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Orangetown Comprehensive Plan

March 2023



TOWN OF ORANGETOWN
RICH IN HISTORY

Vision, Goals, and Objectives

With its natural beauty, convenient location, quality schools, cultural resources, and historic hamlets, Orangetown is a wonderful community to live in. An overarching goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to enhance the quality-of-life features and community resources that draw residents and businesses to the Town.

~~A central aspect of the Vision is to ensure that the goals below address the community's definition of sustainability, as well as the three "E's" of sustainability: environment, economy, and equity. The environment and economy components are addressed in specific chapters, while the equity component, which aims to ensure an even distribution of the burdens and benefits of policy actions across the community, is woven throughout.~~

Goal 1

Maintain the Town's community and neighborhood character while balancing the need for growth and development.

- Objective 1** Encourage an appropriate balance of residential and non-residential development.
- Objective 2** Update and modernize the Zoning Code to simplify enforcement, remove inconsistencies, and regulate new land uses not previously contemplated.
- Objective 3** Develop design guidelines for façades, signage, and streetscapes to preserve, protect, and enhance the unique characteristics of each hamlet.
- Objective 4** Develop measures to increase the efficiency of the Zoning Code and land use review process.
- Objective 5** Discourage new warehouse and distribution center land uses in certain zoning districts, particularly near residential areas. Consider allowing repurposing of existing industrial and commercial buildings and sites for other potential alternative uses.
- Objective 6** Develop design guidelines and performance standards to better regulate certain land uses and to protect open space, viewsheds, historic resources, and community character.
- Objective 7** Strengthen zoning and code protections for natural resources such as wetlands, trees, stormwater, steep slopes, and ridgelines.
- Objective 8** Maximize, revitalize, and redevelop underutilized and vacant or neglected properties as the Town may deem necessary for the benefit of the community, with the purpose of enhancing sound growth of the Town, increasing its tax base and preserving environmental features and resources of such sites.


 Goal 2

Preserve history, open space, and hamlet center character, ~~while promoting a diversity of housing options in appropriate neighborhoods to ensure members of the community have access to quality housing.~~

- Objective 1** ~~Update the Zoning Code to allow a diversity of housing types (e.g. townhomes, mixed-use buildings, and apartment building style condominiums) in appropriately identified areas to meet the various needs of the community, including first-time home buyers/renters and downsizing seniors.~~
- Objective 2** Maintain an adequate supply of senior housing and for a variety of income levels.
- Objective 3** Where appropriate, update the Zoning Map ~~and Code to create transitional districts between hamlet centers and single family neighborhoods.~~
- Objective 4** Establish efforts and mechanisms, including more robust zoning and development enforcement, to protect and preserve hamlet character.


 Goal 3

Strengthen the Town's transportation network for vehicles, pedestrians, and alternative modes of mobility.

- Objective 1** Design and implement context-sensitive dedicated bicycle lanes (on- and off-road) to improve bicycle access and safety.
- Objective 2** Provide additional sidewalks throughout the Town to improve pedestrian access and safety, where appropriate.
- Objective 3** Create pedestrian-friendly, walkable streets in key hamlet centers by limiting traffic during certain times on low-traffic roadways.
- Objective 4** Implement walkable, green streetscapes and rights-of-way.
- Objective 5** Establish performance standards within the Zoning Code to mitigate traffic impacts. Address congestion and parking shortage in key areas.
- Objective 6** Update the Zoning Code to include design guidelines and protections for rural and scenic roadways.
- Objective 7** Encourage more robust enforcement of traffic regulations, particularly those related to truck, delivery, and warehouse traffic.
- Objective 8** Continue to implement the Complete Streets policy.

- Objective 5** Review and update local regulations to promote resilient construction practices, manage stormwater, and reduce flooding.
- Objective 6** Update the Town’s tree preservation ordinance (Chapter 35, “Trees and Shrubbery”) which was last updated in 1973, to establish more robust preservation regulations.
- Objective 7** Build on the success of the Town’s Community Choice Aggregation Program.
- Objective 8** Create and enforce regulations to limit noise and air pollution coming from light industrial zoned areas, especially those close to residential neighborhoods.
- Objective 9** Revisit goals of the 2002 Route 303 Sustainable Development Study.
- Objective 10** Continue to apply for grants, such as the New York State Climate Smart Communities Grant, to implement sustainability objectives and prepare a Climate Action Plan.
- Objective 11** Continue to enforce the recently adopted NYStretch Code.

Goal 5

Preserve the Town’s natural resources and increase access to parks and open space.

