

Town of Marlborough, NY

MARLBORO HAMLET MASTER PLAN



FINAL DRAFT | MARCH 2010

Funding for this plan was procured through
the office of Senator William J. Larkin, Jr.

PREPARED BY



BEHAN PLANNING
AND DESIGN

PREPARED FOR

The Town of Marlborough

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Marlboro Hamlet Master Plan

Town of Marlborough, NY

Marlborough Town Board

Chris Cerone, Supervisor
Eric Affuso, Councilman
Lisa Biggin, Councilwoman
Ed Molinelli, Councilman
Anthony Pascale, Councilman

Advisory Committee

Cindy Lanzetta
Frank Cricchio
Tony Falco
Douglas Smith
Kevin Quimby
Steve Osborn
John DeMarco
William Woodward

(Recognition also to Al Lanzetta, former supervisor and Mici Simonofsky, former Councilwoman)

Prepared by:



112 Spring Street, Suite 305
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Funding for this plan was procured through
the office of Senator William J. Larkin, Jr.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The purpose of this hamlet master plan is to identify and provide solutions to land use issues and opportunities that will inform future zoning changes and physical improvements to the Hamlet of Marlboro. The recommendations are intended to help shape the future of the hamlet in a direction that is desired by the community. This work follows on the heels of the Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan, completed in December 2008, which identified several transportation alternatives for the Route 9W corridor. The Route 9W corridor is the main transportation route through Marlboro and it bisects the hamlet from north to south. In the course of the Route 9W study, land use issues were discussed, but the project scope was focused primarily on transportation in the corridor. This plan continues the work of the transportation plan by looking at land use and transportation together, and extending the focus to the entire hamlet. It provides recommendations that will guide the hamlet's development in a coherent and unified manner.

The Marlboro Hamlet Transportation Plan was initiated by the Town of Marlborough and the Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC) to build upon the needs identified in the *Ulster County Transportation Council's Year 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan*. Identified in the long range transportation plan as being in need of mobility and streetscape improvements, the hamlet underwent a planning process that focused on traffic circulation and pedestrian safety along Route 9W at the intersections of 9W and Western Ave, and 9W and King Street. Existing land use and transportation issues were documented and analyzed and a multi-modal transportation plan was created. Six traffic circulation alternatives were developed for the hamlet, and with public and advisory committee input, two preferred alternatives emerged. A parking study analyzed the supply and current use of parking locations, and identified potential locations for additional public parking in the vicinity of the hamlet's business district. Maintaining the historic character of the hamlet in the face of changes to its roadways and streetscape was an important concern that guided the transportation study, and it is of particular interest to this planning study as well.



Study Area and Description

As an historic 19th century settlement, Marlboro is faced with the modern-day challenges of traffic and development. The hamlet grew as a central gathering spot for a rural town; with power from the Lattintown Creek and access to the Hudson River. Today, the hamlet is still surrounded by vineyards and wineries, orchards, and farm fields. Along Route 9W some commercial highway development has replaced open fields; however agriculture remains an active part of the community's life and economy. The hamlet is located in the Hudson River Valley approximately halfway between New York City and Albany in the Town of Marlborough.



*Historic Marlboro Hamlet
(courtesy of Marlboro Free Library)*

Study Area Map





Historic Marlboro Hamlet – Central hamlet area looking west (excerpt from full image below)
(Source: U.S. Library of Congress)



Historic Marlboro Hamlet 1891 published by L.R. Burleigh, Troy, NY
(Source: U.S. Library of Congress)

Planning Process and Public Outreach

This study explores the existing and future uses of land in the hamlet and makes recommendations to improve the quality of life and vitality of Marlboro. This hamlet master plan was funded by a member item through the offices of Senator William J. Larking, Jr. The town hired consultants Behan Planning and Design to facilitate the planning process and draft the plan document.

An advisory committee was established to provide diverse representation for the project. The advisory committee consisted of residents, business owners, and representatives from the Town of Marlborough. The advisory committee met several times throughout the project to review work products and oversee the planning process to ensure that the project was meeting the needs of the various stakeholders. In addition to the continuous input of the committee, general public outreach was obtained through business and land owner interviews, as well as a public workshop.

The business and landowner interviews were conducted in the summer of 2009 in order to inform the planning process with the perspective of those who are most familiar with the challenges and opportunities in the hamlet. These individuals also have much to gain or lose through the decisions made as a result of the planning process. There was agreement that there should be growth in the hamlet, particularly in business activity and viability. There was also agreement that planning and design standards are needed to provide clarity for property owners and developers in order to encourage better development and make the development review process more predictable. The issues of traffic, lack of pedestrian amenities, and a shortage of parking were identified as some of the main challenges for the hamlet.

The public workshop was held on November 12, 2009, and over 25 residents of Marlboro attended to learn about the project and share their ideas for the hamlet. After a brief presentation by the consulting team, residents discussed needs and opportunities for the future of the hamlet. There was a consensus among the participants on the need to provide pedestrian amenities, more public parking, standards to guide aesthetic and site design improvements related to development, and additions or upgrades to utilities. Many who attended supported the preliminary ideas presented about establishing gateways to the hamlet and taking advantage of the hamlet's natural resources to develop recreation amenities for residents and to attract visitors. Concerns were expressed about truck traffic and congestion, long-term maintenance related to beautification efforts, and residential tenants. The tone of the meeting was generally positive and the public feedback was valuable to the planning effort.



This Master Plan for Marlboro Hamlet provides recommendations for improving land use and transportation, with recommendations for design guidelines and implementation. The hamlet's historic Hudson River setting was considered to be a very unique and special asset to be preserved and leveraged in improvement and revitalization efforts.

IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

With input from the advisory committee and the general public, key issues were identified that continue to challenge the hamlet. Along with these challenges, Marlboro has several opportunities that are unique to its setting which may provide solutions to some of the problems and continue to make the hamlet a wonderful place to live, work, and visit.

- ***Lack of sidewalk continuity and pedestrian connectivity***

Lack of sidewalks and sidewalk connectivity through the hamlet makes walking challenging and uncomfortable for pedestrians. The sidewalk system is inconsistent, with many gaps in the network and variable sidewalk width and conditions. By improving the sidewalk system over time walking can become a more comfortable activity in the hamlet. New sidewalks in the hamlet will be constructed as part of work being planned by Ulster County for Western Ave and for Route 9W by the NYSDOT.

- ***Difficult for pedestrians to cross Route 9W***

Heavy traffic on 9W makes it difficult to cross in the center hamlet area, creating unsafe and unpleasant conditions for pedestrians.

Pedestrian signals and crosswalks in conjunction with traffic lights and other traffic control or traffic calming measures can alleviate this problem and provide safer conditions for residents and patrons of local businesses.



Pedestrians waiting to cross Route 9W

- ***Heavy vehicular traffic***

As an important state highway, Route 9W brings heavy traffic through the center of the hamlet, especially at peak hours. Traffic volume and large truck traffic, an especially notable issue along 9W, creates hazardous and uncomfortable conditions for pedestrians and impacts local businesses.

Traffic calming measures such as stop lights, crosswalks, and other related measures can help send a signal to motorists to slow down in the hamlet.

This improves pedestrian safety, and could encourage some drivers to take alternative routes to their destination.

Formalizing an alternative route to get truck traffic out of the hamlet center area could be explored. As development progresses there may be opportunities for creating a bypass route with careful planning and coordination. Traffic



High traffic volume on Route 9W through the hamlet

volume can also be viewed as an opportunity if improvements can be made that encourage travelers to stop in the hamlet and patronize local businesses. Beautification, clever marketing, easily accessible (but not obtrusive) parking, a comfortable pedestrian environment, and a mix of businesses tailored to their needs, could all work together to entice people to stop and spend time in the hamlet.

- *Inconsistent design quality*

The aesthetic quality of architectural and site design in the hamlet varies greatly. Reflecting a pride of place is an important characteristic of most successful communities, and this could be an important contributor to the economic revitalization of the Marlboro hamlet. Design guidelines for new construction and sign regulations would help guide aesthetic improvements and create a unified character throughout the hamlet. These can be applied as new development occurs and ownership changes, or be more aggressive in requiring some improvements to happen within a specified period of time. The town's Greenway

Committee has been working on sign regulations and considering the benefits of an architectural board which would review proposed improvements and new development for design quality.



