

TOWN OF BALLSTON FINAL DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Ballston, New York

December 2005



**Forwarded to the Town Council
by the CPAC
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Section 1

Section 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Ballston is located within Saratoga County, New York. Facing increasing residential and commercial development pressure, the Town Council instituted a temporary moratorium to allow the community time to establish a vision and a direction for the future.

The Town has decided to take a comprehensive look at issues related to its continued growth and development. The Town's primary concerns looking forward include ensuring the community retains its rural, small-town character, remains a great place to live and that the area's natural resources, open spaces and agricultural land are protected.

This Comprehensive Plan:

- > Identifies needs, assets and opportunities;
- > Is founded on a community-based process which includes input from residents, businesses, institutions, environmental interests and others;
- > Results in a coordinated vision for the future of Ballston;
- > Outlines actions to achieve the shared vision; and
- > Establishes a framework for community-wide efforts on plan implementation.



Example of new residential development taking place in Ballston

It is important to note that the Comprehensive Plan is a flexible document that is intended to evolve as the community's needs and desires change over time. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on a wide-range of issues affecting the community. The Plan does not, however, examine project-specific issues. Rather, the Plan examines a broader set of Town-wide issues, provides recommendations to address such issues and outlines an implementation strategy to achieve success.

1.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

The Town of Ballston began the comprehensive planning process early in 2005. The Town hired Saratoga Associates to assist in developing the comprehensive plan, and the Town Council established the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC). The CPAC included a cross-section of residents who have been involved in community activities. The CPAC held committee meetings throughout the comprehensive planning process. All committee meetings were open to the public and a portion of the agenda at each meeting was devoted to

public comment. All CPAC meeting notes, as well as public workshop meeting results can be found at the Town Hall, the library and the Town website.

In May 2005, a community survey was mailed to 1,500 randomly selected property owners and registered voters within the Town of Ballston. There was a 35% response rate for the community survey. This very positive response demonstrates the commitment of the community to the future of Ballston. Full survey results are found on the website at www.townofballstonny.nycap.rr.com and also in the appendix.

In addition to the previously mentioned CPAC meetings and community survey, the CPAC reached out to the public on several other occasions including:

Issues Identification Workshop – The purpose of this public workshop was to introduce the community to the comprehensive planning process. In addition, participants were asked to work together to define the Town’s strengths and identify issues that should be addressed in the plan. Over 140 people attended this workshop in April 2005.

Visioning Workshop - Participants were asked to take part in an image preference evaluation. Nearly 40 images were shown illustrating various styles and types of commercial development, housing, streetscape and public spaces. Participants were given a scorecard and asked to rate each image on a scale of 1 to 7. A score of 1 indicated that the image was undesirable or inappropriate; a score of 4 was considered indifferent, while a score of 7 indicated that the image was very desirable or appropriate for Ballston. Following an initial run through the images for scoring, a facilitator initiated a discussion about the positive and negative design characteristics of each image with the participants. Later in the meeting, attendees were divided into groups to brainstorm ideas for the Town on aerial photos. A facilitator worked with each group, and reported the group’s ideas to the entire workshop audience at the end of the evening. Approximately 125 people attended this workshop in May 2005.

Community Ambassadors – Members of the CPAC served as Community Ambassadors to solicit additional information from various groups and organizations within the Town. Informal meetings were held with the Fire Departments, the Business Community, Seniors and others.

Townwide Meeting – The purpose of this townwide meeting was to solicit public input about the draft plan. The draft plan document was available for public review in advance of this meeting. Feedback from this meeting was considered in the development of the committee’s final draft plan.

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) Public Hearing - The purpose of this public hearing was to receive comments about the committee’s final draft plan. As required by state law, the CPAC conducted this formal public hearing before it voted on a resolution to forward the final draft plan to the Town Council for its consideration.

Town Council Public Hearing – Once it formally received the Final Draft Comprehensive Plan from the committee, the Town Council scheduled a public hearing. In accordance with state law, the public hearing was held prior to making a decision regarding plan adoption.

At the start of the CPAC’s work, while portions of the public involvement process were taking place, an inventory and analysis of existing conditions of the Town was created. This inventory and analysis is located in the appendix of this comprehensive plan. The inventory describes existing land use and use regulations, demographic and economic trends, environmental resources, cultural and recreational resources, infrastructure and transportation, as well as fiscal conditions.

The information obtained from the public workshops, community survey and the inventory and analysis was used as a basis for plan recommendations. In addition, the multiple written comments and email messages received from stakeholders within the Town were also taken into consideration when crafting plan recommendations. Specific policies and actions were developed to address the problems and issues defined as part of the inventory and through the public outreach process. Finally a strategy for implementing the recommended policies and actions was created. The strategy prioritizes actions and identifies resources for implementation.

A comprehensive plan should serve as a guide for future action by public and private entities in the Town. As with any planning document, this plan should be reviewed regularly to determine if the goals and recommendations found within continue to be relevant based on changing circumstances, and updated as needed.



Section 2

Section 2

2.1 VISION

The recommendations within this plan direct the Town of Ballston toward an overall vision to which most residents can agree. The plan has been developed with the intent of achieving a balance between Village, suburban, and rural perspectives and a balance between new growth and protecting the existing quality of life.

The Town of Ballston aspires to preserve its working agricultural landscapes, natural resources, and high quality of life as it continues to accommodate residential and commercial growth. The community has expressed a desire to maintain the small town and rural qualities still present throughout much of the Town. As the Capital Region continues to attract new commercial growth and new residents, the Town seeks to manage this growth in a manner that maintains the best of the Town of Ballston's character for this and future generations.

2.2 GOALS

The Town has established multiple goals to achieve the vision set forth by the community. These goals address a variety of issues and will guide decision-making. The recommendations found within this plan (Section 3) attempt to direct short-term and long-term actions toward achieving these goals. The goals are listed below and are in no particular order of priority.

- > Encourage the conservation of farmland and significant open spaces and ensure the long-term viability of agriculture.
- > Create a network of open spaces to provide wildlife habitat and potential greenway/recreational trail corridors.
- > Expand the Town's active and passive recreational resources to meet the growing demand for these amenities.
- > Protect and promote the Town's significant historic and cultural resources.

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- > Ensure the protection of all of the Town's important natural resources such as stream corridors, wetlands floodplains, and in particular, the water quality and scenic qualities of Ballston Lake.
 - > Maintain community character by addressing the design, form and location of new development. (Design and form refer to the physical aspects, shape and arrangement of development.)
 - > Promote commercial and industrial growth in specific centers.
 - > Improve mobility in the Town. This includes investments in needed highway infrastructure, improved access to public transportation, and enhancements to the safety and attractiveness of non-motorized modes of travel such as bicycling and walking.
 - > Provide a business friendly environment that is supportive of local and regional businesses and helps assure the provision of quality employment and a diverse economic base in the community.
 - > Encourage agri-business opportunities and support existing agri-businesses.
 - > Strive for a balanced tax base. As the community continues to grow, the cost of providing services (such as schools, recreation, etc.) for new residential development will grow as well. From a fiscal perspective, new residential growth rarely pays for itself in property taxes. Therefore it is important to ensure that the community maintains a balance of residential development, commercial development, and open space.
 - > Provide opportunities and incentives for the development of a variety of housing options to meet the changing needs of the community.
 - > Maintain existing public water and sewer infrastructure. Provide for services where public safety is a concern. Limit the unnecessary expansion of urbanizing infrastructure (especially sewer service) in areas of the town where increased growth is not encouraged by the plan.
 - > Cooperate with neighboring municipalities on issues of mutual concern, and look for opportunities to partner in the delivery of services when appropriate.

Section 3

Section 3

3.1 RURAL AREAS

Much of Ballston's rural area is characterized by working landscapes and open spaces, with single family residential development along the road frontage and an occasional small scale commercial parcel. This area is illustrated on the Plan Recommendations Map as the majority of the Town located west of Route 50. Traditionally, rural areas have been places where resource based economic activities have flourished. Rural areas typically have less demand for public services. Outside of the hamlets and the Village of Ballston Spa, agriculture has been the primary land use. Today, economic trends have reduced the vitality of agriculture in this area, but many working farms continue to exist. It should also be noted that the land, remains the primary asset of many landowners in this area.

With its remaining agricultural businesses, undeveloped lands, and natural resources, this portion of the community is highly valued for its rural character and contributions to the Town's overall quality of life.

Residential development pressure is working its way into the rural areas with more frequency. However, with difficult soils and the lack of sewer and water infrastructure, much of the area will most likely not be intensively developed. On the whole, large public investments in such urbanizing infrastructure such as sewer and water are not likely in most of the rural area. The challenge in this area, therefore, is to provide options for rural landowners so that rural lifestyles, community character and economic opportunity can be maintained here over the long-term.

Revise zoning regulations for the Rural Area.

Maintaining a predictable and fair process for land use and development in this area will be beneficial to property owners, to potential developers, and to the community as a whole.

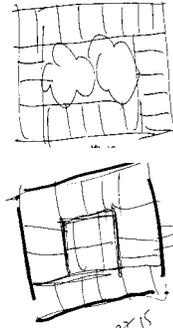
Uses: Typically, a rural area is home to a variety of uses, including agriculture, forestry, mining, appropriate scale commercial and light industrial activity, and low-density residential development. Revised zoning and subdivision regulations for this area must continue to provide a variety of options in terms of the use of land. Agricultural practices and affiliated agribusiness uses such as farms stands and small scale



processing of agricultural products should certainly be permitted. Flexible business opportunities should also be considered that offer economic benefit to existing agricultural uses. Additionally, low-density residential, home occupations, appropriate scale commercial or light-industrial uses, bed and breakfasts, and private recreational uses should be permitted. Appropriate-scale commercial or light-industrial establishments may be allowed under special use permit. However, most commercial should be limited to the major thoroughfares of Routes 50 and 67 (See Section 3.6 – Transportation Corridors) or the Mixed Use Centers (See Section 3.2 – Mixed Use Centers). Design guidelines should be developed to ensure that these small establishments fit appropriately into the Town’s rural landscape. (See “special use permit” discussion below).

Special Use Permit: Most non-residential or non-agricultural uses should require a special permit to ensure that they do not negatively impact the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties. Performance standards for noise, light, vibration, dust, odors, and so forth should be developed to guide the review of such projects. Broad design guidelines may also be appropriate to limit the negative environmental and visual impact of items such as paved parking areas, lights, and signs, or to improve the safety of items such as driveways, that are necessary for the operation of these uses. Sloped roofs, wood siding (or siding with a wood appearance), and stone siding are some of the broad architectural characteristics that could be encouraged to maintain town character.

Minor Subdivision: In terms of residential development, there should be options available to the landowners that reflect varying circumstances. In some cases, a landowner may simply wish to split-off a lot or two for a friend or relative, or to generate some needed cash. These types of small subdivisions should be easy to achieve through a conventional minor subdivision process. It is recommended that a minor subdivision be defined as one that results in the creation of four (4) or fewer lots (including the original parent parcel) over a five-year period. After the five-year period, additional minor subdivisions would be possible. Creation of five lots or more within a five-year would be considered a major subdivision. Current zoning regulations that allow the Planning Board to declare any minor subdivision as a major subdivision should remain.



Frontage development can create access management problems if individual driveways are permitted for each home (left). Frontage development is also inefficient – once the frontage is all developed (top right), developing the interior lands (bottom right) is very difficult because proposed new homes are likely to be in the “backyards” of the ones already built along the road frontage.

Because small subdivisions are typically created along the frontage of existing roads, such subdivisions can quickly have a negative cumulative impact on the safety and efficiency of the road (due to curb cuts). This type of frontage development can also quickly detract from the rural character of an area, because despite the abundance of undeveloped land behind these homes, the view from the roadway is dominated by homes. And finally, unchecked frontage development can negatively impact the future development potential of interior lands. Though the original landowner may have intended to develop these areas, they have unwittingly created opposition to such development because the interior lands are the “backyards” of the lots created in the original subdivision. To counter the negative impact of frontage development from minor subdivisions, the Town could allow well-designed flag lots with shared driveways (and cross-easements), as an alternative option to frontage lot development. This could be accomplished as the zoning and subdivision regulations are amended.

For minor subdivisions, a simple conventional subdivision approach, with a 2-acre minimum lot size, should be permitted.

Major Subdivision: A major subdivision would be the subdivision of five (5) or more lots over a five (5) year period. It is recommended that the density of development remain at 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres in the Rural Area.

The emphasis for the Rural Area should be on options for landowners. For a major subdivision, it is recommended the landowner have an option of utilizing a conservation subdivision design instead of a conventional subdivision. While a conventional subdivision is allowed, a conservation subdivision design approach should be encouraged for major subdivisions within the Rural Area. It is understood that a conservation subdivision may not be appropriate for all locations within the Rural Area and that is why options exist. The suitability of soils to support development (e.g., septic systems and wells) would be a determining factor in the density of a conservation subdivision. Water and septic systems must be located on individual lots unless public water and sewer are available. Community wastewater and well water systems should not be allowed.

It is recommended that a pre-application meeting be required with any applicant seeking to develop a major subdivision. During this time, the Planning Board should express its preference for a conservation subdivision as the default approach, when soil conditions allow. This early first step would ensure the developer/landowner understands the process and the options available. This serves to begin an open line of communication between the Town and the developer/landowner, which assist in streamlining the development process.

A description of the conservation subdivision design approach follows:

The Conservation Subdivision Design approach begins with the identification of open space resources present on the site to be developed (environmentally constrained land, agricultural land, historic or scenic views, significant woodlots, etcetera). This first step is what distinguishes the conservation subdivision approach from the more traditional clustering approach. A Town-wide map of open space resources or a Lands of Conservation Interest Map can be a useful guide for starting this identification process (Section 3.10). This resource identification will form the basis for designating conservation lands in the new subdivision. Once conservation lands are identified and designated, areas where development would be most appropriate are identified. Homes (the number based on allowable density for the zoning district) are then designed into the development areas of the site in a creative fashion. Flexible lot sizes and area and bulk standards facilitate this creativity. Identifying road alignments and lot lines are the final steps in the Conservation Subdivision Design process.

Over 78% of survey respondents agree or strongly agree the Town needs to change zoning to protect open space within new developments.

The use of Conservation Subdivision Design is one technique to accomplish this.

Conservation Subdivision Design (term coined by Randall Arendt)

Uses open space resources present on a site to be developed as the starting point for design (In the same way that a golf-course community is designed).

The **four-step conservation subdivision design process** is quite simple:

1. Identify conservation areas – potential development areas follow once the conservation areas have been “greenlined”.
2. Locate house sites
3. Align streets and trails
4. Draw in the lot lines

Conservation easement – a legal tool that ensures that conservation lands set aside as a result of this process remain undeveloped.

Ownership options for conservation lands - an individual landowner or several landowners in the new conservation subdivision, a homeowner’s association, the Town, or a land conservancy such as Saratoga PLAN.

See Randall Arendt’s, *Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks* (1996) and *Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances* (1999) for more information.

The density (number of lots) permitted in a conservation subdivision can be determined in two ways. One approach is for the applicant to develop a “yield plan” for the site. The yield plan is essentially a subdivision plan developed using a conventional subdivision approach. The Planning Board would review the yield plan to ensure that it is realistic (given environmental conditions, minimum lot size and other area and bulk regulations, etc.). Once the Planning Board determines that the yield plan is achievable, the number of lots shown becomes the number of lots allowed (the yield) for the proposed conservation subdivision. The second approach for determining the density in a conservation subdivision is to prepare a “density calculation”. Under this approach, the applicant identifies all of the environmental constraints (wetlands, steep slopes, and flood plains) on the site to be developed. These constrained lands are removed from the overall acreage of the parcel. The permitted density in the area (1 home per two acres in the Rural Area) is then applied to the unconstrained acreage using a simple calculation. So if there are 50 acres of unconstrained land on a site to be developed, up to 25 lots could be created in the conservation subdivision. The applicant (landowner/developer) should be allowed to determine which method of determining density is most beneficial for them.

A required open space set aside for conservation subdivisions in the Rural Area should also be established. The minimum open space set aside should be 20-50% in this area. A recommended open space set aside would ensure meaningful open space conservation and still allow creative subdivision design. Meaningful open space should include some

buildable lands and could include offsite parcels. It is important to recognize that the required open space set aside does not affect the number of units allowed in the subdivision because the density calculation is based on the entire parcel to be subdivided. To make it easier to achieve or exceed the minimum open space set aside, and to promote housing diversity in the town, a mix of housing types should be permitted in conservation subdivisions.

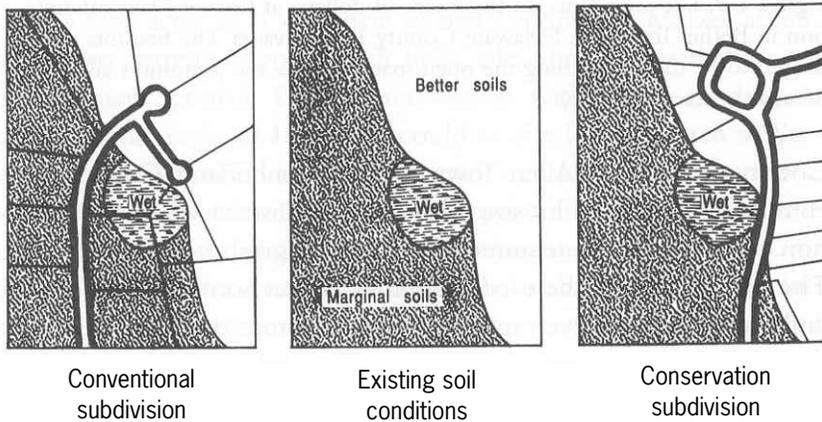
Advantages of the conservation subdivision approach include:

- > Farmland and open space conservation, recreational development and natural resource protection guide the subdivision design process. Because the area and bulk regulations used for conventional subdivisions are not applicable, the design process is creative and not driven strictly by arbitrary minimum lot size requirements.
- > Significant networks of open land are created through the development process – the value of homes within these subdivisions are enhanced as are the value of surrounding neighborhoods, and the quality of life of all town residents is improved.



A comparison of a conventional subdivision (left) with a conservation subdivision (right). In both cases, a total of 16 residential lots were created. A conservation easement ensures that the open land preserved as part of the conservation subdivision (right) cannot be further subdivided or developed in the future. *Source: Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks (1996) by Randall Arendt.*

An additional benefit that is important in Ballston is related to soil conditions. Much of the land in the Rural Area of Ballston contains difficult soils for septic systems. As illustrated in the graphic above, the design flexibility provided in conservation subdivisions can be used as a means for ensuring that development occurs primarily on lands that are best



Among other benefits, the design flexibility permitted in conservation subdivisions allows development to occur on soils that are best suited for development. The conventional subdivision approach (with density defined by minimum lot size) forces lots to be spread across the site with less regard to soil conditions.

suited for such systems. It should be noted, however, that the maximum allowable density in Ballston's Rural Area might not always be achievable due to soil constraints. State Health Department approval of well and septic systems may be necessary prior to subdivision approval. State Health Department approval is typically required for realty subdivisions and alternative wastewater treatment systems.

Stream Corridor Protection: The Town should support protection of water quality, including the quality of Ballston Lake. Currently, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) regulates wetlands over 12.5 acres and has varying levels of protection for Class A, B and C streams. Trout streams have an additional layer of restrictions. Stream corridor protection can be accomplished in multiple ways including using an overlay zone or as part of the subdivision review process utilizing existing NYSDEC restrictions. The Town Board should consider appropriate stream buffers on classified streams. In addition, the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) also regulates waters of the U.S. and requires

protection of these waters. The Town Board should consider appropriate stream buffers on classified streams.

The Town should make certain that the controls and regulations set forth by the NYSDEC and the ACOE are followed appropriately. It is important to raise any potential issues early in the review process.

Consider reducing street width in new residential developments and encourage a connected street network.

Oftentimes, the required minimum residential street width is excessively wide. Wide residential streets inadvertently encourage speeding and, in areas with no sidewalks, can create an unsafe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. This recommendation would require further discussion with various Town Departments, such as the Department of Public Works, and with emergency service providers in the area, to ensure safety. Information about the function, safety, and benefits of narrower streets has become available from transportation engineering organizations, such as the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), in recent years.

3.2 MIXED USE CENTERS

The Mixed-Use Centers provide a social and commercial core for a community. The districts embody the small town feel that many people seek, while also offering a wider variety of residential options. Often only a few blocks long, they host some conveniences and services for locals as well as specialized shops and restaurants that attract people from around the town. Since the buildings, parks and shops in the district become a focus for civic, commercial and recreational activities, layout and design must be emphasized.

In order for Mixed-Use Centers to create the kind of hamlet community and small town feel desired by residents, a balance between residential, office and retail, both within buildings and between buildings, is vital. Within this area, buildings would often have retail or commercial services on the first floor, and residences and offices above. These mixed-use buildings could be just steps away from two-family or multiple dwelling residential structures.

The ability of residents to walk around their community is a priority in a hamlet. Walking is an important form of exercise and socialization for

people of all ages. Residents should be able to safely walk from their homes to run an errand or for exercise. People from other parts of the town can park their cars and shop or simply have a safe place to stretch their legs and meet friends.

The housing developments within the hamlet areas are laid out in street grids with no dead ends. The preservation of open space within these areas is not a priority, though pocket parks, trails and other greenway connections are important.

The Town's need for housing diversity could be accomplished in the mixed use centers (and also in the Hamlet Residential Areas as described in Section 3.3). Greater housing diversity will be increasingly important as demographic trends continue to shift toward an aging population and smaller household sizes. As new hamlet-scale development occurs, the opportunity exists to create senior housing and also low to moderate income housing. Senior housing may be in the form of independent living options such as apartments or accessory units or in the form of senior housing facilities that provide various levels of care.

The Plan Recommendations Map illustrates a Mixed Use Center – North and Mixed Use Centers – South. The area bordering the Village of Ballston Spa has been designated the Mixed-Use Center - North. The Mixed Use Centers – South consist of the Burnt Hills and Ballston Lake hamlets. In addition, a new Mixed-Use Center could be designated in future in the residential area to the east of Ballston Lake to give the residents there a small neighborhood center.

It may be necessary to address differences in scale or intensity of development desired in the Mixed Use Center – North and the Mixed Use Centers – South. It is important to note that while the same basic characteristics of a mixed use center, such as walkability and a mix of uses, apply to both the Mixed Use Center – North and the Mixed Use Centers – South, the scale of these areas is different. For example, it might be acceptable to have a higher density of development and taller buildings in the Mixed Use Center – North. The exact requirements would be determined while revising the Town's zoning regulations.

The land use and design principles for the mixed-use areas are encompassed in the following recommendations.

Focus commercial and retail development in the Mixed Use Areas.

Commercial and retail areas provide services to residents and provide tax base revenues for the Town. Through public meetings, the community survey and other public outreach mechanisms, residents have identified the importance of the scale and appearance of commercial and retail development. Some commercial development within the Town has paid little attention to site organization, design or architectural design. Commercial and retail development, of all scales, should be developed in a manner that is more consistent with adjacent uses and the character of the community.



Commercial development typically includes a variety of development types including office and retail. However, due to a specific concern in the community regarding retail development, retail development should be considered separately from commercial development. While specific definitions of each should be identified as the zoning regulations are revised, a generic definition of retail and commercial might be useful. Retail may be defined as the selling of goods, wares or merchandise directly to the ultimate consumer without a resale license. Commercial may be defined as any activity conducted with the intent of realizing a profit from the sale of goods or services to others. The primary distinction is that commercial is more service oriented while retail is more product oriented.



New mixed-use development in Clarendon, Virginia

The majority of commercial development in Ballston is located within the Mixed Use Centers at the northern end of Route 50 just south of the Village of Ballston Spa near the intersection with Route 67, and at the southern end of Route 50 in the hamlet of Burnt Hills. While various commercial businesses are scattered along these transportation corridors and other locations throughout the Town, the Mixed Use Areas are logical locations to focus future commercial development due to their proximity to existing infrastructure. Commercial uses could include uses such office, restaurant, copy shop or beauty salon. Retail uses could include a variety of retail stores. When the Town revises its zoning regulations to be consistent with this comprehensive plan, it should identify specific uses to be permitted in the Mixed Use Areas. In addition, allowing higher density development in the mixed use areas increases the customer base for the shops and services in the district that results in a more economically viable center. Other suggested zoning revisions are described below.

Village-sized grocery store opens

In May 2005, Price Chopper Supermarkets opened a 37,000 square foot grocery in the village of Richfield Springs, New York. According to the publication, *Progressive Grocer*, the 24-hour store is a new prototype for the regional chain, with a size and design developed to cater to small communities and rural areas. As well as offering value-priced groceries and general merchandise, the store features "bright, colorful, and colossal produce, both exotic and fresh" and "a huge variety" of meats. Other features of the new store include fresh-baked goods, seafood, deli, and floral sections. The store employs about 150 full- and part-time associates.

Revise zoning within these areas.

The zoning regulations should address the form and function of development in these areas. Through public meetings, the community survey and other public outreach mechanisms, residents have identified the importance of the scale and appearance of commercial development and have also identified their concern with increased traffic in the community. Each of these concerns has the potential to negatively impact quality of life for community residents. There are several tools available that could address these concerns while still working to increase the tax base. These tools may be used separately or together to achieve the vision described for the Mixed Use Areas.

Design guidelines are one tool available to communities that can assist in shaping development. Design guidelines should illustrate appropriate site design, site organization and architectural guidelines. Appropriate scale commercial development should enhance character and an identity that reflects the community's vision. In addition, design guidelines could also soften the transition from the Town into the Village of Ballston Spa.

Site design should emphasize the pedestrian as well as the automobile and all modes of transportation. Prominent crosswalks should be located at appropriate signalized intersections and sidewalks should be developed along the roadway, especially as the areas continue to build out. The sidewalk should be separated from main roads with a wide planting strip. The planting strip would serve to buffer pedestrians from automobile traffic. Within the parking lots, substantial landscaping to reduce continuous areas of impervious surface, pedestrian walkways, and other such improvements should be required. Design themes for all buildings should be consistent and utility facilities should be placed in visually unobtrusive locations. In addition, site organization would address the placement of buildings and parking lots on the site to facilitate pedestrian safety, smooth traffic flow and appearance of the site.

The Town should make clear from the beginning of the development process what is expected of the developer regarding site and building design. This might assist in expediting the development process and the resulting predictability may also encourage development in these areas.

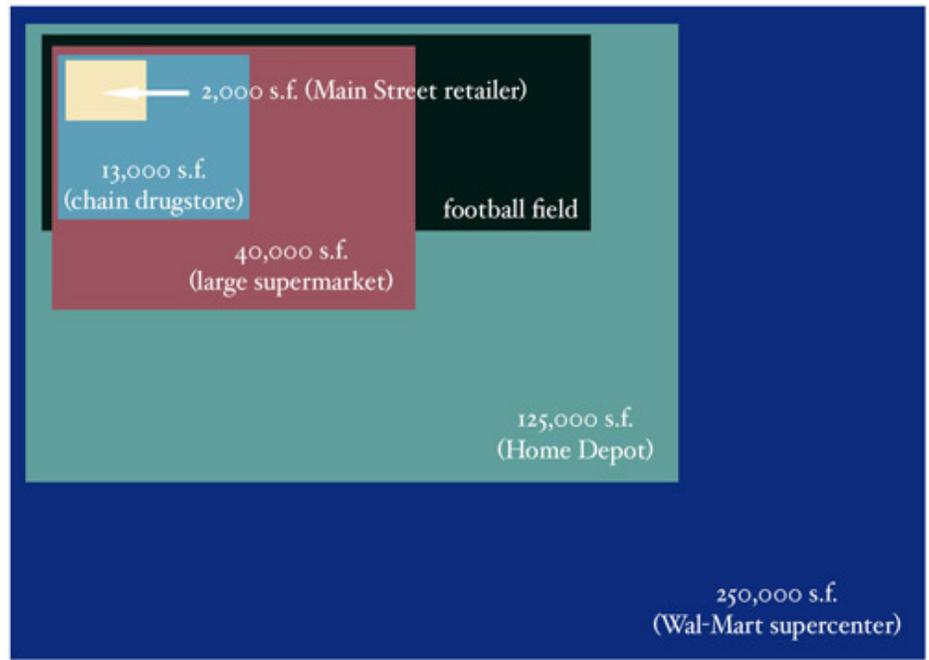
The Town should also consider a limit on the square footage of large-scale retail development, and should encourage multiple story structures in these areas. Various communities across the nation, such as Walpole,

New Hampshire and Coconino County, Arizona, have developed size limits based on total square footage (SF) and other communities, such as Gaithersburg, Maryland, have limited size based on the total footprint of a building, thereby encouraging vertical development. Vertical development must be considered closely as it relates to emergency service provisions. These communities have found this tool successful in maintaining community character and quality of life while still allowing for commercial development.

Additional research, perhaps in the form of a strategic plan for this area, will be necessary to determine an appropriate limit for retail development based on community desires, market conditions, and impacts on the transportation systems. Such a plan could include a market analysis and economic inventory as well. It is critical to ensure that future development can provide enough choices and variety to be successful. As future development occurs, it is also important to maintain community character and minimize the impacts on traffic and quality of life. Achieving a healthy mix of development could include an aggregate of various smaller shops that collectively offer similar economic benefits as that of one larger retail development. The suggested additional research would more clearly determine what size limit would be most appropriate for this area in Ballston and what could potentially be successful. As stated previously, the Mixed Use Areas are those areas where future growth should be focused. Therefore, growth should not be prevented in this area. However, the form of this growth can be shaped in a manner that further enhances the quality of life in Ballston, while also enhancing the tax base.

To provide a basis for conversation, it is important to understand typical store sizes. There are multiple sources from which information can be found regarding the average size of various forms of retail development including the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC). An organization called New Rules has developed an illustration that is useful in better understanding sizes and forms of development. The following information is for informational purpose only. The image below illustrates the various sizes of development in comparison to one another and to a football field. This enables a better understanding of square footage. Free-standing chain drugstores, such as CVS or Rite Aid, generally range from 11,000 – 15,000 SF. Border's, Barnes and Noble or a supermarket have a range of 25,000 – 45,000 SF. Bed Bath & Beyond or Lowe's, for example, fall

within the 60,000 – 140,000 SF range. Larger retailers or supercenters are typically housed in buildings of 180,000 to 250,000 SF.



Source: www.newrules.org/retail

Overall, development in this area should be sensitive to the scale and context of the community as well as to the potential negative impacts of large-scale development (e.g. traffic and quality of life). Simple design elements should be used to break up the appearance of larger building facades. Appropriate scale commercial should be placed at the street with parking in the rear. Commercial signage should also be addressed.

Development standards or performance standards should also be considered as another tool to make decisions about the impact of larger projects. Standards related to impacts from traffic, for example could be established.

Several reasons exist for recommending the above-mentioned tools. The community desires to maintain community character, address or alleviate traffic and pedestrian safety concerns, and enhance economic development in the Mixed Use Centers. Addressing traffic concerns in this area along Route 50 and Route 67, for example, is an important issue the Town currently faces. In fact a study is currently being conducted that begins to examine traffic along the Route 67 corridor. These transportation corridors are important because they not only carry Town

traffic, but also carry traffic from areas outside the Town. Specific recommendations for these transportation corridors are described in Section 3.6. In addition, by addressing the design, scale and performance of development in these areas, impacts related to crime and the additional need for public services might also be addressed.

All of these ultimately lead to an increased quality of life for the community residents and for the adjacent Village of Ballston Spa as well. For example, enhancing the Mixed Use Center North in a form that compliments the Village of Ballston Spa downtown could provide economic benefits to the Village and that area of the Town in the long term. A synergistic relationship should be formed between the Town and the Village that would benefit all.

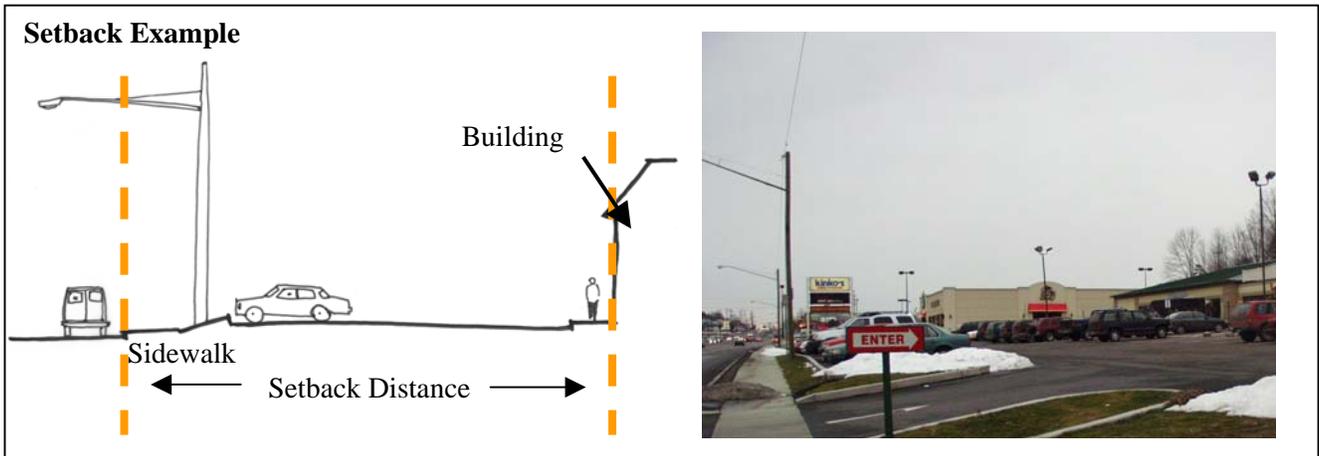
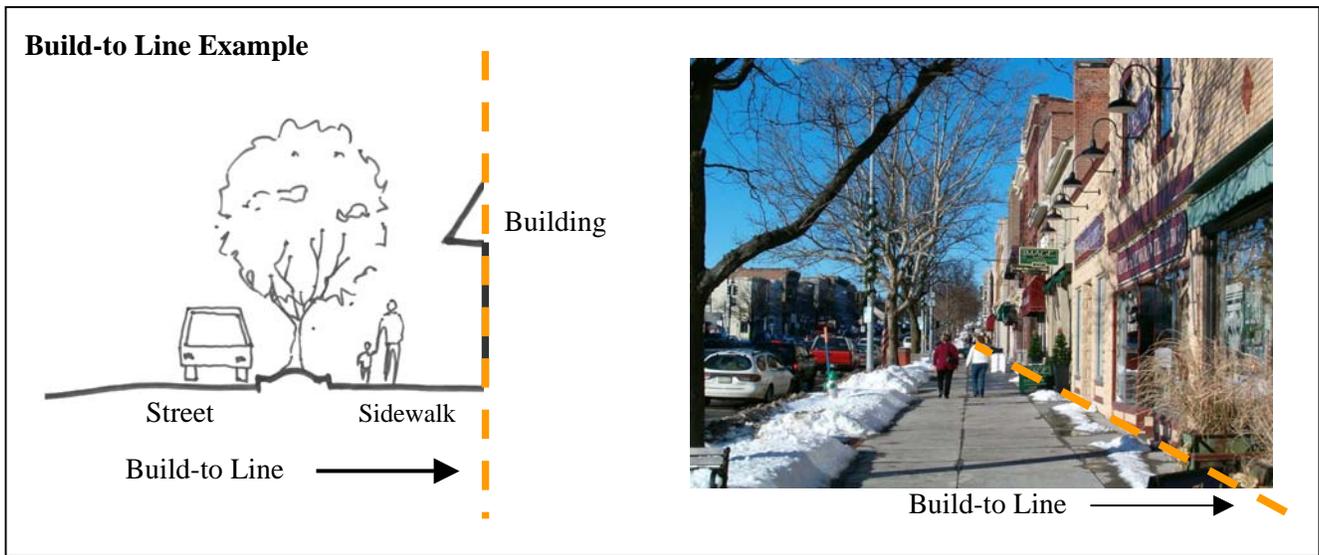
Require new commercial development to be of an appropriate scale in Mixed-Use Districts.

Communities need not sacrifice their small town character and identity to attract a commercial tax base. Design guidelines should be instituted to make sure that buildings, streets, sidewalks and parking areas are appropriately sized, landscaped and laid out. In the end, property owners and businesses find that creative planning to protect community character raises the value of their investment by making them stand out in the marketplace.

New commercial developments should be built with streets that connect to the surrounding community grid. Along with these vehicular ways, sidewalk networks should be extensive throughout commercial areas. Large parking lots should be discouraged. Parking should be scattered behind and on the edges of development parcels instead of facing an external street.

Create a “build-to” line for hamlet buildings.

Build-to lines force structures to line up along a sidewalk in commercial/retail areas or behind small lawns in residential areas. Creating a build-to line achieves several objectives. It makes walking more interesting for pedestrians when they pass retail windows and residential porches rather than parking lots. It also makes sidewalks more comfortable as the building facades close in one side of the pedestrian space. Retail space becomes more valuable as windows and signs become more visible. Shopkeepers and residents closer to the sidewalk have more “eyes” on the street protecting passersby, especially school children.



Specifically, a “build-to” line requires bringing the building facade up to a particular point. The continuous and well-defined streetscape created by a build-to line provides for a more pleasant pedestrian experience and a more valuable retail environment. It also maintains the look-and-feel of a traditional New York hamlet or village. As illustrated below, a build-to line yields a very different result than a setback line. It creates a comfortable pedestrian envelope and enhances the retail experience by allowing shoppers to see window displays and move easily from store to store.

In comparison, a setback requires a building be pushed back from the road by a minimum amount. Often a setback promotes parking in front of buildings, which makes pedestrians feel less comfortable and safe, especially in retail or mixed-use areas.

Commercial/retail design guidelines should be developed to identify the appropriate location of the site development with respect to the road. The build-to line should be defined when zoning ordinances are revised. The final location of this line must respect both the form of development and needs of the adjacent road.

Allow denser and more varied housing development.

The Mixed-Use Districts offer the opportunity to vary the style and price of housing in the Town of Ballston. It increases the customer base for the shops and services in the district and provides for livelier hamlet areas. By controlling the size and design of the commercial establishments, less land need be wasted on buffering between uses; in fact, some housing styles will mesh nicely with the commerce at the hamlet's core.

These areas would provide an opportunity for senior housing in the form of apartments or multi-family housing. Located close to services and within a walkable center, seniors might find the Mixed Use Areas convenient and affordable. Allowing for a diversity of housing types, especially for seniors, will provide the opportunity for seniors to remain in the community and age in place. Senior housing facilities that provide additional levels of care may be allowed in these areas under a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

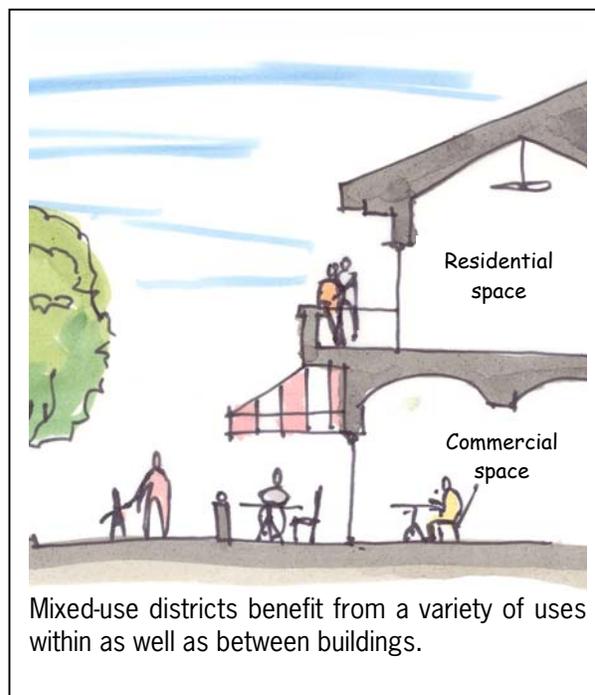
The Town may also consider the use of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning tool to allow more creative, higher density residential uses with a mix of other uses as well. Higher density residential uses would support the variety of businesses that might locate in the mixed use centers.

In addition, residences above storefronts and multi-family housing could also provide an affordable housing option for young professionals and families that desire to be located close to services. With increasing home prices in the community and the region, providing more reasonably cost alternatives become even more important. However, it should be noted that the increasing the density of development in these areas should be closely tied to the availability of public sewer and water infrastructure.

Residential development should include the following:

- > Allowing two and multi-family buildings, where public sewer and water are available.

-
- > Allowing residential units above stores.
 - > Encouraging the location of parking lots and parking garages behind buildings and adequately landscaped.
 - > Investing in sewer and water infrastructure within the hamlets.
 - > Designing small, neighborhood parks and interspersing them with the homes.



Prioritize pedestrians, not parking.

All portions of the Mixed Use Centers should be walkable. Sidewalks should line both sides of the streets and form a continuous network around the community. Along busier roads, sidewalks should be separated from traffic by a curb and planting strip.

Parking lots in front of commercial and larger scale residential buildings strip a community of the character found in its buildings. Large asphalt areas make it uncomfortable for pedestrians to walk from shop to shop. Parking lots should be behind buildings. Rather than demand minimum spaces for commercial/retail developments, parking regulations should discourage large parking lots that remain largely empty. The rules should also make shared parking mandatory whenever possible. Shared parking lots are crucial to reducing the number of curb cuts which create points

of pedestrian/vehicle and vehicle/vehicle points of conflict. Also reduce the need for spaces and therefore the amount of impervious surfaces.

Calm traffic within Mixed-Use Districts.

Slowing traffic in hamlets protects pedestrians; attracts potential customers and makes it easier for them to park and shop. Simple traffic calming measures could include:

- > Allowing on-street parking and constructing planted raised medians, where practical, to “visually” narrow the roadway and encourage people to slow down.
- > Building “bumpouts” at crosswalks to shorten the distance that pedestrians must cross streets.
- > Raising crosswalks or constructing them with brick pavers. The sound change and the feel of the wheels running over the pavers alerts drivers that they are entering a restricted speed zone.
- > Considering innovative intersection treatments to more effectively control traffic at intersections. Innovative treatments should enhance intersection safety as well as vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian movements and reduce the amount of pavement required at intersections.

Implement access management techniques within these areas.

These areas should function well, not only from a vehicular point of view, but also from a bicycle and pedestrian view as well. Access management techniques could be utilized to reduce traffic congestion and potential conflict points with pedestrians and thru traffic. Access management consists of a series of standards that manage (and minimize) the number of access points and curbcuts on the public road system. The purpose of access management is to allow for development to occur, while preserving the flow of traffic in terms of speed, capacity and safety (traffic includes pedestrians and bicyclists).

Avoid dead-end streets and establish interconnected street network whenever possible.

Creating a more hamlet-style road system by eliminating dead-ends serves many purposes. Walking is more interesting when pedestrians can vary routes. In this way, residents more quickly get to know those in their neighborhood. School children can find ways to schools, recreational activities and their friends homes on side streets without having to walk or bike along major arterials. An interconnected street

network tends to calm traffic in the neighborhoods as drivers slow down at repeated intersections. In cases of emergency, all buildings have more than one avenue of access in a street grid system.

Address lighting and noise concerns related to commercial development.

Spill-over lighting and noise are often concerns related to commercial development. Natural buffers are useful in absorbing sound as well as enhancing the visual appearance of commercial development.

Concentrate efforts to expand water and sewer services in Mixed-Use Districts.

It is very expensive to lay water and sewer pipes. Communities find they can maximize their investment in infrastructure by putting more people on shorter pipes, which can only happen in denser areas. Providing these services in certain areas makes it cheaper for developers to locate their homes and commercial developments there – and sends a signal that this is where the community wants to see growth.

3.3 HAMLET RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The Hamlet Residential Districts serve as transitions between the denser Mixed-Use Districts, which they surround, and the less densely developed areas of Town. Open space preservation is not a major goal, although trails and neighborhood parks are a priority as is the general pedestrian friendliness of the neighborhood streets. Walkability and street connections remain important.

Install sidewalks on major roads and busy side streets.

Walkability is a priority in the Hamlet Residential Districts. Install sidewalks on both sides of the streets. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide with a planting strip separating pedestrians from the traffic. The Town may consider the creation of a sidewalk district to assist in the cost of building and maintaining sidewalks.

Lay out streets in village-style grids. Construct no new dead ends.

Creating a road system grid by eliminating dead-ends serves many purposes. Walking is more interesting when pedestrians can vary routes. In this way, residents more quickly get to know those in their neighborhood. School children can find ways to schools, recreational activities and their friends homes on side streets without having to walk

or bike along major arterials. A street grid tends to calm traffic in the neighborhoods as drivers slow down at repeated intersections. In cases of emergency, all buildings have more than one avenue of access in a street grid system. When dead-ends and cul-de-sacs are unavoidable, encourage pedestrian only connections between neighborhoods.

Permit housing densities from 2 to 4 units per acre.

Where public water and sewer is available, developers should be allowed to build at the higher density range if they agree to create small neighborhood parks and trail connections. Higher densities would allow for greater housing diversity.

Greater housing diversity will be increasingly important as demographic trends continue to shift toward an aging population and smaller household sizes. As new residential development occurs, the opportunity exists to create senior housing and also low to moderate-income housing. The Community Survey found that nearly 67% of respondent agree or strongly agree that the Town should encourage a diversity of housing types for single, families, “empty nesters” and seniors.

Locating senior housing in hamlet areas has major advantages. The increased ability to walk safely in hamlets gives seniors highly-desired exercise and activity options. It allows them to remain part of the community and does not isolate them in more suburban-style housing. This becomes particularly important as driving ability becomes limited. In hamlets, they may still be within walking distance of commerce and services. Finally, senior housing in hamlets provides closer to and emergency services (e.g. ambulances). Senior housing may be in the form of independent living options such as apartments or accessory units or in the form of senior housing facilities that provide various levels of care.

Allow two-family structures by special use permit.

Two-family structures would also serve to provide a mix of housing options. In allowing such development by special use permit, this simply requires an additional look to ensure this form of development is consistent with adjacent development.

Allow appropriate scale commercial uses.

Small commercial establishments could be allowed by special use permit in the Hamlet Residential Areas. Any commercial development should

fit with the scale and character of existing development. Design guidelines should also be developed to ensure that these small establishments fit appropriately into these neighborhoods.

Concentrate efforts to expand water and sewer services in Hamlet Residential Districts.

It is very expensive to lay water and sewer pipes. Communities find they can maximize their investment in infrastructure by putting more people on shorter pipes, which can only happen in denser areas. Providing these services in certain areas makes it cheaper for developers to locate their homes and commercial developments there – and sends a signal that this is where the community wants to see growth.

3.4 RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The primary goal of the Residential Area is to allow housing developments while preserving the rural character of the Town. This particular area of Ballston, located east of Ballston Lake is more conducive to higher density residential development given its access to infrastructure and proximity to the Northway.

Adjust the allowable density in this area.

The density of the district should be 1 unit for every 2 acres where public sewer and water are not present. This is necessary for safe and efficient operation of septic systems. In locations where public sewer and water do exist 1 dwelling unit per acre would be appropriate.

Density could be increased to 1 dwelling unit per 20,000 square feet if water and sewer are present and if the project developer agrees to provide a public open space benefit and perhaps utilizes a conservation subdivision design approach. Density could be increased still further if the developer agrees to provide a certain percentage of units as affordable housing.

Establish an Optional Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Process.

A Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) describes an appropriate scale residential development that includes pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, a mix of housing types and some small, neighborhood commercial services. This form of development would essentially serve to create neighborhoods similar to existing

neighborhoods and hamlets found throughout the Town instead of following a conventional suburban form of development.

The Town currently has a PUD tool written into its zoning that should be enhanced and expanded to allow for a TND approach in the Residential Area. The PUD regulation might include design elements such as site organization and site design as well as the mix of uses that should be included. This is an optional tool that would allow greater flexibility for a property owner or developer. If a landowner chooses to utilize this option, the proposed development would ultimately require Town Council approval. If a landowner chooses not to utilize this tool, the base zoning for the Residential Area would apply.

3.5 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Industrial development within the Town of Ballston is currently focused in the northeastern portion of the community near the railroad line along Route 67 and Route 50. In general, existing industrial uses are placed well back from the roadway corridor and provide some natural buffering for those traveling past. There appears to be the opportunity to further develop the current industrial zone and add to the Town's tax base. The Curtis Industrial Park, for example, has room for additional growth and is home to a wide variety of businesses. In addition, possible regional growth in the future, such as the Luther Forest Technology Park, may increase opportunities for industrial growth within the Town's industrial areas.

