



MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION STRATEGY



VILLAGE OF ATHENS, NEW YORK
NOVEMBER 2007



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Purpose of the Main Street Revitalization Strategy

The purpose of the Main Street Revitalization Strategy is to identify the existing conditions and establish goals and recommendations specific to the Village's *Main Street* Target Area which is defined below. These recommendations will be utilized by the Village to achieve and sustain economic viability in a competitive regional market.

Successful modern downtowns have evolved through planning, nurturing, and promoting of the unique qualities that exist within a community's *Main Street*. A revitalized *Main Street* is a result of recognizing changes in the community, identifying new opportunities, creating a plan of action, and mobilizing stakeholders to implement the recommendations. The intent of this document is to serve as a guide for future economic development initiatives that are important to the Village including, but not limited, to historic preservation and restoration, cultural arts, heritage and waterfront tourism.

Target Area

For the purpose of this study, the Target Area is shaped like a "T", and includes parcels fronting Second Street and Water Street. On Second Street, the Target Area includes all parcels within 200 feet of the centerline of Second Street from its intersection with 6th Alley, just northwest of Church Street, to its intersection with Water Street. Continuing on Water Street, the Target Area also includes all parcels within 200 feet of the centerline of Water Street from its intersection with Fourth Street to the south, and the old Dionysos Restaurant (located at 11 North Water Street, parcel number 122. - 19-3-8) to the north. **See Figure 1: Main Street Target Area Map.**

The Target Area contains a mixture of commercial, retail, restaurant, and residential buildings. Many of the buildings are mixed-use, with either commercial or retail on the first floor and residential units on the upper floors. Second Street and Water Street are connected to the Hudson River, the Village's most dominant natural feature. Throughout history, the river has influenced the development of the Village of Athens and today, continues to be a scenic, recreational, and commercial asset.

The Main Street Revitalization Strategy will be used to understand the changing economic conditions, identify community characteristics, and provide development opportunities. Although mapping may specifically show information within this Target Area, the demographic and market research covers the entire Village of Athens. In addition, some recommendations may go beyond the boundaries of the Target Area.

Local & Regional Setting

The Village of Athens is located approximately 30 miles south of the City of Albany in Greene County along the west bank of the Hudson River. The Village is nestled about 100 miles north of

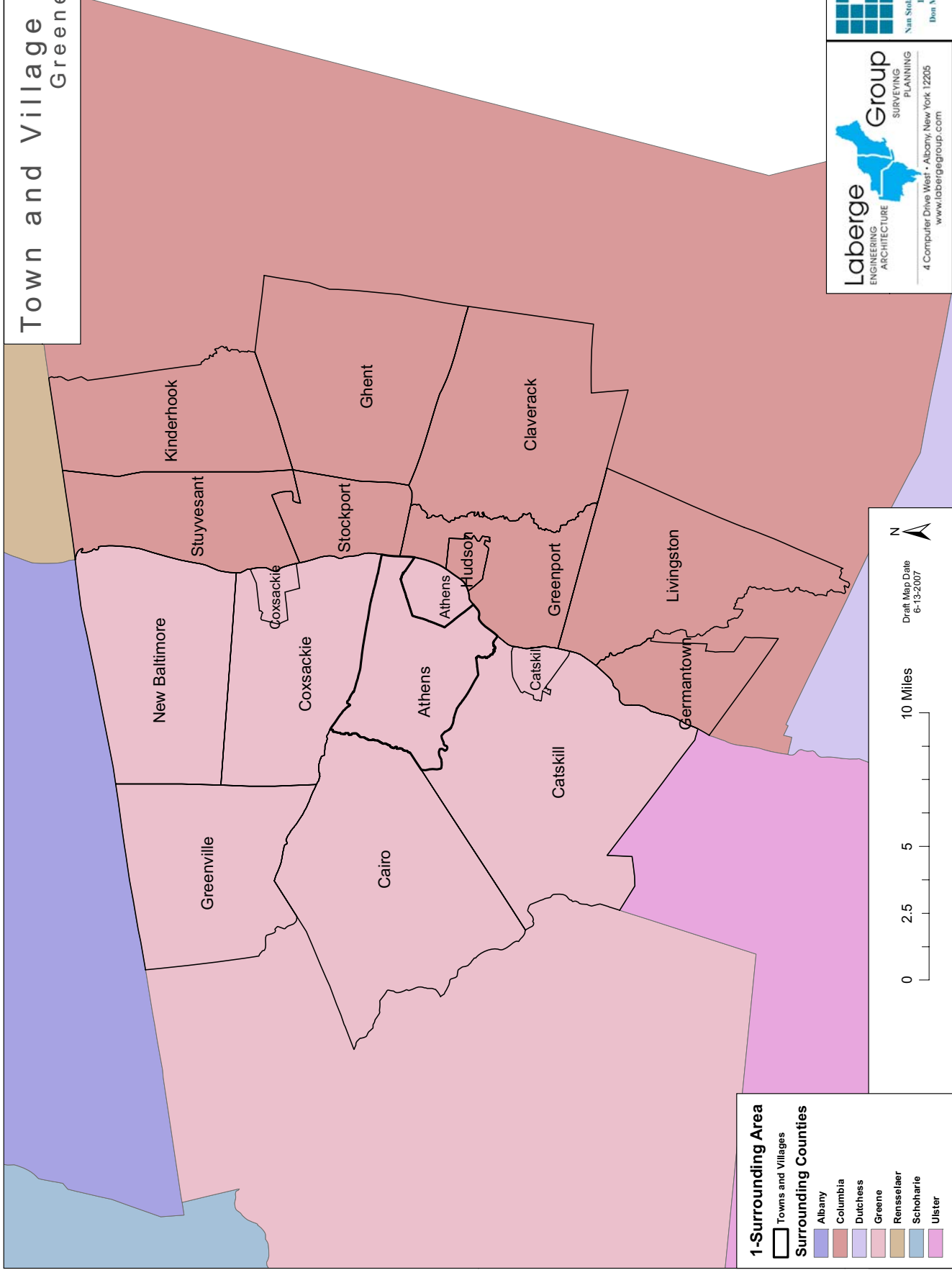
New York City across the river from the City of Hudson. **See Figure 2: Athens Surrounding Area Map.**

With its unique riverfront accessibility, scenic views, and tastefully –restored historic buildings, the Village’s location on the Hudson River and historic architecture are arguably two of the most important Village assets. The Village has long been aware of its historic significance as a center of commerce in the Hudson River Valley. Early residents of the Village enjoyed great prosperity as Athens emerged as a leading manufacturers of ships in the 1800s. Evidence of such prosperity is still clear today in the many grand historic homes and buildings that still stand throughout the Village.

Town and Village of Athens Greene County, NY



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Public Outreach Process

Business – Owner Focus Group Workshop

The Village of Athens held a business – owner focus group workshop on Thursday October 4th 2007 at the Athens Cultural Center on Second Street. The workshop was designed to assist Athens in creating a shared community vision for *Main Street*, as well as developing strategies to meet the needs of the community, strengthen the local economy, and maintain and enhance quality of life. Workshop participants were asked to brainstorm how to transform “obstacles into opportunities”. In addition, a representative from the Greene County Department of Planning & Economic development attended to discuss available grants, loans, and technical assistance for business owners interested in restoring their building or growing their business.

Workshop Format

Upon arrival, participants of the workshop were guided to take a seat surrounding the small group tables. Following a brief presentation, each group was instructed to brainstorm and identify negative factors about Athens *Main Street*. Subsequently, each person within the group was asked to give priority to one factor. After each person identified his/her priority factor, the group brainstormed solutions to minimize or eliminate each of these priority negative factors.

This process was repeated with the brainstorming of positive factors about Athens *Main Street*. After each person identified his/her priority positive factor, the group brainstormed strategies to maintain or enhance each of these positive priority factors to ensure their existence in the future.

The outcome of the workshop provided a ranked list of positive and negative factors of the Athens *Main Street*. The results of the workshop were expanded into strategies or action steps with the intent to revitalize, strengthen, maintain and enhance *Main Street's* unique qualities.

Results Group 1

Negative Factors

- Parking (Priority)
- Traffic Control (Priority)
- Traffic Enforcement (Priority)
- Lack of retail destination (Priority)
- Utility Poles
- Building Conditions
- Senior Citizen Building – *Solution - Paint/Maintain*
- Purtell

- Tree Maintenance
- Space Behind Bank – *Solution - Plant trees & shrubs*
- Ferry Slip – Solution - Continue improve
- Bank – *Solution - Façade improvements/space behind bank, remove checking banner*
- Athens Museum not on Second Street – *Solution - Move to Cultural Center*
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Weeds
- Drainage
- Street Signage
- Snow Removal
- Lack of support of local businesses
- Docks poor condition and maintenance
- Business identifying signage
- Storefronts converted to apartments
- Opera house

Positive Factors

- Easy walking (Priority)
- River Access View (Priority) – *Solution - Complete Park*
- People/neighborly
- Historic Architecture – *Solution - More money/grant*
- Restaurants – *Solution - Parking/Signage*
- Trees – *Solution - Maintain/Replant Celebrate*
- Flowers
- Sidewalks – *Solution - Maintain/Replace*

- Senior Center – *Solution -Improve Maintenance with County*
- Cultural Center - *Solution - Develop 2nd and 3rd floors inside and out on all sides*
- History of Main Street – *Solution - Signage to identify celebrate*
- Safe Village – *Solution - More foot patrols*
- Center of Government
- Community Centers near Main Street
- Park – *Solution - Ferry Slip Restoration*
- Library
- Legion Hall
- Rest Home
- Opera House
- Alleys – *Solution - Maintain*

Group 2

Negative Factors

- Traffic on Second Street and 385 is dangerous (Priority) - *Solution - police enforcement and street lights*
- Lack of appreciation for historic buildings (Priority)
- Absentee Landlords (Priority) - *Solution - code enforcement would help with this - residential occupancy permit*
- Low destination retail (Priority) - *Solution- general store – VT County Store attract people in town*
- Parking is problem – *Solution - need lot*
- Lack of lighting
- Do not have retail in existing storefronts – *Solution - rezone for commercial space only*
- Lack of code enforcement for historic district - *Solution - Tougher enforcement*

Positive Factors

- Riverfront (Priority) - *Solution - More access, labeling, ferry slip, get day traffic connected to Main Street, opening up riverfront places to walk*
- Parking lot to be great for downtown (Priority) - *Solution - get lease lighting, signage*
- Nice place to walk – *Solution - Lighting, sidewalks, enforcement 30mph*
- Cluster of restaurant very positive – *Solution - advertise as group, village and town tax incentives*
- Very friendly community – *Solution - Keep friendly atmosphere*
- Historic Buildings - *Solution - Maintenance guidelines, economic uses for building, code enforcement, tax incentives*
- Unique Character - *Solution – implement the comprehensive plan, promotion, branding for tomorrow, preserve open space*
- Existing store fronts for business compact business area – *Solution – Commercial store front stays commercial*
- Existing pedestrian culture – *Solution - Lighting, sidewalks, enforcement 30mph*

Group 3

Negative Factors

- Parking (Priority) - *Solution - Village parking committee*
- Grants are not meaningful (Priority)
- Follow up on big projects (Priority) – *Solution - Ferry slip*
- Slow growth
- No shopping interest
- Lighting
- No village directory
- Not easy access to village

- No retail stores
- Few job opportunities
- Public transportation
- Success stories
- General upkeep
- Business closing with a few years
- No financial backing
- Tax incentive
- Village maintains sidewalks

Positive Factors

- Walkable Village (Priority)
- River Location (Priority)
- Historical (Priority)
- Growth
- Location
- Wide Main St
- Farmland
- Near bigger towns, Close to Thruway and 9w
- Riverfront Park

Business – Owner Survey

The second opportunity for business –owners to provide feedback was provided through a Confidential Business Survey. The survey was mailed to about thirty (30) business and commercial property owners in late November of 2007. A self-addressed stamped return envelope was provided for convenience purposes. The survey included 21 questions, mostly multiple choice and a few open-ended questions. Unfortunately the Village received only seven

(7) responses to the survey. A copy of the survey is included in the Appendix as well as a full summary of the Survey results.

Previous Planning Efforts

Village of Athens Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

Following the award of a joint Town and Village Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) planning grant, a joint Town/Village Waterfront Advisory Committee was appointed. This committee included members of various local boards, business representatives, civic, planning and environmental groups, and area residents. The community was kept informed of the planning effort through periodic releases and public meetings. A questionnaire was distributed to area residents to ascertain their opinion on a variety of applicable issues. While both communities worked on developing the LWRP, only the Village adopted its LWRP and associated implementation measures in 1999. The NYS Secretary of State approved the Program in 2001 and the U.S. Ocean and Coastal Resource Management Office (OCRM) approved the Program in 2002.

The Village LWRP divided the waterfront area into four land use categories: (1) urban area; (2) urban waterfront area; (3) waterfront recreation and open space areas; and (4) planned open space residential. The urban area was identified as appropriate for intensive commercial and residential development. While a variety of uses were regarded as appropriate for the urban waterfront area, the LWRP indicated that priority should be given to those that require a waterfront location. The waterfront recreation and open space area included areas that, given their natural features and habitats, ought to be preserved.

Overview of the LWRP Recommendations

Since the adoption and approval of the Village of Athens Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), the Village has implemented many of the recommended actions of the LWRP to improve the Hudson River waterfront, with assistance from the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD). The Village of Athens LWRP identified a number of projects as important mechanisms to advance the goals of the LWRP. These priority projects included (1) Substantial phased improvements to the Village's Riverfront Park; (2) Removal of old barges from the waterfront; (3) Improvement to Village-owned waterfront properties to facilitate public water recreational uses; (4) Pursuit of walking and hiking trail opportunities; (5) Development of scenic overlooks; and (6) Historic preservation and revitalization programs. Many of these riverfront improvement projects have been further pursued and studied by the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD), through the Athens Waterfront Restoration Feasibility Study; the Athens Fourth Street Launch & Promenade Project; and the Athens Abandoned Barge Project, which are briefly discussed in the following sections.

Recommended improvements to the Village's Riverfront Park included developing improved docking space and installing a new stand-pipe/dry hydrant for fire fighting capacity. Improvements were recommended for the NYS boat launch and the Village-owned Fourth Street

Boat Launch. In addition, improvements were recommended for Rainey Park at the mouth of Murderers Creek and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The LWRP also recommended that opportunities for public acquisition of waterfront land, through donation or easement, be pursued.

The LWRP included three major trail development recommendations. The “White Elephant Railroad” right of way, which runs from the northern part of the Village to the Coxsackie Town line, was identified as a potential hiking/cross-country skiing/snow-mobile trail. A cleared roadway that runs under the Niagara Mohawk transmission line from NYS Route 385 to the Hudson River in the southern end of the Village was identified as a potential easement site that would permit access for viewing and picnicking. Finally, a third idea was to widen NYS Route 385 to provide for an on-road bike trail. Scenic overlook stopping areas were also recommended for development along NYS Route 385. Street beautification efforts (sidewalk and curbing replacement and resetting and street tree planting) were also recommended to improve accessibility in the Village’s historic district. The LWRP also identified several methods to guide future development in the community, to ensure the community’s resources are preserved and maintained. One such recommendation included the establishment of design guidelines to guide development in the planned open space residential area (including the Sleepy Hollow development).

Other objectives identified by the LWRP were to conduct historic preservation studies, to develop design guidelines, and to create a multi-faceted tourist program to identify markets, design promotional efforts, and coordinate advertising campaigns. To preserve the Middle Ground Flats area, it was recommended that a management plan be created. To assist the Village in preserving additional open lands, it was recommended that the Village conduct a study examining the feasibility of establishing a trust that can accept and administer easements, donations, or land acquisitions to protect natural resources and scenic views.

Athens Waterfront Restoration Feasibility Study

The Village of Athens, with financial and in-kind assistance from the NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, Greene the County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD), Iroquois Gas Transmission System, Army Corps of Engineers, Athens Generating Regional & Community Historic Preservation Benefit Program, and other State and Federal funding agencies, developed a feasibility study and final design plans to revitalize the Village’s waterfront area. The Study identified recommendations to restore the Village ferry slip and adjoining Riverfront Park to benefit both small pleasure craft users as well as larger tour boats. It was even recommended that the Village (and/or others) investigate the feasibility of establishing a small tour boat operation.

Specific recommendations related to the ferry slip restoration addressed a myriad of environmental issues that might arise due to the restoration activities. Techniques to address these concerns included retrofitting the stormwater system (to include sediment traps and stabilized outfalls); working with appropriate County, State, and Federal agencies on dredging techniques and practices; reconstructing 525 linear feet of bulkhead along the Village shoreline and constructing an improved promenade; and designing all aspects of the project including

docks, access ramps, information kiosk, lighting, benches and landscaping to be consistent with the historic character of the downtown.

Additional actions associated with the riverfront project include the construction of a central plaza at the end of Second Street and a small restroom/ticket office facility. There was also an expressed need for additional parking capacity. Methods to increase parking included rearranging and redefining existing on-street parking.

Proposed Barge Removal Project

There have been ongoing attempts by the Village and Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD) to remove the eleven abandoned vessels that have been stored along the Athens waterfront since the 1970s. The vessels, which include barges, tug boats, and a yacht, were brought to Athens by the owner with the intention of rehabilitating the vessels into a series of “waterfront commercial enterprises.” As these plans never materialized, the vessels were abandoned and have deteriorated significantly. Peckham Industries has control of the underwater land grants below the barges.

The blighted vessels, in addition to aesthetic concerns, also present safety and environmental concerns. The area around the barges is heavily covered by wetlands and little is known about what may be stored on the vessels.

Most recently, the Village in partnership with GCSWCD, NYSDEC and Hudsonia, Inc., has been seeking funding to implement the clean-up activities. The Village is seeking to establish a protocol on unknown vessel removal, establishing standard investigation procedures addressing applicable ecological, navigational, historical, and social impacts. The removal was slated to receive funds several years ago from the Hudson River Estuary Program, but the EPF budget did not get passed and the proposal has since been postponed.

Athens Fourth Street Boat Launch Project

Efforts to conduct improvements to the Village’s unimproved boat launch at Fourth Street began in earnest in 2002. Revisiting discussions regarding the site that occurred during the LWRP planning process, the Fourth Street Site was identified as ideal for use as a small craft, paddle craft launch area, where canoes, kayaks, and small power craft could be launched or landed. In 2003, the adjoining landowner opted to participate with the effort, resulting in the scope increasing to include additional public access, a small promenade, increased parking, and improved buffering between properties. Identified as a Hudson River Water Trail site in 2002, the Village has been successful in partnering with both public and private entities to fund and further the project’s progress.

Project components for this effort include, but are not limited to:

- Development of a safe launching/land area for paddle boats such as canoes and kayaks;
- Development of a small kiosk to direct paddle visitors to Village businesses;

- Aesthetic improvements including improvements to streetscape, utility relocation, and improvements to adjoining private buildings and the old slip;
- Installation of landscaping, benches, and planters; and
- Development of parking spaces which can be used by paddlers.

Village of Athens Main Street Revitalization Strategy, 2002

In 2000, the Village of Athens was awarded funding for a technical assistance grant from the Governors Office for Small Cities. The Study was intended to examine the *Main Street* area, collect and analyze building condition data and public opinion, and implement recommendations to revitalize the Athens Business District. The Business District was defined as an “L” shaped area, originating at the intersection of Second Street and Warren Street and continuing to the intersection of Water Street and Fourth Street. The Business District included a mixture of commercial, retail, restaurant, and residential buildings.

The Village gathered data on building conditions and solicited public opinion. The Village then began the preparation of a *Main Street* plan that would revitalize the Athens Business District. A draft summarizing the history, demographics, data collection, and public opinion was completed. However, goals and recommendations were not developed, and ultimately, the plan was never completed or adopted.

As the demographics and building conditions are, in essence, unchanged since 2002 the information gathered by the Main Street Revitalization Committee provides a strong foundation from which to begin the current study. In addition, this study will build upon the 2002 ideas generated from the public participation and surveys to develop specific strategies to achieve the revitalization of the Business District.

Historical Overview

The history of the Village of Athens has long been tied to commerce in the Hudson River Valley region. Local merchants originally purchased the land in 1665 from the Native Americans. The land changed hands several times, eventually being purchased by speculators hoping to create a prosperous community to contend with Hudson, the successful neighboring riverfront community.¹

In the early 1800s Isaac Northrup purchased land from the Van Loon family and laid out the street system of Athens, consisting of ten streets running east to west and five streets running north to south.² In 1805, the land was officially incorporated into the



Northrup House Historic Marker

¹ Village of Athens Draft Main Street Strategy, March 2002, DBS Planning Consultants, Inc.

² National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form. Historic Resources of the Village of Athens.

Village of Athens (originally known as Loonenburg). By the middle of the century, Athens was firmly established and enjoying great prosperity. The Village was a leading manufacturer of ships. The Clark Pottery and various brickyards and ice houses also attracted a large population of immigrant workers. The ferry slip, located at the Athens Riverfront Park, was considered an economic center of the Hudson Valley region. People were drawn to Athens and constructed beautiful homes of the finest architecture. Businesses emerged along Second Street and Water Street to cater to the needs of the growing population.

Growth and prosperity of the Village continued until the early part of the 20th century, with many businesses still prevalent until the 1950's. Due to technological and economical market shifts, the once prominent shops of Athens began to disappear. The economic strain experienced by Athens is not unique. Economic decline has settled over many of the communities in the region. Small retail shops throughout the business district were forced to close or relocate.

Today the historic buildings and homes in the downtown business district preserve the scale of a small, mid-nineteenth century village. Many of these historic buildings are within Athens' Lower Village Historic District, which is on the National and State Register of Historic Places. According to the Historic District nomination, the Lower Village Historic District, "reflects the architectural and historical growth of the small Hudson River community of Athens. Within the district are excellent examples of residential, ecclesiastical, and commercial architecture which vividly portray the village's growth from the beginning of the nineteenth, through the twentieth century. The Historic District contains well-preserved examples of high-style brick Federal, timber frame Federal, Victorian and Federal style row houses, Italianate, Victorian Stick, Early Classical Revival, Second Empire, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Folk Victorian styles. These structures reflect the community's ethnic heritage as well as a strong river-based economy that included a shipyard along with pottery and brick manufacturing."

Although many of the storefronts remain vacant due to the previous economic market shifts, the Village is a unique destination with a *Main Street* that affords great economic potential.



Athens Hudson River Ferry Slip



Well-preserved Historic Home on Second Street



Second Street

Demographic Profile

An integral part of a Main Street Revitalization Strategy is the examination of the area's population. Identifying a community's customer base and their retail needs impacts the sale of goods and services within the community. For instance, individuals with differing family dynamics, income levels, and age groups have different spending patterns. Retailers depend on these factors to determine their market. The examination of the Village's socio-economic data and the surrounding retail trade area will aid in the formulation of the Village's strategies and actions.

This section summarizes a number of trends, including population, age distribution, and housing composition. For comparative purposes, data for the neighboring riverfront villages (Village of Catskill and Village of Coxsackie) was also evaluated. This information is culled primarily from the 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

Population

Local population growth or decline is often dependent upon several factors including: economic expansion, environmental capacity, housing suitability, age driven needs, and regional desirability. According to the US Census Bureau, the Village of Athens experienced a growth rate of 8.4% from 1990 to 2000. During the same decade, the Village of Coxsackie, located north of Athens, also experienced an increase in population of 6.5%, while the Village of Catskill, located south of Athens, experienced a decrease of 4.6%. See **Table 1** for more details.

Table 1: Historic and Projected Population Trends

Year	Historic and Projected Population Trends					
	Athens (V)		Catskill (V)		Coxsackie (V)	
	Number	Growth	Number	Growth	Number	Growth
1980	1,738	NA	4,718	NA	2,786	NA
1990	1,563	-10.1%	4,603	-2.4%	2,719	-2.4%
2000	1,695	8.4%	4,392	-4.6%	2,895	6.5%
2005 (estimated)	1,786	5.4%	4,502	2.5%	2,902	0.2%
2010 (projected)	1,830	2.5%	4,562	1.3%	2,940	1.3%
1990-2005	223	14.3%	-101	-2.2%	183	6.7%
1990-2010	267	17.1%	-41	-0.9%	221	8.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, and 2000. Source for 2005 2010 Projections: ESRI Business Information Solutions.

Age Distribution

Table 2 compares the population's age distribution for the Villages of Athens, Catskill and Coxsackie. According to the 2000 Census, the percentage of population below the age of 18 is similar in all geographic locations: Village of Athens (26.5%), Village of Catskill (27.8%) and the Village of Coxsackie (29.2%).

