



*The Village of Montebello,
New York*

Comprehensive Plan

ADOPTED OCTOBER 2003

Consultants:

A. Nelessen Associates, Princeton, NJ
Robert Geneslaw Co., Suffern, NY



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Land Use Plan

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PREFACE

New York State Law regulates the preparation of comprehensive plans. Section 7-722 of the Village Law describes a comprehensive plan as a document that will “identify the goals and objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development” of a village. Preparation of a comprehensive plan is not mandatory, however, if a plan is prepared and subsequently adopted by the Village Board of Trustees, subsequent land use regulation must be in accord with the adopted comprehensive plan.

The Board of Trustees, the Planning Board, ZBA, Building Inspector and other municipal as well as county and regional officials and agencies make decisions related to site plans, subdivisions, streets, locations for public buildings, expansion of community facilities, and other services and capital improvements that impact the overall pattern and character of development in Montebello. A Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for this decision-making, i.e., specific actions may be measured and reviewed against the goals and objectives of the plan to determine their consistency with the Village’s preferences for development and conservation.

The Village of Montebello commenced the comprehensive planning process “unofficially” in January 2002. The process began with a weekend-long “Summit” at which representatives from the Village’s boards discussed issues currently confronting the community as well as the long-range goals of the community. Shortly after this meeting, the Village decided to commence a comprehensive planning process. This process has been overseen by a Comprehensive Plan Committee made up of representatives of the various village boards and citizens-at-large. The Village has encouraged extensive public involvement throughout the process by allowing the public to “plan” for the community through participation at workshops and visual preference surveys and administration of a questionnaire.

The Montebello Comprehensive Plan is being prepared in a three-phase process. The first phase involved the preparation of existing condition reports, which provided baseline data on population and housing, natural resources, community facilities, land use, transportation, utilities, economic development and historic and aesthetic resources. The information contained in the existing conditions analyses, and public input obtained through the workshops and surveys, were used to identify the challenges currently confronting Montebello.

These challenges are summarized as follows:

Population: *From 1990 to 2000, the Village’s population grew by 25 percent. Growth has occurred in several distinct segments of the population: children, from newborn to age 14 (66%); adults, ages 65 and over (43%); and, young married couples, ages 34-44 (36%). Growth has created additional demand for services, including recreation. The Plan must address the needs of Montebello’s diverse population.*

Housing: *In 2000, 92% of the Village’s housing stock consisted of single-family detached dwellings. In the past ten years, the Village has made an effort to diversify the housing stock by allowing the construction of entry-level townhouse-style dwellings as well as an age-restricted senior housing development. During the public participation process, a need was expressed to allow the construction of additional types of housing that would appeal to adults, retirees, and/or young professionals who want to reside in the Village without the burden of maintaining a large lot residence. These dwellings should be situated in areas that are already in close proximity to higher density areas of the Village and adjoining communities (e.g., along Route 59).*

Land Use: *Scattered vacant parcels, particularly along Montebello Road and Spook Rock Road, will likely be developed in the next 10 years. Concern exists that residential development will not occur in a manner that complements the Village’s rural character or is consistent with the scale of existing, historic residences that are often in proximity to these remaining parcels.*

Economic

Development: *Approximately 37 acres of vacant non-residentially zoned property adjoins the New York State Thruway at Interchange 14B. While office uses are allowed and several projects have been approved, development has not occurred. As part of the planning process, the Village explored options and alternatives to office development (which might allow an additional 400,000 square feet of space plus attendant parking) that would still result in positive property tax benefits to the community.*

Environmental

Resources: *The Village is located at the easterly base of the steeply sloping Ramapo Mountains. The Village's geography is a combination of rolling wooded hillsides and flat low-lying elevations marked by a system of streams, wetlands and ponds that drain to the Mahwah River, which flows along the base of the Ramapo Mountains. Retention of these natural characteristics has perpetuated the rural open character of the community. A challenge exists to preserve these natural features and ecological systems in the face of continuing development. Of particular concern is the need to preserve and protect existing water resources, mature trees and woodland canopy from the incremental impacts associated with land development. This is especially a concern in light of the County's recent three-year long drought and the demands placed on water resources by anticipated growth.*

Historic

Resources: *Montebello has a wealth of historic properties that are concentrated along several major roads in the Village. The protection of historic resources helps to maintain the Village's unique character. Currently, these properties are not protected from alterations that might be done in a manner that would detract from the community's historic character. The Plan identifies historic features in the Village that may be worth preserving, and discusses options for preserving their essential character.*

Aesthetic

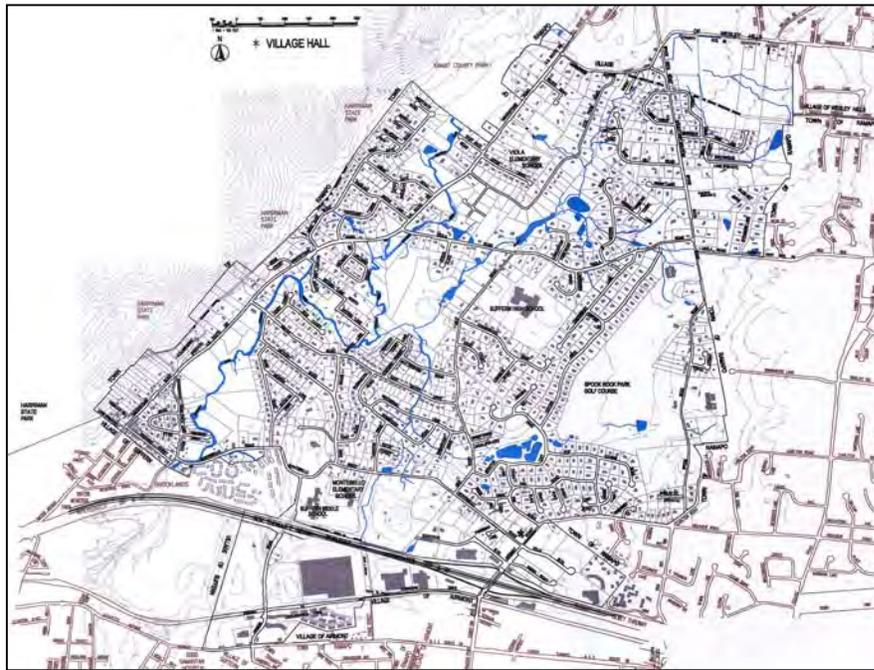
Resources: *The Village's current challenge is to guide development on remaining parcels in a manner that is consistent with the "old way" of building, and to reintroduce features such as tree copses and stone walls within subdivisions to "naturalize" their landscapes. The Village also is concerned with the overall aesthetic appearance of the 14B interchange area, located wholly within Montebello. Lastly, the Plan seeks to identify methods by which older commercial uses can be updated and maintained to reflect the aesthetic preferences of the community.*

Transportation: *Area growth has increased traffic levels along local roads. Vehicles travel at excessive speeds, challenging the Village to calm traffic in order to reduce the number of accidents along these roadways. At one time, the limited amounts of traffic allowed residents to walk, jog and bike along Village roads. Today, traffic levels and speeds discourage shared use of the road. A challenge of this Plan is to recommend ways in which roads might be re-designed and/or signed to accommodate pedestrians.*

Community

Services: *The Village is well-served by a comprehensive system of community facilities and service providers. The Ramapo Central School District has two elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school located in the Village servicing the needs of Montebello students. A Town golf course and pool complex dominates the central portion of the Village, and Village Hall provides a community focal point for Village-sponsored activities. However, the Village does desire an increased police presence to enforce vehicle speed limits.*

Introduction



The Village of Montebello is 4.75-square mile incorporated village located in the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, New York. Montebello was established in 1986 in part to direct and control the intensity and types of land use allowed in the Village. The interior portion of the Village is marked by a sense of openness, with residential land uses decreasing in density as one travels south to north through the community. The Village is characterized by beautiful tree-filled, rock-strewn rolling hills with stone walls lining most of the older narrow roads. An extensive network of streams, ponds and wetlands enhance the natural and open image of Montebello. As one approaches the New York State Thruway, running generally along the southern edge of the community, residential density increases. Nonresidential uses are prevalent and include corporate-style office buildings. A neighborhood shopping area along Route 59 on either side of Hemion Road meets many of the local retail and service demands of Montebello residents.

The primary development pattern has been separate, residential subdivisions laid out in conventional 50,000 square foot lots on curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. The Village has grown by 25% over the last ten (10) years and infill will continue on remaining developable vacant land in the future. Currently, the Village has neither a “center” or commercial focus.

Circulation within Montebello and to destinations outside the village is primarily by car and is dependent on small local roads that connect housing to retail centers and to the New York Thruway. High speed, noisy traffic in the village is a problem.

The Village desires to slow high speed traffic on local roads and streets and to develop a network of trails and paths to maximize pedestrian/bicycle movement.

In January 2002, the Village held a summit of all elected and appointed members to discuss the future of the Village. Based on the deliberations and reactions of the participants, and in order to revisit the goals and objectives of the community, the Village Board imposed a moratorium on all new development until a Comprehensive Plan was prepared and adopted. The Village desired to prepare a Plan that re-examined and established land uses policies and address other land-use related concerns, e.g., historic resource preservation.

The Comprehensive Plan will guide development within the Village for the foreseeable future. Its major goals include protection of the natural character of Montebello, introduction of a mixed-use village center, and creation of a network of paths and traffic-calmed roads linking the Village’s residential neighborhoods and mixed use village center.

The Land Use, Circulation and Village Center elements of this Plan have been drafted through a community participation process led by Anton Nelessen Associates (ANA) entitled “Envisioning the Future.” The planning process relied on community input through intensive discussions, public meetings, application of the Visual Preference Survey[™] and Vision Translation Workshops - one for the overall plan and another for village center conceptualization.

Introduction

A Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) was appointed to oversee preparation of this Plan. This process allowed the community-at-large to direct the future of the Village.

The Comprehensive Plan expresses short- and long-term objectives for addressing the existing and future needs of the Village of Montebello. More importantly, the Plan capitalizes upon and preserves and enhances the existing character of the Village.

The visioning process and community meetings asked people to describe the character of the Village. Words such as “rural,” “quaint,” “charming,” “green,” “beautiful” and “friendly” were most often used to describe Montebello.

The “best” features of the Village of Montebello were the rock walls, large trees and wooded areas and the views of the surrounding hills and mountains and the streams and ponds.

The “worst” features of the Village of Montebello were the lack of biking or walking trails, the need for more playgrounds and parks, high taxes, lack of and poor quality of commercial areas, and the lack of a village focus or center.

This Plan addressed the above comments and concerns while seeking solutions to preserve and enhance the character of the Village of Montebello into the future.

The images on this page represent a sample of the character and recent development in the Village.



Rock walls lining Village roads are one of the most identifiable features of Montebello.



Spook Rock golf course with distant views of the Ramapo Mountains.



New subdivision.



New office buildings.



New 3,000+ square foot single family home on 50,000 sq. ft. lot.

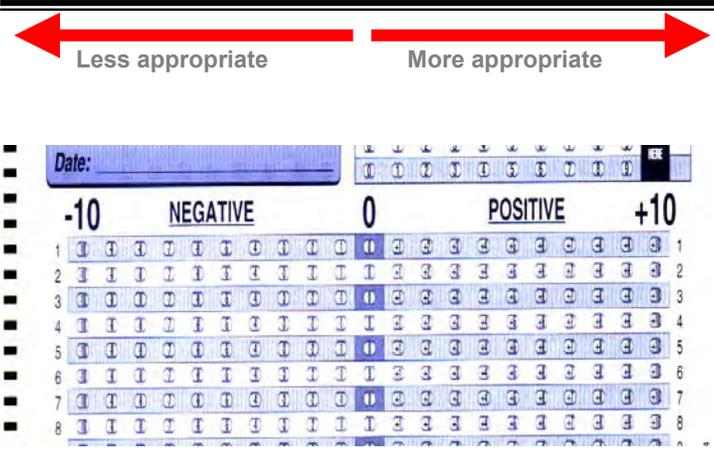


Vacant site for sale.



Part of the network of streams and pond.

Visioning Process



Images were evaluated by the residents using the above form.

“Envisioning the Future,” was the title given to the extensive community outreach/participation process which is the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Visual Preference Survey (VPS), Community Questionnaire and subsequent Vision Translation Workshops (VTW) were techniques used to facilitate community discussion and interaction.

To ensure the proper mix of images in the Montebello VPS and the wording of the questionnaire, a “beta” test was performed with the Comprehensive Plan Committee. The results of the beta test scan of the Committee were used to assist in the formatting of the final questionnaire and visuals for community workshops that followed. The community visioning input process was held over a two-month period. The community participants were asked to evaluate 98 images in 8 categories, and respond to a Community Questionnaire of 53 questions. The 8 categories were street types, traffic calming, edge treatments, commercial & residential development options, pedestrian realm, parks & green space, mobility options and civic pride.

The visual goals of the Village can be best understood after reviewing the results of the Visual Preference Survey and the Demographic, Policy and Market Questionnaire. The numerical values of the images in the Visual Preference Survey and the questionnaire along with the recommended policies for future development are included in a separate chapter of the Plan entitled, “Results of the Visual Preference Survey and Questionnaire.”

Two Vision Translation Workshops (VTW) were conducted using the results of the VPS. The VTW employed mapping techniques to generate recommendations for the Land Use and Circulation Elements, and the Village Center Concept Design.

Two Visual Preference Surveys and Demographic, Market and Policy Questionnaires were developed for the Village—one for the initial Village Summit and another for a series of six public meetings. Approximately sixty five (65) people participated in the Village’s “Envisioning the Future” process.

Visual Preference Survey categories included:

Street Types – Includes existing and potential county, local, residential and commercial streets.

Traffic Calming – Includes various traffic calming techniques.

Edge Treatments – What is seen along the edges of various road and street types for various land uses in the Village.

Development Options – Includes commercial & residential - existing and potential sizes, locations and designs of a wide range of commercial, retail and mixed-use building types, and residential that include single and multi-family options.

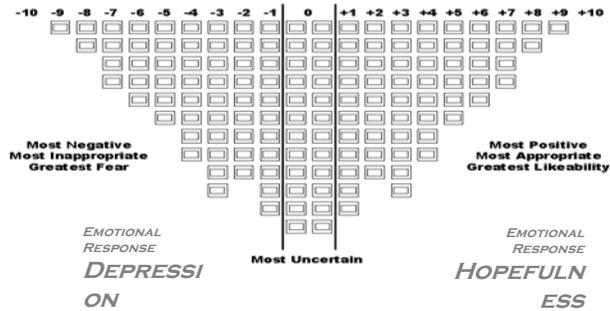
Pedestrian Realm – How pedestrians experience different land uses, sidewalks, streets, and landscaping in the village.

Parks & Green Space – Includes parks and conservation uses.

Mobility Options – Includes vehicular, transit, pedestrian and bicycle movement.

Civic Pride – Includes uses and functions for civic, including government, schools and religious activities.

Visioning Process



NEGATIVE PLACES HAVE THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE CHANGE AND INCREASE IN VALUE. IMAGES AND VALUES WERE ANALYZED USING THE ABOVE DIAGRAM.

POSITIVE PLACES THAT WILL RETURN GREATEST VALUE, INHERENT WEALTH, AND SENSE OF WELL BEING.

For each image in the VPS, an average (mean), standard deviation, maximum and minimum numerical value were statistically tabulated.

The average value, or mean value, was determined for each image in the survey by totaling all values given to a specific image and dividing that total by the number of participants. The standard deviation (SD) is a numerical range that indicates how far from the mean value the majority of responses fell.

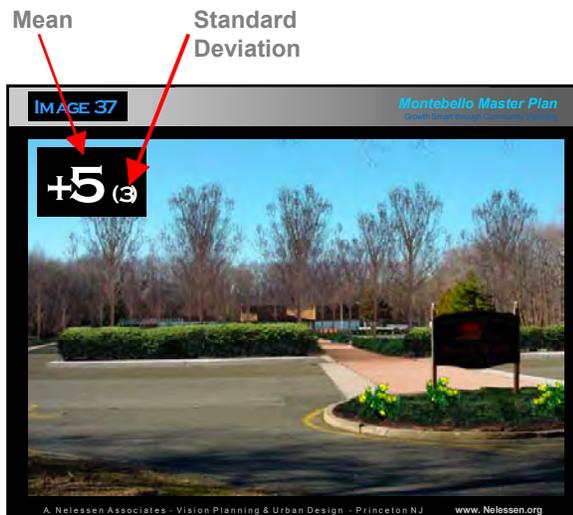
Statistically, 68% of survey responses to an image or question will fall within one standard deviation from a mean. Although standard deviation is generally given as a positive number, for example SD 3, it is actually read as 3 subtracted from the mean and 3 added to the mean. For example, the range of values around a mean of +5 with a standard deviation of 3 is +2.0 to +8.0, which signifies that this image is considered very positive by the majority of the participants.



ONE OF THE CITIZEN PLANNING GROUPS AT THE VISION TRANSLATION WORKSHOP

Once the VPS was collected, tabulated and analyzed, two Vision Translation Workshops were conducted. The first VTW focused on the overall Land Use Plan, while the second concentrated on the Village Center concept. The Vision Translation process encouraged participants to locate on base maps various recommended land uses and mobility improvements.

The recommended Land Use and Circulation Elements, and plans for two Village Centers were direct results of the workshops. Based on public reaction to the village center concept at a public meeting as well as CPC deliberations, one village center was eliminated from the Plan.



Visioning Process

During the Vision Translation Workshop, participants were asked to locate on a base map the “best” and the “worst” places in the Village.

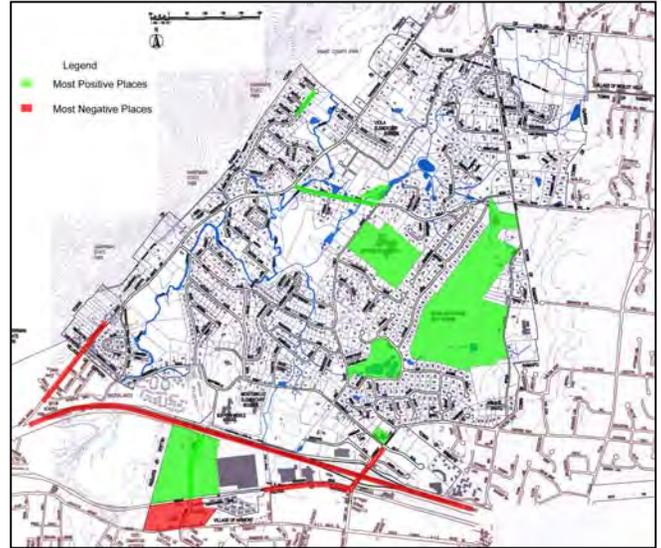
The locations that the majority of participants indicated the “best” have the visual and spatial characteristics which draw the most positive feelings and responses about the Village. These positive places are shown in green.

The “best” locations were large “open” green spaces, such as Spook Rock Golf Course, and undeveloped “defining” landscapes, such as the Ramapo Mountains. Other “best” locations included community “gathering” places, e.g., Village Hall and the High School property. Local roads with a natural or stone wall edge and concentrations of older “historic” properties, e.g., Viola Road between Route 202 and Mile Road, were also selected. Clearly, the preservation and maintenance of natural green areas, existing vistas and the narrower roads that are lined with older properties and stone walls should be important objectives of this Plan. A purpose of defining these cherished places is to implement programs or ordinances that will assist in their protection.

The locations in which the participants indicated “the worst” have the elements that elicit negative reactions. These areas are shown in red. Additional action must be taken to remedy these negative places.

These negative places are located in the southern portions of the Village and include a section of Route 202 and the entire length of the New York State Thruway in Montebello. Dunnigan Drive, the industrial roads paralleling the Thruway, and the Town Highway Garage along Airmont Road were rated negatively. The commercial sites along Route 59 and Hemion Road were negative. North Airmont Road between the Thruway and Village Hall was also rated negatively.

Street edge design improvements will be important along all the roads considered negative. The Thruway, Airmont Road and Route 202 are of immediate concern. Landscaping should be planned for the major arterial roads. Trees and other landscaping provides nature and scenery, boundary, buffer, rhythm, etc. along them. It should be noted that in the VPS, a simulation was prepared for NY Thruway off-ramp that added a treed screen to the south (shown on the right) – this simulated landscaped ramp scored considerably higher than the existing condition.



Positive and Negative Places within the Village of Montebello.



Spook Rock Golf Course provides positive long vistas of the surrounding hills.



NYS Thruway eastbound off-ramp at Int. 14B with simulated edge landscaping.

Maintain and enhance the quality of life, value and character of the Village by preserving and enhancing its natural character, developing an interconnected system of open space, parks and trails, continually enhancing the tax base, and creating a mixed use center along Route 59.

Goals and Objectives

GOAL 1

Maintain Village Character

Maintain and enhance the existing natural and residential character of the Village of Montebello, exemplified by winding roads framed by mature trees, homes set apart, rock walls and hedges, and beautiful views of the mountains surrounding the Village.

OBJECTIVES

- A. *Adopt a Land Use Plan and subsequent site planning standards that will maintain the existing residential scale of single family areas and enhance and protect the natural character of Montebello.*
- B. *Institute street standards that will maintain and enhance the existing winding roads and edges.*
- C. *Protect the Village's woodland character by strengthening the existing tree protection ordinance to require additional tree plantings within all building setbacks for new non-treed residential lots and the replacement of trees for those that have been removed.*
- D. *Maintain and enhance existing views through careful building siting and tree protection.*
- F. *Adopt a Design Vocabulary as guidelines for commercial areas and new residential buildings within the Village Center.*
- G. *Protect the existing historic buildings, structures, and landscapes of Montebello that give the Village its own unique identity.*

GOAL 2

Preserve Parkland, Natural Areas & Create a Village-wide Trail System.

Preserve and enhance the natural areas and parklands in the Village through an integrated network of open spaces, and develop an interconnecting trail system that: promotes the health of the citizens of the Village; protects the natural environment; prevents flooding; and, protects ecological habitats for the benefit of current and future citizens of Montebello.

OBJECTIVES

- A. *Protect the existing natural hydrologic features of the village (streams, wetlands and floodplains) and use the areas as a "green spine" by discouraging additional disturbance or development.*
- B. *Create a network of bicycling, jogging, and walking paths to further the Montebello Trail efforts.*
- C. *Plan for conservation areas that recognize the environmental constraints of the land.*

Goals and Objectives

GOAL 3

Future Mixed-use Development

Plan and design a mixed-use, village center on Route 59 that responds to the needs of the citizens of Montebello while enhancing the existing character, design, massing and value of the Village.

OBJECTIVES

- A. *Design the center to respond to unique location and site characteristics. The mixed-use center should respond to the land use preferences and needs of the citizens of Montebello.*
- B. *Prepare a development program, a street plan, and a design vocabulary that will integrate the existing shopping center with current undeveloped land to create a unified mixed use center.*
- C. *Provide a broad range of housing types.*

GOAL 4.

Movement /Traffic Patterns

Provide safe and efficient access to and from the NYS Thruway. For the remainder of the Village, provide a traffic-calmed road network that maintains and enhances the existing beauty of the road edges, e.g., stone walls and mature trees.

OBJECTIVES

- A. *Adopt new road standards for village and county roads to encourage lower speeds.*
- B. *Identify and adopt appropriate traffic calming techniques. For example, initiate line painting to narrow travel lanes where appropriate.*
- C. *Enforce traffic speeds.*

GOAL 5.

Pedestrian Realm

Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the Village.

OBJECTIVES

- A. *Design and implement, wherever possible, and without compromising the width of the current roadbed, a pedestrian path network connecting major residential neighborhoods with schools, recreation areas, the Suffern Free Library, the village mixed use center and other destination points.*
- B. *Use the proposed Montebello Trail as the basis of future pedestrian and bicycle paths.*

SUMMARY GOAL: Community “Value”

Continue and maintain a superior quality of environment and promote quality of life standards through good design and planning and use of cost-effective approaches.

Background – Existing Demographics

Population Characteristics

The Village of Montebello experienced a population increase of 25% between 1990 and 2000; this increase represented the second highest growth rate of any town or Village within Rockland County, NY.

Population Characteristic Statistics

	1980	1990	1980 to 1990 Change		1990	2000	1990 to 2000 Change	
			Number Change	Percent Change			Number Change	Percent Change
Town of Ramapo	89,060	93,861	4,801	5%	93,861	108,905	15,044	16%
Montebello	NA	2,950	NA	NA	2,950	3,688	738	25%
Rockland County	259,530	265,475	5,945	2%	265,475	286,753	21,278	8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.
 Prepared by Robert Geneslaw, Co.
 Notes: Percentages were rounded.
 NA = Not Available

Age Composition

The change in the Village's age composition is reflected in the accompanying table. The median age of the Montebello population decreased slightly to 37.8 years. The total percentage of school-age children (5-19 years) in the Village increased from 24 to 26 percent over the past decade. The population of pre-school children has increased to represent 8 percent of the total population. The portion of the population that is of retirement age, 65 years of over, has remained relatively stable at 8 percent in 2000. In terms of overall population changes, the total number of children under the age of 5 increased 102.6 percent since 1990. Children ages 5-9 years increased by 71 percent, and children ages 10-14 increased by 40.4 percent. The segment of the population that is 75 years of age and older experienced a 55 percent increase.

Age Composition Statistics

Age	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total
Total Population	2950	100%	3,688	100%
Under 5 years	152	5%	308	8%
5 to 9 years	198	7%	339	9%
10 to 14 years	250	8%	351	10%
15 to 19 years	259	9%	242	7%
20 to 24 years	211	7%	102	3%
25 to 34 years	269	9%	326	9%
35 to 44 years	524	18%	712	19%
45 to 54 years	532	18%	609	17%
55 to 59 years	203	7%	228	6%
60 to 64 years	140	5%	168	5%
65 to 74 years	145	5%	199	5%
75 to 84 years	57	2%	83	2%
85 years and over	10	0%	21	1%
Median age	38	N/A	37.8	N/A

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.
 Prepared by Robert Geneslaw Co.
 Note: Percentages were rounded.

Background - Existing Demographics

Housing Units, Households and Household Size

Household composition is a reflection of the existing housing stock. In 2000, the Census Bureau reported that there were 1,163 households in the Village of Montebello. Of these, 1,024 (or 88%) were family households, compared to 89% in 1990. Although the percentage of family households decreased slightly between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of family households with children increased; in 1990, 45% of family households had children under the age of 18. In 2000, 57% of family households had children under the age of 18.

The median household income in the Village rose from \$82,512 in 1990 to \$116,600, representing a 41.3 percent increase over the last decade.

Between 1990 and 2000, the housing stock increased by 247 units, or by 26 percent.

According to 2000 Census estimates, there were a total of 1,155 housing units in the Village of Montebello. Of this total, 92 percent consisted of single family detached dwellings. The remaining 8 percent consisted of single family attached units – those units are located within the Indian Rock housing development. While 22 percent of the total number of housing units were constructed in the last decade, approximately 40 percent of all persons residing in the Village in 2000 had resided in a different home in the U.S. in 1995. Of that 40 percent, 27.5 percent came from other locations in Rockland County; 6.4 percent came from another County in New York State; and 6 percent arrived from outside the state.

Since 2000, the construction of Montebello Commons has added 176 multifamily senior dwellings to the Village's housing stock thereby reducing the total percentage of single-family detached dwellings in the Village.

Housing Units 1990 and 2000

	1990	2000	Number Change	% Change
Town of Ramapo	29,794	32,422	2,628	9%
Rockland County	88,264	94,973	6,709	8%
Montebello	935	1,182	247	26%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Prepared by Robert Geneslaw Co.

Note: Percentages were rounded.

Background - Existing Demographics

Bedroom Composition: 1990 and 2000

No. of Bedrooms	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	% Change 1990-2000
0	6	0.6%	0	0.0%	-0.6
1	35	3.8%	23	2.0%	-1.8
2	33	3.6%	91	7.9%	+4.3
3	378	40.9%	324	28.1%	-12.8
4	326	35.3%	496	42.9%	+7.6
5 or more	146	15.8%	221	19.1%	+3.3
Total Housing Units	924	100.0%	1,155	100.0%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Prepared by Robert Geneslaw Co.

Note: Percentages were rounded. Differences in housing stock numbers due to sample population.

Approximately 245 four and five-bedroom dwellings were added in the last decade. During this time period, the Village experienced an increase in 2-bedroom dwellings – the majority of these housing units are located in the Indian Rock townhome development or Montebello Commons, an age-restricted housing development. While Indian Rock housing development represented the addition of 93 3-bedroom entry-level dwellings in the community, the Village experienced an overall decrease in 3-bedroom dwellings. This is probably due to the conversion of several Indian Rock dwellings from 3- to 2-bedroom units, and the overall conversion of 3-bedroom to 4-bedroom dwellings.

As 62 percent of all housing units in the Village consist of 4 and 5-bedroom dwellings, **Montebello will likely continue to be a community with a strong family household base including a high percentage of school-age children.**

In terms of housing values, median housing values of owner-occupied dwellings rose from \$285,100 in 1990 to \$335,100 in 2000, or an increase of 17.5 percent.

The percentage of owner-occupied housing units in the Village of Montebello increased from 91% in 1990 to 96% in 2000 and the number of owner-occupied housing units in the Village increased at a much faster rate than the number of renter-occupied dwelling units. Between 1990 and 2000 the number of owner-occupied units increased 5%; renter-occupied units decreased 5%. The percentage of home ownership in Montebello was much higher than the percentage of home ownership in both the Town of Ramapo and Rockland County.

The characteristics of the Village's existing and future population will have an impact on the demands placed on various community facilities and services.

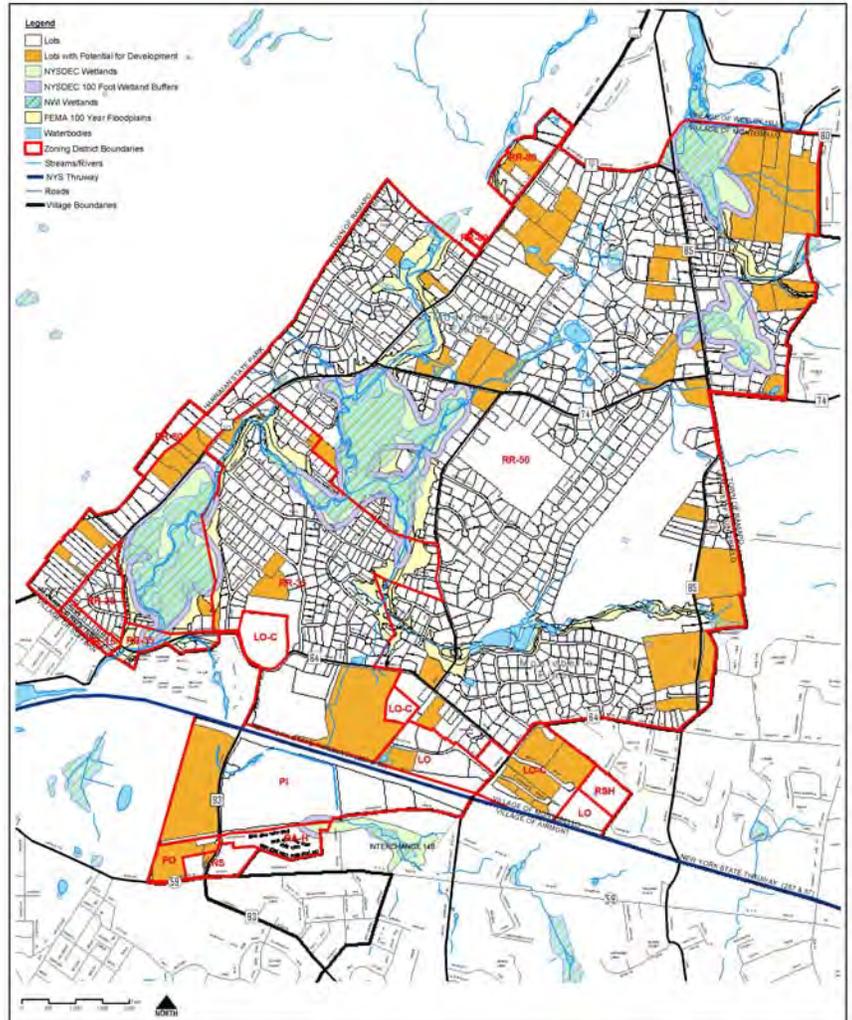
Background - Development Potential

The amount and type of development that is likely to occur in the future depends on a number of factors, including the availability of land, existing land use regulations, and environmental constraints to development, e.g., wetlands and steep slopes. The capacity for future development in the Village was estimated by calculating the amount of vacant and underdeveloped land in Montebello that is not environmentally constrained, and determining the development yield based on the residential or nonresidential density permitted by existing zoning regulations.

Overall, the majority of the Village's land area is developed with low density residential uses. Several properties, including the "Archdiocese" property located on Montebello Road, are considered "underdeveloped" as they are large properties that are currently in use but could be developed in the future with a higher density of development. Vacant properties are scattered throughout the Village, however, large concentrations of vacant land are found in the "Rosedale Manor" section of Montebello, and the subdivided but vacant properties located in the vicinity of Rella Boulevard.

It is estimated that an additional 179 residential dwellings and approximately 1,915,000 square feet of nonresidential gross floor area could be developed in the future under existing zoning regulations.

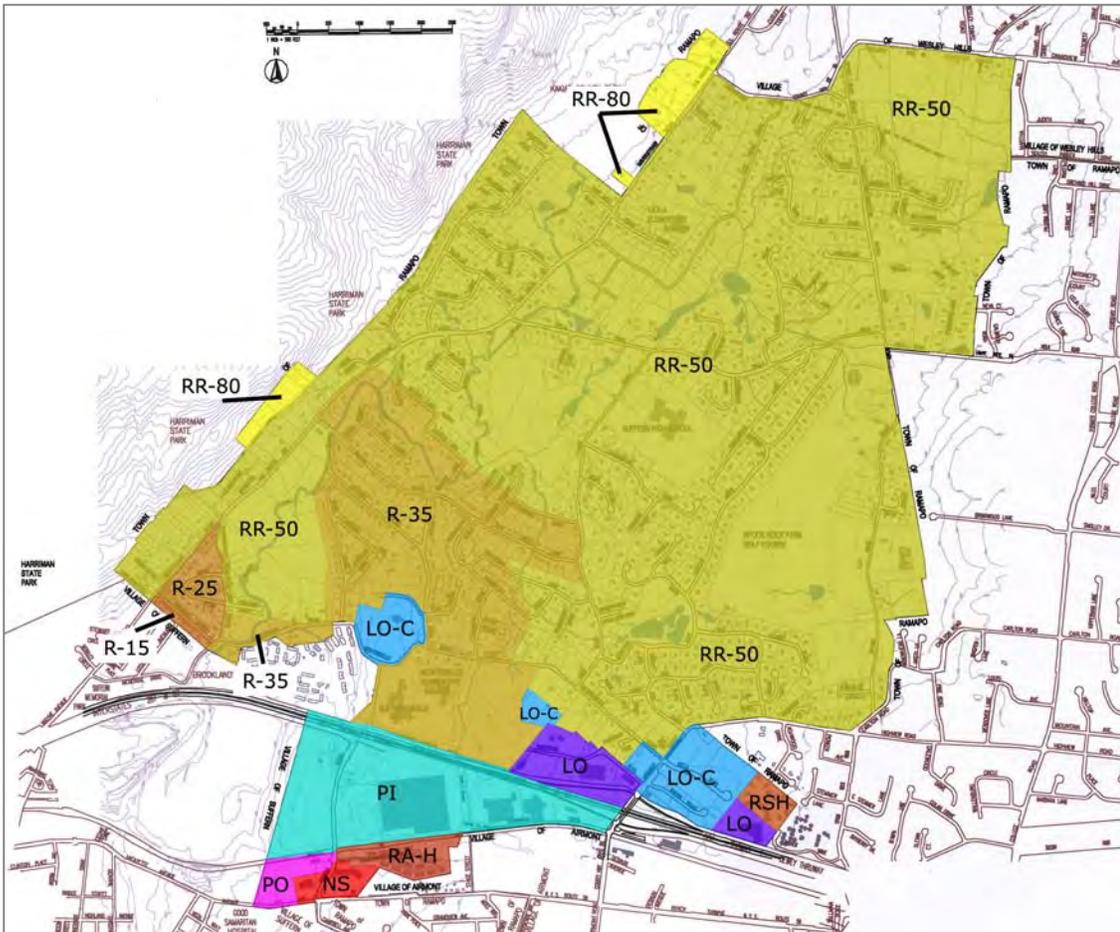
In terms of residential development yield, approximately 70 percent of the total yield would be located in four areas of the Village. The Archdiocese property, which is zoned 1 dwelling/35,000 square feet of lot area, could yield an additional 57 single family detached dwellings. Several large residential properties on Spook Rock Road could yield approximately 43 dwellings. The Rosedale Manor area could yield approximately 67 dwellings. It is estimated that an additional 12+ dwellings could result from minor subdivision of a number of large lots scattered throughout the Village.



