

**POUGHKEEPSIE TOWN PLAN**

**and**

**Final Generic  
Environmental Impact Statement**

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**Town of Poughkeepsie, New York**

Adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Poughkeepsie  
September 26, 2007

# POUGHKEEPSIE TOWN PLAN

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# SECTION I INTRODUCTION

## Regional Setting

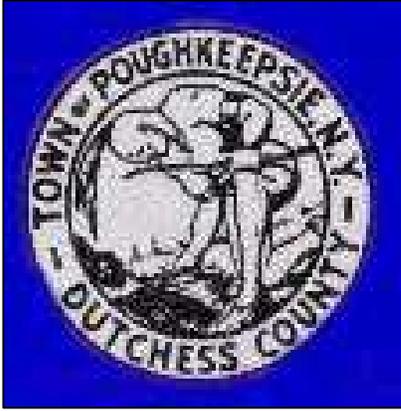
The Town of Poughkeepsie is located on the eastern shore of the Hudson River in Dutchess County, midway between Albany and New York City. The Town surrounds the City of Poughkeepsie on all sides except the west, where it borders the Hudson River and Ulster County. It is a primarily suburban community, but has a more mixed-use character in the areas that surround the City of Poughkeepsie. Approximately 44,000 residents live within the Town's nearly 20,000 acres or 31 square miles, not including the Town's portion of the Village of Wappingers Falls. Other bordering municipalities are Hyde Park to the north, Pleasant Valley to the northeast, LaGrange to the east, and the Town of Wappinger and Village of Wappingers Falls to the east and south.

In planning a community's future it is important to understand the regional context. While town borders may be politically significant, they are often geographically meaningless; development impacts and natural systems ignore borders. Development in the Town of Poughkeepsie, for example, was fueled by its proximity to the City of Poughkeepsie and IBM.

## Historic Overview

The Town and City of Poughkeepsie share a common history. Until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Wappinger Indians were the principal inhabitants of the area. Historians agree that the name "Poughkeepsie" comes from the Wappinger phrase for a spring where Indians gathered and wove lodges from the abundant cat-tail reeds, and that it refers to a place on the banks of the Hudson River near what is now the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, just south of the City. The Indians called





their meeting place "uppuqui" (oo-poo-kee) meaning "lodge covered" plus "ipis" meaning "little water" plus "ing" meaning "place": the Reed-covered Lodge by the Little Water Place. Uppuqui-ipis-ing became Apokeepsing, which became Poughkeepsing, and finally Poughkeepsie.

Henry Hudson's explorations of the region in 1609 laid the initial Dutch claim to the territory. In 1664, this claim was transferred to England. By 1683, Dutchess County became one of the twelve original counties of the province of New York and the second county in New York State. The County originally contained all of the present Dutchess, Putnam, and part of Columbia Counties. Although the mouth of the Wappinger Creek was originally settled in 1680, initial development of the Town was slow and took place along the streams and in the present City area. Growth was spurred by the construction of a north/south road through the County in the early 1700s, which became the King's Highway and later the Albany Post Road, now Route 9.

Poughkeepsie was from the beginning the center of government for Dutchess County. The Town, which included what is now the City and the Town of Poughkeepsie, became the County seat in 1717. By 1720 the first courthouse and jail were completed, and the current County Courthouse exists on the site of the original courthouse. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the population of the Poughkeepsie Precinct continued to grow at a respectable rate, with the commercial, political, and social life of the area concentrated around Main and Market Streets.

The fortunes of war brought Poughkeepsie into unexpected prominence. With New York City occupied by the British in 1776 and Kingston burned in October of 1777, the state government established its capital in Poughkeepsie, where it remained for most of the



*Delegates to the New York Ratification Convention at the Dutchess County Courthouse Approving the Proposed United States Constitution on July 26, 1788.  
(Source: Poughkeepsie Post Office)*

next six years. The ratification of the Constitution of the United States by the State of New York, the most important historic event in the Town's history, took place in 1788.

Also in the year 1788, Poughkeepsie Township was formed by an act of the legislature. In 1799 the Village of Poughkeepsie was incorporated, its boundaries the same as the existing City boundaries with the exception of the Eighth Ward, which was annexed by the City from the Town in 1929.

As the Village grew in stature and its population increased, agitation for a city charter commenced. By 1855, the Village's resident numbered 12,763 compared to the Town's 3,110. Yet the Village was dependent upon the Town for protection, new streets, and schools. The secession took place in 1855 and the Village became a city.



changed to East Poughkeepsie and later Arlington.

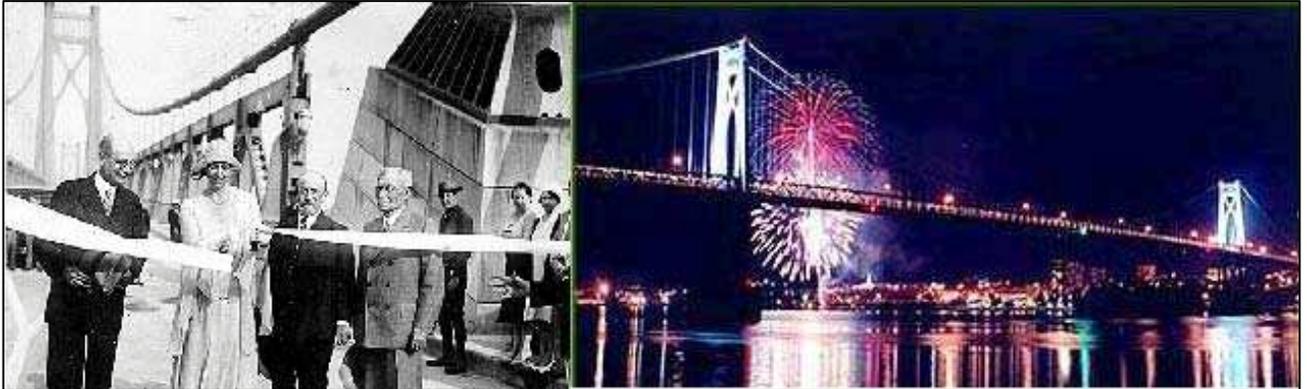
Following the separation, the Town continued to grow. Vassar College was established in 1861 and opened in 1865 with 353 students. The College contributed greatly to the development of the Arlington District, then called Bulls Head, a name originating from the cattle auctions held there. The name was subsequently

Other Town hamlets were developing during this period. "New Hamburg" had a population of 339 in 1860. Channingville, near Wappingers Falls, had a grist mill, two churches and 50 houses. Rochdale had two cotton mills and 15 houses, while Manchester contained a dozen houses and a paper mill. The Fairview District developed at a later date with the coming of industry in the neighborhood. The



Hudson River State Hospital was established by the State Legislature in the Fairview District. When opened in 1871, the institution had 60 patients, but 100 years later the number had reached 4,400.

By the turn of the century, Poughkeepsie was the heaviest populated and most important town in Dutchess County. Industrial development began, mostly in the Fairview District, where many manufacturing plants located, and Marist College opened in 1929. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the increasing availability of the automobile began to change the landscape of Poughkeepsie. With many residents enjoying the benefits afforded by personal transportation, Poughkeepsie undertook numerous infrastructure improvements designed to accommodate automobile traffic. One of the most significant transportation improvements in Poughkeepsie was the construction of the Mid-Hudson Bridge, completed in 1930.



*Left: Eleanor Roosevelt, at that time the First Lady of New York, cutting the ribbon opening the Mid-Hudson Bridge in 1930. (Source: New York State Bridge Authority.)  
Right: Mid-Hudson Bridge Today (Source: City of Poughkeepsie)*

During World War II, the economic potential of the Town, with its valuable industrial sites, available labor force, accessibility to main highways and railroads, and proximity to New York City, was discovered. In 1941, IBM opened the Munitions Manufacturing Corporation on the South Road, and in 1942 it was merged with IBM. The work force was approximately 50 people in the plant's 30,000 square feet. At the end of the war, Poughkeepsie became the center for electric typewriter production, to which were added bombing and navigational systems for the U.S. Air Force in 1952. By the mid-1950s, emphasis was on research and development, with the completion of the laboratory on Boardman Road. In 1961 the production of computers began. By the 1970s, the number of employees at the company's plants in Poughkeepsie numbered 12,000 and the plant had grown to 2.3 million square feet.



*Manufacturing Employees at IBM's Poughkeepsie Plant in 1940  
(Source: IBM)*

Following World War II, automobiles and improved roads made suburban living a possibility for increasing numbers of people. From the 1950s to the 1970s, while the population of the City was declining, the Town was experiencing unprecedented growth. New housing, schools and shopping centers consumed much of the Town's farmland.

During the 1980s, several large corporations and factories closed their operations in the Town of Poughkeepsie, resulting in a significant negative impact on the economic development of the Town. A nation-wide economic downturn continued into the 1990s. This impact was exacerbated locally by a reorganization of IBM which resulted in a significant downsizing in the early 1990s.

Despite this economic downturn, the mid to late 1990s brought a diversification of employment opportunities as many businesses rushed to fill the gap left by these large corporations and take advantage of the Town's resources and employment base. The Town's economy became more diversified, with education, healthcare and retail and high-tech industries gaining importance.

Recent events have had a profound impact on residential development in the region. As a result of the events of September 11, 2001, some New York City residents have been choosing to locate in other parts of New York State. Counties like Dutchess, which have convenient transportation connections to New York City as well as local employment opportunities, have been the focus of increased residential interest and development. Combined with a nation-wide housing boom fueled by historically low interest rates, the Town is facing great development pressure.

### **History of the Planning Process**

In 1957, the Town of Poughkeepsie adopted a *Development Plan*, prepared by George M. Raymond Associates Planning Consultants. This plan not only provided the initial dialogue regarding the nature of regional planning, but also discussed the necessity for regular plan updates and the need for community participation in those updates. A planning analysis described demographic trends in comparison to the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County and predicted a continued population increase as a result of IBM and DeLaval expansions, combined with the then recently completed New York State Thruway and automation of the area's industry.

A Physical Development Plan targeted reforms necessary in several categories, including traffic circulation (citing the need for several by-pass corridors), the Arlington Business District, and current zoning and land use. Additionally, a Comprehensive Recreation Plan detailed existing and proposed recreational facilities for the Town.

Existing Town conditions were described with respect to nine distinct neighborhoods - the Bedell Road Area, Cottam Hill, New Hamburg, Red Oaks Mill, Red Oaks Mill South, Rochdale, Spackenkill, Fairview, and Arlington.

In 1971 the Town adopted *The Development Plan for the Town of Poughkeepsie*, prepared by Brown and Anthony, City Planners in cooperation with Matthew J. Delany, City Planners. Similar to the 1957 *Development Plan*, this document used an examination of existing conditions and determination of future needs to develop a future Development Plan.

While the 1957 Plan discussed the availability and suitability of developable lands in a more general sense, the 1971 Plan included a map overlaying vacant lands with steep slopes, floodplains, and lands already developed. This plan also identified the Hamlet Concept as the preferred development pattern, based upon public consensus. The purpose of the Hamlet Concept was to “establish a sense of neighborhood within the framework of the Town”, with commercial development concentrated in hamlets near higher-density housing. In addition to Arlington, which was the well-established Town Center, the hamlets were identified as Fairview, Rochdale, Red Oaks Mill, South Road, New Hamburg and Wappingers Falls.

The 1971 plan contained an in depth traffic and transportation analysis outlining several proposals for transportation improvements from the State and County that would significantly impact the Town, including the east/west arterials. In conjunction with recommendations for a number of transportation corridors to facilitate the flow of traffic through the Town, a pedestrian circulation plan recommended sidewalks throughout the Arlington, Fairview and Red Oaks Mill neighborhoods.

The 1971 plan also provided the first recognition of historic resources, addressed in an “Esthetic Characteristics Map & Analysis”. In addition to a number of important historic sites, the map and analysis identify several areas of natural beauty and outline their importance to the community. The plan also recognized the “great potential” of the boathouses along Regatta Row, and the importance of acquiring the Hudson River State Hospital lands along the river to improve public access to the river as well as help to create a county-wide riverfront park system.

The *Town of Poughkeepsie Master Plan*, prepared by Stuart Turner and Associates, was adopted by the Town of Poughkeepsie in 1990. The overall goals include maintaining the quality of residential neighborhoods, enhancing the Town’s natural environment, providing greater access to the Hudson River, improving the Town’s aesthetic characteristics, and fostering controlled economic growth that enhances the tax base and provides employment opportunities. Similar to previous plans, existing conditions within the Town are identified with respect to distinct neighborhoods. While the 1957 Plan recognized nine neighborhoods and the 1971 Plan recognized four neighborhoods, the 1990 Plan recognizes a total of six neighborhoods within the Town – Arlington, the Route 9 Corridor, Red Oaks-Spackenkill, Southwest – New Hamburg, Fairview, and Northeast – Rochdale.

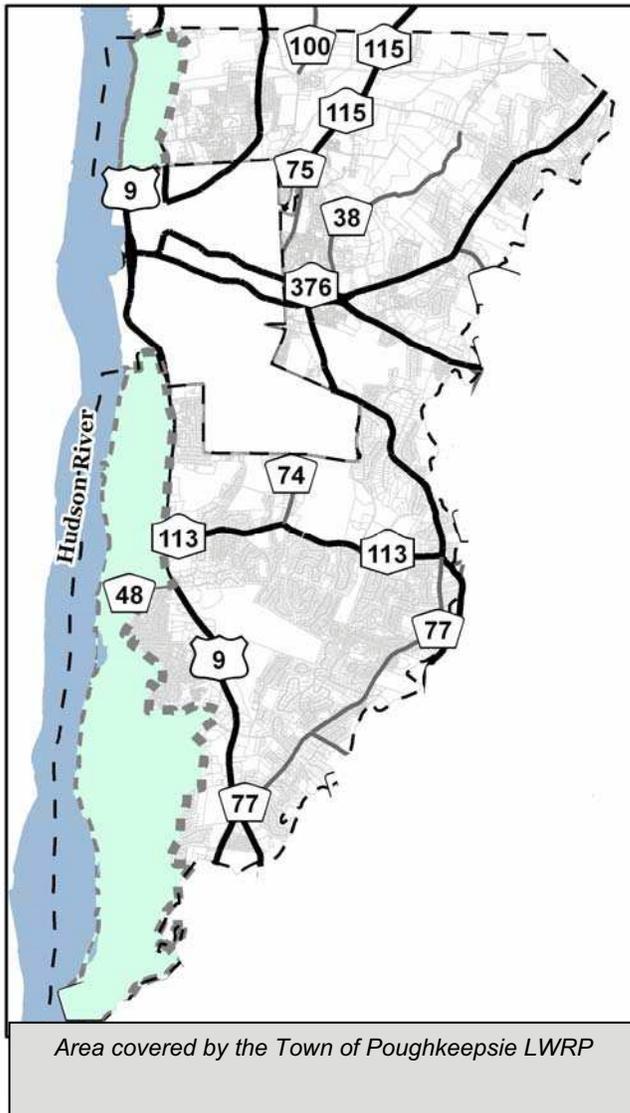
In 1994, the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council (PDCTC) adopted its *Transportation Plan*. Based on past transportation plans for the area dating from the 1940s, this plan contains a series of recommendations designed to maintain existing

infrastructure, provide new transportation capacity, and manage existing metropolitan systems more effectively. In 1998, the PDCTC adopted a *Transportation Plan Update*. This update addresses all forms of transportation and makes recommendations regarding any improvements or changes that should be implemented. This update also includes an air quality analysis and discusses notable projects in the county.

A *Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)* was adopted by the Town of Poughkeepsie in 1999. This Plan addresses 8.5 miles of waterfront on the Hudson River and two miles on Wappinger Creek. Due to the topography of the land, the rail line and commercial and industrial uses on the waterfront, public access has been limited. Several

businesses and institutions including the Hudson River Psychiatric Center, Marist College, Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, IBM and New York Trap Rock quarry occupy large sites which further limit both physical and visual access to the Hudson River. This plan will incorporate the policies and recommendations of the LWRP wherever applicable.

A report titled *The Arlington District: A Vision for Revitalization* was developed in 2000 for Vassar College and the Arlington Revitalization Committee to create a new vision for Arlington that incorporates strategies that produce better public spaces. Presently, the New York State Department of Transportation is developing a plan to reduce the number of lanes going through Arlington as well as a number of traffic calming devices. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements will also be addressed.



In 2000, the Town joined the Greenway Compact Program by adopting *Greenway Connections* as a supplement to its zoning code and subdivision regulations. The Greenway is a State-sponsored regional planning framework designed to enhance the character and economy of the 13 counties bordering the Hudson River. As of 2005, 27 of the 30 Dutchess County communities

have voluntarily joined the Greenway Compact and agreed to work toward intermunicipal cooperation, without forfeiting any of their local decision-making powers. The primary goals of the Greenway Program are 1) Natural and Cultural Resource Protection; 2) Economic Development; 3) Public Access; 4) Regional Planning; and 5) Heritage and Environmental Education. The Greenway Guides included in *Greenway Connections* provide a toolbox of specific methods of preserving the landscape, building successful communities, and creating connections. One of the primary objectives of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan Update is to make the plan and zoning law consistent with the LWRP and Greenway principles and guides.

## SECTION II PLANNING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Community Involvement

The Town of Poughkeepsie began the process of updating the 1990 Master Plan by forming a committee comprised of Town Board and Planning Board members, Town staff members and citizen volunteers. This committee was separated into several subcommittees, each charged with developing goals and recommendations for individual elements of the updated Comprehensive Plan. Through numerous visioning sessions, workshops, and organizational meetings, the subcommittees were able to identify existing strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities within the Town with respect to each Comprehensive Plan element. From this identification, subcommittee members were then able to define goals and recommendations targeted at addressing the current conditions within the Town.



The underlying basis for this plan is the shared values and goals of the community, as expressed in several public meetings held throughout the Town in preparation for this plan. In addition, a survey of public opinion was conducted. This survey, entitled *Looking Toward the Future; A Survey of Public Opinion in the Town of Poughkeepsie, New York*, was conducted by the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion in 2002. The following is an overview of the public opinions expressed in this survey:

#### Quality of Life

Most residents rate the overall quality of life in their communities positively, they feel that the quality of life has remained the same or improved over the past five years, and they feel safe walking, biking or jogging in their communities. A majority of Town residents would like to see a neighborhood center with small businesses, along with a post office, library or park where community and cultural events could be held.

#### Economic Growth

Residents feel that the best way to encourage economic growth in the Town is to increase tourism by restoring historical and cultural landmarks, and the next best way is to develop recreational opportunities. Residents are divided on whether the development of new homes is a good way to encourage economic growth, and are similarly divided on the issue of developing manufacturing or industrial parks. Residents feel that the least desirable way to encourage economic growth is

through the development of shopping centers and mini malls, and a majority of residents feel that more retail business and shopping would not be good for their community.

#### Affordable Housing, Open Space and Taxes

Most residents feel that there is a need for more affordable housing, especially affordable housing for senior citizens. However, given a choice between increasing affordable housing and keeping taxes down, most residents would rather keep taxes down. Also, given a choice, most residents would choose to protect open space over increasing affordable housing. While a majority of residents would choose to protect open space over encouraging economic growth, residents would choose to keep taxes down over protecting open space.

#### Transportation

Most residents feel that traffic congestion is a problem, and that there is a need to improve the roads in their communities. The most popular solution to traffic congestion is increasing public transportation, followed by building new roads to better connect subdivisions or neighborhoods.



*Comprehensive Plan Open House  
(Source: The LA Group)*

Once a preliminary set of goals and recommendations had been defined, an open house was scheduled on November 18, 2002 to present the committee's findings to the community. The strong public input gained from this forum helped to refine the proposed goals and recommendations and determine a shared community vision.

Based upon all of the data assembled and public opinion gathered during this process, an initial draft comprehensive plan was submitted in 2004. This draft plan and all of the background data and surveys are available for review at

the Town Hall. In addition, demographic data will be regularly updated and will be available at the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. The Town chose to use the wealth of information compiled in this background material as the basis for a more concise final Poughkeepsie Town Plan that will focus on policy recommendations and more specific planning strategies for particular areas of the Town.

Through an analysis of existing conditions, a set of goals and recommendations based on these conditions, and a strategy in place to achieve these goals and recommendations, the Town of Poughkeepsie now has the tools necessary to advance the planning process and achieve their vision for the future of the community.



*Comprehensive Plan Open House  
(Source: The LA Group)*

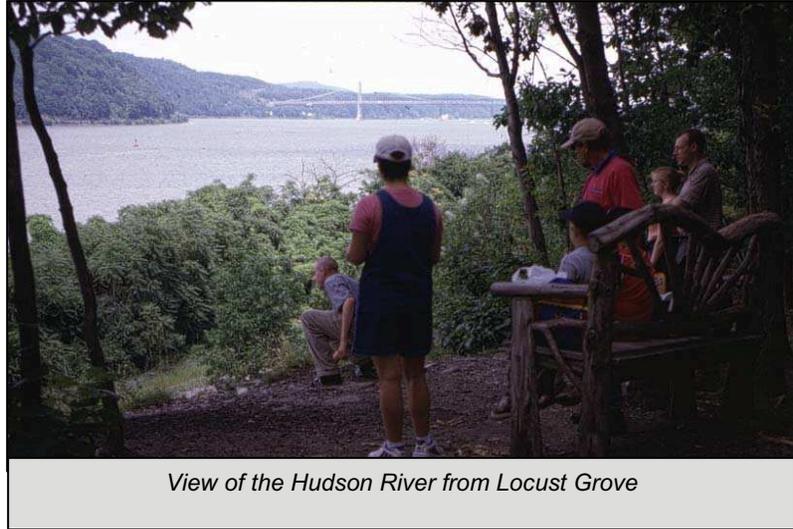
## **Policy Recommendations**

- 1.1 The Town should encourage the widest possible participation in the governmental process to ensure that everyone's concerns are heard. Some techniques to encourage public involvement include:
  - Regular press releases in addition to legal notices to announce agendas of meetings and events;
  - Candidate or community issue forums in the Wards;
  - Weekend walkabouts with local representatives to discuss problems or development proposals;
  - Expanded cable and radio coverage of town meetings and events;
  - Provide updated information on the Town's website.
- 1.2 The Town should support the formation of neighborhood associations and other local interest groups as a way of identifying collective concerns and organizing community involvement.
- 1.3 Town properties, such as the Town Hall and parklands, should be available as centers for community-wide service activities.
- 1.4 Major gateways to the Town and historic hamlet areas should create a distinct and positive visual impression with better landscaping and thematic signs that define the entrances and help generate a sense of community identity and pride.
- 1.5 The Town should ensure that lead agencies implementing the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) produce documents understandable to the general population, provide full opportunity for public comments and consider project alternatives that are compatible with the existing community character.
- 1.6 To continue encouraging public involvement in the planning review process, the Town should require:
  - Public comments as part of the site plan review procedures;

- Posting of notice signs on properties that are the subject of planning and zoning actions;
  - Mailing of public notices to neighboring owners of properties that are subject to proposed planning and zoning actions; and
  - Applicants proposing major developments to submit all SEQRA and other application information in electronic format so it can be posted on the Town website or be otherwise made available to the public.
- 1.7 The Town Board should appoint a committee at least every five years after adoption to review and recommend amendments to this plan in conjunction with resident forums on current planning issues.

## 2. Natural Environment and Greenspace

The Town of Poughkeepsie is rich in remaining natural resources and open space or “greenspace”, even though suburban development has been fragmenting natural systems into separate house lots and commercial strip development since the 1960s. One of the Town’s most significant natural features is the Hudson River. The Wappinger Creek, Casperkill Creek and Fallkill Creek also flow through the Town. Other resources include wetlands and other water bodies, smaller streams, floodplains, steep slopes, significant plant and wildlife habitats, mature woodlands and other greenspaces, including some farm land - all of which feed our aquifers. These natural resources are indicated on Map 1 - Natural Features, and Map 2 – Water Features.



Although the Town is the most populous municipality in Dutchess County and much of its land area is already built upon, the Centers and Greenspace Plan (Section III) shows that there is still a significant amount of undeveloped land in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Some of this land is permanently preserved; however, the bulk of the undeveloped land remains unprotected. While much of this land has significant natural constraints that make development more difficult and expensive, increasing development pressure is threatening these natural resource areas because they are not adequately protected. The preservation of these features, and in some cases the provision of access to them for public use and enjoyment, would greatly enhance the quality of life of Town residents.



The preservation of natural features received overwhelming endorsement from Town residents in the various public input forums. The Town has demonstrated its commitment to preserving its natural resources through the recent acquisition of

Peach Hill and the adoption of an Aquatic Resource Protection Law in 2003. The Town

also has an active Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC), a group of Town Board-appointed residents who volunteer by advising the Town Board and Planning Board on a variety of environmental issues relating to development within the Town.

The Town can further its commitment to preserving greenspace by establishing a funding mechanism for the purchase of land or development rights. There are a number of grant programs available to help municipalities preserve greenspace, but many of these funds require a matching contribution from the community. The Town Board should consider ways to establish a fund which would enable the Town to take advantage of these available resources.

While continued development in the Town is anticipated, the goals stated in this section will help foster an even greater appreciation of the Town's natural resources and will help enable the Town to further its protection measures while allowing for growth in appropriate places. Additional strategies for preserving greenspace are outlined in Section III - Centers and Greenspace Plan.

### **Policy Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Town's greenspace systems should be preserved in part by concentrating development in and around designated centers areas. Within the centers, greenway systems should be identified and landscape design standards used to link to the surrounding natural areas. Outside of the centers, zoning and design guidelines should be used to preserve contiguous areas of greenspace and reduce development densities. The Greenway Guides in Sections A and D of the Greenway Connections should be consulted during the development process. These guidelines outline strategies for preserving greenspace, water quality, and creating connections.
- 2.2 The Town should adopt measures to preserve the priority greenspace parcels that are specifically targeted for preservation on the Centers and Greenspace Plan. Lower density and conservation zoning techniques, clustering regulations, transfer or purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and other tools for preserving greenspace should be enacted for these areas, and the Town should consider ways to establish a funding mechanism to help preserve priority greenspaces. Allowing increased development densities within the Centers would off-set the potential effects of regulations that would preserve open space and limit development densities in the greenspace areas.
- 2.3 The Town should adopt regulations requiring that a clearly identified open space system that reflects the goals of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan be part of every major site plan or subdivision proposal. Whenever possible, this open space system should be linked to form continuous greenspace corridors. Natural corridors should be particularly encouraged along streambeds and wetlands to provide open space, wildlife habitat, and groundwater protection.

2.4 The Town should preserve its biodiversity by identifying and protecting important wildlife habitats, rare or endangered plant communities and other significant environmental areas. Although some protection is provided through the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process, a biodiversity study should be conducted to allow the Town and potential developers to have more information and to have it in the beginning of any development process. This information should also be used by the Town to help determine whether certain areas should be targeted for preservation.

2.5 The Town should strengthen its Aquatic Resources Protection Law, including a “no net loss” policy, and should examine the practicality of a “no loss” policy, for regulated wetlands, to require an applicant for an Aquatic Resources Permit to mitigate any unavoidable loss of wetlands by providing at least the same amount of wetland area on-site if possible, or alternatively on another site within the Town. In addition, the Town should periodically examine the adequacy of wetland, stream, and water body buffer setbacks to determine whether they are actively functioning as protection for these resources.



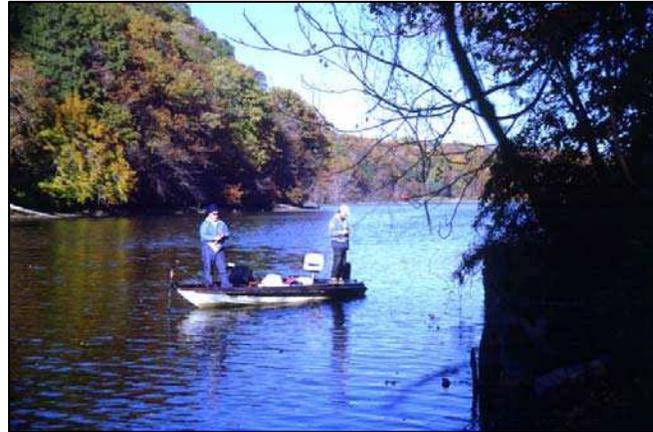
2.6 The Town should improve public access to the Hudson River. Potential new access points should be identified, and existing access should be improved. Specific examples include Quiet Cove Park (to be maintained by Dutchess County on the former Hudson River Psychiatric Center waterfront), the Dutton Lumber parcel, Longview Park at Marist College, and possibly land at the end of Sand Dock Road, railroad land at Pirate Canoe Club Road north of IBM North 100, and the oil storage site in New Hamburg.

2.7 The Town should actively pursue, as a high priority, the establishment of a continuous Hudson River Greenway Trail which connects to Greenway Trails in the City of Poughkeepsie, the Town of Hyde Park and the Town of Wappinger for active and passive recreational use.

2.8 The Town should also protect the natural environment of the Hudson River Shore area. In 1999, the Town of Poughkeepsie adopted a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, and as a result, state, federal and local actions within the Town’s waterfront area are to be undertaken in a manner consistent with the provisions of this LWRP.

2.9 The Town should work toward preserving and acquiring access to the Wappinger Creek, Casperkill Creek and Fallkill Creek corridors for public access whenever possible. Land along the creeks should be obtained through cooperative efforts with landowners, preservation groups, adjacent municipalities, and Dutchess County. As opportunities arise, land or easements along stream corridors should be acquired during the development process. Lands along both sides of these creeks should be made part of a greenbelt system, linking to larger open space areas.

2.10 The quality of the Wappinger Creek and underlying aquifer must be protected. In order to provide adequate protection, however, an inventory of surface waters and ground waters must be created. The Town has signed the Intermunicipal Agreement for the Wappinger Creek Watershed, and the goals outlined within that agreement should be actively pursued. These goals include mapping stormwater discharge points, protecting and restoring forest buffers, identifying sprawl-inducing code regulations, and minimizing the creation of impervious surfaces.



*The Wappinger Creek is a valuable environmental and recreational resource*

2.11 The Town should promote a land use pattern that protects surface and groundwater resources and important aquifer recharge areas while working to eliminate or minimize sources of pollution. Enacting and enforcing measures to control soil erosion and sedimentation from construction sites and established uses will help achieve this goal and will help bring the Town into compliance with the mandatory NYSDEC Phase II Stormwater Regulations.

2.12 The Town Board should adopt regulations to govern development on land with slopes of 20 percent or more, especially slopes in proximity to wetlands, waterbodies, and watercourses, in order to protect these areas whose soils are especially vulnerable to erosion and to minimize the disturbance of natural drainage patterns. This should include consideration of a tree preservation law to prevent the clear cutting of land and the resultant disruption of the local watershed.

2.13 The Town should identify its priority scenic viewpoints and adopt regulations to protect these areas. The Town should also develop a cooperative relationship with adjacent municipalities to minimize visual impacts on important scenic areas, particularly the Hudson River viewshed, including the Wappinger Creek,

resulting from development both within and outside of the Town of Poughkeepsie.

- 2.14 The Town should consider designating additional Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's). There are currently five CEA's within the Town: Schatz Federal Bearing, Page Industrial Park, Dutchess Sanitation (FICA), Wappinger Creek and Wappinger Lake. The CEA designation, authorized under SEQR, provides that greater scrutiny be given to all proposed actions subject to environmental review. It is meant to raise awareness of those natural and cultural resources that are most important to the Town due to their benefits or threats. Some examples include public water supplies, aquifers, flood hazard areas, hazardous waste sites, significant plant or animal habitats, unique or exemplary geological formations, scenic areas, landmarks and historic districts, and research areas. The mapped greenspace areas should be considered for additional analysis to determine whether they meet CEA designation criteria.