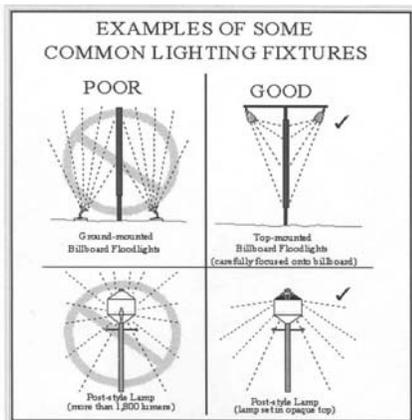
Address lighting concerns.

Promote “good lighting” that does its intended job well with minimum adverse impact on the environment. Outdoor lighting is used to illuminate roadways, parking lots, yards, sidewalks, public meeting areas, signs, work sites, and buildings. It provides for better visibility and a sense of security. However, if outdoor lighting is not well-designed and properly installed, it can be costly, inefficient, glary, and harmful to the nighttime environment. “Good lighting”, as described by the New England Light Pollution Advisory Group and the International Dark-Sky Association, has four distinct characteristics:

1. It provides adequate light for the intended task, but never over-lights.

According to the Community Survey, 58.9% of respondents agree or strongly agree that reducing light from commercial and industrial areas is needed.

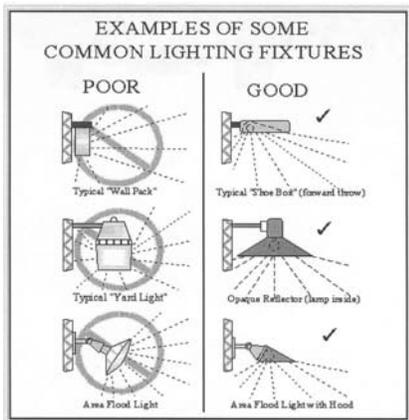
2. It uses “fully-shielded” lighting fixtures, fixtures that control the light output in order to keep the light in the intended area.
3. It has the lighting fixtures carefully installed to maximize their effectiveness on the targeted property, and to minimize the area and/or point of illumination’s adverse effects on neighboring properties.
4. It uses fixtures with high-efficiency lamps, while still considering the color and quality as essential design criteria.



Promoting these “good lighting” characteristics in the Industrial Area and throughout the Town of Ballston would minimize the adverse visual impact of current and future development. This can be accomplished through the provision of information to property owners, and through the Site Plan Review process for new development.

Improve landscaping and buffer industrial uses from adjacent uses.

Improving the appearance of this area, especially along the frontage of parcels on Route 67, would significantly improve this important entrance to the Town of Ballston. Simple landscaping and signage improvements would go a long way. In areas where industrial uses adjoin residential areas or important environmental areas, buffers should be used to shield these areas from any adverse noise, light, dust, or odors that may be associated with certain industrial uses. The creation of buffers from adjacent trails and pathways could be the responsibility of the parties responsible for trail maintenance and should be coordinated with property owners.



Allow for office uses and establish design guidelines.

Office uses that may or may not be associated with industrial activity should be allowed within the Industrial Area. Well-designed architecture and site plans could allow industrial and non-industrial uses to co-exist. Buffering may be needed, but the requirements depend upon the kinds of industrial operations. Prime consideration should be given to linking facilities to the greater community to spur social interaction and greater economic development. Design guidelines for this area should focus on landscaped buffers and placement of parking behind or beside buildings when feasible.



This area has convenient access to major roadways and would be an appropriate location to encourage additional office growth, as well as industrial growth.

Utilize a Planned Unit Development (PUD) option to allow a mixed use approach in the Gateway areas.

The Town could consider allowing the PUD option in the gateways located in the Industrial Area to encourage a mix of uses and create a pleasant welcome into the community. The PUD option allows for greater creativity and flexibility and would be at the discretion of the Town Board. For example, the intersection of Route 67 and East Line Road is an important gateway into the Town. A PUD approach utilizing a mix of uses in a creative manner might be appropriate in this location.

3.6 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

Community character and transportation needs should be the priorities when making decisions that impact the town's roads. The needs of pedestrian and bicyclists should be considered in all transportation planning efforts. Despite the rural nature of much of the community, consideration mass transit options should be investigated and promoted. Mass transit, in areas that are not walkable, keeps seniors integrated in their community as their driving abilities become restricted. In addition, poorer families may be able to limit the number of automobiles in their household if mass transit is available to get them to work and commercial areas.

Funding programs offered through the Capital District Transportation Committee, such as the Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program, may assist in implementing recommendations for the Town's transportation corridors. The Linkage Program provides technical assistance to local communities for planning initiatives that link transportation and land use as well as support efficient land use development and effective transportation systems.

Promote access management along all state and county highways.

Access management is critical to the safety and function of the Town's roadway system. State and county highways are the main routes within and through town. As development occurs, new points of access are created at various points along these roads. Each new point of access creates the potential for additional turning movements onto and off of the highway. Individually, these curb cuts do not usually make a huge difference unless they are associated with a land use that generates many vehicular trips each day. However, the cumulative effect of many curb cuts, even from relatively small trip generators such as single-family homes, can diminish the safety and capacity of such highways.

Driveway spacing, shared access between adjoining uses, and consolidated access where uncontrolled access currently exists, are methods by which the Town can preserve the safety and function of these roads.

Enact a rural road standard along major highways and important thoroughfares.

The purpose of such a standard is to remind future public officials, the County and the New York State Department of Transportation, that certain roads need to maintain a rural character. Safety, however, is important in addressing any road standard. The following are some possible design aspects for a rural road standard.

- > Keeping trees, fences and fields close to the road.
- > Not installing streetlights except at dangerous intersections and in commercial areas.
- > Sidewalks are not necessary on rural sections of the road (e.g. outside of a commercial node and where residential density is less than one unit per acre). However, a shoulder could be maintained to allow for walking on appropriate roadways. The surface material should provide a stable, mud-free walking surface.

Provide adequate bicycle facilities and establish a signed system of bicycle routes throughout the Town.

Biking functions not only as a recreational activity, but also as an alternative mode of transportation. The Town should provide facilities to ensure the safety and convenience of bicycling. The addition of bike lanes, proper pavement markings and signage, and a map of bike routes in the Town should be encouraged. The opportunity exists for the Town to connect with regional bicycle routes. Route 50, for example, is a signed bike route and is an example of a well-kept shoulder for the purposes of bicycling. Programs through regional partners, such as the Capital District Transportation Committee (Bike and Pedestrian Task Force) and the New York Bicycling Coalition could assist the Town in identifying funding for the establishment of signed bicycle routes.

In areas where bicycle facilities are appropriate, guidelines established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) should be used to improve accommodations.

Focus future development along Route 50 within the Mixed Use Districts.

The rural character of this main road is an important community amenity. The rural character along much of Route 50 should be preserved. Residential and commercial development that is allowed should conform to layout and design guidelines described in other portions of the comprehensive plan.

Existing structures and uses will be allowed to remain. Over time, with changes in ownership and use, along with growth, those structures that do not conform to design and layout standards can be retrofitted to do so.

While commercial development should be focused in the Mixed Use Centers, the Town should allow for appropriate scale commercial within the Hamlet Residential and Rural Areas along Route 50 and perhaps Route 67. Design guidelines should address the form of development and the Town should determine what is an appropriate scale of development along the corridor. The scale in the Rural Area, for example, should be reflective of the existing rural character.

Design guidelines are one technique a community can utilize to address the form of its development. A more prescriptive technique to address the form of development is the use of form based code. The Town could consider utilizing a form-based code in the Route 50 and Route 67 corridors. As illustrated on the Plan Recommendations Map, these corridors extend into the Rural and Hamlet Residential Areas of the Town.

Form based codes place less emphasis on use regulations than do conventional zoning documents. Instead, form based codes are more flexible about use, perhaps only prohibiting certain uses that are clearly inappropriate, while being very prescriptive about architecture and design. There are several approaches to form based code and the Town should consider which is most appropriate as the zoning regulations are updated.

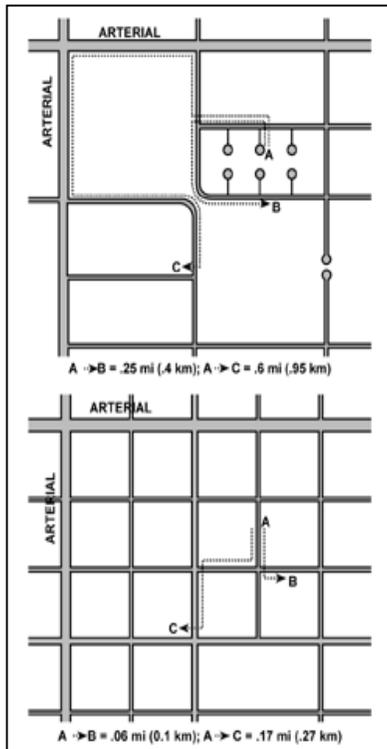
In the future, Route 67 might also be considered for commercial development nodes with design guidelines. This long-term opportunity could occur when the demand for additional commercial space within the community exceeds the supply. As with Route 50, focusing development along this corridor in nodes would assist in maintaining rural character elsewhere in the community.

Encourage the placement of parking lots behind buildings.

In order to emphasize the rural aspects of the community, parking lots should be behind buildings. Sideyard parking and limited front yard parking should be permitted also as long as the lot is screened from the road. The Town may consider creating a “build-to” line for buildings along the corridor. Design guidelines should be developed to encourage the appropriate placement of commercial buildings.

Maintain Street Grid in Mixed-Use and Hamlet Residential Districts.

New developments should recognize the need to connect, at some point, with a street grid and should reserve rights of way for these future connections. Where a vehicular connection is not possible due to physical conditions, a dead end can be connected to a greater grid using a pedestrian or bike trail.



As described in Section 3.2 and 3.3, creating a more hamlet-style road system by eliminating dead-ends serves many purposes. Walking is more interesting when pedestrians can vary routes. In this way, residents more quickly get to know those in their neighborhood. School children can find ways to schools, recreational activities and their friends homes on side streets without having to walk or bike along major arterials. A street grid tends to calm traffic in the neighborhoods as drivers slow down at repeated intersections. In cases of emergency, all buildings have more than one avenue of access in a street grid system. An open street grid system is also more efficient for auto, bike and pedestrian traffic. Travel distance is reduced since people do not have to travel in the wrong direction to reach a destination.

Design sidewalks according to anticipated use.

The Institute for Transportation Engineers recommends particular design guidelines for sidewalk installation depending on anticipated use. The following chart summarizes the minimum ITE recommendations relevant to the Town of Ballston. Where possible, wider sidewalks and planting strips should be installed. In Florida and Oregon, the state departments of transportation recommend six-foot wide planting strips to offer more separation between pedestrians and traffic, accommodate wider trees and provide more space for snow storage.

| District / Area | Pedestrian Treatments |
|---|--|
| Commercial developments | In shopping areas, sidewalk width should be appropriate for their expected use or volume of pedestrian traffic. |
| Residential streets in the Mixed-Use and Hamlet Residential Districts | Install sidewalks on both sides of the street. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide with a wide planting strip separating the pedestrians from the traffic. |
| Residential streets in the Residential District | Install sidewalks on both sides of the street. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide with a planting strip separating the pedestrians from the traffic. |
| Rural Roads | Sidewalks may not be necessary on rural sections of the road (e.g. outside of a commercial node and where residential density is less than one unit per acre). However, a shoulder at least four feet wide (and preferably eight feet on primary highways) should be maintained. The surface material should provide a stable, mud-free walking surface. Sidewalks should be considered where large residential developments are proposed. |
| School Area | Where large developments are located within reasonable proximity to schools, sidewalks should be installed. |

Establish a program to promote sidewalk maintenance.

While there are few sidewalks within the Town, those that do exist (primarily in the Burnt Hills and Ballston Lake hamlets and near the Village of Ballston Spa) should be well-maintained to encourage safe use. Sidewalk maintenance is typically the responsibility of the property owner. While most are aware of this responsibility, some property owners may not be aware of this. The Town could consider establishing

a program to inform property owners of their responsibility related to sidewalk maintenance. The program may be in the form of a brochure or recurring reminder in a newsletter or local newspaper for property owners to keep sidewalks clear of snow in the wintertime and to make sure that sidewalks remain largely free of trip hazards and drain well to avoid pedestrian puddle hazards. Furthermore, an inspection program or a sidewalk inventory could be conducted to assist the Town in identifying areas where repairs are needed or even where additional sidewalks might be appropriate. In addition, the Town might consider the establishment of a sidewalk district to assist in funding sidewalks.

Narrow residential streets.

Residential streets should be no wider than 28 feet. Narrower roads tend to slow traffic, discourage cut-through traffic and make it safer for residents, especially children, to cross. From a municipality standpoint, narrower streets mean less pavement to maintain. Snowplow drivers in particular appreciate being able to clear an entire roadway with a single pass in each direction.

Establish an Official Map for the Town.

New York Town Law (§270) permits a town to create an Official Map indicating the existing and proposed road, sewage and water infrastructure, and other public facilities. An official map is a map that must be adopted by the Town Council. Such a map can be an effective tool for implementing a community vision or master plan because it reserves future rights-of-way. For example, a community might show a future street connection – a message to developers to build their buildings and scale their developments accordingly. In addition, development cannot take place in a way that does not conform to the public facilities set forth in the Official Map. This aspect provides a rare level of certainty and stability to the development process. At the same time, the map does not lock in a specific future and can be amended by the Town Council as needs and desires change.

Conduct a transportation and land use corridor study along the Route 50 corridor.

The Town should conduct further study of this corridor. One option is to seek funding assistance through the Capital District Transportation Committee’s (CDTC) Linkage Study Program. This program takes an integrated planning approach and recognizes the link between transportation decisions and land use decisions.

While many issues should be addressed in this study, several issues that could be examined include:

- > Traffic calming
- > Access management
- > Intersection improvements or creative intersection strategies
- > Managing the transportation impact of commercial and residential development both regionally and locally
- > Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
- > Mass transit, including light rail
- > Park and Ride facilities

Once completed, the Town Council should consider adopting this study as an amendment to the comprehensive plan. It should also consider whether further zoning amendments impacting lands in the corridor are necessary to implement the refined land use recommendations resulting from the study.

Address roadway safety issues.

As part of the Inventory and Analysis (see Appendix, under separate cover), accidents at intersections along the state highway system in Ballston were examined. In a twelve-year period 425, or about 1/3 of reported accidents, were located at the 30 intersections along the state system. Of these 324 occurred at the ten major intersections with other state or county highways. Accident rates were computed and compared with average rates for different types of state highway intersections (the average rates vary based on whether intersections are three or four legged, signalized or unsignalized, and urban or rural).

Four of the signalized intersections were found to have accident rates below or not very far above the average for their intersection type. Two of these intersections, however, showed accident rates two to three times the average for their intersection type: State Route 50 and County Route 60 (Brookline Road) and State Route 146a and County Route 339 (Lake Hill Road).

Consider Improvements at the intersection of State Route 146a and County Route 339 (Lake Hill Road). At this intersection, there is a heavy northbound left turn movement of traffic destined for Burnt Hills. There is no left turn lane for northbound traffic. The addition of one may improve safety and operations. The reverse movement is controlled by a

blinking red light, requiring a stop. A number of violations (i.e. vehicles not coming to a complete stop, etc.) were noted at several observations. The reverse movement at this location is the right turn from eastbound County Route 339 (Lake Hill Road) to southbound State Route 146a.

Consider realignment of the skewed intersection at State Route 50 and County Route 59 (Middleline Road). Where practicable, skewed intersection in the Town should be corrected. At the intersection of State Route 50 and County Route 59 (Middleline Road), the county route meets the state route at an acute angle and is controlled by a stop sign. This skewed intersection alignment encourages violation of the stop sign by right turning traffic, which could potentially be a safety issue. This intersection has been defied as a high accident location, illustrating the safety concern is real. The Town should coordinate with the County to realign the intersection to allow County Route 59 (Middleline Road) to meet the state highway at a perpendicular angle in order to improve safety and operation. In addition, other skewed intersection in the Town may be considered for realignment such as the intersection at Underpass Road.

The intersection of State Route 50 and County Route 60 (Brookline Road) is being examined in more detail in the Route 67 Study currently being conducted. In addition, the Route 67 Study examines the so-called “V-Corners” areas, which is the intersection of Route 67 and Route 50.

A closer examination should be made of traffic and accident data at these three unsignalized intersections to see if modifications should be made to existing signs or traffic controls, including possible signalization.

Consider modifications to vertical alignments. A concern has also been raised regarding vertical alignments on certain roadways in the Town, such as County Route 59 (Middleline Road) and Courthouse Hill. The Town should work together with the County to identify possible modifications that can be made to improve safety in areas where vertical alignments exist. The Town could work together with CDTC and the NYSDOT to identify appropriate programs to provide assistance for such modification. For example, funding may be available through the CDTC or NYSDOT for such work.

Consider the appropriateness of additional transit along major roadway corridors.

Currently the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) operates a transit route between Saratoga Springs and the Village of Ballston Spa. As the Mixed Use Areas are more intensely developed, the density thresholds to support additional transit may be reached. The Town could work with CDTA to identify routes for increased transit in the Town and should consider all types of transit including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit.

In addition, the Town could create an Official Map to reserve right-of-ways for future transit corridors or other infrastructure. This technique is described in Town Law §270.

3.7 BALLSTON LAKE AREA

Ballston Lake is approximately 3.5 miles long and 750 feet wide. The Ballston Lake watershed encompasses over 8,500 acres, primarily in the Town of Ballston. (A portion of the watershed is also in the Town of Clifton Park.) Uses surrounding the lake area are primarily residential, agricultural and undeveloped. The Town has recognized the importance of Ballston Lake and has recently addressed dock standards on the lake.



Ballston Lake

Protect water quality in Ballston Lake.

The scenic views of Ballston Lake and the adjacent areas can be attractive for many looking to reside within the Town. If or when agricultural land and undeveloped land is developed, the potential for the degradation of water increases due to runoff from impervious surfaces and improperly maintained on-site septic systems. Two primary actions would assist in protecting water quality. The first is to protect stream corridors within the Ballston Lake Watershed.



Fishing Pier on Outlet Road

The second method is to properly maintain individual on-site septic systems and fix any failing systems. The Rural Housing Commission of New York State may be a source of technical and financial assistance to the community in updating and maintaining individual septic systems.

If individual septic systems continue to fail, there is a real risk to the water quality of the lake and the health of residents. The Town may need to consider the option of a public sewer system in the vicinity of the lake if problems persist. The recently completed *Evaluation of Sanitary*



Ballston Lake

Sewer in the Ballston Lake Watershed indicates that if existing developed parcels were connected to the public sewer system, the current system would have enough reserve capacity to accommodate the additional peak flow. It is also estimated the current system would have enough reserve capacity to accommodate peak flow from developed parcels in the area even twenty years into the future. When considering the extension of public infrastructure, such as sewer, it is important to recognize the potential growth inducing impacts. The presence of public infrastructure can make an area more appealing for development. Therefore, zoning and subdivision regulations must be very clear about the location, type and form of development that is desired in such areas.

The cost and long-term maintenance associated with the extension of public infrastructure must also be carefully considered. Options, including the creation of a sewer district or developers providing for the installation of the infrastructure might be feasible. Technical and funding assistance may be available through entities such as the New York State Rural Housing Coalition (www.ruralhousing.org).

Require higher standards for development along Ballston Lake.

The intent of this recommendation is to address water quality and the visual environment of the shoreline. Design guidelines with natural buffers would serve to soften the view from the lake while still allowing for beautiful views of the lake. This type of approach to minimizing visual impact from the lake has been utilized in other lake areas in New York State including Lake George in the Adirondacks and Canandaigua Lake in the Finger Lakes. The Town could consider incorporating design standards into the zoning code to address future development along the shoreline of the lake.

To improve the condition of the Lake, it is strongly recommended that Ballston Lake residents with shore property provide the necessary protection to prevent the erosion of their property. The New York State Department of Environmental (DEC) Conservation regulates shore protection design and materials used. A permit from the DEC and Army Corps of Engineers is normally required for all types of work on shore locations.



Lack of natural vegetation makes homes very visible from each other and from the lake

Maintenance of natural vegetation screens homes from one another and reduces the visual impact from the lake of high density lakeside development

Identify additional public access points to the Lake.

Currently, most roads leading to the lake are private drives and public access to Ballston Lake exists solely on the north end of the lake off of Outlet Road. A fishing pier and boat launch allow public access, primarily for fishing. The Town should identify opportunities for future public access along the lake. Opportunities may be identified through the inventorying phase or Phase I of a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program (Section 3.11) or possibly through the creation of a Parks Master Plan (Section 3.12). It should be acknowledged that due to the nature of the lake, large increases in motorboat traffic would not be appropriate. Community meetings have identified the need to identify and pursue passive recreation opportunities near the lake.

Address Stormwater Management Concerns.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in an effort to protect and preserve the nation’s water resources, has developed a stormwater management rule. Phase II of the Stormwater Rule is currently underway and is intended to institute controls on unregulated sources of storm water discharges that may cause environmental degradation. Municipal Separate Storm Water Systems (MS4s) located in Urbanized Areas (as defined by the U.S. Census) are automatically covered by a nationwide permit under the Phase II rule. Phase II represents an expansion of requirements set forth in Phase I. The MS4s are required to

develop and implement a stormwater management program by 2008. The Town is currently working with Saratoga County to comply with Phase II regulations to complete several reports and is continuing to developing its mapping for this effort.

Maintain current land use regulations to the Ballston Lake Area.

Due to the sensitivity of the Ballston Lake Area, it is recommended that the current density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres remain. Development within this area should carefully consider limiting the amount of impervious surfaces. An increase in impervious surfaces can lead to an increase in non-point source water pollution and has the potential to impact water quality in Ballston Lake. The actual boundaries of this area should be determined when zoning codes are revised and updated.

3.8 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES



While not as numerous as they once were, the Town of Ballston continues to have active agricultural operations. Dairy cattle and horses roam pastures in the Town and apple orchards are scattered throughout. As a result, agriculture remains a component of the local economy and ensures a local supply of food and farm products for the community. Farmland is important to a community in many other ways as well. The character of a working landscape is very much a part of Ballston, and farmland and open spaces use fewer services than residential development, which in turn, reduces the cost of community services for all residents. To maintain the existing practices and encourage their existence, several recommendations have been formulated and are described below.

Survey Respondents identified the loss of farmland and agriculture one of the top three important problems facing Ballston over the next 10 years.

Level of traffic and congestion and loss of open land not in agriculture were problems number one and two, respectively.

Encourage participation in Agricultural Districts.

New York State established an Agricultural Districts Law - Article 25AA in 1971 in response to concerns that non-agricultural land uses were encroaching upon valuable farmland. Authorized at the state level, the Agricultural Districts Law is implemented at the county level. This program is voluntary and provides several protections to farmers including agricultural tax assessment; protection against unreasonable local regulations; special review of proposed eminent domain takings; required Agricultural Impact Statements for public projects; notification requirements to inform property buyers about surrounding farming practices; and limited protection against nuisance lawsuits.



Apple Orchard in Ballston

The Agricultural Districts Law specifically states that “local governments, when exercising their powers to enact and administer comprehensive plans and local laws, ordinances, rules or regulations, shall exercise these powers in such manner as may realize the policy and goals set forth in this article, and shall not unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations within agricultural districts.” In short, land use regulations must not unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations that participate in the agricultural district.

The Town of Ballston is currently located within Agricultural District 2 in Saratoga County. As described in the Inventory and Analysis (See Appendix under separate cover), all 49 parcels in Ballston that are classified as agricultural are located within this district.

Highlight the local right-to-farm provisions. With increased residential development, the potential exists for an increase in farmer and neighbor conflicts related to various items such as noise or odor. Right-to-farm laws are intended to strengthen the position of farmers legally when faced with private nuisance suits and to also protect farmers from unreasonable controls on farming operations. New York State’s Agricultural Districts Law Section 308 addresses the right-to-farm. Since the protections under the State right-to-farm law only apply to those farms within an agricultural district.

The Town of Ballston has a right-to-farm law, which has been crafted to include helpful provisions that are not available under the state’s right-to-farm provision. For example, a program could be established to work with local realtors to ensure that potential homebuyers are provided with early notification that the home they are purchasing is in an agricultural area; or the local right-to-farm law could create a mechanism for the mediation of disputes as an alternative to the courts.

The town should continue the practice of encouraging new development to construct buffers to separate proposed new development from existing agricultural uses.

Promote agriculture through education. Working in coordination with local elementary schools, the agricultural community could teach residents about the importance of agriculture to the local economy, the role of farmers as stewards of the land, and the contribution of farming to the overall quality of life in Ballston.

Initiate a “Buy Local” program and develop an agricultural economic strategy. Working with the local cooperative extension to formalize an agricultural economic strategy is one manner in which to encourage agri-business. Such a strategy could lead to the identification of niche markets in the area. A “Buy Local” program could include various levels such as farm stands or a farmer’s market. Such a program could also extend to partnerships with local schools, institutions and restaurants. In addition, “U-pick” operations should be encouraged to continue, such as the various apple orchards within the community.

Other ways to support agriculture

The following are other methods of insuring that agriculture remains an important part of the Ballston. The Town should...

- > Continue the practice of having farmers as members of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals.
- > Make information available at Town Hall regarding the Cooperative Extension and other agencies that can assist farming operations.
- > Allow flexible business enterprises to be operated on farms to help ensure the viability of existing agricultural uses. Proposals should be reviewed under a special use permit.

3.9 GREENWAYS AND OPEN SPACE

The Town of Ballston is characterized by open spaces, trails, natural resource areas and working landscapes. Integrating these resources through a greenway concept would ensure a future network of resources that would potentially benefit wildlife and community residents. A town-wide greenway network would enhance Ballston’s quality of life, protect its working and natural environment, and provide recreation opportunities. A greenway can be a linear park, alternative transportation route (biking or hiking trail) or open space area that provides passive recreational opportunities and also habitat for wildlife. Greenways are often trails, which are limited to non-motorized uses such as walking,

biking and cross-country skiing. They often link natural features such as fields and lakes to commercial amenities and residential areas.

Farmland, open spaces and natural resources such as wetlands and stream corridors contribute to the quality of life in the community and also serve an important function in maintaining a healthy environment by providing wildlife corridors and protecting sensitive areas. Ballston faces increased development pressure. It must plan to make sure these important natural resources are protected since they add value to the community by maintaining its rural character and conducting important functions such as flood control and well-water recharge. Once these resources are lost, they are lost forever.

Communities across the country are beginning to look more carefully at the impact of growth on municipal budgets. Although an acre of land with a new house generates more total revenue than an acre of most cropland, the cost of community services required by residential development far exceeds that of any other land use. According to a recent study conducted by the Farmland Information Center the median cost – per dollar of revenue raised – to provide public services to residential development is over 30% higher than that of working and open lands. In fact, the cost of providing services for farmland and open space is only eight cents (\$0.08) more than that of commercial and industrial uses.¹

| Cost of New York State Community Services, Revenue-To-Expenditure Ratios (Source: American Farmland Trust, 2004) | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Community | Residential including farm houses | Commercial and Industrial | Working and Open Land |
| Farmington | 1:1.22 | 1:0.27 | 1:0.72 |
| Hector | 1:1.30 | 1:0.15 | 1:0.28 |
| Reading | 1:1.88 | 1:0.26 | 1:0.32 |
| Red Hook | 1:1.11 | 1:0.38 | 1:0.30 |

¹ Fact Sheet: Cost of Community Services. The Farmland Information Center, August 2004.
http://www.farmlandinfo.org/documents/27757/FS_COCS_8-04.pdf. Website accessed December 13, 2005.

Actual rates will differ from town to town, as evidenced by the chart above, and are dependent on the availability of public sewer and water infrastructure. However, similar studies conducted by individual municipalities nationwide confirm that residential development will not lower property taxes by increasing the tax base. Evaluating the net contributions of different land uses can be a helpful tool to ensure fiscal stability. Ultimately, of course, municipalities must weigh the public need for housing, jobs and resource conservation when planning for the future.

Survey results indicate that nearly 57% of all respondents would be willing to pay an increase in Town taxes for the conservation of open space or environmentally sensitive land.

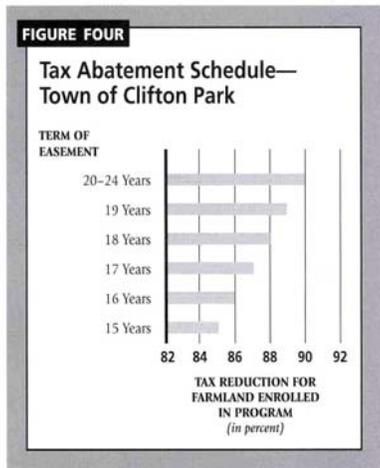
Establish a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program.

The Town should continue to work with the Land Conservation Committee to develop a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program to identify important resources to protect and determine feasible options for protection, including funding sources. Any open space and farmland protection tools identified in such a program would be voluntary and require close coordination and cooperation with property owners.

The Town should also coordinate with Saratoga County Open Space Program, Saratoga PLAN, and other interested organizations regarding open space preservation opportunities.

The Town of Ballston Farmland and Open Space Protection Program might consist of two phases. Phase I would provide the Town with a complete inventory of its farmland and open space resources, and create an open space vision for the community. Phase I also includes the creation of the *Lands of Conservation Interest* Map and would involve significant public outreach. Public outreach is important in the development of this inventory because it provides an opportunity for the Town, residents, stakeholders and property owners to not only work together to identify important resources, but also to learn about farmland and open space protection tools. A strong public education process should be included in the inventory phase of a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program.

The *Lands of Conservation Interest* Map illustrates the community's open space vision in an easy to understand format. It shows the location of various categories of open space in the community, how those resources relate to one another as a network of open lands, and the relationship to developed areas of the community. Opportunities for linkages in the form of paths and trails through the community are also



From *Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York*

benefits of PDR

- PDR protects farmland permanently, while keeping it in private ownership.
- Participation in PDR programs is voluntary.
- PDR allows farmers to capitalize on undeveloped assets—their land.
- PDR can be implemented by state or local governments, or by private organizations.
- PDR provides farmers with a financially competitive alternative to development.
- PDR programs can protect ecological as well as agricultural resources.
- PDR removes the non-agricultural value of land, which helps keep it affordable to farmers.

From - *Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York*

described. As a useful tool, the *Lands of Conservation Interest* map can assist the Town Planning Board, developers and the public in guiding growth in a manner consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan by providing improved knowledge about a site that will be developed: What are the open space resources on the particular site? Where are these resources located? And how do they relate to the larger open space and recreational vision for the Town? This information can be used to guide the project design and approval process in ways that are more sensitive to the unique features present on the proposed development site.

The *Lands of Conservation Interest* map can also help identify lands that should be protected for agricultural, recreational, and open space purposes through the purchase or donation of land or easements from willing landowners.

Phase 2 of the Town’s Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program, if pursued by the Town Council, would focus on developing a local, long-term funding mechanism for farmland and open space conservation. Preservation can take place in a variety of ways including outright acquisition, purchase of development rights (PDR), transfer of development rights (TDR), and donation of land or conservation easements. Again, involvement in protection programs is strictly voluntary.

A Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program would serve multiple purposes:

- > A Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program, through the *Lands of Conservation Interest* Map, would provide the community with a detailed inventory of farmland and open space resources throughout the Town.
- > A Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program would provide recommendations and strategies to be used by the Town Council, Planning Board, developers and the public to achieve meaningful open space conservation even while growth and development occur.
- > Protecting farmland and open space is more cost effective from a public services standpoint than residential development.
- > Protecting these resources is essentially protecting the community character and quality of life.

As a result of the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program, the Town of Ballston will be better positioned to work with developers to conserve significant open space areas while development occurs; apply for grant funding; and initiate other actions to achieve its farmland and open space conservation goals.

The Town should, as a first step toward establishing a farmland and open space protection program, create an inventory of its farmland, open space and natural resources through the creation of a *Lands of Conservation Interest Map*. It could initiate Phase I, development of an inventory of resources and a *Lands of Conservation Interest Map*, utilizing the inventory prepared during the development of this comprehensive plan as a point of departure.

One technique that could be used to accomplish the goals of the Farmland and Open Space Protection Program is the voluntary Purchase of Development Rights (PDR). Using PDR, the town would purchase the development value of specific parcels of land from *willing* landowners. The cost of doing this depends on the specific parcel. It is calculated by determining the current appraised value of the property, and its appraised value as open or agricultural land without development potential (development rights extinguished). The difference between these two numbers is the value (or cost) of the development rights to be purchased. Conservation easements are utilized to ensure that once the development rights have been extinguished, the land remains undeveloped in the future.

Local funds can be used to leverage state funding from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. The department's farmland protection program will pay up to 75% of the cost of the development rights for exceptional proposals. It is important to recognize that given current funding levels for the state's program, demand for these grants statewide far exceeds the available funds. As a result, this is a very competitive grant program.

Other sources of grant funding for PDR should also be explored. These could involve other agencies of the state or federal governments, Saratoga County, or private foundations that work with land conservation organizations in the Capital Region. When ranking proposals for protection in the Town of Ballston, existing farm operations should be ranked higher than non-agricultural parcels.

In addition to PDR or fee simple acquisition, other techniques could be included in this program, such as: donation of conservation easements (perhaps through increased educational efforts in partnership with a local land trust), or a term easement / tax abatement program (a means of conserving for a period of years smaller “open space” parcels - the longer the agreed-to term of the easement, the greater the tax abatement). A Parks Master Plan might be coordinated through this process as well.

Even before reaching a decision about creating and funding a full Farmland and Open Space Protection Program, the public discussion about these issues may generate interest from a farm owner or other large property owner. In this case, the Town Council could consider pursuing such an opportunity as a demonstration project. Oftentimes, a well-conducted demonstration project can address the remaining concerns that some members of the community may still have about land conservation tools and techniques. It is important that ongoing operating and maintenance issues of selected projects are adequately identified and accounted for.

Consider the creation of a Town fund for land acquisition and preservation of open space and parkland. During development of this Comprehensive Plan, there was much discussion about the need to fairly compensate landowners if the community desired to conserve certain lands as permanently protected open space. In all cases, it has been understood that participation in such initiatives by landowners must be strictly voluntary.

It is important to note that the Community Survey indicated strong support in the community for land conservation. Seventy percent (70%) of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the town should buy land or purchase conservation easements to preserve open land. Approximately 57% of respondents said that they would be willing to pay (\$25 to \$50 per \$100,000 of assessed value) for the conservation of open land. However, 80% would like the town to pursue outside funding sources as well.

The results of the Community Survey demonstrate that the community should continue to explore opportunities for developing a local program to acquire special parcels of farmland and open spaces from willing sellers. It is clear that more information will be needed before the Town is ready to determine the best approach for funding such a program.

Important considerations would include the approximate amount of land to be protected, the anticipated total cost of protecting this land (through fee simple acquisition and/or conservation easements), the availability of grant funds from governmental agencies and private foundations, the average cost to town taxpayers, and the fiscal costs and benefits associated with such an initiative. Usually, communities will develop answers to these questions prior to reaching a decision about funding a local program, or in cases when voter approval is desirable or necessary. Building on the dialogue and understanding established through this comprehensive plan process, the Town of Ballston should continue to work toward a program, and a corresponding proposal for funding.

In terms of actual sources of local funding, several mechanisms used elsewhere in New York State, should be considered. The least complicated method is to set aside budgetary funds on an annual basis. Another option might be to develop a revenue bond to extend costs over a period of years. This option has proven successful in the City of Saratoga Springs, New York. In 2002, voters approved a \$5 million bond to fund open space conservation. According to the Saratoga P.L.A.N., if the entire \$5 million were spent in the first year, property taxes would increase an estimated \$0.27 for every \$1,000.00 of assessed value. At the time of the bond, the average assessed home value in Saratoga Springs was \$134,000. The tax increase would be \$35.75 a year over 20 years. (**Note:** These figures were developed based on extensive research and educational outreach that focused solely on the open space needs of the Saratoga Springs community. The City of Saratoga Springs first completed an Open Space Vision Map and an inventory of resources, including the identification of priority resources, prior to organizing the bond referendum that was ultimately approved. It is recommended the Town of Ballston complete Phase 1 of an Open Space and Farmland Protection Program to assist in determining what would be appropriate for the Town and then consider which funding mechanisms might be feasible for the Town.)

Some communities have discovered that an investment in farmland and open space conservation would cost less in the long term than the cost of providing residential services in those same areas. Ultimately, the most successful funding program may include a variety of funding sources, including grants.

Another opportunity exists to raise funds for parkland or recreational resources or to require land dedication. (Recreational resources could include passive recreation areas.) The dedication of recreation land or fees could be required through the subdivision regulations. A developer could be required to set aside a percentage of land for recreation purposes or put a set amount of money into a fund for recreation land acquisition. The percentage of land dedication or the fee could be determined by the planning board. The Town already has a similar provision in its current subdivision regulations regarding public sites and open places.

The planning board could also determine that if there is no suitable land for recreational purposes on site, the developer could have the option of reserving land in another part of the Town. This would require an examination of the needs in the community for recreation or open space. A plan or program that identifies recreational open space resources townwide would assist the planning board in making these decisions.

Encourage the protection of stream corridors. As described for the Town's Rural Areas in Section 3.1, the Town should encourage the protection of stream corridors throughout the community, and water quality in Ballston Lake. The Town Board should consider appropriate stream buffers on classified streams.

Promote best management practices in agriculture, forestry, and mining/extraction activities. There are many techniques available to manage these resources. Some techniques are more sustainable and could provide a better financial return than others. Property owners could coordinate with the Saratoga County Farm Bureau, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County, the local Soil and Water Conservation District, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, as well as the Department of Forestry, and other local and regional organizations to promote sustainable agricultural, mining and forestry activities in Ballston.

Prioritize safe walking and biking routes to schools.

Encouraging children to walk or bike to school and recreational activities should be a priority in the Town of Ballston. Routes to schools should be prioritized for sidewalk installation and traffic calming. It is important to provide pedestrian linkages between schools, recreational areas and dense residential neighborhoods.

Establish recreational trails and develop mechanisms for of funding recreational trails. There are many mechanisms that communities and organizations can use to create trail networks and many ways in which to fund such networks. A conceptual network of trails and paths is illustrated on the Plan Recommendations Map. These potential trails follow corridors such as the former rail rights-of-way. The New York State Local Open Space Planning Guide suggests that linear corridors, such as railroad corridors, utility rights-of-way, and stream corridors are opportunities for the development of trail networks. The rail line is one example of a potential regional trail corridor in Ballston. The Town should work with Saratoga County to help move this project forward.

The proposed trails identified in the Plan Recommendations Map attempt to establish connections to existing recreational facilities, such as Jenkins Park in Burnt Hills or Shenantaha Park in Malta, or provide an opportunity for future connections. When looking at the Plan Recommendations Map, it is important to note that most of the lands through which proposed trails are illustrated are privately owned lands today. Therefore, they are not available for public use. Furthermore, the Plan Recommendations Map shows some of the most obvious possible connections. Additional trail connections could be identified later as part of the development of a more detailed *Lands of Conservation Interest* map.

Most of the trails developed as part of the Town's Recreational Trail System should be multi-use, providing options for hiking, walking, biking, in-line skating, cross-country skiing, and in some areas perhaps horseback riding. Wherever possible, trails should also be designed to provide handicapped accessibility. However, it is possible that some of the trails will not be able to accommodate the full range of uses described due to characteristics of the landscape or other limiting factors. The intent of this initiative is to create a well-connected, well-maintained network of trails and paths throughout the community.

The process for establishing a trail network should be community driven, and would benefit from the participation of a local group of committed advocates. Such a group could help with landowner contacts, with trail maintenance, and other long-term activities that are necessary for the success of this kind of system. The town could assist in the planning and design of these trails, help negotiate with landowners in some cases, help address liability, and coordinate maintenance and safety issues.

Addressing trail buffers and determining who is responsible for the maintenance of those buffers should be discussed at this early stage. Landowner participation must be completely voluntary.

Finally, when planning and designing specific trail segments, consideration should be given to appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that trail users are well-informed about any rules or regulations that apply to use of the trail. For example, if trail use is limited to non-motorized vehicles, special design elements (such as bollards or gates) should be utilized in addition to signage to make this clear; or if adjoining landowners are concerned about users leaving the trail and crossing their property, signs and/or design elements should be considered and implemented by the developer of the trail to make it clear that users must remain on the trail. Attention to such details will ensure that the town's growing network of trails remains a source of pride (not a source of concern) throughout the community.

In addition to funding open space preservation, local funding mechanisms can be established for trail development. The Town should explore appropriate funding mechanisms as a component of a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program (described above).

Coordinate with Saratoga P.L.A.N (Planning for Land and Nature) and other interested organizations in developing and maintaining a recreational trail system.

These organizations can assist with funding, creating and maintaining trail systems. Such organizations can also assist in educating landowners and the community about issues such as liability and maintenance.

Liability concerns are often expressed when considering recreational trails and there are mechanisms in New York State that provide landowners with some protection regarding liability. The New York State Recreational Use Statute (NYS General Obligations Law subsection 9-103) limits the liability of landowners that voluntarily allow access to their land for trails and other recreational activities. This particular law applies to landowners that permit (and also to those that do not permit) use of their property if the following conditions are met: the landowner does not charge fees and the landowner does not maliciously fail to guard against hazards. Landowners meeting these conditions are protected under this law and liability of those allowing access is no greater than those landowners who post their land against trespass.

Liability concerns can also be addressed through individual insurance policies or through liability insurance from trail partners. Oftentimes, an individual landowner’s insurance policy will also assist in protecting the landowner against the risk of litigation. Many communities have partners in creating trails networks and the landowner may be added to the policy as an “additional insured.”

3.10 HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND RECREATION RESOURCES



Scribner Home on Lake Road,
Town of Ballston.



Town of Ballston
Community Library

Continue to maintain, update and promote a town-wide inventory of historic and cultural resources. The Town Historian currently maintains a listing of historic markers and other historic resources within the community. The inventory is a good resource that can be broadened to include important cultural resources and should also identify sites that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Perhaps some sites might be nominated for listing on the National Register if the owners of such sites are interested in this option. If a significant concentration or a number of historic places exists within the community, the Town Council could consider the establishment of a local historic district or historic standards. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation could provide technical assistance for this action. Any involvement in the State or National Register of Historic Places, or in a historic district should be voluntary. The Town Historian could provide assistance to homeowners who would like to consider their property for listing. The historian could also educate the landowner regarding potential restrictions that could follow such designation. In addition, once several eligible property owners have voluntarily submitted their properties for historic designation and are placed on the Register of Historic Places, the Town should consider a local ordinance supporting historic preservation.

Continue to support the Town of Ballston Community Library.

The community library provides a great service to the community in many ways. Funding for the library is provided by the Town through a library district tax.

Establish a Park Master Plan. The Town should conduct a Park Master Plan to inventory existing parks and identify a community-based need for future facilities. The Level of Service approach recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) should be

utilized. This formula is based on a series of factors such as the number of users per day per facility, participation frequency, type of user, facility demand, population service requirements, and other factors.

As part of the Park Master Plan, the Town could clearly identify areas that need parks, the specific types of facilities that are needed, long-term maintenance requirements of existing facilities, and consider additional improvements. The community survey conducted during the development of this plan provides a starting point for this investigation. According to the survey, walking trails, restrooms, and bike trails are the most needed improvements to the Town's recreation areas.

A Park Master Plan might also consider programming needs and might assist in addressing the needs of youth in the community for additional places to gather. Investigating public-private partnerships related to recreation might also be appropriate through the Park Master Plan process.

This project could be accomplished in tandem with the development of the *Lands of Conservation Interest Map*, or as a separate activity.

The Town should continue to work with the Parks and Recreation Committee to lead the Parks Master Planning effort. This Committee should also coordinate trail development activities within the community.

3.11 GATEWAYS



Example of volunteer efforts by the Burnt Hills Ballston Lake Rotary.

Gateways provide a sense of arrival to a community. Within municipalities, gateways can signal the arrival to or departure from particular districts, neighborhoods or hamlets.

The simplest form of embellishment is a sign welcoming visitors arriving by car, bike or foot. Signs, by their design, material and construction, can make a statement about the community's values. Landscaping around signage improves the look of the gateway and informs visitors that the community cares about its appearance. However, gateways can be more than well-landscaped signs. Street and sidewalk treatments can send a positive signal to visitors. Such improvements can also calm traffic and provide a pedestrian refuge on busy streets.

Place well-maintained signage at community gateways.

Many gateways within the Town do have signage welcoming visitors and residents to the community. However, there are locations where no signage exists or where existing signage should be replaced or repaired. The Town could be responsible for maintenance or could work with local businesses and volunteers. Volunteers within the community may be willing to assist in maintaining the signage and landscaping at community gateways. The Burnt Hills Ballston Lake Rotary, for example, has worked to beautify several areas within the community. Efforts such as this can greatly improve the Town’s gateways.



A pleasant rural gateway within Ballston.

Improve landscaping around gateways.

The degree to which a community takes care of this “first impression” can say a lot to visitors about the values of residents and businesses. Simple flowers and/or shrubs of appropriate size for the signs should be planted at their base. Other signs (e.g. billboards, “for sale”, organizational) should be kept sufficiently far from the community welcome sign so as not to distract from it.

Create gateways for the hamlets.

The hamlets of Burnt Hills and Ballston Lake have their own identities within the town and should have appropriate signage within the overall theme of the towns’ signs. As these areas contain commercial uses and higher density residential neighborhoods, the gateways should be designed to calm traffic and increase walkability.

Maintain village look and feel just outside of Ballston Spa.

The area of the Town next to the Village of Ballston Spa, while not officially a village, has similar commercial and higher-density residential characteristics. Signage should signal the transition from Village to Town. However, there is no need to emphasize the transition; characteristics, such as sidewalk styles, tree lines and build-to lines, should continue across the boundary.



Gateway signage in Ballston that is scheduled for improvement.

3.12 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Several areas of the Town have been identified as areas to focus economic development. These include the Mixed Use Centers and the Industrial Area (see previous discussions of each area above). The intent, when considering economic development opportunities in Ballston, is to integrate and connect commercial districts with the surrounding community, to create centers for economic and civic activity, and to diversify the Town's tax base.

Create an Economic Development Strategy for the Town.

As new, high technology markets emerge in the region; the competition to attract business and increase the local tax base becomes stronger. The potential exists for significant spin-off opportunities related to the future Luther Forest Technology Park should that initiative be successful in the coming years. In this plan, the Town has identified locations where industrial and mixed-use commercial activities are desired by the community. Now the Town should identify the type of businesses it hopes to attract and then develop a strategy to attract those businesses.

Among the important questions that an Economic Development Strategy should answer is what role the Town of Ballston could play in the region's growing technology sectors. It should also explore the potential of specific locations, such as the northern mixed-use area with its traditional village atmosphere, in terms of attracting such industries. The Town should partner with the Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, the Saratoga County Industrial Development Agency, and perhaps others, in developing this strategy.

Revise zoning and development regulations to create a more predictable and fair development review process.

Streamlining the development review process is critical to promoting economic development in the community. Developers and potential developers want to understand early in the development process what is expected of them and what they can expect in turn from the Town regarding standards and time schedules. To assist in clarifying expectations, the Town should establish design guidelines for its commercial and mixed-use areas. As discussed previously, design guidelines could address building placement, the location of parking, pedestrian facilities and other design and functional aspects. The Town

can have high standards for development as long as the standards are clear and fair. Developers value predictability, and to the extent that the town's regulations can make the project review process more predictable, the town will be able to achieve beneficial economic growth while maintaining or improving the community's unique character.

When appropriate, consider locations for infill development and redevelopment activities instead of developing on greenfields.

At some point in the future, there may be locations within Ballston that would be appropriate for redevelopment or infill development. When that opportunity arises, the Town should work with incoming businesses to locate in these areas first. The Town could consider developing an incentive program with assistance from the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce to encourage the reuse or redevelopment of these areas if a significant number of parcels become available for redevelopment.

If brownfield sites exist within the community and the Town wishes to redevelop the sites, it could consider seeking funding through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation or the New York State Department of State to assist in the redevelopment of such sites. A variety of technical and funding assistance programs exist that involve coordination between the property owner and the community. Brownfields are former industrial or commercial sites that are prevented from achieving their highest and best use as a result of perceived or actual environmental contamination. Currently, there are no sites within Ballston that are on the National Priority List (NPL).

However, a site does not be listed on the NPL to receive funding and technical assistance to redevelop. For example, a vacant or abandoned gas station or industrial site may be eligible for redevelopment assistance. Such sites may be perceived to have environmental contamination that could be prevent the reuse of the site. These sites could possibly be eligible for programs such as the NYSDEC Brownfields Cleanup Program and others. The NYS Department of State Opportunity Areas Program is another program available to assist in the redevelopment of brownfields as well.