Approximately 569,000 square feet of corporate office space could be developed within the Rella/Executive Boulevard area. Approximately 833,000 square feet of space could result from development of the Liberty Park and Novartis properties. The Novartis property, which totals approximately 37 acres and is zoned "PI", could yield 637,000 square feet of warehouse/industrial space. Approximately 220,000 square feet of office/retail development could result from the Liberty Park parcel, as well as a vacant property with frontage on Hemion Road.

Background - Current Zoning

The Village currently regulates land uses in 11 zoning district categories.



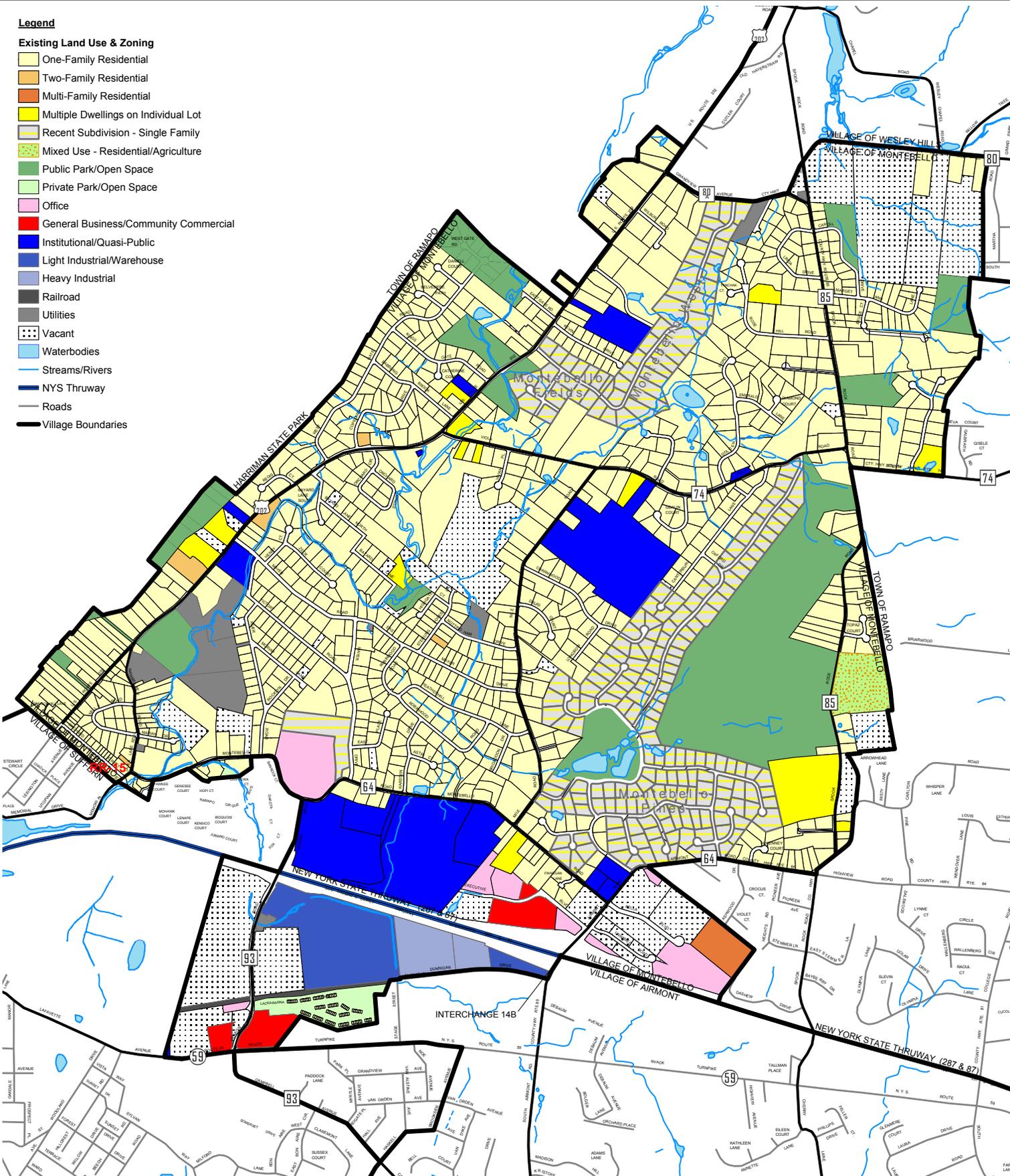
Zoning Map Legend

■	RR-80 Rural Residential
■	RR-50 Rural Residential
■	R-35 Low-Density Residential
■	R-25 Low-Density Residential
■	R-15 Medium-Density Residential
■	RSH Residential Senior Citizen
■	RA-H Medium-Density Affordable Housing
■	NS Neighborhood Shopping
■	PO Professional Office
■	LO Laboratory Office
■	LO-C Laboratory Office-Campus
■	PI Planned Industry

Legend

Existing Land Use & Zoning

- One-Family Residential
- Two-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Multiple Dwellings on Individual Lot
- Recent Subdivision - Single Family
- Mixed Use - Residential/Agriculture
- Public Park/Open Space
- Private Park/Open Space
- Office
- General Business/Community Commercial
- Institutional/Quasi-Public
- Light Industrial/Warehouse
- Heavy Industrial
- Railroad
- Utilities
- Vacant
- Waterbodies
- Streams/Rivers
- NYS Thruway
- Roads
- Village Boundaries



ROBERT GENESLAW CO.
Planning and Development Consultants

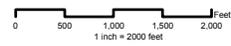
2 Executive Blvd., Suite 401, Suffern, NY 10901

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Note: This map is for general planning purposes only.
 Source: New York State Department of Transportation,
 Rockland County GIS, Robert Geneslaw Co.

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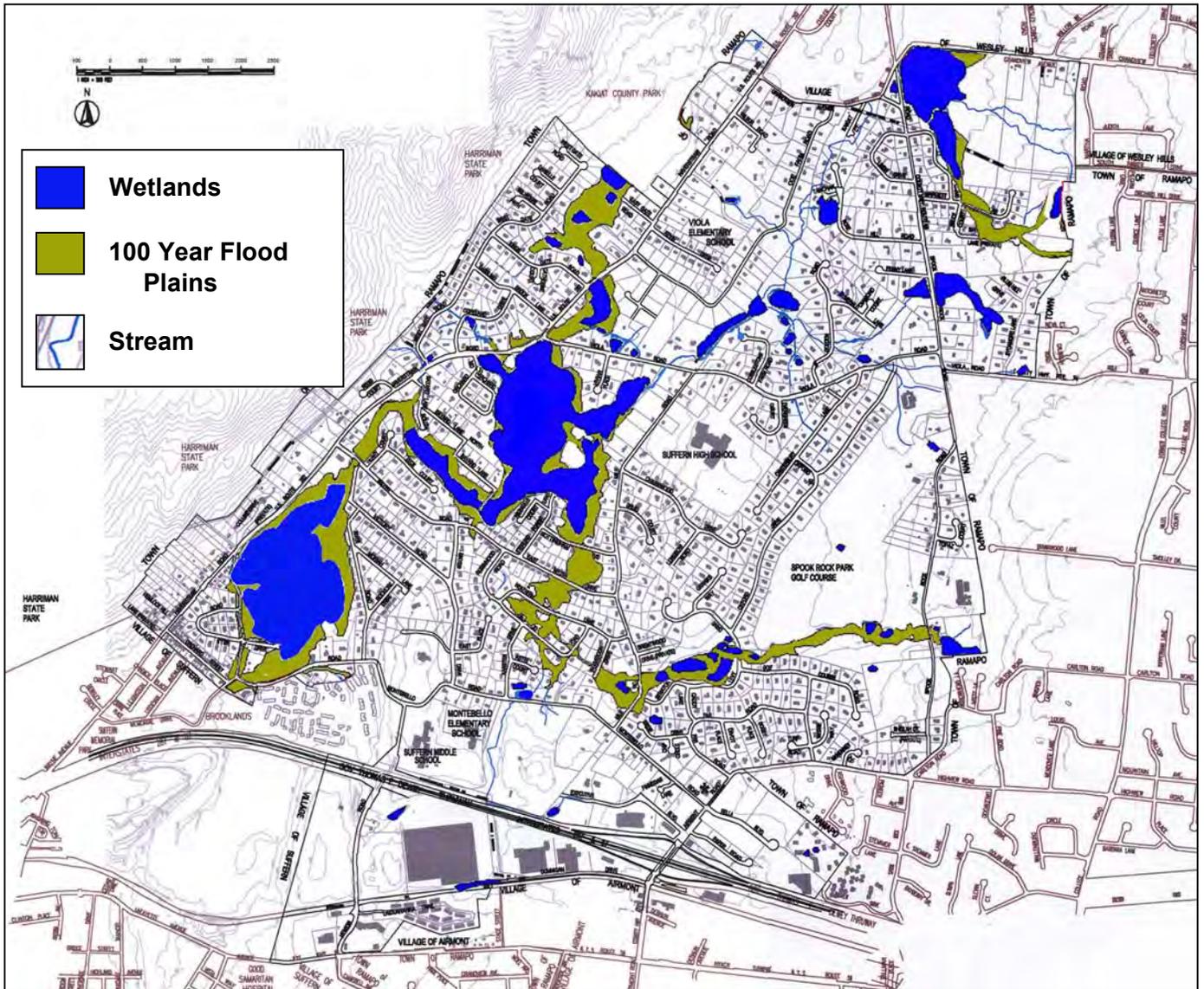


EXISTING LAND USE

MONTEBELLO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Village of Montebello, New York

Background - Environment



There are environmentally sensitive features present throughout the Village that were taken into consideration during the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.

These conditions include: streams and standing water; wetlands and areas of high seasonal water; flood plains; and steep slopes. Analysis of the existing data indicates that there are 223 acres of wetlands and 466 acres of floodplains.

This map combines the locations of the flood plains and wetlands in Montebello. The streams are shown as lighter blue lines. When the three are combined, a continuous network of natural “green” emerges. Protection of this hydrologic network is critical for future health and safety of the Village, but more importantly as continuous natural habitat. The visual and spatial characteristics of this network need to be protected by limiting any building in these areas. To assure protection, the plan recommends that this area become an element of a separate zoning district overlay. Visual access, or viewsheds, from public roadways should be encouraged, thereby enhancing the natural image of the Village. Any future development within this “conservation overlay” will require review to ensure protection of these resources.

Land-Use Plan Element

This section of the Plan document describes the land use areas proposed within the Village. The figure that follows depicts these areas. These land use areas have been formulated based on factors reviewed as part of the analysis of existing conditions, including the location of existing residentially developed areas, existing land use patterns, community facilities and public utilities, major transportation corridors, regional influences, and environmental constraints, particularly wetlands, floodplains, streams, and the forested and mountainous westerly border of the Village.

The recommended Land Use Plan will allow the Village of Montebello to maintain and enhance the existing natural character and traditional Village features. No changes were desired in much of the area currently zoned R-50, R-35, R-25 and R-15, and R-AH. There is a desire to encourage new dwellings to be compatible with existing dwellings in the neighborhoods in which they are to be located in terms of size or scale. In general, the residential land use pattern proposes to concentrate and allow higher densities in areas proximate to Route 59 and the New York State Thruway. As one travels farther north and away from the Route 59 corridor and the proposed Village Center, regional commercial areas, and existing community facilities and services, residential densities decrease.

A number of land use areas encourage conservation and stewardship of land. Review of the green areas on the Land Use Plan illustrate a continuous “green spine” for the Village. This “spine” is created when the environmentally sensitive natural areas, schools and golf courses are combined.

The pages that follow contain descriptions and maps of each of the recommended Land Use areas.

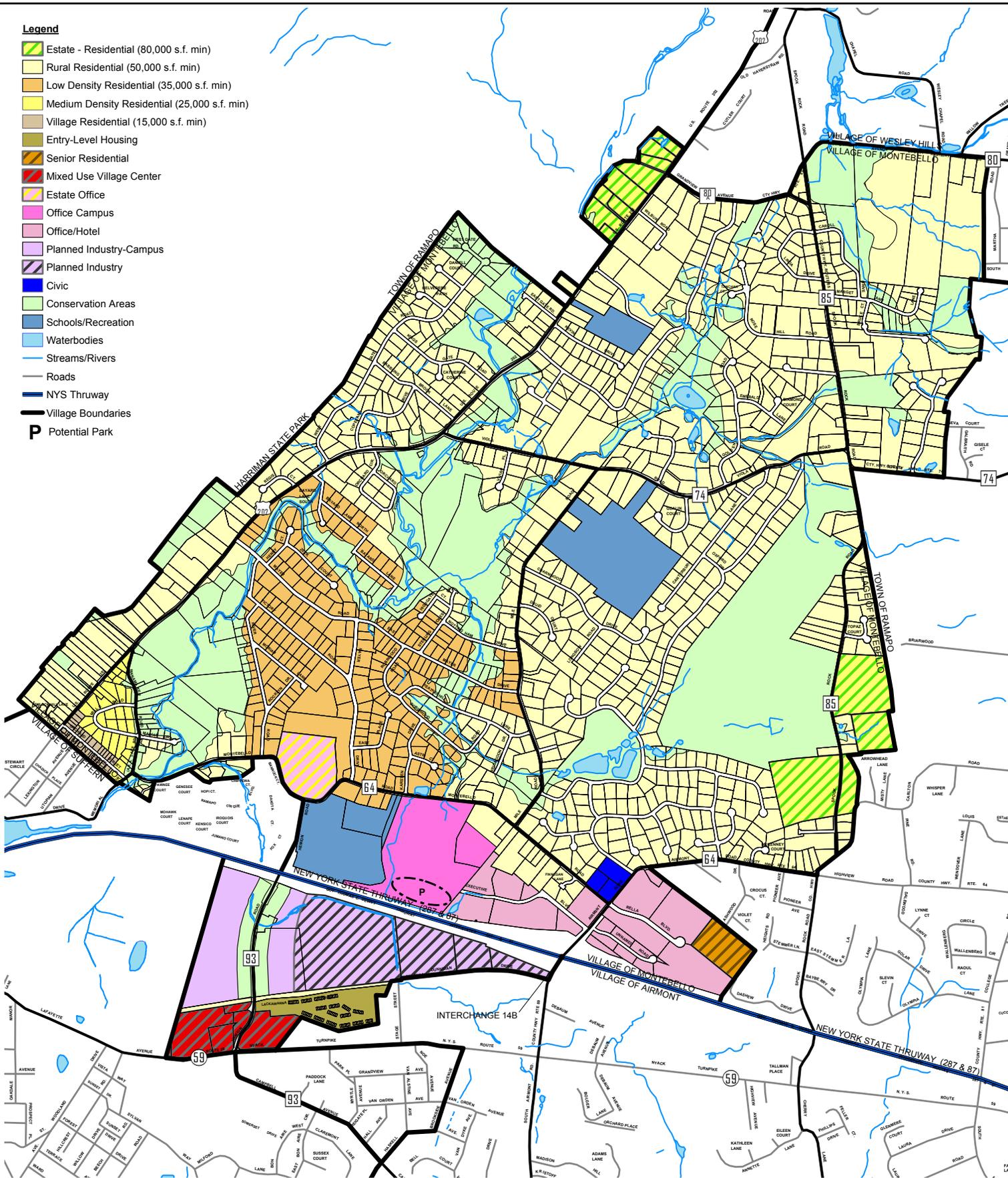
Land Use Map

The recommended Land Use Plan includes the following designations:

- Conservation
- Estate Residential
- Estate – Office
- Rural Residential (50,000 Sq. Ft.)
- Low Density Residential (35,000 Sq. Ft.)
- Medium Density Residential (25,000 Sq. Ft.)
- Village Residential (15,000 Sq. Ft.)
- Entry Level Residential
- Senior Residential
- Village Center
- Office Campus
- Office Hotel
- Planned Industry
- Planned Industry-Campus
- Civic

Legend

-  Estate - Residential (80,000 s.f. min)
-  Rural Residential (50,000 s.f. min)
-  Low Density Residential (35,000 s.f. min)
-  Medium Density Residential (25,000 s.f. min)
-  Village Residential (15,000 s.f. min)
-  Entry-Level Housing
-  Senior Residential
-  Mixed Use Village Center
-  Estate Office
-  Office Campus
-  Office/Hotel
-  Planned Industry-Campus
-  Planned Industry
-  Civic
-  Conservation Areas
-  Schools/Recreation
-  Waterbodies
-  Streams/Rivers
-  Roads
-  NYS Thruway
-  Village Boundaries
-  Potential Park



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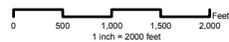
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LOCUS MAP
 Montebello

LAND USE PLAN

MONTEBELLO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Village of Montebello, New York

This area contains open space, important viewsheds, and environmentally sensitive locations in Montebello (contiguous streams, floodplains, and wetland systems). Properties that are included in this land use category are Palisades Interstate Park Commission parkland, village/town parkland, United Water New York well and wellhead protection locations, and school sites. Environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, streams, ponds, floodplains) will be retained in as natural a condition as possible to protect water quality and ecological habitat. The Village also wants to avoid situations that compromise public safety by locating development outside the floodplain. As the Conservation area is intended to be the “continuous green spine” of Montebello, it includes school sites and the golf course.

New development (structures) and disturbances will be discouraged from the flood plains, wetlands or within appropriate setbacks of these natural features. Alterations to existing structures within these areas would be reviewed by the Planning Board to ensure that these alterations are designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes impacts to floodplains, wetlands and streams so as not to create or exacerbate drainage problems. Examples of environmentally sensitive design include allowing existing structures to be extended upward over existing foundations, and decks to be raised above grade on posts.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Army Corps of Engineer (ACOE), and flood plain and floodway regulations also act to regulate and restrict additional development in this land use area. While the Conservation area is not intended to prohibit existing or new development, it does limit the potential for negative environmental impacts.

School sites, golf course and pre-existing single-family residences should be designed and/or uses maintained and operated to minimize impacts, and maximize and maintain the green and natural character of the Conservation area. If at some time the schools no longer serve their purpose, the Village would reconsider what the appropriate uses for those properties should be.

Walking and bike paths are encouraged and can be interwoven in appropriate locations within the Conservation area.



Existing pond



Spook Rock Golf Course

A portion of the Novartis property visible from Hemion Road is included in the Conservation area. The Village wishes to retain the undeveloped vista along Hemion Road and maintain the campus-like setting of the property. The Conservation also applies to property on the east side of Hemion Road for the same purpose, i.e., to maintain a natural appearance along the road.

Estate Residential

Residential dwellings on lots with a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet are recommended for this land use area. The Estate Residential area is intended to protect the natural environment by minimizing disturbance to the land. People who live on these parcels have an implied obligation to be stewards of the land, maintaining the natural character of the site. All development would be based on the holding capacity of the land and would minimize tree removal, impervious coverage, and the altering of existing grades, slopes and natural vegetation.

Estate Residential areas are adjacent to areas classified as "Conservation". The Plan recommends that a minimum 100-foot setback be created along Estate Residential property lines within which the land can be neither disturbed nor graded except for a driveway giving access to the lot. Utility connections would not be permitted within these setbacks.

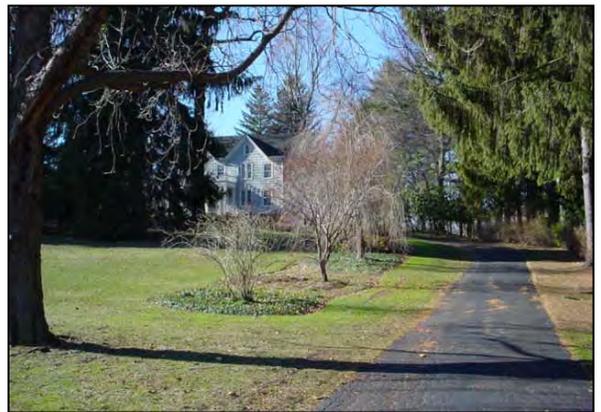
Horse stabling is allowed and encouraged on these large lots.

In addition, for the Fant and Minetto properties, a larger setback is recommended, along with protection of the existing farmhouse structures on the properties which are reminiscent of the Village's rural and agricultural heritage. In order to preserve the character of these two properties, the Village intends to allow the properties to be developed at the same density as is permitted in the Rural Residential land use category. In exchange for the increased density, the scenic vistas and farmhouses must be preserved.

If the owners opt not to make use of the incentive, the Plan recommends that the Village use its average density provisions to require that new residential dwellings be situated outside the scenic vistas described in more detail on the proceeding page.



Example of how good land stewardship preserves areas in natural state.



Existing large lot with large setback and narrow driveway.

Estate Residential – Site Specific Areas

Site Specific Areas

Two properties, the Fant and Minetto Farm properties, straddle Spook Rock Road and have been identified as collectively representing a “special area that epitomizes the rural character of the village”. These properties are also located within a major visual gateway to the interior of the Village. The Plan recommends that these sites be developed in accordance with a specific development plan to be formulated at the time a development application is submitted.

The Plan envisions establishment of a “Rural Preservation Overlay (RPO)” zone that would be applied to the properties. It would be an “incentive zone” to preserve the Spook Rock frontage in open space, as well as preserve the existing homesteads, barns and stone walls. The “incentive density” would be 1 dwelling/50,000 square feet. Procedurally, a conventional subdivision at R-50 density would be prepared to determine yield, subtracting lot area for environmental constraints, and necessary lot area for the two existing farm home sites which must be preserved. The residential yield would be clustered on portions of the site outside the scenic vistas. On the Fant property, the east side frontage on Spook Rock Road would be preserved in its entirety. On the west side, a 300-foot deep frontage would be preserved, to include the barn and primary residence. This distance is in the approximate location of an existing stone wall. On the Minetto property, approximately 200 feet of frontage on the east side of Spook Rock Road would be preserved.

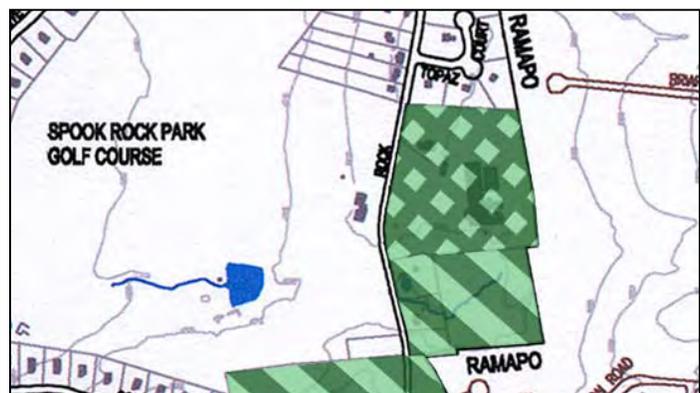
Proposed dwellings may be clustered in the “back portions” of the properties outside the vistas. It is recommended that the owners of the Fant property consider negotiating a future road right-of-way over the Minetto property to obtain access to a portion of the Fant property located to the rear of several residential lots on the east side of Spook Rock Road to reduce future density on the west side of the Fant property. For the clustered homes, it is recommended that they be developed at the R-25 single family detached requirements, or be developed as townhome units. No more than 4 units per building should be allowed. Deed restrictions would be placed on the portions of the property located within the scenic vistas to protect them.

New structures would be required to blend with the existing architecture of the property. A viewshed analysis would be conducted to ensure that the vista is not adversely impacted. A restrictive covenant should be placed on the Fant and Minetto farmsteads and barns so that the buildings are preserved.



Spook Rock Road – Fant property.

The barns could be used as a community center for the new residential enclave or remain as accessory structures, and the Fant homestead would be used as a single family residence. The easterly side of the Fant property visible from Spook Rock Road could be donated to the Village, released to a land trust, or put in the ownership of a homeowners association. Deed restrictions would be required to ensure no additional development occurs within the scenic viewsheds that are being preserved. It is recommended that the future development of the Minetto property attempt to incorporate some of the stables into the design and for use by residents of the residential enclave constructed there.



The Minetto Farm and neighboring stables can sustain a wide variety of options for development.

The Estate – Office (EO) area is intended to accommodate offices on an existing estate (Montebello Park) while protecting the natural and architectural character of the area by mirroring the existing setbacks, landscaping, architecture and site design. Future office development should enhance but not replicate the existing estate structure.

As an alternative to nonresidential development, the Plan proposes to allow single-family attached dwellings in order to least disturb the wooded quality of the parcel, screen them from any adjoining residential uses, protect views of the existing historic mansion and protect the mansion itself. Carriage houses on either side of the main entrance would be possible, provided the dwellings complement the architectural style and materials of the mansion. Carriage homes would provide a developer/builder with the flexibility to develop the site while retaining the natural resources and quality of the built environment. In addition, single-family attached uses, in the form of carriage homes, are consistent with adjoining land uses in the Village of Suffern.

The following is recommended:

- If the mansion is preserved, the Village would permit the development of single-family attached carriage-style homes on the property. It would also allow conversion of the existing mansion to dwellings, provided the building's façade is not altered.
- A minimum 75-foot vegetative buffer around the perimeter of the property along Montebello Road and adjoining residences would be preserved.
- A minimum 75-foot vegetative buffer from the either side of the edge of pavement along the main driveway leading to the mansion would be preserved.
- Two building areas would be permitted on either side of the driveway.
- No more than 24 dwellings would be permitted, split roughly between the two building areas.
- No more than four units would be permitted per building, and buildings would be spaced a minimum distance equal to the height of the buildings.
- A maximum floor area ratio of 0.2 would be permitted. A maximum development coverage of 35 percent is recommended.
- The mansion may be converted to condominium units, at a density of 1 dwelling/1,500 square feet gross floor area. Minimum dwelling unit size would be 1,200 square feet.



Existing mansion converted to offices



Detail of landscaping

Rural Residential Areas

The Rural Residential land use area encompasses existing low-density residential areas that have been developed with minimum lot sizes of 50,000 square feet. Many of the older homes in this land use area (constructed in the 1980s and earlier) have a more “organic” relationship to the land. This relationship includes: trees and rocks retained, homes not parallel to the street, varying setbacks, and the materials, colors and features of the homes selected to accentuate the natural environment.

This land use area generally coincides with areas currently zoned “R-50” except for those R-50 areas constrained by environmental features that are proposed to be located in the Conservation land use area.

In the Rural Residential Land Use Area, it is important that the “green/natural” signature of Montebello be maintained. It is essential that all existing trees be preserved. A minimum of twenty (20) existing or newly planted lawn trees (3 inch caliper or larger) should be required on each new acre lot. These lawn trees should be in addition to any required street trees. Greater variety should be required in the setback and building angle to the street and a palette of natural colors and materials should be recommended. Streets providing access to new development should be kept narrow up to a 27-foot maximum paved width. The stone walls found throughout the Village are highly recommended along the front property lines within this district.

This recommended district remains consistent with the existing RR-50 Rural Residential Zone except for those environmentally sensitive areas that have been designated as Conservation or Estate Residential areas.



This house enhances its site and surrounding area with its arrangement of materials, colors and architectural elements that blend with and retain the natural environment. The Plan encourages this type of residential site design.



This house, called a ‘Mc Mansion” because of its mass manufactured design and construction, imposes itself on the site, as opposed to being organically planned and designed for the site – this should be avoided.

Low Density Residential Areas

This area is intended to permit single-family detached dwellings on lots with a minimum lot area of 35,000 square feet. This area generally coincides with areas currently zoned "R-35" except for those areas that have been allocated to the Conservation land use area.

The Low Density Residential area is primarily built out. The Plan recommends that design standards be created to guide housing size, form and character. This is particularly important where older, smaller houses will be acquired for "scrape off" or "pop up." ("Scrape Off" and "Pop Up" are in reference to the recent and developing practice of purchasing properties to demolish or enlarge an existing structure and build a larger structure in its place.) As contemporary real estate has it, larger houses end up dominating the smaller homes original to the neighborhoods. This should be avoided, however, and can be, with the continued implementation of appropriate design standards, building heights, yard setbacks and floor area ratio^[1] guidelines. Floor area ratios should be evaluated and revised if necessary to protect the nature and character of the Village, and should be reviewed by the Village Board as part of the update of the zoning code, with support from the Village's technical advisors, considering the newly published state building code regulations. Suburban residential street frontage design standards should include specific nature-based design elements such as rock walls, organic clusters of trees in natural areas, and linear rows of trees. These could be made requirements of the issuance of variances or other approvals.

[1] The floor area ratio (FAR) is the quotient of a building's gross floor area divided by the minimum lot area of the property on which it is situated. For example, a FAR of 1.0 would permit a 10,000 square foot building on a property with a lot area of 10,000 square feet.



A typical residential street located in the Low Density Residential areas.

Medium Density Residential Areas

The Medium Density Residential Land Use Area coincides generally with areas currently zoned "R-25" (25,000 square foot minimum lot size). This district is located in a triangle bounded by Route 202, the boundary line of the Village of Suffern, and Lake Road. The Medium Density Residential area is primarily built out.

Like the Low Density Residential area, similar design standards should be implemented to guide current and future housing size, form and character.

Village Residential Area

The Village Residential Land Use Area encompasses existing single-family detached dwellings on narrow lots that are representative of older quintessential village-scale housing. The Village Residential area is proposed to be expanded to include the south side of Orchard Street to match the fabric on the north side of the street. Good planning practice suggests that land use boundaries should not be located in the middle of streets in order for the streetscape to have similar characteristics throughout. The Plan recommends that this area be improved by additional streetscape elements on both sides of Orchard Street, including sidewalks, street trees and front fences.



Existing R-15 Housing with sidewalks and fencing added.

Entry Level Residential Area

The Entry Level Residential Land Use Area encompasses the existing Indian Rock Village development located on the east side of Hemion Road, just north of the Indian Rock Shopping Center. Care should be taken to integrate pedestrian and bicycle linkages between this neighborhood and the shopping center to the south.



Existing entry level housing located in the Village of Montebello.

Senior Residential Area

The Senior Residential Land Use Area is an existing site devoted specifically to senior housing and is currently zoned "RSH".

The Plan supports an interconnection between Montebello Commons, the senior residential development, and Rella Boulevard. This connection would afford seniors with more direct access to other parts of the Village, including senior activities conducted at Village Hall. The Plan recommends that a pedestrian and vehicular connection be created. The connection should be negotiated between the property owners involved. It is preferable that the vehicular connection be gated or otherwise controlled in order to avoid the creation of a through road linking Rella Boulevard with Dashew Drive.



Existing Senior Citizens Housing found in the Residential Senior Housing District.

A Village Center is proposed to be located along Route 59, proceeding westerly from its northwest corner with Hemion Road, across from the Indian Rock shopping center. This center builds on, and around, an existing strip mall that has been converted partially to a daycare facility. In the long-term, this center could ultimately be developed with a mix of retail, offices, and small lot detached dwellings, single-family attached dwellings, a limited number of multifamily dwellings, and possibly museums, art galleries and other cultural facilities. Over time, it is hoped that the Village Center will evolve into a gathering place for the Village. In the long-term, the Village desires that the Indian Rock Shopping Center would also evolve into a more traditional pedestrian-oriented center and it is therefore included in this land use category. However, this Plan's focus is first to encourage the redevelopment of that portion of the Village Center located on the west side of Hemion Road.

By adding a broader range of housing in close proximity to existing commercial centers, and enhancing the overall area to establish more connectivity between the various land uses, a compact, walkable village center may evolve. The Plan recommends that the housing be diverse, with a percentage of the units prioritized for existing Montebello residents and family members including empty nesters, volunteers with ambulance and fire protection agencies serving the Village, and others who serve the Village who may be seeking moderately priced housing.



Examples of the scale and character of buildings intended for the Village Center. In general, the Village desires to improve the current aesthetic quality of all the shopping centers in Montebello to make them consistent with this image.

The Village Center on the westerly side of Hemion Road consists of four separate parcels which should be regulated based on their intended future use within the context of establishing a mixed use village center. They are:

- A Liberty Park - 11.2 acres
- B Ramapo Center (Kindercare)-3.3 acres
- C Vacant Property - 1.6 acres
- D Medical Office Building - 1.1 acres

The Liberty Park property should be developed with two access points: one on Hemion Road, and the other on Route 59. A connection should also be made to Ramapo Center along the driveway situated in front of the strip commercial building. The Plan recommends a "Village Center" zone which would establish bulk standards and uses for the individual parcels that make up the Village Center.

Parcel A (Liberty Rock): Recommendations for this parcel are as follows:

- A residential density of 5 units per acre. An additional 1 unit per acre is permitted, provided the additional housing is set-aside for moderate income households.
- It is recommended that at least two housing types be developed on this site. At least 30 percent of dwellings should be small lot single-family detached units, at least 30 percent of the dwellings should be single-family attached dwellings on fee simple lots, and a maximum of 20 percent of the dwellings may be multifamily units in condominium ownership.
- Single family detached dwellings should be on lots no less than 7,500 square feet, excluding environmental constraints. A minimum lot width of 75 feet is encouraged. Minimum side yards of 10/25 total should apply. Garages are to be side-loaded or in the rear yard to avoid a “garage-scape” appearance.
- Single family-attached units should be on 3,000 square foot lots with dimensions of 30 feet by 100 feet. The rear portion of the lot extending 20 feet from the rear lot line may be used for rear driveways giving access to garages to be located to the rear of the attached dwellings.
- Up to two-multifamily buildings may be permitted, and should be designed as attractive focal points on a village green.
- A ½-acre village commons park must be included on the site. The commons should break up the internal through road giving access from Hemion to Route 59 in order to discourage cut-through traffic and slow traffic through the neighborhood.
- The main road should be a village street. Sidewalks will be provided on all streets and connected to Route 59 and Hemion Road.
- The overall site layout and the building architecture must be designed by an architect with demonstrated experience in neo-traditional (New Urbanism) planning. In laying out the site, the design of Parcel A must demonstrate future potential connections to the remaining parcels in the Village Center.
- A 25-foot screened buffer should be provided along Route 59 and Hemion Road. No rear building facades should face to Route 59 or Hemion Road.
- The recommended maximum development coverage is 50 percent; the maximum floor area ratio for the site is 0.35.

Parcel B

The existing Parcel B could theoretically accommodate an additional 26,500 square feet of commercial space, provided sufficient parking can be provided on-site. It is recommended that:

- up to an additional two buildings be permitted on the site, not to exceed a total gross floor area of 15,000 square feet.
 - One building should be aligned against the westerly property line, with a size not to exceed 10,000 square feet on two stories. Directly in front of the structure would be a plaza area for outdoor dining, and a linear park providing a green space in front of the new structure.
 - The sidewalk in front of the existing plaza should be enlarged to provide a 20-foot “platform for outdoor dining.
 - On the corner of Hemion and Route 59, a small building, no more than 5,000 square feet, also preferably two stories, could be provided as an architectural focal point for the corner. Fifty percent of this building to be devoted to cultural-related activities, including art gallery or museum.
 - No rear building facades shall face to Route 59 or Hemion Road. To the maximum extent, all facades that face to any public road or visible from any internal driveway shall be architecturally treated.
- The current westerly stub of the driveway in front of the building should be extended into the Liberty Park property.

Parcel C

Previous proposals have illustrated a new road through this parcel to provide access to the Liberty Park property. The desire is to develop on-site parking for the Ramapo Commons center, however, if developed separately, it should be developed with “PO” zone uses.

Parcel D

The westerly portion of Parcel D is vacant. It is recommended that the Village Center permit PO zoned uses for this property, or alternatively, the vacant portion could be developed for up to, but not to exceed, two-small lot single family detached dwellings at a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet.

Office Campus Area

This area includes the Archdiocese property and another neighboring religious facility. The Plan recommends that the Village obtain a right of first refusal on the property to acquire some or all of the Archdiocese property for Village ownership. If acquired, it would be used for recreational uses, ball fields, picnic groves, stables, a village community club, or similar community uses. The flat portion of the property closest to the NY Thruway has been identified as a potential location for the ball fields.

