developers to apply for these bonuses. Density bonuses would only be allowed in return for direct social benefits to the Town.

B. Accessory Apartments

Zoning amendment. Currently, accessory dwelling units are allowed by special permit in the Town for occupants related to the owners of the main house and lot. The Town has recently modified its zoning provisions to allow accessory apartments subject to specific standards but without a special permit from the Town Board. The accessory apartment provisions should be reviewed periodically to determine their effectiveness.

C. Preserve and Re-use Older Housing

Historic preservation law. The Town should consider the adoption of a historic preservation law using standards developed by New York State.

D. Variety of Housing Types

Consider re-zoning appropriate lands near existing centers for multi-family housing. A potential location of higher-density residential development is Old Route 9/Main Street (see the Old Route 9/Main Street Concept Plan).

Density units. The Town is currently considering using density units to achieve affordable housing and a variety of housing sizes in a development. This was introduced as part of an Affordable Housing Draft Law affecting RMF districts. By introducing density units, the Town will encourage the production of different sizes of housing units, because developers would be allowed to build 2 one-

bedroom units for every three-bedroom unit, or 1½ two-bedroom units for every three-bedroom unit.

Construction of new multi-family homes that are of a similar size and design as single-family homes. The Town could develop regulations to require any new multi-family housing in certain districts to be designed so that it is virtually indistinguishable from single-family detached housing, as viewed from the street. This is a developing architectural form, with many well-known examples in the U.S.

E. Development in Existing Centers

Housing in mixed use: requiring and conserving. In certain districts, such as the Old Route 9/Main Street district and the Hughsonville Hamlet, the Town should consider requiring new development to include housing either on the floor(s) above a retail use, or in some other location on the site. The Town may consider changing the zoning in these districts to reduce building setbacks, and instead require maximum setbacks to achieve greater development potential and encourage pedestrian-oriented development. The Town can reduce parking requirements, and require shared and coordinated parking instead. The Town can also encourage multi-story buildings with offices and apartments above commercial uses on the ground floor.

Transfer of development rights (TDR). The Town may consider drafting legislation that allows the property owners in designated ‘sending’ districts (such as farmland areas) to sell their development rights to property owners in designated ‘receiving’ districts (such as the Route 9 corridor), which could then build at a higher density with the purchased development rights. Such a plan must be tailored to the local economic realities of development in order for owners and developers to actually begin buying and selling the development rights.

F. Variety of Architectural Styles

Multi-family residential design guidelines. The Town may consider developing design guidelines for multi-family districts in order to better ensure well-designed townhouses, condominiums and apartments.

Resources. There are many resources available to Town residents, Board members, and developers to help promote good design and a variety of architectural styles.

- The Town of Wappinger has a “Commercial and Mixed Use Design Guidelines” document that not only guides development in these districts,

but can be used as a resource for design questions in other parts of the Town as well.

- The Dutchess County Planning Department has produced “Housing Designed to Build Neighborhoods,” other wise known as the ‘Green Book,’ which shows elevations, plans, and site plans of small homes in the vernacular tradition of Dutchess County, including Dutch Colonial, Greek Revival, Federal, Victorian Cottage, Arts and Crafts (Bungalow), and Neo-Colonial.
- The Dutchess County Planning Department has also produced Hamlet Design Guidelines, which shows how to duplicate the historic development patterns in today’s modern context.
- The Dutchess County Planning Department’s “Greenway Connections” is a useful resource on establishing and maintaining historic and ecological land use practices.

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Economic Base

IV. ECONOMIC BASE

Economic health is a critical component of a well-rounded, stable community, and is therefore an important consideration in a comprehensive plan. Economic characteristics such as major employers, commuting patterns, types of employment and income describe the past and future health of a town's economy. This plan incorporates information about both the local economy and the regional economy, since eighty-five percent of Wappinger's employed residents work outside the community.

Issues and Opportunities

1. The economic base of the Town is relatively small compared with the number of employed persons residing in the Town and compared with the number of homes in the Town.
2. This uneven distribution of jobs and housing results in secondary impacts of long commuting times for employed residents and a higher proportion of property taxes paid by the residential sector.
3. The high cost of housing in the Town has become a limiting factor on existing local businesses and on potential new businesses.
4. Commercial, industrial, and office land uses currently use approximately 500 acres of land in the Town, and approximately 400 developable acres are zoned for these uses and are currently undeveloped. Also, several existing commercial properties offer opportunities for reuse and/or additional development.
5. There is a strong consensus in the Town that any future development of commercial land uses should be well designed to fit in with the sites and should preserve and promote positive neighborhood/district features, so that community character is protected and enhanced. The Route 9 Corridor in particular is a high priority, and is discussed further in the following chapter on Community Appearance and Character.

Local Economic Trends

First, some general trends should be noted. Manufacturing has declined as a source of jobs since the 1970s both locally and nationally. In the 1970s, nearly half of Wappinger's employed persons worked in factories, while by the 2000 Census, only 12 percent of the labor force worked in manufacturing. The economy has shifted instead to the service sector, where 44 percent of the workers in the Town now find employment. The service sector includes both high-end jobs in scientific, management, and administrative organizations, and lower-paying jobs in waste management, social services, accommodations and food services. More detailed information on this subject can be found under the 'Employment and Income Characteristics' heading within the Demographics and Housing section of the Inventory and Analysis, which is a companion volume to this Plan.

With a median household income of approximately \$58,000 in 1999, the Town has a higher than average income as compared with the County (\$53,000). The Town has a competitive workforce, with approximately 40 percent of the adult population possessing an Associate's degree or higher, compared with just 30 percent nationally. Wappinger is a working town, with 68 percent of adult residents in the labor force, and an unemployment rate that has remained under 4 percent since 1996.

According to the 2000 Census, about one-third of the workers residing in Wappinger work outside of the County, which is typical of employed residents throughout Dutchess County. Westchester County is the biggest destination for workers who leave Dutchess County for work, and New York City was the second most popular destination; according to the 2004 Town survey 19 percent of the Wappinger labor force works in Westchester, and 9 percent works in New York City (versus commuters for Dutchess County as a whole, where 12 percent work in Westchester, and 4.5 percent work in New York City). Wappinger residents have higher rates of out-of-county commuting than others in Dutchess County because they are closer than residents of most other towns in the County to major employment centers, being 30 miles from a cluster of large businesses in Yorktown via the Taconic, and within 45 miles of most businesses in Westchester, including those in White Plains, Greenburgh and Mount Pleasant. Grand Central Station is 1 hour and 10 minutes away via express service on the Metro-North Hudson line, and the New Hamburg station offers 25 trains each day.

But Wappinger residents pay a high price in commuting times to maintain jobs in Westchester and within the metropolitan region. One-quarter of Wappinger commuters (26 percent) spend 45 minutes or more traveling to work each day – more, even, than in Los Angeles County (where 20 percent have long commutes of 45 minutes or more), and more than in Dutchess County as a whole (22 percent). Nationally, only 15 percent of commuters have commutes of 45 minutes or more. In order to bring commuting times

down, Wappinger needs to participate in a regional effort to improve the distribution and balance of jobs and housing.

Wappinger Survey of Business Establishments - 1997				
Industry	Number of Companies	Revenue (\$1,000)	Payroll (\$1,000)	Number of Employees
Wholesale trade	18	\$120,040	\$14,201	245
Retail trade	26	\$83,503	\$7,141	313
Real estate & rental & leasing	13	\$11,278	\$4,044	123
Professional, scientific, & technical services	26	\$11,972	\$3,414	75
Administrative & support & waste management & remediation services	11	\$3,726	\$1,037	57
Educational services	6	\$474	\$193	18
Health care & social assistance	33	\$12,147	\$4,127	219
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	4	\$1,928	\$608	70
Accommodation & food services	21	\$10,147	\$2,684	308
Other services (except public administration)	15	\$3,727	\$930	56
Total	173	\$258,942	\$38,379	1,484

Source: 1997 Economic Census

In 1986, during a Town-wide inventory leading up to the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, there were 231 businesses in the Town. These were primarily small, locally-owned retail and service operations. Only two commercial properties were found vacant at that time, suggesting a vibrant local economy. The Plan notes that, “Many of the central business establishments and commercial areas of Route 9 are within the...boundaries of the Village of Wappingers Falls.” As of 1997, at the time of the most current Economic Census, there were 173 businesses in the Town, with approximately 1,500 employees. Wappinger’s business community appears to have been strong in 1997, with \$259 million in revenue, and \$38 million in payroll (see chart above).

The Town of Wappinger has far fewer local jobs than it has local workers, partly by accident of historical development patterns, and partly by design, through past land use decisions. Without including the Village of Wappingers Falls, the Town has about 1,500 local jobs, about 12,000 resident workers, and approximately 8,500 housing units, resulting in a jobs-to-housing ratio of 0.2 : 1, and a jobs-to-employed residents ratio of 0.1 : 1 (see table below).

Jobs to Housing Ratios: Wappinger and Surrounding Areas					
Area	Jobs	Housing Units	Employed Residents	Jobs : Housing Ratio	Jobs : Employed Residents Ratio
Town of Wappinger (not including Village)	1,484	8,466	11,959	0.18 : 1	0.12 : 1
Town of Wappinger plus Village	4,094	10,157	13,289	0.40 : 1	0.31 : 1
Towns of Wappinger, Fishkill, Poughkeepsie, and East Fishkill *	29,072	40,802	54,245	0.71 : 1	0.54 : 1
Dutchess County	114,354	106,103	130,793	1.08 : 1	0.87 : 1

Source: 1997 Economic Census, 2000 Census

* Includes Villages of Fishkill and Wappingers Falls

A jobs-to-housing balance would be roughly 1.5 : 1 (Dutchess County is 1.1 : 1) and a balanced jobs-to-employed residents ratio would be 1 : 1 (Weitz, “Jobs-Housing Balance,” American Planning Association, 2003).

It may be more accurate to include a wider area, such as the Village of Wappingers Falls, in an economic analysis, since the Village was historically the economic center of the area, and even today, with 218 businesses and 2,600 employees, it remains a strong

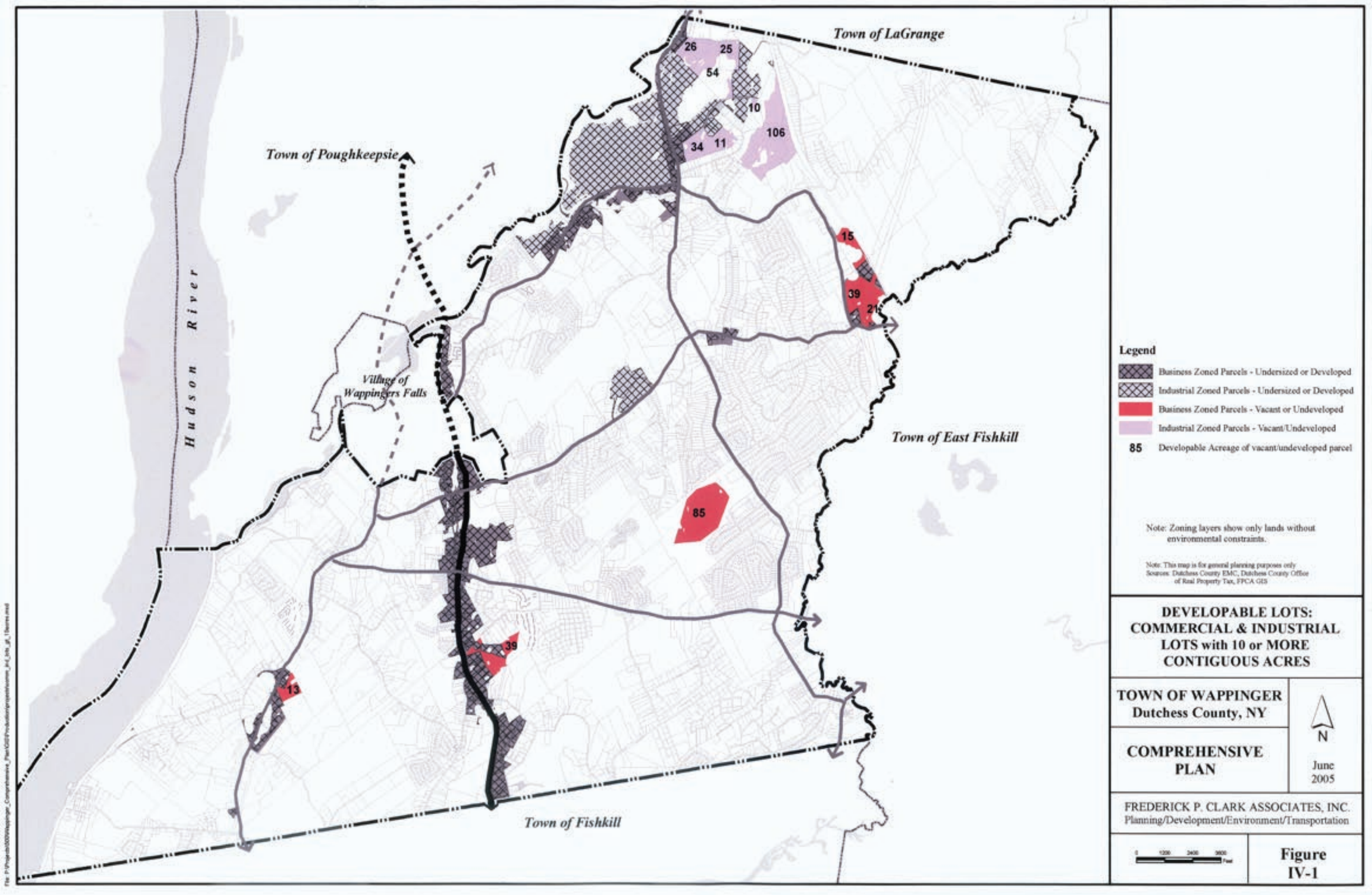
source of goods, services, employment and income for many Wappinger residents. The combined economic area of the Town and the Village yields a jobs-to-housing ratio of 0.4:1, and a jobs-to-employed residents ratio of 0.3:1. Expanding the study area to include the Towns of Poughkeepsie, Fishkill and East Fishkill (with large IBM facilities in Poughkeepsie and East Fishkill) yields slightly higher ratios, but the general trend remains the same: there are fewer jobs than there are workers in the area.

One result of Wappinger's polarized jobs-housing ratio is that its economic base is more dependent than most communities on businesses located outside of the Town. Another result is the heavy reliance on longer commutes to jobs, as mentioned above.

The tax base of the community is also impacted by the relatively small size of the economy located within the Town. According to the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation, Wappinger receives 24 percent of its taxes from commercial land uses. Nearby communities, such as the Town of Fishkill and the Town of Poughkeepsie, get about 35 percent of their tax revenue from the commercial sector. Thirty-five percent of tax revenue from commercial is a commonly accepted goal for most communities, according to the EDC. Currently, commercial, industrial and office land uses occupy 523 acres (just over 3 percent) of land in the Town. These properties have a combined assessed value of \$70 million, which is approximately 8 percent of the total assessed value of all property in the Town. Residents of towns with higher percentages of commercial and industrial uses generally pay less in residential taxes.

The 2004 Survey showed that the property tax implications of all land use and development was one of two single-most important issues to residents of the Town. However, residents were divided about encouraging more commercial and industrial development to broaden the tax base: 47 percent were in favor, 23 percent were unsure or did not respond, and 30 percent were opposed to such development. But when asked if Wappinger should encourage additional business development for the purpose of job creation, 50 percent were in favor versus 30 percent opposed. Finally, a majority (55 percent) opposed encouraging additional business development for the purpose of providing more shopping and commercial activities in the Town. Seventy-nine percent felt that there are adequate day-to-day shopping opportunities currently existing in the Town. Town residents appear to be in favor of further commercial development, particularly if it does not overload an already large regional shopping district, and particularly if it provides local jobs and fiscal tax benefits to the Town.

There are 418 acres of developable land zoned commercial or industrial in the Town. This count excludes already developed commercial or industrial properties, as well as steep slopes, wetlands and floodplains, and lots under 10 acres (but including smaller lots if they are contiguous to other such lots adding up to 10 or more acres). The count was restricted to 10 or more acre lots because many businesses require a minimum of approximately 10 acres for their operations. The majority of this developable land, 213



acres, is located on 15 lots in the Airport Industrial District and the Conservation Commercial District just east of the airport. The remaining developable lands are located in just two places – 26 developable acres along the Route 9 corridor and 179 acres at what is known as the Contrail Property (both are zoned Conservation Office Park). Currently, all but one of the above sites (the Contrail Property) are not eligible for municipal water and sewer services, which is a deterrent to businesses seeking turn-key development locations.

In addition to undeveloped lands, properties with existing buildings and/or improvements offer opportunities in the Town, particularly the Pizzagalli (formerly IBM) Property, the Dutchess County Airport, the former Fairchild computer chip manufacturing site, and the Alpine Commons Property (where a portion of the large parking lot can be reused).

The implications of developing any or all of these sites need to be carefully considered, with the aim of capitalizing upon the potential benefits, such as tax revenue and jobs, and mitigating potential adverse impacts, such as increased traffic and environmental disturbance. The draft Commercial and Mixed Use Design Handbook addresses these issues, including sections on building form, location, and orientation; access and movement, streetscape, signage, landscaping, public spaces, and lighting.

Future development of residential or commercial properties within the region will have an impact on traffic volumes on Route 9. Many businesses in the Town are dependent upon retail activity along this corridor. Thus, maintaining and improving the appearance and function of this valuable community asset is a priority, requiring County-wide cooperation, at many levels. Further discussion of the methods and priorities for improving the Route 9 Corridor can be found in the following chapter on Community Appearance and Character.

The largest businesses driving the regional economy are IBM, with about 11,000 employees located in East Fishkill and Poughkeepsie, and a group of colleges and vocational institutes including Vassar College, Marist College, Dutchess Community College, the Culinary Institute of America, and Bard College (largest to smallest, with a total of about 4,000 employees). The GAP/Old Navy, NXP and Pawling Corporation are the other major businesses that bring money into the region among the top 30 employers, with a total of 2,200 employees in this group. Wappinger has become the home of many companies since 2000, including Southeastern Container (100 employees), Hannaford (230 employees), Epson/Seiko (80 employees), Immediate Credit Recovery (100 employees), and Cable Vision (60 employees).

The ability of current and future businesses to attract and retain employees is currently being called into question by the rising cost of housing in the area, as detailed in the previous chapter. According to the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation, Marist and Bard Colleges are having difficulty attracting new professors due

to the high cost of housing in the region, and IBM is having difficulty recruiting Master's Degree students for the same reason. According to the EDC, 70 percent of the employees at the GAP in Fishkill reside outside of the County, and most of Southeastern Container's 100 employees live in Ulster County where housing is less expensive. Housing, transportation, community appearance and character all have an impact on the quality of life experienced by residents of Wappinger, as well as on the economic decisions of businesses to come to and to remain in the Town.

