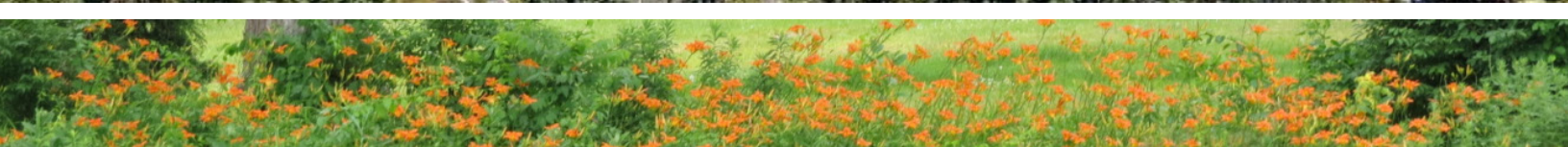
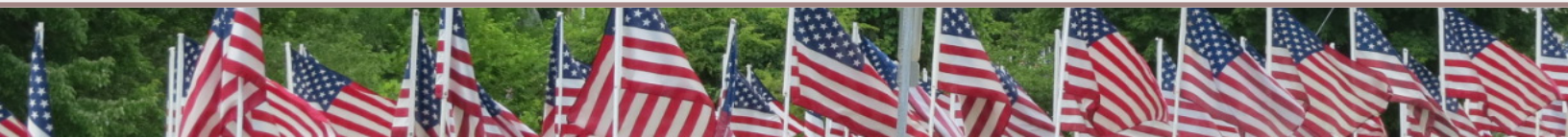




TOWN
OF

CARMEL

2022-2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



DRAFT

**Town of Carmel
2022-2035 Comprehensive Plan**

June 2022

Prepared for:

Town of Carmel Town Board
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A

INTRODUCTION

A. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan represents a new comprehensive plan for the Town of Carmel. The prior Town of Carmel Comprehensive Plan was adopted in October 2000 and was itself an update to a previous plan for the Town prepared in the 19080s. Since more than 20 years have passed since preparation of the 2000 Plan, this plan introduces a new the Vision, goals and objectives that should guide the growth and preservation of Carmel. This Plan is inherently flexible – it provides the Town with a menu of options, rather than mandates, to effectuate the Vision set forth in this Plan.

Significant transformational events have occurred since adoption of the 2000 Plan. Nationally, the U.S. economy went through a crippling recession which slowed the pace of growth regionally – housing construction was largely halted and housing values stalled or declined in the 1990s. The explosion of e-commerce, and its acceleration due to the Covid crisis, impacted the demand for brick-and-mortar stores. The new millennium has seen a shift to the experience economy - younger consumers seek experience rather than goods - material goods are simply not as valued. And most recently in the past two years, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), lead to an ongoing global pandemic which has also resulted in a significant shift in housing demand – there has been an exodus of households from high density communities who seek to live in more suburban and rural communities – this has ramped up demand for housing and resulted in significant increases in housing values in the region.

The 2000 Plan did not have a significant number of objectives, i.e., the actions which must be taken achieve the Plan goals. Locally, the Town of Putnam County Bikeway has been extended through the Town, connecting it to Westchester County to the south, and Brewster to the east. Consistent with the objectives of the 2000 Plan, municipal parks have been added to the Town’s recreational inventory and improved. The Town’s zoning was updated, and almost all of the Town has been rezoned to allow dwellings on three (3) acre lots.

Like the 2000 Plan, the preparation of this Plan has been guided overwhelmingly by the residents of Carmel. Three in-person and online workshops, and a hugely successful public online survey solicited much input and ideas for this 2035 Plan. This 2035 Comprehensive Plan gives Carmel an opportunity to discuss issues that were not previously considered. For example, a drive to sustainable and resilient communities that can weather the complex changes that have occurred to the economy, the climate, and the environment, and the variety of actions that local governments can take to make itself sustainable are a focus today.

Now, more than 20 years later, the Town Board, in consultation with its planning consultant and an advisory group, have assessed the Town’s progress and changes. Preparation of this Comprehensive Plan has provided the Town Board and community the opportunity to do so together. This Plan is a response to the challenges and opportunities of today and those that can be anticipated. This Comprehensive Plan is a living document, and it is recommended that a future Town Board revisit the

comprehensive plan in its entirety within the next 13 years. Further, the Town Board should revisit the Plan annually to assess what has been accomplished, and what still needs to be implemented.

2. PLAN STRUCTURE

This Comprehensive Plan consists of the following sections:

- A. Introduction, providing the purpose of this Comprehensive Plan;
- B. Comprehensive Plan Process overview, describing the process followed in the preparation of this Plan, a brief overview of the public participation process, and next steps;
- C. Vision, which describes the overall Vision that will be pursued for the Town of Carmel;
- D. Land Patterns, which describes the generalized and conceptual land use pattern to guide preservation and development in the Town. This plan especially focuses on revitalizing and reenergizing the Town's two historic hamlet centers;
- E. Goals and Objectives which identify how the Vision and Land Patterns can be accomplished.
- F. Appendices, which provide the Existing Conditions Report, and a summary of the Public Participation processes.



B

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

SYRIL LUDINGTON
REVOLUTIONARY WAR HERO
JAN. 26, 1771
HE LED THE "LUDINGTON RAID" IN
1780, CROSSING THE NARROW PAINTED
BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO REACH
THE BURNING OF THE BRITISH
PLANTATION

B. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

New York State Town Law enables a Town to prepare a comprehensive plan that sets forth the vision and supporting goals, objectives and implementation measure for the immediate and long-range protection, preservation, enhancement, growth and development of the community, and to specifically regulate land use in order to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens. The legislation recognizes that participation of citizens in the planning process is “essential” to the design of a comprehensive plan. Ultimately, a comprehensive plan “fosters cooperation among governmental agencies planning and implementing capital projects” and gives due consideration to the needs of residents and stakeholders.

A comprehensive plan is not required in New York, but when one *is* adopted by the Town Board, the Town’s zoning laws *must* be in accordance with the goals and objectives laid out in the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a “living” document that should adapt to the changing conditions in a Town, as such, it should be updated about every 10-15 years.

The Town of Carmel (Town) last updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2000 (2000 Plan). As the 2000 Plan was almost 20 years old, the Town Board determined it was timely to consider its land use policies and embarked on another update at the end of 2019 with the selection of a planning consultant, Nelson, Pope & Voorhis, LLC (NPV), to facilitate the new plan’s preparation. An advisory group was formed and worked with the NPV to discuss issues and opportunities confronting the Town, review and refine the various public participation events, and vet a draft of proposed recommendations before it was provided to the Town Board. This informal advisory

group was comprised of members of the Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals, as well as representatives from the Town committees and commissions, the development community, local committees, and longtime residents of the Town.

This Plan sets forth Town land use, zoning, and other priorities through the next 13 years. The Plan was intended to address the following, as per guidance from the Town Board:

- ***Provide Continuity*** – The Plan shall provide continuity across time, and give successive public bodies a common framework for addressing land use issues.



Where Are We Now?



Where Are We Going?



Where Do We Want to Be?



How Do We Get There?

- ***Be the means by which the Town can balance competing private interests*** – The Comprehensive plan shall strike a balance among the many competing demands on land by creating development patterns that are orderly and rational.
- ***Be the means by which the Town can protect public investments*** – The Comprehensive Plan shall provide the long-term blueprint for public investments in a logical and well-planned fashion, thereby avoiding duplicating efforts or re-doing improvements.
- ***Define future growth in a way that protects valued resources*** – The Comprehensive Plan shall identify significant and sensitive environmental resources, open space areas, historic and cultural resources warranting protection and identify strategies for preserving those resources from destruction or degradation by inappropriate development.
- ***Provide guidance for shaping the appearance and character of the community*** - The Comprehensive Plan shall establish and reinforce policies that foster a distinctive sense of place.
- ***Promote economic development*** – The Comprehensive Plan shall channel and drive investment to suitable areas of the Town.
- ***Provide justification for decisions*** – The Comprehensive Plan shall provide a factual and objective basis to support zoning decisions, which bolsters the defense against legal challenges.
- ***Create a collective vision for the future*** – The Comprehensive Plan, developed through a robust process of public engagement, will enjoy strong community support. Subsequent decisions that are consistent with the plan’s policies are less likely to become embroiled in public controversy.

An Existing Conditions Report was conducted to establish current conditions in the Town related to:

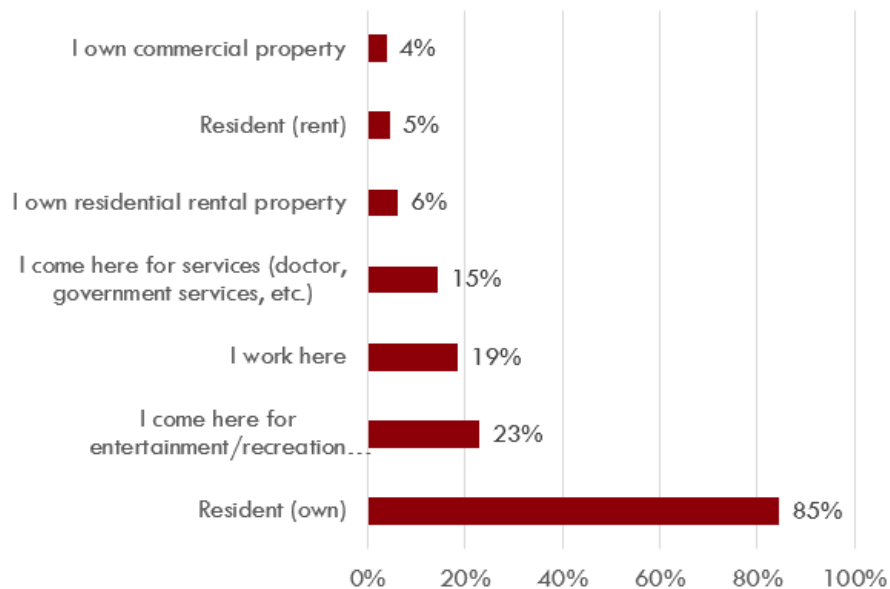
- ***Demographics, Socioeconomics and Housing;***
- ***Land Use and Zoning;***
- ***Natural Resources;***
- ***Transportation and Mobility;***
- ***Community Facilities and Resources;***
- ***Utilities; and***
- ***Historic and Cultural Resources.***

Appendix A provides a snapshot of current conditions influencing land use and other patterns in the Town. Data regarding the latest U.S. Census statistics, regional reports, economic information, land use and environmental inventories, and other data, informed the preparation of this Plan.

SURVEY RESULTS OVERVIEW

1,105 Responses over **3 months**

Affiliation with Town of Carmel



Example of Public Survey Results.

The advisory group provided thoughtful comments, questions, concerns, guidance, and technical insights in their review of the planning materials to bring this Plan together. Importantly, the Town maximized public input into the comprehensive planning process. This Plan is the outcome of a public outreach strategy, beginning with an in-person public workshops held in 2020 in order to identify stakeholder issues and opportunities. To reach even more stakeholders and community members, an online survey was developed and made available for over three months. The findings from this online survey, in-person workshop, and two (2) public video teleconference workshops shaped the Plan (see below).

1. PUBLIC OUTREACH STRATEGY

1.1 Participatory Planning in a Pandemic

In March 2020, a global pandemic hit the United States, affecting all communities including the Town of Carmel. Precautions were prescribed by federal, state, county, and local governments to slow the spread of Covid-19. One such precaution included eliminating or significantly restricting the number of persons allowed at any in-person meetings, workshops, and large gatherings. Despite the restrictions on

gathering in person, the Town remained committed to engaging the public and carrying out the intent of an inclusive public participation process. Workshops were redesigned to be conducted as online webinars using the Zoom™ meeting platform, and one in-person workshop allowed participants to meet in accordance with all health precautions. In spite of the pandemic, much public feedback and insight was shared, with high response rate to the online public survey. Workshop summaries are provided in **Appendices B and C**.

1.2 Outreach Methods

The Town of Carmel initiated the process of updating the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, last adopted in 2000. A major element to preparing a Comprehensive Plan is gathering public input and building consensus on the Town’s needs, strengths, and a vision for the future. Public participation took place primarily through three (3) methods: an online survey, an in-person workshop and two webinar workshops. Additionally, a project-specific email address was created to encourage members of the community and other stakeholders to submit questions, comments, and/or concerns throughout the planning process.

Online Survey

The informal advisory group worked with NPV to draft and administer an online public survey. The survey contained 25 questions on topics including demographics, residential, commercial, and recreational growth, tourism, visual preferences for buildings as well as perceived strengths and issues facing the Town. The survey included multiple choice, rank preference and open-ended questions through the online survey program “Survey Monkey.” The survey was marketed using the Town’s Comprehensive Plan page, articles in Mahopac News, flyers at E-waste Day, emergency text, the Chambers Carmel hamlet e-blast, Facebook, digital sign at Town Hall and DMV, the Mahopac School, and through word of mouth via advisory group members.

The survey was left open from September 10, 2020, to December 31, 2020, during which time 1,105 people responded to the survey, 85% of which are residents of the Town. Additionally, the survey was re-opened to gather additional input after the webinars were held. Responses are quantified and summarized below, combining similar comments by theme to get a more focused sense of user sentiments. As you can see, the beauty of Carmel, sense of community, school system, and natural beauty ranked highly.

Respondents also shared their concerns about the Town. Comments ranged on issues of traffic flow and road maintenance, overdevelopment and the impacts to water/lake quality and environmental resources, taxes and affordability, concern about economic development and the need for new businesses. Respondents also expressed a need for diverse and affordable housing and beautification efforts in the downtown areas, and that frequent power outages must be addressed.

A total of 810 respondents answered a multiple-choice question to select all of the priorities they feel are important for Carmel in the next 10-20 years. Sixty-four percent 64% (518) of responses support the expansion of local convenience, retail, restaurants and personal service businesses within Town; 60% prioritize economic development and expansion of employment opportunities and 54% prioritize environmental conservation and open space protection. Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents prioritize encouragement of renewable energy and other sustainability initiatives and 50% support focusing on the protection of water quality in the lakes and streams in Town.



Public Survey Results - "Priorities for the Next 10-20 Years"

A detailed summary of the online survey results is provided in Appendix B and was one of many inputs to the Town's deliberations and recommendations identified in this Plan.

Workshops

In-Person Workshop 1

On October 29, 2020, from 1-4 PM, the Town of Carmel held an open-house public workshop at the Sycamore Park Recreation Center to provide informational data about the Town's comprehensive planning process and collect public input on a collective Town vision, and determine issues and

opportunities related to the Town of Carmel's growth and preservation. The workshop consisted of six work stations:

1. Introduction and existing conditions map gallery
2. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
3. A vision for the future
4. What does Carmel need?
5. Visual preference survey
6. Trails and recreation

After the workshop, five (5) poster boards for two of the stations were placed at the Town of Carmel Town Hall for an additional one and one-half months to facilitate additional public input. The stations were Station 2 (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) and Station 5 (residential visual preference survey, non-residential visual preference survey, and a board for posting "favorite place" ideas). In addition, existing conditions posters were also posted for informational purposes. Social distancing measures were implemented because of the COVID pandemic and participants were provided with a handout that explained COVID safety protocols for the workshop and detailed the workshop format and topics. Participants were also provided their own pen, a page of dot stickers, and post-it notes to use at each station. These materials ensured that participants could review the station topics and respond without forming crowds or sharing materials at each station for health and safety protection. Members of the consultant team were positioned throughout the room and at each station to answer any questions, guide participants through the workshop topics and facilitate discussion. Approximately 31 (thirty-one) people participated in the public workshop, not including advisory group members that also participated in the process – occupancy of the building was limited to 50 persons for health and safety purposes. Some of the takeaways from this first workshop were:

- Participants were appreciative that the Town was affording them an opportunity to express their opinions on the present and future of Carmel.
- Regarding Town strengths, the majority of comments were related to natural resources and recreational activities available in the Town, followed by positive community character and availability of Town services.
- Weaknesses were expressed as lack of road infrastructure, including sidewalks, and high traffic volumes, high property taxes coupled with lack of a commercial base to offset them.
- Many comments focused upon the hamlet downtown centers, and what could be done to improve them.
- Opportunities for the Town were related to improving transportation linkages including bike trails and sidewalks, economic development opportunities and increasing affordable housing for both seniors and young adults, community character and services. Specific projects that were mentioned included bike trail connecting downtown Mahopac with Croton Falls train station, and the redesign of Route 6/6N corridor.
- Threats to the Town's values fell in four general categories: traffic and road infrastructure, overdevelopment, environmental threats, and NYCDEP regulatory restrictions.
- A draft vision was posted for participants to react to. Participants were asked to select the words that were most appropriate for the vision statement. Socially vibrant downtowns,

traditionally designed main streets, excellent schools, rail trails, and scenic beauty were the most popular vision words. The vision words with least number of votes were highlands community, Mahopac, semi-rural, and diversified commercial uses.

As part of the workshop, a mini visual preference assessment was performed, where participants selected images of the types of residential and nonresidential uses, they liked best and which they thought would be appropriate for Carmel. In terms of residential uses, the majority preferred small lot single-family dwellings as starter homes. Mixed use residential and nonresidential buildings, with a building height that was no more than 3 stories, was also received well. Participants also preferred low-scale 1-story commercial buildings set to a generous sidewalk. Two story traditional commercial buildings also scored well. The image that scored the highest was that which showed an image of the commercial buildings in Katonah. Throughout this effort, it is evident that the public appreciates a traditional village-scale downtown environment. This helped guide the goals and objectives for this Plan.

Webinars 1 and 2

NPV, in collaboration with the advisory group, conducted two online public webinars as part of the ongoing Comprehensive Plan process on April 17 and April 19, 2021. The webinars were intended to complement and supplement the in-person workshop so that persons who did not feel comfortable attending an in-person public event during the Covid-19

pandemic would be able to provide input. The webinars and workshop are part of the robust public participation program for this Plan



Webinar Session 1 was conducted on a Saturday between 10-noon and had approximately 45 attendees. Webinar Session 2 was conducted on Monday between 7-9 PM with about 89 attendees. In total, 134 people participated through the online webinar events. Both sessions presented identical information and were conducted using the online meeting platform Zoom. The goal of the webinars was to educate participants about the comprehensive plan process and the data that had been collected as part of the process to date, and to receive feedback from participants on the needs and future Vision for the Town of Carmel. The webinar results highlight the following:

- The majority agreed with the draft Vision phrases – “Residents benefit from living in a semi-rural atmosphere while still being part of the bustling New York metropolitan region and its employment centers” and “The downtown hamlet areas will be the focus of activity in the Town, spurred by revitalized traditionally-designed ‘main streets’ that feature restaurants, eateries, cultural facilities

and small businesses, recreational connections to the lakefront and are a destination for community gatherings and events”.

- Entertainment and tourism uses received the most support as the land uses which should be encouraged. Non-polluting, job creating uses was second, followed by restaurants and breweries.
- In terms of natural resources, enacting greater protection for wells, aquifers and drinking water ranked No. 1.
- Protecting streams, wetlands and other waterbodies from disturbance, but also streamlining the environmental permitting process, both ranked No. 2.
- The majority of participants felt more public access to lakes or waterfront in Carmel is needed.
- The types of water-dependent/enhanced uses that should be encouraged that received over 50 percent support include kayak/canoe/paddleboat rentals, and a public swimming beach, non-motorized beach launch and public parks.
- Like the workshop and survey, a visual survey assessment was also conducted. Again, small lot single-family dwellings, small multifamily dwellings that appear to be single-family dwellings, townhomes with varied architectural facades up to two stories, were supported. For commercial uses, converted dwellings, one-story and two-story commercial buildings that front to generous sidewalks ranked highly – even two-story buildings with angled parking in front did well. Corporate style buildings set in a campus style environment were also acceptable. Again, images of Katonah ranked highly.
- The implementation of design guidelines to guide renovations and future development, whether residential (but not conventional single-family dwellings) or nonresidential, were supported. Design guidelines were supported for commercial and nonresidential districts, as well as the two downtowns in Mahopac and Carmel hamlets.