A slightly higher percentage of the population is between the ages of 20 and 34 in the Villages of Catskill (18.9%) and Coxsackie (17.7%), as compared to the Village of Athens (14.7%). A larger portion of the population is composed of the 35 – 54 age group in the Village of Athens (30.6%) than either the Village of Catskill (27.4%) or the Village of Coxsackie (29.6%). However, the 55 – 64 age group is comparable in size for all three locations: Village of Athens (9.6%), Village of Catskill (8.4%), and Village of Coxsackie (9.8%).

The percentage of senior citizens (individuals aged 65 and over) is slightly greater in the Village of Athens (18.6%) as compared to the Village of Catskill (17.5%) and the Village of Coxsackie (13.7%). The percent of Athens aging population is significantly above the State's percentage (12.9%).

The population for both the Town and Village of Athens has been on the rise since 1990 and generally reflects the desirable quality lifestyle afforded in Athens. Also as noted, the largest age group in Athens is comprised of residents between the ages of 35 – 54 years. Generally, this age group is characterized as stable and typically settled into a region due to family and/or employment. Overall, the population of Athens can be characterized as generally aging, however, the younger generation is not being replenished. This is a major national trend known as the "graying of America" due to the aging of the vast baby-boomer generation. This trend is further emphasized with the Village of Athens' rising median age (40.6), which is higher than Catskill (37.5), Coxsackie (37.1), and considerably higher than State's median age (35.9).

Table 2: Comparison of Population by Age - 2000 Census

Age	Comparison of Population by Age - 2000 Census					
	Athens (V)		Catskill (V)		Coxsackie (V)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
0 - 14	335	19.8%	954	21.7%	645	22.3%
15 - 19	114	6.7%	270	6.1%	199	6.9%
20 - 24	65	3.8%	255	5.8%	167	5.8%
25 - 34	184	10.9%	574	13.1%	344	11.9%
35 - 44	284	16.8%	597	13.6%	455	15.7%
45 - 54	234	13.8%	605	13.8%	403	13.9%
55 - 64	163	9.6%	370	8.4%	285	9.8%
65 - 74	172	10.1%	359	8.2%	196	6.8%
75 +	144	8.5%	408	9.3%	201	6.9%
Total	1,695	100.0%	4,392	100.0%	2,895	100.0%
Median Age	40.6		37.5		37.1	

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Household Composition

Table 3 compares household composition for the Villages of Athens, Catskill and Coxsackie. In 2000, it was estimated that the Village of Athens had a total of 687 households, of which 451 households (65.6%) were Family Households and 236 (34.4%) were Non-family Households including individuals living alone or together as roommates. Of the Village's total Family Households, 335 households (48.8%) were married-couple families, while 116 households (16.9%) were Other families.

Comparatively, the Village of Catskill households included 62.4% Family Households and 37.6% Non-family Households. The Village of Coxsackie had 60.9% family households and 39.1% non-family households. The percentage of Family households in the two neighboring Villages is less than the Village of Athens.

The Village of Athens had fewer householders living alone (29.7%), when compared to the Villages of Catskill (31.2%), and Coxsackie (32.7%). In addition, the percentage of households living below poverty in the Village of Athens (11.5%) is significantly lower than the Villages of Catskill (17.1%), and Coxsackie (14.5%).

Table 3: Household Composition, 2000

Total Population	Household Composition, 2000					
	Athens (V)		Catskill (V)		Coxsackie (V)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total households	687	100.0%	1,765	100.0%	1,188	100.0%
Family households	451	65.6%	1,101	62.4%	724	60.9%
Married-couple family	335	48.8%	687	38.9%	518	43.6%
With children < 18 years	143	20.8%	291	16.5%	253	21.3%
Other Family	116	16.9%	414	23.5%	206	17.3%
With children < 18 years	73	10.6%	283	16.0%	143	12.0%
Nonfamily households	236	34.4%	664	37.6%	464	39.1%
Householder living alone	204	29.7%	551	31.2%	389	32.7%
With children < 18 years	216	31.4%	574	32.5%	396	33.3%
Households below Poverty Level	79	11.5%	301	17.1%	172	14.5%
Average household size	2.44		2.39		2.38	
Average family size	3.01		2.99		3.09	

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Existing Conditions of the Main Street Target Area

The following section provides an inventory and analysis of the existing conditions of the *Main Street* Target Area. The analysis examines the existing roadway conditions, land uses, zoning regulations, and signage regulations.

A field investigation was completed in August 2007 to verify, through visual assessment, the conditions reported in this section. The visual assessment is used to determine existing property uses and conditions and to evaluate the consistency and effectiveness of the application of local regulations as they relate to zoning, land use, and general property conditions.

Target Area Existing Land Use

Land use patterns are a result of historic settlement characteristics coupled with modern building codes, zoning laws, and subdivision regulations. The *Main Street* Target Area's development patterns reflect such influences. Existing land uses in the *Main Street* Target Area primarily include a mix of commercial and residential uses. A property class map was created to illustrate the existing land uses for each parcel in the Target Area (**See Figure 3, Main Street Target Area and Village Property Class Map, which is associated with Table 4**). The map is based upon 2006 Geographic Information System (GIS) parcel-based Real Property Assessment data provided by Greene County. Each individual land parcel is assigned a land use category based upon the New York State Real Property Type Classification Codes. These codes are used by local Assessors for real property tax assessment purposes. Accuracy and completeness of this information is not guaranteed, as the information is only updated on an annual basis. The database will not always reflect the most current use of a particular parcel, especially if it has been abandoned or changed, and the local Assessor is not notified.³

According to property class information derived from real property tax data, the Village of Athens is comprised of 1,084 parcels, with 137 parcels located within the *Main Street* Target Area. The following major land use categories are represented in the Target Area.

Commercial: Property used for the sale of goods and services, e.g., hotels, restaurants, automobile services, storage, retail, banks, offices, funeral homes, etc.

Community Services: Property used for the well being of the community, e.g., schools, libraries, places of worship, cultural facilities, welfare services, hospitals, clinics, government buildings, police, armed forces, correctional facilities, shelters, cemeteries, etc.

³ NYS Office of Real Property Services Assessors' Manual – Property Type Classification and Ownership Codes, 9-01-06.

Industrial: Property used for the production and fabrication of durable and non-durable goods, e.g., manufacturing and processing, mining, quarrying, wells, pipelines, etc.

Public Services: Property used to provide services to the general public, e.g., electric or gas power generation or transmission, public drinking water and water treatment facilities, communications, train, plane, and bus terminals, canals, waste disposal sewer treatment, etc.

Recreation & Entertainment: Property used for groups for recreation, amusement, or entertainment, e.g., playgrounds, athletic fields, marinas, theaters, racetracks, bowling centers, health spas, beaches, campgrounds, etc.

Residential: Property used for human habitation, e.g., one-family, two-family, and three-family year round residence, estates, seasonal residences, mobile homes, etc.

Vacant Land: Property that is not in use, in temporary use, or lacking permanent improvement.

Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks: Governmentally owned (State, County or Local) reforested land, conservation preserves, public parks and recreation areas, private hunting and fishing clubs, etc.

The *Main Street* Target Area is comprised of 137 parcels. Of these parcels, 88 parcels (or approximately 64% of the total) are assessed as Residential; 24 parcels (or approximately 17.5% of the total parcels) are currently assessed as Commercial property; 18 parcels (or a approximately 13% of the total) are assessed as Vacant Land; 3 parcels (approximately 2%) are assessed as Recreation and Entertainment; 2 parcels (approximately 1.5%) are assessed as Industrial, and the remaining 2 parcels are assessed as either Community Services or Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks.

Table 4: General Land Use Analysis

Property Class	Village	Target Area
	Parcels	Parcels
Agricultural	4	0
Residential	671	88
Commercial	33	24
Industrial	3	2
Recreation and Entertainment	11	3
Community Services	18	1
Public Services	6	0
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks	3	1
Vacant Land	335	18
Grand Total	1,084	137

In general, the Target Area can be described as a mixed -use area of primarily commercial and residential characteristics. Properties vary in parcel size. (See **Table 4: General Land Use Analysis**). The mix of uses in the Target Area is fairly consistent with the permitted uses of the Village's Zoning Districts for this area. Of the Village's 33 total commercial parcels (or approximately 3% of the total Village parcels), approximately 73% of the commercially assessed properties are located within the *Main Street* Target Area.

To gain a better understanding of the different types of land uses in the Target Area, a map was created showing the a break down of the major Real Property Classifications into more detailed sub-categories. **Table 5** shows all of the property sub-classifications land for the Target Area compared to the Village as a whole. (See also **Figure 4, Main Street Core Parcels Property Class** which is associated with **Table 5** below.

Table 5: Detailed Land Use Analysis

Property Class	Village	Target Area
	Parcels	Parcels
Residential	671	88
Apartment Condominium	12	6
Mobile Home	21	4
Multiple	4	0
Rural Estate	1	0
Seasonal	2	0
Single Family	586	65
Three Family	7	0
Two Family	38	13
Commercial	33	24
Auto	4	1
Bank	1	1
Dining	4	3
Funeral Home	1	0
Lodging	1	1
Multipurpose	17	15
Office	1	0
Parking	1	1
Retail	1	1
Storage and Distribution	2	1
Industrial	3	2
Manufacturing	3	2
Recreation and Entertainment	11	3
Camp Resort	2	1
Park	6	1
Social	2	1
Sports	1	0
Community Services	18	1
Cemetery	3	0
Cultural and Recreation	1	0

Property Class	Village	Target Area
	Parcels	Parcels
Educational	4	1
Government	3	0
Protection	2	0
Religious	4	0
Social Welfare	1	0
Public Services	6	0
Waste Disposal	4	0
Water	2	0
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks	3	1
Public Park	3	1
Vacant Land	335	18
Commercial	7	4
Residential	327	14
Waterfront	1	0
Grand Total	1,084	137

Town and Village of Athens
Greene County, NY

Main Street Target Area and Village Property Class

Target Area
(200 feet from 2nd Street
and 200 feet from Water Street)

Property Boundaries

Water

Roads

- Primary Highway
- Secondary Road-State or County
- Local Road

Property Class

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Community Services
- Public Services
- Recreation and Entertainment
- Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks
- Vacant Land
- Unknown

0 50 100 200 300 Feet Draft Map Date 1-24-2007

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Town and Village of Athens
Greene County, NY

Main Street Target Area and Village Property Class

Target Area
(200 feet from 2nd Street
and 200 feet from Water Street)

Property Boundaries

Water

Roads

- Primary Highway
- Secondary Road-State or County
- Local Road

Property Class

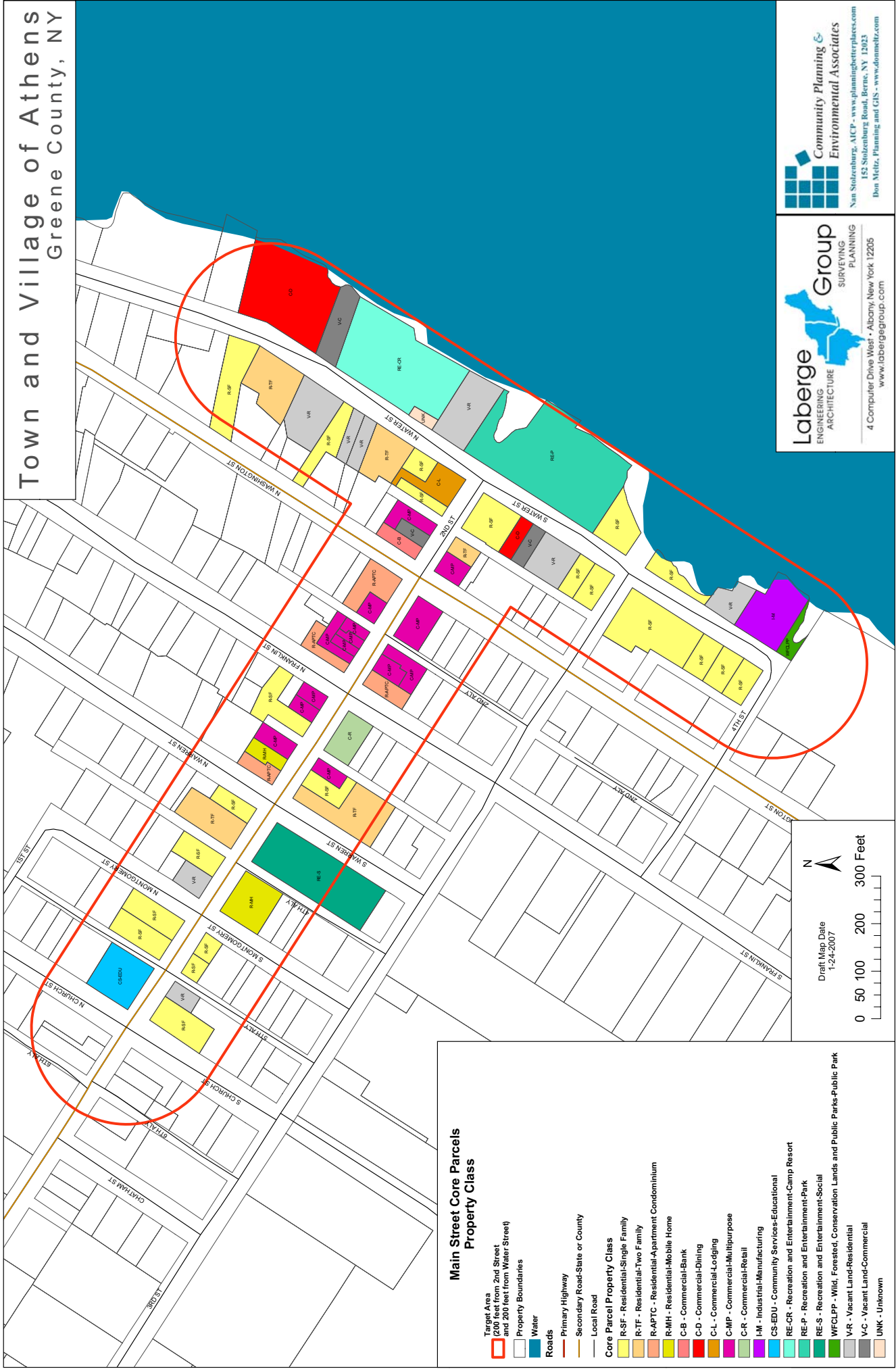
- Agricultural
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Community Services
- Public Services
- Recreation and Entertainment
- Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks
- Vacant Land
- Unknown

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Town and Village of Athens Greene County, NY



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Target Area Existing Zoning

Zoning regulations are intended to control, to some degree, development patterns. Future economic growth, neighborhood stability and preservation are directly impacted by the district boundaries, permitted uses, accessory uses, conditional uses, and prohibited uses, as well as the development requirements of the various zoning districts.

The Village of Athens Zoning Law is comprised of eight zoning districts: Commercial (C), Commercial Residential (CR), Industrial (I), Low Density Residential (RL), Medium Density Residential (RM), Open Space Conservation (OS/C), Recreational Residential (RR), and Waterfront (W). In addition, there are two historic districts. Figure 4 illustrates the location of each existing zoning district within the Target Area.

The *Main Street* Target Area is broken up into six (6) different zoning districts, Medium Density Residential (RM), Commercial Residential (CR), Commercial (C), Open Space Conservation (OS/C), Waterfront (W) and Industrial (I).

The Village Zoning Law requires site plan approval for any use other than a one- or two-family dwelling. Site plans are reviewed by the Planning Board and are intended to provide consideration to the public health, safety and welfare; all applications are required to satisfy the requirements of §92.32.1 of the Zoning Code. The Planning Board may hold a public hearing on the application if it determines that the matter is of wide public interest.

All special uses are declared to possess unique characteristics and special forms and are therefore subject to additional standards and requirements. As a result, most special uses are required to be reviewed on an individual case basis. A site plan is also required for all special uses and is forwarded to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for review and approval. The ZBA refers each application to the Planning Board for a written recommendation report. In addition to the standards found in the Zoning Code, the ZBA is authorized to require additional conditions and safeguards to all special use permits as are necessary to assure continual conformance with applicable standards.

The following provides an overview of the basic requirements of each zoning district in the Target Area. For further details, please see the Village of Athens Zoning Law, Chapter 92 of the Village Code.

Medium - Density Residential (RM) District

Permitted Uses:

1. Single-family dwellings
2. Two-family dwellings
3. Outdoor recreation
4. Home occupations

Special Uses:

1. Multiple-family dwellings
2. Professional offices
3. Hospitals, nursing or convalescent homes
4. Educational, religious or philanthropic institutions

The Medium Density Residential (RM) District requires a minimum lot size of ten thousand (10,000) square feet, a minimum width of seventy-five (75) feet, a maximum building height of thirty (30) feet, a front yard depth of twenty (20) feet, a side yard depth of ten (10) feet, and a rear yard depth of twenty (20) feet.

Commercial Residential (CR) District

Permitted Uses:

1. Single-family dwellings
2. Two-family dwellings
3. Professional or business offices
4. Retail sales and shops
5. Hotel or restaurants
6. Banks, savings and loan institutions

Special Uses:

1. Multi-family dwellings

There are no minimum or maximum area requirements for lot area, lot width, front yard depth, side yard depth, or rear yard depth, except that it must be in compliance with the surrounding buildings. The height of the building is restricted with a maximum height of 50 feet.

Commercial (C) District

Permitted Uses:

1. Offices.
2. Retail stores.
3. Restaurants.
4. Banks.

Special Uses:

1. One-family dwellings.

2. Two-family dwellings.
3. Multiple-family dwellings.
4. Automobile service stations.
5. Auto sales.
6. Shopping centers.

The Commercial (C) District requires a minimum lot size of fifty thousand (50,000) square feet, a minimum width of fifty (50) feet, a maximum building height of fifty (50) feet, a front yard depth in compliance with surrounding buildings, a side yard depth of twenty-five (25) feet, and a rear yard depth of twenty-five (25) feet.

Open Space/Conservation (OS/C) District

The Open Space/Conservation Districts contain land which should not be developed because of physical limitations or are areas that should be preserved for public enjoyment, such as the Hudson River shorelines and the Middle Ground Flats Island. The physical limitations involved include floodplains, wetland areas, stream banks and areas of excessive slopes. These lands should not be developed as long as easily accessible lands are available elsewhere.

Permitted Uses:

1. Outdoor recreation
2. Forestry
3. Agriculture

Waterfront (W) District

Permitted Uses:

1. Recreation facilities requiring a waterfront location such as boat launches, fishing piers and swimming facilities providing nondiscriminating access to all members of the public.
2. Cultural, educational or scientific uses which by their nature require access to the water.
3. Parks, playgrounds and other public recreational facilities enhanced by a waterfront location.
4. Structures needed for navigational purposes.
5. Facilities which support or are necessary to one (1) of the above uses and which occupy less than twenty percent (20%) of total floor area and off-street parking lots. To the extent possible, each facility will be sited in land of the principal use.

Special Uses:

1. Commercial uses which require water transportation for transfer of goods or products.
2. Restaurants with river access/service.
3. Single family homes in {in accordance of § 92-18C(1).
4. Public utilities dependent on a waterfront site.
5. Marinas and related uses, such as sales of marine supplies, services, fuel, equipment, boat yards, boat repairs, manufacture, assembly or repair of marine products such as boats, sails and hardware, charter boats and fishing guide operations, boat rentals or annual membership clubs which are water dependent and which conditions use of the facility upon membership on a nondiscriminatory basis. Support facilities necessary for successful functioning of above uses, for example, parking areas, snack bars, first aid stations and short-term storage facilities. To the extent possible, such facilities will be cited inland of the principal use.

All uses in the Waterfront District are subject to site plan review. The District requires a minimum lot size of ten thousand (10,000) square feet if served with public sewers and water, and five (5) acres without public water and sewers; a minimum width of seventy-five (75) feet if served with public sewers and water, and one hundred fifty (150) feet if not served by public sewers and water; a maximum building height of twenty-five (25) feet, a minimum front yard depth of ten (10) feet, a minimum side yard depth of twenty-five (25) feet and a minimum rear yard depth of twenty-five (25) feet from the mean high waterline of the Hudson River unless a permitted use requires a location closer to or at the water's edge.

Industrial (I) District

Permitted Uses:

None

Special Uses:

1. Industrial uses requiring a waterfront location.
2. Any manufacturing, compounding, processing, packing, treatment or warehousing of goods and performance standards specified under supplementary regulations.
3. Retail sales.
4. Offices
5. Motel, restaurant.
6. Research and testing laboratories.
7. Wholesale business.

8. Shopping centers.

All uses in the Industrial District are subject to site plan review. The District requires a minimum lot size of twenty thousand (20,000) square feet, a minimum width of one hundred (100) feet, a maximum building height of fifty (50) feet, a front yard of forty-five (45) feet, a side yard depth of twenty-five (25) feet and a rear yard depth of twenty-five (25) feet from the mean high waterline of the Hudson River.

Village Sign Regulations

The Code Enforcement Officer reviews all applications by business owners for a new sign under the authority of Chapter 70: signs of the Village Code. The law requires that an application and fee for a sign permit be submitted to the Code Enforcement Officer, and as a part of procedure, the Code Enforcement Officer submits the application to the Planning Board for their review and approval. The Planning Board may consider such factors as the historic and architectural value and significance of any structure with which the sign is to be associated physically or visually, the appropriateness of exterior design, arrangement, textures, nature and quality of materials, colors and general appearance of the sign, and the appropriateness of the type of lettering, dimensions of the sign, method of illumination and location. Chapter 70 §70-6 also gives the Planning Board the power to call in experts to assist with the review of the sign permit application.



Signage on Second Street

Historic Districts

The Village of Athens has two Historic Districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Athens Lower Village Historic District and the Brick Row Historic District. The *Main Street* Target Area is completely located within the Athens Lower Historic District, which according to the National Register of Historic Places covers approximately 267 buildings in an area that is roughly bounded by the Hudson River, Vernon Street and Market Street in the Village of Athens. The Lower Village Historic District has excellent examples of Federal, Greek Revival, Late Victorian and other architectural styles. The Historic Districts are a source of pride for the community and contribute to Athens physical well-being and cultural heritage, as well as provide a sense of identity and place.⁴

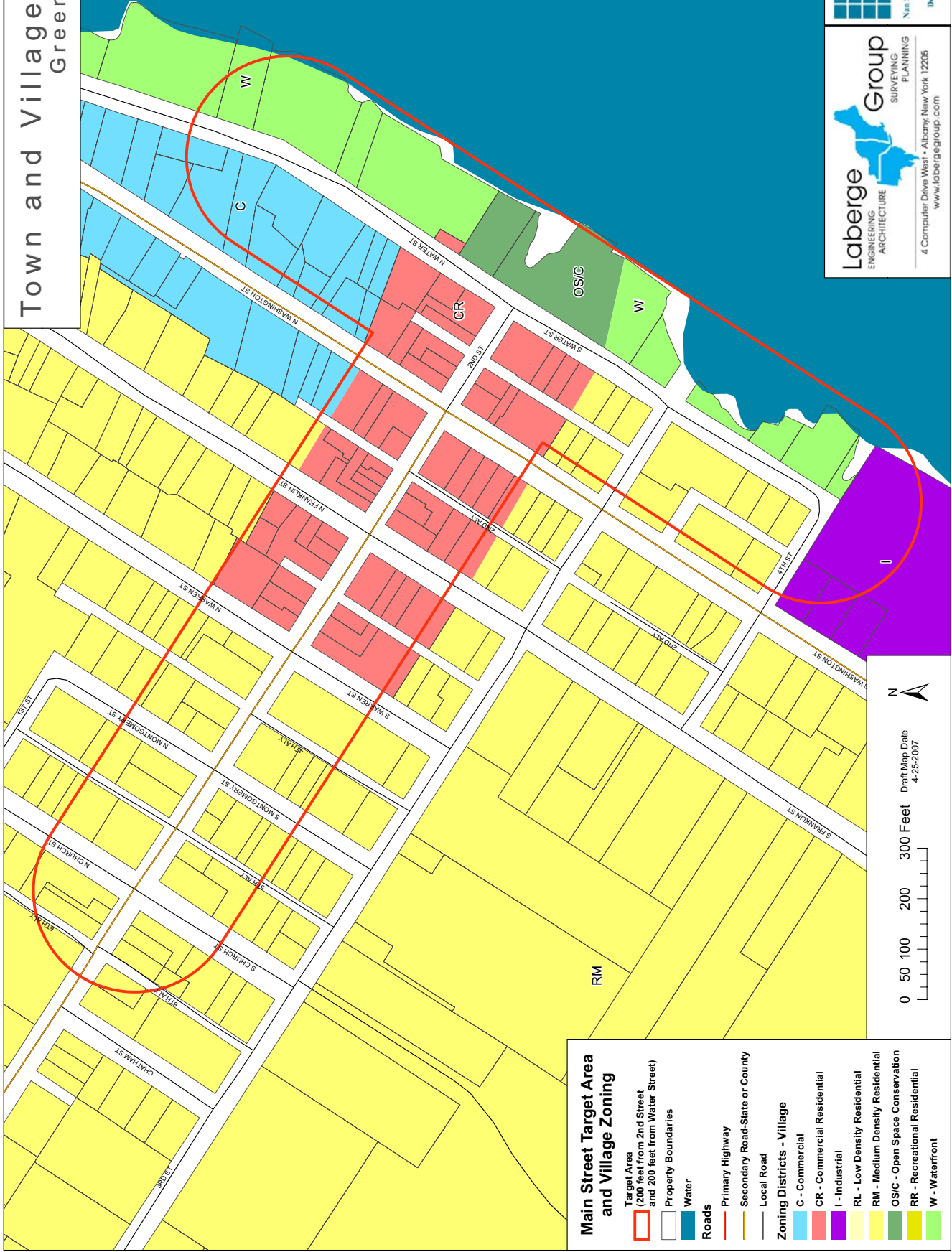
Section 92-16 of the current Village Zoning Law regulates activities within the Historic Districts. All property owners seeking a building permit or special permit for work within a Historic District must provide additional information with the building permit application to the Code Enforcement Officer, i.e., description of work to be done, paint colors and samples, roofing samples, scaled drawings of exterior changes and photos of the existing structure. As a part of

⁴ National Register of Historic Places – <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/ny/greene/districts.html>

procedure, the Code Enforcement Officer submits the application to the Planning Board, and the applicant must attend the Planning Board meeting to explain and discuss the proposed project.

