

VILLAGE OF CENTRAL SQUARE

2008 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Adopted by the Village of Central Square Board
April 7, 2008**

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, Central Square has shifted from a small, close-knit, self-contained community with an agricultural focus, to what might appear today to be a somewhat disconnected cluster of “bedroom” neighborhoods bound together only by the school, common roadway and proximity to Rte. 81. The once thriving, old business district, which served residents basic daily needs, has sprawled away from a central base toward the Rte. 81 interchange, with the Village borders stretching to accommodate progress. Tidy, tree-lined streets of old established homes have become neighbor to apartment complexes, housing developments and a mobile home park. But even with these restylings, Central Square remains true to its original intent of providing a sense a community. This is why the Village continues to grow.

Several critical issues repeatedly emerged during the 1996-98 comprehensive planning process. These points were made on the surveys completed by residents and business owners (for survey information, see “About The Survey” in the Appendix) and were raised by project members during many hours of discussion. They can be summarized as follows:

- The enormous growth experienced in the past 10 years in an around the Village of Central Square indicates an increasing popularity of the area. Clearly, due to its location and amenities, the Village should anticipate continued growth;
- In spite of rampant “urbanized” growth in some areas, Central Square continues to struggle to hold on to its rural village character mainly because residents want the Village to be that way;
- Residents have strong concerns and opinions regarding challenges facing the Village, including maintaining the small-town, safe, friendly quality of life that they enjoy; enhancing water quality; alleviating traffic congestion; and providing a caring social climate for its children, seniors and families;
- Residents welcome an enhanced economic base to provide jobs and relief from increasing taxes.

Central Square is currently challenged with important decisions that will affect its future for many years. The purpose of the comprehensive planning process is to provide guidance for making the decisions that will shape the future of the community.

The planning framework presented in this document is intended to serve as the Village of Central Square’s Comprehensive Plan. It is based upon consensus reached by Village residents from responses to a survey sent out in the fall of 1996, and from hundreds of hours of discussion and research by project members.

One of the underlying assumptions of the comprehensive planning process is that if the Village does not take decisions into its own hands, outside forces will most likely determine its future. Whether these forces are developers, state agencies or the general economy, the Village runs the risk of losing its identity if it does not clearly articulate its goals for the future. The mere statement of goals and plans will not produce the desired results unless the Village implements its goals through carefully thought-out planning,

and zoning amendments and cooperation as a strong partner with outside entities. Two potential projects in particular at this writing, should be carefully paid attention to and directed by the Village Board and Planning Board: highway improvements and possibly some form of an industrial park. Because of the high growth in the Central Square area, its possible that the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) may want to make highway improvements in coming years, and these “improvements” could either reinforce or damage the Village’s character. Also, there has been much discussion, pro and con, about the value of creating an industrial park in the Village, (the potential implications of which are discussed further in “Paying for Growth, Prospering From Development” in the Appendix at the end of this document). The Village is in a position to shape these improvements so that they fulfill the goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

The economic future of Central Square most likely will be based upon developing a broader mix of small businesses of many different types. Some of these new enterprises will be brought by newcomers seeking the small-town atmosphere that Central Square still offers. The Village faces the difficult challenge of making an economic and social transition while continuing to maintain and even enhance its special character.

The population of Central Square has risen dramatically in recent years, indicating an increasing popularity of the area for its easy access to Rte. 81, plentiful sources of goods and services, and favorable rural and small-town atmosphere. The challenge of the planning process is to bring all segments of the community together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, building upon the institutions and traditions of the past which have given the Village its unique character. This planning process is intended to build community cooperation in implementing shared goals for the future.

ABOUT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

All zoned municipalities are required to have a comprehensive plan, or a stated-in-writing plan for growth, to guide local governments in making land-use decisions. The last growth plan for Central Square, called the “General Plan and Progress Report” was published in 1959. Appropriate for its time, that plan has long been outdated. It was long-known that a new plan was needed, but the Village was understandably resistant to the expense of hiring a professional to do the job. Some of the Planning Board members were also resistant to hiring a professional, feeling strongly that it would much better serve the community for the community to put together its own plan. So, in October 1995 the Planning Board made a decision to undertake the task of putting together its own plan. A 10-member volunteer committee was established and met nearly every Wednesday night for two years. The committee taught itself about comprehensive plans by soliciting the expertise of the Tug Hill Commission and the Oswego County Planning Department, and by acquiring and reading comprehensive plans and surveys from other communities. The committee then spent nearly 18 months identifying and discussing issues critical to Central Square. In late summer 1997, the committee began drafting the document. Drafts were edited, reworked, rewritten, and refined many times over. In August 1998 a draft for the plan was presented to and approved by the Village Planning Board. Three public meetings were held in September and October 1998 to solicit public input on the drafted plan. The plan was revised again, sent to the Village Trustees for review and approval in December 1998.

DISTRIBUTION, AVAILABILITY, AND PERIODIC REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In order for the Comprehensive Plan to be effective it is critical that it be easily accessible for review and referencing by village decision makers. Therefore, copies of the Comprehensive Plan must:

Be distributed to the Mayor and to each current Village Trustee, Planning Board member and Zoning Board of Appeals member, and to each future Mayor, Trustee, Planning Board member and Zoning Board of Appeals member immediately upon their election or appointment; and also to the current and all future supervisors of the Town of Hastings;

Be distributed to above-stated people by the Village Clerk and/or by the current mayor;

This plan should be readily available for referencing at all Village Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings, the same way that a copy of the Municipal Code is available.

The Comprehensive Plan will need to be reviewed on a regular basis, in January of years ending with a zero, four or seven (i.e., 2000, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2014, etc.), with public hearings to be held regarding any changes. Frequent reviews and minor updates made on a regular basis will serve the interests of the Village better than the previous 40 year span with no review. The review process should be initiated by the current Mayor and/or the current Chairperson of the Planning Board.

The Comprehensive Plan should be made available to the public in the following ways:

Three copies should be bound and available for review at the Village Clerk's Office

Two copies should be bound and available for review and checking out at the Village library

Anyone should be able to purchase a copy from the Village Clerk's office for the nominal cost of printing.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

LOCATION

The Village of Central Square is located in southern Oswego County, approximately three miles north of the outlet of Oneida Lake at the Oneida River. It is situated at the intersection of U.S. Route 11 and County Route 49. Central Square is easily accessible by car from the New York State Thruway and Interstate 81 at Exit 32.

GENERAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Central Square sits on the Lake Ontario glacial lake plain roughly 20 miles north of the Onondaga Escarpment which lies immediately south of the city of Syracuse. The Village includes a New York State designated wetland area adjacent to Little Bay Creek and also contains other smaller wetlands. The Village includes roughly 1,300 acres and, with the development of recent annexations, has irregularly shaped boundaries.

A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1815, Chester Loomis built the Pudding and Milk Tavern as a stagecoach stop on the spot where the old Salt Road (now Route 11) crosses the Constantia and Fulton Road (now Route 49). The resulting settlement became known as Loomis Corners. Hastings Curtis built a small store in 1820, and soon more homes and businesses developed around a square in the center. The settlement name changed to Center Square, and finally, with the opening of the first Post Office in 1822, to Central Square.

Robert Elliot, often called the founder of Central Square, built a wagon shop in 1825. He also developed a cabinet-making business, a sawmill, and a tannery at the foot of Tannery Hill (now Co. Rte. 12 or Mallory Road). Most of the land in the Village was owned by Robert Roosevelt, who lived across from the square in a house ringed with a white picket fence (more recently this house was known as the Birell House). The house was built in 1834 and was known as the oldest house in Central Square until it was torn down in the 1980s to create a parking lot for what is now Fleet Bank.

Over the years sawmills, hotels, harness shops, dry goods stores, feed stores, blacksmith shops and other small businesses appeared. The first school was organized in 1824.

Between 1844 and 1846 the Central Square and Salina Plank Road (now U.S. Rte. 11) was built. It was the first plank road anywhere in the United States.

Farms in the surrounding area produced wheat, potatoes, corn, hops, and some tobacco. Dairying became a large industry, and as a result, a cheese factory was started on Factory Street, now called Pleasant Avenue.

In 1869 the railroad came through town, intersecting at the southern edge of the Village. The New York Central ran north/south, and the Ontario and Western ran east/west, turning Central Square into a hub of activity. (The Ontario and Western railroad was taken out of service in 1954, but the railbed still exists and is used as a recreation trail

across the region. The north/south route, currently owned by Conrail, is still in daily use.)

The Village of Central Square was incorporated in June 13, 1890. In 1929, the entire village business district was nearly wiped out by a devastating fire, but most of the buildings were rebuilt within a few years.

In 1941 the communities of Cleveland, Bernhards Bay, Constantia, West Monroe, Hastings, Brewerton, Caughdenoy and Central Square combined to form the Central Square School District. In 1954 P.V. Moore School was built in Central Square to serve those areas. Later, in the 1960s, Millard Hawk Primary School and Central Square Intermediate School were added.