- Objective 1** Encourage preservation of open space through flexible/conservation subdivisions which cluster new development to preserve larger contiguous areas of open space.
- Objective 2** Work with the New York State legislature to establish a preservation fund that can be used to acquire property for open space, recreation, or historic reservation.
- Objective 3** Establish a long-term open space preservation plan to guide the implementation of the Town’s open space fund.
- Objective 4** Encourage conservation of waterfront areas, lakes, wetlands, steep slopes and other natural assets.
- Objective 5** Implement the plans for a waterfront park on Lake Tappan within the 216-acres of Town-owned land at the Rockland Psychiatric Center, including walking trails, wheelchair accessible trails, and access to water for passive recreation activities.
- Objective 6** Encourage conversion of inactive rail lines into rail trail facilities to develop a network connecting with trails in adjacent municipalities.

Existing Land Use Patterns and Development Trends

The existing land uses in the Town of Orangetown fall into nine (9) main categories (see **Figure 2-1, Land Use Map** and **Table 2-1** and **Table 2-2**):

- **Single-family residential:** Individual homes on distinct parcels. This is the predominant use of land in the Town, and represents approximately thirty-six (36) percent of land in the Town;
- **Multi-family residential:** Residential structures containing more than one housing unit;
- **Commercial:** Generally, property used for the sale of goods or provision of services, including restaurants and dining establishments, hotels, retail shopping centers, office and professional buildings. Major retail areas include the NYS Route 303 corridor, and the hamlet downtowns of Pearl River (~~N. Middletown Road & E. Washington Avenue~~), Sparkill (Main Street), Orangeburg (Orangeburg Road), Blauvelt (E. Erie Street), and Tappan (Washington Street, Main Street, and Oak Tree Road). Major areas of office or professional use include Blue Hill Plaza along the New York-New Jersey state line;

Formed by North Middletown Rd., East Central Ave, and both North and South Main St.
- **Institutional:** This category includes land devoted to government functions, libraries, schools, colleges and universities, civic and religious functions, hospitals, police, fire, and EMS facilities. Significant properties within this category include the Rockland Psychiatric Center, Orangetown Town Hall, Dominican University New York, St. Thomas Aquinas College, and schools comprising the South Orangetown Central School District, Pearl River Union Free School District, Nanuet Union Free School District, and Nyack Union Free School District;
- **Industrial:** These uses include traditional industrial uses as well as warehousing and distribution facilities. They are located primarily, and somewhat densely, along the NYS Route 303 corridor, but also include the Pfizer campus in northwest Orangetown, and multiple facilities clustered near the New York-New Jersey state line to the east of Lake Tappan;
- **Infrastructure:** This category includes property used for structures that provide facilities and services necessary for the Town's basic operation;
- **Recreation & entertainment:** This category includes public and private golf courses, camps, and camping facilities. It includes the Henry Kaufmann Campgrounds, Blue Hill Golf Course, Broadacres Golf Club, Manhattan Woods Golf Club, Rockland Country Club, and Tappan Golf Center;
- **Vacant land:** This includes property not in use, in temporary use, or lacking improvement (most often due to land constrained by steep slopes, wetlands, or a lack of roadway access), much of which can be found along Lake Tappan and the Hackensack River which feeds it; and
- **Public parks & open space:** This category is the second largest land use in the Town, at approximately 17 percent, and includes Blauvelt State Park, Tallman Mountain State Park, Veteran's Memorial Park, Clausland Mountain Park, and various other, smaller parks throughout the Town.

This 2022 Comprehensive Plan prioritizes protection of environmentally sensitive areas, protection from warehouse and industrial overdevelopment, especially near residential areas, preservation of open space, and contextual infill development where appropriate.

Future Land Use

The future land use map reflects the Comprehensive Plan goal of maintaining the Town's community and neighborhood character while balancing the need for growth and development. The Future Land Use Map echoes the historical growth patterns of the Town of Orangetown, which large swaths of single-family residential neighborhoods and retail/commercial uses centered around the hamlets and major roadways like Route 303.

Central to the development of the Future Land Use Map was the consideration of Goal #2, to preserve history, open space, and hamlet center character, ~~while promoting a diversity of housing options in appropriate neighborhoods to ensure members of the community have access to quality housing. The Future Land Use Map identifies a few new mixed-use areas, where a diversity of housing types (e.g. townhomes, mixed use buildings, and condominiums) could be accommodated to meet the needs of first-time home buyers/renters and downsizing seniors looking to stay within the community.~~

Figure 2-4, Future Land Use Map.

Proposed Implementation Strategies

Analysis of the existing Zoning Code and land use regulations revealed several issues relating to consistency, readability, and ease of enforcement. These issues were echoed by the Town's staff, land use board members, and the public during the public engagement process. This section identifies several areas where the zoning code and land use regulations can be updated.

- The existing Zoning Code is cumbersome in the way it is setup, making it confusing to interpret and difficult to implement. Suggested improvements for consideration:

- Eliminate and consolidate some of the zoning districts. Several districts have substantially similar allowable uses and dimensional (bulk) regulations. Consider the following strategies:

- **Commercial** Consolidate similar commercial zoning districts to streamline the provisions, improve readability, facilitate consistent implementation of the zoning code, and support economic growth.
- **Residential** Rezone undersized residential parcels to reduce the number of pre-existing non-conforming single-family residential lots to lessen the burden on homeowners seeking to improve their residences.

