Town of Chester Comp Plan
Index of Comp Plan Revisions 2015

Cover Page: Revision Date of 3-18-2015

Footer: Revised from 2014 to 2015 throughout document

Page 22: Added: This Plan also recommends the OAD policy be reviewed with respect to the sequence of SEQR, Planning Board and Town Board reviews.

Page 44: Corrected photo captions with respect to Goosepond Mt. and Sugar Loaf Mt.

Page 55: Added "on non-working farms, or to buildings that can no longer by used for agricultural purposes" to policy HR.9, in response to Orange County Planning Department comments.

Page 76: Revised Town of Chester Water District Map to include SBL 12-1-12.22, SBL 12-1-10.32, SBL 6-1-28.12 and SBL 6-1-28.6

Page 78: Sewer Service Revisions: The County will be expanding the Harriman plant to accommodate growth at Camp LaGuardia. In the Sugar Loaf area, there is a separate municipally operated treatment plant. This Plan support continued efforts to upgrade these existing municipal sewer plants to meet the growth needs of the Town. The policy of this 2015 Plan is to prohibit the construction of small individual wastewater treatment facilities in the Town. The Town's previous experience with such facilitie

Page 79: Revised Town of Chester Sewer District Map to include SBL 12-1-12.22 and SBL 12-1-10.32

Page 91: Often, the incentive will take the form of a density bonus—that is, in exchange for including the specified community benefit, the developer is given permission to place more units in a specified area than would normally be permitted by the zoning law and to allow for flexibility in design (i.e. allow attached townhouses in lieu of detached single-family homes in the SR-2 Zoning District).

Page 101: Added: (through incentive zoning) after density bonus.

Page 103: Corrected density code for SBL 7-2-8 from SMD to SLD.

Page 111: Added Laroe Road to LU.8 so that it is consistent with NR.6

Page 117: Added "on non-working farms, or to buildings that can no longer by used for agricultural purposes" to policy HR.9, in response to Orange County Planning Department comments.

Town of Chester Comp Plan
Index of Comp Plan Revisions

Discussion Items for March 24, 2015 Workshop with Town Board:

Comment Letters:

Leonard Silver dated January 14, 2015:

- Would like policies to keep waterways free of human debris
- Concerns related to operation and expansion of gun club
- Concern of traffic from adjacent towns flowing through Chester
- Would like to see more on alternate energy (solar and wind-energy)

Tracy Schuh dated January 14, 2015: (The Preservation Collective, Inc.)

[page 22] - OADs. See noted revision above to address comment
[page 22] - Protection of Natural Features in addition to wetlands, need direction from TB
[page 79] - Expansion of water & sewer districts?
[Page 91] - See revision on page 101 as cited above.
[Page 101]- Does the TB even want to consider future designation of SR-6 District?

Tim Miller Associates, Inc. dated January 13, 2015 [Camp Monroe]:

[Page 91] – Wanted to ensure Incentive Zoning would permit cluster townhouse projects in the SR-2 Zone. See revision on page 101 as cited above.

Linda Cuadros dated December 2, 2015: (Sugar Loaf Community Foundation)

[page 47 Knapps View]. Wants to ensure community facilities are limited to open space related improvements (e.g. restrooms, pinnic areas, etc.).

Michael Bluestein, Rosemary Stack & Gary Tezt (November 2014 through January 2015)

- Recommended revisions to maps showing water and sewer districts on pages 76 & 79.
- The above were addressed with revisions to maps on Page 76 and Page 79

Thomas E. Becker (Farmer):

- Comment with respect the Sign Law impact on existing billboards.

Brian Leentjes (The Caste Fun Center):

- Digital Sign Law

Town of Chester, New York

Comprehensive Plan: 2015 Update

Prepared by the Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Committee
with Planit Main Street, Inc.

Adopted
Town of Chester - **Town Board's Final Draft 3-18-2015**

PLANIT MAIN STREET

Preface

Town of Chester ("Town") prepared and adopted its second Comprehensive Plan ("Plan") on May 1, 2003. That Plan recognized that community planning is an ongoing process and recommended additional actions, plans and detailed studies to pursue the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Section 272-a of the New York State Town Law states the "Town Board shall provide, as a component of such Comprehensive Plan, the maximum intervals at which the adopted plan shall be reviewed." While the adopted Plan did not specify a timeframe for review, the generally accepted standard is every 5 to 10 years.

In January 2013, the Town of Chester Town Board ("Town Board") decided it was time for a periodic review and update of the Comprehensive Plan and thereafter appointed a committee of Town residents to update the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. The committee held regularly scheduled meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month at Town Hall to review and update the Comprehensive Plan. The first Public Visioning Session was held on April 8, 2013 and attended by 56 members of the community.

This draft of the 2014 update of the Chester Comprehensive Plan is not intended as a new departure. Rather it is intended to incorporate and build upon the goals, recommendations and policies set forth in the 2003 Plan. Therefore, it should not be viewed as a change of direction but, rather, as a refinement of the course already established.

Draft

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Town Board

Hon. Alex Jamieson, Supervisor
Jerry Murray, Councilman
Linda Ranni, Councilwoman
Cindy Smith, Councilwoman
Robert Valentine, Councilman

Linda Zappala, Town Clerk
Clifton Patrick, Town Historian

Comprehensive Plan Committee

Robert Valentine, Councilman (Liaison, Town Board)
Don Serotta, Planning Board Chairman
Linda Ranni, former Zoning Board of Appeals, Chairwoman
Ted Talmadge, Resident Farmer
John Vero, Resident, Business Owner and Orange County Legislator
Richard Logothetis, Resident Businessman (Sugar Loaf)
Shary Denes, Resident (Sugar Loaf)

Consultant:

Alan J. Sorensen, AICP, Planit Main Street, Inc.

Special Thanks to:

Special thanks are extended to committee member Shary Denes for her work on editing the Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Chester Town Board also wishes to convey its appreciation to the Orange County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division for their assistance in providing base maps, which has enabled this Comprehensive Plan update to proceed. Special thanks are also extended to those residents who provided their thoughtful input and written comments on the draft Comprehensive Plan. Unless otherwise noted, all photographs courtesy of Planit Main Street.

Draft

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction **1**
1.1 General 1
1.2 Purpose of the Plan 2
1.3 The Comprehensive Plan Process 4

2.0 Portrait of Chester **6**
2.1 Yesterday 6
2.2 Today 7
2.3 Tomorrow 9
2.4 Demographic Trends 9
2.5 Planning Implications for Chester 11
2.6 Chester's Vision and Goals 12
2.7 Achieving Chester's Vision 14

3.0 Natural Resources **17**
3.1 Land Resources 17
3.2 Geologic Features 20
3.3 Water Resources 22
3.4 Natural Habitat 29
3.5 Natural Resources – Objectives and Policies 31

4.0 Agricultural Resources **34**

5.0 Parks and Recreation Resources **43**

6.0 Cultural and Historic Resources **48**

7.0 Transportation **56**

8.0 Community Facilities and Services **73**

9.0 Jobs and Housing **84**

10.0 Land-use Policies **94**

11.0 Implementation Plan **113**

Draft

1.0 Introduction

1.1 General

The Town of Chester was formed in 1845, from parts of the towns of Blooming Grove, Goshen, Monroe and Warwick. For the past 168 years, the Town of Chester has evolved from a rural agricultural community into an agricultural, commercial, industrial and residential center within Orange County, one of the fastest growing counties in New York State.

The growth pressure in the Town is the result of a growing regional economy and proximity to the New York metropolitan area, which will continue to draw more businesses and residents to the community. Chester's challenge and planning vision is to accommodate new growth while retaining its unique heritage and enhancing the Town's character and quality of life.

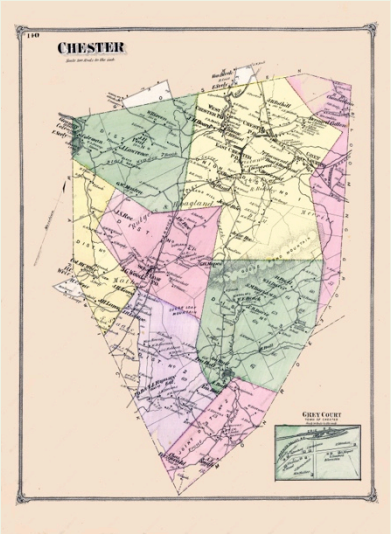
The Town's unique character is defined, in part, by its natural resources, built environment and population. With respect to natural resources, mountains and hillsides such as Goosepond Mountain, Sugar Loaf Mountain, Snake Mountain and Pine Hill help to form the backdrop to Chester's landscape. Glenmere Lake, Black Meadow Brook and other waterbodies also help to form the basis of Chester's identity and character.

Throughout the Town, one can still catch glimpses of Chester's agricultural heritage through its historic farm buildings, which dot the landscape. A few of these structures are part of active farm operations, but many stand neglected. While some farm buildings have been converted to other uses, countless others will be lost without a concerted effort to retain them.

The Town's character is also defined by its commercial centers including the Village of Chester and the hamlet of Sugar Loaf. The Sugar Loaf hamlet provides a compact and energizing mix of land uses; its business center is aesthetically pleasing and conveniently human scaled; its unique shops and eateries, along with historic buildings, invite walking; its Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center attracts patrons from the surrounding region; and the Warwick Valley Rail Line and train station harken back to a time long gone when visitors arrived by rail. The Sugar Loaf hamlet stands in contrast to the surrounding countryside yet is visually harmonious with it.

VISION STATEMENT

"Chester's planning vision is to accommodate new growth while retaining its unique heritage and enhancing the Town's rural character and quality of life."



Above: Chester Map Mid-1800s

Draft

Other portions of the Town have a different character. The industrial parks in Chester were built on a model of uniform uses set upon separate lots with big box buildings that dominate the landscape. In recent decades, a large portion of the Town's farmland was converted to residential development, which was largely built upon the 20th century subdivision model where like uses and building styles, curved streets and/or cul-de-sacs define the landscape.

The Town is also fortunate to have large open spaces (e.g. Goosepond Mountain State Park, Orange County reservoir lands, Black Meadow Creek) and active farmlands, which provide a scenic backdrop to the built environment – helping to retain the rural character of Chester.

Chester's quality of life reflects resident perceptions about cultural, economic, health, physical, social and environmental features of life. Quality of life is therefore a contextual concept, having no independent or absolute value, but is rather a statement about the relative well being of a community. The general sentiment is Chester offers its residents a good quality of life.

The planning vision for the Town of Chester is to continue to allow for growth in a manner that reflects the best qualities of the Town's built environment, while maintaining a high quality of life by providing for economic, employment and housing opportunities, providing a full range of community services and facilities, protecting natural and heritage resources, ensuring the right-to-farm and efforts to keep agricultural lands in production; and protecting the community against negative environmental impacts resulting from new development and/or natural disasters.

1.2 Purpose of the Plan

In accordance with NYS Town Law § 272-a, Comprehensive Plans are intended to be general in nature and may include, but are not limited to, the designation of land-use; the consideration of goals, objectives and policies for agricultural, cultural, historic and natural resource protection; transportation systems; future housing needs, and present and future locations of community facilities; existing and proposed recreation facilities and parkland; future general location of commercial and industrial facilities; and specific strategies for improving the local economy.

Above (top to bottom): View looking northeast toward the Brookview Farm; view looking southeast from McBride Road toward Goosepond Mountain State Park and Sugar Loaf Mountain; and view of the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf. Chester's unique identity is defined, in part, by its agricultural heritage, natural and scenic resources and built environment.

Draft

A Comprehensive Plan includes a concise statement of a community's vision for development, along with goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range implementation of the vision. Goals provide general direction based upon the aspirations of the community, and objectives and policies provide further direction for achieving an aspect of a goal.

This Comprehensive Plan serves as the general guide for the Town Board in its legislative and budgeting role, the Town of Chester Planning Board ("Planning Board") in its site plan and subdivision review and approval role, the Zoning Board of Appeals in its quasi-judicial role, along with Town staff, citizens and landowners with respect to directing development and redevelopment within the Town of Chester.

As a policy statement of community intent, the Comprehensive Plan serves these purposes:

- It operates as an overall guide to be used in day-to-day development decisions.
- It serves as a coordinating mechanism for officials responsible for implementing elements of the plan.
- It provides residents with information on how their community will develop.
- It gives the public and private sectors a clear statement of what the community will expect in development proposals.
- It provides a legal basis for the specific land-use regulations and other local government functions, which will govern the structure of the community in the future.

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to help Chester realize the community's vision for the future and to guide growth in a manner that fosters orderly, coordinated and beneficial development.

The full implementation of some of the Plan objectives necessitates modifications of certain land-use regulations, preparation of more specific plans, or research of additional implementation methods. The additional efforts needed to do these are detailed in the Implementation chapter of the Plan, which outlines the timeframe for implementing objectives along with the party responsible for taking a leadership role in the implementation thereof.

Comprehensive Plan Defined

"A concise statement of a community's vision for development, along with goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range implementation of the vision."

Draft

1.3 The Comprehensive Plan Process

A Comprehensive Plan is, in part, a public review process that defines what is important to the community. By carefully examining current conditions and issues in the context of citizen involvement, the Plan can establish justifiable recommendations for future action. Its purpose is to guide change as consistent with community goals.

The first Comprehensive Plan for the Town was adopted in 1974. More recently, a 12-member Comprehensive Plan Review Committee undertook an update of the 1974 Plan in the summer of 2001 with final revisions adopted by the Town Board on May 1, 2003.

In January 2013, the Chester Town Board appointed seven residents to a Comprehensive Plan Committee to review and update the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Committee, hereafter referred to as "Committee," held regularly scheduled meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month at Town Hall. The Committee encouraged public participation by providing a public comment period at each Committee meeting and by inviting the public on its field trips. Public participation was further encouraged through public meetings on the Plan.

The basic vision of the 2003 Plan has not changed; however, some refinements were necessary to address community conditions and priorities, which had changed since the last update. As such, this 2014 Comprehensive Plan retains the fundamental vision, but updates portions of the plan, where necessary. This 2014 Comprehensive Plan update is not intended as a departure from the 2003 Plan. Rather it is intended to incorporate and build upon the goals, recommendations and policies set forth in the 2003 Plan. Therefore, it should not be viewed as a change of direction but, rather, as a refinement of the course already established.

The first phase of the Comprehensive Plan update includes a relevant document review by the planning consultant with input from the Comprehensive Plan Committee and Planning Board, as well as Town staff members and other commissions of the Town of Chester. Those elements of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan that no longer were relevant were removed and those that were outdated (e.g. population and housing data) were updated to reflect current trends.

Above (top to bottom): View of Chester Town Hall where committee meetings were held; view of segment of the Heritage Trail as seen from Greycourt Avenue in the Village of Chester; and view of historical Welcome to Chester marker, posted by the town historian in 1997. The preservation of historic resources and enhancement of recreational resources are important goals for residents' in the community.

Draft

The Comprehensive Plan Committee held its first Public Visioning Session on April 8, 2013, which was attended by 56 members of the community. The purpose of the visioning session was to solicit input from the public with respect to community priorities and preferences.

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted during the visioning session, which provided a basis to help the Committee focus on those aspects of the Comprehensive Plan that needed to be updated, refined or added.

Table 1-1
Top Responses from Each Category of the SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Historic farms- Black Dirt	Lack infrastructure (Sugar Loaf)	Revitalization of Sugar Loaf	Floodplain development
Open space	Increasing traffic congestion	Conservation subdivisions	High density large-scale housing
Hamlet of Sugar Loaf	Zoning doesn't support business growth	Water Supply Overlay District	Development of Camp LaGuardia
Goosepond State Park	Lack of community center	Link trail systems to regional trails	Location of new sewer plant
Smaller government	Lack of visitor's center	Retain rural character/open land	Traffic congestion
Unique sense of place	No focus on farmland preservation	Retain older residents	Sprawl consuming open space

The Comprehensive Plan Committee also considered the following as part of its update recommendations:

- Town Board priorities and policy direction since the 2003 Plan as reflected in local laws
- New federal and state requirements, laws or initiatives
- The need for better coordination of Plan policies and land-use laws to address conflicts
- Updates to demographic, housing and employment trend analysis
- Clarification of unclear objectives
- Deletion of outdated or completed initiatives that were included in the 2003 Plan
- Recent severe storm events, which appear to be influenced by climate change

This update of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan reflects a culmination of these efforts, along with public input at the Public Visioning Session. Chapter 2.0 provides a historic context concerning the development of the Town of Chester from early European settlement to today, along with an analysis of emerging trends that may affect growth in Chester tomorrow.

Public Visioning Session

"The Comprehensive Plan Committee held a Public Visioning Session on April 8, 2013, which was attended by 56 members of the community. The purpose of the Visioning Session was to solicit input from the public with respect to community priorities and preferences."

Draft

2.0 Portrait of Chester

The Portrait of Chester provides a brief summary of the history of the Town (Yesterday) in order to provide a context to the forces that have shaped Chester's growth (Today) and the demographic trends that are likely to shape the growth of Chester over the next decade (Tomorrow). This is followed by specific demographic trends summarized from U.S. Census Bureau data up to 2010. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the Planning Implications related to emerging trends in the Town and within the surrounding region.

2.1 Yesterday

The Chester area has been occupied by a long series of cultures, beginning with the Paleo-Indian culture through to the Lenapehoking culture (Lenape), which came into the region about 700 years before European settlers. Europeans first settled in the Chester area around 1721. Settlement in the Sugar Loaf area began in the early 1700s. Its businessmen provided supplies and horses to travelers along the Waywayanda Path and King's Highway. In 1794, the first post office was established in Chester (Source: Frank Durland, *Early Chester & Its Settlem*ent).

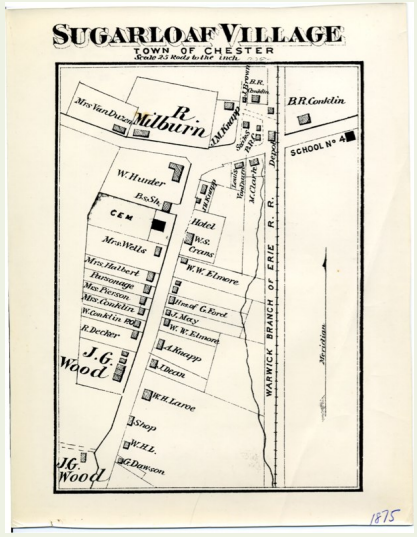
Early settlement of the Chester area was advanced by the development of turnpikes such as Orange Turnpike (1800), Nyack-Goshen Road, New Windsor and Blooming Grove Turnpike (1801) and public roads such as King's Highway (Trenton, N.J. to Newburgh), which greatly improved access to markets for area farmers. In 1806, the Orange Turnpike was extended south to the New Jersey line and north near the hamlet of Chester further improving access to the community.

During the early 1800s Chester remained largely an agrarian farming community with the main dairy product being butter. This would change with the arrival of the railroads, which would alter the nature of farming and commerce in the Town for years to come.

In 1840, the Erie Railroad reached Greycourt, then known as Chesterville. It took until 1841 for the railroad to traverse east one mile to Chester, due to the difficulty in constructing a stable rail bed over the intervening muck lands. Over time, these muck lands were drained and farmers used the Black Dirt farmland to produce a variety of crops, including beets, cabbage, carrots, celery, onions, parsnips and potatoes that were shipped to New York City daily.

Sugar Loaf

"Settlement in the Sugar Loaf area began in the early 1700s. Its businessmen provided supplies and horses to travelers along the Waywayanda Path and Kings Highway."



Above: Sugar Loaf hamlet circa 1875.

Source: Chester Historical Society

Draft

The arrival of the railroad in the 1840s also spawned the liquid-dairy industry as farmers could ship their milk via railroad to New York City. In 1845, the Town of Chester was officially created from parts of the towns of Blooming Grove, Goshen, Monroe and Warwick.

On May 5, 1849, Hambletonian 10 - the founding sire of the Standardbred[i] horse breed - was foaled in the Sugar Loaf, N.Y. Hambletonian produced about 1,331 foals in his 24 seasons at stud. He died on March 27, 1876, at the age of 27 (see page 124 for more on Hambletonian).

In 1850, the Erie Railroad completed a branch line from Greycourt to Newburgh. In 1862, the Warwick Valley Railroad (WVRR) was extended north to Sugar Loaf and Greycourt Station. In 1882, the WVRR merged with the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad (L&H RR) and ran north to Maybrook, N.Y., and south to Belvidere, N.J. The major commodities on the L&H RR were iron and coal.

In 1862, William A. Lawrence, a dairyman in the Town of Chester, created the first American cream cheese as a result of an attempt to create a richer batch of Neufchatel Cheese using cream as well as milk. In 1872, W.A. Lawrence received a patent for his American cream cheese, which was marketed as Cow Brand Neufchatel Cream and Star Brand Cream Cheese.

In 1892, the hamlet of Chester was incorporated into a village. The catalyst for the incorporation of the Village of Chester was the disastrous July 1876 fire that destroyed much of downtown Chester. "The creation of the Village was the mechanism used to provide fire protection through the formation of Walton Hose Company, and Chester's gravity-fed water system with fire hydrants located throughout the built-up sections of the village." (Durland, Frank. A Short History of the Township of Chester and the Incorporation, Village Water Works, etc. 1941)

The railroads provided vital passenger rail service to Chester, stimulating commerce and residential growth. The railroads also enabled local dairy farmers to ship milk directly to New York City, which grew the dairy industry in the Town.

By the mid-1950s, NYS Route 17, aka, The Quickway, dramatically improved vehicular access to Chester, helping to fuel significant commercial and residential growth. Ease of access to the metropolitan region has made Chester an attractive bedroom community for residents.

DAIRY INDUSTRY

"By the late 1800s, Chester's dairy farming industry had grown into a innovative center for cheese production."

4548 CHS Neufchatel Cream Cheese Imprint Plate

Source: Chester Historical Society

Draft

By the early 1980s, passenger rail service to Chester ceased, but freight service is still provided along the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad. It was spring, 1984, that the last passenger Metro North train passed through Chester.

2.2 Today

The Town of Chester has a geographic area of 25.2 square miles (including 2.1 square miles in the Village of Chester), of which, 25.1 square miles is land and 0.1 square miles is land under water. According to the 2010 Census by the U.S. Census Bureau, Chester's population, including the Village of Chester, consisted of 11,981 people. While the 2010 Census shows a slight decrease in population from the 2000 Census, this decrease reflects the loss of approximately 1,000 homeless people who resided at the now closed Camp LaGuardia shelter operated by the City of New York.

Excluding the group quarters population at Camp LaGuardia, the Town and Village of Chester (Village) actually experienced a population increase of approximately 7.5% between 2000 and 2010. This was slightly lower than the growth rate of 9.2% in Orange County (County), but still a higher rate of growth than occurred in the surrounding town/villages of Blooming Grove, Goshen and Warwick.

The table on the next page shows how the Town of Chester, Village of Chester, surrounding municipalities and Orange County population has grown since 1960. Between 1960 and 1980, the Town of Chester's population growth (excluding the Village of Chester) outpaced the County growth rate by a 2:1 margin. Between 1990 and 2000, the Town's growth rate outpaced the County's by 3:1. Again, Chester's slight population decrease between 2000 and 2010 is an anomaly and reflects the closing of Camp LaGuardia and the loss of its group quarters population.

Since the 1980s, there have been a series of annexations of Town of Chester lands into the Village of Chester, which have skewed the growth rate between these municipalities. The large population increases in the Village in recent decades is more a reflection of annexation than growth from within. This growth would have occurred in the Town without annexation. For this reason, Table 2-1 includes the population counts for the Town/Village combined and individually.

Demographic Trends Between the Lines

"The large population increases in the Village in recent decades is more a reflection of annexation than growth from within. This growth would have occurred in the Town without annexation."

Draft

Between 1980 and 1990, the annexation of Whispering Hills condominiums (circa 1984) development into the Village increased its population growth rate to 71.2% - nearly doubling the Village's population.

Developers will continue to seek annexation of their lands into the Village in order to gain access to municipal services (e.g. water and sewer), which, in turn, typically allow for greater development density.

Table 2-1
Population Change 1960-2010

	1960	1970	%Chg. '60-70	1980	%Chg. '70-80	1990	%Chg. '80-90	2000	%Chg. '90-00	2010	%Chg. '00-10	Persons Sq. Mi.
New York State	16,782,304	18,236,967	8.7	17,558,165	-3.7	17,990,778	2.5	18,976,457	5.5	19,378,102	2.1	402
Orange County	183,734	221,657	20.6	259,603	17.1	307,647	18.5	341,367	11.0	372,813	9.2	459
Town of Chester	2,002	3,140	56.8	4,940	57.3	5,868	18.7	8,695	48.2	*8,012	-7.8	320
Village of Chester	1,492	1,627	9.0	1,910	17.4	3,270	71.2	3,445	5.3	3,969	15.2	1,848
Chester (Town & Village)	3,494	4,767	36.4	6,850	43.7	9,138	33.4	12,140	32.8	11,981	-1.31	478
Blooming Grove (T &Vs)	3,777	8,813	133.3	12,339	40.0	16,673	35.1	17,351	3.9	18,028	3.9	519
Goshen (T&V)	*6,835*	*8,393*	*22.8*	*10,463*	*24.6*	*11,500*	*1.0*	*12,913*	*12.3*	13,687	*6.0*	314
Monroe (T &V)	*5,965*	*9,190*	*54.1*	*14,948*	*62.7*	*23,035*	*54.1*	*31,407*	*36.3*	39,912	*27.1*	190
Warwick (T&V)	*12,551*	*16,956*	*35.1*	*20,976*	*24.2*	*27,193*	*29.6*	*30,764*	*13.1*	32,065	*4.2*	316
Woodbury (T &V)	*2,887*	*4,639*	60.1	*6,494*	40.0	*8,236*	26.8	*9,460*	14.9	11,353	*20.1*	314

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census*Reflects closing of Camp LaGuardia and loss of 923 Group Quarters Population counted by U.S. Census in 2000.

The interest of the Town and the Village of Chester should be carefully considered before any request by developers to annex into the Village is considered. This Plan supports the development of an annexation policy to protect the Town and to assist Town policy makers in their review of annexation requests.

Sustained population growth is expected to continue in Chester, and one of the primary goals of the Comprehensive Plan is to manage future development and population growth in a manner consistent with the Town's character and vision.

Annexation Policy

"This Plan supports the development of an annexation policy to protect the Town and to assist Town policy makers in their review of annexation requests."

DRAFT

2.3 Tomorrow

In the coming years, steady population growth in the Town/Village of Chester is expected to continue, but not at the rate experienced in recent decades. The reason for this is two-fold: 1) a decline in the average household size (e.g. fewer children per household, more empty nesters or an increase in single-person households), and 2) the most developable lands in the Town have mostly been developed, leaving only parcels, which are likely to be more difficult to develop due to environmental constraints or poor transportation access.

There are many emerging population trends that will continue to influence development and growth in the Town and County in the decades ahead. These include an aging population, an increase in the number of single-person households, and changes in ethnic and racial compositions of the population and in the surrounding region.

These trends are documented in the 2010 Census and are very likely to continue in the decades ahead. Below is an overview of demographic trends along with an analysis of the potential planning implications. The trends selected for analysis were those determined to most influence development and population growth in the years ahead.

2.4 Demographic Trends

The 2010 Census shows Chester's population is aging. In 2010, nearly 11% of the population was over the age of 65 – up from 7.7% in 2000. In 2010, the Baby Boomers (1946-1964) with a Year 2010 age 45-63 accounted for another 20.7% of Chester's population. Chester will see a dramatic increase in people over the age of 65 in the next decade due to the aging Baby Boomers and increases in life expectancy.

Table 2-2
Chester Town/Village Population by Age 2000 & 2010

Age Cohort	2000		2010	
	Population	%	Population	%
Under 5	866	7.1%	*696*	*5.8%*
5 -19	2,673	22.0%	*2,774*	*23.2%*
20-24	453	3.7%	*554*	*4.6%*
25-34	1,496	12.3%	*1,133*	*9.4%*
*35-44/35-49**	2,604	21.4%	*2,986*	*25.0%*
*45-64/50-64**	2,086	17.2%	*2,482*	*20.7%*
65 & over	930	7.7%	*1,280*	*10.8%*
Total	**12,140**	*100.00*	***11,981***	***100.0%***
Median Age		37.3		39.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 & 2010
*Age cohorts recorded varied between 2000 & 2010

Demographic Trends

"The 2010 Census shows Chester's population is aging."

- In 2010, nearly 11% of the population was over the age of 65.
- In 2010, the Baby Boom Generation (1946-1964) with a Year 2010 age 45-63 accounted for another 20.7% of Chester's population."
- In 2010, only 5.8% of Town residents were under the age of 5.

Draft

While the Town of Chester has a relatively homogenous population, its racial and ethnic composition is changing, due to immigration and different birth rates among racial and ethnic groups. These trends parallel County, State and national trends. The 2010 U.S. Census shows that Chester's residents were 86% white, 5.5.% black, 3.1% Asian, 0.3% American Indian and 6.1% "some other race" and/or "two or more" races.

Table 2-3
Chester and Orange County, New York
Race and Hispanic Origin Year 2010

	Village of Chester		Town of Chester*		Orange County	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Total	3,969	**100.00**	**8,012**	**100.00**	**372,813**	**100.00**
White	2,771	69.8	6,889	86.0	287,802	77.2
Black	469	11.8	442	5.5	37,946	10.1
Asian	247	6.2	245	3.1	8,895	2.4
American Indian	24	0.6	25	0.3	1,748	0.5
Native Hawaiian or PI	0	0.0	1	0.0	125	0.0
Some Other Race	301	7.6	220	3.7	24,615	6.6
Two or more	*156*	*3.9*	*191*	*2.4*	*11,682*	3.1
*Hispanic***	*698*	*17.6*	*971*	*12.1*	*67,185*	18.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau *Town Population excluding Village **Description of ethnicity not race. A person may consider themself white/Hispanic, black/Hispanic, or other combination thereof. The percentages of all racial categories add up to 100%.

With respect to ethnicity, 12.1% of Town residents identified themselves as Hispanic in 2010. Chester is becoming more diverse with respect to race & Hispanic origin and growing diversity is a strength that enriches the fabric of the Town.

The 2010 Census shows a growing level of educational attainment among the Town's residents (see Table 2-4 on next page), which is significantly above the County averages. However, the 2010 Census also shows the loss of high school and college graduates which accounts for the smallest age group in Chester, comprising a mere 4.6% of the Town's overall population (see 20-24 age cohort in Table 2-2). This percentage reflects the outmigration of high school and college graduates to other areas, where they may have greater employment opportunities.

2010 U.S. Census

"Chester is becoming more diverse with respect to race and Hispanic origin and growing diversity is a strength that enriches the fabric of the Town."

Draft

Table 2-4 Chester and Orange County, New York Educational Attainment										
Educational Attainment	Orange County, New York Trends from 2000-2010				Town of Chester Trends from 2000-2010				% Change	$ Change
	2000		2010		2000		2010		County	Town*
		%		%		%		%		
Total *Persons 25 Years and over*	**212,816**	**100.0**	**233,830**	**100.0**	**8,158**	**100.0**	**8,187**	**100.0**	9.9	0.4
Less Than 9th Grade	11,942	5.6	10,787	4.6	357	4.4	186	2.3	-9.7	-47.9
9th-12th, no diploma	26,687	12.5	19,474	8.3	788	9.7	353	4.3	-27.0	-55.2
High school graduate	66,119	31.1	69,192	29.6	2,405	29.5	1,871	22.9	4.6	-22.2
Some college, no degree	42,767	20.1	46,806	20.0	1,676	20.5	1,776	21.7	9.4	6.0
Associate's degree	*17,348*	8.2	*20,478*	8.8	*819*	10.0	*983*	12.0	18.0	20.0
Bachelor's degree	28,169	13.2	39,009	16.7	1,363	16.7	1,952	23.8	38.5	43.2
Graduate or professional	19,784	9.3	28,084	12.0	750	9.2	1,066	13.0	42.0	42.1
Percent high school graduate >		81.8		87.1		86.0		93.4		
Percent Bachelors Degree or >		22.5		28.7		25.9		36.9		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau STF3 Data Year 2000 and Table DP02 2010 *Camp LaGuardia closing in 2006

2.5 Planning Implications for Chester

The Town's population is diversifying age-wise and with respect to race and Hispanic origin. The Town's population has grown steadily in recent decades and this growth is anticipated to continue in the decades ahead, albeit at a slower pace. The Town's growing retirement population could result in additional needs for the senior resident community, resulting in the demand for the provision of additional community services to serve this population.

Future growth in retirees may also influence market demands for new housing styles, with universal design[1] that can better meet the needs of the Town's aging population. There may also be a growing preference for smaller houses to reflect the decrease in average household size and a growing desire to produce more energy efficient housing units.

[1] Universal design in housing is intended to accommodate the needs of the broadest spectrum of users (e.g. children, elderly, people with disabilities and people of different height or weight).

2010 U.S. Census

"The 2010 Census shows a growing level of educational attainment among the Town's residents, which is significantly above the County averages."

Draft

The higher level of educational attainment of Chester's residents is a competitive advantage the Town can utilize to attract business to the community, since a skilled labor force is often a prerequisite for site-selection companies hired to find development sites for business expansion.

With respect to the loss of high school and college graduates, Chester must advance economic development strategies to help retain its talented workforce. It must also encourage and support entrepreneurial ventures and land-use policies, which provide opportunities for commercial growth in the community in a manner that enhances the community character.

The unique character of Chester and the quality of life it offers its residents is also a strong recruitment tool. Increasingly, businesses are attracted to locations where they feel their employees want to live due to a variety of quality of life issues such as sense of security, quality of schools, access to recreation, and the quality of the natural and built environment.

2.6 Chester's Vision and Goals

While history, population trends and demographic data are important considerations in the development of this Comprehensive Plan, the Plan itself is a forward-looking document intended to guide and manage future development and population growth in a manner that is consistent with the Chester's vision for the future.

Simply stated, Chester's vision is to:

> *"Accommodate new growth while retaining its unique heritage and enhancing the Town's character and quality of life."*

The "Overall Goal" as first cited in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan is to:

> *"Retain, preserve and enhance open spaces, parklands and natural features, which form a scenic backdrop for the Town's residential areas while accommodating Chester's fair share growth of residential, commercial and industrial uses within the capabilities of its existing and planned infrastructure."*

VISION STATEMENT

"Chester's planning vision is to accommodate new growth while retaining its unique heritage and enhancing the Town's rural character and quality of life."

Draft

The objectives of the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

- To channel future residential growth into suburban residential areas where central water and sewer services can be expanded efficiently to accommodate that growth.
- To maintain a proper relationship between the rate of growth and the Town's ability to provide essential services such as roads, water, sewer, parks and municipal facilities.
- To coordinate growth with the three primary school districts while being aware of their growth concerns.
- To maintain Black Dirt farmland areas to the greatest degree possible and to encourage the preservation of prime farmlands within the context of current economic conditions by clustering development in adjacent areas away from prime farmland and to encourage an expanded number of farm-oriented uses.
- To encourage the preservation of the ridgelines, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors and natural contours of the land, which form the scenic backdrop for most areas of Chester.
- To consider the protection of environmental assets of the town such as groundwater supply, important topographic features and scenic vistas when reviewing development projects.
- To coordinate planning with the surrounding communities and the County, but most importantly with the Village of Chester and Town of Monroe.
- To provide for a mixture of housing types that will promote a diverse population base, while maintaining the desired environment, town character and quality of life.
- To retain and reinforce the existing higher-density suburban population centers with central services, while recognizing the influence of personal preferences to enjoy a rural lifestyle within the Town's many open area developments and constituting such a significant element of the Town's appearance and character.

