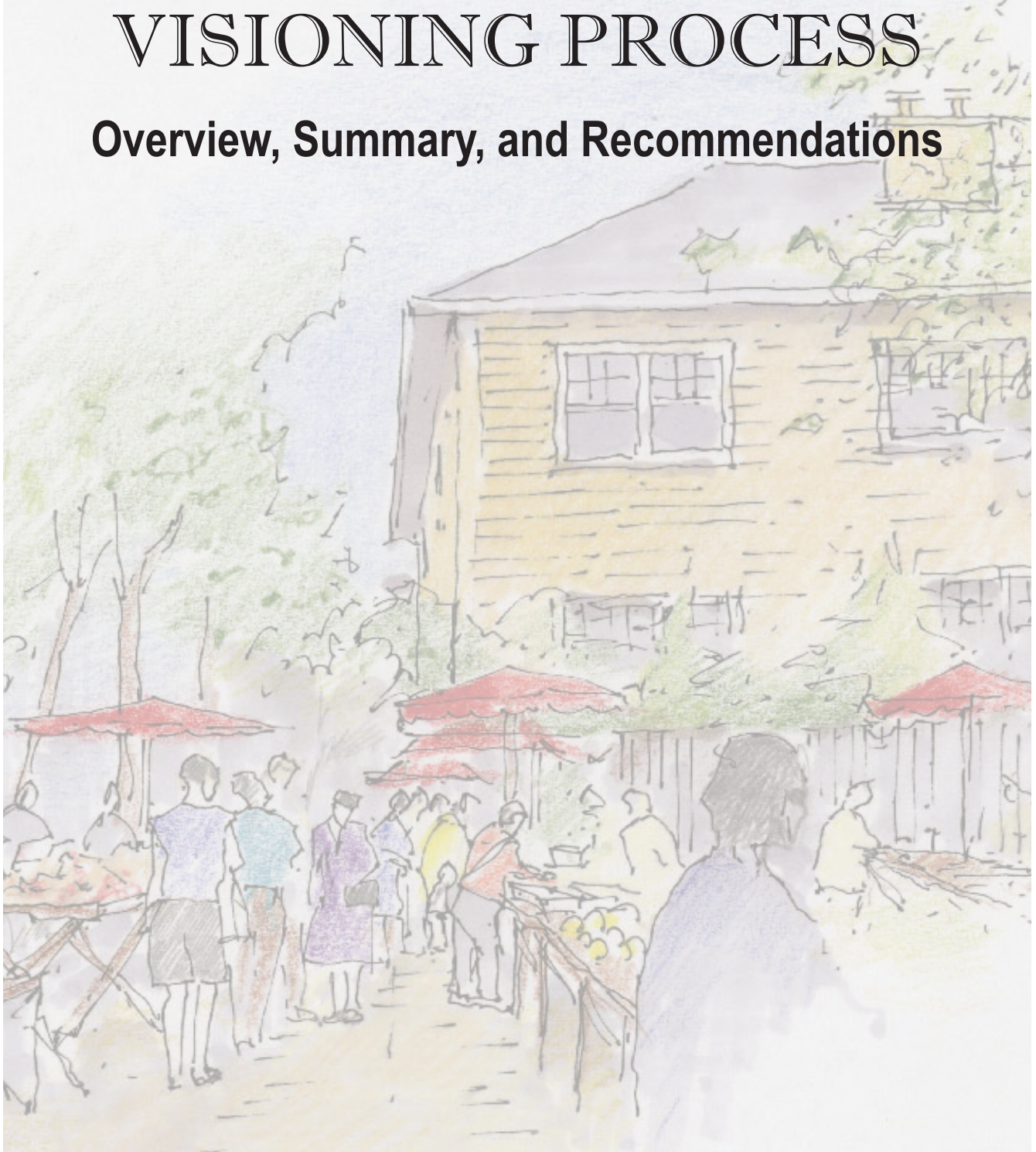


FARMINGDALE VISIONING PROCESS

Overview, Summary, and Recommendations



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VISIONING PROCESS

OVERVIEW

The Village of Farmingdale and Vision Long Island invited residents, business owners and other stakeholders to help shape the future of their community. The effort, Farmingdale's Future, is a public visioning to fuel Main Street improvements and to shape the hamlet's Master Plan, which will guide development over the next 30 years.

At the opening event, residents came to offer their hopes and horrors for the future of their community. They then prioritized these, and indicated their favorite and least favorite areas in Farmingdale. The most important issue appeared to be dealing with the Secatogue housing complex while ensuring that residents are not displaced.

A full day work session, including walking tours, and opportunities for community stakeholders to create their own visions for the region occurred on February 11th.

VISION's design team, headed up by ADLIII Architecture, took these community designs and bring them together into cohesive visions for Farmingdale. These visions were brought back to the community for their review on February 15th.

