

Town of Marlborough, NY

Comprehensive Plan

November 2017



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A special thanks and acknowledgement to all individuals, groups and organizations that helped with, and contributed to the development of this plan.

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**Hudson River
Valley Greenway**



**Department
of State**

November 15, 2017

Alphonso Lanzetta
Town Supervisor
Town of Marlborough
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RE: Comprehensive Plan – Town of Marlborough, NY

Dear Supervisor Al Lanzetta and Members of the Town Board:

On behalf of our company and our consulting team, I am so pleased to be conveying to you this update to the Town of Marlborough Comprehensive Plan.

We are truly grateful to have been allowed the opportunity to serve the town on this very important project. We could not have done this project justice without gaining so much insight from the advisory committee members who contributed their valuable time, ideas and aspirations for the town. Our meetings were fun, engaging, creative and sometimes—well . . . let's just say "interesting". In the end, everyone contributed excellent ideas and much of what you will see in the plan is reflected in the outcome of the discussions we held with the advisory committee. As well a large number of people from across the community participated in the series of workshops that were conducted to provide input to the comprehensive plan.

One of the remarkable traits of the town is the community spirit that I hope you all recognize as your gift to each other—the attitude of working together is pervasive and I have never seen a greater amount of volunteerism in any other community. There were many moments in the process that come to mind as particularly enjoyable—and the time we got to spend with some of the seniors at Mr. Brian Barbulean's class at Marlboro High School was among the high points. If those motivated young people are the future of Marlborough then you can all relax—the town is in good hands as you look ahead. That group of students went above and beyond and put together a questionnaire that surveyed students and others' opinions about issues, needs and town assets and positive elements that we considered and highlighted when drafting the recommendations in the plan.

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The town board's leadership in advancing this project is truly appreciated and we trust you will find the document of utility as you look to continue to make the town a better place to live, work and enjoy.

Finally, I know you don't think that once you adopt the plan that the work is done. Celebrate its completion, recognizing the comprehensive plan is a call to action—to continue to stay ahead of the curve so the opportunities for the town are capitalized upon before they are missed and that the problems that lie around the corner are addressed before they become too big so that your shared vision for the community will become realized. Thank you for this opportunity to be of service.

Yours truly,



John Behan, AICP

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I. Introduction

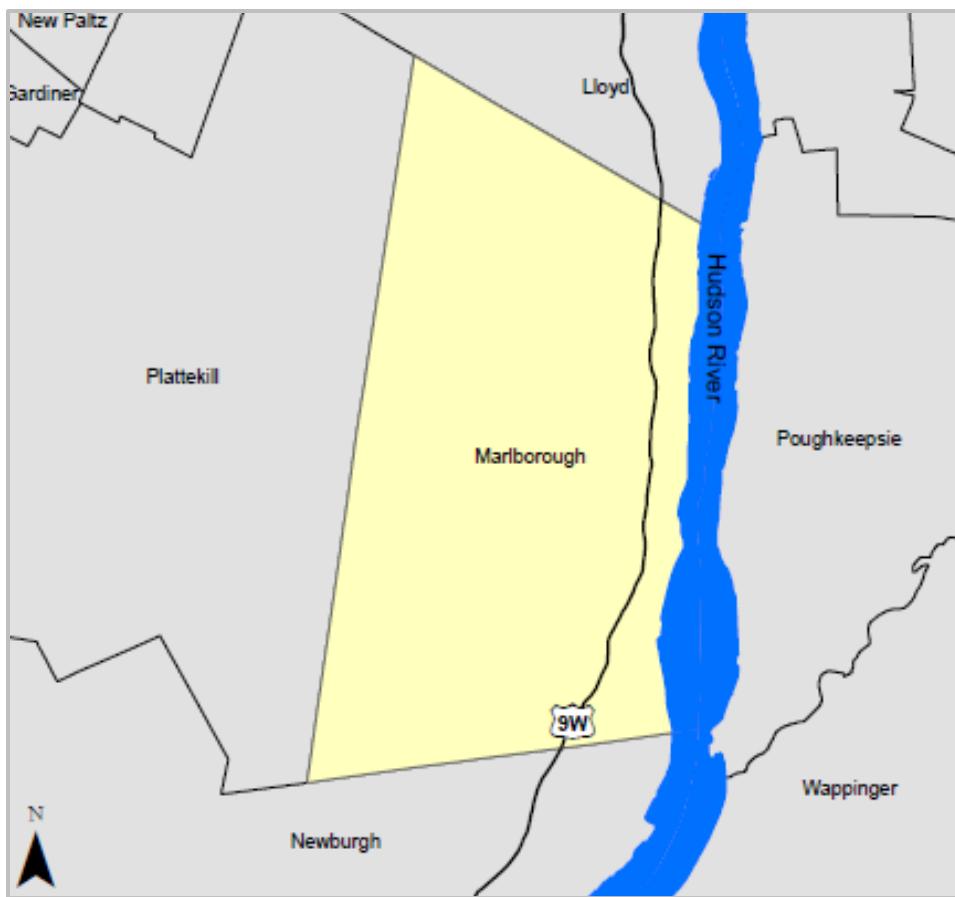
The Town of Marlborough has identified the importance of updating the 2002 Marlborough Comprehensive Master Plan to reflect the current needs, goals and opportunities in the town. As Marlborough continues to evolve, the community is looking toward continued enhancements of the historic hamlets and waterfront areas, management of traffic, land use and *aesthetics* of the highway corridors, fostering economic development, enhancing agriculture, and conserving important open spaces and natural resources. The analysis and recommendations in this plan will provide the foundation for future zoning updates and amendments and other public investment strategies.

This update to the town's comprehensive plan is being developed in parallel with a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to guide the town's land use and revitalization initiatives in a coordinated manner. Fortunately, these efforts are being funded by grants from the Office of Planning and Development, New York State Department of State and the Hudson River Valley Greenway through the Environmental Protection Fund. Both of these planning initiatives are being reviewed as part of the draft generic environmental impact statement (DGEIS) that will allow the town to consider the environmental impacts and benefits of these two initiatives prior to their adoption as official plans for the town.

The comprehensive plan provides a set of goals, policies and objectives for the future growth of the entire town and focuses on land use, development, and zoning-related recommendations. The draft generic environmental impact statement (DGEIS) considers the generic impacts of the adoption of the updated comprehensive plan and the waterfront revitalization program. As the point of the DGEIS is to consider the broad, policy-level impacts of the effects of these two plans, the DGEIS does not address individual projects which may be proposed in the future. The DGEIS establishes thresholds for which future actions can be carried out without further environmental review and the extent to which further environmental review would be required.

II. Regional Setting

Marlborough is located in the Hudson Valley in southeastern Ulster County, New York. It is bound by the Hudson River on the east, the Marlborough Mountains and the Town of Plattekill to the west, the Town of Newburgh in Orange County to the south, and the Town of Lloyd to the north. The town is directly served by New York State 9W which runs north to south parallel to the Hudson River. There are two historic riverfront hamlets: Marlboro and Milton, both located within the 9W corridor on the eastern side of the town.



Ulster County is located approximately midway between New York City and Albany in the area known as the Mid-Hudson Region. The economy of the Mid-Hudson has traditionally been based on agriculture and tourism. For the second half of the twentieth century, manufacturing was an important economic driver in the region. IBM manufacturing facilities in Dutchess and Ulster Counties were the dominant private employer in both counties until large-scale downsizing began in the 1990s. While manufacturing has declined in the region, agriculture and tourism continue to play an important role in the economy and identity of Marlborough.

The apple and grape industries hold important and historical roles in the town, and wine making has emerged as an important regional attractor. In more recent years, agricultural operations have diversified to include organic vegetable farming and small fruit tree farming. A healthy agricultural tourism industry is established in the town, attracting tourists and maintaining the local identity as a farming community.

Currently, the largest job sectors in Marlborough are education services, manufacturing, and retail trade. Together, these industries employ almost 40 percent of those working in Marlborough. The prevalence of these employers in the town and region offer an opportunity for economic growth in Marlborough.

III. Issues and Opportunities

As part of the LWRP process, a thorough inventory and analysis was conducted on the town's existing resources and characteristics (Section III of the LWRP document is attached by reference to this plan). Opportunities to build upon these resources were identified and are addressed in this plan.

A. Continued Community Revitalization – The town has unique historic river town hamlets of Milton and Marlboro and efforts to revitalize the hamlets in order to support expanding business and housing opportunities should continue. The creation of attractive open spaces and better connectivity between the hamlets, the surrounding farms, orchards, vineyards, and other farm-based attractions, as well as to the larger community and the region as a whole will be an important initiative for the town moving forward. These connections can be physical, through the creation of shared-used paths, sidewalks or other infrastructure improvements, or they can be through events and activities like farmers markets and festivals.

B. Demographics - Marlborough is a community of approximately 8,800 residents, and just under half of the town's population lives in one of the two hamlets. The town has experienced modest growth since 2000 with an increase in population of approximately 5.5%. This population growth is comparable to the growth experienced in the neighboring towns of Lloyd and Plattekill.

