

III. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING THE VISION

A. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

According to the survey and workshop results, one of the attributes of greatest importance to Town residents is its scenic beauty. Aesthetics was very important to a large number of workshop respondents and survey participants, and by a large margin this category received the most priority stickers in the discussion of negative features. The planning workshops indicated that residents feel that frontages along Route 20/22 convey a bad first impression of the Town. Respondents indicated a problem with inadequate zoning and enforcement.

The Town is blessed with beautiful rural scenery and long vistas of hills and valleys. Almost half of the survey respondents indicated the rural atmosphere of New Lebanon as the primary reason they decided to live here. Preservation of the Town's scenic resources is critical to maintaining this rural identity and will be a benefit to residents and visitors alike. The Town will take steps to protect and improve its appearance.

Goal:

Protect and enhance the natural scenic vistas and the publicly visible aspects of the man-made environment, in keeping with the Town's rural and "small town" character.

Objectives:

- Preserve scenic vistas of the area's natural beauty including vistas of woodlands, fields, ridgelines, hillsides, hilltops and valleys
- Preserve and/or improve scenic vistas that involve man-made structures
- Develop and implement mechanisms to improve the appearance of facilities, signs, buildings and yards visible from roads and highways
- Develop and implement a concept of "small town" appearance to guide improvements and developments in the Town's commercial center, other commercial corridors and residential areas

Strategies to Protect Scenic Vistas From Degradation:

1. Prohibit or strictly regulate development within a specific distance from hilltops and ridgelines in the following three ways:
 - a. Create a hilltop/ridgeline overlay zone. This overlay zone would incorporate prominent hilltops and ridgelines. Required standards for this overlay could include careful siting of buildings away from ridge tops and ridgelines, structure design to help buildings blend in

with natural surroundings (stone or natural wood siding and earth tone rooftops), control of exterior lighting, preservation of existing vegetation or provision of new vegetation for screening, burying of utilities, and preservation of open space.

An overlay zone is a zone or district created by the local legislature for the purpose of conserving natural resources or promoting certain types of development. Overlay zones are imposed over existing zoning districts and contain provisions that are applicable in addition to those contained in the zoning law.

- b. Establish a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) to designate the hilltops as areas where, pursuant to SEQRA, the planning board must take a “hard look” at environmental impact before making a decision on a proposal.

A Critical Environmental Area (CEA) is a specific geographic area designated by a state or local agency, having exceptional or unique environmental characteristics.

- c. Work with nonprofit conservation organizations to identify important hilltops and ridgelines that should be conserved through the purchase of development rights.
2. Conduct a viewshed analysis to identify specific important viewsheds within the town.

A viewshed analysis is a key component of any visual impact assessment study. The common basis of the viewshed analysis is a visual corridor plotted on a topographic map, verified by aerial photographs and by driving along the corridor. The data collected from these activities becomes a visual resource inventory that will add valuable information for visual resource management purposes in the region. The inventory describes the extent of the view within the visual corridor as well as its quality, potential quality, and significance value. The goals of viewshed analysis are to preserve and enhance the quality of the scenic beauty of the rural landscape and to develop the existing rural landscape with minimum impact to the existing scenic values. Guidelines and recommendations for each view in the study area are provided in the analysis of each unit.

Sites selected for this analysis would include sites in scenic overlay zones, in critical environmental areas and other sites of public importance. Develop design standards to protect these views. Such standards could be similar to those described above for the ridgeline overlay but should also include siting and design methods to ensure that buildings are carefully sited so that they are in the least obtrusive location and designed to fit in with the natural surroundings.

3. Implement land use planning techniques such as the following:
 - a. Rural road standards (to ensure that new and existing roads are kept in character with small, narrow rural roads).
 - b. The use of conservation subdivisions and clustering. This will allow creative placement of structures on a parcel, taking into consideration the environmental features on that parcel. (See Appendix I for illustrations.)

A conservation subdivision is characterized by common open space and clustered compact lots. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland and/or natural resources while allowing for the maximum number of residences under current community zoning and subdivision regulations. In some cases a greater density (density bonus) may be offered in the local ordinance to encourage this approach to residential development planning.

Clustering allows flexibility in lot dimensional requirements to reduce lot size to preserve sensitive environmental features and/or farmland/open space. There is no reduction in the number of lots, only in the size of those lots. The smaller the size of clustered lots the more land is preserved from residential development, and therefore more land is available to the landowner for farmland or open space.

- c. Use of conservation easements to prevent development of critical agricultural areas.

A conservation easement is a legal agreement, written in the form of a deed, which allows landowners to permanently protect their land. Through conservation easement a landowner donates the majority—or entirety—of the property's development rights to a qualified nonprofit land trust or governmental entity.

4. Develop a scenic roads program. Through a volunteer committee, inventory all roads in the town and develop a rating system to identify important scenic roads and views from those roads. This program should be based on an objective system of ratings that takes into consideration features such as width of road, type of landscape, presence of long-views from the road or of important natural features such as ridges, streams or wetlands. Roads that are considered to be scenic can be designated as a locally significant scenic road. Develop standards and criteria for roadways of special significance, including setbacks and signage, specifically to protect views.
5. Develop non-regulatory, voluntary techniques to protect scenic and rural landscapes. One example would be the use of educational initiatives, such as the creation of both a landscape field guide for New Lebanon and an interpretive tour guide. To assist landowners, volunteers could plan and design a scenic corridor map as part of a manual that describes the historic, scenic, and environmental resources for individuals who own property within scenic road corridors. These informational aides could suggest ideas on how to preserve the character of their land.

Strategies to Improve the Appearance of Commercial and Other Developed Areas:

1. Evaluate existing town junk and junk car laws and enhance these to either prohibit storage of equipment, materials, junk, etc. in yards or to regulate it so that a town permit and fencing/screening are required for areas having storage of materials and equipment in their yards. This must be strictly enforced.
2. Develop and implement a local property maintenance law and strictly enforce it to enhance removal of junk, junk cars, and other items.
3. Enhance the Town's sign law to include sign design standards to be enforced by the Building Inspector. The standards should account for location, visibility and uniformity. Allow a grace period of a specified timeframe where nonconforming signs can remain, but thereafter all signs must be conforming. (This should be preceded by conducting a sign inventory so that the Town knows where signs are and which are not conforming to the new standards.)
4. Develop a local design manual to guide new development of commercial buildings. This manual should include such important streetscape elements as setbacks, screening, lighting, signage, roof type, landscaping, location of parking lots to the side or rear, and façade treatment.
5. Ensure enhanced enforcement of all existing and new laws. (See Land Use Section.)

B. NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Workshop participants identified among the Town's positive features the diversity of wildlife habitat, open space, air quality, the Warm Springs, the Wyomanock and Kinderhook Creeks and the large amount of undeveloped land. The preservation of these resources was given high importance by the members of the public who attended the workshops. A large majority of the survey respondents also rated as "important" that the community be concerned with natural resource matters such as wetland and stream protection, noise levels, water quality and visual character.

New Lebanon is blessed with precious natural resources that are valued by its community. New Lebanon should consider it a priority to preserve and protect its natural resources. Ensuring the preservation of its clean air, fine water resources, and uncontaminated soils should be central to the Town's decision about its future direction and growth. The following strategies are designed to preserve and protect for future generations the Town's natural resources.

Goal:

Preserve and protect our environment and responsibly manage our natural resources. Avoid adverse impacts to the environment wherever possible and minimize them where unavoidable.

Objectives:

- Protect surface water, wetlands and groundwater from potential sources of pollution and reduce or eliminate existing sources of water contamination
- Preserve the Town's clean air and reduce air pollution sources
- Prevent development of steep slopes that can lead to erosion
- Prevent the filling or disturbance of wetlands
- Prevent development within the floodplain that can impact upstream properties
- Protect scenic vistas, open space and sensitive wildlife habitats
- Minimize noise pollution
- Protect the dark skies and minimize glare and light pollution
- Encourage restoration, preservation and protection of the Lebanon Warm Mineral Spring

- Encourage the preservation of prime agricultural lands and the promotion of environmentally sensitive management and use of agricultural resources
- Encourage preservation of woodlands and promote environmentally sensitive management and use of forest resources
- Ensure that mining, including the extraction of sand and gravel deposits, is done in an environmentally sensitive manner

Strategies for Town Management of Natural Resources and the Environment:

1. Create a Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) in New Lebanon. This town-appointed advisory council can play a vital role in making site visits, observations, and recommendations to protect the environment. The CAC would report to the Town Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board as projects are proposed. The CAC can also play a vital role in a viewshed/scenic landscape inventory (See recommendations for community appearance).
2. Ensure that the following publications are on hand for the planning board and ZBA to refer to:
 - a. Guidelines for Urban Erosion and Sediment Control: New York 1991.
 - b. Reducing the Impacts of Stormwater Runoff from New Development. NYS DEC Bureau of Water Quality Management.
 - c. Controlling Agricultural Nonpoint Source Water Pollution in New York State: A Guide to Selection of Best Management Practices to Improve and Protect Water Quality. NYS DEC, Division of Water, Bureau of Technical Services and Research, 1991.
 - d. State Pollution Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities. NYS DEC Division of Water. 1993.
 - e. Individual Residential Wastewater Treatment Systems Design Handbook. NYS Department of Health. 1996.
 - f. Stormwater Design Manual. NYS DEC.

Strategies for the Protection of Water Resources:

1. Aquifers
 - a. Designate a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) around known aquifer locations (See map) and ensure that stringent site plan reviews of projects in this area are done and that a hard look is taken to ensure that negative impacts to this aquifer do not occur.
2. Wetlands
 - a. Protect all state and federally designated wetlands and ensure compliance of all applicable regulations relating to wetlands. The Planning Board, ZBA and Building Department should use the GIS maps included in this plan to identify locations having wetlands and ensure that proper setbacks or other protection measures are incorporated into review processes.
3. Floodplains
 - a. Request FEMA to conduct a flood study for the Town.
 - b. Review proposals to place fill in floodplains for flood-way impacts during site plan review.
4. Streams
 - a. Establish a stream buffer to protect streams that do not have a FEMA floodplain designation. Buffers can control or limit development within a designated area along the stream. Buffers can be created through establishment of a stream corridor protection regulation or as a requirement as part of the land subdivision process. Establish appropriate buffer widths that take into account slopes, soil types and existing vegetative covers.
5. Stormwater and Run-Off
 - a. Ensure that all sand and salt piles are covered to prevent salts from leaching into ground or surface waters and to prevent wind erosion of sand. Follow established DEC salt regulations.
 - b. Require all new construction, including Town highway work, to comply with DEC stormwater management and erosion and sediment control requirements for industrial activities and construction which disturbs more than one acre of land.

- c. Encourage use of gravel for roads, driveways and parking areas to reduce impervious surfaces in New Lebanon.
6. Warm Mineral Spring
- a. Explore methods for Town and public involvement in the restoration, maintenance, and operation of the Warm Mineral Spring in Lebanon Springs.
 - b. Explore obtaining grants to rehabilitate, preserve and protect the Warm Mineral Spring and Indian Head Fountain.

Strategies for the Protection of Land and Soil Resources:

- 1. Develop a steep slope overlay where woodland uses and very low-density development are the preferred use. (Erosion and sedimentation controls for roads or trails and other management activities on steep slopes are needed to minimize erosion associated with woodland uses.)
- 2. Use the New York State Forestry Best Management Practices Manual as a guideline to protect steep slopes during forestry operations. In addition, the Town shall establish a threshold size that will trigger review of timber harvesting plans.
- 3. Maintain existing provisions regulating mining. Ensure that the Town maintains the ability to permit mining subject to a special use permit with conditions. These conditions should be designed to protect the environment and adjacent landowners from negative impacts of excavations, removal and transportation of mined materials.

Strategies for the Protection of Wildlife Resources:

- 1. Protect all state and federally designated sensitive wildlife habitats and ensure compliance with all applicable regulations relating to such. The Planning Board should use the GIS or maps included in this plan to identify locations having sensitive wildlife habitats and ensure that proper protection measures are incorporated into review processes.

Strategies to Enhance Quality of Life:

- 1. Adopt noise limits in Town ordinance and ensure that site plan review includes references to minimizing noise pollution.
- 2. Amend zoning to include provisions that regulate lighting and reduce glare. At a minimum full-cut off or shielded light fixtures should be

required. Lighting regulations can control glare, height of lighting standards, and type of bulb.

3. Ensure that the town's promotion of farming activities includes enforcement of Best Management Practices for controlling farm pollution.
4. Implement land use regulations that protect scenic vistas and open space as discussed under Community Appearance.
5. In conjunction with #4 above, the Town must carefully evaluate alternative energy resource proposals, especially wind farms.
6. Adopt laws to phase out the use of burn barrels and to regulate the idling of internal combustion engines. Alternative affordable disposal options, including municipal trash collection, should be evaluated as a replacement for burn barrels.
7. Pursue strategies for monitoring air quality along Routes 20 and 22.

C. HISTORIC RESOURCES

Public and business workshop participants have strongly recommended that the Town's historic resources should be both recognized and preserved. The history of New Lebanon has shaped its independent character. The Warm Spring, the Shakers, farmers and tradesmen have all played their part in the past and should serve as guideposts for our future.

