

T O W N O F C L I N T O N

Comprehensive Plan

Summary and Recommendations



TOWN OF CLINTON, DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

JANUARY 11, 2012 DRAFT

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF CLINTON SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The *Comprehensive Plan* for the town of Clinton is designed to be used as a guide for managing growth and change. It consists of planning principles and maps that express the community's objectives for the town's future. The plan takes into consideration the wishes of those who answered the Community Values Survey described in Chapter One, the information gleaned from the basic studies presented in Chapters Two through Eight, and the goals and objectives set forth in this Summary, as well as the comments from the public in meetings and public hearings and the deliberations of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. It provides a framework for development ten or more years into the future by allocating land among several categories of uses, identifying specific transportation improvements, and setting forth the policies that should guide the town's land use decisions.

One of the most important steps in developing the *Comprehensive Plan* was to articulate the community's vision for Clinton. Planning succeeds when residents reach consensus on their desires for the future conservation and development of their community. A vision statement is the formal expression of that community consensus. The vision statement sets the overall policy direction for the Comprehensive Plan. It answers the question "What do we want Clinton to be?" and in so doing, sets the stage for defining how we get there. The town of Clinton's vision statement, which appears above, was developed by the Comprehensive Plan Committee based on the goals that town residents outlined in the Community Values Survey.

This is an updated version of the *Comprehensive Plan* that was prepared by the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development under the direction of a committee appointed by the town and that was approved in 1991. This new version contains information from both the 1990 Census that was not available in time to include in that plan, plus the 2000 Census information and limited available 2010 Census data. The revisions also consider the knowledge developed through the new research and numerous pertinent studies that have become available since that time. This new information is included in the various Chapters, and is noticeably apparent in the expanded material in the Natural Resources

VISION STATEMENT

The Town of Clinton desires to maintain its rural character, consisting of natural landscapes, native ecosystems, working farms, small hamlet-scale development and historic structures, while preserving its scenic quality, and to do so in a manner that continues to promote its small town atmosphere and quality of life.

Chapter. Significantly, even in light of all the new information, much of the language in the summary and recommendations of the 1991 *Plan* turned out to still be pertinent and applicable.

Although the *Plan* does not have the legal status of a zoning ordinance, subdivision regulation, building codes, or site plan review regulations, it is a legal prerequisite to zoning, authorized by Section 272-a of New York State Town Law, which states that “all town land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section.” A comprehensive plan helps to ensure that land use controls are based on a factual understanding of the community's needs. Of course a plan is only effective if its goals and recommendations are implemented in the Town Code, and if the Town Code, in turn, is enforced. This *Plan* includes a number of recommendations that stress the importance of enforcing Town policies and regulations to realize the goals of the *Plan*.

Changes to a community as it develops over the years are almost always initiated by the private sector, by hundreds of individual decisions to build homes, start new businesses, sell farms, or make other changes. However, the private sector responds to opportunities that governments create through zoning, subdivision regulations, and other official statements of local policy. Local governments can also take the initiative for the protection of valuable resources through the consistent application of comprehensive plan principles and other regulatory actions. A comprehensive plan seeks to guide market forces so that development opportunities and land use goals will be compatible.

Method

The *Comprehensive Plan* is based on technical studies as well as the input of town residents. Sources include:

1. The information and local perspective provided by the Town of Clinton Comprehensive Plan Committee which was appointed by the Town Board to update and revise the Plan, with the assistance of a Planning consultant.
2. The Community Values Survey of 2007 prepared by the Committee using the previous survey as a base and conducted by the town, and the comments and recommendations of residents in the Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings held during the planning process.
3. The updated background studies prepared by the Comprehensive Plan Committee on historic preservation, population and economic profile, housing, community facilities, transportation, and land uses, which consider both existing conditions and future needs. Due to the specialized scientific knowledge required, the natural resources study was revised by a consultant, working under the committee's direction.

4. The Committee's analysis of the regional growth patterns and trends that have affected Clinton's growth and will continue to influence the future development of the town.
5. Planning design techniques for retaining the quality of existing social, economic, and natural environments and improving future development.

The Clinton *Comprehensive Plan* was prepared by the Comprehensive Plan Committee using the following steps:

1. Compiled, distributed, and analyzed the town's Community Values Survey.
2. Reviewed and identified pertinent planning issues.
3. Prepared updated revisions to each of the chapters in the 1991 plan.
 - a. Inventoried existing conditions.
 - b. Identified apparent problems.
 - c. Projected future needs.
4. Analyzed the Assessor's office records to identify land use in the town.
 - a. The committee reviewed real property tax records to distinguish land use.
 - b. The 1988 land use map underlying the 1991 plan was reviewed and used to compare with maps showing current land uses.
 - c. The maps were checked against committee members' personal knowledge of land uses in the town.
5. Prepared a series of maps and figures as follows (*indicates that this figure has been included at the end of this Summary):
 - a. Parcels with Historic Sites (Figure 2.1*)
 - b. Hamlet Parcels with Historic Sites (Figure 2.2)
 - c. Topography: Shaded Relief (Figure 3.1*)
 - d. Steep Slopes (Figure 3.2)
 - e. General Geology (Figure 3.3)
 - f. Soils: Depth to Bedrock (Figure 3.4)
 - g. Agricultural Soils (Figure 3.5*)
 - h. General Soils (Figure 3.6)
 - i. Components of a Watershed (Figure 3.7)
 - j. Water Balance at a Developed and Undeveloped Site (Figure 3.8)
 - k. Water Resources (Figure 3.9*)
 - l. Dutchess County Annual Aquifer Recharge Rates (Figure 3.10)
 - m. Hydrologic Soils (Figure 3.11)
 - n. Water Resource Protection (Figure 3.12*)
 - o. Floodplain Expansion with New Development (Figure 3.13)
 - p. Habitats (Figure 3.14)
 - q. Significant Ecosystems and Rare Species (Figure 3.15)