If the Village cannot acquire the Archdiocese property, the Plan recommends that it be mapped for development as a low-density office campus and that primary access be provided via a connection with Executive Boulevard. Access to the site from Montebello Road should be limited to emergency access. A campus-like, low-density atmosphere must be maintained, comparable to the existing campus-like appearance of Montebello Park. Potential non-residential uses should focus on the adaptive reuse of the existing structure, with limited new construction incorporated into the site. Uses could include: the existing use, conference center, and professional offices. Development of these properties for these types of uses should be done in a manner which limits major grading activities and the clearcutting of trees and vegetation. Any uses that generates truck traffic would not be permitted.

In zoning these properties, the Plan also recommends that the existing uses be permitted to continue.

Office-Hotel Area

The Office-Hotel land use area encompasses several properties on both sides of Airmont Road just north of the Thruway in the vicinity of Interchange 14B. The Plan acknowledges the commercial value of this land adjoining the Thruway interchange and proposes that it be developed for corporate office, research, hotel, and comparable regional commercial development as a means of providing tax ratables not only for the Village but also for the Town of Ramapo. The area includes property along Executive Boulevard and Rella Boulevard. The Plan recommends creating design standards for commercial buildings, landscaping and signage to ensure that the office area maintains a high quality visual character. Most of the existing buildings in this area rated negative in the Visual Preference Survey (VPS). This district requires new design standards and additional landscaping. When these buildings are rehabilitated, the cold, impersonal corporate character of the façade should be modified. The parking lots should be re-landscaped. A recommended standard is one tree for every four parking spaces, and 75% visually impervious edge-screening.

In general, the sign regulations for the Village should be reviewed and updated to reflect the Village's aesthetic preferences for commercial uses in all nonresidential land use areas.

The Plan recommends that the floor area ratio, development coverage, and parking standards be reviewed and amended, as necessary, to encourage an office environment which preserves a greater percentage of "green space", preferably through retention of existing vegetation, into the overall site design.



Existing office building

Planned Industry Area

Planned Industry-Campus Area

Planned Industry

The Planned Industry land use area is an industrial district created specifically for environmentally-friendly industry with emphasis on landscaping and creating a campus-like setting in the future. Montebello has expressed a commitment to protect the environment and encourage industries that will minimize pollution while manufacturing their product.

Because much of this district is currently built-out with the most recent addition being a storage facility, the recommendations must include future additional landscaping of the lots and particularly the edge of the district along the NYS Thruway. The view of the PI district from the Thruway received a negative rating. A Conservation area will extend into the PI area along the east side of Hemion Road to protect its natural woodland character.

Uses recommended for the Planned Industry area are:

- Light Industry.
- Small ancillary public utility buildings only.
- Outdoor and indoor recreation including health and fitness clubs.
- Assembly as long as significant quantities of chemicals are not used
- Wholesaling and warehouses provided that no chemicals are stored on site.

Uses that should be discouraged include:

- Hotels and motels
- Heavy Manufacturing
- Auto sales
- Any use that requires significant storage of chemicals.
- Water towers (Reservoir)

Planned Industry-Campus

The Novartis property is situated on the west side of Hemion Road just south of the New York State Thruway and Old Mill Road, and consists of 36.58 acres. The project site is vacant, except for a southerly secondary driveway that traverses the site to gain access to the main complex located in the Village of Suffern, and a corporate sign near Old Mill Road. The vacant parcel contains remnant stone walls, and a stream that cuts along the northeastern corner of the property.

If developed in the future, the primary objective is to retain the Hemion Road frontage of the Novartis property in its current wooded/landscaped setting. In the vicinity of the existing identification sign, the treeline is setback approximately 240 feet from the Hemion Road right-of-way.



Plantings screening an industrial building.

Unlike the Planned Industry area which has direct access to Interchange 14B and the Thruway via Dunnigan Drive, traffic from the PI-C area would have broader traffic impacts as it would access the 14B interchange using either Montebello Road or Route 59. Also, the Novartis property includes steeply sloping areas. Significant grading and clearing would be required to establish the large flat building footprints for typical Planned Industry type uses.

In order to protect Hemion Road's natural and woodland character, the Plan recommends that the Conservation area extend from the Hemion Road right-of-way approximately 200 feet into the Novartis property, or 50 feet beyond the existing treeline, whichever is greater. Buildings, except small accessory utility buildings, decorative fencing, or similar accessory structures that would not detract from the landscape, could be situated within the Conservation area. Driveways giving access to the site and corporate identification signs would also be permitted.

It is recommended that the Planned Industry-Campus area allow the following types of uses:

- Light industrial uses subj. to performance standards including manufacturing, fabrication, processing, converting, altering, assembling, testing or other handling of products.
- Outdoor recreation facilities
- Indoor commercial recreation facilities
- Utilities and public utility buildings
- Office buildings
- Laboratories, research facilities and corporate parks
- Medical and dental clinics, health service complexes

In order to promote a "green" campus-like environment, development coverage should be limited to 50 percent, and the floor area ratio should not exceed 0.25. Building height should be limited and buildings stepped into the landscape.

The Civic area includes the parcels upon which the municipal offices, Village Pavilion, and the Senior Center are built. The site also has significant open space associated with it. The village offices are located in a converted stone, Adirondack-style mansion with features found on a number of older houses scattered throughout the area, as well as in the Palisades Interstate Park system.



Existing open-air gazebo.



Existing municipal building viewed from Airmont Road.



Open field found behind the municipal building.

The Plan recommends that the four corners of the Montebello/Airmont Road intersection which Village Hall shares with the office-hotel land use area be developed with a unified design to create a “gateway” for the community. This would include construction of additional stone walls, decorative lighting, sidewalks, and preservation of the “pines” that are characteristic of Montebello. In addition, the Village desires to create a more formal entry by exploring the potential construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Montebello Road, North Airmont Road, and Rella Boulevard with a decorative clock tower providing a focal point to this entry.

Natural Resources Element

Montebello's community character is derived in part from the natural resources found within it. The preservation of natural areas provides the Village its sense of openness and "greenness" as well as many other benefits. For example, avoidance of wetland systems limits potential storm water runoff impacts associated with development. Wetlands are a natural "filter" and help absorb pollutants within storm water runoff. Avoidance of steep slopes helps to limit soil erosion and sedimentation in the Village's water bodies and streams, also limiting future drainage problems. The Village seeks to protect its natural resources that help to establish its existing community character and protect the environment.

Physiography and Geology

Montebello's unique form is in part a function of its geology. The Village lies within both the Reading Prong section of the New England physiographic province (known regionally as the Hudson Highlands) characterized by bedrock-controlled uplands and the Triassic Lowlands characterized by small hills and valleys. Most of Montebello is contained within the Triassic Lowlands; the Highlands portion of Montebello is primarily state parkland contained within the Palisades Interstate Park system.

The Ramapo Fault, following the trend of the Mahwah River, separates the Highlands from the Lowlands. Millions of years ago the mountains that form the Highlands in the western portion of the Village were uplifted along this fault zone. Although the Ramapo Fault is not nearly as active or extensive as faults found in other areas of the world, it does represent the source of minor tremors in the area.

Topography and Steep Slopes

Steep ridges and valleys characterize the topography of the western, Highlands, portion of the Village, whereas the eastern, Lowlands, portion of the Village is characterized by rolling terrain with gentle to moderately sloping ridges and valleys. The lowest elevations in the Town of Ramapo are found in the Village surrounding the Mahwah River, with elevations ranging from 200 to 300 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL), whereas the highest elevations and steepest slopes occur in the western, Highlands portion of the Village ranging from 900 to over 1000 feet MSL. Development within the Village is not limited or controlled by significant steep slopes as much of the terrain is rolling. Currently, the Village does not limit or prohibit development from steep slopes.

Groundwater Resources

Groundwater is defined as water in a saturated zone or stratum beneath the surface of the land. This zone is usually made up of unconsolidated deposits, or porous stone permitting the movement of water and allowing it to travel to wells and springs. Groundwater is a source of potable water supply.

Groundwater from the Valley-Fill Aquifer is the source of all of the Villages' potable water via both individual and United Water New York (UWNY) wells. The Valley-Fill aquifer is part the larger Ramapo River Basin sole source aquifer system (SSA) designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA defines the SSA as one that supplies at least 50 percent of the drinking water consumed in the area overlying the aquifer, and where these areas have no alternative drinking water sources.

The Valley-Fill aquifer is classified as an unconfined, surficial aquifer that is located close to the land surface and is highly permeable. A combination of the Valley-Fill aquifer's permeability and its recharge from the Ramapo River result in the potential for contamination. Groundwater protection zones, designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are established to prevent the contamination of ground water and to protect public health.

At this time, there is no formal local protection of the aquifer system from potential pollutants. Since much of the Village is residential, particularly the area located within the aquifer area, any potential threats to the groundwater system would be those introduced from residential uses or from vehicles traveling along the roads crisscrossing the aquifer. Examples of pollutants include pesticides and herbicides used on individual properties, household chemicals that may be discharged outside of the sewer system.

Drainage Basins and Surface Water Resources

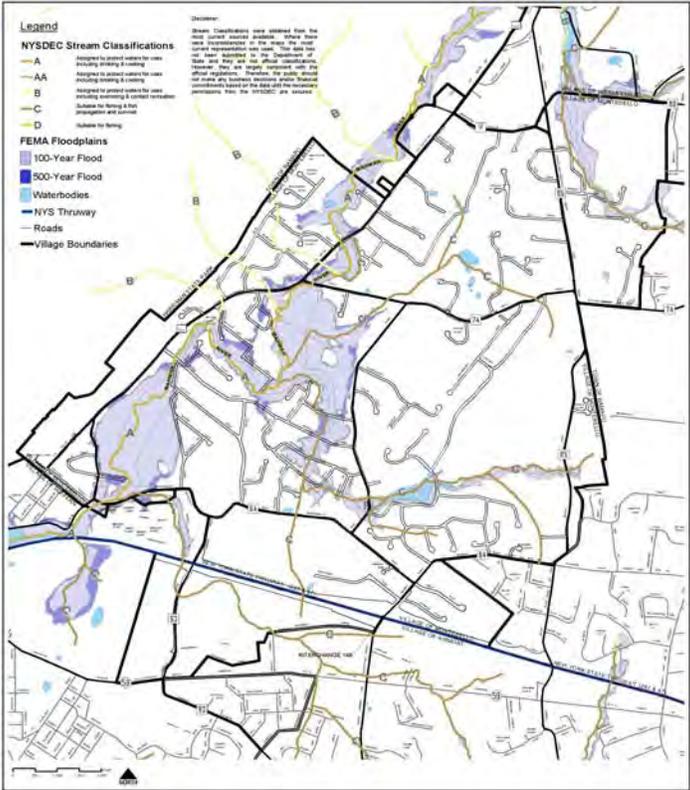
Montebello is drained by a system of intermittent and year-round streams that discharge to the Mahwah River. From there, water enters the Ramapo River and drains to the Passaic River in New Jersey. The Passaic River drains to the lower Hudson River bay.

For purposes of protecting water quality, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) classifies fresh surface waters based on their "best usage". The highest classification, "AA" or "A", are assigned to protect waters for uses including drinking and cooking. Class "B" waters are protected for uses including swimming and other contact recreation, but not for drinking water. The best uses of class "C" are fishing, and fish propagation and survival. Class "D" are suitable for fishing, however, due to natural conditions, such as intermittency of flow, the waters will not support fish propagation. Additionally, fresh surface water classifications may also include the modifier (t) indicating that waters are protected at a level that will support trout populations. The NYSDEC regulates activities to streams that are classified "C" and higher.

Natural Resources



This aerial photograph provides a birds eye view of the Village's built and natural environment.



Surface water features in the Village of Montebello.

Sections of the Mahwah River have been classified as A(t) waters, one of the highest water quality standards. The Village does not currently regulate activities that may affect streams or the aquifer. As mentioned previously, the portion of Montebello located within the aquifer area is almost entirely residential.

Floodplains

A floodplain is defined as the area of land, for a given flood event, adjoining a continuous watercourse which has been covered temporarily by water. Floodplains characteristically provided many beneficial functions, including ground water recharge, water quality maintenance, and flood control. The “100-year floodplain” is the area of land subject to a 1% probability, in any given year, of a certain size flood. Floodplain boundaries are often used in flood mitigation efforts to identify areas prone to significant flooding. However, it should be noted that as a result of development in an area over time, including changes in impervious surfaces, and the contours of the land, boundaries change. The FEMA 100-year floodplains in the Village are located along the Mahwah River and Willow Tree Brook in the northeastern portion of the Village. Several residential neighborhoods have been constructed within the 100-year floodplain that has resulted in drainage and wetness problems for existing residences.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as areas of land that are inundated or saturated by ground or surface water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas and provide many benefits, including water quality protection, flood and erosion control, fish and wildlife habitats, groundwater recharge, and opportunities for recreation and education.

Wetlands within the Village are protected at the State and/or federal level. Five state-regulated wetlands are located wholly or partially within the Village. State wetlands are classified I, II, III, or IV depending upon the prevalence of one or more of 43 defined characteristics. While all wetlands have value, Class I and II wetlands are considered more valuable than Class III and IV wetlands. SL-4, a Class I wetland, is the location of several United Water New York wells. TH23 is also the location of a United Water New York well.

As a well has been developed here, the Plan recommends that the Village request the NYSDEC to upgrade the wetland classification from II to I. TH-21 should be examined to determine whether there is any hydraulic connection between the wellfield on the west side of Spook Rock Road; if so, redesignation of the wetland to a Class I may be appropriate. TH-22 and PR-4 are designated Class II wetlands.

The potential impacts to wetlands are reviewed for those properties that are subject to site or subdivision review. However, some concern exists as to what happens after a development is completed, and individual owners own and maintain the land upon which wetlands are situated. Concern exists that individual property owners may unknowingly alter, drain or fill in portions or all of wetlands thereby impacting the quality of environment. These potential impacts are more difficult to monitor.

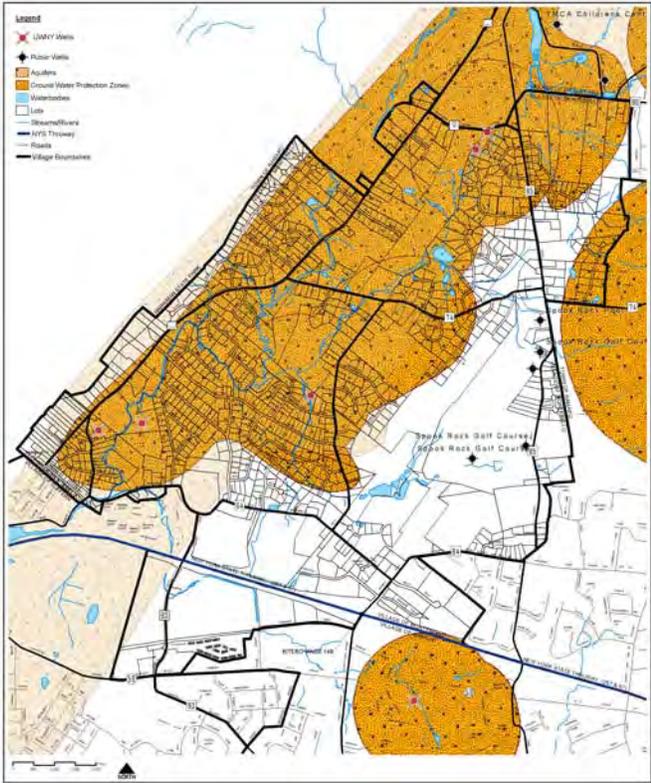
Soils

Soils are a dynamic natural resource that consists of a physical matrix containing mineral particles and organic matter, which provide a chemical environment and biological setting for the exchange of water, nutrients, air and heat. Detailed descriptions of the soil series and soil map units are available in the 1990 Rockland County Soil Survey, prepared by the Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service – NRCS). Of the 33 soil types in the Village of Montebello the most prevalent are the Wethersfield gravelly silt loams (WeC and WeB), comprising more than 30 percent of the Village. Wetness and slope are the main limitations to building development.

A hydric soil is a soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part of the soil. Hydric soils are key factors in determining the location of wetland areas. The hydric soils found within the Village are: Adrian Muck (Aa), Alden silt loam (Ad), Carlisle Muck (Ca), Fluvaquent and Medisaprists, Fredon loam (Fr), Palms muck (Pa), Rippowam sandy loam (Ra), Sloan silt loam (Sa).

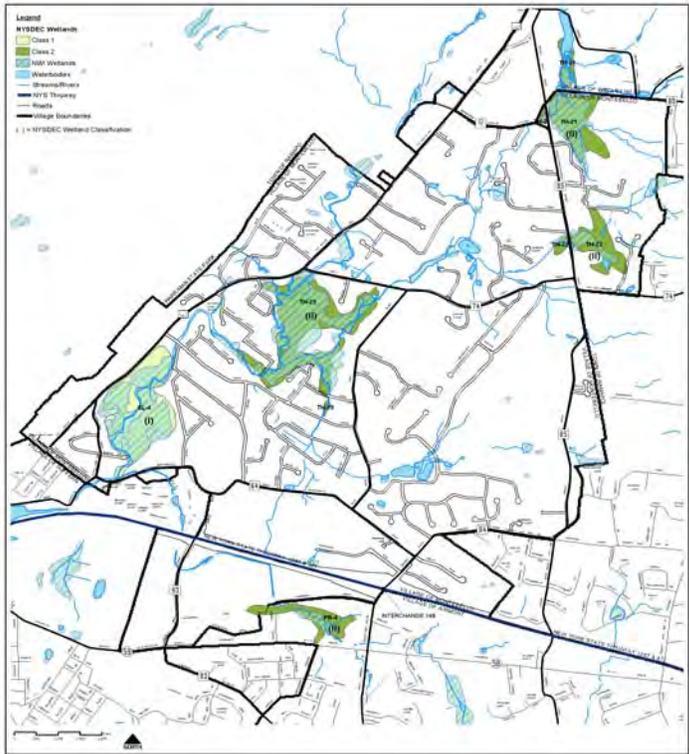
The Village requires soil erosion and sediment control plans as part of site and subdivision applications to ensure that erosion and sedimentation is limited during land clearing and construction activities. However, once a site or subdivision plan is approved, there is no further review of individual building permit applications that might propose significant grade changes which could result in erosion.

Natural Resources



This map illustrates the location of the sole source aquifer within the Village of Montebello.

This map illustrates the location and classification of wetlands within the Village.



Vegetation

The Village of Montebello consists primarily of a patchwork composition of mixed deciduous woodland, except for the continuous forest found within the state park system. The mixed deciduous woodland includes oak, ash and hickory with conifers including hemlocks and spruce mixed among the hardwoods. The principal characteristics of these uplands is that there is not a single dominant tree, but many. A tree survey performed for the Montebello West subdivision is indicative of the general tree species found in Montebello, which include, but are not limited to: ash, locust, maple, basswood, cherry, hickory, poplar, elm, oak, walnut, birch, tulip, spruce, beech. While some species are second growth that have taken over abandoned farm fields and pastures, older mature trees can be found scattered throughout the Village. Many mature tree specimens can be found lining the older historic Village roads. Wetland vegetation is found within the wetlands areas described previously, and along stream and river banks.

In 1998, in an effort to protect the Village's woodland environment, a local law was passed entitled the "Tree Preservation and Landscape Maintenance Law" whose principal purpose was to "preserve an important attribute of the Village, by encouraging owners of existing development lands, and developers of lands, to save or replace as many native and mature tree species as possible when making improvements to real property." Some concern exists that current development trends favor large homes that require more land disturbance and clear cut to accommodate on a lot. In addition, recent residential construction has favored landscaping with large lawn areas which are inconsistent with other older areas of the Village where more woodland has been preserved. Lawn areas are also much more water consumptive.

Significant Species

The presence of rare species in Montebello was discovered through a search of the NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program's database. The NYSDEC has indicated that they cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence or absence of all rare or state-listed species or significant natural communities. This information should not be substituted for on-site surveys that may be required for environment impact assessment. The following species have been identified:

- Timber Rattlesnake, a reptile (State Threatened)
- Sheep Fescue, a vascular plant (State Endangered)
- Northern Pygmy Clubtail, a Dragonfly/Damselfly (Unprotected)
- Gray Petaltail, a Dragonfly/Damselfly (Unprotected – Special Concern)
- Bog Turtle (State endangered/Federal threatened)

The timber rattlesnake would be expected to inhabit the bedrock-controlled topography west of Route 202, particularly within the state park system. However, their roaming range is very large, often covering several miles, therefore, it is possible for them to forage in other parts of Montebello. The bog turtle is suspected of inhabiting wetlands in Montebello, including those located in the vicinity of Grandview Avenue and Spook Rock Road (Rosedale Manor area).

Recommendations

In order to protect the Village's natural resources, the Plan proposes the following:

Adopt a Freshwater Wetlands/Stream Protection Law

Currently, the Village does not regulate alterations, including filling activities, which may occur to wetlands and streams. While NYSDEC and ACOE regulate some activities, there are isolated wetlands and intermittent streams, or streams which as classified "D", which do not receive protection. The Plan recommends that the Village consider adopting a local freshwater wetlands and stream protection law that would protect those resources that are currently not protected by other federal and state agencies. The law would incorporate wetland protection techniques, including mitigation measures such as the construction of dry rock walls or other protective means along wetland boundaries prior to developing a site. Ultimately, the technique selected must ensure adequate recharge to the wetland or stream and protection of their natural function.

Consider adopting a Aquifer Protection Educational Program/Overlay Zone

The Plan recommends that an aquifer protection program be instituted. Property owners should be educated on the location of the aquifer within the community and activities that may be harmful to it. The program could also provide recommendations on alternative landscaping which does not require pesticide or herbicide control, as well as practices to avoid, e.g., outdoor discharge of household chemicals. The Plan suggests that the Village consider an aquifer overlay that would limit the land uses and density of development within the aquifer area. Prior to the establishment of an overlay zone, a study should be made to outline the geographic limits of the aquifer area.

Formalize Stormwater Protection Policies

The Plan recommends that the practice of requiring the submission of drainage analyses be formalized through appropriate references added to the subdivision and site plan regulations. This is to ensure that storm water runoff will not have an adverse impact on water quality, or create flooding problems in the community or downstream. The regulations should also make specific reference to the use of best management practices, such as those promulgated by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Consider adopting Steep Slope Policies

The Plan acknowledges that not all disturbances can be predicted during subdivision plan review. It is recommended that the Village consider creating a mechanism that would allow the Village Engineer, Planning Board, or other appropriate agency to review building permit applications which have the potential to alter the terrain in a manner which could result in soil erosion or sedimentation problems. Building permit applications that propose buildings or structures that would result in significant cut and fill would be reviewed.

Revise Tree Preservation Law

The Plan recommends that the tree preservation law be reviewed and amended, if necessary, based on the practical knowledge and experience gained since its adoption in 1998, to ensure that the Village's woodland character is preserved while the rights of property owners, especially homeowners, are recognized.

- *Review shade tree security;*
- *Consider clear cut limitations;*
- *Consider limitations on maximum disturbance to individual properties;*
- *Explore protection of trees within existing rights-of-way.*

As a general matter, the Plan recommends that educational leaflets or materials be distributed from time to time explaining the benefits of retaining existing woodlands and enhancing existing landscapes to include treed areas, e.g., less maintenance and water consumption compared with lawn areas.

The Plan also recommends that the Village work cooperatively with the County Highway Department and New York State Department of Transportation to ensure that trees are preserved along County and State roads.

Promote ecologically sensitive design standards and guidelines

As a general matter, infrastructure improvements and building designs should always attempt to limit impacts to ecological habitat which supports a diversity of species. For example, wooded wetlands are home to a host of amphibians, including salamanders. Curbs limit the ability of amphibians to move about and within habitats. Bottomless culverts which retain the natural stream bottom are much more environmentally friendly than culverts with concrete bases. These standards help to limit impacts to aquatic habitats. Careful consideration should be given to ecological communities where development is proposed. Where necessary, biological inventories should be conducted to assure that infrastructure and building placement is done in a manner which protects the Village's remaining natural habitats to the maximum extent. Special attention should be given to inventorying ecological species likely to inhabit particular natural habitats in the Village, e.g., the bog turtle.

Encourage clustering within Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The Plan recommends that clustering be used to limit large lot development in areas that are environmentally sensitive without increasing density. Remaining environmentally sensitive areas should be preserved within contiguous open space systems, and should not be "chopped" up among individual wherever possible.

Revise Zoning to Limit Development within Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The Village's current zoning law requires larger minimum lot areas for properties that are constrained by certain features, e.g., floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes, in order to protect these sensitive environmental features. However, the zoning does not limit or prohibit development within these sensitive areas. The Plan recommends that the "environmental constraints" provision of the zoning be revised to limit potential disturbance to the environmentally sensitive features. The Plan also recommends that the zoning code be amended in a manner that provides no credit for sensitive environmental features when determining minimum lot size.

Consider Reducing Development Coverage for Nonresidential Uses

The Village, at the time zone amendments are contemplated, should review and reduce, if necessary, the maximum development coverage limitations currently regulating nonresidential development. Incentives should be considered to encourage developers to use new technologies in the design of a development that will induce groundwater recharge, e.g., the use of permeable surfaces.

Community Facilities Element

Community services and facilities are important components of the Village that enhance its quality of life. The term “community” includes not only those facilities owned by the Village, but also those owned and operated by the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, and other public, quasi-public, and private organizations for the benefit of the Village’s population. The demand for more and varied community facilities and services will increase as the Village’s population increases, existing facilities become outmoded, and public expectations rise. Community needs will also depend on the population being served – for example, senior citizens will require different services than teenagers.

This section addresses emergency services, police protection, educational facilities, library, open space and recreation.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Ambulance and Medical Service

The Ramapo Valley Ambulance Corps (Rt.59 and Airmont Road) serves the Town of Ramapo west of Route 306, including Montebello, Airmont, Monsey, Viola, and Suffern. It is anticipated that the corps will continue to serve the Village.

Good Samaritan Hospital adjoins the Village along its southwesterly border with Suffern. Good Samaritan Hospital is a non-profit facility with 370-beds, and is a major health care provider for Rockland County residents. Hospital services include: emergency, medical, surgical, obstetrical/gynecological and acute care. The hospital also provides specialties including cardiac care and cancer treatment, and serves as a Level II Trauma Center. A level II Trauma Center is a licensed acute care hospital designated by the local EMS. The hospital has the appropriate equipment and supplies to be capable of providing prompt initial evaluation and definitive treatment of all trauma patients, adult and pediatric, that have sustained critical injuries. While not physically located in the Village, use and expansion of the hospital facility has implications for land use planning within the southwestern portion of the Village.

Fire Protection

Two volunteer fire companies in two separate fire districts service the Village of Montebello: Fire District #7, Brewer Fire Engine Company #1, 16 Grove Street, Monsey, NY; and Fire District #20, Tallman Fire Department, 289 Route 59, Tallman NY. Each district has approximately 50 to 60 part-time volunteer fire fighters. The districts have not reported any difficulties in effectively responding to calls. District #20 has a special Ice Rescue Dive Team. Both Districts have three fire trucks.

Police Protection

Police protection in Montebello is provided by the Town of Ramapo Police Department, located at 237 Route 59 in Airmont. The Police Department serves 75,000 residents and its force consists of 115 police officers. Their services include patrol, a detective bureau, a youth bureau, a community response team, records division, community policing, with a community policing substation, a DARE officer and an Honor Guard. The Communications Division handles approximately 50,000 calls for service each year consisting of police, emergency medical service, and general service calls to 90,000 residents in the Town of Ramapo.

The Rockland County Sheriffs Department is involved with county jurisdictional cases. The New York State Police are primarily responsible for patrolling Route 87/287. Although they do have the power to patrol and enforce laws on all roads in New York State they primarily rely on the Ramapo Police Department to handle enforcement in the Village of Montebello.

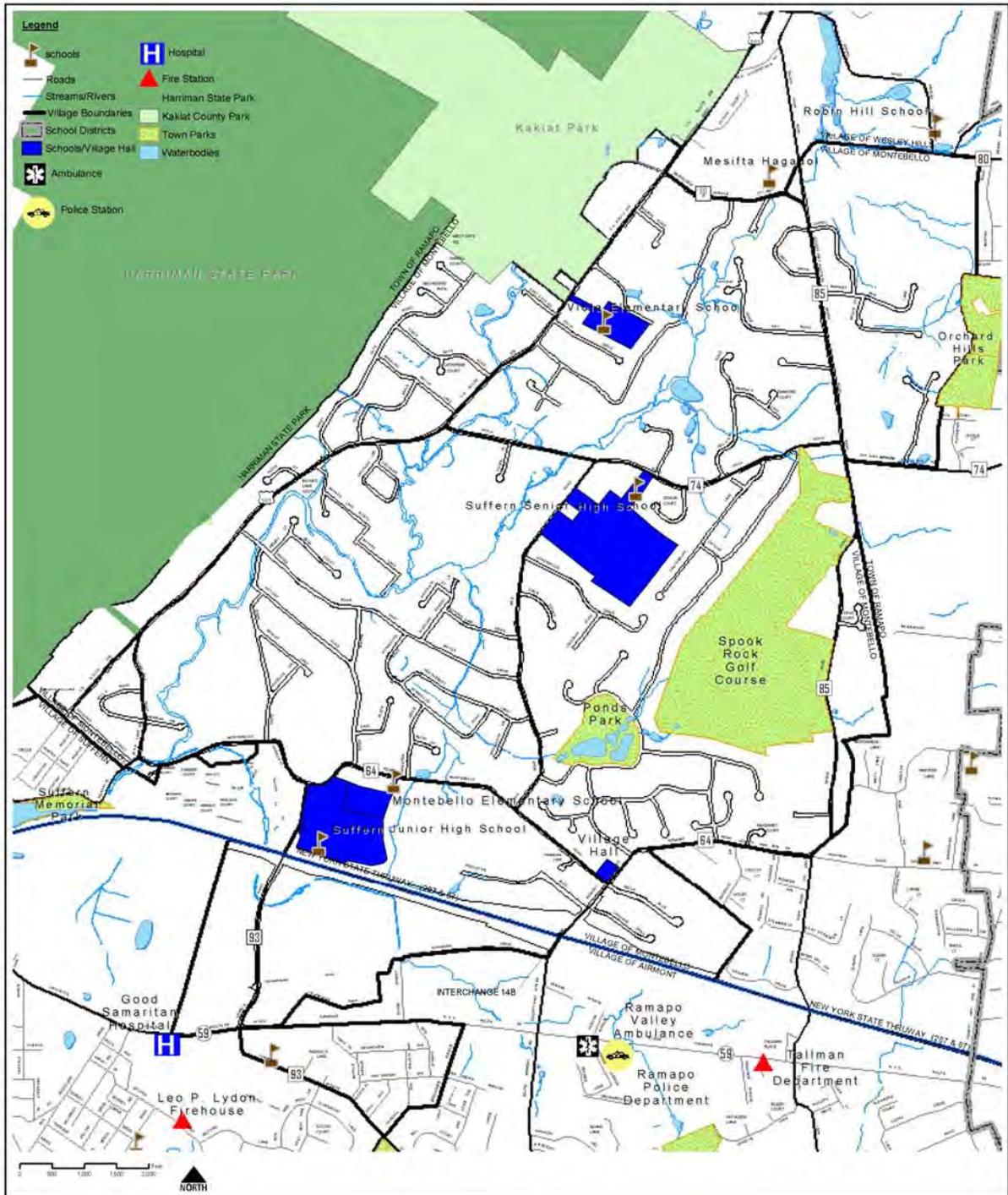
With regard to police protection and enforcement, the Village has expressed concern with the number of vehicular accidents that occur within its borders. In addition, speeding is a perceived problem in the Village.

EDUCATIONAL AND LIBRARY SERVICES

Ramapo Central School District

Public school services, from kindergarten to grade 12, are offered to residents in Montebello by the Ramapo Central School District. The Ramapo Central School District serves all or parts of the Villages of Wesley Hills, Airmont, Hillburn, Montebello, Suffern, Sloatsburg and a small-unincorporated area of the Town of Ramapo. The district’s facilities include five elementary schools, one middle school and one high school serving a total student population of 4,459 students (October 2001). Viola Elementary, Montebello Elementary, Suffern Middle, and Suffern High schools are located in Montebello.

Community Facilities



In response to increasing enrollment trends, the district is currently in the midst of a renovation and building program. To assess future needs, the school district is updating a 1997 demographic study that will project student enrollment for a 5-year time horizon. Commencing in the 2002-2003 school season, the elementary schools will be serving students in grades K through 5, the middle school will enroll students in grades 6 through 8, and the high school will enroll students in grades 9 through 12. The 6th grades in the elementary schools were shifted to the middle school.

Given existing and anticipated increases in enrollment, school district properties within Montebello will continue to function as educational facilities for the foreseeable future. The school district has not expressed any facility expansion plans that necessitate land acquisition within the Village.

Post-Secondary Education

There are no post-secondary educational facilities located in the Village. However, Rockland County Community College property directly adjoins the Village at the southeast corner of Spook Rock Road and Viola Road. As this campus expands, it is possible that secondary effects, particularly traffic, will be experienced in the Village. As the enrollment continues to increase, it is possible that the campus could be expanded in a manner that would have a more direct, noticeable impact on the Village's environs.

Library

The Suffern Free Library, a new facility located in Suffern just west of Montebello on Route 59, serves Village residents as well as other communities in the Ramapo Central School District. The library loans books, music and videos and offers many programs for children. The library is a member of the Ramapo Catskill Library System. While the library is located within walking distance of the southwestern portion of the Village, there is currently no pedestrian connection for children or non-driving members of Montebello's population to access the facility.

GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

Day-to-day governmental services are administered through a combination of Village and Town programs and services. Functions carried out at Montebello Village Hall, located at the northwest corner of the Montebello Road/North Airmont Road intersection, include: local law enactment; building inspection/code enforcement; park planning for Village facilities; site and subdivision plan review; board of appeals; senior citizen programs. Highway maintenance of local roads, tax assessment and billing are services administered by the Town of Ramapo. Ramapo Town Hall is located on Route 59 in Airmont. Town Hall was recently renovated and expanded.

The Town's Highway Department adjoins the Village and is located at the southwestern corner of North Airmont Road and Spook Rock Road. The Village plans to expand the Village Hall complex to include a separate community building that could support a variety of programs.

RECREATION

Recreational facilities and properties are located throughout the Village and are owned and maintained by a number of regional and local agencies. These include:

State Parks

Bear Mountain/Harriman State Park – Harriman State Park borders the Village; a small area of the park is located in Montebello. The state park system is owned and maintained by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC). The park spans over 46,000 acres in both Rockland and Orange counties. Recreational activities permitted in Harriman State Park include:

- Hiking (park trails, Appalachian Trail, Long Trail)
- Picnicking
- Boating
- Camping
- Swimming (several beaches)
- Road Biking

County Parks and Open Space

The 353-acre Kakiat County Park is located in Montebello west of Route 202 in the vicinity of Viola Elementary School. Amenities within the park include fishing along the Mahwah River, guided tours, hiking (the Kakiat Trail starting from the parking area crosses through the park into Harriman State Park ending up in Dater Mountain County Park), horseback riding, picnicking, and scenic viewing. The park supports a number of wildlife and forestry conservation projects. Improvements to hiking trails, picnic areas, and the conservation program are planned. This park became a county park in 1972.

Town Parks and Open Space

Spook Rock Pool and Golf Course, located on Spook Rock Road, is a major Town park facility within Montebello. This 160-acre area houses a golf course, driving range, basketball courts, a swimming pool and restaurant.

Orchard Hill Park is located along the Village's northeast border with the Town of Ramapo. The facility includes new tennis courts, backwall, basketball hoop, softball diamond; there is no direct access to this facility from Montebello. It also has extensive open space.

Ramapo Central School District

The Village of Montebello is home to four of the seven school sites serving children enrolled in the Ramapo Central School District. These facilities have recreational fields and equipment that are available for Village use during non-school hours. These facilities include but are not limited to: tot lot; playground equipment; basketball hoops; softball/baseball fields; tennis courts; track, football, soccer, baseball and softball fields.

Village Parks

Ponds Park located on Senator Levy Drive off of Mile Road in the southeastern portion of the Village is a new addition to the Village's park system; it is currently undeveloped. A portion of the land surrounding Village Hall is utilized or planned to be utilized for park space. Currently, an outdoor pavilion is available for special events and gatherings, and a botanical memorial garden is planned.

