

# **Town and Village of Coxsackie Community Plan**

**May 23, 2007**



# Town & Village of Coxsackie, NY Community Plan

## Acknowledgements

This Comprehensive Plan is the product of nearly three years of work by dozens of individuals who worked cooperatively for the success of the Town and Village of Coxsackie. The following people contributed many hours of concerted effort to the production of the plan. Their commitment, energy and enthusiasm made this plan possible.

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## Introduction

Under New York State law, municipalities are granted the authority and responsibility to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined in the state legislation, a comprehensive plan is a document that presents goals, objectives, guidelines and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the community. Also known as a master plan or land use plan, a comprehensive plan provides guidance to municipal leaders and helps to ensure that the needs of the community will be met.

A comprehensive plan is simply a stack of papers, but infused with the enthusiasm, commitment and energy of those who care about a community, it becomes a vision for the future and a guide to bring that vision to life. The comprehensive planning process that led to the development of this action plan has shown that this spirit of cooperation and enthusiasm is shared by leaders, residents and partners of the Town and Village of Cossackie.

The Cossackie Community Plan is designed to reinforce Cossackie as a vibrant community. The comprehensive planning process resulted in a number of important documents: a community profile, this action plan and, soon, a new zoning ordinance for each municipality. The Cossackie Community Plan is a living document that should be continuously updated to reflect changes occurring within the Cossackie community. It is important that this Plan be implemented and used as recommended since the Plan comprises the choices of Cossackie's citizenry about the way they want to live. The integrity of the Town and Village Zoning Law also depends on it.

## Smart Growth Plan

The Cossackie Community Plan reflects some of the latest thinking about smart growth initiatives. Over recent decades the idea of "smart growth" has grown more familiar and trade-offs between livability, preservation, and economic expansion are no longer commonplace. This plan's emphasis on smart growth encourages development that serves the economy, community, and the environment.

A diverse coalition of 32 organizations called the Smart Growth Network supports smart growth by providing a set of ten principles to help communities recognize and value smart growth and identify strategies to achieve it. The Cossackie Community Plan adopts the following ten principles and recognizes that the actions recommended in this Plan will help put them into practice. Smart growth principles call on the communities to:

- Mix land uses
- Take advantage of compact building design
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices

### The Great Swamp

Five local governments including Southeast, Patterson, Town of Pawling, Village of Pawling and Dover share a wetland, called the Great Swamp, on the border of Putnam and Dutchess counties. These communities joined together to use tools including: neotraditional zoning, planned unit development zoning and incentive zoning; streamlining development using the state environmental review process; and using their intermunicipal authority to do joint land use and transportation planning. They have identified Harlem Valley Partnership as a public-private, regional non-profit to convene them and to be their staff to help them move forward with grant writing and program development.



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- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

The Town and Village of Cossackie have been developing their Comprehensive Plan over the past three years, using a comprehensive plan committee and the assistance of River Street Planning & Development, who were engaged by the Town and Village to facilitate the planning process. The focus of the comprehensive planning effort is asset based, building on community strengths and existing programs and efforts to:

**“We must stop talking about the American dream and start listening to the dreams of Americans.**

Reubin Askew, former Governor of Florida

- Improve livability through economic growth that creates new business and job opportunities, strengthens the Village downtown, expands the tax base and generates wealth and investment
- Provide a broad set of policies and projects that will establish a framework and vision for Cossackie over the next 10 - 15 years
- Establish a walkable downtown in the Village for shoppers and tourists with increased retail stores and entertainment venues
- Create a stable tax base and outline an economic development strategy that keeps existing businesses and attracts new businesses that create jobs for Cossackie residents
- Enhance land management and zoning to facilitate appropriate development while protecting residential and agricultural areas
- Provide significant opportunities to protect and enhance open space, natural resources, and historic and recreation assets in Cossackie

## Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

The planning process has been overseen by a project Steering Committee. The role of the Steering Committee has been to guide and lead the planning process; collect and share relevant information; review documents; supervise the consultant team; educate residents about the process and the plan roles and responsibilities, charge and scope; and conduct community outreach and publicity. The committee conducted dozens of community conversations and coordinated the planning, logistics and outreach associated with survey distribution, focus groups, community visioning meetings and public workshops. They reviewed materials and documents and maintained the flow of communication with elected officials. In addition, the committee conducted four focus groups with the following:

- The Twelve Tribes, a major property owner and retailer in the Village
- Land developers including Hamlet on the Hudson, UMH Properties, and Flach Development
- Planning and Development Agencies including Greene County Industrial Development Authority and Greene County Department of Planning and Economic Development
- Farmers and agricultural organizations



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- The committee also helped to organize and hosted an inter-municipal planning meeting with other Hudson River Towns and Villages to encourage sharing of their emerging comprehensive plans and identification of opportunities for collaboration.

## Community Survey

In order to assess resident concerns about issues facing the future of the Town and Village, a survey was conducted. A paper survey was mailed to every household, and made available in local establishments. The survey was also available on the Internet. A total of 545 surveys were completed – a very high response rate for comparable community surveys. Included here are items of particular note from the survey results.

### Who Responded:

- Surveys were mailed to each household in the Town and Village of Cossackie (excluding residents of the correctional facility). The 545 surveys received represent approximately 23% of the 2,422 households in the Town and Village.
- Responses came in primarily from long time residents (50% living in the community 20 years or longer), and homeowners (94%) who are full time residents (91%).
- Respondents are satisfied with the current pace of development (58%) and would like the community to remain about the same size (53%) or increase (41%).

**“Surveys such as this are crucial to involving the entire community in decision-making (as opposed to only those who can attend a public hearing) ...”**

Resident Survey

### Residential Issues:

- Respondents indicated a preference for the Town and Village to work towards more single family housing (67%) and more senior housing (63%) rather than condominiums (38%), rental housing (35%), or apartments (21%).
- Respondents strongly indicated a preference for regulation of development with 70% indicating that the Town and Village should apply Design Standards and 82% indicating that Cossackie should limit density of residential developments.

### Economic Development Issues:

- Consistent with the concerns expressed in the visioning workshops, 70% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with availability of retail.
- Somewhat surprisingly, given comments made in the visioning workshops, 72% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the availability of professional services.
- A very high percentage indicated support for Town and Village efforts to enhance locally owned and operated businesses (85%).
- A majority of respondents indicated that they would not support further development of industrial parks (56%) – not surprising given recent park development.
- Respondents have indicated a special interest in the aesthetic appeal of the Village. 60% were satisfied with the Village’s appeal, yet 82% would still have the community work to improve it. By comparison only 48% were satisfied with the aesthetic appeal of 9W, but only 77% would have the community work to improve the appeal of that corridor.
- 72% of respondents indicated a desire for a YMCA facility – a desire that will soon be fulfilled.



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## Park and Recreation Issues

- Respondents were generally satisfied with the location of parks and green space (74% satisfied, 17% dissatisfied) but expressed a lack of satisfaction with cycling and walking facilities (37% satisfied, 50% dissatisfied). This correlated with respondents indicating a preference for Coxsackie to work to add more cycling and walking paths (73%). Despite the satisfaction with parks, 68% indicated that the Town and Village should seek to add more parks and green space.
- In good news, 63% of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the maintenance of parks and 82% indicated satisfaction with access to the Hudson. However, despite this satisfaction, a slight majority of residents felt that the Town and Village could further improve park maintenance (58%).

## Environmental Issues

- Problems with the Village's water system were reflected in a 73% dissatisfaction rate with water supply.
- Residents expressed a clear desire to preserve the character of their community with a full 90% indicating that the Town and Village should work to preserve the rural character of the Town, 86% to protect and enhance active farms, and 83% to preserve wetlands and open space.

## Transportation Issues

- Consistent with several comments made during the visioning workshop about the need for improved road maintenance and sidewalks, only a slight majority of respondents were satisfied with these items (55% roads, 52% sidewalks) and a relatively high number would like to see the Town and Village work towards improving these issues (61% roads, 63% sidewalks). Residents are generally satisfied with transportation issues with most items in this category receiving 65% or higher satisfaction rates.

## Other Issues

- Surprisingly, given the many comments in the Visioning Workshops about the 'tight knit community feel' of Coxsackie, only 57% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'sense of community involvement'.
- A high number of respondents also expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of local media (48% satisfied, but 38% dissatisfied).
- Consistent with the desire to preserve the rural character of the Town, there was a strong desire to have Coxsackie work to preserve historic resources (85%).

## Tools to Use To Implement The Plan:

- The community was generally in favor of using regulatory tools to meet objectives, with significant majorities favoring strict development regulations such as zoning (74%) and design guidelines (71%). Incentives were also favorably received including support for rehabilitation incentives (79%) and conservation incentives (73%).
- Three questions asked specifically whether "public funds" should be used for an initiative. As expected, this wording tended to suppress the positive response with only 58% supporting funds for open space and 44% for flood protection. Interestingly, 61% of respondents supported using such funds for increasing park facilities and river access.



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## Open Ended Questions

The survey included several open-ended questions that allowed people to include their own opinions, rather than simply reacting to suggestions. The comments made in these sections reinforced the comments made during the Visioning workshops:

- The committee classified the 1252 responses to the question “what do you like most about Cossackie” into 233 categories. Categories that received the most responses include the community’s small Town feel and caring members, along with its proximity to the Hudson River. Respondents also frequently commented that Cossackie is well positioned to access other cities (Albany, Hudson, Kingston, NYC) via the Thruway, and that its rural character is something they like.
- The 1,222 responses to the question “what do you dislike most” fell in to 414 categories. The top two by far were the quality of the water and the level of school and property taxes. There were also a significant number of responses that commented on the lack of retail services.
- Additionally, respondents had the opportunity to provide general comments about issues facing the Town or Village. The primary issues identified were consistent with the other results of the survey and included: a desire to fix the water system (38 people), frustration with the level of taxation (34), resistance to major developments (19), a desire for more enforcement of regulations and zoning laws (17), the need for a sports park/YMCA (15), need for retail stores (15).

## Public Visioning Meetings

A vision statement and set of planning goals form the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan. The vision statement describes the preferred future that the Town and Village seek to achieve together.

Three public visioning workshops were held to develop the vision statement. The first workshop was held on May 23, 2006 at the Earlton Fire House. The second workshop was held on June 6, 2006 at the Knights of Columbus Hall and the third workshop was held at the Sleepy Hollow Lake Lodge on June 14, 2006. At each meeting the consultants presented an overview of the comprehensive planning effort and explained the visioning process. Participants were asked to finish three statements:

- “What I love about the community...”
- “Things I would change about the community...”
- “When these things are preserved or changed, the community will...”

Participants identified many things that they love about Cossackie. The main themes that emerged were excellent quality of life, great schools, close-knit community, and a supportive place to raise a family. Residents also valued rural character, proximity and access to the Hudson River, and lack of traffic in the community.

In most commonly identified community challenges included protection of property rights, regulations and zoning issues as well as the adequacy of municipal services including transportation and infrastructure. Residents identified the current tax burden as a key problem. Support services for the agriculture community and the lack of recreational options for community members were also highlighted.



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Finally, residents described their preferred future for Coxsackie identifying a future with affordable taxes and homes, a vibrant and sustainable agricultural community and a variety of nearby jobs available to local graduates and residents.

Using feedback from the visioning workshop, a draft vision statement and set of goals for the Comprehensive Plan was developed. The goals address key elements including housing, economic and agricultural development, community services, transportation, open space and natural resources, recreation, and tax base enhancement. The vision statement and goals are listed briefly below. The Action Plan is organized by these goals, and identifies specific items for the Town and Village to accomplish to further each goal.

The purpose of a vision statement is to provide direction for the community's growth and development, serving as a foundation underlying the development of goals and strategies for implementation. Reflecting the common values of local residents, it expresses the "ideal future" that the community hopes to attain. Residents and leaders of the Town and Village have established the following vision statement for Coxsackie:

"The Town and Village of Coxsackie share a prized history, culture and character. Forged by and wedded to the Hudson River, Coxsackie is a unique, quiet, safe and friendly place – part historic Village, part small Town but largely rural with significant irreplaceable open space, farmland and environmental resources. Strategically located, Coxsackie is a wonderful place to grow up, raise a family, make a home and enjoy retirement -- as the multi-generational roots of the people demonstrate. These are the strengths of the community; these are the things that must be preserved.

The Town and Village of Coxsackie look forward to a brilliant shared future together. Growth will occur but we will shape it to be moderate in pace and volume, well planned and consistent with the expressed choice of residents to maintain and nurture the qualities that make this landscape and community a desirable place to live.

When this plan is successful, our community will enjoy an abundant quality of life with a thriving economy that offers well-paying jobs to a talented local workforce. The Village will be a vibrant place to live, work, shop, dine and visit among beautiful historic buildings and landscaped streets. A well-maintained municipal infrastructure and transportation system will provide essential services to residents and shape the location and density of future development. Effective leadership and proactive planning policies will protect our heritage while accommodating well-designed new development that harmonizes with its surroundings. Residents of all ages and incomes will enjoy broad housing choice, diverse recreation opportunities and excellent community services. Long-term residents, newcomers and seasonal homeowners will share a unified commitment to protection of the land, the waterfront, the Village's lively downtown, and the Town's rural character."

## Goals

The central challenge facing Coxsackie for the next decade is to sustain the community's unique character and rich quality of life by creatively shaping development and managing growth while improving the financial security of our municipalities and safeguarding our natural beauty. To be



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successful, Cossackie must build on its assets including natural beauty, irreplaceable open space, historic resources, peaceful small Town life, welcoming Village, community spirit and the Hudson River. Achieving a prosperous future will also require that the community address challenges including strong residential development pressure, water quality challenges, budget insufficiencies, lack of retail and commercial establishments, and the uninviting character of 9W, our key transportation corridor and a gateway to our community.

Based on the Vision Statement above, as well as an inventory and analysis of the existing conditions in the Town and Village and on input from the community gathered from the Community Survey and at the Public Workshops, the following goals were identified. These goals guided the action planning process and allowed for the development of the initiatives and projects outlined in this action plan.

- I. **Community Character and Historic Preservation** - The Town and Village will employ best practices and creative land use tools that shape development, improve design and aesthetics, preserve historic resources and enhance rural character.
- II. **Community Stewardship and Planning** - The Town and Village will provide strong financial stewardship, municipal leadership and visionary and proactive planning in a framework of open government that encourages the involvement of residents and leads to a stable and diverse tax base.
- III. **Economic Development and Village Vitality** - The Town and Village will create work and wealth for local residents by recruiting compatible new companies, supporting business expansion, and creating a thriving retail center. We will focus on stimulating a thriving local economy and a vibrant Village core.
- IV. **Environmental Resources and Open Space** - The Town and Village will protect sensitive natural, scenic and environmental areas and pursue permanent preservation of open spaces that are essential to maintaining our distinct character and rich quality of life.
- V. **Transportation** - The Town and Village will ensure that excellent transportation amenities are accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and public transit users, creating a multi-modal community with well-maintained roadways, manageable traffic and beautiful streetscapes.
- VI. **Infrastructure** - The Town and Village will provide well-maintained municipal infrastructure with adequate capacity that provides quality drinking water, and safe waste management. When we supply new infrastructure it will be consistent with land use goals and financially supported by development fees.
- VII. **Community Facilities and Recreation** - We will develop and maintain excellent park and recreation resources, support schools of distinction, and encourage the creation of diverse community programs for all community members.
- VIII. **Housing** - The Town and Village will encourage diversified homeownership of high quality to meet all phases of a family life-cycle including starter houses, family residences, and vacation or retirement homes. New residential clusters will be designed to conserve open space consistent with our land use goals.
- IX. **Agriculture** - We will encourage agriculture and protect farmland by recognizing the vital role farmer's play in protecting our community's character. We will support creative efforts to sustain the economic viability of farming including outlets for local products.



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## Plan Implementation

Plan implementation should begin when the Town and Village Boards formally adopt this document. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan means that the Town and Village Boards, acting for the citizens of the Town and Village accept this plan, as the guide to future development in Coxsackie. Municipal leaders and other stakeholders should use the plan to assist in making decisions and setting priorities, including those established by the annual Town and Village budgets.

As required under state law, any new land use regulations or amendments in the Town and Village must be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, an important role of the Town and Village Planning Boards will be to review this document to make sure that the goals and ideas of the plan are integrated into land use and development decisions. State law also stipulates that all plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the plan take the plan into consideration. This provision is designed to prevent government actions from disregarding the recommendations of a comprehensive plan.

The involvement of local residents will be vital in helping the Town and Village to successfully achieve the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Although some actions will be appropriate for implementation by the Town and Village Boards and/or municipal department staff, others will call for participation by civic organizations, public/private partnerships, citizen committees, and other entities.

## Periodic Review

The Town and Village Boards will arrange for periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan at least every five years. The review will assess the need for amending or updating the plan to address emerging issues as appropriate. For instance, it will be important to update the plan with the new demographic data from the 2010 Census. Any emerging issues uncovered from the Census should be addressed in an amended Action Plan for the Comprehensive Plan.

**“Destiny is not a matter of chance; but a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for, It is a thing to be achieved.”**

Williams Jennings Bryan

To keep the plan implementation on schedule, the existing Comprehensive Plan Committee will be charged with annual review and evaluation of plan implementation for a period of not less than five years. Each year, the committee will prepare an annual status report on the accomplishments of the last twelve months to inform residents about what is being implemented. The status report will be presented at a public meeting.

## Action Plan

The communities intentionally created a visionary plan rather than a technical document. The following action plan outlines a broad range of initiatives to accomplish the established vision. Some of the actions are readily achievable within the existing planning and funding framework, while others will require additional creativity, financial resources and innovative collaborations. The ongoing development of progressive new zoning ordinances in each community will be linked to this action plan and provide the technical framework to guide its implementation. This Action Plan is organized by the nine goal statements described above.



## I. Community Character and Historic Preservation Actions

### **Goal:**

*The Town and Village will employ best practices and creative land use tools that shape development, improve design and aesthetics, preserve historic resources and enhance rural character.*

### **Context:**

Cossackie is recognized for its scenic beauty, open spaces, rural and historic character and small town quality of life. The desire to protect rural character and control major development is the most prevalent theme raised during the comprehensive planning process. While growth is inevitable and desirable, the character of growth is most important. Residents called upon the Town and Village to explore creative ways to protect community character including conservation initiatives, purchase of land, support for active agriculture, design standards and specialized zoning tools. The uniqueness of Cossackie can easily be lost without careful attention to these issues and they will be the most important challenges the Town and Village face in the years ahead.

**“Conservation is a state of harmony between man and nature.”**

Aldo Leopold

The community is strongly in favor of using regulatory tools to meet objectives. This was expressed strongly in the Community Meetings and also in the survey responses. Significant majorities of survey respondents favored strict development regulations such as zoning (74%) and design guidelines (71%). Residents expressed a clear desire to preserve the character of the community with a full 90% indicating that the Town and Village should work to preserve the rural character, 86% to protect and enhance active farms, and 83% to preserve wetlands and open space. In addition, respondents to the community survey strongly indicated a preference for regulation of development with 70% indicating that the Town and Village should apply design standards and 82% indicating that Cossackie should control density of residential developments.

**“I feel that the main goal of the Cossackie Community Plan is to protect the character of our community and to shape the location, characteristics and intensity of future development.”**

Resident Survey Comment

The Town and Village’s approach to protecting character recognizes land as an eco-system, not a commodity. For generations the major constraint to development in Cossackie has been the soil characteristics and high percentage of wetlands. As development project after development project is reviewed, the influence of these variables on the type, location and density of development, despite local zoning, has been reaffirmed. While New York State regulated wetlands have been identified and mapped, the more prevalent Federal wetlands have not, making it impossible for the community to definitively identify land suitable for development. Regardless of the zoning framework chosen, wetlands will largely determine what can be built and where. This plan proposes the use of a performance zoning framework that focuses development on land least subject to environmental constraints. The recommended actions are as follows:



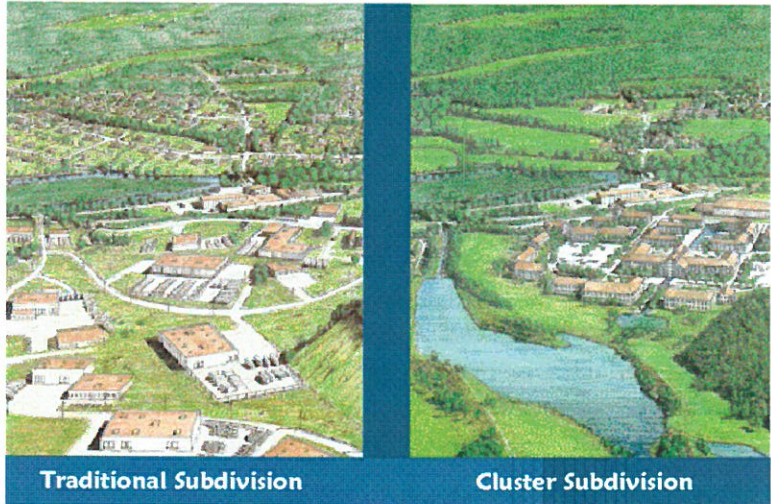
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## Actions:

### 1. Regulation and Standards

Communities across the country grapple with the desire to maintain rural character as they face development pressure and the disappearance of open space and Coxsackie is no exception. There are a growing number of land management and preservation tools used by communities to meet this challenge including:

- **Cluster Development** preserves the maximum amount of open space by clustering development on smaller lots in concentrated areas of a parcel closer than would otherwise be allowed in a conventional subdivision. The approach creates open space or protects environmental features on the remainder of the property without increasing density for the parcel as a whole. Cluster development has the added advantage of reducing the cost of infrastructure.



- **Conservation Subdivisions** are an enhancement of the cluster development, a conservation subdivision accomplishes community goals through a creative design process that identifies primary and secondary conservation areas. Wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes, in addition to a large portion of the flat, dry, and otherwise buildable land is set aside on each parcel. Lot sizes are reduced and the allowed development is arranged to “fit” onto the unconstrained land.
- **Incentive Zoning** provides an incentive, such as a density bonus, in exchange for specific amenities from a developer. A density bonus allows for the development of more units in a zoning district that would normally be allowed in exchange for enhancing or preserving a designated resource, such as an open space or recreation area or providing some other public benefit such as park amenities or workforce housing. Some communities charge a fee to developers in exchange for a density bonus.
- **Performance Zoning** specifies the intensity of land use that is acceptable, focusing on the performance of a parcel and how it impacts surrounding areas. This approach differs from the traditional zoning in place in Coxsackie today that specifies the allowable uses for land in specified districts. Performance zoning has a primary objective of preserving natural resources. Under the framework communities outline performance standards that typically address minimum open space, maximum density, and maximum impervious surface among others. The intensity of development for each project is determined through a site evaluation and compliance with the standards or an established point system. This approach provides flexibility and allows a broader range land uses, as long as their impact is positive.



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- **Environmental Control Formulas** can be used in traditional zoning as an additional requirement or as a part of a performance zoning framework. This approach reduces the development density allowed on a particular parcel based upon the sensitivity of the land. For example, a portion of a site that is actually under water would be discounted 100% (e.g. not buildable at all).
- **Overlay Zoning** provides additional protection or regulation of resources that may span or be present in different zoning districts. Common examples of overlays are flood zones, wetlands, aquifers, water sources, ridgelines, scenic views, historic districts, steep slopes, waterfronts or environmentally sensitive areas.

These are important tools for the Town and Village to use to influence the character of growth in the future. The following activities are recommended as priority actions to protect community character:

- 1.1 Revise all zoning and land management codes to be consistent with this comprehensive plan.
- 1.2 Establish a definition of “major development” as any development of such magnitude or impact that specially prescribed review is required (without regard to size or density).
- 1.3 Adopt a zoning framework that determines density based upon site-specific environmental conditions (especially wetlands and soil conditions) through use of an environmental overlay, performance zoning techniques or control formulas.
- 1.4 Amend existing subdivision regulations to provide for conservation subdivisions and clustering and require these tools for all major developments.
- 1.5 Adopt subdivision standards that protect and maintain natural landscapes and rural character such as requiring protection of mature trees or habitat areas and ensure that new site infrastructure elements reduce sprawl and development costs by including narrow roadways, small entrances, shared driveways, sidewalks, green space and pedestrian amenities.
- 1.6 Develop design standards for new developments addressing streetscape expectations and architectural features and create design districts to address the different character of different parts of the Town and Village. In the Village, standards should reinforce central business district attributes and protection of historic and waterfront resources. In the Town, especially in Earlton, the standards should reinforce rural character and hamlet architecture.
- 1.7 Limit multi-unit developments (condominiums, apartments and mobile homes) to certain locations in the Town and Village.



Conserved Land Used For Farming



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- 1.8 Designate critical environmental resources or create a conservation overlay zone to control development affecting perennial stream corridors and surface water sources, aquifers and recharge areas, and swamps, scenic views, and historic landscapes (see additional discussion in the Environment and Natural Resources section).

## 2. Oversight and Management

As the real estate market remains “hot” and the number and scale of proposed development projects continues to increase, it is important that Coxsackie have the capacity and skills to provide the oversight and project management necessary to review and properly permit new development. New land management tools recommended under this goal demand flexibility and require training and support to master. Under the zoning ordinances presently in place in the Town and Village, land uses are either allowed or not allowed. Under performance zoning, uses are determined through calculations of a variety of factors. By ensuring that municipal boards are well trained and prepared to manage a more complicated review process, the Town and Village can ensure that development projects will be reviewed efficiently. The following activities are recommended as priority actions:

**“Let’s not have Coxsackie lose its character with additional development that detracts from the inherent beauty of the Town and also adds congestion to the roads and taxes resources that are already in need of upgrading.”**

Resident Survey Response

- 2.1 Provide ongoing training for municipal boards on planning and zoning issues. Encourage participation in available training for municipal officials provided by the New York State Department of State and the New York Planning Federation. Take full advantage of the technical assistance and planning provided by Greene County organizations including Planning and Economic Development, Industrial Development Agency, Soil and Water Conservation Department among others.
- 2.2 Retain professional planning services to advise on the implementation of new land management tools and seek the active participation of Greene County planning and conservation organizations.
- 2.3 Develop an approach to manage set-aside lands associated with conservation subdivisions. Conservation subdivisions are characterized by common open space and clustered compact lots. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland and/or natural resources while allowing for the maximum number of residences under current community zoning and subdivision regulations. This tool could be very useful to the Town and Village in their efforts to protect community character, but without comprehensive approach and long term management strategy conservation subdivisions may also simply create little pockets of marginal land rather than true interconnected open space.
- 2.4 Require digital data on all major development proposals and electronic submission of all development application (including SEQR reviews). This requirement speeds up and simplifies the review process and allows for more transparency in development decisions.



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- 2.5 Undertake the range of studies and plans detailed elsewhere in this document. As a result of this Comprehensive Plan and the revision of the Town and Village Zoning Ordinances, a number of special studies and plans were identified. Completion of a comprehensive flood study, wetland mapping, stormwater management plan and open space plan are important to protect public health and safety as well as community character. Many of these actions are described in greater detail under the Infrastructure and Environmental Resources sections of the action plan).

## 3. Historic Preservation

Consistent with the desire to preserve the rural character of the Town, the community survey identified strong resident desire to have Cossackie work to preserve historic resources (85%). Historic preservation has many benefits including strengthening and enhancing the tax base by encouraging reinvestment and maintenance of buildings and increasing property sales; creating a positive image, particularly of a visually appealing and economically viable village that can attract tourists; and increasing competitiveness by differentiating the Village from other business locations to attract new jobs. Recommended actions include the following:



**“Cossackie has a rich Colonial history that should be enhanced further and preserved for future generations.”**

Resident Survey Response

- 3.1 Refine the local historic district program to expand the Reed Street Historic District and adopt historic overlay authority to protect individual structures, sites, and features not part of a district. Ensure that adjacent land uses do not detract from or threaten the historic resources.
- 3.2 Promote and facilitate the protection of historic homes through completion of an historic resources inventory, listing on local, state and national registers and by encouraging the use of tax credits or tax incentives for rehabilitation and reinvestment.
- 3.3 Evaluate the historic commission review process to ensure its efficiency, timeliness and consistency.
- 3.4 Identify existing historic landscape and architectural elements (stonewalls, wells, bridges, cemeteries, etc) and provide appropriate protection.
- 3.5 Work with nonprofits and municipalities to apply for grant funds to preserve historic and cultural resources such as the Bronck House.
- 3.6 Ensure protection of archeological resources by designating important sites as historic and pursuing proper listing of sites on state and national registers. Sensitive sites should also be protected using the historic overlay described above.



## II. Community Stewardship and Planning Actions

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will provide strong financial stewardship, municipal leadership and visionary and proactive planning in a framework of open government that encourages the involvement of residents and leads to a stable and diverse tax base.*

### Context:

**"Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community character is not. The question is not whether your part of the world is going to change. The question is how."**

Edward McMahon,  
The Conservation Fund

The development climate in this small rural Town and Village has changed dramatically – catapulting Cossackie into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and placing new and considerable demands on elected officials, board members, and volunteers. To remain competitive and able to shape development that is smart and sustainable the Town and Village will need streamlined, efficient and professional governance.

Concern and frustration with the level of property taxes was one of the most strongly expressed issues by residents in the community survey and visioning workshops. Residents are afraid that the tax burden is pricing long time residents out of the community, compromising the financial security of seniors and reducing the ability of first-time buyers to own a home in Cossackie. Housing affordability is perceived as eroding rapidly as taxes and home costs continue to climb. Residents also voiced concern about the scale and impact of proposed major development and the impact of such growth on traffic congestion, municipal infrastructure, environmental quality and the quality and cost of education.

### Actions:

#### 1. Tax Base

Cossackie's ability to raise revenue to provide infrastructure and services to the community is driven by effective performance of its tax base. The existing and future real estate of the Town and Village creates opportunities and constraints for maintaining and attracting homeowners, businesses and jobs. In many communities the key to economic stability or growth is to optimizing tax base by making every acre of land as productive as it can be without compromising community vitality or natural resources. In Cossackie's case this effort is complicated by a very assertive residential market that is competing for land – including land appropriate for commercial or industrial growth. Recommended actions include the following:

- 1.1 Ensure that there is an adequate supply of property suitable for commercial development necessary to balance the tax base. This effort is critical to optimizing the tax base, spreading the revenue demands and establishing stable budgets.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

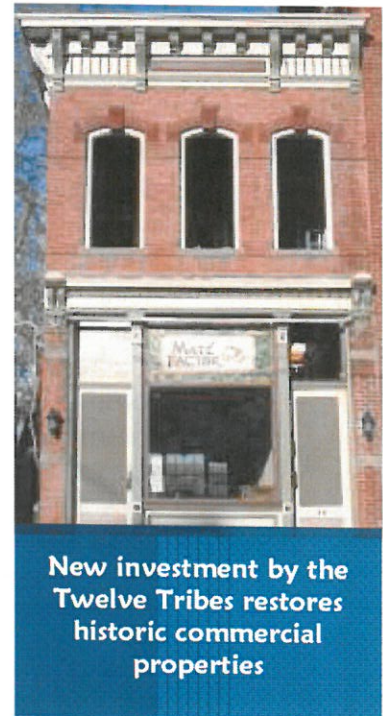
- 1.2 Evaluate measures to ensure that new residential development that proposes no or limited school district impacts build-out as proposed. This includes primarily seasonal housing, fractional ownership housing, and senior/age-restricted housing.
- 1.3 Seek funds to formally evaluate the advantages and disadvantages to adopting a dual tax rate assessment process. The Homestead Tax Option is a local option to establish two separate property tax rates: a lower tax rate for residential property owners (homestead tax), and a higher rate for all other property owners (non-homestead tax). New York State permits municipalities with a dual tax rate structure to eliminate the cap on condominium assessments that otherwise applies.
- 1.4 Promote redevelopment and infill buildings in the Village core and other appropriate target areas. This strategy is critical to maintaining village density and containing sprawl.
- 1.5 Routinely educate local leaders and board members, school board members and administrators and the public about the importance of sustainable tax base expansion.

## 2. Development Fees and Incentives

Most successful communities use a combination of regulation and incentives to influence growth and shape development. Traditional programs targeted toward business recruitment and development are already in place. The presence of a New York State Empire Zone along the Route 9W Corridor helps steer larger development to the successful business parks development by the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA). The use of Payments in Lieu of Taxes for major economic development projects has been, and remains, an important incentive. Some residents are cautious about the use of incentives fearing companies may scale back operations or never reach the full build out that will enable the community to recapture revenues forgone in early years. Research shows, however that while Greene County has many important attributes, its limited labor force concerns site selectors and companies looking for a regional presence. Incentives help to militate against that risk.

As more and more large scale and high-end residential development is proposed, the call to protect community character becomes more urgent. The use of development and impact fees, as allowed in New York State, can be an important tool, generating revenue necessary to preserve open space, sustain agriculture, conserve important natural features and expand availability of park and recreation amenities.

The administration of tax abatements is time consuming and complicated for small communities like the Town and Village of Cossackie. This plan recommends the use of new zoning incentives rather than tax abatements because they are generally simpler to administer. Recommended actions include the following:





# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 2.1 Continue to support available tax abatements and PILOTs to steer major economic development to the 9W corridor and develop specialized tax incentives to encourage small retail business and mixed use development in the Village, hamlet and target areas.
- 2.2 Develop a system of land use incentives and density bonuses to shape smaller scale economic development, mixed use projects and targeted residential subdivisions. Bonuses may allow more floor area in a mixed use project (greater lot coverage or additional height) in exchange for meeting a community goal like development of workforce housing or senior apartments. Greater density in a residential subdivision may be given in exchange for the production of housing affordable to local first-time homebuyers. Cluster zoning also serves as a bonus, enabling additional units but also reducing cost of infrastructure. Density bonuses can also be provided for other public benefits including development of open space, trails and parks, historic preservation, and green building or energy conservation enhancements.
- 2.3 Develop an impact and development fee schedule to guide development, protect land, mitigate impacts and create revenue. Development projects initiated by builders and developers increase demand for water and sewer systems, streets, parks, and various other infrastructure. For example, a new housing development generates demands for services to maintain new roads, collect household garbage and recycling, and educate new children in the community. An increasing number of communities have begun using development impact fees to recover a portion of the costs generated by this increased demand and cost of services rather than passing these costs on to existing property owners. Impact fees must be reasonably related to the impact of the development and many Towns and Villages closely tie impact fees to their capital improvement program.
- 2.4 Identify smaller sites that can be made “shovel-ready” through pre-mitigation work, wetland assessment, technical services for small scale economic development projects and infill in the Village core and target areas.



## 3. Government Services, Communication and Coordination

Coxsackie has been growing quickly (28.5% between 1990 and 2000). While word of mouth and public notices once sufficed to spread the word about community events, a growing population demands more opportunities for communication and enhanced access to information. Today residents expect that basic municipal services will be online and that forms and ordinances will be available through the community web site. Web sites are critical vehicles for keeping contact with all residents - whether they are longstanding residents, second home owners or seasonal visitors.

As all of the nearby River Towns (New Baltimore, Athens, Coxsackie and Catskill) have engaged in comprehensive planning processes, it has become obvious that they share many values, opportunities



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

and challenges. Opportunities for joint planning, consolidated services and intermunicipal agreements exist. Many of the factors influencing Cossackie today are regional including the housing boom, development pressure along Route 9W, waterfront planning and the strong call to protect community character, conserve the natural environment and protect historic resources. Many partners can help to facilitate intermunicipal planning and operations. In particular, the Greene County Department of Economic Development and Planning and Greene County Soil and Water Conservation have taken on important responsibilities and provide vital technical assistance and support. Recommended actions include the following:

- 3.1 Seek funds (NYS shared services grants) to do a formal consolidation study and examine ways to blend Town and Village services to increase cost effectiveness and efficiency. The rising cost of municipal services is an issue facing all communities. The NYS Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant Program is intended to study the feasibility of consolidating services. It covers costs associated with consolidations, mergers, dissolutions, cooperative agreements and shared services among municipalities.
- 3.2 Improve Town and Village communication with residents through a newsletter, mailings in water and sewer bills, and improved web sites. The community websites (or website if a consolidated site can be developed) represent an important source for information, plans, codes and ordinances and a source for public hearing minutes, events listings and a community calendar.
- 3.3 Consider the development of intermunicipal zoning overlay districts to preserve community character and environmental resources along Route 9W and for all of the river towns (New Baltimore, Cossackie, Athens and Catskill).
- 3.4 Prepare a brochure and web page that summarize Town and Village rules for major development. The brochure should describe the community vision, plan priorities, application process, forms and review checklists. If applicants and potential developers understand requirements and procedures more complete and appropriate projects will be proposed and project review can be more efficient.
- 3.5 Collaborate with public and private partners region-wide and in surrounding communities to preserve the character of Greene County's River Towns. Work closely with the Greene County IDA and with Greene County Economic Development and Planning. Examine opportunities to partner with the County to access professional planning and grant-writing support and encourage the County to establish a fund to provide matching funds to leverage grant dollars.





## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 3.6 Participate in a leadership role in the Greene County Hudson River Towns Inter-Municipal Growth Plan. This project, coordinated by Greene County Economic Development and Planning and funded by the NYS Quality Communities Program, proposes the development of an inter-municipal growth compact between the Town of New Baltimore, Town and Village of Coxsackie, Town and Village of Athens and Town and Village of Catskill.
- 3.7 Ensure excellence and consistency in municipal leadership by implementing a code of ethics and disclosure for all boards and committees. As Coxsackie faces considerable growth pressure, the expectations placed on members of Town and Village boards will increase significantly. Ethics and disclosure requirements make explicit to the community the responsibility on the shoulders of municipal boards to represent the needs of the entire Coxsackie community.
- 3.8 Revise municipal codes and add additional code enforcement staff. As new development floods the market and tenants are able to move up and out of starter homes or apartments, many owners of marginal property cannot afford ongoing maintenance. Code enforcement demands may escalate and the Town and Village should be prepared to respond to this trend as it emerges.
- 3.9 The Town and Village Boards will arrange for annual review of the Comprehensive Plan. The review will assess the need for amending or updating the plan to address emerging issues as appropriate. For instance, it will be important to update the plan with the new demographic data from the 2010 Census. Any emerging issues uncovered from the Census should be addressed in an amended Action Plan for the Comprehensive Plan. To keep the plan implementation on schedule, the existing Comprehensive Plan Committee will be charged with annual review and evaluation of plan implementation for a period of not less than five years. Each year, the committee will prepare an annual status report on the accomplishments of the last twelve months to inform residents about what is being implemented. The status report will be presented at a public meeting.

### The Historic River Towns of Westchester

HRTW is a consortium of 13 municipalities along the east bank of the Hudson River, including Peekskill, Cortlandt, Buchanan, Croton-on-Hudson, Town and Village of Ossining, Briarcliff Manor, Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, Irvington, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings-on-Hudson, Yonkers and Historic Hudson Valley. The HRTW is a non-profit organization comprised of representatives of the 11 municipalities noted above. The unique combination of riverine environment and cultural wealth has been attracting visitors to the HRTW region for years. Until recently, there were no area-wide comprehensive and coordinated tourism marketing efforts. Historic River Towns of Westchester was established in 1994 to address this issue.



## III. Economic Development and Village Vitality Actions

*In the business world, everyone is paid in two coins: cash and experience.  
Take the experience first; the cash will come later.  
Harold Geneen*

### Goal:

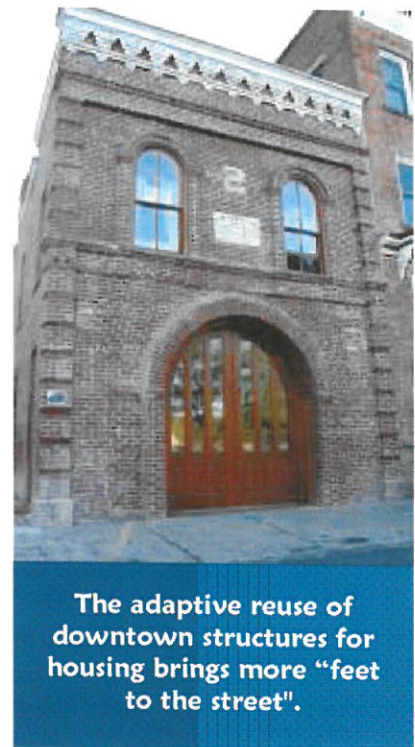
The Town and Village will create work and wealth for local residents by recruiting compatible new companies, supporting business expansion, and creating a thriving retail center. We will focus on stimulating a thriving local economy and a vibrant Village core.

### Context:

The very future of the Town and Village depends upon the accomplishment of a broad economic development strategy focused on creating work and wealth for local residents and companies. Growing and stabilizing the local tax base demands growth in retail, commercial, and industrial sectors. Some of this growth will occur in existing industrial parks and along key corridors such as Route 9W, but there is considerable opportunity for expanded retail development in the downtown core. The Village's distinctive identity and character, including many historic residential and commercial properties will help to attract strong locally owned businesses, which generally return a higher percentage of profit to the community, employ local people, and purchase goods from other local companies. Ongoing support for commercial building improvements including a downtown façade program and pedestrian amenities will be important aspects of the plan.

Residents praised Cossackie as an economically diverse community, with strong family-owned businesses in a great location convenient to the larger capital region. In the community survey, residents expressed disappointment with the availability of retail, while a high percentage of residents were satisfied with the level of professional services. To some degree, this is consistent with the current space utilization in the Village, where services outnumber retail uses. There was strong support for policies that encourage growth of locally owned and operated businesses. The lack of big chain stores and "big box" development was viewed as positive – though some residents wouldn't mind having more access to basic retail.

Residents are especially proud of the aesthetic appeal of the Village, but concerned with the aesthetic appeal of 9W. The need for design standards for each is clear, though they will need to be distinct to create the right commercial environment for each area. Economic development amenities like signage, a business directory, and parking were also identified as important.



The adaptive reuse of downtown structures for housing brings more "feet to the street".



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

The Town and Village face some economic development challenges that must be addressed if the comprehensive plan is to be successful. Low education attainment and increasing concentration of residents with moderate or low incomes and residents living below the poverty line are an important labor-force issue. Low incomes limit household spending and support for local businesses. Median incomes actually decreased when adjusted for inflation between 1989 and 1999 -- in both the Village (by 4.9%) and the Town (by 3.7%). Less disposable income and limited retail availability explain lower than average spending.

On the positive side, recent economic development initiatives include the County Economic Strategy, Comprehensive Economic Development Plan, Historic Buildings Plan, as well as Business Park Development, Main Street Revitalization, Small Business Assistance and Empire Zone Program represent opportunities for collaboration as does the upcoming Greene County Hudson River Towns Inter-municipal Growth Strategy.

**"Cossackie is a lovely village and it would be nice if it could keep that impression. Small local businesses, and the upkeep of homes have done wonders for other places (i.e. Hudson, NY, Wilmington, NC, and Portland ME) and could do the same for Cossackie"**

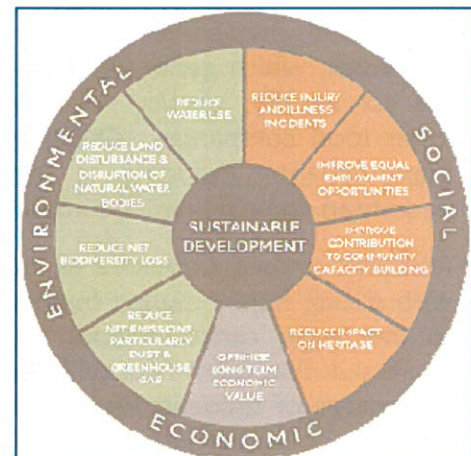
Resident Survey  
Comment

## Actions:

### 1. Encourage Collaboration Around Economic Development Issues

Cossackie is providing framework and opportunity for quality development. IDA Planning (along 9W and RTE 81) and available Empire Zones offer opportunity for solid, positive, organized development of commercial and retail projects. These projects will result in increased tax base for the community. In addition, the Chamber of Commerce, Greene County Economic Planning Department and Rotary Club provide organizations where entrepreneurs cluster and provide moral support to each other. They use the strength of their voices on issues that relate to business and the economic welfare of the Town and Village.

- 1.1 Cooperate closely with IDA planning (along 9W and RTE 81) and available Empire Zones. The IDA's mission is to "focus on developing 'shovel ready' sites and existing historic locations with the goal of marketing to and attracting a diverse mix of business types and employment opportunities for local residents as well as needed new local property tax revenue." Of the four empire zone areas in Greene County, two are located in Cossackie. Area #1 includes 728 acres in the Towns of New Baltimore and Cossackie and includes the Kalkberg Commerce Park (partially located in Cossackie) and Greene Business Technology Park (located entirely in Cossackie). Area #2 includes 100 acres in the Town of Cossackie, which includes the Hudson Valley Commerce Park. The EZ boundaries include the Town/Village line (Plank Road/Sunset Boulevard) and Farm to Market Road



**Sustainable development focuses growth around existing community centers and along development corridors.**



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

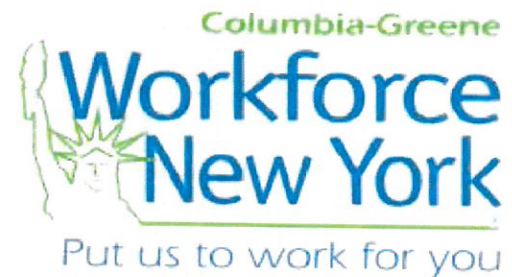
and the area between the railroad tracks and Stacey Road. The Empire Zone Program encourages the creation of jobs and investment in targeted areas through tax breaks and other benefits.

- 1.2 Create a Local Development Corporation to foster interaction with GCIDA, the Chamber of Commerce, Greene County Department of Economic Development and Planning and other economic development entities. A Local Development Corporation can act as an important link between the community and the economic development entities in Greene County. The group could also be responsible for compiling a directory of downtown businesses, services, and amenities. Perhaps most importantly an LDC could apply for and administer grant funds to implement recommended economic development tasks.

## 2. Commercial Land Use

If the tax base in the Town and Village is to become more sustainable, the commercial sector needs to be expanded and made more productive. This can be accomplished by supporting existing companies, buying local products, encouraging small business development and creating space for new development on currently underutilized sites or along corridors.

- 2.1 Carefully evaluate the location of future commercial uses to encourage growth while protecting community character. Focus new development in appropriate locations including infill development in existing zones and traditional commercial clusters. Encourage high value redevelopment on underutilized or underperforming property. Based on feedback from the community meetings, residents would like to see more retail stores including restaurants in the Town and Village. Niche retail and eating and drinking establishments should be concentrated in the village center.
- 2.2 Create a professional business/home occupation zone along 385 from 9W to the Village core and perhaps in other target areas. A home occupation is generally an occupation, profession, or activity carried out for gain that is clearly a customary, incidental, and secondary use of a residential dwelling unit and which does not alter the exterior of the property or affect the residential character of the neighborhood.



Columbia Greene Workforce Investment System supports the growth of the local economy by meeting the employment needs of individuals and business.

## 3. Workforce Development

The Town and Village's solid employment base, including existing prisons and schools, offer Cossackie the opportunity to be selective in development projects that will shape the future. Cossackie has a responsibility to foster growth that provides local people opportunities for quality homes and jobs. There must be a focus on providing and keeping professional jobs at competitive salaries.



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- 3.1 Advocate for improvements in workforce development and local education to increase workforce competitiveness. Cossackie should work to close the skills gap for existing workers and expand the percentage of workers in high-quality jobs by coordinating with regional workforce plans. Cossackie should also encourage excellence in education by supporting its schools and marketing school performance. The Town and Village should continue to support programs that strengthen the continuum of quality learning opportunities from the preschool years through preparation for higher education and the work force.

## 4. Design Standards and Incentives

The Town and Village of Cossackie can influence the development environment by establishing high standards for all development. In general, random growth and speculating developers along 9W detract from the economic success in the community. These developers currently must follow only minimum zoning and planning standards. By contrast, the development sponsored by the GCIDA follows a strict set of design standards to encourage new buildings that are more compatible with traditional rural character.



### GCIDA Design Standards

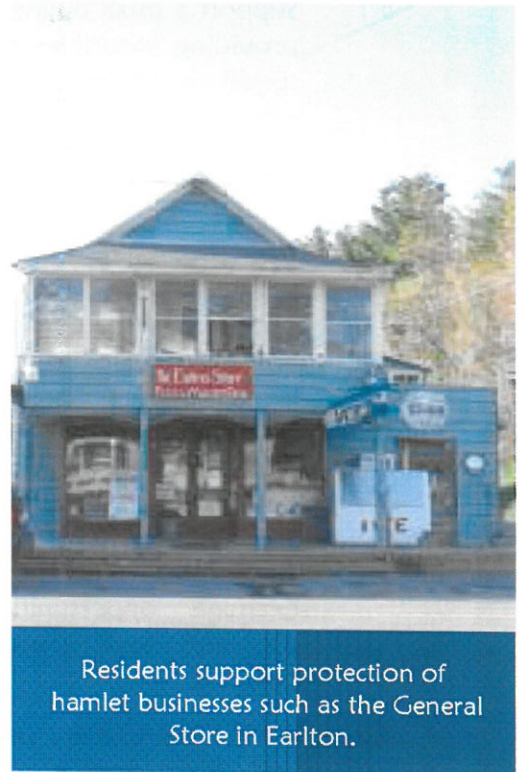
The Greene County IDA has adopted model architectural and development standards for the Greene Business and Kalkberg Industrial Parks. These guidelines have been developed to insure architectural compatibility with existing buildings, the natural landscape and the historic traditions of the region's architecture. These guidelines are intended to permit owner self expression while simultaneously ensuring continuity in building style, materials, and colors, all directed at a compatibility with the natural beauty of the region.