Working through the recent blizzard, the Vision Long Island design team took the designs created by the community together with the results of the other visioning exercises and assembled them into a collective vision for the Village of Farmingdale.

This vision was presented for community review on the evening of February 15th, at the Weldon E. Howitt Middle School. Results from a feedback survey administered at the event indicated a very positive reaction. This vision will help guide both short term Main St. improvements and the updates to the Village's long term Master Plan.

The visioning process identified missing elements transforming the Farmingdale area into a more attractive, functional, safe and enjoyable place to work, shop, be entertained and live. Planned properly, the area will function as a center of public activity, hosting new public space, businesses, services and entertainment and providing better linkages, sidewalks, parks and streetscapes.

By providing higher quality opportunities for interaction, the changes will bring more people to the area. Each segment of the community seeks a street and public area that creates a sense of village life.

The Visioning process was the first step in a six step process that involves a building moratorium, Master Plan update, potential code changes, project development and ongoing accountability and feedback with citizens and business owners.

ASSUMPTIONS

In order for address the feasibility of the concepts and designs generated we need to first identify a number of demographic, economic and infrastructure data. Through the course of the Visioning process the following factors and trends were analyzed: Population, Employment, Retail and Economic Analysis, Traffic and Transportation, Land Use and Infrastructure. Some notable data is as follows:

POPULATION

Population (year 2000): 8,399. Estimated population in July 2005: 8,668 (+3.2% change)
 Population change in the 1990s: +109 (+1.3%)

The 2005 population estimate for Farmingdale Village, New York is 8,668.			
	2005	2000	1990
Population	8,668	8,399	8,022

Population Estimates for Farmingdale Village	
JULY 1994	8,351
JULY 1995	8,365
JULY 1996	8,364
JULY 1997	8,357
JULY 1998	8,361
JULY 1999	8,380
JULY 2000	8,399
JULY 2001	8,412
JULY 2002	8,424
JULY 2003	8,492
JULY 2004	8,665
JULY 2005	8,668

Population trends indicate an increase and following this trend we can assume that the population of Farmingdale will continue to increase.

Races in Farmingdale:

- White Non-Hispanic (80.8%)
- Hispanic (12.6%)
- Other race (5.1%)
- Two or more races (2.4%)
- Asian Indian (1.7%)
- Black (1.6%)
- Chinese (1.0%)

(Total can be greater than 100% because Hispanics could be counted in other races) Ancestries: Italian (34.3%), Irish (24.6%), German (17.0%), Polish (5.7%), English (3.0%), United States (2.6%).

For population 25 years and over in Farmingdale

- High school or higher: 84.7%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 29.0%
- Graduate or professional degree: 11.3%
- Unemployed: 3.7%
- Mean travel time to work: 30.3 minutes

For population 15 years and over in Farmingdale village

- Never married: 30.0%
- Now married: 53.3%
- Separated: 1.9%
- Widowed: 6.8%
- Divorced: 8.0%

17.4% Foreign born (7.9% Latin America, 4.9% Europe, 3.9% Asia).

Median resident age: 37.9 years

Median household income: \$58,411 (year 2000)






Median house value: \$212,000 (year 2000)

Daytime population change due to commuting: +1,271 (+15.1%)

Workers who live and work in the Village: 647 (15.0%)

INCOME

FARMINGDALE CENSUS INFORMATION

Median Household Income: \$58,411 State Average: \$43,393	Low  High
Median Family Income: \$68,235 State Average: \$51,691	Low  High
Per-Capita Income: \$27,492 State Average: \$23,389	Low  High
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units: \$212,000 State Average: \$148,700	Low  High
Median Price Asked for Housing Units: \$162,500 State Average: \$94,700	Low  High

HOUSING	Farmingdale, NY 11735	United States
Apartment Rent	\$1,280	\$653
Property Tax Rate	\$25.09	\$0.00
Median Home Age	46.5	27.2
Median Home Cost	\$484,800	\$208,500
Home Appreciation	15.89%	13.62%
Homes Owned	78.38%	64.07%
Homes Rented	20.45%	21.45%
Housing Vacant	1.17%	14.48%

ECONOMY	Farmingdale, NY 11735	United States
Unemployment Rate	4.30%	5.00%
Recent Job Growth	1.18%	1.30%
Future Job Growth	2.90%	9.06%
Sales Taxes	8.75%	6.00%
Income Taxes	7.13%	5.02%
Household Income	\$71,727	\$44,684
Income per Cap.	\$28,683	\$24,020

PEOPLE	Farmingdale, NY 11735	United States
Population	32,213	293,655,400
Pop. Density	2950.3	80
Pop. Change	0.40%	5.88%
Median Age	37.8	37.6
Household Size	2.9	2.58