Merge residential zoning districts consisting of fewer than three parcels with the immediately adjacent zoning district to increase consistency.

- Restructure the use and bulk tables to improve readability and understanding of the specific district regulations. Also, consider adding new uses to existing zoning districts.
- Consider deleting the deed-like descriptions of the zoning district boundaries within the text of the regulations; the boundaries are already established on the zoning map, and having them also detailed in the text increases the complexity and chances for inconsistencies in future amendments.

- Update the zoning districts, as well as allowable land uses and definitions, to recognize uses not previously addressed and assign appropriate performance standards where applicable.

New zoning district:

- **Mixed Use** ~~Mixed Use zoning districts are established and intended to foster a mutually supportive mix of compatible residential and nonresidential uses. By integrating multiple compatible uses, mixed used development reduces sprawl, auto-dependence, and infrastructure costs (including, fire and police department, sanitation and garbage collection, ambulances, and construction and maintenance of utilities and roadways), while supporting healthy, environmentally sustainable, pedestrian-oriented communities. The district emphasizes the streetscape experience through techniques such as discouraging (or prohibiting) parking areas in the front of buildings, and it is subject to flexible standards that encourage compact development at an appropriate scale and balance of uses to ensure that development is compatible with surrounding uses.~~



Regional examples of attached single-family dwellings © AKRF

New land uses and definitions:

Residential

Update regulations to support a diversity of housing options to ensure members of the community have access to quality housing. Under current regulations, residences generally fall into one of three broad categories: single family (attached and detached), two family, and multifamily, defined as having three or more dwelling units. Expanding housing types to include a greater variety of options, such as townhomes, can facilitate contextual housing development and meet local housing demand. In addition, a regulatory approach to allow more housing as of right would reduce the time and cost associated with new home construction. The parameters of integrating and regulating more diverse housing options would be established during the development of the local law:

Garden townhome

A row house that shares at least one wall with adjacent units and exists on its own lot. Garden townhomes have modest lot coverage of not more than 25-35 percent to preserve open space. The open space may be natural or landscaped, active or passive, open to the public or limited to residents. Akin to cluster style development, garden townhomes provide for enhanced stormwater management for reduced flooding (through less impervious surfaces), decrease infrastructure strain, conserve natural and scenic space, and foster social communities.

Regional example of garden townhome development © AKRF



- Update the Route 303 Overlay District for clarity, enforcement, and to minimize variance requests.
 - In line with the Legislative Intent outlined in the Town’s Zoning Code,¹⁷ target identified commercial, strip style developments for retrofitting with mixed-use and “missing middle” housing, both of which facilitate walkable, environmentally sustainable development.
 - ~~Missing middle housing includes a range of multi-unit housing that are compatible in scale with traditional single-family homes, help meet the growing demand for walkable neighborhoods, and help address the housing shortage.¹⁸ The locations and standards applicable to missing middle housing would be established during the development of the local law.~~
 - Public feedback provided support for redeveloping strip malls, particularly with mixed-use developments; however, common concerns were for design standards and strain on infrastructure. Consider requiring increased design, façade, and landscaping standards on redevelopments and new developments, as well as contributing to upgrades for existing infrastructure. Identified commercial interchanges:
 - Oak Tree Road/Tappan
 - Orangeburg Road/Orangeburg
 - Erie Street/Blauvelt
 - Consider adding other auto-oriented uses (e.g., drive-through facilities) to the list of prohibited uses in § 13.10.B (6), particularly on sites that abut residential areas; consider requiring a pedestrian/bicyclist-only entrance from the side streets.

¹⁷ See § 13.5.

¹⁸ The housing shortage is particularly acute in Rockland County, which has both the highest rate of rent-burdened tenants in the metro area (59% as of 2017) and among the lowest housing production rates in the country.

Regional example of modern townhomes © AKRF



- Minimize variance requests. Variances provide relief to property owners who seek to use their property in a way not permitted by the regulations, either because the desired land use is not permitted, or because the physical building and/or lot do not meet the minimum or maximum bulk (dimensional) standards. If a particular land use becomes a frequent source of variance requests, it is an indication that the regulations should be updated to clarify that portion of the Zoning Code. Similarly, when stringent dimensional standards hinder favorable development because of the need for variances, this indicates that the dimensional standards should be updated.

- Warehouses and distribution center

The ban on “[r]etail warehouse uses including mini-storage uses and distribution centers...in excess of 65,000 square feet” within the Overlay District has been a source of confusion and the subject of variance requests and appeals, specifically, on the issue of whether the ban applies to all distribution warehouses (retail and wholesale), or if the ban is limited to only retail warehouses and distribution centers. To resolve this ambiguity and clearly address the community concern, the text of the Overlay District should be amended to clearly differentiate between different types of warehouses and distribution centers, specify which types are permitted, and establish performance standards to address residents’ concerns.¹⁹

Discuss?