- 4.1 Ensure that commercial uses blend into the existing rural community character by implementing commercial design standards. Require building design that makes the commercial core walkable by creating diverse streetscapes where the ground floor space faces the street, street level retail is appropriate, structures are built to lot lines, and building fronts are made permeable by the placement of doors and windows. Design standards, with or without a design review process, are an important tool in preserving community character. The purpose of design standards and review is generally to preserve the integrity of the neighborhood or community while allowing for change. The Town and Village can ensure attractive streetscapes and pedestrian amenities by:
- Providing pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, landscaping and awnings along sidewalks
  - Providing street furniture, such as benches and trash receptacles
  - Maintaining parking as a buffer between pedestrians and moving vehicles, both on-street and in parking lots
  - Allowing outdoor tables for restaurants and cafes
  - Enhancing pedestrian street crossings with articulated pavers, bump-outs or raised crosswalks



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- Provide adequate lighting at each crossing
  - Ensuring all crosswalks are delineated with materials that provide day and night visibility
  - Planning for the accommodation of automobile traffic in a way where pedestrian comfort and safety are of the utmost importance.
- 4.2 Focus on beautification and aesthetics in commercial districts and the Village including street tree maintenance, plantings, and landscaping. One way to attract residents and visitors to the commercial districts and the Village is to make visual improvements to these areas. Improvements could include planting flowers and shrubbery, general landscaping, maintaining street trees and general clean-up. This may even help stimulate improvements in other areas of the Town and Village as well.
- 4.3 Revise signage guidelines and standards for all types of signage used in the Village, key corridors and Route 9W. Identify the types of signage that are compatible with existing buildings and the community's image, and indicate types of signage that should not be used in these locations.
- 4.4 Improve directional and welcome signage to direct people traveling along 9W and convey the available retail and dining opportunities as well as waterfront attractions. With permission from NYSDOT, the Town and Village of Cossackie should design gateway signage in the highway right-of-way highlighting the Downtown, waterfront and cultural attractions including the Bronk House, and the Reed Street Historic District. Signs, banners, and/or informational kiosks are all ways to make visitors aware of attractions and facilities, and should be developed in a way that conforms to the existing historic character of the community (e.g., wood rather than plastic). Signage at gateways to Cossackie should be improved to welcome visitors and promote the Town and Village of Cossackie. These signs could focus on Cossackie's history or highlight its location.
- 4.5 Develop façade and building improvement programs for the Village, West Cossackie, Earlton, and along 9W. For existing businesses and homes, Cossackie should develop facade improvement districts targeted to the Village, West Cossackie, Earlton, and along 9W to concentrate impact of improvements on aesthetic and community visibility issues. Cossackie should also develop a facade improvement program that pools voluntary tax or private donations from individuals and businesses in a local low-interest lending program. These funds could be used for small-scale improvements. At





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the same time, the Cossackie should attempt to secure funding which can be loaned or granted to property owners for larger scale improvements.

## 5. Small Business Retention and Attraction

The Village is built to accommodate small business and more entrepreneurs are looking at the Village as a possible location. In the survey and workshops many residents complained about limited retail choice. The challenge will be to stimulate a strong buy-local mentality so that new small businesses enjoy the full support of local residents.

- 5.1 Support a small business retention/attraction initiative and retail recruitment strategy by providing incentives and/or loan programs and a buy local initiative. In recruiting specific niche businesses, the Town and Village of Cossackie should work closely with existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs. Merchants, residents, and home-based businesses should be made aware of the types of businesses needed in Cossackie. Information about the businesses being targeted can be publicized in local newsletters and press releases. The unique opportunity for Cossackie with regard to small business development is the presence of two locally owned banks: the National Bank of Cossackie and the Bank of Greene County. Local financial institutions are often more responsive to local entrepreneurs. The Town and Village should develop close working relationships with the financial institutions and examine opportunities to collaborate on programs and grant applications whenever possible.
- 5.2 A retail recruitment package for the downtown and target areas is required. This package should incorporate multiple available properties into a single listing portfolio and include information on incentive programs, financial and building packages, and so on. These unified marketing efforts expand beyond merely commercial properties and vacant buildings, but also include all activities in the Village that impact economic development, consumer activity, residential attractiveness and overall quality of life. Other service and office uses also need to be recruited to put workers and visitors on the street to shop at retail stores.



Cossackie's Riverside Park can serve as an incentive for water-dependent recreation and commercial uses.

## 6. Waterfront Development

The Hudson River is one of Cossackie's greatest assets and it is greatly underutilized. At the very least, this area should be able to support needs of boaters along the river.

- 6.1 Create a development plan for the Hudson River waterfront to support needs of boaters along the river by offering fuel, food and boating supplies, internet access,



showers and laundry services and perhaps eventually hotel accommodations.

- 6.2 As new zoning is prepared for both the Town and Village, it is important to examine existing uses, especially the presence of industrially zoned land – a use that may conflict with plans for the waterfront to be a recreation and tourism resource. New zoning should encourage water dependent and water related uses such as marinas, hotels, restaurants, and park and recreation amenities. The use of a waterfront overlay district to shape future development along the waterfront and encourage the proper mix of uses should be considered

## 7. Brownfield Redevelopment

Throughout the Town and Village, a few Brownfield sites exist. They represent underutilized sites that once contributed to the employment and tax bases of the communities. The Town and Village will explore all available programs to revitalize brownfields and put the land into productive use.

- 7.1 Investigate Brownfield Opportunity Area designation in the Village. The Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program provides municipalities and community based organizations with assistance, up to 90 percent of the eligible project costs, to complete revitalization plans and implementation strategies for areas or communities affected by the presence of brownfield sites, and site assessments for strategic brownfield sites.

The Pre-Nomination Study provides a basic and preliminary analysis of the area affected by brownfield sites. The Nomination provides an in-depth and thorough description and analysis, including an economic and market trends analysis, of existing conditions, opportunities, and reuse potential for properties located in the proposed Brownfield Opportunity Area with an emphasis on the identification and reuse potential of strategic sites that are catalysts for revitalization. The Implementation Strategy provides a description of the full range of techniques and actions, ranging from actions and projects that can be undertaken immediately to those which have a longer time-frame, that are necessary to implement the area-wide plan and to ensure that proposed uses and improvements materialize. Site assessments on strategic brownfield sites may be eligible for funding if environmental data is required.

## IV. Transportation Actions

***Home is where part of the family waits until the others are through with the car.***  
***Herbert Prochnow***

The Town and Village will ensure that excellent transportation amenities are accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and public transit users, creating a multi-modal community with well-maintained roadways, manageable traffic and beautiful streetscapes.



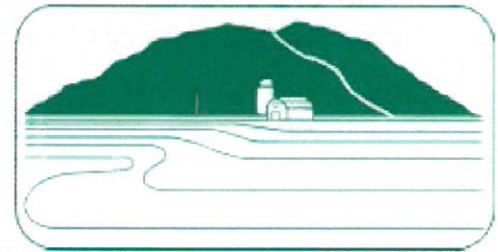
# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## **Context:**

The Town and Village are very conveniently located from a regional transportation perspective. Ready access to the New York State Thruway, and close proximity to major interstate connections such as I-90, I-87, and the Mass Turnpike, make Cossackie desirable as a workplace, home and visitor destination. While there is currently adequate transportation capacity, the Town and Village must carefully evaluate and plan for future growth in order to prevent transportation problems. Poorly planned growth will quickly tax the existing transportation system creating congestion and deterioration of rural roadways and scenic resources.

Based on community input during the planning process, the need for improved road maintenance and sidewalks were identified by a relatively high number of people in the community (61% roads, 63% sidewalks). Residents are generally satisfied with transportation issues with most transportation related items in the community survey and visioning sessions receiving 65% or higher satisfaction rates.

In both the Village and the Town, it must be recognized that there are significant limiting factors that will guide future improvements to transportation. Historic street alignments and lack of sufficient right-of-way, the CSX rail line, Cossackie Creek, wetlands, steep slopes and other factors all contribute to limiting the development of alternative transportation. Given these limitations, it is important that the density of development be carefully controlled, so that existing transportation amenities are not pushed beyond acceptable levels of service.



The Duchess Land Conservancy worked with the County Highway Department to implement rural road standards in the hamlet of Shekomeko that preserved the core and increased pedestrian safety. Removing the entrance's curbs and gutters, retaining rocks and vegetation, and reducing the size of entrances to residential developments maintained the rustic feel of the hamlet.

## **Actions:**

### **1. Develop a Road Maintenance, Rehabilitation and Replacement Strategy**

The Town and Village of Cossackie should complete a detailed strategy that would address short-term and long term maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement of roads within the communities. The plan should be developed using Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies. Ideally, the communities would develop a joint plan to insure consistency in roadway management between the Town and Village. A comprehensive road maintenance strategy would allow the communities to more effectively plan for future road system needs, as well as minimize costs. Specific issues to be addressed in the strategy include:

- 1.1 Develop a methodology for annual road inspections that would document existing conditions, project future conditions, and provide for prioritization of future maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement of the transportation network. The Town has recently appointed an Advisory Committee on Road Repair that will assist with this effort and advise the Town Board.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 1.2 Evaluate and develop appropriate methods for road system drainage to address chronic flooding problems in certain areas of the Town or Village. In the local roads ordinance, include a requirement that all culverts, bridges or other drainage conveyance measures be substantially upgraded any time there is damage from a flood. A local requirement for conveyance upgrades related to drainage structures will greatly increase the communities' opportunity to have the cost of these upgrades covered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in those circumstances when the Town and Village are part of a federally declared disaster area and there is Federal Public Assistance Funding available.
- 1.3 Reduce environmental impacts from local road systems by instituting construction and maintenance practices that will effectively reduce erosion and sedimentation from roadside ditches. When feasible, retrofit road systems to include stormwater treatment practices. Funding from several sources may be available to undertake stormwater treatment retrofit efforts if well planned.
- 1.4 Improve equipment for the effective removal of snow from high density areas such as the Reed Street and West Coxsackie Business District as well as those areas where on-street parking is critical to public users. The Village and Town should consider acquiring a larger snow blower for rapid cleanup after storms.
- 1.5 Implement a snow emergency policy. Consider the use of plowed municipal parking lots as locations for residents of Village streets to park their vehicles after heavy snowfalls to enable the plowing of streets with on-street parking. As an alternative, consider alternate side of the street parking in snow emergencies or another suitable solution.

## 2. New Development Standards

The Town and Village of Coxsackie should work cooperatively on new standards for construction of future transportation infrastructure. For a variety of reasons, no solution or single set of standards will address all situations and conditions within the Town and Village. Specific recommendations include:

- 2.1 To the maximum extent possible, the Town should require any new access to subdivisions to be constructed to Town road standards and dedicated to the Town for future maintenance. Adequate construction and dedication to the Town eliminates future problems with maintenance of these roadways. This requirement should be codified and performance bonds should be required for all related development projects.
- 2.2 In the Village, and/or those portions of the Town where high density development is to be targeted, maximize the use of shared access points for new commercial or residential developments and minimize curb cuts in high density areas to promote pedestrian comfort and safety and reduce infrastructure costs.
- 2.3 Review and revise current local road ordinances to incorporate standards that are appropriate for rural roads yet provide a safe and durable transportation network within the community. These standards should effectively address the look and feel of the desired local road system for all new development projects. Standards should



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

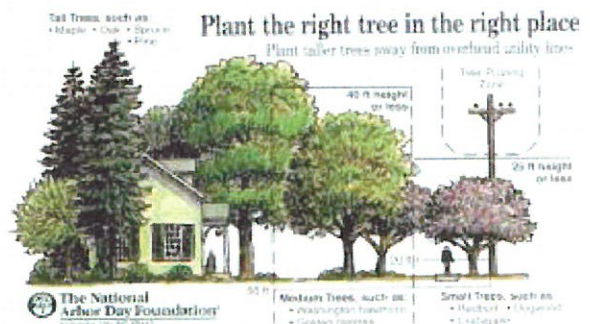
include, but are not limited to, the type and location of sidewalks, lane width, road shoulder width, provision of “green” zones along roadways, signage, and traffic control features such as road markings, curbs etc.

- 2.4 Require any new major development to undertake traffic studies that are more detailed than the standard methodologies. Require future studies to include actual traffic counts over an appropriate length of time instead of reliance on published data or typical values.
- 2.5 In new developments, discourage use of traditional curbing systems that present barriers to amphibians and other wildlife. Use slanted curbs when curbing is necessary. Reducing the reliance on curbing will also reduce future maintenance costs.

## 3. Public Parking

During development of this plan, it has been noted in several forums that there are currently significant limitations on public parking in key areas of the Village of Coxsackie. While new development activities in the Town and Village can be expected to adequately plan for parking needs, parking for existing businesses and public use facilities within the Village presents significant limitations and will require a cooperative effort between the Village and private landowners. Recommendations related to parking include:

- 3.1 The Village of Coxsackie should conduct a detailed analysis of parking resources in those areas where public parking has traditionally been limited and problematic. These areas may include the downtown business district, West Coxsackie business district and the area of the “church corners”. A detailed study would evaluate current parking needs, project future parking needs and identify possible actions to increase public parking within the Village. It is expected that solutions to addressing parking needs will require the close cooperation between local government and private landowners.
- 3.2 Business owners in the downtown and West Coxsackie business districts should be advised to have their employees park away from the businesses so as to reserve public parking closer to the business for customers. For example, employees of businesses in the downtown district could park in the available spaces at Riverside Park or behind Reed Street, freeing spaces along Reed Street for customers.
- 3.3 Require new commercial or institutional property owners to provide adequate =customer parking in future plans for renovations, expansions or new businesses.



**A plan for the planting, maintenance and replacement of trees in all new development will continue the community's rural character.**



## 4. Aesthetics

In addition to a functional transportation system, the Village and Town of Cossackie should seek to implement measures that will improve the aesthetic quality of local road systems. Specific recommendations include:

- 4.1 Establish standards that would provide for tree lined streets in new developments, specifying appropriate species and planting locations.
- 4.2 Establish standards for road signage that will provide a neat, consistent appearance within the community.
- 4.3 Work with CSX to address the unkempt appearance of the railroad right-of-way through the community. A general 'housekeeping' of this corridor will increase its use simply by the appearance of greater safety.
- 4.4 Establish standards for sidewalks and cross walks to insure uniform appearance and to benefit future maintenance.
- 4.5 Create attractive and informative gateways and landscaping into the Village and Town of Cossackie that clearly identify the community and direct visitors to Village shops and the riverfront area.

## 5. Traffic Patterns

Mitigation of current and future impacts on transportation may be partially addressed by better planning of traffic patterns. While there are significant limitations to the development of new transportation infrastructure in certain areas of the Village and the Town immediately adjacent to the Village, better control of traffic patterns could help improve transportation system function. The Village and Town have the authority to set limitations on specific local roads that could improve traffic flow. Specific recommendations include:

- 5.1 Support the Greene County IDA's plans to reconfigure the Route 9W, Route 81 and Route 385 intersection to create turning lanes for all directions and to limit the use of the Mansion Street extension to one way traffic.
- 5.2 Create and enforce tractor trailer routes into the Village to address commercial/industrial traffic to users on Bailey Street, County Route 9 and the Hudson Valley Business Park on Stacy Road. Specifically, consider requiring all traffic to enter and exit via County Route 9 with no tractor trailer traffic allowed to use Bailey Street (from route 385) or Sunset Blvd. All tractor trailer traffic to Pioneer Lumber, the former American Tree and Wreath site, Brockway Smith, Dynabil and future users in this area should route traffic over County 9 to NYS 9W. The Village should provide adequate signage for the truck route and strictly enforce the use of this route.
- 5.3 Past planning documents and discussions have considered changes in the Reed Street Business District that could improve traffic flow as well as parking. The Village of Cossackie should conduct further analysis of the possible change of Reed Street to a one-way street. Recent improvements to Betke Blvd and Pantelo Place may be appropriate to support this traffic pattern.



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- 5.4 In the Village, work to reduce the need for tractor trailer service to areas with limited access such as the current industrial use off the south end of Riverside Avenue and the former industrial properties on the downtown waterfront. Work with current or future owners of these properties to consider future uses that do not require frequent access by large trucks.
- 5.5 Work with NYSDOT, Coxsackie-Athens School District and the Village of Coxsackie to evaluate possible reconfiguration of the Sunset Blvd/NYS Route 385 intersection to allow for school bus access that does not require the school buses to swing into northbound traffic on Route 385 when buses are entering Sunset Blvd. The same intersection is problematic when heavy snows reduce visibility for school children walking to school.
- 5.6 Consider imposition of weight limits or lowered speed limits around the Bronk House and other historic structures or sites that are subject to deterioration from excessive vibration.

### 6. Pedestrian Amenities

The Village and Town should promote a “walkable” community by improving existing sidewalks, implementing traffic calming and increasing accessibility for residents of all ages and abilities.



The Newburgh Waterfront is enjoying a renaissance with new restaurants and shops. Boating services include seasonal and visiting boat slips, pump-outs, electrical hook ups, cable hook ups, wireless internet access, comfort stations with showers, nearby shops, convenient transportation, and access to nearby historical sites.

- 6.1 Require sidewalks in the Town and Village for all new residential and commercial development specifically in those areas where building density is high or commercial uses are present.
- 6.2 Require pedestrian safety amenities including raised intersections, curb extensions, textured pavement and crosswalks, speed humps, and pedestrian cross walks in all new developments. When possible, rehabilitate or replace existing pedestrian features that are substandard or inadequate.
- 6.3 Work with the Coxsackie-Athens Central School District to continue to provide safe routes for children who walk to school. Ensure that road design considers the needs of students including sidewalks, curbing, and crosswalk design. Require sidewalks within a 1.5 mile radius of the school campus and provide crossing guards as possible.
- 6.4 The Town and Village should consider developing a joint sidewalk restoration committee to be charged with improving sidewalk safety and increasing compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (specifically the link between residential and waterfront areas).

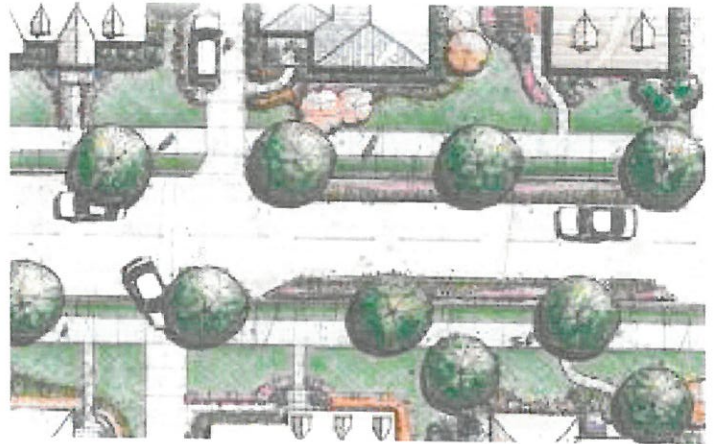


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## 7. Intermodal/Multimodal Opportunities

The Town and Village should work cooperatively to investigate opportunities to maximize linkages between various forms of transportation.

- 7.1 Improve access to Cossackie by boat and small craft. Continue to work with NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to undertake improvements to the Village's Riverfront Park that would effectively promote and enhance visits to the community from the boating community. Improved lighting, expanded dockage, utilities (i.e. electric, water, wastewater) and other amenities may appropriate for consideration. Support local public transportation systems (i.e. taxi, shuttle bus) that can be available to move visitors from the waterfront to local businesses.
- 7.2 Work with the Greene County IDA and the Greene Land Trust to establish a pedestrian/bike path system that can connect the Village with the new business parks located on route 9W.
- 7.3 For new development within close proximity to the Village or the Route 9W commercial corridor, require new development to integrate bicycle and pedestrian paths that will connect the development with these areas.



Many tools exist to calm traffic including textured pavement, curb extensions or "bumpouts", traffic circles or mid-block "chokers" as illustrated above.

## 8. Public Transportation

Long term transportation needs of the community may be addressed in several ways. While some of these recommendations may not be appropriate for today's level of service, they should be recognized as components of a long term strategy and integrated when feasible. The Town and Village should work cooperatively to continue to support and investigate public transportation infrastructure that may connect the community to the greater Capital District or other communities, as well as to locations within the community. Specific recommendations include:

- 8.1 Continue to support access to public bus service via current or future vendors. As bus lines seek to minimize costs there has been a growing trend to reduce services to rural communities such as Cossackie. The Town and Village should remain vigilant to proposed changes in public transportation and work with transportation companies to maintain or expand current levels of service.
- 8.2 Investigate promoting a local public transportation system such as a taxi or van service. Initially, incentives may be necessary to help private vendors maintain steady service due to a limited demand. A local public transportation system that links Cossackie with



important transportation hubs such as the airports and Amtrak rail station should be promoted.

- 8.3 Evaluate and implement supporting amenities such as park-and-ride lots, bus shelters, posted schedules etc. to promote increased use of public transportation. Consider the possibility of creating a local, web based system that could help commuters identify others that may be interested in participating in car pooling.
- 8.4 Work with the Greene County Planning and Economic Development Department to support, expand or enhance the County's current public transportation system and its service to the community

## V. Infrastructure Actions

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will provide well-maintained municipal infrastructure with adequate capacity for quality drinking water and safe waste management. When we supply new infrastructure it will be consistent with land use goals and financially supported by development fees.*

**"A burgeoning market society can not be trusted to produce spontaneously a habitable, sanitary, or even efficient community, much less a beautiful one."**

Murray Bookchin

### Context:

The ready availability and adequate capacity of utility services is a major factor for meeting basic resident service needs and for attracting new residential or commercial development to the Town and Village. The adequacy of existing facilities, especially the Village water systems, water quality and the availability and quality of other utilities have been identified as key concerns. As development continues, the demand on the Town and Village for enhanced public infrastructure will grow, making it a critical aspect of economic development planning in the years ahead.

### Actions:

#### **1. Develop a Comprehensive Infrastructure Management Plan**

Currently, there are a number of efforts by the Village of Cossackie as well the Greene IDA to plan for water and sewer infrastructure. Over the last 12-18 months, the Village has made substantial progress working with Delaware Engineering to address short term as well as some long term needs of the Village, and the Greene County IDA is taking a close look at future infrastructure needs in an on-going process for a third business park. The current work and findings from these efforts should be integrated into a single, comprehensive strategy that examines all components of the Village's infrastructure. A comprehensive strategy would include, but not be limited to:

- 1.1 Develop a Geographic Information System/Global Positioning System (GIS/GPS) based inventory to locate all existing water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure in the Village and surrounding service districts. Include a detailed database that addresses issues such



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as pipe size, flow capacity, condition and other relevant information as may be required to manage the system.

- 1.2 Require all new development projects to provide detailed information on the “as-built” condition of new infrastructure installed. All data should be provided in a digital format that can be readily integrated into the base inventory. New developers should also provide clear and consistent information on flow/capacity calculations in order that this information may be integrated into the database.
- 1.3 Develop a detailed watershed protection plan for the Village of Coxsackie’s reservoir system. Since most of the water system is supplied by lands in the Town of New Baltimore, this activity must be an Intermunicipal effort.
- 1.4 A “safe yield” analysis for the Village of Coxsackie’s raw water supply is being prepared as part of the Greene County IDA GEIS to determine the total amount of raw water that can be expected with safeguards built in for drought periods. Long term planning for infrastructure requires an accurate analysis of the raw water supply.
- 1.5 Together with the “safe yield” analysis, an assessment of storage in the lower reservoir and the impact from sedimentation is being prepared. A long-range improvement plan should be prepared and implemented to be address improvement in raw water quality that could be realized by construction of a closed transmission system to convey water from the upper reservoir to the water treatment plant, bypassing the lower reservoir and allowing for maintenance of both reservoirs.
- 1.6 Work to develop a regional strategy for water, wastewater and stormwater as a tool to guide development. Coordinate with the IDA and other developers to increase infrastructure capacity. Specifically, evaluate the feasibility of developing new infrastructure that will reduce stress on the Village’s existing WWTP.
- 1.7 Work with NYS Dept. of Corrections to ensure long-term protection and use of the Coxsackie Correctional water supply. Protection of the facility’s water resources will reduce the future need for the Village and Town to provide additional services to the Dept. of Corrections. Assist NYS. Dept of Correctional Services with a reservoir protection plan to preserve raw water quality.
- 1.8 A detailed analysis of the Combined Sanitary Outfalls (CSO’s) within the Village is being conducted in 2007 to identify measures that can reduce wet weather loading to the sewer system. Once completed, a Long Term Control Plan will be prepared. Implementation of the plan will involve both improvements to the built environment



### New York Rural Water Association

The Source Water Protection Technical Assistance helps to reduce or eliminate the potential risks of contamination to highly or moderately susceptible drinking water supplies of rural and small communities through the development of watershed or "area-wide" source water protection plans.



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(e.g. funding) as well as changes in community behavior (e.g. disconnection of floor drains from the sanitary system).

- 1.9 Develop a detailed long-term plan for replacement of sewer and water lines in the Village and adjoining districts.
- 1.10 Develop a plan to protect the Sleepy Hollow Lake (SHL) water supply. This high value residential development has faced problems with water quality in the past. Access to safe drinking water for current and future users is a priority. Over the next few years, the GCSWCD will work with SHL to develop a comprehensive lake management plan that will address issues both within and outside of SHL. Protection of water quality, resource protection, and management of the lakes structures will all be included in the management plan.

## 2. Infrastructure Operations

The Village of Coxsackie, working with Delaware Engineering, has made significant improvements in relation to the daily management of the Village's water and wastewater systems. Continued refinements in the operation of the Village's infrastructure will improve efficiencies and help with sustainable community growth. Specific recommendations include:

- 2.1 Continue to work closely with NYS Dept. of Correctional Services regarding infrastructure issues such as timing of water withdrawals and pretreatment of waste water.
- 2.2 Adopt a Sewer Use Local Law in the Village that prescribes in detail the rules for access to the Village's sewer system. The local law should address service connection costs, impact fees, procedure for making hook up application, technical descriptions of materials and connection methods, ownership and maintenance, inspection requirements and any other information as necessary to provide for effective and consistent hookups to the system. The local law should also address use of the system and be very specific about allowable and non allowable activities. For example, the law should prohibit the disposal of toxic substances, large nondegradable objects and large quantities of grease or other similar substances that can clog the system.
- 2.3 Update and adopt a local law governing the use



**Fern Glen**

### Wappinger Watershed

The Town of Poughkeepsie's comprehensive plan outlines a strategy to protect the Wappinger Watershed. Twelve other communities also have land use regulatory authority over the Watershed. This group of communities has formed an intermunicipal agreement, received a grant from the Department of State, and is now working together on a watershed wide protection effort using the comprehensive plan of Poughkeepsie as a core. Under Section 272-a of town law, "a local comprehensive plan of a locality should take into consideration the plans of other municipalities and agencies in the region". The Wappinger Watershed is reaping the benefits of that collaboration.



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and provision of potable water. This local law will set forth the rules of access and use of the Village's water infrastructure and supply. Issues such as connection fees, impact fees, hook up applications, technical specifications for connections, ownership and maintenance, and inspection requirements will be formalized. Permitted uses will be described (e.g. swimming pools, irrigation, car washing, etc.).

- 2.4 Update and adopt a local law describing acceptable standards for the construction of stormwater facilities related to new roads, driveways and drainage structures.
- 2.5 In the Village, existing stormwater system components are generally outdated and in fair to poor condition. Drop inlets, conveyance pipes and stormwater outfalls are frequently overtaxed and can be easily impacted by the introduction of additional stormwater flow. On the other hand, there are sections of the Village where drainage is a significant problem, and the municipal stormwater system may be the only route for correcting these problems. To help address these situations, the Village should implement a Stormwater System Use Local Law to regulate connections of new stormwater systems or new sources of runoff to existing Village infrastructure. The law should establish parameters for evaluating impacts from the addition of new stormwater and set forth a consistent process for approval of these connections.
- 2.6 Develop a plan to impose restrictions in times of drought. Limit water use based on specific levels of the available reservoirs. The plan should outline increasingly restrictive water-use rules ranging from public education to bans on pool filling, car washing and outdoor watering, depending upon the drought levels.

### 3. Stormwater Management

The management of stormwater is the subject of increasing regulation at the state and federal level. In Coxsackie, stormwater management is not only important for protection of water quality, but also for prevention of flood hazards. Development that results in an increase in impervious surfaces increases the volume and timing of runoff from the site that in turn affects hydraulic relationships in streams and watercourses, frequently increasing flooding potential. Specific recommendations related to stormwater management include:

- 3.1 The Town and Village should develop local standards that require all stormwater systems on new development to be designed to achieve the highest level of water quality treatment. Systems that use biological treatment methods are preferred due to their high efficiency and their secondary benefits to habitat and ecological systems.
- 3.2 The Town and Village should develop local standards that require stormwater systems on major new development to be "oversized" as a method to help mitigate impacts from prior development that preceded current stormwater regulations. The community should consider developing a system of incentives to assist new developments in meeting this requirement.
- 3.3 The Town and Village of Coxsackie should work cooperatively with the Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District in the review of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SPPP) submitted by developers. The GCSWCD can provide technical assistance in



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the review of SPPP's prior to approval of the development as well as assist the Village in oversight of stormwater management practices during the construction phase.

- 3.4 To meet state and federal regulations for stormwater management, developers must install stormwater management systems that treat for water quality as well as attenuate flooding impacts. These systems are often complex, and require annual inspections as well as some level of management to insure they work as designed. The Town and Village should work cooperatively with the Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District and neighboring municipalities to evaluate mechanisms for long term inspection operation and management of stormwater management systems. Establishment of some form of Stormwater Management "District", which would charge operation and management fees to those properties that benefit from the stormwater system, is a possible scenario. The GCSWCD would seek to develop a program that is consistent from community to community.
- 3.5 The Town and Village of Coxsackie should seek future opportunities to "retrofit" existing development sites that do not have stormwater management systems in place. These sites would generally be development sites that predated current state and federal laws. As these sites seek approvals for expansion or redevelopment, the Town and Village should work with site owners to install appropriate stormwater treatment systems to address the entire site. Further, the Town and Village should codify this requirement in local law.

## 4. Utilities & Energy

In addition to access to water and sewer infrastructure, future growth in the community will also require a range of other infrastructure. Access to natural gas, electrical service and telecommunications is becoming increasingly important. Specific recommendations include:

- 4.1 Work closely with Central Hudson and other utility providers to ensure that future development can be adequately serviced for electrical, cable, telephone and natural gas.
- 4.2 Work cooperatively with agencies such as Greene County IDA, GCSWCD, CCE and others to evaluate and promote alternative energy sources at larger development projects. Consider creating incentives for developers to increase use of solar, wind, geothermal and other energy sources.
- 4.3 Work with local Internet Service Providers (ISP's) to continue upgrades and improvements to broadband access. Expansion of existing wireless access points and improvements to internet infrastructure to insure reliable service are examples of actions that can be taken.



Since its inception in 1961, the GCSWCD has developed a diverse conservation program in response to local needs. GCSWCD can provide a range of technical assistance to the Town and Village in stormwater, water quality and flood issues among others.



## 5. New Development

As new development occurs in the Town and Village, the community has an opportunity to utilize standards that guide the construction of new infrastructure. Issues that the Town and Village may choose to address could include capacity, materials, construction methods, utility locations etc. Specific recommendations may include:

- 5.1 The Town and Village should consider local regulations that would require all utilities be buried underground to the maximum extent possible in all new development areas. Burying electrical, telephone and cable utilities can provide an aesthetic benefit as well as improve reliability by reducing the occurrences of loss of services due to weather, accidents or other impacts.
- 5.2 In future development projects, the Town and Village should closely examine utility right-of-ways (ROWs) to insure that they are adequate for conducting operation & maintenance activities as well as for future replacement activities. Shared utility corridors, where multiple utilities are located in a consolidated utility ROW should be required to the maximum extent possible.
- 5.3 On smaller development sites (i.e. single family homes) that fall below the existing criteria for stormwater management under state and federal regulations, the Town and Village should work to educate owners on the cumulative impacts from stormwater and how they can develop their site to reduce these impacts. Use education and outreach, access to technical assistance and other incentives to promote implementation of low tech solutions to stormwater management. The use of small rain-gardens for example could have water quality and flood attenuation benefits as well as provide an aesthetic benefit.

## 6. Flood Management

The Town and Village of Cossackie are typical of many small communities that are experiencing increasing occurrences of flooding. Over the past 10 years or more, residents have noted a significant increase in flooding levels in certain problem areas in the community with both more frequent flooding and higher flood levels. This is partly due to local poorly drained soils, a steady increase in impervious surfaces over time and a generally wetter cycle in long term climate trends. GCSWCD analysis of stream gauges in the western portion of the county with over 98 years of records indicate that the highest stream discharges have occurred in the last 15 years. While the Town and Village experience some occurrence of flooding in many areas during particularly heavy rainfall events, most of the chronic flooding problems are associated with the Cossackie Creek in the western portion of the Village and the Hudson River. Specific recommendations associated with flooding in the community include:

- 6.1 The Town and Village of Cossackie should work with the GCSWCD to complete a detailed hydraulic analysis of the Cossackie Creek drainage system. The analysis would identify the smaller sub-drainages that contribute to the stream, the current status of the stream system to include blockages, and hydraulic calculations of discharge (flow)



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associated with various storm events. The analysis would serve to guide other mitigation efforts.

- 6.2 The Town and Village should work cooperatively with the GCSWCD and GCIDA to further integrate various projects that can help attenuate flood flows. For example, wetland mitigation areas constructed by the GCSWCD/GCIDA off Route 385 will dramatically reduce runoff from that drainageway. As the GCIDA/GCSWCD or others need to address habitat conservation and wetland mitigation, these activities should be undertaken so as to provide additional opportunity for flood attenuation. NYS Dept. of Corrections must be a partner in this effort, as opportunity exists on correctional facility property to conduct some of these activities.
- 6.3 The Town and Village should require stringent compliance with existing stormwater regulations for new development as well as adopt local requirements for stormwater management that exceed state requirements in some conditions. Recommendations for requiring large projects to oversize stormwater systems and stormwater retrofitting on older sites will both benefit flooding.
- 6.4 The Village of Coxsackie has a chronic localized flooding problem in the center of the Village. The Village should work with GCSWCD, its engineers, landowner and others to develop a long term solution to this problem. As a component of the project, the Village should develop a detailed management plan for the drainage system to include setting forth consistent policy on the Villages responsibility to maintain drainageways within the Village. Practical solutions to localized flooding problems will not be possible without the close cooperation of private owners. Additionally, the Village should seek opportunities to have new development projects in this area help mitigate the localized flooding problem.
- 6.5 The Town and Village should participate in the county level effort to develop an all hazard mitigation plan for Greene County. This process will provide an opportunity to identify flooding problems as well as set forth certain policies that would help the community access additional FEMA funds for flood mitigation. For example, a policy in local highway rules that require any flood damaged culvert to be upsized by some predetermined amount, must be honored by FEMA for funding when Public Assistance Funds are available after a federal declared disaster.
- 6.6 The Village and Town should work with GCSWCD and the Greene County Planning and Economic Development Department to review and update their local flood ordinance. New digital flood maps (DFIRM) are currently in the review stage for all of Greene County. Upon completion of the map review, the Towns and Village should adopt the new maps and undertake a complete review of their Floodplain Management ordinance.

### 7. On-site Wastewater Treatment

The treatment of wastewater will continue to be a challenge to future growth in the community. In addition to the limitations and deficiencies of the Village's wastewater treatment system, there are also many challenges in those areas not served by municipal sewer infrastructure. The vast majority of the



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Town and Village are characterized by soils that have moderate to severe limitations for septic systems. In the eastern portion of the Town and in the Village, soils are predominately deep clays which provide for poor percolation. In the western portion of the Town, most of the soils are shallow to bedrock and also do not percolate well. These conditions place significant limitations on the use of conventional septic systems.

- 7.1 While NYS rules requires all on-site septic systems to be designed by a licensed professional, there is no requirement for oversight of construction of the system after approval. The Town of Cossackie will adopt local rules requiring on-site septic systems to be inspected and certified by the licensed professional that certified the design.
- 7.2 The Town and Village will provide training to planning board members, code enforcement officers and local contractors regarding the review, inspection and construction of on-site wastewater systems. Training will emphasize the construction of wastewater systems on challenging soils.
- 7.3 The Town will work with the planning board and appropriate local and state agencies to promote on-site wastewater treatment systems in development projects that would otherwise entail significant upgrades to existing infrastructure. As part of this effort, the Town will also need to ensure that an effective and sustainable management structure is in place before approving the development.
- 7.4 The Town will need to evaluate alternatives for addressing on-site wastewater treatment for development recommendations set forth in this plan. For example, cluster or conservation subdivisions will face significant limitations due to poor soils. The Town will investigate the alternatives to individual septic systems such as package treatment systems, "community" septic systems or shared leach fields. The evaluation will address long-term management issues as well as technical and regulatory questions.

## VI. Community Facilities and Recreation Actions

### Goal:

*We will develop and maintain excellent park and recreation resources, support schools of distinction, and encourage the creation of diverse community programs for all community members.*

**"The smallest patch of green to arrest the monotony of asphalt and concrete is as important to the value of real estate as streets, sewers and convenient shopping."**

James Felt, Chairman, NYC Planning Commission

### Context:

Sustainable communities offer high quality of life including excellent park and recreation resources, schools of distinction and diverse and accessible community services such as libraries, family and senior services. Livable places are safe, offering responsive public safety, fire and emergency services. While these amenities are obviously important to current residents, they are also increasingly important to site selectors for major companies. When considering a potential relocation of their business, companies are placing a strong emphasis on quality of life. All of these municipal amenities and



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services exist in the Town and Village today. Residents take pride in their quality and express concern that growth will increase demands without generating adequate revenues to support programs. There is also concern that new residents may have expectations for new services not typically found in rural communities, which, while desirable, are costly to develop and maintain.

In the community survey, respondents were generally satisfied with the location of parks and green space (74% satisfied, 17% dissatisfied) but expressed a lack of satisfaction with cycling and walking facilities (37% satisfied, 50% dissatisfied). Despite the satisfaction with parks, 68% indicated that the Town and Village should seek to add more parks and green space. In good news, 63% of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the maintenance of parks and 82% indicated satisfaction with access to the Hudson. Proximity to the Hudson River was identified by many residents as one of the community's greatest assets. The availability of abundant natural resources and open lands providing space for hiking, wildlife observation, birding, fishing, hunting and four-wheeling were also identified as assets.

In the visioning workshops, Coxsackie's schools were described as an attraction and an asset, complementing the small Town quality of life as a great place to raise a family. Residents praised the school district as providing a "neighborhood school" that is available for charitable and educational uses (i.e. softball, flag football, soccer, youth and adult basketball, adult gym sports, walking, adult education, summer recreation programs, and dance company recitals). The ability to maintain a high performing small school in the face of development pressure is a concern for many residents.



The Greene Land Trust provides an organizational structure to insure long-term protection and management of the habitat lands. The Land Trust is in an effective position to partner with the Town and Village to manage lands set aside as a result of wetland mitigation or implementation of cluster development projects.

## **Actions:**

As change in the community is planned for and accommodated, it is critical that "quality of life" amenities including community-based services and recreation keep pace with the needs of a changing population. The biggest trend facing small communities is the emergence of a healthy and active senior population. To the extent that Coxsackie is able to attract and retain seniors, their recreation demands will move front and center. There was strong support voiced in the community process for the development of recreational trails. Trails are important because they improve character and protect the environment, encourage physical fitness and healthy lifestyles and expose residents of all ages to environmental assets such as natural areas, habitat and waterfronts.

## **1. Create New Park and Recreation Amenities**

- 1.1 Assess recreational needs Town-wide. There is no comprehensive source of information about the public and private recreational facilities within the Town or Village, nor have surveys been conducted to determine residents' recreational needs and preferences. To address this issue, the Town and Village will conduct a study of recreational opportunities in the community. Elements of the research will include an inventory of recreational facilities and activities in the Town; information on the use of, and access to, such facilities; and an analysis of the recreational needs of both adults and children.



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The study will allow the community to identify gaps in services, assess the need to improve or expand recreational resources, and make informed decisions in the future. It will also serve as the basis for implementation of the park and recreation fees described below.

- 1.2 Create a Town Park. Residents observed that the Town does not own or operate sports or active recreation facilities, and does not provide a great deal in the way of organized team sports. Residents prioritized the development of a Town park, perhaps west of 9W where the need for recreation facilities is strongest. There was support for requiring a developer to set aside a percentage of land for recreation. As an alternative, a developer could convey land to the Town or Village for a recreation amenity or pay a fee (described below). If the community adopts conservation subdivision and smart growth zoning techniques (as described under the community character goal), new Town owned greenspace, trails and pocket parks could be created as land is set aside. The Town and Village should work proactively with others such as the GCSWCD and Greene Land Trust to meet this goal.
- 1.3 Implement a system of park and recreation fees dedicated to funding new recreation facilities including perhaps recreational leasing of agricultural lands and development of recreational resources such as playing fields (current facilities are over-capacity). NYS Law allows communities to assess the park and recreation demands created by new development and to require the mandatory dedication of land or payment of money to meet these needs. It is important to note that the statutes focus on meeting the needs for recreational facilities of the residents of the new subdivision and their guests, not to provide recreational facilities for the public at large. While the Town and Village cannot set a fixed formula for the dedication of land, they can and should assess the needs on a case by case basis. There are two steps in the assessment process. First, the planning boards must determine that the development under review will add to the recreational needs of the community. Second, based on a review of the particular proposal before it, the planning boards must determine whether it contains adequate and suitable space for recreational facilities. Only if it finds that such space does not exist, may the planning boards require the developer make a monetary contribution. All such contributions must be deposited into a trust fund to be used by the municipality exclusively for recreational purposes.
- 1.4 Create a trail development plan Town-wide. Encourage construction of segments as development occurs and add biking facilities to all major road rehabilitation. The Town and Village of Coxsackie are rich in natural, historical, and recreational resources. Weaving through and connecting the varied landscapes, there is the opportunity to create an integrated trail system, from the narrowest of hiking paths to stretches of multi-use corridors. Thousands of walkers, cyclists, bird-watchers, skaters, and others could take advantage of these pathways each year. These activities are affordable, complement waterfront and main street development and are accessible to residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. Outdoor recreation trails accommodate walkers and hikers but also make possible a range of other interests including bird watching, cross country skiing, nature walks, snowshoeing, stargazing and wildlife viewing. Trails can be motorized or non-motorized, on land or on water. The Town and Village will compile a descriptive list of organizations and funding sources that support the



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

development of trails and greenways. It will determine where trails could be located, and recruit volunteers to build and maintain the trails. A brochure with a map of trails, bike paths, and greenways in the area will eventually be created to build awareness of the trails and encourage recreational use by residents and visitors.

- 1.5 The Town and Village should support the efforts of the GCIDA, GCSWCD and Greene Land Trust to establish a multiuse trail on the habitat conservation lands adjoining Greene Business & Technology Park and Kalkberg Commerce Park. The GCIDA, GCSWCD and GLT are working to develop a trail system that would link the Village of Coxsackie with the existing business parks to the north. The goal is to establish a walking/biking trail that would provide access to the existing and future business parks.
- 1.6 The Town of Coxsackie owns a small parcel of approximately seven acres located on the southern end of Coxsackie Island. The property was purchased with the assistance of the GCSWCD that obtained the necessary grant funds for the acquisition of the property, and facilitated the purchase by the Town. While the property is currently undeveloped, and receives only informal use, the plan will advance the vision for this property to create a day use area and paddle destination that is easily accessible from Coxsackie Riverfront Park. The Town should seek Hudson River Water Trail designation for this parcel and access available grants funds for the development of improvements at both the riverfront park and at the island to. Improvements should be designed such as they are low impact and low maintenance.
- 1.7 Scenic Hudson, a regional land trust organization owns several parcels on Four Mile Point. These properties include the existing Four Mile Point Preserve that is co-managed by the Town of Coxsackie and the GCSWCD, as well as a larger parcel known as the Rasmussen Parcel that is managed by the GCSWCD. Four Mile Point Preserve is a low impact facility with a small nature trail and access to the riverfront. The preserve includes a scenic overlook and is popular in the spring for shore striper fishing. The Rasmussen parcel is larger and has been traditionally use for water fowl hunting. Scenic Hudson, GCSWCD and the Hudson River Waterfowl Protective Association have been working in partnership to provide continued hunting access to the site. The Rasmussen parcel also includes two small portions that have had a long tradition of local use for fishing access as well as canoeing and kayaking. The Town should actively work with Scenic Hudson and the GCSWCD to complete enhancements related to public access at



**Stony Brook Harbor**

Three Long Island communities (Stony Brook, Smithtown and Brookhaven) have formed an intermunicipal agreement to protect Stony Brook Harbor. These towns have agreed to adopt consistent comprehensive plan components for the protection of their harbor, which is a key economic and environmental asset. The unique aspect of this agreement is that they will cross notify one another when a proposal is presented that will impact the harbor. They have also set up a process for dispute resolution should one of the communities disagree with a planned action.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

the Four Mile Point Preserve and the development of additional public recreation amenities at other properties owned by Scenic Hudson on Four Mile Point Road. The Town should continue to assist Scenic Hudson and the GCSWCD with planned improvements at Four Mile Point Preserve that will include shoreline stabilization, development of a canoe/kayak launch and repairs to an existing garage that is proposed for use by a local paddling club. Scenic Hudson has secured a substantial NYSDEC grant for this work. On the Rasmussen parcel, the Town should work with Scenic Hudson and the GCSWCD to expand use of the property for hiking, birding, fishing and kayak/canoe. Access should be provided in a manner that is consistent with preservation of the habitat.

- 1.8 Expand Park And Recreation Resources Through Partnerships – The Town and Village will work closely with other public, private and non-profit organizations to improve park and recreation resources. The Town and Village will coordinate efforts with the Greene Land Trust and other organizations to secure conservation easements on historic structures, sites, landscapes, open spaces and agricultural lands and other important environmental resources for preservation or passive recreation use. In a similar task, the Town and Village will provide full support to the new YMCA to ensure success of this important community service. The Town and Village should actively seek grants from multiple sources to help with funding of new parks or park improvements.
- 1.9 Protect and Utilize Town and Village Waterfront Resources - The history of Coxsackie was heavily influenced by its waterfront location and its future can be linked to this same resource. As stewards of this resource, along with other Greene County River Towns, Coxsackie must work to improve it for future generations. In the survey and workshops, residents asked for expanded recreational facilities including more access to the Hudson River, building upon the boat launch and creating a new cluster catering to boaters and visitors. Development of a master plan and economic development strategy for the waterfront (described under the economic development goal) can be advanced by the use of land management tools to ensure that the waterfront is protected.



**Coxsackie's Four Mile Point Preserve**

- 1.10 The GCSWCD, working with the GCDPED is already funded to complete a Waterfront Inventory and Water Dependent Use Study for Greene County. The Village should actively participate in this process to insure the results are consistent with the Village's desires. In addition to designating a waterfront overlay district, the Town and Village



should use all available powers under SEQR to ensure that visual and physical impacts to the river are evaluated. In the ongoing zoning update, the Town and Village should consider rezoning current industrial uses located along the waterfront to be more compatible with future opportunities. To the degree possible, a continuous public trail along the riverfront should be developed to enhance public access and the economic impact of river tourism. Additionally, the Town and Village should work proactively with waterfront land owners, especially the Twelve Tribes, to seek way to expand public access along the waterfront. There is opportunity for significant improvements and extension of the waterfront promenade if adjacent owners are willing to provided access.

## 2. Existing Park and Recreation Facilities

- 2.1 Maintain Existing Park and Recreation Facilities. The Town and Village will identify planned recreation infrastructure improvement and maintenance projects for existing facilities at McQuaid Park and Riverfront Park. For Riverfront Park this task includes implementation of the Master Plan developed for the park by NYSOPRHP, the GCSWCD, the Village of Cossackie and others. In addition to the improvements completed to date, the master plan also addresses the placement of playground equipment, the development of a concession area with restrooms, the placement of additional sidewalks and cross walks as well as other items such as lighting along the riverfront promenade. These amenities remain critical to the establishment of the park as a tourist destination and resource for residents.
- 2.2 Consider Use for Fireman's Park. The Town and Village should evaluate whether Fireman's Park is obsolete and should be used for another purpose. Fireman's Park is a very small parcel of open land in the West Cossackie area, just east of the CSX rail line. The property has limited improvements, and includes a single swing set. The park is maintained by the Village DPW, but does not include any identifying signage. For a period of years in the 1990's, the Village restricted use of the property as a park while the former American Valve site was investigated and remediated under the USEPA Superfund Program. At this time, while restrictions on the parks use are no longer in effect, the Village has not promoted use of the facility nor made any improvements. In the survey and public workshops residents expressed concern that this park is obsolete and should be replaced on more appropriate land and another use found for the site.

## 3. Other Community Services

- 3.1 Support the Needs of Various Community Organizations. The Town and Village will support the needs of various community service and cultural organizations to ensure their continuing success by assisting in planning and fundraising. There is pride in the quality of existing services (library, fire, police, and emergency response) and concern that uncontrolled growth and a significantly expanded population base will stress service delivery unless significant addition revenue is available. Staffing of volunteer fire and rescue squads in the face of dramatic residential expansion is of particular concern. While the community has recently moved from a volunteer rescue to a paid ambulance service, it still must rely on volunteers to meet its fire protection responsibilities. The



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Village and Town should evaluate the possibility of establishing incentive programs such as retirement benefits, tax relief or the like that will assist with recruitment and retention of volunteers.