While Marlborough has experienced a modest increase in overall population, it has also experienced the largest decline in the under 40 population in the county in recent years. Between 2010 and 2015, the median age in the town grew from 37 to over 40. This demographic shift is noticeable in the Marlboro Central School District enrollments and projections. At its historical peak in 2005, the school district had 2,137 students and by 2015, enrollment fell by nearly 10%. This trend is expected to continue to 2025. (Marlboro Central School District, June 2016). The Marlboro Central

Total Projected Enrollment Grades K-12 Marlboro Central School District (2015-2025)

Year	Projected Enrollment
2015	1950
2016	1890
2017	1895
2018	1865
2019	1875
2020	1855
2021	1860
2022	1835
2023	1805
2024	1780
2025	1720

Data from Marlboro Central School District Demographic Study, June 2016

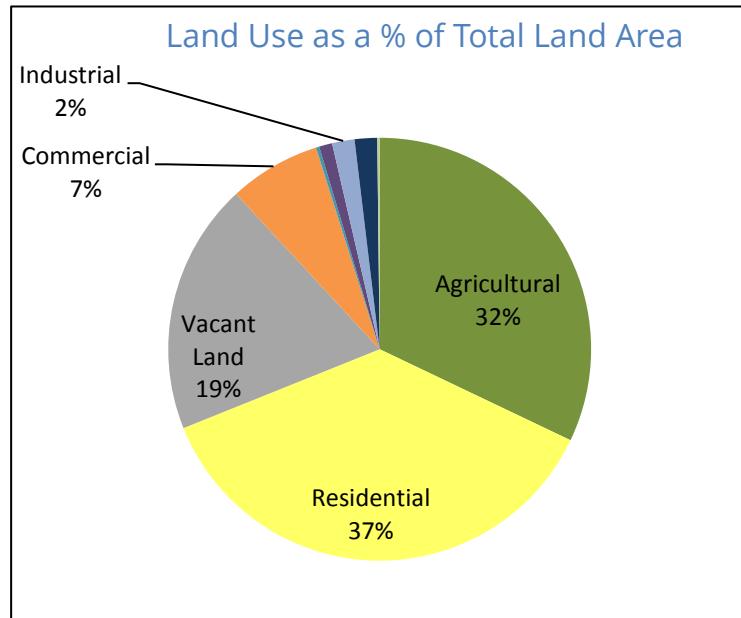
School District is an asset to the town and the academics, extra-curricular programs, athletics and facilities represent overall benefits to the community. The decrease in school enrollment is not seen as a negative indicator of the school district itself, but rather a general indicator of the changing demographics in the town and throughout the region.

Among the demographic trends identified in Marlborough, the three that must be considered for the future of the town include:

- 1. The projected decline in enrollment in the Marlboro Central School District;**
- 2. Projected relative decline in the “under 40” population;**
- 3. Projected increase in the senior and elderly population.**

These trends are not unique to Marlborough, but can contribute to increasing challenges in terms of the cost of community services for education and well-care for an aging population. Addressing these trends proactively will take increasing, multi-level efforts to encourage new and young households to remain or move into town, to help secure a diverse mix of affordable home ownership and home rental options and to increase the base of younger generations to balance the growth of an aging population and provide the needed services for these populations.

C. Land Use - Land use within the town is predominantly in agricultural, and Marlborough is home to nearly 12 percent of Ulster County's active farms. A large proportion of the town is located in a state-designated agricultural district administered through Ulster County. A recent land survey indicates that there are approximately fifty active agricultural operations in the town, amounting to nearly 4,500 acres of farmland.



Data from the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services

The composition of land uses in the town contributes significantly to the unique character and quality of life enjoyed by the residents of Marlborough.

Agriculture – Agriculture was historically Marlborough’s economic mainstay and continues to play a key role in the town’s economy today. The majority of Marlborough’s active farmland lies in the upland areas west of NYS Route 9W. Despite its thriving agricultural community, Marlborough has not been immune to the state-wide trend of declining active farmland, between 2008 and 2015, properties classified as agricultural decreased by more than 6% while residential properties increase by approximately 4% over that same time period (NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services). It is important to note, that the decrease in agricultural land has been much more moderate than other places around the state, and there are some formerly inactive agricultural lands that have been cleared and put back into production both of which are positive signs for agriculture in the town. The farming community in the town is strong with many operators contributing to the region’s economy, and to the town’s healthy agritourism industry producing apples, grapes, wine, and other specialty crops.

Residential Growth - Marlborough has approximately 3,436 households averaging two to three people in size. The town as a whole grew by over 400 households, or a growth rate of 13 percent between 2000 and 2015. Mid-Hudson Valley home prices fell significantly following the housing collapse in 2008-2009. At present, the average home value in Marlborough is approximately \$204,000 (Zillow).

Denser residential development is located in and around the hamlets of Milton and Marlboro, with more rural style subdivisions expanding westward into the more rural landscapes of the town.

More than 60% of housing units in Marlborough are single-family homes, and this type of housing comprised the majority of new residential development in the town between 2001 and 2014. Three separate large-scale, multi-family developments occurred during different years during this period, each of which is located within one of the two hamlets. At its peak in 2007, the town issued 97 building permits for single-family homes and at its lowest in 2013, issued two permits each for two-family dwellings.

Commercial Growth – Commercial development can be found in the hamlet centers where locally owned businesses and restaurants serve the residents and the visitors of the community. Outside the hamlets, the 9W corridor is dominated by larger-scale highway strip style development with a mix of services, light industrial uses, auto sales and other similar businesses. Outside of the hamlets, restaurants are also an important commercial use along/near the highway. Recently, the hamlets have seen resurgence in new locally-owned businesses with new restaurants and shops locating there.

Land Use Regulations – The town currently has basic zoning regulations that specify allowed uses and bulk, height and setback requirements in each zoning district, but include little to no narrative or graphics on how development should look from a site planning perspective. This lack of design guidance makes it difficult for the planning board to ensure new projects meet the community's expectation. Including design guidelines in the zoning ordinance will provide an opportunity for the town to establish and clarify community expectations and incorporate a clear vision for future development in town into their land use regulations. These guidelines should rely on design patterns and concepts which emphasize the desired physical character of development and create a unified vision for the future of an area and the community. This will help contribute to the overall attractiveness and economic vitality of the town.

D. Historical Background – Marlborough is a town steeped in history. From early historical narratives of Native American fishing grounds, to the earliest European settlers in the 17th Century, to early train travel evidence of the town's past can be seen in its historic hamlets, buildings, landscapes and industrial ruins. The river provided not only transportation but was an important food source during the colonial and early industrial period and shad from the river were netted by the tens of thousands as a staple for protein over the long winter months during the town's early years.

The Town of Marlborough and its residents take great pride in the historical roots of the community. Many of the families in town have lived in Marlborough for multiple generations, and there are farming families that have been working on land in Marlborough for over 200 years. The strong and historical community ties that exist in Marlborough are elements that are important to maintain, and also elements that should be built upon for the future.

E. Overall Connectivity – Marlborough has many resources and attractions for residents and visitors to enjoy, however these attractions are scattered throughout the town and there is a significant lack of connectivity between them. The town in general is oriented north to south with the Hudson River and railroad tracks running along its eastern border. The major north/south roadway connections are Route 9W and Lattintown Road (Ulster County Route 11). Both the Milton and Marlboro hamlets are within the 9W corridor. Two of the major east/west connections through the town are Milton Turnpike (Ulster County Route 10), extending from the Milton hamlet westward, and Western Avenue (Ulster County Route 14, and 14A) in Marlboro hamlet. For the most part, these major connections throughout the town have minimal pedestrian and virtually no bicycle infrastructure that would provide for non-motorized connections between Marlborough's resources and attractions. Sidewalks, shared-use paths, and widened shoulders are elements that could be included along

connector routes and in hamlets to make Marlborough a more walkable and connected community. Intersection safety and connectivity, especially along NYS Route 9W is in great need of improvement including safe pedestrian crossings, consideration of alternative designs including roundabouts and separate facilities for bikes/pedestrians.

Throughout conversations with the town's youth and other residents a general concern that has been expressed is the inability to walk most places. Walking in Marlborough is generally challenging due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure, both on and off the road. Lack of walkability is not only a safety issue; it is also a quality of life issue. Communities that are walkable are more attractive to home-buyers; they also contribute to the overall physical and mental health of their residents.

Significant strides have been made by the town to improve pedestrian accommodations in recent years. In 2016, a Safe Routes to School study was performed to identify areas in need of improvements. Since then, pedestrian amenities have been installed and upgraded around town, but gaps in the infrastructure continue to exist.

IV. Vision Statement and Goals

The vision statement for the future of Marlborough was established following numerous committee meetings and public input sessions. This vision statement is designed to reflect what Marlborough is and where Marlborough is going and is used as guidance for this plan.