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE 1959 GENERAL PLAN & PROGRESS REPORT

The current Comprehensive Plan Committee began meeting in the spring of 1996, which represents the first time since 1959 that a formal plan for the Village has been considered. In 1959, a master plan for the Village, called the “General Plan and Progress Report”, was prepared under the leadership of Arnold Goettel, then Chairman of the Planning Committee. Many changes have occurred in the Village since the drafting of the 1959 plan, generally changes of great growth. More specifically:

A new sewer plant was constructed and put into service in 1964, and all Village homes converted from septic tanks to the new Village sewer system. This convenience opened the door for several land annexations to the Village, clearing the way for the creation of several major subdivisions. In fact, most of the annexations were requested for the purpose of bringing Village water and sewer to sections of land that could then be developed for homes and apartments.

Village boundaries have changed dramatically over the years. Annexations doubled the size of the Village from 640 to 1290 acres, changing Village boundaries from the simple square that it began as to the irregular boundaries of the present Village (see Village Boundaries map in Appendix A). Village annexations were as listed below. Four apartment complexes were built: Country Gardens Apartments (originally UpCountry Apartments), Bay Creek Apartments, Green Acres Apartments and Meadowview Apartments. Many larger, older, one-family dwellings along Routes 49 and 11 have been converted into multiple housing units; and a mobile home park for seniors was begun east of the business district on Rte. 49.

In November of 1996 the sewer plant was expanded to accommodate increased and projected growth.

In 1959 the population of the Village was 826 with 243 houses and a few multiple housing units listed in the Village. The 2000 census showed a population of 1,646 with 796 housing units. Since 1990 there have been 83 housing units added, tripling housing units in the Village over the past four decades.

And, most significantly, Interstate Route 81 was opened for business in 1963, adding off/on ramps, abundant traffic to, from and through the Village, and unprecedented access to other, larger locations. Route 81 paved the way, literally, for the boom of development Central Square has experienced.

Year	Acreage	Location	Purpose
1942	9 acres	Fulton Rd., adj. To American Legion	Ada Powell Smith Park
1963	42.14 acres	Northland Drive/Thelma Rd. (Scott & Burdick)	Residential development
1968	58 acres	Dry Bridge Rd. area (Burdick)	Residential development – Scott Tract area
1976	188 acres	North Side of Mallory Rd. (Weatherup)	Res. Dev. – North Country Manor/Heights
1978	52 acres	Green Acres Drive area (Weatherup)	Residential/commercial development
1978-1989	280 acres	West of Rte. 81 (included Mallory farm)	Burger King
1996	60.7 acres	Rte. 11/Hungary Lane (Weatherup)	(deannexed)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Change

Central Square showed a very slight decrease (1.5%) in population between 1990 and 2000. This follows many decades of growth. The Town of Hastings grew 8.5% during this period. This trend of a village losing population while the town it is located within gains population is common in upstate New York.

Table 1.

Village of Central Square Population Change 1950-2000

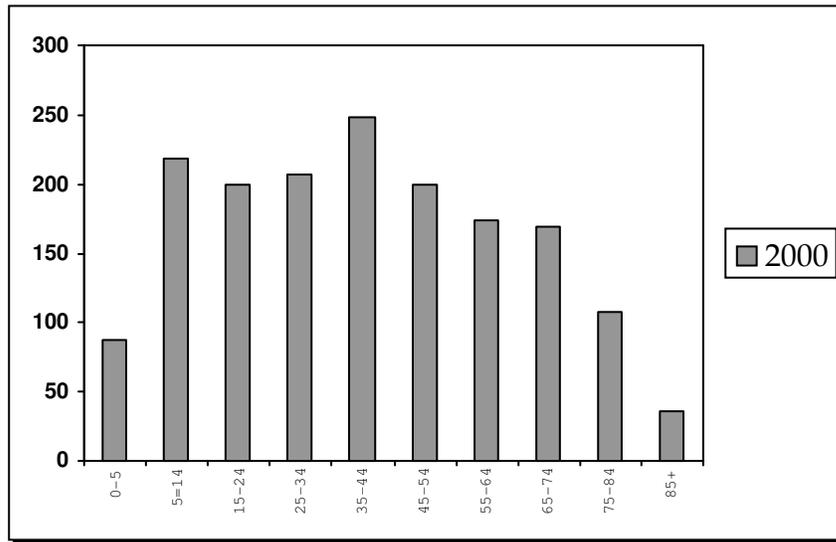
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Central Square	665	935	1,298	1,418	1,671	1,646
Hastings	3,063	4,457	6,042	7,095	8,113	8,803
Oswego County	77,181	86,118	100,897	113,901	121,771	122,377

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Age

According to the 2000 Census, the largest age cohorts in Central Square at that time were the 5-14 and 35-44 age groups. The median age was 39.2. The median was 35.9 in the Town of Hastings and 35.0 in Oswego County.

Figure 1.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Households

Table 2 shows the number and size of households in the Village in 1990 and 2000. The number of households grew 10.6% while the average household size shrank. This is a national trend driven by decreasing family size. Average household size is slightly smaller than that of the Town of Hastings and Oswego County. Median household income (\$31,875) was lower than that of Hastings and the county. Median household income dropped for all three areas during the 1990s.

Table 2.
Household Population

	# of Households 1990	Average Household Size	# of Households 2000	Average Household Size
Central Square	680	2.46	752	2.19
Hastings	2,883	2.81	3,374	2.61
Oswego County	42,434	2.76	45,522	2.60

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3.

	Median Household Income 1990	Median Household Income 2000
Central Square	(37,553)	31,875
Hastings	(42,317)	40,085
Oswego County	(38,317)	36,598

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Note: 1990 figures are adjusted for inflation

HOUSING

The Village added 83 units between 1990 and 2000, an increase of 11.6%. The Town (outside the Village) added 458 units during that period, an increase of 19.2%. Table 5 lists the number of different types of structures. About half (46.5%) of the housing in Central Square is in single-family dwellings and half (49.1%) is in multi-family dwellings.

Table 4.
Total Housing Stock

	1990	2000
Central Square	713	796
Hastings (TOV)	2,381	2,839
Oswego County	48,548	52,831

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 5.
Dwelling Units by Number of Units per Structure 2000

	1 detached unit	1 attached unit	2-4 units	5-9 units	10 or more units	mobile homes, trailers, other	total
Central Square	370	0	122	107	161	35	795
Hastings	2,463	46	222	122	173	609	3,635
Oswego County	33,653	610	5,719	1,509	1,901	9,320	52,831

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Tables 8 and 9 detail the availability and affordability of housing. A homeowner vacancy rate of 1.5% is considered acceptable by the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). An acceptable rental vacancy rate is 5%. The Village of Central Square had a homeowner vacancy rate of 2.3% and a rental vacancy rate of 5.3% according to the 2000 Census. The Town as a whole had homeowner and rental vacancy rates of 2.2 and 5.6%, respectively.

Housing affordability is *roughly* measured by the ratio between median housing value and median household income in a given community. A ratio of 2.5:1 or lower is considered an indicator of affordability. Central Square had a 2.6:1 ratio in the 2000 Census. Hastings and the County both had 1.9:1 ratios.

Table 7.
Housing Vacancy Rate

	Homeowner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate
Central Square	2.3	5.3
Hastings	2.2	5.6
Oswego County	2.2	9.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 8.
Housing Affordability 2000

	Median Value for All Owner-Occupied Units	Median Household Income	Ratio
Central Square	81,300	31,875	2.6:1
Hastings	75,400	40,085	1.9:1
Oswego County	69,800	36,598	1.9:1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Table 9 shows employment status in 1999. The unemployment rate in Central Square was lower than that in the Town of Hastings as a whole and lower than that of the county.

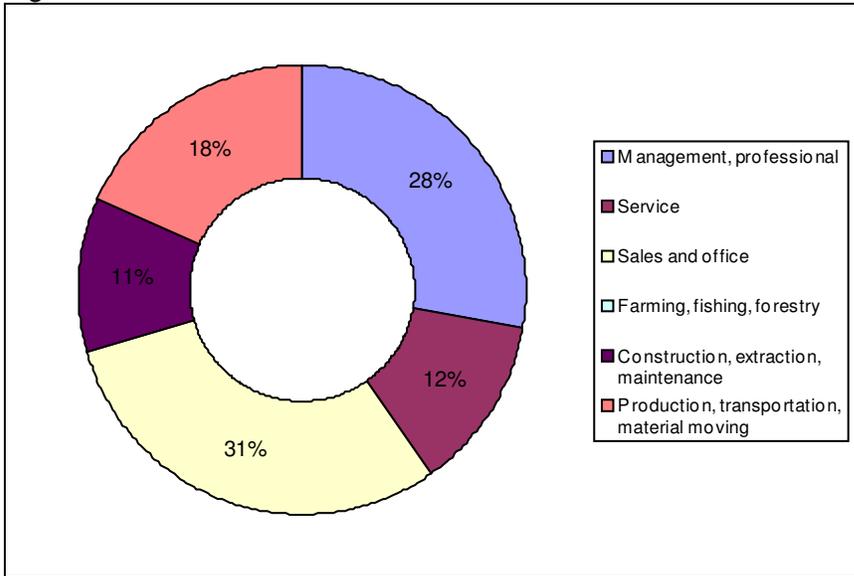
Table 9.
Employment Status 1999

	Civilian Labor Force	Percent Unemployed
Central Square	818	2.4
Hastings	4,502	3.3
Oswego County	59,667	9.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

When employment is broken down by type, the top three occupations Central Square residents are employed in are 1) sales and service, 2) management and professional, and 3) production, transportation and material moving.