- r. Community Facilities (Figure 6.1*)
 - s. Town of Clinton Fire Districts (Figure 6.2)
 - t. Traffic Volumes (Figure 7.1)
 - u. Crash Locations (Figure 7.2)
 - v. Speed Limits (Figure 7.3*)
 - w. Land Use 1988 (Figure 8.1)
 - x. Vacant Land Use Comparison 1988 to 2010 (Figure 8.2)
 - y. Residential Land Use Comparison 1988 to 2010 (Figure 8.3)
 - z. Agricultural Land Use Comparison 1988 to 2010 (Figure 8.4)
 - aa. Residential, Vacant, and Agricultural Land Uses (Figure 8.5*)
 - bb. Non-Residential, Non-Vacant, and Non-Agricultural Land Uses (Figure 8.6)
 - cc. Current Zoning Districts (Figure 8.7*)
 - dd. Conservation Subdivision Design – Four Step Process (Figure 8.8*)
 - ee. Centers and Greenspaces Plan (Figure 9.1*)
- 6. Interpreted all data for planning problems and opportunities.
 - a. Community Values Survey results – identified issues of concern and assessed degree of support for different land use controls.
 - b. Background studies – identified current and potential deficiencies, conflicts, and opportunities in local and regional context.
 - c. Natural constraints – identified areas with multiple constraints and areas with few constraints.
 - d. Existing land uses – identified existing concentrations of uses and existing or potential land use opportunities and incompatibilities.
 - 7. Updated draft background chapters for Committee review and public comment at Committee meetings.
 - 8. Outlined goals and objectives based on identified problems and opportunities and public comment.
 - 9. Defined planning principles and land use categories that would meet the diverse goals and objectives.
 - 10. Recommended a conceptual “Centers and Greenspaces” land use plan along with zoning tools and techniques to implement that plan.
 - 11. Presented the draft Comprehensive Plan to the Town Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals for review and comment.
 - 12. Presented draft Comprehensive Plan for public comment during a Public Hearing, and considered changes based on public comments received.

Planning Goals and Recommendations

The plan for the town of Clinton focuses on eight goals based on the community values and background chapters. These goals are the core elements of the plan. When recommended by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, after review by the Town's Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and once adopted by the Town Board, these planning goals and implementing recommendations become the guide for all future land use decisions. To ensure that the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan continue to guide conservation and development of the Town in a manner that is consistent with community values, a comprehensive review of the Plan should be undertaken at least every ten years in conjunction with community surveys and/or resident forums on current planning issues. It should also be stressed that one of the keys of the success of the plan clearly lies in the commitment to adequately enforce all existing and future policies and regulations.

The following section summarizes the *Comprehensive Plan*, presents the town's goals and specific recommendations to implement those goals, and describes the land use plan categories and map. For a complete understanding of the background, goals, and recommendations of the Town of Clinton, the reader is encouraged to read the full *Comprehensive Plan*.

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY VALUES

Background:

A critical step in the planning process was the development of a Community Values Survey. The survey was written using the 1988 Survey as a base, adjusted by the Committee, subsequently distributed by mail to every household on the tax roll in Clinton and also made available in the Town Hall and on the Town's web site. The survey was designed to solicit opinions and comments from residents about the town and its future.

The 486 returned surveys produced a fair and representative sample of Clinton's residents. An analysis of the returned surveys highlighted many clear preferences on individual issues, including the preservation of the town's historic character and natural features, the desire for only limited growth, and the willingness to advocate land control measures. The results of the survey are described in detail in Chapter One.

Goal:

To preserve the character of the town and enhance the sense of community among Clinton's residents.

Recommendations:

- 1.1 The town should continue to encourage effective public participation in the decision making process to ensure that the concerns of all are heard.

- 1.2 Major entranceways to the town and the historic hamlets should be enhanced with landscaped thematic markers to visually identify important boundaries and help generate a sense of community identity.
- 1.3 To reinforce the hamlets as community centers, the town's land use policies should allow compatible development in and adjacent to the hamlets and limit development in the traditionally more rural, open areas.
- 1.4 The Town Hall and its grounds should be used as a center for community-wide service activities.
- 1.5 The town should maintain adequate land use and planning regulations to protect the natural landscape of the town and maintain the rural atmosphere of privacy, peace and quiet, and a friendly community. There should be a strong community resolve to enforce Town policies and regulations.
- 1.6 Major shopping needs are supported by nearby municipalities, and town residents have little interest in having such shopping opportunities available locally, in order to maintain a rural atmosphere.
- 1.7 Businesses to be encouraged should be limited to those compatible to a rural residential area focused around scattered hamlets, such as farms, home businesses and country stores.



Dressage trainer Brandi Rivera from Kross Creek Farm on Centre Road.
Photo courtesy of Bill Hamilton.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Background:



Historic buildings contribute to Clinton's character.
Stone House Road, Town of Clinton
Photo courtesy of Norene Coller.

- Clinton is rich in historic character, and is committed to preserving it.
- Clinton has designated the seven historic hamlets Critical Environmental Areas.
- Since 1986 the Clinton Historical Society has designated 36 buildings in the town as local landmarks.
- The Town Board has designated 49 roads in the town as "Historic Roads of the Town of Clinton" and appointed the Clinton Scenic and Historic Roads Committee to provide recommendations on protection measures.

- The Dutchess County historic survey of 1988 has identified 163 individual sites with historic value in Clinton. Expansion of this list by the Comprehensive Plan Committee to 297 sites [see Figure 2.1] includes structures which have local significance to Clinton, such as the Town Hall built in 1920.

Goal:

To identify, protect, and restore Clinton's historic buildings, sites, and roadside cultural features.

Recommendations:

- 2.1 Clinton's history, particularly of its hamlet centers, should be promoted through the use of educational materials coordinated with driving, bicycling and walking tours.
- 2.2 A local archive for the collection of historic township documents and photographs should be created by the Town in an appropriately accessible space.
- 2.3 The town should continue to support documentation and designation of local historic landmarks that is currently being done by the Clinton Historical Society, with well defined standards.
- 2.4 The Clinton historic survey should be reviewed and refined for the purpose of nominating historic districts and individual sites to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Where historic structures do not qualify for such designation, criteria should be created to govern local designation.
- 2.5 The town's local laws should incorporate specific protection measures for designated local landmarks and National Register districts and sites, using the Model Historic Preservation Law prepared by New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation as a guide.
- 2.6 The Critical Environmental Area designation of the seven historic hamlets should continue to be used to thoroughly review the environmental and historic impacts of development decisions. The town should also consider adjusting the existing Critical Environmental Area boundaries to include all land in the Hamlet Zoning Districts in order to provide a more complete level of scrutiny under the State Environmental Quality Review process. The significance of each of the seven hamlets should be determined and plans developed for their preservation.
- 2.7 The town should encourage the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic properties by permitting a range of uses, such as multi-family housing and bed-and-breakfasts, provided that the reuse is subject to performance standards as part of special permit requirements (which include protection of the historic structure).
- 2.8 The town should develop guidelines to insure that new development does not detract from the setting, scale, and design of surrounding architecture and landscape features, particularly for development in the hamlets.

