

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 5, 2001

**TO:** Comprehensive Plan Committee

**FROM:** Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.

**RE:** Goals and Objectives: Second Draft

The drafting of goals and objectives is the next step in the Comprehensive Plan process. Based upon the information obtained in the documentation of existing conditions and in discussions with the Committee, the goals and objectives are concepts to be used as guidance when constructing the Comprehensive Plan. These concepts are borne out through the use of implementation tools such as zoning modifications and land use techniques, and the enforcement of the tenets of the Comprehensive Plan itself, which, subsequent to its adoption, will become a policy document for the Town. It is the goals and objectives that form the vision for the Comprehensive Plan, and thus, for the future of Orangetown.

The initial drafts of the goals and objectives will be refined as we move through the next steps in the planning process, with final language included in the Comprehensive Plan document itself.

### 1. **Recreation and Open Space**

To provide additional open space and recreation facilities to serve existing and anticipated population needs and balance development and preservation goals, the Town will:

- 1) Strengthen the two north-south open space corridors that already exist in Orangetown--the Lake Tappan riverway and the Clausland Mountain corridor--through acquisition of lands for open space and through zoning and land planning techniques (including clustering) that limit development on steep slopes and wetlands, and along ridge lines and waterbodies.

- 2) Make certain that proposed development that is proximate to Lake Tappan and Clausland Mountain is carefully examined prior to approvals, with mitigation measures provided to protect water resources and steep terrain.
- 3) Acquire sites for additional active recreation, such as soccer, baseball, swimming, and other uses, including land for use by the Town, its school districts, and local clubs and organizations, such as the Little League.
- 4) Preserve major portions of the Rockland Psychiatric Center as open space, particularly the area to the east of Lake Tappan; secure and develop major portions of that site for active recreation.
- 5) Improve and expand the walking and biking trails in Orangetown; provide connections between major open space areas and hamlet centers; seek to have designated trails provided, such as the Rail-Trail, to help reduce bicycle traffic along major roadways.
- 6) Improve access to Lake Tappan and to the Hudson River for boating and other recreational opportunities; work with the State, local villages, and private utility companies to achieve this objective.
- 7) Work with the County and other communities, where appropriate, to secure outside funding for the acquisition of open space lands and recreation sites.
- 8) Upgrade existing park facilities and recreation programs, where necessary, to provide additional recreational opportunities for current and future populations; utilize recreation fees collected through the subdivision process, user fees, other town funds, and outside grants to support the recreation program. Improve opportunities for indoor recreation for youth and seniors in conjunction with schools and libraries.
- 9) Improve the open space character along portions of the Town's major roadways, particularly Route 303, possibly with both a landscaped median and with wide front yard landscape strips for all developments along the right-of-way.
- 10) Provide additional landscaping and urban design treatment within the major downtown hamlet centers, particularly Pearl River; improve the visual character of Orangeburg Road

between Route 303 and the Palisades Parkway with a tree planting and design improvement program to identify this area as a major center in Town.

## 2. **Residential Development**

In order to provide decent housing for present and future residents, the Town will:

- 1) Maintain and enhance the quality of life that exists in various neighborhoods throughout the Town, including the preservation of environmental features and open space, provision of quality community facilities and services, promotion of high quality site and architectural design, and the separation and buffering of uses considered incompatible with residential neighborhoods.
- 2) Continue to permit a broad range of housing types, densities, and locations that provide choices for both existing and future residents.
- 3) Provide updated zoning regulations that will help to facilitate the development of a variety of housing options for an increasing senior population, including independent living, congregate and assisted living, nursing homes, and life care communities, with pricing options that meet the varied financial needs of the elderly population.
- 4) Evaluate opportunities for affordable housing, particularly starter housing, for public sector employees, as well as volunteers who serve the Town of Orangetown.
- 5) Consider the use of non-traditional zoning techniques on selected properties, such as the Rockland Psychiatric Center, where such zoning is designed to achieve desired residential and open space objectives; this would include cluster zoning, planned unit development, and incentive zoning, among other techniques.
- 6) Conserve the Town's sound housing stock through the enforcement of all codes and through the use of housing rehabilitation programs, where applicable, to help upgrade housing for senior citizens, handicapped persons, and other limited income persons.