### 3. Historical, Archaeological & Cultural Resources

The Town of Poughkeepsie, part of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, is rich in historic and cultural assets. These resources contribute to the character of the Town and the neighborhoods in which they exist, and have great importance to many of the people that live there. Historic and cultural sites, indicated on Map 3 – Historic Resources, are also important when viewed as an attraction for potential tourists. The results of 2002 Marist Survey of Public Opinion indicate that the majority of Town residents feel that the best way to encourage economic growth in the Town of Poughkeepsie is to increase tourism by restoring historical and cultural landmarks.



*Samuel F.B. Morse Historic Site (Locust Grove)  
National Landmark  
(Source: Samuel Morse Historic Site)*

#### Historic Preservation

There are at least 25 structures in the Town that are listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, four of which are also designated National Historic Landmarks. In addition, the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development conducted a windshield survey of the historically significant properties in the Town of Poughkeepsie as part of a county-wide project in 1986. As a result of this survey, 89 properties that met the standards of the State Historic Preservation Office were documented, a list of which is available at the Town Historian's Office. These sites were determined to merit further historic research toward local landmark designation or possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Since then, the Town has designated eight Local Landmarks and has added at least 25 other sites to the County's list of historically significant properties.

The Town has an active Historic Preservation Commission, which was enacted in 1995 when the Town adopted legislation establishing the Commission and outlining standards for the designation of landmarks and modification of landmarks (Town of Poughkeepsie Code, Chapter 126). It is this Commission which made recommendations to the Town Board that resulted in the designation of the eight Local Landmarks. This designation has saved some of these properties from almost certain demolition. The Commission is continuing to review the list of historically significant properties to determine which should be considered for Local Landmark status or State and/or National Register designation.

Currently, many historic documents and artifacts relating to the Town are scattered between the libraries, the Town Hall, and various other storage places. This includes

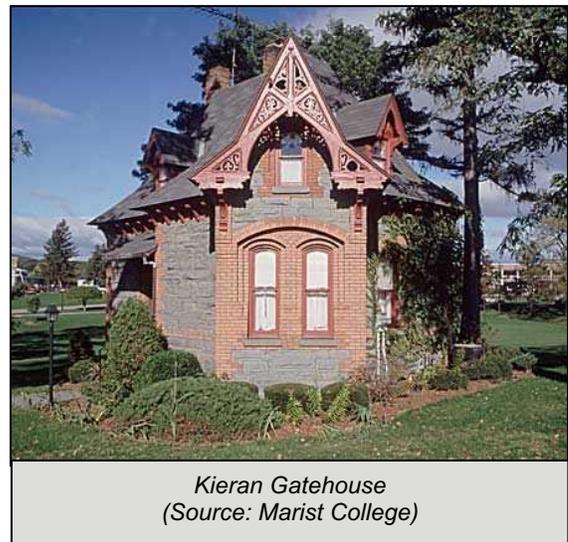
three 17<sup>th</sup> century books chronicling Town government and school records. Restoring and reassembling these items in a visible public location within the Town would help to educate the public about the history of the Town and raise awareness of the value of preserving our heritage. Other methods of educating residents and visitors about local historic and cultural sites should be considered, such as guided historic walking tours and maps, a historic resources page on the Town's website, and better identification of the historic sites through a sign program, for example.

### **Archaeological Resources**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has identified a number of archaeological sites in Poughkeepsie. These sites appear to be predominantly Indian community sites and fields. Additionally, there are several sites of prehistoric significance. Since these sites are considered sensitive, their locations are not publicly identified.

### **Cultural Resources**

The Town of Poughkeepsie has a variety of cultural resources available, several of which are also sites of historical importance. These include three colleges: Marist College, Vassar College, and Dutchess Community College, which are also discussed in the Educational Resources section. In addition to a multitude of cultural opportunities provided by these facilities, including visual and performing arts, libraries, continuing education and guest lectures, they also have historically significant campuses. Marist College has three buildings currently listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Greystone dates to 1865 and is currently the office of the college president.



Kieran Gatehouse also dates to 1865 and served as the gatehouse for the original estate purchased in 1905. St. Peter's, also built in 1865, houses administrative offices for the College. Vassar College's Main Building, designated a National Landmark, was the original college building when Vassar opened and now houses administrative offices and student housing. The Vassar College Observatory, constructed in 1865, is also listed as a National Landmark. Many other buildings on campus have historical significance as well.

There are also a variety of fine arts resources located within the Town. The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, located at Vassar College, is one of the largest galleries in the Hudson Valley with more than 15,000 works. Numerous theatrical performances can be found at the colleges and at the County Players Theater. The Town also offers a free weekly summer concert series in local parks. The success of this program could be built

upon by providing a variety of seasonal arts events in other local parks, such as outdoor movies and arts and crafts fairs, for example.



The Town also offers a variety of opportunities to take advantage of the scenic qualities enjoyed in the area, including the views of the Hudson River Valley from Locust Grove and Peach Hill, among others. Dutchess County Tourism also offers a driving tour highlighting some of the most historic and scenic sites in the Town.

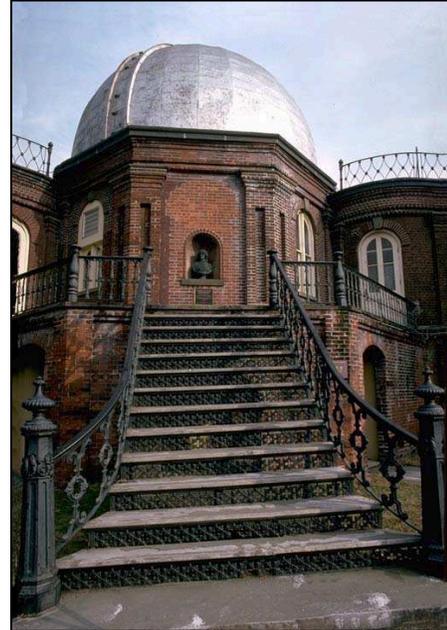
In addition to the Town's many cultural assets, there is a wealth of outstanding and diverse cultural opportunities located nearby in the City of Poughkeepsie and other adjacent communities.

### **Policy Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Town of Poughkeepsie Historic Survey should be supplemented with additional historic research for the purpose of National Register nominations and local landmark designation of historic districts and individual sites, based upon the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendations. Since only local landmark designation provides protection from demolition or inappropriate exterior renovation, this should be a priority.
- 3.2 In order to protect places of historical or cultural significance, historic district overlay zoning should be considered to coordinate development around these sites, help preserve the historic setting, and ensure that adjacent land uses do not detract from places of importance.
- 3.3 The Town's Historic Preservation Law should be supplemented with graphic design guidelines that include recommendations on architecture, streetscapes, signs, and maintenance procedures in order to define the concept of architectural compatibility, to provide positive guidance to applicants and the Planning Board, and to help simplify the development review process. These guidelines should include both street front and rear and side building elevations.
- 3.4 The Town Historic Preservation Commission should promote its historic and cultural assets, particularly its historic districts and hamlets, through the use of educational materials in local schools and libraries, an enhanced website, and in conjunction with driving, cycling and walking tours.

3.5 The Town should restore and reassemble the Town's historic documents and relics and display them in a public location within the Town to help educate the public about the history of the Town and raise awareness of the value of preserving our local heritage.

3.6 The Town should continue to work with the State and local historic sites to develop a Poughkeepsie Heritage Trail linking Locust Grove, Maple Grove, the spring at Apokeepsing from which Poughkeepsie derived its name, and the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, with Springside and other historic sites in the City of Poughkeepsie. This project should include enhancing pedestrian connections between sites, signage, promotion, and protecting the district with architectural design standards.



*The Vassar College Observatory  
National Landmark  
(Source: Vassar College)*

3.7 Through the development review process and Highway Department policies, the Town should strive to retain stone walls, tree-lined streets, barns, cemeteries, and other cultural features of the landscape.

3.8 The Town should continue to require historical, cultural and archaeological surveys to be conducted as appropriate in conjunction with the SEQRA process. A list of local Landmarks and other locally important historic sites should be made available in the Building Department, and applicants should be referred to the Town's Historic Preservation Commission if their project would impact one of these sites.

3.9 The Town should sponsor and support the provision of more cultural events in local parks.

## 4. Population and Economic Base

### Population

Dutchess County is the fifth fastest growing county in New York State, according to 2004 Census Bureau estimates. This follows a regional trend, with Orange and Putnam Counties growing at an even faster rate. Much of this growth can be attributed to the area's proximity to the New York Metropolitan Area, where the high cost of living has made more affordable areas like Dutchess County attractive places to live and do business.



The Town of Poughkeepsie is currently the most populous municipality in Dutchess County, with 43,533 residents according to the latest Census Bureau estimates (2003). The Town originally developed as a suburb of the City of Poughkeepsie, and eventually outgrew it. Most of the Town's population growth occurred from the 1940s through the 1960s, when the population increased almost 200 percent from about 13,500 to nearly 40,000, while the City of Poughkeepsie's

population declined by about 8,500. Over the next 30 years, from 1970 to 2000, the Town's population only increased another 4.6 percent.

Since the 2000 Census, the Town has been experiencing steady growth, increasing 4.2 percent between 2000 and 2003. With several large residential development projects proposed in the Town, this trend is currently not showing signs of slowing.

**Table 1**  
**Town of Poughkeepsie Population Projections**

Year	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Population	41,800	43,449	44,568	45,940	48,343	50,552

*Source: Estimates by Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council, with base county data from NYMTC forecasting program, 2003. 2000 base population from the U.S. Census Bureau.*

A recent buildout analysis commissioned by the Dutchess County Environmental Management Council shows that if the Town were to continue developing under the current zoning, an estimated 16,816 new housing units could ultimately result (see Table 2). At an average Town of Poughkeepsie household size of 2.57 people (Census 2000), this would amount to a population increase of 43,217. This increase would double the population of the Town to total of approximately 86,750 people.

**Table 2**  
**Town of Poughkeepsie Build-Out Analysis**  
**2005**

Residential Zoning Districts	Total Zoning District Area (1) (acres)	Total Existing Developed Area (acres)	Developed Areas With Subdivision Potential (acres)	Primary Conservation Areas (2) (acres)	Total Area of Protected Lands (3) (acres)	Total Area Under Conservation Easement (4) (acres)	Total Buildable Land -20% (5) (acres)	Potential New Residential Building Lots (6)
R-45	1,731	606	496	383	4	0	926	851
R-20	5,071	3,116	2,746	770	919	0	2,134	4,060
R-15	3,651	2,391	1,276	469	220	0	1,172	2,736
R-10	3,258	2,364	1,319	314	242	6	1,126	4,211
R-M	683	485	465	66	83	30	368	4,303
R-MA	25	17	5	0	0	0	5	36
R-NH	25	22	20	18	1	0	2	9
R-MH	176	157	157	54	1	0	86	610
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>14,619</b>	<b>9,157</b>	<b>6,483</b>	<b>2,073</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5,819</b>	<b>16,816</b>

- (1) Dependent on water/sewer availability. This analysis assumes no availability.  
(2) Includes steep slopes  $\geq 20\%$ , 100-year floodplains and NYSDEC wetlands with 100-ft. buffers. State and Federal wetlands, waterbodies and streams were also considered absolute constraints to development.  
(3) Protected lands may overlap with features in the primary conservation areas.  
(4) Conservation easements may not include the whole parcel.  
(5) -20% is the general allowance for roads, drainage, and other design accommodations.  
(6) Numbers reflect the mapped residential build-out potential

*Source: Dutchess County Environmental Management Council GIS Lab*

Looking at a breakdown of the Town’s population, the most notable statistic is that compared to the County overall, the Town has a lower percentage of elementary and secondary school aged children. At the same time, the Town has a much greater percentage of college-aged residents, which can be explained by having three colleges within the Town. The Town has fewer residents in the 25- to 59-year-old age range compared to the County, which indicates that the Town is losing many of its college-educated students after graduation. The Town also has a slightly higher percentage of older residents compared to the County overall.



The Town also has a comparatively well-educated population. Over 87 percent of Town residents have at least a high school diploma, compared to 84 percent of County residents, and 31 percent of Town residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent of County residents.

The Town has a relatively high median annual household income of \$55,327, compared to Dutchess County at \$53,086 and New York State at \$43,393. Many Town residents commute outside the Town to work. In 2000, 45 percent of employed residents worked within the Town, while another 35 percent of employed residents worked outside of Town but within Dutchess County. The rest of the workers commuted outside of Dutchess County to work (see Table 4.) The average unemployment rate for the Town in 2004 was 4.2 percent, while Dutchess County was also 4.2 percent and New York State was 5.8 percent.

**Table 3**  
**Where Town of Poughkeepsie Residents Work (2000)**

<b>Place of Work</b>	<b>Number of Workers</b>	<b>Percent of Workers</b>
Town of Poughkeepsie	9,035	45.5 %
City of Poughkeepsie	2,047	10.3 %
Town of East Fishkill	1,060	5.3 %
Town of Fishkill	829	4.2 %
Town of Wappinger	626	3.2 %
Town of Hyde Park	599	3.0 %
Elsewhere in Dutchess Co.	1,782	9.0 %
Westchester Co.	1,217	6.1 %
Orange Co.	624	3.1 %
New York City	597	3.0 %
Ulster Co.	476	2.4 %
Rest of New York State	577	3.0 %
Connecticut	258	1.3 %
New Jersey	52	0.3 %
Elsewhere outside of NYS	84	0.4 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,863</b>	<b>100.1 %</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

### **Economic Base**

The Town of Poughkeepsie is considered the retail and employment center of the County. There were 32,026 people employed within the Town in 2000, accounting for 28 percent of all employment within Dutchess County (Census 2000). Many of Dutchess County's



Commercial development along the South Road  
(Route 9)

largest employers are located in the Town, including IBM, St. Francis Hospital, Marist College, Vassar College, the NYS Department of Transportation, Dutchess Community College, and several others. More than 45 percent of all working Town residents are employed in the fields of education, health and social services and manufacturing. The Town also has the greatest amount of retail space in the area, including the largest shopping mall in the area. According to the 1997 Economic Census, the Town generates the greatest amount of retail sales, has the largest

number of retail establishments and employees, and the largest retail payroll of any municipality in the County. The County Sales Tax distribution to municipalities should reflect the expenses incurred by the town providing services required in generating those revenues.

**Table 4**  
**Ranking by Retail Sales (1997 Economic Census)**

Place	Number of Establish-ments	Retail Sales (\$1,000)	Number of Employees	Payroll (\$1,000)
Dutchess County	1,097	2,259,516	13,506	225,717
T/Poughkeepsie	285	764,857	5,105	75,246
V/Wappingers Falls	63	293,132	1,339	26,809
T/Fishkill	98	262,281	1,567	24,271
C/Poughkeepsie	172	195,607	1,475	23,694
T/Wappinger	26	83,503	313	7,141
C/Beacon	37	77,906	235	6,585
T/East Fishkill	55	71,405	462	7,812
T&V/Rhinebeck	42	70,546	464	8,873
T/Hyde Park	60	69,063	456	7,551
T/Beekman	12	24,090	178	2,339
T/LaGrange	24	21,434	106	2,648

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Table 5**  
**Employment by Industry (2000)**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Town of Poughkeepsie residents</b>	<b>Dutchess County residents</b>
Educational, Health and Social Services	30.3 %	26.4 %
Manufacturing	15.0 %	12.3 %
Retail Trade	11.0 %	11.4 %
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management	8.8 %	9.1 %
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	6.3 %	6.3 %
Public Administration	5.0 %	5.5 %
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	4.9 %	4.9 %
Construction	4.6 %	6.8 %
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	4.7 %	5.9 %
Other Services	3.8 %	4.6 %
Information	2.8 %	3.3 %
Wholesale Trade	2.5	2.5
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Mining	0.4	1.0

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Although the Town has a fairly diverse economy, the larger employers do have a substantial effect on the local economy. This was most notably evident during the 1990s when IBM downsized its operation from nearly 30,000 employees in the region to less



*IBM Poughkeepsie Plant*

than 10,000. Employment at the Poughkeepsie plant was reduced by 5,000 jobs. The direct result and secondary effects of the downsizing contributed to the rise in the Town's unemployment rate from 1.8 percent in 1990 to 5.4 percent in 1993. Employment at the IBM Poughkeepsie plant is currently about 5,800. IBM has been selling off significant real estate and has successfully petitioned the Town to lower its tax assessment. In order to protect the Town's economy

from another major downsizing, it is important to continue to foster a diverse mix of employment opportunities. The Town should work with IBM to develop a district rezoning plan for their Poughkeepsie complex in order to intensify office, research and industrial uses and to attract a variety of high-quality jobs. This would also prevent the piecemeal selling off of smaller pieces of land for strip commercial and other uncoordinated development.

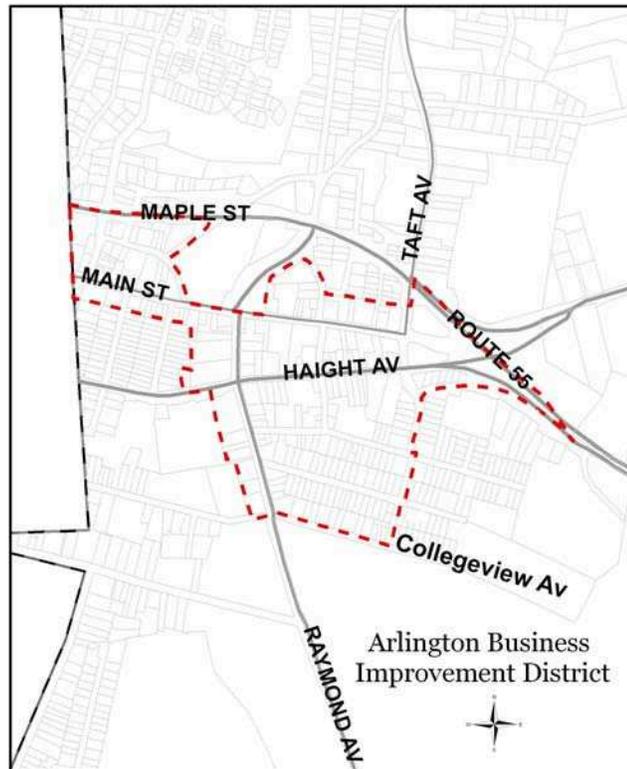
The Town recently established a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Arlington area. As a result, a nominal tax is assessed for properties within the BID. This money is used to support the purposes of the Arlington BID: to increase business, enhance the physical appearance and unique quality and character of the area, organize civic events, and reinforce Arlington as Poughkeepsie's Town Center.

The Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC) is a public/private partnership whose primary goals include the retention and attraction of businesses and the development of tourism in Dutchess County. The DCEDC, which also includes the Dutchess County Tourism Promotion Agency, is a resource that can provide the following:

- Attract business and market the area and available buildings, and maintain an inventory of properties available for development or business purchase;
- Assist the Town and individual businesses with access to State or other governmental development programs, grants, financing, or other resources;
- Provide incentives for business development; and
- Promote tourism opportunities available in the Town.

The DCEDC also administers the Poughkeepsie/Dutchess Empire Zone, which is a program that offers tax credits and business incentives in order to encourage employment growth and attract new investment within the designated Empire Zone areas. The Town of Poughkeepsie has several properties within the Empire Zone, including the Arlington neighborhood, IBM, and the former Hudson River Psychiatric Center, and several others.

The Town is in a good position to attract new businesses, with proximity and easy access to the NY Metropolitan Region, land available for commercial development, and compared with many other municipalities within Dutchess County and the region, an affordable housing stock, an educated population, good schools, a low crime rate, and an overall high quality of life. The Town's proximity to New York City, the economic and population hub of the region, places it in an excellent position to capitalize on this



resource. With over nine million people less than a two-hour train ride or drive from the Town, there should be vast potential for attracting businesses and increasing tourism in the area.

### **Policy Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Town should diversify its economic base by promoting a wide range of business and employment opportunities, rather than relying on any single sector of the economy.
- 4.2 Business attraction programs should focus on high quality job creation and the redevelopment of existing buildings, rather than providing zoning for additional retail outlets, which in many cases displace business from existing nearby establishments. The 1990 Town Master Plan and the results of a Marist opinion poll indicate that residents believe that the Town already provides ample retail shopping opportunities and that job creation should focus on increasing non-retail employment opportunities.
- 4.3 Commercial and residential growth should be focused in designated mixed-use centers in order to define and strengthen community identity, mutually reinforce adjacent businesses, provide efficient shared services and infrastructure, minimize traffic impacts, and halt strip commercial development.
- 4.4 Appropriate areas for larger-scale office development and manufacturing uses should be located, whenever possible, in or adjacent to centers, rather than widely separated and entirely dependent on vehicle trips.
- 4.5 The Town should work with IBM to develop a district rezoning plan for their complex on Route 9 and any surplus properties in the surrounding area, geared toward the intensification of office, research, manufacturing, and other quality job creation uses with an attractive overall design and efficient transportation access.
- 4.6 The Town should continue to work with the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation to market the Town to new businesses, retain and enhance existing businesses, promote tourism, and take advantage of the Empire Zone incentives.
- 4.7 Tourist promotional efforts should feature the Town's historic landmarks, such as Locust Grove and adjacent sites in the South Road historic district and Vassar College and its art museum. Future trail linkages and bicycle lanes along the Hudson River Greenway Trail to the City of Poughkeepsie waterfront and Railroad Station and along the Dutchess Rail Trail will also benefit the Town's tourist potential.

- 4.8 Areas surrounding large institutions such as St. Francis Hospital and Vassar, Marist, and Dutchess Community colleges, should be considered economic development opportunity areas for both related new business development and convenient, walkable service centers for the campus population and the substantial number of yearly visitors.
- 4.9 The Town should continue to work cooperatively with the Arlington Business Improvement District to improve the Arlington area as the Town Center and primary main street business district with coordinated marketing, shared parking, and upgraded landscaping and design standards.
- 4.10 Given recent economic and technological changes, the Town should encourage home occupations and telecommuting with standards that prevent disruption of neighborhood character, as well as locations in centers for home occupations to share services and grow into small business establishments.
- 4.11 The Town Board should consider establishing an economic development committee that develops, monitors and carries out economic strategies and reports regularly to the Town Board.
- 4.12 All tax-exempt properties in the Town such as hospitals, colleges, etc. should be strongly encouraged via Planning Board processes to enter P.I.L.O.T. (payment in lieu of taxes) agreements with town, county, fire, school, etc. districts and municipalities upon proposal of any and all development and/or amendment/redevelopment/expansion projects.

## 5. Housing

According to the 2000 Census, the most recent date for which Town and County housing data are available, residential growth in the Town has lagged behind the County's overall growth rate. Between 1990 and 2000 the number of housing units in the Town grew by 760, a 5.5 percent increase. During the same time period, the number of units in the County increased 9 percent.

Of the 14,177 occupied housing units in the Town, 70.9 percent were owner-occupied; slightly higher than the County's owner-occupied rate of 68.9 percent. The variety of housing unit types in the Town very closely reflects the housing mix in the County overall, with nearly 70 percent single-family units, 26 percent multi-family units, and less than 4 percent mobile homes.



*A new senior housing complex in the Town*

While housing prices have been steadily rising for the past several years, the affordability of housing in the Town is comparable to that of the rest of the County. According to data from the Dutchess County Office of Real Property Tax, the median sales price of a single-family home in 2004 was \$269,000 in the Town of Poughkeepsie, compared to \$286,306 in all of Dutchess County. This is a 19 percent increase from the 2003 median sales price

in the Town of \$226,341.

A comparison of median income and sales prices further indicates that an increasing number of households are being priced out of the housing market since wage increases cannot keep up with annual sales price increases of 19 percent. Projecting the Town of Poughkeepsie's median household and family income (household being a single person or unrelated people, and family being people related by blood or marriage, living in one housing unit) from the 2000 Census using the December 2004 Consumer Price Index for the NY Metropolitan Area, the December 2004 median family income was an estimated \$77,608 and the median household income was an estimated \$65,704. Using these incomes, federal affordability standards and standard lending criteria, the median family could afford a \$270,700 home and the median household could afford a \$228,400 home. Both of these prices fall short of the December 2004 median sales price of \$275,000, and the disparity will only increase if double-digit housing price increases continue and/or mortgage interest rates rise.

There is a similar affordability mismatch with rental housing. According to the 2000 Census, there were 4,345 renter households in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Sixty percent of these renter households in the Town made less than 80 percent of the median income and 58 percent of those households paid more than 30 percent of their income towards rent, the federal government's affordability standard. Dutchess County's 2004 Rental Housing Survey showed that the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in an apartment complex in the Town was \$897 and a two-bedroom was \$1,028. Using the federal affordability standard, a household would need to make approximately \$36,500 to afford a one-bedroom and \$42,000 to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

This data indicates a need for moderately-priced owner-occupied and rental housing for Town residents. The Marist Survey of Public Opinion, which was discussed in Chapter 1, indicates that a majority of Town residents feel there is a need to provide more affordable housing in the community, with senior housing being the most favorable type of affordable housing.

There are County, State and Federal Government programs available to assist with the development of moderately priced housing. There are also non-profit and for-profit developers who specialize in the development of this type of housing. Several successful moderately-priced housing projects have taken place in Dutchess County with the developer, government agency, housing agency and local municipality working in partnership to develop this needed resource while at the same time enhancing existing neighborhoods.

### **Policy Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Town should continue to promote equal housing laws and ensure that all housing meets public health, safety and zoning codes.
- 5.2 The Town should encourage local zoning strategies that promote the development of housing appropriate in size, location, type, accessibility and cost for a wide variety of households, and work with developers to pursue government and private funding sources.
- 5.3 The Town's centers should be the focus for any new moderate to higher density units, housing over or adjacent to storefronts and housing for seniors, to alleviate dependency on the automobile and reinforce the traditional community center land use pattern.
- 5.4 The Town should encourage cluster or conservation development for any residential development that takes place outside of designated centers.

5.5 The Town should implement architectural standards for residential neighborhoods to maintain consistency with the existing character of the neighborhood.

5.6 The Town should encourage moderately priced housing and consider a 10 percent set-aside in designated centers. The Town Board should also implement a local law authorizing the Town Board to grant 10% bonus densities to encourage attainment of housing goals such as moderately-priced housing, etc.



*All residential development should be held to high design and compatibility standards*

5.7 The Town should continue to allow accessory apartments that meet the standards of compatibility with the existing structure and the surrounding neighborhood.

5.8 Zoning standards should be established for conversions of existing structures, such as large older homes or commercial buildings for residential or mixed uses.

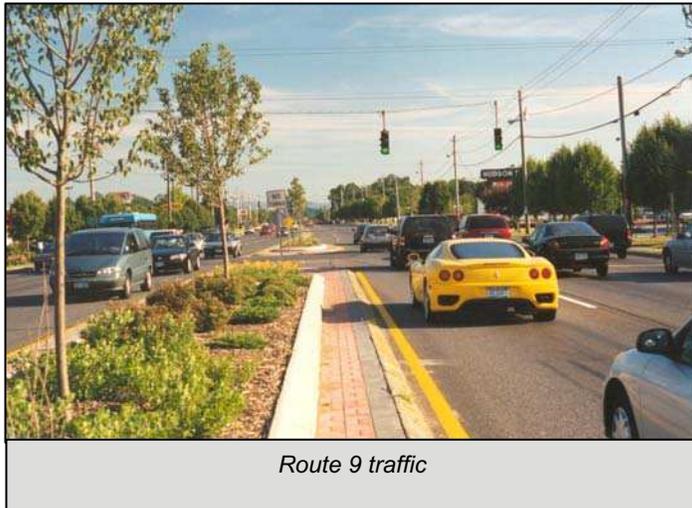
5.9 The Town should define standards to upgrade mobile home parks.

5.10 The Town should eliminate bonus densities allowed by Town Code for the availability of central municipal services.

## 6. Transportation

### Roads

The Town's roads and rights-of-way are actually prominent public spaces, the means by which residents travel throughout and visualize their community. Roadways are also the areas where the Town can most directly control its future character but implementing the Greenway principles to improve their appearance and efficiency. The primary road pattern in the Town reflects the historical significance of the City of Poughkeepsie as a regional center for economic activity. Most of the major state and county roads that pass through the Town travel into the City. As development began shifting out from the City around the 1950s, growth increased beyond the City's boundaries in the form of housing developments, retail and commercial establishments and major employers. The abundance of land available in the Town and conventional zoning led to a much less compact, suburban growth pattern. As a result, the private automobile became and remains the exclusive mode of daily travel for most Town residents.



According to the 2000 Census, of all Town residents who are employed, more than 85 percent reported traveling to work by car, with 76 percent driving alone and the rest car-pooling. Less than four percent use public transportation, while 8.7 percent walk to work. That is a relatively high proportion compared to the County overall, where only 3.9 percent of workers walk to their jobs. The average commute time for Town residents is 24.8

minutes, compared to the average for all County workers of 29.8 minutes. Only 1.9 percent of employed residents work from home, compared to 3.2 percent of all workers in the County.

The primary regional roadway that passes through the Town is US Route 9, which runs north/south and carries nearly 50,000 vehicles per day. The primary east/west routes are US Routes 44 and 55, which also carry a significant volume of traffic. Several other major State, County and local roads service the Town and the many large employment and retail centers within the Town. Traffic counts conducted by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Dutchess County Department of Public Works (DPW) show that traffic volumes in the Town have increased or decreased over time for different roads.

**Table 6**  
**Selected Average Daily Traffic Volumes**

<b>Road</b>	<b>Traffic Volume and Year</b>		
<b>Route 9</b> Spackenkill Rd. to Beechwood Ave.	47,700 (1994)	48,100 (1997)	49,000 (2000)
<b>Route 9</b> Delafield St. to North Rd.	22,600 (1996)	33,100 (1999)	32,000 (2002)
<b>Route 44</b> Rt. 55 to DeGarmo Rd.	16,900 (1993)	18,400 (1999)	17,700 (2002)
<b>Route 55</b> Rt. 44 to Overlook Rd.	20,700 (1992)	19,600 (1998)	24,700 (2001)
<b>Route 376</b> Raymond Ave.	17,500 (1998)	16,200 (1999)	16,900 (2002)
<b>Vassar Rd. (CR 77)</b> Spring Rd. to Jackson Rd.	n/a	17,183 (2000)	19,949 (2002)
<b>Spackenkill Rd. (NYS 113)</b> Rt. 9 to Wilbur Blvd.	n/a	19,559 (1998)	21,290 (2001)
<b>Salt Point Tpk. (NYS 115)</b> Smith St. to Bedell Rd.	n/a	8,687 (2000)	9,621 (2003)
<b>Innis Ave. (CR 75)</b> Jackman Dr. to De Laval Pl.	n/a	13,284 (2001)	15,785 (2003)

*Source: NYSDOT and Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council*

Residents and others using Town roadways routinely complain about traffic congestion, especially on Route 9. Traffic congestion was identified as a problem by most residents polled in the Marist College Survey of Public Opinion, and most felt that more attention needs to be given to improving roads. When asked about the best way to solve traffic problems, the answer most often given was to increase public transportation, followed by building new roads to better connect neighborhoods.

Both the NYSDOT and the Dutchess County DPW have accident surveillance systems, which are used to monitor accidents on their roadways. Locations with significant accident rates are identified and investigated on a continuing basis. If necessary, a safety improvement project is programmed to correct the condition. In addition, whenever a project is designed along a state highway, a safety screening or analysis is performed to determine if there are any safety problems within the project limits that should be corrected.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has issued new standards to require municipalities that have revenues of \$10 million or more to assess the physical condition of their infrastructure (roads) in their financial statements by 2007. The Town is subject to this requirement.

Regional transportation issues are being addressed through the 2006-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). A joint effort between the Poughkeepsie Dutchess County Transportation Council (PDCTC), of which the Town Supervisor is a voting member, and the NYSDOT, the program outlines major transportation projects scheduled for the next five years. Major transportation projects include all federally funded highway, transit, and mobility projects as well as any significant projects funded by state, local, or special authority funds.

**Transit**

With rising gas prices and increasing road congestion, it is important that the Town constantly strive to improve access to public transportation. Over 25 percent of the population cannot drive or chooses not to drive, many of whom are commuters, elderly, young people or those with low incomes. Transit also serves many visitors to the area,



and the provision of a convenient, efficient mass transit system can encourage tourism and business travel within the Town and the region. There are currently a number of transit options within the Town, including rail service and bus service.