In summary, the public’s comments, embodied in the online survey and the results of the workshop and webinars, has guided the Vision, Goals and Objectives of this Plan that follow.

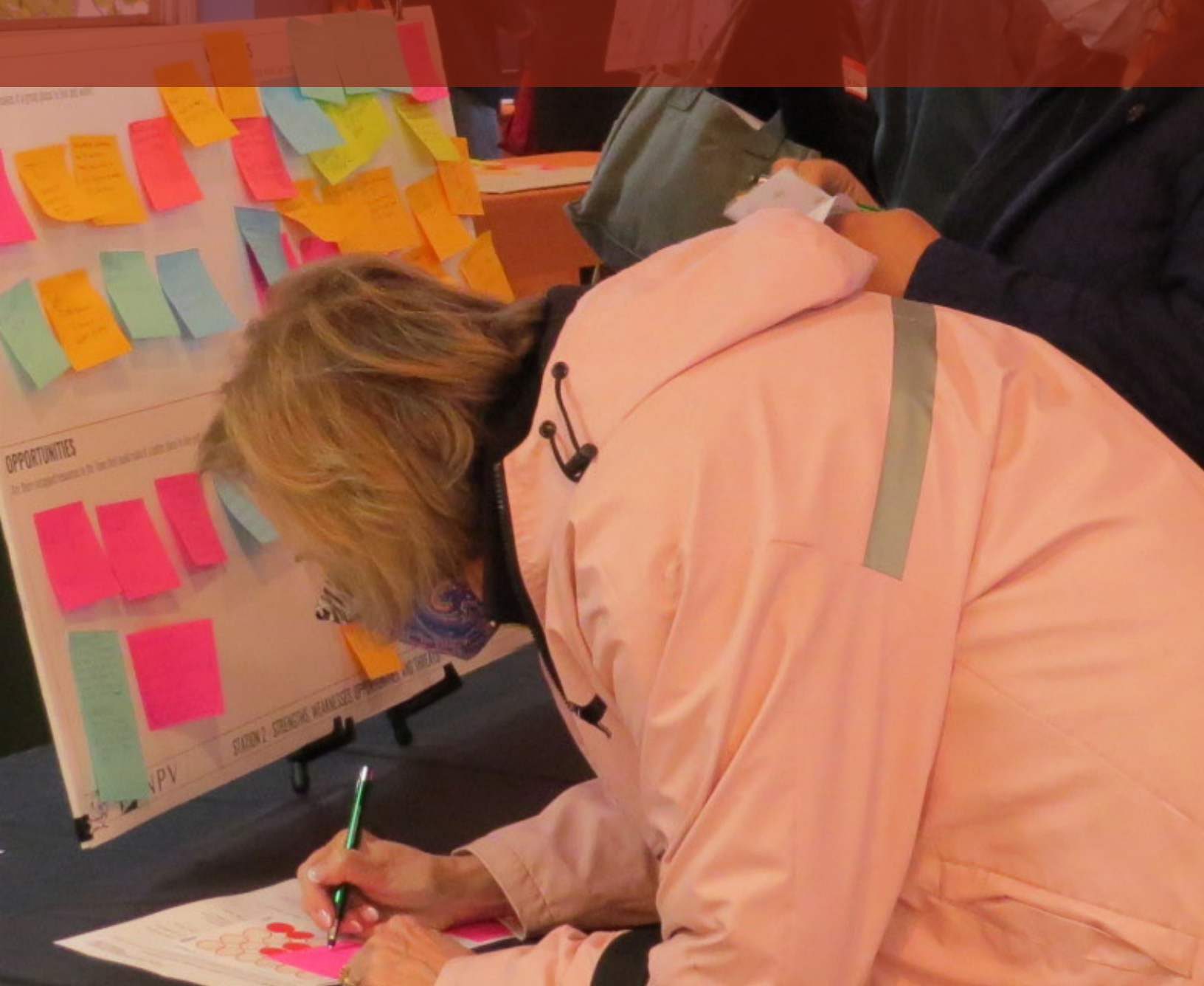
2. NEXT STEPS

Upon completion of the draft Comprehensive Plan, the Town Board will hold a public meeting to present the document and obtain feedback on its recommendations. The Town Board will further review and revise the Plan in light of the public comment. Following completion of an environmental review of the potential effects of implementing the Plan, the Town Board can move to adopt the 2035 Comprehensive Plan. Ultimately, the Town Board and other boards and committees will use the Plan as a policy guide in their decision making and can refer to the Implementation Matrix (Section 9) when considering projects, legislation, and funding in order to advance the Town’s Vision for its future.



C

A VISION FOR CARMEL



C. A Vision for Carmel

The Town of Carmel Comprehensive Plan presents a forward-thinking and long-term Vision for the Town's future. This Vision is supported by broad and clearly defined **goals**, and specific and actionable **objectives**.

1. VISION STATEMENT

Goals and objectives create the action agenda for planning and policy making in the Town. As discussed previously, the zoning and land use decision-making in the Town must be consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan Update.

A VISION FOR THE TOWN OF CARMEL

The Town of Carmel is a community defined by the reservoirs and lakes which dominate the landscape, and its two historic lakefront hamlets – Mahopac and Carmel. The Town has grown to accommodate a diversity of residential neighborhoods served by excellent schools, parks, an expanding rail trail and other major public services. Growth has been balanced with protection of the community's natural resources and scenic beauty. The Town of Carmel is where the countryside begins – residents benefit from living in a semi-rural atmosphere while still being part of the bustling New York metropolitan region and its employment centers. In the next 10-20 years, the Town will continue to evolve to be an attractive place to live, work and play, with socially vibrant downtowns with traditionally designed main streets, interconnected by trails and sidewalks, a mixture of commercial uses, more in-town employment opportunities, and a range of housing types that meet the needs of all age groups - young adults, families, and the elderly. The downtown will feature restaurants, eateries, cultural facilities and small businesses, recreational connections to the lakefronts and will be a destination for community gatherings and events.

2. A SUSTAINABLE VISION

Sustainability is the ability of the Carmel community to meet its present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By ensuring future policies address are aligned with the 3 E's of sustainable development, the Town can pursue a sustainable and resilient future for those who live, work, and invest in Carmel. Embodied in the goals and objectives expressed in this Comprehensive Plan are sustainability measures, including green infrastructure techniques, to help achieve a sustainable community.



Venn Diagram of the 3 E's of Sustainability

2.1 Economy

Economic sustainability and resiliency are achieved through goals and objectives that encourage a diversity of nonresidential and residential land uses to encourage and keep jobs and services in the existing hamlets and developed areas of Carmel, all of which are accessible via a multimodal transportation system. Blending housing with employment reduces vehicular trips, fossil fuel consumption, preserves the environment, and keeps a higher proportion of household expenditures within the local economy. This Plan also recommends encouraging a housing balance that provides workforce housing that retain Carmel's young adults and seniors, ensuring Carmel is a place where people can raise their children and age in place.



Carmel Farmers Market.

2.2 Equity

Equity refers to social equity and environmental justice. Environmental justice seeks to ensure that lower income neighborhoods are not disproportionately impacted by pollutant-causing and unhealthy land uses. Equity also refers to the equitable distribution of resources within a community such as healthy food, housing and transportation options. The “equity” element of the 3 E’s seeks to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities to thrive and contribute to a community both economically and socially - this builds social resilience and sustainability. This Plan recommends diversifying modes of transportation and encouraging transit-oriented development for the benefit of residents with limited transportation options, in order that they may access Town services and employment centers readily and safely. Land use and housing diversity are also emphasized; a strategy that ensures that all residents at various income levels can access Town resources for recreation, employment, food and household goods and other goods and services.

2.3 Environment

Environmental sustainability is addressed in this Plan through goals and objectives that encourage the preservation and enhancement of natural ecosystems, especially as they relate to climate resiliency. Goals and objectives focus on the continued preservation of sensitive woodland habitat, and the Town’s many water bodies and wetlands, and incorporating green infrastructure into the built landscape. The Plan Update also promotes environmental sustainability by encouraging the rehabilitation, reuse and improvement of developed sites and buildings.

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES SUMMARY TABLES

The goals and objectives of the Plan are intended to support the Vision Statement expressed above. The Comprehensive Plan discussion that follows the table describes the goals and objectives in detail. It is also repeated in the Implementation section at the end of the Plan.

1. LAND USE AND ZONING					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 1	Allow development in a pattern consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan.				
1.1	Revitalize the Mahopac and Carmel downtowns.	✓			
1.2	Consider creating a mixed-use zoning district that can be applied to sites where infill development should be encouraged.	✓			
1.3	Ensure that the C/BP zoning district is properly mapped and allow for a flexibility of uses that meet current and future anticipated economic shifts.	✓			
1.4	Review the Zoning chapter to update outdated sections and evaluate new land use issues not previously considered.	✓			
1.5	Add general design guidelines and improve site plan standards consistent with the desire to improve the visual environment and character of the Town.	✓			
1.6	Consider adopting form-based code zoning for the Carmel and Mahopac downtowns.	✓			
1.7	Consider consolidating the various zoning districts that pertain to the NYCDEP watershed lands.	✓			
1.8	Consider creation of a zoning district to include all dedicated open space parcels such as cemeteries, parks and historic sites.		✓		
1.9	Consider adopting incentive zoning provisions.	✓			
1.10	Explore opportunities to create a small mixed-use hamlet by Secor Road to accommodate additional social, entertainment, commercial and housing uses.			✓	
1.11	Explore opportunities to create a small mixed-use hamlet by Mahopac Falls to accommodate additional social, entertainment, commercial and housing uses.		✓		
1.12	Allow the Planning Board to require that site/subdivision plans incorporate green infrastructure and other sustainable practices related to renewable energy or other		✓		

1. LAND USE AND ZONING

Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	methods of greenhouse gas reductions.				
1.13	Update the zoning chapter to ensure that the application review processes are consistent with NYS Town Law, ensure consistent application reviews and interpretation, and encourage investment by conveying clear development expectations.	✓			

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 2	Promote economic development opportunities.				
2.1	Diversify the types of nonresidential uses that are allowed in the Town.	✓			
2.2	Explore creation of a business improvement district in the Mahopac and Carmel hamlet downtowns to secure funding explicitly used for downtown improvements.	✓			
2.3	Protect the integrity of commercial zoning from residential uses.	✓			
2.4	Commit to supporting a group that will pursue economic development opportunities for the Town and develop materials to promote the Town.	✓			
2.5	Consider creating an economic development floating zone to allow for opportunities to locate desirable nonresidential development in areas with appropriate infrastructure and transportation access.		✓		
2.6	Pursue uses that capture demand created by visitors to the Town and tourists in the region.	✓			
2.7	Increase opportunities for research and technology				✓

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	industries to locate within the Town.				
2.8	Work collaboratively with property owners to create shovel ready sites which expedite the planning process for development that is consistent with the Plan.				✓
2.9	Encourage a local food economy by incentivizing the use and sale of locally produced goods in Town	✓			
2.10	Promote a sustainable agricultural economy.	✓			
2.11	Define and permit indoor agricultural production.		✓		
2.12	Support and promote community farms.				✓
2.13	Permit smaller-scale agricultural activities including but not limited to backyard farms, small animal husbandry and apiaries, community farms and gardens.				✓

3. HOUSING					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 3	Promote diverse housing opportunities.				
3.1	Support apartments above ground floor retail space in the hamlet downtowns, to introduce people and add vitality and a market for the “main streets”	✓			
3.2	Redevelop vacant or underutilized shopping centers to create mixed use neighborhoods	✓			
3.3	Consider the adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings for residential use.	✓			
3.4	Consider commissioning a housing needs study for the Town to determine where gaps in housing type		✓		

3. HOUSING					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	and price points may exist and assess whether a mandatory inclusionary housing policy for large residential projects would be beneficial to the Town.				
3.5	Allow for the construction of two-family, three-family, four-family and townhomes in addition to multifamily developments in appropriate locations of the Town, preferably in close proximity and connected to the hamlet downtowns.				✓
3.6	Ensure the cluster subdivision standards are consistent with NYS Town Law				✓
3.7	Evaluate if there are locations in the Town which could accommodate smaller housing lots where sewer is available, and one (1) to two (2) acre zoning in closer proximity to the hamlet centers which would be more affordable than the large lot three (3) acre zoning now required.		✓		

4. NATURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 4	Continue to protect the natural resources in the Carmel which lend the Town its unique semi-rural and woodland character.				
4.1	Ensure that new developments are designed to fit into, and not dominate, the scenic landscape.				✓
4.2	Ensure that the use of “net lot area” is applied to site plan and subdivision review and includes environmental constraints to development including wetlands and waterbodies, steep slopes, agriculturally significant soils (where relevant), aquifers and floodplains. Defining “intact” or “established” forest habitat should				✓

4. NATURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	also be considered within this definition.				
4.3	Promote native and pollinator friendly landscape plantings and control the spread of invasive species. Promote native plant species during subdivision and site plan review.		✓		
4.4	Consider adopting ridgeline preservation regulations or guidelines.		✓		
4.5	Streamline wetland protection laws to avoid overlap between various jurisdictions, including the NYSDEC, NYCDEP, ACOE, and Town.				✓
4.6	Identify opportunity areas and partnerships for restoring riparian and floodplain habitats and lakes.				✓

5. WATERFRONT AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 5	Connect the Town physically and visually to its waterfronts by enhancing public access and recreational and cultural waterfront amenities.				
5.1	Ensure that waterfront zoning considers public waterfront access or viewsheds during site and subdivision plan review	✓			
5.2	Consider obtaining first rights of refusal for any properties which may be in private ownership, and which afford direct access to the lakefronts.	✓			
5.3	Preserve the Mahopac downtown waterfront as a location for water-dependent and water-enhanced uses.	✓			
5.4	Pursue creation of a Local Waterfront	✓			

5. WATERFRONT AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	Revitalization Program.				
5.5	Consider incorporating, designing and constructing innovative access to the waterfront.	✓			
5.6	Integrate public access and recreation opportunities where new development is proposed along the waterfront.	✓			

6. TRANSPORTATION: COMPLETE STREETS AND TRAILS					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 6	Pursue a safe and interconnected multimodal transportation system of trails, sidewalks, and streets.				
6.1	Adopt a Complete Streets resolution specific to the Town of Carmel.	✓			
6.2	Review parking requirements within the zoning chapter, evaluate the current capacity and demand of uses for parking, and allow adjustments and flexibility to reduce any oversupply of parking that limits the scope of building development and introduces unnecessary impervious surfaces.	✓			
6.3	Create a Town bike and trail plan that identifies rights-of-way throughout the Town that are appropriate for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.		✓		
6.4	Promote the continued expansion of the Putnam County Trailway and obtain easements		✓		✓

6. TRANSPORTATION: COMPLETE STREETS AND TRAILS					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	to connect existing neighborhoods to the trail.				
6.5	Continue to improve walkability by reducing curb cuts, improving crosswalks and connecting new and existing sidewalk infrastructure in appropriate locations throughout Town, especially where connections between neighborhoods, public transportation routes and community services are possible.		✓		
6.6	Continue to encourage opportunities to consolidate curb cuts and improve pedestrian safety through the site plan review process.	✓			✓
6.7	Ensure that existing and future on-street bicycle routes throughout Town are safe and clearly marked and ensure pedestrian and bicycle amenities are included in site plan and subdivision review.	✓			
6.8	Pursue New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) funding opportunities				✓
6.9	Support traffic calming measures.				✓

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 7	Preserve and promote the Town's history and scenic character embodied in its historic buildings, cultural assets and landscapes.				
7.1	Implement design guidelines to encourage consistently attractive development.	✓			
7.2	Consider adopting a Downtown Design Overlay District which requires redevelopment and infill	✓			

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	development to be constructed in accordance with traditional downtown standards.				
7.3	Consider requiring art sculptures as part of new or substantially renovated large-scale developments with appropriate art sculptures, landscaping, lighting, and other visual amenities to add visual interest and enhance the appearance of the Town. Incorporate public art into Town streetscapes to enhance the Town's identity and create interesting visual environments.		✓		
7.4	Beautify the main Town transportation corridors, especially at the entrances into the Town.	✓			✓
7.5	Preserve the existing historic buildings in the Town of Carmel.				✓
7.6	Allow the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in order to preserve and protect them.	✓			✓
7.7	Provide the Planning Board with historic review authority when reviewing projects involving historic buildings.	✓			
7.8	Work with local agencies and seek grants to develop a comprehensive list of historic resources and buildings in the Town.				✓
7.9	Pursue local landmark designations, as this process is the most effective at protecting significant historic sites.		✓		
7.8	Create a historic plaque program and provide it to property owners who maintain their historic buildings.		✓		
7.9	Allow the Building Department and Planning Board to enforce design guidelines	✓			✓
7.10	Continue to promote education and visitor		✓		

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	interest in the Town by installing interpretative signage that provide information regarding historic and scenic resources.				
7.11	Work with the Historical Society to create a walking tour of the Carmel hamlet center which has significant historic resources.		✓		
7.12	Preserve the scenic rural and historic character of the Town's roads		✓		



D

LAND PATTERNS

D. Land Patterns

The Town's settlement pattern is influenced primarily by its history, its environment, and the construction of the NYC watershed reservoirs. Historically, settlers came to the Town and settled generally in three areas which became centers for housing, government, and commerce – Carmel, Mahopac, and Red Mills (now referred to as Mahopac Falls).

As rail transportation expanded the reach of New York City vacationers into the Town, it saw the growth of various small lakeside communities. As the Town has grown and evolved, development has generally focused along the Town's major transportation routes, and residential subdivisions have been developed throughout the Town's borders. This Plan recognizes this pattern, and reinforces the settlement pattern, including concentrating development in the two primary hamlets. However, the Plan proposes that more diverse land uses be allowed outside the hamlets and developed in a manner which are consistent with, and which do not impact, existing residential neighborhoods.

Overwhelmingly, this plan is about reimagining and revitalizing the Town's historic hamlet centers in Mahopac and Carmel. It also seeks to allow a land pattern along its primary transportation corridors which reinforce the hamlet centers, rather than competing with them. It seeks to ensure that the residential communities surrounding the lake do not “overwhelm” the health and quality of the lake. The Town also seeks to promote the low-density residential environment outside the hamlets themselves, balancing residential development with environmental protection. To this end, many of the recommendations involve revising land use regulations to achieve the land pattern.

The Conceptual Land Use Map identifies areas discussed in the plan that are appropriate for development and conservation.

1. THREE HAMLETS

The three hamlets in Carmel – Carmel, Mahopac, and Mahopac Falls (Red Mills), have been the historic centers of the Town since its founding.

