

Volunteer Ambulance has communicated a concern during the course of the Area-Wide Planning Study that new developments can impact the volunteer service and decision makers need to be mindful of impacts to special assessment districts, including volunteer fire and ambulance/EMS, with regard to land use decisions.

ACTION ITEMS

- Work with the Eastport Fire Department to locate a Fire Department substation in the Speonk area.
- Consider the location of a fire substation in Westhampton as the need increases.
- Consider the location of a future ambulance substation in the Speonk area, as the need increases.
- Consider impacts to special assessment districts, including volunteer fire and ambulance/EMS, with regard to land use decisions.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Roadway Issues - General

A major issue raised repeatedly by residents and Town officials during the course of the various focus group meetings concerned the excessive use of Speonk-Riverhead Road and Old Country Road by trucks associated with the industrial activities along the northerly section of Speonk-Riverhead Road. A direct interchange with Sunrise Highway as described below would help to alleviate this problem. There also is the potential to extend the Sunrise Highway service road in order to open up development opportunities in the northwest quadrant of the Study Area, along CR 111 and Speonk-Riverhead Road. This extension could divert truck traffic off of Old Country Road, since trucks could

access Speonk-Riverhead Road directly from Sunrise Highway. A new interchange off of Sunrise Highway to the northern portion of the Study Area would allow for more convenient access for commercial and industrial users.

As an alternative, the feasibility of realigning the southern section of the Speonk-Riverhead Road to intersect Old Country Road opposite North Phillips Avenue and creating a cul-de-sac on the south end to separate the residential area from the industrial area was explored. Based upon a review of this concept, it has been determined that the resulting impact on the vacant parcel on the northwest corner of Old Country Road and Speonk Riverhead Road would be significant in terms of the future development potential of the site. The financial implications and the possible environmental impacts associated with a roadway realignment of this magnitude are such that it would be difficult to justify from a cost/benefit standpoint. It is recommended that the Town's efforts and resources would be better directed in pursuing the Sunrise Highway interchange. However, during the hearing process, it was encouraged that the Town further explore the opportunity for such realignment of Speonk-Riverhead Road with North Phillips Avenue extension and a potential cul-de-sac configuration for the residential portion of Speonk-Riverhead Road. This recommendation is currently listed in the Transportation Chapter of the 1999 Comprehensive Plan Update for further exploration. A concern about the need for future signalization at the intersection of North Phillips Avenue and Old Country Road could be addressed with a roundabout, serving to facilitate turning movements and to provide traffic-calming on Old Country Road.

In the event the interchange of Sunrise Highway and Speonk-Riverhead Road is opened, traffic-calming for Speonk-Riverhead Road is recommended (e.g., neck-downs, intermittent center median), particularly along the residentially-zoned portion of Speonk-Riverhead Road.

The other recurring concern centered around the need to reduce vehicular travel speeds on the local roads to promote a safer environment overall and particularly for pedestrian and bicyclists. Based on the input received and our review of the existing roadway network, a series of recommendations has been outlined below.

In addition, traffic-calming measures are necessary for locations near schools where high levels of school children and pedestrian traffic exist. Traffic calming measures, including sidewalks, neckdowns and enhanced crosswalks should also be considered along Montauk Highway and Phillips Avenue.

There is the potential for improved intermodal use of the Speonk railroad station, including the use of the parking area as a trailhead.

ACTION ITEMS

- Pursue construction of a direct interchange between Sunrise Highway and Speonk-Riverhead Road by the New York State DOT.
- Pursue an extension of the South Service Road from Country Road 111 to Speonk-Riverhead Road by the New York State DOT.
- During the course of SEQRA reviews for projects within the Study Area, identify mitigation in the form of traffic improvements.

Sunrise Highway (NY 27)/Speonk Riverhead Road

It is recommended that the Town actively pursue previous requests to the New York State Department of Transportation for construction of a direct interchange between Sunrise Highway and Speonk-Riverhead Road, as well as an

extension of the South Service Road from County Road 111 to Speonk-Riverhead Road.



View southwest from the Speonk-Riverhead Road overpass of Sunrise Highway. A new interchange or extension of the service road along Sunrise Highway would divert traffic from Old Country Road and enhance development opportunities in the northwest quadrant of the Study Area for potential tax ratables.