RACE		
White	88.97%	77.53%
Black	2.97%	12.35%
Asian	3.21%	3.58%
American Indian	0.30%	0.89%
Other	4.55%	5.65%
Hispanic	10.13%	12.73%
FAMILY		
Married, w/children	30.41%	27.90%
Married, no children	32.31%	31.04%
Single, w/children	4.45%	9.43%
Single, no children	32.05%	30.05%
Divorced	6.18%	7.64%
Separated	4.51%	2.82%
Widowed	6.91%	7.42%
Now Married	56.39%	57.73%
Never Married	26.01%	24.39%

INFRASTRUCTURE

Preliminary investigations indicate that much of the macro utility infrastructure that is needed to support the modest redevelopment of Village of Farmingdale is currently available and adaptable. In certain areas additional investigation of the utility systems will be conducted in order to identify where investment will be required and where it will be prudent to modify the plan to avoid conflicts with existing infrastructure. The opportunity also exists to integrate project-related infrastructure improvements with those currently being planned by the Village.

TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

A variety of public investments in infrastructure are underway or anticipated in the near future. A portion of such investment can and should be redirected as a result of potential redevelopment. Review of available federal, state and local funding programs will commence during the planning period. The Village should seek any and all available public funding sources to support and offset needed utility and roadway improvements for downtown improvements.

MARKET ANALYSIS, ENVIRONMENTAL, TRAFFIC, FISCAL IMPACT AND FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Detailed market studies and traffic impact analysis were not commissioned during the Visioning process. A comprehensive study of the local and regional housing market, for example, will need to be performed in order to establish accurate assumptions about market demand, attainable price points and anticipated market absorption rates. Other impacts studies can be attained as part of the SEQRA process through the development process.

LAND USE TRENDS

Building trends include 21 Building permits were issued in 2005 and 12 to date in 2006. Residential subdivisions and the flipping of industrial and commercially zoned property continue as development pressures. The Village has put a limit on the overall FAR which has limited the expansion of the building footprint in residential areas of the Village.

GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS

Through the review of existing data, market trends local input and anecdotal evidence the following assumptions are put forward.

- 1) The Village's population will continue to increase. The present growth of thirty-something couples will be searching for additional amenities and services within the Village.
- 2) Land use changes are occurring both in the residential areas of the Village as well as the industrial and commercial districts.
- 3) Traffic increases will continue to occur making most all of the major thoroughfares level F roadways. No roadway capacity improvements will occur due to land use constraints therefore transportation enhancements need to be made in the areas of rail, bus, biking and pedestrian modes.
- 4) Infrastructure needs are being mapped out by the existing administration in the areas of roadway improvements, water service and quality as well as parking management. Additional analysis is needed in order to determine the feasibility of potential growth scenarios.
- 5) Expansion of commercial tax base is needed to support school district infrastructure as well as alleviate the property tax burden.
- 6) Diversification of retail uses and other amenities is needed in order to expand the draw of the downtown as a destination.
- 7) Community character issues persist as residents are concerned about code enforcement, parking, illegal housing, public safety and overall quality of life concerns.
- 8) Continued residential subdivisions are being put forward despite a softening residential market.
- 9) Need for focused management of the Village downtown outside formal roles of Village government. Currently no group exists to plan, market, promote and organize downtown Farmingdale.
- 10) Outside influences potentially detrimental towards health of downtown. The proliferation of big box stores on Route 110, the redevelopment of the Liberty site as a big box supermarket and the continued redevelopment of areas primarily in the Town of Babylon and Oyster Bay will have a negative effect on the Village without proper communication and planning.

GOALS

The Visioning process pointed to an overarching theme that resonated amongst the residents and business owners alike: "We Love Farmingdale"

Towards that end the goals of the Visioning process were to:

- 1) Protect and Preserve Neighborhoods
- 2) Protect and Preserve Downtown Centers

PRIORITIES

Through the various outreach efforts, public workshops and informal meetings with residents and community leaders the following eight priorities emerged:

- Main Street Revitalization
- Transportation
- Housing
- Open Space/Parks
- Community Facilities
- Street Design
- Architectural Character
- Overdevelopment

The following sections outline specific policy recommendations that the design team and subconsultants recommend to address the communities needs.

MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION

In order to improve the conditions on Main Street as part of a comprehensive downtown revitalization program the following recommendations were developed:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.Main Street management team needed (Main Street Association, focused and staffed Chamber of Commerce or a Business Improvement District.)
- 2.Better marketing of downtown business district
- 3.Retail analysis of appropriate mix is needed downtown
- 4.Study feasibility of bed and breakfast small inn as a complimentary use to the downtown
5. Analyze and access parking in fringe areas (i.e. Waldbaums lot) in the downtown.
6. Long Term expansion of commercial area onto Conklin Street west of Main Street
7. Develop transition areas with office and housing (live/work units)
8. Increased residential development within the downtown business district will improve commerce.
9. Consider improvements to the four back parking lots, and encourage merchants to improve their back entrances.
10. Consider encouraging some building owners to redevelop their one-story structures by expanding to a second story to provide affordable housing and/or office space.