Vision Statement: *Marlborough is a unique riverfront town that offers a diverse range of business opportunities, cultural attractions and housing options set in a beautiful Hudson Valley landscape where agriculture and history are highly-valued elements of our community and our small town quality of life is the centerpiece of multi-generational living and civic endeavors.*

Goals: The stated goals of this comprehensive plan are the established goals of the community and therefore mirror those put forth in the LWRP. While the LWRP addresses the goals with coastal policies and recommended projects and actions for the waterfront area, the comprehensive plan seeks to accomplish the town's goals through recommendations for future land uses in the town.

The goals of this plan build upon the goals set forth in the 2002 Master Plan and mirror those in the LWRP in order to:

Strengthen Connections with the River – Integrate the waterfront into the community by improving both physical and visual access to the river.

Revitalize Milton and Marlboro Hamlets – Restore and improve Marlboro and Milton hamlets as the commercial and cultural centers of the town through strategic public and private investments in streetscapes, parking areas, and private properties in and around the hamlet areas and improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodation.

Improve the NYS Route 9W Corridor – Collaborate with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and Ulster County to improve the safety and aesthetics of the highway corridor, calm traffic in the hamlet centers, and create a system that can better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists and address the needs of the mobility impaired.

Celebrate and protect natural and cultural resources – Maintain and protect the town's natural resources and better document the town's historic and cultural resources, and consider ways to protect and enhance these resources as a source of community revitalization.

Enhance Agricultural Uses – Explore more ways to advance and promote agriculture within the town so that these traditions continue to be an important part of town life and the regional economy.

Hudson River Valley Greenway Compact – Marlborough has long been an active member of the Hudson River Valley Greenway and is recognized as a “compact community” in supporting the Greenway criteria which are well aligned with the town’s goals and objectives for this comprehensive plan.

The Greenway criteria are described by the Hudson River Valley Greenway Act as “the basis for attaining the goal of the Hudson River Valley Greenway”. These criteria complement the overall goals of the community of Marlborough and include:

- Natural and cultural resource protection,
- Regional planning,
- Economic development,
- Public access,
- Heritage and environmental education.

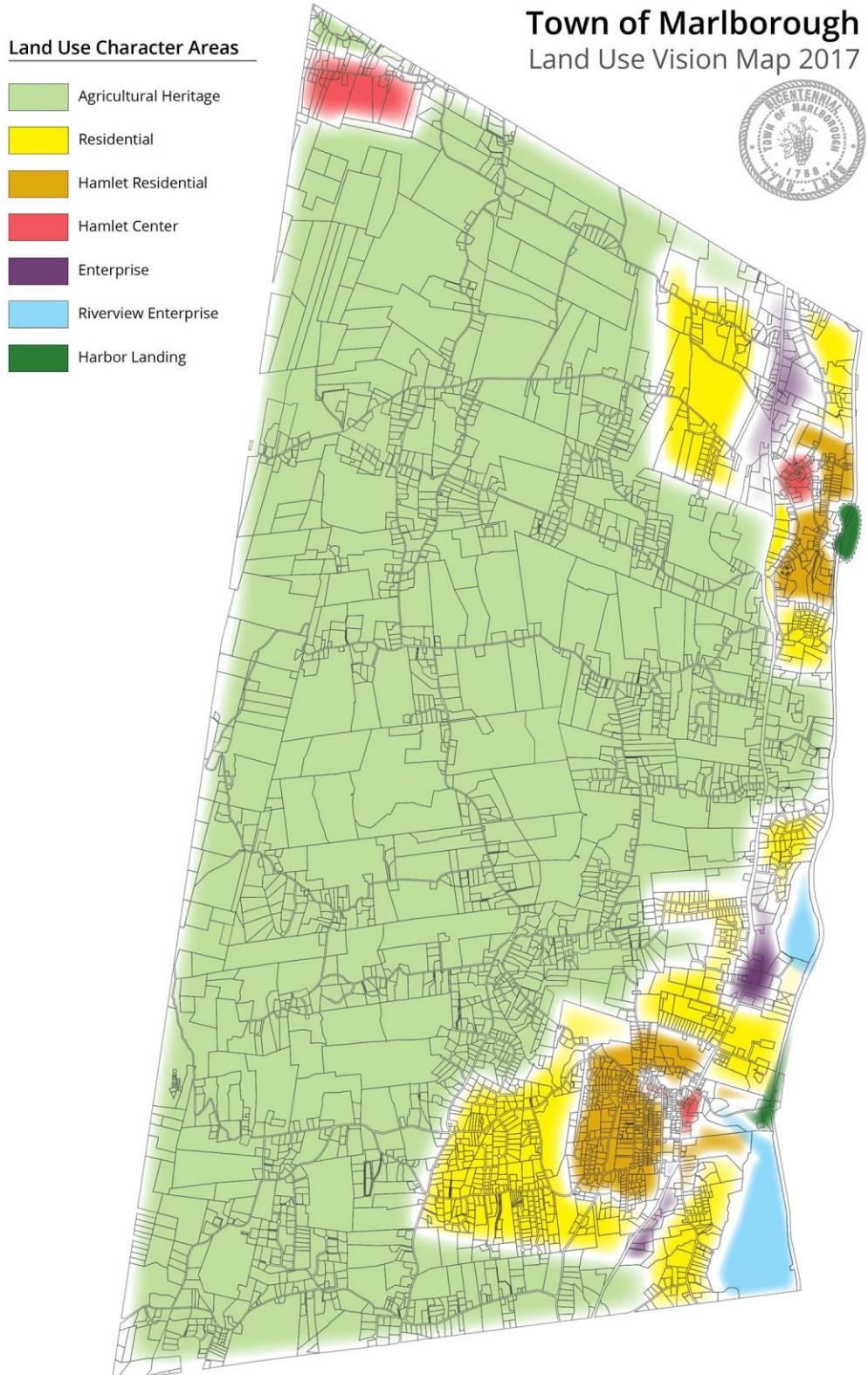


Northern pier at Milton Landing Park in Marlborough provides public access to the Hudson River.

The general nature of the Greenway criteria allows communities to develop locally-based projects which address community concerns while contributing to the overall framework of the Hudson River Valley Greenway.

V. Land Use Vision Map

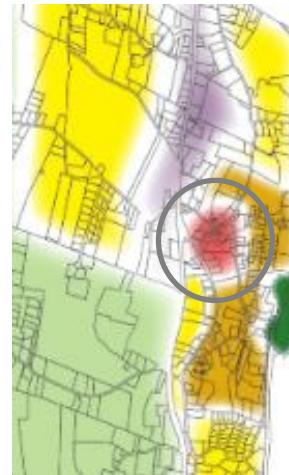
The land use plan has been divided into several character areas representing general land and development concepts with similar natural, cultural, or development features meant to outline future land use patterns. These character areas are depicted on the land use vision map on the following page. The character areas do not represent specific zoning boundaries, but rather, broad development, land use, and conservation categories. Nevertheless, these character areas should be considered and further refined when making updates to the town’s zoning ordinance.



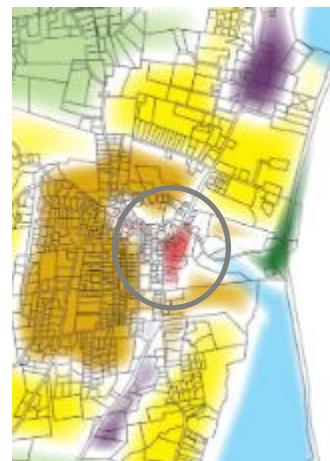
Land Use Character Areas

Several land use areas have been identified on the map on the previous page. These areas are grouped together based on similar characteristics of current land uses and development types. The shared features and current and future uses for each character area are described in the following section. Planning issues to be considered for future growth, development and conservation are identified for each character area.

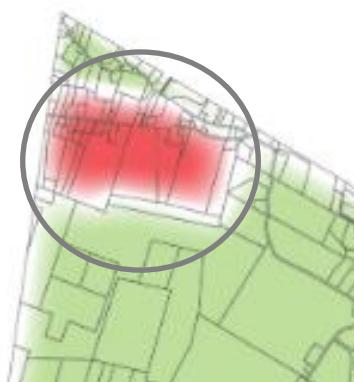
Hamlet Center – The hamlet centers are the locations of the historical settlement of the town, based around the transportation opportunities that the Hudson River supplied as well as the water-power opportunities that the many creeks and falls provided for the residents and industries in the area. Historically, these areas were the center of commerce and social interactions for residents and visitors to the town. Today, these areas represent an opportunity for commercial growth and mixed-use development that would provide a wider range of housing types in the town. Mixed-use development is a traditional type of settlement in which housing is situated above commercial storefronts located on the street-level. The Urban Land Institute's Mixed-Use Development Handbook characterizes mixed-use development areas are those that 1) provide three or more significant revenue-producing uses (such as retail/entertainment, office, residential, hotel, and/or civic/cultural/recreation), 2) foster integration, density, and compatibility of land uses, and 3) create a walkable community with uninterrupted pedestrian



Milton Hamlet Center



Marlboro Hamlet Center



Route 44/
Northwestern
Hamlet Center

connections. Expansion of this type development can allow for increased housing opportunities for business owners, their employees, and young families moving to the area.