Figure 2.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Educational Attainment

Central Square residents reported a slightly higher education level than the Town of Hastings and Oswego County.

Table 10.

	% High School Diploma	% Bachelors Degree	% Masters Degree
Central Square	83	18	8
Hastings	82	11	4
Oswego County	80	8	3
NYS	79	27	12

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

LAND USE

Developed land in Central Square is primarily residential. Single and multi-family dwellings make up the majority of development, with apartment complexes interspersed on Route 11 and Route 49. Small business activities are centrally located in the Village along Route 11. Larger businesses are currently locating along Route 49 between Little Bay Creek, eastward to Route 81.

UNDEVELOPED LAND

Some larger pieces of undeveloped land still exist in the Village. Most of these parcels are behind developed frontage, and are presently zoned residential, commercial or industrial. A considerable amount of this land is NYSDEC designated wetlands and

therefore undevelopable. The remaining portions, however, could eventually be developed. While residential development did not surface as a significant issue in the 1996 survey, the availability of public water and sewer and prime access to Rte. 81 make Central Square attractive for future residential as well as commercial development. It would be prudent for Village government to encourage development to extend north and south of Rte. 49, (perpendicular to Rte. 49) and that this development be connected by interior service roads, thereby eliminating the traffic hazard of additional curb cuts. Development perpendicular to Rte. 49 and Mallory Road, and roadways running north from Rte. 49 would give interior acreage road frontage, thereby making that property more valuable and developable.

In any development plan, the Village government must pay particularly careful attention to the current and projected traffic situation from the Route 81 exit through the Village.

OPEN SPACE

Public open spaces are a meaningful part of a traditional village community, providing opportunities for informal gatherings. The Goettel Community Park, Rte 11, was once a large village green that served as a gathering space as well as community greenspace for privately owned livestock. It continues to be a prime location in the Village for sporting, social, family and cultural events. Most of the rest of Central Square is given over to development or vehicular traffic. Many of Central Square's current small open spaces are only grassy areas along streets and include recently installed benches. As development continues, open space becomes an increasingly valuable commodity that helps keep the Village a desirable place to live.

DEVELOPED LANDS "UPTOWN"

Central Square's main business district (all of Main Street, and in the center of the Village where Main Street, Rte. 49 and Fulton Road connect – commonly known as "uptown") is still home to many older buildings and generally considered to be the heart of the Village. This district possesses a distinct visual identity and contains what remains of the Village's historic structures, including the Lows building, the Yates building, Bank of America, the Goettel Block, several historic churches, the Cronk Insurance building and many older homes. Section here deleted from prior draft It should include stringent guidelines regarding the size and appropriateness of businesses for the neighborhoods they are considering locating in. It should also include controls on such items as demolition, signage, exterior alterations, landscaping, parking, and building appearance. It would be to the advantage of village preservation for a tax or other incentive to be offered to builders willing to preserve, restore, or otherwise make careful use of historical buildings considered to be of significant value to the Village.

Of special note in Central Square is the old, restored Railroad Depot, a half-mile from the center of the Village, on Railroad Street. This carefully, meticulously restored museum is a valuable, as yet untapped asset to the Village.

OTHER COMMERCIAL AREAS

Currently most commercial growth is focused on the regional commercial district in the Village, the stretch of land from Little Bay Creek to Rte. 81. This land was annexed into the Village in pieces between 1978 and 1989.

TRANSPORTATION BACKGROUND

As with many villages established in the 18th and 19th centuries, growth in Central Square was due primarily to its location as a natural stopover point between other destinations. Central Square is a crossroads on the way to several larger municipalities - Rome to the east, Oswego and Fulton to the west, Watertown to the north and Syracuse to the south. This crossroads location was the foundation of Central Square's earliest economy. Taverns, inns and liveries sprang up to serve road and rail travelers passing through the Village. Merchants built homes near their businesses, and in the early days, farming on some scale was a way of life for many people. Dairy farms developed naturally in the fertile land surrounding the Village. The Village of Central Square was a trade and entertainment hub for area farm families. A community was born.

With the demise in the 1970s and 1980s of small family farms, with traffic speeded up so that an overnight between Syracuse and Watertown was unnecessary, and with the attraction of newly built, nearby shopping malls, Central Square's primary economic focus has changed. Although the roads have been upgraded from dirt and planks to modern, high-speed, major state highways, the original concept of the Village as a crossroads remains. Interstate 81 and U.S. Route 11 form a major north/south arterial, and are intersected by state Route 49. As well, Conrail still makes many daily passes through the Village, so much so that there is potential to attract to the Village businesses for whom access to rail could make trackside property desirable. Further, because of its central location, Central Square is also home base of the school district, and the location of a high school, intermediate and elementary school, and district offices. In addition, the middle school on Rte. 11, approximately two miles south of the Village, generates a great deal of traffic through the Village. But traffic through the Village today is not only the lifeline of the Village to the greater world, but also one of the biggest challenges the Village faces. Traffic congestion, long waits to make left turns, risk to pedestrians, and vehicular accidents are a regular part of daily Village life.

In the tabulations done by the Tug Hill Commission of the 1996 survey, respondents showed great concern regarding the traffic flow in and around Central Square. Many comments were made about congested areas, such as at the intersection of County Route 12 and State Route 49 ("Mallory Road"), County Rte. 12 and Rte. 11 ("Caughdenoy Road", at the old post office – especially difficult to make left turns during rush hours) and along Rte. 49 between Fulton Savings Bank and the Rite Aid and Dollar Tree, where, in both areas, making right turns can be difficult and left turns virtually impossible at rush hours. The Comprehensive Plan Committee recognizes this as a serious situation. In several areas, traffic is quickly approaching gridlock during peak rush hours.

RTE. 81

Perhaps the most important development impacting the Village since 1959 has been the construction of Interstate 81.

The 1959 plan, developed about three years prior to the opening of Rte. 81, correctly suggested that “the village and the area in general will become a part of and share in the economy of the Syracuse Metropolitan area to a greater extent in the future because of this transportation facility provided.” The prediction that Rte. 81 would bring changes to Central Square was direct accurate and understated. Rte. 81 transformed Central Square in many ways particularly in the volume of traffic that now passes through the Village. In 1959 the average daily traffic count on Route 49 between the business district and area of the exit ramp for I-81 was 1,800 vehicles. Today it is approximately 13,000.

As much as easy access to Rte. 81 is an asset for the Village, it is also a liability. Rte. 81 generates intense traffic, and the intensity continues to increase, resulting in severe traffic problems in several areas of the Village, for example, for drivers trying to turn off Mallory Road onto Rte. 49. Traffic volume on Webb Avenue has also greatly increased, as drivers use Webb as a shortcut from Rte. 11 to Rte. 49, thus avoiding a traffic light.

Route 81 has also been a major contributing factor to the increase in the geographic size of the Village. As 81 created quick access to Syracuse, Central Square became more and more desirable as a residential area. Growth in population and housing units brought about several increases in Village property through annexations, necessitating increases in water and sewer capacity. Easy access to Rte. 81 can also be held responsible for the rapid commercialization of the Rte. 49 corridor between the old business district and the exit ramp. This includes the development of a major grocery store (now defunct), a WalMart supercenter, fast food restaurants, gas stations, a car wash, a bank, a large car dealership and auto parts stores.

The popularity of Rte. 81 has also affected traffic along Route 49 and Route 12 in recent years. Other factors contribute to this growth, such as development of new housing, particularly along Route 12 (Mallory Road) and the popularity and nearness to Central Square of the Great Northern Mall/Walmart/Wegmans shopping district at the Rte. 31/481 interchange in Clay. All of these components have contributed to a variety of traffic-related challenges for the Village that must be carefully examined and mitigated. Many of the corrective measures that might be taken affect county and state roads, and so will require state and county financing.

Means of Travel to Work:

Drove Alone	608
Carpooled	87
Taxicab	3
Walked	33
Other Means	4
Work at Home	22

VILLAGE SERVICES

The Village government is comprised of a mayor, a code enforcement officer, three clerks, six highway personnel, two judges and a court clerk. The Village police department has a Chief of Police, nine part-time officers and two vehicles.

Fire fighting and rescue squad services are provided by all volunteers. The Central Square fire department has about 40 members and a junior squad of teenage members. Their equipment includes two squad trucks and three pumpers (two 1,000 gallon and one 1,550 gallon capacity), one utility vehicle, one "grass" firefighting truck, one tanker, and a six-wheel ATV. The Southern Oswego Volunteer Ambulance Corps. (SOVAC) maintains three vehicles and 25 volunteer members. In addition, six part-time paid employees cover shifts from 6 A.M. to 5 P.M.

The Central Square Central School, the Village's largest employer, includes a primary (grade K-2, 411 students, 66 faculty), intermediate (grades 3-5, 383 students; 54 faculty), and high school (grades 9-12, 1,507 students, 194 faculty). The Middle School (grades 6-8) lies to the south between Central Square and Brewerton. The school census states that the combined enrollment for all schools in the Village is 2,301. BOCES offers limited adult education classes, and SUNY colleges are offering courses through distance learning.