Goal

Encourage a balanced economy with diversified employment opportunities.

Objectives

A. Promote regional cooperation in economic development planning.

Recommendations

1. Coordinate with neighboring municipalities and the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation to undertake an economic study and analysis to explore potential land use changes and restructuring within business and commercial districts and to develop a regional business and commercial structure plan.
2. Build partnerships with surrounding communities for evaluating development impacts, preserving highway capacities, encouraging diverse business and commercial opportunities and enhancing community character.

B. Improve business opportunities within the framework of improved community character and appearance.

Community character and appearance are important values to maintain as the Town's commercial areas continue to develop and change. Community character contributes to a quality of life that should be understood as a part of the Town's strength in attracting highly-skilled employees and high-paying employers. Community character is also important to the Town's ability to attract shoppers. Improving community character also entails an efficient use of land, which offers direct and tangible benefits to the Town in terms of the conservation of land for future economic opportunities, and more tax base per acre of land.

Recommendations

1. Simplify and streamline review and permitting process while maintaining environmental protection and enhancing community character.
2. Ensure that areas the Town designates for higher intensity commercial and industrial development are within existing or planned sewer and water service areas.
3. Review commercial zoning district requirements and consider focusing commercial areas into more compact nodes of development by promoting in-fill, mixed-use and higher intensity uses within key locations. Re-evaluate zoning requirements that may deter business development, especially parking requirements.
4. Reduce the number of commercial zoning districts with a focus on area character, function and design instead of a separation of uses. (See also recommendations for Community Character and Appearance.)
5. For key areas, develop detailed district design plans. The development pattern for important commercial centers should be clearly articulated with plans and standards designed to ensure that commercial, economic and design objectives are attained. Often this requires a more detailed design process combining land use planning with open space, pedestrian circulation, transportation and built form. Areas identified for the preparation of conceptual development plans include:
 - Hughsonville Hamlet (see attached Figure V-1 for a rendering of a possible Hughsonville Concept Plan)
 - Old Route 9 District (from Old Hopewell Road through Myers Corners / Middlebush Road to U.S. Route 9; see attached Figure V-2 for sketch plan)
 - Chelsea Hamlet
 - Swartoutville Hamlet
 - New Hackensack Hamlet
 - Myers Corners Hamlet

C. Promote well-designed office research parks and similar uses that offer good jobs and wages in appropriate locations.

Recommendation

Cooperate with the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation to identify strategies to increase marketability of existing underutilized commercial properties.

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Community Appearance and Character

V. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER

A community is shaped by the topography and natural character of the land, by the number of people and the kind of housing built upon the land, by the economy that shapes the lives of the people, and by the function and appearance of the transportation system that links destinations. But a community's character is also influenced by collective values and their influence on the landscape and the built environment. This chapter is about how Wappinger can and should capitalize on its own unique assets and use private development forces to create a more attractive and humane community with a strong connection to both nature and history, and an enhanced sense of place.

Goal

Encourage development with high aesthetic standards to provide a visual and natural environment that will promote economic stability, enhance community character, and will be compatible with surrounding land uses.

Objectives

A. Improve the appearance of the Route 9 corridor.

B. Develop Hughsonville, Chelsea, New Hackensack, Swartoutville and Myers Corners Hamlets, and the Old Route 9 District as vibrant, traditional town/village centers.

C. Protect important landscapes through open space and farmland conservation.

D. Protect historic buildings and sites.

E. Regulate signage to promote appealing streetscapes and to protect important landscapes.

Issues and Opportunities

1. The existing pattern of development in the Town is primarily one of fragmented low-density housing developments and strip commercial development along Route 9.
2. Other than the Village of Wappingers Falls, which regulates itself and its lands separately from the Town, Wappinger does not have a town center.
3. The Old Route 9 area from Old Hopewell Road through Middlebush / Myers Corners Road to U.S. Route 9, and the Hughsonville, Chelsea, New Hackensack, Swartoutville and Myers Corners Hamlets are existing centers of activity that can be enhanced and redesigned to promote community character in the Town.
4. Farm fields and forested lands, which provide natural resources and a rural or semi-rural character to the Town, are threatened by the continued development of housing, commercial, and institutional sites in the Town. Fields and forests also help define the edges and shape the identities of settled areas.
5. The Wheeler Hill Historic District is the only protected historic feature in the Town. Other important historic resources may be lost or degraded without regulatory protection.
6. Billboards on Route 9D are inappropriate for the area and detract from the appearance of the roadway.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Wappinger has a unique combination of assets that makes it an attractive place to live, work, and play. Key items are:

- Hudson River, Wappinger Creek, Sprout Creek
- A mix of commerce including corporate offices, manufacturing, and retail
- A good location within the region in terms of jobs, transportation, recreation, and tourism
- An excellent school system
- Views and scenic vistas, in particular from hilltops and ridgelines

- A variety of housing types (single-family detached homes, condominiums, and multi-family apartment buildings)
- Farms, open spaces, numerous large and small wetland areas
- Historic hamlets, sites and districts
- Scenic roadways

Many residents wrote in their own comments in open-ended questions of the 2004 Survey that they want Wappinger to keep its small town, rural feeling, and that they were concerned about the impact of future development upon that small town character. While the Town cannot, legally or ethically, bar the doors to all new development, the Town can commit to carefully guiding the form of that development. What follows is a description of the existing problems and opportunities for the Route 9 corridor, for enhancing and developing existing centers, for protecting farms and woodlands, for historic preservation, and for roadside signage throughout the Town.

Route 9 Corridor

Currently, the Route 9 Corridor in the Town is organized around the parameters of automobile drivers' needs and perceptions, and routine business strategies to attract the attention of, and make accommodations for potential customers passing along the road. The corridor is generally zoned as Highway Business, Highway Office, or Highway Design. While this linear commercial zone may be a good strategy for accommodating these uses, the end result is currently a denuded landscape, characterized by a landscape of oversized parking lots, large, box-like buildings, large signs in clashing colors, a lack of coordinated landscaping, and, particularly on the north end of the corridor, traffic congestion due to too many lights and driveways too close together. Upon exiting from an automobile, one finds that the only appealing environment for a pedestrian is inside the store. Pedestrian connections between separate lots are virtually nonexistent in the corridor.

Recommendations

1. Adopt the *Commercial and Mixed Use Design Handbook*. This handbook, crafted specifically for the Town of Wappinger, demonstrates best practices in building location and orientation, building form, access pathways, streetscape, signage, landscaping, public spaces, and lighting. The use of local design guidelines and minimum standards for all new commercial and mixed use development will reinforce the community's desired future character and contribute to rebuilding community identity within commercial districts.

2. Encourage shared driveway/roadway access to Route 9 among contiguous lots (details can be found in the Transportation section).
3. Create a Boulevard Effect along Route 9, with street tree plantings, sidewalks, and roadway realignments with medians where possible.
4. Encourage the development of small, closely spaced storefronts in the fronts of existing large parking lots.
5. Consider developing a detailed master plan for landscaping and public space improvements in the corridor, including street tree planting, pedestrian sidewalks, attractive lighting design, hedges and flower plantings, and community art installations.
6. Use the Greenway Connections “Zip Up the Strip” Guide, provided by the Dutchess County Planning Department, for planning and development decisions regarding the corridor.
7. Encourage development design which hides parking from plain view along Route 9.
8. Require that parking areas be landscaped well.
9. Encourage the remediation and reuse of existing brownfields and other disturbed areas.

Centers





Other than the Village of Wappingers Falls, which regulates itself and its lands separately from the Town, Wappinger does not have a town center. The Route 9 corridor forms a linear backbone to the Town, but does not provide the kind of human scale, community focus which characterizes a traditional town center. The existing hamlets of Hughsonsville and Chelsea are not functioning as centers due to a lack of at least two of the following: sufficient passers-by to support local retail, sufficient pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks and public spaces, a cluster of local institutions such as school, churches, a post office, or a government building, and sufficient parking. Neighborhood-scale businesses help give a community a sense of place.

In addition, the Town itself is lacking in definition, from the point of view of those passing through it. Many residents responded to the 2004 Survey with comments that they did not know where the Town’s borders were, and when they were entering or leaving the Town. The Route 9 Corridor, with Greenfly Swamp at the south end and

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LEGEND

-  Existing Buildings
-  Potential Development
-  Trees
-  Parking Area

**HUGHSONVILLE HAMLET
CONCEPT PLAN**

**TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY**

**COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



June
2005

0 125 Feet

**Figure
V-1**

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LEGEND

-  Existing Buildings
-  Potential Development
-  Trees
-  Proposed Road
-  Parking Area
-  Property Line

OLD ROUTE 9 CONCEPT PLAN

TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY

COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN

Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation

0 200 400 Feet



June
2005

Figure
V-2

Wappingers Lake at the north end, represents an opportunity for defining boundaries that passers-by can understand.

Recommendations

1. Develop District Design Plans. Existing historically significant centers with unique qualities which contribute to the character of the Town should be preserved and enhanced. This requires a detailed design process combining land use planning with open space, pedestrian circulation, transportation and built form. Areas identified for the preparation of District Design Plans include:
 - Hamlet of Hughsonville (see attached Figure V-1 for a rendering of the Hughsonville Concept Plan)
 - Old Route 9 District (from Old Hopewell Road through Myers Corners / Middlebush Road to U.S. Route 9) (see attached Figure V-2 for sketch plan)
 - Hamlet of Chelsea
 - New Hackensack Hamlet
 - Swartoutville Hamlet
 - Myers Corners Hamlet
2. Review and amend zoning as necessary to encourage appropriate development in areas to be developed as Town centers. Encourage compact development, mixed use, infill, and higher densities to increase pedestrian activity, make efficient use of public facilities and infrastructure, and create more vibrant commercial centers.
3. Install signs or other visual markers at all the main entry-ways to the Town.

Landscapes

The Town's rural and semi-rural character is due to the farms on the west and northeast sides of Town, and large undeveloped parcels, mostly forested, scattered between the developed areas in the central section of Town. The central section is generally zoned R-20 or R-40, while the northeastern and western areas are generally zoned R-80. From 1986 to 2003, the area of land used for housing increased from 4,868 acres in 1986 to 7,733 acres in 2003, indicating that 2,834 acres of land was consumed during this 17-year period for the development of new housing. If past rates of development continue, at roughly 110 acres of land developed per year, most of the remaining undeveloped or

agricultural lands in the Town will be developed in 70 years (3,400 of 5,544 acres currently in undeveloped/agricultural land use would be developed for housing alone). As noted in the Population and Housing chapter, demand for housing will likely remain strong for the foreseeable future. The challenge before the Town is to accommodate the demand for housing while preserving the character of the community.

Hilltops and ridgelines within the Town are not only good sites for scenic vistas, they are also themselves the objects of views from other locations in the Town and in neighboring communities. Any development occurring on these hilltops and ridgelines should be sensitive to the nature of these sites as important elements in the appearance and character of the community.

The Town has the opportunity to take action to ensure that future development responds to and respects existing areas of important natural landscape features. Areas that should be considered include:

- Farms and open space surrounding Carnwath Farm
- White's Farm House and adjoining lands at the northeast corner of All Angels Hill and Old Hopewell Roads
- Garafalo Homestead, Meadowbrook Farm, and Reese Farms
- Portions of large undeveloped parcels including Cranberry Hills, Shamrock, Cedar Ridge, Brookvale, Hill 'n Dale, and Contrail

Recommendations

1. Consider creating an Agricultural Overlay District. Such a district may include one or more of the following:
 - Transfer of development rights;
 - Agricultural easements;
 - Purchase of important land holdings;
 - Tax incentive programs; and
 - Open space / conservation subdivision requirements.
2. Target key sites for open space preservation / acquisition.

3. Establish Scenic Districts or design scenic easements for appropriate locations.
4. Protect scenic roadways through formal establishment through appropriate regulation. Roadways to be considered for Scenic designation:
 - Old Troy Road
 - Wheeler Hill Road
 - New Hamburg Road
 - Diddel Road
 - All Angels Hill Road
 - River Road
 - Creek Road
 - Robinson Lane north of Wappinger Farms
5. Develop special regulatory standards, such as mandatory open space/conservation subdivisions, for the subdivision of larger parcels of land.
6. Review and update regulations regarding hilltop and ridgeline development. Coordinate this review with concerns and recommendations referred to in the Environmental Resources chapter. The Town may draft new regulations or zoning amendments, and/or develop a Sensitive Areas Overlay District for environmentally or visually sensitive areas.
7. Update subdivision regulations as necessary to ensure that newly developed sites retain topsoil, identify and protect large trees, plant new trees, and provide high quality landscaping.
8. Pursue a Scenic Byway¹ designation from the State for Route 9D in cooperation with all of the municipalities involved. (Currently, Route 9D is designated as a Scenic Byway only in certain sections in Putnam County.)

¹ Scenic Byways are roads that are representative of a region's scenic, recreational, cultural, natural, historic or archeological significance as defined by NYSDOT.

9. Create an Open Space Plan after this Comprehensive Plan is adopted.
10. The Town should consider making use of the New York Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program, the Dutchess County Partnership for Manageable Growth, and/or other farmland and open space protection programs and funding sources.

Historic Preservation

Historic buildings, sites and neighborhoods provide a sense of continuity to community members and can make an important contribution to community character and sense of place. Wappinger has its own unique historical contributions to make on the national and state level (the Wheeler Hill district, for example), and on the local and regional level. Unregulated historic landmarks in the Town may be lost through development or redevelopment. An example is the 200-year-old “La Fonda Del Sol” building located on Old Hopewell Road and Old Route 9, which was demolished last year.

The Wheeler Hill Historic District was listed in the State Register of Historic Places on April 24, 1991 and within the National Register of Historic Places on June 14, 1991. The District has eight contributing properties, with 52 contributing buildings or structures, and 17 contributing sites. This district is currently the only location in the Town of Wappinger with Historic Preservation status.

Recommendations

1. Survey the historic resources of the Town for determination of historic significance, and determine the proximity and density of historic sites for the feasibility of developing additional historic districts.
2. Develop a Historic Preservation Law. A draft Historic Preservation Law was considered by the Town Board in May 2003. The draft Law includes the creation of a Historic Preservation Commission, a process to designate historic landmarks and districts, and a method for reviewing changes to these landmarks and districts. The draft Law was prepared in accordance with the Certified Local Government (CLG) program administered through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP). Certification through the CLG program would provide a direct link to state and federal preservation programs, including a range of municipal support programs and government grants.
3. Ensure that developments adjacent to historic sites are compatible with the setting and the scale of existing features.

Signage

The ability of Route 9D to function as a scenic roadway is reduced by the large billboards along this route. Other areas of the Town, such as Route 9, may benefit from tighter controls on signage, as well.

Recommendations

1. Adopt the *Commercial and Mixed Use Design Handbook*. This document contains detailed guidelines for freestanding, window, and wall signs, including illustrations of both recommended and discouraged features. It covers the size, location and design of signs, as well as materials, color, and lighting.
2. Review the existing signage regulations and zoning controls as they pertain to signage for opportunities to improve regulation.
3. Explore methods of phasing out and removal of existing signage where such signage is in conflict with planning objectives.
4. Use the guidelines in Dutchess County's *Greenway Connections / Greenway Guides* to improve signage in the Town.

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Transportation

VI. TRANSPORTATION

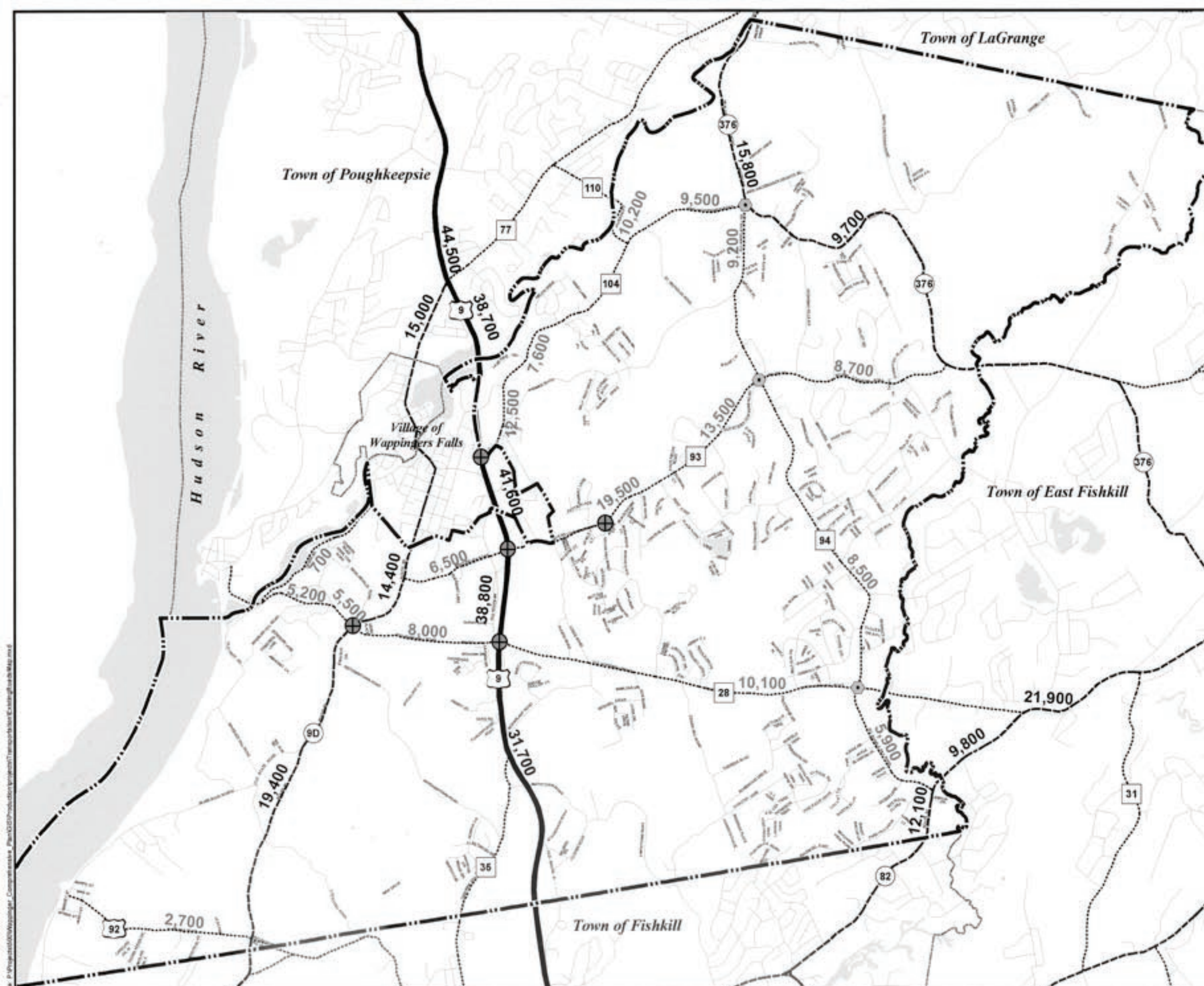
The transportation system connects residences with work, shopping, recreational and community facilities. In Wappinger, as in the rest of Dutchess County, the primary element of the transportation system is a road network and private automobiles. Other elements of the transportation system include the Dutchess County Airport, Metro-North rail service, regional and inter-city bus service, waterborne transportation, and pedestrian and bicycle systems. This section of the Plan examines existing conditions as a basis for recommendations to improve the system. It includes recommendations for improvements to accommodate increased traffic on Routes 9 and 9D, and for transit and pedestrian improvements as well. Successful management of the increasing level of traffic on the main roads in Wappinger will involve integrated planning, including enhancing transportation alternatives and coordinating future land uses with the best possible transportation systems and practices, and working together with neighboring municipalities and State and County officials to implement major improvements.