- Constrained redevelopment

Within the Overlay District, certain sites may be in technical compliance with the required dimensional standards but may not meet the aspirational redevelopment goals of the Overlay District. Yet, redevelopment on these sites is constrained because of their relatively small lot sizes, which makes it infeasible or impossible to fit the new structures and desired features and still comply with the required setbacks and other dimensional standards. In these cases, property owners would have to obtain variances to proceed, which discourages and hinders redevelopment – even redevelopment that is desirable and in line with the goals of the Overlay District. Therefore, to reduce the need for variances and encourage favorable redevelopment, the dimensional standards in the Overlay District should be loosened.

- As a complementary technique, retrofitting is an approach to upgrade, without necessarily redeveloping, existing developments by integrating enhanced features such as landscaping, bicycle/pedestrian pathways, seating areas, environmental protections, and general aesthetic updates.

- Update nuisance regulations to improve resident quality of life.

- Review minimum buffer requirements between commercial and residential uses; effective buffers are not necessarily wide, but dense, to enhance visual quality (and provide screens when necessary), reduce noise, and enhance environmental sustainability; they should be planted with mixed, native vegetative, hearty species with sufficient size and density and regularly supplemented with new plantings.

¹⁹ The ban is referenced in two sections of the Code: § 13.10.B.5., Nonresidential areas, quoted above, and § 15.5.J, Legislative intent, which states that: “particular types of retail and retail warehouse uses shall be prohibited, pursuant to § 13.10.” To implement the recommended change, both sections of the Code would need to be updated to differentiate between permitted and prohibited types of warehouses.

- Review noise, light, and odor regulations, and increase enforcement of existing provisions. Consider restricting truck deliveries and loud machinery uses to certain hours. Residents report that noise and odors issues have gotten worse as facilities are allowed to expand but nuisance regulations are not enforced to protect residents. In particular, residents expressed concern about recycling facilities with odors that travel as far as half a mile away.
- Establish regulations to govern short-term housing rentals and the commercial use of residential properties. In particular, the short term rental of residential swimming pools should be prohibited.



Regional example of senior living apartments on a major road © AKRF

- ~~Where appropriate, update the Zoning Map and Code to create transitional districts between hamlet centers and suburban neighborhoods. Transitional districts take into account the character and scale of the areas on either side of it. Generally, the scale of buildings decreases as you move (or transition) from a higher density downtown to a lower density residential neighborhood.~~
- ~~Mixed-use districts, which integrate townhome and apartment housing types with retail spaces, are a natural way to transition between residential and commercial shopping areas. Buildings in mixed-use districts may include shops, restaurants, or offices on the ground floor and apartments on the upper floors. Typical housing types in mixed-use districts include townhomes, low-rise apartments, and live-work buildings. These housing types are sometimes referred to as the “missing middle” because they sit in the middle of the spectrum between detached single-family homes and multi-family homes in terms~~

~~of scale, as well as number of units and often, affordability.²⁰ In addition to providing more housing diversity, missing middle housing supports locally serving retail and public transportation options. Missing middle housing fits well among single-family homes, or alongside single-family areas where it can form a transition to the downtown. Public feedback emphasized that, in addition to the array of housing construction styles, mixed-use districts are particularly suitable for senior housing owing to their walkability and access to services and public transit. The details, including location, restrictions, and standards for transitional districts would be established during the development of the local law.~~

- Establish performance standards within the Town’s Zoning Code to mitigate traffic impacts.
- Update the Zoning Code to include design guidelines and protections for rural and scenic roadways.
- Review flexible/conservation subdivision regulations.
- Consider establishing a maximum height of three stories in downtown areas.
- Update the Tree Preservation Code to regulate the removal of mature trees.
 - Details of the ordinance would be established during the development of the local law. However, it is anticipated that the removal of dead, dying, or invasive species would be exempt from the tree preservation ordinance.
- Review Special Permit and Conditional Use Permit Standards and update as necessary to address current uses and concerns. In particular, clarify and update the standards for warehouses and distribution centers.

²⁰ The term “missing” refers to the fact that this type of home construction has been largely illegal in the United States since the mid-1940s. “What is Missing Middle Housing?” 2022. <https://missing-middlehousing.com/about>.



Dewint House, Tappan. John Scott photographed this Edwin Dahlberg painting.
Source: Nyack Library Local History Collection

Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The vision, goals, and objectives related to historic preservation were developed based on an inventory of the existing historic preservation measures and public feedback. In the community survey, 64 percent of respondents indicated that the preservation of historic buildings and structures was an important or very important factor to consider in terms of future development.

Proposed Implementation Strategies

The 2022 Comprehensive Plan goals include maintaining the Town's community and neighborhood character while balancing the need for growth and development and preserving history, open space, and hamlet center character, while promoting a diversity of housing options in appropriate neighborhoods to ensure members of the community have access to quality housing.