Both AMTRAK and the Metro-North Railroad provide passenger rail service convenient to the Town. AMTRAK provides intercity service between New York City and

Albany with stops in the City of Poughkeepsie and Rhinecliff. Since 1991, ridership from Dutchess County has doubled.

**Table 7  
AMTRAK Annual Weekday Ridership**

Station	1991	2000	% Change
Poughkeepsie	40,200	59,274	47.5 %
Rhinecliff	79,200	180,029	127.3 %
Total	119,400	239,308	100.4 %

*Source: AMTRAK*

Metro-North Railroad (MNR), a division of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, is the nation’s third largest commuter railroad. MNR provides commuter rail service to New York City, stopping at three Dutchess County railroad stations: the City of Poughkeepsie, New Hamburg in the Town of Poughkeepsie, and Beacon. Ridership on

MNR has been increasing significantly, putting additional traffic and parking pressure on communities around their railroad stations.

**Table 8**  
**Metro-North Inbound (To NYC) Weekday Ridership**

Station	1990	2000	% Change
Poughkeepsie	1,011	1,598	58.1 %
New Hamburg	507	799	57.6 %
Beacon	931	1,611	73.0 %
Total	2,449	4,008	63.7 %

*Source: Metro-North Railroad*

The City of Poughkeepsie Bus System and the Dutchess County LOOP Bus System provide local and countywide bus service to the Town. The LOOP offers midday and commuter service along several major roads in the town, as well as service to the Metro-North and AMTRAK stations, and Stewart International Airport in Orange County. A Dial-A-Ride service is also available to senior citizens and disabled persons in the Town.

Private carriers also provide regular transit service in Dutchess County. Adirondack Trailways offers service from Newburgh to Kingston with a stop in Poughkeepsie. Arrow provides service between New Paltz and Poughkeepsie. Leprechaun Lines offers service from the Town of Poughkeepsie to White Plains and runs the Newburgh-Beacon Shuttle. NYSDOT-sponsored commuter transit service includes the Dutchess-White Plains Express between Poughkeepsie and White Plains, operated by Leprechaun Lines.

### **Air Travel**

Commercial air traffic is largely served by regional airports, including Stewart International Airport and the Albany and New York City airports. The Dutchess County Airport provides charter air travel service to the Poughkeepsie area, and is located just over the Town of Poughkeepsie border in the Town of Wappinger. In 1990, the airport was classified by the Federal Aviation Administration as a “Commercial Service” airport, but in August 2001 scheduled passenger commercial service was terminated and the airport classification changed to “General Aviation”. The proximity of the County airport to Stewart International Airport and New York City has limited the possibility of hosting a major carrier. However, national demand for charters has increased dramatically since September 11, 2001.

The airport recently completed an update to their Airport Plan, which outlines the extent, type, and schedule of development needed to accommodate existing needs and future aviation demand at the airport out to the year 2020. The Plan indicates that additional growth in the General Aviation market is anticipated, and outlines a number of

recommendations to accommodate this growth. These include providing additional hangar and airplane tie-down space, a new General Aviation Welcome Center, and various runway improvements.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

Walking is the most economical form of transportation. As our awareness of the benefits of physical activity and the dramatic rise in childhood obesity increases, it becomes ever more important to provide safe and convenient places for the residents of the Town to walk, jog and bike. Encouraging alternatives to automobile travel for shorter trips can also help to alleviate traffic congestion and air quality problems, since one-fourth of all trips in the U.S. are less than one mile from home, and shorter car trips are more polluting on a per-mile basis than longer trips. Several studies show that walkability also increases property values, and that homebuyers are willing to pay a premium for homes in pedestrian-friendly communities (Source: Local Government Commission Center for Livable Communities).



One of the primary goals of this plan is to create pedestrian and bicycle-friendly hamlet and neighborhood centers that nearby residents can walk or bike to, or that others can drive to and park their cars, and conveniently walk around. Another goal is to have path and sidewalk connections between schools, recreational areas and residential areas to allow children to safely walk to school and for all residents to have convenient access to recreational facilities while leaving their cars at home. Safe and inviting sidewalk connections (separated from traffic by planting strips with street trees) between transit stops and

employment, commercial and residential areas could also facilitate and encourage more people to use public transportation. *Greenway Connections* promotes trails and walking and biking options throughout the document, and the Greenway Guide “Walkable Communities” has specific guidelines for sidewalks.

### **Policy Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Town should continue to implement the Greenway principles for streets and roadways, especially during the site plan review process, and incorporate these principles into the zoning law.

6.2 The Town should focus development and community services in designated mixed-use centers and require all new development to reduce auto-dependence and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists by providing sidewalks, walkways through parking lots, crosswalks, bike racks and other amenities.



6.3 The Town should encourage alternatives to driving alone by promoting employee-sponsored and privately arranged ride sharing and increased use of commuter bus service with direct connections to the train stations. Additional bus shelters should be added to stops to protect users during inclement weather and thus encourage more use.

6.4 The Town should work with the County and City to ensure that their bus systems provide convenient, coordinated access to designated centers and major employers within the Town.



*Residential streets with large setbacks and no street trees look so wide that they induce higher speeds.*



*Narrower residential streets lined with trees provide a pedestrian scale and sense of enclosure to help slow traffic.*

6.5 The Town should require interconnected roads within new subdivisions and avoid cul-de-sacs to provide more efficient traffic circulation and emergency response routes, require road connections between new adjacent subdivisions, and minimize vehicular access points to major roads.



*Narrower roads are appropriate for residential areas.*

- 6.6 The Town should promote the use of traffic calming measures, such as street trees, curb extensions, center islands, crosswalks and on-street parking, to control speeds on roads with pedestrian/bicycle traffic and where speeding has been identified as a problem.
- 6.7 The Town should revise its road and parking specifications to provide narrower street options for lower volume or traffic calming situations, promote street tree buffers and sidewalks, and significantly reduce impervious asphalt coverage.
- 6.8 The Town should continue to manage access onto all roadways by strictly limiting access points to one per parcel, unless a traffic analysis or unique conditions fully justify another curb cut, by limiting left-turns, and by sharing and consolidating driveways and interconnecting commercial sites with rear access connections between rear parking lots.
- 6.9 The Town should require traffic impact analysis for projects that generate more than 50 trips during any single peak hour.
- 6.10 The Town should prevent the further commercialization of Routes 44 and 55, Salt Point Turnpike, Van Wagner Road, Vassar Road, Spackenkill Road and other primarily residential roadways outside of designated centers to maintain efficient traffic flow.
- 6.11 The Town should consider an east-west connector across the northern section of the Town to help alleviate congestion and provide a more efficient connection between Route 9, Route 9G, Salt Point Turnpike and Van Wagner Road.
- 6.12 The Town should, wherever practicable, provide sidewalks and/or marked shoulders along roadways to facilitate and encourage safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, especially to provide connections to centers and recreation areas.
- 6.13 The Town should develop sidewalks or clearly marked shoulders for walkers and bikers along all collector or higher roads within the “no-busing” zones of schools to allow children to safely walk or bike to school, and should require walkways/bikeways within these areas for all new development.

## 7. Community Facilities

### Parks

The Town of Poughkeepsie offers numerous parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities, and open spaces for residents and visitors, as indicated on Map 4 – Parks, Trails and Recreation. These amenities are also generally indicated on the Centers and Greenspace Plan. Although there are nearly 600 acres of designated parkland within the Town, not all residents have convenient access to it and many of the existing facilities could be improved. The Town could also benefit from a new consolidated recreational facility to accommodate a variety of sporting events. The Town Code does allow the Planning



*A Town of Poughkeepsie park*

Board to require developers to either set aside parkland or pay a recreational fee based upon the number of lots when a major residential development is proposed. This money can be used for park and recreation purposes, including the acquisition of property.

There are 21 parks throughout the Town comprising a total of 132 acres. A variety of facilities are offered in these parks, including ball fields, basketball courts, fishing ponds, natural areas, picnic areas, play areas, shelters and tennis courts. In 2004, the Town also acquired Peach

Hill, a 157-acre open space parcel located off Salt Point Turnpike at the Hyde Park border. The Town is currently facilitating the environmental cleanup of the former orchard and developing plans to open the park for passive recreation. The Town of Poughkeepsie Recreation Department manages all of the Town-owned parks, and the Town contracts with a private company for their maintenance.

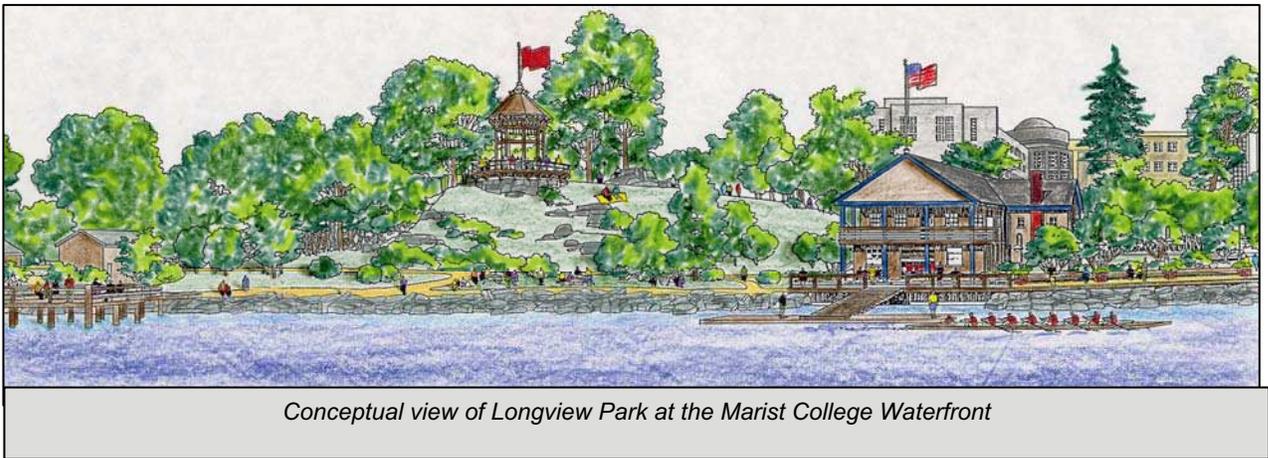
Although there are many parks and recreational facilities available to Town residents, many of them are in need of repair. An inventory of necessary repairs has been conducted and the Town has begun to address them. According to the Town of Poughkeepsie Recreation Department, there is a need to resurface various ball fields, and many of the



*Peach Hill*

parks have courts (basketball, tennis, and/or hockey) which are also in need of repair. There is also the possibility of adding lighting at various parks. The provision of well-lit recreational facilities promotes a feeling of security for park visitors and protects the facilities from vandalism. A maintenance plan and a capital improvement plan for the parks would help the Town to budget for and schedule necessary maintenance and desired improvements.

Dutchess County also has two parks within the Town. Bowdoin Park, located between Sheafe Road and the Hudson River, consists of 301 acres of open space, playgrounds, ball fields and picnic areas. There is also a nature center, camping lodges, and a series of interpretive hiking trails, including two boardwalks through wetland areas. The 27-acre Quiet Cove Riverfront Park is located on former grounds of the Hudson River Psychiatric Center just north of Marist College. The County has an agreement with New York State to develop a Hudson Riverfront park which will include a non-motorized boat launch and deep-water bulkhead, picnic and fishing areas, public restrooms, a playground, upland parking and, eventually, a community meeting room and Greenway Trail. Quiet Cove improvements are slated to be phased in over a three-year period with public access available in 2006.



Longview Park, a public/private initiative involving Marist College and the City and Town of Poughkeepsie, is currently under development. The park is located on six acres of Hudson Riverfront property, with four acres owned by Marist and the remaining two acres jointly owned by the City and Town as part of their joint water treatment plant facilities. Marist College will be responsible for all funding and management of the park

facilities. This project will create public access and promote the use of the Hudson River as a recreational resource, with a Greenway Trail for walking and biking along the waterfront, picnicking, fishing, non-motorized boating activities including kayaking and sailing, and competitive rowing opportunities for rowers.

The Vassar College Farm is a large open space parcel with community gardens, open fields and hiking trails, which are open to the public. In addition, many of the public schools have playgrounds, courts and ball fields that are used by school children as well as the general public.

## **Trails**

In recent years, trails for walking, jogging and biking have become increasingly desirable amenities. Separated from traffic, trails provide a safe and pleasant place for people to exercise, experience nature, or travel from one place to another. Studies also indicate proximity to trails significantly increases land values. Numerous funding sources are available on a competitive basis for the creation of trails.

Several parks within the Town contain small trail systems. The Wappinger Greenway Trail extends from Bowdoin Park into the Village of Wappingers Falls. There are also a number of trail projects proposed within the Town, as shown on the Centers and Greenspace Plan. The County-owned Maybrook Corridor, an abandoned rail line which passes through the Town from College Hill to the Manchester Bridge, is slated for development as a recreational walking/biking trail.



*Trail at the Vassar College Farm*

Efforts to establish a continuous Hudson River Greenway Trail also continue. The City of Poughkeepsie constructed a waterfront trail at Waryas Park, and has plans to extend this trail north and south to the Town of Poughkeepsie borders. This trail will then continue north through the Town via the Vassar College Boathouse property, Longview Park and Quiet Cove Riverfront Park. To the south, the Town is working with the State and other stakeholders to extend the Greenway Trail via the Poughkeepsie Heritage Trail, which would link a number of historic sites south of the City of Poughkeepsie. One of these sites, Locust Grove, recently added a 3.2 mile trail loop to the State's designated Greenway trail system. As opportunities are presented, this trail should be extended further south to link up with the Wappinger Greenway Trail.

There are a number of potential trail projects in the Town. An abandoned rail spur splits off from the Maybrook line at Morgan Lake, passes Peach Hill, and continues into the Town of Hyde Park and on to Pleasant Valley where it meets West Road Elementary School and the adjacent Redl Park. This potential trail would be very convenient to the

residents of this area and would greatly improve access to Peach Hill, as well as provide a link to adjacent communities.

Another potential trail location exists along the Central Hudson Utility Corridor in the northern part of the Town. This corridor extends from the rail spur that runs through Marist College to the east. The development of this trail would provide access to the Hudson River Psychiatric Center property and Quiet Cove Park, Violet Avenue School, Dutchess Community College, the Fallkill Creek, Peach Hill, and joins the above-mentioned abandoned rail spur.

Efforts should be made to obtain property or easements along the Wappinger Creek, Fallkill Creek and Casperkill Creek to establish Greenway Trails along these waterways. Much of this land is within the federally designated floodplain or floodway, and therefore is not typically suitable for development.

### **Recreation**

A good variety of recreational programs within a community is considered a positive quality of life factor for all residents. The Town of Poughkeepsie's Recreation Department sponsors a variety of recreational programs year-round, ranging from "free playtime" to sports clinics to social organizations. Participation in these programs spans all age groups from age groups from 5 through senior citizens. In addition to Town-sponsored programs, many recreational programs serving Town residents are sponsored through private organizations. These programs are primarily focused on sports and active recreation. While many of these organizations require a yearly membership fee, there are also organizations free to the public.



*Casperkill Golf Course*

Other recreational facilities available in the Town include several golf courses: McCann Golf Course, owned by the City of Poughkeepsie, and two private courses that are open to the public: Casperkill Country Club and the Vassar College Golf Course. Another course, the Dutchess Golf and Country Club, is open to club members only. These courses are an important component of the Town's recreational resources, and the Town could consider a variety of land use regulations that could be adopted into the Town Code to help ensure that they are preserved.

The construction of the Hudson River Boathouse, just south of Marist College has been recently completed. The boathouse will provide modern facilities for high school and community rowing programs, and includes storage for all equipment, a repair bay, indoor

tanks and training areas, locker rooms and showers, conference areas, docks and parking. It is hoped that this facility will help to re-establish the Poughkeepsie area as a world-class rowing center.

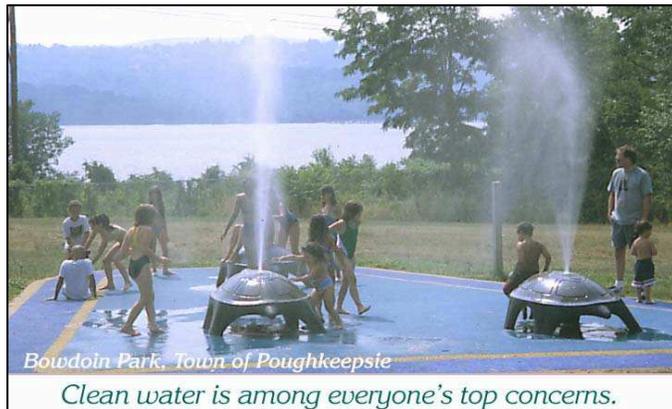
The sport of rowing has shared a long history with Poughkeepsie, which was the home to the annual Inter-Collegiate Regatta from 1895 to 1949. When the Intercollegiate Rowing Association relocated elsewhere, the Mid-Hudson Rowing Association was chartered. Faced with limited space, Poughkeepsie entered into an agreement with Marist College in 1977 to allow Marist to obtain title to the Cornell Boathouse and surrounding land with the provision that they allow the high schools to row out of the boathouse until 2002.

The Hudson River Rowing Association (HRRA) was formed in 1998 to organize the various rowing programs in the region. The HRRA offers a variety of off-season rowing programs for high school students, adult learn-to-row and competitive programs. The ensuing loss of rowing facilities in 2002 combined with similar space limitations for high school programs led the HRRA to enter into negotiations to construct a large community boathouse serving local rowing programs and the general rowing community.

## **Water**

The Town of Poughkeepsie operates a town-wide water treatment and distribution system that serves all six wards. This plant, which receives water from the Hudson River, operates jointly with the City of Poughkeepsie. The Town owns approximately one-half (1/2) of the plant and 45% of the water capacity. According to 2004 estimates, the Town currently uses 5.45 million gallons per day (MGD).

Currently the total average daily pumpage at the plant is 9 MGD. Additionally, usage fluctuates in the peak summer months when it is significantly higher. The intake vs. metered usage of the plant indicates that there is some leakage in the system. However, the extent and location of the leakage has not been identified. Otherwise, the water distribution system appears to be in good condition, with no other known or anticipated problems.



The Town has three wells for backup purposes. These wells are located on a wellfield near Wappinger Creek, south of Degarmo Road and have a capacity of 1.7 MGD. The Town also has storage tanks with a combined capacity of 10.5 million gallons.

## Sewer

Sanitary sewer serves most developed areas of the Town of Poughkeepsie. The Town does not have a unified system, but rather three principal systems with 27 separate sanitary sewer districts, varying greatly in size. The majority of these districts provide only collection. Four separate wastewater treatment plants handle treatment: City of Poughkeepsie, Arlington, Tri-Municipal, and Country Club Estates.

As shown on the Municipal Sewer Map, sewer service does not exist in the eastern portion of the Town as well as pockets in the central portion of the Town and the New Hamburg area. Service extension would facilitate the future development of vacant land as well as the replacement of failing residential septic systems.

Sewer services are generally most economical when planned on a drainage basin basis to take advantage of gravity flow. In addition, large treatment plants typically achieve higher levels of treatment and exert less of an impact on the discharge water bodies. There may be opportunities for economies of scale by working with adjoining municipalities such as Hyde Park or Pleasant Valley on future service extensions. The Town engaged Morris Associates in 1996 to develop an overall sewer service plan. This plan should be reviewed and updated as required in order to function as a guide for future service extensions.

## Hospitals

The Town has excellent access to two major hospitals: Saint Francis Hospital in the Town of Poughkeepsie, and Vassar Brothers Medical Center in the City of Poughkeepsie, as shown on Map 5 – Emergency Services. From anywhere in the Town, normal driving time to a hospital is less than 20 minutes. Due to the proximity to two hospitals, there is also a concentration of various medical professionals in the Poughkeepsie area.



*St. Francis Hospital*

Saint Francis Hospital is a fully accredited Catholic Hospital with state-of-the-art equipment and facilities. The hospital currently includes a 296-bed acute care facility with Centers of Excellence in orthopedics, plastic surgery, behavioral health, trauma, and neuroscience. The George T. Whalen Family Trauma Center is the only New York State designated Level 1 trauma center located between Albany and Westchester. Saint Francis is a teaching

hospital, affiliated with the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine and Mt. Sinai Hospital.

Vassar Brothers Medical Center in the City of Poughkeepsie is a 365-bed facility with Centers of Excellence in cardiac services, cancer care and women and children’s health services. As a regional medical center, Vassar houses the area’s only cardiothoracic surgery center between Westchester and Albany. Vassar has a state-of-the-art birthing center that delivers more babies than any other hospital between Manhattan and Montreal. Vassar Brothers has the only level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in the Mid-Hudson Valley and the only dedicated Pediatric Unit. The Dyson Center for Cancer Care provides infusion therapy, radiation therapy, stereotactic radiosurgery, pet therapy and a wide variety of support groups. The Medical Center houses the Center for Advanced Surgery, one of the most sophisticated operating rooms in the world and one of only a handful in the United States. The Medical Center is now treating more patients than ever in its newly renovated Emergency Room.

**Police**

The Town is served by three law enforcement agencies; the Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department, the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office and the New York State Police. Although all three agencies share jurisdiction in the Town, the Poughkeepsie Police Department is the only law enforcement agency that actively patrols the Town. The Department responds to and investigates over 30,000 calls for service per year.

The Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department has a mutual agreement with the Dutchess County “911” Emergency Response Center and all Dutchess County Law Enforcement agencies. All “911” calls for service within the Town are received through the Dutchess County “E911” Center. Using a “one button transfer”, the call is transferred to the Town of Poughkeepsie Dispatch Center, which dispatches all calls for service within the Town.

The Department is made up of 87 sworn full-time police and 13 civilian staff members. Within the Patrol and Detective Divisions are specialized units consisting of Juvenile, Identification and Records, SWAT, Crisis Negotiation Unit, Traffic, DARE, School Resource Officers, Crime Prevention, K9, and a Computer and Technical Division.

The Town of Poughkeepsie Police cover approximately 150 miles of roadway and safeguard a resident population of more than 43,000 citizens. They cover four public school districts, plus six private schools and three colleges within the Town: Dutchess Community College, Vassar College and Marist College. These colleges house a total population of approximately 18,361 students and staff. The Department also provides services to numerous major industrial and commercial sites.



*Fairview Fire House*

## **Fire and Ambulance**

The Town is divided into three fire districts: the Fairview Fire District, the Arlington Fire District, and the New Hamburg Fire District. The Fairview Fire District handles all calls in the Fairview neighborhood area in the northwestern corner of the Town. The Arlington Fire District, which is further divided into four stations, handles all calls in the Rochdale, Arlington, and Red Oaks Mill/Spackenkill neighborhoods as well as the Route 9 corridor. The New Hamburg Fire District handles all calls in the southern part of the Town, including New Hamburg and Wappingers Falls.

The Fairview Fire District has one station on Violet Avenue in Poughkeepsie, averaging 1,700 annual calls. The company has use of two fire engines, one ladder truck, two ambulances, a complete set of hydraulic rescue equipment and low-pressure air bags. There is a substantial amount of property in this district that is tax exempt and which accounts for a significant percentage of the calls for emergency service. While some of the non-profits make donations to the fire district, it still has one of the highest fire taxes in the state. The sale and future development of the Hudson River Psychiatric Center should help to relieve some of the burden on the taxpayers in this district.

The Arlington Fire District consists of four separate stations; the Arlington Engine Company, which is the district headquarters, located on Burnett Boulevard, The Red Oaks Mill Fire Company on Vassar Road, the Rochdale Fire Company on Route 44, and the Croft Corners Fire Company located on Spackenkill Road. There is no fire station located in the northeastern area of the Town between Rochdale and Fairview. The companies have a total of 8 fire engines, 2 ladder trucks, 4 ambulances and 10 support vehicles. The district handles approximately 4,000 calls annually.

The New Hamburg Fire District is divided into two stations; the New Hamburg Engine Company #1 on Channingville Road and the East End Engine Company #2 on Route 9D. The two stations have in total 3 fire engines, 1 ladder truck, 1 rescue vehicle and 1 service truck. The companies handle approximately 500 calls annually.

Each of the three fire districts indicates there is a dire need for additional support. The number of volunteer firefighters is steadily decreasing and the funds are not available to hire additional career firefighters. Each district is handling its respective calls, but additional staff and volunteers would increase effectiveness and reduce time to respond to calls. There has been some discussion about possible mergers between the Fairview Fire District and the Arlington Fire District.

## **Educational Resources**

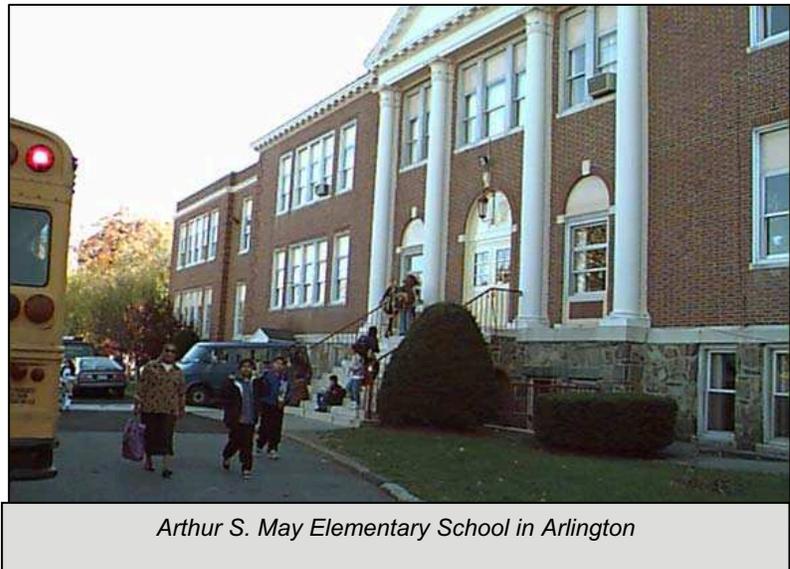
The Town is fortunate to have an abundance of educational opportunities for its residents, including public and private schools, three colleges and a public library system. The Town's educational institutions, shown on Map 6 – Educational Resources, offer numerous benefits to the community. Eighteen percent of all employed Town residents

work in the field of education. Town residents have access to a multitude of opportunities for educational advancement, and many schools offer training programs cooperatively with local employers. Town residents have access to the many cultural and recreational opportunities provided by these institutions, and several have programs that encourage student involvement with community groups. These educational institutions also maintain a significant amount of recreational and open space within the Town, most of which is open to the general public for their enjoyment.

## **Schools**

Residents of the Town of Poughkeepsie are served by four separate public school districts: Arlington, Spackenkill, Wappingers and Hyde Park. The Spackenkill Union Free School District is the only district entirely within the Town; the remaining three districts also serve other municipalities.

As indicated by Table 7-I, student enrollment at each of these school districts has increased over the last five years. As enrollment increases, so does the pressure to accommodate more students within limited space. The Arlington Central School District has identified its first priority as addressing the lack of capacity at Arlington High School (located in the Town of LaGrange), the Hyde Park School Board is currently working on a comprehensive plan to address its growing student population, and the Wappingers Central School District is proposing capital improvements at several of its facilities.



*Arthur S. May Elementary School in Arlington*

**Table 9**  
**Public School District Enrollment Trends**

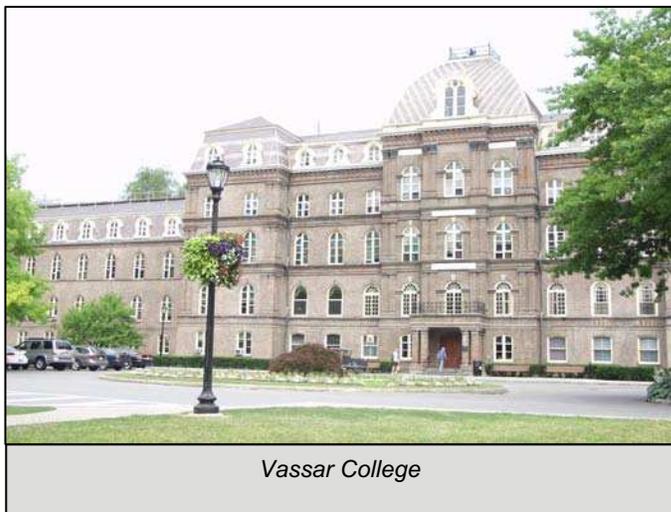
School District	Enrollment		Change	
	1999-2000	2004-2005	Number	Percent
Arlington Central School District	9,270	10,173	903	9.7 %
Hyde Park Central School District	4,584	4,645	61	1.3 %
Spackenkill Union Free School District	1,751	1,831	80	4.6 %
Wappingers Central School District	11,408	12,312	904	7.9 %

*Source: Dutchess County BOCES and NYS Education Dept.*

There are also several private schools within the Town of Poughkeepsie, including three that provide high-school education, including the Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie Day School, and Our Lady of Lourdes High School.

### Colleges

There are three colleges within the Town’s boundaries: Dutchess Community College, Marist College and Vassar College. Marist College is located on the banks of the Hudson River in the Fairview neighborhood of the Town. Founded in 1929 as a Catholic school for training Marist Brothers, it is now one of the leading arts and sciences colleges in the northeast, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The College has nearly 6,000 students and has grown substantially in recent years, redeveloping the original campus and also expanding east of Route 9 to accommodate this growth.



*Vassar College*

Vassar College, founded in 1861 as a college for women, is located in the Arlington neighborhood and had much to do with the establishment of Arlington as the Town’s Center. As one of the leading liberal arts colleges in the country offering undergraduate degree programs, Vassar maintains a relatively small student body and currently has 2,400 students.

Dutchess Community College (DCC) was founded in 1957 and offers a variety of associate’s degrees. DCC is part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system,

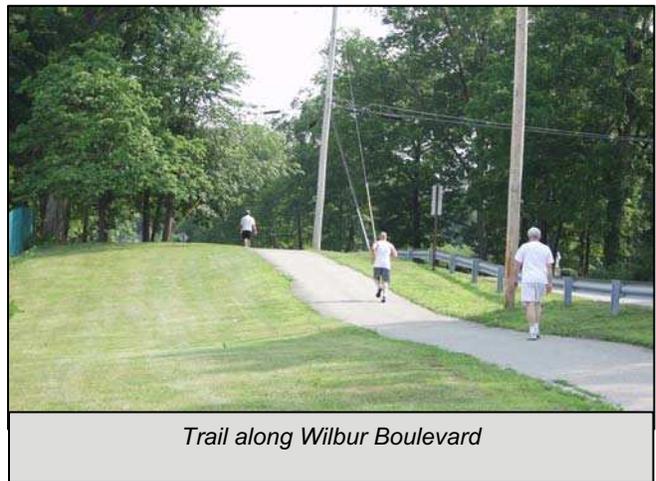
and serves more than 25,000 students at a fraction of the cost of most private colleges. DCC has completed a College Master Plan which identifies the need for renovations of several existing buildings.

### **Public Libraries**

The Town of Poughkeepsie is served by the Poughkeepsie Public Library District (PPLD), and members have access to all of the 22 libraries within the system. There is one branch location in the Town, the Arlington Branch Library, located on Haight Avenue. Other library branches are also convenient to the Town of Poughkeepsie, including Adriance Memorial Library in the City of Poughkeepsie, which is the main branch of the MHLS. The MHLS has identified the need to expand the Arlington Branch Library and over the past several years has been conducting a search for a new location. Libraries are important public facilities which should be convenient to a majority of the population and should be located so as to reinforce the Town Center.

