

# GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL 2005 PLAN

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## 2005 -- HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To conserve, protect, and enhance our important natural resources, such as wetlands, ravines and steep slopes, woodlands, riverfront, and wildlife habitats.

- Encourage site design that protects existing terrain, preserves significant vegetation, and incorporates native trees and shrubbery.
- Preserve and enhance the view of the waterfront from the Village and the river.
- Pursue opportunities for Village residents and visitors to observe and preserve river wildlife, such as eagles, waterfowl, fish, etc., in their coastal habitat.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cease all dumping of trash and filling of ravines.
2. Create a review and permit process that will allow selective filling.
3. Begin a program to clear trash and debris from ravines, gullies, and wooded hillside properties.
4. Encourage property owners to thin brush from vacant lands bordering Village streets.
5. Begin a program of replanting these areas with indigenous ornamentals, ground covers, and shrubs that will provide cover in addition to fruits and seeds for birds.
6. Trim and prune all major trees and remove and/or chip all fallen and dead trees and debris.
7. Create a park-like setting when viewed from the street. Encourage landowners and local civic groups to adopt and groom these areas.
8. Create a trail system through the ravines that will connect the lower Village with the upper Village.

9. Create resting and bird-watching areas by installing benches. Adopt a new tree preservation program regulating the removal of major trees on private and public property. Establish a system to regulate the removal, with the intent being the preservation of a valuable natural resource.
10. Design a landscape plan and plant new trees, flowers, and shrubbery along the North Main Street-Route 9J right-of-way.
11. Require that trees be planted in conjunction with any development of vacant or partially occupied lands.
12. Develop standards for the protection, trimming, and pruning of trees during construction and/or power line maintenance activities to prevent unprofessional or careless over-trimming.
13. Protect existing trees and plant new ones when old and decayed trees are removed along Village streets.
14. Work with civic groups to establish an annual Arbor Day event.
15. Establish a walking link to the Schodack Island State Park. Create bird-watching areas along the route.
16. Design and construct details that control and filter storm water before discharge to the Hudson River. Construct silt entrapment details in ravines and gullies and along other areas of erosion or areas subject to erosion.
17. Continue to pursue revitalization of the Village's riverfront. Continue to pursue waterfront access for all residents.
18. Remove deteriorated buildings from Main Street to create landscaped parking areas and open views to the Hudson River.
19. Remove trash and debris from behind Main Street buildings and the railroad. Repair and paint the river-facing sides of these buildings to improve the river view of Castleton. Encourage the railroad authorities to remove trash trees, brush, and other debris from the right-of-way.
20. Enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to view the Hudson River.
21. As part of the site review function of the Planning Board, establish an environmental review process to assess and analyze the various proposed projects and activities that might impact the Village's natural and scenic resources.
22. Identify sensitive areas within the Village and develop a written program and/or written materials for the use of residents and developers. This material will outline the various natural resources in the Village and establish their sensitivities and location.



## 2005 -- HISTORIC & CULTURE RESOURCES

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To promote the historic and cultural heritage of the Village by preserving and adoptively reusing significant historical structures, preserving historical documents, artifacts and records, and making those items available for public view.

- Promote the preservation, adaptive reuse, maintenance, and enhancement of historic properties and the Historic District.
- Develop and promote community programs to teach historic preservation and build awareness of the Village's cultural and historic resources.
- Utilize fully the services of the New York State Historic Preservation Office to evaluate and mitigate proposed impacts on historic properties.
- Adopt design standards to ensure that new construction and rehabilitation of major exterior alterations of historic properties will be compatible with the nineteenth century character of the Village.
- Develop and promote interpretive programs to demonstrate the Village's culture and history.
- Complete an inventory of the Village's historic structures and sites.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and adopt, as a local law, a set of design standards for constructing new buildings in Castleton's Historic District.
2. Develop and adopt a set of guidelines and rules for the restoration and rehabilitation of facades in Castleton's Historic District.
3. Develop and adopt a set of non-binding guidelines setting preservation and design standards for the repair and rehabilitation of historic homes within the Village.
4. Work with the New York State Education Department and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to evaluate and inventory the Village's historic buildings.
5. Continue to improve the maintenance and safety of older rental and other buildings through consistent building code enforcement.
6. Promote the current Castleton Historic District and develop guidelines consistent with meeting eligibility to secure grants and funding.
7. Develop and adopt standards for signage located in the Castleton Historic

District.

8. Research and inventory the Village's historic photographs. Work in conjunction with the Schodack/Castleton Public Library to create a central repository for historic photographs. Create a collection of physical artifacts from the Village's past and centralize this collection.
9. Create an awareness of history by erecting interpretive panels at various key areas of the Village. Develop a walking history trail in conjunction with the interpretation.