The Planning Board considers such factors as the historic and architectural value and significance, and the appropriateness of exterior design, textures, nature and quality of materials, colors and general appearance. The Planning Board has thirty (30) days to render an opinion to the Code Enforcement Officer and Applicant. The Applicant has the opportunity to file an application to the Planning Board for exemption of the requirement of this law due to hardship and may also file an appeal to the Planning Board if they are aggrieved by the decision. For further details, please see the Village of Athens Zoning Law, Chapter 92, Section 92-16.

Town and Village of Athens Greene County, NY



Main Street Target Area and Village Zoning

- Target Area
(200 feet from 2nd Street
and 200 feet from Water Street)
- Property Boundaries
- Water
- Roads**
 - Primary Highway
 - Secondary Road-State or County
 - Local Road
- Zoning Districts - Village**
 - C - Commercial
 - CR - Commercial Residential
 - I - Industrial
 - RL - Low Density Residential
 - RM - Medium Density Residential
 - OSC - Open Space Conservation
 - RR - Recreational Residential
 - W - Waterfront

0 50 100 200 300 Feet Draft Map Date
4-25-2007



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Visual Assessment of the Main Street Target Area

A visual survey of the Target Area was conducted in order to assess the overall appearance of building facade, streetscape (including sidewalk and road condition), and other physical features that impact the general character of the Target Area. The boundaries of the visual assessment encompassed both sides of Second Street from the intersection of 6th Alley, southeast to the intersection with Water Street. In addition, the Target Area also covers both sides of Water Street between Fourth Street and the old Dionysos Restaurant. The area was visually inspected and photographed with respect to various characteristics including façade condition, architectural fit with its surroundings, landscaping, and signage. For manageability and assessment purposes, the results of the visual survey are described below in four segments.

Segment 1: Second Street between 6th Alley and Montgomery Street

Building/Façade Conditions

This segment of Second Street can be characterized as residential in nature. The area is within the Village's Medium Density Residential (RM) Zoning District. The majority of buildings are historic single-family or two-family homes, which are well-kept, tastefully painted and historically restored. Many of the homes have unique architectural features that are typical of the early 19th Century, including Federal, Greek Revival, Classic Revival and Colonial.

The D.R. Evarts Library, located at 80 Second Street was built in 1907 and is an example of Beaux Arts style that was popular for public buildings of this period. There is dilapidated building on the corner of N. Montgomery Street and Second Street which is surrounded by overgrown trees and shrubs, detracting from the overall excellent visual character of the neighborhood. The corner of S. Montgomery and Second Street has the newest housing with a newer ranch-style home that may be considered a doublewide mobile home.

Streetscape Appearance

This segment of Second Street has very small front yard setbacks of twenty feet or less, and includes a sidewalk and grass-planting strip. Most homes do not have street trees planted in the front yard, as there is very little space between the sidewalk and the front porches, steps or vestibules. Most homes have well kept lawns, small shrubs and flowering plants decorating their private yards. The D.R. Evarts Library front yard has the largest street trees within this segment. Local volunteers provide beautiful



Well-kept homes on Second Street



D.R. Evarts Library



Second Street Streetscape

flowering baskets that decorate the telephone poles along Second Street.

Sidewalk maintenance and repair is the responsibility of the property – owner in the Village of Athens and the majority of the sidewalk network is in good condition along this segment of Second Street. The sidewalks are fairly narrow due partially to the location of the above ground utility poles, and are mostly made of concrete.

There are a few areas where historic slate sidewalks are maintained, although large tree roots and frost heaving cause problems with this type of sidewalk material. The sidewalks do not appear to be compliant with the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The concrete and granite curbs are in good condition for the most part, however the curbing is starting to degrade on the north side of Second Street near the Library. The sidewalks on the north-western corner of Second Street and N. Montgomery Street are grown over or non-existent near the dilapidated home, and much of the sidewalk on the south-eastern side of N. Montgomery Street are a mix of concrete and slate that is in fair condition with some issues of heaving from either frost or overgrown tree roots.



Alley way off of Second Street

The 6th and 5th alleys, as with most of the un-marked alleys in the Target Area, consist of a crushed stone surface that is roughly one lane wide. There is no parking allowed in the alleys, although property owners use the alleys to access their back or side yards, with some homes having a side garage or parking area off the alley way. Other properties are fenced off from the alley.



Rivertown Senior Citizens Center

Segment 2: Second Street between Warren Street and Franklin Street

Building / Façade Conditions

Beginning at the intersection of Warren Street, Second Street becomes more mixed use in character, with a variety of commercial and residential uses. The Rivertown / Greene County Senior Citizens Center, stands out as the only building with a large front yard setback and a paved parking lot with 25 to 30 parking spaces available in the front. This building seems un-attractive and out of character with its surroundings of grand historic homes and buildings.

In general, the building conditions along this segment of Second Street vary between excellent and fair condition. There are as many examples of buildings that have been beautifully restored, as there are examples of buildings that have undergone façade renovations and/or improvements that are not in character with the building's original historic persona. One example of a beautifully refurbished home is located opposite the Senior Citizens Center, on the corner of S. Warren Street and Second



Newly restored historic building

Street. In addition to the restoration of this building, the slate sidewalk and fence were also repaired to excellent condition.

Streetscape Appearance

Beginning on the north side of Second Street at the intersection of N. Warren Street, the sidewalk is slightly wider, however the width varies depending on the building setback, protruding porches, stoops and vestibules. Currently the only occupied storefronts within this segment appear to be the Glenco Construction Company and the Laundromat. Utility poles, large trees and tenant trash bins and recycle bins also block the sidewalk in some areas. The Village has provided a few trash receptacles as a benefit to the residents and patrons. The old post office on N. Warren Street was recently converted to a new branch of the Columbia - Greene Federal Credit Union.

The segment of the Second Street is very well-shaded with street trees of various ages. Some property owners have installed a brick treatment or metal grates around the trees to allow for watering, while others have not. Many of the trees have grown so large that the tree trunks are being strangled by the concrete sidewalk, causing the sidewalk to heave around the trees. Many of the street trees in Athens are simply too large for the available planting strip between the street and the sidewalk.



Streetscape on Second Street



Athens Laundromat

Segment 3: Second Street between Franklin Street and Water Street

Building / Façade Conditions

This segment of Second Street begins at the intersection of Franklin Street and is slightly more commercial in nature including more buildings with traditional storefront facades that are two and three stories tall. The Athens Opera House is one of the most dominant buildings within this area, located on the corner of S. Franklin Street and Second Street. The Opera House was constructed in 1889 and housed silent movies and theater productions. Today the majority of the second and third floors of the building with over 9,400 square feet of space remain vacant and available for rent or lease.

Between Franklin Street and Water Street, there are a number of other large commercial buildings that are in various states of repair and occupancy. Businesses include Broadway Dance Center, Pam's Hair Salon, Animal Crackers Pre-school, an antique store, Weichert Realtors' Fontaine & Associates, Cameo's Restaurant, National Bank of Coxsackie, and Bella Mia Salon. Most of the buildings appear to require only minor repairs, paint, and maintenance. One of the larger buildings, the Athens Cultural Center is a Village-owned building that is currently being restored. The Village has secured several grants and member items amounting to over \$25,000 to repair the building.

However, there are a few buildings with more significant visual flaws and are considered dilapidated. These structures could benefit from a façade improvement program. Some structures are currently being renovated through the Main Street Revitalization Program funded by the Greene County Legislature.

The Village of Athens has many historic structures, with a unique business district that preserves the scale of a small, mid-nineteenth century village. Historic buildings are what make the *Main Street* shopping experience different and attracts visitors to the area. The modifications are apparent due to visual remnants of the structure's original façade and detract from the building's historic architecture.

Streetscape Appearance

Other than street trees, there is no grass planting strip in front of the buildings from Franklin Street to Water Street. Volunteer gardeners and some property owners supply decorative planters to improve the overall streetscape appearance. Several flowering baskets hang from the existing utility poles throughout this segment of the Target Area. In addition, banners unique to the Village of Athens and American Flags hang from many of the utility poles. Together these visual amenities create a sense of place and improve the overall aesthetics of Second Street.

Sidewalks are present along both sides of Second Street to accommodate pedestrians. However, the condition of the sidewalk varies throughout Second Street, with some sections in need of upgrade and repair. A portion of the sidewalk on N. Franklin Street has been improved with stamped concrete, replacing the traditional concrete or slate sidewalks.

There is a large parking area owned by Fontaine and Associates, located about one block from Second Street on N. Franklin Street. Although the parking area and the surrounding sidewalk are in dire need of enhancements, i.e., paving, striping, signage, landscaping, this parking area is an asset that could greatly benefit economic development should the Village and the property owner come to a reasonable agreement. Easy access to the parking area is available from N. Franklin Street as well as the alleyway between N. Franklin Street and N. Washington Street.

The signage within the Target Area is currently inconsistent in size, style, color, and location, although Chapter 70 of the Village Code deals with signs. Some signage is located flush with the building's façade, while other signage hangs above the sidewalk.



Façade Improvements of the Athens Cultural Center



Storefronts & Signage on Second Street



Outdoor Seating at Cameo's Restaurant on Second Street



Parking area on N. Franklin Street

Signage generally lacks special details and treatment to create a unique and uniform appearance for the Village downtown.

Segment 4: Water Street

Building / Façade Conditions

The visual assessment of Water Street covers the east and west sides of the street between the Fourth Street to the south and the old Dionysos Restaurant (located at 11 North Water Street) to the north. Water Street is unique to the Village of Athens because many of the properties have access to the Hudson River or have amazing views of the river and Hudson-Athens Lighthouse. Many of the businesses operating on Water Street are dependent on the river and waterfront activity for business. Water Street has a wide variety of uses including single and multi-family homes, recreation areas, marinas, and other water dependent uses.

One of the most attractive historic buildings on Water Street is the Stewart House, located on the corner of Second Street and Water Street. The Stewart house is currently being operated as a restaurant, bar, and bed and breakfast. The building is an example of late Italianate style and has a well-preserved, ornate bracketed cornice, and tall, hooded windows. The Stewart House and the Lydia Coffin House, located at 12 Water Street, are two of the most beautifully maintained historic buildings in this section of the Athens waterfront. Across the street from the Stewart House is their River Garden Bar. Weather depending, this area is used by patrons of the Stewart House. The Stewart House and the neighboring marina have a few small dumpsters on the riverside that appear to be stored within the street right-of way, and should be better screened from view.

Another dominant feature of Water Street is the Athens Riverfront Park. This key community gathering place is located on Water Street at the bottom of Second Street. The park features a band shelter, picnic tables, benches, and floating docks open to the general public for boat tie-up and fishing. There is a small gravel parking area in front of Riverside Park that has no delineated parking spaces, curbing or pavement markings.

North of the Stewart House, there are a few buildings and old storage garages that are in disrepair. Many property owners store boats and boat trailers near, or on the street. A private marina has an outdoor storage area for piles of wood pallets, firewood and dock floats behind a chain link fence that is in disarray. Landscaping or a more solid fence material would benefit the aesthetics of this property.



Stewart House Bed & Breakfast and Restaurant



Riverfront Park



Dionysos Restaurant – currently out of business

The Dionysos Restaurant is currently closed and boarded up; however the property appears very well kept. With its' location on the Hudson River waterfront, its large facilities and parking areas, this commercial property is a very valuable asset to the Village year-round and tourism economy.

On the opposite side of Water Street from the Dionysos Restaurant is a raised ranch style multi-family building with lower level garages that is in good condition. There is also a small single-family home on top of a hill opposite the old restaurant.

Returning south to the intersection with Second Street, the southwestern end of Water Street is mostly residential in nature except for Ursula's Restaurant which is located between Second and Third Streets.

The large Federal style house located at 12 Water Street is a dominant feature of this end of Water Street with its immense Corinthian style columns. This building is known as the historic Lydia Coffin House and was designed by the renowned architect Barnabas Waterman and built by Anthony Livingston. The two-story columns were recently hand-crafted by the current owner.

On the Hudson River side of the intersection of 4th and Water Streets is a property for which grant funding has been secured for a car-top (canoe/kayak) boat launch. This is a designated Hudson River Greenway Water Trail launch site, and may be incorporated into redevelopment of the adjacent Electric Launch Company (ELCO) property. The side entrance to the ELCO property is currently fenced and gated off at the intersection of Water Street and Fourth Street. The fencing and overgrown vegetation surrounding this property detracts from the well-kept character of most of the other waterfront properties.

Streetscape Appearance

Compared to the majority of the Target Area, Water Street is in poor condition. Although the potholes appear to be repaired, all of Water Street could benefit from re-paving and curbing. There are no visible signs of any pavement markings to delineate the travel two travel lanes, making the street un-safe for the many pedestrians that visit the Riverfront Park, and patronize the nearby restaurants, thru traffic and emergency vehicles. The street also lacks any delineated pedestrian cross walks which would be beneficial especially between the Stewart House and Riverfront



Ursula's Riverside Diner on Water Street



Historic Lydia Coffin House



Location of Future 4th Street Boat Launch



Slate sidewalk beside Stewart House

Park. The parking area for Riverfront Park could be improved with signage, curbing and pavement markings to delineate the parking spaces. As on-street parking is allowed on much of Water Street, proper delineation of the on-street parking spaces will maximize the available parking spaces, benefitting the local businesses.

There is no curbing or sidewalks on the riverside of Water Street and the sidewalk network terminates about a block north of the Stewart House, which is surrounded by a mix of slate and concrete sidewalks. South of the intersection with Second Street, concrete sidewalks exist only on the western side of Water Street but they are in poor condition. Many property owners do not maintain the sidewalks properly on Water Street. There have been instances where the sidewalk has been removed and not replaced.



Dilapidated Fencing and Overgrown vegetation surrounding the ELCO

In general the streetscape appearance of Water Street is very green. Most property owners take great care in mowing their private lawns, the grass strip between the sidewalk and the street, and maintaining shrubs and flowering plants. There are a number of large trees along the waterfront that offer shade for Riverfront Park visitors. The utility poles are also decorated with American Flags and hanging flowering baskets. Local volunteers and business owners share the cost of planting and maintaining the flowers on the street.

Economic Profile

The personal income figures of a community are among the most important indicators of the condition of the local economy. Gaining an understanding of the wealth of a community can demonstrate the individual ability to maintain homes and contribute to the local economy.

To understand the various components of economic development, an analysis of employment trends, occupational trends, market segments, and existing businesses was completed. Analyses of employment trends will help identify segments of the area's economy that have potential for growth and those that may decline. The population for the Village has been on the rise since 1990, and is projected to experience a growth rate of 2.5% over the next few of years. This projected growth is very much dependent upon several factors, including economic expansion, environmental capacity, housing suitability, varying needs within age cohorts, and overall regional desirability.

Income

Table 6 compares the household incomes for the Villages of Athens, Catskill, and Coxsackie. In 2000, the Village of Athens had 31.8% of households earning less than \$25,000 and was comparable to the Village of Coxsackie (33.1%). While the percentage of Catskill's residents earning less than \$25,000 was considerably higher (43.9%). The percentage of households earning between \$25,000 and \$49,999 in the Villages of Athens and Coxsackie were again

comparable, with 35.9% and 34.0% respectively. However, both had a greater percent of the population earning between \$25,000 and \$49,999 than the Village of Catskill (29.5%).

The Villages of Athens (17.2%) and Cocksackie (17.8%) had a similar percentage of households earning between \$50,000 and \$74,999. The Village of Catskill has a fewer percent of households (13.0%) with an income between \$50,000 and \$74,999. The Village of Athens had the highest percentage (15.2%) of households earning \$75,000 or more, followed by the Village of Cocksackie (15.1%), and then the Village of Catskill (13.7%).

Table 6: Household Income, 2000

INCOME IN 1999	Household Income, 2000					
	Athens (V)		Catskill (V)		Cocksackie (V)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Less than \$25,000	226	31.8%	779	43.9%	391	33.1%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	255	35.9%	523	29.5%	402	34.0%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	122	17.2%	230	13.0%	211	17.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	56	7.9%	129	7.3%	133	11.2%
\$100,000 or more	52	7.3%	114	6.4%	46	3.9%
Households	711	100.0%	1,775	100.0%	1,183	100.0%
Median HH Income- 1990	\$25,438		\$26,134		\$27,946	
Median HH Income- 2000	\$36,655		\$28,261		\$35,787	

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990 and 2000.

Between 1990 and 2000, median household income in the Village increased by 44.1%. During the same time period, median household income in the Village of Catskill increased by only 8.14% and the Village of Cocksackie increased by 28.06%.

Employment

Table 7 illustrates the employment of the Village of Athens residents compared to Greene County residents. The top three employment sectors in the Village of Athens were education/health/social services sectors (22.4%), public administration (15.3%), and retail trade (11.6%).

The top three sectors in Greene County were health/education/social services sectors (20.3%), retail trade (10.8%), and public administration (10.5%). The education/ health/social services and retail trade sectors were also among the top three in the State.

The Village's percentage of jobs in the manufacturing sector was 10.3% compared to the County's 8.7%. Of the total employment, retail trade in the Village (11.6%) plays a larger role in Athens' local economy than it does in Greene County (10.8%).

Table 7: Residents Employment by Sector, 2000

CLASSIFICATION	Residents Employment by Sector, 2000		
	Athens (V)		Greene County
	Number	%	%
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining	5	0.7%	2.5%
Construction	40	5.5%	8.5%
Manufacturing	75	10.3%	8.7%
Wholesale trade	25	3.4%	2.5%
Retail trade	85	11.6%	10.8%
Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities	42	5.7%	6.8%
Information	23	3.1%	2.8%
FIRE, rental and leasing	36	4.9%	5.4%
Professional/Scient/Mgmt/Admin/Waste	53	7.3%	6.4%
Education/Health/Social Services	164	22.4%	20.3%
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation/Accommodations	45	6.2%	9.4%
Other Services	26	3.6%	5.4%
Public Administration	112	15.3%	10.5%
Total	731	100.0%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Figure 6: Village of Athens - Employment by Industry, 2000

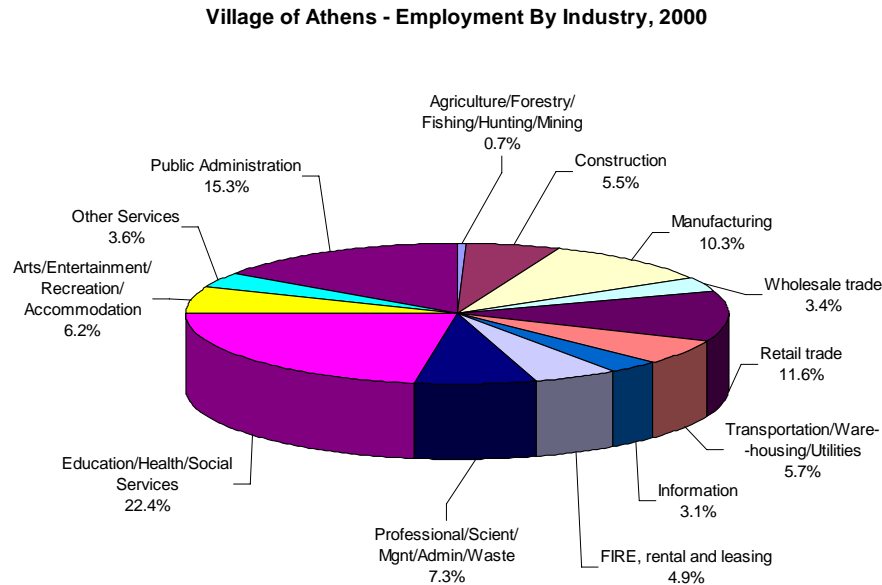


Table 8 indicates resident occupation from Census 2000. The majority of the Village's employed residents held management or professional positions (27.6%), slightly lower than Greene County (30.5%). The top three occupations for Village residents were the same as Greene County. These were management or professional workers, sales/office/administrative support workers, and service industry workers.

Table 8: Resident Occupation, 2000

Occupation Type	Resident Occupation, 2000		
	Athens (V)		Greene County
	Total	%	%
Management/Professional	202	27.6%	30.5%
Service industry	155	21.2%	17.8%
Sales/Office and Admin Support	190	26.0%	25.4%
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	5	0.7%	1.4%
Construction/Extraction/Maintenance	69	9.4%	11.6%
Production/Transportation/Material	110	15.0%	13.3%
Total	731	100.0%	100.0%
Employed civilian population 16+	731	54.9%	52.9%
Unemployed civilian population 16+	32	2.4%	3.5%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	0.2%
Not in Labor Force	569	42.7%	43.4%
Total Population 16 years +	1,332	100.0%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Commuter Patterns

According to **Table 9**, 62.3% of Village residents had commute times of less than 25 minutes, compared to the County at 56.7%. The Village had the lowest percentage (7.5%) of workers traveling between 25 and 34 minutes to work. This figure was comparatively higher for the County (15.9%). A significant percentage of Village residents (30.2%) commute more than 35 minutes to work and is a higher percentage than overall commute times for the County (27.5%).

Table 9: Travel Time To Work Comparison, 2000

Workers 16+ by Means of Transportation to Work	Athens (V)		Greene County	
	Total	%	Total	%
< 10 minutes	108	15.4%	3,699	19.3%
10 - 24 minutes	330	46.9%	7,147	37.4%
25 - 34 minutes	53	7.5%	3,035	15.9%
35 - 44 minutes	64	9.1%	1,332	7.0%
45 - 59 minutes	78	11.1%	1,739	9.1%
> 60 minutes	70	10.0%	2,178	11.4%
Total (Employed Commuters)	703	100.0%	19,130	100.0%
Mean Travel Time	27.3		29.1	

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Analysis of Consumer Spending Patterns

In an effort to identify how residents may be underserved locally by existing businesses, and in order to learn about the spending patterns of Athens residents, a Retail Goods and Services Expenditure report was obtained from ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO). Business Analyst Online (BAO) provides reports and maps to businesses to help them understand the lifestyle and buying behaviors of the households in a particular market in order and to find optimal sites for new store locations. BAO combines Geographic Information technology with extensive demographic, consumer, and business data to deliver more than 50 reports and maps over the Web. BAO uses data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Consumer Expenditure Surveys to identify baseline-spending patterns. Data from additional surveys, including the weekly Diary Survey for daily purchases and quarterly Interview Survey for general purchases, are used to refine the spending estimates. BAO integrates data from both surveys to provide a comprehensive database on all consumer expenditures.