### **Policy Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Town should develop a maintenance plan to address necessary park repairs, and a capital improvement plan to help budget for and schedule more significant park improvements. The Town should also explore neighborhood-based programs such as the Adopt-a-Park program that encourage neighborhood pride, protection, and upkeep of local parks. The Town should encourage “No Net Loss” of recreation facilities or diminution of recreational facilities in Planning Board processes.
- 7.2 The Town should evaluate future development proposals, using the Centers and Greenspace Plan, to determine whether the proposals present an opportunity to further the Town’s recreational or greenspace goals. This could be done through the dedication of new parkland, recreational fees, or strategically planning open spaces during the subdivision and site planning processes.
- 7.3 The Town should seek opportunities to develop a consolidated recreational facility with sports fields, possibly an indoor recreational center, and a senior citizens’ center.
- 7.4 The Town should work toward establishing an interconnected system of greenspaces and recreational sites through the use of trails, paths, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks, including the



conversion of the Maybrook Corridor into a pedestrian/bicycle trail and potential greenway trail corridors along the Town's major creek systems.

- 7.5 The Town should make the establishment of a continuous Hudson River Greenway Trail a high priority by working with stakeholders and adjacent municipalities to link properties or obtain easements along the Hudson River shoreline.
- 7.6 The Town should consider updating the 1996 Future Sewer Service Plan.
- 7.7 The Town should increase the tax base in the Fairview Fire District by promoting the redevelopment or reuse of tax-exempt properties to help relieve the inordinately high burden on taxpayers in the district.
- 7.8 The Town should consider ways to attract volunteer firefighters.
- 7.9 The Town should work with the school districts to ensure that when choosing a location for new buildings, proximity to the Town's designated centers is a primary consideration in order to provide convenient access to the majority of the population and to reinforce the Town's centers as the core of neighborhood civic activity.
- 7.10 The Town recognizes that Marist, Vassar and Dutchess Community Colleges are an asset to the community. Cooperative relationships with these institutions should be maintained and expanded to ensure that mutually beneficial goals are achieved.
- 7.11 The Town should work with the Mid-Hudson Library System to encourage the location of a new library within a designated center.
- 7.12 The Town should encourage the greater use of public school facilities for community recreation and other events outside of regular school hours.
- 7.13 The Town should continue to work with Dutchess County and the Wappinger Greenway Trail Committee in the development of Quiet Cove Riverfront Park, which should include a Greenway Trail connection.

## SECTION III CENTERS AND GREENSPACE PLAN

The Centers and Greenspace Plan is intended to encourage new development in existing and potential emerging centers and protect nearby greenspace areas, consistent with the Town's desire to grow in accordance with Greenway principles. One of the primary policies of *Greenway Connections* is to "focus development more efficiently in and around traditional centers and avoid overdevelopment of the rural surroundings." This is the most effective, proactive way to combat sprawl and contain the Town's infrastructure



and maintenance costs. Conventional zoning practices of the past allowed development to spread out into the countryside and widely separated housing from stores and job sites, causing an over-dependence on automobiles and ever-increasing traffic congestion. Standard subdivisions also consume farmland and natural areas in great quantities.

More compact development within a center reduces auto-dependence, preserves open space, and is easier to design in harmony with important

natural features, like wetlands, steep slopes, and existing tracts of woodland. Studies show that residential properties with trails, parks and other protected open space nearby are valued higher and appreciate more. Centered development also creates far fewer road extensions and more compact service areas for the municipality to maintain over the long-term, thus limiting the local tax burden. And since over one-third of auto trips are for local errands, car traffic can be reduced by a significant percentage in well-planned, walkable commercial and mixed-use areas.

City neighborhoods, town centers, villages, and smaller hamlets surrounded by lower density suburban and rural countrysides are a traditional land use pattern in Dutchess County and the Hudson River Valley. Although much of the Town of Poughkeepsie has been filled in over the last few decades by suburban-scale residential development and linear commercial highway strips, there are still significant areas of greenspace left. The Centers and Greenspace Plan, if implemented through local land use decisions, will help protect the Town's remaining large areas of natural and undeveloped land and refocus new development opportunities in a more centered pattern that allows adjacent businesses to mutually reinforce each other.

The Centers and Greenspace Plan map identifies three essential settlement patterns that characterize the Town’s landscape: large remaining greenspace parcels, existing and emerging centers, and intervening areas of suburban development.

## Greenspaces

Identified greenspaces include the major natural and open areas in the Town that have not been developed, remaining agricultural land, parks, golf courses, historic estate properties, and substantial buffer lands. As critical landscapes for Poughkeepsie’s future character, these greenspaces reflect not only the beauty of the individual parcels, but also the underlying natural systems that link these areas together. Stream corridors, wetlands, woodlands, and steep slopes are usually interconnected. These continuous natural



*Greenspace along Van Wagner Rd.*

systems allow open land to still flow through certain significant sections of the Town. By permitting wildlife to travel freely, limiting stream bank erosion and siltation, recharging groundwater, and leaving room for floodwaters to be stored, they help preserve the natural environment on which all communities and land uses depend.

A widely held assumption, based on past trends and current zoning designations, is that every

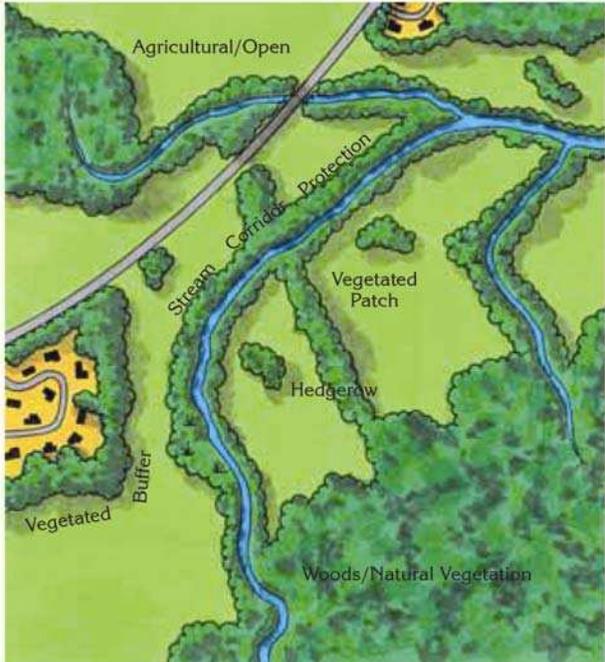
developable parcel will eventually be transformed into a new residential or commercial use. Instead, land use practices can allow a healthy level of development in the Town without destroying the natural and open characteristics of the landscape. Many local governments, not-for-profit groups and individuals in the Hudson Valley have been taking steps to preserve remaining greenspaces through targeted zoning regulations, cooperative easement agreements, conservation development alternatives, purchase of development rights, and transfer of development rights into growth centers.

Key Greenway principles for the remaining rural areas include:

1. Protect farmlands and farm soils through cluster subdivision, conservation development techniques, and coordinated efforts to support agricultural operations; and

2. Maintain the open, rural character of the landscape, protecting critical environmental areas and preventing strip commercial or residential development lining the roadways; and
3. Scatter new buildings in tree lines or group in hamlet-forms, retaining more than half of the land as part of interconnected open space systems.

Greenway Guides A1, A2 and A4, “Fitting into the Landscape,” “Preventing Strip Subdivisions,” and Saving Farmland with Development,” describe techniques that allow some development to occur in greenspace areas, while being sensitive to natural resources and open land. Other guides focus on natural resource protection, such as “Connected Habitats,” “Stream Corridor Protection,” or “Wellhead and Aquifer Protection.”



### Habitat Protection Goals

- Map and maintain a system of stream bank protection areas, hedgerows, road and trail corridors, wetlands, development buffer areas, small and medium sized forest patches, and woodland reservations.
- Strive for connectivity (vegetated corridors) and proximity (stepping stones) among the vegetated open space tracts.
- Limit development on large, consolidated open space tracts.
- Allow smaller wildlife areas (patches) of 20 acres or more to be liberally scattered throughout the town.
- Work to establish soft feathered edges along woodland boundaries.
- Allow fingers of wild land to connect with suburban and urban districts.
- Encourage use of native species in landscaping.

Certain properties in the Town can be designated for high priority protection based on the following criteria:

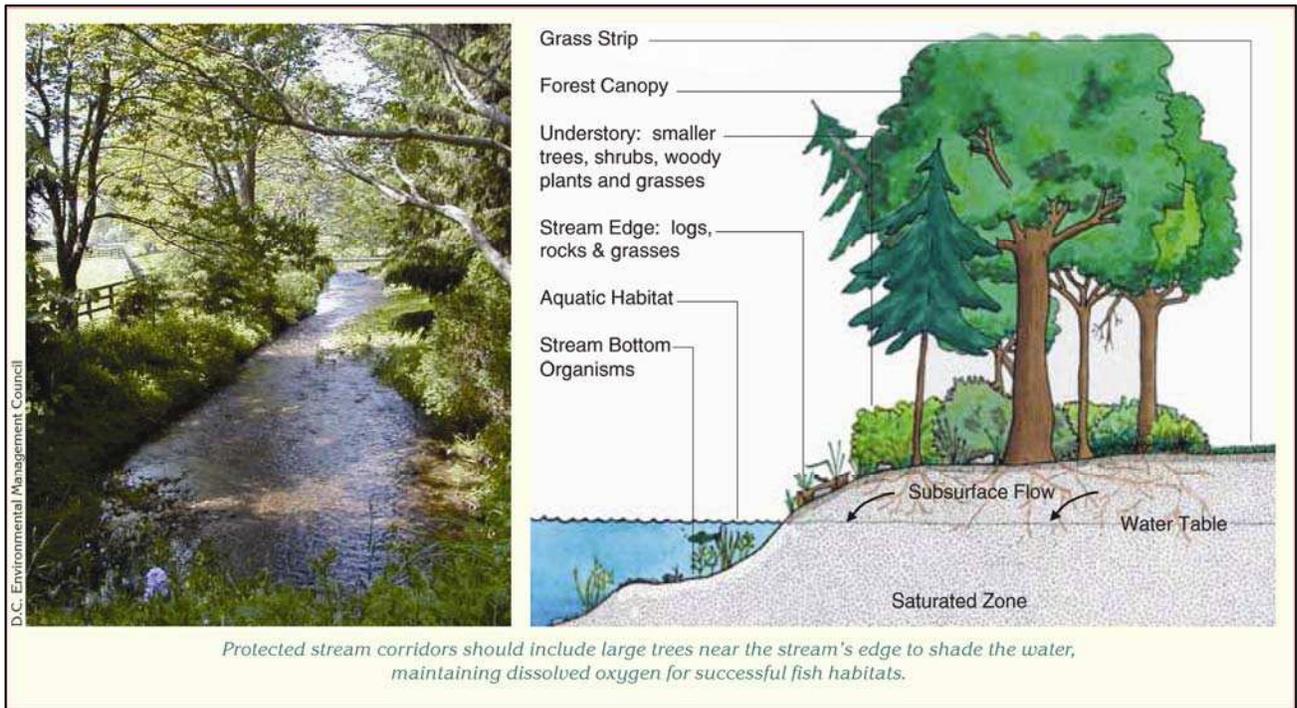
- Remaining farmland uses or agricultural soils;
- Gateway or greenbelt locations around centers;
- Unprotected important natural features or habitat;
- Historic landscapes or settings for historic structures; or
- Significant views (Catskills, Hudson River, multiple fields).

The Conservation Advisory Commission for the Town of Poughkeepsie is developing a list of properties that should be considered for preservation and purchase. The largest section of remaining rural landscape is in northern Poughkeepsie, around Bedell and Van Wagner Roads. This area contains most of the Town’s remaining open fields and contiguous undeveloped land, major wetlands, and steep slopes around Peach Hill. This

section is currently zoned for 45,000 square foot lots (approximately one acre per unit) with substantially higher density bonuses if sewer lines are extended into the area. In order to prevent suburban sprawl into the last rural section, the Town should designate this primary greenspace area for low density zoning in the three to five acres per unit range, with Planning Board discretion to require clustering that preserves a majority of land as open space and protects natural features and rural road characteristics. New development in the northern section of Poughkeepsie should instead be focused around the existing and potential centers in Fairview (including the former Hudson River Psychiatric Center campus), the lands to the east of the former Alfa-Laval industrial property and the existing commercial properties at Rochdale Road , and the emerging center at Salt Point Turnpike and Bedell Road.

The second major area of contiguous greenspace in the Town is in the southwest section, including the buffer areas around the Trap Rock quarry, Bowdoin Park, Mt. Alvernia, and the Audubon Preserve along the Wappinger Creek. Most of this property seems unlikely to be developed in the future, but should still be maintained as greenspace with an underlying zoning similar to that recommended for the three to five acre Bedell-Van Wagner Road area.

There are several other large greenspace sections in the central part of the Town, including the Locust Grove-Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery area, the former Girl Scout



Property on Spackenkill Road, the Vassar Farm area, and the undeveloped land to the east and south of the Casperkill Golf Course and including the golf course. These areas are largely surrounded by developed properties, but serve as important natural landscapes and greenbelt edges for the neighborhoods. They should also receive lower density designations in the one to three acres per unit range, subject to clustering and other techniques to maintain a high percentage of permanent greenspace and to protect natural

features. In particular, Locust Grove, the Vassar Farm, and the Casperkill Golf Course and the nearby baseball fields are highly valued as community recreation and open space uses and should be preserved.

The Casper Creek basin connects many of these central greenspace areas, from the Bedell Road area in the north, through Vassar College and the Vassar Farm, the Casperkill Country Club, and south through the quarry property into the Hudson. Restoring Casper Creek as a natural system along its entire length should be one of the long-term goals and benefits of protecting major greenspace parcels in the Town.

## **Centers**

Centers are the traditional focal points for community life. There is no hard and fast rule as to what constitutes a center. In fact, virtually any residential and non-residential uses may be appropriate provided they do not adversely infringe on other uses or diminish the traditional retail, office, cultural, and entertainment function of the center. Centers can range in size from small hamlets like New Hamburg to villages like Wappingers Falls and to the City of Poughkeepsie, an urban center with multiple neighborhoods. In the Town of Poughkeepsie all the centers are more village-scale, rather than city-scale. Arlington functions as the Town Center with a mix of smaller, main street-type stores surrounded by a close-knit variety of neighborhood housing, an attached area with larger-scale shopping opportunities, and institutional anchors like Vassar College, public schools, state offices, the Town Hall and Post Office. The Town also has multiple locations considered potentially emerging centers, particularly the larger concentrated clusters of shopping plazas along Route 9 and Route 44 with room for infill commercial development and the creation of connections to nearby housing. There are also smaller hamlet centers in, Red Oaks Mill, and Rochdale Road, as well as an emerging area along Salt Point Turnpike/Bedell Road that can be consolidated into a center form with careful site planning and sidewalk connections.

Key Greenway principles for Centers are:

1. Focus development within walking distance of a central core or neighborhood center to encourage alternatives to the car and efficient use of land;
2. Encourage a mixture of uses with prominent central locations for civic structures, such as post offices and municipal buildings; and
3. Identify priority growth areas, both infill redevelopment sites and growth areas that will strengthen existing centers or establish new centers.

Centers work best when they are compact and support a mixture of commercial uses within a reasonable walking distance, measured by the human scale of a five- to ten-minute walk. The ¼-mile radius defines the commercial core, designed to get people out of their cars to walk around the central business area. Thus, the commercial frontage along the central road should be firmly limited to ½-mile total length in designated centers. Beyond that, the center starts to become a strictly auto-oriented strip. The

concentric ½-mile radius or ten-minute walk defines the surrounding residential neighborhood, where residents will likely walk from the edge to the center and back. In some cases the outer walkable area can also contain larger scale uses, such as offices, research facilities, and schools. The street and building designs must foster a balance between walking and driving, still convenient for cars, but encouraging pedestrian access as well.

Proposals for Centers should be based on the Greenway Guides and the following specific guidelines for traditional neighborhood development:

- **Designed to park once and walk around.** Centers should be compact and pedestrian friendly with the core mix of commercial uses generally within a ¼-mile walking radius of the center and the surrounding residential area generally within a ½-mile radius.
- **Buildings brought up to the sidewalk and street.** Short front setbacks reinforce the sidewalk system, making walking more convenient and storefronts more visible.
- **Two or more story buildings with a mix of uses.** Multi-story buildings help shape the space of the street and allow an active mixture of uses in the core, with offices above restaurants, shops, and service businesses, sometimes mixed with residential units above the dominant commercial uses.
- **Central greens and centerpiece civic buildings.** Civic uses and parks or squares should be centrally located in prominent positions to promote community identity and public interaction.
- **Interconnected street system for easier access.** A network of connected streets and small blocks create shorter walking distances and help diffuse traffic.
- **Narrow, tree-lined streets.** Human scale streets with an enclosing canopy of trees can effectively maintain even traffic flow, but at a speed that is safer for walkers and more comfortable for shopping.
- **On-street parking and shared parking lots to the rear.** Parking is most efficient when shared between nearby uses, both on-street for convenient access and to protect sidewalks and in lots toward the rear, screened by buildings and landscaping.
- **Multiple housing options within walking distance.** Complete neighborhoods have a diverse range of dwelling types, such as single-family and two-family houses, attached townhouses, live/work units, condominiums and apartments in the areas in proximity to the core.

- **Protection of important natural and historic features.** Site designs should take advantage of existing historic structures, stone walls, and natural elements such as regulated wetlands and mature trees, to form a sense of place, greenway connections, and a rural edge.

The Centers and Greenspace Plan is designed to concentrate new development opportunities in compact layouts with a mix of retail, restaurants, offices, civic uses and, in specific centers housing, from the midpoint of the core to its edge. In those centers identified as appropriate for mixed residential and commercial uses a mix of uses can provide housing diversity for different ages and incomes, while protecting communities and business people against downturns in any one segment of the market. Seniors can “age in place” by moving to smaller, low-maintenance housing types in the same neighborhood, while compact unit design would provide a greater variety of housing opportunities for young singles and married couples. Compact centers will also protect natural features, especially in the surrounding residential districts and greenspace areas, and promote walking, biking, and transit alternatives, rather than the typical traffic-producing sprawl patterns. Traffic calming, bike lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks will all foster a safer street environment in the centers, while allowing vehicles to flow more smoothly at higher speeds in the sections between centers. Consolidating new commercial development in the centers will discourage strip development with multiple driveways along the primary state highways and help replace the demand for separated subdivisions along outlying roads. In those centers identified as appropriate for mixed residential and commercial development, such as the MacDonnell Heights Center, the Arlington Town Center, the Salt Point Center, and the Crown Heights Center, the high density residential potential effectively replaces the residential densities in the greenspace areas and preserves the greenspace areas by concentrating residential and commercial density within the centers.

### **Arlington Town Center**

The Arlington area extended neighborhood, centered around Raymond Avenue and



*Arlington Town Center then*

*... and now*

reaching east along Main Street and along Haight Avenue (Route 44/55), has all the

components of a traditional Town Center: historic buildings, civic uses like the Town Hall, Firehouse, Library, Post Office, schools, and churches, major institutional anchors such as Vassar College and the state transportation offices, a mix of housing types, and the most pedestrian-oriented business district in the Town. Unfortunately, Arlington has been fragmented by over-scaled highways, automobile-oriented site plans, and lack of good pedestrian connections. The recent redesigning of a portion of Raymond Avenue along Vassar College provides the Town's best opportunity in decades to pull together a coordinated long-term vision for Arlington. The Raymond Avenue area between Vassar College and Main Street is the historic heart of Poughkeepsie's Town Center, by far the best place in Town to reinforce a walkable neighborhood and main street business district, integrated with the college and featuring smaller-scale shops, restaurants with outdoor dining, and into-the-evening activities. A pedestrian-friendly specialty shopping and entertainment district in Arlington has great potential to attract college students, neighborhood residents, and destination visitors from a much wider area. But since Raymond Avenue was widened to four lanes in 1965, the business district has slowly stagnated, not just from the impacts of through traffic, but also from the competition of outlying shopping centers compared to Arlington's limited room for new growth. To truly turn Raymond Avenue around, the Town, Vassar College, NYSDOT, neighborhood groups and other interested parties need to apply an integrated approach to all three of the following primary problem areas:

- 1. The arterial highway width and appearance of Raymond Avenue favors through traffic over sidewalk and storefront activities.** The existing four-lane section north of Collegeview, without shade trees or other amenities, is uncomfortably tight for both drivers and walkers, and the four lanes south of Collegeview promote speeding and frequent lane switching. The dominance of traffic splits the neighborhood in half, rather than having Raymond Avenue serve as a central main street seam.

This plan recommends a tree-lined boulevard approach to rebuilding Raymond Avenue through the center of the Arlington neighborhood, one that is balanced in



*Barrier between the Vassar College Campus and Collegeview Ave.*

favor of walking, biking, lowering vehicle speeds and promoting local businesses. The final design should fully accommodate auto access, but not treat peak hour through traffic as the main priority. The existing four-lane highway configuration, with long crosswalks and the hazardous weaving of traffic between left-turning vehicles and parking or double-parked cars, is unacceptable. The redesign of Raymond Avenue should also be coordinated with traffic calming

measures on Collegeview, Grand, and other side streets to discourage speeding through the entire neighborhood.

**2. Vassar College has isolated itself from Arlington businesses by maintaining a wooded buffer between student circulation and the commercial district.**

Successful campus business districts – look at Princeton, for example, - offer close, visible frontages to make student-neighborhood interchange so convenient that it becomes part of daily routines. Right now, the central corner at Collegeview is only developed on the far side, while the southern Vassar-owned side of this main intersection is inactive space most of the time. Vassar should redesign its frontage to open direct access to Arlington and encourage more of its on-campus services to be fulfilled in the neighborhood center.

**3. The Arlington core neighborhood needs a stronger base of commercial and residential diversity to complement the college, but the center of Arlington has had little or no room to grow.**

A Project for Public Spaces study of Arlington in 2000 pointed out that specialty shopping districts like Arlington generally require double the amount of the existing commercial space to succeed. It is not enough to recycle businesses into the limited number of existing small shops. New stores bring new life and add a critical mass of customers. The Town planning and zoning process should encourage infill development in Arlington that is compatible with the existing neighborhood, but also provides a more diverse and energetic commercial core with opportunities for new buildings and businesses.

The Town, City, County, DOT, Vassar, the Business Improvement District, and neighborhood groups should cooperate on a coordinated land use and transportation approach for a revitalized Arlington Town Center that both expands the core Arlington



*Redevelopment potential along Route 44*

business district with new mixed-use buildings along the Vassar frontage and rebuilds Raymond Avenue as a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly boulevard. The parallel parking along Raymond Avenue, both north and south of Collegeview, should be designated for short-term turnover spaces that support the business district. Parking can also be rearranged on Collegeview to provide safer, diagonal parking on the south side and parallel parking on the north side. Coordinated rear yard parking behind the

Collegeview storefronts and the stores on the west side of Raymond Avenue would further ease parking concerns.

The Main Street section of Arlington is currently marred by too many auto-oriented uses to be pedestrian friendly, including car sales and repair, gas stations, billboards, and parking lots facing the street. The Town, working with the County, should upgrade the Main Street frontage with good sidewalks and crosswalks, street trees and shared access drives, wherever possible, to eliminate curb cuts. Revised zoning and site plan standards throughout the Arlington business center should also encourage new uses that feature quality storefront architecture, landscaping, and a mix of uses, not site plans arranged around asphalt frontages.

Although not part of the identified Arlington Town Center, the large, half-empty shopping plaza site along Route 44 offers a timely opportunity to rebuild this 21-acre property as a commercial complement to the mostly commercial eastern Arlington area. The Town should revise its standards for shopping centers to encourage a broader variety of business and mixed commercial use activities. Instead of the existing one-story retail boxes surrounding an oversized parking lot, development plan for this area could include a mix of one and multi-story buildings, facing a street and including a sidewalk system connected to all three surrounding roads with parking located at the side and rear of the buildings and pedestrian walkways linking the lots with the surrounding neighborhood. The Casperkill Creek, which has been relegated to a drainage ditch at the edge of the parking lot, could be restored as a natural element in the site plan, perhaps combined with a central organizing green. Any larger floor plate stores or offices could still be integrated into the overall site plan without parking lots becoming the dominant element.

### **Emerging Centers along Route 9**

Emerging centers in the Town are existing concentrated areas of primarily commercial development that can be consolidated into more diverse, mixed-use centers over time. This infill redevelopment strategy offers the best long-term cure for the almost continuous Route 9 strip with its seemingly endless string of commercial driveways, traffic lights, confusing competition of overly large signs, bland building types, and unattractive expanses of half-empty parking lots. It is better for both the Town's economic development and its environment to redevelop existing "greyfields" (underutilized malls or commercial plazas with lots of unused asphalt, but good central locations and access) than to clear and pave over the last remaining "greenfields."

Existing malls and shopping plazas, although they begin as clusters of strictly retail arrangements surrounding large parking lots with poor pedestrian connections to the nearby community, are still preferable to stand-alone strip stores because they concentrate development, share access and parking, and allow walking between mutually reinforcing businesses. But even in the current prosperous economy, many of the major commercial centers in the Town are experiencing significant vacancies, from the newer plaza across from Marist College in the north to the older plaza in east of Arlington and to the major mall in the southern part of Town.

Each of the two emerging centers identified along Route 9, the Fairview area north of the City, and the Crown Heights section share certain characteristics, but will require an individualized redevelopment strategy tailored to the current layout and the needs of the property owners and neighborhood. They each have existing infrastructure connections and access to a major arterial, zoning for intensive uses, and substantial room for redevelopment in vacant buildings, excess parking areas, or by rebuilding outdated sites and structures. These emerging centers also have nearby residential districts within walking distance that could be connected by sidewalk and street systems. The presence of these existing, high density residential developments adjacent to these emerging centers provide a unique opportunity to develop a successful center concept that has a ready-made customer population.

The Greenway Guide C-1, “Commercial Strip Redevelopment” outlines seven steps to retrofit the strip, by improving traffic circulation, upgrading landscaping, adding sidewalks for more attractive and walkable places, infilling vacant parking lots, and redeveloping buildings with a multi-story mix of offices and other uses. The Town should adopt zoning and design guidelines to encourage designated mixed-use and commercial use centers along Route 9 so that, with in each successive site plan, commercial plazas can be redeveloped into higher value neighborhood centers, and older retail strip uses between centers can be gradually phased out, whenever possible.

## Seven Steps to Retrofit the Strip

Communities can begin to reclaim existing shopping strips outside village and town centers by agreeing to a long-term redesign program that gradually transforms strips into mixed use sub-centers with each successive site plan application:



1. Restrict further development of outlying highway frontage and limit existing commercial districts to under 1/2 mile in length;
2. Consolidate entrances along the road to a few main driveways with internal service streets based on a block system to connect businesses in between;
3. Help unify the streetscape with continuous street trees, high quality landscaping, and, where possible, planted medians to prevent unlimited left hand turns;
4. Build sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the area to create connections to shared parking, public transportation, walking between stores and to nearby housing;



5. Fill in the fronts of large parking lots with small, closely spaced or attached storefronts to build a street frontage with courtyard parking behind;
6. With buildings up front, attractive architecture, wall signs and sidewalks can be featured along the frontage, not parking lots and pole signs;
7. Encourage a mix of housing and other uses adjacent to the shopping to begin to build a walkable neighborhood rather than a strictly commercial driving district.



The long-term goal is to not only create more economically successful and connected centers, but to address the increasing traffic concerns along Route 9. Greenway Guide C-



2, “From Congestion to Circulation,” proposes a three-prong approach to taming traffic congestion: strictly limit access drives onto major roads, disperse vehicles on interconnected secondary street systems, and mix land uses closer together to encourage alternatives to the automobile. Route 9 needs a coordinated approach to land use and transportation issues. Numerous individual commercial driveways and traffic lights, and not enough convenient rear connections between adjacent commercial sites and surrounding residential areas, force too much traffic onto Route 9. The proposed redevelopment of certain centers along Route 9 is meant to facilitate traffic and land use solutions by consolidating access points, building a secondary street and sidewalk system, mixing more uses in closer proximity, and allowing traffic to flow uninterrupted between centers.

As an example of applying these principles to an emerging center along Route 9, a design concept map depicting a scheme to link the commercial Fairview Center with surrounding residential and mixed use properties has been included. The proposed large-scale mixed use redevelopment of the former Hudson River Psychiatric Center (HRPC), the creation of a County park on the waterfront land to the west, the recent development of the Mid-Hudson Plaza, and the ongoing construction of Marist College housing to the east of Route 9 make this area ripe for coordinated planning as a designated commercial center. In particular, the main buildings and central grounds of the HRPC are a National Landmark Historic District, deserving historically sensitive redevelopment. But this beautiful historic property contains almost one million square feet of existing buildings, many in a serious state of disrepair. A mix of housing types with additional retail, office and service uses in a village-like on the HRPC property would create a walkable northern neighborhood to support the commercial Fairview Center, while generating enough revenue and tax base to support the successful restoration of many of the historic structures.

The Fairview Center design concepts first suggest a Route 9-9G road connection through the HRPC property and a new north-south street along an abandoned rail line. These

interconnected secondary streets would provide alternative routes for existing and proposed traffic, diffusing flow in multiple directions rather than funneling all vehicles onto Route 9. Traffic calming techniques that protect sidewalks, shorten pedestrian crossing times, and keep traffic moving, but at a design speed of 30 miles per hour, should also be considered as part of an upcoming Route 9 corridor study sponsored by the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council. The Fairview Center would be understood to include the Fairview Industrial Park.

Consistent with Greenway principles and the emphasis on greenspaces in this plan, the design concepts recommend maintaining a permanent green frontage along Route 9 north of the Marist campus to the Hyde Park line. Pedestrian connections are promoted by a Hudson River Greenway Trail from the Quiet Cove Park south through the Marist campus into the City and a sidewalk extension along Route 9 to the park. Alternatives to the automobile are also stressed by closely integrating the proposed development on the southern section of the HRPC property and the Marist East Campus section along Fulton Street into a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use center concept. Fulton Street along the southern edge of the Mid-Hudson Plaza should be developed as a tree-lined main street center for Fairview, creating linkages to the residential neighborhood to the east. The entire plaza should be retrofitted over time, using the Greenway Guides to build better pedestrian connections and landscaping for the large parking areas. Marist College has agreed to work with the Town, the Department of Transportation, and others to improve frontages along Route 9 and Fulton Street and consider alternative long-term solutions for Route 9 crossings, including the option of a future mid-block overpass between buildings set close to the road.

Along Route 44 immediately east of and adjacent to the former DeLaval property is vacant land that is suitable to support a new mixed use center. This center, located at MacDonnell Heights, would straddle the north and the south sides of Route 44. It could support a variety of housing types and would ideally include a mix of neighborhood scale retail and commercial uses. The MacDonnell Heights Center would utilize a compact design for the commercial and residential developments to preserve open space and to allow the commercial uses to function as neighborhood businesses and not solely as an auto oriented destination retail strip. Allowing high density residential development in what is otherwise a fairly low density rural area would ensure the long-term viability of the center by providing a steady customer base for the businesses that would locate there. The introduction of a mixed use center would also support the long-term reuse and rehabilitation of the DeLaval industrial complex.

### **Hamlet Centers**

The Town's smaller centers include New Hamburg, Red Oaks Mill, and Rochdale Road, as well as a potential emerging hamlet/center along Salt Point Turnpike. These hamlets might be smaller scale than the Arlington Town Center, Route 44, and the Route 9 centers, and consist of a compact commercial and mixed-use core area serving primarily local needs with a strong surrounding residential neighborhood.

New Hamburg, on the river at the southern tip of Poughkeepsie, is the most historically intact hamlet in Town and, except for the following two primary issues, should be preserved as close to its current condition as possible. First, the Metro-North parking lot has grown out of proportion to the hamlet, leading to serious traffic and visual problems. The Town should work with Metro-North to avoid any further expansion of surface parking at this station, to limit commuter traffic as much as possible on hamlet streets, and to dramatically improve landscaping in and around the large parking lot. Second, the oil tank facility, located on a too-small parcel in the center of the hamlet without room for buffers, should eventually be removed to an industrial area with other tanks. This key waterfront parcel, or at least part of it,

could then be considered as a small park for local river access.