Coordinate with the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) and the Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) to promote local businesses and quality employment.

The Chamber and SEDC seek to encourage planned economic development that supports local commerce and quality of life. The Town should also work with these organizations to retain the Town's younger population through the creation of quality employment.

3.13 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Continue to prepare for and comply with Phase II Stormwater Management Regulations.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in an effort to protect and preserve the nation's water resources, has developed a stormwater management rule. Phase II of the Stormwater Rule is currently underway and is intended to institute controls on unregulated sources of storm water discharges that may cause environmental degradation. Municipal Separate Storm Water Systems (MS4s) located in Urbanized Areas (as defined by the U.S. Census) are automatically covered by a nationwide permit under the Phase II rule. Phase II represents an expansion of requirements set forth in Phase I. The MS4s are required to develop and implement a stormwater management program by 2008.

Generally, a stormwater management program must contain six minimum control measures, according to the MS4 Phase II Permit requirements. Each minimum control measure must describe measurable goals as well as select and implement management practices to achieve the goals. The minimum control measures include: public education and outreach; public involvement and participation; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction site runoff control; post-construction runoff control; and pollution prevention and good housekeeping. So, for example, the town could work with partners to provide educational services related to septic system maintenance and the prevention of illicit discharges into the Town's storm drainage system. Portions of the Town are located in an urbanized area, including the Ballston Lake and Burnt Hills hamlets as well as the Village of Ballston Spa and areas south of the Village boundary. Therefore, the Town should continue to work closely with the DEC and Saratoga County to ensure they are properly addressing the Phase II regulations.

The Town is currently working with Saratoga County to complete several reports and is continuing to developing its mapping for this effort. The Town is on target to achieve compliance in advance of the 2008 deadline.

3.14 INFRASTRUCTURE

Maintain existing systems.

The Town should continue to maintain existing water systems as needed. The expansion of water and sewer systems should only occur to support specific development opportunities that have been identified through this plan, or when necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The Town should continue to work with the County to provide sewerage service where necessary.

Investigate the current condition of, and improve as necessary, the technology infrastructure available in the Town.

In previous decades, transportation, electricity, and water and sewer infrastructures were considered necessary ingredients for economic development. Today, in addition to these forms of infrastructure, the availability of technology infrastructure for high-speed communication is necessary for many technology based or technology dependent industries.

As physical improvements to commercial and mixed-use areas in the community are phased in over time, technology infrastructure should be provided in the areas currently lacking. Niagara Mohawk's Wired Building Grant Program and similar initiatives through New York State and at the federal level should be pursued.

3.15 ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Community Services:

Coordinate with fire and emergency service providers in the Town regarding service and long-term planning for facilities.

The Town could work with emergency service providers to establish an inventory and needs assessment for fire and emergency services. The Town should also encourage emergency service providers to consider the vision and goals of the comprehensive plan when preparing their own

long-range plans for facilities and for their ability to provide services to a growing community.

Energy Conservation:

Encourage the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for new development and redevelopment of buildings and sites in the town.

The LEED Green Building Rating System® is the national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Participation in LEED is voluntary. The standards have been developed by the U.S. Green Building Council through consensus by all members of the building industry. LEED standards address a variety of site design, building design and construction materials based on the long-term sustainability of the community. LEED information could be provided through the Building Department and distributed as potential developers seek information regarding building in the town. The following is a list of categories that LEED standards consider:

- > Erosion and sedimentation control
- > Site selection
- > Urban redevelopment
- > Brownfield redevelopment
- > Alternative transportation, public transportation access
- > Alternative transportation, bicycle friendly
- > Alternative transportation, parking reductions
- > Reduced site disturbance, protect and restore open space
- > Reduced site disturbance, maximize open space
- > Stormwater management, flow treatment and reduction
- > Landscape and exterior design to reduce heat islands, non-roof and roof surfaces
- > Light pollution reduction

Assist developers in understanding and identifying available funding opportunities supportive of sustainable design and construction.

The Town, the local Chamber and the Saratoga County Economic Development Council (SEDC) could coordinate with the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) to discover opportunities for developers regarding grant funding assistance and technical assistance. Programs available through NYSERDA include: the Energy Smart Loan Program which assists in the cost of installing

energy-efficient technologies, incentives for photovoltaic installers, a Renewable Resource Development Program, Renewable Energy Technology Development Program, and many more.

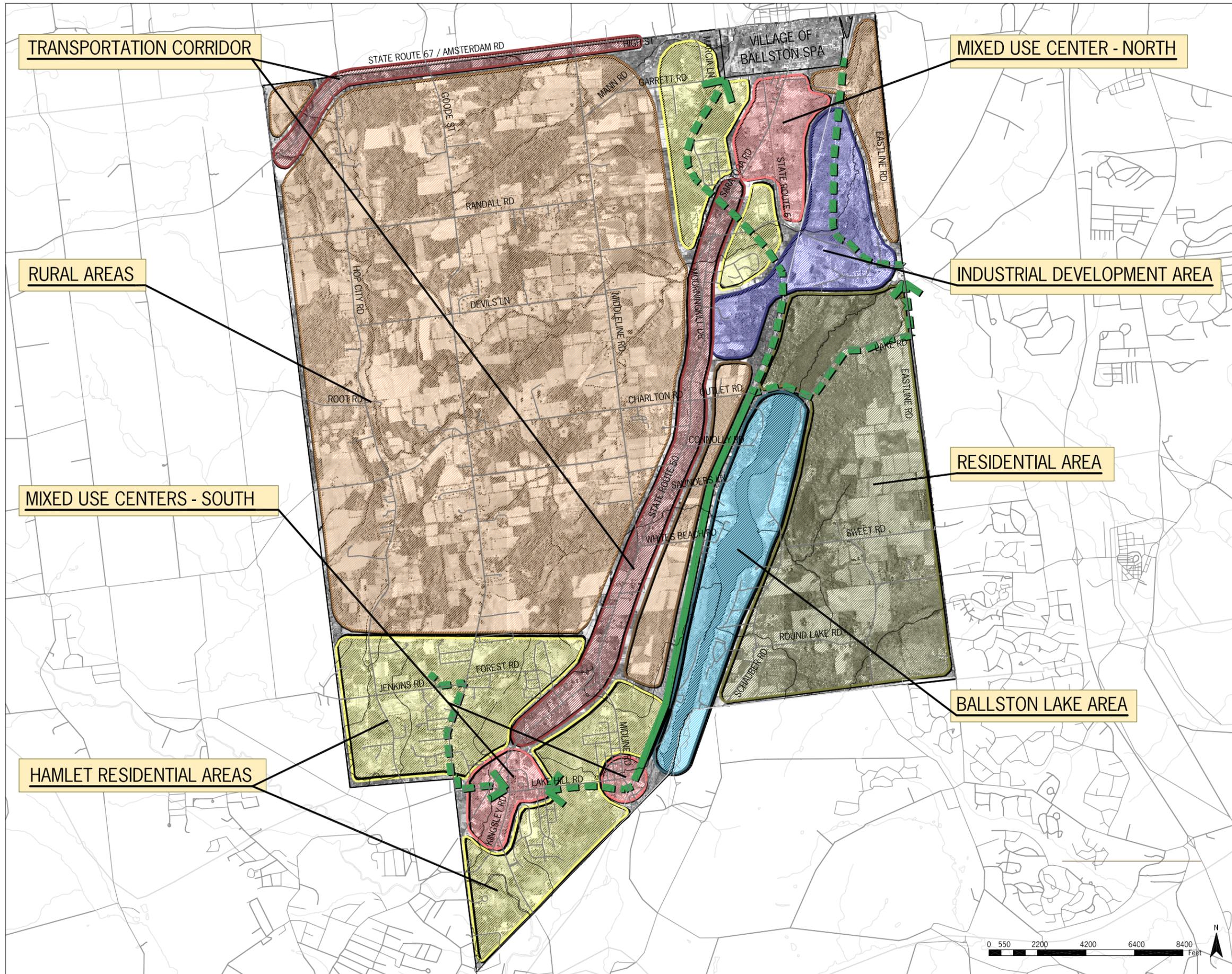
Regional Cooperation:

Continue to coordinate with neighboring municipalities, Saratoga County, the Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), area school districts and emergency service providers, and regional entities such as the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) in planning related activities.

The Town should encourage the coordination of long-term planning efforts with these regional partners. The impacts of growth do not stop at municipal boundaries. A coordinated effort to address issues such as transportation, waste management, and water supply would benefit all parties involved. In addition, this might be an opportunity to work with school districts and emergency service providers on related issues and to address long-term planning.



Section 4



DRAFT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Comprehensive Plan
December 2005

KEY

- RURAL AREA
- MIXED USE CENTER
- HAMLET RESIDENTIAL AREA
- RESIDENTIAL AREA
- INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA
- BALLSTON LAKE AREA
- TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR
- EXISTING TRAILS
- POTENTIAL TRAILS

NOTE: THE BOUNDARIES OF THE AREAS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIFIC BOUNDARIES CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH REVISION OF THE TOWN'S ZONING ORDINANCE.

PROJECT # 05022.10M
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**SARATOGA
ASSOCIATES**

Landscape Architects, Architects,
Engineers, and Planners, P.C.
BOSTON > NEW YORK > SARATOGA SPRINGS

TOWN OF
BALLSTON,
NEW YORK





Section 5

Section 5

The specific actions that will implement this plan are described and prioritized below. In each case responsibilities are suggested, guidance is provided for organizing the action, and potential sources of funding or technical assistance are identified (where applicable). Although the preference may be to implement all of the recommendations immediately, an incremental approach is likely to be more efficient and realistic based on the availability of staff, funding resources and volunteers. While the plan attempts to consider the Town's capacity to implement the various recommendations, it is recognized that there may be a need for additional staff or a reallocation of staff responsibilities to fully implement the plan recommendations.

To monitor progress in implementing the plan, and to identify and address new problems and changes that are likely to emerge in the coming months and years, there needs to be ongoing dialogue between the Town Council and the other official Boards and Committees (both permanent and temporary) that deal with land use and planning issues in the Town. To accomplish this, the Town Council could convene joint meetings between these boards and committees on a regular basis. As a starting point, these joint meetings should be held annually. The frequency could be adjusted as appropriate at the Town Council's discretion. The joint meetings could include the Town Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and any other permanent or temporary boards/committees that are involved in land use and planning issues for the Town.

Generally, each of these Boards/Committees could provide a brief report of their activities since the last joint meeting with an emphasis on any large projects, decisions, issues that they have addressed or are currently considering. The purpose of the meeting would be to provide a forum and collaborative environment for identifying and troubleshooting problems or emerging concerns. Of course, any such meetings must be open to the public, properly noticed, and should provide opportunity for public comment.

Ultimately, the Town Council is responsible for plan implementation. The joint meetings could assist the Town Council in monitoring progress and making adjustments as needed. The comprehensive plan itself should be understood to be a living document. As such, the plan may

need to be adjusted or updated from time to time in order to reflect the current conditions and needs of the community. The joint meetings could help future Town Councils become aware of when that time has arrived. However as a point of reference, the last implementation item described in this chapter suggests that within five or ten years the comprehensive plan, as a whole, should be updated.

The Town could consider a number of options to assist in funding those implementation actions that require additional funding. A portion of the Town budget could be set aside annually to implement these actions, grant funding could be sought from various governmental agencies or private foundations or the Town could establish a revenue bond to fund specific projects. The least complicated method is to set aside budgetary funds on an annual basis. Grant funding can be an effective way to supplement the Town's financial resources for specific implementation actions. However, grants are typically distributed on a competitive basis and often require a local match. Therefore, grants should be considered in conjunction with other funding sources.

Developing a revenue bond is a method of raising funds and extending the cost over a period of years. Many communities have found this a successful method to raise funds for specific projects, initiatives or programs. Voter approval is necessary for revenue bonds. It would be important for the average cost to Town taxpayers and the fiscal costs and benefits associated with such an initiative to be given strong consideration prior to reaching a decision about the appropriateness of this type of fund source.

5.1 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS (TO BE INITIATED UPON ADOPTION OF THE PLAN)

Update the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to reflect the recommendations set forth in this comprehensive plan.

Updating zoning and subdivision regulations is one of the most important tools a community in New York State has for ensuring future growth follows the vision and goals described in the comprehensive plan. The Town Council should initiate a process to update the Zoning Map and Text, as well as the Subdivision Regulations. To accomplish this task, the Town Council should establish a small working group that would be charged with developing draft amendments for Town Council consideration. Plan recommendations for the zoning and subdivision regulations include the following:

-
- > Revise zoning map in accordance with the Plan Recommendations map in this comprehensive plan. Note: the plan recommendations map is generalized and is not meant to convey the specific boundaries of future zoning districts. Zoning district boundaries will be determined in detail during the zoning phase, and should follow parcel boundaries whenever possible.
 - > Modify list of allowable and special permit uses in the Rural District.
 - > Modify minor and major subdivision definitions
 - > Incorporate the use of conservation subdivision design
 - > Create a new Residential District east of Ballston Lake as described in the plan. Incorporate TND consideration through a PUD process in this district.
 - > Establish Hamlet Residential District as described in the plan.
 - > Establish Mixed Use District(s) as described in the plan. More than one Mixed-Use District may be necessary to accommodate variations in the specific mix of uses, the scale of buildings, and/or the design features desired in these different areas of Town.
 - > Update site plan requirements.
 - > Establish a Ballston Lake District to provide special attention to the impact of development on the water quality of Ballston Lake.
 - > Establish design guidelines and/ or performance standards for the Mixed Use Districts, the Hamlet Residential District, and for commercial establishments permitted on major thoroughfares in the Rural and Hamlet Residential Districts. The Planning Board should be responsible for design review in these districts as part of special use permit and/or site plan review. An additional board (additional layer of review) is not contemplated.

Develop Strategic Plan for the town’s northern Mixed Use Area.

The Town Council should take a proactive role in the future of the northern Mixed Use Area by developing a more detailed Strategic Plan. Working cooperatively with landowners, interested residents, and other stakeholders the Town should facilitate a public process that refines the appropriate mix of uses, and which establishes proposed future locations for streets and other public spaces (pocket parks, greens, and plazas). Location of streets and public spaces should be reserved through the establishment of an Official Map in conformance with Section 270 of Town Law. The Strategic Plan should also identify the desired urban design and architectural characteristics of future development sites,

determine the impact of various build out scenarios on traffic and on the feasibility of incorporating options such as public transit, and perhaps include a market analysis to encourage appropriate investment.

The Town may consider structuring the Strategic Plan to serve as a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). The benefit of this approach is that it would allow the Town to determine up front the type and magnitude of investments that will be necessary to mitigate the potential adverse impacts of the proposed development, and to establish mitigation fees that would distribute these costs equitably between future developers in the area. Future investments in water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure, public spaces, and other items necessary to mitigate any potential impacts would not be borne solely by existing taxpayers; nor would they be borne solely by the unfortunate developer who happens to propose the last project that causes conditions to deteriorate beyond acceptable levels (while those who came before and contributed to those conditions bear no responsibility). The Town could even recoup the cost of preparing the Strategic Plan and GEIS as part of the mitigation fees that are established.

Complete Phase 1 of the Ballston Farmland and Open Space Protection Program (already underway).

The Town should continue to work with the Land Conservation Committee to develop a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program to identify important resources to protect and determine feasible options for protection, including funding sources. The Town should complete Phase 1 of a Ballston Farmland and Open Space Protection Program. Building on the natural resources inventory and other information collected for this comprehensive plan, this task involves identifying in detail the town's important categories of open space resources. Through additional research and fieldwork, and a series of public workshops, it would answer questions such as:

- > Where is the highest quality farmland in the town? Which are the most viable farm operations?
- > Where are the town's important gateways?
- > Where are the scenic vistas? Rural roadways?
- > What are the opportunities for linking these resources, and connecting different parts of the town to one another, and to adjoining municipalities and trail systems?

This project must be carefully designed to ensure that it is accomplished in a reasonable time frame. Once the Lands of Conservation Interest map is completed and endorsed by the Town Council, it will become a major guide to the town's Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program, and it will be a tool to assist the Planning Board and developers in the design of conservation subdivisions.

Consider recommendations of the Ballston/Malta Route 67 Corridor Study.

This detailed study of transportation and land use issues in the Route 67 Corridor has been underway at the same time as development of the Comprehensive Plan. Throughout the comprehensive planning process, the CPAC coordinated with the committee directing this effort to ensure general consistency with the comprehensive plan. As the Route 67 Corridor Management Plan is concluded, the Town Council should review and accept it as an additional guide to policy in the area that it covers. Furthermore, the Corridor Management Plan will suggest additional action items that the Town Council should consider implementing as appropriate.

5.2 SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

Establish Access Management Policies for primary transportation corridors in town.

As described in Section 3.6, access management is critical to the safety and function of the Town's roadway system. State and county highways are the main routes within and through town. As development occurs, new points of access are created at various points along these roads. Each new point of access creates the potential for additional turning movements onto and off of the highway. Individually, these curb cuts do not usually make a huge difference unless they are associated with a land use that generates many vehicular trips each day. However, the cumulative effect of many curb cuts, even from relatively small trip generators such as single-family homes, can diminish the safety and capacity of such highways. Driveway spacing, shared access between adjoining uses, and consolidated access where uncontrolled access currently exists, are methods by which the Town can preserve the safety and function of these roads.

The Town Council should organize a small working group consisting of Town staff from the highway and building departments, representatives from the County Departments of Public Works and Planning, and a

representative of the NYS Department of Transportation regional office to develop access management policies. The group should focus on all areas of the Town except the Mixed-Use Areas (the Mixed-Use Areas will be studied in detail as Master Plans are developed for each).

Implement Phase 2 of the Ballston Farmland and Open Space Protection Program.

Upon completion of Phase 1, the Town Council should consider a long-term funding mechanism for the ongoing implementation of the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program. The most likely source of funding would be through a bond initiative approved by voters. Essentially, the Council would ask the community whether it could borrow a certain amount of money for the purposes of conserving valuable farmland and critical open space resources in the town. If approved, the town's dedicated fund would be used to fund projects outright, and/or to leverage other sources of funding (provide local match) that could be obtained for these projects. Current sources of funding include Saratoga County, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Farmland Protection Fund, and the NYS Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The state programs are funded through the Environmental Protection Fund.

The Lands of Conservation Interest Map would be a guide for selecting acquisition projects under the town's Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program. The town should also establish additional criteria for project selection. These criteria might include: landowner contribution (donation), development pressure, and other items to be determined.

Permanent conservation of farmland and other open spaces through outright acquisition or Purchase of Development Rights will by necessity be limited to excellent quality projects. This Phase of the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program should also establish other options for landowners. One could be a term easement/tax abatement program. Modeled on successful initiatives in Perinton, Clifton Park and other communities in upstate New York, this program would provide tax relief to large landowners who agree to keep their land undeveloped for a period of years -- the greater the period of years (the term) the greater the abatement.

A second initiative would be for the Town to partner with Saratoga PLAN to provide education to large landowners about their land stewardship options. There are potential income and estate tax benefits that can be generated through the donation of conservation easements to a municipality or land trust. By actively providing such education, additional conservation may be achieved.

Facilitate volunteer gateway improvement program.

As described in Section 3.11, entranceways along major roads into the Town could be enhanced to be more prominent and welcoming, and to improve the Town's self-identity or sense of place. While it is recognized that welcome signs do currently exist in some locations, there still are opportunities for simple improvements. Additional enhancements might include banners or flowers to improve the sense of arrival. The Chambers of Commerce or a local business organization (or perhaps in the future a Business Improvement District) might contribute to a streetscape beautification program in the identified entranceway areas. In addition, local volunteer groups might be willing to contribute their time and energy to assist in maintaining these areas.

Initiate design and source funding for expansion of Ballston's recreational trail system.

Working with Saratoga County and/or a regional organization such as Saratoga PLAN, the Town of Ballston should begin to plan and design future extensions of the Ballston Veterans Trail northward to both the Zim Smith Trail and to the Village of Ballston Spa, and southwesterly to the Hamlets of Ballston Lake and Burnt Hills. Funding for the planning, design, and construction of these expansions could come from a variety of sources including local, county, and state funds, and perhaps federal transportation dollars allocated through the Capital District Transportation Committee's regional transportation improvement program (TIP).

5.3 MID-TERM ACTIONS

Develop Strategic Plan for the town's southern Mixed Use Areas.

Based on the Town's success with the Strategic Plan for the northern Mixed-Use District (see short-term actions above), the Town Council could consider a similar project for the southern Mixed-Use Areas. This Strategic Plan could also serve as a Generic Environmental Impact Statement.

Establish a sidewalk improvement and maintenance program.

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, participants identified the need for additional pedestrian connections in certain areas of the Town. Primarily, sidewalks are desired along busy streets in the vicinity of the Village of Ballston Spa and the Ballston Spa Middle School/High School complex, and in the hamlets of Burnt Hills and Ballston Lake. In terms of plan areas, the focus of this program should be in the Mixed Use Districts and the Hamlet Residential Areas. A sidewalk improvement and maintenance program should include the development of a prioritized list of locations where sidewalks are needed, strategies for funding the construction and maintenance of sidewalks in the town (including cooperative arrangements between the Town and landowners), and policies related to snow removal and general upkeep. In addition to sidewalks, the program might include locations where off road pedestrian pathways are possible. Such paths could, for example, connect neighborhoods separated by cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets, or take advantage of certain rights-of-way or other unique features in a specific area. A small committee of Town staff and/or volunteers could be established to spearhead this effort at the Town Council's discretion.

Implement stormwater management program in compliance with U.S. EPA Phase II Stormwater Rule.

The 1972 Clean Water Act, enacted by Congress, established a policy to protect and improve the waters of the United States. In 1987, Congress amended this Act to require a program to address stormwater discharges. The United States Environmental Protection Agency developed a phased approach to implementing this program. Phase I went into effect in 1992 and permits were required for a number of categories of stormwater discharges including industrial activities, construction-related disturbances greater than 5 acres and large and medium size municipal separate storm sewer operators. In 2003, Phase II of the Federal Law required permits for construction disturbances of one acre or greater and small size municipal separate storm sewer operators. In addition, all areas with municipal separate storm sewer systems within an urbanized area must develop a stormwater management plan.

As required by the New York State Department of Environment Conservation, in March 2003, the Town of Ballston implemented a Stormwater Management Program including the six minimum control measures described in Section 3.13. The Town of Ballston plans to build and expand its Stormwater Management Plan through March of

2008 when the overall plan must be finalized. Currently, the Town is on track to be in full compliance in advance of the 2008 deadline.

Create an Economic Development Strategy for the Town.

As new, high technology markets emerge in the region; the competition to attract business and increase the local tax base becomes stronger. In this plan, the Town has identified locations where industrial and mixed-use commercial activities are desired by the community. Now the Town should identify the type of businesses it hopes to attract and then develop a strategy to attract those businesses.

Among the important questions that an Economic Development Strategy should answer is what role the Town of Ballston could play in the region's growing technology sectors. It should also explore the potential of specific locations, such as the northern mixed-use area with its traditional village atmosphere, in terms of attracting such industries. The Town should partner with the Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, the Saratoga County Industrial Development Agency, and perhaps others, in developing this strategy.

5.4 ON-GOING ACTIONS

Continue to enhance capacity of Building Department and its information systems.

The Town should consider expanding the existing service agreement with the Town Engineer to provide professional planning services. As the Town continues to grow, and as it implements the many recommendations in this plan for managing its growth, the Town Council may wish to consider the addition of a professional planner to the town staff. Several area communities have found it useful to add one or more planners to their staff in recent years. The region is fortunate to have a graduate planning program at the University at Albany and an active section of the Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association from which to find knowledgeable candidates if needed.

In addition to the possible need to add staff in the future, the Town should continue to enhance its information systems. Current information about the town's growth helps to form the basis for good decision-making. Ballston is a changing community and it is, therefore, important to be able to track information about this change. The Town has already made significant progress in this regard with the recent establishment of

a Geographic Information System (GIS) in the Building Department. The Town should continue to expand its GIS capability, and perhaps in the future, explore options for providing more of this information to the public via the Internet.

Encourage or require continuing education for board members.

The Town Council should encourage or require that all members of the Town's Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals attend educational programs in an effort to update their knowledge of planning and zoning techniques and laws on a continuing basis. Town Council members should also be encouraged, and planning staff should be required, to attend such programs as appropriate. This is of particular importance as the Town continues to change and as it considers the use of new planning tools in response to this change. Several organizations offer such programs and hold workshops and conferences or can come to local communities for this purpose. These organizations include, but are not limited to: the Saratoga County Planning Department, the New York State Department of State Division of Local Government, the New York Planning Federation, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, the Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association, and local colleges and universities such as Albany Law School and the University at Albany.

5.5 LONG-TERM ACTIONS

Consider additional initiatives to strengthen the business environment in the Mixed Use Districts.

Based on the results of the Economic Development Strategy, additional actions to enhance the success of the mixed-use districts (the Town's main commercial areas) may be warranted. A Business Improvement District (BID) could be established for one or more of these districts as appropriate. A BID provides a mechanism for property owners and business owners in a defined area to raise funds for street and sidewalk maintenance, beautification, prospecting, marketing, and business recruitment and retention.

Review this Comprehensive Plan in its entirety.

As the community changes, its needs and desires change. The comprehensive plan should be a flexible and adaptable document that reflects such changes. As a result, it is recommended that the Town review and update (if necessary) this comprehensive plan in its entirety within five to ten years.



Appendices

Appendix A

Inventory and Analysis

**Town of Ballston
Inventory and Analysis**

INTRODUCTION AND SETTING

The Town of Ballston is located in Saratoga County, New York, between the cities of Schenectady and Saratoga Springs. Ballston is only hours from major metropolitan centers such as New York City, Montreal and Boston, and recreational activities found in the Adirondack and Catskill Mountains. The Town is home to one Village, Ballston Spa, as well as many neighborhoods and hamlets, each with its own unique character. These include Burnt Hills, Garrison Manor and Ballston Lake. The rural working landscape and scenic views of Ballston Lake are some of the town's attractive qualities. Coupled with its scenic quality, Ballston's convenient location near major interstate highways, rail connections and cities is a significant draw for residents, visitors, and commercial and industrial businesses.

The Town is characterized by a mix of rural and suburban residential and agricultural uses, as well as commercial and industrial uses on either side of NYS Route 50. Route 50 is a north-south road that bisects the Town, providing the primary form of access through and around the Town. Although the topography is relatively flat, natural resources such as Ballston Lake and its associated streams make Ballston a potential attractive recreational destination.

When the 1989 Master Plan¹ (hereafter referred to as the "1989 Plan") was written, the distribution of land by type of use in Ballston was different than in 2004, primarily in terms of residential and agricultural land. The most dramatic change in land use that has occurred since the 1989 Plan was written has resulted from an increase in residential uses from 20% to over 50%, and a corresponding decrease in agricultural uses from 34% to 13%. The percentages of land in Town that is covered by other land use categories such as commercial and industrial have remained approximately the same since 1989.

Like many towns in the Capital District, Ballston is faced with issues that accompany all types of residential and commercial development. The goal of the Comprehensive Plan will be to recommend strategies for growth to occur at a reasonable rate and encourage a proper balance between the "old" and the "new."

The following inventory will identify existing conditions and trends within the Town of Ballston relating to land use and zoning; growth trends and patterns; infrastructure capabilities; transportation networks; the natural environment; school systems; agriculture; economic development; fiscal conditions; housing; and recreational resources. A discussion of future needs will occur for each topic area as well.

¹ The Town of Ballston Master Plan, March 1989

HISTORY²

The Town of Ballston has a rich and varied history. Ballston's success as an early community, as well as its involvement in local and regional affairs and resulting community pride have endured to the present. The early history of Ballston began with its use as a primary hunting ground for the New York State-native Iroquois Indians. Their interest in using the natural resources of the area and replenishing them appropriately was important to the area's history. Settlement by non-indigenous people began with the sale of land through the Kayaderoseros Patent, which opened the area to major change. The first white settlers to arrive in the mid-1700s, Nicholas and Michael McDonald, built a cabin on Ballston Lake. When they arrived, they established the beginning of a history of good relations with the local Native Americans.

The first significant settlement of people came in the 1770s with the arrival of Reverend Eliphalet Ball from southern New York State. A community was established and based around Reverend Ball's church, located in the area of present-day Charlton and Middleline Roads. Also in the 1770s, Town residents were involved in the Revolutionary War. Joe Betteys, who lived on present-day Route 50, was a Patriot fighting against the British and then became a spy delivering messages to the English troops. He was eventually hanged for his crimes. Middleline Road became a settlement of men dedicated to the cause of fighting against the Crown. General James Gordon was a well-known rebel leader and was one of many residents who were captured by the British and taken to Canada for imprisonment. After the war ended, General Washington came to visit Ballston and specifically General Gordon to thank him for his service to the new country.

In the late 1700s and into the next century, a number of significant settlements began to appear in the Town. One was located in the area that became known as Ballston Center, where Reverend Ball and his fellow settlers first arrived. This area is now home to approximately one quarter of all the Historical Markers in the Town and was a major site of daily activities and war-related events during the Revolution. It also contained the places where the original governmental buildings were built, and where the first local school was established. It is an area where large tracts of farmland still predominate.

A second settlement area was located in the vicinity of the intersection of Lakehill Road and Kingsley Road. This was the area of the "original" Burnt Hills, the location of the original town green and the center of the southern segment of the Town for more than 100 years. This was also the area famous for the beginning of the Central School District and the homes of many of the original local residents. This area was also renowned for its beautiful maple trees, which once formed a canopy over the street. The third major settlement occurred in what was then called South Ballston and what is today the Hamlet of Ballston Lake. This was the center of the Ballston Lake activities that became the Town's most important

² Town of Ballston Historian

feature in the early 20th century: the railroad and trolley links and the vacation areas on the lake itself.

Finally, several settlements formed in the northern part of the Town. One was the home of the East Line Post Office, located in the northeast corner of the Town. The other was present-day Route 67, the northern boundary of the Town, in Ballston Spa. The Town courthouse was located here for many years and was the home of some of Ballston's famous politicians.

During the 19th century, Ballston began to develop into a thriving and successful community. Education continued to be a priority for the residents and the Ballston Academy was established. Graduates included several state senators, founders of colleges and the first State Superintendent of Education. The Delaware and Hudson Railroad between Schenectady and Saratoga, the second railroad in the State, traveled through Ballston Lake. It replaced much of the stagecoach travel and allowed for the creation of Forest Park on the southern end of Ballston Lake.

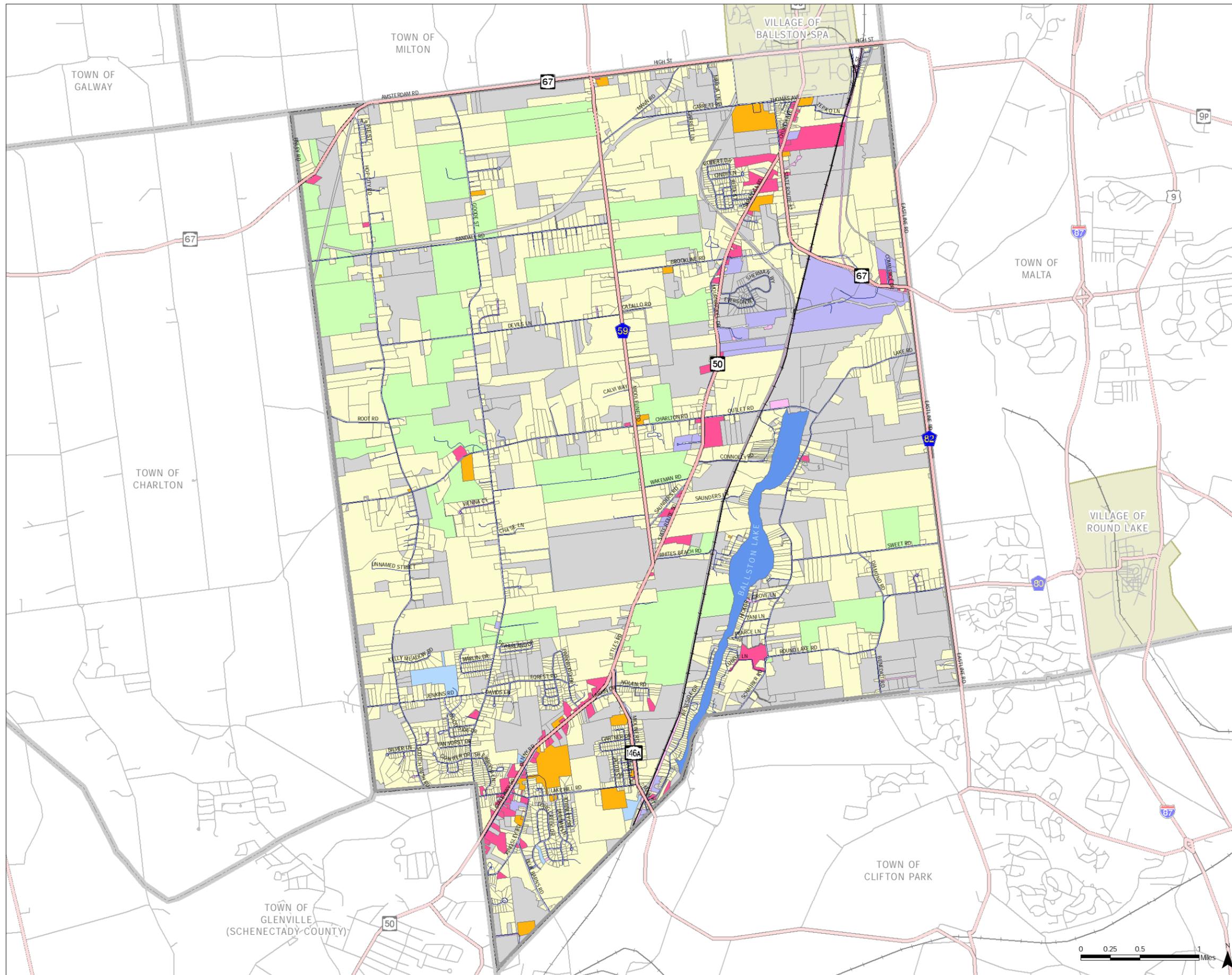
The Town's population grew from 2,034 in 1900 to 8,729 in 2000. Although the growth rate was less than 2% during the century, this rate allowed for the steady creation of entertainment and amusement activities as well as a recognized educational system. During the 20th Century, one-room schoolhouses dotting the Town were gradually replaced by a Central School District. The Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central Rural School District, created in 1925 as the first consolidated and second centralized school district in the state of New York, replaced the Burnt Hills School of Agriculture and Homemaking, which had previously been opened on Lakehill Road. Over time, the school district built three more elementary schools and two secondary schools and become known as one of the area's best school districts.

The intersection of Lakehill and Kingsley Roads became a commercial center for the Town. The Village Green became a meeting place and location of a gas station, dry goods and meat store, a post office and barbershop. That commercial center slowly moved westward by the second half of the 20th Century after Route 50 was built and became a major travel route between Saratoga and Schenectady Counties. The Route 50 corridor developed into an area where local businesses thrived for many years. In recent years, it has become the home to national chain stores as well.

LAND USE AND ZONING

EXISTING LAND USE

The **Land Use Map** illustrates the locations of various land uses in Ballston. Land uses are determined by the Town Assessor and are categorized according to property classification codes that are found in the New York State Office of Real Property Services Assessors' Manual. The Land Use Map includes the



CURRENT LAND USE

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

KEY

- AGRICULTURAL
- COMMERCIAL
- COMMUNITY SERVICES
- FORESTED
- INDUSTRIAL
- PUBLIC SERVICES
- RECREATION & ENTERTAINMENT
- RESIDENTIAL
- VACANT
- TOWN BOUNDARIES
- VILLAGES
- MAJOR ROADS
- LOCAL ROADS
- RAILROAD

Data Sources:
 - Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 - Parcel Boundaries/Classifications: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004. Land use classification is based on the property class code assigned by the local assessor, in accordance with the New York State Office of Real Property Assessor's Manual

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File Location: S:\GIS\05022\Land Use.mxd

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following categories: agricultural, commercial, community services, forested, industrial, public services, recreational and entertainment, residential, and vacant.

The current land use patterns will shape the future character of the Town. The type of development that occurs (i.e., residential, industrial or commercial), the form or design of that development, and the scale of that development can transform the appeal of a community. Land use can also impact the functionality of a community's infrastructure and roadway systems. Allowing new development in a previously undeveloped area, for example, could increase traffic along a corridor or require additional water and sewer infrastructure or roadways. Alternatively, allowing development in an area already equipped with sufficient infrastructure and roadways would likely reduce the impacts on a community.

Although land use within Ballston varies, with nine classifications represented, residential and agricultural uses dominate the landscape. Residential uses comprise over half of all land in Town, and are found throughout. Route 50, which traverses the Town from Ballston Spa to the southwest, is bordered largely by commercial and industrial uses. A high concentration of vacant and industrial land exists east of Route 50. Two clusters of community service functions exist in Town: one located south of Ballston Spa and another in the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake neighborhood. Vacant parcels, which are located throughout Ballston, may represent opportunities for future development or opportunities to create additional community service areas or recreation areas, such a neighborhood parks.

Table 1, Land Use

| Land Use | Acreage | Percent of Town |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Agricultural | 2415.29 | 13.26% |
| Commercial | 315.23 | 1.73% |
| Community Services | 206.29 | 1.13% |
| Forested | 0.11 | 0.00% |
| Industrial | 369.13 | 2.03% |
| Public Services | 108.17 | 0.59% |
| Recreation & Entertainment | 66.73 | 0.37% |
| Residential | 9572.84 | 52.54% |
| Vacant | 5164.82 | 28.35% |
| TOTAL | 18218.61 | 100% |

Source: GIS data created by The Saratoga Associates with information provided by Town of Ballston

EXISTING LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Town of Ballston adopted its first Zoning Ordinance in 1957 and continues to regulate land use through its ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The Zoning Ordinance was updated in 1999, revised and readopted during codification in 2000, and updated again in 2003. The ordinance is continually amended as needed. It includes regulations on permitted uses in zoning districts, environmental

regulations, construction standards, permit requirements and signage standards. The Subdivision Regulations were adopted in 1962 and are also amended as needed. The Village of Ballston Spa has its own zoning ordinance and is not regulated by that of the Town.

Ballston contains seven zoning districts, which are illustrated in the **Zoning Map**. These districts include the Ballston Lake Commercial District, Commercial, Commercial/Industrial, Residential, and Rural, in addition to five Planned Unit Development Districts (PUDD). Table 2, below, shows the distribution of zoning districts throughout the Town in acreage and percentage of total Town land.

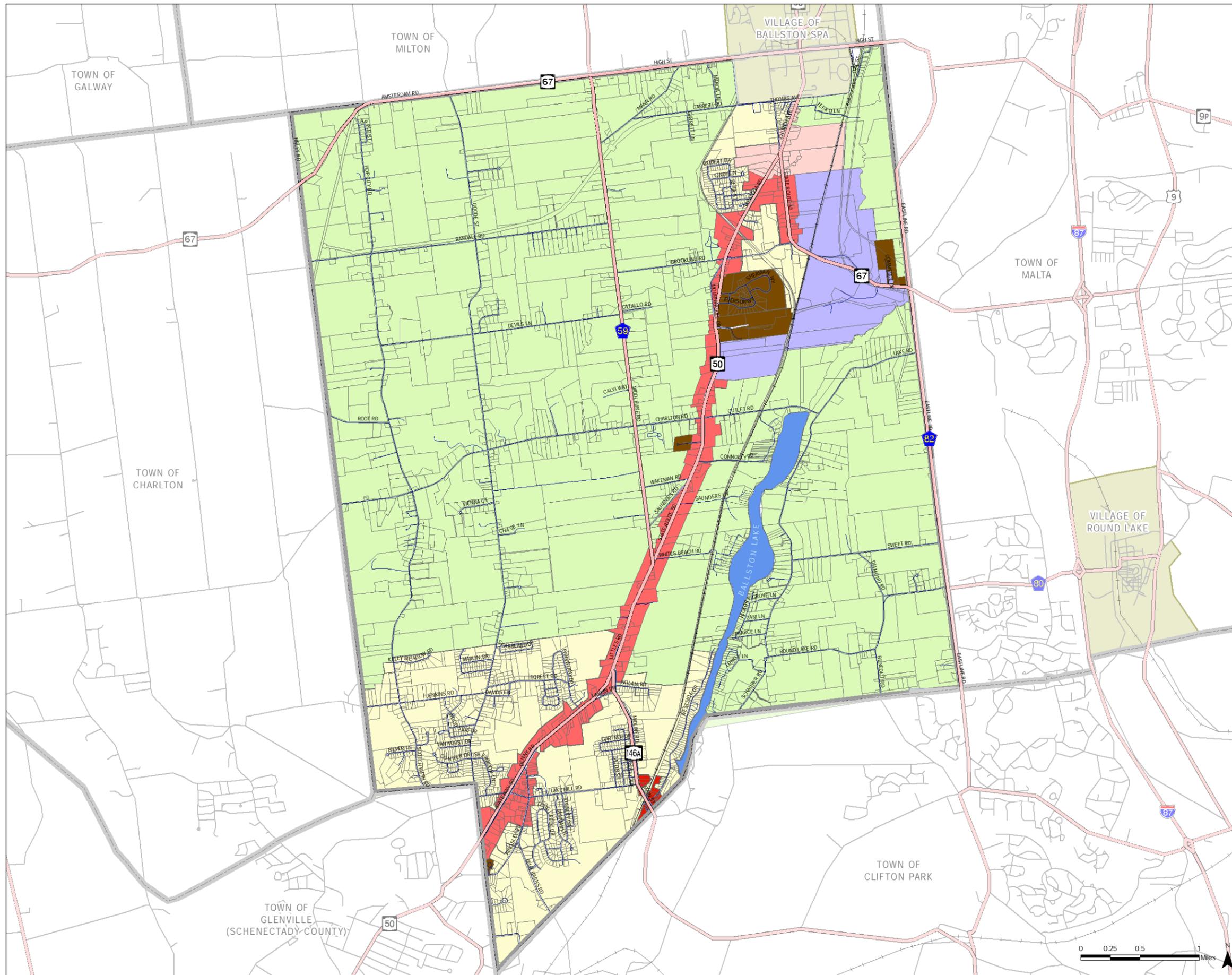
Table 2, Zoning

| Zoning District | Acreage | Percent of Town |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Ballston Lake Commercial Dist. | 29.13 | 0.16% |
| Commercial | 734.79 | 3.92% |
| Commercial / Industrial | 194.03 | 1.03% |
| Industrial | 753.76 | 4.02% |
| PUDD | 256.59 | 1.37% |
| Residential District | 2,993.13 | 15.95% |
| Rural District | 13,805.05 | 73.56% |
| TOTAL | 18,766.47 | 100% |

Source: GIS data created by The Saratoga Associates with information provided by Town of Ballston

The Rural District designation covers nearly 14,000 acres, or three-quarters of the Town’s land. This is by far the largest concentration of acres in any district, as the Residential District, which is the second highest concentration, covers only 16% of the Town’s land. Residential districts are found primarily to the south of the Village of Ballston Spa and in the southwest corner of Town in Burnt Hills. The Commercial district runs alongside Route 50 from the southern border of Ballston to the Commercial/Industrial district directly south of Ballston Spa. The Ballston Lake Neighborhood Commercial District is a small area located at the southern tip of Ballston Lake, and allows for single-family residential, retail, and office uses, as well as other uses such as two-family residential and restaurants with a special permit. The Industrial district is a 750-acre area located east of Route 50 and south of Ballston Spa, and is adjacent to two PUDDs, described below.

As stated in the ordinance, the purpose of the PUDD classification is to provide for the rezoning of land to zones that conform with standards and ensure compatibility along land uses, as well as foster innovations in site planning and encourage sound design. The Town’s five PUDDs are: the Beacon Hill PUDD, a residential subdivision located near the intersection of Brookline Road and Route 50; SSP PUDD, located directly south of Beacon Hill; Schultz PUDD, a 35-acre parcel located east of the Industrial district on the Town’s eastern border; Katz Corporate Park PUDD, an 11-acre parcel centrally located on Route 50, and Senior Citizen Housing, a small district in Burnt Hills. The purpose of the latter district is to provide a



CURRENT ZONING

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

KEY

- COMMERCIAL
- BALLSTON LAKE COMMERCIAL DIST.
- COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PUDD
- RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- RURAL DISTRICT
- TOWN BOUNDARIES
- VILLAGES
- MAJOR ROADS
- LOCAL ROADS
- RAILROAD

Data Sources:
 - Zoning: Town of Ballston
 - Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 - Parcel Boundaries: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004

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File Location: S:\GIS\05022\Environmental Features.mxd

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means for the creation of housing for Senior Citizens and Handicapped residents.

DISCUSSION OF NEEDS

Land use regulations dictate the type and location of development that occurs in a community and should be clear as well as concise. The comprehensive plan will recommend land use regulations that are consistent with the Town's long-term vision in terms of where development should occur and what it should look like.

GROWTH TRENDS AND PATTERNS

POPULATION

The Town of Ballston has been experiencing significant population growth over the past 20 years. In 2000, Ballston had a population of 8,729. This represents a 13% increase in population since 1980 and an 8% increase since 1990. Between 1980 and 2000, Ballston's population grew slightly slower than that of Saratoga County and selected adjacent municipalities. Between 1990 and 2000, the Town's population as a whole grew slightly faster than that of the Village of Ballston Spa. Access to nearby employment centers such as Schenectady and Albany, rural character, and quality of life are likely factors contributing to the Town's population growth.

Table 3, Population and Population Change from 1980 to 2000

| Municipality | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | Change 1980-2000 | Change 1990-2000 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Town of Ballston | 7,714 | 8,078 | 8,729 | 13.2% | 8.1% |
| Village of Ballston Spa | 4,711 | 5,194 | 5,556 | 17.9% | 7.0% |
| Town of Malta | 6,968 | 11,709 | 13,005 | 86.6% | 11.1% |
| Town of Clifton Park | 23,989 | 30,117 | 33,110 | 38.0% | 9.9% |
| Saratoga County | 153,759 | 181,276 | 200,635 | 30.5% | 10.7% |

Source: U.S. Census.

The Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) is responsible for the development of population and household projections for the four-county Capital District Region. Utilizing 2000 Census data, CDRPC developed projections using a Population Projection Model. The first stage of the model included a quantitative stage that used a log-linear regression projection model on historic Census data and Census estimates. Log-Linear models are an excellent basis for population forecasts because they project average historic rates of change into the future in a manner consistent with the average changes in natural populations.

The second stage of the model involved a qualitative stage, which included non-quantitative judgments of the likelihood and extent of future population change within particular jurisdictions. There are many historic trends other than simple population which may give an indication of the direction and extent of future population change, including, but not limited to, average persons per household, persons in group quarters, building permit issuances, new home and apartment unit construction, immigration and emigration patterns, journey-to-work data, and labor force data. In addition, there may be new development opportunities or constraints for particular jurisdictions embodied in zoning and subdivision regulations, environmental regulations, economic development programs, and capital budgets for transportation facilities and water and sewer service extensions, to mention just a few possible sources. As much of this information as possible was considered in reviewing the projections and changes made as appropriate.

The CDRPC population projections have been relatively accurate in the past. Previous projections for the year 2000, for example, were slightly above actual population numbers for the Town of Ballston. According to CDRPC Population Estimates data, projections for the 2000 census indicated a population of 8,752. Actual 2000 Census data indicated a population of 8,729, which is only 23 persons lower than projected. Projections for the Town of Ballston are found in Table 4, Population Projections.

The 2040 population projections developed by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) indicate an increase of approximately 2,110 persons by 2040 in the Town of Ballston, or approximately 53 persons per year over the next 40 years. This represents a 24% increase in population over a 40-year period. Ballston is projected to capture between 3% and 4% of Saratoga County's population growth through 2040.