Health services in the Village include a medical health center (PHP-HMO), three dentist offices, three pharmacies, two optometrists, a home health care agency, two physical therapists, a podiatry service, an ambulance service and a veterinary hospital.

Churches in the Village include Catholic, Universalist, and Baptist.

Service organizations and clubs include the Lions Club, the Lioness Club, the American Legion and auxiliary, a volunteer fire department and auxiliary, the Railroad Historical Museum, a Village Library, the Masonic Temple, Project Bloom (beautification group), little league, a snowmobile club, various boy and girl scout troops, and a neighborhood watch program. The Village is also affiliated with the area Rotary and Chamber of Commerce.

The Village owns and maintains two parks (Goettel Community Park on Rte. 11 North and Ada Powell Smith Park next to the American Legion on Fulton Street) and also owns a wedge of land between Rte. 49 and Mallory Road, approximately 1/10 mile east of the Rtes. 11/49 intersection and a parcel on South Main Street.

ECONOMY

Businesses located in the Village and its immediate environs provide the majority of personal services, retail sales and commercial business in the Town of Hastings. Much of this activity is located in the higher density north-south and east-west corridors through and beyond the Village on Route 11, Route 49 and County Route 12.

Retail services in Central Square currently consist of a WalMart, a bakery, several convenience stores with gas pumps, a florist/gift shop, frame and art shop, three auto parts stores, two auto dealerships, two used car lots, a craft shop, an electronics shop, a

video store, a liquor store, dollar store, restaurant, two drug stores, and a local newspaper.

General services in the Village include hair salons, a barbershop, an auto repair shop, real estate brokers, two laundromats, three banks, two funeral homes, attorneys, insurance agents, a car wash, and a bowling alley. Transportation services include Centro and Oswego County Opportunities.

Restaurants in the Village include a pizza shop, Chinese restaurant, sub shop, three franchise fast-food restaurants, and a breakfast/lunch diner.

According to the village survey, the hope for the future is to attract business or light industry that is unobtrusive and environmentally friendly. The ready access to Route 81 and Conrail, a recently upgraded sewer system, combined with a readily available and stable work force, provide considerable incentive to locate in the area.

Excluding the Village's largest employer, the school district, no one type of business dominates the community. Unlike one-industry towns with the potential for cyclical economic disasters, Central Square benefits from a mix of small, diverse, independent enterprises.

Central Square has often been called a "bedroom community", with its daily egress to Syracuse, Fulton and other areas, thus linking these respective economies. Often overlooked, however, is the ingress of professionals, entrepreneurs, service providers and laborers from nearby communities.

A summary of local commuters statistics (as compiled from the 1990 Census) is as follows:

Place of Work:	
Work in Village	165
Work in Town Outside Village	29
Work Outside Town	563

Central Square can be identified to some extent by what it is not. It is not a seasonal type community. There is no attraction as a second home community. There is not a significant migration to escape winter. (Most residents are able to cope with winter well, at least in part due to the excellent snow removal by the village crew). The Village has no tourist industry, with its fluctuating seasonal population growth and congestion. It has no sports complexes, no casinos, no racetracks, no convention centers, and no shopping meccas. There are no movie theaters or playhouses, or other events that draw large patronages. There are, however, some opportunities for local entertainment and recreation which attract primarily local residents. These include summer concerts, the Apple Festival, and school athletic stadium events, musical and dramatic events.

In view of the foregoing, considering what the Village is and what it is not, a stable population, a proliferation of well educated professionals, and a stable economy are mutually sustaining qualities that can promote what the Village can be and must be: a growing, prospering community offering a constantly improving quality of life.

ASSETS

People often choose where they will live based upon the area's natural physical assets. Central Square is blessed with a number of beautiful and worth-preserving natural assets.

NATURAL ASSETS

Ada Powell Smith Park. This lovely, nine-acre parcel of land tucked between the American Legion and the residential neighborhood of Fulton Street was given to the Village by Ms. Ada Powell Smith with the stipulation that it remain forever wild. The natural landscape of this parcel is such that it requires little if any maintenance to be valuable to hikers and walkers, as well as hunters and snowmobilers. It is suggested that this parcel of land be left alone, kept up with only what maintenance has been tended to it in the past.

Goettel Community Park. Donated to the Village by the Goettel family in the 1920s, this park continues to be home to many traditional village events, including the Lioness Apple Festival, as well as being used as a baseball field for school and little league games, as a meeting place for family picnics and reunions. Thanks to the continuous upkeep by the Lions and village crew, and having been recently re-landscaped, this park appears to be functioning quite well as is.

The new park area (between East Avenue and Mallory road, west of the railroad tracks). This little wedge of land hugs the wetland edge of Little Bay Creek and is full of old trees and plant life. Centrally located, this Village-owned land is ripe for a variety of possible recreational-type uses. The Creek area could be developed into a picnic-nature walk area, with wood walkways and stations where visitors could observe the wetlands and identify birdlife that visits the area. This could be done through use of signs describing animals and showing footprints, explaining habitat choice, breeding and migration habits, etc.

Acres of fields south of Rte. 49 between the railroad tracks and Rte. 81. While it is recognized that this property is a prime development area, it is also felt that careful planning could preserve much of the "look" and "feel" of this rolling, open area that currently seems to be such an important part of the landscape of the Village of Central Square. In preserving the sense of open space, the land could be even more valuable to the developer by providing a location that entices tenants with its uncrowded, pastoral, small-town ambience. Protecting, preserving, and only very carefully "developing" these natural assets should be a Village priority.

Future Walking Trail. Central Square has the potential for a "walking trail" to circumnavigate the Village. A network of trails already used and maintained by the local snowmobile club is well established around the Village. With a little work, including making agreements with landowners, developing a system of "trail markers", and some seasonal brush cutting, the trails could be used for year-round recreation. Such a trail would be very low-maintenance and would provide a form of down-to-earth, no cost, family recreation. Walking trails are very common in European countries, and in many areas of the United States, walking trails (sometimes called "greenways") are artificially created by paving asphalt trails through fields and farmlands, and building small walking

bridges over watery areas. This proposed trail could create a refreshing, stress-reducing respite for residents seeking alternative exercise and contact with nature.

It is recommended that the concept of a walking trail be kept in mind with each new development review, and that the trail be developed slowly and added to over time, as a long-range project.

PEOPLE ASSETS – Professional/Bedroom Community

Central Square is blessed with more than just a good location, natural assets and a small-town atmosphere. The biggest asset of all, the one with the most potential, is the people who live in Central Square, and their historical spirit of volunteerism. Volunteers – not a huge cash flow from taxes or a private or corporate beneficiary – have historically made the largest and richest contributions toward maintaining and uplifting the quality of life in the Village of Central Square.

An excellent example of the prevailing spirit of volunteerism in the Village is the library. This institution was conceived of by one book-loving woman who, supported by a small group of like-minded individuals, marshaled friends and neighbors into making contributions of books, space and time to create the foundation of our library (see “Central Square Library” in the Appendix of this document). Likewise the current Village Hall was built by local men volunteering their talents and time. The benches recently installed around the Village were planned by a volunteer group and donated by generous citizens. Volunteers restored the old railroad station into the delightful jewel that it now is. A volunteer fire company and a volunteer ambulance service rush to aide residents in distress. Volunteers keep historical records, manage little league and youth programs, coordinate food pantries, tend to parks, arrange Christmas parties for local children, and conduct countless other known and unknown endeavors that add vibrance and vitality to the Village of Central Square.

History demonstrates that a strong volunteer spirit is the cornerstone on which the Village of Central Square was created and has been maintained for nearly 200 years. The heart of Central Square will probably continue to be her volunteers for as long as families and individuals choose to root themselves here. The Comprehensive Plan Committee recognizes these generous past and future contributions to be an endowment of the richest kind.

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A series of general and specific goals for the future of Central Square emerged in the planning process and are outlined on the following pages. These goals are the most important elements of this plan and will, when followed vigorously and completely, set the Village's course for the next century. Planning and zoning decisions and public investments should be made in a manner consistent with fulfilling these goals.

The deepest concerns that arose during the planning process were:

- Maintaining a village-like atmosphere and quality of life
- Carefully encouraging job- and tax- producing businesses to take root
- Finding solutions to ever-increasingly difficult traffic-related situations, and
- Upgrading the appearance of the Village to attract new residents and businesses, help maintain and raise the standard of living for all who currently call Central Square home.

GOAL #1

IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW FOR CARS AND PEDESTRIANS. KEEP THE VILLAGE "PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY".

It is recommended that the Village government, particularly the Planning board, adopt a very clear approach toward new development with regard to moving automobile traffic efficiently through the Village. Project developers of all sizes should be encouraged to contribute positively to the resolution of current traffic congestion and hazards. Some potential solutions may include, but are not limited to, limited curb cuts, service roads, traffic lights, sidewalks and crosswalks.

Strategies

- 1A. **Place a "no right on red" sign at the corner of Fulton St. and Rte. 11 (heading south) to allow easier movement of traffic turning off Rte. 12 (Caughdenoy Road) during peak traffic times.**
- 1B. **Establish sidewalks or walkways (separated from the road by a painted line) on all Village streets and roads including in any existing and new developments.**
- 1C. **Identify and reclaim all sidewalk areas that have been paved over, such as those on the west and south side of the Jreck Subs building.** Landscaping could be used in such areas to buffer sidewalks from parking areas and streets.