- 3.2 Protect the community's high performing small schools. The Town and Village will address the potential impacts of all types of development on school capacity and taxes. There is significant concern among residents that new development will negatively affect the school district. The Town and Village will be closely involved in the School district's regular long term and strategic planning processes. The Town and Village will also designate the School District as an interested party in all development applications that might generate additional school children so that the planning boards and district can work together to accurately evaluate impacts. In a further action, the Town and Village will make new large scale development projects subject to a fiscal impact analysis that directly addresses school district impacts. The Town and Village should work with the school district to maximize the use of the school facilities for a wide range of stakeholders. Use of the school by adults after school hours should continue to be promoted and new uses identified and evaluated.
- 3.3 Evaluate opportunities to expand local health services. As the population continues to grow and senior housing is attracted to the community the desire for state-of-the art health care intensifies. Given that the nearest hospitals are in Albany or Hudson, Coxsackie residents have come to depend upon and admire the EmUrgent Care facility on Route 9W. As the business and commerce park build-out on 9W, the Town and Village will advocate for the attraction of an array of professional health care offices.
- 3.4 Create a brochure to potential residents explaining what it means to live in a "modern" but consciously rural place. This recommendation addresses the concern expressed by many residents about whether new residents will expect or demand new services that the community cannot afford to deliver and whether they will value "rural character" and way of life as much as long time residents. Community organizations such as Greene Land Trust should be approached and asked to partner in this effort as many of the issues that would be covered are of interest to GLT.
- 3.5 The Village and Town should continue to work cooperatively to design and construct new highway department/public works department facilities and promote effective sharing of resources. A joint highway facility could share fueling stations, sand and salt storage, specialized equipment and other resources. Additionally, the Village and Town should also evaluate the possibility of mitigating existing drainage problems in the area proposed for the joint highway facility on Bailey Street. Drainage in this area originates north of the Mansion Square apartments and has long been a problem.

### Garlic Festival Saugerties, NY

#### Mission:

To present an annual fall festival in Saugerties that celebrates the harvest season with its generous life-sustaining gifts and, particularly, the natural health and food-enhancing benefits of garlic. Our commitment is to reawaken this awareness and deep appreciation of the fruits of the harvest through early harvest rituals, music, dance, delicious food, camaraderie and fun. To enhance the community in which the festival is held, through donation of all profits to address worthwhile community needs.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 3.6 The Community is fortunate to have a progressive public library resource at Hermance Memorial Library. The Town and Village should continue to support the library district and help, as appropriate, the library to grow and meet the future needs of the community.
- 3.7 In recent years, fire departments in the Village's of Catskill and Athens have successfully undertaken consolidation of their multi-company fire departments as a single fire company. While consolidation of fire services is always a sensitive issue due to long standing traditions and an important sense of identify amongst the individual fire companies, increasing complexities in training, equipment and overall management of the fire service would suggest that the Village should evaluate the consolidation of the existing two fire companies into a single company. Consolidation can save costs and increase efficiencies of the fire service in the Village.
- 3.8 The Town and Village should work jointly to revive the Coxsackie Riverside Festival or some other community event that can bring residents together, and build unity and community spirits. While the festival was formally seen as a "Village" event, it was enjoyed by Town and Village residents alike. The Riverside Festival was a very successful event and many people looked forward attending annually and visiting with friends.

"People are living longer than ever before, a phenomenon undoubtedly made necessary by the 30-year mortgage."

Doug Larson

## VII. Housing Actions

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will encourage diversified homeownership of high quality to meet all phases of a family's life-cycle including starter houses, family residences, and vacation or retirement homes. New residential clusters will be designed to conserve open space consistent with our land use goals.*

### Context:

Sustainable communities offer quality housing for residents of all ages and incomes. They offer a range of opportunities from high end executive level housing to quality affordable housing for both renters and homeowners. Housing to meet all phases of a family life cycle is available - enabling young couples to buy a starter home, move up into a home large enough for a family, and when they are ready, into town homes or other retirement options. Sustainable communities offer housing of all types and at all price levels in safe neighborhoods with amenities and easy access to convenient retail. A healthy housing market should provide good quality units that address resident demand in terms of number of bedrooms, location, price and other considerations.

By choice, the Town and Village of Coxsackie are residential communities of beautiful historic and family housing. They have traditionally been places to live and farm above all else. They have embraced a wide array of residents: from wealthy families who own large historic homes, to local workers attracted to available job opportunities, to retired people enjoying the peace and quite, and farmers whose work protects the Town's rural character.

Nevertheless, today, the cost of housing acts as a gatekeeper to families moving up in the community,



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

becoming new members and retiring “in place”. While there is still a supply of affordable housing for acquisition, and in some cases rehabilitation, the growing cost of housing and the price targets of new and proposed housing development are out of the reach of the majority of residents.

In the community survey residents indicated a preference for the Town and Village to work towards more single family housing (67%) and more senior housing (63%) rather than condominiums (38%), rental housing (35%), or apartments (21%). Respondents strongly indicated a preference for regulation of development with 70% indicating that the Town and Village should apply design standards to residential development and 82% indicating that Cossackie should limit density of residential developments.

Residents express a range of concerns about pressure facing the Town and Village from proposed major residential development. They worry that new development is unaffordable to average residents and that it will price seniors out of the local market. They are concerned that the pace of development will overwhelm local roads, utilities and schools and that the absence of a “developer pays” system leaves taxpayers vulnerable to carrying the expanded costs which could, in turn, influence quality of life. An additional concern relates to the density of new development and the possible population expansion it could bring. Between 1990 and 2000 the Town and Village population grew by over 28.5%. Residents fear that their close-knit small community character will be lost if population continues to grow at or exceed this pace. Some residents suggested large lot zoning (5 to 10 acres per dwelling unit) as solution, but this approach creates sprawl, increases the cost of municipal services and breaks apart open space and critical environmental areas.

The Town and Village, above all else, seek to provide for a balanced mix of housing types and residential land uses targeting those uses most likely to have a positive tax base impact such as senior housing, age restricted housing, cottages, one and two bedroom apartments. The Town and Village will work together to protect the integrity and long-term viability of their dense village core, on the one hand, and their low-density residential areas on the other.

## **Actions**

### **1. Land Management Tools Shape Residential Land Use**

In reviewing data about housing for this plan, it became clear that the Town and Village need to identify affordable housing as well as higher end housing. High end housing should be pursued in smaller nodes rather than as part of mega-projects. The area South of the Village along Rte 385 that will likely get Village water (through Hamlet on the Hudson) was identified for special focus. It is likely that this area will be more densely settled with more housing in the future than West of Cossackie, where each dwelling unit will require a well and septic system.

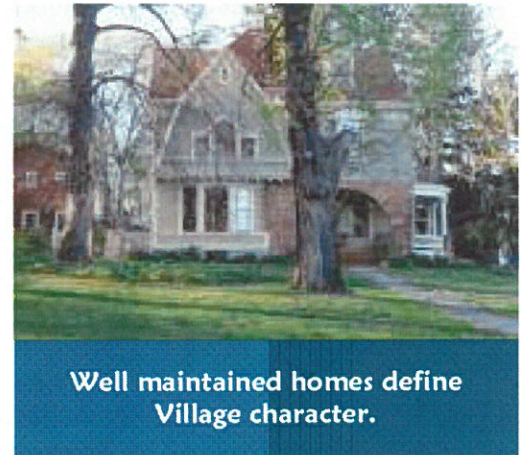


**Beautiful smaller homes in the Village and Town represent important opportunities for homeownership.**



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

- 1.1 Implement the range of land management tools described in the Community Character and Historic Preservation and other sections to control and shape new residential development.
- 1.2 Carefully identify and designate the land available for multi-family housing and condominiums. Ensure that these selections permit an appropriate density and scale of development that will be consistent with surrounding neighborhood and community character.
- 1.3 Designate a Senior Residence District, PUD or use other zoning tools to provide for the development of age-restricted housing (55+ or 62+) with appropriate amenities. Consider specifying a menu of amenities that a developer may pick from including senior services, recreation amenities, senior day care, etc. Require that a relatively large percentage of the units be one-bedroom (a further protection against the conversion to non-age-restricted housing) and require elevators to all upper floor units.
- 1.4 Designate a Resort Residential District to provide for the development of new seasonal housing and amenities such as a golf course. Require bylaw or operating principles that ensure that seasonal residences remain seasonal.
- 1.5 Develop and integrate design standards into a Design District Overlay as part of the Zoning Law that recognizes the uniqueness of the Village and other target areas. Apply the standards to all development and re-development in the Village, other hamlets and identified target areas. Include rigorous requirements in the form consistency of all new development with the Village character, including vernacular architectural elements. Ensure that requirements address scale, mass and building form of new buildings. The standards should ensure sympathy with surrounding structures, as follows:



- Design to human scale, and utilize a variety of detailed features and patterns, which provide visual interest
- Design the height of new buildings and significant alterations to existing buildings to be consistent with that of neighboring buildings
- Design roofs to mimic the vernacular architecture
- Place windows and doors at regular intervals across the building façade
- Utilize traditional building materials
- Require consistent setbacks from the street, including “zero” setback where appropriate
- Prevent infill construction that is out of scale with surrounding buildings



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- Enact a building scale regulation which controls the mass of new houses – either by basing the square footage of residential dwellings upon the size of the lot, or by limiting residential building size to a maximum that reflects the size of existing Village or target area houses
  - Require site plan approval for expansion of existing residential dwellings when such expansion exceeds a specified threshold size -- either in square footage or as a percent of the lot area
- 1.6 Encourage the integration of residential units into existing Greene and Kalkberg Industrial Park as part of a mixed use development strategy. As the IDA adds retail and service uses to the existing industrial parks on Route 9W, they should look for opportunities to integrate some residential use, perhaps as apartments on the upper stories of commercial buildings. One of the advantages of the design standards in place for these industrial parks is that the roof lines required for certain structures create second story space, unlike traditional suburban style big box development found in other parks. This creates an opportunity for a mix of uses.

## 2. Preservation And Development Of Affordable Housing

Many communities struggle to meet the seemingly competing demands for affordable housing on the one end and upper income housing on the other. For Coxsackie the need to provide affordable housing is undeniable. On an income basis, both the Town and Village faced declining incomes when adjusted inflation between 1990 and 2000. Poverty rates are also on the rise (increasing from 8.5% in 1990 to 12.7% in 2000 in the Village and from 7.8% in 1990 to 12.9% in 2000 in the Town). Owner occupied housing lost 18% of its value between 1990 and 2000. Though the current “hot” housing market has likely wiped away that loss – its impact may be temporary. Affordability standards are exceeded for both owners and renters according to 2006 projections. The dramatic increase in housing prices and recent steep escalation in heating and utility costs has likely increased the affordability gap significantly.

- 2.1 Explore opportunities to collaborate with a housing development organization to secure a Community Development Block Grant Small Cities grant for housing rehabilitation. As a part of an overall rehabilitation strategy, identify and prioritize those areas with the greatest needs in terms of housing conditions and income needs. Perhaps working with other Hudson River communities, Coxsackie will pursue CDBG grants from the Governor’s Office for Small Cities to aid in rehabilitation of affordable rental housing. One benefit of this program is that it provides adequate funding to create substantial improvement in code compliance and appearance of properties while requiring affordability of the units over a period of time.



**In the survey, residents indicated a preference for the Town and Village to work towards more single family housing (67%), and more senior housing (63%).**



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 2.2 Encourage local employers to participate in a worker-housing homeownership initiative, providing matching funds for down-payment or closing cost assistance. Employers benefit from a stable workforce. This stability can be developed, in part, when employees live in the same community where they work. If the worker has made a significant investment in a home, the likelihood of stability increases further. In light of this, a growing number of employers are assisting their employees to buy homes by paying for closing costs, matching down payments, or providing time off to participate in homeownership education classes.
- 2.3 Explore the use of Inclusionary Zoning and/or density bonus systems to create workforce housing for first time homebuyers. Coxsackie can promote the development of new homes that are accessible to the local workforce and young families by encouraging or requiring developers to contribute affordable housing in the community. Inclusionary zoning can take many forms, with some programs being mandatory and others providing incentives to developers, such as density bonuses, zoning variances, or parking waivers. Some programs require cash contributions to an affordable housing fund, while others involve construction of affordable units within the development. By allowing developers to build more units than allowed under zoning provisions, inclusionary zoning can provide an economic incentive to set aside a number of affordable housing units.
- 2.4 Implement Manufactured Housing Zoning Standards. Manufactured housing can be an affordable alternative to site-built homes. Coxsackie can zone specifically for manufactured housing and ensure that these homes are attractive, safe and of high quality. These standards may be in a stand-alone ordinance, or a combination of an ordinance with zoning. This approach will enable Coxsackie to include specific installation requirements for individual units, and/or standards for manufactured housing developments to make sure they conform to the character of the community. For example, standards could include require certain roof pitches, height off of the ground or ensure that the exterior finish of manufactured homes consist of materials customarily used in site built homes, or that skirting for mobile homes be made of a masonry material such as brick or block.

### **Rural Ulster Preservation Company (RUPCO) Manufactured Housing Case Study**

Recently The Rural Ulster Preservation Company used manufactured housing to infill two small development parcels on Fair Street in Kingston New York. Their goal was to produce affordable housing and help revitalize an inner-city neighborhood. The manufacturer had no model home that would satisfy the site constraints, the neighborhood context and the need for a relatively small home. RUPCO originally hired the project architect to design the foundation, but it expanded the role to include revisions to the modular designs. RUPCO found that design professionals remain essential with modular homes if design and aesthetics are concerns. They found that many manufacturers take a passive approach to the initial design stage, waiting for the developer to state a preference or submit a proposal. From there, it is a matter of negotiation and compromise to find the right balance of good design and manufacturing practicality.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## 3. Housing in the Village

Most of the people who moved into the Town and Village between 1990 and 2000 were married couples with school aged and younger children who obviously view Cossackie as a desirable place to buy a home and raise a family. Surprisingly, seniors are leaving the Village and increasing in population in the Town, a trend counter to many communities where active seniors seek out the walkability and convenience of the downtown core. One explanation in Cossackie might be that seniors are giving up their large, high-maintenance historic homes looking for fewer responsibilities. If that is the case, opportunities to create downtown housing, apartments or condominiums might help keep seniors in the Village.

- 3.1 Enable residential property owners to participate in façade and streetscape programs available through the county-sponsored main street initiative. Begun as a facade improvement program, this program has recently expanded to include a focus on



### Elder Cottages

Elder Cottages are small (apartment-sized), detached homes for seniors which are sited on private property, typically the primary residence of a younger family member. An Elder Cottage utilizes the water, electric, and sewer systems of the primary home. It provides security for the older person, privacy for both the senior and the younger family, and encourages the caregiving efforts of the younger family. This cottage is on Whidbey Island in Washington State.

interior commercial spaces through the County's Microenterprise Assistance Program (MAP) and a new Main Street Business Attraction Initiative. The Main Street Business Attraction Initiative provides matching grants to local organizations for marketing of vacant commercial space and strategic planning. By adding these additional initiatives, Greene County is addressing as many of the challenges involved with Main Street revitalization as possible through a targeted, pro-active approach. The expansion of these programs to address residential improvement needs would go a long way toward encouraging mixed use development in main street areas.

- 3.2 Encourage conversion (or adaptive reuse) of upper story space in the Village core for residential use. This conversion would not only provide a new source of housing for Cossackie residents, but would maximize the economic reuse of existing structures in the Village. A significant residential presence in the Village core would provide evening and nighttime support for businesses such as restaurants, retail and entertainment venues, enhancing the downtown environment. It provides a "niche" housing market that is gaining strength nationwide as communities of all sizes find downtown living is providing new life for their central core and enhancing the environment of their community.



## 4. Senior Housing

Baby Boom seniors are poised to make enormous demands on the residential real estate market. These seniors are healthier, more active and more engaged in their lives and their communities than any previous generation in history. According to a recent study, 37% of Boomers will move to a new home within the first year after their youngest child goes off to college. An AARP survey revealed that, when it's time to retire, today's 50+ Americans say they would either stay in their current home or move to one very nearby opting to "age in place," maintaining the social connections, personal and professional relationships, and comfortable familiarity of home. Proximity to children and grandchildren is a driving force behind many real estate decisions. The Town and Village will encourage homebuilders to provide an expanded range of innovative housing options that combine the comforts and conveniences of a resort lifestyle with the aesthetics, amenities and independence of a single-family home.

- 4.1 Encourage market rate senior housing through development of apartments, accessory apartments, senior cottages, town homes and apartments to increase senior housing supply. Locate this housing as close to the Village as is feasible.
- 4.2 Explore development of a continuing care retirement community with town homes, apartments, assisted living and nursing care in a campus setting.

## VIII. Agriculture Actions

### Goal:

*We will encourage agriculture and protect farmland by recognizing the vital role farmer's play in protecting our community's character. We will support creative efforts to sustain the economic viability of farming including outlets for local products.*

*"You can make a small fortune in farming... provided you start with a large one."*

Anonymous

### Context:

Based on community surveys, comments at community visioning sessions and a review of existing data and information such as the Greene County Agricultural Protection Plan, Coxsackie is typical of most rural communities in this country. The small family farm that once was the fabric of rural communities is rapidly declining, replaced by homes and other development activities. The reasons for these changes are complex, and not readily solved. The alarming loss of farmland to development and the decline of farming activities can be attributed to several undisputable factors:

- The nature of farming has been steadily changing from small, family owned farms to larger corporate operations that take advantage of the economy of scale. Americans in general do not tolerate much impact on food pricing, and the agriculture sector has responded by adopting business models that keep commodity unit costs down.
- The impact of property taxes is acute, and is a major factor in the inability of local farming



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operations to remain viable. While some tax incentives do exist, they are not sufficient to maintain a diverse farming community.

- There has been a significant and continuing decline in intergenerational transfers of farming operations. While farming has traditionally been a “family” operation, with farms passed from generation to generation, this trend has been significantly impacted by the lack of interest from recent generations.

The importance of maintaining an active agricultural base in Cossackie can not be overstated. Long term sustainability of farms has a positive impact on the community’s property tax structure. Valuable open space is maintained and active farms are a significant economic factor in the community. Unfortunately, many of the challenges to farm retention are not readily solved at the local level. The factors that are causing farms to disappear are complex, and can not be addressed by any single entity. Working cooperatively at the community level, farmers, the Town and Village governments, existing agencies and organizations, as well as some possible new organizations, can play a role in maintaining an agricultural base in the community.

Greene County recently completed an Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan. The plan sets forth in detail a series of goals and objectives as well as proposed initiatives that would benefit the further development of agricultural enterprises in Greene County, as well as mechanisms to protect farmland and farming operations. In addition to providing specific recommendations that support agriculture, the Ag Development and Protection Plan also takes advantage of existing institutional structures and integrates agencies and organizations such as the Greene County Ag & Farmland Protection Board, Greene County Planning & Economic Development, Cooperative Extension, Soil & Water and others. The Town and Village of Cossackie should work to the maximum extent possible to assist the agriculture community in implementation of this plan.

In addition to the recommendations in the Agricultural Development & Farmland Protection Plan, the Cossackie Community Planning Committee makes the following recommendations based on data from the Community Survey, Community Visioning Workshops and discussions with representatives of the community’s farmers.

## **Actions:**

### **1. Regulatory Tools**

The Town and Village will promote, develop or strengthen, and enforce effective regulatory tools to protect and promote agricultural activities within the community. Cossackie is typical of many rural communities where residential growth and development is in increasing conflict with agricultural activities. By its very nature, agriculture often has associated noise, odors, management activities and other issues that may have an influence beyond the property boundary. As a traditional agricultural community, these issues were common to most landowners or at least understood to be part of the “cost” of living in the country. In recent years, as more and more farms have been taken out of production and converted to housing, the remaining farm land is left fragmented, with working farms and subdivisions often sharing a

#### **Agricultural Value Assessment**

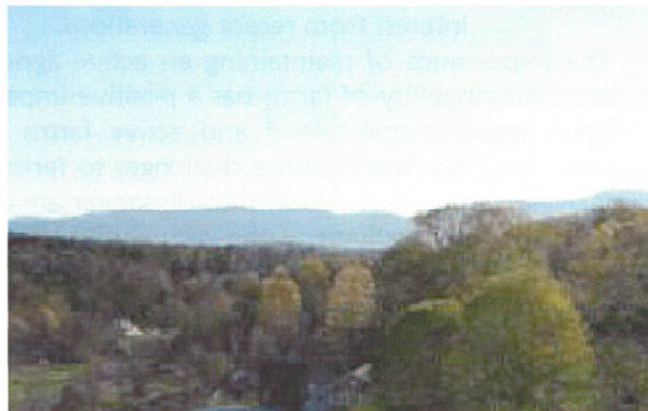
When development pressure increases real property values in a community, farm income cannot keep up with the related property tax increases due to limitations on a farm’s productivity. In NYS soils types are used as the basis for determining the agricultural value of land. Under the system, all soils are assigned a value based on their ability to produce agricultural products. Better, higher producing soils have the highest value while poor soils with low crop productivity are assigned lower values. In Cossackie, agricultural values in 2006 could range from a high of \$513/acre to a low of \$26/acre. The agricultural value is used directly in the farm’s assessment.



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narrow tree line as their boundary.

As a result, the potential for conflicts between these two land uses is greatly increased, adding additional stress on agricultural viability. In conversations with representative of Coxsackie's farming community, they expressed significant concern that review and approval of development projects in close proximity to agricultural operations does not adequately take into consideration these potential conflicts. While a traditional project review should address the direct impact of the project on agriculture (i.e. is farm land being taken out of production to build the development), typical project reviews do a poor job at evaluating the impact to adjoining farms. By improving consideration of impacts on farming activity during the review of new projects, potential conflicts can be anticipated and provided for in the projects final approval. The following activities are recommended as priority actions.



**Agricultural land preserves scenic views, ridgelines, habitats and open spaces.**

- 1.1 Review and revise the Town of Coxsackie Right to Farm Law to include a broadened consideration of specialty (niche) farming and agroforestry related activities such as timber harvesting and other forest or forest product related land uses.
- 1.2 Evaluate the current and future role of agricultural activities within the Village of Coxsackie and determine if the Village should adopt a Right-to-Farm law.
- 1.3 Require that new development comply with all agriculture regulations. Require full compliance with new and existing regulations such as NY AG and Markets law-25AA, Town of Coxsackie Right To Farm Law, zoning and site plan review laws when the proposed development is in or near an agricultural district, or in proximity to areas of active farming.
- 1.4 Require impact assessment of developments affecting land in agricultural use. Require developers to analyze the impacts to the land (changes in topography, water courses, drainage patterns, etc.), to local and regional farmers (e.g. effect of diminishing the critical mass of farms), economy, employment (type of, skill sets), etc. of the change in land use.
- 1.5 Include farm representation on local planning boards. Utilize technical and professional resources available from existing agencies and organizations to provide input on development projects impacting agricultural land. Available resources may include NYS Agriculture and Markets, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County, Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District, Greene County Ag and Farmland Protection Board, Greene County Farm Bureau and others. A formal institutional framework for engaging these services should be developed.



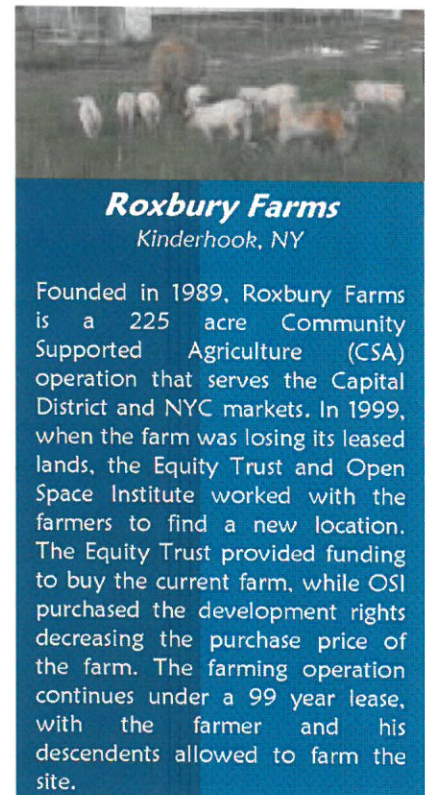
# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 1.6 Review and revise existing land use regulations to integrate consideration of local agricultural activities. Specific actions may include:
- Establishing effective buffer zones between new residential development and active farm land. Prohibit construction of new homes in the buffer zone to reduce conflict between farm operations that may have impacts beyond the property line (i.e. manure spreading) and residential development.
  - Requiring use of deed covenants on new residential subdivisions that serve to notify potential buyers of the presence of agriculture.

## 2. System of Tax Incentives

The Town and Village will work cooperatively with agricultural interests to develop an effective system of tax incentives that will facilitate long range security of farming in the community and the preservation of open, working farmlands. The increasing reliance on property taxes to fund governmental and educational operations is a burden to all landowners. In the case of farms, this impact is much more pronounced as basic farm economics is in crisis and can not keep up with increases in taxes. Additionally, farms require a larger land base that in turn increases their tax load. While there are existing real property tax incentives that can help farmers, these programs are often poorly understood and not used to their full advantage. Reducing property tax impacts on agricultural operations must be a priority item in any comprehensive strategy to help maintain an agricultural base in the community. The following recommendations are made:

- 2.1 Enhance participation in existing farm incentive and tax exemption programs such as the NYS agriculture assessment program, farm building-exemption portion of the real property tax law, NYS farmer's school tax credit, NYS historic barn credit program and the NYSDEC Forest Tax Law.
- 2.2 Improve farmer and local government understanding of these tax incentives programs. Provide training to farmers, tax assessors, tax preparers and others to insure effective application of these programs.
- 2.3 Work with farm landowners and local assessors to correctly apply tax incentive programs such as the state Agricultural Value Assessment Program to insure maximum benefit to community farms.
- 2.4 Investigate development of new local tax incentives that promote the continuance of agriculture and the maintenance of open space. Examples may include:
  - Extending property tax incentives to smaller agricultural operators that may not meet state size/income qualifications. The community can develop a local program that would help promote smaller farms.





- Provide additional local incentives for agricultural land that is within identified priority areas for farmland protection. Priority areas may include those areas with an existing, non-fragmented, high percentage of active farms, in water supply watersheds to protect drinking water supplies, or other priority areas as may be identified by the community. Additional incentives may involve providing a slightly lower tax or assessment rate for farms that are within these priority areas.
- Provide additional property tax incentives for agricultural buildings or other farm infrastructure to promote investment in agricultural operations.

## 3. Public/Private Partnerships

The Town and Village will create public/private partnerships that can improve the economic viability of local farms. In discussions with agricultural producers in the community, a significant limitation to long term viability of farms was tied to the difficulty of maintaining a profitable operation. The increasing cost of doing business, the lack of farm support services and limited markets for local farm products were noted as the major reason farms can no longer stay in business. If farms can not remain profitable, no amount of tax relief will be effective to keep active farming in the community. Addressing farm economics is not a job that can be accomplished by local governments alone. It will require a creative partnership between local governments, farmers and agencies or organizations that can effectively address a diverse array of issues. Recommended action items include:

**“The highest priority for the Village and Town should be to preserve existing farmland, open space and ecologically sensitive land and concentrate development on that land that is already developed in the Village.”**

Resident Survey Response

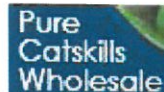
- 3.1 Work with a wide range of stakeholders to increase access to funding that can assist with making improvements or modifications to farm businesses that may be necessary for increased profitability and long term sustainability.
- 3.2 Cossackie is fortunate to have the National Bank of Cossackie and The Bank of Greene County, both locally based. As local banks, there is significantly more flexibility in the development of incentive programs that can help meet the community’s goal of preserving farms. Evaluate the feasibility of working with local banks to develop loan incentives (i.e. reduced interest rates) to assist qualified farm operations in meeting needs for farm capital investments.
- 3.3 Help local farms take advantage of programs such as the NYS barn rehabilitation grant program that may be able to assist in maintaining their farm infrastructure.
- 3.4 Evaluate the development of a program that would purchase farm development rights. These programs not only help directly conserve open space, but can provide farmers with an infusion of cash that can be reinvested in the farm. Reinvestment may focus on improvements and increased efficiencies to existing operations, or provide farmers with funds they may need to convert to another, more profitable operation.
- 3.5 Evaluate recreational leasing of farmland for various recreation activities. There are already provisions in NYS Ag & Markets Law for farmers to be able to open their land



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by lease to hunters. The concept of recreational leasing of farm land has been a long standing practice in Europe. Payments for recreational use will not only provide farmers with cash benefits, but will also promote visitors to the area and may provide additional benefits to other businesses such as hotels, restaurants, sporting stores etc.

- 3.6 Work with a wide range of stakeholders to develop an effective comprehensive strategy to improve farm economic viability. This strategy should be done in conjunction with the Greene County Agricultural Development and farmland protection plan and will need to address a wide range of issues. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
- Evaluating the feasibility of establishing a community based agriculture cooperative that can facilitate marketing of farm products. The feasibility of creating a local farmers market as well as methods to collect and transport farm products to markets in major urban areas such as NYC should be included. A cooperative may be able to assist smaller farms when competing with larger wholesalers to supply farm products to local institutions or larger retailers.
  - Work with state legislators to increase NYS Dept. of Corrections purchasing of local farm products. With two correctional facilities in Coxsackie, direct farmer sales to these facilities can create an important market.
  - Coxsackie Athens Central School District should implement any available measures that will increase the District's use of local agricultural products. The school should investigate participation in the NYS Farm-to-School program, as well as take advantage of no-bid provisions for locally grown produce. It must also be recognized that the school needs consistent and reliable access to this produce and farmers must improve their ability to deliver local agricultural products as required by the school.
  - Work with the Greene County Industrial Development Agency to evaluate the feasibility of integrating a farm product retail center in the future Business Park that is being targeted for destination retail. High volume traffic associated with destination retail can also benefit local retail of farm products.
  - Work with Greene County Planning & Economic Development to develop agri-business incentives for farming operations. Programs for agricultural operations that are modeled on the current Micro-Enterprise Assistance program or the existing revolving loan funds should be evaluated. Evaluate the feasibility of seeking federal HUD or Small Cities funds to create new financial incentives for agricultural operators.
  - Work with appropriate partners to facilitate development of new specialty farm operations and farm product marketing tools. This would include working with



### Pure Catskills Wholesale

When farms thrive, our communities benefit in many ways. Pure Catskills farms are located in the region that protects clean drinking water for nine million New Yorkers. These farms grow and harvest crops as part of a world-renowned and innovative partnership that focuses on healthy, working farmland and the water protection practices it takes to keep the streams and reservoirs safe.



farms to adapt current operations to more profitable or sustainable types of farming, developing new markets, both within and outside of the community, finding opportunities for “added value” for farm products, developing an effective education and outreach program that ensures community residents understand the importance of maintaining farms and how they can help.

### IX. Natural Resources and Open Space Actions

#### **Goal:**

The Town and Village will protect sensitive natural, scenic and environmental areas and pursue permanent preservation of open spaces that are essential to maintaining our distinct character and rich quality of life.

#### **Context:**

In one of the visioning workshops, a very young resident appealed to the Town and Village not to “take away the homes of the birds and animals”. The long-term stability of wildlife species and habitats, ecosystems and economies, and public health and welfare requires careful protection of environmental resource, biodiversity and open space.

**“Don't blow it - good planets are hard to find.”**  
Quoted in *Time*

Rural areas such as Coxsackie are becoming increasingly aware of the need to find an effective balance between new development, open space preservation and provision of recreational opportunities. In addition to the value of open space for quality of life and general aesthetics, maintaining open space in the community reduces impacts on community resources such as schools and municipal services. In the community survey, respondents overwhelmingly indicated their support for maintaining existing community character with 90% of responders indicating they wanted to preserve rural character, 86% to preserve farms and 83% to preserve wetlands and open space. In addition, 74% indicated they were in favor of using regulatory methods to meet environmental and open space protection goals.

While there was strong support for open space and environmental protection in the survey results, with three out of four people supporting a strong regulatory approach, there was much lower support for public funding being used to meet these goals -- 58% of the respondents supported public funding for open space, 44% for flood mitigation and 63% for park development. Given tight municipal budgets it is important that private development be pushed to bear more responsibility for meeting environmental and open space goals. Along the 9W corridor, the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA) and Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD) have already established precedent for making open space conservation a requirement associated with large-scale development. In the case of the GCIDA, a 1.4 acres were preserved for every acre of land approved for development. While this ratio may not be appropriate for all projects, an aggressive approach will be necessary if the Town and Village want to accomplish any meaningful conservation.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

If the community wants to have open space conservation and environmental protection as key elements of their futures, they must act locally. While regulatory agencies such as NYSDEC and the Army Corp of Engineers can address wetland impacts through mitigation, these agencies do not have the regulatory framework to adequately address open space and community character in their review and permitting of projects. Even though these agencies require habitat and open space impacts to be considered in SEQRA reviews and permitting processes, they do not have a consistent or defined policy for requiring developers to mitigate these impacts.

## 1. Mitigate Wetland Impacts

In the Town and Village of Cossackie, substantial areas of state and federal regulated wetlands exist. While these conditions are slightly more dominant in the area east of the Thruway, extensive wetlands occur throughout the Town. Recently, wetland assessments conducted by the GCSWCD for potential developments have determined that many of the remaining large vacant parcels in the Town and Villgage may have 50% to 75% or more of the site meeting the criteria for designation as federal wetlands. Addressing impacts to wetlands will be the single most important issue to impact future development in the community. Specific recommendations related to wetland impacts include:

- 1.1 Working with the GCSWCD, GCIDA and others, the Town and Village will seek funding to complete wetland mapping in those areas where they would like to see development occur. Currently, there are no National Wetland Inventory Maps (NWI) available for the Town or Village of Cossackie. While these maps do not substitute for site-by-site



### Mashomack Preserve

The east-end towns of Long Island (Easthampton, Riverhead, Shelter Island, Southampton and Southold) requested and received special legislation from the state legislature to impose a two percent real property transfer tax to put money into their conservation fund, which was then approved by the voters. The fund has preserved numerous parcels including the Mashomack Preserve in Shelter Island.

delineation of wetlands, they can be an effective tool to help “guide” potential development. Mapping of wetlands in preferred growth areas can serve as an incentive as it can save developers significant costs. This is a dynamic process. Wetlands are constantly changing. If delineations and mapping are completed and a Jurisdictional Determination (JD) is provided by the Army Corp of Engineers, the JD is only good for five years. Any mapping effort will require periodic adjustment and monitoring.

- 1.2 Require all development projects that complete wetland delineations to provide a digital copy to the planning board so that they can be integrated by GCSWCD into a database of known wetlands.



- 1.3 Work with the GCSWCD, GCIDA and Greene County Department of Economic Development and Planning (GCDPED) to promote the creation of wetland mitigation banks (WMB). A WMB is a way for a sponsor (often a municipal entity) to create mitigation wetlands in advance of development projects, with developers being able to use “credits” from the WMB to offset impacts of their projects. Providing WMB credits to developers at no fee or a reduced fee can be a powerful incentive to promote the type and location of development the community desires. If done correctly, WMBs can also provide additional benefits such as open space preservation and flood control. However, development of a WMB is not a simple proposition. It requires extensive site assessment, wetland design, construction and monitoring of the wetland to insure it meets mitigation requirements.
- 1.4 Work with the Greene County Legislature to strengthen local resources that can facilitate the planning, construction and management of one or more WMBs. In Greene County, the GCSWCD is a likely choice as a lead agency for this type of project due to their experience with wetland mitigation. In recent years, the GCSWCD has not only completed wetland delineation mapping and the design of mitigation wetlands, but they have also completed the actual construction of mitigation wetlands for the GCIDA at a greatly discounted cost. Currently, the GCSWCD does not have the staffing or financial resources to undertake the development of a WMB. While it might be reasonable to seek some level of grant funding, and some WMB expenses could be reimbursed by the sale of WMB credits to developers, there is significant “up front” costs to establish WMBs that cannot be met by grants. A source of “seed money” is critical to get this process started.
- 1.5 The Town and Village of Coxsackie will strongly advocate for NYSDEC to update mapping of state regulated wetlands. Existing NYSDEC regulated wetland maps are based on wetland delineations conducted in the mid 1970’s or early 1980’s and are grossly inaccurate. Currently, developers must have NYSDEC conduct field delineations on a case-by-case basis and are often surprised to find that the wetland boundaries shown on the maps are significantly different from the actual wetlands, on the site today. Updated wetland mapping is often seen by communities (particularly landowners who have wetlands) as being undesirable and expensive. However, the lack of updated and accurate maps leaves only a false sense of security, since the actual extent of wetlands will not be known until the Town or Village Planning Board is in the process of reviewing a project. The availability of accurate wetland mapping can help the community, as well as developers, to ensure they have a viable project before it reaches the review stage.

### Town of Greenburgh, NY

#### Town of Greenburg

The Town of Greenburg in Westchester County used its real property tax authority to increase by one-half percent the tax on all assessed property in the town for a six-year period with the money going into a conservation fund for open space preservation. The fund is not sufficient to buy everything town officials want to conserve, they believe that the Town having done it’s fair share, will provide a competitive advantage when seeking funding for open space proposals under the Clean Air/Clean Water Bond Act and other grant programs.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

- 1.6 Prepare an official map showing all new streets, highways, rights-of-ways, drainage systems, parks, infrastructure and other physical features. An official map is not a zoning map. It is a guide, showing the actual location of features and where future infrastructure will and will not be. It can direct long term growth.

## 2. Environmental-Based Technical Resources

Like many issues in our society, the evaluation of environmental issues confronting the community is becoming increasingly complex. Environmental laws, and the science behind them, are constantly changing, making it difficult for volunteer entities such as Town or Village planning boards to keep abreast of these issues. Effective implementation of many of the recommendations in the Cossackie Community Plan, the Town and Village will need access to knowledgeable and trusted experts familiar with the rapidly changing status of environmental regulations. In addition to the need for ready access to professional knowledge and experience, the community would benefit by having access to environmental experts that are familiar with the area, the community and the “local” issues. Specific recommendations include:

- 2.1 The Town and Village will evaluate the feasibility of establishing a local conservation advisory panel to assist the planning board with project reviews. The communities could choose to establish their own Conservation Advisory Committees, or utilize existing groups



### The town of Perinton

The Town of Perinton in Monroe County used its authority to lower property tax assessments for parcels where, conservation easements have reduced the development allowed on the property for a period from five to 25 years. The Town leased the development rights of those properties in exchange for a property tax reduction ranging from 25 to 95 percent. The Lincoln Mills Conservation Easement shown in this picture is a woodlot on the banks of Irondequoit Creek, former site of a Seneca Indian trail.

such as the GCSWCD Habitat Advisory Committee. If a choice is made to establish an advisory structure at the Town and/or Village level, the communities must recruit members who are willing to commit the time it will take to be engaged in project reviews and have the professional or personal qualifications necessary to handle the highly technical issues involved in environmental impact reviews.

- 2.2 The Town and Village will evaluate entering into a cooperative agreement with the GCSWCD to serve in an advisory capacity to the Town and Village and on environmental



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issues. The GCSWCD can provide long-term institutional knowledge, and facilitate consistent environmental policy. While the GCSWCD has the experience and authority to serve in this capacity, it currently lacks the resources to perform this service on a regular basis. The Town and Village could facilitate this effort by working with the GCSWCD to develop a sustainable funding structure that would include public as well as private funds.

- 2.3 The Town and Village will provide continuing training to their planning boards on the effective use of the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) as a tool help evaluate impacts associated with proposed development projects. The planning board will be well versed in the requirements of SEQRA including specialized components such as the Visual Environmental Assessment Form as an additional tool to evaluate aesthetic or viewshed impacts associated with development projects.
- 2.4 The Town and Village will develop detailed guidance documents to provide developers and landowners with clear, consistent information about Town and Village local laws. These documents can help the planning board ensure they cover all topics as well as help developers know in advance what the local expectations are. Guidance documents will be updated as local ordinances and land use regulations change. The documents will include a detailed checklist that integrates recommendations of this plan as well as new ordinances and policies that result from its implementation.

## Critical Environmental Area Overlay District

The town of New Castle in Westchester County is placing two environmentally rich areas of the town under a critical environmental area overlay district. This overlay protects wetlands, trees, soils, flood plains, ridge lines, aquifers and watersheds. The authority to implement this zoning tool exists under Section 10 of the Municipal Home Rule Law, which says that villages, towns and cities have the authority to enact laws to protect their physical environment.

### 3. Open Space and Habitat Conservation

Overall, the Town and Village of Coxsackie have only a limited amount of land permanently dedicated to open space. While the community has strongly voiced their support for the maintenance of the community's rural character, the Town and Village currently lack important tools to make this happen.

- 3.1 The Town and Village of Coxsackie will work with the GCSWCD, Greene County Habitat Advisory Committee, Greene Land Trust and others to identify important habitat and open space resources in the community. This inventory and evaluation will result in the establishment of regulatory overlay zones that delineate critical habitat and open space resources within the community.
- 3.2 The Town and Village of Coxsackie will establish, by local law, open space/habitat protection standards that can be applied to new development projects or those projects where substantial redevelopment is proposed. The standards will be applied in established overlay zones based the protection of critical habitat or open space areas and should build upon the existing work of the GCSWCD and GCIDA. A primary focus of these standards should be the protection of grassland habitat, with a minimum mitigation ratio of 1:1 established for any project that will impact greater than ten (10) acres of grassland habitat.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 3.3 The Town and Village planning board will recognize the importance of long-term stewardship of lands dedicated to conservation. These properties must be managed in perpetuity. An effective management strategy that provides for both the institutional structure and fiscal resources necessary to oversee these properties must be provided. The Town and Village will work with Greene Land Trust to address these issues. Additionally, the provision of stewardship fees must be a component of any conservation strategy associated with future development projects.
- 3.4 Conduct an inventory of important viewsheds and ridgelines within the community. The inventory will be used as the basis to develop additional regulatory overlay districts or other programs to protect these views. An inventory of important viewsheds would also be helpful to the Town and Village planning boards, helping ensure consistent project review and approvals.
- 3.5 Develop a conservation zoning designation or utilize overlay districts to protect critical environmental resources areas. Protection will be provided to currently established habitat areas, extensive wetland complexes and other important natural resource features that may be identified in a natural resources inventory for the community. All development will be prohibited in these protected areas.
- 3.6 Develop a long-range plan for an open space protection plan consistent with the findings of a natural resource inventory. Work cooperatively with GCSWCD, GLT, GCIDA and others



### Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Plan

The Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Plan is a partnership between the Wildlife Conservation Society's Metropolitan Conservation Alliance and the four contiguous towns of Cortlandt, New Castle, Putnam Valley, and Yorktown in northwestern Westchester County and southwestern Putnam County. The goal of the project is to establish a regional, multi-town approach to land use planning to promote the conservation of wildlife and habitats. These four towns were selected because they contain an impressive diversity of wildlife and habitats, are under development pressures that threaten those natural resources, and because there is a growing concern within these towns about the costs of sprawl to the environment and to human health and well-being.

to establish the plan and build on the success of current activities in the community. The plan must also include the establishment of a wide range of incentives to promote open space protection. Conservation easements, purchase of development rights, local tax incentives and other tools will be used in a comprehensive approach to open space protection.

- 3.7 The Town and Village will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Greene Land Trust to help facilitate many of the recommendations in this plan. The Greene Land Trust was established to provide an institutional structure that could assist local communities with wetland, habitat and open space conservation. The Town, Village and Greene Land Trust could execute a memorandum of understanding that recognizes each party's willingness to work together to meet the communities' conservation goals.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## 4. Stream & River Corridor Protection

The Hudson River is perhaps the most complex and diverse ecological resource in the Town and Village of Cossackie. At Cossackie, the river is tidal, and in addition to the river itself, there are numerous adjacent tidal wetlands and backwater areas that provide a rich and diverse ecosystem. There are two areas in the Town and Village that are designated as Hudson River Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas. In addition, the Town contains many other streams and water courses that are important resources.

- 4.1 Create an overlay district along the Hudson River corridor to ensure effective protection of critical natural resources. Establish strict standards for lot size, viewshed protection, wetlands, stormwater and other impacts within the overlay district. Specifically, establish a five (5) acre minimum lot size within the overlay district and strongly promote the use of conservation subdivisions, planned unit developments or similar smart growth tools.
- 4.2 Develop and adopt a local stream corridor and wetland protection law. The ordinance should provide for a protective buffer along streams and creeks, prevent development of structures and impervious surfaces and promote vegetative buffers.
- 4.3 The Town and Village will work cooperatively with the GCSWCD, Greene Land Trust and others to educate residents on the importance of stream corridor and wetland protection. Residents should be knowledgeable about the many benefits streams and wetlands provide for water quality, flood prevention, habitat and aesthetics.



**The Northern Harrier Hawk and the Short Eared Owl**

## 5. Watershed Protection

The Town of Cossackie contains significant areas where surface water drains in to drinking water supplies. The Village of Cossackie lower reservoir, NYSDOC Cossackie Correctional Facility reservoir, Sleepy Hollow Lake and the Village of Catskill's Potic Creek reservoir are all sources of drinking water that receive drainage from areas within the Town of Cossackie. These water systems are critical resources, and must be adequately protected.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 5.1 Develop protective watershed overlay districts and within these districts, use environmental performance based zoning, site plan review and other regulatory methods to ensure reservoir water quality protection.
- 5.2 The Town and Village will work cooperatively with the Town of New Baltimore to develop a watershed protection plan for the Village water supply. The plan will inventory threats to the water supply and set forth detailed recommendations for watershed protection. The plan will require all three communities to enact and enforce consistent protective measures.

## 6. Sediment & Erosion Control

Soil erosion, and its subsequent deposition in waterways, wetlands and other critical environmental areas is an issue of both local and national importance. While NYS enacted strong stormwater regulations in 2002, enforcement is often difficult due to limited staffing at NYSDEC. The Town and Village must be aware of erosion and sedimentation issues related not only to private developments but also to municipal activities. For example, erosion from roadside drainage ditches can be a significant source of sediment. The clay soils that dominate the community make erosion a particular problem for Coxsackie. Clay soils consist of extremely fine particles that stay in suspension in water for a very long time, allowing them to travel far from their origin.

- 6.1 The Town and Village will undertake a detailed review of Stormwater Pollution prevention Plans (SPPP) for all projects subject to NYSDEC regulations. The Town and Village will utilize the services of the GCSWCD and/or professional consultants as necessary.
- 6.2 On larger development projects, the Town and Village will require third party inspections of erosion and sediment control measures during the construction phase, with the cost of the inspections paid by the developer. A third party inspector would supplement NYSDEC inspections. The GCSWCD could be a resource for these services.
- 6.3 The Town and Village of Coxsackie will adopt local policy that requires their municipal services (i.e. highway) to integrate sediment and erosion measures into their daily activities. For example, the highway department will be required to control erosion related to maintenance of roadside drainage by seeding and mulching ditches after they are cleaned.

### Sound Agricultural Practices

Under NYS Agricultural District Law the Commissioner of the Dept. of Ag & Markets is authorized to review complaints from municipalities and farm neighbors regarding a specific farm practice. If the Commissioner rules a practice is sound, it can not be found to be a private nuisance. A sound practice must be legal, non-harmful, necessary and supported by expert guidance or opinion. Determinations of sound practices are only made after extensive on-site investigations.



### Visioning Workshops

Three visioning workshops were conducted in the spring of 2006. In each workshop, participants were asked to discuss the things they love and the things they would like to change about Cossackie. Participant comments from these workshop are included in the table below. The second column includes action items included in the plan that address participant comments.