## **2005 -- PARKS & RECREATION**

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

To provide and maintain, through the use of parks, trails, greenways, and facilities, a variety of recreational opportunities and public access to riverfront, ravines, woodlands and streams.

- Develop a community center with a positive and meaningful youth program.
- Develop programs that contribute to community identity and common ideals.
- Maintain, upgrade, and enhance existing recreational facilities and parkland.
- Encourage a balance of private and public investments/efforts in the development of opportunities for riverfront recreational use.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Develop a plan to accommodate the facility needs of recreational, civic, or social activities such as (but not limited to) the Boys and Girls Club, Castleton Kids, CYO Basketball, etc.
2. Develop a design plan for the recreational use of the Brickyard. This plan may include parking areas, landscaping, restrooms, permanent ice skating facilities, cross-country ski trails, trail systems linking the Village to the area, stream conservation and streamside trails, warming hut, court games, natural history education kiosk, picnic and camp pavilion.
3. Continue to work with State agencies to provide access to, and fund the construction of, a mini park on the former Marine Sales property at the base of Scott Avenue.
4. In conjunction with the above mini park, design and construct a landscaped parking area, playground, and sitting area on the northwest corner of Scott Avenue and North Main Street.
5. Design landscaping for the tract of land between Route 9J and the railway fence on North Main Street.
6. Perform a study and develop a design plan for the use of parkland surrounding the firehouse. Study new routes of circulation and install new roadways. Provide additional landscaped areas and plant more trees and ornamental shrubbery for bird cover. Provide a walkway linking Main Street to the parkland. Develop a multi-age play area and various court game areas. Install picnic tables and benches for sitting.
7. In all park areas, develop and install interpretive and educational signage

to highlight unique natural features, historical settings, etc.

8. Explore opportunities to develop marine-related uses of the waterfront and develop public/private partnerships to operate these facilities.
9. Work with the Hudson River Valley Greenway, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic Preservation, Town of Schodack, and Rensselaer County to develop linking trail systems. Link these trail systems with the proposed Village trail systems.

## **2005 -- ECONOMY**

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

To promote and revitalize the downtown business and waterfront area by encouraging the growth of small businesses that will enhance the quality of life of Village residents and attract visitors.

- Encourage river-oriented commercial and recreational activities consistent with sound environmental practices.
- Functional use of land.
- Encourage the development of small businesses that are compatible with the needs of Village residents and visitors.
- Promote the development of a downtown property owners association.
- Appoint a business development council to attract new business to the central Main Street business district that is compatible with the precepts of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Promote and create incentives for adaptive reuse of unused and underutilized property to attract compatible businesses.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Develop and market the Village's positive aspects and future potential.
2. Encourage business development by being proactive and developing fair, consistent, and understandable local laws, codes, regulations, and design guidelines.
3. Market Main Street as the business district, including businesses such as mini-grocery stores, restaurants, antique shops, craft shops, small repair shops, florist shops, specialty food retailers, and mini-mart gas stations.
4. Maintain the historic ambiance of Main Street by providing fair and reasonable, but quality, design standards.
5. Create a safe crime-free environment.
6. Create a Business Development Council to procure important parcels of property for further planned development and work with businesses and developers.
7. Encourage development and rehabilitation of Main Street apartments to attract a more diverse population.
8. Plan and develop affordable housing adjacent to the Main Street business district to provide a constant customer base for business.

9. Create more off-street parking and limited time parking on Main Street and adjacent areas to provide for resident and customer parking.
10. Establish commercial corners (zones) at the north end of Main Street for future business development.
11. Working with the New York State Department of Transportation, provide for traffic control devices and details to slow down traffic in the Main Street business district.
12. Plan for construction of a Village square on Main Street to form a focal point for the Village and to set a theme for revitalization.
13. Create additional satellite parking areas and link these areas to Main Street by means of walkways, pathways, and stairs.
14. Begin a dialogue with existing incompatible businesses to purchase and secure important commercial corners for redevelopment. Work with these businesses to find and relocate to compatible areas within the Village.

## 2005 -- HOUSING

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To provide a broad range of housing options for all economic groups, ages, and families.

- Ensure that the conversion of single-family homes to multifamily apartments is compatible with the character of the neighborhood.
- Actively market the Village housing stock.
- Encourage the restoration and protection of existing structures to maintain the historic character of the Village.
- Explore alternative options for low-income housing that provide a quality and safe environment for families.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enforce existing building codes, rules, regulations, and local laws to the fullest extent in a fair and consistent manner.
2. Train knowledgeable officials, and maintain and communicate data expeditiously to prospective businesses and developers.
3. Work with all interested parties to develop quality housing that is safe, attractive, and consistent with the Village's architectural heritage.
4. Initiate a Village policy to help market Main Street property as it becomes available.
5. Appoint a public housing authority to seek grants and develop public housing and/or senior housing. Continue to enforce provisions of the zoning ordinance which limit the conversion of single family homes to multiple family dwellings.