Goal:

Preserve and promote New Lebanon's historic heritage as an integral part of the Town's culture, character, attractiveness and economic future.

Objectives:

- Support and assist in the preservation of historic resources, properties and structures within the Town
- Support the relocation of the Shaker Museum and Library to the New Lebanon site
- Support tourism by assisting in the documentation of historic sites
- Support the Historical Society and Town Historian to promote the suitable, permanent display and storage of artifacts of Town history

Strategies to Identify Historic Resources:

1. Support efforts of the community to identify homes, structures and sites for listing on the State and Federal Register of Historic Places through the following:
 - a. Documentation of historic sites (see Historic Sites Map).
 - b. Development of a map of historic resources.
2. The Town will support the Historical Society and Town Historian in cataloguing, preserving, and displaying known artifacts of Town history, including state historical markers and cemeteries.

Strategies to Preserve Historic Resources:

1. Establish an historic overlay zone to include, at a minimum, the Shaker Museum and Library facilities and other buildings of the original Mount Lebanon Shaker settlement that are now part of Darrow

2. School and the Abode. Another area to consider including would be the Warm Mineral Spring and its surrounding area.
3. Create a local Historic District program through the adoption of a local Historic District Preservation Law. A historic district or neighborhood is characterized by groups of buildings whose collective architectural qualities and cultural associations give them significance. The natural or working agricultural landscape surrounding the buildings is an important component of a district and should be considered.
4. Appoint a Historic Commission to administer this program, which would encourage the restoration, preservation, rehabilitation and conservation of historically, architecturally, and archaeologically significant areas, structures, buildings, sites, objects, and their surroundings. This Commission would review new construction design to ensure compatibility with the character of the district and to safeguard against any potentially adverse influences which may cause the decline, decay, or destruction of the Town's important assets.
5. Ensure that the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau of the State Historic Preservation Office is involved in project review. They will use Environmental Review in the planning stages to protect historic buildings and sites from the impacts of government-assisted projects. Through this review, the Bureau identifies historic resources involved in public projects and assists with developing preservation approaches.
6. Ensure that environmental review of each application for permitting, variances, subdivision or site plan includes consideration of its impact on historic resources. SEQRA tools will be used to gather information on historic resources that may be present on any proposed project site and to mitigate any potential impacts that may occur.
7. Refer to and utilize the applicable laws that can help New Lebanon protect historic resources.
8. To the extent possible, encourage the re-use of historic buildings. The Town Board might consider tax abatements or other incentives for re-use.
9. Encourage local schools to include the teaching of New Lebanon's history and historic resources as part of their curriculum, at both elementary and high school levels.

Strategies to Support the Relocation of the Shaker Museum and Library to the New Lebanon Site:

1. Work with representatives from the Shaker Museum and Library to smoothly transition their operations to the New Lebanon site. (See Tourism strategies.)

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

According to the survey and workshop responses, retail, home based and light industrial businesses were the most highly favored choices for economic development. Respondents also expressed a strong desire to locate any commercial/industrial development within well defined zones established for those purposes. In particular, survey respondents expressed a desire that a viable and diverse business district be encouraged and expanded along the 20/22 corridor. In planning for this area, however, Town officials and planners must also keep in mind some of the other key issues resulting from the workshops and survey, i.e. maintenance of a small town atmosphere and the expressed desire to avoid heavy industrial and high polluting businesses and "big box" stores.

New Lebanon is located in a valley, with limited remaining land space for commercial development and a sensitive ecological environment. Consequently, all economic development efforts must be prudently planned and constructively managed.

Goal:

Promote an environment that supports the constructive growth plans of existing businesses while attracting appropriate new businesses.

Objectives:

- Develop an overall framework (requirements, type, etc.) for the attraction of new business
- Support the development of tourism
- Develop the infrastructure needed to concentrate growth in designated commercial and/or light industrial districts
- Support and help to strengthen current businesses while actively pursuing a variety of new business and commercial entities, to meet the needs of the community and contribute to the economic viability of the existing business base
- Ensure avoidance of heavy industrial and high pollution businesses and big box stores
- Ensure effective commercial/industrial zoning enforcement

Strategies to Enhance and Support Economic Development:

1. Support and encourage the newly re-established Lebanon Valley Business Association to engender a greater business spirit within New

Lebanon. Support and encourage them in their efforts to act as an incubator of ideas and a resource for economic development in the community.

2. Working with the Lebanon Valley Business Association, create an official entity (New Lebanon Development Corp. or Community Development Corp.) to pro-actively pursue economic development.
 - a. Appoint a member of the Town Board as the official liaison to this entity.
 - b. Work with Town officials, business owners and other relevant parties to develop a conceptual framework for this effort. This framework should include:
 - Definition of industrial/commercial zones
 - Emphasis on “nodal” rather than “strip” development
 - Emphasis on light industry, professional, retail and hospitality business
 - Identification of infrastructure, communication, environmental and zoning issues
 - Identification of the types of potential businesses desired/appropriate in this area
 - Develop and maintain an accurate current assessment of businesses operating in New Lebanon
 - c. Establish relationships at the County, State, and Federal levels with entities such as the Center for Economic Growth, Empire State Development Corp., and others to explore economic opportunities and to learn about new strategies for pursuing the Town’s economic development goals.
 - d. Apply to the Governor’s Office for Small Cities for a grant to further explore opportunities and to develop specific strategies for economic development.
 - e. Develop a multi-year strategic plan for the economic development of New Lebanon.
 - f. Once plans are formulated, seek economic development and micro-enterprise grants to pursue defined projects for supporting current businesses and attracting desirable new ones. Some of the potential sources of funding could be:
 - Economic Development Administration. (EDA)(Federal)
 - Community Development Block Grants. (Federal and State)

- Economic Development Agency Planning Grants
 - Economic Development Public Agency Public Works Grants
 - The Mohawk Valley Economic Development Corporation
 - Micro-loan/Small Loan Program
 - Community Reinvestment Act (working with banks)
3. Support tourism efforts.
 4. In keeping with the goal of attracting appropriate new businesses, strictly control adult entertainment enterprises through zoning and enforcement.

E. HOUSING

Survey and workshop respondents reported a concern that there be adequate housing for senior citizens and affordable housing for young families. Single unit and manufactured modular houses were favored over multi-unit structures and mobile homes.

Housing is a complex issue and presents many challenges requiring a delicate and careful balancing of several factors. In addition to the issues of having adequate affordable housing for seniors and young people, other issues of importance needing to be considered are those of environment/ecology, maintaining rural and small town character, effective tax base expansion, and costs, including those of infrastructure, community services, and education. Because of the complexity of these issues, it is recommended that the Town commission a professional study of this area. In the meanwhile, some strategies and actions that might be pursued are recommended in the following commentary.

Goal:

Promote housing opportunities for all economic levels and age groups.