What People Said	Possible Actions
<b>Community Character and Historic Preservation</b>	
Use conservation incentives	Use development standards, rezone sensitive land, conservation
Use design guidelines	Implement guidelines for new residential and commercial development
Improve village buildings	Provide local tax or building incentives including a facade program
Protect open space	Adopt conservation subdivisions; purchase conservation easements
Resistance to major developments	Require detailed fiscal impact assessment
Need to preserve rural character	Clustering, conservation subdivisions, open space preservation
Enforce zoning laws/track compliance	Hire additional staff; require zoning compliance survey annually
Protect historic resources	Expand Reed Street district; use overlay to protect other resources
Limit the density of residential developments	Increased density may be desirable. Limit total number of units
Protect agriculture	Incentives, conservation easement programs, promotion and marketing
Protect scenic beauty and views	Land acquisition, scenic overlays, zoning lands "conservation"
Protect property rights	Anticipate needs of large lot owners and farmers
Consider conservation easements	Create conservation easement program
Slow the pace of development	Increase standards, improve review process, require fiscal impact
Infrastructure in place before development is permitted	Improve village infrastructure. Developer pays for infrastructure
Need more code enforcement officers	Hire more officers
Support land trust	Collaborate on funding applications
Need adequate base mapping (wetlands, etc)	Work with county on mapping, advocate with State and Federal Gov.
<b>Agriculture</b>	
Preserve rural character and agriculture	Enact right to farm law; conservation easement programs
Earlton's character is different than the rest of the community	Define specific standards and incentives
Need a farmers market	Meet with agricultural providers and discuss feasibility and location
Need to create incentives for farmers to hold large tracts	Conservation easement program, recreational leasing
Create recreation on agricultural lands	Work with the land trust to catalog idle agricultural land
Use development fees to support agriculture	Create easement purchase, open space acquisition or TDR fund
Bond for purchase of development rights	Work with the land trust to identify critical environmental resources



Governance and Leadership	
School and property taxes too high	Need expanded commercial contribution, consolidated services
Tax impact on seniors	Consider local tax breaks for seniors; affordable senior housing
Tax base is unbalanced: too much residential	COS analysis: need to expand commercial, retail and industrial uses
Need residential uses to grow tax base	Encourage uses that have positive fiscal impact
Tax exempt land off tax rolls	Can't restrict purchases of land by non-profits; encourage co-location
PILOTS no guarantee business will stay	Need Local Dev. Corp and more ED coordination
Condo assessment is unfair	Evaluate dual tax rate structure. Advocate for NYS legislative action
New residents will demand new, more suburban services	Project impacts. Identify vision of remaining consciously rural
Need educated workforce to be competitive	Encourage school excellence and worker training
Consider consolidation of government services	Do a consolidation study. Pursue available State grant funds
Need development/impact fees	Develop a schedule of development fees and implement it
Cooperate	More intermunicipal agreements. River Towns. County ED strategy
Pursue brownfield redevelopment	Identify sites and pursue funding and BOA designation
County should share sales tax	Make formal request for sale tax sharing
Can we make user 55 plus communities actually turn out that way	Create Senior Residence District in zoning
Village debt is a big concern	Must diversify tax base, access grants and make developers pay
Transportation	
Convenient location	Promote and take advantage of location
Condition of village streets is fair to poor	Develop plan to improve fixed length of road annually
Concern about future congestion	Plan for and carefully assess transportation impacts
Appeal of 9W	Implement design guidelines on 9W
Trees and sidewalks in village	Create street tree and sidewalk programs
Trains are concern and disruptive	Work with CSX regarding maintenance and procedures
Need public transportation	Encourage local providers: bus, taxi, mini-bus, senior rides
Walk to school routes	Work with schools to plan safe routes with sidewalks and crossings
Control major truck traffic	Create truck routes and control weight limits on Village streets
Protect back roads	Adopt rural road standards
Control/promote gateways	Acquire land and control gateway development
Parking needed for events, at school and along waterfront	Develop plan for additional parking
Development standards for commercial corridors	Prepare design standards
Bike paths	Prepare bike/hike trail plan and gradually implement



Economic Development And Village Vitality	
Need much more retail	Retail recruitment plan and entrepreneurship support
Support locally owned businesses	Buy local campaign, entrepreneurship training
Balance industrial and other forms of development	Reserve land for commercial and retail development
Use design guidelines for commercial buildings	Prepare commercial building design guidelines
Protect agriculture as an economic driver	Conservation easements and other incentives
Limit big box/chain stores	Zoning to limit total square footage size of commercial structures
Protect main street character	Historic preservation, streetscapes, sidewalks, trees, parking
Develop farmers market	Create committee to advance the idea of a farmers market
Improve workforce quality	Coordinate with school and CGCC
Improve welcoming and directional signage	Design, construct and locate signs
Improve the appeal of 9w	Impose design standards and provide pedestrian amenities
Riverfront development is an opportunity	Prepare waterfront strategic plan and implement
Prisons are good employers	Continue close coordination especially about municipal infrastructure
Need professional park for Dr's, dentists, lawyers	Identify feasibility and location with GCIDA
Redevelop brownfield sites	Identify sites and pursue funding and BOA designation
Build and rehabilitate gateway buildings	Identify sites and attract users
Environmental resources and open space	
Problems with the village water system	Develop plan to fix the system permanently
Preserve rural character	Conservation subdivisions, clustering, conservation easements
Use regulatory tools to protect open space	Inventory lands. Use overlays: scenic, environmental, habitat, wetland
Use public funds for open space acquisition	Establish pool of funds and/or bond for land acquisition
Preserve agriculture	Conservation easements, incentives and active promotion
Protect natural resources	Inventory resources and sensitive lands
Access to the river	Develop waterfront strategic plan
Scenic beauty and views	Create and use scenic overlay and SEQRA visual impact assessment
Lakes and streams	Protect and buffer streams and waterways from runoff and erosion
Street trees need to be planted, maintained and replaced	Develop street tree program
Go slow on largest lot development	Use tools to preserve large lots
Land trust is in place	Partner with land trust
Use impact fees to fund open space preservation	Develop schedule of impact fees
Purchase development rights	Develop PDR/TDR program
Wetlands need to be preserved	Create wetland mitigation bank. Strategy to manage set-aside lands



Community facilities and recreation	
Want more cycling and walking facilities	Prepare plan for bike/hike system and Town Park
Add more parks and recreation areas	Add lighting, improve maintenance of playground equipment
Use public funds for parks and river access	Prepare funding program for park enhancement
Law enforcement and rescue service are top notch	Plan for impact of growth on these services
School and local education is excellent	Plan for impact of growth on the schools
Four Mile Point Preserve is an asset	Work to implement plan for its use
Library is great	Ongoing support from the library is essential
Need recreation west of 9W	Consider recreational leasing of AG land
Use development fees to pay for new recreation	Implement system of development fees and in lieu fees for parks
Use the Yacht Club and Cocksackie Island for canoeing and kayaking	Partner with environmental groups and seek grants
Housing	
Promote more single family housing	Pursue homebuyer assistance funds. Zone for single family
2 acre residential zoning carves land up and causes sprawl	Implement density incentives and conservation and clustering
Control loss of rural character	Need large lot or cluster zoning
Second home ownership is growing	Need to understand market and desires of new owners
Need town homes and high end housing options	Identify location for higher density housing
Affordability is a problem for seniors	Create affordable senior cottages and affordable rentals
Historic homes must be preserved	Use historic overlays and extend district boundaries
Residential development should meet design standards	Prepare residential design standards for new development
Rehabilitate existing homes as well as building new	Apply for CDBG grant
No increase in trailer parks	Don't zone for more trailer parks. Manufactured housing standards
Ensure that retirement communities actually are for seniors	Senior residence district
Infrastructure	
Problems with village water	Address consent order and improve system
Flooding along river and in downtown a problem	Prepare flood hazard mitigation plan
Development happening faster than infrastructure can accommodate	Use zoning and standards to influence the location of development
Need to address water main breaks and distribution system	Plan for distribution system improvements
Protect drinking water supply	Intermunicipal agreement to protect reservoirs
Separate storm and sanitary sewer	Develop phased plan to separate storm and sanitary sewer
Need to direct growth to where public infrastructure is available	Adopt an official map, use zoning standards
Improve high speed internet and cellular communication	Continue to advocate with utility providers
Underground utilities in the village	Ensure that utilities are underground in all new development



# Town & Village of Coxsackie

## Community Plan

SEPTEMBER 1, 2006

### COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

#### STEERING COMMITTEE

Frank Gerrain, Chair  
 John Benson  
 Shawn Clouthier  
 Rocco Cole  
 Leslie Copelston  
 Sy DeLucia  
 Aaron Flach  
 Michael Johnson  
 Laurel Mann  
 John Oliver  
 Ed Pebler  
 Clark Pell  
 Peggy Quigley  
 Ed Ross  
 Al Schnare  
 Rene Van Schaack  
 Bill White

#### WHAT I LIKE MOST ...

- **SMALL TOWN FEEL**
- **HISTORIC VILLAGE**
- **CARING COMMUNITY**
- **OPEN SPACE**
- **HUDSON RIVER ACCESS**
- **CONVENIENT LOCATION**
- **RURAL CHARACTER**

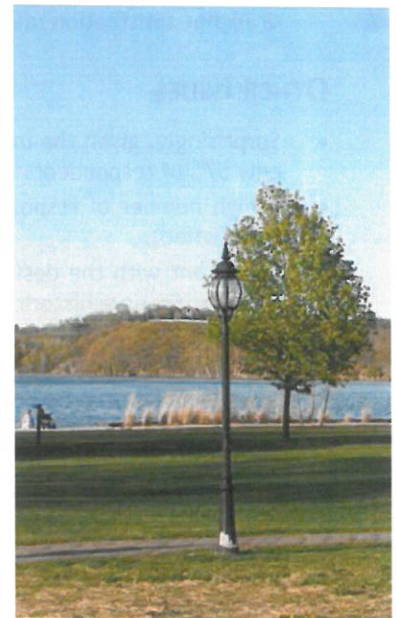
In order to assess the concerns of residents about issues facing the future of the Town and Village, a survey was conducted. A paper survey was mailed to every household, and made available in local establishments. The survey was also available on the Internet. As of June 28, 2006 a total of 545 surveys were completed. Of particular note in the survey results:

#### WHO RESPONDED

- 9% of the Town and Village population of 6,051 (excluding residents of the correctional facility) responded to the survey. Since one survey was mailed to each household, we assume that the majority of households returned only one survey and that these 545 surveys represent approximately 23% of the 2,422 households in the Town and Village.
- Responses came in primarily from long time residents (50% living in the community 20 years or longer), and homeowners (94%) who are full time residents (91%).
- Respondents are satisfied with the current pace of development (58%) and would like the community to remain about the same size (53%) or increase (41%).

#### RESIDENTIAL ISSUES

- Respondents indicated a preference for the Town and Village to work towards more single family housing (67%) and more senior housing (63%) rather than condominiums (38%), rental housing (35%), or apartments (21%).
- Respondents strongly indicated a preference for regulation of development with 70% indicating that the Town and Village should apply design standards and 82% indicating that Coxsackie should limit density of residential developments.



#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- Consistent with the concerns expressed in the visioning workshops, 70% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with availability of retail.
- Somewhat surprisingly, given comments made in the visioning workshops, 72% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the availability of professional services.
- A very high percentage indicated support for Town and Village efforts to enhance locally owned and operated businesses (85%).
- A majority of respondents indicated that they would not support further development of industrial parks (56%).
- Respondents were very interested in the aesthetic appeal of the Village. 60% were satisfied with the Village's appeal, yet 82% would have the community work to improve it. By comparison only 48% were satisfied with the aesthetic appeal of Route 9W.
- 72% of respondents supported development of the new YMCA facility.



## PARK AND RECREATION ISSUES

- Respondents were generally satisfied with the location of parks and green space (74% satisfied, 17% dissatisfied) but expressed a lack of satisfaction with cycling and walking facilities (37% satisfied, 50% dissatisfied). Despite the satisfaction with parks, 68% indicated that the Town and Village should seek to add more parks and green space.
- 63% of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the maintenance of parks and 82% indicated satisfaction with access to the Hudson.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- Problems with the Village's water system were reflected in a 73% dissatisfaction with water supply.
- Residents expressed a clear desire to preserve the character of their community with a full 90% indicating that the Town and Village should work to preserve the rural character of the town, 86% to protect and enhance active farms, and 83% to preserve wetlands and open space.

## TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

- Consistent with several comments made during the visioning workshop about the need for improved road maintenance and sidewalks, only a slight majority of respondents were satisfied with these items (55% roads, 52% sidewalks) and a relatively high number would like to see the Town and Village work towards improving these issues (61% roads, 63% sidewalks). Residents are generally satisfied with transportation issues with most items in this category receiving 65% or higher satisfaction rates.

## OTHER ISSUES

- Surprisingly, given the many comments in the Visioning Workshops about the 'tight knit community feel' of Coxsackie, only 57% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'sense of community involvement'.
- A high number of respondents also expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of local media (48% satisfied, but 38% dissatisfied).
- Consistent with the desire to preserve the rural character of the Town, there was a strong desire to have Coxsackie work to preserve historic resources (85%).

## TOOLS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

- The community was generally in favor of using regulatory tools to meet objectives, with significant majorities favoring strict development regulations such as zoning (74%) and design guidelines (71%). Incentives were also favorably received including support for rehabilitation incentives (79%) and conservation incentives (73%).
- When asked whether "public funds" should be used to pay for or an initiative, only 58% supported using funds for open space and 44% for flood protection. 61% of respondents supported using funds for more park facilities and river access.

## OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

- The committee classified the 1252 responses to the question "what do you like most about Coxsackie" into 233 categories including small town feel and caring members, proximity to the Hudson River, good position to access other larger cities (Albany, Hudson, Kingston, NYC) via the Thruway, and rural character.
- The 1,222 responses to the question "what do you dislike most" fell in to 414 categories including the quality of the water, the level of school and property taxes and the lack of retail services.
- Respondents had the opportunity to provide general comments about issues facing the Town or Village including a desire to fix the water system, frustration with the level of taxation, resistance to major developments, a desire for more enforcement of regulations and zoning laws, the need for a sports park/YMCA and the need for more retail.



# Cossackie Community Abbreviated Action Plan

Under New York State law, municipalities are granted the authority and responsibility to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined in the state legislation, a comprehensive plan is a document that presents goals, objectives, guidelines and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the community. Also known as a master plan or land use plan, a comprehensive plan provides guidance to municipal leaders and helps to ensure that the needs of the community will be met.

The Town and Village of Cossackie have been developing their Comprehensive Plan over the past three years, using a comprehensive plan committee and the assistance of River Street Planning & Development, who were engaged by the Town and Village to facilitate the planning process. The role of the Steering Committee has been to guide and lead the planning process; collect and share relevant information; review documents; supervise the consultant team; educate residents about the process and the plan roles and responsibilities, charge and scope; and conduct community outreach and publicity. The committee conducted dozens of community conversations and coordinated the planning, logistics and outreach associated with survey distribution, focus groups, community visioning meetings and public workshops. They reviewed materials and documents and maintained the flow of communication with elected officials.

In order to assess resident concerns about issues facing the future of the Town and Village, a survey was conducted. A total of 545 surveys were completed – a very high response rate for comparable community surveys. In addition, three public visioning workshops were held to develop the vision statement. Participants identified many things that they love about Cossackie. The main themes that emerged were excellent quality of life, great schools, close-knit community, and a supportive place to raise a family. Residents also valued rural character, proximity and access to the Hudson River, and lack of traffic in the community. The most commonly identified community challenges included protection of property rights, regulations and zoning issues as well as the adequacy of municipal services including transportation and infrastructure. Residents identified the current tax burden as a key problem. Support services for the agriculture community and the lack of recreational options for community members were also highlighted. Finally, residents described their preferred future for Cossackie identifying a future with affordable taxes and homes, a vibrant and sustainable agricultural community and a variety of nearby jobs available to local graduates and residents.

Using feedback from the visioning workshop, a draft vision statement and set of goals for the Comprehensive Plan was developed. The goals address key elements including housing, economic and agricultural development, community services, transportation, open space and natural resources, recreation, and tax base enhancement.

The central challenge facing Cossackie for the next decade is to sustain the community's unique character and rich quality of life by creatively shaping development and managing growth while improving the financial security of both municipalities and safeguarding their natural beauty. The action plan below outlines a range of implementation tasks necessary to accomplish the vision statement:

"The Town and Village of Cossackie share a prized history, culture and character. Forged by and wedded to the Hudson River, Cossackie is a unique, quiet, safe and friendly place



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

– part historic Village, part small Town but largely rural with significant irreplaceable open space, farmland and environmental resources. Strategically located, Coxsackie is a wonderful place to grow up, raise a family, make a home and enjoy retirement -- as the multi-generational roots of the people demonstrate. These are the strengths of the community; these are the things that must be preserved.

The Town and Village of Coxsackie look forward to a brilliant shared future together. Growth will occur but we will shape it to be moderate in pace and volume, well planned and consistent with the expressed choice of residents to maintain and nurture the qualities that make this landscape and community a desirable place to live.

When this plan is successful, our community will enjoy an abundant quality of life with a thriving economy that offers well-paying jobs to a talented local workforce. The Village will be a vibrant place to live, work, shop, dine and visit among beautiful historic buildings and landscaped streets. A well-maintained municipal infrastructure and transportation system will provide essential services to residents and shape the location and density of future development. Effective leadership and proactive planning policies will protect our heritage while accommodating well-designed new development that harmonizes with its surroundings. Residents of all ages and incomes will enjoy broad housing choice, diverse recreation opportunities and excellent community services. Long-term residents, newcomers and seasonal homeowners will share a unified commitment to protection of the land, the waterfront, the Village's lively downtown, and the Town's rural character."

The following action plan summary outlines a broad range of initiatives to accomplish the established vision. Some of the actions are readily achievable within the existing planning and funding framework, while others will require additional creativity, financial resources and innovative collaborations. The ongoing development of progressive new zoning ordinances in each community will be linked to this action plan and provide the technical framework to guide its implementation. This document summarizes a the much more comprehensive action plan draft report which will be available shortly.

## I. Community Character & Historic Preservation Actions

### **Goal:**

*The Town and Village will employ best practices and creative land use tools that shape development, improve design and aesthetics, preserve historic resources and enhance rural character.*

### **Actions:**

#### **1. Regulation and Standards**

- 1.1 Revise zoning and land management codes to be consistent with this comprehensive plan.
- 1.2 Define "major development" as any development of such magnitude or impact that specially prescribed review is required (without regard to size or density).
- 1.3 Adopt a performance zoning framework that determines density based upon site-specific environmental conditions.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

- 1.4 Amend existing subdivision regulations to provide for conservation subdivisions and clustering, and require these tools for all major developments.
- 1.5 Adopt subdivision standards that protect and maintain natural landscapes and rural character.
- 1.6 Develop design standards for new developments addressing both streetscape and building design.
- 1.7 Limit multi-unit residential developments to certain locations in the Town and Village.
- 1.8 Designate critical environmental resources or create a conservation overlay zone.

## 2. Oversight and Management

- 2.1 Provide ongoing training for municipal boards on planning and zoning issues.
- 2.2 Retain professional planning services to assist with implementation of new land management tools.
- 2.3 Develop an approach to manage set-aside lands associated with conservation subdivisions.
- 2.4 Require digital data on all major development proposals and electronic submission of all development materials.
- 2.5 Coordinate the studies and plans detailed elsewhere in this action plan.

## 3. Historic Preservation

- 3.1 Expand the Reed Street Historic District and adopt historic overlay authority to protect individual structures including the Bronck House and surrounding area.
- 3.2 Promote and facilitate the protection of historic homes.
- 3.3 Evaluate historic commission review process to ensure efficiency, timeliness and consistency.
- 3.4 Identify archeological resources, historic landscapes and architectural elements and provide appropriate protection.
- 3.5 Secure grant funds to preserve historic and cultural resources such as the Bronck House.

## II. Community Governance Actions

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will provide strong financial stewardship, municipal leadership and visionary and proactive planning in a framework of open government that encourages the involvement of residents and leads to a stable and diverse tax base.*

### Actions:

#### 1. Tax Base

- 1.1 Ensure that there is an adequate supply of property suitable for commercial development and for the build-out necessary to balance the tax base.
- 1.2 Ensure that new residential developments that propose to have no (or limited) school district impacts actually build-out as proposed.
- 1.3 Seek funds to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of adopting a dual tax rate assessment process.
- 1.4 Promote redevelopment and infill buildings in the Village core and other target areas.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

- 1.5 Routinely educate local leaders and board members, school board members and administrators, and the public about the importance of sustainable tax base expansion.

## 2. Development Fees and Incentives

- 2.1 Continue to support available tax abatements and incentives to steer major economic development to the 9W corridor.
- 2.2 Develop a system of land use incentives and density bonuses to shape smaller scale economic development, mixed use projects and targeted residential subdivisions.
- 2.3 Develop an impact and development fee schedule to guide development, protect land, mitigate impacts and create revenue.
- 2.4 Identify smaller sites that can be made "shovel-ready" through pre-mitigation work, wetland assessment, and technical services.

## 3. Government Services, Communication and Coordination

- 3.1 Seek funds to study ways to blend Town and Village services.
- 3.2 Improve communication with residents through a newsletter, mailings in water and sewer bills, and improved web sites.
- 3.3 Consider the development of intermunicipal zoning overlay districts to preserve community character and environmental resources along Route 9W and for all of the river Towns.
- 3.4 Prepare brochure and web page that summarizes rules for major developments.
- 3.5 Collaborate with public and private partners region-wide to preserve the character of Greene County's River Towns.
- 3.6 Take a leadership role in the Greene County Hudson River Towns Inter-Municipal Growth Plan.
- 3.7 Implement a code of ethics and disclosure for all boards and committees.
- 3.8 Revise municipal codes and add additional code enforcement staff. [Also, I discovered a missing "n" in the main plan Town ad Village in the last sentence.]
- 3.9 Conduct annual review and evaluation of plan implementation. [I assume 3.9 was added to the plan.]

**"Destiny is not a matter of chance, but a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for, It is a thing to be achieved."**

Williams Jennings Bryan

## III. Agriculture

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will encourage agriculture and protect farmland by recognizing the vital role farmers play in protecting our community's character. We will support creative efforts to sustain the economic viability of farming including outlets for local products.* [Plan opens with "We will..." should be changed to match this if you haven't already]

### Actions:

#### 1. Regulatory Tools

- 1.1 Review and revise the Town's Right-to-Farm Law to include broad consideration of niche farming and agroforestry activities.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 1.2 Evaluate the current and future role of agricultural activities within the Village and determine if it should adopt a Right-to-Farm law.
- 1.3 Require all development projects that are in proximity to areas of active farming to be in full compliance with new and existing regulations.
- 1.4 Require impact assessment of all developments affecting land in agricultural use.
- 1.5 Include farm representation on planning boards and professional resources for technical assistance.
- 1.6 Review and revise existing land use regulations to promote increased consideration of local agricultural activities.

## 2. System of Tax Incentives

- 2.1 Enhance participation in existing farm incentive and tax exemption programs.
- 2.2 Improve farmer and local government understanding of tax incentives programs.
- 2.3 Work with farm owners and local assessors to correctly apply tax incentive programs.
- 2.4 Investigate development of new local tax incentives that promote the continuance of agriculture and the maintenance of open space.

## 3. Public/Private Partnerships

- 3.1 Increase access to funding to increase agricultural profitability and sustainability.
- 3.2 Encourage local banks to develop loan incentives for farm capital investments.
- 3.3 Help local farms take advantage of programs such as the NYS barn rehabilitation program.
- 3.4 Evaluate the programs to purchase development rights from farm owners.
- 3.5 Evaluate recreational leasing of farm land for various recreation activities.
- 3.6 Improve farm economic viability through a range of activities.

# IV. Housing

## Goal:

*The Town and Village will encourage diversified homeownership of high quality to meet all phases of a family's (check that 's is in main plan) life-cycle including starter houses, family residences, and vacation or retirement homes. New residential clusters will be designed to conserve open space consistent with our land use goals.*

- 1.1 Actions

## 2. Land Management Tools to Shape Residential Land Use

- 2.1 Implement the land management tools described elsewhere in this plan.
- 2.2 Carefully identify and designate land available for multi-family housing and condominiums.
- 2.3 Designate a Senior Residence District or Planned Unit Development or use other zoning tools to shape development of age-restricted housing with appropriate amenities.
- 2.4 Designate a Resort Residential District to shape development of new seasonal housing and amenities such as golf courses.
- 2.5 Develop a Design District Overlay that recognizes the uniqueness of the Village and other target areas.
- 2.6 Discourage gated communities in the Town and Village.
- 2.7 Pursue a mixed-use development pattern in the Greene and Kalkberg Industrial Parks including compatible residential uses.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## 3. Preservation and Development of Affordable Housing

- 3.1 Collaborate with a housing development organization to access grants for housing rehabilitation.
- 3.2 Encourage local employers to participate in a worker-housing homeownership initiative.
- 3.3 Explore the use of inclusionary zoning to create workforce housing for first time homebuyers.
- 3.4 Implement manufactured housing zoning and design standards.

## 4. Housing in the Village

- 4.1 Expand façade and main street initiatives to include residential properties.
- 4.2 Encourage the use of upper story space in the Village core for residential use.

## 5. Senior Housing

- 5.1 Encourage development of market rate senior housing.
- 5.2 Explore development of a continuing care retirement community.

## V. Economic Development and Village Vitality

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will create work and wealth for local residents by recruiting compatible new companies, supporting business expansion, and creating a thriving retail center. We will focus on stimulating a thriving local economy and a vibrant Village core.*

### Actions:

#### 1. Encourage Collaboration Around Economic Development Issues

- 1.1 Cooperate closely with the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA) planning (along 9W and RTE 81) and available Empire Zones.
- 1.2 Create a Local Development Corporation to foster interaction with development entities.

#### 2. Commercial Land Use

- 2.1 Carefully evaluate the location of future commercial uses to encourage growth while protecting community character.
- 2.2 Create a professional business/home occupation zone along 385 from 9W to the Village core and perhaps in other target areas.

#### 3. Workforce Development

- 3.1 Advocate for improvement in workforce development and local education services to increase workforce competitiveness.

#### 4. Design Standards and Incentives

- 4.1 Ensure that commercial uses blend into the existing rural community character by implementing commercial design standards.
- 4.2 Focus on beautification and aesthetics in commercial districts and the Village including street tree maintenance, plantings, and landscaping.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 4.3 Revise signage guidelines and standards for all types of signage used in the Village, along key corridors and along Route 9W.
- 4.4 Improve directional and welcome signage to highlight the available retail and dining opportunities as well as all waterfront attractions.
- 4.5 Develop façade and building improvement programs for the Village, West Coxsackie, Earlton, and along 9W.

## 5. Small Business Retention and Attraction

- 5.1 Support a small business retention/attraction initiative and retail recruitment strategy by providing incentives and/or loan program and a buy local initiative. [Did 5.2 get deleted?]

## 6. Waterfront Development

- 6.1 Create a development plan for the Hudson River waterfront to support needs of boaters and visitors.
- 6.2 Use a waterfront/Hudson River overlay district to shape future development along the waterfront and encourage the proper mix of uses

## 7. Brownfield Redevelopment

- 7.1 Investigate Brownfield Opportunity Area designation for identified sites in the Village.

# VI. Community Facilities and Recreation

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will develop and maintain excellent park and recreation resources, support schools of distinction, and encourage the creation of diverse community programs for all community members.*

### Actions:

- 1.1 Create New Park and Recreation Amenities
- 1.2 Assess recreational needs Town-wide.
- 1.3 Create a Town park.
- 1.4 Implement a system of park and recreation fees for funding new recreation facilities.
- 1.5 Create a trail development plan Town-wide, to be reflected on the official map.
- 1.6 Support the efforts of the GCIDA, Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD) and Greene Land Trust (GLT) to establish a multiuse trail on the habitat conservation lands.
- 1.7 Seek Hudson River Water Trail designation for the Coxsackie Island property and make improvements at both the riverfront park and at the island.
- 1.8 Continue to assist Scenic Hudson and GCSWCD with planned improvements at Four Mile Point Preserve.
- 1.9 Expand park and recreation resources through partnerships.
- 1.10 Protect and utilize Town and Village waterfront resources. [Did 1.10 get deleted?]

## 2. Existing Park and Recreation Facilities

- 2.1 Maintain existing park and recreation facilities.
- 2.2 Consider the future use for Fireman's Park.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## 3. Other Community Services

- 3.1 Support the needs of various community organizations.
- 3.2 Protect the community's high performing small schools.
- 3.3 Evaluate opportunities to expand local health services.
- 3.4 Create a brochure for potential residents explaining what it means to live in a consciously rural place.
- 3.5 Work cooperatively to design and construct new highway department/public works department facilities to promote effective sharing of resources.
- 3.6 Continue to support the library district and help the library to grow and meet the future needs of the community.
- 3.7 Consider and evaluate consolidation of Village fire companies.
- 3.8 Revive the Coxsackie Riverside Festival or some other community event that can bring residents together.

## VII. Transportation

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will ensure that excellent transportation amenities are accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and public transit users, creating a multi-modal community with well-maintained roadways, manageable traffic and beautiful streetscapes.*

### Actions:

#### 1. Develop a Road Maintenance, Rehabilitation and Replacement Strategy

- 1.1 Develop a methodology for annual road inspections.
- 1.2 Develop appropriate methods for road drainage to address chronic flooding problems.
- 1.3 Institute practices that reduce erosion and sedimentation from roadside ditches.
- 1.4 Improve equipment for the effective removal of snow from high density areas.
- 1.5 Implement a snow emergency policy.

#### 2. New Development Standards

- 2.1 Require new access to subdivisions to be constructed to Town road standards and dedicated to the Town for future maintenance.
- 2.2 Maximize the use of shared access points to new commercial or residential developments and minimize curb cuts in high-density areas.
- 2.3 Adopt local/rural road design standards that effectively address the look and feel of all new development projects.
- 2.4 Require new large scale developments to undertake traffic studies that are more detailed than the standard methodologies.
- 2.5 Discourage traditional curbing systems that present barriers to wildlife.

#### 3. Public Parking

- 3.1 Conduct a detailed analysis of Village parking resources.
- 3.2 Work with downtown business owners to have employee's park away from the businesses.
- 3.3 Require new commercial or institutional property owners to provide adequate provisions for customer parking in future plans for renovations, expansions or new businesses.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## 4. Aesthetics

- 4.1 Establish standards that provide for tree lined streets in new developments, specifying appropriate species and planting locations.
- 4.2 Establish standards for road signage that provide a neat, consistent appearance.
- 4.3 Work with CSX railroad to address the unkempt appearance of the railroad right-of-ways.
- 4.4 Establish standards for sidewalks and crosswalks to ensure uniform appearance and to simplify future maintenance.
- 4.5 Create attractive and informative gateways and landscaping.

## 5. Traffic Patterns

- 5.1 Support GCIDA's plans to reconfigure the 9W/81/385 intersection.
- 5.2 Create and enforce tractor trailer routes into the Village.
- 5.3 Conduct further analysis of the possible change of Reed Street to a one-way street.
- 5.4 Work to reduce the need for tractor trailers in areas with limited access including the waterfront.
- 5.5 Work with NYSDOT, the School District and the Village to evaluate reconfiguration of the Sunset Blvd/Route 385 intersection.
- 5.6 Consider imposition of weight limits or lowered speed limits around the Bronk House and other historic structures.

## 6. Pedestrian Amenities

- 6.1 Require sidewalks in the Town and Village for all new residential and commercial development.
- 6.2 Require pedestrian safety amenities such as crosswalks and curb extensions.
- 6.3 Work with the School District to continue to provide safe routes to walk to school.
- 6.4 Consider developing a joint Town/Village sidewalk restoration committee.

## 7. Intermodal/Multimodal Opportunities

- 7.1 Continue to work with NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to undertake improvements to the Village's Riverfront Park that would promote and enhance visits to the community from the boating community.
- 7.2 Work with the GCIDA and the GLT to establish a pedestrian/bike path system.
- 7.3 Require new development to integrate bicycle and pedestrian paths to connect the development with other recreation areas and trails.

## 8. Public Transportation

- 8.1 Continue to support access to public bus service via current or future vendors.
- 8.2 Investigate incentives to promote a local public transportation system such as a van service.
- 8.3 Evaluate and implement supporting amenities such as park-and-ride lots, bus shelters, posted schedules etc. to promote increased use of public transportation.
- 8.4 Work to support, expand or enhance the County's current public transportation system.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## VIII. Infrastructure

### Goal:

*The Town and Village will provide well-maintained municipal infrastructure with adequate capacity that provides quality drinking water and safe waste management. When we supply new infrastructure it will be consistent with land use goals and financially supported by development fees. [you probably caught this, but double check that this is identical in both places in the plan itself, I had changed it slightly in one place.]*

### Actions:

#### **1. Develop a Comprehensive Infrastructure Management Plan**

- 1.1 Develop a Geographic Information System (GIS)/Global Positioning System (GPS) based inventory to locate existing water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure.
- 1.2 Require new development projects to provide detailed information on the “as-built” condition of any new infrastructure.
- 1.3 Develop a detailed watershed protection plan for the Village’s reservoir system.
- 1.4 Ensure that long term planning includes a safe-yield analysis of the raw water supply.
- 1.5 Prepare a long-range improvement plan to address improvement in raw water quality.
- 1.6 Develop a regional strategy for water, wastewater and stormwater to guide development.
- 1.7 Work with NYS Dept. of Corrections to ensure long-term protection of the Cossackie Correctional water supply.
- 1.8 Implement emerging plans to reduce and eliminate Combined Sanitary Outfalls (CSO’s).
- 1.9 Develop a detailed long-term plan for replacement of sewer and water lines in the Village and adjoining districts.
- 1.10 Develop a plan to protect the Sleepy Hollow Lake (SHL) water supply.
- 1.11 Prepare an official map.

#### **2. Infrastructure Operations**

- 2.1 Continue to work closely with NYS Dept. of Correctional Services regarding infrastructure issues such as timing of water withdrawals and pretreatment of waste water.
- 2.2 Adopt a Sewer Use Local Law in the Village that prescribes in detail the rules for access to the Village’s sewer system.
- 2.3 Update and adopt a local law governing the use and provision of potable water.
- 2.4 Update and adopt a local law describing acceptable standards for the construction of stormwater facilities related to new roads, driveways and drainage structures.
- 2.5 Implement a Stormwater System Use Local Law to regulate connections of new stormwater systems or new sources of runoff to existing Village infrastructure.
- 2.6 Develop a plan to impose restrictions in times of drought.

#### **3. Stormwater Management**

- 3.1 Develop local standards that require stormwater systems on new development to be designed to achieve the highest level of water quality treatment.
- 3.2 Develop local standards that require stormwater systems on major new development to be “oversized” to help mitigate impacts from prior development.
- 3.3 Work with the GCSWCD to review Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SPPP).



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- 3.4 Work with the GCSWCD and neighboring municipalities to evaluate mechanisms for long term inspection, operation and management of stormwater management systems.
- 3.5 Seek future opportunities to “retrofit” existing development sites that do not have stormwater management systems in place.

## 4. Utilities & Energy

- 4.1 Work with Central Hudson and other utilities to ensure that future development can be adequately serviced.
- 4.2 Work to evaluate and promote alternative energy sources at larger development projects.
- 4.3 Work with local Internet Service Providers (ISP's) to continue to upgrade and improve broadband access.

## 5. New Development

- 5.1 Consider local regulations to require utilities be buried underground to the maximum extent possible in new development areas.
- 5.2 In future developments, closely examine utility right-of-ways (ROWs) to ensure that they are adequate for operation, maintenance and future replacement activities.
- 5.3 Work to educate home builders and owners of small developments about the cumulative impacts from stormwater and how they help reduce these impacts.

## 6. Flood Management

- 6.1 Work with the GCSWCD to complete a detailed hydraulic analysis of the Coxsackie Creek drainage system.
- 6.2 Work cooperatively with the GCSWCD and GCIDA to further integrate projects that can help attenuate flood flows.
- 6.3 Require compliance with stormwater regulations for new development and adopt local requirements that exceed state requirements in some conditions.
- 6.4 Develop a detailed management plan for drainage systems.
- 6.5 Participate in the County effort to develop an all hazard mitigation plan.
- 6.6 Work with GCSWCD and the Greene County Department of Planning and Economic Development (GCDEDP) to review and update their local flood ordinance.

## 7. On-site Wastewater Treatment

- 7.1 Adopt local rules that require on-site septic systems to be inspected and certified by the licensed professional that originally certified the design.
- 7.2 Provide training to planning board members, code enforcement officers and contractors about the review, inspection and construction of on-site wastewater systems.
- 7.3 Work with the planning board and local and state agencies to promote decentralization of wastewater treatment systems in large-scale development projects.
- 7.4 Further evaluate alternatives for addressing on-site wastewater treatment in support of development recommendations set forth in this plan.



## IX. Environment and Open Space

### **Goal:**

*The Town and Village will protect sensitive natural, scenic and environmental areas and pursue permanent preservation of open spaces that are essential to maintaining our distinct character and rich quality of life.*

### **Actions:**

#### **1. Mitigate Wetland Impacts**

- 1.1 Working with the GCSWCD, GCIDA and others, seek funding to complete wetland mapping where the communities would like to see development occur.
- 1.2 Require all development projects that have wetland delineations to provide a digital copy for integration into a database of known wetlands.
- 1.3 Work with the GCSWCD, GCIDA and GCDPED to promote the creation of a wetland mitigation bank (WMB).
- 1.4 Work with the Greene County Legislature to strengthen local resources that can facilitate the planning, construction and management of one or more WMBs.
- 1.5 Strongly advocate for NYSDEC to update mapping of state regulated wetlands.

#### **2. Environmental-Based Technical Resources**

- 2.1 Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a local conservation advisory panel to assist planning boards with project reviews.
- 2.2 Evaluate entering into a cooperative agreement with the GCSWCD to serve in an advisory capacity to the Town and Village on environmental issues.
- 2.3 Provide continuing training to planning boards on the effective use of the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the tools it provides.
- 2.4 Develop detailed guidance documents to provide developers and landowners with clear, consistent information on relevant local environmental laws.

#### **3. Open Space and Habitat Conservation**

- 3.1 Work with the GCSWCD, Greene County Habitat Advisory Committee (GCHAC), GLT and others to identify important habitat and open space resources in the community.
- 3.2 Establish, by local law, open space/habitat protection standards that can be applied to new development projects or those projects where substantial redevelopment is proposed.
- 3.3 Recognize the importance of long-term stewardship of any lands dedicated to conservation and work with GLT to address these issues.
- 3.4 Conduct an inventory of important viewsheds and ridgelines within the community.
- 3.5 Develop a conservation zoning designation or utilize overlay districts to protect critical environmental resources areas.
- 3.6 Develop a long-range plan for open space protection plan consistent with the findings of a natural resource inventory.
- 3.7 Enter into a cooperative agreement with the GLT to provide an institutional structure that could assist with wetland, habitat and open space conservation.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## **4. Stream & River Corridor Protection**

- 4.1 Create an overlay district along the Hudson River to ensure protection of natural resources.
- 4.2 Develop and adopt a local stream corridor and wetland protection law that would set forth requirements for protection of streams and wetlands.
- 4.3 Work cooperatively with the GCSWCD, GLT and others to educate residents on the importance of stream corridor and wetland protection.

## **5. Watershed Protection**

- 5.1 Develop watershed overlay districts that protect public drinking water supplies.
- 5.2 Work cooperatively with the Town of New Baltimore to develop a watershed protection plan for the Village's water supply.

## **6. Sediment & Erosion Control**

- 6.1 Undertake detailed review of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SPPP) for all projects subject to NYSDEC regulations.
- 6.2 Require third party inspections of erosion and sediment control measures during the construction phase, with the cost of the inspections paid by the developer.
- 6.3 Adopt a local policy that requires Town and Village municipal services (i.e. highway) to integrate sediment and erosion measures into their daily activities.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## Vision Statement

“The Town and Village of Cossackie share a prized history, culture and character. Forged by and wedded to the Hudson River, Cossackie is a unique, quiet, safe and friendly place – part historic Village, part small Town but largely rural with significant irreplaceable open space, farmland and environmental resources. Strategically located, Cossackie is a wonderful place to grow up, raise a family, make a home and enjoy retirement -- as the multi-generational roots of the people demonstrate. These are the strengths of the community; these are the things that must be preserved.

The Town and Village of Cossackie look forward to a brilliant shared future together. Growth will occur but we will shape it to be moderate in pace and volume, well planned and consistent with the expressed choice of residents to maintain and nurture the qualities that make this landscape and community a desirable place to live.

When this plan is successful, our community will enjoy an abundant quality of life with a thriving economy that offers well-paying jobs to a talented local workforce. The Village will be a vibrant place to live, work, shop, dine and visit among beautiful historic buildings and landscaped streets. A well-maintained municipal infrastructure and transportation system will provide essential services to residents and shape the location and density of future development. Effective leadership and proactive planning policies will protect our heritage while accommodating well-designed new development that harmonizes with its surroundings. Residents of all ages and incomes will enjoy broad housing choice, diverse recreation opportunities and excellent community services. Long-term residents, newcomers and seasonal homeowners will share a unified commitment to protection of the land, the waterfront, the Village’s lively downtown, and the Town’s rural character.”

## Goals

Based on the Vision Statement above, as well as an inventory and analysis of the existing conditions in the Town and Village and on input from the community gathered from the Community Survey and at the Public Workshops, the following goals were identified. These goals guided the action planning process and allowed for the development of the initiatives and projects outlined in this action plan.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- I. **Community Character and Historic Preservation** - The Town and Village will employ best practices and creative land use tools that shape development, improve design and aesthetics, preserve historic resources and enhance rural character.
- II. **Community Stewardship and Planning** - The Town and Village will provide strong financial stewardship, municipal leadership and visionary and proactive planning in a framework of open government that encourages the involvement of residents and leads to a stable and diverse tax base.
- III. **Economic Development and Village Vitality** - The Town and Village will create work and wealth for local residents by recruiting compatible new companies, supporting business expansion, and creating a thriving retail center. We will focus on stimulating a thriving local economy and a vibrant Village core.
- IV. **Environmental Resources and Open Space** - The Town and Village will protect sensitive natural, scenic and environmental areas and pursue permanent preservation of open spaces that are essential to maintaining our distinct character and rich quality of life.
- V. **Transportation** - The Town and Village will ensure that excellent transportation amenities are accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and public transit users, creating a multi-modal community with well-maintained roadways, manageable traffic and beautiful streetscapes.
- VI. **Infrastructure** - The Town and Village will provide well-maintained municipal infrastructure with adequate capacity that provides quality drinking water, and safe waste management. When we supply new infrastructure it will be consistent with land use goals and financially supported by development fees.
- VII. **Community Facilities and Recreation** - We will develop and maintain excellent park and recreation resources, support schools of distinction, and encourage the creation of diverse community programs for all community members.
- VIII. **Housing** - The Town and Village will encourage diversified homeownership of high quality to meet all phases of a family life-cycle including starter houses, family residences, and vacation or retirement homes. New residential clusters will be designed to conserve open space consistent with our land use goals.
- IX. **Agriculture** - We will encourage agriculture and protect farmland by recognizing the vital role farmer's play in protecting our community's character. We will support creative efforts to sustain the economic viability of farming including outlets for local products.



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# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Introduction

Under New York State law, municipalities are granted the authority and responsibility to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined in the state legislation, a comprehensive plan is a document that presents goals, objectives, guidelines and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement growth and community development. Also known as a master plan or land use plan, a comprehensive plan provides guidance to municipal leaders and helps to ensure that the needs of the community will be met.

## Community Profile

The Town and Village of Coxsackie Community Plan is made up of two parts: the Community Profile, which is a summary of existing conditions, and the Implementation Plan which identifies specific short and long-range projects and planning efforts. Based on research and interviews and the public input process described above, the Community Profile describes the Town and Village, their residents and resources; identifies needs; and discusses key issues, opportunities, and challenges impacting future growth. It provides a profile of the Town and Village's population, land uses, historic and natural resources, economic development, housing, community services, real estate tax base, transportation and infrastructure, and recreation, and is designed to serve as a basis for developing community goals, objectives, strategies and policies.

## Demographic and Housing Characteristics

Sustainable communities offer quality housing for residents of all ages and incomes. They offer a range of opportunities from high-end executive level housing to quality affordable housing for both renters and homeowners. These communities offer housing to meet all phases of a family life cycle - enabling young families to buy a starter home, move up into a home large enough for a family, and when they are ready, into town homes or other retirement options. Sustainable communities offer housing of all types and at all price levels in safe neighborhoods with amenities and easy access to convenient retail.

This element of the Community Profile begins with demographic analysis of population and age trends in the Town and Village using 2000 Census and statistical projections. In addition, the range of housing available in the community and affordable housing issues are also evaluated.

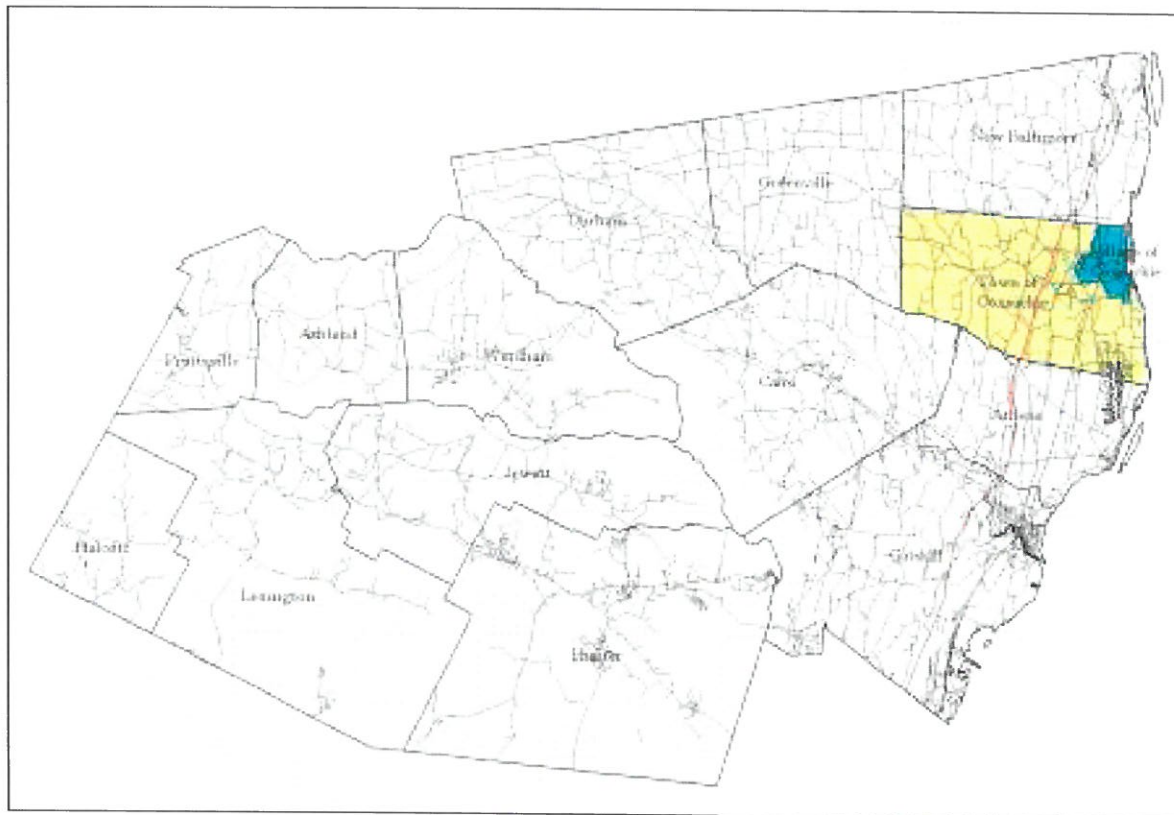


# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

***Unless noted, all census data for the Town of Cossackie excludes Census Tract 808 that contains the Cossackie Correctional Facility and Greene Correctional Facility (with 2,070 occupants classified by the Census as “living in group quarters”. This adjustment has been made to more accurately assess demographic trends for Town and Village residents.***

## Demographic Characteristics

The Town and Village of Cossackie are located in the eastern portion of Greene County. The Town of Cossackie encompasses approximately 36.9 square miles (land area) and a 2000 population of 7,082. According to the 2000 census, the Village of Cossackie has a population of 2,879 and an area of 2.17 square miles (land area). Cossackie is bordered by the Town of New Baltimore to the north, the Towns of Athens and Cairo to the south, the Hudson River to the east, and the Town of Greenville to the west.





# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Population

Since 1990, the Village of Coxsackie's population has increased by 3.2%, while the Town's population grew by a very significant 28.5%. In 2000, the Census reported the County's population at 46,356, a gain of 8.6% from 1990. The Village of Coxsackie accounts for 6.2% of the County's overall population base, while the Town accounts for 15.3% of the County's overall population base.

**Table 1: Population Change, Town and Village of Coxsackie**

Municipality	1990	2000	# Change	% Change
Village of Coxsackie	2,789	2,879	90	3.2%
Town of Coxsackie	5,511	7,082	1,571	28.5%
Greene County	42,669	46,356	3,687	8.6%

Source: Bureau of the Census

There has been significant population growth in some of the communities that border the Town, but none came close to the Town's growth rate of 28.5%. As shown in Table 2, the Towns of Athens (10.5%) and Cairo (17.3%) experienced double-digit population increases during the 1990s. Greene County experienced an 8.6% increase in population.

**Table 2: Comparative Population Change, 1990 – 2000**

Municipality	1990	2000	Change, 1990-2000
Village of Coxsackie	2,789	2,879	3.2%
Town of Coxsackie	5,511	7,082	28.5%
Greene County	42,669	46,356	8.6%
Town of Athens	3,613	3,991	10.5%
Town of Cairo	5,418	6,355	17.3%
Town of Catskill	11,965	11,849	-1.0%
Town of Greenville	3,135	3,316	5.8%
Town of New Baltimore	3,371	3,380	0.3%

Source: Bureau of the Census.

According to the 2000 Census, the vast majority of residents in the Village of Coxsackie (2,716, or 94.3%) are white and non-Hispanic. African-American residents make up 2.3% of the population, while 2.0% of the population is Hispanic and Latino. American Indian and Alaska Natives and persons of two or more races each account for less than one percent of the population. In comparison, 81.8% of the Town's population is white and non-Hispanic. Approximately 10.8% is African-American and 5.8% is Hispanic and Latino. American Indian and



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Alaska Natives, Asian, some other race alone, and persons of two or more races each account for less than one percent of the population.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of minorities' dramatically increased in the Town of Coxsackie. In 1990, the census reported a total of 212 minorities, and in 2000 there are 1,078. Further each minority group experienced triple digit increases. In comparison, the Village experienced a 61.1% increase in the minority population during the same period. However, among the minority groups, both the black and Asian/pacific islander population witnessed losses.

**Issues:** The adjusted population (netting out prisoners) grew at a very significant 28.5% between 1990 and 2000. It is assumed that the majority of that growth occurred as Sleepy Hollow built-out and new families moved into newly build homes. Increasing population may affect available housing by creating a tight housing market. It may affect the local school district, requiring larger budgets and classroom size. Population growth can provide a greater applicant pool for jobs and be an incentive for new business location and commercial growth. Increasing population can also spread the tax burden among more taxpayers. Since Coxsackie is growing faster than the surrounding communities, it bears the burden of dealing with growth issues early on, requiring additional resources sooner, competing for a larger share of local and County resources and facing additional burden on its public infrastructure as well as the cost of maintenance and repair on these systems.