**Table 4
Population Projections 2010 to 2025**

| Municipality | % Annual Avg. Growth | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Town of Ballston | 1.7 | 9,263 | 9,779 | 10,302 | 10,839 |
| Village of Ballston Spa | 0.3 | 5,602 | 5,611 | 5,619 | 5,645 |
| Town of Malta | 2.2 | 14,183 | 15,345 | 16,518 | 17,645 |
| Town of Clifton Park | 3.7 | 36,382 | 38,874 | 40,619 | 41,983 |
| Saratoga County | 2.8 | 219,391 | 233,633 | 246,647 | 258,305 |

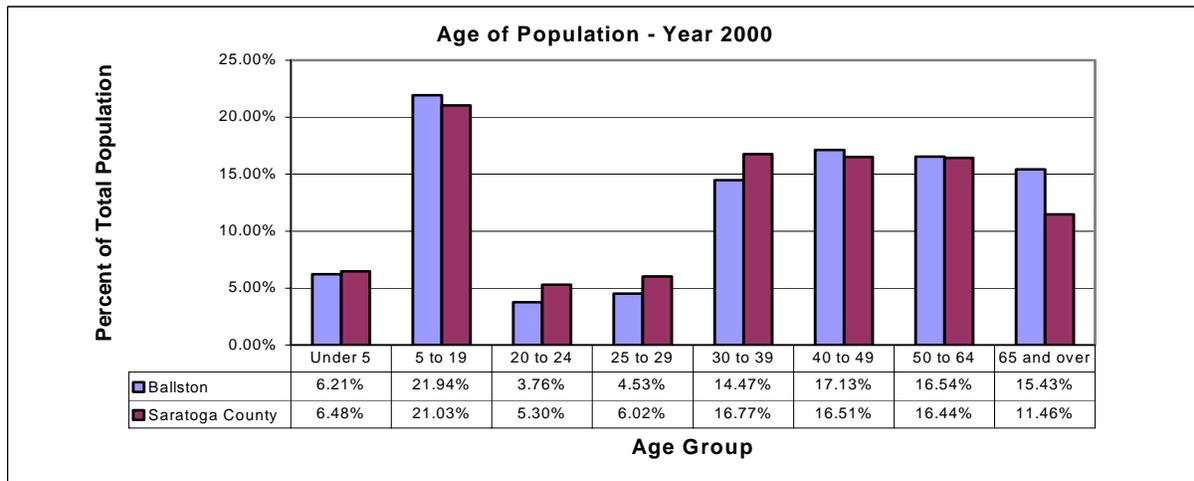
Source: www.cdrpc.org

AGE

The age of the population within a community can dictate the level of services needed and the level of consumer activity. For example, a significant number of people over the age of 65 may indicate a need for

additional senior programs or senior housing. A high number of people in their twenties may indicate a need for increased recreational activities or employment opportunities that target this younger generation.

According to the 2000 Census, the largest age group in Ballston was the 5 to 19 year-old age group, capturing 22% of the total population. This is consistent with age distribution of this group in Saratoga County, which captured 21% of the population. This particular age group represents school age children and may indicate a need to address facilities requirements in local schools. The next largest age groups in Ballston were the 40-49 and 50-64 groups, both of which captured approximately 17% of the total population. Overall, the population distribution in Ballston is similar to that of the entire County. The Under 5 age group as well as those age 20 to 29 represent the smallest segments of the Town capturing 6% and 8% of the population, respectively.



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational data is important to understand, as education levels strongly influence the economic success of a community. As shown in Table 5, Educational Attainment, education levels in the Town of Ballston are below state levels in almost every category. Compared to Saratoga County, Ballston has marginally better attainment levels in the categories of college and post-graduate education.

In 2000, over 9% of Ballston’s 25 and over population had a graduate or professional degree, which is a 1.5% increase since 1990. Although this represents a higher percentage than Saratoga County, it is lower than state and some surrounding municipalities such as Clifton Park, where 15% of the population had graduate degrees. Also in 2000, 13% of Ballston’s 25 and over population had a Bachelor’s degree. This represents a higher percentage than Saratoga County, yet lower than state and some surrounding towns.

In 2000, 17% of the Town's population was comprised of high school graduates and almost 8% claimed "some high school" or "less than 9th grade" as their highest educational attainment. This represents a small increase since 1990. These trends may reflect the relocation of older and more educated workers to other parts of the region. Compared to surrounding municipalities in 2000, Ballston has intermediate levels of educational attainment. The Village of Ballston Spa had lower levels of college and graduate degree attainment and more persons with only a high school education. Clifton Park and Malta, on the other hand, exceeded Ballston in the number of people with graduate and college degrees, and had fewer people with only a high school education.

Table 5, Educational Attainment, 2000

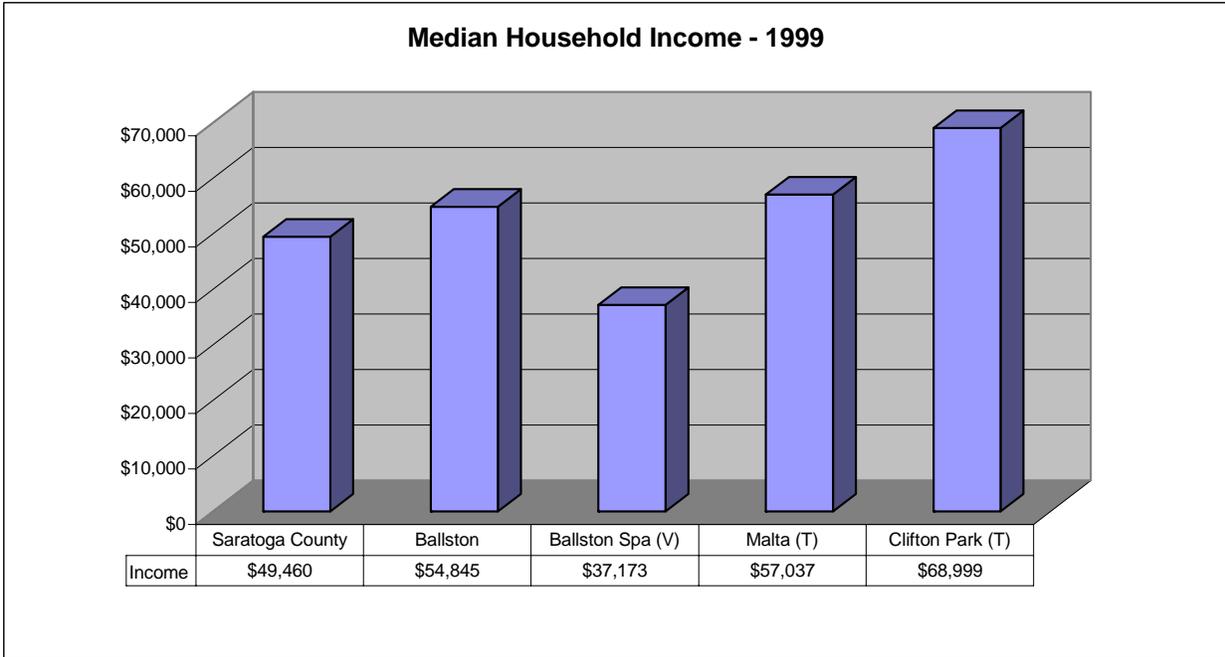
| Level of Attainment (Population Aged 25+) | New York State | Saratoga County | Town of Ballston |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Less Than High School | 19.5% | 7.94% | 7.84% |
| High School | 27.4% | 19.49% | 17.34% |
| Some College | 17.5% | 12.14% | 13.32% |
| Associate Degree | 7.2% | 6.94% | 8.03% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 16.2% | 12.45% | 13.01% |
| Graduate Degree | 12.2% | 8.32% | 9.41% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median household income in the Town of Ballston is slightly better than that of Saratoga County, but below that of some adjacent municipalities. According to the 1999 Census, the median household income in Ballston was \$54,845. This figure is about \$5,000 more than that of the Saratoga County (\$49,460) and much higher than the Village of Ballston Spa (\$37,173). However, it was lower than select adjacent Towns of Clifton Park and Malta.

In Ballston, 4.5% of all families were below the poverty level in 1999. Since poverty levels inversely relate to median household income, Ballston's 1999 poverty level was lower than that of the County (6.0%) and Village of Ballston Spa (9.8%), and higher than that of Clifton Park (2.6%) and Malta (2.6%).



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

Ballston will likely experience continued pressure from population growth. Rapid population growth often results in heightened pressures on public services, infrastructure and educational systems. Increased taxes often result from rapid population growth due to the need to pay for expanded schools and services. Community character and open spaces can also be threatened.

The Town is taking a proactive step in addressing these concerns through the comprehensive planning process and update of the zoning and subdivision amendments. The comprehensive plan will identify a vision for Ballston. It will also address where growth should occur and how the community can accommodate such growth.

Additionally, Ballston, like many municipalities, will also need to address the issues associated with an aging population. Access to basic services and medical care as well as affordable housing are issues to be considered.

INFRASTRUCTURE CAPABILITIES

The capability of the Town’s infrastructure, such as sewer and water systems, to accommodate current development and to accommodate future development is a critical consideration. Improvements to

existing infrastructure are constant and typically require significant financial resources. The addition of new or expansion of existing infrastructure requires public investment and can have dramatic impact on the character, function and safety of the Town. Such expansion requires careful thought with regard to growth inducing impacts. The **Infrastructure Capabilities Map** illustrates the location of various types of infrastructure.

WATER

Ballston's water districts were created and expanded in the 21st century. The Town currently has three Water Districts (Districts 2, 5 and 6) that are served by water from the Town of Glenville. Water Districts 3,4 and the Milton Terrace Water District are served by the Village of Ballston Spa. According to the 2004 Annual Water Report, the Town's water system serves 1,683 service connections.³ In 2004, the total water usage was slightly under 110 million gallons, up from 107 million gallons in 2003. The entire distribution system has been designed to provide the fire flows required by the Insurance Services Organization for recognition as acceptable for "protected" fire insurance rates. All water services and customers are metered in the Town.

The Town's water is purchased from the Town of Glenville. The Glenville water supply is taken from the Great Flats Aquifer through four drilled wells that are each approximately fifty feet deep. The aquifer is an extensive bed of sands and gravel underlying the Mohawk River channel that produces clear, clean water. Water from the Village of Ballston Spa is drawn from deep wells located off Roland Street and Baker Road in the Town of Milton.

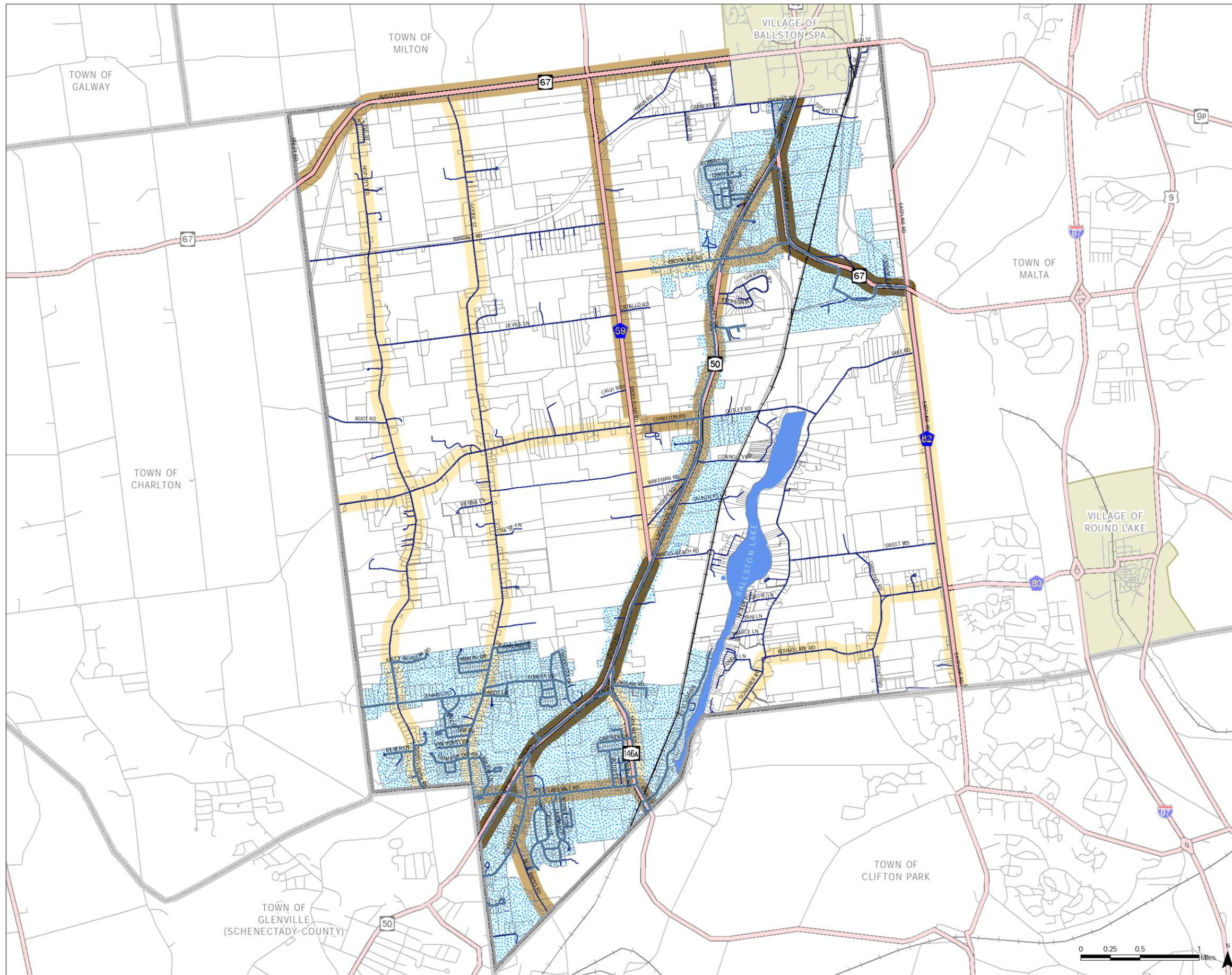
According to the Water and Sewer Department, the system has an adequate amount of water to meet present and future demands. In 2004, the Town of Glenville began the process of expanding the present treatment facility. This expansion would double production capacity.

The Town has approved a new water district along Lakehill Road, and property owners in the new district will pay approximately \$1,000 per year for its services.

SEWER

In March 2005, the Saratoga County Sewer District #1 released an Engineers' Report for the *Evaluation of Sanitary Sewer in the Ballston Lake Watershed (Sewer Report)*. Within this report, the feasibility of installing a public sanitary sewer system and a preliminary collection system layout were discussed.

³ 2004 Ballston Annual Water Report, http://www.townofballstonny.nycap.rr.com/annual_water_report_20041.htm



TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

- KEY**
- WATER MAIN
 - ▨ WATER DISTRICT
 - MAJOR ROADS
 - PARCEL BOUNDARIES
 - LOCAL ROADS
 - RAILROAD
 - TOWN BOUNDARIES
 - VILLAGES
- AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC COUNT**
- > 10,000
 - 5,000 - 10,000
 - < 5,000

Data Sources:
 - Water Main, District: Town of Ballston
 - AADT Traffic Counts: NYSDOT
 - Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 - Parcel Boundaries: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004

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Most properties located within the watershed are currently served by on-site septic systems. Historically, there has been a concern with failing septic systems and the potential impact on lake water quality and public health. Soils unsuitable for conventional septic systems and a high groundwater table contribute to the potential failure of conventional disposal systems. The Sewer Report has identified this area as an area for high growth potential due to its proximity to Saratoga Springs, Schenectady and Albany, as well as the proposed Luther Forest Technology Park in Malta. The Sewer Report found that increased development without a public sanitary sewer system is likely to have adverse impacts on the quality of Ballston Lake.

According to the Sewer Report, if existing development within the study area were connected to public sewer, the estimated peak flow would be 2.2 MGD. The estimated peak flow from this same study area in twenty years would be 3.3 MGD. Wastewater would be conveyed via a system of gravity sewer, small pump station and forcemains to a larger pump station and connect with the Trunk Sewer of County Sewer District #1. The existing Trunk Sewer is anticipated to have enough reserve capacity to accommodate the estimated peak flow increases.

SOLID WASTE

The Town of Ballston does not have a sanitation department or refuse district. Private haulers such as County Waste, a company based in Clifton Park, perform garbage collection for residential and commercial buildings.

The Town operates a small dump for the disposal of brush and leaves only. It is located on Outlet Road and is usually closed to the public. The Town schedules specific opportunities for metal as well as leaf and brush. In addition, the Town holds an annual Town of Ballston Clean-up Day.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

While specific needs exist for both sewer and water infrastructure, it should be recognized that maintenance and repair of existing infrastructure is continuous. The community must consider the costs of on-going maintenance of existing facilities as well as the need for additional facilities.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Transportation in the Town of Ballston, as in many suburban towns, is highly auto-oriented. The 2000 Census found that of the 3,248 occupied households, 95% had one or more autos, and of those, almost 70% had two or more autos. Commuting to and from work was almost entirely (92%) by auto, and mostly in single-occupant vehicles. Transit accounted for only 1% of all commutes while 7% worked at home or used other means of transport. The average travel time to work was 23 minutes. Of the 4,261 residents

who were reported working, 48% worked in Saratoga County (including almost 19% in Ballston), 28% commute to Schenectady County, 18% to Albany County, and 3% to Rensselaer County.

HIGHWAYS

Autos, trucks and buses utilize the 84-mile Ballston road system for both local trips and through traffic. To varying degrees of adequacy, the roads also accommodate pedestrians and bicycles. The following types of roads are found in Ballston.

State Highways

Fourteen miles of state highways connect Ballston with nearby urban centers and with major routes, such as I-87.

- a. **State Route (SR) 50** is one major state route in Ballston. The highway extends through the entire Town, from the Village of Ballston Spa in the northeast to the Town of Glenville in Schenectady County in the southwest. SR 50 is classified as a Principal Arterial, generally 20 to 22 feet in width, with shoulders varying from 3 to 4 feet. NYS DOT rates the pavement condition from *good* to *very good*. SR 50 is a 2-lane road except where left turn lanes are provided at Route 67, at Middle Line Road (northbound), at Route 146a (southbound), at Kingsley Road (southbound) and at Lake Hill Road.

In addition to Town traffic, SR 50 carries traffic from Saratoga Springs to the north and from Scotia and Schenectady to the south. Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) was over 15,000 to the south of Ballston Spa (where it overlaps with Route 67), over 12,000 in the Hamlet of Burnt Hills, and about 9,000 between the two, near the Charlton Rd/ Outlet Rd intersection.⁴ Approximately 6 to 7% of the vehicles counted are heavy vehicles. Traffic signals are located at the junctions with Route 67, Brookline Road, Charlton Road/Outlet Road, Route 146a, and Lake Hill Road.

- b. **SR 67** is another significant route in the Town and is also classified as a Principal Arterial from its overlap with SR 50 east to Exit 12 of the Northway. It is classified as a Minor Arterial from Ballston Spa to the west, where it forms the boundary between the Towns of Ballston and Milton. SR 67 is generally two lanes; pavement width is about 24 feet and shoulders vary from 3 to 5 feet in most places. NYS DOT rates the condition of most segments as *good*.

Route 67 carries a considerable volume of traffic. The segment between Route 50 and Northway Exit 12 in Malta carries over 17,000 AADT. It carries less than 10,000 AADT west of Ballston Spa. The percentage of heavy vehicles is generally about 6% but as much as 9% in sections east of SR 50, where there are several large commercial sites. There is a traffic signal at East Line Road, and a flashing red/yellow signal at Middle Line Road that operates between midnight and 9

⁴ Traffic volumes from the NYS DOT 2003 Traffic Volume Report. Some data is from prior years.

AM.

- c. **Route 146a** connects the Town with I-87 Exit 9 via Route 146 and with Exit 10 via MacElroy Road/Ushers Road in the Town of Clifton Park. It is two lanes in width, with a pavement width of 22 to 24 feet and shoulders varying from 2 to 4 feet. NYS DOT rates the pavement condition as *good*. AADT on Route 146a is estimated at over 8,000 between Lake Hill Rd and Main St, Elnora (County Route 82), but less than 3,000 between Lake Hill Road and Route 50, north of Burnt Hills. The percentage of heavy vehicles using the road is approximately 7%. A red/yellow blinker light is located at the intersection with Lake Hill Road.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Capital District area describes all projects for which federal transportation funds are eligible. The TIP has been developed by the Capital District Transportation Committee, the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MPO) for this region, and updated annually. The Draft 2005-2010 TIP contains one project in Ballston, the Removal of the SR 67 Bridge over the Abandoned Delaware & Hudson Line scheduled for 2006. The project may include an underpass for the Zim Smith Trail, which is being constructed along the abandoned railroad right-of-way (see Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities, below).

County Highways

Saratoga County routes account for almost 28 miles of highway in the Town of Ballston. These roads serve rural land and communities, and connect the Town with adjacent towns. Blue Barnes Road / Kingsley (CR 110) and Middle Line Road (CR 59) north of CR 51 are classified as arterials. Ballston's remaining county roads are classified as collectors or local roads.

Traffic volumes on County highways are generally less than 5,000 AADT. Several of these roads carry volumes in the 5,000 to 10,000 AADT range, including Middle Line Road (CR 59), Brookline Road (CR 110) between SR 67 and CR 59, Lake Hill Road (CRs 58,110 and 339), and Kingsley Road /Blue Barnes Road (CR 110)⁵. The only county traffic signal is located at the intersection of Lake Hill Road and Kingsley Road in Burnt Hills. All other intersections are controlled by stop signs.

Town Highways

The remaining 43 miles of road in Ballston are Town highways, which are classified as local roads. The primary function of Town highways is to provide access to adjacent property.

⁵ Saratoga County Department of Public Works

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Transit Routes

The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) and Upstate Tours supply public bus service to residents of the Town. CDTA operates Routes 50, 71, and 73 in Ballston. Route 50 runs once each way in the morning and afternoon between Ballston Spa and Schenectady, along SR 50 in the Town. In Fiscal Year 2004-05, annual ridership was 11,000 passengers. Route 71 operates hourly between Ballston Spa and Saratoga Springs (ridership figures are not available.) Route 73 is a rural route that operates only on Wednesdays, providing one trip to Schuylerville and one trip to Galway. This route, on which riders flag down the bus as needed, has an annual ridership of fewer than 800 persons. In addition to the CDTA routes, Upstate Tours operates a route from Ballston Spa to downtown Albany and to Colonie Center.

Auto-oriented land use design and zoning and low residential densities in the Town are not conducive to transit service. The CDTA reports that in terms of ridership and revenue, the routes in Ballston perform poorly. CDTA also cites a lack of supportive pedestrian infrastructure outside the Village of Ballston Spa.

Park-and-Ride Services

Park-and-Ride lots offer opportunities to residents with dispersed origins—such as those in Ballston—to take transit or to carpool. Upstate Tours offers several trips a day between Park-and-Ride lots near Northway Exits 9, 11 and 12 and downtown Albany. Approximately 200 riders per day utilize this service. Another Park-and-Ride lot located at Fire Road near Northway Exit 9 is accessible only to carpoolers.

Regional Transit Development Plan

CDTA is conducting a major planning effort to assess and reorganize its public transit services. Its purposes are to increase transit ridership; to align service provided with service demand, with attention to new markets; to provide input to the fleet replacement program; to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations; and to establish service guidelines and monitoring mechanisms. Services to the Town of Ballston and to Saratoga County will be reviewed in this planning effort.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

Sidewalks and Shoulders

Walking and bicycling can be excellent forms of recreation and alternatives to vehicular travel if safe and adequate facilities are provided. Sidewalks can provide a safe and convenient way for walking moderate distances to schools, community facilities and local shopping areas. The Town of Ballston, unfortunately, has very few sidewalks. A sidewalk is located on Lake Hill Road between CR 110 and SR 146a, where it

serves users of the public library and Stevens Elementary School.

Roadway shoulders can also safely serve pedestrians and bicyclists in a much broader area than can be provided with sidewalks. However, shoulders must be paved and of adequate width (at least 4 feet and preferably more) to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicycles. In Ballston, these safety requirements are generally not met. Although shoulders on several portions of the state highway system appear to be adequate, shoulders on most other highways in the Town are less than adequate in width. Where they are paved, there is an accumulation of debris and gravel that makes walking and bicycling along the road difficult and dangerous.

Trails

An extensive trail system has been developed for many years in Saratoga County. The 3.25-mile Ballston Veterans Trail extends from Outlet Road to Route 146a, east of and adjacent to the Delaware and Hudson Rail tracks. An unpaved parking area for three cars is located at the north end of the trail. At the south end, unpaved space exists for about a dozen cars; however, in order to utilize these spaces, vehicles must back onto SR 146a, which can be a dangerous maneuver.

The Zim Smith Trail is currently under construction. The trail extends along an abandoned rail line right-of-way south from the Village of Ballston Spa. It turns east and goes along the south side of SR 67 after crossing under the SR 67 bridge. Due to structural deterioration, NYS DOT has programmed for removal of the bridge and an underpass of new SR 67 for the trail is being studied. The trail will enter the Town of Malta and turn south, passing through the Village of Round Lake before turning east again.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

Highway Issues: Traffic Growth

Traffic congestion in Ballston is a growing concern. Traffic backups already occur at several intersections during peak periods, and the amount of traffic is increasing. Due to residential and commercial development anticipated in the Town, congestion may become a more significant issue in the near future. In recent years, traffic has increased at a rate of 3% annually on SR 67, 4% on SR 146a and 2% on SR50. Development in the Town and in nearby areas will continue this trend and—if all projects currently in the planning phase are implemented—may increase the rate of traffic growth.

Immediately south of the Village Ballston Spa, large scale commercial projects have been proposed. An access highway on the east side of SR 50 looping around the SR 50 / SR 67 intersection would provide access to this and related projects. Other proposals have been approved and development is underway in the Towns of Ballston and Malta. One of the most noteworthy developments is the Luther Forest

Technology Park project in the nearby Malta and Stillwater. This project, along with others, can considerably increase residential and non-residential growth in the Town, as well as corresponding traffic volumes. Traffic impact studies for individual projects will identify the improvements necessary to accommodate increased traffic volumes generated by such projects.

The cumulative impact of a series of development projects in the area and the secondary growth they may generate requires a more comprehensive study. The CDTC is funding a SR 67 Study being conducted by a consultant for the Towns of Malta and Ballston. The SR 67 Study has identified the location of residential, commercial, warehouse and industrial projects in the Towns of Ballston and Malta. While many of these projects are speculative, they could add over 5,000 peak hour trips to the Town highway system if they all materialize. The Route 67 Study will be assessing in detail the traffic impact of these projects and the roadway improvements they may require.

Highway Issues: Safety

In a review of accident data for SRs 50, 67 and 146a, it was found that six fatal accidents occurred on those highways over a 12-year period ending in 2002. In that same period, pedestrians and/or bicycles were involved in 18 accidents.

The data show that on average (over the 12-year period), 108 accidents occur each year on the state highways in Town. Most of the accidents occurred on SR 50 (73 annually) and SR 67 (29 annually). Given these roads' length and traffic volumes, the accident rates per million vehicle-miles (mvm), at 2.6 and 2.2, respectively, were near the average for two-lane undivided highways. SR 146a averaged less than seven accidents per year, but accident the rate on this road was higher, at 3.8 per mvm. This suggests the need for follow-up studies of the accidents and roadway conditions on SR 146a.

In addition, the issue of parking at trail heads should be addressed. Limited parking along busy roadways creates a potential safety concern for hikers and thru traffic. Relocating parking areas or creating additional parking a locations along a trail may be items to consider.

Highway Issues: Access Management

If not properly managed, access to highways from adjacent property can increase the number of accidents and reduce roadway capacity. Unplanned and unregulated driveways and poorly defined parking lots, particularly at non-residential properties, are serious problems in developing towns. The potential for accidents increases when vehicles enter and exit the traffic stream at irregular and unexpected locations. This is particularly true near intersections. Vehicles entering and exiting the traffic stream also impede the movement of through traffic. This reduces the roadway capacity and leads to difficult and costly road widening.

While NYS DOT reviews and issues permits for access to state highways, it cannot refuse all access. Evidence of haphazard driveway development and unmarked parking areas can be seen along SR 50 south of Ballston Spa and the SR 67 intersection, as well as in the vicinity of Burnt Hills.

Access management is the technique of land and roadway planning that minimizes the number of driveways and sets standards for their location, design and operation. Connecting parking lots, for example, makes it unnecessary for vehicles to enter traffic to access adjacent businesses. Town subdivision regulations can play a significant part in assuring that roadway capacity and safety are not compromised as development occurs.

Pedestrian and Bicycles Facilities

Improving pedestrian crossings and sidewalks near public and civic locations, such as schools, is important to ensuring pedestrian safety and connections. The Town should consider appropriate locations for such facilities. Additional bicycle facilities in the form of paved shoulders, bike lanes or separate bike paths would also serve to create connections between civic buildings, neighborhood services and neighborhoods.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Within the Town of Ballston, the natural environment is just as important in shaping community character as the built environment. The ability of the natural environment to sustain development is inherently limited. There are constraints based on soils, slopes, wetlands, and a variety of natural features. When considering the type and intensity of development that could occur within a community, these natural constraints must also be considered.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are among the world's most productive ecosystems. Wetlands are generally defined as areas covered with shallow water permanently or for periods long enough to support aquatic or semi-aquatic vegetation. Areas designated as wetlands may include bogs, swamps, marshes, wet meadows, flood plains, and water-logged (hydric) soils. Wetlands serve many important functions including: providing habitat for wildlife and plants, playing a role in storm water management and flood control, filtering pollutants, recharging groundwater, and providing passive recreational and educational opportunities.

Federal policy regarding wetlands is that there shall be no net loss. Under the most recent federal rules,

which took effect in the fall of 2000, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates any disturbance of 1/10 of an acre or more of wetlands. Under the current Nationwide Permit #39 any disturbance of wetlands and waters of the United States between 0 - 1/10th of an acre will require post-construction notification. If the disturbance is between 1/10 and 1/2 of an acre, pre-construction notification is required with the possibility of mitigation. If the disturbance is more than 1/2 acre, an individual Army Corps Permit is required, along with an Individual 401 Water Quality Certification from the NYSDEC.

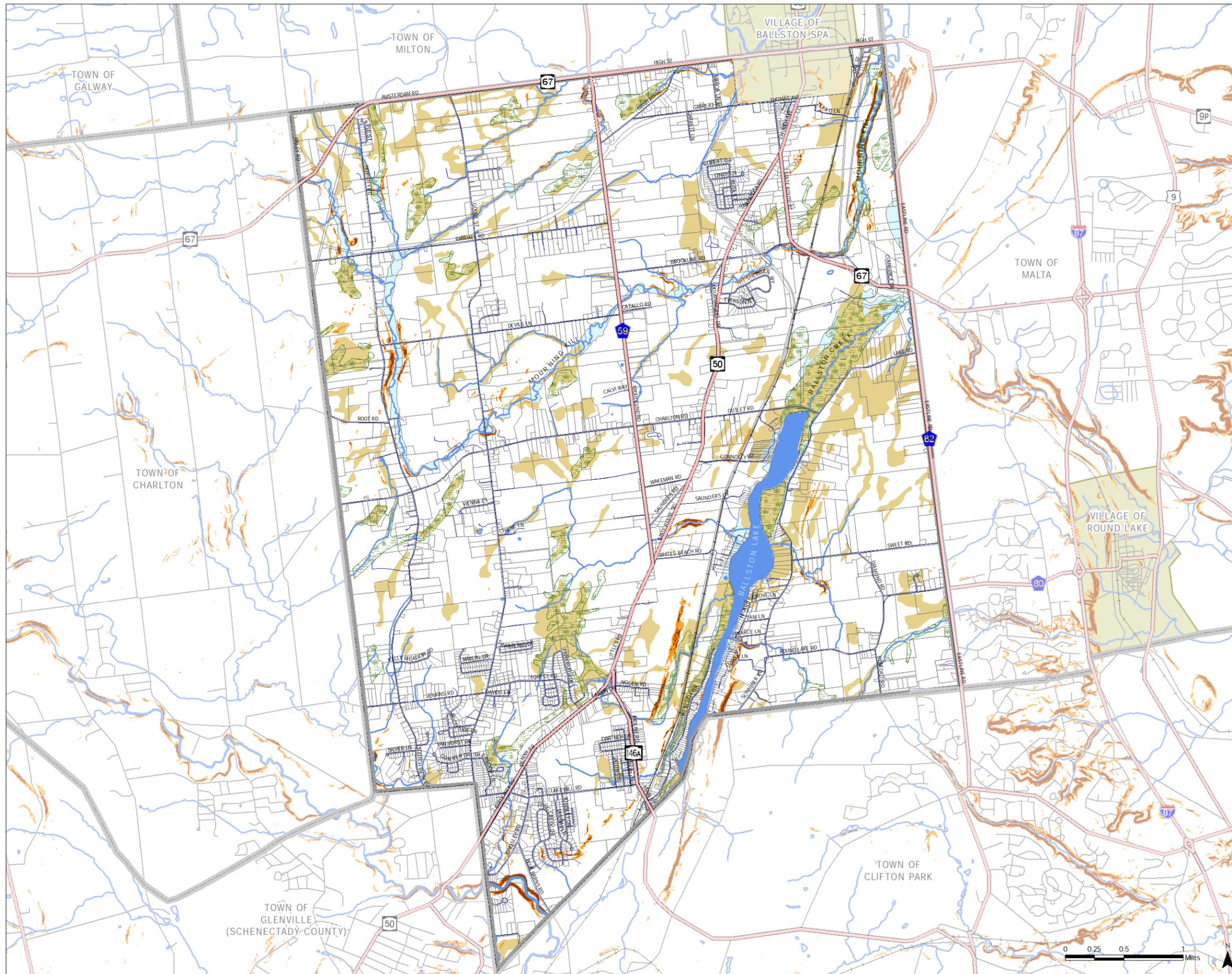
Federally regulated wetlands, because they are not mapped as such, can be difficult to identify and are sometimes overlooked in project reviews. It requires vigilance on the part of responsible landowners, and local review boards, to ensure that these smaller wetland areas are not destroyed as development occurs. Hydric soils are a strong indicator of the presence of wetlands.

New York State, through the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC), generally regulates all wetlands that are 12.4 acres or more. New York State regulated wetlands are mapped and are therefore more likely to be considered in project reviews. The **Environmental Features Map**, shows the location of NYS DEC wetlands. A large area of wetlands exists at the north end of Ballston Lake (as it flows into Ballston Creek) and there are wetlands on either side of the lake further to the south as well. Various other wetland areas are found throughout the Town.

FLOODPLAINS

Areas bordering on a stream, river, pond, lake or wetland that are periodically submerged by floodwater are considered to be floodplains. Floodplains serve two important purposes; they act as temporary natural water storage areas during periods of high water after heavy rains or melting snow, and they reduce peak flows during flooding, therefore limiting downstream bank erosion. Flood zones, as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are shown on the Environmental Features Map, x-x. The 100-year floodplains are found primarily alongside waterbodies and streams such as Ballston Lake, Mourning Kill and the other primary streams in the northwest area of Ballston.

The Town has been a participant in the Federal Flood Insurance Program since June 1, 1984. Many communities have regulations that prevent development from taking place within a floodplain or within a specific distance of a floodplain to ensure protection of these sensitive areas. Development within a floodplain can potentially impact the ability of a floodplain to accommodate floodwaters and can pose a risk to property. The areas displayed are floodplains that have a 1% chance of being inundated in any given year, and subsequently are considered unsuitable for development.



ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

KEY

- 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN
- NYS DEC WETLANDS
- BALLSTON LAKE
- RIVERS, STREAMS, CREEKS
- 16%-24% SLOPES
- 25%+ SLOPES
- HYDRIC SOILS
- TOWN BOUNDARIES
- VILLAGES
- MAJOR ROADS
- LOCAL ROADS
- RAILROAD

Data Sources:
 -Wetlands: Town of Ballston, NYSDC
 -Floodplain: Town of Ballston, FEMA
 -Slopes: Generated from USGS DEMs
 -Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 -Parcel Boundaries: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004

PROJECT # 2005 - 05022.10P
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File Location: S:\GIS\05022\Environmental Features.mxd

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TOWN OF
 BALLSTON,
 NEW YORK



STEEP SLOPES

Less than 1% of Town land is covered by slopes of 25% or greater. The majority of the steep slopes are found on river and lake embankments and on the edges of FEMA flood zones and/or NYS DEC wetlands. Attempting to build on these slopes is not impossible, but it must be done with great care. Vegetated ground cover acts as a sponge, slowing down rainwater and snowmelt and allowing the water and nutrients to be absorbed into the soil. Careless development can expose the soil causing increased runoff and erosion, which can in turn increase sedimentation rates and nutrient loading in downstream waterways.

SOILS

Ballston is underlain with glacial till and impervious bedrock. The soils were mixed by retreating glaciers and have a wide variety of characteristics. The bedrock is dominated by sandstone and shale of the Ordovician Schenectady Formation.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) classifies soils for a variety of purpose including but not limited to agriculture and development. Agricultural soils are classified as either *Prime Farmland* or *Farmland of Statewide Significance*. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Prime Farmland possesses the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and is available for those uses. Prime farmland is of major importance in meeting Nation's short- and long-term needs for food and fiber..

Farmland of Statewide Significance is land that is considered of statewide importance for the production of crops. These soils are important to agriculture in the state, but exhibit some properties that do not meet *Prime Farmland* criteria, such as seasonal wetness, and erodibility. Such land produces fair to good yields when managed appropriately.

Many parts of the Town are not currently serviced by public sewer and water. Therefore, the ability to properly site individual septic systems may become a limiting factor to development. Septic systems must be able to function properly to avoid serious health issues.

According to the March 2005 *Evaluation of Sanitary Sewer in the Ballston Lake Watershed* Report, soils within the Ballston Lake Watershed are generally not suitable for conventional septic systems due to high groundwater tables. In situations with high groundwater tables, conventional systems do not function properly and could ultimately introduce pollutants in the groundwater and eventually into the lake. Failing septic systems are potentially a serious threat to health and water quality.

WATERWAYS AND HABITAT

The northern part of Ballston lies within Mohawk watershed, and southern is within Hudson-Hoosic watershed.⁶ The 278-acre Ballston Lake, which is approximately 3.5 miles long and 750 feet wide, is the only still water body within the Town. The surface is at an elevation of 251 feet. The south basin has a depth of 120 feet and the north basin, which is a marsh area, has a depth of 10 feet. NYSDEC has listed Ballston Lake as a class A waterbody, which is deemed a suitable supply of drinking water. Class A waterbodies are also suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. The Ballston Lake Watershed encompasses 8,537 acres in both the Towns of Ballston and Clifton Park. The variety of all-season activity on Ballston Lake, as well as its scenic landscape, makes it one of the Town's top attractions. Other major surface water bodies include Mourning Kill and Ballston Creek.

The Natural Heritage Program is a systematic, scientific inventory of data on rare plants and animals that are native to New York. Ecological communities are also inventoried. The data assists in the facilitation of sound conservation, planning and natural resource management. In addition, the data helps to conserve ecological communities, plants and animals that represent New York State's natural heritage. According to a letter from the NYS DEC Natural Heritage Program dated May 11, 2005, there is only one endangered or threatened wildlife, fish and plant species located in the Town. The Frosted Elfin is found near the Long Kill Road Power line right-of-way. NYS DEC has designated this species as Critically Imperiled. The letter also indicates that Ballston Lake has been designated a "Warm Water Fish Concentration Area."

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

Ballston has a variety of natural resources that contribute significantly to its high quality of life. As development occurs, it will inevitably push the extent to which these resources are impacted. Impacts from future development should be carefully considered in areas of steep slopes, wetlands, and areas containing soils undesirable for development. The DEC's Natural Heritage Program, for example, should be notified as development occurs on specific sites to ensure no conflicts with endangered or threatened species occur and to determine mitigation measures to reduce the potential impact on such species. By identifying important natural resources early in the development process serious, irreversible impacts can most likely be avoided.

⁶ www.dec.state.ny.us

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Services within the Town of Ballston include school systems, fire and emergency services, libraries, post offices, and senior services. In addition, the Town supports a variety of programs as a service to the community, such as a summer recreation program through the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Schools and a swim program in the Village of Ballston Spa.

The Town government is located in Town Hall on Charlton Road, which opened in 1977. A major addition was placed on that building and completed in 2005.

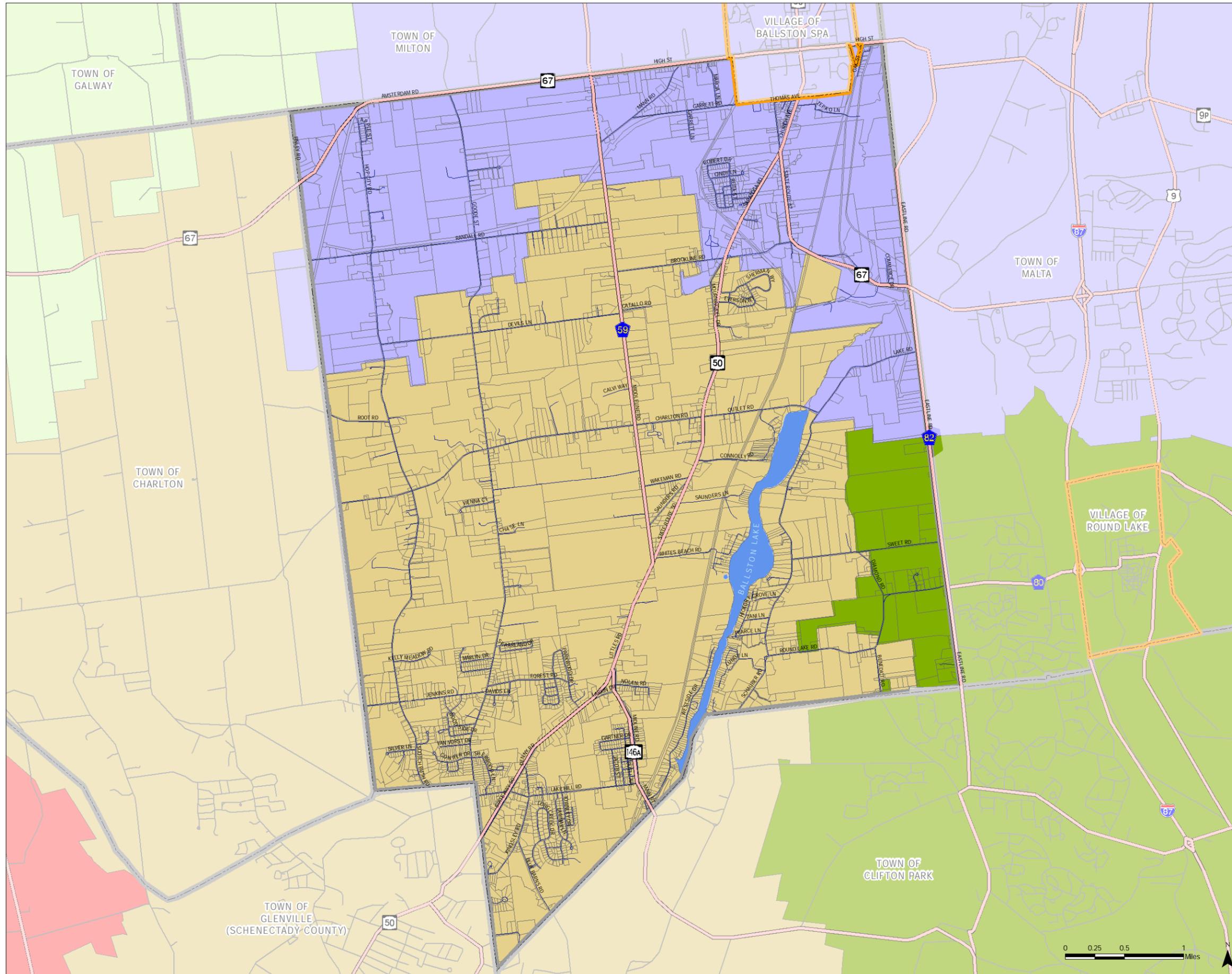
SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Residential growth in a community can impact the educational system as an influx of school age children places increased pressures on existing systems. This pressure is often passed onto residents through increased taxes. Therefore, when examining the growth within a community, the impact on schools must also be considered. This inventory assesses the three School Districts in the Town of Ballston: the Ballston Spa Central School District, the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District, and the Shenendehowa Central School District. Created in 1925, the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake CSD was the first consolidated and second centralized school district in the State of New York.

Geographically, the Ballston Spa CSD, in the northern portion of Town, encompasses 30.7% of Ballston. The Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake CSD, in the central and southern areas of Town, encompasses 64.2% and the Shenendehowa CSD covers only 5.1% of land in the southeast. The **School Districts Map** illustrates the extent of the school districts within the Town.

According to the *New York State District Report Card*, the Ballston Spa CSD had a 2002-2003 enrollment of 4,477 pupils. In the same year, the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake District had an enrollment of 3,413 pupils and the Shenendehowa District had an enrollment of 9,233 pupils.

The following chart illustrates financial data for each school district. As a smaller district, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake has a significantly lower outstanding debt than the larger districts and also generates less in revenues. The Shenendehowa District has the largest enrollment and, subsequently, the district also had the largest amount of outstanding debt and generates the most revenues.



SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

KEY

- TOWN BOUNDARIES
- MAJOR ROADS
- VILLAGES
- LOCAL ROADS
- BALLSTON LAKE
- SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
- BALLSTON SPA C.S.D.
- BURNT HILLS-BALLSTON LAKE C.S.D.
- SHENENDEHOWA C.S.D.
- GALWAY C.S.D.
- SCOTIA-GLENVILLE C.S.D.

Data Sources:
 - School Districts: CUGIR
 - Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 - Parcel Boundaries: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004

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File Location: S:\GIS\05022\School Districts.mxd

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 NEW YORK



2003 School District Financial Data⁷

| District | Indebtedness (Total Outstanding Debt) | Revenues (Total) | Expenditures (Total) |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ballston Spa CSD | 51,115,610 | 57,269,620 | 55,445,185 |
| Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake CSD | 25,371,976 | 38,978,132 | 41,408,084 |
| Shenendehowa CSD | 74,608,615 | 106,954,339 | 114,816,136 |

Source: NYSORPS, www.orps.state.ny.us/MuniPro/

Interestingly, the distribution of graduates differs as well. Information gathered shows the percent distribution of 2002-2003 graduates from each district according to their post-graduation activities.⁸ The Shenendehowa District had the largest percentage of graduates in 4-year colleges (63%), followed by Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake (60%) and Ballston Spa District (54%). Each district had 4% of their graduates entering directly into the workforce.

Ballston also has three private schools: Fellowship Christian Academy, a Baptist school for Grades 1 through 7 that is located east of Ballston Lake; and two schools in the Village of Ballston Spa: Spa Christian School (K-6), and St. Mary's School (Pre-K-6.)

Projected School Enrollment Grades K-12

| District | School Year | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 05-06 | 06-07 | 07-08 | 08-09 | 09-10 |
| Ballston Spa | 4,574 | 4,609 | NA | NA | NA |
| Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake | 3,476 | 3,461 | 3,462 | 3,461 | 3,462 |
| Shenendehowa | 9,657 | 9,744 | 9,890 | 9,985 | 10,115 |

Sources: Ballston Spa, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake and Shenendehowa School Districts

While there are no collegiate level educational facilities in the Town of Ballston, within the region there is an abundance of educational institutions providing undergraduate, graduate, professional and other educational and job training programs including the following:

Adirondack Community College (Queensbury), College of Saint Rose (Albany), Excelsior College (Albany), Hudson Valley Community College (Troy), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (Troy), Schenectady County Community College (Schenectady), Siena College (Loudonville), Skidmore College

⁷ From <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/muni/specprep/2003/2003schools.pdf>. Total debt is the principal balance of all indebtedness issued for school district purposes outstanding as of June 30, 2003.

⁸ New York State District Report Card Comprehensive Information Report 2002-2003.

(Saratoga Springs), Empire State College (Saratoga Springs), Union College (Schenectady), and the University at Albany (Albany.)

The Region is also home to a number of high-technology teaching and research centers, such as Albany Medical Center, GE Corporate Research and Development, Wadsworth Center, and Knolls Atomic Power Lab.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Town of Ballston is covered by the County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Police, as the Town does not have its own police force. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and fire protection services are provided by trained volunteers. The Ballston Lake Ambulance Squad was founded in 1951 and continues to serve the greater Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake area today. Other squads serving the Town are the Burnt Hill Fire Department, Ballston Lake Fire Department, Round Lake Fire Department and the Ballston Spa Fire Department and the Community Emergency Corps. These squads receive support from nearby county EMS organizations.⁹

LIBRARIES¹⁰

The Town of Ballston Community Library is a special district funded by the Town of Ballston. The library was opened in the basement of Our Lady of Grace Church's Parish Hall on Edward Street in 1952, and moved to a building on Lakehill Road in 1958. In 2001, it moved to a new, adjacent building on Lakehill Road. Since its foundation, the library has increased its collection size from 2,789 items in 1955 to 68,032 in 2004 and the number of holders of library cards from 719 to 5,338 in the same period.

The library receives annual grants from the Town of Charlton, Saratoga County, New York State and the Southern Adirondack Library System. Currently, the Library has a total collection of 68,000 items, including books, magazines, videos, tapes, DVDs, CDs, puzzles and computer software. In 2004, 6,616 items were added to the collection, and 5,338 cardholders borrowed 174,144 items (an average of 23 items per person) in the chartered service area. Compared with a statewide average of 6.88 items per person per year, the Ballston Library is a highly utilized resource in the community. Children's materials are among the most heavily used in the library. Since 2003, 51% of all items circulated have been from the juvenile collection.