Design standards for signs, site design, and architecture would help unify the look of the hamlet and improve aesthetic quality.

- *Lack of business vitality*

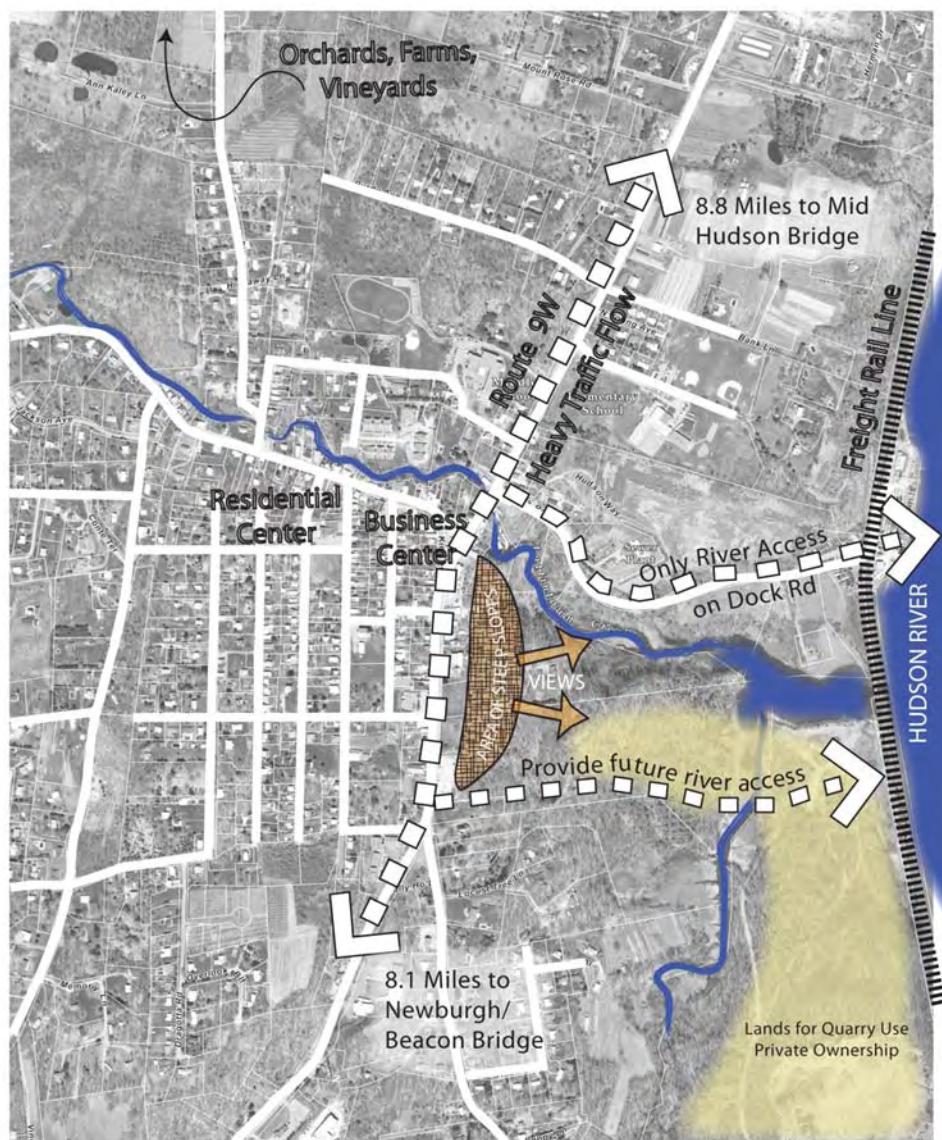
As in most places, businesses in the hamlet have been challenged by the lull in the economy. Even in prior years, the closing of some key businesses in the area has reduced the number of people who frequent the hamlet on a regular basis (such as lunch time patrons). Revitalization strategies such as marketing Marlboro as a destination for its scenic resources, wineries and vineyards, and beautification of the streetscape could all help create momentum towards increased business vitality. New cultural and entertainment venues, such as the Falcon, can also bring patrons and economic activity to the hamlet.



Business closure and vacancy has increased in Marlboro Hamlet.

Analysis

An analysis showing some of the major assets and challenges of the hamlet reveals that access to the Hudson River, an important resource with recreation and commercial potential, is limited by some slope constraints, the freight rail line, and private ownership of adjacent lands. The steep slopes on the east side near the center of the hamlet pose development constraints for expansion to the east, however there is potential for capitalizing on beautiful views of the Hudson River. Historically the hamlet functioned as a business center for a rural town characterized by orchards and vineyards which still exist today, even if fewer in number. Heavy traffic flow on Route 9W can be attributed in part to Marlboro Hamlet's location between two Hudson River crossing points, the Newburgh / Beacon Bridge and the Mid Hudson Bridge. It is a major north-south travel route.



Marlboro Hamlet Analysis showing some of the major assets and challenges

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Marlboro Hamlet Land Use Concepts

Hamlet Expansion

Residential development with hamlet-style design qualities and additional road and pedestrian connectivity

Hamlet Mixed Use

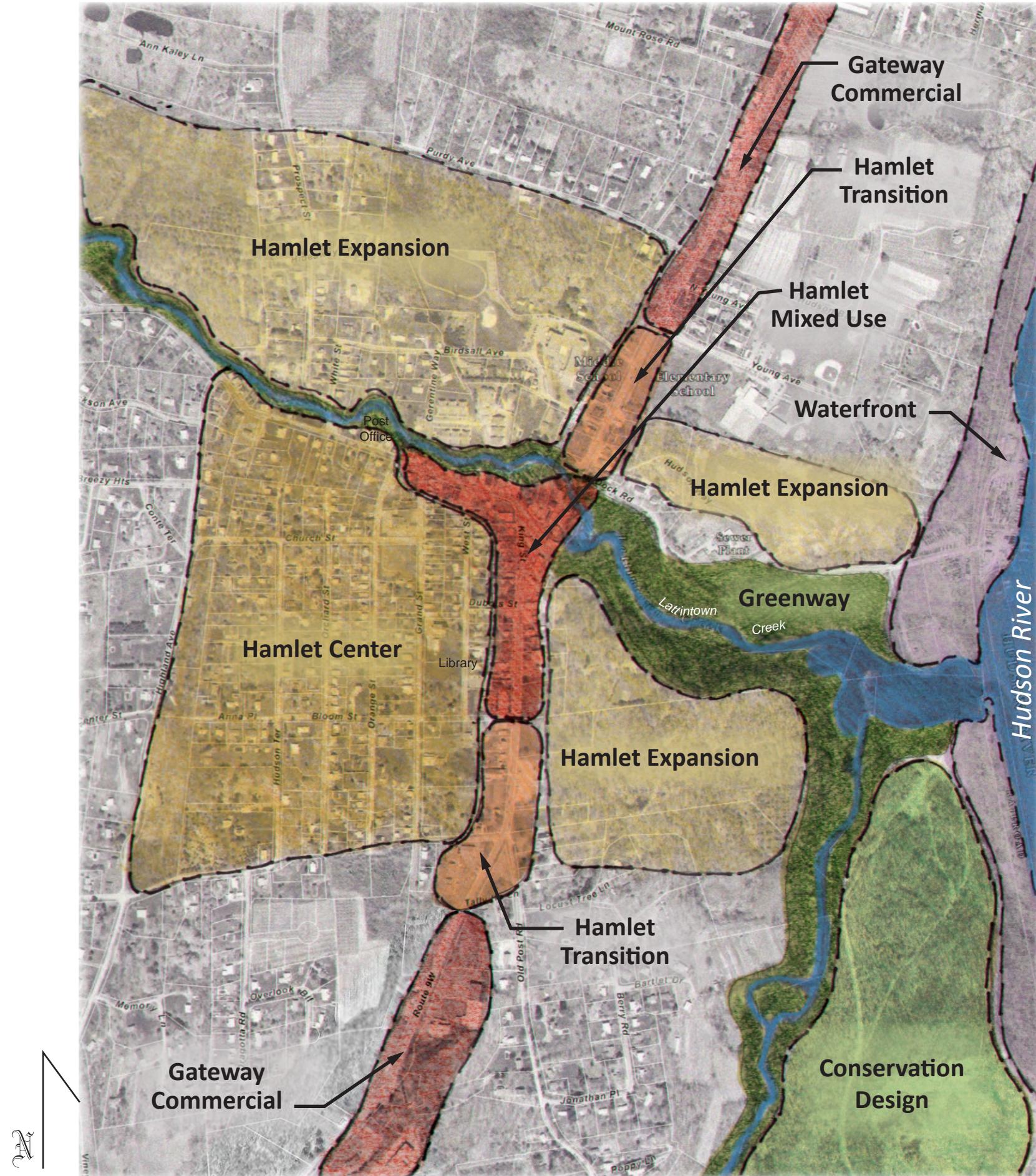
Primarily Commercial at ground level, residential or office on additional floors