## **2005 -- PUBLIC & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**To provide adequate municipal services and facilities to meet the needs of all Village residents in an efficient and cost-effective manner.**

- Facilitate the provision of social and community services by private and not-for-profit organizations.
- Encourage the collaboration in planning for use of community facilities, including accommodate increasing demand without compromising Village access to services.
- Preserve the elementary school as an integral part of the Village community.
- Provide new facilities or adoptively rehabilitate existing facilities so that services are contained in the community to strengthen community identity.
- Encourage volunteerism for the Fire Department, Rescue Squad, and other community organizations.
- Continue to develop new and enhance existing services for children and the elderly.
- Bring local storm-water management requirements up to standards.
- Provide unbiased and consistent enforcement of Village zoning ordinances.
- Continue to improve the appearance of municipal buildings and grounds.
- Pursue efforts to bury public and private utility lines throughout the Village to enhance safety and appearance.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **UNDER CASTLETON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

1. Form a special commission to study and recommend the adaptive reuse of this facility and the surrounding grounds. Include county, town, and village representation on the commission.
2. Study the potential for developing a not-for-profit entity to own and

maintain the facility under guidelines established by the special commission.

3. Enhance and develop the open space facing Campbell Avenue to provide mini-soccer fields, court game areas and other play areas.
4. Consider developing angled parking spaces on the west side of Campbell Avenue and the east side of Ransom Avenue by making each street one-way.
5. Plan the adaptive use of the building to contain spaces for relevant services such as: Castleton Kids, Castleton Boys and Girls Club, library services, early childhood services such as preschool or prekindergarten, Village administrative offices, Town of Schodack administrative offices, satellite Rensselaer County offices, Police station, community center, satellite health center, and professional office space for doctors, dentists, and attorneys, etc.

#### **UNDER ENHANCING PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES**

1. Coordinate and plan for the expansion of existing child care programs to support the needs of Village families.
2. In order to enhance program capacity and educational opportunities, establish appropriate space for the above programs.

#### **UNDER ENHANCED PUBLIC SAFETY**

1. Reestablish an active "Neighborhood Watch" program by soliciting resident support.
2. Ensure the Village Board of Trustees maintain close and constant communication with the Town of Schodack Police Force in order to provide the level of protection needed in our Village.

#### **UNDER ENHANCED VILLAGE APPEARANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Develop a consistent program of infrastructure repair and rehabilitation as part of the daily function of the Public Works Department. As a budget line item, establish a repair and rehabilitation account for visible and non-visible infrastructure.
2. Staff the Public Works Department accordingly to properly provide staff to perform repair and rehabilitation projects in a consistent and planned manner.
3. Demolish existing uninhabitable Village buildings when it has been determined by the Historic Review Board that salvage is not possible.

4. Establish signage standards. Keep existing signage in good repair and replace deteriorated signage.
5. Plan and construct a new Public Works Building/Center and plan for the adaptive reuse of the Public Works Building on Van Buren Avenue. Plan an adaptive reuse of the old Public Works Building on First Street.
6. Obtain professional design services to prepare a comprehensive storm water survey and subsequent written report. Establish design criteria and proceed to design and construct a new storm water system. Treat storm water by channeling this water through artificial tidal wetlands prior to discharge into the Hudson River.

#### **UNDER VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

1. Continue the strong support of our Fire Department and the Rescue Squad.
2. Establish Village awards and recognition days for volunteer effort.

## **2005 -- WATER SUPPLY & SEWER**

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**To recognize that the Village's water and sewer systems are assets that should be utilized to the maximum to enhance the quality of life and natural resources of the area.**

#### **Water Capacity**

- Explore the potential of working with the Town of Schodack to develop new sources of water supply and distribution.
- Upgrade the existing water distribution system to improve pressure and flow, and reduce turbidity.
- Work with the Town of Schodack to develop wellhead and aquifer protection programs. Explore the feasibility of treating water to improve quality.

#### **Sewer Capacity**

- Assure adequate sewage disposal to meet existing and future needs within the Village and appropriate areas.
- Explore the potential for improving the system plant capacity to reduce the per unit cost of sewer service.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**With regard to the Water Supply System, this Plan recommends the following actions:**

1. As part of the Village budget, create a yearly capital line item for waterline replacement and/or expansion. Develop a staged replacement plan for existing waterlines and valves, including estimates of cost for replacement.
2. Establish a plan to replace existing old waterlines prior to resurfacing Village streets.
3. Open a dialogue with the Town of Schodack to develop and expand the existing water system. Create a deeper customer base and cost share accordingly to reduce the burden now imposed on Village residents and some Town residents. The Village should retain ownership of the water and sewer systems because this is a valuable asset.
4. Explore the establishment of new water districts and anticipate future growth within those districts.