The recommended interchange would significantly benefit the hamlet areas by providing direct access to and from Sunrise Highway for the existing commercial/industrial property along Speonk-Riverhead Road and to any future development projects north of Old Country Road. This could result in a reduction in the current traffic volumes on Old Country Road, particularly in the number of trucks using the road, and would also minimize the impact of future development projects on the local road network. Based on present and anticipated future traffic volumes, a simple diamond interchange should function effectively and would be relatively inexpensive to construct.

In addition, the proposed South Service Road extension would provide an opportunity for the Town to develop access to the north, from the undeveloped land between Sunrise Highway and Old Country Road, thereby further minimizing the potential impact of future development on the existing roadway network.

These major roadway improvements can be implemented as one overall project or undertaken as two independent projects, as land in the area develops and the demand arises. As an alternative funding source, the Town should investigate the feasibility of obtaining contributions from property owners and developers based on the need for traffic mitigation measures associated with their projects. This type of funding mechanism has been utilized effectively in other areas, particularly when rezoning is being requested.

See Exhibit VI-10, “Transportation Recommendations”.

Roadway Recommendations – Specific

Montauk Highway - County Road 80

- Establish a more consistent speed limit on Montauk Highway. In certain stretches, speed limits of 40 mph or 45 mph may be appropriate, and in business areas 35 mph may be appropriate. The current speed limit, posted at 55 mph, is considered inappropriate for much of the Montauk Highway due to its current build-out involving mixed-uses and residential character development, numerous connector roads, curb cuts, and roadway curves (e.g., from Brookhaven Town Line in Eastport to Mill Road, Speonk, recommended for 35 mph; from Mill Road, Speonk to Mill Road, Westhampton, recommended for 40 mph; and from Mill Road, Westhampton to Westhampton Beach Village Line, recommended 40 mph).
- Eliminate passing zones.
- In the Eastport commercial district, construct sidewalk “bump-outs” and a speed table/raised crosswalk to slow traffic and create a more pedestrian friendly environment.



The sidewalk along the south side of Montauk Highway should be extended from Pleasant Valley to South Bay Avenue in Eastport. Traffic calming and enhanced pedestrian circulation should be promoted in the vicinity of the local schools and hamlet centers.

- In the vicinity of the school near River Avenue and the church near Pleasant Valley, enhance the existing crosswalks by installing contrasting textured surfaces to better define the crossing points. The new crosswalks should be complemented with enhanced signage.
- Between Pleasant Valley and South Bay Avenue, install sidewalk and curb on south side of street.
- At the South Country Road (Main Street) intersection adjacent to Dock Road, construct a roundabout, that



The intersection of South Country Road, Dock Road and Montauk Highway forms a gateway to the Speonk-Remsenburg hamlet. An opportunity exists to create a traffic roundabout at this location as a traffic calming device, and avoid future traffic signalization at this scenic community crossroads.

would function as a traffic calming device as well as a focal point for the westerly entrance into Speonk.

- At North and South Phillips Avenue, install contrasting textured crosswalks on all approaches and upgrade pedestrian crossing features on traffic signal. Also, investigate the feasibility of constructing “bump-outs” on the corners.



The small commercial area at the traffic light intersection area of Montauk Highway and North/South Phillips Avenue in Speonk could be enhanced with coordinated parking, more clearly defined curb cuts and enhanced pedestrian crosswalks, as well as indicate signage to identify the train station area and bus transit.

- At the eastern boundary of the Speonk hamlet center, in the vicinity of Old Montauk Highway, construct a “neckdown” or some similar type of traffic calming measure.
- At the Mill Road/Old Country Road intersection, replace the existing crosswalk on the east side of the intersection with a contrasting textured crosswalk.
- Sign and designate bicycle lanes.

Old Country Road

- Reduce the posted speed limit from 45 mph to 30 mph from the intersection of Montauk Highway near Cook’s

Pond to the LIRR crossing, and to 35 mph from the LIRR crossing to the westerly Town line.

- Eliminate existing passing zones.
- Restripe and narrow travel lanes to 10 feet wide.
- Sign and designate bicycle lanes.
- Pursue designation as scenic route, as part of an overlay district, that would include buffer and access management regulations. Design criteria to be considered as part of an overlay district would likely include: buffer separation from the road right-of-way; consolidation of curb cuts; limited entry signage; landscape screening incorporated into design plans; and design criteria for fences and walls.



The rural quality of Old Country Road should be maintained through the use of sensitive design controls, and by limiting the number of curb cuts.

Speonk-Riverhead Road

- Reduce the posted speed limit from 55 mph to 35 mph through the residentially-zoned portion of Speonk-Riverhead Road, and to 45 mph through the industrially-zoned portion.