Goal

Encourage the development of a transportation system consistent with Town land use patterns and objectives, including public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle systems.

Objectives

- A. Improve traffic conditions on Route 9 and Route 9D.
- B. Use transportation improvements as a positive factor in shaping growth.
- C. Require service roads, internal connections and combined parking lots, where appropriate.
- D. Minimize the number of access points on major and collector roads.
- E. Develop a sidewalk network and bikeway system connecting community facilities, centers and schools.
- F. Improve street connectivity between neighborhoods as new areas are developed.



Legend

Road Network

- U.S. Route 9
- - - N.Y.S. Route
- County Road
- Local Road
- Waterbodies

Congestion Points:

- ⊕ Greater
- ⊙ Lesser

9,900 ADT Volumes County Roads
 9,900 ADT Volumes State & Federal Roads
 *ADT - Average Daily Traffic

Note: This map is for general planning purposes only.
 Sources: Dutchess County EMC, Dutchess County
 Office of Real Property Tax, FPCA GIS

Data Sources: NYS ORPS, NYS GIS
 Clearinghouse, FPCA GIS

EXISTING ROAD NETWORK

TOWN OF WAPPINGER
 Dutchess County, NY

**COMPREHENSIVE
 PLAN**

Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.
 Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



June
 2005



**Figure
 VI-1**

Issues and Opportunities

1. There is a high level of traffic congestion on Route 9 during peak hours, especially between Myers Corners Road and New Hackensack Road.
2. Service roads designed to alleviate traffic congestion in this area have been planned since 1974, but have not been implemented, due to the difficulty of acquiring control of certain properties, physical constraints, fiscal constraints, and the additional requirement of coordination between the Town and the Village of Wappingers Falls, plus State and County authorities. The 2004 Survey shows that there is public support for the condemnation of land to build new roads to improve traffic within the Town.
3. The 2004 Survey shows that 84 percent of Town residents support using local tax dollars to fund roadway improvements to improve traffic flow (with 13 percent neutral and only 3 percent opposed). When residents were asked to identify the single-most important investment the Town should make, this was the highest-ranking item.
4. Traffic congestion on Route 9 and Route 9D induces drivers to seek alternate routes, resulting in higher levels of traffic and higher speeds than are appropriate on local roads.
5. Moderate but increasing levels of congestion occur during peak hours on Myers Corners Road by Ketcham High School, at the intersection of Old Hopewell Road with Route 9D, at the intersections of the major east-west collector roads (New Hackensack, Myers Corners and Old Hopewell Roads) with Route 9 (particularly westbound in the morning peak hours) and with All Angels Hill Road (County Route 94).
6. Use of public transit has increased, but opportunities for travel by pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit modes are limited and not fully integrated.

Transportation Conditions and Recommendations

The private automobile is the primary means of transportation in the Town. Most Town residents rely on private vehicles for their commute to work, for trips to shopping locations and for other daily activities. The vast majority (82 percent) of Town residents drive alone to work, and 10 percent carpool. Use of public transit, including train and bus service, has increased from 3.2 percent of commuters in 1980 and only 2.0 percent of commuters in 1990 to 4.9 percent of commuters in 2000. Walking and bicycling are not common means of getting to work (1.3 percent), but there is strong support (61 percent in

the 2004 Survey) for walking and bicycle trails connecting large areas of the Town: 43 percent of responders said that if bike paths and bike lanes existed throughout the Town, they would be used by at least one member of the family. More detailed information on commuting patterns can be found in the companion volume to this Plan, the Inventory and Analysis, in the Community Services and Facilities section.

While Wappinger commuting patterns are similar to others in Dutchess County, a significant minority of workers commute 45 minutes or more each way. The mean travel time to work for Wappinger workers was 32 minutes, up 16 percent from 1990. This increase in travel time to work is due to people commuting further for employment, and to more traffic on roads. The number of Wappinger resident workers leaving the County for work increased by 17 percent from 1990 to 2000.

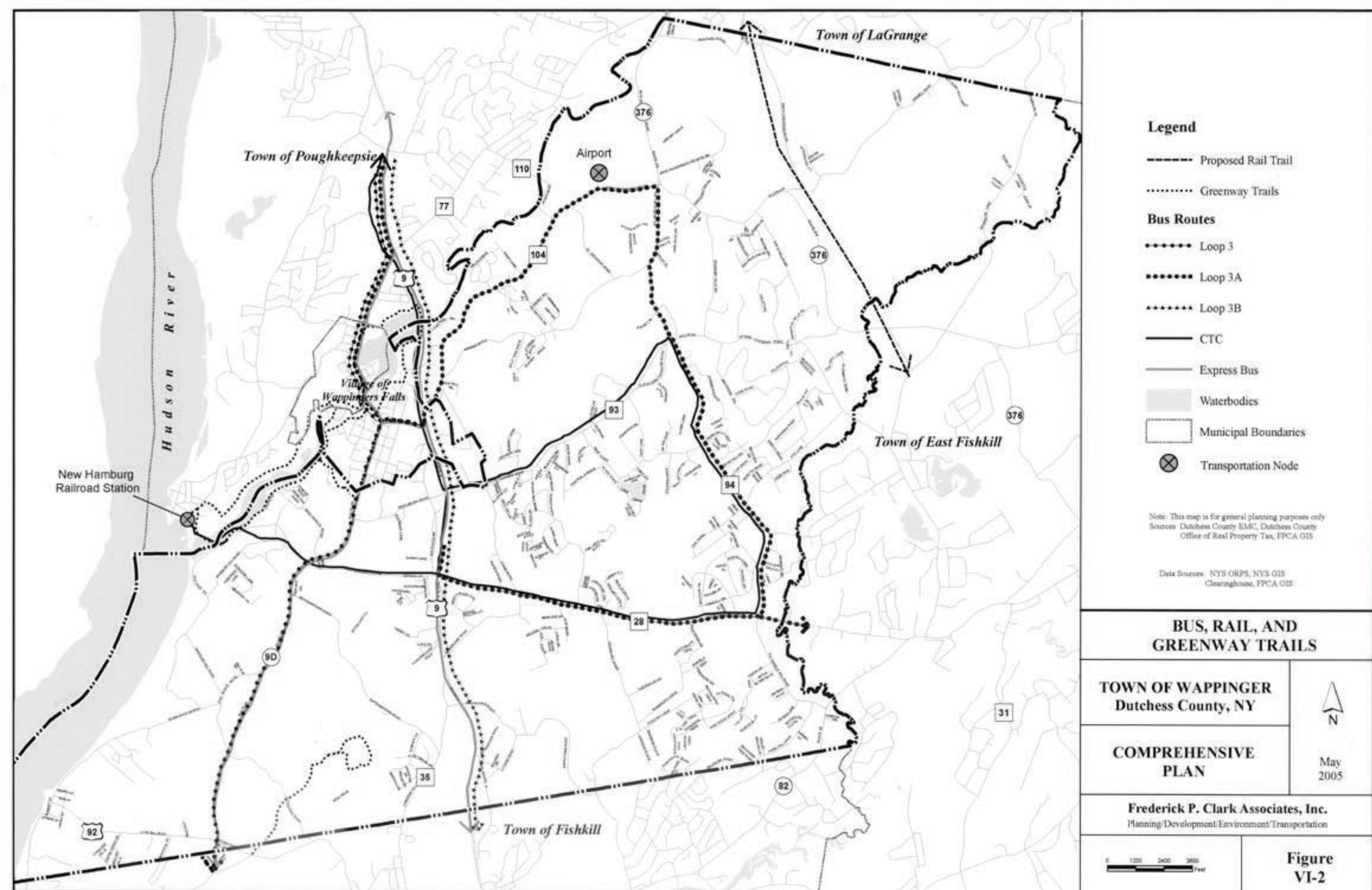
As noted in the earlier chapter on the economic base of the community, one-quarter of Wappinger commuters (26 percent) spend 45 minutes or more traveling to work each day – more, even, than in Los Angeles County (where 20 percent have commutes of 45 minutes or more), and more than in Dutchess County as a whole (22 percent). Nationally, only 15 percent of commuters have commutes of 45 minutes or more. Many of these long-distance commutes involve crossing county lines, particularly to the south. According to the 2000 Census, one-third of the workers residing in Wappinger work outside the county. While one way to reduce the long commute is to bring jobs and housing closer together (as described in the chapter on the local economy), another is to improve the transportation system, including roadway improvements and improved transit options.

Pedestrian and Bicycle System

The Town has a limited system of sidewalks, no existing bicycle paths, and one County-designated bicycle route (Route 9D). There is a Greenway trail from the mouth of Wappinger Creek to the Route 9 bridge over the north end Wappinger Lake. The New York State Department of Transportation has proposed bicycle routes along Route 9 and Route 82, and the Dutchess County Planning Department is developing plans to use the old Maybrook rail line as a bicycle path.

Recommendations

1. Develop a staged Pedestrian and Bikeway Master Plan that inventories and evaluates existing and potential facilities and improvements. The Town has already studied the possibility of having others build a sidewalk on Route 9 from Old Hopewell Road to Middlebush / Myers Corners Road, and on Old Hopewell Road from Route 9 to Route 9D in Hughsonville, with a crosswalk at the intersection of Route 9 and Old Hopewell Road (approximately two miles total, with a sidewalk on one side only). Old Hopewell Road, Myers Corners Road,



Route 376, and the portions of New Hackensack and Widmer Roads near Route 9 should be considered as future corridors for bike paths and/or bike lanes.

2. Review and expand requirements for the provision of sidewalks in conjunction with new commercial development.

Public Transit

Public transportation options available to the residents of the Town include the Metro-North Railroad (Hudson Line) and the County's LOOP Bus System. Inter-city bus service is provided by a group of private companies: Short Line, Arrow Bus, and Leprechaun Bus Lines. The County also operates a Dial-A-Ride service for senior citizens and physically handicapped persons who are unable to access the LOOP Bus System. The details of these services are described below.

The Metro-North Hudson Line provides access to Westchester County and New York City with stations in New Hamburg and in Beacon to the south. The New Hamburg station is 1 hour and 10 minutes away from Grand Central Station (GCT) via express service, and offers 25 trains each day, with six trains leaving the station to arrive at GCT during the morning peak hours, and six leaving GCT for New Hamburg during evening peak hours. Ridership at the New Hamburg station increased from an average of 193 persons per day in 1982 to 800 per day in 1996 and 818 per day in 2003. The station has parking for 815 automobiles. The County LOOP bus system connects to the station, with five trips each morning and six each evening. Undeveloped properties near the New Hamburg station, just south of Wappingers Creek in the Obercreek / Wheeler Hill neighborhood, present opportunities for transit-oriented development.

Four LOOP bus routes and one CTC (Commuter Train Connection) bus route operate in the Town, with a total of 39 LOOP buses and 11 CTC buses per weekday. LOOP 3 offers the most frequent service, with 12 buses per day from the Galleria Mall in Poughkeepsie along 9D to Beacon. Saturday schedules vary slightly, and Sunday service is not available on all LOOP bus lines. Fares are low, at 75 cents per ride, with an option for monthly passes as well.

Dial-A-Ride is a demand response bus system designated to meet the special needs of elderly and disabled people in seven Dutchess County municipalities. The service is sponsored by the Town in conjunction with Dutchess County Office for the Aging and provides individualized transportation to those elderly and handicapped individuals who cannot use regular bus service. At the present time, Dial-A-Ride service is available to Wappinger residents on weekdays, with fares starting at 75 cents for a one-way trip.

Private bus companies offer express service to New York City, Poughkeepsie and White Plains. The Short Line bus company runs 18 buses a day between New York City and

Poughkeepsie, with a flag stop in Wappingers Falls. The Arrow Bus company provides eight buses a day between Poughkeepsie and New Paltz. Leprechaun Bus Lines runs 13 buses a day to White Plains with a stop at Nine-Mile Plaza in Wappingers Falls.

Recommendations for Public Transit

1. Coordinate with regional transit authorities and adjoining communities to improve regional transit services. Public transit connections to regional nodes, such as the New Hamburg station, the airport, and park-and-ride stations, should be evaluated and opportunities for expansion considered.
2. Encourage higher density land uses in locations which could serve as public transit nodes in the future.

Airports

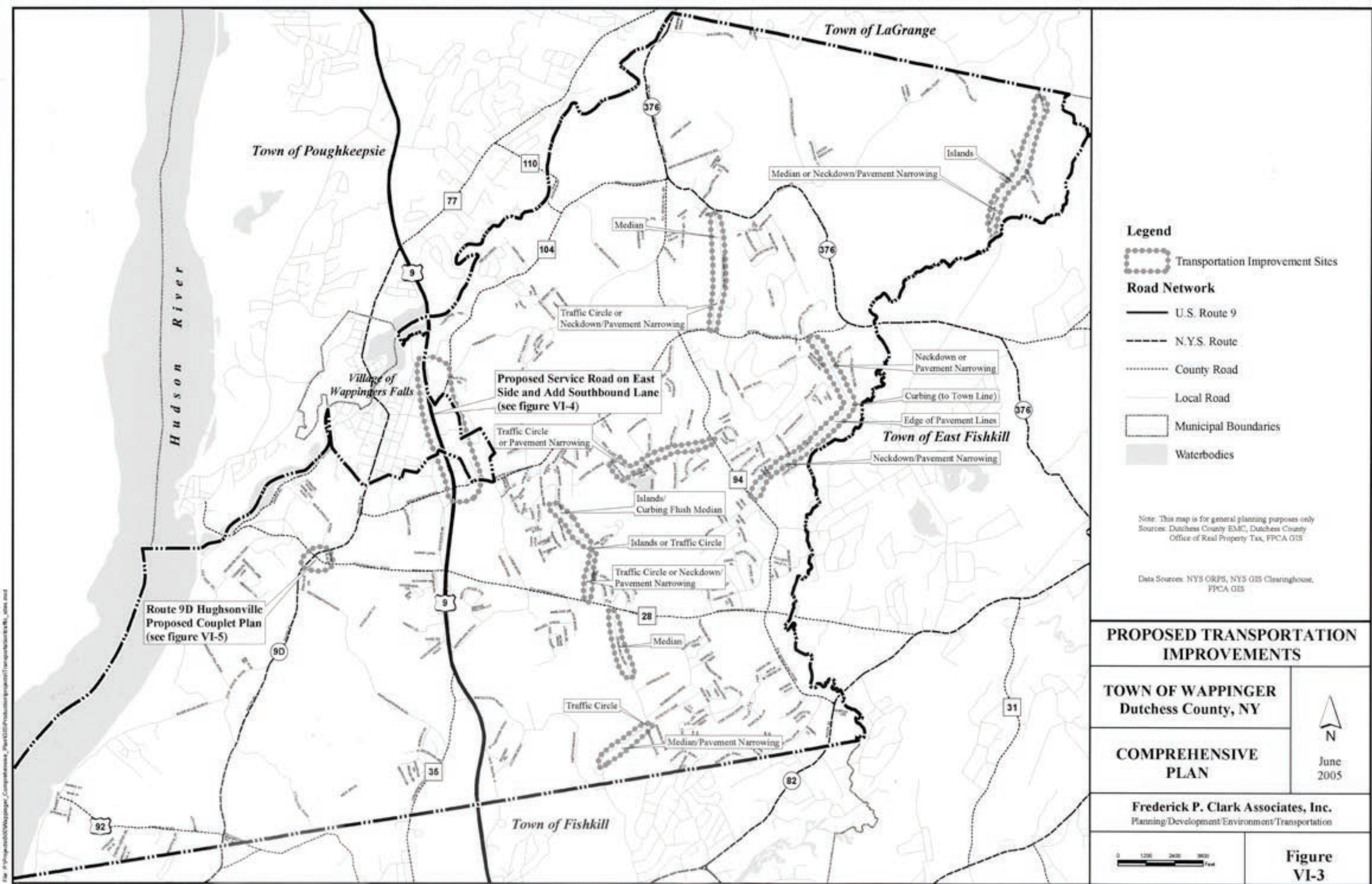
The Dutchess County Airport is the major airport in the County. While regular commercial flights ended in 2001, the airport hosts frequent private charter flights, averaging four passengers per flight, according to the Dutchess County Airport's manager. The airport is also useful as a facility for reconnaissance flights for law enforcement and utility companies, and as a fast route for deliveries, from organ transplants to weekly parcel deliveries.

Stewart International Airport is 20 miles away from most locations in Wappinger, located across the Hudson River in Newburgh. The airport offers commercial passenger service, including US Airways, American, Northwest, Delta and Alaska Airlines, with approximately 25 flights daily offering direct service to Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Leprechaun Bus Lines operates a shuttle from the Beacon station to the airport hourly.

Recommendation: Amend zoning to restrict land uses to avoid high populations of employees or residents near the Dutchess County Airport, in relation to proximity to the airport generally, and in relation to proximity to flight paths.

Water Transportation

The Hudson River, on the western border of Wappinger, has a deep water channel for ocean-going vessels as far north as Albany. Deep draft vessels can be berthed at private facilities in Beacon, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie and Kingston. There are public launches for small boats at Beacon, New Hamburg, Poughkeepsie, Statensburg, Rhinecliff and Tivoli. There are also private boat clubs in most riverfront communities. There is a small launch facility at Chelsea that is available for use by Town residents.



Freight

Although CSX operates a freight rail line through the Town, and freight travels on the Hudson River and through the airport, all freight with origins or destinations in the Town must travel on the roadway network.

Arterial Roadways

The principal arterials traversing Wappinger are Route 9D, Route 9, Route 376 and a short section of Route 82, consisting of a total of 11.26 miles of State-maintained arterial highways. These roadways provide access to Poughkeepsie to the north, Beacon and Fishkill to the south and Hopewell Junction and Pawling to the east. Arterials passing through Wappinger connect with Interstate 84 to the south, providing access to Pennsylvania, New England and New York City, as well as with the Taconic State Parkway to the east, which connects New York City with northeastern New York State. Other arterials in Dutchess County include Route 22, a north-south roadway in the eastern section of the County, Routes 44 and 55 which traverse the County from east to west, and Route 52 in the southern section of the County.