1.1 Carmel

A history of Carmel in 1849¹ identified it as a quiet, rural, and small village, beautifully situated on what was then called Shaw's Lake, now Lake Gleneida. The hamlet is named after the town in which it is located. The Courthouse, Jail, Clerk's Office, and Putnam County Bank were located by this time and are still located in the hamlet. Through the village, “in the olden time”, ran one of the roads leading from New York City to Albany. It continues to be the home for several community places of worship and also maintains small central business district which serves the immediate hamlet. This historic commercial center of Carmel fronts to Gleneida Avenue (NYS Route 52) at the confluence of Route 301, Fair Street

¹ *The History of Putnam County, William J. Blake, Esq., 1849.*

and Stoneleigh Avenue. The hamlet is the County seat, and is home to the Putnam County Courthouse, Correctional Facility, County Clerk's office, County Court complex and Sheriff's Department. The Carmel Post Office and Carmel High School are situated along Fair Street. Reed Memorial Library anchors the corner of Gleneida Avenue, Stoneleigh Avenue, and Seminary Hill Road. The Town's boundary with the Town of Kent is nearby, just north of the Carmel Shoprite Plaza. The Carmel hamlet's residential neighborhoods are somewhat separated from the historic business district, in part due to the Lake Gleneida and a large wetland complex just east of the hamlet. As a result, the hamlet is "pinched" through the corridor, and development has fanned out south from this location. Development now extends south along Route 6 and Seminary Hill Road, and Stoneleigh Avenue. Most of the modern commercial amenities serving Carmel are concentrated along the Stoneleigh Avenue/Route 6 overlap. Commercial development continues primarily in the direction of Brewster in the Town of Southeast. The Route 6 corridor leads to Interstate I-84, one of the primary transportation connections providing regional and interstate transportation access. The Putnam County Trailway, located along a former branch of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad line (NY, NH and HRR or NH) is a major recreational and transportation amenity that links Brewster to the Carmel and Mahopac hamlets before traveling south into Westchester County. The Carmel hamlet is a census-designated place, and its population was estimated to be 6,345 persons in 2019 with a total of 2,717 housing units.

Based on public input, the Town seeks to revitalize and enliven the hamlet center with a variety of retail entertainment, dining, and recreational uses. The pattern of development, especially near the historic center of the hamlet, should reinforce the traditional building pattern. This includes buildings that front to broad sidewalks with or without small front yards, with street trees, street furniture and other amenities, storefronts for retail with amply window on the first floor, and offices or apartments in upper stories. Buildings could generally be as high as three stories and should reinforce historic architectural patterns. Infill multifamily buildings would be appropriate, provided they reflect the historic character of the hamlet. Should any of the institutional uses that front to Lake Gleneida seek to relocate in the future, buildings should be adaptively reused or reconstructed to mimic a building pattern that prioritizes buildings. Parking areas need to be relocated to the rear. Automotive uses should not be located within the core of the historic Carmel center as these uses are not pedestrian friendly.

The historic buildings in the hamlet need to be protected, preserved, and revitalized. To the south along Stoneleigh Avenue, an opportunity exists to break the strip commercial pattern through small infill townhome and multifamily housing opportunities. Carmel is dominated by a ridgeline between Seminary Hill Road and Stoneleigh Avenue – here, the Retreat at Carmel has been constructed, and the Villas at Seminary Hill are under construction. Because these dwellings sit at the top of the ridge, it is more likely that residents would find it easier to access the central business district along Seminary Hill Road if they were to walk. A safe pathway could be provided to access a revitalized historic hamlet. In general, using the Putnam Trailway as the main spine, connections should be provided which connect the hamlet's neighborhoods to its downtowns, to the great extent possible.

1.2 Mahopac

The hamlet is centered around Lake Mahopac. The hamlet evolved when the New York City and Northern Railroad extended from up through Lake Mahopac, introducing new summer visitors from the

more urban cities to the south. A historic description notes it is "a very desirable resort for all, as it is easy of access, being only five miles from the present termination of the Harlem Railroad at Croton Falls, and only three hours' ride from the city. The ride to the Lake from the railroad is beautiful, it being through such a wild and picturesque country, and is really refreshing after fifty-four miles of railroad travel." The historic and dense commercial center of the hamlet is situated around the triangular area formed by Clark Place, Route 6 and South Lake Boulevard and has grown outward from here. The Putnam Trailway runs just to the south of the hamlet and the former converted train station is still located adjacent to the trailway on Bucks Hollow Road. The hamlet maintains uses along the southern shore of Lake Mahopac, and several marinas are located here. Visual access to the lake from the hamlet is somewhat constrained by the construction of large buildings that are oriented parallel to the lakeshore. This Plan seeks to limit this type of building pattern so as to retain what remaining view corridors still exist of the lake from the hamlet. Similar to Carmel, there is a desire to construct a cohesive, pedestrian oriented environment which connects the entire hamlet. Parking needs to be on-street or relegated to the rear of buildings. Here, design guidelines will help to create a building environment that is reminiscent of historic villages in the area. Small multifamily infill development opportunities exist to create a more active downtown center.

1.3 Mahopac Falls

Mahopac was known as Red Mills, by virtue of the mills which were located here along the Muscoot River. It is at the outfall to Kirk Lake and at the southwesterly end of Lake Mahopac. The Mahopac Middle School and High School complex serve as a transitional border between Mahopac Falls and Mahopac hamlet. The center of Mahopac Falls centers around a couple of commercial plazas that are situated at the intersection of Hill Street (CR32) and NYS Route 6N. A park also dominates this corner which was the site of the former mills. The hamlet has a post office, places of worship, and public and private schools. There are large wetland complexes associated with the Muscoot River which somewhat separate the hamlet and limit development within the center. The Putnam County Golf Course is within one mile of the center of the hamlet and is an attraction drawing persons to the area. Only a few parcels that encompass the small commercial plazas and the bank are zoned for commercial use. There is an opportunity to allow the adaptive reuse of buildings within the center and along Route 6N to be reused for local commercial and personal service establishments.

2. LAKE COMMUNITIES

The Town of Carmel is home to a number of lakefront residential communities that surround the many small and large lakes and reservoirs within the Town. The major and minor water bodies include the West Branch Reservoir, Croton Falls Reservoir, Lake Gleneida, Lake Gilead, Lake Casse, Lake Mahopac, Kirk Lake, Lake Secor, Long Pond, Lake Ossi, Wixon Pond and Dixon Lake, Glencoma, Baldwin and Teakettle Spout lakes. Some lakes are entirely encircled by road and residential uses (e.g., lake Casse), while other water bodies have significant buffers between development and the shores (e.g, Lake Gilead), although visual access to these waterbodies exists and adds value to the residences around them. Some of the lakes are owned and controlled by individual homeowner and property owner associations, giving lake rights only to the residential subdivisions surrounding them. Others are associated with the NYCDEP watershed and are not accessible except by non-motorized boats. Lakes are

also owned by the Town of Carmel (e.g., Secor Lake, Lake Casse) as well as Putnam County (Lake Macgregor). Lake Mahopac is the largest lake which is available for both motorized and non-motorized boating and is heavily used. Few of the lakes outside of the hamlets have small commercially zoned areas that cater to local residents. One commercial area serves the Secor Lake neighborhood but uses and commercial demand are generated by the proximity of this area to the Taconic Parkway. As discussed below, the major commercial areas outside the hamlets are the Town's commercial corridors, namely Routes 6 and 52. The Comprehensive Plan envisions that these lake communities will continue to remain residential in character. Around the larger lakes, such as Lake Mahopac and Kirk Lake, an opportunity exists to allow additional water dependent and water enhanced uses, ranging from bed and breakfasts, restaurants, breweries and distilleries, and other entertainment related uses, provided these uses are situated on lots which are large and would not impact adjoining residential uses.

3. COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

The Route 6/52 corridor travels from the northern to the southern borders of the Town. Specifically, Route 52 extends from the Town of Kent where it meets up with Route 311 providing northerly access to I-84. Route 52 meets Route 6 in the Carmel hamlet – Route 6 travels east along Stoneleigh Avenue toward Brewster and I-84. Traveling south from the Carmel hamlet, Route 6 travels along the southerly shore of Lake Mahopac and connects to Baldwin Place in Westchester County. This corridor has been zoned primarily for commercial uses, with a gap in this commercial zoning between Lakes Mahopac and Gleneida where it travels along the West Branch Reservoir. Within the Carmel hamlet and along Route 6 north of Baldwin Place, large tracts have been zoned for Commerce/Business Park. About 250 acres of underutilized land is located west of Route 6 on the outskirts of Baldwin Place, while parcels on the outskirts of the Carmel hamlet include the hillsides on either side of Route 6, including an undeveloped subdivision south of the Centennial Golf Club property.

The only other smaller commercially zoned “node” is to the north of the Putnam Hospital Center. It is envisioned that this commercial node could be zoned to a commercial zone which emphasizes medical, office, and limited retail uses that would serve the immediate neighborhood. It is noted that there are scattered commercial uses located along Route 6N, but this corridor is zoned Residential.

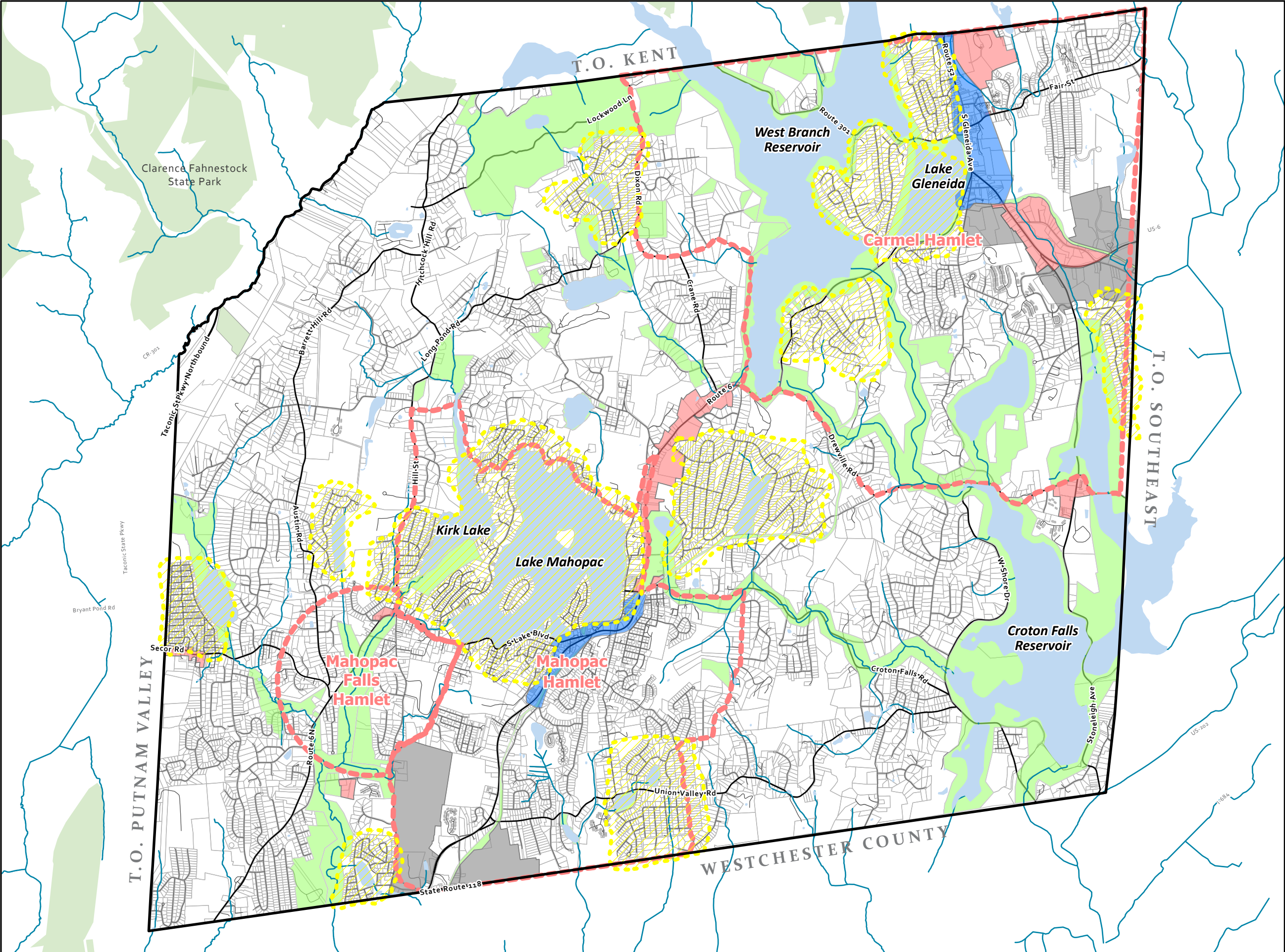
Because Route 6/52 is a high traffic volume regional road connecting Carmel with larger commercial and employment centers and major highway systems, it is highly visible and to some extent sets the visual image of the Town. A very broad mix of commercial uses have been located along the corridor, ranging from heavy commercial to automotive to personal service establishments. The Comprehensive Plan envisions better standards to regulate the design of uses along this corridor. The zoning of the commercial corridor could be more diversified so as to control heavy commercial uses (contractor yard, automotive uses) to more distinct and limited areas which can be visually buffered. Future zoning should ensure broad landscape setbacks, unlike the downtowns, which should be regulated by zoning which encourages traditional downtown building patterns.

4. HILL AND VALLEY NEIGHBORHOODS

The Town's geography, like much of the Hudson Highlands region within which it is situated, consists of a series of hills and valleys. The road names in Carmel are evidence of the Town's geography – Seminary Hill, Cherry Hill, Weber Hill, Shear Hill, Barrett Hill, Hitchcock Hill roads – lots are carved into the hillsides and valleys, many providing attractive vistas to the Town's lakes and reservoirs. Within the valleys, remnant farmsteads still exist. While farming was not a large-scale activity in the Town, the valleys did have farms, such as those that existed along Hill Street, Austin Road, Agor Lane, Mechanic Street, Gypsy Trail Road and other roads. Many of these roads are historic, dating back to the 1800s and earlier, and many still maintain larger estate style and country homes with barns as evidence of this farming past. It is anticipated that development patterns outside the commercial corridors and hamlets will continue to be primarily residential. However, there is an opportunity to allow nonresidential uses, including agricultural uses and small craft industries, and tourism-related entertainment uses on larger lots within these areas of the Town, provided they do not impact existing residential neighborhoods. Because it is a goal of the Comprehensive Plan to allow larger scale uses which generate jobs and property tax revenues, provided they are environmentally friendly or neutral in their impacts, it is envisioned that an economic development floating zone could be applied to these areas, which would require Town Board and Planning Board approval, if it is consistent with this Plan.

5. CONCEPTUAL LAND USE MAP

The map that follows illustrates the conceptual land use pattern for the Town. The methods for pursuing this land use pattern are described in the chapter that follows.



Town of Carmel

Comprehensive Plan

**Map 1:
Concept Plan**

- Hamlets
- Hill & Valley Neighborhoods
- Lake Communities
- Commercial Corridor Areas
- Downtown Areas
- Economic Development Areas
- Open Space/Recreation Areas
- Surface Water
- Town of Carmel Boundary
- Streams
- NYS DEC Lands
- NYS OPRHP Lands



1 inch equals 1 miles

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;
Putnam County GIS; NYS GIS Clearinghouse

E

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



E. Goals and Objectives

In this chapter, the goals and objectives that will implement the Vision for the Town of Carmel are described.

The following sections reflect major themes related to the overall Vision for the Town:

1. Land Use and Zoning
2. Economic Development Opportunities
3. Housing
4. Natural Resources
5. Waterfront & Recreational Opportunities
6. Transportation
7. Historic, Scenic, and Cultural Preservation

Following these sections is an Implementation section which summarizes the action items which can be pursued to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

1. LAND USE AND ZONING

GOAL 1:

Allow development in a pattern consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan.

Objective 1.1

Revitalize the Mahopac and Carmel downtowns.

The Comprehensive Plan, based on significant input by the community, seeks to revitalize the Mahopac and Carmel downtowns. The vision is for these downtowns to be the focus of entertainment, commercial shopping, recreation, and nightlife for people of all ages. To that end, the downtowns need to be guided by zoning districts which are specific to each downtown, with uses differentiated from the more general commercial zone applicable to the commercial corridors. Among the considerations of a new zoning district, the following should be considered:

- Allow for 2-3 story buildings with retail on the ground floor and offices and apartments in the upper stories, in appropriate locations in the hamlet.
- Reserve and open up view corridors to Lake Mahopac and Lake Gleneida. New regulations should ensure that views of the waterfront, which are important to the character of each one, are preserved. Long buildings should not be sited parallel to the lakefront, which only serve to block views. Building massing needs to be stepped down, approaching the waterfronts.

Objective 1.2

Consider creating a mixed-use zoning district that can be applied to sites where infill development should be encouraged.

There are other potential locations in the Town which could accommodate a mixed-use development in the future, provided sewer capacity exists. This includes areas such as along Route 6 approaching Baldwin Place. Also, underutilized shopping centers could be converted to allow a mix of residential and nonresidential uses. The zoning district would require that a master plan for development be prepared, and that there be a mix of residential housing types to meet diverse housing needs, as well as commercial uses to provide employment and property tax revenues. The mixed-use zoning district could be a floating zone, which only lands upon an Applicant submitting a zone petition, and only upon approval by the Town Board. The floating zone would be guided by siting criteria defining where it could “land”, e.g., requirement for central sewer, minimum acreage, frontage on state road, etc. It would also have design standards related to density and intensity of housing and commercial uses, respectively. In this manner, it would be a flexible option for future developers to pursue, not relegating the zone to any one parcel.

Objective 1.3

Ensure that the C/BP zoning district is properly mapped and allow for a flexibility of uses that meet current and future anticipated economic shifts.

At present, the C/BP zoning district allowed multifamily dwellings for the elderly, which is a use which is generally inconsistent with manufacturing and other uses that are situated in the zone. In the Economic Development section of this chapter, the Plan recommends diversifying and allowing additional nonresidential uses in the nonresidential zones in the Town. Multifamily developments may be better situated within a distinct zoning district that allows this specific use. In this manner, the Town would also avoid any additional non-residentially zoned land being used for residential purposes.

Objective 1.4

Review the Zoning chapter to update outdated sections and evaluate new land use issues not previously considered.

It is important that the Town continue to consider emerging land uses to ensure that they are properly regulated based on the needs of the Town. Emerging land uses to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Camping, “glamping” and other ecotourism related land uses
- Short-term home rentals
- Telecommunications facilities including 5G technology
- Large-Scale Energy (battery) storage facilities, as well as permitting for home battery storage systems

The Town should consider the appropriateness of these uses relative to consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.5

Add general design guidelines and improve site plan standards consistent with the desire to improve the visual environment and character of the Town.

The Town zoning chapter provides standards for parking, loading, and other accessory uses. To improve the visual appearance of properties that are proposed to be developed or redeveloped, it is recommended that minimum landscape and lighting standards be added to the regulations.

The Town’s sign regulations should be reviewed and updated to ensure that signs are attractive, in scale with the buildings and properties where they are located. The Town should consider allowing projecting signs within the hamlet downtown centers.

Lastly, general design standards can be added with regard to the layout of a site to assist the Planning Board in developing attractive layouts, whatever type of development is proposed. The Planning Board could grant waivers from the standards on a case by case-by-case basis.