Downtown Pearl River © AKRF

Existing Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization Strategies and Programs

2018 Pearl River TOD Opportunities Analysis

In 2018, the “Pearl River TOD Opportunities Analysis” (Pearl River Study) was submitted to the Town of Orangetown. The purpose of the Pearl River Study was to establish a downtown revitalization strategy for the hamlet of Pearl River. According to the Pearl River Study, key assets in Pearl River, which make it “uniquely positioned for physical and economic rejuvenation” include a relatively large downtown (for the area), a compact urban form comprised of a mix of uses, and rail connectivity to Secaucus Junction and New York City by way of the NJ Transit Pascack Valley line.

At the time of the Pearl River Study, it was observed that home sales and rental prices had been rising in the hamlet, especially for one-bedroom apartments. While restaurants and similar establishments continued to attract patrons to the downtown, “neighborhood-scale

2018 Pearl River TOD Opportunities Analysis



Pearl River © AKRF

retail offerings along Central Avenue had become smaller and less diverse” as they competed with nearby malls and societal shifts to e-commerce. In the decade preceding the Pearl River Study, “only minimal infrastructure improvements [were] implemented in the downtown core.”

The Pearl River Study included quantitative analysis of Pearl River’s demographics, economic and fiscal conditions, housing, and land use. It also, through a community workshop and other outreach efforts, explored desires of the local community, and community feedback was informative. Some strategies advanced by the community included:

- Encourage a greater diversity of entertainment, retail, and service establishments.
- Increase working opportunities downtown through office and co-working space which could assist in generating foot traffic.
- Attract more consumers to the hamlet by improving dated storefront facades, filling vacancies, beautifying lots and sidewalks, and adopting design standards.
- ~~Support locating higher density housing closer to the train station, while maintaining zoning and building code enforcement to preserve community character.~~
- Improve train service in the hamlet, including more frequent express service to New York City.
- Enhance the pedestrian experience by repairing existing sidewalks, creating new sidewalks, and installing traffic calming measures to improvement pedestrian and motorist safety.
- Enhance streetscapes with trees, landscaping, planters and outdoor seating.

~~The Study concluded that Pearl River was “well positioned physically and economically for downtown infill development, especially in an around its train station.” The Study’s land use assessment found that the “existing urban form around the train station could accommodate a greater mix of uses, higher intensity of land use, and taller buildings.”~~

2018 Orangetown Bike Study

The “Orangetown Bike Study: A Comprehensive Plan for a Safer and More Welcoming Cycling Environment on Orangetown’s Roads and Trails” (Bike Study), was presented to the Town Board in June 2018. The primary goal of the Bike Study was to create a community vision for the local cycling network, with a focus on connecting residents with local business districts and community facilities including schools, libraries, and parks.

The Bike Study included some limited recommendations regarding economic development and downtown revitalization. It discussed the “Bike Friendly New York”¹¹ program as a method of connecting the local business community to cyclists, and improving the experience for Orangetown residents and visitors who wish to dine, shop, travel, or make other trips by bike. Launched in 2017 by Parks & Trails New York, a statewide advocacy organization for parks and trails, the Bike Friendly New York program awards certification to businesses in New York State that fulfill certain eligibility requirements and offer specified bicycle-friendly amenities that demonstrate support for cyclists. As explained by Parks & Trails New York, “[t]he purpose of the Bike Friendly New York program is to recognize

11 <https://www.ptny.org/cycle-the-erie-canal/bikefriendly>

- Attract new businesses of varying types and sizes to broaden business offerings and protect the Town’s tax base.

The Town can create a more attractive environment for businesses in a variety of ways. Improvements to downtown connectivity, linking amenities, housing, retail options, and natural resources and open space would enhance the sense of place in the hamlet downtowns. Promotion of walking as an important mode of local circulation within the downtowns, and strengthening intermodal connections, would make it easier for pedestrians to travel within downtown areas, frequenting more businesses with ease, and between downtowns and other areas of the Town. Economic development initiatives to attract new businesses and broaden business offerings should be focused on placemaking strategies (discussed above) and improving quality of life for residents.

- Encourage infill development wherever possible to maintain the ‘feel’ and ‘character’ of the hamlet downtowns.

~~To facilitate infill development, the Town can develop an inventory of existing vacant properties, organizing the properties by type (e.g., professional offices, commercial businesses, strip mall, factory/manufacturing, warehousing, dining). This inventory can also identify underutilized parcels. Using this information, the Town can develop specific strategic plans for hamlets that are more receptive to commercial development. Orangeburg and Pearl River were the hamlets more receptive to commercial development than others, based on Public Survey responses (see **Figure 5-7**). Infill residential development could also be considered as part of a downtown revitalization strategy, as the housing data presented regarding vacancy (see **Table 5-9**) indicates there is low residential vacancy in the Town. Increased housing in downtown areas could also grow those local populations, further benefitting downtown businesses.~~

As **Figure 5-2** indicates, Orangetown’s older residents are aging in place. In response to that phenomenon, infill development could consider the development of facilities catering to the needs of that cohort of the population, which could include condominiums (for those individuals wishing to downsize), a senior center, a community center, and medical facilities.

open spaces, increase access to parks across the Town, and support the ecological function of open spaces in flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, and in providing wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

Goal: Preserve the Town’s Natural Resources, Increase Access to Parks and Open Space, and Enhance their Ecological Role.