There are three areas defined as hamlet centers in the town, they are based on the two hamlets, Milton and Marlboro, and the area in the northwest portion of town around Milton Turnpike (Route 44). The Milton hamlet center is focused around Main Street where hamlet scale businesses, restaurants and community services are located. Any development in Milton should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood fabric and historic streetscape. In the Hamlet of Marlboro, the hamlet center area has a different feel because it is centered on



The hamlet center areas are the center of commerce and social interaction for the town.

Image courtesy of Vivian Photography

the much busier Route 9W and Western Avenue. Within Marlboro, consideration should be given to creating more of a sense of a hamlet center, perhaps with the creation of a small pocket park or green space that could host community events. Efforts should also be made to calm highway traffic and increase walkability and pedestrian safety in hamlet center character areas.

The hamlet center areas of Milton and Marlboro are primarily zoned Commercial (C-1) while the hamlet center in the northwestern portion of town is zoned Commercial (C-2), both designations that allow for retail businesses and services, professional offices, restaurants, automobile service, repair and filling stations, and dwelling units over ground floor commercial uses. These areas offer the opportunity to create a sense of place for the



The hamlet centers offer opportunity for infill commercial and mixed-use development.

Image courtesy of Rick Lashinsky & Meet me in Marlborough.

community by promoting a walkable, highly connected street layout with proximity to local businesses, restaurants and services. The proximity to restaurants and other services as well as the walkable nature of the hamlet centers position these character areas for the expansion of overnight lodging options like bed and breakfasts and small-scale inns that could provide

complimentary services to the town's already existing agritourism business and emerging heritage tourism industry.

In the most recent update to the zoning, the C-1 area in the Marlboro hamlet was decreased, converting areas along Western Avenue from C-1 to Residential. Considerations should be given to ensuring a connected system of sidewalks throughout the hamlet center and extending into the surrounding hamlet residential character areas, as well as installing crosswalks where appropriate both of which will create a safer and more welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike.

Future zoning amendments incorporating design guidelines in the hamlet center areas should consider the historical context of the hamlets. Buildings should be built close to the sidewalk line, with height and architectural elements that are contextually relevant and compatible with the existing buildings. Sidewalks, crosswalks, street trees, and pedestrian scale street lights should be incorporated throughout the hamlet center areas. Where possible, an off-street shared parking area should be formalized in each hamlet with shared parking between establishments and shared access should be sought in order to minimize curb cuts.

Design with Marlborough in mind – design guidelines provide a way for the town to provide input on how new development should look, but also how it interacts with the surrounding community.



Traditional Zoning - Provides information on what is not allowed. New development is unpredictable.



Design Guidelines - Describes what is wanted and how it should look. Creates predictability in new development.

Hamlet Residential – Surrounding the hamlet center areas in Milton and Marlboro are the hamlet residential character areas, these areas are characterized by older, denser, traditional residential development patterns. The hamlet residential areas typically are served by existing sewer and/or water infrastructure; new residential development should be guided towards these areas.

The hamlet residential areas are comprised primarily of R-Residential zoning. This zoning designation allows for the orderly growth of established residential centers. Single-family and two-family detached homes are the main residential structures in these areas. Minimum lot size in this zoning district is currently between 10,000 and 20,000 square feet depending on access to utilities. The smaller lot sizes allow for a denser and more diverse development pattern. Residential infill development should be pursued in the hamlet residential areas where appropriate. Siting and encouraging more housing in these areas is important not only to enhancing the hamlet areas, but also to protecting the agricultural areas in the town by taking development pressure off of the farmland and reducing resource fragmentation.

The primary issues in these hamlet residential character areas are the enhancements to the built environment including pedestrian amenities and safety, and the aesthetics and design of the street. Design guidelines for the hamlet residential areas should consider the traditional pattern of smaller lot sizes and setbacks. In many traditional hamlet residential areas, the setbacks are varied offering interesting and unique streetscapes and lot frontages, this element should be considered and allowed in the design guidelines.



For new construction, smaller houses and row houses are appropriate for residential infill in the hamlet residential character areas.

Enterprise – Enterprise areas exist along the Route 9W corridor. These areas allow for both commercial and industrial uses such as office buildings, warehouses, and light manufacturing complexes.

The Enterprise areas are zoned primarily Highway Development (HD). The intent of this zoning designation is to provide an environment that is conducive to the development of light industrial and complementary commercial uses, including research and development institutions, professional and administrative facilities, warehousing and storage, distribution, and low-intensity processing.

Thus far, development in these areas is a scattered mix of services, light industrial, auto sales, retail, restaurants and other similar businesses. While this type of development is allowed in the zoning code and contributes to the town's tax base, care should be given to ensure that future development is sited and landscaped in such a way as to contribute to the aesthetic quality of the town and the 9W corridor.



Development in the Enterprise character areas should include pedestrian accommodations, partial screening of the buildings, and trees and other landscaping elements.

Other planning concerns for this character area include access management issues resulting from a large number of ingress and egress points along Route 9W, a heavily trafficked corridor. Future development in this area should consider a model of shared access points and business park type models to reduce access points and promote a more orderly type of development.

Design guidelines in the enterprise areas should ensure appropriate screening for businesses from the road using clusters of vegetation and stone walls where feasible. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations separated from the roadway should be provided where possible. Future development should be clustered in a way that limits access points by enabling shared curb cuts and interconnected parking among adjacent businesses.

Residential – The Residential character areas of Marlborough support neighborhood development between the areas of the town with more intense residential and commercial uses and the more rural agricultural areas. Residential character areas are located on the outskirts of the hamlets and extend upland into the agricultural areas of the town. Residential development is less dense here than in the hamlet residential areas and much of this area is defined by large lot residential housing and subdivisions.

More than 60 percent of the housing units in Marlborough are single-family homes, and many new homes are built on a landscape that was once devoted to agriculture. The problem of farmland conservation is not one house or one development; the problem arises cumulatively overtime as we build out across the landscape. Working farmland and wildlife habitats are fragmented by building footprints, lawns, roads, and driveways potentially leading to decline in viable agricultural land and other connected open spaces.

This area is primarily zoned R-1 Residential with a minimum lot size of 1 acre, a consistent lot size for the intended moderate-density residential development. Future residential development in this area, particularly in the areas where working farmland is still present, should consider the effects of fragmentation and seek settlement patterns that reduce the division of farmland and wildlife habitat.



The Community Design Manual

Ulster County Planning Board

March 2017

As the town looks to develop design guidelines, it is recommended these be customized to fit the unique setting in the town. Ulster County's design manual will be a helpful reference but would not be a substitute for the town creating its own standards.

Where residential development and working farmland do coincide, residential lots should be sited to minimize the impact/intrusion into farmland space, and a vegetative buffer located on the residential properties to separate residential from agricultural land should be required. Although the town currently has a right-to-farm law that protects farmers from nuisance complaints, the addition of a buffer zone between the two uses will further protect farm operations and promote good neighbor relations.

Agricultural Heritage – Marlborough's agricultural areas reflect one of the defining aspects of the land use characteristics of the town. These areas are widespread across the town. Also important are the extensive forest lands which include large tracts of woodlands across the Marlboro Mountains and some of the higher elevations. The agricultural heritage area lies primarily on the western side of the Route 9W corridor, in the upland areas of the town.

The 1970 land use survey and U.S. Census of Agriculture data confirmed the town's agricultural character with 64 percent of Marlborough's total land area in agricultural use. Today, agricultural remains one of the primary land uses in the town with approximately 32 percent of Marlborough classified as agricultural by the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Service (2015 Annual Assessment Rolls).



Marlborough's agricultural heritage is the result of generations of hard work and stewardship of the working landscape. Image courtesy of Matt Kierstead.

Maintaining the agricultural character and keeping land in farming in the future is a primary concern for the town. There are two key aspects which should be considered to ensure farming remains a key aspect of life in Marlborough: first, help keep farming profitable by enhancing agricultural uses and promoting agritourism; second, protect existing farmland from residential development that creates fragmentation and loss of agricultural viability.

For the most part, the agricultural heritage areas are zoned Rural Agricultural (RAG), a designation that is intended to encourage the continuation of agriculture and to preserve important natural and economic resources, and to create conditions conducive to rural life and country living in an area primarily dedicated to agriculture. While in general this description accurately describes the current conditions in the agricultural heritage areas, the RAG zoning also allows for a minimum lot size of 1-acre.

While it is understood that ability to subdivide and sell off a +/-1-acre lot for development is an important option for landowners to maintain, it should be considered that if this option was utilized to its fullest extent, at a density of 100 lots on 100 acres there would be a drastic change to the landscape and to the character of this rural and agricultural area. To fully examine this possibility, the town should consider conducting a build-out analysis based on the current zoning and review these findings with owners of large tracts of land with the idea of exploring alternative methods of subdivision design that would protect property values and protect the rural agricultural resources and character.