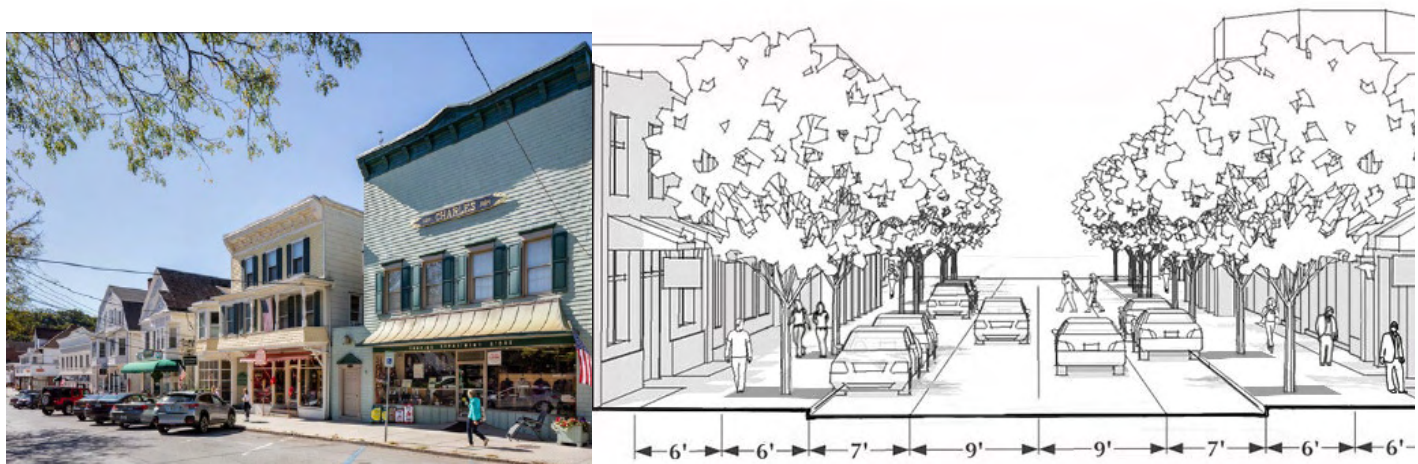
Objective 1.6

Consider adopting form-based code zoning for the Carmel and Mahopac downtowns.

As defined by the Form Based Code Institute, a form-based code is a land use regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the regulations. As a result of the various visual survey assessments that were conducted during the public participation process, it is clear that the community wants the downtowns revitalized and their model image was specifically downtown Katonah. Specific aspects of the Katonah downtown environment include:

- Buildings are set to the sidewalk;
- The ground level is lined with stores, with general display windows which add visual interest to the downtown;
- There is a solid “street wall”, i.e., parking is not located in front of the buildings, and there are not driveways and curb cuts that would break up the pedestrian experience;
- Buildings are 2.5-3 stories, and do not overwhelm the streetscape;
- The facades of buildings are articulated, and some of the buildings are historic residential structures which have been adaptively reused;
- Signs are attractive, and landscape planters or planter boxes add visual interest in front of the shops. Real awnings provide authenticity to the buildings, and shade pedestrians in the summer months;
- Angled parking has been provided in front of the storefronts, similar to the experience along South Lake Boulevard in Mahopac;
- A landscape median provides shade trees and breaks up the expanse of pavement along Parkway, a road serving the downtown.
- Uses are a combination of boutique retail, personal service, dining, and offices on the ground floor, with nonresidential or residential apartments above.

Specific form-based codes should be considered for downtown Mahopac and Carmel.



Objective 1.7

Consider consolidating the various zoning districts that pertain to the NYCDEP watershed lands.

At this time, the districts shown on the zoning map, other than Conservation-zoned parcels, are not regulated by any zoning district regulations. Specifically, there are New York City Watershed, New York City MOA, and Waterbody zoning districts, which could be combined, and a use table created to describe the activities that occur/are allowed there.

Objective 1.8

Consider creation of a zoning district to include all dedicated open space parcels such as cemeteries, parks and historic sites.

A review of the zoning map shows that not all recreational and open space uses are identified. Also, there is opportunity to consolidate some of the zoning districts that may cover open space, e.g., the Conservation zone. The Town could consider one Recreation and Open Space zoning district to encompass all of these lands. The Town may want to place lands that are in Town or County ownership within this category, to differentiate them from NYCDEP lands.

Objective 1.9

Consider adopting incentive zoning provisions.

NYS Town law allows municipalities to implement incentive zoning. Section 26-1b of NYS Town Law defines an incentive zoning as "a zoning system by which specific incentives or bonuses are granted, pursuant to this section, on condition that specific physical, social or cultural benefits or amenities would inure to the municipality. Incentives are adjustments to the permissible population density, area, height, open space, use, or other provisions of a zoning law for a specific purpose authorized by a town board. A community benefit or amenity is defined as open space, housing for persons of low or moderate income, parks, elder care, day care or other specific physical, social or cultural amenities, or cash in lieu thereof, of benefit to the residents of the community authorized by a town board.

Incentive zoning provides a means by which the Town can achieve one of its objectives. So, for example, an objective has been for the Town to construct a swimming pool. A developer, in exchange for a density bonus, could donate land, monies, or assist in the construction of a swimming pool (above and beyond the normal recreational set aside required for a residential site and subdivision plans). As part of the zoning update, the Town Board should consider whether to implement a system of incentive zoning to achieve an objective set forth in this Comprehensive Plan. Incentive zoning is discretionary on the part of the Town Board, so if a project is proposed in a location where the density would not be appropriate, it does not have to allow incentives.

Objective 1.10

Explore opportunities to create a small mixed-use hamlet by Secor Road to accommodate additional social, entertainment, commercial and housing uses.

At this time, the C zoning district primarily serves as a general business district which allows a whole host of uses, some of which are not necessarily related to the needs of the local neighborhood there. This small hub is highly accessible to the Taconic State Parkway and could accommodate a mix of small scale multifamily housing, mixed residential and nonresidential uses, and social and entertainment uses. The zoning district would be revised to allow uses similar to those that would be allowed in the new downtown zones for Mahopac and Carmel, but development would be regulated to allow a lower density and intensity of uses.

Objective 1.11

Explore opportunities to create a small mixed-use hamlet by Mahopac Falls to accommodate additional social, entertainment, commercial and housing uses.

On a smaller scale, Mahopac Falls has a “center” which contains various commercial uses, a park, and school and fire district uses are on the edges of this center. Although not at the same scale as what is envisioned for the downtown Carmel and Mahopac hamlets, there is opportunity to adaptively reuse the older buildings here, and focus uses to allow more entertainment, retail, recreation and similar uses to this area. Smaller scale multifamily housing, like townhomes and three-family dwellings could be allowed, subject to architectural design guidelines.

Objective 1.12

Allow the Planning Board to require that site/subdivision plans incorporate green infrastructure and other sustainable practices related to renewable energy or other methods of greenhouse gas reduction.

To encourage sustainability, the Town should allow the Planning Board to require that sustainability practices be incorporated into a development’s design. The Planning Board, in its discretion, could require installation of one of the practices, depending on the scale of the development. These practices may include but are not limited to:

- Green or solar rooftops/rooftop agriculture
- Solar awnings over parking areas
- Provision of EV charging stations in parking areas
- On-site building use of renewable energy including solar or geothermal
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification
- Passive Building Certification
- Landscaped rain gardens or bioswales
- Permeable Paving

Continuing maintenance of green infrastructure, once installed, including rain gardens and bioswale upkeep should also be incorporated into site plan approvals.

Objective 1.13

Update the zoning chapter to ensure that the application review processes are consistent with NYS Town Law, ensure consistent application reviews and interpretation, and encourage investment by conveying clear development expectations.

The zoning chapter needs to be updated to address a variety of procedural matters. The following items need to be addressed:

- Update the zoning to be clear as to what is allowed as a permitted use or special use. All references to conditional uses need to be revised to refer to them as special uses, as the NYS Town Law was updated to provide legislative authority for municipalities to establish and regulate them. Special use permits should be subject to Planning Board review and approval, and procedural and general standards added to the zoning to guide review of special use permit applications.
- Eliminate all references in the zoning code to zoning districts that no longer exist.
- Make explicit whether fast food restaurants allow drive throughs.
- Review designed shopping center regulations and whether the types are necessary to regulate.
- Update the zoning to reference current maps and standards applicable to the FEMA-regulated floodplains.
- Update the Zoning Board of Appeals regulations in the zoning chapter by specifically referencing the criteria for area and use variances as per NYS Town Law.
- Others are determined necessary through review of the zoning.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL 2:

Promote diverse economic development opportunities.

Objective 2.1

Diversify the types of nonresidential uses that are allowed in the Town.

Within the zoning chapter, the allowable uses set forth in Schedule A could be made more expansive and explicit of the types of uses Carmel seeks to have located in the Town, e.g., farm to table restaurants, delicatessens, coffee shops, health food shops, breweries and distilleries. While retail may broadly cover many of these uses, this use may also be too broad, allowing uses that may not be less desirable, e.g., automotive uses in the downtown areas. By providing more descriptive uses, it provides the Code Enforcement Officer with a better ability to interpret the specific uses which the Town desires in the various zoning districts.

Objective 2.2

Explore creation of a business improvement district in the Mahopac and Carmel hamlet downtowns to secure funding explicitly used for downtown improvements.

Article 19-A of the NYS General Municipal Law provides the legislative authority to establish business improvement districts (BIDs). BIDs are economic development organizations that deliver public services to specific neighborhoods to supplement the bundle of public services provided by the government and are funded by mandatory tax assessments paid by merchants and property owners within the district. The menu of services provided varies, but BIDs generally fund a combination of sanitation, security, capital improvements, neighborhood promotions, and business attraction. BIDs often serve as a method of branding an area. Neighborhood amenities include but are not limited to:

- construction and installation of landscaping, planting, and park areas;
- construction of lighting and heating facilities;
- construction of physically aesthetic and decorative safety fixtures, equipment and facilities;
- construction of improvements to enhance security of persons and property within the district;
- construction of pedestrian overpasses and underpasses and connections between buildings;
- closing, opening, widening or narrowing of existing streets;
- construction of ramps, sidewalks, plazas, and pedestrian malls;
- rehabilitation or removal of existing structures;
- removal and relocation of utilities and vaults;
- construction of parking lot and parking garage facilities;
- construction of fixtures, equipment, facilities and appurtenances as may enhance the movement, convenience and enjoyment of the public and be of economic benefit to surrounding properties such as: bus stop shelters; benches and street furniture; booths, kiosks, display cases, and exhibits; signs; receptacles; canopies; pedestrian shelters and fountains;

- provide for the operation and maintenance of any district improvement;
- provide for additional maintenance or other additional services required for the enjoyment and protection of the public and the promotion and enhancement of the district whether or not in conjunction with improvements authorized by this section, including: enhanced sanitation services; services promoting and advertising activities within the district; marketing education for businesses within the district; decorations and lighting for seasonal and holiday purposes; and services to enhance the security of persons and property within the district.

Not unlike a water, sewer or lighting district, the property owners within the business district are taxed and all improvements can only occur within the BID. The BID is guided by a district plan which is a map and written report which among other things, will identify the improvements and costs to be funded through the BID.

In Hyannis, MA, they have paid for organized events, installed new streetlights, installed planters, signage and other improvements.



Signage installed as part of Main Street improvements.

Objective 2.3

Protect the integrity of commercial zoning from residential uses.

At this time, the C zoning district allows single-family dwellings as principal permitted uses. Yet, the C zone is the single zoning district which covers a variety of environmental from commercial corridors to the downtowns, and single-family dwellings are not necessarily appropriate to all the C locations. As mentioned previously, the C zone should be further differentiated based on the land patterns expressed in the Comprehensive Plan, and do not allow single-family and other residential uses where not appropriate.

Objective 2.4

Commit to supporting a group that will pursue economic development opportunities for the Town and develop materials to promote the Town.

To ensure that the Town keeps a constant focus on pursuing economic development opportunities, the Plan recommends that a standing Economic Development Committee be created to serve as a liaison between the Town Board and existing and prospective businesses, which could develop promotional materials that describe the benefits of working, living and playing in Carmel.

The Town should also promote existing businesses on the Town website and could print a map of businesses in the Town and/or hamlets to have available as handouts in local commercial businesses or post the map on the Town website.

Objective 2.5

Consider creating an economic development floating zone to allow for opportunities to locate desirable nonresidential development in areas with appropriate infrastructure and transportation access.

A floating zone is a zoning district that is written into the Town Zoning chapter but does not “land” until an applicant petitions the Town Board to apply the zone to a particular site. The Town Board would approve the zone based on findings that the proposed project is consistent with the siting criteria, intent and regulations of the floating zoning district.

It is difficult to zone for every conceivable use that could potentially occur in the Town. While there are obvious uses which the Town would prohibit, there are many that might be acceptable in the appropriate location, but where the use is not listed in the Zoning chapter because it was simply not contemplated. The Town could establish an economic development zone for larger-scale nonresidential uses where it could allow a variety of nonresidential uses that would be subject to performance and design standards.

Where residential development is not preferred, but a vibrant, walkable place or employment center is desirable, the Town might consider a light industrial/commercial mixed use or innovation district where employment hubs and service commercial uses (restaurants, banks, retail, grocery store) might be mixed and connect to an existing residential neighborhood.

Objective 2.6

Pursue uses that capture demand created by visitors to the Town and tourists in the region.

The Hudson River Valley is a significant tourist destination area. Putnam County’s own tourism webpage includes the statue of Sybil Ludington on its first page. Among the tourist-related sites listed on the first page are the Putnam County Trailway, the Fred Dill Wildlife Sanctuary, the Tilly Foster Farm/Tilly’s Table, and Putnam County Golf Course all within or in proximity to Carmel. From hotels to bed and breakfasts to bike rental and sales businesses to dining, all contribute to the visitor experience and generate spending. Essentially, the primary hospitality businesses are: food and beverage, travel and tourism, lodging, and recreation. An opportunity exists to allow tourism-related uses within the scenic areas of Carmel outside the conventional C zoning district. These uses can take advantage of the scenic beauty of the Town, provided they do not otherwise impact the quality of any residential neighborhoods and uses. These can be allowed by special use permit and subject to Planning Board review, and they would be required to meet certain locational and performance criteria to ensure they are not impactful.

Objective 2.7

Increase opportunities for research and technology industries to locate within the Town.

The Town could consider requiring, or encouraging through development incentives, green businesses, high tech, educational, cradle-to-cradle production (the reuse of waste product to create something new or return to the earth) and other light industrial uses within a new nonresidential zoning district. A mix of light industrial and commercial uses such as co-work/flex office space may be advantageous in this district to provide convenient services for a diversity of employees, for example, breweries,

restaurants, print and copy services, financial services and grocery stores would likely be well utilized if within walking distance to employment centers. Retail sale of goods produced could also be permitted. The zoning district could be established and mapped or could otherwise be created as a floating zone.

Objective 2.8

Work collaboratively with property owners to create shovel ready sites which expedite the planning process for development that is consistent with the Plan.

The NYS Empire State Development (ESD) Shovel Ready Certification program assists municipalities to develop local buy-in around a strategic development site and market the project to prospective developers. Shovel Ready Certification is available to any site in New York State that is suitable for the type of development proposed, has proper zoning and infrastructure, has completed the appropriate surveys and studies, and has received the necessary permits and approvals. Through completion of a self-evaluation checklist, a shovel ready site demonstrates to a developer that the existing conditions of a site such as floodplains, wetlands, utility service, zoning conformance, traffic impacts, etc., have been evaluated. The Town of Carmel could work with property owners of strategic properties, i.e., those within the proper zoning district, not environmentally constrained, and served by centralized utilities, to be pre-approved and certified for a set of uses which could be marketed to prospective developers.

Objective 2.9

Encourage a local food economy by incentivizing the use and sale of locally produced goods in Town.

Related to the above objective, farm-to-table restaurants, farm markets, tasting or tap rooms should be permitted as accessory to farm operations and operated consistent with NYS Alcohol and Beverage Control and NYS Agriculture and Markets regulations. By allowing these additional uses, it incentivizes property owners to maintain properties in agricultural use, rather than converting them to more permanent uses such as houses.

Objective 2.10

Promote a sustainable agricultural economy.

At present, farms, gardens, nurseries and other agricultural activities are allowed as permitted uses only in the R zoning districts. An opportunity exists to allow these uses more broadly throughout the Town. Farm stands and markets, orchard crops, commercial greenhouses, farms, stables, and farmettes could be allowed in both commercial areas and within the outlying areas of the Town.

Zoning would be reviewed to ensure that regulation of “farm operations” as defined by Agriculture and Markets regulations are not overly burdensome, and to ensure a diversity of low-impact land use and economic options can be facilitated on agricultural land. The Town should consider the economic benefits of diversifying land uses on agricultural lands not considered by New York State Agriculture and Markets as an “agricultural operation.” The Town’s zoning would be reviewed to consider the following:

- Review all zones, and where appropriate, permit agricultural uses as permitted uses.

- Allow agricultural-related uses, e.g., breweries, wineries, small-scale food production, and allow in association with farms, subject to appropriate standards to minimize conflicts between residential and agricultural production uses.
- Explicitly allow farm stands within any zoning district.
- Encourage value-added agricultural uses throughout Town to support and complement the introduction and continuation of agricultural operations.
- Allow farm operations to conduct seasonal event venues, support farm stay or lodging, education, and other value-added opportunities. NYS Agriculture and Markets law considers wedding receptions, parties and special events to be “marketing activities” for farms and must directly relate to the sale and promotion of the goods produced on farm from at least 51% of on-farm produce. While this is important threshold for “agricultural operations” as defined by Agriculture and Markets, the Town could expand its land use regulations to allow for small agricultural operations that may not be a “farm operation” under Agriculture and Markets law to become established and continue to utilize the land for farm-related uses.

For small lot farmers whose production yield is limited by space restraints, value-added processing is a way to increase the profitability of a harvest. Value-added goods are those that require additional production and manufacturing, which increase the value of raw agricultural commodities. Milk can be turned into cheese, grapes to wine, tomatoes can be processed and canned for sauce or soup, and meat can be butchered, cured and sold locally. Often the use of a personal or commercial kitchen, specific equipment and/or warehouse space is required for cutting, baking, canning, preserving, freezing, dehydrating, juicing, pickling, brining, bottling, packaging, roasting or smoking, and may require a NYS Agriculture and Markets Processing License under Article 20-C of Agriculture and Markets Law.² In New York State, non-hazardous foods such as candy, cakes not requiring refrigeration, cookies, brownies, two-crust fruit pies, breads and rolls, standard fruit jams and jellies, dried spices and herbs, and snack items can be produced in home kitchens.³

Uses that are important for value-added production such as commercial kitchens or the use of home kitchens for business use should be defined within the Town of Carmel zoning chapter and allowed, where compatible, throughout Town.

Agricultural incubators are also valuable additions to a farm economy. The Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming in Cold Spring, New York is a local county example of a non-profit farm that focuses on education, business development and provides other supportive infrastructure for new or small farmers. These too could be encouraged in the Town.

Objective 2.11

Define and permit indoor agricultural production.

Technological innovations such as hydroponic indoor farming, aquaponics and rooftop gardening have enabled agricultural operations to expand their growing seasons and offer innovative products within

² <https://agriculture.ny.gov/food-business-licensing>

³ <https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2017/05/45-value-added-processing/>

commercial and industrial zones. The Town could allow indoor and rooftop agriculture within business and light industrial zoning districts and encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings for indoor farming. In addition, the Town could support burgeoning fields in food industry such as indoor mushroom farming, and value-added goods derived from grown materials, subject to the availability of utilities. For example, mushroom mycelium and hemp can be processed and bound to agricultural byproducts to produce packaging and even building materials. The Town can host “cradle to cradle”⁴ companies, which may produce biodegradable materials developed from agricultural or other biological waste products.

Objective 2.12

Support and promote community farms.

The Town could acquire vacant land through foreclosure or outright purchase, and the property could be converted for community gardening to support programs such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and Community Farms. Space on existing underutilized recreational parcels could also serve this purpose. A CSA is a non-profit farm that is supported financially by “shares” i.e., people interested in receiving a weekly offering of produce from the farm. Shareholders can pick up their share of the farm produce, which is planted, maintained and harvested by the CSA. The organization can host educational programs for gardening and cooking and other activities.

A community farm/garden can be organized so that plots of land are rented by individuals who may not have the space to garden in their own backyards. Each plot is farmed by an individual person who plants, maintains and harvests their own portion of land. This is a valuable use for vacant or marginal lands within Town - community farms or gardens add vibrancy and foot traffic to such areas.

Objective 2.13

Permit smaller-scale agricultural activities including but not limited to backyard farms, small animal husbandry and apiaries, community farms and gardens.