Hamlet Center

Small Lot Residential with Interconnected Streets

Hamlet Transition

Commercial with Residential allowed
Refined architectural, sign, and landscape standards required



Waterfront

Recognition of Hudson River Waterfront Amentiy Opportunities for future development of recreation opportunities and public access

Greenway

Natural areas along Lattintown and Mill Creeks should be preserved for water resource protection as well as public enjoyment of the natural features

Conservation Design

Residential conservation design with allowance for public access to the waterfront amenity

Gateway Commercial

Commercial with Refinements to landscape and architectural standards

PLAN CONCEPTS FOR MARLBORO HAMLET

Land Use

The Land Use Concepts Map on the previous page illustrates the primary land use categories in the hamlet consistent with the community's vision for the future. The map and the descriptions of individual land use categories that follow are intended to guide future zoning changes and other hamlet revitalization efforts.

Hamlet Mixed-Use

The hamlet mixed use area extends down both sides of Route 9W from Dock Road to Bloom Street, and west along Western Ave to Orange Street (near the Post Office). This is the center of economic and civic activity in the hamlet. Where possible, this land use type should include commercial and other active uses at ground level, and either residential units or offices on upper floors. An appropriate mix will promote vitality in the center hamlet area as there will be supporting population at different times of day (office tenants during day, residents in the evening), which provides a diversity of business patrons and people moving about the hamlet center.

Recommendations:

- Allow and encourage a wide mixture of uses in the center of the hamlet. This mixture of uses should occur both horizontally and vertically - that is, across the district and within individual buildings. Active uses (retail and services, restaurants, entertainment, etc.) are preferred on the ground floor to create a more vibrant street life.
- Zoning for the hamlet mixed use area should emphasize the architectural and urban design form of development. Design guidelines or standards based on the unique character this area should be established.



Promote a diverse mixture of attractions to increase business vitality through Hamlet Mixed-Use



Illustrated design guidelines (left) could help clarify expectations for infill development in the hamlet. The result would be appropriate projects for the hamlet and a more predictable review process for investors. The new mixed-use building in Rhinebeck (below) is an example of good infill development consistent with that community’s vision.



Hamlet Center Residential



Hamlet Center Residential in Marlboro is characterized by small lots with interconnected streets.

The Hamlet Center Residential area consists of the core residential neighborhood nearest the center hamlet area. This area is made up of predominantly small residential lots on an interconnected network of streets. Although few lots remain for additional development, any new construction (infill or redevelopment) within this area should respect the traditional development patterns of the neighborhood. Setbacks, building orientation, and other dimensional and design characteristics should closely match

those in the surrounding neighborhood, and architectural features should reflect those of nearby buildings, to the extent possible, while still fulfilling the intent and purpose of the new construction. Additionally, this core area should be used as a model for new construction in the areas of the hamlet identified as Hamlet Extension.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that the zoning for this area allows and requires new construction to be consistent with the traditional urban design and architectural characteristics of the neighborhood.

Hamlet Transition

The Hamlet Transition area consists of properties along Route 9W immediately north and south of the hamlet center (the Hamlet Mixed Use area). The Hamlet Transition area serves as an entryway to the center of the hamlet. Many of the existing buildings in this area are residential or once were. Commercial and residential uses should continue to be permitted in this area. Commercial activity should be carefully regulated to ensure that it is a good neighbor to remaining residences; and conversions of residences to low impact commercial uses (such as professional offices) should be allowed with care. Appropriate landscaping between commercial and residential uses,



Enhanced architectural and landscape design for commercial establishments is recommended in the Hamlet Transition Area.

and mitigation of the potential impacts of such things as lighting and noise, can help minimize these impacts on existing residences. This could be encouraged or required in new zoning regulations and design guidelines.

Recommendations:

- Require higher design and landscaping standards for commercial properties within this land use area through zoning regulations and design guidelines.



Landscape buffers such as trees and shrubs help screen undesirable elements of commercial properties.

Gateway Commercial

The Gateway Commercial area consists of the remaining frontage along Route 9W extending to the north and south away from the Marlboro Hamlet. This area is zoned for commercial uses (Highway Development), though much of it remains undeveloped. Because Route 9W is the main travel corridor through the Town, the character of development along this highway creates an impression of the community for those who travel it. The Gateway Commercial designation is intended to provide for a higher level of site and landscaping requirements than currently exist, while allowing for a greater variety of commercial uses than the somewhat more restrictive Hamlet Transition area described above. Features that may be included in the requirements and/or design guidelines are:

- Consolidated curb cuts (access management) to reduce the potential number of entry and exit points on Route 9W
- Landscaped buffers with trees and hedges as visual buffers
- Natural building materials and colors reflecting the vernacular architectural style of this area of the Hudson Valley
- Signage requirements including provisions for maintenance

The purpose would be to provide an enhanced commercial corridor that reflects pride of place and signals arrival to a vital, well cared for community.



Typical design features preferred for a rural highway setting such as the Gateway Commercial area

Waterfront

The Hudson River waterfront is a potential amenity that is uncelebrated and underutilized along much of its stretch through Marlborough. The rail line poses an obstacle to safe recreation and access from upland areas to the west near Marlboro Hamlet. There are, however, opportunities for future development which could be realized with careful planning and visionary support from the town. Such development could bring tourism and eventually spur residential growth that would support a thriving hamlet and create lasting vitality.



The Hudson River should be celebrated as an important community amenity.



Scenic view of the Hudson River from the hamlet

Recommendations:

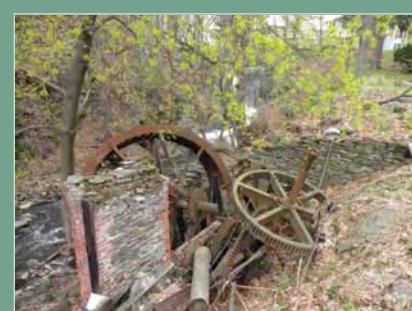
- Consider providing public access to the Hudson River waterfront through future parcel acquisitions and in the review and approval process for any new development in the waterfront area.
- Use the existing town owned parcel near the end of Dock Road for its recreation potential and be aware of opportunities for future acquisition of adjacent parcels.

Greenway, Open Space, and Recreation

There is a great opportunity in the hamlet of Marlboro for a greenway along Lattintown Creek, Mill Creek, and the area where they enter the Hudson River. In addition to the environmental benefits of preserving and stewarding the lands along the creeks for water protection and wildlife habitat, the creation of nature trails, interpretive signage, and associated elements of a passive recreational corridor in this greenway could stimulate economic activity in the hamlet.