- 2.9 In conjunction with the Clinton Scenic and Historic Roads Committee, the town should strive to retain stone walls, tree-lined roads, barns, mill sites and other cultural features of the landscape.
- 2.10 The town should improve records on historic sites, with better identification of such sites (GPS locations and Tax Grid Numbers).
- 2.11 The town should re-address the role of the Scenic and Historic Roads Committee to include developing proposals as to how to improve the protection of the cultural features of the landscape.
- 2.12 The town should review the designation of Historic Roads and historic sites by relating to the significance of the historic impact(s) noted for each (event, place, unusual use, etc.).
- 2.13 The town should conduct an archaeological resource inventory that identifies areas in Clinton to be protected.
- 2.14 The town should preserve archaeological resources by carefully considering sensitive archaeological zones identified by New York State and local archaeologists during the SEQR reviews of proposed developments. File newly discovered archaeological sites with the State archaeological survey for inclusion in its databases.



Rural roads lined with trees and stone walls are found throughout the town.
Town of Clinton. Photo courtesy of Norene Coller.

CHAPTER 3: NATURAL RESOURCES

Background:

- Clinton possesses a wide variety of natural features that provide both site amenities and constraints on construction.
- A most important factor to be considered in the planning process is the capacity of the land to accept development.
- Much of the land in Clinton has at least one characteristic (steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, shallow or low permeability soils) that limits its suitability for development [see Figure 3.1].
- Clinton has two general areas where highly permeable sand and gravel surface deposits coincide with bedrock aquifers—just west of Little Wappinger Creek from Silver Lake to Long Pond and in the Clinton Corners area south to Wappinger Creek.

- Soils rated of statewide importance for agricultural purposes cover substantial portions of the town with scattered pockets of prime-rated farmland also still remaining [see Figure 3.5].
- Clinton has significant habitat supporting rare plants and animals, some which are of conservation concern.

Goal:

To preserve the natural resource base on which the quality of life in Clinton depends.

Recommendations:

Groundwater Protection

- 3.1 Land use policies and regulations should continue to provide for densities that permit adequate aquifer recharge and individual septic system effluent dilution while protecting prime and statewide significant agricultural soils.
- 3.2 In prime aquifer recharge areas, the town should strictly control land uses or consider developing central or shared utility systems to prevent overuse or contamination of groundwater. To prevent groundwater contamination, the town should consider the development of an aquifer overlay district based on Dutchess County's model aquifer protection ordinance.
- 3.3 The Town should encourage educational efforts and support septic system best management practices including but not limited to:
 - Periodic inspections and pumping (every 1-5 years),
 - Providing new homeowners with a well and septic system location map
 - Avoiding disposal of bulky items in septic,
 - Keeping swimming pools and heavy equipment away from leach fields, and
 - Practicing water conservation.
- 3.4 The Town should encourage the use of nitrate removal systems for the construction of new septic systems.
- 3.5 The Town should encourage the use of high efficiency plumbing devices for new construction.
- 3.6 The Town should encourage the development of alternative septic systems for problem areas including establishment of sewer districts in developments surrounding lakes or in areas with soil hydrologic groups that are inappropriate for septic systems. Problem areas should be identified and mapped.

Watershed Protection [see Figures 3.9 and 3.12]

- 3.7 The Town should reduce the pollutant load in runoff by:
 - Recommending limiting use of lawn chemicals and fertilizers within a minimum of 100 feet of all wetlands, streams, and water bodies

- Requiring a minimum distance of 100 feet of vegetated buffer between all stormwater management basin outfalls and wetlands, lakes and streams
 - Developing guidelines for minimizing the impacts of road salt including disposal of snow at least 100 feet from any receiving waters.
 - Implementing Townwide policies that eliminate or minimize all known sources of water pollution including road salt, leaching dump sites, and herbicides/pesticides/fertilizers applied to landscaped areas and utility corridors.
- 3.8 New septic systems should be at least 100 feet (200 feet in Conservation Areas) from all wetlands, water bodies or streams; this will require that all wetlands on site in proximity to proposed septic systems are delineated.
- 3.9 Forested, wetland, watercourse, and lake/pond buffers should be shown on all site plans, subdivision maps and special use permit applications, and for building permit applications where appropriate. All buffers should be flagged prior to any land disturbance.
- 3.10 The Town should review and update guidelines for protection of stream buffers, including recommended width and vegetation (e.g. use of woody vegetation for stream bank stabilization).
- 3.11 Educational funding should be included in the town budget to provide information to residents about the importance of forested buffers to the town's biological, aesthetic and water resources. Information on forested buffers and requirements for delineation on plans and in the field should be available in the Town Hall and provided to developers and property owners that submit applications to the Town as appropriate.
- 3.12 During the review process, the Planning Board should require applicants to conduct onsite delineations of all wetlands in the vicinity of proposed land disturbance activities, regardless of jurisdictional status, prior to granting an approval. This is needed because: 1) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) and NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) wetland maps are not accurate at the parcel/site scale; 2) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) jurisdictional wetlands and Town of Clinton wetlands are determined from onsite wetland delineations – they are not shown on state or federal wetland maps and; 3) hydric soils maps are not accurate at the parcel/site scale.



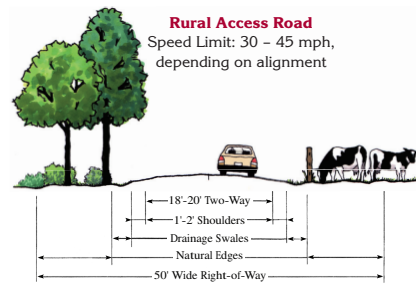
Streams buffers should be protected from development.

Brown Pond's Road, Town of Clinton.

Photo courtesy of Norene Coller.

- 3.13 The Town should use the Environmental Protection Agency's three parameter (physical, chemical, biological) stream health guide for evaluating the health of streams and using this information to inform land use decisions and cumulative impact assessments.
- 3.14 The Town should give careful consideration to watershed protection in local land use decisions, based on the Natural Resource Management Plan for the Wappinger Creek and Fallkill Creek Watersheds, including the consideration of cumulative impacts of land use practices on watersheds (e.g. impacts on water supply and quality), indirect impacts to wetlands and streams, and impacts affecting wetland contributing drainage areas. A similar recommendation should be followed for the Crum Elbow Watershed. The Town should implement these during SEQR reviews of proposed development projects.
- 3.15 The Town should adopt, as appropriate, the use of the DEC's *Better Site Design Principles* when evaluating new development and stormwater management provisions – including promoting the use of rain gardens and grassed swales. The Planning Board should continue to encourage the use of vegetated swales where practical in new subdivisions and site plans, and the Highway Superintendent should consider vegetated swales for use in highway projects. Swales should be designed according to the most recent version of the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual.
- 3.16 Reduce impervious surfaces by minimizing pavement in parking lots, using pervious materials wherever possible, and incorporating stormwater management practices (i.e. bioretention) in vegetated islands. The town should amend the Zoning Law to permit shared parking to reduce parking lot size, and should encourage use of stormwater management practices such as bioretention in parking areas. The Planning Board should continue to: (1) use Greenway Guides (Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development) to provide standards for parking lot landscaping, and (2) encourage the integration of low-impact development practices into landscaped areas where appropriate to manage and treat stormwater runoff. Properly engineered at grade or depressed planting islands with gaps in the curbs should be encouraged.
- 3.17 When conducting environmental impact reviews, the Town should evaluate potential impacts of a proposed project to watershed health, giving consideration to the area of impervious surfaces and forested area within watersheds (or sub watersheds), and wetland-contributing drainage areas that include the project site.