Visioning

"First we shape our buildings; and afterwards our buildings shape us."

Winston Churchill

Note: Stated while addressing the nation with regard to the re-building of the *'Houses of Commons'* after its destruction during the Second World War.

Draft

In addition to the specific objectives listed on the previous page, the following *values* are reflected throughout the Town of Chester's Comprehensive Plan:

- Chester strives to be a community where all the necessities of life, including housing, employment and retail opportunities, and access to health care, a good education system, recreational amenities and locally grown produce can be obtained within the Town's borders.
- Economic development in Chester will strive to diversify the Town's economic base with an emphasis on agribusiness development, downtown revitalization of Sugar Loaf, industrial park and planned office development as well as small-scale industries, which complement the unique character of the Town.
- Environmental stewardship that protects the Town's natural surroundings, open space, watersheds, ridgelines and viewsheds will be made possible by best management practices, cluster development, purchase of development rights or conservation easements.
- Chester will encourage regional cooperation to extend and link the trail systems within the Town of Chester to surrounding municipal systems and/or regional and national trail systems.
- Chester will support a culturally stimulating environment within the hamlet of Sugar Loaf, in particular, but also throughout the Town.
- Chester will document its cultural and historic resources for future generations.
- Chester will strive to preserve its rich heritage for future generations by encouraging the preservation of historic structures.

Values of Chester

"Chester strives to be a community where all the necessities of life, including housing, employment and retail opportunities, and access to health care, a good education system, recreational amenities and locally grown produce can be obtained within the Town's borders."

Draft

2.7 Achieving Chester's Vision

The Town of Chester faces a variety of challenges in achieving its vision for the future. These challenges include managing growth and redevelopment and protecting agricultural, historic and natural resources; providing employment and housing opportunities; providing necessary infrastructure and services to meet the needs of a growing population; and expanding cultural and recreational amenities throughout the Town. Achieving each of these will require balancing, what in some instances will be competing interests.

In the chapters that follow, detailed descriptions of the Town of Chester are presented including natural, agricultural, parks and recreation, and cultural and historic resources; the transportation system; public safety and community facilities; jobs and housing; and land-use policies. The Comprehensive Plan includes goals for each of these aspects of Chester, including chapter-specific goals, objectives and policies that support the Town's vision and values.

Values of Chester

"Economic development in Chester will strive to diversify the Town's economic base with an emphasis on agribusiness development, downtown revitalization of Sugar Loaf, industrial park and planned office development and small-scale industries, which complement the unique character of the Town."

Draft

3.0 Natural Resources

The Town of Chester in many ways is defined by a rural landscape with high aesthetic value, which contains agricultural, recreational, natural and wildlife areas. The Town is actively engaged in efforts to preserve these areas and protect them from development. These natural resources contribute to the Town's unique character. Residents have access to many of these natural resources, including Goosepond Mountain State Park, Chester Commons Park, Knapp's View and conservation lands and nature preserves, all of which contribute to the quality of life in the Town. This chapter highlights the natural resources found within the Town, including land resources (i.e. open space, trails and scenic roads), geologic features (mountains, hillsides and backdrops) and water resources (wetlands, floodplains, aquifer, streams and water bodies).

3.1 Land Resources

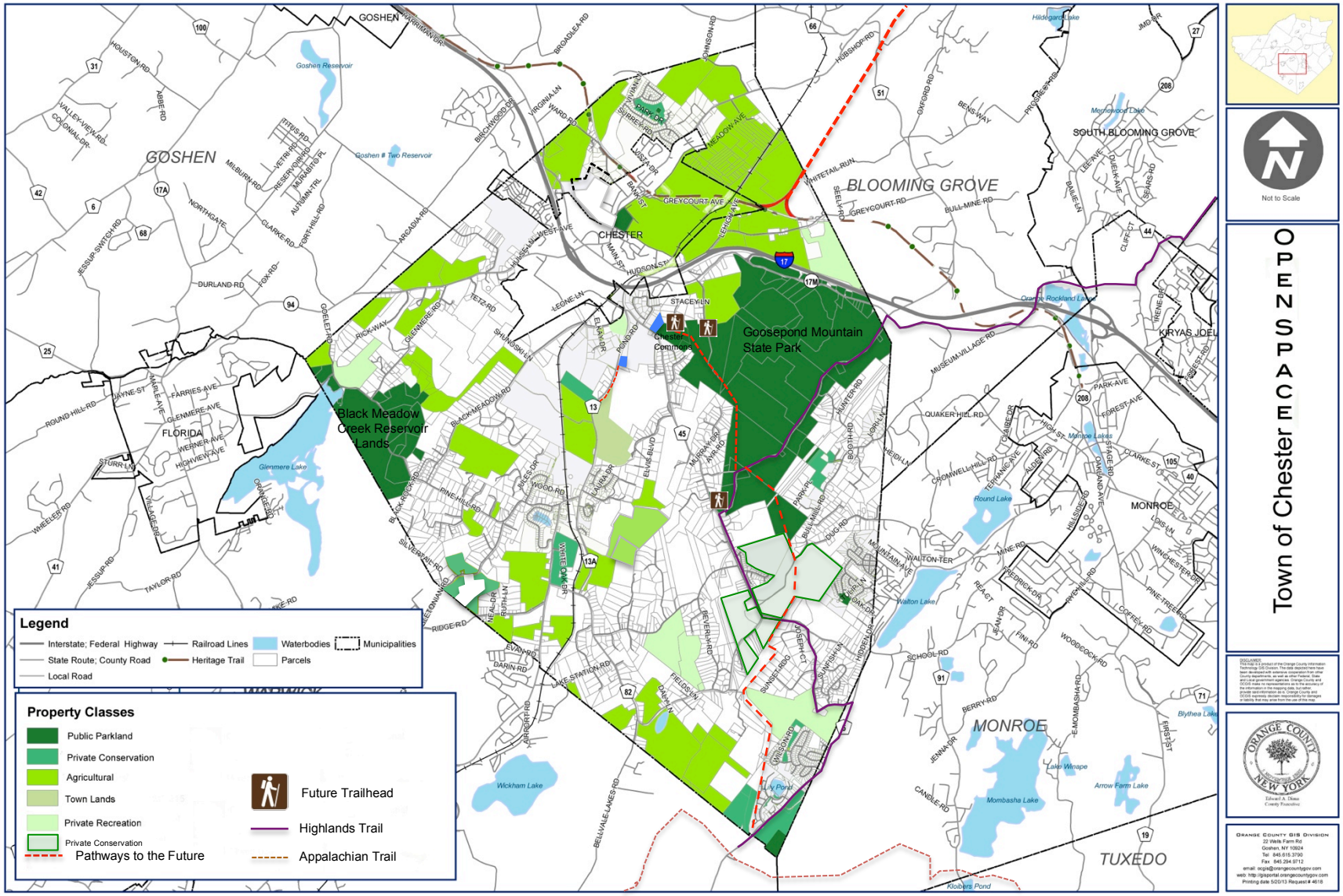
Open Space

One of the reasons the Town of Chester has been able to retain its rural character is due, in part, to the number of open spaces and agricultural lands within the borders of the Town. Open space in the Town can be categorized in the following ways:

1) Privately owned open space associated with a farm, resort (e.g. Glenmere) or conservation easements, which generally are not open to the public or that have limited public access.
2) Common recreational facilities associated with residential developments, which are typically reserved for use by the residents within the development.
3) Undeveloped recreational property owned by the Town, County and State that includes open space intended for passive recreational use by all residents in the community.
4) Developed recreational lands owned by the Town, County or State, including lands currently used for active recreational purposes by residents or intended for future active recreational lands (e.g. Chester Commons Park, Orange Heritage Trailway, etc.).
5) Private recreation lands, such as nature preserves and hunting camps, which have limited or restricted public access.
6) Environmentally constrained lands such as wetlands and steep slopes, which have limited or restricted public access.

Above (top to bottom): Town-owned land known as Knapp's View, which is open to the public; view of Goosepond Mountain State Park, which is open to the public, and view of Cold Spring Farm, which is not open to the public, but is an important part of the Town's open space system.

Draft


Town of Chester OPEN SPACE
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
MONROE
TUXEDO
FLORIDA
KIRYAS JOEL
Goosepond Mountain State Park
Black Meadow Creek Reservoir Lands
Chester Commons
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Railroad Lines
Heritage Trail
Waterbodies
Parcels
Municipalities
Property Classes
Public Parkland
Private Conservation
Agricultural
Town Lands
Private Recreation
Private Conservation
Pathways to the Future
Future Trailhead
Highlands Trail
Appalachian Trail
ORANGE COUNTY NEW YORK
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Printing date 5/20/13 Request # 4618

The protection of each of these types of open space is important and each contributes to defining the unique character of Chester. These open spaces also help to preserve and protect natural features such as aquifer recharge areas, steep slopes and wildlife habitats. The protection of these resources is necessary to maintain the overall quality of life in the Town. The following is a discussion concerning specific land resources in Chester.

Trails

The Orange Heritage Trailway is a 12.4-mile rail trail, which runs along the former Erie Railroad Main Line from Harriman to Middletown, N.Y. This Plan supports the extension of the trail as a recreational resource, as well as future enhancements along it (visitor amenities, landscaping, parking areas, trail-related land uses, etc.), which would make the trail more attractive to users. This Plan also supports the extension of the Heritage Trail along the Erie Railroad Chester to Newburgh branch line, which begins to the east of the Greycourt Avenue trailhead and runs through the Camp LaGuardia site. This Plan supports a coordinated Town/County partnership to acquire the branch line from Erie Properties Corp. for future rail-trail development.

This Plan supports development of trailheads and footpaths to improve access to Goosepond Mountain State Park, Sugar Loaf Mountain from the Sugar Loaf hamlet and improvements to the Highland Trail to tie into the Appalachian Trial. This Plan explicitly recognizes such trails would likely be located on privately owned land and that development of future trails would require the consent of property owners or the purchase of such lands by the Town or third-party preservation group. The Planning Board should look for opportunities, in its review of development applications, to work with property owners to obtain conservation easements for trails.

Scenic Roads and Setbacks

The Town includes several areas of unusual scenic beauty, usually encompassing mountainous or hilly areas or areas that afford sweeping, expansive views of natural settings. These include views along portions of Kings Highway, including Sugar Loaf Mountain, and portions of Gibson Hill Road and Pine Hill Road, which offer panoramic views. The Plan supports the existing Ridge Preservation Overlay District, and strengthening the Town's subdivision regulations consistent with protecting these scenic resources. In some cases, this may involve increased setbacks for structures or other restrictions such as building height or placement limits, to protect the viewshed.

Above: Photos of Heritage Trail taken from trailhead off of Greycourt Avenue within the Village of Chester. From top to bottom: View looking west toward railroad overpass with bicyclist utilizing the trail; view looking west with mom and baby in tow; and parents with baby strollers enjoying the trail. This Plan strongly supports enhancement and extension of the Heritage Trail.

Draft

3.2 Geologic Features

Mountain, Hillsides and Backdrops

Areas with steep slopes and the ridgelines above these slopes are depicted on the Slope map on the next page. These areas of steep terrain are generally wooded, but have shallow soil over bedrock, and are highly susceptible to erosion.

In their wooded natural state, they form an attractive backdrop, or setting, so important to Chester for both medium- and low-density development. At low levels of density, such as the Town currently allows in Open Area Developments, and subject to the requirements that the Town currently applies to Open Area Development subdivisions, modest use can be made of these steep-slope lands without destroying their very nature.

In contrast, higher densities of as little as one unit per acre, along with the necessary roads built to municipal slope requirements, would result in the need for extensive grade changes in steeply sloped areas, most likely involving retaining walls or long disturbed slopes that would require extensive stabilization.

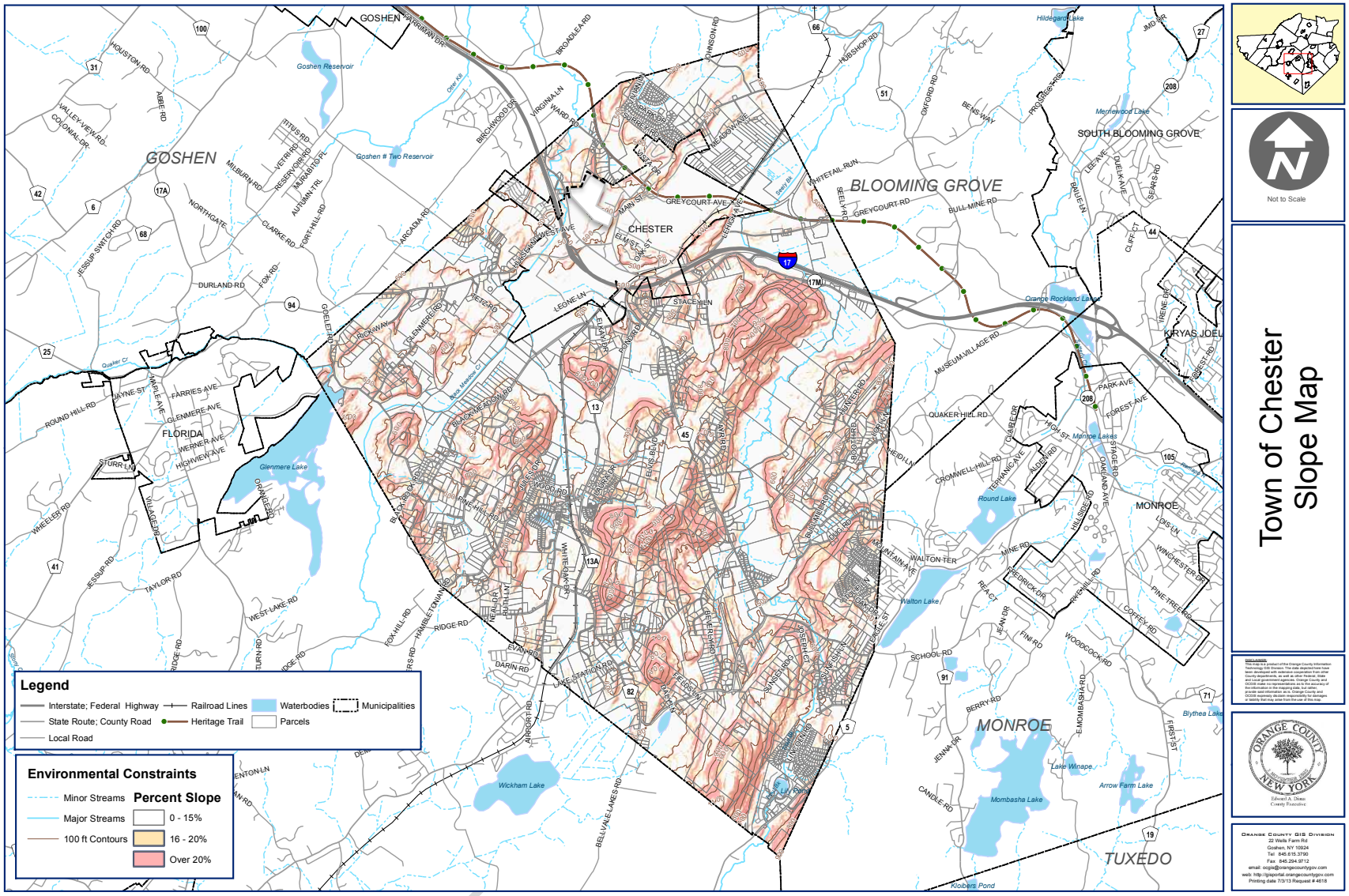
Such disturbed areas in many cases would be visible to the wide area, imposing a stark contrast between the natural wooded landform and the highly engineered, disturbed slope. This outcome would be inconsistent with the Town's character and environmental goals.

Therefore, this Comprehensive Plan encourages the protection of mountains, hillsides and steeply sloped backdrops, and the adoption (or refinement) of measures to avoid the wholesale re-grading and disturbance of these areas for any land-use.

This Plan also encourages the adoption of provisions in the subdivision regulations to reduce and avoid slope disturbance, and to encourage the sensitive siting of dwellings and their access ways in a manner that works with the natural contours of the land and entails minimum disturbance. *This Plan further supports the creation of Visual Assessment criteria to guide Planning Board review.*

Above (top to bottom): View from Kings Highway looking southwest and showing hillside with housing units on ridgeline; view looking across industrial park with undeveloped hillside in the backdrop; and view of townhouses in the Windridge condominium development with undeveloped hillside forming a natural backdrop. The protection of hillside is a key goal of this Plan.

Draft


Town of Chester
Slope Map
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
FLORIDA
MONROE
TUXEDO
KIRYAS JOEL
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Railroad Lines
Heritage Trail
Waterbodies
Parcels
Municipalities
Environmental Constraints
Minor Streams
Major Streams
100 ft Contours
Percent Slope
0 - 15%
16 - 20%
Over 20%
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Printing date 7/3/13 Request # 4618

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town's current criteria for Open Area Developments (OAD) be extended to apply to all new development in steeply sloped areas as a means of achieving its goal of protection consistent with the reasonable use of these sensitive lands. Other criteria may be appropriate, as needed, to account for a higher level of disturbance that would be possible in non-OADs. This Plan also recommends the OAD policy be reviewed with respect to the sequence of SEQR, Planning Board and Town Board reviews. Furthermore, this Plan recommends the current Ridge Preservation Overlay District be refined to address the loophole that allows for nonresidential and multifamily developments to disturb mountains, hillsides and steeply sloped backdrops.

3.3 Water Resources

Wetlands

Both the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regulate wetlands. All proposed development within the vicinity of NYSDEC and federal wetlands must comply with the regulation of the respective authority. This Plan supports full compliance with these regulations. This Plan also supports the Town's Floodplain and Ponding Area Environmental Subdistrict regulations, which provide additional protections to areas that are subject to periodic inundation and ponding.[ii]

The general location of wetlands is provided on NYSDEC and ACOE Wetland Inventory maps. When wetlands are identified on a property, they should be delineated in the field during the subdivision or site-plan review process. *This Plan recommends the Planning Board continue to evaluate the need for wetland delineations at the earliest time possible during the review*.

Wetlands serve three primary functions: 1) to filter and clean water; 2) to provide wildlife habitat; and 3) to provide stormwater storage and retention. Wetlands are necessary to our ecosystems. Their development, outside of the occasional road or access driveway, must be limited and resisted. They also serve a vital function in retaining large amounts of runoff during the spring thaw or major storm events. In this respect, wetlands help to reduce peak flood flows and decrease flood damage. Wetlands also provide scenic viewsheds, which help to define Chester.

Above (top to bottom): View looking southeast from McBride Road toward Goosepond Mountain State Park; wetland area near one of the Black Dirt farms; and view from Pine Hill Road looking at Black Meadow Creek with Goosepond Mountain in the background. The protection of water resources is an important objective of this Comprehensive Plan.

Draft

Floodplains

This Plan urges protection of floodplains for the benefit of the Town's present and future residents, as well as Chester's neighbors, both downstream and upstream.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified potential flood hazard areas in the Town of Chester, which are shown on FEMA maps. Flooding results from snow melt, heavy rains or other weather conditions. By identifying areas that are prone to flooding, it is possible to restrict development to open space uses, including passive recreation and agricultural uses, which don't obstruct water flow and are tolerant of flooding.

It is important to do this in order to mitigate both financial loss and the potential loss of life that might occur as the result of periodic flooding. FEMA defines the likelihood of flooding into two broad categories: 1) lands within the 100-year floodplain; and 2) lands within the 500-year floodplain. Lands within the 100-year floodplain have a 1% probability of a flood exceeding a certain depth in any given year. Where the threat exists of potential loss of life or property, the construction of houses and other buildings, including civic buildings, should be discouraged.

The Town Planning Board must factor in the presence of floodplains when it reviews site plans and subdivision applications. The Planning Board must mandate mitigation measures for any development within floodplains or flood-prone areas. Finally, the Town's Freshwater Wetlands, and Floodplain and Ponding Area Environmental Subdistrict regulations should be periodically reviewed and, if needed, revised so they are responsive to changing community needs.

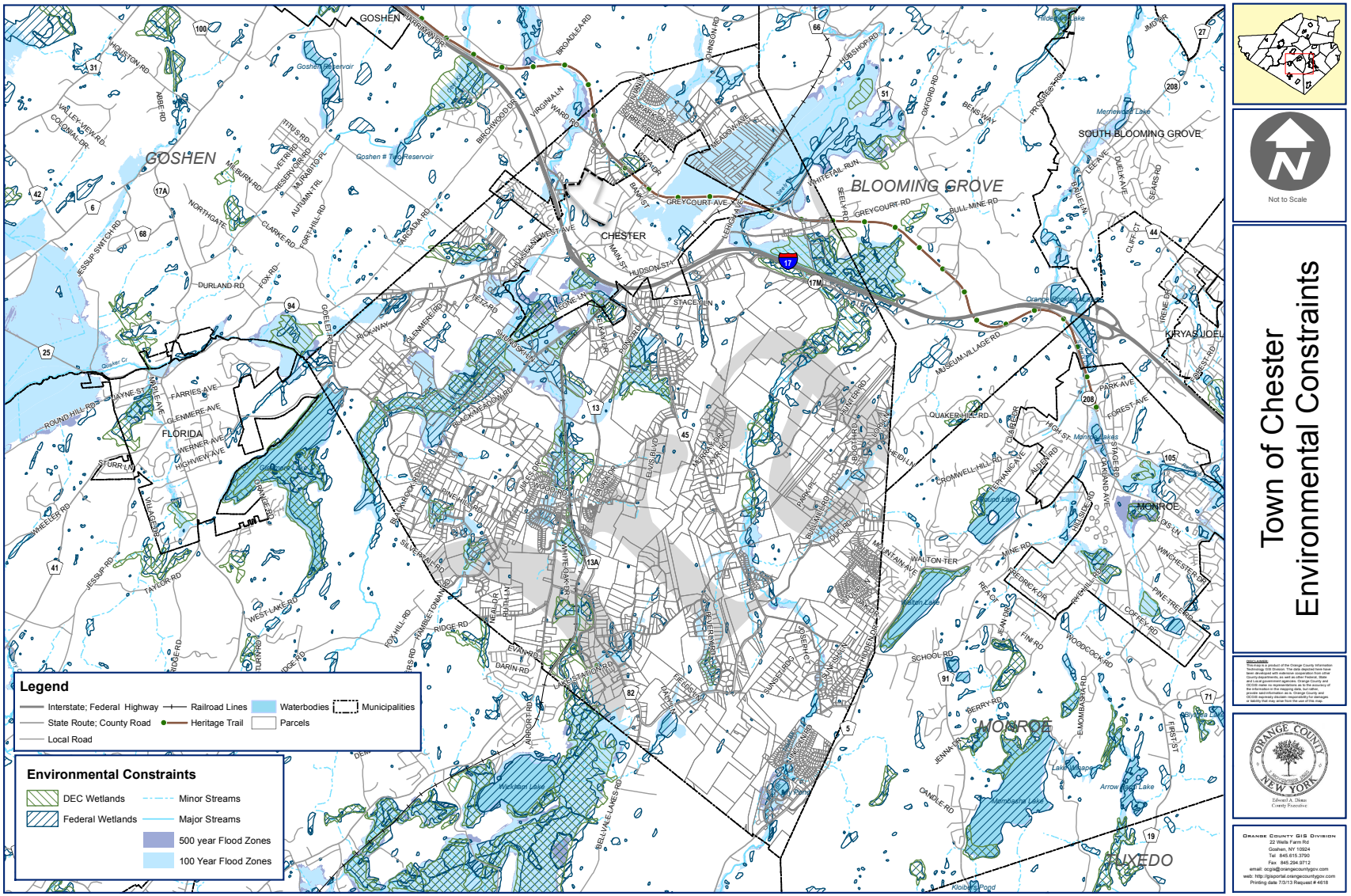
Streams, Water Bodies and Riparian Zones[iii]

This Plan recommends riparian zones be established along all major streams, including Seely Brook, Quaker Creek, Black Meadow Creek, Trout Brook and their tributaries, to prevent stream bank erosion and mitigate damage during major flooding events. The land-use activities allowed within the riparian zone might include passive recreation and other limited-impact activities that would not adversely affect native plant species within the riparian zone. Passive linear parks would be appropriate within the riparian zone, provided the design protects native plants, etc. The Town should strictly limit or prevent filling or construction within the riparian zone.

FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION

"THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD MUST FACTOR IN THE PRESENCE OF FLOODPLAINS WHEN IT REVIEWS SITE PLANS AND SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS. THE PLANNING BOARD MUST MANDATE MITIGATION MEASURES FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN FLOODPLAINS OR FLOOD PRONE AREAS."

Draft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Printing date 7/3/13 Request # 4618

Specific areas for active or passive recreation use along streams should be delineated in the future and incorporated as a recommendation of the revised Comprehensive Plan.

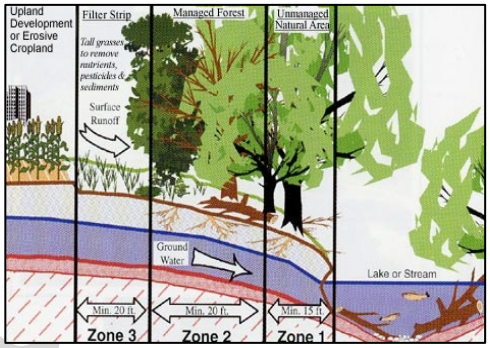
A *riparian zone* is the border between land and a flowing body of surface water that is densely populated with plant species. Perhaps one of the most important qualities of the riparian buffer zone is its ability to control erosion, and thus, to prevent sediment pollution. In a stream surrounded by a riparian zone, sediment pollution is controlled. Riparian zones are densely populated with plant species, and thus, have intricate root systems that prevent erosion and undercutting of banks. In addition, the woody stems and grasses help to physically trap sediment by slowing down the water runoff from the surrounding area, allowing the sediment to settle out.

The branches, stems and leaves of these plants absorb the impact of raindrops. Decaying leaves and low-growing vegetation form a ground cover that further lessens the erosive force of raindrop impact. This groundcover slows runoff, increasing the amount of water absorbed into the soil, and then releases slowly into the stream, groundwater or atmosphere.

The water that is absorbed may contain nutrients, pesticides and other pollutants that will eventually be taken up by plants or broken down over time. By slowing runoff, trapping sediments, and increasing absorption, these plants act as a living filter to protect water quality. Riparian zones along the water courses in the Town play a vital function in helping to protect the water quality in these streams.

The riparian zones also play a very important role in helping to prevent excessive erosion of the stream banks during periodic flooding. Waterfront vegetation also enhances habitat for wildlife and increases opportunities for wildlife viewing. Plants along waterways provide food and shelter for a variety of insects, amphibians, reptiles, songbirds, mammals and fish.

With the onset of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011, Seely Brook experienced severe flooding, but the riparian zone helped to reduce erosion along the bank of the stream. Unfortunately many homes were still affected by flooding, but the damage could have been worse without the riparian zone along Seely Brook.



Above (top to bottom): Illustration showing unmanaged natural zone, managed forest zone and filter strip (i.e. Zones 1, 2 and 3); and views of riparian zone along Seely Brook. Riparian zones help to prevent excessive erosion of stream banks during flooding.

Source: Illustration from Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation & Development Council.

Draft

Maintaining or developing an attractive riparian zone can

- increase property values;
- reduce property loss from excessive erosion;
- protect water quality by filtering sediments and other contaminants;
- discourage geese congregation;
- enhance wildlife habitat by providing shade that reduces water temperature;
- contribute to the natural beauty of the land;
- dissipate noise from traffic, roads, and nearby properties;
- reduce maintenance time and related costs;
- provide privacy;
- screen unsightly views; and
- enhance scenic views.

Aquifer and Wellhead Protection

Wellhead areas for public water supplies are shown on the Groundwater Resources map. Around each of these sites is a 1,500-foot radius protection boundary within which greater concern and review should occur in the development of land. The Village of Chester's wellhead protection area is larger and more amorphous based upon detailed ground water study for that well.

This Plan supports the protection of the Town's critical natural resources, particularly its aquifers and groundwater quality. Wellhead protection legislation should be adopted to provide an additional measure of protection for these irreplaceable water resources. Cooperation between the Town and Village of Chester is necessary to properly protect these groundwater resources. The development of intermunicipal wellhead protection laws is supported by this Plan.

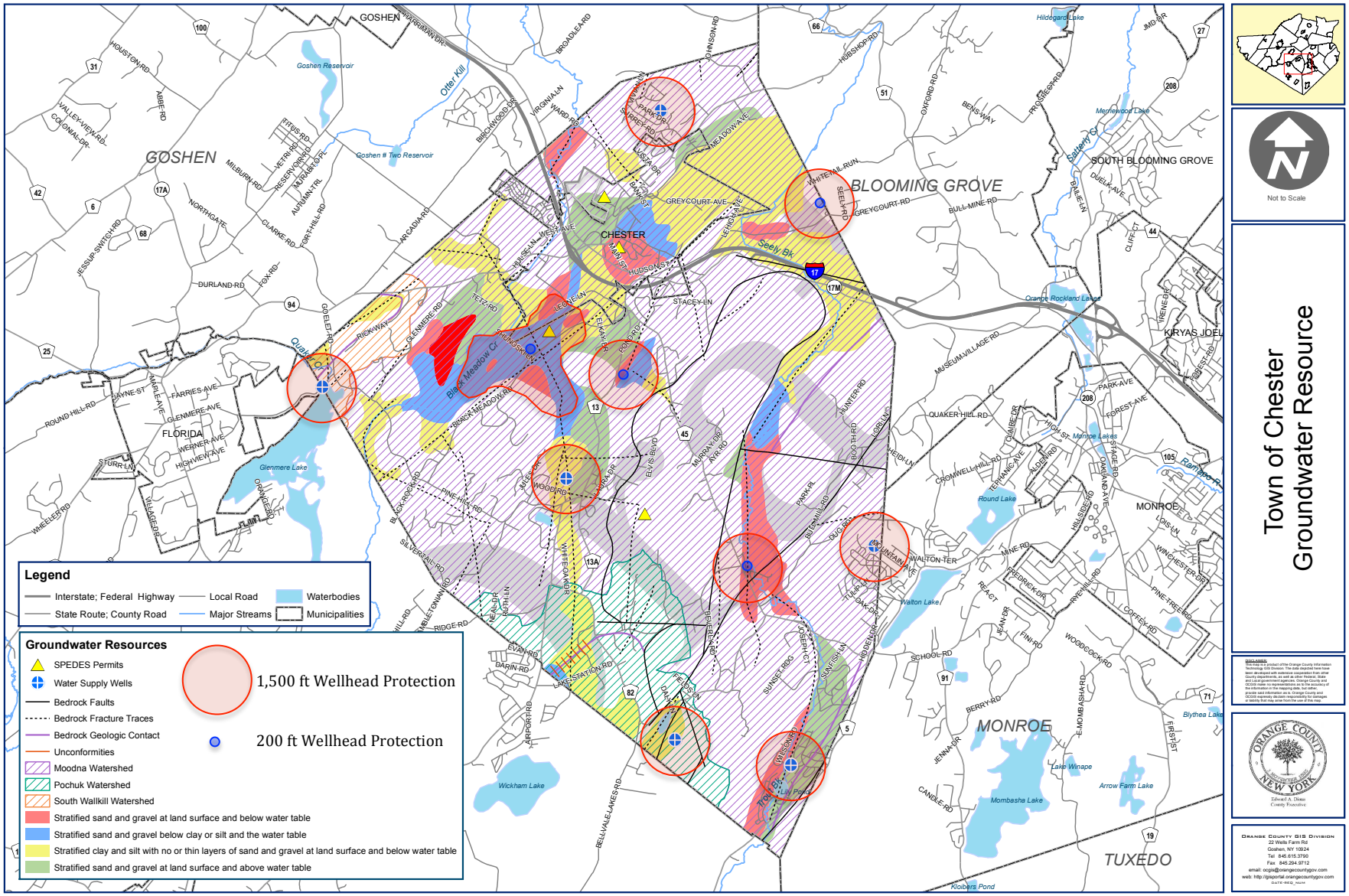
Such a local law could be enacted as a zoning overlay district defining and delineating wellhead areas and establishing additional setbacks or restrictions applicable to certain potentially dangerous uses within these areas. This Plan supports wellhead and groundwater protection measures and the development of more detailed plans and studies to protect these vital resources.

Rivers and Streams

"A river is more than an amenity. It is a treasure. It is a necessity of life that must be rationed among those who have power over it."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Draft


Town of Chester
Groundwater Resource
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
BLOOMING GROVE
CHESTER
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
KIRYAS JOEL
FLORIDA
MONROE
TUXEDO
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Major Streams
Waterbodies
Municipalities
Groundwater Resources
SPEDES Permits
Water Supply Wells
Bedrock Faults
Bedrock Fracture Traces
Bedrock Geologic Contact
Unconformities
Moodna Watershed
Pochuk Watershed
South Wallkill Watershed
Stratified sand and gravel at land surface and below water table
Stratified sand and gravel below clay or silt and the water table
Stratified clay and silt with no or thin layers of sand and gravel at land surface and below water table
Stratified sand and gravel at land surface and above water table
1,500 ft Wellhead Protection
200 ft Wellhead Protection
Orange County GIS Division
22 Wells Farm Rd
Goshen, NY 10924
Tel: 845.615.3790
Fax: 845.294.9712
email: ocgis@orangecountygov.com
web: http://gisportal.orangecountygov.com

Stormwater Management

Stormwater is water that accumulates on land as a result of storms or melting snow. The porous and varied terrain of natural landscapes like forests, wetlands and grasslands trap rainwater and snowmelt and allow it to slowly filter into the ground. Runoff tends to reach receiving waters gradually. In contrast, nonporous landscapes like roads, bridges, parking lots and buildings don't let runoff slowly percolate into the ground. Water remains above the surface, accumulates and runs off in large amounts.

Chester's stormwater management system includes its storm sewers and ditches that are designed to quickly channel runoff from roads and other impervious surfaces. These devices are important to control high flows that may be a threat to public safety. Unfortunately, there are adverse environmental impacts associated with traditional stormwater management.

Runoff gathers speed once it enters the storm sewer system, and when it leaves the sewer system and empties into natural stream courses. During storm events, large volumes of high velocity runoff can erode streambanks, damage streamside vegetation and widen stream channels. In turn, this will result in lower water depths during nonstorm periods, higher than normal water levels during wet-weather periods, increased sediment loads and higher water temperatures. It is thus important to control stormwater runoff associated with development.

In New York State, any construction operation that will disturb or expose one or more acres of soil requires a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit for stormwater management discharges from construction activity. Soil disturbance includes clearing vegetation, grubbing, filling, grading, excavation, demolition and any current or proposed construction activity. If the proposed action is anything other than a single-family home, it will also require the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

A SWPPP addresses both construction and post-construction activities. During construction activities, erosion and sediment control devices such as silt fences are used to prevent silts from soils from being carried off the site during storm events.

Stormwater Management

"A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, in accordance with NYSDEC regulations, is required for any construction operation that will disturb one or more acres if constructing something other than a single-family residence."