⁹ <http://www.crisny.org/not-for-profit/vffc/links.htm>

¹⁰ Town of Ballston Librarian

The Library provides Internet access computers for its patrons and has accumulated a circulating children's educational software collection. The library is currently in the process of installing an entirely new library automation system and on-line catalog, which will improve services to patrons. In 2004, the Library sponsored 438 programs for the community, which was a 16% increase over 2003. Over 8,000 children, teens and adults attended the programs, a 37% increase over 2003's attendance.

Library staff includes two full-time librarians, one full-time senior library clerk, and fifteen part-time employees all of whom work less than half time. An active Friends of the Library group that does fund-raising and puts on special events at the Library. In 2004, with the help of a management consultant, the library sought input from trustees, staff and other community stakeholders to create its first comprehensive long range plan. The blueprint will guide the library in its growth and development during the next three to five years.

The 2005 operating budget is \$448,703, of which \$349,600 (78%) has been raised by Ballston taxes. The library expects to receive another \$51,000 (11%) of its funding from the Town of Charlton. Funds from New York State, Saratoga County, and library system aid amount to \$9,654 (approximately 2% of the total budget.) The remaining \$38,449 is expected to come from other miscellaneous sources.

The Ballston Spa Public Library also serves residents and is located at 21 Milton Road in the Village of Ballston Spa. Chartered in 1893 by the State of New York, the Ballston Spa Library serves village residents, as well as residents in the Town of Milton, Ballston, Malta, Galway and Charlton. The majority of library funding comes from the village. Milton and Charlton, the Ballston Spa School District, and Saratoga County also contribute. The library has a collection of over 47,000 items.

POST OFFICES

There is a United States Post Office on Route 50 in Burnt Hills. Another Post Office is located in the Village of Ballston Spa.

SENIOR SERVICES

The Saratoga County Office for the Aging, located in the Village of Ballston Spa, provides benefits and services for the Saratoga County senior age 60 and over. Among the many services provided include adult day care (the closest center is in Clifton Park), counseling, in-home services, and employment training and placement. In addition, the Office for the Aging administers several clubs and centers for senior citizens throughout the county. The Burnt Hills/Ballston/Charlton center is in the southern portion of Ballston. The surrounding communities of Ballston Spa, Malta, and Clifton Park each contain a senior citizen club/center.

A number of senior independent living apartment complexes exist in Ballston and the surrounding municipalities. Council Meadows is in the southern part of Ballston, and others are located in Ballston Spa, Clifton Park, and Malta. Assisted living senior housing is available in Malta and Clifton Park.¹¹

The New York State budget for 2005-2006 includes funds that are specifically allocated to support “aging in place” initiatives. Among them is the “Access to Home” program that will invest \$10 million to make the homes and apartments of low and moderate income New Yorkers with disabilities more accessible.¹²

DISCUSSION OF NEEDS

As the school-age population continues to grow, it is increasingly important for the Town and school district to address educational needs from a fiscal, facility and programmatic standpoint. In addition, as the baby boom population reaches retirement age and the senior population expands, the Town needs to address specific senior housing, service and access needs. The trend among seniors is the desire to stay in their home. Access to medical care, social activities and basic life needs (such as grocery stores and pharmacies) as well as housing affordability often make this difficult. This is a growing concern that requires careful attention.

The impact on fire, police and emergency services should also be taken into consideration when new development occurs. Pressures on volunteer fire departments to appropriately staff calls and provide adequate service will invariably increase.

Evidently, there is a great need for the kinds of educational opportunities the library presents. In fact, comparison of reading materials circulation and sponsored programs attendance statistics may suggest that the latter are in greater demand. The library capacity to provide those services has to be compared to corresponding population needs. Perhaps, a new library branch or a community center will be required in the near future to serve those functions.

AGRICULTURE

Agricultural land is beneficial to the Town in many ways. First, agricultural land uses cost the Town and its residents less in terms of public services (such as fire, police, sewer, and education). In fact, numerous studies addressing the cost of public services indicate that residential development is often a fiscal drain

¹¹ Saratoga County Office for the Aging, www.co.saratoga.ny.us/aindex.html

¹² <http://aging.state.ny.us/index.htm>

on a community. According to organizations such as the American Farmland Trust, for every dollar of property tax revenue gained from agricultural land uses, the cost of providing public services is less than a dollar. Conversely, for every dollar gained in property tax revenue from residential land uses, the cost of providing public services is higher than a dollar.

Agriculture continues to play a vital role in the local and regional economy and food supplies. The agricultural industry contributes investments of money, tax base, and income in addition to providing employment. In addition, local farmstands provide a source of fresh, locally grown produce for nearby residents.

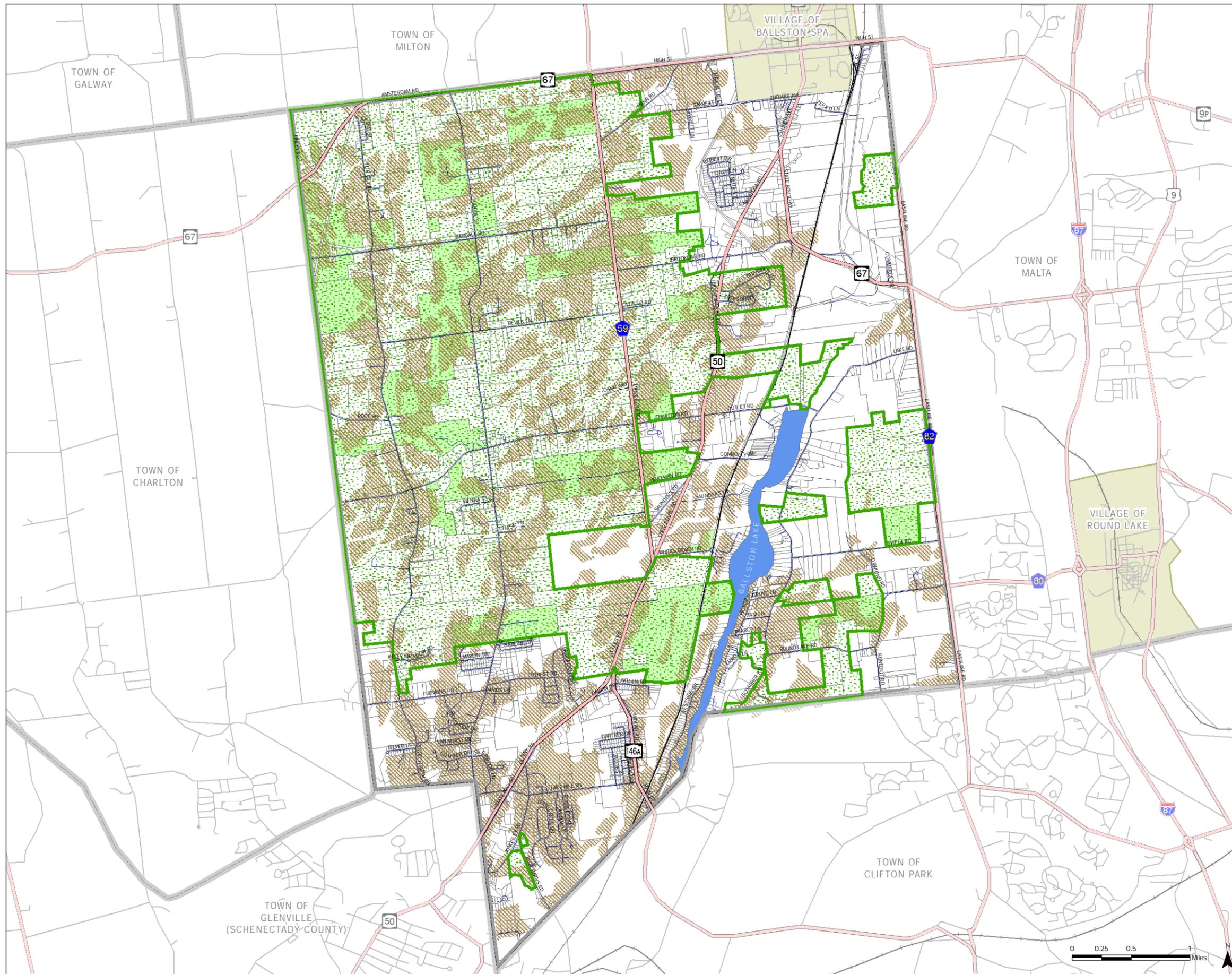
The **Agricultural Resources Map**, identifies the location of agricultural districts, prime farmland soils and agricultural parcels. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Prime Farmland possesses the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and is available for those uses. Prime farmland is of major importance in meeting Nation's short- and long-term needs for food and fiber.

Ballston has a patchwork of farm operations among residential development clusters. Active farms cover approximately 13% of land in the Town, located primarily north and north of Ballston Lake. There are also several parcels of farmland currently out of operation, which are considered vacant. Out of 3,757 properties in Town, 49 are registered as agricultural, which is a slight decrease from 2000. This trend in reduction of agricultural land is consistent with County and State trends.¹³ Many reasons exist for the decline in agriculture in Ballston, such as low prices for products, increased production costs, an aging farm operator population, regulations, non-farm neighbor relations, distance to support services, availability of farm labor, and development pressures.

The New York State Legislature created the Agricultural Districts Program in 1971. The intent of the program is to address concerns of non-agricultural land-uses expanding into valuable farm areas. The voluntary program offers protections to farmers including differential tax assessment; protection against unreasonable local regulations; special review of proposed eminent domain takings; required agricultural impact statements for public projects; notification requirements to inform property buyers about surrounding farming practices; and limited protection against nuisance lawsuits. Agricultural districts are reviewed and, if necessary, boundaries are modified every eight years.

Within Saratoga County, two agricultural districts totaling approximately 118,000 acres exist. The Town of Ballston is located within Agricultural District 2. All 49 of the parcels in Ballston that are classified as "agricultural," which have a total acreage of 2,415, are located within this District. According to a map

¹³ www.orps.state.ny.us



AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

KEY

- AGRICULTURAL PARCEL
- AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
- PRIME FARMLAND SOILS
- MAJOR ROADS
- LOCAL ROADS
- RAILROAD
- PARCEL BOUNDARIES
- TOWN BOUNDARIES
- VILLAGES

Data Sources:
 -Ag. Parcels: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004
 -Ag. District: Town of Ballston (portions modified to more accurately follow parcel boundaries), 2002
 -Prime Farmland: NRCS, 2004
 -Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 -Parcel Boundaries: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004

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File Location: S:\GIS\05022\Agricultural Resources.mxd

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 BALLSTON,
 NEW YORK



created by Saratoga County Real Property Tax Service for CCE in Saratoga County, Ballston is home to twenty farms, including horse farms, field crops farms, horticultural farms, farm stands, orchards, a honey stand, and an animal fiber farm.¹⁴

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

Saratoga County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, which represents broad-based groups of farmers, people associated with agricultural businesses, and county agencies, completed an Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan for Saratoga County in December of 1997.¹⁵ In addition, American Farmland Trust developed an agricultural and farmland protection plan for Saratoga County in 1999. The plan includes an analysis of agricultural resources, trends in the local economy and development patterns, and recommendations on how to protect the land base and support agricultural development. Since its adoption, the county has hired an agricultural economic development specialist to work with farmers and allocated \$1 million to acquire easements.¹⁶

A community with residential growth pressures, such as Ballston, has a higher risk of losing valuable agricultural land and losing a part of its rural character as well. Allowing property owners to gain a reasonable return on their investment as well as protecting working landscapes is a challenging balance that should be carefully considered as development pressures increase.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The Town of Ballston is part of the broader Capital District Region. In addition to Saratoga County, where Ballston is located, the Capital District includes Albany County, Rensselaer County, and Schenectady County. Situated at the confluence of the Hudson River and Mohawk River, the Capital District contains the New York State Capital, and with only 4.3% of the State's population, it has 21.7% of the State government jobs. Capital District residents fill the majority of these jobs.¹⁷

Excellent transportation linkages exist in the Capital District including interstate highways, county and local roads, a public bus transit system, commercial and passenger rail, Albany International Airport, and the Port of Albany. These transportation networks link the Region to important metropolitan centers in the United States and Canada.

¹⁴ www.ccesaratoga.org

¹⁵ Cornell Coop Extension

¹⁶ American Farmland Trust Website

¹⁷ Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Capital District – Vol. 2, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, October 2000.

In addition to transportation networks, the Region's workforce is well educated and flexible. These characteristics are important as the regional, national and global economies are being redefined. The Capital District for example has historically been an economy reliant on heavy manufacturing industries and is currently witnessing a shift to lighter high-tech industries. Educational institutions in the Region, such as the University at Albany and the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), are providing necessary educational and research services that will assist the Region in positioning itself for a changing economy. In addition, cooperation among regional organizations such as the Center for Economic Growth, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) – the Region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), and the Empire State Development Corporation will continue to be important.

The Capital District is also part of a larger Tech Valley Chamber Coalition, which includes 17 chambers of commerce representing 18 counties in the Hudson Valley. The Chamber Coalition represents 18,000 businesses and organizations employing nearly 400,000.¹⁸ The Chamber Coalition is working to position the Tech Valley as a receptor for new industries.

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

CDRPC is a regional planning and resource center serving Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties. CDRPC provides objective analysis of data, trends, opportunities, and challenges relevant to the Region's economic development and planning communities. CDRPC serves the best interests of the public and private sectors by promoting intergovernmental cooperation; communicating, collaborating, and facilitating regional initiatives; and sharing information and fostering dialogues on solutions to regional problems. Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce is another organization working to improve and maintain good economic conditions in the County. The Chamber also has a broad goal of promoting Saratoga County as a desirable place to work, live and conduct business.

According to the 2000 Census, over 53% of those persons in the Town age 16 and over have occupations in management or some variety of professional-level work. This represents the occupation with the highest percentage of those in the workforce and is consistent with the high educational attainment of Ballston residents. Production and Transportation occupations have the second largest percent of persons with over 17%. The farming, fishing and forestry occupations have the smallest percentage of persons in the workforce with 1.4%. The following chart illustrates the workforce breakdown by occupation.

¹⁸ Bethlehem Industrial Development Agency Economic Development Forum II, October 2003

Ballston's Workforce By Occupation in 2000

| Occupation Type | Number of Persons (Age 16 and over) | Percent of Persons (Age 16 and over) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Management & Professional | 2,314 | 53.1% |
| Sales | 593 | 13.6% |
| Service | 426 | 9.8% |
| Production & Transportation | 751 | 17.2% |
| Construction | 215 | 4.9% |
| Farming, Fishing, Forestry & Mining | 60 | 1.4% |

Source: U.S. Census

LUTHER FOREST TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS

The Town of Malta, which lies directly east of Ballston, is proposing the creation of the Luther Forest Technology Campus (LFTC), a PDD that would allow a mixture of industrial, commercial and residential uses, including up to four silicon “chip” manufacturing facilities, approximately 2 million square feet of ancillary uses, a hotel/conference center, and 50 residential homes. The 1,350-acre project site is located one-half mile southeast of the intersection of Dunning Street and Route 9 in Malta. If the LFTC is approved, its development will impact the entire County, particularly in terms of job creation, economic development and overall growth.

As stated in the Statement of Findings for the LFTC GEIS, “Industries like nanoelectronics manufacturing, which place a high value on and are dependent upon a highly skilled workforce, must locate in areas capable of attracting and retaining an educated workforce. Professionals and other upwardly mobile people are generally more attracted to thriving, culturally diverse communities like the Albany/Saratoga region.”

In terms of growth-inducing aspects of the LFTC, it will provide many new employment opportunities in the region, and will directly affect the Town of Ballston. According to the GEIS, “this new nanotech-cluster will likely contribute to population growth in the Capital Region and as far north as Warren and Washington Counties.” The Statement of Findings estimates that up to 10,000 new jobs will be created at full buildout of the Campus over a 15- to 25-year period, some of which will be filled by the existing population residing in an approximate 30 to 40 mile radius around the project site. New residents will be moving to the region to fill the management level positions, and it can be assumed that Ballston will feel the impacts of an influx of residents in terms of housing, retail services, or possibly ancillary businesses

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

Maintaining a balance between economic development and residential growth is critical. Additional residential growth often leads to an increased need for public services such as schools, emergency

services, and more. Balancing such growth with development that does not require as many public services is a challenging, but achievable task. With many communities in the Capital District and larger Tech Valley region each seeking economic development, Ballston may wish to distinguish itself as a business-friendly place if it wishes to encourage economic development. If this is a desire of the Town, the Town could accomplish such an economic development vision while still preserving the community character that is Ballston. This could be accomplished in many ways, including working toward a more clear development process, identifying potential locations to site various types of economic development and continuing to create a labor force that can support a variety of occupations. Preserving community character could be a part of all aspects of economic development from location to site design.

In addition, an emerging regional concern is that the region’s educated young people are moving out of the region. Creating jobs that might retain younger members of the population is of great importance to Ballston as well as the entire region, and the development of the LFTC could help to reverse this flow and even attract young professionals to the area. Because of its close proximity to the project, Ballston could position itself strategically as a desirable place for new employees of the LFTC to live by focusing on livability and quality of life and fostering a “creative class.” Engineers, scientists, designers, and artists are considered part of the creative class, which is demanding a higher quality of life in the communities within which they live. A higher quality of life can be enhanced by convenient services; cultural and entertainment opportunities; easy access by car, foot or bike; and unique residential options.

FISCAL CONDITIONS

As the table below illustrates, the Town of Ballston property tax rates are lower than surrounding municipalities. The Town of Ballston currently has no Town tax. The information shown is based on tax rate per \$1,000 assessed valuation for the fiscal year 2003 and was provided by the New York State Office of Real Property Services and the Town Assessor’s Office. As indicated in the table, the school district taxes are by far the largest component of the overall property tax rate.

Overall Property Tax Rates for Selected Municipalities* – Fiscal Year 2003

| Municipality | County Tax Rate | Town Tax Rate | School District Tax Rate/\$1000 Range | Total Overall Range |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Town of Ballston | 3.07 | 0 | 23.12-25.00 | 26.19-28.07 |
| Village of Ballston Spa | --- | 76.08 | --- | 76.08 |
| Town of Malta | 2.72 | 0.15 | 17.88-22.56 | 18.03-25.43 |
| Town of Clifton Park | 2.45 | 0.60 | 22.30-22.98 | 25.35-26.03 |

*Tax rates per \$1,000 assessed valuation. Source: NYSORPS, www.orps.state.ny.us

While there is no Town Tax, there are taxes levied for special districts. Special district assessments include the library, water, and emergency services. In addition, the Town of Ballston does not have a Highway Tax.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

The Town should take into account its fiscal setting as it considers the future vision for the community. To ensure future sustainability, the Town might consider achieving a balance of municipal costs and revenues between residential and non-residential development. In addition to fiscal impacts, impacts on land use, community character, transportation systems and other factors should be considered.

HOUSING

A community's housing stock and owner to renter ratio is a strong indicator of its stability. Typically a homeowner is more attentive to property maintenance than a renter or absentee landlord. A homeowner also tends to remain in their home for a longer period of time than a renter, reducing the amount of turnover within a neighborhood. These and other factors contribute to the level of investment in a neighborhood and ultimately contribute to the value and character as well. In Ballston, residential growth mirrors the population growth trend, as can be expected. In comparison to Saratoga County and adjacent municipalities, Ballston has grown at a slower pace over the past 20 years, but at a similar pace since 1990. Overall, it has grown steadily in the past century.

HOUSING UNITS

The number of housing units in Ballston in 2000 was 3,378. This figure represents increase of over 300 housing units since 1990. As shown in the table below, several municipalities surrounding Ballston, as well as Saratoga County as a whole, experienced an increase in housing units. The Town of Clifton Park experienced the greatest increase by far with nearly 2,200 additional housing units over the ten-year time period. In comparison, Ballston experienced relatively modest growth in housing units.

Housing Units 1990-2000

| Geographic Area | 1990 | 2000 | Change 1990-2000 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Town of Ballston | 3,071 | 3,378 | 307 |
| Village of Ballston Spa | To come | 2,404 | NA |
| Town of Malta | 5,053 | 5,754 | 701 |
| Town of Clifton Park | 10,880 | 13,069 | 2,189 |
| Saratoga County | 75,105 | 86,701 | 11,596 |

Source: www.census.gov

HOUSING TENURE

In 2000, the Town of Ballston's housing vacancy rates were lower than most surrounding communities in the area, at 3.8%. Clifton Park had a similar vacancy rate of 3.7% while Malta's was 8%. The Village of Ballston Spa had a vacancy rate of 5.5%. Along with low vacancy rates, the rate of owner-occupied housing is considered important to the long-term viability of a town. In 2000, Ballston had an owner-occupancy rate at 76%, compared to 78% in the Town of Clifton Park, 67% in the Town of Malta, 76% and 72% in Saratoga County. The Village of Ballston Spa has a relatively low rate of owner-occupied housing units at 53%.

Housing Tenure

| Geographic Area | Owner-Occupied | Vacant |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------|
| Town of Ballston | 76% | 2.8% |
| Village of Ballston Spa | 53% | 10.1% |
| Town of Malta | 67% | 3.6% |
| Town of Clifton Park | 78% | 3.7% |
| Saratoga County | 72% | 8.3% |

HOUSING VALUES

Housing values in Ballston are higher than those of Saratoga County. According to the 2000 Census, the median housing value of an owner-occupied home was \$124,900. This is higher than the County median of \$112,600, and between the median values of Clifton Park (\$143,700) and Malta (\$114,900.) The Village of Ballston Spa has a low median home value of \$98,800. Given the population growth and subsequent demand for housing, continued high housing values in and around Ballston are expected. As housing values rise, a community should consider options to provide for a mix of housing options such as senior housing and affordable housing.

More recent construction values provided on building permit applications for single family dwellings illustrates that values have been steadily increasing in the Town during the period between 2000 and 2005. In 2000, the average construction value of new residential development was \$178,608. This value increased to \$230,509 in 2005 (as of June 2005).

BUILDING PERMITS AND FUTURE GROWTH

Residential building permit data obtained from the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) indicates fluctuations in approved building permits during the time period from 1980 to 2003. The following table highlights the residential building permits approved.

Town of Ballston Residential Building Permits

| Year | Buildings | Units |
|------|-----------|-------|
| 1980 | 30 | 30 |
| 1985 | 33 | 50 |
| 1990 | 30 | 30 |
| 1995 | 22 | 22 |
| 2000 | 31 | 31 |
| 2003 | 49 | 57 |

Source: CDRPC

In recent years, Ballston has seen an increase in building permits issued. The Town approved more building permits in 2003 than in the 1980's and 1990's. Ballston issued an average of 41 building permits from 2000 to 2003 according to data compiled by CDRPC. High quality of life, a convenient commute to nearby cities, and good schools all work to attract residents.

The number of building permits issued in the Town each year provides a sense of the actual amount of development occurring. Examining the number of approved lots and lots in the pipeline can also help to identify the potential for future residential growth in the Town. However, it should be noted that in some cases approved lots are not always developed. A number of factors may influence the actual development of an approved lot including land suitability and market demands. Typically, most approved lots within the Town of Ballston are developed within a relatively short time frame. This signifies that there is indeed a demand for housing within the community.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NEEDS

The impact of developing all approved, available buildable lots and potential lots currently in the pipeline could be significant in terms of traffic, sewer and water services, schools and emergency services. The community will likely be faced with making decisions about whether or not sewer and water infrastructure should be extended for new development or to improve the safety of an existing development. The extension of such infrastructure can be utilized as a tool to guide growth to locations where it is desired. Therefore, the vision of the Town set forth in the comprehensive plan should be reflected throughout development review process.

If the Luther Forest Technology Project is approved, it can be expected that Ballston will receive an influx of new residents that will need to be accommodated either by the Town's existing housing stock or new development. In addition, rising construction values indicates that more reasonably priced housing may be needed for young professionals, seniors and young working families.

RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

PARKS

Multiple parks and recreational facilities exist within the Town of Ballston. Jenkin's Park, located along Jenkins Road is maintained by the Jenkin's Park Association. Fireman's Grove is owned by the Fire Department. Other facilities include the Ballston Lake Bike Path, the fishing pier on Outlet Road and Carpenter's Acres pocket park. These facilities further enhance the quality of life in the community and provide opportunities for both passive and active recreation. In the mid-20th Century, Ballston made major improvements to its only major park, Jenkins Park. The **Recreational, Historic and Cultural Resources Map** illustrates these resources.

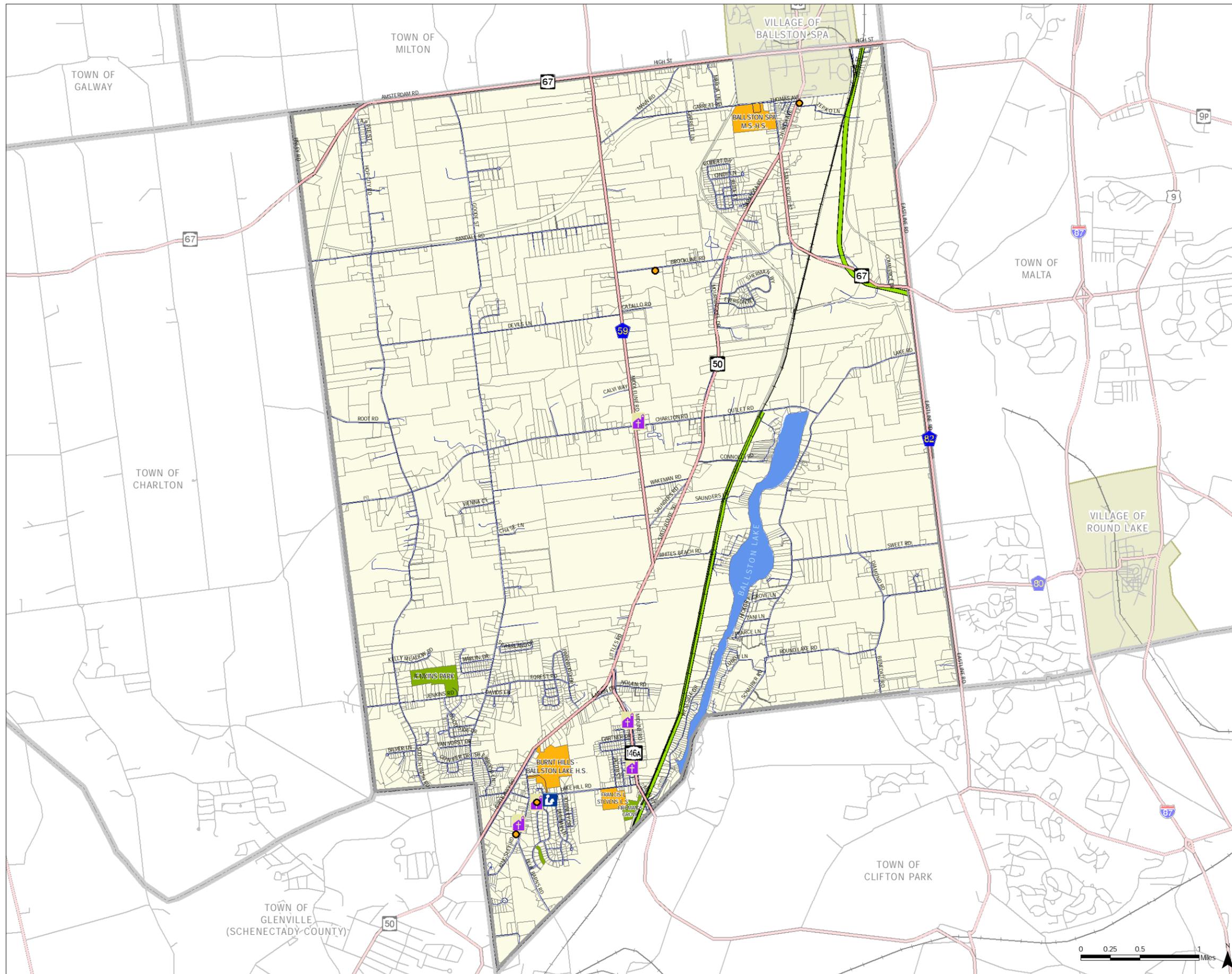
TRAILS

As mentioned previously, an extensive trail system has been developed for many years in Saratoga County. The 3.25-mile Ballston Veterans Trail extends from Outlet Road to Route 146a, east of and adjacent to the Delaware and Hudson Rail tracks. An unpaved parking area for three cars is located at the north end of the trail. At the south end, unpaved space exists for about a dozen cars; however, in order to utilize these spaces, vehicles must back onto SR 146a, which can be a dangerous maneuver.

The Zim Smith Trail is currently under construction. The trail extends along an abandoned rail line right-of-way south from the Village of Ballston Spa. It turns east and goes along the south side of SR 67 after crossing under the SR 67 bridge. Due to structural deterioration, NYS DOT has programmed for removal of the bridge and an underpass of new SR 67 for the trail is being studied. The trail will enter the Town of Malta and turn south, passing through the Village of Round Lake before turning east again

PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

For the first time within the Town of Ballston, open space has been preserved through a donated conservation easement. Saratoga PLAN (Preserving Land and Nature), a local land trust, holds the easement and worked with the landowners to preserve property. Located on East Line Road and bordered by Ballston Creek, the property was once a farm and is now characterized by mixed forest of hardwood and conifers. Twenty-nine acres of the property will be a preserve used for walking trails and cross-country skiing. In total, 40 acres has been preserved.



RECREATIONAL, HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Comprehensive Plan Update
June 2005

KEY

- LIBRARY
- CEMETERY
- CHURCH
- SCHOOL
- PARK / RECREATION AREA
- EXISTING TRAIL
- MAJOR ROADS
- LOCAL ROADS
- RAILROAD
- PARCEL BOUNDARIES
- TOWN BOUNDARIES
- VILLAGES

Note: The Town of Ballston lies within New York State's 'Mohawk Valley Corridor' Heritage Area

Data Sources:
 -Library, Churches, Cemeteries: Town of Ballston
 -Roads, Railroad, Municipal Boundaries: CUGIR, 2005
 -Parcel Boundaries, Schools, Parks: Town of Ballston, Saratoga County Office of Real Property, 2004

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File Location: S:\GIS\05022\Recreational Historic Cultural.mxd

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TOWN OF BALLSTON, NEW YORK



PROGRAMS

The Town of Ballston supports programs throughout the community and beyond. The Village of Ballston Spa Swim Program, the Summer Recreation Program at the Burnt Hills-Ballston Spa School District, the After School Program at the YMCA (in the Burnt Hills-Ballston Spa School District only), and the Summer Recreation Program in the village through BARC.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Town of Ballston takes pride in its rich collection of historic resources. There are thirty-eight Historical markers throughout the Town, as shown in the table below. In addition, several books on Ballston's history have been written by former Town Historian Kathy Briaddy, including *Ye Olde Days*; *Shadows: The Life and Times of Eliphalet Ball*, *The Founder of the Town of Ballston*; *Around Ballston Lake*; and *Around Burnt Hills*. In 2005, Town Historian Richard Reynolds co-authored a book, *From Wilderness to Community: The Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District*, a history of the school district that services most of Ballston and parts of neighboring towns. Moving forward, it will be important to protect the Ballston's heritage by continuing to recognize its many historic resources.

During the 19th Century, some of Ballston's wealthy residents built grand homes, some of which still survive today. Buell Mansion was and still is a grand mansion, and may have been used as a hideout before the Civil War for activities of the Underground Railroad. "The Castle" (although not in present-day Town of Ballston) was built on the eastern side of Ballston Lake. It was based on Warwick Castle in England and, from its highest balcony, it is said that one can see the Catskill Mountains. It was for a time used as a summer home for the man who lived in Hawkwood, another grand home which was located near where Route 50 and Middleline Road intersect today. Hawkwood was visited by Theodore Roosevelt who, as Vice President of the United States, came through the Town on his way to Buffalo to become the President upon the death of William McKinley. Hawkwood was the first house in the area to have pull chain toilets, running water and gas lights.

List of Historical Markers in the Town of Ballston

| Marker Name | Location | Coordinates |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Briggs Cemetery | Brookline Road | 42 58 47N 73 52 27W |
| Hubbell House | Brookline Road and Route 67 | 42 58 63 N 73 51 08W |
| Trip-Hammer | Brookline Road and Route 67 | 42 58 63 N 73 51 05W |
| Centennial Barn | Goode Street | 42 55 16N 73 54 23W |
| Pioneer Farm | Goode Street | 42 56 28N 73 53 97W |
| Larkins Corners | Goode Street and Charlton Road | 42 57 13N 73 54 12W |

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Jennings, Edmund house | Hop City Road | 42 59 05N 73 55 29W |
| McDermid, Angus house | Hop City Road | 42 57 89N 73 55 16W |
| Burnt Hills Baptist Church | Kingsley Road | 42 54 43N 73 53 76W |
| 1772 House | Lake Road | 42 56 44N 73 51 06W |
| Clinton, John | Lake Road | 42 56 75N 73 51 11W |
| Scribner House | Lake Road | 42 55 92N 73 51 28W |
| Stevens School | Lakehill Road | 42 54 64N 73 52 95W |
| Calvary Church | Lakehill Road | 42 54 60N 73 53 52W |
| Ballston Founding | Lakehill Road and Kingsley | 42 54 58N 73 53 70W |
| Kingsley Inn | Lakehill Road and Kingsley | 42 54 58N 73 53 73W |
| Larkin House | Larkin Road | 42 55 32N 73 52 97W |
| Palmer House | Larkin Road and 146A | 42 55 35N 73 52 87W |
| Mann House | Mann Road | 42 59 75N 73 52 32W |
| Ballston Center | Middleline and Charlton Road | 42 57 29N 73 52 62W |
| Ballston Center Church | Middleline and Charlton Road | 42 57 32N 73 52 61W |
| 1780 Invasion | Middleline and Devils Lane | 42 58 14N 73 52 76W |
| Christ Episcopal Church site | Middleline Road | 42 57 21N 73 52 60W |
| Colonial Tavern | Middleline Road | 42 58 96N 73 52 88W |
| CourtHouse | Middleline Road | 42 58 96N 73 52 89W |
| Davis, Samuel house | Middleline Road | 42 57 73N 73 52 68W |
| Filer House | Middleline Road | 42 59 18N 73 52 92W |
| Gordon, James site of house | Middleline Road | 42 58 26N 73 52 77W |
| Scott, George | Middleline Road | 42 59 74N 73 53 01W |
| Ball, Eliphalet site | Route 50 | 42 57 58N 73 51 89W |
| Bettys Tavern | Route 50 | 42 55 60N 73 52 72W |
| McCrea Hill | Route 50 | 42 58 01N 73 51 80W |
| McDonald's Grave | Route 50 | 42 56 33N 73 52 41W |
| Waterman House | Route 50 | 42 55 11N 73 53 35W |
| White, Stephen house | Route 50 | 42 57 02N 73 52 02W |
| Young, Samuel house | Route 50 | 42 57 50N 73 51 92W |
| Revolutionary War Fort | Route 50 and Charlton Road | 42 57 36N 73 51 96W |
| Taylor, John house | Route 67 | 43 00 01N 73 56 36W |

Source: Town of Ballston Town Historian

DISCUSSION OF NEEDS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends guidelines for parks, recreation, open space and greenways. The guidelines are intended to assist a community in determining its parks and recreation needs based on the community's unique situation. Utilizing the Level of Service (LOS) approach, the NRPA suggests a formula that establishes the recreation facility supply and recreation

facility demand within a community. The LOS formula is based on a series of factors such as the number of users per day per facility, participation frequency, type of user, facility demand, population service requirements, and other factors. The resulting detailed analysis can effectively identify the surplus and deficit of recreational facilities in the Town. The complete LOS approach is found in NRPA recommended *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* by James Mertes and James Hall.

Given the level of analysis required to complete a full recreation LOS, this discussion will only review the recreational needs as identified by the Town and anecdotally through public meetings. The Community Survey conducted as part of this process will also provide insight into the desires of the Town residents. The Town will need to determine if a more in-depth analysis should be considered in the future.

Appendix B

Community Survey Results

TOWN OF BALLSTON – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS 2005

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. After completion, please return the survey in the envelope provided. Thank you for your participation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please read each question carefully. Some questions require you to choose only one answer but others allow for two or more answers. **IMPORTANT!** If you mark more answers than allowed, none of your answers to that question will be counted.

Please use a #2 pencil or a BLUE or BLACK pen. We are having answers tallied using computer software.

Please completely fill in marks like this: ● NOT like this: ∅ or ⊗

1. How important are the following factors in your decision to live in the Town of Ballston?

| | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Too Important | Not At All Important |
|---|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| a. Born or raised in Ballston | 11.7% | 16.2% | 13.0% | 59.1% |
| b. Quality Schools | 71.1% | 18.6% | 5.0% | 5.2% |
| c. Housing selection / quality | 57.6% | 34.7% | 6.1% | 1.6% |
| d. Affordable housing | 50.5% | 34.6% | 10.8% | 4.1% |
| e. Feeling of community / know neighbors | 47.2% | 39.9% | 10.9% | 1.9% |
| f. Desire to live near region's cities (Albany, Saratoga Springs) | 42.8% | 31.0% | 18.5% | 7.7% |
| g. Good job opportunities in Town | 13.4% | 23.3% | 34.0% | 29.3% |
| h. Access to parks and recreation opportunities | 26.4% | 47.0% | 20.4% | 6.2% |
| i. Ballston Lake / Adirondacks / other natural features in the area | 45.4% | 41.2% | 11.2% | 2.3% |
| j. Local shops and services | 27.7% | 48.5% | 19.5% | 4.3% |
| k. Reasonable taxes | 73.1% | 23.2% | 2.3% | 1.3% |
| l. Family / Friends | 43.9% | 33.3% | 12.4% | 10.4% |
| m. Safe community (in terms of crime) | 82.6% | 15.7% | 1.6% | 0.2% |
| n. Proximity to job | 41.3% | 32.2% | 14.6% | 11.9% |
| o. Unable to move or relocate | 5.3% | 14.1% | 26.5% | 54.1% |

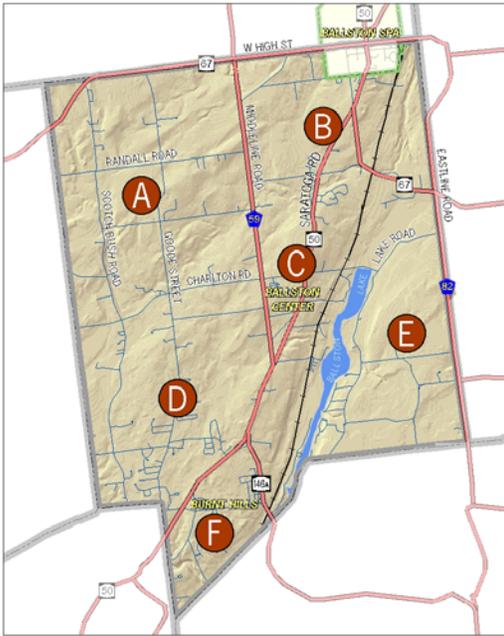
2. Taking all things into consideration, how do you rate the overall quality of life in the Town of Ballston?

- a. 55.0% Better in Ballston than in other places I have lived in or visited
- b. 38.2% About the same in Ballston as in other places I have lived in or visited
- c. 2.7% Worse in Ballston than in other places I have lived in or visited
- d. 4.2% No opinion

3. In your opinion, how is the overall quality of life in the Town of Ballston changing?

- a. 19.5% It is improving
- b. 35.1% It is staying about the same
- c. 40.0% It is declining
- d. 5.4% No opinion

3a. **Why?** _____



4. For the purposes of this survey, please identify the general area in which you live or own property in the Town of Ballston? **(See map at left)**

Please mark (●) **one** response

- a. 15.5% Area A
- b. 21.9% Area B
- c. 12.2% Area C
- d. 21.1% Area D
- e. 10.6% Area E
- f. 18.8% Area F

5. Which of the following best describes the type of environment where you live?

- a. 40.0% Traditional / older neighborhood
- b. 22.4% Residential subdivision
- c. 5.7% Small hamlet
- d. 32.0% Rural area

6. Residential areas can have many qualities that make them attractive and enjoyable places to live. The following is a list of common neighborhood qualities. Please rate where you live on each of the following categories.

Please mark (●) **one** response for each statement.

| | Excellent | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Not Important |
|--|-----------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Where I live feels like a neighborhood | 44.3% | 44.7% | 4.4% | 6.6% |
| Housing costs are reasonable | 14.6% | 67.3% | 14.2% | 3.9% |
| Convenience of neighborhood businesses | 19.6% | 57.6% | 11.7% | 11.1% |
| Roads are clean and in good condition | 27.7% | 61.7% | 10.2% | 0.4% |
| Roads are safe and used appropriately | 21.6% | 56.5% | 21.6% | 0.4% |
| Conveniently located to schools | 49.0% | 43.0% | 0.6% | 7.4% |
| Trails are safe and useful | 16.8% | 52.2% | 10.1% | 20.9% |
| Recreation areas are easily accessible | 18.9% | 57.1% | 12.3% | 11.7% |
| Protected from adjoining commercial area | 25.0% | 52.9% | 15.5% | 6.6% |

7. Where applicable, how would you rate the following facilities and services?

| Facility/Service | Excellent | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Do Not Know | N/A |
|--|-----------|--------------|----------------|-------------|-------|
| a. Road Maintenance | 29.4% | 61.0% | 8.4% | 0.4% | 0.8% |
| b. Parks and Recreation | 12.6% | 59.2% | 13.8% | 8.9% | 5.4% |
| c. Police Services | 16.7% | 62.5% | 9.2% | 7.7% | 3.8% |
| d. Fire Services | 42.3% | 50.4% | 0.8% | 5.8% | 0.8% |
| e. Emergency Services | 43.6% | 48.2% | 1.0% | 6.9% | 0.4% |
| f. Water Service | 28.7% | 36.8% | 11.2% | 2.3% | 20.9% |
| g. Code Enforcement | 10.8% | 48.7% | 12.4% | 23.8% | 4.3% |
| h. Development Approval Process | 3.8% | 35.3% | 25.7% | 30.7% | 4.6% |
| i. Controlling spending and taxes | 7.6% | 53.7% | 25.0% | 12.6% | 1.2% |
| j. Community relations/ public information | 6.9% | 61.1% | 21.3% | 9.1% | 1.6% |
| k. Transfer station / recycling | 7.4% | 51.7% | 13.5% | 19.7% | 7.8% |
| l. Senior Services | 2.8% | 24.9% | 11.0% | 45.0% | 16.4% |
| m. Youth Services | 3.8% | 30.6% | 13.7% | 40.9% | 11.1% |

8. If no changes are made, what will be the most important problems facing the Town of Ballston over the next 10 years? **Mark (●) only five**

- a. 25.7% Availability of affordable housing options
- b. 11.7% Availability of a variety of housing options
- c. 49.7% Loss of farmland and agriculture
- d. 58.3% Loss of open land / undeveloped land (not farmland)
- e. 10.4% Adequacy of parks and recreation facilities
- f. 33.0% Adequacy of infrastructure (water and sewer)
- g. 27.8% Maintaining highest quality schools
- h. 18.6% Loss of freedoms and property rights
- i. 21.9% Crime and public safety
- j. 25.0% Damage to natural resources
- k. 68.9% Level of traffic and congestion
- l. 43.0% Rate of residential growth
- m. 42.6% Rate of commercial growth
- n. 21.3% Appearance of commercial development
- o. 19.8% Availability of places to walk and bike safely

9. What is the one thing that would make the biggest improvement in Ballston's Recreation Facilities (including Jenkins Park, Ballston Lake Bike Path, Fireman's Grove, Fishing pier on Outlet Road, Carpenter's Acres Pocket Park)? **Mark (●) the one response that best describes your opinion**

- a. 19.7% The Town has too few parks and recreation facilities
- b. 6.1% The Town's parks need to be closer to neighborhoods or easier to get to from neighborhoods
- c. 18.1% The equipment and design of parks needs to be changed to meet changing recreational needs
- d. 15.6% The existing parks and recreation facilities need to be better maintained
- e. 0.8% The Town has too many parks and recreation facilities
- f. 39.6% Parks and recreation facilities are fine

10. Where are new Town recreation facilities needed? **Please refer to the Town Map on Page 2 and Mark (●) the one response that best describes your opinion**

- a. 8.1% Area A
- b. 7.5% Area B
- c. 6.7% Area C
- d. 2.8% Area D
- e. 6.9% Area E
- f. 4.8% Area F
- g. 26.3% No new Town recreation facilities are needed
- h. 36.8% Do not know

11. Which of the following improvements or attractions are needed in any of the Town's recreation areas? **Mark (●) your top five**

- a. 24.1% New playground equipment
- b. 15.9% Fields for soccer, football, or lacrosse
- c. 13.7% Baseball/softball fields
- d. 48.2% Restrooms
- e. 39.0% Bike trails
- f. 54.6% Walking trails
- g. 7.4% Equestrian trails
- h. 8.8% Skateboard park
- i. 25.9% Indoor facilities
- j. 8.8% Volleyball courts
- k. 13.9% Basketball courts
- l. 35.5% Tennis courts
- m. 15.9% Picnicking
- n. 30.5% Fishing pier
- o. 14.1% Cross country skiing
- p. 0.0% Skating
- q. 19.3% No improvements are needed

12. The **one** thing that would make the biggest improvement in the area where I reside is:
- a. 4.2% Get property owners to take better care of their houses/property
 - b. 6.5% Develop sidewalks
 - c. 28.9% Prevent loss of open space and rural character
 - d. 16.4% Limit the impact on residential areas from commercial/industrial development
 - e. 2.0% Allow small, neighborhood retail and service establishments
 - f. 16.6% Provide public sewer
 - g. 6.9% Provide public water
 - h. 8.5% Limit traffic and/or slow traffic
 - i. 10.1% The area where I live is fine
13. Ballston's Overall Image: The **one** best way to improve the Town of Ballston's image would be to:
- a. 8.9% Relax development standards so that each property owner can express his/her individual preferences
 - b. 41.8% Tighten development standards to encourage a more consistent, inviting look for new development
 - c. 25.0% Beautify public spaces
 - d. 24.4% The overall image of the Town of Ballston is fine
14. Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. **Please mark (●) one response for each statement.**

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | No Opinion |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| a. Better landscaping in commercial areas is needed to improve the appearance of the Town. | 25.4% | 44.9% | 12.6% | 1.9% | 15.1% |
| b. Standards for commercial signs are needed to improve the appearance of the Town's commercial areas. | 21.9% | 46.1% | 14.3% | 1.4% | 16.4% |
| c. There is a good mix of commercial, institutional, government and office development in the Town. | 3.7% | 59.1% | 17.3% | 5.6% | 14.2% |
| d. Sidewalks and/or trails for bicycle and pedestrian travel are needed to connect the area where I live to commercial areas. | 19.5% | 23.5% | 30.4% | 12.3% | 14.4% |
| e. Create buffers between residential areas and commercial areas to limit impact on residential areas. | 35.3% | 43.1% | 7.4% | 1.9% | 12.2% |
| f. The Town needs to regulate development so that it results in a Town with a distinctive sense of place / identity. | 53.8% | 31.0% | 7.7% | 3.1% | 4.4% |
| g. Reducing noise from commercial / industrial areas adjacent to residential areas is needed. | 27.8% | 36.6% | 11.9% | 1.6% | 22.2% |
| h. Reducing light from commercial / industrial areas adjacent to residential areas is needed. | 27.4% | 31.5% | 12.6% | 2.7% | 25.7% |

15. Understanding that it is unrealistic to preserve all open spaces in the Town, which of the following types of open space in the Town do you feel should be considered for preservation? **Please rank in order of importance – one is the most important type of open space, five is the least important. Select a number only one time.**

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| a. Farmland and agricultural property | 43.9% | 19.1% | 14.9% | 13.2% | 8.9% |
| b. Wetlands and swamps | 18.3% | 15.5% | 18.8% | 16.0% | 31.3% |
| c. Brushland and meadows | 13.4% | 21.9% | 28.5% | 24.4% | 11.8% |
| d. Woodlands and forests | 40.4% | 32.7% | 18.7% | 6.7% | 1.5% |
| e. Scenic viewsheds | 29.3% | 13.8% | 17.0% | 16.3% | 23.6% |
| f. No Opinion / Need more information | 0 | | | | |

16. What means should the Town of Ballston pursue when considering financing the conservation of undeveloped land?

Mark (●) all that apply

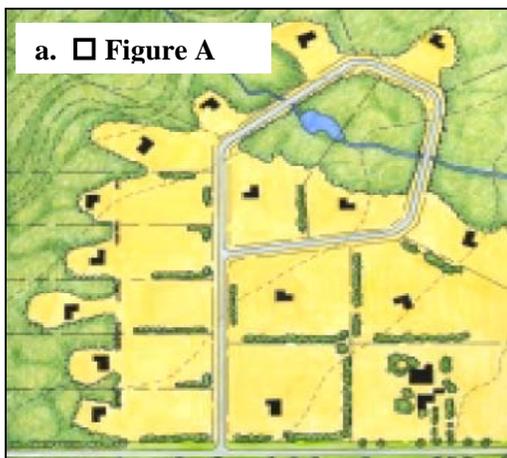
- a. 17.8% Public funds should not be expended for this purpose
- b. 47.6% Utilize general Town budget (with Town Board approval) or borrow money (with Voter approval) to fund the purchase of land or easements
- c. 80.2% Apply for state and federal grants which are competitively awarded
- d. 59.5% Lower tax assessments on undeveloped land so property owners can afford to keep the property undeveloped (shift the tax burden)

17. Implementing some aspects of the comprehensive plan will likely cost the Town additional money. For which of the following items might you be willing to pay an increase in town taxes of say \$25 to \$50 per \$100,000 of assessed value? **Mark (●) all that apply**

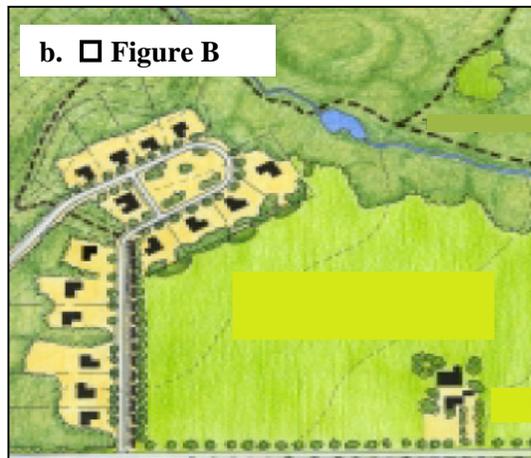
- a. 56.8% Conservation of open space / undeveloped land or environmentally sensitive land
- b. 35.1% Construction of new sidewalks to improve residents' ability to walk comfortably and safely to nearby destinations (i.e., parks, schools, stores)
- c. 43.4% Construction of trails for recreation and to improve residents' ability to walk or bike comfortably and safely to nearby destinations (i.e., parks, schools, stores)
- d. 32.7% Parkland acquisition
- e. 31.7% Improvements to recreation facilities
- f. 20.5% Public funds should not be expended for any of these purposes

18. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following policy options. **Please mark (●) one response for each statement.**

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | No Opinion |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| The Town of Ballston needs to change zoning regulations to protect open space within new developments. | 46.6% | 31.6% | 8.8% | 3.5% | 9.4% |
| The Town should buy land outright or purchase conservation easements to preserve open space. (A conservation easement is an agreement with willing landowners that restricts the use of land to open space, farming or wildlife habitat.) | 36.5% | 33.1% | 15.8% | 6.6% | 8.0% |
| The Town should do nothing; the market and/or property owners will determine the best use of land. | 8.3% | 13.0% | 27.0% | 42.9% | 8.9% |



a. Figure A



b. Figure B

19. **Please review the two images above.** Given that both subdivisions will result in the same number of homes (16), and no further subdivision of these lands will be possible in the future, which subdivision layout seems more appropriate for rural areas of the Town of Ballston?

