

#### 1.4 Site Area Existing Land Uses

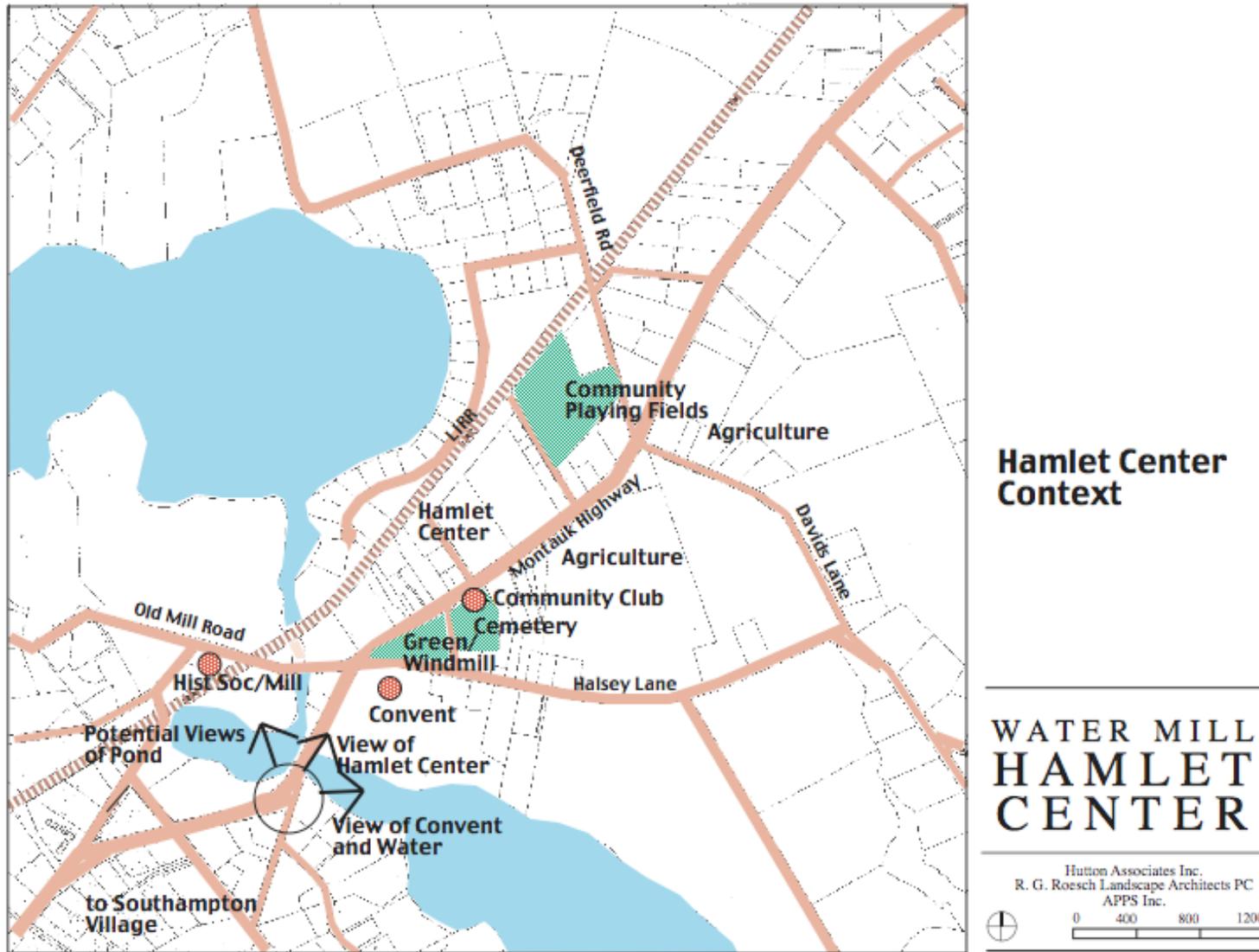
The adjacent maps describe the hamlet center, defined as Water Mill's central pedestrian commercial zone. The hamlet center study area considered in this report (the primary central focus and surrounding secondary area) is bounded on the south by Montauk Highway and the Water Mill green, windmill, convent, community center and low-scale garden store or other highway commercial uses to the south of the highway. It is bounded on the north by the LIRR line. To the east are additional highway-related commercial uses fronting on Deerfield Road (which connects north to extensive residential development), and to the west are historic and traditional residential uses, including the Water Mill Museum/ pond.