Draft

Detention and retention basins are used to ensure that post-development runoff rates from a site do not exceed pre-development rates. Bioretention basins are becoming more common. Detention basins are dry basins that fill with water during a storm event. They work by delaying the storm water so that it is released at a rate that mimics predevelopment flow. Retention basins hold water in a pool and release water through an overflow spillway during storm events. These basins provide for the release of runoff at controlled rates to protect the quality of surface waters and to prevent flooding during storm events.

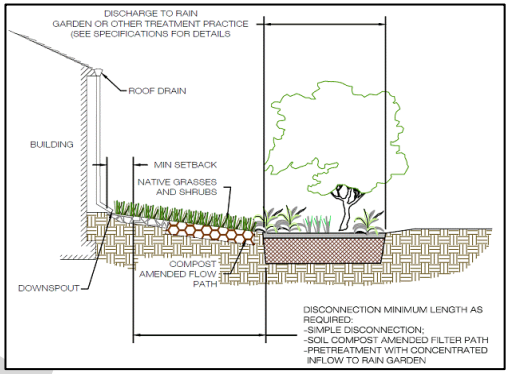
These basins are important stormwater treatment systems that allow particulates in stormwater to settle to the bottom, thereby, reducing pollution in runoff prior to discharge into receiving waters. A bioretention basin is one variation of these systems, with plantings intended to also absorb nutrients. Within off-street parking areas, catch basins are used to retain and filter contaminants before they leave the site. Infiltration trenches also treat runoff through a soil medium and pea-gravel-filter layer before it is discharged.

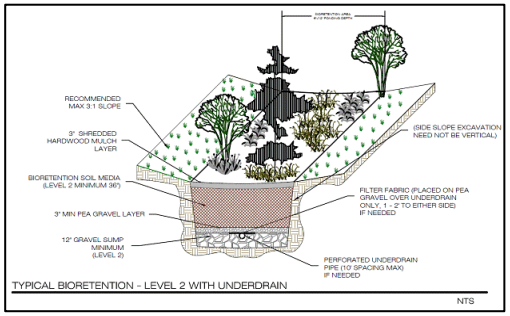
This Plan also encourages the use of low impact design alternatives, such as curbless parking areas, open grass drainage swales, permeable pavement and dry wells to decrease potential stormwater runoff, flooding, surface water pollution and groundwater pollution related to future development. As the Planning Board reviews development applications, it must ensure that appropriate stormwater management measures are put in place. Such measures will help to protect water quality and mitigate potential damage during major storm events.

3.4 Natural Habitat

Threatened and Endangered Species

This Plan supports the NYSDEC mission of protecting threatened or endangered species through sound scientific practices, so as not to foreclose these opportunities to future generations. As the Planning Board reviews development proposals, it must first assess whether there is likely to be any State threatened or endangered species on the site, or locally designated species of special concern. When such species are found on a site, measures to protect and conserve their habitat should be put in place. These measures may include modification of development design to avoid sensitive habitat, conservation easements and public-private partnerships.





Above (top to bottom): Illustration showing residential rooftop bioretention system; view of bioretention system with plantings, which are intended to absorb nutrients from runoff; and a typical bioretention system. This Plan supports best management practices.

Source: Illustration from Virginia Department Conservation & Recreation.

Draft

Night Sky

The dark, star-filled night skies that still prevail in the more rural areas of Chester are an important, but diminishing natural resource. Chester's dark skies provide more than aesthetic value; they also help to define the rural character of the Town. Unfortunately, artificial lighting associated with development can result in "light pollution" that washes out the stars and makes it difficult to identify constellations, bright planets and other celestial bodies.

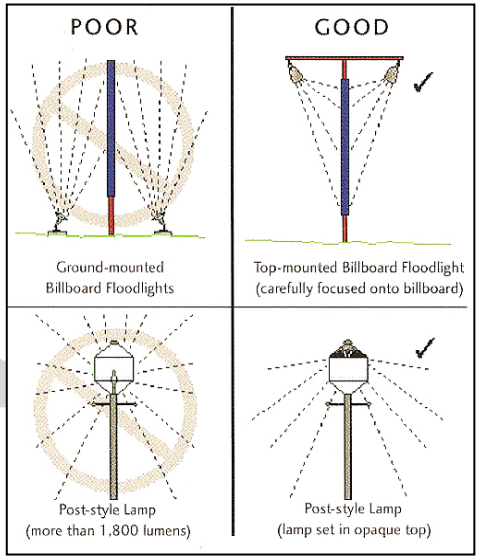
This Plan supports the regulation of exterior lighting in a manner that balances nighttime visibility and security needs while protecting the night sky, natural environment and wildlife habitats. By taking simple steps to regulate outdoor lighting, Chester can preserve the night sky, reduce energy consumption and protect wildlife habitat where darkness is essential to migration and reproduction of many nocturnal species.

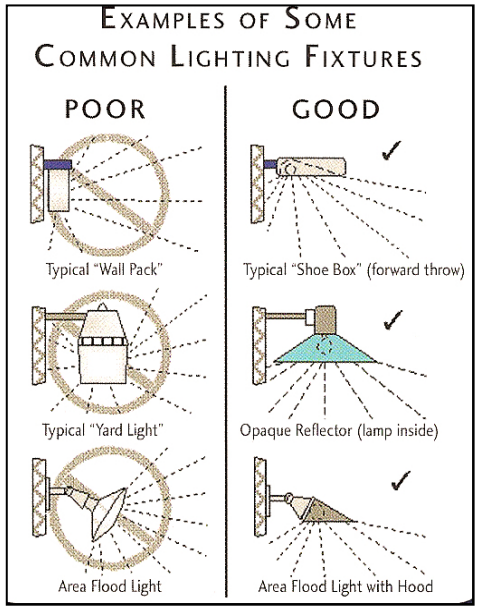
Invasive Plants and Animals

This Plan supports invasive plant and animal eradication efforts. Invasive species are non-native species that can cause harm to natural ecosystems, resulting in a wide range of environmental, recreational and economic impacts. The NYSDEC has identified invasive species as a significant threat to the State's biodiversity - second only to habitat loss.

The Town's economy is dependent on the health of its ponds and streams that provide boating, fishing and swimming opportunities. Once introduced into water bodies, aquatic invasive plants spread rapidly, congest waterways and disrupt native fish populations. Invasive animals could decimate local fish populations. Once infested, ponds and rivers can become unusable, which could adversely affect the local economy as the quality of these natural resources is diminished.

The Town Board will work with NYSDEC to identify threats related to invasive species including Japanese Knotweed, Purple Loosestrife, and Japanese Barberry. When identified, the Town Board should partner with the NYSDEC to secure funding through the State's Invasive Species Eradication grants to help eradicate invasive species. State funds can be used to pay for up to one half of the total costs of a selected eradication project.





Above: Examples of "poor" and "good" lighting fixtures. Source: Otsego County Conservation Association "Starry Nights in Otsego County"

Draft

3.5 Natural Resources: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Land Resources: Open Space, Trails, and Scenic Roads and Setbacks

NR.1. Protect and conserve the natural beauty of Chester's setting and natural environment.

NR.2. Promote land-use decisions that encourage the protection and sustainable use of the Town's natural resources.

NR.3. Consider importance of protecting natural resources in the review of any development proposal within the Town.

NR.4. Protect and develop appropriate access to the community's natural resources and public open spaces for the enjoyment and recreation of residents and visitors.

NR.5. Develop trailheads and footpaths to improve access to Goosepond Mountain State Park and to Sugar Loaf Mountain from the Sugar Loaf hamlet.

NR.6. Protect views along portions of Kings Highway, including Sugar Loaf Mountain, and portions of Gibson Hill Road and Pine Hill Road, which provide panoramic views of the meadows.

NR.7. Encourage the provision of greenway linkages to the Appalachian Trail, Heritage Trail and Goosepond Mountain State Park and to other areas of the Town as properties are developed.

NR.8. Extend Heritage Trail along the Erie Railroad Chester to Newburgh branch line.

NR.9. Reserved

Geologic Features: Mountain, Hillsides and Backdrops

NR.10. Encourage the preservation of the ridgelines, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors and natural contours of the land, which form the scenic backdrop for Chester.

NR.11. Refine Ridge Preservation Overlay District to address the loophole that allows for nonresidential and multifamily developments to disturb mountains, hillsides and steeply sloped backdrops.

NATURAL RESOURCES

"PROMOTE LAND-USE DECISIONS THAT ENCOURAGE THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE TOWN'S NATURAL RESOURCES."

Draft

NR.12. Review and refine the Ridge Preservation Overlay District to ensure it is meeting the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan in all zoning districts.

NR.13. During the development review process, ensure that natural resources, including native habitat of threatened or endangered species, are protected.

NR.14. Conserve and protect wildlife corridors between development sites consisting of natural vegetation, forested areas, wetlands and undeveloped steep slopes.

Water Resources: Wetlands, Floodplains, Aquifer, Streams and Water Bodies

NR.15. Implement SWPPP best management practices as required in the MS4 program.

NR.16. Minimize impact of new development on the natural resources through best management practices (BMP), low-impact design standards and conservation subdivision techniques.

- Require onsite stormwater management to reduce runoff and nonpoint source pollution.
- Minimize the amount of tree loss and impervious cover for new projects, consistent with permitted land-use intensity.
- Situate buildings to minimize driveway length and preserve trees.
- Encourage clustering of development away from environmentally sensitive land such as woodlands, wetlands and steep slopes.

NR.17. Conserve the riparian zone along major streams and tributaries, including Seely Brook, Quaker Creek, Black Meadow Creek, and Trout Brook and their tributaries.

NR.18. Acquire land easements or utilize other conservation measures along the entire length of Seely Brook, Quaker Creek, Black Meadow Creek, and Trout Brook to create a large greenway that also serves to enhance the riparian buffer.

NR.19. Ensure that all developments comply with NYSDEC and ACOE wetland regulations.

NR.20. Restrict development in riparian buffer zones.

NR.21. Cooperate with the Village to protect groundwater resources through an intermunicipal wellhead protection law.

Conservation Subdivisions

"Minimize impact of new development on the natural resources by encouraging best management practices, low-impact design standards and conservation subdivision techniques."

Draft

NR.22. Review and refine Freshwater Wetlands and Floodplain and Ponding Area Environmental Subdistrict regulations to meet the changing needs of Chester.

Natural Habitat: Threatened & Endangered Species, Night Sky and Invasive Plants and Animals

NR.23. Encourage conservation of threatened or endangered species habitat through appropriate site design, best management practices and conservation easements.

NR.24. Regulate outdoor lighting to balances nighttime visibility and security needs while protecting the night sky, natural environment and wildlife habitats.

NR.25. Work with NYSDEC to identify threats related to invasive species and secure funding through the NYSDEC Invasive Species Eradication program to eradicate such species when identified.

The information provided in this chapter is provided for general planning purposes and is not intended to be a substitute for detailed site-specific information. Proposed land-use applications will need to provide additional details as may be appropriate and necessary for a particular site.

NIGHT SKY

"REGULATE OUTDOOR LIGHTING IN A MANNER THAT BALANCES NIGHTTIME VISIBILITY AND SECURITY NEEDS WHILE PROTECTING THE NIGHT SKY, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE HABITATS."

Draft

4.0 Agricultural Resources

Chester's farmers and its agricultural lands provide an important part of the community's economic base and contribute to the unique character of the Town. Agriculture in Chester has historically focused on dairy, equine and vegetable crops, but the variety of agricultural activities and the very nature of farming is changing in the Town of Chester.

Agriculture is an important part of the Town's history, economy and environment providing locally grown produce and other agricultural products along with valuable open space that enriches the quality of life for Town residents. The Town's farm buildings (including its farmhouses, barns, silos and other out buildings) also enrich Chester's landscape and help to define the rural character its resident's have come to appreciate.

This Plan seeks the long-term preservation of the Town's agricultural resources, promotes diversity of farm types, and supports the economic viability of the farming community and the profitability of each farm.

Chester's farmland can be divided into two distinct categories: 1) fertile uplands consisting of sands, silts and loams, and 2) lowlands consisting of poorly drained silts, clays and organic matter, locally referred to as "Black Dirt." Both the uplands and lowlands contain prime soils, which are highly suitable for agriculture. However, only the uplands are suitable for development, which has placed these lands at greater risk for development.

Since 2003, a number of upland farms in Chester were sold to developers and subsequently subdivided for residential purposes. In most cases, the farmland simply became part of the residential building lots and was lost for agricultural purposes. In a few instances, however, agricultural lands were saved through the use of the Conservation Subdivision process. A case in point is the Eagles Crest subdivision, where a large lot was reserved for agriculture purposes.

This Plan recommends the use of conservation subdivisions to save prime agricultural lands based upon the characteristics of the property being subdivided.

Above (top to bottom): View from Leigh & Hudson Rail Line looking back across Black Dirt corn fields and houses along McBride Road; Black Dirt fields as seen from McBride Road with newly planted corn and onions; and view of Cold Spring Farm showing recently established vineyard.

Draft

In recent years, the dairy industry was perhaps the hardest hit in the Town, in part due to dramatic increases in feed, fuel, labor and equipment costs coupled with declining revenues. However, many dairy farms, which were situated on highly developable uplands, were simply lost due to development pressure and the high prices offered by developers for these lands. Many of these farms have since been subdivided for residential purposes and several others are presently before the Planning Board seeking subdivision approval.

Today there is only one active dairy farm in the Town of Chester, the C.F. Johnson & Son Farm on Johnson Road. There is also a heifer farm (dairy) – Brookview Farm on Route 17 M – operated by the Talmadge family. The owners of these farms, have diversified their operations in an effort to sustain their family farms. For example, in 2013 the C.F. Johnson & Son Farm established on two acres the Peace and Carrots Farm, a community supported agriculture (CSA) farm. Under a CSA, consumers can buy locally grown produce by paying up front for a share of each year's harvest.

The Town's Black Dirt farmers have fared better, but they too are prone to rising costs for fertilizer, fuel, equipment and labor. The greatest threat to Black Dirt farmland is not development pressure, but rather the ability to maintain the economic viability of these vegetable farms and safeguard them from the impacts associated with periodic flooding and climate change. While most of the Black Dirt in Chester is still in production, there is a growing amount of Black Dirt that is sitting fallow and at risk of reverting back to brush land or wetlands.

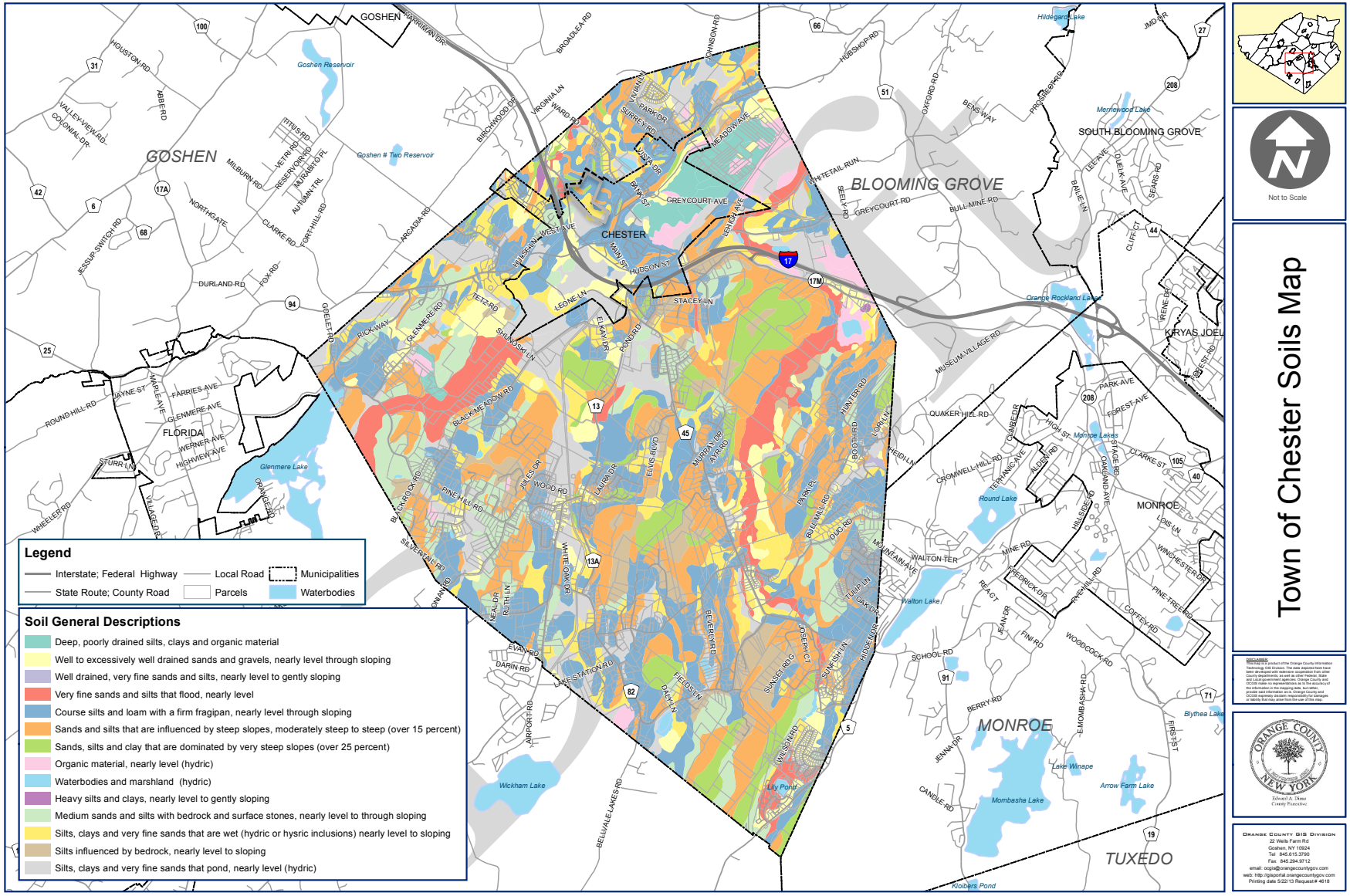
According to the 2004 Orange County Agricultural Development Strategy, approximately 42% of the County's land area, or 224,000 acres, are considered prime and productive soils. Of these, only 10,000 acres, or 4.4% of prime soils, are found in muck lands or Black Dirt in the Town's of Chester (Town/Village), Goshen, Minisink, Warwick and Waywayanda (see map on page 36).

The report found that approximately 4,000 acres of additional muck soils could be improved through drainage to achieve better productivity. Black Dirt soils are highly productive and suitable for a wide variety of vegetable and field crops, but are not suitable for development due to the hydric soil characteristics. Within the Town, one of the greatest threats to some Black Dirt farmland is not development, but having such lands lay fallow. Another threat is the ongoing maintenance needs of drainage canals and pump stations, upon which Black Dirt farming depends.

Above (top to bottom): Brookview Farm (Talmadge family) on NYS Route 17M, which is a heifer farm with pasture and hay fields; Peace and Carrots Farm, which is CSA farm on Johnson Road; and view of Scattered Acres Farm warehouse on Meadow Avenue.

Source: Photo of Peace & Carrots from the Farm's Web site.

Draft


Town of Chester Soils Map
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
FLORIDA
MONROE
TUXEDO
KRYAS JOEL
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Parcels
Municipalities
Waterbodies
Soil General Descriptions
Deep, poorly drained silts, clays and organic material
Well to excessively well drained sands and gravels, nearly level through sloping
Well drained, very fine sands and silts, nearly level to gently sloping
Very fine sands and silts that flood, nearly level
Course silts and loam with a firm fragipan, nearly level through sloping
Sands and silts that are influenced by steep slopes, moderately steep to steep (over 15 percent)
Sands, silts and clay that are dominated by very steep slopes (over 25 percent)
Organic material, nearly level (hydric)
Waterbodies and marshland (hydric)
Heavy silts and clays, nearly level to gently sloping
Medium sands and silts with bedrock and surface stones, nearly level to through sloping
Silts, clays and very fine sands that are wet (hydric or hysric inclusions) nearly level to sloping
Silts influenced by bedrock, nearly level to sloping
Silts, clays and very fine sands that pond, nearly level (hydric)
ORANGE COUNTY NEW YORK
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Printing date 5/22/13 Request # 4618

More than 100 acres of Black Dirt on the Camp LaGuardia site have remained fallow for decades. The drainage canals within Camp LaGuardia have not been dredged or cleared for many years. As a result of this neglect, the Black Dirt has reverted back to a mixture of overgrown fields, brush land and in some areas woodlands or wetlands. This Plan supports efforts to restore some of the Camp LaGuardia Black Dirt for agriculture. More importantly, this Plan supports efforts to keep Black Dirt farmland cultivated, especially those that are farmed today.

There are Black Dirt fields off of Glenmere Road that are sitting fallow and, if left unplanted, will become overgrown with native vegetation and eventually revert back to second-growth shrub or forestlands. Since the Black Dirt lands are by far the most productive soils in the Town, every acre lost has a disproportionately greater impact on agriculture in Chester. For these reasons, this Plan supports proactive policies to conserve Black Dirt for agriculture through such measures as purchase of development rights, conservation easements and/or conservation subdivisions.

Since the 2003 Comprehensive Plan was adopted, Chester experienced a dramatic decline in its dairy farms, a large loss of upland farmland to residential development, along with the loss of some of its Black Dirt farmland. Even with these declines in its traditional agricultural base, Chester has seen some positive trends in agriculture in recent years.

For example, a vineyard was established on the Cold Spring Farm on Kings Highway and the Rock Ridge Alpaca Farm was established on Gibson Hill Road. There are still a number of horse farms in Chester along with other pastureland, which is being utilized to raise livestock. As mentioned above, the Peace and Carrots Farm, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm, was recently established with its first growing season in 2013.

There is a growing understanding of the value of local food production and the access to local healthy foods. The Town and its citizens can support organizations and businesses such as the Chester farmer's market on Winkler Place in the Village of Chester, CSA farms, community gardens and restaurants serving locally grown food. The Town can also support regional efforts to improve processing and transportation facilities for agricultural products, including regional food hubs.

Above (top to bottom): Fallow Black Dirt fields at Camp LaGuardia; view of fallow Black Dirt fields on Glenmere Road, which have been fallow for several years; and view of active Black Dirt farm on Bellvale Lakes Road. Proactive measures by the Town and County are needed to assist farmers in keeping Black Dirt productive.

Draft

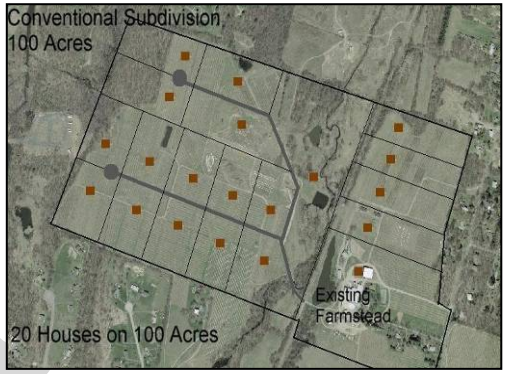
There are a variety of land-use tools that can be employed to assist the farming community. These include conservation subdivisions, right-to-farm laws and other measures that are described in greater detail below.

This Plan recommends the use of conservation or "cluster" subdivisions to retain prime farmland. A conservation subdivision is a form of development that allows for a reduction in lot area and bulk requirements, provided there is no increase in the number of lots or density permitted under a conventional subdivision and the remaining land area is devoted to open space.

Conservation subdivisions could be used to cluster development on one portion of a site in exchange for retaining a large tract of land for agricultural production. There are some practical issues that have to be considered in using conservation subdivisions to retain farmland such as ensuring the conservation parcel is large enough for farming while providing a buffer between the farming activity and houses. There are also the practical limitations of reducing lot sizes when residences are served with onsite wells and septic systems.

Still, when a subdivision of farmland with prime agricultural soils is proposed, an effort should be made to conserve such lands through a conservation subdivision. This Plan supports the use of conservation subdivisions to save prime soils for agriculture and to provide a buffer between agricultural and residential activities.

This Plan also encourages commodity diversification among area farmers. Fluctuations in the price of a single commodity can lead to financial difficulties when the price of that commodity suddenly drops. To reduce this risk, farmers are increasingly looking to subsidize their primary income with niche agricultural products. One example would be a dairy farmer that produces on-farm cheeses or grows spring and fall vegetable crops. Another way for farmers to diversify their incomes is to devote less productive portions of their farmland to tree farms or nurseries. Nurseries can help to keep fallow land from reverting to brush land, while providing an important income stream to the farmer or other landowner. Nurseries are also a good fit for most farming activities in that the needs for maintaining the nursery can be scheduled around other farming activities.



Above (top to bottom): The above illustrates how a conservation subdivision can be used to retain large tracts of farmland. The top illustration shows a conventional subdivision of 100 acres into 20 five-acre lots where the community's zoning requires a minimum lot size of five acres per lot. The illustration below it shows a conservation (cluster) subdivision where the 20 building lots are clustered on 33 acres of the site – leaving 67 acres of prime farmland within a conservation easement. The conservation easement can be held by a homeowners association, land trust, or sold to an adjacent farmer for the agricultural value of the property that is far lower than the use value if it could be developed.

Draft

It is also important to identify areas where agricultural activity should be supported over the long-term and develop land-use policies aimed at retaining large blocks of farmland that are able to support a variety of farm businesses. Larger areas of farmland provide greater opportunities for farms to adapt to changing market conditions and to develop synergies with adjacent farming operations. It also helps to ensure a buffer between residential areas and lands in agricultural production. Strategies that might be employed include the purchase of development rights (PDR) or conservation subdivisions. The concentration of Town/Village Black Dirt farms is an obvious area where agricultural activity should be supported over the long term.

This Plan support efforts by area farmers to establish buying or selling cooperatives. Another way to increase the profitability of farming is by reducing costs. In this respect, area farmers might explore opportunities to form buying cooperatives to reduce their operational cost. They could also consider creating selling cooperatives to better market their products, increase the amount they are paid for their products and reduce the cost of getting their products to market.

A buying cooperative is designed to gain cost price advantages by buying in bulk. Areas where farmers might benefit through the creation of cooperatives are in the purchase of fuel, electricity, fertilizers and feed. A selling cooperative could help vegetable producers, onion farmers and vineyards. The development of a Chester Farms or Warwick Valley brand for these commodities could help them gain access to larger vendors such as ShopRite or other regional grocers. Each farmer on their own might not be able to produce the volume of product required by larger vendors. By working together, local farmers could collectively ensure the volume of goods needed to secure larger contracts. Such efforts could lead to greater profits for area farmers.

This Plan supports programs aimed at keeping existing farmlands in production. It is a reality that many farm children have chosen not to pursue the farming way of life. When their farmer parents retire, there is no one to take over the family farm, increasing the likelihood that the farm will be converted to some other use. The New York Farm Link Program is designed to help match those farmers who are selling their properties with people who are looking to purchase a farm. Local farmers and real estate agents should be made aware of this program to save remaining farms, and the creation of a local or County farm-link initiative should be consider by the Town Board.

Above (top to bottom): Inactive farm off of Goosepond Mountain Road, which is at high risk of being developed as a residential subdivision; pastures for horse farm on Laroe Road; and new horse paddock on Bellvale Road. There is a growing niche agricultural sector in the Town of Chester that should be supported to save prime farmlands.

Draft

This Plan supports the farmer's right-to-farm within the Town of Chester. With the growing residential community in Chester there inevitably will be conflicts between farmers and new homeowners. The Town should strengthen its right-to-farm laws in order to provide greater protection to farmers from nuisance lawsuits and to help protect the economic viability of farming.

It is also recommended the Town create land-use regulations that allow for a wider variety of agricultural, farm-oriented and other non-nuisance uses in existing farm buildings. As farms have been subdivided, there remain a number of barns and other out buildings that are underutilized. This Plan encourages the adaptive reuse of these farm buildings for a wide variety of uses through the special permit review process, with standards adopted for new uses. Examples include: conference centers, breweries, professional offices, cheese-making, wineries, non-nuisance light industries, restaurants and warehouses.

The Town should also streamline the development review process for farmers and allow certain supplemental farming activities as-of-right. For example, the Town's zoning laws should permit certain farm-business activities such as the provision of farm stands, value-added onsite processing, nurseries, greenhouses, timber processing and like activities as-of-right.

This Plan also recommends the Town Board revisit its animal control and zoning regulations with respect to allowing "micro-livestock" – such as bees, chickens, ducks, quail, rabbits, goats, etc. There are probably a number of residents in residential zoning districts who are already raising a few chickens or goats or keeping bees in their backyard. The main benefit of keeping these micro-livestock is the food they produce: eggs, milk and honey. Keeping bees also has the benefit of providing pollination services and ensuring a present bee population, which directly benefits the local vegetable growers. Studies have shown that honeybees pollinate two-thirds of food crops.

The primary concerns with allowing micro-livestock in the backyard are related to odor, noise and disease. To address these issues, land-use regulations should limit the number and type of micro-livestock that can be kept, establish minimum setbacks from neighboring properties and require a certain amount of space per animal. A minimum lot size for raising micro-livestock should also be established, along with minimum sanitation practices.

Above (top to bottom): Barn at Fury Brook Farm, which was converted to light industrial use; Laroe Saw Mill at the corner of CR 13A and CR82 Bellvale Road; and small barn across from Brookview Farm on Route 17M. There is a growing niche agricultural sector in Chester, which should be supported to save prime farmlands.

Draft

4.1 Agriculture: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal AG-1: Ensure long-term protection of agricultural-land resources for agriculture, open space and scenic resources.

AG.1. Encourage both private and public efforts to preserve and manage agricultural lands through purchase of development rights (PDR), transfer of development rights (TDR), participation in the NYS Agricultural & Markets Districts (see Ag Districts, page 42) and conservation subdivisions.

AG.2. Encourage conservation subdivision design to preserve prime soils when farms are subdivided.

AG.3. Require sufficient vegetative buffer on the nonagricultural land, so farms are buffered from homes.

AG.4. Support local farmers efforts to ensure the County's maintenance and repair of drainage canals and pumps stations is done in a timely and responsive manner to protect Black Dirt from flooding.

AG.5. Encourage participation in the New York Farm Link Program to match farmers who are selling their farms with people who are looking to purchase a farm.

Goal AG-2: Retain and encourage a diversity of economically viable farm types.

AG.6. Encourage shared, or "cooperative" infrastructure development (storage and processing facilities, locations for CSA drop-off and pickup, regional food hubs, etc.).

AG.7. Increase community engagement and consumer demand for locally grown food.

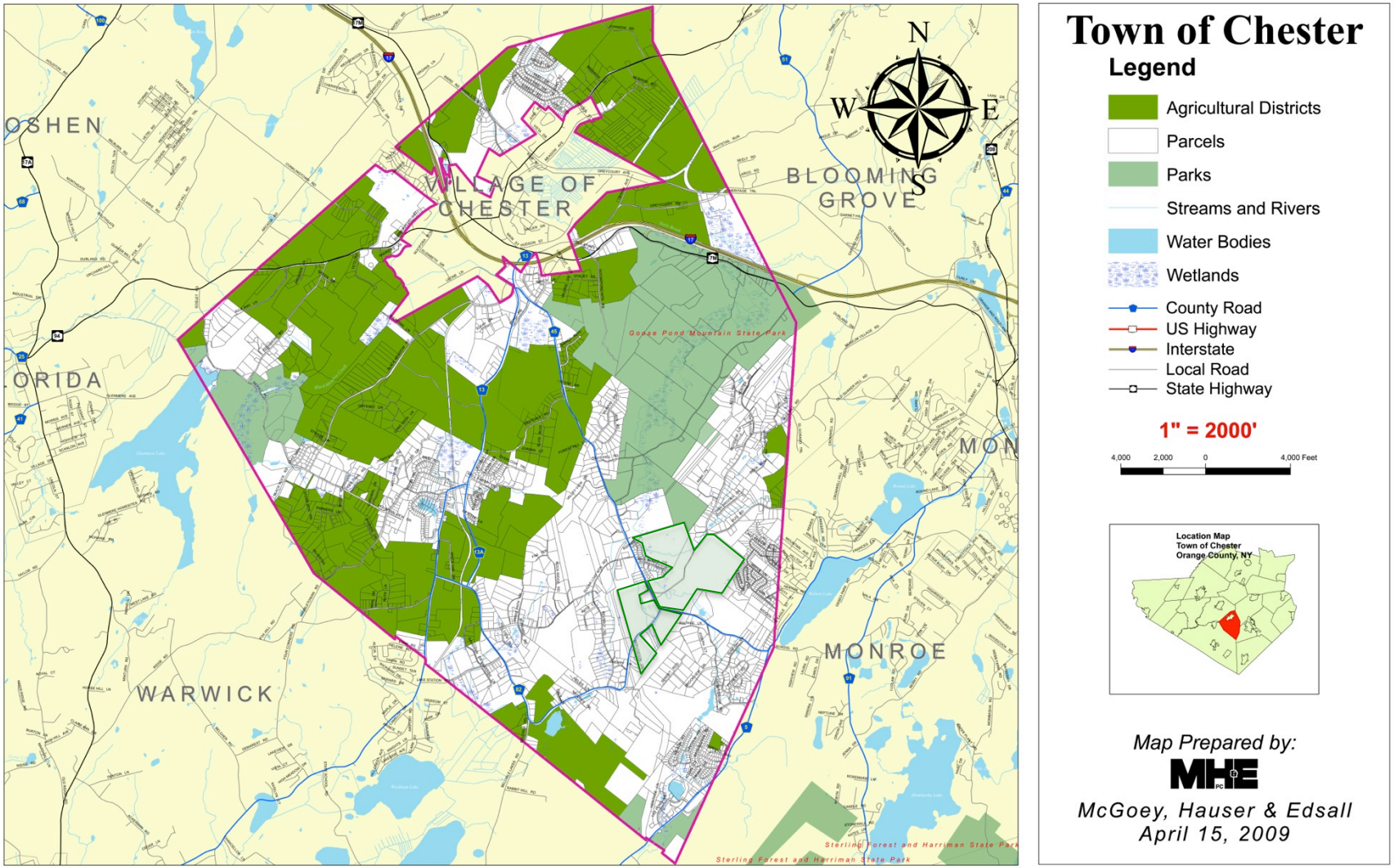
- Work with regional economic-development entities and County and local governments to give local agriculture a higher priority and more visibility.
- Help connect institutional, restaurant and wholesale opportunities with agricultural producers.
- Revise animal control and zoning laws to allow more residents to raise or keep micro-livestock.

AG.8. Review and revise regulations pertaining to farm operations to ensure these laws do not needlessly inhibit farming (e.g. farm stands, year-round farmers markets, greenhouses, value-added product operations, home-food production, U-picks, CSAs, and agritourism sites).

AG.9. Continue support for agricultural programs provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Above (top to bottom): Temporary pumping system for canal, which was utilized when pump stations were down (main pumps were down for two years between 2011 and 2013); view of outflow canal as it crosses under Lehigh & Hudson Rail Line and enters Camp LaGuardia; view of canal along Black Dirt field north of the Lehigh & Hudson Rail Line.