Objectives:

- Promote the development of housing options for seniors with emphasis on safety, affordability and access to daily needs
- Promote the availability of a variety of affordable housing options
- Ensure that the location and density of homes matches the ability of the land to support them and the community's desire to preserve the Town's rural and small town character

Strategies to Establish a Formal Process for Oversight and Effective Management of Housing:

1. Identify the various entities (county, state, federal) which might be resources to assist with the overall assessment and management of housing issues.
2. Appoint a member of the Town Board as the housing liaison who will do the following:
 - a. Make contact with New York State Housing and Community Renewal and with our Congressional office to discuss projects and potential approaches.

- b. Identify potential funding sources to secure monies for the commissioning of a professional study.
- c. Identify and select a consulting firm to conduct a housing study.

Strategies to Achieve Effective Analysis of the Current Housing Situation in New Lebanon and Develop Projections/Scenarios of Future Needs:

1. Support the commissioned study. This study, utilizing Town history and input regarding resident desires (as determined from the Comprehensive Plan survey and workshop results) as well as trends and projections of future activities (such as relocation of Shaker Museum and Library to New Lebanon), will provide the following information:
 - A complete and accurate current situation analysis
 - Projections regarding future growth
 - Analysis regarding immediate and future housing needs
 - Plans for alternative housing scenarios to meet current and anticipated needs
 - Analysis of valuation and tax base implications of the various scenarios
 - Recommendations regarding Zoning Code modification necessary to achieve housing objectives

F. TOURISM

In the survey responses and workshop comments, two sources of tourism received strong support: the relocation of the Shaker Museum and Library from Old Chatham to Mt. Lebanon, and cultural events and concerts such as those occurring at the Theater Barn and Tannery Pond. Survey respondents indicated that the relocation of the Shaker Museum and Library provides New Lebanon with a unique opportunity--to revitalize its Shaker heritage while benefiting from significant economic potential. When fully operational with its museum and educational programs, the facility could draw as many as 75,000 visitors to the area. It is in the Town's best interest to support the museum and to plan for the challenges and opportunities that this influx of visitors will represent.

Goal:

Develop and promote New Lebanon as a destination for tourism.

Objectives:

- Develop and promote recreational opportunities
- Promote historical features
- Promote cultural and entertainment resources
- Support the development of the Shaker Museum and Library project
- Promote the Town's proximity to cultural and recreational resources in the surrounding area
- Promote orderly development of the Town's infrastructure for the support of tourism

Strategies to Support the Shaker Museum and Library Project:

1. Officially and publicly announce support of the Shaker Museum and Library project.
2. Appoint the Town Supervisor or a member of the Town Board to be the official liaison with the Museum administrators. This person will do the following:
 - a. Participate in ongoing, joint-venture-like meetings and discussions with Shaker Museum and Library.

- b. Ensure close coordination and necessary support on the part of the Town.

Strategies to Establish a Mechanism/Structure for Promoting Tourism in the Town:

1. Appoint a Town Board member as the official liaison for tourism efforts.
2. Establish a Tourism Board/Committee/task force and assign them the task of developing a viable tourism effort. This effort should include the following:
 - a. Establishment of working relationships with tourism agencies at the County and State levels as well as with regional efforts in the Capital District, Berkshire County and other local communities which are adjacent to New Lebanon.
 - b. Develop and implement a strategy, a plan and collateral materials (emphasizing historic, cultural, recreational and environmental features) necessary to promote New Lebanon as a destination for tourism.
 - c. Actively pursue the Hudson River Valley Greenway designation as a "Scenic Byway".

Strategies for Planning for the Orderly Development of the Infrastructure Necessary to Successfully Meet the Challenges and Opportunities of the Forecasted Influx of Visitors to the Area:

1. Establish a formal infrastructure project task force and begin liaison with appropriate County, State and Federal planning agencies to assess and scope out potential transportation, environmental, safety and other community impacts.
2. Construct an overall infrastructure development plan to ensure community readiness.
 - a. Consider infrastructure issues (transportation, health, safety, parking, etc.).
 - b. Develop appropriate signage, including these:
 - o Historic markers
 - o New Lebanon "gateway" signage
 - o Tourism resource identification/guidance

- c. Establish community appearance guidelines to complement tourism efforts.
- 3. Ensure that Town zoning ordinances facilitate the support and development of businesses related to the Shaker theme and related tourism, e.g. Shaker arts and crafts, bed and breakfasts, and other relevant service and support organizations.

G. AGRICULTURE

New Lebanon's agricultural heritage and farmland vistas are central to its identity. Eighty-nine percent of the responses to a survey question ranked farmland as "important" to preserve. The themes of preserving New Lebanon's rural character and open space appear repeatedly in responses from the workshops and the survey.

New Lebanon should create a business environment that is supportive of farming. New Lebanon should integrate farmland protection and agricultural viability into future town economic development strategies. The Town can facilitate farm expansion or attraction of new types of farms by initiating discussions with the county Industrial Development Authority and other economic development organizations to seek ways to advance agricultural interests. When marketing the town or more aggressively pursuing economic expansion, the Town should make agriculture and its support industries a priority. The Town will also work to protect farmland that helps provide other scenic, environmental and cultural amenities--such as scenic views, important water resources or historic landscapes for its citizens.

Goal:

Encourage the preservation of existing farms and open farmlands and the creation of new economically viable farms.

Objectives:

- Encourage and aid in the continuation of existing farms
- Maintain the Town's rural character through active preservation of the open farmlands
- Preserve open spaces for future agricultural use
- Encourage the creation of new niche or hobby farms
- Ensure that agriculture and forestry operations do not negatively impact the environment

Strategies to Inform Landowners, Improve Communication and Encourage the Creation of New Farmland:

1. Review the existing agricultural assessment program in New Lebanon and work with eligible local landowners who are not currently taking advantage of the State agriculture assessment program. (In order to receive lower assessments on property taxes, \$10,000 in gross income must be earned from farming on a minimum of seven acres of farmland.) Work with local landowners to increase participation in programs such as these: the farm

building-exemption portion of the Real Property Tax Law, Section 483; NYS Farmers School Tax Credit; NYS 480A Program for Forestland; NYS Historic Barn Credit Program; the NYS Barn Rehabilitation Cost Share Program, and the 480-A program for woodlands. All eligible landowners should be encouraged to take advantage of these programs.

2. Appoint a volunteer who can serve as a liaison between federal, state, and local programs and local landowners to provide them with informational resources about options they may have related to agriculture.
3. Educate farmers and landowners about the GROW New York Program. This is a competitive grant program offered through New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to help farm businesses become more profitable. These include the Agriculture Research and Development Grants, Farmland Viability Grants, and Farmer's Market Development Grants. Grants are also available through New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to preserve barns and agricultural buildings.
4. Initiate and facilitate agricultural education programs to bring farmers and nonfarmers together via farm tours, brochures, news articles or use of other media outlets.

