



# NEW SCOTLAND HAMLET MASTER PLAN

JULY 2012

PREPARED BY



PREPARED FOR

Town of New Scotland, NY  
*and the*  
Capital District Transportation  
Committee (CDTC)



PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I: Introduction.....	1
Section II: Existing Conditions.....	5
Section III: Public Participation.....	17
Section IV: Future Land Use Recommendations.....	19
Section V: Zoning Recommendations.....	25
Section VI: Design Guidelines Recommendations.....	35
Section VII: Transportation Recommendations.....	43
Section VIII: Implementation.....	53

## APPENDICES (under separate cover)

Appendix A: Existing Conditions

Appendix B: Meeting notes - Public Workshop #1 - December 2011

Appendix C: Meeting notes - Public Workshop #2 - May 2012

**Disclaimer:**

This report was funded in part through a grant from the Federal Highway Administration [and Federal Transit Administration], U.S. Department of Transportation. The views and opinions of the authors [or agency] expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U. S. Department of Transportation. This report was prepared in cooperation with the Town of New Scotland, the Capital District Transportation Committee, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, Albany County and the New York State Department of Transportation. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of these government agencies. The recommendations presented in this report are intended to support the Town of New Scotland’s efforts to establish a clear vision for the Hamlet of New Scotland, centered on the area around NY 85 and NY 85A, and create the New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan, the goal of which is to identify the desired future land use for the hamlet and its surroundings, and the tools that will help the town realize the vision. The recommendations are conceptual in nature and are presented to characterize the types of improvements that are desirable, and that may be implemented as part of future land use and transportation improvement projects. The recommendations do not commit the Town of New Scotland, CDTC, NYSDOT, or Albany County to funding any of the conceptual improvements. All transportation concepts will require further engineering evaluation and review.

**Environmental Justice**

Increased attention has been given to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) related to its ability to balance overall mobility benefits of transportation projects against protecting quality of life of low-income and minority residents of a community. President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898 to bring attention to environmental and human health impacts of low-income and minority communities - referred to as environmental justice - when federal funding is involved. The goal of environmental justice review is to ensure that any adverse human health or environmental effects of a government action, such as federally-supported roadway or transit project, does not disproportionately affect minority or low-income residents of a community or neighborhood. Environmental justice is a public policy objective that can help improve the quality of life for those whose interests have traditionally been overlooked.

The CDTC staff has completed a review of civil rights/environmental justice impacts of transportation actions proposed under this study. Based on a review of the latest socioeconomic data available, the CDTC staff has determined that there are a total of 0 TAZ’s in the New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan Study that are identified as Environmental Justice Target Population Areas. All of the transportation recommendations for the study would provide fair access and do not result in negative impacts to any minority or low-income residents. However, additional information gathered through the public review process could suggest a different outcome. In addition, examination of regional equity impacts would be necessary if any transportation action is considered for inclusion in CDTC’s Transportation Improvement Program.

Equitable access to, consideration within, and effects of the design and implementation of federally assisted projects is also a key aspect of environmental justice. However, design and construction is the responsibility of implementing agencies in the region. For projects identified in this study, implementing agencies would either be the New York State Department of Transportation, Capital District Transportation Authority, Albany County, or the Town of New Scotland.

EJ Target Population Areas are defined as any TAZ with low income, minority, or Hispanic populations equal to or greater than the regional average.

The regional averages are as follows:

Minority Population	11.2%
Hispanic Population	2.6%
Low Income Population	8.9%

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

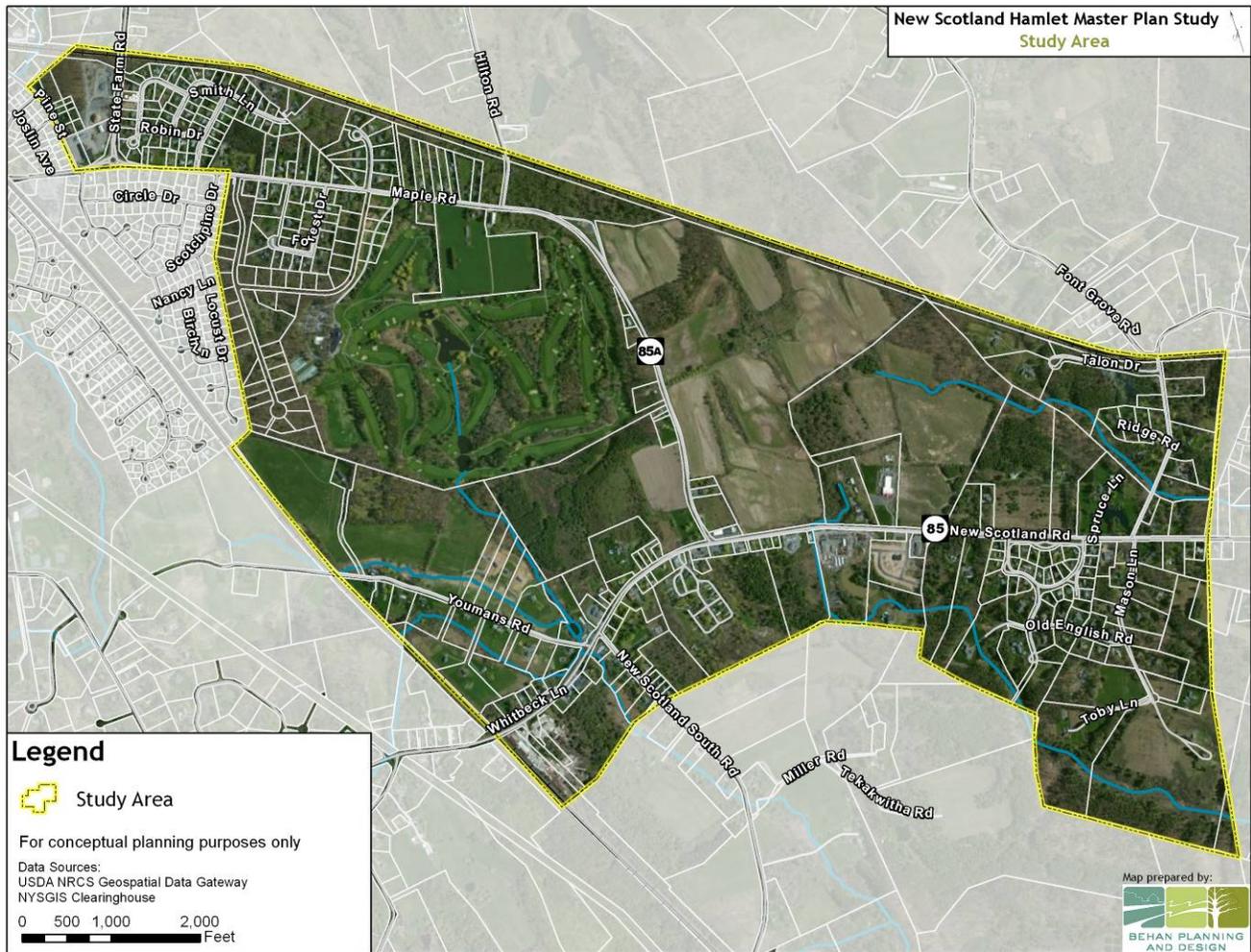
The Town of New Scotland is a predominantly rural residential community, located within a short commuting distance of the City of Albany and adjacent to the suburban towns of Guilderland and Bethlehem. Following several previous studies, the Town of New Scotland recognized the importance of establishing a clear vision for the Hamlet of New Scotland and partnered with the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) to help create the New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan. The goal of the master plan is to identify desired future land uses, conceptual development patterns, and corresponding transportation enhancements for the hamlet and its surroundings, and to suggest tools that will help the town realize its vision. By taking a proactive approach to planning for the New Scotland hamlet, the town is positioning itself to encourage and accommodate future growth. Implementing the plan, through amendments to the Town’s zoning and other actions, will be a critical next step in this process.



*The New Scotland Hamlet Study Area is in the northeastern quadrant of the town, and less than 10 miles from downtown Albany.*

### Study Area

The study area comprises the hamlet of New Scotland and the immediately surrounding area. Hamlets do not have specific geographic boundaries, however the hamlet is generally thought of as being centered on the intersection of NYS Routes 85 and 85A (New Scotland Road and Maple Road respectively). For the purposes of this project the study area boundaries are roughly the municipal boundary with the Town of Bethlehem to the east, the former rail line and future Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail to the north, the Village of Voorheesville and the active rail line to the west, and the southern boundaries of the Commercial and Medium Density Residential (MDR) zoning districts to the south. The core of the study area is the town’s Commercial zoning district, with portions of the MDR and Residential Agricultural (RA) district included on the periphery.



### Process

The creation of the New Scotland Hamlet Plan has been a collaborative effort between a Study Advisory Committee (SAC), the CDTC, and the town’s planning consultant, Behan Planning and Design. The SAC includes a cross section of area residents, mostly landowners within the study area, and local

agency representatives. The SAC met regularly throughout the planning process to help guide the recommendations of the hamlet plan.

A detailed inventory and analysis of existing conditions and previous studies provided a strong foundation for the hamlet plan. The inventory and analysis is summarized in the second section of this report with the full detailed report included as an appendix.

Public input is critical to a plan’s success. Input received from a well attended public workshop in December 2011 provided the basis of many of the plan’s recommendations. A second workshop was held in the spring of 2012 to gather additional feedback and refine the plan recommendations. Summaries of the public workshops are included in the third section of this report.



*The study area along Route 85 has a significant amount of development, consisting of a mix of land uses, primarily commercial and residential. There is considerably less development along Route 85A, and the majority of the land area within the study area is undeveloped.*

*The center of the hamlet is generally considered to be the intersection of NYS Routes 85 and 85A (photo at right).*

*Images copyright Pictometry 2006-2007*



PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Overview

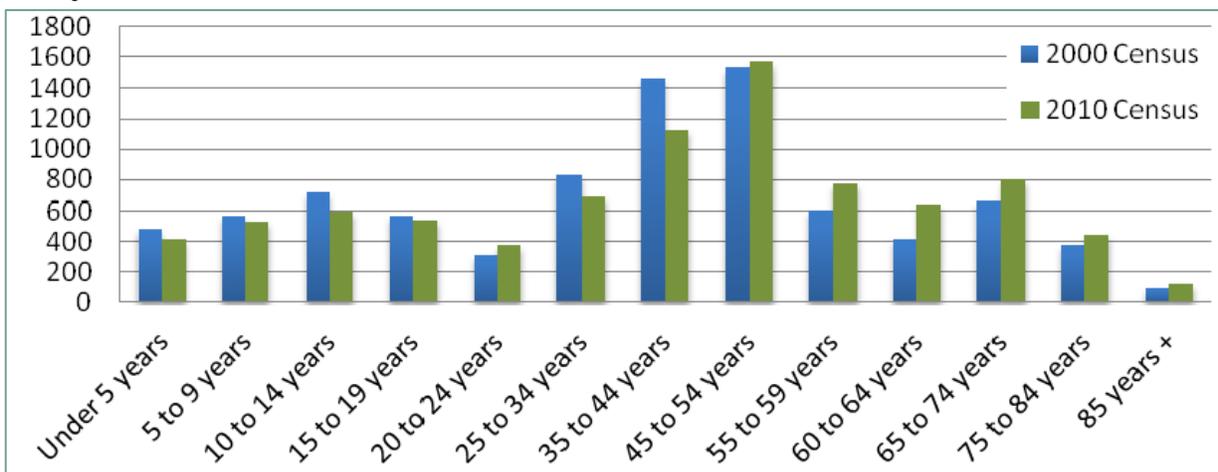
A comprehensive inventory of existing conditions for the New Scotland hamlet was completed at the beginning of this project, and an Existing Conditions report is included as Appendix A. The following are the key findings from that report.

The study area is made up of residential, commercial and professional uses. It is home to a number of locally-owned and operated businesses including Stonewell Plaza (a small strip center), Long Lumber, Our Family’s Harvest farm stand and nursery, Emma Cleary’s Café, Tastee-Treat ice cream, In-Town Self Storage, New Scotland Auto Center, Olsen’s Nursery / Ace Hardware and Falvo’s meat market. More recent commercial development includes a Stewart’s, a 10,000 square foot medical building, an expansion of Olsen’s nursery, redevelopment of Blackbird Prime Properties, and a business support center called Corner Gateway. There is also the vacant “Big Box” restaurant, and the Sabre offices located on Route 85. A senior housing project (Stone Creek Estates) is currently under construction within the Study Area. The secondary area of interest is the residential area to the north which provides linkages to the Village of Voorheesville and the Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail.

### Demographics

A review of demographic data provides a snapshot of the Town’s population right now and insight into trends that may affect future development. The primary sources of this information include the U.S. Census Bureau and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission. The key findings/highlights are:

- The population in the Town of New Scotland has increased less than 1% from 2000 to 2010 and is expected to continue growing relatively slowly compared to surrounding suburbs.
  - Population within the study area has decreased approximately 7% from 2000 to 2010.
- The senior population is steadily growing while the school-aged population is falling.
- The Town’s median household income is higher and its unemployment rate is lower than Albany County as a whole.



Population change, by age group, in the Town of New Scotland – the median age in town increased from 41.1 to 45.2.

## Housing

Existing housing stock, household makeup and home values provide a snapshot of the Town's character and also provide insight into housing trends that may affect the Town and/or surrounding communities in the future. The primary source of information used to prepare this analysis is the U.S. Census Bureau, with additional data provided by Albany County Real Property and the Town of New Scotland. The key findings/highlights are:

- There are approximately 3,700 total housing units in the Town of New Scotland.
  - Within the study area there are approximately 280 residential units with an additional 90 approved units
- The median home value in the Town is \$224,400; Albany County has lower median values.
- Town-wide there is a 7% vacancy rate for residential buildings.
- The majority of the housing in the study area is single-family, detached homes built before 1980. There is also a mobile home park and a new housing development (Stone Creek Estates) south of NYS 85 which will include two family homes for seniors.

## Mobility/Transportation

It is important to understand the current condition of the study area transportation system as it relates to the accommodation of all modes of travel: motor vehicle (including trucks, public transit and school buses), bicycle, pedestrian; and the relationship of this system to surrounding land use activities. Understanding the current capacities, limitations, and gaps of this system will help shape what is possible in the future and determine, at a conceptual level, improvements needed to support the future community based vision of what the hamlet study area can become.

The mobility/transportation section of the existing conditions report describes the current characteristics of the various roadways and other transportation system elements within the study area and includes information on traffic volumes; roadway characteristics; motor vehicle crashes; level of compatibility between major roadways, their access characteristics and surrounding land uses; and a description of system elements in terms of ability to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists comfortably and safely. The key findings/highlights are:

- The two main roadways serving the study area are owned and maintained by New York State. These urban minor arterials and urban collectors serve as both commuting routes for travelers within and outside the Town of New Scotland to jobs or activities elsewhere in the region, and as main roads and potentially as main streets within the New Scotland Hamlet area.



*The main intersection, Routes 85 and 85A, located at the center of the hamlet. Views approaching from the east (left photo) and from the west (right photo).*

- Roadways within the study area serve a mix of land uses, with commercial uses concentrated around the intersection of NYS 85/NYS 85A and primarily residential uses adjacent to both roadways moving away from this intersection and outside the study area.
- These roadways serve the current, relatively low intensity, surrounding land uses and through traffic well in terms of motor vehicle level of service and safety. The amount of motor vehicle travel has remained relatively constant over the past decade.
- Both NYS 85 and NYS 85A have surplus capacity under current traffic conditions; the current capacity or Level of Service (LOS) for the roadway sections and intersections along NYS 85 and NYS 85A within the study area are well within acceptable ranges for typical arterial roadways.
- Residential level of compatibility (LOC) ratings are poor where residential use/traffic conflict occurs along NYS 85 on the eastern edge of the study area and within Slingerlands, and along the short segment of NYS 85 between CR308 and NYS 85A. On NYS 85A, LOC ratings are also poor where residential dwellings are clustered near the intersection of NYS 155.
- Walking on the main routes within the study area using narrow shoulders alongside travel lanes where vehicles are moving at or over the speed limits of 45 and 40 mph most likely discourages pedestrian activity. However, land uses along the roadway in this area attract pedestrians.
- Bicycle level of service analysis and walkability surveys (lack of sidewalks and pedestrian signals at NYS 85/NYS 85A) give the area poor marks.



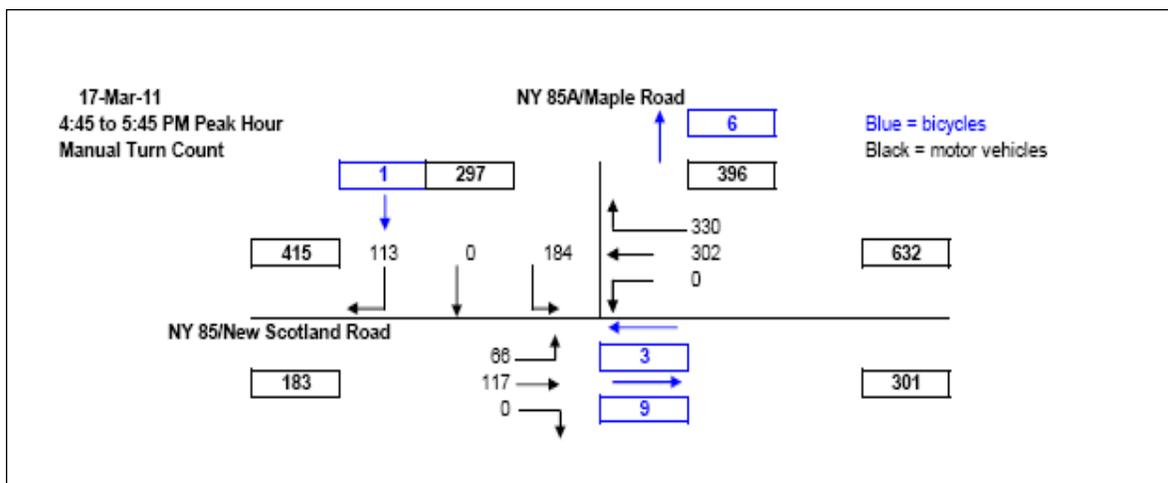
*Shoulders throughout the study area are very narrow and limit the “walkability” and “bikeability” of the hamlet.*

- Despite the low Bicycle Level of Service scores, roadways within the study area are known as popular recreational rider and cycling club routes.
- The ability to add roadway capacity and/or to provide future standard bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in some areas along main routes (NYS 85 and NYS 85A) is somewhat constrained due to limited right-of-way width, as well as the proximity of adjacent structures and the location of utilities.
- The Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail presents a future opportunity for accommodating pedestrian and bicycle travel (both commuting and recreational) across a section of the study area.



The bus stop in the hamlet center consists of a sign post just off the edge of pavement – there are no pedestrian accommodations at the bus stop, nor are there crosswalks or sidewalks to provide a safer means of reaching the bus stop.

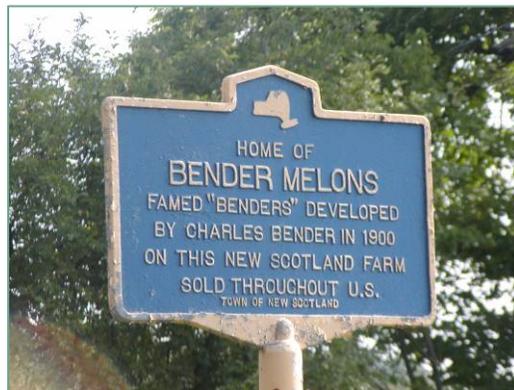
Transit service is seen as an asset to the study area providing an alternative to driving/enhanced mobility for those without access to a car. However due to the poor pedestrian and bicycling environment, limited frequency and timing of service as well as current lack of bus stop amenities, taking transit may not be an attractive option for some potential riders, with ridership decreases in recent years.



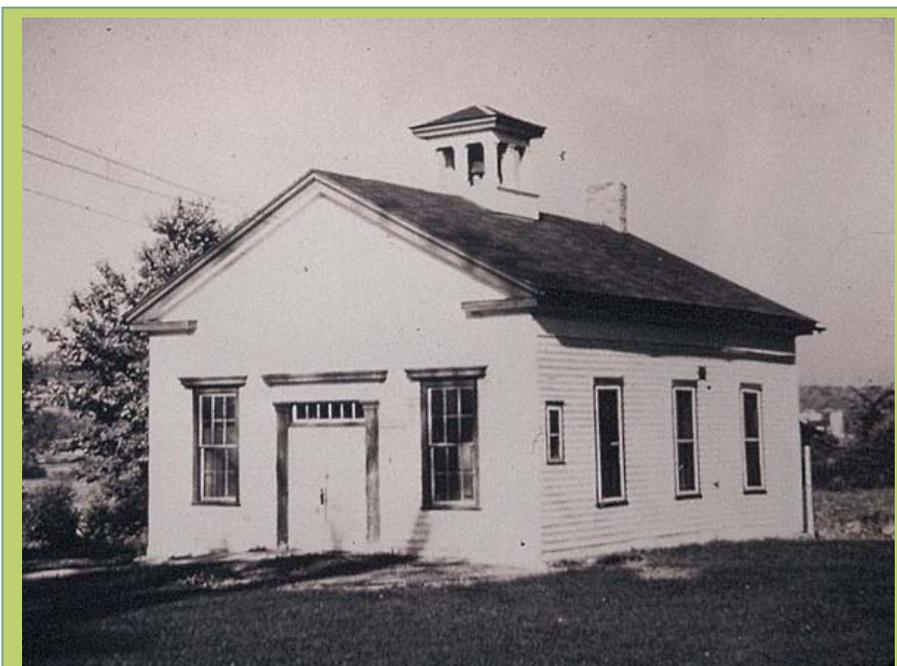
Various data have been collected for key intersections within the study area as summarized in Appendix A. In terms of intersection performance for the various modes, the NYS 85 (New Scotland Road)/NYS 85A (Maple Road) intersection currently functions well for motor vehicles, operating at a Level of Service (LOS) B during the PM peak hour. The junction of these two state routes is the only signalized intersection within the study area. CDTC staff conducted manual turn counts during the PM peak travel period as shown above. In addition to the motor vehicle traffic counted, there were 19 bicycles tallied during this one hour period. No pedestrians were observed.

## Historic & Cultural Resources

The earliest known settlement in New Scotland was by Europeans in the early 17th century. By the 18th century, settlers from Holland, Scotland, England and elsewhere began to settle and start farmsteads and after the American Revolution the population began to grow significantly. Churches, which served as meeting halls and social centers, were erected in the hamlets throughout the area and by the early 19th century, schools were also being established in each of the hamlets. The hamlet of New Scotland was settled around 1765 by Scottish settlers, hence the name. Additional information is summarized in Appendix A, and the key findings/highlights are:



- The area now known as the Town of New Scotland was settled in the early 17th century but wouldn't be established until April 25, 1832.
- The Town's earliest economy was based on agriculture. New Scotland was the largest provider of hops to breweries in the City of Albany. The Town's most popular farm product was the "Bender Melon" produced on the Charles Bender Farm.
- The single greatest impact on the town was the establishment of the railroad, which increased markets for farmers and other merchants.

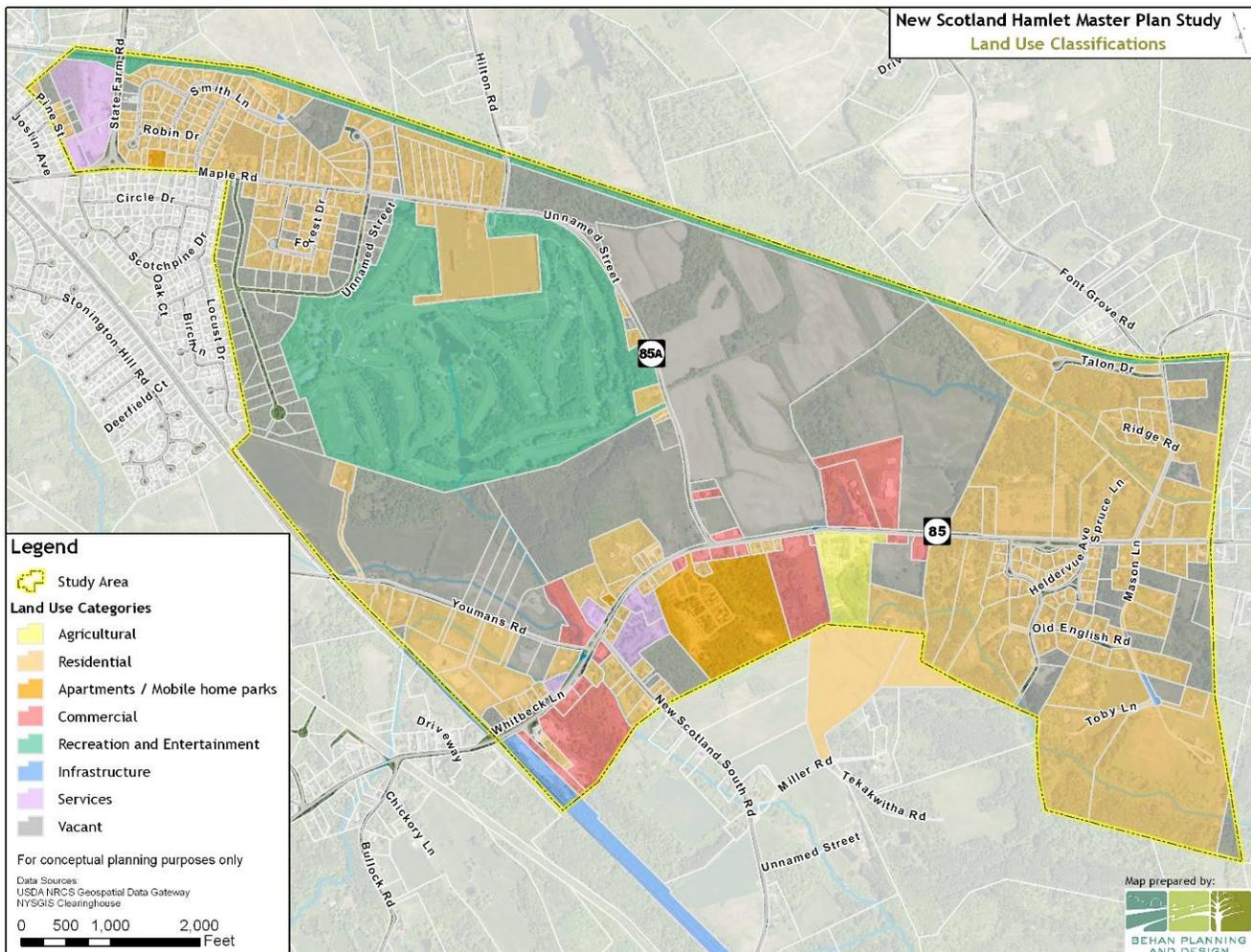


*The current new Scotland Town Hall was formerly The New Scotland School, District No. 8. The school was built in 1866 and prior the site was occupied by a log school since 1804. In 1952 the building ceased to be a school and was then renovated in 1957 for use as the New Scotland Town Hall. Today, Town Hall is a focal point of the hamlet as well as the town. It is not only the home of the town's government activities but also serves as a community center and public meeting space. Source: New Scotland Historical Association*

### Land Use & Development

Understanding the characteristics and patterns of the land and how the land, not only within the Study Area but throughout the Town of New Scotland, is currently used is a key element to crafting a Hamlet Master Plan. Land is a finite resource; we cannot create more of it, so how we develop and/or convert land for different uses has a lasting, if not permanent impact. New Scotland, like surrounding suburban and rural towns, is faced with development pressures. Change is inevitable, but the pattern, rate, timing and location of that change can be managed, in part, by the community. The question is not whether New Scotland will grow, but how it will grow and look. The land use and development summary in Appendix A provides a description of the current zoning and land uses within the Study Area. The key findings/highlights are:

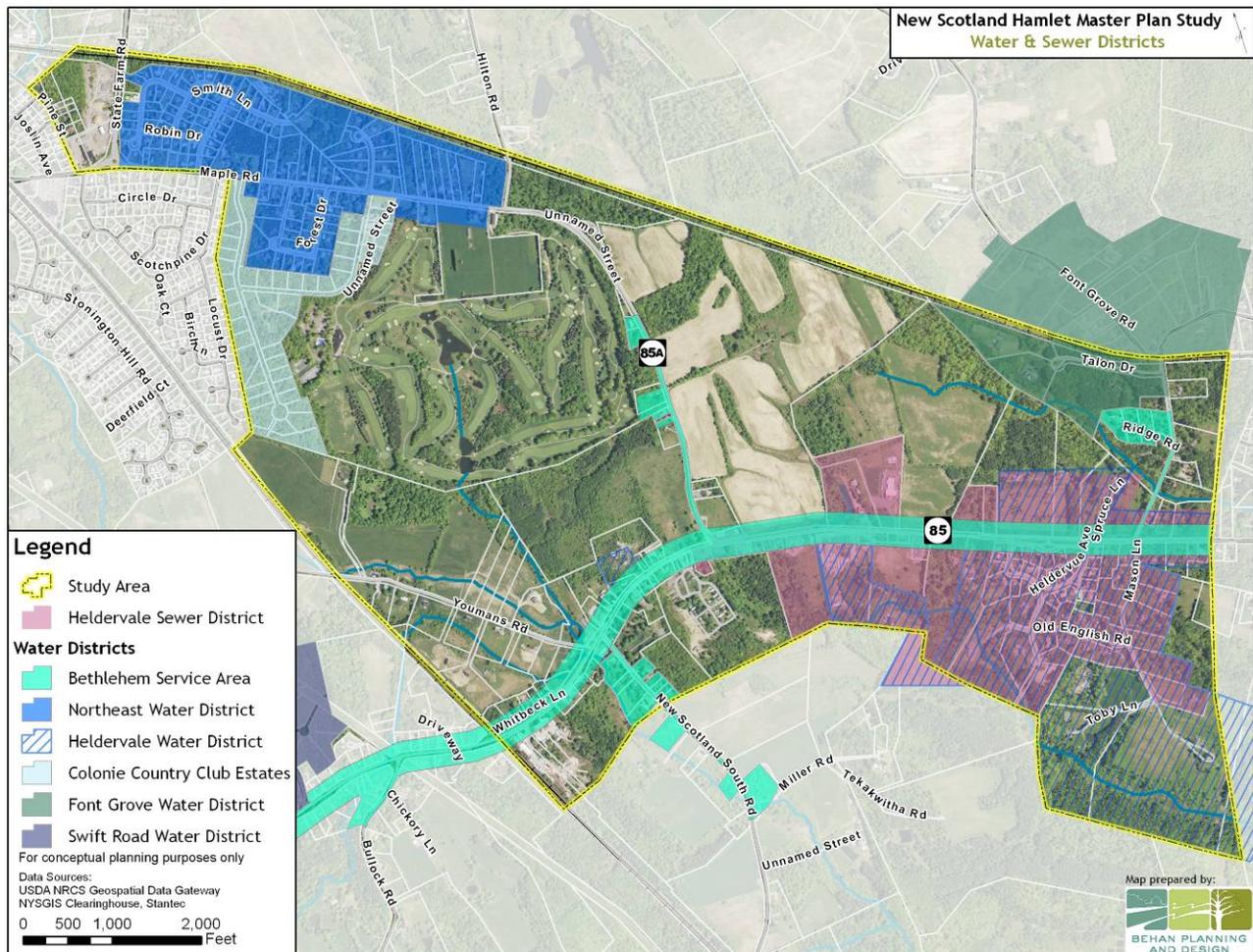
- The Study Area is predominantly zoned [COM] Commercial.
- The Study Area is largely a mix of vacant, residential and commercial land speckled with community service-type uses.
- Three (3) major residential subdivisions have been approved in the last few years within the Study Area.



### Sewer & Water Infrastructure & Community Facilities

The issue of planning for the provision of water and sewer infrastructure to serve existing, proposed and potential development within the study area has been the subject of discussion as well as various efforts over the years. There are a variety of arrangements that currently exist to provide this infrastructure including facilities owned and operated by the Town of Bethlehem which provide supply or capacity either directly to study area land owners or to various water or sewer districts, some of which are then administered by the Town of New Scotland. Ongoing infrastructure issues relate to current and needed future capacities, demand, ownership, funding and scale. The Town of New Scotland currently has a Water Committee exploring these issues. The information in Appendix A was obtained through a variety of sources including the Kensington Woods DEIS, the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, with updated and more specific information being provided by the Town’s engineer. The key findings/highlights are:

- Sewer capacity is limited.
- According to the Town engineer, current information on the hydrogeology in the area indicates that there does not seem to be much potential for groundwater alone to supply larger scale development plans.



- There are physical, fiscal and administrative constraints to providing additional public water and sewer infrastructure in and adjacent to the study area under current arrangements.

### Summary of Existing Reports / Studies

Several existing reports that are related to the New Scotland Hamlet were reviewed as part of this study. These reports included:

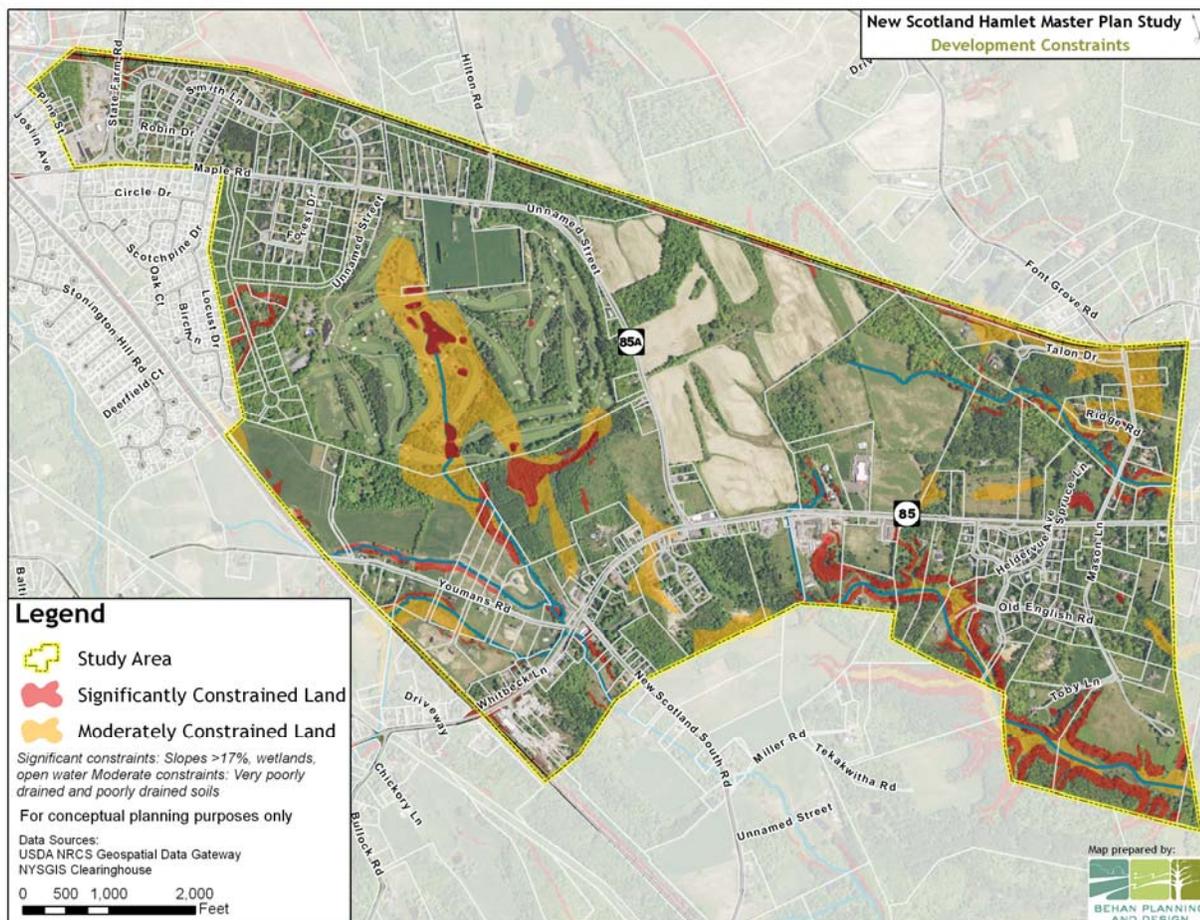
- Town of New Scotland Comprehensive Land Use Plan,
- Residents Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) Route 85/85A Corridor Development - Recommendations to the Town Board,
- Traffic Impact Study - Kensington Woods, and
- Commercial Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC) - Report and Recommendation to the Town Board\*

There were some overlapping themes in the various reports. In terms of land use, the reports indicate a desire to maintain the hamlet character and encourage mixed-use development. Commercial development, while desired, should fit in with the hamlet in terms of scale, and should serve the local population. It should not be “a regional draw”. The comprehensive plan highlights the New Scotland Hamlet as being the most appropriate for new residential development, however the RPAC report indicates residents (at that time) did not want condos/townhouses and/or rental units to be located in the hamlet. In terms of transportation it was noted that there are no pedestrian accommodations anywhere in the hamlet, and that conditions are less than desirable for pedestrians. Traffic volumes, while not ideal, are not viewed as problematic and there is no obvious need for intersection redesigns (though improvements regarding site lines and pedestrian accommodations could be made). A more detailed summary of the reports reviewed is included in the Existing Conditions Report in Appendix A.