Draft


Town of Chester
Legend
Agricultural Districts
Parcels
Parks
Streams and Rivers
Water Bodies
Wetlands
County Road
US Highway
Interstate
Local Road
State Highway
1" = 2000'
4,000 2,000 0 4,000 Feet
Location Map
Town of Chester
Orange County, NY
Map Prepared by:
McGoey, Hauser & Edsall
April 15, 2009
N
W
E
S
VILLAGE OF CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
MONROE
WARWICK
Goosepond Mountain State Park
Sterling Forest and Harriman State Park

5.0 Parks and Recreation Resources

Chester offers a variety of public and private recreational opportunities for its residents. There are four parks in the Chester area, encompassing approximately 44.8 acres. Three of the parks are located in the Town: Chester Commons Park (24-acres), Pulvrent Field (1.4-acres) and Oak Drive Park (3-acres). The fourth park – Chester Community Carpenter Park (16.4-acres) – is located in the Village of Chester. The Town also owns the 91-acre Knapp's View parcel, which was purchased via a referendum for open space for public use. This Plan supports the use of Knapp's View consistent with the stated purpose in the Town's referendum to purchase the land.

Other recreational opportunities available to Chester residents, albeit with more limited accessibility, are the 459-acre Black Meadow Reservoir owned by Orange County and the 1,477-acre Goosepond Mountain State Park, which is maintained the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. Private recreational opportunities include The Rock Sports Park, The Castle Fun Center, Camp Monroe, Glenmere Mansion and the Monroe-Chester Sportsmen Club.

The 2003 Comprehensive Plan recommended expansion and development of Town and regional parkland in several general and particular areas as described below:

1. Chester Commons Park: expand facilities;
2. McNeil property (160 acres): acquire property to link Chester Commons Park to Goosepond Mountain State Park. This land was acquired by the State and is now part of Goosepond Mountain State Park.
3. Goosepond Mountain State Park: establish a regional park with active and passive recreation.
4. Black Meadow Creek Reservoir: establish hiking trails, fishing and other passive recreation, as well as active recreation, if lands no longer withheld for reservoir purposes;
5. King Tract: connect small area along Seeley Brook north of King Tract to Goosepond Mountain;
6. Camp Monroe: acquire for Town park;
7. Sugar Loaf: install neighborhood tot lots or create passive recreation areas;
8. Sugar Loaf Mountain: preserve for open space, scenic backdrop and hiking by way of clustering and transfer of development rights; and
9. Heritage Trail: improve trailhead parking, and explore adaptive reuse of Camp LaGuardia buildings for park use.

The 2003 Plan also supported a payment in lieu of parkland fee to the Town to pay for recreational facilities. This 2014 Plan continues to support the above listed actions as well as the requirement for a payment in lieu of parkland fee.

Above (top to bottom): The trailhead to Goosepond Mountain State Park from NYS Route 17M near Chester-Blooming Grove town line; the Town of Chester's Knapp's View; and view of The Rock Sports Park at the corner of Kings Highway and Black Meadow Road (Photo: The Rock Sports Park from Frozen Ropes Web site).

Draft

In 2005, the Town's Parks and Recreation Commission spearheaded the development of a Town of Chester *Recreation and Open Space Plan*, which was adopted by the Town Board in December 2007. The *2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan* includes an inventory of Town, State, regional and private recreational resources, along with five recreation and open space goals, which are provided below:

Goal 1: Create a park and recreation system that meets the needs of Chester's residents, providing them with top-quality parks and recreational facilities.

Goal 2: Through efficient and appropriate park planning, provide Chester residents with attractive, diverse, and safe parks and facilities.

Goal 3: Provide a variety of structured recreation programs, both active and passive activities, for individuals and groups to participate in.

Goal 4: Create an efficient and responsive park and recreation department that provides quality resources and user-friendly customer service, ensuring timely responsiveness and safe provision of recreational facilities.

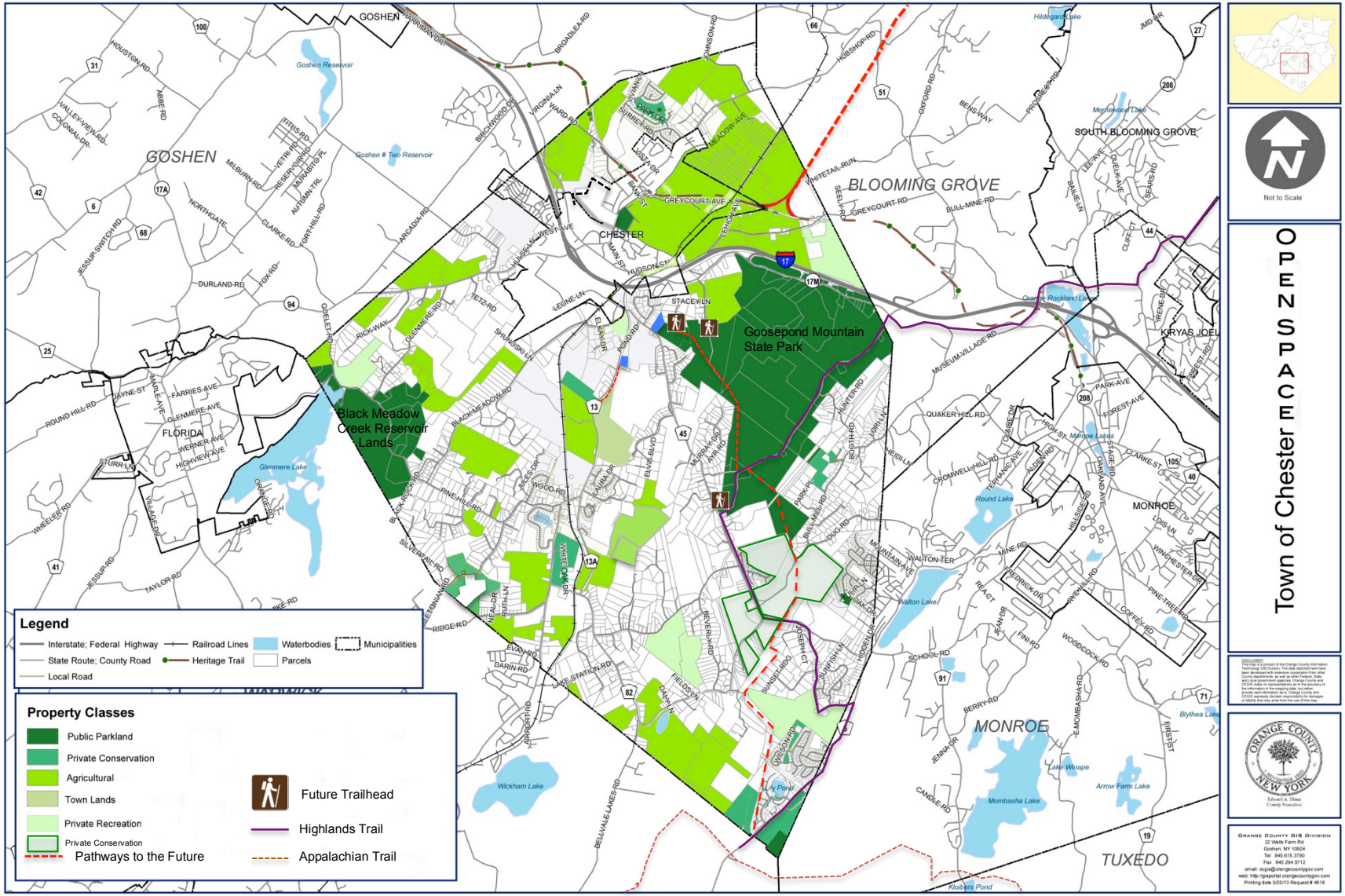
Goal 5: Follow adopted Town policies to the extent possible and practical to establish parks and recreation as a premier community service.

This 2014 Comprehensive Plan continues to support the goals of the 2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan. This 2014 Plan also supports the Recreation and Open Space Plan recommendations as follows: 6.3 System Wide Recommendations, 6.4 Recommendations to Meet Chester's Recreational Needs, 6.5 Recommendations to Meet Chester's Open Space Needs, 6.6 Chester's Existing Trail Network, 6.7 Pocket Park Recommendations, 6.8 Community Park Recommendations, and 6.9 Other Parks and Resources, which are incorporated herein by reference.

This 2014 Plan also recommends some additional initiatives and programs, which were not envisioned in the 2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan. These are presented as addendums to the exiting recommendations cited above and are presented on page 46 of this Plan.

Above (top to bottom): View from Sugar Loaf Mountain of Goosepond Mountain State Park; view from Goosepond Mountain to Sugar Loaf Mountain; and playground at Chester Commons Park. The Town has an abundance of passive recreational opportunities, but there is a need to provide improved access and parking to passive parks. (Source: The photos above courtesy The Preservation Collective and Chester Parks and Recreation)

Draft


Town of Chester OPEN SPACE
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
BLOOMING GROVE
CHESTER
FLORIDA
MONROE
TUXEDO
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
KIRYAS JOEL
Goosepond Mountain State Park
Black Meadow Creek Reservoir Lands
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Railroad Lines
Heritage Trail
Waterbodies
Parcels
Municipalities
Property Classes
Public Parkland
Private Conservation
Agricultural
Town Lands
Private Recreation
Private Conservation
Pathways to the Future
Future Trailhead
Highlands Trail
Appalachian Trail
ORANGE COUNTY NEW YORK
ORANGE COUNTY GIS DIVISION

5.1 Parks and Recreation: Goals, Objectives and Policies

This 2014 Comprehensive Plan recommends the following additions/revisions to Chapter 6.0 - Recommendations of the Town of Chester 2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan.

6.3 System Wide Recommendations

6.3.1 Design Improvements

DI.7. Construct, design, operate and maintain parks, facilities and programs to the greatest and most economical extent possible in an environmentally friendly manner to help protect the dual purpose of Chester's parks (i.e. protecting the environment while providing recreational space).

6.3.2 Maintenance Improvements

MI.4. Ensure well-balanced maintenance program of athletic fields along with a maintenance and replacement schedule for recreational equipment, such as playgrounds and recreational facilities.

6.4 Recommendations to Meet Chester's Recreational Needs

RN.6. Ensure parks are easily accessible by sidewalks, bike paths or other pedestrian links and that adequate onsite parking is provided within parks and at trailheads to accommodate public access.

6.5 Recommendations to Meet Chester's Open Space Needs

OS.9. If the Town obtains real property through in-rem foreclosure, it should first give due consideration to protecting portions of open space on the property with a conservation easement or by other means, when such lands further the goals and objectives of the Town's Recreation and Open Space Plan or Comprehensive Plan.

OS.10. If the Town disposes of parkland, proceeds from the sale must be used for parkland acquisition or improvements.

6.6 Chester's Existing Trail Network

T.5. Work with Orange County to extend Heritage Trail along the Erie Railroad Chester to Newburgh branch line.

T.6. Develop trailheads with off-street parking and footpaths operated by the Town and/or private developers to improve access to Goosepond Mountain State Park and to Sugar Loaf Mountain from the Sugar Loaf hamlet.

Above (top to bottom): View of Heritage Trail in the vicinity of Greycourt; stream crossing along the Erie Railroad – Chester to Newburgh – branch line, which needs new decking; view of Erie Railroad branch line in vicinity of Camp LaGuardia. This Plan supports the extension of the rail trail along the branch line.

Draft

T.7. Extend the Highlands Trail through the Chester Golf and Camp Monroe properties [through public-private partnership] to provide a direct connection to the Appalachian Trail.

6.7 Pocket Park Recommendations

6.7.3 New Pocket Park Recommendations

NP.1. Encourage creation of pocket parks within new residential developments so that children can walk to and from parkland from their homes.

NP.2. Consider use of payment-in-lieu of parkland fees to create new pocket parks within existing areas with higher residential densities.

6.8 Community Park Recommendations

6.8.4 Ashford Estates

AE.1. Investigate potential use of 50-acre open space parcel in the Town of Goshen for a community or regional park.

AE.2. Investigate utilization of half–acre open space lot on Hambletonian Road as a trailhead for the Heritage Trail.

6.8.5 Knapp's View

KV.1. Develop a long-term master plan for Knapp's View for parkland.

KV.2. Develop design and locational criteria for any community facilities to be situated on this Town-owned land.

6.8.5 Camp LaGuardia

CL. 1. Explore opportunities for Heritage Trail parking at Camp LaGuardia along with the adaptive reuse of adjacent buildings for parks and recreation purposes.

6.9 Other Parks and Resources

6.9.4. Consider the impacts of new development on adjacent Town, State and County parklands and from viewsheds from these public open spaces.

This Comprehensive Plan also recommends a periodic update of the Town's 2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan so that it remains relevant to the needs of the Town of Chester and its residents.

Recreation and Open Space

"Create a park and recreation system that meets the needs of Chester's residents, providing them with top-quality parks and recreational facilities."

Above: A vacant building near the trailhead for the Heritage Trail on Camp LaGuardia property that may lend itself to adaptive reuse for park purposes.

Draft

6.0 Cultural and Historic Resources

The Town's 2003 Comprehensive Plan noted the importance of cultural and historic resources, Sugar Loaf's historic area, historic structures and some cemeteries. The 2003 Plan directed the Planning Board and Town Board to consider these resources as individual properties are proposed for development. The Plan further noted their importance, but recommended addressing them on a case-by-case basis.

This 2014 update of the Comprehensive Plan builds upon the 2003 Plan by providing more specific goals and objectives to guide the Planning Board and Town Board decisions regarding cultural and historic resources. Furthermore, this Plan recognizes that there are many historically significant structures in the Town, in addition to those in the Sugar Loaf hamlet that are worthy of consideration. The preservation of historic structures contributes to the architectural integrity of Chester, promotes economic development, and educates citizens and building owners on proper preservation techniques.

The following goals are set forth in this Plan with respect to cultural resources:

Goal 1: Promote the Sugar Loaf historic area as both a cultural resource and an economic development tool.

Goal 2: Provide support for a rich variety of cultural opportunities and activities for all groups and individuals in the community.

Goal 3: Provide support for the Chester Public Library to ensure it continues to meet community needs.

The following goals are set forth in this Plan with respect to historic resources:

Goal 1: Strive to identify, conserve and protect significant public and privately owned historic structures, landmarks and farm buildings in recognition of their contribution to the Town's identity.

Goal 2: Promote the preservation, appreciation and sustainable use of historical resources.

Goal 3: Work with property owners to upgrade and renovate historic properties and farm buildings within the Town of Chester, including adaptive reuse options.

Above (top to bottom):Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf; Moondancer gift shop; and performing arts during Sugar Loaf festival (bottom photo courtesy Sugar Loaf Art & Craft Village Web site). The hamlet of Sugar Loaf is an important cultural center in the Town, with a variety of historic, commercial and residential buildings.

Draft

The Town of Chester's rich history is preserved in its historic cemeteries, houses, barns and other structures, which can be found throughout the Town. While their owners maintain many of these historic structures in good condition, others are threatened by lack of owner maintenance and pressure for redevelopment.

The Town has taken proactive measures to protect its historic cemeteries and burial sites. The Town Board adopted Chapter 40 A – Cemeteries on April 1, 2003, by local law in an effort to protect the cemeteries and burial sites throughout the Town. The Orange County Genealogical Society prepared a map of the Town's cemeteries and burial sites, but cemeteries and burial sites continue to be discovered in the Town.

The Cemeteries Law establishes a 100-foot setback requirement between cemeteries and new residential or nonresidential structures and empowers the Planning Board to require a residential or commercial developer to erect fencing, install plantings or otherwise erect a visual barrier between developable lands adjacent to cemeteries. The Cemetery Law also compels the building inspector not to issue a building permit for any structure within 200 feet of cemeteries without first referring the matter to the Planning Board for review and approval. This Plan continues to support these laws, which protect the Town's cemeteries and burial sites.

According to the National Register of Historic Places in Orange County, N.Y., there are several National Register-listed properties in the Village of Chester, including the Yelverton Inn, which hosted Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr, as well as George Washington during the Revolution. Within the Town, one property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Fury Brook Farm near the hamlet of Sugar Loaf. This farm was first established along the old Waywayanda Path in 1731, and during the Revolutionary War horses used by the Continental Army were raised on its pastures, according the National Register listing narrative.

There are many other structures in the Town that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. This Plan recommends the Town Board also support efforts by property owners to have their properties listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places and to promote the preservation, appreciation and sustainable use of historical or heritage resources.

Above (top to bottom): National Register - listed Fury Brook Farm, established on the Waywayanda Path in 1731; Painting "Autumn Landscape, Sugar Loaf, N.Y.," Jasper Francis Cropsey, Calif., 1870-75, Metropolitan Museum of Art (courtesy Sugar Loaf Historical Society); and National Register Yelverton Inn (112 Main Street,Chester) circa 1765.

Draft

The National Register of Historic Places is the U.S. government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects worthy of preservation. Today, one historic property within the Town – The Fury Brook Farm – is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[2] Many eligible properties, however, are not. There are no National or State Register historic districts in the Town of Chester – although the hamlet of Sugar Loaf has many historic structures, which could form the basis for an eligible National Register Historic District listing.

Presently, Chester does not have land-use regulations that address exterior alterations to historic structures. Although the Town has the hamlet of Sugar Loaf, which is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, there is little in the way of standards to guide exterior alterations to historic residential or nonresidential properties. If the Town is to retain its unique sense of place in the future, some consideration of protecting the integrity of its historic properties through guidelines or historic district designation should be considered.

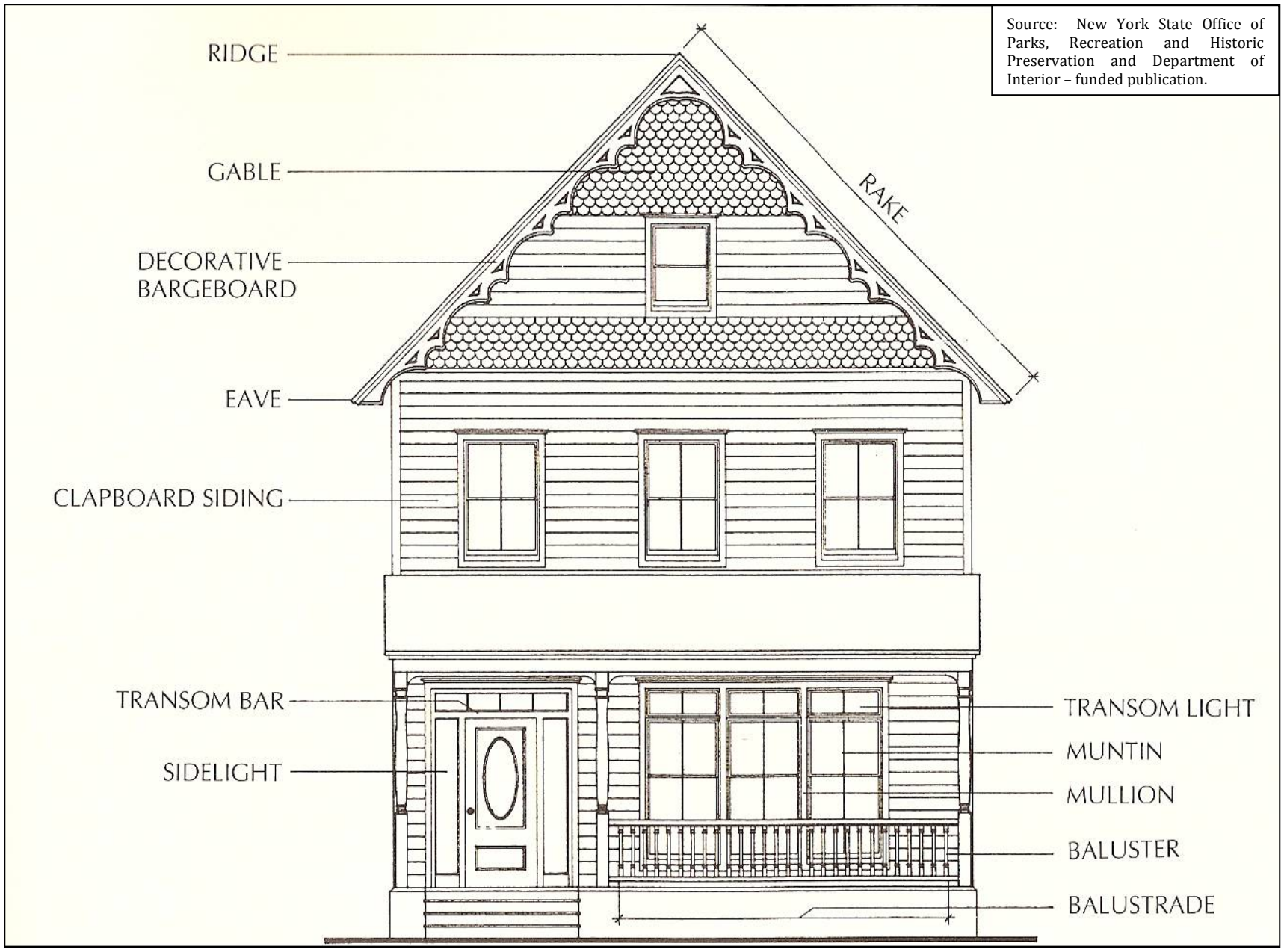
This Plan recommends the Town Board initially develop a set of voluntary historic preservation guidelines to guide landowner decisions with respect to exterior alteration to their homes or businesses and to help building owners better understand historic-preservation techniques. The guidelines would outline the principles of design and preservation that homeowners and business owners could use when they are evaluating proposed changes to historic buildings. The guidelines would describe the renovations and specify the appropriate types of building materials to be used. It would also describe the architectural elements to be preserved (see illustration on page 51).

Long-term, the Town Board could work with property owners in Sugar Loaf to seek the creation of a National Register-designated historic district. The National Register listing would symbolize the importance of the hamlet, and property owners in the districts would be eligible for a 20% investment tax credit for the "certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures."

Above (top to bottom): Historic structure in Sugar Loaf hamlet, which is being restored by new owners; farmhouse and barns on Meadow Avenue; and farm structures on an inactive farm off of Goosepond Mountain Road. The Town's rich history is reflected in these older structures, and efforts by property owners to preserve structures should be promoted by the Town.

[2] The *National Register of Historic Places* is the U.S. government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects worthy of preservation. The National Register was established in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Out of the over one million properties on the National Register, 80,000 are listed individually, the others are contributing members within historic districts.

Draft



Source: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and Department of Interior – funded publication.

The following general historic preservation guidelines are offered to guide renovations of historic structures (adapted from National Register Guidelines):

Respect Original Architecture of the Building.

- Determine which elements are essential to its character and preserve these; and
- Avoid masking over original materials.

Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant architectural features or adding materials, elements or details that were not part of the original building.

- Rehabilitation work should preserve and retain original wall and siding materials; and
- Details such as decorative millwork or shingles should not be added to buildings if they were not an original feature of that structure.

Maintain existing architectural elements of the historic building.

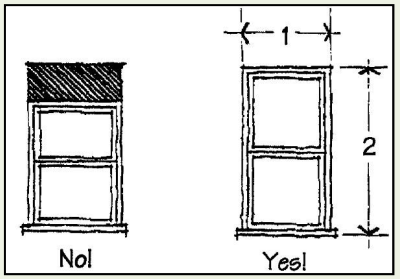
- The best preservation technique is to maintain historic features from the outset so that intervention is not required. Use treatments such as caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint and rust removal;
- Repair only those architectural features that are deteriorated;
- Only replace those features that are beyond repair or missing; and
- Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate or otherwise upgrade the existing material, using National Trust Preservation Standards.

The original window openings, muntin and mullions should be preserved where feasible.

- Do not block down the original window openings to accommodate a stock window that does not fit the building (see illustration to the right);
- Where windows have previously been blocked down, allow replacement windows that will fit the original opening.
- Retain original window style when replacement is necessary.

Historic Preservation

"The best preservation technique is to maintain historic features from the outset so that intervention is not required."



Draft

Original building materials should be preserved and should not be covered with synthetic materials.

- Avoid removing siding that is in good condition or that can be repaired;
- If portions of the wood siding must be replaced, be sure to match style and lap dimensions of the original;
- New building permit applications to install vinyl or aluminum siding should be prohibited; and
- Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible.

The Town can strengthen its preservation goals by becoming a state-designated *Certified Local Government* (CLG). If the Town enacts appropriate preservation legislation and appoints a qualified preservation review commission, it would become eligible to become a CLG, pending determination by the State Historic Preservation Office that it meets it meets state and federal standards. Approvals are forwarded to the National Park Service for certification. The CLG program supports and strengthens local preservation activities by encouraging communities to develop an action plan in order to achieve their preservation goals. In New York State, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation administers the CLG program.

All certified CLGs are eligible to receive a variety of services from the SHPO, including:

- Grant money designated exclusively for CLG projects, which are awarded through the CLG program;
- Membership in a national CLG network;
- Technical preservation assistance and legal advice;
- Direct involvement in SHPO programs, such as identifying properties that may be eligible for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places;
- Training opportunities that will enable communities to protect their historic resources and integrate them into short- and long-term planning initiatives; and
- Ongoing support from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.

This Plan recommends the Town give further consideration to pursuing Certified Local Government designation. Doing so will help to protect historic resources for future generations.

Above: Properties in Sugar Loaf eligible for National Register designation.

Draft

6.1 Cultural and Historic Resources: Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are set forth with respect to cultural resources:

Goal 1: Promote the Sugar Loaf historic area as a cultural resource and an economic development tool.

CR.1. Collaborate with local cultural institutions to help them grow within the community and market their resources to the surrounding region.

CR.2. Provide support for cultural events within the Sugar Loaf hamlet.

CR.3. Help promote the not-for-profit Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center as a singular facility for the performing arts and support its long-term sustainability.

CR.4. Support efforts to develop a cohesive cultural identify for the Sugar Loaf hamlet and to market its products and leisure experiences for residents and visitors.

CR.5. Include cultural and historic resources in a new Chester wayfinding sign system.

Goal 2: Provide support for a rich variety of cultural opportunities and activities for all groups and individuals in the community.

CR.6. Provide support for cultural activities at Chester Public Library and at Town parks.

Goal 3: Provide support for the Chester Public Library to ensure it continues to meet community needs.

CR.7. Ensure library is supported in capital and programing budget.

The following goals, objectives and policies are set forth with respect to historic resources:

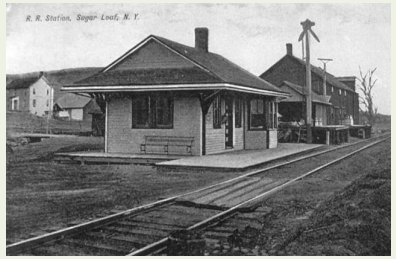
Goal 1: Strive to identify, conserve and protect significant public and privately owned historic structures, landmarks and buildings in recognition of their contribution to the Town's identity.

HR.1. Support nominations for individual listing of properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

HR.2. Provide support letters to individuals or organizations that seek grant funding for historic preservation through the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.

Historic Preservation

"Support nominations for individual listing of properties on the National Register of Historic Places."



Above: Original Sugar Loaf train station, which was razed and lost forever. When historic structures are lost, especially important civic structures, a piece of the community's rich fabric is also lost for future generations. This Plan strongly supports efforts to save such historic structures.
Post Card: Courtesv Jav Westerveld.

Draft

HR.3. Seek grants to research, survey, document and rehabilitate heritage resources in Chester.

HR.4. Maintain accurate inventories of eligible historic properties in the Town, so that they can be considered in planning and development actions.

Goal 2: Promote the preservation, appreciation and sustainable use of historical resources.

HR.5. Foster stewardship of hamlet centers, places and landscapes as the Town grows and develops.

HR.6. Develop a set of voluntary historic preservation guidelines for local residents.

HR.7. Ensure Planning Board reviews development applications for land adjacent to historic resources to aid the Town's heritage-resource protection efforts. Development proposals adjacent to or including historic sites should identify and mitigate adverse development impacts on those sites.

HR.8. When historic resources are to be lost, they should be documented compliant with the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), Historic American Landscape Standard (HALS) or other appropriate nationally recognized standard.

Goal 3: Work with property owners to upgrade and renovate historic properties and farm buildings within the Town of Chester, including adaptive reuse options.

HR.9. Create special permit criteria in the zoning law to allow the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and nonresidential uses on non-working farms, or to buildings that can no longer by used for agricultural purposes.

HR.10. Consider the adoption of a preservation plan to further the Town's goals for the preservation and conservation of historic resources.

Goal 4: Explore Certified Local Government Status.

HR.11. Further evaluate the potential benefits of Certified Local Government status and its potential application in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf and throughout the Town of Chester.

HR.12. If sufficient benefit is determined to arise from CLG designation, pursue designation in cooperation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.

HR.13. Amend zoning law to allow for adaptive reuse of agricultural or historic structures subject to special permit approval by the Planning Board.

Historic Preservation

"Further evaluate the potential benefits of Certified Local Government Status and it potential application in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf and throughout the Town of Chester."

Draft

7.0 Transportation

The Town of Chester's transportation system is comprised of its highways, streets, freight rail line, sidewalks and recreational trails. This chapter discusses the relationship of traffic impacts with land-use policies and incorporates policies that protect existing roadway capacity and reduce the effects of increased traffic as the result of new growth.

7.1 Highway and Roadway Improvements

The 2003 Comprehensive Plan recommended 12 specific improvements to the road system within the Town and Village of Chester. This 2014 update of the Comprehensive Plan reviews and amends these recommendations in light of current conditions and community needs.

7.1.1 Sugar Loaf Bypass

The 1974 Plan recommended the construction of a County Route (CR) 13 bypass road to protect the Sugar Loaf business area with its busy shops and heavy pedestrian traffic. The first segment of the bypass [the development of CR 13A from the Sugar Loaf Firehouse to Bellvale Road (CR 82)] is completed. The 2003 Comprehensive Plan also recommended improvements at the intersection of county routes 82, 13, and 13A. These intersection improvements were not completed, and this 2014 Plan update recommends completion of the alignment improvements at these intersections.

7.1.2 This paragraph reserved.

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS CHAPTER INCORPORATES POLICIES THAT PROTECT EXISTING ROADWAY CAPACITY AND TO REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF INCREASED TRAFFIC."

Draft

7.1.3 Connection between Surrey Meadows and the Village

The 1974 and 2003 Comprehensive Plans recommended a connecting road be constructed from the Surrey Meadows subdivision to provide the elementary and high schools direct and safe access from NYS Route 94, as well as a second means of access for the Surrey Meadows subdivision. The proposed connection would also allow additional development in this portion of the Town. This update of the Comprehensive Plan continues to recommend this connecting road to be built, as the need for the connection has only increased. There is an 80-acre landlocked parcel adjacent to the school and a future road connection to the high school and elementary school should be considered through the land-use decision-making process.

7.1.4 This paragraph reserved.

7.1.5 NYS Route 94

The 1974 Comprehensive Plan recommended widening and alignment improvements to portions of NYS Route 94. These improvements were completed in 1998-1999. Looking ahead, the Town should track accident data at key intersections along NYS Route 94 to identify where future improvements may be needed. The Planning Board should also carefully assess potentially significant traffic impacts associated with new development and require appropriate mitigation measures to maintain roadway level-of-service and safety along NYS Route 94.

7.1.6 Bull Mill Road and Laroe Road

This intersection was realigned and graded as part of the County's Laroe Road project. However, stockpiled soil from the construction remains at the northeast corner of this intersection. This Plan supports the restoration and re-grading of the staging area to improve sight distance.

Above (top to bottom): Aerial view of vicinity of proposed connection between NYS Route 94 and Surrey Meadows; aerial view of intersection of Kings Highway and Laroe Road; and aerial view of NYS Route 94 improvements in vicinity of Exit 126.

Draft

7.1.7 This paragraph reserved.

7.1.8 Secondary Access to High School via Hambletonian Avenue

The 2003 Plan recommended a connection be provided to the high school across the Heritage Trail, if it proved to be physically possible. This 2014 Plan also supports this recommendation. It is further recommended the school district consider acquiring needed right-of-way from adjacent parcels, either through acquisition of right-of-way or land (see page 57).

7.1.9 This paragraph reserved.

Above (top to bottom): View from Bull Mill Road looking toward the intersection with Laroe Road; view looking south from the Bull Mill Road-Laroe Road intersection; and view along recently improved Laroe Road heading north toward Restdale Road.

Draft

7.1.10 Exit 127 Interchange from NYS Route 17 (Future Interstate 86)

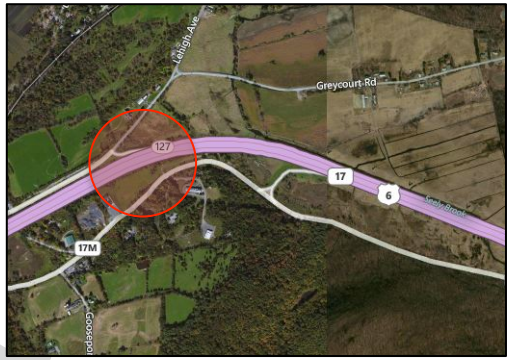
As part of the NYS Route 17 upgrade to Interstate 86, the NYSDOT was proposing to replace Exit 127 with a full diamond interchange located opposite the yeshiva, connecting to Greycourt Road with NYS Route 17M via a new overpass. However, NYSDOT is no longer recommending a new Exit 127, but is instead recommending closing this exit. The NYSDOT's *"Route 17 Transportation Corridor Study"* ("Corridor Study") recommends converting Exit 128 to a full-access interchange instead. Access between the interchange Exit 127 area and the new interchange at Exit 128 (Oxford Depot) would be via NYS Route 17M and would include improvements to the alignment and geometry at the Kings Highway intersection. This Plan supports recommended improvements at the Kings Highway intersection. This Plan also recommends Town coordination with NYSDOT and the Orange County Transportation Council (OCTC) to ensure adequate access is provided from NYS Route 17 to Camp LaGuardia to accommodate redevelopment of this site, which is zoned OP-Office Park.

7.1.11 CR 13 (Kings Highway) and NYS Route 17M

The intersection of CR 13 and NYS Route 17M is awkwardly aligned and confusing, as well as being routinely congested. The Corridor Study recommends enhancing connections to the Exit 128 ramps by widening and improving NYS Route 17M and the intersection with Kings Highway. This Plan recommends Town coordination with NYSDOT and the OCTC to ensure a budget is developed for the design of intersection improvements and funding is allocated to cover the costs for implementing transportation improvements at this location upon approval of the design report.