Red Oaks Mill also has a long history, a beautiful location along the Wappinger Creek, and is an important commercial center for the primarily residential southeastern section of town. The Town should implement zoning consistent with the existing low density suburban center and surrounding area. The center zoning should be comprised of 1 story neighborhood

businesses limited to retail offerings, service and office/artistic/crafts work space. The residential areas surrounding the center should be maintained as low density single family housing so as not to disturb the established character of the neighborhood. The Town should encourage the County and State to establish improved pedestrian and bicycle access for the surrounding areas to Red Oaks Mill by constructing bike paths and/or sidewalks on Vassar Road, Spackenkill Road, and Route 376. All new building and amendments to existing site plans should include upgrades to visual impacts of building facades, landscaping, sidewalks and street trees as necessary and wherever possible, encourage visual and physical public access to the creek.

Rochdale Road, originally home to mill operations along Wappinger Creek, now has a largely vacant landscape business and a commercial moving and storage business as its most prominent features. The surrounding residential neighborhood is strong and fairly compact, but the hamlet suffers from the lack of sidewalks, core commercial buildings, or any other sign that this place has a central identity. The Town could work with NYSDOT in the future to reduce the wide open highway appearance along this section of Route 44 and replace wide shoulders with planting strips, street trees, sidewalks and bike paths. Landscaping and trees along the frontages would soften the street views of parking lots and help to slow down speeding traffic. The former Herman's Nursery property and the Roe Moving property should also be targeted for small scale commercial development consistent with hamlet center guidelines. Lack of sewers and long-term

drainage and floodplain problems are issues that need to be addressed in any future development plans for this area and will continue to limit residential development and high density residential uses.

The Town has experienced considerable growth along Salt Point Turnpike over the last decade around the small existing neighborhood business district. Rather than continue to spread development out into the remaining greenspaces around Bedell Road, this plan recommends zoning the land at the intersection of Salt Point and Bedell road for a mixed-use center with a commercial core, parking primarily screened behind the building lines, attached and small lot housing close-by to the rear, and an interconnected street and sidewalk system extending out into the existing neighborhood. This is one of the best locations in the Town for a new compact hamlet center/town center with a preserved greenbelt of surrounding natural and open land.

## **Suburban Areas**

Suburbs are separated, single-use development areas outside of centers, such as strictly single-family subdivisions or highway business districts. Suburban residential projects tend to spread out on larger lots into the countryside wherever land is available, while commercial zones line up in a strip fashion along arterial highways. Suburban land patterns are almost entirely reliant on cars for daily transportation. This overdependence on vehicles creates an unsustainable suburban contradiction – how low-density development leads to high densities of traffic congestion.

The appeal of “moving to the country” into outlying single-family subdivisions includes more space and privacy. However, with each new subdivision the countryside fades away, the surrounding open land soon becomes someone else’s back yard, and the demand for more spread-out services forces up local taxes. If the suburban real estate pitch is primarily more privacy, each subsequent sale in the area defeats the purpose and devalues existing properties. If, on the other hand, the central goal is creating community, mixed-use development within a walkable scale can add new activities to the neighborhood and be a positive contribution to a stronger sense of community. The attractive aspects of suburban life, including larger single-family houses and access to parks and natural areas, can be satisfied without covering the countryside with house lots and clogging our roads with traffic.

Key Greenway principles for existing Suburbs include:

1. Gradually connect separated subdivisions into neighborhoods through interconnecting streets and pathways;
2. Create focal points for community interaction (small commercial cluster, civic building, park or playground) within a 5- to 10-minute walk of most houses to act as a neighborhood center;
3. Encourage retail strips to become mixed-use centers over time by limiting the length of the district and promoting infill to the rear and along the fronts of large parking areas.

The current Town of Poughkeepsie zoning map has many existing single-family suburban areas in an irregularly shaped maze of separate districts, based on minimum 10,000, 15,000, and 20,000 square foot lots. Subdivision streets are generally not connected, often forcing out-of-the-way travel routes for local traffic, as well as service and emergency vehicles. Rather than diffusing traffic into an interconnected network with more directional choices, winding streets and cul-de-sacs funnel all traffic onto a few collector routes, such as Spackenkill and Vassar roads, which soon become overloaded.

The Town should use every opportunity to connect new streets and prohibit dead-end streets, unless justified by unusual topographical conditions or natural constraints. Certain higher priority street connections could be identified based on better access for emergency vehicles or school buses. Any retrofit connections can be combined with traffic calming measures to prevent speeding on local streets. If existing house or lot locations prevent interconnections, rights-of-way for paths can sometimes be secured to at least allow linkages for walking, especially to nearby parks or schools. All new subdivision and site plan proposals should include consideration of surrounding parcels to create logical street and sidewalk connections and the preservation of contiguous natural areas.

This plan also recommends the consolidation of the mostly built-out R-10, R-15, and R-20 districts to dramatically simplify the zoning map and to emphasize larger neighborhood relationships, rather than the current array of contorted zoning districts. A combined single-family residential district could acknowledge the existing range of lot sizes as conforming, but require new lots to be large enough to discourage further subdivision of existing suburban parcels outside of designated centers.

The Town's multi-family zones are also in mostly scattered suburban locations, primarily approved on a project-by-project basis. New attached and detached housing options should be mixed in and around centers, with close access to neighborhood stores, services, and public transportation, rather than in isolated projects, located in outlying multi-family zones.

Existing strip highway business districts between centers would be hopefully phased out over time as the market adjusts to more integrated commercial centers with shared access and parking and a mix of uses nearby. At the very least, no new strip zoning should be approved and existing highway business districts outside of designated centers should not be extended.

## **SECTION IV IMPLEMENTATION**

To be effective, the Poughkeepsie Town Plan must be a working document, continually consulted by municipal officials when carrying out various duties. It is not a static document; rather, it should reflect changing conditions. The policies contained in this Plan should be reviewed by a Town Board appointed committee at least every five years, and any amendments that are recommended should be incorporated following public participation and hearing. The entire Plan should be updated within ten years of its adoption.

The first step in implementing this Plan is for the Town Board to adopt its recommendations for the future growth and improvement of the Town. Once the Poughkeepsie Town Plan is adopted, there are many strategies that the Town and its citizens can use to implement both long range policies and specific recommendations for future action. Some of the primary mechanisms that can be used to meet the Town's goals are outlined in the following paragraphs.

### **Zoning Law**

The Town's zoning law contains the rules that control the use, bulk, design and intensity of what can be done within each zoning district, and the zoning map delineates these zoning districts. Zoning is designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, and is the most common means of carrying out a community's comprehensive plan. Zoning also gives the community the opportunity to organize and streamline the development process. The Zoning Code of the Town of Poughkeepsie was last comprehensively updated in 1993, with several minor amendments following its adoption. Many of the changes proposed in the Poughkeepsie Town Plan will not be legally binding until the enactment of a new zoning law. The Town should review and update its zoning law as soon as possible to be consistent with the recommendations of this Plan and to allow for their implementation.

Although the zoning process is only a part of an effective implementation program, zoning literally shapes the community and is an essential tool in determining its character. A new zoning law should make the granting of variance requests less likely, as Town officials upgrade sign, landscaping and other standards to improve conditions Town-wide. The most important goal of this plan is the incorporation of its recommendations into the zoning law and subdivision regulations.

In this regard it should be noted that certain matters relating to signs and architectural standards for residential and commercial buildings remain incomplete as part of the 2007 Zoning Law amendments. Due to the interest of business groups in the proposed sign regulations, in January 2007 the Town Board formed an ad hoc committee comprised of select town board members, business persons, sign manufacturers, and lay public to review the regulations (see Article IX of the Zoning Law), and to report back to the Town

Board with specific recommendations for revisions. As of the date of adoption of this Town Plan and the Zoning Law the committee had not yet made it's report. With respect to architectural standards for residential and commercial uses, the Town Board was advised by its planning consultant that the preparation of such standards typically involves formation of a committee of architects and designers with expertise in such matters and could expect to involve some months to develop prior to introducing the standards for public review. Rather than attempt to develop architectural standards while also reviewing the proposed Town Plan, Zoning Law, and Subdivision Law amendments, the Town Board determined that this effort should await individualized study.

The Town Board anticipates that it will receive the recommendations of the ad hoc Sign Committee by the fall of 2007, and is committed to reviewing these recommendations and making a determination as to any additional amendments to the Zoning Law by the end of the second quarter of 2008.

With respect to architectural standards the Town Board is committed to forming a committee in January 2008 and charging that committee to make recommendations on architectural standards for residential and commercial properties within one year of its formation. The Town Board will make a determination as to any amendments to the Zoning Law by the end of the second quarter of 2009.

### **Subdivision Regulations**

Subdivision regulations govern how land is divided into smaller lots, and ensure that the necessary public facilities, such as streets and water and sewage facilities are provided in accordance with municipal standards. The Town adopted its current Subdivision Regulations in 1974, with review authority assigned to the Planning Board. These regulations should be reviewed for consistency with the recommendations of this Plan and any subsequent revisions in the zoning law. In addition to making the regulations consistent with the Plan, illustrations should be incorporated to clearly demonstrate both recommended and unacceptable ways of developing land and graphically convey the requirements that applicants are expected to meet.

### **Site Plan Approval**

The zoning law specifies the types of building proposals that are subject to site plan review by the Planning Board. The site plan review process provides the opportunity to assure that development is well-planned and that standards regarding landscaping, driveway or road design and placement, building placement and scale, signs, lighting, drainage, pedestrian access and many other detailed features have been properly interpreted and applied. In many instances, it is the only means by which the Planning Board can assure that major development proposals are compatible with the existing character of the community centers and the Town as a whole. Many of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan's policy recommendations, especially when integrated into a revised zoning law, can be specifically cited during the Planning Board's discretionary design decisions

in the site plan review process. Architectural standards for buildings and signs should be reviewed as part of the site plan review process to improve the economic and aesthetic quality of the Town. Standards for architectural and signage should be considered. Public participation during this review process will continue to ensure that all appropriate concerns are addressed, and should be strongly encouraged. The Town's Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations should include architectural, landscaping, access, and other design standards or guidelines to supplement Greenway Connections and give more specific guidance to local boards and applicants.

### **Greenway Connections**

The Greenway Guides section of *Greenway Connections* is a toolbox of strategies to deal with everyday design issues relating to open space protection, community development and redevelopment, environmental preservation, and site planning. The guides are concise and heavily illustrated, providing a clear vision of the community's preferences. These illustrated guides should be routinely used by the Town's review boards to assist with their reviews. They should also be provided to developers early in the process to make the Town's expectations known up front, and avoid conflicts and costly redesigns later in the process. The new zoning law should be consistent with Greenway principles in terms of upgraded lighting, landscaping, signs, parking, and other standards.

### **Historic Districts and Landmarks**

Under New York State Law, communities are empowered to enact special controls in areas of historic significance. Once historic districts or local landmarks have been designated in the zoning law, municipalities can control development in or adjacent to these properties by regulating architectural design, façade changes, and demolition requests. In addition to a required local review, any development proposal on or adjacent to a site which is on or eligible for the State or National Register of Historic Places is subject to an extra level of review during the SEQRA process. The Town Board enacted legislation establishing a Historic Preservation Commission and standards for the designation and modification of local landmarks in 1995. The Town should supplement its existing historic preservation legislation by adopting written and graphic guidelines to visually define design compatibility.

### **Parks and Recreation Plan**

Under Town Law, the Town may require that either land or money-in-lieu of land be delivered to the Town for developing parks before the Planning Board approves a subdivision plat. This power can be beneficial in helping the Town acquire additional park and recreation space and for capital park improvements. Since money-in-lieu of land must be used for acquisition or capital improvements, not operating or maintenance costs, the recreation fund should be targeted at specific park projects. In order to determine how this money or land should be used, the Town should develop a comprehensive park plan using the Parks and Recreation and the Centers and Greenspace Plan sections of this Plan

as a guide. The Planning Board can then make a recommendation to the Town Board about whether to accept land or money in-lieu-of land, based upon this Plan.

### **Clustering or Conservation Development**

Clustering, also referred to as conservation development, allows the number of dwelling units normally allowed for a parcel to be grouped into one portion of a site, while leaving the remainder of the property open. The overall density on the property does not exceed what would be allowed under a conventional subdivision layout. New York State enabling legislation authorizes legislative bodies to permit the Planning Board to approve cluster developments, and to mandate clustering where appropriate. Municipalities may cluster any type of development that is permitted in their zoning law and adopt criteria for deciding where a cluster alternative should be required. Municipalities may also require the remaining open space to be placed under conservation easement to ensure its protection in perpetuity.

The advantages of this concept lie in the preservation of open space and the flexibility given in site design for areas with sensitive natural or historic features. In addition, affordability in housing may be realized through reductions in both the amount and cost of infrastructure, such as roadways, utilities, and other site improvements. Cluster developments are a good way of helping to provide open space systems in the Town and giving definition to community centers, as well as conserving the agricultural open space and scenic vistas which contribute to the overall rural character of the Town.

## How to Create Conservation Subdivisions

### Step 1

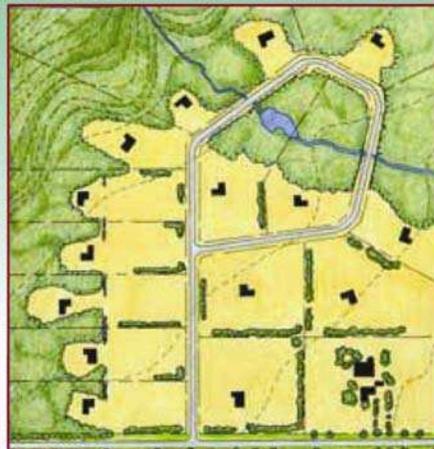
Require a map of the open space system for the parcel and surrounding area.

### Step 2

Conventional 3-acre sketch layout determines maximum lot count under existing zoning.

### Step 3

The same number of houses can fit in to the landscape while preserving 80 percent of the open space



#### Locate Development Pocket

A sketch analysis of the area provides all the basic information to calculate how a development can fit into the landscape - what land should be protected and potential development pockets.

#### Typical Superimposed Subdivision

- Productive farmland lost forever.
- Pleasant view from road eradicated.
- Stream corridor cut off by backyards.
- Large lots divide up and dominate the landscape.
- Individual road for each subdivision.
- Costly road and bridge construction.
- No chance for residents to enjoy special site features.

#### Conservation Subdivision

- Large farm field protected.
- Rural view from road retained.
- Trail system allows access to stream.
- Smaller, but substantial individual lot sizes with central green.
- Potential connection to adjacent parcel.
- Less expensive construction costs.
- Residents have views of open field and direct access to woods.

## Other Open Space Techniques

A variety of innovative techniques could be used to help the Town of Poughkeepsie retain its character through selective open space protection. Outright public acquisition, the purchase of development rights, or the negotiation of conservation easements on key parcels, are among the most direct ways to protect important properties. Conservation easements are generally voluntary agreements filed with the deed for permanent protection that still maintain private ownership of the land. Deductions on state and federal taxes for any charitable donation or reduced property taxes are sometimes available as incentives to landowners, depending on the particulars of the property. Such easements are often proposed in conjunction with cluster or limited development projects.

Another conservation option is a transfer of development rights (TDR). This program, which has been authorized by New York State Law, allows future development potential (usually expressed in dwelling units per acre) to be relocated from a sending property to a property within a designated receiving area. To implement a TDR program, the Town Board must identify the "sending district" where land conservation is sought, and the "receiving district" where development of property is desired. The TDR program would be useful for relocating development from the designated greenspace areas in the Town to the designated centers, as indicated on the Centers and Greenspace Plan.

### **Capital Program**

A town's program for allocating its financial resources is a powerful tool for implementing its comprehensive plan. The capital program is a summary of the community's public improvement needs (usually projected over five to six years), the estimated costs of the improvements, and an ordering of priorities for the provision of improvements. Recreation expenditures, highway programs, water and sewer system projects, and investments in police, fire and ambulance services outlined in the capital program should closely reflect the objectives and priorities that the Town Plan and any further studies have identified.

### **Official Map**

Municipalities may use an official map to identify sites that will be needed for future public improvements. Adoption of an official map is the responsibility of the Town Board, but the map is usually prepared and amended according to the Planning Board's recommendations. Such a map would empower the Town to dictate the specific location of needed streets, drainage systems, recreation sites and other public improvements.

### **Private-Public Partnerships**

Shrinking federal and state monies for municipal projects require local governments to find creative solutions to fulfill community needs. As proposals for development are received, the Town has the opportunity to work with applicants to provide for those needs. The Town can supply resources and negotiate with the development community to find innovative methods for solving problems it might not be able to solve on its own.

### **Grants**

The Federal government makes money available to local municipalities each year through the Community Development Block Grant Program, which is administered by the Community Development section of the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. Funds are available for projects that benefit a community's low and moderate income residents and neighborhoods. Eligible projects can range from sidewalk improvements to rehabilitation of housing units to recreation enhancements and more. Many sections of the Town and individual homeowners qualify for this assistance. There are also a variety of other grants available from the federal, state and county government

and other sources. These include the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, NYS Environmental Protection Fund and Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act, the Hudson River Valley Greenway Program, the NYS Brownfields Cleanup Program, the Dutchess County Partnership for Manageable Growth for Open Space and Farmland Protection, and many others. The Town should continue to take advantage of these opportunities to provide public improvements and amenities consistent with the recommendations of this Town Plan.

### **Environmental Protection Regulations**

Specific regulations incorporated into the zoning law governing the use of floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, mature stands of trees or specimen trees, stream corridors, aquifers, scenic open spaces, sensitive wildlife habitat, steep slopes, or other special natural features allow the Town to set standards to protect its physical environment.

With respect to the Town's existing Aquatic Resource Protection Law the Town Board is committed to working with Town building, engineering, and planning staff along with the Conservation Advisory Committee to consider revisions to the existing Aquatic Resource Protection Law. It is expected that this effort will commence in January 2008 and that recommendations would be provided to the Town Board within one year thereafter. The Town Board would then make a determination as to any amendments by the end of the second quarter of 2009.

With respect to the a Tree Preservation Law the Town Board is committed to working with Town building, engineering, and planning staff along with the Conservation Advisory Committee to prepare a draft local law. It is expected that this effort will commence in January 2008 and that recommendations would be provided to the Town Board within one year thereafter. The Town Board would then make a determination as to any amendments by the end of the second quarter of 2009.

With respect to steep slopes protection the Town Board is committed to seeking the input of the town engineering and planning staff for amendments to the existing Erosion and Sediment Control Law as part of the Town's on-going Phase II Stormwater compliance planning. The Town Board expects that it will have proposed amendments to the Erosion and Sediment Control Law by the end of 2008.

### **Watershed Protection**

The quality of any water resource is dependent upon how its watershed is managed. The Town of Poughkeepsie lies within the Wappinger Creek Watershed, which covers 135,400 acres in 11 towns and 2 villages, and flows into the Hudson River at New Hamburg. The health of this watershed requires cooperation across these local government boundaries. The Wappinger Creek Watershed Intermunicipal Council, comprised of municipal officials from each of the communities within the watershed, has developed a set of goals for the preservation, restoration and management of the

watershed. Some of the methods for achieving these goals include mapping stormwater discharge points, protecting and restoring forest buffers, and review municipal codes to revise sprawl-inducing regulations. A committee is also forming to address issues of preservation and management for the Fallkill Creek.

### **State Environmental Quality Review Act**

The New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) legislation ensures that environmental factors will be granted the same weight as social and economic factors in the decision-making process. It also provides for communication between governmental agencies and the private sector, public participation, and a means to consider project alternatives and mitigation measures. It should be noted that SEQRA regulations undergo periodic review and it is the responsibility of local officials to be aware of changes in the law as they occur.

The provisions of SEQRA can apply to rezonings, subdivisions, redevelopment projects, land use plans, zoning regulations, or comprehensive resource management plans. Most development actions are subject to SEQRA; however, the regulations as published by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 6NYCRR Part 617, provide a specific explanation of applicable actions. In addition to the lists of Type I and Type II actions (actions requiring or not requiring SEQRA review) outlined in the State legislation, SEQRA Law authorizes a municipality to develop its own list of additional Type I and II actions. The legislation also allows a municipality to designate critical environmental areas (CEAs), which affords the resource a higher level of consideration during the SEQRA process.

### **Comprehensive Plan Review Committee**

The Poughkeepsie Town Plan has been designed to shape the future growth and development of the Town in accordance with the expressed goals of its residents and official representatives. While many of its policies can be realized through continuing community participation and consensus, the specific changes enumerated in the Plan require a comprehensive implementation initiative.

To further the goals and policies of the Town Plan, the Town Board may evaluate and analyze on a site-specific basis the best use of an identified parcel of land regardless of the underlying zoning. If the Town Board determines, after careful review, which review shall consist of a land conservation analysis and any other analysis deemed necessary by the Town Board, that the property is appropriate for a more flexible land use plan, the Town Board may entertain an application to rezone the property subject to approval of a development master plan. In its deliberations as to whether to entertain an application, the Town Board shall consider and give weight to all factors including, but not limited to proposed uses, public benefit, and protection of natural features such as water bodies, wetlands, steep slopes, existing vegetation, ridgelines, and scenic views.

The Town Board should establish a Town Plan Review Committee. This committee should consider all the policies and recommendations in the Plan, meet periodically to determine feasible priorities, and recommend actions to the Town Board.

### **Additional Methods**

These fundamental mechanisms for guiding community change are only a few of the numerous tools available to the Town. Additional options include:

- Scenic Roads Program
- Bikeway Program
- Performance Standards
- Architectural Review
- Affordable Housing Requirements
- Street Tree Program

## SECTION V – FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

### A) Introduction

For the purposes of compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), the Poughkeepsie Town Plan shall also serve as the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS). SEQR establishes a process requiring the consideration of environmental factors early in the planning stages of actions that are undertaken, approved or funded by state, regional or local agencies. This systematic approach allows for adverse impacts to be either avoided or mitigated to the extent practicable. The "action" that requires SEQR review is adoption of the Plan and related Zoning Law and Land Subdivision Law amendments by the Town Board. This GEIS describes the potential impacts of such adoption.

According to § 617.10 of 6 NYCRR Part 617 State Environmental Quality Review Act:

*"Generic EISs may be broader, and more general than site or project specific EISs and should discuss the logic and rationale for the choices advanced. They may also include an assessment of specific impacts if such details are available. They may be based on conceptual information in some cases. They may identify the important elements of the natural resource base as well as the existing and projected cultural features, patterns and character. They may discuss in general terms the constraints and consequences of any narrowing of future options. They may present and analyze in general terms a few hypothetical scenarios that could and are likely to occur."*

This Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) has been prepared as directed by the Town Board of the Town of Poughkeepsie as the Lead Agency. This FGEIS has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law, the "State Environmental Quality Review Act" (SEQRA), and the implementing regulations in 6 NYCRR 617. This FGEIS responds to the written comments received during the public comment period on the Draft GEIS that commenced on May 25, 2007 and closed on July 9, 2007, including comments received at two public hearings held on June 13, 2007 and June 27, 2007. It is important to note that the public hearings on the Draft GEIS were held simultaneously with the public hearings on the draft Town Plan, the draft Zoning Law, and the draft Subdivision Law. Although the public hearing on the DGEIS was closed on June 27, 2007 the public hearings on the draft Town Plan, the draft Zoning Law, and the draft Subdivision Law remained open thereafter. As a result, this FGEIS responds only to those comments pertaining directly to the DGEIS, because at the time of acceptance and publication of this FGEIS the public hearings on the proposed Town Plan, Zoning Law, and Subdivision Law, remain open and subject to additional public comment. Further,

the Town Board may chose to consider any additional public comment as amendments to the draft Town Plan, draft Zoning Law, and draft Subdivision Law. Depending on the significance of such additional amendments a Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement may be required.

Responses to each of the substantive comments received concerning the DGEIS may be found in a separate document entitled “Final GEIS – Comments and Responses to the Draft GEIS” which is hereby incorporated by reference into this FGEIS. The responses serve to clarify, supplement, and provide specific answers to the relevant topics discussed in the DGEIS. Where necessary, revisions have been made to this FGEIS to clarify the analysis of the DGEIS and to explain revisions to the proposed Town Plan, Zoning Law, and Subdivision Law.

All descriptions, comments, evaluations and recommendations regarding potential environmental impacts, and their significance, are based on data available at the time this FGEIS was printed. This FGEIS complies with the requirements of SEQRA as to scope, adequacy and content. It addresses the reasonably anticipated adverse and beneficial environmental impacts that may be generated by the proposed application. This FGEIS was accepted as complete by the Town Board on August 22, 2007, and the period for public consideration of the Final GEIS ends on September 4, 2007.

The proposed Town Plan and its recommendations carefully consider the environmental resources found within the Town. The inventory and analysis sections of the Plan clearly identify both the man-made and the natural resources that are critical to the Town of Poughkeepsie. In many ways the Poughkeepsie Town Plan is a mitigation plan against the potential effect of residential and commercial development on the remaining limited environmental resources of the Town of Poughkeepsie. In addition, the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Land Subdivision Law amendments that would implement the goals and policies of the Plan strive to guide new development in a manner that will enhance the community in the future.

Environmental sustainability is one guiding principle that was determined early in the comprehensive planning process. Balancing environmental sustainability, fiscal responsibility, and respect for property owners is an important approach that is evident when considering the Plan recommendations and zoning amendments as a whole.

It is important to note that adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Amendments will not result in the approval of any development activity, either private or public. As individual projects and activities are proposed and reviewed, environmental reviews may be necessary on a site-specific basis. Site-specific environmental reviews would still need to be conducted under SEQRA and would, in the ordinary course of plan review, consider the scale and intensity of a proposed action and consistency with the concepts and vision outlined in the Poughkeepsie Town Plan.

## **B) Matters to be decided**

Upon acceptance of this FGEIS as complete a ten day period for public consideration of this document will be provided. During this ten day period the Lead Agency cannot take any action to approve or adopt any of the proposed Amendments. At the end of the ten day period the Lead Agency may take up the matter of adoption of a Findings Statement to complete the environmental impact review process under SEQRA, after which it may take up the matter of adopting the proposed Amendments themselves.

## **C) Description of the Action**

- 1) The proposed action is the adoption of amendments to the Town of Poughkeepsie Zoning Law, Subdivision Law that would implement the recommendations and policy goals as set forth in the proposed Town Plan. Implementation of the Town Plan goals would generally take the form of, among other items:
  - a) Changes to the location of residential and non-residential zoning district boundaries to eliminate land use conflicts;
  - b) Changes to the proposed Zoning Map to introduce town centers and hamlet centers as a new type of mixed use district and to encourage the creation of higher density residential and commercial developments within the designated mixed use centers and hamlets in order to preserve identified greenspace areas within the outlying undeveloped areas;
  - c) Consolidating residential districts to simplify the Zoning Map and the designation of residentially zoned areas;
  - d) Amending the permitted uses in the existing business and residential districts to eliminate potentially conflicting land uses;
  - e) Introducing design standards to be applied to all applications in the residential and non-residential districts to achieve a unity of design and cohesion between the movements of pedestrians and motorists;
  - f) Introducing mandatory clustering of residential units;
  - g) Introducing the use of incentives to allow a developer to obtain additional residential density in return for specific benefits to the Town.

## **D) Changes Under Consideration Resulting From Public Comment**

As a result of public comment received the Lead Agency is considering the following additional changes to the Town Plan, Zoning Law, and Subdivision Law:

### Town Plan

- 1) Include consideration of a “no loss” policy for wetlands.
- 2) Amend various sections to strengthen language calling for provision

of greater pedestrian and bicycle pathways and linkages between existing and proposed development.

- 3) Include a timeline for consideration of future code changes regarding signage, architectural standards, revisions to the Aquatic Resource Protection Law and the Erosion and Sediment Control Law, and a new Tree Preservation Law.

#### Zoning Law

- 1) Amend definitions as necessary to clarify meaning and eliminate redundancies.
- 2) Expand the CHCO District to add a secondary development area to provide additional land for commercial and mixed use development. The expanded area was deemed necessary in order to ensure that sufficient land is available to the east and to the west of Route 9 to allow a proper build-out of a new town center.
- 3) Create an expansion to the CHCO District area to allow a better transition between the existing high density residential neighborhoods located west of the CHCO District and the new high density mixed use town center within the CHCO area.
- 4) Clarify the process for approval of a development plan for the CHCO District and the establishment of new Business Parks.
- 5) Amend the language of the CHCO District to clarify that the maximum allowable residential density is 4 units per acre.
- 6) Amend the “incentives” section to clarify that once a development project meets the requirements for obtaining additional residential development densities that there is no discretion on the part of the Town to limit or deny such additional densities.
- 7) Establish a base density of 300 units, and an additional incentive density of up to 150 units, for the entirety of the HRDD property.
- 8) Create a new Neighborhood Highway Business (B-NH) as an interim commercial district for lands that are not suitable for designation as either Neighborhood Business or Highway Business.
- 9) Create a new Greenspace Overlay District that may, upon Town Board approval, be applied to one or more of the parcels identified in the Town Plan as “greenspace” areas. This new overlay district provides for lower development densities, and limits the number of potential uses, on properties so designated.
- 10) Add provisions for calculation of recreation fees for multi-family development, and clarify the process for determination as to the Planning Board’s process for requiring either the reservation of parkland or the payment of a fee in-lieu of parkland.
- 11) Amend the provisions for required setbacks and landscape buffers for

new development adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods.

- 12) Limit, in certain instances, the creation of through road connections to established residential neighborhoods in the R-20,000 District.
- 13) Clarify the uses and the area and bulk requirements for the two waterfront districts.
- 14) Amend and clarify the design standards for the residential and the non-residential districts.

#### Subdivision Law

- 1) Amend definitions as necessary to clarify meaning and eliminate redundancies.
- 2) Amend the “maximum density yield” calculation to allow an applicant to calculate the residential density of a development project using a Sketch Plan analysis based on a current boundary and topographic survey instead of the mathematical formula.
- 3) Amend the cluster subdivision language to allow an applicant to present a cluster development plan without the need to provide a conventional subdivision layout.
- 4) Amend the cluster subdivision language to clarify the manner in which the preserved open space is to be protected.
- 5) Clarify the design standards for dead-end roads and limit their use unless the Planning Board determines that the use of such roads is necessary to protect the public health and safety.

#### **E) Project Purpose, Need and Benefit**

The proposed action is recommended in the Town Plan, of which this FGEIS is a part. The Town Plan recognizes that the historical growth pattern for the Town is one of increasing residential development in the remaining few large greenspaces that place pressure on limited community resources. As noted in the Town Plan, the Town of Poughkeepsie is the most populated town in Dutchess County, and by virtue of the large number of commercially developed properties, particularly retail uses, generates almost 40% of the total sales tax collected by the county. Such largess, however, comes at the expense of continued development pressure that would sacrifice the remaining large tracts of forest, wetland, streams, and open space that have made the town a desirable homestead opportunity for many years. Major north-south Route 9 highway and east-west Route 44/55 highways also provide easy access of the New York State Thruway, Taconic Parkway, and Interstate 84 making the town a desired commuter community. As documented in the Town Plan the town has witnessed dramatic increases in population and commuter traffic volume to the New York City metropolitan area via commuter rail links in the City of Poughkeepsie and the New Hamburg hamlet. The Town Plan encourages a rethinking of the town’s traditional zoning by recommending the introduction of centers in strategic locations along Route 9, Route 44, and

Salt Point in which commercial, and mixed residential-commercial uses would be concentrated, while up-zoning the remaining undeveloped greenspace lands to limit the loss of open space and impacts to water bodies and essential habitat. In turn, the up-zoning would be mitigated by making additional residential densities possible through the use of incentives that would generate specific benefits to the town in return for allowing higher densities than would otherwise be allowed. These benefits include the preservation of open space, dedication of land, creation of workforce and senior housing, and the preservation and reuse of historic property. The proposed action is a result of discussion by the Town Board during the Town Plan process in response to community concerns related to potential overdevelopment in the south, south-central and northern areas of the town. Issues regarding overdevelopment and corresponding traffic, environment and school impacts were raised during the public input workshops and hearings. Also, the concept of lower density zoning for the greenspace areas, as outlined in the Greenway Compact, of which the town is a participating member, were explored. Each of these issues is examined in greater detail in Section I of the Town Plan.