## 3. **Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development**

In order to provide local employment opportunities, necessary tax rates, and a broad array of services for community residents, the Town will:

- 1) Select geographic areas for economic activity that are suitable for commercial, office, and industrial development in terms of location, access, and environmental constraints, making certain that sites avoid conflicts with nearby uses and residential neighborhoods.
- 2) Provide and/or require landscaped screening areas to buffer commercial uses that exist along major roadways and that are adjacent to residential developments, and ensure that commercial building designs, facades, and signage are properly planned to maintain and improve the overall aesthetic quality of the Town.
- 3) Upgrade local business areas within existing hamlet centers, including Pearl River, Blauvelt, Sparkill, Tappan, and Orangeburg, with appropriate streetscape, parking, landscaping, signage, and utility improvements, and through preservation of historic properties, rehabilitation of existing structures, and marketing for new uses, with funding for these improvements provided through a combination of public and private sector sources.
- 4) Control strip commercial development on Route 303 and North Middletown Road through more restrictive zoning and lot and bulk revisions, including additional requirements for landscaping along the right-of-way.
- 5) Encourage new business and industrial development, and expansion of existing business opportunities at sites zoned for such uses, by working with County economic development agencies, local real estate interests, local colleges, and others in order to provide pertinent information that would help attract desired business activity, and by updating zoning regulations to meet contemporary standards and encourage new growth. A key element necessary to attract new economic development relates to homestead/non-homestead tax policies.
- 6) Within designated office and industrial zoning districts, investigate “fast track” approval techniques.
- 7) Pursue opportunities for increased tourism by building upon the natural resources and historic character of the Town; promote the development of Bed and Breakfast establishments in designated areas through appropriate zoning techniques.

#### 4. **Transportation and Infrastructure**

In order to support residential and commercial development, the Town will:

- 1) Work closely with the New York State Department of Transportation to improve the

traffic-carrying capacity, safety, and aesthetics of Route 303 from the Town of Clarkstown on the north to the New Jersey State line on the south, as proposed in the Route 303 Sustainable Development study; make certain that any improvements to Route 303 address different segments of the roadway in a distinct manner and account for open space and environmental issues, including the effects of the roadway on Sparkill Creek.

- 2) Continue to maintain the high-quality existing road network, and develop a Town-wide program designed to improve existing roads and intersections with said improvements undertaken by appropriate governmental entities (i.e., State, County, Town) and by private developers, where such improvements are necessary to mitigate the impact of site-specific developments as identified through the environmental review process.
- 3) Provide sidewalks and promote traffic-calming measures in hamlet centers to enhance pedestrian safety.
- 4) Maximize parking opportunities and provide additional parking in hamlets like Pearl River to serve existing business activity and railroad commuters; work with the County in their efforts to promote Park and Ride lots to reduce the number of vehicles on major commuter roads.
- 5) Monitor the progress of plans and environmental studies related to the upgrading or replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge, and the effects of such action on the Town (including the incorporated Villages of Nyack, South Nyack, and Grand View).
- 6) Work with Rockland County officials in their efforts to have passenger service provided on the West Shore Railroad, and if this is achieved, pursue the development of a railroad station to the south of the Orangeburg Road bridge, where land use, access, and environmental issues, such as noise, would be properly addressed.
- 7) Maintain the high quality utility systems that serve existing development, including sanitary sewage and water supply facilities, and monitor the conditions of water pressure, water supply, and water quality.
- 8) Provide increased stormwater protection for existing streams, including Sparkill Creek, addressing erosion and sediment control, flooding issues, and the enhancement of the natural habitat for flora and fauna. Ensure that new development properly protects wetlands and waterbodies, utilizing appropriate best management practices and upgrading stormwater, sanitary sewage, and water supply facilities, where necessary, to mitigate site-specific impacts identified through the environmental review process.
- 9) Work with surrounding communities to ensure that major development projects adjacent to

the Town do not impair the Town's road and infrastructure systems, including its water resources; upon an assessment of the development's level of impact, the Town should act accordingly and address any potential issues.

- 10) Wherever possible, pursue opportunities to place overhead wires behind stores (as proposed in Pearl River) or underground.

## 5. **Community Facilities**

To maintain an adequate level of service, while concurrently planning for the projected growth in the Town's senior population, an increased level of ethnic and racial diversity, and the changes in service that these factors could generate, the Town will:

- 1) Continue to increase the level of services for a growing senior population.
- 2) Increase cooperation and foster working relationships between area colleges and the Town; encourage partnerships between the colleges, public school districts, and libraries; pursue programs that could generate special events and/or programs that could be beneficial to Orangetown as a whole.
- 3) Work with local fire districts and other volunteer organizations to continue to provide high quality services; help monitor or recruit volunteers through the provision of affordable housing opportunities.
- 4) Support the efforts of the local police officers to ensure traffic safety through the improvement of roads and intersections, and the construction of additional sidewalks.
- 5) Continue to protect historic resources in designated historic districts and throughout the Town; require that any public improvements within designated historic districts are sensitive to the character of the district; work with the County in its efforts to develop a County-wide historic trail system.
- 6) Promote the arts and cultural activity in Orangetown at local schools, colleges, and, if possible, as part of the reuse of the Rockland Psychiatric Center.