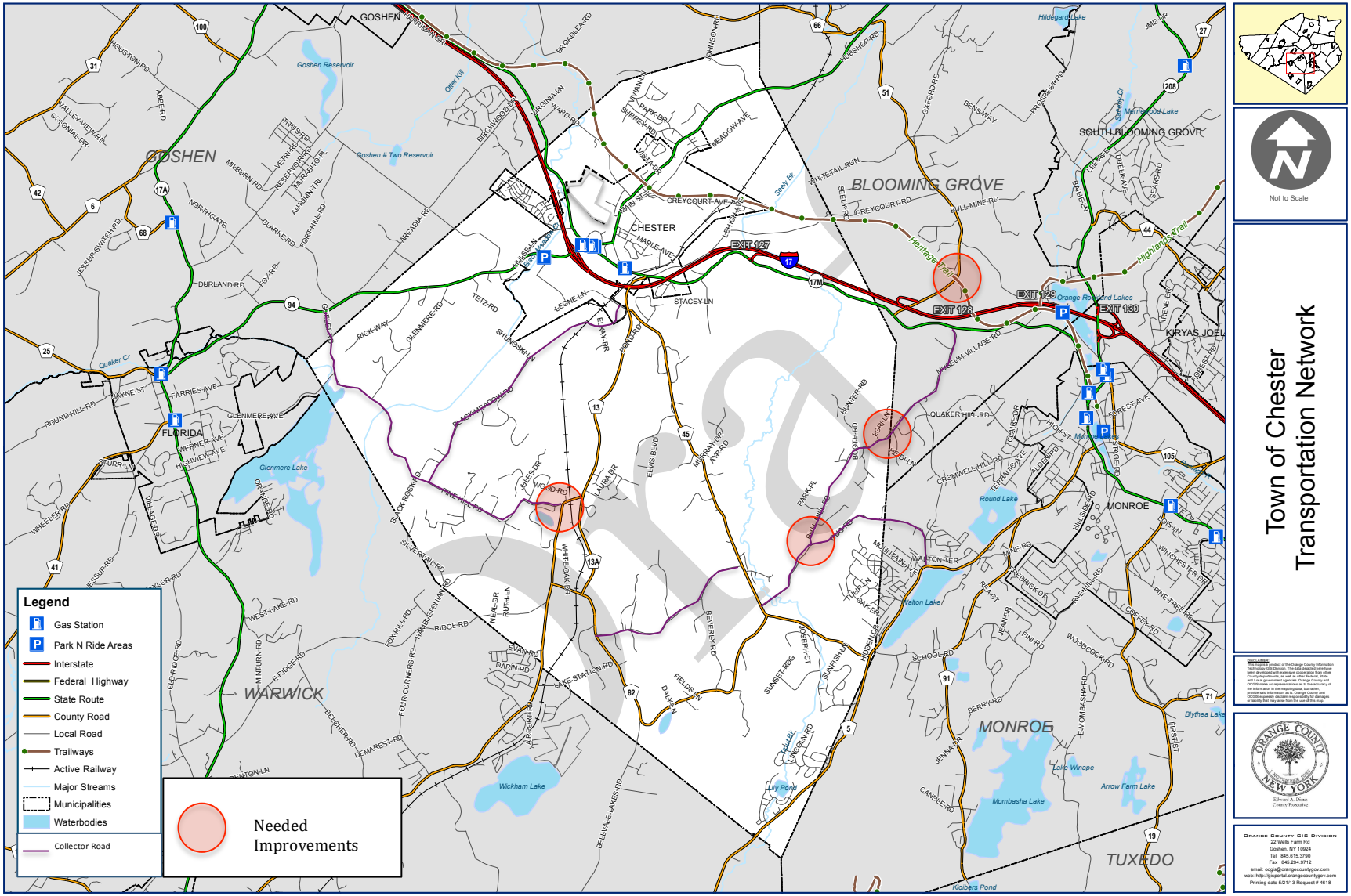
7.1.12 NYS Route 94 at Conklingtown Road

A majority of the traffic generated from the recently approved 455-unit Greens at Chester housing development will access Conklingtown Road to it intersection with Route 94. This intersection lies at a 45-degree angle at a curve on Route 94. As a result the applicant will, as part of the development, extend Conklingtown Road straight to meet Route 94 farther east at a 90-degree angle. This proposed improvement should be undertaken, as the project develops to accommodate traffic increases from Conklingtown Road onto Route 94.



Above (top to bottom): Aerial view of vicinity of proposed new Exit 127 interchange; aerial view of intersection of CR 13 and NYS Route 17M; and aerial view of NYS Route 94 intersection with Conklingtown Road.

Draft


Town of Chester
Transportation Network
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
FLORIDA
MONROE
WARWICK
TUXEDO
KIRYAS JOEL
EXIT 127
EXIT 128
EXIT 129
EXIT 130
Heritage Trail
Highlands Trail
Legend
Gas Station
Park N Ride Areas
Interstate
Federal Highway
State Route
County Road
Local Road
Trailways
Active Railway
Major Streams
Municipalities
Waterbodies
Collector Road
Needed Improvements
Orange County GIS Division
22 Wells Farm Rd
Goshen, NY 10924
Tel 845.615.3790
Fax 845.294.9712
email: ocgis@orangecountygov.com
web: http://gisportal.orangecountygov.com
Printing date 5/21/13 Request # 4618

7.1.13 Dug Road and Bull Mill Road Intersection

The Y-intersection of Dug Road and Bull Mill Road is awkwardly aligned and confusing. Additionally, due to the increased volume of traffic from new developments along these roads, the roadway geometry at this location needs to be addressed. This Plan strongly recommends the Planning Board require traffic-impact studies for residential developments proposed along either of these roads to determine the effect on the level of service at this critical intersection. Appropriate mitigation measures should be required when traffic impact studies reveal an impact on the level of service, including improvements to roadway geometry or consideration of development alternatives that reduce traffic related impacts.

7.1.14 Dug Road Roadway Geometry Near Lori Lane

The roadway geometry along Dug Hill Road has long posed a safety concern due to curves, hills and sight distance, and other alignment problems. This Plan recommends the Town seek Orange County Transportation Council (OCTC) funds to conduct a study to analyze the highway in order to develop a plan for needed improvements to Bull Mill Road extending from the Blooming Grove town line to the Dug Road intersection.

7.1.15 CR 51 – Heritage Trail Underpass (Blooming Grove)

As noted in Section 7.1.10 above, the NYSDOT's *"Route 17 Transportation Corridor Study"* recommends converting Exit 128 to a full-access interchange. Access between Exit 126 and the new interchange at Exit 128 (Oxford Depot) would be via NYS Route 17M and would include improvements to the alignment and geometry at the Kings Highway intersection. Access from the new interchange at Exit 128 and Camp LaGuardia would be via CR 51 to Greycourt Road. The Camp LaGuardia site is slated for redevelopment by Orange County. However, the NYSDOT's plans to eliminate the interchange at Exit 127 would adversely affect access to this site without significant improvements to CR 51 – specifically the underpass under the Heritage Trail, which is narrow and restricts traffic flow. This Plan recommends Town coordination with NYSDOT and the OCTC to ensure adequate access be provided from NYS Route 17 to Camp LaGuardia to accommodate redevelopment of this site, which is zoned OP-Office Park.

Above (top to bottom): View of the Dug Hill Road and Bull Mill Road intersection looking north from Bull Mill Road; view of Dug Hill Road as seen while entering the Town of Chester from Blooming Grove; and the Common Woods Manor development, which has direct access to Dug Hill Road.

Draft

7.1.16 Kings Highway/CR13 and Pine Hill Road

The roadway geometry at the intersection of Pine Hill Road and Kings Highway/CR 13 in Sugar Loaf has long posed a safety concern due to curves, sight distance and other alignment problems, as well as the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks to facilitate safe pedestrian movements. The Preliminary Streetscape Plan for Sugar Loaf identified some possible solutions that need further evaluation. This Plan recommends the Town secure funding to advance the Preliminary Streetscape Plan for Sugar Loaf to the final design phase. The final design should address the alignment, pedestrian movement issues and traffic calming needs at this intersection.

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS PLAN RECOMMENDS THE TOWN SECURE FUNDING THROUGH THE OCTC TO ADVANCE THE PRELIMINARY STREETSCAPE PLAN FOR SUGAR LOAF TO THE FINAL DESIGN PHASE. THE FINAL DESIGN SHOULD ADDRESS THE ALIGNMENT, PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT ISSUES AND TRAFFIC CALMING NEEDS AT THIS INTERSECTION."

7.2 Street Classification

Highways are generally described by their functional classifications, which describe the intended purpose of each type of road. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) has created a functional classification system for roadways that is described below.

Interstate and Limited-Access Highways: This type of highway moves large volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds to and from locations outside the region. Such highways have limited access via designated exits with no at-grade intersections. An example is NYS Route 17.

Arterial: The function of an arterial is to carry medium-to-heavy volumes of traffic at moderate to high speeds and provide access to major traffic generators. Examples in the Town include NYS Route 17M, NYS Route 94 and CR 5.

Major Collector: Provide connections between arterials and local roads at relatively higher speeds. Examples include Laroe Road (CR 45) and Bellvale Road (CR82).

Minor Collector: These roads provide connections between arterials and local roads at comparatively slower speeds and carry moderate volumes of traffic (e.g. Black Meadow Road, Bull Mill Road, Dug Road, Glenmere Road, Sugar Loaf Mountain Road and Pine Hill Road).

Local: This type of road provides direct access to abutting properties and channels local traffic to collector roads (e.g. residential streets). Local roads are typically town roads and they may even function as a minor collector where they carry through traffic within a subdivision (e.g. Surrey Meadows Road).

As recommended in the land-use portion of the 2003 Plan, the Town developed specifications for open development area roads in low-density areas. This Plan recommends adherence to these standards in the review of applications for development in open development areas. This Plan recommends the incorporation of traffic-calming measures to slow traffic without relying on speed limits or enforcement measures in more dense developments. In general, roads should be designed to handle the anticipated traffic volumes based upon their street classification and connection to the existing transportation system.

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS PLAN RECOMMENDS THE INCORPORATION OF TRAFFIC-CALMING MEASURES TO SLOW TRAFFIC WITHOUT RELYING ON SPEED LIMITS OR ENFORCEMENT MEASURES IN MORE DENSE DEVELOPMENTS."

Draft

7.3 Road Capacity

Road capacity reflects the amount of traffic a road can safely carry based upon its physical design characteristics and travelled speed. Factors that affect road capacity include physical design parameters such as the alignment of the road, width of the road pavement, and number of travel lanes, shoulder width, road surface and other factors. The number of curb cuts or driveways also affects road capacity, as cars slowing to accommodate the needs of turning vehicles impede traffic flow along roadways.

Road capacity can be increased by making physical improvements to the road, such as widening, adding lanes or removing curves and other obstacles. However, the cost of retrofitting road improvements or building new roads is high, and where serious regulatory barriers exist (e.g. wetlands, endangered species habitat, etc.) even large expenditures of money may not be able to increase available capacity where it is needed.

For the above-cited reasons, this 2014 Comprehensive Plan update focuses on simple measures to protect and maintain the available road capacity due to future growth. The recommended measures are as follows:

This paragraph reserved.

TRANSPORTATION

"ROAD CAPACITY REFLECTS THE AMOUNT OF TRAFFIC A ROAD CAN SAFELY CARRY BASED UPON ITS PHYSICAL DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAVELLED SPEED."

Draft

7.4 Design Criteria

The design criteria described below should be incorporated into the subdivision regulations applicable to new roads, driveways and intersections created during the subdivision process. Similarly, such design criteria should also be utilized to address new driveways and private roads that are part of a site plan not involving a subdivision. The descriptions below are designed to help illustrate the serious concerns of sight distance relative to traffic safety and the need to apply these criteria throughout the Town.

7.4.1 Sight Distances and Stopping Criteria

Sight distance is the distance along a roadway that an object of special height is continuously visible to the driver. This distance is dependent on the height of the driver's eye above the road surface, the specified object height above the road surface, and the height of sight obstructions within the line of sight. For measurement of both stopping and passing, sight distances assume the height of the driver's eye to be 3.5 feet. For stopping sight-distance calculations, the height of the object is considered to be 6 inches above the road surface. For passing sight-distance calculations, the height of the object is considered 4.25 feet above the road surface.

Sight distance is a critical issue in the design and review of new roads, streets and driveways in new developments. This Plan recommends the Planning Board in its review of development proposals utilize the standards from the American Association of State Highway and Traffic Officials (AASHTO), which may be amended from time to time. These principles are illustrated in Table 7-1 Sight Distances at Entrances and Table 7-2 Sight Line Criteria, on the following pages.

7.4.2 Sight Obstructions

On tangents, the obstruction that limits the driver's sight distance is the road surface at some point on a crest vertical curve. On horizontal curves the obstruction that limits sight distance may be the road surface at some point on the crest vertical curve or it may be some physical feature outside the traveled way, such as a bridge-approach fill slope, tree, foliage, or the back slope of a cut section. Accordingly, all highway construction plans should be checked in both vertical and horizontal place for sight-distance obstructions.

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS PLAN RECOMMENDS THE PLANNING BOARD IN ITS REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS UTILIZE THE STANDARDS FROM THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY AND TRAFFIC OFFICIALS (AASHTO), WHICH MAY BE AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME."

Draft

Table 7-1

SIGHT DISTANCES AT ENTRANCES

D – DISTANCE ALONG MAJOR ROAD FROM DRIVEWAY TO ALLOW VEHICLE TO ENTER SAFELY
See Illustration below

	30 mph (50 Km/h)				40 mph (60 Km/h)				50 mph (80 Km/h)				60 mph (100 Km/h)			
	2 Lane		4 or 6 Lane		2 Lane		4 or 6 Lane		2 Lane		4 or 6 Lane		2 Lane		4 or 6 Lane	
	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R	D_L	D_R
Passenger Cars																
Feet	360	260	220	260	530	440	380	440	740	700	620	700	950	1050	950	1050
Meters	110	80	67	80	160	135	225	215	190	215	190	215	290	320	290	320
Trucks																
Feet	500	400	400	400	850	850	850	850	1600	1600	1600	1600	2500	2500	2500	2500
Meters	150	120	120	120	260	260	260	260	490	490	490	490	760	760	760	760

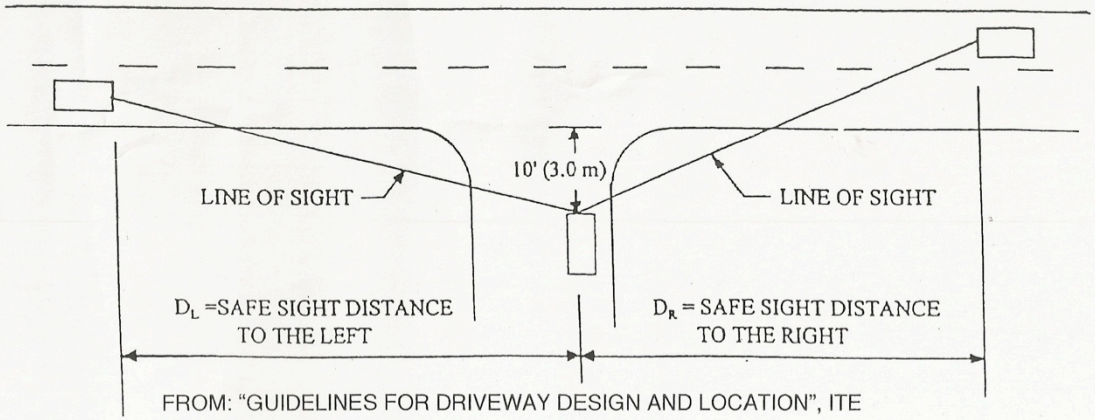
VALUES ARE FOR URBAN CONDITIONS. ON RURAL HIGHWAYS, INCREASE DISTANCES BY 10 PERCENT FOR SLOWER DRIVER REACTION.

EXCERPT FROM:

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

POLICY and STANDARDS for Entrances to State Highways

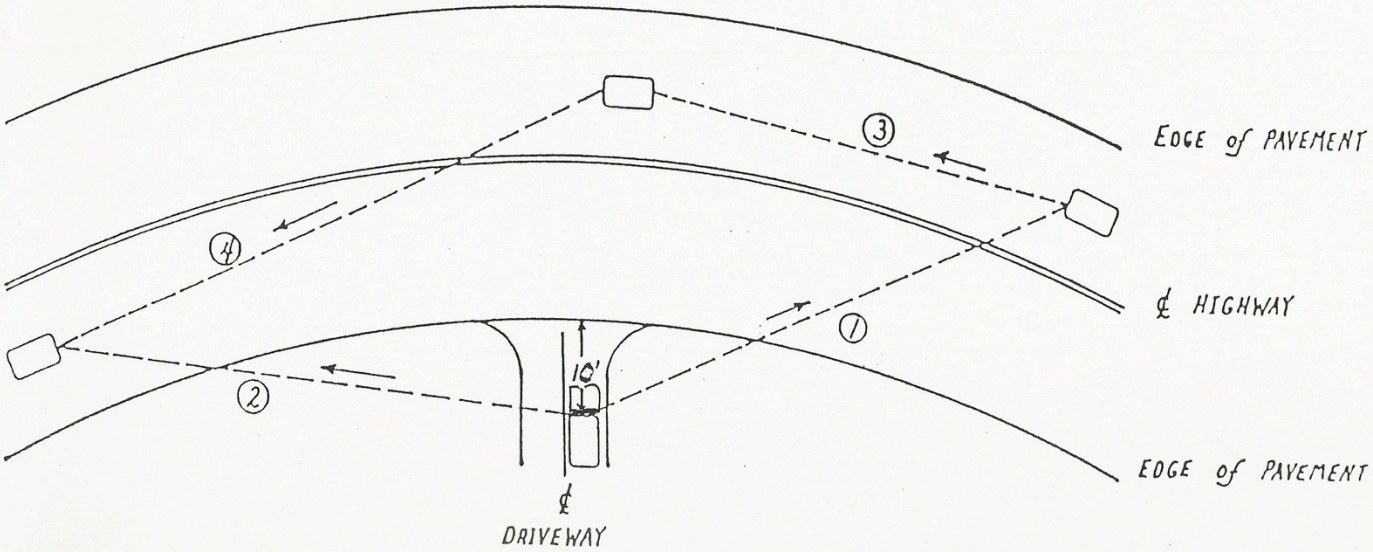
February 1998



FROM: "GUIDELINES FOR DRIVEWAY DESIGN AND LOCATION", ITE

Table 7-2

SIGHT LINE CRITERIA



(1) Exiting Sight Line at 10 feet from the edge of pavement looking right to the approaching vehicle.

(2) Exiting Sight Line at 10 feet from the edge of pavement looking left to the approaching vehicle.

(3) Rear end Sight Line from the left turn entering vehicle to a vehicle approaching from the same direction.

(4) Sight Line from the left turn entering vehicle to a vehicle approaching from the opposite direction.

Note:

Height of driver's eye is 3.5 feet.

Height of object in the center of the object's lane is 4.25 feet.

7.5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Most of Chester is rural and its dispersed residential areas are not conducive to pedestrian and bicycle transportation use. The exception is the hamlet of Sugar Loaf, where the dense settlement pattern could accommodate better pedestrian circulation with sidewalk and trail improvements.

Although pedestrians and bicyclists are common within even rural parts of the Town, these activities are undertaken for recreation and exercise rather than transportation purposes. Still, this Comprehensive Plan recommends explicitly accommodating pedestrian and bicycle transportation needs in the higher density land-use areas of the Town. Design provisions for these needs should be accommodated in the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations.

This Plan strongly supports appropriate pedestrian improvements in the Sugar Loaf hamlet (i.e. sidewalk improvements, which complement and do not overpower the historic character of the hamlet). This Plan encourages accommodating bicycle access along the Kings Highway corridor to Sugar Loaf and the NYS Route 94 corridor into the Village of Chester. This Plan also supports pedestrian connections to Town Hall and the Chester Public Library. In the southern portion of the Town, similar pedestrian corridors should be developed along Lakes Road into Monroe and eventually from Laroe Road through Goosepond Mountain State Park to Route 17M.

Bicycle routes along roadways complement dedicated bicycle paths such as the Heritage Trail. Such routes are intended to encourage alternative transportation options and discourage recreational users from using the on-street system. Many roads in the Town do not lend themselves to bike routes. However, conflicts between automobiles, pedestrians and cyclists can occur where adequate facilities for cyclist are not provided. Therefore, the goal should be to establish areas within the Town where an integrated system of bike routes could be established.

When County or State roads are planned for significant upgrades, the redesigned roads should be designed as "complete streets", which take into account pedestrian and bicycle needs, if possible. This Plan supports future planning and development of both on and off-road bicycle routes, including the expansion of the Heritage Trail along the Erie Railroad branch line.

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUPPORTS FUTURE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF BOTH ON AND OFF-ROAD BICYCLE ROUTES, INCLUDING THE EXPANSION OF THE HERITAGE TRAIL ALONG THE ERIE RAILROAD BRANCH LINE."

Draft

7.6 Public Transportation

Local and regional public transit options are important to Chester's quality of life because they provide transportation alternatives to the private automobile for residents, employees, students, and staff, as well as visitors to the Town. The various transit services discussed below are now available in the Town and provide connections to Orange County and beyond.

7.6.1 Bus Service in the Town of Chester

Commuter service to the Port Authority Bus Terminal (8th Avenue at 42nd Street, Midtown Manhattan) is available from Chester via Coach USA-ShortLine. Residents in the Town of Chester also have access to local bus service within Orange County on the County's Main Line Trolley Bus (operated under contract by Coach USA-ShortLine), which stops in Chester. The Main Line runs seven days a week between Middletown and Harriman with stops in Middletown, Goshen, Chester, Harriman, Monroe and Woodbury Common. The County Dial-A-Bus, also provides bus services to numerous communities in the county. Passengers must call ahead to reserve a ride. In Chester, service is provided Monday through Saturday with hours of operation adjusted from time to time.

Coach USA-ShortLine's new state-of-the art office and garage complex was recently opened in the Chester Industrial Park. The new location enabled the bus company to consolidate office, maintenance and operations personnel in one centralized location. This Plan supports the expansion of bus service within the Town, where feasible to do so. With respect to the existing service, this Plan strongly supports efforts to increase the number of stops with amenities such as shelters, benches and other means of weather protection. Such efforts will improve overall safety and comfort of riders and may also increase ridership on these buses.

7.6.2 Park & Ride Facilities

There is a 97-space Park & Ride lot in Chester off of NYS Route 17, Exit 126, along with nearby facilities in Monroe. These facilities are overcapacity, but NYSDOT recently opened a new 60-space Park & Ride in Monroe. This Plan recommends ongoing Town coordination with NYSDOT and the OCTC to ensure adequate spaces are provided to accommodate growing commuter demand. The expansion of existing lots or creation of new lots is supported by this Plan.

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS PLAN STRONGLY SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STOPS WITH AMENITIES SUCH AS SHELTERS, BENCHES AND OTHER MEANS OF WEATHER PROTECTION."

Above: Chester's Park & Ride off of NYS Route 17, Exit 126.

Draft

7.6.3 Passenger Rail Service in the Town of Chester

There is no passenger rail commuter train service to the Town or Village of Chester. However, New Jersey Transit's Port Jervis line has a station at nearby Harriman, which is available to Chester residents who commute to New York City. All trains require a transfer to reach the city. Transfers are available at Secaucus for NJ Transit Trains to Penn Station and from Hoboken for PATH trains to 33rd Street and the World Trade Center. This Plan strongly supports bus-to-rail connections from Chester to existing train stations served by NJ Transit and the MTA.

7.7 Rail Service (Freight and Passenger)

Today, freight rail service is provided to Chester along the Lehigh & Hudson River RR line, which runs between northern New Jersey and terminates in Maybrook, N.Y. The L&HR provides service to a number of Chester businesses. This Plan supports the continued operation of the L&HR for freight service. The Town should support efforts by the railroad to obtain State and federal dollars to continue to operate this vital component of the Town of Chester's transportation system.

Currently no passenger rail service is provided to the Town. The closest terminal for passenger service is located in Harriman, approximately 10 miles southeast of Chester. The Erie Railroad branch line provided rail access to the Town up until the early 1980s. The Erie line has since been converted to the Heritage Trail rail trail.

Additional bus connections to regional passenger rail are desired to meet the growing demand from commuters. The Plan recommends a dedicated bus service-rail connector be established with stops in Sugar Loaf and the Village of Chester, which would then provide limited peak hour bus service between Chester and the NJ Transit Harriman Station.

Long term, this Plan also recommends the Town explore possibilities to provide passenger service to the Town – perhaps along the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad active freight line or via a branch line to the NJ Transit-operated Port Jervis line along the Erie Railroad branch line to Salisbury Mills. Passenger rail could increase heritage tourism in the area and be helpful in decreasing traffic congestion on NYS Route 17 (Future I-86).

TRANSPORTATION

"THIS PLAN SUPPORTS THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE LEHIGH & HUDSON RIVER RR FOR FREIGHT SERVICE."

Draft

7.8 Transportation: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal: To provide an interconnected, multimodal transportation system that is safe and efficient, and serves and supports residential and nonresidential land-use in Chester.

Objectives and Policies

Traffic Circulation

TC.1. Provide a road network that accommodates multiple modes of transportation, including bus, pedestrian, and bicycle access, and develop strategies for reducing demand on the Town's roads.

TC.2. Actively participate in the Orange County Transportation Council's updates to the metropolitan planning organization's Plan to ensure the needs of the Town are met.

TC.3. Limit the number of access points on collector roads and arterials by promoting cross access between commercial sites, as well as road connectivity between adjacent residential development.

TC.4. Work with business owners and trucking companies to explore alternatives for dealing with heavy truck traffic on area roads (e.g. dedicated truck routes, delivery hours, etc.).

TC.5. Secure funding to advance the Preliminary Streetscape Plan for Sugar Loaf to the final design phase, and to extend the study to encompass the entire business district.

Bicycles and Pedestrian Safety

BP.1. Develop a bikeway-trail system that minimizes potential conflicts between bicycles, pedestrians and motor vehicles.

BP.2. Improve access to Chester's trail network by providing parking and other facilities at trail access points to promote use of the system.

BP.3. Advance opportunities for pedestrian/bicycle connections between new developments and existing centers.

BP.4. Support efforts in Sugar Loaf to advance opportunities for sidewalk enhancements within the hamlet to create a safe and inviting environment within the business district in a manner that respects the unique and historic character of Sugar Loaf.

TRANSPORTATION

"INTEGRATE *COMPLETE STREETS* INFRASTRUCTURE AND DESIGN FEATURES INTO STREET DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN LARGE-SCALE DEVELOPMENTS TO CREATE SAFE AND INVITING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL USERS TO WALK, BICYCLE AND USE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, WHERE PRACTICAL AND FEASIBLE."

Draft

BP.5. Integrate complete streets infrastructure and design features into street design and construction within large-scale developments to create safe and inviting environments for all users to walk, bicycle and use public transportation, where practical and feasible.

BP.6. Require bike racks and amenities for commercial sites, schools, parks and public facilities.

Public Transportation

PT.1. Work with Orange County to increase the number of covered bus shelters and covered bike parking at transit stops where appropriate.

PT.2. Coordinate with Orange County to monitor the public transportation provided to ensure effectiveness and efficiency while maintaining the priorities of safety, courtesy and scheduling.

PT.3. Improve transit service by creating a dedicated bus service-rail connector with stops in Sugar Loaf and the Village of Chester, which would then provide limited peak hour bus service between Chester and the NJ Transit Harriman Station.

PT.4. Work regionally and locally to develop satellite park-and-ride facilities with bus service to reduce traffic congestion at primary park-and-ride facilities.

PT.5. During the development review process, ensure that transit service and access to/from the transit stops and the development are considered and connections made, when feasible to do so.

PT.6. Design bus pull-off lanes at bus stops to maintain the level of service on roadways.

Rail Service

RS.1. Support projects and proposals to help ensure the freight railroads are adequately utilized for commercial use.

RS.2. Railroad rights-of-way should be preserved for current and future use.

RS.3. Explore opportunities to provide seasonal tourist train rides along the L&H RR line.

TRANSPORTATION

"WORK REGIONALLY AND LOCALLY TO DEVELOP SATELLITE PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITIES WITH BUS SERVICE TO REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION AT PRIMARY PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITIES."

Draft

8.0 Community Facilities and Services

The Town of Chester seeks to provide public facilities and services that are accessible and responsive to community needs in a cost-effective and efficient manner. The Town provides a broad range of facilities and services to its residents and businesses, including general government, water supply, parks and recreation, police and a public library. The Town's highway department also maintains a system of Town roads, which are a vital part of the community's overall transportation system.

There are a variety of other services provided to Town residents by Orange County along with a variety of special districts (e.g. drainage, fire, lighting, sewer, etc.). It is the Town's desire to provide, or coordinate with others to provide, sufficient facilities and services to all residents and businesses in a timely and cost-effective manner.

8.1 Town Government

The Town provides a wide variety of basic government services, including policy and day-to-day management, voter registration/elections, construction permitting, site plan and subdivision review, community financial management (assessment, taxation, collections, borrowing, etc.), and code enforcement inspections. Most general government services are housed in the Town Hall. Chester also provides a variety of community services such as recreation programs and general information on available County or State programs.

The Town-owned municipal complex provides a central location for citizens to access Town services. The municipal complex includes Town Hall, which houses Town administrative offices and the Town of Chester Police Department. The complex also contains the Chester Public Library and senior center, which are housed in a separate building on the same site. The municipal complex does not meet the present needs of Town government. The Town Board has identified the need for a recreation center and a larger senior center to hold up to 250 seniors. As the population continues to grow, Town facilities will likely need to expand to meet community needs in the future.

Above (top to bottom): Town Hall on Kings Highway, which houses the Town supervisor and Town Board offices, Town clerk, assessor and police department; Town Hall sign; and Town highway department on Laroe Road.

Draft

This Plan recommends the Town Board continue to assess the needs for its community facilities and when necessary to plan for capital improvements to meet those needs. A capital improvement plan (CIP) to address the future needs for community facilities is also recommended.

8.2 Chester Public Library

The Chester Public Library is situated within the municipal complex at 1784 Kings Highway. The library is funded, in part, through a library special district. A five-member library board of trustees sets the general policy, and eight staff members, in addition to four circulation clerks, manage the day-to-day operations. The library is a member of the Ramapo Catskill Library System, a regional lending library system that gives Chester residents access to member-library collections in Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster counties.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends continued support for the Chester Public Library to meet community needs and in keeping this facility in its current location, which is easily accessible to residents. As the community grows, this Plan supports the provision of bicycle and pedestrian connections to the library and the municipal complex.

8.3 Police Department

The Chester police headquarters, located in the Town Hall, serves as the operations center for the department. The police department is headed by a chief of police and consists of three sergeants, two detectives, 11 officers, two court officers and two administrative staff. Specialty units include a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program and bike patrol. Today the headquarters don't meet the needs of the department.

There is a direct relationship between increased population and the number, frequency and type of crimes committed and a need for additional emergency safety resources. As development is proposed, studies should be conducted to determine the impact of an increasing population on police services and whether more officers are needed to support the mission of the department. The Town Board has identified the need to find a new home for the police headquarters. The former Chester Volunteer Ambulance Corp building is one site being considered, which is supported by this Plan.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

"AS DEVELOPMENT IS PROPOSED, STUDIES SHOULD BE CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE IMPACT OF AN INCREASING POPULATION ON POLICE SERVICES AND WHETHER ADDITIONAL OFFICERS ARE NEEDED TO SUPPORT THE MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT."

Draft

8.4 Fire and Ambulance

Fire protection in the Town and Village of Chester is provided by the Chester Fire Department. Since the fire district boundaries do not coincide with municipal boundaries, Chester's fire district ("District") includes portions of land located outside of the Town.

The Chester Fire Department consists of three all-volunteer fire companies: Walton Engine & Hose Co. #1, located in the Village and serving the northern portions of the Town; Sugar Loaf Engine Co. #2, serving the hamlet and surrounding area; and Trout Brook Engine & Hose Co. on Lakes Road (CR 5), serving the Trout Brook area and lands accessible through Monroe.

Ambulance service is provided by Mobile Life Support Services, a paid ambulance company. The Chester Volunteer Ambulance Corp is no longer active. This Plan recommends the Town identify an appropriate reuse of this building for another public purpose.

The Town has a dedicated and well-trained group of volunteer providers, but as other communities in the region are finding, there are concerns with the adequacy of volunteer staff numbers during certain times of the week, especially during weekdays.

As the area grows, new residents are often commuters and therefore may not be available during the week. Time-pressed commuters may not feel able to devote the time to training and service, or may be unaware of the vitally important role that volunteer service providers fulfill in a rural area such as Chester. The Town and its residents should continue to support high-quality volunteer fire services that are adequately staffed with trained and properly equipped personnel. This Plan supports programs to attract and retain volunteer providers.

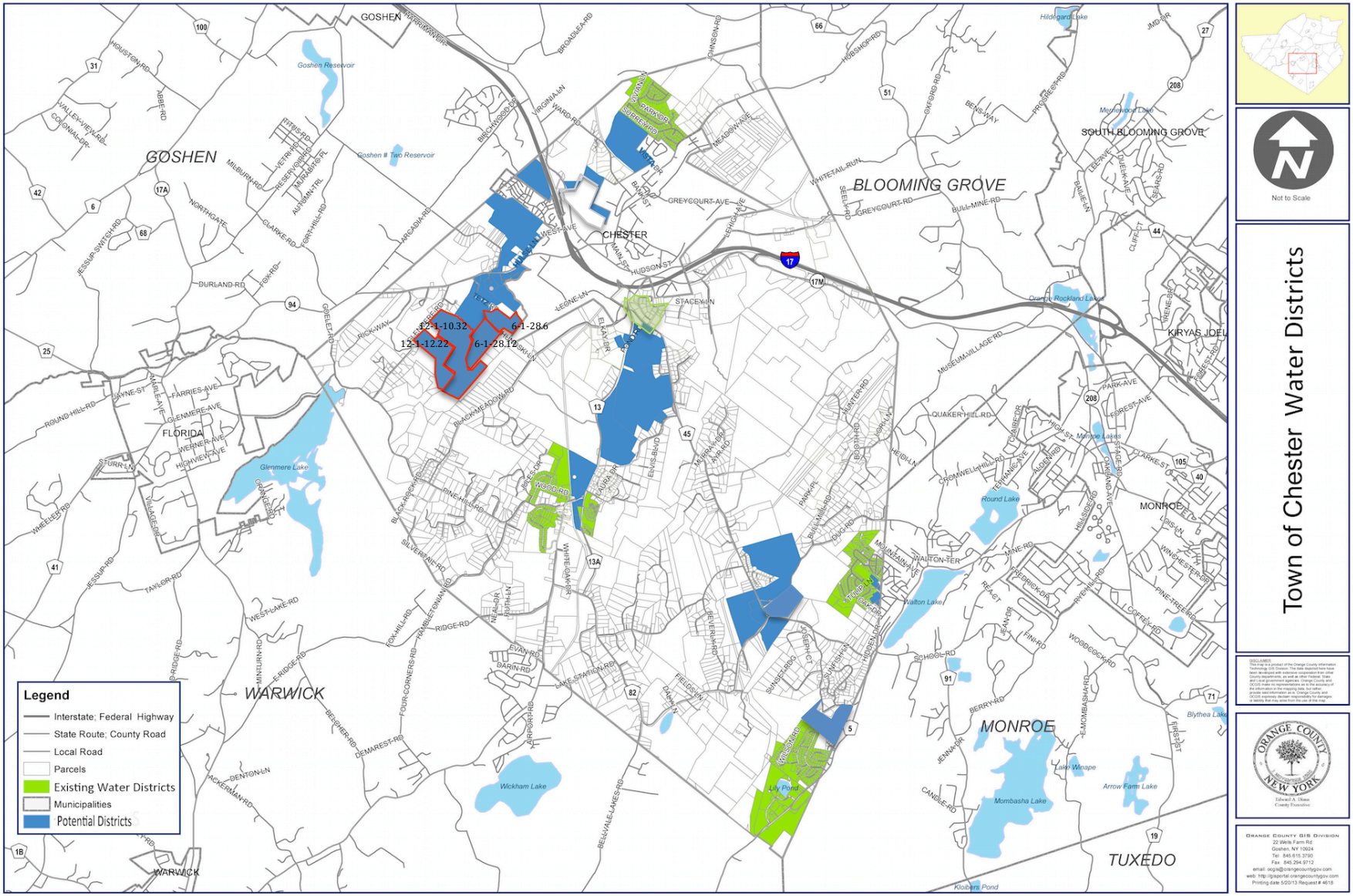
8.5 Water Service

The Town of Chester provides water services through five water districts: 1) Surrey Meadows, 2) Sugar Loaf, 3) Lake Hill Farms, 4) Walton Lake Estates, and 5) Fieldcrest. The Water Districts map on the next page shows existing water districts receiving service and potential water service areas as originally proposed in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

"THE TOWN AND ITS RESIDENTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICES THAT ARE ADEQUATELY STAFFED WITH TRAINED AND PROPERLY EQUIPPED PERSONNEL."