Strategies to Increase Farming Activity:

1. Offer additional locally sponsored property and building tax incentive programs that compensate farmers for protecting farmland. To implement this, the town should consider offering agricultural assessments to farmers who can show \$5000 or more gross income from farm activities on their land or who have 4 or more acres of farmland. This will allow those who may have "hobby" farms or smaller alternative farms to receive benefits for maintaining agricultural land.
2. Tap into the rising market of community support of agricultural operations (CSA's) and small/organic vegetable farms, and farmers markets. Seek technical assistance from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to explore mechanisms to attract these operations. Explore programs described in Appendix G. These are designed to help landowners take advantage of new, niche and emerging markets.
3. Support initiation of a centralized location in the Town center for a year-round local farmer's market. This should be located to capture some of the Routes 20 and 22 tourism traffic. A local farmer's market can recapture local money that is currently going to outside supermarket chains for produce purchases. Explore the year-round upscale farmer's market located in the Town of Livingston as a model. A Shaker farm

related products brand image might be used to develop a marketing theme for a local market.

Strategies to Help Protect Farmland:

1. Implement agricultural and farmland protection initiatives such as agriculture overlay zones, tax incentive programs and use of conservation easements toward blocks of viable farmland. In New Lebanon, these blocks coincide with the current agricultural district boundaries.
2. The Town will lower density in the agricultural areas (see Land Use Section and proposed land use maps), separating lot size from density, using clustering and conservation subdivisions, and designating hamlet areas for higher density and mixed uses. The suggested overlay zone can be used to trigger performance standards and other requirements that can protect farms.

A hamlet is a rural residential settlement that compactly accommodates development. Higher density is permitted in hamlet areas. A hamlet is characterized by a diversity of development options, including duplexes, townhouses, senior housing and mixed residential-commercial uses. The hamlet designation facilitates the construction of quality affordable housing. Hamlet zoning will define the types of retail or service uses allowed, with preference given to businesses that would serve the needs of the immediate community and will include specific standards for development within the hamlet overlay. The delineation between hamlet and other areas will help maintain New Lebanon's rural and small town character.

- a. Reconfigure zoning and lot sizes to move away from large-lot zoning and dependence on minimum lot sizes as the determining factor for density. Use of minimum lot sizes in the range currently found in New Lebanon is ineffective because it actually increases residential development and results in new lots too small for farming. See Land Use Section for proposed zoning alternatives.
- b. Offer developers of major subdivisions or commercial operations a density (refers to number of dwellings per area) bonus when they move or cluster new growth away from active, productive farmland. Density bonuses are authorized by NYS law and allow the Town to offer additional density in return for permanent farmland protection.

Should such an incentive be offered, NYS Town Law Section 261-b must be followed.

- c. Adopt amendments (such as clustering and conservation subdivisions) to the Town subdivision and zoning laws to allow innovative land use planning tools to steer development away from productive farmlands. See illustrations in Land Use Section.
 - d. Designate hamlets and require hamlet style development within them. Encourage higher density in and near the hamlets. This will provide efficient provision of public services and help reduce development pressure on surrounding farmland. Zoning and its requirements shall ensure that there is a clear designation between hamlet areas and countryside. A sharp delineation between countryside and hamlet will help maintain rural character.
 - e. Focus water and sewer in already developed areas. Location of infrastructure such as water and sewer can have profound impacts on where and how much development takes place. Land development typically follows infrastructure development. Hamlet areas should be the locations where these services are offered. Hamlet zoning districts should include “room to grow” and not allow infrastructure expansion beyond that district.
3. Review and amend Zoning Law to ensure the following:
- o Agricultural uses are allowed in more than one zoning district.
 - o Accessory uses for agriculture are carefully defined.
 - o Agriculture is broadly defined to include nurseries, horse arenas, Christmas tree farms, and greenhouses.
 - o The law does not inhibit farm use of properties such as farm stands, hobby farms, and agri-tourism activities.
4. Amend subdivision and/or site plan review laws to lessen the impact of new, non-farm development on agriculture by requiring new residential development to provide buffers between the structure and existing farms. Buffers are physical barriers between farm and non-farm uses. They may be strips of land (from 50 to 500 feet wide) planted in trees or shrubs. Buffers should be placed on new development rather than on neighboring farmland.

Tax Assessment Strategies:

1. Require town assessors to receive training on the real value of agricultural buildings and structures. Urge assessors to apply consistent principles in their assessment of farmland and farm structures and to apply “current use” standards to vacant farmland.
2. Require the town to offer lower assessments when conservation easements (of the type held by the Columbia Land Conservancy or other land trust organizations) have been placed on a property. The assessor will help implement state and federal laws which allow tax abatement for landowners seeking to preserve open space.

Other Local Strategies That Can Meet Agricultural Objectives:

1. Encourage Columbia County to develop a countywide “agriculture and farmland protection plan.” In the event that such a county plan is not adopted, seek approval from the NYS Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to accept this comprehensive plan as an officially accepted agriculture and farmland protection plan. In this way, New Lebanon can take advantage of future state and federal funding opportunities that are tied to locally adopted protection plans.
2. Adopt a “right to farm law.” Such a law will protect existing farmers from nuisance lawsuits. They also send a strong message that farming remains a prominent land use that the town is willing to protect. (See Appendix F for model).
3. Ensure that the Planning Board coordinates all reviews as required with the NYS Agriculture and Markets Law 25A (see Appendix G) and that impacts to agriculture are adequately reviewed during site plan review and whenever SEQRA is triggered.
4. Mitigate loss of farmlands during new development. During project review, SEQRA requires that potential impacts to agriculture be evaluated. Should the reviewing board determine that a project would have negative environmental impacts to farming in New Lebanon, consider mitigating this by requiring an equivalent quantity of productive farmland to be protected elsewhere. Such mitigation may be most appropriate for major subdivisions.

H. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Workshop participants, especially those attending the business workshop, noted that the location of the Town as a Gateway to the Berkshires is a positive attribute. They also made clear that, although the Town commercial center's location at the intersection of Routes 20 and 22 is a source of business and tourist trade, it also contributes to our high traffic counts in relation to our population. Developing safe, pedestrian-friendly traffic patterns, parking areas and speed limits were desires commonly expressed. There was strong workshop support for a more identifiable and pedestrian-friendly Town center. Reducing speed limits along the 20/22 corridor and building sidewalks were solutions proposed at the workshops.

Goal:

Maintain and improve the safety and functionality of the roadway infrastructure and promote opportunities for alternative means of public and private transportation.