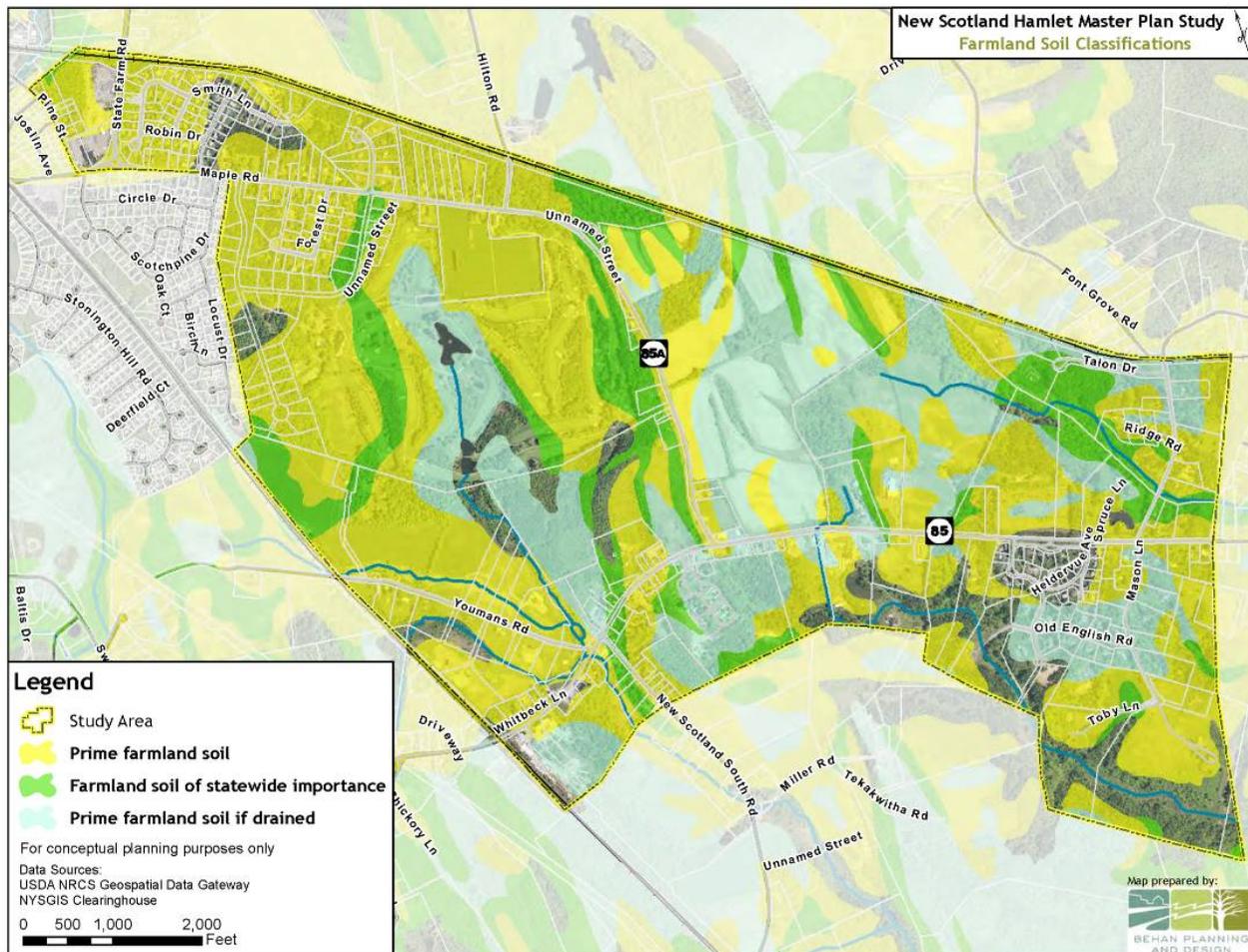
\* Note: though there was an official version of this report, additional opinions were submitted to the Town Board by various members of this committee.

## Other Highlights from the Existing Conditions Study

**Natural Features:** The Study Area straddles two watershed areas - the Vly Creek-Normanskill and the Vloman Kill. Sections of the Vloman Kill and Phillipin Kill waterways are found in the vicinity of Youmans Road and south of NYS 85. Along these streams steep slopes can be found. There are also some small wetland areas scattered throughout the study area, however none are large enough to be regulated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).



**Recreational Features:** There are currently no public parks or recreational facilities within the Study Area. However, just west of the Study Area is New Scotland Town Park which contains 2 ball fields, a tennis court, walking paths, and some additional facilities. South of the Study Area is the NYSDEC's Five Rivers Environmental Educational Center; and just 5 miles to the east is Elm Avenue Park in the Town of Bethlehem. The Colonie Country Club, a private golf course, is located in the northwest section of the Study Area. The proposed Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail, which will convert a 9-mile stretch of the old Delaware and Hudson Railroad between the Port of Albany and Voorheesville to a recreational trail, defines the northern limit of the Study Area. Once completed, this trail will be a tremendous recreational and transportation asset to the Town, enhancing quality of life and access for both residents and visitors. The trail may generate recreation-based businesses or may inspire the creation of additional public spaces and parks close by.



### Agricultural Soils:

A large percentage of the study area includes soils designated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as Prime Farmland Soil or Farmland Soil of Statewide Importance. The USDA designations were confirmed by a representative of the Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District. In terms of the former Bender Farm, he indicated that the farm is still considered viable farmland. The land has most recently been in corn and is similar to productive farms in Albany County. Soils are generally wet, however with subsurface drainage they are productive soils as indicated on the map above. The soils are adequate to support crops and the productive potential is evident. Such agricultural products include, but are not limited to:

1. Field crops, including corn, wheat, rye, barley, hay, potatoes and dry beans.
2. Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries and berries.
3. Vegetables, including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets and onions.
4. Horticultural crops, including nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees, flowers and sod.
5. Livestock and livestock products, including cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, fur bearing animals, milk, eggs and furs.

6. Maple sap and maple syrup.
7. Christmas trees derived from a managed tree operation whether dug for transplanting or cut from the stump.
8. Woody biomass, which means short rotation woody crops raised for bio-energy and shall not include farm woodland.
9. Apiary products, including but not limited to honey, royal jelly, pollen, beeswax and propolis.
10. Compost products

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public input has been encouraged throughout the planning process. All of the SAC meetings were open to the public, and there were many comments received during these meetings. A project specific website was also created both as way to get information out to the public, but also a means for residents to comment on ideas and recommendations for the plan. Most importantly the public was encouraged to attend the two public workshops held during the planning process. The first workshop provided background information and some early ideas about the study area, but focused primarily on gathering ideas from the public through small workgroup sessions. These ideas helped shape the land use concepts presented in the next section. The second workshop provided an opportunity to review and respond to the proposed concepts and strategies for the study area, and led to refinement of the final hamlet plan. The following are summaries from the two public meetings.

#### Workshop #1 - December 1, 2011

Approximately 60 people attended the first public workshop on December 1, 2011 at the Voorheesville High School Commons. The meeting began with an overview of the study area and the existing conditions within the study area, a brief summary of previous studies completed for this area, and finally some “Food for Thought” for attendees to consider, such as what it means to be a hamlet, and what does “mixed-use” really mean.

Following the presentation the audience divided into eight facilitated discussion groups. The focus of the groups was to formulate a vision for the hamlet, both the immediate vicinity of the NYS Route 85/85A intersection, as well as the larger study area. Participants were asked what they would like to see improved in the area, what type of land uses and development patterns make sense for the study area, and what type of connections could be made both within, and to and from, the study area. A listing of the ideas from each group is included in Appendix B, with the big ideas discussed below.

Following the group discussions, each group was asked to report back to the whole audience the key ideas their group came up with. In no particular order, some of the key ideas were as follows:

- Pedestrian improvements for the hamlet - this includes creating trails and sidewalks, connections to the new rail trail, connections between the Village and the hamlet (particularly for ice cream) and creation of a bike lane on NYS Routes 85 and 85A.
- Maintain commercial focus - there is a desire to maintain commercial opportunities, but with a focus on smaller businesses mixed with residential uses. Businesses should serve the local population as well as possibly overnight visitors. Businesses that are education and/or technology focused were highlighted as larger operations that could fit in the study area. Also agricultural themed businesses were thought to be appropriate for the area, especially those that both made use of the land and sold directly to consumers within the hamlet. Examples included a brewery/distillery and cheese manufacturing.
- Focus on architecture and scale - there was a lot of concern about making sure new development “fits” in the hamlet. There is a desire to have design guidelines that specify

maximum building heights, appropriate setbacks, and architectural styles that complement or improve the existing hamlet.

- Desire to maintain agriculture and open space - while the emphasis on open space and agriculture varied between the groups, it was a common theme among all groups. Maintenance of rural character is important, including preservation of important views. Agricultural heritage is important to celebrate, suggesting a percentage of open land be preserved, and the creation of parks were all discussed.

Overall the groups seemed to be in favor of change within the study area, as long as the change is well planned and viewed as fitting in with the character of the New Scotland hamlet.

### Workshop #2 - May 23, 2012

Approximately 35 people attended the second public workshop at the Voorheesville High School Commons. The meeting began with a presentation that provided some background information about the project and the study area; and that summarized the recommendations contained in the *Draft New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan* (May 2012). The Draft Plan was made available for public review a week prior to the public workshop at Town Hall and on the project website.

Following the presentation of the Draft Plan, those in attendance were asked to respond to two questions:

- What do you like about the ideas/concepts that were presented?
- What concerns or questions do you have about the ideas/concepts that were presented?

In general there were many positive comments about the ideas/concepts described in the plan and the presentation. Attendees liked the emphasis on mixed-use development balanced with open space conservation. They also agreed with the emphasis on creating a walkable/bikeable environment and organizing new development around an interconnected network of streets. The notion of new zoning with a focus on design guidelines and standards was well received.

Several concerns and questions were also raised and discussed. Some of these issues included lingering concerns about traffic related to potential new development, the market for various forms of housing and commercial development proposed in the plan, the challenge of implementation, the management/maintenance of conserved open space, and several others. Additional suggestions for connections between portions of the study area and other ideas were also offered. A more complete summary of the discussion can be found in the meeting notes in Appendix C.

## IV. FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

The hamlet of New Scotland contains one of only two commercial zoning districts in the town, and therefore proposed changes in this area must maintain commercial viability and landowner equity while allowing for a more dynamic and desired future land use pattern. Through discussions with the SAC, CDTC, and the community, a set of “character areas” has been identified for the study area. The character areas are described in the text and illustrated on the *Conceptual Land Use & Linkages Plan* that follow. The locations of the character areas and the connections shown on the *Conceptual Land Use & Linkages Plan* are highly generalized and tend to follow existing landscape features such as tree lines and streams. These lines are not fixed and they should not be interpreted as zoning district boundaries, though they could provide a starting point for the designation of future zoning districts. Similarly, the text below describes general considerations about the type and form of development that is desired for these various portions of the study area. Zoning recommendations for these areas are discussed further in Section V and Design Guidelines recommendations are discussed in Section VI of this document.

### Existing Hamlet

The *Existing Hamlet* character area consists of the traditional hamlet homes and businesses which have been built over the years along the frontage of NYS Route 85, extending roughly from the railroad tracks to the professional building on Stone Creek Road. This linear corridor is illustrative of the historical growth patterns within the study area. It is primarily composed of smaller scale structures—with some exceptions—providing a mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses. While there



*Section of NYS Route 85 within the Existing Hamlet area.*

does remain additional growth potential, mostly from future subdivisions of the larger lots along the corridor, a large portion of the frontage has already been developed. For this reason, the majority of future change in the existing hamlet will likely come from conversions, renovations and expansions to properties which are expected to take place slowly over time. The conversion of a single-family home into a small professional office or retail store, and eventually expanded or replaced with a new commercial structure, is one example of the type of gradual change that can be expected here.

In order to properly plan for and adapt to this type of expected growth, it is recommended that efforts to manage change in the Existing Hamlet character area focus on maintaining its current residential scale and character. This can be achieved with zoning modifications and new design

guidelines which are targeted to this particular area. These are described in more detail in the Zoning Recommendations and Design Guidelines Recommendations sections. The goal of these changes should be to allow the hamlet to continue to develop with a moderate level of density as a visually attractive mixed-use hamlet corridor, taking specific precautions to avoid the loss of character to sprawl or strip development.

## Hamlet Center

The *Hamlet Center* area, encompasses the immediate vicinity of the NYS Routes 85 and 85A intersection. This proposed center is intended to act as a more visible arrival point into the heart of town, with a denser and more formal arrangement of buildings similar to the atmosphere found in a traditional village development. As the focus of this center, a large town commons which would serve as a public gathering space and distinguishing feature of the town, could be developed. This park could be framed on two or more sides with clusters of buildings which would look out over the commons, creating a very attractive outdoor space with amenities such as benches, sidewalks, a bus stop, crosswalks and possibly a public monument.

The buildings found within the hamlet center should provide a mix of uses including shops, offices and residences. They should be 2-3 stories in height, clustered together and relatively close to the road. Parking lots should be secluded from view in the rear of the buildings, while on-street parking could be provided in front of the shops facing the commons. This setting would be the ideal location for a new Town Hall, Library, or other public building situated to overlook the commons.

Wide sidewalks around the hamlet center would create a very pedestrian-friendly environment, with potential for outdoor cafes/restaurants, encouraging people to walk around, mingle or shop. The pedestrian connections of this hamlet center would extend outward into the *Hamlet Expansion and Development Areas*, described below.

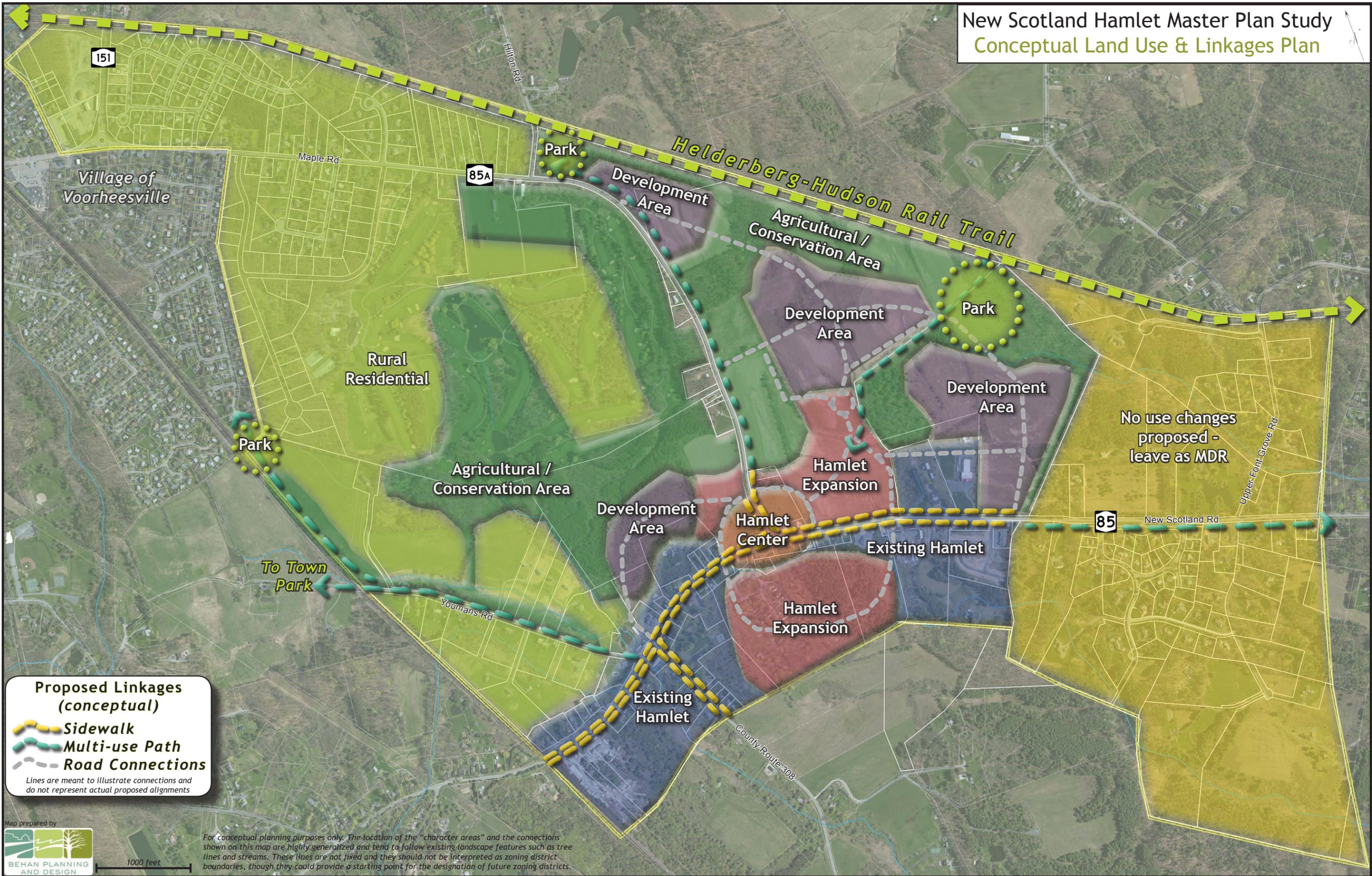


*This sketch – prepared for another community – illustrates the type of character that a town commons lined with mixed use buildings could have in the Hamlet Center.*

## Hamlet Expansion

The *Hamlet Expansion* area is proposed as a natural extension, and eventual future growth area, of the *Hamlet Center* development. This area would be located to the northeast and northwest of the Hamlet Center and could extend into the larger lots found directly to the south on the other side of NYS Route 85. Development here would be organized around an interconnected network (or modified grid) of local streets, served by a handful of primary boulevards from NYS Routes 85 and 85A and from the *Hamlet Center*. This area could provide space for additional small-scale mixed-use development.

New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan Study  
Conceptual Land Use & Linkages Plan



**Proposed Linkages  
(conceptual)**

-  Sidewalk
-  Multi-use Path
-  Road Connections

*Lines are meant to illustrate connections and do not represent actual proposed alignments*

*For conceptual planning purposes only. The location of the "character areas" and the connections shown on this map are highly generalized and tend to follow existing landscape features such as tree lines and streams. These lines are not fixed and they should not be interpreted as zoning district boundaries, though they could provide a starting point for the designation of future zoning districts.*

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Some higher density residential apartments or townhomes could also be incorporated here, branching off as needed and perhaps transitioning onto smaller local roads and service alleys with small-lot single family homes. For the purposes of walkability and scale, the extent of this hamlet expansion area should probably not exceed about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile or so from the Hamlet Center. A conceptual development sketch for a portion of the Hamlet Center and Hamlet Expansion area is shown below.



*A conceptual layout for the northeast corner of the **Hamlet Center** and adjacent **Hamlet Expansion** area. In this concept commercial development is concentrated around the commons and along the major roads with moderate density residential development beyond. Park land and pedestrian accommodations are also considered and interwoven within the new development.*

## Development Areas

Further out from the center, primarily to the northeast and northwest, there remains a lot of land suitable for development. Some of this area, discussed below, should be set aside as a farmland/open space conservation area as development occurs; however the remainder could still be utilized for a number of different purposes suitable to New Scotland. Such uses could include: clusters of small-lot single-family home neighborhoods mixed with townhomes and apartments geared toward smaller households and moderate income residents; a senior living community providing for a continuance of care; an educational facility; a mixed-office/light industrial campus, or combinations of these things.

In order to attract environmentally sensitive economic development that would strengthen the identity of New Scotland as a special place to live and work in the region, incentives could be created to encourage development that meets specific goals for cleanliness and environmental responsibility. For example, a college annex or learning center dedicated to researching environmentally-friendly sciences or technology and training the next generation of workers, or an office park/light industrial campus which develops sustainable-living and clean-energy products. A focus on this type of development could help to distinguish New Scotland as a unique and forward-thinking community, while providing jobs and economic investment.

As a particular sub-group to this development area, the inclusion of a Town Park is recommended, located directly off of the Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail. This recreation area could double as a trail-head, providing parking for trail users and acting as a highly visible gateway to the larger recreational system proposed for the Study Area. All of the Development Areas should be connected to one another and to the businesses and services in the Existing Hamlet and Hamlet Center through a system of multi-use paths and sidewalks.

### Agricultural / Conservation Area

A significant portion of land in the Study Area is recommended to be conserved for its continued use as farmland and open space. Some of this land contains wetlands, steep slopes, or other constraints that would limit its development potential; but most of it is classified as “prime farmland soil” or “farmland soil of statewide importance”, and continues to have value as productive farmland. Conservation of these areas would also preserve the natural views and rural character of the Maple Road (NYS Route 85A) corridor that local residents cherish. This would help to maintain an attractive countryside aesthetic and visual separation between the Hamlet of New Scotland and the Village of Voorheesville.



*There is a strong desire from the public to maintain the rural character and views to the Helderbergs along NYS Route 85A.*

Ideally, the conserved farmland would continue to be cultivated in the future, as rental farmland for a large farmer elsewhere in the county or as a smaller, niche farm operation. An organic farm, CSA, or other type of similar enterprise could perhaps benefit from the expanded population in the hamlet, potentially serving local restaurants or organic grocers within the town. It might also be possible to use some portion of this area as a community garden, with small plots available for people who live in the apartments, townhomes, and small lot single family neighborhoods of the hamlet.

It is understood that all of the lands indicated as Agricultural / Conservation Areas on the *Conceptual Land Use & Linkage Plan* map are privately owned. For the owners of this land - most of which has been zoned for commercial uses for many years - there is an expectation that their land will retain

some value beyond what it would garner as farmland in today's marketplace. To address this, the plan proposes to allow a wide range of uses and higher density development on portions of these parcels in exchange for the conservation of other portions of these parcels. By clustering the development in patterns as described above (Existing Hamlet, Hamlet Center, Hamlet Expansion, and Development Areas), significant areas of conservation land can be set aside as development occurs. Condensing the development into these clusters will also allow them to be more efficiently served by the infrastructure that will be necessary to make development here possible.

An alternative approach to using development to achieve the conservation of a portion of these lands would be to acquire the land, or conservation easements on the land, through donation, lease, or purchase. The Town could set aside funding for this purpose and/or supplement its own funding with state or federal grants. It should be noted, however, that state financial resources for farmland and open space conservation have been very limited over the last few years.

### **Rural Residential Area**

The remainder of the lands to the west of Route 85A are recommended to be treated as a *Rural Residential* area. Although some of this area has been commercially zoned for decades, it has evolved as an area of large lot, single family homes and farmland. This existing residential character should be recognized in the Town's zoning. For the portions of this area that are not now residential, the Rural Residential designation should allow and encourage the existing recreational (Colonie Country Club) and agricultural uses to continue. However, if these uses are no longer viable in the future, low density residential development with conservation of open space resources (farmland, natural resource areas, and scenic views) should be permitted.

This area of town also has potential for providing a pair of key linkages in the western part of the Study Area. One linkage would be a connection from the end of Locust Drive in the Village of Voorheesville, through now vacant land that is proposed to be developed residentially, to Youmans Road, and down Youmans Road to New Scotland Road. This would serve to connect neighborhoods in Voorheesville to the hamlet. Ideally the connection between Locust Drive and Youmans Road would be a full street connection (designed specifically to discourage cut-through traffic); but at a minimum a bike/pedestrian connection linking these areas should be required if development occurs.

A second link would extend west on Youmans Road – under the railroad tracks at the old underpass – and eventually reach the New Scotland Town Park on Swift Road. Both of these routes would require cooperation with/from local landowners before they could be implemented.

### **Medium Density Residential (MDR) Area**

This portion of the Study Area follows the existing Medium Density Residential (MDR) zoning district boundary. No changes to the zoning in this area have been recommended through this study. However, a sidewalk or trail along New Scotland Road, connecting this area to the Hamlet Center and to existing pathways in the Town of Bethlehem, would be appropriate. In addition, if new development takes place in this area, provisions for connections (full street or, at a minimum, bike/pedestrian connections) to adjoining lands that could be developed in the future should be required.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## V. ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to realize the vision established for each of the character areas described in the previous section, new zoning will be necessary for the study area. This section discusses recommended changes that should be considered when revising the town's code.

Most of the Study Area is currently zoned as Commercial (COM). A retail size cap law, limiting retail development in this area to structures no larger than 50,000 sf and grouped retail (plazas) to 100,000 sf was adopted by the New Scotland Town Board in June 6, 2012 (Local Law C of 2012).

The Commercial (COM) zoning designation should be replaced with one or more new zoning districts that prescribe the type of development suggested for each of the character areas in the last section. However, the character areas as drawn on the *Conceptual Land Use & Linkage Plan* are not intended to be translated directly into zoning districts. Instead there are several ways that the recommendations for these conceptual areas could be incorporated into zoning -through new zoning districts that mirror some of the individual character areas or groupings of related character areas; through the use of innovative zoning techniques such as an overlay zone or Planned Development District (PDD), and/or perhaps others. The selection of an appropriate approach should occur when the Town revises its zoning and related land use regulations as a follow-up to this plan, and should take into account the need to incorporate these changes into the Town's existing zoning law.

Within the new zoning district or districts, techniques such as incentive zoning and/or conservation subdivision design could be utilized to shape growth patterns into more focused, dense areas of mixed use development balanced with significant open space conservation. Incentive zoning allows a landowner or developer to work with a municipality to obtain incentives (additional density or other specified modifications to zoning standards) in exchange for providing desired community amenities (such as open space conservation or assistance in creating a park and trail system). Conservation subdivision design (a form of clustering) is density neutral; it does not change the number of homes that can be built on a site but it does change the form of development based on an analysis of the specific land to be developed. Identification of open space resources worthy of conservation at the earliest stage of design guides the design and approval process of these subdivisions. Like clustering, conservation subdivisions result in permanent open space conservation by allowing flexible lot sizes. In this way, important farmlands, natural resources, or rural vistas can be preserved even while development occurs.

Design Guidelines that describe the desired site and architectural characteristics for development in the study area should also be established and woven into the project approval process outlined in the zoning. The Planning Board could review and enforce the design guidelines as part of the special use permit and site plan review processes, or a separate board could be created for this review (now or in the future as appropriate). Design Guidelines are discussed further in the next section (Section VI. Design Guidelines Recommendations). Transportation recommendations, discussed in Section VII, should also be woven into the zoning and design guidelines as appropriate. Important ideas such as connectivity, access management, and infrastructure for walking (sidewalks), biking (bike racks), and public transportation (bus shelters) can be encouraged or required as part of the development approval process.

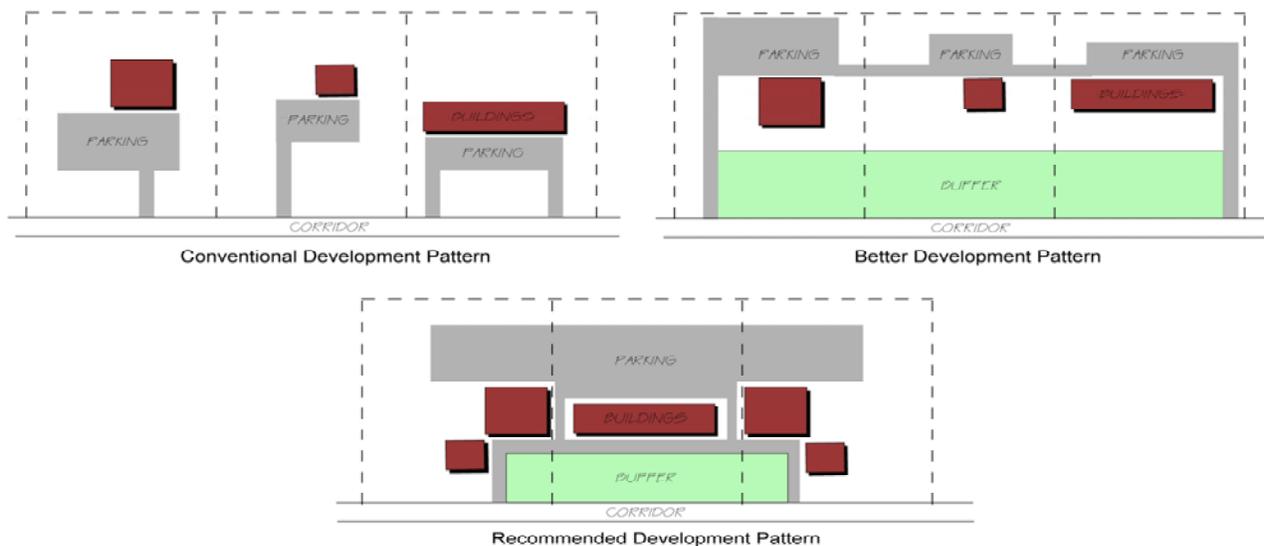
Some specific suggestions for the zoning, as applied to each of the character areas, are provided on the following pages. These suggestions are intended to further describe some of the key elements that should be included in the zoning for each of these areas.

### Existing Hamlet

The area identified as the existing hamlet is recommended to be rezoned specifically to manage the gradual change of commercial conversions which this corridor is likely to experience. The combined use of revised zoning regulations and design guidelines should be tailored for this area to allow the corridor to continue to grow as an attractive mixed-use hamlet corridor while avoiding potential characteristics of strip development and conflicts with existing residences. Care should be taken to continue to allow residential structures and protect them from the potential adverse effects of adjacent commercial development as the area grows. To this end, the following zoning and design recommendations should be advanced:

*Site Planning:* Special attention should be paid to proper site planning early in the design review process, particularly for new development, to avoid strip development characteristics. It is recommended that new construction and additions/expansions of existing structures in this area attempt to mimic the existing front setbacks of the older structures along the corridor. Parking areas should be limited to the side or rear of structures where possible - while a few parking spaces in the front may be permissible for convenience, the goal should be to minimize the amount of parking lot readily visible from the road. The number of curb cuts should be kept to a minimum, with a limit of one per property and/or access management arrangements where two or more adjacent properties share a common driveway. Commercial site plan reviews should require the addition of sidewalks along the property frontage, separated from the road with a generous grass planting strip/landscaped area.

Raising the minimum amount of required greenspace in this district could be considered, however a majority of the current greenspace requirement is being met on existing parcels by leaving the back



*Buildings, parking lot(s) and open space should relate to one another in such a way as to create the feeling of one unified development and minimize entry points from the road*

half of the property undeveloped. As an alternative strategy, the amount of greenspace required in the front half of the lot—for example from the back of the building to the front lot line—could be measured as a separate standard. This would allow a higher amount of greenspace to be required in the front (where it is most visible and would make the greatest visual improvement), while allowing a reduced percentage for the overall total for site plan flexibility.

***Building Heights:*** In order to maintain the character of the existing neighborhood, building heights in this area should remain limited to the current height of 35 feet to permit two-and-a-half story structures.

***Allowed Uses:*** Within the Existing Hamlet character area, some of the allowed uses (found under the current COM district zoning) may be incompatible with the reality of this area and should, therefore, be considered for removal or clarification. Such uses include:

- ***Agricultural farm and nurseries (more than 5 acres).*** This use type should be re-defined to differentiate between a full-scale agricultural farming operation (such as dairy or corn production) and other less intensive agricultural uses which may be more appropriate for the hamlet. These less intensive uses may include nurseries, orchards, landscaping sales, community gardens, farm stand or a horse farm. This would allow such uses to be permitted in the hamlet, perhaps with size caps, while larger farming operations could be reserved for other parts of the Town.
- ***Restaurants and taverns.*** This use classification does not appear to differentiate between a standard table restaurant, and a drive-thru facility (such as a McDonalds). It is recommended that this use type be redefined to create this distinction so that restaurants and taverns can continue to be allowed while drive-thru restaurants could be excluded or required to meet specific regulations. If drive-thru establishments are permitted in the existing hamlet, the design guidelines should have specific requirements to ensure that they (as well as similar auto-related uses such as drive-thru retail, auto repair, car wash, etc.) are sensitive to the hamlet's character. Such design requirements could include limiting the location of drive-thru facilities to the side or preferably the rear of buildings out of view from public streets, landscaping to reduce the visibility of drive-thru facilities, provisions to minimize impacts on adjoining residences (if any), and consideration of internal vehicular circulation and pedestrian safety.
- ***Retail business.*** It is recommended that the retail business use be further re-defined to differentiate between small, medium and/or large retail establishments. The purpose of this is to allow for an increased standard of review for medium sized projects, while excluding large development projects which would likely be incompatible in the area of the existing hamlet.

In general, allowed uses in the Existing Hamlet should include a wide variety of commercial retail and services uses, professional offices, and single family and multi family residential. Accessory uses such as detached garages, carriage houses, granny flats, and similar uses that increase the variety of living and working opportunities without diminishing quality of life should also be permitted. The scale and architectural typology of new buildings and additions/expansions to existing buildings should be consistent with the older structures found in the existing hamlet.



*The example on the left illustrates a design for a chain restaurant which would be more in character with the hamlet, as opposed to the example to the right, which utilizes the entire building as a corporate “sign”, with little attention to building character, design, or surrounding context.*

**Design Review:** Several other elements of design should also be regulated (such as scale, massing, architectural character, signs and landscaping) through the use of design guidelines. Recommendations for these have been provided in the Design Guideline Recommendations section later in this document. It is recommended that the zoning be updated to authorize this type of review during the approval process.

**Hamlet Center**

The area characterized as Hamlet Center is recommended to be zoned specifically to encourage or require a denser and more formal arrangement of buildings similar to the atmosphere of a traditional mixed-use village. The combined use of revised zoning regulations and design guidelines should be tailored for this area to create a special sense of arrival into a walkable neighborhood. The hamlet center would have the highest standards of design for facades, parking and signs. To this end, the following zoning modifications are recommended:

**Site Planning:** Buildings should be required to be located close to the sidewalks to encourage a strong pedestrian environment, with all off-street parking located behind the buildings in shared and/or well screened lots. On-street parking would be provided along the secondary roads (not along NYS Route 85



*An example mixed-use building that could potentially ‘fit’ in the Hamlet Center*

or 85A) around the town commons area and on side streets. Wide sidewalks, street trees, benches, trash bins and similar pedestrian amenities, as well as bicycle parking should be required as part of site plan review.

**Building Heights:** Building heights in this area should be limited to a height of 3 stories to permit a vertical mix of uses between ground floor commercial/retail, with offices and or residential units above.

**Allowed Uses:** The allowed uses within the Hamlet Center should be include the following:

- Commercial retail space (without drive-thrus).
- Restaurants and taverns (without drive-thrus).
- Offices and professional services (banks, real estate, accountants, etc.)
- Municipal/civic buildings (town hall, library, courthouse or police station, etc.)
- Hotels or Inns (not motels).
- Personal services (hair care, beauty, massage, dry cleaning, etc.)
- Small, outpatient medical service clinic (doctor, dentist, etc.)
- Day care
- Multi-family dwellings (as part of a mixed-use buildings, not stand-alone)
- Churches
- Home occupations
- Temporary farm stand or outdoor market.

**Parking Requirements:** Due to the staggered parking demands between commercial and residential uses, a reduction in minimum required parking could be provided within this area to reduce the size of parking lots, thereby freeing up more buildable area for leasable space. The minimum parking requirements—particularly those for retail—should be reduced below the levels currently found in the zoning. Shared parking and similar arrangements should be strongly encouraged.

Particular attention should be paid to not permitting vehicle dependant uses which would undermine the aesthetic of the pedestrian village-style development, such as auto dealers, car washes, gas stations or motels.

Due to the fact that this central node of the town—particularly the creation of the town commons—would be highly dependent on creating the correct arrangement of buildings and design aesthetic, it is possible that it may be better suited toward a planned unit development approach. In this approach, the town would work in advance with developers to agree on the design for each of the different lots and buildings around the commons so that they work together to create a unified setting. To achieve this, the town should allow for, or encourage, Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning within the

Hamlet Center. The town has PUD language as part of the existing zoning code, however this section would likely need to be modified to be more specific about outcomes in order to achieve the goals set forth in this plan. Alternately, the town could advance the design concept of this central area further with the help of planning consultants to establish a pre-approved plan, and then seek a developer interested in building it.

## Hamlet Expansion

The area identified as Hamlet Expansion, is recommended to be rezoned to accommodate additional growth outward from the Hamlet Center (within an easily walkable distance of ¼ mile or so), while providing somewhat more flexibility in building arrangement, uses and design compared to the more formal center.

***Site Planning:*** Unlike the Hamlet Center, commercial/residential structures in the Hamlet Expansion area would be permitted larger (but still modest) setbacks and more flexible parking arrangements. Larger lawns with a high degree of landscaping, paths and sidewalks would be required.

***Building Heights:*** Building heights in this area would be limited to 2-1/2 stories.

***Allowed Uses:*** Permitted uses within the Hamlet Expansion area could be very similar to those in the Hamlet Center, with the following exceptions:

- Multi-family uses, such as apartment buildings, townhouses or condominiums, could also be permitted as stand-alone structures without a commercial component.
- Single-family homes could be permitted on small lots.
- Buffers (distance and landscaping) would be required between mixed-use commercial structures and residential-only areas.

In order to ensure that commercial uses in this district will not create an awkward relationship with any residential homes which may potentially be included as well, their relative placement and vehicle



*Small-lot residential cottages with rear alley driveways and garages, similar to the type of neighborhood which could be developed in the Hamlet Expansion neighborhood.*



*Multi-family residential housing in Henrietta, NY is designed to be in keeping with agricultural community and rural setting.*

circulation routes should be carefully arranged in a logical separation. One potential method of creating this separation between commercial/mixed-use properties and single family cottages is the creation of a small park or linear green which can act as a transition between the two. This type of formal greenspace can also double as a public outdoor activity area and/or a location for a multi-use path which runs through the development. The illustration on page 21 provides an example of this principle. Likewise, the entire layout could be designed as part of a PUD, as described above for the Hamlet Center.