- 1D. **Undertake a study of particular traffic challenges, the solutions to which will make traveling through and parking in the Village much less problematic.** Situations requiring in-depth study include:
- the establishment of a road that connects Mallory Road and Rte. 49 (see Future Roads Map, in the Appendix);
 - the creation of an arterial road connecting Rt. 49 at WalMart to Hungary Lane; Continuation of Gertrude Rd.
 - public parking lots in old village areas;
 - prohibition of parking on sidewalks;
 - the possibility of an additional Rte. 81 off-ramp between Central Square and Parish.
- 1F. **Develop a communication liaison with the area Department of Transportation offices, perhaps appointing one trustee or Planning Board member or other community volunteer as a contact person, in order to apprise the DOT of our interests and to keep up to date on their plans.** As this project extends beyond Village borders and would benefit the whole Town of Hastings, it would be most advantageous for all parties involved to partner on such projects.

GOAL #2

INSIST THAT ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT OR REWORKING OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT ONLY POSITIVELY IMPACTS CURRENT VILLAGE LIFE AND FUTURE VILLAGE GROWTH.

It is a widely accepted belief that villages are important, valuable, irreplaceable and worth-protecting commodities. Central Square's major capital asset is its "quality of life". Depleting that precious resource through poorly made choices would be like treating the Village as a business that's being liquidated, creating an uncertain or diminished future for our children. It's entirely possible that nothing – no building, no set of buildings, or businesses of any sort, could be as valuable to Central Square as her quality of life. Growth that is not seen as able to support and/or enhance village life and future potential as a 'liveable community' may be of questionable value to the community as a whole, and should be regarded as a detriment to be avoided.

Strategies

- 2A. **The Planning Board should carefully and realistically examine all potential new developments to weigh the pros and cons of the project based on what the Village's current infrastructure will support.** Each new project introduced to the Village should be looked at from several possible impact perspectives, including:
- Village water (quality and volume)
 - Sewer and roads?

- Village traffic?
- Air and water quality?
- District schools? School taxes?
- Police and fire protection?
- Village taxes?
- Vandalism and/or crime?
- Dramatically driving up or lowering area real estate prices?
- Making it increasingly difficult for “locals” to stay in their homes and community?

2B. **The Village should consider conducting a survey of owners of large, still undeveloped parcels, to discover what plans they may have regarding development of their properties.** An effort should also be made to review what is planned for land around the Village in the Town of Hastings. The two government groups should work together for the good of the total community.

2C. **Carefully plan for new development in the area east of the railroad tracks, on both sides of Rte. 49.** Plans should:

- allow for arterial connectivity to areas north of the village;
- take into consideration the quantity of the land in those areas for buildings, roads, drainage, etc., as dictated by elevations, wetlands and soils (see Soil Suitability for Small Commercial Buildings map in the Appendix);
- ensure the appropriate placing of commercial and residential areas.

GOAL #3

INCREASE THE TAX BASE AND CREATE NEW JOBS IN A WAY THAT WILL TRULY ENHANCE THE VILLAGE.

The Village government is generally uncomfortable with traditionally used methods of tax-base enhancement, i.e. enticing a large company to settle in Central Square by offering tax breaks or whatever other incentives. It is felt that such measures could cause irreparable damage to the Village’s infrastructure, quality of life and emotional well being, as well as ultimately be the cause for future tax increases. Village trustees are strongly urged to explore alternative, nonthreatening possibilities for economic enhancement, such as described in “Paying For Growth, Prospering From Development” in the Appendix.

Strategies

3A. **Create an “economic development council” to help the Village make positive changes in its economic growth.** All money re-spent in the Village provides all the benefits of outside money with none of the negative side effects of growth. An economic development council could consist of a blend of residents and business owners, with a mission of:

- Identifying local growth opportunities
- Identifying and curtailing “economic leaks”

- Encouraging support of local businesses, and raising awareness of the value of spending money locally
- Creating more “local wealth” by using existing recourses more effectively.

Studies and information on economic renewal and sustainable development are available from The Rocky Mountain Institute. Available publications include: Economic Renewal Guide: A Collaborative Process For Sustainable Community Development by Michael J. Kinsley; Community Energy Workbook: A Guide To Building A Sustainable Economy by Alice Hubbard and Clay Fong, and Homemade Money How to Save Energy and Dollars in Your Home) by Amory and Hunter Lovins. (Rocky Mountain Institute, 1739 Snowmass Creek Road, Snowmass, CO 81654-9199 ph. 970-927-3851).

GOAL#4

ENHANCE OVERALL STRUCTURAL APPEARANCE OF THE VILLAGE

Strategies

- 4A. **Develop a design plan for the center of the Village, complete with infill building locations, façade improvements, landscaping, use of planters, buried wires, improved parking, etc.**
- 4B. **Amend the zoning law to incorporate design standards for the center of the Village.**
- 4C. **Develop guidelines for private property appearance and maintenance.**
- 4D. **Research methods to provide property tax relief for homeowners upgrading their properties.**
- 4E. **Bury utility wires whenever possible.**
- 4F. **Establish a Village-wide clean-up day.**

GOAL #5

ENHANCE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF VILLAGE THROUGH LANDSCAPING.

Strategies

- 5A. **Improve landscaping whenever possible through plantings and use of planters.**
- 5B. **The Village government should encourage developers to set aside some land in their development for the express purpose of providing strategically located greenspace for some type of park or playground, or simply as a relief to the eye from all the buildings.**
- 5C. **Re-tree the Village.** The Village should:
 - **Develop an overall village design plan to replace trees that have been cut down along Rte. 11 and East Ave.;**

- Continue a tree replacement program funded by citizen contributions to a “Tree Fund” and utilizing volunteer help such as Project Bloom;
- Establish a village budget item for tree planting and maintenance;
- Adopt a policy to replace all trees that are cut down, damaged or otherwise lost in public areas.

5D. **Protect natural areas of Rt. 49/Mallory Rd land with the exception of portions directly along the lot frontage.**

5E. **Plan for the improvement of Village parcel on South Main Street.**

GOAL #6

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Placement of a municipal building in a location which is convenient, centrally located and most importantly, easily accessible for all citizens including the handicapped would enhance the relationship between citizens, businessmen and village officials. Currently, the offices of the zoning officer is on the second floor. Although the zoning officer can come downstairs to the clerk’s counter to talk with handicapped clients, there isn’t an area where wheelchairbound persons can maneuver around in this room. Also, meeting rooms currently on the second floor are not handicapped accessible and use of the downstairs facilities have to be worked around court dates, Village Board and Planning Board use.

The library is currently located on Main Street in the Village of Central Square. In 1981 an addition was built onto the library nearly doubling its size. This building has reached its capacity and has no direction on the small village lot in which to make any more additions. Recently a handicapped ramp and a small, off-street parking lot were added to the back of the facility. Although the parking lot did ease the parking situation somewhat, at times it is still difficult to park when the funeral home next door has a large attendance.

Strategies

6A. **Explore a plan for a new municipal building to house the Village office and personnel.** The possibility exists for merging the library with the Village Offices which could prove beneficial to both parties. The library is constantly facing cutbacks in finances. By pooling its resources with the Village, both could benefit by sharing the building and grounds maintenance responsibility. This has been successfully done in Pulaski, New York. The Village already owns the property and the Municipal Hall could be Phase One of the Park. The current offices of the village could give expanded office use to the police department and highway maintenance groups. A building fund should be created.

GOAL #7

IMPROVE DISTRIBUTION OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO CITIZENS.

Comments in the surveys lead the Village to believe that important village-related information is not reaching citizens via the local newspaper as well as it might. The Village should explore alternate methods of getting information to citizens.

Strategies

7A. **Mail a quarterly newsletter with the sewer bills.** A newsletter could not only distribute information, but also help to further build a sense of community and networking. It could also help to educate new and longtime citizens about the workings of the Village and who to contact in the event of an emergency.

7B. **Continue to disseminate information via the Village website and keep it up to date.**

GOAL #8

CONTINUE TO SOLICIT VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH VILLAGE ORGANIZATION, UPKEEP AND ENHANCEMENT.

As has historically been the case in Central Square, citizens are often more than eager to make some sort of voluntary contribution toward the upkeep of their community. They simply need a specific task and/or direction in which to go. A volunteer program could give that direction, and the Village, in general, could reap the harvest of their labors. Furthermore, someone with the interest and ability to communicate and organize could serve as a volunteer coordinator.

Strategies

8A. **Devise a simple volunteer program to provide citizens with an opportunity to make enriching contributions to the organization and enhancement of their community.** All sorts of backgrounds and talents can be sought and utilized. For example:

- a. people with experience or interest in grant writing can be given the opportunity of researching and applying for grants;
- b. scouts seeking projects could begin defining trails and identifying plants in the new park area;
- c. an individual with an interest in landscape architecture could develop a plan for replanting trees in the Village;

GOAL #9

MAKE SOME PROVISION FOR PRESERVING VILLAGE HISTORY AND ARTIFACTS.

Strategies

9A. **Establish a historical committee to collect and preserve any and all pertinent artifacts.** If it is not practical to house such a collection in the municipal building, a separate building to be a village museum would be ideal.