Many communities across the country have researched consumer-spending behaviors to understand local trends. In general, consumers prefer to shop for everyday items close to home. These items include goods and services such as groceries, home cleaning supplies, personal care items, alcohol, cigarettes, automobile repair, beauty salon services, and restaurants. In contrast, consumers are willing to travel farther from home for larger ticket items such as furniture, furnishings, appliances, electronics, clothing, entertainment, automobiles, recreational vehicles and medical services. Finally, consumers are willing to take longer day trips from home in search of specialty shopping experiences that may include dining, entertainment, and recreation.

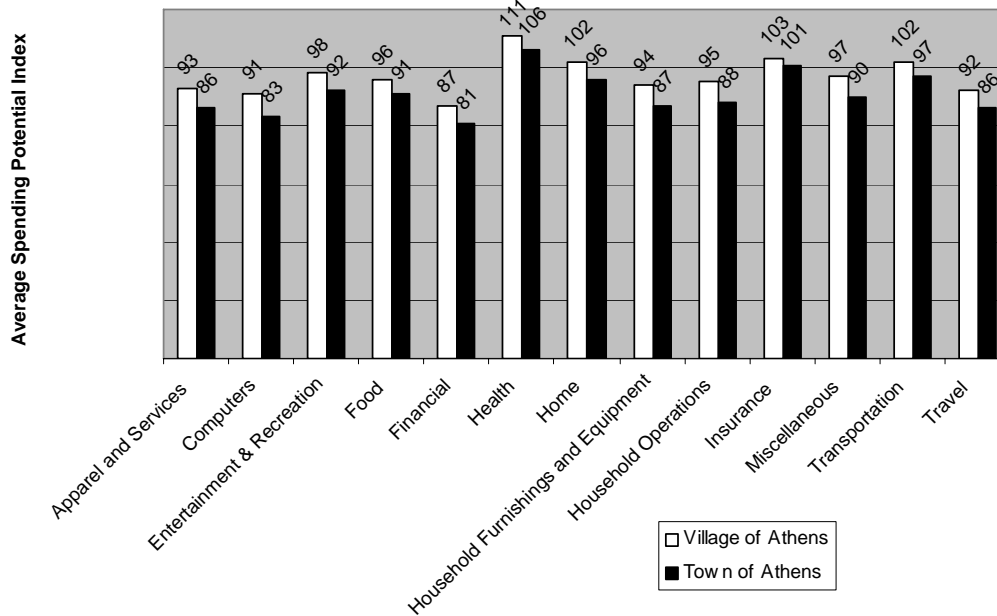
A Retail Goods and Services Expenditure report details the spending habits of Athens residents which can be compared to the existing services and business available within the Target Area. Evaluating where local and regional consumers spend their money is important, because it reflects the dollars that could be spent within the *Main Street* Target Area, if the right mix of stores were available to accommodate the demand.

The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount of money spent for a product or service relative to a National average of 100. Analysis of this data helps businesses identify important changes and significant trends in consumer spending and buying habits within a particular market, and helps identify the best areas to market specific products and services. These figures are not meant to represent annual expenditures made within Athens. Rather, the figures represent the potential total annual expenditures of Town and Village residents as might be spent both within and outside of Athens. While local spending habits are compared to a National average, the expenditure outlays are not corrected for regional inflation. Therefore, that a given community spends less on specific goods or services may reflect one of several things: (1) local residents are able to obtain the desired goods or services at a cheaper cost; (2) local residents' interests in such goods and services falls short of the National average or the goods and services are not easily available, or (3) local residents have less disposable income to spend on such items.

According to the SPI, for every \$1 spent nationally on retail goods and services, Town of Athens residents spend between \$0.62 and \$1.23, while the residents of the Village spend between \$0.83 and \$1.20. *Graph 1: Athens Spending Index* compares the residents' average spending potential index for each category in the Village and Town of Athens. **Table 10: Retail Goods and Services Expenditures**, provides an expanded summation, with subcategories, of the spending potential index for each category. As a whole, the consumers of this area spend slightly less than the national average on most goods and services with a few exceptions. Overall, Athens consumers spend close to the national average on items such as health, insurance, home, and transportation services.

As seen in Graph 1, the top two categories by expenditures for Athens are Health (Village – 111 and Town – 106) and Insurance (Village – 103 and Town – 101). The category with the lowest average expenditure ranking is Financial (Village – 87 and Town – 81).

Figure 7: Athens Average Spending Potential Index



Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions (ESRI BIS). Expenditure Data area derived from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data was updated in September of 2003 based on Consumer Expenditure Surveys from 1999, 2000, and 2001.

The average amount spent per household on each of the goods and service subcategories is comparable in both the Village and Town. However, the Village spends slightly more per dollar in each subcategory. The following are the subcategories with the highest and lowest spending potential index for both the Village and Town.

Village: Highest Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)

1. Recreational Vehicles & Fees (123)
2. Prescription Drugs (120)
3. Maintenance & Remodeling Materials (114)

Village: Lowest Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)

1. Investments (69)
2. Child care (82)
3. Admission to Movie, Theatre, Opera, Ballet (83)
3. Admission to Sporting Events, excel Trips (83)

Town: Highest Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)

1. Recreational Vehicles & Fees (120)
2. Prescription Drugs (118)
3. Lawn & Garden (109)

Town: Lowest Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)

1. Investments (62)
2. Child care (73)
3. Moving, Storage, Freight Express (74)

Most of the retail goods and services that residents are willing to spend more on, are not provided within the *Main Street* Target Area, indicating that residents are finding these services elsewhere. Recapturing even a portion of sales currently spent elsewhere represents a significant market opportunity. Achieving this vision will require establishing a critical mass of quality retail and service businesses throughout the Target Area to enhance the area's drawing power and consumer spending potential.

Table 10: indicates the spending habits of the Athens residents, as compared to a nationwide standard.

Table 10: Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Retail Goods & Services Categories	Village			Town		
	Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)	Average Spent per Household (Village)	Total Spent per Year (Village)	Spending Potential Index	Average Spent per Household (Town)	Total Spent per Year (Town)
Apparel and Services	93	\$2,559.14	\$1,888,647	86	\$2,373.49	\$4,075,281
Men's	95	\$495.07	\$365,365	88	\$460.19	\$790,150
Women's	93	\$841.59	\$621,096	86	\$775.79	\$1,332,028
Children's	94	\$406.99	\$300,361	88	\$379.67	\$651,899
Footwear	89	\$447.74	\$330,434	83	\$417.92	\$717,571
Watches & Jewelry	96	\$241.09	\$177,924	89	\$223.20	\$383,231
Apparel Products and Services	87	\$126.65	\$93,467	80	\$116.72	\$200,402
Computer	91			83		
Computers and Hardware for Home Use	90	\$223.39	\$164,863	82	\$202.74	\$348,101
Software and Accessories for Home Use	92	\$26.99	\$19,916	83	\$24.40	\$41,891
Entertainment & Recreation	98	\$3,059.01	\$2,257,547	92	\$2,865.67	\$4,920,351
Fees and Admissions	87	\$524.48	\$387,066	78	\$473.26	\$812,587
Membership Fees for Clubs	91	\$149.21	\$110,118	83	\$135.60	\$232,822
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips	89	\$102.54	\$75,678	80	\$92.41	\$158,672
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet	83	\$121.30	\$89,519	75	\$108.59	\$186,444
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips	90	\$50.18	\$37,032	81	\$45.23	\$77,656
Fees for Recreational Lessons	83	\$101.25	\$74,719	75	\$91.43	\$156,993
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	96	\$991.12	\$731,445	90	\$924.67	\$1,587,652
Community Antenna or Cable Television	100	\$551.02	\$406,654	95	\$523.77	\$899,311
Color Televisions	91	\$104.56	\$77,166	84	\$95.88	\$164,629
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players	91	\$34.44	\$25,415	81	\$30.58	\$52,511
Video Cassettes and DVDs	94	\$38.51	\$28,418	85	\$34.75	\$59,674
Video Game Hardware and Software	90	\$30.48	\$22,495	81	\$27.60	\$47,395
Satellite Dishes	103	\$3.04	\$2,243	98	\$2.88	\$4,945
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs	89	\$55.94	\$41,286	80	\$50.17	\$86,143
Sound Equipment	94	\$167.58	\$123,671	86	\$153.93	\$264,300
Rental and Repair of TV/Sound Equipment	91	\$5.55	\$4,097	83	\$5.09	\$8,744
Pets	106	\$374.06	\$276,055	102	\$359.14	\$616,651
Toys and Games	95	\$193.04	\$142,462	89	\$181.12	\$310,977
Recreational Vehicles and Fees	123	\$413.17	\$304,919	120	\$401.14	\$688,764
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment	95	\$209.71	\$154,767	91	\$199.85	\$343,138
Photo Equipment and Supplies	96	\$138.41	\$102,147	88	\$127.26	\$218,506
Reading	97	\$215.02	\$158,686	90	\$199.23	\$342,076
Food	96	\$7,628.27	\$5,629,663	91	\$7,174.03	\$12,317,814
Food at Home	98	\$4,642.53	\$3,426,190	93	\$4,400.39	\$7,555,465
Bakery and Cereal Products	98	\$691.85	\$510,585	93	\$655.39	\$1,125,305
Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs	97	\$1,230.51	\$908,119	93	\$1,175.33	\$2,018,035
Dairy Products	99	\$510.79	\$376,965	94	\$483.75	\$830,605
Fruit and Vegetables	95	\$792.38	\$584,779	90	\$750.83	\$1,289,182
Snacks and Other Food at Home	99	\$1,416.99	\$1,045,742	94	\$1,335.08	\$2,292,338

Retail Goods & Services Categories	Village			Town		
	Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)	Average Spent per Household (Village)	Total Spent per Year (Village)	Spending Potential Index	Average Spent per Household (Town)	Total Spent per Year (Town)
Food Away from Home	94	\$2,985.74	\$2,203,473	88	\$2,773.65	\$4,762,349
Alcoholic Beverages	90	\$461.14	\$340,323	82	\$419.52	\$720,310
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home	101	\$398.91	\$294,398	95	\$376.90	\$647,131
Financial	87			81		
Investments	69	\$5,796.27	\$4,277,646	62	\$5,143.51	\$8,831,411
Vehicle Loans	105	\$5,660.96	\$4,177,786	99	\$5,385.57	\$9,247,019
Health	111			106		
Nonprescription Drugs	107	\$106.02	\$78,240	101	\$100.76	\$173,009
Prescription Drugs	120	\$645.65	\$476,489	118	\$634.33	\$1,089,137
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	105	\$89.92	\$66,362	98	\$84.19	\$144,546
Home	102			96		
Mortgage Payment and Basics	94	\$7,487.20	\$5,525,552	88	\$7,001.02	\$12,020,746
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	97	\$1,533.07	\$1,131,408	92	\$1,443.18	\$2,477,937
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials	114	\$369.20	\$272,468	107	\$344.19	\$590,980
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	101	\$4,216.57	\$3,111,831	96	\$4,013.49	\$6,891,168
Household Furnishings and Equipment	94			87		
Household Textiles	94	\$119.04	\$87,850	87	\$109.38	\$187,808
Furniture	89	\$543.45	\$401,065	82	\$501.53	\$861,125
Floor Coverings	93	\$73.03	\$53,897	87	\$67.95	\$116,664
Major Appliances	101	\$274.74	\$202,756	95	\$258.92	\$444,564
Housewares	97	\$92.41	\$68,197	91	\$87.06	\$149,476
Small Appliances	100	\$35.21	\$25,985	93	\$32.69	\$56,123
Luggage	85	\$9.06	\$6,683	76	\$8.07	\$13,853
Telephones and Accessories	94	\$48.78	\$36,003	88	\$45.67	\$78,421
Household Operations	95			88		
Child Care	82	\$344.36	\$254,140	73	\$306.90	\$526,939
Lawn and Garden	113	\$473.21	\$349,226	109	\$458.93	\$787,985
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	85	\$43.06	\$31,780	74	\$37.91	\$65,097
Housekeeping Supplies	101	\$681.13	\$502,671	95	\$643.12	\$1,104,231
Insurance	103			101		
Owners and Renters Insurance	109	\$453.62	\$334,769	106	\$438.34	\$752,625
Vehicle Insurance	100	\$1,296.12	\$956,538	94	\$1,229.03	\$2,110,239
Life/Other Insurance	107	\$676.51	\$499,267	102	\$647.96	\$1,112,542
Miscellaneous	97			90		
Personal Care Products	96	\$389.55	\$287,490	90	\$362.08	\$621,687
School Books and Supplies	86	\$97.83	\$72,197	77	\$86.88	\$149,175
Smoking Products	109	\$540.97	\$399,236	103	\$512.23	\$879,501
Transportation	102			97		
Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay)	104	\$5,817.86	\$4,293,577	99	\$5,521.78	\$9,480,888
Gasoline and Motor Oil	105	\$1,935.65	\$1,428,511	100	\$1,844.83	\$3,167,572
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	98	\$1,011.66	\$746,607	92	\$949.06	\$1,629,535
Travel	92			86		
Airline Fares	88	\$356.62	\$263,186	81	\$327.03	\$561,517

Retail Goods & Services Categories	Village			Town		
	Spending Potential Index (S.P.I.)	Average Spent per Household (Village)	Total Spent per Year (Village)	Spending Potential Index	Average Spent per Household (Town)	Total Spent per Year (Town)
Lodging on Trips	97	\$386.80	\$285,455	91	\$363.36	\$623,887
Auto/Truck/Van Rental on Trips	88	\$43.50	\$32,105	80	\$39.78	\$68,303
Food and Drink on Trips	96	\$432.21	\$318,969	90	\$402.93	\$691,839

Target Area Recommendations

This section of the document offers recommendations for change, that when implemented will guide revitalization of Second Street and Water Street (the Target Area). The recommendations will guide future decisions in the Village, and will have a positive affect on Target Area businesses. The organization of this section was modeled after the *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*©.

Across the United States, many small communities are adopting the *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*©. In 1977, the National Trust for Historic Preservation spearheaded this renowned approach. Faced with the threat of demolition of historic commercial buildings, the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched a study of three pilot communities to discover the causes of downtown economic decline and develop a strategy for combating the issues. This strategy became known as the *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*©. This approach has been successfully applied to diverse communities throughout the Country, bringing many downtowns back to life.

The Main Street Approach

The *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*© is a comprehensive strategy that can be tailored to different communities and is based on a *Four Point Approach*©. The following excerpt is from The Professional's Guide to the Main Street Approach, National Trust's National Main Street Center 2000:

1. **Organization:** Building a consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals that play roles in the downtown. Many individuals and organizations in the community have a stake in the economic viability of the downtown, including: bankers, property owners, governmental officials, merchants, downtown residents, professionals, chamber of commerce representatives, local industries, civic groups, historical societies, schools, consumers, real estate agents, and local media.
2. **Economic Restructuring:** Strengthening the existing economic base of the downtown while diversifying it. Activities include: helping existing downtown businesses expand, recruiting new businesses to provide a balanced mix, converting unused space into productive property and sharpening the competitiveness of downtown merchants. By strengthening the downtown's economy, communities are able to support the ongoing use of historic commercial buildings, and preserve unique community assets.
3. **Design:** Improving downtown's aesthetic by enhancing the physical appearance of the public and private buildings, streetlights, window displays, storefronts, parking areas, signs, sidewalks, public open spaces, promotional materials, and all other elements that convey a visual message about the downtown and what it has to offer.
4. **Promotion:** Marketing the downtown's unique characteristics to shoppers, investors, new businesses, tourists, and others. Effective promotion creates a positive image of the

downtown through retail promotion activity, special events, and ongoing programs that rekindle community pride.

Two very important points that are missing from the *Four Point Approach* © are **Funding** and **Implementation**. Without funding sources and individuals or groups of individuals to seek out funding sources, the revitalization effort will fail. In addition, it is very important to have dedicated individuals responsible for making the planned actions happen.

Principles of the Main Street Approach

The National Trust for Historic Preservation Offers the following eight principles that must be combined with the *Four Point Approach*©.

1. **Comprehensive:** A single project cannot revitalize a downtown. For instance, design improvements alone will not stabilize or expand a downtown. Effective marketing, organization, and solid economic development strategies are all necessary components of successful *Main Street* revitalization.
2. **Quality:** From storefront design, to promotional campaigns, to special events, quality must be emphasized in every aspect of the revitalization program.
3. **Public-Private Partnerships:** Public and private sectors have a vital interest in the economic health and physical viability of downtown. An effective partnership is one that recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of the other partner.
4. **Incremental:** Small projects and simple activities enable those involved to see things happening on *Main Street*. Small projects enable those involved to develop the skills and confidence needed to be successful at more complex, larger projects.
5. **Self-Help:** Local leaders must have the desire and will to make the project successful. Grant programs can help fund pieces of the work, planners and consultants can provide guidance, but without community involvement and commitment, the revitalization effort will not be successful.
6. **Identify and Capitalize on Existing Assets:** Every community is unique and has special qualities that set it apart from the all others. Local leaders should focus on a unique asset like a distinctive building or feature, and turn it into an opportunity.
7. **Changing Attitudes:** Changing community attitudes and habits are essential to bring about downtown revitalization. Public perceptions about the conditions on *Main Street*, or the ability to offer needed services must be shifted in order to support and sustain the economic revitalization of *Main Street*.
8. **Implementation Oriented:** Frequent visible changes and activities create confidence in the program and encourage greater levels of participation in the revitalization efforts.

The success of the *Main Street Approach*© is depended on the comprehensive nature of the strategy. In order for Main Street revitalization efforts to be successful in creating positive long-term change, local organizations must:

Make a Long-term Commitment: All the changes necessary to bring *Main Street* alive will not happen over night, in fact, it may take a few years.

Work on all Four Points©: The strategy is comprehensive, with activity in one area reinforcing activity in the other three areas. Strategies that have concentrated on design changes alone have seen limited success.

Create Public-Private Partnerships: The community, government, and the business owners must support the project, and agree to what steps will occur next.

Understand Reality: Survey business owners and residents to understand the existing perception of *Main Street*. For example, is there a perceived lack of parking, lighting may be poor, or the hours of operation or the services provided by *Main Street* businesses are not unique or competitive.

Preserve and Enhance Unique Resources: Unique landmarks, historic buildings, and natural areas are what make the *Main Street* shopping experience different from the Mall. Although a structure may be dilapidated, or a natural area or scenic view may currently be inaccessible, the community should make every effort to preserve and enhance these unique resources.

Organization

According to the *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*©, organization is defined as the building of consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals that play roles in downtown revitalization. Many existing organizations such as the GreeneBusiness Partnership, the Greene County Chamber of Commerce, and the Greene County Tourism Promotion Department have a stake in the economic viability of the Athens *Main Street* Target Area, as do many other stakeholders, including: individual bankers, property owners, government officials, merchants, downtown residents, professionals, local industries, civic groups, historical societies, schools, consumers, real estate agents, and the local media.

Now is the time to join forces, unify efforts, and implement a comprehensive plan for *Main Street* Revitalization. The following list is a guide for creating a formal *Main Street Revitalization Organization*, and has been adapted from the *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*©. Depending on the pace of the volunteers, this process could take 12 to 18 months. It is critical that the process not be rushed. Investing effort up-front into educating the community about *Main Street*, building broad-based support, and establishing an effective representative board and committee structure will help ensure the long-term success and viability of an Athens *Main Street* Revitalization Program.

1. **Establish a Main Street Program Steering Committee:** The steering committee should reflect the entire Athens community and should be composed of no more than 11 individuals. More people can be added later and may participate in sub-committees.

Representation should come from the following groups: downtown business and property owners, historic preservation groups, local civic associations, financial institutions, professionals (accountants and attorneys), community residents, the Chamber of Commerce, museums, and other public institutions. A member of the Village staff or Board of Trustees may serve as a liaison to the committee. This is just a general list and not all need to be represented. Should the Committee decide to formalize as a 501(c)(3) (a not-for-profit organization), to become the official entity that would manage the *Main Street* Program, they would have to draft articles of incorporation and bylaws. An attorney should be retained to assist.

2. **Develop a preliminary budget for the *Main Street* Program:** At the start, the initial steering committee would be voluntary in nature. As the steering committee evolves into a more formal *Main Street* organization, it may become necessary to hire full-time staff. Should this occur, a budget could include a salary for a downtown manager, fringes, office expenses, insurance, travel for conferences, and enough money for Programmatic expenses. A yearly budget should be established that is sufficient to start the Program. Setting goals from the onset will aid in the development of a budget that can be used for fundraising. Many organizations tend to fall into the pitfalls of “budget for now, and the rest will come later.” This should be avoided, as funding is a critical component of all activities.
3. **Utilize the Local Development Corporation (LDC) to raise money for the *Main Street* Program:** The Village already has an established Local Development Corporation (LDC). The LDC may also apply for funding under the NY Main Street grant program through the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR). A qualified not-for-profit entity such is eligible to apply for NY Main Street grant funding. Eligible activities include building renovations, façade and streetscape improvements. The LDC may undertake a membership drive and solicit funds from local businesses and work with a local bank to set up an account for contributions. In lieu of, or in addition to, cash contributions, the organization may request in-kind commitments of office space, materials, and equipment. Carefully develop a strategy to appeal for funds from a variety of sources so the *Main Street* Program will not be threatened if any one source dries up. This strategy traditionally includes the development of signs, stickers, emblems, or certificates and also includes a listing in a business directory.
4. **Develop an informational brochure to describe the *Main Street* Program:** The brochure should list local participants, explain the structure of the Program, and describe its initial goals and expected projects. These can be distributed throughout downtown, to individuals, and to groups.
5. **Define geographic boundaries:** The Program’s target area should have a clear beginning and end and include the natural commercial boundaries of the downtown district. It is important to work within a defined geographic district; the purpose is not to exclude anyone, but to be able to demonstrate change in a concentrated area.
6. **Hold public information meetings to educate the community about the *Main Street* Program:** As with any organization, participation and education are key ingredients for

success. Targeted presentations can be made to civic groups and clubs in the community to inform them about the Program and enlist their support. Public presentations should be well advertised in local media and held at a variety of convenient times and locations to facilitate maximum attendance. Give participants an opportunity to ask questions and share opinions. Identify, and personally invite key stakeholders, or individuals whose initial support is critical to the success of a *Main Street* Program.

7. **Involve the Media:** It is important to keep the media outlets informed of the activities, progress, and successes of the *Main Street* Program. Appoint a public relations person to prepare media releases, provide interviews, and one-on-one contact in order to better keep the public involved and aware of the revitalization of Athens' *Main Street*.
8. **Produce a detailed work plan for the *Main Street* Program Organization:** The work plan is the "road map" for the *Main Street* Program and may initially be based on the recommendations within this plan. Each sub-committee should develop its section of the work plan by setting goals and developing specific projects to meet each goal. The work plan should focus on a 12-to-18-month period of activity and should describe each task necessary to accomplish a project.
9. **Form partnerships with community groups that can support the *Main Street* Program by helping with work plan activities:** These groups can be represented on a steering committee and/or assist with the implementation of projects. Delegate projects in its work plan to other organizations with similar goals, such as Cocksackie-Athens Central School District student activity groups.
10. **Explore the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID):** The purpose of a BID is to improve conditions for business in a specific area, attract and retain businesses, generate jobs and improve the quality of life for those who use the district. A BID enables property and business owners to decide which services to provide to meet the district's unique needs. Property owners in a geographically defined area agree to an extra fee (assessment) for improvements that will benefit the entire BID. The BID's district management association, which operates the BID, will use the assessment funds to enhance or supplement services provided by the municipality or to provide services that the municipality does not ordinarily provide. General Municipal Law § 980-c directs the funds generated from the BID assessment may only be used for three broad categories:
 - To provide district improvements on or within the BID which will restore or promote business activity;
 - To provide services for the enjoyment and protection of the public and the promotion and enhancement of the BID;
 - To construct improvements on the properties of businesses located within the BID for the specific purpose of increasing access from public areas to the businesses for persons with disabilities.

Economic Restructuring

According to the *Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization*®, economic restructuring can be defined as: “Strengthening the existing economic base of the downtown while diversifying it.” Activities include helping existing downtown businesses expand, recruiting new businesses to provide a balanced mix, converting unused space into productive property, improving the physical conditions of the built environment, and sharpening the competitiveness of downtown merchants. By strengthening the downtown’s economy, communities are able to support the ongoing use of historic commercial buildings, preserve unique community assets, provide additional housing units for residents, and create a special place for people to work, live and recreate. Please note that Economic Restructuring is interdependent on enhancing community design and the development of a strong marketing program, many of the recommendations contained within this section are closely related to recommendations in the subsequent sections on Design and Promotion.