- Install traffic calming devices, such as curb bump-outs and neckdowns along residential portion of road.
- Construct roundabout at intersection with Old Country Road
- Sign and designate bicycle lanes.

North Phillips Avenue

- Install continuous sidewalks between Montauk Highway and Speonk LIRR station.
- Consider potential extension of sidewalks further north relative to other possible development proposals, such as Feather Factory proposal.
- Construct roundabout at intersection with Old Country Road
- Sign and designate bicycle lanes.



An existing residential neighborhood along South Phillips Avenue is connected by an extensive sidewalk system leading to the hamlet commercial area along Montauk Highway in Speonk. The same does not hold true for North Phillips Avenue, which is further separated by truck route status and industrial land uses mixed with residential.

Old Riverhead Road (Westhampton Riverhead Road)

- Install traffic calming devices on southern portion to slow traffic in built-up area
- Sign and designate bicycle lanes

South Country Road

- Eliminate passing zones.
- Reduce travel lanes to 10 feet.
- Prohibit commercial vehicles, except local delivery.
- Sign and designate bicycle lanes where existing pavement width allows. On the remaining portions sign as bicycle route and install “SHARE THE ROAD” signs.

Mill Road

- Ensure sidewalk connections on the north side from the intersection of Mill Road with Montauk Highway and Oneck Lane, Village of Westhampton Beach.
- Reduce speed limit to 30 mph.
- Reduce travel lanes to 10 feet.
- Enhance crosswalks at Oneck Lane in vicinity of schools with contrasting, textured material.

Public Transportation

Long Island Rail Road

A significant issue at the Speonk train station is the impact of lighting from the rail maintenance yard on nearby neighborhoods. This train station and rail maintenance yard is located within a primarily residential area and close to the Speonk-Remsenburg hamlet center. As such, the negative

impact of excessive lighting on the surrounding area should be addressed. In addition, the noise impacts from rail maintenance activities, idling trains, and train whistles has negative impacts to the surrounding area, and this Area Study advocates that the LIRR be more sensitive to the community concerns regarding off-site impacts of its operations.

The Westhampton train station is in need of improvements, such as paving existing parking lots and traffic and pedestrian circulation enhancements. The LIRR has not completed the work necessary to upgrade the parking facility, suggesting instead that it is a municipal responsibility. The Town has indicated that the property is owned by the LIRR and ought to be paved at the expense of the LIRR, not at Town taxpayer expense. There is the possibility that the Westhampton station could be relocated to Gabreski Airport in the future, as part of an Airport Transportation Hub initiative. If this scenario occurs, there is the potential for the on-site building to be leased through the LIRR and reused for professional office space, and/or a lease of parking facilities to accommodate a potential expansion of the tennis facility, or a contractor's park extension of Westhampton Beach Village's "non-nuisance" industrial zone.

Both the Speonk and Westhampton station parking lots could be used as trailheads to link the pedestrian trails to public transportation.

The potential exists for the enhancement of the Speonk LIRR station as a multimodal transportation hub, at least during the busy summer tourist season. The recent improvements to the Speonk station, combined with the fact that it is the east terminus of many LIRR train runs, provide the basic framework for promotion of this station as a multi-modal center. The feasibility of establishing local shuttle bus service, perhaps in cooperation with an existing transportation provider such as a local taxi or school bus company, to transport residents and visitors from the LIRR to

the various hamlets and tourist centers should be explored.