OPEN SPACE/PARKS



Open space and parkland account for less than two percent of the Village's land area. Strategies to address this condition are as follows:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Engage in proactive preservation by identifying the maintenance and acquisition of open spaces as a priority of the Village
2. Landscape existing open spaces, as was done with the Main Street/Melville Road parcel. Such landscaping could be done by volunteers, in cooperation with local nurseries, and possibly as projects by some of the district's students.
3. Work with other levels of government. Nassau County has recently identified open spaces as a priority.
4. Redesign Village park to make it more pedestrian friendly and accessible for public use.

COMMUNITY/CIVIC SPACE

There was a desire to increase the amount of civic and public space in the Village as well as develop different types of activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Creation of a farmers market somewhere in the Village. NYS has a program dedicated to the start up of Farmers Markets. In addition a Long Island operator has been identified who is currently working in eight communities in Nassau and Suffolk.
2. Creation of a community facility/ community center in the Village

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Architectural character derives from the aesthetics and patterns of design. This can include pattern books, architectural review boards, and guidelines serve as tools to create architectural character.



- A pattern book, though not often thought of as a code, functions as one and almost always comes under the heading of private regulation. Usually dealing with architectural style, it also addresses how buildings relate to the public realm. Rather than setting parameters like an architectural code, a pattern book offers options usually shown as drawings. Most importantly, pattern books generally introduce historically dominant urban design patterns and the relationship between the built environment and the civic realm.

- Design Guidelines are codes with less specificity. Organizations or officials find them useful when they have leverage to cause a project's implementers to adhere to the guidelines. Where such leverage is minimal or nonexistent, the guidelines are often ignored.

- An architectural review board is a body that reviews proposed developments for their architectural congruity with surrounding developments and either renders an advisory opinion on the matter or is authorized to issue or deny a permit. Its review is based upon design criteria or standards adopted by the Village.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve visual appearance of new development and redevelopment.
2. Determine Village approach to the following design details: Building materials, doors, windows, roofs, awnings, signage, height and coloring.
3. Determine Village approach to landscaping standards and details: planting, paving, benches, wastebaskets, signs, utilities, and lighting.
4. Approaches could include a design code, design guidelines through a Architectural Review Board, an advisory Pattern Book, in house staff management, or the hiring of a Village Architect.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an ongoing challenge not just for the Village of Farmingdale but for all of Long Island. Traffic increases will continue to occur making most all of the major thoroughfares level F roadways. No roadway capacity improvements will occur due to land use constraints therefore transportation enhancements need to be made in the areas of rail, bus, biking and pedestrian modes. Towards that end the following steps can be taking to address the situation:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Work with the MTA/LIRR on the new “Transit Village” program that is in development.
2. Work with MTA LI Bus on improved bus shelters.
3. Determine the feasibility of a downtown trolley that could be used for special events i.e. US Open.
4. Consider a parking garage as a long term parking solution in one of the village lots (ideally in the southeast)

STREET DESIGN

Due to the increased amount of pedestrian traffic there was a desire to improve the walking conditions with the following priorities:

1. Identify pedestrian safety “hot spots” where traffic calming solutions could be applied.
2. Adopt street design guidelines to make areas more pedestrian friendly as a part of roadway redevelopment and maintenance.
3. Work with community organizations to improve pedestrian safety through public education campaigns (case example: Coalition for a Safer Manhasset)
4. Work with NYS DOT in the long term to develop a true boulevard style reconstruction of Route 109.

HOUSING

The following are a series of old and new concepts for the potential increase and guidance of residential development in the Village:

RECOMMENDATIONS

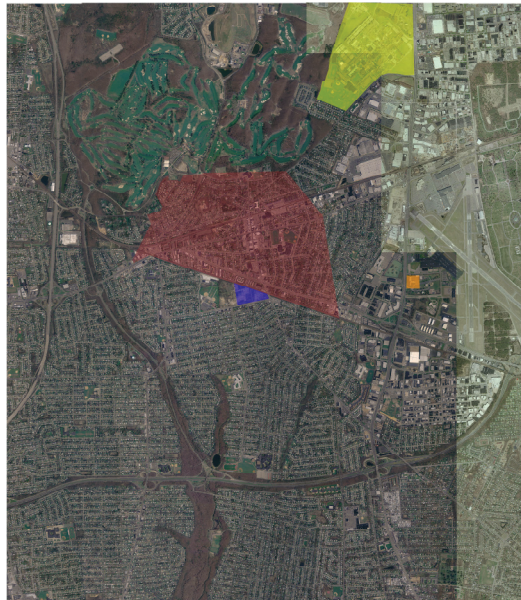
1. Passage of inclusionary zoning ordinance mandating 20% of all new units be set aside for affordable/workforce housing
2. Identify the feasibility of an owner occupied accessory apartment ordinance.
3. Consider adopting a zoning change that would allow for accessory apartments for seniors, where the seniors' immediate families could own and live in the houses.
4. Make any new affordable housing development preference to Farmingdale residents.
5. Identify strategies to preserve existing affordable and low income housing stock.
6. Use creative building design and architectural guidelines to create a mix of housing options and styles.
7. Incorporate Green Building Standards (i.e. Energy Star) into new residential development.
8. When planning senior housing, look to create housing that meets seniors' needs in terms of affordability, services, and maximizing the role of seniors in the community.
9. Consider tapping the existing multi-unit complexes, both senior and others, to see if the Village can provide a tax benefit to the complex in exchange for an agreed upon number of apartments being designated as affordable.
10. Continue to support the efforts of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society to identify and bestow recognition on historically significant homes.