Similar to the Hamlet Center recommendations, the parking requirements for this district should be reviewed to ensure that there is not an oversupply of parking.

## Development Areas

The areas identified as Development Areas are recommended to be zoned to accommodate additional neighborhood-scaled residential growth, and/or to provide additional opportunities for well designed commercial, light industrial and institutional uses which would enhance the town as an attractive place to live and work. As such, the zoning for these areas is recommended to be adjusted as follows:

***Site Planning:*** The Development Areas should have the greatest degree of flexibility for site planning, however they should be required to incorporate high quality landscape design and innovative stormwater management techniques. Ideally, each of these areas would be designed under a unified plan (such as a business park or campus) to ensure well-conceived use of the land and consistent quality.

***Building Heights:*** Building heights in this area would be limited to 2 or 3 stories.

***Allowed Uses:*** The permitted uses within the Development Areas should include a wide range of low-impact activities such as:

- Single-Family Residential. Creation of a small-lot single family home neighborhoods with lot sizes ranging from approximately 60 x 100 feet to 100 x 200 feet. Carriage houses and accessory apartments could provide additional living space for mixed income families.
- Senior Housing / Senior Living - could include a continuum of care to meet the changing needs of residents.
- Education/Research facilities - could include an educational or learning center primarily devoted to the study of environmental sciences, nature or sustainable living.



*Specialized facilities, similar to Hudson Valley Community College TEC-SMART building pictured above, could bring clean energy research and education to New Scotland.*

- Office / Light Industry - Offices and associated light industry could be targeted to specific industries such as environmentally-friendly and sustainable products, organic foods, clean energy technology or similar endeavors. Zoning should include restrictions on noise and limits for on-site retail sales of products, etc.
- Home occupations
- Support services - small retail or service uses to support facilities listed above could be incorporated into the development program within limits. However, these should not be sufficient in size or concentration to pull significant business away from establishments in the Hamlet Center, Hamlet Expansion Area, or the Existing Hamlet.



*Small lot residential development or senior housing with a mixture of independent and assisted living options are some residential options that could be considered in the Development Areas.*

## **Agricultural / Conservation Area**

Recognizing the more intensive development that would occur as portions of these properties are developed, the areas that would be designated for Agricultural / Conservation would be limited to customary agricultural farming practices and land conservation. The purpose of this is to balance development with conservation and protect a portion of these fertile lands and maintain the existing rural character of the viewshed which defines this area of New Scotland. This may be a separate zoning district or, more likely, a condition of the *Development Areas* designation. For example there could be a 50-50 zoning designation that requires 50% of a parcel be kept in agriculture/conservation while the remaining 50% could be developed under the *Development Area* and/or *Hamlet Expansion* scenarios.

### Allowed Uses:

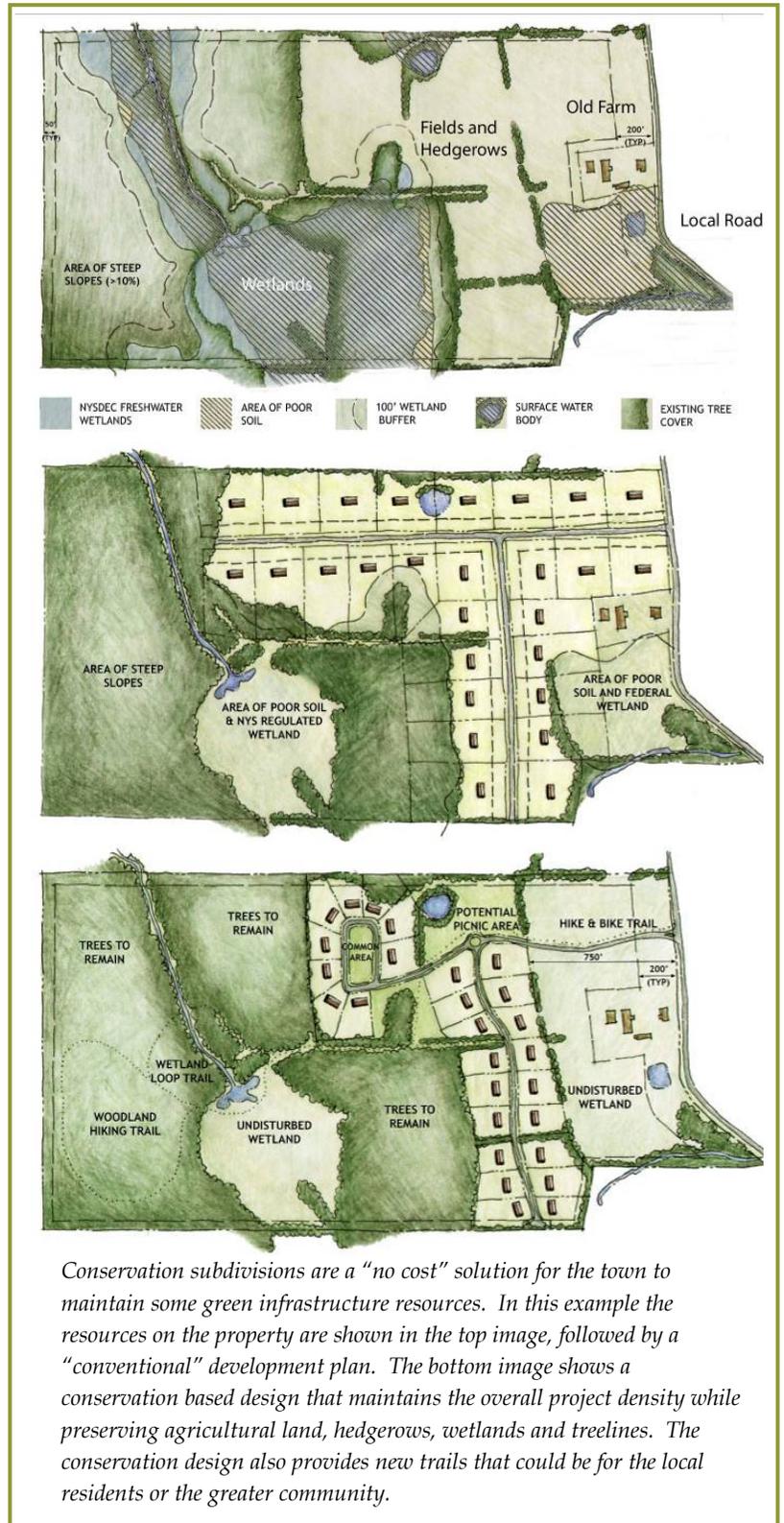
- Agricultural uses as defined by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

- Public park, playground, recreation area or trail
- Conserved open space

**Rural Residential Area**

The character area defined as Rural Residential, which is currently zoned Commercial (COM) and Residential Agricultural (RA), should be rezoned to become a new rural residential zoning district. This district would permit single-family residential development at an overall density of approximately 1 acre per dwelling unit (in keeping with current nearby density levels) but would require that the development be designed as a conservation subdivision. This in effect would require that about one-half of the total land be preserved as open space, while permitting smaller lot sizes to accommodate the reduced area. The purpose of this zoning district would be to allow for continued residential growth while protecting much of the natural setting and landscape which helps to define the character of New Scotland. The zoning for this district could be framed as follows:

*Site Planning:* Applicants for new residential subdivisions within this district could be required to conduct a site analysis describing the unique characteristics of the property to be developed and, with the approval of the Planning Board, identify areas of the land which are most appropriate for development and those areas which would best be preserved as agricultural/conservation land. Once the agreed-upon development areas are determined, the applicant would submit a conventional subdivision layout using



*Conservation subdivisions are a “no cost” solution for the town to maintain some green infrastructure resources. In this example the resources on the property are shown in the top image, followed by a “conventional” development plan. The bottom image shows a conservation based design that maintains the overall project density while preserving agricultural land, hedgerows, wetlands and treelines. The conservation design also provides new trails that could be for the local residents or the greater community.*

all buildable lands to determine the maximum number of homes which would legally be able to be constructed on the property using the area and bulk regulations for the district. Once the maximum number of homes has been determined, the applicant would then submit a conservation layout using reduced lot sizes and leaving at least 50% of the overall property undisturbed.

In all cases, the conserved land should be restricted from further development through the use of a conservation easement. The conserved land can be owned / maintained by one landowner or several landowners as part of their parcels. In a larger project, it might be owned/maintained cooperatively via a homeowner's association. A land trust could also be involved or in some situations the Town might take ownership of all or some of the conserved land. There are many alternative scenarios that can work depending on the specific circumstances. The important thing is that the future of the open land set aside in these projects cannot be left to chance. Conservation easements are critical for securing the future of these lands. A management plan for the open land should also be prepared and made part of the easement. The zoning and subdivision regulations should spell out in detail what is required to ensure that these things are addressed properly.

In order for this district to be enabled, specific conservation subdivision language should be adopted into the zoning code, either for this district or for use in multiple districts in Towns, to replace the current §190-22 Cluster Development. This language should specifically outline the review and approval process, including goals, milestones and performance metrics of the design.

In addition to residential use, agricultural operations, recreational uses (such as the current country club) and low-impact rural business uses would be appropriate for this area.

## VI. DESIGN GUIDELINES RECOMMENDATIONS

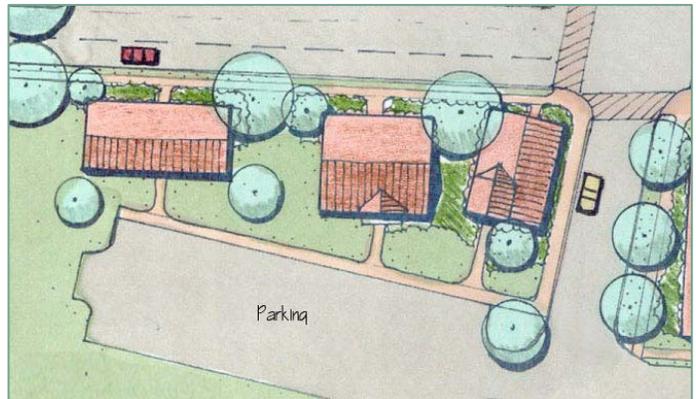
In order to protect the desired character of this important area of New Scotland, it is recommended that illustrated design guidelines accompany new zoning changes to help regulate the appearance of new buildings, additions/expansions of existing buildings, signs and landscaping. These guidelines could be enforced by the Planning Board and should apply, at a minimum, to any commercial property which requires a building permit or site plan review approval. Richly illustrated design guidelines add predictability to the development approval process by making it clear to developers, reviewers, and the public at large what is desired and expected in terms of the design of new development in the community.

A description of some of the design characteristics that should be encouraged for each of the character areas follows.

### Existing Hamlet

Because of its nature as an older mixed-use corridor, the design guidelines for the existing hamlet area can be somewhat more relaxed than the design requirements for the other areas such as the Hamlet Center or Hamlet Expansion, and should therefore be separate from the requirements for these other areas.

**Site Planning:** The guidelines should enforce the goal of new construction and infill buildings being sympathetic to the front setbacks and alignment of any immediately adjacent structures on neighboring lots. Parking areas should be kept on the side or rear of the building and visually secondary to the architecture and landscaping, although having a few convenience spaces in front may be acceptable. Larger parking lots, if required, should be broken down into a series of smaller lots separated by significant landscaping. Automobile repair and sales establishments should keep vehicle storage in the rear of the lot and screened from view, although a small number of vehicles for sale may be displayed in front. Adjacent properties should connect or share their driveways and parking areas to limit curb cuts along the main corridor and provide more parking options where feasible. Pedestrian access to/from parking areas, adjacent buildings and sites, and to the



*Development along the NYS Route 85 corridor should seek to locate and connect their parking lots in the rear for improved access management, and share common driveways to reduce the number of curb cuts.*



*Example of a large commercial building which has used different architectural treatments and massings along the front façade to highlight entry areas and reduce the perceived scale of the building.*

local sidewalk network and nearby bus stops (if applicable) should be emphasized in the design. Building entrances should be easily accessible to pedestrians and oriented toward the street. Utilitarian functions such as outdoor storage, dumpsters, loading docks, vehicle service bays and similar areas should be kept in the rear of the building and screened from view. Driveways should only be as wide as necessary for one or two lanes of traffic as needed; any existing curb cuts which are significantly wider should be narrowed and reclaimed as attractive front yard landscaping.

***Building Scale and Massing:*** New buildings and additions should be broken up into smaller massing segments to avoid the look of monolithic boxes. To achieve this, requirements could be applied which would limit the length of any continuous run of visible exterior wall to about 40 or 60 feet without a significant change in massing. Other methods may include: encourage the use of pitched roofs over the use of flat roofs; discourage the visibility of large areas of blank wall facing the road; prohibit the use of garage doors and loading docks on the front facade; front entry points into the building should be readily visible and highlighted with the use of different massing or separate roof element; and similar requirements.

***Architectural Character:*** Although the architectural character of the NYS Route 85 corridor is varied and diverse - it is recommended that some basic architectural standards be maintained. The use of certain exterior materials could be encouraged, such as wood clapboard (instead of vinyl siding or concrete block) on the visible facades to improve the look and feel of buildings along the corridor. A list of encouraged and discouraged materials could be included in the guidelines for front and/or readily visible facade areas.



*An example of new construction in a New England town that made use of architectural styles typical of the surrounding area.*

***Older and Historic Structures:*** Several of the older structures on the corridor have special and/or historic qualities which should be respected. In these cases, adaptive re-use of the older structures should be a high priority. Additions and new construction on these properties should appear secondary to the original structure, and be particularly sympathetic to their scale, character and use of materials. In these cases, the guidelines may have to identify the specific structures along the corridor which would receive this special treatment, or alternately the reviewing body could be given the authority to deem these properties special on a case-by-case basis.

***Signs:*** The proper use of signage along the corridor will have a marked impact on the visual appeal of this area. Specific guidelines for signs here may want to permit the use of freestanding monument signs, provided they are kept relatively low to the ground and are limited to only a small amount of text such as the name of the business or plaza and a street number. The use of a freestanding sign which lists multiple business names on it or large amounts of information should be avoided. The use

of a freestanding sign could be limited only to cases where the commercial business is of a certain size or distance away from the road which would warrant the extra signage near the roadway. Otherwise, all remaining commercial signs could be limited to one per business, and surface mounted on the facade of the building. The size of all signs could be regulated to a moderate amount of area so that the text is readable from the road, while the sign board itself is not made unnecessarily large.

The lighting of signs could be strictly limited to small, shielded lamps which produce only the minimum amount of light needed to illuminate the sign surface, mounted to the exterior above or below the sign board. Internally illuminated cabinet 'box' signs, changeable message LED or changeable-copy trailer signs should not be permitted.

**Landscaping:** The front yard areas of all commercial properties should be sufficiently landscaped with well maintained lawn, shrubs, trees and other decorative plantings to create an attractive appearance from the roadway. Excess parking, driveway or other paved surfaces in the front yard area should be removed or relocated and reclaimed with landscaping wherever possible. The immediate perimeter around the front facade of the building should be framed with a planting area consisting of bushes, flowers and/or lawn—paved parking and asphalt areas which directly abut the building exterior should be prohibited. Any points of public entry along the front facade should be provided with a paved walkway which connects to the parking area and public sidewalk, if present. New commercial properties or existing properties seeking site plan approval for significant exterior alterations should be required to provide a sidewalk along the entire parcel frontage.



*Buffer plantings are employed at this service station to shield the business from the adjacent roadway.*

## Hamlet Center

Because of its nature as a new commercial center within the town, the design guidelines for the Hamlet Center area should be somewhat stricter than the design requirements for the other areas, and should therefore be separate from the requirements for these other areas.

**Building Scale and Massing.** Buildings in this district should be limited in size and massing to smaller scale, individual forms which can be arranged to work together to create inviting outdoor public spaces. This can be achieved through the use of a small floor area ratio (F.A.R.) limit, or the use of building footprint size caps. Because large portions of this district could potentially be designed as part of a unified master plan, F.A.R. limits would not likely be effective and therefore the building

footprint caps might be preferred. Suggested limits would probably be in the range of between 4,000-10,000 square feet.

Due to the desired Hamlet Center aesthetic which is evocative of traditional mixed-use village development patterns, buildings here would ideally be 2 or 3 stories in height. Without the benefit of preparing a pre-approved development plan which dictates multiple stories for some of the structures here, it may be necessary to require 2 or 3 story building heights as part of the zoning or design guidelines in order to ensure that this will happen. Likewise, the use of pitched roof designs should be a requirement, and/or flat-roofed structures could be permitted provided they have a strong parapet.

Architectural Character. A list of encouraged and discouraged exterior materials should be provided for all structures which is slightly more demanding than the material standards for the Existing Hamlet, and should be applicable to all exterior facade and roof areas, not just those readily visible from the public way. Additional requirements for window types and sizes should also be included which encourage the use of more traditional window forms on the upper floors, such as double-hung styles, vertically proportioned and of limited size ranges. At the ground floor level in pedestrian areas, larger picture windows, inviting storefronts and recessed doorways should be required. Any blank areas of wall should be adequately minimized with decorative designs, trims, moldings or landscape treatments.

Signs: The design requirements for signs in this district could be similar as those for the Existing Hamlet, with signs being limited to one per business, and no internally-lit signs allowed. However, the Hamlet Center standards could be different in the following ways:

- No commercial freestanding monument signs should be permitted.
- Non-commercial freestanding monument signs which identify common public or civic institutions or areas may be permitted, such as a public park, Town Hall, police station or library.
- Small freestanding public directory signs which include a map of the local area and nearby businesses may be permitted in limited pedestrian areas for local wayfinding.
- The size of all signs should be kept to a minimum text and sign board size, with information limited to the name of the business and brief description of services. The size of the text and sign board size should ideally be smaller than what would be permitted in the Existing Hamlet.
- All signs should be constructed from carved and/or painted wood signboards, or extruded metal channel lettering which is surface mounted.
- All signs which are part of a given development should be part of a coordinated sign program which pre-determines a consistent look of shape, materials and background color for a clean and uniform appearance. Specific lettering or logo colors which may be a part of an established business logo should be allowed.

**Landscaping:** The landscaping requirements for this district could be similar to those listed for the Existing Hamlet, however could be further strengthened with minimum acceptable levels for tree plantings, shrubs and groundcover. All perimeter areas around a building abutting within five feet of a building facade should be provided with landscaped planting beds, lawn or sidewalk. Public alleyways or open courtyards created between neighboring buildings should be designed as attractive pedestrian plazas with flower beds, raised planters, decorative pavers, seating benches, bike racks and trash receptacles.

### Design Guidelines in Remaining Districts

The design guidelines for the Hamlet Expansion district would likely be almost identical to those developed for the Hamlet Center district, with perhaps only minor differences, if any. Due to the fact that the Development Areas could evolve as either residential or commercial/industrial, it is not known what role design guidelines might have here. It would be possible however to reserve them for future use, and have them be developed—when needed—as part of the approvals for any development area proposal.

No design guidelines are expected to be needed for the Rural Residential Area, or the Agricultural / Conservation except as may be deemed necessary for any potential accessory barn structures.



*Multi-story mixed use development within the Hamlet Expansion area could be carefully designed with natural materials such as wood and stone to be in keeping with the rural character of the area.*



*Example of attractive multifamily residential architecture in Colchester, VT.*

## Sustainable Building and Site Design

Sustainable building and site design techniques should be considered for all development activity in the New Scotland Hamlet Study Area. Green building techniques and green infrastructure should be strongly encouraged or required as appropriate. Elements such as solar panels, geothermal heating and cooling, green roofs, shade trees, porous paving, rain gardens, and similar features should be considered whenever projects are proposed and reviewed. Though these techniques are increasingly being utilized by the local development community on their own, the Town could encourage their use through the establishment of development incentives or by providing educational materials to builders/developers.



*Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Henrietta, NY – a bioswale filters stormwater from the road and parking lot.*

In terms of green infrastructure, the Town of New Scotland is part of the Stormwater Coalition of Albany County; a partnership of ten (10) municipalities that are regulated by the NYS Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit program administered by the NYSDEC (as a consequence of the Federal Clean Water Act). As part of the Coalition's activities, a subcommittee is developing a model local law(s) or guidelines for green infrastructure practices and will provide training for local Planning, Zoning, and Legislative board members. This work is funded through a grant from the NYSDEC.

The purpose of this grant is to help incorporate the requirements in the NYS Stormwater Management Design Manual with local zoning, subdivision regulations and other related local code documents. The new green infrastructure practices that are being encouraged by the design manual are not always acceptable under local municipal code language. For example, allowing a narrower street width in a residential neighborhood in order to reduce impervious surface or allowing a cluster development in order to conserve open space on a parcel.

**Green Infrastructure:** Systems that mimic natural processes in order to infiltrate, evaporate, and/or reuse stormwater. Green infrastructure uses soils, topography, and vegetation in a way that minimizes the impacts of anthropogenic [human] disturbance and maintains the pre-development hydrology and water quality of urban environments.

- SUNY ESF: State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry

The Coalition expects to be finished with the grant work in 2013. The Town of New Scotland should consider how to incorporate this work into its land use regulations for the Study Area and, perhaps, the entire Town.

The New Scotland Town Board recently adopted Local Law D of 2012 that provides alternative specifications for “green road design.”



*Green infrastructure in Niagara Falls, NY – an example of stormwater management that is environmentally friendly and aesthetically appealing in a densely developed setting.*

In order for portions of the Study Area to develop as described in this plan (in particular the Hamlet Center), an integrated stormwater management program for this area may be warranted. Rather than dealing with stormwater on a site by site basis, a coordinated strategy for the Hamlet Center could result in better environmental and urban design outcomes.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## VII. Transportation Recommendations

As noted in the Mobility / Transportation section of the Existing Conditions report, there are no vehicular safety or capacity issues that require immediate attention in the Study Area. The two main roadways, New Scotland Road (NYS Route 85) and Maple Road (NYS Route 85A), both have surplus capacity. The intersection of these two state highways also performs well within acceptable ranges. Anticipated growth (approved projects and projects in the pipeline) in and around the Study Area will not significantly change this conclusion. However, the future land use vision as described in this plan will require a closer look from the standpoint of vehicular transportation. This will be described further below.

Though vehicular safety and capacity are not issues currently, there are existing quality of life concerns related to transportation in the study area that should be addressed. The Existing Conditions report notes that Residential Level of Compatibility (LOC) ratings are poor where residences are located close to roadways that are intended to serve through traffic. Small portions of the study area, in particular segments of NYS Route 85 near the eastern edge of the Study Area toward Slingerlands and in the heart of the hamlet (between NYS 85A and CR 308), are characterized by relatively poor ratings for residential compatibility; these poor ratings will be worsened as additional traffic volume is added to these roadways and other segments with previously good ratings will also degrade as traffic volumes increase. Owners of these homes are well aware of the impact of traffic - during the peak hours and when trucks pass their homes - on their quality of life. A broader concern for all residents and visitors to the hamlet is the lack of basic bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along the main roadways in the Study Area. Narrow shoulders and no sidewalks make riding a bicycle or walking along NYS Route 85 and NYS Route 85A unattractive and unpleasant. Despite the relatively close proximity of homes to businesses and institutions (church, Town Hall) in the hamlet, walking is not very common due to these conditions.

Transportation recommendations for the New Scotland Hamlet Study Area include the following:

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements on Existing Highways**

Addressing the lack of basic bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the heart of the hamlet is a primary concern. Limited right-of-way width, the proximity of adjacent structures to the roadway, and the location of utilities will constrain the options for future bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in the NYS Route 85 Corridor; however without additional study the extent of these constraints is unknown. In cooperation with the NYS Department of Transportation, the Town of New Scotland should take the lead in investigating the alternatives in more detail as a follow-up to this plan. The Town of Bethlehem, which desires to replace its old water transmission lines in this corridor, should also be asked to participate.

Ideally, the goal would be to have sidewalks on both sides of the street throughout the existing hamlet - along NYS Route 85 from approximately Whitbeck Lane to the new senior housing / office development at Stone Creek Court. The sidewalks could also extend south on CR 308 a short distance to pick-up a few houses, and north on NYS Route 85A a short distance to Falvo's Meat Market. Where possible, the sidewalks should be separated from the roadway by a planting strip. The desirability

and feasibility of other streetscape elements - formal curbs, streetlights, street trees and similar amenities - could also be determined as part of the further study of this corridor. A dedicated bicycle lane, or at least a wider well-maintained shoulder, for bicyclists would also be appropriate on NYS Route 85, NYS Route 85 A, and CR 308 in the study area. Physical constraints such as those identified above, as well as limited county or state funding and the need to accommodate new state stormwater regulations, must all be considered. However, consistent with recently approved NYS Complete Streets legislation and the regional transportation plan (CDTC's *New Visions Plan*), a balanced roadway environment should be pursued as possible and appropriate.

Based upon a detailed investigation of the constraints identified above, it may be necessary to modify the ideal. For example, if standard sidewalks are not possible in some portions of the NYS Route 85 corridor (such as the oldest section of the hamlet from CR308



*An example of a paved pathway that can be used as an alternative to a formal sidewalk.*



*A "Sharrows" alerts motorists that the travel lane is to be shared with bicycles.*

to the intersection with NYS Route 85A), an alternate route or a less formal paved pathway could be considered as possible alternatives in these areas. Paved pathways can meet the needs of most users (though they might not achieve full ADA compliance) and are arguably more appropriate from a design perspective than formal sidewalks and curbs in a historic hamlet setting.

Similarly, if a bike lane cannot be accommodated throughout the NYS Route 85 corridor, or along portions of the other highway segments identified above, a shared lane could be substituted for the bike lane in these locations. "Sharrows" stenciled on the pavement could be utilized (if the speed limit is reduced to 35 mph or less - see below for traffic calming recommendations) in these sections of shared roadway to alert motorists and bicyclists to the transition. Information about the proper function and use of sharrows is found in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) under Section 9C.07, Shared Lane Marking. NYSDOT would need to determine whether sharrows would be appropriate in these locations and, if so, would need to secure the physical and fiscal resources to install and maintain them.

## Traffic Calming

The speed of traffic as it travels is an existing concern; and this will likely become a bigger issue in the future if, through this plan, the Town allows higher density development near the center of the hamlet and encourages more biking and walking. To address this concern, "traffic calming" techniques should be considered.

The primary objectives of traffic calming are: to reduce vehicle speed, to reduce traffic volumes, and to reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. Depending on the situation, one, two, or all three of these objectives can be addressed by the inclusion in the roadway system of features that will alter driving habits to the benefit of non-motorized users of the system. Traffic calming techniques can be:

- passive, such as a speed trailer telling the driver how fast he is going;
- psychological, such as narrowing the roadway by the use of pavement markings; or
- physical, such as roadway closures or diverters to reduce volume, or roundabouts, speed bumps/tables, or curb extensions to reduce speed.

In the Hamlet of New Scotland, the primary concerns are reducing speed and reducing vehicular conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists. The goal is to differentiate the role and function of this roadway - NYS Route 85 - for the approximately three-quarters of a mile that it traverses the heart of the hamlet. Outside of the hamlet it is, and should remain, a rural highway. However, within the heart of the hamlet, NYS Route 85 should function more like a “main street”. The same is true for NYS Route 85A as it approaches the hamlet center.

The posted speed limit (45 mph) may need to be reduced in the future as development of the hamlet progresses. To help motorists identify this transition from the rural highway to a slower speed main street, physical changes to the roadway should also be considered. For example, at the entranceways to the hamlet from the east and west on NYS Route 85, and from the north on NYS Route 85A, special design treatments could be installed. These “gateway treatments” could include raised, planted medians that would send a clear signal to motorists that they are entering the hamlet and that they must slow down. The raised medians could contain hardy, low maintenance grasses, ground cover or low plantings. If the town or a local group of volunteers would be willing to maintain them, more decorative plantings could be utilized as appropriate. In addition, the median could serve as the location for a “Welcome to New Scotland” sign.



*Examples of “gateway treatments” that serve to signal an arrival to a destination and also provide a visual cue to reduce speed.*

## Access Management

According to the Federal Highway Administration, access management is “the proactive management of vehicular access points to land parcels adjacent to all manner of roadways. Good access management promotes safe and efficient use of the transportation network.” It preserves roadway capacity and reduces conflicts between vehicles and other users of the road (bicyclists and pedestrians).

Along the state highway corridors in the New Scotland study area there are two primary means by which the Town can help accomplish good access management. Where changes are proposed on already developed parcels in the existing hamlet (building additions and improvements, redevelopment, etc.), the Town can work with the business/property owners to make small access improvements. The use of landscaping to create defined driveways, the consolidation of curb cuts, cross-access agreements between adjoining parcels, and other similar techniques can make a big difference over time. In the new development areas identified in this plan, it is recommended that access be provided via new, local streets constructed off of the highways rather than through individual curb cuts to the maximum degree possible. The future roadway network, described in the next subsection, will make this possible.

## Future Roadways

As part of the future land use vision described in this plan, much of the new development proposed for the study area will be directed inward onto the large parcels of land on the north side of NYS Route 85. While development along the roadway frontage on NYS Route 85, and to a lesser degree along NYS Route 85A, is planned, almost all of the new development will be accessed via a new network of interconnected local streets. These will intersect with the existing roadways at particular locations (new intersections), but the number of access points will be far fewer than what would occur if the frontage were developed in a conventional suburban commercial manner. The interconnected nature of the new internal street network will also distribute traffic more efficiently, reducing the potential impact of the new traffic generated by the development on the existing roads and on the intersection of NYS Routes 85 and 85A.

The new roadway network should make it possible for people to travel from NYS Route 85 to NYS Route 85A without passing through the intersection of these two roadways, however the network should not function as a bypass of this intersection. To accomplish this, the internal roads should be designed with T-intersections, traffic calming, and other elements that would tend to discourage pass through traffic.

The *Conceptual Land Use & Linkages Plan* illustrates a conceptual framework for a new system of local roads on these parcels. The lines shown are not intended to represent actual proposed alignments; instead, these lines indicate the types of major connections that should be provided between the different character areas shown. In addition to these larger connections, a more fine grained network or grid of inter-connected local streets would be developed as part of the development of these areas.

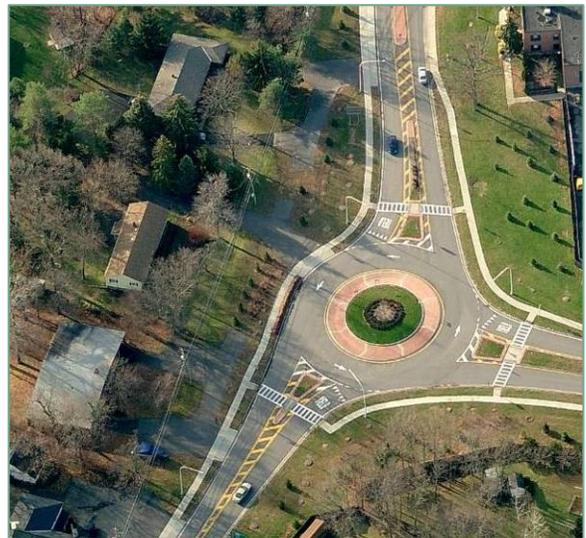
All of the new local streets that are constructed as part of the internal roadway network should also be designed as “complete streets”. That is, streets that are designed to meet the needs of all users, including “pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, motorists and citizens of all ages and abilities, including children, the elderly and the disabled” (from the recently adopted NYS Complete Streets legislation). As such, in the more densely developed portions of the Study Area (such as the Hamlet Center and the Hamlet Expansion areas) roadways should include elements such as curbs and sidewalks, bike lanes where necessary, and similar accommodations. In the other development areas, and along the roadways connecting the development areas to one another, other options such as pathways paralleling the road might be more appropriate.



## Intersection Improvements

The intersection of NYS Route 85 and NYS Route 85A sits at the center of the hamlet of New Scotland. Under current conditions, this intersection performs acceptably in terms of vehicular safety and capacity. It does not, however, create a very welcoming feeling for bicyclists or pedestrians.

As development progresses in the hamlet area, and as more accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians are considered, improvements to this intersection may be necessary. There are a range of conventional improvements that could be considered, including: fixing the skewed alignment of the intersection, formalizing thru traffic and turn lanes, adding highly visible crosswalks and pedestrian signals, etc. At some point, this intersection might warrant a more significant redesign such as the construction of a roundabout. While a single-lane roundabout (like the one in Voorheesville) or simple capacity improvements (such as the addition of a turn lane) might be appropriate, it



*A single-lane roundabout, such as the one in Voorheesville, may eventually be appropriate at the NYS Routes 85/85A intersection.*

should be noted that the community does not want to see major expansions or widenings of these roadways or this intersection.

The Town of New Scotland should carefully monitor this intersection as new development is proposed in and around the study area. A certain level of development could trigger the need for improvements and, to the degree possible, the cost of such improvements should be shared in an equitable manner between the public and private sectors. Furthermore, the Planning Board should be careful to consider the possibility of a future redesign of this intersection as it evaluates site plans for properties located adjacent to it.

With the development of the future roadway network described in the previous subsection, new intersections with NYS Routes 85 and 85A will be created. There will also be new intersections constructed on the development sites themselves. These intersections should be designed with all users in mind - vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Whether designed as a conventional intersection or a small roundabout, crosswalks and other appropriate infrastructure must be incorporated into each.

There might also be locations on NYS Routes 85 and 85A, or within the new interconnected roadway network, where mid-block pedestrian crossings would be beneficial. In such locations, it is recommended that crosswalks with a raised median be considered. The median reaffirms the need for motorists to slow down and provides a pedestrian refuge for people crossing the street. The path across the median could be designed with a slight jog that requires the pedestrian to look in the direction of oncoming traffic before crossing the second travel lane. This simple design feature adds an additional level of safety to the median's role as a pedestrian refuge. The appropriate use and design of mid-block crossings is described in NYSDOT's Highway Design Manual.



*Examples of mid-block crossings which utilize a raised median to alert motorist to the presence of pedestrians.*

## Trail Connections

The proposed Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail is viewed as a tremendous future asset for New Scotland. As already described, it is recommended that a Town Park be established adjacent to the trail to provide an amenity for users of the trail and residents of New Scotland. This would also serve as a trailhead for some users, and help establish connections from the trail to services (stores, restaurants) in the hamlet center. Steep slopes and wetlands along portions of the embankment in this area will need to be considered in the design of the park facility. A second small park and trailhead should be established along Maple Road near its intersection with Hilton Road.



*A typical paved multi-use path.*

Taking advantage of these connections to the future Rail Trail, this plan envisions a system of trails and pathways throughout the study area and connecting to nearby destinations in the Town and the Village of Voorheesville. The *Conceptual Land Use and Linkages Plan* illustrates this system of trails and pathways. Running alongside roadways such as NYS Route 85A (Maple Avenue) and Youmans Road, and through future development areas such as the Bender Mellon Farm, this network would create numerous walking / biking loops and serve as a unique and highly attractive recreational resource for residents and visitors to New Scotland. This type of amenity would also distinguish these development areas in the regional marketplace and perhaps improve their chances of success.

Aside from progressing work on the Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail, another short-term trails-related initiative that the Town of New Scotland could pursue would be to secure public access to the small underpass that runs beneath the active rail line at the end of Youmans Road. With the recent closing of the former at-grade crossing, and the construction of a new road from the other side of the tracks to Swift Road, this old cattle pass could serve as a vital link for a trail connection from the study area to the Town Park off Swift Road. More information about the ownership status of this old underpass and negotiations with the railroad and adjoining landowners will probably be necessary, as well as determining the feasibility of excavation to provide enough clearance for bicyclists to safely pass through.



*The "cattle pass" at the end of Youmans Road which could allow for a multi-use path to extend from the study area to the Town Park located approximately 1/2-mile to the west.*

## Public Transportation

As described in the Existing Conditions report, bus service through the Study Area is provided by the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA). With the relatively large number of town residents who commute to Albany each day, it would seem possible that bus ridership will increase in the future as gas prices continue to rise. CDTA's current Albany County route restructuring initiative will have some bearing on the level of service provided and, therefore, the desirability of this option for commuters. But with the potential development envisioned for the New Scotland hamlet in this report, the Town should work with CDTA to pursue all opportunities to enhance the attractiveness of public transportation.

Currently, bus stops in the Study Area consist of small signs posted along the edge of the road. There are no amenities or even comfortable places to stand at these locations, and there is no pedestrian infrastructure in place to make walking to these locations feel safe or attractive. Whenever new development or redevelopment is proposed on sites adjacent to a bus stop in the Study Area, the developer should work with the town and CDTA during site plan review to ensure that transit stops and related infrastructure are upgraded as appropriate.

As part of the development review process for properties in the Hamlet Center area, the Town should ensure that provisions for well-designed bus shelters are included in the plans. To maintain route efficiency, buses cannot be expected to veer far from the main roads but perhaps they could utilize a location along the Town Commons envisioned as part of the Hamlet Center for a nice bus shelter. It might also be possible to use some of the parking behind the buildings in the Hamlet Center as designated park-and-ride locations. Bus riders would then pass the stores and restaurants in these buildings on their walk to and from the bus stop.

## Transportation Conclusions

It should be noted that many of these transportation recommendations - from lowering the speed limit and utilizing traffic calming techniques to adding sidewalks or bike lanes - will need to be considered together as a package of improvements for the corridor. For example, NYSDOT is unlikely to reduce the speed limit for a section of the highway corridor unless this is part of a comprehensive strategy for the hamlet. Furthermore, any physical changes to the corridor would only be considered by NYSDOT as part of a reconstruction project, not within a routine paving project. Given the state's constrained fiscal situation and the large number of transportation projects that need to be addressed in the region, NYSDOT will probably not focus on this section of NYS Routes 85 and 85A for several years. Therefore, in order to advance the Town's goals for the corridor sooner, the Town will need to take a more direct role in the design and the financing of improvements. The next section of this document (Section VIII: Implementation) will suggest an approach for doing so.