**GOAL #10
PROTECT NATURAL ASSETS.**

Because the natural assets of Central Square – parkland, open fields, and wetlands as natural habitats for herons, ducks and other waterfowl – are part of what draws people to this area, and keeps people here, every effort must be made, on a continuing basis, to protect these priceless commodities. When it is difficult to preserve a whole large piece of land in its entirety, in its natural state, effort must be taken to blend the man-made in with the natural, and to retain the natural effect. These efforts will, in the long run, have been more than worthwhile as the Village of Central Square retains its simplicity, and its natural beauty, and therefore, its quality of life.

Strategies

- 10A. **Seek to retain natural features of development sites, where appropriate, through the site plan review and State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACHIEVING GOALS

Establishing goals, strategies and implementation measures is helpful, but does not by itself produce results. Only specific actions taken in furtherance of the goals and recommendations in Section 3 will move the Village along the road toward achieving its goals. Some of these are immediate short-term actions (less than a year), some are longer term (a year or more). Others will require on going planning and vigilance.

Cost is the biggest controlling factor in making changes, but cost – however prohibitive it may seem – should not prevent planning. With plans in place, the Village is much better prepared to respond quickly should funds become available through grants, county, state or federal funding, or other development or private funding. Budgets can be worked out, over time, to accommodate larger projects. Many projects could be initiated if not completed by volunteers. The Village should consider appointing a person to be in charge of overseeing the carrying-out of decisions and plans made by the Board of Trustees. Someone who already has a solid background in Village operations would be a good choice. This might mean additional budget expenditures for salary and benefits, but could prove to be more than worth the additional expense in the long run.

SECTION 4: LAND USE POLICIES

This section includes policies which form the framework for the Village's zoning and subdivision regulations and are intended to guide the decisions of the village board, planning board and board of appeals. All development projects in the Village should conform to these standards.

BASIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

1. **Residential growth should occur from the center outward.** Development should occur (to the extent possible) first within a quarter mile of the center (the intersection of Rts. 11 and 49) and then within a half mile.
2. **Land use diversity should decrease from the center outward.** Smaller lots and a more diverse mix of uses should occur at the center.
3. **Development patterns should take their cue from street layout, not from lot lines.** Development should not create stand-alone pods that are the result of creating the most lots out of a given parcel.
4. **All streets should (to the extent possible) connect two other streets and form a block pattern.** Cul de sacs and loop streets should be avoided.
5. **Development outside the village center should form mixed-use neighborhoods.** Neighborhoods should be predominantly residential with occasional commercial uses at corners and some nodes of purely commercial or industrial uses located at neighborhood edges (i.e. major roads, railroad tracks, etc.).
6. **Commercial development should be located at major intersections to allow access from several directions.** Aside from the fact that these locations give a business better access, these locations alleviate traffic because cars can disperse in three or more directions (as opposed to two if a business is located in the middle of a road segment).

SENSITIVE AREAS

There are many areas of Central Square that have a limited suitability or are inherently unsuitable for development. There are other areas in which development should be avoided due to the valuable natural character of the area. A character which would be lost or damaged if disturbed. Areas which are either unsuitable or fragile include wetlands, steep slopes, hydric soils, and stream corridors.

Wetlands

Character: Wetlands are transitional areas between terrestrial and aquatic environments where the water table (the level of groundwater) is at or near the ground surface or the land is covered by shallow water. These areas often act as groundwater recharge areas, areas for filtering and cleaning water, and as significant wildlife habitat.

Location: DEC regulated wetlands occur in the western portion of the village between Rt. 49 and Caughdenoy Rd.; in the northern portion between Rt. 11 and Mallory Rd.; and in a large area just east of the village center along Little Bay Creek. See *Development Constraints map*.

Consequences of Development: Wetlands are generally considered a severe hazard to development. Development can lead to loss of valuable and irreplaceable wildlife habitat. Wetlands are particularly important as they are sometimes groundwater which is exposed on the surface of the ground, and vulnerable to pollution. Development of these areas is expensive, as landfill is usually needed and flood protection is often necessary.

Steep Slopes

Character: These are areas which have greater than a 10 percent slope, which means that there is a vertical rise of ten feet for each 100 feet of horizontal distance.

Location: Steep slopes occur in three areas in the village, one just west of Kelly Drive; one east of the CSX tracks and north of Rt. 49; and one south of Rt. 49 between the CSX tracks and Little Bay Creek. See *Development Constraints map*.

Consequences of Development: Slopes of less than 10 percent are generally considered slight constraints on development. Slopes of between 10 and 15 percent are generally considered moderate constraints on development. Slopes of greater than 15 percent are considered severe constraints on development. The development of slopes is not recommended for several reasons. There are some environmental concerns, such as erosion and stream sedimentation. It is also more expensive for communities to service development on steep slopes with roads, water lines, and sewerage facilities.

Hydric Soils

Character: Hydric soils are soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in their upper parts. Hydric soils include soils developed under sufficiently wet conditions to support the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation.

Location: Hydric soils are present in large areas in the vicinity of Little Bay Creek and its tributaries. See *Development Constraints map*.

Consequences of Development: Hydric soils present hazards to development due to their poor drainage characteristics.

Stream Corridors

Character: These are stream corridors which are of special significance. They may act as important fish and wildlife habitats. They may be important for their significance as drainage conduits.

Location: The majority of the village is drained by Little Bay Creek into Oneida Lake.

Consequences of Development: Stream corridors must be developed very carefully so as not to destroy their natural characteristics and contributions as habitats and drainage areas. Improper development can lead to erosion of the stream banks, resulting in siltation of the stream and the loss of stabilizing soil. Water quality can be impaired, and the recreational use of the stream degraded. The aesthetic qualities of the stream may likewise be destroyed by improper development.

Policies

- 1. Development taking place near wetlands, and stream corridors should be limited to those uses that will not adversely affect water quality.**
- 2. Uses and structures should be properly set back from streams, ponds, and wetlands.**
- 3. Land disturbing activities should be conducted in accordance with proper erosion control measures.**

VILLAGE CENTER AREA

Character

The Village Center area is located in the core of the village at the intersection of Rts. 11, 49, and Mallory Rd. This area lies roughly within a 750-foot radius of the intersection and is made up of mixed land uses on small lots. The Village Center is home to uses such as churches and clubs as well as the majority of the small, traditional commercial uses in the Village. Residences are also present in the form of single-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings. Most buildings are two stories and are sited very close to the street right-of-way creating a strong building edge. The area is served by public water and sewer.

Recommendations

The Village Center's street lengths are appropriate in that 1,000' to 1,500' is a comfortable distance for pedestrians (and not coincidentally the length of most shopping malls). Commercial uses, especially small retail sales and services, should be highly encouraged here. Residential uses are appropriate, and should be especially encouraged as second floor apartments above commercial storefronts. This approach saves valuable space that is more suited to commercial development and creates a livelier street. New construction should respect the existing building (setback) line as well as the architectural character of neighboring buildings. Buildings should range from two to three stories in height and have a footprint size that doesn't overwhelm neighboring structures. Parking and signage for commercial uses should be of appropriate scale for a small village downtown. It is important that this district's boundaries not be extended until absolutely necessary. Maintaining them will create a more vibrant hub with more traffic for existing businesses in the center (due to concentration), preserve the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods and create a strong sense of entry into the center.

Policies

1. **Commercial uses of appropriate scale, particularly retail sales and services, should be highly encouraged.**
2. **Institutional uses, especially Village government facilities, should be encouraged.**
3. **Residential uses are appropriate in the center. However, they should be encouraged primarily as second floor apartments above commercial storefronts.**
4. **New construction should respect the existing building setback line.**
5. **New construction should respect the architectural character of neighboring buildings.**
6. **Buildings in the Village center should have small footprints and range from two to three stories in height.**

NEIGHBORHOOD GENERAL AREAS

Character

The main Neighborhood General area lies roughly within two miles of the village center. It is bounded to the north by the original village boundary; to the east by Little Bay Creek and the CSX tracks; to the south by the abandoned railroad corridor; and to the west by the village boundary. The area is largely residential with a sprinkling of other uses, including small commercial and institutional buildings. Lot sizes are generally a half-acre or less. Buildings are typically one to three stories and are located relatively close to the street. The relationship between building height and the space between buildings on opposite sides of a street creates spatial enclosure which is very comfortable for pedestrians. The space between buildings on opposite sides of a street should be approximately three to six times the height of the buildings. This area is served by public water and sewer.

Two other Neighborhood General areas exist in the village – one in the northern end (Northridge Dr. area) and one in the southern end (Dry Bridge Rd. area), south of the abandoned railroad corridor. These areas more purely residential in character and have fewer connections to the village street grid.

Recommendations

The Neighborhood General area is an ideal place for residential development. The majority of the area lies within a 5-minute walk from the village center. Infill residential development should be encouraged here as well as new development (where soil conditions permit). Future streets should be laid out in a block pattern that respects the current street pattern. Home businesses are welcome here with design and performance standards. Commercial uses should be allowed on corner lots, but only if they are of a similar bulk as neighboring residences and do not alter the residential

character of the district. Multi-family dwellings should also be in character with single-family dwellings. Setbacks should be small to preserve the intimate, human character of the street. Buildings should range from one to three stories in height and have a footprint size that does not overwhelm neighboring structures. Development should occur from the center outward. This area should be completely built-out before its boundaries are expanded.