While private, the Indian Rock residential neighborhood has two playgrounds for use by children residing here.

Pedestrian access to all recreational facilities is limited as the Village currently does not have a formal pedestrian or bicycle trail system.

COMMUNITY FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

In identifying needs, the Plan is sensitive to the results of the 2002 VPS survey where 75 percent of respondents expressed that it is "important" to "very important" to keep the current tax burden essentially the same. The Village will need to balance the needs of the community with the costs associated with expanded services. Given the Village's current and anticipated population base, it will be important to explore options including partnerships where the cost and maintenance of facilities are shared among other agencies and service providers. The Plan recognizes that the Village is one of many incorporated communities within the larger Town of Ramapo. The Village's population, at 3,688 persons in 2000, represents 3.4 percent of the Town's total population of 108,905 persons. Wherever possible, the Plan recommends that the Village continue, initiate and/or expand relationships with other service providers to share the burden of providing services.

Traffic Enforcement

The Plan recommends that the Village implement a traffic enforcement program. A traffic enforcement officer would be hired to monitor roads within the Village and issue violations for traffic infractions, particularly speeding. The Plan recommends that the Village explore the feasibility establishing a village court to process these and other violations.

Library

The Plan anticipates that the Suffern Library has sufficient capacity to handle the additional demand for service that may be generated by future Village residents. The Plan does recommend that the Village work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Transportation and the Village of Suffern and property owners where necessary to construct a sidewalk or path that links the library with the proposed Village Center. The Plan seeks to connect the library to the larger, proposed trail system.

Recreation

It is an objective of the Comprehensive Plan to create an open space and recreation network that serves to link the neighborhoods throughout the Village and help to enhance the Village's identity. Village residents have been surveyed on several occasions to communicate their recreational preferences. In 1998, a walking/running path was the highest-rated active recreational resource supported by respondents. Passive recreation, e.g., wildlife viewing areas, rated highest among all options. In the most recent 2002 survey, the following responses related to recreational opportunities:

- 80% supported passive recreation.
- 74% supported a community green or common.
- 71% of respondents favored active recreation facilities, like soccer fields, ball fields, including night lighting.

Two objectives have been expressed:

- Acquire and preserve property for passive recreational opportunities, e.g., wildlife viewing areas. Allow only limited disturbance to these areas.
- Acquire and develop property for active recreational facilities, e.g., league fields. Introduce improvements that would allow expanded seasonal and daily use.

The Plan supports both objectives; however, the Village needs to pursue a comprehensive strategy for identifying appropriate locations for passive and active facilities. The Village needs to explore resident preferences in greater detail and identify locations for recreational facilities. This Plan outlines a strategy for defining these needs.

Prepare Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Study

The Plan proposes that a comprehensive recreational study be initiated and completed within six months of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Parks Commission would oversee preparation of the study. The recreational study should include:

•**Comprehensive Inventory of Existing Recreational Facilities/Properties:** This survey would include a comprehensive examination of all recreational facilities located in the Village, the Town of Ramapo, adjoining municipalities, and Ramapo Central School District school sites. All facilities should be assessed in terms of the quality and age of equipment/playing surfaces.

•**Comprehensive Survey of Village resident needs:** The study must identify the recreational activities supported by Village citizens. The survey should be administered Village-wide, and it should represent a representative sample and cross-section of the population. The Village should seek input from leagues and other recreational organizations in which Village residents participate and explore the needs of these organizations.

Once the Village's preferences are identified, the Village should identify the recreational activities that could be supported at the Village level and which activities should be supported at a Town or regional (e.g., County or shared municipal) level. For example, a tot lot is commonly supported by the smaller population of a neighborhood, while a golf course is typically supported by a larger population (50,000 persons).

The study must identify the activities that could be located within or supported by the Village. This will depend on two factors: the locational requirements of the recreational activity, and its operational characteristics. Locational requirements include the minimum lot area; operational requirements include play duration, e.g., daytime or nighttime, seasonal or year-round use. For example, while a property may meet minimum acreage requirements to support a softball field, the character of land uses around the property may not support nighttime usage. Lastly, the Village must assess whether the Village can reasonably operate and maintain the facility, or whether a facility is more appropriately supported at a Town or multi-municipal level.

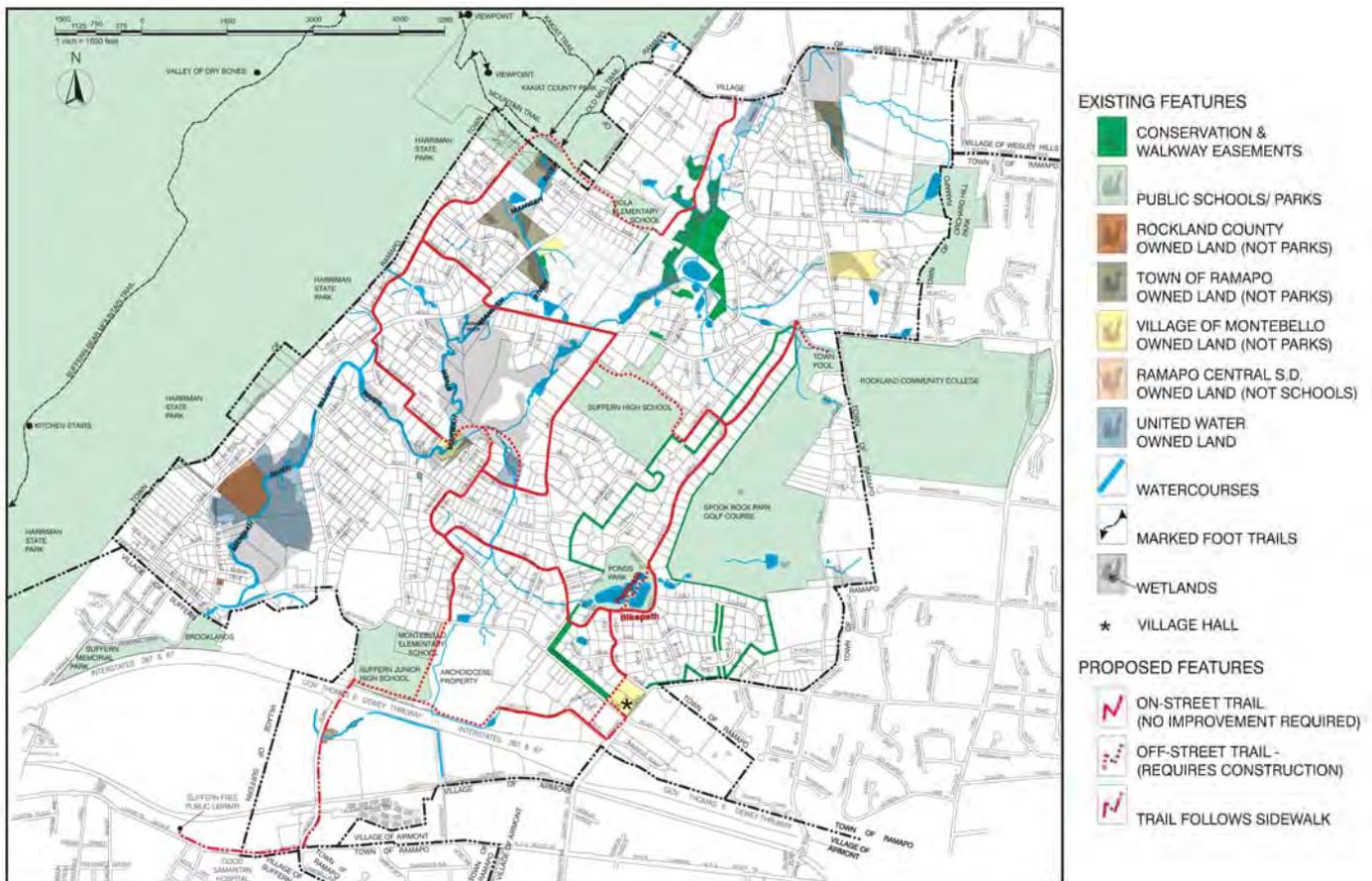
Identify Potential Park/Recreation Locations

During preparation of the land use plan, potential locations for passive or active recreational facilities were identified. The study should examine these properties for their ability to support specific recreational facilities based on the operational characteristics and locational requirements of the proposed activity.

Potential locations for passive and/or active recreation include:

- Thruway Property** – Miscellaneous vacant parcels in the vicinity of the New York State Thruway.
- Archdiocese Property** – The Plan supports acquiring a “right-of-first refusal” on this property. The property is currently not on the assessment roll, and does not provide any real property tax benefit to the municipality. If acquired in whole or in part, the property would meet several potential objectives – the “fields” adjoining the Thruway could support active recreation fields, and the bulk of the property could be used for passive uses, including nature walks. Lastly, the existing residence could be reused for a cultural/community center.
- Existing Spook Rock Golf Course/Swim Pool** – This property may be able to support limited recreational activities, e.g., a tot lot. The parking area appears to be underutilized and could be reclaimed for additional recreational uses.
- New corporate developments.**
- School sites.** Joint use of existing fields or new facilities at various schools located in Montebello by way of agreements with the Ramapo Central School District.
- Rockland Community College Property.** – A portion of the undeveloped RCC property directly adjacent to and across from the swimming pool could be used for recreational purposes.
- “Stables” site** – The Plan proposes to retain specifically the horse stables on-site, if possible.
- Village Center site** – If developed, the Village Center will include a community green or small pocket park which could support recreational uses.
- Orchard Hill Park** – Orchard Hill Park is an underutilized park located partially within the Village of Montebello. Potential passive and active uses that could be supported by this property should be explored.
- United Water New York/wetland properties** – Associated with the Mahwah River is a system of wetlands and natural areas that could be used for passive recreation. Properties associated with this wetland system are owned by United Water New York, the Town and Village, with several properties in private ownership.
- New residential subdivisions.**

Community Facilities



Montebello Trail System

The Montebello Trail system is intended to provide a cohesive and comprehensive system of walking/bike paths that would link Montebello's schools, parks, and neighborhoods. The 2002 survey found that 90 percent of respondents favored bike/walk trails, particularly those connecting schools, recreation and existing subdivisions. The trail would be **implemented incrementally, with priority given to those areas that do not require extensive capital improvements at this time**. The trail could be established initially with the erection of small signs with a "walker" or "cyclist" silhouette identifying the route. Where the route crosses a street, an arrow would be added to the sign to indicate the change in routing. Crosswalks would be signed or textured pavement used to provide a visual cue to motorists.

The trail follows short segments of Viola and Mile Roads. Due to the higher traffic volumes experienced on these segments, special design attention is required. Here, the design must be sensitive to adjoining residences and "fit" into the Village's rural setting. The trail mostly follows existing roads within residential subdivisions.

The trail is intended to link the following destinations. Except for the Suffern Library, all locations are in the Village:

- Village Hall
- Ponds Park
- Town swimming pool
- Suffern High School
- Viola Elementary School
- Kakiat Park
- Montebello Elementary/Suffern Middle School
- Suffern Public Library

Optional extensions of the proposed trail include:

- A walking loop within Spook Rock golf course
- A connection to Orchard Hills Park

Historic and Aesthetic Resources Element

The Village of Montebello is dotted with older, historic homes, buildings and landscapes reminiscent of its agricultural heritage. The historic homes, outbuildings, stone walls, and other features provide the community with its own unique character and sense of place. While there is an awareness that these structures contribute to the historic character of the village, town and county, no structures have been formally designated "historic".

According to the results of a questionnaire administered to Village residents, **65 percent of respondents believe that certain areas or locations in Montebello should be considered for historic designation (another 20 percent stated "maybe").**

This element provides a brief narrative of the Village of Montebello's history, followed by recommendations for the preservation of the Village's historic features.

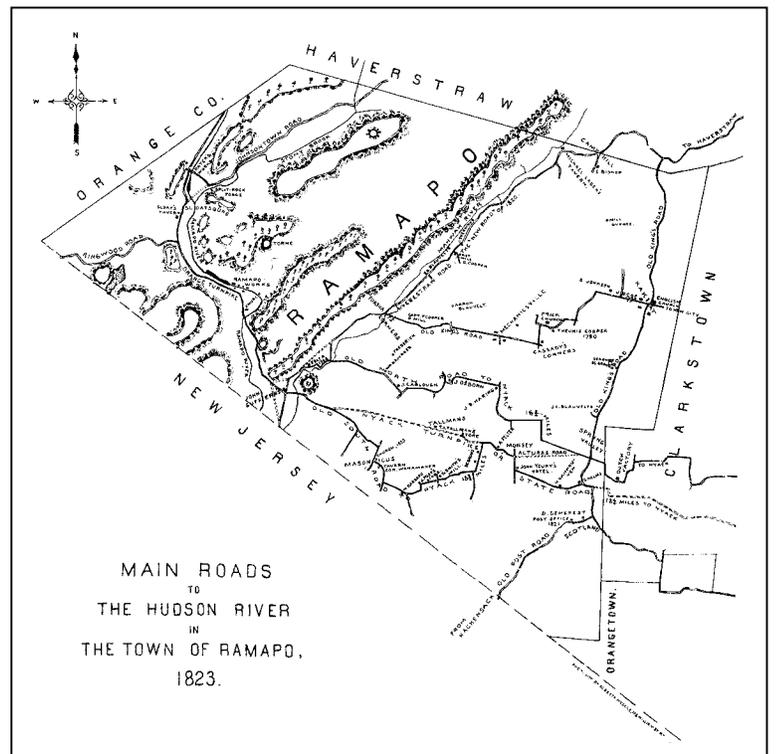
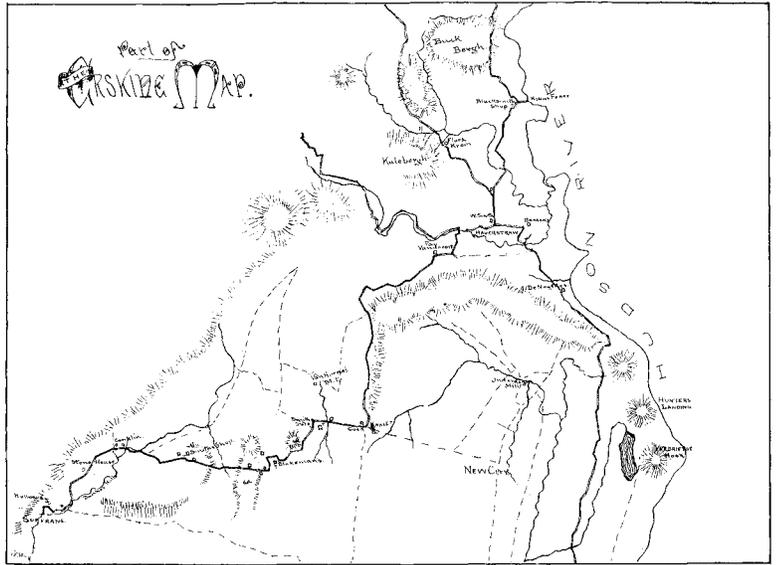
General History^[1]

The Village of Montebello is an incorporated village within the Town of Ramapo. Ramapo was known by the Native American name as "Kakiat", but was given the official name "New Hempstead" in 1791. In 1827, to avoid confusion with the town of "Hempstead" on Long Island, the Legislature renamed the town "Ramapo".

The area now known as Montebello began as a pre-revolutionary farming community just north of the Village of Suffern. Neighboring Suffern was the location known as the "Point of the Mountain" and was an origination point for pre-revolutionary or colonial roads destined to regions throughout the original thirteen colonies. Early inland settlements depended on this road network to transport goods to ports along the Hudson River. The combination of fertile land and road network encouraged early inhabitants to choose this area as a place to settle. Pre-revolutionary settlements thrived in this area before and after the war. Some of the early inhabitants played prominent roles in the founding of our country and in the civil war, including Aaron Burr, who had property in Montebello at one time where he built a cabin. (The cabin no longer exists.)

An early map of the County prepared by Robert Erskine, a Surveyor General for the Continental Congress, illustrated a pre-revolutionary road following the alignment of lower Route 202 (Haverstraw Road) and Viola Road. Viola Road is one of the oldest roads in the County.

^[1] General History excerpted from the Town of Ramapo Plan Report, dated 1930, prepared by Earnest P. Goodrich and Wayne D. Heydecker, page 16.



As early as 1794, the importance of these roads were recognized and the state legislature enacted laws to straighten and extend several routes in the area. Haverstraw Road (State Route 202) was a regionally important route for transporting bricks from Haverstraw to Suffern and cordwood from the Haverstraw Mountains (present day Harriman State Park) to Haverstraw. The road was built upon sections of pre-revolutionary roads and was originally chartered in 1814. However, the road was built piecemeal over the next few years. Obstacles, such as swamps and bypasses, made the road difficult to complete.

Other locally important roads follow the same path as their pre-Revolutionary alignment. Present day Viola Road was known as Old Kings Road and was a main east-west alternative until Nyack Turnpike was constructed (which follows the approximate route of present day Route 59).

The intersection of Viola Road (Old Kings Road) and Route 202 (Haverstraw Road) was known as "Forshay's Corners", the location of an early polling place in Ramapo, and home to a distillery and several homes owned by the Forshay and Conklin families in 1823. Just east of the intersection on the north side of Viola Road was the grist and saw mill of Abbot Copper, built in 1808. The Sherwood, Hopper and Coe families would also have a presence here.

Viola Road was a main thoroughfare of the farming community located in and around the Montebello area, which traded goods and services in the former hamlet of Mechanicsville, which was renamed Viola in 1882. Mechanicsville, or Viola, was centered in and around the intersection of present day Viola Road and Maple Avenue, with homes and business extending west and east along the road. The Viola hamlet was still active in 1930, but described in the Town of Ramapo Plan Report as a "place of no great significance except that it is the area of the County Poor Farm and a center for the community of farmers surrounding it."

Farther north of Forshay's Corner was an early settlement known as "Sherwoodville" which was centered in present day Wesley Hills, but which extended southward to include the northernmost points of present day Montebello. Immediately west of the Route 202 intersection with Grandview Avenue, a foundry and mills were situated along the Mahwah River.

Present day Montebello Road was known as Old North Road during the Pre-revolutionary era, and was renamed after the Ryan summer home and grounds, which Mr. Ryan referred to as "Montebello Park." Portions of the former Old North Road include present day Memorial Road, which turned south toward Suffern. Present day Lake Road was the only road that connected Suffern to the Haverstraw Road and Kings Highway (present day Viola Road). Although some of these roads may not today have great historic significance because of the changes that have occurred, these roads are more likely to have older homes that would be historically or architecturally significant. The significance of the homes in this area would be linked to their association with early prominent homesteaders, or because the building represents an excellent example of a particular type of dwelling for its era.

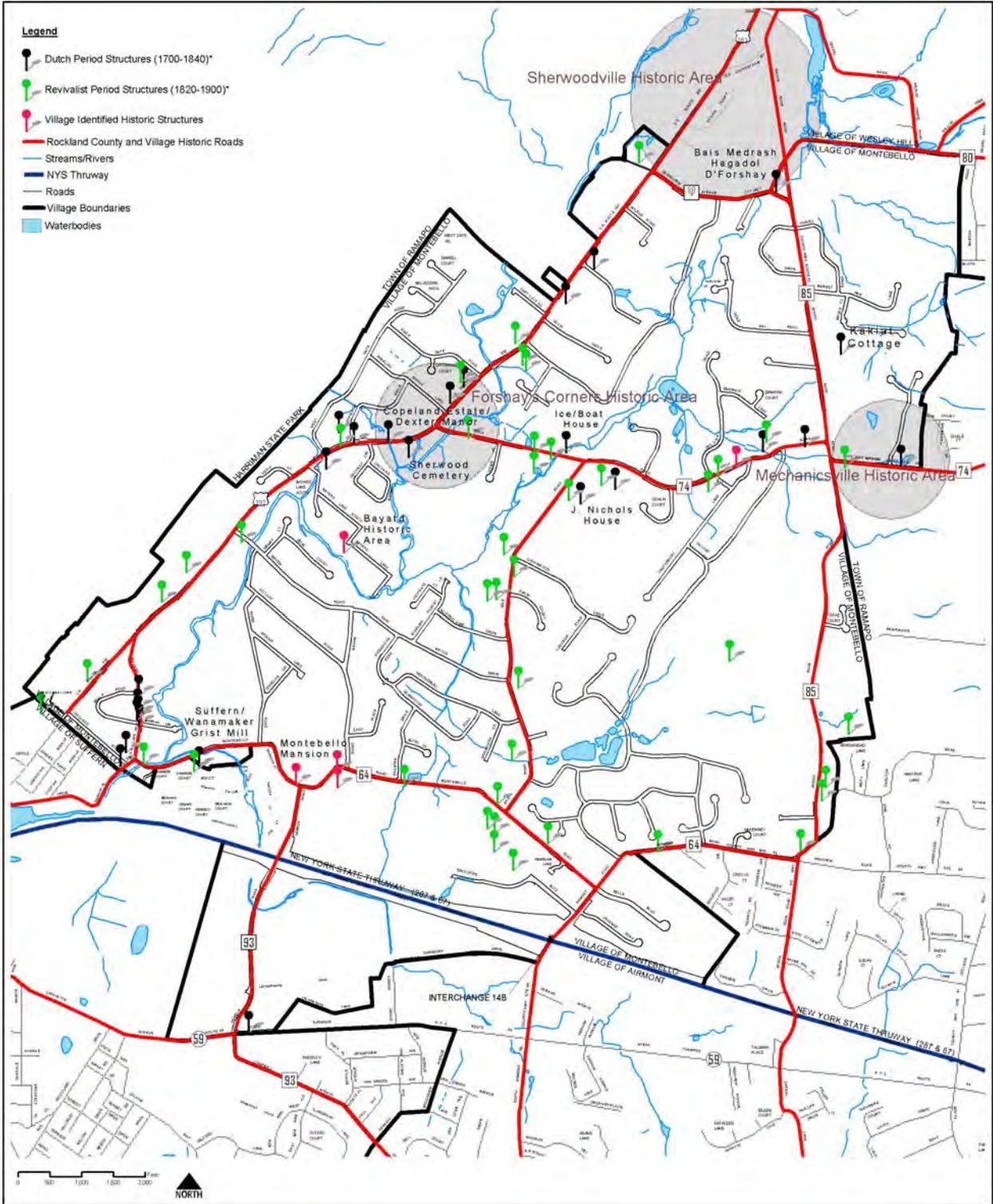
[1] A copy of the survey can be obtained at the Rockland County Planning Department or the Rockland County Historical Society.

Structures in Montebello associated with the Village's history of settlement were identified by the Rockland County Historical Society as part of a countywide volunteer effort to catalog historic resources in Rockland County. The survey was completed in 1999 with the assistance of the Rockland County Planning Department. Within Montebello, the survey identifies 50 historic properties: 19 of these properties are associated with the "Dutch Period" and constructed between 1700 and 1840; the balance were constructed during the "Revivalist Period" between 1820-1900. Properties in the Rockland County database include homesteads, former gristmills that have been converted to housing, barns, cemeteries, and Indian Rock. The properties are identified according to their early family associations and include the Coe family, Damon family (Kakiat Farm), the Conklin family, the Johnson family, the Blauvelt family, the Wannamaker family, the Nichols family, Dan Sherwood, Royal S. Copeland, and Otis Cutler.[1]

A prominent summer home was "Montebello Park, built by the Ryan family in 1902.[1] The Ryan family eventually moved to the community and lived in the house on a year-round basis. The Ryans were significant benefactors of several public or quasi-public institutions, including the hospital, schools, and churches located in Suffern. Another prominent residence is the home of Stanley Morse, which is now Montebello Village Hall.

Indian Rock is regarded by local historians and history buffs as having originally been a pre-historic Native American worship alter. Recent excavations around the site failed to provide physical evidence of its use by the Native Americans, however, the site has been a landmark for over a century, and may have long been a target for artifact hunters. This rock became a prominent feature of the Cutler Estate, which was known as "Boulder Farm".

[1] *Archaeological Investigation of the U.S. Realty of Montebello, Inc. Property.* By Edward J. Lenik and Ronald J. Dupont, Jr. of Sheffield Archeological Consultants, June 1989.



Another noteworthy area in Montebello is the Bayard Lane community located on the east side of Route 202 containing homes built in the 1930's. The community was based on the "utopia" vision of Ralph Borsodi, a nationally-recognized author, economist, and philosopher. His vision was to create a self-sustaining cooperative community based on an agrarian lifestyle to benefit struggling families in the inner city. In order to create this community, he acquired land through a non-profit cooperative he helped establish, called the Independence Foundation, and invited modest income families from New York City to take part in his community-style of living. The area retains its historic charm and character and is one of the many architectural treasures of Montebello. Many of the original homes are still located on Bayard Lane.^[2]

Post-World War II development has established the current rural-suburban setting that exists today. Many of the original farmhouses that remind one of the early settlers still exist, intermingled between the newer residential subdivisions and neighborhoods within the Village.

Historic Eligibility

The National Park Service maintains a list of properties that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The standards for inclusion are set by the U.S. Secretary of the Department of the Interior and are as follows:

"...districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- a. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or*
- b. are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or*
- c. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
- d. that have yielded, or may likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (applies mostly to archeological sites)*

Ordinary cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historic figures, properties owned by religious institutions, or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the last 50 years are not generally eligible for the National Register of Historic Places unless they fall within the following categories:

^[2] *History of the Borsodi "Bayard Lane Utopia" excerpted from Bayard Lane: The Borsodi Experiment by Craig Long, Village Historian, article published in the Montebello Review, edited by Helen Airo, Spring 2002 issue.*

a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance;

•a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural values, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event;

or

•a birthplace or grave of a historic figure of outstanding importance if there is not other appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or

•a cemetery that derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design figures, or from association with historic events; or

•a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or

•a property primarily commemorative in intent of design, age tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or

•a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance."

The properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places have been determined to meet a minimum standard of significance as described above. This significance can be at the national, state or local level of importance. A building where George Washington may have headquartered a campaign (national level of significance) and a building of a prominent local citizen such as Montebello Park (local level of significance) are equally eligible for listing on the National Register.

The New York State Historic Register includes New York properties only, and is maintained by the State Historic Preservation Office (referred to herein as SHPO), a division of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The criteria for listing are identical. Properties in New York that are placed on the National Register are automatically placed on the State Register.

Although several properties may be eligible for the National or State Historic Registers, none are listed. Presently, no formal local protection exists for historic properties. Informally, when presented with the opportunity to do so, the Planning Board has recognized the aesthetic value of historic properties and required developers to preserve a historic home's setting and to integrate elements of that setting, e.g., stone walls, into the overall design of new development. In addition, in certain areas, it may be appropriate to establish an historic district, e.g., Bayard Lane. In this manner, any infill development could be constructed in a manner that is visually consistent with the historic structures in this neighborhood.

Recommendations

Throughout its history, Montebello has maintained a rural atmosphere that should be maintained. Preserving this atmosphere is crucial to the continued setting and context of the historic homes and farms in Montebello. The context of this landscape includes the tree-lined winding roads with narrow carriageways, stone walls, older wooden fences, openness and undeveloped setting, as well as the homes and farms that were constructed during various settlement periods in Montebello's history. The following are recommendations for protecting historic resources in the Village:

Protect the character of the Village's historic and scenic roads.

Roads that are identified as "historic" in Montebello include: Grandview Avenue; Viola Road, Montebello Road, North Airmont Road, Hemion Road, Spook Rock Road, State Route 202 (Haverstraw Road), Lake Road, and Mile Road, and Bayard Lane. To protect the scenic and historic characteristics of these roads, the following is recommended:

- Maintain the tree cover and general width of the road.
- Avoid unnecessary alteration to existing pavement widths.
- Preserve stone walls and rural wood fences along these roads.
- Erect new street signs that visually identify the roads as distinct and different from other roads in the community. This could be accomplished by using a different street sign color, an old-world font, or different post or pole to identify the historic roads in the Village.
- Minimize the use of concrete sidewalks along historic roads. If a walkway is necessary, slate or brick should be used as construction material, and the sidewalk should be planned to avoid loss of tree canopy.
- Minimize the impact of new road openings, particularly on the setting of any historic homes in the vicinity.
- Adopt design policies that preserve the character of an historic road. For example, homes on historic roads should be oriented with their front façade to the road; open garage bays should not be the visible element. If a home must be oriented with its front façade not facing the street, appropriate screening should be provided.
- Where a new structure will not be substantially in keeping with the historic character of the road or adjoining historic buildings, it should be screened and set back to minimize its visual impact.

Identify the historic resources in the Village. The resources identified in this element should be reviewed and updated.

The historic survey conducted by the Rockland County Historic Society includes only those resources associated with Village's history up to the 1900's. The Village should perform a comprehensive update to the survey.

Adopt a local historic preservation law.

The Village should consider adopting a local law that would allow the Village to review applications that propose to demolish, alter, or change a structure that is identified as "historic".

The Village should encourage the continued maintenance and preservation of historic resources located in the Village.

There are several policies that may be pursued to achieve this objective. These include the following:

- List Village Hall on the National Register of Historic Places. The building is eligible as an excellent example of Late Queen Anne Style, interpreted in stone, and for its visual prominence in the community. National Register listing will not prevent the Village Hall from making future changes to the building if necessary, however it will help to create a feeling of "status" among the residents, and begin to formally identify Montebello as a historic community.
- Create a Historic Landmark Program within the Village of Montebello. A Historic Landmark Program could provide positive recognition to important historic resources within the Village, and provide recognition to those owners that maintain their property's historic character. For example, a historic plaques program could be initiated to identify historic structures.
- Encourage property owners to list their eligible properties on the National Register of Historic Places and the State Historic Register. National Register Listing does not prohibit the homeowner from altering the residence's exterior. However, studies suggest that residences on the National Historic Register are more likely to be maintained in character with the original building.

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*The Village of Montebello,
New York*

OCTOBER 2003

Circulation Plan

Consultants:

A. Nelessen Associates, Princeton, NJ
Robert Geneslaw Co., Suffern, NY

Introduction

The Circulation Plan addresses the existing vehicular and pedestrian concerns expressed by Montebello residents during the community visioning meetings and workshops, and takes into consideration the future traffic that will be generated as the Village grows.

The single most important objective of the Circulation Plan is to slow excessive vehicular operating speeds on roads in the Village through the implementation of traffic calming measures while maintaining and improving traffic flow in and around Interchange 14B of the New York State Thruway. The Plan recommends vehicular and pedestrian improvements.

The second most important objective is the introduction of a pedestrian and bicycle trail system connecting neighborhoods with various destinations in and around the Village.

Positive and Negative Places

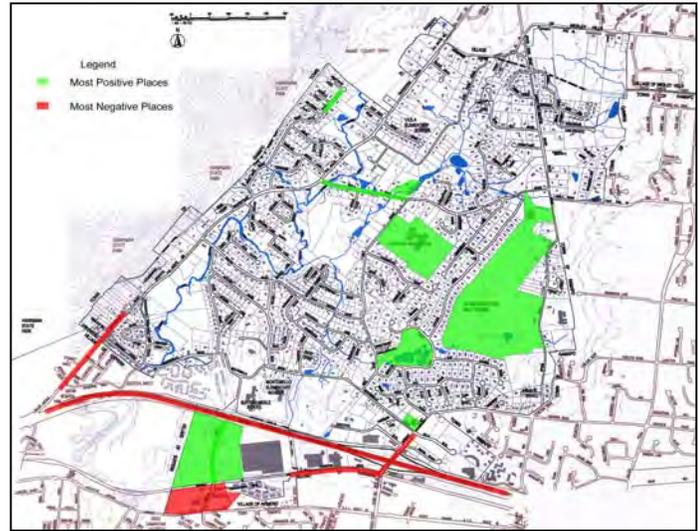
The functional and visual characteristics of streets and roads have a strong impact on the character, value of place, and the perception of community safety. During a series of public workshops, participants were asked to select the “best” and “worst” places in the Village.

The “worst” places are shown on the map to the right and include:

- Portions of Route 202 through Montebello.
- New York State Thruway.
- Airmont Road from Dunnigan Road to Montebello Road.
- Dunnigan Road and the intersection of Airmont Road and Dunnigan Road.

The landscape found along the edge of the New York State Thruway sets the perceived character of the Village. Currently, the landscaping is considered negative and as such is a serious liability. Trees and other landscaping techniques provide a positive image, give the impression of care and concern, and integrate nature into these visually hard-surfaced edges. Included in the VPS, a simulation was prepared for the eastbound off-ramp of the Thruway (Figure 1 and 2). The simulation (Figure 2) of a landscaped-enhanced ramp scored considerably higher than the existing ramp condition (Figure 1).

Unfortunately, even with an improved landscaped edge, the perception was still generally negative. The negative values are also due to the fact that noise generated from the NY Thruway is a major concern. This concern led to the recommendation for heavily landscaped noise barriers. New noise barriers should be complemented with landscaping in order to protect the visual character of Montebello.



Map which synthesizes all of the input collected from the community.



Fig. 1 - NYS Thruway before pre-landscaping.



Fig. 2 - NYS Thruway post-simulated landscaping.

Existing Conditions

Participant Perceptions

Expressed at Workshop Meetings

During the public Village Summit meeting held in January of 2002, and the Vision Translation Workshops held in March and April, participants were asked to identify problems with the Village's existing circulation network. The following issues were identified:

- High Speed Traffic
- Local Traffic Noise
- NYS Thruway Noise
- Traffic Congestion, particularly at Interchange 14B of the Thruway
- Dangerous Pedestrian/Traffic interaction
- Dangerous Sidewalk/Crosswalks
- Congested/Dangerous Intersections

Twenty intersections were identified as “dangerous” by participants. These locations should be programmed for intersection improvements such as crosswalks, stop signs, traffic lights, and various other traffic calming measures.

Many of the roads in the Village were cited as dangerous for walking. A trail system is strongly recommended to resolve pedestrian safety issues.

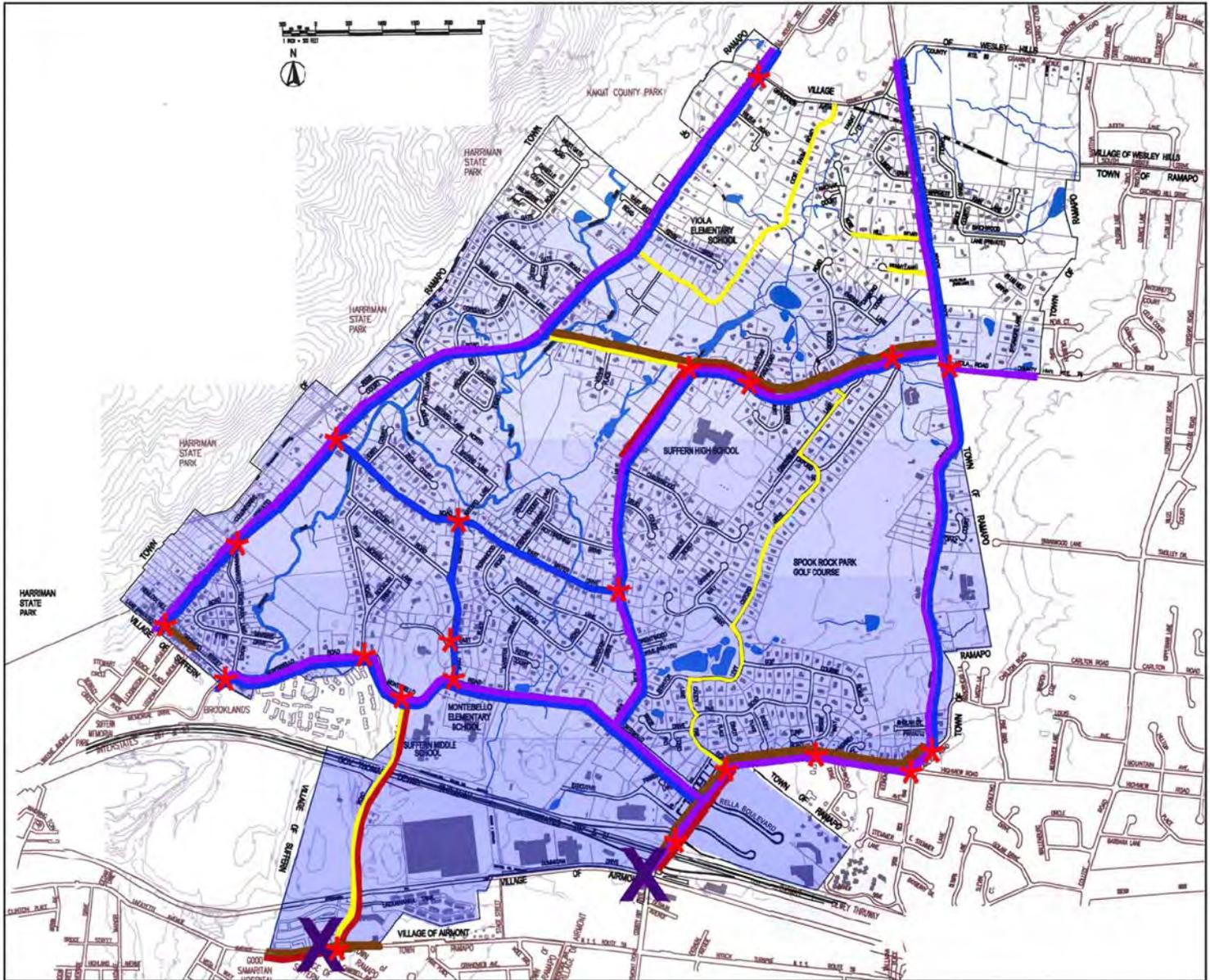
Although most roads in the Village have posted maximum speed limits of 30 miles per hour (mph), workshop participants have observed vehicles regularly operating at higher speeds. Decreasing vehicular speeds through the implementation of traffic calming techniques is recommended. Traffic calming techniques include but are not limited to modifications to: posted speeds; width of driving lanes; and, road edges and surfaces. The Circulation Plan recommends a number of techniques that could be applied to the various roads.



