

# VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND FALLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



July 2009

# VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND FALLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Prepared for:**

**The Village of Highland Falls, New York**

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## I. INTRODUCTION: THE PLANNING PROCESS

The most recent comprehensive plan for the Village of Highland Falls was developed in 1967. Since then the Village has undertaken a number of planning studies that have focused on downtown revitalization, housing and community development. In 1989, the Village completed a Master Plan review that addressed the potential development of vacant and underutilized land. In 2003, the Village developed its most recent plan for its downtown area, entitled “Historic Downtown Plan, Village of Highland Falls, NY.” Elements of the downtown plan are incorporated into this document.

In 2006, the Village of Highland Falls and the Town of Highlands began discussions of a possible joint effort in the preparation of a comprehensive plan for both communities. Although they share the same geographical base and have many similar issues, it was determined that each community should have a separate comprehensive plan, but that the process through which the plans were developed would be a joint effort. In order to achieve this, the Town and the Village each established a comprehensive plan committee, with strong representation by the Village Board of Trustees, the Town Board, the Zoning Board and both Planning Boards.

Over the course of twelve months, the committees met independently and together and discussed existing conditions, planning issues, goals, plan proposals and implementation tools. A total of 10 meetings were held. While the Town and Village identified a number of common issues and proposals, there were several items that were unique to each community, and clearly the individual comprehensive plans reflect those unique characteristics.

Common issues identified in the planning process included the opportunity to create a regional approach toward tourism, extending beyond the Town and Village, and recognizing the communities’ natural and historic assets in the Hudson Valley. Similarly, both the Town and Village plan to control strip commercial development on Route 9W and Route 218, and to further enhance the Village downtown area and the Fort Montgomery Hamlet Center. Both plans recommend the preservation of open space, the development of additional recreation facilities and the provision of access to the Hudson River. Both the Town of Highlands Comprehensive Plan and the Village of Highland Falls Comprehensive Plan call for additional consolidation of services, with the two communities working together, but maintaining their own identity.

The Comprehensive Plan for the Village is fully described in this report. The Plan is organized in a manner similar to the major topics discussed with the Comprehensive Plan Committee: starting with existing conditions and locally defined issues; then moving through the goals and objectives which provided the basis for conceptual and specific plan proposals; and, finally, proposing measures to implement the Plan.

Most of the proposals in this plan are geared to specific conditions in the Village, including those relating to potential development of approximately 250 acres of West Point land, identified herein as the “Conveyance Parcel”, and recommendations specific to the Village’s housing and downtown revitalization policies.

## II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A thorough understanding of existing conditions is a necessary component of the Comprehensive Plan process. This chapter outlines the existing conditions of land use, zoning, socioeconomic conditions, community facilities and environmental factors. The subsequent chapters of this report address concerns such as housing, open space, tourism and development along corridors. The basis for each chapter is the pattern of existing conditions, as presented below.

### Location

Highland Falls, an incorporated Village within the Town of Highlands in Orange County, New York, is located just north of the Bear Mountain Bridge and the Hamlet of Fort Montgomery. The Village of Highland Falls is bound by the Town of Highlands to the south, the United States Military Academy at West Point on its north and west, and the Hudson River to the east. Two main roads go through the Village: Route 218 that travels through its center, and Route 9W that runs north/south along its western edge.

### Existing Land Use

The Village of Highland Falls is a community that is largely built out, primarily due to highly sloped terrain in many of its remaining vacant lands.

The existing land use categories are as follows:

- Single-Family and Two-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Parks
- Industrial
- Vacant

#### *Single-Family/Two-Family Residential*

Single-family and two-family residential developments are located throughout the Village. The center of the Village features denser, smaller residential lots while the southern portion of the Village features less dense, larger residential lots. Also included in this residential category are several large estate properties along the Hudson River, some of which contain historic and architecturally significant structures.

Most of the single and two-family homes in the Village of Highland Falls are in sound condition and are located in attractive residential neighborhoods. The area directly to the west of the Village Hall contains some building deterioration; however, the Village has recently undertaken a number of improvement projects in the area, including: housing rehabilitation, code enforcement, infrastructure improvements and the construction of affordable townhouses as part of an urban renewal project.

One issue facing the existing single-family/two-family neighborhoods is commercial and multi-family use encroachment, which threatens to alter the fabric of these neighborhoods. Another issue is that the potential development of vacant and underutilized properties along the Hudson River could alter the Hudson River viewshed.

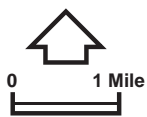
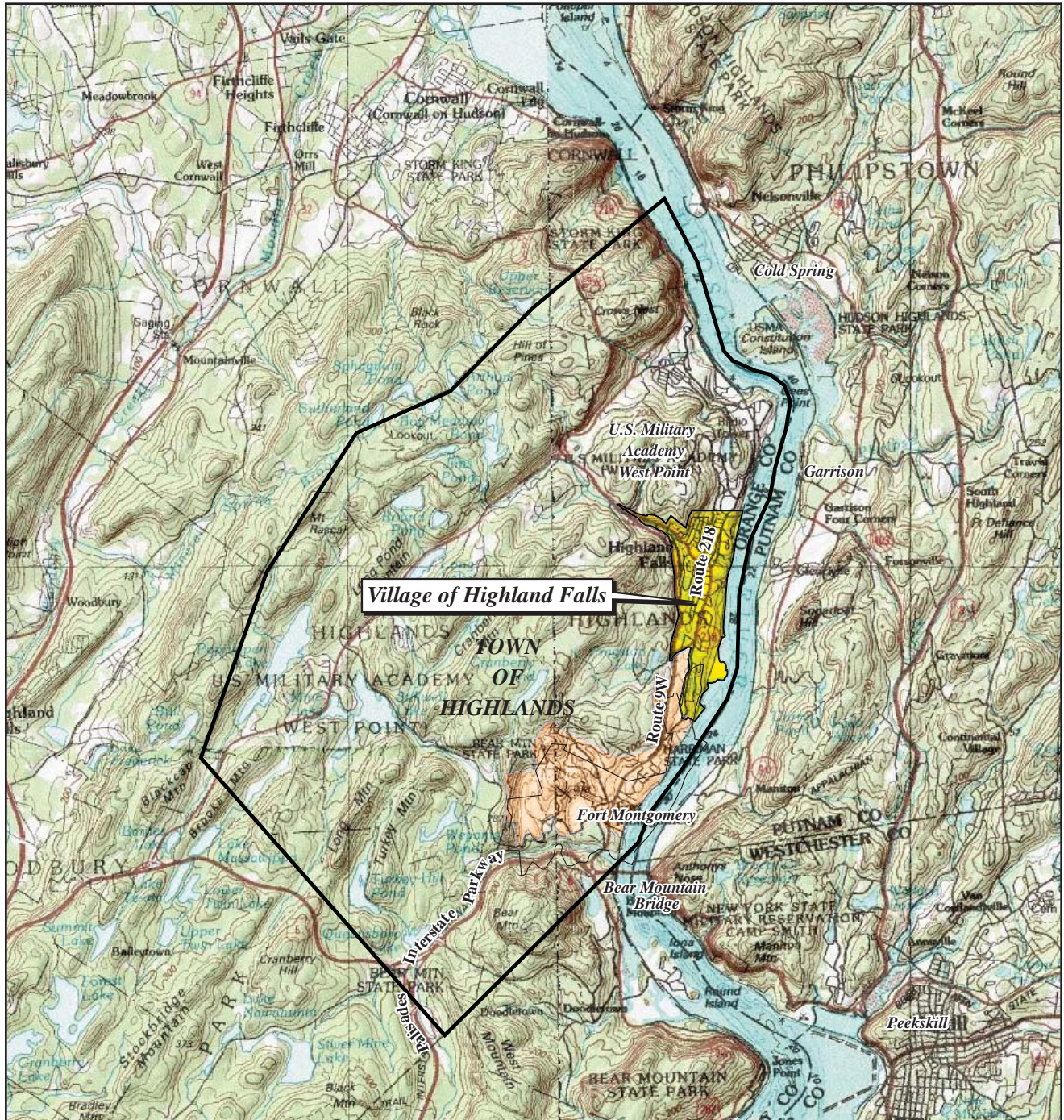


Exhibit 1  
**SITE LOCATION**  
**VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND FALLS, NEW YORK**

Base Map Source: MapCard, Version 2.0

Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning and Development Consultants

### *Multi-Family Residential*

While there is not an abundance of multi-family residential development in the Village, existing R-5 zoning allows for higher density development in or adjacent to neighborhoods that are currently predominantly single and two-family homes.

Recent multi-family developments include Winhaven Park on Route 218 just south of Peacedale Avenue, and two different townhouse developments on Villa Parkway. Other multi-family units include an affordable housing development at the intersection of Schneider Avenue and Center Street, senior housing on West Point Highway at Webb Lane, on the east side of Route 218 across from Winhaven Park and a few other locations around the Village.



*Recently constructed townhouse affordable housing project at the intersection of Schneider Avenue and Center Street*

### *Commercial*

The Village downtown area is concentrated on Main Street near Thayer Gate, and then further south in the historic center of the Village. This latter area includes retail, restaurant and other commercial uses along with the Village Hall, Town Hall, the Highland Falls Library and Village Post Office. In the center of the Village, commercial uses spread into some side streets, with a small handful of businesses also located in residential neighborhoods. Additional commercial uses are located primarily on the two main corridors, Route 9W and Route 218. Along Route 9W, there is currently a motel north of Crystal Lake Crossing, and two more motels located at the intersection of Route 9W and Crystal Lake Crossing. The majority of the commercial development along Route 218 is located within close proximity of the Village Center. There is also a supermarket, pharmacy, Mexican restaurant, funeral parlor, and other commercial uses on Route 218 south of the center of the Village.

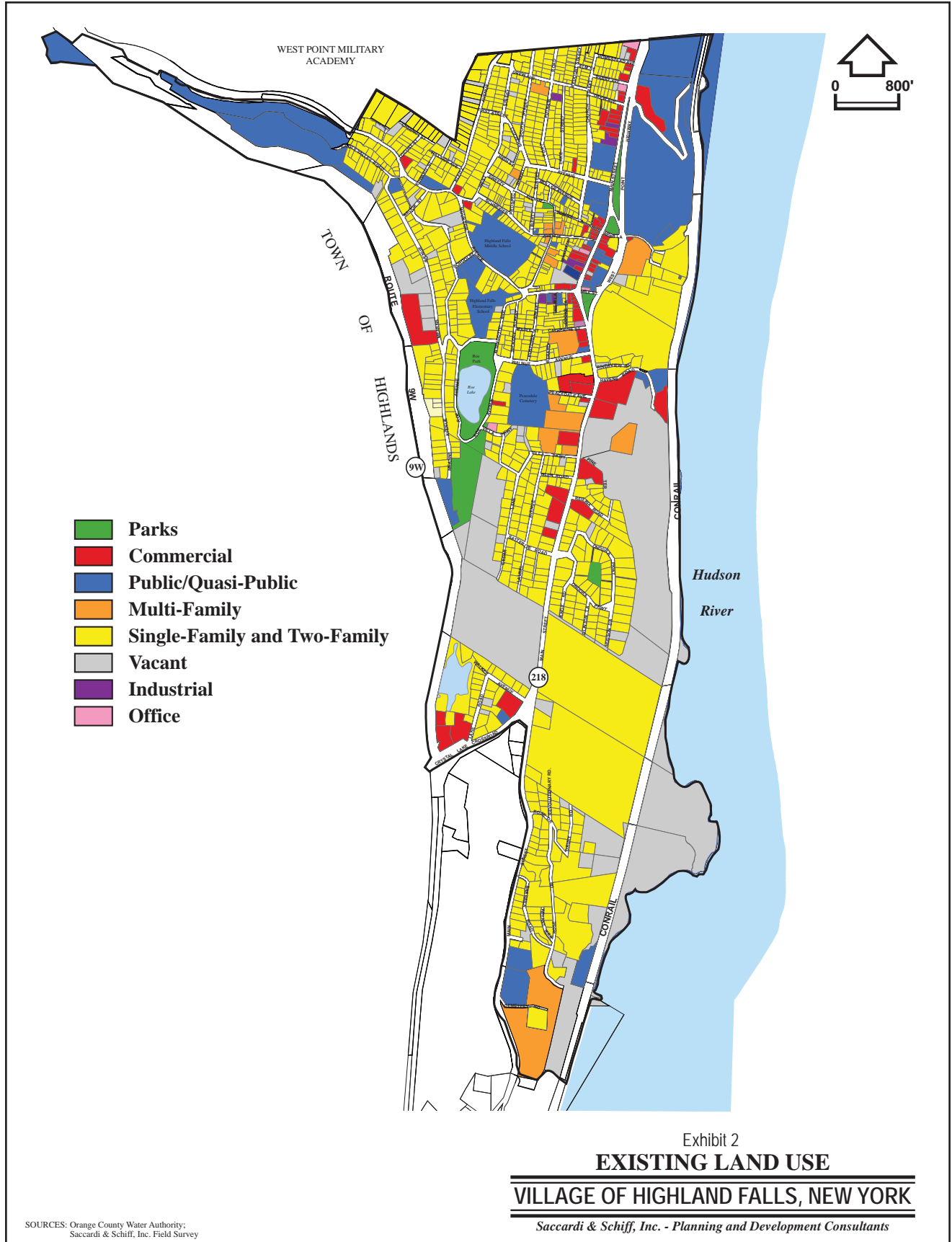
### *Public/Quasi-Public*

The Public/Quasi-Public use category consists primarily of public schools, municipal uses, and the United States Military Academy at West Point.

The Highland Falls Middle School and Elementary School are located along Mountain Avenue, west of Center Street. There are two cemeteries in the Village, one located on Peacedale Avenue and the other located on south Main Street at the very south end of the Village.

### *Parks*

The largest of the Village public parks is Roe Park, located at the west end of Walnut Street. Roe Park offers several programs and activities for use by Village and Town residents, while two small public parks are located within the center of the Village that each offer small scale passive recreational activities; Memorial Park, at the entrance to the downtown from the south, and Ladycliff Park located at the center of the downtown.





### ***Industrial and Office***

Industrial land uses includes heavy commercial and auto related businesses. This use category is found in a few locations in the center of the Village. Offices are located within downtown Highland Falls, but in some cases are included in the commercial land use category because they are located above retail. Outside the downtown, offices are mostly included as a separate, free standing land use.

### ***Vacant***

Vacant and underutilized land in the Village includes a small number of vacant parcels located in and around the center of the Village. This category also encompasses a parcel of approximately 20 acres on the west side of Route 218, just north of Crystal Lake Crossroad, two parcels south/southeast of Roe Park, and the 35+ acre parcel located on the east side of Route 218, just south of Havens Road. The full list of parcels is located in the Buildout Analysis in Appendix II.

This category would also include the 248-acre Conveyance Parcel, on the west side of Route 218 where West Point lands will be available for development and open space.

## **Existing Zoning**

The Village of Highland Falls Zoning Ordinance consists of eight zoning districts that specify permitted uses, lot and bulk controls and parking requirements. Of the eight districts, three are single family uses, one is single and two-family, two are multi-family, and two are commercial districts. Of the two commercial districts, the primary designation in the Village is the B-1, which stretches from the West Point entrance at Thayer Gate at the north end of the Village, to just south of Regina Road. In the center of the Village, the B-1 district extends into side streets, but the areas at the north and south ends of the district are largely contained to Route 218. The higher density residential districts are contained primarily within the center of the Village.

Existing land use and existing zoning are generally consistent throughout the Village. Some of the significant zoning related issues identified through the comprehensive planning process include the permitted multi-family density in the R-5 district and the extent of both R-5 and B-1 zoning district boundaries as they affect existing residential neighborhoods. See Chapter 6 of this plan for further discussion.

## **Socioeconomic Factors**

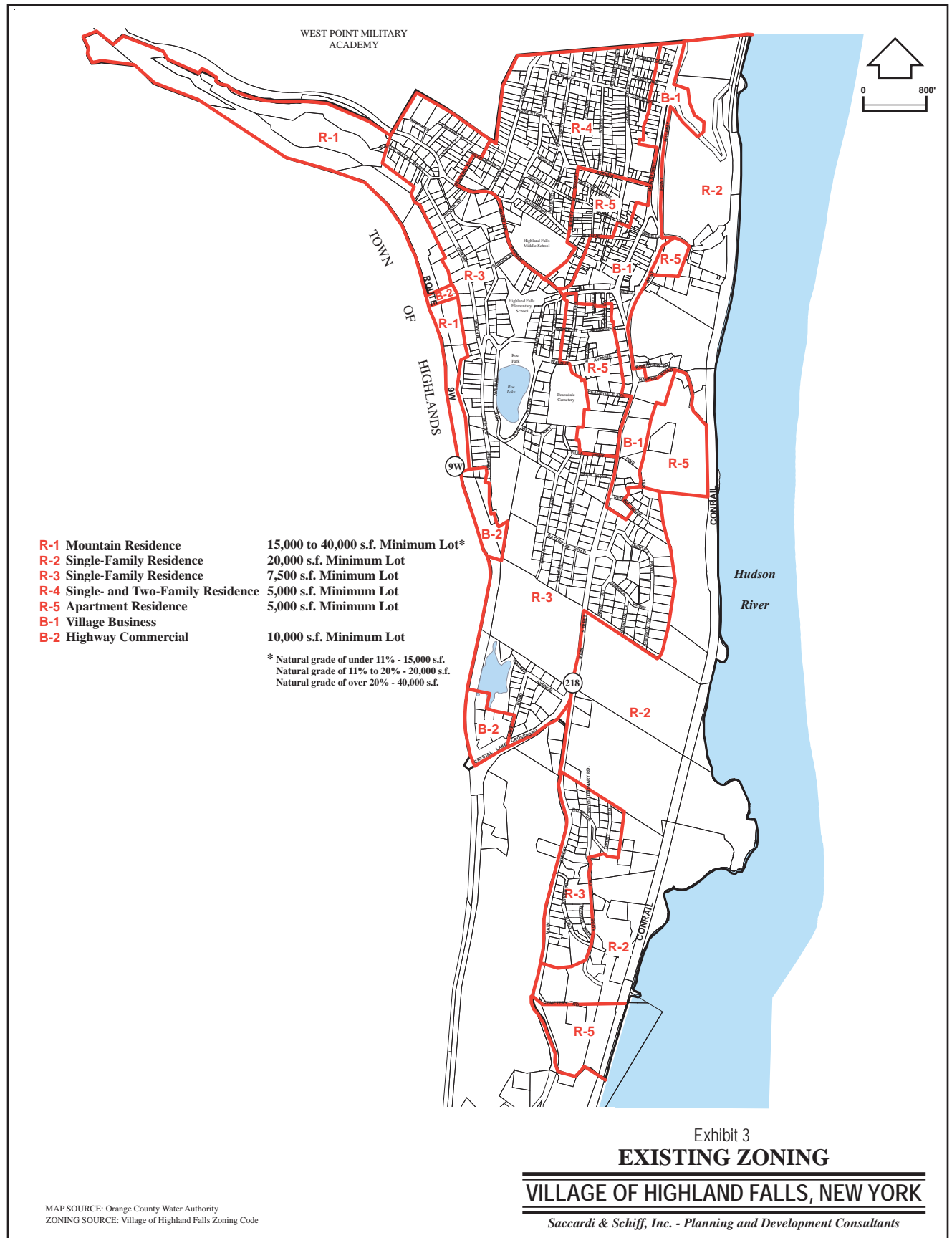
### ***Demographic Conditions<sup>1</sup>***

- **Population**

Between 1990 and 2000, the population of the Village of Highland Falls decreased about 7 percent, from 3,937 to 3,663 persons. The decreasing population has reversed itself in recent years, with the 2007 population estimated at 3,885, an increase of about 6 percent over 2000. Projections estimate that the slight increase in population will continue, and in 2012 there will be an estimated increase of about 4 percent to 4,030 residents living in the Village.