## Households<sup>1</sup>

Change in the number of households can affect the overall demand for housing in a community. As defined by the Census Bureau, a household includes all persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more persons living together, or any other group of related or unrelated individuals who share living arrangements outside of an institution. In 2000, there were 2,422 households in the Town of Coxsackie, representing a significant increase of 13.2% from the 1990 figure of 2,140 (Table 3). Village households increased by 2.7% from 1,157 in 1990 to 1,188 in 2000. At the same time, there was an increase in the average number of persons per household in the Town and Village.

<sup>1</sup> Persons in group quarters are not included in overall count of households.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

**Table 3: Household Change, Town and Village of Cossackie**

<i>Municipality</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i># Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Village of Cossackie	1,157	1,188	31	2.7%
Town of Cossackie	2,140	2,422	282	13.2%

Source: Bureau of the Census

Claritas estimates that the Town has 2,459 households in 2006, an increase of 1.5% since 2000. There are 2,483 households projected in the Town for 2011. According to Claritas estimates, there are 1,180 households in the Village in 2006, a decrease of less than 1.0%. There are 2,818 households projected in the Village for 2011.

Tables 4a and 4b show the distribution of households by type in Cossackie. In 2000, less than half of the households (43.8%) in the Village could be considered traditional nuclear families with a husband, wife, and related children under age 18, while 17.4% were headed by a single parent. Non-family households include single-person households and households of unrelated persons (such as roommates or domestic partners). These households account for about one-third of the households in the Village.

**Table 4a: Households by Type, 1990 – 2000, Village**

<i>Type</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Change, 1990-2000</i>
Married couple families	562 (48.6%)	518 (43.8%)	-7.8%
Male headed household, no wife	59 (5.1%)	63 (5.3%)	6.8%
Female headed household, no husband	125 (10.8%)	143 (12.1%)	14.4%
Non-family households	411 (35.5%)	459 (38.8%)	11.7%

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Approximately 56.9% of households in the Town are married couple families, while 13.6% were headed by a single parent. Non-family households account for 29.5% of households in the Town.

**Table 4b: Households by Type, 1990 – 2000, Town**

<i>Type</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Change, 1990-2000</i>
Married couple families	1,173 (54.8%)	1,603 (56.9%)	36.7%
Male headed household, no wife	90 (4.2%)	139 (4.9%)	54.4%
Female headed household, no husband	234 (10.9%)	244 (8.7%)	4.3%
Non-family households	643 (30.0%)	830 (29.5%)	29.1%

Source: Bureau of the Census.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

**Issues:** There was a significant 13.2% increase in the number of households in the Town between 1990 and 2000. Married couples with families represented the second highest percentage of household growth in the Town. As the number of households continues to increase, there will be demand for additional types of housing units available in the community including market rate and affordable housing, senior housing, townhomes and condominiums as well as single-family homes at all market options.

## Age

Village residents are aging at a faster rate than town residents and the state as a whole. The median age of Village residents is 37.2 years according to the 2000 census. This compares to 35.0 in 1990, showing an aging of the Village's population of 3.5 years in ten years' time. The Town of Coxsackie's median age in 2000 is 35.0 years, remaining essentially the same from the 1990 median age of 35.2. In comparison, the median population age for New York State as a whole increased from 33.8 to 35.9 between 1990 and 2000. The age distribution of Coxsackie's population has important implications for the delivery of services within the community, including education, recreation, and child care or elder care. Table 5a and 5b compares the Town and Village's age distribution in 1990 and 2000. The most recent census figures show that in 2000, 33.9% of Village residents were between the ages of 20 and 44 and 24.2% were between the ages of 45 and 64. The Village's school-age population (ages 5-19) represented 22.3% of the total population, while 6.6% of Village residents were less than five years old in 2000. Elderly persons 65 and older accounted for 13.0% of the population, while residents 55+ comprised 22.6% of the Village population. Among the age groups, adults between the ages of 45 and 64 experienced the greatest population increase at 29.1% and elderly persons aged 65 years and older experienced the largest decline at 21.9%. In comparison, elderly persons aged 55 years and older only declined by 2.7%.

**Table 5a: Age Distribution, 1990 – 2000, Village**

Age Group	1990	2000	Change, 1990 – 2000
0-4 Years	195 (7.0%)	190 (6.6%)	-2.6%
5-19 Years	567 (20.3%)	641 (22.3%)	13.1%
20-44 Years	1007 (36.1%)	976 (33.9%)	-3.1%
45-64 Years	540 (19.4%)	697 (24.2%)	29.1%
65 Years and Older	480 (17.2%)	375 (13.0%)	-21.9%
55 Years and Older	670 (24.0%)	652 (22.6%)	-2.7%
Total	2,789 (100.0%)	2,879 (100.0%)	3.2%
Median Age	35.0 years	37.2 years	6.3%

Source: Bureau of the Census.



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According to the 2000 Census, about 40.8% of all Town residents were between the ages of 20 and 44. School-age children comprised 20.8% of the population. The Town's adult population (ages 45-64) represented 21.6% of the total population, while 5.7% of Town residents were less than five years old in 2000. Elderly persons 65 and older accounted for 11.1% of the population, while residents 55+ comprised 20.3% of the Town population.

**Table 5b: Age Distribution, 1990 – 2000, Town**

Age Group	1990	2000	Change, 1990 – 2000
0-4 Years	355 (6.4%)	404 (5.7%)	13.8%
5-19 Years	1,199 (21.8%)	1,475 (20.8%)	23.0%
20-44 Years	1,996 (36.2%)	2,887 (40.8%)	44.6%
45-64 Years	1,191 (21.6%)	1,531 (21.6%)	28.5%
65 Years and Older	770 (14.0%)	785 (11.1%)	1.9%
55 Years and Older	1,271 (23.1%)	1,438 (20.3%)	13.1%
Total	5,511 (100.0%)	7,082 (100.0%)	28.5%
Median Age	35.2 years	35.0 years	-0.6%

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Between 1990 and 2000, all age groups in the Town experienced an increase in population. Adults between the ages of 20 and 44 experienced the greatest increase at 44.6%, while school age children increased by 23.0%. The number of pre-school children and adults 55 and older both grew by roughly 13%. There was a slight increase in the number of residents age 65 and over.

**Issues:** The significant increase in the number of school aged children will impact the school system perhaps resulting in larger class sizes, and the need for additional teachers, classroom space, budgets and tax levy. The expansion of young families and young children will also create demand for recreational facilities, after school programs and day care services. The growth pattern will provide a cadre of young volunteers for a range of community initiatives including community projects and youth sports groups. The overall loss in seniors in the Village is a concern for maintaining a stable mixed age population, while the increasing senior population in the Town will impact the availability of senior services, including health care services and housing.

## Educational Attainment

Educational services in the Town of Coxsackie are provided by three centralized school districts: Coxsackie-Athens Central, Greenville and Cairo-Durham. The Coxsackie-Athens Central School



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

District serves the majority of the Town. The Greenville School District covers the northwest portion of Coxsackie, while the Cairo-Durham School District serves a small western portion of the Town.

**Table 6: Educational Attainment Levels, Persons 25+**

	<i>No High School Diploma</i>		<i>High School Diploma or higher</i>		<i>Bachelor's Degree or higher</i>	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Village of Coxsackie	27.9%	19.0%	72.1%	81.0%	15.0%	16.1%
Town of Coxsackie	25.4%	25.8%	74.6%	74.2%	13.5%	14.2%
Greene County	26.4%	20.6%	73.6%	79.4%	13.7%	16.7%
New York State	25.2%	20.9%	74.8%	79.1%	23.1%	27.4%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000).

Data on educational attainment levels in the Village of Coxsackie reveal that 81.0% of residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma, while 74.2% of Town residents have a high school diploma. Approximately 79.4% Greene County residents<sup>2</sup> are high school graduates. Additionally, 16.1% of Village residents and 14.2% of Town residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, while 16.7% of Greene County residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

According to the New York State Department of Education, the Coxsackie-Athens School District had a high school dropout rate of 1.3% during the 2004-05 academic years. Greenville Central School District had a dropout rate of 1.5% and the Cairo-Durham School District rate was 5.5%. In comparison, the New York State drop out rate for the 2004-05 academic years was 4.5%.

**Issues:** The Town lags the New York State average for educational attainment at the high school level. Although population has increased significantly in the Town there was only slight improvement in educational attainment. The lack of residents in both the Town and Village with advanced degrees is a significant concern. Coxsackie has roughly half as many residents with degrees beyond high school as the state as a whole. This may reflect the dominance of the prison as a regional employer since it is an industry that provides relatively stable wages for persons with high school or associates degrees. The relatively low educational attainment is a concern for economic development and business recruitment and should push Greene County in its current economic development planning to use supplement basic education with other job training methods.

<sup>2</sup> 1990 and 2000 Educational attainment figures for Greene County do not include Census Tract 808.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## General Housing Characteristics<sup>3</sup>

According to the 2000 Census, the Village of Coxsackie had a total of 1,308 housing units, of which 60.1% are owner-occupied and 39.9% are renter-occupied (Table 7a). Although nearly two-thirds of the housing in the Village was in single family structures, 37.8% of housing units were in multi-family structures with two or more units and 1.0% was in mobile homes or trailers. In 2000 the Village had a relatively low 3.0% vacancy rate in for-sale housing and a 2.7% vacancy rate for rental housing, representing a tight rental market.

**Table 7a: General Housing Characteristics, Village of Coxsackie**

	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total Housing Units	1,245	100.0%	1,308	100.0%	5.1%
Total Occupied Units	1,146	92.0%	1,188	90.8%	3.7%
Owner occupied housing units	701	61.2%	714	60.1%	1.9%
Renter occupied housing units	445	38.8%	474	39.9%	6.5%
Vacant units	99	8.0%	120	9.2%	21.2%
Number and type of unit:					
Single family	682	54.8%	800	61.2%	17.3%
Multi-family	519	41.7%	495	37.8%	-4.6%
Mobile homes/trailers	34	2.7%	13	1.0%	-61.8%
Other	10	0.8%	0	0.0%	-100.0%
Vacant for Sale	11	1.5%	22	3.0%	100.0%
Vacant for Rent	31	6.5%	13	2.7%	-58.1%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000).

The Town of Coxsackie has 2,789 housing units according to the 2000 Census. Of the total units counted in the Census, 2,422 were occupied. Owners occupy 68.8% of the occupied housing and renters occupy 31.2%. Like the Village, two-thirds of housing in the Town is located in single-family structures. Approximately 22.2% of housing units are in multi-family structures and 11.6% are in mobile homes/trailers. The vacancy rate in for-sale housing in the Town (in 2000) was 2.5% and the vacancy rate for rental housing was 3.9%.

<sup>3</sup> Persons in group quarters are not included in Census data described in the General Housing Characteristics.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

In 1990, the median value of an owner-occupied home in the Village was \$84,500. (The value is based on an estimate by the homeowner, at the time of the census, of how much their property would sell for if it were for sale). The median value for the Town was slightly higher at \$87,500. In order to compare market value, 1990 values are adjusted for inflation. After adjusting the 1990 median value for inflation to 2000 dollars, a median value of \$111,331 for owner-occupied units in the Village and \$115,283 in the Town is reported. The reported median value in 2000 for the Village was \$91,100 and \$94,900 for the Town. Within the Village, median value declined by 18.2% and median value in the Town declined by 17.7%. Owner-occupied housing in Cossackie is losing market value. However, it should be noted that the housing value is self-reported by residents filling out the Census Forms.

**Table 7b: General Housing Characteristics, Town of Cossackie**

	1990		2000		% change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total Housing Units	2,460	100.0%	2,789	100.0%	13.4%
Total Occupied Units	2,142	87.1%	2,422	86.8%	13.1%
Total Owner Occupied Units (% of occupied)	1,505	70.3%	1,667	68.8%	10.8%
Total Renter Occupied Units (% of occupied)	637	29.7%	755	31.2%	18.5%
Vacant Units	318	12.9%	367	13.2%	15.4%
Number and type of unit:					
Single family	1,543	62.7%	1,846	66.2%	19.6%
Multi-family	630	25.6%	620	22.2%	-1.6%
Mobile homes/trailers	267	10.9%	323	11.6%	21.0%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Vacant For-Sale	30	2.0%	43	2.5%	43.3%
Vacant For-Rent	39	5.8%	31	3.9%	-20.5%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000).

The Town has experienced more residential construction than the Village, a reasonable expectation given the built-out nature of the Village. Approximately 13.1% of the Town's housing stock was built during the 1990's, compared to 6.5% in the Village. Housing in the Village is substantially older, with nearly one-half of all units in the Village built before 1940, compared to only one-third of units in the Town constructed before 1940. The Town and Village of Cossackie has witnessed a boom in residential home construction since 2000. Sleepy Hollow Lake is a 2200 acre residential community surrounding a two and a half mile man made lake that spans the border of the Town of Cossackie and Town of Athens. Between 2001 and



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

2005, there have been 95 homes constructed in the Town of Cossackie as part of this project. Overall, there have been approximately 300 homes constructed townwide (not including the village).

**Issues:** Owner occupied housing lost value between 1990 and 2000. This statistic is self reported by persons completing census forms. It is significant that residents felt their homes had lost nearly 18% of value between 1990 and 2000. Although significant price escalation and market demand occurred after 2000 the underlying trend is a concern since the housing price "bubble" is expected to slow or burst eventually.

## Multiple Listing Service Trends

The Multiple Listing Service of the Greene County Board of Realtors is an association of realtors that compiles data on housing sales and market trends within Greene County. Data for this analysis was obtained for the Town and Village of Cossackie (combined) and Greene County (as a whole) for 2005 and 2006 (January to June).

**Table 8: Multiple Listing Service, Village and Town, 2005 and 2006**

Residential	Cossackie		Greene County	
	2005	2006	2005	2006
<b>Two-Bedroom or less</b>				
Avg. Selling Price	\$122,925	\$104,400	\$129,053	\$121,419
Avg. Market Time	157	175	164	173
# Listings	8	5	84	32
<b>Three-Bedroom</b>				
Avg. Selling Price	\$182,619	\$210,933	\$191,926	\$195,636
Avg. Market Time	199	152	175	175
# Listings	26	25	183	102
<b>Four-Bedroom</b>				
Avg. Selling Price	\$251,543	\$311,583	\$226,018	\$230,480
Avg. Market Time	163	191	187	195
# Listings	18	6	84	36
<b>Five-Bedroom +</b>				
Avg. Selling Price	\$246,141	\$263,225	\$269,382	\$253,178
Avg. Market Time	222	262	222	233
# Listings	6	4	34	19
<b>Total Residential</b>				
Avg. Selling Price	<b>\$202,347</b>	<b>\$217,943</b>	<b>\$191,595</b>	<b>\$195,492</b>
Avg. Market Time	<b>185</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>184</b>
# Listings	<b>58</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>189</b>



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

In 2005, a total of 58 homes were sold in Coxsackie for an average selling price of \$202,347. On average, homes were on the market for 185 days. In comparison, 40 homes have been sold between January and June 2006. The average sales price for homes in 2006 is higher than in 2005 at \$217,943. On average homes were on the market for 172 days. With 58 homes sold in 2005, Coxsackie accounts for 15.1% of the homes sold in Greene County.

## Rental Housing Market

As part of the housing analysis, data on current rental listings was also analyzed. Information on rental listings was provided by Century 21 Heart Land Realty. Sunset View Apartments offers one and two bedroom apartments and two bedroom townhouses at \$500, \$625, and \$850 respectively. They typically have a 97% occupancy rate and all units are occupied as of August 2006. Additionally, there were only three units available for rent as of August 2006: a studio apartment on Reed Street (\$650), a two-bedroom on Reed Street (\$700), and a four-bedroom house in the Village (\$1200).

## For-Sale Housing Market

Type of Housing	Total (8/16/06)	Average Sales Price
<b>Single Family Homes</b>	<b>83</b>	
▪ under 2 bedrooms	6	\$208,825
▪ 3 bedrooms	53	\$306,054
▪ 4 bedrooms	21	\$364,940
▪ 5 or more bedrooms	3	\$198,266
<b>Two Family Homes</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$213,600</b>

A listing of homes for sale was obtained through the Greene County Multiple Listing Service (August 16, 2006). Combined, there were 83 single-family homes and eight two-family home listed in the Town and Village of Coxsackie. The majority of single-family homes were three-bedroom units (53 total) with an average asking price of \$306,054. Twenty-one four-bedroom units (average asking price \$364,940) were available. Five or more bedroom units (3 total) had an average asking price of \$198,266. There are six two or less bedroom homes also available for sale (average asking price \$208,825). Further, there are eight two-family homes listed with an average asking price of \$213,600.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## Affordable Housing

Approximately 200 units of rental housing in Cossackie are provided through subsidized funding sources such as the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). General characteristics of these units are presented in the table below.

Bethany Village is the largest subsidized housing facility including 99 rental units and 1 superintendent's unit. As of August 2006, only two residents pay market rate (\$634) rents, while the remaining tenants pay rents that do not exceed 30% of their income. There are currently 17 elderly households on a waiting list. The Peppertree Apartments and Peppertree Park Apartments are provided under Rural Development Subsidies from the USDA Rural Development Agency (formerly Farmer's Home Administration) with four units at market rate rents.

**Table 9: Subsidized Housing Inventory**

Facility	Total						Subtotal	Subtotal
	Units	0BR	1BR	2BR	3BR	4+BR	Elderly	Non-Elderly
Bethany Village	100	0	100	0	0	0	100	0
Peppertree Apartments	24	0	18	6	0	0	0	24
Peppertree Park Apartments	24	0	0	24	0	0	0	24
Mansion Square	32	0	18	14	0	0	0	32
Housing Vouchers	20	*	*	*	*	*	7	13
Totals	200	0*	136*	44*	0*	0*	107	93

Source: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. Note: \*the unit mix of the Housing Vouchers was unavailable.

The Greene County Rental Assistance Program provides the Housing Choice Voucher Program for the County. There are currently 284 vouchers, of which 20 are used to rent apartments in Cossackie. Approximately 200 County residents are currently on the waiting list for rental assistance through this program.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Housing Affordability<sup>4</sup>

### Housing Rental Index

Rental housing is generally defined as affordable for a household if it does not cost more than 30 percent of the occupant's annual income on housing costs (housing costs include basic utilities). One measure of affordability is a rental index that calculates the maximum gross rent a household can afford. The average monthly rental rate in the Town of Coxsackie (in 2000) was \$448 and \$453 in the Village of Coxsackie. The median household income in the Town of Coxsackie was \$37,830 in 2000, and \$36,098 in the Village. The average Town household has a monthly income of \$3,153, while the average Village household has a monthly income of \$3,008. In meeting the standard of paying not more than 30% of income, the average Town household (in 2000) could spend \$946 on rent, while the average Village household could spend \$902. Both these figures are higher than the average monthly rent, making most rentals affordable to average residents in 2000.

Municipality	Monthly Rental Rate (2000)	Median Household Income (2000)	Average Monthly Income (2,000)	Affordable Rent (30% of Average Monthly Income)
<b>Town</b>	\$448	\$37,830	\$3,153	\$946
<b>Village</b>	\$453	\$36,098	\$3,008	\$902

According to estimates from Claritas Inc. the estimated median household income for Town residents was \$43,333 in 2006, while the estimated median household income for Village residents was \$42,464. This translates to a monthly income of \$3,611 for the Town and \$3,539 for the Village. Therefore, Town households are estimated to be able to reasonably afford \$1,083 for rent while Village residents can afford \$1,062. According to the U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Greene County in FY2006 is \$630. The FMR for three-bedroom units is \$819 while for a four-bedroom unit is \$892. Fair Market Rent is an amount determined by HUD to be the cost of modest, non-luxury rental units in a specific market area. Based upon this data, rental costs in Coxsackie still appear to be affordable.

<sup>4</sup> Persons in group quarters are not included in Census data described in the Housing Affordability section.



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## Ownership Units Affordability Ratio

In order to determine the affordability of homeowner units, a comparison is made between the median value of homeowner units and median household income. Nationally, a ratio of 2.0 or less is considered "affordable". For instance, for a home costing \$200,000 to be affordable the household should earn an income of \$100,000 to achieve a ratio of 2.0.

In 2000 the affordability ratio was 2.51 for the Town and 2.52 for the Village of Cossackie. The affordability ratio was 2.52 for Greene County and 3.42 for New York State. Therefore in 2000, homes in Cossackie exceeded basic affordability standards, but not dramatically.

**Table 10. Housing Affordability (2000)**

	Village of Cossackie	Town of Cossackie	Greene County	New York State
Median house value	\$91,100	\$94,900	\$92,400	\$148,700
Median Household income	\$36,098	\$37,830	\$36,493	\$43,393
Affordability Ratio	2.52	2.51	2.53	3.43

Source: US Census Bureau (2000)

According to 2006 estimates from ESRI, housing prices in Cossackie, Greene County, and New York State have increased dramatically since 2000. Housing prices for both the Town and Village grew in excess of 100%. The affordability ratio in 2006 was 4.48 for the Village of Cossackie and 4.37 for the Town of Cossackie.

**Table 11. Housing Affordability (2006)**

	Village Cossackie	Town Cossackie	Greene County	NYS
Median house value	\$196,278	\$198,883	\$197,666	\$288,276
Median Household income	\$43,807	\$45,547	\$43,638	\$54,403
Affordability Ratio	4.48	4.37	4.53	5.30

Source: ESRI Market Profile Report (2006)

As population expands and housing prices escalate affordability of housing may become a concern. At a median gross rent of \$494 per month (in 2000) in the Town, a minimum annual income of \$19,760 would be required by a household to afford a typical unit at 30% of income. Based on the income distribution, approximately 587 (24.1%) of households within the Town of Cossackie have incomes below \$19,760 and would need to expend greater than 30% of their income for the median gross rent for housing available in the Town. In the Village, 2000 median rent was \$475 per month. A minimum annual income of \$19,000 would be required by a



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Village household to afford a typical unit at 30% of income. Based on the income distribution, approximately 300 (25.3%) of households within the Village of Coxsackie have incomes below \$19,000 and would need to expend greater than 30% of their income for the median gross rent for housing available in the Village.

## Cost Burden<sup>5</sup>

The number of households waiting for entry into public housing or in need of subsidized housing or rental subsidy is reflective of the extent of cost burden on renter households in the Town and Village of Coxsackie. Cost Burden is defined as the extent to which gross housing costs exceed 30% of gross income, based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 12a. Cost Burdened Rental Households – Village of Coxsackie**

	Total	Number of Households by Income Range			
		Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Renter-Occupied Units	474	121	101	123	129
% of renter households	100.0%	25.5%	21.3%	25.9%	27.2%
Renters paying over 30% of income for rent	179	69	69	41	0
% cost burdened	37.8%	57.0%	68.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Income range as a % of cost burdened households	100.0%	38.5%	38.5%	22.9%	0.0%

Source: 2000 Census.

A total of 179 households in the Village (in 2000) reported housing costs in excess of 30% of income. This represented 37.8% of all renter households. Not surprisingly, the extent of cost burden was significantly greater on lower income households. Households with annual incomes under \$10,000 accounted for 57.0% of the households determined to be cost burdened.

The increasing cost of housing also affects homeownership levels. Overall, a total of 162 owner-occupied households in the Village reported housing costs in excess of 30% of income. This represented 26.2%% of all owner households. Similarly, the extent of cost burden was significantly greater on lower income households. Households with annual incomes under \$10,000 accounted for 76.5%of the owner households determined to be cost burdened. Given

<sup>5</sup> Persons in group quarters are not included in Census data described in the Cost Burden section.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

the significant escalation in housing prices in the years since 2000, it is anticipated that this pattern has worsened.

Table 12b presents statistics on cost-burdened rental households in the Town of Coxsackie according to 2000 Census information. A total of 270 households in the Town reported housing costs in excess of 30% of income. This represented 36.7% of all renter households. Not surprisingly, the extent of cost burden was significantly greater on lower income households. Households with annual incomes under \$10,000 accounted for 57.7% of the households determined to be cost burdened.

**Table 12b. Cost Burdened Rental Households – Town of Coxsackie**

	Number of Households by Income Range				
	Total	Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Renter-Occupied Units	735	168	138	222	207
% of renter households	100.0%	22.9%	18.8%	30.2%	28.2%
Renters paying over 30% of income for rent	270	97	106	67	0
% cost burdened	36.7%	57.7%	76.8%	30.2%	0.0%
Income range as a % of cost burdened households	100.0%	35.9%	39.3%	24.8%	0.0%

Source: 2000 Census.

The increasing cost of housing has also made it difficult for lower-income households in the Town of Coxsackie to maintain homeownership. Overall, a total of 315 owner-occupied households in the Town reported housing costs in excess of 30% of income. This represented 25.7% of all owner households. Similarly, the extent of cost burden was significantly greater on lower income households. Households with annual incomes under \$10,000 accounted for 70.3% of the owner households determined to be cost burdened.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

**Table 13a. Cost Burdened Owner Households – Village of Coxsackie**

	Number of Households by Income Range				
	Total	Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Owner-Occupied Units	619	17	60	117	425
% of renter households	100.0%	2.7%	9.7%	18.9%	68.7%
Owners paying over 30% of income for rent	162	13	48	42	59
% cost burdened	26.2%	76.5%	80.0%	35.9%	13.9%
Income range as a % of cost burdened households	100.0%	8.0%	29.6%	25.9%	36.4%

Source: 2000 Census.

## Housing Organizations Serving Coxsackie

### Catskill Mountain Housing Development Corporation

Organized in 1981, Catskill Mountain Housing Development Corporation (CMHDC) was formed “to purchase, build or rehabilitate structures in order to make available affordable housing to the elderly and those of low and moderate income through management, renting, leasing or sale; and to provide consultation, assessment and information to the elderly and those of low and moderate income for the purposes of housing rehabilitation and improvement.” Catskill Mountain Housing offers a Home Buyer Assistance Program and home owner and credit counseling to first time home buyers. They also manage four senior housing projects outside of Coxsackie and operate an Emergency Home repair program for seniors in Cairo and Hunter.

### Community Action of Greene County, Inc

Community Action of Greene County is part of more than 1,100 local, private, non-profit and public agencies that work together to alleviate poverty and empower low-income families in communities throughout the United States. CAGC links human service resources throughout our service area to provide leadership and serve the specific needs of each community. Community Action provides a Weatherization Assistance Program, Domestic Violence Program, and a Home Energy Assistance Program.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

### Greene County Rental Assistance Program

The Greene County Rental Assistance Program provides the Housing Choice Voucher Program, Family Self Sufficiency Program, and the Emergency Food and Shelter Program to County residents. The Housing Choice Voucher Program (Rental Assistance) is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered through the New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR). This program enables low-income families to pay no more than 30% of their monthly income toward their total shelter expenses by issuing direct payments to landlords in excess of this amount. There are currently 284 vouchers, of which 20 are occupied by Coxsackie residents. Approximately 200 are currently on the waiting list.

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program promotes economic independence and self-sufficiency for eligible participants already receiving rental assistance. This is a five-year voluntary program where participants develop goals and design a service-training program to meet desired goals, including possible home ownership, further education, or the purchase of an automobile. A tax-free escrow account is set up for each FSS client and at the end of the five-year completed program the money is released to the family's head of household. If the family has not completed the five-year contract, the escrow money is forfeited.

The Emergency Food and Shelter program is a federally funded emergency program through the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA). The program provides assistance to renters and homeowners in order to forestall eviction, foreclosure and utility shutoffs. The landlord, mortgage institution or utility company must agree not to evict, foreclose or shutoff for one full month in order to receive a payment.

**Issues:** A healthy housing market should provide good quality units that address resident demand in terms of number of bedrooms, location, price and other considerations. The generally accepted standards for measuring availability in a healthy housing market are vacancy rates in the area of 5% for rental units and 1% for purchase housing. According to the 2000 census the vacancy rates for the Town and Village were 3.9% and 2.7% respectively. The tight housing market could be attributed to the population increase witnessed by Coxsackie. Significant price escalation has occurred in recent years has likely worsened this trend. Housing prices for both the Town and Village grew in excess of 100%. The affordability ratio in 2006 was 4.48 for the Village of Coxsackie and 4.37





# **Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan**

for the Town of Coxsackie. A significant percentage of residents are cost burdened – paying in excess of 30% of their income for housing. Low and moderate income families are pinched further by substantial increased in the cost of transportation and utilities.

## **The Local Economy**

This element of the Community Profile includes analysis of census data relating to income, labor market, and commutation patterns. Existing economic development initiatives are also described. Based on the existing data, strengths and weaknesses of the local economy and business base are identified as well as the community's economic assets and liabilities from a developer's perspective.

### **Coxsackie Yesterday**

With its location on the Hudson River and the abundance of natural resources, industry thrived in Coxsackie throughout its early development. The large quantity of suitable clay provided raw materials for the brick factories. Fifty million bricks were produced per season during the 1830's from the Coxsackie brickyards. Ice harvesting and storage was also once a major industry in Coxsackie until the advent of affordable household refrigerators and commercial artificial ice plants in the early 1900's. Other major industries at this time included lumber mills, ship building, tanneries, and barrel factories.

Since 1900 Coxsackie has been the location of some large industrial establishments, most of which are now out of operation. These were built on the solid history of the metal foundries that replaced the shipbuilding industries in the mid 19th century. The early foundries took advantage of cheap transportation of raw material and finished goods on the Hudson River and the local availability of moulding sand. The American Valve Company employed 200 people until its closure in 1988. The American Tree and Wreath Company employed 150 people until it stopped manufacturing in 1990. Baugh and Sons Fertilizer Company built a plant on the Hudson River, ceasing operations in 1964. The General Electric Company opened a plant in 1946, specializing in heating pads and later switching to the production of missile blankets and specialty heating equipment. This was short lived and discontinued operation in 1962. Many of these former industrial sites are now vacant.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Coxsackie Today<sup>6</sup>

The climate for business establishment in Coxsackie is quite favorable. With its location just off the New York State Thruway, Coxsackie offers close proximity to major markets, just two hours north of New York City, three hours east of Boston, MA and four hours south of Montreal, Canada. Albany International Airport is 30 miles away and NYS Route 9W, a popular north/south route through the Hudson Valley from the Capital Region south, cuts through the town and has developed a significant commercial corridor in Coxsackie. The county is easily accessible by rail with service from Hudson, just across the river, to New York in two hours.

The Town's location on the Thruway has made a perfect location for two business and technology parks owned by the Greene County IDA. The Greene Business and Technology Park is a 200 acre shovel ready business park that is located in the Town of Coxsackie. The Kalkberg Commerce Park is a 146 acre shovel ready commerce park that is also located in both the Town of Coxsackie and Town of New Baltimore. It is directly north of the Greene Business and Technology Park.

Coxsackie is located in New York's Tech Valley where more than 1,000 technology companies in the region have an economic impact of \$5 billion and an annual payroll of \$2 billion. Excellent high tech research facilities nearby include chip manufacturing at International Sematech North, a nationally recognized company focused on nanotechnology at Albany NanoTech at the University at Albany and RPI's Nanotechnology Center, as well as RPI's Center for Biotechnology, and Center for Integrated Electronics.

Locally, the Greene County IDA has a variety of incentive programs to support companies relocating to Greene County including financial incentives, tax credits and low-interest loans for qualifying projects. The IDA is also available to provide technical assistance to relocating firms, including helping companies access the wide variety of New York State incentive programs available, assisting with training and recruitment to meet workforce needs, and assisting with the permitting and regulatory process.

Regionally, Coxsackie's location in both the Hudson Valley and the Capital Region provides extensive access to business support and networking organizations, especially for high-tech businesses including the Center for Economic Growth (CEG), Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation, BioConnex, Techconnex, Technology Roadmap and Tech Valley.

<sup>6</sup> Content based on River Street Planning's previous work with the Greene County IDA.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Correctional Facilities in Coxsackie

Coxsackie Correctional Facility is a maximum security prison located in the Town of Coxsackie. It was constructed in 1935. Originally, the facility served as a vocational institution for 500 male inmates between 16 and 18 years, most of whom committed minor offenses. Since the 1970's, Coxsackie has been a standard correctional facility serving all felons. It has only been since 1990 that the facility accepts inmates over the age of 21. Today the facility serves approximately 1000 inmates, most of them over 21. Greene Correctional Facility is a medium security prison that was constructed in 1984 next to the Coxsackie Correctional Facility.

## Labor Force Characteristics<sup>7</sup>

The civilian labor force in Coxsackie consists of residents aged 16 and older who are employed or actively seeking employment, excluding those enrolled in the armed forces. According to the 2000 Census, 1,410 Village residents, or 64.8% of its working age population, participated in the civilian labor force in 2000. The labor force participation rate decreased slightly in the Village between 1900 and 2000, when the Village had a resident civilian labor force of 1,418, accounting for 65.5% of the population aged 16 and over. Approximately 52.6% of the Town of Coxsackie residents participated in the civilian labor force in 2000. In 1990, 2,836 residents participated in the labor force accounting for 66.4% of the population aged 16 and over.

According to the 2000 US Census (see table below), the industries employing the most Village residents were education, health care and social services industries (21.0%) followed by public administration (18.4%), and transportation and utilities (8.8%). The base industries in the Town are education, health care and social services industries (18.1%), public administration (15.1%), and manufacturing (10.4%). Public administration includes police protection at the two correctional facilities in Coxsackie. It should be noted that employees at the Correctional Facilities are not all grouped in one category (i.e. medical staff at the facility would be counted under health care).

A direct comparison between 1990 and 2000 to identify shifts in employment cannot be made with regard to service-related industries because industry categories have been altered between the decennial census periods. Nonetheless, it is clear that the majority of employment remains in the same mix of industries. According to the 1990 Census, 16.1% of Village residents were

<sup>7</sup> Group quarters data is included in the labor participation rates but the data on employment by industry and occupation does not include group quarters data.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

employed in public administration and health and educational services followed by retail trade (11.9%) and transportation (11.7%). In addition, in 1990 15.6% of Town residents were employed in retail trade, followed by public administration (13.7%), health and educational services (12.9%) and manufacturing (12.1%).

According to Greene County Planning and Economic Development, the largest private employers in the Town of Coxsackie include Brockway Smith Company (metal window and door manufacturer), Dynabil Industries Inc. (sheet metal work manufacturing), United Stationers Supply Company (office supplies merchant wholesale), Coxsackie Transport Inc. (taxi service), Grand Union Company (supermarket) and National Bank of Coxsackie (commercial banking). Further, the Coxsackie Correctional Facility, a maximum-security prison and the Greene Correctional Facility, a medium-security prison, both located in Coxsackie employ over 1400 workers.

**Table 14: Resident Employment by Industry, 2000**

Industry	Village		Town	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry and Mining	10	0.8%	28	1.0%
Construction	86	6.6%	232	8.3%
Manufacturing	89	6.8%	292	10.4%
Wholesale Trade	46	3.5%	83	3.0%
Retail Trade	84	6.4%	222	7.9%
Transportation and Utilities	115	8.8%	263	9.4%
Information	26	2.0%	58	2.1%
FIRE	102	7.8%	167	6.0%
Services (Total)	508	38.9%	1,031	36.9%
Professional services	104	8.0%	201	7.2%
Educational, Health and Social Services	274	21.0%	507	18.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food	85	6.5%	185	6.6%
Other services (except public admin)	45	3.4%	138	4.9%
Public Administration	241	18.4%	421	15.1%
Total	1,307	100.0%	2,797	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

According to the 2000 US Census, 1,307 civilian Village residents were employed. The most common occupations were management, professional and related occupations (31.0%), sales and office occupations (26.9%) and service occupations (18.1%). The most common occupations



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among the Town's 2,797 civilian residents include management, professional and related occupations (29.3%), sales and office occupations (26.5%), and service occupations (17.4%). While a direct comparison to 1990 cannot be made as some of the occupation categories have been modified, a general comparison indicates that administrative support occupations predominated in both the Village (22.8%) and the Town (18.9%). Professional and specialty occupations (13.4%) followed in the Village, while precision, production and craft and repair occupations followed in the Town at 13.5%.

**Table 15: Resident Employment by Occupation, 2000**

Occupation	Village		Town	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	405	31.0%	819	29.3%
Service occupations	236	18.1%	488	17.4%
Sales and office occupations	352	26.9%	742	26.5%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	5	0.4%	24	0.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	120	9.2%	303	10.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	189	14.5%	421	15.1%
Total	1,307	100.0%	2,797	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

According to the 2000 census figures, unemployment in the Town of Coxsackie was 2.5%, slightly lower than the Village unemployment rate of 4.7%. More recent regional unemployment data is generated by the New York State Department of Labor, however, it should be noted that the Census unemployment rates are not derived from the same data that the New York State Department of Labor uses to determine unemployment rates. Recent statistics from the Department of Labor indicate that Greene County had an unemployment rate of 4.9% for July 2006. Unemployment data for the Town and Village of Coxsackie is unavailable.

## Journey to Work<sup>8</sup>

More Village residents (70.2%) work outside the Village than within. The most common mode of transportation is by car, truck or van (94.0%) while less than 1.0% use public transportation and 3.1% walk to work perhaps indicating a resurgence of entrepreneurship in the Village core. Of the 1,252 residents that travel outside the home for work, 41.7% travel less than 19 minutes.

<sup>8</sup> Persons in group quarters are not included in Census data described in the Journey to Work section.



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Approximately 31.5% travel 20 to 34 minutes. The most common travel time is 5 to 9 minutes (18.0% of all workers).

Nearly one-half of Town residents (45.2%) work outside of Greene County. Like the Village, the most common mode of transportation (92.4%) is by car, truck or van. Of the 2,663 residents that travel outside the home for work, 42.6% travel less than 19 minutes, while 27.2% travel 20 to 34 minutes. The most common travel time is 5 to 9 minutes (15.3% of all workers).

## Income Levels<sup>9</sup>

Personal income is one of the most important variables in creating a vibrant community for the future. Understanding the income characteristics of the community is also important in determining the community's wealth as well as the ability of residents to maintain housing, contribute to the local tax base, and participate in the economy.

According to the 2000 Census, the median household income for the Village of Coxsackie was \$36,098 and per capita income was \$17,914. The Town of Coxsackie had a slightly higher median household income (\$37,830), but lower per capita income<sup>10</sup> (\$17,909). Greene County had a median household income of \$36,493 and per capita income of \$18,931 in 2000. In addition, 363 or 12.7% of Village residents and 767 or 12.9% of Town residents are living below poverty level, according to the 2000 Census. This figure is comparable to Greene County (12.2%) and New York State as a whole (14.6%).

The 2000 census asked respondents to report their annual income for 1999. To gain a better understanding of changes in income between the surveys taken in 1990 and 2000, Census income data from 1989 is converted to 1999 dollars using the consumer price indices calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This analysis yielded an inflation rate of 34.4% over the 10 year period.

Median incomes at the Town and Village level actually decreased when adjusted for inflation between 1989 and 1999. As Table 9 indicates, when year 1989 incomes in the Village of Coxsackie were adjusted for inflation, median household income decreased 3.7% from 1989 to 1999 and median family income decreased 3.8%. Per capita income decreased by 1.9%. In

<sup>9</sup> Persons in group quarters data are included in the Per capita income, but not included in household or family income and poverty data.

<sup>10</sup> Per capita income does not include Census tract 808 which contains the prisons.



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comparison, the Town's median household income decreased by 4.9% and median family income decreased by 1.7%. Per capita income increased by 3.1%.

**Table 16: Household Income and Poverty Rate Comparison**

	Village of Cossackie (1989)	Adjusted* Village of Cossackie (1989)	Village of Cossackie (1999)	Town of Cossackie (1989)	Adjusted* Town of Cossackie (1989)	Town of Cossackie (1999)
Median Household Income	\$27,896	\$37,480	\$36,098	\$29,622	\$39,799	\$37,830
Median Family Income	\$34,464	\$46,304	\$44,565	\$34,976	\$46,992	\$46,189
Per Capita Income	\$13,585	\$18,252	\$17,914	\$13,749	\$18,472	\$17,909
Individuals Below Poverty Level	8.5%	n/a	12.7%	7.8%	n/a	12.9%
Families Below Poverty Level	6.0%	n/a	10.4%	6.7%	n/a	9.5%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000).

For purposes of comparison, 1989 dollars have been adjusted for inflation to 1999 dollars.

The Village of Cossackie contained a significant proportion of low and moderate income households (in 2000). Census figures indicate that approximately 48.9% of households in the Village in 2000 were considered low and moderate income households (i.e., households with income less than 80 percent of the Greene County median) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Further, 29.1% of households in the Village were very low income, earning 50% or less of the Greene County median family income. In comparison, 46.4% of Town residents were low and moderate income households and 26.6% are very low income.

**Issues:** Cossackie's income profile is not uncommon in upstate New York. There has been minimal improvement in median income in the Town and Village and incomes have lagged inflation, limiting buying power and household income. The area is experiencing increasing concentration of residents with moderate or low incomes as well as residents living below the poverty line.

## Current Local and Regional Economic Development Initiatives

There are a number of economic development initiatives underway or have recently been completed that impact the Town and Village of Cossackie.



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A **Greene County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** was completed in September 1998 by the Greene County Planning Department and Economic and Community Development Department in accordance with guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The purpose of this plan was to “coordinate the efforts of all sectors of Greene County to maximize the effectiveness of economic development activities”. The Strategy resulted in the identification of four priorities, two of which are directly located in the Town of Coxsackie. The first priority on the Economic Development Project Priority list was Infrastructure Development within US Route 9W corridor in the Town of Coxsackie. The project involves installation of 7400 linear feet sewer lines and 3000 feet water lines within existing road right of ways along US Route 9W. The project is expected to generate approximately 540 new long-term jobs upon completion. This project has been completed. The third priority is to provide infrastructure to Industrial Development Agency US Route 9W property. The IDA has developed that area into the Greene Business Park. Multiple funding sources were used to develop the park, including the construction of an access road and extending water and sewer lines.

A **Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDP)** is currently being prepared for Greene County. This will provide a comprehensive assessment of the Greene County economy, and a set of prioritized strategic directions and actions that the county will use to improve the livability and quality of life for its residents, facilitate the creation of high-quality jobs, generate new investment in our communities, and ensure the county’s long-term fiscal health.

In May 2006, key findings to date with respect to the trends and conditions impacting economic development in Greene County; feedback from stakeholders; target industry analysis; and workforce assessment were summarized. The key findings include the following:

- Government is the largest employer in Greene County, accounting for 30% of all jobs.
- Tourism remains a critical part of the Greene County economy.
- Greene County is missing much of its core service base for businesses and residents.
- A large percentage of Greene County residents work outside the county, suggesting that sufficient job opportunities are not available locally.
- Greene County has a limited number of jobs for graduates of two- and four-year colleges to allow children to “come home” after completing their education.
- Some Greene County industries rely on workers from other counties to fill jobs.
- Small businesses play a vital role in the Greene County economy.



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- Most companies that locate in Greene County have a personal or family connection, or value its location and relatively low cost of doing business.
- Greene County has an increasing number of self-employed professionals, artists, and writers drawn to the area's natural beauty and quality of life.
- The quality of labor is a major concern of Greene County employers.
- The quantity of labor is also an issue for local businesses.
- Greene County school districts, on average, fare better than New York State averages.
- There is apparently a mismatch between the career aspirations of high school students and identified target industries for Greene County.
- Other issues impacting economic development in Greene County include community aesthetics, the lack of planning and zoning, and the need for amenities such as health care services and shopping.
- Target industry opportunities identified for Greene County can be divided into four "tiers."
- Potential target industries for Greene County include the following: Food manufacturing, Printing operations, Plastics and rubber manufacturing, Machinery manufacturing, Computers and electronics manufacturing, Medical device manufacturing, Warehousing and storage, financial services back office, Professional and technical services, and emerging technologies.
- Course offerings at educational institutions serving Greene County need to be aligned with the labor and educational requirements of the target industries identified.
- Because of the absence of a major research university, the County could not aspire to attract research and development facilities in the emerging technologies of nanotechnology, biotechnology, renewable energy, advanced materials, and information technology.

The **Greene County Historic Buildings Project** was completed by the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) in partnership with the Greene County Office for Planning and Economic Development to encourage the redevelopment of historic buildings in the County. Two of the targeted buildings are located on Reed Street in the Village of Coxsackie: The Coxsackie School and the Sbarboro Café building. The project was funded through the County IDA and a \$25,000 grant from the Governor's Office of Small Cities Technical Assistance program. The IDA identified eleven underutilized historic buildings in the County, secured price guarantees from the owners, and developed a marketing strategy and marketing materials to promote the reuse of the buildings to businesses. The project documented the current conditions of the buildings, including floor plans and cost estimates for rehabilitation, developed a



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marketing analysis and strategy building on Greene County's location between two high tech centers, and developed promotional materials to be used for mail and Internet based promotion efforts.

The project included a wide variety of structures - a former school, a main street church, an opera house, an underutilized warehouse, several small retail buildings and a former dairy farm. Buildings are located throughout Greene County, primarily in the County's attractive riverfront and mountaintop villages. The buildings are structurally sound, but several have been vacant for many years and will require extensive rehabilitation and capital investment to prepare them for occupancy that has made it difficult for private owners to market them successfully.

The **Greene Business and Technology Park** is a 200 acre shovel ready business park that is located in the Town of Coxsackie. It is approximately a 0.5 mile from the New York State Thruway (Interstate 87). Major tenants include Save-A-Lot Distribution Center and Bank of Greene County. There is a mix of retail and light manufacturing. According to the Greene County IDA, "the Park is fully permitted for build out simply requiring a simple site plan approval from the local planning board. We can have a shovel in the ground in 30 -45 days."

The **Kalkberg Commerce Park** is a 146 acre shovel ready commerce park that is also located in the Town of Coxsackie and Town of New Baltimore. It is directly north of the Green Business and Technology Park. It is approximately a 0.5 mile from the New York State Thruway (Interstate 87). Major tenants include Serta/National Bedding. According to the Greene County IDA, "this park can accommodate larger development in the range of 200,000 – 300,000 Square feet."

The Hudson Valley Commerce Park comprises 100 acres in the Town of Coxsackie. It is located 2.3 miles from the New York State Thruway and there is a rail spur on site. The Commerce Park is in the process of becoming a shovel ready site with assistance from a Build-NY grant. It is zoned industrial and ideal target markets include small scale development (<50,000 square feet) for professional, light manufacturing, data center, back office industries. It is home to a major regional facility of Brockway-Smith and adjacent to Dynabil Industries.

Greene County also offers a variety of community development and business assistance programs such as the Microenterprise Assistance Program (MAP), the Quantum Fund, and the Main Street Revitalization Programs. The **Greene County Microenterprise Assistance Program (MAP)** is a Federally-funded program administered by the Greene County Department of Planning and



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Economic Development with a mandate to create jobs in the County by helping small businesses grow. The program offers basic business training, technical assistance, and low-interest loans to individuals interested in starting or expanding a small business in Greene County. The **Greene County Quantum Fund** makes term loans available to start-up and existing businesses operating in Greene County, New York that will create or retain employment opportunities.

The County's **Main Street Revitalization Program** includes four components: the Small Grants Program, the Main Street Business Attraction Initiative, the Interior Space Program, and the Tourism Enhancement Program. The Main Street Business Attraction Initiative provides matching grant funds for communities, local chambers of commerce, municipalities and not-for profit Main Street organizations to attract new businesses, particularly to the County's historic main streets. The Interior Space Program provides deferred-payment matching grants for interior space improvements or modernization that will prepare the space for occupancy by a new owner or tenant that will create additional employment. The Tourism Enhancement Program provides matching funds to assist resort/lodging/tourism operators to create effective business plans and market their properties to adapt to changing market conditions. Recently the former National Bank of Coxsackie headquarters at 2-4 Mansion Street was renovated for two business offices under the Main Street Revitalization Program.

The **Greene County Empire Zone** is administered by the County Department of Planning and Economic Development. This New York State sponsored program offers incentives to businesses relocating from out of state or expanding in the Greene County Empire Zone in the form of exemptions from state sales taxes, wage tax credits, investment tax credits, real property tax credits, tax reduction credits, utility rate reductions and capital credits. There are four areas in the Greene County Empire Zone, including two areas located in the Town of Coxsackie. Area 1 includes the Kalkberg Commerce Park and the Greene Business and Technology Park. Area 2 includes the Hudson Valley Commerce Park.

### Assessment Analysis

Coxsackie's ability to raise revenue to provide infrastructure and services to the community is driven by effective performance of its tax base. The existing and future real estate of the Town and Village creates opportunities and constraints for maintaining and attracting homeowners, businesses and jobs. In many communities the key to economic stability or growth is to optimizing tax base by making every acre of land as productive as it can be without compromising community vitality or natural resources. Understanding existing land use patterns,



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property ownership, number of parcels, amount of land and configuration of potential redevelopment areas are key to understanding future development potential and enhancement strategies. Existing data sources and field study document the existing development patterns and concentrations, zoning designations, design requirements and other land use regulations. This element of the Community Profile includes an analysis of the tax base based on computerized assessment records with the most recent property information. Assessment data on agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and public properties are analyzed in order to quantify the contribution these uses make to the community's tax base.

## Coxsackie Real Estate and Tax Base Analysis

From the perspective of municipal administration, a community's tax base drives its ability to invest in amenities and provide quality professional services that residents expect. From the citizen's perspective, tax burden influences where people buy homes, whether they reinvest in property and where they develop businesses. The municipality's ability to raise revenue to provide infrastructure and services is affected by its tax base. The existing and future real estate of the municipality provides opportunities and constraints for maintaining and attracting homeowners, businesses and jobs.

In many communities the key to economic stability or growth is to optimize the tax base by making every acre of land as productive as it can be without compromising community vitality or natural resources. Today, there are many tools available to communities to enhance, diversify and optimize their tax base. This analysis provides the basis for identifying those actions.