Suburban farming can contribute to the revitalization of abandoned or underutilized land, provide social and economic benefits to suburban communities, and beneficial impacts on the landscape. In suburban areas on larger lots, food growing, limited types of animal husbandry, beekeeping, aquaponics (e.g., integrating fish farming and agriculture), and sale of non-food products such as processing and selling seeds, cultivating seedlings, and growing flowers are all types of local farming that can have a local economic impact and improve food security. The Town should consider minimum lot sizes that are not prohibitive for individuals that might engage in these kinds of backyard agricultural activities.

⁴ “cradle to cradle” is a term that refers to a closed loop production system where product, or waste product, is reused for a new or similar purpose, as opposed to “cradle to grave” production which is when a product ends its life cycle in a landfill.

3. HOUSING

GOAL 3:

Promote diverse housing opportunities.

Objective 3.1

Support apartments above ground floor retail space in the hamlet downtowns, to introduce people and add vitality and a market for the “main streets”.

The hamlet zones are presently in the C zoning district. The zoning chapter does allow “existing apartments in mixed-use structures at the time of passage of this chapter”, and they are not subject to any other standards. However, the C downtown centers do not permit newly created apartments. To promote a mixed use environment, it is recommended that a new zone be created which would allow mixed use development including apartments above stores. Standards would be required to ensure that dwelling units are a suitable minimum size.

Objective 3.2:

Redevelop vacant or underutilized shopping centers to create mixed use neighborhoods.

The Town could adopt a planned unit development (PUD) zoning district that allows mixed use development and that can be applied to infill sites such as older shopping centers that are vacant or underutilized.

New York State Town Law, §261-c, allows the Town Board to enact procedures and requirements for establishing and mapping planned unit development zoning districts. As per Town Law, “planned unit development district regulations are intended to provide for residential, commercial, industrial or other land uses, or a mix thereof, in which economies of scale, creative architectural or planning concepts and open space preservation may be achieved by a developer in furtherance of the town comprehensive plan...” The zoning chapter could be revised to include PUD regulations which allow for the mixed-use redevelopment of infill and mixed-use sites, subject to specific design criteria. Key elements of the PUD, besides establishing a flexible range of uses, would include design considerations for: walkability; streetscapes, civic and community gathering space; open space and appropriate integration of sensitive environmental resources; and sustainability measures. The PUD should be clear about where the zoning can land, and the Town may not want to permit PUDs in nonresidential zones such as the C/BP zone.

Objective 3.3

Consider the adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings for residential use.

Buildings such as historic sites/buildings, schools, and old warehouses could be reused. Among other purposes, for housing especially when located in residential, mixed-use or downtown centers. Regulations should include a minimum square footage per residential unit, particularly for multifamily dwellings, and should ensure that density is appropriate for the surrounding infrastructure and

neighborhood. The zoning chapter could be modified to allow adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings for residential purpose. It is recommended that a minimum floor area per dwelling unit be established as part of any regulations.

Objective 3.4

Consider commissioning a housing needs study for the Town to determine where gaps in housing type and price points may exist and assess whether a mandatory inclusionary housing policy for large residential projects would be beneficial to the Town.

During the Plan process, participants indicated that housing should be diverse in terms of the households that are supported, from young adults to seniors. A specific housing study for the Town may be warranted to determine actual affordability thresholds. This will help the Town better understand how best to allow “workforce housing” that is specific to the needs of residents. The zoning chapter does not presently address workforce housing opportunities although it allows multifamily housing.

The provision for workforce housing could be incentivized through incentive zoning or could be mandated for larger multifamily or mixed-use developments, without applying a density bonus, based on the outcomes of the housing needs study. A percentage of dwelling units in a residential development could be made affordable to households earning within 80-120 percent of the median income for the Town.

Housing incentives or requirements can be offered in mixed-use districts as part of infill and redevelopment opportunities but may be less appropriate in the more rural areas of the Town, where municipal services are farther away.

Objective 3.5

Allow for the construction of two-family, three-family, four-family and townhomes in addition to multifamily developments in appropriate locations of the Town, preferably in close proximity and connected to the hamlet downtowns.

The zoning chapter does not explicitly permit townhomes, also known as single-family attached dwellings. These housing types would be allowed as “multifamily dwellings” as these are defined as a building containing three or more dwelling units. Multifamily dwellings, and multifamily dwellings for the elderly are permitted (these dwellings are restricted to persons ages 55 and over). The zoning chapter also states that multifamily developments are allowed in the R zone and can include garden apartment design or townhouse design. Yet, Schedule A only permits multifamily dwellings for the elderly in the R zone. Multifamily developments are also permitted on the waterfront in the C zone as are elderly multifamily developments. Even the C/BP zone allows elderly multifamily developments by conditional use as does the CN, Conservation, zone.

If the Town desires to expand housing opportunities, it should explicitly identify the housing types that would meet the needs of Carmel residents into the future. In general, apartments over stores should be allowed in the downtown zones, which should be the center of activity in the Town. Extending out from the downtown, multifamily (such as fourplexes) and townhome development should be allowed within ¼-mile walking distance of the downtown, which households would be connected to and use the

downtowns to meet their entertainment and social needs. Within 1/4-mile up to 1/2 mile of a downtown center, housing should be lower density, but more diverse and suitable for the lower density neighborhoods, and allow two-and three-family dwellings, in addition to single-family dwellings. Beyond 1/2-mile radius around a downtown center, housing should be lower density single-family dwellings. This pattern ensures a hamlet center to rural residential gradient, where higher density housing is located close to the downtowns that can serve the households and where households are within walking distance of services.

Objective 3.6

Ensure the cluster subdivision standards are consistent with NYS Town Law.

Residential cluster developments are allowed by conditional use in the R zone. The zoning defines a cluster development as a residential development that obtains a lot count through conventional subdivision approval, then develops the parcel at the same density that would be allowed in the zoning district in which the site is located, provided that the remaining undeveloped land shall be reserved and improved for permanent open space use.

NYS Town Law defines a cluster development as a subdivision plat or plats, approved pursuant to Section 278 of NYS Town Law, in which the zoning law is modified to provide an alternative permitted method for the layout, configuration and design of lots, buildings and structures, roads, utility lines and other infrastructure, parks, and landscaping in order to preserve the natural and scenic qualities of open lands. Fundamentally, the purpose of the regulations are to preserve natural and scenic qualities of open lands.

Cluster subdivisions are regulated by Section 156-45 of the zoning chapter. Some of the parameters of a cluster development are:

- It is allowed on properties with a minimum acreage of 20 acres.
- Environmental constraints are to be subtracted when determining density, although no such environmental constraint map exists.
- At least 35% of the gross area shall be reserved for open space.
- The zoning allows active recreation to be included within the open space, which is not required by NYS Town law.

It is recommended that the following updates be considered:

- The Planning Board should be allowed to require the submission of a cluster subdivision;
- A cluster subdivision should be allowed for all development regardless of parcel size, but a cluster subdivision could be waived for smaller parcels or subdivisions;
- The minimum open space area should be a higher percentage of the gross acreage of the lot, closer to 50 percent as a target;
- The zoning chapter must define what constitutes environmental constraints, without having to create a Townwide map;

- The regulations should define what environmental features are considered important open space features (see Natural Resources section);
- The obligation to provide recreation land, or a fee in lieu of land, should be separate and apart from the land to be set aside as open space.
- The Town may want to establish minimum or maximum bulk standards for a cluster development, such as building height.
- Cluster developments are not actually a “use” and should be allowed anywhere residential subdivisions are allowed. They should not require a “conditional use” approval.
- The regulations should specify the various types of ownership in which the open space could be held. Open space should be contiguous and located on a minimum number of lots, unless located on one lot. The regulations should reference the ability to require conservation easements and deed restrictions which would limit how the open space may be utilized, depending on the nature of the land to be preserved.

Objective 3.7

Evaluate if there are locations in the Town which could accommodate smaller housing lots where sewer is available, and one (1) to two (2) acre zoning in closer proximity to the hamlet centers which would be more affordable than the large lot three (3) acre zoning now required.

At this time, the majority of new single-family housing is constructed within the R zoning district. Here, the lot sizes are a minimum of approximately three (3) acres. Single-family dwellings are allowed in the C zone, and can be constructed at a density of one dwelling per approximately one (1) acre. The C zone is not necessarily intended to be the location for new single-family subdivisions. Rather, it is recommended that the Town consider a zoning district within the immediate vicinity of the two downtown centers where infill development can occur with single-family dwellings on one acre lots.

It is acknowledged that Section 156-10.I in the zoning chapter addresses existing dwellings that are located on undersized lots within the R zone. However, if a new zone is created to allow for new infill smaller lot single-family residential dwellings, some neighborhoods within the Town could also be included within a new zone. The added benefit is that the R district could become a Rural Residential zone which could also allow additional, compatible nonresidential uses, without the concern of affecting “tighter” residential neighborhoods, as they would now be located in a different zone.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL 4:

Continue to protect the natural resources in the Carmel which lend the Town its unique semi-rural and woodland character.

Objective 4.1

Ensure that new developments are designed to fit into, and not dominate, the scenic landscape.

Any new major development in the Town should consider the viewshed within which they will be located, and vantage points from which they can be seen. To the maximum extent, existing woodland should be preserved to screen and buffer views of development from scenic vantage points. Where disturbances occur, a robust landscaping plan needs to be implemented that will intrude landscaping which softens the appearance of development within the landscape. The zoning chapter should be amended to include specific design standards related to landscaping. Specifically:

- Native species should be emphasized;
- Large impervious surface areas, including parking lots, need to be shaded by trees and other plantings;
- Regulations should include standards for the quantity of plantings, and establish minimum recommended size of landscape material installations;
- Site and subdivision plans should require that landscaping be maintained for the life of the proposed use.

Objective 4.2

Ensure that the use of “net lot area” is applied to site plan and subdivision review and includes environmental constraints to development including wetlands and waterbodies, steep slopes, agriculturally significant soils (where relevant), aquifers and floodplains. Defining “intact” or “established” forest habitat should also be considered within this definition.

Many communities establish the intensity and density of commercial and residential development based on the net lot area of a parcel, after deducting for environmentally sensitive and constrained lands. This is to ensure that the amount of development on a site is directly related to the land’s capability to absorb development without having an adverse impact on environmental resources. Typical environmentally sensitive resources that are excluded, or partially excluded, when establishing residential or nonresidential yield include but are not limited to:

- Freshwater wetlands, including those regulated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- 100-year floodplain;
- Steep slopes, which can be defined generally as a slope equal to or greater than 25 percent;

- Waterbodies, streams, and man-made water bodies, including stormwater basins, whether existing or proposed.

The zoning chapter intended to exclude environmentally constrained lands when determining the yield for cluster developments. Ultimately, the provisions, if adopted, should apply to all development, except for pre-existing developed lots, e.g., a lot with a single-family dwelling.

Objective 4.3

Promote native and pollinator friendly landscape plantings and control the spread of invasive species.
Promote native plant species during subdivision and site plan review.

In 2016, the NYS Departments of Environmental Conservation and Agriculture and Markets published the NYS Pollinator Protection Plan. Wild pollinators and managed bees, typically honeybees and bumblebees kept by beekeepers, are critically important to the health of New York's environment, as well as the strength of the state's agricultural economy. New York State is also home to more than 450 wild pollinator species, a native population that is important not only to the pollination of commercial crops, but also to biodiversity in our environment. Over the past decade, the loss of managed pollinator colonies in the state has exceeded 50%. This is coupled with losses in the native pollinator community and the habitat that sustains them.

Trends suggest that native pollinator population losses are a result of the interacting impacts of several environmental stressors. Among these stressors are habitat fragmentation due to urban development and mono-agriculture reduces the size of pollinator populations by increasing their isolation and making lands less than favorable to sustain them. The Town should follow policies intended to restore and enhance pollinator habitat, including:

- Use native plant guidance in appropriate restoration and habitat enhancement projects where safety and operational consideration permit, including road and utility rights-of-way. Select plants that include at least 15 species and have a high percentage of forbs (30-60% by seed count), as well as vegetation that provides nesting, egg-laying and overwintering locations. Grasses and shrubs are important for community structure and nesting sites. When planting conditions allow, include at least three flowering species in each bloom period so there is a continuous food source throughout the season (few early-blooming species are typically included in mixes).
- Minimize mowing to the greatest extent practicable, without compromising roadside safety and time, to offer plants the ability to bloom and provide sufficient forage for pollinators.
- Increase habitat quantity, and encourage highly diverse plantings in smaller plots located in areas away from pesticide use to provide floral-rich pollinator habitat. These plantings will be located in areas that are sufficiently buffered from pesticides and other impacts.
- Restore native grassland communities on degraded open-field habitats.
- Encourage Integrated Pest Management Plans be used on golf courses.

As mentioned elsewhere, the Town should allow for small apiaries to be located in the Town, in appropriate locations and settings.

Objective 4.4

Consider adopting ridgeline preservation regulations or guidelines.

The Town's scenic character is defined by its natural woodland environment, and few areas in the Town have been developed where the development is substantially visible from the Town's higher elevations. For example, some municipalities regulate ridgelines located within a defined distance of a ridge line, e.g., within 200-500 feet of the ridgeline, or may regulate ridgelines which exceed a certain elevation above mean sea level (msl) so that only the most visible and prominent ridgelines are regulated. In Carmel, the Town's geography is hilly, and there are numerous hills and vantage points which are visible from major public vantage points, and development should be designed to avoid clearcutting or notching woodland to render a development highly visible from any significant vantage point. Ridgeline regulations need to be established with a threshold, i.e., what will trigger review by a municipal board. The Town will need to determine whether the standards apply to any used which otherwise require site plan, special use permit, or subdivision approval, or whether to apply the standards to construction of buildings that only need a building permit.

The zoning chapter should include a purpose that requires the protection of the Town's wooded ridgelines. It can also consider implementation of design standards for development which is proposed on top of any ridgeline. To protect the scenic vistas in the Town, it is important that a development not clear cut the top of a ridgeline, but selectively cut trees so that the wooded ridgetop is protected. A board can establish conditions on development, e.g., site a building so that it is setback from the ridgeline and will not be as visible, require earth tone colors on the building so that it is not in stark contrast to the surrounding landscape. Depending on the extent of disturbance, the Planning Board would be authorized to minimize these disturbances as part of its review.

Objective 4.5

Streamline wetland protection laws to avoid overlap between various jurisdictions, including the NYSDEC, NYCDEP, ACOE, and Town.

At present, the Town regulates wetlands in accordance with Chapter 89, Freshwater Wetlands. In many instances, activities within freshwater wetlands are also subject to permitting from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Further, because of the presence of the NYCDEP watershed within the Town, activities may require approval from the NYCDEP. The Town could consider removing from regulation any activity that is otherwise already subject to these other agency jurisdictions. Any wetland which is not otherwise regulated could require review by the Environmental Conservation Board. In this manner, an applicant would not be subject to multiple permits for the same activity.

It also needs to be clear in the regulation what the ECB's authority is, in the review of applications, and how their role and recommendations varies from other agencies. A property owner should be aware of any standards being imposed upon them, and those standards need to be explicitly set forth in any local regulations to avoid unpredictability in the review process.

Objective 4.6

Identify opportunity areas and partnerships for restoring riparian and floodplain habitats and lakes.

The Town has numerous water bodies, some of which are protected by buffers, and others which are not. Long-term, runoff from development and impervious surfaces introduce nutrient and pollutants to a receiving waterbody, which can result in eutrophication of a lake. Sediment load will ultimately fill in a water body, until it becomes a wetland, and open waters are lost. It is not uncommon to see vegetation take over areas which have become shallow from sedimentation, forever changing the habitat of the lake or water body. Riparian restoration is the process of planting vegetation and stabilizing or naturalizing the shorelines and floodplains of the Town's streams, which help reduce runoff entering the system. Replanting along the shoreline promotes improved water quality by stabilizing the shoreline and slowing stormwater as it enters the stream, preventing erosion; trapping sediments containing pollutants before they enter the water body and shading the water, keeping it cool for aquatic species. In addition, restored floodplains and riparian areas offer enhanced protection against flood events.

The Town should support the study of watersheds which contribute surface water runoff to a water body within the Town, especially smaller lakes that serve residential communities. A protection plan can be created with concrete measures that will result in riparian restoration and pollutant reduction.

5. WATERFRONT AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL 5:

Connect the Town physically and visually to its waterfronts by enhancing public access and recreational and cultural waterfront amenities.

Objective 5.1

Ensure that waterfront zoning considers public waterfront access or viewsheds during site and subdivision plan review.

Within the Mahopac downtown area, views to the water are primarily from Marina Drive. Much of the land is in private ownership there, although beyond the large condominium building along the waterfront, visual access is possible, but mostly through looking across private parking lots. Limited visual access exists from Route 6; large-scale buildings have largely block views to the waterfront. Within Mahopac, design guidelines need to be followed which ensure that a viewshed corridor is preserved from public streets to the water. Buildings should not be oriented parallel to the waterfront, and some percentage of the shoreline, e.g., 50 percent, should remain open between the public realm and the waterfront. If necessary, incentives can be offered to allow a building to be constructed “up” rather than “out”. This is not an apparent issue with Lake Gleneida in Carmel, as the shoreline is owned and controlled by the NYCDEP. The image below shows visual access looking through the parking lot of the multifamily building along Marina Drive.



Unimpeded View of Lake Mahopac from Marina Drive.

Objective 5.2

Consider obtaining first rights of refusal for any properties which may be in private ownership, and which afford direct access to the lakefronts.

Town residents would like to see more access to the major water bodies and lakes in the Town. This may require that the Town strategically identify key properties where this opportunity could be provided, and the Town could enter into a right of first approval to accomplish this objective. The right of first refusal is an agreement that the Town could enter into with a private landowner that would ensure that the Town is approached first if the land were to be sold. Numerous parcels surrounding the lakes, including existing marinas, could provide future access to the waterfront for Town residents. Rights of first refusal or other arrangements or agreements can position the Town to negotiate acquisition of waterfront lands.

Objective 5.3

Preserve the Mahopac downtown waterfront as a location for water-dependent and water-enhanced uses.

It is recommended that specific zoning provisions be implemented that limit uses along the waterfront to water-enhanced and water-dependent uses. Within the Mahopac downtown center, access to the waterfront is very limited, and private developments dominate the hamlet. Here, there is an opportunity to expand visual and public access to the waterfront, by limiting uses to boating, boat launches, public parks, restaurants, marinas, and similar uses. The image below received significant positive response, as it includes many of the features sought by the community – water-enhanced uses and public walkway along the waterfront.



Public walkway along a waterfront which increases accessibility.

Objective 5.4

Pursue creation of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

Lake Mahopac, Lake Gilead, Lake Carmel, Lake Casse, Lake Ossi, Teakettle Lake, MacGregor Lake, Secor Lake, Kirk Lake, Wixon Lake, Glencoma Lake and Dean Pond are waterbodies listed in the New York State Inland Waterways List. As such, it makes these waterbodies eligible for funding to prepare a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. An LWRP is a document that allows the community to evaluate local waterfront resources, develop goals and a comprehensive strategy for the best use of those resources, proposed future projects, and adopt a local program that will guide appropriate development. The LWRP plans for long term land and water uses and specify the legal techniques for implementation. Local regulations would be designed to implement a clear overall concept of how the community's waterfront should be used. Generally, the regulations must:

- Assure that new waterfront development is well designed and sited.
- Provide for public access to the water.
- Prevent the displacement of essential water dependent uses (recreational, commercial and industrial) by uses which do not require a waterfront location, particularly residential and retail uses.
- Bring land use regulations into better conformity with the objectives of State regulations for the protection of natural areas.
- Assure that new development is designed to reduce impacts from the natural forces of flooding, erosion and rising water levels.