The economic restructuring recommendations that follow are designed to position the Village of Athens as a vibrant retail center. In order to achieve the goals as set forth in this plan, the Village of Athens must reinforce its critical mass of shopping, enhance its core service provisions, and further develop the area’s ability to draw consumers. The recommended actions have been clustered together into three main categories: Business Development, Attraction and Expansion; Business District Physical Improvements; and Marketing and Economic Recruitment.

Business Development, Attraction and Expansion

1. **Capital Improvement Grant/Loan Program:** It is recommended that the Village create a small business revolving loan program to assist with business attraction and/or expansion within the Target Area. The Capital Improvement Fund should be designed and directed to property owners and business owners for the purpose of making capital renovations to the external and/or internal components of either vacant or occupied commercial space. This program may be used to assist in defraying the costs associated with capital improvements to: building facades, full building envelopes, interior structural components, and signage. The program should be structured as a grant/loan with some form of requirement for owner equity. The Village should administer the Capital Improvement Program with oversight from a Revolving Loan Fund Committee, comprised of members from the banking and business community.
2. **Develop a Business Assistance Revolving Loan Program:** It is recommended that the Revolving Loan Fund be designed and directed to new and existing Village-based businesses either located on, or considering a *Main Street* location. In addition, the program should target existing businesses seeking to strengthen and expand their current business. Examples of the Revolving Loan Fund’s uses include, but are not limited to: relocation and start up expenses; purchase of equipment or inventory; the engagement of professional technical assistance, leasehold improvements; and working capital.
3. **Maximize investment along Second Street and Water Street:** Including but not limited to infrastructure, streetscape, housing and building façade improvements.

4. **Encourage stable business development:** Rapid turnover of new businesses is an issue that is discouraging to the business climate. The Village should encourage new business-owners to provide have a business plan and to take advantage of the technical assistance services provided by Greene County Department of Planning and Economic Development. The Village should consider offering tax incentives for business start-ups for the first five years to allow them to get established.
5. **Focus on filling the space in the Athens Opera House:** Today the majority of the second and third floors of the Opera House building remain vacant. The building has over 9,400 square feet of space and available for rent or lease. The Village and Greene County should work with the property – owner to encourage the use of this key building.
6. **Open a riverfront restaurant facility:** The old Dionysos Restaurant is currently closed and boarded up, however the property appears very well kept. With its' location on the Hudson River waterfront, its large facilities and parking areas, this commercial property is a very valuable asset to the Village year-round and tourism economy. The Village and Greene County should work with the business-owner to determine their financial needs and available grant/loan opportunities.
7. **Encourage the use of *Main Street* storefronts for retail** use and second and third floors for service industries and/or additional housing opportunities: While professional services (i.e. financial, real estate, and insurance) are important to the fabric of the community, they should be encouraged to locate in second and third floors. The first level storefronts of buildings along *Main Street* should be utilized for retail activities, as they are most visible and accessible in this location. Village zoning should be adjusted to discourage the conversion of existing commercial storefronts to residential uses.

Business District Physical Improvements

1. **Improve the aesthetic appeal of the Target Area:** Continue to encourage property and business owners to invest within the Target Area. There are good examples of building design, signage, and quality housing throughout the Target Area to continue to improve the overall appearance.
2. The Village should **annually apply for funding** through the Greene County Main Street Revitalization matching grant program for public sign enhancements and infrastructure improvements of up to \$2,500. Local property – owners should also be encouraged to take advantage this matching grant program for assistance with façade renovation and restoration projects of up to \$7,500. In addition, the Village should apply of Small Cities grants to establish a larger revolving loan fund.
3. Work with Greene County to improve the aesthetic appeal of the **Rivertown Senior Citizen Center** facility and parking area.

4. **Continue rehabilitating the Athens Cultural Center.** The Athens Cultural Center is an important community facility that is also a tourist attraction. The Village should continue to seek funding to support efforts to restore the building to ensure the highest and best use of all floors of the building. Consider moving the Athens Museum to this location.
5. **Enhance Code Enforcement:** Address issues such as vacant or dilapidated buildings, broken or boarded up windows, unscreened dumpsters, uninviting fencing and building facades, cluttered sidewalks, and unattractive signs.
6. **Update the Village Sign Law:** Ensure that new signage is pedestrian friendly, but at an appropriate scale for drivers as well. Currently, the code prohibits off-premises signs. In some instances where businesses are located on side streets, off-premises directional signs may be necessary. The Village should develop and adopt guidelines that will address signage design requirements.
7. **Continue to promote and advertise the availability of low – interest loans through the Village of Athens Historic Revolving Loan Program:** This revolving loan fund was originally created by the Village with funding from mitigation impacts associated with the construction of the Athens Generation Plant. Village residents and property – owners interested in restoring historic properties and improving building facades should be encouraged to apply for low-interest loans of between 0 and 3% through this program.
8. **Support and Celebrate Aesthetic Contributions:** The Village of Athens and/or *Main Street* Organization should support and reward current businesses that improve the aesthetic appearance of the community through good design and curb appeal.
9. **“Dress up “Vacant Buildings/Windows:** It only takes a few empty buildings, windows and storefronts to change the visual appeal of a community. The Village should work with business and property owners to creatively dress up the vacant buildings and windows within the *Main Street* Target Area. Work with the Athens Cultural Center and the Athens Museum to provide ideas for the use of vacant storefront windows for displays of local art and/or historical information.
10. **Continue to enhance Riverfront Park** as a focal point for Village-wide activities and special events. Continue to implement the goals of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and the Athens Waterfront Revitalization Project to improve Riverfront Park and other riverfront properties. These improvements would attract tourists to the Village, provide access to the river and promote recreational activities. Riverfront improvements that were recommended from these plans, that are either currently underway, or have yet been implemented include the following:
 - Dredging of the ferry slip to restore depth and development of heavy duty mooring for use by tour boats.



Dilapidated home on the corner of Second Street & Montgomery Street

- Improvements of the “Central Plaza” area at the foot of Second Street.
 - Construction of a small structure to house restrooms and possible ticket office.
 - Rearrange and define street parking areas to provide additional capacity.
 - Placement of various architectural details such as railings, lighting, and surface treatments.
 - The establishment of a boat tour operation or additional ferry trips running between Hudson & Athens, and the Hudson-Athens Lighthouse and/or other river destinations.
11. **Improve the Riverfront Park floating docks** and maintain the existing decking, benches and landscaping in the park.
 12. **Display information kiosks in Riverfront Park and other key locations.** The information kiosks should include a map of historic sites in the Village and information on dining, shopping events and opportunities for visitors, including festivals and other interesting attractions in the community. The kiosks could also include information on the Village of Athens Walking Tour (map and pamphlet developed for the Bicentennial celebration), Athens Cultural Center, Athens Museum, Middle Ground Flats, Brandow Point, Stockport Conservation Area and the Hudson River Regional Festival among other attractions.
 13. **Complete the Athens Fourth Street Boat Launch Project:** Work with the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a launching/land area for paddle boats such as canoes and kayaks; develop a small kiosk to direct paddle visitors to Village businesses; improve the streetscape; relocate utility poles; replace the fencing surrounding the ELCO property; add landscaping and screening and develop a small parking area to be used by paddlers.

Marketing and Economic Recruitment

1. **Provide Marketing Assistance:** Enhance and promote Village resources in order to attract a greater percentage of the tourism industry.
2. **Continue to Foster a Good Working Relationship with Existing Economic Development Entities:** Work with the GreeneBusiness Partnership, the Greene County Chamber of Commerce, and the Greene County Tourism Promotion Department to attract and retain employment opportunities within the Village.
3. **Develop a Village of Athens Website for Economic Development:** Create a Village of Athens website for the promotion of existing and forthcoming economic development programs to attract and retain Village businesses.
4. **Establish stronger relationships with existing businesses within the Village:** Develop a job retention primer package that provides information and resources for current

businesses. Make certain to tailor specific program incentives to current businesses that may need assistance in expanding or retaining employment opportunities.

5. **Attract and retain business opportunities** that are specific to the consumer spending patterns within the Village of Athens' trade area: Recruit businesses that will attract visitors after 5:00 PM, including but not limited to fine dining establishments and entertainment opportunities. Utilize the Riverfront Park as an attraction and catalyst for recruiting and retaining businesses. Riverfront Park provides a direct link from the Hudson River to the Business District at the intersection of Second Street and Water Street.
6. **Encourage a downtown farmers' market location:** Identify an appropriate *Main Street Target Area* location or utilize the Riverfront Park for a farmers' market. Work with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County, Greene County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, Greene County Department of Planning & Economic Development and Greene County Tourism to seek grant opportunities for local farmers in order to strengthen the local agricultural economy. Local farmers can benefit from involvement in a regional agri-tourism, eco and/or recreational tourism market, as well as expanded farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture Programs (CSAs or Co-ops).

Design

Improving downtown's appeal is a very important component to the Village's revitalization effort. Enhancing the physical appearance of the public and private buildings, streetlights, window displays, storefronts, parking areas, signs, sidewalks, and public open spaces will help convey a positive visual message about the downtown and what it has to offer. An orderly, progression of building and landscaping presents a pleasant shopping environment for consumers and a pleasant view for motorists. Tourists are more likely to travel to, and stop in, communities known for their street appeal. Communities such as these become destination places for visitors who wish to stroll along the downtown streets and look at the shops.

The following figures are provided to visually illustrate the design recommendations and strategies included in this section for improving Second Street and Water Street.

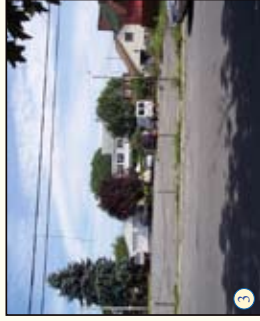
SECOND STREET BETWEEN WARREN & WATER EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Improve Second Street's aesthetics by enhancing the physical appearance of the building facades and window displays.



Work with property owners to restore historic building facades. The preservation and restoration of historic sites and buildings is crucial to the promotion of a unique shopping experience.



Improve parking area for public use. Work with property owner to improve signage, landscaping, paving, striping and improve access points to the lot.



Lesson the visual impact of the overhead wires to protect the unique view of the Hudson River. Relocate utility wires underground or utility poles behind buildings.



Seek funding and continue efforts to restore the Athens Cultural Center Structural are needed for up-per floor access.



Encourage private landowners to improve sidewalks. Plant new street trees and improve streetscape where feasible.



Provide pedestrian scale lighting and other amenities to further enhance the streetscape.



Develop signage standards to create a consistent appearance along Second Street.



Work with NYS DOT to improve pedestrian & bicyclist safety at the intersection of Second Street and Rte. 385. Research and provide appropriate traffic calming treatments to this intersection.



Provide alternative parking areas to improve access to Second Street. Encourage business owners to park off-street to attract customers and visitors to Main Street businesses.

WATER STREET

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Improve the overall aesthetics of the streetscape by encouraging landowners to screen dumpsters from view.



Improve pedestrian safety near riverfront park by installing sidewalks and curbing on the river side. Define parking spaces & pedestrian crossing areas between business and waterfront.



Implement the proposed improvements of the 4th Street boat launch. Work with ELCO to replace the dilapidated fencing around their property and clean up over grown vegetation.



Open a new year-round riverfront restaurant and banquet facility at this prime location. Apply for grant/loan funding through Greene County Economic Development.



Continue improvements to Riverfront Park. Improve the ferry slip, provide rest rooms, define on and off-street parking. Provide informational kiosks & directional signage to connect the riverfront to area businesses.



Define travel lanes with curbing and striping. Consider making Water Street one-way between Fourth & Third Street.

Historic Preservation

The preservation of historic sites and buildings is crucial to the promotion of a unique shopping experience. Unique landmarks, historic buildings, and natural areas are what make the *Main Street* shopping experience different from the Mall. Although a structure may be dilapidated, or a natural area or scenic view may currently be inaccessible, the community should make every effort to preserve and enhance these unique resources. The following recommendations have been made in order to address these issues.

1. Consult with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to update the **Historic District Guidelines**. The Village has drafted new Historic District Guidelines that have not been adopted yet. These guidelines could be improved if they more closely followed the Model Historic Preservation Law drafted by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. See the model in the Appendix.
2. Investigate the benefits of becoming a participant in the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation **Certified Local Government Program (CLG)**. If and when CLG status is obtained, apply for grant money, technical assistance and training programs designated only to Certified Local Government members. Throughout New York State, communities are recognizing that historic buildings, sites, and neighborhoods make an important contribution to their quality of life. Many villages are seeking opportunities to preserve the special character of their communities and neighborhoods. The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is one way to get the professional guidance and support to shape the future of your community; preserve historic buildings while encouraging growth; and create programs that foster appropriate planning and development. Any city, county, town, or village can be a CLG, once the SHPO determines that it meets state and federal standards, which include having enacted appropriate preservation legislation and appointed a qualified preservation review commission. Approvals are forwarded to the National Park Service for certification. All certified CLGs are eligible to receive a variety of services from the SHPO, including:
 - Grant money designated exclusively for CLG projects. Contact the SHPO to find out more about these annual awards or to request application information;
 - Membership in a national CLG network;
 - Technical preservation assistance and legal advice;
 - Direct involvement in SHPO programs, such as identifying properties that may be eligible for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places;
 - Training opportunities that will enable communities to protect their historic resources and integrate them into short and long term planning initiatives; and
 - Ongoing support from your SHPO.

Detailed information on the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program can be found in the **Appendix**.

3. Develop a **thematic signage program** celebrating and proclaiming the historical significance of important structures and sites.
4. **Ensure compatibility of uses** in and abutting historic districts, or areas that have been identified as properties of importance or significance to the Village.
5. Educate the public about the available **tax incentives for historic preservation**.
6. Establish a system of **award or recognition** for business owners and homeowners who preserve and restore historic structures within the Village.
7. Develop **partnerships with business groups** and other interested organizations to beautify historic properties and sites.
8. Formulate an **exhibition of historical photographs** of the Village that includes educational information about the different architectural styles and types of buildings.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Design Enhancements

A number of transportation issues were identified relating to customer convenience, pedestrian safety and overall aesthetics. Presently, some of the existing sidewalks have settled unevenly, with raised pavement edges becoming a tripping hazard. Other issues identified were unattractive highway style street lighting, unattractive overhead utilities, degraded curbing, lack of consistent landscaping, and lack of street amenities (i.e. benches, garbage cans, bike racks).

In order to provide for the safety and efficient circulation of pedestrian and automotive traffic, certain physical improvements to the *Main Street* Target Area are suggested:



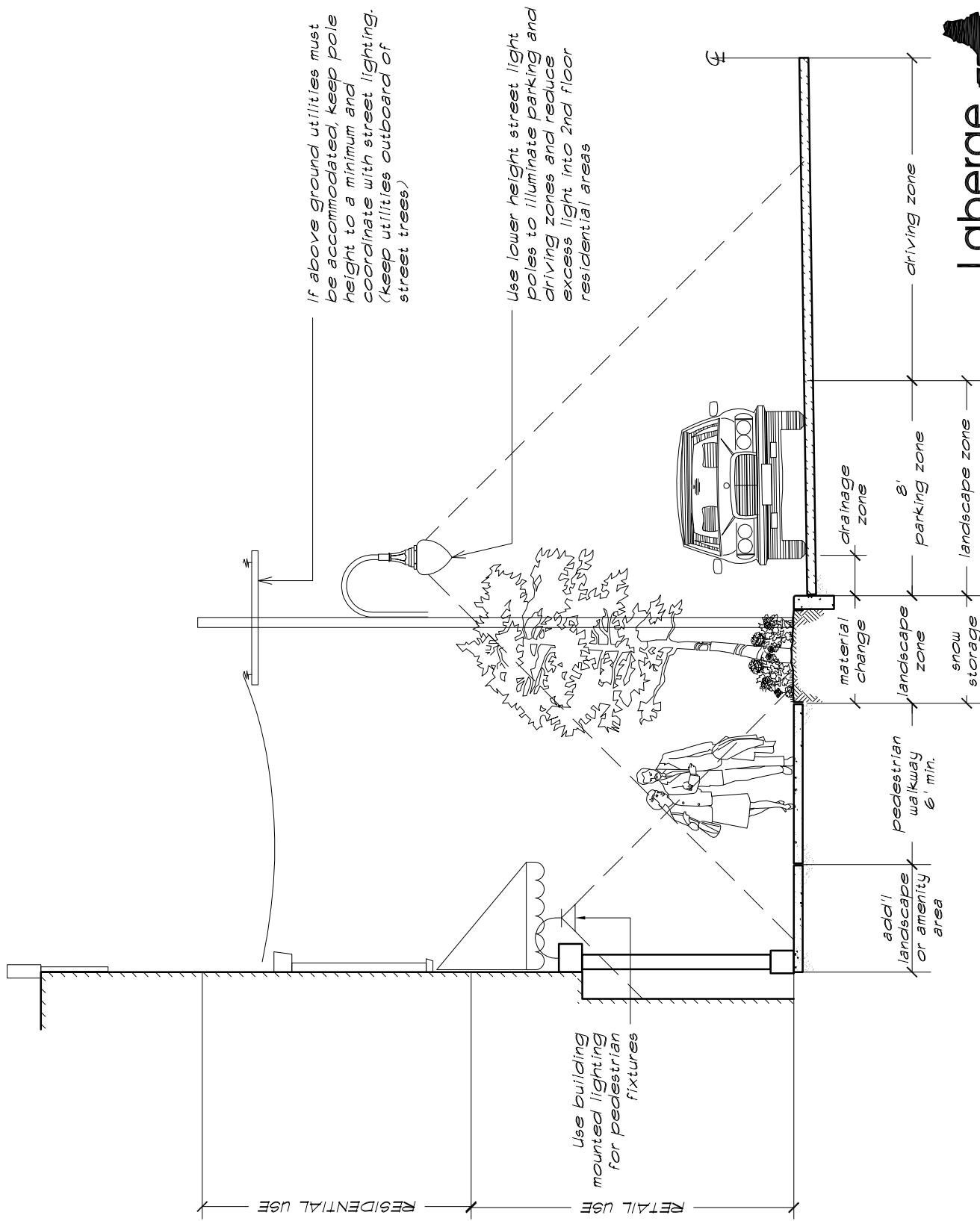
Sidewalk and curbing repair needed.

1. Continue to **maintain, enhance and expand the sidewalk system** that connects residential and commercial areas throughout the Village. Install sidewalks on the riverside of Water Street where space permits.
2. **Improve and maintain the pavement**, curbing and lane striping on Second Street and Water Street.
3. **Prominently stripe cross walks** and stop lines, or install embedded paving bricks or stamped concrete, for a more visually significant feature. An important crossing area is at the intersection of Second Street and Water Street between the Stewart House and Riverfront Park.
4. Install signs to notify motorists that they must **slow down/stop for pedestrians**, and work with local and state police to enforce this rule. One critical area of concern is at the intersection of Second Street and NYS Route 385 (Washington Street). Work with NTSDOT to re-configure the intersection of Second Street and Route 385 by traffic calming treatments such as curb bump outs, landscaping and highly visible crosswalks

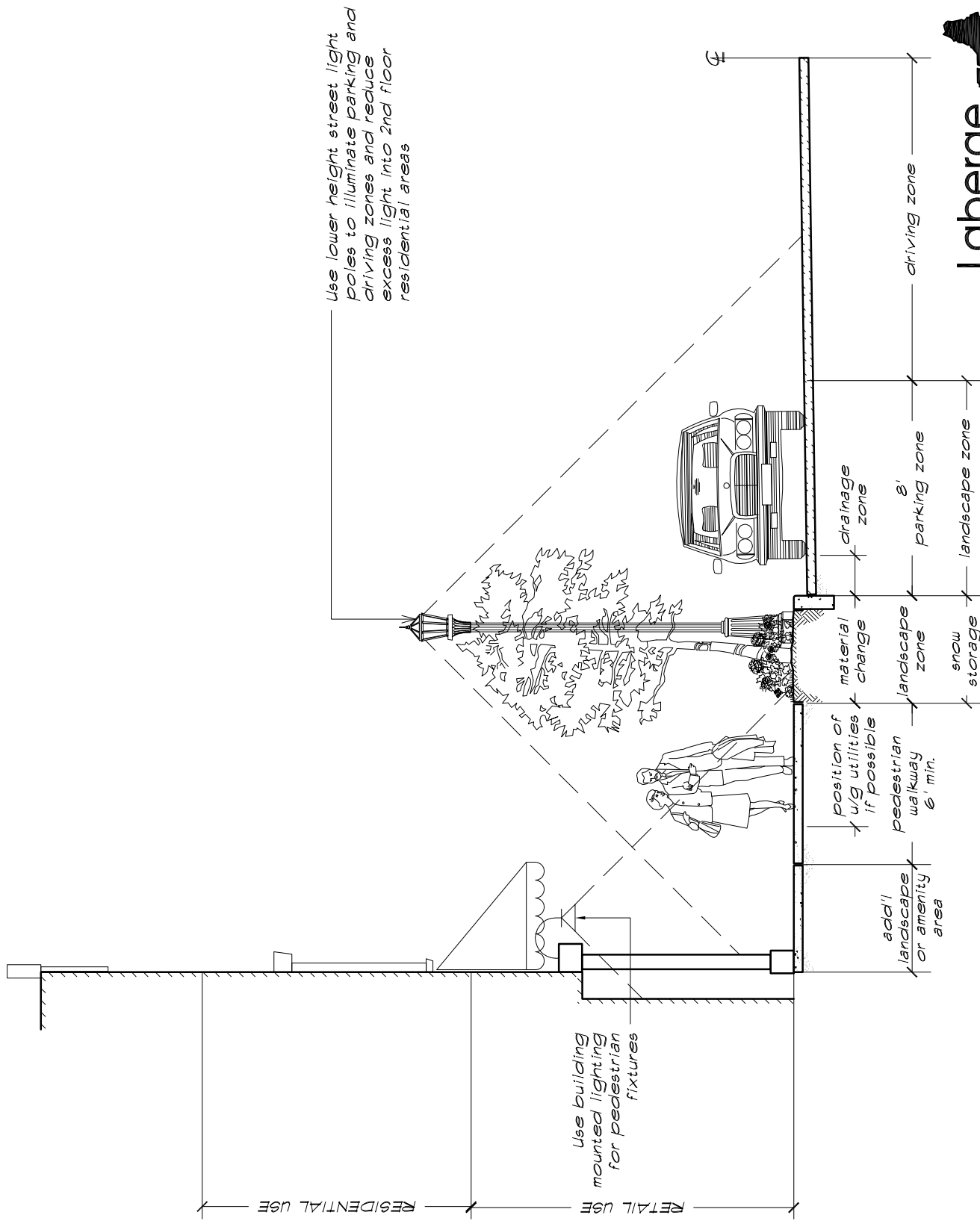
with alternative materials such as brick, “stampcrete”, poured concrete, or other NYS DOT approved alternative material. See Figure 12 Streetscape Improvement Opportunities #1.

5. **Increase police presence and enforce the Village speed limit** especially at the intersection Second Street and Route 385. Enforce other traffic laws to ensure the safety of pedestrians. Consider using crossing guards at key heavy volume intersections.
6. **Consider changing Water Street to one-way** only between Fourth and Third Street to encourage safer traffic flow especially during riverfront special events.
7. Create pedestrian space and **street amenities within the business district** (i.e. landscaping, benches, kiosks, tables and chairs for eating areas, etc.
8. Identify locations to create **public off-street parking areas**. Buffer parking areas from the street with landscaping and/or wrought iron (open type) fencing.
9. **Ensure bicycle safety** by having designated bike lanes in the roadway where feasible.
10. **Apply for Federal and State assistance** for improvements to local and state roads.
11. **Work with New York State DOT to develop a Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan for Route 385**, a NYS designated Scenic Byway. This plan should address the promotion, enhancement and protection of scenic, natural, coastal, historical, cultural and recreational resources along Route 385, and among other things, ensure that the Town and Village are not divided from the waterfront by this major roadway. Creation of the plan is fundable through the NYS DOT, and adoption of the plan will lead to further funding opportunities for improvements along Route 385.
12. **Establish a sidewalk fund for the Village** to support regular ongoing maintenance and orderly expansion of the sidewalk network. This fund should be proportional to the size of the sidewalk network and the estimated annual need for basic repairs. The fund could be set up as a 50/50 program between the Village and property –owners. Major construction or rehabilitation projects can be addressed through DOT’s regular roadway project funds available to municipal projects such as the Transportation Improvement Program or Marchiselli Funds. Major projects can also be funded through semi-regular sources such as the NY State Transportation Bond Act’s Multi-Modal Program (projects funded at discretion of either the Governor’s office, the NY Assembly, or the NY Senate).
13. During winter months, **enforce the existing property codes** that require property-owners to shovel their own sidewalks in the Village.
14. Continue to maintain, enhance and **expand the system of walking trails, bike trails and crosswalks that connect the schools, residential, and commercial areas** of the Town and Village. Create a map of bicycle and pedestrian pathways and install bike racks where appropriate.