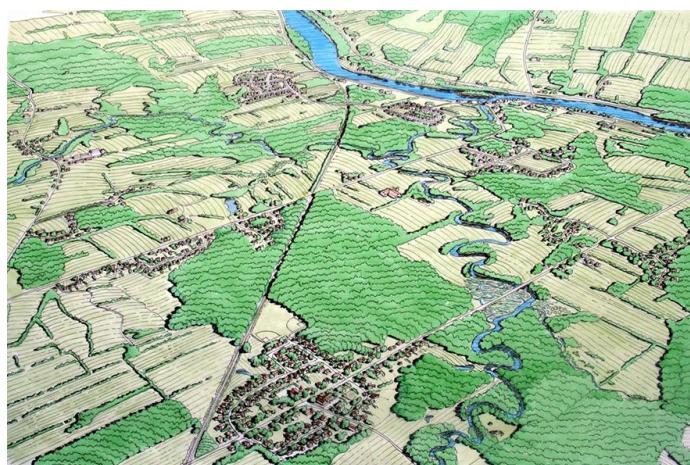
The concept of maximum density allowances should be explored as a way to maintain the rural quality of life in the agricultural heritage areas while maintaining the 1- acre minimum lot size.



Existing Conditions



Conventional Large - Lot Development



Conservation Development

Another option to explore for future development in this area is the conservation subdivision technique. Conservation subdivisions are intended to protect farmland and open space, particularly employed on new residential development.



This model of conservation subdivision preserves the farmstead area and much of the forested area of the parcel while allowing moderately dense residential development.

rural quality and scenic views of the area.

While the conservation subdivision model of development does not save the entire farm itself, it does preserve the agricultural character of the area without limiting a landowner's opportunity to develop. Lower density conservation subdivisions can yield equal to or net return to a landowner than higher density development.

Harbor Landings – There are two harbor landing areas in the town located at Milton Landing and Marlboro Landing. Milton Landing is the home of the historic Milton Train Station, a town park, and a pier that is utilized by the public for fishing and viewing the river. Marlboro Landing is shared by two private marinas, West Shore Marine and the Marlboro Yacht Club. Both marinas have dock space available for guest use and a boat launch is available to the public for a fee.

The harbor landing areas are the only places in Marlborough where the Hudson River can be accessed by the public for recreational purposes. These areas are zoned Industrial (IND) although based on the current and desired uses of the riverfront, that designation should be changed in order to avoid potential conflicting uses with the established waterfront parks and marina facilities. A stated goal of the community is to strengthen and establish more public connections to the river. The harbor landing areas are ideal locations for targeted enhancements to public river access.

A conservation subdivision takes a more holistic approach to development by looking at the entire parcel available, and the surrounding area and planning the subdivision with the goal of conserving as much of the parcel, farmland, forestland or open space as possible. In this model, a higher concentration of housing on parts of the land is allowed in order to reduce fragmentation of forest and farmland, and to allow for development while maintaining the



The harbor landing areas provide opportunities to expand public access and facilities along the Hudson River. These examples illustrate some of the many possibilities for Marlborough's waterfront and water view areas.

Riverview Enterprise – There are two riverview enterprise areas in Marlborough, both of which offer tremendous opportunities for the town to establish new connections, both visual and physical, with the Hudson River.

The northern riverview enterprise area is the site of the Copart auto salvage and auction operation, and formerly the site of a sand and gravel mine. This is an ideal location for this type of commercial use because it is shielded from view of the hamlets. Although it is not anticipated, if Copart was to cease operations here, this area should be retained as a technology based/ light industrial/manufacturing area. A small industrial park with multiple smaller facilities may be appropriate. The area is adjacent to an enterprise character area, which is zoned Highway Development and allows uses that may complement those in the riverview enterprise area. The expansion and connection of compatible uses in this area should be explored as a way to develop industrial business clusters that can benefit from a shared location, and increase tax revenue for the town.

The southern riverview enterprise area is located on Dock Road in the hamlet of Marlboro and extends throughout the Tilcon quarry area along the river. This entire character area is privately owned, and it is anticipated that Tilcon will retain the land as it currently stands for the foreseeable future. The Dock Road parcel should be evaluated for a potential multi-family, mixed-use development that could build upon and incorporate any future development in the Marlboro Landing area and take advantage of the Hudson River views.

VI. Land Use Recommendations

Land use recommendations in this plan recognize that the Town of Marlborough is a patchwork quilt of land use patterns containing a mix of residential, farmland, forestland, and commercial corridors along with historic hamlets and waterfront areas.

A. Agricultural - Despite the importance of Marlborough's farms to the community and the region, there are very few conserved farms within the town. A conserved farm is an agricultural property that has been permanently protected through a conservation easement/purchase of development rights (PDR) or transfer of development rights (TDR) – both of which are mechanisms in which a landowner is compensated for his or her right to develop the land. The landowner retains ownership of the land and can continue to farm it; however, the potential for development has been removed conserving the property as agricultural land for the future.

In addition to maintaining farmland and the agricultural character of the town, conserved farms protect wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas such as meadows, wetlands and streams. Well managed farmland can also help maintain surface and ground water quality. Farmland helps keep property taxes low by requiring, on average, just 37 cents of municipal services for every dollar it pays in taxes.

Agriculture and agritourism are important industries for the town, local organizations like Meet me in Marlborough and the Shawangunk Wine Trail draw visitors from New York City and around the region for winery tours, pick-your-own days at local farms and farm-to-table dining. The Hudson Valley Research Lab supports farmers in the area by conducting research and educational events in the area. The town should continue to support the efforts of those groups as well as continuing to support farmers markets, on-site retail operations and other value adding activities and agricultural related events.

The Hudson Valley Research Laboratory (HVRL) is a farmer owned, farm centered research station staffed by Cornell University faculty and staff. The HVRL, located in Highland, provides vital research and critical education and support to New York's farming community. To the farmers of Marlborough, this facility has provided important education regarding pest management and crop production. The town's policies should continue to support and enhance the efforts of HVRL.



The best strategy to maintain farmland is to keep farmland profitable, but even the most profitable farms can be vulnerable to subdivision and development. In a survey conducted by Ulster County in conjunction with the Ulster County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, conservation easements and PDR were identified by a majority of farmers who responded as “very important” or “somewhat important” land use options in relation to farming (Ulster County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, 1997). Preserving farms through conservation easements helps sustain the viability of existing farms and keeps the land available for the next generation of farmers. The town should explore continued partnership opportunities with local land trusts like Scenic Hudson or the Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy to further advance conservation easements throughout Marlborough.

By continued and expanded collaboration, the town and the agricultural community should establish goals and strategies to keep agriculture strong in Marlborough, and develop answers to the following questions:

- The future of agriculture in Marlborough will be...?
- This will be achieved by....?
- Which will require...?

Conservation easements are voluntary and can be donated or sold by the landowner. Purchasing a farmer’s development rights provides a way to financially compensate willing landowners for not developing their land. Removing the development rights from a property not only provides the current landowner with a mechanism to derive capital from the land, but makes the possibility of purchasing the land more accessible for a new farmer. By removing the development potential through purchase of development rights, the land can later be sold at the lower agricultural value by someone, often a family member, seeking to buy the land and continue farm operations on the property.

Transfer of development rights (TDR) is a technique used to permanently protect farmland and other natural and cultural resources by redirecting development that would otherwise occur. Landowners within valuable agricultural and resource areas are financially compensated for choosing not to develop some or all of their land. The right to build a house or other structure is transferred from an area where development is discouraged (the “sending zone”) to an area where development is encouraged (the “receiving zone”).

In addition to the above conservation techniques, the agricultural community along with the town should consider drafting and adopting an agriculture and farmland preservation plan. Not only do these plans help establish agriculture as a critical land use in the town through local policies, they also develop a framework for the town to promote farming and

agritourism, and place the town and local landowners in a better position to receive state and federal monies for farmland conservation.

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets offers Farmland Protection Planning Grants (FPPG) which assist municipal governments in the development of agricultural and farmland protection plans.

B. Residential Growth and Affordable/Workforce Housing - Residential growth should be focused in and around the Hamlets of Marlboro and Milton, these areas are already serviced by the public water and sewer districts. Focusing additional development in the hamlets would reduce future municipal infrastructure costs. It will be important that a mix of housing types are available to accommodate the range of housing needs in Marlborough—in particular for those of low-moderate income including housing to accommodate those that work in the town. As the town looks to update its zoning, it should consider appropriate incentives to help produce affordable/workforce housing as part of a balanced mix of housing types in the town.

Hamlet Center - Expanding residential uses including multi-family housing above commercial types of uses at a scale that reflects some of the higher-density current use patterns will be helpful to strengthen hamlet livability as a place to live and work and find local services, restaurants, and cafes. Altering allowed building heights to three to four stories would be appropriate, along with increased residential densities to fit within those building sizes.