Draft


Town of Chester Water Districts
Not to Scale
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Parcels
Existing Water Districts
Municipalities
Potential Districts
GOSHEN
BLOOMING GROVE
CHESTER
FLORIDA
WARWICK
MONROE
TUXEDO
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
KIRYAS JOEL
12-1-10.32
6-1-28.6
12-1-12.22
6-1-28.12
ORANGE COUNTY NEW YORK
Edward A. Diana County Executive
ORANGE COUNTY GIS DIVISION
22 Wells Farm Rd
Goshen, NY 10924
Tel: 845.615.3780
Fax: 845.294.9712
email: ocgis@orangecountygov.com
web: http://gisportal.orangecountygov.com
Printing date 5/20/13 Request # 4618

The areas indicated as "potential" water service areas are projected to need central water services due to planned potential densities. Water services in future potential service areas would need to be provided by the developers and supported by the users by way of a district. However, once developed, they should be owned and operated by the Town.

The Surrey Meadows Water District is supplied by a low-yield well. However, the area surrounding Surrey Meadows has the potential to yield additional water for future use should the demands for water increase. The Town of Chester is presently considering additional wells for this water district to boost capacity and to provide additional reserves. This Plan supports such efforts to ensure that the needs of the district users are met as the community continues to grow.

The Sugar Loaf Water District has production wells that yield up to 250,000 gallons per day. These wells have the highest capacity of any of the Town's water districts. While the well yield is very good, the water district has one good well and a backup well that has tested positive for bacteria and is only used for emergencies use. There is a critical need to provide a backup well capable of providing potable water to the district users, and the Town is exploring locations to drill another backup well. This Plan strongly support these efforts so that the potable water needs of residents and businesses within the Sugar Loaf area are met.

The Lake Hill Farms Water District is supplied by two wells, which presently yield sufficient volumes of water to meet the needs of district users. However, the expansion of the water district to serve new users would require additional water sources. The expansion of the water district should only be considered after additional water sources and developer contributions needed to support the expansion are identified.

The Walton Lakes Estates Water District is in dire need of new or additional water supplies. This water district has experienced severe water shortages in recent years and it is a priority of the Town to try to resolve this water supply shortage. Town officials have explored a number of options for increasing the water supply in recent years. One potential solution involves the expansion of the King Tract water system, a privately owned and operated water system off of Laroe Road. The Town initiated water improvements in the summer of 2014.

Community Services

"Water services in future potential service areas would need to be provided by the developers and supported by the users by way of a district."

Draft

Another potential solution to the Walton Lakes Estates Water District water shortage would be the production of new wells near King Tract. In its review of residential subdivisions in proximity to the Walton Lakes Estates Water District, the Planning Board should request that as part of any proposed development, the developer dedicate new wells to the Town so that the Town can serve the water district.

The Fieldcrest Water District serves the Fieldcrest subdivision off of Laroe Road. The Town of Chester owns and operates the water district, but purchases its water from the Village of Chester. The water supply for this water district is presently sufficient to meet existing needs.

In the future, this Plan anticipates that demand to supply water to commercial, industrial and residential users will continue to grow. While the creation of additional production wells would help to address short-term needs, this Plan also recommends the incorporation of water conservation measures in all new residential and nonresidential developments. This Plan also recommends additional water-storage capacity for each district so these systems have at least two large tanks for storage capacity and built-in redundancy. Such redundancy is needed to avoid water-service interruptions during routine maintenance or emergency repairs. Finally, this Plan recommends requirements for well pump tests for public and central systems be periodically reviewed and, if needed, amended to ensure sufficient water supply for existing and new land uses.

8.6 Sewer Service

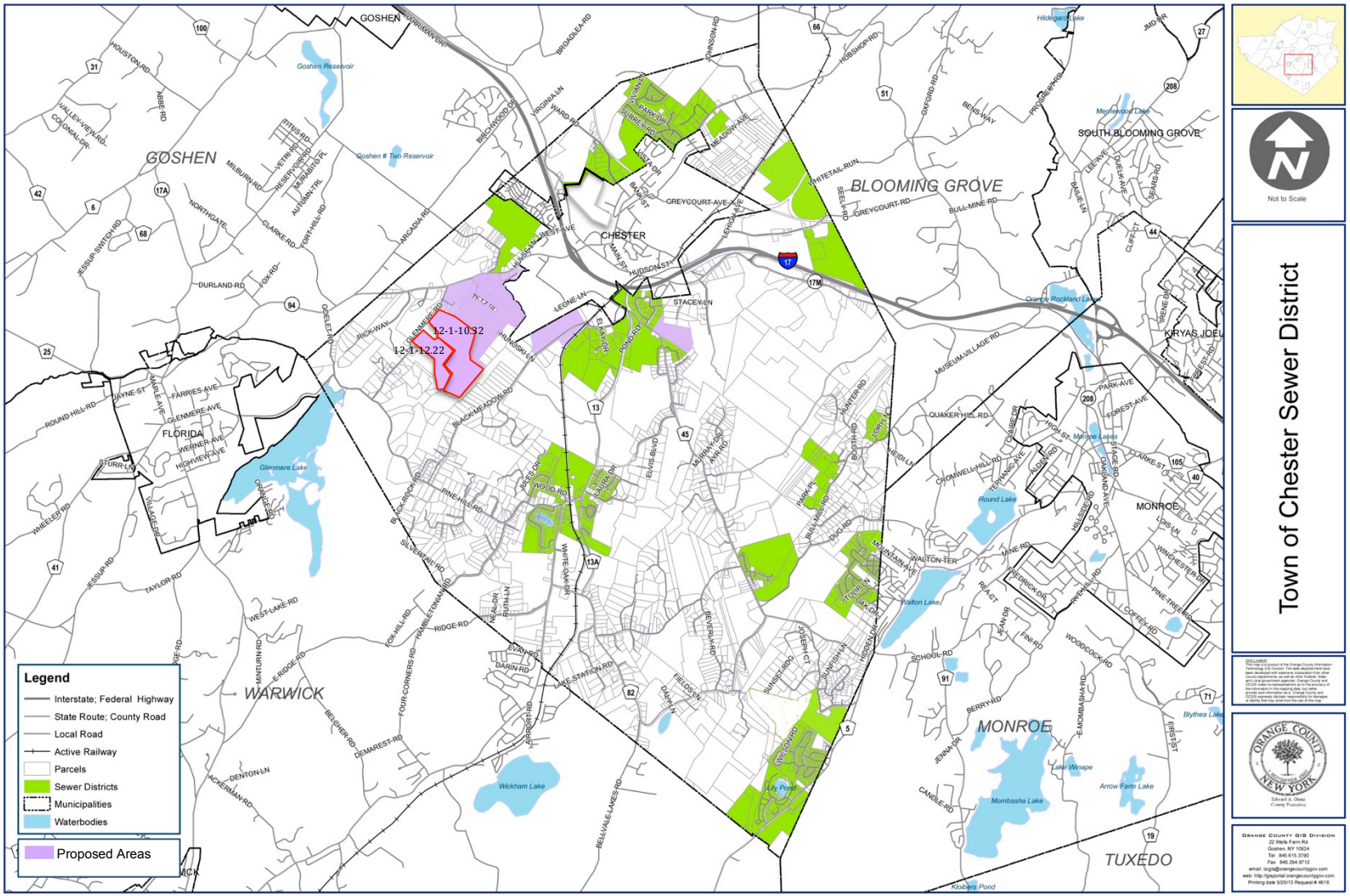
Sewer service is provided by The Moodna Basin Sewer Commission, which provides sewer service to the Town, as well as the Village of Chester. Moodna Basin wastewater flows into a county-operated treatment facility in Harriman, which discharges into the Ramapo River. The County will be expanding the Harriman plant to accommodate growth at Camp LaGuardia. In the Sugar Loaf area, there is a separate municipally operated treatment plant. This Plan support continued efforts to upgrade these existing municipal sewer plants to meet the growth needs of the Town.

The policy of this 2015 Plan is to prohibit the construction of small individual wastewater treatment facilities in the Town. The Town's previous experience with such facilities has not been good. Surrey Meadows and the King Tract once had their own treatment plants that developed problems, and many other communities in the region had similar experiences.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

"THIS PLAN ALSO RECOMMENDS ADDITIONAL WATER-STORAGE CAPACITY FOR EACH DISTRICT SO THAT EACH SYSTEM HAS TWO LARGE TANKS FOR STORAGE CAPACITY AND BUILT-IN REDUNDANCY."

Draft


Town of Chester Sewer District
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
BLOOMING GROVE
CHESTER
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
KRYAS JOEL
FLORIDA
MONROE
WARWICK
TUXEDO
12-1-10.32
12-1-12.22
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Active Railway
Parcels
Sewer Districts
Municipalities
Waterbodies
Proposed Areas

8.7 Schools

Four school districts serve the Town of Chester: Chester Union Free, Goshen Central, Monroe-Woodbury Central and Warwick Valley Central (see School District map on following page). Only a handful of Chester students attend the Goshen Central School District.

The Chester Union Free School District enrolls 1,019 students with a student teacher ratio of 13:1 (source NewYorkSchools.com). The schools in the district include the Chester Elementary School (K-5) and the Chester Middle/Senior High School (6-12). The Monroe-Woodbury Central School District serves 7,382 students with a student teacher ration of 14:2. There are seven schools in the district: Central Valley School, Monroe-Woodbury High School, Monroe-Woodbury Middle School, North Main Street School, Pine Tree Elementary School, Sapphire Elementary School and Smith Clove Elementary School.

As residential developments are proposed in the Town of Chester, it is important that the Planning Board utilizes the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) law to assess potential impacts on student enrollment within its school districts. When impacts are anticipated, the developer should provide appropriate mitigation measures to help ensure the community could continue to offer the highest quality of public education available to its residents. This Plan recommends the Town cooperate with its school districts to reserve land for schools when planning future development. This will help to ensure that school facilities are in harmony with the Town's vision of future land-use.

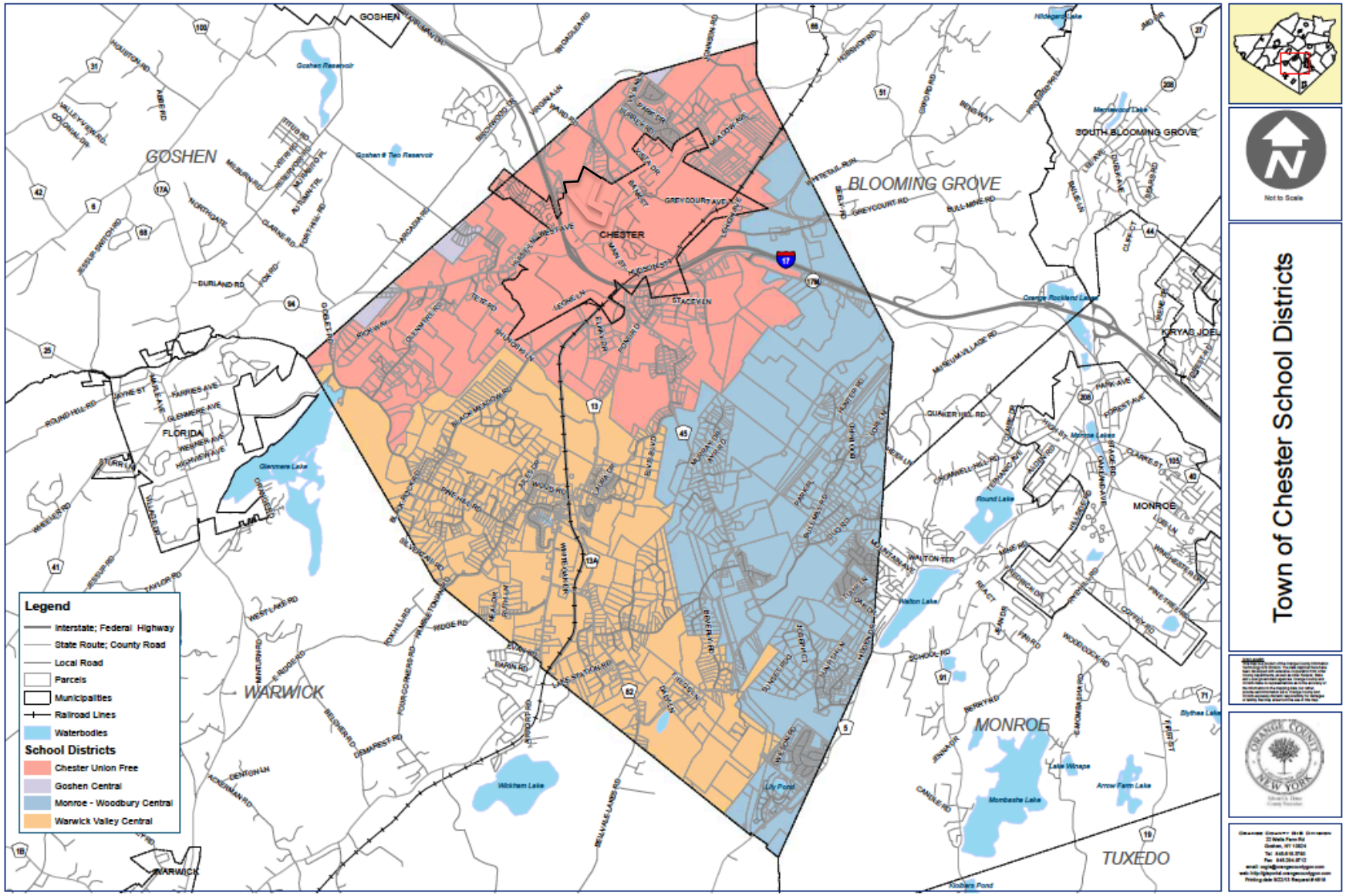
8.8 Broadband and Wireless Communications Network

A town-wide state-of-the-art broadband and wireless communications network is an important goal of this Plan. The Town should insist its franchised broadband providers continue to expand the broadband network town-wide and not just to the most densely populated areas. Cellular service also needs to be expanded to address areas where there are gaps in coverage. Cell towers should first be considered on existing structures (e.g. water tanks, silos, steeples or existing towers). The placement of new wireless towers must be planned to mitigate potential visual impacts and should be designed to be inconspicuous in nature through tower placement or stealth design. Increasing reliance on cell phones makes cell service a must for public safety in the Town.

Community Services

"It is important that the Planning Board utilizes the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) law to assess potential impacts on student enrollment within its school districts."

Draft


Town of Chester School Districts
Not to Scale
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Parcels
Municipalities
Railroad Lines
Waterbodies
School Districts
Chester Union Free
Goshen Central
Monroe - Woodbury Central
Warwick Valley Central
GOSHEN
CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
FLORIDA
WARWICK
MONROE
TUXEDO
KIRYAS JOEL

8.9 Community Facilities and Services: Goals, Objective and Policies

Goal: Maintain and fully utilize existing Town facilities according to their level of service and in a manner consistent with the community's high level of expectation and the needs for services.

Objectives and Policies: Community Facilities

CF.1. Ensure building-needs assessments and cost evaluations are analyzed prior to construction or renovation of public facilities, and that the final public facility is compatible with other public facilities surrounding it.

CF.2. Provide public facilities that serve as examples of the desired development quality in Town.

- The design of new public facilities and the renovation of existing facilities will meet U.S. Green Building Council rating system standards and meet current best management practices that provide for efficient and cost-effective operations over the expected life of the facilities.
- New public facilities should emphasize efficient service-delivery systems to meet existing and anticipated community needs.

CF.3. Every property to be acquired for a community facility must be evaluated upon its own merits to ensure the property fulfills the multitude of Town needs at the time of purchase and in the future.

CF.4. Plans for new facilities should include opportunities for future additions and expansions. New facilities should be capable of containing multiple Town departments, agencies and offices from other government entities, where appropriate.

CF.5 When impacts are anticipated, developers should provide appropriate mitigation measures to help ensure the community could continue to offer the highest quality of public education available.

CF.6. Cooperate with school districts so land is reserved for schools when planning future development. In this way school facilities will be in harmony with the Town's vision of future land-use.

CF.7. Develop a backup well for Sugar Loaf Water District and secure funding to extend water to the business district.

CF.8. Periodically review requirements for well pump tests for public and central systems and, if needed, amend to ensure sufficient water supply for existing and new land uses.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

"EVERY PROPERTY TO BE ACQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY FACILITY MUST BE EVALUATED UPON ITS OWN MERITS TO ENSURE THE PROPERTY FULFILLS THE MULTITUDE OF TOWN NEEDS AT THE TIME OF PURCHASE AND IN THE FUTURE."

Draft

CF.9. Create a capital improvement plan (CIP) for capital facilities with an asset management plan that identifies funding sources. A CIP would assess the useful life of capital facilities, maintenance needs and replacement schedules.

Public Safety

PS.1. Create an environment that encourages respect, mutual responsibility, community outreach and cooperation between public safety officials and citizens through citizen education programs, safety education programs, mediation, conflict-resolution services and other outreach opportunities.

PS.2. Provide citizens with the highest quality public safety services and facilities by maintaining high levels of training opportunities for police, fire, and rescue personnel. Establish public safety levels of service and consider these levels when evaluating the impact of future land-uses on Town services.

PS.3. Provide cellular service townwide to ensure cell users can access emergency responders through the 911 system in the event of an emergency.

Telecommunications and Wireless Facilities

TC.1. Strive for the highest level of broadband network is available throughout the Town to give Chester a competitive advantage in its business retention and recruitment efforts.

TC.2. Pursue public and private partnerships to complete projects linking major facilities (e.g. Town government, library, cultural institutions, business and industrial parks) with fiber optic networks.

TC.3. Seek State and federal grants in cooperation with service providers to provide broadband and wireless communication service to underserved areas of the Town.

TC.4. Require co-location on wireless communication antennas on existing towers.

TC.5. Wireless communication towers should first be considered on existing structures (e.g. water tanks, silos, steeples) or existing towers.

TC.6. New wireless communication towers should be designed to be inconspicuous in nature through tower placement or stealth design (e.g. silo or stealth tree).

Community Services

"Strive for the highest level of Broadband network is available throughout the Town in order to give Chester a competitive advantage in its business retention and recruitment efforts."

TC.6. New wireless communication towers should be designed to be inconspicuous in nature through tower placement or stealth design (e.g. silo or stealth tree).

Draft

9.0 Jobs and Housing

For Chester to prosper, future growth within the community has to involve new investments in its agricultural sector, commercial gateways, business and light industry parks, and Sugar Loaf business district, along with the adaptive reuse of underutilized sites with access to water or sewer infrastructure. This Plan supports an environment that fosters growth in agriculture, businesses and industries, which create local employment opportunities. This Plan also recognizes successful economic development must also include diversified housing opportunities for employees at various economic levels. Finally, this Plan recognizes the necessity to provide state-of-the-art broadband and telecommunications infrastructure throughout the Town to connect Chester to the global economy. This chapter begins with a discussion of Chester's economic base and opportunities and concludes with a discussion of housing resources and needs within the Town.

9.1 Trends in Employment Status and Industries

In 2011, nearly 50% of Chester's civilian labor force of 6,557 people was employed in three industries: educational and health services (23%), retail trade (14.2%) and professional services (10.8%). The high percentage of employment in these industries reflects the nature of the area's major employers and the strong service and retail based economy.

Between 2000 and 20011, the fastest growing industries were arts, entertainment and recreation; finance, insurance and real estate; professional services; public administration; transportation and warehousing; and construction. Declining industries during this time included wholesale trade; other services, communications and information; manufacturing; and agriculture, forestry and mining (see Table 9-1), reflecting the diminishing role of these industries as major employers.

Chester's diverse economic base has enabled the community to better withstand the recent economic downturn than have other communities. Chester's talented and well-educated workforce with educational attainment significantly above the Orange County average (see Chapter 2, page 9, Table 2-4) makes it an attractive community for growing businesses. Furthermore, Chester has a competitive advantage in transportation access (e.g. NYS Route 17 and the L&HR freight line), making the town conveniently located for businesses to access other markets.

Above (top to bottom): Amscan's warehouse distribution center in the industrial park in Village of Chester; Black Dirt farm within the Town as seen from McBride Road looking toward Camp LaGuardia; and Unilock in the industrial park off of Tetz Road in Chester.

Draft

Table 9-1
Trends in Employment Status and Industries
2000-2011

Employment Characteristics (Age 16 and over)	Orange County, New York Trends from 2000-2011				Town of Chester Trends from 2000-2011				Percent Change	Percent Change
	2000	%	2011	%	2000	%	2011	%	COUNTY	TOWN
Total										
Persons 16 Years and Over	252,668	100.0%	281,763	100.0%	9,183	100.0%	9,551	100.0%	11.5%	4.0%
In Labor Force	**164,858**	65.2%	**190,228**	67.5%	**6,770**	73.7%	**6,557**	68.7%	15.4%	-3.1%
Civilian Labor Force	159,946	63.3%	184,756	65.6%	6,765	73.7%	6,557	68.7%	15.5%	-3.1%
Employed	***151,744***	*60.1%*	***171,723***	*60.9%*	***5,818***	*63.4%*	***6,181***	*64.7%*		
Not Employed	8,202	3.2%	13,033	4.6%	947	10.3%	376	3.9%		
Armed Forces	4,912	1.9%	5,472	1.9%	5	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Not In Labor Force	87,810	34.8%	91,535	32.5%	2,413	26.3%	2,994	31.3%		
Industry										
Educational & Health Services	36,167	23.8%	45,927	*26.7%*	1,120	19.3%	1,421	**23.0%**	27.0%	26.9%
Retail Trade	20,399	13.4%	22,211	*12.9%*	878	15.1%	878	**14.2%**	8.9%	0.0%
Professional services	11,579	7.6%	14,646	*8.5%*	570	9.8%	665	**10.8%**	26.5%	16.7%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	9,702	6.4%	10,446	*6.1%*	396	6.8%	571	**9.2%**	7.7%	44.2%
Public administration	11,457	7.5%	12,503	*7.3%*	471	8.1%	546	**8.8%**	9.1%	15.9%
Manufacturing	15,404	10.2%	13,280	*7.7%*	523	9.0%	442	**7.2%**	-13.8%	-15.5%
Transportation, warehousing & utilities	9,081	5.9%	10,095	*5.9%*	323	5.6%	386	**6.2%**	11.2%	19.5%
Construction	10,297	6.8%	13,280	*6.8%*	305	5.2%	353	**5.7%**	29.0%	15.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	*8,379*	5.5%	*11,994*	*7.0%*	*227*	*3.9%*	*334*	***5.4%***	43.1%	47.1%
Wholesale Trade	6,146	4.1%	5,776	*3.4%*	398	6.8%	185	**3.0%**	-6.0%	-53.5%
Communications and Information	5,255	3.5%	4,563	*2.7%*	294	5.1%	188	**3.0%**	-13.2%	-36.1%
Other Services (except public admin).	6,332	4.2%	6,680	*3.9%*	261	4.5%	164	**2.7%**	5.5%	-37.2%
Agriculture, forestry and mining	1,546	1.0%	1,854	*1.1%*	52	0.9%	48	**0.8%**	19.9%	-7.7%
	151,744		171,723		5,818		6,181			

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau DP-3 Table and 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates DP-3 Table.

Draft

In recent years, Chester has successfully attracted major employers to its business parks, which have provided employment opportunities for local residents, even as there were declines in other industries. Recently Coach USA's Shortline Bus Company and Unilock located in Chester's industrial park. Collectively, these businesses will provide employment for 350 or more employees.

9.2 Economic Development Goals

Chester's economic development efforts must continue to build upon the Town's assets: strong local government; diverse agricultural sector; vibrant Sugar Loaf business district as a specialty retail and cultural destination; Goosepond Mountain State Park, Heritage Trail, Highlands Trail and other recreational resources as tourist destinations; and the NYS Route 17 corridor and L&HR freight line to access markets, along with "shovel-ready" industrial parks to attract new businesses.

At the same time, the Town must make careful decisions among those strengths in order to create a diverse economy and enhance the quality of life for its residents. It must also ensure that new commercial and industrial development is well planned so it enhances rather than detracts from the unique character of the Town. Jobs within industrial and business parks will continue to be important to Chester's competitive position as an employment center in the Hudson Valley. The arts, entertainment & recreation and agricultural industries will continue to add variety to the job market, providing job opportunities to workers with different skill levels.

Chester's zoning map includes 12 zoning districts, which are generally divided into residential, nonresidential and mixed-use districts. This Plan recommends that commercial, office and industrial development be limited to areas already designated for such purposes. The exception would involve the adaptive reuse of farm buildings or historic properties, which this Plan supports for non-nuisance businesses. This Plan supports the Town's current zoning district designations and encourages development within these districts be consistent with the provisions of the zoning law. This Plan strongly supports the development of an office park on the Camp LaGuardia site, which is zoned OP-Office Park, to help diversify Chester's economic base.

Over time, a diverse economy will result in a more balanced, fiscally stronger community that is less prone to a dramatic decline in any one industry.

Above (top to bottom): Chester's industrial park along Tetz Road; industrial park along Davidson Drive with access from Bellvale Road, which has not received final approvals; and aerial view of Camp LaGuardia, which lies in the OP-Office Park Zoning District.

Draft

Sugar Loaf Business District

The hamlet of Sugar Loaf is an important specialty retail and cultural center, which is a very important component of the Town of Chester's diversified economic base. This Plan strongly supports efforts to grow the emerging arts, entertainment & recreation industry in Sugar Loaf, which is the focal point for such activities within the Town.

The Local Business/Sugar Loaf off-street parking requirements are inflexible and have resulted in business owners having to go to the expense of providing parking spaces on their property, which often results in owners having to tear up their yards. Visitors patronize multiple businesses in one visit, and so the parking usage is similar to that of a shopping mall. As such, more accurate and flexible standards are needed to reflect the actual parking demand. The off-street parking requirements should be revised to provide more flexibility for individual sites. More municipal parking may also be needed. This Plan recommends the Town coordinate with Orange County and the Sugar Loaf business community to develop shared lots, which could be used by all businesses.

The existing sidewalk system within the hamlet is another impediment to new investment, since the current system is not cohesive and in many areas is not ADA compliant. This Plan supports efforts to provide sidewalk enhancements within the business district. This Plan further recommends Town coordination with Orange County to ensure sidewalk enhancements are provided within the business district with the understanding such improvements respect the unique characteristics of the hamlet center. This plan recognizes the impediment to sidewalk upgrades due to the County's prescribed right-of-way overlapping with many property lines. As such, the Plan strongly recommends the Town coordinate with the County to resolve this obstacle so that sidewalk improvements can move forward in Sugar Loaf.

The lack of central water and sewer is yet another impediment to stimulating new investment, especially in attracting more restaurants, which have high water and sewer demands. Central water is also need for fire protection. The Town of Chester and Sugar Loaf business organizations have discussed the possibility of providing central water to the business district, but steps to design or implement such improvements have not advanced. The Town should coordinate with Orange County, Sugar Loaf business organizations and other interested parties to move forward with a feasibility study for the extension of water and sewer service to the business district.

Above (top to bottom): Rosner Hand Crafted Soap – Artisan Soap Makers; Exposures Art Gallery – Nick Zungoli Photographs; and a gift shop within the Sugar Loaf Business District. The Sugar Loaf hamlet is a destination specialty retail and cultural center, which attracts customers from the surrounding region.

Draft

Threats to the Sugar Loaf Business District include a large tract of abandoned buildings, which include several dilapidated structures. Such properties serve as an attractive nuisance for young children or point of congregation for vagrants. They may also serve as a place of rodent infestation thereby creating a health menace to the community. This Plan recommends the Town adopt an unsafe buildings law, which would allow it to issue an order to repair or assess the land on which the building is located for the cost of repair, demolition or removal of unsafe buildings.

Industrial and Industrial Park Development

The Town of Chester zoning map designates a number of areas throughout the Town for industrial, industrial park or office park use. Generally, this Plan recommends that industrial, industrial park and office park uses should be limited to areas already designated for such purposes. One of the unique aspects of Chester's industrial park on Tetz Road is that a portion of the site had been mined before the industrial park was developed. This Plan strongly supports the reuse of quarries when and where possible for light industrial development. The rezoning of such sites for light industrial use would be consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.

Chester's industrial park has excellent transportation access from NYS Route 17 (Future I-86) for light industry and warehouse distribution facilities. This light industrial park also has access to central water and broadband, which are prerequisites for many industries. This light industrial park is "shovel ready," meaning the infrastructure is in place to accommodate new buildings. This Plan strongly supports efforts to attract new businesses to this shovel-ready light industrial park in order to broaden the Town's tax base while expanding employment opportunities for its residents.

There are also other areas within the Town of Chester that are zoned for industrial, industrial park or office park use and could support additional business development. Some sites are shovel ready, but many of these sites lack final approvals or the necessary central water or broadband infrastructure. One example of an almost shovel-ready site is the industrial park along Davidson Lane, which has a road that has not yet been dedicated to the Town. This industrial park also has frontage along the L&HR railroad line, which might appeal to certain industries that depend on rail for shipping and receiving materials. With modest investment, sites like these could become shovel ready. This Plan encourages investment in such sites to make them truly shovel-ready to improve the Town's competitive advantage.

Above (top to bottom): The Shortline Bus garage during construction in the summer of 2013; Iron Mountain within the Village of Chester's industrial park; and Steris Corp., which is also situated within the Village of Chester industrial park on Elizabeth Drive. This Plan supports the creation of a diverse economic base, including light industry.

Draft

Office Park Development - Camp LaGuardia

There are two OP-Office Park Districts within the Town. One is near the Exit 126 interchange off of NYS Route 17 and the other encompasses lands along Greycourt Road, including Camp LaGuardia. This Plan supports the present zoning designation of these areas and development for an office park. This Plan also recommends allowing non-nuisance light industrial uses within the OP district.

The County-owned Camp LaGuardia site represents a unique opportunity for a public-private partnership to develop a state-of-the-art business park within the towns of Chester and Blooming Grove. This Plan strongly supports the reuse of the Camp LaGuardia site for office park development and supports light industry and flex space on the site. The site has access to central water and sewer, but improvements are needed with respect to accessing the site from NYS Route 17. This Plan recommends Town coordination with NYSDOT, the Orange County Transportation Council, and the Town of Blooming Grove to ensure adequate access is provided from NYS Route 17 to Camp LaGuardia to accommodate redevelopment of this site for a business park.

To help facilitate the redevelopment of Camp LaGuardia as a business park, the Town should coordinate with the County and Town of Blooming Grove to first develop a plan for the reuse of the buildable portion of the Camp LaGuardia site for an office park. Once a master plan is developed for the business park, the County and the Towns could submit applications to secure U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process to make needed improvements to the site. Other potential sources of funding may be available for the delivery of broadband to the site or alternative energy through NYSERDA programs. The redevelopment of this site is a Plan priority.

Agriculture

Agriculture is an important part of the Town's economic base and this Plan Agriculture is an important part of the Town's economic base, and this plan strongly supports the long-term protection of agricultural land and a diversity of economically viable farms. Please refer to Chapter 4.0-Agriculture for specific goals, objectives and policies in support of agricultural economic development.

Above (top to bottom): Buildings on the Camp LaGuardia property that have been abandoned since the closing of the Camp LaGuardia homeless shelter. This Plan strongly supports the reuse of the Camp LaGuardia site for office park development.

Draft

Service and Retail Industries

The Town's zoning map designates areas along Route 17M and CR 13 (south of the Village) as GC-General Commercial and a small area north of the Village on Route 17M as LB-Local Business. The Sugar Loaf business district is designated on the zoning map as Local Business/Sugar Loaf (LBSL). Each of these districts allow for banks, office buildings, personal-service establishments and restaurants, subject to site plan review. The GC-General Commercial Zoning District (District) provides for the largest variety of permitted uses, and the LBSL district is the only area where mixed-use is permitted in the Town.

This Plan supports continued development of commercial, office and mixed-use development within the areas already designated for such purposes. However, this Plan also supports the adoption of design guidelines for these commercial corridors. The design guidelines would provide guidance for creating aesthetically pleasing and functional commercial corridors. It is recommended such guidelines include both standards (requirements) and guidelines (suggestions), to guide the Planning Board's review of new commercial development.

Other Industries

One of the emerging industries in the Town is the arts, entertainment and recreation industry, which grew by 47% between 2000 and 2010. Chester's natural setting, as well as its established events, festivals, and performing arts center, make it an attractive destination for tourists and a desirable location to draw new residents. The Town also has the opportunity to become base camp for outdoor enthusiasts who want to take advantage of regional parks and trails such as Goosepond Mountain State Park, the Highlands Trail, Appalachian Trail and the Orange Heritage Trailway. This Plan supports continued growth in the arts, entertainment and recreation industry.

Telecommunications

This Plan recognizes the increasing telecommunications requirements (broadband and cellular) for businesses to reach customers and customers to reach businesses. To be economically competitive, telecommunications infrastructure, including broadband, needs to be available to homes and businesses throughout the Town.

Above (top to bottom): The Tractor Supply Co. in the Chester Mall Shopping Center, Brookside Avenue (Route 17M); The Castle Fun Center on Brookside Avenue; and the Kurt Seligmann estate, which houses the offices of the Orange County Citizens Foundation, the Orange County Arts Council and the Orange County Land Trust, on White Oak Drive just south of the Sugar Loaf hamlet.

Draft

9.3 Housing

Today, the Town contains a diverse range of housing types. This Comprehensive Plan seeks to continue a wide range of housing types and costs, including single-family detached homes, multiple dwellings and townhouses that may either be for sale or rent.

The Town's zoning map devotes the largest land area to residential development ranging from 0.2-0.5 dwelling units/per acre (du/ac) in the AR-3 Agricultural Residential District to 2-6 du/ac in the SR-Suburban Residential districts. However, due to the numerous wetlands, area of Black Dirt farmland, hills, mountains and steep grades, a great deal of land will continue to develop at densities around one unit per five or more acres within the AR-3 District.

On the other end of the spectrum are the SR-Suburban Residential zoned areas where residential development has concentrated over the years, such as areas around the Village of Chester, near Sugar Loaf and along Lakes Road. These areas all have water and/or sewer services and are envisioned for build-out at densities ranging from one to six dwelling units per acre.

The Town seeks to pursue additional options for its senior citizens by encouraging the development of multiple dwellings for senior or age-oriented housing in affordable rental units in limited areas close to shopping and transportation services. The Town also seeks to pursue additional options to encourage workforce housing as part of a townwide strategy to ensure that housing is available for a broad cross section of the population. This Plan, however, does not recommend that affordable units be concentrated in one area, but rather such units are integrated as a smaller component of larger market-rate housing developments throughout the Town.

To create more affordable units, the Town should consider incentive zoning that provides inducements to developers for projects providing a public benefit, such as a park, senior housing or affordable workforce housing. Often, the incentive will take the form of a density bonus—that is, in exchange for including the specified community benefit, the developer is given permission to place more units in a specified area than would normally be permitted by the zoning law and to allow for flexibility in design (i.e. allow attached townhouses in lieu of detached single-family homes in the SR-2 Zoning District). The equitable benefit to the Town must be carefully weighed when incentive zoning is considered. Once created, the Town must set limits on the sales price of owner-occupied units or rents of affordable rental units, to ensure they remain affordable.