It should also be clearly stated that it is not the intention of this plan to suggest development levels that would create conditions requiring the significant expansion (widening) of NYS Routes 85 and 85A or the intersection of these two highways. Residents of New Scotland have expressed a strong preference for maintaining the general characteristics of this transportation infrastructure - one travel lane in each direction, etc. As discussed at the start of this section, the existing roadway system has a

fair amount of surplus capacity. The form of development proposed in this plan and the recommendations in this transportation section are intended to minimize the potential negative impacts of future development in this area on the existing roadway system. The interconnected network of future streets, access management, support for public transportation, and the creation of an environment that really promotes walking and bicycling will reduce the growth of traffic pressure on existing roadways. Still, the Town and its partners at CDTC and NYSDOT should continue to monitor these conditions, especially since traffic issues here are impacted by activities elsewhere in the town and the region.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## VIII. Implementation

This New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan establishes for the first time a clear and compelling vision for the future of the New Scotland hamlet and its environs. The plan identifies the desired future land use pattern for the study area and suggests the tools (zoning, design guidelines, etc.) that will help the town realize the vision. It also provides a set of transportation recommendations that are coordinated with the land use vision.

The plan is an important first step for the Town of New Scotland. This area of the town has been the focus of a great deal of community discord in recent years. Though complete community consensus about the future of this area would be desirable, it is probably not a realistic goal. It is, however, hoped that the vision described in this study gives the town and the various stakeholders in this process a positive and mutually beneficial outcome to aim for. To the degree that there can be agreement about this, there is the potential for the town, landowners and business owners, residents, and the development community to work together toward achieving this vision. Time and resources can be put to productive use and everyone can benefit. The community can achieve a balance of conservation and development, preserve its unique character, create a new vibrancy and sense of place in the center of the hamlet, expand its selection of recreational amenities, and distinguish itself as a community of choice in the region. The Town can attract quality development that enhances its fiscal position. And landowners and business owners can have predictability in the development review process and a partner in the town to help address the big needs (transportation, infrastructure, etc.) that must be dealt with in order to bring high-quality development to this area.

The New Scotland Town Board should adopt or accept this plan as its policy guide for the New Scotland Hamlet study area. The Town Board is also ultimately responsible for implementing the plan. To assist the Town in organizing for this work, this section outlines some of the important actions that the Town should undertake to move these ideas forward. Recognizing that it is necessary to focus on a small number of tasks at one time, this section offers suggestions about priorities. It also provides information about how the work can be accomplished including appropriate partners and potential funding sources as appropriate.

### Short-term (initiate immediately)

#### *Revise the Town's zoning and related land use regulations -*

This plan describes a land use vision and provides specific ideas about how the Town's zoning and related land use regulations could be revised to achieve that vision. Making these changes is a critical next step for the Town. These regulations guide private sector development, and they should be written to ensure that the type of development envisioned through the plan is in fact allowed and encouraged. The Town's current Commercial (COM) Zoning District covers most of the study area, and it is not suitable for directing the type of growth and change desired here. Replacing this zoning district with one or more new districts that incorporate tools and techniques specifically tailored to achieve the development patterns described in the plan is absolutely necessary.

The new regulations developed for this area should be clear and predictable so that the desired outcomes are understandable for those seeking to develop or make significant changes to their properties, for those tasked with reviewing and approving the proposed changes, and for the general public. Illustrated design guidelines and standards, such as those suggested within this plan, should be incorporated into the revised regulations (directly or by reference) to assist users in visualizing the desired site design and architectural characteristics.

A small technical committee should be tasked by the Town Board with guiding development of draft zoning amendments and associated documents building upon the recommendations in this plan. The Town Board, Planning Board, and perhaps the ZBA, should be represented on this technical committee. The Town Attorney, or a resident volunteer who specializes in land use law, could also be considered for a role on the committee. The Town's planning consultant charged with working with the committee could be asked to draft the zoning amendments and design guidelines with review by town legal counsel. The technical committee would serve in an advisory role. It would submit its draft amendments directly to the Town Board, and the Town Board would be responsible for coordinating review, conducting required public hearings and adopting the final version of the proposed changes.

Accomplishing this change is something the Town of New Scotland can initiate right away. Funded by the Town, this project could be completed within the next four to six months. If grant funding, through CDTC's Transportation Linkage Planning Program or from other sources, is utilized, it could take somewhat longer to initiate and complete the work. Given the long debate about this area of Town, it might be beneficial to move forward quickly if the Town's finances allow.

#### *Continue dialogue with landowners in the Study Area -*

Through the course of this study much has been learned about the aspirations of some of the primary landowners in the Study Area, and they too have learned more about the community's desires for this part of town. This dialogue should continue so that ideas can be shared and opportunities for cooperation identified. There is much to be done if the vision expressed through this plan is to be achieved, and both public and private investment of time and resources will be required.

#### *Develop an educational program about the vision and recommendations for the New Scotland Hamlet -*

The Town could spearhead an effort to provide additional information about the vision and recommendations contained in this plan for residents, business owners, and for the local development community. The purpose of this educational program would be to raise awareness about what the community desires for the New Scotland Hamlet and to send a message that the Town is open for business. The program could further explain some of the new land use tools and techniques that the Town intends to utilize to manage change in this area. Through presentations, brochures, or web based media, this effort would be designed to increase knowledge and smooth the transition to the new approach that the Town intends to utilize for this area.

---

***Continue to work with Albany County and other partners to advance trail concepts -***

The Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail continues to be an eagerly anticipated project in New Scotland and surrounding communities. The Town of New Scotland should continue to work with Albany County to advance this important project. The Town could also consider whether there are any interim steps that it can advance on its own to make portions of the trail more accessible to the public in the near term. Sometimes getting people out there creates more momentum and advocacy for moving the larger effort forward. If appropriate, volunteers could serve an important role in making some of the initial improvements. The Friends of the Rail Trail, a committee of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, is currently working with the Town to open a section of the trail - from Voorheesville to Upper Font Grove Road - this summer\*.

*\* Note: On June 22, 2012, Albany County, the Town of New Scotland, the Village of Voorheesville, and the Mohawk-Hudson Land Conservancy signed a four-way license agreement to maintain and operate a 2.6 mile section of the trail in the town and village. Formal opening will be later this summer after bridge safety issues are addressed, but the entire length of trail adjacent to the study area will be open for public use soon - volunteers and Town Highway crews began brush clearing and trail maintenance efforts on June 23, 2012.*

The other short-term action related to trails would be for the Town to work with the railroad and adjacent property owners to explore issues surrounding reuse of the old railroad underpass at the end of Youmans Road. This underpass would serve as a critical link for the future network of multi-use pathways envisioned in this plan.

To coordinate these initial activities and future efforts to develop the trail system envisioned in this plan, the Town of New Scotland could create an advisory pathways committee. Similar to efforts in Guilderland and in other communities in the region, such a committee could sustain the type of long-term initiative that is necessary to nurture the development of a trail network across such a large area.

**Medium-term (initiate within the next two years)*****Develop design concepts for the NYS Route 85 Corridor in the hamlet -***

The Town of New Scotland along with its partners at CDTC and at the NYSDOT should undertake a conceptual design study for the NYS Route 85 Corridor in the hamlet (from the Town line on the east to the active railroad tracks on the west). Small segments of NYS Route 85A and CR308, immediately north and south of NYS Route 85 respectively) should also be included in this study. The primary purposes of this conceptual design study would be to collect information about the right-of-way, utilities, and other features of the corridor and to develop preliminary designs for bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular improvements consistent with the vision established in this plan. Additionally, desired streetscape elements (curbs, lighting, street trees, and other amenities) for various sections of this corridor could be identified and preliminary cost estimates provided. This conceptual design study would provide the Town and its partners with the information necessary to program funding for design development and construction in future years.

### *Create a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the Study Area -*

Under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), communities in New York can prepare a GEIS to evaluate the potential cumulative impacts of expected or planned development in an area. Since this Hamlet Master Plan has affirmed the community's intention to see well-planned development occur in the existing hamlet and on the large parcels of land surrounding the existing hamlet, the Town of New Scotland could take a pro-active role in ensuring that the transportation, infrastructure (water, sewer, stormwater, etc.), parkland and open space, and other needs associated with this development are satisfied in a timely and equitable manner. Under a GEIS, the Town of New Scotland could evaluate the potential adverse environmental impacts of alternative development scenarios that fit within the vision described in this plan and propose appropriate mitigation strategies for addressing such impacts. One potential outcome of this approach could be the establishment of a system of mitigation fees that ensure that future development pays its fair share of the cost of mitigating impacts. Absent legislative authorization for impact fees in New York State, the establishment of mitigation fees under SEQR is the primary mechanism by which a community in New York can require that infrastructure, roadway, or other public investments needed to meet the needs (address the impacts) of planned development in an area can be shared between the public and private sectors.

Several towns in the Capital Region have utilized this approach with much success over the last two decades. The use of a GEIS to address up-front the impacts (and costs) of development across a defined area is considered uniquely fair because it can ensure that such costs are not only divided equitably between the public and private sectors, but also between the various developers of land in the study area. Too often, the first one or two (or more) sponsors of development in an area pay relatively little to offset the impacts of their projects because a critical threshold, above which some improvement may be required, has not yet been reached. In such cases, it is the unlucky next developer in the door that gets saddled with the full cost of offsetting the impact if his/her development is the one that crosses the threshold. By analyzing and preparing for these impacts in advance, this type of situation can be avoided.

The cost of preparing a GEIS that addresses issues as described above can be significant. It is an upfront investment in the future that the Town Board could decide to make. It should, however, be noted that the cost of preparing the GEIS can be recouped by the Town over time if these costs are included as part of any mitigation fees established through the study.

Given the state's current fiscal situation, and the very large number of transportation and other infrastructure projects that are competing for funding throughout the region and the state, the establishment of a local source of funding for improvements via a GEIS could be the most likely way to advance the vision for this area within a reasonable period of time. As noted earlier in this report, the NYS Route 85 and NYS Route 85A corridors in New Scotland will not be a high priority for NYSDOT in the foreseeable future. However, if the Town takes a proactive role in terms of initiating this work and developing some of the funding to implement the necessary improvements, it might have more success bringing NYSDOT to the table.

Another potential benefit of this type of proactive, in-depth approach is that the GEIS could lead to the identification of locations within the study area that should be made “shovel-ready” for certain types of desired development. In particular, one or more of the Development Areas shown on the Conceptual Land Use & Linkages Plan could be made shovel ready. The term “shovel ready” has been around for many years and has been established as a formal designation by New York State. It has been defined as follows:

Having an economic development site certified as a "Shovel Ready Site" means that the local developer (or community) has worked proactively with the State to address all major permitting issues, prior to a business expressing interest in the location. This advance work creates a site where construction can begin rapidly, once a prospective business decides to develop a facility there. By reducing the time it takes a company to begin construction of a new facility, New York State and its local partners are able to provide valuable savings to the business and job opportunities for local residents.

Shovel Ready Certification is an ongoing component of the Build Now-NY program and is administered by Empire State Development (ESD). A site can, however, achieve Shovel Ready Certification without having received a Build Now-NY grant or loan to assist the developer in completing the advance work. Shovel Ready Certification is available to any site in New York State that is suitable for the type of development proposed, has proper zoning and infrastructure, has completed the appropriate surveys and studies, and has received the necessary permits and approvals.

Rather than continuing with the old “zone it, wait, and react” approach that has characterized the Town’s role in bringing development to its only commercial zone for many years, the actions described in this section would make the Town of New Scotland an active partner in promoting the appropriate development of this area. It would also ensure that the community does not leave to chance the preservation of its unique character and the provision of the necessary infrastructure and desired amenities to make the community a desirable place to live, work, and visit for years to come.

#### ***Work with the Capital Region Economic Development Council -***

Under a new initiative of the Cuomo administration, New York State has established regional economic development councils to develop long-range strategies for economic growth in each region of the state. The Capital Region Economic Development Council created its Strategic Plan last year. The state also provided funding to implement the regional strategic plans last year, and will do so again this year. The Town of New Scotland should engage in this process to ensure that its vision for economic growth in the New Scotland Hamlet Study Area becomes part of the regional vision; and to try to secure funding for some of the transportation and infrastructure improvements that will be necessary to attract appropriate development to this part of New Scotland.

***Consider creation of a local organization to promote development such as a Local Development Corporation -***

The Town of New Scotland could establish a Local Development Corporation (LDC) or a similar entity to take the lead in actively promoting and pursuing economic development in the Study Area consistent with the vision established in this plan.

According to the NYS Office of the State Comptroller (*Municipal Use of Local Development Corporations and Other Private Entities: Background, Issues and Recommendations*, April 2011): "LDCs may be created pursuant to Not-For-Profit Corporation Law, Section 1411 for the following purposes:

- Relieving and reducing unemployment;
- Promoting and enhancing employment opportunities;
- Instructing or training individuals to improve or develop skills;
- Conducting scientific research to attract or retain industry; and
- Lessening the burdens of government and acting in the public interest."

The same report notes that, "To achieve the purposes for which they are created, LDCs have the power to:

- Construct, acquire, rehabilitate, and improve industrial or manufacturing plants;
- Assist financially in such construction, acquisition, rehabilitation, and improvement;
- Maintain such plants for others;
- Acquire by purchase, lease, gift, bequest, devise or otherwise real or personal property or interests therein;
- Borrow money and issue bonds, notes, and other obligations therefor;
- Sell, lease, mortgage or otherwise dispose of any such plants or any of their real or personal property upon terms determined by the LDC;
- Carry out their corporate purposes; and
- Foster and encourage the location or expansion of industrial or manufacturing plants in the territory where the LDC's operations are principally conducted."

In creating an LDC, the Town of New Scotland could provide very clear guidance about its mission that ties it directly to achieving the vision for the New Scotland Hamlet Study Area established through this plan and any subsequent studies conducted to advance this plan.



# NEW SCOTLAND HAMLET MASTER PLAN

JULY 2012

Appendices Only

PREPARED BY



PREPARED FOR

Town of New Scotland, NY  
*and the*  
Capital District Transportation  
Committee (CDTC)



**Appendix A**  
**Existing Conditions Report**

## Introduction

The New Scotland Hamlet Study Area is the area at the junction of Route 85 and Route 85A, a major gateway into the Town of New Scotland. The Study Area includes the commercial zoning district which extends from the Town of Bethlehem line almost to the Village of Voorheesville line. This area is made up of residential, commercial and professional uses. It is home to a number of locally-owned and operated businesses including Stonewell Plaza (a small strip center), Long Lumber, Our Family's Harvest farm stand and nursery, Emma Cleary's Café, Tasti-Treat ice cream, In-Town Self Storage, New Scotland Auto Center, Olsen's Nursery / Ace Hardware and Falvo's meat market. More recent commercial development includes a Stewart's, a 10,000 square foot medical building; an expansion of Olsen's nursery; redevelopment of Blackbird Prime Properties, and Corner Gateway, a business support center. There is also the former "Big Box" restaurant and the Sabre offices located on Route 85. A senior housing project is currently under construction within the Study Area. The secondary area of interest is the residential area to the north which provides linkages to the Village of Voorheesville and the Albany County Rail Trail. The Town of New Scotland is composed of a number of historic hamlets; in addition to New Scotland these include the hamlets of Clarksville, New Salem, Unionville, and Feura Bush.

Figure 1. The New Scotland Hamlet Study Area



*The New Scotland Hamlet Study Area includes lands in the vicinity of the junction of NYS Route 85 and NYS Route 85A.*

The Town of New Scotland is a rural residential community only miles from the City of Albany and adjacent to the suburban towns of Guilderland and Bethlehem. The estimated population for New Scotland is just under 9,000 with the majority of the residents living in the northern part of the town in and around the Village of Voorheesville. New Scotland is home to many that travel to and work in the City of Albany, including many employed in government, universities and hospitals.

A community's existing conditions analysis provides an important foundation for making recommendations further along in the study process. This analysis relied primarily on information received from the Town of New Scotland, the U.S. Census Bureau, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the New York State Department of Transportation, and in some cases data that has been collected by the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). This Existing Conditions Assessment is intended to provide a snapshot of New Scotland today.

Outlined below are some indicators that illustrate the existing conditions and trends for the Town of New Scotland and the Capital Region as a whole. The information will be used to build a foundation for the Hamlet Master Plan and the community may use the information as a tool to guide future decision-making, as well as benchmarking and measuring success, as the Plan is implemented.

## Demographics

This narrative presents a summary of the general demographic characteristics of the Town of New Scotland. This data provides a snapshot of the Town's population right now and insight into trends that may affect future development. The primary sources of this information include the U.S. Census Bureau and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission.

### *Key Findings / Highlights*

- The population has increased less than 1% from 2000 to 2010 and is expected to continue growing relatively slowly compared to surrounding suburbs.
  - Population within the study area has decreased approximately 7% from 2000 to 2010.
- The senior population is steadily growing while the school-aged population is falling.
- The Town's median household income is higher and its unemployment rate is lower than Albany County as a whole.

### *Population*

As shown in Table 1, the Town of New Scotland has grown by less than 1% since 2000; more slowly than the surrounding suburbs of Bethlehem and Guilderland and Albany County as a whole. According to the CDRPC's population forecasts (Table 2), the Town is expected to continue growing slowly through 2040. Historically, growth in the Town of New Scotland has occurred at a much slower rate than many other areas of the Capital Region, particularly its neighbors Voorheesville, Guilderland and Bethlehem. Generally, Albany County is growing much slower than Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties. Within the study area the population from 2000 to 2010 actually decreased by approximately 7% from 818 people to 761 people.

Table 1. Population Change (2000-2010)

Year	Town of New Scotland*	Town of Bethlehem	Town of Guilderland	Albany County
2000	8,626	31,304	34,045	294,565
2010	8,648	33,656	35,303	304,204
Change	22	2,352	1,258	9,639
% Change	0.3%	7.5%	3.7%	3.3%

\*Includes the Village of Voorheesville, Source: U.S Census

The Town of New Scotland is predominantly white (about 96%), making it much less diverse than Albany County which is 78% white. The racial composition of the Town is highlighted in Table 3.

Comparing 2000 and 2010 Census data (see Figure 2), the Town's population seems to be getting older while the number of children and teenagers has decreased; in fact the median age in 2000 was 41.1 and in 2010 rose to 45.2. This means residents value their community and want to stay, or "age in place," rather than move to a retirement community or different state. Recent data shows that older Americans want to stay in their homes as long as possible. New development should be built according to universal design standards, allowing all people, regardless of physical abilities or disabilities to easily access buildings. Although Census figures show the number of children and teenagers decreasing, school enrollment projections seem to remain level through 2013 (see Figure 3).

Table 2. Population Forecast (2010-2040)

Year	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
2010	8,700	302,162
2020	8,798	307,201
2030	8,925	311,707
2040	9,079	316,197
Change	379	14,035
% Change	4.2%	4.4%

Source: CDRPC

Table 3. Race Comparison (2010)

Race	Town of New Scotland		Albany County	
	Count	%	Count	%
White	8,345	96%	237,873	78%
Black or African American	54	1%	38,609	13%
American Indian and Alaska Native	19	0%	654	0%
Asian	96	1%	14,579	5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	6	0%	98	0%
Some other race	14	0%	4,744	2%
2 or more races	114	1%	7,647	3%
Total	8,648	-	304,204	-

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that 64 million people will be over 65 by 2025. This is the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. In the Capital Region, the baby boom generation accounts for about 27% of residents and the need to improve the transportation system for senior mobility is urgent. Older drivers find roadways difficult to navigate and increasingly become dependent on transit and walking. This growing population must be considered in future Town planning, especially in the hamlet area where there will be more opportunities for recreation, shopping and walking.

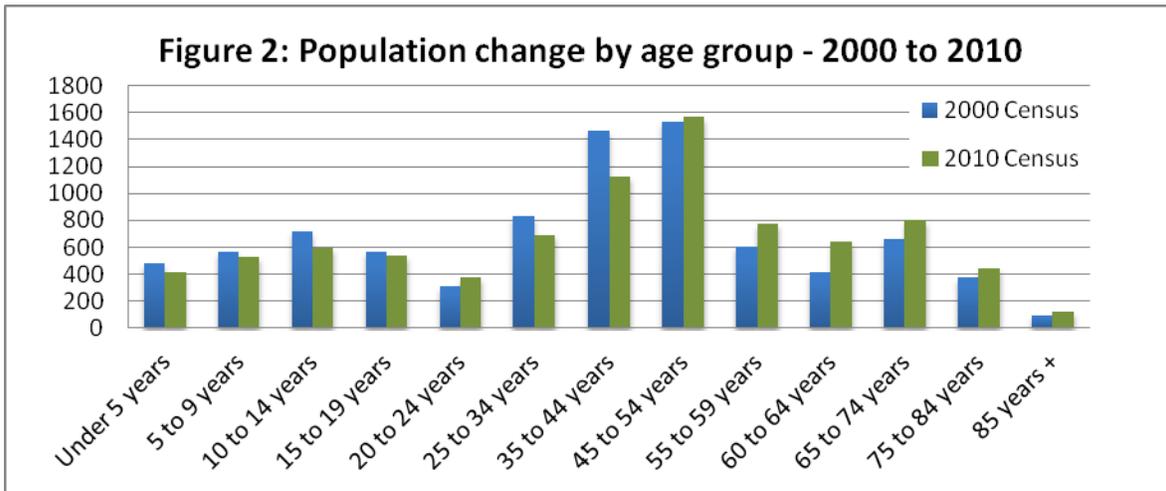
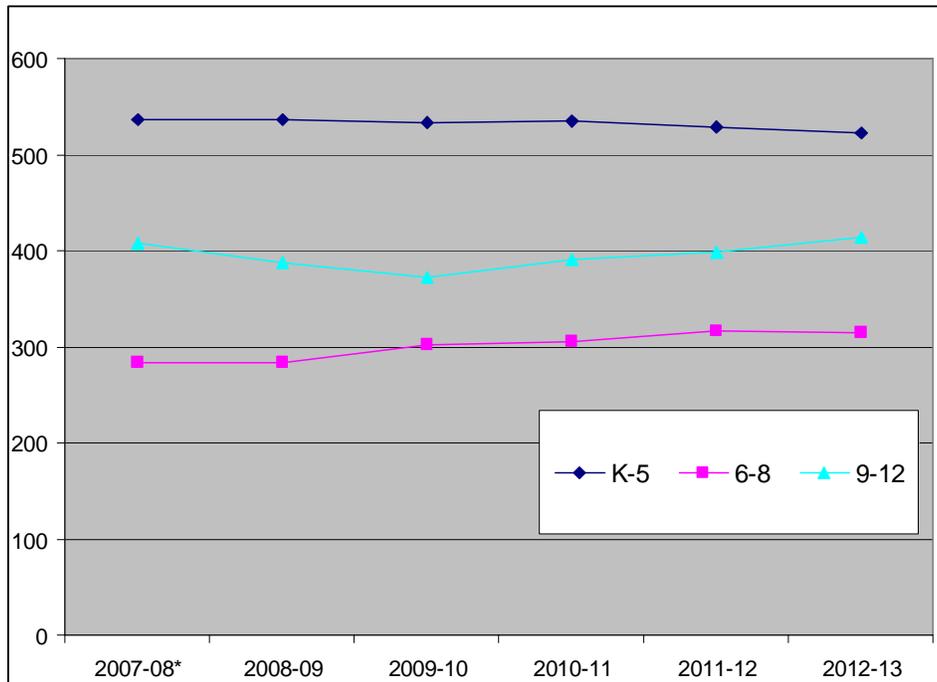


Figure 3. Voorheesville Central School District Enrollment Projections



Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission

*Population Density*

Overall, the Town of New Scotland is a rural community that has experienced modest residential growth in the hamlet area. Population density in the Town’s Census Tracts ranges from 102 to 113 persons per square mile. By comparison the Village of Voorheesville (which is the third Census Tract in New Scotland) has a population density of approximately 1,330 persons per square mile. The neighborhoods north of NY 85 are generally denser than those that are south of NY 85. Anecdotally, most new development that has occurred in the Town has been north of NY 85. Based on 2010 Census Block data the population density within the study area is approximately 340 persons per square mile.

*Income*

According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-year estimates from 2005-2009 the median household income in the Town of New Scotland is \$69,950, compared to Albany County’s median household income of \$55,350 (Table 4). A relatively low percent of the population in the Town is living below the poverty level (6.4%)<sup>1</sup>. Albany County, as illustrated in Table 5, has nearly double the percent of its population living below the poverty line (12.4%).

*Commercial Activity and Employment*

Table 6 shows the levels of employment and unemployment for 2005-2009. The Town of New Scotland has a slightly lower unemployment rate than Albany County. Table 7 illustrates the types of occupations that residents are estimated to be employed in. The majority of employed workers hold jobs in management, professional and related occupations (56.7%) and service occupations (27.2%). Despite the rural character of the Town, 0% of

Table 4. Income (2005-2009)

Income	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
Median household income (inflation-adjusted dollars)	\$69,950	\$55,350
Per Capita income (inflation-adjusted dollars)	\$40,322	\$30,063

Source: U.S. Census

Table 5. Poverty (2005-2009)

	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
Individuals Below the Poverty Line	6.4%	12.4%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 6. Employment (2005-2009)

	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
In Labor Force	4,637	160,213
Employed	4,450	150,676
Unemployed	187	9,364
	4.0%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census poverty threshold for 2010 is based on household size. For example, the poverty level for a one person household is \$11,130 and a four person household is \$22,314 (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/>).

residents were reported to be employed in farming, fishing and forestry occupations. This is likely due to the data being an estimate based on a surveyed sample of the town, and most likely there were no farmers included in the survey. There are known working farms located within the Town

Table 7. Occupation (2005-2009)

Type	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
Management, professional and related occupations	4,450 56.7%	63,219 42.0%
Service occupations	2,134 27.2%	24,000 15.9%
Sales and office occupations	373 4.8%	42,440 28.2%
Farming, fishing and forestry occupations	0 0.0%	232 0.2%
Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations	505 6.4%	9,093 6.0%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	387 4.9%	11,692 7.8%

Source: U.S. Census

**Housing**

This section presents general housing characteristics and projects for the Town of New Scotland. Existing housing stock, household makeup and home values provide a snapshot of the Town’s character and also provide insight into housing trends that may affect the Town and/or surrounding communities in the future. The primary source of information used to prepare this analysis is the U.S. Census Bureau.

*Key Findings / Highlights*

- There are approximately 3,700 total housing units in the Town of New Scotland.
  - Within the study area there are approximately 280 residential units with an additional 90 approved units
- The median home value in the Town is \$224,400, Albany County has lower median values.
- There is a 7% vacancy rate for residential buildings.
- The majority of the housing stock is single-family, detached homes built before 1980. There is also a mobile home park and a new housing development south of NY 85 which will include two family homes.

*Housing Characteristics*

According to Census data, which is displayed in Table 8 below, there are a total of 3,736 housing units in the Town of New Scotland - 93% of those units are reported occupied and 7% are vacant. About 85% of the occupied housing units are owner-occupied whereas 15% are being rented. The numbers reflect data available between 2005 and 2009, however there have been areas that have been subdivided and platted for new development, but new homes may not have been reported as of the time of this report. Based on an analysis of parcel data and in consultation with the town’s engineering consultant there are approximately 280 residential units within the study area and approximately 90 additional units have been approved, but not yet developed.

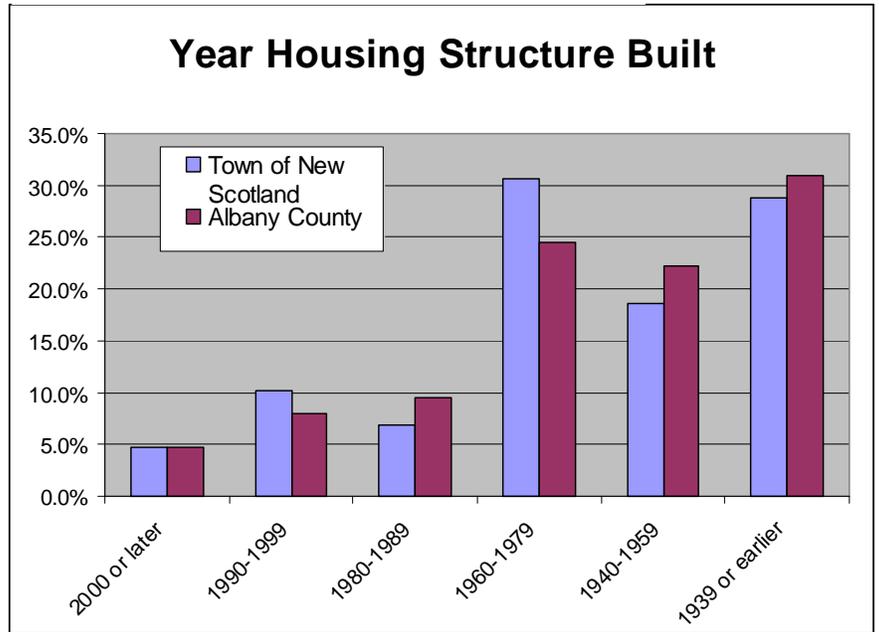
Table 8. Housing Stock (2005-2009)

	<b>Town of New Scotland</b>	<b>Town of Bethlehem</b>	<b>Town of Guilderland</b>	<b>Albany County</b>
Total housing units	3,736	13,231	14,537	133,501
Occupied housing units	3,475	12,785	13,897	122,525
Owner-occupied	2,939	9,863	9,576	73,507
Renter-occupied	536	2,922	4,303	49,018
Vacant housing units	261	446	658	10,976
Vacanty Rate	7.0%	3.4%	4.5%	8.2%

Source: U.S Census

The town’s housing stock consists of mostly single family, detached houses with a modest number of multi-family or apartment buildings. As illustrated in Figure 4, the Town experienced the most growth between 1960 and 1979 when almost 31% of the town’s total current housing was being built. There are a large number of historic homes as well, with almost 30% of homes built prior to 1940. While in some communities the age of these homes would be a concern, in the Town of New Scotland they are well maintained and add to the community’s identity. The forms and patterns of both historic and newer homes will be evaluated later in the planning process to assist the community in determining where and how to grow in the future. These forms and patterns will also help determine design guidelines in the hamlet so it continues to develop in a manner that is consistent with its special character.

Figure 4. Year Structure Built (2005-2009)



Source: U.S. Census

The median home value in New Scotland is \$224,400, which is higher than Albany County home values at \$192,500 (Table 9). According to Census data, the median monthly housing costs for mortgage owners was \$1,705, non-mortgaged owners \$626 and renters \$794. Of renters, 25% are spending greater than 30% or more of household income on housing. The Housing Affordability Index suggests that housing is considered “affordable” if it costs 30% or less of household income.

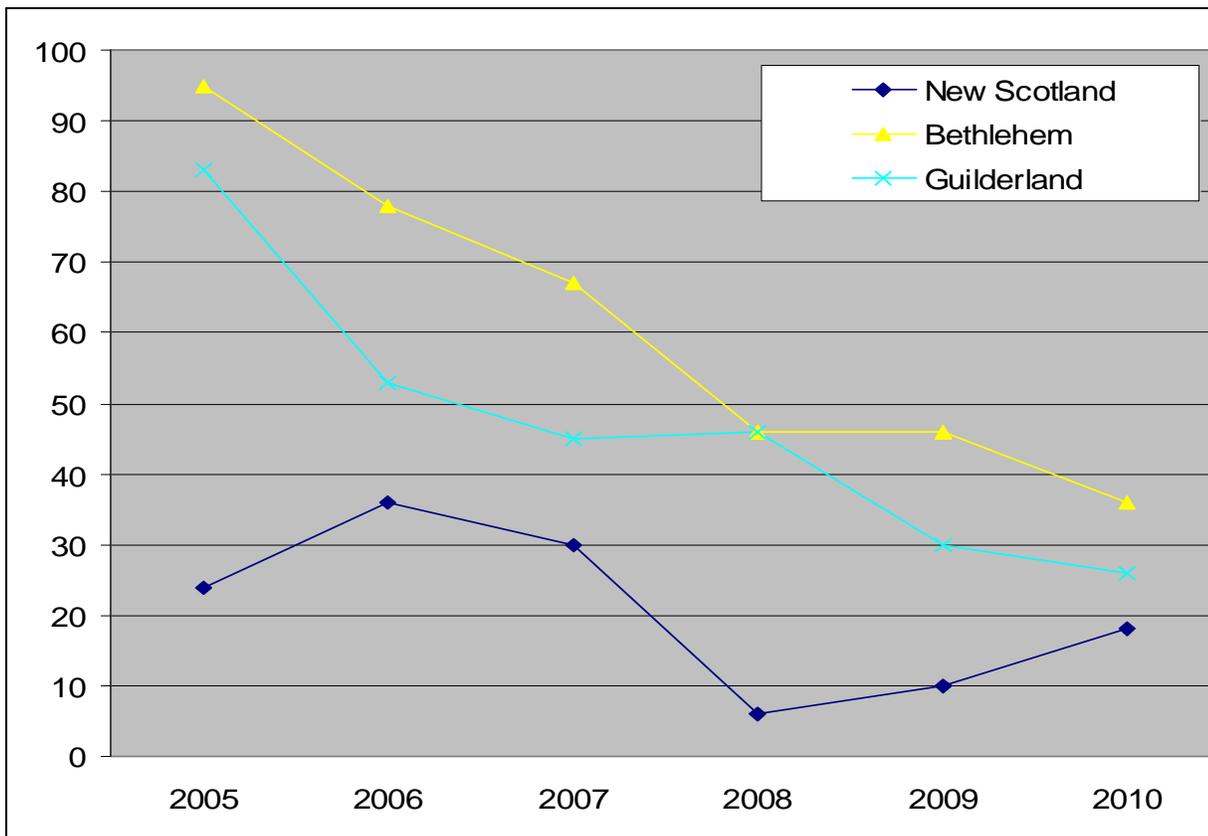
Table 9. Median Home Values

	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
Median home value (dollars)	\$224,400	\$192,500

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 5 illustrates the number of building permits issued in the Towns of New Scotland, Bethlehem, and Guiderland from 2005-2010. In New Scotland, there was a clear drop off in building permits in 2008, when the recession was having the greatest impact on construction and real estate. The Town of New Scotland seemed to gradually rebound whereas building permits in the surrounding suburbs of Bethlehem and Guiderland have continued to drop off or level. New Scotland has varied from 2% to 8% of the County building permits in the last five years.

Figure 5. Building Permits (2005-2010)



Source: CDRPC receives this information from the U.S Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Construction Statistics Division

## Mobility/Transportation

To assist the Town of New Scotland and its residents in developing a Hamlet Master Plan it is important to understand the current condition of the study area transportation system as it relates to the accommodation of all modes of travel: motor vehicle (including trucks, public transit and school buses), bicycle, pedestrian; and the relationship of this system to surrounding land use activities. Understanding the current capacities, limitations, and gaps of this system will help shape what is possible in the future and determine, at a conceptual level, improvements needed to support the future community based vision of what the hamlet study area can become.

This section describes the current characteristics of the various roadways and other transportation system elements within the study area and includes information on traffic volumes; roadway characteristics; motor vehicle crashes; level of compatibility between major roadways, their access characteristics and surrounding land uses; and a description of system elements in terms of ability to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists comfortably and safely.

### *Key Findings / Highlights*

- The two main roadways serving the study area are owned and maintained by New York State. These urban minor arterials and urban collectors serve as both commuting routes for travelers within and outside the Town of New Scotland to jobs or activities elsewhere in the region, and as main roads and potentially as main streets within the New Scotland Hamlet area.
- Roadways within the study area serve a mix of land uses, with commercial uses concentrated around the intersection of NY 85/NY 85A and primarily residential uses adjacent to both roadways moving away from this intersection and outside the study area.
- These roadways serve the current, relatively low intensity, surrounding land uses and through traffic well in terms of motor vehicle level of service and safety. The amount of motor vehicle travel has remained relatively constant over the past decade.
- Both NY 85 and NY 85A have surplus capacity under traffic current conditions; the current capacity or Level of Service (LOS) for the roadway sections and intersections along NY 85 and NY 85A within the study area are well within acceptable ranges for typical arterial roadways.
- Residential LOC (level of compatibility) ratings are poor where residential use/traffic conflict occurs along NY 85 on the eastern edge of the study area and within Slingerlands, and along the short segment of NY 85 between CR308 and NY 85A. On NY 85A, LOC ratings are also poor where residential dwellings are clustered near the intersection of NY 155.
- Walking on the main routes within the study area using narrow shoulders alongside travel lanes where vehicles are moving at or over the speed limits of 45 and 40 mph most likely discourages pedestrian activity. However, land uses along the roadway in this area attract pedestrians.
- Bicycle level of service analysis and walkability surveys (lack of sidewalks and pedestrian signals at NY 85/NY 85A) give the area poor marks.

- Despite the low Bicycle Level of Service scores, roadways within the study area are known as popular recreational rider and cycling club routes.
- The ability to add roadway capacity and/or to provide future standard bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in some areas along main routes (NY 85 and NY85A) is somewhat constrained due to limited Right- of-Way width, as well as the proximity of adjacent structures and the location of utilities.
- The Albany County Rail Trail presents a future opportunity for accommodating pedestrian and bicycle travel (both commuting and recreational) across a section of the study area.
- Transit service is seen as an asset to the study area providing an alternative to driving/enhanced mobility for those without access to a car. However due to the poor pedestrian and bicycling environment, limited frequency and timing of service as well as current lack of bus stop amenities, taking transit may not be an attractive option for some potential riders, with ridership decreases in recent years.