Once an LWRP is approved, municipalities are eligible for implementation funds through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to begin to implement identified and prioritized projects. For projects that are not waterfront-dependent or water enhanced uses, they could be allowed provided that a portion of the site remain for those purposes.

Objective 5.4

Consider incorporating, designing and constructing innovative access to the waterfront.

Typically, access to the waterfront is thought to require substantial frontage along the waterbody. However, where public access maintains limited frontage, there are other methods of accessing it. Other methods can include:

- Piers that extend into the water;
- Floating docks;
- Cantilevered walkways.

The waterfront access itself can serve as a destination for residents and visitors alike. Examples are provided of different structures that can achieve this purpose. The image below received significant positive responses – it embodies the type of waterfront that the Town envisions.



Creative designs to provide access to a waterfront.

Objective 5.5

Integrate public access and recreation opportunities where new development is proposed along the waterfront.

New development along the waterfront always introduces an opportunity to expand public access to the waterfront. The zoning regulations should consider establishing a requirement where public access is required when a project of a certain size, in number of units or acres, comes before the Planning Board for approval. It could include creation of a small waterfront park, a trail that ends at the shoreline, a non-motorized boat launch, or such other access which is appropriate to the development proposed. At a minimum, barriers should not be installed that would preclude the public to access the public waterfront.

6. TRANSPORTATION: COMPLETE STREETS AND TRAILS

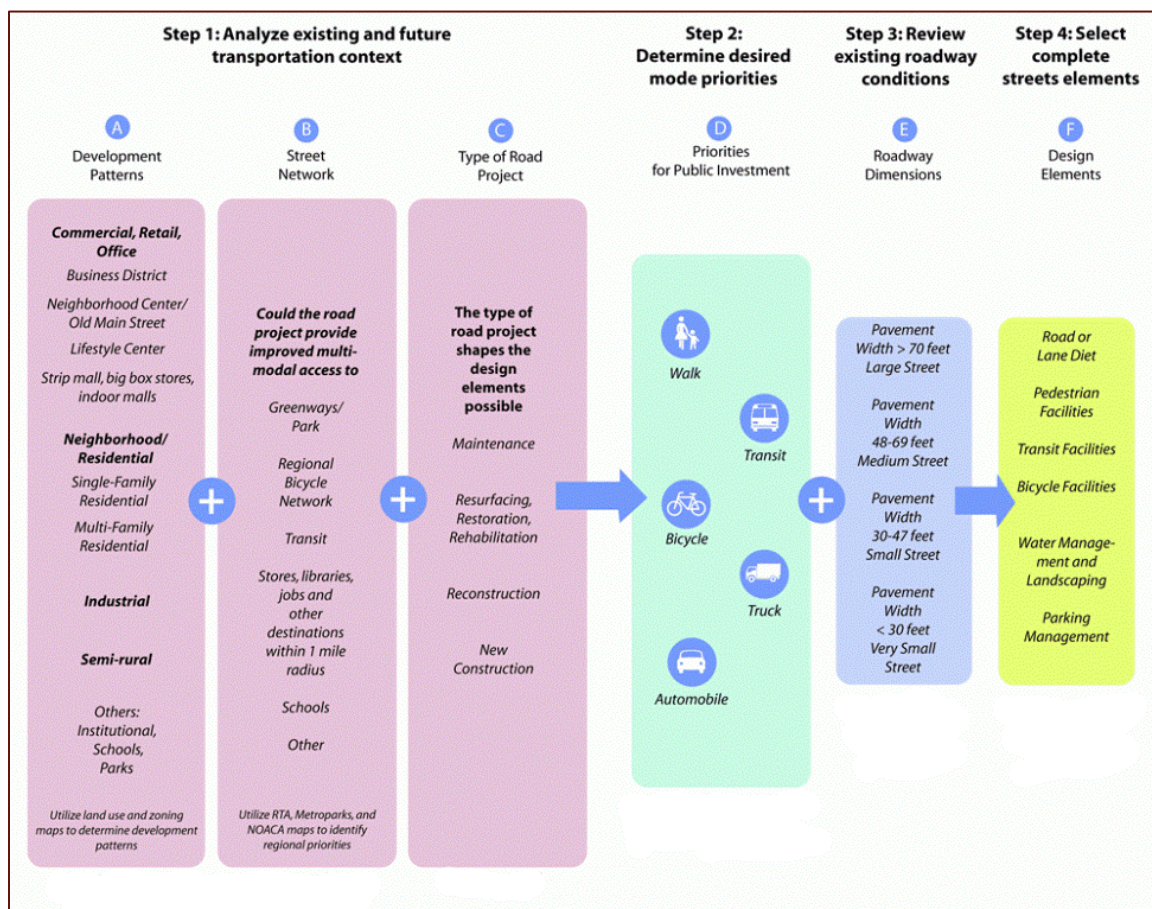
GOAL 6:

Pursue a safe and interconnected multimodal transportation system of trails, sidewalks, and streets.

Objective 6.1

Adopt a Complete Streets resolution specific to the Town of Carmel.

The New York State Complete Streets Act requires that state, county and local agencies consider the convenience and mobility of all users when pursuing transportation projects that will receive state and federal funding. Many Towns have adopted complete streets resolutions, which makes the Town's intent with regard to transportation design clear. Importantly, it memorializes the Town's commitment to complete street policies and principles for NYS funding purposes.



Flow Chart from the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission – Complete Street Implementation.

Objective 6.2

Review parking requirements within the zoning chapter, evaluate the current capacity and demand of uses for parking, and allow adjustments and flexibility to reduce any oversupply of parking that limits the scope of building development and introduces unnecessary impervious surfaces.

- Do not require parking to be the sum required for all uses if uses operate at different hours of the day.
- Allow a portion of parking improvements to be deferred, up to a certain percentage, which does not have to be constructed at the time a building permit is issued, and only need be constructed when demand is demonstrated after occupancy of the development. At this time, the Planning Board can only defer the parking where it finds it would have an adverse impact on the visual environment.
- Allow a reduction in parking where on-street parking or municipal parking is available. In downtown environments where on-street parking is available, the Planning Board should be able to waive the number of parking spaces based on a utilization analysis which shows that on-street parking or municipal off-street parking can meet this demand.
- Allow for shared use of parking facilities where one use and property have excess parking, provided an appropriate agreement is established to ensure the off-site parking is available for the life of the building and/or use.
- Assess whether the required spaces set forth by use and zoning district result in an excess of parking and decrease where appropriate based on current standards.
- Allow for the redevelopment of parking lots where it is evident that the parking lot has been designed over the capacity needed. It has been customary for shopping centers and malls to provide more parking spaces than required by zoning regulations, to address peak demand during holiday seasons. With the change in retailing that has occurred, where retailers no longer need brick and mortar spaces, many of the parking lots accessory to shopping centers and malls are underutilized year-round. Allow for these excess parking lots to be developed for alternative uses without the need for additional parking.
- In the hamlets, allow for a fee in lieu of parking to be paid instead of requiring off-street parking to be provided on each individual development site. This parking fund can be utilized by the Town to create municipal parking lots which can serve an entire center area.

Objective 6.3

Create a Town bike and trail plan that identifies rights-of-way throughout the Town that are appropriate for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

The Town should prepare a Town bike and pedestrian plan that identifies rights-of-way in the Town that may accommodate bicycle infrastructure such as sharrows, on-street bike lanes, separated bike lanes and off-street bike and pedestrian trails. Adoption of a bike plan by the Town Board would create an opportunity to pursue funding and offer an opportunity to identify co-improvements on roadways maintained by state, county and town agencies.

Objective 6.4

Promote the continued expansion of the Putnam County Trailway and obtain easements to connect existing neighborhoods to the trail.

Trails are inclusive transportation infrastructure - they promote equity because they are available at all times and provide a cost-free transportation alternative. Trails provide fitness benefits, can stimulate visitor activity and spending, and can increase property values for the properties that have access to them. The Town benefits greatly from the presence of the Putnam County Trailway that runs through the Town, extending into Westchester County and Brewster NY. Opportunities exist to improve the Town's connection to this trail through improved wayfinding signs on existing on-street bike routes, expansion/enhancement of on-street bike routes and the creation of off-street connections.

Objective 6.5

Continue to improve walkability by reducing curb cuts, improving crosswalks and connecting new and existing sidewalk infrastructure in appropriate locations throughout Town, especially where connections between neighborhoods, public transportation routes and community services are possible.



Sidewalk along Route 6 in Mahopac.

Especially in the hamlets, there is an opportunity to improve the sidewalk system, especially along the primary road corridors such as Route 6. In instances, sidewalks are not protected by curbs. As such, vehicles accessing a property can access it along the entire frontage of the property. This results in more wear and tear for public sidewalks. This is also unsafe for pedestrians, as a vehicle does not have a defined entry and exit point. Lastly, Cars have been observed parking on the sidewalks within the Town, which unnecessarily increases costs. The picture provides an example of uncontrolled access to a property.

Objective 6.6

Continue to encourage opportunities to consolidate curb cuts and improve pedestrian safety through the site plan review process.

Related to the above objective, regulatory language should be incorporated into the zoning regulations allowing the Planning Board to require curb cut consolidation which will help limit vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Especially on state roads, consolidated curb cuts limit turning movements onto the road, which would help limit points of access and reduce conflicts which can increase vehicular accidents. It also limits the number of times a pedestrian crosses a driveway, another point of conflict, if the driveways are shared.

Objective 6.7

Ensure that existing and future on-street bicycle routes throughout Town are safe and clearly marked and ensure pedestrian and bicycle amenities are included in site plan and subdivision review.



Examples of maintained and unmaintained sharrows.

The above images show properly maintained sharrows and another sharrow where the paint is not being maintained. Sharrows are appropriate on certain segments of roads within the Town. However, depending on traffic volumes, higher volume roads would be better designed with a dedicated or buffered bicycle lane for safety purposes. For roadways that are wide enough to accommodate a conventional bicycle lane, a separated bicycle lane, or a buffered bicycle lane, the Town should work with the applicable jurisdiction to study and implement one of these preferred bicycle route designs. Design elements of these bicycle lanes include a physical separation from other roadway users such as bollards or a curb, changes in pavement color and material, and reflective paint. This infrastructure must also be maintained.

Objective 6.8

Pursue New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) funding opportunities.

While funding through NYS DOT is not guaranteed annually, the Town should stay up to date on funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program which are intended to fund projects that “support bicycle, pedestrian, multi-use path and transportation-related projects and programs, as well as projects that reduce congestion, and will help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.”

Objective 6.9

Support traffic calming measures.

Where neighborhoods complain about excessive speeding in neighborhoods, the Town can consider the implementation of traffic calming devices. "Traffic calming" is applied to design interventions that make streets safer by reducing opportunities for illegal or aggressive driving. Measures may include the installation of stop signs, speed bumps, curb extensions, raised crosswalks, as well as other measures. They are especially useful in residential neighborhoods with long, nontraffic-controlled lengths of roads.

Neighborhoods that experience high speed vehicles can petition the Town and request for measures to be installed. An elevated speed bump platform was installed along Cherry Street in Katonah to reduce speeds on this road – the speed bump is properly signed. These larger platforms are better at surviving snowplow blades.



Traffic calming measure on Cherry Street in Katonah.

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL 7:

Preserve and promote the Town's history and scenic character embodied in its historic buildings, cultural assets and landscapes.

Maintaining historic, scenic and cultural assets and preserving the original fabric of a community enriches it and allows its own residents and visitors to learn about and explore the Town's history and culture. Historic, scenic and cultural assets enrich the everyday experience of living and working in a community and imbue it with its own unique sense of place.

Historic preservation can promote place-based economic development and conserve natural resources through reuse of existing structures and buildings. Preserving these assets is ultimately sustainable, e.g., the reuse of a historic building does not demand materials like new construction and does not generate waste from demolition, does not result in the processing of materials used in new construction, and energy is not consumed. There is often a high-quality and high-value materiality to older and historic buildings, which cannot be achieved today in a new building without significant cost. Preserving these resources is known to protect and preserve overall property values. For all these reasons, preservation of these resources is important to the Town of Carmel.

Objective 7.1

Implement design guidelines to encourage consistently attractive development.

Chapter 8 of this Comprehensive Plan has design ideas and guidelines which could be integrated into renovations, reconstructions and new development projects. The design guidelines flow from the visual assessment that was part of the public participation events, where participants expressed their preferences, and also named locations which could be an inspiration for design ideas. The zoning chapter should indicate that proposed applications should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including the design guidelines outlined in this document.

Objective 7.2

Consider adopting a Downtown Design Overlay District which requires redevelopment and infill development to be constructed in accordance with traditional downtown standards.

To implement the Vision of the Plan, it is recommended that a Downtown Design Overlay zoning district be created that would encompass the areas in the historic hamlet downtowns where alterations and new construction should be reviewed. It would encompass buildings and properties that are at the core of these historic centers, and review would be conducted by the Planning Board or Building Department as noted above.

Objective 7.3

Consider requiring art sculptures as part of new or substantially renovated large-scale developments with appropriate art sculptures, landscaping, lighting, and other visual amenities to add visual interest and enhance the appearance of the Town. Incorporate public art into Town streetscapes to enhance the Town's identity and create interesting visual environments.

An opportunity exists to beautify the Town and add visual interest by installing sculptures, murals and other visually interesting artistic media. The zoning regulations could be amended to indicate art installations should be incorporated into the overall design of projects of a certain size, at the discretion of the Planning Board. These installations can also become focal points and gathering spaces within these projects and neighborhoods. Because successful economies are becoming more experiential based, it is important to add interest within the landscape to attract people into the community.



Art sculptures add visual interest in the landscape in Montgomery, NY.

Objective 7.4

Beautify the main Town transportation corridors, especially at the entrances into the Town.

Most travelers and residents enter the Town via major state roads and arterials, especially Routes 6, 6N, and Route 52. An opportunity exists to create strong points of entry and instill pride by installing signage and landscaped entries which set the stage and define the Town. While these signs have been installed in the hamlets, they should also be considered for the main points of entry into the Town of Carmel. A tag line or logo could be added to an entry sign. A common design could be used for all signs. Signs could be used to identify hamlets or centers where the overall sign design remains the same, but the sign face is different as it identifies each unique area. Decorative signage, monuments and memorials are maintained and stand out within the landscape.



Example of a landscaped gateway into a community with municipal monument sign.

Objective 7.5

Preserve the existing historic buildings in the Town of Carmel.

Historic preservation involves preserving the historic, architectural, aesthetic character and heritage of the Town of Carmel, which allows it to maintain its unique sense of place as well as provide a continuity of place. In a world where modern franchise development creates uniformity, it becomes increasingly important for the Town to reflect upon its unique origins in order to keep its identity intact. Historic buildings help to define a community and hint at its past. When historic neighborhoods are preserved, the Town's uniqueness is enhanced. Maintaining the Town's unique history contributes to community pride.

Objective 7.6

Allow the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in order to preserve and protect them.

Opportunities exist to incentivize historic building preservation, by allowing alternative uses to those allowed within a particular zoning district within which a historic building is located, which make it more economical to preserve the building. For example, historic buildings can be repurposed for restaurants and offices to allow for an alternative use of the building. The property owner would have to commit to preserving and maintaining the historic character of the building, in exchange for flexibility in the use allowed for the building. The building would be subject to Planning Board review and approval to ensure that the proposed use is complementary to and does not impact the neighborhood within which it may be sited, especially if the neighborhood is predominantly residential. Hours of operation, noise, traffic generation, and other potential effects would be reviewed.

Objective 7.7

Provide the Planning Board with historic review authority when reviewing projects involving historic buildings.

The Town zoning chapter at this time requires the following: "No exterior part of any building or structure that is listed or is eligible for listing in the Federal or State Registers of Historic Places, as determined by the Town of Carmel Historical Society, shall be altered or demolished until the Board of Architectural Review shall approve an application and plans for such changes to the exterior architectural features which are subject to public view from a public street or place." However, the Architectural Board of Review is not constituted and thus this section is not effective. It is recommended that the Planning Board be given historic review authority over buildings that may come before them as part of any special use permit, site plan, or subdivision review, in order that they may be able to preserve important historic buildings as part of an application review.

Objective 7.8

Work with local agencies and seek grants to develop a comprehensive list of historic resources and buildings in the Town.

Working with the Town Historian, Historical Society, and the Putnam County Historian and Historical Society, develop a comprehensive list of historic resources and structures in the Town. This list should include the following, at a minimum:

- Identification of all National and State Register Historic Places;
- All historic cemeteries;
- Buildings and structures over 100 years old;
- Identification of the location of all historical markers throughout the Town.



Putnam County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission Historic Marker.

The Town has a rich history which should be catalogued so that residents are educated about the history of their Town, understand the importance of their neighborhood in their Town's history, and could even be used to create touring routes in the Town. Once these various buildings are identified, efforts need to be made to educate property owners on the benefits of this designation, and have them listed on the National Register.

Objective 7.9

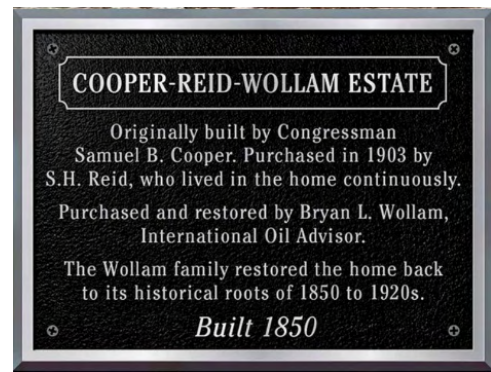
Pursue local landmark designations, as this process is the most effective at protecting significant historic sites.

Local landmark designation is the best method for ensuring that historic buildings in the Town of Carmel are protected and preserved. A local historic review commission would be tasked with reviewing applications that may result in the alteration, removal or demolition of designated landmark structures and buildings. The Town Board can designate landmarks after a public hearing has been held and the Town Board has approved the landmark status. The benefit of a local landmark designation is there is a protective status on a building wherein it cannot be demolished without the action first being reviewed. Review of activities that would require approval from a commission would be set forth in the legislation. Again, it is recommended that the Planning Board act in this capacity.

Objective 7.10

Create a historic plaque program and provide it to property owners who maintain their historic buildings.

Whether or not a building ends up listed on the National Register, many historic communities offer a plaque program whereby historic buildings and properties are provided a small plaque to be installed on the building, which can be a source of pride for the property owner and incentivize them to maintain it.



Example of historic plaque.

Objective 7.11

Allow the Building Department and Planning Board to enforce design guidelines.

As per the results of the various public participation events, the community would like to see implementation and enforcement of design guidelines. The concept of design guidelines was supported for downtown center projects, large developments, major residential projects, and nonresidential uses. The zoning chapter should be revised to give the Planning Board design review authority over projects that come before them.

A mechanism should also be instituted that allows certain building permits not requiring Planning Board approval to be reviewed at the Building Department level, to ensure that any alterations to a significant historic building, especially in the historic hamlet downtowns, are attractive and a visual asset to the community. Building upgrades in the hamlets need to be designed to be attractive and architecturally consistent with the traditional and historic building patterns in these locations.

Objective 7.12

Continue to promote education and visitor interest in the Town by installing interpretative signage that provide information regarding historic and scenic resources.



Interpretive signage in the Catskills.

The Town should seek funding and install interpretive signage along trails and within the Mahopac and Carmel downtowns, and near historic sites to provide the background and history of important places in the Town. The Planning Board should work with applicants to install historic/educational signage on their sites where appropriate.

Objective 7.13

Work with the Historical Society to create a walking tour of the Carmel hamlet center which has significant historic resources.

In the historic hamlets, there is a concentration of historic buildings and resources which provide the basis for a walking tour. The three National Register sites in the Town are within the Carmel hamlet itself.