The New York State Office of Real Property Services Assessor's Manual defines individual property class codes organized by land use categories such as residential, commercial, industrial etc. The following categories are used in the analysis below:

- Residential (200 series) - includes single family; two family; three-family and mobile homes. The series does not include multi-family, mobile home parks or other residential/mixed use, which are classified in the commercial category
- Vacant land (300) – includes property not in use, in temporary use or lacking permanent improvement. If land is "improved" (i.e. has a building on it) then it falls under a specific use class (residential, commercial, community service, etc.). If there is no improvement on the property, then it falls under the vacant land category.



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For example, if a single family home is unoccupied, it is still classified as residential even though no one is living there, but if it is demolished and the land has no structure on it, it would be re-classified as vacant land.

- Commercial (400) - Property used for sale of goods and services and certain residential uses noted above.
- Recreation & Entertainment (500) - Property used by groups for recreation, amusement or entertainment including Entertainment Venues (Theaters, Movies, Drive-ins, TV & Radio Studios); Sports Venues & Facilities (Arenas, Racetracks, Bowling, Ice Rinks, Ski Centers, Golf Courses, Pools, etc); Amusement Facilities (Fairgrounds, Amusement Parks) etc.; Clubs (Elks, Moose, etc.); Beaches & Marinas; Campgrounds; Parks, Playgrounds, Athletic Fields, Picnic Grounds.
- Community services (600) - Property used for the well being of the community including Education (Libraries, Schools); Religious; Health (Hospitals); Military Installations; Correctional Facilities; and Cultural Resources (Museums).
- Industrial (700) - Property used for the production of durable and non-durable goods.
- Public services (800) - Property used to provide services to the general public including Water (Flood Control, Water Supply, Water Treatment); Communication (TV, Radio, Cell Towers); Terminals (Bus terminals, truck terminals, taxi garages etc.); Non Road Transportation (Railroad, Canals, Bridges); Waste Disposal (Incinerators, Compacting, landfills); and Utilities (Electric & Gas).
- Conservation (900) – Property that is wild, forested, conservation lands and public parks.

## Data Notes

This analysis is based on a GIS shape file provided by Greene County and a database of assessment information provided by the Town of Cossackie. Certain parcels on the shape file were not associated with any category. These are classified as “Unknown” in the tables below.

In the tables below, the “Taxable Value per Acre” column is calculated based on parcels where the both the taxable value and acreage is known. It is not calculated simply by dividing the



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taxable value column by the acres column, because these two columns include parcels even if the other value is unknown.

In the assessor's database, the 15.5-acre former American Valve property located in the Village is classified as Industrial, but has no associated taxable value. The analysis below treats that property as Vacant rather than Industrial.

## Town of Cossackie Including Village

The Town of Cossackie encompasses 36.9 square miles (approximately 23,616 acres) of land area according to US Census data. These totals include the Village of Cossackie (2.2 square miles and 1,408 acres). For 2005 the Town of Cossackie maintained assessment data on 4,260 parcels. Based on the GIS shape file provided by Greene County, these parcels contain approximately 22,940 acres, indicating that 676± acres is dedicated to roads and right of ways, or about 3% of the Town's land.

## Town of Cossackie Including Village Tax Base Analysis – 2005

	Parcels	%	Taxable value	%	Acres	%	Taxable Per Acre
Unknown					351	1.53%	
100 - Agricultural Properties	31	0.73%	3,032,277	0.95%	2,447	10.67%	1,195
200 - Residential Properties	2,116	49.67%	226,269,446	71.23%	8,770	38.23%	25,417
300 - Vacant Land	1,804	42.35%	21,213,740	6.68%	8,480	36.97%	2,461
400 - Commercial Properties	147	3.45%	34,557,491	10.88%	534	2.33%	64,262
500 - Recreation and Entertainment Properties	10	0.23%	940,000	0.30%	536	2.34%	1,748
600 - Community Service Properties	58	1.36%	393,000	0.12%	1,215	5.30%	319
700 - Industrial Properties	6	0.14%	4,610,000	1.45%	40	0.18%	114,346
800 - Public Service Properties	78	1.83%	26,418,437	8.32%	453	1.97%	19,727
900 - Conservation, public parks, forested lands	10	0.23%	247,000	0.08%	115	0.50%	1,803
Total	4,260	100.00%	317,681,391	100.00%	22,940	100.00%	13,131

Approximately 39% of the Town's land area is dedicated to residential uses including single and multi family homes. Vacant land makes up an additional 37% of the Town's land uses. Agricultural properties comprise the next largest grouping (10.7%). Community service properties account for 5.3% of the acreage, with recreation properties and commercial properties each occupying 2.3%.



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The Town of Coxsackie has a total taxable assessment base of \$317,681,391 as indicated in the assessor's database. A significant imbalance exists between the percentage of land in residential use (38.23%) and taxable value that this land contributes (71.23%) in Coxsackie. On average, residential properties in the Town have a taxable value of \$25,417 per acre.

Commercial and industrial properties contribute positively to the tax base compared to their acreage, although they comprise a smaller portion of town-wide land uses. Commercial properties make-up only about 2.3% of the acreage in the Town of Coxsackie but generates 10.9% of its taxable land value. On average, commercial properties in the Town have a taxable value of \$64,262 per acre. Therefore, on a per acre basis, commercial properties generate about 2.5 times more tax revenue than residential properties.

Industrial properties perform similarly, making up less a tiny fraction (0.18%) of the acreage in the Town of Coxsackie but generating approximately 1.45% of its taxable land value. While this is a relatively small portion of the Town's tax base, industrial properties in the Town average a taxable value of \$114,326 per acre. On a per acre basis, industrial properties generate approximately 4.5 times more tax revenue than residential properties.

Combined, properties in these positively performing classifications (residential, commercial and industrial), utilize 40.7% of its land area in the Town and produce 83.6% of its tax base.

Nearly one-half of the Town's acreage is comprised of agricultural properties and vacant land (10.7 and 37.0% respectively). Not unexpectedly, these land uses contribute to only a small percentage of the Town's tax base (7.6% total). These open spaces also help define the Town's rural character and quality of life. The challenge of the comprehensive planning process will be to determine the most appropriate use of these open spaces – which should be developed to strengthen Coxsackie's tax base and which should be protected to preserve rural quality.

### Village of Coxsackie

As noted, the Village of Coxsackie encompasses 2.2 square miles (approximately 1,408 acres) of land area according to US Census data. For 2005 the Village of Coxsackie maintained assessment data on 1,216 parcels. Based on the GIS shape file provided by Greene County, these parcels contain approximately 1,280 acres, indicating that 128± acres is dedicated to roads and right of ways, or about 9% of the Village's land.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Village of Coxsackie Tax Base Analysis - 2006

	Parcels	%	Taxable Value *	%	Acres	%	Taxable Per Acre
Unknown					45	3.49%	
100 - Agricultural Properties	2	0.16%	109,705	0.11%	75	5.89%	1,443
200 - Residential Properties	866	71.22%	76,791,556	76.20%	491	38.38%	153,376
300 - Vacant Land	214	17.60%	2,175,835	2.16%	432	33.77%	4,912
400 - Commercial Properties	82	6.74%	12,325,113	12.23%	98	7.69%	126,106
500 - Recreation and Entertainment Properties	3	0.25%	230,000	0.23%	18	1.41%	12,778
600 - Community Service Properties	23	1.89%	235,000	0.23%	104	8.16%	2,260
700 - Industrial Properties	2	0.16%	500,000	0.50%	4	0.32%	122,901
800 - Public Service Properties	24	1.97%	8,411,365	8.35%	11	0.89%	480,312
Total	1,216	100.00%	100,778,574	100.00%	1,280	100.00%	77,743

\* The "Taxable Value" column in this table reflects the Village Taxable Value. The two other tables in this section use the Town Taxable Value. 103 Residential parcels in the Village have a Village taxable value that not the same as the Town taxable value. As a result, the total Village taxable value is \$190,114 more than the Town taxable value for Village properties. Four properties have a higher taxable value in the Town than in the Village and 99 have a lower taxable value in the Town than in the Village.

Approximately 38.4% of the Village's land area is dedicated to residential uses including single and multi family homes. Vacant land makes up an additional 33.8% of the Village's land uses. Community service properties comprise the next largest grouping (8.2%). Commercial properties account for 7.7% of the acreage, agricultural lands account for 5.9%.

The Village of Coxsackie has a total taxable assessment base of \$100,778,574 as indicated in the assessor's database. Similar to the Town-wide situation, a significant imbalance exists between the percentage of land used for residential (38.4%) and the amount of taxable value that this land contributes (76.2%) to the tax base in the Village. On average, residential properties in the Village have a taxable value of \$153,376 per acre, six times greater than the Town-wide average of \$25,417 per acre.

Commercial and Public Service properties also contribute positively to the Village tax base although they comprise a smaller portion of Village land uses. Commercial properties make up about 7.7% of the acreage in the Village of Coxsackie but generate 12.2% of its taxable value. On average, commercial properties in the Village outperform those in the Town with a taxable value of \$126,106 per acre, compared to the town-wide average of \$64,262 per acre. However,



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on a per acre basis, Village commercial properties generate only about 82% of the tax revenue produced by Village residential properties.

The other positive performing land use category in the Village is Public Service properties. It makes up less than 1% of the acreage in the village but generates about 8.35% of taxable value. However, this is mainly due to a single use. Properties owned by Central Hudson Gas & Electric including the Turbo Facility and substation on Bailey Street have a taxable value of \$6.6 million and accounting for 78% of the value contributed by this category.

Approximately 40% of the Village's acreage is comprised of agricultural properties and vacant land (5.9% and 33.8% respectively). Not surprisingly, these land uses contribute to only a small percentage of the Village's tax base (2.3%).

*Note: Most of the vacant parcels in the village are less than an acre in size. However, the data base identifies 18 parcels of 5 acres or more. The following summary provides details on why there are so many large vacant parcels.*

- The Coxsackie Island parcels in ownership of the Coxsackie Yacht Club & Town of Coxsackie are incorrectly classified. They are obviously not buildable, and are both dedicated to recreation and open space uses.
- The T. Fori parcel on the riverfront has extreme limitations due to wetland (state and federal) as well as being 100% within flood zone.
- The Schoenborn and Mabee parcels have extreme limitations due to slope and wetlands. There may be potential to develop a few homes on each property, but definitely not suitable for any large scale subdivisions
- The T&G Meiers parcels have already been approved for subdivision development and there are plans to extend development of single family homes into these areas. Tim also owns adjoining lots along the road, and they are currently being built out
- The Mathes parcel will be used to development of no more than one home.
- The Greene County IDA parcel on north boundary is part of the habitat set-aside, permanent conservation, soon to be transferred to Greene Land Trust.
- The W. & A. Matter parcel has severe limitations due to drainage and wetlands, anticipate that building potential is limited
- The CA Schools parcel has no plans currently. The site has wetland and drainage problems. It is also in close proximity to railroad tracks and would not make very attractive for development. The school also owns the rectangular piece that touches corners with the Matter parcel, which also has wetlands and drainage issues.



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- The Greene County parcel on Bailey Street was taken for taxes. The County and Town are in the process of subdividing off 15 +/- acres for donation to town for use as new highway facility. The Town and Village are discussing a joint facility. The rest of the property is being held for economic development. County is likely to get the adjoining commercial property (Lane LLC) for taxes soon (they foreclosed once, but backed off to allow tenant opportunity to remove equipment). They are holding the remaining portion of the lot they donating to the town so it can go with the Lane parcel in the future.
- The remaining properties (Pepper Tree, Flach, F&M Farms, Cary and LKDB Co.) all have very severe limitations due to wetlands and habitat. There is also an ATT cable ROW as well as Central Hudson gas transmission ROW that goes through here and impacts development opportunities. Additionally, about 50% (maybe even more) of these properties are wetlands.
- Lastly, the Distributors Reality Corp currently has industrial buildings (usable) that occupy the first one-third of the property off the road with the remaining property likely to be 75% or more wetlands.

## Town of Cossackie (excluding Village)

In order to better understand the differences between the Town and Village tax bases, we also analyzed the Town outside of the Village, which comprises approximately 21,660 acres of land area.

## Town of Cossackie (excluding Village)

### Tax Base Analysis – 2006

	Parcels	%	Taxable Value	%	Acres	%	Taxable Per Acre
Unknown					306	1.41%	
100 - Agricultural Properties	29	0.95%	2,922,572	1.35%	2,371	10.95%	1,187
200 - Residential Properties	1,250	41.06%	149,668,004	68.94%	8,278	38.22%	17,746
300 - Vacant Land	1,590	52.23%	19,037,905	8.77%	8,047	37.15%	2,324
400 - Commercial Properties	65	2.14%	22,232,378	10.24%	435	2.01%	50,873
500 - Recreation and Entertainment Properties	7	0.23%	710,000	0.33%	518	2.39%	1,365
600 - Community Service Properties	35	1.15%	158,000	0.07%	1,111	5.13%	140
700 - Industrial Properties	4	0.13%	4,110,000	1.89%	36	0.17%	114,167
800 - Public Service Properties	54	1.77%	18,007,072	8.29%	441	2.04%	8,312
900 - Conservation, public parks, forested lands	10	0.33%	247,000	0.11%	115	0.53%	1,798
Total	3,044	100.00%	217,092,931	100.00%	21,660	100.00%	9,359



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Approximately 38% of the Town's land area is dedicated to residential uses including single and multi family homes. Vacant land makes up nearly 37% of the Town's land uses. Agricultural lands comprise the next largest grouping (11.0%). Community service properties make up 5.1% of the acreage, commercial properties, recreation and entertainment and public service properties each occupy about 2% of the Town's acreage.

The Town's total taxable assessment base (excluding the Village) is \$217,092,931. Similar to the Village, residential land uses generate a higher percentage of taxable value (68.9%) in relationship to acreage (38.2%). On average, residential properties in the Town (outside the Village) have a taxable value of only \$17,746 per acre compared to the value of residential properties in the Village of \$153,376 per acre.

Commercial and Industrial properties also contribute positively to the tax base although they comprise a smaller portion of town land uses. Commercial properties make-up about 2% of the acreage in the Town but generates 10.2% of its taxable land value. On average, commercial properties in the Town have a taxable of \$50,873 per acre as compared to the Village's average taxable value of \$126,106 per acre for commercial properties.

The other positive performing land use category in the town is Industrial properties. It makes up a miniscule 0.17% of the acreage in the town but generates 1.9% of taxable value. On average, industrial properties in the Town have an average taxable value of \$114,167 per acre. Over one-half of the Town's acreage is comprised of agricultural properties and vacant land (10.9% and 37.2% respectively). Not surprisingly, these land uses contribute to a relatively small percentage of the Town's tax base (10.1% total).

### Comparable Communities Analysis

#### *Budget and Fiscal Trends*

To provide an overall framework for assessing local economic conditions, a number of comparable municipalities of similar size and demographics in New York State were selected for comparison with the Town and Village of Coxsackie. Comparable communities were initially selected based on 2000 population figures. From that initial list, communities of comparable, location and demographic characteristics were chosen reflecting a combination of rural and urban character. Waterfront location was also a consideration. Most communities selected were in



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

upstate New York including a significant number from the Capital District region that share common market and economic trends with Coxsackie. Statistics for the town and village were considered separately – comparing the town with similar sized towns within the state and the village with comparable villages. This analysis includes:

- general population, location and land area statistics
- an analysis of property valuation, equalization rates and tax rates
- an assessment of revenues contributing to the tax base of the communities
- an analysis of municipal expenditures by various budget categories
- summary of key findings

## Village of Coxsackie

The chart below delineates the general characteristics for the Village of Coxsackie and the twenty-one (21) comparable communities selected for analysis. According to the 2000 Census, Coxsackie ranked 180<sup>th</sup> among the 553 villages in New York State with a population of 2,895. The villages selected for comparison ranged in population from 4,855 (Chittenango – rank 107) to 1,902 (Greenwich – rank 255). Seven of the comparable villages are in the Capital Region. With a land area of 2.2 square miles, the Village of Coxsackie's population density is 2.1 persons per acre. This is slightly lower than the average for the 21 comparable villages (2.7 persons per acre). Coxsackie's population is nearly identical to the average of the comparison villages.

Municipalities in New York State are responsible for assessing or assigning a value to every parcel within their jurisdiction for the purpose of determining and collecting property taxes. Initially these values are based on the full market value of the property ("full valuation") as determined by an independent re-evaluation of all property within the jurisdiction (the presumed price the property would sell for if offered for sale). Due to the significant cost involved, many communities do not re-evaluate property on a regular basis, causing the discrepancy between the assessed value of property and its actual market value tends to increase over time. The State's equalization rates are an attempt to adjust for this imbalance between assessed value and full value. Full valuation takes into account the effect of different equalization rates among the communities and provides a fair and equitable way to compare their tax bases.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

NYS Comparable Villages	County	2000 Census	Rank	Land Area	Persons per sq mile	Persons per acre
CHITTENANGO	Madison	4,855	107	2.4	2,023	3.2
CATSKILL	Greene	4,392	120	2.2	1,996	3.1
HOOSICK FALLS	Rensselaer	3,436	154	1.7	2,021	3.2
RAVENA	Albany	3,369	158	1.3	2,592	4.0
WALTON	Delaware	3,070	175	1.5	2,047	3.2
AVON	Livingston	2,977	178	3.0	992	1.6
SILVER CREEK	Chautauqua	2,896	179	1.2	2,413	3.8
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>Greene</b>	<b>2,895</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>2.1</b>
GOWANDA	Cattaraugus	2,842	181	1.6	1,776	2.8
LEWISTON	Niagara	2,781	184	1.1	2,528	4.0
BLASDELL	Erie	2,718	187	1.1	2,471	3.9
VOORHEESVILLE	Albany	2,705	188	3.1	873	1.4
YORKVILLE	Oneida	2,675	190	0.7	3,821	6.0
LAKE PLACID	Essex	2,638	195	1.4	1,884	2.9
SKANEATELES	Onondaga	2,616	197	1.3	2,012	3.1
CAZENOVIA	Madison	2,614	198	1.6	1,634	2.6
ATTICA	Wyoming	2,597	201	1.7	1,528	2.4
DELHI	Delaware	2,583	203	3.2	807	1.3
CORINTH	Saratoga	2,474	210	1.1	2,249	3.5
ROUSES POINT	Clinton	2,277	222	1.8	1,265	2.0
WATERFORD	Saratoga	2,204	231	0.3	7,347	11.5
GREENWICH	Washington	1,902	255	1.5	1,268	2.0
<b>Average 21 Comp Villages</b>		<b>2,887</b>		<b>1.7</b>	<b>1,742</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development.

In terms of tax base analysis, a number of contrasts were noted between Coxsackie and the other comparison villages. Based on information provided in the Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 (the latest report available), the following analysis compares the fiscal outlook for the Village of Coxsackie compared to twenty-one comparable villages.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

With respect to taxable valuation of real property, the total **assessed value** of the Village of Coxsackie's tax base was 9% lower than the average assessed valuation of the 21 comparison villages. In terms of **full valuation**, Coxsackie's tax base was even lower than the average of the comparison villages by 20%. This is due to the fact that Coxsackie's equalization rate is 100% (1.00). The assessed value of property in Coxsackie equals its market value (full valuation). Less than half of the comparison communities had an equalization rate of 1.00.

Village	Assessed Value	Full Valuation	Equalization rate	Full value per acre	Tax levy	Tax Rate
CHITTENANGO	\$132,326,141	\$132,326,141	1.00	\$86,150	\$926,282	\$7.00
CATSKILL	\$132,194,120	\$132,194,120	1.00	\$93,888	\$2,206,318	\$16.69
HOOSICK FALLS	\$20,438,860	\$108,659,542	0.19	\$99,871	\$784,215	\$7.22
RAVENA	\$102,267,875	\$102,267,875	1.00	\$122,918	\$572,700	\$5.60
WALTON	\$35,742,912	\$86,169,026	0.41	\$89,759	\$784,557	\$9.10
AVON	\$112,471,402	\$115,604,277	0.97	\$60,211	\$664,134	\$5.74
SILVER CREEK	\$70,586,825	\$72,620,190	0.97	\$94,558	\$890,450	\$12.26
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>\$84,861,993</b>	<b>\$84,861,993</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$60,271</b>	<b>\$837,563</b>	<b>\$9.87</b>
GOWANDA	\$14,706,889	\$68,435,966	0.21	\$66,832	\$985,750	\$14.40
LEWISTON	\$115,326,617	\$115,326,617	1.00	\$163,816	\$510,897	\$4.43
BLASDELL	\$70,358,094	\$85,014,613	0.83	\$120,759	\$851,331	\$10.01
VOORHEESVILLE	\$130,081,127	\$135,529,409	0.96	\$68,311	\$85,853	\$0.63
YORKVILLE	\$75,072,391	\$75,072,391	1.00	\$167,572	\$583,470	\$7.77
LAKE PLACID	\$241,875,233	\$241,875,233	1.00	\$269,950	\$2,601,890	\$10.76
SKANEATELES	\$184,016,494	\$198,743,378	0.93	\$238,874	\$1,096,738	\$5.52
CAZENOVIA	\$109,575,290	\$118,064,098	0.93	\$115,297	\$722,487	\$6.12
ATTICA	\$132,121,030	\$66,060,515	2.00	\$60,717	\$772,908	\$11.70
DELHI	\$57,717,805	\$61,291,074	0.94	\$29,927	\$634,896	\$10.36
CORINTH	\$62,707,838	\$127,119,071	0.49	\$180,567	\$884,338	\$6.96
ROUSES POINT	\$97,822,505	\$97,822,505	1.00	\$84,915	\$360,711	\$3.69
WATERFORD	\$1,731,485	\$36,223,535	0.05	\$188,664	\$223,525	\$6.17
GREENWICH	\$57,362,018	\$58,247,378	0.98	\$60,674	\$528,430	\$9.07
<b>Avg 21 Comp Villages</b>	<b>\$93,166,807</b>	<b>\$106,412,712</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>\$100,335</b>	<b>\$841,518</b>	<b>\$7.91</b>
	91.09%	79.75%		60.07%	99.53%	124.81%

Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

On a *per acre basis*, full valuation in the Village of Cossackie is lower than all but two of the other comparison communities. Full assessed value per acre in Cossackie was \$60,271 in 2003 as compared to the average for the 21 comparison villages of \$100,335 per acre. Villages rely on a number of sources to generate revenues to support municipal operations. These include real estate taxes, non property taxes, State, Federal or other governmental aid, interest earnings and fees for services such as water and sewer. The two revenue sources directly related to land use characteristics and development are the real property tax and the sales tax. Real property taxes are dependent on such factors as the value of assessed property, the percent of tax-exempt parcels and the tax rate. Sales tax revenues primarily depend upon the quantity and quality of retail development impacting the community. The table below analyzes the performance of real property and sales taxes in Cossackie and the twenty-one comparison villages.

Village	Real property taxes		Sales taxes		Other revenues		Total
CHITTENANGO	\$926,283	40.7%	\$445,437	19.6%	\$904,444	39.7%	\$3,007,300
CATSKILL	\$2,204,580	47.9%	\$0	0.0%	\$2,399,598	52.1%	\$7,125,893
HOOSICK FALLS	\$784,092	32.0%	\$144,281	5.9%	\$1,525,020	62.2%	\$4,695,356
RAVENA	\$572,811	24.7%	\$574,075	24.7%	\$1,175,052	50.6%	\$1,908,759
WALTON	\$785,146	11.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$6,340,747	89.0%	\$3,007,300
AVON	\$664,853	23.8%	\$51,735	1.9%	\$2,072,040	74.3%	\$2,788,628
SILVER CREEK	\$896,521	37.3%	\$270,967	11.3%	\$1,233,310	51.4%	\$2,400,798
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>\$837,563</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>\$1,894,616</b>	<b>69.3%</b>	<b>\$2,732,179</b>
GOWANDA	\$759,244	32.8%	\$243,845	10.5%	\$1,313,967	56.7%	\$2,317,056
LEWISTON	\$510,497	18.2%	\$549,524	19.6%	\$1,749,634	62.3%	\$2,809,655
BLASDELL	\$851,056	34.2%	\$188,408	7.6%	\$1,449,572	58.2%	\$2,489,036
VOORHEESVILLE	\$86,304	4.7%	\$771,486	42.2%	\$970,560	53.1%	\$1,828,350
YORKVILLE	\$575,159	44.4%	\$387,599	29.9%	\$332,742	25.7%	\$1,295,500
LAKE PLACID	\$2,607,118	19.2%	\$0	0.0%	\$10,986,374	80.8%	\$13,593,492
SKANEATELES	\$1,096,708	23.6%	\$413,939	8.9%	\$3,144,305	67.5%	\$4,654,952
CAZENOVIA	\$722,488	38.6%	\$371,908	19.9%	\$778,763	41.6%	\$1,873,159
ATTICA	\$778,716	31.2%	\$25,474	1.0%	\$1,689,658	67.8%	\$2,493,848
DELHI	\$628,517	17.2%	\$0	0.0%	\$3,023,436	82.8%	\$3,651,953
CORINTH	\$884,139	28.7%	\$679,695	22.0%	\$1,518,913	49.3%	\$3,082,747
ROUSES POINT	\$360,242	4.9%	\$471,060	6.4%	\$6,491,817	88.6%	\$7,323,119
WATERFORD	\$223,219	23.9%	\$165,372	17.7%	\$547,122	58.5%	\$935,713
GREENWICH	\$529,380	55.6%	\$0	0.0%	\$422,899	44.4%	\$952,279
<b>Avg 21 Comp Villages</b>	<b>\$830,813</b>	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>\$274,038</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>\$2,384,284</b>	<b>68.3%</b>	<b>\$3,534,995</b>



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

*Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development.*

In FY 2003, real property taxes in the Village of Coxsackie accounted for 30.7% of total revenues. The comparison cities averaged 23.8% and ranged from 4.7% to 55.6%. Along with five other comparison villages, Coxsackie did not receive support from sales tax revenues. (The Village of Catskill has just proposed a sales tax sharing formula to the County that would also benefit the other Towns and Villages.) Overall, sales taxes provided an average only 7.9% of the total revenues of the villages studied. However in seven of the communities, sales tax revenues accounted for about 20% or more of the revenues. Other revenues, which include Federal and State aid, interest on earnings, income and fees for services, etc., generated 69.3% of total revenues in Coxsackie. For the comparison villages, this figure was 68.3% of total revenues. In Coxsackie, 65% of these other revenues were generated by water and sewer fees.

In terms of overall revenue generated, Coxsackie had total revenues of \$2,732,179 from all sources. The comparison villages generated on average 23% more revenue from all sources than the Village of Coxsackie. In terms of per capita revenues, Coxsackie generated total revenues of \$943.76 per capita versus \$1,224.57 for the comparison cities (77%). In general, the comparison villages relied less on property tax revenues than Coxsackie. Sixteen villages generated decent revenues through use of the sales tax and as noted above for seven of the communities this is a significant contribution to their tax base. Most villages, like Coxsackie, depended on other sources of income including water and sewer fees and federal and state aid.

## Budget Expenditures Comparison

The Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 also provides detailed information regarding budget expenditures in two different formats: by object and by function. “Object” describes specific revenue spending such as salaries and payroll, health insurance, purchase of equipment, telephone bill, repair bill, debt service payment, etc. “Function” describes the expenditures by the category of services provided, for example general government, public safety, public works, utilities, economic development, etc. Total expenditures by object equals total expenditures by function plus debt service payments.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Village	Personal Services	Employee Benefits	Contractual Expenditures	Equipment/ Capital outlay	Debt service	Total
CHITTENANGO	\$923,523	\$234,928	\$891,771	\$263,105	\$95,268	\$2,408,595
CATSKILL	\$2,051,305	\$564,735	\$1,409,386	\$1,141,357	\$295,938	\$5,462,721
HOOSICK FALLS	\$714,844	\$248,086	\$1,215,302	\$292,665	\$147,800	\$2,618,697
RAVENA	\$654,089	\$317,849	\$783,682	\$385,435	\$198,434	\$2,339,489
WALTON	\$660,722	\$173,537	\$1,625,566	\$4,568,550	\$423,396	\$7,451,771
AVON	\$878,460	\$211,911	\$846,555	\$451,508	\$391,000	\$2,779,434
SILVER CREEK	\$814,359	\$222,055	\$788,309	\$1,084,728	\$341,738	\$3,251,189
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>\$678,188</b>	<b>\$215,897</b>	<b>\$883,506</b>	<b>\$457,354</b>	<b>\$712,058</b>	<b>\$2,947,003</b>
GOWANDA	\$772,495	\$171,224	\$960,508	\$29,775	\$253,188	\$2,187,190
LEWISTON	\$600,865	\$211,865	\$1,205,680	\$284,084	\$65,627	\$2,368,121
BLASDELL	\$634,652	\$195,462	\$1,374,958	\$381,464	\$329,224	\$2,915,760
VOORHEESVILLE	\$391,421	\$138,514	\$740,338	\$1,270,239	\$35,643	\$2,576,155
YORKVILLE	\$443,211	\$189,916	\$497,334	\$4,531	\$123,980	\$1,258,972
LAKE PLACID	\$3,215,030	\$1,114,760	\$5,310,627	\$2,604,991	\$1,183,423	\$13,428,831
SKANEATELES	\$1,380,691	\$451,738	\$1,750,977	\$577,996	\$423,521	\$4,584,923
CAZENOVIA	\$665,250	\$201,872	\$578,371	\$80,848	\$287,936	\$1,814,277
ATTICA	\$849,377	\$233,697	\$964,536	\$220,064	\$235,181	\$2,502,855
DELHI	\$631,894	\$189,258	\$735,393	\$1,472,401	\$71,963	\$3,100,909
CORINTH	\$790,483	\$281,156	\$1,453,944	\$244,257	\$47,389	\$2,817,229
ROUSES POINT	\$1,140,368	\$371,652	\$4,611,635	\$2,462,127	\$248,916	\$8,834,698
WATERFORD	\$48,142	\$4,239	\$754,401	\$70,484	\$87,143	\$964,409
GREENWICH	\$464,142	\$113,187	\$314,624	\$538,367	\$27,190	\$1,457,510
<b>Avg 21 Comp Villages</b>	<b>\$891,682</b>	<b>\$278,173</b>	<b>\$1,372,090</b>	<b>\$877,570</b>	<b>\$483,082</b>	<b>\$3,672,559</b>

Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development, LLC.

The distribution of expenditures by object for the Village of Coxsackie and the twenty-one comparison villages are shown in the table above. For the comparison villages, current operations (made up of Personal Services, Employee Benefits and Contractual Expenditures) accounted for 69.2% of annual expenditures in FY 2003. Equipment and Capital Outlay made up another 23.9% of expenditures and the remaining 6.9% of budget expense was for principal and interest payments on debt service.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

For the Village of Coxsackie, current operations accounted for 60.3% of annual expenditures in FY 2003. Equipment and Capital Outlay made up another 15.5% of expenditures and the remaining 24.2% of budget expense was for principal and interest payments on debt service. In general, Coxsackie spent less of their budget on current operations and capital outlay and more on debt service than the average of the comparison villages.

Per capita expenditures for current operations in Coxsackie were \$614.02 compared to the average of \$880.57 per capita for the twenty-one comparison villages. Total expenditures per capita in Coxsackie were \$1,017.96 compared to the average of \$1,272.23 per capita for the comparison villages.

### Key Findings:

- The Village of Coxsackie has a slightly larger land area than the twenty-one villages used as comparables (2.2 square miles vs. 1.7 square miles), therefore Coxsackie's population density is somewhat lower than the comparison communities (2.1 persons per acre vs. 2.7 persons per acre). The population of Coxsackie is nearly identical to the average of the other villages.
- The full value of property per acre in the Village of Coxsackie is only 60% of the average value of the comparable villages. In fact Coxsackie's per acre value was greater than only two of the comparable villages. The analysis noted that Coxsackie is less densely populated than most of the comparable villages. In the tax base analysis, it was noted that there are a number of vacant parcels that may be appropriate for new development that could significantly improve the full value per acre number for the village.
- The Village of Coxsackie's equalized tax rate of \$9.87 per \$1,000 of property valuation was higher than fourteen of the twenty-one comparable communities and approximately 25% higher than the average equalized tax rate for these communities (\$7.91). Of the fourteen communities with an equalized tax rate lower than Coxsackie, twelve receive sales tax revenues. The negotiation of a sales tax sharing plan with the County could be an important potential revenue source for the Village.
- The Village of Coxsackie generated total revenues per capita of \$943.76 per capita, which was 23% less than the average for the comparison villages (\$1,224.57).



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- The Village of Coxsackie spent less of their budget on current operations and equipment/capital outlay and more on debt service than the average of the comparison communities. Debt service accounted for 24.2% of Coxsackie's budget, by far the highest percentage among all of the communities studied. The comparable villages range between 1.4% and 15.9%. The average budget expenditure for debt service for all comparable villages was 6.9%. As infrastructure issues present themselves and the demands of future development confront the Village additional borrowing may be necessary.

## Town of Coxsackie

We performed a similar comparison analysis for the Town. The chart below delineates the general characteristics for the Town of Coxsackie and ten comparable towns in New York State selected for analysis. According to the 2000 Census, Coxsackie ranked 169<sup>th</sup> among the 931 towns in New York State with a population of 8,884. The towns selected for comparison ranged in population from 11,859 (Catskill – rank 129) to 7,287 (Oswego – rank 212). Nine of the comparable towns are located in the Capital Region. With a land area of 36.9 square miles, the Town of Coxsackie's population density is 0.4 persons per acre. This is slightly higher than the average for the 18 comparable towns (0.3 persons per acre). Coxsackie's population is also slightly higher than the average of the comparison towns.

NYS Comparable Towns		2000		Land	Persons	Persons
Town	County	Census	Rank	Area	per sq mile	per acre
CATSKILL	Greene	11,849	129	60.5	196	0.3
HERKIMER	Oneida	9,962	150	31.6	315	0.5
SENECA FALLS	Seneca	9,347	161	24.2	386	0.6
MANCHESTER	Ontario	9,258	164	37.8	245	0.4
SODUS	Wayne	8,949	168	67.4	133	0.2
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>Greene</b>	<b>8,884</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>0.4</b>
BALLSTON	Saratoga	8,729	171	29.6	295	0.5
NEW SCOTLAND	Albany	8,626	175	58.1	148	0.2
WATERFORD	Saratoga	8,515	179	6.6	1,290	2.0
KINDERHOOK	Rensselaer	8,296	184	31.8	261	0.4
COEYMANS	Albany	8,151	187	50.2	162	0.3
SAND LAKE	Rensselaer	7,987	190	35.2	227	0.4
WATERLOO	Seneca	7,866	194	21.7	362	0.6



# Town & Village of Cocksackie Community Plan

RHINEBECK	Dutchess	7,762	197	36.3	214	0.3
CANANDAIGUA	Ontario	7,649	202	56.9	134	0.2
STILLWATER	Saratoga	7,522	204	41.4	182	0.3
SCHAGHTICOKE	Rensselaer	7,456	207	49.9	149	0.2
SKANEATELES	Onondaga	7,323	211	42.7	171	0.3
OSWEGO	Oswego	7,287	212	27.4	266	0.4
<b>Average 18 Comp Towns</b>		<b>8,474</b>		<b>39.4</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>0.3</b>

Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development.

Full valuation takes into account the effect of different equalization rates among the communities and provides a fair and equitable way to compare their tax bases. Municipalities in New York State are responsible for assessing or assigning a value to every parcel within their jurisdiction for the purpose of determining and collecting property taxes. Initially these values are based on the full market value of the property ("full valuation") as determined by an independent re-evaluation of all property within the jurisdiction. Due to the significant cost involved, many communities do not re-evaluate property on a regular basis, causing the discrepancy between the assessed value of property and its actual market value tends to increase over time. The State's equalization rates are an attempt to adjust for this imbalance between assessed value and full value.

In terms of tax base analysis, a number of contrasts were noted between Cocksackie and the other comparison towns. Based on information provided in the Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 (the latest report available), the following analysis compares the fiscal outlook for the Town of Cocksackie compared to the eighteen comparable towns in New York State. With respect to taxable valuation of real property, the total **assessed value** of the Town of Cocksackie's tax base was only 79% of the average assessed valuation of the eighteen comparison towns. In terms of **full valuation**, Cocksackie's tax base was lower still accounting for about 66% of the average of the comparison towns. This is essentially due to the fact that Cocksackie's equalization rate is 100% (1.00). In other words, the assessed value of property in Cocksackie equals its market value (full valuation).



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

NYS Comparable Towns	Assessed Value	Full Valuation	Equalization rate	Full value per acre	Tax levy	Tax rate
CATSKILL	\$499,228,350	\$531,320,083	0.94	\$13,722	\$2,349,298	\$4.42
HERKIMER	\$15,792,848	\$242,966,892	0.07	\$12,014	\$685,462	\$2.82
SENECA FALLS	\$285,228,487	\$285,228,487	1.00	\$18,416	\$715,651	\$2.51
MANCHESTER	\$279,079,413	\$279,079,413	1.00	\$11,536	\$493,987	\$1.77
SODUS	\$291,588,695	\$323,987,438	0.90	\$7,511	\$1,146,718	\$3.54
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>\$267,775,339</b>	<b>\$267,775,339</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$11,339</b>	<b>\$1,002,291</b>	<b>\$3.74</b>
BALLSTON	\$433,618,293	\$480,569,980	0.90	\$25,368	\$749,337	\$1.56
NEW SCOTLAND	\$513,730,598	\$535,247,549	0.96	\$14,395	\$1,398,071	\$2.61
WATERFORD	\$164,213,868	\$321,987,976	0.51	\$76,228	\$2,032,563	\$6.31
KINDERHOOK	\$412,593,187	\$412,593,187	1.00	\$20,273	\$557,876	\$1.35
COEYMANS	\$391,093,781	\$391,093,781	1.00	\$12,173	\$1,753,677	\$4.48
SAND LAKE	\$152,478,210	\$406,067,137	0.38	\$18,025	\$1,222,118	\$3.01
WATERLOO	\$190,650,509	\$211,833,898	0.90	\$15,253	\$1,026,825	\$4.85
RHINEBECK	\$539,308,017	\$719,077,356	0.75	\$30,952	\$1,690,457	\$2.35
CANANDAIGUA	\$615,368,873	\$615,368,873	1.00	\$16,898	\$1,772,715	\$2.88
STILLWATER	\$292,086,362	\$339,635,304	0.86	\$12,818	\$802,908	\$2.36
SCHAGHTICOKE	\$133,074,318	\$342,886,673	0.39	\$10,737	\$1,683,420	\$4.91
SKANEATELES	\$696,361,327	\$696,361,327	1.00	\$25,482	\$2,276,720	\$3.27
OSWEGO	\$175,854,678	\$175,854,678	1.00	\$10,028	\$631,784	\$3.59
<b>Avg 18 Comp Towns</b>	<b>\$337,852,767</b>	<b>\$406,175,557</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>\$16,106</b>	<b>\$1,277,199</b>	<b>\$3.14</b>

Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development.

On a *per acre basis*, full valuation in the Town of Coxsackie is slightly lower than the average of the other comparison towns. Full assessed value per acre in Coxsackie was \$11,339 in 2003 as compared to the average for the comparison towns of \$16,106 per acre.

Towns rely on a number of sources to generate revenues to support municipal operations. These include real estate taxes, non property taxes, State, Federal or other governmental aid, interest earnings and fees for services such as water and sewer. The two revenue sources directly related to land use characteristics and development are the real property tax and the sales tax.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Real property taxes are dependent on such factors as the value of assessed property, the percent of tax-exempt parcels and the tax rate. Sales tax revenues primarily depend upon the quantity and quality of retail development impacting the community. The table below analyzes the performance of real property and sales taxes in Coxsackie and the eighteen comparison towns. In FY 2003, real property taxes in the Town of Coxsackie accounted for 67.3% of total revenues, the highest percentage among the towns in the study group. The comparison towns averaged 35.6% and ranged from 18.8% (Seneca Falls) to 58.0% (Waterloo). Along with only four of the comparison towns, Coxsackie did not receive support from sales tax revenues. Overall, sales taxes provided an average of 21.8% of the total revenues of the other towns studied. Other revenues, which include Federal and State aid, interest on earnings, income and fees for services, etc., generated 32.7% of total revenues in Coxsackie. For the comparison towns, this figure was 42.6% of total revenues. In Coxsackie, 48% of these other revenues were from State aid sources.

Town	Real property taxes		Sales taxes		Other revenues		Total
CATSKILL	\$2,349,298	53.4%	\$0	0.0%	\$2,050,277	46.6%	\$4,399,575
HERKIMER	\$685,462	45.6%	\$264,106	17.6%	\$553,368	36.8%	\$1,502,936
SENECA FALLS	\$715,651	18.8%	\$0	0.0%	\$3,100,328	81.2%	\$3,815,979
MANCHESTER	\$493,987	24.2%	\$706,274	34.5%	\$844,127	41.3%	\$2,044,388
SODUS	\$1,146,718	44.9%	\$185,194	7.2%	\$1,222,743	47.9%	\$2,554,655
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>\$1,002,291</b>	<b>67.3%</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>\$487,698</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>\$1,489,989</b>
BALLSTON	\$749,337	18.9%	\$1,888,898	47.6%	\$1,326,061	33.5%	\$3,964,296
NEW SCOTLAND	\$1,398,071	29.6%	\$1,617,461	34.3%	\$1,703,072	36.1%	\$4,718,604
WATERFORD	\$2,032,563	36.5%	\$1,305,108	23.4%	\$2,237,717	40.1%	\$5,575,388
KINDERHOOK	\$557,876	25.4%	\$719,387	32.7%	\$921,570	41.9%	\$2,198,833
COEYMANS	\$1,753,677	34.6%	\$1,670,950	32.9%	\$1,647,284	32.5%	\$5,071,911
SAND LAKE	\$1,222,118	30.5%	\$563,886	14.1%	\$2,214,649	55.4%	\$4,000,653
WATERLOO	\$1,026,825	58.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$742,802	42.0%	\$1,769,627
RHINEBECK	\$1,690,457	56.5%	\$234,851	7.9%	\$1,065,568	35.6%	\$2,990,876
CANANDAIGUA	\$1,772,715	27.1%	\$3,054,398	46.6%	\$1,720,890	26.3%	\$6,548,003
STILLWATER	\$802,908	20.2%	\$1,186,890	29.9%	\$1,985,520	49.9%	\$3,975,318
SCHAGHTICOKE	\$1,683,420	54.0%	\$477,845	15.3%	\$957,134	30.7%	\$3,118,399
SKANEATELES	\$2,276,720	49.5%	\$0	0.0%	\$2,322,961	50.5%	\$4,599,681
OSWEGO	\$631,784	37.2%	\$225,047	13.3%	\$839,627	49.5%	\$1,696,458
Average 18 Comp Towns	\$1,277,199	35.6%	\$783,350	21.8%	\$1,525,317	42.5%	\$3,585,866





# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

Source: *Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development.*

In terms of overall revenue generated, Cossackie had total revenues of \$1,489,989 from all sources. The comparison towns generated on average 2.4 times the revenue from all sources than the Town of Cossackie. In fact only one of the comparable towns generated less total revenues than Cossackie. In terms of per capita revenues, Cossackie generated total revenues of \$167.72 per capita versus \$423.16 for the comparison towns (40%). In general, the comparison towns relied less on property tax revenues than Cossackie. A number of the other towns secured fairly significant sales tax revenues that helped lessen the burden of property taxes.

## Budget Expenditures Comparison

The Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 also provides detailed information regarding budget expenditures in two different formats: by object and by function. “Object” describes specific revenue spending such as salaries and payroll, health insurance, purchase of equipment, telephone bill, repair bill, debt service payment, etc. “Function” describes the expenditures by the category of services provided, for example general government, public safety, public works, utilities, economic development, etc. Total expenditures by object equals total expenditures by function plus debt service payments.

The distribution of expenditures by object for the Town of Cossackie and the eighteen comparison towns is shown in the table below. For the comparison towns, current operations (made up of Personal Services, Employee Benefits and Contractual Expenditures) accounted for 78.7% of annual expenditures in FY 2003. Equipment and Capital Outlay made up another 16.2% of expenditures and the remaining 5.2% of budget expense was for principal and interest payments on debt service.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Town	Personal Services	Employee Benefits	Contractual Expenditures	Equipment/ Capital outlay	Debt service	Total
CATSKILL	\$1,363,540	\$599,093	\$1,719,594	\$292,117	\$52,456	\$4,026,800
HERKIMER	\$560,030	\$332,455	\$672,170	\$45,760	\$135,766	\$1,746,181
SENECA FALLS	\$688,783	\$248,536	\$1,752,351	\$209,581	\$123,084	\$3,022,335
MANCHESTER	\$637,397	\$141,872	\$773,119	\$1,091,745	\$163,873	\$2,808,006
SODUS	\$674,127	\$178,945	\$1,149,111	\$392,286	\$68,095	\$2,462,564
<b>COXSACKIE</b>	<b>\$466,952</b>	<b>\$137,727</b>	<b>\$727,612</b>	<b>\$97,954</b>	<b>\$101,776</b>	<b>\$1,532,021</b>
BALLSTON	\$1,045,741	\$372,383	\$1,463,264	\$327,339	\$327,028	\$3,535,755
NEW SCOTLAND	\$1,254,410	\$465,975	\$1,789,732	\$969,756	\$207,444	\$4,687,317
WATERFORD	\$1,629,854	\$430,770	\$1,891,511	\$928,295	\$490,372	\$5,370,802
KINDERHOOK	\$660,012	\$205,628	\$1,022,751	\$313,302	\$0	\$2,201,693
COEYMANS	\$1,983,568	\$636,018	\$1,806,491	\$195,523	\$370,022	\$4,991,622
SAND LAKE	\$936,591	\$306,629	\$889,834	\$1,743,598	\$295,060	\$4,171,712
WATERLOO	\$479,124	\$203,483	\$553,342	\$644,858	\$208,618	\$2,089,425
RHINEBECK	\$953,610	\$361,009	\$978,580	\$477,346	\$41,186	\$2,811,731
CANANDAIGUA	\$1,549,616	\$446,610	\$3,135,516	\$627,605	\$409,630	\$6,168,977
STILLWATER	\$1,099,001	\$280,392	\$1,985,403	\$1,230,767	\$77,561	\$4,673,124
SCHAGHTICOKE	\$672,734	\$299,119	\$1,357,096	\$188,388	\$283,089	\$2,800,426
SKANEATELES	\$1,521,699	\$524,510	\$2,314,288	\$110,898	\$6,830	\$4,478,225
OSWEGO	\$637,378	\$184,558	\$573,383	\$568,672	\$55,091	\$2,019,082
<b>Avg 18 Comp Towns</b>	<b>\$1,019,290</b>	<b>\$345,444</b>	<b>\$1,434,863</b>	<b>\$575,435</b>	<b>\$184,178</b>	<b>\$3,559,210</b>

Source: Financial Data for Local Governments – Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2003 and River Street Planning & Development.

For the Town of Coxsackie, current operations accounted for 87.0% of annual expenditures in FY 2003. Equipment and Capital Outlay made up another 6.4% of expenditures and the remaining 6.6% of budget expense was for principal and interest payments on debt service.

Per capita expenditures for current operations in Coxsackie were \$149.97 compared to the average of \$330.37 per capita for the comparison towns. Total expenditures per capita in Coxsackie were \$172.45 compared to the average of \$420.01 per capita for the comparison towns.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Key Findings:

- The Town of Coxsackie has a slightly smaller land area than the eighteen towns used as comparables (36.9 square miles vs. 39.4 square miles). The population of the Town is slightly higher than the average of the other towns (8,884 vs. 8,474). Coxsackie's population density therefore is somewhat higher than the comparison communities (0.4 persons per acre vs. 0.3 persons per acre).
- The full value of property per acre in Coxsackie is only 70% of the average value of the comparable towns. In fact Coxsackie's per acre value was greater than only three of the comparable towns.
- Coxsackie's equalized tax rate of \$3.74 per \$1,000 of property valuation was higher than thirteen of the eighteen comparable communities and approximately 19% higher than the average equalized tax rate for these communities (\$3.14). Of the thirteen communities with an equalized tax rate lower than Coxsackie, eleven receive sales tax revenues. As noted above for the Village, negotiation of a sales tax sharing plan with the county may be an important future revenue source.
- Coxsackie generated total revenues of \$167.72 per capita, which was 60% less than the average for the comparison towns (\$423.16). In other words, per capita revenues in the comparable communities averaged 2 ½ times revenues generated in Coxsackie.
- Coxsackie spent more of their budget on current operations (87% vs. 78.7%) and debt service (6.6% vs. 5.2%) and significantly less on equipment/capital outlay (6.4% vs. 16.2%) than the average of the comparison communities.

## Infrastructure

The ready availability and adequate capacity of utility services is a major factor for meeting basic resident service needs and for attracting new residential or commercial development to the Town and Village. This element of the Community Profile includes an assessment the opportunities and constraints of Coxsackie's utility infrastructure system, including sewer, water, gas, electricity and telecommunications. *Note: Delaware Engineering, the Village's consultants, has provided invaluable assessment information and recommendations regarding the water and sewer system.*



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Water Systems

The Village of Coxsackie's Water District is one of eleven community water systems in Greene County. It serves the entire Village as well as a small area in the Town of Coxsackie. The remaining areas of the Town are served by private wells. Sleepy Hollow Lake's water system is privately owned and operated with water taken from Sleepy Hollow Lake. The Coxsackie Correctional Facility also has its own water supply.