Proposed Implementation Strategies and Actions

- Use cluster development and conservation easements to preserve large contiguous areas of open space and protect environmentally sensitive areas.

Discuss?

NYS Town Law Section 278 authorizes municipalities to approve cluster development. Cluster development is a type of subdivision in which typical zoning requirements are modified to allow an alternative “layout, configuration and design of lots, buildings and structures, roads, utility lines and other infrastructure, parks, and landscaping.”⁷ Development is clustered so that natural, scenic, or historic resources and environmentally sensitive sites are preserved. In exchange, developers are permitted to subdivide property in ways that deviate from the bulk and area requirements that would otherwise apply under the Zoning Code. Cluster development should be considered for development and redevelopment on large parcels to preserve and protect contiguous open space and safeguard environmentally sensitive areas.

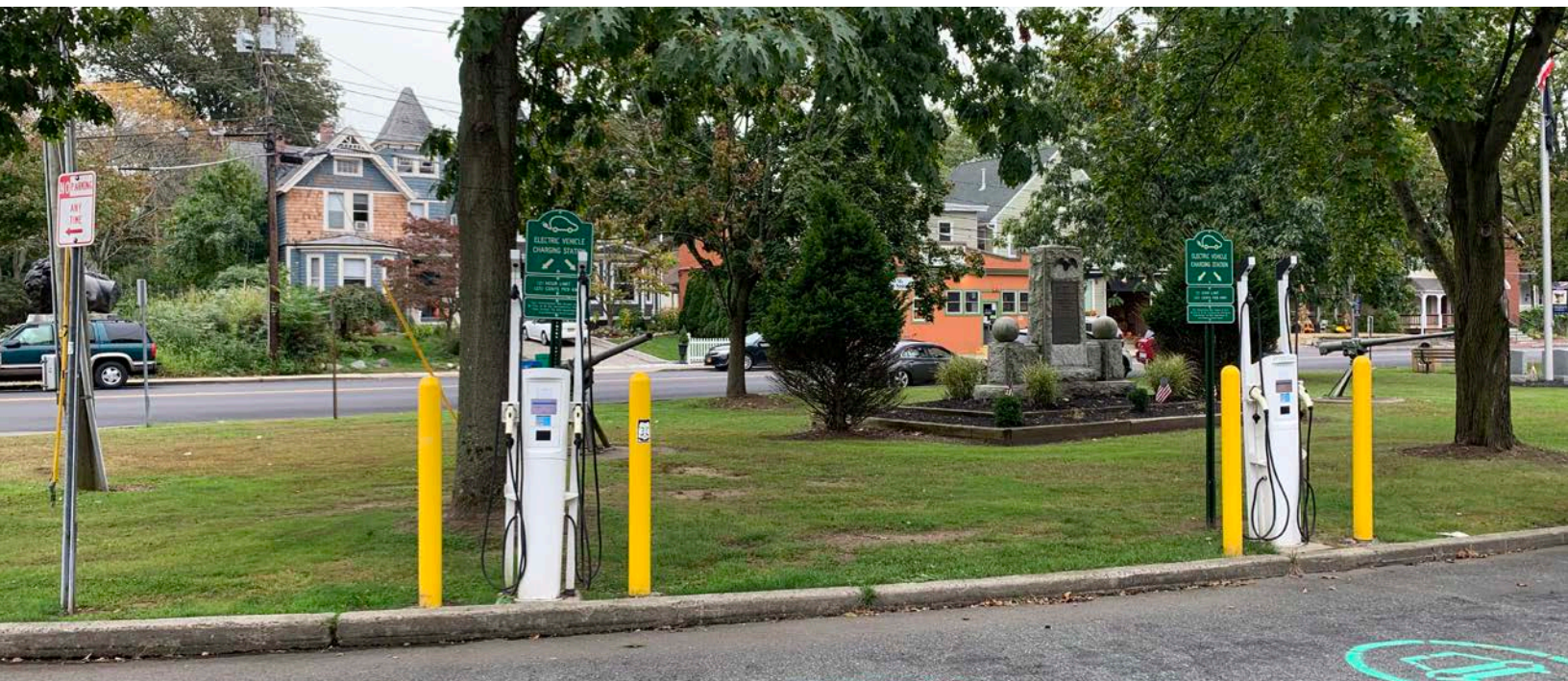
§21-7.1, Conservation Easements (created in 1999, amended in 2007), of the Town Code authorizes the Planning Board to require conservation easements on real property that is situated within environmentally sensitive and flood-prone areas. To enhance the maintenance and enforcement of conservation easements, the Town could consider establishing a Conservation Easement Program that annually monitors compliance, provides funding for private property owners who require financial assistance in maintaining the easements, and creates a program for active maintenance and stewardship of Town-held conservation easements.⁸ In terms of ecological management, the Conservation Easement Program can guide the management of invasive species, native species, and pests within conservation easements. For instance, rather than following a tree preservation ordinance based on solely tree trunk diameter, guidelines can be introduced to promote preservation of native plant and tree species while allowing for the removal of harmful, invasive species. Through attentive monitoring and maintenance, conservation easements can be impactful in ameliorating environmental effects of climate change.