Objective 7.14

Preserve the scenic rural and historic character of the Town's roads.

It is evident from a drive through the Town that the mature trees, stone walls, and scenic landscape is evidence to its history. The construction of the reservoirs results in the construction of man-made stoneworks that are impressive today. As part of the review of zoning, the Town should consider identifying scenic roads in the Town, where any development is required to be setback and screened through the preservation of the existing landscape at the road's edge.



Stone wall in Carmel.

8. DESIGN GUIDELINES

This Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of protecting the Town’s visual environment – for its health, safety, and economic well-being. These guidelines are intended to serve as a general guide to property owners, boards, and other decisionmakers to consider when implementing improvements within the Town, whether to the public or private realm.

These guidelines especially focus upon downtown “village style” style development. The preferences of the Town are to have infill and new development match the patterns that exist in traditional downtowns. When asked what communities should be a model for the Town, responses included:

- Katonah, NY
- Ridgefield, CT
- Rhinebeck, NY
- Eastdale Village in Poughkeepsie, NY
- Emerson Resort and Spa, Mt. Tremper, NY
- Duck NC
- Darien, CT
- Bedford Village, NY
- Armonk new construction in hamlet center, NY
- Stone Harbor, NJ
- Woodstock NY

What is common to almost all of these locations are that they have walkable downtowns. The communities have sidewalks, with shops that front to them. The buildings are attractive and maintained. These are also “smaller” scale communities – buildings are 2-3.5 stories, and buildings are not large or long. Building blocks may consist of several row buildings, but they are not at an urban scale. In particular, many participants in the planning process pointed to Katonah as being representative of what the Town’s downtown environment could aspire to – residents love the Town but would like to see an upgrade in the appearance of its downtowns and commercial corridors. Stone Harbor has a quintessential “main street” environment, and new infill development has been consistent with this building form. Duck, NC, was mentioned because it provides an example of how commercial development could be tied to the waterfront – where the Town would have more accessibility to enjoying it. The pictures below are intended to provide inspiration on how areas of the Town could evolve and provide a sense of what the plan participants desire. The design guidelines will further detail what it is about these places, as demonstrated in the images, that are appealing from a design perspective. In the future, the Town may want to memorialize these guidelines in a form based code for certain segments of the Town, especially its Carmel and Mahopac downtowns, and its primary commercial corridors. Design guidelines would also guide infill mixed use and commercial development.



Woodstock’s downtown environment does not consist of attached buildings, but repurposed residential buildings where a landscaped front yard dominates – sculptures add visual interest.



Katonah’s downtown environment exhibits angled parking, a broad sidewalk, 2-3.5 story buildings which are not connected but repurposed residences. Operable awnings, large window displays provide an attractive pedestrian friendly environment.



In Duck, NC, a public walkway provides access to both storefronts and the waterfront. Carmel residents desire more visual and physical connection to its lakefronts.



An infill project in Armonk, NY. Although one building, the massing is broken in size and massing to give the appearance of multiple buildings. Building heights are two stories, and large shop windows provide visual interest.



Stone Harbor, NJ, has a low scale downtown environment with multiple residential buildings converted to storefronts. Large sidewalks and street trees, and shopping windows provide a welcoming environment.



In Ridgefield, CT, the pavers break up the sidewalk environment for visual interest. Street trees within a landscaped median softens the streetscape. Buildings range from 2-3 stories. A street café is protected from the street with large landscape boxes.

The general design guidelines provide design criteria and suggest development approaches which will help both the Town and applicants consider issues of overall site organization and design, architecture, landscaping, parking, site design, and pedestrian circulation. The purposes are to:

- Maintain or improve the appearance and historic character of the Town’s “downtowns” and commercial corridors;
- Encourage the highest quality of architectural and site design;
- Provide general design objectives; and
- Provide guidance to developers, property owners or business operators during the design phase of proposed projects; and

These guidelines should be used by applicants at the beginning of the design phase of development and can be utilized by the Planning Board during review of applications for site plan or special use permit approval or other boards that may also be responsible for land use decisions. These guidelines are intended for general guidance, and the Planning Board should vary from them where it finds the proposed design of a building is consistent with the Plan, and is protective of, or enhances, the Town’s historic and architectural character.

These Design Guidelines emphasize that it is especially important for the Town to pursue a high-quality visual environment at its gateway locations, on either end of Route 6. The impression that a visitor will have of a community will be created from the first moment he/she enters the community at these critical gateways. To the maximum extent, projects need to be reviewed, with the objective of elevating the quality of each gateway’s appearance.

These guidelines flow from the input provided by many Carmel residents and stakeholders who participated in various public outreach efforts including a workshop, public survey, and webinars. Each of these efforts included a design element, to assess the Town’s visual preferences, especially with regard to buildings and the built environment. A special focus was for the commercial corridors, including the downtowns of Mahopac and Carmel, and ideas with regard to the types of higher density development which may be appropriate, depending on location.

Because the downtown areas and commercial buildings have older “historic” buildings, these guidelines focus on maintaining and expanding downtown similar to what has existed.

Building Placement



Building setback. In a downtown setting, buildings typically front to street right-of-way and the sidewalks that provide pedestrian access to the front of a building. Buildings should have no setback, or up to 15 feet, so as to relate the buildings to the streetscape.

Façade relationship to the street. As also demonstrated in the above image, buildings should never result in a blank wall fronting to a street as it results in a poor and uninteresting streetscape and pedestrian environment. Buildings are to be designed so that entrance doors and windows, rather than blank walls, garages or storage areas, face the street. Especially in the downtowns, parking areas should never be located in front a building. Where it is difficult to situate parking behind a building, it should only be along the side of it. The rear façade of a building should not be visible from a street.



Building alignment. The front facade of buildings are to be parallel to the street it adjoins, unless it is a corner property, where the Town can assess whether an angled building would achieve the objectives of these design guidelines. This image shows a building at an angle to the street corner. This building is the front portion of a firehouse building (located in Cape May, NJ) which is located to the rear of this building.



Parking and building location. As mentioned previously, buildings in the downtown areas need to be oriented primarily to a sidewalk, whether as it exists today or extended in the future. On-site parking spaces are not to be located between a principal building and the street to which it fronts. Parking, to the maximum extent, is to be located behind a building, or within a side yard but behind the front façade. Only where the Town determines

that a parking area cannot be located other than within the front yard, the parking area must be landscaped by a solid, continuous year-round vegetative screen, consisting of a hedge, decorative fence, or combination of both. Mugo pine and trees are used to screen the parking in the example above. Importantly, there should never be uncontrolled access into and out of a parking lot. Parking lots should be designed where there are clear access aisles, and defined curb cuts need to be provided at driveways. Where a sidewalk crosses a driveway, the cement

sidewalk should be continued. The image below shows the defined driveway point, with a drop curb where the driveway is only, and a landscape buffer between the sidewalk and parking lot (Armonk, NY). Service areas behind buildings, such as loading and unloading areas, need to be screened.



Building Scale



Scale and mass. These guidelines encourage buildings that fit with the scale and mass of existing buildings in the downtown. Thus, the scale and mass of buildings need to be compatible with that of adjacent and nearby buildings, particularly as viewed from adjacent streets. Here, a large building has been broken down into the appearance of multiple buildings, through the use of

multiple gable roofs, and different architectural treatments (Armonk, NY). The best treatment is to allow smaller building footprints – breaking up the massing of a building is another design alternative.



Do not mismatch building masses!

Building height. The maximum building height will be dictated by the zoning regulations. However, the Town encourages 2 ½ - 3 story buildings that are comparable to the heights in the downtown areas.



Maximum footprint. The total footprint of any single building, whether or not the building is occupied by a single or multiple tenants, should not exceed a gross floor area of 5,000 square feet. As an example, the bank building below has an approximate floor area of 3,600 square feet. Buildings should “go up, not

out”. Where the Town allows a larger building, especially where a row-style building is being designed, it need to be broken up into wings, building extensions, and changes in massing and architecture so as not to appear large. It is common for older historic building expansions to extend back toward the rear yard, as lot widths were typically narrow. The image above (Armonk, NY) shows an addition to a converted residential dwelling.

Architectural details. Older “historic buildings” will have bays, porches, wings, and other details. There is no single prevalent style in the Town’s downtowns, but individual buildings do have a style, and rehabilitation of these buildings, or construction of infill buildings adjoining them, need to be sympathetic and preserve these features. Always repair rather than replace architectural elements. Original architectural components, such as fascias, soffits, trim, columns, brackets, porch railings, and door/window casings, and architectural details, such as joinery and surface patterns, contribute significantly to the character of a building and need to be protected. If replacement is determined to be necessary, make sure that style, size and material match the original. Tompkins Mahopac Bank in Carmel has distinctive architecture – both the building and the architecture need to be preserved as they add to the distinct character of this block along of Gleneida Avenue.



Building Façade Materials

Exterior facades. Exterior materials of new construction need to be compatible with those traditionally used in the Town and may include wood (clapboard, board and batten or shingles), or, to a lesser extent, brick or stone. Products that simulate wood clapboard (e.g. Hardiplank, Hardiboard) may be appropriate. Such siding material should replicate the smooth painted surfaces of authentic wood clapboard, match the reveal of the original clapboards, and incorporate corner boards where appropriate. If vinyl is allowed, it should be architectural grade and textured.

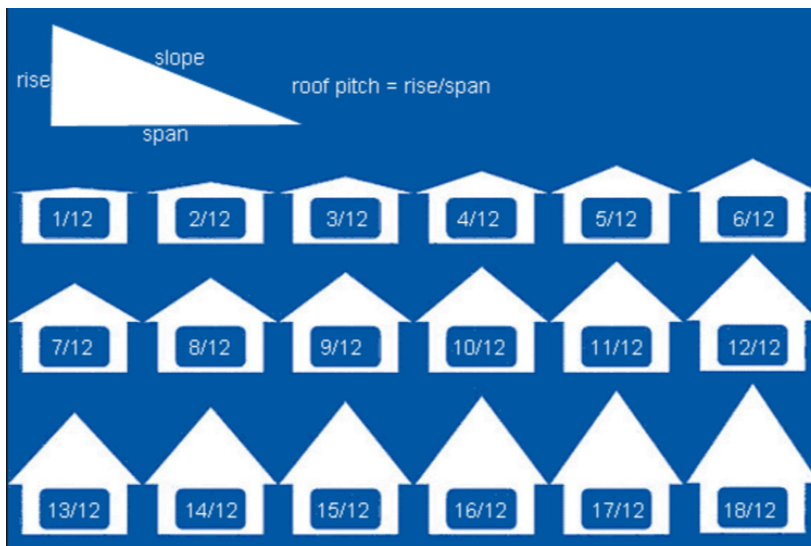
Stone product. Some prominent buildings in the Town are constructed of stone. It is not common in the Town to have buildings constructed from stone. Colonial buildings in the Town have had clapboard siding, and a limited number of buildings are constructed in brick. Man-made or processed masonry materials (such as cultured stone) designed to simulate brick or stone may be used upon a determination by the Town that the texture, color, method of construction and architectural features (lintels, sills, etc.) of the material is sufficiently similar to that of the natural material to be compatible.

Stucco. Stucco buildings are not a common material used in the design of buildings in the Town. Stucco or similar troweled or sprayed-on textured surface finishes are allowed when used with a smooth (unpatterned) or sand finish, and would require wood trim, including corner boards, casing, and cornice and soffit details that are in keeping with earlier historic buildings.

Unacceptable materials. Facades of metal, plastic, plywood panels, ceramic tile, or similar materials are not allowed.

Trim. Existing historic trim, e.g., dentils, vergeboard, pedimented gable ends, and other trim features are to be retained or replaced in kind. Buildings should be trimmed to match the architectural style of the building, whether renovated or new. Faux quoins made from stucco or dryvit are not consistent with the older architectural styles of Carmel buildings.

Roof Types and Materials



Roof style. Roofs in the Town are most commonly gable style roofs. All roofs are to be gabled with a minimum pitch of six rise to 12 span (or run). Few roof types have a roof pitch of 12/12 in the Town.

Flat roofs. Flat roofs can be allowed, only on two or greater-story buildings, if designed with a roof cornice or overhang with brackets similar to Victorian buildings. For one

story buildings, a decorative parapet should be used to screen rooftop mechanical equipment. The preference is gable roofs. The image below shows a building with a gable front roof, which has a parapet which allows for signs to be placed on the face.

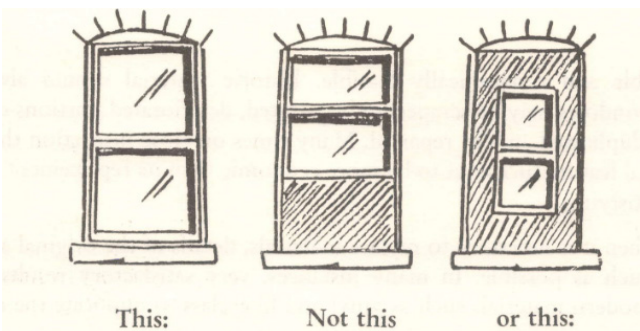


Alternative roof types. Gambrel or hipped roofs may be allowed if designed in a manner consistent with past Dutch Colonial historic building styles. Mansard roofs are not common to the Town and are not encouraged.

Dormers. Peaked or slope roof dormers and cupolas are acceptable and help break up the roofline. The preference is for a building to have real dormers, not faux architectural elements.

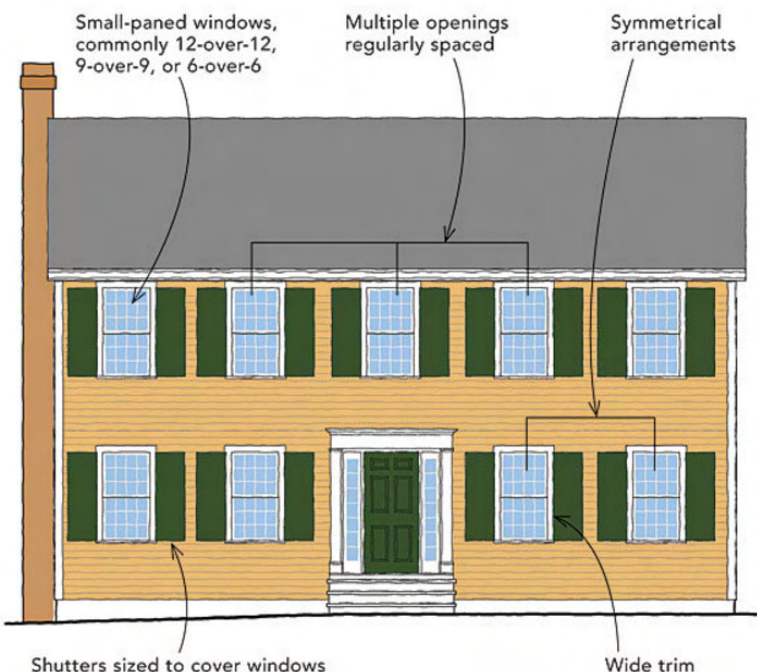
Materials and Rooftop Equipment. Roofing materials should be slate, standing seam metal, asphalt or architectural grade fiberglass shingles or cedar shakes. White or very light shingles are generally not acceptable. Roof ventilators, skylights, solar panels, and other mechanical items should be installed on rear slopes or other locations not easily visible from the public right-of-way.

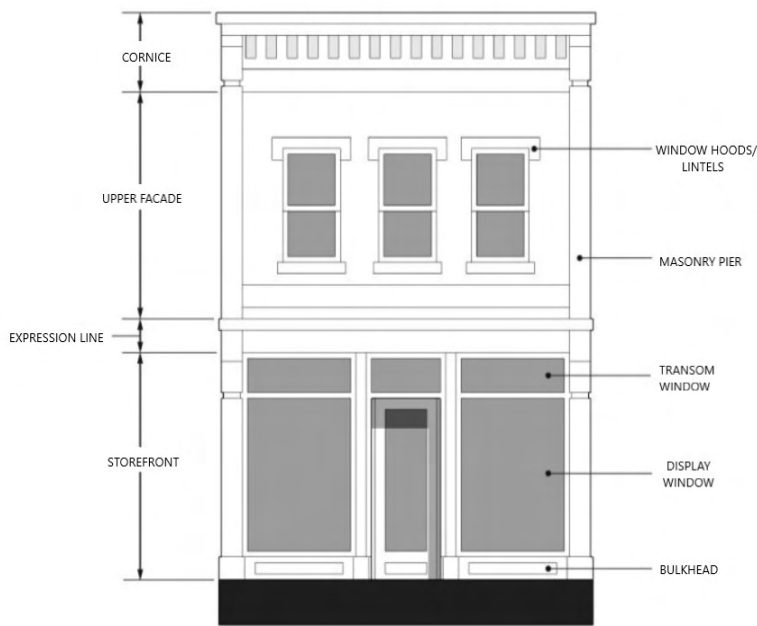
5. Window and Door Arrangement



Window arrangement. The spacing, pattern and detailing of windows and window openings are to be compatible with those of other buildings and consistent with the architectural style of the building. The image below shows typical spacing for a colonial style building. Window openings that have been closed should be reopened wherever possible, and existing windows should never be blocked off or sided. Replacement windows need to match the existing opening.

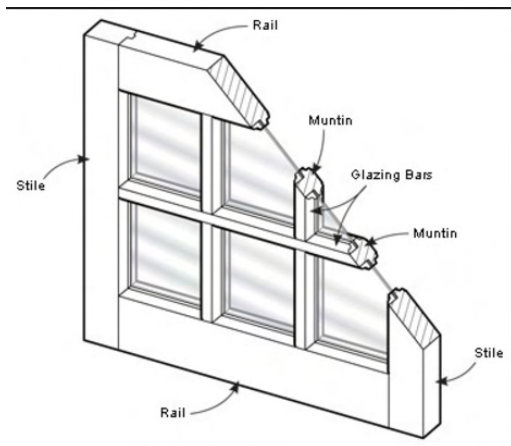
Window orientation. Windows on the first floor should be oriented vertically. Those on the second floor need to relate to the first in shape, form and pattern, except for building types where smaller windows such as "eyebrow" windows are traditionally used. Window types must be consistent with the architectural style chosen for the building.





Display windows. Typical and effective display windows in storefronts typically consist of single pane glass. Where display windows are proposed, the display area on the first floor needs to be at least 70 percent of the wall area of the first floor. Display windows can be single pane glass or be separate colonial panes (also referred to as “lights”). Use bays to accentuate and further highlight a display window.

Muntins. Windows with permanent muntins no wider than one inch in patterns consistent with the building style are preferred. Removable muntins are discouraged. False muntins sandwiched between the glazing of thermal windows do not provide the shadowlines that are an authentic detail of historic buildings and therefore should be avoided.



Where thermal pane windows are desired, true or simulated divided lights should be used, whichever type best replicates what was original to the building. “Snap-in grills” are not durable and should be avoided. The image shows a true window with muntins dividing the panes or “lights”. For double hung windows, “9 over 9” refers to the individual number of panes on the upper and lower sashes of a window. The window to the left shows a six-pane window.



Doors. Principal entry doors are to face the street to which the building fronts. Original historic doors on older buildings should be retained to the extent practicable. Door colors should accent and complement the colors of the principal building..



Paths. A concrete, stone, brick or gravel path needs to be installed from the entry door to the sidewalk, unless a porch fronts directly to the sidewalk. Stamped asphalt walks are discouraged in favor of the materials described previously. Textured paths are inviting and add to the community's visual character.

6. Building Colors

Historic palette. Building colors, for wood or vinyl sided buildings, should be selected from the historic color palette recommended by any commercial paint manufacturer. These include, but are not limited to Benjamin Moore Historical Collection, Sherwin Williams Historic Collection, or similar palette. This will create consistency, especially in the downtown areas.