OVER-REDEVELOPMENT

A wide range of definitions include the depletion of open spaces and parkland, the congestion of housing developments and the traffic created by them. High density and minimal space characterize urban environments but the difference between density and overdevelopment are the services provided to handle the explosion of people and activity. Indeed, the nature of the overdevelopment charge is generally that some new building is in the wrong place. The concern presented is related to development outside the Village borders that will have potential negative consequences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Analyze the impact of development outside Farmingdale. Work with other municipalities, and ensure input on projects that might directly affect the Village (such as the Liberty and the Fairchild properties).
2. Revise codes and regulations to protect against maximum build out of residential areas.
3. Enforce existing zoning regulations more strictly. There should be strong and ongoing administrative procedures to identify and if necessary prosecute zoning improprieties.
4. Consider creation of Neighborhood Conservation District.



SPECIFIC AREA VISIONS



A village center is the core of a community, fulfilling most ordinary human needs, including those of transportation. A good one achieves a satisfactory experience for those both going to it and those going through it. Since a village becomes more livable as it becomes more walkable, a village center is typically a compact neighborhood that is mixed use and mixed income, and is defined by a walking distance of (on average about) five minutes or about a quarter of a mile from center to edge. Promoting mixed use and higher density infill at existing shopping

centers, as well as encouraging walking and bicycling between nearby residential areas and the community core, can help a village center become a more vital place.

The Village of Farmingdale currently contains a mix of uses such that under ideal conditions, the daily needs of the residents are met within the area. In order to accomplish this, a balanced set of activities such as shopping, work, recreation and dwelling are provided. This includes a variety of business types, from retail to professional offices, as well as outbuildings for business incubation. Also, housing types that provide for a variety of incomes is important to the economic and social vitality of the community. Housing types include backyard apartments (i.e. apartments above detached garages), housing above stores, and small apartment buildings, as well as single-family housing. Due to an efficient street grid connectivity is a priority between housing and the core of the village center. This allows residents easy access to the center.

The Village should be proactive in making any and all zoning changes which would materially assist these transformations, additions and renovations. Suspending dedicated parking requirements; adopting codes (such as New Jersey's) which do not penalize the renovation of older, nonconforming structures; changing suburban-level standards for lot coverage and FAR; these and similar sorts of things add up to alter for the better the climate for incrementally re-growing the downtown.

Although there were two alternatives suggested during the visioning process, one that suggests commercial/retail/residential use and another that suggests heavy office concentration; our recommendation would concentrate on the former, which currently seems a more market-viable proposal. However, a detailed economic study should be provided for the whole area in order to cater to the market demands and avoid oversaturation..

Concepts from the Visioning process are as follows:



This is a proposal for one portion of Main Street. It features three mixed-use buildings. The corner building is two stories and half-timber inspired. It features two separate spaces for small businesses, each with beautiful display windows to draw in passers-by. Above the stores is space for either apartments or offices, accessible through the central red door. This building anchors the corner of the block.

The second structure is a smaller two-story pitched-roof wood frame with business and living space. Like the larger building, this retail space is fronted by large display windows. The second story space is accessed through a side entrance. The third building is a gambrel-roofed wood frame with window-fronted retail and second story space for living or additional businesses.

The sidewalk is paved with either brick or painted concrete and features classic double fixture street-lamps. Cars are accommodated with parallel parking.



This is a multi-unit residential building. More than just a plain brick, flat-roofed apartment building, this structure features a pitched roof and its windows face the street. Indeed, the entire building is built to the sidewalk allowing for a pedestrian-friendly experience. To augment the building-street connection, the first floor has a covered porch for lounging or visiting. Small architectural details like carved roof brackets add visual interest to the building.