Objectives:

- Improve safety in areas of high vehicle and pedestrian usage and ensure safe pedestrian access to areas of identified need
- Plan for changing traffic patterns and volumes and promote traffic access management techniques to control traffic congestion when new development occurs
- Ensure safe, adequate and accessible parking to meet commercial and public needs
- Promote opportunities for public transportation
- Promote scenic enhancement of roads and highways
- Design, build and maintain roads and parking lots consistent with rural road standards and small town character

Strategies to Improve Safety in Areas of High Vehicle and Pedestrian Usage and to Ensure Pedestrian Usage and Safe Access:

1. Work with New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) and the Columbia County Highway Department to obtain up-to-date traffic counts and speed data for major Town roadway corridors. This data will be important to formulate a foundation for development of long-term options to manage traffic.

2. Identify particularly hazardous traffic situations and develop remedies. Work with NYS DOT to explore methods that can be implemented to reduce speed, particularly in hamlets.
3. Consider use of traffic calming designs (including street-tree planting, on street parking, use of bulb-outs, modern roundabouts, and a center median with grass and trees), safe pedestrian crossings (including refuge islands), and construction of sidewalks focused on Routes 20 & 22 near the Town's civic and commercial center and schools. Maintain Routes 20 & 22 as two-lane roads and encourage use of traffic access management techniques instead of road widening and land additions.
4. Explore the opportunity to host and sponsor a SUNY Albany Department of Planning and Geography Design Studio Project focused on traffic issues within Town.
5. Work with the County Sheriff and local State Police Troop to enhance enforcement of speed limits. This effort should be focused on the Town center and school areas.
6. Develop alternative methods of transportation and routes to promote multi-modal transportation. This should include development of an off-road bicycle/pedestrian corridor focused on the old railroad bed (see Recreation Strategies).
7. Work with NYS DOT and Lebanon Valley Speedway to explore ways to improve traffic flows and pedestrian safety during events.

Strategies to Improve Traffic Patterns and Volumes, to Promote Traffic Access Management Techniques and to Control Traffic Congestion When New Development Occurs:

1. Develop an official map to identify locations for required shared access drives (use of shared access is most important in the hamlet areas along Routes 20 and 22).
2. Require development of road standards for a grid or modified grid pattern of side streets and service roads as part of a subdivision or site plan review or for future development within the hamlets.
3. Work with NYS DOT to limit curb cuts especially in the hamlet commercial areas. Limitation of curb cuts will improve traffic flow.

Strategies to Ensure Safe, Adequate and Accessible Parking to Meet Commercial and Public Needs:

1. Enhance parking standards through zoning to ensure not only that adequate parking is included as part of new development, but that parking standards are appropriate to rural and hamlet areas and contribute positively to the streetscape. Allow for on-street parking for new subdivisions.
2. Consider language that establishes basic parking standards with added flexibility to determine the amount of parking needed on a case-by-case basis.
3. Require the consideration of shared and linked parking areas between commercial developments in site plan review.

Strategies to Promote Opportunities for Public Transportation:

1. Work with NYS DOT, Columbia County, and U.S. Congressman's office to support extension of JARC (Job Access/Reverse Commute) bus services to New Lebanon as part of Federal Transit Administration funding.
2. Work with the Columbia County agencies to explore options to extend/increase service to New Lebanon for the elderly and disabled.
3. Develop designated bus stops to facilitate extension of Columbia County transit services as well as attract regional bus links to downtown Pittsfield and Albany.

Strategies to Promote Scenic Enhancement of Roads and Highways:

1. Identify scenic roadway corridors and specific scenic views from roadways (derived from community survey results and community input). Develop a viewshed analysis for locations defined as scenic. Designate those locations as locally significant scenic roads.
2. Establish guidelines for new development and construction for the siting of parking to the side and rear of commercial or light industry businesses consistent with other plan objectives. Large expanses of pavement should not be allowed to occur between the road and the building. Standards should be established for landscaping, screening, and lighting within parking lots to reduce their visual impact.
3. Pursue Hudson River Valley Greenway Scenic Byways designation.
4. Promote landscaping improvements along Routes 20 and 22.

Strategies to Design, Build and Maintain Roads and Parking Lots Consistent With Rural Road Standards and Small Town Character:

1. Develop a written protocol to determine under what circumstances and conditions unpaved town roads will be considered for paving. The protocol should include, at a minimum, considerations of cost, safety, maintenance issues, the preferences of adjoining residents and landowners, the importance of the road as a traffic connector; and the impact the decision will have on the Town's rural character. The Town will give adequate notice of paving proposals to adjoining residents, landowners, and the public and will provide an opportunity for their input.

I. RECREATION

Input received from the public indicated a clear interest in creating new and expanded recreational facilities that are in keeping with our community's natural setting and small town character. For example, survey respondents overwhelmingly favored the development of bicycle and hiking trails. Workshop participants stressed the need for an expanded playground and a youth center with indoor recreational facilities. The following strategies are aimed at putting those desires into action. They will directly benefit residents and provide appropriate attractions for tourists and newcomers.

Goal:

Expand recreation opportunities in keeping with the Town's rural nature and the "small town" character of its commercial center.

Objectives:

- Promote availability, with appropriate conditions, of multi-use trails for activities such as walking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding
- Protect and expand public access to fishing and boating resources of the Kinderhook and Wyomanock Creeks
- Expand existing Town Park facilities to provide safe childrens' play areas, such as winter skating rink, skateboard park, soccer fields and other improvements
- Encourage the development of indoor community facilities and programs for basketball, soccer, weight training, aerobics, skating and other activities
- Target areas in the Town's center (Routes 20/22 overlap) for commercial recreation such as bowling, skating rinks and a movie theater
- Provide safe and adequate parking and pedestrian access to recreational facilities

Strategies to Enhance Recreation Opportunities in the Town's Commercial Center and Vicinity:

1. Designate a Town Board Parks and Recreation Committee to coordinate recreation opportunities.
2. Develop a community recreation plan.

3. Identify commercial recreation businesses that might, with incentives, consider locating in New Lebanon. Ensure that any new zoning language in the hamlet areas allows for their establishment.
4. Develop a plan for municipal parking and pedestrian access improvements to support development of recreational opportunities in hamlets.
5. Identify priority properties adjacent to Shatford Park and Town schools that would be desirable to acquire for additional recreation space. Identify these properties within the community recreation plan and on land use and official maps. Seek advice from New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP) regarding parks acquisition funds for additional land.
6. Seek advice from NYS OPRHP to determine typical space needs and costs for desired facilities and improvements.
7. Prepare a plan for a multi-purpose / multi-age recreation center.
8. Continue to work with the school district to find ways to expand and build on programs using existing school district resources to benefit the broader community. Establish a standing recreation committee to facilitate this liaison and recruit volunteers to help organize and supervise activities. Explore opportunities to obtain NYS Department of Health physical activity promotion grants or technical assistance to support these efforts.
9. Identify funding sources to support development of a recreation needs and facilities plan. Possible sources to explore are our local legislative representative, NYS OPRHP grants, the Governors' Office for Small Cities and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal.
10. Identify recreational facilities or events where parking is inadequate and explore options for remediation. These might include use of adjacent open land for temporary parking during special recreational events, construction of sidewalks or pedestrian paths from nearby existing parking areas, and increased use of on street parking.