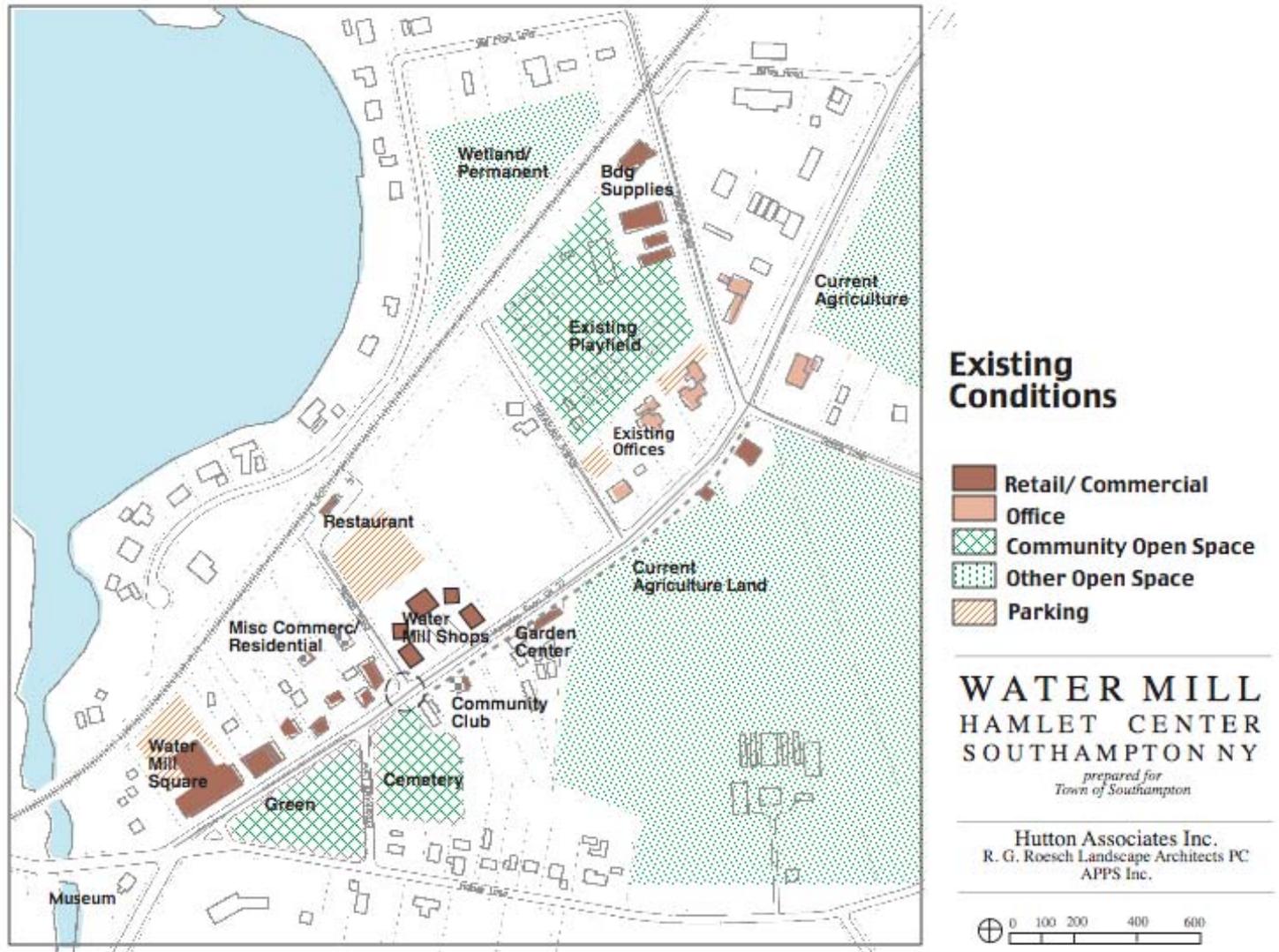
Major uses within the central site area include the following, going from west to east:

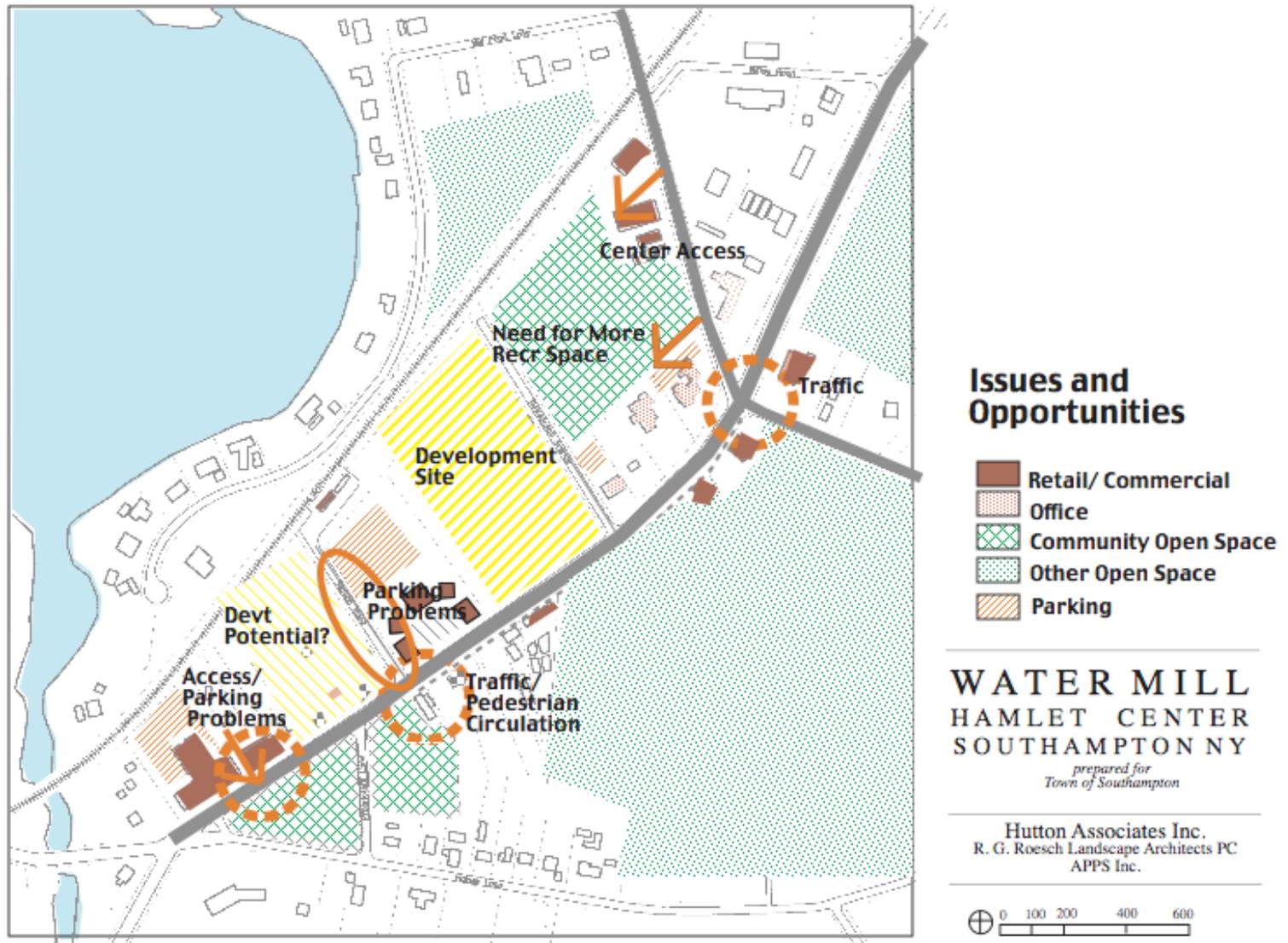
- A *'Water Mill Square,' an older low-scale shopping cluster.* This complex is anchored by the Post Office and features associated services, shops and off-street parking. While technically not part of the primary study area, the reinforcement of this development and alleviation of traffic pressure is an important consideration.
- B *To the east of Water Mill Square, a variety of individual parcels.* These mixed buildings, actually the original hamlet center with buildings dating from the mid 1800s to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, featuring uses ranging from residences to food shops and

antique stores, served often by individual curb cuts and parking. These long narrow parcels often stretch from the highway frontage to the rail line and often contain multiple structures— barns, older houses (some reused for shops and/ or housing), and traditional frontage commercial buildings. These future uses, although as with Water Mill Square not part of the primary study area, are also of concern to the overall integration of the hamlet center. Many are at the moment available for purchase.