The State conducts traffic counts on all State roadways at regular intervals. The most recent volume data is presented in full in the companion volume to this Plan, Inventory and Analysis. Significant increases in traffic volume over the past 10 years have occurred only on Route 9 near the junction with Myers Corners Road and on Route 376.

Route 9

The Wappinger portion of the Route 9 corridor, functionally classified as an Urban Principal Arterial System,¹ has experienced tremendous land development and increased traffic volumes (heavy commercial traffic, commuters and local traffic). This section of the Route 9 corridor has been identified by the NYS Department of Transportation as having no access control and in need of alternative traffic movement options along the western (southbound) side of the road between Myers Corners Road and Mesier Avenue. This portion of Route 9 was not widened to six lanes in the 1990s when the rest of the corridor was improved from Vassar Road in Poughkeepsie to Mesier Avenue in Wappinger. A major chokepoint is the segment between New Hackensack Road and East Main Street due to the proximity of these intersections, inadequate stacking and turning lane capacity, the large number of left turn movements, and the large number of curb cuts

¹ An Urban Principal Arterial System “carries most of the trips entering and leaving thearea, as well as most of the through movements.” *Source: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 2004.*

in such a small area. The close proximity of existing buildings and businesses to the traveled way severely complicates solutions.

There are many commercial and light industrial sites along the Route 9 corridor and other roadways with individual curb cuts and very few coordinated entrances off of major collector and through road arterials. There are limited or no internal connections between the sites with high traffic-generating uses (commercial and multi-family). These conditions lead to decreased function on the roadways resulting from conflicting turning movements, driver confusion, restricted pedestrian access and safety concerns. The large number of individual and sometimes multiple curb cuts for each site also contributes to a degraded pedestrian environment and a cluttered visual appearance.

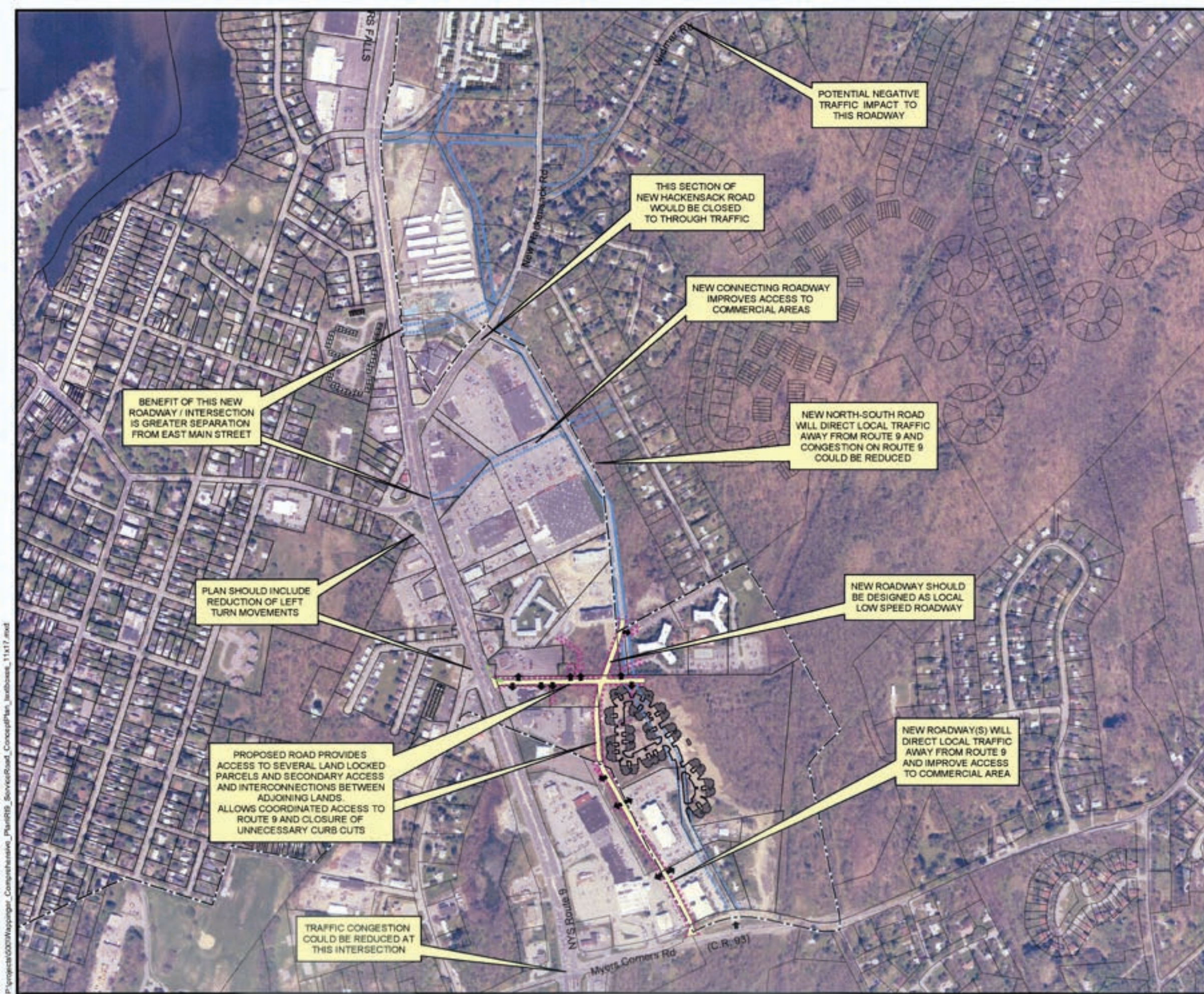
Peak hour traffic is seeking alternate routes to Route 9 and is diverting to local streets, creating safety concerns and a significant degradation of the quality of life in the adjoining areas. The congested rush hour traffic is resulting in significant delays, increased air pollution, productivity impacts, increased frustration, and diminished quality of life for residents, workers and shoppers. Continued problems may limit the proper economic growth of the area.

The traffic congestion on Route 9 is not primarily a problem of volume or capacity, but one of access management – there are too many intersections and curb cuts in the 1.5 mile corridor in the north end of Town. In this portion of Route 9, there are several long dead-end roadways that parallel Route 9 on the east side and that contain high density development (multi-family housing, senior housing, office parks, etc.) that, despite long-term recommendations for their continuation as through streets, have not been extended and connected as a secondary service road. Key properties necessary to make the desired connections are currently being considered for development that would prohibit such connections. Continued failure to develop service roads on both sides of Route 9 would reduce traffic safety, and limit the functionality and economic potential of the surrounding area.

Recommendations for Route 9

1. Service road east of Route 9. Implement plans from 1974 to create a north-south service road on the east side of Route 9 by joining several dead-end access roads. Concept plans include lateral east-west links through to Meiser Avenue, East Main Street and Old Route 9. [see attached map] The PDCTC Transportation Improvement Program includes this project, from Hollow Brook to Imperial Boulevard, with acquisition of the right-of-way in 2010 and construction in 2011.
2. 3rd southbound lane. Encourage the NYSDOT to provide a third southbound lane on Route 9 from Meiser Avenue to Myers Corners Road for the purpose of creating benefits to the level of service on Route 9. The NYSDOT includes a

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pedestrian crossing project (as the Route 9 Pedestrian Bridge) at Wappingers Lake.

3. Right turn lanes. Encourage the NYSDOT to consider installing additional right turn lanes at all Route 9 intersections.
4. Reduce / eliminate / combine vehicular access points to Route 9. Section 240-20, Access and Required Street Frontage, of the Town's Zoning Law currently requires individual street access for all properties. This requirement should be changed for commercial land uses to encourage coordinated use of vehicular access points along the major arterials of the Town. The revised regulation should place a greater emphasis on traffic efficiency and pedestrian safety, and the cumulative negative impact of individual access points on the traffic movement along Route 9. Regulatory changes should be consistent with the Greenway seven-step guide to "Zip Up the Strip."
5. Commercial site interconnectivity. Encourage service roads, parking lot connections, and sidewalks linking commercial sites so that main roadways are not congested by excess turning movements.
6. Parking. The Town should review current parking requirements and adjust them to encourage the coordination of parking and access between adjoining commercial properties in this corridor.
7. Boulevard design. The appearance and pedestrian safety of Route 9 should be improved through streetscape improvements, including median landscaping, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, signage and underground utilities. (See also the previous chapter on Community Appearance and Character.)

Route 9D

Route 9D is frequently used as a cut-through between Route 9 in Wappingers Falls and the I-84 exit near the Beacon-Newburgh Bridge. Congestion is significant during peak hours in the vicinity of Hughsonville and Wappingers Falls. The proximity of buildings in these areas precludes the widening of the roadway for vehicular traffic, and the section in Hughsonville is especially narrow, allowing no room for sidewalks, islands or other amenities.

Recommendations

1. Hughsonville / Route 9D Concept Plan. The planning process associated with this plan identified a potential solution to the problems of congestion in Hughsonville as well as a solution to the lack of sidewalks in the hamlet. The solution involves

the creation of a new couplet, approximately 800 feet long on the southeast side of Route 9D in the hamlet center. The new section of road would serve northbound traffic only, and the existing roadway would be reconfigured to serve only southbound traffic (see attached map, Figure VI-5).

The Hughsonville / Route 9D couplet would alleviate traffic congestion and delays along Route 9D by reducing the number of conflicting turning movements. Separate northbound and southbound travel lanes will allow motorists to conduct left turn movements unopposed. Coordination of the two traffic signals could permit a continuous flow for the larger movements, such as the northbound to eastbound movement during the morning peak period. Reducing the number of conflicting turning movements will also reduce the potential for accidents and may therefore improve safety.

The new section of road would pass through mostly vacant land, requiring the removal of a metal building housing a salvage yard operation. All of the other buildings would remain and would be enhanced by coordinated parking areas behind buildings, sidewalks, street lights and some parallel on-street parking. The Town should cooperate with County and State officials to study the possible solutions further and to advance the outcomes possible under the Hughsonville / Route 9D Concept Plan.

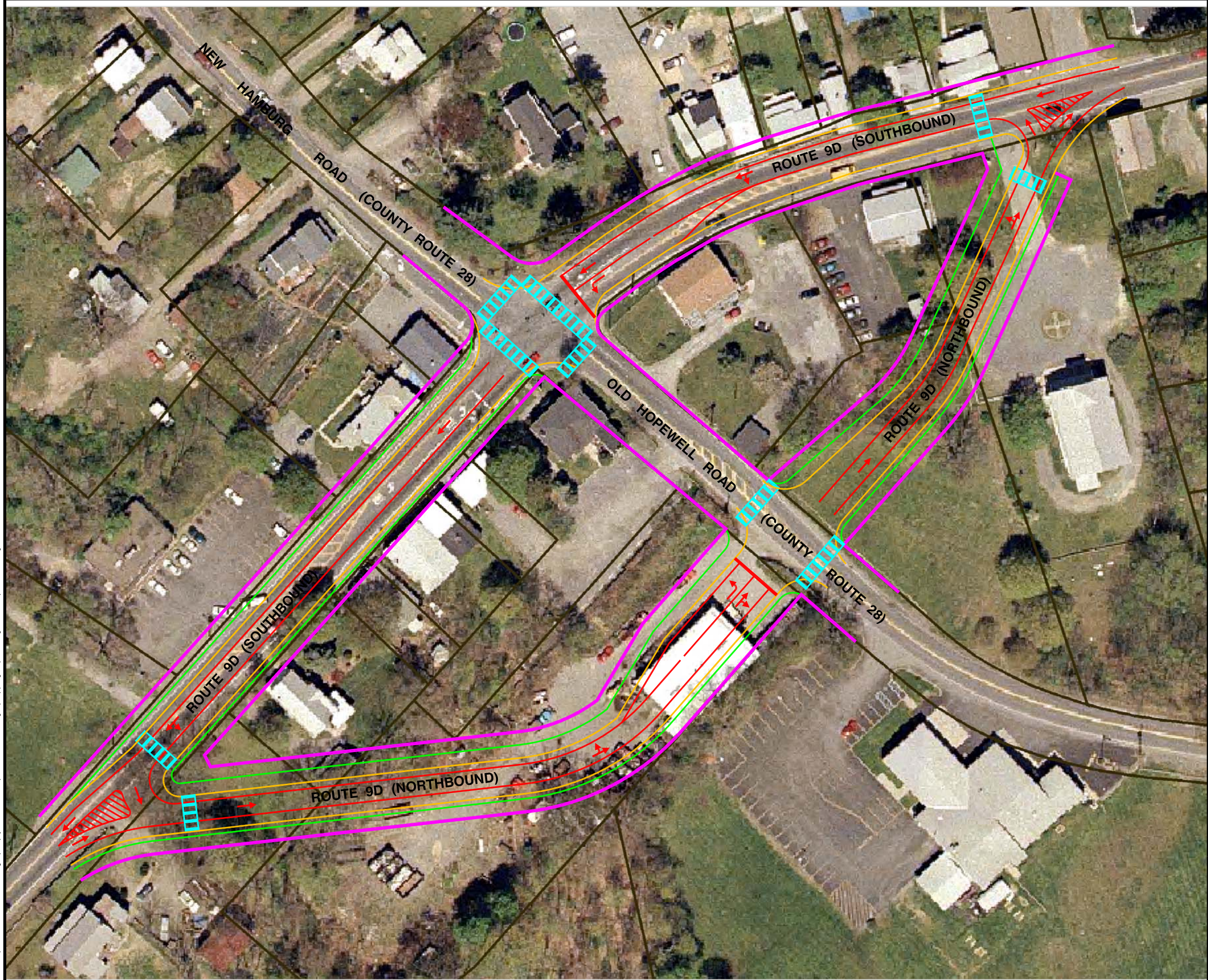
2. Maintain and enhance the highway's scenic and rural character. This includes maintaining the road as a two-lane highway, and removing billboards from the corridor.

Collector Roadways

Collector roads provide traffic circulation access to land within the Town's primarily residential areas, connecting homes and worksites with the regional arterial network. The 21.26 miles of collector roads in Wappinger are maintained by Dutchess County. County Routes 28, 29, 34, 35, 93, 94, 104 and 110 are the primary collector roadways in the Town. Of these, Routes 28 and 94 (Old Hopewell Road and All Angels Road) also serve as conduits for through traffic. Volumes on all County roads are recorded at regular intervals by the Poughkeepsie – Dutchess County Transportation Council.

Traffic levels on these collector roads have increased over the past 10 years. Hughsonville / Old Hopewell Road (County Road 28) increased to over 10,000 AADT (average annual daily traffic) east of Route 9, with an average increase of 2.6 percent per year. Middlebush / Meyers Corners Road (County Road 93) experienced increases of up to 3.0 percent per year, and volumes of nearly 20,000 AADT near the Ketcham High School. New Hackensack Road (County Road 104) has traffic volumes of around 10,000 AADT near Route 9 and between Jackson Road and All Angels Road. Jackson Road

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Legend

- Roadway Markings (Travel Lanes)
- Parking/ Bike Lane (Shoulder)
- Buffer
- Right of Way/ Sidewalk (Boundary Line)
- Pedestrian Crosswalk

Source: June 6, 2003 Aerial Photograph

HUGHSONVILLE ROUTE 9D CONCEPT PLAN

TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY

COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN

Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



June
2005

0 20 40 60 Feet

Figure
VI-5

(County Road 110) near the airport increased the most of all County roads in traffic volume, more than doubling since the mid-1980s to over 10,000 AADT by 2001. (For more detailed information, please refer to the Inventory and Analysis, the companion volume to this Plan.)

As mentioned earlier, the County roads, which ordinarily serve as collectors providing access to the arterial roadways, are now doubling as through-roads, due to the higher levels of traffic and reduced levels of service on Route 9. Also, peak hour travelers on the east-west collector roads (New Hackensack, Meyers Corners and Old Hopewell Roads) often experience delays approaching the intersection with Route 9, particularly westbound traffic. Congestion has also been reported at the intersections of these roadways with All Angels Hill Road. The high volume of traffic turning into and out of Ketcham High School results in long queues and delays along Meyers Corners Road during morning school arrival and afternoon school dismissal times.

Recommendations for Collector Roadways

1. The Town should encourage County officials to construct a turning lane on County Route 93 (Myers Corners Road) at the Ketcham High School entrance.
2. The Town should encourage State and County officials to address the problems on Route 9 that contribute to traffic problems on collector roads.
3. The Town should encourage County officials to construct right turn lanes at the intersection of Routes 93 and 94.

Local Roadways

Local roadways provide access to individual properties throughout the community. The 96 miles of local roadway system in the Town of Wappinger are maintained by the Town Highway Department. The 36 miles of double yellow centerlines on local roadways are repainted every year. The Town has a tentative re-paving schedule, which includes paving between five and six miles per year. This results in the repaving all Town roads approximately every 15 years. The Town has plans to improve the intersection of Ketchamtown Road at Route 9D with State funding.

Certain local roads are being used by through traffic, or are experiencing higher traffic volumes than what they were designed for or can safely accommodate due to environmental constraints. Specific problems have been reported on Spook Hill Road, Kent Road, Cedar Hill Road, Degarmo Hills Road, Montfort Road, Robinson Lane and Pye Lane. The Town commissioned a study of these roads to determine the extent of the problems and the feasibility of traffic calming solutions.

The study found that Spook Hill Road and Kent Road had 20 or more accidents each during a three-year period between 1998 and 2001, and all the roads studied commonly experienced traffic traveling 10 or more miles per hour over the posted speed limit. The study also found that for most of these roads, physical improvements such as curbing and raised center medians in key locations could help reduce the speed of traffic (for more details, refer to “Traffic Calming Study: Town Roadways, Wappinger, New York,” prepared by Frederick P. Clark Associates, March 2003).

Recommendation for Local Roadways

The Town should pursue financially feasible traffic calming solutions, including physical long-term improvements in key locations.

Integrating Land Use and Transportation

Currently, most of the Town consists of low-density residential land uses, generally one-half acre to an acre per dwelling unit. As the Town continues to grow, and as automobile use becomes less efficient in terms of cost and function, transportation alternatives will become more viable and important. Bus routes and other forms of public transportation work best when they link areas of higher density housing and employment with one another. Daily shopping needs and community activities can be accessed by walking when housing and other uses are close together. While the Town currently has public transit service, the frequency of service has not yet risen to levels competitive to those with the automobile as an option.

Developing higher densities of employment along particular corridors in the Town would facilitate expanded transit service. The Route 9 Corridor has a large amount of developed land, but lacks housing and pedestrian amenities. Myers Corners / Middlebush Road (County Route 93) is still rural and suburban in character, yet it links major employment centers – the former IBM office facility, the high school, junior high school and elementary school, plus Hughsonsville hamlet. Route 9D links the Village of Wappingers Falls with Hughsonsville and with the cities of Beacon and Newburgh. These three roads could be the major axes of public transportation in the Town’s future.