Natural features and scenic vistas provide an economic development opportunity

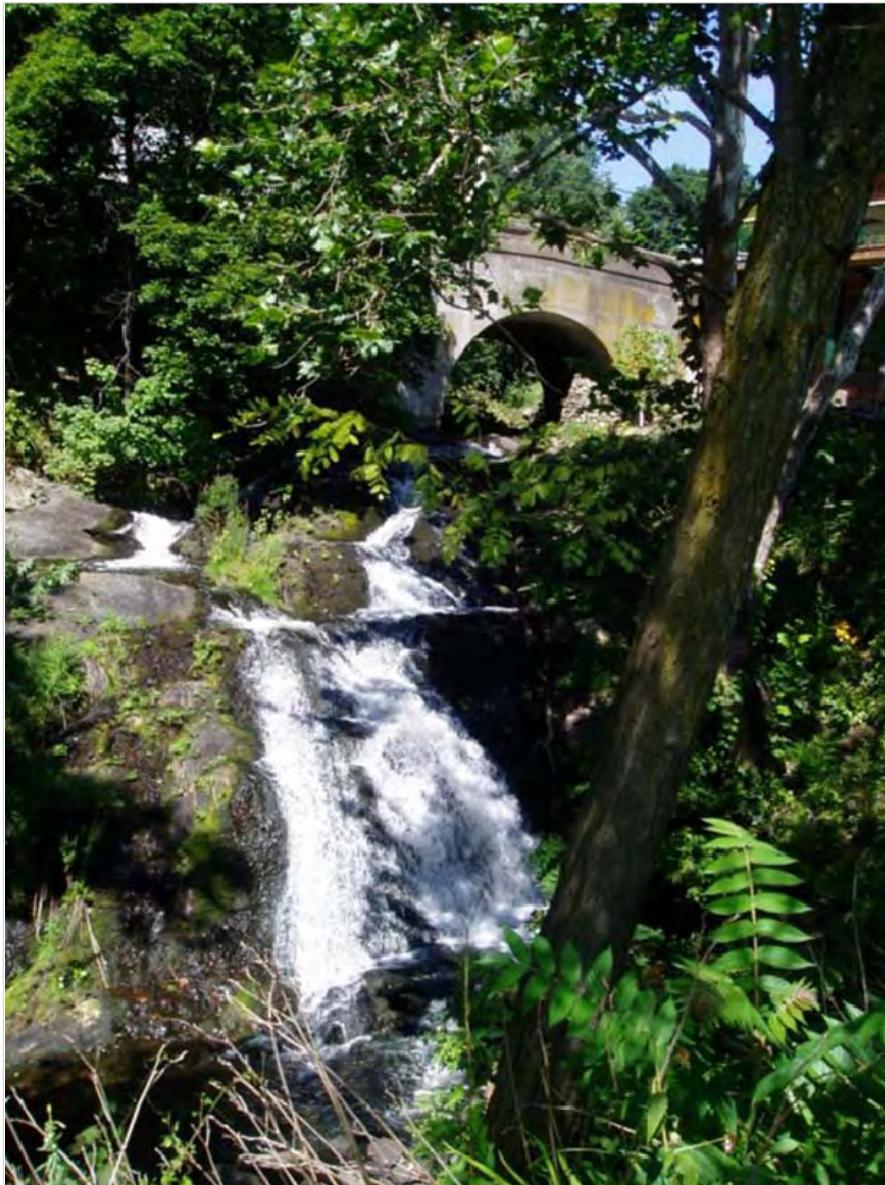


Highlight opportunities for historic interpretation a



Recommendations:

- Celebrate the natural features as amenities for residents and visitors (Lattintown Creek and falls)
- Develop trails and signage, and create viewing opportunities as an economic development opportunity
- Highlight the opportunities that exist in the hamlet for historic interpretation and renewable energy (Old Mill works)
- Identify opportunities for parks and recreation in Marlboro Hamlet



The falls of Lattintown Creek located near the corner of 9W and Dock Road are a dramatic natural feature that could be capitalized on to attract visitors to the hamlet. Opportunities for public viewing and enjoyment of the falls should be formalized and made accessible for this purpose.

Conservation Design

The area designated Conservation Design on the conceptual land use map should be creatively planned for development that incorporates the waterfront as an amenity. Much of the property under this land use area is currently under ownership for quarrying purposes. Forging a relationship between the current and/or potential future land owners and the Town would ideally result in a future development project that takes the needs of all parties into consideration. For future hamlet residents this might be a publically accessible waterfront area with recreational opportunities and conservation acreage for resource protection. Though this area may continue to be mined for many years to come, it would be beneficial to begin discussions with the landowner now so that the Town is not left in a reactive position if for some reason the land is no longer needed for mining purposes sooner than expected.

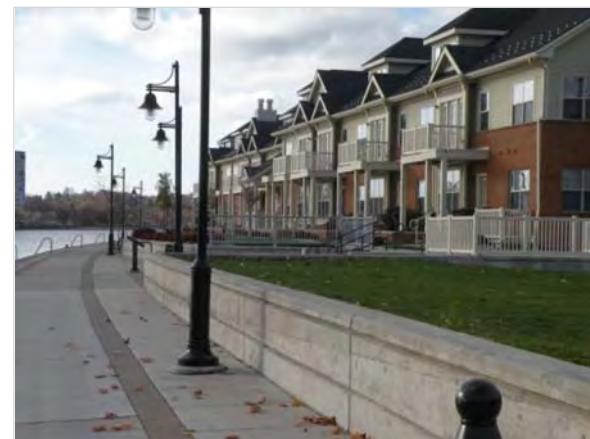
Recommendations:

- Continue dialogue with land owners to understand their current and future plans.
- Develop a land use plan for that area that includes public waterfront access for recreation and some lands conserved as resource protection.

Hamlet Expansion

New development at the periphery of the hamlet provides an opportunity for creating an extension of the hamlet's best qualities and the special sense of place that residents enjoy. Design principles that promote the desired qualities of hamlet living include:

- interconnected street networks (with multiple connections to the existing network of hamlet streets),



A new development in the city of Rochester, NY takes advantage of the Genesee River waterfront while still making it available for public access.



This historic home in Marlboro Hamlet is a good example of an architectural style recommended for new development which extends the hamlet character.

- small residential lots with small front yards and larger rear yards for private space,
- sidewalks for walkability and linkages to the center hamlet and other destinations such as parks and schools, and
- front porches to promote pedestrian scale and interaction with neighbors

Warwick Grove, a new development in Warwick, NY provides an example of how new development can successfully implement these design qualities. This project is described on the following page.

In Marlboro Hamlet, new development should be viewed as an opportunity for hamlet expansion and integration. Promoting connectivity to the center hamlet area, as well as schools and other community amenities, should also be considered with any development application. The Conceptual

Land Use map shows potential areas recommended for hamlet expansion. Growth will need to be coordinated with necessary utility improvements such as sewer and water expansion, sewage treatment plant upgrades, and possible natural gas extension. In addition, with new development, a variety of housing types and costs should be encouraged. Multi-family and low cost housing options should be integrated into new residential development plans through requirements and incentives. With careful attention to design, these units can be developed to blend seamlessly with single-family units in the hamlet expansion areas.



With good design multi-family housing can be integrated in a way that fits the community and enhances its character and diversity.

Recommendations:

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) design principles for hamlet expansion areas
- Coordinate utility improvements with potential new development

Warwick Grove: A Model for Hamlet Expansion

The urban design, architecture, and amenities included in this new development in Warwick, NY make it a good model for hamlet expansion in Marlboro. Warwick Grove includes elements such as:

- Interconnected street networks
- Building orientation toward main streets
- Pedestrian scale architecture with front porches
- Small front and side yard setbacks
- Sidewalks
- Alleyways for garage access
- Open spaces with public amenities



Alleyway garage access behind homes allows the main streetscape to be uninterrupted by driveway curb cuts, and eliminates the garage-dominated front facades typical of many newer subdivisions, creating a continuous pedestrian way.