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<sup>1</sup> The Demographic Conditions for the Village of Highland Falls are derived from data provided by the United States Census Bureau and the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI).



- **Households**

The number of households decreased by approximately 3 percent in the Village, from 1,644 in 1990, to 1,593 in 2000. In 2007, it is estimated that the number of households will increase to 1,638, almost matching the 1990 tabulation. By 2012, it is expected that households in the Village will increase to 1,700.

In 1990, the average household size in the Village of Highland Falls was 2.45 persons per household. The average household size remained relatively stable in 2000, and is projected to follow this trend in 2007 and 2012.

- **Age**

The median age in the Village increased from about 30 in 1990, to approximately 40 in 2000. The median age is expected to remain stable at about 40 according to the 2007 and 2012 population projections.

Table II-1 presents the distribution of the Village population aged 55+ for approximately a 20 year span. While this population group decreased in size from 1,016 to 881 between 1990 and 2000, by 2012 population aged 55+ is expected to climb about 30 percent from 2000, to 1,143. This projected increase in population illustrates potential for greater demand of senior housing in the next five years.

**Table II-1  
Population Trends and Projections Age 55+**

Age	1990	2000	2007	2012
55-64	430	325	437	528
65-74	336	305	294	266
75-84	200	204	214	239
85+	50	67	86	110
Total	1,016	881	1,031	1,143

Source: United States Census Bureau and ESRI

The data presented in Table II-2 shows a population decline of about 33 percent in the 25-34 age group between 1990 and 2000, a further decline projected in 2007, but then a slight rebound in population by 2012.

**Table II-2  
Population Trends and Projections Ages 25-34**

Age	1990	2000	2007	2012
25-34	757	508	427	526

Source: United States Census Bureau and ESRI

Table II-3 presents the population trends in the 0-4 and 5-19 age groups. The 0-4 age group is projected to grow slowly between 2000 and 2007 with an eight percent increase, and a further six percent increase by 2012. In 2000, there were 749 Village residents aged 5-19, but that number is projected to decrease by about 100 to 644 by 2012. These two population groups indicate a drop in school aged children since 2000. However, the small increase in the 0-4 population would not be sufficient to stabilize the population of school aged children.

**Table II-3  
Population Trends and Projections School Aged  
and Pre-School Children**

Age	1990	2000	2007	2012
0-4	283	207	223	237
5-19	687	749	739	644

Source: United States Census Bureau and ESRI

- Race**

In 2000, the majority of the Village’s population was classified as white at 76.9 percent. By 2012, both the total number (2,830 to 2,816) and percentage of total population (69.9 percent) of white persons are expected to decrease.

**Table II-4  
Distribution of Population of the Village of  
Highland Falls by Race**

Race	1990	2000	2007	2012
White	3,265	2,830	2,825	2,816
Black	532	469	569	642
Asian & Pacific Islander	67	88	114	134
American Indian	5	14	17	18
Hispanic Origin	233	389	501	577

Source: United States Census Bureau and ESRI

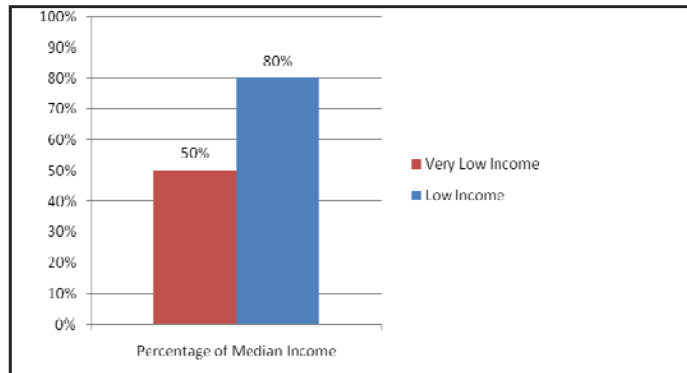
The African American population is expected to increase steadily between 2000 and 2007, with an estimated increase from 100 to 569 total persons, and by 2012 a further increase to 642 persons. Peoples of Hispanic origin and Asian and Pacific Islanders are also expected to experience population increases from 2000 to 2012. The Hispanic population is estimated to grow to 577 by 2012, an increase of over 48 percent from 2000. The Asian and Pacific Islander population is expected to increase over 52 percent from 2000 to 2012.

- Income**

Median household income has increased steadily with inflation and cost of living increases in the Village of Highland Falls from \$35,319 in 1990, to \$45,765 in 2000, to an estimated \$60,332 in 2007 and \$71,766 in 2012.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicates that for Orange County in 2007, a four person household with an income of less than \$59,000 is defined as “low income” (80 percent of median income) and households with incomes less than \$38,200 are considered “very low income” (50 percent of median income).

**Graph II-1  
Orange County Income Limits**



Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The very low income category generally falls in a range of about 300-400 persons between 1990 to 2012. The low income category generally ranges from about 600 to 900 persons between 1990 to 2012. While some of the fluctuation in the census data and population projections could be attributed to broad data ranges, it could also be related to a growing lower income population in the Village.

**Table II-5  
Distribution of the Population of the Village of  
Highland Falls by Household Income**

Household Income	1990	2000	2007	2012
< \$15,000	326	203	90	73
\$15,000-\$24,999	259	174	153	147
\$25,000-\$34,999	231	252	169	91
\$35,000-\$49,000	201	291	279	274
\$50,000-\$74,999	361	340	333	294
\$75,000-\$99,999	100	255	260	276
\$100,000-\$149,999	41	105	254	352
\$150,000-\$199,999	28 <sup>2</sup>	24	79	127
\$200,000+		10	21	69

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI

- Very Low Household Income Levels
- Low Household Income Levels
- Median Household Income

<sup>2</sup> The 1990 Census does not include an income category of \$200,000 or greater.

## Community Facilities

### *Police Department*



*The Village Hall on Main Street*

The Village of Highland Falls Police Department is located in the downtown area south of Schneider Avenue, adjacent to Village Hall. The department employs ten full time police officers, four full time communications and five part time dispatchers, and two part time civilian school crossing guards. Most recently, the number of full time officers has decreased to as low as five due to various issues, the most prevalent being salary differentials with neighboring municipalities and counties.

According to correspondence with Chief Peter Miller, the Village Police Department is currently understaffed. To accommodate

increased demand for emergency services due to population growth, more officers would need to be hired. It is estimated that an additional three full time officers would cost the Village \$162,000 annually for salary, \$2,000 annually for vehicle maintenance, and a one time fee of \$28,000 for an additional emergency services vehicle.<sup>3</sup>

### *Fire Department*

The Highland Falls Fire Department (HFFD) is an entirely volunteer force made up of 50 members. The HFFD is located on Mountain Avenue, west of Main Street. The department is equipped with two Class A Pumper Trucks (one equipped as a rescue pumper), a light rescue vehicle, a decontamination trailer, and a chief's vehicle.



*The Village Fire Department located on Mountain Avenue*

Although the ratio of firefighters to residents is 1 for every 160 persons in the Village, only about half of the 50 volunteers are qualified as interior firefighters. In addition to this, many volunteers are unavailable during the day, which further lowers the number of responders. To address this issue, the Village has an automatic aid agreement with both the Town of Highlands and the United States Military Academy at West Point to assist the HFFD in certain scenarios.

The HFFD identified a need to be included in plans for future development, especially in the downtown vicinity. Narrow streets and on-street parking hinder the ability of the fire department to adequately access buildings in many downtown areas. The fire department would also like to coordinate with the Building Inspector and Code Enforcement official in a greater capacity to ensure the awareness of potential hazards in future responses.

<sup>3</sup>Letter, Chief Peter Miller, Village of Highland Falls Police Department, October, 2006.

### *Ambulance Services*

The Town of Highlands Ambulance Corps provides service to the Village of Highland Falls. It operates out of a building on Main Street (Crystal Lake Crossing), just south of where Old State Road and Main Street merge. The Ambulance Corps has 22 members that operate two ambulances.

While the current Ambulance Corps members are adequate in serving the local population, it is expected that within three to five years population growth will lead to a need for greater staffing.

### *Schools*

The Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District is comprised of four schools: the Fort Montgomery Elementary School, the Highland Falls Elementary School, the Highland Falls Middle School and the James I. O'Neill High School. Students are enrolled in programs from Kindergarten through grade 12. The James I. O'Neill High School educates students from the communities of Highland Falls, Fort Montgomery, West Point and Garrison, New York.

Recent enrollment figures for the school district are as follows:

- Fort Montgomery Elementary School (Grades K-2) – 198 Students
- Highland Falls Elementary School (Grades Pre-K, 3 & 4) – 125 Students
- Highland Falls Middle School (Grades 5-8) – 250 Students
- James I. O'Neill High School (Grades 9-12) – 597 Students



*The Highland Falls Elementary School*

The total district enrollment is 1,170 students. Average class size in the school district is estimated at 22 students/per class. The cost per pupil to the taxpayers for the 2006-2007 school year was \$7,618 per student. The School District is not currently planning any capital improvement projects.

While school district athletic fields are used by both the Town of Highlands and the Village of Highland Falls, maintenance and upgrades to the fields are undertaken solely by the School District. A shared cost and maintenance agreement between the School District, the Village and Town is necessary.

### *Library*

The Highland Falls Library was chartered in 1896 by the New York State Department of Education. It is located on the east side of Main Street, just south of Schneider Avenue. The library serves both the Village and the Town of Highlands. The staff consists of the director and one senior clerk, which are full-time positions, five part-time clerks, and one student page.

The library currently has capacity for a small increase in local population. Due to its sufficient space for a greater amount of shelves and materials, a large population increase could be addressed by hiring additional staff and extending its hours.

### ***Recreation***

Recreation programs and activities in the Village of Highland Falls are consolidated with the Town of Highlands. Recreational activities within the Village are held at Roe Park and on school grounds. Roe Park offers amenities such as baseball fields, basketball and tennis courts, swimming facilities, and fishing. Other small parks scattered around the Village allow small scale activities.



*Roe Park, the Village's primary recreational facility.*

There is currently a need in the Village for a senior and youth recreational center. Many activities are run through school facilities, which create an increased strain on maintenance and scheduling.

### **Environmental Factors**

#### ***Steep Slopes and Water Bodies***

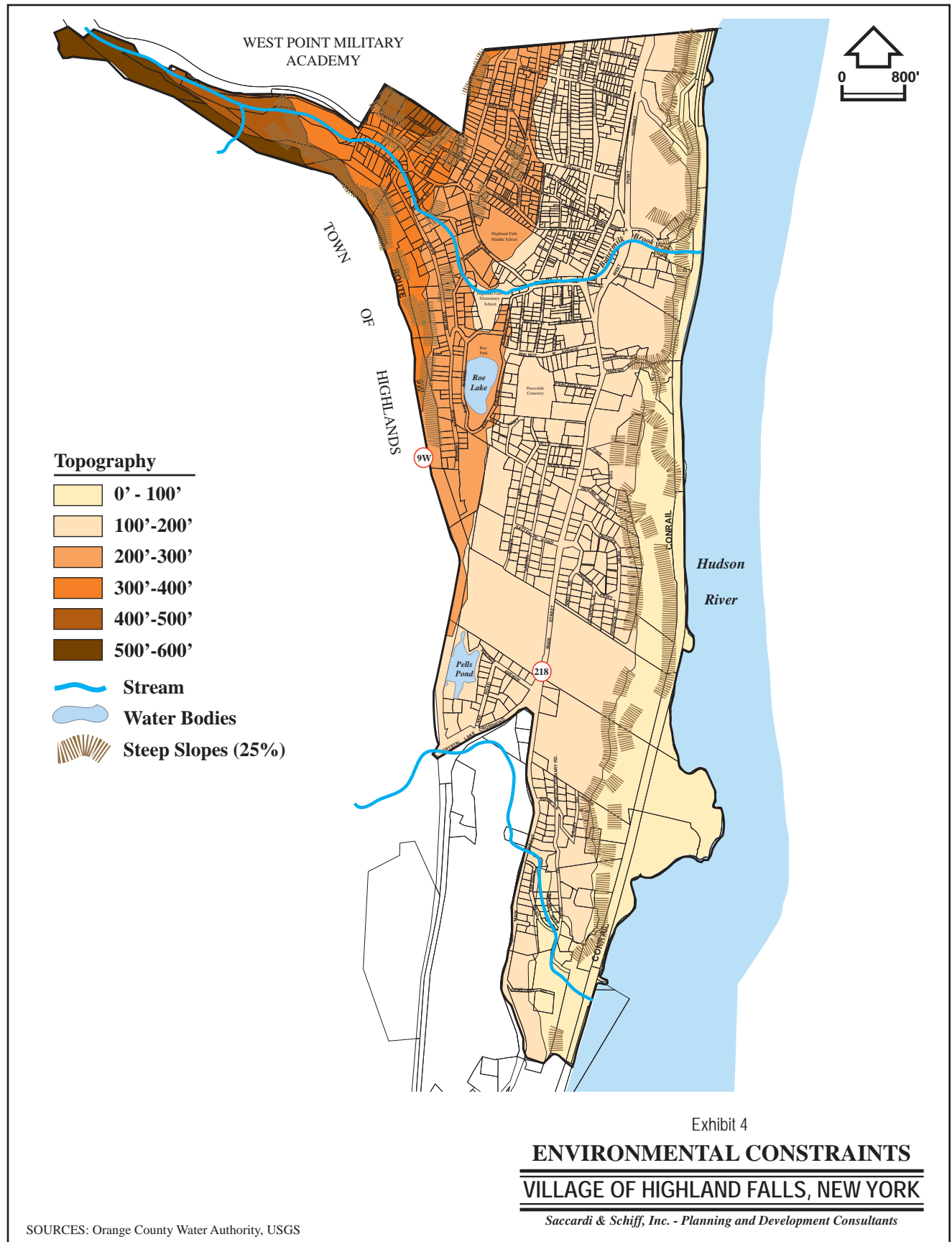
Much of the Village of Highland Falls is characterized by its steep slopes and rough terrain. Steep slopes increase the difficulty of developing land both physically and legally; zoning restrictions on property located in areas with steep slopes promote the preservation of ridgelines and the Hudson River viewshed.

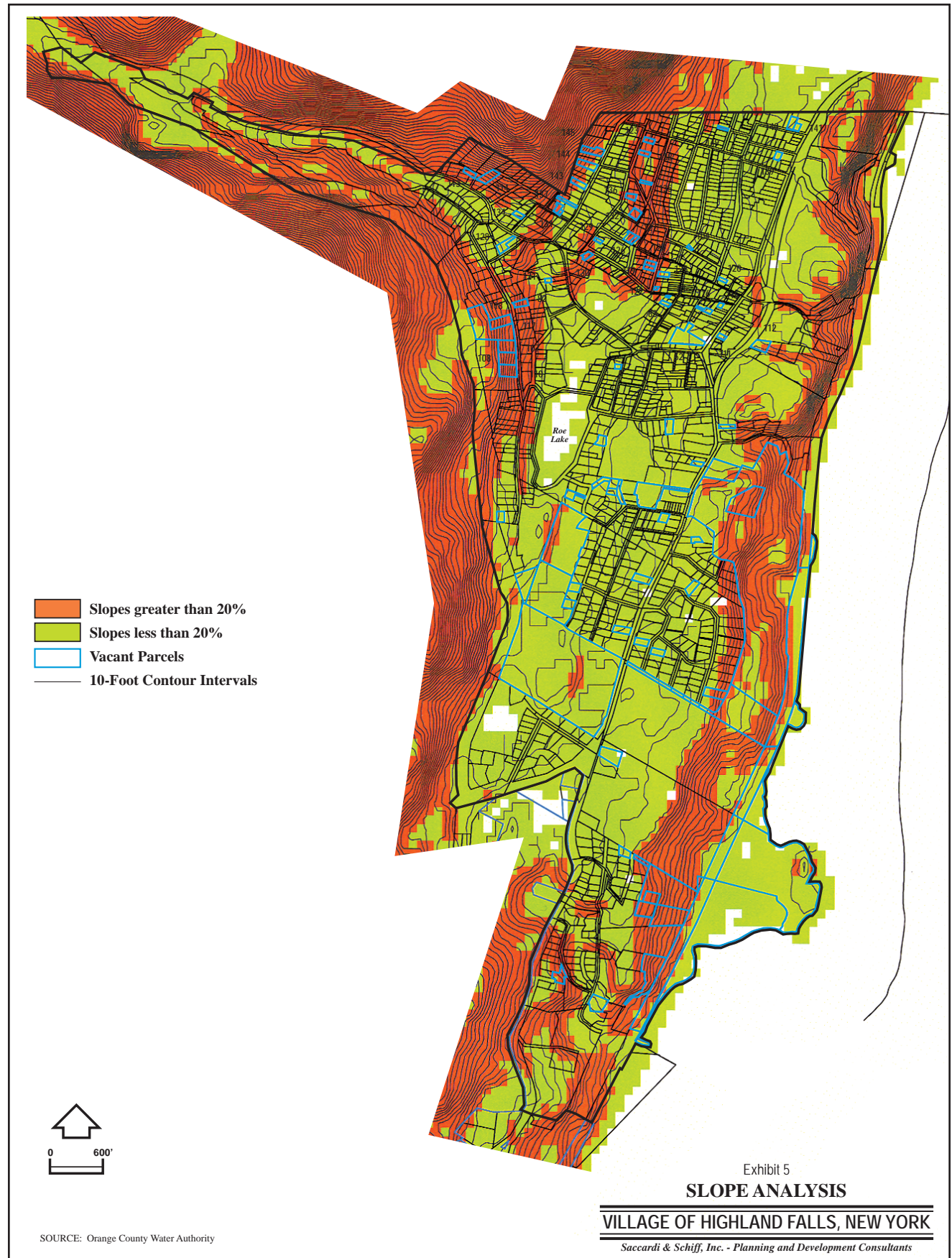
The most significant water bodies in the Village are the Hudson River, Roe Pond, and Pells Pond. All three can be preserved for public use and by providing an open space buffer that limits future development on parcels adjacent to or nearby these areas. Buttermilk Brook flows through the edge of the downtown area, crossing under Main Street and West Point Highway. Before entering into the Hudson River, the Brook drops sharply as Buttermilk Falls.