The Town should give careful consideration as well to the Wheeler Hill / Obercreek area as a potential area for transit-oriented development in relation to the New Hamburg station in Poughkeepsie, with the parallel goal of preserving the rural landscape that separates and defines the Hughsonsville hamlet. As mentioned in the earlier chapter on population and housing, land development of the densities required to achieve positive transit and pedestrian outcomes also involves extending municipal water and sewer service.

Recommendation: Encourage higher commercial density and mixed commercial land use in existing commercial areas that support transit, reduce traffic, improve local identity, provide opportunities for public spaces, and promote pedestrian activity.

Coordinated Planning

The Town will need to work with State and County transportation agencies, and with neighboring municipalities in order to implement the improvements proposed in this Plan. The improvements planned by the Village of Wappingers Falls in its 2001 Plan regarding Routes 9 and 9D have been considered and this Plan does not conflict with them. The widening of Route 9 and the development of service roads to the west will take close coordination between the two municipalities over a long time period.

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Water Supply and Sewage Treatment

VII. WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE TREATMENT

Water supply and sewage treatment are essential services accompanying the development of land for housing, non-profit and community institutions, commerce and industry. While many services, such as electricity and telephone communications, are ubiquitous and available to all without complications, water supply and sewerage systems develop in relation to the surrounding infrastructure and natural environmental conditions, and to the intensity of uses required of these systems.

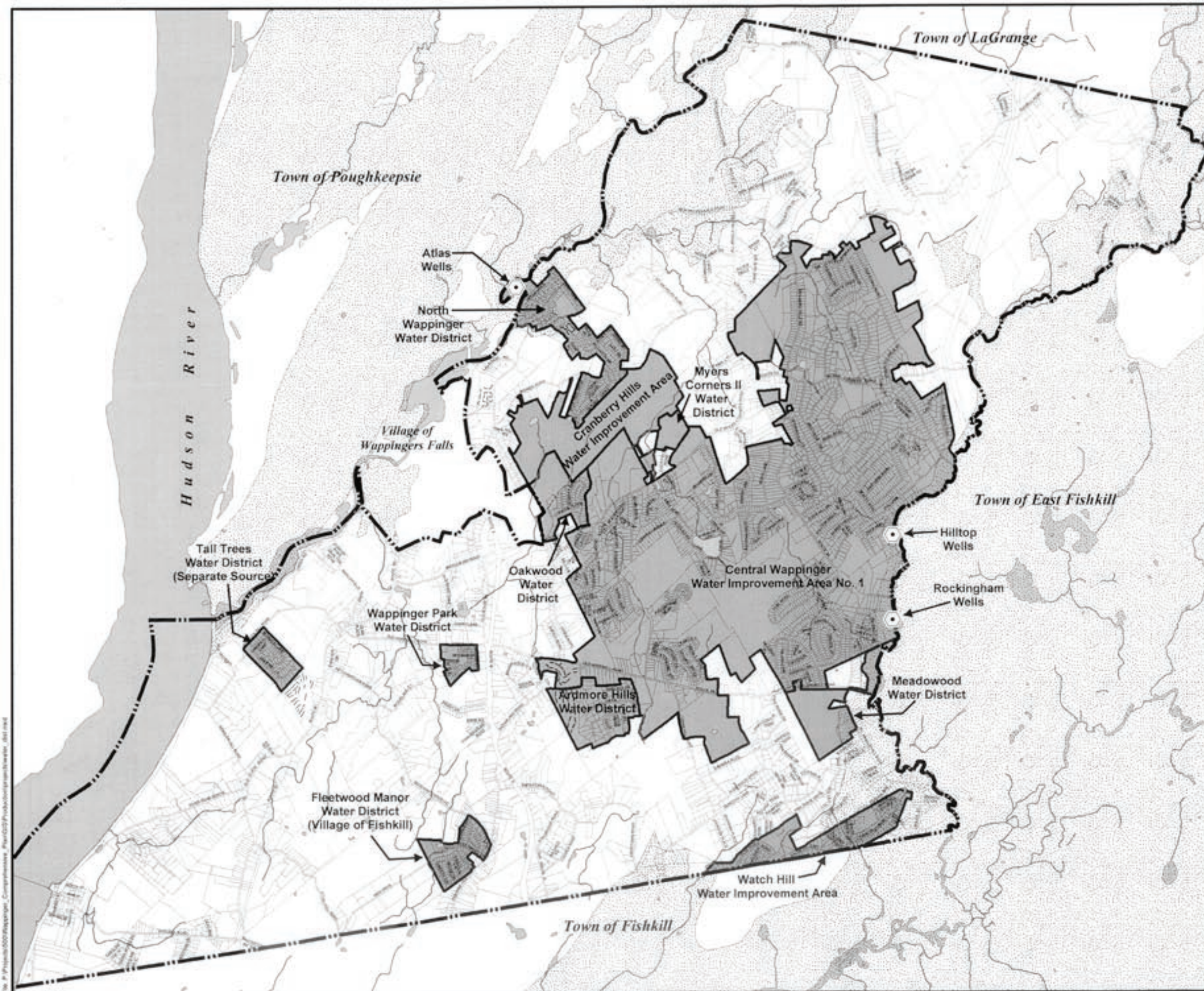
Issues and Opportunities

1. Water availability within the Town is constrained by a bedrock aquifer that is limited in volume, and limited access to the sub-surface sand and gravel aquifers associated with Sprout Creek and Wappinger Creek. Town wells have the capacity to meet existing and future development within existing water districts, but without substantial upgrades to the existing system, future services to additional districts would be limited to roughly 700 additional homes. One-quarter of all residents that participated in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey reported some kind of supply problem regarding their individual wells. The Town will need to access alternative water supplies or system improvements in order to meet future demands outside of existing service areas.
2. Nearly two-thirds of the Town have soils that provide severe limitations to septic suitability, and most of the remainder provide moderate limitations. One in ten households participating in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey reported failing or marginal septic systems, and most had systems that had been replaced at least once.




The Town has responded to problems of water supply and sewage disposal by making significant capital investments in central water and sewer systems. The history of these investments and the current status of Town and private water and sewer systems are outlined below. Information regarding residents' private water supply and septic systems was derived from a 2003 Water and Sewer Survey which was mailed to nearly 5,000 addresses in June 2003, to which approximately 1,500 residents responded.

Water Systems: Existing Conditions

The Town now has a central water supply system referred to as the United Wappinger Water District (UWWD) that serves approximately 3,400 households and a much smaller number of commercial establishments. The current system, with the Atlas and Hilltop well fields, can supply a maximum of 2.4 million gallons per day (MGD) during low water supply periods, such as a drought. Current average demand is approximately 1.0



Legend

-  Municipal Well
-  Aquifer
-  Water Districts


Note: This map is for general planning purposes only.
Sources: Dutchess County EMC, Dutchess County Office of Real Property Tax, FPCA GIS

WATER DISTRICTS

TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY

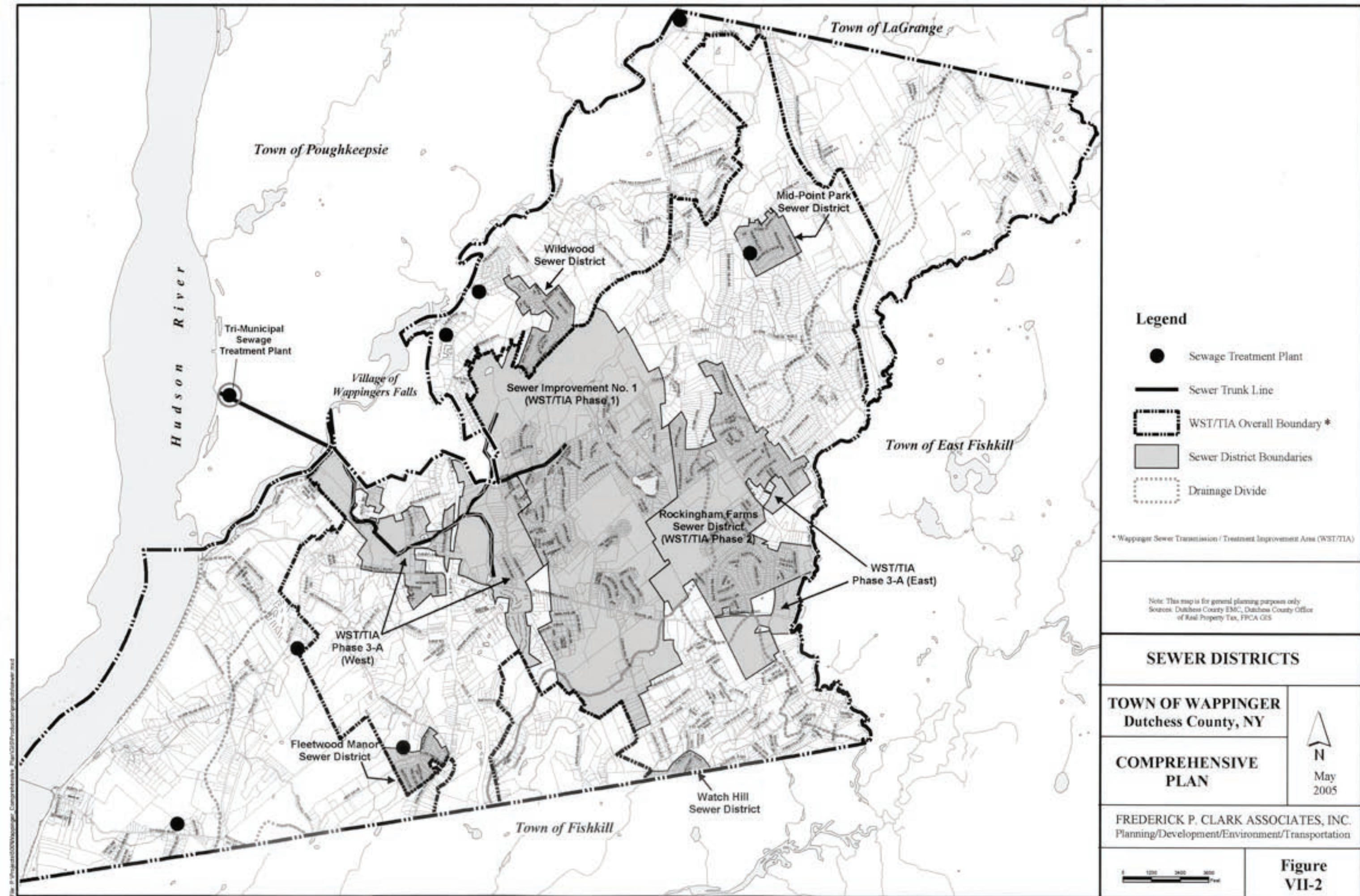
**COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation


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May 2005



**Figure
VII-1**



MGD and current maximum daily demand is approximately 1.70 MGD. Capacity appears to be sufficient for current and future development within the existing UWWD, if zoning remains unchanged.

Future demand Town-wide, however, based on current zoning, is estimated to be 4.0 MGD. Since future demand outpaces the maximum reliable supply, accommodating only 700 additional households outside the current water district boundaries, the Town may eventually need to find alternative sources of drinking water for its residents outside of existing districts. The primary alternatives are to connect to the Poughkeepsie system, which draws from the Hudson River, or to the Fishkill system, which draws from the Clove Creek aquifer.

The water system has developed substantially since the Town's purchase of Hilltop Water Works in 1970. Hilltop, drawing from the edge of the Sprout Creek Aquifer, has the capacity to produce 900 gallons per minute (GPM) under normal flow conditions, and can be relied upon to produce 350 GPM, or approximately 0.5 MGD, in drought conditions.

The Town then purchased the Rockingham Water System and developed the Central Wappinger Water Improvement Area, with new service areas in the vicinity of Kent Road, Brothers Road, DeGarmo Hills Road, Mid-Point Park and Top-O-Hill Road. More recent improvements include the purchase of the Atlas Well Field in 1990, a much larger producer than Hilltop, being rated with a capacity of 1,500 GPM or 2.16 MGD and subsequently resulted in the formation of the UWWD. There has also been a related upgrade of the entire Town's storage and transmission components, amounting to over \$9,000,000, which is known as Project No. 99-2(R).

Most older, smaller central water systems have been integrated into the UWWD, with the most recent two being the Oakwood Knolls Water District and the Wappinger Park Water District. However, there are a number of remaining private independent water systems, including Alpine Commons, Montclair Condominiums, Woodhill Green Condominiums, and Village Crest Apartments.

There are three other Town-owned Water Districts not connected into the Central Water system. The first two are the Fleetwood Water District at the south end of Town, which is connected into water from the Village of Fishkill wells, and the Watchhill Water District, also on the south side of Town, which is hooked into the Town of Fishkill Water Supply System.

The last remaining Town District is the Tall Trees Water District, which is on the west side of Town, adjacent to the Hudson River. This district is served by their own two private wells, which have a marginal supply. It should be noted that the residents of the

Tall Trees Water District have been on water conservation restrictions for the last 3 to 5 years.

The quality of the drinking water in the Town's central system is monitored by the State and has historically met water quality standards. On the other hand, private systems, both individual wells and those serving larger numbers of users, have frequently had water quality concerns, usually with regard to taste or odor, water hardness, and the effect of minerals in the water on plumbing fixtures. One-third of those participating in the water and sewer survey rated the water quality of their individual wells as marginal or unsatisfactory.

The water quality of individual wells is threatened by nearby septic systems that are either too close or failing. Of the survey participants that knew the distance between their well and their septic system, one-quarter said that this distance was less than 100 feet, which is the standard minimum today. Of the 1,552 respondents, two percent said that their system was failing, and seven percent reported the system as marginal. In addition, household oil tanks – particularly those which are buried and more difficult to monitor – are a constant threat to water quality, and contamination from a leak could go unnoticed in individual wells until the water is tested. Thirty percent of those participating in the water and sewer survey have not tested their well water in the past five years.

In addition to water quality problems, some Town residents find that they cannot get enough water from their individual wells. One-quarter of all residents that participated in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey reported “marginal,” “substandard,” or “supply problems” regarding their individual well systems. While the survey shows that residents with water quantity problems are distributed throughout the Town, residents on Cedar Hill Road, Losee-Sucich, Fowlerhouse Road, Peggy Lane, Apple Blossom, Peter Road and Montclair Condominiums have significant issues, and the Town is looking into the feasibility of serving these households with central water.

Typically, water lines cost \$250 per linear foot to install, or about \$1.32 million per mile. Costs are borne by the users, and each new group of users is organized by the Town into a water district, which pays for its share of capital and operational costs. Households may pay between \$600 and \$1,200 or more annually for water service in a new district, depending on the density of development (more compact development requires less investment for service, so annual fees are lower).

Sewage Treatment Systems: Existing Conditions

The Tri-Municipal Sewage Treatment plant in Poughkeepsie was built in 1984, and the Town of Wappinger, at one time a partner in its development, connected to the system as a tenant user in 1995, which allowed the Town to remove two under-performing plants from service. The Tri-Muni plant is currently configured to treat 2.775 MGD, of which

Wappinger accounts for 1.375 MGD, or approximately half the volume to be treated. Actual dry weather volumes from the Town are approximately 0.8 MGD per day currently. The plant was designed to allow for expansion as needed, up to a total of 16 MGD. Because the plant is located on the Hudson River, the treated effluent will have minimal environmental impacts, compared with the former small, older facilities located on small tributaries.

Four sewer districts in the Town continue to rely on treatment through means other than the Tri-Muni plant, due to distances and topography. The Watch Hill Sewer District collection flows to a facility in Fishkill. Mid-Point Park, Fleetwood and Wildwood each have small sewage treatment plants that discharge into tributaries. Wildwood's discharge into the much larger Wappinger Creek is less of a long-term concern than the smaller creeks into which Mid-Point and Fleetwood discharge. In addition, there are several private sewer plants in the Town. These include Montclair Condominiums and Chelsea Apartments, and Woodhill Green Condominiums and Village Crest Apartments near Wappinger Creek.

The Town's sewer system has developed in phases, beginning with Phases 1 and 2, which were completed in 1990. Phase 3A was completed in 2001, and Phase 3B is currently in the planning process. Phase 3 is only in the conceptual mode of development with the focus on Mid-Point Park and DeGarmo Hills Road. The execution of these plans hinges on the Town's residents being able to afford them. Construction costs have risen dramatically in the last 2 to 3 years and Federal grants and State interest subsidized loans have become more scarce. It would seem that these phases would become a reality when funds become available from either the Federal or State governments.

These phases correspond to existing sewer districts, each of which collects its own capital and operating costs from its own base property owners within the District. In addition to the individual districts there is an overall Wappinger Sewer Transmission/Treatment Improvement Area (WST/TIA), which extends from Smith Crossing Road in the northeast to Fleetwood in the southwest. This overall sewer improvement area was created in approximately 1990. Areas outside of the WST/TIA are generally zoned for much lower density. Residents within Phases 1, 2 and 3 paid between \$300 and \$500 per year into the system, whether they currently receive sewer service or not.

Phases 1 and 2 re-routed sewage from Sewer Improvement Area No. 1, Oakwood System and the Rockingham System, and their outdated plant to the Tri-Municipal Plant in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Phases 1 and 2, which combined cost approximately \$16,000,000, was designed to accommodate 1 MGD of waste corresponding to the future level of demand, when all parcels in this District are developed to the then current zoning. Phase 3A expanding service to respond to failing septic in neighborhoods to the east and west of the previously established Phase 1 and 2, with approximately 800 residential customers and a number of commercial users in the District. This cost was

approximately \$11,000,000. This phase included expanding the Tri-Municipal Sewage Treatment Plant to accommodate the additional 375,000 GPD of flow.

Phase 3B will further expand the service to some combination of the following targeted areas:

- Route 9
- Sub-areas to the North and South
- Edgehill Manor
- Shale Drive
- Route 9D/Hughsonville
- Mid-Point Park
- DeGarmo
- Middlebush Road
- Fowlerhouse Road
- Peggy Lane

The capital cost for this per resident will be significantly higher than those in Phases 1, 2 and 3, and without funding could easily reach \$1,500 per year per household. The cost of this project will vary, however, depending upon the areas identified by the Town for sewer service.

In general, sewer system expansion costs slightly more than water system at approximately \$300 per foot or \$1.58 million dollars per mile (MDM). Accompanying the cost for the pipe line is the necessary expansion of the Tri-Municipal Sewer Treatment facility to accommodate the treatment of the newly generated flows. The New York State Revolving Loan Fund allows participating municipalities to save on interest payments by subsidizing the interest charged through the life of the bond and actually providing the Town with a manual check to defray this costs. The Town has participated in this program for Phases 1, 2 and 3A saving in excess of \$4,000.000.