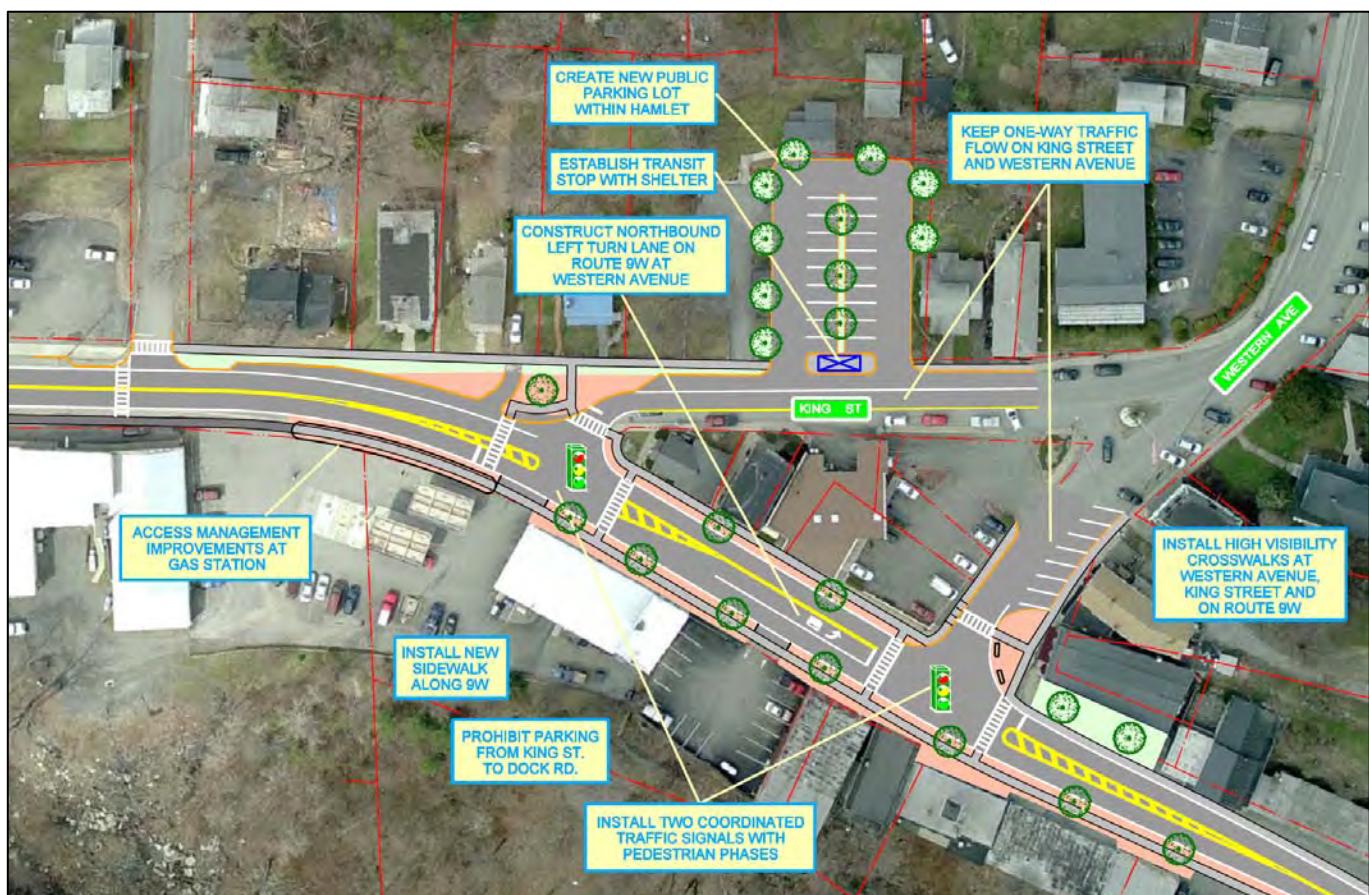
Pocket parks with pedestrian amenities such as benches and picnic tables provide gathering areas for neighbors to meet and interact. These opportunities are often lacking in modern subdivision developments, resulting in a community that rarely ventures outside home or car.



Transportation

Transportation Study

The Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan completed in 2008 by Creighton Manning with Behan Planning and Design, explored several alternative scenarios for turning lanes, parking, traffic flow and traffic signals on Route 9W in the hamlet. This study builds on the 2008 transportation plan in several ways. First, during public review of the transportation plan two of the alternatives, Alternative 2 and Alternative 6, were viewed most favorably. This was narrowed down further during this process, and Alternative 2 (described below) was selected as the preferred alternative. Second, it became clear that the streetscape design improvements proposed in the transportation plan could benefit from some refinement; and to accomplish this would require careful coordination between the Town, residents and business owners in the hamlet, and the NYSDOT. Third, the parking study completed during the transportation planning process required further study and analysis. Parking is discussed in a later section of this plan.



Alternative 2 excerpted from the Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan

Alternative 2, the preferred scenario from the 2008 transportation plan, proposes a synchronized couplet of traffic lights with a left turn lane from Route 9W onto Western Avenue, the one way traffic flow preserved going west on Western Ave to a left turn south on King Street. This alternative also proposes maintaining the angled parking on Western Ave, on-street parking on King Street, but no on-street parking on Rote 9W. The new parking lot shown on this alternative (off of King Street) was intended to conceptually replace the number of existing on-street parking spots that would be eliminated; however this location is not the only place where such off-street parking could be provided. Other options for off-street parking are discussed below. The parcel showing the new parking lot in the Alternative 2 drawing may better serve as a location for a new mixed-use building.

Pedestrian Improvements

9W Streetscape

The 2008 Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan also addresses the pedestrian portion of the streetscape including sidewalks and crosswalks, and amenities such as street trees and a potential pocket park. The streetscape improvements, to be started by NYSDOT in 2010, are an opportunity for realizing an improved streetscape environment where pedestrians can feel comfortable and safe while navigating around the hamlet. It will be important for the town to work closely with NYSDOT staff so that improvements are designed in a way that reflects the desires and interests of the hamlet. The Town should be prepared to make some design decisions such as the type and location of particular treatments: whether or not to include street trees, tree spacing, the style of pavers, lights, and crosswalk treatments, as well as amenity selections such as benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc. In addition, off-street parking alternatives should be designed to offset any on-street parking which will be lost through this project.



Left: A portion of the hamlet that will receive streetscape improvements (looking north on Route 9W near King Street).

Right: A conceptual sketch of the same portion of the hamlet with streetscape improvements.

Scheduled Improvements

The design phase for improvements described in the Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan is scheduled to begin in 2010. Other improvements currently in the works include a pair of tandem stop lights in front of the elementary and middle schools on Route 9W to facilitate safe turning movements to and from the busy highway. The county also has plans for improvements to Western Avenue, including a shoulder widening from the high school to Prospect Street and a new sidewalk from Prospect Street to Route 9W. This project is scheduled to begin in 2012. Coordination between the county's and the state's proposed improvements will be important for creating a unified look within the hamlet.

As the two projects meet in the central hamlet area, treatments should be consistent between the two. The Town of Marlborough should take a leading role in guiding these improvements that are so important to the hamlet's future.



The county is scheduled to begin an improvement project for Western Avenue in 2012.

Port Ewan, NY

Recently, NYSDOT made improvements in Port Ewan, NY in a process similar to the one which will be starting in Marlboro. Providing pedestrian amenities and an enhanced streetscape environment have made Port Ewan a more welcoming place. The design phase for improvements in Marlboro Hamlet will begin in 2010. The Town of Marlborough should take a lead role in guiding decision-making during this process.



Benches provide spots for sitting, and invite people to rest and interact with one another. Pedestrian scaled lights and street trees line the road; and highly visible crosswalks improve safety for walkers and a visual cue to motorists indicating that pedestrians are around.

Streetscape beautification provides a more comfortable walking and shopping environment, making Port Ewan a desirable location to visit and do business.



New City, NY: A Makeover



Vacant restaurant building - BEFORE

The hamlet of New City, in Rockland County NY, underwent a visioning process in 2007 which has resulted in tangible changes in the hamlet. The vision plan recommended zoning and design changes for the revitalization of South Main Street.



Reinvestment based on anticipated zoning and streetscape changes - AFTER

The South Main Street Streetscape Improvement Project was under design from 2007 to 2009, and construction began in fall of 2009.



Improvements under construction include sidewalk upgrades, street trees, lighting, improvements to a neighborhood park, and amenities which all work together to make New City a comfortable pedestrian environment and an exciting place to live and do business.