Although Farmingdale has a vibrant Main Street, this elevation improves upon the existing design. With the addition of two or three floors, the street gains architectural presence and interest. The flat roofs, pitched roofs and cornices mingle together to create an eclectic mix of building types and styles. All of the buildings have ground floor retail with inviting display windows. The suggested businesses include a dry cleaners, an art gallery, a sandwich shop, a hair salon and a pub & ale house, though the infrastructure can allow for any type of business.

Above the ground floors are one or two extra stories for office space or apartments (if zoned accordingly). Lining the street are classic double fixture streetlamps with decorative flowerpots. In the middle of the block is access to parking lots behind the stores with additional parking along the street. The end of the elevation is anchored by an asymmetrical, pitched roof two-bay firehouse.



Although it is a **7-11** inside, the outside conforms to a more exacting main street design standard; this is no single story shack surrounded by a large parking lot. The building is half-timber inspired two-story structure that anchors the corner with an architectural presence; this is a welcome alternative to the hostile space of a parking lot. A similar 7-11 exists in Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood (pictured below). Main Street features a substantial brick crosswalk with a small pedestrian island beyond the right turn lane. The road adjacent to Main

has a beautiful tree-lined median designed to calm traffic and give pedestrians a place to stop while crossing the four lanes.

The new Route 109 will be more walkable and will increase the transportation options of those who live near or pass through the corridor. The increase in walkability will be achieved by re-shaping the design of the road to match a more village like context and by designing the road itself to function as a transportation facility serving more than just one mode of transportation.



Like the 7-11, a regular **Walgreens** exists on the inside while the outside suggests a more refined architectural aesthetic. The structure is built to the corner and affords a strong presence, thanks to its two floors and an entrance tower that extends beyond the roofline. The long side of the building along the sidewalk has windows with colonial grill patterns (rather than a blank wall) and is divided into three parts by stonework, awning variations and a bay window.



To augment the intersection of Conklin and Main Streets' appearance, laid brick crosswalks have been added. Opposite The Library Café, a two-story rendering of Main St. is featured.

IMPLEMENTATION

1) PASSAGE OF A BUILDING MORATORIUM

A building moratorium is a suspension of home construction or development activity in general enacted by a municipality to impede overdevelopment. Often used to protect an area's natural resources, a building moratorium can be used by government officials to pressure a reform of zoning ordinances. This tool gives local officials time to catch up or change policies in times of heavy development pressure, future permits are evaluated with clear criteria

2) SET UP ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

Architectural character derives from the aesthetics and patterns of design. This can include pattern books, architectural review boards, and guidelines serve as tools to create architectural character. In addition a SmartCode is a tool that can be used to guide design.

- A pattern book, though not often thought of as a code, functions as one and almost always comes under the heading of private regulation. Usually dealing with architectural style, it also addresses how buildings relate to the public realm. Rather than setting parameters like an architectural code, a pattern book offers options usually shown as drawings. Most importantly, pattern books generally introduce historically dominant urban design patterns and the relationship between the built environment and the civic realm.

- Design Guidelines are codes with less specificity. Organizations or officials find them useful when they have leverage to cause a project's implementers to adhere to the guidelines. Where such leverage is minimal or nonexistent, the guidelines are often ignored.

- An architectural review board is a body that reviews proposed developments for their architectural congruity with surrounding developments and either renders an advisory opinion on the matter or is authorized to issue or deny a permit. Its review is based upon design criteria or standards adopted by the Village.

A SmartCode provides design criteria for streets, blocks, open spaces and buildings based on their geographic location from rural preserve to urban core. Municipalities can now adopt the SmartCode as a replacement for the aging zoning ordinances. In the SmartCode, regulations that control street design, zoning, preserved and reserved open space, and building design are all allowed to work as an integrated system.

3) WORK WITH BUSINESS OWNERS ON DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

A management group such as a Main Street Association or a Business Improvement District can be a vehicle for downtown revitalization and redevelopment.

MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION

The collaboration between community and economic development yields techniques that preserve and enhance existing towns. The overlapping goals of a Main Street Program and Smart Growth serve to revitalize small town downtowns. An example of a successful Main Street Association would be the town of Oyster Bay and the Oyster Bay Main Street Association, for joint efforts to protect the historic downtown area and ensure its economic viability.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

A business improvement district (BID) (also known as a special improvement district, a business improvement area, or a business revitalization zone) is a public/private sector partnership in which property and business owners of a defined area elect to make a collective contribution to the maintenance, development and marketing/promotion of their commercial district. It is, in some ways, similar to a residential community association, but an appropriate analogy would be that of a suburban shopping mall, from which the idea for BIDs is, itself, modelled. Malls are generally single properties managed by one entity that rents out retail spaces to various tenants. Tenants pay a common maintenance fee to pay for services that enhance the appearance of the mall's common areas and provide cooperative advertising for the mall and its various stores. BIDs operate in much the same way. BIDs are grassroots organizations, that are driven by community support and require legislative authorization by the municipality in which it resides, in order to be established. BIDs typically provide services such as street and sidewalk maintenance, public safety officers, park and open space maintenance, marketing, capital improvements, and various development projects. The services provided by BIDs are a supplement to the services already provided by the municipality.