### *Roadway Network*

The roadway network within and adjacent to the study area includes two New York State highways: NY Routes 85/New Scotland Road and 85A/Maple Road; an Albany County highway: CR 308/New Scotland Road South) and local Town-owned roads.

As the map on the next page illustrates, both New York State routes are functionally classified as Urban Minor Arterials with NY 85/New Scotland Road's classification changing to an Urban Collector west of its junction with NY 85A/Maple Road. CR308/New Scotland Road South is also classified as an Urban Collector. The functional classifications of these roads are further described below:

- NY 85 and NY 85A: These two NY State routes are classified as *Urban Minor Arterials*, defined as roadways that “should interconnect with and augment the urban principal arterial system and provide service to trips of moderate length at somewhat lower levels of travel mobility than principal arterials” (Source: NYSDOT Functional Classification Memo, 2000). Both NY 85 and NY 85A provide connections to adjacent municipalities to the north, east and west: Route 85 connects New Scotland with municipalities to the west (Berne, Middleburgh, etc) and east (Town of Bethlehem to the City of Albany), while Route 85A provides a connection northward to the Village of Voorheesville and to the Town of Guilderland via NY 155 which intersects it at a roundabout near the northern limit of the study area on the outskirts of the Village. Each of these state highways serves as both a commuting route for travelers within and outside the Town of New Scotland to jobs or activities elsewhere in the region, and as a main road and potentially as a main street within the New Scotland Hamlet area.
- NY 85 west of NY 85A and County Route 308: Urban Collector roadways such as NY 85 west of NY 85A and CR 308 (New Scotland Road South) also provide both “land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas.” Urban collectors extend into residential neighborhoods and distribute trips to and from arterials. (Source: NYSDOT Functional Classification Memo, 2000)

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Within the New Scotland Hamlet study area, NY 85 is approximately 1.5 miles in length with one signalized intersection at NY 85A (Maple Rd). According to the NYSDOT Pavement Condition Report, this roadway consists of two 11 foot travel lanes and generally up to 3 foot shoulders throughout the study area (between NY 85A and Swift Road the shoulders vary with limited sections having up to 4 foot shoulders); it should be noted that in some sections on-site observations indicate the shoulder is significantly more narrow (i.e. 0 to 1 ft) than the overall segment estimate of 3 - 4 feet. The pavement condition has been scored by NYSDOT as a 7 which means it is considered to be in good condition with surface distress beginning to show.



The speed limit on Route 85 within the study area is primarily 45 mph but changes to 40 mph near 1862 New Scotland Road (toward the eastern boundary of the study area/Town of Bethlehem line). There is a short section of sidewalk on the south side of the roadway, east of the NY 85A intersection but no other pedestrian facilities; an easement for a future sidewalk exists at the front of the Stewarts property.

The narrow shoulders and 45 mph speed limit, along with the lack of a sidewalk network negatively impact the pedestrian and bicycling environment within this area. However, there are land uses along the roadway in this area that attract pedestrians and it has been noted that people are often seen walking on the shoulder between Stewarts and residential uses, such as the mobile home park, on the south side of NY 85.

Within the study area, NY 85A is approximately 1.75 miles in length with one signalized intersection at NY 85 (New Scotland Rd). This roadway consists of two 10 foot travel lanes and 3 foot shoulders. There is some rolling terrain, and curves both east and west of the signalized intersection as can be seen in the Functional Classification Designations Map, resulting in some sight distance concerns. According to the NYSDOT 2010 Pavement Data Report, the pavement condition has been scored a 6 or Fair, meaning surface distress is clearly visible. The speed limit on NY 85A within the study area is primarily 45 mph but changes to 30 near the Village of Voorheesville.

Table 10, summarizes information about the existing conditions of the roadway network in the New Scotland Hamlet study area. More detailed explanations for the various roadway characteristics listed on the table follow.

Table 10. New Scotland Hamlet Roadway Network: Existing Conditions

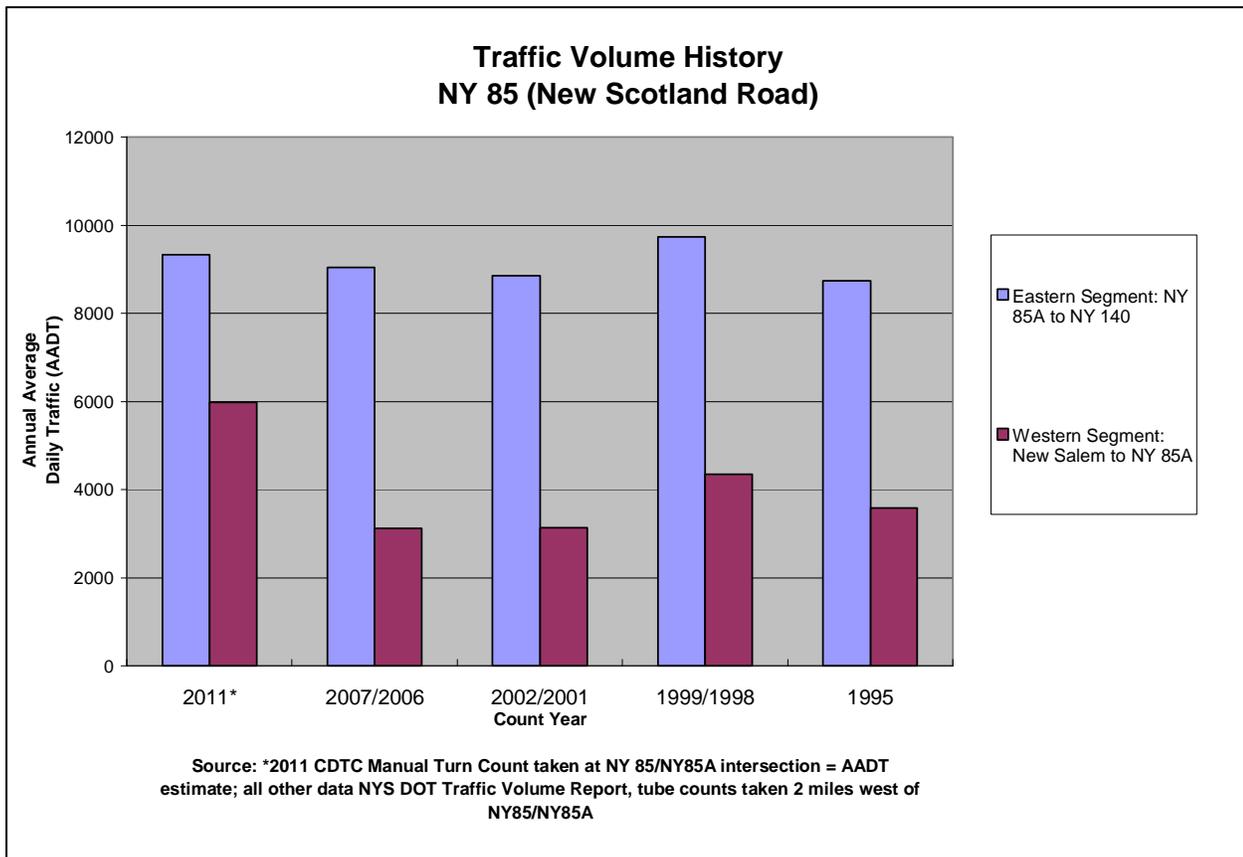
	NY 85/New Scotland Road	NY 85A/ Maple Road	CR 308/New Scotland Road South	Other Roads: Hilton, Upper Font Grove
<b>Functional Class</b>	Minor Urban Arterial/Collector	Minor Urban Arterial	Urban Collector	Local
<b>Geometry</b>	two 11 ft travel lanes /3 - 4 ft shoulders	two 10 ft travel lanes/3 ft shoulders	two 10 ft travel lanes/ 4 ft shoulders	Hilton Rd: two 10 - 11 ft. travel lanes/no shoulders; Font Grove Rd two 9 ft travel lanes/1-3 ft shoulders
<b>Posted Speed Limit</b>	45 mph	45 mph	45 mph	Hilton Rd: 40 mph Font Grove Rd: 30 mph near NY 85
<b>Traffic Volume (Annual Average Daily Traffic est.)</b>	9330 (east of NY 85A)/ 5980 (west of NY 85A)	6930	1900	NA
<b>Bicycle Level of Service</b>	D/E	E	NA	NA
<b>Pedestrian Facilities</b>	limited shoulder space/short segment of sidewalk 1 side	No sidewalks/ limited shoulder space	No sidewalks/ limited shoulder space	
<b>Access/Level of Compatibility (LOC)</b>	Residential LOC = D (CR308 to NY85A)	Residential LOC = D (NY 155 to Hilton Rd)	NA	NA
<b>Bus Service</b>	CDTA Route 19 (turns onto NY 85A)	CDTA Route 19	none	none
<b>Percent Heavy Vehicles (Trucks)</b>	6%	6%	NA	NA
<b>Avg. Annual No. of Crashes (1/2007-11/2010)</b>	NY 85(east of Swift Rd to Mason Ln): 11/yr	NY 85A(NY 155 to NY 85): 6/yr	NA	NA
<b>Additional Notable Features</b>				Albany County Rail Trail crosses Hilton Rd.and Upper Font Grove Rd.

Source: NYSDOT, CDTC

*Traffic Volumes/Mainline Level of Service*

NY Route 85 (New Scotland Road): Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes (AADT or average annual daily traffic is defined as the bi-direction traffic count representing an average 24-hour day in a year) have stayed fairly consistent for the past decade from approximately 9,100 vehicles per day east of the NY 85A intersection to approximately 3,100 vehicles per day west of the intersection toward New Salem, as tallied by the NYSDOT using automatic tube counters. (See Figure 6 below). (Note: The 2011 manual turn count daily traffic estimate for the section west of the intersection is higher as this count was taken directly at the intersection of NY 85/NY85A whereas the NYSDOT tubes were placed approximately 2 miles to the west).

**Figure 6. Traffic Volume History of NY 85 (New Scotland Road)**

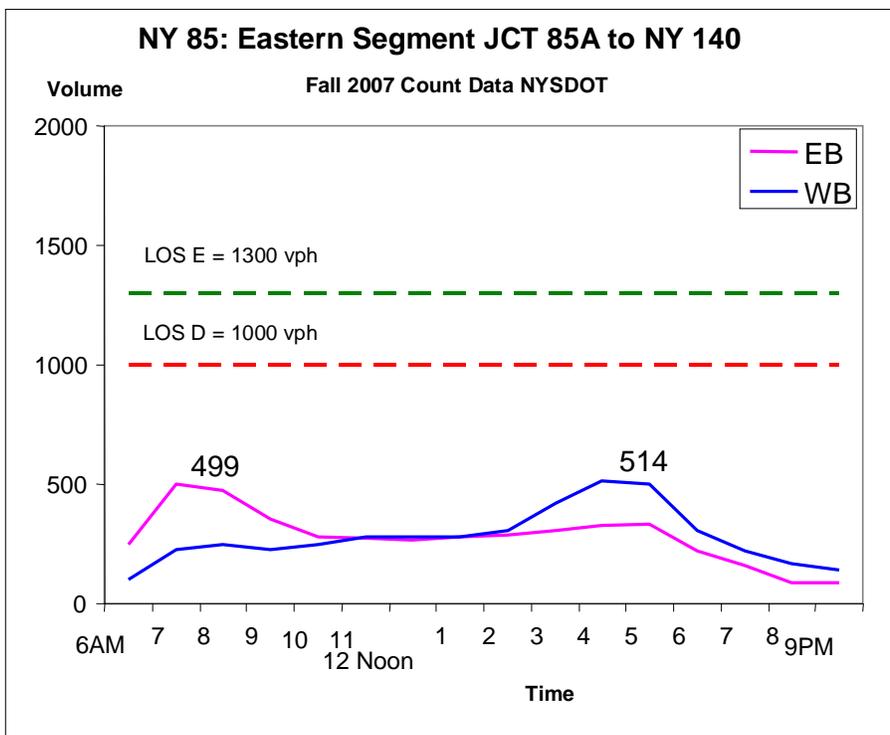


A note about bicycle and pedestrian traffic volumes: these data are not typically collected as part of traffic impact studies nor are they available for mainline roadways through standard sources, while such data is collected for motor vehicle traffic via NYSDOT automatic tube counts. However, bicycles and pedestrians were counted as part of the manual intersection traffic turn counts conducted by CDTC. In addition, both NY 85 and NY 85A are routes used for a regional bicycling club’s weekly rides. With respect to the PM peak hour manual intersection turn count conducted in March of 2011, there were 19 bicyclists counted. A common traffic engineering rule of thumb that is applied to PM peak hour motor vehicle trips to convert them to average daily volumes is to multiply the PM peak hour total by 10. If a similar rule of thumb were applied to bicycle trips, the resulting bicycling volumes

would be much higher than the 19 in the PM peak hour indicates. This area is known for its popularity with recreational bicyclists. Therefore, in an attempt to better capture the number of bicyclists using both NY 85 and NY 85A information on bicycling club rides was obtained. According to data compiled at the request of CDTC, the Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club provided information on club rides that use all or parts of NY 85 and NY 85A on their ride routes. In 2011 there were 7 different types of rides offered and 121 rides occurred for a total of 2,136 miles over these roadways. Weekly rides occurred on Saturday, Sundays, Tuesdays or Thursdays.

In terms of mainline or corridor segment Level of Service, NY 85 has maintained a high level of service related to mid-block capacity thresholds that compare the number of travel lanes with the estimated amount of daily through traffic as shown in the Figures 7 and 8 below. Mid-block or mainline traffic conditions are evaluated by using guidelines established for CDTC’s regional planning work. Mainline highway capacity deficiencies are identified by comparing mid-block traffic volumes against estimated mid-block capacities. The working guidelines for arterial and collector roadway capacity used in CDTC’s regional STEP model are summarized in Table 11. These thresholds relate primarily to commercial areas; livability measures for residential arterials and collectors are diminished when daily traffic volumes increase. (See Level of Compatibility or LOC discussion below.)

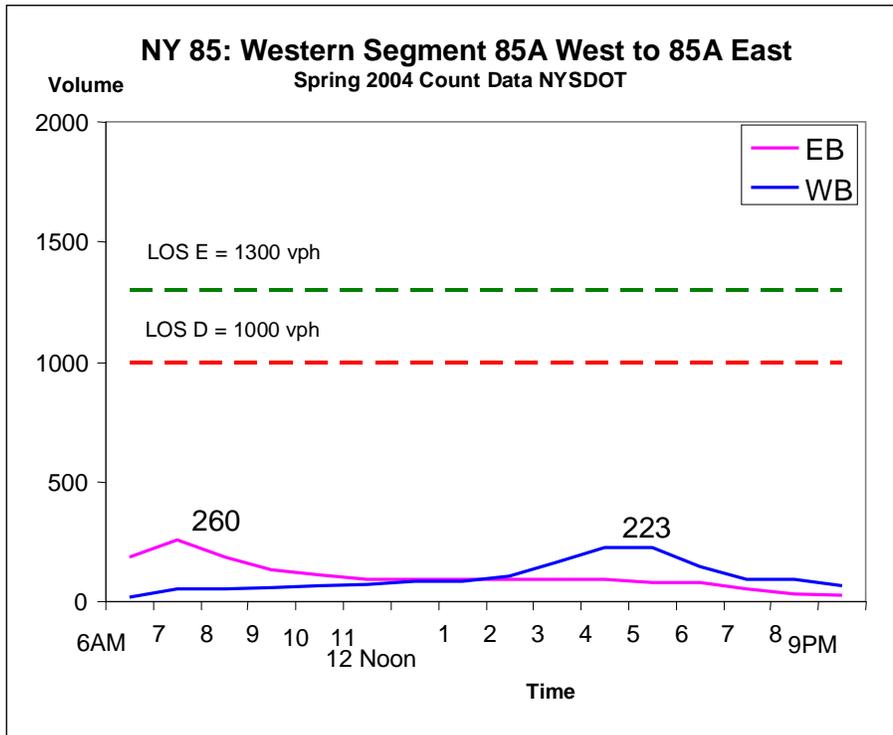
Figure 7. Traffic Count Data for NY 85 Eastern Segment - Junction 85A to NY 140



EB = eastbound; WB = westbound

Vph = vehicles per hour

Figure 8. Traffic Count Data for NY 85 Western Segment - 85A West to 85A East



EB = eastbound; WB = westbound

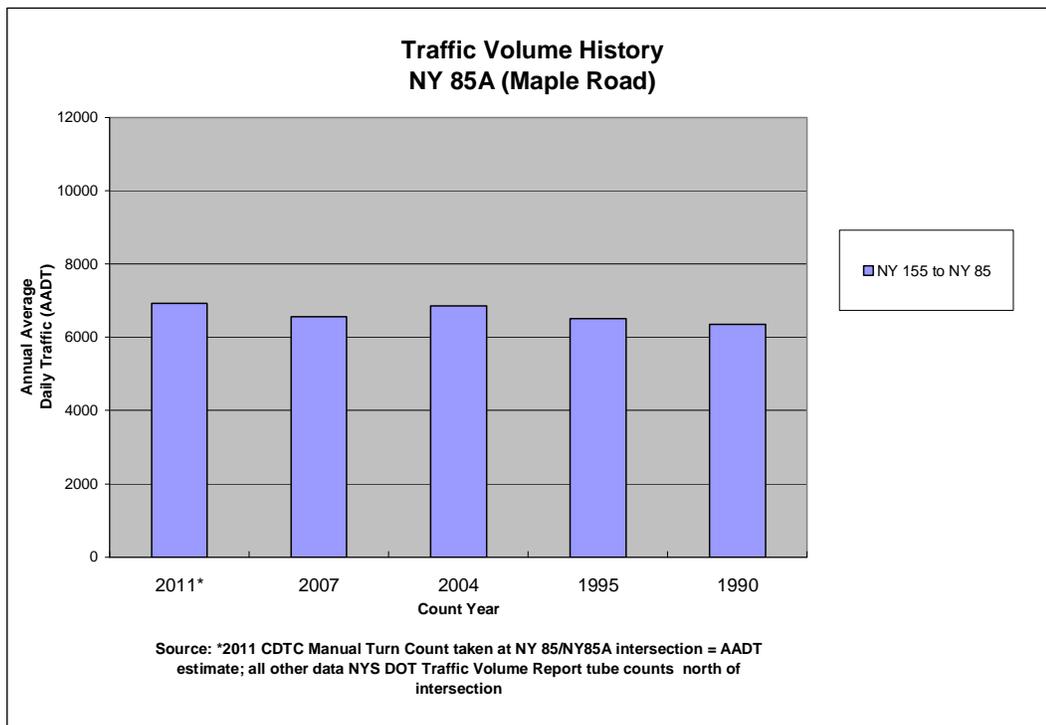
Vph = vehicles per hour

**Table 11. CDTC STANDARDS/CRITERIA FOR HIGHWAY SYSTEM EVALUATION RECOMMENDED FOR USE IN REGIONAL SUBAREA AND TRAFFIC STUDIES: Mid-Block Capacity Thresholds**

TABLE 1 URBAN ARTERIAL, COLLECTOR, EXPRESSWAY, AND LOCAL ROAD MID-BLOCK CAPACITY THRESHOLDS		
Roadway Type	<u>Approximate LOS D Capacity (each Direction)</u>	<u>Approximate LOS E Capacity (each direction)</u>
<b>Surface Arterial and Collector Roadway</b>		
Single Lane (each direction)	1,000 vph	1,300 vph
Two Lane Undivided (each direction)	2,500 vph	3,120 vph
Two Lane Divided with Flush Median (each direction)	2,800 vph	3,500 vph
<b>Expressway</b>		
Single Lane Limited Access (Undivided)	1,600 vph	1,840 vph
Single Lane Limited Access (Divided)	1,650 vph	1,850 vph
Two-Lane Limited Access (Divided) (each direction)	3,400 vph	3,700 vph
<b>Local Road</b>	625 vph	800 vph
Notes:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thresholds for surface arterials and collector roadways would apply to roadways primarily serving commercial areas of the community. Lower thresholds should be considered for residential areas.</li> <li>2. Thresholds for single lane arterials and collector roadways assume left turns are not managed. Higher quality access management, such as the presence of a median left turn lane, would argue for a higher threshold. For a three lane facility (one lane in each direction with median turning lane), using a LOS D capacity of 1250 and LOS E capacity of 1625 in each direction would be consistent with CDTC STEP Model practice. Microsimulation has been used in specific cases to assist in determining acceptable mid-block movements in the context of a system of traffic signals.</li> <li>3. Local streets serve to provide land access in residential, commercial, and industrial use settings. Through movements on local streets are incidental and involve traveling to and from a collector facility. Typically local roads carry relatively low traffic volumes and are therefore designed with narrow travel lanes, little lateral clearance, on rolling terrain, and circuitous alignments. Roadways with such restrictive physical features would have lower capacity than typical urban arterial and collector facilities. Based on the capacity values of two-lane facilities in the above table and the factors set forth in Chapter 8 of the 1985 <i>Highway Capacity Manual</i>, the maximum capacity of two-lane local roads is estimated to average 625 vph in the peak direction for LOS D conditions. The capacity of "improved" local roads may be somewhat higher, but will still fall below the threshold established for arterial facilities.</li> <li>4. The thresholds used in this table should not be used as justification for widening a road. Careful consideration of the CDTC Congestion Management System and sensitivity to the land use context would be necessary in any decision to add capacity. Other ways of managing traffic, land use and development must be considered.</li> </ol>		

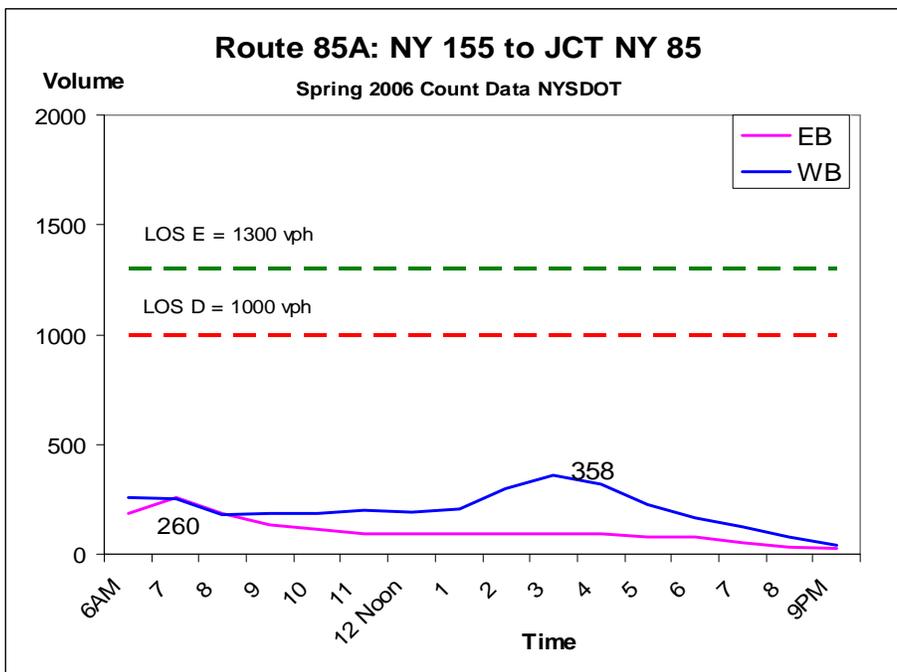
NY Route 85A (Maple Road): Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes have stayed fairly consistent for the past two decades as shown in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10. Traffic Volume History for NY 85A (Maple Road)



Similar to the findings for NY 85, in terms of mainline or corridor segment Level of Service for motor vehicles, NY 85A has also maintained a high level of service related to mid-block capacity thresholds as shown in the Figure 10 below.

Figure 10. Traffic County Data for NY 85A - from NY 155 to JCT NY 85



### *Level of Compatibility - NY 85 and NY 85A*

The roadway network of a community is defined in terms of a street hierarchy. This hierarchy describes the principal use and/or intended function of each road. As described above, roadways classified as arterials primarily serve the through movement of traffic between communities. Local streets provide access to abutting land, such as in residential neighborhoods. Collector streets funnel traffic between the two, and usually serve a secondary land access function. When a street begins to serve more than its principal function, conflicts can occur.

One type of conflict that can occur concerns access conflict with commercial traffic. Excess curb cuts and resulting driveway turn movements can interrupt traffic flow. As conflict between the primary function of a roadway as conveyor of through traffic and access to adjoining parcels increases, congestion and traffic crashes follow. This undesirable situation also limits the suitability of arterials for use by pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists. Where problems either exist or are emerging, construction of too many more driveways could threaten the operational integrity of the corridor.

From a quality of life perspective, the most notable conflict concerns the intrusion of through traffic into residential areas. Heavy traffic volumes and through traffic diminish the quality of residential living environments. Conflicts occur when through traffic uses local neighborhood streets, or where residential properties exist along streets that are intended to serve a through traffic function. For NY 85 the concern with regard to residential traffic conflict occurs on the eastern edge of the study area and within Slingerlands. There are also some concerns along the short segment of NY 85 between CR308 and NY 85A. On NY 85A, residential dwellings are clustered near the intersection of NY 155.

The point at which traffic levels are perceived as a detriment to residential quality or commercial access, however, is difficult to measure and depends on the expectations and past experience of each individual. Using objective criteria developed from a number of sources, and based on traffic volumes, roadway function, and land use characteristics, analysis of the highway network can identify areas along the arterial and collector streets where traffic volumes are clearly in conflict with residential land use or commercial access. The CDTC has developed a Level of Compatibility (LOC) rating to measure these conflicts. This measure compares traffic volumes to the number of residential or commercial driveways per segment using the formula, AADT/average distance between driveways in



feet to arrive at a residential or commercial conflict index. As shown in the Table 12 below, for traffic/residential use conflicts, the scale ranges from A, for which there is no conflict between residential uses and the level of traffic on the roadway, to F, for which continued residential use may not be possible. For commercial access conflicts, the scale ranges again from A, for which the arterial function is not affected by access, to F, for which either the access or through movement of the roadway is not functional.

Currently, there are few commercial driveways within the study area. However, there are a number of commercial driveways clustered around the intersection of NY 85 and NY 85A, some of which are located in the functional area of this intersection, resulting in conflicts between driveway and intersection traffic.

Table 12. Arterial Level of Compatibility (LOC) Index: Residential and Commercial

Road Segment	Length (Miles)	AADT (est. CDTC manual count 2011)	Residential Dwys per mile	Commercial Dwys per mile	Residential Conflict Index (AADT/Avg Spacing)	Commercial Conflict Index (AADT/Avg Spacing)	Residential Level of Compatibility (LOC)	Commercial Level of Compatibility (LOC)
<b>NY 85 Corridor (New Scotland Road)</b>								
Conrail to CR 308 (New Scotland So Rd)	0.31	5980	5	6	5	7	B	A
CR 308 (New Scotland So. Rd) to NY 85A (Maple Rd)	0.28	5980	25	13	28	14	D	B
NY 85A (Maple Rd) to Upper Font Grove Rd	0.91	9330	5	8	10	14	B	B
	<b>1.5</b>							
<b>NY 85A Corridor (Maple Road)</b>								
NY 155 (State Farm Rd) to Hilton Road	0.85	6930	26	0	35	NA	D	A
Hilton Road to NY 85 (New Scotland Rd)	0.9	6930	4	2	5	2	A	A
	<b>1.75</b>	6930						

### *Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS)*

The level of service (LOS) for bicycle travel within the study area was estimated for the two main routes: NY 85 and NY 85A. This measure is based on bicyclist perceived safety and comfort with

respect to motor vehicle traffic while traveling along a roadway and is useful for evaluating bicycling conditions in a shared roadway environment. The most recent version of the Highway Capacity Manual 2010 includes a BLOS<sup>2</sup> measure adapted from an earlier version of the model developed by Landis<sup>3</sup>. Various roadway characteristics such as travel lane and shoulder widths, motor vehicle speeds and volumes, including the amount of heavy vehicle traffic, and the condition of the pavement are used in the tested traveler-perception model to calculate a Bicycle LOS score. The resulting scores generally range from 0.5 to 6.5 and are broken down into ranges corresponding to LOS A to F, with F representing a roadway with the highest level of discomfort and perceived danger to cyclists.

See Table 13 for Bicycle Level of Service ratings for NY 85 and NY 85A. Input data was obtained from NYSDOT. The BLOS evaluation indicates that within the study area, both of these state highways rate poorly in terms of bicyclist perceived safety and comfort.

Other roadways within the study area, including CR 308/New Scotland Road South, Hilton Road, and Upper Font Grove Road, also attract cyclists. While the Bicycle Level of Service was not estimated for these roadways, due to their relatively narrow travel lanes and shoulders and posted speed limits of 45, 40 and 30 mph, respectively, bicyclist comfort and safety will primarily depend on the amount of motor vehicle traffic using these roadways, as well as the condition of the pavement.

Table 13. Bicycle Level of Service ratings for NY 85 (New Scotland Road) and NY 85A (Maple Road)

Road	From	To	Lanes per direction	% Heavy Vehicles	Posted Speed Limit	Travel Lane Width (ft)	Shoulder Width (ft)	BLOS Grade
<b>NY 85</b>	Westover Rd	Route 85 A	1	5%	45	11	3	<b>E</b>
<b>NY 85</b>	Route 85 A	Bullock Rd	1	6%	45	11	4	<b>D</b>
<b>Route 85A</b>	NY 155	Hilton Road	1	6%	45	10	3	<b>E</b>
<b>Route 85A</b>	Hilton Road	NY 85	1	6%	45	10	3	<b>E</b>

Note: Shoulder widths are based on NYSDOT's Pavement Data Report and are typical widths. However, shoulder widths are not completely uniform within roadway sections; for example along NY 85 between Route 85A and Bullock Rd there are some areas where the shoulder is closer to 0 - 1ft in width. In those areas application of the narrower shoulder width would result in a BLOS of E.

<sup>2</sup> HCM2010, Highway Capacity Manual, Chapter 15/Two-Lane Highways, pp 15-36 to 15-38. Bicycle Mode, Transportation Research Board, Washington DC, 2010

<sup>3</sup> Landis, Bruce W. et. Al. "Real-Time Human Perceptions: Toward a Bicycle Level of Service" Transportation Research Board 1578, Transportation Research Board, Washington DC, 1997.

*Pedestrian Facilities*

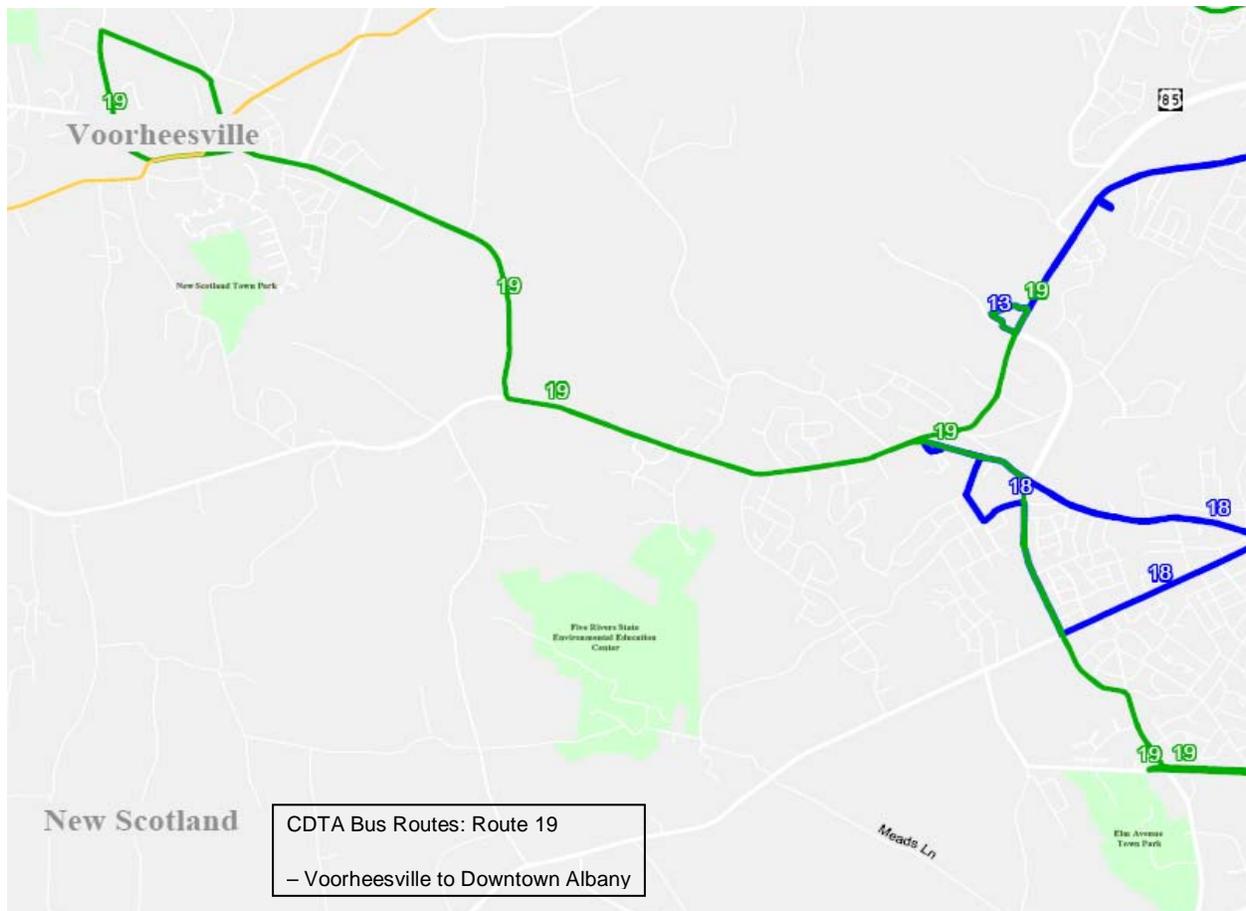
The same roadway characteristics that impact Bicycle Level of Service affect the perceived level of comfort and safety for traveling by foot. Pedestrian accommodation within the study area currently is limited to roadway shoulders and a very short section of sidewalk along NY 85, east of the intersection with NY 85A. Sidewalks can be found along NY 85 from the Bethlehem/New Scotland boundary eastward into Bethlehem and along NY 85A from the Voorheesville/New Scotland boundary northward into Voorheesville. Walking on the main routes within the study area using narrow shoulders alongside travel lanes where vehicles are moving at or over the speed limits of 45 and 40 mph most likely discourages pedestrian activity.

It should be noted that the Albany County Rail Trail is located along the northern boundary of the New Scotland Hamlet study area; it crosses both Upper Font Grove Road and Hilton Road. This trail is planned for use by both pedestrians and bicycles but funds for construction as a multi-use trail have not yet been secured by Albany County. A portion of the trail is now open for pedestrians, and soon for mountain bikes, on a section of the trail in the Town of Bethlehem between bridges/road crossing areas.

*Public Transit*

Public transit is a vital component of a well-rounded transportation system. Transit provides an alternative to driving, and in some cases is the only reasonable and affordable way to get to work.

Figure 11. Transit Service



The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) runs bus Route 19 which connects the Village of Voorheesville, New Scotland along NY 85A and NY 85, Slingerlands, and Bethlehem’s Elm Avenue Park and Ride with downtown Albany. Route 19’s path through New Scotland is illustrated in Figure 11. Transit service provides a benefit to people living and working within and adjacent to the study area by providing an alternative to driving and relieving the need to park a vehicle.

Bus stops for the Route 19 service are located at various intersections within the study area, most notably NY/85/NY 85A and Hilton Road/NY 85A. As noted elsewhere in this report, the pedestrian and bicycling facilities serving trips to and from bus stops within the study area are lacking: there are no sidewalks adjacent to bus stops and in some areas stops are located where the roadway is fronted by a drainage ditch. There are no bus shelters at stop locations. It is important to note that CDTA runs the transit service and maintains facilities they own, pedestrian and bicycle access to transit service is achieved through a partnership with adjacent road and site facility owners. According to CDTA’s publication titled a *Guide to designing and locating bus stops*, “It is very important to remember that every bus rider is a pedestrian for a part of the trip. That is why special attention should be given to providing adequate pedestrian accommodations like sidewalks and crosswalks.” As noted in the CDTA Guide to designing and locating bus stops CDTA receives more requests for shelters than the funding available. Consequently, installation of new shelters has to meet certain criteria related to ridership, whether a location is a transfer point, available right-of-way, and area demographics. The CDTA guide also includes information relevant to rural stops which recommends that in rural areas stop location and design should “adhere to as many (urban/suburban) stop location standards as is practicable”.