Individual septic systems in the Town have historically had a high rate of failure and most have been replaced at least once. The Town is constrained by a high percentage (59 percent) of soils that provide severe limitations to septic suitability, and most of the remainder (39 percent) provide moderate limitations. Limitations include shallow soils (depth to bedrock), soil types that are easily saturated with water, hydric soils, and wetlands. Nine percent of households participating in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey reported failing or marginal septic systems, and most had systems that were newer than the house, indicating that the original septic system was replaced at some point in the past.

Many areas in the Town with soils that pose severe limitations to septic systems have been developed as one acre lots (as zoned by the Town), and a number of these lots have reported marginal or failing systems in the 2003 Water and Sewer Survey. The areas in or near soils with severe limitations with large numbers of septic system problems can be divided into five main groups: the Brothers Road area, the Apple Blossom – Peters Road area, the Helen Drive – Daisy Lane area, the Tall Trees area, and the Lake Drive - Sky Top Drive area.

The largest area, referred to above as the Brothers Road area, is north of the Rockingham Sewer District, south of the Mid-Point Park District, and bordered on the east by the Sprout Creek and on the west by the Sewer Improvement Number 1 District. It includes approximately 100 lots and is approximately 175 acres in size. Within this area, the residents of 363 lots responded to the 2003 Sewer and Water Survey, and of these, 34 reported marginal or failing septic systems (9 percent). This rate of lots with septic system problems does not take into account the number of such systems that were marginal or failing in the past and were replaced.

The Apple Blossom – Peters Road area is in the southeast corner of the Town, from Leskow Circle to Apple Blossom Lane and Moccasin View Road. It includes 13 marginal and failing systems out of 70 lots that responded to the survey (18 percent), with an area of approximately 325 acres.

The Helen Drive - Daisy Lane area (also known as Quiet Acres) just south of the airport and adjacent to the Town Atlas Wellfield contains another significant cluster of lots that reported marginal septic systems. Other areas with clusters of failing or marginal septic systems include the Tall Trees development, and in the Lake Drive - Sky Top Drive area.

Two areas with moderate soil limitations also contain clusters of marginal or failing septic systems. Hughsonville Hamlet and the Route 9 area between Fowlerhouse Road and Smithtown Road have significant numbers of failing or marginal septic systems.

The Town is faced with the need to respond to multiple areas with chronic septic system problems, and to also consider the need to allow denser development in community centers to enhance community character, which also demands the infrastructural support of sewer and water. There is considerable support for further development of central sewer services among the residents of the Town who do not yet have sewer service: of the survey participants who responded directly to Question #12 (“Would you consider hooking into the system for \$850?”), 59 percent said “Yes,” and 41 percent said “No.”

Coordinating Water and Sewer Service with Land Use Planning

The Community Character and Land Use Chapters call for developing and/or enhancing community centers in four main locations: the Old Route 9 District, the Hughsonville Hamlet, Chelsea Hamlet and Myers Corners. By directing development to these areas, the Town will better protect existing rural and semi-rural areas. But Wappinger’s opportunities for creating higher density housing cannot be achieved without central water and sewer service. Currently, none of these four areas, except for the southern area of the old Route 9 commercial district, are served by central water or sewerage systems. Plans for allowing increased densities in these areas must be accompanied by plans to serve these areas with central utilities.

Also, some currently undeveloped areas of Town may become overburdened by demands from too many septic systems located too close together, if they are developed according to existing zoning. There are several areas of concern where there are soils with severe septic limitations to the north of current sewer districts. These areas are currently zoned at densities that have resulted in high septic system failure rates in similar soil conditions in other parts of the Town. (See the Environmental Resources Chapter for more details.) These areas are unlikely to be served by a central sewer system in the future. Rezoning for lower densities in these areas may be necessary.

Goal

Continue the development of a system of central utilities to address the needs of existing developed areas with water supply and sewage treatment problems, and to achieve land use goals and objectives.

Objectives

- A. Rank areas in terms of need for water and wastewater service that are currently outside of existing district boundaries
- B. Extend utilities at the lowest cost feasible by serving the highest number of users per linear distance of utilities.
- C. Encourage public involvement in planning decisions associated with municipal sewer and water service.

Recommendations

1. Organize water and sewer districts to include both cost-effective denser areas and cost-ineffective existing problem areas.
2. The Town may consider reducing allowed residential densities in some areas north of the sewer districts, where there are several undeveloped parcels of 10 or more acres which have the same soil constraints as the Brothers Road area to the south of Mid-Point Park. To offset the lost development potential of rezoning these lands, and to enhance community character and tax base, the Town may consider strategically rezoning key areas for higher density, and providing central sewer and water to these areas, as recommended in Dutchess County's Greenway

Connections, in the section “Coordinating Development with Central Utilities.” (Please refer to the Land Use Chapter for a full discussion of this recommendation.)

3. Identify new sources of water supply for the Town. This could include the use of the approved Meadowood Well Field, subject to completion of water distribution system improvements, or connection to the newly constructed Dutchess County Central Transmission Line on the east side of Town.
4. The Town should continue to seek legislation in Albany to consolidate water districts.
5. *Groundwater Resource Report, Dutchess County Aquifer Recharge Rates & Sustainable Septic System Density Recommendations*, prepared in 2006 for the Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Authority should be used as a guide for implementation of appropriate zoning amendments.

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Recreation and Community Facilities

VIII. RECREATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities and services are important factors in the quality of life in a community. As a community grows, existing facilities and services need to expand to maintain this quality of life. This chapter provides an overview of the recreation facilities, emergency services, solid waste services, Town government facilities, educational facilities and library facilities available to Town residents.

Recreation

The Town owns and maintains 23 parks on approximately 372 acres, including 11 parks with facilities for active recreation. The Town recently purchased the Greystone / Carnwarth Farm property next to the Hudson River, which consists of 98 acres of fields and forest, with a historic estate house, gardens and a baseball field.

Town residents also have access to two large recreational facilities that are in or near the Town, but are not owned and maintained by the Town. Stony Kill, operated by the State of New York, is on the southern border of the Town, and consists of 735 acres of parkland, 285 of which are in the Town of Wappinger. Bowdoin Park, operated by the County, consists of 299 acres, and is just north of Wappinger Creek along the Hudson River.

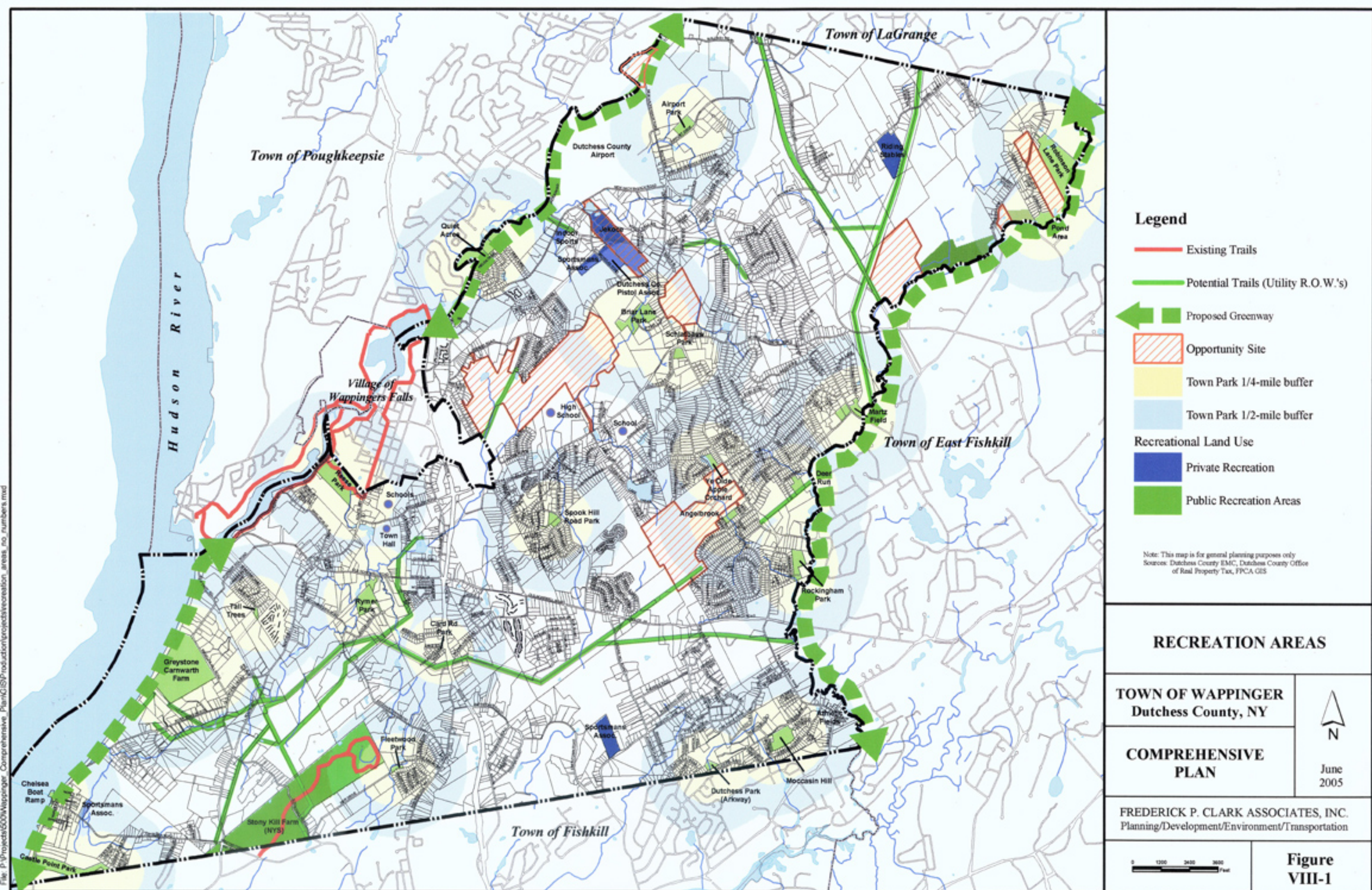
Details of the Town recreational facilities are outlined in the following table.

TOWN OF WAPPINGER: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

PARK	LOCATION	ACRES	FACILITIES/FEATURES
Greystone/ Carnwarth Farms	Wheeler Hill Road	98.6	Historic estate house and gardens, ballfield and panoramic Hudson River views
Card Road	Card Rd.- S. Fowlerhouse Road	0.3	½ Basketball court
Quiet Acres	Helen Drive	12.2	Ballfield, swings, slide, Basketball court, Summer playground, pavilion, storage
Martz Field / Montfort Road Building	Pye Lane	11.3	Ballfield, 2 tennis courts, volleyball courts, picnic area, basketball court, swings, slide, field house, maintenance barn, summer program
Robinson Lane Complex	Robinson Lane	40.0	Ballfields (10), swings, field house, pavilion, summer program, picnic area, restrooms
Castle Point	S. River Road	40.0	Ballfields (2), playground equipment, picnic area, shelter, summer program, restrooms
Schlathaus Park	All Angels Hill Road	5.0	Bandstand, house, storage, garage
Chelsea Boat Ramp	Front Street	--	Boat ramp
Spook Hill Park	Spook Hill Road	5.3	Fieldhouse, pavilion, swings, slide, handball court, summer playground, modular play area
Angelbrook	Rich Drive	4.0	Open field
Ye Olde Apple Orchard	Kent Road/All Angels Hill Road	5.4	Pond
Airport Park	Airport Drive	10.0	Soccer fields, field house pavilion
Rockingham	Regency Drive / Soccerfield Drive	11.5	Soccer fields, swings, pond
Fleetwood	Fleetwood Drive	2.0	Swings, basketball
Reese Park	Creek Road	40.0	Trails, restrooms
Briar Lane	Briar Lane	21.8	Undeveloped
Deer Run	Deer Run Road	6.2	Undeveloped
Dutchess Park (Arkway)	Salem Road	3.2	Undeveloped
Moccasin Hill	Boxwood Close	13.4	Undeveloped
Noto Subdivision	Woodland Court	15.2	Undeveloped
Pond Area	Joan Lane	8.5	Undeveloped
Rymer	Old Hopewell Road	30.3	Undeveloped
Tall Trees	Amherst Lane	1.6	Undeveloped
Meadowood	Old Hopewell Road and Sprout Cr.	11.8	Undeveloped

The 2004 Survey included a range of questions regarding residents' needs and levels of satisfaction with Town parks. Key findings are:

- One-half or more of the respondents were familiar with the following seven Town facilities (of 23 total): Martz Field / Montfort Road Building, Robinson Lane, Schlathaus Park, Reese Park, Spook Hill Park, Airport Park and the Chelsea Boat Ramp.
- Residents use Town parks just about as often as County and State parks, private recreational facilities, and parks outside of Wappinger.



- While over half of respondents felt that their recreational needs are met by existing Town facilities, over one-quarter felt that the Town needs additional recreational facilities.
- When asked, “If more facilities in Wappinger were available, which of the following would you participate in?” “Nature enjoyment” was 1st, picnicking 2nd, walking or hiking 3rd, swimming 4th, and winter sports (ice skating, skiing) 5th.
- Although there was not overwhelming support for the acquisition of land for active recreation (such as ball fields) and for the development of a swimming pool facility, 20 percent of respondents felt that acquisition of land for active recreation was the single-most important investment the Town should make, and 13 percent felt that acquiring land for a swimming pool facility was the single-most important investment.
- Nature preserves and trails were the top items (over 80% combined) for recreational amenities that respondents would like to see more of in their neighborhoods.

The Town Recreation Commission is monitoring activities and needs, and is actively pursuing new opportunities to better meet the recreational needs of residents. The top priorities of the Commission are currently:

- Develop a year-round swimming pool. The Town is currently using a private outdoor facility at the Cross Court property for the Town Summer Camp program.
- Develop a roller hockey / skateboard park. Robinson Lane Park is currently being considered for this facility.
- Develop more athletic fields. Existing baseball fields are sufficient for existing uses, but the community needs more soccer fields. The Recreation Commission is exploring opportunities to expand to properties adjacent to Robinson Lane Park.
- Develop more tennis courts. Tennis court usage is currently at an all-time high.
- Develop a large indoor space / gymnasium. The Recreation Commission is currently working with the Wappinger Central School District to use its facilities. The Commission is exploring the feasibility of constructing a “bubble building” for approximately \$700,000. The life expectancy of such building is approximately 20 years.

- Enhance Schlathaus Park with the cooperation of the local Rotary organization. Develop a seasonal outdoor ice-skating rink.

Goal

Develop recreational and cultural facilities and programs that are adequate to serve the Town's current and future populations.

Objectives

- A. Anticipate future needs and provide appropriate locations for facilities, services and programs. Locate recreational facilities in such a way that they are compatible with Town development patterns.

There are a number of potential sites for acquisition by the Town for recreational purposes. These are:

- Lands around Robinson Lane Park.
- Cranberry Hills / Ketcham Trails property, consisting of 327 acres. This site has potential for both active and passive recreational uses.
- Jekoce Acres camp property for a community recreation center and swimming pool. The adjacent Sun-Up construction storage site that borders the lake to the west could be a part of the future facility.
- Deer Hill. This Wheeler Hill Road property has recently been put up for sale. This was identified as a new opportunity to meet the Town's growing recreational needs.
- Lands adjacent to Castle Point Park. The former VA Hospital water plant property and building, located opposite the entrance to Castle Point Park, is available for immediate acquisition from the Federal Government. The land could be used for parking and the building re-used for cultural, recreational, tourism functions, and for a possible Teen Center.

Recommendation

1. The Town should define a method for evaluating these opportunities and engage the public in the decision-making process.
2. The Town should create a fund for potential land acquisitions for recreational uses.

B. Maximize community use of existing facilities.

The Town Administration and the Recreation Commission have been engaged in developing the following properties for greater public use:

- Carnwath Farm. Continue to develop the Greystone/Carnwath Farms property for recreational uses. A sports museum will be a tenant for one part of the property.
- Robinson Lane Park. The Recreation Commission has proposed a one-mile trail around the perimeter of the park, and recommends developing a rollerblade and skateboard facility in the park. A second vehicular access is needed to resolve congestion and safety problems during larger events.
- Rymer Park. Currently undeveloped with approximately 30 acres, the park includes large areas of slopes and wetlands with little level land. A conceptual plan had been prepared to improve the park for public use, including a small building, bathrooms, and a play/picnic area suitable for summer camp use. This property could be linked to the Wappinger Creek Greenway Trail via the nearby Town sewer line easement and proposed multi-family development between Old Hopewell and Route 9D (behind the cell tower, Emergency Services and Town Hall buildings).

Specific recreational amenities were requested consistently in the write-in questions of the 2004 Survey. The Town will need to prioritize these requests, and identify whether existing properties can meet these needs, or whether new properties would be necessary. The most requested amenities were:

- Ice skating rink, and more winter activities
- Shaded picnic areas or pavilions at recreation sites, more benches
- More restrooms

- Lighting on athletic fields for nighttime use
- Teen center
- New larger senior center

The Recreation Committee is also working on developing the following high priority amenities:

- Swimming pool
- Additional athletic fields
- Additional tennis courts
- Gymnasium

Recommendation

Identify a methodology to use in comparing various alternatives, and involve public in decision-making process.

- C. Develop Greenways along the Hudson River, Wappinger Creek and Sprout Creek for public recreation.

The Hudson River has ecological, scenic and historical value, as well as being a great recreational resource.

Recommendations

Hudson River

1. Develop the Hudson River Greenway trail from Castle Point Park to Wappinger Creek. Sixty-nine percent of residents participating in the 2004 Survey were in favor of this measure, versus 11 percent opposed.
2. Improve access to the Hudson River, including acquisition of the Chelsea Marina and improved trailer parking and boat storage; pedestrian access at Castle Point Park and Carnwath Farm. (Fifty-four percent of residents participating in the 2004 Survey were in favor of purchasing the Chelsea Marina and waterfront lands, with

only 18 percent opposed.) The lumber yard to the north of Chelsea hamlet may be a possible future location for parking or other facilities.

3. Integrate and improve facilities to support the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail for canoers and kayakers. Provide access at Reese Park for hand launch of small boats and camping by permit at Reese and Castle Point parks.

Wappinger Creek

4. Develop a cooperative partnership with the Village to make the best recreational use of Wappingers Lake, including possible dredging of the lake.
5. Continue to develop and expand the Wappinger Greenway Trail as a joint Village and Town project.
6. Improve access to Wappinger Creek (Fifty-nine percent of residents participating in the 2004 Survey were in favor of improving access, with only 15 percent opposed.)

General Recommendations for Greenways

7. Develop a Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The Town should, either independently or in cooperation with the Town of Poughkeepsie and the Village of Wappingers Falls, prepare a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). The Village of Wappingers Falls is currently in the process of preparing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (LWRS). LWRPs have been touted as among the most efficient and effective programs ever created for waterfront revitalization. An LWRP provides clear priorities and action steps that implement Federal, State and local coastal zone management.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">D. Develop additional trails throughout the Town to meet public demand for nature and walking trails in cooperation with the Wappinger Greenway Trail Committee, which is an intermunicipal group comprised of the Towns of Wappinger and Poughkeepsie and the Village of Wappinger Falls. |
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Recommendations

1. Develop more jogging and walking paths and trails on existing Town-owned lands. The 2004 Survey showed significant demand for nature preserves and trails, with over 80 percent of residents interested in having these facilities in their own neighborhoods.