Kevin Landau Park and South Main Street at Congers Road intersection



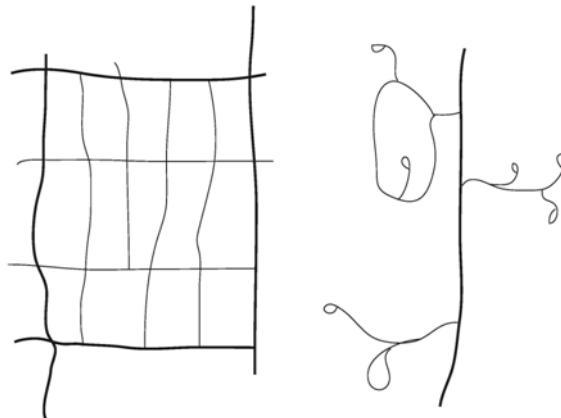
Current Conditions



Proposed improvements (looking south)

Connectivity

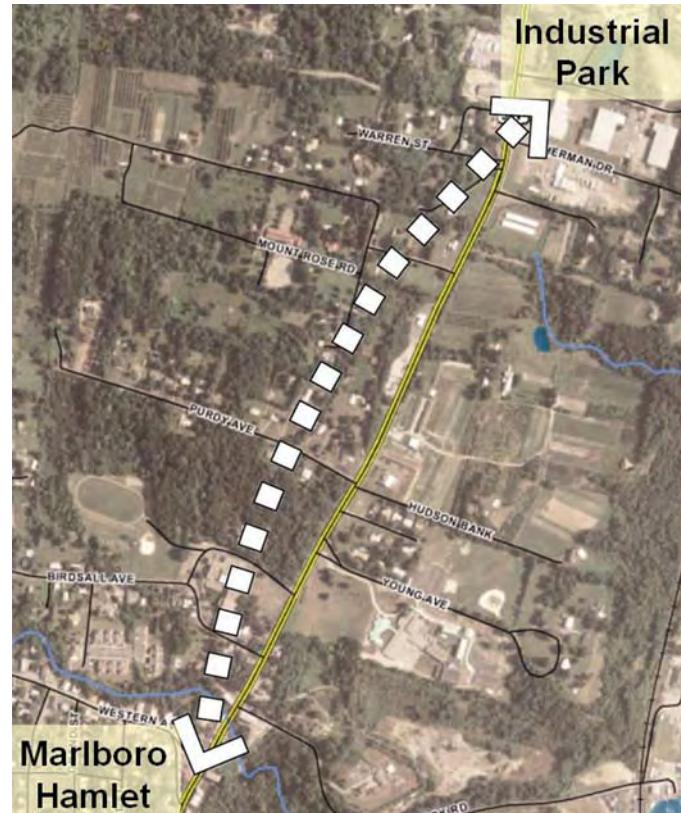
Interconnected street networks provide multiple routes to destinations, creating greater capacity for cars and a variety of routes for pedestrians to reach desired locations in less time. Traffic congestion is reduced and vehicles have multiple points of entry and exit so that not all cars are funneled to a single location. Such networks also facilitate bike and pedestrian travel. They can shorten the trip distance and also provide more varied, and therefore more interesting, pedestrian experiences. It is recommended that all new development seek to incorporate such connectivity, and that future development applications are reviewed with road and pedestrian connectivity in mind.



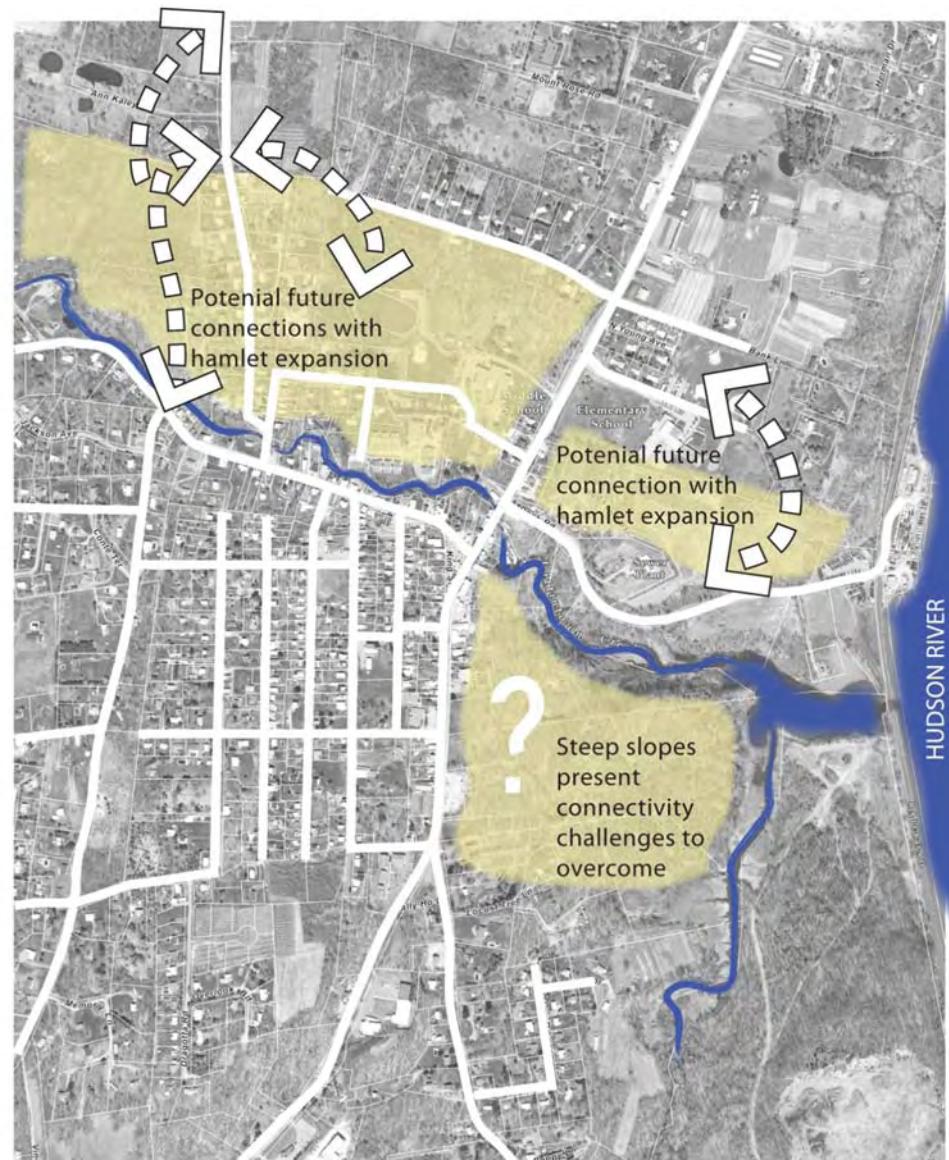
An interconnected road network has greater capacity to move vehicles from place to place than that of cul-de-sac ending with no outlets.

Opportunities for Connectivity in Marlboro Hamlet

The existing road network in Marlboro shows a good interconnection of streets on the west side of Route 9W. Historically, topography in the hamlet has presented challenges for completing roadway connections, and has resulted in dead end streets that would have instead linked into the gridded road pattern. Topography on much of the east side of Route 9W, particularly south of Dock Road, may in fact prohibit the ideal of an interconnected or gridded road pattern. As plans for new development proceed in this area, however, design concepts should include creative means for providing multiple entry/ exit points and vehicular and pedestrian connections to the center hamlet area and nearby amenities. Additionally, as improvements to the nearby industrial park to the north proceed, there may be an opportunity to link it with the hamlet, allowing workers easy access to and from businesses in the hamlet.



With proposed improvements to the industrial park to the north, an opportunity exists to provide a pedestrian / bicycle connection between the hamlet and the industrial park.



The existing road network in the center hamlet area of Marlboro is interconnected to a great extent. Multiple connections (streets, sidewalks, and trails) between new development and existing roads should be provided to the maximum extent practicable, thereby increasing safety, walkability, and ease of vehicular movement.

Gateways

Gateways provide a sense of arrival and pride of place when marked with enhanced landscaping, signs, and amenities such as crosswalks or medians. These features can also provide visual cues to motorists, alerting them that they are entering a hamlet, that there are pedestrians and bikers around, and that slowing down is warranted. It is recommended that gateway treatments be incorporated into the design and construction of the NYSDOT improvements for Route 9W, new developments when applicable, or become community projects to be implemented when possible. Care should be taken, however, that all three gateways have a similar look and feel, and the design for all three is coordinated even though implementation may occur in phases.