⁷ Raines, P., Cluster Development and Policy (2017)

⁸ Town of Gardiner (Ulster County, NY), “Town of Gardiner Open Space Commission: 2019 Annual Report”

- 2 Setting clear targets and providing timeline and guidelines for reducing GHG emissions.
- 3 Limiting truck traffic and deliveries during peak hours by incentivizing businesses to choose overnight or off-hour deliveries.
- 4 Rerouting truck traffic from residential areas and schools to major highways and roads.
- 5 Creating connected, safe and walkable communities with generous pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian lights, landscaping), and public transportation (bus stops and shelters) on NY State Route 303 and throughout Orangetown.
- 6 Relocating commuter parking to existing developed areas with safe, sheltered bus stops to encourage the use of public transportation.
- 7 Encouraging the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in public areas.
- 8 Beginning with schools and businesses, advertising and enforcing efforts to limit the use of engine idling within the Town.
- 9 ~~Limiting the use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers.~~
- 10 Increasing resident participation in waste management programs such as the Town's Food Scraps Recycling Program.

EV charging stations in a Sparkill parking lot © MUD Workshop



- Limit the use of fossil fuels as a source of energy supply and encourage the use of green building technologies for new development projects and retrofits.

In 2012, Orangetown’s commercial sector produced 25.5 percent of the Town’s total GHG emissions, and the residential sector was responsible for 21.1 percent.⁶⁹ These commercial and residential sectors generated close to 50 percent of the Town’s GHG in order to fulfill heating, cooling, lighting, and other needs. As such, the Town should consider prioritizing renewable sources for electricity and encouraging green building technologies that would decrease overall residential and commercial energy usage. Green building technologies include but are not limited to adaptive reuse, green roofs, use of renewable energy, and energy-efficient appliances and heating/cooling systems, and can be used in new development sites and retrofitted for existing sites. The Town can consider updated energy supply and infrastructure as well as green building strategies, including:

- 1 Continue meeting NYSERDA benchmarks in order to qualify for future phases of the Rockland Community Power CCA program.
- 2 ~~Adopting the CCA's 100 percent NY sourced renewable electricity option as the default supply for Town residents and small business.~~
- 3 Building on the success of the Town's Community Choice Aggregation Program.
- 4 ~~Exploring efficient alternatives to the aging existing electrical grid infrastructure, which has limited ability to take advantage of modern technologies. These alternatives should promote micro grid Community Distributed Generation of electricity, such as Community Solar installations, as a means to both protect critical infrastructure and to lower the stress on the existing utility infrastructure. Leading upgrades and retrofits by updating all municipal buildings for high energy efficiency and switching 100 percent of energy supply to renewable sources. Incentivizing businesses and institutional buildings to follow.~~
- 5 **Encouraging** Requiring the use of green building technologies for heating and cooling for all new construction and redevelopment.
- 6 Continuing to enforce the recently adopted NYStretch Code for development, and improving the energy efficiency of building systems, including heating, cooling, and lighting.
- 7 Encouraging building performance code certifications such as Energy Star, LEED, and the Living Building Challenge for new construction over a certain size.

⁶⁹ NY Climate Smart Communities *Mid-Hudson Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory*, Table 26. “Rockland County; Total Emissions by Municipality and Sector”.