- 3.18 The Town should encourage the reduction in impervious surface associated with roads and streets and should adopt narrower road standards for low-volume streets using the *Greenway Guide* on Rural Roads as a model.
- 3.19 The Town should develop and implement a logging ordinance to address issues of stormwater management (e.g. erosion control), water quality and habitat protection.



Narrow roads reduce vehicle speeds and are less costly to build and maintain.
Source - Greenway Guide: Rural Roads

Biodiversity

- 3.20 A defined open space system should be part of every site plan proposal and, where possible, be linked to form continuous greenspace corridors. Natural corridors should be particularly encouraged along streambeds and wetlands to provide open space, wildlife habitat, and groundwater protection.
- 3.21 Reduced assessments, development plan trade-offs, government purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and other similar approaches should be encouraged to allow desired natural resource protection.
- 3.22 The town should amend the Zoning Law to require Special Use permit approval for excavation and tree clearing of any land area $\frac{1}{4}$ acre and greater in size, with the exception of agricultural activities and selective harvesting/sustained yield forestry consistent with the NYS Best Management Practices and Timber Harvest Guidelines.
- 3.23 During project reviews, the Planning Board should limit the amount of land to be cleared for new development to the minimum extent possible, allowing clearing only within a specifically defined building envelope. Site clearing and grading and tree preservation requirements should be clarified by requiring that the limits of clearing and grading be delineated both on project plans and in the field.
- 3.24 Encourage the preservation of areas of contiguous habitat, areas with significant biodiversity, and areas that support species of conservation concern.
- 3.25 Important wildlife habitats and other significant environmental areas should be identified and protected. During the review of proposed projects, the Planning Board should implement Habitat Assessment Guidelines, and recommend the use of NYS DEC's list of "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" for animals, and the Plant Atlas (Young, 2007 and updated versions) for identification of species of conservation concern. (Refer to the Species Tables in Appendix 3.3 of the *Comprehensive Plan* for lists of these species.) Habitat Assessment Guidelines should be based on models developed by the Towns of Milan, New Paltz, or Shawangunk.

- 3.26 The Town should protect naturally vegetated contiguous corridors for the movement of particular wildlife species between habitats. To be effective, these connections and corridors must be of sufficient width and vegetative composition, so that they are tailored to the habitat needs of particular wildlife species rather than ‘wildlife’ in general. They must also provide connections between specific habitat patches suitable for those species, particularly habitats used for nesting or foraging. Information resources for determining corridor placement or width include but are not limited to the Town’s Open Space Plan (Biodiversity section including maps), Hudsonia’s Biodiversity Assessment Manual, NYS Natural Heritage program resources and research, and the US Department of Agriculture’s “Conservation Buffers” publication¹.
- 3.27 Significant resources should be described in a natural resources inventory or similar report, or be depicted on maps. The Town has baseline studies for the Wappinger Creek and Fallkill watersheds. Additional baseline studies should be encouraged as needed, in particular for the Crum Elbow watershed, which is part of a larger ‘significant biodiversity area’ known as the ‘Dutchess County Wetlands’².
- 3.28 Data collection standards. To facilitate a consistent environmental impact/review process, and ensure better mitigation of impacts to significant habitats and species of conservation concern, the Town should recommend standards for the collection of natural resource data (for example, the use of EPA’s stream biomonitoring protocol to evaluate the health of streams) by applicants and consultants, and include peer review as needed.
- 3.29 As part of project review, the Planning Board should require that significant resources be depicted on site plan and subdivision maps so that they can be avoided or contained in the site’s ‘open space.’ If avoidance is not possible, effective mitigation of impacts should be required. A baseline study may be required as part of this process. Mitigation should correspond to all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on (1) watersheds and (2) biodiversity- including all habitats used by species of conservation concern at some stage of their life cycle, fragmentation of habitat patches, and interruption of corridors and connections between habitats.
- 3.30 Amend the Town’s subdivision regulations to include submission of a resource analysis during the pre-application phase, based on Dutchess County’s model subdivision ordinance.

¹ Gary Bentrup, *Conservation Buffers: Design Guidelines for Buffers, Corridors and Greenways* (Asheville, NC: Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Gen. Tech. Rep. SRS-109, 2008).

² T. Howard, et. al., *Rare Species and Significant Ecological Communities of the Significant Biodiversity Areas within the Hudson River Watershed* (Cornell University and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, 2002).

- 3.31 Identify the location of vernal pools in the town and use the guidelines described in “Best Development Practices: Conserving Pool-Breeding Amphibians in Residential and Commercial Developments in the Northeastern United States”³ for the protection of vernal pools and their associated Critical Terrestrial Habitat. This includes all vernal pools that may be used by pool-breeding amphibians.
- 3.32 Amend the cluster provisions in the Zoning Law to include the four-step conservation subdivision design standards [see Figure 8.8]. Encourage conservation subdivision and subsequent protection of large continuous rather than fragmented areas of natural habitat. List specific criteria to trigger a requirement for conservation subdivisions, and include a minimum percent of the parcel’s area that must be left as open space. All areas set aside as open space should contain the most important features of conservation value, such as water resources, biodiversity, and contiguous habitats on the site. Prime and statewide important agricultural soils should be identified as secondary conservation areas to be preserved.
- 3.33 Conservation subdivision should be required in the Clustered Residential District. This tool should be coupled with other means of protecting agricultural lands, such as incentive zoning which can be used to raise funds for the purchase of development rights from productive agricultural land while encouraging historically appropriate development in the hamlets.
- 3.34 Encourage the use of native plants in landscaping throughout the Town, wherever possible. The Planning Board should require inclusion of native and non-invasive plant species during project reviews. Landscaping should be designed in such a way that habitat value is also provided. This will mitigate for a portion of the loss of native vegetation in site clearing/grading. The town should identify and periodically update a list of native plants⁴ for new plantings and include a list of invasive plant species⁵ to discourage use of these plants in landscaping; this information should be provided to homeowners and developers.

³ A. Calhoun and M. Klemens, *Best Development Practices: Conserving Pool-Breeding Amphibians in Residential and Commercial Developments in the Northeastern United States* (MCA Technical Paper No.5, Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, New York, 2002).