Proposed locations for gateways into Marlboro Hamlet include:

- Northern gateway near elementary school
- Western gateway near Western Ave and Prospect Street
- Southern gateway near Marlboro plaza



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/

Pavers and planters arranged with a crosswalk provide an example of potential gateway features for the hamlet



Gateway features such as medians, light poles, signs and plantings provide a sense of arrival and visually signal drivers to slow down.



The three gateway locations for Marlboro Hamlet (red asterisks) shown with the road network

Northern Gateway

The area along Route 9W near the elementary and middle schools provides a natural entry location to the hamlet where gateway features would be appropriate. Pedestrian amenities are needed at this location and should be an integral feature of the gateway here, in addition to "Welcome to Marlboro" signs and landscaping enhancements.



Northern Gateway Area

Southern Gateway

The gateway into Marlboro from the south occurs near the Marlboro commercial plaza on Route 9W. "Welcome to Marlboro" signs would be appropriate features, as well as landscaping and enhanced architectural and sign regulations. A median at this location, integrated with a change that shifts the plaza entrance to the south, would slow drivers and help alleviate some of the hazards with entering/ exiting the plaza at this location.



Southern Gateway

Western Gateway

The western gateway into Marlboro is located on Western Avenue at the intersection with Prospect Road. At this location the residential neighborhood starts to become mixed with more commercial activities. Homes and buildings begin getting closer together as density increases which creates the feeling that one is entering the hamlet. The bridge over the Lattintown Creek is visible and existing open space and lawn provides a park feeling which should be maintained or even enhanced as part of the gateway feature.

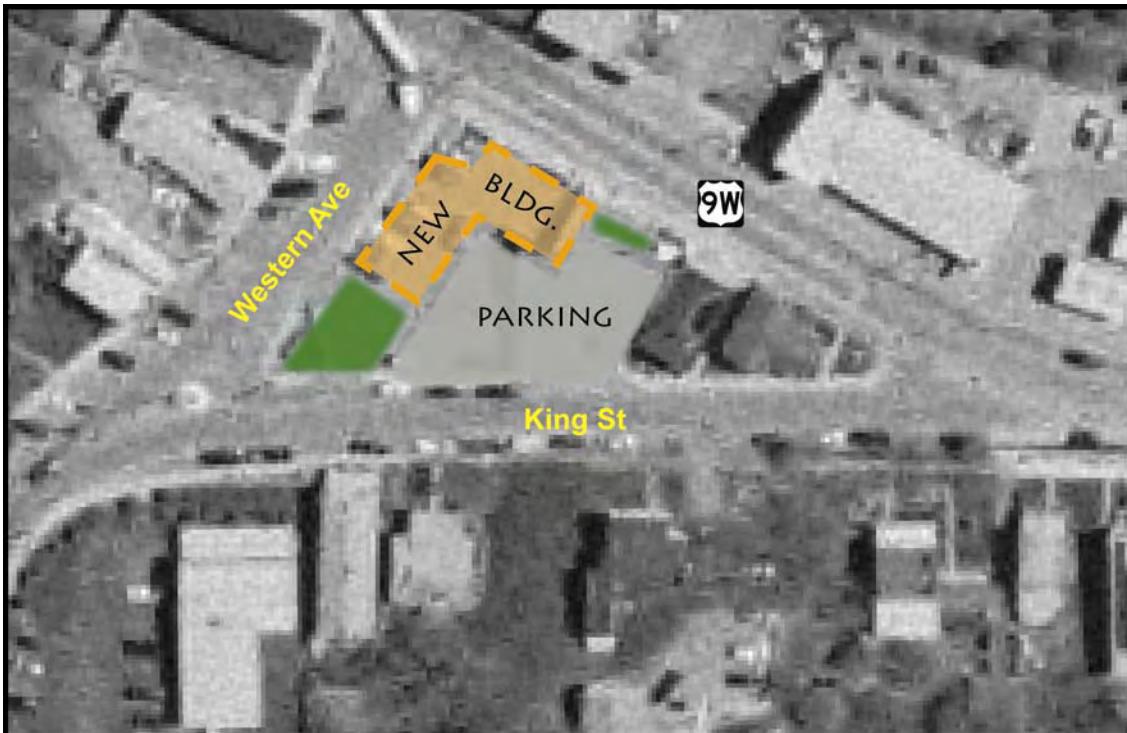


Western Gateway



Hamlet Center

The hamlet center for Marlboro is a historic center for commerce and activity in the rural Town of Marlborough. Located at the intersection where Route 9W, Western Avenue, and King Street form a triangle, and extending outwards toward the described gateway points, this area provides a place that knits the neighborhood communities together and creates a unique hamlet feature. Of the six alternatives explored for roadway improvements to this area in the Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan (2008), two of them showed the section of Western Avenue between King Street and Route 9W closed to traffic and as having potential for a parking area or community green space. The community did not get behind this idea, as the traffic circulation around the triangle provides frontage and visibility for businesses as well as a smoother flow for traffic from 9W onto Western Ave.



This potential position for a future building would provide architectural structure and a focal point to an important location in the hamlet.

The central location of this triangle within the main hamlet area makes it an important focal feature both functionally and aesthetically. The northeast corner of the triangle, once the home of a multi-story bank building, has undergone a transformation that has been controversial for the residents and business owners of Marlboro Hamlet. The location of the original building provided a focal point on the corner and contributed to the structure of the streetscape. Today, the parking area at that corner does not serve the same purpose, and as a result this key location is dominated by asphalt and parked cars. While the available parking is important, it could be located behind a replacement building (access from King Street) if the building were located and configured differently. A small public plaza or gathering space could be incorporated into the building entrance at the corner where Route 9W and Western Avenue intersect. Of course, any change to this location is a long term prospect, to be

implemented at a future time when the existing building reaches the end of its design life. Despite the current building, the community is very pleased to still have a bank in the heart of the hamlet; therefore, working closely with the current or future new owners towards a mutually beneficial design would be the best outcome. This might take several years, but it would make a significant contribution to the character of the hamlet.

Other potential redevelopment sites to consider as ownership changes or other opportunities emerge include the area along Route 9W where the existing gas station is located, the section on the west side of Route 9W across from Dock Road, and the potential development of an overlook park on the east side of Route 9W near the bridge across Lattintown Creek.

Recommendations:

- Work with landowners of the current Key Bank site to improve landscape presentation of parking lot (short term) and discuss future plans for any changes or upgrades to the building and building location (long term).
- Work with the landowners of the other potential redevelopment sites, and the potential overlook park, to take advantage of future opportunities.



Areas for potential architectural improvements and/or site development as uses and ownership change.

Parking

Public parking in the center hamlet area is important for increased business vitality. Parking areas should be located conveniently so that patrons can park and walk to their favorite businesses, and it should be promoted (appropriately signed, etc.) so that drivers know that parking is available and easy to find. As part of the 2008 transportation plan a parking study was done which analyzed existing parking areas for use, and identified potential new parking locations. Preferred Alternative 2 from the transportation plan (discussed earlier) maintains existing parking with the exception of on-street parking along the east side of Route 9W. In order to compensate for the loss of those spaces, the new off-street parking area shown on Alternative 2 (off of King Street) is primarily a placeholder. Concern has been expressed that parking at that location may not be the best use of that parcel. Other potential locations for new off-street parking areas were identified in the transportation plan and are highlighted below with a blue asterisks.



Parking Study - Excerpt from the Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan (2008)

When pursuing one or more of these locations for additional parking, consideration should be given to ownership and the potential for acquisition, distance to the business "center", visibility, and the site's suitability for an efficient parking layout. Beyond specific locations for providing public parking, there are measures that can improve the availability of spaces such as having business owners and employees park outside of the main business center of the hamlet and pursuing shared parking between private landowners to obtain more efficient use of existing parking spaces. Shared parking arrangements work well with businesses or institutions that have limited hours such as a church, or between two business types that have different hours, such as between a bank with daytime hours, and a restaurant or bar.

whose business occurs predominately during dinner hours or later. With the NYSDOT improvements it may be possible to procure federal funding to replace parking that will be removed due to construction of roadway improvements.