Among the alternatives considered the preferred implementation would involve up-zoning the one acre (R-45,000) areas of the town to 4 acre minimum lot size (R-4A). These areas are all located in the northern part of the town. Most of the undeveloped one-half (R-20,000) areas of the town, consisting of large lots, would be up-zoned to a 2 acre minimum lot size (R-2A), while the developed one-half acre (R-20,000) areas of the town would absorb the R-10,000 and R-15,000 areas into the R-20,000 district. The alternative also includes an up-zoning of approximately 170 acres of R-10,000 acre lands to the east of Route 9 north and south of Spring Road to a 1.5 acre minimum (R-1.5A). In order to mitigate adverse affects on housing and land development in the up-zoned residential areas the Zoning Law would introduce density incentives whereby a developer could receive up to 100% of the maximum residential development potential of a lot in return for providing identified benefits to the town for the increase in density. These benefits would include the creation of workforce and senior housing; permanent preservation of open space; historic preservation; and the granting of public access for passive and active recreation uses. The 100% incentive “give backs” would effectively lower the minimum lot area to 2 acres in the R-4A acre districts, to 1 acre in the R-2A district, and to .75 acre in the R-1.5A district.

The re-zoning would also involve establishing the commercial centers at the South Hills Mall, and the Mid-Hudson Plaza. The Arlington, Crown Heights, MacDonnell Heights, the Salt Point Turnpike centers, and the Rochdale Road hamlet would all be zoned for mixed residential and commercial uses. The inclusion of high density (i.e. 4 and 6 dwelling units per acre) residential development in the mixed use centers would mitigate the potential impact on housing availability that might otherwise result from the general up-zoning of the existing one-half acre and one acre zoned areas. The potential 4 to 6 unit residential densities in the mixed use centers/hamlet combined with the potential 100% “give back” of residential densities in the R-4A, the R-2A, and the R-1.5A

districts would ensure the town-wide availability of housing in a mix of housing types (i.e. single family and attached units) at a range of housing prices.

With respect to the specific residential densities permitted in the designated mixed use centers, the Arlington, the MacDonnell Heights, and the Salt Point Turnpike centers all allow residential densities up to 6 units per acre. In addition, the Salt Point Turnpike and the MacDonnell Heights centers allow for the development of residential units above commercial spaces without counting such units against the 6 unit per acre cap. The reason for this is that the areas in which these two new mixed use centers are located are sparsely settled, and do not contain sufficient residential development around the centers to support the commercial uses that are required as part of a traditional neighborhood development. In other words in order for the mixed use centers to work in those areas the code must permit sufficiently high residential development densities in order to attract and support the commercial uses that are required as part of the mixed use development.

By contrast the maximum residential density in the Crown Heights Overlay District and the Rochdale Road Hamlet District is set at 4 units per acre and all units, even those constructed above commercial uses, would be counted against the 4 unit per acre residential density cap. Again, the reason for this is that these two districts are surrounded by land that is already settled for single family and multi-family use at sufficiently high densities capable of supporting the new commercial uses that would be developed there. In fact, the design standards for the Crown Heights Overlay District and the Rochdale Road Hamlet District encourage the creation of pedestrian and bicycle paths to connect the existing neighborhoods to these new centers as a means of limiting automobile use and to facilitate the development of the commercial components within the mixed use centers. Allowing residential development densities above 4 units per acre would add far more residential density to the Crown Height and Rochdale Road areas than could be reasonably supported along with the required commercial uses.

The former State Psychiatric property located north of the proposed commercial Fairview Center will also include a mix of residential and commercial types within a center-like setting. The potential residential densities allowed within the former State Psychiatric property (referred to in the Zoning Law as the “Historic Revitalization Development District” or “HRDD”) would allow development of up to 300 new units as part of a mixed use center, with the potential for an additional 150 units provided that the development plan preserves the ±18 acre “Great Lawn” west of the main historic buildings and provides for the adaptive reuse of the remaining ±269,099 square feet of the National Landmark Building. Based on the potential of 550 units within the HRDD property the effective residential density is approximately one unit for each 0.28 acres of land. This residential density is less than the 4 to 6 units per acre allowed in the Crown Heights, Salt Point Turnpike and MacDonnell Heights centers, but due to the unique nature of the existing historic property, and the need to accommodate non-residential development as part of the mixed use development on the site,

these densities are considered appropriate and are consistent with the overall intent of the new Town Plan to preserve open space and encourage the reuse of historic properties, while limiting residential densities to sustainable levels.

Implementation of the Town Plan in this manner is contemplated to have several beneficial impacts including reducing potential future impacts of additional residential growth on the traffic conditions on Route 9 and Route 44/55, preserving the character of existing residential areas, reducing potential future growth impacts on the school districts, and limiting residential development to rates that are considered sustainable by the town and the four school districts serving the residents of the town.

Key recommendations of the Town Plan include:

- 1) *Residential District Up-Zoning:* The Plan recommends that the R-10,000 and R-15,000 districts be folded into the R-20,000 district in order to simplify the zoning map and to emphasize larger neighborhood relationships. The Plan also recommends that certain undeveloped greenspace areas such as the R-45,000 district along Salt Point Turnpike could be up-zoned to provide for up to 5 acre minimum lot sizes, and the greenspace areas such as the R-20,000 and the R-10,000 districts along Route 9 could be up-zoned to provide for a 3 acre minimum lot sizes. The up-zoning is intended to provide protection for the remaining large areas of contiguous open space, and to push the concentration of growth into the designated Town Centers. Cluster subdivision design is mandated for development of parcels greater than 25 acres in size.
- 2) *Town Centers:* The Plan recommends that development of mixed residential and commercial land uses be concentrated in the identified Town Centers. Concentrating higher development densities in the Town Centers goes hand-in-hand with the up-zoning of the suburban areas by encouraging re-use and re-development in those areas where public utility and other services are already in place.
- 3) *Greenspaces:* The Plan recommends protection of farmlands and farm soils through conservation techniques such as cluster subdivision design, and the maintenance of open space by mandating the quality of the open space set-aside areas. Minimum setbacks from established neighborhoods and extensive use of landscape buffers would ensure the continued quiet enjoyment of developed property located in proximity to areas proposed for development. In addition, although the zoning density and design provisions of the proposed Zoning Law and Subdivision Law are considered adequate to ensure the long-term preservation and protection of the designated greenspace parcels (see Map 8), the proposed Zoning Law has been amended to include a “Greenspace Overlay District” which may, upon future Town Board action, be applied to any of the greenspace parcels. This overlay district would severely limit the density and development options of the greenspace parcels and its implementation would require a separate environmental review before such a designation could be made.

- 4) *Design Guidelines:* The Plan recommends that site design and architectural design guidelines be developed for each residential and commercial district. The guidelines would be administered by the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals through the Site Plan and Special Use Permit approval processes, and would be set up to allow a potential developer to understand the design parameters during conceptual plan development.
- 5) *Cluster Subdivision Design:* This approach utilizes flexible lot sizes and density incentives to encourage conservation of land in subdivision design. Cluster subdivision design would be mandatory for major subdivisions of 25 acres and greater, and establishes minimum open space set-asides and configuration. Incentive zoning could be used by a developer to obtain additional residential densities by providing work force housing, land dedication for public use, historic preservation, and senior citizen housing.
- 6) *Incentive Zoning:* Incentive zoning establishes density bonuses to encourage the preservation of open space as well as affordable housing under an approach that offers tiered levels of density bonuses for the provision of work force housing, land dedication for public use, historic preservation, and senior citizen housing.
- 7) *Commitment To Examining Future Town Code Amendments:* Adoption of the Town Plan, the Zoning Law, and the Subdivision Law represent significant, but by no means all, of the regulatory updates the Town will need in order to manage future development. In this regard the Town Plan has been amended to provide specific time tables for consideration of amendments to the town erosion and sediment control law, the aquatic resource protection law, along with consideration of a tree preservation law, steep slopes protection law, and standards for signage and architectural guidelines for residential and commercial development.

**F) Project Approvals**

The proposed action would require approval from the Town of Poughkeepsie Town Board, also acting as the Lead Agency for this Action. The proposed action would also include referral to the Town of Poughkeepsie Planning Board in accordance with the requirements of the Town’s Zoning Code and General Municipal Law referral to the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Economic Development.

**Cross Reference Table**

Required FGEIS Sections (6 NYCRR 617.9(b)(5))	Location in this document
A concise description of the proposed action, its purpose, public need and benefits, including social and economic considerations.	Section I – Introduction Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations Section V - GEIS

<p>A concise description of the environmental setting of the areas to be affected, sufficient to understand the impacts of the proposed action and alternatives.</p>	<p>Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section III – Centers and Greenspace Plan  Section IV – Implementation  Section V - GEIS</p>
<p>A statement and evaluation of the potential significant adverse environmental impacts at a level of detail that reflects the severity of the impacts and the reasonable likelihood of their occurrence.</p>	<p><i>a) Short-term and long-term impacts, cumulative impacts.</i>  Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section V - GEIS</p> <p><i>b) Adverse environmental impacts that cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated.</i>  Section IV – Implementation  Section V - GEIS</p> <p><i>c) Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of environmental resources.</i>  Section IV – Implementation  Section V - GEIS</p> <p><i>d) Growth-inducing aspects.</i>  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section IV – Implementation  Section V - GEIS</p> <p><i>e) Use and conservation of energy.</i>  Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section V - GEIS</p> <p><i>f) Solid waste management.</i>  Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section V - GEIS</p> <p><i>g) Public acquisitions of land or interests in land.</i>  Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section III – Centers and Greenspace Plan  Section IV – Implementation  Section V - GEIS</p>
<p>A description of mitigation measures.</p>	<p>Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section III – Centers and Greenspace Plan  Section IV – Implementation  Section V - GEIS</p>
<p>A description and evaluation of the range of reasonable alternatives to the action that are feasible, considering the objectives and capabilities of the project sponsor.</p>	<p>Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section III – Centers and Greenspace Plan  Section IV – Implementation</p>
<p>A list of any underlying studies, reports, EISs and other information obtained and considered in preparing the statement.</p>	<p>Section I – Introduction  Section II – Planning Policy Recommendations  Section III – Centers and Greenspace Plan  Section IV – Implementation</p>

### **G) Impact on Land**

- 1) A description of the land areas of the town, and the diversity of land types, is provided in Section II.2 of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's land resources and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town of Poughkeepsie will likely impact land resources in the Town. Some areas that are currently not fully developed, but are served by public sewer and water, are proposed for more intensive uses in the Plan. Conversely, it is recommended that those areas without public infrastructure and that consist largely of undeveloped open spaces be developed in a less intensive way. For example, the use of a cluster subdivision design is proposed and will serve to mitigate adverse impacts related to construction by allowing for development while protecting important natural resources. This technique allows flexibility in lot size and bulk standards to ensure development is designed in a manner that is in harmony with the landscape and suitability and environmental constraints will be among the many factors considered during reviews of specific projects. Implementation of the Town Plan through the proposed zoning and subdivision laws would provide mitigation against overdevelopment of the identified greenspace areas.

### **H) Impact on Water Resources**

- 1) A description of the water resources of the town is provided in Section II.2 of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's water resources, including wetlands, and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments will not have an adverse impact on water resources in the Town. The Plan recommends the use of design guidelines for residential and commercial development to be located away from significant environmental features. Stream corridors, wetlands, and other surface water would, in most cases, be protected using this approach. By locating improvements away from water bodies, potential erosion and sedimentation impacts of construction would be limited. Other forms of non-point source pollution would also be reduced. Additionally, the regulations provide a process to "net out" environmentally constrained land areas from the calculation of buildable land in order to avoid overdevelopment and adverse impacts to streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and steep slope areas. As defined in the proposed Zoning Law and the proposed Subdivision Law constrained land is

*“A parcel or lot containing in whole or in part one (1) or more of the following: Town, State and/or federal protected freshwater wetlands; one hundred (100) year flood plains or flood hazard areas; steep slopes of twenty (20) percent and greater; and open bodies of water including streams, ponds and lakes of any size.”* This process would provide for the long-term protection of vital water and wetland resources by ensuring that land utilization does not exceed its carrying capacity.

- 3) In addition, the Plan recognizes that the Town must comply with the Phase II Stormwater Management regulations. Under these regulations, all Municipal Separate Storm Water Systems (MS4s) must develop and implement a stormwater management program by the year 2008. The Plan recommends close coordination with NYSDEC to ensure the Town is properly addressing the Phase II regulations.

#### **I) Impact on Air Resources**

- 1) As a result of the potential increase in commercial and residential development in compact areas of the Town, minor adverse impacts to local air quality could be anticipated. However, these will not be of a type or magnitude that would adversely impact human health or the environment. In fact the compact Town Centers are intended to encourage a pedestrian friendly environment. This could provide an alternative to vehicular travel and ultimately reduce air quality impacts. The use of cluster subdivision design is another method that protects open space while allowing for development.

#### **J) Impact on Plants and Animals**

- 1) A description of the plant and animal resources of the town is provided in Section II.2 of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town’s flora and fauna resources and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will not significantly impact plant and animal resources in the Town. Where new development is proposed, existing vegetation will be removed and some wildlife may be displaced. However, the use of a cluster design approach will help to reduce the amount of vegetation to be removed and the conserved areas will help to establish wildlife corridors.
- 3) The New York Natural Heritage Program has identified multiple rare or state-listed animals, plants or significant natural communities within the Town of Poughkeepsie. Information identifying the specific location of these rare species is designated sensitive and would require interpretation from experts at the Natural Heritage Program. As a result, the Poughkeepsie Town Plan suggests that the Natural Heritage Program be notified as development occurs on specific sites to ensure no conflicts with endangered

or threatened species occur and to determine mitigation measures to reduce the potential impact on such species. This will occur as project specific SEQRA evaluations are completed. The Plan also suggests in-fill development and redevelopment of existing buildings and sites to minimize the impact of growth on greenfield sites which might reduce disturbance to plants and wildlife.

#### **K) Impact on Agricultural Resources**

- 1) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will not adversely impact the agricultural resources in the Town. The Plan supports current agricultural activities and suggests the promotion of local agriculture through education, a buy local program and an agricultural economic strategy. Participation in agricultural districts and light-to-farm and right-to-practice-forestry laws are also recommended.

#### **L) Impact on Aesthetic Resources**

- 1) A description of the aesthetic resources of the town is provided in Section II.2 and Section III of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's aesthetic resources and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) The intent of the recommendations found in the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments is to enhance the aesthetic resources in the community. Protection of community character in both the developed and undeveloped areas of the Town is an important goal of the Plan. Several recommendations assist in protecting community character including gateway enhancement, infill and redevelopment in developed areas of the Town, the use of cluster subdivision design, a focus on compact development within the Town Centers, and the notion of design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use development. Streetscape design is also discussed within the Town Centers. The zoning amendments include design guidelines for each residential and commercial district, which are intended to address site function, design and overall aesthetics.

#### **M) Impact on Historic and Archaeological Resources**

- 1) A description of the historic resources of the town is provided in Section II.3 of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's historic resources and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will have no significant adverse impact on

historic and archeological resources. The Plan recognizes the importance of these resources and calls for a town-wide inventory of historic and cultural resources that could build from this earlier study. The zoning amendments include a cluster subdivision design approach for residential development. This approach would allow the flexibility to locate development in a manner that protects historic or archeological resources on the site. Project specific SEQRA review will also ensure that these resources are considered during the development review process.

#### **N) Impact on Open Space and Recreation**

- 1) A description of the open space resources of the town is provided in Section II.2 and Section III of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's open space resources and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will have a positive impact on open space and recreation in the Town. The Plan recommends the use of a variety of tools such as the purchase of development rights, fee-simple acquisition, or donation of conservation easements. In addition, the Plan recommends the use of cluster subdivision design to preserve open space.

#### **O) Impact on Critical Environmental Areas**

- 1) A description of the Critical Environmental Areas of the town is provided in Section II.2 and Section III of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's Critical Environmental Areas and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will have no impact on any CEA within the town. In fact, the Plan recommends that CEA protections be established through the site plan and subdivision approval process.

#### **P) Impact on Transportation**

- 1) A description of the transportation resources of the town is provided in Section II.6 and Section III of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of the current pace of development on the town's transportation resources and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.
- 2) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments will likely have some impact on transportation systems

in the Town. The number of automobile trips may increase in the areas designated to receive additional development, such as the Town Centers. However, the intent of the Plan and zoning amendments is to offset the adverse transportation impacts by encouraging a bicycle and pedestrian friendly environment and improving public transit opportunities.

- 3) In addition, the Plan recommends additional study of key transportation corridors, such as Route 9, Route 9G, Route 55 and Route 44. An integrated planning approach that recognizes the link between land use and transportation is suggested. Such an approach could address traffic safety and congestion issues in the more developed portions of these corridors. Enhancement of the community's gateways along major transportation corridors will serve to establish the Town's identity and enrich community character.

#### **Q) Impact on Energy**

- 1) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will not have a significant impact on energy. While additional commercial and residential development may increase energy usage, the Plan identifies ways in which this could be reduced. The focus on enhancing the pedestrian environment, encouraging bicycling and the development of recreational trails supports alternative modes of transportation which reduces the reliance on automobiles. The use of cluster subdivision design is another technique that might serve to reduce the use of energy due to the fact that less roadways and infrastructure are required to serve these areas.

#### **R) Noise and Odor Impacts**

- 1) There will be no adverse impacts from noise and odor as a result of the adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town.

#### **S) Impact on Public Health**

- 1) Adoption of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments by the Town will have no direct impact on public health. In fact, the enhancement of pedestrian facilities and development of recreational trails could serve to improve public health. While County Health Department approval has always been necessary, the Plan specifically connects Health Department approval of well and septic systems to lot size requirements in areas not currently served by public sewer and water.

#### **T) Impact on Community Character**

- 1) A description of the town's community character is provided in Sections II.2, II.3, II.4, II.5, II.6, II.7 and Section III of the Town Plan, and is incorporated here by reference. This section describes the potential effect of

the current pace of development on the town's character and quality of life and makes specific recommendations for implementation of new regulatory measures to protect these resources.

## **2) Population**

- a) As noted in Table 1 of the Town Plan the Town of Poughkeepsie has experienced, and is projected to continue to experience, steady growth in population. The very issues that have given rise to the proposed action relate to this growth and its effects on traffic, services, and the built environment. During this time, the Town has not only grown in population, but has become more diverse as well with respect to racial and cultural profiles.
- b) Although total population increases affect land use, the growth in the number of households has a more direct effect on housing demand and on the character of land use trends. In 1990, the number of households within the Town was 13,777. By 2000, the number of households was 15,132, an increase of 9 percent, which is greater than population growth during the same period. This would appear to reflect national trends toward smaller household sizes.
- c) As in much of the region and nation, the Town is slowly growing older, with the baby boom generation beginning to move through the 45-54 and 55-64 age groups. This growth in younger people reflects the echo-boom occurring from the children of the baby boom generation and illustrates new challenges for local schools facing higher enrollments.

## **3) Housing**

- a) Of the 15,132 housing units in Town in 2000, 527 units, or three percent, were vacant. As noted in the 2000 Census data owner-occupied housing still heavily outweighs renter-occupied housing and married family households still comprise the majority of owner-occupied housing units.
- b) The burden of housing costs in Town can be measured by how much owners or renters paid in household income toward owner costs or rent. Typically, housing costs become an undue burden if owners or renters pay more than 30 to 35 percent of household income toward these costs. The percent of owners in Town paying more than 35 percent of household income toward housing costs increased from 14.6 percent in 1990 to 15.9 percent in 2000. The burden on renters however, appears to have decreased – in 1990, the percent of renters paying more than 35 percent of household income toward rent was 26.3 percent, while in 2000 this number was 19.5 percent. This may actually reflect a change in the availability of rental units versus for-sale units.

## **4) Potential Impacts to Population and Housing**

- a) The build-out analysis in Table 2 of the Town Plan calculated that under the town's present zoning and land use regulations a total of 16,816 new units could be constructed. Most of this potential new construction would

likely occur in the existing residential R-45,000, R-20,000, R-15,000, and R-10,000 districts. These districts, in particular the R-45,000, R-20,000 districts, also contain the largest amount of remaining open space land and environmentally constrained land areas. If the town is to strike a proper balance between housing availability and the preservation of diminishing open space and significant environmental resources it must find a way to raise residential development densities within the existing developed areas to off-set a potential loss of housing units in the undeveloped areas. The proposed action is the realignment of the zoning district boundaries and the allowable land uses in areas that do not presently allow for high density residential development to create mixed use centers in which new housing units could be constructed at densities that would generally replace the units that would not be constructed in the more rural areas, and to provide incentives to cluster housing and create affordable housing for residents and seniors while preserving open space in the remaining undeveloped greenspace areas. As noted in the table below the proposed zoning would provide for ample new housing construction but would do it in a way that preserves the greenspace areas while providing for a range of housing types and unit costs.

**Table 10  
Potential Build-Out Analysis  
Based On Proposed Re-Zoning**

Proposed Residential and Mixed Residential Zoning Districts	Total Zoning District Area (1) (acres)	Total Existing Developed Area (acres)	Developed Areas With Subdivision Potential (acres)	Primary Conservation Areas (2) (acres)	Total Area of Protected Lands (3) (acres)	Total Area Under Conservation Easement (4) (acres)	Total Buildable Land -20% (5) (acres)	Potential New Dwelling Units (6)
R-4A	1,731	606	496	383	0	0	792	198
R-2A	3,435	901	856	612	0	0	2,358	1,179
R-1.5A	170	0	0	0	0	0	136	90
R-20	10,494	9,879	2,551	682	0	6	1,982	4,318
R-M	593	395	375	66	0	30	302	1,812
R-NH	25	22	20	18	0	0	2	9
R-MH	176	157	157	54	0	0	86	610
ATC (7, 9)	195	171	34	0	0	0	195 (10)	348
CHCO (7, 9)	73	0	0	0	0	0	73 (10)	292
MHC (7, 9)	62	0	0	6	0	0	50	300
SPC (7, 9)	77	0	0	4	0	0	62	372
HRD (8)	167	0	167	0	0	0	60 (11)	550
RRH	14	0	14	0	0	0	14 (11)	56
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>17,198</b>	<b>12,131</b>	<b>4,489</b>	<b>1,825</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5,841</b>	<b>10,134</b>

- (1) Dependent on water/sewer availability. This analysis assumes no availability.
- (2) Includes steep slopes >=20%, 100-year floodplains and NYSDEC wetlands with 100-ft. buffers. State and Federal wetlands, water bodies and streams were also considered absolute constraints to development.
- (3) This column is zeroed out due to overlap with features in the primary conservation areas.
- (4) Conservation easements may not include the whole parcel.
- (5) -20% is the general allowance for roads, drainage, and other design accommodations.
- (6) Numbers reflect the mapped residential build-out potential.
- (7) Mixed commercial and residential uses are required reducing the amount of land available for residential use.
- (8) A density of 1 unit per each 0.28 acres is assumed for the HRDD.
- (9) Within the centers the calculation assumes re-development of existing, fully developed lands.
- (10) No deduction for infrastructure taken because the area is already developed.
- (11) The amount of land devoted to residential and mixed residential uses in the HRD zone is assumed to approximate the land area of the residential centers.

*Original data source: Dutchess County Environmental Management Council GIS Lab*

- b) As shown in the table above the realignment of the residential and mixed use zoning districts would reduce the overall gross potential build-out by 6,782 units (see Table 2 of the Town Plan). However, this figure represents a conservative number since the actual residential development densities in the mixed use centers may be higher depending on the actual amount of land devoted to non-residential uses in the centers. In addition, the above build-out figure does not take into account the potential for a 100% increase in the total number of residential units that might be constructed if developers would take advantage of the incentive densities. If all of the developments in the proposed R-4A, the R-2A, the R-1.5A, and the R-20,000 districts took advantage of the full incentive densities an additional 1,467 units could be built. The difference is that the potential residential build-out is achieved using a compact design either within a cluster subdivision or as a compact design within a mixed use center or a multi-family zone. Further, the increase in potential residential development densities under the proposed zoning would result in the preservation of open space land, streams, water bodies, and forested areas, while providing for a mix of housing types including set-asides for workforce housing and senior housing. The use of compact Traditional Neighborhood Design in the mixed use centers would also result in the creation of a mix of housing types, such as single family detached, single family attached, condominiums, and apartments within a compact village-like setting. It should also be noted that the total amount of acreage available for residential development under the proposed zoning amendments is slightly more than the “Total Buildable Land” acreage under the 2005 build-out scenario presented in Table 2 of the Town Plan.
- c) The build-out figure also does not take into account the incentives for creation of dwelling units located above ground floor and second floor commercial spaces in the Salt Point and MacDonnell Heights mixed use centers. These units would not be counted against the maximum residential dwelling unit density for the district in order to ensure their creation as an affordable housing option within the centers, and to help establish the residential densities required to sustain the commercial components of the new mixed use centers.
- d) The greatest impact on residential land development would be felt mostly in the areas that are currently zoned for one acre (R-45) and the one-half acre (R-20,000) districts. Overall the total number of units that might otherwise be built in these areas would decrease by as much as 4,534. However, as noted in the table this decrease in housing availability would be off-set by the introduction of high density residential uses in the mixed centers proposed at Salt Point Turnpike, MacDonnell Heights, and Crown Heights where residential uses are currently not permitted, or are only allowed at extremely low densities.
- e) In addition to increasing the number of potential residential units in areas

where they are either not currently permitted or where the development densities are constrained (i.e. the CHCO, MHC, SPC districts) the proposed action would encourage the creation of workforce and senior housing throughout the town. The potential impact of the general up-zoning of the current R-45,000, the R-20,000, the R-15,000, and the R-10,000 districts would be mitigated by providing housing opportunities in the high density mixed use centers. The provision of additional housing opportunities would achieve the Town Plan goal of housing affordability and housing choice while preserving the remaining open space areas of the town, and the character of existing single-family neighborhoods. The Town Plan and its implementation would promote affordable housing while revising residential lot size and density, providing design guidelines and substantial buffering between residential and commercial uses. Implementing the recommendations in the Town Plan through the proposed zoning amendments would have several positive cumulative impacts including the preservation of single-family neighborhoods, improved community aesthetics, enhanced neighborhood safety and preservation of open space and natural features. As a result no adverse impacts associated with housing and population is anticipated.

- f) It is possible that implementation of the Town Plan recommendations as proposed would reduce the amount of potential taxes that would be generated by additional future residential development. Furthermore, the rendering of smaller pre-existing vacant parcels nonconforming within improvement districts may also effect current special assessments (for example, water and lighting districts). Assuming a median home price of \$269,000.00 (see Section II.5 of the Town Plan), and an applied 2007 Town of Poughkeepsie uniform percentage of value rate of 44.50 the median assessed value of a dwelling unit would be \$119,705.00 which would generate County taxes of \$690.69 per year, and Town taxes of \$839.132 (homestead) or \$1,307.18 (non-homestead). Depending on the school district in which such a unit is located the school taxes could range from a low of \$2,750.82 (Wappingers CSD homestead rate of \$22.98 per thousand) to a high of \$7,527.05 (Spackenkill UFSD non-homestead rate of \$62.88 per thousand). The wide disparity in tax potential per dwelling units is highly dependent on the type of unit (i.e. single family attached, town home, condominium, apartment, etc.) and school district within which the unit is located. In addition, the creation of mixed use centers will also affect the assessed valuation of new units as the value of living in a compact community setting is realized by new purchasers and pricing of new units within the centers is established by the market. The commercial uses within the mixed use centers will also generate new tax revenue in an amount that is dependent on the amount of new commercial square footage constructed. Given that the build-out of the new centers would occur over a multi-year period, and that the above noted tax assessment for a median single family home is based on the 2007 tax year, it would be purely speculative to analyze the town-wide tax effect of the new zoning

out to the year of complete build-out except to note that as new commercial and residential units come on-line they would need to be taxed at a rate sufficient to off-set the additional costs (i.e. emergency services, utility and transportation costs, etc.) of such development. It should also be noted that under the worst-case residential build-out as set forth in Table 2 of the Town Plan the difference in tax revenue from the proposed development densities as set forth in Table 10 above is highly dependent on the off-set from taxes generated by the commercial uses in the town centers. However, assuming that there is a potential for a tax “loss” (i.e. the difference between taxes generated under the worst-case build-out scenario and the proposed build-out scenario) this loss would be more than offset by the avoidance of potential adverse impacts to traffic, population, schools, and the environment, while increasing the potential taxes from commercial development located within the commercial and mixed use centers. Under such a scenario the fire departments would receive less in tax revenue with the Proposed Action than with the worst-case build out scenario, but they would not have to recruit as many additional volunteer firefighters to serve their districts. The decrease in future development would likely result in fewer additional calls for service to the Fire Departments and Police Department. The school districts also would not receive as much tax revenue. However, they would not be impacted by a large and uncontrolled influx of school children during any one tax year.

- g) As noted above the long term and the short term impact on community character would be positive. The Town of Poughkeepsie has long been experiencing residential and commercial growth. Long time residents and more recent residents are drawn to the Town because of its high quality of life, convenient services, and community character. The intent of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and related Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments is to protect those factors that make Poughkeepsie an attractive place to live and work. The Plan as implemented through the proposed Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments achieves this through a balanced approach that focuses development in specific locations, conserves open spaces and working landscapes, and encourages economic development. In addition, the Plan considers the fiscal responsibility associated with its recommendations.
- h) By focusing development that is appropriately scaled and designed in the centers, for example, the Town can expand its economic base while maintaining the character of its less developed areas. The use of cluster subdivision design can also serve to protect community character while allowing for continued residential growth. The zoning amendments include design guidelines for each zoning district, and illustrated design guidelines for the Town Center and the general commercial districts. The design guidelines are intended to address concerns raised during the comprehensive planning process about the aesthetic quality of development and its impact on community character. The guidelines will

provide the Planning Board and potential applicants with a better understanding of what is desired in terms of new development in the community.

#### **U) Potential Impacts of the Incentive Zoning Provisions**

- 1) In designing a plan to award additional residential density (see §210-76 of the proposed Zoning Law), the Town has made a determination that such awards should be limited to the R-4A, R-2A and R-1.5A zoning districts rather than be applied throughout the town. The reason for this is that the general town-wide up-zoning was previously determined to have a potentially adverse effect on housing availability and affordability in the up-zoned areas. The primary mitigation for this potential impact is to relocate much of the residential density into the mixed use town centers and out of the “greenspace” areas. However, despite the increase in allowable housing density in the town centers it was recognized that not all of the reductions in housing availability could be made up by increasing the allowable residential densities within the confines of the mixed use town centers. There is also a need for increasing the allowable housing densities in the R-4A, R-2A and R-1.5A areas to off-set the potential impact on housing availability and to ensure that a range of housing types are capable of being created within the market place. The incentives are designed to allow additional residential density to meet potential housing demand outside of the town centers, while also providing a mechanism to encourage the creation of affordable workforce and senior housing opportunities and preserve open space. As noted above, under the proposed Zoning Law the total potential number of additional incentive dwelling units is 1,467, which is approximately 14% of the total number of “Potential New Dwelling Units” that could otherwise be constructed (see Table 10 above). In addition, it should be noted that this number of additional incentive dwelling units would not be located in any one area, but would occur in the remaining buildable land in the R-4A, R-2A and R-1.5A districts. The fact that these additional incentive units would be dispersed across the ±3,286 acres of remaining buildable land in the -4A, R-2A and R-1.5A districts means that the potential environmental effects would not be concentrated in any one single area, thereby simplifying the process of designing site specific mitigation for the additional units.
- 2) As previously noted the additional residential densities available through the incentive program comprise only 14% of the total number of potential new units under the proposed Zoning Law. Under the proposed Zoning Law the total number of potential new dwelling units is calculated to be approximately 6,782 fewer units than could be constructed under the current Town Zoning Law. In designing the incentive program the town has made a determination that such incentives are necessary and desirable to obtain benefits for the town in the form of open space preservation, affordable housing, historic preservation, and recreation land while encouraging compact design (i.e. clustering) of the units and the creation of affordable housing for families and

senior citizens. Although the original basis for clustering of residential development may well be the preservation of open space or some other defined resource(s), experience has shown that clustering of homes has the effect of reducing the overall cost of developing residential communities. Such cost savings arise as a result of:

- ◆ Fewer linear feet of constructed road.
- ◆ Fewer linear feet of constructed water and sewage disposal line.
- ◆ Less subsidization of road and utility maintenance.