#### ***Open Space***

Most of the Village's open space can be defined as vacant parcels that have yet to be developed. These vacant parcels are generally located outside of the downtown, especially along the Hudson River and have remained underdeveloped due to their topography. While some of these parcels may be developed in the future, open space can be preserved through encouraging development patterns that are less taxing on the environment.







SOURCE: Orange County Water Authority

### III. COMMUNITY VISIONING

The Comprehensive Plan Committee for the Village of Highland Falls and the Town of Highlands met jointly and then separately and devised a series of goals that established the objectives that the Comprehensive Plans would seek to address.

The goals and objectives for the Village of Highland Falls follow.

#### Recreation and River Access

In order to provide additional recreation fields and facilities to serve the Village and balance development and preservation goals, the Village should:

1. Promote public waterfront access through the redevelopment of the marina, the railroad property and the teardrop parcel.
2. Create a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to address the previous goal and other future waterfront projects. An LWRP would provide the Village with greater ideas and related policies for public access to the Hudson River, as well as allow additional local decision making for waterfront projects. Without an LWRP, the State would have greater control over the Village's waterfront.
3. Consider further consolidation (Town and Village) of maintenance responsibilities for recreational facilities.
4. Develop sites for additional outdoor recreation, such as baseball and soccer fields, playgrounds, basketball courts, picnic areas and nature trails, for use by the Village, the Town, the school district, and various clubs and organizations.
5. Consider the possible expansion of Roe Park (4-acre parcel behind Little League fields) to adjoining sites that may be developed with cluster techniques that create open space connections.
6. Upgrade existing and create new recreation programs and indoor facilities for youth and seniors. A recreation center would be desirable to supplement the library, schools and church facilities.



*Opportunity for waterfront access to the Hudson River*



*Existing restaurant on Route 218 lacks a landscaped buffer*

7. Improve the open space character along portions of Route 9W and Route 218 by creating front yard landscaping strips for all development along the right-of-way. Although most of these corridors are still attractive, the Village should avoid strip commercial development along the roadways.
8. Provide additional landscaping and urban design treatment along Main Street, utilizing concepts in the Village of Highland Falls Historic Downtown Plan. (See also Economic and Commercial Development Objectives).

9. Promote clustering design techniques to achieve open space land as part of the development of any large site in the Village.
10. Preserve available Hudson River views and environmentally sensitive lands, including steep slopes, vegetation and water bodies.
11. Make certain that excess former Military Academy lands along Route 9W, known as the Conveyance Parcel, include open space areas that protect wetlands and steep slopes as well as provide suitable sites for development.
12. Work with the County, the State and other entities, such as Scenic Hudson, the Open Space Institute and Hudson Highlands Land Trust, where appropriate, to secure outside funding for the acquisition of open space lands and recreation sites.

### **Transportation and Infrastructure**

In order to support existing and future residential and commercial development, the Village should:

1. Maximize parking opportunities and provide additional parking in the Village downtown to serve existing business activity and encourage more pedestrian traffic.
2. Revise zoning regulations to address parking deficiencies and require visitor parking be provided at proposed developments.
3. Consider consolidation of Town and Village water and wastewater treatment facilities.
4. Ensure that new development properly protects wetlands and water bodies, utilizing best management practices, and upgrading stormwater, sanitary sewage, and water supply facilities, where necessary, to mitigate site-specific impacts identified through the environmental review process.
5. Implement environmentally sustainable practices including: water conservation measures; green building techniques; landscaping; buffers; and tree preservation.
6. Promote traffic calming measures in the downtown, such as curb extensions (bumpouts) placed at mid-block locations or intersections, and special paving, alternative road surfaces, colored concrete or special pavers used along the sides of the street or at intersections.
7. Provide landscaped treatment and visual relief for community gateways along Routes 218 and 9W, and also along Main Street in downtown Highland Falls.
8. Provide pedestrian and vehicular connections between existing parking lots and Main Street. Consider reconfiguring existing municipal parking lots to increase capacity.
9. Provide pedestrian crossing signs at crosswalks.

### **Economic and Commercial Development**

In order to provide local employment opportunities, necessary tax ratables, and a broad array of services for community residents, the Village should:

1. Pursue opportunities for increased tourism by:
  - Continuing current Chamber of Commerce efforts including:
    - Preparing a new Village tourism brochure

- Establishing a tourism web site with links to/from other regional tourism web sites to Highland Falls destinations;
  - Creating a regional tourism organization involving Rockland, Orange and Putnam counties, Garrison, Cold Spring and Highlands;
  - Building on the natural resources and historic character of the Village;
  - Encouraging and publicizing upgrades to local hotels and motels; and
  - Implementing relevant recommendations of the Historic Downtown Plan.
2. Work with West Point Visitors Center to make information about historic areas in the Village available to tourists (including maps, brochures, information about special events, etc.).
  3. Select geographic areas for economic activity that are suitable for commercial development in terms of location, access and environmental constraints -- particularly Main Street in the Village.
  4. Promote mixed use development downtown with ground floor commercial/retail uses and residential development above.
  5. Control strip development on Route 218 and Route 9W; devise a signage program leading visitors to the Village Center.
  6. Encourage façade and streetscape beautification by creating/promoting grant programs, which provide public funds to individual property owners for façade improvements, lighting and architectural design standards if design guidelines are met.
  7. Provide and/or require landscaped screening areas to buffer commercial areas that exist along major roadways and that are adjacent to residential development, and ensure that commercial building designs, façades and signage are properly planned to maintain and improve the overall aesthetic qualities of the Village.
  8. Reuse existing vacant and underutilized buildings in the Village downtown area.
  9. Remove or relocate overhead wires; plant street trees in the downtown area.
  10. Revitalize Mountain Avenue as a gateway into the downtown.



*A building in need of sign improvements*

### Residential Development and Zoning



*Multi-family development off of Route 218*

In order to provide housing for present and future residents, and guide future development, the Village should:

1. Maintain and enhance the quality of life that exists in various neighborhoods.
2. Evaluate opportunities for additional senior housing, affordable housing, and starter housing for public sector employees and volunteers who serve the Village.

3. Consider the use of a Landlord Registration Law, and support better enforcement of the existing codes to reduce overcrowding at some residences, overcrowded parking areas, and address property maintenance issues.
4. Consider the use of traditional and non-traditional zoning techniques where zoning is designed to achieve desired residential and open space objectives; this could include incentive zoning, floating zones and cluster development.
5. Provide updated zoning regulations that will help focus density and development in desired areas, and facilitate the development of a variety of housing options including senior and workforce housing above ground-floor commercial development in the Village.
6. Limit the extent, location and density of R-5 residential zoning districts in the Village.
7. Encourage redevelopment of properties in downtown Highland Falls, with a mix of commercial and residential uses.
8. Evaluate the extent and location of business/commercial zoning districts in the Village. Consider modifying the boundary of the existing B-1 District to ensure that commercial uses are concentrated and minimize the encroachment of commercial areas into adjacent residential neighborhoods.



*Multi-family development on Route 218*

## Community Facilities and Services

In order to maintain an adequate level of service while concurrently planning for projected growth and the changes in service that these factors could generate, the Village should:

1. Consider consolidation of facilities and services for efficiency and cost savings.
2. Provide additional storage space for Department of Public Works vehicles and equipment.
3. Ensure that the interiors and exteriors of all public buildings are properly maintained.
4. Continue to increase the level of services for the senior population, including housing and recreational facilities and programs.
5. Work with the local fire department and local volunteer organizations to continue to provide high quality services; help monitor or recruit volunteers through the provision of affordable housing opportunities.
6. Encourage and promote recycling compliance by expanding equipment and manpower to accommodate commercial development.
7. Develop sites for additional outdoor recreation including baseball and soccer fields for use by the Village, the Town, the School District and other organizations.
8. Continue to pursue State and Federal grants for waterfront access, historic preservation, commercial area rehabilitation and ADA accessibility.
9. Pursue federal grants for an elevator in Village Hall.
10. Promote energy conservation and environmentally sustainable practices including green energy and the use of solar power.

## IV. CONCEPTUAL PLAN

From the Goals and Objectives identified by the Village Comprehensive Plan Committee, a Conceptual Plan was developed transforming the committee’s vision into a physical form. The Conceptual Plan is the bridge between the goals and objectives and the more in depth, detailed plans that appear in subsequent sections of this report.

The Conceptual Plan map, Exhibit 6, encompasses the following broad planning proposals:

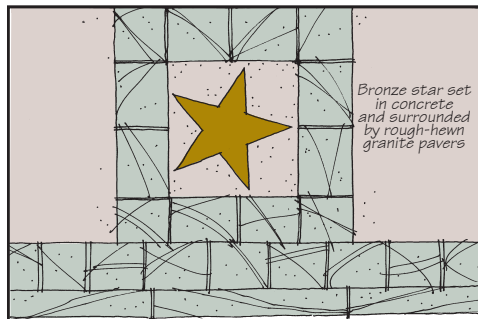
### Strengthen Downtown

The Village needs to intensify its efforts to improve its Main Street downtown area. Past efforts to improve building facades and signage need to be complemented with more dramatic actions that include the development of off-street parking, either to the east or west of Main Street, behind commercial uses. On the west side of Main Street, in particular, off-street parking could be devised as a public-private partnership with a private developer seeking to create a mixed-use development, with retail, residential and parking uses combined with sufficient off-street parking that is also available for public use.

The Village can utilize its powers of eminent domain, as needed, to purchase property and use it for parking alone or for parking in conjunction with a mixed use project. Such an effort could be based on an incentive zoning program that provides density bonuses and increased building height. A mixed-use project may include ground floor retail uses with senior housing located above. Senior housing in the downtown area could provide additional purchasing power supporting Main Street shops and restaurants.



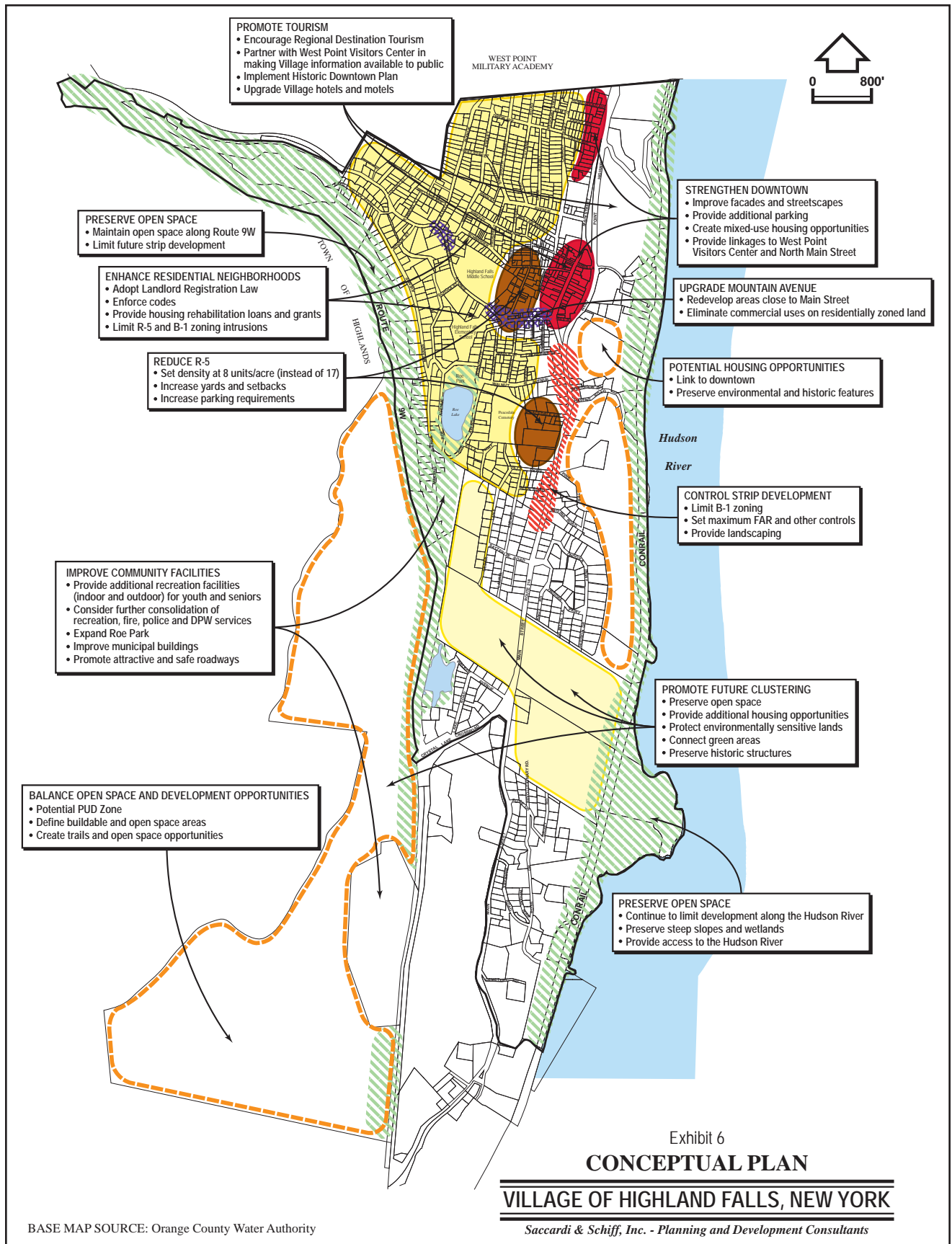
*Opportunities for downtown revitalization*



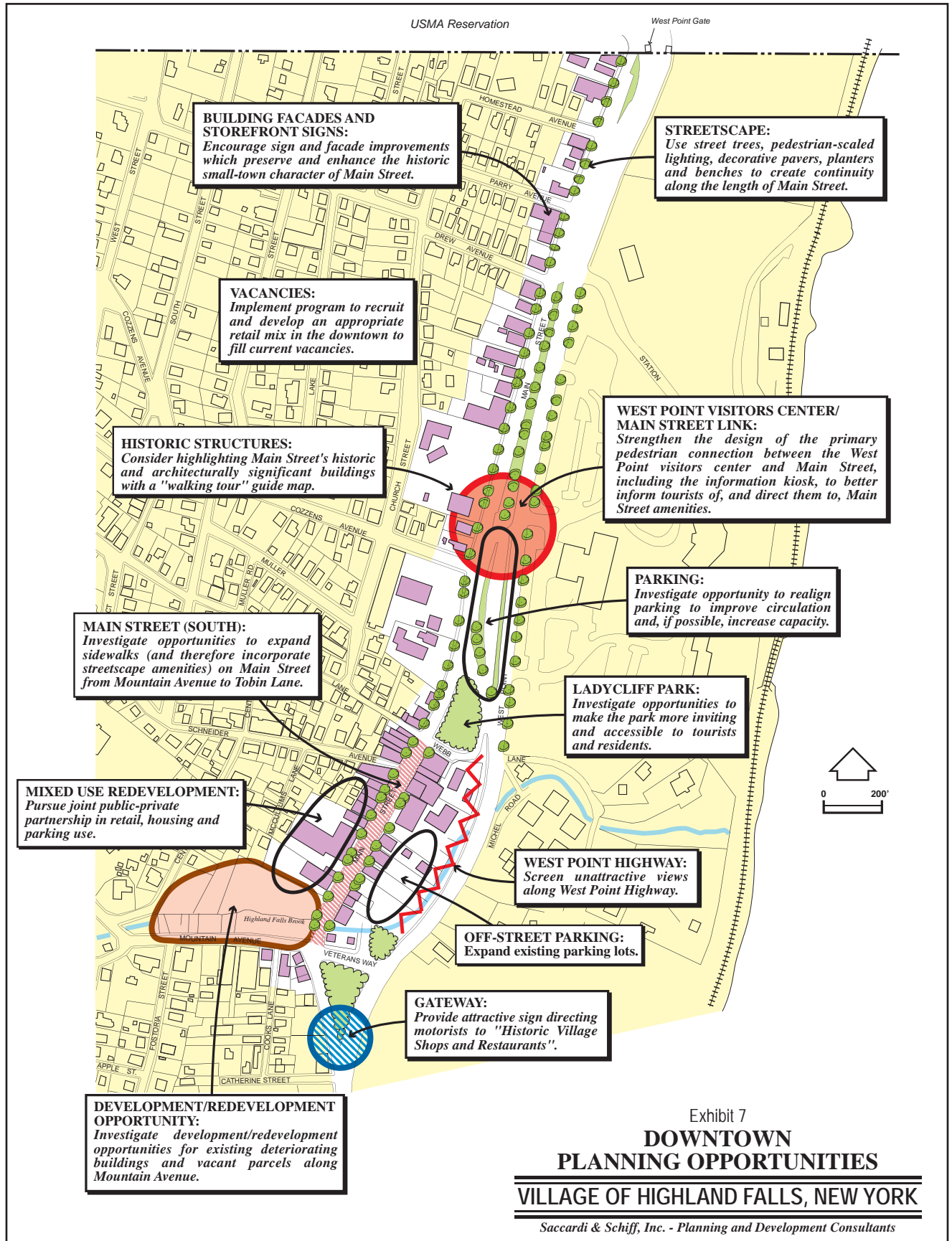
*The Bronze Star paving detail*

The Village also needs to complete the implementation of the 2003 Historic Downtown Plan, which recommends a number of site design improvements to provide linkages between the Village downtown and the West Point Visitors Center. Improvements suggested in the Historic Downtown Plan, such as the “Five Star Pedestrian Plaza” and the “Bronze Star Paving Detail” would not only provide an attraction for visitors but also help create a more pedestrian friendly environment in the Village.