5. Explore new water sources and treatment options;

**With regard to the existing Sewage/Wastewater Treatment System, this plan recommends the following actions:**

1. Investigate the capacity for expansion of the waste treatment plant and an extension of the system into new sewer districts.
2. Investigate new technologies for upgrading the existing plant so that the Hudson River receives a more cleansed effluent (possible tertiary treatment).
3. Establish a budget line item for yearly repairs and upgrades to the wastewater treatment system.

## **2005 -- TRANSPORTATION**

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**To provide and promote a variety of modes of safe and reliable transportation for all residents of the community.**

- Provide and maintain curbing and sidewalks on primary streets.
- Regularly maintain Village road surfaces.
- Encourage enforcement of local speed limits.
- Pursue efforts with the New York State Department of Transportation to restrict speed near the Castleton Elementary School.
- Continue efforts with the New York State Department of Transportation to create safe railroad crossings for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Pursue efforts with the Capital District Transportation Authority and other appropriate agencies to improve public transportation to meet the needs of Village residents.
- Conduct a comprehensive study of Village parking needs for the purpose of assuring adequate parking for residents.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Make Castleton a walking village by instituting a consistent and budgeted program to repair and/or install new sidewalks complete with ADA curb cuts.
2. Isolate the walking residents from traffic by the installation of appropriate curb heights.
3. Link sidewalks with proposed trail systems. Install sidewalk resting and viewing areas complete with purchased landscape furnishings.
4. Develop a prioritized plan to replace sidewalks. Concentrate on key areas of circulation.
5. Install stop signs and crosswalk delineation at key areas.
6. Begin a program to create consistent intersection alignment and turning radii on Village streets.
7. Establish sight distance by the elimination of shrubbery and other barriers. Delineate stop lines.
8. Work with State and county transportation authorities to establish a more

comprehensive public transportation plan for the Village and surrounding area.

9. Increase the diversity of transportation by creating a shuttle bus service, a shopping day bus service, and a medical transportation service.
10. Establish a program with the Castleton Boat Club to provide for more dockage for transient boaters.
11. Develop a consistent budgeted capital program to maintain and repair Village streets.
12. Pursue grants to finance street and infrastructure repair and replacement.
13. Conduct a study to recommend various improvements to traffic control and safety.
14. Work with the New York State Department of Transportation to construct safe pedestrian and vehicular crossings at Green Avenue and Scott Avenue.
15. Construct a full highway bridge across the railroad tracks at Hamilton Printing and the Village's sewer plant.
16. Encourage law enforcement cooperation from county, State, and town police forces to regularly and consistently enforce speed limits on Main Street and throughout the Village.
17. Work with the New York State Department of Transportation to designate Scott Avenue as a "school zone" with a blinking caution light to slow traffic to safe levels.
18. Consider the construction of a signaled and landscaped traffic circle that will accomplish traffic "calming" and create a Village square.
19. Create a Village-wide parking plan to create new parking spaces and improve existing parking spaces.
20. Develop special parking space details and designs that support the special roadside conditions such as those found on Green Avenue.
21. Establish a volunteer committee to aid in the transportation of the elderly and those in need.

## **2005 -- REGIONAL PLANNING**

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**To develop a close coordinated working plan with the town and the county to assure that area growth is beneficial to the entire region.**

- Capitalize on the existing water and sewer systems to provide a source of revenue for the Village. Energize the growth of the town and provide opportunities for homeowners outside the Village to avoid costly well water systems and expensive on-site sewer systems.
- Consider annexation as an opportunity to provide commercial and residential growth to enlarge the tax base for both the Village and the town.
- Develop lines of communication with towns in Albany County as well as the Town of Schodack to assure development will have a positive impact on both sides of the Hudson River.
- Work closely with representatives from the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation to assure that the operation of Schodack Island State Park will enhance the quality of life in the Village.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Appoint a Planning Liaison to work with the State, county, and town planning entities.
2. Formally explore and report on possibilities for shared services with surrounding communities.
3. Interact with surrounding communities to explore and develop various joint grants for funding cooperative and linking projects.
4. Work jointly with the town to establish permanent waterfront access and boat, canoe, and kayak launching sites. View the waterfront as the town and the Village's waterfront.
5. Prepare joint grants to develop the waterfront.
6. Work jointly with the town to prepare a new Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan WRP.
7. Work jointly with the town to create additional public transportation routes and senior citizen transportation.

8. Work jointly with the town to explore the reuse of the existing Castleton Elementary School, should it become available.
9. Work jointly with the county and the town to establish and link bike and hiking trail systems.