The cost savings for implementation of compact development design is quite dramatic as shown in the table below.

**Table 11**  
**Compact Subdivision Design versus Traditional Subdivision Design<sup>1</sup>**

Area of Savings	Annual Savings per Dwelling Unit	Total Savings over 25 years <sup>2</sup>
All land (acres)	\$0.124	\$3,099,000
Land cost	\$619.79	\$15,490,000,000
Agricultural land (acres)	\$0.0694	\$1,735,000
Frail environmental land	\$0.0341	\$852,000
Local roads (lane miles)	\$0.0036	\$91,000
Local road costs	\$1,325.08	\$33,130,000,000
State roads (lane miles)	\$0.0001	\$3,000
State road costs	\$106.49	\$2,660,000,000
Water laterals (#)	\$0.0902	\$2,255,000
Water lateral costs	\$185.52	\$4,640,000,000
Sewer laterals (#)	\$0.0966	\$2,416,000
Housing costs	\$5,791.78	\$144,790,000,000
Non residential costs	\$861.25	\$21,530,000,000
Fiscal impacts	\$964.02	\$24,100,000,000
TOTALS	\$9,854.35	\$222,350,451,024.00

This table is a consolidation of results taken from New Jersey, the Delaware Estuary, Michigan, South Carolina and Florida applied to an assumed national

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1. Smart Growth: More Than a Ghost of Urban Policy Past, Less Than a Bold New Horizon, by Robert W. Burchell, David Listokin, and Catherine C. Galley, Housing Policy Debate, Volume 11, Issue 4, Fannie Mae Foundation 2000, p. 828.  
2. Amounts expressed in 1999 dollars, per residential unit multiplied by 25 million units for U.S. growth from 2000 to 2025.

growth of 25 million housing units over the next 25 years. The results, are taken from a variety of locations including slow and fast growth states, rural and developed locations and large and small municipalities. They are therefore representative of the existence of cost savings attendant with concentrated development. These results are similar to those reported elsewhere such as a 1997 study prepared by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (“SEMCOG”) entitled, *“Fiscal Impact of Alternative Land Development Patterns in Michigan”*. That Study examined 18 communities of varying sizes and geographic settings in southeast Michigan to determine the differences in land consumption and costs for infrastructure and municipal services resulting from alternative development patterns. The Study compared the impact costs of conventional low density single family development with more compact, higher density development coupled with open space preservation and a diversity of housing types. Findings were measured in amount of land consumed; infrastructure requirements; housing costs; and the ratio of cost to revenue impact to the municipalities and school districts. Based on these findings it is clear that the use of compact housing design, as encouraged by the incentive provisions, along with the set-aside of affordable (i.e. workforce) housing units would result in the creation of cost efficient housing with savings capable of being easily passed on to end consumers.

- 3) The Town of Poughkeepsie is the most populous town in Dutchess County. It has a well developed roadway system, and provides central sewer and water supply services to most of its residents. The Town provides emergency services through tax payer funding and is also served by four separate public school districts offering quality education. The infrastructure of the Town is generally considered adequate to accommodate these additional incentive dwelling units without generating additional traffic or population that may stress available services. It should also be noted that the incentive provisions encourage the preservation of open space and the clustering of dwelling units in land areas that do not have significant environmental constraints. The provisions of the Zoning Law and the Subdivision Law would prevent the siting of any of the by-right or the incentive dwelling units in areas constrained by wetland, watercourse, steep slope, or ecological constraints. The additional incentive dwelling units are therefore deemed compatible with the development, and the level of development, otherwise permitted under the proposed Zoning Law. The determination to include an incentive provision for additional dwelling units is an explicit acknowledgment that there are no significant environmentally damaging consequences associated with implementing the incentive plan.
- 4) Although the town has determined that the additional incentive units are generally compatible with the natural and man-made environment of the town, the implementation of the incentive dwelling units on any parcel of land would only be limited as necessary to mitigate adverse environmental impacts associated with the additional residential densities on a site specific basis. In other words although the ability to utilize one or more of the bonus provisions

to obtain additional residential densities is at the discretion of the developer and not the town, the additional units must still be proven, on a case-by-case basis, to be environmentally viable through a project specific environmental impact review under SEQRA. Under this analysis the designated lead agency (most likely the Town Planning Board) would probably analyze the environmental impacts of a project: 1) without the additional residential density; and 2) with the additional residential density as an alternative. This would result in a better understanding of the incremental impact of the additional residential units and allow the lead agency to impose mitigation as may be necessary to avoid and minimize adverse environmental impacts. Such an analysis is also required under §261-b(3)(f) of the Town Law. Under this scenario the lead agency would be expected to examine the impact of the additional incentive dwelling units on such things as:

- a) The operating level of services of local roads and intersections; and
- b) The flora, fauna and other ecological attributes of the site;
- c) The provision of water supply and sewage disposal;
- d) The wetland and aquatic resources of the site;
- e) The viewshed characteristics of the site.

## **V) Alternatives**

### **1) No Action Alternative.**

- a) Not adopting the Poughkeepsie Town Plan and Zoning Law and Subdivision Law amendments, while an alternative that the Town could consider, is not the preferred alternative. The Town has devoted a significant amount of time and energy into developing a plan that reflects the needs and desires of all residents, while providing economic sustainability to the foreseeable future. This proposed Plan and the zoning and subdivision regulations represent the results of an extensive public involvement process. To the greatest extent possible, the Plan as proposed provides a balance of resident needs and desires. Alterations to the Plan at this time may upset the balance that has been achieved.
- b) The No Action Alternative would not further the Town's goals and would prevent the Town from achieving its full vision for the future. While existing federal, state and local regulations could be sufficient to protect natural and cultural resources, the benefit of the Poughkeepsie Town Plan is that it suggests a manner in which the Town can grow, while still enhancing community character and protecting the Town's valuable resources. The proposed Zoning Law and Subdivision Law support this vision and provide the specific tools to achieve it. The absence of a plan, a program for implementation, and amended zoning and subdivision regulations would place the Town in a position of reacting to development instead of being proactive in its efforts.

**2) Limited up-zoning of greenspace areas, attractive bonus incentives, and compact centers.**

- a) This alternative would result in the R-45,000 areas being zoned for four acre minimum lot sizes, and the greenspace R-20,000 and R-10,000 acre parcels being zoned for two acre minimum lot sizes. The available incentive densities would be up to 100% of the potential unit count for any one development. The residential densities in the Arlington, Crown Heights, MacDonnell Heights, Salt Point and Rochdale Road centers would also be capped at four to six units per acre.
- b) This general description is the alternative under consideration. The implementation of the Town Plan under this alternative offers the best balance of compact commercial and mixed residential-commercial development concentrated in the centers, while preserving the open spaces of the identified greenspace areas. This alternative would provide diversity in housing types and costs, while encouraging the establishment of neighborhood scale and limited regional commercial development. This alternative would provide the most appropriate balance of properly scaled growth and economic development, respect for property owners, open space protection, and recreational opportunities, as well as enhancement of community character. The importance of this balance has been expressed by Town residents and is reflected in the vision and goals in the Plan. This alternative would further the Town's goals and assist the Town in taking the necessary steps to achieve its vision. Therefore, this is the preferred alternative.

**3) Significant up-zoning of greenspace areas, limited incentive densities, limited residential uses in the centers.**

- a) This alternative would result in the R-45,000 areas being zoned for five acre minimum lot sizes, and the greenspace R-20,000 and R-10,000 acre parcels being zoned for three acre minimum lot sizes. The available incentive densities would be limited to 20% of the potential unit count for any one development. The residential densities in the Arlington, Crown Heights, MacDonnell Heights, and Salt Point centers would also be capped to two or three units per acre.
- b) Under this scenario the future availability of a range of housing types at affordable rates would be constrained. Although the amount of preserved greenspace area would be significant, this type of zoning would encourage the development of large scale single family housing almost to the exclusion of other housing types. The limited range of housing types would cause the market to put a premium on the available housing that could potentially cause lower and moderate income families to seek housing opportunities outside of the town. In addition, the low rate of return for incentives would likely cause developers to effectively ignore the potential additional incentive residential units, and no workforce or senior housing is likely to be created. Similarly, in the centers the

development pressure would favor the creation of additional retail space, as opposed to neighborhood scale mixed residential and commercial space, thereby defeating the purpose of the town center zoning.

**4) Up-zoning greenspace areas with no incentives.**

- a) This alternative would result in the R-45,000 areas being zoned for three acre minimum lot sizes, and the greenspace R-20,000 and R-10,000 acre parcels being zoned for one acre minimum lot sizes. There would be no incentive densities available, and the areas that have been identified as centers would remain zoned for highway business, shopping center business, office research, and commercial use.
- b) Under this scenario the market would likely adjust to simply build single family residential dwellings thereby limiting the type and cost of housing for the future. Without appropriate incentives the market would likely ignore the construction of workforce and senior housing – at least without other types of government tax incentives. Commercial development in the town would likely concentrate on retail uses putting additional pressure on the local transportation network.

**5) Significant up-zoning of greenspace areas, limited incentive densities, expand the center districts and allow high density residential uses in all districts.**

- a) This alternative would result in the R-45,000 areas being zoned for five acre minimum lot sizes, and the greenspace R-20,000 and R-10,000 acre parcels being zoned for three acre minimum lot sizes. The available incentive densities would be limited to 20% of the potential unit count for any one development. The residential densities in the Arlington, Crown Heights, MacDonnell Heights, and Salt Point centers would be set at eight to twelve units per acre, and residential uses would be allowed in the South Hills and Fairview Center districts.
- b) Under this scenario the future availability of a range of housing types at affordable rates in the greenspace areas would be constrained. In fact, this type of zoning would encourage the development of large scale single family housing almost to the exclusion of other housing types. This lack of housing diversity in the greenspace areas would create pressure to develop high density housing in all of the centers, thereby jeopardizing the balance of commercial and residential uses within the centers that the Town Plan policies encourage. It is likely that the centers would become essentially a multi-family residential zone to the exclusion of commercial development.

**6) Limited up-zoning of greenspace areas, attractive bonus incentives, and compact centers.**

- a) This alternative would result in the R-45,000 areas being zoned for four acre minimum lot sizes, and the greenspace R-20,000 and R-10,000 acre parcels being zoned for two acre minimum lot sizes. The available

incentive densities would be up to 100% of the potential unit count for any one development. The residential densities in the Arlington, Crown Heights, MacDonnell Heights, and Salt Point centers would also be capped at 4 and six units per acre. The limits of the mixed use centers would also be expanded to include additional land areas.

- b) Under this alternative a balance of housing types and costs would be achieved along with the preservation of the greenspace areas of the town. Mixed residential-commercial use and commercial use centers would be established, but the boundaries of the mixed use centers would be enlarged to include additional land area. In the Crown Heights Center this would mean incorporating additional land area on the west side of Route 9 north to IBM Road, and on the east side of Route 9 to include parts of the Casperkill Country Club. In the Salt Point Center, additional land would be included in the center on the north side of Bedell Road.
- c) The expansion of the Crown Heights and the Salt Point centers would achieve the desired balance of housing types and neighborhood scale commercial development, but would also increase the total number of potential housing units since the lands that would be added to the centers is zoned for non-residential or low density residential use. Such an expansion could easily be accomplished in the context of a high density compact center and would increase the overall number and type of housing units available in the town. Although this alternative is not required in order to obtain the balance of economic growth, housing availability, and quality of life set forth in the Town Plan, it could be easily accommodated as a future plan change.

#### **W) Growth Inducement**

- 1) The proposed action, in and of itself will not result in any direct impacts. Potential indirect impacts relate to a general reduction in residential densities that would only be increased by providing set-asides of open space land, affordable housing, and historic preservation. Corresponding impacts from a reduction in future density would include a reduction in future additional residential and truck traffic, population, site disturbance, school children, and impacts to emergency service providers and environmentally sensitive areas.
- 2) The proposed action would generally limit the amount of growth permitted in the greenspace areas of the town, while providing inducements to create housing and commercial development in the centers. However, this action in and of itself is not anticipated to induce additional growth.

#### **X) Unavoidable Adverse Impacts**

- 1) An unavoidable adverse impact from the proposed action would be that some currently conforming properties would become pre-existing nonconforming. However, in the case of legal, conforming properties in the R-10,000 and the R-15,000 districts, the up-zoning to R-20,000 would be accomplished by

providing a special “grandfather” clause for such properties, whereby expansion of existing homes could be accomplished without the need to obtain area variances provided certain specific criteria are met. This provision will protect existing homeowners from the more stringent effects of the new zoning requirements while requiring that undeveloped lots in the consolidated R-20,000 district be brought into conformity with the new regulations.

- 2) The anticipated benefits from the proposed action such as reducing future potential impacts to traffic circulation, schools, and the environment would likely outweigh adverse impacts.

**Y) Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources**

- 1) Implementation of the proposed action will not directly cause a loss of resources. To the extent that the proposed action permits development, certain resources relating to building and development will be committed. These resources include, but are not limited to: concrete, asphalt, steel, timber, paint and topsoil. The operation of construction equipment would involve the consumption of fossil fuels, while completed developments would require electricity in addition to fossil fuel usage. The proposed action, however, seeks to limit the amount of future adverse impacts associated with growth, including the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources.

**Z) Effects on Use and Conservation of Energy**

- 1) Any new development occurring as a result of the proposed action will primarily utilize energy resources for residential or commercial power needs. The proposed action, however, seeks to limit future adverse impacts associated with growth, including the additional use of energy.

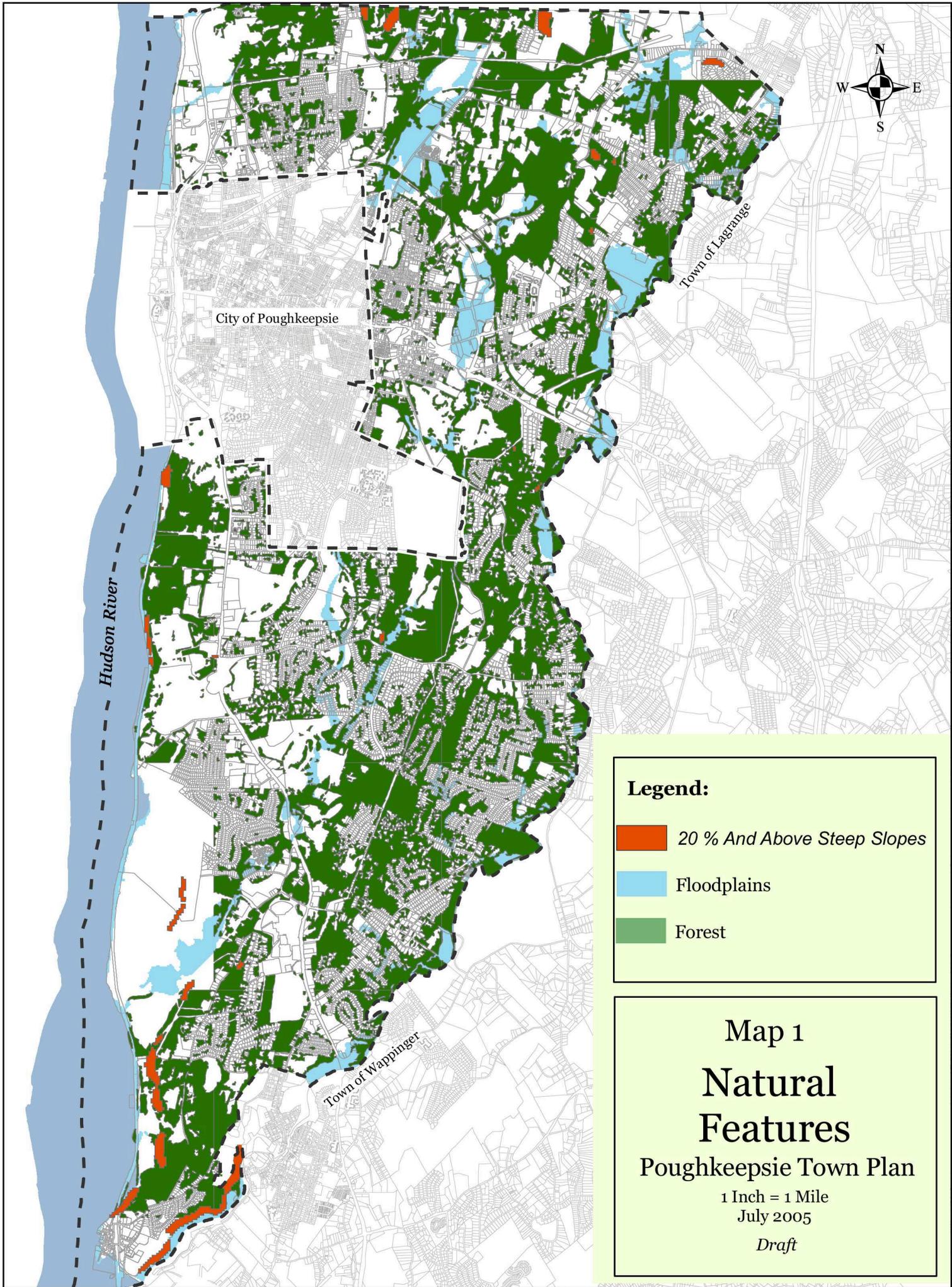
# **APPENDIX A**

## **MAPS**

## **Maps**

### **Concept Design Alternatives**

The following maps depict design alternatives for select areas of the Town of Poughkeepsie, and are intended only to provide guidance as to how to achieve a unity of design that integrates planning for pedestrian-motorist movement, and planning for a compact residential-commercial uses. They are not representative of the actual zoning districts, allowed uses, or lot requirements for the properties depicted, but are illustrative of the design guidelines set forth in the Greenway Compact for various types of zoning districts.



City of Poughkeepsie

Town of Lagraige

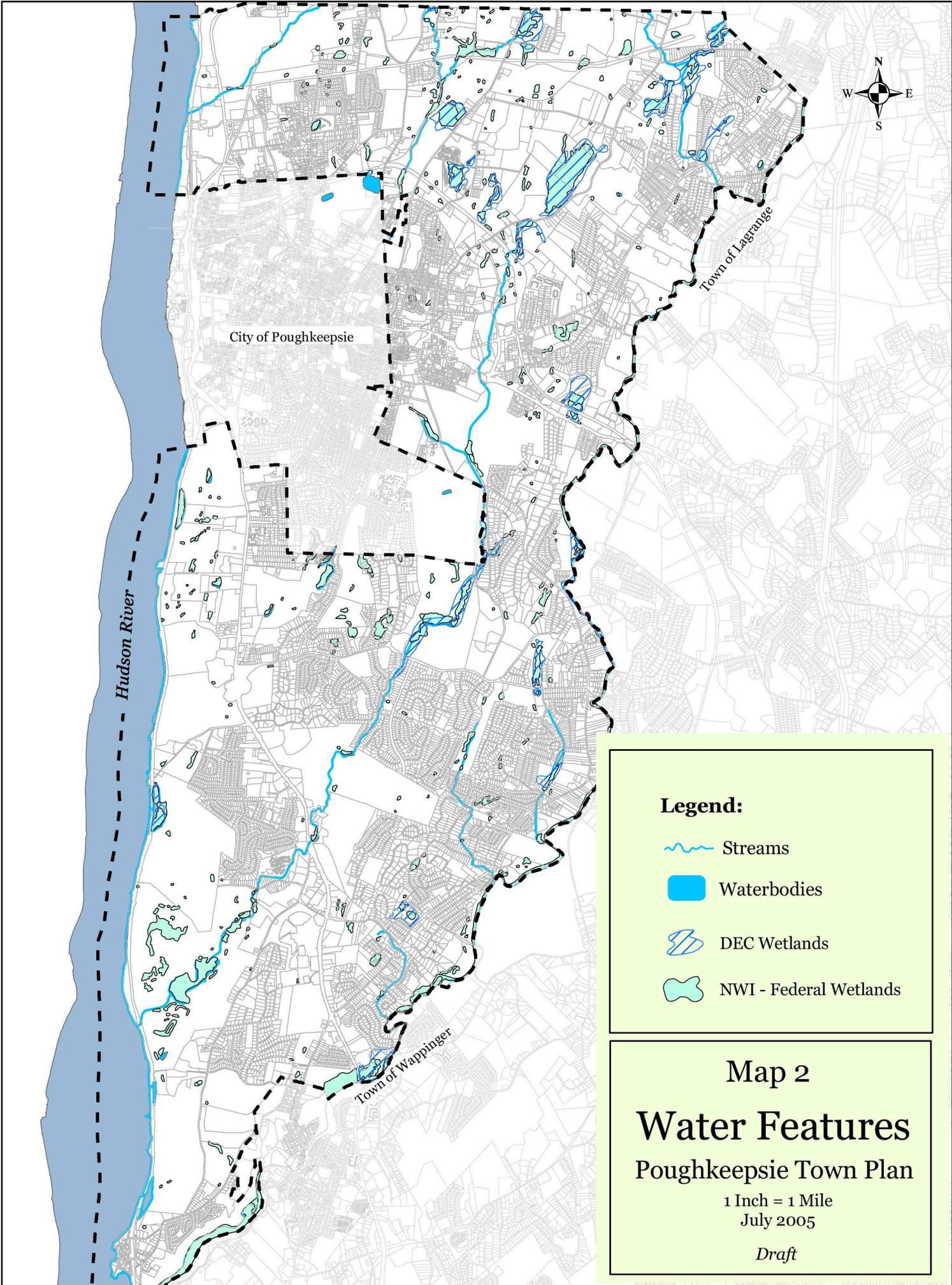
Hudson River

Town of Wappinger

**Legend:**

-  20 % And Above Steep Slopes
-  Floodplains
-  Forest

Map 1  
**Natural Features**  
Poughkeepsie Town Plan  
1 Inch = 1 Mile  
July 2005  
Draft



City of Poughkeepsie

Town of Lagrange

Town of Wappinger

Hudson River

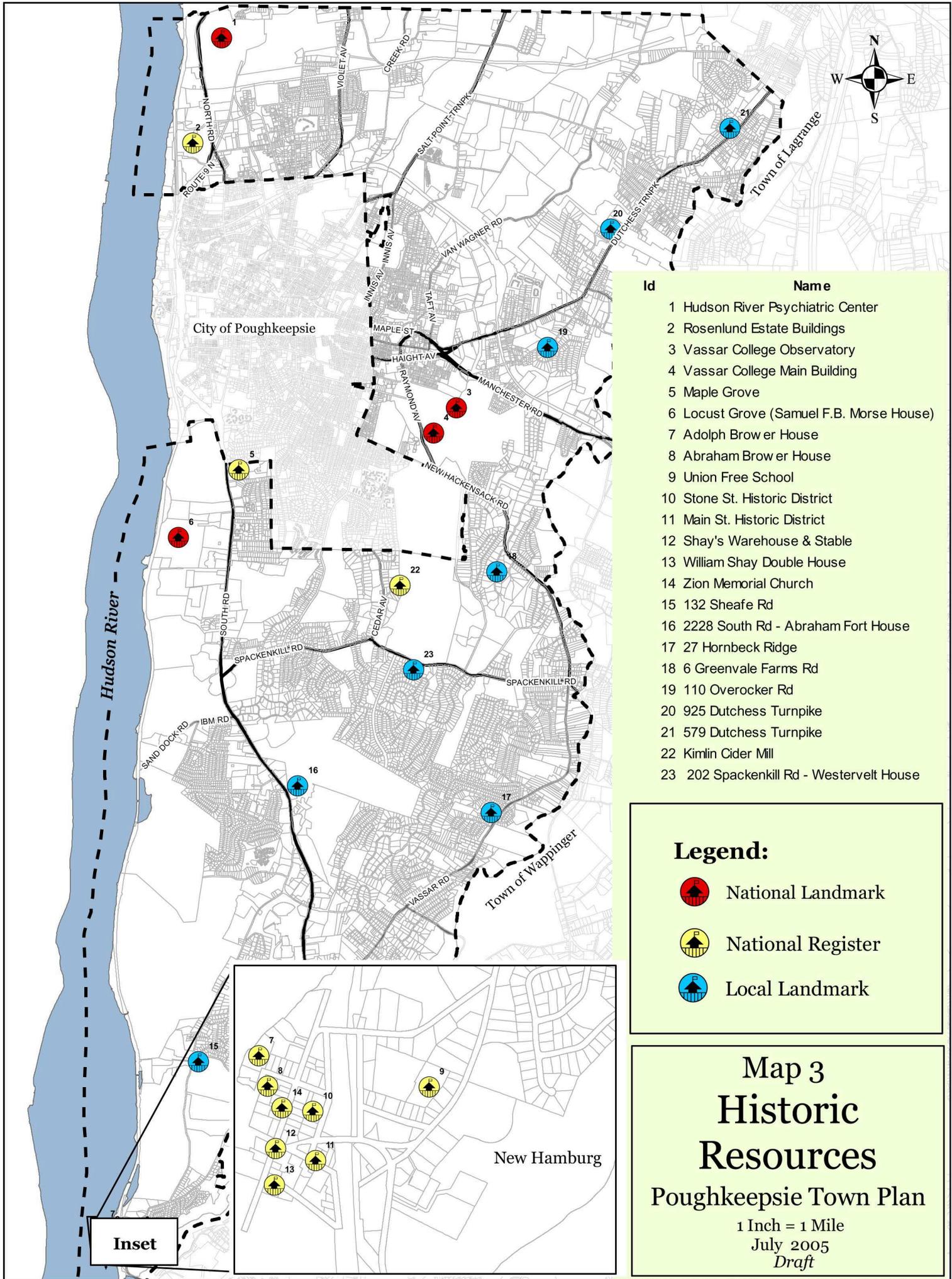
**Legend:**

-  Streams
-  Waterbodies
-  DEC Wetlands
-  NWI - Federal Wetlands

**Map 2**  
**Water Features**  
**Poughkeepsie Town Plan**

1 Inch = 1 Mile  
July 2005

*Draft*



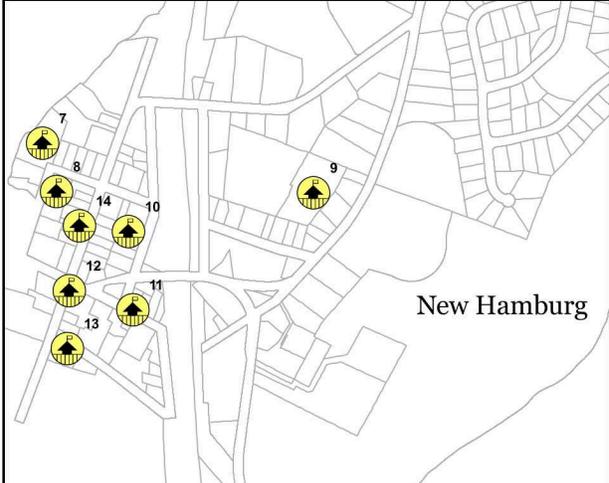
Id	Name
1	Hudson River Psychiatric Center
2	Rosenlund Estate Buildings
3	Vassar College Observatory
4	Vassar College Main Building
5	Maple Grove
6	Locust Grove (Samuel F.B. Morse House)
7	Adolph Brower House
8	Abraham Brower House
9	Union Free School
10	Stone St. Historic District
11	Main St. Historic District
12	Shay's Warehouse & Stable
13	William Shay Double House
14	Zion Memorial Church
15	132 Sheafe Rd
16	2228 South Rd - Abraham Fort House
17	27 Hornbeck Ridge
18	6 Greenvale Farms Rd
19	110 Overocker Rd
20	925 Dutchess Turnpike
21	579 Dutchess Turnpike
22	Kimlin Cider Mill
23	202 Spackenkill Rd - Westervelt House