The Village should also work with the Town of Highlands, and other levels of government to create a regional tourism strategy that would attract visitors to the community who would stop at Village stores and dine at Village restaurants. Upgrading hotels and motels in Highland Falls would also help to encourage tourism. The creation of a Business Improvements District (BID) to assist in marketing, promotional activities, clean up programs and events would also help to strengthen the downtown area and fill some of the vacant storefronts.







### Control Strip Commercial

The B-1 zoning districts outside downtown Highland Falls need to be amended to better protect the entryway into the community along Route 218. More extensive zoning controls and the provision of landscaping and design requirements are recommended. The recommended zoning changes include the establishment of a floor area ratio (FAR) requirement to establish the maximum building size allowed per acre of lot area. Zoning district boundaries need to be adjusted so that existing commercial properties are zoned for business purposes.

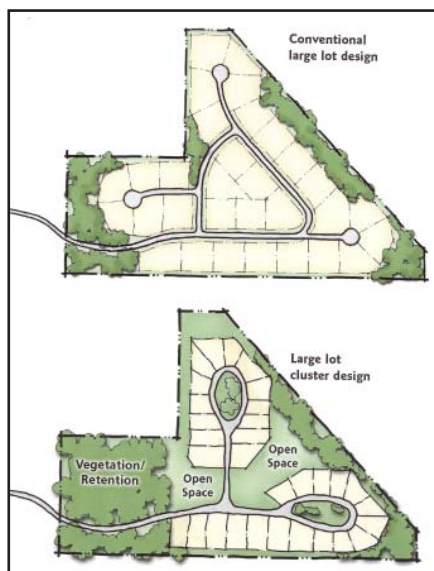


*Commercial development just south of downtown*

An enhanced Route 218 signage program should also be developed beginning at the intersection of Route 218 and Route 9W. The program should provide sign design guidelines for commercial properties and well-coordinated directional signage leading visitors to West Point, downtown Main Street and other attractions. In addition to Route 218, the Mountain Avenue gateway into the Village needs to be upgraded with the removal of unsightly buildings and the redevelopment of properties consistent with surrounding land uses.

### Provide Additional Housing Opportunities and Maintain Existing Neighborhoods

The Village has an opportunity to strengthen residential development, especially senior and workforce housing, while also ensuring quality neighborhoods.



*Conservation clustering can be achieved through the Village PRD regulations.*

In addition to the development of housing in or within close proximity to the downtown, the Village should encourage cluster development. Cluster development is one option for future development that could be targeted for undeveloped and underutilized sites identified on the Land Use Plan. A cluster development refers to a form of residential development that coincides with the amount of units allowed under conventional zoning but instead of using large uniform lot sizes, concentrates buildings in a more compact subdivision while conserving land for open space. Cluster development can be used to protect environmentally sensitive lands while also providing open space.

Another action the Village should undertake is to reduce the density allowed in the existing R-5 district. The R-5 District currently allows over 17 units per acre. Recently constructed townhouse developments on the west side of Route 218 are built at



*Recently constructed multi-family housing off of Route 218*

approximately 10 units per acre (despite zoning that allows 17 units per acre). Based upon detailed review of the site plan for recently constructed units, it is recommended that the Village scale the zoning back to 8 units per acre. Other zoning code amendments such as adjustments to yards, setbacks, and minimum open space requirements would address site design issues. Higher densities could still be attained under the Village's Planned Residential Development (PRD) district, but a development of this nature would be held under tougher scrutiny by the Village and its zoning code.

The Village Comprehensive Plan Committee explored potential development densities on vacant parcels, some privately owned. For example, as outlined in Exhibit 6, the Conceptual Plan, a density study was completed for a 35-acre parcel with frontage on both Route 218 and the Hudson River. The parcel is currently zoned R-2 and R-5, however, the plan recommends that this parcel be rezoned entirely to R-5, but at 8 dwelling units per acre, not the existing 17.

To address rental properties, the Village should adopt a Landlord Registration Law in order to compile an accurate and up to date database of current landlords. A registry of landlords would allow the Village to contact and make parties accountable for overcrowded residential units and parking, as well as poorly maintained properties. Community Development Block Grant funds should be sought, with low interest loans and grants provided by the Village to those property owners in need of assistance for building rehabilitation. Such actions can encourage maintenance and aesthetic improvements that will reduce deterioration in the Village.

To limit further intrusions to the stable lower density residential neighborhoods located in and surrounding the center of the Village by B-1 and R-5 districts, zoning map changes should be made to the existing zoning boundaries thereby protecting residential neighborhood from unplanned redevelopment.

### **Preserve Open Space, Expand Recreational Facilities and Other Community Facilities**

The Village should look to expand its current recreational facilities, especially by adding programs for both youths and seniors. This should not only include expanded services, but also the construction of a recreation center, as existing programs are constrained by current locations in both the schools and library.

With little land available, the provision of additional outdoor recreation in Highland Falls is difficult to address. Further expansion to Roe Park would be desirable. Providing access to the Hudson River through the Highland Falls marina on the north end of the Village would provide recreational opportunities and a riverfront identity. Providing additional athletic fields at the High School, with the Village working in tandem with the Town of Highlands and the Fort Montgomery – Highland Falls Central School District, is also recommended in the plan.



*The Highland Falls Marina*

In addition to active recreation, passive recreation and open space can be preserved in the Village in a number of ways. Significant opportunities for open space preservation are available in the Conveyance Parcel to the west of Route 9W, where both development and conservation activities can be planned, including the provision of hiking trails. An open space buffer could also be created along both Route 9W and the Hudson River. A buffer would help preserve steep slopes and wetlands from future development as well as provide a scenic entryway to the Village.

Further consolidation of Town and Village facilities has been identified by both municipalities to conserve resources and improve efficiency. Facilities such as police and services within the Department of Public Works could all be eligible for consolidation. Further discussion of potential consolidation is covered thoroughly in Chapter VII of this report.

## V. LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan is comprised of broad categories that identify future development and redevelopment patterns in the Village of Highland Falls. The land use pattern shown in Exhibit 7, is based on existing land use and the goals and objectives identified by the Comprehensive Plan Committee. Descriptions of the land use categories are as follows:

### Residential

The *Estate/Very Low Density Residential* land use category encompasses three 20+-acre parcels located on Route 218, just north of the intersection of Crystal Lake Crossroad on both the east and west side of the road. The recommended density for the Estate/Very Low Density Residential category is approximately one unit per acre.

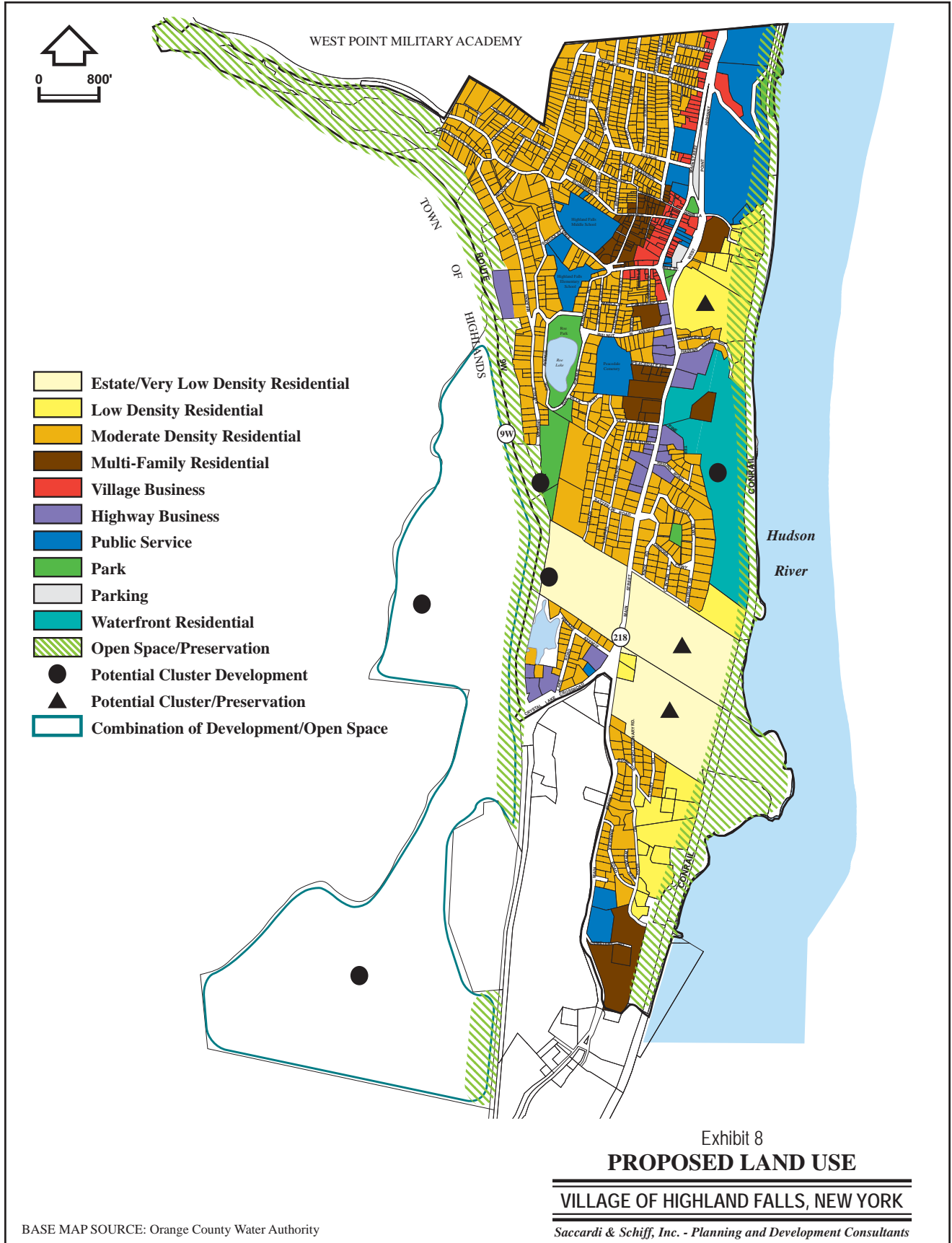
If developed in the future, parcels within this category have potential for a cluster design that would preserve the attractive Route 218 gateway to the Village, provide open space buffers and limit development along the Hudson River. The parcels on the east side of Route 218, however, contain historic and architecturally distinctive buildings that should be preserved. If ever developed in the long-term future, cluster techniques should also consider preservation of the sites’ on-site structures.

The *Moderate Density Residential* land use category, with a density of approximately two units per acre, is located primarily along the Hudson River, east of Main Street. Like the Estate/Very Low Density, this category includes vacant and underdeveloped parcels in close proximity to the River, which should be kept at a relatively low density in order to preserve the Village’s riverfront viewshed.

Of the various parcels in this land use category, development of a 12-acre site (Parcel G on the Buildout Analysis in Appendix II) and an adjacent four-acre site (Parcel H) on the east side of West Point Highway, when entering the downtown from the south, is suggested for cluster development in the long-term future. Approximately nine of these 16 acres could not be developed given environmental constraints (mostly steep slopes). Preservation of existing historic and architecturally significant buildings would further limit development. However, under the current R-2 zoning, the seven buildable acres could result in the construction of up to 16 residential units. If higher density development were permitted, such as with a Planned Residential Development (PRD), up to 29 units could be built. Under the PRD, density is calculated by gross acreage regardless of environmental constraints or other factors used when normally interpreting calculating permitted density. If the Village were to rezone the sites to R-3, up to 35 units could be constructed, as shown in the following tables.

**Table V-1  
Potential Development Density  
12.49 Acre Parcel**

Zoning	Buildable Area	Unit Density per Acre	Total Units
R-2 (existing)	6.15	2.17	13
R-2 (w/recommended PRD)	6.24	2.4	15
R-3 (not recommended)	6.15	5.8	35



**Table V-2  
Potential Development Density  
4.13 Acre Parcel**

Zoning	Buildable Area	Unit Density per Acre	Total Units
R-2 (existing)	1.51	2.17	3
R-2 (w/recommended PRD)	2.06	2.4	5
R-3 (not recommended)	1.51	5.8	8

Each of these properties is currently developed with large historic structures. If developed in the long-term future, the existing buildings could be adaptively reused as single-family homes, apartment buildings, or even community facilities depending on the development proposed. With the R-2 densities noted above, preservation of steep slopes and open space along the Hudson River could still be achieved.

The *Medium Density Residential* land use category is located throughout the Village. The density of this category is approximately six units per acre if zoned R-3, or nine units per acre if zoned R-4. This category is made up of both single-family and two-family residences, with the two-family residences located closer to the downtown.

Just south of Roe Park are two adjacent parcels of over four acres each. These two properties are possible future cluster development sites. Their proximity to Roe Park and surrounding medium density residential uses make these parcels ideal locations for cluster development, with open space connections to complement the adjacent park.

The *Multi-Family Residential* land use category consists of parcels located in close proximity to the center of the village. Multi-family residential is largely located in close proximity to the Village in order to provide a greater potential customer base for downtown businesses and to preserve open space and environmental features in areas that are less dense away from the downtown. The one exception of a multi-family use not within close proximity to the center of the Village is an existing mobile home park at the southern edge of the Village.



*Mobile home court on the southern edge of the Village*

As previously noted, the recommended multi-family residential density in the R-5 district is eight units per acre, although current zoning allows 17.4 units per acre. The R-5A district, which allows up to 29 units per acre, should be limited to sites adjacent to the downtown area with development that provides needed services to the community such as affordable housing, workforce housing, senior housing, and public parking.

***Waterfront Residential Impact Study***

This Plan provides an analysis of a vacant 35-acre waterfront parcel, entitled *Waterfront Residential Impact Study*, located in Appendix I. The waterfront parcel is currently zoned R-2, R-5 and B-1, with frontage on both Main Street and the Hudson River (labeled Waterfront Residential Study on the

Proposed Land Use map; site graphic provided in Appendix I). This plan recommends multi-family residential use at eight units per acre on this site. The majority of the property contains extremely steep slopes, making much of the acreage unbuildable. Of the 35 acres, approximately 7.2 acres are buildable. Development of the site would occur under the suggested Zoning Ordinance update for the R-5 zone detailed in Chapter VI of this Plan. The updated zoning would result in 56 multi-family units on the 7.2 acres of buildable land.

**Table V-3  
Waterfront Study Parcel**

Zoning	Total Area (in acres)	Buildable Area (in acres)	Maximum Possible Units
R-2 (Existing 2.17 units per acre)	35	7.2	15
R-5 (Existing 17.4 units per acre)	35	7.2	125
R-5 (Proposed 8 units per acre)	35	7.2	58

### Commercial

The *Village Business* category consists of commercial properties that are located in the downtown, primarily on Main Street between Thayer Gate and Catherine Street. Village Business districts located on side streets do not extend more than a few parcels from Main Street. Under this plan, commercial uses are contained close to the downtown, preventing business from spreading into the existing residential neighborhoods.



*Main Street, looking north*

The existing zoning text permits a maximum lot coverage of 80 percent. In order to encourage redevelopment, the zoning text would be revised to include a maximum lot coverage of 100 percent within the B-1 district. In addition, the Plan recommends the adoption of design guidelines for the Main Street area, which would help ensure attractive building and façade treatment.

**Table V-4  
Existing and Proposed B-1 Zoning Regulations**

Zoning Category	Existing B-1	Proposed B-1
Max. Lot Coverage	80%	100%



The *Highway Business* category is shown on several parcels on Route 218 from Catherine Street to just north of Satterlee Road, on the west side of Crystal Lake Crossing, and on two parcels on Route 9W, one just north of Crystal Lake Road, the other the current location of the Pointer’s Echo Motel. This category is aimed to control strip development, contain commercial activities to certain segments of the highway corridors, and preserve open space.



Route 218 corridor, south of downtown

Existing zoning in a B-2 district does not require a landscaped buffer in a front yard, nor a maximum FAR. In order for the Village to have greater control in shaping the type of commercial development that is constructed in the future, the proposed zoning language suggests that the maximum lot coverage be reduced from 50 percent to 25 percent, a minimum landscaped buffer of 10 feet be required in a front yard, and a maximum FAR of 0.20 be required. Design guidelines for commercial development on Route 218 include recommendations for signage and landscape treatment in the front yard, and for side and rear yards that abut residential property.

**Table V-5**  
Existing and Proposed B-2 Zoning Regulations

Zoning Category	Existing B-2	Proposed B-2
Max. Lot Coverage	50%	25%
Min. Landscaped Buffer in Front Yard	None	10 feet
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	None	0.20

### Parks/Open Space Preservation



Recreational activities at Roe Park

The *Parks* category encompasses Roe Park, other existing parks and the proposed Highland Falls marina on the northern edge of the village. The marina could provide the community with a recreational waterfront use that would connect the Village with the Hudson River.

The *Open Space/Preservation* category includes parcels where the Village has the opportunity to create buffers that will limit future development on Route 9W and preserve steep slopes and wetlands while limiting development along the Hudson River. Limiting such development will provide a scenic gateway to the Village along Route 9W and the Hudson River.



Route 9W, looking south

## Other Land Uses

*Public Service* uses are scattered throughout the Village. The public services include, but are not limited to: schools, churches, Village and Town offices, the library, and the West Point Visitors Center. The *Public Parking* category identifies the two existing public parking lots in the Village.

The *Combination of Development/Open Space* land use category includes the Conveyance Parcel of approximately 248 acres of West Point land located on the west side of Route 9W. This category encourages development on certain portions of the Conveyance Parcel, while preserving open space and allowing greater opportunities for community use on other lands, including areas with environmental constraints. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) is currently leading an effort to identify the highest and best use of the site with input from a committee consisting of members from the Village of Highland Falls and United States Military Academy at West Point. The Conveyance Parcel is described in further detail in Chapter VII.

## VI. PROPOSED ZONING TEXT AND MAP CHANGES

### Zoning Text

This plan recommends several revisions to the Village Zoning Ordinance to reflect the proposals of the Comprehensive Plan. The recommended zoning text changes are discussed below.

#### *Single- and Two-Family Districts*

Notwithstanding the R-1 district, which is a very low density district limited to portions of Route 9W, the single-family districts in Highland Falls include:

- R-2 Single-Family Homes on 20,000 s.f. lots
- R-3 Single-Family Homes on 7,500 s.f. lots
- R-4 Single-Family Homes on 5,000 s.f. lots and Two-Family Homes on 3,000 s.f. lots

The R-2 district exists in the southeastern portion of the Village, generally between Route 218 and the Hudson River. An additional area of R-2 zoning is located east of West Point Highway near the Village downtown. The R-3 district encompasses most of the built-up area south of Mountain Avenue on both the east and west sides of Route 218. Both the R-2 and R-3 zones include some relatively large, vacant and underutilized areas where development may occur; however, ownership, topographic constraints and historic status limit the amount of development that could be anticipated.