2. Consider the use of utility line easements for possible trails and connections to areas of public open space. There are 24 miles of utility right-of-ways in the Town, which could be used as trails through Town agreement with utility companies. (Sixty-one percent of residents participating in the 2004 Survey were in favor of the Town using these right of ways for recreational purposes, with only 11 percent opposed.)
3. Develop bike paths where appropriate as opportunities arise. (Forty-three percent of residents participating in the 2004 Survey said that at least one member of the family would use bike paths and bike lanes if they existed throughout the Town.)
4. Explore the feasibility of developing a connecting trail from Stony Kill north along wetland boundaries to the elementary and middle schools, finally connecting with Reese Park.

Emergency and Protection Services

The Town of Wappinger's police coverage is provided by the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Police, which provides regular patrols to all areas of the Town in marked patrol vehicles 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, with particular attention to areas with more activity. The Sheriff is also responsible for responding to 911 emergency calls in the Town. The Sheriff's office provides additional services to the Town's schools. Deputies are assigned to schools in order to teach safety lessons, maintain order, and provide a general sense of security.

The Town Wappinger fire services consist of three different fire districts: Hughsonville, New Hackensack and Chelsea. These companies supply comprehensive fire coverage for the Town. For more information, please refer to the companion volume to this Plan, Inventory and Analysis. In addition, Village of Wappingers Falls is protected by Village of Wappingers Falls Fire Department.

Solid Waste

The existing and proposed County programs and private carriers generally handle solid waste and recycling issues in the Town. The Town has a recycling center and a bulk pick-up site. There is particular concern with the proper disposal of hazardous wastes such as used motor oil, anti-freeze, used paint, fertilizers, pesticides, and other household chemicals. The key is to make proper disposal of these wastes easier and more user-friendly.

Goal

Maintain and enhance the Town-wide comprehensive recycling program.

Objectives

A. Encourage increased rates of recycling.

Recommendation: Increase quality and quantity of public education and announcements locally. Use the Town website for information, announcements and reminders.

B. Encourage proper disposal of hazardous wastes.

Recommendation: Provide local drop-off and pick-up of hazardous wastes. Provide collection services at the Town recycling center as extension of the County program.

C. Monitor recycling rates, solid waste disposal rates, and hazardous waste disposal rates through objective measurements.

Recommendation: The Town should consider the hiring of a waste management company.

Town Government Facilities

The Town Hall on Middlebush Road provides 16,000 square feet of space for offices and meeting rooms. All Town offices, except for the Recreation Office at Schlathaus Park and the Town Highway facilities by Old Route 9, are located in the Town Hall. The Town Hall also includes facilities for Town Court, which are no longer large enough to accommodate the needs of the Court. The Town Highway site includes a garage, offices, equipment storage buildings, a salt storage bin and a Sheriff substation.

Education

The Town of Wappinger is located within three school districts. The majority of the Town falls within the Wappingers Central School District. A small area in the southwest corner of the Town falls within the Beacon City School District and an even smaller area in the Northeast corner falls within the Arlington Central School District.

The Wappingers Central School District covers 120 square miles, and is the 9th largest central school district in New York State, with over 11,000 students. It has 10 elementary schools, two of which are located within the Town. The district has two junior high school and two high schools; one of each are located in the Town. The district is considering plans to build another school facility, administrative offices, bus depot, and athletic fields on a property within the District. The location of existing school facilities and school districts in the Town are shown in the companion volume to this Plan, Inventory and Analysis.

Library

The Grinnell Library serves the needs of the residents of the Town of Wappinger and the Village. The Library is located in an historic building on East Main Street in the Village. The building has approximately 4,000 square feet of space and in excess of 27,000 volumes. The building was constructed in 1887; an addition was completed in the early 1980s. Grinnell Library is a member of the Mid-Hudson Libraries; this affiliation provides residents with additional services and a larger resource base.

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Land Use

IX. LAND USE

There are approximately 17,000 acres of land in the Town of Wappinger, comprising of over 26 square miles. This chapter explores how the Town has changed in the last three decades; how it will change if current land use regulations remain the same and if private development were to maximize allowable densities of development; and how the Town should develop in the future.

This chapter builds upon the research and analysis as reported in the “Land Use, Zoning and Development Potential” chapter in the companion volume to this Plan, Inventory and Analysis.

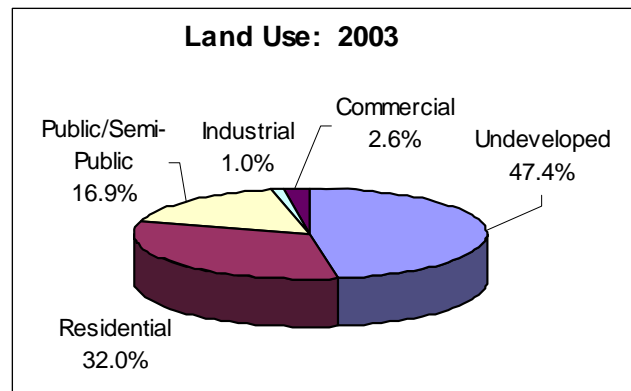
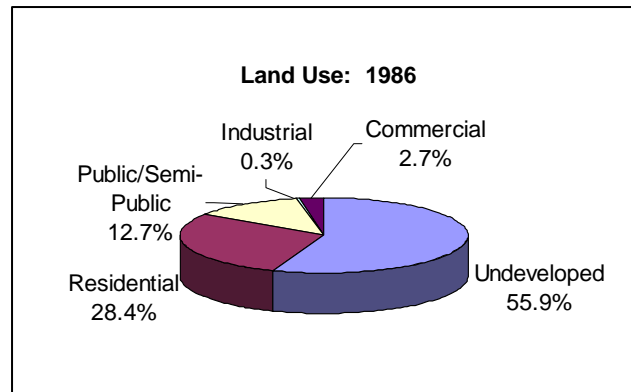
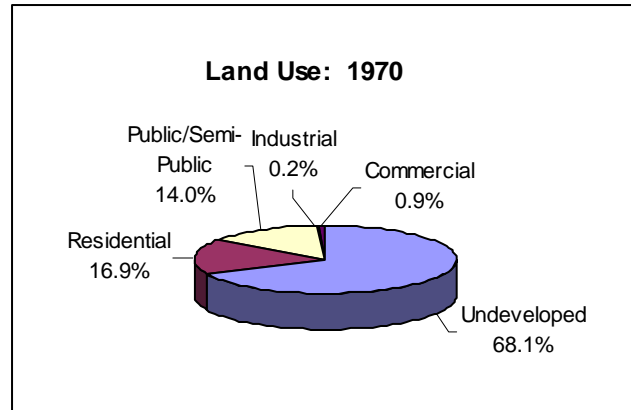
The analysis of development potential in the second half of the chapter is an important step in identifying if the zoning of a municipality is in line with the goals and expectations of the Town.

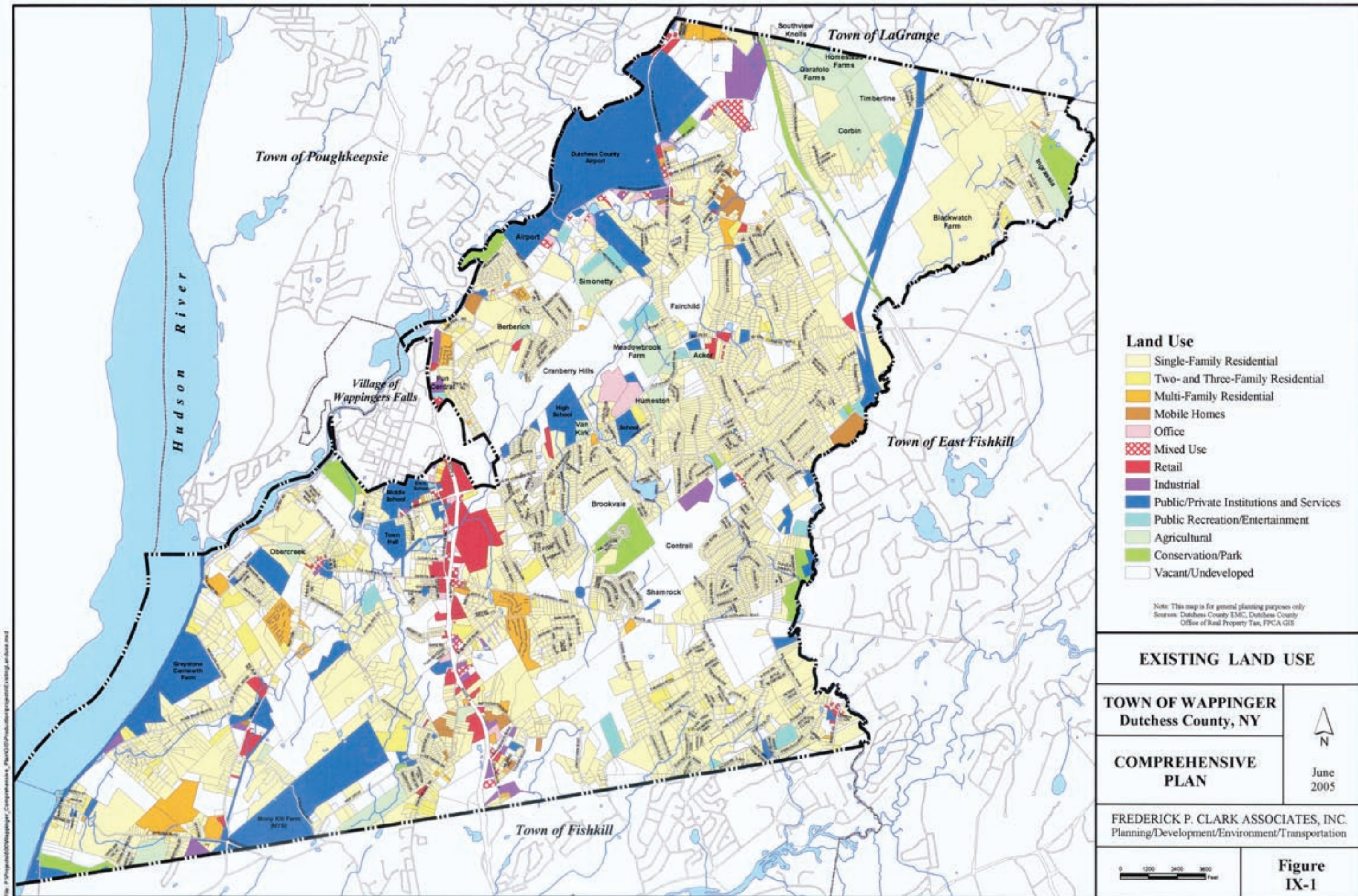
The land use component of this plan uses the dual perspectives of past trends and a possible future based on current zoning to adjust and fine-tune the destiny of the Town. The details of the dual analyses are summarized below:

1. Past Land Use: Land Use Changes from 1970 to 2003. The

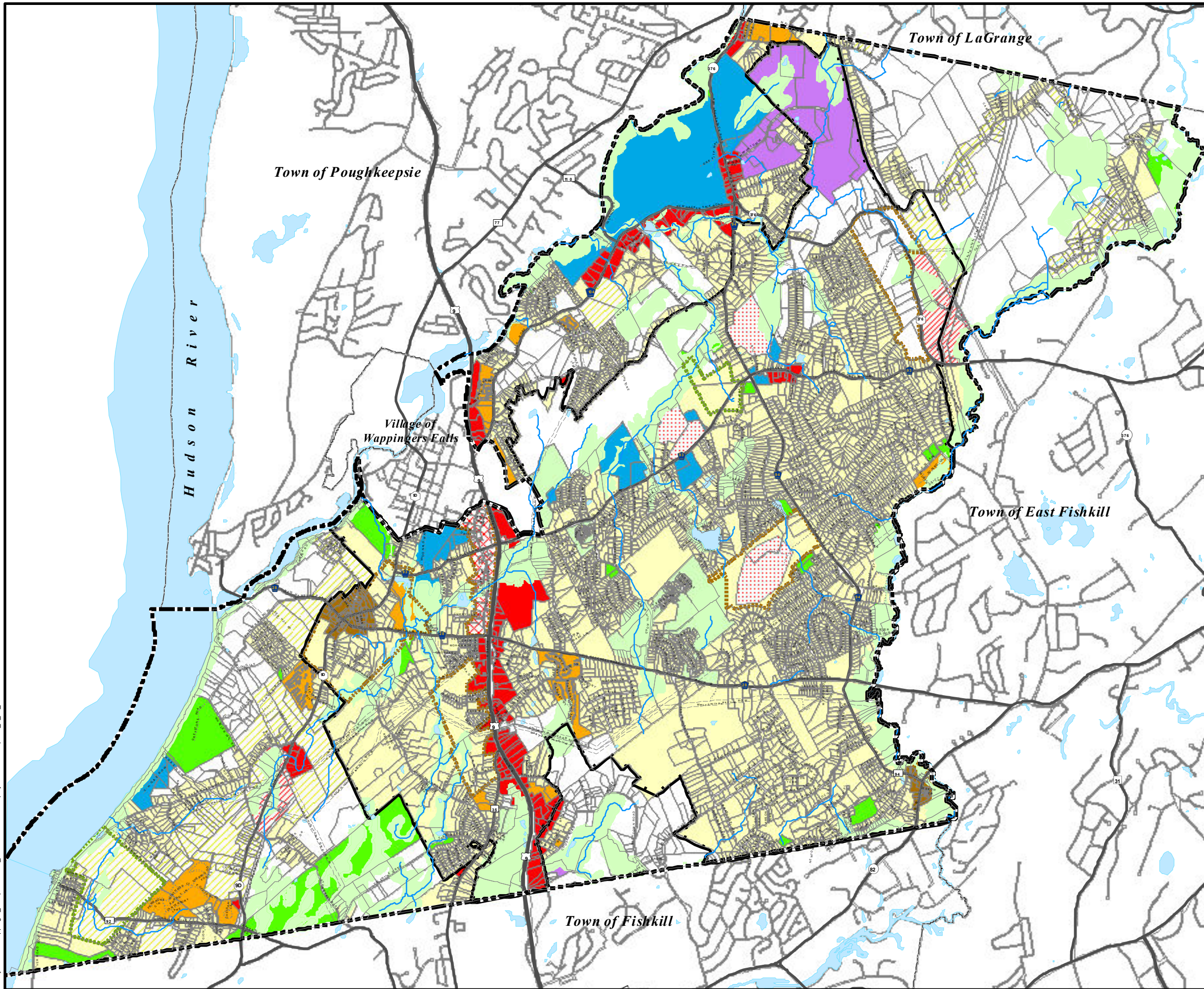
following items highlight the major changes in development the Town has experienced over the 33 years between land use inventories:

- Developed Land: In 1970, there were 5,214 developed acres (32% of all Town land); in 2003 there were 8,997 developed acres (55% of all Town land). The amount of developed land increased by 70 percent in this 33-year period, resulting in the development of 3,673 acres of land at a rate of 111 acres per





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Legend

- Waterbodies
- WST/TIA Overall Boundary*
- Conservation Residential (Cluster)
- Workforce / Senior Affordable Housing Overlay
- Residential - Low Density
- Residential - Low/Medium Density
- Residential - Medium Density
- Residential - High Density
- Hamlet
- Mixed Office/Retail/Residential
- Commercial
- Conservation Commercial
- Conservation Office Park
- Industry
- Institutional
- Recreation
- Open Space

* Wappinger Sewer Transmission / Treatment Improvement Area (WST/TIA)

Note: This map is for general planning purposes only
Sources: Dutchess County EMC, Dutchess County
Office of Real Property Tax, FPCA GIS

**2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
RECOMMENDED LAND USE**

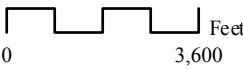
**TOWN OF WAPPINGER
Dutchess County, NY**

**COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



Revised
September 27, 2010



**Figure
IX-2**

year. If land development trends continue, all currently undeveloped lands will be developed by the year 2075.

- Public and Semi-Public Land: Currently occupying 2,866 acres with approximately 650 acres for recreation, the percentage of land in public use (17% in 2003) has not changed appreciably since 1970 when it was 14 % of all Town land.
- Agriculture: Two-thirds of agriculturally used lands were lost between 1986 and 2003; a reduction from a total of 1,596 acres in 1986 to 531 acres in 2003.
- Industry: Lands used for industrial purposes have grown from 25 acres in 1970 to 173 in 2003. Approximately 930 acres (about 6 percent of the Town's land area) are zoned industrial. While this greatly exceeds industrial land use, industrial zoning generally allows all other commercial uses as well as industrial uses.
- Commercial Land: Use of commercial land peaked in the 1980s at 452 acres – triple the amount of land used for commercial activity in 1970 at 148 acres. Currently, commercial land use is 439 acres: 88 acres in office uses, 263 in retail/service and 88 in mixed use. Approximately 1,075 acres (about 7 percent of the Town's land area) are zoned commercial.
- Residential Land: Acreage used for residences nearly doubled between 1970 and 2003, rising from 2,759 acres to 5,409 acres. Approximately 2,650 acres were developed for housing during this period, averaging 80 acres per year. The Town maintained a nearly constant balance of single family vs. multi-family land uses, at roughly 10% multi-family and 90% single-family. Currently, the Town has 4,724 acres in single-family use and 685 acres in multi-family use. Approximately 13,500 acres are zoned residential, including approximately 340 acres zoned for multiple family residential uses and 13,160 acres zoned for single-family residential use.

2. Development Potential. This section highlights future land uses, given current land use regulations:

- Residential Development Potential. Approximately 4,600 acres of residentially zoned land is developable, resulting in an estimated 3,100 units of housing that could be built in the future.
- Commercial and Industrial Development Potential. There are approximately 4.7 million square feet of potential building space in vacant land zoned

commercial or industrial in the Town. This figure takes into account the floor area ratio (FAR) allowed in each district, as well as environmental constraints. However, development potential is limited by the absence of municipal sewer and water service on most sites. Of the lots with 10 or more contiguous acres zoned commercial or residential (see Figure IV-1), only one area totaling 85 acres (in the Conservation Office Park District) is in municipal sewer and water districts. The development potential of this property is up to 740,000 square feet of floor area. Two areas zoned Conservation Office Park or Conservation Commercial are *adjacent* to water and/or sewer districts, with a total area of approximately 114 acres and a development potential of approximately 980,000 square feet of floor area. The remaining large vacant or undeveloped sites are in the Airport Industry District, which is not planned to receive municipal sewer and water service. Development of sites without sewer and water service is constrained primarily by the performance of on-site wells and septic systems.