- a. 31.4% Figure A
- b. 55.4% Figure B
- c. 13.2% No opinion

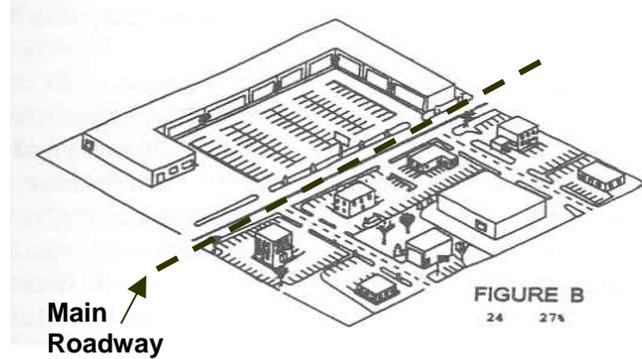
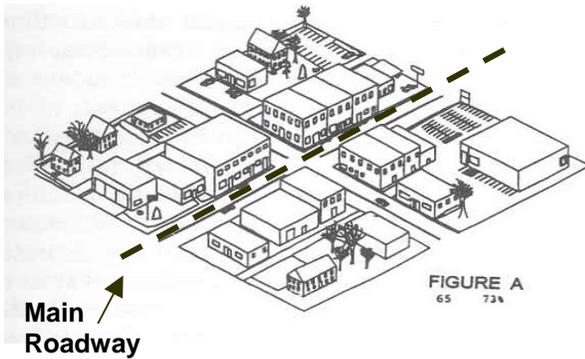
20. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Mark (●) one response for each statement.

| <u>THE TOWN OF BALLSTON SHOULD:</u> | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | No Opinion |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| a. Build additional roads to provide quick and easy movement of automobiles through the town | 24.8% | 11.2% | 53.8% | 24.8% | 5.9% |
| b. Improve existing roads to ease movement of automobiles throughout the town | 16.5% | 59.3% | 14.0% | 4.7% | 5.4% |
| c. Pursue expansion of clean, affordable, and efficient public transportation | 11.8% | 37.1% | 28.2% | 7.8% | 15.1% |
| d. Encourage the extension of public sewer and water service | 25.8% | 32.2% | 20.7% | 10.2% | 11.1% |
| e. Create better public access to Ballston Lake | 20.5% | 39.4% | 17.0% | 8.8% | 14.4% |
| f. Create programs and incentives for the reuse of underutilized/vacant commercial buildings and sites | 39.9% | 48.1% | 4.1% | 1.8% | 6.2% |
| g. Pursue strategies for creating quality (“living wage”) jobs in the town | 19.2% | 50.4% | 13.8% | 6.2% | 10.5% |
| h. Utilize town funds / local incentives to promote economic development | 6.4% | 34.9% | 36.3% | 12.3% | 10.1% |
| i. Establish initiatives to assist the development and growth of local businesses | 12.2% | 53.8% | 20.8% | 5.4% | 7.8% |
| j. Take a lead in encouraging regional cooperation to manage growth and development | 27.1% | 50.9% | 7.5% | 2.8% | 11.8% |
| k. Create programs and incentives for rehabilitating historic homes and buildings | 27.6% | 49.8% | 11.5% | 2.9% | 8.2% |
| l. Promote and encourage local agriculture and farm viability | 39.0% | 48.9% | 5.8% | 0.4% | 5.8% |
| m. Create programs that promote affordable home-ownership opportunities | 14.5% | 44.3% | 21.5% | 6.6% | 13.1% |
| n. Encourage more single family residential development | 9.4% | 34.2% | 32.0% | 10.4% | 14.1% |
| o. Encourage a diversity of housing types (for singles, families, “empty nesters”, seniors, etc.) | 16.2% | 50.7% | 17.4% | 6.4% | 9.3% |
| p. Promote development of compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods | 12.3% | 38.1% | 26.2% | 7.3% | 16.1% |
| q. Work to lower overall (town, county, and school combined) property taxes | 49.1% | 35.6% | 8.7% | 1.5% | 5.0% |
| r. Support small, local businesses | 38.2% | 54.0% | 4.5% | 0.2% | 3.1% |
| s. Develop design standards or guidelines to improve the appearance and function of commercial areas | 32.6% | 52.2% | 7.2% | 0.6% | 7.4% |
| t. Allow individual property owners to have more rights in determining appropriate use of their land (reduce land use restrictions) | 13.9% | 23.6% | 34.9% | 17.8% | 9.8% |
| u. Protect environmental resources (i.e. Ballston Lake, steep slopes, wetlands, streams, mature forests) | 51.0% | 43.0% | 2.3% | 0.4% | 3.3% |
| v. Encourage the expansion of activities for youth | 21.9% | 55.5% | 8.9% | 1.5% | 12.2% |

21. In general, what type of development do you feel the Town should encourage? **Mark (●) all that apply**
- a. 42.9% Residential
 - b. 33.9% Small scale, neighborhood commercial
 - c. 11.0% Large scale commercial
 - d. 15.3% Office / light industrial
 - e. 55.6% Mixed use development with residential, office and small scale commercial
22. In what location(s) would additional commercial development be appropriate? **Mark (●) all that apply**
- a. 36.0% Near the Village of Ballston Spa
 - b. 15.1% In the vicinity of the Burnt Hills / Ballston Lake hamlets
 - c. 57.0% Along major road corridors such as Route 67 and Route 50
 - d. 13.8% Near East Line Road
 - e. 9.1% In the western portion of the Town
 - f. 13.4% Other _____
23. In thinking about the future of commercial districts in the Town of Ballston, strategies for development or redevelopment could take two general design forms. Which sketch (below) seems more appropriate to you?

a. 63.3% **Figure A**

b. 36.7% **Figure B**



Illustrations from a visual preference survey conducted by the Livingston County (Michigan) Planning Department. From Randall Arendt's, *Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character*. APA Planners Press. 1994.

24. Please indicate your response to the following statements regarding infrastructure in the Town of Ballston. **Mark (●) one response for each statement.**

| | Yes | No | Not enough information |
|---|-------|-------|------------------------|
| Public water service is needed in the area where I live. | 20.7% | 72.6% | 6.7% |
| Public sewer service is needed in the area where I live. | 43.7% | 44.8% | 11.5% |
| I am willing to pay, through an increase in taxes, for public water service in the area where I live. | 20.7% | 67.2% | 12.1% |
| I am willing to pay, through an increase in taxes, for public sewer service in the area where I live. | 34.7% | 52.3% | 12.9% |
| The extension of public sewer and water service is desirable, even given the potential for additional commercial and residential growth that could occur as a result. | 30.6% | 44.4% | 25.0% |

RESPONDENT PROFILE

25. What is your age?

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| a. 1.0% 18-24 | d. 22.4% 55-64 |
| b. 25.3% 25-44 | e. 14.7% 65-74 |
| c. 26.3% 45-54 | f. 10.3% 75 + |

26. What is your gender? a. 46.5% Male b. 53.5% Female

27. How many people are in your household?

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------------|
| a. 8.0% 1 | c. 19.5% 3 | e. 7.1% 5 |
| b. 44.5% 2 | d. 18.3% 4 | f. 2.7% 6 or more |

28. Which of the following age categories are represented in your household? **Mark (●) all that apply**

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| a. 10.1% 0-5 | c. 17.4% 18-24 | e. 34.6% 45-54 | g. 17.6% 65-74 |
| b. 26.1% 6-17 | d. 34.8% 25-44 | f. 31.1% 55-64 | f. 31.1% 75 + |

29. How long have you lived in the Town of Ballston?

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. 12.9% 0-5 years | c. 23.0% 11-20 years |
| b. 13.1% 6-10 years | d. 51.1% 21 + years |

30. How many acres do you own in the Town of Ballston?

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. 45.0% Less than 1 acre | d. 2.9% 20 – 49 acres |
| b. 34.7% 1 – 5 acres | e. 2.5% 50 or more acres |
| c. 9.6% 5 – 19 acres | f. 5.4% None |

31. Your current work status is:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| a. 9.7% Work in the Town of Ballston (not at home) | h. 6.3% Work at home |
| b. 16.8% Work elsewhere in Saratoga County | i. 1.0% Currently unemployed |
| c. 0.4% Work in Warren or Washington Counties | j. 0.8% Student |
| d. 2.0% Work in Rensselaer County | k. 29.8% Retired |
| e. 14.8% Work in Schenectady County | l. 1.2% Disabled |
| f. 11.8% Work in Albany County | m. 4.5% Other |
| g. 0.8% Work in Fulton or Montgomery Counties | |

32. Do you...

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| a. 93.8% Own your residence? | b. 3.3% Rent your residence? |
| | c. 2.9% Live with parents or relatives? |

33. How many vehicles do you have in your household?

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| a. 1.2% None | c. 51.7% 2 | e. 12.5% 4 or more |
| b. 12.3% 1 | d. 22.3% 3 | |

34. What is your approximate Household Income?

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. 4.4% Less than \$19,999 | e. 20.8% 60,000-79,999 |
| b. 6.9% 20,000-29,999 | f. 14.1% 80,000-99,999 |
| c. 6.9% 30,000-39,999 | g. 29.3% 100,000 or more |
| d. 17.5% 40,000-59,999 | |

Do you have any additional thoughts, comments or suggestions to share with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC)?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!

Town of Ballston Community Survey Highlights June 2005

In May 2005, survey questionnaires were mailed to a random sample of 1,500 property owners and registered voters in the Town as part of the comprehensive planning process. Over 500 completed survey questionnaires were returned to Town Hall and tabulated. The response rate – over 35% - was very good.

The survey has a sampling error of not more than +/- 5% at the 95 percent confidence level. In other words, the chances are 19 out of 20 (95%) that the actual population value is within 5% of our estimate, in either direction.

A safe community, reasonable taxes and quality schools are the top three factors influencing the decision of respondents to live in Ballston, according to the survey results. Overall, community performance in terms of fire and emergency services and road maintenance rated as excellent among respondents.

Taking all things into consideration, approximately 55% of respondents feel the quality of life in the Town of Ballston is better than in other places. However, 40% feel that the quality of life is getting worse. The top five most important problems facing the community over the next 10 years include (in order of importance) traffic and congestion, the loss of open land, the loss of farmland, the rate of residential growth and the rate of commercial growth.

Many of the results of the survey reinforce what has been expressed during the public workshops and through written comments that have been received in past months. The following highlights several items of interest based on the following general topic areas: community character; parks, recreation, and open space; transportation and infrastructure; community services; agriculture; and economic development. Full survey results will be made available at the Town Hall, the Town Library and on the Town website at www.townofballstonny.nycap.rr.com.

Community Character: Respondents are concerned with maintaining and protecting the rural character of the community. In fact, nearly 85% agree or strongly agree that the Town should develop design standards or guidelines to improve the appearance and function of commercial areas. Also, 85% strongly agree or agree that the Town needs to regulate

Ballston Community Survey Results

June 2005

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development so that it results in a distinctive sense of place. The majority of respondents feel that preventing the loss of open space and rural character is the one thing that would make the biggest improvement in the area where they reside.

Ballston also has a long and important history, as evidenced by the multiple historic markers found throughout the community. Related to this, 77% of the survey respondents either agree or strongly agree that programs and incentives need to be created for rehabilitating historic homes and buildings.

The need for housing diversity is an issue that received much agreement. Nearly 67% of survey respondents agree or strongly agree that the Town should encourage a diversity of housing types for singles, families, “empty nesters,” and seniors.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space: Respondents recognize the importance of natural areas and open space. Approximately 78% agree or strongly agree that zoning regulations should be changed to protect these areas within new developments. The conservation subdivision or clustering technique was viewed favorably. Respondents also supported the acquisition and protection of open lands. While over 80% feel that state and federal grants should be utilized to finance the conservation of undeveloped land, nearly 57% of respondents indicated they might be willing to pay for the conservation of open space through an increase in Town taxes. Over 43% indicated a willingness to pay for the construction of trails for recreation. Furthermore, nearly 70% agree or strongly agree that the Town should buy land outright or purchase conservation easements to preserve open space. These responses all point to a desire to preserve open space, however, it seems that there is a need for additional education and study about the appropriate techniques and methods of financing such efforts.

Parks and recreation facilities within the Town are fine, according to nearly 40% of the respondents. Over 57% of the survey respondents indicated satisfactory when asked if recreational areas are easily accessible. Expanding the Town’s active and passive recreational resources to meet the growing demand for these amenities is also an important issue. The top three improvements or attractions needed in the Town’s recreation areas, as identified by respondents, include walking trails, restrooms and bike trails.

Transportation and Infrastructure: Nearly 69% of the respondents agreed that if no changes are made, the level of traffic and congestion will become a significant problem for the Town over the next 10 years. According to the survey, over 75% feel the Town should

Ballston Community Survey Results

June 2005

Page 3 of 3

improve existing roads. Conversely, nearly 79% feel the Town should not build additional roads.

When asked about the extension of public sewer and public water service, the majority of respondents indicated they would be unwilling to pay for such service in the area where they live. However, there was some indication that the extension of these resources might be desirable. It seems that additional education about the options available and the impacts of extending this infrastructure is necessary.

Community Services: Overall, community services, such as fire and emergency services, were rated as excellent. However, only 4% of the survey respondents ranked youth services as excellent in the Town of Ballston. Over 55% agree that the Town should encourage the expansion of activities for youth.

Agriculture: Residents of Ballston find agricultural lands to be an asset to their community. In fact, 44% gave farmland and agricultural property their highest priority ranking when asked what type of open space should be considered for preservation. Approximately 88% of respondents agree and strongly agree that the Town of Ballston should promote and encourage local agriculture and farm viability.

Economic Development: Residents of Ballston would like to provide a business-friendly environment that is supportive of local businesses and helps assure the provision of quality employment and a diverse economic base in the community. This is apparent when 92% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the Town should support small, local businesses. Approximately 66% agree or strongly agree that the Town should establish initiatives to assist the development and growth of local businesses.

Over 64% of the survey respondents agree or strongly agree that reducing noise from commercial and industrial areas adjacent to residential areas is necessary. In addition, nearly 59% agree or strongly agree that reducing light from these areas is needed.

When asked about the type of development that should be encouraged in Ballston, nearly 56% of respondents feel that the Town should encourage mixed use development with residential, office and small scale commercial. Over 42% feel that residential development should be encouraged and only 11% feel that large scale commercial development should be encouraged. Approximately 57% of respondents feel that additional commercial development within the Town should be focused along major road corridors such as Route 50 and Route 67.

Town of Ballston – Community Survey Written Comments Summary

Without question, the top concerns for those that wrote comments in the survey were the presence of big box retail and preservation of open space. There is a concern that stores, such as Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Lowe's could impact the rural nature and overall feel of the Town and would also add to an already existing traffic problem. However, the presence of commercial development is welcomed, but with a stress on local and small business developments, rather than large retail and chains. It was often noted that these types of stores are within an easy drive to Saratoga or Clifton Park, and is not needed in the Town of Ballston. Suggestions were made to place a cap on store size for any new development (i.e. 75-90k sq ft). A grocery store was listed as a needed development, with the reuse of the existing Grand Union building.

Protection of open space prompted several ideas involving purchasing farmland, in particular the Capiello Farm and the development planned for the area. The majority of comments regarding this project opposed it and wanted to see the property turned into a public park. Another area requested for public use is adjacent to the new Town Hall, to create a "town center" and recreation area.

The amount and type of traffic is seen as a problem on major roads such as Routes 50 and 146, as well as local roads. There are quite a few complaints about speeding, particularly on Route 50, Goode St., and Charlton Rd. It was reported in one survey that there is drag racing occurring on Goode St. A speed limit change was suggested on Charlton Rd. from 55 to 40 mph. Residents are requesting increased police presence and issuance of traffic violations (i.e. speeding), as well as reduced commercial traffic on these roads. Public transportation was requested as a way to reduce traffic problems.

Adequate water supply and sewer service is another top priority for residents. The provision of public water and sewer has been requested by a large number of residents, especially since there has been an increase in developments.

Recreational opportunities need to be expanded. The bike path should be improved and extended to meet up with destinations such as Rt. 67 and the Malta bike path. A network of trails for horses was requested as well. Public access to Ballston Lake was mentioned, allowing free access for all residents. Also, it was stated that due to pollution and noise concerns, a maximum motor size for boats or other restrictions (i.e. no jet skis) should be instituted. Other recreational requests included ball fields (provided by the Town, not the school), parks, and public swimming pools. Residents would like to use these facilities and to be able to walk/bike to them, but are concerned about the lack of sidewalks and small road shoulders.

Older residents were concerned with the increased taxes, in particular the school tax. It was said that there should be a cap on school taxes for persons over a certain age. The older population also requested better transportation (public or private taxi companies) for shopping and getting around. More options should be given for residential

opportunities as well, such as one-level condo or townhouse developments directed at retirees and elderly clients.

New residential developments received mixed comments. Some people suggested increasing the minimum lot size to 3+ acres to limit suburban sprawl, while others requested cluster development. It was also noted that developments (residential and commercial) should be regulated for architectural style, and that all new developments should be accompanied by sidewalks.

Although the flavor of the comments from the surveys were mixed, most were very appreciative of the effort of the survey and are hopeful that this is a first step towards making Ballston a better place to live.

Cross-Tabulations

As mentioned above a survey of residents of the Town of Ballston was conducted in May 2005. The following information provides a summary of three different cross-tabulations of survey responses based on the geographic area of respondents. It is important to keep in mind that these survey results reflect a random sampling of the population, not every townsperson received or responded to the questionnaire. Although the questionnaire covered many important topics, this section of the report will focus on three key issues related to the placement of new recreational facilities; the need for expanded water and sewer service; and the amount of acreage held by respondents.

As might be expected, residents consistently identified their own neighborhoods as the highest priority for siting new recreational facilities, and adjacent neighborhoods as a close second. However, a couple of interesting findings emerged. Residents in every area of the Town of Ballston responded to the need for new recreational facilities in Area C. Furthermore, although the majority of positive responses did come from residents of Area C itself, their response rate was a mere 42.4%. As a means of comparison, over 70% of support for facilities in Area F came from residents of Area F, likewise for Areas B and D.

When asked to respond to statements regarding infrastructure, 43.7% of survey respondents expressed the need for expanded sewer service, nearly twice as many percentage points as those respondents expressing a need for water service. In a cross-tabulation of the general area in which respondents live and their need for sewer, nearly the same percentage of residents living in Areas D and F responded in the affirmative as all other areas combined. A comparison between Areas D and F shows very little difference between the two areas, having received response rates of 9.8% and 9.6% respectively.

However, land holdings by residents of Areas D and F differ substantially. Over 24% of Ballston residents who own between 1-5 acres of land live in Area D, this represents the largest share of ownership in this particular lot size classification. In comparison, less than 15% of owners who hold between 1-5 acres live in Area F. More strikingly, of the residents who do not own land in the Town of Ballston over 20% live in Area F, while less than 5% of this segment of respondents live in Area D.

Finally, it is worth noting close to half of all survey respondents own less than 1 acre of land. Only just over 5% hold 20 acres or more, and of this segment of respondents, the largest percentage of landowners has holdings in either Areas A and C.



Appendix C

Public Meeting Notes



Meeting Notes

Project Name: Town of Ballston Comprehensive Plan

Project #: 05022

Meeting Title: Issues Identification Workshop

Date and Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Time: 7:00 pm

Attendees: Members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC)
Members of the Public
Saratoga Associates Team, including Greenman Pedersen, Inc.

Purpose/Intent of Meeting:

Issues Identification Workshop

If the meeting notes are not complete, accurate, or in context, please notify the sender of this document of such discrepancy within ten days following receipt of this record. The meeting notes are intended to represent comments made by the workshop participants and are not intended to be official meeting minutes.

The Town of Ballston Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held an Issues Identification Workshop on Wednesday, April 13, 2005. The Town of Ballston is currently in the process of preparing a Comprehensive Plan. The primary role of the Comprehensive Plan is to establish the community's vision for its future, to provide direction about how to attain that vision, and to assign responsibilities for, and to prioritize, the specific actions that will be taken following completion of the plan. The Plan will address a variety of topics such as residential growth, economic development, land use, infrastructure and community character.

The Issues Identification Workshop was the first of several public meetings related to the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the Issues Identification Workshop was to introduce the community to the comprehensive plan process. In addition, over 140 workshop participants worked together to define the Town's strengths and identify issues and concerns that should be addressed through the planning process. Residents, property owners, business owners, and others interested in the future of the Town participated in this workshop.

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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Following a brief presentation by Saratoga Associates, participants were divided into four smaller discussion groups. In these groups, participants answered the following two questions:

- > *What do you like about living / working in the Town of Ballston?*
- > *What issues or concerns should be addressed in the plan?*

The discussion comments were documented and the results of this interactive workshop are listed below by discussion group. In addition, each discussion group identified priority concerns. The emerging overall priority concerns, as identified by workshop participants, included the following:

Overall Priority Concerns

- > Zoning
 - o Enforcement
 - o Protection of community character
 - o Strip development along Route 50
- > Sewer and Water Infrastructure
 - o Costs passed onto taxpayers
 - o Encouraging growth
- > Maintaining a unique identity – not becoming “Anywhere, USA”
- > Development of farmland
- > Impact of development on natural resources, historic resources, viewsheds and rural character
- > Type and Quality of Development
 - o Big box
 - o Size of development
 - o Design and appearance
 - o Employment opportunities
- > Traffic
 - o Impact on existing roads
 - o Impact on community character
- > Commercial land uses near schools and residential areas

Group 1

What do you like about living / working in the Town of Ballston?

- > Rural – Open space
 - o Farmland
 - o Agriculture

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Diverse agriculture
 - o Big & Small
- > No Town Tax
- > Great Schools
 - o Small Class size
- > Location – Capital Region and beyond
 - o Easy access
- > Small historic village (Ballston Spa)
- > Historic areas in town - hamlets
 - o Can see the history
- > Small open government
- > Kids – great place to raise family – safe, peaceful
- > Walk & ski in the woods
- > Access to nature
- > Town still looks unique – unique identity
- > The lake
- > No light pollution
- > Traffic is reasonable
- > Pride in community
 - o Many generations
- > Relaxed way of life
- > Dedicated volunteers in Emergency Services
- > Small businesses in Community
- > Proximity to Albany, Schenectady, Saratoga, etc.
- > Walkable centers – hamlets and villages.
- > Library
- > Bike path
- > Family recreation – parks
- > Low crime
- > Adirondacks, Hudson valley – beautiful region
- > Wildlife
- > Good for small business – business friendly

What issues or concerns should be addressed in the plan?

- > Ability of infrastructure and roads to handle more development
 - o Don't want to degrade

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Same for Emergency Services
- > Overcrowded schools
- > Tax base, especially for schools
- > Current zoning doesn't promote fiscally advantageous development, especially for business –
 - o Office and light industrial
 - o Too much emphasis on retail
- > Zoning doesn't protect character of community
- > Water – many on wells
- > Concern about water & sewer being imposed on rural landowners – tax implication
- > Overdevelopment of farmland
- > Worried about deterring all commercial development – end up with too much residential (fiscal implication)
- > Definitive line/boundary to commercial areas
- > Maintain industrial zone
- > Most roads are 2 lanes
 - o Concern about possible need to widen
- > Help at Town level to preserve farmland – options for landowners
- > Harder to walk, ride, etc.
- > Need for parkland
- > Develop in a “smart manner”
- > Some wells not high quality – will be a need for public water
- > Address the way commercial looks
- > Truck traffic – in village
 - o Route 50
 - o Middle Line
- > Not be overwhelmed by growth
- > Would like places to shop nearby –
 - o Things that you really need
- > Commercial zoning on Route 50 - What will it become?
- > Route 50 – Kingsley Road to Schenectady – Architectural character
- > Cell phone towers
- > Natural resource protection
- > Commercial District does control growth now
- > Take care vacant properties
- > Pedestrian safety by schools
- > Pedestrian safety everywhere

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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Group 2

What do you like about living / working in the Town of Ballston?

- > Schools
- > Close knit community
- > Volunteerism
- > Small town feel, but close to cultural centers
 - o Saratoga, Albany
- > Diversity of individuals and professionals
- > Historic character
- > Architecture
- > Still lots of farmland, and not a lot of traffic
- > Scenic vistas and open land
- > Viable agriculture – the Town has recognized this
 - o Ag Districts
- > Parts of town are walkable
 - o i.e. to the church, store, library
- > Traffic is still manageable
- > Rural homelife – good for families
 - o Run, bike safely
- > People put down roots
 - o Strong sense of community
- > Ballston Lake
 - o Bike path, fishing
- > Horsefarms
- > Orchards
- > Low taxes
- > People – family oriented
- > Low crime
- > Lots of small business owners
 - o Good place to shop local and get custom service
- > Accessible Town Board

What issues or concerns should be addressed in the plan?

- > Moratorium impact on construction jobs
- > Affordable housing for future generations

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Arbitrary changes to zoning without full input from the public.
- > Few public parks; lack of public access to Lake
 - o More recreation areas for families
- > Multi-use for horses
- > Shoulder width on roads unsafe for bike and walking
- > Traffic on Route 50 and Rt. 67) corridor (as growth continues)
 - o Safety – roadway; schools
- > Impact of growth on volunteer emergency services
- > Balance tax base commercial -Commercial & residential
 - o Impact on schools, etc.
 - o Meeting basic needs
 - o Do need commercial growth to support tax base
- > Problems with schools
 - o need growth (tax base) to support
- > Control development – provide incentives for open space
- > Environmental Impacts
- > Attract commercial/industrial
 - o little traffic
 - o no retail
- > Ballston Lake
- > Infrastructure (sewer and water) and impact on communities
- > Loss and misuse of valuable resources
 - o Historic
 - o Viewsheds
- > Size of Future business would detract from small-town feel
- > Quality of development
 - o Wages
 - o Cross-section of people
 - o Design
 - o Still affordable
- > Public Safety
 - o Inadequate coordination with DOT
 - o Coordinate regionally
- > Development fees
 - o Placed on those who want new development
- > Let residents truly have an input

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- Referendum
- > Road system not prepared for additional traffic
 - Inadequate in commercial
 - Truck traffic
- > Controlled growth and infrastructure
 - Balance
 - Find funding for school projects
- > Rt. 50 development should look nice
- > Control growth (but keep here)
 - Growth helps to pay for infrastructure

Group 3

What do you like about living / working in the Town of Ballston?

- > Walk to Village
- > Produce own goods
 - Milk, orchard, fertilizer
- > Feels like a community - Rockwell like; know people, caring
- > History and architecture
- > Public Schools
- > Feel at home; calming once you leave the Northway
- > Rich in natural resources, such as Ballston Lake
- > Rural character and farmland
- > Low traffic
- > Family traditions
- > Affordable Housing, although increasingly harder to find
- > Taxes
- > Scenic viewsheds
- > Convenient location - accessible to shopping, entertainment, and employment in region.
- > Restore public beach Ballston Lake (North End, Whites Beach)
- > Safe, Low crime
- > Freedom of landowners to benefit from Land
 - Heirs/Children generation
 - Many generations
- > Slow pace
- > No industry –smokestacks
- > Easy to shop; Exit 12 Curtis Lumber

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Bike Trails, open space
- > Working Farms
- > Rich, warm community
 - o Volunteers, Help each other
- > Historic – Washington slept here
 - o Native Americans
 - o Forest park
 - o 1st RR

What issues or concerns should be addressed in the plan?

- > As the town grows, we need law enforcement to match
- > Land use to protect watershed – review adequacy
- > Lake phosphate levels should coordinate with public infrastructure
 - o Storm runoff
 - o Failing septic
- > Extend water/sewer funding or eliminate
- > Protect landowner rights
 - o Development rights
 - o Trespassing
- > Unchecked commercial development to rear of neighborhoods has the potential to destroy property values
- > Traffic impacts on Ballston Spa with ability to widen roads - DOT & Village
- > Ballston Spa – North End School
 - o Pedestrian traffic issues
 - o Sidewalks
- > Allow planned unit development
 - o Preserve open space
 - o Calibrate density to base density
 - o Maintain 60' setback – Don't allow Planning Board variances
- > Reuse Grand Union for adaptive reuse
- > Include affordable housing
 - o 1st time homebuyers and seniors
- > Grant Info:
 - o Historic
 - o New Business
 - o Parks

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Survey – How long folks lived in community
 - o Recent & longstanding residency
- > Current Rt. 50 zoning
 - o Don't allow strip development
 - o Lack organize character
 - o Proper zoning – preserve rural character setback
- > Decrease traffic
- > Lack planned infrastructure
- > Poor yards to village
- > School districts
 - o Bring together
 - o Competing interest – is there an advantage?
- > Lack planned infrastructure
- > Need jobs/tax base
- > Town Park
- > Taxes – school; property
- > Consistency standards
 - o Differ by project
 - o Enforcement
- > Land use - no commercial near school
 - o safety for pedestrians and students enroute to school
 - o inappropriate adjacent uses
 - o land use fosters a walkable community

Group 4

What do you like about living / working in the Town of Ballston?

- > Landscape
- > Rural
- > School District
- > Lake & Bike Path
- > Historical Sites
- > You can see the stars
- > Minimal Traffic Lights
- > Back Road –Low Traffic
- > Country Roads
- > Town support of infrastructure

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Size of Town
- > Low Crime
- > Real Community
- > No mega commerce
- > Synergy between rural areas and the village
- > Small, locally owned businesses
- > Historical Downtown
 - o walkable
- > Feel safe with kids
- > Community/Cultural History
- > Young people starting to come back
 - o Family
 - o Growth
- > Great central location in region
 - o Half hour to everything you need
- > It is not Saratoga Springs, not Albany and not Clifton Park
- > Wildlife

What issues or concerns should be addressed in the plan?

- > Include village coordination with other hamlets and other towns.
- > Community events
- > Mosquito Control
- > Stormwater Management
- > Lack of town park
- > Ineffective development control
- > Lake Bikeways
- > Protection of land owner rights
- > Burnt Hills deterioration
 - o Architectural Mismatch
- > More family resources for recreation are needed
 - o Sports Fields
 - o Playground
- > Lack of affordable housing
 - o Housing Types
- > Too many underutilized buildings
- > Lack of sidewalks and pedestrian paths

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Too much building (development)
- > Ballston Lake Water Quality
- > Lack of a Community Center
- > The impact of development on safety
 - o Police, EMS and fire
 - o volunteers needed
- > Commercial development near schools
- > Zoning Strip Malls on Rte. 50
- > Taxes
- > Agricultural Viability
- > Lack of development coordination with County
- > Zoning not enforced
- > Encroachment by Commercial development on residential areas
- > Not becoming "Anywhere, USA"
- > Big Box development
- > Traffic increasing on back roads
- > Development in other towns
- > Land, Air and Water Pollution
- > Commercial landscape designs
- > Architectural mismatch
- > Town's Open Space Initiative
- > Farms
- > Locally grown produce
- > Library
- > Town Water
- > Well Water
- > Clean/Low Pollution
- > Low Noise
- > No 4 – lane highways
- > Mountains/Vistas
- > Traffic
- > Big Box
- > Not Becoming "Anywhere"
- > Encroachment by Commercial – Residence
- > Zoning – all aspects
- > Air, Land, Water Pollution

Meeting Notes

Issues Workshop, April 13, 2005

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- > Coordination with village, Hamlets, other towns, county
- > Taxes
- > Strip malls on Rt. 50

Additional Public Comments

- > Widewaters Representative – Thanks for allowing participation and we are willing to work with Town to meet its vision for the future.
- > LCC Meeting 4/14/05 at 7pm
- > Rt. 50 zoning
 - o Regarding the moratorium – people not as informed as they think
 - o Town ultimately has little input, DOT and other entities have the final say

Meeting Notes

Project Name: Town of Ballston Comprehensive Plan

Project #: 05022

Meeting Title: Visioning Workshop

Date and Thursday, May 19, 2005

Time: 7:00 pm

Attendees: Members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC)
Members of the Public
Saratoga Associates Team, including Greenman Pedersen, Inc.

Purpose/Intent of Meeting:

Visioning Workshop

If the meeting notes are not complete, accurate, or in context, please notify the sender of this document of such discrepancy within ten days following receipt of this record. The meeting notes are intended to represent comments made by the workshop participants and are not intended to be official meeting minutes.

The Town of Ballston Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held a Visioning Workshop on Thursday, May 19, 2005. The Town of Ballston is currently in the process of preparing a Comprehensive Plan. The primary role of the Comprehensive Plan is to establish the community's vision for its future, to provide direction about how to attain that vision, and to assign responsibilities for, and to prioritize, the specific actions that will be taken following completion of the plan. The Plan will address a variety of topics such as residential growth, economic development, land use, infrastructure and community character.

The purpose of the Visioning Workshop was to encourage participants to think about the future of Ballston in a broad, big picture way. How should Ballston look in the future? What kind of development is desired? Over 125 workshop participants worked together through two exercises. Residents, property owners, business owners, and others interested in the future of the Town participated in this workshop.

The first part of the workshop involved an Image Preference Evaluation exercise. The intent of this exercise is to better understand how the community residents feel about the design and form of

Meeting Notes

Visioning Workshop, May 19, 2005

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development. A series of 37 images were shown to the workshop participants in rapid succession. The images represented residential development, commercial development, public spaces, and streetscapes.

Participants were given a scorecard and asked to rate each image on a scale of 1 to 7. A score of 1 is undesirable or inappropriate and a score of 4 is indifferent, while a score of 7 is very desirable or appropriate. A brief discussion of various images followed the image evaluation. The average rating of each image and discussion comments are found in the Image Preference Evaluation and Discussion Comments document (under separate cover).

Following the Image Preference Evaluation, participants were divided into four smaller discussion groups for another exercise. In these groups, participants gathered around a large aerial map of the Town to identify the future vision of the Town. Topic areas discussed included transportation, commercial land use, residential land use, and open space and agriculture. Thoughts and ideas were identified on the aerial maps and presented to the larger group. The ideas discussed by each group are as follows:

Group 1

Residential

- > The area along Eastline Road and south of Lake Road might be appropriate for a mixed use hamlet.

Commercial

- > Hamlet scale commercial is appropriate in the Ballston Lake hamlet area of Route 146a south of Lake Hill Road.
- > The Denny Road area is already commercial.
 - o Is there room for more?
 - o Aesthetics are important
 - o Consider cooperating with Glenville
 - o Is there a need for additional infrastructure
 - o Consider walkability
- > Consider the scale of commercial along Route 50 south of Ballston Spa.
 - o Is multiple use commercial appropriate?
 - o What are the impacts on traffic and infrastructure?
- > The area south of Route 67 within the Town is prime commercial and industrial property

Open Space

- > Utilize the area south of Whites Beach Road for recreation, education or open space.
- > Historic Native American artifacts are located along Westside Drive.

Meeting Notes

Visioning Workshop, May 19, 2005

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- > There are several dairy, beef and orchard farming operations throughout the community that should remain.

Transportation

- > Address pedestrian connections near the Ballston Spa High School and Middle School
- > Route 146sa is a gateway into the community
- > Extend the existing bike path north and connect to the park in Malta

Group 2

Residential

- > A bedroom community in the area from Ballston Lake to the Northway (the southeast corner of the Town)

Commercial

- > Mixed use commercial would be appropriate along Route 50 from the Village of Ballston Spa to just south of the intersection of Route 67.
- > There is already commercial development in the Burnt Hills area along Denny Road and Lake Hill Road. This type of development should remain in this area.
 - o Concern regarding sufficient infrastructure?
- > There is some debate about whether a Town center concept would be appropriate in the area of Charlton Road and Middleline Road.
- > Make a connection with Malta and Luther Forest

Open Space

- > There are many scenic vistas of agricultural lands along Hop City Road and Goode Street.
- > Scenic views of Ballston Lake are visible in the area south of Whites Beach Road and at the north end of Ballston Lake.
- > Various locations for parks/open space might include an area near Robert Drive, and near Middleline Road and Route 67
- > The northwest corner of the Town should remain agricultural.
- > The area south of Whites Beach Road is good agricultural land.
- > There are many historic areas, especially along Middleline Road

Transportation

- > Too much traffic in the vicinity of Route 67 and Route 50
- > Extend bike path northward.

Meeting Notes

Visioning Workshop, May 19, 2005

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- > Create a bike trail along Charlton Road.
- > There should be an orchard trail.

Group 3

Residential

- > Senior housing necessary
- > Residential development should be a cluster type with green space

Commercial

- > No commercial development near schools
- > Limit drive-thrus in the area near the Route 50 and Route 67 intersection
- > There may be an opportunity for small scale commercial on the west side of Route 50, just south of the Route 67 intersection
- > Buffer residential areas from commercial development
- > Light commercial may be appropriate along Kingsley Road
- > The Grand Union Plaza north of the Town may be a place for re-use

Open Space

- > Create an open space buffer around Ballston Lake
- > Maintain agricultural uses
- > Create a park on the Capiello property south of Whites Beach Road and also north of Whites Beach Road
- > Maintain the historic areas
 - o In the vicinity of Outlet Road, Charlton Road and Mourningkill Road
 - o Near Sweet Road
 - o Along Middleline Road

Transportation

- > Transportation improvements needed near the schools in Burnt Hills
 - o Bike facilities
- > Create a trail on the old trolley line
- > Connect the bike path to the Malta Trail

Group 4

Residential

Meeting Notes

Visioning Workshop, May 19, 2005

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- > Residential development could occur in the area north of Devil's Lane between Route 59 and Goode Street.
 - One suggestion is 2 acre lots
 - Another suggestion is for clustering to allow open space to remain
- > Housing with a park-like setting in the area near Route 50 and Zepko Lane.
 - An opportunity for a combination of senior housing and townhomes
- > Affordable, independent living Senior housing would be appropriate in the area west of Route 59 near just south of the intersection with Route 67.
 - A good neighbor to the school
 - There is a concern with traffic in this area
- > Higher density, mixed use housing may be an option in the area south of Lake Road along Eastline Road.
 - Utilize existing infrastructure
- > Protect and maintain existing residential areas from encroaching commercial development

Commercial

- > A State Farm Insurance-type office development in a park-like setting would be more appropriate in the vicinity of the proposed Wal-Mart site.
- > There is more of a need for office commercial than for retail commercial
 - A need for jobs with higher salaries
- > A grocery store may be appropriate in the old Grand Union Plaza (just outside of the Town).
- > Any retail commercial development should be small, community-scaled development
- > Possibly an opportunity for small-scale development near the Curtis Park area

Open Space

- > A neighborhood park would be nice in the vicinity of the Robert Drive residential area
 - Parks within walking distance of residential areas
- > Preserve the Heron Rookery north of Lake Road
- > Opportunities for additional parks with access to Ballston Lake should be examined
 - Scenic views
 - Recreation
 - Connections to bike path
 - One location could be the area south of Whites Beach Road
- > Allow continued use of the snow mobile trail across the central area of the Town
- > Protect scenic views of Ballston Lake along Route 50
- > Protect the entire rural area and promote farming

Meeting Notes

Visioning Workshop, May 19, 2005

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Transportation

- > Pedestrian crossings at the intersection of Route 50 and Route 67 are not safe for school children
- > Sidewalks are needed
 - In the vicinity of Route 50 and Route 67
 - Near Denny Road and Lake Hill Road - near the school
- > Buffers (planter strips) are needed between sidewalks and the roadway
- > Traffic at intersection of Denny Road and Longcreek Drive
- > Add a turn lane on Kingsley Road
- > Address speeding along Route 50 through traffic calming
- > Truck Traffic is a concern, especially along Route 67 and Church Avenue in the Village (jake brakes a problem)
- > Reserve access for a bike trail as development occurs in the areas east of Route 50 and south of Zepko Lane
- > Extend the bike path north and connect the bike path to the Malta trail and the park in Malta
- > Look for connections to the bike trail – the only way to get there is by driving.
 - Re-establish trails and connections throughout the Town
- > Provide for horseback riding trails



Landscape Architects, Architects,
Engineers, and Planners, P.C.

Meeting Notes

Project Name: Town of Ballston Comprehensive Plan

Project #: 05022

Meeting Title: Townwide Public Meeting

Date and Time: July 21, 2005 at 7:00 PM

Attendees: CPAC
Saratoga Associates
Members of the Public

Purpose/Intent of Meeting:

Present and Discuss Draft Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

If the meeting notes are not complete, accurate, or in context, please notify the sender of this document of such discrepancy within ten days following receipt of this record.

Items of Discussion:

The Town of Ballston Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held a Townwide Public Meeting on Thursday, July 21, 2005 at the Town Hall. The purpose of the public meeting was to present the Draft Comprehensive Plan recommendations and receive feedback from residents, property owners and other stakeholders in the community. Approximately 175 stakeholders attended the public meeting.

The following bulleted list represents general comments/concerns received during the public meeting. The comments are organized by plan topic area. Full transcripts of the meeting are available at the Town Hall and the Community Library.

Rural Areas:

- > Interpretation of special use permits
 - o Noise of uses (e.g. motorcycling)
 - o Loss of rights for rural uses
- > Concern about small commercial in rural area

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- > No further community development desired on Route 50 outside of hamlets
- > Literature suggestions
- > Dangers of reducing vegetation for town
- > Concern for preservation of natural beauty
- > Protection of open space needed in conservation subdivision
- > Notification needed for zoning changes
- > Need more for preservation of farmland
- > Include sidewalk requirements in plan
- > Worried about ability of young couples to live in area
- > Liability of open space in conservation subdivision

Mixed Use Areas:

- > Build-to line not suitable for this area (especially regarding parking)
- > Against multi-family housing
- > Need place to purchase houseware products
- > Need to determine appropriate land for mixed-use development
 - o Put stores in residential area?
- > Concern for how to develop mixed use zoning
 - o Some properties are currently under contract
- > Problems caused from narrow streets
 - o School bus and truck access
 - o Congestion
- > Look beyond built-to line
- > Large-scale development needs community input
 - o Above 60,000 square feet requires input
- > Community character important
- > Commercial development at regional scale not appropriate
 - o 50,000 square feet and over
- > Concerned about housing affordability
 - o Tax increases
 - o Need steady tax base
- > Describe research for the cap on square footage
 - o What do you anticipate?
 - o Against variances and special-use
- > Against Exit 12 type of development
- > Size of growth should fit community

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- Maximum of 60,000 square feet
- > Current neighborhood and community size is appropriate scale
 - Growth of appropriate scale is okay
 - Use of size cap is acceptable

Hamlet Residential Areas:

- > Concern over who will develop guidelines for sidewalks (especially near schools)
- > Questions regarding sidewalk liability and maintenance
- > Less residential density could mean increased price
 - Expensive water lines
- > Consider historic aspects
- > Boundaries for different areas are unclear
- > Too many recreational trails

Residential Area:

- > Confusion over current levels and future Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)
 - Does not want additional TND restrictions
- > Burden created for developers to create open space
 - Additional cost for houses
- > Big Box taxes should be higher than residential taxes
- > Need to clarify borders – does residential area go west of lake?
- > A proposed Plan by Widewaters will create 700 permanent jobs and \$1.5 million in sales tax

Industrial Development Area:

- > Roads need a lot of work
 - Must know state DOT plans
- > Need to clarify definitions and areas
 - Some industrial development appears to be located in rural areas
- > Will there be a technology park?
- > Is there a size CAP in area?
- > Is there a proposed industrial CAP?
- > Does area allow for Big Box development?
- > Previous plans were not reflected in zoning – need guarantees now

Transportation Corridors:

- > How does traffic planning proceed?
 - State to local, or local to state

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- > An increase in traffic causes problems with driveway access
 - o Rural character should remain
 - o Middle Line Road
- > Need to prohibit construction of 4-lane roads in town
 - o Limit amount of building
 - o Size caps okay
- > 87% want lower taxes according to the survey
 - o Need commercial resources to pay for development
- > Community desires a townwide vote on concepts
- > Big Box development doesn't necessarily create more traffic than mixed-use development
 - o Mixed-use increases traffic
- > Concern that mixed-use development will increase taxes because of residential aspects
- > Community does not want cap on stores that have own money to pay for improvements
- > Use other successful areas as examples when creating roads to decrease traffic
- > Need to take a broader look beyond just the town
- > Had planning process before and did zoning (2003) – why revisiting so soon?
- > Mixed Use / Smart Growth is good direction
 - o Lower infrastructure costs
 - o Better quality of life
 - o Maintains property value
- > Sidewalks are a necessity – 1/3 of town population cannot drive
- > Better job future with small businesses

Ballston Lake Area:

- > Concern over allowing increased residential density and sewer development
 - o More lawns means more runoff
- > Lake area is already overdeveloped
- > More desire for park on lake rather than residential development
 - o Park proposed in previous plan
- > Concern over how to protect stream corridors
 - o Specifics should be indicated in plan
- > All streams are intermittent and often located on residential properties
- > How to define zones?
- > How far back does zone go?
- > Allowing future density increases will result in more houses
 - o Need management district

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Agricultural Resources, Greenways and Open Space:

- > Against acquisition of trail links by town
 - o Need to look closer at issue
- > Supportive of greenway and open space development
- > Supportive of trails and lower density development
 - o Will town compensate?
- > Supportive of greenways
 - o Can attract a more skilled workforce

Historic, Cultural, Recreational Resources and Gateways:

- > Keep historic and gateways in consideration at the Ballston Spa border
- > Current two gateways are unattractive
- > Need park action before property is gone and/or cost increases
- > Consistency needed
 - o Standard for "historic" house – 170 years?
- > Historic sites need protection
 - o 217 Middleline Road is missed
- > Need to study kinds of parks needed
 - o Consider needs and uses of area
- > Need better access to bike trails and programs
- > Concern over how to pay for parks
 - o Taxpayers?
 - o Survey indicated 57% willing to pay for parks

Economic Development:

- > Why change Business Area to mixed-use?
 - o Large scale is okay
- > Questions the need for an increase in economic development in a town of 8,000 people
- > Against mixed-use development
 - o Design standards undemocratic
 - o Increases traffic congestion
- > Look at what is already in place
 - o Need economic development that fits to town scale
- > Support for size CAP
 - o 60,000 square feet okay
- > Don't need two mixed-use areas
- > Concern that size of supermarkets are going down

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- Price Chopper – 37,000 square feet
- Average Wegman's – 160,000 square feet
- > As size decrease, number of stores increases
- > Proposing mixed use for site / town center
 - Lights and sidewalk
 - Design standards

Other Topic Areas and General Comments:

- > Have meetings in different areas and at different times
- > Concern over who gets construction jobs
- > Wants 60,000 square foot cap to be total use
- > Questions over what effect mixed-use will have on Ballston Spa
- > Community does not want Big Box or Strip Mall
 - Desire to make Starbucks fit in
- > Worried that land for trails will be taken by eminent domain
- > 60,000 square foot building cap may be too big
- > Town of Wilton takes shoppers
 - Need anchor and/or village center
- > Community wants build-to details
- > Village cannot find tenant for empty Grand Union site
- > Concern that you cannot limit Big Box store
- > Town already has a good Master Plan and updated zoning
- > Traffic is already a problem
- > 'One-stop' shopping hurts local shops
- > Town avidly supports agriculture
 - Few comments from farmers – always working

Submitted, July 25, 2005

SARATOGA ASSOCIATES

Landscape Architects, Architects, Engineers, and Planners, P.C.