Existing Conditions

Participant Perceptions

Expressed at Workshop Meetings



The map above summarizes the perceptions of workshop participants regarding traffic and circulation concerns. “High speed” roads are shown in blue. The large number of roads that were indicated as having high speeds was the major catalyst for the introduction of traffic calming techniques in the Plan. Route 59, along the southernmost edge of the village, shown in brown, was considered one of the most congested roads in the village. Twenty-one intersections, perceived to be “dangerous”, are shown with a red asterisk. The blue colored masking which extends over most of the Village is the area impacted by noise emanating from vehicles traveling on the NYS Thruway.

- Legend**
- █ High Speed Traffic/Traffic Noise
 - Thruway Noise
 - █ Traffic Congestion
 - X Perceived Crime
 - █ Acceptable Ped/Traffic Interaction
 - █ Dangerous Ped/Traffic Interaction
 - █ Dangerous Sidewalk/ Crosswalks
 - * Congested/ Dangerous Intersections

Goals and Objectives

CIRCULATION GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Movement / Traffic Patterns

Provide safe and efficient access and egress from the NYS Thruway and for the remainder of the Village.

Provide a traffic-calmed roadway pattern at 25 miles per hour.

Objectives

- A. *Improve access at the NYS Thruway interchange on Airmont Road.*
- B. *Adopt new roadway classifications and design characteristics based on proven traffic calming practice and design standards.*
- C. *Adopt a Street Regulating Plan for all new streets.*
- D. *Identify and adopt appropriate traffic calming techniques throughout the Village. Coordinate these with existing and future traffic counts and traffic engineering practices.*

Pedestrian Realm

Provide safe pedestrian /bicycle connections throughout the Village, with attention on linkages between activity generators, e.g., Suffern High School, and the use of appropriate design standards.

Objectives

- A. *Design and implement a pedestrian/bicycle path connecting major residential areas with schools, recreation areas and proposed Village Center.*
- B. *Encourage pedestrian and bicycle usage at new commercial developments, e.g., bike stands at office parks.*
- C. *Integrate the pedestrian / bicycle trail system with the scale and character of the existing environmental character and the edges of the streets and roads.*

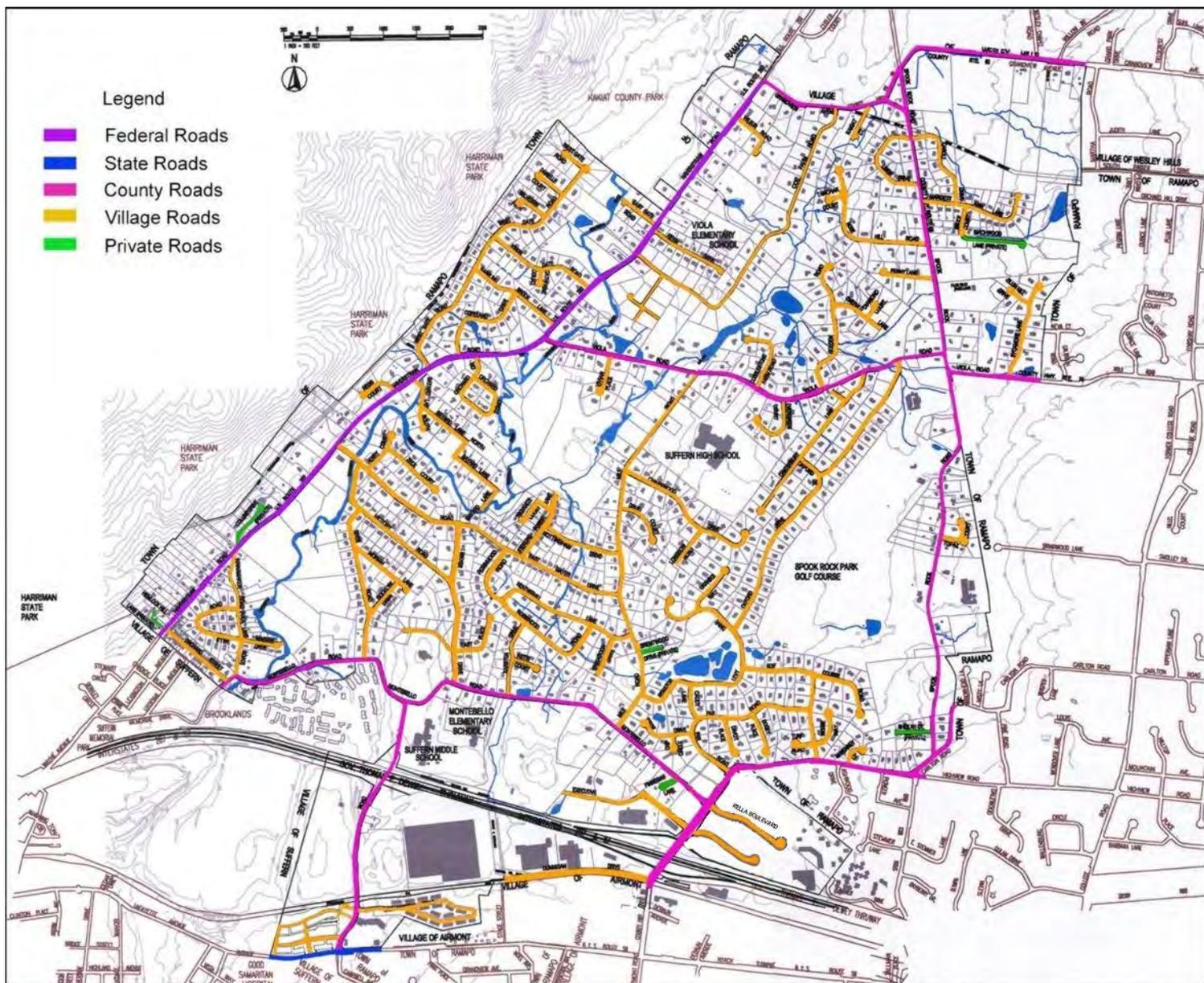
Streetscape

Maintain and enhance the Village's streetscape. Wherever possible, preserve and provide a natural green-edge to all roads.

Objectives

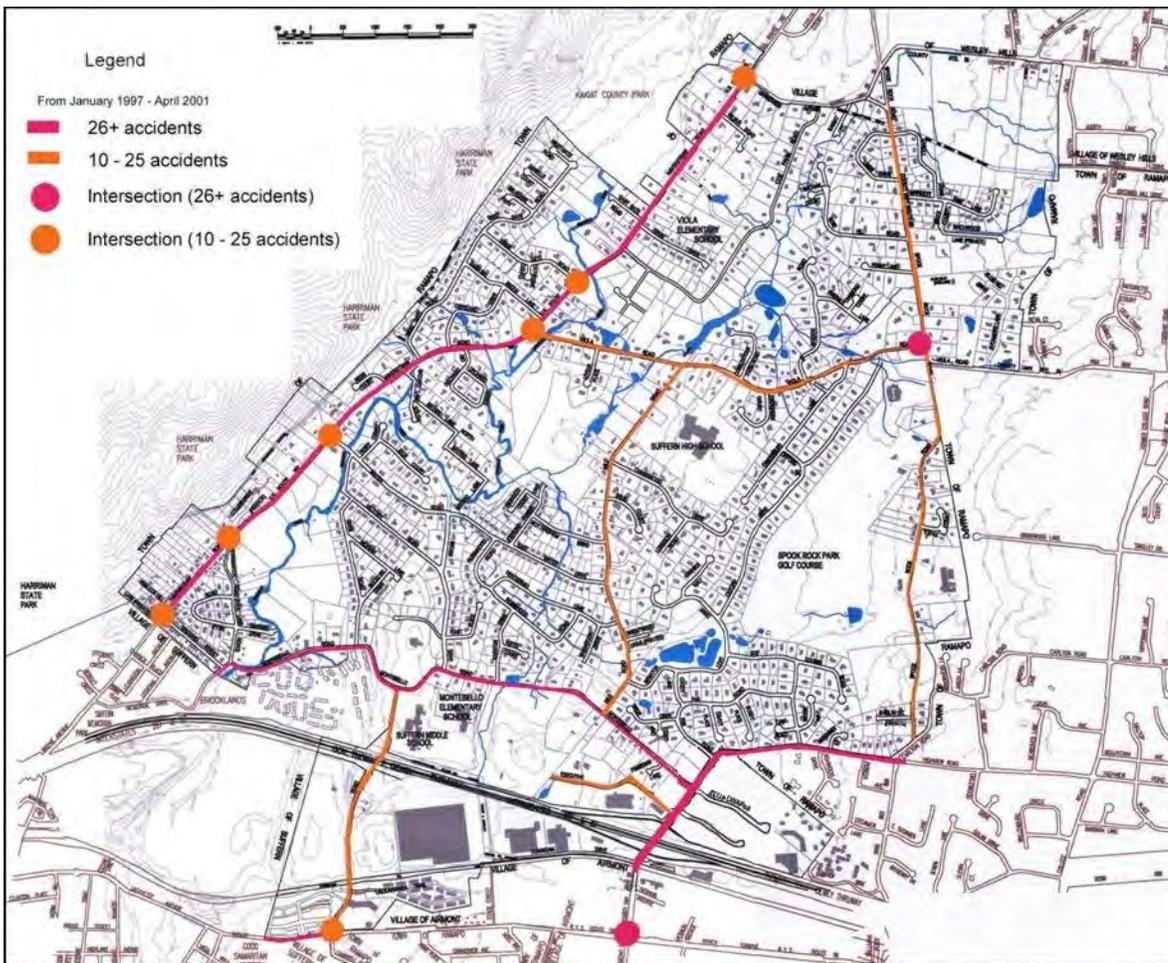
- A. *Soften the appearance of Airmont Road through plantings of flower boxes and flower beds, hanging baskets, and construction of stone walls and decorative lights.*
- B. *Introduce a roundabout at Rella Boulevard/Airmont Road which includes a clock tower as a focal point.*
- C. *Protect stone walls, mature trees rows, flowers and wildflowers along all Village roads.*

Road Jurisdiction



The map above illustrates the jurisdictional control of roads in Montebello. The Village of Montebello maintains most roads, shown in yellow. Implementation of the recommended traffic calming and pedestrian improvements will be the easiest on these roads. The County, State and Federal Government control all of the major arterials, shown in purple, blue and pink. Private roads are indicated on the map in green.

Accident Data



Source: Robert Geneslaw Co.
Memo dated: July 10, 2002

The map above illustrates road segments and intersections with the highest number of accidents in the Village for the survey period January 1997 to April 2001. A red dot represents an intersection that experienced 26 to 54 accidents, an orange dot represents intersections with 10 to 25 occurrences. A red-colored road indicates roads that had a high level of accidents (26 and higher occurrences). An orange-colored road designates a moderate level of accidents (ranging from 10-25 occurrences). Ninety-eight percent of the accidents, and ninety-nine percent of all injuries, occurred on the following eight roads under the following jurisdictions:

Route 202	Federal/(State)
North Airmont Road	County
Spook Rock Road	County
Montebello Road	County
Route 59	State
Viola Road	County
Mile Road	Local
Hemion Road	County

Note that while a number of roads were perceived by workshop participants to be “dangerous”, statistics suggest differently in a number of cases. The roads/intersections listed herein should be further reviewed to determine whether improvements would actually improve safety. It is important that the historic character of the Village and the desired character of road edges be balanced with the proposed traffic improvement techniques. Except for Mile Road, maintenance and improvements for these roads is not under Village jurisdiction and therefore the Village must work cooperatively with other agencies to balance safety with aesthetics.

Accident Data Roads / Streets

Accident Data Roads / Streets

Accident Data for the Village of Montebello
1/97 - 4/01

26 + accidents
10-25 accidents

Street/Street Intersection	Road Jurisdiction	No. of Accidents	% of All Accidents	No. of Injuries	% of All Injuries	% of All Accidents by Major Street	% of All Accidents
R202/Copeland	F/L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
R202/East Gate	F/L	3	0.4%	0	0.0%		
R202/East Mayer	F/L	1	0.1%	1	0.3%		
R202/Grandview	F/C	13	1.7%	7	2.4%		
R202/Kings Gate	F/L	10	1.3%	4	1.3%		
R202/Lake Street	F/L	10	1.3%	4	1.3%		
R202/Mayer	F/L	23	3.0%	4	1.3%		
R202/Orchard	F/L	10	1.3%	3	1.0%		
R202/Regis	F/L	4	0.5%	0	0.0%		
R202/Viola	F/C	16	2.1%	11	3.7%		
R202/West Gate	F/L	6	0.8%	2	0.7%		
R202/Wilbur	F/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
R202/Wilder	F/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
R202	F	45	5.9%	14	4.7%		
R59/Hemion	S/C	28	3.7%	15	5.1%	89	21
R59/North Airmont	S/C	3	0.4%	0	0.0%	9.0%	7.1%
R59	S	38	5.0%	8	2.0%		
Rella	L	3	0.4%	0	0.0%		
River Street	L	3	0.4%	7	2.4%		
Rose Hill	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Spook Rock/Carroll	C/L	1	0.1%	2	0.7%	110	48
Spook Rock/Grandview	C/C	7	0.9%	3	1.0%	14.4%	16.2%
Spook Rock/Highview	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Spook Rock/Linda	C/L	1	0.1%	1	0.3%		
Spook Rock/Penny	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Spook Rock/Rose Hill	C/L	5	0.7%	2	0.7%		
Spook Rock/Stone Hedge	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Spook Rock/Topaz	C/L	7	0.9%	3	1.0%		
Spook Rock/Viola	C/C	54	7.0%	28	8.4%		
Spook Rock/Carlton	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Spook Rock	C	31	4.0%	9	3.0%		
Topaz	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Turf	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Victory/West Mayer	L/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Victory	L	2	0.3%	1	0.3%		
Viola/Canterbury	C/L	3	0.4%	5	1.7%	42	15
Viola/Galbraith	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	5.5%	5.1%
Viola/Golden	C/L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Viola/Mile	C/L	9	1.2%	7	2.4%		
Viola/Quince	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Viola/Suffern HS	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Viola/Sycamore	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Viola	C	24	3.1%	3	1.0%		
West Gate/Babbling Brook	L/L	1	0.1%	2	0.7%		
West Gate	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Willow Trees/Grandview	L/C	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
		766	100.0%	297	100.0%	98.0%	99.0%

F = Federal Road
S = State Road
C = County Road
L = Local Road

Accident Data for the Village of Montebello
1/97 - 4/01

26 + accidents
10-25 accidents

Street/Street Intersection	Road Jurisdiction	No. of Accidents	% of All Accidents	No. of Injuries	% of All Injuries	% of All Accidents by Major Street	% of All Accidents
Bayard	L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Brentwood	L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Canterbury	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Dunnigan Drive	L	4	0.5%	1	0.3%		
East Mayer/Robin Hood	L/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Executive Blvd	L	16	2.1%	1	0.3%		
Golden	L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Heather Hill	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Hemion/Indian Rock	C/L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	27	9
Hemion/Lackawanna	C/L	3	0.4%	3	1.0%	3.5%	3.0%
Hemion/Old Mill	C/L	5	0.7%	0	0.0%		
Hemion Road	C	17	2.2%	6	2.0%		
Indian Rock (Internal drives)	L	16	2.1%	1	0.3%		
Karsten	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Lake Street	L	1	0.1%	1	0.3%		
Mayer/East Mayer	L/L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Mayer/Robin Hood	L/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Mayer/Victory	L/L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Mayer Drive	L/L	3	0.4%	3	1.0%		
Mill/Charmwood	L/L	2	0.3%	1	0.3%	31	11
Mill/Druid	L/L	2	0.3%	1	0.3%	4.0%	3.7%
Mill/East Mayer	L/L	4	0.5%	0	0.0%		
Mill/Heather Hill	L/L	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
Mill/Nottingham	L/L	6	0.8%	3	1.0%		
Mills Road	L/L	15	2.0%	6	2.0%		
Mills Road	L/L	1	0.1%	6	2.0%		
Montebello/Arrowsmith	C/L	1	0.1%	1	0.3%	108	45
Montebello/Brooklands	C/L	1	0.1%	2	0.7%	14.1%	15.2%
Montebello/Finnegan	C/L	3	0.4%	1	0.3%		
Montebello/Hemion	C/C	17	2.2%	7	2.4%		
Montebello/Karsten	C/L	3	0.4%	0	0.0%		
Montebello/Lake	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Montebello/Mayer	C/L	16	2.1%	8	2.7%		
Montebello/Mile	C/L	14	1.8%	4	1.3%		
Montebello/River	C/L	10	1.3%	5	1.7%		
Montebello/Windermere	C/L	4	0.5%	2	0.7%		
Montebello Road	C	38	5.0%	15	5.1%		
North Airmont/14B	C/S	39	5.1%	16	5.4%	151	72
North Airmont/Ashwood	C/L	1	0.1%	1	0.3%	19.7%	24.2%
North Airmont/Champion	C/L	2	0.3%	3	1.0%		
North Airmont/Debaune	C/L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
North Airmont/Dunnigan	C/L	10	1.3%	2	0.7%		
North Airmont/Executive	C/L	25	3.3%	16	5.4%		
North Airmont/McKennay	C/L	3	0.4%	0	0.0%		
North Airmont/Montebello	C/C	17	2.2%	16	5.4%		
North Airmont/Par	C/L	7	0.9%	1	0.3%		
North Airmont/Pioneer	C/L	1	0.1%	1	0.3%		
North Airmont/Rella	C/L	7	0.9%	1	0.3%		
North Airmont/Spook Rock	C/C	2	0.3%	0	0.0%		
North Airmont	C	36	4.7%	15	5.1%		
Orchard	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
Oxford/Senator Levy	L	1	0.1%	0	0.0%		
R202/Babbling Brook	F/L	4	0.5%	0	0.0%	156	63
R202/Bayard	F/L	2	0.3%	3	1.0%	20.2%	17.8%
R202/Colline	F/L	4	0.5%	0	0.0%		

Source: Robert Geneslaw Co.
Memo dated July 10, 2002

Above are accident data for the Village of Montebello between January 1997 and April 2001. Streets and street intersections having 26 or more traffic accidents are classified as subject to great concern. A red color classification designates the highest traffic safety concern (having 26 and more accidents). An orange color classification designates a moderate level of safety concern (ranging from 10 to 25 accidents). These classifications are illustrated on the Village map found on the previous page.

Traffic Calming Options

Research indicates that there are four fundamental methods for roads to be traffic calmed. Below is a list of traffic calming measures recommended for streets and roads in the Village of Montebello:

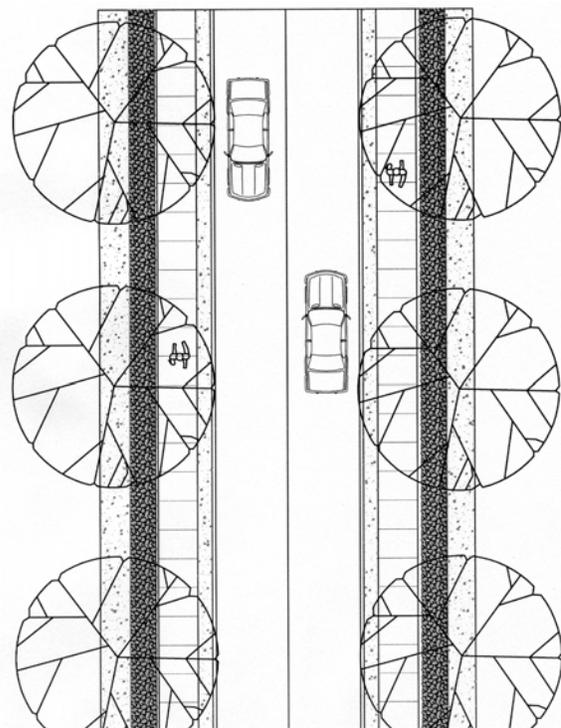
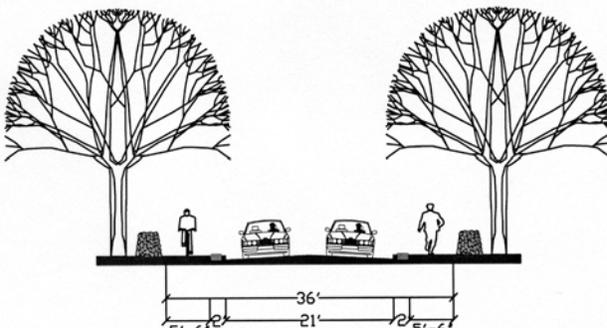
1. Post lower speed limits.

Currently, local residential road speed limits are posted at 30 mph. However, according to informal polls and staff field observations, local traffic speeds are considerably higher. As a method of resolution to this concern, it is recommended that the speed limit be posted between 15 and 25 mph. The most noticeable signs are those with “abnormal” speeds such as 19 or 24 mph. In all cases, it can be expected that vehicle speeds will remain slightly higher than the posted speed. A **strict enforcement program** of local traffic laws and restrictions must be implemented.

2. Narrow the lane widths.

Speed is related to the width of the marked lane and the travel way (area in which cars travel) and the perceived road and road edge conditions (i.e. curves, trees on the edge etc). A rule of thumb is “the wider the width of the street, the higher the speeds.” Lane widths can be narrowed by re-striping to a narrower travel lane area. While the minimum highway travel lane width recommended by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is 10 feet 6 inches (10' 6”), reducing this to 9 feet 6 inches or lower (< 9' 6”) would be more desirable. This is a simple process using standard line painting technology. Since roads are required to be re-striped every few years, this traffic calming measure can be phased in over time with the most important roads completed earlier by adding an outside white line.

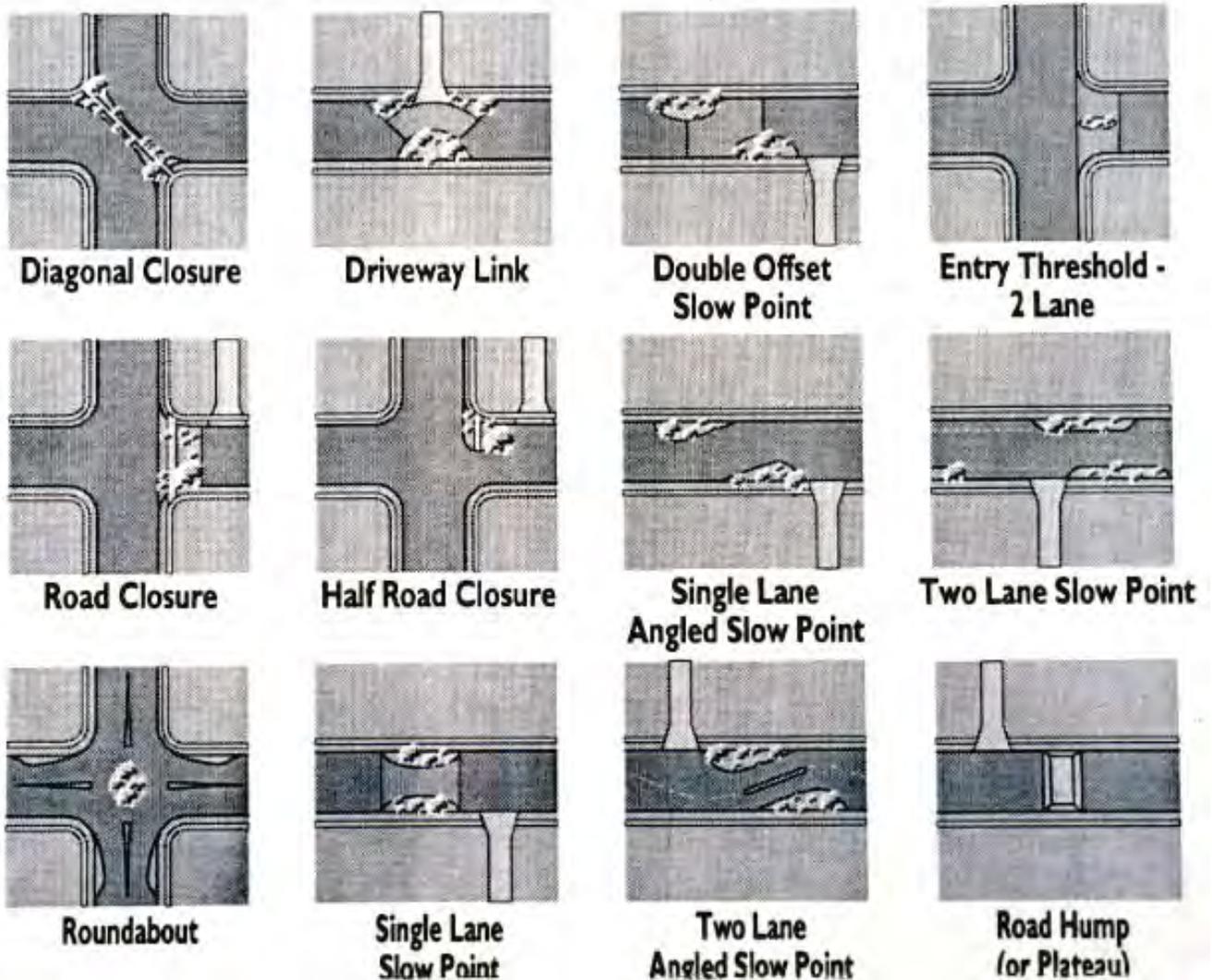
The remaining paved area can in turn be dedicated to a bike lane or a sidewalk if the appropriate width is available. Another alternative on those roads where bike paths are not recommended is to remove the asphalt pavement and replace the area with a compacted grassy median or edge.



Traffic Calming Options

3. Apply one or more physical traffic calming techniques – in possible combination with one or more physical traffic calming applications.

The diagram below, developed by Walter Kulash, an internationally recognized expert on traffic calming, illustrates a number of the traffic calming techniques that are currently being employed throughout American communities. Specific application of these techniques in the Village of Montebello will require amendments to the Village's road specifications and coordination with the design specifications followed by the County.



Physical Traffic Calming Techniques, Walter Kulash.

4. Strictly apply speed limits and cite violators for speeding.

Since the Village of Montebello does not have its own police department, traffic control is provided by the Town of Ramapo police department. Inquiries have indicated that there is little to no enforcement throughout the Village. It is recommended that the Village explore options to employ a part or full time traffic enforcement officer(s) to cite traffic violators and a municipal traffic court. The Village will continue to work closely with the Town to enhance traffic enforcement. The Village will also retain a consultant to explore traffic enforcement options.

Traffic Calming Options

The images on this page are provided for illustrative purposes. Each traffic calming technique must be reviewed by the Village and studied by a traffic engineer familiar with the Village and its environs to determine its applicability to specific Village roads.

Chicanes



A chicane creates a slow curve in the road which causes a driver to decelerate in order to maneuver around the obstacle. The extra area created by a chicane can be landscaped to beautify the neighborhood.

Textured or Painted Crosswalks



Clearly defined crosswalks can also act as traffic calming devices where they are textured or painted. Recommended textures include: cobblestone, or stamped cement or asphalt to mimic brick or cobblestone.

Rumble Strips



Rumble strips are slightly raised stones or concrete blocks which are embedded into the street. A rumble strip causes a vehicle to experience “friction” resulting in the driver slowing down. This technique can produce increased noise.

Traffic Calming Options

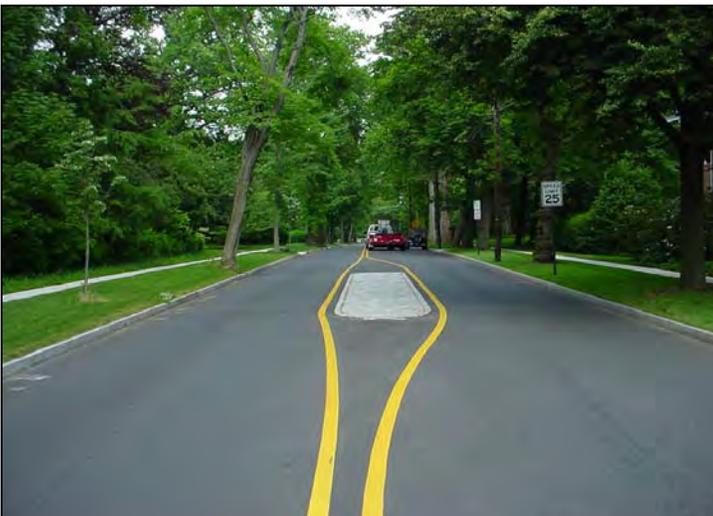
The images on this page are provided for illustrative purposes. Each traffic calming technique must be reviewed by the Village and studied by a traffic engineer familiar with the Village and its environs to determine its applicability to specific Village roads.

Planted Center Island



This technique employs a small island constructed in the center of a wide road. The center area of an island may be planted with grass, flowers, and/or one or more trees. Note that to prevent driver sight line obstruction, all ground level vegetation must be kept under 24 inches. In addition to vegetation, road signs warning of driving hazards should be erected (as illustrated in the photo at left).

Paved Center Island



As an alternative to a planted center island, some municipalities have opted to pave the island area with rough textures or cobblestones. By paving the center island, no additional maintenance is required by the municipality and community.

Traffic Calming Options

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Large Roundabouts



A common traffic calming device is the strategic construction of a large roundabout at the intersection of two major roads, streets or boulevards. Vehicles are directed in a slow counter-clockwise direction around the roundabout. Roundabouts should be explored for the following intersections: Montebello/Airmont/Rella Boulevard; Spook Rock/Grandview Road; Viola/Spook Rock Road.

Small Traffic Circles



A small residential traffic circle, similar to a large roundabout, slows vehicles. This technique is recommended at the intersection of two minor roads or residential streets.

Traffic Calming Options

The images on this page are provided for illustrative purposes. Each traffic calming technique must be reviewed by the Village and studied by a traffic engineer familiar with the Village and its environs to determine its applicability to specific Village roads.

Signage



Traffic signs effectively communicate potential hazards and are considered traffic calming devices. The Village should also consider the installation of deer crossing signs in appropriate locations. Signs should be used sparingly in order to limit sign clutter except where appropriate and necessary.

Slow – Children



Road Narrows



Traffic signs depicting hazards of children have proven to be effective in neighborhood communities.

Sign warning that "Road Narrows" alerts the driver to slow down to adjust to a change in road width.

Traffic Calming Options

The images on this page are provided for illustrative purposes. Each traffic calming technique must be reviewed by the Village and studied by a traffic engineer familiar with the Village and its environs to determine its applicability to specific Village roads.

Raised Intersection with Crosswalk

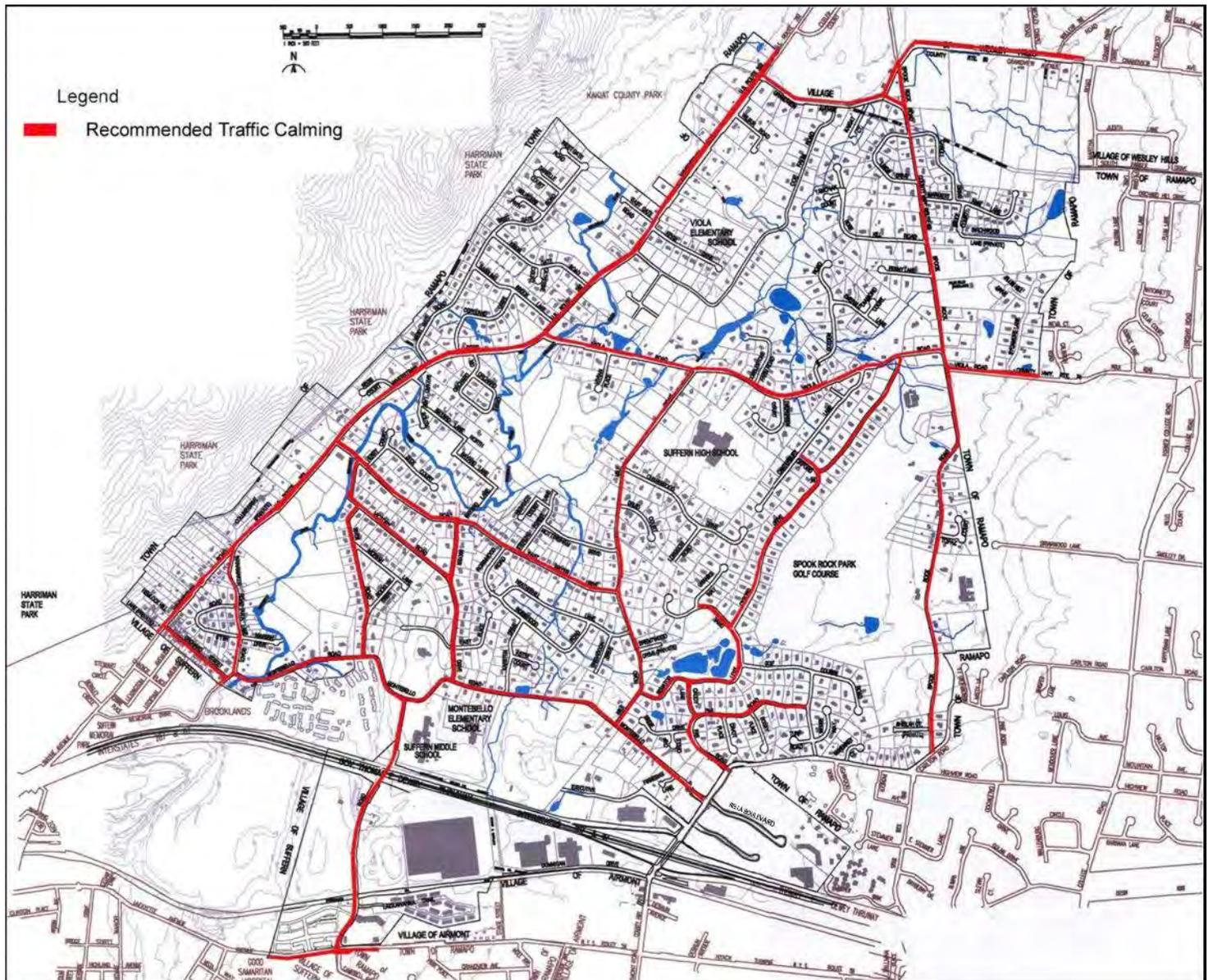


Raising the road level of an intersection by a few inches is a form of traffic calming. This traffic calming device is also referred to as an “intersection table.” The raised area of the intersection can remain an asphalt or cement texture. Painted or textured lines are included to visually accentuate pedestrian crosswalks. This technique should be considered for East Mayer and Mayer Drive as an alternative to the installation of “stop” signs.