The R-4 district allows single family homes on 5,000 s.f lots, and two family homes with 3,000 s.f of lot area per unit. The R-4 district is located generally north of Mountain Avenue up to the United States Military Academy at West Point/Village boundary.

Zoning in the residential districts permits a broad range of Special Exception uses, including bed and breakfasts, clubs, schools and public utilities. Special exception uses in the R-2 include marinas, fuel storage and distribution uses and colleges; the R-3 allows horticulture as a Special Exception use. The various Special Exception uses are also regulated in the Village's multifamily zoning districts (see Table VI-1).

The Special Exception uses in the R-1, R-2 and R-3 districts need some clarification and adjustment. The R-2, for example, allows bed and breakfasts, membership clubs, social clubs, and fuel storage, which may not be appropriate for this 20,000 s.f. lot, suburban-type zoning district.

The R-2, R-3 and R-4 districts allow Planned Residential Developments (PRD), essentially a mechanism for clustering of residential housing in Highland Falls, by Special Exception permit. The PRD regulations permit a mix of single family, two family and multi-family housing at the following densities (see Table VI-2).

**Table VI-1  
Summary of Permitted and Special Exception Permit Uses in Residential Districts,  
Highland Falls Zoning Ordinance**

District	Permitted Uses	Special Exception Uses
R-1	1 Family Residences 2 Family Residences Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planned Residential Developments</li> <li>▪ Bed &amp; Breakfast</li> <li>▪ Schools, Colleges</li> <li>▪ Country Clubs</li> <li>▪ Public Utilities</li> </ul>
R-2	1 Family Parks	Same as R-1, plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Churches and Similar Religious Uses</li> <li>▪ Nursery Schools</li> <li>▪ Library, Museum, Fire Station, etc.</li> <li>▪ Bus Shelter</li> <li>▪ Cemeteries</li> <li>▪ Membership Club</li> <li>▪ Social Clubs</li> <li>▪ Fuel Storage/Distribution</li> <li>▪ Marinas</li> </ul>
R-3	Same as R-2	Same as R-2, except no <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nursery Schools</li> <li>▪ Colleges</li> <li>▪ Country Clubs</li> <li>▪ Motels</li> <li>▪ Marinas</li> <li>▪ Plus Horticulture</li> </ul>
R-4	1 Family 2 Family Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conversion of 1 Family to 2 Family</li> <li>▪ Planned Residential Development</li> <li>▪ Bed &amp; Breakfast</li> <li>▪ Churches and Similar</li> <li>▪ Nursery Schools</li> <li>▪ Library, Museum, Fire Station, etc.</li> <li>▪ Schools, Colleges</li> <li>▪ Bus Shelter</li> <li>▪ Utilities</li> <li>▪ Horticulture</li> </ul>
R-5	Same as R-4	Same as R-4, plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple Dwellings</li> <li>▪ Condominium</li> <li>▪ Townhouses</li> <li>▪ Membership Clubs</li> <li>▪ Nursing Homes</li> <li>▪ Social Club</li> </ul>
R-5A	1 Family 2 Family	Same as R-5, except no <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bed &amp; Breakfast</li> <li>▪ Churches and Similar</li> <li>▪ Nursery Schools</li> <li>▪ Library, Museums, Fire Station</li> <li>▪ Schools and Colleges</li> <li>▪ Bus Shelters</li> <li>▪ Clubs</li> <li>▪ Nursing Homes</li> <li>▪ Social Clubs</li> <li>▪ Utilities</li> </ul>

**Table VI-2  
Planned Residential Development (PRD) Allowed Densities**

	<b>PRD Density</b>	<b>Density without PRD</b>
R-2	2.4 units/acre	1.75 units/acre
R-3	5.7 units/acre	4.6 units/acre
R-4	13 units per acre	11.6 units/acre

The permitted increase in density for the PRDs provides an incentive for more creative land development planning, including the use of clustering techniques. PRD should also be used as a tool to encourage senior and affordable housing development.

For PRD development in the R-4 District, the maximum building height is 70 feet; a height permitted in the R-5 and R-5A, but more appropriate for redevelopment in the downtown area. It is suggested that the maximum PRD height in the R-4 district be reduced to 45 feet. The 35-foot maximum height would apply to the R-2 and R-3 districts.

Note that the PRD densities are calculated without deductions for environmental constraints, such as steep slopes, wetlands and water bodies. For sites with extensive areas of slopes in excess of 25 percent or other environmental features, the densities may result in too dense a development on the level, non-constrained portions of the given site. This is particularly relevant for large, vacant and parcels along the Hudson River. Hence, it is suggested that 50 percent of the site area with very steep terrain, along with any wetlands or water bodies, should be deducted from the gross site area, with the resulting net site area being the basis on which the PRD density would be calculated. This deduction could, however, be modified if the project met Village affordable or senior housing goals.

***Multi-family Districts***

Although the text of the Zoning Ordinance includes three multi-family zoning districts (R-5, R-5A and R-6), only the R-5 District is identified on the Zoning Map. The R-5A, with higher densities than the R-5 should remain, but the R-6 should be eliminated from the Ordinance.

The R-5 density at 17.4 units per acre is too high for most townhouse-type developments. It is recommended that the maximum density for townhouses be reduced to eight units per acre, which is slightly lower than the density actually realized for new townhouse development in the Village. In addition, the yards, setbacks and floor area per unit are currently minimal and should be increased. Recommended modifications to the lot and bulk controls for townhouses in the R-5 zoning district follow in Table VI-3.

The R-5A density (29 units/acre) for multi-family housing should remain. In certain instances, the density would be acceptable for infill townhouse development in high-density residential areas, similar to the developments behind Village Hall in the Center Street/Schneider Avenue area where affordable townhomes have been previously built. The Zoning Ordinance currently permits this type of infill housing on sites as small as 5,000 s.f. This differs from R-5 townhouse developments where a minimum parcel size should be set at 80,000 s.f.

**Table VI-3  
Current and Proposed R-5 District Townhouse-Style Development Regulations**

		Current	Proposed								
1.	Max. Density	17.4 units/ac.	8.0 units/ac.								
2.	Min. Lot Area	No Requirement	80,000 s.f								
3.	Max. Lot (Building) Coverage	35%	25%								
4.	Min. Yards										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Front</li> <li>▪ One Side</li> <li>▪ Two Sides</li> <li>▪ Rear</li> <li>▪ Side of Corner Lot</li> </ul>	20' 8' 10' 25' 20'	30' 20' 40' 25' 30'								
5.	Min. Distance Between Principal Buildings	20' or 0.66 times building height	2.0 times building height								
6.	Min. Distance from Parking Lot or Driveway to Principal Building	No Requirement	10'								
7.	Min. Contiguous Open Space	No Requirement	10% of Site Area								
8.	Max. Building Length w/o Offset	40'	40'								
9.	Max. No. of Townhouse Units in a Row	No Requirement	6'								
10.	Max. Building Height	35'	35'								
11.	Min. Off Street Parking										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Townhouse or condominium</li> <li>▪ Apartment</li> </ul>	2.0/unit 1.5/unit	*								
<p>* Parking should be based on unit sizes plus visitor parking, e.g.:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 150px;">Studio</td> <td>1.0/unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 br.</td> <td>2.0/unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 br.</td> <td>2.0/unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 br.</td> <td>2.5/unit</td> </tr> </table> <p>plus 10% of required parking for visitors</p> <p><u>Note:</u> References to condominiums should be deleted for the zoning, since the term relates to a type of ownership, not a land use or housing type. Townhouses and multifamily are the appropriate terms.</p>				Studio	1.0/unit	1 br.	2.0/unit	2 br.	2.0/unit	3 br.	2.5/unit
Studio	1.0/unit										
1 br.	2.0/unit										
2 br.	2.0/unit										
3 br.	2.5/unit										

**Commercial Districts**

There are two Business Districts in Highland Falls: a B-1 Village Commercial district and a B-2 Highway Commercial district. The B-1 district extends along Main Street from West Point, past Mountain Avenue and south on Route 218 to just past Regina Road. This district includes both downtown-type uses with full front lot line development, which exists generally to the north of Catherine Street, and highway commercial development, with on-site parking, which exists generally to the south of Catherine Street. The lot and bulk controls in the B-1 district include an 80 percent maximum coverage requirement, for example, which is much too high in the southern portion of the B-1, but generally more appropriate in the Main Street downtown area. Similarly, the parking ratio for retail use (1:200 s.f.) is more appropriate in the southern B-1 area, where off-street parking is needed, in contrast with downtown Highland Falls

where on-street and public parking are provided (albeit in limited supply). Clearly, these two B-1 areas should have separate and distinct zoning regulations.

The B-2 district is currently located two locations along Route 9W. The B-2 zone allows “heavier” commercial and highway-oriented uses, e.g., motels, veterinary offices, repair garages, non-nuisance industry and research, by Special Exception permit. The coverage requirement in the B-2 is 50 percent. The southern portions of Route 218, which are currently zoned B-1, should be changed to B-2 with the use, lot and bulk controls modified, the addition of a floor area ratio requirement (FAR), designed to establish the maximum amount of development on the lot, and a minimum landscaped buffer requirement in the front yard of B-2 properties, designed to address aesthetic and traffic circulation issues for Route 218 commercial sites.

**Table VI-4  
Existing and Proposed B-1 and B-2 Regulations**

		<b>Existing B-1 Downtown Village Business</b>	<b>Proposed B-1 Downtown Village Business</b>	<b>Existing B-2 Highway Commercial</b>	<b>Proposed B-2 Highway Commercial</b>
1.	Min. Lot Area	No Requirement	No Requirement	10,000 s.f.	10,000 s.f
2.	Max. Lot Coverage	80%	100%	50%	25%
3.	Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	No Requirement	No Requirement	No Requirement	0.20
4.	Maximum Height	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet
5.	Min. Lot Width	No Requirement	No Requirement	75 feet	75 feet
6.	Min. Yards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Front</li> <li>▪ One Side</li> <li>▪ Two Sides</li> <li>▪ Rear</li> <li>▪ Side of Corner Lot</li> </ul>	No Requirement 12 ft, if provided No Requirement 20 feet No Requirement	No Requirement No Requirement No Requirement No Requirement No Requirement	50 feet 20 feet 40 feet 30 feet 50 feet	50 feet 20 feet 40 feet 50 feet 30 feet
7.	Min. Landscaped Buffer in Front Yard	No Requirement	No Requirement	No Requirement	10 feet

Similar to the residential districts, the Special Exception uses in the commercial districts could use clarification and adjustment. For example, the B-2 district only allows motels as a Special Exception use. Hotels and bed and breakfasts could be appropriate in the B-2 district.

The B-1 regulations in downtown Highland Falls currently permit residential uses above ground floor commercial. With a proposed increase in maximum lot coverage from 80 percent to 100 percent, the amount of potential residential units in redevelopment efforts could increase.

It is proposed that the B-2 district undergo a few significant changes. Through reducing the maximum lot coverage from 50 percent to 25 percent and adding a Floor Area Ratio of .20, the size of future commercial development would be limited. Another change would be to add a minimum front yard landscaping buffer to all future development. This action helps further separate the use from the road, as well as limit the visual impact of development from the road and sidewalks. Strengthening the design controls for automotive related uses is also proposed.

### *Other Zoning Issues*

The Plan recommends updating parking requirements. Two spaces per dwelling unit for townhouses and one and a half spaces per apartment unit should be revised to reflect the number of bedrooms in the unit, and to require a percent of total parking for visitors. Retail parking requirements (1:200 s.f.) are adequate for areas outside the Main Street downtown. The office requirement at (1:150 s.f.) is very high and should be decreased. Design standards for parking lots need to be expanded to add more landscaping and site design requirements.

Other lot and bulk controls should also be examined, including a possible residential Floor Area Ratio requirement that would prohibit excessively large houses that overwhelm other homes in established residential neighborhoods. Many Zoning Ordinance details need to be examined for consistency. For example, the basis for the variations among permitted principal and special exception uses, as illustrated on Table VI-1, are not clear. Certain definitions (e.g., senior and affordable housing) need to be updated.

Presently, the Village's zoning code does not include regulations for uses that have caused concern in other communities, such as adult entertainment and cell towers. These regulations should also be considered as part of the amendments to the Village Zoning Ordinance.

The Village should also consider modification of its Planned Residential Development regulations with a more traditional Planned Unit Development (PUD) approach where the Village Board of Trustees grants initial PUD approval as a zoning map change, based on recommendation from the Planning Board. The PUD regulations could allow additional uses and greater building height and density of development, provided as an incentive for the construction of senior or workforce housing. Upon approval of the PUD zoning, the applicant would then be required to secure site plan approval from the Planning Board.

### **Zoning Map Changes**

To encourage and allow several of the proposals for future land use in the Village of Highland Falls, the zoning map should be revised. While much of the existing zoning map will remain unchanged, this plan recommends consideration of a few important changes:

#### *Decreased Density*

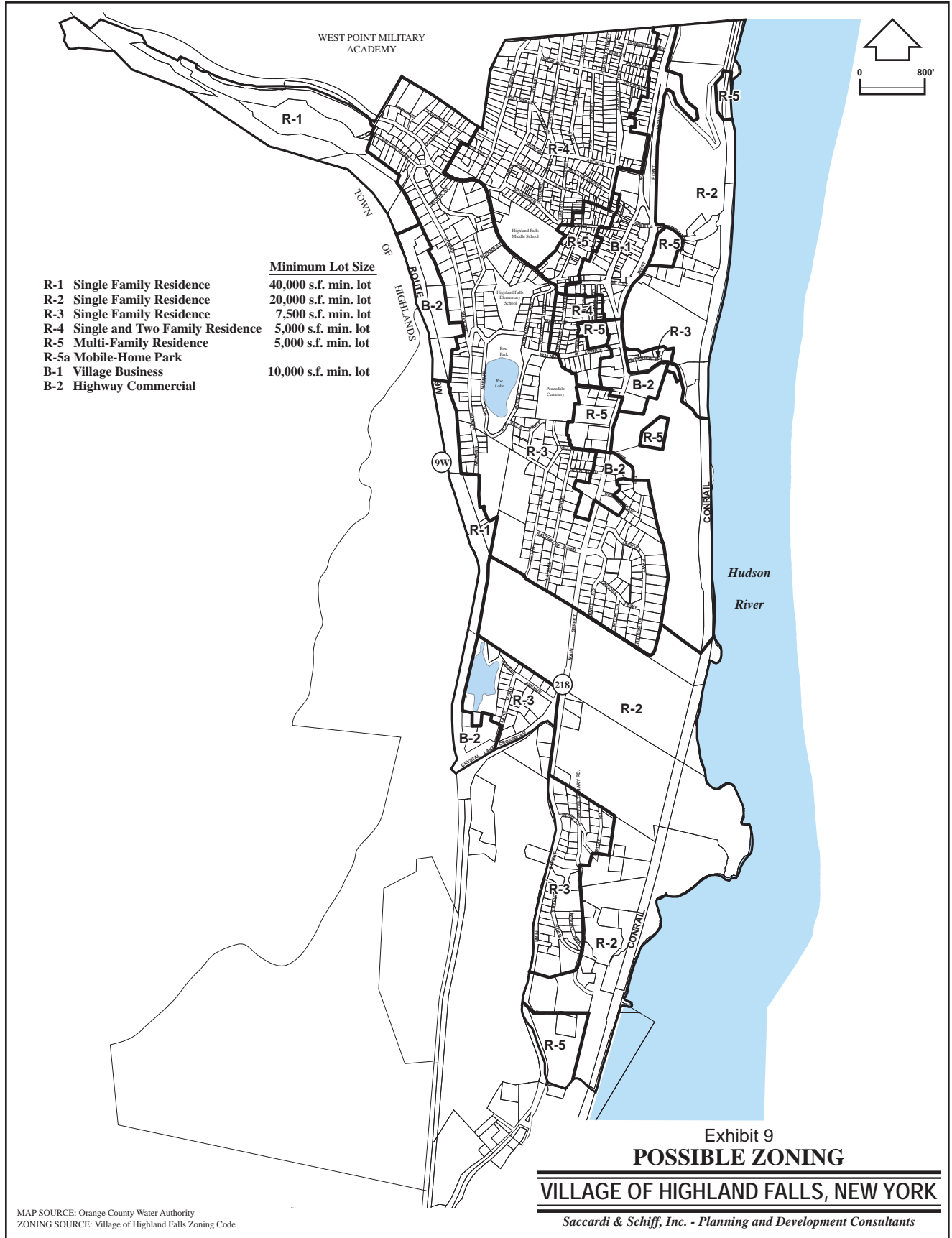
- **R-5 to R-4 (A on map)**

This proposed change would occur in two locations in the center of the Village, including the residential area along Route 218 near the recently constructed Winhaven development. The rezoning to R-4 is designed to scale back the amount of multi-family development that would be allowed to spread out into adjacent lower density residential neighborhoods.

- **B-1 to B-2 (B)**

As previously noted, under the existing zoning the same zoning restrictions are applied to both the more dense commercial development at the center of the Village and less dense commercial uses along the Route 218 corridor. This proposed amendment would adjust the restrictions of properties that should be considered highway business.





- **R-3 to R-2 (C)**

This change would be limited to only one parcel, though it is one of the largest parcels in the Village. The parcel in question is located just north of Crystal Lake Crossing on Route 218. The proposed decrease in zoning addresses the potential development of a large parcel that, if developed under R-3 regulations as currently permitted, would be too dense for the site. Whether developed under R-2 zoning or even as a PRD, the Village can have a much greater chance of preserving open space and preserving the gateways to the Village on Route 9W and Route 218 if the density of this parcel were decreased.

- **R-3 to R-1 (D)**

The proposed decrease in density from R-3 to R-1 would address frontage along Route 9W just north of Crystal Lake Crossing. The purpose of this rezoning is to discourage future commercial and residential development along the highway and encourage and reinforce the proposal of maintaining open space along this corridor with low density development.

- **R-5 to R-2 (E)**

This proposed zoning change would apply to two parcels: one lot east of Main Street in the downtown, and one lot at the southern tip of the Village, adjacent to the existing mobile home court. Rezoning the downtown property would further Plan objectives, such as limiting the extent and location of the R-5 district, and preserving views of the Hudson River. While the parcel at the southern tip of the Village is likely not buildable, this zoning change is suggested to maintain consistency with surrounding R-2 zoning, and dissuade the encroachment of high density multi-family development, appearing in the form of an existing mobile home court on the adjacent parcel to the west.