Some design options for providing landscape buffers along the perimeter of existing parking areas in the hamlet.

Design consideration for parking areas should include landscape treatments to minimize the negative aesthetic effects of parking in a small urban area such as the center hamlet. These types of treatments could be encouraged in the short term for existing parking areas, such as the bank's parking lot in the triangle, to create an immediate improvement to the hamlet's character.

Recommendations:

Investigate parking options in greater detail including the following criteria:

- Ownership and potential for acquisition or lease
- Distance to desired business destinations
- Visibility
- Potential for number of spaces and efficient layout
- Pursue shared parking arrangements that will result in better balance and efficiency of parking
- Have business owners and employees park outside the center hamlet area to keep spaces open for patrons
- Encourage landscape enhancements to visually buffer existing and new parking lots



Example of off-street parking effectively buffered from the sidewalk by attractive landscaping

Business Vitality

An important goal of this planning effort is to provide recommendations for improvements that will help restore a stronger, more vibrant commercial center than exists today. Each of the previous sections of this plan provides keys to increasing the livability of the hamlet, which could lead to an increased population base within the hamlet. The land use recommendations can lead to a diverse mix of businesses and people which make a place vibrant, and increase the desire for people to live and work within and visit the hamlet. The land use recommendations also clarify desired land use patterns so that amended land use regulations (e.g. zoning)

can be more clear and predictable about what type and form of development is desired. The recommended transportation improvements would reduce the impacts of traffic and make the hamlet easier to navigate for drivers and pedestrians, and additional parking that is easy to find will make it easy for people to stop in the hamlet. Pedestrian amenities and aesthetic enhancements provide comfort and safety for pedestrians, as well as interest for those passing by, enticing them to stop and spend time (and money) in the hamlet. All of these plan elements work together to provide a vibrant and active hamlet center.

Acknowledging the historic and agricultural context of Marlboro, a design concept informed by nearby wineries and orchards may help guide streetscape and architectural improvements. This concept or "theme" could also be part of a marketing campaign to attract visitors to the hamlet.

The formation of one or more organizations to steward and help fund the design and maintenance of streetscape / architectural improvements is often key to the success of a vibrant hamlet. A business district or downtown business association can direct the purchase and maintenance of such amenities such as seasonal hanging flower baskets, holiday flags and/ or lights, benches, and trash receptacles. They can also be involved in organizing special events or promoting joint marketing efforts. These types of organizations often start as informal groups that evolve into a more formal self-taxing organization such as a Special Assessment District (usually focusing on a single element such as lighting or sidewalk) or a Business Improvement District.



Beautification efforts provide a sense of pride of place and help attract visitors to the hamlet.

TOOLS FOR ACHIEVING LAND USE GOALS

Zoning

- The existing Highway Development District of the Marlborough zoning code allows for commercial growth without guidelines for mitigation. In order to improve the aesthetics and maintain green space in the commercial corridor of 9W to the north and south of the hamlet, consider incorporating design guidelines and standards which address the function and aesthetic quality of these extensions of the hamlet.
- The existing commercial zoning districts do not promote mixed uses in the hamlet center area. In order to facilitate mixed use development in the hamlet center, area and bulk requirements, parking standards, design guidelines and standards which allow and encourage a variety of uses including commercial, residential, and office should be developed. Parking requirements should be appropriate to a small urban center, rather than suburban-style development.
- Gas stations are generally not appropriate in the center of the hamlet, and as such the town should consider prohibiting them in hamlet center zoning. Preexisting gas stations should be required to provide enhanced landscape and architectural treatments, and discourage internally lit signs and canopies with bright colors.



Well designed filling station sign and canopy that fits the context of the community



Typical filling station sign and canopy with obtrusive colors and little architectural interest

Infrastructure

The extent of new development associated with the Marlboro Hamlet will rely on extensions and upgrades to existing infrastructure. While some early investigation has been undertaken, more is required in order to inform decision making for specific improvements to upgrade sewer, water, and other infrastructure.

In May of 2007 an engineering report was conducted on the Marlboro wastewater treatment facility by Brinnier and Larios which provided information about current conditions. Additionally, the town has submitted a grant application to do a more detailed study on infrastructure requirements. This study would describe limitation of the existing municipal sewer system, use the Brinnier and Larios report to evaluate the increased sewer demand of a proposed development site(s), and identify alternative solutions and mitigation measures including conservation and the expansion of the local wastewater treatment plant. The study will also evaluate the needs of the industrial park to the north.

Currently natural gas service does not exist in the hamlet. Natural gas lines have recently been extended to come near the hamlet in the vicinity of the elementary and middle schools, as such, future extension into the hamlet center may be possible. A feasibility study should be conducted to determine if such an extension would be beneficial for hamlet.

The improvements to 9W proposed by the Marlboro Hamlet Area Transportation Plan may present an opportunity to investigate and implement utility upgrades in the hamlet. It is less disruptive to local businesses and the community as a whole if infrastructure improvements are done while the street is under construction.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Marlboro Hamlet is a unique place with strong potential for renewed vitality. Among its assets are a tight knit hamlet center, several strong unique and historic architectural features, and an assortment of natural and scenic resources. In moving forward towards revitalization, the recommendations presented in this plan provide guidance in nurturing and celebrating these assets. The first step in implementing the Marlboro Hamlet Master Plan is formal adoption of the plan by the Marlborough Town Board. This action illustrates the Town's commitment to the revitalization process, and provides strength and guidance while coordinating improvement efforts with the state and county. In addition to the recommendations found throughout the plan, the following implementation tasks should help to guide future revitalization efforts.

Designate Design Coordination Committee

The role of the committee would be to:

- Coordinate with NYS DOT early and often regarding 9W improvements
- Coordinate other scheduled improvements such as traffic signals by the elementary and middle schools, and the county work on Western Ave

The coordination of revitalization improvements by various agencies is critical to the future success of the hamlet. There is opportunity to have much of the cost of revitalization covered by state and county projects if the community has streetscape improvement plan in place. By coordinating internally and with the state and county, there can be major steps completed towards revitalization within the next few years.

Complete an Infrastructure Study

Build on the engineering report completed by Brinnier and Larios (May 2007) in order to:

- Evaluate capacity needs based on potential development of hamlet expansion areas identified in this plan
- Identify alternative solutions and mitigation measures, including conservation and the expansion of the local wastewater treatment plant
- Investigate the potential for extending natural gas service into the hamlet
- Coordinate utility upgrades with scheduled improvements

Advance Zoning Amendments and Design Guidelines

- Continue to pursue grant opportunities for zoning amendments and design guidelines
- Hire consultant(s) to update zoning and create design guidelines document

Advance Parking Opportunities within the Hamlet

- Conduct additional analysis of parking opportunities
- Select best site(s) for parking and create visibility through signage and wayfinding
- Proceed with land acquisition or lease agreement for parking as appropriate

Plan for Public Access of Hudson River Waterfront

- Continue dialogue with Tilcon N.Y. regarding the future of gravel mining operation and their plans for the land south and east of the hamlet
- Investigate ways to expand the property near the river that is already under town ownership

Develop Trail and Recreation Amenities

Applicable grants can help pay for the planning and construction of trail and recreation amenities.

Funding sources may potentially include:

- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
 - Park Development and Planning Program
- National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
- NYS DOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Hudson River Valley Greenway Small Grant Program

Create a Gateway Design Plan

Improvements at the three gateway locations identified in this plan should be coordinated so that treatments have a similar look and feel. Construction may be phased based on coordination with scheduled improvements with the state or county. Welcome signs, landscape enhancements, crosswalks, traffic signals and any other features should be coordinated not only with each other but with hamlet treatments as well, so that the look and feel of the gateways is a true introduction to the core of the hamlet. Local business talent could be used for installation of landscape design.

- Coordinate with other improvement projects
- Hire a professional landscape architect to provide design

Coordinate with Business and Land Owners in Center Hamlet Area

- Create a business district and/or downtown business association to direct and provide enhancements to the central hamlet area.