4) PASSAGE OF STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

5) DEVELOP FARMERS MARKET AND OTHER CIVIC AND OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

6) PASSAGE OF INCLUSIONARY ZONING ORDINANCE

Inclusionary zoning, which would allow a developer to increase the density -- the maximum number of units that can be built on a parcel -- in return for setting aside a percentage of the units at prices that would be within reach of families whose income is below the region's median.

7) APPLY FOR GRANTS TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VISION

Federal, State, County, Town and private funding sources are in place to implement various pieces of the Visioning process. Prioritization of demonstration projects, capital improvements and ongoing planning needs to be put in place to keep the process moving forward.

CONCLUSIONS

In a snapshot the results of this Visioning process if implemented will improve the Village of Farmingdale in the following areas:

- 1) Assist in the re-greening of Village
- 2) Provide 200-500 housing units for Farmingdale residents
- 3) Provide 10,000-20,000 Square foot of commercial tax base
- 4) Assist in the reduction of pedestrian accidents and overall vehicular and pedestrian safety
- 5) Create an improvement of architectural character
- 6) Allow citizen and municipal control of development patterns
- 7) Creation of at least one additional civic space.
- 8) Create awareness of and planning for outside development impacts
- 9) Create additional public and private sector investment

ADDENDUM

Changing Conditions and New Opportunities

Following the visioning process of the previous winter, the Village of Farmingdale has seen several occurrences in the downtown that necessitate bringing the Visioning initiatives up to date.



As of August 2007, a total of 18 stores have been vacated. Presently, there is one store in litigation and it is expected to be evicted soon. These local businesses offered a variety of convenience services such as a bakery, car dealership, several delicatessens, retail shops, tax services, landscaping and other commercial entities. The loss of the “Downtown,” a prominent music venue, and other businesses has hindered the downtown’s potential to attract consumers outside of the trade area. The loss of niche retail such as the skate shop, sugar control center and Tsang Patisserie, exhibit the absence of particular markets in the surrounding area. Other adjacent shopping centers are seeing a 15% increase in vacancies as well.

Despite these setbacks, one new business has recently opened in the downtown. The restaurant, Viva Juan’s, is successfully serving the diverse market that visits the downtown but there is still ample opportunity for further small business development. Additionally, three stores have been completely renovated (455-459 Main Street, 340 Main Street, and 310 Main Street) and are on the market.



Despite these losses, there is an opportunity for growth and change. In conjunction with a marketing and incentive strategy, these vacancies have the potential to fill the niches of the downtown business district with housing and appropriate economic development. The proximity to SUNY Farmingdale and the lack of affordable Next Generation housing can also serve as a catalyst for the downtown. Businesses that are thriving include those that caterer to the demographics, such as the Library Café, the Nutty Irishman, the Java Room, and Ben and Jerry’s ice cream shop.

Businesses that are thriving include those that caterer to the demographics, such as the Library Café, the Nutty Irishman, the Java Room, and Ben and Jerry’s ice cream shop.



The need for additional workforce housing exists in Farmingdale as well as the rest of Long Island. Only 17% of the housing units on Long Island are rentals, a much lower percentage than other areas of the country or other neighboring counties—Westchester is 38%, Rockland County is 26%, Bergen County, NJ is 32%.

Like the rest of Long Island’s housing market, high rents are increasingly more common. One-third of rental units cost \$1,500 per month or more in 2005, up from only 11% five years prior. The Office of the State Comptroller describes Nassau County as having the second-highest rents in the State (behind Westchester County), and the 14th highest in the U.S.



The presence of a Long Island Rail Road Station also presents an attractive market for transit oriented development. Transit Oriented Development is a fast growing trend in creating vibrant, livable communities. Also known as Transit Oriented Design, or TOD, it is the creation of compact, walkable communities that are centered on transit systems. This makes it possible to live a higher quality life without complete dependence on a car for mobility and survival. This would include additional housing and retail to service residents and visitors.

Transit oriented development (TOD) has been used to revitalize declining downtown business districts and communities with underutilized transit resources. Since they are usually a new development type for communities and are intentionally denser than surrounding suburban areas, they generally require rezoning, substantial community involvement, and a longer period for the public process to unfold. It is not unusual for the development period to run three to seven years, depending on the project. Given the capital requirements, TODs are almost inevitably public/ private ventures, often involving joint development agreements between the developer and the local jurisdiction and/or the transit agency.