⁴ Lists of native plants may be obtained from a variety of sources, including the following:

- a. www.newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu
- b. www.wildflower.org/collections/collection.php?collection=NY
- c. Univ. of Connecticut: www.jordancove.uconn.edu/jordan_cove/publications/stormwater_manual/Apx_A_Plant_List.pdf
- d. NYS Stormwater Management Design Manual, Appendix H Plant Lists, pp. 10-16.
- e. D. Tallamy, *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 2007).

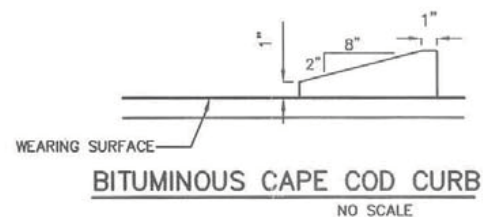
⁵ There are many lists of invasive plant species. For example, see “Invasive Exotics of the Eastern Forest” compiled by Leslie Jones Sauer in *The Once and Future Forest* (Andropogon Associates Ltd., 1998).

- 3.35 Promote the use of Cape Cod curbing⁶, when curbing is required, along all streets in the vicinity of reptile and amphibian habitats.

Planning/Miscellaneous

- 3.36 The town should identify and protect its scenic resources, including open space views and vistas.
- 3.37 The town should discourage the development and encourage protection of slopes over 15 percent and ridgelines to ensure minimal disruption of their environmental function and scenic qualities.
- 3.38 The Town should develop and implement a methodology for conducting preconstruction meetings including:
- *For projects requiring Planning Board approvals:* A pre-construction meeting with the Town Engineer and a representative of the town's Conservation Advisory Committee should be arranged prior to commencing construction.
 - *All other approvals through the Building Inspector* (i.e. new construction on pre-existing lots): A similar pre-construction meeting should be held to outline buffer and wetland/watercourse protections and ensure that they are properly marked on the site.
- 3.39 Amend the subdivision regulations to require that utility lines in new subdivisions should be installed underground, and share one trench. Also require that the subdivider install underground service connections to the property line of each lot before the road or street is paved.
- 3.40 The Planning Board and Building Department should continue to encourage use of Section 70.9 of the Town Highway Specifications, which supports discharge of rooftop runoff to pervious areas within an existing lot.
- 3.41 Prime and statewide important agricultural soils should be protected from uses that would destroy the agricultural potential of the land.

⁶ High (90 degree) curbing creates a significant barrier to migrating amphibians. Many amphibians cannot climb the curbing and are funneled along the curb until they find an opening that allows them to continue their journey, or more often, are swept into or fall into "catch basins." Many other amphibians, wood frogs, green frogs, spring peepers, tree frogs, toads, etc., are also killed en masse due to their tendency to stay within roadways that have steep sided curbs, especially those with pooled water. Studies have shown that Cape Cod style curbing, with its gently sloping surface, allows the amphibians a safer passage to and from their breeding sites. Additionally, as hatchling turtles disperse from their upland nest to their aquatic habitat, they are better able to negotiate a Cape Cod curb than the typical steep-sided curb. The Cape Cod curbing accomplishes the same storm water channeling functions as traditional curbing.



- 3.42 With reference to the NYS Mined Land Reclamation Law (ECL Section 23-2703), the Town should monitor and notify the state of any issues and concerns regarding state-mandated mined land reclamation activities within the town's boundaries.
- 3.43 The town should ensure that the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation requirements regarding the complete reclamation of mining sites are met, including minimizing the environmental and aesthetic damage caused by extractive operations.
- 3.44 Develop and implement a plan for effective enforcement of existing natural resources protection regulations. The Town should continue to evaluate the Zoning Law and subdivision regulations for natural resource protection effectiveness, and add provisions as necessary.

CHAPTER 4. POPULATION AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

Background:

- Rapid double-digit population growth that continued from 1950 to 1990 slowed significantly in the 1990s; the number of residents increased 6.6 percent from 1990 to 2000. Population has increased 7.5 percent between 2000 and 2010 to a town population of 4,312 persons.⁷
- Average household size is decreasing, consistent with the national trend.
- Continued growth is expected; population projections range from 4,557 to 4,922 by 2020.
- The long-term transformation of Clinton from an agriculturally based economy to a residential community for commuters to outside work places (90.5 percent of the work force in 2000) appears to have continued since the 1991 plan.
- Nonetheless, the town still has an overall population density below 150 persons per square mile, the threshold for a "rural" town as designated by the New York State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. In the year 2010, Clinton's population density was 111 persons per square mile⁸.
- Clinton has a lower percentage of public transportation users than the county as a whole (3.5 percent in 2000, compared to 4.2 percent for the county). Use of public transportation by town residents has declined from 5.8 percent in 1991.
- In 2000, Clinton had the next to lowest average, but the highest median, family income of surrounding towns; it also ranked higher than the average and median for Dutchess County (2000 Census data).

⁷ Based on early 2010 US Census Bureau information. Additional 2010 census data is not yet available.

⁸ Based on the 2010 US Census Bureau actual population of 4,312 persons. According to the 2010 Census, the Town comprises 38.784974 square miles (including 38.1433 square miles of land area and 0.641674 square miles of water area).

- Management and professional positions account for a relatively high percentage of the labor force (47.9 percent in 2000).

Goal:

To allow economic opportunities that are consistent with the primarily rural, residential character of the town.

Recommendations:

- 4.1 The town should promote land use and housing policies that provide for the town's mix of ages and income groups.
- 4.2 Because fluctuations in population over the last 50 years make projections difficult, the town should periodically reassess its housing and community services policies as new significant data become available.
- 4.3 The town should encourage small businesses that serve the needs of town and hamlet residents and are compatible with the existing community.
- 4.4 The town should permit home occupations that do not disrupt neighborhood character.
- 4.5 Clinton should allow only low-intensity tourist activities that are compatible with the rural character of the town's hamlets and open areas.
- 4.6 The town should encourage agricultural operations, including farm-related businesses, the on-site sale of farm products produced on the property or locally, lower taxation of farms, and the protection of farm activities from constraints associated with adjacent non-agricultural development. Farm operations and non-farm properties should strive for compatibility while being consistent with the NYS Agriculture and Markets laws.
- 4.7 The town should recognize the trend in the growth of older population (65 and older) and ensure that its services and housing are consistent with the needs of this age group. This trend is likely to continue as the population ages.
- 4.8 The town should encourage the County's return of public transportation when economic factors can support the service.