Issues and Opportunities

For most areas, the Plan described here recommends a continuation of existing zoning, or recommends adapting existing zoning to reflect actual uses that may have pre-dated the zoning. The areas where changes from either current land use or current zoning are recommended are highlighted below.

1. This land use plan includes changes designed to improve the function and appearance of existing community centers, including the Hamlets of Chelsea, Hughsonville, New Hackensack, Swartoutville and Myers Corners, and the proposed Old Route 9 District.
2. Currently, there is a mismatch between the capacity of the land to absorb waste water and the allowable density of dwelling units in the northern part of the Town. The Town can correct this mismatch by rezoning lands not currently within a sewer district to lower densities, and by rezoning lands outside of areas planned for sewer service to even lower densities.
3. Other areas recommended for a change to low-density residential are an area south of MacFarlane Road and east of Route 9, and an area on Route 9D south of Ketchamtown Road.
4. Other areas to be changed to high-density residential to make existing mobile home/trailer parks more conforming in terms of zoning include three areas in the Route 9 Corridor (on Cooper Road, on Osborne Road, and on Route 9 and Smithtown Road) and one area at the junction of Pye Lane and Montfort. An existing trailer park on New Hackensack Road northeast of Lakeside Road is

currently zoned RMF-3 but the density of dwelling units on the site is approximately 4.7 units per acre. This site should be changed to RMF-5 zoning to make the site more conforming.

5. The Route 9 Corridor consists of a patchwork of Highway Business, Highway Office, and Highway Design zoning districts, and the northern section is partially under the control of the Village of Wappingers Falls. The Town should initiate a discussion with the Village of Wappingers Falls with the goal of coming to a consensus on the use of land in the northern section of the Route 9 Corridor. In the southern section, the Town has an opportunity to create uniform standards regarding setbacks, landscaping, and access to sites which could improve the character and function of the Corridor.

Goal

Guide the development of the Town in a way that preserves environmentally significant features, improves housing choice, and encourages a balanced economy.

Objectives

A. Designate areas of the Town intended for low-density residential development, farmland protection and open space.

B. Designate areas of the Town that are well situated for medium- and high-density residential development.

C. Designate areas of the Town that, due to transportation links, the intensity of proximate land uses and other features, are appropriate for current and future use as Town centers.

D. Designate areas of the Town where only commercial, industrial or institutional land uses are appropriate.

Land Use Plan

The plan for future land use in the Town of Wappinger is depicted in the Land Use Plan Map, and is further identified and explained in this section. The following categories are a part of the land use plan. The purpose, definition and location of each land use category are described below.

- Residential – Low Density
- Residential – Low/Medium Density
- Residential – Medium Density
- Residential – High Density
- Workforce / Senior Affordable Housing Overlay
- Conservation Residential (Cluster)
- Hamlet
- Mixed Office / Retail / Residential
- Commercial
- Conservation Commercial
- Conservation Office Park
- Industry
- Institutional
- Recreation
- Open Space

Residential – Low Density

This category calls for two- to five-acre minimum lot sizes to protect groundwater supplies and quality (both of which have gradually diminished over the course of the last 30 years of housing development) and to prevent the incidence of septic system failure, as soils north of Widmer Road and Myers Corners Road, and west of Route 9D generally pose severe limitations to the proper functioning of septic systems. This Low Density Residential area is also intended to help preserve open space in the areas furthest from central sewer service and in areas with clusters of protected forest and parkland and working farms. Finally, the Low Density Residential areas are intended to limit traffic burdens on rural roads and hamlets.

Within the Low Density area, new residential uses are expected to rely on individual or group septic systems designed to protect groundwater quality, with a residential density no greater than one unit per two acres. The use of private treatment plants should be discouraged.

As in the Residential – Medium Density category, cluster development should be encouraged, as long as it is designed to rely either on individual private septic systems or a collective septic system.

The category includes areas east of the Dutchess Rail Trail in the northeast corner of Wappinger, the sensitive uplands and wetlands that surround Smithtown Road, and the southwestern corner from the Hudson River inland to Route 9D and east of 9D along both sides of Stonykill Road.

Residential – Low/Medium Density

This category calls for lots that are 40,000 sq.ft. (approximately 1 acre) to 80,000 sq.ft. (approximately 2 acres) in size, depending upon the availability of public sewer and/or water. This category includes areas along and mostly west of Route 9D from Marlerville Road to Chelsea Road; areas along Diddell Road, Robinson Lane, Viola Court, Red Hawk Hollow Road and Maloney Road in the northeasterly corner of the Town; and two Swenson properties on New Hackensack Road in the vicinity of New Hackensack Hamlet.

Residential – Medium Density

The one-quarter to one-acre minimum lot sizes of this residential area cover most of Wappinger. This area extends from the proposed Dutchess Rail Trail west to Hughsonville and parcels west of Ketchamtown Road. It includes lands east and west of the Route 9 Corridor, with the exception of the Greenfly Wetland and the steep slopes and wetland areas around Smithtown Road.

Much of the area is already devoted to residential development at densities of one-half to one acre per lot. The one-half acre lots are concentrated within the area currently zoned R-20 both west and east of Route 9, and west of Lake Oniad and Myers Corners along Old Hopewell, Myers Corners and Widmer Roads.

To protect groundwater quality and to support central utilities, new development within this area should either connect to central sewer systems within existing sewer districts or sewer improvement areas, or be designed to connect to the regional municipal sewer system. Cluster developments should be used where appropriate to preserve natural features, such as riparian buffers, open space / conservation areas shown on the Land Use Map, and to allow for more cost-effective utility systems and roads.

Residential – High Density

This category includes multi-family (apartment) housing, townhouses, and duplexes. It covers scattered sites in the Route 9 Corridor and three existing locations on the

southwest and northeast ends of Town. This category currently includes over one-third of the existing housing units in the Town, which comprise 9% of all residential land uses.

This Land Use Plan proposes that high-density residential districts be eligible for density bonuses for affordable/workforce housing and affordable senior housing. Under this plan, a density bonus would be available if a specified portion of the additional housing units are affordable to working residents and a density bonus would be available if a specified portion of the additional housing is age-restricted to seniors. Specific guidelines and definitions would be established through local legislation.

Workforce / Senior Affordable Housing Overlay Zone

A mapped overlay zone applies an additional layer of incentives or controls over an area, which determines the way in which the underlying zone functions, or add uses and standards which would not ordinarily apply to the underlying zone. The Workforce / Senior Affordable Housing Overlay Zone would encourage the construction of housing that is affordable to working people and seniors in the Town through a density bonus. The bonus would be available if a specified portion of the additional housing developed is affordable to working people in the Town or seniors. Specific guidelines and definitions would be established through local legislative action.

Conservation Residential (Cluster)

This category includes lands with special environmental features and scenic value. The intent of this category is to recommend that housing development in these areas – the Meadowbrook Farm area near Myers Corners and the lands surrounding Chelsea Hamlet – be developed only through cluster development, concentrating residential uses in areas with the least impact and preserving large areas with scenic and environmental value.

Hamlet

One historic hamlet within the Town demands special attention in the land use decision-making process: Hughsonville. The land use plan designates as a hamlet the existing densely settled portions of this area, and a limited amount of undeveloped land on its perimeter. The plan calls for carefully designed zoning and transportation improvements needed to preserve the character of this area and to ensure that surrounding development pressures will not destroy the functionality of its road system and historic character.

In Hughsonville, mixed residential and commercial uses and building renovations are needed, along with a plan for accommodating increasing traffic volumes through the hamlet (see Transportation and Community Character Chapters for a more detailed explanation of proposed solutions and a graphic rendering of the District Design Plan for Hughsonville). Also, dimensional requirements for lots within this hamlet should be

revised to reflect the existing, traditional development pattern and bring the majority of the lots there into conformance with zoning. For instance, many attractive lots in Hughsonville are between 50 and 70 feet wide, and between 90 and 170 feet deep. Total lot size in the hamlet ranges from 3,500 square feet to 25,000 square feet. Lots of 4,000 to 5,000 square feet are in keeping with village and hamlet patterns throughout the region, and generally function well where central utilities are present.

Providing additional public access to the Hudson River at the hamlet of Chelsea would be worthwhile, but controlling future traffic through the hamlet is essential. Regarding current land uses, careful monitoring of drinking water quality and vigilant maintenance of individual septic systems is needed until central sewer and water systems are available.

Swartoutville, a third hamlet at the junction of Route 82 and All Angels Hill Road in the southeastern corner of the Town, is nestled between steep hills on the west and the floodplains of Sprout Creek on the east. This Land Use Plan recognizes this hamlet through its inclusion in the Hamlet land use category.

The preparation of a concept plan for the Swartoutville hamlet (such as has been done for the Hughsonville Hamlet as part of this Plan), should be accomplished in the future.

Mixed Office / Retail / Residential

This use is intended to foster a compact, vibrant community center for the Old Route 9 District. The Town envisions a carefully arranged complex of shops and offices, with residences above or behind buildings fronting main roads. Further development of details for the Old Route 9 District will follow after this Plan.

Commercial

The purpose of this category is to allow for the continued commercial use of areas in the Route 9 Corridor, in Myers Corners, and near the airport. These areas are generally zoned as Highway Business, Highway Design, General Business or Shopping Center. Due to the Town's interest in protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the community, the areas planned for commercial use along Route 9 have not been expanded. Businesses will be encouraged to make more efficient use of existing commercial areas.

Conservation Commercial

The Conservation Commercial category appears in areas where commercial uses already exist or would be more appropriate than any other use, but where severe environmental constraints dictate that development be carefully designed and built at a relatively less intensive scale than in other commercial districts. For this reason, gasoline stations

should not be allowed in the Conservation Commercial zoning district. The three areas shown are the lands between Route 376 and the Maybrook Line, a small area south of Myers Corners Road near Route 9 and the area along both sides of Route 9D at its northern intersection with Old State Road.

Conservation Office Park

Areas appropriate for office uses, but which contain extensive wetlands, streams or steep slopes, thereby requiring special treatment, are included in the Conservation Office Park (COP) category. This category represents the greatest opportunity for the large-scale development of attractive, environmentally sensitive non-residential uses that could expand the Town's tax base and make its economy more secure. Imaginatively designed office campuses in these areas would leave ample open space networks and could incorporate wetlands and streams as site amenities.

The areas designated for this land use include the “Conrail” property west of All Angels Hill Road and north of Tor Road.

Industry

Industrial areas have been designated to the northeast of the Airport, in the area of the former IBM facility just west of Myers Corners, and on the southern end of the Route 9 Corridor. This represents a significant strategic change from former land use plans, which sought to encourage primarily office and office/research uses. The 1988 Plan had only one small site designated as industrial – the lumber company site on the Hudson River. With IBM now gone, and with the Fairchild property still underutilized, the Town has begun to diversify its land use strategy.

Institutional

The institutional category includes existing public facilities that are not also recreation areas or floodplains, and includes school grounds, the Town Hall and Emergency Services Building, the Chelsea pump station owned by New York City, fire department property on Myers Corners Road, and the Dutchess County Airport. In the event that additional schools or other public facilities are needed in the future, specific siting studies should be undertaken to determine the best locations.

Open Space

The Open Space category includes areas of the Town intended to remain green space, because of important or fragile environmental features. This category includes 100-year floodplains and lands not owned by the Town but which are publicly owned lands for active and passive recreation (primarily the New York State Stony Kill property), and

lands conserved in perpetuity. The plan proposes that these areas be kept permanently undeveloped.

Recreation

This category includes Town-owned lands that are used for active and passive recreational purposes, and any proposed lands for such use (such as the lands to the north of the Dutchess County Airport, adjacent to Wappingers Creek).

Recommendations

1. The Hamlet zoning should be revised so as to work with existing hamlet settlement patterns and to reduce the occurrence of nonconforming lots. Lots of 4,000 to 5,000 square feet in size are in keeping with village and hamlet patterns. For instance, many attractive lots in Hughsonville are between 50 and 70 feet wide, and between 90 and 170 feet deep. Total lot size in the hamlet ranges from 3,500 square feet to 25,000 square feet.

Providing sewer service to the area will help achieve land use goals and minimize environmental problems associated with waste water disposal on existing lots. Small lot sizes can also be a way of encouraging affordable housing. By encouraging small lots with central sewer service, developers have an opportunity to construct modest-sized houses on these lots and sell them for more affordable prices.

2. A zoning district should be developed so as to implement the mixed retail, office and residential uses intended for the Old Route 9 District in the Land Use Plan.
3. Zoning changes should be considered in the areas between the Wildwood Sewer District and Route 376, where there are several parcels of 10 or more acres which have the same severe soil constraints as other areas in the Town with high rates of septic system failure. Within this area, two areas near the intersection of St. Nicholas Road and Widmer Road are zoned for half-acre lots, and the rest is zoned for one acre lots. These areas should be rezoned to R-80. The area outside of the WST/TIA boundary to the north should be rezoned from R-20 to R-80 and the area to the northeast from R-40/80 to R-3A to reflect the unsuitability of the soils there for septic systems, the need for more area for absorption of septic flow, and the fact that there are no plans to extend sewer service to these areas. The other areas that have soils with severe septic limitations and are not within existing sewer districts are either already largely developed according to existing zoning, or are zoned for two-acre lots, posing less of a demand on the soils.

4. In the future, the Town should examine the residential zoning districts with variable densities (R-20/40 and R-40/80), the intermediate densities of 30,000 or 60,000 square feet, in that these zones allow for these densities under circumstances that may not be environmentally sound. Currently, the intermediate densities are allowed if either central water or central sewer are present. Central water without central sewer will protect homeowners from some public health consequences of failing septic systems, but will not protect the overall environment from failing systems. Conversely, central sewer without central water will not protect homeowners from droughts and other potable water problems.
5. In order to improve the function and appearance of the Route 9 Corridor, the Town should consider offering density bonuses for development occurring on larger lots. This would encourage the assembly of small lots, which would result in fewer curb cuts, greater opportunities for landscaped buffers along the highway's edge, better internal circulation and better traffic flow on Route 9. The Town should also study the appropriateness of current zoning in the Route 9 Corridor and the possibility of consolidating two or more zones in the corridor, or developing uniform dimensional regulations for lands within the Corridor. The study should examine current land uses, current lot sizes, existing lot widths and depths and setbacks.
6. As mentioned above, the Land Use Plan shows Hughsonville and Swartoutville as being designated for Hamlet development.
7. Villa Borghese is a restaurant and catering facility which has been in existence in an R-20 zoning district for many decades. Similarly, the Osborne Inn has been in existence in an R-40 zoning district for quite a long time. As a reflection of the existing and enduring nature of these uses, the Land Use Plan shows these properties with a Commercial (Neighborhood Business) designation.
8. Stonykill Farm is a property which is roughly 285 acres in size and owned by the New York State Education Department. This property is used for agricultural and educational purposes. The Land Use Plan designates this property for a new five-acre zoning district. In addition, this Plan recommends that the Town explore the creation of a new agricultural zoning district which would include property such as this.
9. This Plan finds it reasonable and appropriate to extend the Swartoutville hamlet to the south by a relatively small amount to encompass the Chambers property within the Hamlet designation.

10. The property known as Stonegate and located on the east side of Old Post Road includes existing high density residential development on the front portion of the property, while the rear portion which extends to Beechwood Circle is undeveloped. The Land Use Plan shows a Commercial designation for the developed portion of the property and a residential designation for the rear, in order to both reflect the existing development and protect the Beechwood Circle neighborhood.
11. The “Canter” property is located on the westerly side of Route 9 between Fowlerhouse and Card Roads. It is one of only two properties located on Route 9 which are zoned 2-Family Residence District.¹ The Land Use Plan designates the front of this property for commercial (Highway Business) use and the rear for Medium Density Residential, in order to both acknowledge this parcel’s location on Route 9 and to protect the adjacent neighborhoods.
12. This Plan recommends that the former Fairchild property be rezoned from Planned Industry to Conservation Office Park because Planned Industry is no longer appropriate given the alternative opportunities for the redevelopment of this property.
13. The property formerly known as Pizzagalli and located on Myers Corners Road is currently zoned Planned Industry. Given the existing and potential future uses of this property, this Plan recommends that it be rezoned to Conservation Office Park, which allows many suitable uses for this property, but excludes higher intensity industrial uses.
14. The property known as Cranberry, which is located between Widmer and Myers Corners Road, is a large (325-acre) undeveloped property zoned R-20. Much of this property is environmentally sensitive, including approximately 112 acres of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulated wetlands. This wetland acreage comprises 35.4% of the total property. When mapped, it is likely that the Town-regulated wetlands may exceed that amount. This property also contains steep slopes, important habitat areas, and abundant wildlife, possibly including threatened or endangered species.

This property is one of the most well-studied properties in the Town, having been the subject of a variety of development applications and associated environmental analysis, as well as long-term analysis over many years as part of this Comprehensive Plan. During this period development regulations in the Town and State have changed and have become more environmentally protective,

¹ The other property is proposed for RMF-3 zoning to reflect the density of the existing mobile home park located on that property.

including but not limited to the enactment of new, comprehensive Town wetland regulations in 2005.

Given the environmental sensitivity of this property, this Plan recommends that the Town Board consider designating the Cranberry property as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) in accordance with the provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

Further, and in the interest of having this property's zoning properly reflect the carrying capacity of this property, this Plan recommends that the Cranberry property be designated for Low Density residential development, or more specifically to be rezoned to the R-80 zoning district.

15. The Town's Zoning Law currently includes 13 non-residential districts, which the Town Board deems too many, given the kinds of uses permitted in these districts and the nature of the Town. Two of these zoning districts, namely the Highway Office (HO) and Highway Design (HD) Districts, permit essentially the same list of uses. In the interest of making the Zoning Law less cumbersome, this Plan recommends that the HO District be eliminated, and that the HO-zoned properties in the Town be rezoned to the HD District.
16. This Plan recommends that zoning be created which would allow for the creation of what is known as a Continuing Care Retirement Community, whereby senior independent living, assisted living and advanced care for seniors would be located together on the same property. However, this Plan does not identify any specific property in particular as being appropriate for this new zoning. An analysis upon which to base an identification of an appropriate property (or properties) would need to be performed.
17. As mentioned above, the Residential – Low/Medium Density category includes two properties owned by Swenson on New Hackensack Road in the vicinity of the New Hackensack Hamlet. This Plan more specifically recommends the rezoning of these two properties from R-20 to R-40/80.
18. This Plan recommends the rezoning of the Smart property located on the westerly side of River Road between Lake Drive and Stenger Court (as well as the property immediately to the south) from R-80 to R-40 so as to be the same as the zoning along both sides of River Road to the north of the two subject properties.
19. It is recommended that the Town and the Village of Wappingers Falls explore the exchange of property between these two jurisdictions in order to try to achieve the safer, more efficient and more economical provision of services and facilities.