The Village of Coxsackie draws its water supply from the Climax and Medway Reservoirs in Greene County. The Medway Reservoir has a surface area of approximately 90 acres and impounds about 250 MGD. It is the upper reservoir. Medway is primarily a spring fed reservoir but it is also supplied by one stream. The Climax Reservoir has a surface area of about 7 acres and a maximum depth of about 31' and impounds approximately 42 MG. It is the lower or terminal reservoir. Coxsackie is the only community drawing water from these reservoirs and there does not appear to be a capacity issue affecting future development of the community.

Water from the upper reservoir is withdrawn through a multilevel shore intake and then flows overland through the Murderers Kill creek, approximately four miles to the lower reservoir. The stream passes through several swamps and areas containing water of questionable quality before entering the lower reservoir. The watershed area adjacent to the reservoir consists of gently sloping forested land, with a few residential dwellings and a few open fields.

Raw water is drawn directly from an intake structure located approximately 50 feet from the shore and is transmitted to the treatment plant via 2,500 ft of 12-inch DIP. The intake tower was constructed so that water could be drawn from three levels: at elevation 395', 388' and 381' (i.e. 8', 15' and 22' below the surface respectively). Raw water should be drawn from the level that consistently has the highest quality. The watershed area surrounding this reservoir is a mix of steep forested slopes and open fields; the inlet feeder stream passes directly through an active horse farm and immediately adjacent to livestock barns and grazing areas. The total watershed area above the Climax Reservoir intake is about 5 square miles and the safe yield of the system is reported to be about 1.2 MGD.

The raw water quality is impacted by a number of factors, principally stratification within the reservoirs, which raises the level of manganese, the flow of the raw water overland from the upper to the lower reservoir through Murderers Kill creek and adjacent swampy areas and



## Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

farmland. This contributes to increases in color and turbidity, typically during the spring and during storm related runoff events.

According to Delaware Engineering, there is probably little that can be done at the reservoir because they will not be able to get a State permit to do any clean-up work. The reservoir is apparently considered a wetland site. The engineers have looked at the construction of a pipe from the reservoir to the treatment plant that would eliminate the exposure of the water flow through farmlands and swampy areas. However, the project would cost \$3 million and there is not a likely funding source to pay for this. The engineers feel that the best strategy is to concentrate improvements at the water treatment plant.

The Cossackie water treatment plant provides water to about 3,100 consumers through approximately 900 metered service connections. Distribution storage is provided by a 150,000 gallon elevated storage tank in the Village. The filter plant has a rated capacity of 1.6 million gallons per day (MGD). Typically, the plant produces approximately 0.5 to 0.6 MGD. The instantaneous flow rate to distribution system ranged from 200 gallons per minute (gpm) to 1,200 gpm; flow surges to  $1200 \pm$  gpm occur every 2 to 3 hours based on demand from Greene Correctional Facility. The plant is in operation 24 hours per day, 7 days/week and is staffed 8 hours per day from 7AM to 3PM.

The capacity of the treatment plant is sufficient to handle future development in the community but the current filtration system is not operating sufficiently and is operating under several consent orders issued by the Department of Health (DOH). Until improvements are made, new connections to the facility are limited.

The plant is equipped with a very complex filter system that is not easily serviced or maintained. The engineers have never seen anything quite like this in their experience. To complicate matters, the company that manufactured the filter is no longer in business. The successor company does not want to be involved in proposing a solution because they do not want to risk exposure to potential liability. The Village is not in favor of a wholesale replacement with a new filtration system because they still owe significant debt on the current filters.

Delaware Engineering indicates that they have come up with a temporary solution. It involves augmenting the current system with an additional filter. They are testing the system now. If it meets DOH standards, it will provide a cost effective solution to the problems, at least in the short-term.



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According to Delaware Engineering, the current permitted average day capacity of the Water Treatment Plant is 1.6 million gallons per day (gpd) and 650,000 gpd rating of the facility based on performance. The average day demand for the facility on a monthly basis is 560,000 gpd. The peak day demand for the facility on a monthly basis is 850,000 gpd. The available unused capacity (facility rating minus average demand) is 90,000 GPD. There is 146,000 gpd capacity dedicated by contract to outside users (Towns and IDA). Currently, the estimated number of homes that could be serviced by the facility (accounting for a 10% buffer) is -168 homes. For the finished water storage, there are 650,000 gallons of storage, 560,000 demand gallons and 90,000 capacity gallons.

The limitations of the water treatment plant are filters, backwash handling and lack of storage. The short term solution is to provide temporary filters, while the long term solution will involve replacement of filters, improving backwash handling, and adding 1.75 million gallons of storage (2 day supply). This project will cost \$4.5 million. The storage tank is scheduled to be completed in 2007, while the filters and backwash are scheduled to be completed by 2008. The Village has funds available for these projects.

Once improvements are completed, the permitted average day capacity of the water treatment plant will remain 1.6 million gpd, while the capacity will be 1.6 million (gpd rating of the facility based on performance). The average day demand for the facility on a monthly basis will be 760,000 gpd. The peak day demand for the facility on a monthly basis will be 1.1 million gpd. The available unused capacity (facility rating minus average demand) will be 840,000 gpd. There will remain 146,000 gpd capacity dedicated by contract to outside users (Towns and IDA). The estimated number of homes that could be serviced by the facility (accounting for a 10% buffer) will be 2,082 homes. These estimates include 200,000 gpd for Hamlet on the Hudson. For the finished water storage, there will be 1.75 million gallons of storage, 1.52 million demand gallons and 2.3 million capacity gallons.

### Sewer Systems

The Village of Coxsackie owns and operates a 1.2 MGD secondary wastewater treatment plant and collection system that serves the Village and portions of the towns of Coxsackie and New Baltimore. Sleepy Hollow Lake operates a private sewerage treatment facility.

Public sewer service is provided throughout the developed portions of the Village of Coxsackie, with only a few areas without sewer provision. The Village Sewage Treatment Plant is located



## Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

on the Hudson River waterfront on South River Street. It provides secondary treatment before discharging into the Hudson River and it has a capacity of 625,000 gallons per day. The level of service provision is generally adequate, although 20% of the sewer lines are in bad shape and the wastewater treatment plant is close to and sometimes exceeds capacity.

The Village sewer system serves the Village of Cossackie, the Cossackie Correctional Facility, the Greene Correctional Facility, and developed portions of US Route 9W in the Town of Cossackie. Outside of the developed section of the US Route 9W corridor, the Town of Cossackie has no wastewater treatment system and development is served by private septic systems. The residential subdivision at Sleepy Hollow has a self contained secondary treatment system with residences featuring individual pressurized grinder pumps.

Stormwater from the Cossackie Correctional Facility is collected by a series of drainage structures and piping systems ultimately discharging to a pond that drains to Cossackie Creek. Stormwater from the main complex of the Greene Correctional Facility is collected by a series of ditches, drainage structures and piping systems, and discharges and drains east and west of the site. Stormwater from the farm drains into the Cossackie Correctional facility stormwater system.

Recent expansion to the State Correctional Facilities has put the Village sewage treatment system under pressure, reducing and at some periods eliminating spare capacity. This situation limits development opportunities in the Village, where new development is required to be sewerred, and in the adjacent areas of the Town where public sewer service exists. The Village of Cossackie and the State Department of Corrections have recognized the important and valuable partnership that exists between the Village and the Correctional Facilities and agreement has been reached for the State Department of Corrections to fund improvements to the sewage treatment facility. This will increase the capacity and capability of the Village facility, helping to maintain the Village's ability to develop or redevelop within the Village by ensuring the continued existence of spare capacity in the sewer system.

Existing infrastructure and public services are generally adequate to support further development and redevelopment in the Village of Cossackie, although infrastructure improvements are required. Efforts to concentrate development to exploit current infrastructure must be accompanied by the maintenance and improvement of existing infrastructure. The use of alternative or innovative waste systems may reduce the impact of treatment of large quantities of waste at the Village's municipal wastewater treatment plant. The impact on this plant of further development at the State Correctional Facilities could be reduced by initial treatment of wastes



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

on site, utilizing the presently unused wastewater treatment plant located at the Coxsackie Correctional Facility

According to Delaware Engineering, The Village of Coxsackie's Wastewater Treatment Plan has a permitted average day capacity of 1,250,000 gpd and 1,250,000 gpd rating of the facility based on performance as of September 2006. Average demand per day for the facility on a monthly basis is 760,000 gpd, while the peak day demand for the facility on a monthly basis is 861,000. The available unused capacity (facility rating minus average demand) is 490,000 gpd. The capacity dedicated by contract to outside users (Towns and IDA) is 146,000 gpd. The estimated number of homes that could be serviced by the facility (accounting for a 10% buffer) is 1,032 an additional homes.

Limitations to the Wastewater Treatment Plant are combined service overflows (CSOs) and limited expansion space at the plant site. Identified solutions include the implementation of a Long Term Control Plan for the CSOs and recognizing that large new demand for sewer service must be met off-site. The costs for these are unknown at this time. The Long Term Control Plan will be completed in 2007.

## Utilities

Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation serves the Village and Town of Coxsackie, providing gas and electric service. State Telephone Company, with its main office in the Village of Coxsackie, provides local telephone service, internet service, and high speed DSL internet access. Mid-Hudson Cable provides cable television, digital television, high speed internet access and cable phone services.

## Community Character and Historic Preservation

Facilitated by strategies such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program, communities large and small are integrating and relying on historic preservation as part of their community and economic development programs. In doing so, these communities have taken steps to identify, protect, enhance and promote their historic and cultural resources. These strategies help maintain and enhance property values, enhance community pride, establish a unique sense of place, stabilize neighborhoods, facilitate tourism and attract additional investment. This element of the Community Profile includes an inventory of sites and districts



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

listed on the National and State Register Listings of Historic Places, identifies local historic resources and a description of existing historic preservation programs and initiatives.

## National and State Register Listings

The National Historic Preservation Act and New York State Historic Preservation Act establish criteria by which buildings, sites, and structures are determined historic. In order to be designated historic and listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places, buildings, structures, sites and neighborhoods are evaluated through a formal survey and nomination process. Listed resources are afforded a basic level of protection from federal and state actions, but local regulation is needed to prevent demolition and other actions.

National and State Register-listed historic resources in the Town and Village of Cossackie include two historic districts (Reed Street Historic District and Flint Mine Hill Archeological District) and three individually-listed buildings. In addition to the buildings and historic districts listed on the National and State Register, there are a number of older buildings in the Town and Village of Cossackie with local historic and architectural significance.

## Buildings listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places

The buildings listed individually in the National and State Registers include:

- **Bronck Farm 13-sided Barn** – Located on the west side of Old Kings Road 600' north of Bronck Road on the grounds of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Pieter Bronck House (also listed – see description below), this is one of seven surviving agricultural structures associated with the historical development and operation of the Bronck farm. It is historically and architecturally significant as the earliest know central plan dairy barn in New York State.
- **The Pieter Bronck House** – Located on Route 9W, The Bronck House is an outstanding example of organic growth in a typical Dutch Colonial dwelling in the Hudson Valley. It has evolved from the earliest periods of Dutch inhabitancy through to the immediate post revolutionary period when most of the significant major changes to the house were made. Its evolution spanned nearly a century and half, over which time there was profound changes in architectural taste influenced by the larger socio-economic conditions prevalent at the time. This house still stands, along with a 1685 stone addition and a 1738 brick house, connected to the original stone structure by a hallway. Eight generations of



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Broncks maintained the homestead as a working farm and more than 300 years of history are reflected in this building and the associated homestead dependencies. The Bronck House was left to the Greene County Historical Society in 1939 and serves as the Society's headquarters and a museum open to the public.

- **Bronck-Silvester House** – Located at 188 Mansion Street, this two-story, five by two bay, center hall plan house is built of brick and is supported by a stone foundation. It is an excellent example of Federal style residential architecture in the region.

## Historic Districts listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places

In addition to the buildings individually listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places above, there are two historic districts, the Reed Street Historic District and the Flint Mine Hill Archeological District. The Reed Street Historic District was listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places in 1980. The Flint Mine Hill Archeological District was listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places in 1978.

The **Reed Street Historic District** includes thirty-two buildings in the downtown business section of the Village of Coxsackie. The Historic District includes the entire Reed Street block, one house on Ely Street, and short sections of Mansion and River Streets. The Historic District is characterized by two- and three-story mid-nineteenth century commercial buildings. Most have first floor storefronts opening directly onto the sidewalks, and many feature period doorways giving access to second and third floor offices and living quarters. Among the few exceptions are three attached Federal residences, a hotel of the 1880's, a period fire house, and a modern post office.

The **Flint Mine Hill Archeological District** is located to the east of the NYS Thruway and extends south into the Town of Athens. Flint outcrops located in the vicinity of Flint Mine Hill constitute the most extensive quarry-workshop site in the eastern United States. The Historic District includes a number of known archaeological sites including quarry sites, waste dumps, finishing stations and a rock shelter. There are approximately two hundred flint pits, sorting and chipping stations, workshops and refuse dumps in the area. A range of artifacts has been recovered from throughout the area, including large unfinished blades, hammerstones, finished points and tools. Evidence suggests that this area has supported human activity since early post-glacial times, featuring an uncommon temporal depth spanning all archaeological stages which can provide an understanding of man's prehistoric settlement and development in the northeast.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Local Historic Resources

In addition to the historic downtown area focused on Reed Street, there are a number of older buildings in the Town and Village of Coxsackie with local historic and architectural significance. These include a few pre-Revolutionary structures and many surviving from the nineteenth century. A number of these are concentrated in West Coxsackie, the other historic center of the Village. According to the Coxsackie Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, the following structures were identified in an historic survey of the Village by Greene County:

- Peter Bergen stonehouse, Mansion Street, West Coxsackie. A stone building, now a residence. Built in 1763.
- One room stone school house, c1800, vacant. No public access from state road. Fair condition.
- "Rose Hall" (reference from Beer's 1867 map). Two story clapboard. Temple facade and Doric Columns, c 1840. Fair condition.
- Bethel African Methodist Church, 1854. Small white clapboard church. Fair condition.
- House, 2-story brick, Federal style, early 19th century
- "Sylvestre House", 1.5 story Greek Revival with Ionic columns, c1840. Also adjoining 2 story brick residence with stepped gable ends, early 19th century.
- "Abraham Van Dyck House", 2 story brick, Federal style, early 19th century.
- First Reformed Church, West Coxsackie, prior to 1856. Federal style church with white clapboard siding, good condition. This church was organized in 1732.
- Lampman House, Lampman Hill. Imposing French chateau, early 1800s.

In addition to the above list, there are many structures with local historic and architectural significance located within the Town and Village of Coxsackie that have yet to be catalogued. A full understanding of these resources would require the completion of a comprehensive historic and architectural survey of the community.

## Existing Historic Preservation Programs and Incentives

Existing organizations whose missions and/or activities concentrate on historic preservation or design include the following:

- Village of Coxsackie Historic Commission – The Commission reviews Preservation Work Permits and may designate an area a preservation district.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- **Greene County Historical Society** – The Greene County Historical Society is a non-for-profit educational corporation that manages the Bronck Museum and the Vedder Research Library. The Bronck Museum includes the House and barns. The Vedder Research Library is a non-circulating research center that collects, preserves, interprets, and makes accessible original material that records the history of Greene County, N.Y.

## Community Facilities and Recreation

In vibrant communities, the libraries, schools, clinics, parks, recreation centers and other facilities are gathering places that reinforce community identity, relationships and pride. In community after community we have recognized the role parks and green space play in maintaining property values. This element of the Community Profile includes an inventory of existing park, recreational and community facilities as well as a summary of related issues, opportunities and challenges. Further, existing recreational resources are analyzed to determine if they adequately serve various segments of the population.

### Recreational Facilities

#### *NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation*

The NYSOPRHP is the owner of the four (4) acre parcel that comprises the Coxsackie Boat Launch and adjoining Riverfront Park. The current boat launch facility was initially developed and managed by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and transferred to NYSOPRHP in 1968. The original boat launch site was expanded in the early 1970's when the former Baugh Fertilizer Plant was demolished. The boat launch site has traditionally been managed by NYSOPRHP, with the Village of Coxsackie undertaking improvements and managing the adjoining Riverside Park. More recently, the relationship between NYSOPRHP and the Village of Coxsackie was formalized with the execution of a management agreement that sets forth the roles and responsibilities of each party. Between 2003 and 2006, the facility underwent a significant upgrade at both the boat launch facility as well as the adjoining park.

The installation of steel piling bulkhead, the construction of a concrete promenade, an increase in parking and an upgrade in the seasonal docks were completed with funding provided by NYSOPRHP and the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program. At the time of the most recent upgrades, NYSOPRHP worked with the GCSWCD, the Village of Coxsackie and others to



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

develop a master plan for the facility. In addition to the improvements completed to date, the master plan also addressed the placement of playground equipment, the development of a concession area with restrooms, the placement of additional sidewalks/cross walks as well as other items such as lighting along the riverfront promenade.

The Town and Village of Coxsackie is also in close proximity to two important regional recreation sites located on the Hudson River. These are the Hudson River Islands State Park, a major destination point for recreational boaters in this part of the Hudson River, and the Stockport Flats component of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve (HRNERR). This last site is dedicated to resource protection, research, education and public access and it is discussed in more detail in Section II-E-1-(viii). The locations of these sites are illustrated on Map II-3. The State Boat Launch in Coxsackie is a major access point to these areas.

The Hudson River Islands State Park, located in the Town of Stockport, comprises of two parcels - a peninsula known as Gays Point and a small island known as Stockport-Middleground Island. The site is owned by NYS Office of General Services (OGS) and by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and it is managed by the Saratoga-Capital District Region of OPRHP as a low intensity recreation day-use facility. The park is currently managed as a satellite park from J.B. Thatcher State Park in Berne, Albany County, approximately 45 miles away. The State Park is accessible only by boat from boat launches in surrounding communities. Developed facilities include primitive sanitary facilities, a perimeter trail, a small shelter, an observation deck, a seasonal dock at Gays Point, and picnic areas at Gays Point and Stockport Middleground Island. Current recreational use includes picnicking, nature observation, fishing and waterfowl hunting. There are some unauthorized overnight camping and seasonal campsites.

### *Town of Coxsackie*

The Town of Coxsackie does not own, or manage any sports or active recreation based facilities. In addition to the small parcel on the south end of Coxsackie Island that is currently undeveloped open space, the Town also owns and manages the small Veterans Park located in the triangle between NYS Route 385 and Ely Street, just past the southern limits of the Village. Development of the site has been undertaken by the local Veterans of Foreign Wars organization, with the town contracting with private vendors for maintenance items such as mowing. The town does provide limited financial support to number of community organizations who provide



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

recreational opportunities within the community, and is responsible for the day to day management of the Four Mile Point Preserve.

## *Village of Coxsackie*

The Village of Coxsackie owns and manages a series of recreational facilities within the community. These parks are owned by the Village, and maintained under the Villages general fund budget. The Village does not have a dedicated parks department or staff, and relies on the Department of Public Works to maintain these facilities. Village parks include:

- **McQuade Park** – The largest of the Village’s facilities, McQuade Park is located in the middle of the Village behind the Village offices. The park is a mixed use site, with a concentration of sports facilities. The park contains a number of basketball and tennis courts, as well as a baseball field constructed and managed by the local Babe Ruth league. The local girls softball league also has a facility at the park. Additional amenities include a small pavilion, large children’s playground and a seasonal ice skating rink.
- **Firemen’s Park** – This site is small parcel in the West Coxsackie area, just east of the CSX rail line. The property has limited improvements, and includes a single swing set. The park is maintained by the Village DPW, but does not include any identifying signage. For a period of years in the 1990’s, the Village restricted use of the property as a park while the former American Valve site was investigated and remediated under the USEPA Superfund Program. At this time, while restrictions on the parks use are no longer in effect, the Village has not promoted use of the facility nor made any improvements.
- **Riverside Park** – As noted earlier, the Village of Coxsackie is the managing entity for this site that is owned by NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. This park is used primarily for passive recreation, access to the Hudson River and community assembly. Amenities in the park include a single basketball court, a large gazebo, a boat launch and parking for both cars and boat trailers. Plans are in place to build a small children’s playground area to replace the outdated facilities that were removed during recent site renovations.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## *Coxsackie-Athens School District*

The Village of Coxsackie is the host for the primary campus of the Coxsackie-Athens School District. The site contains the Coxsackie Elementary school as well as the District's middle and high schools. In addition to the educational buildings, the campus includes a variety of sports fields and recreational facilities. The elementary school areas includes a children's play ground as well as a series of informal ball fields used for the schools P.E. program as well as local softball league play. At the high school site, fields for boys baseball, girls softball, soccer and football are present in addition to a track and its attendant facilities. The high school site also contains a series (4) tennis courts that are include lighting and are well used by the general public. All facilities at the school are frequently used during non-school hours either formally by local leagues (i.e. soccer league), or informally by local children and residents. The District maintains these facilities in excellent condition.

## *Community Organizations*

In addition to the municipal owned or managed recreation facilities, there is also a small Little League field located in West Coxsackie, on land owned by Coxsackie Hose Company #3. The facility includes a formal baseball field used by the leagues major and minor league players, as well as a smaller, less formal field used by T-Ball teams. Coxsackie Little League organization has long recognized the need for larger and updated facilities.

## *Private Facilities*

In the Town and Village of Coxsackie, there are a limited number of private or commercial facilities that are available to the public for recreational activities. There are also additional facilities such as those at Sleepy Hollow Lake that are restricted to use by property owners within the community. The following is a summary of these facilities;

- Earleton Hill Campground – Located in the western section of the town, the campground is a public facility that includes accommodations for both seasonal as well as short-term users. The campground has 00 camping sites, and contains the typical amenities associated with camping to include a pond, ball fields, community center, restrooms, showers etc.
- Driving Range – Located on Route 9w, the Coxsackie Driving Range is a small business that provides for driving golf balls.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

- Sleepy Hollow Lake - The Sleepy Hollow Lake Association of Property Owners (APO) maintains a diverse inventory of recreational facilities for the exclusive use of the community's residents and their guests. Facilities include a swimming area at the lake, two pools, a marina, tennis and basketball courts, a camp ground as well as several naturalized areas that are open for hiking and fishing.

The Town and Village of Coxsackie is in close proximity to two important regional recreation sites in this part of the Hudson River. These are the Hudson River Islands State Park, a major destination point for recreational boaters in this part of the Hudson River, and the Stockport Flats component of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve (HRNERR). This last site is dedicated to resource protection, research, education and public access and it is discussed in more detail in Section II-E-1-(viii). The locations of these sites are illustrated on Map II-3. The State Boat Launch in Coxsackie is a major access point to these areas.

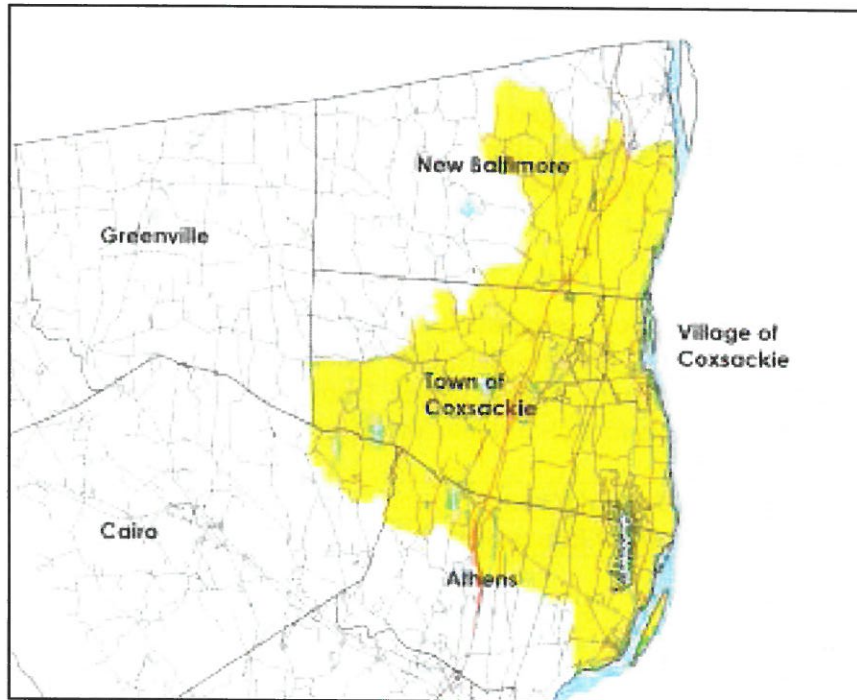
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## Educational Services

The Town and Village of Coxsackie are served by the Coxsackie-Athens School District that also provides services to a portion of the Towns of Athens, New Baltimore, and Cairo. The School District includes the Coxsackie Elementary School (K-4), Coxsackie-Athens Middle School (5-8), Coxsackie-Athens High School (9-12), and the Edward J. Arthur Elementary School located in the Town of Athens. During the 2004-2005 school year, the District enrolled 1,593 students and employed 139 teachers.



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan



In 2005, approximately 13.1% of the student body was eligible for the free lunch program compared to 36.6% eligibility statewide. For the 2003-2004 school year (the most recent year statistics are available), the District spent \$6,583 per pupil for general education and \$19,832 per pupil for special education program, compared to the statewide average of \$8,177 and \$17,667.

The school drop out rate has been improving annually. The drop out rate during the 2004-2005

school year was 1.3%. This is slightly lower than the 2002-2003 drop out rate of 2.2% and the 2003-2004 drop out rate of 1.9%. In comparison, the New York State drop out rate for the 2004-05 academic year was 4.5%.

The percentage of students receiving a regents diploma has increased dramatically. Approximately 80% of all students at Cossackie-Athens High School received a Regents Diploma in 2005 compared with 48% in 2003 and 55% in 2004. In addition, 29% of all students received a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation. According to the New York State Department of Education, students who entered grade nine in 2001-2002 may earn a Regents diploma by passing Regents Exams in five areas and meeting course requirements. To earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation, the student must pass eight Regents exams. Among 2005 graduates 25% were planning to attend a four year college and 62% were planning to attend a two year college. Thirteen percent of graduates were not planning to pursue higher education at the time of graduation.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Across the state increasing emphasis is being placed on graduation rates for high school students. Statewide it is reported that 36% of students do not graduate on time (in four years). In the Coxsackie Athens School District 75% of students who started ninth grade in 2000 graduated on time in 2004. Only 60% of economically disadvantaged students graduated on time. Female students had a higher on-time graduation rate (83%) than male students (67%). The rate of white and minority students graduating in four years was identical (75%).

## Fiscal Accountability Information

The New York State Department of Education requires that school districts report their expenditure ratios for general education and special education students. The table below compares the Coxsackie-Athens School District with Similar School District Groups (based on a Need-to-Resource Capacity index) and all public schools in New York State.

<b>Table 17. Expenditure Ratios, 2003-2004 School Year</b>		
	<b>General Education</b>	<b>Special Education</b>
<b>Coxsackie-Athens School District</b>		
Instructional Expenditures	\$10,578,473	\$2,498,871
Pupils	1,607	126
<b>Expenditures per Pupil</b>	<b>\$6,583</b>	<b>\$19,832</b>
<b>Similar District Group</b>		
Instructional Expenditures	\$6,423,937,649	\$2,133,644,676
Pupils	861,915	116,809
<b>Expenditures per Pupil</b>	<b>\$7,453</b>	<b>\$18,266</b>
<b>All Public Schools in New York State</b>		
Instructional Expenditures	\$23,071,001,473	\$7,088,163,962
Pupils	2,821,352	401,211
<b>Expenditures per Pupil</b>	<b>\$8,177</b>	<b>\$17,667</b>

Source: New York State Department of Education

Similar district groups are identified according to an established Need-to-Resource-Capacity index that measures a district's ability to meet the needs of its students with local resources. It represents the ratio between the estimated poverty percentage and the combined wealth ratio. A district with both estimated poverty and combined wealth ratio equal to the State average has a need to resource capacity index of 1.0. The Coxsackie-Athens School District is categorized as a District



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

with average student needs in relation to resource capacity. All school districts in this category score between the 20th (0.7706) and 70th (1.188) percentile on the index.

In comparison to similar school districts as well as all public schools in New York State, the Cossackie-Athens School District spends less per pupil on general education but spends more per pupil for special education. Among the School Districts with average student needs, schools in the Cossackie-Athens School District are defined as having middle range needs (see Table below) based on school enrollment, English language learner's percent, and free lunch percentage. In comparison to other similar schools, the needs of schools in the Cossackie-Athens School District are average.

**Table 18: Cossackie-Athens School District Need by School**

School	School Enrollment	English Language Learners (ELL) Percent	Free Lunch Percent	Need Statistic	Need
<b>Elementary Schools</b>					
Cossackie Elementary School	325	1.2%	13.8%	34.1	Middle Range
Edward J. Arthur Elementary School	284	0.4%	13.7%	33.0	Middle Range
<b>Middle Schools</b>					
Cossackie Athens Middle School	513	0.2%	14.2%	34.0	Middle Range
<b>High School</b>					
Cossackie Athens High School	471	0.0%	11.0%	26.2	Middle Range

According to the Cossackie-Athens School District, they offer a variety of instructional opportunities, including advanced placement courses in up to nine disciplines, an environmental science course which uses the Hudson River as its "classroom," a robotics-based middle school technology program, and the highly competitive New Visions programs for upper level students seeking a unique opportunity to work in medical, technological, arts-based, or communications fields in a career-shadowing model that has been replicated throughout the state.

## Questar III (Rensselaer Columbia Greene BOCES)

Questar III serves school districts in Rensselaer, Columbia and Greene Counties by providing instructional and support services. Program and services offered include Career and Technical Education, Special Education, General Education and District Support Services. The Career and





# **Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan**

Technical Education Program offers students in high school the opportunity to learn about different careers while getting a Regents Diploma. The General Education Program provides arts, pre-kindergarten, science, technology and regional competitions. The Special Education Program provides individualized instruction to students based on their individual academic capabilities and social/behavioral needs.

## **Columbia-Greene Community College**

Located in the City of Hudson in Columbia County, Columbia Greene Community College is part of the State University of New York school system. The College offers associate degree programs in accounting, computer science, criminal justice, education, and nursing, among others.

## **Emergency Services**

Like most small rural areas, the Town and Village of Coxsackie are facing increasing challenges related to the provision of emergency services. While the community has always had a paid, professional police force, fire and emergency services have traditionally been provided by volunteer organizations. The community however has not been immune from a national trend that has seen a decrease in the overall number of volunteers as well as the amount of time they have to give to provide these services. While many of the problems associated with the loss of volunteers have taken time to impact Coxsackie in comparison to surrounding communities, it is now an increasingly significant problem that the Town and Village are working to address. The following is a summary of the current status of law enforcement, fire protection and emergency medical services in the community.

## **Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement in the Town and Village for Coxsackie is primarily met by three law enforcement agencies. For many years, the Village of Coxsackie has maintained a full time, professional police department that includes a Police Chief, a limited number of full-time officers and many part-time officers. While the Village police force is primarily focused on law enforcement within the village limits, they do provide mutual aid support to other agencies such as the sheriff and NYS Police outside the immediate village as needed. The Village police force maintains a seven day a week patrol schedule and covers at least 16 hours a day. Over night coverage is not typical. Law enforcement is also provided in the community by the Greene County Sheriffs department as well as the New York State Police. The sheriff's department



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

maintains road patrols typically on day and evening shifts, but does not have a specific patrol car assigned to Coxsackie. A sheriff's patrol may be covering many towns any given shift. To supplement the Village and Sheriff's resources, the Towns of Coxsackie, Athens and New Baltimore jointly contribute funding to NYS for the provision of a local State Police substation that is currently located near the Coxsackie Correctional Facility. By providing funding, these towns are assured that during most times of the day a specific State Police patrol(s) is dedicated to this area.

### Fire Protection Services

The Village and Town of Coxsackie are fortunate in that they are still able to cover fire protection services using volunteers that belong to one of several fire companies. In the township, fire protection services are provided by two companies that operate as a Fire Protection Districts. Unlike Fire Districts, Fire Protection Districts do not operate under a separate Board of Fire Commissioners, and are funded directly via the Town of Coxsackie's general budget.

That area of the Town west of the Thruway is covered by the Earlton Fire Department, while the township east of the Thruway is covered by the Coxsackie Hose Company #3. In both cases, the fire departments are funded as a line item, or a contractual expense, under the Town of Coxsackie budget and do not have separate boards of Fire commissioners or the ability to separately tax for their services. In the Town, the two companies act as independent units, though both participate in the Greene County Mutual Aid program, which allows for each unit to provide support to the other when emergency situations require additional manpower or equipment.

In the Village of Coxsackie, fire protection is provided by two fire companies which act as a unit under the Coxsackie Fire Department. D.M. Hamilton Streamer Company #2 is located in the center of the Village of Coxsackie and serves only the Village, while West Coxsackie, Coxsackie Hose Company #3 serves a joint role as a member of the Village Fire Department as well as its contractual obligations to the Town. In the Village, the two companies act as the Coxsackie Fire Department that is governed by the Coxsackie Fire Council. The Coxsackie Fire Council consists of the Chiefs of D.M. Hamilton Streamer Company as well as Coxsackie Hose Company No. 3 as well as additional representatives.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Emergency Medical Services

Like most small, rural communities, the Town and Village of Coxsackie has struggled to provide effective emergency medical services to their residents. As recent as the mid 1960's, emergency medical services were provided by local funeral homes which used their hearse and staff to do double duty serving as ambulances. In the mid 1960's, the first all volunteer rescue squad was developed under the former G.H.Scott Fire Company where it was located for many years. When the G.H.Scott fire company was disbanded, the Coxsackie Rescue Squad became an independent unit operating as a member of the Coxsackie Fire Department. In addition to providing EMS service to the Village, Coxsackie Rescue Squad also maintained contractual relationships to provide EMS service to the Town of Coxsackie as well as a small portion of the Town of New Baltimore.

In more recent years, the local EMS service has been supplemented by a paid paramedic service that is run by a non-profit EMS corporation that works at the county scale. Each community contributes to the budget for this organization on a use basis, and in turn is provided access to a paramedic staffed fly car that supplements local rescue squads as needed for the more critical patients. To facilitate participation in the county fly car program, in 2006, the Town of Coxsackie established a formal ambulance district to allow for establishing a taxing structure to support EMS service.

Facing a significant reduction in volunteer participation, and the consequences of a reduced volunteer force such as missed rescue calls that have to be handled by outside, often distant, EMS providers, in late 2006 the Town and Village of Coxsackie began a series of intensive discussions on the need to develop a strategy that would insure the community had effective EMS coverage. The final outcome was a decision that the Town of Coxsackie would take over the EMS service responsibility with the formation of a municipal ambulance service that would include paid staff as well as volunteers. In November 2006, the Town hired a full time ambulance administrator and is in the process of hiring EMT's and other emergency service providers with the goal of implementing this service by January 1, 2007. Under the plan, the Coxsackie Rescue Squad is transferring its assets, primarily its ambulance and associated equipment, to the Town of Coxsackie. The Village of Coxsackie will allow the Town to use the new ambulance building as a base for the new service. The new municipal ambulance service will provide basic ambulance coverage with paid crews, supplemented with volunteers. The local ambulance service will continue to be supplemented by Town and Village participation in the county paramedic service.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Public Works & Highway

The Town and Village each maintain separate departments that address highways and other public infrastructure management. The Town maintains a highway department that is overseen by the independently elected highway superintendent. While the Town controls the highway department's budget, all activities of the highway department are determined by the Superintendent of Highways. While the highway departments in many other townships in Greene County often work broadly on a number of issues such as parks and other community benefits, in Coxsackie the highway superintendent works strictly on roads. In the Village, the Department of Public works is a multifaceted department that works not only on maintaining the Village's transportation network, but also provides services to the water and sewer departments as well as maintains Village parks, buildings and other public amenities.

In recent years, it has been an issue with both the Town and Village that their highway/public works facilities are substandard and in dire need of attention. To this end, in 2006 the Greene County Legislature donated a fifteen (15) acre parcel in the southwest area of the Village to be used for the development of a new Town highway facility. While this effort was initiated by the Town, there have been discussions between the Town and Village to have both municipalities develop a joint facility. While each may maintain its own actual building as needed to meet their specific responsibilities, there is ample opportunity to share significant facilities such as fueling stations and winter abrasive materials storage. The Town and Village have sought NYS Quality Communities grant funding for the purpose of further exploration of this concept.

## Library

Library services in the Town and Village of Coxsackie are provided by the Hermance Memorial Library located on lower Ely Street in the Village of Coxsackie. The library was first chartered by the N. Y. S. Board of Regents on March 12, 1908 and was established according to the terms of the will of Eleanor Christina Hermance. Miss Hermance bequeathed her home at 1 Ely Street and \$68,000 to establish a public circulating library for the residents of the Town and its vicinity. This bequest has provided residents of Coxsackie a library building and funding for library services for almost 100 years. On October 6, 1999 the residents of the Town of Coxsackie voted overwhelmingly to make the Heermance Library a Special District Library. Residents of the Town of Coxsackie will vote each year on the library budget and will elect 3 members to the Board of Trustees. The library tax is listed as a separate item on the Town of Coxsackie tax bill.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Analysis of Land Use Regulations

This element of the Community Profile includes a review the current land use regulations that apply to the Town and Village including an examination of conforming/ nonconforming uses, overlay districts and development standards in growth areas.

### *Town of Coxsackie*

The Town of Coxsackie Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 201 of the Code of the Town of Coxsackie, was formally adopted August 31, 1987 and has been updated over time and reprinted in 2003. The purpose of the Town's Zoning Ordinance is set forth in Article I – Purpose and Intent, §201-3 and states that the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to:

“Promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community. In accordance with the Town's Master Plan, this chapter is designed to secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other dangers; to promote health and general welfare, to provide adequate light and air; to prevent crowding the land and undue concentration of population; to facilitate transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public services; to assure privacy for residents and freedom from nuisance and things harmful to the senses.”

The Zoning regulations were first implemented following the Revised Comprehensive Plan of 1986. The following summarizes some of the key elements of the Town's Zoning Ordinance, as well as other land use regulations included separately in the Town Code including signage, adult uses, mobile homes and travel trailers and the subdivision of land.

Article II, Zoning Districts, establishes the use districts for the Town outside the Village. The Town is divided into 6 use districts including two residential districts, commercial, industrial, corridor industrial and developmental. The purpose of each district is summarized below.

*Rural Residential/Agriculture District.* The purpose of this district is to preserve prime agricultural land for that use, discourage development on unsuitable land (e.g. steep slope areas, shallow soils, etc.); to serve as a buffer between more intensive development and more sensitive environmental uplands; to protect and preserve aquifers and runoff areas that feed into reservoirs or other water sources used as water supplies and to encourage single family development. Uses permitted as of right include agricultural uses, sing family homes, mobile



## Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

homes, home occupations and parks. Several notable uses are permitted with a special use permit including golf courses, resorts, health spas and campgrounds. Most of the town east of I-87 is zoned rural residential/agriculture. The minimum lot size in the district is two acres.

*High Density Residential District.* The purpose of this district is to provide adequate community water and sewerage facilities for high-density development; and to discourage high-density development in other parts of the Town where soils are physically unsuitable. All uses in this district require town-approved community water and sewer. According to the zoning ordinance there are presently only three areas of the Town appropriate for this district and have been zoned as such: the two mobile home parks along US Route 9W and Sleepy Hollow Lake Development. The minimum lot size in the district is two acres. The minimum lot size is .25 acres.

*Developmental District.* The purpose of this district is to preserve rural and open space character within the town; to allow the continued integration of commercial, residential and agricultural uses in an orderly fashion; to encourage development on physically suitable land to protect and preserve aquifers and runoff areas that feed into reservoirs or other water sources used as water supplies. Uses permitted as of right include agriculture, all residential dwellings, home occupations, public parks, golf courses, nurseries and offices. There are a wide variety of uses permitted with a special permit including many commercial and excavation-related uses. The minimum lot size of this district is two acres. The entire portion of the Town of Cossackie west of I-87 is zoned Developmental.

*Commercial District.* The purpose of this district is to attract commercial development to areas where infrastructure, physical characteristics and transportation facilities are suitable; to promote commercial development in proximity to population centers, to maintain the rural nature of the rest of the Town; and facilitate the provision of community services. Uses permitted as of right include a wide variety of retail, service and business/office related commercial uses, and some public and institutional uses. Uses permitted with a special permit include most other non-industrial commercial uses, wholesale distributors and governmental and institutional uses. Minimum lot size for this district is one acre. The zone has been used along the Route 9W corridor in the Town. Uses in this district are expected to provide "adequate screening from the public highway with trees, shrubs and fences. However, the term "adequate" is not defined and there are no landscaping/buffering specifications.

*Industrial District.* The purpose of this district is to encourage industrial development, to attract industry near major transportation arteries such as railroads and the New York State Thruway; to



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

concentrate industries to minimize the environmental impacts and facilitate the provision of community services; to minimize conflicts with other types of development; and to locate industries close to labor supplies and commercial services. The uses typical associated with an industrial district including manufacturing and assembly and warehousing are permitted in this district as of right or with a special use permit. The minimum lot area is one acre.

**Corridor Industrial District.** The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of a business and technology park with access to high tech communications infrastructure; to provide for a mix of clean, employee-intensive industries and businesses; to attract industries and businesses near major transportation routes; minimize environmental impacts by concentrating industries and provide development patterns and styles typical of a business or technology park. The Greene County Technology Park located just off of Route 9W is zoned “corridor industrial.” This district permitted of commercial and industrial uses typical found in industrial parks along with adult entertainment uses that meet all other town requirements related to siting such uses. The minimum lot size for this district is one acre. An area between Stacy and Sutton Streets, the railroad tracks and the Village has been zoned industrial.

There are general performance standards associated with any use in the “industrial” or “corridor industrial” districts to be reviewed by the Planning Board. These standards re related to addressing a range of issues including the infrastructure, off-street parking, traffic congestion, preservation of community and neighborhood character and value, storm water management, screening and buffering and hazardous materials.

The town zoning ordinance does not have specific regulations pertaining to design, landscaping and buffering. Site Plan Review, Article VIII of the Town Zoning Ordinance, is required for all new and changes in uses and all expansions except for single- or two-family residential dwellings, individual mobile homes or lands in agricultural production as defined by NYS Agricultural Districts Law.

Subdivision of land is address in Chapter 174 of the Town Code. This subdivision law is the equivalent of a standard subdivision ordinance. The Town Code does not provide for other alternative subdivision of land such as a planned unit development, cluster development or conservation subdivision.



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Chapter 166 of the Town Code addresses signage throughout the town. This chapter was adopted in 2002 and includes a comprehensive sign ordinance that regulates sign installation and usage in each zoning district.

Adult entertainment businesses are addressed in Chapter 68 of the Town Code as adopted in 2002. This law is a comprehensive regulation of adult uses in the Town. As mentioned above, adult entertainment uses are permitted in a Industrial Corridor zone as long it as it is not within 1,200 feet of any residential zoning district or residential use, and 1,400 feet of any school, religious institution, public park or other outdoor public recreational facilities. The Planning Board must issue a permit for such uses and a license obtained from the Town.

## ***Village of Coxsackie***

The Village of Coxsackie Zoning law, Chapter 155 of the General Code of the Village of Coxsackie, was formally adopted June 4, 1970 and has been updated over time and reprinted in 2000. The purpose of the Village's Zoning law is set forth in Article I – Purpose, §155-1 and states that the purpose of the Zoning law is to:

“promote the health, safety, morals and the general welfare of the Village of Coxsackie and to lessen congestion in the streets, to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, to provide adequate light and air, to avoid undue concentration of population and to facilitate adequate provisions for transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other requirements, under and pursuant to Article VI-A of the Village Law, the height, number of stories and size of buildings, signs and other structures, the percentage of the lot that may be occupied, the size of yards and other open spaces, the density of population and the use of buildings, structures and land for the trade, industry, resort, residence or other purposes are hereby restricted and regulated as hereinafter provided.”

The Zoning regulations were first implemented following the Town and Village of Coxsackie's first Master Plan in 1965. Since then the comprehensive plan has been updated in 1981 and 1986. The following summarizes some of the key elements of the Village's Zoning Law. Other land use regulations are included separately in the Village Code including site development plan, mobile homes and mobile home parks, and the subdivision of land.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

Article II, Districts, Zoning Map establishes the use districts for the Village. The Village is divided into 6 use districts including three residential districts, neighborhood commercial, institutional and industrial. The purpose of each district is summarized below.

*Rural-Residential/Agriculture (R-1).* This district focuses on rural and recreational land uses including low density, single family residences and agriculture, golf courses, commercial and public recreational facilities and planned residential areas. Special permit uses of note include mining and mobile home courts. The minimum lot size for this district is one acre. This acre of the Village zoned R-1 is north of Van Dyke Street on the northern border of the Village.

*Low-Density Residential (R-2).* This district focuses on medium density residential uses. The district permits single and two family dwellings. The minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet. This district is the most dominant in the Village and is used throughout.

*High-Density Residential (R-3).* This district focuses on high density residential uses including apartments, row houses and garden apartments. Single-family uses are not permitted. Conversion of single-family dwellings to two-, three and four-family dwellings are permitted as of right. The minimum lot size is 3,500 square feet per family unit or 10,000 square feet total. The R-3 district is used in the Village center and in West Coxsackie.

*Neighborhood Commercial (NC).* This district focuses on retail and service sector commercial uses, professional offices and government buildings. Despite its name, this district is actually the only commercial district and is used for the Village center on Reed Street. There is also a commercial area in the hamlet of West Coxsackie zoned neighborhood commercial.

*School, Community Facilities and Recreation (PSP).* This district permits such uses as public parks and recreation, governmental buildings, places of worship and professional buildings. Other public buildings and assembly buildings, theaters and galleries are also permitted with a special permit. The minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet. This district is used around school facilities, public parks and the portion of Coxsackie Island located in the Village.



## Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

*Industry, Warehousing and Research (IWR).* This district focuses on industrial uses within the Village. Typical industrial uses such as research and development, manufacturing and assembly are permitted as long as the processes are not noxious or injurious by reason of their production. The minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet. This district is used around the railroad line, along the Hudson River south of Reed Street and in the vicinity of Homestead Street.

Development and expansion projects for all uses except single-family residences require a site development plan according to Chapter 122 of the Village Code. Site Development Plans are reviewed by the Village Planning Board and is an abbreviated but similar process to that of typical site plan review. The site plan requires the provision of information related existing buildings, topographic data, legal data and development data. The Planning Board reviews all projects for their ability to achieve:

- maximum safety of traffic access and egress;
- site layout, including the location, power, direction and time of any outdoor lighting of the site, which would have no adverse effect upon any properties in adjoining residence districts by impairing the established character or the potential use of properties in such districts;
- reasonable screening, at all seasons of the year, of all playgrounds, parking and service areas from the view of adjacent residential properties and streets;
- conformance of the proposed site development plan with such portions of the Master Plan of the village as may be in existence from time to time; and
- in applicable cases, a drainage system and layout which would afford the best solution to any drainage problems, including off-site improvements necessary to properly handle increased runoff.

Subdivision of land is address in Chapter 132 of the Village Code. This subdivision law is the equivalent of a standard subdivision ordinance. The Village Code does not provide for other alternative subdivision of land such as a planned unit development, cluster development or conservation subdivision.

The Village Code addresses other land use-related topics such as flood damage prevention, junkyards, mobile homes and mobile home parks.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Historic Preservation Regulations

The Village Code has provision for the creation of Historic Preservation Districts. Chapter 75 authorizes the creation of local historic districts and provides procedures. The intended purpose of the districts is to

- The protection, stabilization and grading of an area of historic, architectural and/or cultural importance to the village.
- Ensuring the continued existence of the village's cultural and historical heritage as embodied in such an area.
- The stabilization of and improvement of property values in such an area.
- Strengthening the economy of the village.
- Advancing the use of a preservation district for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the village.

This chapter establishes a Historic Preservation Commission to over see the creation and management of local historic preservation districts. The Commission is seven community members appointed every five years by the Mayor with Village Board approval. Along with reviewing and approving the establish of Historic Preservation Districts, the Commission is also charged with reviewing the required work permits for the alteration of any improved real property with the District. The Chapter provides a set of general design standards to aid the Commission in determining the appropriateness of proposed building alterations.

## Transportation

Adequate transportation facilities are a critical element to the success of any growing community and there is an inextricable link between transportation access and economic activity. This element of the Community Profile includes an evaluation of existing corridor and traffic studies, traffic volume on arterials and other major roadways using NYS DOT data, a survey of road and streetscape conditions. Access and circulation issues at existing and potential future commercial nodes and corridors are analyzed and circulation concerns along important through roads such as Route 385 and the 9W Corridor, and in residential neighborhoods are addressed. (A summary memorandum on other transportation issues is located in Appendix A.)



# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

## Introduction

Cossackie is fortunate to have the combined benefit of a mix of retail, commercial, residential, recreational, industrial and agricultural properties in close proximity to population centers, major highway, rail and waterway access. From a transportation perspective, this project is considered an extension of previous works which will strengthen on-going planning initiatives as well as generate immediate, short-term and mid-term action plans.

This chapter of the community profile summarizes previous works, transportation issues, comments and recommendations. It outlines a framework to develop an inventory of existing conditions including and surrounding the area transportation system. Collectively, the transportation model developed is to be considered an on-going initiative for municipal leaders to use for continued analysis, maintenance and future development plans. The format is intended to be flexible and adaptable for easy understanding, transmission, publication and continued use for the benefit of the community over time.

## Transportation

Overall it is very clear that growth and transportation use in this area began along the waterway then gravitated to railway commercial/passenger use and then to the arterial roadway system, with each segment leading to easier connections to adjacent population centers. As such, transportation elements within and surrounding Cossackie are varied and provide the community with many exciting possibilities as they look forward to promoting the benefits of their surroundings. Given the advancing technologies and diverse interests of the general public, this community is poised to be a year-round local destination with perhaps retirement or seasonal tourist elements in the years that follow. In addition, cross region marketing can add value to this corridor that is largely ignored today. For example, the NYS 145/23 corridor can be area be linked with Cossackie but also linked with other Greene County activities.