Design guidelines will be important to reflect local architectural character while allowing more updated architectural styles. While architectural elements that blend with historic details are important, equally important is creating an attractive environment for new investment and for supporting building design that fits and adds to the overall streetscape character and amenities of the hamlets.

Securing off-site parking areas will open up hamlet infill development while maintaining a compact form and increasing walkability which is important for economic viability.

Hamlet Residential - The lot sizes and other dimensional aspects of this character area should reflect a compact settlement pattern where walkability is a key part of design. Lot widths, yard setbacks and lot sizes should be small enough to allow compact development of single-family, two-family and townhome type development. Typically lot widths around 50-60 feet, 5-10 feet side yard setbacks and lot areas around 7,000 to 8,000 square feet for detached dwellings with water and sewer are appropriate for this area.

Planning and providing for a diversity of housing types in and around the hamlets is a strategy that can provide more affordable housing and attract a more diverse population of people to the town. The hamlets are the ideal places to create and encourage different housing types including duplexes and townhomes. In addition to addressing issues of affordability, a greater range of housing types may attract young families with school age children to the town. As previously noted, enrollment in the Marlboro Central School District has been in decline for the past decade and is projected to continue to decline. Increasing the population of school-aged children to reverse the current downward projection should be viewed as an opportunity rather than a burden. The school district currently has the capacity to increase enrollment and doing so will only add to the vibrant education environment that already exists in Marlborough.

When possible, existing housing should be maintained and rehabilitated in the hamlet areas. The hamlets and surrounding neighborhoods have a combination of older and historic houses mixed with newer residential structures. While new development should be encouraged, the older homes should be maintained whenever possible as they add to the character of the community and provide a glimpse into Marlborough's historic past.

Infill development in the hamlet center and residential areas should be encouraged to maintain the desired density and a diversity of housing choices. Other areas in the town should be evaluated for possible growth based on available infrastructure and existing uses.

Agricultural Heritage - Additional elements should be added to the town's site plan review process to further protect agricultural land, like requiring buffer areas and residential/other uses if required between farm uses. This provision should be added to the zoning code for new residential development that abuts the agricultural district or active farmland. The buffer should be located on the residential property. Ideally, these buffers should be at least 50 feet in width and planted heavily with a mixture of grasses and low growing indigenous shrubs and a variety of trees.

Measures should also be taken to maintain a contiguous landscape of farmland in the agricultural areas of town. These measures include avoiding the approval of subdivisions that result in piecemeal residential development, consideration of conservation subdivision design requirements and limiting excessive strip residential development along rural roads.

C. Historic Resources - Marlborough is a town with a tremendous history, much of which can be seen in its housing stock. While many of the older homes are well-maintained and cared for, it is a well-known dilemma that upkeep on an older house is expensive and more time consuming than maintaining a new home, and once the repairs cease, old homes

can decline quickly and can result in “demolition by neglect” due to the absence of routine maintenance and repair. This is an all too common fate of historic housing. While it is understood that maintenance of older homes is often difficult, time consuming, and costly, maintaining the integrity and appearance of these homes is an important contribution to the community.

The town together with the code enforcement officer can work to prevent older and historic homes from falling into disrepair by ensuring maintenance through annual inspections to evaluate code compliance. The town could assist historic home owners in developing a voluntary maintenance program which ensures that measures are taken to maintain the essential structure of the building. The code enforcement officer could meet with the homeowner annually to make sure that the maintenance program is being followed. In many historic communities, non-profit historic preservation organizations have been created with the goal of helping property owners recognize, preserve and enhance historic properties.

The first step in protecting the historic housing stock in Marlborough is to first identify and locate these important resources. This can be done through a cultural resources survey conducted by a historic preservation consultant. A cultural resources survey identifies all historic buildings and structures as well as all prehistoric and visible historic archaeological sites. Once these sites are identified there are historical preservation planning incentives and programs such as preservation tax credits that can be taken advantage of to assist in the renovation and maintenance of the historical building stock in the town.



Shared-use paths provide off-road connections that can be used for recreation and community and can be more desirable for a larger number of users along high-volume roads like Route 9W than sidewalks or bike lanes.

Other options include the National Register (NR) program, administered by the National Park Service, a component of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. NR listing adds prestige to a property, placing it on a national list of historically significant properties. NR listing does not prevent a property owner from altering or demolishing a listed building and has several significant benefits. Inclusion on the NR can protect properties from the effects of publicly-funded projects through the environmental review process. Income-producing NR-listed properties can be eligible for tax credits for restoration conducted according to the

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. NR listing does not result in any property tax or valuation increases, but can potentially increase property resale value. Where there are multiple adjacent historic properties they can be listed together to form a National Register Historic District (NRHD).

D. Circulation and Transportation – The town and in particular the hamlet areas are in need of mobility and streetscape improvements, specifically along Route 9W which runs north to south through the town and serves as the main street for Marlboro hamlet. While this route brings a large number of motorists through the town on a regular basis, the design of the roadway and the corridor does not encourage them to stop, visit, or spend time in Marlborough.

Ulster County is conducting a Route 9W corridor study that will cover the route through the majority of Marlborough from the Town of Lloyd along Route 9W to Western Avenue in Marlboro hamlet. While this is a significant portion of the town, a comprehensive, town-wide approach to the safety and aesthetics of this corridor should be undertaken to better address these issues.

Traffic circulation is an issue within the town especially on Route 9W through Marlboro hamlet at the intersection of Western Avenue, King Street and Route 9W where the intersection of three roads creates an odd situation for motorists. This intersection has been studied by previous town plans, these plans should be revisited and their recommendations should be considered and implemented.

The town, county, and New York State should consider implementing a complete streets policy especially within and between the hamlet areas. Complete streets are roadways that are constructed and designed to enable

Increasing north-south connectivity for bicycles and pedestrians:

Marlborough's Lattintown Road winds its way through Marlborough's upland areas providing spectacular views of the town's agricultural lands and the Hudson River Valley. For these reasons and many more, the busy roadway attracts many of the area's avid cyclists who enjoy the challenge of an uphill climb and the reward of a beautiful view at the top. The road itself, a county highway, offers very little shoulder for cyclists to travel in, and therefore they often ride in the travel lane along with motorists. This situation prevents many visitors and residents from walking or cycling along this scenic route. Lattintown Road seems like an ideal location for a shared-use path; however the topography and agricultural uses that surround the road prevent such an option. Here, widening and improving the shoulder along the county highway to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians alike would increase safety, attract more visitors to this location, and ease the burden on traffic that often results from a tour of cyclists.

safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike. Elements should include completing sidewalk and crosswalk connectivity throughout the hamlets; and ensuring major roadways have a wide enough shoulder or a shared-use side path which pedestrians and bicyclists could use safely along-side motorists. Priority areas for improvements are identified in the town's Safe Routes to School (Alta Planning + Design, 2016); these improvements should be considered whenever construction or upgrades are performed on the town's roadways.

E. Natural Resources Conservation - Marlborough contains many important natural features that contribute to scenic beauty, the tourism economy, and the ecological health of the region. Wetlands, open spaces, forested hillsides, soils of statewide importance for agriculture, and the Hudson River each play an important role in the town. The conservation and protection of these important natural resources should be taken into account when considering future development.

Open spaces - Open spaces are a vital part of Marlborough's landscape. In addition to providing areas for recreation and public enjoyment open spaces protect and buffer wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas such as meadows, wetlands and streams and protect the local drinking water supply.

Approximately 2 percent of the town's total land area is permanently protected as open space, while the average for Ulster County towns is 31 percent. (Catskill Center for Conservation and Development and Open Space Institute, 2006, as sited in the Ulster County Open Space Plan, 2007). As a result, Marlborough stands to be fully developed with no guarantee that the town will keep its open space character in the future. The town should work with landowners to find mutually agreeable ways to protect open space resources for a number of reasons including conserving important farmland, maintaining clean streams and waters, providing wildlife habitat, and preserving scenic views and rural open landscapes.

Forestlands - The forested hills descending from the Marlborough Mountain range are part of a globally significant forest patch that extends into the Town of Plattekill. Globally significant forest patches range in size from 15,000 to 600,000 acres and represent the largest, most intact forests. The size and natural condition of these forests support ecological processes, natural communities, and populations of forest-interior plant and animal species. Smaller patches of forest are located in the southeastern and northwestern portions of town. Forests of this size, at least 200 acres in size, are considered the minimum threshold for intact forest ecosystems capable of supporting forest-interior bird species. Maintaining

these unfragmented forest areas should be a consideration for any future natural resource conservation endeavor.