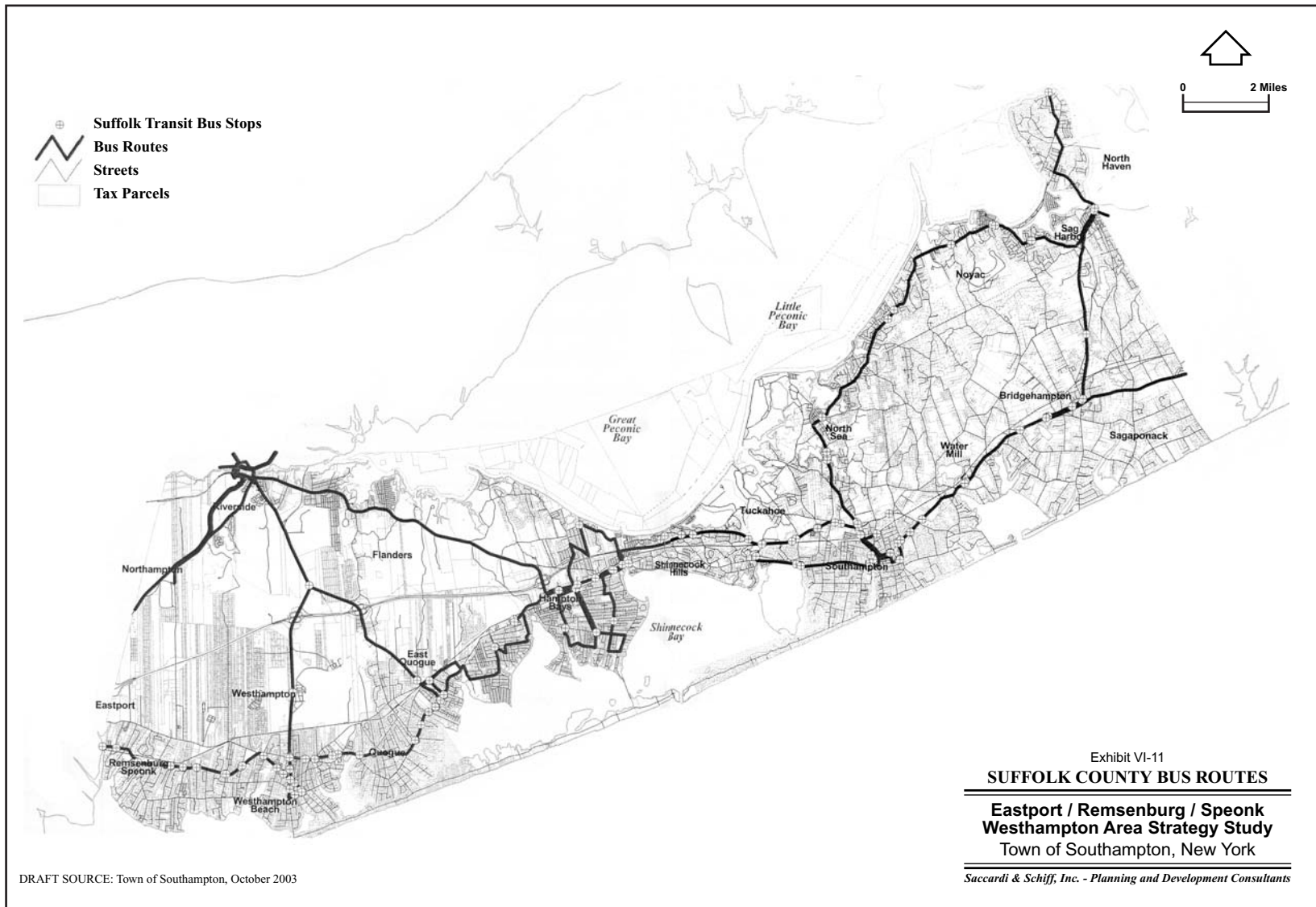
Amenities at the railroad station, such as bus shelters, motorcycle lockers and bicycle lockers, would help to promote and encourage residents and visitors to access the station by other modes of travel. The Westhampton railroad station, while not as heavily utilized, should be improved and enhanced in a similar fashion.

Unguarded railroad crossings at the railroad track's intersections with Pleasant Valley Road and South Bay Avenue pose a significant safety issue for pedestrians in Eastport and should be resolved with the LIRR.

Bus Transit

The need for improved public transportation in the study area was raised at several of the focus group meetings. (Exhibit VI-11 illustrates the existing bus routes for Suffolk County). Long distance service needs are adequately met by the LIRR and private bus companies, which provide daily service to New York City. Suffolk County Transit provides local bus service to the study area on the S 90 route which runs seasonally between Moriches and Riverhead. Connections to other County bus routes are available at transfer points, providing access to the east on both the north and south forks, as well as to destinations further west.

In terms of new transportation services, it must be recognized that the cost of operating a local bus system is often difficult to justify in relation to the number of users. In order to attract people to utilize buses, the service must be comfortable and convenient, service must be frequent and fares must be reasonable. Based on the input received from the various focus groups, the following are key target populations, that should be considered for additional transit service:



Senior Citizens

According to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, Southampton's senior population, as a portion of its total, is nearly twice that of Suffolk County overall. Additionally, the Town has approved a large senior citizen housing complex on the former raceway site. Several other proposals for senior housing and/or assisted living facilities have also been under discussion. A localized dial-a-ride service to transport seniors to hamlet centers, recreational facilities, social meeting places, doctors offices, etc. should be explored. Private developers should coordinate their shuttle service routing and timing.