### *Increased Density*

- **R-2 to R-5 (F)**

This rezoning would address the marina property in the northeastern portion of the Village. This change would only be recommended if it results in public access to the waterfront (i.e. a publicly accessible boat launch, waterfront park or marina).

### *Commercial to Residential*

- **B-2 to R-3 (G)**

This rezoning would address three parcels currently zoned for commercial development at the intersection of Route 9W and Crystal Lake Crossing. Only one of the three properties adjacent to Pells Pond has frontage along either road, and its current use is residential. Zoning these lots for residential use would also encourage the other two properties to blend into the fabric of the existing residential neighborhood, rather than permit future redevelopment as commercial uses.

- **B-2 to R-1 (H)**

This zoning change would address one commercially zoned area on Route 9W. The parcels in question are the Highway Department building located just north of Crystal Lake Crossing and an adjacent parcel. If the Highway Department were to discontinue the use of its building on Route 9W, this zoning change would address future development and use of the site, which should not be commercial.

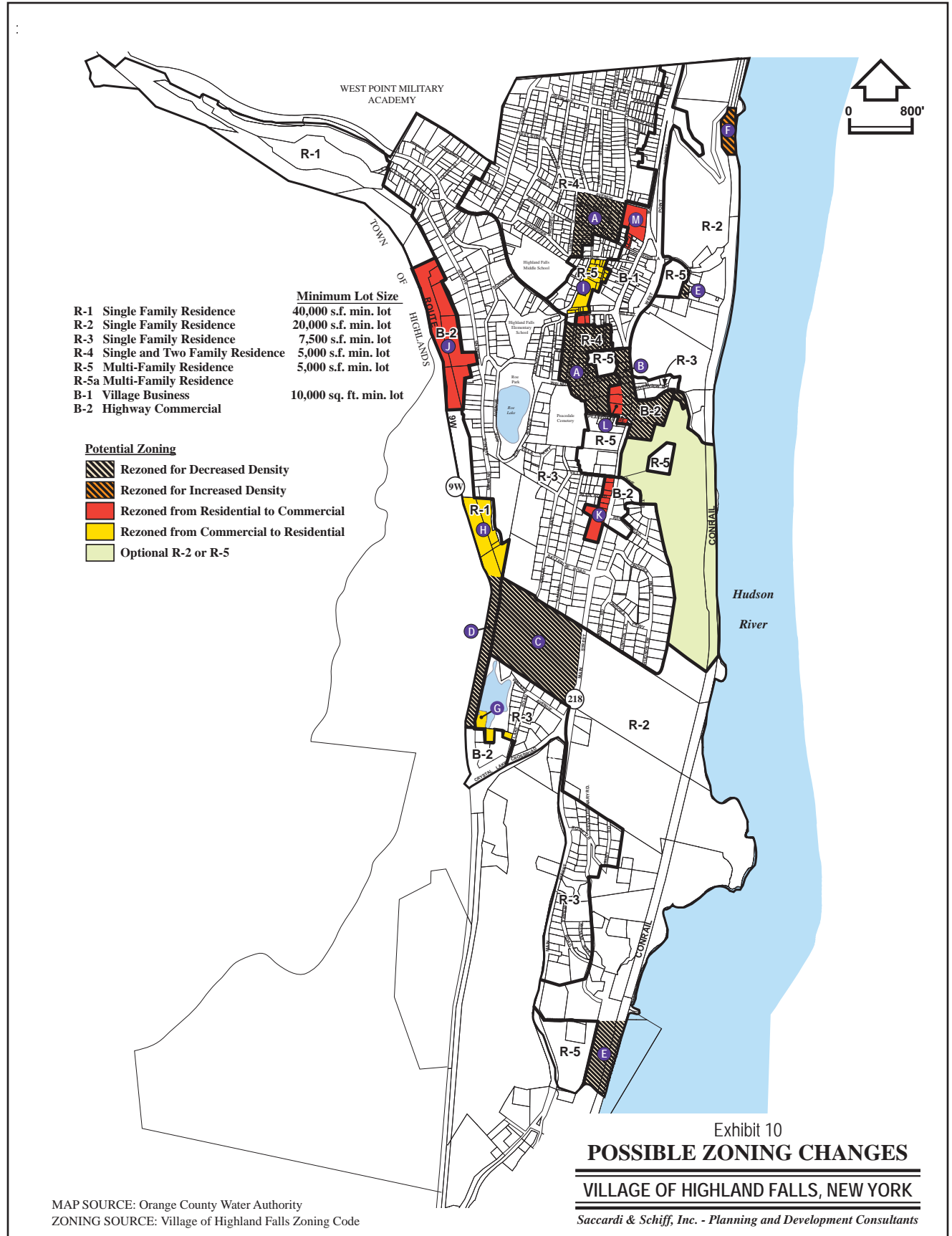


Exhibit 10  
**POSSIBLE ZONING CHANGES**  
**VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND FALLS, NEW YORK**

MAP SOURCE: Orange County Water Authority  
 ZONING SOURCE: Village of Highland Falls Zoning Code

Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning and Development Consultants

- **B-1 to R-5 (I)**

This change would occur in only the center of the Village located along the entire east side of Center Street, between Mountain Road and Schneider Avenue. Rezoning these residential properties to R-5 allows potential development in a manner consistent with the neighborhood, while also containing commercial uses closer to Main Street.

### *Residential to Commercial*

- **R-1 to B-2 (J)**

This zoning change would address the Pointer's Echo Motel property, and three parcels adjacent and in close proximity to the motel, all located on Route 9W. Of the three properties besides the motel, two currently contain homes; the third parcel, which sits adjacent to the motel to the north, is currently vacant. The properties should be zoned B-2 in order for the motel to become a conforming use and to allow small-scale commercial development in the future. While this proposed rezoning section would be the only properties along Route 9W north of Crystal Lake Crossing that would permit future commercial



*Pointer's Echo Motel on Route 9W*

use, this zoning change would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goal of encouraging economic development within the Village and increasing opportunities for tourism. The existing motel provides tax revenue to the Village and fills an existing need for accommodations for visitors to the USMA at West Point and other tourist attractions within the Highland Falls area.

- **R-3 to B-2 (K)**

This change would strengthen areas currently zoned for residential use but that already contain commercial uses along the Route 218 corridor, including both a restaurant and funeral parlor. While some of the properties in this area along Route 9W are currently residential uses, this change allows an easier transition to commercial use for the existing residential properties and also reinforces the existing commercial development. Existing residential uses could be clearly permitted uses in the amendment to the B-2 district regulations to avoid issues of non-conformity.

Another area for consideration of change from R-3 to B-2 includes the U.S. Academy Motel and adjacent Ambulance Corps property on Crystal Lake Crossing. Either zoning district would be appropriate for the two parcels; R-3 is appropriate because the two properties adjoin a residential neighborhood, and B-2 is appropriate because there is currently commercial development just to the south on Crystal Lake Crossing that is within the B-2 zoning district and because of the existing U.S. Academy Motel and Ambulance Corps property. Rezoning the parcels would satisfy several goals of the Comprehensive Plan, including: 1) maintaining and expanding the Village's commercial tax base, and, 2) providing additional tourism resources. Maintaining the current R-3 zoning on the site retains the existing mix of residential and commercial/public service uses.

- **R-5 to B-1 (L)**

This rezoning would coincide with the proposed change from B-1 to B-2 along Main Street just south of the center of the Village, allowing three properties cut in half by the current zoning greater commercial flexibility

- **R-5 to B-2 (M)**

To avoid gaps in commercial frontage along Main Street in the center of the Village, residential uses should be encouraged in mixed-use buildings. This change of zoning would address the school property if it were to ever become vacant. If this parcel were converted to a residential use without commercial use on the first floor, northern and southern Main Street could be divided even further.

## VII. ADDITIONAL PLAN PROPOSALS

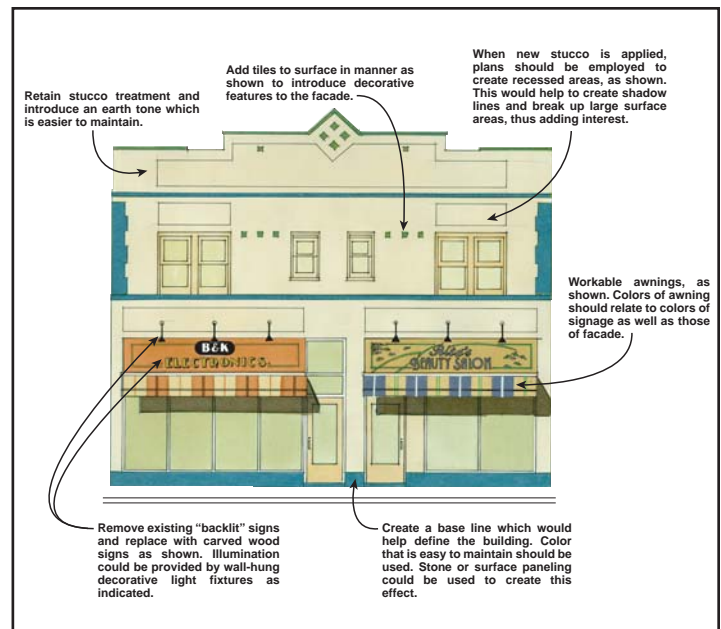
### Downtown and Route 218 Commercial Proposals

As previously described, the Village of Highland Falls has two separate areas of commercial development: the Main Street downtown area and the Route 218 corridor. In order to maintain its current inventory and encourage future commercial growth in both locations, the Village has the opportunity to implement design guidelines<sup>4</sup> that would enhance and strengthen both the built and landscaped environments of commercial properties.

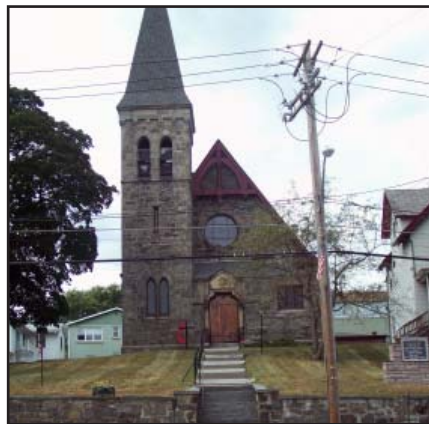
#### *Downtown Highland Falls*

- **Building Facades, Store Fronts, Signage**

The Village should improve existing buildings in the downtown with a continuation of its previously established commercial rehabilitation and façade improvement program. This should include: removing excess and damaged signs and awnings with new, appropriately scaled replacements; coordination of size, placement and color of signs and awnings among businesses in one building; utilization of building materials and colors that reflect the historic character of both the building and downtown; returning damaged and covered up storefronts to their original architectural style; cleaning and repairing architectural detailing such as cornices or lintels; and restoring shutters and windows to appropriate sizes and spacing on upper stories.



*Example of facade and signage improvements the Village should pursue*



*One of the Village's architecturally distinctive buildings*

- **Historic Resources**

The Village should pursue a historic district designation for the downtown commercial district, along Main Street. Designation from the National Register of Historic Places would allow the Village to benefit from financial incentives such as federal and state tax provisions and historic preservation grants on the federal and state levels.

Another recommendation to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the downtown is to establish an Architectural Review Board. An Architectural Review Board could review building permit applications for both new construction and exterior improvements of existing buildings.

<sup>4</sup>The downtown design guidelines detailed in this section are based on the Village of Highland Falls Historic Downtown Plan, proposed by Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. in 2003.

- **Traffic and Pedestrian Environment**

Additional signage at the gateways to the Village and entryway to the downtown area should direct traffic and pedestrians towards the Main Street, while also illustrating that there are a mixture stores, shops and other attractions to visit.

The Village should work closely with the West Point Visitors Center to encourage West Point Tourists to enter the downtown. To facilitate a friendlier passage into the downtown, the Village should strengthen existing pedestrian movement through a pedestrian plaza, with a kiosk that lists Village businesses.

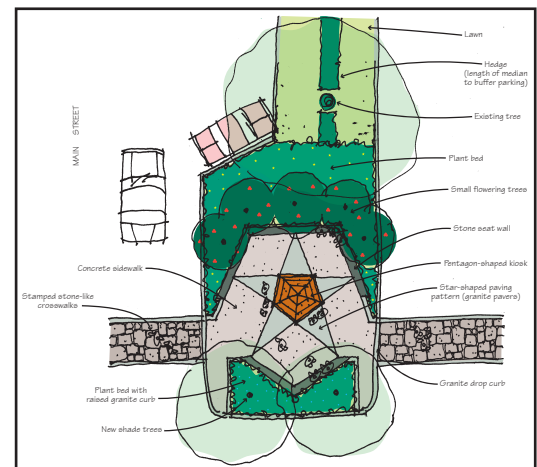
- **Parking**

The Plan calls for the provision of additional public parking facilities on either the east side or west side of Main Street, behind existing and proposed buildings. This type of parking needs to be attractive, well landscaped and well lit, with easy access for pedestrians and vehicles. Directional signage to both existing and new parking facilities is particularly important to guide visitors.

- **Streetscape Amenities**

The Village has many opportunities to improve the existing aesthetics of the downtown streetscape, while also increasing pedestrian safety. Depending on the width of the sidewalk, the Village can add new decorated lampposts, colorful banners or flower baskets, street trees, planters, trash receptacles, benches, and even safe street seating for restaurants and cafes.

The Village should pursue a pedestrian passage and plaza just north of Ladycliff Park. The Village of Highland Falls Historic Downtown Plan describes these two amenities as the “Bronze Star Paving Detail” and the “Five Star Pedestrian Plaza”.



*Bronze Star concept detailed in the 2003 Village of Highland Falls Historic Downtown Plan.*

### **Route 218 Corridor**

- **Building Design**

As described in Chapter VI, the plan recommends zoning text amendments that address setbacks of new development and proposes a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) that should also be established to limit excessive highway development.

Building design guidelines should be established for highway commercial properties to encourage new construction and amenities to be sensitive to location and nearby uses. Front yard activities, such as parking, should be limited and drive-through windows should be coordinated with the overall building and site design. Building entries, canopies, awnings, outdoor seating and signage should be oriented forward to abutting public thoroughfare in the property’s front yard.

To encourage and provide safety for pedestrians, the Village could require new development to provide sidewalks to connect with adjacent commercial development and surrounding neighborhoods.



*Example of design treatment on an existing highway commercial site.*

• **Landscaping and Parking**

In addition to building design guidelines, the Village should require natural landscaping buffers as well as walls and fences, especially in areas with adjacent and surrounding residential development. Landscaped islands along Route 218 would be particularly important, maintaining this area as an attractive gateway into the Village. It is essential that parking, loading and storage areas have buffers. Large parking lots should include landscaped islands to break-up the appearance of expansive paved areas.

Wherever possible, parking should be encouraged in side yards and discouraged or limited from front yards. Where front yard parking is allowed, there should be separation from the roadway with a landscaped, green area that limits visual impacts. A low fence on rock wall can be used in front yards with limited space.

• **Building Facades, Storefronts and Signage**

The Village should encourage the use of high quality building materials such as brick and wood clapboard, increasing the longevity and life span of new development. High intensity colors should be discouraged wherever possible. Often scattered items such as outdoor displays, vending machines, seasonal sales areas, and trash receptacles should be integrated into the overall site design to limit the visual impacts of such site features.

To encourage proper and attractive signage on both existing and new highway development, the Village should adhere to the following basic principles:

- The fewer signs the better.
- Signs should be as low as possible.
- All signs should be small and discreet as possible.
- Garish color lights, materials, or gimmicks should be avoided or used only in the most carefully limited and exceptional circumstances.
- Adjacent signs should be of the same height.
- Signs applied to the front of a building should not extend past the roof line.
- The number of window signs should be limited to prevent their overpowering of the building façade.
- To the extent possible, adjacent signs on the same or adjoining buildings should be placed within the same horizontal band and be of reasonably harmonious materials and colors.



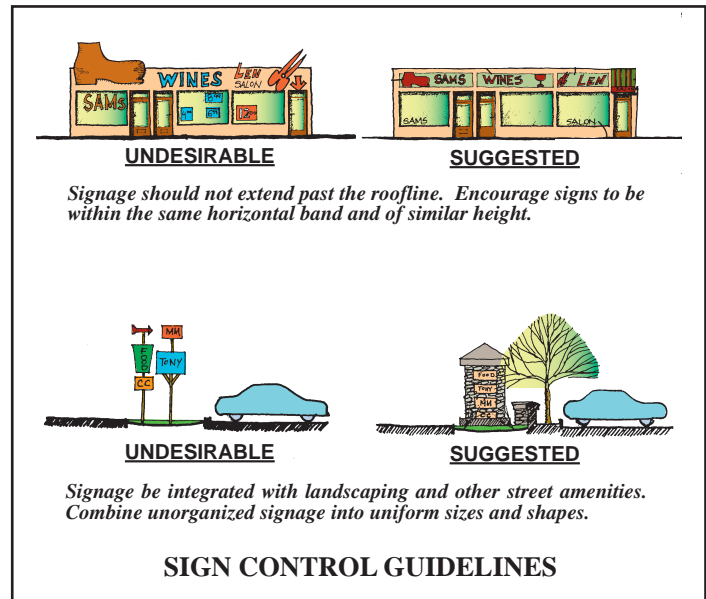
*Lack of landscaping and curbside pose a safety hazard to both drivers and pedestrians, and also provide an unattractive streetscape.*



*Proper landscaping and design treatment can provide a safer and more attractive atmosphere for existing highway development setback from the road.*



- Signs supports should be as slender as possible.
- Wherever possible, all freestanding signs should be eliminated by placing them on walls or fences and thus integrating them with other roadway elements.
- Signs should be of a regular shape (squares, rectangles, circles, ellipses, etc.). Awkward angles and unusual shapes, unless small and very deftly handled, disrupt the continuity of the streetscape.
- Lettering should be as small as possible; the signs should have a few words as possible.



## B. Conveyance Parcel

For over ten years, the Village of Highland Falls had negotiated with the United States Government for the potential annexation of approximately 250 acres of property that would provide potential tax ratables and jobs for the community. In 2006, an agreement was reached for a 50-year ground lease of approximately 248 acres of land, currently within the United States Military Academy boundaries. The property is located adjacent to the Village, just west of the Route 9W/Route 218 interchange. The Conveyance Parcel would be developed privately to grow and diversify the Village, Town and School District’s tax base, though the land would continue to be owned by the United States Government.