CHAPTER 5. HOUSING

Background:

- Construction of new homes was at an all time high in Clinton during the 1980s, with the number of housing units increasing 23 percent during that decade. From 1990 to 1999, the number of housing units in Clinton only increased by 12.3 percent. New

home construction further slowed from 2000 through 2008, with the number of housing units only increasing by 9.8 percent for that period.⁹

- Single-family detached homes comprised a high percentage (91.9 percent) of total housing units in 2000. The proportion of owners over renters was the highest among surrounding towns and for Dutchess County as a whole.
- No mobile home parks or apartment complexes exist in Clinton. However, they are allowed in the MR-1 Zoning District.
- From 1990 to 2000, the median market value of a house in Clinton increased 10 percent; this is a significant decrease from the rate increase of 202 percent between 1980 and 1990.
- The gap between housing costs and what median income households can afford steadily widened between 1970 and 1990, although home-ownership became slightly more affordable between 1990 and 2000. Nevertheless, projections for 2008 suggest that households earning less than the median income have few housing choices in today's market, raising the possibility that Clinton could become an exclusive residential community unless steps are taken to address this. The *Three-County Regional Housing Needs Assessment* prepared by the Planning Departments of Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster Counties (February 2009) estimates the need for 112 affordable owner-occupied units and 29 affordable rental units in Clinton to address the housing affordability gap by 2020. This estimate is based on 120 percent of median income.
- Projected total housing needs range from 1,625 to 1,806 units by 2010 and 1,733 to 2,131 units by 2020, compared to 1,502 occupied units in 2000.

Goal:

To provide a broader range of housing sizes and types in appropriate locations for all Clinton's residents, including young people, the elderly, and households earning less than the median income.

Recommendations:

- 5.1 The town should ensure that equal housing laws are enforced and all housing meets public health and safety codes.
- 5.2 The town should allow for more concentrated housing in established hamlets and within a ¼ to ½ mile radius of the center of each hamlet rather than in outlying areas (while still maintaining open space around the hamlets).
- 5.3 New single-family development should feature variety in housing design with varied and sufficient setbacks.

⁹ Please note that the number of new homes built in 2009 was not available to include in these calculations.

- 5.4 Accessory apartments that are compatible with the existing structure and the surrounding neighborhood should continue to be permitted in owner-occupied homes.
- 5.5 Performance standards should be reviewed for conversions of existing structures, such as large older homes or unused agricultural buildings, for rental or other residential uses.
- 5.6 Performance standards should be reviewed for permitting two-family or detached accessory residences in single-family areas.
- 5.7 Multifamily dwellings should be permitted, subject to site plan review, in hamlet areas, provided they meet performance standards that protect neighboring properties. Multifamily dwellings should not be required to be owner-occupied, with provision for appropriate safeguards for the upkeep and maintenance of the property.
- 5.8 The town should develop performance standards to allow by special permit the placement of non-permanent Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity (ECHO) dwellings to provide for care of the elderly or disabled.
- 5.9 The town should encourage conservation subdivision design with preservation of open spaces.

CHAPTER 6. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Background:¹⁰

- The growth over the last 20 years led to a need for additional facilities in the Town Hall. To resolve the need for additional office space and town court needs, the town moved two historic buildings (the Schoolhouse and the Masonic Hall) to the town hall site in 2011.
- The highway department should ensure that the highway garage meets the requirements of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.
- Volunteer staffing of fire departments may become inadequate as population grows due to a lack of volunteers. The upgrading of fire and highway equipment needs to be considered in respective future budgets.
- As growth occurs, assessment of parks and recreational space must be reviewed. The west and northern parts of the town are currently without such space.
- The Town has in place a Disaster Plan which is currently under review.

Goal:

To provide municipal facilities and services that will meet the residents' basic needs and improve opportunities for community activities.

¹⁰ See Figure 6.1.

Recommendations:

- 6.1 The town should continue to develop long-term operations and capital budgets which will provide for the future staffing, equipment, and facility requirements for the Highway Department, recreation programs, fire districts, and other essential services.
- 6.2 Continue to develop Town Hall as a focus for local services and community events. The town should consider expanding the parking, landscaping, and recreational improvements on the property.
- 6.3 The town should continue to support the Clinton Library and encourage educational outreach programs in conjunction with area schools and historical groups.
- 6.4 The town should promote organizations that provide a community-wide public service, such as Clinton's senior citizen's group, with the use of the Town Hall and, when possible, financial assistance.
- 6.5 The town should continue to provide enclosures and impermeable pads for all Highway Department materials and equipment to prevent pollution and enhance the visual qualities of the site.
- 6.6 The town should actively promote volunteer staffing for the fire districts and, if necessary, consider paid positions to ensure adequate coverage.
- 6.7 To improve the fire districts' ability to obtain emergency water supplies, the town should continue to encourage the construction of ponds and the installation of dry hydrants at accessible ponds and creeks.
- 6.8 The town recreation program should continue to diversify its list of activities, including more passive recreational opportunities for seniors and the creation of linear parks or easements for hiking trails/nature walks.
- 6.9 As continuing growth in the town occurs, assessment of parks and recreation space must be reviewed. The west and northern parts of the town are currently without such service.
- 6.10 An engineering study that would include testing of existing wells should be conducted to determine if central utilities need to be established in the future in the vicinity of Clinton Corners to protect the aquifer from increased development in the area.
- 6.11 The town should consider appointing a recycling coordinator to oversee mandated source separation of household refuse and to work to establish increased recycling opportunities at the town's transfer station.
- 6.12 The town should continue to resolve the identified needs for increased space for office staff and the town court functions.

CHAPTER 7. TRANSPORTATION

Background:

- Traffic calming measures should be used in the hamlets to slow traffic speeds and encourage walking, in conjunction with a bypass road around Frost Mills and Pleasant Plains where traffic volumes and accidents are highest.
- Clinton is almost unique in Dutchess County in that its major state highways (Route 9G and the Taconic State Parkway) do not pass directly through the town, but rather only skirt the edges.
- Traffic volumes on state and county roads are increasing annually, and are being carried on a road system that largely retains its narrow rural character.
- Traffic accidents have been increasing on roads throughout Clinton, with intersections generally being the most dangerous locations.
- All at-grade crossings of the Taconic State Parkway in the Town of Clinton have been closed, which has changed traffic patterns in Clinton.
- Alternative systems to the dependence on individual automobiles, such as ride-sharing are only used by a small portion of the community. (The County halted regular bus service to Clinton in 2009.)
- Town-wide reductions of speed limits would provide the most immediate and comprehensive strategy to reduce traffic accidents [see Figure 7.3 for current speed limits].
- Intersections on town roads need to be wide enough to provide good sight distances and handle large vehicles, but should be narrowed in many cases to encourage slow speeds and careful turning movements.
- Reduced design and maintenance standards need to be considered for certain low volume roads, consistent with the recommendations of the *Greenway Guide* on Rural Roads.