Beachgoers

A properly planned shuttle service to local beaches has the potential to ease demand for the limited parking supply and reduce vehicular traffic on local roads used to access the beaches.

Students

A local feeder service between the Speonk train station and Suffolk Community College could provide an alternative means of access for local students, as well as for students from beyond the immediate area. This service could also be designed to accommodate high school students attending after school sports activities and other after school programs.

In-depth feasibility studies, including surveys of potential users, must be conducted for each type of service under consideration. These studies can provide the Town with information as to whether there is sufficient interest to justify implementation of bus service from a benefit/cost perspective. Any service that is being considered should be instituted on a trial basis and should be flexible to change based on feedback from the targeted passenger base.

ACTION ITEMS

- Consider the enhancement of the Speonk LIRR station for use as a multimodal transportation hub.
- Ensure LIRR meets obligations to maintain/repair Westhampton train station site or relocate to Gabreski Transportation Hub, leasing this facility through its Real Estate Division.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing local shuttle bus service to transport residents and visitors from the LIRR to the hamlet and tourist centers.
- Provide amenities, e.g., bus shelters, motorcycle lockers and bicycle lockers at the railroad stations.
- Related to the Speonk train station's use as an intermodal center, consider providing additional shuttle transit service for seniors, beachgoers and students.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Routes

It is clear from the input at all of the focus group meetings, as well as from the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, that bicycling and walking should be given more consideration as alternative means of travel, particularly during the warm weather months. Toward this end, the Town should begin to develop a system of bicycle/pedestrian routes that will provide residents and others with a safe and practical alternative to the use of automobiles, particularly for local trips. There are several public access points along the waterfront, south of Montauk Highway, and several of the local streets leading to these locations might be conducive to bicycle/pedestrian access; refer to previous discussion of recreation resources in this section. The 1999 Comprehensive Plan contains several specific recommendations for bicycle routes and walking paths that can serve as a general guide. A recent map prepared by a Bicycle Advisory Committee includes recommendations

for bicycle lanes on several roads within the hamlet study area. Bicycle lanes that are designated sections of a roadway dedicated for preferential use by bicyclists, are recommended along the following roadways:

- Old Country Road
- Montauk Highway
- Speonk-Riverhead Road
- North Phillips Avenue
- Old Riverhead Road (Westhampton-Riverhead Road)
- South Road/South Country Road

There are other roads within the area that are not wide enough to establish bicycle lanes, but lead to public access points along the shoreline or other places of interest. They are basically preferred routes for bicyclists to follow to specific local destination points. These roads can be designated as bicycle routes and signed accordingly. In some instances it would be advisable to review the existing pavement markings and consider re-striping to eliminate passing zones and create narrower travel lanes. On sections of road where there is insufficient pavement to establish separate shoulders, they can be signed with “SHARE THE ROAD” signs to create a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. The following are examples of such roads:

- South Bay Avenue
- South Phillips Avenue
- Tanners Neck Lane/Apaucuck Point Road/Seabreeze Avenue

In addition to the above, it is recommended that the Town continue to explore the creation of an off-road bicycle path in conjunction with a proposed trail linking the Hampton West Estates residential community to Old Country Road.

These local routes can be tied in with existing and proposed routes to provide an overall network that expands beyond

these immediate hamlets to the remainder of the Town and other parts of Suffolk County.

All bicycle routes should be mapped and locally advertised for bicycle commuting and touring or as preferred routing through the community. A systematic program for roadway improvements to enhance conditions for bicyclists, such as shoulder repairs to provide a suitable riding surface and replacement of existing drainage grates with more modern bicycle friendly grates, should be developed. Amenities, such as bicycle racks/bicycle lockers, should be installed at key locations, including railroad stations, hamlet centers, schools, parks and beaches, and trail heads.

ACTION ITEMS

- Develop a safe and practical bicycle/pedestrian route system.
- Designate and sign preferred bicycle routes.
- Explore the creation of an off-road bicycle path linking Hampton West Estates and Old Country Road.
- Map and advertise bicycle routes.
- Develop a systematic program for roadway improvements for bicyclists.
- Install amenities, such as bicycle racks and lockers at key locations.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY USE

Enactment of the Central Pine Barrens Act in 1995 has focused development in areas with existing infrastructure and substantial land acquisitions by the State, County, Town, and private conservation organizations has substantially reduced the impacts of what would have occurred had development been permitted to sprawl into the Pine Barrens region without development limitations. Approximately 3,300 acres of the