The Conveyance Parcel is characterized by its beauty and variety of terrain. It includes steep hillsides, water bodies, wetlands, woodland vegetation and rock outcrops along with other fields, which are well sited for development. Heading west from Route 9W and Highland Falls, the site rises in elevation providing views of West Point to the north, and the Hudson River, Hudson Highlands and Highland Falls to the east. The site currently has access to/from Route 9W at three locations, though at present, the primary access is via a shared entry drive with the Highland Falls – Fort Montgomery School District at the Route 218 interchange.

In the past, the Village evaluated the site for potential land uses and development constraints. Uses that were considered included a clustered community of senior housing, office/conference center uses, back office computer operations and a health spa retreat. Preliminary discussions between the Village and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) have indicated strong support for a balance of open space and development, which could include a senior housing project, an upscale hotel/conference center or an office/research facility. The Village of Highland Falls expressed little support for any type of large-scale retail development.

Currently, the ACOE is spearheading the effort to identify the highest and best use for the site and the developer selection process as follows:

- **Highest and Best Use Study** - The ACOE has contracted with an economics consulting firm to collect existing conditions data, determine site constraints and prepare a market study to determine the highest and best use for the Conveyance Parcel. After this initial phase of the project, a market analysis report will be produced and reviewed by the ACOE, the Mayor of the Village and other interested parties. The market analysis report would identify a highest and best use, and other marketable and feasible uses for the project site.
- **Notice of Intent to Lease** - Following the identification of potential land uses, the ACOE's consultant would prepare a document that establishes general parameters for site development and process requirements. The Notice of Intent to Lease provides guidelines for the proposed development, indicating which potential uses would be considered viable, and which, would not.
- **Advertise Concept to Development Community** - This Notice of Intent to Lease, similar to an RFQ, would be forwarded to an extensive database of developers.
- **Public Industry Forum** - After the RFQs are issued, the ACOE would sponsor an "Industry Forum" attended by interested developers. This forum provides an opportunity for developers to obtain additional information on the site, the specifications and discuss their conceptual proposals with the selection committee. Following the Industry Forum, interested applicants would have approximately 30 days to respond to the RFQ with their development proposals.
- **Source Selection Board** – This Committee comprised of the Mayor of the Village, representatives of the ACOE, and the consultant team, would evaluate the developer proposals and select one that best meets the goals and objectives of the Village and the US Government.
- **Leasing and Management Plan** – Following the selection of the developer, the proposal would be refined through a series of public design charettes at which residents of the Village, the Town, neighboring communities and the various interested agencies would have the opportunity to review and discuss the proposed project.
- **NEPA Environmental Review Process** - The final step in the process would involve the preparation of an Environmental Assessment, which could last approximately one year or an Environmental Impact Statement, which would likely last longer.

Given the above, the entire process could be completed in 2008, with a groundbreaking for initial development in 2009.

### **C. Consolidation of Municipal Services**

Both the Town of Highlands and the Village of Highland Falls identified consolidation of municipal facilities and services as a goal in their Comprehensive Plans, recognizing that the benefits of consolidation could include: more efficient provision of local services; more effective public administration for these services and potential cost savings for merging personnel, equipment and offices.

#### ***Progress Already Made in the Consolidation of Services***

In addition to the preparation of several studies, the Town and Village have made significant progress with regard to consolidation. Currently, they share the following facilities and services:

- **Department of Public Works** – The Town Highway Department and Sanitation Department provide service to the Town and the Village. Roadway maintenance, garbage and recycling pick up, and snow removal are all managed by a joint Department of Public Works, which increases efficiency, and limits and distributes the cost for these services between the municipalities.
- **Tax Assessor** - The Village and the Town share a tax assessor, whose office is located in Town Hall.
- **Ambulance Service** – The Town of Highlands Ambulance Corps (THAC) provides ambulance service to both the Village of Highland Falls and the Town of Highlands. The Town of Highlands Ambulance Tax District employs one full time paid EMT. It is anticipated that in three to five years, THAC will need to employ additional personnel to accommodate increasing demand. Because this is a joint service, any increase in tax burden required to hire additional personnel would be distributed to the Town and the Village.
- **Recreation Department** – The Town of Highlands Recreation Department provides recreation facilities and services to both the Village and the Town. In addition, the Village, the Town and the Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery School District share many recreation facilities.

As noted throughout the document, both the Town and the Village have indicated the need for additional ball fields and for a dedicated community center as the Recreation Department currently relies on space in the local schools for youth and senior programs and activities. Both the Town and the Village, and the Highland Falls – Fort Montgomery School District have indicated that the distribution of maintenance costs between the various entities should be reevaluated to better balance the cost loads. More coordination between these three entities should occur, particularly in light of the need for additional facilities.

- **Highland Falls Library** - The Highland Falls Library, which serves both the Village and the Town, is one of 47 members of the Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS), a state-funded system serving libraries in Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Southern Ulster County. In 2006, approximately 90 percent of the operating budget for the Highland Falls Library was provided from tax revenue from the Town of Highlands.

### *Additional Consolidation*

This Plan recommends that the Town and Village create a task force to determine whether it is in the public interest to consolidate the following services and facilities in these contiguous communities:

- **Wastewater Treatment Facilities** – Currently, the Village of Highland Falls and the Town of Highlands operate separate wastewater treatment plants. The Village STP currently has additional capacity. The Town’s STP is operating at capacity and has experienced inflow and infiltration issues during periods of heavy rain. By consolidating their wastewater treatment plants, the municipalities can help defray initial costs (and potentially apply jointly for grants), minimize land acquisition, and combine and reduce overall operating and maintenance costs. In addition, with one efficiently operating STP, the municipalities may be able to increase operating capacity, minimizing the need for further significant expansion.

- **Water Supply** - Water pressure and supply within the Village are adequate. Although water lines generally run to Garrison Pond (Franklin Street), no existing comprehensive public water supply infrastructure exists in the Town<sup>8</sup>. The Town of Highlands purchases approximately 75,000 gpd from the Village to serve some residents, while other Town residents, particularly those east of the Hamlet Center, are on individual wells. Contamination from a now defunct gas station and the deep rock topography has prevented the Town from developing an active and productive water source for the Hamlet. The Town has asked for land from West Point for additional wells and is in the process of testing additional wells to expand their water supply.
- **Department of Public Works (DPW)** – Currently, the Superintendent for the DPW heads a department that reports directly to the Village Board. In contrast, the Town of Highlands Highway Superintendent receives funding from the Town Board, but is more autonomous. The Town Highway Superintendent’s responsibilities include sanitation for both the Town and the Village.

It is suggested that the Village and Town consider combining their public works operations into one department. The consolidated DPW would employ a director, a professional engineer, who would oversee a number of related functions such as highways, sanitation, water, sewer and buildings.

- **Police Services** – At present, the Village and the Town maintain separate police forces, though the Town recently conducted a consolidation survey and also approached the New York State Police regarding their assuming police duties in the Town<sup>9</sup>. The Town of Highlands Police Department consists of 22 part time officers and one part time chief; one officer is on duty at all times. The Town Police Department is located in a temporary structure on Route 9W, where they have been located for 20 years, and are currently actively seeking more permanent space. The Village Police Department maintains a full time staff with part time officers as needed. Both the Village and the Town have expressed interest in consolidating their police forces. The advantages of consolidation include: one central location for departments, minimizing land acquisition, construction and maintenance costs and reduction of duplicative administrative services.

### *Separate Facilities*

This Plan recommends that the following services and facilities remain separate for the foreseeable future.

- **Fire Department** – Currently, the Village and the Town maintain separate volunteer fire departments. The Village Fire Department is a fifty member, 100 percent volunteer force. The Village owns their equipment though they lease their building from the Fire District. The Village does not currently own a ladder truck, and as such, relies on mutual aid departments to provide a ladder truck at fires.

The Fort Montgomery Fire Department is also a 100 percent volunteer department. The Fire Department owns their firehouse and rents their equipment from the Fire District. In addition, the Town pays rent to the Fire Department to park vehicles at the firehouse. In general, for daytime emergency service calls, the Highland Falls and Fort Montgomery fire departments would both be dispatched under an existing automatic aid agreement.

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<sup>8</sup> Water lines run under Firefighter’s Memorial Drive, but these lines are not hooked into anything.

<sup>9</sup> At the time of the survey, the New York State Police indicated that the Town of Highlands Police Department should continue to serve the emergency service needs of the Town of Highlands.

At present, both the Highland Falls and Fort Montgomery Fire Departments have indicated a preference to maintain separate fire departments and though they anticipate additional needs in the future, their emergency service capabilities are currently sufficient.

- **General Government Functions** –The Town of Highlands government is run by the Town Supervisor and a Town Council. The Village of Highland Falls operates with a Mayor and a Village Board of Trustees. Each municipality maintains separate administrative functions including a clerk, and building inspector, etc. This Plan recommends that the municipalities continue to function separately.

Notwithstanding continued separate governments, there are certain areas where joint actions could occur to help save money. Purchasing supplies may be less expensive, for example, if done jointly. Use of outside consultants (engineers, attorneys, etc.) could perhaps be more efficient if done in tandem, as has been the case for the Comprehensive Plan. A joint regional tourism strategy is recommended in the Plan, with funding for the Town and Village, and outside sources, which may be more inclined to participate if done in an inter-municipal manner. The Zoning Board of Appeals, a joint effort, is another example of consolidation. Though the Town and the Village maintain separate Planning Boards, the responsibilities of the Zoning Board have been consolidated. Through discussion with various members, it appears that this arrangement has worked well for both municipalities and should therefore continue.

## D. Regional Tourism

The Town of Highlands and Village of Highland Falls identified strengthening tourism as a key short-term economic development goal. To achieve this goal, the communities need to increase the marketing of recreational, cultural and historic resources located in the Town and Village and also capitalize on their unique location between many existing popular tourist attractions. The Plan provides information on existing regional tourism organizations with which the communities' can partner, identifies opportunities to increase tourism activities, and offers strategies to maximize these resources and activities. The Plan incorporates the existing Village, Town and Chamber of Commerce activities and integrates the Goals and Objectives developed during the planning process to produce proposals for the continued marketing of these important communities throughout the Hudson Valley and beyond.

The Village of Highland Falls and the Town of Highlands are exceptionally well located amidst rich and historically significant architectural, recreational and cultural resources. In addition, the central and riverfront location, varied topography and historic, recreational and cultural attractions within and surrounding the Town of Highlands and the Village of Highland Falls put these communities in a unique position to maximize their connection to existing resources and attract more visitors to the area. While some coordinated tourism and marketing efforts exist within the region, the Village and Town should undertake efforts to continue to promote their communities as tourist attractions.

### *Regional Approach*

Many tourist organizations located throughout the Hudson Valley provide information on sites, activities and programs available to visitors to the area. On a regional level, Orange, Rockland, Putnam and Westchester Counties have tourism offices and chambers of commerce, with extensive databases and websites providing information and links to local events. These websites not only provide valuable resources on special events, activities and attractions, but also on transportation, lodging, restaurants, and shopping.

In addition to events located within the Town and Village, many adjacent local communities sponsor special events, which bring people from outside the area to visit. These include: cultural heritage festivals, Renaissance Fairs, skiing events, Civil War reenactments, antique and custom car shows, food festivals, and concert series. Highlands and Highland Falls can coordinate with neighboring communities to publicize these events and potentially offer cooperative events. Providing community sponsored buses to and from local events would encourage visitors initially attracted to an event in a different Town, to come to Highlands and Highland Falls.

The communities can also capitalize on their location adjacent to the Appalachian Trail, which crosses the Bear Mountain Bridge. Many trail and hiking related brochures, pamphlets and websites can provide links to local chambers of commerce, lodging and restaurant information for Highlands and Highland Falls. Currently, some trail and hiking related websites provide links to the Hamlet of Fort Montgomery, however, no further information is provided. Using these existing opportunities to publicize the Town and Village is an easy and immediate way to get information out to users.

In addition to the Appalachian Trail crossing and the many hiking opportunities at Bear Mountain and the Palisades Parks, the region offers a variety of other outdoor activities including bicycling, swimming, ice skating, canoeing, rafting and tubing, horseback riding. Outdoor races and activities, which pass through several communities, provide a particularly good opportunity for tourism involvement by Highlands and Highland Falls. The Avon Foundation sponsors an annual relay race, which begins at the Bear Mountain Bridge and ends in New Rochelle. The Town of Highlands and Village of Highland Falls can pursue providing buses, lodging, food and beverages to race participants.



*The historic Bear Mountain Inn*

Hudson River excursion tours of the area include: Trans-Hudson ferry service between Peekskill and West Point, NY Waterway offers cruises from West 38th Street in Manhattan to Tarrytown; and River Rose Tours and Cruises offers sightseeing cruises and private rentals of paddlewheel boats on the Hudson originating in the revitalized waterfront of Newburgh, New York. The unique location of Highlands and Highland Falls and the potential development of riverfront access/marinas offers new opportunities to connect with existing tours and draw in sailors and boaters from the Hudson River.

The Town and Village can connect with surrounding communities to create a new regional tourism organization. Partnering with Rockland, Orange, and Putnam Counties and Garrison and Cold Spring would create the opportunity for Highlands and Highland Falls to establish a common regional identity. This identity could focus on common histories, including the Revolutionary War and Native American history; the Hudson River, open space resources, and local architecture. A regional tourism organization would allow the various communities to join together for special events, education programs and

celebrations. The organization could develop its own logo, newsletter, and videos and design and install common signage and street banners. By holding regular meetings, this regional organization could become a powerful information source and resource for residents, visitors and private entities looking to hold events or develop attractions in the region. The regional organization could pursue public/private partnerships to promote activities and attractions.

In the short term, the Village and the Town can work closely with on going inter-municipal and regional tourism efforts. There are many existing regional environmental, governmental and tourist organizations in the Hudson Valley including: Hudson River Valley Greenway, the National Parks Service, the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, I Love NY, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and many others. Such established groups can provide technical support to Highlands and Highland Falls to:

- Publicize local events on existing regional tourism websites;
- Provide links on regional tourism websites to local restaurants, hotels, and shopping; and
- Coordinate with existing historic and military battlefield tours and reenactments.

For example, the Hudson River Valley Greenway (HRVG) is a New York State agency created to develop a “regional strategy for preserving scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources while encouraging compatible economic development and maintaining the tradition of home rule for land use decision-making.”<sup>10</sup> Currently, both the Village of Highland Falls and the Town of Highlands are Hudson River Valley Greenway Compact Communities. Participation in the Hudson River Valley Greenway planning program is voluntary and communities, which participate, can receive technical assistance and funding for local land use planning projects, which support the goals of the Greenway program. The Village and the Town can utilize these existing resources to promote existing tourist related development efforts.

Providing public access to the Hudson River is a key recreation and tourism goal for both the Village and the Town. Currently, the Greenway is developing the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail (HRGWT) and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, both of which aim to preserve, protect and interpret 156 miles of Hudson River waterfront. The HRGWT focuses on the improvement of public access to the Hudson River, and the diversity and heritage of the riverside communities of the Hudson River Valley. A series of public festivals are held near several stopover points along the Hudson River. Since 2002 the HRVG has designated seventy-one sites as part of the HRGWT, installed a dozen informational kiosks, provided marker flags to designated sites with flag poles, partnered with the Hudson River Watertrail Association, Inc. to update their guidebook and make it the official guide of HRGWT, added a signs program and awarded over \$300,000 in Water Trail Grants. The Village and the Town should coordinate with the HRVB for partnering, and funding opportunities.

Another important regional organization with which the Village and Town have previously partnered is Scenic Hudson, which works with local communities, residents, developers, and other regional and state organizations to control growth and promote preservation along the Hudson River. Scenic Hudson has been actively involved with the Town of Highlands in the preservation of important historic structures at Fort Montgomery and will continue to be involved in the potential development of marinas in both

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us/>

the Town and the Village. While Scenic Hudson's focus is not on tourism, they will provide valuable resources and guidance for any tourist related waterfront development in these communities.

The Orange County Department of Tourism, located in Goshen, NY provides extensive information on local and regional events and highlights the United States Military Academy at West Point on its website. The website (<http://www.orangetourism.org>) contains a great regional map, lists contact information for events, hotels, restaurants, transit and has one link to Hudson Valley Tourism. The Village and Town can coordinate with the County to ensure that they provide additional information about and links to Highlands and Highland Falls destinations.

### *Localized Tourism Efforts*

In addition to the general tourism goals discussed earlier in this section, through the comprehensive planning process, the Village and Town committees identified specific goals and objectives to promote local tourism and support economic development.

Within and immediately adjacent to the Town of Highlands and the Village of Highland Falls are many activities that attract tourists to the region. A variety of cultural and historic sites including Fort Montgomery, The United States Military Academy at West Point, the Hudson Highlands, Bear Mountain State Park, the Appalachian Trail, and many others draw people to the area and provide the Town and Village with the opportunity to draw these visitors to their communities for extended visits. The Village of Highland Falls Historic Downtown Plan, prepared in December 2003, recommended specific signage design and plan for the Village to promote the historic downtown as a destination in and of itself, as well as a place to stop on the way to West Point. The communities can explore creative ways to highlight and celebrate their rich history and architecturally significant buildings including commemorative plaques, decorative pavers and interpretive signage, which can be installed along primary gateways to direct visitors to the community.



*Entry signage to the Village of Highland Falls*

Both the Village and the Town currently have some regulations in place to protect and preserve environmental features within the municipalities, however, the Comprehensive Plan includes additional techniques to ensure these important attractions remain viable for years to come. For example, the Town Plan calls for ridgeline protection, minimizing glare from lighting and upgrading building facades in the hamlet center. The Village Plan recommends design guidelines focusing on façade and streetscape beautification, and landscaped screening along Route 218. Incentive and grant programs are available to assist in funding these efforts.

Both the Village and the Town stated interest in working with the Chamber of Commerce to prepare a new tourism brochure highlighting not only the tourist sites and attractions within the Village, but also regional attractions. The brochure would include contact information for local hotels, bed and breakfasts, and restaurants. This brochure can be made available at a number of visitor's centers including: along the Palisades Interstate Parkway, Boscobel, Woodbury Commons, at Bear Mountain Park, at the Fort Montgomery Visitor's Center, and at the United States Military Academy at West Point.



Developing a website is a key component of the overall tourism plan. The website casts a wider net, gives the Village the opportunity to attract visitors from farther afield and can be frequently updated to provide information on seasonal events, upgrades to local hotels, bed & breakfasts and restaurants. The Village can provide links to and from regional tourism websites to Village of Highland Falls destinations. For example, currently, the Village of Highland Falls website <http://www.highlandfallsny.com> promotes the Village as the “Gateway to West Point” and includes links and information about different sites



*The Military Academy at West Point Visitors Center*

and accommodations available at the United States Military Academy at West Point. However, the West Point Visitor’s Center website, <http://www.usma.edu/publicaffairs/vic.htm>, does not currently provide links to tourism resources in the Village of Highland Falls. The Town and the Village can work with West Point to coordinate information on their respective websites, provide cross-promotions for lodging and dining in the Village during USMA athletic activity weekends.