The Route 19 is currently an express or “commuter” route, limited to two runs in the morning and two runs in the afternoon peak travel periods. It has been noted that both the morning and afternoon

Table 14. 2009-2010 CDTA Route Performance

**FY 2009-2010 PERFORMANCE**

**EXPRESS ROUTES**

Ranked by Riders per Revenue-Hour

Route	Description	Total Riders	Revenue-Hours	% Rider change 08-10	Riders per Revenue Hour	Comment
35X	Troy-Albany	50,265	1,410	13.0%	35.6	
55X (57)	Schenectady-Albany	139,549	4,803	24.0%	29.1	Replaced by new express routes #530, #531, and #532 as part of BusPlus rollout (April 2011)
520	Nassau	29,206	1,550	N/A	18.8	
19	Voorheesville	21,189	1,330	-28.6%	15.9	Included in Albany County Route Restructuring - Phase 2 (Summer 2012)
56X	Schenectady-State Campus	9,579	605	5.6%	15.8	Eliminated due to low ridership (May 2010)
540	Northway Express	173,931	11,499	-0.4%	15.1	Harriman Campus and Wolf Rd trips eliminated with Mechanicville trip operated as Route 432 (November 2010)
21X	Altamont	18,543	1,239	-25.8%	15.0	Included in Albany County Route Restructuring - Phase 2 (Summer 2012)
90X	Troy-State Campus	2,241	415	N/A	5.4	Eliminated due to low ridership (November 2010)
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>444,504</b>	<b>22,852</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>55,563</b>	<b>2,856</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>19.5</b>	
<b>% of System</b>		<b>3.1%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>			

Above productivity threshold  
Below productivity threshold

**NOTES:**

- CDTA operates two forms of expresses - Park & ride based service operating almost entirely on highways with a higher fare structure (#540 - NX) and feeder-express service with a standard fare.
- CDTA is currently conducting a Regional Park & Ride/Express Bus study which will create a comprehensive plan for express bus services in the region

peak runs do not mesh well with school transit times, making it difficult for those with school children to use public transit for their work trips; the lack of any mid-day trips may also be limiting the number of riders currently using Route 19. Ridership data shown in Table 14 below indicates Route 19 has been losing ridership recently and falls below the productivity threshold CDTA uses to evaluate performance of express routes. Acceptable annual ridership thresholds vary by the type of service, with the threshold for express service at 30,000 riders/year. For the 2009/2010 period, the Route 19 carried just over 21,100 riders; with the number of riders per hour at 15.9 also below the acceptable threshold for express service which is 25 riders per hour.

CDTA is currently undertaking Phase 1 of the Albany County Route Restructuring process; Route 19 was not included in this initial phase and will be examined for route changes next year after Phase 1 changes have been implemented later in 2011. According to CDTA, the purpose of the Albany County route restructuring effort is to “establish a new routing network that better aligns services to demand because where people live, work, shop and travel has changed dramatically over the years.” Changes to routes are based on ridership data, future developments, and input from riders and residents. CDTA implemented similar route restructuring projects in Saratoga and Schenectady Counties over the past several years, resulting in increased transit ridership, even as revenues to provide realigned service were kept constant or “revenue neutral”. During Phase 2 of the Albany County Route Restructuring, area residents and transit riders will have the opportunity to provide input to CDTA on any proposed changes to Route 19. One concept being considered is to combine Route 19 with Route 21 (Altamont Express) to create one commuter route and to add at least one additional morning peak and afternoon peak trip.

### *Crash History*

Crash data summaries for NY 85 and NY 85A within the Study Area were obtained from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). These cover the most recent three-year period available - January 2007 through November 2010. Crash data summaries by severity are discussed below for non-intersection mid-block segments and for select intersections.

Review of crash data for NY 85 (New Scotland Road) within the study area show that there were no bicycle or pedestrian crashes with motor vehicles during the analysis period (2007 - 2010) and that the overall crash rate is within range of Statewide Average rates for crashes on similar roadways. In addition, most of the crashes occurred during dry conditions, with 26% occurring during the night and 30% involving a fixed object (tree, utility pole, etc). Driver inattention, unsafe speed, failure to yield right of way, following too closely, and animal actions were the most frequently cited contributing factors. Rear-end collisions, overtaking, right-angle, and left-turn against were the most common collision types.

Table 15. NY 85(New Scotland Road) Non-Intersection Crashes

Non-Intersection Crashes NYS Route 85 (New Scotland Road)	Crash Type				
	Total	Fatal	Injury	Property Damage Only	Non-reportable
<b>Segments</b>					
Just East of Swift Road to Youmans Road	8	0	3	1	4
Youmans Road to NY 85A/Maple Road	4	0	2	2	0
NY 85A to Just East of Mason Lane	26	0	7	13	6
Totals	38	0	12	16	10
<b>Average Annual Crashes:</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: NYSDOT Safety Management Information System

Table 16. NY 85(New Scotland Road) Intersection Crashes

Intersection Crashes NYS Route 85 (New Scotland Road)	Crash Type				
	Total	Fatal	Injury	Property Damage Only	Non-reportable
<b>Intersections</b>					
Youmans Road	1	0	0	0	1
NY85A(Maple Road) tallied in NY85A table	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Heldervue Avenue	1	0	0	1	0
Mason Lane	3	0	1	1	1
Totals	5	0	1	2	2
<b>Average Annual Crashes:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: NYSDOT Safety Management Information System

Review of crash data for NY 85A (Maple Road) within the study area show that there were no bicycle or pedestrian crashes with motor vehicles during the analysis period (2007 - 2010) and that the overall crash rate is below the statewide average rate for crashes on similar roadways. In addition, most of the crashes occurred during dry conditions, with 44% occurring during the night and 18% involving a fixed object (tree, utility pole, etc). Driver inattention, unsafe speed, failure to yield right of way,

following too closely, and animal actions were the most frequently cited contributing factors. Rear-end collisions and right-angle and left-turn against were the most common collision types.

Table 17. NY 85A (Maple Road) Non-Intersection Crashes

Non-Intersection Crashes NYS Route 85A (Maple Road)	Crash Type				
	Total	Fatal	Injury	Property Damage Only	Non-reportable
Segments					
NY 155 to Hilton Road	12	0	2	7	3
Hilton Road to NY 85/New Scotland Road	12	0	2	8	2
Totals	24	0	4	15	5
<b>Average Annual Crashes</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: NYSDOT Safety Management Information System

Table 18. NY 85A (Maple Road) Intersection Crashes

Intersection Crashes NYS Route 85A (Maple Road)	Crash Type				
	Total	Fatal	Injury	Property Damage Only	Non-reportable
Intersections					
Apple Blossom Lane	1	0	0	0	1
Hilton Road	3	0	1	2	0
NY 85/New Scotland Road	6	0	1	4	1
Totals	10	0	2	6	2
<b>Average Annual Crashes</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

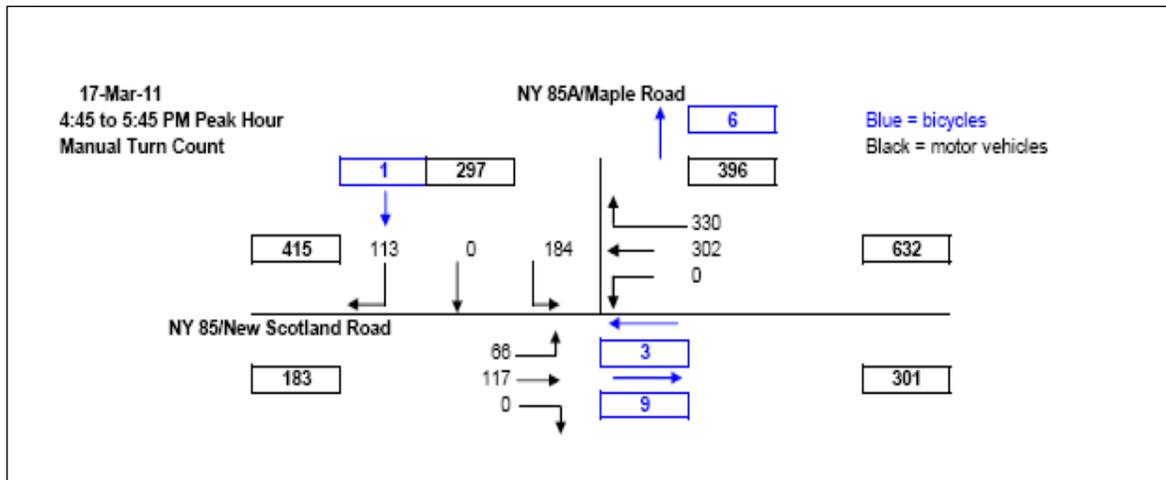
Source: NYSDOT Safety Management Information System

*Intersection Performance*

Various data have been collected for key intersections within the study area as shown in Table 19 on the following page. Among the information collected are manual turn counts tallied by CDTC in 2011 and a Sidewalks and Street Survey facilitated by AARP and collected by Town resident volunteers in April 2010.

In terms of intersection performance for the various modes, the NY 85 (New Scotland Road)/NY 85A (Maple Road) intersection currently functions well for motor vehicles, operating at a Level of Service (LOS) B during the PM peak hour. The junction of these two state routes is the only signalized intersection within the study area. CDTC staff conducted manual turn counts during the PM peak travel period as shown in Figure 12 below. In addition to the motor vehicle traffic counted, there were 19 bicycles tallied during this one hour period. No pedestrians were observed.

Figure 12. CDTC Traffic Count of NY 85 and NY 85A Junction



In comparing the 2011 manual turn counts for the NY 85 (New Scotland Road)/NY 85A (Maple Road) intersection with those done in 2007 as part of the Kensington Woods Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Traffic Impact Study done by CME, turn count volumes have remained fairly constant. The LOS analysis done by CME in 2007 concluded that under existing conditions the intersection operated at a level of service (LOS) B in the PM Peak hour; with the addition of Kensington Woods housing related trips, by 2013 their analysis estimated that the LOS will remain a B for the PM Peak hour. Using the 2011 turn counts, CDTC staff calculated the current PM Peak Hour LOS as B as well.

As noted in the intersection summary table below, there are no pedestrian facilities at NY 85/NY 85A. Signalized intersection pedestrian facilities typically include pedestrian signal heads and crosswalk markings. Information on intersection characteristics relevant to walkability was collected as part of a 2010 *Sidewalks and Streets Survey facilitated by AARP*, a member of the National Complete Streets Coalition and collected by town resident volunteers in April 2010. This AARP Sidewalks and Streets Survey was developed in coordination with the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and resulted in numerous surveys being conducted around the Capital District.

Table 19. New Scotland Hamlet Intersections: Existing Conditions

<b>Intersection</b>	<b>NY 85/NY 85A (New Scotland Rd/Maple Rd)</b>	<b>NY 85/CR 308 (New Scotland Rd/New Scotland Rd South)</b>	<b>NY 85A (Maple Rd) /Hilton Rd</b>
<b>Geometry</b>	3 legs/one lane per direction on each approach (no turn lanes)	3 legs/one lane per direction on each approach (no turn lanes)	3 legs/one lane per direction on each approach (no turn lanes)
<b>Traffic Control</b>	Signal (WB right turn arrow); no pedestrian signal	Stop sign controlled on CR 308	Stop sign controlled on Hilton Rd
<b>Posted Speed Limit</b>	45 mph	45 mph	45 mph
<b>Vehicle LOS</b>	B (= average delay of approx. 18 seconds)	NA	Unsignalized intersection: side street delay minimal according to Kensington Wood EIS (2007)
<b>Access/Level of Compatibility (LOC)</b>	Driveways within intersection functional area resulting in conflicts		
<b>Bicycle LOS (on adjacent segments)</b>	D/E (west of intersection)/ E (east of intersection)	D (on adjacent NY 85 segment)	E (on adjacent NY 85A segment)
<b>Pedestrian Facilities</b>	None	None	None
<b>Intersection Pedestrian Friendliness Index /Walking Survey Results</b>	D/Fair	D/Fair	D
<b>Bus Service/Stops</b>	CDTA Route 19	NA	CDTA Route 19
<b>Notable Features</b>	Wide turn radius WB; vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-pedestrian conflicts around Stonewell Plaza/ Bus Stops		Bus Stops
<b>Crash History</b>	6 during 39 month reporting period/ 1 injury	None during reporting period 2007-2010	3 during 39 month reporting period/1 injury

In New Scotland, intersections surveyed included NY 85 and NY 85A as well as the intersection of NY 85 and County Route 308. Information collected noted that while the 85/85A intersection is a CDTA transit stop, there are no pedestrian accommodations, such as sidewalks or crosswalks, at the bus stop or leading to the intersection. An abrupt pavement transition was noted at the road edge, there are no crosswalks on either road, and a turn arrow limits pedestrian crossing opportunities at the NY 85/NY 85A intersection. While more qualitative, it was observed that drivers appeared to be speeding, not yielding to pedestrians, and were sometimes distracted (cell phones). Also it was noted that drivers can enter/exit 85A at the commercial property at the northeast corner of the intersection and that this entry/exit point is too close to the main intersection.

Similar problems were noted with the Route 308 intersection, where issues included lack of crosswalks and no sidewalks or shoulder. Information collected cited that there is reportedly a fence and three traffic signs the create line of sight issues here and that the relative high speed (45 mph) (of passing traffic) makes crossing difficult; drivers were observed cutting the corner turning onto Route 308 creating danger to both pedestrians crossing Route 308 and drivers entering the intersection from Route 308.

*Mode Choice*

It is important to note that according to the most recent data available from the US Census Bureau, motor vehicles remain by far the most common mode of travel for New Scotland commuters (Figure 13) and vehicle ownership levels in New Scotland are high relative to those for the county as a whole (Table 20).

Figure 13. Commute / Mode Share

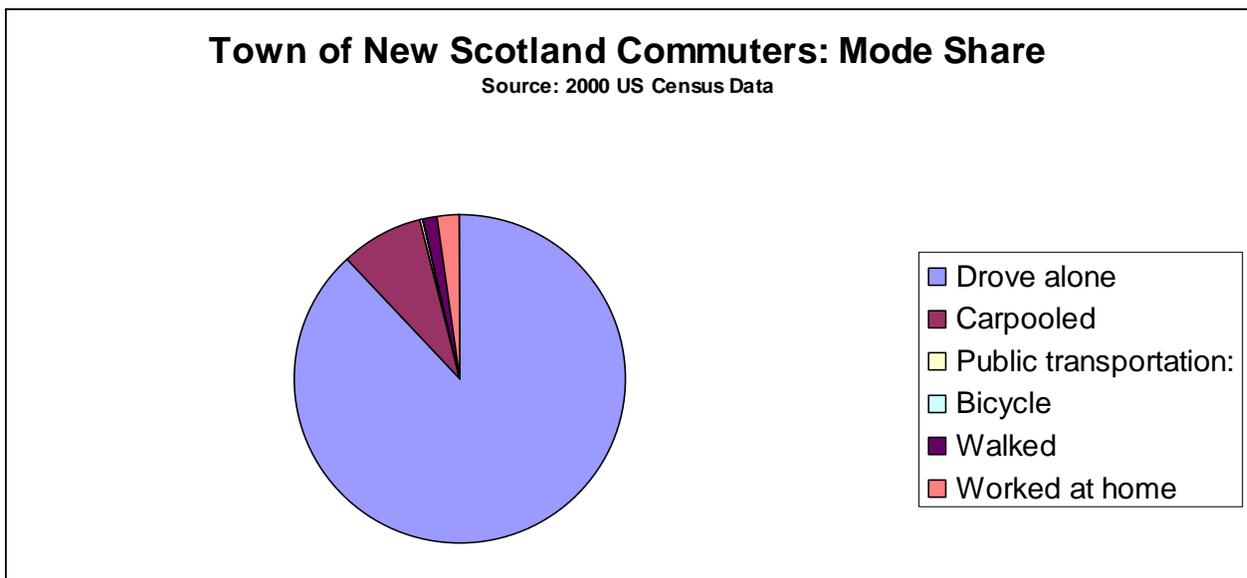


Table 20. Vehicles Available (2005-2009)

Vehicles Available	Town of New Scotland	Albany County
None	2.1%	12.0%
1 Vehicle	26.4%	37.6%
2 Vehicles	47.6%	36.3%
3 or more vehicles	24.0%	14.1%

According to CDTC's STEP regional transportation model, in the PM peak hour 25% of all driving trips arriving in the Town of New Scotland come from the City of Albany and 21% come from within the Town of New Scotland. 40% come from other parts of Albany County. Rensselaer, Schenectady and Saratoga Counties together account for 11% of the PM peak hour trips arriving in the Town of New Scotland. A large portion of these trips are residents of the Town of New Scotland returning home from work.

Table 21. Origin of PM Peak Hour Trips

PM Peak Hour Trips arriving in the Town of New Scotland from:	
City of Albany Total	25%
Downtown Albany	10%
Midtown Albany	5%
Uptown Albany	9%
Town of New Scotland	21%
Town of Bethlehem	11%
Town of Guilderland (including Altamont)	12%
Colonie and Menands	12%
Knox, Berne, Westerlo	3%
Coeymans, Ravena	1%
Other Albany County locations	0.5%
Rensselaer County	5%
Schenectady County	4%
Saratoga County	2%
External to the Four Counties	3%
Total (after accounting for rounding)	100%

Source: CDTC STEP Model

## Historic & Cultural Resources

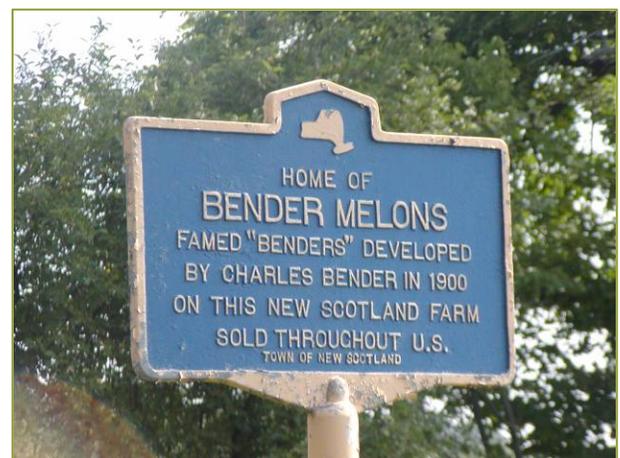
### *Key Findings / Highlights*

- The area now known as the Town of New Scotland was settled in the early 17th century but wouldn't be established until April 25, 1832.
- The Town's earliest economy was based on agriculture. New Scotland was the largest provider of hops to breweries in the City of Albany. The Town's most popular farm product was the "Bender Melon" produced on the Charles Bender Farm.
- The single greatest impact on the town was the establishment of the railroad, which increased markets for farmers and other merchants.

The earliest known settlement in New Scotland was by Europeans in the early 17th century. In 1629, a patroonship was granted to Killian VanRensselaer by the Dutch West India Company. A patroonship was a deeded tract of land that could span 16 miles in length on one side of a major river, or 8 miles if spanning both sides. By the 18th century, settlers from Holland, Scotland, England and elsewhere began to settle and start farmsteads and after the American Revolution the population began to grow significantly. Churches, which served as meeting halls and social centers, were erected in the hamlets throughout the area and by the early 19th century, schools were also being established in each of the hamlets.

The Town of New Scotland was created by an act of the state legislature on April 25, 1832. Before this, the town's entire previous jurisdiction had been part of the Town of Bethlehem. The early economy was based on agriculture. Food crops from apples to fodder for livestock were grown. Interestingly, hops were harvested extensively for shipment to nearby breweries in the City of Albany. Many of the area's still existing farms date back to this early period. After the Civil War, New Scotland began to feel the influence of improved communication and transportation. The single greatest impact on the town was the establishment of the railroad which allowed farms to send their goods to a much larger market.

The Town of New Scotland now consists of 58 square miles and has grown from 2,030 people in 1835 to nearly 9,000 in 2010. The villages and hamlets of the town include Clarksville, Feura Bush, New Salem, New Scotland, Onequethaw (Tarrytown), Unionville, and Voorheesville. The hamlet of New Scotland was settled around 1765 by Scottish settlers, hence the name. The West Shore Railroad established a line running through it in 1865 with a station in the hamlet. New Scotland's most famous farm product was the "Bender Melon," produced on the Charles Bender Farm.



The New Scotland hamlet has a number of significant historic landmarks. One landmark, which still exists, is the New Scotland Presbyterian Church on New Scotland Road just west of the junction of NYS Rte 85 and 85A. New Scotland Presbyterian Church was organized in 1787 and is the oldest church in the town, with the first building having been erected in 1791. The present-day church (pictured below) was built in 1849. There is also an old cemetery located on the west side of the church property. The New Scotland Presbyterian Church was listed on the Historic Register in 2010.

Figure 14. Presbyterian Church in New Scotland



The current new Scotland Town Hall was formerly The New Scotland School, District No. 8 (see Figure 15 below). The school was built in 1866 and prior the site was occupied by a log school since 1804. In 1952 the building ceased to be a school and was then renovated in 1957 for use as the New Scotland Town Hall. Today, Town Hall is a focal point of the hamlet as well as the town. It is not only the home of the town's government activities but also serves as a community center and public meeting space.

Figure 15. New Scotland School, District No. 8 pictured in 1920



Source: *New Scotland Historical Association*

## Land Use & Development

Understanding the characteristics and patterns of the land and how the land, not only within the Study Area but throughout the Town of New Scotland, is currently used is a key element to crafting a Hamlet Master Plan. Land is a finite resource, we cannot create more of it, so how we develop and/or convert land for different uses has a lasting, if not permanent impact. New Scotland, like surrounding suburban and rural towns, is faced with development pressures. Change is inevitable, but the pattern, rate, timing and location of that change can be managed, in part, by the community. The question is not whether New Scotland will grow, but how it will grow and look.

The land use and development summary below provides a description of the current zoning and land uses within the Study Area. It will serve as a basis for building a future land use vision for the hamlet, which includes making choices about how and where future development should take place.

### *Key Findings / Highlights*

- The Study Area is predominantly zoned [COM] Commercial.
- The Study Area is largely a mix of vacant, residential and commercial land speckled with community service-type uses.
- Three (3) major residential subdivisions have been approved in the last few years within the Study Area.

### *Zoning*

Under the Town of New Scotland's current zoning ordinance, most of the study area is currently zoned Commercial (COM). This zoning district permits commercial development such as restaurants, office buildings, agriculture-farms and nurseries, municipal buildings, etc. Some special uses include residential uses, shopping facilities and auto sales and service, all of which are currently located in the commercial-zoned area. As shown in Figure 16, lands north and east of the commercial zone are zoned Medium Density Residential (MDR), lands north and west of the commercial zone are zoned Residential Agriculture (R-A), and an area immediately south of the commercial zone is zoned Industrial (IND).

### *Existing Land Uses*

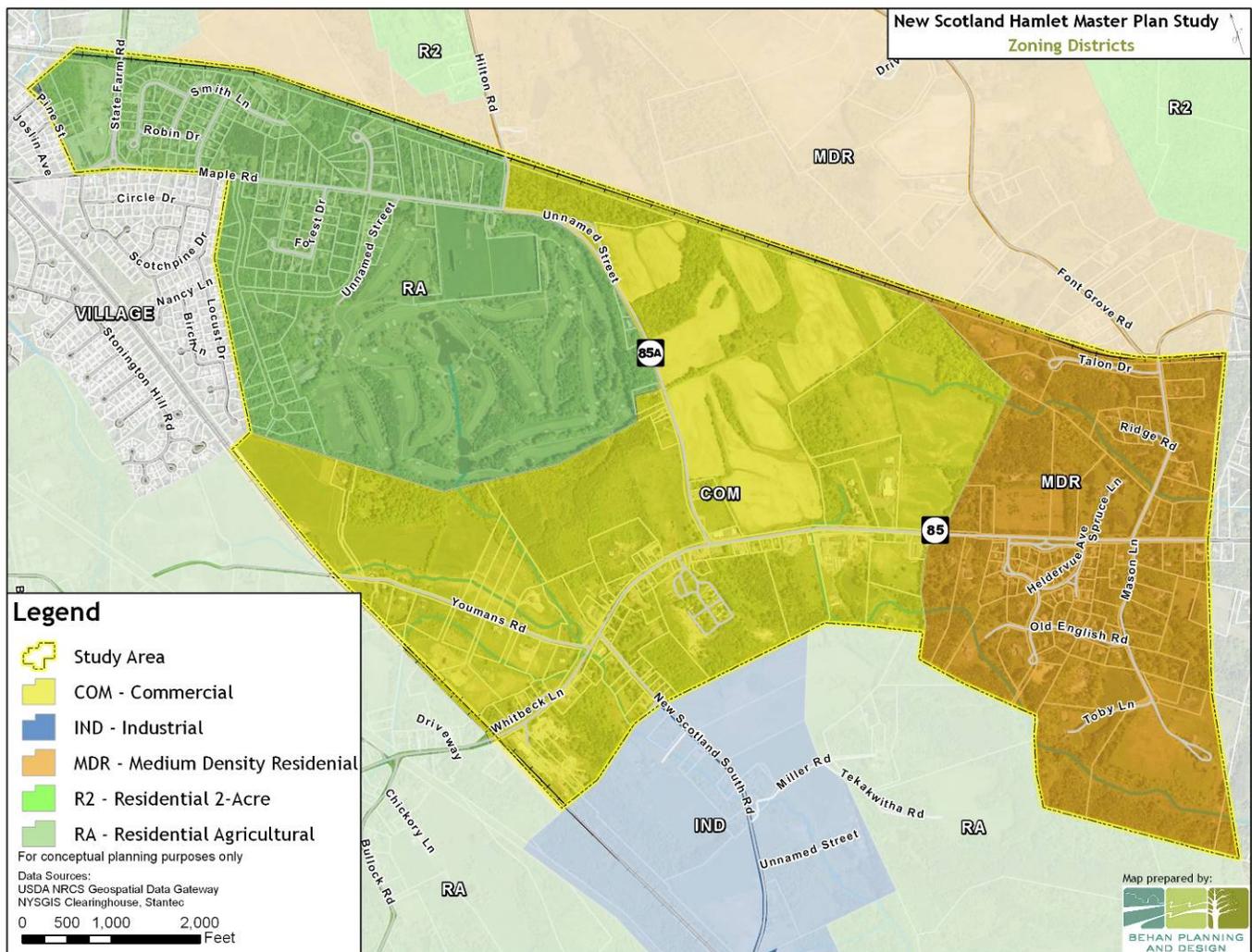
The Study Area contains a mix of vacant, residential and commercial land speckled with community service-type uses. The map below illustrates current land uses in the Study Area (See Figure 17). The area around Youmans Road shown as "commercial" has been subdivided and developed with single-family homes since the data was collected.

Stonewell Plaza, at the corner of NY 85 and NY 85A contains various small businesses such as Pizza by Dominick, Something Olde Something New, and the Windowbox Café. Across the street from the plaza is an auto sales and service center and Corner Gateway which contains a slew of business services for small, medium and home-based businesses. Also along NYS 85 is the Sabre offices and facility, the closed Big Box restaurant, Olsen's Hardware and Garden Center, a Stewart's Shop and gas station,

Emma Cleary’s Café, a senior housing project that is currently under construction, and a few other small offices and businesses. Falvo’s Meat Market is the only business within the Study Area located on NY 85A.

The large vacant parcel east of NYS 85A is former agricultural land commonly known as the Bender Farm. There is another large vacant parcel directly across the street on the western side of NYS 85. The only other agricultural land use currently in the Study Area is Olsen’s Hardware and Garden Center. Over the past few decades, both the number of farms and land being farmed in Albany County, as well as the region as a whole, has decreased. Factors that have contributed to farmland loss include a stressed agricultural economy, an aging farm operator population, increasing development pressures, and increasing property taxes. The Study Area is not in an Albany County Agriculture District, but 2 of the 3 County Agriculture Districts lie within the Town of New Scotland because of its prime farmland conditions and soils.

Figure 16. Zoning Map



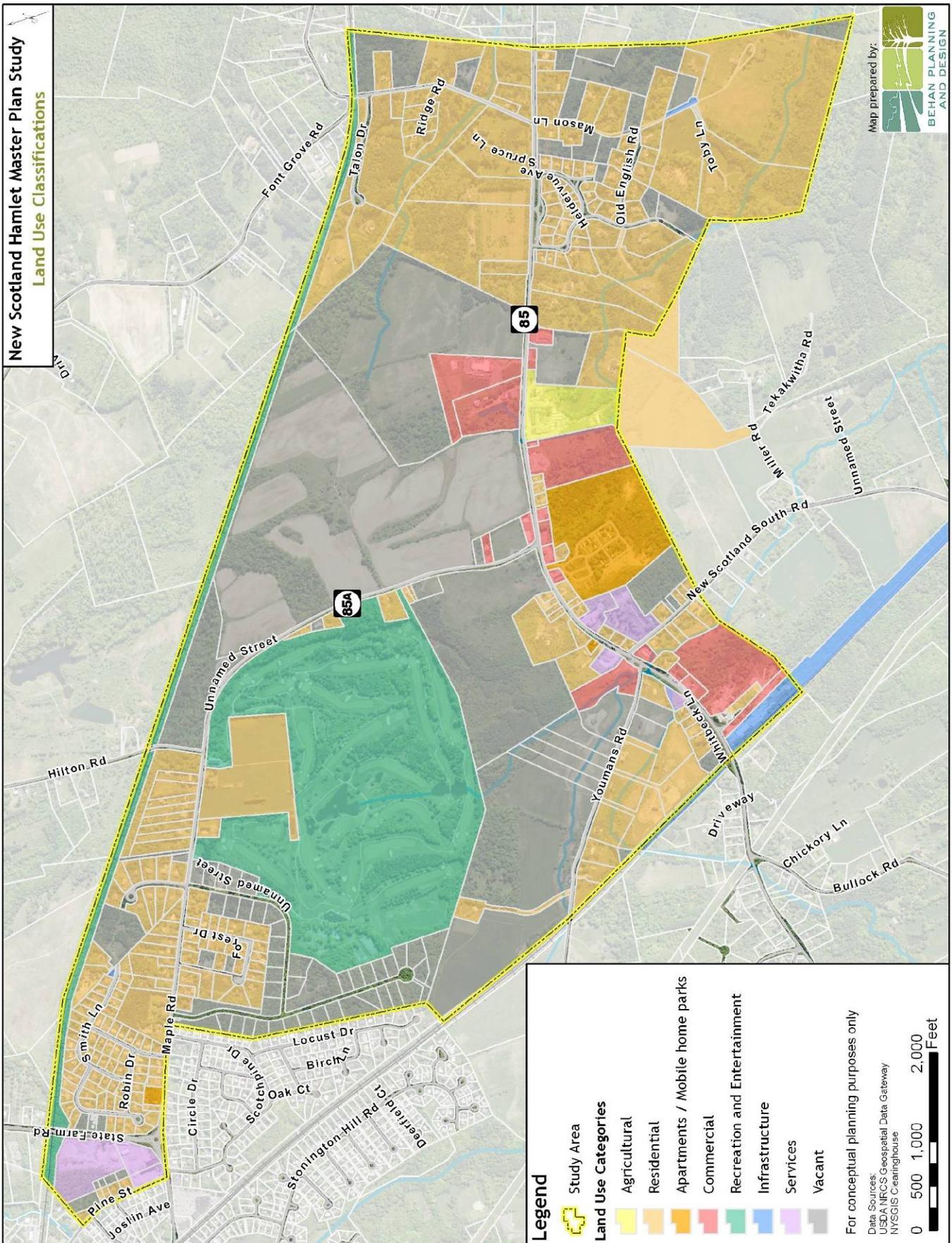


Figure 17. Land Use Map

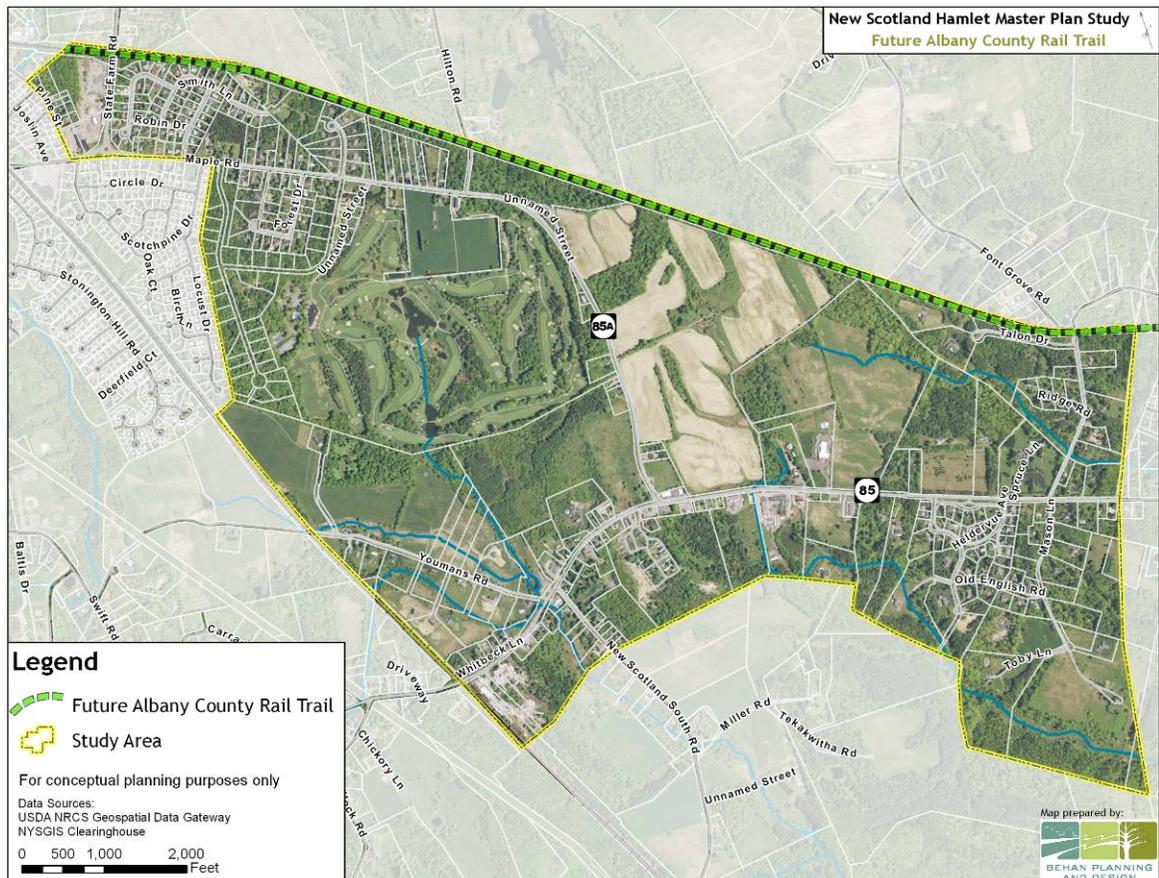
Within the New Scotland Hamlet Study Area, three (3) major residential subdivisions have been approved in the last few years. These include:

- Country Club Partners - 42 units (Located on the northwest corner of the Colonie Country Club)
- Stone Creek Estates - 30 units (Located on Rt 85 behind the medical office building)
- LeVie Farm - 18 units have received concept approval (Located south of Rt 85A at intersection with Hilton Road)

While not within the study area, there is a large project adjacent to the study area, north of the former rail line off of Hilton Road, Kensington Woods, which is has 176 units and could have impacts on the study area. These projects have been approved but not yet fully constructed. Sewer and water infrastructure information related to these and other potential developments/other areas of interest is discussed in more detail below.

There are currently no public parks or recreational facilities within the Study Area. However, just west of the Study Area is New Scotland Town Park which contains 2 ball fields and a tennis court. South of the Study Area, outside of the Town, is Fiver Rivers Educational Center; and just 5 miles to the east is Elm Avenue Park in the Town of Bethlehem. The proposed Albany County Rail Trail, which will convert a 9-mile stretch of the old Delaware and Hudson Railroad between the Port of Albany and Voorheesville to a recreational trail, runs through the Study Area (Figure 18). Once completed, this trail will be a tremendous recreational and transportation asset to the Town, enhancing quality of life and access for both residents and visitors. The trail may generate recreation-based businesses or may inspire the creation of additional public spaces and parks close by.

Figure 18.  
Future Albany  
County Rail  
Trail



## Sewer & Water Infrastructure & Community Facilities

### *Key Findings / Highlights*

- Sewer capacity is limited
- According to the Town engineer, current information on the hydrogeology in the area indicates that there does not seem to be much potential for large scale water supply.
- There are physical, fiscal and administrative constraints to providing additional public water and sewer infrastructure in and adjacent to the study area under current arrangements.

The issue of planning for the provision of water and sewer infrastructure to serve existing, proposed and potential development within the study area has been the subject of discussion as well as various efforts over the years. There are a variety of arrangements that currently exist to provide this infrastructure including facilities owned and operated by the Town of Bethlehem which provide supply or capacity either directly to study area land owners or to various water or sewer districts, some of which are then administered by the Town of New Scotland. Ongoing infrastructure issues relate to current and needed future capacities, demand, ownership, funding and scale. The Town of New Scotland currently has a Water Committee exploring these issues. The information below was obtained through a variety of sources including the Kensington Woods DEIS, the Town's Comprehensive Plan, with updated and more specific information being provided by the Town's engineer.

The discussion below is meant to be general in nature and to provide an overview of the existing sewer/water infrastructure and related issues within the study area and any known limitations or constraints that need to be considered in developing a conceptual Hamlet Master Plan for the area.

Water Supply: According to the Kensington Woods DEIS, there are two aquifer fed water districts relevant to the study area; including the Town of New Scotland's Northeast Water District and the Village of Voorheesville system. The location of these districts are shown in Figure 19. There are also private wells serving properties within the study area.

The Town of Bethlehem owns a variety of water lines of various ages and sizes along NY 85/New Scotland Road. Within what is known as the "Permissive Service Area" according to the Town of New Scotland Comprehensive Plan Map dated 2006. Properties within 150 feet on either side of NY 85 have rights to Town of Bethlehem water within this "Permissive Service Area" and those customers connected directly to the transmission main are billed directly from Bethlehem. Properties outside of the "Permissive Service Area" must negotiate with the Town of Bethlehem on a case by case basis for access to Bethlehem water. The Town of Bethlehem is currently in the process of examining aspects of potential installation of a new higher capacity water transmission main in this area. One of the issues that will likely be considered relates to potential constraints presented by the limited right of way and easements currently along NYS Route 85 within the study area.