The residential areas to the north and south could be improved to adding connections to main village streets and encouraging more mixed uses.

Policies

- 1. Home businesses in residential neighborhoods should be carefully controlled.**
- 2. Large-scale commercial developments should be permitted only at neighborhood edges where they will not interfere with predominantly residential areas.**
- 3. Site design and appearance of commercial developments should be controlled in residential neighborhoods.**
- 4. Messy conditions should be prohibited and junkyards should not be permitted.**
- 5. High-density residential development should be encouraged (small lots with their short dimension along the street).**
- 6. A variety of types of housing, including multi-family homes and accessory apartments, should be allowed, but these uses must be designed to fit in architecturally with and minimize negative impacts on adjacent properties.**
- 7. New construction should respect the existing building setback line.**
- 8. Buildings should have small footprints and range from one to three stories.**

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL AREAS

Character

A large commercial area has developed at the Interstate 81 exit in the eastern end of the village. These areas offer access and parking for automobile oriented traffic.

Recommendations

These areas should be designated for automobile oriented commercial uses which are inappropriate in the village center. These areas should be limited in size, so as not to become overwhelming to motorists. Appropriate uses include large retail outlets, large product retail facilities for cars, boats, mobile homes, etc.; car washes; fast-food establishments; drive-through businesses; service stations; motels; and other like businesses. These are all commercial uses which require parking areas and building footprints that would be harmful to the village center. As these areas are the entrance gateways to the village, the land should be developed and maintained in an aesthetically

pleasing way. New buildings should be somewhat in character with those of the rest of the village and be set back a greater distance than those in the Village center.

Policies

- 1. Land and buildings should be developed in an aesthetically pleasing way, as these areas are located at entrances to the village.**
- 2. Signage should be controlled so that it doesn't distract motorists or become visual blight.**
- 3. Buildings should respect a maximum setback line to retain at least a minimal sense of street enclosure.**
- 4. Side yard setbacks should be minimized to avoid wasting land.**
- 5. Road access should be carefully limited and managed.**

RURAL AREAS

Character

The Rural areas include lands in the eastern half of the village to the north and south of Route 49 between the older portions of the village and the commercial area just west of I-81. These areas are presently undeveloped and include hydric soils (soils developed under sufficiently wet conditions), DEC regulated wetlands and steep slopes.

Recommendations

These portions of the village should remain largely undeveloped due to environmental constraints, such as wetlands and hydric soils, and their distance from the village center.

SECTION 5: CONCLUSION

The future of the Village of Central Square rests squarely in the hands of its elected and appointed officials. Unrestricted growth in the Village will result in chaos and congestion in the appearance of the Village and in the roadways, and may present enormous future challenges to the Village infrastructure and services and unnecessary costs to Village citizens.

Lack of tight, comprehensive zoning will result in unfinished construction and rehab projects as well as decaying rental housing, resulting in an increasingly diminished Village appearance. Careful and prudent revision must be given to all plans submitted by developers to be sure that plans being agreed to are in the best interest of the majority of Village residents, current and future.

The Village's ideal line of defense is to plan for the best while anticipating the worst, by decisively controlling the growth that happens to the Village instead of allowing the impending growth to control the Village.

In order to preserve and maintain what's left of the "old" Village, and to ensure continued appeal for current and future residents and business owners, and growth for the municipality as a whole, the Village should adopt a firm and aggressive stand regarding all new development, planning, zoning, site plan review, and enforcement. Particular attention should be focused on solving the multitude of current traffic challenges and preventing future traffic-related problems. It is further suggested that the Village government fairly but firmly enforce zoning regulations.

The goal of this comprehensive plan, while it may seem daunting, is to prepare the Village of Central Square for the onslaught of the 21st century. If the Village is to be preserved as a safe-haven for families and individuals seeking a quiet respite from hectic cities, and a warmer, more intimate lifestyle than is offered by the suburbs, a commitment must be made to preserve what is good, and to keep out what is unwanted. This plan offers definitions of both the good and the unwanted, and solutions for managing each.

APPENDIX

ABOUT THE SURVEY

In the Fall of 1996, the Comprehensive Plan Committee drafted and distributed a survey regarding opinions and attitudes about the Village to all residents in Central Square. The survey was compiled from a list of questions borrowed from other community surveys and tailored for Central Square by the committee. The survey was distributed by the mail to all water bill addresses and by hand to all apartment-complex units. Additional copies were available for pick-up at the Village Clerk's Office. Articles were placed in "The Citizen Outlet" informing residents of the importance of the surveys and asking for their cooperation in completing and returning them. The Tug Hill Commission of Watertown, New York, tabulated and reported to the Committee on the surveys. Their report, in part, is as follows:

"The Village sent out 825 survey questionnaires. Of these, 72 (9%) were returned as undeliverable, leaving 753 apparently distributed. There were 126 responses, which constitutes a 16.73% return rate. This rate is considered somewhat low for a mailed questionnaire, which normally approximates a 24% return rate or somewhat better, but is within the range where reliance can be placed on the results, especially on the reasonable assumption that those with strong feelings did respond, and that other citizens will likely concur with the respondents' views, in the absence of some factor skewing response (e.g., a campaign by persons supporting or opposed to some "hot button" issue). Such a skew factor did not appear to be present in this survey."

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CENTRAL SQUARE: EVENTS
COMPILED BY VERNON GOETTEL**

- 1789 Oliver Stevens settled at Brewerton.
- c. 1812 Chester Loomis bought the first tavern of the northeast corner of the crossroads in Central Square.
- 1815-30 The roads in the area were surveyed.
- 1820 Nicholas Roosevelt bought a tavern in Central Square.
Hastings Curtiss built a store where the Fancher House later stood in the V formed by Rtes. 11 and 49.
School District No. 1 was formed at Caughdenoy.
- 1822 First Post Office opened at Loomis Corners; Hastings Curtiss, Postmaster.
Name "Loomis Corners" changed to Central Square.
First burial in Hillside Cemetery – Mrs. Anna Goodspeed.
- 1823 Hastings Curtis built first brick building in Central Square, a hotel, later called the Dixon House.
- 1824 Rollin Blount built a sawmill.
Central Square School District #4 was formed – James Coit was the first teacher.
First bridge built to cross Oneida River at Brewerton.
Robert Elliott came to Central Square and first lived in a part of the Nicholas Roosevelt house.
- 1825 Robert Elliott built a wagon shop and tannery; Town of Hastings was established.
- 1827 Rufus Tiffany built the Yellow Store; the Erie Canal was completed.
- 1836 Giehel Noble built on the corner of Rte. 11 and Caughdenoy Rd., later owned by Traub.
- 1844-46 The plank road was built from Salina to Central Square.
- 1846 First Methodist Church and First Baptist Church built.
- 1851 Plank Road built from Central Square to Fulton.
- 1856 Armonelle Devendorf and husband came to Central Square.
- 1860 First newspaper started (soon lapsed); White Methodist Church was built, later became "Mutter's Hall".
- 1864 Sam Sweet built a house on the northeast corner of Rte. 11 and 49.
- 1865 C.E. Coville took over a store on the public square.
- 1867 A school house was built on the west side of Main Street.
- 1869 Midland Railroad, later named New York-Ontario & Western was built.
- 1871 The Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg railroad, later The New York Central, was built; the Central Square railroad station was built.

- 1873 The Brick Schoolhouse was built at a cost of \$6,000.00.
- 1877 Another weekly newspaper was started.
- 1880 The Brick Store, Low's and Coville's, was built.
- 1888 The bandstand was built by George Elliot.
- 1890 Central Square village was incorporated.
E.T. (Tim) Conterman opened a meat market.
- 1892 W.H. Vrooman started publication of the "Central Square News" and also did job printing.
- 1898 The three-story Bates-Elliott building was built.
- 1903 The first rural delivery of mail began with a route of 22 miles.
- 1906 The Central Square telephone system was built and put into operation by Adelbert E. Coe.
- 1908 The Universalist Church was built.
- 1910 A lumber mill was built by Herman P. Goettel.
- 1911 The bandstand is torn down by pranksters on Halloween.
- 1912 The First National Bank of Central Square was chartered and a new bank building was constructed.
- 1914 Electricity was brought to Central Square village.
- 1915-16 Route 11 was paved. Harridine Bros. were the contractors.
- 1916 The Dixon House hotel burned.
- 1918 The three-story Wightman-Penoyer building was erected on the site where the Dixon house hotel had stood.
- 1919 A bronze plaque was placed as a monument listing local veterans.
- 1920 Land was deeded by Abraham Goettel to the school and called Community Park.
- 1921 Fire destroyed the bank building, the Traub building, and the three story Wightman Penoyer building in which the fire started. The shell of the First National Bank was turned over to the fire company and remodeled for use as a fire station. Codner and Reymore bought the Fancher House Hotel livery stable and converted it into a Chevrolet Auto Agency and garage. Route 49 was paved east to West Monroe and beyond.
- 1922 A new bank was built on the vacant lot on Route 49. The contractor was Francis D. Culkin.
Wightman-Penoyer built a new one-story garage and Ford Sales agency.
- 1925 The Masonic Temple was built.