Above (top to bottom): A single-family home in Sugar Loaf, new single-family residence in the Eagle Crest subdivision, and mixed-use commercial-residential building in Sugar Loaf with a residential dwelling on the second floor. This Plan encourages a diverse range of housing types for all income groups.

Draft

9.3 Jobs and Housing: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Economic Development

ED.1. Promote economic development that builds upon the strengths of the Town and region.

- Promote tourist-oriented business development, based upon the historical, cultural and natural attractions of the Town and surrounding area.
- Work cooperatively with business organizations to implement goals and objectives.
- Encourage light industrial uses within the Town's existing industrial and light-industry parks.

ED.2. Promote role of Sugar Loaf as a specialty retail, cultural and arts activity center of the Town.

- Secure funding to advance the preliminary streetscape plan for Sugar Loaf, which was spearheaded by the Sugar Loaf Community Vision Committee. Early conceptual work was done by David Church, commissioner for the Orange County Department of Planning, and SUNY Albany's department of planning, with final conceptual design by IQ Design.
- Work with County and Sugar Loaf business organizations to identify infrastructure needs (e.g. off-street parking, sidewalks and water service) and secure funding to implement needed improvements.
- Review and revise regulations pertaining to off-street parking requirement in the Sugar Loaf hamlet.
- Help promote the not-for-profit Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center as a singular facility for the performing arts and support its long-term sustainability.
- Work with Sugar Loaf business organizations to secure New York Main Street grants.

ED.3. Promote a diversified economic base that takes advantage of emerging opportunities.

- Cooperate with County, regional and State efforts, as well as those of local business organizations within the Town, to promote economic development.
- Promote entrepreneurial resources, infrastructure and institutions (such as business incubators).
- Support economic growth that creates jobs that match the occupational needs of the Town's residents.
- Coordinate with telecommunications providers to ensure planning for broadband and cellular service is consistent with Town goals, objectives and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

ED.4. Facilitate the development of shovel-ready industrial and office parks in areas zoned for such use.

- Cooperate with landowners to undertake pre-development activities to facilitate shovel ready sites.
- Facilitate the redevelopment of the Camp LaGuardia site as a professional office park by partnering with Orange County and the Town of Blooming Grove to achieve this objective.
- Facilitate reuse of quarries when and where possible for industrial development.

Economic Development

"Promote a diversified economic base, which takes advantage of emerging opportunities."

Draft

ED.5. Facilitate well-designed development within the Town's business and commercial zoning districts.

- Develop design guidelines for new commercial development within the business and commercial districts.

Housing Opportunities

HD.1. Promote a wide range of housing types and costs, including single-family detached homes, multiple dwellings and townhouses that may either be for sale or rent.

- Housing should be developed within the areas designated for such use and at the densities prescribed by the Town zoning law and zoning map.
- Support efforts to provide affordable senior housing in areas that have access to nearby shopping and transportation services.
- Promote the integration of affordable units within a variety of different housing developments and types throughout the Town, rather than clustering such units in one large-scale affordable-housing complex.
- Consider mandatory set-asides for affordable units within large-scale multifamily developments that have access to nearby shopping and transportation services.
- Promote major employer assistance in developing workforce housing in close proximity to the Chester industrial park for employees of businesses that are situated within the industrial park.

HD.2. Encourage provision of handicap-accessible dwelling units for people with physical disabilities.

HD.3. Consider the enactment of Incentive zoning, which would allow for inducements to developers for development projects that provide some type of a community benefit, such as senior housing, or affordable senior and workforce housing.

HD.4. Carefully scrutinize the build-out plan for proposed conservation subdivisions to ensure that all conceptual lots are buildable.

Housing Opportunities

"Promote a wide range of housing types and costs, including single-family detached homes, multiple dwellings and townhouses that may either be for sale or rent."

Draft

10.0 Land-Use Policies

For comparison with the 2003 Plan, the page number of the land use in that Plan is noted in blue.

10.1 Goal of the Plan

The fundamental goal of this Comprehensive Plan is to retain, preserve and enhance open spaces, parklands and natural features, which form a scenic backdrop for the Town's residential areas, while accommodating Chester's fair share growth of residential, commercial and industrial uses within the capabilities of its existing and planned infrastructure.

The objectives of the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

- To channel future residential growth into suburban residential areas where central water and sewer services can be expanded efficiently to accommodate that growth.
- To maintain a proper relationship between the rate of growth and the Town's ability to provide essential services such as roads, water, sewer, parks and municipal facilities.
- To coordinate growth with the three primary school districts while being aware of their growth concerns.
- To maintain Black Dirt farmland areas to the greatest degree possible, encourage the preservation of prime farmlands within the context of current economic conditions by clustering development in adjacent areas away from prime farmland, and encourage an expanded number of farm-oriented uses.
- To encourage the preservation of the ridgelines, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors and natural contours of the land, which form the scenic backdrop for most areas of the Town.
- To consider, protect and retain all environmental assets such as groundwater supply, topography and scenic vistas when reviewing development projects.
- To coordinate planning with the surrounding communities and the County, but most importantly with the Village of Chester and Town of Monroe.
- To provide for a mixture of housing types that will promote a diverse population base.
- To retain and reinforce the existing higher-density suburban population centers with central services, while recognizing the influence of personal preferences to enjoy a rural lifestyle within the Town's many open area developments, which constitute such a significant element of the Town's appearance and character.

The land-use policies set forth below are the means that Chester intends to achieve the goal of the Plan.

Chester Comprehensive Plan Goal

"The fundamental goal of this Comprehensive Plan is to retain, preserve and enhance open spaces, parklands and natural features, which form a scenic backdrop for the Town's residential areas while accommodating Chester's fair share growth of residential, commercial and industrial uses within the capabilities of its existing and planned infrastructure."

Draft

10.2 Proposed Land Uses

The various land-use areas pursuant to this 2014 Plan are described below, accompanied by a discussion relating to the land-use plan categories to relative density ranges, where applicable. The land use Plan is graphically illustrated on the Land-Use Plan map on page 96.

10.2.1 Residential Areas

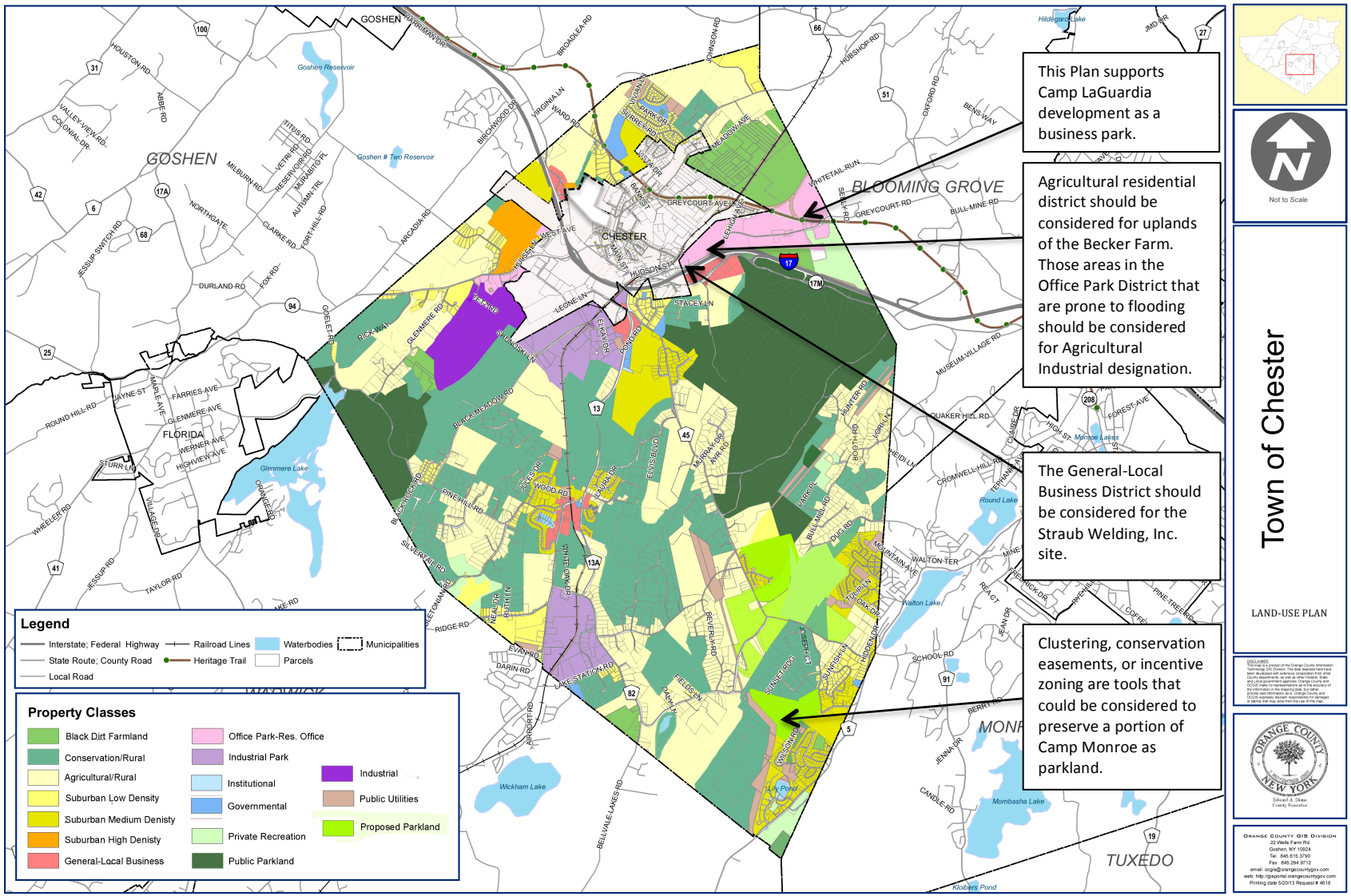
A. Conservation-Residential Area: These areas are shown in pale green on the Land-use Plan map. This area encompasses many of the open area development (OADs) as well as many lots with a land area of more than five acres. Also included are Sugar Loaf, Brimstone, Bellvale, Snake and Goosepond Mountain, along with Pine Hill, Durland Hill, Lazy Hill and the other hills and backdrops that provide Chester with its rolling rural character.

These conservation-residential areas run generally northeast to southwest and create low-density backdrops for the development that will occur in the valleys between the hillside areas. Residential development in this area should be at very low densities. Provision of central water or sewer services is not encouraged, and no density bonus should be granted in the same. Commercial uses are not considered compatible with this land-use category. However, the adaptive reuse of agricultural and historic structures may be permitted subject to special permit criteria that should be developed for such uses. The conservation-residential areas shown on the Land-use Plan map lie within the Town's AR-3 Zoning District and the permitted land-uses are controlled by that district.

B. Agricultural-Rural Residential Area: These areas are shown in the ivory color on the Land-use Plan map and the AR-3 District on the zoning map. These areas may include some challenging land with steep slopes and wetlands such as is currently incorporated in open area development (OAD) subdivisions; however it is generally less severe than the conservation-residential category. Development densities at one unit per three acres are envisioned for this area, with no bonuses being granted for the provision of water or sewer. Most commercial uses are also not considered compatible here, but the adaptive reuse of agricultural and historic structures may be permitted subject to special permit criteria that should be developed for such uses.

Above (top to bottom): Business on Main Street Sugar Loaf; recent renovation and conversion of house on Main Street Sugar Loaf; and entrance sign to Eagle Crest subdivision on Hambletonian Road. The Town's land use regulations (i.e. zoning law and subdivision regulations) control where land uses may occur and at what densities.

Draft


This Plan supports Camp LaGuardia development as a business park.
Agricultural residential district should be considered for uplands of the Becker Farm. Those areas in the Office Park District that are prone to flooding should be considered for Agricultural Industrial designation.
The General-Local Business District should be considered for the Straub Welding, Inc. site.
Clustering, conservation easements, or incentive zoning are tools that could be considered to preserve a portion of Camp Monroe as parkland.
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Railroad Lines
Heritage Trail
Waterbodies
Parcels
Municipalities
Property Classes
Black Dirt Farmland
Conservation/Rural
Agricultural/Rural
Suburban Low Density
Suburban Medium Denisty
Suburban High Denisty
General-Local Business
Office Park-Res. Office
Industrial Park
Institutional
Governmental
Private Recreation
Public Parkland
Industrial
Public Utilities
Proposed Parkland
GOSHEN
CHESTER
BLOOMING GROVE
FLORIDA
TUXEDO
Not to Scale
Town of Chester
LAND-USE PLAN

i. Open Area Development and Large Lot Subdivisions:

Open area developments (OADs) are authorized under Article V of the Town's subdivision regulations. The OAD policy of the Town code states: "It is the established policy of the Town of Chester that the natural topography of the land in an Open Area Development is an asset, which should be preserved and safeguarded. It is hereby declared that the various features of topography, including the topsoil and other natural materials that constitute the land, the shape or contouring of the land, and water or the flow thereof upon the land, are of prime concern to the welfare of the people of the Town of Chester, and no changes shall be permitted in such topography except those which are absolutely necessary in order to permit the property and appropriate use of the land, or which may be expressly required by the Planning Board."

The Town of Chester has approved many OADs since they were first permitted in 1985. As of 2003, a total of 274 lots exceeding five acres were created for residential use, accounting for 1,400 acres or two square miles of land area. This represented 10% of the Town's land area and is roughly equivalent to the 1,475-acre Goosepond Mountain State Park.

OADs are large-lot subdivisions of tracts in excess of 50 acres where private roads are allowed to access lots of five acres or more. The intent of allowing OADs was allow development where roads would be difficult to build to Town standards due to slope and other factors. These projects are usually distant from areas with central water and sewer services.

This Comprehensive Plan supports the existing provisions of §83-27.4 of the Town code, which only permits open development areas in those areas zoned with an AR-Agricultural Residential prefix. This Plan also supports the minimum road specifications and requirements for a homeowner's association for all new open area developments.

This Plan further recommends a requirement that all private roads developed through the open area development process contain a private road maintenance agreement, which should be filed with the New York Sstate Attorney General's Office in accordance with the Martin Act, often referred to as the "Blue Sky Law," which prohibits fraudulent and misleading practices in the sale of real estate.

Open Area Development

"It is the established policy of the Town of Chester that the natural topography of the land in an Open Area Development is an asset, which should be preserved and safeguarded."

Draft

ii. Environmental Limitations:

There are several environmental limitations and other factors that affect the ability to develop residential neighborhoods within the Town, as long as these environmental factors are regulated as proposed in this Plan. These factors include: Chester's often steep and rocky terrain, the number of prominent ridgelines and their separation from one another, the presence of State and County-owned lands and the presence of Black Dirt soil areas.

An important concern in environmentally limited areas is that new residences should continue to be hidden in the wooded areas and not be "skylined" or prominently placed atop ridgelines. This Comprehensive Plan further reaffirms the Town's longstanding policy to restrict clearing in any hilly or wooded area. In order to avoid these problems, this Plan reiterates the importance of compliance with the Town's Ridge Preservation Overlay District (RPOD) as described in §98-26 of the Town Code. This Plan recommends periodic review and refinement of the Town's RPOD to ensure it is meeting the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan in all zoning districts. This Plan also recommends a tree ordinance to regulate and manage tree cutting.

Other environmental concerns include grades, septic designs, water supply and road improvements. Subdivision regulations should be supplemented to ensure these areas would be addressed as described in the Natural Resources chapter of this Plan. Water supply concerns for large lots over five acres that are not required to be reviewed by the Orange County Health Department (OCHD) should be addressed by requiring wells to be drilled and tested prior to approval at the same ratio as would be required for smaller lots that now require OCHD approval.

Where allowed, private roads should be developed according to new specifications of §83-27.5 A (1-5) of the Town code so that excessively steep grades, drainage problems, poor-quality road bases, thin or unsurfaced treatments will be avoided.

When combined with the Goosepond Mountain State Park, County lands, wetland and Black Dirt areas, the conservation-residential area of the Plan encompasses approximately one half the area of the Town outside the Village of Chester.

Above (top to bottom): New home in Eagle Crest subdivision with muted colors and preservation of trees to screen it from viewshed; "skylined" homes in Town of Warwick as seen from Pine Hill Road looking south; and homes below ridgeline as seen from Kings Highway looking southeast.

Draft

iii. Recreation, Public and Private:

Other uses within this area include State, County and Town parks and private recreation or conservation uses on a large scale. These uses would include golf courses and hunting clubs, which require some degree of separation from adjacent uses, restaurants and catering facilities, wildlife sanctuaries, hotels or resorts similar to the Glenmere Hotel, and preserves like the Kurt Seligmann estate, now home to the Orange County Citizens Foundation, Orange County Arts Council and the Orange County Land Trust. Some of the limited commercial areas would require substantial buffers.

iv. Residential uses/options and clustering:

Water and sewer services will not be extended into conservation-residential or agricultural/rural-residential areas by the Town pursuant to this Plan. However, if large land areas are developed so as to require central sewer or water service due to the Orange County Health Department's "49 lot rule," then such services would be considered necessary according to this Plan and allowed within the context of clustered development. These areas are intended to remain rural, and the Plan's policy requiring these larger net lot sizes will help to protect the water supplies by limiting demand on ground water in steeply sloped terrain, as well as the number of wells and septic areas. In order to encourage clustering, this Plan proposes providing a number of "carrots and sticks."

First, it proposes a density not to exceed one-third of a unit per acre. Second, the Town code §98-20 and §98-25, authorize the Planning Board to allow or mandate cluster development in accordance with §278 of New York State Town Law to enable and encourage flexibility of design and the development of land in such a way as to promote the most appropriate use of land, preserve the scenic and open quality of the Town's rural landscape, and protect historic and agricultural resources. This Plan supports these provisions within the Town code, but also recommends the procedural requirements of §98-25 be reviewed for consistency with the goals of this Plan. The current regulations have the Planning Board proceeding through the SEQRA process and issuing a Negative Declaration or Findings Statement, which is the end of the subdivision process. The Planning Board should require the application of clustering when such measures will further the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

Above (top to bottom): The Orange County Citizen's Foundation headquarters on the Seligmann preserve property; sculpture garden on the grounds of the Seligmann property; and entrance to the Glenmere Mansion. Each of these private conservation and recreation facilities contribute to Chester's open space and unique sense of place.

Draft

C. Suburban Low Density Area:

Located in several areas of the Town and shown in pale yellow on the Land-use Plan are areas where houses were built on one-acre or two-acre lots, even though the zoning permitted higher densities. Such areas would otherwise be designated as rural agricultural/rural residential pursuant to this Plan, based upon their characteristics, even though a few of these may have access to water and sewer services (e.g. area along Lakes Road and Cold Spring Farm).

This Plan proposes to provide for such uses areas by including them in a suburban low-density land-use category. These areas are generally included in the SR-1 Suburban Residential (0.5-1 DU/AC) District on the Town's zoning map. Other lands included in this suburban low-density area have the potential to be supplied by central water and sewer services, but have sensitive site features that warrant a lower density category. Land-use densities in this category will be no higher than one unit per acre. Provision of water and sewer services should not result in bonuses in this land-use category, and commercial uses are generally not considered to be compatible here.

D. Suburban Residential Area:

The areas proposed to be developed at suburban residential densities with services are centered around the Village, along Route 94 to the Tetz property and Conklingtown Road, along Kings Highway to Sugar Loaf and along Lakes Road near Monroe. This suburban-residential land-use category is broken down into two subcategories, the medium-density and high-density suburban-residential areas. The medium-density suburban-residential area is shown in dark yellow on the proposed Land-use Plan while the high-density suburban-residential area is shown in light orange. These areas are described as follows:

i. Suburban Development (Medium Density):

This category represents typical suburban subdivisions of approximately one-third acre lots that require central water and sewer facilities. This would include King Tract, Surrey Meadows and Lake Hill Farms. These areas are generally included in the SR-2 Suburban Residential (2 DU/AC) District on the Town's zoning map.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

"CLUSTERING IS TO BE AN IMPORTANT TOOL TO BE USED BY THE PLANNING BOARD AND TOWN BOARD BASED UPON GENERALLY SPECIFIED CRITERIA, WHICH IS PROVIDED IN §98-20 AND §98-25 OF THE TOWN CODE."

Draft

Such projects in the future will be located only in existing sewer districts and areas that are proposed to have sewer services. See the Sewer Service Areas map on page 79 for more information. Land use densities will range from 1.0 to 2.0 dwelling units per acre, and commercial development is not generally considered to be compatible or feasible here. However, there may be some locations that lend themselves to local business use depending on the road access and other site-specific factors.

Zoning that is to be implemented in this category could include a density bonus (through incentive zoning) for the provision of affordable housing or senior citizen and planned adult community projects, which are addressed in greater detail below. This area could be used as a receiving district for transferred development rights, if such program were implemented.

ii. Suburban Development (High Density):

These areas were included in the SR-6 Suburban Residential (2-6 DU/AC) District on the Town's zoning map. The intent of this higher-density residential-use category shown in orange was to provide multiple dwellings for senior and age-oriented housing in affordable rental units in limited areas close to shopping and transportation services. All the lands within the Town's SR-6 districts have been approved for development or were annexed into the Village of Chester. Future designation of additional SR-6 lands should only be considered when 20% of the housing units are set-aside for affordable senior or workforce housing.

E. Specialized Housing Types – Senior Housing:

The suburban-residential land-use category makes reference to specialized housing types such as senior housing. There are multiple types of specialized housing modes for senior citizens. The type of housing that is intended for senior citizens varies depending on the age and the activity of the residents. The land-use requirements for different senior-housing modes vary depending on the intended population. For example, age-oriented housing limited to adults aged 55 and over would pose very different traffic demands than a senior-assisted living facility, which provides varying levels of care and assistance to a much older population.

Suburban Development High Density

"The intent of this higher-density residential-use category shown in orange is to provide multiple dwellings for senior and age-oriented housing in affordable rental units in limited areas close to shopping and transportation services."

Draft

Age-oriented or adult housing appeals to a population that is highly active and may still be actively employed, generating traffic on a scale comparable with nonage-restricted housing. This is in contrast to senior-assisted living facilities that deal with a far less mobile population. Senior assisted living facilities are typically separate facilities offering a variety of care assistance, ranging from limited assistance to full-fledged nursing homes. All such projects fit under the same rubric of senior housing in terms of zoning criteria (see §98-29 (W) of the Town code).

"Planned adult communities" (PACs) are permitted as a floating zone in accordance with §98-29 (N) of the Town code. In order to be considered for PAC designation, a site must contain at least 25 acres and have direct access to a State or County road or have direct access to such roads via new private, town or village collector roads without traveling through existing residential subdivisions. Once a site is rezoned as a PAC, the use would be allowed subject to site plan review.

This Plan recommends removing the floating zone provision from the Town code since it undermines the ability of citizens to rely on predictability of the zoning map. Instead, this Plan recommends that other existing provisions of the Town code be used to encourage the development of age-oriented senior housing (e.g. §98-29 (S) and (T) of the Town code). The Town should also continue to explore other land use policies to encourage senior housing as needs arise.

F. Development Build Out Analysis:

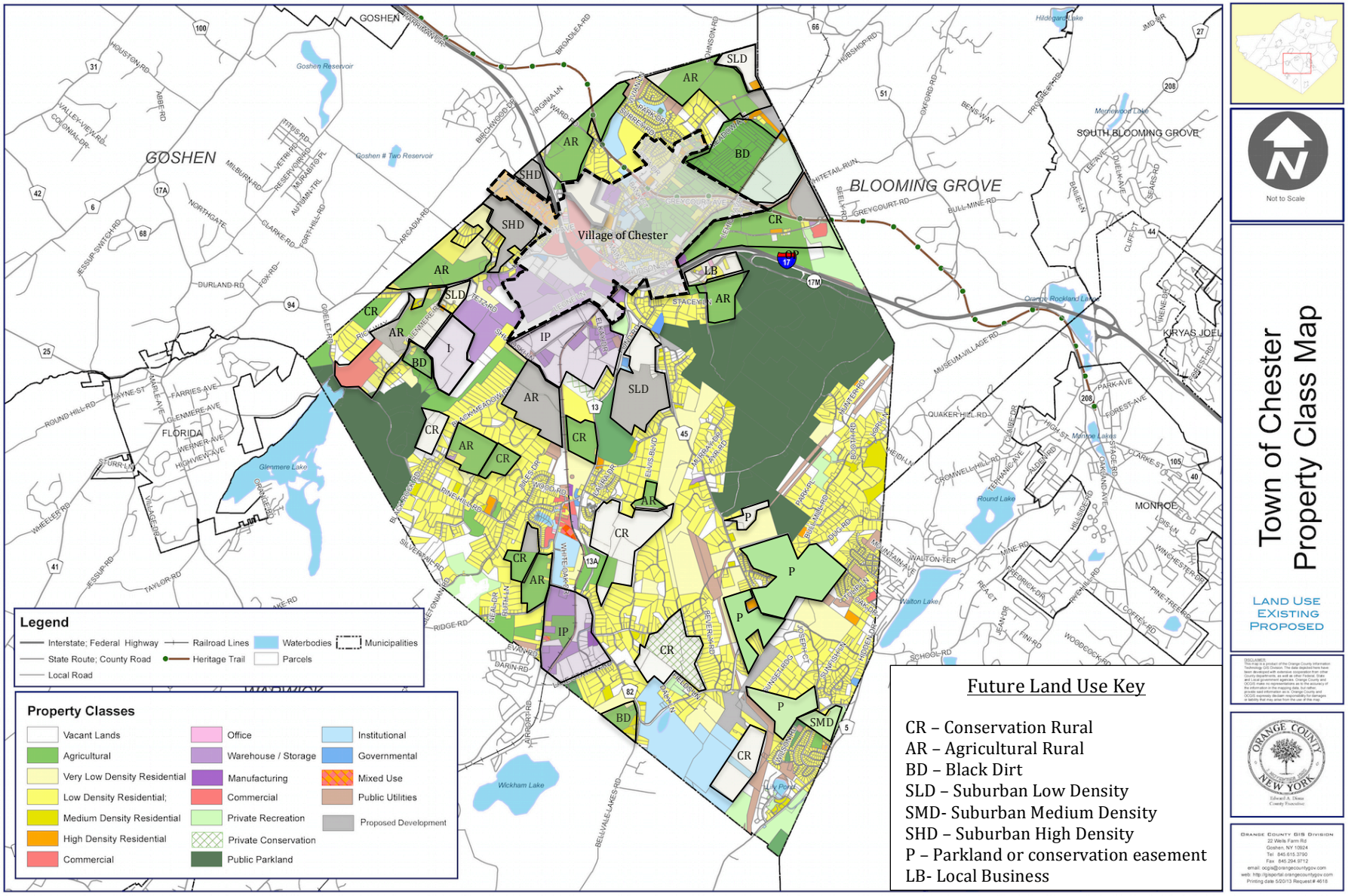
The 2003 Plan included a build-out analysis to illustrate the potential impact of that Plan on the Town. That analysis compared the existing zoning compared to the proposed plan densities. The 2003 Plan recommendations were implemented through a new zoning law adopted by the Town Board on June 1, 2004. This updated Plan does not propose changes to the zoning law, which would dramatically affect permitted densities or development potential.

The build-out potential would generally be within the permitted densities and land-use currently allowed under the zoning law. However, if the Town were to enact incentive zoning for a specific public purpose, permitted density on some sites might be increased through a density bonus. The Existing/Proposed Land-use map on the next page shows the remaining vacant lands in white and proposed developments in gray. An overlay shows the future land-use designation of vacant land and farmland.

Specialized Housing Types

"This Plan recommends removing the floating zone provision from the Town code since it undermines the ability of citizens to rely on predictability of the zoning map. Instead, this Plan recommends that other existing provisions of the Town code be used to encourage the development of age-oriented senior housing (e.g. §98-29 (S) and (T) of the Town code)."

Draft


Town of Chester
Property Class Map
LAND USE
EXISTING
PROPOSED
Not to Scale
GOSHEN
BLOOMING GROVE
SOUTH BLOOMING GROVE
Village of Chester
FLORIDA
MONROE
KRYAS JOEL
Legend
Interstate; Federal Highway
State Route; County Road
Local Road
Railroad Lines
Heritage Trail
Waterbodies
Parcels
Municipalities
Property Classes
Vacant Lands
Agricultural
Very Low Density Residential
Low Density Residential;
Medium Density Residential
High Density Residential
Commercial
Office
Warehouse / Storage
Manufacturing
Commercial
Private Recreation
Private Conservation
Public Parkland
Institutional
Governmental
Mixed Use
Public Utilities
Proposed Development
Future Land Use Key
CR – Conservation Rural
AR – Agricultural Rural
BD – Black Dirt
SLD – Suburban Low Density
SMD- Suburban Medium Density
SHD – Suburban High Density
P – Parkland or conservation easement
LB- Local Business

10.2.2 Commercial Areas

This Comprehensive Plan continues to recommend the Town's commercial lands be divided into four distinct commercial zoning districts: LB - Local Business, LB/SL - Local Business Sugar Loaf, RO - Residential Office and GC - General Commercial.

A. Local Business:

This Plan supports the existing LB-Local Business zoning designation on the Town's zoning map to address the needs of smaller-scale local commercial uses such as retail, gas stations, convenience stores, restaurants, office and personal-service uses. These areas are shown on the Land-use Plan map in red. An LB area is designated on the zoning map along Route 17M north of the Village. While not presently shown on the Land-use Plan map, LB areas or uses would be allowed to service key locations near proposed industrial park areas. They would provide ancillary services for the industrial park tenants without undermining the integrity of the industrial park. These areas are situated to service higher-density residential land-uses as well as passing traffic.

B. Local Business-Sugar Loaf:

Because the existing Sugar Loaf business district includes numerous residences and is an area that dates back 250 years, buildings are located on small lots with minimal setbacks. The Town's current bulk requirements for the Local Business-Sugar Loaf (LB-SL) area therefore reasonably provides for these small lots and yards.

As discussed in Chapter 9, there is a need to revise the off-street parking requirements in Sugar Loaf. Another issue that needs to be addressed in the hamlet is the regulation of live-work spaces and home-based businesses. While the present LB-SL Zoning District allows mixed-use, these regulations need to be further refined to better support live-work and home-based businesses, which this Plan supports in the Sugar Loaf hamlet. This Plan recommends the periodic review of the LB-SL district boundary, along with a review of district regulations to ensure they continue to be responsive to resident and business owner needs in Sugar Loaf. It also recommends the Town secure funding to advance the Sugar Loaf Preliminary Streetscape Plan to the final design phase.

Commercial Areas

"This Comprehensive Plan continues to recommend the Town's commercial lands be divided into four distinct commercial zoning districts: LB - Local Business, LB-SL Local Business Sugar Loaf, RO - Residential Office and GC - General Commercial."

Draft

C. Residential Office Area:

Areas designed strictly for residential and office uses are shown in pink and are proposed along Route 94 near Whispering Hills and other highways. These areas will either be overlay areas of existing residential districts or small office parks. Such uses and zones would be allowed instead of other commercial areas shown. The Plan supports such zones as transitional districts along state highways and busy streets where commercial uses may be desirable, but retail uses generate excessive traffic and are incompatible with an area's residential use.

D. General Commercial:

A GC-General Commercial land-use category is shown in red along CR 13 and along NYS Route 17M south of the Village of Chester. The GC areas are intended to provide for highway-commercially oriented land uses often used by commuters and a more regional clientele. Offices, service/ commercial uses, auto service and sales, motels, restaurants and larger, highway-oriented retail uses such as lumber yards would be contemplated in this land-use area.

These areas would be covered by a new set of architectural-review procedures administered by the Planning Board pursuant to this Plan. Even though the GC-General Commercial areas shown on Route 17M are not in the sewer district, it would still be considered compatible with this Plan to add that area to the sewer district in the future.

E. Adult Uses

The Town presently regulates adult uses as conditional uses, which are permitted subject to special permit review and approval by the Planning Board in accordance with §98-29 Q of the Town code. The existing provisions of the Town code contain special requirements for the regulation of such uses along with criteria to guide the Planning Board's review of such uses. This Plan continues to support the regulation of such uses through the special permit review process, which affords the public an opportunity to comment by requiring a public hearing before the Planning Board can take final action.

Architectural Review

"These General Commercial areas would be covered by a new set of architectural review procedures administered by the Planning Board pursuant to this Plan."

Draft

10.2.3 Industrial, Industrial Park and Office Areas

Currently there are four categories of industrial uses in the Town: industrial, industrial park, office park and agricultural industrial (see zoning map on page 112). Agricultural industrial is a highly specialized form of industrial use that relates to the Black Dirt areas. This use recognizes the fact that some types of agricultural uses are actually industrial in nature and involve levels of storage and processing that do not typify the dairy and other uses common to the upland agricultural areas of the Town. The current I-Industry area will remain on the Town's zoning map and no changes are proposed for the use of permitted or special permit uses within this district.

An OP-Office Park land-use category is shown in a few areas near the Village on major roads where large-scale commercial development is desirable. The intent is to encourage the development of coordinated business or industrial parks where suitable access would be provided near the new Exit 126 interchange. Motels as well as some business uses would be considered compatible with this use category. This Plan recommends the Town Board consider an amendment to the OP-Office Park District to allow light industry uses and flex space (i.e. buildings that predominantly consist of light industrial and commercial high uses and related services, such as research and development, office, retail ancillary to principal uses and light industry processing).

The IP-Industrial Park land-use category will be associated with light manufacturing or assembly, distribution centers and warehouses. Commercial areas along State and County roads near the entrances to industrial parks will be allowed to be zoned IP and LB. All industrial areas, except for the area on Kings Highway south of Sugar Loaf, are expected to be served eventually by central water and sewer services. New highway interchanges should aid the development of all industrial and office park areas, such as the Camp LaGuardia site.

10.2.4 Public and Quasi-Public Areas

The Land-use Plan map shows public and quasi-public areas in light blue, dark blue or tan. Public purposes include such uses as municipal government buildings, the library, wastewater treatment plants and municipal well sites. Quasi-public uses would include religious institutions, schools and other government and not-for-profit institutions.

CAMP LAGUARDIA

"NEW HIGHWAY INTERCHANGES SHOULD AID THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL INDUSTRIAL AND OFFICE PARK AREAS, SUCH AS THE CAMP LAGUARDIA SITE."

Draft

10.3 New Urbanism

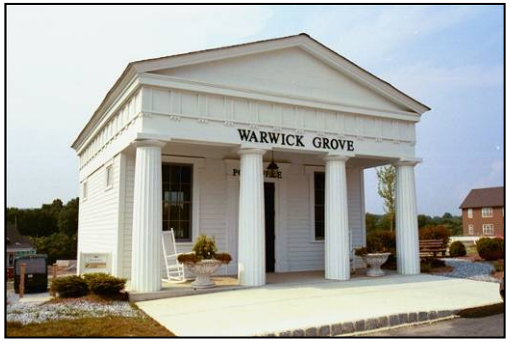
New Urbanism or traditional neighborhood design (TND) is an approach to designing human-scale, walkable communities with moderate to high residential densities and a mixed-use core. Instead of driving on highways, residents of TND neighborhoods can walk to shops, businesses, theaters, schools, parks and other important services that are located in close proximity to one another. The heart of a TND community is the mixed-use center where residents can live above stores and where a variety of retail, cultural, or professional services and institutional uses (such as a post office) are available to serve the community's needs.