### *Next Steps*

Short term implementation of the tourism plan would involve coordinating directly with existing regional tourism, government and recreational organizations, to provide links on their website to Highlands and Highland Falls attractions. This would be an immediate, relatively low cost alternative, which could be pursued using existing resources.

The Town and Village could pursue grants to fund more capital intensive tourism initiatives including producing a brochure and developing a website. The formation a regional tourism organization can be spearheaded by the Town and Village, which would develop fund raising policies and goals to self-perpetuate.

For a more comprehensive tourism outreach program, the Village and the Town should pursue hiring an economic development consultant to prepare a regional tourism feasibility study. The study could involve inventorying existing tourism resources, developing recommendations for outreach and partnering opportunities with other local and regional organizations including Putnam and Orange Counties. The Village and Town would form a selection committee, which should also include representatives from tourism agencies. The committee would develop and issue an RFP for developer interest and evaluate the proposals. Because this may be a joint effort, funding the tourism feasibility study could be derived from the municipal budget. However, Putnam, Rockland and Orange Counties could also provide funding for a study with a regional scope.

## VIII. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### A. Zoning Update

The proposed zoning text and map changes are described in Chapter VI of this Comprehensive Plan. The most important changes are:

- Reductions in the land areas zoned B-1 and R-5, where current zoning potentially affects existing residential neighborhoods;
- Reducing the R-5 density from 17.4 units to 8 units per acre;
- Rezoning the parcel focused on in the Waterfront Residential Impact study from R-2, B-1 and R-5, to R-5 with density reduced in the R-5; and
- Rezoning of some areas along Route 218 to commercial, with additional design controls that address aesthetic concerns.

Proposed text amendments call for reductions in the area zoned R-5 along Route 218 where unplanned redevelopment for multifamily use could adversely affect surrounding homes within the neighborhood. Additionally, the Plan recommends a reduction of the size of the B-1 zone behind Village Hall, as it currently extends through the entire residential area up to Center Street. As previously noted, the B-1 District is proposed to focus on properties along Main Street with revised B-1 regulations that include downtown lot and bulk controls and provide incentives for redevelopment. To the south of this Main Street area, an updated B-2 highway commercial district is proposed with added lot and bulk controls designed to minimize undesirable aspects of strip commercial development.

Perhaps, the most important text changes are those relating to the lot and bulk controls in the B-1 and B-2 zones and density changes in the R-5 zone. Although the changes proposed in the Plan are specific, they would need to be further discussed and refined prior to the public hearing and adoption, addressing ownership and potential non-conforming issues, among others. These map changes should be studied in detail by the Village Board and Planning Board, and then implemented as a priority item.

### B. Downtown Revitalization

The Plan recommends the implementation of the design proposals set forth in the 2003 Historic Downtown Plan, including façade improvements, street and sidewalk amenities, landscaping and proposals designed to provide linkages to the West Point Visitor's Center. Implementation of these recommendations requires expenditure of funds that are often available from State and Federal sources, including HUD's Community Development Small Cities program, for example. The Village has established an excellent track record securing available funding, and should continue to do so as funds become available.

Notwithstanding this ongoing revitalization effort, the Village needs to pursue some more ambitious efforts to address issues in its downtown area. As recommended in the Plan, the Village should create additional off-street parking either on the east side or the west side of Main Street (or both) behind commercial properties. This would likely require the use of eminent domain for the purchase of private property. Alternatively, the Village could attempt to create critically needed off-street parking as part of a public-private partnership with a developer that would bring new commercial and residential

development to Main Street, along with necessary parking. For such a development to occur, the Village would have to allow increased density. Purchase of private property could be realized with private sector monies; however, the mechanism for acquisition, demolition, relocation and disposition of land would probably be processed through a Village adopted urban renewal plan, prepared under Article 15 of New York State General Municipal Law.

This plan suggests that the Village move in a pro-active manner in pursuant of its downtown renewal. It should undertake a blight study as required by Article 15, declare the area suitable for renewal and then prepare an urban renewal plan for the area that would be a useful tool in the process of seeking potential private sector redevelopment and outside funding sources.

The residents residing in the new downtown housing that would be realized as a result of this redevelopment would provide additional purchasing power for Main Street shops and restaurants. Additional residential development on nearby vacant land would provide additional customers to the Village downtown. This would include the lower portion of Mountain Avenue, south of Buttermilk Brook, where a mixed-use redevelopment should also be pursued as part of a gateway plan for that area.

To further implement downtown revitalization, the Village should pursue the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) as an entity that could raise money for promotional activities, marketing, clean up programs, etc., augmenting what the Village itself can do to revitalize its downtown. With powers greater than a Chamber of Commerce, the BID would be the catalyst for downtown improvements, working with a budget derived from an assessment of each property owner.

Among other activities, the BID could promote a quality signage program in Highland Falls, following some of the already existing storefront signs, banners and directional signage. Sign design guidelines should be considered. Sign design grants should be incorporated into any commercial rehabilitation effort. The Planning Board should also review signage as part of site plan and Special Exception Permit approvals.

### **C. Economic Development**

Economic development in Highland Falls includes efforts to:

- Revitalize the downtown area, as described above;
- Develop portions of the Conveyance Parcel; and
- Promote tourism as part of a multi-community, regional effort.

The economic development activities are designed to bring additional taxes and jobs to Highland Falls and to identify the community as a desirable place to visit and shop. Downtown revitalization strategies and development of the Conveyance Parcel are described in Chapter VII of this Plan.

The regional tourism concept is also presented in Chapter VII of this Plan. As indicated, the Chamber of Commerce, which includes both the Village of Highland Falls and Fort Montgomery in the Town of Highlands should be the local focal point for the regional tourism effort, working with Village, Town, County and State government officials, and representatives for each of the major attractions in the area. As previously discussed, the opportunity to promote the Village and Town as part of a regional tourist destination in the Hudson Valley would bring people from the entire New York region, and beyond, to the myriad of historic and natural attractions in the Hudson River Valley.

Shuttle bus service between attractions, services for visitors arriving by boat, and promotional material that describe the tourist attractions, along with Village shopping and dining opportunities, would require the expenditure of funds derived from a variety of sources. In order to specifically establish a program and budget, it is suggested that the Village and Town issue a Request for Proposals and then contract with a economic consultant for preparation of regional tourism feasibility study. Funding for such a study could be derived from municipal budgets; however, given the nature of the regional tourism concept, it is suggested that such a study be financed with Orange (and perhaps Putnam) County dollars. The role of the Chamber, the Village and others should be clearly defined in the feasibility study.

#### **D. Neighborhood Preservation**

The Village needs to continue its efforts to preserve the quality of its various residential neighborhoods. This includes a combination of code enforcement and public improvement actions. The Village should consider the adoption of a Landlord Registration Law that would help ensure that apartments are not rented illegally or contain overcrowded conditions that could result in safety hazards. Through available funding sources from HUD or New York State, the Village should continue past efforts to provide housing rehabilitation loans and grants. Complementing these various housing efforts, the Village should improve area streets, sidewalks and utility systems where deficiencies exist. Given the hilly terrain, special attention needs to be given to stormwater management.

#### **E. Recreation and Open Space**

Although there is a significant need for additional active and passive recreation, including both indoor and outdoor facilities, obstacles include limited land and limited financial resources.

Given this situation, the Village should immediately pursue the acquisition of some riverfront land in the northeastern portion of the Village as a joint public-private partnership in conjunction with private development activity in this area. This could include a boat launch, canoe or kayaking site.

Also in conjunction with private sector developers, the Village should pursue a policy that calls for the establishment of connected open space system and trail network, including portions of the Conveyance Parcel. Cluster development south of a potentially expanded Roe Park could provide further pedestrian/open space connections to Route 218 and beyond.

Active recreation facilities should be constructed on the High School grounds as a joint Town/Village/School District project. Within the Village, expansion of Roe Park should also be considered, utilizing outside grants to the extent possible.

The steep topography along the Hudson River and along Route 9W should be preserved as open space. As part of downtown and Mountain Avenue redevelopments, Buttermilk Brook should be opened up for view as a scenic resource.

#### **F. Plan Adoption and Environmental Review Under (SEQRA)**

Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan is a Type I Action under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The Comprehensive Plan does not have to be adopted under New York law; however, if adopted, it would be a stronger, more effective policy document. Certain plan recommendations, including zoning text and map changes, and site specific developments would also

require a SEQRA review prior to adoption or approval. If these items are covered in one generic review of the Comprehensive Plan, subsequent environmental reviews can be more streamlined.

In the event that the Village decides to pursue a full Generic Environmental Impact Statement, it would follow the basic SEQRA procedural steps as outlined below.

The initial steps in the SEQRA process would include lead agency determination, adoption of a positive declaration requiring preparation of a generic DEIS, and optional scoping. This would be followed by the development of the draft impact statement, a policy document that recasts the Comprehensive Plan as the Proposed Action, and describes impacts, mitigation measures and alternatives. After a public hearing, which would be held on both the Comprehensive Plan and the DGEIS, a Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement would be prepared, responding in broad policy terms to the comments from the public and various outside agencies. Comments from the County and surrounding communities on the Comprehensive Plan would be sought and responded to in the FGEIS. After review of the FGEIS, the Village Board would consider and adopt an Environmental Findings Statement followed by formal adoption of the Plan.

Alternatively, the Village could decide to consider adoption of the Comprehensive Plan based on an Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) and evaluation of environmental/community issues and impacts. The same depth and scope of analysis can be accomplished in an Expanded EAF as an EIS. This analysis could result in a Negative Declaration (i.e., with no Draft Generic EIS provided). This procedure could require a subsequent more extensive SEQRA review for the implementation techniques, such as the adoption of zoning text and map changes.

## **APPENDIX I: WATERFRONT RESIDENTIAL IMPACT STUDY**

With the development evaluated in this study, the Village of Highland Falls has an opportunity to address its need for further senior and workforce housing development, while also preserving valuable open space along the Hudson River.

The site of this study is an approximately 35-acre parcel along the east side of Route 218, just south of Havens Road. After the deduction for steep slopes, only about 7 acres of this parcel remain buildable. This parcel is currently zoned B-1 at its frontage along Route 218, R-5 on the northern half of the site that includes an existing multi-family apartment building, and R-2 along its southern half.

To avoid commercial development similar to the adjacent uses to the north, it is proposed that the zoning along the frontage of the property be rezoned to a residential use. In order to provide the greatest benefit to the community socially and economically, the R-2 and B-1 areas of the parcel should be rezoned to R-5, with the caveat that the Village amends its R-5 zoning from an allowed density of 17.4 units per acre to 8 units per acre.

The impact of potential development of this site was examined for R-2 and several possible R-5 densities (see table). Impact categories include population generated, school and pre-school aged children, school tax revenues and costs, total tax revenues, water and sewer utilization and traffic generation.

The existing R-2 zoning allows a maximum density of 2.2 units per acre. This density would allow 15 single-family homes that would increase the Village population by 57 persons. The 15 units would generate about \$200,000 in Village, Town, County and School taxes. The \$98,000 in school taxes that would be generated would not meet the actual burden of the 13 school aged children from new development.

The existing R-5 zoning allows a maximum of 17.4 units per acre. Under this density, 125 units could be built, that would increase the population by 259. The 259 units would generate \$830,000 in total taxes. The \$410,000 in school taxes generated by the new development would exceed the burden of \$145,000 in school costs created by 17 new school children.

The proposed R-5 zoning would allow a maximum allowed density of 8 units per acre. This proposed density would allow for 58 new units that would increase the Village population by 120. This new development would generate \$385,000 in total tax revenue. The \$190,000 in school taxes generated by the development would exceed the \$69,000 increase in school costs. The R-5 zoning at 8 units per acre results in impacts that are beneficial to the community and less intrusive to the environment. While traffic and utility impacts are greater than in the R-2 option, the effects are considered to be manageable.

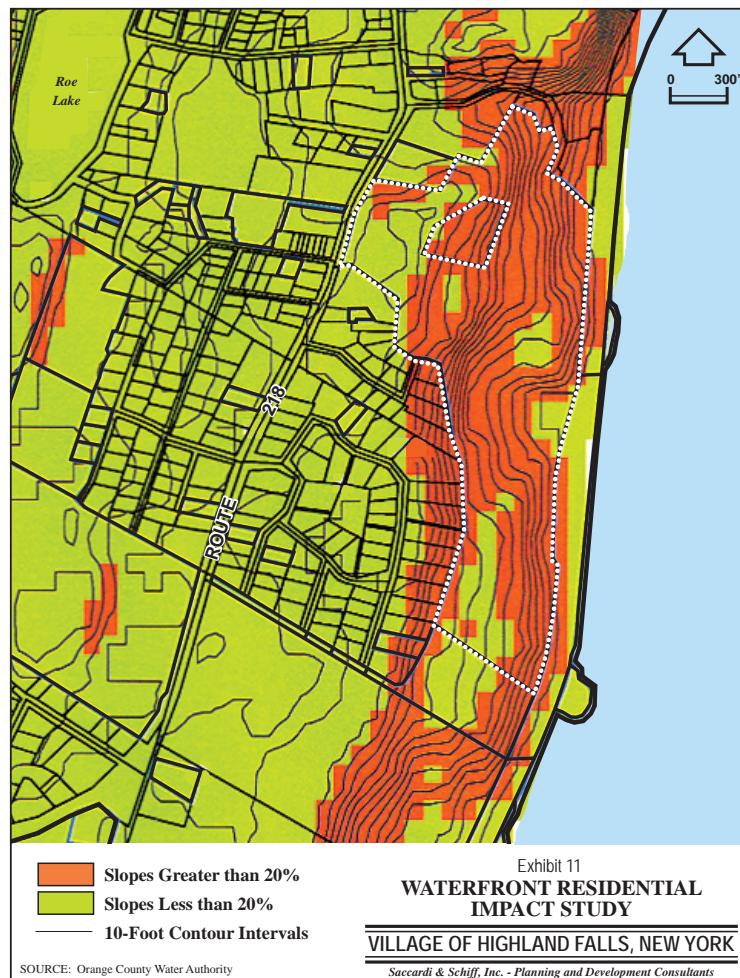
**Table App. I-1**  
**Village of Highland Falls - Waterfront Study - Tax Map No.105-5-6.21 - 35 Acre Parcel**

Potential Zoning	Density (Max Units per Acre)	Buildable Area	No. of Units	Population <sup>1</sup>	School Children (K-12) <sup>2</sup>	Children Aged Pre-K <sup>3</sup>	School Costs <sup>4</sup>	School Taxes <sup>5</sup>	Total Taxes (Village, County, Town, School)
R-2	2.2	7.2 Acres	15	57	13	7	\$111,800	\$98,206	\$200,026
R-5 (Current)	17.4	7.2 Acres	125	259	17	14	\$146,200	\$409,193	\$833,441
R-5 (Possible)	8.0	7.2 Acres	58	120	8	6	\$68,800	\$189,865	\$386,717

**Table App. I-2**  
**Effect on Infrastructure**

Potential Zoning	Sewage Effluent (gallons per day) <sup>6</sup>	Water Usage (gallons per day) <sup>7</sup>	Trip Generation <sup>8</sup>	
			AM	PM
R-2	3,900	4,500	12	15
R-5 (Current)	15,080	17,400	55	65
R-5 (Possible)	32,500	37,500	26	30

<sup>1</sup> 2.0685 persons per 2-bedroom townhouse and 3.6248 persons per 4-bedroom single-family home in the Northeastern U.S. Urban Land Use Institute (ULI): "Development Impact Assessment Handbook" p. 295.  
<sup>2</sup> .8738 children/4-bedroom single-family home, .1393 children per 2-bedroom townhouse in the NE U.S. ULI p. 296.  
<sup>3</sup> .4756 children per 4-bedroom single-family home, .1111 children per 2-bedroom townhouse in the NE U.S. ULI p. 298.  
<sup>4</sup> Estimate from the HFFMCSO that the tax burden per student is \$8,600.  
<sup>5</sup> Based on single-family building units with a Fair Market Value of \$600,000 and townhouses of \$300,000.  
<sup>6</sup> 130 gallons per bedroom per day. NYSDOH: "Individual Residential Wastewater Treatment Systems Design Handbook."  
<sup>7</sup> 150 gallons per bedroom per day. NYSDEC: "Design Standards for Wastewater Treatment Works."  
<sup>8</sup> .77 AM Peak trips and 1.02 PM Peak trips per Single Family home. .44 AM Peak trips and .52 PM Peak trips per townhouse. ITE Trip Generation Vol. 7.



## APPENDIX II: BUILDOUT ANALYSIS

To analyze the potential and limits of future development, the Village must understand the limited capacity of its vacant and underutilized land. The Buildout Analysis for the Village of Highland Falls is shown in Table II-1, and graphically in Exhibit 12.

If future development/redevelopment efforts in the Village follow patterns in the proposed land use map, approximately 220 residential units could be added to the existing housing stock over time. This estimate of residential units would be the result of redevelopment and infill efforts in the R-4 district in the northernmost portion of the Village (Area A as shown in Exhibit 2), redevelopment and infill efforts in the R-5 and B-1 district in the center of the Village (Area B), the Waterfront Residential Study Parcel adjacent to the Hudson River (Area C), two parcels in the R-3 district south of Roe Park (Area D and E), and the large parcel in the R-2 district on the west side of Main Street in the southern portion of the Village (Area F). The Village Zoning Ordinance currently allows for Planned Residential Development (PRD) in the R-2, R-3 and R-4 zoning districts. PRD is a special permit use requiring Planning Board approval, whereby an Applicant is eligible for residential bonuses in exchange for open space preservation. Under the existing zoning, the targeted development areas (A,B,C,D,E and F on Exhibit 10) could yield 195 units; if developed under a PRD, the aforementioned areas D, E and F could yield approximately 25 additional units, potentially producing up to 220 residential units (see Table II-1 below).

**Table II-1  
Potential Buildout Units**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	<b>Potential Units Under Proposed Zoning</b>	<b>Residential Type</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>R-4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Single-Family</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>R-5/B-1</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Multi-Family</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>R-5</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>Multi-Family</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>20 (25 PRD)</b>	<b>Single-Family</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>20 (25 PRD)</b>	<b>Single-Family</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>R-2</b>	<b>35 (50 PRD)</b>	<b>Single-Family</b>
	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>195 (220 under PRD)</b>	