The Heldervale Water District is located along/in close proximity to NY 85 near the Bethlehem Town line. The Town of New Scotland administers this water district and purchases 20,000 gallons/day (gpd) from the Town of Bethlehem to supply water to properties that are part of this district. This

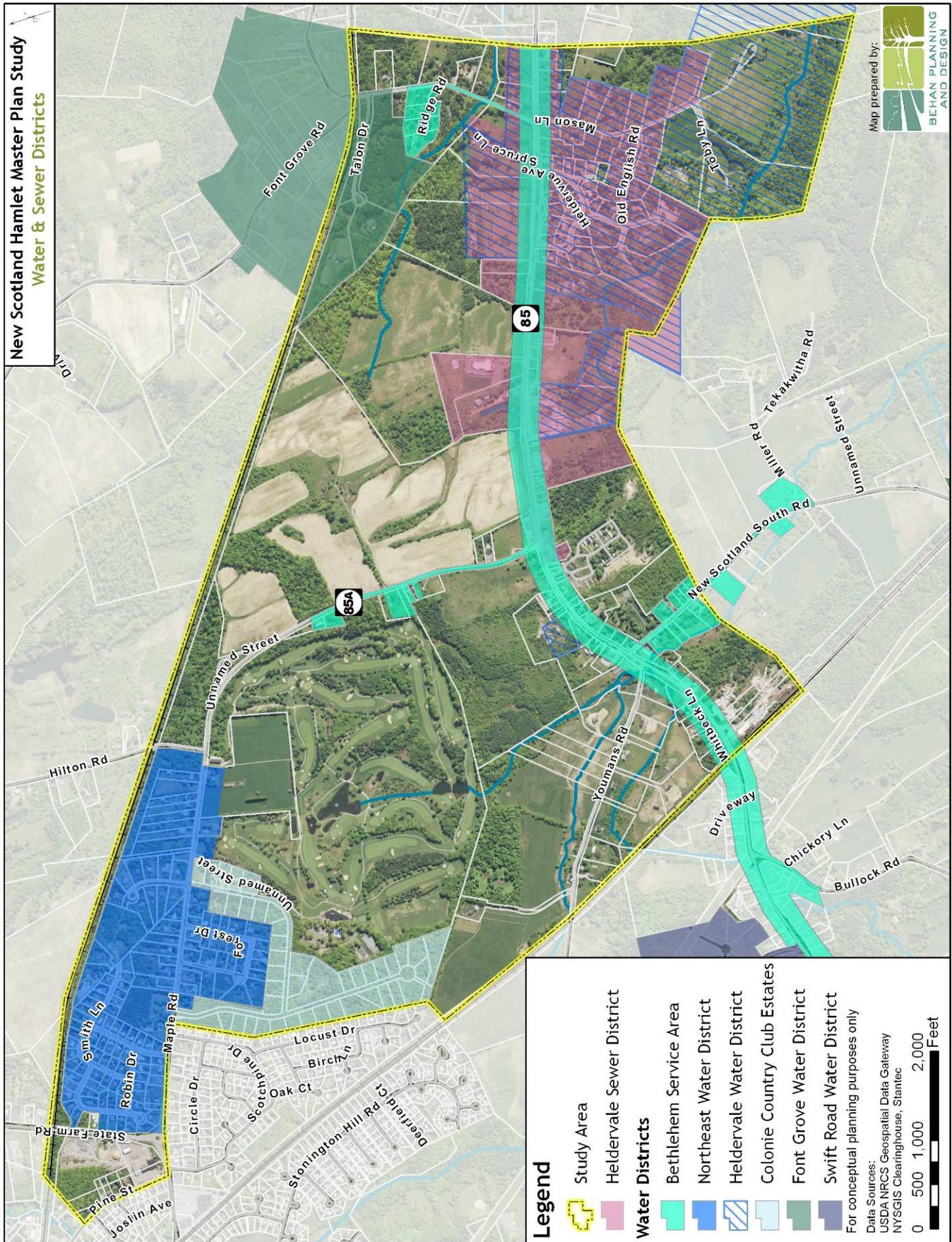


Figure 19. Water & Sewer District Map

district has reached capacity under current contracts with the Town of Bethlehem; additional water supply could be negotiated for purchase under a new contract between the two towns.

In addition to standard size transmission lines owned by the Town of Bethlehem along NY 85, there is also a series of lines of various sizes/capacities and ownership on either side of that roadway; there are also low capacity lines present for a distance on either side of NY 85A. Lines under the road right of way may impact the ability to implement subsequent multi-modal transportation improvement concepts that are to be identified as part of this study.

The Northeast Water District is located on both sides of NY 85A east of Route 155 and adjacent to the Village of Voorheesville. This is a small system owned by the Town of New Scotland consisting of a well and a pressure tank with limited capacity; there are no fire hydrants. Currently the system serves 132 homes; with the addition of the homes being added in the LeVie Farm subdivision (see below) there will be 150 dwelling units in this district and it will have reached capacity. This system may eventually be abandoned as the 150 units would eventually tie into the Kensington Woods water system (see below).

Sanitary Sewer: The Heldervale Sewer district, composed of low-pressure forcemains that discharge to a gravity sewer located in the Town of Bethlehem for treatment at the Town of Bethlehem's wastewater treatment plant, is also located along and in close proximity to NY 85 near the Bethlehem Town line. This district is also at capacity under current contracts with the Town of Bethlehem. There is not additional capacity available in the Bethlehem sanitary sewer system without extensive system upgrades on the Bethlehem side. This sewer system is constrained principally by the size of the sewer main (4") along NY 85 within New Scotland. However, other options may exist for addressing sanitary sewer needs such as development of package sewage plants which require a stream for outlet of treated waste and which are typically associated with larger scale commercial or residential development projects, such as Kensington Woods.

#### Sewer and Water Infrastructure Related to Upcoming Development:

- a) Stone Creek Estates is a residential development including 30 units of two-family housing contained in 15 buildings located south of NY 85 behind the medical office building. This development has its water and sewer infrastructure in place and is part of the Heldervale sewer and water district.
- b) Another residential development, Colonie Country Club Estates is obtaining water from Voorheesville through an inter-municipal agreement. Sanitary sewer is being handled by individual lot private septic systems as soils in this area are conducive to such systems due to their percolation properties. The developer has obtained all required Planning Board approvals and is waiting on the housing market to begin construction for a 42 lot single family residential subdivision, likely to be completed within the next five years.
- c) LeVie Farm has received concept approval from the Planning Board for 18 single family residential lots; this number may be reduced as the project moves through the approval process. Each lot will be served by public water from the Northeast water district and individual lot private septic systems.

Other areas of interest:

- The Youmans Road Commercial Zone is an area that has seen fairly recent residential single family large lot subdivision development, with only a few lots being developed at any one time. This area has no public water currently and provision of public municipal water in this area, obtained from the Bethlehem transmission line, would be cost prohibitive and therefore subject to the NYS Comptrollers limit on the amount that can be charged. A utility right-of-way was maintained in the Colonie County Club Estates development for the possibility of connecting to the Voorheesville water system. This right-of-way was created with a width too narrow for a road as it is to serve as a utility ROW only.
- Dwellings in the trailer park located on the south side of NY 85 are served by public water through an agreement whereby the owner of the park purchases water from the Town of Bethlehem. Sanitary sewer is provided by an on-site private community-based system. The total build out of the trailer park is 80 lots; there are currently between 40 and 50 lots. There is reportedly interest in connecting to a public sewer system in the future.
- There is a large, mostly unused, parcel on the south side of NY 85, owned by the Stewarts Shops. The property contains the headwaters of the Phillipinkill and would likely have limited further development potential; there are reportedly extensive federal wetlands in this area.
- Several additional parcels of interest are located outside of the primary study area but abut parcels that front on NY 85, with those frontage parcels being served by public water and sewer. Two of these are located behind Olsen's Garden and Hardware; one of these parcels has access to Miller Road. These parcels are owned by Olsen's.
- The Creekside Estates residential subdivision is also located south of the study area and is currently in concept review by the Town. However, due to public water access issues the project has not moved forward in the review and approval process. A constraint to connecting this development to the Heldervale water district is its location relative to the Phillipinkill ravine, which would need to be crossed to connect to the water district. There is a thin lateral water line located on New Scotland South Road (CR 308). The Town of New Scotland has asked the developer to explore creation of a water district off of New Scotland Road South as one option but there may be cost sharing issues that would have to be resolved. Another potential option would for a partnership to be formed with other property owners of large vacant lots in the immediate area seeking to develop their lots to create a district off of NY 85 with the potential to connect to the Town of Bethlehem's system.
- A concept for a mixed residential and commercial development has been discussed in the past for a property on the north side of NY 85, east of NY 85A, owned by Baltis. A concept was developed that included 125 units in a compact form, with provision of low income senior housing and a mixed-use building fronting on NY 85. In order to develop this concept a public sewer connection would be needed. Based on the discussion above regarding the current sewer capacity issues related to the Town of Bethlehem's system that serves this area, a connection to that system is unlikely.
- Kensington Woods subdivision - this development, located immediately north of the study area will include construction of a package wastewater treatment plant that will be sized to service only the 169 lots in the subdivision; there will be no growth inducing impacts. This development will also utilize a 50,000 gallon/day water system, drawing from an aquifer on site, which will be constructed and maintained to serve the 169 lots. The Town requested that

this system include an elevated water tank for fire protection purposes and piping in the direction of and for a future connection to the Northeast Water District which will eventually serve 150 units as mentioned above. According to the Town's engineer, the understanding is that this system is not believed to be able to support much more than the future connection to the Northeast Water District's 150 units and some minor peripheral growth.

The potential range of water supply needs and wastewater generation of various land use types/intensities contemplated for the hamlet master plan area should be reviewed and this information included in development of the draft plan as appropriate.

According to the Town engineer, current information on the hydrogeology in the area indicates that there does not seem to be much potential for large scale water supply.

As previously noted, there are physical, fiscal and administrative constraints to providing additional public water and sewer infrastructure in and adjacent to the study area under current arrangements. Options to provide expanded infrastructure range from a sewage treatment plant alternative to modular package plants; in both instances locations for treated discharge would be needed and any options developed would have to be consistent with town and state regulations, including the recently enacted NYS Smart Growth and Public Infrastructure Policy Act of 2010.

In the absence of additional public system sanitary sewer capacity in the Study Area, on-site septic systems will be relied upon unless or until sewer infrastructure is developed here. Development constraints, many of which are related to suitability for septic systems, are shown in Figure 20 below.

Utilities/water/sewer lines within the right-of-way (ROW) along NY 85 may be a constraint to potential future multi-modal roadway improvements (i.e. sidewalks or widened shoulders for pedestrians and bicyclists), in addition to the current roadway and shoulder width and close proximity of some structures and the cemetery to the roadway.

As shown in Figure 20, the study area is relatively free of development constraints. In particular, most of the large undeveloped parcels to the northeast of the intersection of NY 85 and NY 85A appear to be generally suitable for development. However, the drainage characteristics of soils provide another indication of their suitability for septic systems. As shown in Figure 21, soils within the Study Area are mixed in terms of their suitability for septic systems. Many of the large undeveloped parcels contain soils that are "somewhat poorly drained" and would therefore have some limitations for development without the provision of sanitary sewer infrastructure as mentioned above. New development must comply with NYS Stormwater regulations. The recently revised NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Stormwater Management Manual, along with Albany County efforts and those of the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation, will provide opportunities to employ green infrastructure techniques in the study area.

Other Natural Features: The Study Area straddles two watershed areas: the Vly Creek-Normanskill and the Vloman Kill. Sections of the Vloman Kill and Phillipin Kill waterways are found in the vicinity of Youmans Road and south of NY 85. Along these streams steep slopes can be found.

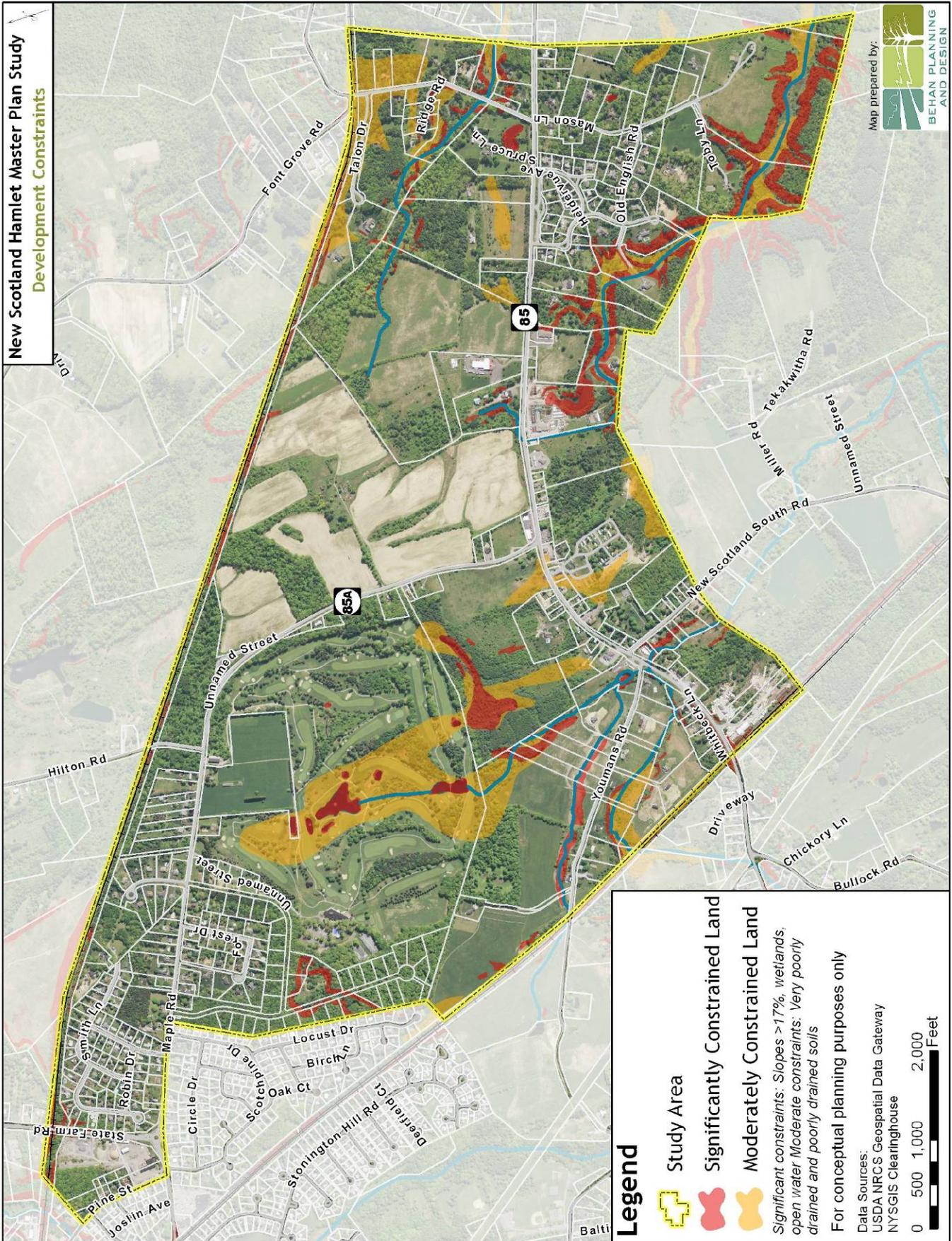


Figure 20. Development Constraints

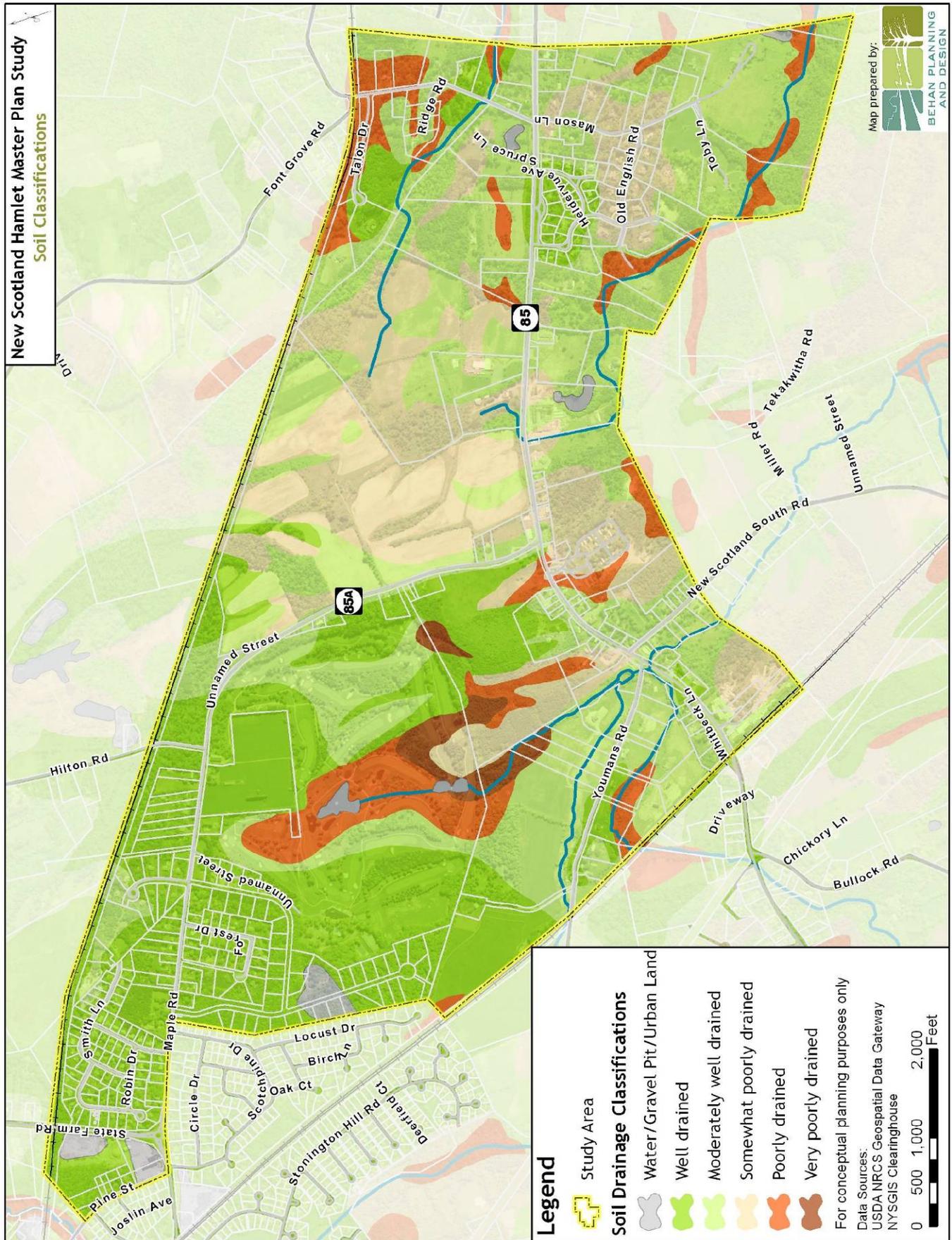


Figure 21. Soil Suitability



## Summary of Existing Reports / Studies

Behan Planning and Design reviewed existing reports that are related to the New Scotland Hamlet. These reports included:

- Town of New Scotland Comprehensive Land Use Plan,
- Residents Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) Route 85/85A Corridor Development - Recommendations to the Town Board,
- Traffic Impact Study - Kensington Woods, and
- Commercial Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC) - Report and Recommendation to the Town Board

There were some overlapping themes in the various reports. In terms of land use the reports indicate a desire to maintain the hamlet character and encourage mixed-use development. Commercial development, while desired, should fit in with the hamlet in terms of scale, and should serve the local population - not be a regional draw. The comprehensive plan highlights the New Scotland Hamlet as being the most appropriate for new residential development, however the RPAC report indicates residents do not want condos/townhouses and/or rental units to be located in the hamlet. In terms of transportation it was noted that there are no pedestrian accommodations anywhere in the hamlet, and that conditions are dangerous to pedestrians. Traffic volumes, while not ideal, are not viewed as problematic and there is no obvious need for intersection redesigns (though improvements regarding site lines and pedestrian accommodations could be made). The following is a more detailed summary of the reports reviewed.

### *Town of New Scotland - Comprehensive Land Use Plan (January 1994)*

The town's comprehensive plan was reviewed in an effort to identify relevant background, goals and recommendations as they pertain to the study area. Overall the comprehensive plan recommends focused development in the New Scotland hamlet, with an emphasis on mixed-use development. Maintenance of neighborhood character, among other things, is also important. Relevant sections from the comprehensive plan are copied below.

#### Section I. Introduction

##### B. Summary of Surveys and Public Meetings

##### 1. Initial Public Meetings

##### b. Economic Development (page 3)

Three main concerns were expressed about business enterprise in the Town. There was a general desire to promote commercial and industrial developments in Town. A general preference was expressed for office park development over heavy manufacturing. Small scale stores were the preferred type of commercial development; large "regional malls" were not favored.

Economic development was viewed from a different perspective in the hamlet districts. It was perceived that commercial ventures within hamlets are overtaking and destroying the small town character possessed by these areas.

## Section II. Goals and Objectives for Control of Development

### Goal: Town Character and Environment

#### III. Policies: Townscape (page 14)

C. To encourage development in hamlet areas and discourage sprawl.

### Goal: Economic Development

#### III. Policies: Hamlets (page 15)

- A. To promote definite hamlet boundaries and encourage higher intensity use of these areas through restoration of community center character, allowing for appropriate mixes of residential, commercial, office uses and public service uses.
- B. To allow home occupations and businesses which are compatible with surrounding land uses within hamlet areas

### Goal: Land Use and Development

#### II. Policies: Residential (page 16)

- A. To provide a range of housing densities.
- B. To encourage infill and higher density use. in hamlet areas where appropriate infrastructure may be placed and where transportation systems can be improved to handle increased traffic.

#### IV. Policies: Commercial (page 16)

- A. To encourage mixed use development (office, commercial/retail and residential) where infrastructure can be provided.
- B. To encourage appropriate signs, access routes, site plans and density controls in commercial areas.

### Section III. Environmental Considerations

#### 3. Vloman Kill Watershed (page 31)

The eastern portion of the Town, including the hamlets of New Scotland, Unionville and Feura Bush drain into the Vloman Kill and Phillipin Kill streams. Both of these streams flow to the southeast of the Town. Very few large wetlands exist in this area, however, as with the Vly Creek watershed, a number of deep accumulations of glacial sands and gravels exist which may potentially be good surficial aquifer sources. Accordingly, this watershed and the underlying aquifer areas should be protected and regulated to maintain water quality and groundwater recharge capacities for existing and future water supply purposes.

### Section V. Existing Land Uses

#### B. Hamlets (page 73)

Hamlets act as community centers in Town. Most community facilities and commercial development lie within these areas, as does much of the housing. While there are no population statistics- available for hamlets, based on the number of residences counted, it appears that each hamlet contains 400 to 500 residents, with the exception of Unionville which has an approximate population of 300.

With the introduction of public water in Clarksville, each hamlet has some access to public water facilities, mostly through Bethlehem Water Districts or the Village of Voorheesville. None have access to public sewer facilities. (In fact, the only homes with public sewer facilities are approximately 25 residences in the northeastern corner of Town which are served by the Bethlehem Sewer District.)

Each hamlet, except Clarksville, has experienced residential development since the last plan. New Scotland and New Salem each expanded by over 30 dwellings. Unionville and Feura Bush each expanded by about 20.

#### 5. New Scotland

The hamlet of New Scotland is located in the Town's north. Most homes in the hamlet are located along Route 85, the hamlet's major east to west thoroughfare. Residential development also exists along Swift Road, New Scotland South Road, Mason Road and Upper Font Grove Road. Each of these roads run north to south, and intersect with Route 85.

There are approximately 160 residences in the hamlet of New Scotland. There is also a mobile home park. Home construction since the last plan has occurred along Swift Road and along the eastern end of Route 85, where public water from the Bethlehem Water District is available.

New Scotland contains more commercial uses than any other hamlet in Town. Most of these establishments are scattered along Route 85, they include: a golf driving range, a new car dealership, a used car dealership, a pizza parlor, a meat market, a nursery, a craft shoppe, a restaurant with office space, an auto repair garage, a lumber company, an ice cream stand, and an architect/builder. Stonewell Plaza, at the intersection of 85 and 85A, contains a restaurant, grocery store, card shoppe and a video store. In addition, a few vacant stores exist in the hamlet.

The Town Hall and a firehouse are two public buildings within the hamlet; a church and cemetery make up the semi-public uses.

## 6. Future Development of Existing Hamlets

All of the hamlets in New Scotland can accommodate some additional development near their informal borders and on interior lots. Like all areas in the Town, their development potential depends on the land's ability to supply water and accommodate sewer facilities; or in the event of unfavorable natural conditions, the accessibility to public (or private) water and sewer systems.

A limited water supply has historically limited development in New Scotland. But each hamlet now has some, if limited, access to public water supplies. The availability of public water will eliminate the restriction posed by lack of acceptable natural water resources ... Where access to the public water supplies are more limited (New Scotland, Unionville and New Salem), acceptable natural resources sufficient to support additional development exist in varying quantities and qualities.

Septic suitability is another major determinant of development potential. Without built sewer facilities the ability of the land to safely accommodate septic systems, largely determines safe development density of an area. With the exception of Clarksville, the hamlets in the Town can accommodate individual septic systems fairly well, at a density of at least one unit per acre.

Natural conditions enable each hamlet to safely accommodate additional development at a density of one unit per acre. If at any time both water and sewer facilities were introduced in one of these hamlet areas, safe density would jump to one unit per quarter acre.

Although each hamlet offers the opportunity for growth, the hamlet of New Scotland is expected to experience relatively more new residential and neighborhood development over the next 20 years than the other hamlets. This is because of its location within the Town's northeast, where there has been a good deal of interest expressed in new development.

## C. Historic Character

New Scotland is still an essentially rural community. While long lost in many Capital District suburbs, the traditional development pattern, where buildings are clustered in hamlet areas and outer areas remain open, is still dominant in New Scotland. This development pattern gives the Town an historic context. Scattered throughout, the many residential structures, farms, inns, school, and churches provide more apparent historic charm, as do several of the compact hamlets.

A trend in the hamlets has been noticeable. Homes are being converted into mixed use buildings. Residential structures are now being used for residential purposes on one floor and for offices on another. To this point, the architectural character of New Scotland hamlet areas has not been significantly altered by this phenomenon. However, this change in hamlet land use should be monitored and regulated by land development ordinances/zoning to ensure that New Scotland's hamlet character is maintained.

## Section VII. Community Development Analysis

### E. Summary

#### 2. Recommended Land Use Regulations

##### Neighborhood Commercial Facilities (page 132)

d.) To attain the economic development objective of this Comprehensive Plan which seeks to provide residents with accessible neighborhood businesses, and to compliment the Town's primarily residential character, consideration should be given to:

- Permitting retail and service establishments in hamlet areas of New Scotland, Clarksville, New Salem, and Feura Bush. As they are developed, these land use zones can be used to meet more of the retail and service needs of the existing population and create well balanced, mixed use, hamlet setting which is vital to their continuation as town centers. In addition these land use zones would reserve space for future commercial growth in predetermined hamlet locations.
- A higher intensity commercial use category, that would allow small shopping plaza, mini-mall, grocery store and related retail uses, is recommended in the New Scotland hamlet area. Development within this category could service Town residents and be available to meet the needs of future populations. Siting of this use category should be done carefully; major transportation corridors separate from, yet accessible to, existing or proposed residential populations are suggested (Intersection of 85 and 85A).
- Low density office use zoning, more intensive that that allowed as a home occupation, is recommended in hamlet areas. Higher intensity office space is suggested as an accompaniment to the higher intensity commercial uses described above. As such, higher intensity office space should be carefully sited at a few select locations, close to existing or proposed transportation corridors.

Section IX. Evaluation of Existing Zoning Districts

## B. Commercial Zones (COM) (page 140)

## 2. Recommended Modifications

Environmental constraints on much of the undeveloped lands within the Town, the potential costs associated with extensive municipal service expansion, the availability of regional commercial services in adjoining municipalities and the potential conflicts with the rural character of the Town of New Scotland, suggest that future commercial uses should be limited to those necessary to service the local needs of the Town's residents. Office uses may or may not be included in these uses, provided considerations are given to potential incompatibilities associated with allowing the mixing of such uses.

Acceptable commercial uses are essential to the welfare of the residents of New Scotland. Allowable uses within the zone could be modified to exclude residential uses and large, regionally drawing commercial operations. Residential uses are in greater demand at this time and if lands suitable for future commercial development are not set aside the potential exists for residential development to completely consume this land this precluding any needed future commercial development from locating in the Town.

Current standards for commercial ventures should be reconsidered to make allowances for municipal services while also limiting development to densities compatible with the environment.

Section X. Recommendations and Implementation Measures

## A. Planning Goals, Issues Identified and Recommended Actions

## Goal: Land Use and Development

- b.* Issue: Preserve and enhance Town hamlets as the focus of development in rural Town areas. (page 153)

Recommendation: Designate Clarksville, Feura Bush, New Scotland, New Salem and Unionville as Town center areas and preserve and foster the traditional development pattern in these zones with land use regulations which allow for residential lots at higher densities, mixed use structures, offices and commercial establishments. Development in these centers is intended to taper out at progressively lower densities until densities blend with the rural residential character of outlying areas. Infrastructure and other improvements must be added, along with new development, to support development at higher densities.

Goal: Housing - provide opportunities so that a range of choices for safe and affordable housing are available for town residents

- b.* Issue: Homes in Town have become more costly over the decade. Given the combination of housing stock comprised almost solely of single family homes, and housing inflation, new residents of the community would be limited to households with incomes capable of supporting current single family home costs. (Section V) (page 155)

Recommendations: Promote rental housing, by allowing two family and mixed use structures in hamlets and higher density residential zones.

Using zoning, promote construction of smaller units with less land acreage in hamlet areas, and enable innovative mixed density development utilizing average density development and other progressive techniques. Denser developments on less land, such as those created in an average density development, incorporate smaller dwelling units and require less infrastructure (i.e. roadway, sidewalks) per unit than the detached single family housing currently being built on larger lots (of 1 acre or more). Developments of this nature tend to be less expensive to construct. While there is no guarantee that these savings will be passed on to the consumer, the option to produce and sell lower cost housing is preserved.

## B. Land Use Design Concepts

### 1. Development Centers (page 157)

Appropriate centers for development are already established in the Town of New Scotland. New Salem, Feura Bush, Unionville, Clarksville and New Scotland have historically served as major crossroads and centers for activity. This is evidenced by denser development in these hamlet areas and the number of public buildings and churches.

If these centers are to continue to attract development at densities and uses in line with the traditional development pattern, zoning must be provided to allow mixed use buildings and denser residential development within and adjacent to these hamlets. By providing areas which accommodate development on relatively small lots, these centers should help to alleviate development pressures facing rural areas and ensure that the Town's land use regulations are not overly restrictive.

These areas should act as human service centers. Elements such as libraries, post offices, churches, and municipal buildings should be encouraged to develop in the hamlet districts. Other allowable uses should include neighborhood convenient stores, medical offices, small shops, perhaps including small clothing stores and drugstores. Elderly, multifamily and apartment style housing is also acceptable in hamlet areas.

Development is intended to taper out from the hamlet centers at progressively lower densities until densities blend with the rural agricultural /residential character of outlying areas. Continued

development of limited municipal water and sewer infrastructure is recommended to make these areas attractive to residential and local commercial development.

### 3. Northeast Quadrant

The Northeast quadrant, including the hamlet of New Scotland, more than any other area in the Town, is appropriate for residential development. Its soils, transportation linkages and proximity to the City of Albany have made it a naturally attractive site for development. The private market has responded by expressing interest and proposing to develop land in this portion of the Town.

Innovative approaches are proposed for this area to ensure that open space and the preservation of environmentally sensitive features are incorporated as an integral part of this expanding, residential area. Employment and commercial services will be appropriate accessory activities to create a well balanced community area. While it recognized that residential development is suitable for the area at moderate to high densities, if municipal services are provided, visual quality, traffic management, environmental quality and rural character should be promoted.

Limitations on clearing of forest cover, control over new road cuts and driveway access, as well as buffer standards, are specifically intended to mitigate suburban development conditions which contrast rural character. Required open space requirements, planning to incorporate "greenway" concepts, recommendations for improving traffic impacts and considerations for other municipal services are proposed. These tools can be used to promote growth that is sensitive to environmental conditions and the Town's rural character.

## C. Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map and Proposed Density Classifications

### 1. Development Centers

#### b. Commercial Hamlet Area (page 159)

Within the core hamlet areas, small scale, neighborhood commercial enterprises should be encouraged to locate. The intent is to provide services and shopping opportunities to the residents of the hamlets and other visitors. This is intended to promote the shopping environment of a small village conducive to traditional hamlet residential characteristics.

Appropriate uses would include neighborhood grocery stores, banks, beauty and barber shops, and eating and drinking establishments. Mixed uses, such as a building containing offices on one level and residences on another, may also be appropriate. Residential uses should be allowed, however, they should not overshadow the commercial character of the area...

### 4. Commercial and Light Industrial Areas

#### a. Rural Commercial Areas (page 162)

The purpose of the Rural Commercial areas is to provide select areas in the Town where retail and service businesses, dependent on automobile borne customers, and primarily for the convenience of the neighborhood residents, may be located. Key cross roads, outside existing hamlet areas should be considered for rural commercial areas...

Appropriate land uses for Rural Commercial areas include retail businesses, professional offices, places of indoor assembly, convenient stores, banks, personal services, such as barber and beauty shops. Conditional uses might include automobile filling stations and eating and drinking establishments.

b. Commercial Areas (page 163)

The purpose of the Commercial Areas is to provide areas for the location of businesses which are dependent on automobile borne customers and which require large parking areas to be successful. The standards of this district are intended to allow commercial uses while requiring controlled highway access, good quality site design and protection of adjacent residential property.

Appropriate uses for the Commercial District would include hotels, motels, or inns, eating and drinking places, drive-in restaurants, places of indoor assembly, amusement or culture, retail stores, arts and crafts studios, professional offices, office buildings and business offices, lumber and building material dealers, building and construction contractors (provided there is no exterior storage of materials or equipment visible from a public street or abutting property), gasoline service stations, veterinary facilities and kennels, mortuary or funeral parlors, academic institutions and campuses.

*Residents Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) Route 85/85A Corridor Development - Recommendations to the Town Board - 2005*

In 2003 New Scotland established the RPAC "to develop short-term and long-term recommendations for the Town of New Scotland (TONS) Planning and Town Boards for changes/additions/deletions to Town laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations to better prepare the Town to manage and plan for land use in a manner to preserve the existing atmosphere and natural beauty of the Town of New Scotland."

After approximately 18 months the RPAC submitted a findings and recommendation report. The report was based on input received from a town-wide survey, over 40 community meetings, discussions with specialists, and a visual preference survey.

According to the RPAC report residents in New Scotland see opportunities for the Route 85/85A corridor which include:

- Encourage the preservation of the beautiful vistas and the rural and agricultural character of the Town;
- Encourage commercial development, consistent with the findings and recommendations within this report;
- Build senior housing; and,
- Create additional recreational resources for both the young and old.

Regarding commercial development the report states:

If commercial development were to take place on the Corridor, the following businesses were checked as being preferred by respondents (listed in order of most preferred):

- Eateries;
- Professional offices; and,
- Banks/personal services.

Industrial development was checked off as a use that respondents did not want to see along the Corridor.

Regarding residential development the report states:

Most people did not want to see residential growth along the Corridor. More respondents indicated, however, that they preferred more residential growth along Rte 85-A than along Rte 85. Of the types of residential units that respondents definitely did *not* want, the following were checked:

- Condos/townhouses;
- Apartment buildings; and,

- Rental units/in-law apartments.

More people preferred mixed-use (residential/commercial) on Route 85, rather than on Route 85-A.

For the northeast section of town, approximately 89% of the respondents said yes to the question: Do you think that the New Scotland Town Board ought to pursue development of reasonable guidelines that would improve the quality of building design, signage, and landscaping in the Town's commercial districts?

The results of the Visual Preference Survey complemented the responses to the RPAC Survey. In general, residents prefer the typical architecture and landscaping that characterize a small town or hamlet, and have strong negative feelings about non-descript and "corporate-style" architecture, areas with little green space and landscaping, multi-lane roads, and large parking lots in front of buildings. More specifically the results of the surveyed showed positive reactions to:

- The use of traditional building features, such as shutters, awnings, and window panes;
- Highly visible doors and entranceways;
- Frequent use of fences (wrought iron and wooden picket fences);
- Frequent use of porches or other extensions into the front setback;
- Building colors typically neutral or muted;
- Buildings typically two-stories;
- Peaked roofs;
- Building architecture complex to the eye with multiple façade and roof changes; and,
- Buildings using traditional building materials, such as brick and wood siding (or appearing wood-sided)

Conversely the visual preference survey showed negative reaction to:

- Use of trademark building and colors (e.g., Monroe Muffler and McDonalds);
- Building out of context with surroundings; and,
- Flat-roofed buildings.

Regarding signs, the visual preference survey results showed residents preferred signs that:

- Attached to buildings with no free standing sign;
- Visible, carved wood or matching building architecture; and,
- Smaller and lower.

Regarding landscaping, the visual preference survey results showed residents preferred:

- Ample shade trees; tree-lined streets; mature trees;
- Highly apparent landscaping;
- Green spaces and grass visible; and,
- Intersection corners uniquely landscaped with trees and shrubs to create depth and color near corner sidewalk.