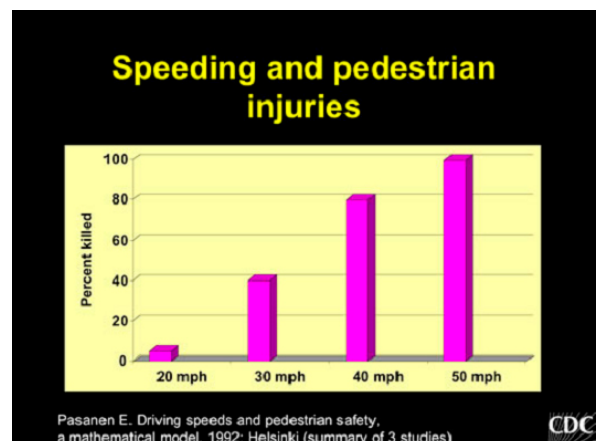
Goal:

To provide a safe and efficient transportation system, while preserving the town's scenic and historic roadside features.

Recommendations:

7.1 The town should work with the Dutchess County Department of Public Works to address the following issues:

- Traffic calming measures should be used in the hamlets to slow traffic



Studies have shown a direct correlation between traffic speeds and pedestrian fatalities.

Source - Centers for Disease Control

- speeds and encourage walking, in conjunction with a bypass road around Frost Mills and Pleasant Plains where traffic volumes and accidents are highest.
 - Lower speed limit to 30 mph on Clinton Corners Road (CR 13) and Salt Point Turnpike (CR 17) in the hamlet of Clinton Corners.
 - Intersection and alignment improvements.
- 7.2 Clinton should recognize that its roads and right-of-ways are the town's most prominent public spaces, the means by which residents visualize their community, and are areas where the town can most directly control its future character.
- 7.3 The town should support the Clinton Scenic and Historic Roads Committee's advisory efforts to find solutions to road improvement problems that respect the scenic and rural qualities of the historic road system.
- 7.4 The town should support a program to enhance its roadside views within the limits of the lands it controls by, for example, rebuilding stone walls, planting buffers to block views at power lines and other visually disruptive locations, selectively pruning to reveal open space vistas, and creating landscaped islands at certain intersections (see existing examples on Hollow Road at intersections with Walnut Drive and Clinton Corners Road).
- 7.5 The town should establish an Official Town Map which would include lands and roads owned by the town and other government agencies, and town roads "by use."
- 7.6 The Highway Department should continue to narrow the width of many of the town's roads and intersections (as long as visibility is not affected), and use other traffic calming measures to promote lower speeds and careful turning movements, as recommended by the new Greenway Guide on Rural Roads (*Greenway Guide A5*) and by the Cornell Local Roads Program, *Highway Standards for Low-Volume Roads in New York State* (2008).
- 7.7 When improvements are planned to the intersection and curve above Frost Mills, the curve at the bridge and intersection in Clinton Hollow, and the acute-angled intersection in the center of Clinton Corners, these improvements should be made using context-sensitive design and, if necessary, included on transportation improvement programs.
- 7.8 The town should work with New York State Department of Transportation to construct a culvert at Field Road and to create an interchange and park-and-ride lot at the intersection of Pumpkin Lane and the Taconic State Parkway.
- 7.9 The town should work with New York State Department of Transportation to improve the intersection where the Taconic State Parkway ramps intersect with Salt Point Turnpike.

- 7.10 In reviewing proposed subdivisions and site plans, the town should strictly limit the number of access points on collector roads by discouraging strip residential patterns, promoting cluster development and encouraging shared driveways.
- 7.11 The use of cul-de-sacs streets should be discouraged. Where cul-de-sac streets are necessary to protect natural resources or best serve the community, the town should encourage use of alternative cul-de-sac designs as outlined in the Dutchess Land Conservancy's *Design Guide for Rural Roads* to reduce impervious surfaces and improve aesthetics. Where used, round cul-de-sacs should incorporate center landscaped islands and stormwater management practices rather than a fully paved turnaround.
- 7.12 As a means to lower housing costs, discourage strip residential development, and limit multiple access points, the town should investigate standards permitting town roads to be built to reduced specifications, but with legal safeguards for quality construction.
- 7.13 The town should encourage alternatives to the dependence on individual automobiles by promoting employee-sponsored and privately arranged ride sharing and increased use of commuter bus service with direct connections to the train stations.
- 7.14 Clinton should work with Dutchess County to encourage the reestablishment of public transportation for town residents.
- 7.15 The Town should implement the recommendations of the Local Site Planning Roundtable outlined in Chapter 7 of the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- 7.16 The town should adopt Highway Specifications with rural road standards consistent with context sensitive design as recommended by the *Greenway Guide on Rural Roads* as outlined below:
- Protecting roadside features such as rock outcroppings, stone walls and rows of trees
 - Keeping grading and clearing to the minimum based on safety
 - Avoiding the use of curbing
 - Minimizing road width
 - Promoting short common entrances and/or common driveways
 - Using wooden guide rails
 - Considering alternatives to asphalt, such as porous paving, chip and seal and gravel
 - Designating local scenic roads and establish standards for their protection and maintenance

CHAPTER 8. LAND USE

Background:¹¹

- Much of the land in Clinton is in low density residential use with extensive fields and woodlands. Most of the remaining land is in agriculture or is vacant.
- Non-residential uses are few in number and scattered, causing a lack of central focus for the town's activities.
- Although agricultural land uses are declining, there are orchards, vineyards, specialty crops, and livestock farms still active within the town, with the primary agricultural use now being horse farms.

Goal:

To promote a pattern of land use that reinforces the community's hamlets and preserves the town's natural resources and rural character.

Recommendations:

- 8.1 The town should encourage high quality design and construction, with the retention of existing trees whenever possible and the extensive use of native landscape elements that integrates new development with the surrounding area. Projects requiring site plan approval should include landscaping with consideration of passive and active solar potential. The Town should adopt an appropriate architectural Pattern Book as a guide for applicants and reviewing agencies.
- 8.2 A community design plan should be developed for all of Clinton's historic hamlets to recommend landscaping, parking, circulation, sign and public space improvements, with suggestions for the enhancement of historic buildings and the use of vacant land in the area.
- 8.3 The town should limit commercial development to hamlet zones to focus activity in historically concentrated areas and ensure that the location and scale of the businesses primarily serve local needs. Exceptions to this concept should continue to include home occupations and be clearly defined in the Zoning Law. Strip commercial development or commercial buildings facing state highways should be strictly avoided.
- 8.4 The Bulls Head Hamlet Critical Environmental Area should be included in the Residential Hamlet Zoning District.
- 8.5 The existing hamlet districts should be considered for expansion. However, all hamlet districts should be designed to have defined boundaries to limit sprawl that would overwhelm their historic scale. Whenever possible, a buffer of open space or

¹¹ See Figure 8.5 for current land uses as identified by the Town Assessor, and Figure 8.7 for Clinton's Current Zoning Map.

