

VII. DETAILED HAMLET AREA CONCEPT PLAN PROPOSALS/DESIGN AND STREETSCAPE/RESOURCE PROTECTION STRATEGIES

The Detailed Hamlet Area Concept Plan Proposals contained herein are based upon the following critical factors:

1. an evaluation of the community's resources, both man-made and natural;
2. identification of areas anticipated to experience change either with or without government intervention; and
3. an analysis of important community planning issues in key areas.

In addition, more detailed design and streetscape recommendations are provided.

This section also provides recommendations for resource protection strategies for scenic resources, historic resources and agricultural resources.

This section is divided into several sub-sections as follows:

- Land Use Controls/"Smart Growth"
- Proposed Zoning Map Amendments for Hamlet Office/Hamlet Commercial (HO/HC)
- Eastport Detailed Hamlet Area Concept Plan
- Speonk-Remsenburg Detailed Hamlet Area Concept Plan
- Westhampton Detailed Hamlet Area Concept Plan
- Preliminary Design Guidelines/Streetscape Recommendations
- Agricultural Resource Protection Strategies
- Scenic Resource Protection Strategies
- Historic Resource Protection Strategies

Land Use Controls/"Smart Growth"

The Study Area is currently divided into 17 zoning districts that control the elementary form of the built areas and intensity of land use. The zoning ordinance works in conjunction with the subdivision ordinance, which regulates the division of land from larger parcels to new smaller parcels.

The Town of Southampton also has separate ordinances regulating the way in which land may be used related to wetlands, aquifer protection, flood management and the Pine Barrens. This section identifies suggested zoning map amendments, reflecting the desire of the various hamlet communities to more specifically regulate the type, scale and ultimate design of future development/redevelopment proposals.

The proposed revisions to the Zoning Map as shown on Exhibit VII-1 and the Detailed Hamlet Area Concept Plan Proposals reflect the considerable input from the public during this process and, to a large extent, also mirror the principles behind the "Smart Growth" movement.

Suffolk County's "Smart Growth Policy Plan," adopted October 2000, while respecting the Home Rule zoning and planning powers of the towns and villages, recommends that towns and villages use the Smart Growth process and policy guidelines to direct development to hamlet centers to strengthen existing communities.

Smart Growth policy guidelines include:

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- Create walkable neighborhoods;
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration;
- Foster distinctive, attractive places with a strong sense of place;
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective;
- Mix land uses;
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;
- Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities; and
- Take advantage of compact building design.¹

In almost every instance, the Eastport/Speonk-Remsenburg/Westhampton Area Study recommendations address each of the aforementioned Smart Growth principles.

Hamlet Centers

As stated earlier in the report, the traditional business and shopping areas presently serving the Study Area have been oriented towards the Main Street and Eastport Manorville Road area in the Town of Brookhaven's portion of the hamlet of Eastport, and the Main Street and Sunset Avenue area and Montauk Highway Business District of the Village of Westhampton Beach. In Speonk, a village business center for convenience shopping exists, albeit down-sized from that originally envisioned by the 1970 Master Plan in accordance

¹Taken from "Smart Growth Online," developed and maintained by the Sustainable Communities Network, <http://www.sustainable.org>.

with zoning amendments undertaken as a result of the 1992 Speonk-Remsenburg Hamlet Study and furthered by recommendations in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan.

In historical times, however, there were other "hamlet centers" as well. For example, in the Historic Profiles report it is noted that the Beaverdam area in Westhampton hosted "the area's first stagecoach stop and postal delivery location" and "settlers built their first mill, their first church/meetinghouse, their first cemetery and their first school" in the Beaverdam area.

The mill, along with a church/meetinghouse and later a school, became the center of the local community at Westhampton. A map of the area shows that "all roads lead to the mill. Settlers could come from Tanners Neck via Montauk Highway, Ketchabonack (Westhampton Beach) via Mill Road, Quogue via Montauk Highway and from the settlement of small farmhouses to the west via Old Country Road to grind their wheat and rye."²

All that remains as vestiges of this historic hamlet center, however, is the cemetery and "Cook's Pond." Condominiums are located where the church and school once stood. The mill, which stood over 200 years, was "dismantled in 1936..." and "whatever was left was completely destroyed two years later as the storm surge of the hurricane of 1938 raced up Beaver Dam Creek and flooded the whole area."³

In Westhampton, nonetheless, the Post Office and a 7-11 convenience store function as a limited hamlet center to an extent. It has become a meeting place to a degree, and is located adjacent to the Town-owned Community Center for which expansion plans have been initiated as evidenced by the Town's purchase of adjacent property.

²"Historic Profiles Report", Ron Michne, Jr., January 2004, p. 26.

³*Ibid.*

In Eastport, the Main Street area also functioned as an extension of the Brookhaven hamlet center for Eastport, with a particular focus on the Eastport Bible Church, school, and numerous farmsteads hosting mixed uses including commercial services such as automotive repairs, room accommodations and other services.

In Speonk, there is a hamlet center at the North Phillips Avenue intersection with Montauk Highway. In addition, there is a transitional area adjacent to the Old Mill characterized by office and institutional uses.

There are also portions of Montauk Highway between these “hamlet centers” that are zoned commercially, such as the Highway Business and Motel Business areas in Westhampton in the vicinity of Seabreeze Avenue. For the purpose of the Area Study, these Highway Business-Motel Business-zoned areas are considered part of the Westhampton hamlet core area.

Goals and objectives of the Area Study process include evaluating existing conditions, current zoning and hamlet center issues, and discussing opportunities “to curtail commercial sprawl,” “to pursue traditional neighborhood design in and around hamlet centers,” and “to foster a sense of community.”

Proposed Zoning Map Amendments

Hamlet Office/Residential (HO), Hamlet Commercial/Residential (HC) and Hamlet Residential (HR)

The Town has recently adopted specific zoning text amendments that would allow for mixed-use developments to occur at a more residential scale relative to building size and footprint. Although these zoning districts have not yet been formally mapped throughout the Town, the zoning classifications were intended to selectively replace existing Highway Business (HB), Village Business (VB) and Office District (OD).



More contemporary commercial structures on Montauk Highway do not reflect the historical heritage of the hamlet areas.



Hamlet Office (HO) and Hamlet Commercial (HC) zoning districts permit certain land uses in a manner which emulates residential designs and historic character, allowing for mixed uses of low-impact, and providing for a more aesthetic view for hamlet center areas and transition zones. Examples of mixed-use development occurring on a more residential scale in the Eastport section of the Study Area. The Town’s proposed HO/HC zoning district classifications attempt to replicate this mixed-use development pattern.

In 2003, the Town of Southampton created the Hamlet Office/Residential (HO) and Hamlet Commercial/Residential (HC) zoning districts. These districts are intended to provide for the office and retail needs in the Town (primarily in proximity to the Town’s hamlet and village centers) while keeping the scale and design of these businesses consistent with the surrounding residential context.

The HO/HC districts are proposed for areas where there has been conversion of existing residential structures to mixed use, or where a concentration of such “mixed uses” exists, including some commercial uses that have existed on a more historic basis along portions of Montauk Highway in the Study Area.