Water Resources - There are many small creeks and streams that run throughout Marlborough, beginning in the mountains to the west and emptying into the Hudson River to the east of the town. These waterbodies are important to the history of the town and were once used for powering the extensive water-powered mills and manufacturing operations that were concentrated in the Marlboro and Milton hamlets. There are three known trout streams within the town including Lattintown Creek. Maintaining the health of these waterways is important for the future by taking measure to reduce runoff of silt and other debris in order to keep these tributaries clean.

Parks and Recreational Resources - In Marlborough, there are two established parks with an additional park under development. The largest of the established parks, Cluett-Schantz Park is located in the Hamlet of Milton along Route 9W and encompasses approximately 20 acres with sports fields and walking paths for recreation. Milton Landing Park is smaller and is primarily used for fishing and access to the river and contains the historic Milton Train Station which is used for community meetings and events. Other improvements are planned for Milton Landing Park. A dog park was recently opened (an Eagle Scout project led by Robert Ahlers) in the park and it will soon offer passive recreation options, hiking trails and camp sites.



Proposed enhancements to the Milton Waterfront Park.
Behan Planning and Design, 2017

With the addition and improvement of Milton Landing Park, land space reserved for parks in the town will increase by over 50 percent. As residential development continues to grow in the upland areas of the town, the town should look into the possibility of future park needs for the Marlboro hamlet and more longer term toward putting aside conservation/passive recreation land in the area known as Lattingtown hamlet for a future park that would serve the growing residential population in that portion of Marlborough.

Energy Sustainability - The town should investigate the benefits of becoming designated by New York State as a climate smart community. Members make up a network of New York communities engaged in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improving climate

resilience. Climate smart communities look to minimize the risks of climate change and reduce its long-term costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This designation allows the town to be eligible for funding for energy efficiency programs

F. Economic Development and Community Enhancement - Marlborough's economy is a key contributor to the region's prosperity. The Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council has identified the "food and beverage manufacturing supply chain" as a manufacturing-based industry cluster for the purpose of the state's manufacturing extension program. Employment in this sector grew by about 40 percent in the past 10 years in the Mid-Hudson region with average earnings at more than \$70,000.

Opportunities exist for local companies in the food and beverage supply chain to potentially secure financial and other support through the state's economic development programs including education and outreach from the Hudson Valley Technology Development Center (HVTDC), expansion of promotional tools through Hudson Valley Tourism, and potential investment in expansion of companies in the Mid-Hudson region through the consolidated funding application (CFA) process.

Tourism – Due to its convenient location about 70 miles north of New York City and it's a remarkable surroundings, Marlborough has emerged as an attraction for many in the New York City Metro-area. The unique agricultural, cultural, and historical heritage in Marlborough creates an exciting tourism opportunity for the town to tap into and expand upon.

Agricultural tourism or agritourism has emerged as a major contributor to the economic base and the tourism base for the Town of Marlborough. Farm stands, U-pick operations and winery tours are among the major draws for visitors from near and far. An opportunity that is missed from visitors for agritourism is the ability to lodge them overnight. Expanding lodging options in the town, particularly in the hamlet center areas, where guests could walk to services and



Image: www.buttermilkfallsinn.com

The Buttermilk Falls Inn has become a popular destination for visitors to the area. Located in Milton, the inn offers luxury accommodations in a circa 1764 building with Hudson River Views. There is also a spa and restaurant on site.

The Buttermilk Falls Inn partners with other local attractions like The Falcon in Marlboro to offer entertainment packages to their guests.

amenities, would increase the attraction for far away visitors and increase the income distributed by visitors throughout more of the town.

Place-based or heritage tourism is an opportunity to capitalize on the town's proximity to the Hudson River, the Marlborough Mountains and its vast historic resources. Like agricultural tourism, Marlborough's unique history presents an opportunity for the town to attract new visitors through historical interpretation and heritage tourism.

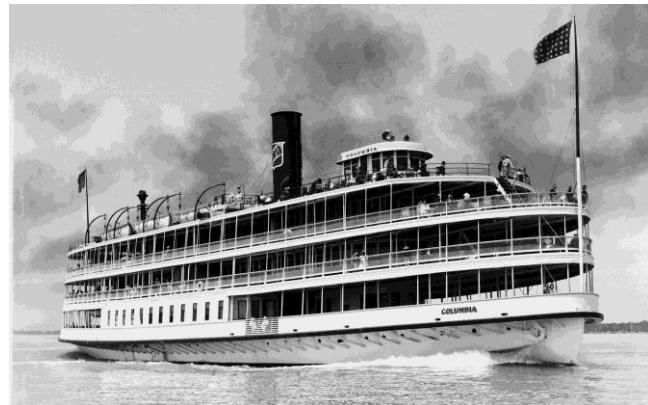
The Marlborough Economic Development Committee has proposed a trail project that follows Lattintown Creek through Marlboro's historic business district and industrial ruins. This path, the "Marlboro Mills Waterfall Walkway" will include interpretation of local historical themes including the mills and early industries, and the farms-to-river port connection. The Milton Landing Committee is planning a trail system and park improvements in that hamlet. These trail systems will increase public open space access and reconnect the historical commercial centers to the Hudson River waterfront. The addition of these trails will help position the hamlets as destinations for visitors and residents interested in learning about Marlborough's history while exercising and enjoying views of the Hudson River.

Waterfront tourism opportunities exist in both harbor landing areas. The Hudson River Greenway Water Trail or "blueway" is a series of launches and landings along the Hudson River, creating a water trail for non-motorized vessels like canoes and kayaks. A "trailhead" for the blueway has been established at Milton Landing Park where there are facilities for picnics and camping. Establishing a similar facility at the Marlboro docks would increase connectivity between the hamlets and increase opportunities for those seeking to recreate in the area.

The Marlboro harbor landing area is home to West Shore Marine and the Marlboro Yacht Club. Located less than a mile from the hamlet of Marlboro, these facilities can accommodate over 200 boats. Although these are member-based facilities, both have capacity for visitor docking. Creating better pedestrian connections between the Marlboro docks and the hamlet center would open up the hamlet for day visitors arriving via boat for lunch or dinner, or to take in the sights.

Like Marlboro Landing, Milton Landing has great potential to be established as a tourist destination. In addition to the historic Milton Train Station and the recreational amenities offered by the soon-to-be Milton Waterfront Park, Milton Landing also has a pier with the potential to dock a deep water vessel. In 2016, a structural evaluation was performed on the pier to determine its ability to accommodate the Hudson River Sleep Clearwater as well as the steam day-liner, the SS Columbia.

The historic SS Columbia, currently under renovation, is 207 feet in length and 60 feet wide and was designed to carry 3,200 passengers. Once restored, the SS Columbia is envisioned to be “a floating platform for arts, education, and entertainment connecting New York City to the Hudson Valley” (sscolumbia.org). Making the necessary pier improvements as well as forming connections between Milton Landing and Milton hamlet and into the rest of the town should be a priority in order to accommodate and take full advantage of the potential the SS Columbia may provide. In the near-term, the town should continue to seek funding support through the consolidated funding application (CFA) process from New York State to support the full implementation of the park master plan. Funding for construction plans, specifications, bid documents and construction of improvements for all of the park elements including reconstruction of the south pier to support landing of tour vessels including the SS Columbia to support regional tourism development and educational education.



The SS Columbia is one of only two remaining excursion steamboats from the 20th century.

Image courtesy of sscolumbia.org

Arts and cultural tourism utilizes the strong connections to the arts in the Mid-Hudson Valley. The spectacular landscapes of the region were made famous by Thomas Cole and the other painters of the Hudson River School in the mid-19th century. Known as “The Birthplace of American Art”, the beautiful scenery and closeness to nature provided by the valley continues to inspire artists today and has attracted communities of authors, poets, painters and musicians.

Today Marlborough continues to attract artists seeking refuge from nearby New York City and inspiration from the natural surroundings. The Falcon, located in a renovated button factory in Marlboro hamlet, attracts a strong lineup of performers and serves as a powerful regional attractor for jazz concerts and exhibits. The Falcon has developed into an anchor for the hamlet of Marlboro, the town should seek to expand upon this attraction.

Marlborough’s location nested above the Hudson River in the Mid-Hudson Valley offers some unique economic development opportunities. There are currently two locations, identified in the Future Land Use map as riverview enterprise areas which offer views of the Hudson River and the surrounding landscapes. Both of these sites, currently zoned industrial, are privately owned, but should be explored as possible locations for future redevelopment, investment and economic opportunities for the town.

Power Plants - These plants are important assets to the town, school district and Hudson region for both energy production and for the role they play in the fiscal health of the community. The Roseton generating station is a dual fuel-fired 1,242 megawatt facility put on-line in 1974 and is capable of running on both natural gas and fuel oil. The older Danskammer generating station, first put on-line in 1951, is partially dual fuel-fired. The considerable devaluation of the Roseton and Danskammer power plants is a primary reason why the town's tax base has eroded and finds itself in a situation of assessing a tax rate higher than that favored by residents and businesses. Especially significant is the high tax burden generated by school taxes. In the most recent awarding of a PILOT (payment in-lieu of taxes) agreement to the power plants, the town had only a very limited role in the negotiations with the operator and was also removed from the valuation of the power plants' revenue potential as well as the determination of an equitable tax obligation.