## Roadways

### *Condition*

In the Town of Cossackie roadway system includes Interstate 87, US Highway 9W as well as many State, County Route (CR) and local roadways. Cossackie Village includes a unique mixture of one (1) State Highway, four (4) County roadways and several local streets. The condition of the Federal and State roadway system in this area is in typically very good throughout, carrying



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

less than capacity, but lacking a sense of arrival for this region. US 9W is not pedestrian friendly.

The County roadways in this area vary between:

- Very good along Plank Road (CR 9)
- Good along Lawrence Avenue (CR 61)
- Fair along Ely Street (CR 64)
- Poor along Mine Road (CR 57)

These corridors include access to waterfront area roadways that serve small commercial /retail stores and generally some commuter traffic. They possess excess capacity, have a limited sense of arrival, present dated or insufficient signage and lighting and need to promote shared access and reduced curb cuts. The remaining Village streets are split between good and fair condition, with a smaller percentage considered in poor condition. These residential corridors have a close comfortable family setting with slower travel speeds, high visibility, low traffic volumes, and few trucks. However, lighting, signage, parking and pedestrian amenities are deficient or dated in outlying areas away from Village Center.

### *Operation*

The most recently advanced CHA traffic study, 'The Kalkberg Commerce Park – Traffic Impact Study, 2004' clearly depicts the roadway system with sufficient capacity for increased development. The study identified existing circulation and critical movement issues at the intersection of US 9W and NYS 385 that need to be addressed regardless of additional development. Transportation Concepts completed a supplemental analysis to determine the effect of seasonal variations at this intersection, which will be discussed as part of the final report. The issues for this intersection and the Mansion Street Extension intersection both involve left-turn delay and associated queuing. It is possible that the re-alignment of Mansion Street could address this issue although it would not support one-way circulation and left-turn restriction SB along 9W at Mansion Street.

Intersection control within the Village limits are either 'stop' sign or 'yield' sign controlled. Outside of excess curb cuts within the Village limits, alignment issues are evident at various areas, most noticeably along NYS 385 at Lafayette Avenue. Furthermore, noted in recent resident's comments, re-appropriation of funds to provide for needed improvements to area infrastructure deficiencies and promote area design standards and goals moving forward would be supported.



# Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

## Parking

In the Town, roadway system permits some short-term roadside parking, depending on location and available shoulder area. Parking areas are not defined, inconsistent from area to area and have limited identifiable signage for passing traffic. Safety is the biggest concern for both on-street and off-street users in this area due to higher speeds and generally low lighting conditions. Village parking varies by location and includes on-street parking in residential areas, parallel and off-street parking in commercial/retail areas. Large lot parking areas exist at all large commercial/industrial/prison/marina areas, within school areas and at the newly improved Riverside Park and State Boat Launch.

Areas of concern include Coxsackie-Athens Elementary/Middle and High School special event parking as well as roadside parking on lawn areas in residential clusters. Most areas are well below capacity levels, except along New Street, South Street and Ely Street. Overall the concerns with parking are two-fold; in large parking areas internal circulation, control, channeling pedestrian areas, transit stop areas and sheltering from major corridors. In smaller areas, like South Street and New Street there are areas of wasted parking that can be corrected through modifications to circulation, design and streetscape features that will promote slower speeds and more pedestrian activity.

## Waterways

The Town of Coxsackie has a reported six (6) miles of Hudson River waterfront area, whereas the Village area has nearly 1.5 miles of waterfront area with direct access to the Coxsackie Yacht Club, and Riverside Park and State Boat Launch. Immediate view sheds for this area include Rattlesnake Island, Riverside Cemetery, Coxsackie Island, Nutton Hook State Unique Area, and the Hudson River Islands State Park. Many of these areas are being improved in some capacity or have been improved over recent years; with the Riverside Park area have the most extensive improvements. There are opportunities to advance the use and awareness of the Hudson Riverfront as an asset to the community throughout the seasons. The Riverfront has great potential for growth and has shown the beginnings of development already. Parking, sense of arrival, docking space, connectivity and lighting (safety) and waterside activities are inconsistent and deficient in some locations. These will continue to be key issues as this area emerges in growth.



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## Railways

The Conrail railroad system splits the eastern portion of the Town and the Village in half with fairly frequent usage including evenings. The condition of this system is dated throughout, and visibility at crossing area is in need of some improvements including advance warning, surface treatments and reflectivity features. Currently the condition of this corridor is tainted through the unkempt appearance of trees, grass areas and path areas as well as random areas of open equipment storage. A general 'housekeeping' of this corridor will increase its use simply by the appearance of greater safety. There is not a capacity issue for this transportation feature and several opportunities are available to increase the shared use of this feature for pedestrian and recreational use moving forward for all seasons. There is sufficient R.O.W. to provide multiuse activities that are currently not available to the public at this time.

## Pedestrian

Pedestrian areas vary between the Town campground areas of Earlton and surrounding reservoirs to the newly improved Village Riverside area. As a whole, the system suffers from the expanse of its area and the dramatic elevation changes. There is significant need for improvements, mainly in the Village area at the approaches from the residential areas to the waterfront. Poor drainage features, climate and dated materials have caused several areas of broken/uneven and unsafe passage for all types of pedestrian movements. Of particular concern is the lack of amenities that are ADA compliant, not only for area resident's but for visitors and tourists. Overall the pedestrian corridors have no capacity concerns, have very good access points, but much repair is needed throughout as well improved pavement marking, signs and lighting improvements are needed. As stated previously, re-alignment of intersections, advance warning signs and pavement striping will further improve pedestrian access and recognition leading to increased safety.

## Recreational

Recreation features in the Town include the Hudson River, Broncks Lake, Northern Sleepy Hollow Lake, the Earlton Hill Family Campground, and several small lakes and both the Coxsackie and Potuck Reservoirs. Village features include the Ernie Foster Memorial Field, Riverside Park and Fireman's Park. In all settings the amenities provided are dated, and in need of varying degrees of maintenance from minor to severely deficient. Due to these deficiencies these recreational corridors are underutilized, and present some safety concerns when they are





# **Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan**

used. As noted above, improvements for pedestrians will promote use in recreational areas leading to the need for recreational improvements as well.

## **Landuse Features**

### *Historic*

Coxsackie is rich in historic venues where within the Township the Bronk House and Museum is most notable, whereas the village historic venues include the Reed Street area. These elements are important to the transportation landscape; however lack proper signage and access from multimodal transportation such as pedestrian, bicycle and off season activities such as cross country skiing. Lack of amenities such as restrooms, ample parking, bike and personal belonging storage further limit their continued use.

### *Commercial/Retail*

Commercial features in the Town include the Coxsackie Correctional Facility, Hope Plaza, United Stationers Supply Company, Greene Business and Technology Park, Highway Drive-in Theater and the Save-a-lot Distribution Center where there are large portions of undeveloped lands. In these areas, the transportation issues are minor and lack only a more direct access for pedestrian and transit uses. Village features are less defined and have developed randomly over time. Setbacks, parking and pedestrian access differ at every business and will ultimately benefit from a Village wide design standard plan that will leave visitors with an expectation of arrival, service and sense of security to return.

### *Residential*

Residential areas in the Town include mainly well disperse single family homes and the clustered residential area of Northern Sleepy Hollow Lake. Village areas have a great mixture of uses including the clustered family areas of Pepper Tree Apartments, Mansion Square Apartments, Maple Ridge Apartments and Heritage Estates, single family homes and retirement community of Bethany Village. As noted previously, road condition, sidewalk condition and parking are the largest issues that face these areas. Clustered elderly residential areas are well provided for with observed regular transit service. There are no apparent 'cut-through' issues except on Sunset Boulevard near the schools.





# **Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan**

## *Institutional*

The local schools are concentrated along Sunset Boulevard, consequent forcing peak period cut-through traffic largely along Sunset Boulevard, Bailey Street, Plank Road and NYS 385. The largest concern is the roadway speeds along roads that need a fair amount of improvement and have limited means to identify pedestrian crossing areas. Available parking features/design and streetscape can improve most of the deficiencies identified along this corridor while adding value to areas that are now actual devalued by their proximity to the schools.

## **Transit**

Local area transit is available to the general public for US 9W and portions of NYS 385, however is not available otherwise. The exception previously noted is for elder care, which is being provided and encouraged. Unfortunately, at this time, there are not enough sustained pedestrian volumes to financially support transit improvements in this area. Smaller steps need to be taken in advance of transit improvements that can be incorporated into design standards so that when Coxsackie is ready as a community the roadway system is pre-design to accommodate it.

## **Environmental Resources and Open Space**

Increasing growth pressure threatens open space, agricultural lands and rural character. This element of the Community Profile includes an analysis of a wide range of environmental issues that may effect development and growth.

## **Climate**

The Town of Coxsackie is located in a temperate climate that is characterized by four distinct seasons. The Greene County Soil Survey provides an analysis of long term climatic averages between 1963 and 1979 for a weather station located in Freehold. In this area, temperatures generally range from an average daily of 24 degrees F in the winter to 68 degrees in the summer. Average daily minimum temperature is 15 degrees F in the winter with an average high daily maximum temperature of 88 degrees F in the summer. During periods of extreme weather, temperatures can fall well below 0 degrees and infrequently exceed 100 degrees F in the summer.

Precipitation averages 37 inches with approximately 18 inches falling between April and September. Average annual snow fall is 68 inches. Overall, hydrology is characterized as being



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precipitation dominant. Much of the precipitation in the township is associated with short duration, high intensity rainfall or snow events. The sun shines an average of 60% of the time in the summer and 40% in the winter. The prevailing wind is from the south, but frequently blows from the northwest. Last freeze dates range from April 13<sup>th</sup> to May 26<sup>th</sup> in the spring and from September 26<sup>th</sup> to October 24<sup>th</sup> in the fall. The growing season ranges from 123 to 207 days. While no analysis of more recent weather data is available, characteristics related to rainfall in particular have exceeded published values.

## Geology

The Town of Cossackie lies within the Hudson Valley section of the Ridge and Valley physiographic province, which contains three sub-regions. To the east, the township and village are located in the terrace region, which is fairly level and averages 100 feet in elevation. The terrace region is characterized by deep deposits of sand and clay which have been dissected by fluvial action of the Hudson River and its tributaries. Further west, the Kalkberg region is a series of low hills that lie parallel to the Hudson River. The Kalkberg region has low lying hills that range from 300 to 500 feet in elevation. The western portions of the town are located along the very eastern limits of the Hooeberg region which is a higher range of hills that range from 800 to 100 feet in elevation and are characterized by rounded hills verse distinct ranges of hills.

Bedrock geology in the Town of Cossackie is characterized by six (6) formations that run in narrow bands along a north-south orientation (Figure \_\_), that is parallel to the Hudson River. Geologic formations present in the Town include

Lower Ordovician/Upper Cambrian – This formation lies in a narrow band along the immediate river corridor and runs from the northern limits of the town to the Four Mile Point area. This formation represents the steeper, eastern facing slopes along the river and is the result of past glacial seas and their lacustrine deposits of sands and mud. Bedrock is predominantly shale, with some limestone.

Normanskill Formation - This region runs the entire length of the town and represents the underlying bedrock between the steeper river facing slopes, and the start of the Kalkberg formation which runs almost perfectly along the NYS Thruway. The formation contains primarily a variety of shale, with some limestone and cherts also present. The flint mine features just southeast of the Cossackie Correctional facility are characteristic of this formation



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Heldberg Group – This formation is a narrow area that lays along the immediate NYS thruway corridor. The bedrock geology is of limestone which is highly faulted and folded. The formation also includes a number of steep cliffs.

Schoharie Formation – Just west of the Heldberg group, this formation is predominately comprised of a number of different shales and forms conspicuous ridges.

Lower Hamilton group – Again, a narrow band that runs along a north-south orientation, this formation is comprised of shale and siltstone. The Potic Mountain range is within this formation.

Kiskatom Formation – This formation makes up the western third of the township and is comprised of sandstone and shale. The sandstone is laminated, and has been quarried in the past for flagstones.

## Topography

Topography in the Town of Coxsackie is variable, with elevations ranging from 0 feet in elevation along the Hudson River to a maximum elevation of 850 feet above sea level at the highest peak of the Potic Mountain formation just west of the NYS Thruway. Topography relationships, similar to geology, run in roughly linear arrangements on a north south orientation that is parallel to the Hudson River. Along the immediate river corridor, there is limited flat terrain, with topography characterized by steep slopes that rise from the river. These steep slopes have been formed over 10,000 years as the Hudson River has incised into the remains of past glacial lakes. These steeper slopes also extend east and west along the tributaries and smaller drainageways to the Hudson where fluvial action has also resulted in the streams being dissected into the landscape.

East of these steeper slopes, running to the base of the Kalkberg formation, topography is flat to extremely flat. This terrain is representative of landscapes that have formed on lake bottoms associates with past glacial seas. The flat topography is only broken by a series of low hills that run north-south in the area of Flint Mine Hill, and a series of smaller, dissected waterways, that have down cut into the landform. West of the NYS Thruway, topography is much steeper, and is associated with the low lying Potic Mountain Range and the more variable hill and valley complex associated with the Hooeberg geologic formation.



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## Soils

Soils within the Town of Cossackie are variable, and contain many different soil types that fall within three general categories. Again, like geology and topography, these soil groups run in linear bands on a north-south orientation that is parallel to the Hudson River. The general soil types in the Town include the;

Nassau-Farmington Series – This soil series runs in a narrow strip along the entire Hudson River with the exception of an area where the Village of Cossackie is located. The series also exists in a narrow band that runs north and south with the NYS Thruway on its eastern limits. The soil series is comprised of fine and moderately textured particles that are generally shallow. The soils range from gently sloping to steep and include individual soils that range from well drained to excessively well drained though poor drainage is predominant. Minor soil types in this series include Tuller, Rhinebeck, Galway and Valois.

Kingsbury-Rhinebeck-Hudson Series – Soils in this series are located on the flatter terrain just west of the Hudson River and east of the NYS Thruway and include the area where the Village of Cossackie is located. The soil series is characterized as being very deep and can range from very level to very steep. They are fine grained soils (clays) that are lacustrine in origin, having been formed as sediments on a former glacial lake bed. The series may be moderately drained, but are more often poor to very poorly drained. Minor soils located within the series includes Vergennes, Covington and Madalin. Much of the soil series has been cleared at some point for agriculture, but is now undergoing succession back to forest. The dominant limitations on this series include wetness, poor tilth and erosion.

Arnot-Lordstown Series – The western half of the township is characterized by this soil series which is shallow to moderately deep. The series can range from nearly level (0%) to very steep (55%), and the soils are excessively to moderately well drained. The soil texture is medium. Rock outcrops are frequent. Minor soil types on this series include Nassau, Valois, Mardin and Tuller. Most areas are best suited for woodland, with pasture and other agricultural activities suitable for the more moderately sloped areas. Slope and shallowness to bedrock are the dominant limitations.

With the exception of smaller, isolated units, the Town of Cossackie has very little soil that is classified as being prime agricultural soil. In the western portions of the town, where soils are



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better drained, the slope is generally steep and not conducive to a wide range of farming. In the flatter areas, where agriculture has been traditionally located, the soils are heavy, wet and very difficult to work. While a wide range of agricultural activities such as row crops, pasture and hay lands have been traditional in the township, moderate to poor soil quality limits yields and presents obstacles of agricultural activities such as harvesting during the fall wet periods.

In addition to the limitations on agricultural uses, the soils within the town also present significant hurdles to development. A number of factors, ore importantly slope, texture and drainage characteristics present a challenge to many development activities. Often, the soils poor drainage make them less than suitable for on-site waste water (septic) systems and they require special attention when constructing foundations, roadways and other development activities. In eastern portion of the township, fine to very fine soil texture combined with low cohesion, make many of the soils very prone to erosion. The problems with excessive turbidity in Sleepy Hollow Lake are directly related to the erosive nature of these soils, as well as their fine texture (colloidal) which keeps them in suspension for extended period once eroded.

### Land Cover/ Land Use:

The Town of Coxsackie is rural in nature and is characterized by a land cover that is predominantly forest, open fields, or old fields that are in various stages of succession. Land cover associated with development is fairly limited in the town, and is primarily located in the Village and along the 9W corridor south and north of the Village. In the eastern portions of the town, land cover is fairly evenly split between open fields and forests, while in the western portion of the town forest is the predominant land cover. In general, land cover is strongly related to slope, with open fields and successional fields located in the flatter areas and forest on the steeper slopes and along waterways. Fields are primarily hay land, or early successional fields that contain shrub communities. The successional fields are directly attributed to the steady decline in agricultural activities in the town. The forest is predominantly mixed, new growth hardwoods, with cedar and white pine dominating the conifer component.

### Stream Systems

The Town of Coxsackie is characterized by a diverse assemblage of streams (Figure \_\_\_\_). In the eastern portion of the town, the streams are characterized as being low gradient (slope), with low velocities, and are formed in fine (clay) soils. In the western portion of the town, topography, soils and geology present conditions where the stream systems have a steeper



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gradient, higher velocities, increased erosion and are generally formed in a gravel or small cobble substrate. In the eastern portion of the town, the Coxsackie Creek, Murderers Kill Stream, two larger unnamed tributaries and the Climax Brook are the primary stream systems. In the western portion of the Town, the Potic Creek, Cob Creek and Grapeville Creek, and their tributaries, are the primary stream systems. The flow regime of most of the main stream channels is perennial in nature, while most of their tributaries are intermittent.

In NYS, the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) maintains a stream classification system that categorizes streams based on their highest and best use. Streams are classified from A through D, with A classified streams representing the highest use as drinking water and D the lowest with fishing being the best use. Class C waters are suitable for fish propagation and have water quality characteristics that make them suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation. Class D streams may be suitable for fishing but are often limited by flow or stream substrate. Class C and D streams are not subject to NYSDEC stream protection regulations. Classifications of B for swimming and C for fishing is also used. Subclasses of AA or AAA can be used for drinking water supplies. Stream classified as C can carry subclasses of (T) or (TS) which represent their ability to support trout populations. Class C (T) or trout spawning C (TS). Under Article 15 of NYS Environmental Conservation Law, streams with a classification of C or higher, require a permit for activities within the stream. Classifications of C or D do not require permits. The following is a summary for the stream systems in the Town,

Coxsackie Creek (Class C) The creek is a perennial stream that flows in a northerly direction from its headwater just cross the Athens-Coxsackie town line, to its confluence with the Hudson River at a point in New Baltimore. The Coxsackie Creek drains much of the inland section of the Town of Coxsackie's between the Thruway and the river, and in several areas in its headwaters the stream becomes less defined as it flows through large wetland complexes. The Coxsackie Creek is the boundary between the Town of Village in the Village's northwest corner.

Murderers Kill Creek – This creek is the main source of water for Sleepy Hollow Lake and originates in the Town of Athens in the low, flat area along the railroad tracks just south of Schoharie Turnpike. The stream is perennial in nature, and has a sinuous pattern as it flows north to enter Sleepy Hollow Lake. The stream is characterized by several unnamed, intermittent tributaries as well as extensive wetland complexes along its path.



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Unnamed Tributary (SHL) – The second principle supply to Sleepy Hollow Lake is an intermittent stream that originates in the area of the Hudson Valley Industrial Park just south of the Village of Coxsackie. The stream is small, and classified as a C stream under NYSDEC standards.

Unnamed Tributary (Reservoir) - A small, unnamed tributary flows from the Coxsackie Correctional Facility reservoir which is located just west of the NYS Thruway. The stream is generally intermittent, but in wet years may exhibit flow that is more perennial in nature. The stream joins the Coxsackie Creek just south of the Bronck House

Climax Brook – This stream is generally perennial in nature, and originates just west of the NYS Thruway. The stream is the out flow of the Village of Coxsackie lower reservoir and under certain drought conditions the stream may become intermittent in the summer. The streams headwaters originate in New Baltimore flow through the reservoir and pass under the NYS Thruway just south of NYS Route 81, after which flows easterly along a highly sinuous route until it joins the Coxsackie Creek in the area near Martins Trailer Park.

Potic Creek – The Potic Creek is located in the western portion of the town, and is the primary drainage from the west facing slopes of the Potic Mountain ridge. The stream originates from Mill Pond in Earlton, and runs almost dead north-south until it joins the Catskill Creek in Athens. The Creek is classified as C (T) along the portion located in the Town of Coxsackie, while Mill Pond carries a B (T) classification. The stream has a moderate gradient (slope) and a gravel or small coble substrate. The stream is also well shaded and known as decent trout resource.

Cob Creek – This is a perennial stream that has its source in the hills of Greenville and New Baltimore. The stream flows south, south-east and passes through an impoundment in the northwest corner of the Town before flowing into the Potuck Reservoir which is the Village of Catskill's water supply. Cob Creek carries several classification, with the stream being a Class C (T) between the reservoir and the Potic Creek and a Class A between the streams entrance to the reservoir and the first upstream tributary. The stream also carries a classification as a B and C as you move away from the reservoir and to the headwaters.

Grapeville Creek – This perennial stream is located in the north-central portion of the town, originating from a moderate sized impoundment just south of the New Baltimore



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Town line. The stream runs south, south-east and ends at Mill Pond in Earlton. The stream is a Class C. The Grapeville Creek also receives water from the Medway Creek which originates in New Baltimore.

### Hudson River

The Hudson River is perhaps the most complex and diverse ecological resource in the town of Coxsackie. At Coxsackie, the river is tidal, with a diurnal tide pattern that is characterized as having two high tides and two low tides within each 24 hour period. Even though the Coxsackie Riverfront Park is over 120 miles from the ocean, tides generally average from 3-5 feet on any given day, and may be greater during certain periods when the river flow is high or there is a full moon combined with a strong freshnet (flow for the upper watershed). In the Coxsackie area, the Hudson River is classified as a Class A by NYSDEC, and there is a no dumping (bilge water) in this stretch of the river

The tides take approximately six (6) hours to change, with approximately 45 minutes of slack tide between each change. As such, the timing of each high and low tide is different every day. The Hudson River in this area is tidal, and is classified as being an estuary. While traditionally, an estuary is described as enclosed bodies of water (i.e. river, sound, bay) where freshwater meets and mixes with saltwater from the sea, the definition as commonly used has been extended to include all those tidal areas, regardless of mixing of fresh and salt water. In drought years the "salt front" has come far up the river, but it has never gotten close to the Coxsackie area.

In addition to the river itself, there are numerous adjacent tidal wetlands and backwater areas that provide a rich and diverse ecosystem. In the town and village of Coxsackie, there are two areas that are designated as Hudson River Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas .

Coxsackie Island Backwater - The Coxsackie Island Backwater is located along the western shore of the Hudson River in the Towns of Coxsackie and New Baltimore, and the Village of Coxsackie. It is characterized as a relatively shallow side channel of the Hudson River, separated from the main river channel by Coxsackie Island, Rattlesnake Island and a stone dike at the upriver end of Rattlesnake Island. The area is approximately 1.5 miles long, encompassing approximately 140 acres of vegetated backwater with a silty bottom and abundant aquatic vegetation, primarily milfoil and water chestnut. There is an abundance of underwater shelter in the area provided by sunken barge hulls. Coxsackie Island Backwater is under the jurisdiction of the OGS, and habitat disturbances are minimal.



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Coxsackie Island Backwater is one of only several relatively large areas of vegetated backwater in the Hudson Valley ecological region. Extensive littoral zones such as this are productive spawning and nursery areas for many resident freshwater fish species, such as brown bullhead, yellow perch, largemouth bass, esocids and carp. These areas also serve as feeding habitats for migratory fish species such as juvenile American shad, blueback herring, and American eel. Compared to other habitat types in the river, vegetated backwaters may have the greatest diversity of fish species. Furthermore, Coxsackie Island Backwater is especially significant as a wintering area for largemouth bass. It is one of only two important winter concentration areas known in the upper Hudson estuary.

Vosburgh Swamp & Middleground Flats - The Vosburgh Swamp and Middle Ground Flats SCFWH extends for approximately four miles along the western shore of the Hudson River. While Middleground Flats is located in the Town and Village of Athens, a majority of the Vosburgh swamp component is located in the Town of Coxsackie. The habitat area is characterized by extensive mudflats and shallows, off-channel open water areas, hardwood swamp and a freshwater impoundment. These habitat types make the Vosburgh Swamp and Middle Ground Flats area very attractive to many fish and wildlife species. The mudflats, marshes, and littoral zones in this area provide valuable feeding and resting habitat for large concentrations of waterfowl during the fall and spring migrations.

Approximately 10,000 canvasbacks, along with various other waterfowl species, have been reported in the area during seasonal migrations. When open water is available, this area also provides an important waterfowl wintering area in the upper Hudson Valley region, especially significant for redhead and canvasback ducks. Mud turtles and least bittern have been reported to reside in Vosburgh Swamp, but this has not been confirmed for either species. This wetland area does provide potential habitat for various other marsh-nesting birds, including green-backed heron, American bittern, black duck, mallard, wood duck, Virginia rail, common moorhen, and marsh wren. Several rare plant species, including heartleaf plantain, and subulate arrowhead, occur in shoreline areas near Vosburgh Swamp.

The Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve - The Town and Village of Coxsackie are fortunate to be situated opposite the Stockport Flats component of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve (HRNERR). The Research Reserve was



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established by New York State and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 1982 as a system of four of the highest quality tidal wetlands on the Hudson River estuary. The Stockport Flats component of the HRNERR, located on the eastern shore of the Hudson River and includes Nutten Hook, the Hudson River Islands State Park (Gay's Point and Stockport Middle Ground Island) and Stockport Marshes. The Nutten Hook portion of the Reserve is situated directly across from the Village of Cossackie.

## Impoundments

The Town of Cossackie contains a significant number of impoundments of various sizes. Ranging from small private ponds to the Village of Catskill's Potic Reservoir, these water resources are critical for many reasons. While smaller impoundments such as farm ponds provide a valuable resource to livestock and wildlife, the larger impoundments provide the water supply to over 50% of the town's population as well as the Cossackie Correctional Facility. Significant impoundments in the town of Cossackie include;

Sleepy Hollow Lake – Located in the southeast section of the Town, this manmade lake was constructed in the early 1970's as the focal point of a large residential development. Only a small portion of the lake (approximately 20%) is located within the Town of Cossackie. SHL serves as the domestic waters supply for the residential community and is used for a wide range of recreational activities including fishing, swimming and boating.

Lower Cossackie Reservoir – The smallest of the Village of Cossackie's water system reservoirs is located in the Climax area of the Town. The reservoir served as the Villages original water supply until a significant caused the Village to construct the larger upper reservoir in the Town of New Baltimore. The lower reservoir is exhibiting signs of sedimentation and loss of storage capacity.

NYS Department of Corrections Reservoir – Just west of the NYS Thruway, this small impoundment serves as the water supply for the Cossackie Correctional facility. The reservoir is approximately 00 acres in size, and has experienced extensive sedimentation. The reservoir is characterized as being extremely utrophic.

Bronx Lake – Located just west of the Cossackie Correctional Facility Reservoir, the lake is privately owned. The lake is surrounded primarily by forest cover, and several residential



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properties are located on the lakes shoreline. Use is limited to the private owners, and there is no public access.

Potuck Reservoir – This reservoir is located in the southwest corner of the town, and is the water supply for the Village of Catskill. The larger north basin of the reservoir is located in the Town of Coxsackie, while the smaller south basin is located in the Town of Athens. The reservoir is supplied by Cob Creek.

### Wetlands

Once believed to be flooded wastelands, wetlands are now recognized as valuable natural resources. Wetlands provide important wildlife habitats, opportunities for recreation and valuable open space. Wetlands also play an important role in flood control and in improving water quality, as they are natural sponges able to absorb large quantities of run-off and filter out impurities and sediments. The Town of Coxsackie contains numerous areas that are classified as state and/or federal wetlands. Poorly drained soils, a dense drainage network, large areas of flat topography and adequate precipitation work in unison to produce ideal conditions for wetlands. Unfortunately, current mapping of these wetlands is poor

In New York State, the Freshwater Wetlands Act (1975) protects wetlands from activities which can have a negative impact on water quality. Wetland of 12.4 acres in size, smaller wetlands determined to be of unusual local importance, are regulated by the Act. State regulation of these wetland also extends to a buffer of 100 feet surrounding the wetland. Anyone proposing to undertake an activity on or within 100 feet of a designated wetland is required to obtain a permit from DEC. While these wetlands have been mapped in the past, the state regulated wetland maps are now over 25 years old and are no longer representative of the actual extent of these wetlands.

In addition to the state regulations, wetlands are also protected under the Federal Clean Water Act, which is overseen by the US Army Corps of Engineers under the Section 401 permit program. Federal classified wetlands have no minimum size, and can be regulated down as small as 1/10 acre. Federal wetlands are determined based on three criteria which includes vegetation, period of inundation, and hydric soils, whereas the state designated wetlands are primarily defined by vegetation only. The federally regulated wetlands within the Town and Village of Coxsackie have yet to be identified and mapped under the National Wetlands Inventory.



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In the Town of Coxsackie, the GCSWCD has mapped the location of hydric (poorly drained) and potentially hydric soils in the corridor between the Hudson River and the NYS Thruway as these soils are a fairly good indicator of potential wetlands. Mapping of hydric soils was completed as a surrogate for NWI maps, and are being used to help screen potential development and conservation areas. The area selected for mapping was done based on expected development pressure. Since 2003, the GCSWCD has been working with the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA) and other developers on projects characterized by wet, abandoned farm fields, and federal wetland frequently make up as much as 50% of the sites.

In general, the majority of the wetlands within the Town of Coxsackie are located in the eastern portion, where the soils are more poorly drained and the topography is flatter. Wetland complexes in the western portion of the Town are generally smaller, more localized and found in the flatter areas between ridgelines and hills. In most cases, wetland areas are associated with local stream networks, but they are also frequently located in association with smaller streams and drainageways in former agricultural fields. While the highest density of these wetlands are located along the main stem of the Coxsackie Creek and Murderers Kill Stream, to some extent a network of small streams and wetlands is present throughout the entire watershed. In several areas, former farmlands are experiencing rapid conversion to wetlands as the former drainage networks are no longer maintained to some extent, increasing beaver populations have also been a major factor in the increase in size of some wetlands, as well as creating conditions that promote the development of new wetlands.

To date, impacts to smaller wetlands have been steadily increasing. As fallow farms revert to their former conditions, landowners are finding themselves in increasing conflict between their development plans, and the impact to these federal wetlands. As the 9W corridor continues to experience a growth in development activities, impacts to wetlands will be one of the most important factors which must be addressed in site plan reviews.

### **Flooding**

In recent years, portions of the Town and Village of Coxsackie have been experiencing increasing problems related to flooding. While flood prone areas are associated with most waterways within the township, the most frequent flooding occurs along the Coxsackie Creek, and to a lesser extent along the Hudson River. Flooding can occur in the community during all seasons, but is generally most frequent during the spring or fall. Spring flooding is often associated with snowmelt which adds to heavy spring rains to produce increased runoff. Less frequently, ice jams



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on the Hudson River and high spring tides results in isolated flooding of waterfront areas. Summer and fall floods are also associated with hurricane activity which carries extensive tropical moisture into the northeast,

During the past 5-10 years, flooding along the Coxsackie Creek has increased significantly both in its occurrence as well as magnitude. While flood that would close Mansion Street at Bethany Village were rare in the past, this situation is now happening as frequently as once a year. The increase in flooding can be attributed to a general trend in increased precipitation as well as an increase in paved and impervious surfaces, notably as a result of increased development along the US Route 9W corridor. Increases in impervious surfaces increases both the amount and rate of runoff within the Coxsackie Creek watershed

The Flood Insurance Studies for the Town and Village of Coxsackie have recently been revised by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and released to the municipalities for review and adoption in October 2006. The flood studies and the associated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), provide details on the character of the rivers and streams in Coxsackie. These studies examine in detail the potential for flooding and include information on stream discharges, still-water (flood) elevations and hydraulic characteristics. In Coxsackie, the majority of the mapped flood hazard areas are associated with the primary stream systems described earlier.

In 2003, the GCIDA, working with the GCSWCD, initiated an effort to incorporate additional flood protection measures into the IDA's development projects. Stormwater infrastructure at the Greene Business & Technology Park and Kalkberg Commerce Park were oversized, to allow for some mitigation of flood conditions. In addition, in the fall of 2006, the GCSWCD completed the first of several mitigation wetlands just north of Route 81 and east of the NYS Thruway. While the facility was primarily built to meet the IDA's need for wetland mitigation, the site as well as type of construction was chosen to mitigate flood discharges in the small watershed in which the Hope Plaza complex is located. The initial wetland sill was designed to reduce peak discharge from a 2 year storm (3" of rain) by 72% and from a 100 years storm (8" rain) by 40%. The development of additional flood impoundments around the town, combined with diligent enforcement of floodplain and stormwater regulations, may be able to reverse some of the current flooding problems.



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## Habitat

### Known or Suspected Environmental Impacts

In the Town and Village of Coxsackie, there are a number of problem areas that have been documented as having significant environmental impacts. Additionally, factors such as soils, runoff, septic systems, development and wetlands have also been identified as having a strong potential for additional environmental impacts. Most of the known problem areas are in the eastern portion of the town, but potential impacts can be expected town wide. Known or suspected environmental problems include;

Erosion & Sedimentation - In the Coxsackie Creek and Murderers Kill watersheds, impacts from erosion and sedimentation are both natural, as well as man-made in origin. Erosion is associated with the continuing incisement of the streams and their smaller drainageways into the clay soils upon which they are located. While incisement of these waterways is primarily a natural phenomena, this processes is easily increased by any change in a watershed's hydrology which results in increased runoff. As increasing levels of imperviousness are created in the watershed, peak flows and total runoff are also increased and the watersheds drainage system becomes subjected to stresses which accelerate incisement. Another significant threat to the watershed associated with sedimentation and erosion involves the nature of the soils in those areas where most of the development is taking place. The flat, colloidal clay soils are easily subjected to sheet and rill erosion when the vegetative cover is removed, and as such, the control of sediment during construction activities is highly advisable.

On-Site Waste Water Treatment Systems - In the Town of Coxsackie, most of the land base is not served by municipal waste water, with homes and businesses relying on traditional on-site waste water treatment systems (septic systems). In most of the Town, soils are a major limiting factor to on-site treatment with the eastern part of the Town impacted by poorly drained clay soils and the western portion impacted by steep slopes and shallow soils. It can be expected that based on the type of soils, as well as the age of the average waste treatment systems present, that as high as half of the on-site waste treatment systems may be sub-standard, and do not meet current regulatory requirements.



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Stormwater Management - At the present time, the most significant potential impact to natural resources in the Town is associated with a rapid expansion of imperviousness surface associated with development projects. In the southern watershed, significant imperviousness is associated with the joint correctional facilities. In the past 20 years, the construction of a second correctional facility (Greene), as well as expansions at the older Coxsackie Correctional Facility has been identified as contributing to changes in the watershed's hydrology. Additionally, warehouse development along route 9W and in the Coxsackie Industrial Park, and the construction of larger commercial projects in the area of the Route 9W and Route 81 intersection have obviously created stormwater impacts. In almost all instances, these developments preceded stormwater regulations and they contain little or no provisions for stormwater management. The United Stationers project alone represents over 20 acres of impervious surface with no stormwater attenuation.

Hazardous Waste – There are two known areas within the Village of Coxsackie which are characterized as being hazardous waste sites. Both are associated with former brass foundries. In the middle of the Village, the American Valve site is a federal superfund site that was remediated after a long period of evaluation and cleanup. The site was formally a brass foundry which was contaminated by heavy metals as well as a range of other pollutants. In 2001, the NYSDEC executed a contract with a firm to clean up the site. Between 2001 and 2004, the sites buildings were dismantled, the contaminated casting sands underwent a thermal treatment, and the treated sands were disposed of on-site in an 8 acre, capped landfill.

The problem was first noted with American Valve in the early 1980's when sewage sludge from the villages' sewer plant tested high for metals. Contamination track down revealed that the most likely source of these materials was the American Valve site, where sands and soil were being carried to the plant via the combined sanitary and stormwater systems. If the contamination was capable of moving off site through the municipal stormwater system, then it is reasonable to assume that some off site transport may have been occurring in other drainage patterns leaving the site. The project is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2002.

The other known site that has some level of contamination is the former M.G. Carter & Sons foundry on the Villages riverfront. The 4 acre site was also a former brass foundry, and it is currently undergoing evaluation and testing under the states Brownfield Cleanup Program. The current owner is a "volunteer" participant, and hopes to clean up the site



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for reuse as a commercial business. Initial testing and evaluation indicate that the Carter site does not have nearly the same level of contamination as the American Valve site.

NYSDEC Priority Waters List – Under the Clean Water Act, each state is required to evaluate all Water bodies and to assess their condition. Those Water bodies that exhibited water quality impacts were classified based in the severity of the impacts, and how they reduce the Water bodies use. In the Town of Coxsackie, there are three Water bodies on the states Priority Waters List (PWL List). These include;

Coxsackie Creek (Segment No. 1309-0092) - The Coxsackie Creek is classified as Stressed, for both aesthetics (primary) and aquatic life. The known pollutants include odors and aquatic vegetation while suspected pollutants include pathogens, nutrients and sediments/silts. The primary source of the pathogens has been identified as on-site wastewater treatment, with a mobile home park identified as the principle source. Urban runoff is also suspected to be a secondary source of pollutants. The PWL lists the resolution potential as medium.

Coxsackie Correctional Reservoir (Segment 1390-0060) - The 20.0 acre Coxsackie Correctional Reservoir is listed as being stressed for water supply and aesthetics. The primary form of pollutants is suspected to be nutrients with aquatic vegetation and silts being secondary sources of the impairment. The source is suspected to be agricultural in origin. The segment has a medium resolution potential.

Sleepy Hollow Lake (Segment 1301-0059) – Sleepy Hollow lake was originally nominated for the PWL list by the GCSWCD in the early 1990's. The Lake was determined to have "Precluded" classification, which meant that it was elevated in importance and placed on the state's 303(d) list. The 303(d) list identifies those water bodies where impacts were found to be significant enough to warrant the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs). TMDL's are developed to determine what level of pollutants that can be assimilated by the water body without an impact on water quality. The primary pollutant of concern in SHL is sediments. The GCSWCD has secured a \$50,000 water quality grant on behalf of SHL and is working with the community on long term plans for reducing these impacts.



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## Open Space

Overall, the Town and Village of Coxsackie have a fairly limited amount of land dedicated for the permanent conservation of open space. Prior to the early 1990's, the community had only a small NYSDEC (33 ac) owned parcel in the western part of the town that was dedicated to conservation. In 1992, a joint project of Scenic Hudson, the Greene County Soil & water Conservation District and the Town of Coxsackie acquired a small (7.4 ac) parcel on Four Mile Point Road, resulting in the first open space/public access area in the Town of Coxsackie. Since that initial project, a number of new, and in some cases innovative, open space projects have been undertaken. The following is a summary of the open space conservation initiatives in the Town and Village of Coxsackie.

**Coxsackie Creek Grassland Preserve** – This project represents the largest concentration of open space under permanent protection in the Town and Village of Coxsackie. The CCGP was initiated in 2003, and is the cornerstone of a mitigation strategy developed by the GCSWCD and its Habitat Advisory Committee to facilitate the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA) obtaining the necessary NYSDEC and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers permits for construction of the Greene Business & Technology Park and Kalkberg Commerce Park. The CCGP currently includes approximately 289 acres of property that runs along the Coxsackie Creek, and includes property in the Town and Village of Coxsackie as well as a small section in the Town of New Baltimore. An additional parcel of 30 acres located on Route 81 is currently being built-out as mitigation wetlands, and is also designated to be added to the CCGP. The GCIDA also will be providing an additional 32 acres of habitat lands to meet its permit obligations, bringing the total acreage of the CCGP to approximately 350 acres.

The lands were selected for their habitat value, more specifically for grassland bird species. The keystone species for the conservation effort was the Northern Harrier Hawk, but other species are expected to benefit for this effort. The GCIDA acquired the properties, and working with the GCSWCD, facilitated the establishment of an independent non-profit land trust (Greene Land Trust) which has taken ownership of the conservation lands. In addition, the GCIDA and Greene Land Trust have established an innovative twenty year funding mechanism that will not only fund the day to day maintenance of the CCGP in accordance with the GCIDA permits, but also establish a stewardship fund that will cover the cost of long term expenses necessary to maintain the properties. Currently, there are no provisions for formal public access to the preserve, but plans for a multi-use trail system are underway.



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**Four Mile Point**– Scenic Hudson Inc, a regional land trust organization, is the second largest owner of protected open space in the Town of Coxsackie with holdings concentrated on Four Mile Point Road. Initially started in 1992 with the acquisition of 7.4 acres that was developed as the Four Mile Point Preserve, recent acquisitions of two additional large parcels in the immediate area (Rasmussen 00 acres and Tufano 00 acres) have brought Scenic Hudson's holdings to 000 acres on Four Mile Point Road. Currently, the Town of Coxsackie, with assistance from the GCSWCD, manages the Four Mile Point Preserve, while the Greene GCSWCD manages the other two parcels under an agreement with Scenic Hudson. Four Mile Point Preserve is a low impact facility with a small nature trail and access to the riverfront. The site includes a scenic overlook and is popular in the spring for shore striper fishing. The new parcels currently have no improvements and are currently not open for general public use. The GCSWCD and Scenic Hudson are working on the development of a public access plan.

The Rasmussen parcel has had a traditional use for water fowl hunting, with Scenic Hudson and GCSWCD working with the Hudson River Waterfowl Protective Association to provide continued hunting access to the site. The Rasmussen parcel also includes two small portions that have had a long tradition of local use for fishing access as well as canoeing and kayaking. It is the intention of Scenic Hudson to eventually transfer ownership of the Rasmussen (and hopefully Trufano) parcels to NYSDEC. There is significant interest on the part of the state due to the habitat sensitivity of these parcels, and their location across the river from the Stockport Flats Hudson River Estuarine Research Reserve facility.

**Coxsackie Island Preserve** – The Town of Coxsackie owns a small property that is specifically dedicated to the preservation of open space and recreation. The parcel is approximately 7+/- acres which is located on the southern end of Coxsackie Island. The property was purchased in 1999 with the assistance of the GCSWCD which obtained the necessary grant funds for the acquisition of the property, and facilitated the purchase by the Town. While the property is currently undeveloped, and only receives informal use, the vision is to create a day use area or paddle destination that is easily accessible from Coxsackie Riverfront Park.

**NYS Department of Environmental Conservation** – NYSDEC owned land in the Town of Coxsackie is limited to a single 33 acre parcel in the western portion of the Town. The parcel is located substantially in the Town of Coxsackie, but a small portion located in the Town of New Baltimore. Though the property is located outside the "Blue line" (boundary of the Catskill Park), it is still classified and managed as part of the state forest preserve. According to NYSDEC Region



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4 Land Management Staff, the property does not have a management plan in place and it is likely that the state will consider declaring the property as surplus and turn it over to NYSOGS for disposal in the future. It would be NYSDEC's intent to notify the appropriate municipalities if a decision is made to surplus the property to determine if there is any local interest (personal communication, Peter Innes, NYSDEC Region 4 Land Manager (9/20/06))

**NYS Office of General Services** – NYS is the owner of several parcels of land located along the Hudson River. The Office of General Services (NYSOGS) owns those lands that lie below the mean high tide line of the Hudson River. This also includes lands that may have been below high tide in the past, but were filled as the result of navigational dredging on the Hudson. In Coxsackie, the most significant of these areas is located along the Village's waterfront, where OGS owns several parcels in the area of the shallow bay north of the Coxsackie Riverfront Park. While these lands are owned by the state, upland landowners, whose property adjoins the river, enjoy the rights of riparian access. These rights provide the owner access to the water for the purpose of boating, fishing and other river uses, but do not provide rights to construct navigational improvements such as dockage or moorings. NYSOGS does have a system in place by which upland owners may be granted an easement for the purpose of installing docks, but no longer makes outright grants of underwater lands. Along the Coxsackie waterfront, a number of older underwater land grants are still in place. While these grants provide the upland owners broader rights to undertaken improvements, any work within the underwater grant area is still subject to all state and federal environmental and navigation regulations. In Coxsackie, the NYSOGS holdings represent a critical environmental resource area, and are characterized as shallow, tidal wetland areas. The presence of these properties, combined with their environmental sensitivity, provides limitations to the development of the upland parcels.

## Agriculture

Agriculture has played an important role in the economy of Greene County for many years. According to the Census of Agriculture, there were 342 farms<sup>11</sup>, and 57,898 acres of land in farms, in Greene County in 2002. This represents a 17.1% increase in the number of farms and an increase of 12.7% in farmland acres since 1997. The 342 farms in Greene County generated

<sup>11</sup> The Census of Agriculture defines a farm as "a place which produced and sold... \$1,000 or more of agricultural products@ during the year of the census. This may exclude some part-time agriculture-related operations.



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sales of \$14.4 million according to the 2002 Census. Based on the available data<sup>12</sup>, the top commodities produced in the County were milk and other dairy products, nursery and greenhouse crops, and vegetables, melons, potatoes and sweet potatoes.

Greene County has an Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan which provides an overview and inventory of the County agricultural industry. As part of the plan, goals and objectives were developed and major agricultural initiatives were also identified.

There is one state-certified agricultural district in Greene County, and as of November 2006 includes 36,755.11 acres (approximately 8.7% of total area in Greene County). Greene County Consolidated Agricultural District #124 includes land in Cossackie as well as other municipalities in Greene County. Currently, approximately 3,225.63 acres of property in Cossackie are located in Greene County Agricultural District. One site encompassing 16 acres in Cossackie is currently under review by the Greene County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board to be added to the Agricultural District. According to the Greene County Department of Planning & Economic Development, the site will likely be added to the district following action by the county legislature (in December 2006) and NYS Ag and Markets (early next year).

The Greene County Agricultural Districts were created as a result of the Agricultural Districts Law enacted by New York State in 1971. This law was passed to encourage the protection of farmland by providing incentives to farmers to keep their land in production. A key benefit for farms within an Agricultural District is a tax benefit for owners of ten or more acres which generate at least \$10,000 in gross sales during the preceding two years. The Agricultural Districts Law also provides other protections to limit restrictions on agricultural operations other than those necessary to protect health and safety.

According to the Greene County Department of Planning & Economic Development, each year there is a 30-day review period in September where landowners can request to have land included in the District. Land proposed for addition during the current 2006 review includes 18 parcels owned by 16 landowners totaling 959.11 acres and includes land in Ashland, Athens, Cairo, Cossackie, Durham, Greenville, Hunter, New Baltimore and Windham. Each of the landowners has requested that their land be added to the district. In addition to the annual requests for inclusion, the district is reviewed every eight years at which time land may be added or removed from the district. The last eight-year review was conducted in 2003-2004 at which

<sup>12</sup> Certain records gathered by the USDA may not be made public for reason of maintaining privacy for operators filing the reports.



## Town & Village of Coxsackie Community Plan

time three separate districts in Greene County were consolidated into one. The next eight-year review will begin in 2011. During this review, the County will notify all property owners in the district and ask them whether or not they would like their property to remain in the Agricultural District. The County will also hold a public information session to provide other landowners with an opportunity to place their land in the district.

Thirty-one parcels representing more than 2,400 acres in the Town of Coxsackie (including the Village) are assessed as agricultural, according to 2005 tax assessment records. This represents 10.7% of the total acreage in the Town and 1.0% of the total assessed value. Nearly one-half of the Town's acreage is comprised of agricultural properties and vacant land (10.7 and 37.0% respectively). Not unexpectedly, these land uses contribute to only a small percentage of the Town's tax base (7.6% total). These open spaces also help define the Town's rural character and quality of life. The challenge of the comprehensive planning process will be to determine the most appropriate use of these open spaces – which of them should be developed to strengthen Coxsackie's tax base and which should be protected to preserve its rural quality.

In the Village agricultural lands account for 5.9% of land. Approximately 40% of the Village's acreage is comprised of agricultural properties and vacant land (5.9% and 33.8% respectively). Not surprisingly, these land uses contribute to only a small percentage of the Village's tax base (2.3%).

In the Town outside of the Village Agricultural lands comprise (11.0%). Over one-half of the Town's acreage is comprised of agricultural properties and vacant land (10.9% and 37.2% respectively). Not surprisingly, these land uses contribute to a relatively small percentage of the Town's tax base (10.1% total).

### **According to the tax base analysis:**

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# Town & Village of Cossackie Community Plan

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## Land use classification affecting agriculture

*Rural Residential/Agriculture District.* The purpose of this district is to preserve prime agricultural land for that use, discourage development on unsuitable land (e.g. steep slope areas, shallow soils, etc.); to serve as a buffer between more intensive development and more sensitive environmental uplands; to protect and preserve aquifers and runoff areas that feed into reservoirs or other water sources used as water supplies and to encourage single family development. Uses permitted as of right include agricultural uses, sing family homes, mobile homes, home occupations and parks. Several notable uses are permitted with a special use permit including golf courses, resorts, health spas and campgrounds. Most of the town east of I-87 is zoned rural residential/agriculture. The minimum lot size in the district is two acres.

*Rural-Residential/Agriculture (R-1).* This district focuses on rural and recreational land uses including low density, single family residences and agriculture, golf courses, commercial and public recreational facilities and planned residential areas. Special permit uses of note include mining and mobile home courts. The minimum lot size for this district is one acre. This are of the Village zoned R-1 is north of Van Dyke Street on the northern border of the Village.