6. Accessory Mechanical Equipment



Equipment. All roof-, wall- or ground-mounted mechanical equipment, such as heating and air conditioning units, exhaust fans, satellite dishes, etc., shall be confined within the principal building or within an area enclosed by a wall, fence, berm or hedge of sufficient height and density to screen the equipment year-round from view from adjacent streets, properties and parking lots. If not housed within the building, the preferred location is at the rear of the building. Enclosures should match the color and style of the building to minimize visibility. Mechanical equipment can be screened by vegetation, but there needs to be sufficient depth to screen the equipment. New utility lines need to be undergrounded. Installation, rehabilitation, or replacement of mechanical systems need to be planned to minimize changes to the appearance of a building. Building systems include mechanical and electrical equipment and distributions lines; plumbing pipes and vents; and communication systems, such as telephone and television.



Waste enclosures. All dumpsters and similar containers shall be fully enclosed within a building or structure or shall otherwise be shielded from view by an opaque fence and gate and screened by appropriate landscaping. No dumpster shall be located in front of a building, and the preferred location is at the rear of the building.

7. Parking and Access



Combined parking and access. The number of driveways and access points along a street should be limited to avoid breaks in the sidewalk system. Single access driveways to adjoining parking lots or an interconnection between adjoining parking lots is encouraged and should be required where necessary to provide safe traffic management. This shared driveway is along Main Street in Goshen, NY.

Parking lots. Off-street parking lots are not preferred within the front yard unless the Town determines an alternative location cannot be accommodated on the site. Where parking cannot be located elsewhere on the site, it needs to be separated from the sidewalk or street by a landscape strip no less than five feet

in width which will includes trees, fences, or hedges or shrubs or a combination thereof which screens views of the off-street parking lot from the public road.

Materials. Landscaping materials should satisfy the following minimum requirements at the time they are installed and be maintained and replaced as necessary to retain compliance with these requirements:

1. Large deciduous trees: two-inch caliper.
2. Conifers: six feet high.
3. Small flowering trees: one-inch caliper.
4. Large shrubs: thirty-inch height.
5. Small shrubs: eighteen-inch height.

8. Signs



Materials. Signs constructed of wood with painted, carved or mounted letters are preferred.



Lighting. New internally lit signs are not recommended (e.g., box signs with internal lighting). Lighting needs to be via an external light source oriented to avoid glare towards adjacent streets. Goose neck style lighting meets this requirement.



Perpendicular wall signs. Signs that hang perpendicular to the building façade should be allowed where the façade is within five (5) feet of the public right-of-way, or where a reviewing board determines the sign enhances visibility of an establishment. A perpendicular wall sign which is the same shape as the use or name it announces is an iconic sign. The design of iconic signs are encouraged where tasteful.

Freestanding signs. Freestanding signs are allowed. Temporary black sandwich boards are allowed, provided they do not block sidewalks, and are brought inside when the establishment is closed.



A freestanding sign can have multiple tenant names. The more tenants, the more difficult it is to read a sign, especially when viewed from a street, and at higher operating speeds. This monument sign has a stone base and exterior lights illuminate it – authentic stone should be used.

The image below shows a monument sign which provides identification for a franchise type retail store. Where the Town is trying to achieve a more cohesive appearance, it can require that similar colors be used in the signage, rather than allowing multiple colors including the standard franchise colors.





Mural signs. The Town can allow wall mural signs for visual interest on blank brick walls, or for purposes of breaking up an existing blank wall. Murals can be a community project, engaging the local school and a source of pride.



9. Lighting

In general, wherever LED lighting is used, the kelvin value should not exceed 2,700 kelvin. Otherwise, the lighting will appear stark white, and can be a distraction and nuisance.



Style. Light fixtures that are consistent with the architecture of a building and from a manufacturer of historic or period lighting are preferred.

Light sources. All external light sources are to be designed to direct glare away from adjacent streets, properties and the sky. The goose neck lights below are aimed at the building which is preferred.

Neon signs. Neon signs are discouraged unless consistent with the style of an existing building.





Height. Light fixtures should be no taller from finished grade than 18 feet or the building height. Lower light poles are common to pedestrian-oriented, Town-style downtowns. Light fixtures can also have installations that allow hanging signs and flag to be mounted to the light pole. Note the split rail fence which protects pedestrians from the street and serves to channel pedestrian to defined crosswalks.



LED lighting. Storefront LED light strings which outline a window are not allowed. They are brash, too bright, and distract motorists.

Nighttime lighting for security can be accomplished in other, less visually intrusive ways that protect the night sky.

10. Fences and Walls



Fences. Fences and walls can be wood, stone, brick, and metal/wrought iron and match the architectural style of the building they enclose. Materials such as vinyl, fiber cement (hardie board) or other man-made material can be used where it determines allowing such waiver is no less protective of the aesthetic character. Chain link fencing is not allowed in the downtown areas

within the front yard, and generally discouraged. Fences or walls with a maximum height of 42 inches can be located between a structure and the street, either parallel or perpendicular to the street, if constructed of either vertical wood pickets, with a separation between pickets preferably at least equal to the width of the picket. Decorative fences will add visual interest are encouraged. Where retaining walls are required and face to the public street, use real

stone, or stone product that has the appearance of real stone. Avoid paver blocks and large segmental concrete blocks.



Fences not permitted. Chain-link fences or solid wood, e.g., stockade fences should not be allowed in front of any principal building's façade which faces a street.

11. Monuments and Sculptures



The Town has parks and monuments within the downtown area honoring various residents and events. These add visual interest to the downtown areas and are to be encouraged. Artistic installations add visual interest.

12. Historic Features and Elements



Historic features. Historic features and structures should be preserved to the maximum extent, as they are reminders of the Town’s unique history.

Brick chimneys should never be removed but maintained.

13. Landscaping



Front yard. The front yard of any property is the most visible element of the landscape. Front yards must be vegetated with lawn, shrubs, or low growing planting, e.g., ivy or pachysandra, perennials or annuals. Front yards are not to be paved, except for a driveway entrance, the width of which should be minimized to no more than ten feet for a dwelling, and no more than 12 feet for a commercial use.

Where streets are close to the right of way, box planters and other potted plants and benches can be used to add greenery and break up appearances of impervious surfaces. Yards can be used as landscape features and to control and treat stormwater runoff. Here a garden within the pergola can provide stormwater infiltration. It also breaks up views of the parking lot from the public street, and is a pedestrian access way.



14. Lakefront Vistas



Unique to the Town of Carmel are the lakefronts upon which the downtowns and commercial corridors front. It is important to retain these views and vistas from the road corridors and sidewalks from which the lakefront is visible. When sighting buildings, the building, yards, and open space need to be designed and oriented to retain these vistas. Pedestrian corridors can be integrated in front of the buildings to allow access to the waterfront.



open up views.

Buildings should be oriented perpendicular to the waterfront with view corridors down to the lakes. Buildings should be given flexibility to have small side yard, where it can expand a second side yard to open up viewsheds, where the side lot lines of a lot are perpendicular to the waterfront. Publicly-available amenities should be situated to take advantage of the lakefronts. Drives and streets should be perpendicular to the waterfront to also

By pursuing the designs set forth in this section, and introducing improvements within the streetscape, an existing or new building can be an attractive amenity which is can draw visitors to the community.

It is recognized that there are many other architectural improvements that could be appropriate for buildings within the community. The Town, if it conducts architectural review, can retain an architect, an urban designer, or a landscape architect to guide any board to the appropriate redevelopment, or new development of buildings that enhance the Town's character.

9. IMPLEMENTATION

Adoption and Filing

The Carmel Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide the Town's policies, funding, capital improvement programs over the next 13-15 years. The first step in implementing this Plan is for the Town Board to adopt the document. As per Section 272-a of the NYS Town Law:

- All town land use regulations shall be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to Section 272-a.
- All plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the town comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section shall take such plan into consideration.

As is evident, the Plan is an important document when seeking funding or planning capital projects within the Town. Once adopted, the Comprehensive Plan will be filed with the Town Clerk and a copy sent to the Putnam County Planning Department. It should also be made available online, and hard copies available at Town Hall and at the local library.

Once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted, there are many strategies that the Town and its citizens can use to implement long range policies. Some of the primary mechanisms that can be used to meet the Town's goals are outlined below. Importantly, the plan should be consulted on a regular basis by Town officials and board members when carrying out their various duties.

To ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is revisited periodically and to determine whether the Town's decision-making is aligned with the vision, goals and objectives outlined in the Plan, the Town Board should set aside time each year with its boards to review the Comprehensive Plan objectives, to identify what was implemented over the past year, and to set targets for the upcoming year. The Town Board could have this discussion at a workshop meeting around the time of its annual reorganization meeting. Based on the outcome of this discussion, the Town Board could then task the appropriate department(s), or a committee(s) if necessary, to implement the objectives identified for the coming year. In addition, the Plan should be reviewed in its entirety within 13-15 years of its adoption.

Tools for Implementation

A number of planning and zoning tools are discussed throughout this document as tools to implement the Plan Vision, including but not limited to:

- Amending Chapter 156, Zoning, Town of Carmel Zoning Code
- Site Plan Regulations, 156-61, of the Zoning Chapter
- Subdivision Regulations, Chapter 131, Town of Poughkeepsie Code
- Floating Zoning Districts
- Overlay Zoning Districts
- Form Based Codes

- Local Landmarks
- Cluster Subdivision
- Targeted Studies including Historic Inventory and Housing Studies

Next Steps

Following this section, a matrix is provided which lists all of the goals and objectives in the plan and assigns a general timeframe for the implementation of each. Some of these projects have already begun; others should be started soon after the plan is adopted. In most cases, these projects are intended to advance several plan goals and objectives at once.

An immediate implementation measure will be amendment to the Town's Zoning Chapter and related land use regulations – as noted above, under State law the Town's land use regulations must be in accordance with the adopted comprehensive plan. Unlike the 2000 Plan, this Comprehensive Plan will require more substantial revisions to the Town's land use regulations. Ultimately, all of these changes must be reviewed and adopted by the Town Board. Some will occur immediately with the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, while others can be adopted in the next several years.

Implementation Matrix

The implementation matrix is the summary of goals and objectives, and whether these should be implemented in the short- or long-term. Some require implementation as part of an ongoing continual process – they may be implemented early and will continue to be achieved on an ongoing basis. Short term objectives should be implemented within 3 years of adoption, medium term within 4-7 years and long-term objectives should be achieved within 10-15 years of adoption.

1. LAND USE AND ZONING					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 1	Allow development in a pattern consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan.				
1.1	Revitalize the Mahopac and Carmel downtowns.	✓			
1.2	Consider creating a mixed-use zoning district that can be applied to sites where infill development should be encouraged.	✓			
1.3	Ensure that the C/BP zoning district is properly mapped and allow for a flexibility of uses that meet current and future anticipated economic shifts.	✓			
1.4	Review the Zoning chapter to update outdated sections and evaluate new land use issues not previously considered.	✓			
1.5	Add general design guidelines and improve site plan standards consistent with the desire to improve the visual environment and character of the Town.	✓			
1.6	Consider adopting form-based code zoning for the Carmel and Mahopac downtowns.	✓			
1.7	Consider consolidating the various zoning districts that pertain to the NYCDEP watershed lands.	✓			
1.8	Consider creation of a zoning district to include all dedicated open space parcels such as cemeteries, parks and historic sites.		✓		
1.9	Consider adopting incentive zoning provisions.	✓			
1.10	Explore opportunities to create a small mixed-use hamlet by Secor Road to accommodate additional social, entertainment, commercial and housing uses.			✓	
1.11	Explore opportunities to create a small mixed-use hamlet by Mahopac Falls to accommodate additional social, entertainment, commercial and housing uses.		✓		
1.12	Allow the Planning Board to require that site/subdivision plans incorporate green infrastructure and other sustainable practices related to renewable energy or other		✓		

1. LAND USE AND ZONING

Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	methods of greenhouse gas reductions.				
1.13	Update the zoning chapter to ensure that the application review processes are consistent with NYS Town Law, ensure consistent application reviews and interpretation, and encourage investment by conveying clear development expectations.	✓			

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 2	Promote economic development opportunities.				
2.1	Diversify the types of nonresidential uses that are allowed in the Town.	✓			
2.2	Explore creation of a business improvement district in the Mahopac and Carmel hamlet downtowns to secure funding explicitly used for downtown improvements.	✓			
2.3	Protect the integrity of commercial zoning from residential uses.	✓			
2.4	Commit to supporting a group that will pursue economic development opportunities for the Town and develop materials to promote the Town.	✓			
2.5	Consider creating an economic development floating zone to allow for opportunities to locate desirable nonresidential development in areas with appropriate infrastructure and transportation access.		✓		
2.6	Pursue uses that capture demand created by visitors to the Town and tourists in the region.	✓			
2.7	Increase opportunities for research and technology				✓

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	industries to locate within the Town.				
2.8	Work collaboratively with property owners to create shovel ready sites which expedite the planning process for development that is consistent with the Plan.				✓
2.9	Encourage a local food economy by incentivizing the use and sale of locally produced goods in Town	✓			
2.10	Promote a sustainable agricultural economy.	✓			
2.11	Define and permit indoor agricultural production.		✓		
2.12	Support and promote community farms.				✓
2.13	Permit smaller-scale agricultural activities including but not limited to backyard farms, small animal husbandry and apiaries, community farms and gardens.				✓

3. HOUSING					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 3	Promote diverse housing opportunities.				
3.1	Support apartments above ground floor retail space in the hamlet downtowns, to introduce people and add vitality and a market for the “main streets”	✓			
3.2	Redevelop vacant or underutilized shopping centers to create mixed use neighborhoods	✓			
3.3	Consider the adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings for residential use.	✓			
3.4	Consider commissioning a housing needs study for the Town to determine where gaps in housing type and price points may exist and assess whether a		✓		

3. HOUSING					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	mandatory inclusionary housing policy for large residential projects would be beneficial to the Town.				
3.5	Allow for the construction of two-family, three-family, four-family and townhomes in addition to multifamily developments in appropriate locations of the Town, preferably in close proximity and connected to the hamlet downtowns.				✓
3.6	Ensure the cluster subdivision standards are consistent with NYS Town Law				✓
3.7	Evaluate if there are locations in the Town which could accommodate smaller housing lots where sewer is available, and one (1) to two (2) acre zoning in closer proximity to the hamlet centers which would be more affordable than the large lot three (3) acre zoning now required.		✓		

4. NATURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 4	Continue to protect the natural resources in the Carmel which lend the Town its unique semi-rural and woodland character.				
4.1	Ensure that new developments are designed to fit into, and not dominate, the scenic landscape.				✓
4.2	Ensure that the use of “net lot area” is applied to site plan and subdivision review and includes environmental constraints to development including wetlands and waterbodies, steep slopes, agriculturally significant soils (where relevant), aquifers and floodplains. Defining “intact” or “established” forest habitat should also be considered within this definition.				✓

4. NATURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
4.3	Promote native and pollinator friendly landscape plantings and control the spread of invasive species. Promote native plant species during subdivision and site plan review.		✓		
4.4	Consider adopting ridgeline preservation regulations or guidelines.		✓		
4.5	Streamline wetland protection laws to avoid overlap between various jurisdictions, including the NYSDEC, NYCDEP, ACOE, and Town.				✓
4.6	Identify opportunity areas and partnerships for restoring riparian and floodplain habitats and lakes.				✓

5. WATERFRONT AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 5	Connect the Town physically and visually to its waterfronts by enhancing public access and recreational and cultural waterfront amenities.				
5.1	Ensure that waterfront zoning considers public waterfront access or viewsheds during site and subdivision plan review	✓			
5.2	Consider obtaining first rights of refusal for any properties which may be in private ownership, and which afford direct access to the lakefronts.	✓			
5.3	Preserve the Mahopac downtown waterfront as a location for water-dependent and water-enhanced uses.	✓			
5.4	Pursue creation of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.	✓			
5.5	Consider incorporating, designing and	✓			

5. WATERFRONT AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	constructing innovative access to the waterfront.				
5.6	Integrate public access and recreation opportunities where new development is proposed along the waterfront.	✓			

6. TRANSPORTATION: COMPLETE STREETS AND TRAILS					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 6	Pursue a safe and interconnected multimodal transportation system of trails, sidewalks, and streets.				
6.1	Adopt a Complete Streets resolution specific to the Town of Carmel.	✓			
6.2	Review parking requirements within the zoning chapter, evaluate the current capacity and demand of uses for parking, and allow adjustments and flexibility to reduce any oversupply of parking that limits the scope of building development and introduces unnecessary impervious surfaces.	✓			
6.3	Create a Town bike and trail plan that identifies rights-of-way throughout the Town that are appropriate for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.		✓		
6.4	Promote the continued expansion of the Putnam County Trailway and obtain easements to connect existing neighborhoods to the trail.		✓		✓
6.5	Continue to improve walkability by reducing curb cuts, improving crosswalks and connecting		✓		

6. TRANSPORTATION: COMPLETE STREETS AND TRAILS					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	new and existing sidewalk infrastructure in appropriate locations throughout Town, especially where connections between neighborhoods, public transportation routes and community services are possible.				
6.6	Continue to encourage opportunities to consolidate curb cuts and improve pedestrian safety through the site plan review process.	✓			✓
6.7	Ensure that existing and future on-street bicycle routes throughout Town are safe and clearly marked and ensure pedestrian and bicycle amenities are included in site plan and subdivision review.	✓			
6.8	Pursue New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) funding opportunities				✓
6.9	Support traffic calming measures.				✓

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
Goal 7	Preserve and promote the Town's history and scenic character embodied in its historic buildings, cultural assets and landscapes.				
7.1	Implement design guidelines to encourage consistently attractive development.	✓			
7.2	Consider adopting a Downtown Design Overlay District which requires redevelopment and infill development to be constructed in accordance with traditional downtown standards.	✓			
7.3	Consider requiring art sculptures as part of new or substantially renovated large-scale		✓		

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	developments with appropriate art sculptures, landscaping, lighting, and other visual amenities to add visual interest and enhance the appearance of the Town. Incorporate public art into Town streetscapes to enhance the Town's identity and create interesting visual environments.				
7.4	Beautify the main Town transportation corridors, especially at the entrances into the Town.	✓			✓
7.5	Preserve the existing historic buildings in the Town of Carmel.				✓
7.6	Allow the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in order to preserve and protect them.	✓			✓
7.7	Provide the Planning Board with historic review authority when reviewing projects involving historic buildings.	✓			
7.8	Work with local agencies and seek grants to develop a comprehensive list of historic resources and buildings in the Town.				✓
7.9	Pursue local landmark designations, as this process is the most effective at protecting significant historic sites.		✓		
7.8	Create a historic plaque program and provide it to property owners who maintain their historic buildings.		✓		
7.9	Allow the Building Department and Planning Board to enforce design guidelines	✓			✓
7.10	Continue to promote education and visitor interest in the Town by installing interpretative signage that provide information regarding historic and scenic resources.		✓		
7.11	Work with the Historical Society to create a walking		✓		

7. HISTORIC, SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES					
Goal / Objective	Description	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Ongoing; Continuing
	tour of the Carmel hamlet center which has significant historic resources.				
7.12	Preserve the scenic rural and historic character of the Town's roads		✓		

A photograph of a person riding a horse in a paddock. The rider is wearing a white shirt and a dark helmet. The horse is dark-colored. In the foreground, there is a large, leafy green tree on the left and a dirt track on the right. A red banner with the word "APPENDICES" in white capital letters is overlaid on the middle of the image. In the bottom right corner, there is a small, ornate red lantern on a stone base.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Existing Conditions Report

APPENDIX B

Online Survey Results

APPENDIX C

Workshop Summaries