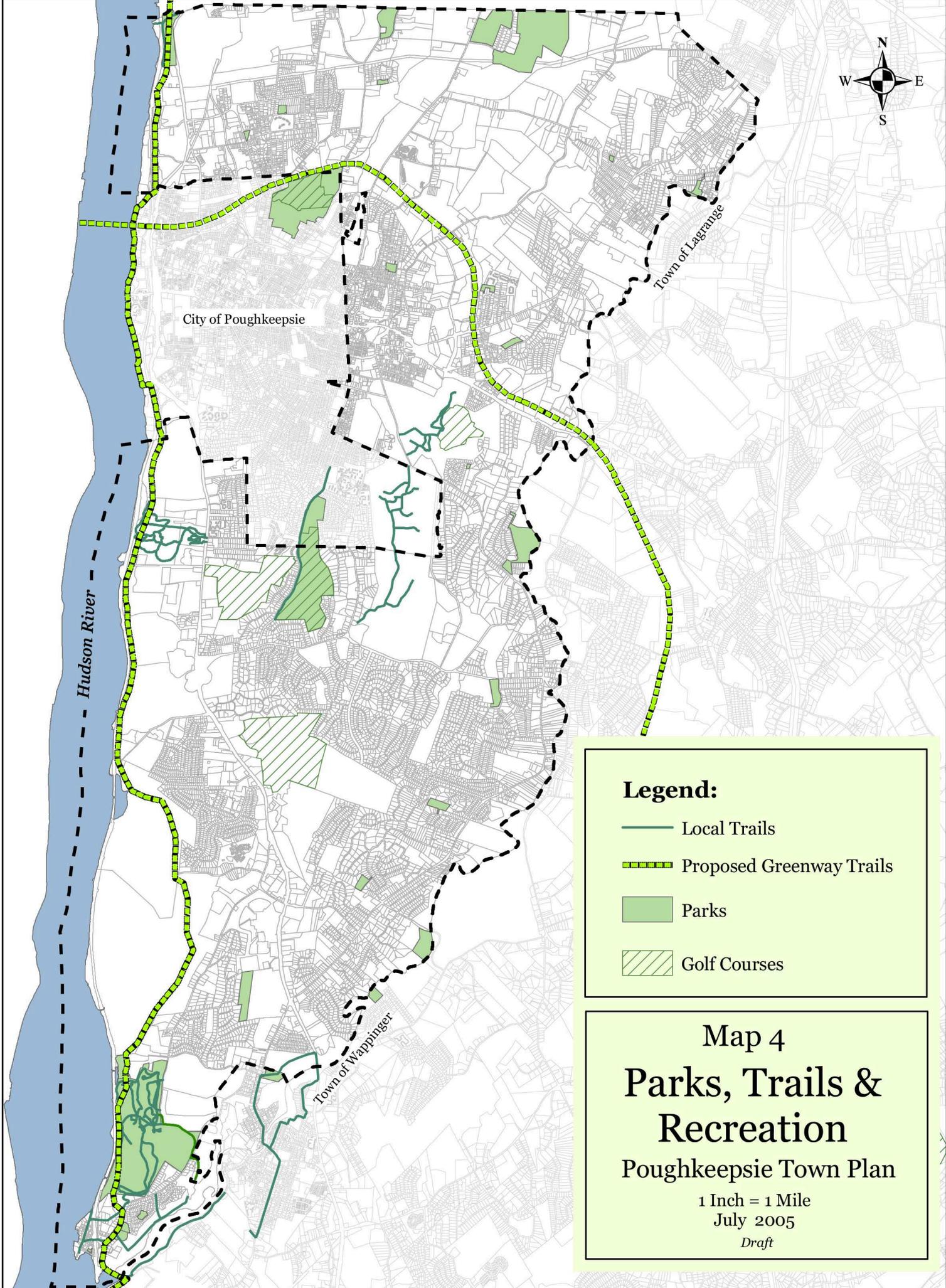
**Legend:**

-  National Landmark
-  National Register
-  Local Landmark

**Map 3**  
**Historic**  
**Resources**  
**Poughkeepsie Town Plan**  
 1 Inch = 1 Mile  
 July 2005  
*Draft*

**Inset**





City of Poughkeepsie

Town of Lagrange

Hudson River

Town of Wappinger

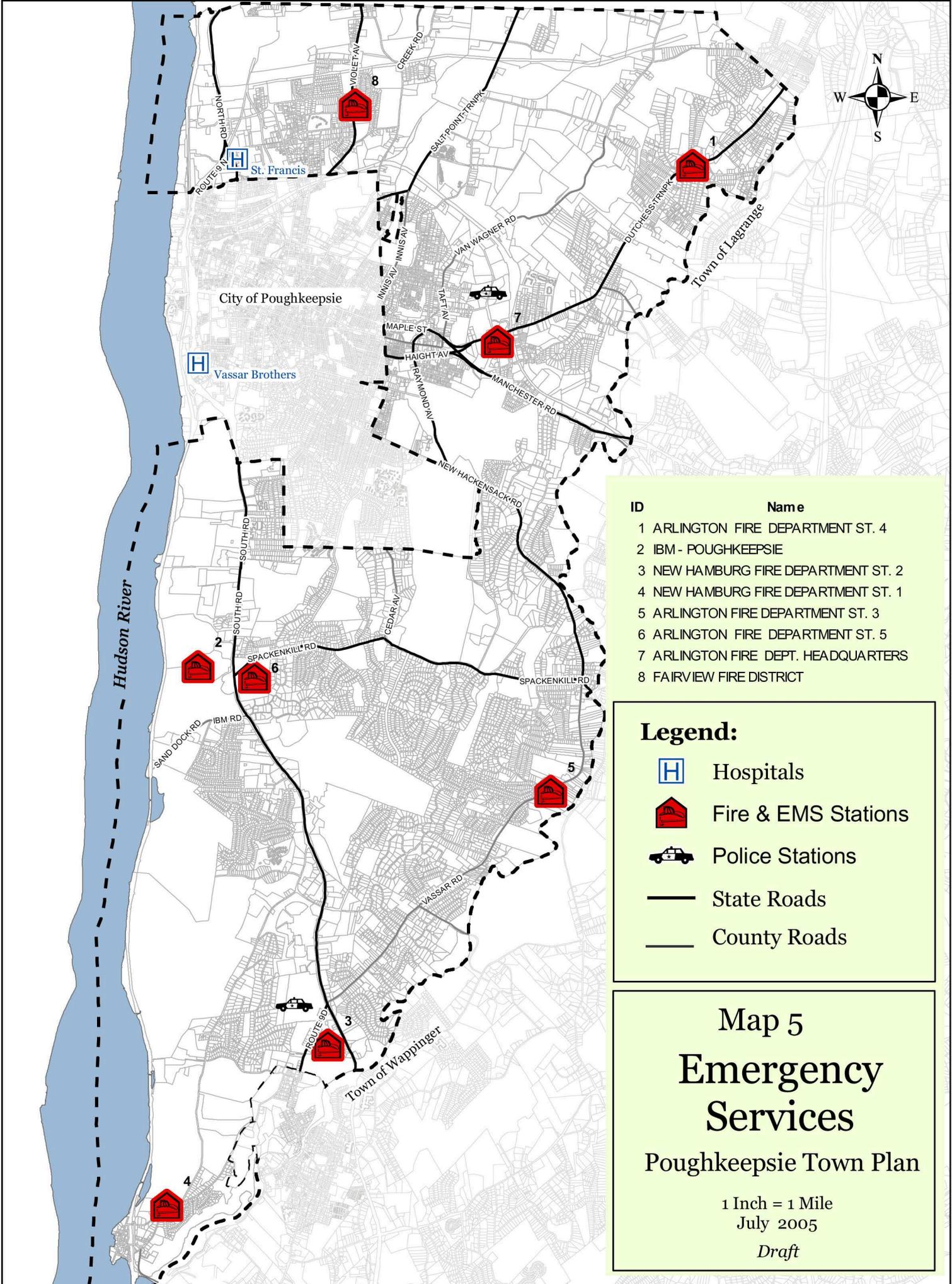
**Legend:**

-  Local Trails
-  Proposed Greenway Trails
-  Parks
-  Golf Courses

Map 4  
**Parks, Trails &  
 Recreation**  
 Poughkeepsie Town Plan

1 Inch = 1 Mile  
 July 2005

*Draft*

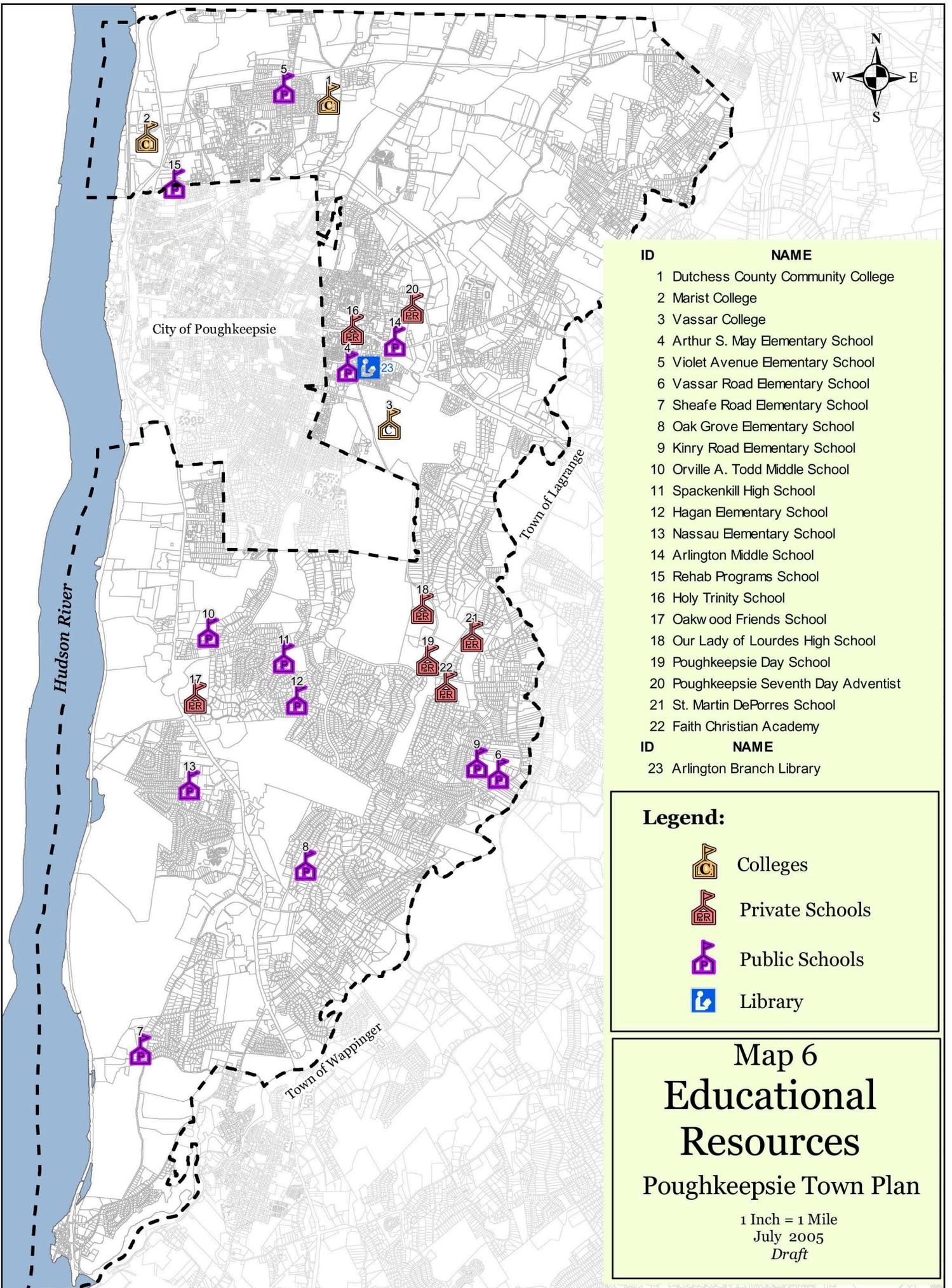


ID	Name
1	ARLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT ST. 4
2	IBM - POUGHKEEPSIE
3	NEW HAMBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT ST. 2
4	NEW HAMBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT ST. 1
5	ARLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT ST. 3
6	ARLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT ST. 5
7	ARLINGTON FIRE DEPT. HEADQUARTERS
8	FAIRVIEW FIRE DISTRICT

**Legend:**

-  Hospitals
-  Fire & EMS Stations
-  Police Stations
-  State Roads
-  County Roads

**Map 5**  
**Emergency Services**  
**Poughkeepsie Town Plan**  
 1 Inch = 1 Mile  
 July 2005  
*Draft*



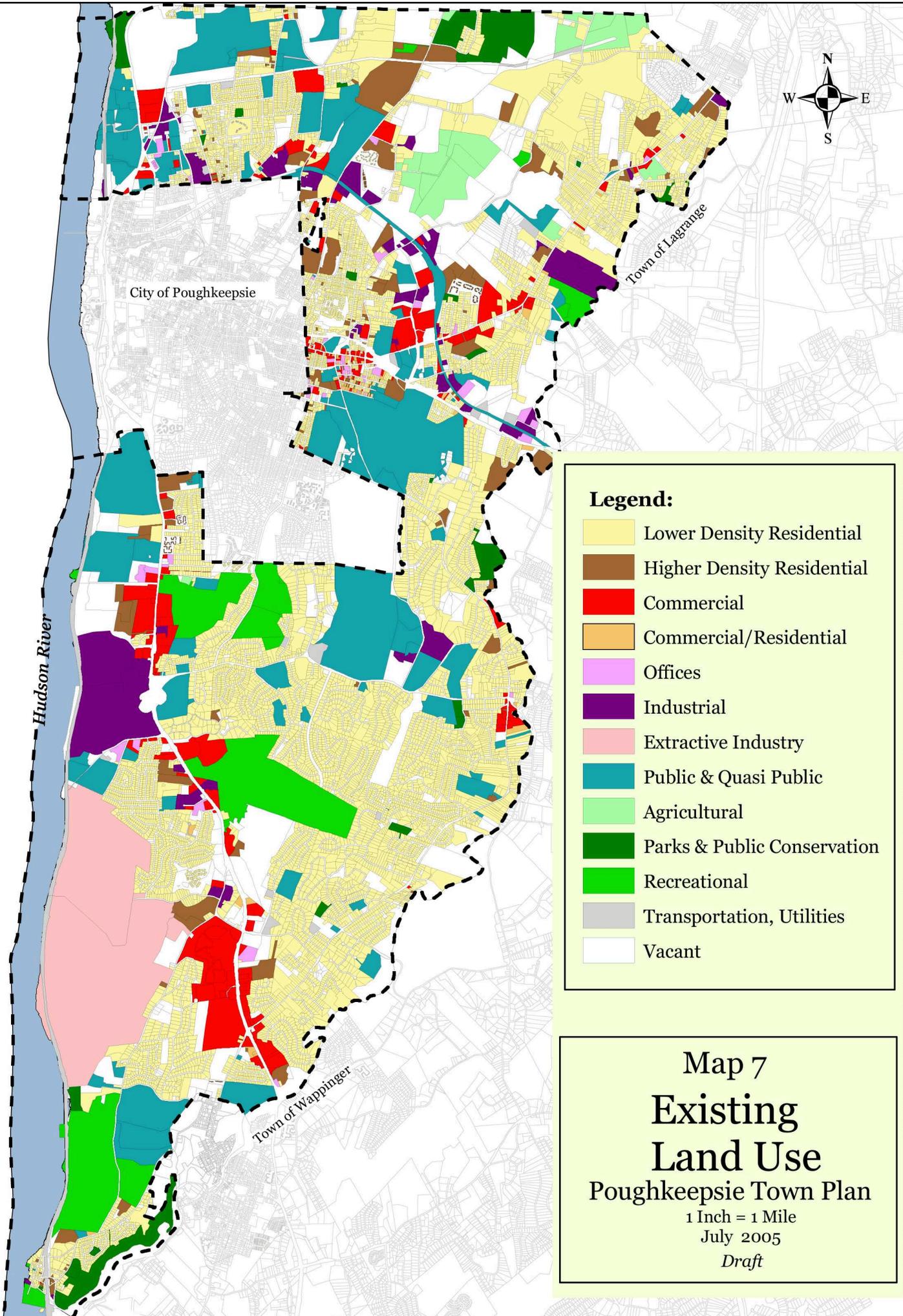
ID	NAME
1	Dutchess County Community College
2	Marist College
3	Vassar College
4	Arthur S. May Elementary School
5	Violet Avenue Elementary School
6	Vassar Road Elementary School
7	Sheafe Road Elementary School
8	Oak Grove Elementary School
9	Kinry Road Elementary School
10	Orville A. Todd Middle School
11	Spackenkill High School
12	Hagan Elementary School
13	Nassau Elementary School
14	Arlington Middle School
15	Rehab Programs School
16	Holy Trinity School
17	Oakwood Friends School
18	Our Lady of Lourdes High School
19	Poughkeepsie Day School
20	Poughkeepsie Seventh Day Adventist
21	St. Martin DePorres School
22	Faith Christian Academy
ID	NAME
23	Arlington Branch Library

**Legend:**

-  Colleges
-  Private Schools
-  Public Schools
-  Library

**Map 6  
Educational  
Resources  
Poughkeepsie Town Plan**

1 Inch = 1 Mile  
July 2005  
Draft



City of Poughkeepsie

Town of Lagrange

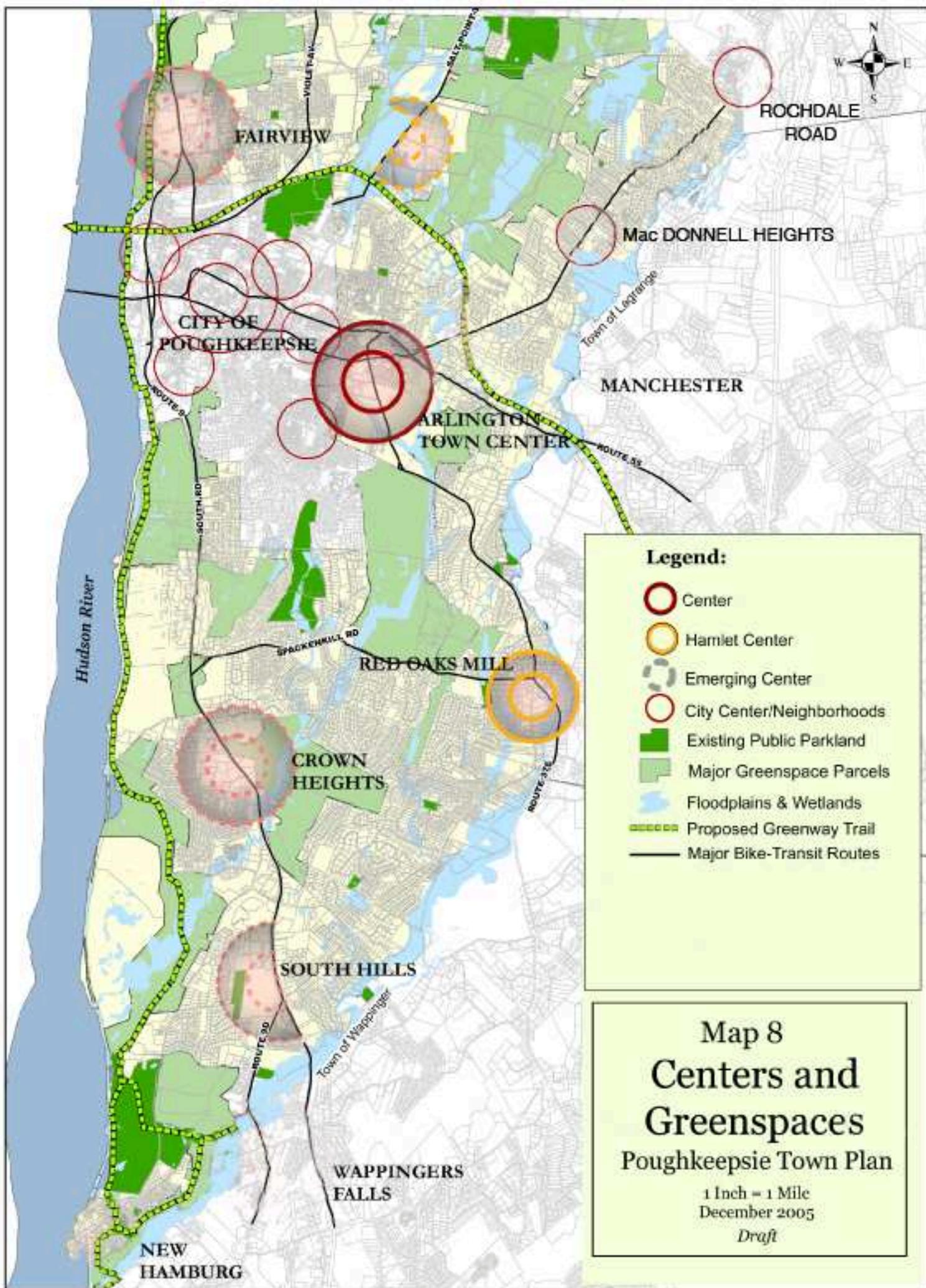
Hudson River

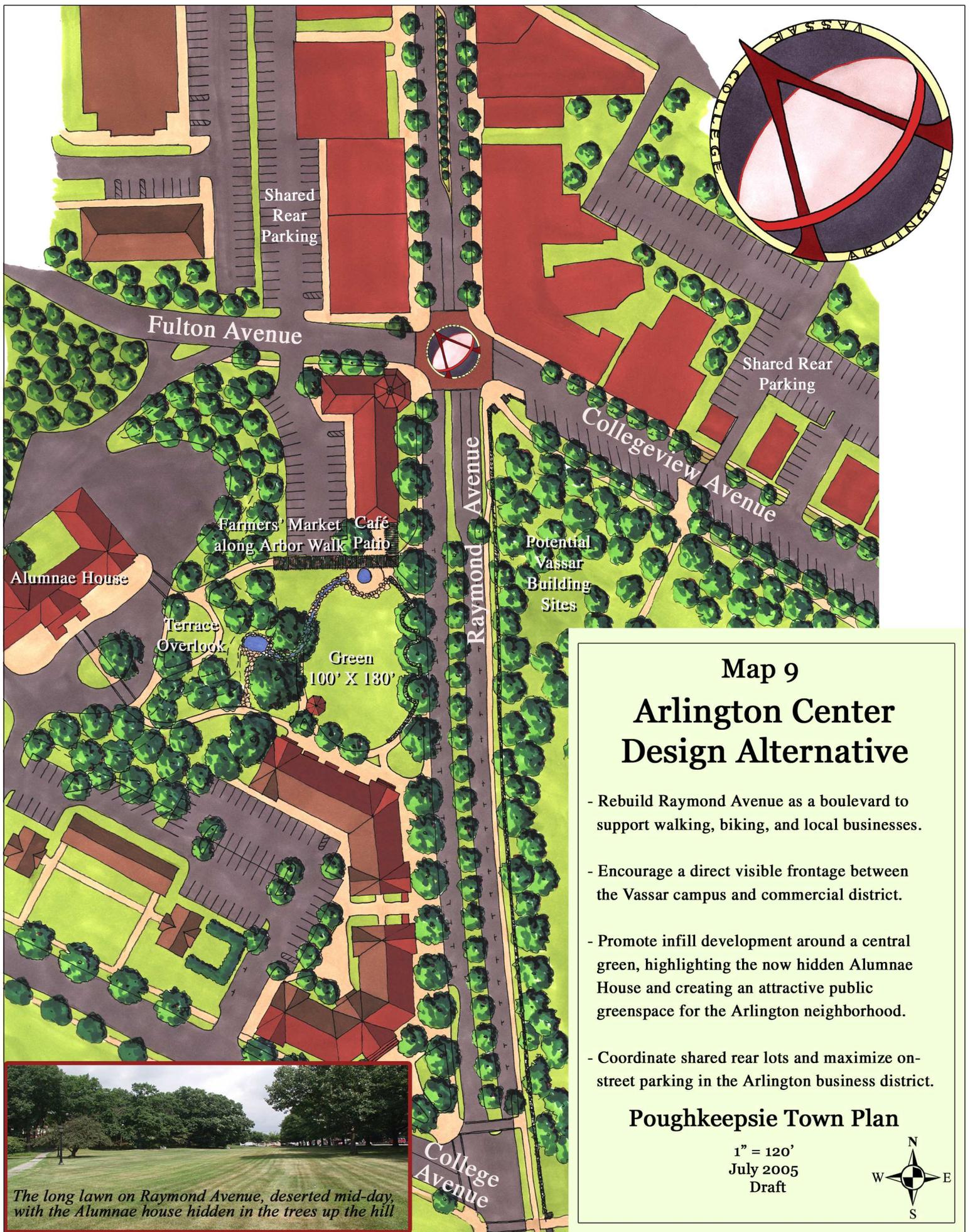
Town of Wappinger

**Legend:**

- Lower Density Residential
- Higher Density Residential
- Commercial
- Commercial/Residential
- Offices
- Industrial
- Extractive Industry
- Public & Quasi Public
- Agricultural
- Parks & Public Conservation
- Recreational
- Transportation, Utilities
- Vacant

**Map 7**  
**Existing**  
**Land Use**  
**Poughkeepsie Town Plan**  
 1 Inch = 1 Mile  
 July 2005  
*Draft*



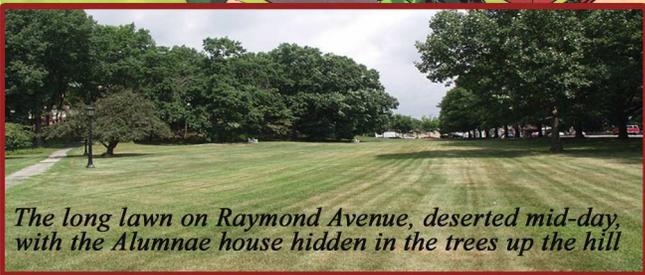


## Map 9 Arlington Center Design Alternative

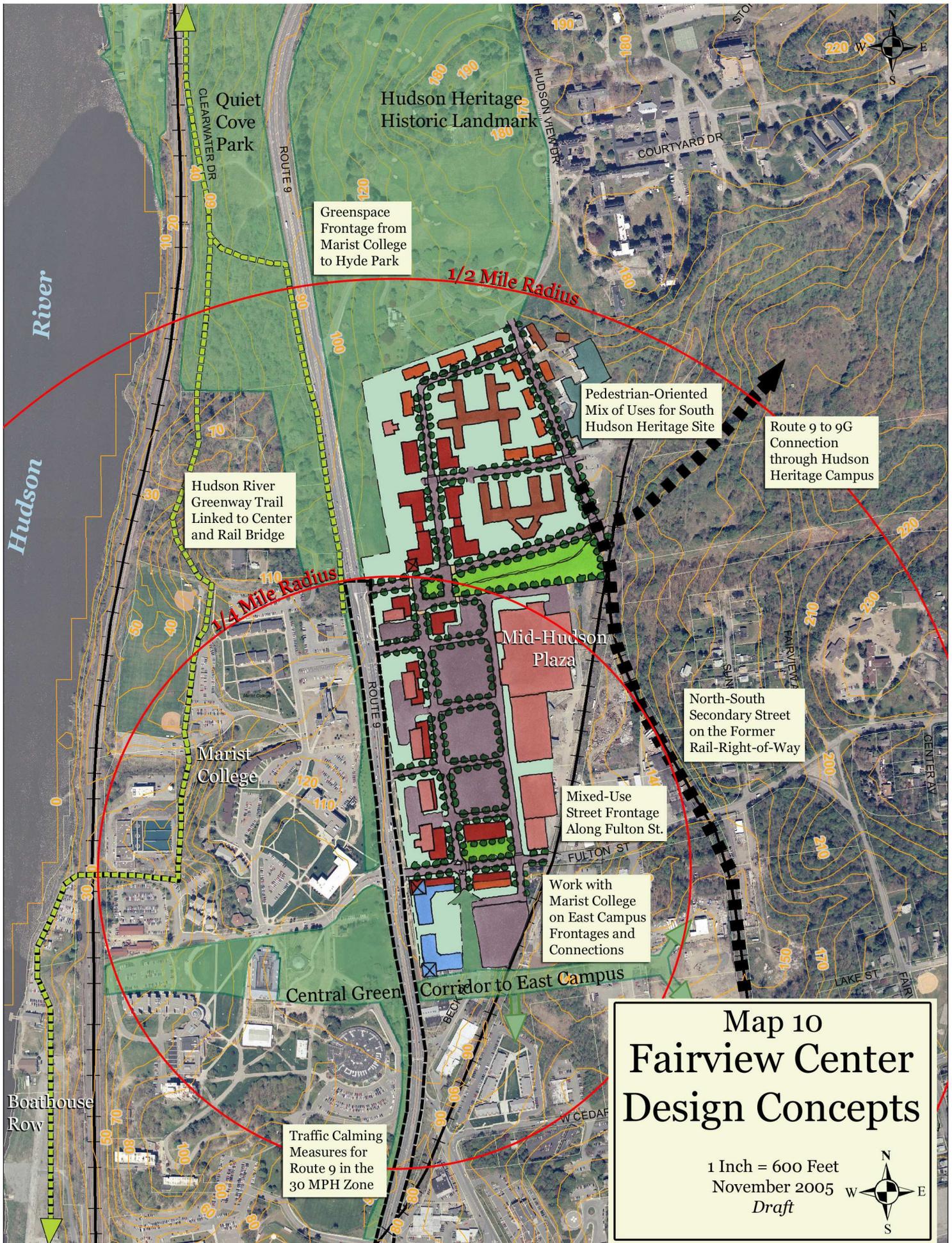
- Rebuild Raymond Avenue as a boulevard to support walking, biking, and local businesses.
- Encourage a direct visible frontage between the Vassar campus and commercial district.
- Promote infill development around a central green, highlighting the now hidden Alumnae House and creating an attractive public greenspace for the Arlington neighborhood.
- Coordinate shared rear lots and maximize on-street parking in the Arlington business district.

### Poughkeepsie Town Plan

1" = 120'  
July 2005  
Draft



*The long lawn on Raymond Avenue, deserted mid-day, with the Alumnae house hidden in the trees up the hill*



Hudson River



Quiet Cove Park

Hudson Heritage Historic Landmark

Greenspace Frontage from Marist College to Hyde Park

1/2 Mile Radius

Pedestrian-Oriented Mix of Uses for South Hudson Heritage Site

Route 9 to 9G Connection through Hudson Heritage Campus

Hudson River Greenway Trail Linked to Center and Rail Bridge

1/4 Mile Radius

Mid-Hudson Plaza

North-South Secondary Street on the Former Rail-Right-of-Way

Marist College

Mixed-Use Street Frontage Along Fulton St.

Work with Marist College on East Campus Frontages and Connections

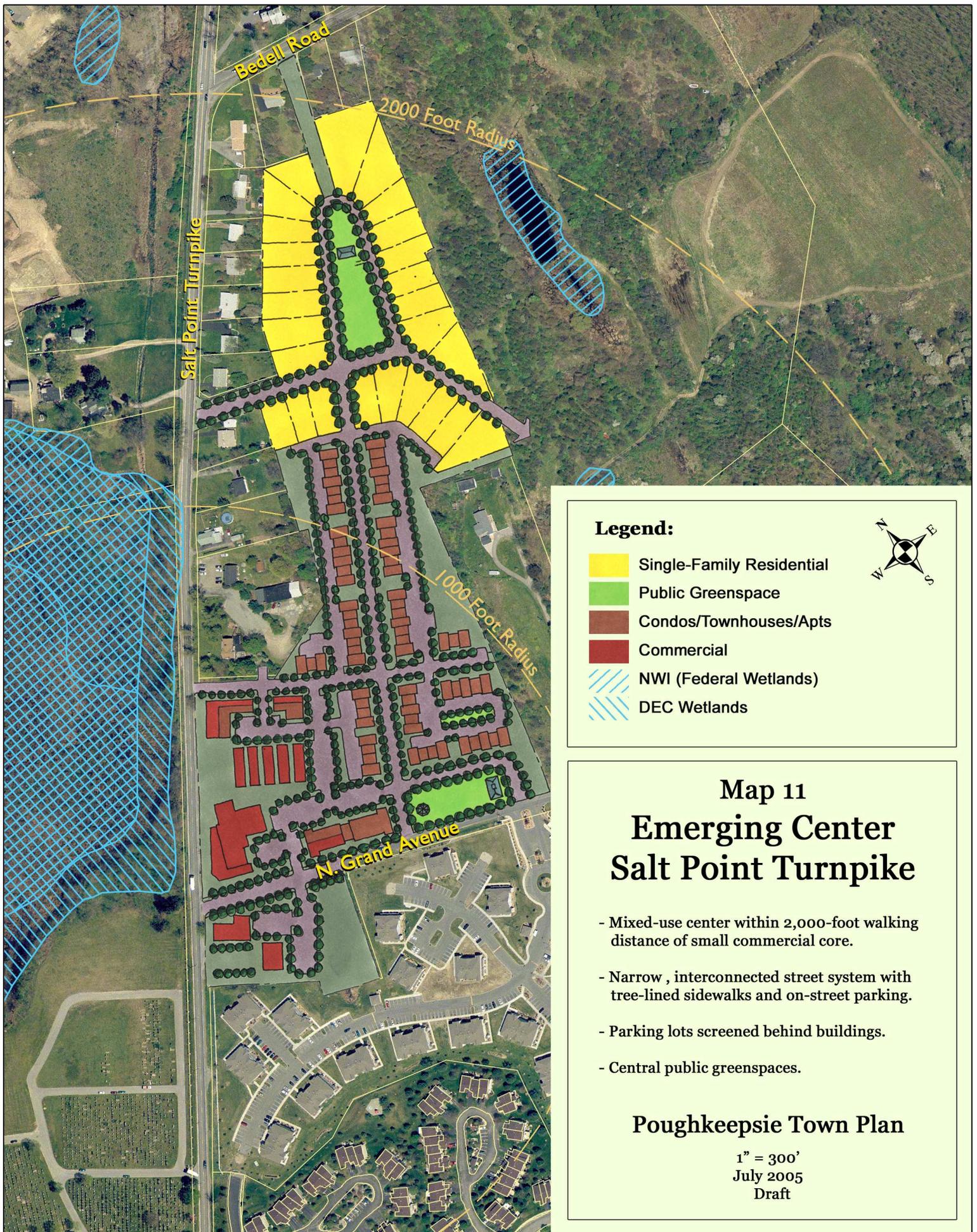
Central Green Corridor to East Campus

Boathouse Row

Traffic Calming Measures for Route 9 in the 30 MPH Zone

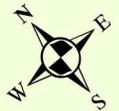
**Map 10**  
**Fairview Center**  
**Design Concepts**

1 Inch = 600 Feet  
 November 2005  
*Draft*



**Legend:**

- Single-Family Residential
- Public Greenspace
- Condos/Townhouses/Apts
- Commercial
- NWI (Federal Wetlands)
- DEC Wetlands



**Map 11**  
**Emerging Center**  
**Salt Point Turnpike**

- Mixed-use center within 2,000-foot walking distance of small commercial core.
- Narrow, interconnected street system with tree-lined sidewalks and on-street parking.
- Parking lots screened behind buildings.
- Central public greenspaces.

**Poughkeepsie Town Plan**

1" = 300'  
 July 2005  
 Draft