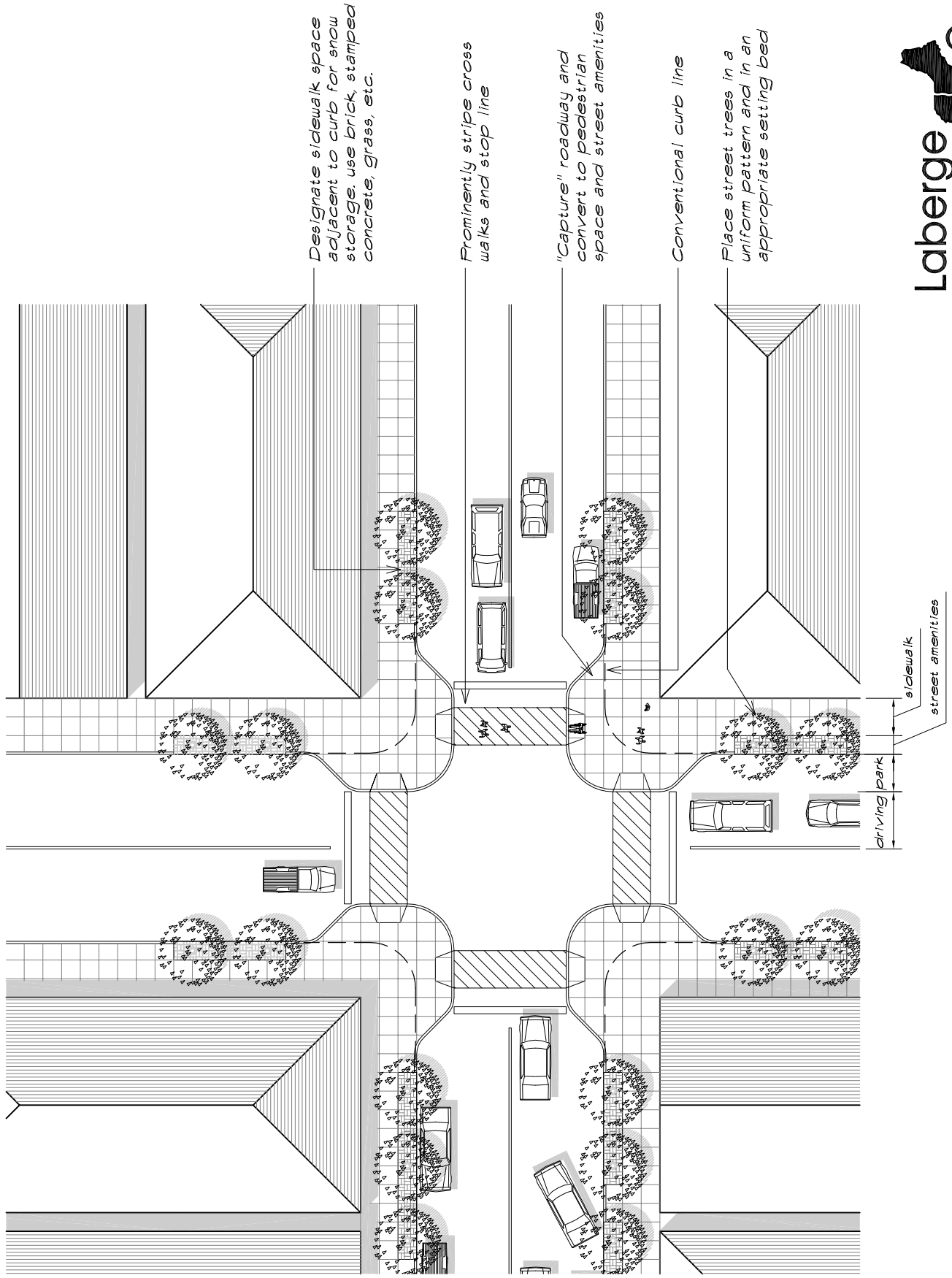
15. **Enhance the existing network of Village alleyways** for pedestrian and bicycle safety. Repair surfaces, install lighting where practical, name and sign the alleyways.
16. Install **pedestrian-scaled ornamental lighting** along Water Street to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the aesthetics of the riverfront.



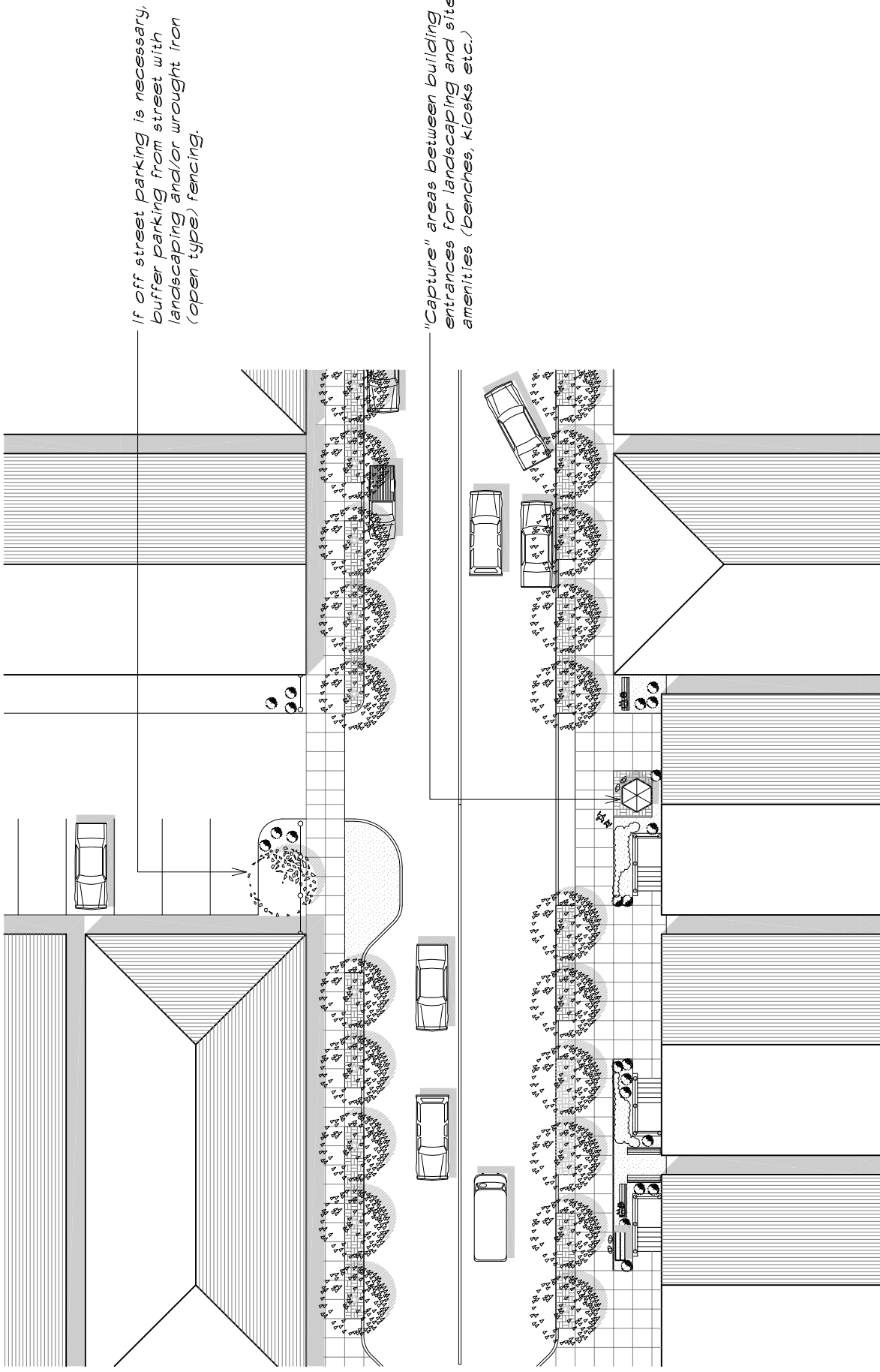
*Typical Street Improvements
(above ground utilities)*



*Typical Street Improvements
(under ground utilities)*



Streetscape Improvement Opportunities #1



Streetscape Improvement Opportunities #2

Parking Enhancements

1. **Explore alternative parking provisions to improve access to the businesses within the Target Area.** Analyze residential and commercial streets, off-street parking conditions and develop a plan for solving the associated parking problems. Potential solutions include:
 - Establishing a larger municipally-owned parking area in a central location;
 - Delineating existing on-street parking spaces with stripping;
 - Installing parking meters;
 - Enforcing parking regulations;
 - Creating designated spaces for renters through a permit system.
2. **Ensure that available parking is being used in the most efficient manner.** Establish time limitations for prime parking spaces. The standard shopping or business trip is approximately 90 minutes. This being the case a two-hour limitation is reasonable for most trips to the downtown. Time limitations could be implemented for both on-street and off street public parking areas with signage, a parking metering system or parking permit program, and parking enforcement.
3. **Considered underutilized lots or portions of lots for off street parking for business patrons, employees, and downtown residents.** Work with private parking lot owners to coordinate the use of parking spaces for public use during certain prime times of the day, evenings, and/ or weekends. Underutilized private parking lots within the downtown could help increase the availability of public parking. Potential properties include the existing underutilized parking area on North Franklin Street and the Rivertown Senior Citizen Center. The Village should continue to negotiate a long-term lease to use and improve these areas for public parking. The Village or a BID organization could obtain title to these lots, easements or a lease agreement. Ensure that proper signage is installed, both on an off- site to direct patrons to the location of the lot.
4. The **rearrangement of existing parking spaces** to a consistent orientation and limiting aisle space could potentially yield more parking spaces.
5. Work with the local business community **to provide employee parking that is not on the street in front of the businesses.** Identify prime on-street parking in the business district and make these parking spaces time limited or metered. Encourage employees to park away from prime areas. According to the “Downtown Improvement Manual” by Emanuel Berk, the primary trade area for short-term parkers is usually limited to a short block in all directions, whereas the secondary trade area (for long-term parkers may extend a block further, and the possible trade area for employee parking is greater still. Well-lighted and safe areas within a reasonable walking distance should be identified for

employee parking. This recommendation is the responsibility of the local business owners to implement.

6. **Generate funding for future parking needs.** Establish a Village parking fund to set aside money each year for the acquisition and development of new parking facilities. Consider establishing a special assessment district. The assessment district could be based on the amount of required parking for each property owner and funds collected from the assessment district could be used for ongoing maintenance, acquisition and development of public parking facilities.
7. **Improve existing public parking areas in the Village.** Improve the public parking area near Riverfront Park and at the Community Center with better signage, curbing and pavement markings to delineate the parking spaces and encourage more efficient use of the existing spaces.
8. **Improve existing parking areas with landscaping.** Parking lot landscaping enhances the visual environment; promotes public safety; moderates heat, wind and other local climatic effects produced by parking lots; and minimizes nuisances, primarily noise and glare. Landscaping provision can be used to enhance the safety of parking lots by guiding the circulation of cars and people and by ensuring that the driver's vision is unobstructed. Hedges can guide automobiles and pedestrians. Rapid growing vine and climbing shrubs can be planted on fencing where no set back is possible.

FRANKLIN STREET PARKING LOT EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



- ### DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
1. Coordinate a long term agreement with private lot owner for public use.
 2. Implement time restrictions to ensure parking area is being used efficiently during business hours.
 3. Maintain sidewalks and landscaping for pedestrian safety and aesthetic improvements.
 4. Define the boundary of the lot with improved landscaping and fencing. Plant street trees and shrubbery around and within the parking lot to screen the parking area and minimize noise and glare.
 5. Provide signage to discourage public use of private parking area.
 6. Install pedestrian scale lighting in and around the parking lot for safety improvements.
 7. Install appropriate parking area lighting to minimize glare on neighboring properties.
 8. Provide attractive on and off-site signage directing patrons to the location of the parking lot.
 9. Delineate each parking space with painted striping, signage or wheel stops.



Drawing is not to scale- For illustrative purposes only.



ATHENS MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

Parking Myths & Solutions

The goals for many of our downtowns include high density, to be compact & pedestrian friendly, to have a strong sense of place, to take advantage of historic and cultural features - all these elements need to be supported by the planning for parking.

“There should be a comprehensive plan for the downtown, where parking is one of the key ingredients.” - *Kent Robinson*

Common Myths About Downtown Parking

Myth – People do not like to walk.

Reality – Most motorists do not mind parking a block or two away from their destination if there is a dedicated and inviting parking area for them *AND A REASON TO STOP*.

- When a downtown is clean and well maintained with occupied storefronts, people enjoy the walking experience.
 - Cooperstown, NY.
 - Burlington, VT.
- Walkable downtowns have become trendy.
- People WALK IN MALLS!



Myth – If we build it they will come. “Field of Dreams” approach.

Reality – Parking is not a downtown attraction.

- Physical improvements must be undertaken in conjunction with economic and quality of life improvements for revitalization efforts to succeed.
 - Parking is a component to the overall approach.
 - promote downtown retail/services
 - maintain integrity of urban design



Myth – All parking must be in front.

Reality – People will park where parking is provided.

- Traditional downtowns have a grid pattern that often allows for rear lot parking behind the *Main Street* businesses.

- Market Street, Corning, NY
- Front Street, Port Jervis, NY
- Communities must use proper design:
 - Signage
 - Lighting
 - Access

Myth – Everyone is entitled to free parking.

Reality – Every space entails a cost for developers, owners, tenants and taxpayers.

- Parking fees are actually factored into rents, lease fees, sale prices, and taxes.
- There is nothing wrong with charging for parking:
 - Time limits
 - Permit Parking
 - Meters

Myth – It’s difficult to find parking in downtown.

Reality - Rather than focusing on how many spaces you have, think about how they relate to the downtown.

- Signage - Can people find the parking spaces?
- Connectivity - Are they easily accessible?
- Location - Are they located in a safe place?
- Walkability and Accessibility - How direct is the pedestrian path to get to them?
- Design and Aesthetics - Is it a pleasant experience?

Myth – Parking should be equally available everyone.

Reality – It is essential to segment parking motorists into different groups and prioritize them accordingly.

- Customers and shoppers are the highest priority. They generate the greatest benefit with the highest turnover and the lowest costs.
- Other visitors, residents follow in importance.
- Employees and owners should park the furthest away.

Myth – A Parking problem is a BAD thing!

Reality – A parking problem may be indicative of GOOD things.

- Flourishing businesses.
- Customers/Visitors/Tourists.
- Well-used or needed services.
- Vibrant and active downtown.

Potential Parking Solutions

Principle One - Understand the Proper Role of Parking in Downtown.

Develop solutions that focus on creating a downtown setting that is compact, walkable, and interesting.

- In-fill development with safe, clean sidewalks and curbing.
- Parking accessibility has the potential to set the tone for the rest of the downtown experience for visitors.

Principle Two - Strategically Locate Parking Facilities

- Back lot parking behind the *Main Street* buildings.
- Clearly mark parking so people can find it through good directional signage and/or way finding system.
- Avoid locating parking facilities in heavy pedestrian corridors.

Principle Three - Value the Utility of On-Street Parking.

- Maintain on-street parking as much as possible.

- On-street parallel & angled parking provide perceived advantages of visibility, accessibility, and safety.
- Regulate on-street parking to prevent parking nesters (e.g. 2-hours to 90 minutes).

Principle Four - Emphasize Quality Design.

- Parking Areas should be generously landscaped and well-maintained.
- Landscaping should be designed to include a visual buffer between the parking area and adjacent sidewalk.
- Include visual amenities to help make the transition from driver to pedestrian a positive experience.

Principle Five - Make Better Use of Existing Spaces.

- Develop a parking educational campaign to inform the public of the whereabouts of typically unused parking spaces.
- Encourage shared parking facilities for users that experience peak parking demands at different times.
- Ways to get the message out include directional signs, publicizing parking locations on websites, brochures, newspaper advertisements, and through individual downtown businesses to distribute information to employees and customers.

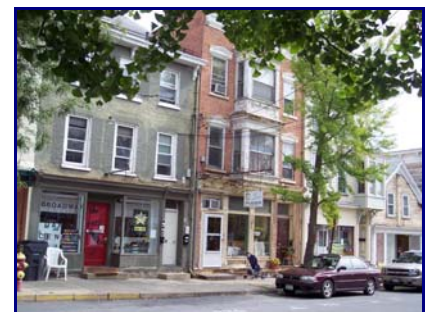


Streetscape Improvements

In order to improve the overall aesthetics, comfort, convenience and safety of the pedestrian area the following streetscape improvements to the *Main Street Target Area* are suggested:

Landscaping

1. **Soften the streetscape area** by introducing additional street trees, grass areas, and planters in areas where they have been eliminated. Screen front parking areas to break up the continuous expanse of pavement.
2. Provide **additional park-like features** to create a feeling of a continuous greenspace along Second Street between Warren Street and Riverfront Park.



Main Street – Lack of landscaping and street amenities; overhead wires are visible.

3. Encourage business-owners to **improve screening of commercial dumpsters** on Water Street.
4. **Revise zoning regulations** to require a higher percentage of landscaping on commercial properties. Landscaping requirements will ensure that future commercial properties dedicate a certain portion of the lot to landscaping elements such as trees, grass and shrubs. The regulations can specify spacing, location and size of trees.
5. **Maintain the existing street trees** and replace trees with more appropriate tree species where necessary. There are a few areas along Second Street where the street trees have been removed, or have grown so large that the tree trunks are being strangled by the concrete sidewalk, causing the sidewalk to heave around the trees.

Lighting

1. **Provide effective and safe street lighting** that compliments the businesses and the aesthetics of the Village.
2. **Establish a program to replace the existing highway-style lighting** with luminaries that compliment the historic heritage of the Village.
3. Require future developers to **provide Victorian style lighting with underground wiring**.
4. Install **supplemental lighting, such as gooseneck lighting to illuminate a business sign**, under-awning lighting, and/or building mounted lighting for the pedestrian areas.



Example Aesthetic Lighting

Amenities

1. **Install benches, garbage cans, tree grates**, information kiosks, and bicycle racks for pedestrian convenience.
2. Ensure that **new signage is pedestrian friendly** but at an appropriate scale for drivers as well.
3. Investigate funding opportunities for **planters, benches and other streetscape improvements**.
4. Where space is available, continue to **allow restaurants to utilize the sidewalk for outdoor seating**



Outdoor Seating

Overall Aesthetics

1. Improve the overall aesthetics of the *Main Street Target Area* by **addressing issues such as vacant or dilapidated buildings**, broken or boarded up windows, unscreened dumpsters, uninviting building facades, cluttered sidewalks, and unattractive signs etc.

2. **Keep roadways clear of trash by enforcing litter regulations**, educating the public and organizing an annual or semi - annual roadside clean up day.
3. Establish a *Displays on Main Street* program to **have displays in the windows of temporarily vacant buildings**.
4. **Lesson the visual impact of the overhead utilities**. Bury utility wires or relocate utility poles behind buildings. If utility wires cannot be relocated or buried, continue to use existing poles for signage, street and sidewalk lighting, banners, flags hanging flower baskets etc.
5. **Encourage shared sponsorship of between the business-owners and the Village of flowers and hanging plants** to create consistent beauty for all commercial structures on Second Street and Water Street.



Existing view along Second Street from the intersection of Warren Street.

Gateway Improvements

Gateway improvements tend to instill pride in residents and provide information to visitors. Attractive “Gateways” that welcome motorists/tourists into the Village often include a welcoming sign, kiosk, or landscaped area that announces entry into the community. Some gateways are merely welcoming signs, while more elaborate gateways include a visitors center. Elements used in successful gateways include signs, sculpture, lighting, ornamental historic objects (such as carriages or cannon) and landscaping.

A tourist friendly community requires a comprehensive and readable signage system. Visitors to the Village will need directions to the various attractions, parking options and businesses that are available. Information will include directions to the *Main Street* business district, scenic overlook restaurants, community parks and parking options. In order to create community gateways that are unique to the Village the following gateway improvements are suggested.

1. Design and construct additional welcoming gateways at the western entrance to the Village along Second Street, as well as the northern and southern entrances along Washington Street.
2. Seek additional funding for the on-going improvements to the Jan Van Loon House located on Route 385 for the development of a future **Welcoming Center** for the Village.
3. Direct consumers to the *Main Street* business district with informational kiosks, signage, and maps.
4. Create a comprehensive and coordinated way-finding signage program.
5. Develop a theme or design for the signs and place them at strategic places to direct traffic, label destinations and provide information.

6. Establish more detailed sign laws to ensure that future signs are consistent in design, size and material.

Building Improvements

In order to preserve and enhance the Village's quality of life now and into the future, a number of options are available to advance building improvements. Building improvements will make *Main Street* a more attractive place to visit and do business.

1. Encourage building owner's to address general maintenance items. Many buildings need only minor repairs and a new coat of paint.
2. Develop a Recognition/Reward Program to encourage building owners who have improved/enhanced their building.
3. Support and expand a building maintenance loan/grant program for Second Street and Water Street businesses-owners. Maintenance, includes repairing or replacing building facing, windows and doors, roofs, signs, porches, stairs and other façade elements. This program may also be used to assist in defraying the costs associated with capital improvements to full building envelopes and interior structural components.
4. Develop a matching grant program for the development of upper floor housing in buildings within the Main Street Target Area.
5. Develop and adopt Architectural Design Guidelines that will address façade appearance, signage, setback, landscaping requirements and other appropriate design requirements.
6. **Adopt a Residential Occupancy Permit (ROP) regulation.** A ROP regulation can require that every time a landlord is renting or leasing to a new tenant(s), an inspection is triggered and the new resident(s) must register with the Village Code Enforcement Officer. At this time, the Coder Enforcement Officer can determine if the unit is up to code, and the property is current on all local taxes before the ROP can be issued. The intent of such legislation is to guard against unsafe living conditions while improving the quality of life.



Continue to recognize improvement efforts.

Promotion

One of the most important components for revitalization is promotion of the downtown's unique characteristics to shoppers, investors, new businesses, tourists, and others. Effective promotion creates a positive image of the downtown through retail promotion activity, special events, and ongoing programs that rekindle community pride.

The Village *Main Street* Target Area is endowed with direct access to the Hudson River, complemented by splendid cultural, and historical resources. Organized promotion of these assets can result in the building of a spirit of cooperation among the many groups and individuals that have a stake in the success of *Main Street*.

THE DOORS OF ATHENS



1. Coordinate with the GreeneBusiness Partnership, the Greene County Chamber of Commerce, and the Greene County Tourism Promotion Department to enhance advertising and promotions of *Main Street* Athens as a *Unique Experience*.
2. Develop a brand strategy for the Village of Athens as a place to do business and as a place to visit: Destination branding often refers to efforts to increase tourist visits and tourist spending for a particular travel destination. On the other hand, place branding is about defining your city to attract tourists, and attract investment capital, while simultaneously building a reputation of benefit to your constituents.
3. Celebrate local history and historic preservation. Create marketing materials that have the potential to raise funds for the historic preservation revolving loan fund. A potential marketing tool would be the creation of posters, plaques, and/or key chains depicting the variety of historic Doors of Athens. This promotional tool has been successfully used in Dublin Ireland and other cities across the world. Athens has a talented local photographer that has already published a very profitable book on the historic doors of Athens. The Village should consider working with this local photographer to develop fund raising materials using this or other potential themes. Materials could be sold at various public places including the Athens Cultural Center, Community Center, Library, and future Jan Van Loon Welcoming Center.
4. Organize a historic walking and garden tour of the Village, similar to the one developed in the past for the Bicentennial celebration.
5. Form a business group or a BID (described below) to jointly advertise and promote local products, services and special events to attract tourists.
6. Develop additional mechanisms to promote local art and cultural opportunities such as direct mailings, newsletters, and the use of the Internet. Create a Village web site for the promotion of existing and forthcoming programs, development initiatives and community events. Be sure to provide links to Chamber of Commerce, Greene County and school district websites.