Traffic Calming Recommendations

Priority Roads for Traffic Calming

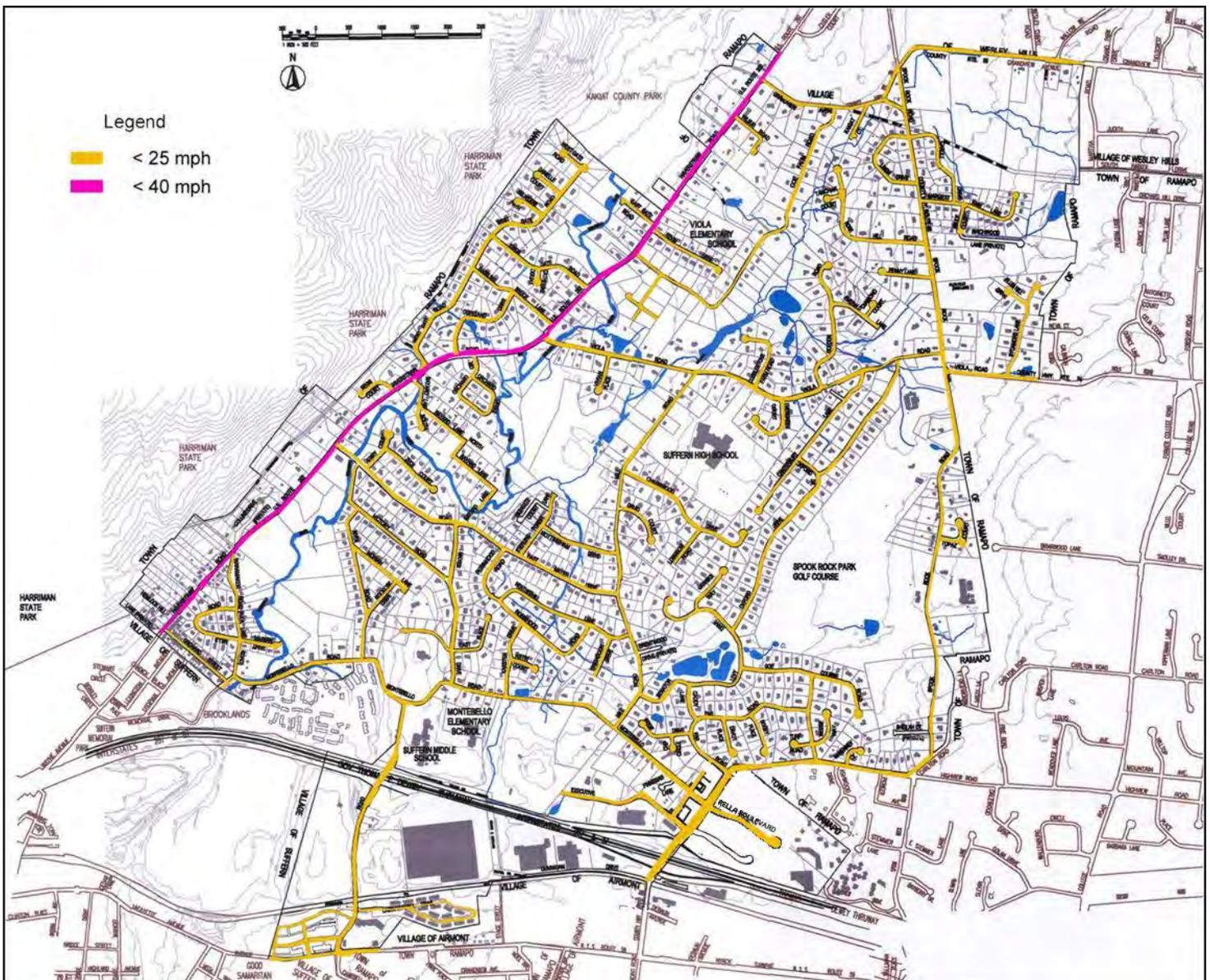
While the Circulation Plan recommends that all roads be calmed in the Village, the roads below presents those that should be given priority. This map reflects the public comment made by Village Summit and Visioning Translation Workshop participants and the deliberations of the Comprehensive Plan Committee. In addition, detailed in-field inspections, photography, measurements and design application of the various possible physical conditions was performed.



Recommendation One

The first recommendation for traffic calming is to establish a program of posting lower speed limits throughout the Village.

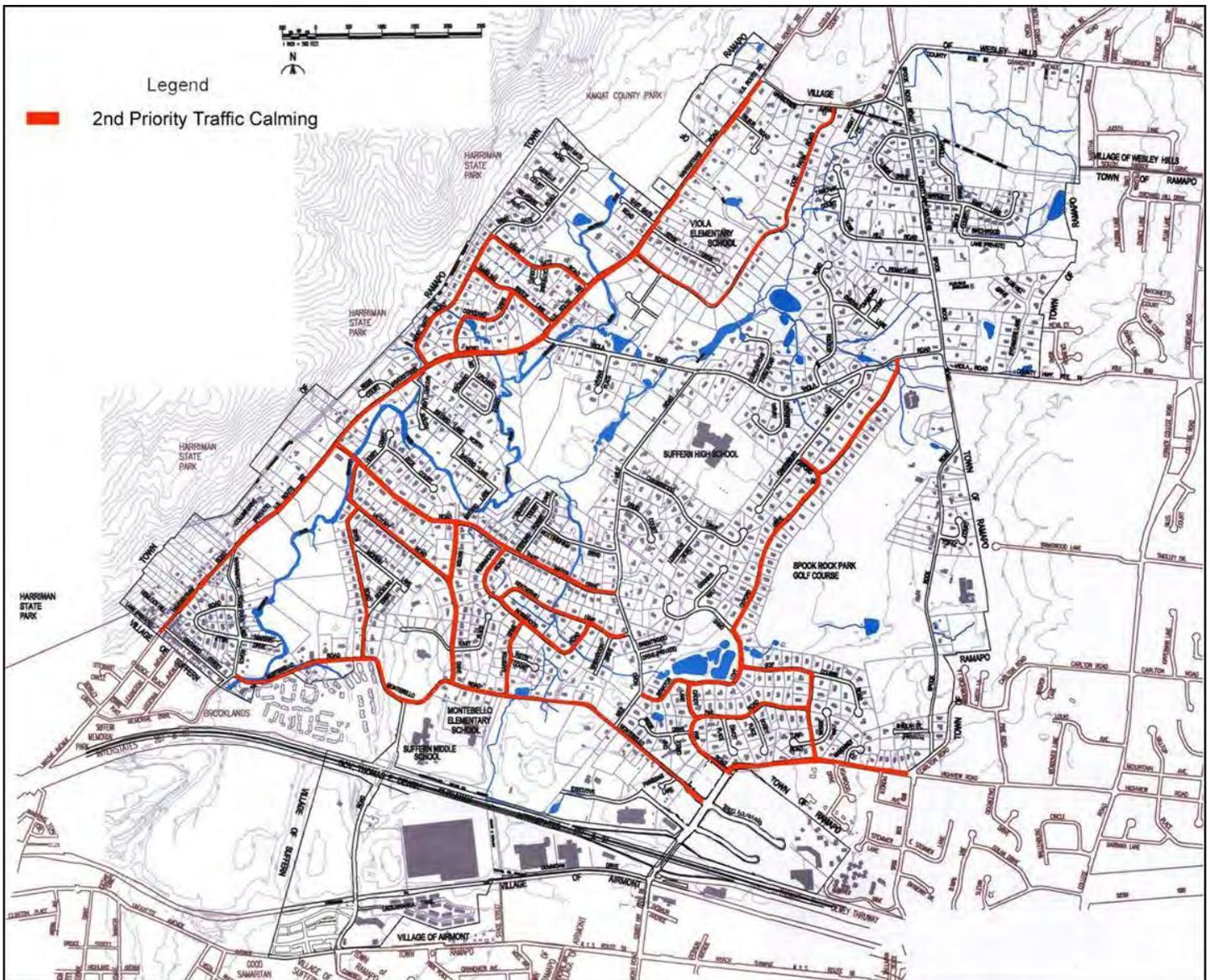
The key element of this recommendation is to post lower speed limits. The map below illustrates the recommended speeds for the various roads throughout the Village. Two speed designations are recommended: *maximum speed of 25 mph* and *maximum speed of 40 mph*. The lower speed (shown in yellow) is recommended for all local, County and State roadways in the Village, while the higher speed (shown in pink) is recommended for US Route 202.



Recommendation Two

The second recommendation for traffic calming is to narrow lane widths by painting or removing pavement.

After careful field analysis, the roads indicated on the map below are recommended for narrowing. The illustrations that follow demonstrate methods by which roads may be narrowed.



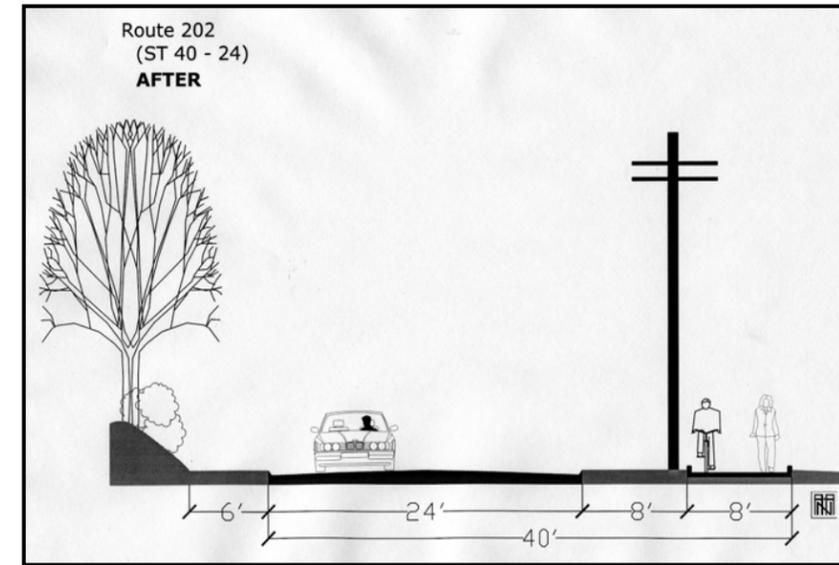
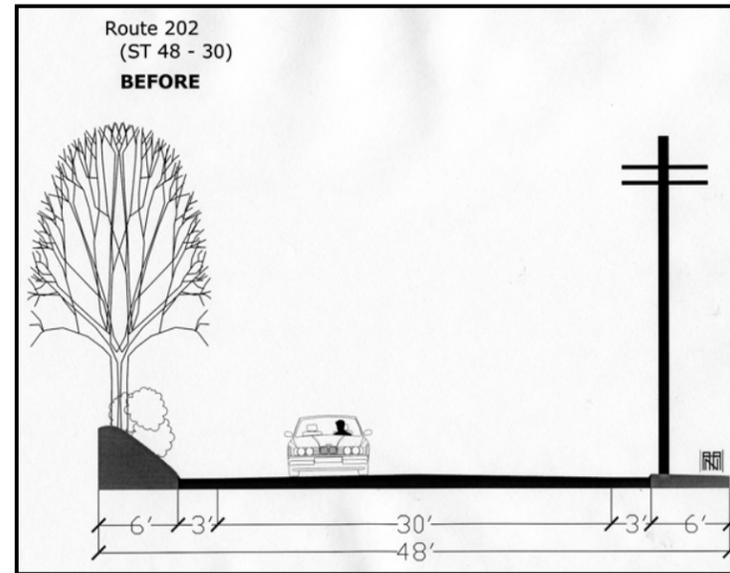
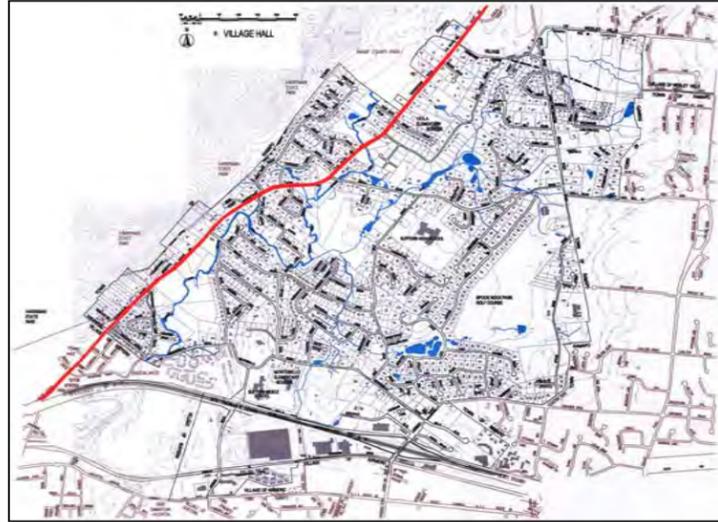
Traffic Calming Recommendations

Street Maps and Street Sections

Simulated Images

Traffic Calming Recommendations

Route 202



Route 202 is a designated state bike route. The recommendation is to construct a separate 8 foot bike path on one side of Route 202. In addition, the lane width shall be reduced to 12 feet per lane with a grassed shoulder.



Before

After



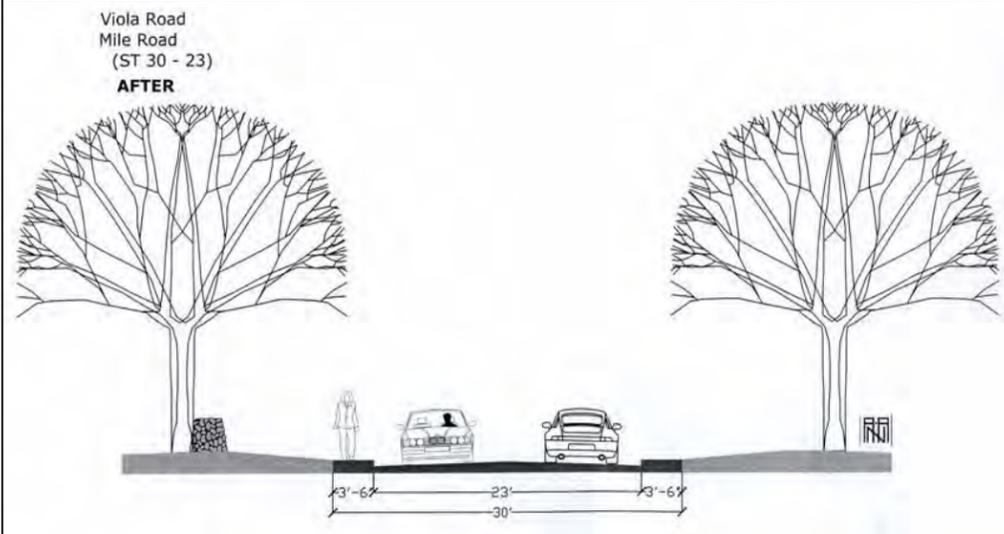
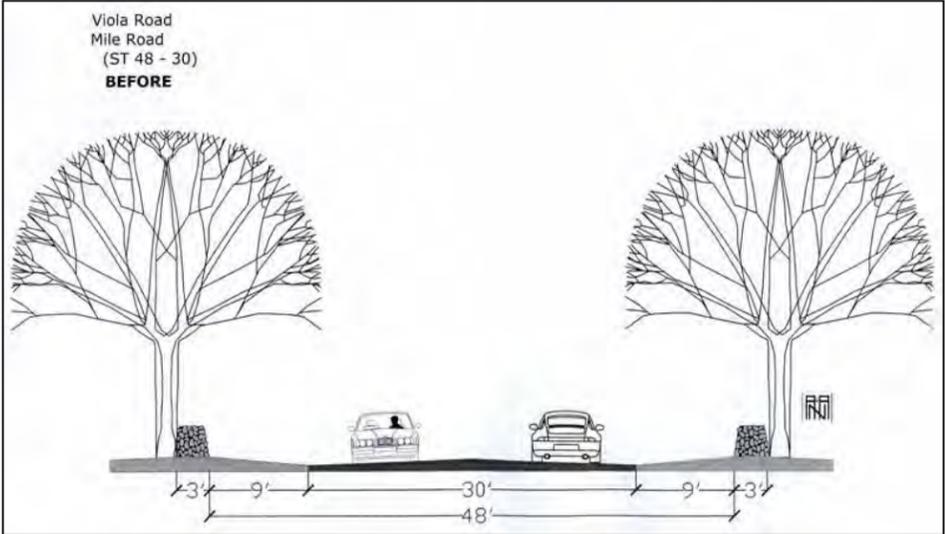
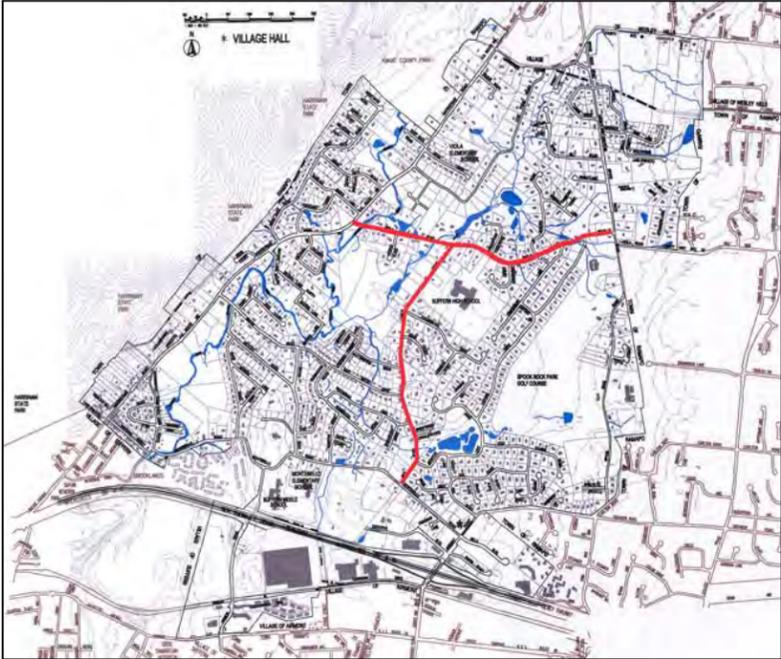
Before

After



Traffic Calming Recommendations

Mile Road / Viola Road



Viola and Mile Roads are typical streets recommended to include sidewalks, similar in character to Spook Rock Road. The traffic calming measure recommendation is to reduce lane widths to 10' 6" each. In addition, creating a pedestrian realm through construction of a walking/bike path on Viola and Mile Roads is recommended.

Before

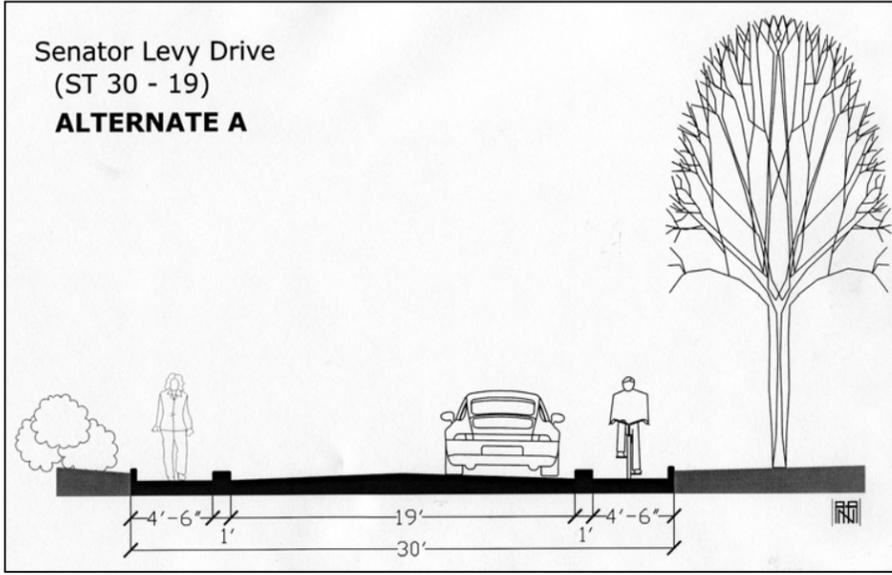
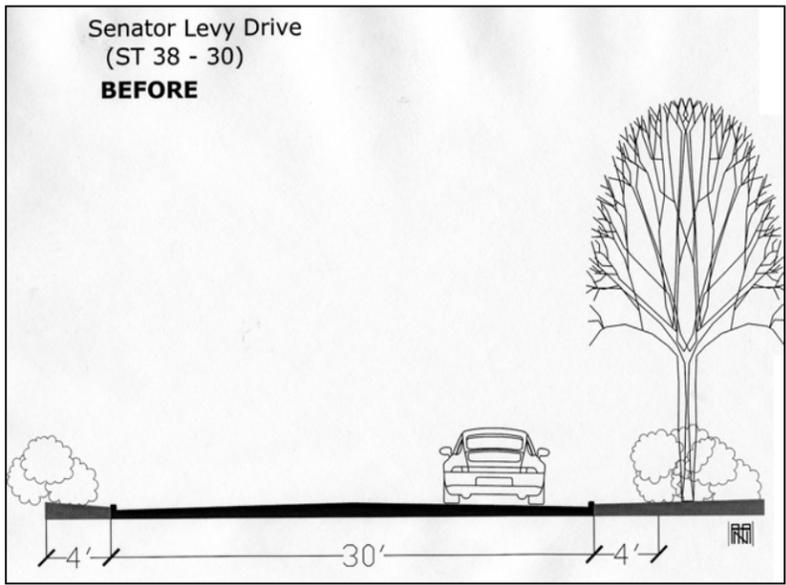
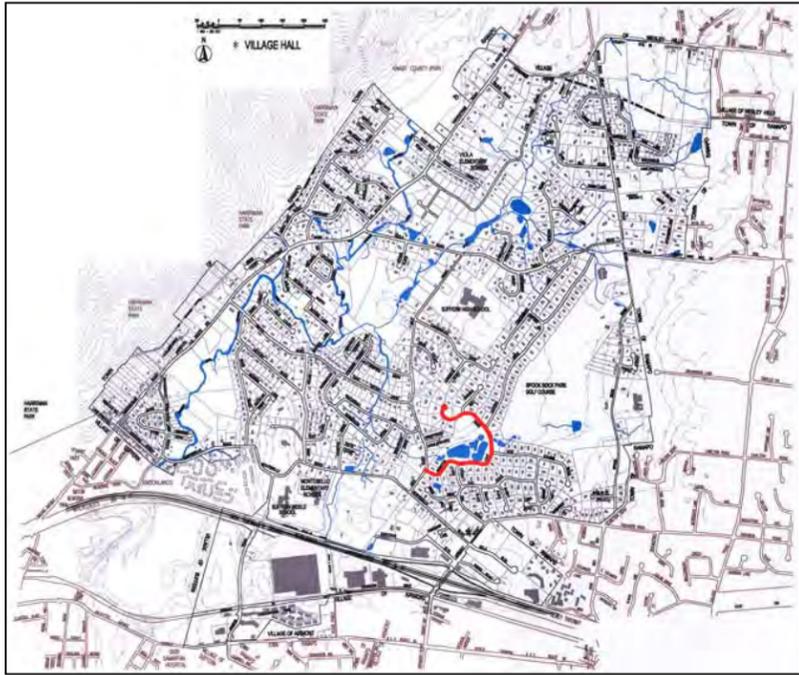


After



Traffic Calming Recommendations

Senator Levy Drive



Simulation 1



Before

After



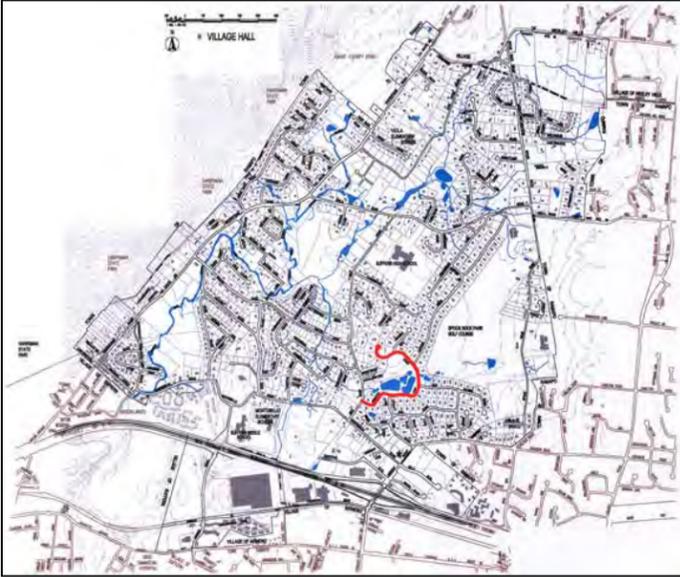
4' sidewalk



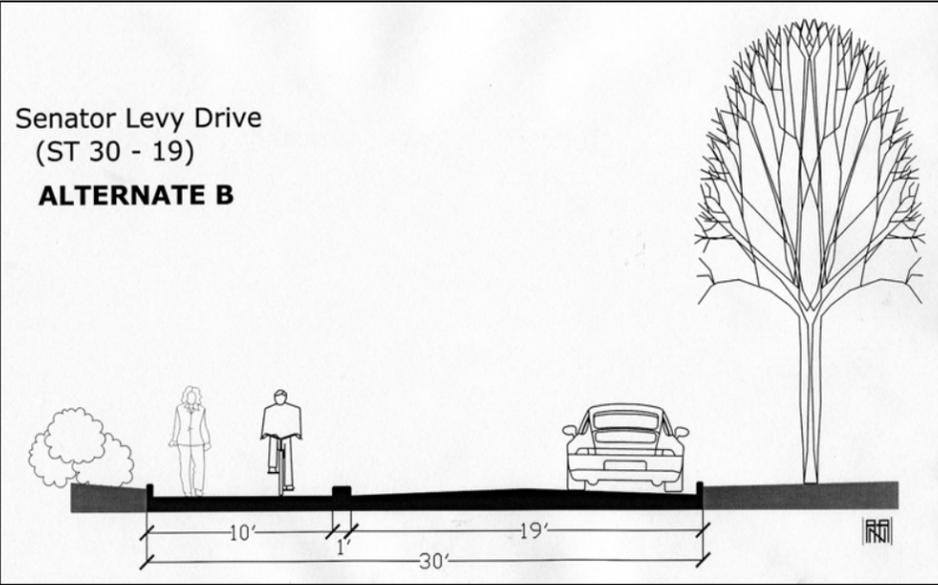
8' sidewalk

Traffic Calming Recommendations

Senator Levy Drive



Senator Levy Drive is an example of a separated shoulder lane as a traffic calming measure. To include the separated shoulder lane, the lane width is recommended to be reduced to 9 feet each. In each simulation, a separated shoulder is simulated on either one or both sides of the street. Each separated shoulder lane shall range between 4 to 8 feet in width.



Simulation 2



Before

After



Simulation 3



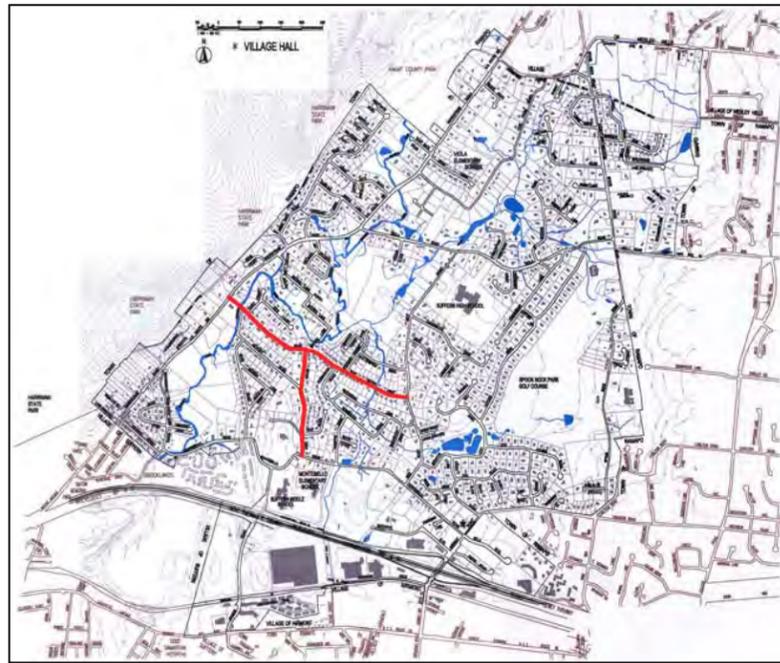
Before

After



Traffic Calming Recommendations

Mayer Drive



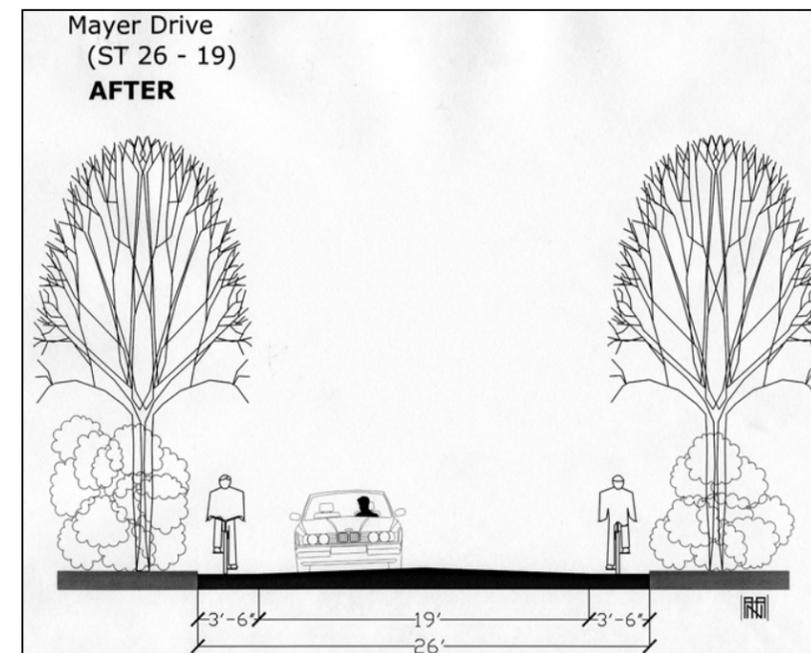
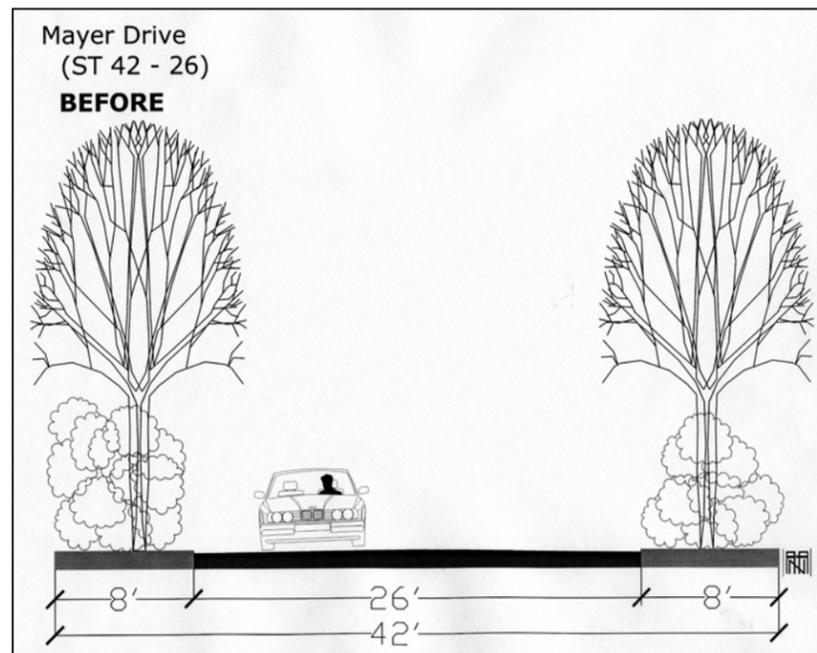
Before



After



Mayer Drive is an example of a street in which a shoulder lane traffic calming measure is recommended. In order to accommodate the shoulder lane on each side of the street, each lane width is reduced to 9 feet. The recommendation is to construct the designated 3' 6" painted shoulder lanes on each side of the street. The shoulder lanes allow to increase bicycle and pedestrian traffic throughout the village.

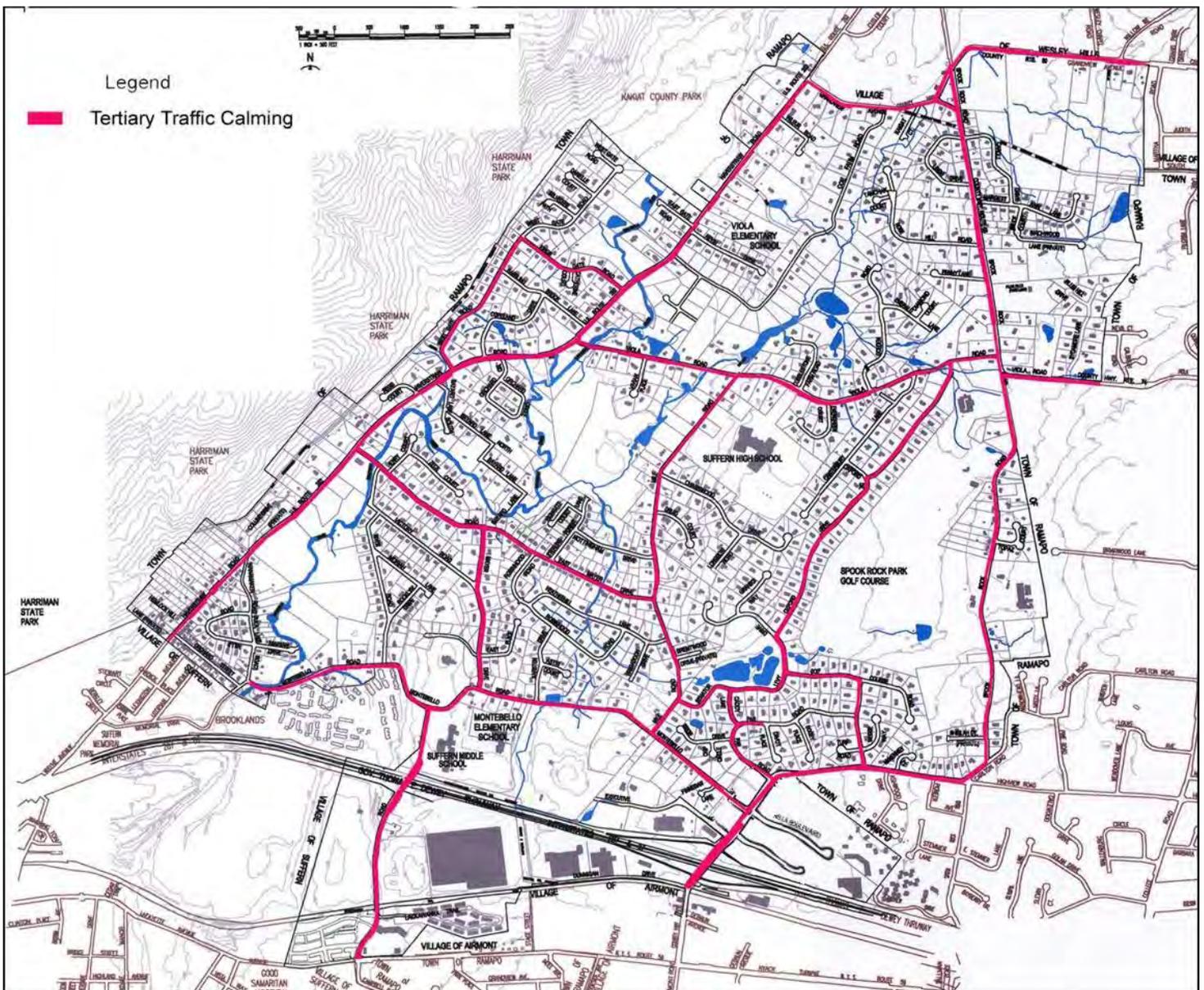


Recommendation Three

Additional physical traffic calming techniques are recommended at selected locations, mainly at intersections, on these roads.

Roads in red, illustrated below, are recommended for additional traffic calming measures.