Regarding parking, the visual preference survey results showed residents preferred parking:

- Buffered from view, not visible;
- With shade trees that break up pavement;
- On-street or one row in front of building; and,
- Underneath or behind building.

Respondents had a very strong negative reaction to expanses of parking, especially without attractive landscaping.

Regarding roads, the visual preference survey results showed residents preferred:

- Lack of visible utility poles;
- Road unbroken with multiple curb cuts; and,
- Pedestrian and bike paths factored into road improvements.

Respondents had strong negative reactions to both multi-lane roads and streets that looked like Central and Delaware Avenues, in Albany and Delmar, respectively.

*Traffic Impact Study, Kensington Woods - 2008*

A traffic study was completed as a component of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Kensington Woods subdivision located just north of the hamlet study area. While the focus of the study was potential traffic impacts resulting from the new development, several of the road segments and intersections within the study area were evaluated. A summary of relevant information from the traffic study is listed below.

The Route 85/85A intersection has an actuated traffic signal with single lanes on each approach. NYSDOT reportedly identified the intersection as a potential candidate for a single-lane roundabout. Reconfiguration likely wouldn't occur until 2018 at the earliest.

The Route 85/Upper Font Grove/Mason Lane intersection has stop signs on Upper Font Grove and Mason Lane with single lanes on each approach.

The average daily weekday traffic on Hilton road 1,360 vehicle per day, with 250 vehicles during the am peak, and 195 vehicles during the pm peak.

Heavy vehicles comprised 1% to 13% of the traffic volume during the am peak, and 0% to 1% during the pm peak.

CDTA bus route 19 makes two stops in the study area, the intersection of Route 85A and Hilton Road and also at Route 85 and 85A.

While the level of service (LOS) at the intersections within the study area are expected to degrade over the next few years, they are not expected to necessitate changes to the intersection/signalization. The worst intersection in the study area is the Route 85/85A intersection with a LOS C eastbound on 85 and southbound on 85A during the AM peak time. This intersection is predicted to decrease to a LOS D (AM peak) by 2013 regardless of construction of the Kensington Woods project. According to the report if a single-lane roundabout were to be installed at this intersection, then a predicted LOS A would result.

The longest vehicle queue observed (in 2007) was during the AM peak hour at Route 85 eastbound, waiting to turn onto 85A, with a queue length of 17 cars (425'). This is predicted to increase to 22 cars by 2013. The maximum queue length on Hilton Road, at the intersection with 85A, is predicted to be 2 cars during the PM peak hour. The maximum queue length on Upper Font Grove Road, at the intersection with 85, is existing and predicted to be 1 car at both the AM and PM peak hour. There is zero predicted queue length at Mason Road and 85 and Upper Font Grove and Font Grove Road.

Sight distance measurements at the unsignalized intersections indicate all of the intersections within the study area have sufficient site distances except at the intersection of Upper Font Grove and Font

Grove Road. Turns being made from and onto either of these roads have too short a sight distance in all directions due to a curve in the road.

A "Bike Trail Park" is being contemplated adjacent to the future rail trail, on the west side of Hilton Road. With the future trail and the potential park there has been discussion to lower the speed limit on Hilton Road. An evaluation of the stopping site distance at the rail trail crossing point indicates sufficient sight line for southbound traffic, but insufficient sight for northbound traffic due to the presence of trees and vegetation on private property adjacent to Hilton Road.

There are no pedestrian accommodations along Hilton Road that would allow a user of the rail trail/future park to connect to the CDTA transit stop at the Hilton Road/Route 85A intersection. It was recommended that CDTA could add a stop at the future park if feasible.

*Commercial Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC) - 2008*

In 2008, the Town Board established the Commercial Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC) to review the town's zoning law as it applies to the commercial zoning district in the hamlet study area. Formation of this committee was in response to a very large retail commercial development proposal at the site of the former Bender Mellon Farm. The committee met several times amid a great deal of public debate about the development proposal, and was ultimately unsuccessful in reaching consensus. The committee's planning consultants, Behan Planning and Design, were asked to prepare a final report and recommendation based on the meetings that were held with the committee and the results of a large public workshop in September 2008. Excerpts from this report, submitted in December 2008, are provided below.

By the end of the summer, the CZAC had developed a preliminary approach for the Commercial Zoning District. The preliminary approach consisted of two elements:

1. A building size cap that would apply to all retail and wholesale establishments in the zone.
  - a. Based on the comprehensive plan's recommendation to exclude "regionally drawing commercial operations from the commercial zone."
  - b. The committee had not yet settled on an appropriate cap size, however, there was considerable discussion of something in the range of 60,000 sf. This would allow for the possibility of a modern supermarket that might anchor a "neighborhood center" or small "community center" scale retail plaza. It was also generally agreed that the maximum size of retail plazas (groups of individual stores) should be limited.
2. A mixed-use hamlet overlay zone
  - a. Based on the comprehensive plan's recommendation to allow mixed-use buildings, denser residential development, and to promote traditional development patterns "within and adjacent to these hamlets" [including the New Scotland hamlet]
  - b. Overlay zone would cover most, but not all of the Commercial Zoning District (would avoid areas that have already been developed for single-family residential - i.e. Youmans Road).
  - c. In the overlay zone, landowners would have an additional option to develop (with an approval process specified in zoning) mixed-use projects with some minimum percentage of commercial development, integrated with higher density forms of residential development. Such mixed-use projects would be required to meet Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) standards.

This preliminary approach was the subject of a public workshop sponsored by CZAC on September 17, 2008 at Voorheesville High School. The workshop was attended by nearly 200 people. The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Update the community on CZAC's progress,
- Summarize the committee's objectives for the Commercial District,

- Summarize the regulatory approach being considered by the Committee, and
- Obtain feedback from the community about the committee's direction.

The workshop revealed areas of agreement and some remaining concerns regarding the CZAC's proposed approach to the Commercial District. To summarize, the results indicated that there is/are:

- Considerable support in the community for limiting the size of retail structures and shopping plazas in New Scotland
- Disparate views about what the size limit should be - however, participants at the workshop certainly tended to favor a smaller cap (one smaller than the 60,000sf floated by the committee).
- General acknowledgement that something should/could be built in this area. There were some who questioned whether anything should go here, but the vast majority seemed to view the problem in terms of defining what type of development would be appropriate.
- Considerable interest in the idea of hamlet/village scaled mixed-use development. However, there were many questions about the specifics of this type of development. Clearly more information/discussion about this option was desired before most would be willing to support this alternative.
- Remaining big picture concerns about growth and development in the Town. There were several questions and comments about the long term vision for the Town and its role in the region, and the potential impacts of alternative future development patterns on the environment, traffic, fiscal conditions, community services, etc.

Behan Planning and Design's last meeting in New Scotland was the public workshop in September. Behan Planning prepared notes from the workshop and these were forwarded to CZAC and posted on the Town's website. Unfortunately, we were unable to meet again with the committee to review the notes and to discuss how the workshop results should be interpreted for the purposes of advancing CZAC's work.

### Next Steps

Based on the outcome of the workshop, there appears to be substantial support for the first component of the approach identified by CZAC. Therefore, the Town Board could consider advancing a size cap for retail buildings and plazas in the Town's Commercial Zone. Some suggestions for doing so are found below.

The second component of CZAC's approach - the establishment of a mixed-use hamlet overlay zone - should probably be postponed until a detailed planning study, complete with a robust community involvement process, can be undertaken. Unfortunately, this delay will eliminate an important component of the committee's original suggestion. In addition to advancing the comprehensive plan's vision for hamlet-centered growth, the mixed-use option was intended to provide a new development alternative for landowners who might perceive that some of their options have been limited by the

size cap; and to help make smaller, local businesses more viable by placing new residents in close proximity to jobs and shopping.

We have at least two suggestions for moving forward once the Town Board has made its determination about whether to amend the Town Zoning Law with the provision of a building size / plaza size cap.

They are:

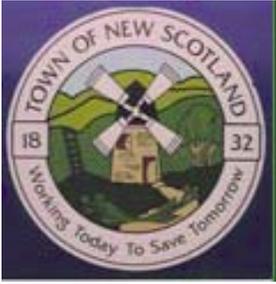
- Development of a Master Plan for the New Scotland Hamlet Area - we believe that a more detailed understanding of the community's vision and goals for this hamlet area is needed to inform further changes to the Town Zoning Law and to direct additional non-regulatory actions toward enhancing and growing the hamlet. As noted above, there appears to be considerable interest in the community for the idea of focusing mixed-use growth in and around the hamlet utilizing traditional hamlet/village design patterns. There remain, however, questions about the appropriate form and scale of such development, and the environmental, fiscal/economic, and community impacts or benefits of this type of approach. Infrastructure and transportation concerns must also be addressed. A participatory process - one that places residents, business owners, landowners and community officials in a problem-solving environment - is the most effective way to develop this type of Master Plan.
- Completion of an update to the 1994 Comprehensive Plan - As noted above, at September's public workshop there were several questions and comments about the long term vision for the Town. These generally concerned the Town's role in the region, and the potential impacts of alternative future development patterns on the Town's environment, traffic, fiscal conditions, community services, etc. Such concerns are best addressed through a community-wide comprehensive planning process. Even if you eventually find that many of the goals and recommendations of the town's 1994 Comprehensive Plan remain valid today, fourteen years is a long-time since the last discussion of these issues. There have been many changes in the town, the region, the state and the nation over this period. There are probably new residents in the community that are not familiar with, or vested in the 1994 plan. Completion of an Updated Comprehensive Plan would help reaffirm or recreate a shared vision for New Scotland's future.

Moving forward with one or both of these suggestions in the months ahead would probably help heal the divide that the current controversy has created in the community. In the long-term, these approaches could also save energy and financial resources that might otherwise be wasted on further disagreements and legal fees.

**Appendix B**

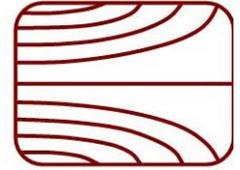
Meeting Notes - Public Workshop #1

December 2011



**Town of New Scotland**  
*New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan*

**Public Workshop #1**  
**December 1, 2011**  
**Voorheesville High School – 6:30 PM**



**Meeting Summary**

**I. Public Presentation**

This was the first public workshop for the New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan project. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting which was facilitated by Behan Planning and Design and the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). Mike Welti from Behan Planning and Design gave a PowerPoint Presentation that introduced the project, gave an overview of the study area and the existing conditions within the study area, a brief summary of previous studies completed for this area, and finally some “Food for Thought” for attendees to consider, such as what it means to be a hamlet, and what does “mixed-use” really mean.

**II. Small Group Brainstorming**

Following the presentation the audience divided into eight facilitated discussion groups. The groups were led by Mike Welti, John Behan, Michael Allen, Rick Lederer-Barnes, and Rebecca Nolan from Behan Planning and Design, Jennifer Ceponis and Anne Benware from CDTC, and committee member Leslie Lombardo from Albany County Planning. The remaining Study Advisory Committee members in attendance “floated” between the groups to get a sampling of each of the discussions. The focus of the groups was to formulate a vision for the hamlet, both the immediate vicinity of the Route 85/85A intersection, as well as the larger study area. Participants were asked what they would like to see improved in the area, what type of land uses and development patterns make sense for the study area, and what type of connections could be made within and to and from the study area. A listing of the ideas, as they were written down, from each group is attached, with the big ideas discussed below.

**III. Report Back – Big Ideas**

Following the group discussions, each group was asked to report back to the whole audience the key ideas their group came up with. In no particular order, some of the key ideas were as follows:

Pedestrian improvements for the hamlet - this includes creating trails and sidewalks, connections to the new rail trail, connections between the Village and the hamlet - particularly for ice cream, and creation of a bike lane on 85 and 85A.

Maintain commercial focus - there is a desire to maintain commercial opportunities, but focusing on smaller business, mixed with residential uses. Businesses should serve the local population as well as possibly overnight visitors. Businesses that are education and/or technology focused were highlighted as larger operations that could fit in the

study area. Also agricultural themed businesses were thought to be appropriate for the area, especially those that both made use of the land and sold directly to consumers within the hamlet. Examples included a brewery/distillery and cheese manufacturing.

Focus on architecture and scale - there was a lot of concern about making sure new development 'fits' in the hamlet. There is a desire to have design guidelines that specify maximum building heights, appropriate setbacks, and architectural styles that complement the existing hamlet.

Desire to maintain agriculture and open space - while the emphasis on open space and agriculture varied between the groups it was a common theme among all groups. Maintenance of rural character is important, including preserving important views. Agricultural heritage is important to celebrate, requiring a percentage of open land be preserved, and the creation of parks were all discussed.

Overall the groups seemed to be in favor of change within the study area, as long as the change is well planned and viewed as fitting in with the character of the New Scotland hamlet.

#### **IV. Wrap up**

After the group summaries it was noted that the ideas from the meeting will be synthesized, and will help form the strategies for the hamlet master plan. The next public meeting, which will review some of these strategies, will likely be in the winter or early spring. Updates will continue to be posted on the town's website and the project website. And a special thank you to committee member Katy O'Rourke and family for providing refreshments for the meeting - they were well received by those in attendance.

#### **V. Adjournment**

**Group Notes** – Note these represent the ideas that were written down during the group discussion, and may represent an individual’s thought, or the group as a whole. Some bullets have been edited for clarity, but the majority of ideas presented are as they were recorded on the notepads for each group.

**Anne Benware - CDTC**

- Group of 3 or 4 people would like to see as much open space as possible- preserving views to west and to explore economic use of agricultural in this area
- Set things back from rd. a bit to keep views
- Others interested in mix use w/ retail & other commercial and housing on other levels
  - Especially thinking of seniors
- Parks preserved w/in that area
- Other commercial uses- interest in enhancing the tax base of the town
- West of 85A keep open=views/development to east of NY 85A
- Ideas for connecting to highway
  - Bike/hike trail for safe walking and
- Interest in good road improvements
- Limit new driveways- provide connectivity not cul-de-sacs
- Water/ sewer infrastructure capacity constrained- what can be done
- Other highways?
- This area is the only commercial remaining in town
- Bethlehem controls the western infrastructure concern Bethlehem will dictate
- Agricultural land a possibility?
  - Soils are ok
  - Community Gardens idea
- Housing not a good money maker
- Don’t need more housing?
- Youmans Rd- constraints to commercial due to topography
- Hamlet area-converted to something like Glassworks Village- mixed use>business along roadway, with walking paths winding through
  - More interested in walking along roads(not paths)
- Interested in walking(drive once to walk around)
- Housing-envisioning mixed use-not large lots w/long driveways
- Design > more colonial era and scale, and fits into area context
- Professional bldg still has vacancies- so not much more market for that?
- People-aging-interested in having people be able to get places without having to drive their cars
- Transit-bus-it’s great to bike to the bus- but roads are unsafe /uninviting
- Zoning-create some incentives for developers to build connections, parks? Dense area w/ shops and places to walk-couple stories-shops live above
- Dense area- would allow developer to get a return-
- need places for older people to live, walk

- Competing with Village of Voorheesville
  - Infrastructure is decaying there
- Tension between New Scotland & Village of Voorheesville
- Farming- town w/ prop. Costs

### **Leslie Lombardo-Albany County Planning**

#### Rt 85 corridor

- Sidewalks-pedestrians both yes and no importance
- Both opinions
- want to move in& around on sidewalks, ability to be mobile
- the vista very important, gives this area its character, common space needed like Village of Voorheesville/ clock tower park area
- preserving green space is very important
- Build off of a plan for green space
- the way Bennington (VT) looks when you go in the "old" road route into town
- ideas of greens/parks, maybe on the corner (without a bus stop)
- Rail Trail access down to corner of 85/85A, a safe access to commercial area
- safety for bikers in the area, bike lane put in, road improvements needed
- don't want to see the whole thing go commercial
- good idea commercial but not regional, mixed use, village concept
- a lot of small businesses would fit here but can't support
  - E.g.: restaurants, not more pizza, locally grown food used, antique shops, specialty shops, locally made crafts
  - want to get existing buildings fixed up, want new buildings to look nicer
  - design guidelines needed
  - landscaping very important
  - parking lots in back not in front
  - E.g.: of Emma Cleary
  - Shared parking
  - mix of use>church example
  - town complex: town hall:?
  - Re-use of old town hall>make it a community center
  - architectural designs should be "old style"
- idea of a roundabout at corner 85/85A
- residential up front to get the view then business behind
- set back restrictions needed to get bldgs. Off of road to provide walkways, cycle lanes
- more "eyes on the street" = safety
- the question of sewer & water
- manufacturing not a fit for this area, belongs w/hwy access and rails
- office bldgs ok just not high buildings
- overall group not interested in lg. lot SF develop
- Want to see cluster develop
- The idea of dividing up the large parcels

- the opposite of keeping it as one large parcel so the town can work with them to get a master idea
- mixed use= liked development was concentrated (the example on the plastic sheets of existing developments in the surrounding area), keep green space +residents
- residential cluster concept, the Brandle Meadows development as a beautiful complex for the area, walk to a coffee shop & other shops

#### Questions of study comm.

- data available of what size is supported by #of residential so how much residents can we include
- zoning commercial now not appropriate for the town, zoning has to be changed
- Want to create a win/win situation though
- nothing higher than 2 stories- residential

#### Group Summary

- pedestrians, rail trail access & biking important to accommodate them, build new buildings set back to allow sidewalks, able to move in & around places
- commercial is smaller businesses, mixed with residential, multi family ok- if not higher than 2 stories restaurants, antique shops, specialty shops, church?
- offices ok 2-story
- Aware that this property owned by someone who expects to be able to develop it
- pocket park idea at corner, preserving green space very important, should grow off of green spaces incorporated into develop.
- would like to see design guidelines
- the vista, the view is important incorporate it into future development
- round-a-bout at corner 85/85A
- cluster development whatever it is- not large lot residential
- landscaping important

#### Jen Ceponis - CDTC

##### 1. Community space w/ community garden

Community center

-recreation center

Passive open space

Active open space -preserve views

Agriculture based business

Cheese Making

##### 2. Mixed use-small/specialty retail

Residential

Commercial

Residential mix- affordable+ larger homes

3. Clusters of office/ retail  
with intrerpreserved open space  
inter connection of waterways- roads  
Develop in pieces w/an overall plan for infrastructure and open space
4. 30% open space  
Distinct areas w/in hamlet
5. Design standard- consistent, attractive, aesthetic

### **Mike Welti - Behan Planning and Design**

- One of homes on 85A was converted to insurance office- this was good
- Trail connection (informal now)- from Locust/Scotch pine to Hamlet- ice cream is the attraction
- A lot of neighborhoods in Voorheesville-(naturally occurring retirement community)- not a lot of kids in them
- All this business development in region Vista, Albany Nanotech-will those people need homes- this area is close by
- Kids walk on 85 from trailer park to Stewarts- very dangerous
- People love "The Crossings" a place like that would be great for Voorheesville
- Sidewalk accommodation in hamlet
  - Perhaps more of a trail along Maple Ave.
- Question about whether commercial is really needed here- as is nice as the way it is
- If some big commercial- not too big
  - Keep some of the open space
  - Do we need more commercial for taxes
  - Concern for traffic and what new commercial would do. Don't want roads to need widening
- Small stores- like the copy shop or medical offices
- Parking is a big part of the problem- people don't like- people don't like seeing the parking
- Parking behind buildings (like in Woodstock municipal building)
- The idea of hamlet being more of a village okay
- Some discussion about residential in or near hamlet- not sure about small lot village style homes
  - Larger lots preferred by some-some space but with more open space
  - Some like the smaller lots but want some open space
  - Some like more compactness
- Some type of park near the future rail trail
- There are not many eateries-would like more-where?
- Village is not a socializing place. Would like some activity here
- Perhaps keep the road frontage more rural but develop some concentration of businesses internal- a road off 85-not too visible-don't see parking

### **Group Summary**

- Walking connection from village to hamlet (ice cream) +by Stewarts
- Rail trail > opportunity for park and businesses nearby
- Scale of development (focuses on local community)+design are key (i.e. parking)
- Hamlet as a walkable village
  - Sidewalks
  - Pathways(off road)along rural roads(like Maple)
- Preserving rural character along road-develop internal areas-eateries, activities
- Maximize open space-cluster development

(moderate income housing)

Or

(MAYBE) apartments that look like homes and can attract long-term rental (stable citizen base)

### **Rebecca Nolan - Behan Planning and Design**

- how far will development Go?
- Traffic
- Hilton Rd-190 homes
- Mixed use-apts. On 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- Blend of both rather than mixed or comm/res.
- Concerns that could get pushed to res.
- What does the town need?
- Lacking places to work, places to convene
- Places to hold events
- No hotels/motels-no place for guests to stay-need
- No restaurants-need
- Townhome/carriage style-architectural style on a green
- Places to work, office buildings
  - E.g.: Delmar, price-chopper saratoga
- Focal point/grid system
- Office park potential, grand union closed

### **Guidelines**

- Bottle-necking
- Citizens made choice to live
- Everything close by
- No mixed use for senior
- Cabellas
- Town center

- Exercise loop
- 10 acres-farm properties-1970-municipal playground across tracks
- Affordable senior housing
- Residential communities; price chopper/Hannaford/office
- Open Space-town park un-utilized jewel
  - connection to trail
- -new England village concept

### **Group summary**

1. Senior housing-affordable
2. Village/hamlet center/town hall-solves space problem
3. Places to work-jobs
4. Mixed-use>one component/specific-office space, retail 1<sup>st</sup> floor, hotel
5. No mass residential
6. Architectural style/guidelines
  - character
7. Access routes-not just a few connections to 85/85A
  - walkability=bikes
  - rail trail
8. Good soil-diverse-
  - farmer
  - owner

### **Michael Allen - Behan Planning and Design**

- Little shopping center-could look nicer, dated. Back out into street is a problem, but great
  - parking in rear, less flat &dated. Parking in back
  - taller like more interesting. Limited in space
- Wants to look at entire area before
- Sidewalks all along route ?
- Facades to blend more architecturally
- Sidewalks to start from Bethlehem side
  - Short walk is scary/unsafe
- Safe bike route
- Bike lane could help in place of sidewalk
  - Clifton Park walking is VERY good
- Multiple connections off road to rail trail
- Would like to see some open space
- Can save some fields on either side of maple to preserve rural character
- Would the development ever come?
  - Predominantly commercial, but not too much retail

- Limited to 20% retail
- Sister/cottage industry instead of office/retail
- Learning center/university
- Once we get rid of green, it is gone forever
- What about housing that doesn't cost \$400k
- Farmers market/Aq town park w/swimming pool
- Town owns 10 acres south of study area by Miller Rd.
- Does this area really have the critical mass to really support retail
- Restaurant is needed/pharmacy
- Peddlers village (arts & crafts village)
- Water? @New Paltz village
- There is a need for not expensive

### **Group Summary**

- Area could benefit from better architecture>perhaps add design guidelines. Some places dated/poor condition
- There isn't need for all retail, perhaps keep retail development scaled back. Focus instead on small cottage industry, learning center, arts & crafts, university/school, as a unique local draw that identifies community
- Can work to preserve select fields on either side of Maple Road to protect the rural view/character while allowing development behind/screened
- Sidewalks could be used in very select center of Hamlet, however a bike lane along entire route would allow people more room to walk when they did
- Need for housing types which are not 400k and more for young families; apartments/rental units
- Connections to Rail Trail, sidewalks and trails are important, should be heavily networked
- Need a restaurant, local pharmacy, perhaps small arts& crafts industry
- Need town public land such as a park with pool

### **Rick Lederer-Barnes - Behan Planning and Design**

#### **“Big” Ideas:**

- Allow and encourage a mix of uses - retail/office/condos/single-family/light industry/senior housing
- Scale new development to existing hamlet - “New England” scale
- Need “rooftops” - there has to be enough new residential development to support new non-residential development
- Need to maintain the unique character of New Scotland - don't want to be another Bethlehem or Guilderland, there's a clear identity currently that should be maintained. People know each other - they know the owners of the businesses; there's a “quaint” nature that should be maintained. Maintaining that character and sense of place is believed to be good for property values as well.
- New development should have consistent architecture - need for design guidelines. Could draw from the town's Dutch heritage

- Specific ideas for the area include:
  - A botanical garden - New Scotland is supposed to be the “jewel of Albany County” so it seems like a logical location. Expanding on the idea, adding mixed use development or commercial development at the edge of the botanical garden to feed off each other.
    - Peddler’s Village in PA was shown as an example of something that might work here - it is a mix of retail, restaurants and lodging, 1- to 2-story, with activity and event space, both outdoor and indoor (<http://www.peddlersvillage.com>)
  - Should take advantage of “Tech Valley” - close to Luther Forest, Nano-tech campus, etc. Could allow light industrial in the area, which could in turn provide a need for residential and service businesses. Have to make sure the manufacturing is still relatively small in scale to “fit” in the hamlet.
  - Senior development which would include independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing. Include businesses that would be frequented by the senior community.
  - Community supported agriculture (CSA) or a community gardens
  - Distillery/Brewery that grows ingredients right there - could be a form of agritourism
- Should create an economic development committee that could act as a liaison between the town and the development community
- No matter what, the town needs to have a crystal clear plan for the hamlet area so developers know what the town wants, rather than what it doesn’t want.

**Other information/ideas from the group:**

- The “shop local Saturday” was viewed as successful, showing that people do seem to care about the local merchants
- There’s virtually nothing in terms of boarding in the hamlet. An Inn was discussed as a favorable type of development, something big enough to not only provide rooms, but an event space for weddings and meetings.
- Expanding on that, it was suggested that a compact “small village” could be built in the hamlet with a couple of new streets with small retail shops and cafes/restaurants anchored by an Inn with community/private event space.
- Town hall and the library reportedly both need to expand, perhaps they could be moved into the center of the hamlet to help create a “community center”
- No need seen for a large-scale supermarket given the Hannaford and in Voorheesville, and the Price Chopper and future Shop Rite in Bethlehem.
- If infrastructure is put in place, or at least plan, that could help bring in new development - a couple of new streets, water and sewer.

- Historically developers have not wanted to build in New Scotland - need to change their perception
- It was noted that Bethlehem has enough water capacity and is willing to sell it to the town for this area, they just want to know what the plan is
- Clearly plenty of room for development, including residential development, and Voorheesville school district is under capacity currently, and would reportedly be able to absorb (and may welcome) additional students resulting from new development
- Large parcel at NW corner of 85 and 85A would be best suited for park land, with development on NE corner
- Need to plan past the current economic conditions for the future

### **John Behan - Behan Planning and Design**

- Large cooperative produce farm?
- Large planned development - well done
- Not big box - work with in road
- Trader Joes/Whole Foods - like Napa Valley, Fairfield Wal Mart - so many trees very nicely done
- Watersheds - so important
  - Downspouts into watershed gardens
  - Get parking to percolate some places
    - Lots of trees
- Architecture is a big factor - A big factor
- Fracking - Utica shale -it's a concern
- Businesses with housing above
- We are a very strong draw
  - Simple
  - Rural nature
  - Not driving expansive commercial areas to get to town
- Having hard time keeping commercial only commercial - interspersed small businesses
- Walk to a new town center kind of feel
- Don't we need a larger population to support businesses here?
- Small businesses
  - Restaurant
  - Doctor
- Architecture is a big part. Love to see a Trader Joes...but I love my little Hannaford store in Voorheesville "is my store now"
- Commercial developments to fit the architectural character in area:
  - Victorian
  - Craftsman
  - Etc.
- Preserving architecture - replicating older style architecture - like in New Salem, Clarksville
  - Why people move here
- Multiple green spaces throughout
- Connections with a bike path

- Don't want 3 year old walking on 85A
- Don't want pathway "taking over" someone's lawn
  - Making a pathway system internal
- Traffic capacity is an issue in Bethlehem
- Recreation/Park use should be considered
- Don't rule out agriculture
  - Heritage trees, organic farming, etc.
- Commute is 10 - 15 minutes to Albany
- 250 acres is a big area, could see pockets of development (mostly residential) within preserve of rural area; preserve connected areas
- Partner with State Universities, Cooperative extension

### **Group Summary**

- Great space+character
  - Agriculture
  - Recreation
  - Walkability/bikeability
- Architectural style
  - 2-Story or under
  - Local style preserved
  - Even commercial (not too much) is okay
- Partnering with
  - State University for Agriculture (e.g. Cobleskill)
  - Work w/ property owners
  - Cooperative planning process
  - \*give owners their rights
- Aging/inadequate infrastructure  
Water pressure 85

### **Green Comment Cards - filled out by those not wishing to speak or who had additional ideas at the end of the meeting**

- We need to maintain space for commercial development. The type of commercial is not important. How it is configured and designed - that is important
- I would suggest that all land use in the area be tax producing, not tax exempt. It is the only commercial zone in the town
- Green space combined with green industry - i.e. why not small-scale solar farm? Geothermal? What about controlled solar panels on the roofs?
- Provide guidance now to small commercial businesses in the hamlet that will let them grow into bigger businesses in a successful community
- Small "heritage" "organic" dairy manufacturing incorporating animals, museum, processing plant open to public viewing
- Preserve "wild" area nearest bike path
- (1) Von Haberscham Beaufort, SC, (2) DMZ - designed developments

## Appendix C

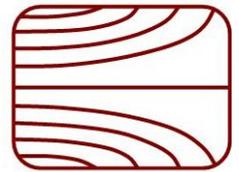
Meeting Notes - Public Workshop #2

May 2012



**Town of New Scotland**  
***New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan***

**Public Workshop #2**  
**May 23, 2012**  
**Voorheesville High School – 7:00 PM**



**Meeting Summary**

***Presentation***

This was the second public workshop for the New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan project. Approximately 35 people attended the meeting which was facilitated by Behan Planning and Design. Michael Welti, AICP from Behan Planning and Design gave a PowerPoint Presentation that provided some background information about the project and the study area; and that summarized the recommendations contained in the *Draft New Scotland Hamlet Master Plan* (May 2012).

The Draft Plan was made available for public review a week prior to the public workshop - at Town Hall and on the project website: <http://newscotlandhamletstudy.wordpress.com>. Comments collected at this workshop will be considered by the Study Advisory Committee as it prepares a final draft of the plan in the coming weeks. After this meeting, additional comments can be submitted to the Study Advisory Committee at Town Hall or to Jennifer Ceponis from CDTC ([jceponis@cdtcmpo.org](mailto:jceponis@cdtcmpo.org), 458-2161). In order to be considered, such comments should be provided by early June. The Study Advisory Committee hopes to complete its final draft and submit it to the Town Board for adoption by early summer.

Following the presentation of the Draft Plan, Mr. Welti asked those in attendance to answer two questions:

What do you like about the ideas/concepts that have been presented tonight?

What concerns or questions do you have about the ideas/concepts that have been presented tonight?

The following is a summary of the comments received from the audience at the public workshop.

***What do you like about the ideas/concepts that have been presented tonight?***

- Likes the fact that there is more residential. And a mix with commercial and open space, etc.
- Impressed with the way you can design smaller residential neighborhoods and preserve open space
- Likes mixed use and green space. Also recognizing housing opportunities for the elderly in the plan is good. Also concerned about the walking/bike path as it crosses Hilton Road—people crossing and warnings for motorist to stop.

- Likes the ideas of keeping NYS Routes 85 and 85A the way they are—not widening, expanding.
- Likes the small business and service focus—focus on local amenities, small scale approach (and not on the big plazas)
- Likes the idea of small homes for seniors and emphasis on ability to walk from place to place.
- Likes the idea of minimizing access cuts into 85 and 85A (with the internal access roads) - access management.
- The plan will encourage more socialization by design— will help build community (due to walkability, trails, sidewalks connecting stores, etc.).
- Love the plan’s vision for roads—an interconnected network of roads (instead of unconnected dead end roads/cul-de- sacs).
- Plan provides options to travel by car, walk, or ride a bike in safe and attractive ways.
- Likes the idea of the zoning code with design guidelines. This will let developers understand in advance what the community expects. This should save time and money for the developers (predictability)—and the community gets what it wants.
- Concern about stormwater and flooding. Runoff from stormwater can be directed to designated areas where it can be appropriately managed. Good that the plan recognizes natural systems - these are mapped so that people will not buy undevelopable land.
- Likes idea of clustering public/civic institutions into the hamlet center area. (As/if these institutions are looking to move.)
- Liked the presentation—the visuals were very effective. They show what is possible.

*What concerns or questions do you have about the ideas/concepts that have been presented tonight?*

- What is a “regional draw” in terms of the plan? This term is mentioned early in the plan. How is that interpreted?

Response: The phrase “regional draw” means different things to different people. That is one of the problems with the language in the town’s comprehensive plan. From a scale standpoint—it generally means that the town is not looking to create “gravity” (where customers are drawn from outside the area—i.e., those that do not typically use/pass through the area.)

- Since we are not expecting a large population increase in the area, then who is going to populate the hamlet?

Response: It is correct that we are not expecting a large increase in population. That is why the emphasis for new residential in the hamlet is targeted toward forms of housing that are not present in the New Scotland housing market today - smaller single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments that are geared toward smaller households and moderate incomes. These housing options might appeal, for example,

to older residents who no longer wish to maintain the large home that they raised their family in but who would like to remain in the community.

- Traffic - question about the classification of roads in terms of traffic capacity.

Response: The graphs in the Existing Conditions section of the report illustrate that - based on traffic engineering standards for Level of Service (LOS) in use throughout the state and the nation - existing traffic on NYS Routes 85 and 85A is well below any threshold that would indicate a capacity problem on these highways. However, that is a very narrow way of looking at the function of these roadways. In terms of walking, biking, and measures of compatibility with residences/neighborhoods located along these highways, the report acknowledges other issues (aside from capacity) that are considered later in the plan recommendations.

- Concern about implementation... How will this be accomplished? Is it too complicated? Who actually "does anything" (in terms of making the plan actually happen)?

Response: It starts with adopting or accepting the plan in some fashion (as an amendment to the comprehensive plan or otherwise). Once there is agreement about the vision and the plan is adopted, then the hard work begins. It will require a strong and sustained (over many years) effort. The Town Board can spearhead the initiatives (zoning, etc.) as described in the implementation section. The tools (design guidelines, zoning) can then be given to the planning board, etc. to work with.

- Open space is an important aspect of the plan— conserve contiguous areas and corridors so that it is useable, and not fragmented. Also keeping agriculture as an active part of the desired uses in the area—even things such as hydroponics.
- What are the rights of landowners—in terms of moving forward with the plan?

Response: Owners can, hopefully, see the benefits and see opportunities that they want to pursue. The plan does not compel the owners to do anything. The Town has the ability to manage development through its plan and corresponding land use regulations. There are rules in place now. In crafting the plan, we tried to provide flexibility; and hopefully the landowners will see opportunities in that flexibility.

- Our town is getting older. (There is one project for seniors being built now). Driving— it is not easy for seniors to make left hand turns, etc. Likes the idea of providing for seniors—including establishing housing for seniors with moderate incomes. Also offering options for young households—those with limited means. Some concern that there is too much residential in the plan (fiscal issue) but businesses do need people.
- We have some existing businesses that draw from the region already (Falvo's)—this is not necessarily bad. Thatcher Park is a draw. What else would be an appropriate draw—artists, boutiques, local businesses, smaller scale.

- What do we have for young people to do; so that they are attracted to stay (or come back)? There should be subcommittees to come up with ideas. Need an outreach person to draw businesses to the area.
- Likes the ideas for parking—shared parking, smaller parking lots, etc.
- Likes the idea of being able to connect between character areas—and the rail trail to connect throughout. Also the suggestion to reactivate the rail underpass on Youmans Road is a good idea (connection to the Town Park). Concern about the “MDR zone” on the east end of the study area —one of the more populated areas. Should look to connect to this area too—both from Bethlehem (existing sidewalk that ends near the Town line) and to the new/expanded hamlet area.
- Does this all stop...wait until the area gets public water?

Response: Not necessarily—but water system expansion will be necessary to support the full vision. Rather than wait for this to occur, the plan suggests a more pro-active approach led by the Town.

- Question about conservation subdivisions: for the preserved land—who owns (and takes care of, pays taxes on) the conserved land?

Response: In all cases, the conserved land should be protected by a conservation easement. The conserved land can be owned / maintained by one landowner or several landowners as part of their parcels. In a larger project, it might be owned/maintained cooperatively via a homeowner’s association. A land trust could also be involved. There are many alternative scenarios that can work depending on the specific circumstances. The important thing is that the future of the open land set aside in these projects cannot be left to chance. Conservation easements are critical for securing the future of these lands. A management plan for the open land should also be prepared and made part of the easement. The zoning and subdivision regulations should spell out in detail what is required to ensure that these things are addressed properly.

- What about trying to preserve the view on NYS 85A? (The vista, up across the landscape to the escarpment.)

Response: The plan suggests a more holistic approach for the development of these large parcels. Development along road frontage is the most simple, and common, approach typically used. The plan, on the other hand, provides ideas for the development of internal portions of these parcels so that some of the frontage can be preserved.

- Nothing happens without a champion...who is going to be the champion here? A developer? A group of property owners together to get a master planned development?

Response: There could be many different champions. The Town Board will need to lead in order to set the stage for this to happen. Code specific to the vision outlined in this plan should be written (not simply copied from elsewhere). But the Study Advisory Committee, landowners, and others can all have a role to play. A “cooperative planning approach”, with the Town, the landowner(s) and the community working together to shape a specific development proposal could be particularly beneficial here if people are willing to work cooperatively.

### *Wrap-up and Adjournment*

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM, after everyone who wanted to had an opportunity to provide their comments.