7. Utilize existing promotional tools such as the “I ♥ New York Travel and Vacation Guide,” and www.iloveny.com to advertise tourism opportunities in the Village and publicize Village events and attractions.
8. Light the Riverfront Park for the holidays, and continue the lighting scheme throughout the *Main Street* Target Area. Extend business hours in order for holiday-light viewers to shop after dark.
9. Use consistent sign design for Village and Town facilities such as offices, parks, and the library.
10. Send a bookmark to residents monthly, advertising special events.
11. Develop a more recognizable signage program throughout the Village that will lead visitors to the *Main Street* Target Area and other attractions (i.e. kiosks, gateways, and banners).
12. Create a cultural events program to bring residents together to get to know each other and to encourage tourism. Plan more festivals, block parties, concerts, fundraisers, for all seasons of the year, i.e., a soap box derby, snow sculpture contest, hand made sail boat contests, a Spring and Fall “Village Beautification Day”, etc. Once per month, make something happen.
13. Continue to participate in regional events, programs and services that already exist and appeal to tourists. The Great Hudson River Paddle is but one regional festival that involves many communities throughout the region. It is important for the Village to continue to participate in such events to secure its place in a regional economy.
14. Develop programs that encourage youths and seniors to get together for social activities.
15. **Take advantage of the Hudson River.** Incorporate information kiosks and special events to link Riverfront Park to the downtown-shopping district.
16. **Encourage shared sponsorship of organized events by business owners.** In addition to the Athens Street Festival, develop a variety of weekend events that attract tourists to local restaurants, and display and sell local foods, wines arts and crafts.
17. Work with Black Horse Farms and other local farmers to establish a downtown and/or riverfront farmers’ market location. The location could also be used for seasonal festivals to draw visitors interested in not only fresh fruits and vegetables, but locally made foods, e.g., pies, jams, jellies, maple syrup. The festivals could for example host local cooking contests for soups or chili and offer tasting of New York wine and cheese.



Expand promotion efforts.



18. Draw consumers to the *Main Street* Target Area on evenings and weekends by encouraging business owners to stay open past 5:00 PM, catering to tourists and residents alike.
19. Work closely with the GreeneBusiness Partnership, the Greene County Chamber of Commerce, and the Greene County Tourism Promotion Department to ensure that the recommendations of this Plan are implemented.

More About Business Improvement Districts (BID)

The purpose of a Business Improvement District is to improve conditions for business in a specific area, attract and retain businesses, generate jobs and improve the quality of life for those who use the district. A BID enables property and business owners to decide which services to provide to meet the district's unique needs.

Property owners in a geographically defined area agree to an extra fee (assessment) for improvements that will benefit the entire BID. The BID's district management association, which operates the BID, will use the assessment funds to enhance or supplement services provided by the municipality or to provide services that the municipality does not ordinarily provide. General Municipal Law § 980-c directs the funds generated from the BID assessment may only be used for three broad categories:

- To provide district improvements on or within the BID which will restore or promote business activity;
- To provide services for the enjoyment and protection of the public and the promotion and enhancement of the BID;
- To construct improvements on the properties of businesses located within the BID for the specific purpose of increasing access from public areas to the businesses for persons with disabilities.

Examples of acceptable BID Assessment Funded Enhancements and Services:

- Maintenance
 - Street / sidewalk cleaning
 - Graffiti removal
- Public Safety / Hospitality
 - Public safety officers
 - Visitor assistance
- Business Development
 - Commercial vacancy reduction
 - Business mix improvement
- Landscaping
 - Park / open space maintenance
 - Trees / flower planting

- Capital Improvements
 - Improved streetlights
 - Custom trash receptacles
 - Directional street signage
 - Custom news boxes
 - Flower boxes

Is a Business Improvement District (BID) right for my community?

Several factors must be considered before implementing a BID:

Property Usage

The majority of funding for BIDs comes from a special assessment levied upon the commercial property in a district. Therefore, it is important that the area considered for a BID contain an adequate base of commercial property to generate the assessment funds. Keep in mind that residential property, government and other tax-exempt property and undeveloped property will contribute little to the BID.

Stable Commercial Occupancy Rates

The ability to generate adequate assessment revenue is dependent upon the current economic activity in a district. Property owners who have vacant buildings or land may be hesitant to support a BID since they cannot pass the BID assessment on to a tenant, but instead, must absorb the cost directly.

Strong Local Support

BIDs are grass roots, community-driven organizations. Organizing and administering a BID requires active public review, approval and oversight. In addition, it is important that local officials and community board members understand and support the formation of a BID.

How is a BID formed?

General Municipal Law Article 19-A prescribes the legal steps necessary to form a BID. There are preliminary steps that can be taken to facilitate the official legal process of establishing a BID:

- Organizing district stakeholders into a steering committee;
- Gather data on the district relevant to the possible formation of a BID;
- Identify preliminary BID services, improvements and boundaries;
- Developing a database of proposed BID property owners and tenants;
- Holding informational meetings for property owners and tenants to gather feedback on the proposed BID.

For detailed information on the legal process required to create a BID, please refer to General Municipal Law Article 19-A, or Business Improvement Districts by the New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials, included in the **Appendix**.

Appendix

VILLAGE OF ATHENS

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS SURVEY

This survey has been designed to aid in the development of the Main Street Revitalization Plan for the Village of Athens. The survey is intended for owners of businesses and commercial properties. Your responses will be tallied and presented to the Advisory Committee to gather a consensus as to what the strategies of the Main Street Revitalization Plan should entail. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. **Please return your survey by October 1, 2007 using the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.** Thank you for your participation in this survey.

1. Please check one that best describes your business:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retail | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Services (Lawyer, Doctor, Architect) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant/bar | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, Insurance or Real Estate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)_____ |

2. Do you live in the Village? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Do you own or rent your place of business? ☐ Own ☐ Rent

4. How long have you been operating your business in the Village of Athens?

☐ 0-2 years ☐ 3-5 years ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 10- 15 years ☐ 15 years or more

5. How many people do you employ including yourself?

Full-time_____# Part-time_____# Seasonal_____

6. What are your hours of operation? _____(Specify am or pm)

7. Do your hours of operation change seasonally? ☐ Yes _____(am or pm) ☐ No

8. Are you considering any of the following changes for your business over the next 12 months? Check all that apply:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expanding or renovating your space | <input type="checkbox"/> Expanding services or product line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiring additional employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Relocating you business outside of the Village |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selling or closing your business | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)_____ |

9. What percentage of your customers are: Tourists_____ % Residents_____ %

10. In the past five years have your sales? ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ Stayed the same

11. Is the Village Government responsive to the needs of the business community?

☐ YES ☐ NO

12. Please rate the following services that are provided in the Village:

Service	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Fire Protection				
Police Protection				
Street Maintenance				
Water/Sewer Service				
General Tidiness				
Snow Removal				
Municipal Parking Facilities				
Storm water management				
Code Enforcement				
Main Street Revitalization & Economic Development Efforts				
Responsiveness of the Village Administration & Staff				

13. What factors or amenities of the Village adversely affect your business?

14. Do you consider the following community enhancements to be a priority for Athens?

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS	YES	NO
Improvements to the appearance of Main Street		
Public sewer improvements		
Public water improvements		
Pedestrian circulation & safety improvements		
Parking improvements		
Creating a micro-enterprise assistance/revolving loan fund		
Programs for adding trees, plantings, landscaping		
Improved maintenance of public spaces		
More street lighting in the business districts		
Design guidelines and standards for building design, renovation, and maintenance of commercial properties		
Guidelines for retail signs		
Enhanced historic preservation regulations		
Stricter code enforcement		
Improved community welcoming gateways & directional signage		

15. Please list your three highest priorities for the Village.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

16. Would you be in favor of the Village government providing financial incentives to attract/retain employment opportunities? ☐ YES ☐ NO

17. If you answered YES to question 16, what incentives would you like to participate in?

☐ 50/50 Façade Improvement Program ☐ 50/50 Interior Rehabilitation

☐ Low-interest Revolving Loan Program ☐ Other _____

18. How often do you shop or seek services in the Village? Please mark one answer.

- ☐ Several times a week
- ☐ At least once a week
- ☐ Once every few weeks
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Never

19. How often do you shop or seek services in cities and towns other than Athens?

- ☐ Several times a week
- ☐ At least once a week
- ☐ Once every few weeks
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Never

20. Please list the types of shops or services that you feel are needed in the Village of Athens?

21. What can be done to make doing business in the Village easier?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Village of Athens Business Survey Results

Q1. Please check one that best describes your business:		
Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Retail	14.3%	1
Restaurant/Bar	14.3%	1
Manufacturing	0.0%	0
Professional Services (Lawyer, Doctor, Architect)	14.3%	1
Finance, Insurance or Real estate	14.3%	1
Other (please specify)	42.9%	3
	<i>Answered question</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Skipped question</i>	<i>0</i>

Q2. Do you live in the Village?		
Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	42.9%	3
No	57.1%	4
	<i>Answered question</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Skipped question</i>	<i>0</i>

Q3. Do you own or rent your place of business?		
Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Own	57.1%	4
Rent	42.9%	3
	<i>Answered question</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Skipped question</i>	<i>0</i>

Q4. How long have you been operating your business in the Village of Athens?		
Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
0-2 years	0.0%	0
3-5 years	14.3%	1
6-10 years	28.6%	2
10-15 years	14.3%	1
15 years or more	42.9%	3

	<i>Answered question</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Skipped question</i>	<i>0</i>

Q5. How many people do you employ including yourself?		
Answer options (fill in blanks)	Response Percent	Response Count
Full-time (between 1 & 6)	66.7%	4
Part-time (between 1 & 10)	50.0%	3
Seasonal	16.7%	1
	<i>Answered question</i>	6
	<i>Skipped question</i>	1

Q6. What are your hours of operation? (Specify am or pm)		
Answer	Response Percent	Response Count
9am - 5pm		1
Various 36 hours total		1
pm		1
7am-2pm, M-F, Sat by chance		1
9am - 6pm		1
Day & Evening (pm)		1
5pm-10pm, Wed-Sun		1
	<i>Answered question</i>	7
	<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q7. Do your hours of operation change seasonally?		
Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	60.0%	3
Yes (am or pm)	40.0%	2
	<i>Answered question</i>	5
	<i>Skipped question</i>	2

Q8. Are you considering any of the following changes for your business over the next 12 months? Check all that apply:

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Expanding or renovating your space	50.0%	3
Hiring additional employees	33.3%	2
Selling or closing your business	0.0%	0
Expanding services or product line	33.3%	2
Relocating you business outside of the Village	16.7%	1
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0
	<i>Answered question</i>	6
	<i>Skipped question</i>	1

Q9. What percentage of your customers are:

Answer options (fill in blanks)	Response Percent	Response Count
10 % Tourists 90% Residents	20%	2
50% Tourists 50% Residents	10%	1
20% Tourists 80% Residents	10%	1
90% Tourists 10% Residents	10%	1
60% Tourists 40% Residents	10%	1
100% Residents	10%	1
	<i>Answered question</i>	7
	<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q10. In the past five years have your sales...

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increased	66.7%	4
Decreased	0.0%	0
Stayed the same	33.3%	2
	<i>Answered question</i>	6
	<i>Skipped question</i>	1

Q11. Is the Village Government responsive to the needs of the business community?

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	66.7%	4
No	33.3%	2
	<i>Answered question</i>	6
	<i>Skipped question</i>	1

Q12. Please rate the following services that are provided in the Village:						
Answer options	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Rating Average	Response Count
Fire Protection	6	1	0	0	3.86	7
Police Protection	4	1	0	2	3	7
Street Maintenance	2	4	0	1	3	7
Water/Sewer Service	2	3	0	2	2.71	7
General Tidiness	2	3	1	1	2.86	7
Snow Removal	2	4	1	0	3.14	7
Municipal Parking Facilities	1	1	2	3	2	7
Storm water management	2	1	2	2	2.43	7
Code Enforcement	2	0	3	2	2.29	7
Main Street Revitalization & Economic Development Efforts	1	2	1	3	2.14	7
Responsiveness of the Village Administration & Staff	1	3	1	1	2.67	6
					<i>Answered question</i>	7
					<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q13. What factors or amenities of the Village adversely affect your business?		
Answer	Response Percent	Response Count
The Village looks run down and dirty. Junk cars on personal property, Streets not cleaned. Pallets on property are a fire hazard. Cars are left running with nobody inside		1
Lack of parking		1
Trash removal is a problem		1
Parking, no walking traffic. Stricter codes needed for the up keeping of personal properties		1
	<i>Answered question</i>	4
	<i>Skipped question</i>	3

Q14. Do you consider the following community enhancements to be a priority for Athens?					
Answer options	Yes	%	No	%	Response Count
Improvements to the appearance of Main Street	5	70%	2	30%	7
Public sewer improvements	4	60%	3	40%	7
Public water improvements	4	60%	3	40%	7
Pedestrian circulation & safety improvements	2	30%	5	70%	7
Parking improvements	5	70%	2	30%	7
Creating a micro-enterprise assistance/revolving loan fund	3	50%	3	50%	6
Programs for adding trees, plantings, landscaping	5	70%	2	30%	7
Improved maintenance of public spaces	6	90%	1	10%	7
More street lighting in the business districts	2	40%	4	60%	6
Design guidelines and standards for building design, renovation, and maintenance of commercial properties	5	70%	2	30%	7
Guidelines for retail signs	3	50%	3	50%	6
Enhanced historic preservation regulations	4	60%	3	40%	7
Stricter code enforcement	4	60%	3	40%	7
Improved community welcoming gateways & directional signage	4	60%	2	40%	6
Answered question					7
Skipped question					0

Q15. Please list your three highest priorities for the Village.		
Answer		Response Count
Parking Parking enforcement Code enforcement		1
Parking Small business assistance		1
More parking Trash removal Destinations - something for people to do		1
Street lighting Garbage on personal property Signage		1
Parking Improve appearance (lighting, garbage cans)		1

Grants for building revitalization (no tax increase first 3 years or so) Change codes – no garbage cans left on Main St. for garbage pick-up No garbage, furniture, old vehicles left in front of homes or businesses. Don't let people turn storefronts into apartments.		
	<i>Answered question</i>	5
	<i>Skipped question</i>	2

Q16. Would you be in favor of the Village government providing financial incentives to attract/retain employment opportunities?

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	90.0%	6
No (<i>not at the expense of tax payers, such as PILOTS</i>)	10.0%	1
	<i>Answered question</i>	7
	<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q17. If you answered YES to question 16, what incentives would you like to participate in?

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
50/50 Façade Improvement Program	57.1%	4
Low-interest Revolving Loan Program	71.4%	5
50/50 Interior Rehabilitation	14.3%	1
Other (please specify) 1. Work with property owners. 2. Financial incentives that are achieved from grants. 3. Waterfront enhancement	42.9%	3
	<i>Answered question</i>	7
	<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q18. How often do you shop or seek services in the Village? Please mark one answer

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Several times a week	71.4%	5
At least once a week	28.6%	2
Once every few weeks	0.0%	0
Once a month	0.0%	0
Once a year	0.0%	0
Never	0.0%	0
	<i>Answered question</i>	7
	<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q19. How often do you shop or seek services in cities and towns other than Athens?		
Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Several times a week	28.6%	2
At least once a week	57.1%	4
Once every few weeks	14.3%	1
Once a month	0.0%	0
Once a year	0.0%	0
Never	0.0%	0
	<i>Answered question</i>	7
	<i>Skipped question</i>	0

Q20. Please list the types of shops or services that you feel are needed in the Village of Athens?		
Answer		Response Count
Grocery store, deli, clothing/shoe store, drug store		1
Convenience store, good food stores, movie house, competition, clothing store		1
Wine/liquor, retail, lawyers, doctors, dentist, deli		1
Record and CD store, high end women's clothing store, antique store, yoga/massage, café store and book store, arts studio		1
Novelty stores, antique, specialty shops, book store, liquor store, thrift shops		1
	<i>Answered question</i>	5
	<i>Skipped question</i>	2

Q21. What can be done to make doing business in the Village easier?		
Answers		Response Count
Better parking in downtown		1
Welcome new businesses. Have meetings with buildings owners to see what kind of business they would like to host in their buildings. The Village should stop playing hard nose		1
Parking regulations and parking space		1
Taxes		1
We really need the parking issue solved. You avoid going downtown unless you are walking as you usually have to park further away		1
Events Ideas for generating traffic Better use of land		1

Night time activities		
Promote the businesses to the locals. If the locals would support their businesses there would be no problem. There are no less people living in the Village now then there were 50 years ago when there were a lot of businesses thriving		1
	<i>Answered question</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Skipped question</i>	<i>0</i>

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program in New York State

Information and Regulations Regarding the Certification Process



**New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island State Park
P O Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189
(518) 237-8643
www.nysparks.state.ny.us/field**

**Effective June 8, 1989
Updated July 31, 2002**

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Section 1: Purpose and Authority

Congress established a preservation program for the United States with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Since that time, the national historic preservation program has operated as a decentralized partnership between the federal government and the states with the common purpose of identifying, evaluating, and protecting the nation's historic properties. All preservation related programs are implemented primarily by the states through its State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) whose authority was also established by the 1966 legislation.

Recognizing the success of this relationship, Congress expanded the partnership to provide for participation by local governments. The 1980 amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act [16 U.S.C. 470a (7)(C)] contained the authorization in *Section 101(a)(7)(C)* for a federal-state-local preservation partnership that became known as the **Certified Local Government (CLG)** program. Federal law directs the Secretary of the Interior to certify qualified local governments through the authority delegated to the National Park Service. Working with the SHPO, the National Park Service specifies several requirements that local governments must meet to qualify for certification. Any municipality may request certification and the request is reviewed by the SHPO. Once the SHPO is satisfied that the municipality meets all requirements, a recommendation for certification is forwarded to the National Park Service.

The procedures outlined in this handbook are part of the implementation of the federal-state-local partnership in New York State by informing potential CLGs of the procedures and regulations required for participation in the program.

Section 2: Definitions

The following definitions will apply throughout this document:

- A) ***Certified local government*** or ***CLG*** means any local government certified according to procedures in this document. CLG status is granted when a Certification Agreement is signed by both the SHPO and the chief elected official (CEO) of the local government after a review and with the concurrence of the National Park Service.
- B) ***Chief elected official (CEO)*** means the elected head of a local government.
- C) ***County*** means any county that is not wholly included within a city.
- D) ***Historic preservation review commission*** or the term ***commission*** means a board, council, commission, or similar body established by local historic preservation legislation and having the authority to carry out municipal responsibilities for a historic preservation program. If more than one local body has historic preservation responsibilities, the body having the responsibilities set forth in *Section 3(a)(3)* shall be considered the commission for purposes of the CLG program.
- E) ***Historic resource*** or ***historic property*** means any building, structure, district, landscape, area, site or object, including underground and underwater sites, that are of significance in the history, architecture, archeology, or culture of the state, its communities, or the nation.
- F) ***Legislation*** means the local law, ordinance, statute or other official action by the legislative body of the local government.
- G) ***Local government*** means a city, county, municipality, town or village, or any other general-purpose political subdivision of the state.
- H) ***National Park Service (NPS)*** means the bureau of the Department of the Interior through which the Secretary of the Interior administers the National Historic Preservation Program.

I) ***State Historic Preservation Officer*** or ***SHPO*** means the official within the state who has been designated and appointed by the Governor to administer the state historic preservation program. In New York, the SHPO is in the Commissioner of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. ***SHPO*** may also refer to the State Historic Preservation Office, the bureau designated with historic preservation duties.

J) ***Secretary*** means the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior.

K) ***Undertaking*** shall mean any of the following:

- 1) Any physical activity undertaken by a government agency, including the alteration or demolition of property, and the transfer, lease or sale of property.
- 2) The funding by a government agency of any physical activity, including the alteration or demolition of property, and the transfer, lease or sale of property.
- 3) The approval or entitlement by a government agency of any physical activity including the alteration or demolition of property, and the transfer, lease or sale of property.

L) ***National Register of Historic Places*** means the national list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, landscapes, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture maintained by the Secretary of the Interior.

Section 3: Requirements for Certification

In order to qualify for certification, the local government must meet the following requirements:

A) The local government must have and enforce local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties enacted under the provisions of the *New York State General Municipal Law Article 5, Section 96-a and 119aa-119dd*. The following provisions must be included either in the local legislation or implementation regulations:

- 1) A statement of purpose;
- 2) The establishment of an historic preservation review commission;
- 3) Assignment of powers to the commission, which must include at least the power to:
 - i) Designate or recommend designation of properties worthy of preservation;
 - ii) Provide advice and guidance to property owners and government agencies concerning historic preservation issues;
 - iii) Adopt rules for the conduct of commission business; and
 - iv) In the case of cities, towns, and villages, the power to approve or disapprove any demolition, relocation, new construction, or exterior alteration affecting designated properties under its jurisdiction;
 - v) In the case of **counties**, at least the power:
 - (a) To review and comment upon all county undertakings and to recommend approval, modification, or disapproval of undertakings that might affect properties included in the county inventory or other historic properties. See *Section 5.B.3(i)(c)*.
 - (b) To review and report to the pertinent county agency or municipality whenever the county is called upon to formulate planning advice concerning actions that may affect properties included in the county inventory.
- 4) Provisions must include establishment of criteria and procedures for designation of historic properties worthy of preservation:
 - i) Legislation encompassing all classes of historic properties is recommended; however, it is sufficient that the criteria admit at least **one** category of historic resources, such as historic districts, etc.

ii) The criteria may not exclude a class of resources that is defined solely in terms of the property's use or ownership, for example, religious properties, nor the actions of its owner such as designation subject to owner's consent. However, publicly owned properties that fall outside the commissions' ordinary jurisdiction may be explicitly or implicitly excluded.

5) The provisions must also include procedures for commission actions and standards and criteria for commission decisions that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation. The Standards can be accessed online at www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/arch_stnds_0.htm.

6) The provisions must also include procedures for enforcing commission decisions; and

7) A process for seeking relief from the strict application of the law in cases where unnecessary economic hardship can be proven; and

8) Other provisions to ensure due process, including notification procedures.

B) The historic preservation review commission established by the local government must meet the following qualifications:

1) The commission must have no fewer than **five** members.

2) All commission members must have a demonstrated interest, competence or knowledge of historic preservation.

3) To the extent that such professionals are available, the community must appoint commission members to represent the disciplines of history, archeology, architecture, architectural history, and historic architecture. Members may also represent the fields of planning, folklore, cultural anthropology, conservation, landscape architecture, museums, and other historic preservation-related professions.

4) Terms of office must be staggered.

5) Commission meetings must be scheduled at regular intervals.

6) The jurisdiction of the commission must coincide with the geographical jurisdiction of the local government.

7) The commission must have at least the powers described in *Section 3.A.3*.

C) The local government must maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic

properties within its jurisdiction, and must be coordinated with and complementary to the survey activities of the SHPO.

1) To ensure that local survey and inventory data can be readily integrated into the statewide comprehensive historic preservation planning process and other appropriate planning processes, the local government must follow survey methods, standards and format established by the SHPO. Guidelines for survey are available from the SHPO.

i) If the local government receives prior written approval from the SHPO, the local government may use some other survey system and format.

ii) The survey system should include all classes and types of historic resources, not only those that may be subject to the commission's jurisdiction.

2) All inventory material must be securely maintained and must be accessible to the public; however, access may be restricted in the case of inventoried properties that might be damaged by unauthorized persons if its location were generally publicized.

D) The local government must provide for **adequate public participation** in the local historic preservation program.

1) All meetings must be open to the general public, announced by public notice, and documented through the taking of minutes, which must record all decisions and the reasons for those decisions, as required under the NYS Open Meetings Law (articles 6 and 7 of chapter 47 of the Consolidated Laws--Public Officers Law).

2) All policies, procedures, and guidelines used by the local government or commission must be maintained in written form and be readily accessible to the general public.

Section 4: Process for Certifying Local Governments

A) The local government shall make a formal request to the SHPO for certification. The request **must** include the following:

- 1) A request to participate in the CLG program, including an assurance of the local government's intent to enter into a certification agreement, signed by the chief elected official of the local government or that official's designee;
- 2) A copy of the local historic preservation legislation and any policies, procedures, or regulations that have been adopted for administering and enforcing the legislation;
- 3) Information on the membership of the commission, documenting each member's interest or expertise in fields related to historic preservation and a description of the appointment process. If the commission membership is not drawn from the professional disciplines defined in *36 CFR 61.6* and the Secretary's Professional Qualification Standards (history, archeology, architectural history, architecture, or historic architecture), the local government must document its efforts to obtain representation in such discipline(s) and its proposed mechanism for obtaining professional expertise when needed. See Section 5.B.2.iii.
- 4) A description of the survey system in use by the municipality, a chronology of past survey efforts, a listing of all properties included in the local inventory, and a listing of properties designated under the local legislation;
- 5) If available, a copy of the current local historic preservation plan or a statement describing the local preservation program; and
- 6) If applicable, a statement concerning additional historic preservation responsibilities that the local government agrees to undertake if certified.