- C *The recently- built 'Water Mill Shops', a cluster of retail buildings.* Parking to the rear is accessed by Station Road, a dead-end street that also serves the restaurant in the old railway station to the rear of the Water Mill Shops parking. The restaurant also owns additional developable land to its east, and is considering offers for purchase of its entire holdings. The Shops development, initially less successful than anticipated, has been retented with a Citarella food store flanking the Blockbuster video store. Associated local service shops, located on the side 'wings' of the complex, are hampered by lack of adjacent on-street parking.
- D *Adjacent to Water Mill Shops, a large vacant parcel proposed for development as 'Water Mill Village'.* Originally proposed for a large supermarket and associated retail, uses opposed by the community and the Town, the site has remained undeveloped. Its future use is a major issue in the current study.







- E *To the west of the proposed Water Mill Village, uses fronting onto Nowedonah Avenue.* This dead end road leads perpendicularly from Montauk Highway to the railroad. On its western side are miscellaneous small-scale commercial or residential uses—the ‘Chariots of Fire’ auto body shop on the corner and various single family houses along Nowedonah Avenue. On the eastern side of Nowedonah Avenue is an office development fronting the highway, with parking behind.
- F *The Community Club playfield.* This is a major use served by Nowedonah Avenue, a 7-acre open space tract to the east of the roadway, containing softball fields, tennis courts and other recreation facilities, as well as three small buildings used for indoor storage or activities.
- G *Deerfield Road uses.* The Community Club playfield is flanked on the east by Deerfield Road (from which it has secondary access) and a series of commercial/ light industrial uses fronting that road.
- H *Uses to the south of Montauk Highway.* From Station Road east, a series of uses range from the Community House to Hampton Coffee, the Green Thumb, the garden center fronting the highway, and a miscellaneous retail center at Davids Lane.. These retail/ commercial uses are more automobile-

oriented, and with the exception of the Community House do not relate to uses on the opposite side of Montauk Highway—in large part because of the difficulty on adequately crossing the traffic. The existing agricultural open space is an important part of the hamlet center’s ambiance and character. There are a number of issues associated with the hamlet center as it has developed to date. Many are identified in the comprehensive plan summary (see figure 2), but the following current issues have been identified through the study advisory committee and associated research (see figure 4) and should be incorporated into development strategies:

- It is critical to keep the casual pedestrian character of Water Mill. While autos are important in terms of arrival and departure, once parked at the hamlet center one should be able to walk directly and pleasantly from destination to destination without using the car.
- At the same time, local circulation patterns for the auto need to be carefully examined and revised in order to avoid the sorts of traffic conflicts with both locally bound and through traffic on Montauk Highway that currently decrease hamlet business and affect pedestrian safety.

- A further issue important to both hamlet residents as a whole and to the Community Club institution which serves these residents is how to increase open space and recreation facilities: the popularity of the existing hamlet center facilities has put pressure on scheduling and maintenance and has led to preliminary investigations of space for additional nearby playfields. The need to preserve existing agricultural land is also an important consideration.
- Similarly, how to improve the center's visual environment is an important concern expressed by Community Advisory Committee members and others. Over the last decade, the hamlet center area has almost doubled in size, and in the process has lost a sense of architectural coherence due to a variety of siting approaches and building design. Application of both generic and specific design guidelines can help restore such coherence.
- Another important challenge is how to respond to the Center's existing location and site characteristics: emphasizing interrelated pedestrian-oriented uses on the northern side of Montauk Highway as opposed to similarly residential-scaled but more auto-oriented uses (such as the garden center) or agricultural open space on the south side of the Highway.
- Finally, the type of use and quality of development on the remaining undeveloped tracts in the center are extremely important. New uses need to complement other uses, not compete or overpower them. At the

same time, feasible and sustainable development will make sense both for the community and for the landowner.