Another important aspect of TND developments is the way buildings and streets are arranged to foster a sense of community closeness. A dense network of narrow streets with reduced curb radii is fundamental to TND design. Houses are also placed in close proximity to one another on smaller lots in order to reinforce the human-scale of the community and sense of place. This closeness greatly enhances the pedestrian scale of the community. Architecture and design are also important features of TND communities. The architectural styles in TND communities often borrow heavily from traditional periods of American architecture, including Victorian, Colonial, Federal and Greek Revival.

A TND development would not be allowed under the Town's existing zoning code and subdivision regulations. The subdivision regulations require residential street widths that would not accommodate a TND community. The recommended right-of-way for a single-family residential street is far wider than would be called for within a TND community.

The typical TND lot is as small as 5,000 square feet, far smaller than the minimum lot size permitted in any zoning district. However, allowing such size lots will require central water and sewer. New Urbanism development should be encouraged in the vicinity of the Sugar Loaf hamlet and the Village of Chester.

Traditional neighborhood design should be encouraged to allow for new growth while strengthening the fabric of the community. This Plan recommends the Town code be amended to provide for the zoning mechanisms needed to allow New Urbanism or TND developments.



Above (top to bottom): A New Urbanism community in Celebration, Fla., circa 1992; Warwick Grove single-family homes in Warwick, N.Y., circa 2006; and Warwick Grove post office., circa 2006.

Draft

10.4 Billboards

This Plan recognizes that the proliferation of billboards throughout the Town could have an adverse affect on Chester's visual environment. It also recognizes that the existing billboards in the Town are an important source of income for landowners and has helped to preserve valuable farmland. This Plan seeks to strike a balance between these competing interests. This Plan recommends that any legally erected billboard should be considered to be a pre-existing non-conforming use and regulated under the nonconforming-use provisions of the Town's zoning law. The Plan further recommends that no permits shall be issued for any new billboards on any site within the Town of Chester. An inventory of all legally erected billboards should be completed prior to the adoption of zoning amendments to regulate pre-existing billboards.

10.5 Home-Based Business

This Plan supports the use of accessory structures in the Local Business-Sugar Loaf District for home-based businesses subject to site plan and special permit review by the Planning Board. The Town's zoning law should be amended to establish special permit review criteria for such uses.

10.6 Tree and Topsoil Removal, and Grading and Excavating.

This Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town strengthen its land-use regulations to better regulate tree clearing and topsoil removal, and grading and excavating to protect important viewsheds and habitat, and to prevent soil erosion.

10.7 Noise.

Certain land uses are inherently more likely to generate noise levels, which have the potential to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life and property for adjoining residential property owners. Excessive noise can interrupt and degrade sleep, reduce residential and commercial property values, and reduce the use, enjoyment and value of natural, cultural and historic resources.

HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

"THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDS THE TOWN STRENGTHEN ITS LAND-USE REGULATIONS TO BETTER REGULATE TREE CLEARING AND TOPSOIL REMOVAL, AND GRADING AND EXCAVATING TO PROTECT IMPORTANT VIEWSHEDS AND HABITAT, AND TO PREVENT SOIL EROSION."

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The generally accepted standard for the noise level of outdoor residential areas is 65 dBA Ldn (dBA is the decibel scale for measuring sound energy weighted to human hearing, and Ldn is the average daily noise level with a 10-decibel penalty added for noise levels between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.). The generally accepted standard for indoor residential areas is 45 dBA Ldn.

This Plan recommends that the Town code be amended to ensure that it includes necessary provisions to protect residential areas from excessive noise generated from adjoining non-residential land uses, and that it also provides the means for enforcing the standards set forth therein.

10.8 Alternative Energy

Alternative renewable energy resources, such as wind and solar, should be encouraged within the Town of Chester to reduce dependence on foreign energy supplies and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Town Board should review its zoning laws to allow alternative energy facilities and establish land use laws to regulate the placement of such facilities to ensure they are visually acceptable and don't adversely affect adjoining property owners.

10.9 Multi-jurisdictional Conservation Subdivisions

The Town has faced a dilemma in the past regarding how to process conservation subdivisions involving lands, which straddle municipal boundaries. This Plan recommends that the Town Board adopt guidelines for the Planning Board to follow when reviewing such applications. It further recommends careful scrutiny of the conceptual build out (based upon a conventional subdivision) to ensure the density yield is an accurate reflection of what could realistically be development on a site.

NOISE

"AMEND THE TOWN CODE TO ENSURE THAT IT INCLUDES NECESSARY PROVISIONS TO PROTECT RESIDENTIAL AREAS FROM EXCESSIVE NOISE GENERATED FROM ADJOINING NONRESIDENTIAL LAND USES, AND THAT IT ALSO PROVIDES THE MEANS FOR ENFORCING THE STANDARDS SET FORTH THEREIN."

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10.8 Land-Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

LU.1. Clearly communicate the Town's future land-use goals, law standards and requirements to the development community and the general public.

- Create a developer's guide to site plan, special permit and subdivision review.
- Provide a copy of this Plan to the Planning Board, Town Board and Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Continue to provide Town code online and place 2014 Plan on the Town Web site.

LU.2. Review the Town's zoning law and subdivision regulations, as well as other parts of the Town code, to ensure these land-use regulations adequately implement the Comprehensive Plan.

- Adopt amendments to the zoning law as identified in this Plan based upon Town Board priorities.
- Determine specific zoning law and subdivision regulation amendments, which are necessary to:
  - Encourage reinvestment and growth in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf
  - Stimulate redevelopment of the Camp LaGuardia site
  - Protect natural resources
  - Regulate billboards
  - Protect important viewsheds
  - Stimulate economic development

LU.3. Consider the compatibility of development with surrounding uses.

- Utilize strategies such as landscaping, tree preservation and other buffering techniques.
- When necessary, require modification of site development plans to minimize impacts.
- Encourage developers to work with surrounding property owners to resolve community concerns prior to formalizing their development plans.

LU.4. Encourage mixed-use infill development within the Local Business-Sugar Loaf District.

- Encourage the use of New Urbanism design principles to strengthen the character of Sugar Loaf.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive long-term parking strategy for the Sugar Loaf hamlet.
- Amend zoning law to allow use of accessory structures for home-based businesses by special permit.
- Secure funding to advance the Sugar Loaf preliminary streetscape plan to the final design phase, and to extend the plan to encompass the entire business district.
- Work with County to resolve right-of-way issues that have hindered sidewalk improvements.

LU.5. Encourage more construction of U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certified buildings.

SUGAR LOAF

"AMEND ZONING LAW TO ALLOW USE OF ACCESSORY STRUCTURES FOR HOME-BASED BUSINESSES BY SPECIAL PERMIT IN THE SUGAR LOAF BUSINESS DISTRICT."

Draft

LU.6. Utilize the tool of cluster development as a means to enhance the natural environment and preserve prime farmland and open space.

LU.7. Through the land-use and decision-making process, encourage grouping of open space or the connectivity of open space through conservation easements or cluster development.

LU.8. Protect views along portions of Kings Highway, including Sugar Loaf Mountain, and portions of Laroe Road, Gibson Hill Road and Pine Hill Road, which provide panoramic views of the rural landscape.

LU.9. As the Town focuses on the redevelopment of Camp LaGuardia, in conjunction with Orange County and the Town of Blooming Grove, consider improvements to IT infrastructure and better access to transportation as cited in this Plan.

LU.10. Regulate the amount of noise and light produced by developments to minimize the impacts on neighbors, night sky and the rural character of the Town.

LU.11. Through the land-use and decision-making process and cooperation with the Village of Chester, protect the integrity and quality of water resources in the Town and Village.

LU.12. Protect the integrity of riparian zones, forested areas as buffers and wildlife habitat.

LU.13. Require the preservation of vegetation along the perimeter of sites and landscaping during land development to buffer neighboring properties.

LU.14. Continue to support the right-to-farm and the placement of Chester farms in the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Agricultural Districts Program.

LU.15. This Plan strongly recommends the Town with County to resolve easement/property line issues that have been hindering sidewalk improvements.

LU.16. Regulate the amount of noise produced by land uses to minimize impacts on nearby residential properties.

LU.17. Amend Town code to ensure that it includes necessary provisions to protect residential areas from excessive noise generated from adjoining nonresidential land uses, and that it also provides the means for enforcing the standards set forth therein.

Water Resources

"Through the land-use and decision-making process and cooperation with the Village of Chester, protect the integrity and quality of water resources in the Town."

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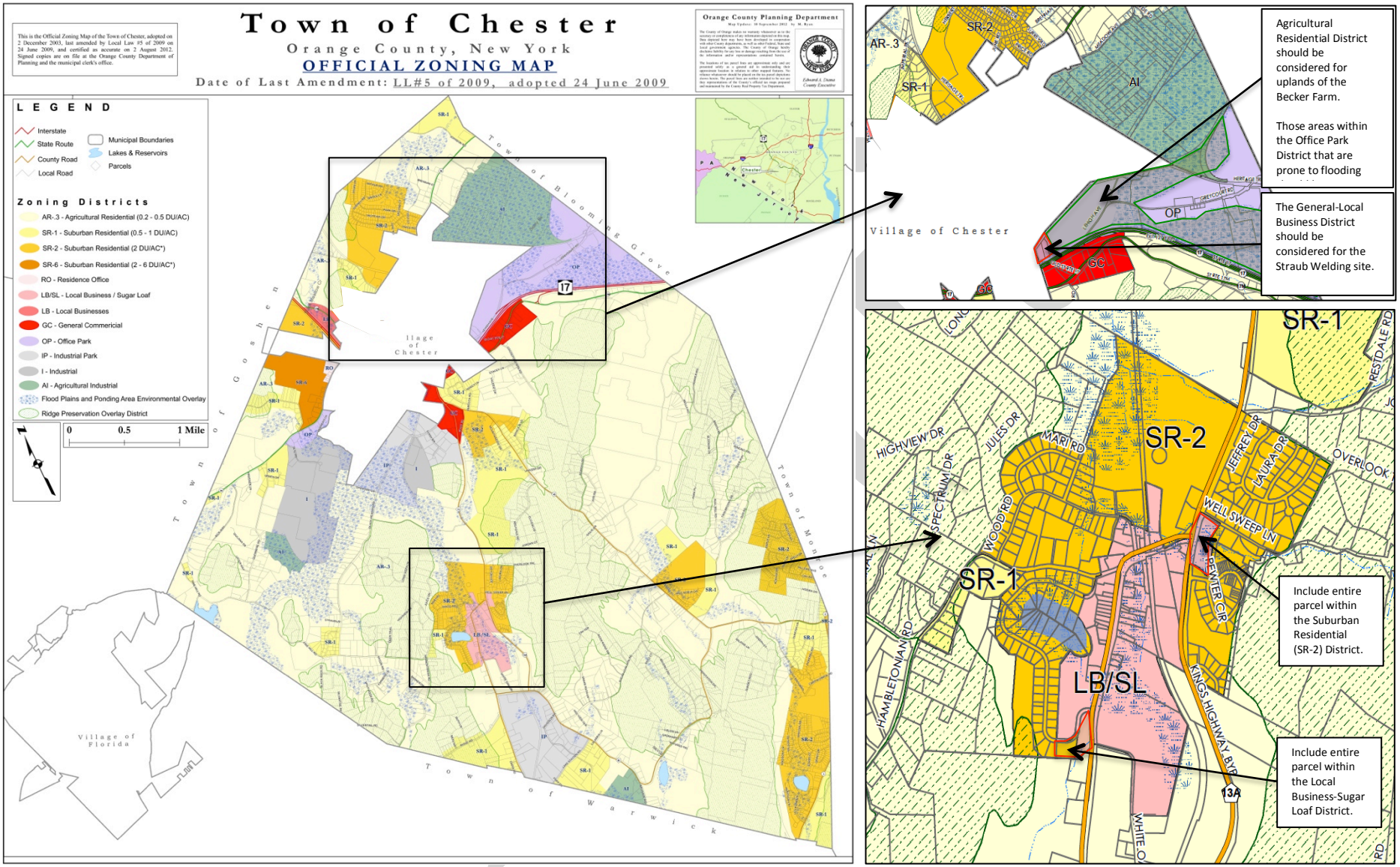

Above: The Official Zoning Map of the Town of Chester with recommended zoning map amendments graphically illustrated in the insets to the right of the map.

11.0 Plan Implementation

In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, the Chester Town Board must actively apply the policies that are contained within the Plan. Furthermore, its Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals must use the Plan as a framework to guide their decisions with respect to the review of development proposals. Certain recommendations contained herein will require the Town Board to enact revisions to the Town code and other land-use regulations. Other actions, such as the protection of natural resources or historic preservation programs, will require the collaboration between the Town, County, State and not-for-profit entities. These actions are outlined in implementation tables in this chapter along with the party responsible for implementing the policy or program.

Each member of the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals should have a copy of this Comprehensive Plan. The Town Board should appoint a Comprehensive Plan subcommittee to spend time each month reviewing progress on the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan and coordinating efforts with other entities where necessary. The following pages provide a summary of the major recommendations that are part of this Plan. The recommendations are organized under the broad topic areas as follows: natural resources, agriculture, parks and recreation resources, cultural and historic resources, transportation, community facilities, jobs and housing, and land-use policies.

For each subject there is a list of specific recommendations, along with an indication of when the recommendation should be implemented and the party responsible for ensuring that the recommendation is followed. The schedule for the implementation plan will help the Town Board to set priorities for the subsequent actions that will be necessary to implement this Comprehensive Plan. Some recommendations should be implemented immediately, including the recommended revisions to the Town's zoning law. Other measures will be implemented in the short term within two years of adopting this Comprehensive Plan. There are still other recommendations that are long term in nature - meaning they would be completed over a two-to-five year timeframe. It is not reasonable to assume that all the recommendations contained herein will be implemented immediately. The implementation of the Plan is meant to be a process that will occur over a period of years. Setting priorities ensures the process will get underway.

Plan Implementation

"In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, the Chester Town Board must actively apply the policies that are contained within the Plan. Furthermore, its Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals must use the Plan as a framework to guide their decisions with respect to the review of development proposals."

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Action**		**Responsibility**
Natural Resources: Also refer to Section 3.5 of the Comprehensive Plan				
1	Promote land-use decisions that encourage the protection and sustainable use of the Town's natural resources [NR.2].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
2	Consider importance of protecting natural resources in the review of any development proposal within the Town [NR.3].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
3	Protect views along portions of Kings Highway, including Sugar Loaf Mountain, and Laroe, Gibson Hill and Pine Hill Roads that provide panoramic views [NR.6].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
4	Encourage the provision of greenway linkages to the Appalachian Trail, Heritage Trail and Goosepond Mountain State Park as properties are developed [NR.7].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
5	Encourage preservation of the ridgelines, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors and natural contours, which form the scenic backdrop for Chester [NR.10].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
6	During the development review process, ensure that natural resources, including native habitat of threatened or endangered species, are protected [NR.13].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
7	Conserve wildlife corridors between development sites consisting of natural vegetation, forested areas, wetlands and undeveloped steep slopes [NR.14].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
8	Minimize impact of development on the natural resources through best management practices (BMPs), low-impact design standards [NR.16].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
9	Conserve the riparian zone along major streams and tributaries, including Seely and Trout brook, Quaker and Black Meadow creeks, and their tributaries [NR.17].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
10	Encourage conservation of threatened or endangered species habitat through appropriate site design, BMPs and conservation easements [NR.23].	Project		Planning Board Town Board
11	Regulate outdoor lighting to balances nighttime visibility and security needs while protecting the night sky, natural environment and wildlife habitats [NR.24].	Project		Planning Board Town Board
12	Refine Ridge Preservation Overlay District to address loophole that allows nonresidential and multifamily uses to disturb mountains and hillsides [NR.11].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
13	Review and refine the Ridge Preservation Overlay District to ensure it is meeting the goals and objectives of this Plan in all zoning districts [NR.12].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
14	Review and refine Freshwater Wetlands and Floodplain and Ponding Area Environmental Subdistrict regulations to meet changing needs [NR.22].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
15	Cooperate with the Village of Chester to protect groundwater resources through an intermunicipal wellhead protection law [NR.21].	Local Law		Town Board Village Board

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Natural Resources: Also refer to Section 3.5 of the Comprehensive Plan				
16	Develop trailheads and footpaths to improve access to Goosepond Mountain State Park and to Sugar Loaf Mountain from the Sugar Loaf hamlet [NR.5].	Project		Parks & Recreation Palisades Park C
17	Extend Heritage Trail along the Erie Railroad Chester to Newburgh branch line [NR.8].	Project		Town Board Parks & Recreation
18	Acquire land easements or utilize other conservation measures along the entire length of Seely and Trout brooks, Quaker and Black Meadow creeks [NR.19].	Conservation Easement		Town Board Planning Board
19	Work with NYSDEC to identify threats related to invasive species and secure funding to eradicate such species when identified [NR.25].	Program		Town Board NYSDEC*
Agriculture: Also refer to Section 4.1 of the Comprehensive Plan				
20	Encourage conservation subdivision design to preserve prime soils when farms are subdivided [AG.2].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
21	Require sufficient vegetative buffer on the nonagricultural land, so farms are buffered from homes [AG.3].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
22	Encourage participation in the NY Farm Link Program to match farmers who are selling their farms with people who are looking to purchase a farm [AG.5].	Policy		Town Board NYS Ag & Markets**
23	Continue support for agricultural programs provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and Orange County Soil & Water Conservation District [AG.9].	Policy		Town Board CCE***
24	Encourage shared, or cooperative infrastructure development [AG.6].	Program		Town Board/CCE
25	Increase community engagement and consumer demand for locally grown food [AG.7].	Program		Town Board CCE
26	Support the efforts of local farmers to ensure the County's maintenance and repair of drainage canals and pumps stations is done in a timely and responsive manner to protect Black Dirt farms from flooding [AG.4].	Project		Town Board Local Farmers Orange County
27	Review and revise regulations pertaining to farm operations to ensure these laws do not needlessly inhibit farming [AG.8].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
28	Preserve and manage agricultural lands through purchase of development rights (PDR), transfer of development rights (TDR), participation in the NYS Agricultural & Markets Districts and conservation subdivisions [AG.1].	Grant Procurement		Town Board CCE NYS Ag & Markets

*** New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; **New York State Agriculture & Markets; ***Cornell Cooperative Extension**

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Parks and Recreational Resources: Also refer to Section 5.1 of the Comprehensive Plan				
29	Amend Chapter 6.0 – Recommendations of the Chester 2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan as recommended in Section 5.1 of this Plan.	Plan Update		Town Board Parks & Recreation
30	Periodically update the Town's 2007 Recreation and Open Space Plan so that it remains relevant to the needs of the Town of Chester and its residents.	Plan Update		Town Board Parks & Recreation
Cultural and Historic Resources: Also refer to Section 6.1 of the Comprehensive Plan				
31	Collaborate with Sugar Loaf cultural institutions to help them grow within the community and market their resources to the surrounding region [CR.1].	Policy		Town Board Cultural Institutions
32	Support cultural events within the Sugar Loaf hamlet [CR.2].	Policy		Town Board Cultural Institutions
33	Help promote the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center as a singular facility for the performing arts and support its long-term sustainability [CR.3].	Policy		Town Board Cultural Institutions
34	Support efforts to develop a cohesive cultural identify for Sugar Loaf and to market its products and leisure experiences for residents and visitors [CR.4].	Policy		Town Board Cultural Institutions
35	Support cultural activities at Chester Public Library and Town parks and ensure library is supported in capital and programming budget [CR.7].	Policy		Town Board Cultural Institutions
36	Support nominations for individual listing of properties on the National Register of Historic Places [HR.1].	Policy		Town Board Town Historian
37	Provide support letters to individuals or organizations that seek grant funding for historic preservation through the NYS OPR&HP* [HR.2].	Policy		Town Board Town Historian
38	Seek grants to research, survey, document and rehabilitate heritage resources and maintain accurate inventories of eligible historic properties [HR.3].	Policy		Town Board Cultural Institutions
39	Ensure Planning Board reviews development applications for land adjacent to historic resources to aid the Town's heritage-resource protection [HR.7].	Policy		Planning Board Town Historian
40	When historic resources are to be lost, they should be documented compliant with appropriate State and nationally recognized standards [HR.8].	Policy		Planning Board Town Historian
41	Include cultural and historic resources in a new Chester wayfinding sign system [CR.5].	Program		Highway Department Cultural Institutions
*** New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation;**				

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Cultural and Historic Resources: Also refer to Section 6.1 of the Comprehensive Plan				
42	Develop a set of voluntary historic preservation guidelines for local residents [HR.6].	Design Guidelines		Planning Board Town Historian
43	Create special permit criteria in the zoning law to allow the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and nonresidential uses on non-working farms, or to buildings that can no longer by used for agricultural purposes [HR.9].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
44	Further evaluate the potential benefits of Certified Local Government status and its application in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf and the Town [HR.11].	Program		Town Board Town Historian
45	Amend zoning law to allow for adaptive reuse of agricultural or historic structures subject to special-permit approval by the Planning Board [HR.13].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
46	Consider the adoption of a preservation plan to further the Town's goals for the preservation and conservation of historic resources [HR.10].	Preservation Plan		Town Board Town Historian
47	If warranted, pursue designation in cooperation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation [HR.12].	Program		Town Board Town Historian
Transportation: Also refer to Section 7.8 of the Comprehensive Plan				
48	Provide a road network that accommodates multiple modes of transportation, and develop strategies for reducing demand on the Town's roads [TC.1].	Policy		Highway Department OCTC**
49	Actively participate in the Orange County Transportation Council's updates to the MPO's* Plan to ensure the needs of the Town are met [TC.2].	Policy		Town Board OCTC
50	Limit the number of access points on collector roads and arterials by promoting cross access and road connectivity between adjacent lands [TC.3.].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
51	Work with trucking companies to explore alternatives for dealing with heavy truck traffic on area roads (e.g. dedicated truck routes) [TC.4].	Policy		Planning Board NYSDOT***
52	Advance opportunities for pedestrian/bicycle connections between new developments and existing centers [BP.3].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
53	Integrate complete-streets infrastructure and design features into street design and construction within large-scale developments [BP.5].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
54	Require bike racks and amenities for commercial sites, schools, parks and public facilities [BP.6].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
*** Metropolitan Planning Organization; ** Orange County Transportation Council; *** New York State Department of Transportation**				

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Transportation: Also refer to Section 7.8 of the Comprehensive Plan				
55	Coordinate with Orange County to monitor public transportation to ensure effectiveness and efficiency while maintaining safety, courtesy and scheduling [PT.2].	Policy		Town Bard Orange County
56	During the review process for a proposed development, consider the accessibility of transit service, and ensure that stops and connections are incorporated when feasible [PT.5].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board OCTC
57	Support projects and proposals to help ensure the freight railroads are adequately utilized for commercial use [RS.1].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
58	Railroad rights-of-way should be preserved for current and future use [RS.2].	Policy		Town Board
59	Improve access to Chester's trail network by providing parking and other facilities at trail access points to promote use of the system [BP.2].	Project		Planning Board Town Board
60	Work with Orange County to increase the number of covered bus shelters and covered bike parking provided at transit stops where appropriate [PT.1].	Project		Planning Board Town Board
61	Improve transit service by creating a dedicated bus service-rail connector with stops in Sugar Loaf and the Village of Chester, which would provide limited peak hour bus service between Chester and the NJ Transit Harriman Station [PT.3].	Project		Town Board Orange County OCTC
62	Secure funding to advance the preliminary streetscape plan for Sugar Loaf to the final design phase, and to extend the study to encompass the entire business district [TC.5].	Capital Improvement		Town Board Orange County
63	Develop a bikeway-trail system that minimizes potential conflicts between bicycles, pedestrians and motor vehicles [BP.1].	Project		Town Board OCTC
64	Support efforts to advance opportunities for sidewalk enhancements in Sugar Loaf to create a safe and inviting environment within the business district in a manner that respects the unique and historic character of Sugar Loaf [BP.4].	Project		Town Board Water Dept. Sewer Dept.
65	Work regionally and locally to develop satellite park-and-ride facilities with bus service to reduce traffic congestion at primary park-and-ride facilities [PT.4].	Project		Town Board NYSDOT
66	Design bus pull-off lanes at bus stops to maintain the level of service on roadways [PT.6].	Project		Town Board NYSDOT

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Community Facilities and Services: Also refer to Section 8.9 of the Comprehensive Plan				
67	Ensure building needs assessments and cost evaluations are analyzed prior to construction or renovation of public facilities, and the final facility is compatible with other public facilities surrounding it [CF.1].	Policy		Town Board Town Departments Parks & Recreation
68	Provide public facilities that serve as examples of the desired development quality in Town [CF.2].	Policy		Town Board Parks & Recreation
69	Every property to be acquired for a community facility must be evaluated upon its own merits to ensure the property fulfills the multitude of Town needs at the time of purchase and in the future [CF.3].	Policy		Town Board Parks & Recreation Town Departments
70	Plans for new facilities should include opportunities for future additions and expansions [CF.4].	Policy		Town Board Town Departments
71	When impacts on schools are anticipated, developers should provide appropriate mitigation measures to help ensure the community can continue to offer the highest quality of public education available [CF.5].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board Town Departments
72	Cooperate with school districts so that land can be reserved for schools when planning future development. In this way, school facilities will be in harmony with the Town's vision of future land use [CF.6].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board School Districts
73	New wireless communication towers should be designed to be inconspicuous in nature through tower placement or stealth design [TC.6].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
74	Create an environment that encourages respect, mutual responsibility, community outreach and cooperation between public safety officials and citizens. [PS.1].	Policy		Town Board Police Department
75	Develop a backup well for Sugar Loaf Water District and secure funding to extend water to the business district [CF.7].	Project		Town Board Water Department
76	Periodically review requirements for well pump tests for public and central systems and, if needed, amended to ensure sufficient water supply [CF.8].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
77	Provide cellular service townwide to ensure cellular callers can access 911 in the event of an emergency [PS.3].	Program		Town Board Cellular Providers
78	Ensure the highest level of broadband network is available to give Chester a competitive advantage in its business retention and recruitment efforts [TC.1].	Program		Town Board Cable Providers
79	Pursue public and private partnerships to complete projects linking major facilities [TC.2].	Program		Town Board Cell-Cable Provider

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Jobs and Housing: Also refer to Section 9.4 of the Comprehensive Plan				
80	Seek State and federal grants in cooperation with service providers to provide broadband and wireless communication service to underserved areas [TC.3].	Program		Town Board Cell-Cable Provider
81	Create a capital improvement plan (CIP) for capital facilities with an asset management plan that identifies funding sources. A CIP would assess the useful life of capital facilities, maintenance needs and replacement schedules [CF.8].	Capital Improvement Plan		Planning Board Town Board Town Departments
82	Promote economic development that builds upon the strengths of the Town and region [ED.1].	Policy		Town Board Orange County
83	Promote role of Sugar Loaf as a specialty retail, cultural and arts activity center of the Town [ED.2].	Policy		Town Board Business Community
84	Promote a diversified economic base, which takes advantage of emerging opportunities [ED.3].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
85	Facilitate well-designed development within the Town's business and commercial zoning districts [ED.5].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
86	Promote a wide range of housing types and costs, including single-family detached homes, multiple dwellings and townhouses for sale or rent [HD.1.].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
87	Encourage provision of handicap-accessible dwelling units for people with physical disabilities [HD.2].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
88	Consider the enactment of incentive zoning, which would allow for inducements to developers for projects that provide a community benefit, such as senior housing, or affordable senior and workforce housing [HD.3].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
89	Facilitate the development of shovel-ready industrial and office parks in areas zoned for such uses [ED.4].	Project		Town Board County IDA*
Land-Use Policies: Also refer to Section 10.8 of the Comprehensive Plan				
90	Clearly communicate the Town's future land-use goals, land-use standards and requirements to the development community and to the general public [LU.1].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
91	Consider the compatibility of development with surrounding uses [LU.3].	Policy		Planning Board
***Orange County Industrial Development Agency**				

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Land-Use Policies: Also refer to Section 10.8 of the Comprehensive Plan				
92	Encourage mixed-use infill development within the Local Business-Sugar Loaf District [LU.4].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
93	Explore programs to encourage more construction of U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certified buildings [LU.5].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
94	Utilize the tool of cluster development as a means to enhance the natural environment and for the preservation of prime farmland and open space[LU.6.].	Policy		Town Board Business Community
95	Through the land-use and decision-making process, encourage grouping of open space or the connectivity of open space through conservation easements or cluster development [LU.7].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
96	Protect views along portions of Kings Highway, including Sugar Loaf Mountain, and portions of Gibson Hill Road and Pine Hill Road, which provide panoramic views of the rural landscape [LU.8].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
97	Through the land-use and decision-making process and cooperation with the Village of Chester, protect the integrity and quality of water resources in the Town and Village [LU.11].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
98	Protect the integrity of riparian zones, forested areas as buffers and wildlife habitat [LU.12].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
99	Require the preservation of vegetation along the perimeter of sites and landscaping during land development to buffer neighboring properties [LU.13].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
100	Continue to support the right-to-farm and the placement of Chester farms in the New York State's Agriculture & Districts program [LU.14].	Policy		Town Board Ag & Markets
101	Amend zoning law to allow use of accessory structures for home-based businesses by special permit [LU.4].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
102	Review the Town's zoning law and subdivision regulations, as well as other parts of the Town Code, to ensure these land-use regulations adequately implement the Comprehensive Plan [LU.2].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board Town Attorney
103	Secure funding to advance the Sugar Loaf preliminary streetscape plan to the final design phase [LU.4].	Capital Improvement		Town Board Orange County

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Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	**Recommendations**	**Type**		**Responsibility**
Land-Use Policies: Also refer to Section 10.8 of the Comprehensive Plan				
104	Regulate the amount of noise produced by land uses to minimize impacts on nearby residential properties [LU.16].	Policy		Planning Board Town Board
105	Amend Town Code to ensure that it includes necessary provisions to protect residential areas from excessive noise generated from adjoining non-residential land uses, and that it also provides the means for enforcing the standards set forth therein [LU.17].	Zoning Amendment		Planning Board Town Board
106	Review zoning laws to allow alternative energy facilities and establish land use laws to regulate the placement of such facilities to ensure they are visually acceptable and don't adversely affect adjoining property owners.			
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Definitions

Detention Basin: Usually dry, a detention basin fills with water during a storm event. Detention basins work by delaying the storm water so that it is released at a rate that mimics the predevelopment flow.

Flex Space: A building type with a mix of non-residential uses such as research and development, office, retail accessory to industrial activities, light industrial processing.

Light Industry: Manufacturing activity that uses moderate amounts of partially processed materials to produce items of relatively high value for end users rather than as intermediates for use by other industries.

Retention Basin: A basin that holds water in a pool. The only outlet is through an emergency spillway that allows the basin to overflow in a controlled manner should it become too full. The retention basin loses water through infiltration and evaporation but is designed with capacity to hold the runoff from average storm events.

Recreation, Active: Leisure-time activities, usually of a formal nature and often performed with others, requiring playground equipment and taking place in prescribed places, sites or fields.

Recreation, Passive: Activities that involve relatively inactive or less energetic activities, such as walking, sitting, picnicking, and hiking.

Riparian Zone: A complex assemblage of plants and other organisms in an environment adjacent to water without definitive boundaries, which may include stream banks, floodplains, and wetlands. Mainly linear in shape and extent, riparian zones are characterized by laterally flowing water that rises and falls at least once within a growing season.

Traditional Neighborhood Design: An approach to land-use planning and urban design principles that promotes the building of pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods with a mix of uses, housing types and costs, lot sizes and density, architectural variety, a central meeting place such as a town square, a network of narrow streets and alleys and defined development edges.

Riparian Zone

"A complex assemblage of plants and other organisms in an environment adjacent to water without definitive boundaries, which may include stream banks, floodplains, and wetlands. Mainly linear in shape and extent, they are characterized by laterally flowing water that rises and falls at least once within a growing season."

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Hambletonian 10

A great grandson of the imported English Thoroughbred Messenger profoundly influenced the sport of harness racing. On May 5, 1849, Hambletonian was born in Sugar Loaf, N.Y. Sired by Abdallah and foaled to a horse called the Charles Kent Mare, Hambletonian and his dam were owned by Jonas Seeley. Seeley's hired hand, William Rysdyk, cared for them. Rysdyk became so attached to the pair and was so convinced that the foal would someday be great that he asked to purchase them. Seeley finally agreed, and for $125 William Rysdyk took his prize possessions home.

Hambletonian 10, as he was registered, made his first public appearance at the age of six months at the nearby Orange County Fair in Goshen. He caused quite a sensation, and horsemen started referring to him as "Rysdyk's Abdallah colt." This colt began his stud career at age two, when Rysdyk allowed him to cover four mares. Meanwhile another son of Abdallah, Abdallah Chief, owned by Seeley C. Roe, was looming as a competitor for the local stallion honors. Roe had nothing but contempt for Hambletonian, and claimed he'd never be a trotter, only a show horse. This issue was settled in 1852 at Long Island's Union Course. Hambletonian and Abdallah Chief were hitched to skeleton wagons with their owners driving. Three minutes and three seconds after the start, Hambletonian crossed the finish line ahead of his rival. Roe still wasn't satisfied and insisted on another race. A time trial was held. Abdallah Chief went the mile in 2:55 1/2. Then Roe watched Hambletonian, in what would be the only time trial of his career, trot the mile in 2:48 1/2. Rysdyk then placed Hambletonian at stud in Chester and bred him to local mares for a fee upwards of $500. The horse's reputation quickly grew as a sire of speed, and Rysdyk made a modest fortune from the horse's services. In his years at stud, 1,331 foals were sired.

Hambletonian died March 27, 1876, at the age of 27. Both he and his owner, who died in 1870, were buried in Chester, N.Y. Seventeen years after Hambletonian's death a granite monument, the gift of many people who had fond memories of the horse, was placed over his grave on Hambletonian Avenue.

The Hambletonian bloodlines were so strong that, after a number of years, all other family lines became extinct. The lineage of nearly all American trotters and pacers can be traced to one or more of four prominent Hambletonian sons: George Wilkes, Dictator, Happy Medium and Electioneer. Famous descendants of Hambletonian include Dexter (2:17 /¼), Lou Dillon (the first two-minute trotter), Maud S., Billy Direct (1:55), Greyhound and the 1995 Hambletonian winner, Tagliabue (1:53.3). (Source for Hambletonian History: The Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame.)

Above (top to bottom): A view of Hambletonian 10 birthplace marker, posted by the Hambletonian Society; painting by J. H. Wright, courtesy of the National Museum of Natural History; and stone marker with brass plaque, which reads as follows: "Hambletonian 10, father of the trotting horse, foaled on this spot, May 5, 1849. Erected by his admirers, August 15, 1935."

[i] Standardbred horses are known for their ability to race in harness at trot or pace instead of under saddle at a gallop. The breed is recognized worldwide for its harness-racing ability.

[ii] See Section 98-27 FP Floodplain and Ponding Area Environmental District of the Town code for complete description of regulations.

[iii] Riparian Zone: A complex assemblage of plants and other organisms in an environment adjacent to water without definitive boundaries, which may include stream banks, floodplains and wetlands. Mainly linear in shape and extent, riparian zones are characterized by laterally flowing water that rises and falls at least once within a growing season.

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