Strategies to increase and Enhance Trails for Walking, Biking, Cross-Country Running, Skiing and Snowmobiling:

1. Create a map that details official locations of all roads and infrastructure. On the map include undeveloped portions of the old railroad bed and key access points to it from public roads. This could serve as a potential recreational and safe walking route to Town facilities and businesses.

2. Seek state and federal grants to acquire easements to develop a trail making use of open portions of the old rail bed corridor. Work with utilities to explore options for trail uses along transmission line rights of way and along the rail bed.
3. Identify and map other appropriate potential recreational corridors, such as abandoned Town roads, for multi-use and hiking-only trails.
4. Work with NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation to identify potential corridors to link New Lebanon into the statewide snowmobile trail network. Seek designation of any existing local snowmobile trails to ensure eligibility for NYS OPRHP snowmobile grant program.
5. In cooperation with neighboring residents and landowners, acquire and develop one or two parking / trailhead areas that provide hiking access to the Pittsfield State Forest (MA) trail system and Taconic Crest Trail.
6. Promote and encourage use of the Columbia Land Conservancy Hand Hollow Recreation Area.

Strategies to Enhance Bicycle Touring:

1. Use examples of Red Hook (Dutchess County with Winnakee Land Trust) and Kinderhook in identifying and developing local bicycle routes along safe and inviting Town and County roads. Investigate creating a link to the Hudson Valley Bikeway. Working with the Columbia County and Town Highway Departments, use local land use planning tools and roads policies to maintain these routes as attractive, low volume / low speed corridors.
2. Work with NYS DOT to maintain the quality of the biking experience along Route 20, which is designated as State Bike Route 5 and connects to Bike Route 9 / Greenway Bike Trail.

Strategies to Enhance Fishing and Boating on Town Creeks:

1. Work with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) to identify potential additions to fishing easement corridors along the Wyomanock and Kinderhook Creeks and ensure adequate parking and access from public streets and sites.
2. Identify and seek to acquire land or easements for potential links between fishing access corridors and the old rail bed.

3. Identify areas of Kinderhook Creek with sufficient summer flow to allow potential canoe/kayak use and identify desirable parking, access, and launch points.

J. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Primary issues expressed in the public workshops and survey are a lack of a community center and a need for a more cohesive town center. A majority of respondents to the survey supported the creation of a sidewalk system to connect the Town center.

New Lebanon should recognize that by investing in public facilities, the Town can actively shape its future growth. The Town should make investments in infrastructure where growth is desired, and discourage it where growth is not desired.

Goal:

Provide convenient, safe facilities and maintain appropriate services that meet the needs of the community.

Objectives:

- Develop a multi-use community center, with emphasis on the needs of seniors and youth
- Provide well-designed facilities for local government, with adequate space for staff and public meetings and security for records and judicial proceedings
- Evaluate the need for residential trash collection and address, if deemed necessary
- Continue to maintain a safe Town road system with adequate staff and equipment (see Traffic and Transportation section)
- Promote the availability of a community-wide wireless telephone system
- Ensure continuation of effective emergency services and public safety
- Evaluate the need for municipal water and sewers, and address, if deemed necessary
- Ensure continued support of the Library
- Enhance communication between Town Government and residents

Strategies For an Effective and Coordinated Provision of Services:

1. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to further effective, efficient, and affordable provision of public services, including roads, emergency services, water, sewer, town hall, and library.

A **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** details plans for the construction, maintenance, improvement and replacement of physical systems in the community. All capital improvements shall be based on the CIP. These improvements and the CIP shall be consistent with growth patterns established in this Comprehensive Plan. It shall include a project list, map(s) where physical work is to occur, annual priorities, and offer a detailed budget. The CIP is generally developed for 5 years with an annual update.

Strategies for Developing Community Facilities:

1. Evaluate development of a recognized Town center. A Town center would promote a sense of community and provide a central gathering place for both community services and local government.
2. Develop user groups to help develop new public facilities. For example, senior citizens and youth should be involved in locating and planning any new facility for their use. Alternately, they should evaluate the benefits and costs of converting an existing building for this use.
3. Identify space and storage needs for Town government.
4. Ensure that the Town Hall can accommodate staff, public meetings, records and judicial proceedings. It should remain in a hamlet. It shall be an Americans With Disabilities Act accessible facility. Consider renovating or reusing existing structures for this purpose. However, if a new building is required ensure that the structure is designed and sited to be consistent with the hamlet and its historic architecture.
5. Consider including Library space in the planning of any new local government facility.

Strategies for Provision of Community Services That Meet the Service and Infrastructure Needs of the Community:

1. Initiate a study of municipal trash collection needs. Evaluate the need, costs, and program alternatives. If the study confirms the public perception of a need, initiate a municipal trash program that also includes recycling capability.

2. Evaluate the need for municipal water and sewer. Ensure that a cost/benefit study is included in infrastructure planning. The Town shall consider all available treatment options, including constructed wetlands, small package plants, decentralized management systems, biological treatments, and other technologies that are available.
3. Conduct a careful review of development projects in areas not served by some form of a central sewer. This shall include review of each proposed parcel and its soil characteristics. Site-specific soil conditions that might limit use of a conventional septic system should be evaluated and described and mitigation measures undertaken prior to approval.
4. Review/revise the local telecommunication tower law to control the siting, construction and modification of cellular and other wireless facilities. Cellular towers shall be sited where they will be the least intrusive on scenic views of ridgelines, viewsheds and historic locations. Consider using the GIS data developed for this plan to conduct a viewshed analysis of the town to identify tower location options and constraints. Develop a map that illustrates areas potentially suitable or unsuitable for siting towers. This will benefit both the community and the wireless industry by providing carriers with a clearer understanding of New Lebanon's expectations. (Additional guidance may be found in the New York State document titled Planning and Design Manual for the Review of Application for Wireless Telecommunication Facilities: A Practical Guide for Communities Managing Wireless Telecommunications Facilities Siting in New York State, March 2001, New York State Department of State.)
5. Continue to work with the Lebanon Valley Protective Association (LVPA) to support and facilitate an advertising and promotion campaign to recruit new volunteers. This effort could include placement of signs and banners around town in important and well-traveled locations, posting of public service announcements, and distributing materials that discuss the benefits of volunteering. Continue to contract with paid emergency departments to respond during off hours or as a backup.
6. Enhance communication between Town government and residents by establishing a town web site, community bulletin board, increasing local news coverage in the local newspaper, and by encouraging participation in local government meetings.