B) The SHPO shall review the local government's submission to determine if it fulfills the requirements outlined in Section 3. During the review process, the SHPO may request additional documentation necessary to evaluate the municipality's eligibility for certification. The SHPO shall respond to the chief elected official within **sixty** (60) days of receipt of an adequately documented application for certification.

- 1) If the SHPO determines that the municipality's historic preservation program fails to qualify, the SHPO will identify the deficiencies and suggest remedies.

2) If the SHPO determines that the local government meets the requirements for certification, the SHPO, in consultation with the municipality, will prepare an agreement listing the specific responsibilities the local government will assume when certified.

C) The SHPO will forward documentation of the local government's eligibility for certification to the National Park Service along with the signed certification agreement and a request for NPS concurrence. If the request for concurrence cannot be affirmed as submitted, the NPS will notify the SHPO of deficiencies within 15 working days. If the NPS concurs with the SHPO recommendation, the date of the NPS concurrence shall be the effective date of certification. The NPS will notify the CLG of the concurrence, along with a copy to the SHPO.

Section 5: Responsibilities of Certified Local Governments

- A)** All the responsibilities delegated to the certified local government shall be listed in the written certification agreement, which may be amended upon mutual agreement of both parties and the concurrence of the National Park Service.
- B)** In order to maintain CLG status, the local government must perform certain responsibilities according to the performance standards specified below. In cases where the performance standard is not being met at the time of certification, the certification agreement shall specify a time period for meeting that standard.

Responsibilities:

1) To enforce the local historic preservation legislation;

- i) The local legislation shall be enforced continuously and consistently.
- ii) Before amending the local legislation or implementing regulations, the local government shall consult with the SHPO.
- iii) Any amendments to the legislation enacted by the local government and any rules or related administration procedures shall be consistent with the requirements and intent of the CLG program.
- iv) The local government shall provide the SHPO with copies of any amendments or rules within **90** days of their enactment.

2) To maintain a qualified historic preservation review commission;

- i) An adequate commission shall be maintained at all times. Vacancies shall not be allowed to impair the commission's ability to take action for more than thirty days.
- ii) The local government shall make maximum effort to obtain professionals who meet the qualification standards set forth in 36 CFR 61.6 and the Secretary's Professional Qualifications Standards to fill any vacancies on the commission. At a minimum, commission members must demonstrate interest, competence or knowledge of historic preservation. The local government shall maintain records of the appointment process and shall submit a description of the recruitment process and qualifications of any newly appointed members to the SHPO.
- iii) When a commission reviews and comments on National Register nominations or other actions requiring evaluation by a professional in a discipline that is not represented on the commission, the commission shall obtain expertise in that area before rendering its decision. The commission may seek assistance from

universities, private preservation organizations, the SHPO, other review commissions or private consultants. The local government shall maintain records documenting that such professional advisors to the commission comply with the 36 CFR 61.6 and the Secretary's Professional Qualification Standards.

iv) Commission members shall maintain or augment their knowledge through participation in historic preservation training at least annually or as provided by the SHPO. The SHPO will provide all local commissions with orientation materials and training pertaining to the roles and operations of federal, state and local historic preservation programs. Commission members may satisfy the training requirement through attendance at training provided by the SHPO or at other training approved by the SHPO. Unless otherwise stated, at least 75% of commission members must attend such training.

v) The commission shall meet **at least four times** during each year. In order to ensure public participation, the commission shall conduct all business in a public manner, consistent with provisions of the NYS Open Meetings Law (articles 6 and 7 of chapter 47 of the Consolidated Laws--Public Officers Law).

3) To maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties coordinated with and complementary to the survey activities of the SHPO;

i) Local inventories shall include, at a minimum:

(a) All properties in the municipality that have been listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places,

(b) All locally designated properties, and

(c) In the case of counties, all county-owned properties that meet the National Register criteria for evaluation. Evaluation of county properties shall be undertaken in consultation with the SHPO.

ii) Copies of local inventory shall be provided to the SHPO for inclusion in the statewide inventory of historic resources.

iii) All inventory material shall be **updated** to reflect new historic information or significant changes in the condition or status of inventoried property as such information becomes available, but **at least every five years**.

iv) Local inventory data shall be maintained in a manner that is accessible to the public and secure from physical damage or loss.

4) To provide for adequate public participation in the historic preservation program.

i) All local government meetings concerning historic preservation shall be open to the general public, announced by public notice, and documented through the taking of minutes, in compliance with the NYS Open Meetings Law (articles 6 and 7 of chapter 47 of the Consolidated Laws--Public Officers Law).

ii) All local government records, policies, procedures and standards for the historic preservation program shall be maintained in written form and be readily accessible to the general public.

iii) The local government shall inform its employees and officers of conflict of interest rules mandated by NYS General Municipal Law Article 18 Sections 801 and 802, and by the *National Register Programs Guidelines* (NPS-49) by means of a written code of conduct, oath of office, annual training, or other means.

iv) The local government shall solicit and respond to public comment on all historic preservation issues that are of general public interest, including, but not limited to local district designations, State and National Register nominations and establishment of policies and procedures.

5) To actively participate in the process of nominating properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

i) Certified local governments may propose and sponsor nominations to the State and National Registers, but may not review and nominate properties directly to the National Register except as provided in *36 CFR 60.12* (Nomination appeals). Nominations developed and sponsored by CLGs shall be given priority for review by the New York State Board for Historic Preservation, provided they are developed in consultation with the SHPO and based upon a comprehensive local historic resources survey.

ii) If any State or National Register nomination proposal received by the SHPO lies within the jurisdiction of a CLG, the SHPO shall transmit a copy of the fully documented nomination proposal to the local historic preservation review commission and the chief elected official for review and comment in no less than sixty days nor more than one hundred and twenty days prior to the scheduled review of the proposal by the State Board for Historic Preservation.

iii) If a historic district is proposed, the CLG shall assist the SHPO in notifying property owners and/or conducting public information meetings at a time and place agreeable to the SHPO.

iv) The commission, after providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment, shall prepare a report stating its opinion as to whether or not such property meets the criteria for listing in the State and National Registers. The report shall objectively evaluate the property in accordance with the National Register criteria for evaluation. Upon request, the SHPO shall provide guidance in

applying the National Register criteria.

v) Within **sixty** (60) days of notice from the State Historic Preservation Officer, the chief elected local official shall transmit the report of the commission and his/her recommendation to the SHPO. The CLG comment period may be reduced by mutual agreement between the CLG and the SHPO, and will be eliminated when the CLG, as sponsor of a nomination, transmits its report and recommendation as part of the nomination package.

vi) If the commission and the chief elected official agree that the proposed nomination does not meet the criteria for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places, the chief elected official will return the nomination materials along with the commission's report and his/her opinion to the SHPO. The chief elected official shall notify the commission, the property owner(s) and the public of this action. The SHPO shall take no further action regarding the National Register nomination unless an appeal is filed in accordance with *36 CFR 60.12*. If such an appeal is filed, the SHPO shall place the nomination before the State Board for Historic Preservation at the earliest possible meeting.

vii) For the purposes of the State and National Registers nomination process, the jurisdiction of a county CLG shall include only properties owned by the county. Only in the case of county-owned property shall the county CLG have the powers described in Section 5.B.5.vi previous.

6) To submit an annual historic preservation report. The report shall be submitted to the SHPO no later than November 15 and shall cover the period ending on the preceding September 30. The report shall follow a format prepared by the SHPO and shall include:

i) A statement of the present status of historic preservation activities and land use or other regulations relating thereto as they are being administered within the reporting jurisdiction;

ii) An identification and analysis of any problems or issues relating to the effectiveness of local development or administration of historic preservation plans and programs, including problems of funding and personnel requirements, procedural problems, enforcement problems, or any other issue;

iii) A report on commission activities, which shall include, at a minimum, the number and types of cases reviewed, documentation on any new designations made, updated resumes for commission members, and minutes relating to consideration of National Register nominations;

iv) A report on the status of inventory and survey, including a list of properties added to the local inventory, and copies of the inventory forms.

v) Copies of any documents published by the commission or CLG concerning the local historic preservation program.

C) The SHPO may at his/her discretion and by mutual written agreement with the local governing body, delegate further responsibilities to the certified local government.

- 1) Either the SHPO or the local government may initiate expansion of CLG responsibilities at any time.
- 2) Such delegation will be executed in the written certification agreement.
- 3) It shall be the responsibility of the SHPO to establish criteria, qualifications, and performance standards for such additional responsibilities.

Section 6: Process for Monitoring Performance of Certified Local Governments and Revoking Certification

- A) The SHPO shall monitor CLG programs and at least every four years shall evaluate each certified local government to ensure that it is fulfilling its responsibilities as defined in these procedures and in the written certification agreement.
- B) The SHPO shall examine documents submitted by the CLG, including the annual reports, completion reports for any subgrants, inventory forms, any procedures and guidelines published by the certified local government, and any other public documents relating to administration of the local historic preservation program. In addition, the CLG shall make available any other records and materials that the SHPO may request, and the SHPO may attend meetings of the commission or take other action to learn about the operations of the certified local government.
- C) The CLG will be notified in writing of the results of the performance review, along with suggestions for improvement in its operations.
- D) If the SHPO determines that the CLG has failed to fulfill its responsibilities according to the performance standards set forth in Section 5 previous, the SHPO shall notify the certified local government in **writing** of this determination, documenting the areas that require correction, and advice and assistance on any steps that **must** be taken to correct the deficiency. The SHPO shall specify a time period within which improvement must be achieved. The CLG shall have no less than **thirty** (30) days nor more than **one hundred twenty** (120) days to implement the required improvements.
- E) If at the end of the allotted time the SHPO determines that sufficient improvement has not occurred, the SHPO may recommend to the National Park Service that the certification of the local government be revoked, citing specific reasons for the recommendation.
- F) Within **thirty** (30) days of receipt of an appropriately documented SHPO recommendation for revocation of certification, the NPS will notify the SHPO of any problems or additional time needed to review the recommendation. The local government will be decertified upon NPS concurrence with the SHPO recommendation.
- G) When a local government's certification is revoked, the SHPO shall so notify the local government. If the municipality is a subgrantee for HPF monies for an activity found deficient by the SHPO, the SHPO will conduct financial closeout procedures as specified in the National Register Programs Guidelines.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION FIELD SERVICES BUREAU

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

Funding: New York State sets aside 10% of its federal historic preservation allocation every year for grants to Certified Local Governments (CLGs). The total amount of available funding varies each year with the federal allocation. Past awards have ranged from \$1,200 to \$28,000 with most awards falling between \$4,000 and \$10,000. CLG funding may be applied to projects that address the goals of identifying, evaluating, nominating, and protecting a community's historic and cultural resources. Some examples of eligible projects are local historic and cultural resource surveys, National Register nominations, preservation training for municipal officials, public education programs and publications, or preservation planning studies.

Eligibility: Funds are awarded on the basis of merit, determined by a competitive application process. Only completed applications accompanied by all necessary documentation will be considered for funding. Grants will be awarded only to CLGs, but local governments may apply simultaneously for certified local government status and grant funding.

Grant Cycle: Grant applications and instructions are usually available and due during the summer, and grant awards are typically announced early in the following year.

Draft Proposals: The SHPO is willing to review draft grant proposals from local governments wanting guidance with the application process. The draft should be as detailed as possible and be modeled after the standard application form. Please contact your field representatives for assistance.

Implementation: Successful applicants should begin implementation within three to four months after the award notification. Grant projects must be completed in the fiscal year following the award, or phased to accommodate the funding cycle.

Grant Disbursement: Payment is made on a reimbursement basis only, after the CLG submits documentation for completed work and total expenditures. Grants may fund up to 100% of the costs of a project, but communities are encouraged to commit other funds or in-kind services to the project.

For more information, contact:

Certified Local Government Program
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189
Waterford NY 12188-0189
(518) 237-8643
www.nysparks.state.ny.us/

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) PROGRAM IN NEW YORK STATE

Model Historic Preservation Law for Municipalities in New York State



For Additional Information, Contact the:

CLG Coordinator

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Field Services Bureau

Peebles Island State Park

PO Box 189

Waterford NY 12188-0189

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

LOCAL LAW

AN ORDINANCE relating to the establishment of landmarks or historic districts in the Village/Town/City of _____

Section 1: Purpose

It is hereby declared as a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of landmarks and historic districts are necessary to promote the economic, cultural, educational, and general welfare of the public. Inasmuch as the identity of a people is founded on its past and inasmuch as _____ has many significant historic, architectural and cultural resources, which constitute its heritage, this act is intended to:

- (A) protect and enhance the landmarks and historic districts, which represent distinctive elements of _____'s historic, architectural, and cultural heritage;
- (B) foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past;
- (C) protect and enhance _____'s attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to the economy thereby provided, and
- (D) insure the harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth and development of the Village/Town/City.

Section 2: Historic Preservation Commission

There is hereby created a commission to be known as the _____ Historic Preservation Commission.

- (A) The Commission shall consist of _____ members to be appointed, to the extent available in the community, by the mayor as follows:

at least one shall be an architect experienced in working with historic buildings;

at least one shall be a historian;

at least one shall be a resident of a historic district;

at least one shall have demonstrated significant interest in and commitment to the field of historic preservation evidenced either by involvement in a local historic preservation group, employment or volunteer activity in the field of historic preservation, or other serious interest in the field; and

all members shall have a known interest in historic preservation and architectural development within the Village/ Town/ City of _____ .

(B) Commission members shall serve for a term of four years, with the exception of the initial term of one of the ___ members, which shall be one year, one, which shall be two years, and one, which shall be three years.

(C) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Commission shall be elected by and from among the members of the Commission.

(D) The powers of the Commission shall include:

(i) Employment of staff and professional consultants as necessary to carry out the duties of the Commission;

(ii) Promulgation of rules and regulations as necessary to carry out the duties of the Commission;

(iii) Adoption of criteria for the identification of significant historic, architectural, and cultural landmarks and for the delineation of historic districts;

(iv) Conduct of surveys of significant historic, architectural, and cultural landmarks and historic districts within the Village/Town/City;

(v) Designation of identified structures or resources as landmarks and historic districts;

(vi) Acceptance on behalf of the Village/Town/City government of the donation of facade easements and development rights and the making of recommendations to the Village/Town/City government concerning the acquisition of facade easements or other interests in real property as necessary to carry out the purposes of this act;

(vii) Increasing public awareness of the value of historic, cultural and architectural preservation by developing and participating in public education programs;

(viii) Making recommendations to Village/Town/City government concerning the utilization of state, federal or private funds to promote the preservation of landmarks and historic districts within the Village/Town/City;

(ix) Recommending acquisition of a landmark structure by the Village/Town/City government where its preservation is essential to the purposes of this act and where private preservation is not feasible; and

(x) Approval or disapproval of applications for certificates of appropriateness pursuant to this act.

(E) The Commission shall meet at least monthly, but meetings may be held at any time on the written request of any two of the Commission members or on the call of the Chairman or the Mayor.

(F) A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of _____ of the Commission's members, but not less than a majority of the full-authorized membership may grant or deny a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Section 3: Designation of Landmarks or Historic Districts

- (A) The Commission may designate an individual property as a landmark if it:
- (i) Possesses special character or historic or aesthetic interest or value as part of the cultural, political, economic or social history of the locality, region, state or nation; or
 - (ii) Is identified with historic personages; or
 - (iii) Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style; or
 - (iv) Is the work of a designer whose work has significantly influenced an age; or
 - (v) Because of unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood.
- (B) The Commission may designate a group of properties as a historic district if it:
- (i) contains properties which meet one or more of the criteria for designation of a landmark; and
 - (ii) by reason of possessing such qualities, it constitutes a distinct section of the Village/Town/City.

The boundaries of each historic district designated henceforth shall be specified in detail and shall be filed, in writing, in the Village/Town/City Clerk's Office for public inspection.

(C) Notice of a proposed designation shall be sent by registered mail to the owner of the property proposed for designation, describing the property and announcing a public hearing by the Commission to consider the designation. Where the proposed designation involves so many owners that individual notice is infeasible, notice may instead be published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation at least _____ days prior to the date of the public hearing. Once the Commission has issued notice of a proposed designation, no building permits shall be issued by the building inspector until the Commission has made its decision.

(D) The Commission shall hold a public hearing prior to designation of any landmark or historic district. The Commission, owners and any interested parties may present testimony or documentary evidence at the hearing which will become part of a record regarding the historic, architectural, or cultural importance of the proposed landmark or historic district. The record may also contain staff reports, public comments, or other evidence offered outside of the hearing.

(E) The Commission shall forward notice of each property designated as a landmark and the boundaries of each designated historic district to the office of the _____ County Clerk for recordation.

Section 4: Certificate of Appropriateness for Alteration, Demolition or New Construction Affecting Landmarks or Historic Districts

No person shall carry out any exterior alteration, restoration, reconstruction, demolition, new construction, or moving of a landmark or property within a historic district, nor shall any person make any material change in the appearance of such property, its light fixtures, signs, sidewalks, fences,

steps, paving or other exterior elements which affect the appearance and cohesiveness of the landmark or historic district, without first obtaining a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission.

Section 5: Criteria for Approval of A Certificate of Appropriateness

(A) In passing upon an application for a certificate of appropriateness, the Historic Preservation Commission shall not consider changes to interior spaces, unless they are open to the public.

The Commission's decision shall be based on the following principles:

- (i) properties which contribute to the character of the historic district shall be retained, with their historic features altered as little as possible;
- (ii) any alteration of existing properties shall be compatible with their historic character, as well as with the surrounding district; and
- (iii) new construction shall be compatible with the district in which it is located.

(B) In applying the principle of compatibility, the Commission shall consider the following factors:

- (i) the general design, character and appropriateness to the property of the proposed alteration or new construction;
- (ii) the scale of proposed alteration or new construction in relation to the property itself, surrounding properties, and the neighborhood;
- (iii) texture, materials, and color and their relation to similar features of other properties in the neighborhood;
- (iv) visual compatibility with surrounding properties, including proportion of the property's front facade, proportion and arrangement of windows and other openings within the facade, roof shape, and the rhythm of spacing of properties on streets, including setback; and
- (v) the importance of historic, architectural or other features to the significance of the property.

Section 6: Certificate of Appropriateness Application Procedure

(A) Prior to the commencement of any work requiring a certificate of appropriateness, the owner shall file an application for such a certificate with the Historic Preservation Commission. The application shall contain:

- (i) name, address and telephone number of applicant;
- (ii) location and photographs of property;
- (iii) elevation drawings of proposed changes, if available;
- (iv) perspective drawings, including relationship to adjacent properties, if available;
- (v) samples of color or materials to be used;

(vi) where the proposal includes signs or lettering, a scale drawing showing the type of lettering to be used, all dimensions and colors, a description of materials to be used, method of illumination, and a plan showing the sign's location on the property; and

(vii) any other information which the Commission may deem necessary in order to visualize the proposed work

(B) No building permit shall be issued for such proposed work until a certificate of appropriateness has first been issued by the Historic Preservation Commission. The certificate of appropriateness required by this act shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any building permit that may be required by any other ordinance of the Village/Town/City of _____ .

(C) The Commission shall approve, deny or approve the permit with modifications within _____ days from receipt of the completed application. The Commission may hold a public hearing on the application at which an opportunity will be provided for proponents and opponents of the application to present their views.

(D) All decisions of the Commission shall be in writing. A copy shall be sent to the applicant by registered mail and a copy filed with the Village/Town/City Clerk's Office for public inspection. The Commission's decision shall state the reasons for denying or modifying any application.

(E) Certificates of appropriateness shall be valid for ____ months, after which the owner must reapply if he still wishes to undertake work on the property.

Section 7: Hardship Criteria for Demolition

An applicant whose certificate of appropriateness for a proposed demolition has been denied may apply for relief on the ground of hardship. In order to prove the existence of hardship, the applicant shall establish that:

- (i) the property is incapable of earning a reasonable return, regardless of whether that return represents the most profitable return possible;
- (ii) the property cannot be adapted for any other use, whether by the current owner or by a purchaser, which would result in a reasonable return; and
- (iii) efforts to find a purchaser interested in acquiring the property and preserving it have failed.

Section 8: Hardship Criteria for Alteration

An applicant whose certificate of appropriateness for a proposed alteration has been denied may apply for relief on the ground of hardship. In order to prove the existence of hardship, the applicant shall establish that the property is incapable of earning a reasonable return, regardless of whether that return represents the most profitable return possible.

Section 9: Hardship Application Procedure

(A) After receiving written notification from the Commission of the denial of a certificate of appropriateness, an applicant may commence the hardship process. No building permit or demolition

permit shall be issued unless the Commission makes a finding that a hardship exists.

(B) The Commission may hold a public hearing on the hardship application at which an opportunity will be provided for proponents and opponents of the application to present their views.

(C) The applicant shall consult in good faith with the Commission, local preservation groups and interested parties in a diligent effort to seek an alternative that will result in preservation of the property.

(D) All decisions of the Commission shall be in writing. A copy shall be sent to the applicant by registered mail and a copy filed with the Village/Town/City Clerk's Office for public inspection. The Commission's decision shall state the reasons for granting or denying the hardship application. If the application is granted, the Commission shall approve only such work as is necessary to alleviate the hardship.

Section 10: Enforcement

All work performed pursuant to a certificate of appropriateness issued under this ordinance shall conform to any requirements included therein. It shall be the duty of the Building Code Enforcement Officer to inspect periodically any such work to assure compliance. In the event work is found that is not being performed in accordance with the certificate of appropriateness, or upon notification of such fact by the Historic Preservation Commission, the Building Code Enforcement Officer shall issue a stop work order and all work shall immediately cease. No further work shall be undertaken on the project as long as a stop work order is in effect.

Section 11: Maintenance and Repair Required

Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance and repair of any exterior architectural feature of a landmark or property within a historic district, which does not involve a change in design, material, color or outward appearance.

No owner or person with an interest in real property designated as a landmark or included within a historic district shall permit the property to fall into a serious state of disrepair so as to result in the deterioration of any exterior architectural feature which would, in the judgment of the Historic Preservation Commission, produce a detrimental effect upon the character of the historic district as a whole or the life and character of the property itself.

Examples of such deterioration include:

- (A) Deterioration of exterior walls or other vertical supports.
- (B) Deterioration of roofs or other horizontal members.
- (C) Deterioration of exterior chimneys.
- (D) Deterioration or crumbling of exterior stucco or mortar.
- (E) Ineffective waterproofing of exterior walls, roofs or foundations, including broken windows or doors.

- (F) Deterioration of any feature so as to create a hazardous condition, which could lead to the claim that demolition, is necessary for the public safety.

Section 12: Violations

(A) Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be deemed a violation and the violator shall be liable to a fine of not less than _____ nor more than _____ for each day the violation continues.

(B) Any person who demolishes, alters, constructs, or permits a designated property to fall into a serious state of disrepair in violation of this ordinance shall be required to restore the property and its site to its appearance prior to the violation. Any action to enforce this subsection shall be brought by the Village/Town/City Attorney. This civil remedy shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any criminal prosecution and penalty.

Section 13: Appeals

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Historic Preservation Commission relating to hardship or a certificate of appropriateness may, within 15 days of the decision, file a written application with the Village Board/Town Board/City Council for review of the decision. Reviews shall be conducted based on the same record that was before the Commission and using the same criteria.

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Successful Main Street Programs

The Main Street revitalization movement has its roots in New York State, where a successful Main Street revitalization program in Corning, New York proved a useful model for other communities to follow. Communities across New York State from Saratoga to New York's Times Square, from the Catskill Region to neighborhoods in Buffalo, have spearheaded successful Main Street efforts. ***New York Main Street Community Profiles*** provide a concise examination of the process that led to the revitalization of Main Streets throughout New York State, including discussions of how such efforts were sustained,

who led the efforts, how such initiatives were financed, and the economic and social benefits of each program. We invite you to explore the *Community Profiles* to see how other communities in the State have approached their Main Street revitalization efforts.



Cortland

Ambitious plans in place to revitalize historic downtown Cortland, NY.



Ithaca

Downtown plans for Ithaca expected to impact the entire Finger Lakes region.



Utica

NY Main Street Grant helping Utica develop an economic asset and tourist destination for years to come.



Plattsburgh

Historic City Hall, downtown Plattsburgh



Albany

Renovating historic resources to recall an earlier time in Albany's history.



Saranac Lake

Originally a logging and manufacturing town, Saranac Lake is fast becoming a vacation destination.

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