Although the current PILOT does not expire until the 2021-2022 school year, it is important for the town to proactively address the taxability of the power plants, especially given the potential for increased demand for natural gas alongside the planned decommissioning of the Indian Point nuclear power plant. Representatives of the town have already begun discussions with the Town of Newburgh. However, the town and Marlboro school district could also form a broad multi-agency task force including the plant owner/operator representatives that meets quarterly/semi-annually to address operational, fiscal, and environmental issues including plant needs, community needs and ultimately address the negotiation process with the plants operators on their tax burden upon expiration of the current PILOT. A second strategy that should be undertaken by the town in collaboration with other taxing jurisdictions is an independent valuation of the power plants by a consultant versed in the financial operations of infrastructure and also energy demand modeling to understand the revenue calculations used to determine the equitable tax burden for the plants.

Agricultural Development - This plan recognizes the importance of retaining and strengthening the town's agricultural sector, preventing the conversion of rural landscapes into low density residential development, and advancing transfer of development rights as a strategy for conservation as well as infill development within the hamlets. While agricultural land uses offer many benefits in addition to its employment benefits, its greatest town-wide economic impact is the potential for farms and vineyards to help define Marlborough's identity, stimulate hamlet revitalization, and support a more expansive hospitality sector. Many agricultural producers are investing heavily into their operations and expanding products and production and as example of the power of cooperative ventures, recently a coalition has been formed to organize wine producers harvesting a unique grape,

the Cabernet Franc. This coalition seeks to promote a signature grape as the basis for a distinctive wine specific to the region. These kind of expanded partnerships can help address the issues and opportunities identified in this plan and can be further explored should the agricultural community advance the idea of creating a town-wide agricultural development and farmland protection plan in partnership with the town and NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets

Commercial and Industrial Development - There are some underutilized industrial sites along the Route 9W corridor. However, the potential for industrial development is hamstrung by town's geographic position and removal from the interstate highways required to support the flow of manufactured goods. Potentially more successful, however, could be supply-chain businesses or resource and development ventures tied to the agriculture industry. One opportunity for furthering stimulating this development would be to ensure that the curricular program of a satellite educational campus in Marlborough be closely tied to stimulating innovation in the agriculture industry and supporting the incubation of ancillary businesses related to it.

Hospitality and Restaurants - One of Marlborough's core economic development challenges is that it does not have the hospitality infrastructure in place to capture the full tourism potential generated by the farms and vineyards. Specifically, visitors to Marlborough may come to a vineyard and farm to buy wine and pick their own produce but they are not incentivized to stay in Marlborough for a longer time. The Meet Me in Marlborough initiative is a very positive step in this direction. However, achieving the full potential of Marlborough as a tourist destination will require a more proactive marketing initiative, increased coordination between various farms and vineyards, completion of the hamlet trail networks, and a signage program that facilitates movements between the farms as well as the hamlets. Beyond all these changes, strong consideration should be given to the appropriate sites and supportive land use regulations for enabling a broader network of overnight accommodations (including hotels as well as bed and breakfasts) in the hamlets.

Arts, Culture, & Entertainment - Success of the Falcon performance venue is a good indication of the potential for Marlborough to draw increased visitation to arts, culture and entertainment venues. The town could make a more proactive effort to initiate dialogue with major regional arts institutions and gauge their willingness to satellite venues within the town, especially in the hamlets. Also, the comprehensive could identify sites that are especially appropriate for cultural institutions on the basis of their transportation access and adjacent land uses.

G. Community Facilities and Utilities - The major community facilities are the school district-town hall building complex, the 42-acre Cluett-Schantz Park on Route 9W and the Milton Landing Park. The hamlet of Marlboro remains removed from these parks and is in need of expanded open space opportunities. In addition to the proposed Marlboro Mills Waterfall Walkway, the town should consider acquiring or leasing land that would provide additional opportunities for the enjoyment of the outdoors and potential new public connections to the Hudson River. Recreational needs are directly proportional to population levels, and as Marlborough seeks to develop and grow, care should be given to also developing open space and recreational facilities for the growing population.

Youth Services - The Town of Marlborough values its youth, and along with the school district provides programs and activities for after school and in the summer time. Through conversations with high school students, some common themes have arisen. Many young people conveyed that it is difficult to walk anywhere in town, and that they feel it is necessary to drive everywhere. However, if students are not old enough to drive or do not have access to a car, they are often left with limited activities after school or on weekends. There are a large number of school sponsored clubs and activities, including some very strong sports teams, but there are few places in town where young people can have unstructured time away from home and school to spend with their friends.

Through these conversations, the idea of a Youth Center or Youth Drop-In facility has been developed as a safe activity for high-school aged kids. The town should reach out to other communities in the area who have successfully established a facility of this kind and explore the potential for such a facility in Marlborough. Ideally a drop-in youth center like this would be located within one or both of the hamlets.

Water and Sewer - Municipal water and sewer service is available throughout the hamlets. Water service continues out of Marlboro hamlet along South Street to Lattintown Road and south to the Newburgh town line. Water and sewer service is not available along Route 9W south of Marlboro hamlet, and perhaps more importantly, expansion of sewer service for growth areas north of each of the hamlets needs to be part of future economic development plans. A sewer treatment plant is located in each of the hamlets. Recent infrastructure upgrades in the Milton hamlet now incorporate water and sewer on Main Street and the surrounding roads. The town and individual developers have been working to extend sewer infrastructure to enable increased density for business and housing opportunities in and around Milton hamlet. The reach and capacity of the water and sewer districts should be taken into account when considering new development in the town. Any future extension to

these services should be made only where new development is appropriate, for example, to serve the enterprise character area to the north of Milton hamlet.

Energy and Wireless – It will continue to be important for the town to encourage the development of on-site solar and, where appropriate, solar fields (in particular in areas that are not located in important natural resource areas), deployment of LED and other energy conservation technologies, geothermal, use of green building materials (e.g., made from renewable/recycled materials), electric vehicle charging stations and similar measures to reduce the production of carbon dioxide and other fossil fuel byproducts.

Given the expanding importance of wireless communication to support cell phones and other device use, the town should continue to support installation of wireless transmission facilities that fit into the town with minimal visual impact.

Municipal Stormwater - The Town of Marlborough is a designated municipal separate stormwater sewer system (MS4) community and is required to develop a stormwater management program that will reduce the amount of pollutants carried by stormwater during storm events to waterbodies to the “maximum extent practicable”. The goal of the program is to improve water quality and recreational use of the waterways. As such, Marlborough has a program in place to manage stormwater.

The infrastructure of the stormwater systems in the town generally consist of stormwater conveyance systems such as pipes and swales, and water quantity and quality mitigation appurtenances such as stormwater retention and detention areas. These are in addition to the natural stormwater resources of the town such as wetlands, streams, and water bodies. The capacity of the town’s stormwater resources and effects of runoff from construction and new development should be considered when reviewing new proposals.

In addition to the existing stormwater infrastructure, the town should seek to expand its green infrastructure systems. Green infrastructure is a cost-effective approach to water



A community stormwater pond in Pittsford, NY provides stormwater management, habitat for fish and wildlife, and open space for recreation and enjoyment.

management that incorporates both the natural environmental and engineered systems to manage stormwater. By implementing one of this plan's previous recommendations to increase open space, the town would also be adding to its green infrastructure system and improving the management of its stormwater.

Open spaces play a key element in absorbing stormwater and preventing runoff from entering waterways too quickly. In addition to Marlborough's large amount of farmland, the creation of an additional park area with a stormwater pond would not only serve as an effective stormwater management technique, but also as a community gathering place and space for recreation.

VII. Conclusion

The Town of Marlborough seeks to grow and develop in a way that maintains its agricultural heritage, pays homage to its history and protects vital environmental resources for the future. This comprehensive plan sets forth goals and recommendations that build upon the characteristics that make Marlborough a unique and special community to live in and to visit, and provides guidance for future growth, change, and resource protection in the town.

This plan seeks to achieve a community supported vision by encouraging continued enhancement and protection of agricultural uses, promoting new residential growth in and around the hamlets, encouraging economic growth in designated areas, and improving public access to the Hudson River. In order to achieve the town's vision, this plan provides basic design guidelines and well as some additional targeting recommendations for the priority areas of development throughout Marlborough. The guidelines and recommendations include provisions for pedestrian access like sidewalks and shared-use paths, streetscape improvements like landscaping and street lighting, and general guidance to ensure new development is done in a way that fits in and is sensitive to its surroundings.

This comprehensive plan has been developed as an update to the town's 2002 Comprehensive Master Plan, and should be updated and amended regularly. It is the intention of this document to present the current vision and goals of the community at this point in time. As changes occur and the needs of the community shifts, these goals and recommendations should be revisited and updated in order to remain current with the concerns, needs, and desires of the Town of Marlborough.