Appendix D

This is an unofficial copy of the meeting transcript for convenience only. Please refer to the paper copy on file at the Town Hall to review the official meeting transcript

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING

Town Hall Meeting Room
November 21, 2005
7:00 p.m.

Lesle B. DiMauro
Courtroom & Hearing Reporter
(518) 347-0865

1 MS. HAKES: I think we'd like to get started.
2 If you have not yet had a chance to sign in and you
3 would like to speak tonight, please do so on our
4 wonderful yellow sign-in sheets over here.

5 Welcome to the Town of Ballston Comprehensive
6 Plan Committee Public Hearing. This is a public
7 hearing of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee.
8 Tonight what we would like to do, first I am going to
9 give a brief presentation, and I do see some new faces
10 here, so let me introduce myself. I am Jackie Hakes
11 with Saratoga Associates and I am the project manager
12 for this, and I have been the liaison, the advisor to
13 the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee through this
14 process.

15 I'm just going to give a brief presentation
16 about where we are, how we got here and what the next
17 steps are, and then we'll get to the heart of the
18 meeting tonight, which is to really hear from you.
19 This is a public hearing, and so after about 10 minutes
20 or so, I'm going to hand this over to Don Rhodes, who
21 is the Chair of the CPAC committee, to guide us through
22 that public hearing.

23 I first would like to start in describing the
24 team that has been involved in the creation of this

1 draft comprehensive plan to date, and that involves the
2 Ballston Community, which involves stakeholders, that
3 includes residents, property owners, business owners,
4 it also involves the Town Council and the CPAC
5 committee that you see in front of you, and this is a
6 group of volunteers that have given a lot of energy and
7 effort to this process. Helping them along, as I
8 stated before, I'm with Saratoga Associates, and we
9 have been helping the committee to develop this plan.

10 I think it's important to understand how we
11 got to where we are today with this draft comprehensive
12 plan. There have been many opportunities for public
13 involvement through this process, and it really has
14 been a public process, and that's important, because at
15 the end of this process, it's going to be the community
16 plan, it's going to be your plan, so it needs to
17 reflect your desires and it needs to achieve the vision
18 that's been set forth in the plan. So, there's been
19 everything from the issues workshop to the community
20 survey to the visioning workshop and the town-wide
21 public meeting that many of you attended in July. In
22 addition, the CPAC has had numerous meetings to kind of
23 sift through all of this information and try to achieve
24 a consensus and create a balanced plan, and I really

1 think that this draft plan that we have for you to
2 review right now reflects that.

3 The plan is arranged around topic areas and if
4 you have not read the plan, I do urge and encourage you
5 to read it. It is available online and it's available
6 at the library and here at the Town Hall, as well. You
7 can see from the number of topic areas here that it
8 really is a comprehensive plan. It involves looking at
9 everything from transportation to agricultural/rural
10 areas to economic development. It really does look at
11 the town as a whole and it strives to identify
12 recommendations for each of these topic areas to help
13 this community achieve this vision that's outlined in
14 the plan.

15 To illustrate those recommendations that are
16 outlined in the plan, there's a plan recommendations
17 map that has been developed, and I do understand in
18 speaking with a gentleman earlier today, there may be
19 some confusion. That is also available on the website.
20 It's a separate link, if you will, because of the size.
21 So, if you went onto the website and you didn't see it,
22 it is there.

23 This recommendations map, I want to be very
24 clear that it's not a zoning map. It's actually a

1 future land use map to identify what the community
2 could be like in the future, and the recommendations
3 help support this. And I do also want to take a moment
4 to clarify that the comprehensive plan is different
5 than the zoning. The comprehensive plan is not
6 regulatory, but the zoning is. The comprehensive plan
7 sets forth a guide for the community over the next
8 five, ten, fifteen and even twenty years, and that
9 guide is reflective of this public process that we've
10 had here.

11 Now, for those of you that were at the town-
12 wide public meeting in July, you realize it was a very
13 long, very interactive meeting and we went through and
14 described each of the recommendations for each of the
15 planned topic areas. Tonight I'd like to abbreviate
16 that a little bit and just hit on some of the
17 highlights, some of the things that have changed since
18 the last draft, and these changes have come out of what
19 we've heard from the public and what the committee
20 feels is most appropriate for this community. So, I'm
21 not going to hit on all the changes. I encourage you
22 to read through the plan itself to get a sense of how
23 they all interact with one another and how all of these
24 recommendations really create a cohesive vision for the

1 community. So, let me just run through a few of the
2 highlights.

3 Starting with the rural areas, one of the
4 changes we've made as a committee was to change the
5 minor subdivision from four or fewer lots over ten
6 years, which was in the initial draft that was
7 available for public review, to four or fewer lots over
8 five years. The committee felt this was much more fair
9 to the property owner that just wanted to subdivide one
10 or two lots. In addition, the requirement of a pre-
11 application meeting for major subdivisions was added,
12 and this is very important because it provides the
13 Planning Board with a venue to sit down and talk with
14 the developer early in the review process to make sure
15 everyone's on the same page, and it also provides an
16 opportunity to encourage conservation subdivision, if
17 appropriate, in certain areas in the rural area.

18 The mixed use centers, now this, as you all
19 know, has been one of the areas that has received a lot
20 of attention throughout this process, and what has
21 happened in this particular area in the plan, is that
22 it has been reworked so that it's clearly understood
23 what the actual vision is for the mixed use centers,
24 and the plan identifies tools to consider. These tools

1 can be worked together, or they can be individual, and
2 they would still help to achieve the mixed use centers
3 that are described in the plan.

4 Design guidelines, a limit on square footage
5 of retail and development standards are some of the
6 tools that are identified. Now, I do want to be clear
7 that the comprehensive plan does not specify what the
8 square footage limit should be, but it does identify
9 that is a tool that the community should look into
10 further. The committee felt that it's very important
11 to look into this and really understand what might work
12 from a market perspective and what works from a
13 community perspective in terms of quality of life,
14 traffic impacts, those types of things, and the town is
15 actually taking a proactive approach to this,
16 understanding the importance of this particular issue,
17 and is looking to begin an economic development study
18 in the very near future that will look at what is the
19 appropriate size that the market can sustain in this
20 particular area.

21 In the residential area, there was a really
22 interesting addition made, which I think provides a lot
23 more flexibility to the property owners and the
24 developers, and that is a density bonus. In those

1 areas in the residential area that are served by public
2 sewer and water, the developer has an opportunity to
3 provide a public benefit, such as open space or maybe
4 park land, and if they do, they can receive a density
5 bonus. This recommendation, I think it's very
6 interesting, it provides some flexibility for the
7 developer to create a denser development, if you will,
8 but still the public is benefiting from something
9 through that, as well.

10 There was also a discussion previously in the
11 residential area about using a floating zone to
12 incorporate a traditional neighborhood development.
13 Well, we took a closer look at that and the town
14 currently has a Planned Unit Development process, a PUD
15 process, and we felt there was an opportunity to expand
16 that process to include some language to allow for a
17 traditional neighborhood development, which is a more
18 walkable, compact development that has some variety of
19 mixes of uses.

20 And related to the transportation corridors,
21 there was a consideration added to look at form-based
22 code along the corridors, and those corridors we're
23 talking about primarily are Route 50 and Route 67, and
24 utilizing design guidelines so that the development

1 that does occur along those corridors does not
2 negatively impact the rural character along some of
3 those corridors. So, those are a couple of tools that
4 are outlined in the comprehensive plan to help achieve
5 that.

6 And also in the transportation corridors,
7 there's some language added about roadway safety.
8 There's some intersections that have been identified as
9 being potentially problematic in terms of accident
10 rates, things like that. One example is the Route 50-
11 Middle Line Road intersection. There's some expanded
12 language in the comprehensive plan about that.

13 So, those are some of the brief highlights.
14 There have been some other things that have taken
15 place, but ultimately it's come together to be a much
16 more direct vision for the community over the future.
17 The CPAC will be holding a meeting a week from tonight
18 here, and what we'll be doing at that meeting is to be
19 thinking about everything we hear from you tonight,
20 incorporate any revisions that the committee feels is
21 necessary, and then vote to forward it on to the Town
22 Board. Once the Town Board has the comprehensive plan,
23 they will then hold a public hearing and then decide
24 whether or not they wish to vote to adopt the

1 comprehensive plan.

2 So, it's been a long process, but we're
3 getting close to the end. So, I want to thank you for
4 your participation thus far, and stay tuned, it's
5 really important that you stay involved, not only in
6 the development of it but in the implementation of
7 this, as well.

8 So, with that, this is the public hearing, I
9 am going to stop talking now and turn it over to you
10 all. I just ask that you please be courteous whenever
11 anyone is speaking, and each person will have a limited
12 time to speak, five minutes to speak. Don will be the
13 time keeper, and I just want to reiterate that this is
14 not a question and answer session like some of our
15 other public meetings have been, but this is truly time
16 for us to listen to you, and with that, I'll turn it
17 over to Don.

18 MR. RHODES: Thank you. I won't be the
19 timekeeper. Like any good project manager, you defer
20 all the nasty business to somebody else, so I'm
21 thankful that Richard Kinney is going to keep an eye on
22 the clock. There are a lot of people scheduled, signed
23 in to speak, so that's the only reason we have the five
24 minutes. We appreciate you trying to keep your

1 comments as brief and as to the point as possible, and
2 try to give as many constructive comments regarding
3 specific language you'd like modified so that we can
4 consider it as a committee during our next meeting and
5 try to get it integrated into the plan, because after
6 all, it needs to be your vision, not our vision. We're
7 hoping through the coordination that we've done through
8 the workshops and the meetings, that we're pretty
9 close, but I'm sure we have some more things to do.
10 So, that's what we'll work on.

11 The first person signed up to speak is Jim
12 Martin, the second person is Martin Zavadil, and I
13 apologize in advance. I'm probably going to butcher
14 names the entire evening, but bear with me, we'll try
15 to get through it.

16 Martin Zavadil, would you like to come up
17 first.

18 MR. ZAVADIL: I'm Martin Zavadil. I live at
19 206 Ballston Avenue.

20 I'm a little disappointed that all of our
21 elected officials are not here tonight, but I will
22 address this as if they all were here.

23 I've been attending mostly every meeting of
24 the CPAC committee and Town Board meetings. I've

1 appreciated all of the time and effort that has gone
2 into the development of the comprehensive plan for our
3 town. However, I was very disappointed when the CPAC
4 committee disregarded the recommendation of the
5 Saratoga Associates and took the 60,000 square foot
6 restriction out of the current plan. I'm also
7 disappointed to hear that the Town Board is really not
8 sure what the will of the People is because the same
9 people keep attending these public meetings. We are
10 the People, and we attend these meetings because we are
11 extremely interested in the future of our town.

12 The Town Board mailed a survey to "random
13 taxpayers" to get their desires about the future of our
14 town. Here is where a grave error was made. With an
15 issue this important to the future of our town, why was
16 this survey not mailed to every taxpayer in our town?
17 I have lived in Ballston Spa for 17 years, and when I
18 found out that this was the plan, I was gravely
19 disappointed in our elected officials. I do not have a
20 positive attitude towards this process, because I was
21 left out of the most important part of creating this
22 comprehensive plan for our town. I expressed my
23 feelings to Mr. Rhodes in person at one of the first
24 public meetings. This is not the way to treat the

1 public regarding such an important process.

2 I would remind the officials of the town that
3 according to the results of their survey, 56 percent of
4 us expressed support for the 60,000 square foot limit
5 in the mixed use zone, and only 11 percent support big
6 box development. We have stated over and over again,
7 we do not want to become a regional shopping center.
8 We want expanded local businesses. Why must we become
9 like every other town in America?

10 I listened with great interest recently to an
11 interview on public radio regarding how Wal-Mart
12 operates when it comes to a new town. The person being
13 interviewed had traveled to Wal-Mart's home office and
14 observed its operation first hand. When a new super
15 center opens, pictures of the local business owners are
16 hung on the wall, and one by one, they're "x'ed" out as
17 local businesses close their doors.

18 I came to Ballston Spa when about half the
19 store fronts were vacant. I do never want to
20 experience that again. And when Wal-Mart is not happy
21 with what local officials will require of them or what
22 their employees want, they simply close their doors,
23 leaving the town with a huge, useless building. I have
24 seen this happen in Clifton Park, i.e. Clifton Country

1 Mall, and I never want to see this happen here in
2 Ballston Spa.

3 You are elected town officials, and therefore
4 represent all the people of the Town of Ballston. You
5 are commissioned to reflect the will of the People in
6 your decisions regarding the comprehensive plan.
7 Therefore, if 56 percent of the people want a cap
8 restriction as part of this plan and only 11 percent
9 want big box developments, 3 members must support the
10 restriction, 1 must vote against it and 1 must abstain.
11 Your own individual wants cannot be part of this issue.
12 You, as an elected group, must represent the will of
13 the People and the people of Ballston Spa have spoken
14 over and over again. Please listen.

15 MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Jackie. My name --
16 I've just given handouts to the committee members that
17 will track with the presentation. My name is Jim
18 Martin. I'm here on behalf of Hal Schultz, who's a
19 property owner in the town, and I'd like to speak
20 tonight to specifically the mixed use center portion of
21 the comprehensive plan, and most specifically
22 geographically to the area at East Line Road and Route
23 67.

24 We see this as an exciting possibility for

1 merger of the public interest as well as a private
2 intention, and a real opportunity to not just have a
3 vision for the town, but have that vision actually put
4 into motion. This is the map that Jackie referred to
5 earlier and I've highlighted the section that's the
6 focus of my comments tonight. There is an existing PDD
7 at this location approved back in 1984, and we're not
8 sure as to why this wasn't included in the original
9 grouping of mixed use centers as it shares many of the
10 attributes with the other areas that have been
11 identified, and also, notably, the uses around this
12 intersection speak to a lot of the mixed use concepts
13 that are in the plan, convenience retail, there's a
14 nursery there and so on and so forth, and we'd like to
15 build upon that.

16 Now, what I'm outlining for you next here,
17 this is in your handout, on the left-hand side here are
18 the excerpts from the draft plan, some of the call-
19 outs, specifically outlining the concepts behind what
20 is intended for the mixed use centers and why they're a
21 good idea. And what I'm outlining for you on the
22 right-hand side is how the concept we have for this
23 intersection, specifically the northwestern quadrant,
24 how these can be met. We see this as an opportunity to

1 support new businesses and the requisite jobs, as
2 mentioned in the plan, including a variety of housing
3 types consistent with the character of the surrounding
4 uses, Stewart's, the Halloween Hall Dance Center and so
5 on, and also, you'll see in our concept that I'm going
6 to show you in a minute, an opportunity to really
7 foster the small-town character that's spoken to in the
8 plan, stay within the retail development standards that
9 I see in a handout here earlier, and really meet the
10 compact design and limited nature of these mixed use
11 centers in terms of the types of commercial development
12 they'll allow for, as well as incorporating residential
13 dwellings and reduce dependency on vehicular travel and
14 encourage pedestrian movement.

15 Now, what I have here is an aerial view of
16 this area of the town, our site is highlighted in
17 yellow. You'll see the Northway up to the top of the
18 photograph, Route 67 running down the right-hand side
19 and East Line Road is basically side to side through
20 the middle of the photograph. And this is here to show
21 you and highlight the uses in the area, the rural
22 nature of this specific area, the area around the
23 intersection, but also harkening to the heritage of
24 this specific site. Even dating back to 1837, this has

1 had mixed use commercial uses on it, and there's been a
2 lot of public investment made in this site already in
3 terms of bringing water and sewer to this intersection,
4 widening the highway, and what this concept will do is
5 take advantage of those investments made. That's smart
6 planning, that's smart growth.

7 The next slide serves to highlight a concept
8 that could be exercised for this corner. You'll notice
9 the limited nature of the building shown. They're
10 broken up in a campus-like setting with the housing
11 incorporated into the design, pedestrian movement
12 encouraged and incorporated into the design, public
13 spaces, community spaces in the design. So, it's
14 walkable, very welcoming and an excellent gateway to
15 the community but in keeping with that limited
16 commercial nature that is so often spoke of.

17 So, in wrapping up my comment, what's being
18 asked for is that this intersection be considered as a
19 node to the mixed use commercial center to the north,
20 acknowledging the use is already permitted in the PDD
21 that's existing on this site and has been for some 20
22 years as allowing for retail and various types of
23 offices and industrial uses, and more importantly,
24 providing a means for this to be built as the town's

1 first mixed use center, a prototype of what can be done
2 when there's proper planning actually put into place
3 and it can be a prototype and a gateway to this
4 community that you can be proud of.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. RHODES: George Splain, followed by J. D.
7 Wood.

8 (Mr. Splain declines to speak)

9 MR. RHODES: Okay. J. D. Wood.

10 MR. WOOD: Okay. J.D. Wood, Town of Ballston.

11 I prepared a statement because a lot of time I
12 get passionate and start speaking from the heart and go
13 on tangents, so I prepared something.

14 Why am I not surprised that this draft
15 comprehensive plan is little more than a revisitation
16 of the 1989 plan? From the get-go, we knew the process
17 would be faulty, as what was supposed to be an advisory
18 committee of citizens, was made of individuals, for the
19 most part, were already indebted to their magical lives
20 thanks to the crafting of Geppetto's workshop. Absent
21 from what have been a true representative of the
22 community at large, are members of the human service
23 sector of the community.

24 The largest employer of the town, the schools,

1 will feel the biggest pressure of the impacts of
2 development here. The youth of the community, ages
3 zero to twenty-five, who make up 30 percent of our
4 demographic population, who are in line to inherit the
5 Ballston we leave behind, the clergy, the small
6 business entrepreneur, the moderate income family, the
7 single parents, the stay-at-home moms and dads, the
8 other stakeholders and professionals with valuable
9 input and other service-orientated services.

10 Analysis and observation of the CPAC process
11 continually stunned us, though we were sure that the
12 many surveys conducted expressed the consensus of our
13 stated needs, wants and desires, and we were very
14 confident that the Saratoga Associates clearly
15 understood the genuine majority's opinion of what we as
16 a collective community wanted in terms of a valuable
17 comprehensive plan. All too often, we witnessed our
18 desires and intent go by the wayside.

19 If CPAC is suggesting that we adopt this
20 watered-down draft plan, then it becomes even more
21 obvious that what should have served as an advisory
22 committee, in fact manipulated and steered away from
23 our wants and enabled a product of someone else's
24 creation. If there is anything that we learned from

1 the process, perhaps it was the new spelling and
2 emphasis on the term "roadblock".

3 This draft lacks any concise, meaningful or
4 specific actions, goals and objectives. It is a
5 document of ambiguous statements, of wordage which all
6 too often includes the words "the town should" and "the
7 town could", rather than the more productive goal
8 setters as the words "the town will". Historically,
9 we've seen the Town Board either incapable or unwilling
10 to act on complacent wording such as "could" and
11 "should". It is painfully evident that they, the
12 Board, need outline-specific action plans, measurable
13 goals and objectives and a general job description in
14 order to motivate them from a reactive realm to a more
15 productive proactive movement. They are incapable of
16 moving forward on their own, otherwise they would have
17 done this over the past 17 years and we wouldn't be
18 standing in this predicament today.

19 The new state-of-the-art Malta plan is goal
20 and objective specific. Yielding a more reasonable
21 plan to pursue toward fruition and therefore will be
22 successful in achieving what the public intends for
23 their town. We deserve and need this here, too.

24 If you are asking me to accept the draft plan

1 as "our plan", I emphatically answer no. This is not
2 the plan the public has asked for. This is not the
3 plan that the Saratoga Associates set out to offer us,
4 and it is not a strong foundation to which we can craft
5 the future of our town. I plead with you to put the
6 teeth back into a diligent watch dog of our overall
7 best interests by being more site, design and plan
8 specific of our expressed needs and desires to preserve
9 a quality of life and the rural character of our town.

10 Should you find offense with my analogy that
11 this draft is but a product of Geppetto's workshop,
12 then prove me wrong and reject this plan until it
13 contains stronger intent to deliver what the people of
14 Ballston deserve and have demanded, but as it stands
15 now, this draft serves only to fuel the argument that
16 the Town Board's passed, that we really didn't need a
17 new master plan, as this one's just the like old one,
18 yet in a newer jacket.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. RHODES: Liz Carrigan.

21 (No response)

22 MR. RHODES: Alice Ehmann.

23 MS. EHMANN: Actually, I had a question, and
24 obviously this isn't a question and answer session, but

1 I did read through the document this weekend, and I was
2 a bit perplexed that there was not more information on
3 the kinds of developments that were going to go around
4 the schools. I think a lot of people who have young
5 children who are making decisions on where they're
6 going to send them to school would really appreciate
7 that information. People move to Ballston Spa and
8 Burnt Hills to send their kids to a suburban school,
9 and I know it's a concern of mine that that's not going
10 to be where my kids are attending. So, thank you.

11 MR. RHODES: Thank you.

12 Andrew Wolfson.

13 (Mr. Wolfson yields his time)

14 MR. RHODES: Okay. Bob Cawley, followed by
15 Bob Speck.

16 MR. CAWLEY: Bob Cawley, Ballston.

17 In response to public demand for protection
18 from runaway development, first the decision was made
19 to draft a new comprehensive plan and this committee
20 was formed. This draft plan seems to actually go in
21 the opposite direction. The 1988 plan had prohibitions
22 against regional malls; this plan actually advocates
23 large retailers and states it is critical to insure
24 that any future development is large enough to meet

1 some critical mass. Didn't have to be this way.
2 Saratoga Associates faithfully followed the community's
3 desires, which have been expressed overwhelmingly and
4 consistently through the hearings and through the
5 survey. The original draft that they provided included
6 a 60,000 square foot cap, it included a ten-year
7 minimum between minor subdivisions, it included a
8 stream corridor overlay. CPAC has chosen to ignore the
9 wishes of the general public. Instead, they have
10 stripped or watered down each of these provisions. In
11 short, this plan does not provide the protection that
12 the citizens of this town have been asking for, for
13 almost two years.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. RHODES: Bob Speck.

16 (Mr. Speck defers his time)

17 MR. RHODES: Okay. Good. Melissa Cobart,
18 followed by Linda Furman.

19 MS. COBART: Hi. Good evening. Melissa
20 Cobart, Town of Ballston, Village of Ballston Spa.
21 Bear with me, because if anybody knows, I hate talking
22 in public, so. All right.

23 First, I'd like to thank the committee for all
24 the work they've put into the formation of this plan.

1 For all those who haven't had the opportunity to attend
2 every meeting as I have, they'll find it difficult to
3 fully understand the incredible amount of thought and
4 detail that has went into the creation of this
5 document. The committee has spent countless hours
6 sorting through information, discussing planning
7 options and trying to find the right direction in which
8 to steer the town. They have done this of their own
9 free will and personal time, all the while knowing that
10 no matter how it came out, tremendous criticism will
11 come, because the truth is, it isn't possible to please
12 everybody.

13 The town is made up of many different people
14 from different walks of life that have lived here for
15 generations and some who have just moved here. And the
16 fact is, most have different views of the direction the
17 town should take. That has never been more obvious
18 than now. We have seen many new faces at the Town
19 Board meetings over the past nine months and a lot of
20 people that voted in the recent election was
21 remarkable. It is apparent to me from those election
22 results that the majority of the voters, those who cast
23 their ballots and those who spoke with their silence,
24 have shown their great confidence in the current board

1 and the direction they have and will lead this town.

2 This plan is meant to cover each and every
3 part of this town, not just one particular area. It
4 was not intended to stop one or two particular
5 projects, but to provide us and guide us with the
6 future for years to come.

7 After reading this document, I, too, have
8 found certain things that I did not want, so I tried to
9 step back and put my personal opinion aside and look at
10 what's best for the town as a whole, but I still found
11 that I had certain concerns. I guess I will start with
12 the suggestion to put parking in the rear of the
13 buildings. Though I do understand the aesthetic
14 reasoning behind this, I feel that the safety of the
15 people takes precedence over visual appeal. In recent
16 months there have been concerns raised over the parking
17 lot safety in big box stores, but the reality is that
18 crime and violence is not contained to big box stores.
19 Unfortunately it is everywhere, and I am afraid that
20 while trying to shield the cars from the public eye, we
21 may be putting the consumers at risk. There are
22 adequate tools that can be used, such as buffers,
23 planning strips and walking paths that can soften the
24 traditional parking lot look.

1 Next I want to address the recommendation of a
2 retail size cap. While personally I don't agree with a
3 cap, I respect the committee and the Town Board, the
4 way they have chosen to pursue this. Many times I have
5 heard residents that are in favor of the cap speak to
6 the fact that they have provided adequate information
7 to the committee and their success elsewhere, but we
8 also should remember that these caps have not been
9 challenged in other towns and I am sure as you all well
10 know, these landowners are not going to go away
11 quietly. To move too quickly and impose a size cap of
12 an arbitrary number without solid facts will only set
13 up the town for a legal battle it will not win, at
14 which point the cap would be pointless and cost the
15 town millions, and taxpayers, as well. My fear is that
16 a size cap will deter commercial development and we
17 cannot afford to allow our town to become stagnant.

18 The town of Ballston keeps growing
19 residentially, and with Malta and Milton developing
20 more housing at rapid rates, we will soon need to
21 expand our schools and repair our roadways that are
22 already failing, but we will be doing this all without
23 the added revenues commercial development will bring.
24 So, we, the taxpayers, will be seeing the increase in

1 our tax bills every year.

2 Okay. Next subject. In recent days I have
3 read that some are upset that the plan does not include
4 the recommendations for stream corridor protection from
5 the LCC, but I think what needs to be remembered is
6 that the LCC was formed by the Town to identify and
7 evaluate parcels of land for open space preservation.
8 Though they did do a considerable amount of work on
9 this paper, it was something that they took upon
10 themselves to do and it has not been voted on or
11 accepted by the elected officials. Therefore, it would
12 be irresponsible of the CPAC to use this in the plan.
13 Now, at sometime in the future, after the Board has
14 reviewed the paper and looked at the LCC and how they
15 came up with these recommendations, then if they feel
16 it necessary, they can and will implement these into
17 the plan. That's the best thing about this document,
18 it's not law; it's a flexible document. The details
19 come with the zoning.

20 So, I feel that you guys did a wonderful job
21 and our town will prosper with this plan.

22 MR. RHODES: Linda Furman, followed by William
23 Hillig.

24 MS. FURMAN: This is brief and hopefully not

1 to inflammatory. It's my opinion as a taxpayer for the
2 last 46 years.

3 I'm just wondering how much we've all really
4 thought through regarding the economic impact of
5 restricting large-scale development, such as
6 Widewaters, which would bring a rich tax base, a half-
7 million dollars in property taxes, one and a half
8 million dollars in sales tax, and personally, I would
9 love my taxes helped out. Small retail development or
10 mixed use can't compete with this kind of tax base.
11 The large-scale development finances the cost of the
12 infrastructure, which all of us are very concerned
13 about as we develop in our area, such as roads and
14 lighting and other things. A true vision for the
15 future of our town considers the necessity of this kind
16 of development to help a community grow in a healthy
17 way and to thrive.

18 Mixed use has not been terribly successful in
19 my little area of Burnt Hills. We've had stores move
20 in and out of that mixed use area and empty store
21 fronts in the 46 years I've been there, so often and
22 still continuing, and the same is true of the Saratoga
23 Outlet Mall, which no one likes to go in and out of
24 these shops freezing and in rain and snow and sleet.

1 It's just not conducive to the northeast.

2 So, I personally vote to obliterate the mixed
3 use in our comprehensive plan center and keep our
4 present zoning intact, which this board brought up a
5 number of years ago. I think they've done a very fine
6 job of running our town. I'm thankful for them and all
7 the work that the committees had put in. I think we
8 need to encourage large-scale development and honor the
9 rights of all property owners in the town of Ballston.

10 Thank you very much.

11 MR. RHODES: William Hillig, followed by John
12 Zepko.

13 (Mr. Hillig defers his time)

14 MR. RHODES: Okay. Thank you.

15 John Zepko, followed by Michelle Bracht.

16 (Mr. Zepko defers his time)

17 MR. RHODES: Okay. Michelle Bracht.

18 MS. BRACHT: Hi. I've lived in the town of
19 Ballston for 26 years, temporarily relocated to a small
20 town in Pennsylvania while my husband is attending
21 medical school. I decided to speak at this meeting
22 after reading the comprehensive plan.

23 The Saratoga Associates' vision for the Town
24 of Ballston is shockingly similar to the town I now

1 live in. In Section 3.2, the mixed use centers,
2 buildings with retail or commercial services on the
3 first floor and residences above is suggested. Now,
4 this may not sound too bad on paper; however, in life
5 it can be not only inconvenient but an eyesore, as
6 well.

7 One such mixed use building in Schwenksville,
8 Pennsylvania where I currently live contains a laundry
9 mat and convenience store on the bottom floor with
10 housing above it. There's insufficient parking so
11 people are frequently double parking to unload their
12 laundry which blocks traffic, and the eyesore, there's
13 balconies above where the people live. It's hideous to
14 see people's garbage and furniture parked on the
15 balcony all through the winter, all through the summer
16 people hanging their laundry out to dry. We have
17 sidewalks through the town so people can walk to any of
18 the small shops. Unfortunately, the only stores that
19 seem to stay open for more than a year or two is the
20 liquor store and the laundry mat. No one wants to walk
21 to the store, anyway, carrying your heavy bags through
22 the streets in the snow in the winter or the heat in
23 the summer. It's not convenient. The tiny stores
24 don't have the land or the money to improve the

1 infrastructure, so you either have to try and park on
2 the street or find a tiny parking lot shoved in the
3 back somewhere. Either way, it's unsafe and
4 inconvenient to try to get back out onto the road.

5 As I said, we have a walkable community full
6 of small shops. In fact, there's not a single building
7 over 4,000 square feet on my entire 15 mile commute to
8 work. You may think without big box stores to shop,
9 that the traffic wouldn't be too bad, but that's
10 exactly wrong. My 15-mile commute can take me over an
11 hour in the morning to get to work. The small towns
12 provide no stores, no large stores to shop in, very few
13 job opportunities. All that it provides is a lot of
14 people, a lot of people that have to shop elsewhere and
15 drive elsewhere to go to work, just providing more
16 traffic. The vision of -- this small town has created
17 more traffic, more danger to pedestrians, more danger
18 to the motorists and generally decreased the quality of
19 life for the residents.

20 MR. RHODES: Scott Miller, followed by Karen
21 Terbush.

22 MR. MILLER: Scott Miller, Town of Ballston.

23 I want to say I'm disappointed we're not
24 allowed to ask questions. I think during all the

1 meetings up until now, we haven't been able to ask
2 questions based on the final document, and I think
3 that's really a miscarriage.

4 I want to talk about the rural sections
5 subdivision regulations, and it changed from ten years
6 to a five-year period. To recap, Saratoga Associates
7 recommended ten years, LCC recommended fifteen years,
8 CPAC said five years. I think part of the role of
9 consultant is to explain what the words mean on the
10 ground, and I'm going to do that for you. We had a 32
11 acre parcel in a rural section of the Town of Ballston,
12 it could be completely subdivided in six years under
13 this regulation. Got that? Six years. Take, for
14 example, the 90 acre parcel at Middle Line and 67,
15 4,000 feet of rural frontage. It's the rural gateway
16 to Ballston Spa, could be divided into 32 parcels in 12
17 years, completely outside any major subdivision
18 regulations. Plus side, the major subdivision
19 regulations are so weak, it probably wouldn't make any
20 difference.

21 If we look at conservation subdivision,
22 conservation subdivision and transferred development
23 rights are the two major tools this town has available
24 to it that will achieve a significant open space

1 protection without soaking the taxpayers and penalizing
2 landowners. The conservation subdivision provision was
3 gutted. It's unrecognizable as a conservation
4 subdivision. It's only an option. The Planning Board
5 can express its preference but can't require.

6 Here's a recap of the suggestion. Saratoga
7 Associates recommended that conservation subdivisions
8 be required and implemented in one of two fashions:
9 either mandatory or with density bonuses; the LCC
10 recommended mandatory conservation subdivisions on
11 identified lands with conservation interests, and
12 throughout the country, conservation subdivision
13 minimum is that it is the permitted use. All other
14 major subdivision options be special permit. The
15 burden of proof is on the developer that it cannot be
16 done. CPAC, except to change the global density basis,
17 is unchanged from current zoning. This, as implemented
18 in this plan, looks no different than what you've got
19 right now. So, when you read the little box next to
20 the master plan, says 78 percent of residents wanted to
21 see changes in the master plan in the major
22 subdivision, you can be sure that 78 percent of the
23 residents are going to be disappointed.

24 If we look at green space minimums, we have

1 one of these great ambiguous statements: minimum open
2 space set aside should be, perhaps, 20 to 50 percent.
3 the English translation of that is: something like 20
4 to 50 percent, if the developer feels like it, or less,
5 or nothing. That's what it means. You can write
6 zoning based on that statement. What it started off
7 with is Saratoga Associates recommending 50 percent
8 green space. That's of developable land. The LCC
9 recommended 20 to 50 percent specified based on the
10 type of land in the lands of conservation interest and
11 density bonuses. Malta, for instance, just for
12 reference, nearby, not too strange a place, has it at
13 50 percent, and as I say, CPAC says 20 to 50 percent or
14 not at all.

15 And the question you want to ask is, how is
16 the Zoning Committee supposed to decide when 20 percent
17 is appropriate, when 50 percent is appropriate. The
18 plan gives no guidance, no vision. And suppose the
19 Planning Board wants to ask for 20 percent. There's
20 nothing to make it stick. The Planning Board asks for,
21 say, the recommended 20 percent, and the developer says
22 no. That's it. They go away. There's nothing to
23 enforce it. There's no carrots, there's no sticks.

24 So, I think in this case, what we're talking

1 about is the town gets the sleeves of the vest because
2 there's additional fuzzy statements in there about the
3 green space including non-developable lands. So, you
4 might get 20 percent of the land, but it might be the
5 stuff they couldn't build on, anyway.

6 I'm going to skip to -- there's lots of other
7 bad things in there, but I'll skip to stream corridor
8 protection.

9 Saratoga Associates represented a stream -- or
10 suggested a stream overlay zone for water quality
11 habitat, restrict building, vegetation removal and for
12 compliance with MS4. The LCC recommended stream
13 buffers for designated DEC streams, CDRPC said stream
14 buffers, LA Group said stream buffers, DEC, Army Corps
15 of Engineers, USDA, EPA U.S. Forrest Service, all of
16 those agencies best management practices call for
17 stream buffers. Our surrounding towns, stream buffers.
18 County planning, stream buffers. CPAC, business as
19 usual. CPAC asserts all streams already have wetland
20 buffers, so they're protected. A demonstratively
21 false statement. CPAC asserts the best sign should
22 guide us.

23 (Speaker's time up)

24 MR. RHODES: Karen Terbush, followed by

1 Merrill McCall.

2 MS. TERBUSH: Hi. I'm Karen Terbush from the
3 Randall Road, Town of Ballston.

4 I'm surprised to see how many people are out
5 here tonight, because I personally felt there was not a
6 lot of public notice of the availability of the revised
7 document or of this meeting, and fortunately someone
8 sent me an email and said that it was available and I
9 was able to download it last night and take a look at
10 it. So, my comments will be brief because I haven't
11 had much time to review, and I'll probably mostly focus
12 on the rural area because that was at the beginning.

13 Basically, I went through the document very
14 fast and just tried to compare the July version to this
15 version. In the rural areas, under the uses, the
16 former draft suggested that small-scale commercial or
17 light industrial be limited to 4,000 square feet. This
18 new draft has no size limit. I feel that's a mistake
19 taking that out.

20 In the minor subdivision definition,
21 previously it said that the creation of four or fewer
22 lots would occur over a ten-year period. The ten-year
23 period has been reduced to five years, after which
24 additional minor subdivisions would be possible. This

1 could result in considerably more development over a
2 shorter period of time in the rural area.

3 Conservation subdivisions, the first draft
4 would have required these in rural areas and even
5 suggested an incentive for their use. The new draft
6 recommends that they be considered, but there's no
7 incentive at all for a developer to use them or not use
8 them.

9 Stream corridor protection, the earlier draft
10 recommended a stream corridor protection overlay zone
11 or buffer. This should be added back into the plan.
12 Current DEC and Corps of Engineers regulations do not
13 provide enough protection for our important riparian
14 corridors. These are important to protect water
15 quality, especially in streams that ultimately flow
16 into Ballston Lake, and they are also important
17 corridors for wildlife movement.

18 In the mixed use centers, I was very
19 disappointed that the size limit recommended in the
20 earlier plan in July was removed, and although there
21 will be additional study, it does seem prudent for the
22 master plan to at least start with a recommended size
23 limit, like 60,000 square feet. Otherwise, the sky's
24 the limit. This limit was supported by the public

1 survey.

2 Overall, it seems like it's a good start, but
3 it does seem like there's an awful lot of "iffy"
4 statements in the plan and there's an awful lot of
5 chances to do additional plans. I'm kind of
6 disappointed that it wasn't all done in this first
7 planning effort. And why are there separate plans for
8 each of the mixed use areas, for example, and a
9 separate open space plan? As these plans are
10 eventually completed, they should be added to this plan
11 so that it really, truly is a comprehensive plan for
12 the town.

13 Thank you, very much.

14 MR. RHODES: Merrill McCall, followed by Frank
15 Rossi.

16 MS. McCALL: My comments will be considerably
17 shorter. Basically, I have concern with the entrance
18 into Ballston Lake. There was quite a bit of talk
19 about entrances and the approach to the town and how it
20 appears. If you come over from the Northway on Exit
21 11, and you go down the Round Lake Road, there are
22 several houses, one abandoned, one abandoned and it
23 looks like it's been burned. There are several others
24 at various entrances to the town, some up on Middle

1 Line Road. And my question is, what provisions does
2 the town have for abandoned buildings or neglected
3 buildings, and functionally, is there anything in the
4 comprehensive plan that addresses these points?

5 Thank you.

6 MR. RHODES: Frank Rossi.

7 (Mr. Rossi defers his time)

8 MR. RHODES: Rose Rossi.

9 (Ms. Rossi defers her time)

10 MR. RHODES: Next is Joyce Bracht, followed by
11 John Sayre.

12 MS. BRACHT: My name is Joyce Bracht, and I
13 spent two, three weeks trying to figure out what I was
14 going to say, digging up facts, figures, and I'm just
15 going to speak the way I feel.

16 And I feel the proposed mixed use, I'm against
17 it. The proposed mixed use area is designed so nothing
18 happens in the north end of town. Route 50's too
19 narrow to have on-street parking. No one's going to go
20 shopping for much more than a quart of milk or an
21 article of clothing and walk. If they would, how come
22 there's so many cars in Stewart's parking lot? Or
23 McDonald's? They're always full of cars.

24 And contrary to some people in the town that

1 awoke from a coma last year, there has been a plan in
2 the northern end of town. Saratoga County and the Town
3 of Ballston took it upon themselves to change the
4 zoning to encourage a concentration of commercial there
5 as early as 1999. The master plan was also updated at
6 or about the same year. Several members of the town
7 went over the 1989 master plan line by line and decided
8 that it was still a good document. That would be
9 considered an update.

10 There's been no economic study specifically
11 for square cap in the Town of Ballston, and to pick a
12 figure from other towns with square caps, I don't think
13 that's appropriate. There's also been many well-
14 attended open meetings regarding the northern end of
15 town as early as 1999 and late 2003 following an eight-
16 month moratorium, which included zoning changes and
17 updates to the master plan. My husband and myself, as
18 well as many other property owners, attended meetings
19 and planned our lives accordingly. We did exactly what
20 was asked of us and marketed our property accordingly.
21 1999 or 2003 should have been the time to object to the
22 vision or the zoning changes in the northern end of
23 town. Somehow it doesn't seem right that we should
24 plan our retirement around what the town and county

1 wanted and after the fact, some people want to change
2 the rules. To most of us, real estate is the most
3 valuable asset, and now that it's our time to retire,
4 are we going to get kicked in the back on the way out
5 the door? And whatever happened to property owners'
6 rights?

7 Thank you.

8 MR. RHODES: John Sayre, followed by Clifford
9 Sampson.

10 MR. SAYRE: Good evening. My name is John
11 Sayre and I'm the real estate developer who has the
12 shopping center proposed for the intersection of 50 and
13 67. I've been told I talk too fast, so I'll try and
14 slow down tonight.

15 The Widewaters Group is a real estate company
16 based in Syracuse, New York. We're a family business.
17 I'm a parent myself. I've got a four-year old son and
18 a two-year old daughter. I understand and appreciate
19 the values that you folks are trying to protect here in
20 the town of Ballston.

21 Three issues that I want to address tonight.
22 They're important for all in the community, are taxes,
23 traffic and jobs. I'm going to start with traffic.
24 The intersection of Route 50 and Route 67 fails today.

1 The Annual Average Daily Traffic count north of 50 and
2 67 overlapping into Ballston Spa is 15,100 vehicles per
3 day. The AADT east of Route 50 is 17,900 vehicles per
4 day. BFJ Planning has recommended to the town that a
5 roundabout be built at the intersection of Brookline
6 Road and Route 67, as well as an additional parallel
7 service road along Route 67. The cost for these
8 improvements is estimated at \$6-million.

9 What does that mean to all of you? That is
10 approximately \$488 per resident in the Town of Ballston
11 that you're going to be asked to pay for the next ten
12 years; per resident, not per household. This fee can
13 be paid through the developer of the Wal-Mart site and
14 also the Widewaters Group. We can help to mitigate the
15 traffic problems that exist today, regardless of
16 commercial development. These road improvements have a
17 20-year useful life and it will eliminate the dangerous
18 intersection that exists today.

19 The DOT, New York State Department of
20 Transportation, has no plans or funding to pay for
21 these improvements today. It's up to development,
22 commercial development to mitigate these traffic
23 impacts.

24 Furthermore, there's been a building cap

1 discussed in the community relative to the mixed use
2 center. In order to fund these traffic improvements,
3 I'd like to ask the Town to consider Town Law of New
4 York Section 261-b. Town Law of New York permits towns
5 to adopt local laws to have incentive zoning.
6 Incentive zoning is essentially techniques which allows
7 uses not otherwise defined or permitted under certain
8 zoning code in exchange for amenities. Amenities are
9 defined as: open space, housing for persons of low or
10 moderate income, parks, elder care, day care or other
11 specific physical, social or cultural amenities or cash
12 in lieu thereof, or benefit to the residents of the
13 community authorized by the Town Board. Essentially,
14 this law says, if the Town Board deems that these
15 improvements will benefit the town, regardless of
16 zoning or cap size, they can create law which allows
17 for this uses to be on site.

18 Taxes; according to the long range financial
19 projection of the Ballston Central School District
20 prepared by John P. Duffy, the school budget for 2006
21 to 2007 will be 59-million-651-thousand-and-change,
22 resulting in an additional 7.66 percent increase in the
23 tax levy. This is off the Ballston Central School
24 District web page. Commercial development offsets

1 increases and provides the necessary tax revenue to
2 fund needed infrastructure improvements. The estimated
3 assessed value of the proposed retail developed
4 products in town are \$23-million. This will have a
5 positive annual sales tax revenue in excess of \$1.5-
6 million dollars, annually, as well as real property tax
7 revenues of \$445,000.

8 Jobs; the retail projects proposed for
9 Ballston will create 450 temporary construction jobs
10 during the construction and full build out of the
11 shopping centers, as well as 750 permanent part-time
12 jobs averaging \$9.74 per hour. It's not top dollar,
13 but they're good, solid jobs. The average Wal-Mart
14 employs 450 people. I've got a home improvement and
15 discount anchorage center that I'm discussing which
16 will employ approximately the same number of people.
17 Target and Wal-Mart both have distribution centers in
18 the area employing 950 and 500 people respectively.

19 I submitted my formal record to Don for
20 inclusion in the record, but I want to speak off the
21 cuff a little bit. Scott Miller misled you a little
22 bit earlier when he said that the Town and the Board
23 does not have the ability to monitor waterways. SEQOR,
24 which stands for the State Environmental Quality Review

1 Act, is the state -- it's all the rules the town has to
2 follow. They're very, very thorough. They tell the
3 Town, the Planning and Zoning Boards how they have to
4 act to discuss issues ranging from traffic to storm
5 waters to wetlands and drainage. These tools are in
6 place for the towns to use and adopt to plan for your
7 future. You don't have to reinvent the wheel, because
8 there's existing tools in place.

9 When we have a project which we propose in a
10 certain town, it's not like a slam dunk in the land of
11 zone for us to come
12 in --

13 (Speaker's time up)

14 MR. RHODES: Thank you.

15 MR. SAYRE: Thank you.

16 MR. RHODES: Clifford Sampson.

17 (Mr. Sampson defers his time)

18 MR. RHODES: Don Breightman, followed by Sally
19 Adams.

20 MR. BREIGHTMAN: I'm Don Breightman. I live
21 down at the southern end of Goode Street for the last
22 over 50 years. I've watched Goode Street expand from
23 Doc Aaronson's place up ten miles along. Now we've got
24 subdivisions, little cul-de-sacs, all the way up and

1 it's dismaying to me.

2 It seems that I've heard tonight great
3 emphasis on economic prosperity. I chose to live in
4 Burnt Hills. I happen to live not very close to my
5 work. For years I went to Albany, worked in downtown
6 Albany. I went for many a great number more years down
7 to Schenectady, another ten-mile commute. I'm assuming
8 a lot of you did the same thing and still do. But I
9 don't want to discount the fact that we need dollars,
10 but I think for part of our well-being, we need some
11 spiritual places.

12 I haven't heard much commentary at all about
13 open space. We all talk about preserving open space,
14 but I don't hear much in the way of planning for it.
15 We need -- and it seems to be left entirely up to a
16 developer for a project. He buys a farm, couple
17 hundred acres, puts in a little pond of two-three
18 hundred square feet, put a fountain in the middle, a
19 walkway around it, and that's the open space. I think
20 we should consider more open space.

21 I happen to be friendly with a family, two or
22 three families, the Mitchells, a lot of you probably
23 know them. They own 500 acres, it's scattered in two
24 or three places, and it's a paradise. Part of it's a

1 wetland and much of it's just their back lot behind the
2 cow pasture.

3 But I think -- I deplore seeing all this go in
4 terms of what's profitable for the contractor. Now,
5 the contractor, if you leave it up to the contractor to
6 provide open space, you'll get the minimum, because
7 open space that he leaves behind unused is not profit
8 in the bank for him. I'd like to see some initiatives
9 taken by the public representatives here in the
10 creation of open spaces and the developers can work
11 around that rather than have proposals which were
12 strictly for money making and then we work in a little
13 open space in between all those developments.

14 I strongly endorse many of the comments made
15 here. Some of them frighten me a little bit, but we've
16 all chosen the Town of Ballston to live in and I just
17 don't like to see things moved at hurricane speed.