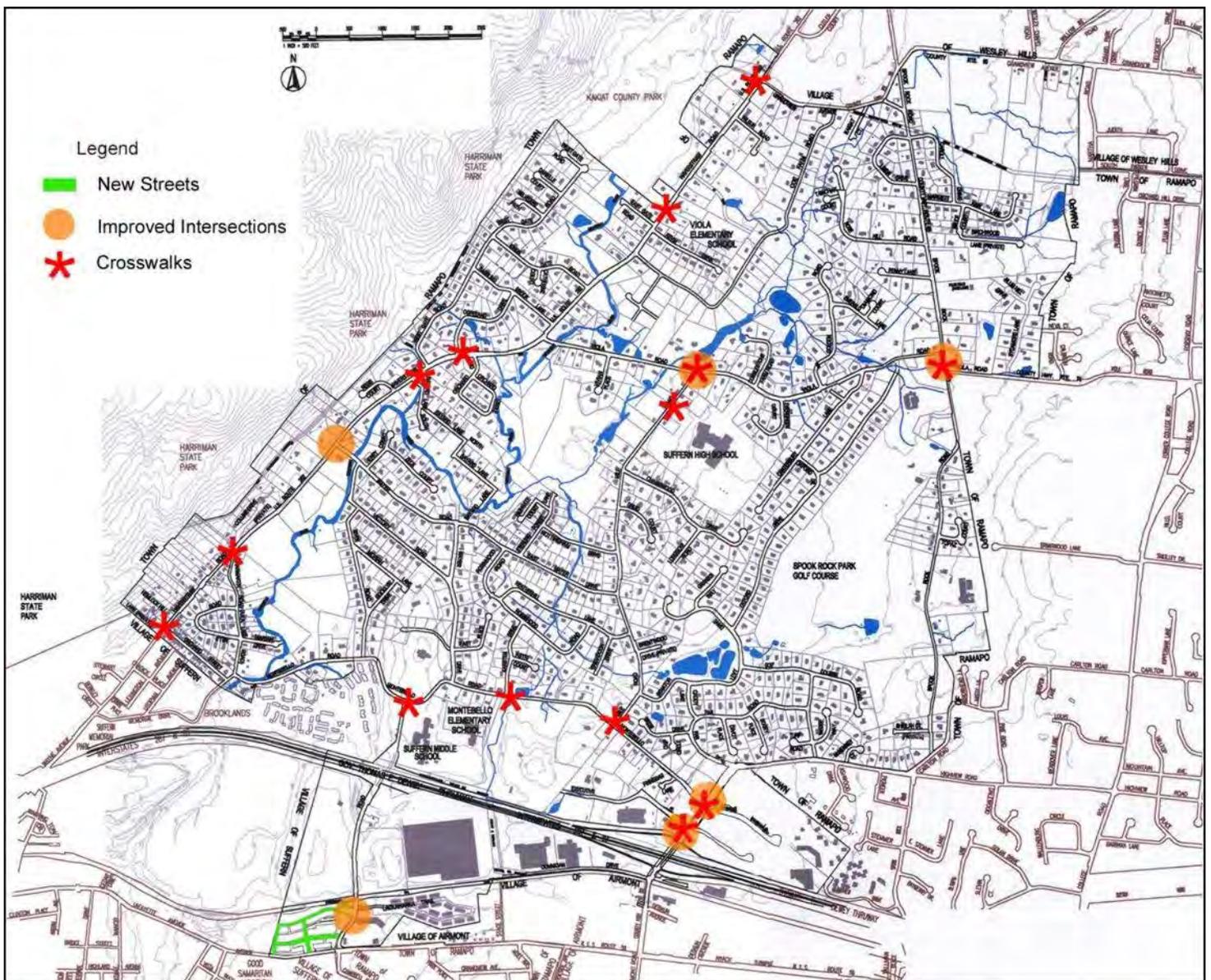
- Montebello Road** - Install a parallel path for children who are traveling to and from school and/or sports facilities.
- Signs** - Should be posted on Montebello West/ Fields lots proposed as potential trail connections to alert future homeowners of future trail access easements.
- Lane widths** - Should be reduced where a wider shoulder is necessary to accommodate pedestrians/cyclists. Pavement width should not be expanded.



Intersection Improvements

Five intersections have been designated for improvement ranging from intersection geometry to traffic control. Additionally, seventeen intersections have been designated for crosswalk improvements. The locations indicated on the map below are the top priority for these improvements. Specific recommendations can be found on the following pages.

The intersections located in proximity to the Village Center should be joint road improvement projects with the developers of the centers. As mentioned previously, traffic roundabouts should be considered for the following intersections: Rella/Montebello/Airmont Road; Grandview/Spook Rock Road; Viola/Spook Rock Road.



Transportation Improvements

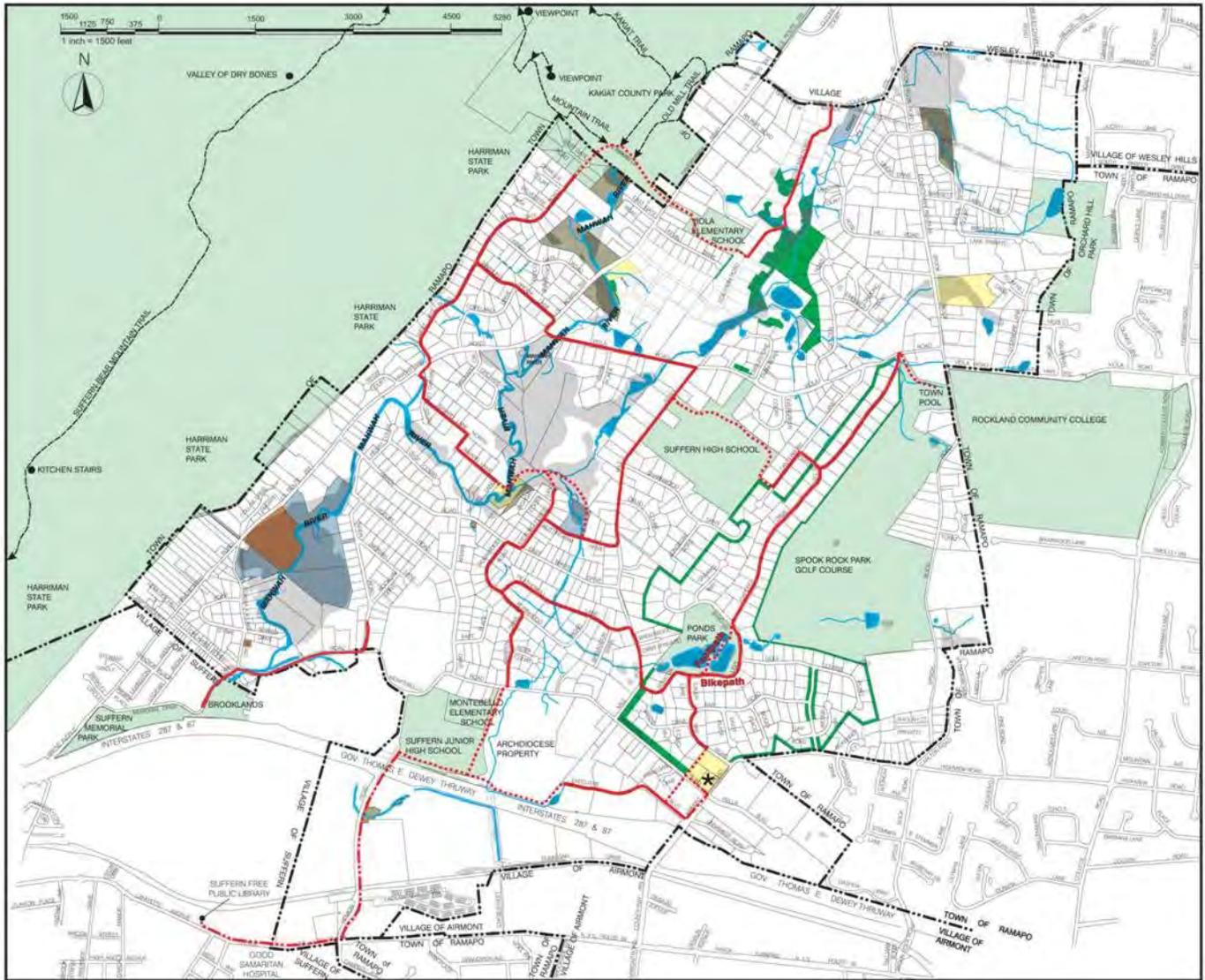
The Plan recommends that the following specific street and intersection improvements be studied:

- **Viola Road/ Mile Road** - Intersection improvements should include pedestrian crosswalks and traffic control measures such as stop signs. Improvements could include raised intersections (tables) or texturing the intersection.
- **Viola Road/ Spook Rock Road** - Intersection improvements should include pedestrian crosswalks and traffic control devices such as stop signs. Improvements could include raised intersections (tables) or texturing the intersection.
- **Mayer Road/ Route 202** - Intersection improvements should include pedestrian crosswalks and traffic control devices such as stop signs. Improvements could include raised intersections (tables) or texturing the intersection.
- **Route 202** - Pedestrian/bicycle crosswalks are recommended along Route 202 at the intersections with the following Village streets: Orchard Street, Wanamaker (Lake) Road, Mayer Road, Bayard Lane, Viola Road, Viola Elementary School ingress/egress, and Grandview Road.
- **Montebello Road** - Pedestrian/bicycle crosswalks are recommended along Montebello Road at the intersections with the following Village streets: Hemion Road, Kirsten Drive, Mile Road, and North Airmont Road.
- **Montebello Road/ Hemion Road** - Intersection improvements should include pedestrian crosswalks and traffic control devices such as stop signs. Improvements could include raised intersections or intersection texturing.
- **North Airmont Road** - Pedestrian/bicycle crosswalks are recommended along North Airmont Road at the intersections with the following Village streets: Executive Drive, Montebello Road and Par Road.
- **Hemion Road between Route 59 and Lackawanna Trail** - Intersection improvements should include pedestrian crosswalks and traffic control devices such as stop signs or traffic signals. Improvements could include raised intersections or intersection texturing.
- **Rella Boulevard/ North Airmont Road** - Street improvements include the development of a large traffic circle. Add pedestrian crosswalks to this intersection
- **Village Center** - Street improvements for this Village include the development of a street grid of 400 foot X 250 foot blocks.
- **North Airmont Road/ Exit 14B** - Install a “NO RIGHT ON RED” sign to prevent drivers from turning right from the westbound NY Thruway exit ramp onto North Airmont Road when the ramp light is red.
- **North Airmont Road** - Southbound should be one lane north of Par Road. Signage northbound for the merge north of Par Road must be improved. North Airmont Road between Par Road and Route 59 should be redesigned as a boulevard, with a landscaped center median.
- **Hemion Road** - Install a landscaped median to create a boulevard.
- **Hemion Road/ Route 59/ Campbell Ave** - Add pedestrian crosswalks to this intersection.
- **Mayer Road** - Install a landscaped median to create a boulevard.

Montebello Trail Plan

Montebello Trail

The Montebello Trail forms the backbone of the pedestrian/bike circulation plan. It is the basic network as proposed by the Montebello Parks and Recreation Commission. The plans that follow enhance this network and provide more specific recommendations. The plan connects the major recreation and activity generators in the Village. It is meant to complement the natural character of the landscape and provide opportunities for mobility beyond dependence of the private car.



EXISTING FEATURES

- CONSERVATION & WALKWAY EASEMENTS
- PUBLIC SCHOOLS/ PARKS
- ROCKLAND COUNTY OWNED LAND (NOT PARKS)
- TOWN OF RAMAPO OWNED LAND (NOT PARKS)
- VILLAGE OF MONTEBELLO OWNED LAND (NOT PARKS)
- RAMAPO CENTRAL S.D. OWNED LAND (NOT SCHOOLS)

- UNITED WATER OWNED LAND
- WATERCOURSES
- MARKED FOOT TRAILS
- WETLANDS
- * VILLAGE HALL

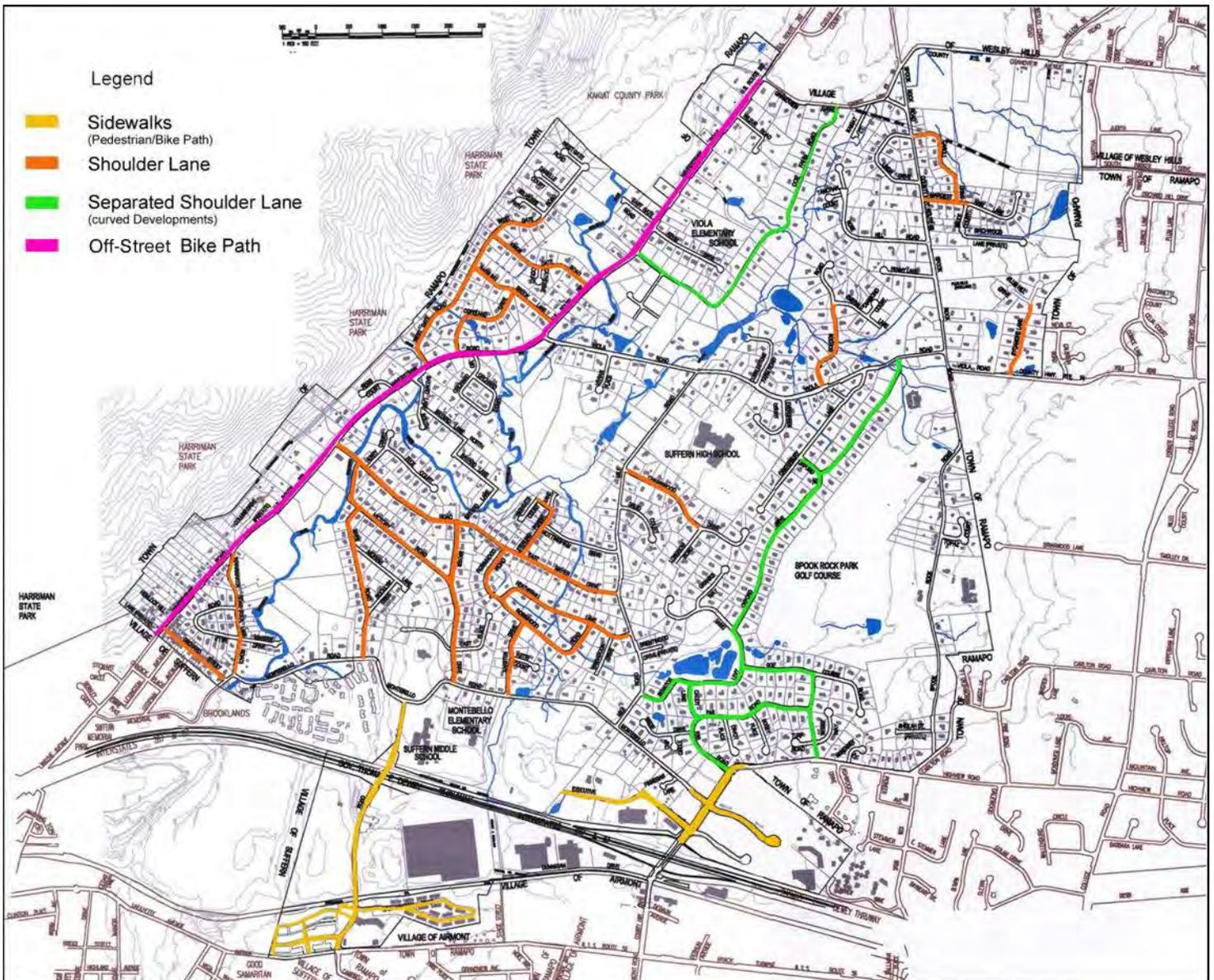
PROPOSED FEATURES

- ON-STREET TRAIL (NO IMPROVEMENT REQUIRED)
- OFF-STREET TRAIL (REQUIRES CONSTRUCTION)
- TRAIL FOLLOWS SIDEWALK

Pedestrian & Bicycle Improvements

The map below illustrates the locations for pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Pedestrian paths are recommended on one side of the street or road, utilizing the right of way and additional space which can be created when traffic calming occurs. Recommended shoulder lanes for bicycles (bicycle lanes on the edge of the pavement) utilize roadway pavement where roads have been narrowed and designated with striping and bike/pedestrian symbols. Recommended separated shoulder lanes also utilize roadway pavement where a road has been narrowed, but are separated from the roadway with curbing. All roads designated for bicycle use should be stenciled with bike/pedestrian symbols on the physical pavement. The designated bike path on Route 202 is planned by the New York State Department of Transportation. Sidewalks are required on all streets in the Village Center. Sidewalks could be installed in the following locations:

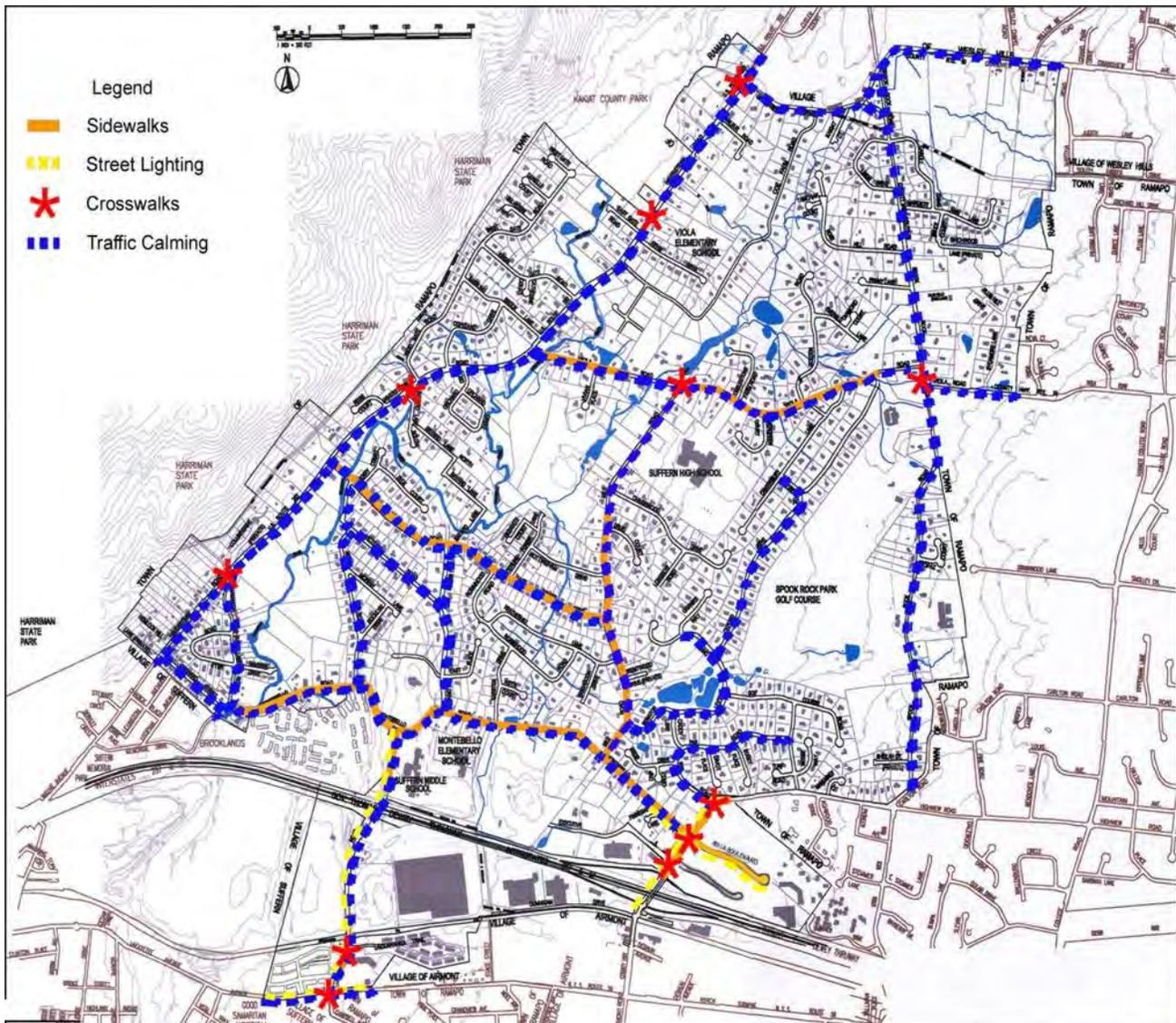
- West side of North Airmont Road from Par Road to Village boundary line.
- East side of Hemion Road from Montebello Road to Route 59.
- Rella Boulevard; Executive Boulevard; Lackawanna Trail.



Appendix A: Traffic Improvements

The map below presents the synthesis of public reactions from the Village Summit and Vision Translation Workshops. Due to the high levels of speed and noise resonating from vehicles traveling at high speeds, most local roads have been cited as a problem / concern. Several traffic calming techniques have been recommended in order to resolve these issues. Scientifically documented, high levels of speed and noise on residential streets and roads decrease safety and livability margins, resulting in negative effects on overall property values. One of the expressed goals of the Circulation Plan is to “calm” the traffic to a level deemed safe for residents. The posted area speed throughout residential streets and roads within the Village of Montebello is 30 mph, and 45 mph on US Highway 202. Most of the streets and roads in the Village are experiencing much higher speeds, in part due to the lack of traffic and speed limit enforcement.

The map below illustrates those streets and roads for which traffic calming techniques are strongly recommended. Traffic calming techniques include narrowing lanes, reducing posted speeds, change in surfaces, and the introduction of crosswalks, bike trails and sidewalks.





*The Village of Montebello,
New York*

OCTOBER 2003

Village Center Plan

Consultants:
A. Nelessen Associates, Princeton, NJ
Robert Geneslaw Co., Suffern, NY

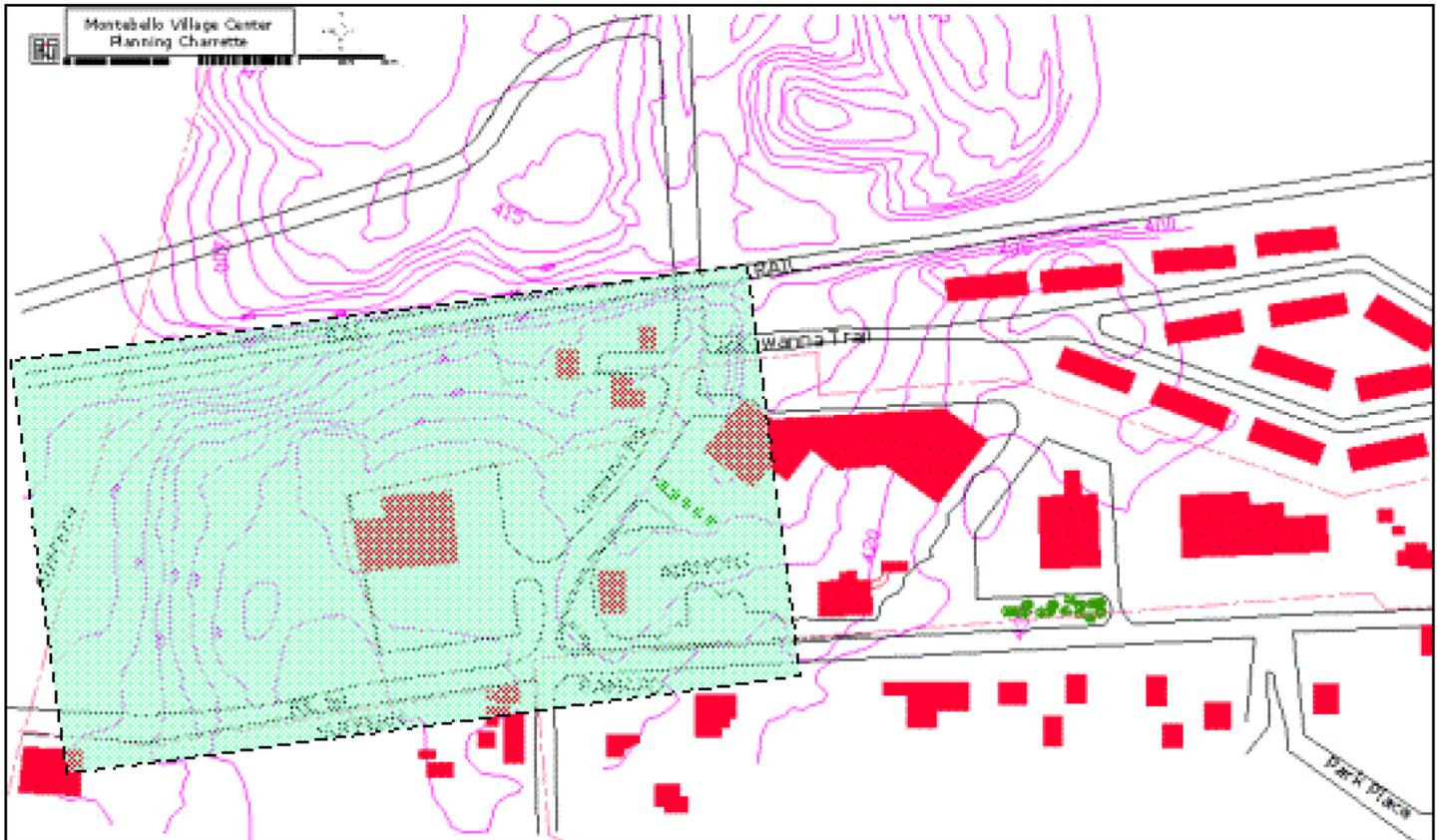
Mission Statement

The objectives of establishing a mixed use village center in the vicinity of the intersection of Hemion Road and Route 59 are as follows:

- Plan and design a mixed-use Village Center incorporating unique architectural and visual characteristics that complement the character and scale of the Village and unique to its site.
- Allow uses in the Village Center that meet the local service commercial and retail needs of the Village that complement but do not excessively compete with potential uses that enhance the redevelopment of Suffern's business district.
- Spatially design the Village Center in a manner that fosters social interaction and gathering among Village residents.
- Minimize potential traffic congestion on Route 59 by creating an interconnected network of internal streets and boulevards in the center.
- Undertake design improvements that enhance the value of existing properties while generating the greatest profit to developers and the highest tax revenues to the Village.

The Plan for the Village Center provided in this Section of the Comprehensive Plan represents an illustrative example of how development of the properties that are included in the Center may be coordinated to create a cohesive mixed use environment. It is also based on secondary and general information regarding topography, location of property boundaries, etc. The Planning Board, in reviewing site-specific projects, shall be guided by the general site layout, architectural, and circulation design recommendations contained herein. Ultimately, the overall design that the Planning Board approves shall be consistent with the goals and objectives related to the Village Center, but the overall design and layout of the Village Center as presented here may change in order to coordinate the development of properties that are currently in separate ownership, and to take into consideration site opportunities and constraints based on site-specific data and fully engineered plans.

Area of Design Concern



One area is presently recommended as a mixed-use Village Center. The site was selected based on location, the availability of adjoining vacant land, recommendations from the public workshops and Comprehensive Plan Committee.

The Village Center site (Route 59 and Hemion Road) consists of approximately 25 acres. The project area (area bound by the green box on the map above) encompasses both sides of Hemion Road as improvements are contemplated to them. Controlling the design of both sides of a street is critical to creating the desired visual and spatial characteristics and is a fundamental principle of good Civic Design. This plan will incorporate the existing shopping plaza (expanded to include a day care center) and small offices located on the west side of Hemion Road north of the day care center. A rail line forms the northern edge of the property and the Village's boundary with the Village of Suffern forms the western edge.

The site has moderately steep topography along the northern edge of the project area. The rolling character of most of the site will add to its positive spatial character.

Negatively-rated features

These images of the site and immediate surroundings received a 0 to negative rating values in the community-wide VPS. Here again, the building of a well planned and designed center will increase the perceptual value and improve the image of the Village.

VPS Value - 0



The existing Indian Rock Shopping Center is of a better design than many strip commercial shopping plazas, however it still received a neutral rating. The design of Village Center must significantly improve this location for not just convenience but also for image and market appeal.

VPS Value - 4



The entry level townhouses are better designed than many others, however they still received negative ratings by the community. The design of any new townhouses must improve upon the design of those pictured here.

VPS Value - 6

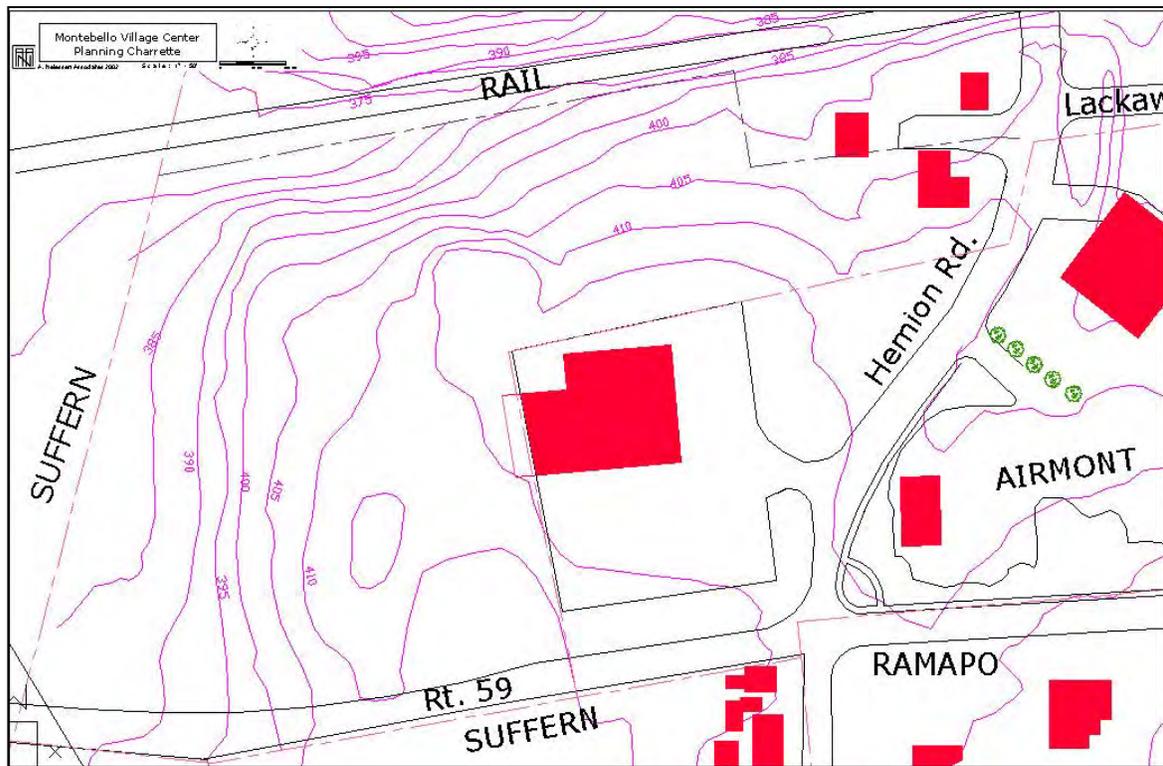


This photograph was taken just before the reconstruction began on the vacant half of the shopping plaza. This image was considered very unacceptable to the community.

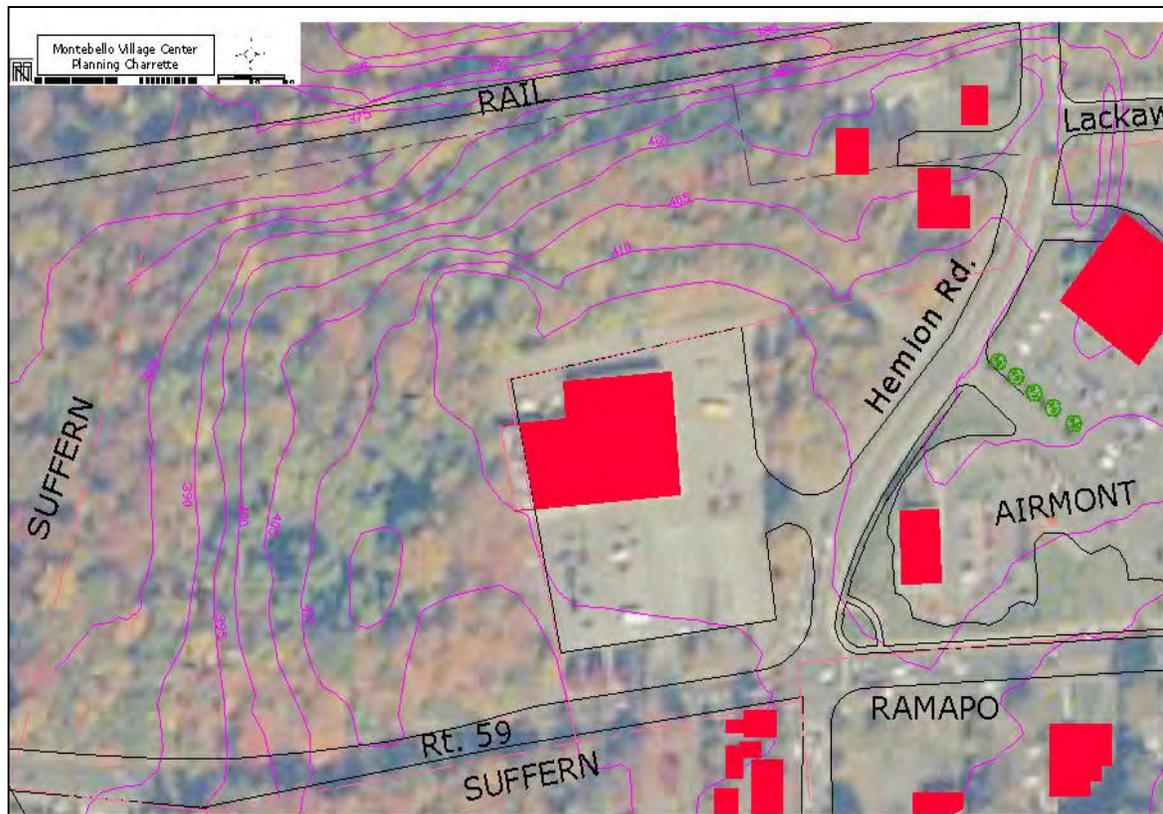
VPS Value +1



The image above is a computer simulation of redevelopment of the site on the left. This image was used in the Community Visual Preference survey as one option for the site. Notice that the gray SUV remains in the same location.



Site Topographic Map - The site contains rolling terrain with the steepest topography found along the northern edge.



The Site Topographic Map has been superimposed onto an aerial photograph. The photograph illustrates existing tree cover, buildings and paved areas.

Existing Visual Character (5/02)



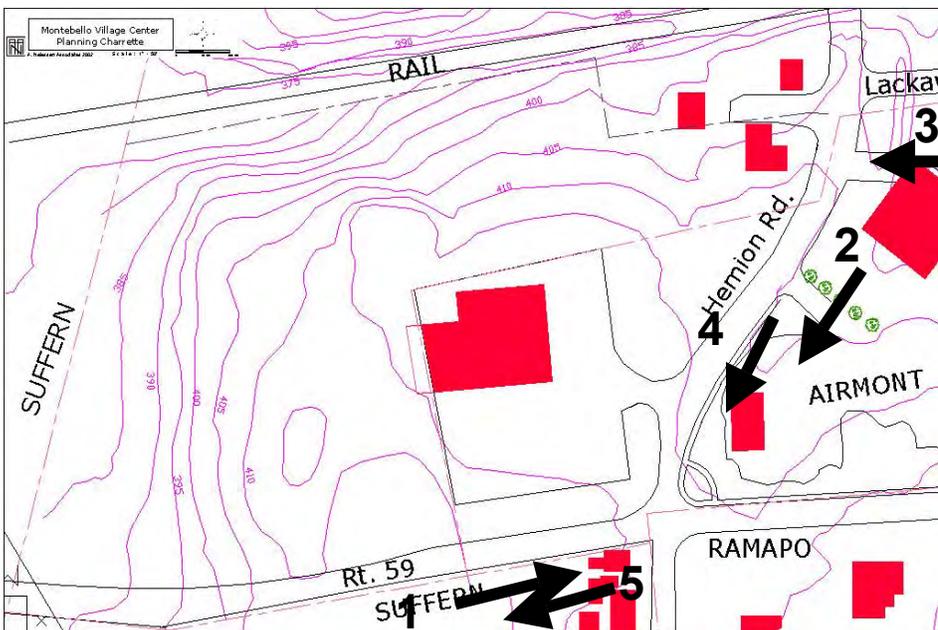
Location 1
View from a sidewalk along Route 59.