Strategy	Action Item	Time Frame	Responsible Agency
Land Use, Zoning, and Design			
Update the zoning districts, as well as allowable land uses and definitions, to recognize and regulate uses not previously addressed.	New district: Mixed-Use (for transitional areas) New residential uses: attached single-family residence and townhomes	Short-Term	Town Board
	New commercial uses: standalone fitness center, media production facility and soundstage	Short-Term	Town Board
Add new permitted uses in LI/LO zoning districts which are already permitted in commercial districts	Additional permitted uses in LI/LO: hotel and motel and retail drug, dry goods and variety, food, hardware, stationary, and auto supply	Short-Term	Town Board
Update the Rt 303 Overlay District	Add other auto-oriented uses (e.g., drive-through facilities) to the list of prohibited uses in § 13.10.B (6), particularly on sites that abut residential areas; consider requiring a pedestrian/ bicyclist-only entrance from the side streets.	Short-Term	Town Board
	Target identified commercial, strip style developments for retrofitting, mixed-use and “missing middle” housing, both of which facilitate walkable, environmentally sustainable development that serve as transitions between commercial areas and single-family neighborhoods. Consider requiring increased design, façade, and landscaping standards for new and redevelopments, as well as requiring developers to contribute to infrastructure upgrades.	Medium-Term	
	Update relevant sections to differentiate between the different types of warehouse uses, and to establish performance standards to address resident concerns. Encourage new uses in the Overlay District, including “clean and green” uses such as indoor greenhouses and vertical farms.	Short-Term	
	Increase flexibility of dimensional standards (minimum lot size, setbacks, FAR) to allow for favorable redevelopment without the need for variances; explore retrofitting options for constrained sites.	Short-Term	
Update nuisance regulations and increase enforcement.	Increase minimum buffer requirements for dense, hearty, and mixed vegetation. Reevaluate existing uses for compliance for nuisance regulations, particularly for noise and odors along the Rt. 303 corridor.	Medium-Term	Town Board

Strategy	Action Item	Time Frame	Responsible Agency
Land Use, Zoning, and Design			
Create environmental protection ordinances	Wetlands protection ordinance; Steep slopes and ridgeline protection ordinance.	Medium-Term	Town Board
Update the zoning map and code to create transitional districts between hamlet centers and suburban neighborhoods	Establish and encourage mixed-use districts, which integrate townhome and "missing middle" housing with retail spaces; these districts are a natural way to transition between residential and commercial, shopping areas. (See Future Land Use Map)	Short-Term	Town Board

Community Character and Historic Resources

Protect historic resources	Maintain existing local preservation tools.	Short-Term	Town Board
	Develop designation criteria for Historic Areas	Medium-Term	Historical Areas Board of Review
	Develop design guidelines and performance standards	Long-Term	Historical Areas Board of Review
	Publish online an inventory of locally-designated historic roads	Short-Term	Town Board
	Consider individual landmark protections	Medium-Term	
	Survey Orangetown's historic buildings and structures	Short-Term	
	Consider joining the CLG Program	Long-Term	

Strategy	Action Item	Time Frame	Responsible Agency
Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization			
Encourage small businesses that add to the vitality of hamlet centers by providing cultural, recreational, and entertainment amenities desired by the community	To attract businesses to Orangetown’s hamlet centers, the Town could undertake a marketing campaign to showcase the Town as a unique place to live, work, visit, and explore. The campaign should encourage business development equally across the Town.	Medium-Term	Town Board
	The Town could consider some increases in density in downtown areas, and the development of transit-oriented districts.		
	Establish procedure to meet with potential property buyers and developers at pre-application meetings, to advise on potential uses that meet zoning designations.		
Establish a local development corporation (LDC)	The Town Board and Planning Board, with the assistance of the Town Attorney, should determine the feasibility of establishing an LDC in Orangetown.	Medium-Term	Town Board and Planning Board
	In addition to considering creation of an LDC, the Town should connect with the Rockland Economic Development Corporation (REDC) or the Rockland County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) to facilitate redevelopment projects.		
Create an Orangetown Economic Development Plan (EDC)	Explore creation of a new Town department (or identify appropriate existing Town department) that would establish, implement, and monitor an EDC for Orangetown. Conduct public outreach to establish economic development goals and strategies for the Town based on citizen and business-owner feedback.	Short-Term	Town Board, Planning Board, and Supervisor’s Office
		Medium-Term	
Attract new businesses of varying types and sizes to broaden business offerings and protect the Town’s tax base	Undertake improvements to downtown connectivity, linking amenities, housing, retail options, and natural resources and open space, to enhance the sense of place in the hamlet downtowns. Promote walking within the downtowns and strengthen intermodal connections.	Long-Term	Town Board, with assistance from Parks and Recreation and Highway Departments
	Encourage uses that include clean industry and data centers, which could be facilitated by the implementation of a floating zone. This could be applied to the Town-owned areas of the Rockland County Psych Center.		

Strategy	Action Item	Time Frame	Responsible Agency
Sustainability and Climate Resiliency			
Reduce carbon emissions and promote healthier air quality.	Create and enforce new regulations including those to: (1) limit air pollution from light industrial areas; (2) limit truck traffic and deliveries during peak hours; (3) reroute truck traffic from residential areas and schools to major highways and roads; and (4) ban the use of gasoline-powered gardening equipment.	Medium-Term	Planning Board
Limit the use of fossil fuels as a source of energy supply and encourage the use of green building technologies for new development projects and retrofits.			
Enforce Orangetown Code Section 4.27 to limit light pollution.	Undertake public outreach to promote awareness of negative impacts of light pollution, and methods to reduce it. Consider revisions to Town Code to ensure stricter enforcement, and by limiting light pollution indicated on building applications through the ACABOR board.	Short-Term	Planning Board