18 Thank you all.

19 MR. RHODES: Sally Adams.

20 (Ms. Adams defers her time)

21 MR. RHODES: Holly Hawkes, followed by David
22 Schlitzer.

23 MS. HAWKES: I guess the previous speaker's a
24 neighbor of mine, although I haven't met him. I agree

1 with his concepts about open space. I moved to Burnt
2 Hills three years ago, because I wanted to live in a --
3 I like the rural feel of the town. I live at the end
4 of a dead-end street, I have wild turkeys running
5 through my yard and the night sky is very bright
6 despite the fact that I live ten minutes from the town
7 center where there's all kinds of nice little stores,
8 and if I had wanted to live in a place with malls and
9 big box stores and so forth, I could have bought in
10 Clifton Park, but I specifically chose to be here where
11 the development is mostly rural, a few small stores, no
12 big four-lane highways and so forth. I don't mind
13 driving a distance to go to a big box if I need one.
14 They're over in Clifton Park. I can happily drive over
15 there. I love driving from my home up to Ballston Spa
16 and seeing a lot of green along the side of the road.
17 I want to see green and not stores and parking lots and
18 so forth. I realize we need a certain amount of retail
19 development, but we need to keep that to a minimum
20 here.

21 I'm really concerned about the further
22 development of Route 50, the two-lane road can barely
23 handle the traffic it has now. I don't want to see it
24 turn into a four-lane road.

1 I really would like to see a cap on size. The
2 60,000 square feet is even too big for me. I'd set it
3 lower if it were up to me.

4 So, that's just a little bit about what I'd
5 like. I'm not an expert on the master plan. I don't
6 know anything about the old one because I didn't live
7 here back in the eighties, but I would just like us to
8 look at the kind of community we have and love and do
9 what we can to preserve it.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. RHODES: David Schlitzer.

12 MR. SCHLITZER: We're all here tonight because
13 we all have at least one thing in common; we all care
14 about the future of this town. In my mind, the master
15 plan should be a road map. It should address what we
16 want the town to look like and the steps required to
17 get there. The minutes from the February 24 CPAC
18 meeting indicate they agreed with this. Both the
19 master plan must be definitive and should recommend an
20 implementation strategy. This version of the master
21 plan falls short of this goal.

22 For example, with regards to mixed use, the
23 plan says the town should consider limits on square
24 footage of large-scale development. The plan makes

1 reference to smaller stores buffering large parking
2 areas for larger stores, in reference to one large
3 retail development to meet the needs of the people.
4 This is in direct conflict with the survey, question
5 23; 63 percent of residents preferred mixed use over
6 big box. Question 20, greater than 50 percent of the
7 people want mixed use walkable neighborhoods.

8 With regards to the town considering build-to
9 lines and many places in the plan, small scale was
10 replaced with appropriate scale. The survey says, in
11 question 23, an overwhelming majority wanted tight
12 development standards as the best way to improve the
13 town's look. Question 20, 92 percent feel the town
14 should support small-scale local businesses. Question
15 11, only 11 percent support large-scale commercial
16 businesses.

17 Regarding minor and major subdivisions of
18 lots, the plan shortened the time frame over which
19 subdivisions are created from ten years to five years,
20 and made conservation subdivision options to
21 developers. This is a key component to preserving
22 rural character of the town. The town building
23 inspector said suggested zoning doesn't work and gave
24 the Hess station as an example. From the survey,

1 question 12, highest single response for making the
2 biggest improvement in the town was to prevent the loss
3 of open space and rural character. Question 18, 78
4 percent of the residents feel zoning regulation is
5 needed to protect the open space with new developments.

6 The plan makes reference to zoning specifics
7 to be done by another committee. There are three
8 problems with this recommendation. CPAC has all of the
9 data and is the most capable on commenting on the
10 town's vision. Secondly, this vaguely written master
11 plan leaves far too much open for interpretation by
12 another committee. Actually, the plan misrepresents
13 the data. And thirdly, CPAC owes it to the many people
14 that attend these meetings and have given their input
15 under the impression that the master plan reflecting
16 the town's vision would result.

17 In short, the plan is too vague and I feel the
18 committee would be hard pressed to find supporting data
19 for the verbiage in this plan.

20 MR. RHODES: Paul Simpson, followed by Bill
21 Korman.

22 MR. SIMPSON: Hope I can read my own writing.
23 You've heard this before tonight, all ready, but the
24 original plan had incorporation of a stream corridor

1 document. Our own Land Conservation Committee prepared
2 an excellent document and presented it to the CPAC
3 board. It was rejected and said that it should be
4 given to the Town Board for incorporation. Well, for
5 some reason, the Town Board doesn't feel it's valid,
6 either. They wouldn't even put it on the website to
7 let people look at it.

8 The corridor itself, the corridor along the
9 various waterways allow absorption, if they're done
10 properly, of the nutrients and the contaminants that a
11 farm, a residence, a business, a parking lot, rejects
12 in a rainstorm or whatever else. Depending on the
13 component or the vegetation within this corridor, many
14 of the pollutants can be absorbed and prevented from
15 going into any of the waterways. Ballston Lake is
16 important, all the creeks of the town are equally as
17 important because they feed other waterways. That
18 should be in this document.

19 Many references in this new plan say, and I
20 quote, "make it easier and cheaper for the developers".
21 This appeared two and three times. This isn't the
22 purpose of this plan. We -- our surveys said that we
23 want a rural environment. The plan doesn't address
24 that. When they begin to discuss how to manage the big

1 box and the larger developments, instead they should be
2 saying how to prevent the arrival of these things which
3 the residents in the town have said all along is what
4 we want.

5 The plan contains an awful lot of language
6 that I'm sure many of you here don't know the
7 definitions of the various acronyms that are used. I
8 would hope that somewhere in the final plan, that
9 there's a glossary of terms that define the specific
10 meaning and intent of all these acronyms that are used.
11 Now, there's a blank section in there right now and
12 there are appendix -- provisions for appendix --
13 appendices, possibly they're going to be included
14 there; if not, I think they should be.

15 We keep hearing about the intensity or the
16 level of traffic along the Route 67 and Route 50.
17 There's supposed to be a Route 67 highway -- state
18 highway Department of Transportation study. Both of
19 these roads go right through the Village of Ballston
20 and Burnt Hills and other places. I would think it
21 would be appropriate that this plan incorporated some
22 of the findings of that Route 67 corridor study. To
23 my knowledge, I can't find anything in there on it at
24 this point, but I think it should be.

1 That's all.

2 MR. RHODES: Bill Korman.

3 MR. KORMAN: My name's Bill Korman. I live on
4 Randall Road. I've been there for a little over 37
5 years.

6 A little over 37 years ago, I brought my
7 daughter and my son to the area to do a little fishing,
8 and we both fell in love with it, both my children and
9 my wife, and we decided to move to this area. We loved
10 the water, we loved the fresh air, we loved the green
11 and we loved the traffic that was very, very light. My
12 children had to walk about a tenth of a mile to Middle
13 Line Road to pick up the bus every morning, and there
14 wasn't a day that my wife and I weren't afraid of the
15 traffic pattern that would come down the road and
16 obstruct any lane so my children could be safe and be
17 picked up by the school bus and return home and walk
18 back the same way.

19 My concern is that -- I'm concerned about the
20 water in the area, keeping it fresh and keeping it
21 clean. I'm worried about the cap size of the large
22 buildings that may be growing and building in this
23 area, and the traffic patterns that would come up Route
24 67 and 50. I drove for over 35 years on Route 67 going

1 down the Northway, and if any of you, which I'm sure
2 many of you do, go down that road at 7:00 in the
3 morning or 4:00 in the afternoon, it's horrendous.
4 It's backed up to the Northway and it's backed up
5 almost a mile the other way. I had to make certain
6 alterations in my plans, I had to leave like 5:30,
7 quarter to six in the morning so there wouldn't be that
8 much traffic and then leave at 3:00, 3:30 in the
9 afternoon to get home in time so I wouldn't have to be
10 bothered with it.

11 I just want to be a person that has a life
12 that's clean air, fresh water and safety for our
13 children and the best patterns for traffic for running
14 around and I'd like to be a taxpayer that stays in this
15 area a long time.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. RHODES: Judy Korman.

18 (Ms. Korman defers time)

19 MR. RHODES: Elizabeth Newsom, followed by
20 John Forshey.

21 MS. NEWSOM: My name is Elizabeth Newsom. I
22 live in both the Village of Ballston and the Town of
23 Ballston.

24 I've attended many of the comprehensive plan

1 meetings only to leave feeling as if nothing got
2 accomplished. This draft backs that feeling up. I
3 feel this draft is too vague. It leaves far too many
4 open doors and far too many important items for further
5 study and interpretation. These words leave me feeling
6 very empty. To leave such huge town decisions, like
7 size caps, out of this plan is disheartening. This
8 committee surveyed the community who said that we want
9 open space protected, we want size caps, we want
10 controlled growth and we want to keep the rural feel of
11 our town. I see it as we want a master plan that gives
12 us the security to know that our town will still be our
13 town and not the vision and reality of developers.
14 This draft is, as it stands, not the answer; just a
15 welcome mat for anything.

16 MR. RHODES: John Forshey, followed by Linda
17 Lambert.

18 MR. FORSHEY: I'm John Forshey, Town of
19 Ballston.

20 First I'd like to speak just briefly on the
21 survey numbers that people are tossing around. Their
22 surveys are not 67 percent and 92 percent, 80 percent
23 of the residents of the Town of Ballston. That survey
24 is a random sampling. It was sent out to 1,500 people

1 in the Town of Ballston, and 525 returned, to my
2 knowledge. That is less than 10 percent of the people
3 who are residents of the Town of Ballston. There was,
4 by the 2000 census, over 6,000 voting-age residents in
5 the Town of Ballston. So, with 100 percent survey, it
6 certainly would have looked a lot different, I would
7 think, than what we got. The numbers that's being
8 tossed around, 60 percent, 80 percent, 75, you're down
9 to 4 percent of the residents, 5 percent, maybe 6
10 percent. So, if you're mentioning numbers in the
11 survey, please mention "respondents", because
12 mentioning the residents is not accurate.

13 I'm going to speak on something of a more
14 personal nature. I'm one of the property owners who is
15 under contract for development. The first meeting in
16 February, I asked, what are my rights as a citizen of
17 the United States and a resident of the Town of
18 Ballston. Why are myself and a few others denied the
19 right to sell our property, the right allowed to
20 probably 99 percent of the town's people? This number,
21 by the way, is probably much more accurate than either
22 survey that is constantly quoted, including here
23 tonight.

24 At the first CPAC meeting I said the

1 moratorium should apply to everyone in the town, no
2 buying, no building, no selling. This drew a lot of
3 laughs, but I still don't think it's a laughing matter.
4 To take away the rights of a few and allow those who
5 complain to buy, build or sell, our vocal neighbors
6 from the town of Malta and Milton who attend our
7 meetings and are allowed to speak, while it is business
8 as usual in towns which are building large residential,
9 adding to our school tax, and yet, they campaign
10 against the town's commercial development which would
11 help ease the school tax burden.

12 Since March, there has been, by my realtor's
13 source, 121 realty transactions in the town. I am
14 again requesting that my property rights be honored and
15 I be treated as an equal to all other citizens and
16 residents of the Town of Ballston.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. RHODES: Linda Lambert, followed by Linda
19 Wood.

20 MS. LAMBERT: Linda Lambert, resident, Town of
21 Ballston and a merchant in the Village of Ballston Spa.

22 I hope I don't stumble on this, but I've been
23 writing -- usually I prepare something, but I didn't
24 tonight. I've been preparing this as I sat here, so, I

1 hope I can read my own writing.

2 But I want to thank Don Rhodes and the
3 committee for enduring the trials and tribulations of
4 this past year. It has not been an easy task and they
5 deserve great credit for their perseverance.

6 My first request to the committee is to
7 provide an allowance for anchor stores to keep our
8 residents shopping in the vicinity, not having to
9 travel to Wilton or Clifton Park to meet their every-
10 day needs. Keeping people here will be an incentive to
11 also shop at the specialty stores in the village,
12 instead of completing their shopping elsewhere. Many
13 of us as merchants in the village do not believe large-
14 scale commercial will negatively impact our businesses,
15 but actually benefit them.

16 Creating a village just outside the Village of
17 Ballston Spa with plenty of parking will certainly be
18 the death of our downtown business district. The
19 downtown district has few opportunities for part-time
20 jobs, as most of us are mom and pops, and we just don't
21 have part-time jobs available for our teens, our young
22 mothers looking for a few hours at a time to work while
23 their husbands can baby-sit or for our seniors.

24 My second request is to include a hotel as a

1 possible use for the mixed use north district. The
2 Village loses a major -- the businesses in the Village
3 lose a major amount of business when events take place
4 in the Village and participants needing to go to Malta
5 or Saratoga for their major lodging. The Medbery in
6 the Village only has 11 rooms, and while they're in
7 Malta or Saratoga, they eat and they shop there and we
8 lose those businesses.

9 I'm going to say something now that will be
10 extremely inflammatory. I've been sitting, I've been
11 coming to virtually every CPAC meeting, hearing,
12 committee meeting, and what I've been hearing is really
13 making me very angry. Many who are speaking that are
14 critical of this committee for allowing landowners to
15 develop their land too quickly, or if we're not
16 imposing conservation guidelines in rural areas, how
17 many of you who are critical of that own and pay a
18 minimal amount of taxes on a quarter to a half acre of
19 land, who are trying to impose your judgment on
20 landowners in this town who have paid taxes on 10, 20,
21 40 or even 100 acres of property for 20 to 40 years,
22 and who should have some rights on how they develop
23 their investment.

24 And finally, I have never heard a particular

1 reason for setting a 60,000 square foot as a cap for
2 commercial development as opposed to 90 or 50 or any
3 other figure. Much criticism has been heaped upon this
4 committee for voting to take the cap out pending a
5 study to figure what is the best option. What is not
6 known by many of the people in the audience is this,
7 there have been two landmark court cases in both
8 Federal and New York State court. In one, language by
9 the judge described the case to be an equal protection
10 issue under both federal -- I can't find it, but
11 anyway, has to do with federal and state courts, and
12 it's an equal protection issue which would involve --
13 with no cap on residential or industrial areas, it
14 could be discriminatory to have a cap in commercial
15 areas. The only reference -- I mean, you wouldn't have
16 a cap on residential, but in industrial, the only
17 reference that I could find in any of our town
18 documents was one of the developers of an industrial
19 park agreed not to build a building larger than 750,000
20 square feet. That's three Wal-Mart's.

21 (Time called)

22 MS. LAMBERT: Okay. Thank you, very much.

23 MR. RHODES: Linda Wood, followed by Ben
24 Walter.

1 MS. WOOD: I'm Linda Wood, Town of Ballston.
2 And I've been sitting here debating whether to
3 get up and speak or not and I've been waffling back and
4 forth whether or not to do it, because -- well, just
5 because. I'm feeling a little unprepared coming up
6 here and speaking. The amount of time between when
7 this plan came out and being able to totally review it
8 and get up here and say something that makes sense,
9 didn't seem like quite enough time to me.

10 But I'm fairly new to the town. My husband
11 and I have invested, we brought property here over a
12 dozen years ago and it's not a quarter of an acre and
13 it's not a hundred acres, somewhere in the middle. We
14 built a home, we've invested in a 30-year mortgage.
15 We've picked this community -- I'm echoing what some of
16 the other people here have said -- we landed here
17 because we loved what we saw.

18 When the public hearing happened last February
19 where it was standing room only and everybody had their
20 opinion to say, I didn't want to speak out because I
21 didn't feel I knew enough about what was going on. I
22 spent the entire last year, since that time, coming to
23 as many meetings as I can, educating myself as to
24 what's going on, trying to stay informed, trying to

1 stay on top of what's been happening.

2 One of the things that I was very encouraged
3 by in the beginning of the process is that I heard that
4 there would be a master plan. We would, as a
5 community, everyone working together, get a vision for
6 where it is that we want to live, where we're living
7 now, where we want it to go, and then as the meetings
8 progressed, I felt more and more frustrated with the
9 whole process in that I did not see as much community
10 involvement as was promised at first. There would be
11 public comment allowed at the end, which is just sort
12 of like, "okay, that's what you think", and it didn't
13 seem to be part of the actual process to me.

14 One of the things that I think shows that
15 people do care is when there is a public hearing where
16 people can speak out, we get large turn-outs, people do
17 show up, and I have a lot of respect for the people
18 that do come to every meeting. I know the numbers are
19 really small and I know it takes a lot out of
20 everyone's busy schedule to come and try to pay
21 attention to all this, but overall, without getting off
22 on too many tangents, I've read what I can of this
23 plan. I don't see a vision. I see a lot of, what
24 someone said, vague terminology. I see that over and

1 over again. I see the phrase "additional research
2 needed", "further study needed", and okay, I'll go
3 along with that, but at the same time, there are major
4 projects that are in the works, people stand up here
5 and talk about them, and they're pushing to have these
6 projects done when a lot of what everyone's saying is,
7 we don't know enough about how this is going to impact
8 us.

9 There's an old song that came to mind a little
10 while earlier, "They pave paradise and put up a parking
11 lot"; once you pave it, it's gone, and I just -- I have
12 a real fear of that. There's a lot of things that
13 don't seem to be regarded real carefully with these --
14 it even says in the plan that we are not talking about
15 project-specific things here. Okay. That's fine and
16 well and good for the document that you've got there,
17 but in a lot of the people's minds in this community,
18 what I hear and what I see, there are some project-
19 specific things that are very important to people that
20 want to develop and people that don't want it
21 developed, and I see a real split in the community over
22 that, but I think we're disregarding the proximity of
23 these huge projects to our school, the middle school
24 and the high school, and that concerns me, as well.

1 Another thing that I found very interesting
2 was very recently we had an election, and both parties
3 were -- all the mail that I was getting regarding this
4 election, both parties stood on the platform of no
5 over-development, let's avoid the sprawl. Both parties
6 stood for that, and I was having a hard time ferreting
7 out who was really kind of telling the truth here. I
8 had a really hard time with that. I spoke to someone
9 and said getting an answer about what really was going
10 on was like trying to pick a raw egg off the floor, and
11 I have been going to these meetings, I have been
12 listening to people talk and I'm trying to really
13 figure it all out, and I have a major concern that this
14 paradise that we have come to, if we move too quickly
15 with putting in size caps or -- I heard that earlier
16 tonight and it made me laugh, we could pave a paradise.

17 That's all.

18 MR. RHODES: Ben Walter, followed by Jennifer
19 David.

20 MR. WALTER: Ben Walter, Town of Ballston.

21 What I'm worried about -- again, thank the
22 CPAC members for spending so much time on this
23 document.

24 What I'm worried about is that the Board of

1 Supervisors is using this process to legitimize their
2 preconceived preferences for large-scale commercial
3 development. The plan is so open and vague that the
4 Council can do anything it wants and say it is
5 following the plan. As one CPAC member said at a
6 meeting, this plan is being eviscerated.

7 Let me give you some specific information
8 about size caps that could have been in this plan but
9 wasn't. There are over 25 communities in this county
10 that implemented size caps. They have all stood the
11 test of time. Let's look at New York: North Elba,
12 Lake Placid, population 8,700, size cap of 40,000;
13 Skaneateles, population 7,500, size cap 45,000;
14 Warwick, New York, population 31,000, size cap 60,000,
15 and we know about Malta, size cap 20,000. You add all
16 those communities up and take the average ratio of size
17 cap to population is about five-and-a-half -- it's a
18 big range, but it averages five-and-a-half. That means
19 five square feet for every person as a size cap. That
20 would put Ballston in the -- somewhere between a 50-
21 and 60,000 square foot range, which is what we're
22 talking about. So, I'm concerned that we weren't able
23 to put that in the plan, some of that information.

24 Almost none of the towns did an economic

1 development study or traffic study specifically for
2 that size cap, rather they simply listened to their
3 people. The people spoke and the leaders listened.
4 Sometimes they had referendums. That was the bottom
5 line for them. That could be for now. I'm worried
6 that we're going to pay a consultant to tell us
7 whatever they are paid to say.

8 We all know what the people want. Even Mr.
9 Callanan said on his campaign this year, let me quote,
10 "Republican Ray Callanan is standing up for our
11 conservative, small-town guided by passing common-sense
12 laws to protect Ballston from big box developers like
13 Wal-Mart", end of quote. So, he knows what the town
14 wants. Everybody knows what the town wants, and we'll
15 be looking for that kind of leadership.

16 When it comes to mixed use development,
17 studies have shown mixed use development is better
18 economic development over the long-run. Again, you can
19 have a big bang for your buck very quickly with a Wal-
20 Mart or a major superstore, but over the long term, you
21 can't easily have both. So, if you have a pattern of
22 planning that allows for mixed use, over the long term
23 you'll have better jobs, you'll have more jobs, you'll
24 have better taxes, you'll have better quality of life.

1 One out of three people cannot drive. So, if
2 we can plan for those people, people who are too old,
3 too young, have a disability, this plan will serve
4 them. It's also healthier. People who live in
5 communities with single-use development are fatter
6 because they don't exercise. It's very hard to get
7 proper exercise. The studies have been done. It's a
8 public health issue. It's better for the environment,
9 it's better for traffic. The top places to live in the
10 country, all of them are mixed use communities. The
11 town was surveyed, the town has spoken. 90 percent
12 don't want big box stores.

13 Let me say one thing about large landowners
14 and property rights; all landowners have property
15 rights. Just because you want to sell your land
16 doesn't give you the right to damage the value of the
17 vast majority of the property owners around you. We
18 all have rights and that's why we have zoning.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. RHODES: Jennifer David. Jennifer David,
21 are you here?

22 (No response)

23 MR. RHODES: John Bracht.

24 MR. BRACHT: John Bracht, Devil's Lane, Town

1 of Ballston.

2 If mixed use is so good, what is Schenectady
3 shrinking, going broke and debt ridden? That was my
4 first question.

5 I want to talk about wetlands, streams, et
6 cetera. LCC, many times, wants to have the final say
7 over DEC and the Army Corps of Engineers. Many times
8 Mary Beth Hines and Richard Kinney have gotten up in
9 front of CPAC and wanted this and were voted down every
10 time, but they haven't given up yet. The above-
11 mentioned ploys by Mary Beth Hines and Richard Kinney
12 did not work at CPAC, so they changed direction. At
13 the 10/4/05 Town Board meeting, a number of people
14 miraculously appeared worried about the runoff into
15 Ballston Lake. It appears a lot of people don't know
16 why Outlet Road is not called Inlet Road. The vast
17 majority of drainage to the northern half of the town
18 drains to Mourning Kill, Kaydeross, Gordon Creek and
19 Ballston Creek, away from Ballston Lake. The west and
20 southwest portion of town mainly drains to Applaus
21 Kill. This leaves the Sweet Road area and the White
22 Beech area for the major stream drainage in the
23 Ballston Lake. These are not year-round streams, and
24 there's a very small percentage of the total town and a

1 very small flow to the lake. To this you add seepage
2 and spring as the major input.

3 I believe that LCC and a few individuals have
4 tried to take control of wetland streams, et cetera,
5 for one purpose, and it has very little to do with
6 Ballston Lake. They want to have the power to, in
7 essence, condemn land, thereby getting green space,
8 open space, et cetera, for nothing. They give no
9 consideration to the people who have owned and paid
10 taxes on this land for years. The majority of these
11 people moved here recently and own very little land, in
12 some cases, a half an acre or less. It sounds great to
13 them to use and have the benefit of someone else's hard
14 work.

15 In the last comprehensive plan, this one here,
16 section 3, page 5 and 6, regarding conservation
17 subdivisions, environmentally constrained land,
18 wetlands, et cetera, is lumped together with
19 agriculture, historic, et cetera. Is this to be used
20 in conjunction with these maps, these overlay maps to
21 condemn land, to make it unusable and unsellable by the
22 landowner? Many people are affected by the points
23 previously mentioned and spent a large portion of their
24 lives and wealth on these properties and count on these

1 properties for a portion of their retirement.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. RHODES: Jennifer David, followed by David
4 Stern.

5 MS. DAVID: The committee has spent such a lot
6 of time on this plan, and as somebody who comes to a
7 lot of these meetings, I do appreciate all the time you
8 guys spent on it, a lot of long nights. However, I do
9 feel it's a shame that you're spending so much time on
10 the plan that does such a poor job of translating the
11 overwhelming voice of the people of this town.

12 I want to make a couple of points. My first
13 point is that the vague language in this plan,
14 particularly in the mixed use areas, I do not feel
15 follows the results of the survey at all or the public
16 comments that I've witnessed at the public town
17 sessions that I've attended. And I'm going to pull out
18 here a question from the survey, number 21, the town
19 was asked: what type of development should the town
20 encourage? 55 -- 56 percent said mixed use development
21 with residential, office and small-scale commercial.
22 Now, you can choose all that applies, that's why the
23 numbers are a little higher. 43 percent said
24 residential; 34 percent said small-scale neighborhood

1 commercial; 15 percent said office, light industrial,
2 only 11 percent said large-scale commercial. Okay?
3 And I think those numbers are important to bring up,
4 and I know somebody earlier said, well, you know,
5 statistics, and it didn't really sample the whole town.

6 I can understand people are upset that they
7 didn't have a chance to respond to the survey, I can
8 completely understand that. However, to say that
9 statistics is not valid is ridiculous. Statistics are
10 all around us. The recommendations of the FDA and
11 health studies, they're everywhere, and to just say
12 that you can't get a small sample and thereby translate
13 it to a larger group, it's just not realistic. We do
14 this every day for our country. Look at polls. Every
15 day for our country, we use statistics, okay? So, to
16 me, I don't really understand that.

17 So, based on the statistical sample that we've
18 been given, this is what people said, okay, they said,
19 small-scale commercial, they said residential, they
20 said neighborhood commercial, they said office, light
21 industrial. Okay? And what do we have in our plan?
22 These are some quotes from the plan: we should put in
23 smaller scale buildings oriented to the sidewalk and
24 street -- I'm sorry -- smaller scale buildings, smaller

1 buildings oriented to the sidewalk and street could
2 improve the pedestrian environment along Route 50 and
3 buffer the large parking areas that larger stores
4 require. Okay? Direct quote. Achieving a health
5 critical mass could include an aggregate of various
6 smaller shops or one large retail development. Okay?
7 So, my concern here is that no where in the survey,
8 except for the 11 percent, which is the very last
9 amount that we saw in terms of response of people
10 saying they wanted large. People were saying small.
11 They said small over and over again, but somehow that
12 didn't make it into our plan.

13 My second point is that I don't see any
14 specific recommendations in this plan for buffer zones
15 adjacent to the residential neighborhoods that border
16 the north mixed use center. There's one vague language
17 about it's important to have buffers up, but nothing
18 concrete, nothing that says with a certain X-amount of
19 hundred feet of a residential area, we should make sure
20 that it's primarily office, or we should make sure that
21 there's no retail, or we should make sure there's a
22 buffer of X-amount of green space between a residential
23 area and a commercial area. I think those things need
24 to be there, because if they're not there, what will

1 happen is this sprawl, which is going to extend out
2 into the village and pretty soon all the houses, and I
3 live in one of them that are in that area there, right
4 near the mixed use area, they're all going to be mixed
5 use some day, and I think just that that's a terrible
6 shame.

7 My third point, size caps, I think that they
8 should go back into the plan. In fact, I think the
9 60,000 square foot cap was a number that was
10 recommended by the consultant, we paid the consultant,
11 they develop these plans for communities just like
12 ours, yet we didn't take that seriously; we didn't keep
13 it in our plan.

14 And then finally, I think that in terms of
15 thinking about the future of our town, we really need
16 to try to put in some language about what we want in
17 terms of the traffic flow, in terms of limiting the
18 four-lane roads. I really think that's something that
19 should be in the plan. It wasn't put in the plan and I
20 think it could serve as an indication to the state and
21 to the other governments that we really want to try to
22 limit it and keep this a real small-scale development
23 type area.

24 MR. RHODES: David Stern, then Gina Marozzi.

1 MR. STERN: David Stern, Town of Ballston.

2 And I want to talk a little bit about
3 statistics. I want to do it by a little survey. How
4 many of you, by round of applause, don't want large-
5 scale development in our town?

6 MR. RHODES: David, that's not how we're going
7 to handle this meeting. I'm going to have to ask you
8 to sit down if you're going to poll the audience. This
9 is for a public hearing only.

10 MR. STERN: This is a lesson in statistics.

11 MR. RHODES: We don't need a lesson. Please
12 just tell us your comments. Thank you.

13 MR. STERN: Okay. My comments are that we had
14 a huge group of people that came to a meeting wanting a
15 moratorium because they were concerned about large-
16 scale development. There was another group that didn't
17 want it, much smaller group. Statistically, it matched
18 the surveys. We had -- by the way, I was the candidate
19 that was telling the truth. But going back into this
20 -- going back into the active plan, mixed use, section
21 3 page 12, buffer the large parking areas that large
22 stores require; I was wondering which stores these were
23 and with the reference of large stores that only 11
24 percent of the respondents wanted while the rest of the

1 respondents said no to them. The town, section 3 page
2 13, the town should also consider a limit of square
3 footage of large-scale retail development and should
4 encourage multi-story structures in these towns -- in
5 these areas. I think they're talking about -- first of
6 all, they're two separate issues and shouldn't be
7 connected in the same sentence, and also, there's no
8 definition of the number of stories, although I'd
9 imagine it would be 40 feet, which is our zoning, but
10 based on the survey, I think the sentence should be,
11 the town should implement a square footage cap, a size
12 cap, to avoid large-scale retail development in the
13 Town of Ballston, and the other sentence, when they are
14 consistent with surrounding uses, multiple-story
15 structures should be considered to conserve open space.

16 Some of the other stuff -- when we talk about
17 open -- or appropriate scale, there's no definition of
18 what "appropriate" is, and I have a real big concern
19 about that. I think what we need to do is change some
20 of these based on public comments, is that we need to
21 change it to avoid inappropriately sized development.

22 Page 49 in the same section, maintain village
23 look and feel outside of Ballston, and I think there's
24 a direct conflict of direction in this paragraph and in

1 development of commercial and industrial development in
2 mixed use areas. Where does "just outside the village"
3 begin and where does it end? The proposed development
4 begins maybe, depending on how fast you're driving,
5 three seconds from the village. I think we need to
6 have some definitions of where they expect this to be.
7 I think at minimum, absolute minimum, you're looking at
8 V Corners, but really more likely past Carpenter Acres,
9 because that's where our kids are walking to school.

10 You know, I think other things we need to
11 include in this are survey results and survey
12 highlights. They should be in the master plan with
13 this document, because anyone who's doing the zoning
14 needs to see where these things came from. Also, the
15 LCC reports. You know, we look at some of these
16 projects -- and Don, with respect, after one of the
17 town meetings, I talked to Don a little bit and
18 mentioned about size caps and he said he absolutely
19 opposes them.

20 MR. RHODES: That is not true. Sorry.

21 MR. STERN: At my car window, you said that
22 you oppose them and every project should go to the
23 town. We shouldn't prejudge anything. Well, the
24 citizens of this town have said we don't want it,

1 consistently, over and over again in the surveys, and I
2 think the Town Board and the CPAC committee, I
3 appreciate your time, but I think you really need to
4 look at what the people of this town want.

5 And one last comment. About people from
6 outside the community being able to participate in
7 these meetings and have their comments, well, there's a
8 lot of people speaking for the development that don't
9 live in our town.

10 MR. RHODES: Gina Marozzi, followed by Peter
11 Miller.

12 MS. MAROZZI: Good evening members of the
13 CPAC, members of the Board, friends and neighbors.
14 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on such
15 an important topic.

16 For those of you who do not know me, my name
17 is Gina Rossi-Marozzi. I reside in the Town of Milton,
18 but my family is a large landowner in the Town of
19 Ballston, therefore, I feel I have a legitimate reason
20 to address you tonight, because we are taxpayers just
21 like the town residents.

22 Over the past nine or so months, I have
23 attended practically every meeting there has been
24 regarding the drafting of the comprehensive plan. And

1 month after month, I have listened to the opposition
2 claim that they are, and I quote, "speaking for the
3 majority of the town's people". They continue to state
4 that the two surveys taken in the past year and a half
5 support their stance. The two surveys were the one
6 taken by the LCC and the other was taken by the CPAC,
7 each getting a 30-something percentage of response.
8 The LCC received 910 replies out of the town-wide
9 mailing, and the CPAC received a little more than 500
10 out of the 1500 surveys that were mailed. I disagree
11 with this claim and here's why. I feel that there is
12 better measure of the voice of the town's people, and
13 that is the recent election.

14 The incumbents won this election by a
15 resounding 12 percent. It could have been 1. This
16 recent election had the largest turnout of voters that
17 we have seen in quite some time. Therefore, it is the
18 true measure of the people's will in the purest and
19 most democratic way possible. This voice tells me
20 that the town's people are happy with the performance
21 of the incumbents and the CPAC. It tells me that they
22 are satisfied and content with the progress being made
23 by both the Town Board and the CPAC. The naysayers are
24 blaming "the good old boys" and "dirty politics" for

1 the incumbent's victory. How insulting is that? Can
2 you say "sour grapes"? I say, give the people some
3 credit. They are far more intelligent than you think.
4 Based on this, I say yes, the people have spoken and
5 have done it loud and clear. So, please do not be so
6 vain as to claim you are speaking for them.

7 The next topic I would like to address is the
8 size cap issue. Those for it state that a size cap is
9 necessary, but there is only one reason for this, and
10 it is to keep Wal-Mart out. They don't care about the
11 needs of the people or the fact that we desperately
12 need a supermarket in town, or most importantly, the
13 economic impact of a size cap. They just do not want
14 Wal-Mart at any cost.

15 A few months ago my father issued a challenge
16 to the size cap supporters. He told them to bring him
17 a supermarket that would fit under the 60,000 square
18 foot cap they supported and he would build it. To
19 date, not one person has stepped forward with a
20 contract for one. The fact is that no market wants to
21 come to this area without a major anchor store to
22 attract business. It is just not economically feasible
23 to any market chain to do it without such a store. The
24 fact of the matter is that you need a major anchor to

1 attract smaller business, period.

2 Our opponents site traffic as a problem with a
3 major anchor and they claim that the town does not want
4 to be a regional draw for business. On the traffic
5 issue, I have two points. First, it is scientific fact
6 proven by the Institute of Transportation Engineers and
7 relied on all over the country, that many small
8 businesses cause more traffic than one major store.
9 Second, who better to solve the traffic problems and
10 fix the roads than major anchor stores? Let's face it,
11 the 50-67 corridor needs to be fixed, as is, today.
12 Small businesses simply cannot afford to do this. This
13 means it will be up to the taxpayers. Why not let a
14 couple of large retailers alleviate the burden of cost
15 of these repairs?

16 As to not wanting regional draw, I am sure
17 that there are a lot of business people around here who
18 would love to argue that point. More shoppers mean
19 more sales. More sales mean more tax dollars. It is
20 not that difficult to figure. So what if they come
21 from Milton or Malta? And let's face it, our school
22 system is a regional draw. Due to the fact that there
23 are approximately 1,000 new housing units proposed in
24 Ballston and the surrounding towns, our school system

1 faces overload in the very near future. This means our
2 schools are going to have to grow to accommodate this
3 influx. I don't know about you, but I almost fainted
4 when I opened my last school tax bill. It is a proven
5 fact that the school tax paid by a household does not
6 cover the education provided to a student living there,
7 let alone two, three or more students. Large retail
8 pays large taxes, yet does not burden our school
9 system. Why not have some retail regional draw to
10 offset the regional burden facing our schools? Why not
11 keep some of the surrounding town's shopping tax
12 dollars here? Just do the math.

13 Another concern has been the effect that large
14 retail will have on the Village of Ballston Spa's
15 businesses. I am a little confused here. The pro-size
16 cap side says that major retail will be the end of the
17 village businesses. Yet they are in favor of a mixed
18 use area at the 50-67 corridor, which is placing many
19 small shops and apartments, or essentially another
20 village, next to the existing village. This will not
21 affect the downtown of Ballston Spa? I beg to differ.
22 When surveyed by the Camoin Group this year, a majority
23 of the village business owners stated that they did not
24 feel a major retail store would have a negative impact

1 on their respective businesses. Again, the pro-cap
2 side is speaking for a group they should not be. A
3 village next to the village simply does not make good
4 sense. Think about it.

5 In closing, I would like each and every one of
6 you to consider the facts I have presented to you. Do
7 not make the mistake of jumping on the pro-cap
8 bandwagon just because it's the fashionable or in-vogue
9 yuppie thing to do. Think about the town's needs,
10 think about your personal needs. Think about the cost
11 of fuel today and what it costs to drive to another
12 town for your groceries and other necessities, not to
13 mention the valuable time it takes. Please support the
14 CPAC and embrace the master plan as drafted. Thank you
15 for your time and consideration.

16 MR. RHODES: Peter Miller.

17 MR. MILLER: I would like to also thank CPAC
18 members for your many, many months of discussion and
19 debate and hard work on this plan. Unfortunately, I
20 don't think this plan has gotten it right. Saratoga
21 Associates, the professional consultants hired by the
22 town, delivered an excellent first draft back in July
23 which contained many progressive tools and techniques
24 to accommodate the inevitable growth that the town is

1 going to see. We found that draft very encouraging.
2 Most importantly, it captured the vision that Ballston
3 Spa residents, Ballston Town residents had expressed
4 for their future: the strong desire to preserve the
5 town's rural character, restrict massive developments
6 and protect open space.

7 Since then, meeting without Saratoga
8 Associates, CPAC seems to have picked apart the plan,
9 and as it stands, it now encourages the helter-skelter
10 growth we had hoped to avoid. Some of the problems
11 include the removal of a 60,000 square foot retail size
12 cap. That's a very reasonable number. It's 50 percent
13 larger than the old Grand Union at the north end of
14 town, and we hear that perhaps size caps might not be
15 legally defensible, but they exist all over the state
16 and all over the country, and perhaps the reason they
17 haven't had to withstand legal challenges is because
18 they're based on solid legal grounding, and that is the
19 will of the people.

20 There are very few specifics in this plan. It
21 has evolved from a plan with some really specific
22 recommendations for tools, into one that's very
23 generic. There's no design guidelines and no
24 performance standards. Too much is left for

1 interpretation. Speaking of design and architectural
2 standards, have you seen the Malta website, the
3 planning website? It is a model for designing
4 buildings of the future.

5 The best part of this plan, as I see it, is in
6 section 2, goals that this plan was supposed to
7 accomplish, because those goals do reflect the will of
8 the people, as expressed in the public surveys and the
9 public hearings. The survey done by Saratoga
10 Associates was loud and clear, it's statistically
11 accurate, it should have driven every aspect of this
12 plan, but where is it reflected? CPAC does not seem to
13 have responded to the wishes of the community in this
14 plan. The plan should have been an evolution from the
15 original draft to more specifics, not less. Instead,
16 it has no implementation strategy, no actionable items.
17 It's not better, really, than the 1989 plan. We're not
18 protected by this plan. I think CPAC needs to re-read
19 the town-wide survey and go back to work.

20 MR. RHODES: Patti Southworth, followed by Don
21 Tuxill.

22 MS. SOUTHWORTH: Patti Southworth, Town of
23 Ballston. Hadn't actually planned to speak tonight,
24 most of you know where I stood on the issues and I

1 believe CPAC did, as well, but couple quick points.

2 When they all talked about sales tax revenues
3 and bringing in more revenue, we get a standard
4 percentage of the sales tax revenue that's produced in
5 Saratoga County. So, if you're shopping in Clifton
6 Park and now you're shopping in Ballston, we're not
7 getting any more money. So, keep that in mind. We're
8 still going to get the same amount of money, unless
9 you're pulling shoppers from outside this county, which
10 is probably not going to happen.

11 A couple other words that I heard here were
12 "temporary jobs", "permanent part-time jobs". This
13 community doesn't need temporary jobs. Construction
14 workers -- these big corporations bring their own
15 workers. They don't hire our workers. They bring
16 their own teams with them. And permanent part-time
17 jobs don't bring a living wage, they don't bring
18 healthcare benefits, they don't bring child care
19 benefits, they don't bring the things that working
20 families in this town need and deserve. We can do
21 better than that.

22 When you move to a small town, it's not a big
23 secret, there's no shopping here in Ballston. Ya'll
24 know that when you drive around town. Everybody knew

1 that when they moved here. Everybody knew they were
2 going to be commuting to work; so I think that those
3 issues are just moot. You knew that when you moved
4 here. You accepted it, you purchased your property,
5 you chose to live here and raise your families here,
6 and part of the reason was because we didn't have that
7 traffic and we didn't have massive shopping centers to
8 have to deal with.

9 One of the main points I wanted to speak about
10 tonight, is the "should", "perhaps", "could",
11 "consider", "appropriate". They leave a lot to the
12 imagination, and they really need to be stronger
13 direction. This town deserves that.

14 One of the reasons they're talking about
15 stream buffer overlay, I firmly believe and I think all
16 of you know, I've knocked on your doors, you know where
17 I stand on that issue, but part of the reasons are
18 because there is a developer who proposed development
19 and he said he was going to give us a hundred foot
20 setback from some wetland on the properties, and you
21 know, he went through the planning process, and lo and
22 behold, he went back in front of the Planning Board
23 because they laid some slabs wrong and now the houses
24 weren't going to be in a row and he wanted to take back

1 nine foot of that wetland guarantee that he'd given us,
2 and what did we do? We said, hey, no problem, it's
3 only nine foot. This is why we need stronger
4 requirements and stronger direction and we need to not
5 leave so much open. We don't ask these developers to
6 give us much of anything, and they're not going to give
7 it on their own. We don't sit there on the Planning
8 Board and you guys don't have the tools to say, you
9 have to give us a certain amount of recreation space
10 here or somewhere else. You have to give us sprawl
11 structure development. They could, but who's going to
12 give us money on their own? Why would they take money
13 out of their pocket just to give it to us? You have to
14 be able to ask for it. We need the strong direction,
15 otherwise, we're going to get what we don't want, which
16 is a developer coming back in front of our Town Board
17 now saying, now we want to raise the buildings to 40
18 square foot. I know it was 35, but please give us 40.
19 And the cost of the materials are going to cost us too
20 much now that we told you we were going to put on the
21 side of the buildings, so, hey, please cut us some
22 slack and give us a break and let us put something else
23 on. That decision hasn't been made yet. I'm sure
24 we'll hear it at the next Board meeting what they

1 decide on that. But these are the reasons we need
2 formal, strict guidelines in this plan to base the
3 zoning on, so that we don't get what they want to give,
4 we get what we deserve.

5 MR. RHODES: Don Tuxill.

6 MR. TUXILL: Good evening. My name's Don
7 Tuxill. I live in the Town of Ballston on Forrest
8 Road. My parcel's one acre. I happen to be a civil
9 engineer by profession.

10 My understanding -- I came here, we moved here
11 eight years ago, my family. My understanding is,
12 roughly, the population of this town was roughly around
13 8,000 around 1980, and I guess from what I'm hearing
14 tonight, it's roughly around 10,000.

15 One issue I haven't heard mentioned in this,
16 and I'm not sure where the document would go towards,
17 is the Cappiello development, also, as far as how that
18 plays in all this, because I'd like you to picture some
19 point down the road, potentially the Cappiello
20 development, Wal-Mart and Widewaters all in place. I
21 understand there are ways, as an engineer, to mitigate
22 these things. There are ways engineers can build
23 things to accommodate increased needs, and they can do
24 things like, they can build roads like Route 9, they

1 can build things like I-87, that's hyperbole I'm using,
2 I understand that, you've heard a bit of that tonight.

3 There've been quotations out of context of
4 technical documents. There have been AADTs thrown
5 around that, quite frankly, I would question. I would
6 say to you folks is that, the reality of this is that,
7 yes, it can be mitigated, but I ask you to think, what
8 does that picture look like? You came here and you
9 bought your home, wherever you live, for a reason. The
10 place you're going to have when this is done, I would
11 venture a guess, would look substantially different.

12 And quite frankly, I've heard tonight
13 something rather discomfoting to me, is the intonation
14 that if we don't accept the tax donations of a large
15 developer, that we are going to be just simply lost. I
16 understand there are consequences for not going that
17 route, but there are consequences for going that route.
18 I think that's something that we, as a town, have to
19 determine. And quite frankly, yes, I lived in the town
20 of Skaneateles. It's a lovely place to live, but I
21 will tell you that there are ways, I believe, to do
22 things, and I think, quite frankly, folks, as a
23 committee and as a Town Board, the election that just
24 came through, I don't know what historically the trends

1 were in turnouts, I know the past election or so before
2 this one, the turnout wasn't that great. The turnout
3 was much greater on this one, and I think probably
4 because of this topic. Now, I just think that there's
5 -- I understand the outcome of the election, but I
6 think there was something that was put forth in that
7 election, and I would say to you that I think that
8 there are concerns here. There's quality of living
9 issues. There's traffic issues. There's the school
10 issues, and when I hear that our taxes are going up 6
11 percent next year in our school district, I understand
12 that, and on the average homeowner, that's a certain
13 amount of money; on somebody who has a larger parcel
14 land, that's a more amount of money; I understand that.
15 That goes with the piece of property we own. That is
16 the reality of it, folks. That's the price we pay for
17 living where we live.

18 So, I'd say, gentlemen, my final question to
19 you is on the limit of the size of big box, if we're
20 not going to say 60,000 here, who's going to decide
21 that? Where does that kick in? You've had a
22 consultant make that recommendation; it's been pulled
23 out. Where does that come into place where you even
24 consider that limit? Because if this is a plan that

1 we're putting into place, where does this all take
2 place? So, I would leave that with you folks.

3 I thank you for the work you're doing. I
4 really do, but I would urge you to consider some of
5 these issues, because you're the leaders of this
6 community and you are the ones who are setting forth
7 the vision for this community, and I'd like you to
8 really look hard and really long at what that vision
9 looks like. Thank you.

10 MR. RHODES: I think that's it on the list.
11 Yup, that's it. Thank you all for coming. I believe
12 we have another CPAC meeting on the 28th, a week from
13 tonight. Thank you.

14 (Whereupon the meeting is adjourned)

Appendix E

Glossary of Planning Terms

Glossary of Planning Terms

Access Management: regulations of access to the public road system from public roads and private driveways that manage and minimize the number of points of entry and curbcuts.

Buffer: the use of landscaping located between land uses of different character intended to mitigate the negative impacts of the more intense use.

Build-to Line: the precise distance from the curb line to the line along which building construction must take place.

Conservation Subdivision Design: a form of cluster development that originates with the identification and protection of open space resources and results in the concentration of buildings on less sensitive lands.

Density: permitted number of dwelling units per acre.

Design Guidelines: specific criteria and limitations placed on development that illustrates appropriate site design, site organization and architectural appearance.

Farmland and Open Space Protection Program: a specific plan of action that results in the permanent protection of working landscapes and natural areas in order to fulfill a broad range of objectives such as: conserving natural resources and rural character, increasing opportunities for passive recreation and scientific education, mitigating natural hazards and encouraging the viability of local agriculture.

Gateways: the use of signs, monuments, or landscaping to accentuate the arrival at a destination point.

Infill Development: development of vacant, skipped-over parcels of land in otherwise built-up areas, as a way of limiting the costs of extending infrastructure into newly developing areas, strengthening older neighborhoods and reducing the loss of resource lands.

Official Map: legally adopted map that conclusively shows existing streets, and approved proposed streets, parks, and other public places and infrastructure.

Performance Standards: zoning regulations that permit uses based on operational standards rather than a particular type of use.

Planned Unit Development: a tract of land developed as a unit under unified control, rather than as an aggregate of individual lots, with greater design flexibility from traditional siting

regulations, which enables the provision of amenities such as the preservation of open space as well as improved economics in construction.

Planting Strip: the use of trees, shrubs and other vegetation for the purpose of creating a physical and visual separation between pedestrian uses and activities and the street.

Purchase of Development Rights: a less-than-fee-simple interest in property that is voluntarily donated or sold by a willing landowner to a unit of government for public benefit which include: the protection of open space, recreation, ecological, agricultural, or historic resources.

Special Use Permit: approval for a special purpose that has been determined to have a potentially greater impact than a permitted use within the same zoning district. Frequently adopted in conjunction with performance standards and broad design guidelines.

Streetscape: the character defining elements that contribute to the physical makeup of a street and the pedestrian environment along the street, including: building frontage, street paving, street furniture, landscaping, signs, lighting and other constituents.

Traditional Neighborhood Development: compact, mixed-use neighborhood where residential, small commercial and civic buildings are within close proximity to each other.

Traffic Calming: techniques and devices designed to reduce motorist speed, decrease motor vehicle volumes, and increase safety for pedestrians and bicycles.