- The Fancher House hotel was torn down and a Standard Oil Service Station built in its place.
- 1926 The Main Street School was built. The contractor was H.C. O'Connell from Earleville, NY.
The C.J. Yorkey Law office was built on Fulton Street.
Henry West built a garage on South Main Street for Dodge car agency.
On Christmas Eve, fire destroyed the Bates-Elliott building, the Methodist Church, the Anderson home and the Edwin Church store.
Aurthur Watson starts Watson Funeral Home.
- 1927 The Goettel Block was built on the site of the Bates-Elliott building.
The brick Methodist Church was built.
St. Michael's Catholic Church was built.
- 1928 The schools gave the park to the village under the condition that it be "forever resolved, that it be maintained as an athletic field."
George Traub built a furniture store on the corner of Main and Caughdenoy streets.
- 1929 Installation of the Village water system was commenced. Contractor: Bird & Street.
The George Devitt store burned and was rebuilt.
- 1932 The village water system was completed.
- 1933 Library started by Inez Moon by renting a portion of the home of Mrs. Josephine Rogers.
Second floor approved for the firehouse.
- 1934 The Codner & Reymore garage was enlarged and improved.
- 1936 A new plate glass front was installed on the Bruce Conterman store and market.
- 1939 A new Standard Oil Company station was built to replace the old one which was removed.
- 1942 The Codner & Reymore garage was enlarged and improved.
Ada Powell Smith gave to the village nine acres of land off Fulton Street stipulating that it remain forever wild.
- 1944 The Central Square Central School District was formed.
- 1949 The school bus garage was built and used for school class rooms for several years.
Obelisk erected at the former site of the gazebo.
- 1950 The Chargo House (built in 1879 by Sam Sweet) was torn down to build the Atlantic Gas Station (now a Mobil Express).
- 1952 St. Michael's Catholic Church was enlarged – two wings were added.
- 1953 The new Paul V. Moore high school building was built.
- 1954 Scott farm is subdivided and Scott Tract housing development begins.

- 1955 First library building is built on Route 11.
- 1957 The Traub Funeral Home was enlarged and improved.
The Ontario and Western Railroad stopped running.
- 1958 Natural gas for cooking and heating was piped to Central Square.
- 1958 The new Paul V. Moore high school building was built.
- 1959 Earnest Ladd Jr. becomes manager of Watsons Funeral Home.
- 1960 Super Duper is built on Route 11 south.
- 1961 A new U.S. Post Office was built by Carl Penoyer on the site of the former Penoyer House (built in 1879 by George Woodin).
The new Millard Hawk junior high school building was built.
Route 81 opens to traffic from Brewerton to Central Square.
The fire department makes battery operated early warning alarms available to the public for \$5.00 each.
- 1964 Student population was 3,698.
- 1965 Reymore Chevrolet built a new garage and sales room on the north side of the village.
The Central Square sewer system was installed.
The Central Square elementary school was built.
A new Methodist church was built north of the village on Route 11.
Baptist church expands.
- 1966 The fire company made a new fire house from the vacated Reymore Chevrolet garage.
A new Sunday school wing was added to the First Universalist church.
Up Country Apartments are built on Route 11 south.
- 1969 The Hastings-Mallory elementary school was built, on Barker Road.
Carl Penoyer purchases hardware store from Stephen Farnett and uses it for auto dealership.
- 1971 Thomas Weatherup has bowling alley built on Route 49.
- 1973 Southern Oswego Volunteer Ambulance Corps (SOVAC) formed and occupied the railroad depot.
Paul V. Moore high school undergoes extensive renovation and addition.
- 1974 The St. Michael's Catholic Parish Center was built.
- 1976 St. Michaels Catholic Church builds Parish Center on former Getman property.
Byrne Dairy builds new store on corner of Route 11 and Webb Ave.
- 1977 Tom Weatherup subdivides property off Mallory Road and begins first phase of North Country Manor.
- 1979 Meadowview apartments breaks ground on Webb Avenue for senior housing.
- 1981 Cable TV available.

- 1985 Wightman-Penoyer building torn down.
- 1987 Traub Funeral Home razed Grange Hall and built a new extension.
New Town of Hastings truck garage built.
- 1987-88 Baptist church is added on to.
New Post Office is built at the corner of Rte. 11 and Hillcrest.
- 1989 Fulton Savings Bank builds new bank on Rte. 49.
- 1990 SOVAC erects new home at Gertrude Drive.
- 1990-92 New middle school and district bus garage on Route 11 between Central Square
and Brewerton.
- 1991 Village annexes property on Route 49 near the I-81 exit.
- 1993 Tom Schultz subdivides property between Thelma Avenue and Dry Bridge Road.
- 1995 Summerhill breaks ground off Route 49 behind the IGA to accommodate senior
housing.
- 1996 Paul V. Moore begins its second renovation.
- 1998 Onondaga County Water Authority replaces existing water lines and takes over
village water system.
- 2000 Hillside Cemetery Association turns Hillside Cemetery over to the village.
- 2001 First community website.
- 2002 WalMart builds SuperCenter on Route 49 east.
- 2004 Student population was 4,889.
Byrne Dairy moves north of the village to new site on Route 11.
- 2005 Pathfinder Bank out of Oswego builds new bank on Route 49 east.
CSX train derailment of 28 cars at Dry Bridge.
Sovac purchases the Grange Hall.

RESOURCES

Additional resources & references used in compiling the 1997 Comprehensive Plan include:

'Historical Background of Central Square: Events", contributed by Vernon Goettel, Central Square, NY

"Historical Background of Central Square: Structures", contributed by David Lonergan, Central Square, NY

Village maps by Paul Shenemen, PLS Engineers, Tully, NY

Let's Reminisce, a collection of historical photos and essays by Emily Hoyt, originally published as a book in 1985.

1957 General Plan, published by the Central Square Planning Board, Chairman Arnold P. Goettel, Central Square, NY 1957.

Oswego County Census Reports

"Reinventing the Village", by Susanne Sutro, AICP, published by American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service (Report 430)

"Paying for Growth, Prospering From Development" by Michael J. Kinsley and L. Hunter Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute, Snowmass, CO

"City Stands Good Chance of Losing Pieces of Its Past" by Sean Kirst, Post Standard Newspaper, Syracuse, NY

"Central Square Library" by Emily Hoyt from Let's Reminisce

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

1A.	Place a “no right on red” sign at the corner of Fulton St. and Rte. 11 (heading south) to allow easier movement of traffic turning off Rte. 12 (Caughdenoy Road) during peak traffic times.	HIGH
1B.	Establish sidewalks or walkways (separated from the road by a painted line) on all Village streets and roads including in any existing and new developments.	MEDIUM-LOW
1C.	Identify and reclaim all sidewalk areas that have been paved over, such as those on the west and south side of the Jreck Subs building.	LOW
1D.	Maintain all sidewalks as child-safe and in good repair.	MEDIUM
1E.	Undertake a study of particular traffic challenges, the solutions to which will make traveling through and parking in the Village much less problematic.	HIGH
1F.	Develop a communication liaison with the area Department of Transportation offices, perhaps appointing one trustee or Planning Board member or other community volunteer as a contact person, in order to apprise the DOT of our interests and to keep up to date on their plans.	HIGH
2A.	The Planning Board should carefully and realistically examine all potential new developments to weigh the pros and cons of the project based on what the Village’s current infrastructure will support.	LOW
2B.	The Village should consider conducting a survey of owners of large, still undeveloped parcels, to discover what plans they may have regarding development of their properties.	LOW
2C.	Carefully plan for new development in the area east of the railroad tracks, on both sides of Rte. 49.	HIGH
3A.	Create an “economic development council” to help the Village make positive changes in its economic growth.	MEDIUM
4A.	Develop a design plan for the center of the Village, complete with infill building locations, façade improvements, landscaping, use of planters, buried wires, improved parking, etc.	MEDIUM
4B.	Amend the zoning law to incorporate design standards for the center of the Village.	MEDIUM-HIGH

4C.	Develop guidelines for private property appearance and maintenance.	MEDIUM
4D.	Research methods to provide property tax relief for homeowners upgrading their properties.	LOW
4E.	Bury utility wires whenever possible.	LOW
4F.	Establish a Village-wide clean-up day.	ONGOING
5A.	Improve landscaping whenever possible through plantings and use of planters.	ONGOING
5B.	The Village government should encourage developers to set aside some land in their development for the express purpose of providing strategically located greenspace for some type of park or playground, or simply as a relief to the eye from all the buildings.	HIGH
5C.	Re-tree the Village.	LOW
5D.	Protect natural areas of Rt. 49/Mallory Rd land with the exception of portions directly along the lot frontage.	LOW
5E.	Plan for the improvement of Village parcel on South Main Street.	HIGH
6A.	Explore a plan for a new municipal building to house the Village office and personnel.	LOW
7A.	Mail a quarterly newsletter with the sewer bills – include web address.	HIGH
7B.	Continue to disseminate information via the Village website and keep it up to date.	MEDIUM
8A.	Devise a simple volunteer program to provide citizens with an opportunity to make enriching contributions to the organization and enhancement of their community.	HIGH
9A.	Establish a historical committee to collect and preserve any and all pertinent artifacts.	HIGH
10A.	Seek to retain natural features of development sites, where appropriate, through the site plan review and State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process.	HIGH