K. LAND USE

The primary goal voiced by the majority of survey respondents and workshop participants was to maintain New Lebanon's small town and rural character. Town Zoning Regulations form the framework for land use patterns and reflect the integration of the Goals and Objectives of this Comprehensive Plan. Land use tools can provide the methodology for guiding future development and defining alternatives in planning.

Uniform and equitable enforcement of the Town Zoning Regulations was also strongly supported by the public as necessary to ensure the implementation and continued use of this land use planning framework. Therefore, in addition to their inclusion in previous sections of this plan, these strategies are outlined here under the comprehensive and encompassing topic of Land Use.

Goal:

Land use patterns will promote reaching the 10 goals set forth in this Plan.

Objectives:

- Evaluate the existing zoning law for its compatibility with the Plan's Goals and Objectives
- Promote the achievement of the Goals and Objectives through amendments and additions to the zoning law.
- Employ land use tools to assist in achieving the Goals and Objectives
- Ensure that zoning regulations will be easily understood
- Ensure that the zoning laws will be enforced uniformly

Land use tools are concepts or methods used singly or in various combinations to help guide or plan development or changes within a community. These may include GIS maps, overlay zones, clustering, and site plan review.

Strategies to Ensure Compatibility of Zoning With the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Evaluate the existing zoning regulations for consistency with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
2. Amend zoning regulations as needed to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

3. Evaluate future amendments and/or additions to the Zoning law for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Implement the following districts:
 - a. For RA-5, RA-2, and RA-1, no changes will be made to the current definitions. The name of RA-5, "Residential Agricultural," will be changed to "Agricultural/Conservation" to encompass a wider definition for that category.
 - b. For C (Commercial), C-Rec (Commercial-Recreation) and M (Light Manufacturing) no changes are recommended to the use definitions, except as might be developed in the Economic Development effort.
 - c. A zoning district/overlay will be established, called Hamlet (H), with a higher permitted dwelling density that could include small retail establishments.
5. Establish the following overlays to guide zoning decisions:
 - a. Flood Zone Overlay, currently in existence
 - b. Hamlet Overlay (see Agriculture strategies)
 - c. Ridgeline and Hilltop Overlay (see Natural Resources strategies)
 - d. Historical Overlay (see Historical Resources strategies)
 - e. Agricultural Overlay (see Agriculture strategies)
 - f. Scenic Overlay (see Tourism strategies)
6. Establish densities, defined as dwellings per acre, for each residential zoning district, rather than minimum lot size.

Currently, minimum lot size determines the minimum area for a dwelling (for example, in RA-2 you would find 2 acre lots with 1 housing unit per lot). The Plan proposes that densities be used to specify how many units can be built on a parcel. For example, on a 20 acre parcel in RA-2, 10 housing units would be allowed, but they might be placed on 5 acres on the parcel, with the remaining 15 acres preserved as open space. Minimum lot size would need only be large enough to satisfy septic system/water requirements for the site. This approach allows more flexibility in development and allows for cluster development, better siting of housing, better use of the land, and the potential for preserving the rural landscape and open space. See Appendix I for an example.

7. Evaluate allowing density or area bonuses for developers and determine what level of bonus will be given. This should include detailed standards for the development.
8. For Commercial, Commercial-Recreation and Manufacturing zoned areas, there are no changes recommended to the use definitions. Density and maximum allowed building size in these non-residential zones should be reviewed by the Town Board.
9. Consider using an environmental control formula to better match allowable density to environmental site conditions. (See Appendix H for an example.)
10. Prohibit the expansion of non-conforming uses, and where appropriate, consider time limits for non-conforming uses.

Strategies to Encourage Economic Growth and Development Consistent With the Character of the Town:

1. Maintain provisions currently in zoning to allow use of Planned Unit Developments (PUD), but amend them to ensure that standards are consistent with the other recommendations and policies suggested in this Plan.

The intent of Planned Unit Development is to allow more flexibility in development than is available under the general zoning provisions, to provide for necessary commercial and recreational facilities, to provide for well-located, clean, safe and pleasant industrial sites involving a minimum strain on the environment. PUD's can be used to encourage innovations in residential, commercial and industrial development by allowing for greater variety in type, design and layout of buildings and by the conservation and more efficient use of open space near such buildings. Planned Unit Developments clearly outline the procedures required to relate the type, design and layout to the particular site and to encourage long term, integrated planning.

2. Require Site Plan Review, with clear standards, for all new commercial, manufacturing, major subdivisions, mobile home parks, and multifamily residential development. Include the illustrated design guidelines mentioned in other sections into the zoning and site plan review law.

A site plan is a rendering, drawing, or sketch prepared to specifications and containing necessary elements as set forth in the Zoning law. The site plan shows the arrangement, layout and design of the proposed use of a single parcel of land as shown. Elements which may be required include, where appropriate, those related to parking, means of access, screening, signs, landscaping, architectural features, location and dimensions of buildings, adjacent land uses, and physical features meant to protect adjacent land uses. The Board authorized to perform site plan review may reject, approve or set specific conditions for approval of the site plan.

3. Amend subdivision and zoning to allow for clustering and conservation subdivisions. (See Appendix I for illustrations.)
4. Specifically allow manufactured home parks only through a PUD procedure. Develop standards to guide development of such housing complexes to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the residents, to provide adequate emergency access, to provide screening, and to meet the goals of this plan.
 - a. Allow temporary manufactured homes to be placed during construction for a set amount of time only.
 - b. Allow new single-wide manufactured homes only in manufactured home parks.

A manufactured home is a structure that is transportable in one or more sections. In traveling mode, the home is eight feet or more in width and forty feet or more in length. A manufactured home is designed and constructed to the Federal Manufactured Construction and Safety Standards and is so labeled. The term “mobile home” refers to a factory built housing unit built prior to June 15, 1979, the effective date of the federal standards.

Strategies for Clarity, Accountability and Greater Efficiency in Zoning Regulation for Land Use:

1. Ensure that zoning regulations are clearly written and easily understood.

2. Ensure that each use specified in the Use Table is adequately defined.
3. Ensure that each use specified as needing a special use permit has a comparable section detailing the standards and requirements for that use.
4. Ensure that enforcement of zoning and of site plan review is equitable, consistent, and supports the goals and objectives of both the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Law. Instruct the Zoning Enforcement Officer to regularly review ongoing compliance with permitted special uses, sign regulations, and site plan review conditions.
5. This plan will be re-evaluated after ten years.