According to an article in the July/August 2007 edition of New Urban News entitled, “Capital Region Rail Stations Are Fast Becoming Mixed-Use Hubs,” Washington and its suburbs are seeing increasing numbers of transit oriented developments (TODs). Due to congested highways, all-adult households, the attractions of the downtown urban lifestyle, and other factors, developers are paying more attention to projects that address issues of affordable housing and transportation.



A tally of “joint development” projects, — those in which private developers build on land owned by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro) — reveals the strong demand for transit-oriented development in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. Developers have proposed doubling the current amount of housing at or near Metro stations with 5, 809 new units. In addition, they are also proposing to build 3.9 million square feet of offices and nearly 2 million square feet of retail on land owned by Metro. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments reports that in 2005, the last year for which figures are available, a fourth of the region’s commercial construction took place within a half-mile of Metro or other commuter rail stations.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and NJ TRANSIT spearhead a multi-agency Smart Growth partnership known as the Transit Village Initiative. This culmination of efforts redeveloped and revitalized communities around transit facilities to make them appealing places for people to live, work and play, and reduce dependence on the automobile. The Rahway Transit Village is a strong successful example of a declining downtown community undergoing revitalization due to a village hub created from a recently renovated train station. The trains offer easy access to New York City, Newark International Airport, Trenton, Philadelphia and the Jersey Shore. The combination of ample bus service and a 24-hour taxi yields excellent transportation options for residents. Additionally, the plaza in front of the station serves as a gathering place for the community, with farmers' and crafts markets occurring there.

New Jersey's "transit villages" have to fulfill certain criteria in order to claim that title. The town must be in proximity to transit, exhibit a willingness to grow in jobs and housing, have the appropriate zoning for TOD, offer a variety of housing options, and be bicycle and pedestrian oriented. The transit station itself should act as a community center with amenities and a sense of place in order to be a successful vehicle for revitalization. While these criteria are fixed, they are flexible enough to work with the varying locations, sizes, and markets.



Many archetypical suburbs have enhanced their identity by capitalizing on the place-making attributes provided by a transit village to create a new town center. Their defined boundaries as the village center and additional density create the opportunity to introduce needed new product types—like housing for seniors, upscale urban lofts, or workforce housing—that otherwise would not be acceptable in established single-family, detached dwelling, suburban communities. The economic benefits are also attractive because transit villages become top-quality locations.

Across various markets and projects, property values within a short walk of a transit platform are dependably 10 to 20 percent higher than similar projects a mile from a station. And the cost of a transit investment can be expected to generate three to four times that amount in private investment and spin-off economic development in the area. Consumers are drawn to TODs for the affordable and attractive uniqueness of small, local businesses. When carefully designed, these villages offer attractive, reasonably priced alternatives to a move back into a downtown environment.

Building upon transportation opportunities can serve as a successful vehicle for economic growth. Population in these areas will undoubtedly increase as developers take advantage of transit-oriented development and by attracting employers who wish to capitalize on greater access to the region's labor pool. Transit oriented development (TOD) within the community could also lead to an enhanced tax base as property values increase and retail sales grow. New housing in this corridor would provide opportunities to promote new businesses by using the commuter rail as a catalyst for mixed use development.

A specific example of this profitable partnership of transit and the downtown is in Chicago, Illinois. Metra, the commuter rail line for Chicago's suburbs, is working with suburban developers to build mixed-use, housing, and retail development around its stations in several suburban communities. Private and

public entities are investing along the transit corridor. Many communities along the lines are already planning redevelopments, and in Glenwood, construction is underway on Nugent Square, a four-story, mixed-use development adjacent to the proposed station in that community.



A recent Transit Oriented Development forum on Long Island discussed TOD's potential to provide much needed affordable housing, support downtown business, and decrease the regional dependency on the automobile. The gathering of Long Island leaders at Hofstra's Axinn Library on September 20th included elected officials, civic and business leaders, not-for profits, environmental groups and many others. Facing swelling sprawl, escalating taxes and increasing hours spent stuck in traffic (second only to Los Angeles), leaders in the region have begun to recognize transit centers as an underutilized asset. Transit oriented development (TOD) is the potential solution for what many Long Islanders see as a critical issue in the region.



Downtown Farmingdale has the opportunity to seize upon the potential of TOD and to be a leader for other communities on Long Island to look to as a successful model. It can provide

200-500 housing units for Farmingdale residents and generate an improvement of architectural character with new construction. New residents in the downtown would attract the much needed 10,000-20,000 square feet of commercial tax and lead to an enhanced tax base as property values increase and retail sales grow.



The implementation of several goals will lead to overall future improvements in the downtown. As to the re-greening of the village, the North side pocket park creates a green civic space that instills public pride and stewardship. Preliminary drawings for the construction of the Ferrante Townhouses along Fulton Street simultaneously provide downtown housing and improve the architectural character of the Village. The addition of a new business to the downtown also indicates the potential for niche and leisure economic development.