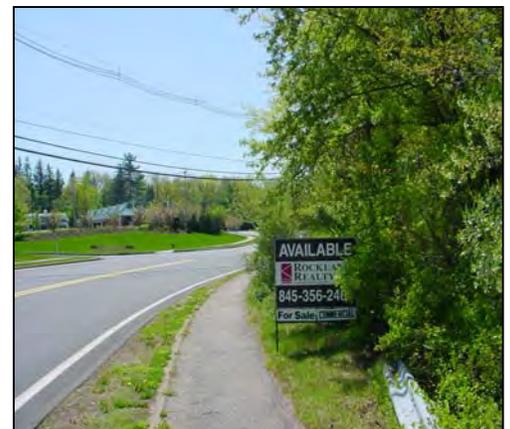
Location 2
View from a sidewalk along Hemion Rd.



Location 3
View from Lackawanna Trail intersection with Hemion Road.



The images on this page show various views around the site.



Location 4
View from a sidewalk along Hemion Rd



Location 5
View from a sidewalk along Route 59

Architectural and Site Plan

Site, Block, And Design Principles

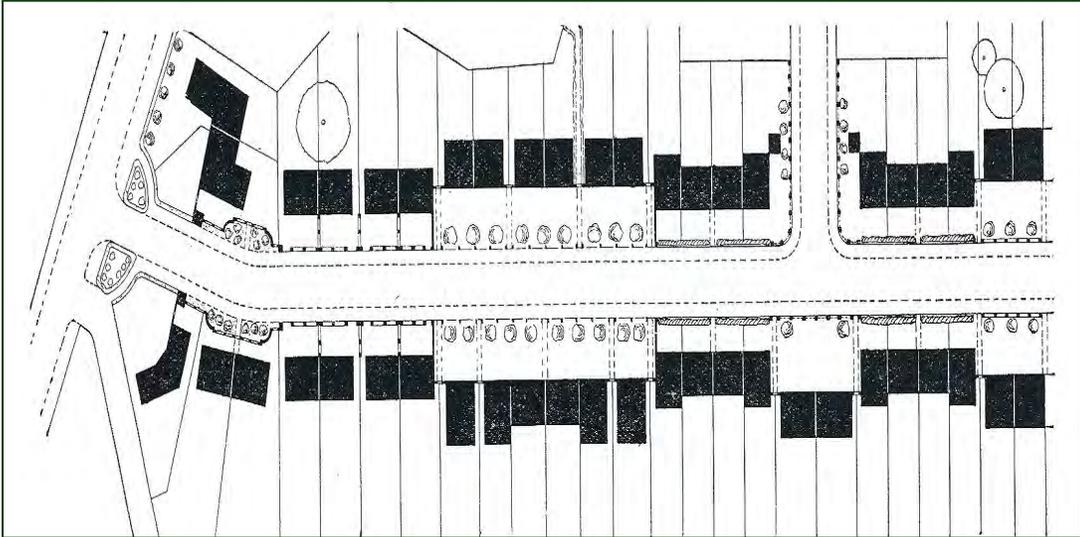
Ten design principles have been established for the Village Center.

The Village Center must be planned and designed to conform to these principles. The Village Center design must incorporate scale and character of buildings and spaces valued as positive by the community in the Visual Preference Survey. Adherence to classical design principles and standards will enable the Village to achieve the visual, spatial, civic and market character it desires for the Center.

Principle One

Buildings in the Village Center must front directly onto a street with a prominent pedestrian realm and no parking in front yards.

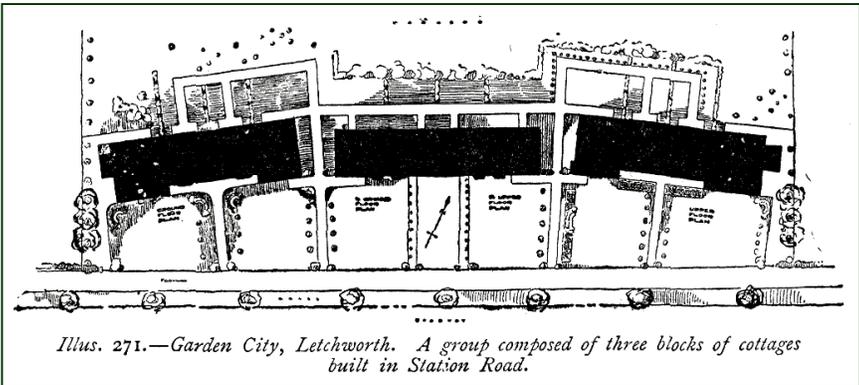
The locations of the buildings are of critical visual and spatial importance relative to where they will be perceived by the most people from streets. The visual and spatial characteristics of the streets and spaces, further depends on the appropriate proportion of the street, the architectural design, scale and modulation of building setbacks, changes in topography or curves, and visual termination of the streets.



The above illustration depicts a gateway treatment to the street, the bend for spatial definition, and the setbacks to define secondary spaces.

Principle Two

Use many smaller buildings to create and define the spaces.



Illustrations from CIVIC DESIGN

Commercial Design Standards – Retail Edge

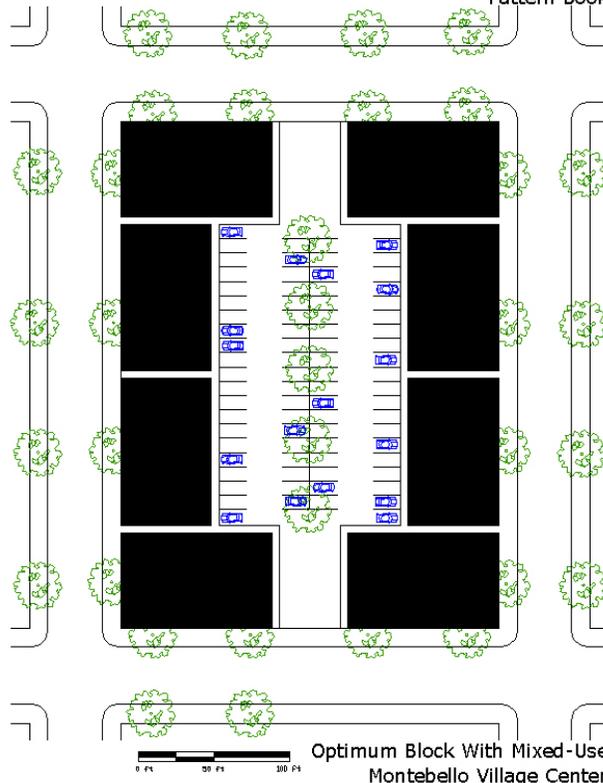
Principles One and Two - Examples

The photographs below illustrate building locations on a block and the relationship of retail uses to the sidewalk. Parking is located behind the buildings, and walkways located between the buildings connect parking areas to the retail frontage. All blocks are programmed for on-street parallel or diagonal parking.

The interface between the blocks require that there be similar building uses as well as streetscape features on both sides of the street.



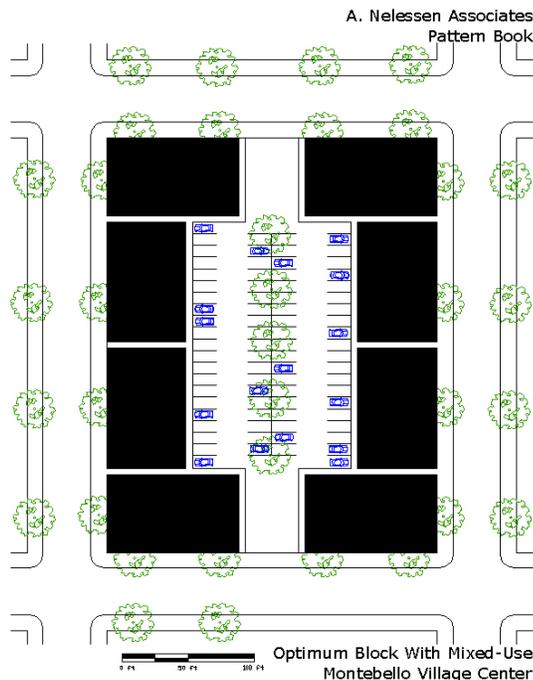
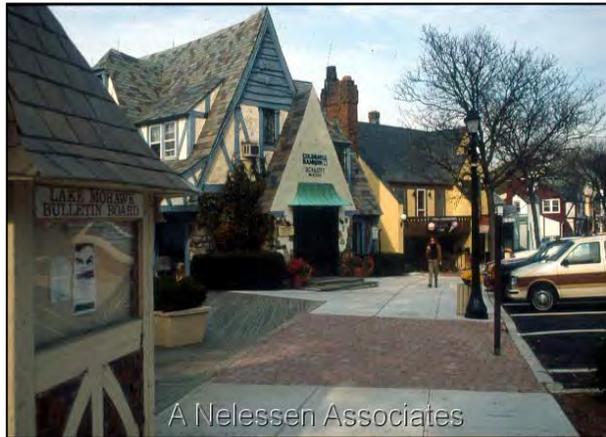
A. Neessen Associates
Pattern Book



Commercial Block Standards – Mixed-Use

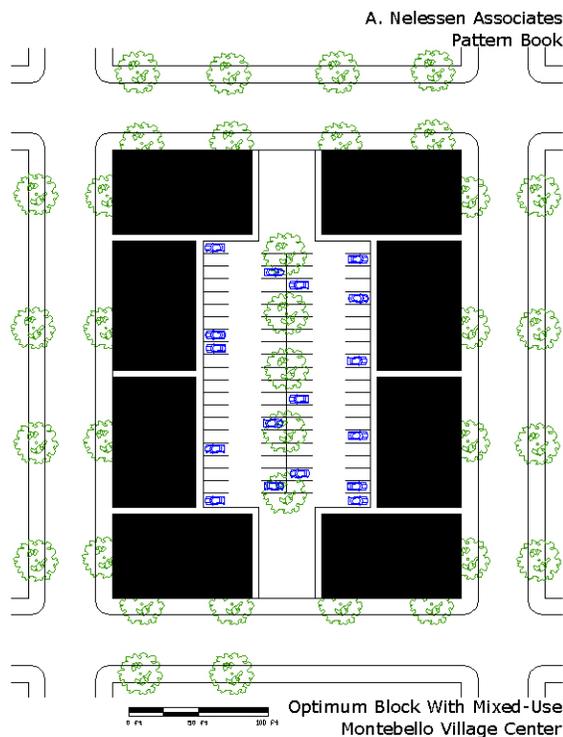
Principles One and Two - Example

The photographs below illustrate mixed-use buildings that front directly onto the sidewalk and street. Mixed use buildings have retail on the ground floor with offices or residential uses in the upper stories. The block form shown below can be designed with a variety of architectural expressions.



Principles One and Two - Example

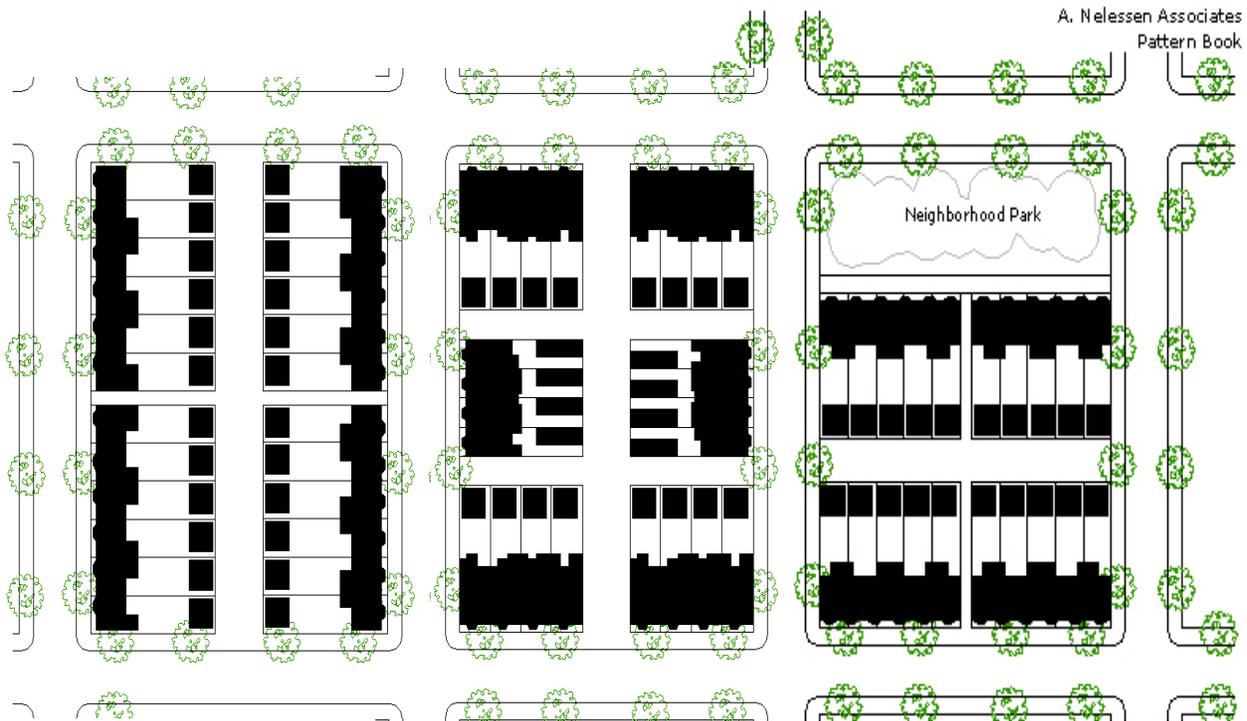
The photograph below illustrates a small office building that has a residential scale. Parking is in the center of the block, accessed through an opening in the building wall. This building's mass allows a continuous street façade to be designed that is in character with the residential or other mixed-use buildings in the center. Buildings are set back from the sidewalk with a small planted area.



Residential Block Standards – Single Family Attached

Principles One and Two - Example

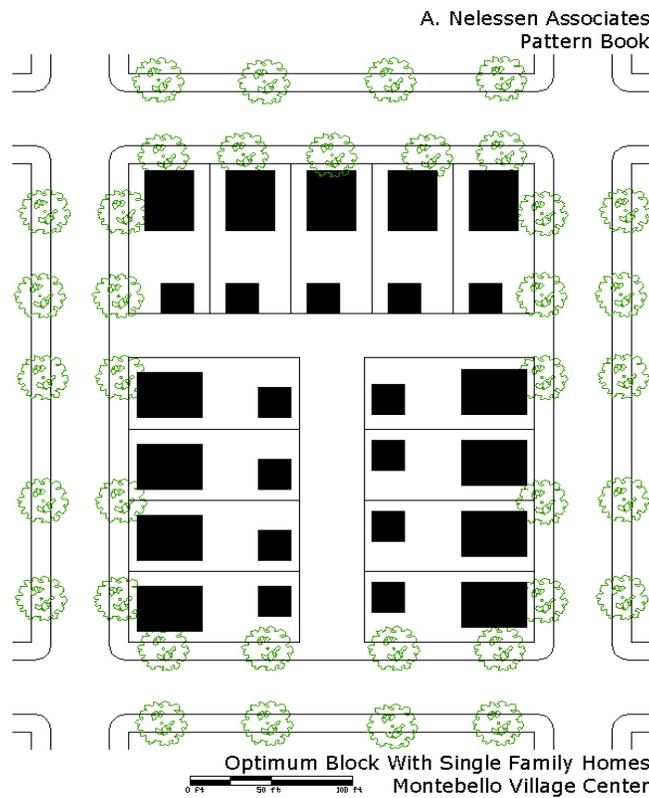
The photographs below illustrate the location of new attached single family housing on a block in a village setting. Three block layouts are illustrated using classical two- and three-story single family attached dwellings (also referred to as “townhouses”). Each unit is accessed from the rear of the buildings to limit curb cuts and provide a more pleasing street edge. In these examples, a two-car garage is accessed from a rear residential lane. Garages and driveways should not be accessed from the front of townhouse blocks. The blocks have a range of rear access lane designs.



Residential Block Standards – Single Family Detached

Principle One and Two - Example

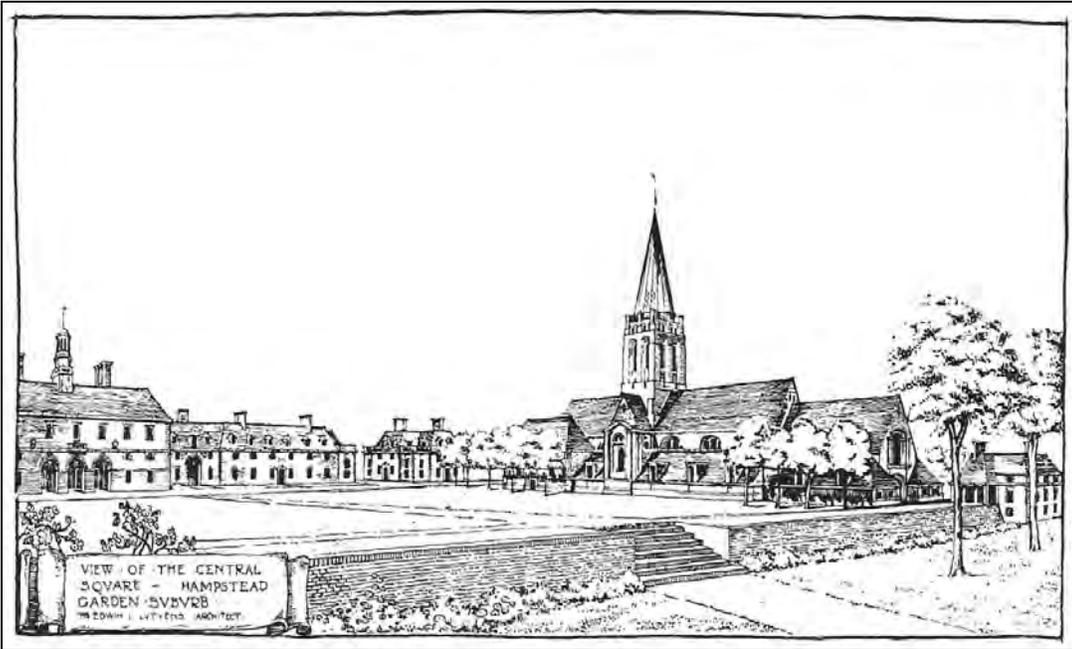
The photograph below illustrates the building location of new single family housing on a block in a Village setting. The block has a T-alley with two- or three-car garages in the rear yards accessed from a residential lane. In this way a greater visual and spatial value is captured by not having the garage, the most detracting element of most housing, visible from the street.



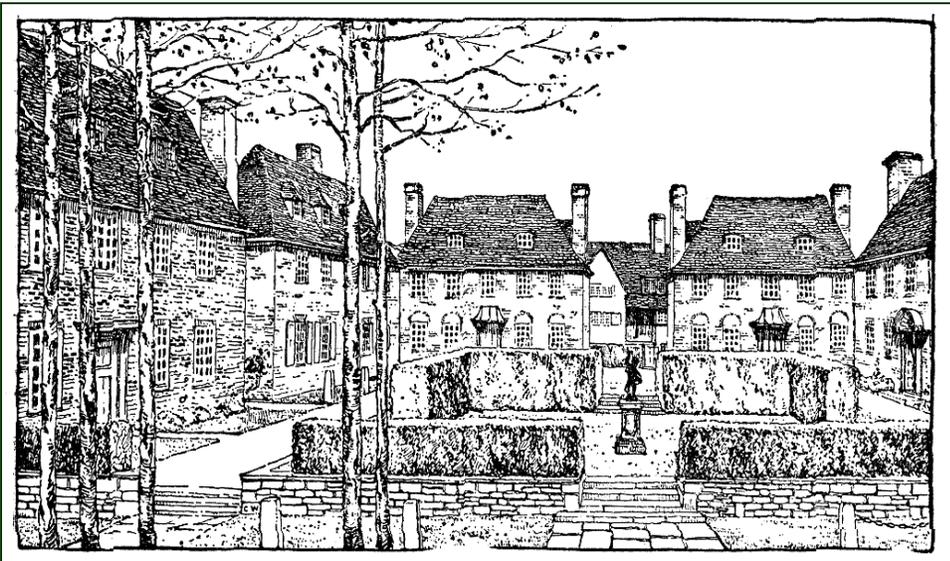
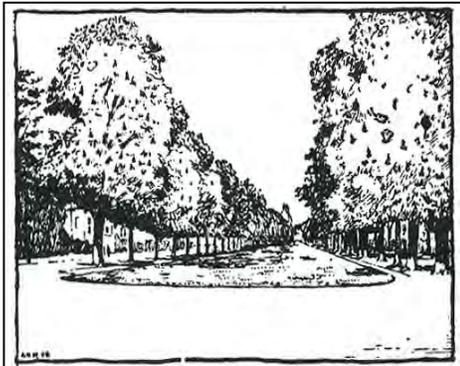
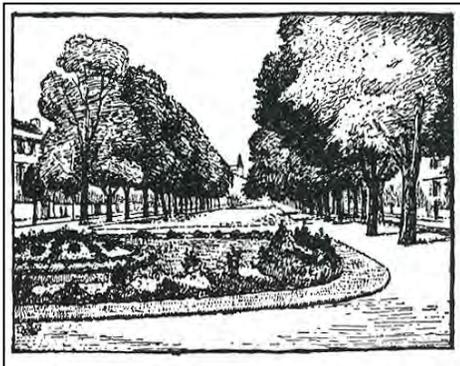
Principle Three

Buildings must be site planned and designed to create definable public spaces.

Public spaces are an important feature of a Village Center. The size of the space must be proportionate to the height of the buildings. Visual elements, for example bell towers and chimneys, enhance the scale and proportion of the space.



The image above illustrates a classic example for an open corner. The stone walls, with stairs leading to the elevated plaza, further defines the space.



Attractive small spaces can be created using small buildings. The green square above is formed by 6 small buildings designed in a rectangular pattern.

All Illustrations on this page are from CIVIC DESIGN

Commercial Design Standards – Public Plazas

Principle Three cont'd

Incorporate public gathering spaces into the center. Use open facades, street cafes, paved and green plazas.

The images below illustrate these building and spatial forms that should be incorporated into the block and building design.



Park and Streetscape Design Standards – Residential

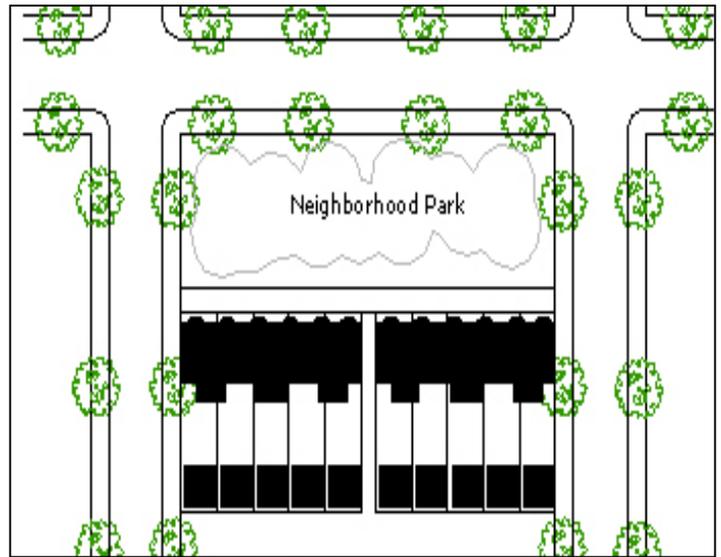
Principle Three cont'd

Small parks and street planting must be designed into residential areas forming a continuous network of green.

The photographs below illustrate the types of parks and streetscapes that are required in the Village Center.



A small neighborhood park at the end of the block.



The block above illustrates the small park integrated into the end of the block.



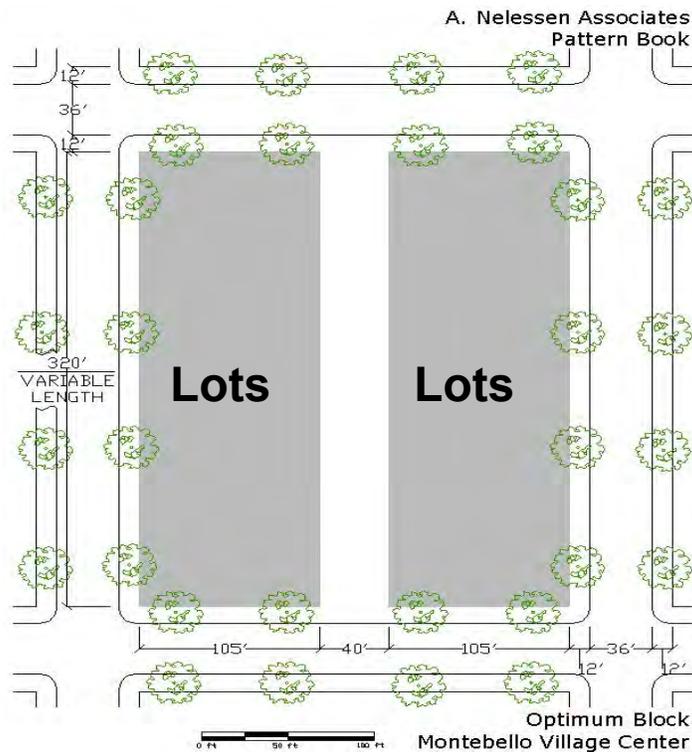
A small neighborhood park.

Principle Four

Design the centers using a block pattern for flexibility, better traffic circulation and greater developability.

The optimum block, shown below, allows the layout of a range of building types, lot sizes, and is ideally designed with a lane down the center of the block for access to parking. Streets are located on the edges of the block. Street trees and sidewalks are within the street right of way.

A block can have a variety of shapes and sizes. The optimum size of the block is 250 feet x 320 feet for most residential neighborhoods and small-scaled streets of mixed-use buildings with parking in the rear. When assembled, blocks create a network of streets for the Village center. When this block pattern is applied to a gentle slope, the visual and spatial character of the street can be significantly enhanced.



Recommended Block Typology and Dimensions for Montebello:

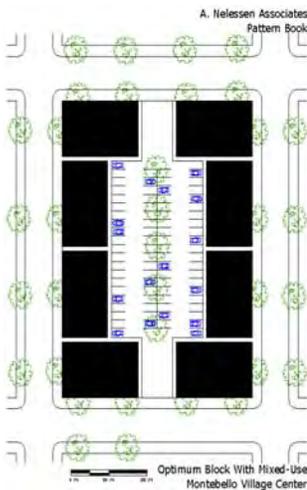
250' x 320'

Principle Four cont'd

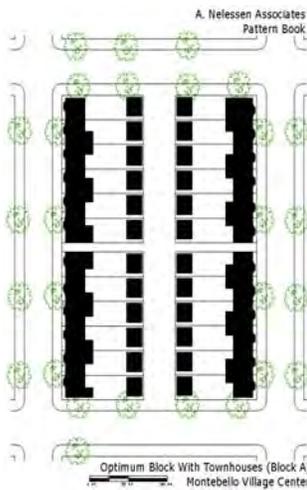
The block typologies shown on this page illustrate the various uses possible on the typical (optimum) block. The building types include:

- Block 1** **Mixed-use, Office or Apartments**
- Block 2A** **Townhouses – full block – two frontages**
- Block 2B** **Townhouses – four faces of the block**
- Block 2C** **Townhouses – with front park**
- Block 3** **Single family – small lot**

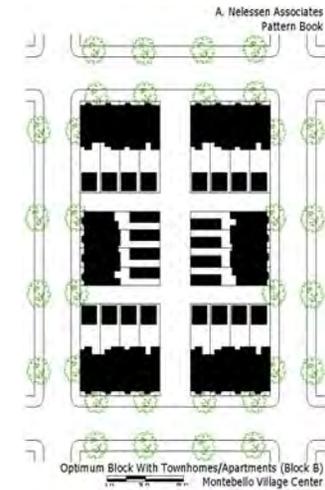
Block 1



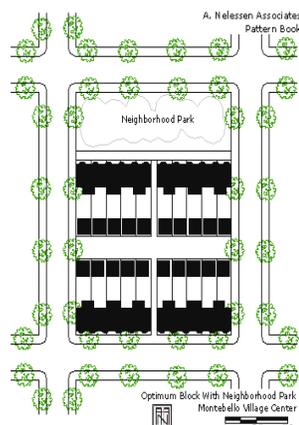
Block 2A



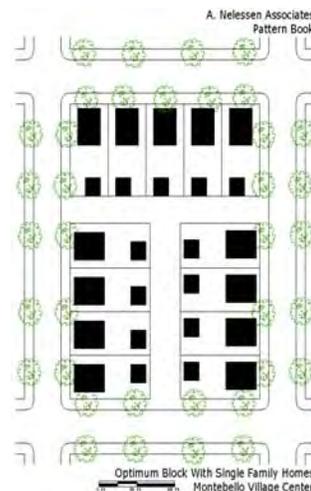
Block 2B



Block 2C



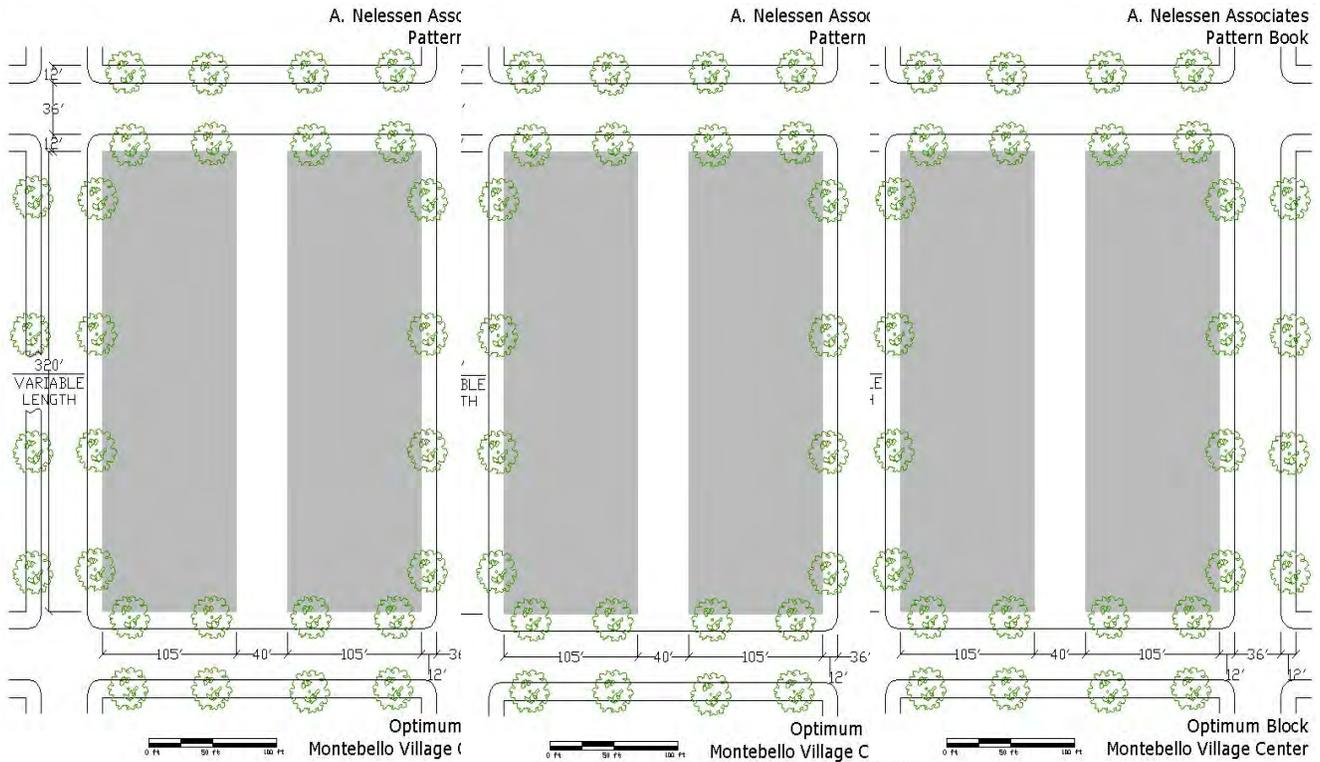
Block 3



Principle Five

Connect sets of blocks to create a network of streets for the Village Center.

This network of streets allows for multiple circulation paths for both vehicles and people.

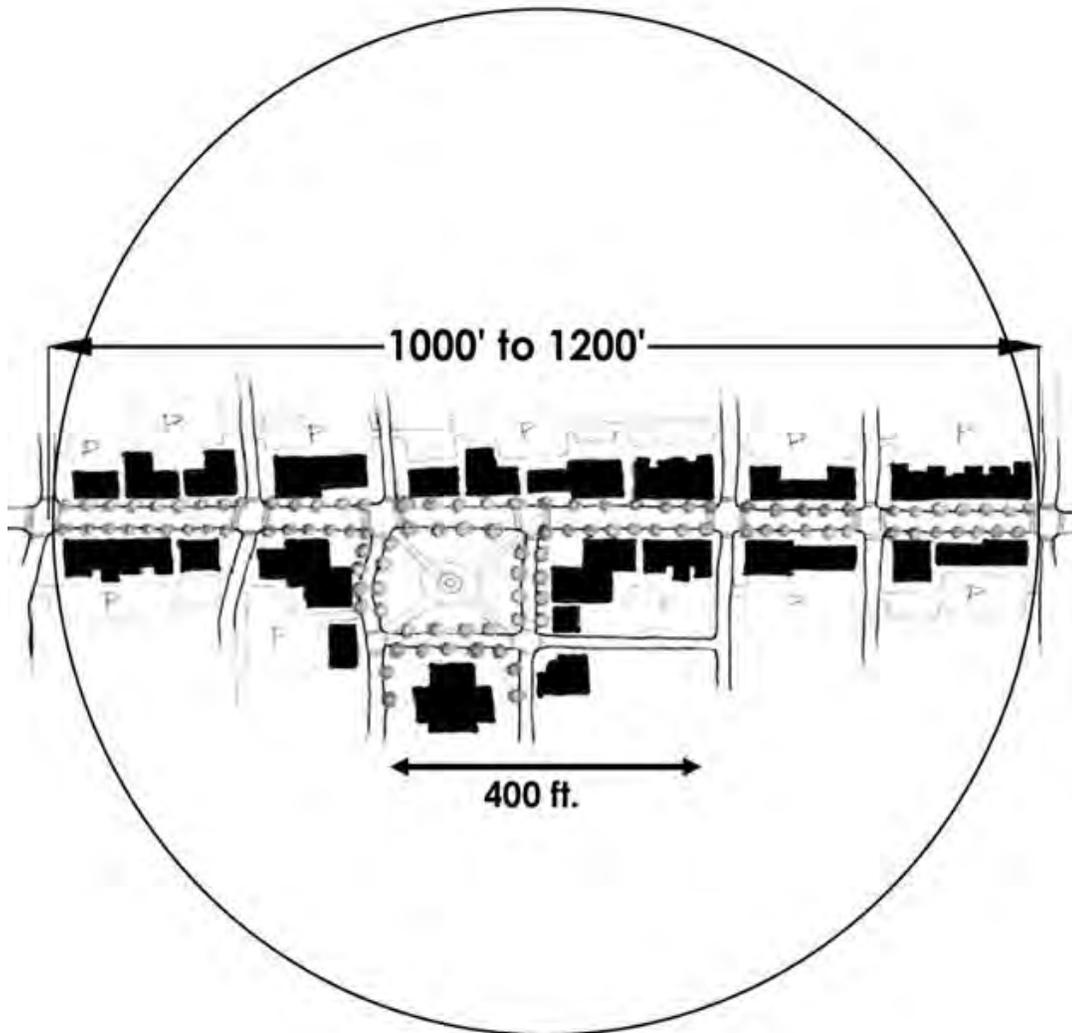


Commercial Block Standards – Retail Frontage

Principle Six

Concentrate retail along a continuous frontage not to exceed 1000 feet.

Research indicates that the pedestrian shopping experience is limited in most cases to a 1,000 to 1,200 foot walking distance. Beyond this distance, people will prefer to use an automobile or simply not walk. The 500 to 600 foot dimension from the center to the edge is a distance that can be walked in approximately 3 minutes by the average pedestrian. To encourage people to walk this distance, the “main street” experience must be positive and engaging with a pedestrian realm containing varied and interesting building edges, proper sidewalk widths, street trees, human-scaled signs and weather protection. The length of the frontage must be maintained and not exceeded, to assure that the Village Center maintains a level of vibrancy. The template below calls for the Village Green/Plaza to be a focal point of the plan. The pedestrian realm should be of the highest quality with parking adjacent to the curb and in the rear of the buildings. Note that the buildings front onto a grid of streets with access to the parking at the rear of the buildings.



The diagram above illustrates the ideal retail frontage for a center.