- farmland should be retained at the edge of the hamlet districts to further set off the boundaries and ensure that the hamlets maintain a central identity.
- 8.6 Growth in the Clinton Corners area is complicated by the fact that the hamlet lies over one of the town's prime aquifers. This area should have additional restrictions, such as an aquifer protection overlay district, to protect surface and ground waters. Contamination by the existing level of development should also be investigated to determine if a future central water system and possibly sewer system might be warranted.
 - 8.7 Stringent landscaping, setbacks, and screening requirements should be enforced in the Clinton Corners Hamlet to protect the scenic qualities of the Taconic Parkway. In addition, traditional neighborhood design standards should be adopted for commercial uses to ensure small-scale buildings appropriate to the hamlet setting, with parking located to the rear of buildings and pedestrian connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
 - 8.8 Conservation subdivision design [see Figure 8.8] should be required in the Clustered Residence District to preserve open space and agricultural land, allow better site plans in relation to the interspersed natural constraints, and limit road and other infrastructure costs that contribute to escalating housing prices.
 - 8.9 In the case of large parcels that straddle the boundaries of the Hamlet Districts, conservation subdivision should be used to locate new development within the hamlets, leaving the remainder of the property as a protected open space around the hamlet.
 - 8.10 The town should continue to allow light industry and offices in locations with good buffering and access to collector roads, and should review the appropriateness of the locations and boundaries of the current Office Light Industrial Zoning District.
 - 8.11 The town should continue to regulate non-essential, off-site, or excessively large signs, and encourage graphics that are compatible with the building and neighborhood.
 - 8.12 To preserve open space and agricultural lands, the town should promote such techniques as the use of conservation subdivision design, incentive zoning, conservation easements, purchase of development rights, and tax incentives (e.g., leasing of development rights) for the maintenance of open space.
 - 8.13 In areas suitable for agriculture, development should be clustered on marginal soils or embedded within wooded areas whenever feasible.
 - 8.14 The Planning Board should continue to have the authority to mandate clustering as an effective means to reduce housing costs, limit access points, and provide additional recreation and open space. Clustering should include the concepts of conservation subdivision design and farmstead complexes.

- 8.15 The Zoning Law should be amended to include additional unbuildable features, such as wetlands and steep slopes, that must be deducted prior to calculating permitted lot count.
- 8.16 To preserve rural character and minimize traffic and fiscal impacts, the town should consider reducing permitted building potential in areas identified as greenspaces on Figure 9.1, consistent with the regional trend of neighboring communities and the recommendations of the Greenway Guides.
- 8.17 The town should review the Conservation Agricultural Residential Zoning District and consider additional standards to protect sensitive natural areas, for example, principal aquifers, significant habitats, important agricultural soils, etc.
- 8.18 The town should amend the Ridgeline Protection Overlay Area to include provisions governing single family residential development to ensure that such development fits into the landscape and does not impact this significant aesthetic resource.
- 8.19 The town should take full advantage of the State Environmental Quality Review Act as a means to obtain detailed information on the environmental and community impacts of proposed development, make potential concerns open to public comment, and consider project alternatives.
- 8.20 The town should consider alternative means of providing relief from the area and bulk regulations for preexisting non-conforming lots located within low density residential zoning districts.
- 8.21 The town should ensure annually that the Real Property Codes are current for all parcels within the town's boundaries.
- 8.22 The town should return to its previous practice of requiring that all driveways require approval from the Planning Board.
- 8.23 Moderate density residential uses should only be developed when community water and sewage facilities can be provided.
- 8.24 Home occupations should be compatible with the district they exist within and should be clearly defined as to their limitations.
- 8.25 The town should ensure that all boards, committees and town employees are offered ample opportunities for training and education in their responsibilities and town regulations.
- 8.26 The town should ensure all boards, committees and appropriate town employees fully understand the existing land use techniques and how and when applied.
- 8.27 Starting in April 2005 the Town of Clinton participated in a Study of Better Site Design. The results of the Clinton participation are found in the document "Town of Clinton: Recommended Model Development Principles for Protection of Natural Resources in the Hudson River Estuary Watershed". These recommendations should

be reviewed and the town codes and ordinances should be addressed for potential changes.

- 8.28 The town should continue its current relationship with Greenway Connections, Greenway Compact Program and Guidelines of Dutchess County Communities.

Land Use Plan

Based on the goals, background information and planning principles outlined above, the land use plan for Clinton allows a more concentrated level of development and a wider variety of uses in and around the existing hamlet centers, while limiting potential development in the outlying sections, especially areas with sensitive natural characteristics. The resulting plan is meant to help reestablish the traditional settlement pattern by reinforcing the hamlets and preserving the town's open spaces and rural character. It will also help prevent strip residential land use patterns and restrict highway businesses. Agricultural uses are encouraged throughout the town. The Town should use the planning and zoning tools recommended throughout this *Comprehensive Plan* to achieve the land use pattern indicated on the *Centers and Greenspaces Plan* [see Figure 9.1].

A description of the Town's current Zoning Districts is included in Chapter 8 of the *Comprehensive Plan*, and specific recommendations to amend these Zoning Districts appear throughout the *Plan* and in this Summary. Much of Clinton outside the hamlets is currently undeveloped, with low-density residential uses, agriculture or vacant lands. The *Plan* does not propose any fundamental rearrangement of this settlement pattern. Instead, it seeks to organize, consolidate, and preserve existing patterns, while providing for additional development that will be compatible with Clinton's historic character and a high level of natural resource protection. Generally, development should occur within and adjacent to existing hamlets, and residential density in other areas of the town should be reduced, taking into consideration factors such as traffic impacts and the natural constraints of the land, such as depth to bedrock, soil permeability, and the vulnerability of surface and groundwater to contamination. Floodplain corridors are protected in Clinton through their inclusion in a separate Zoning District, but the numerous areas of steep slopes and wetlands, because of their scattered locations throughout the town, will be more efficiently protected through adoption of specific standards in the Zoning ordinance. Use of conservation subdivision design and the deduction of additional unbuildable natural features prior to calculating permitted lot count, for example, are recommended to preserve natural resources and identify the most appropriate areas for development on individual parcels. Other tools, such as incentive zoning, can be used to protect environmentally sensitive and resource rich areas of the Town, such as significant farmlands, while strengthening the existing hamlets. These and other planning techniques recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan* can be used to reinforce the Town's existing "centers and greenspaces" pattern.