

THE TOWN OF MARBLETOWN

DRAFT

HAMLET STRATEGIC PLAN;
PZC TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS
For Stone Ridge and High Falls

The Marbletown Planning and Zoning Committee
Hamlet Task Force



Prepared as part of
A Sustainable Economic Development Plan

June 2011

**Prepared as part of
A Sustainable Economic Development Plan
for
The Town of Marbletown**

In consultation with:
Fairweather Consulting, New Paltz, NY

HAMLET TASK FORCE

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*Cover: Marbletown Emblem by Barbara Bash created for Walkway Over the Hudson
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Section I: INTRODUCTION

A. ABOUT THE HAMLET STRATEGIC PLAN

The intention of the Hamlet Strategic Plan is to promote discussion and action among residents, the business community, and local government on the best ways to assure a sustainable local economy and, more specifically, to enhance our quality of life through improvements to the two commercial hamlets; Stone Ridge and High Falls. This document is designed to further some of the key guiding concepts for Marbletown's social and economic base as introduced in the Town's Comprehensive Plan (Town Plan). It is a set of strategies and recommendations offered to the Town Board as it works to maintain a successful balance between environmental and historic preservation, social well-being, moderate growth and economic opportunity.

Planning for economic development has long been identified by the Town as a primary goal. But current conditions appear to be creating a new and more immediate need for exploration and action. At the time this project was initiated over a year ago, concerns about the prospect of a downward shift in national prosperity, and the adverse effect of economic conditions on the local situation made prompt action seem all the more critical. Since that time, these concerns have burgeoned rather than abated. The number of children in the local school district (Rondout Valley Central) is shrinking. 2010 census data reveals a population decrease (-4.2%) in Marbletown since 2000. New York State budgetary challenges are affecting schools and local governments, and the climate for small business and retail is challenging. It now appears more than ever that heightened efforts for collaborative planning are the key to securing a healthy future and maintaining the integrity of the community we treasure.

The report that follows is the result of the collective efforts of The Hamlet Task Force, a volunteer group of residents working at the request of the Town Board through the Planning and Zoning Committee (PZC), with policy review and drafting assistance from Peter Fairweather of Fairweather Consulting of New Paltz, NY, a specialist in local economic and land-use planning. The task force was created so as to include residents with diverse interests, expertise, and opinions. This text reflects that variety in that it captures a shared vision while offering a range of ideas that have generated healthy debate among task force members. The Town is grateful for the additional assistance of community members Charles Cullen for providing historic photos (page 8), Andy Lutz for acting as facilitator of the October 2009 community workshop on hamlet planning, and Planning and Zoning Secretary Maggie Colan for administrative support.

A range of recommendations, small and large, short

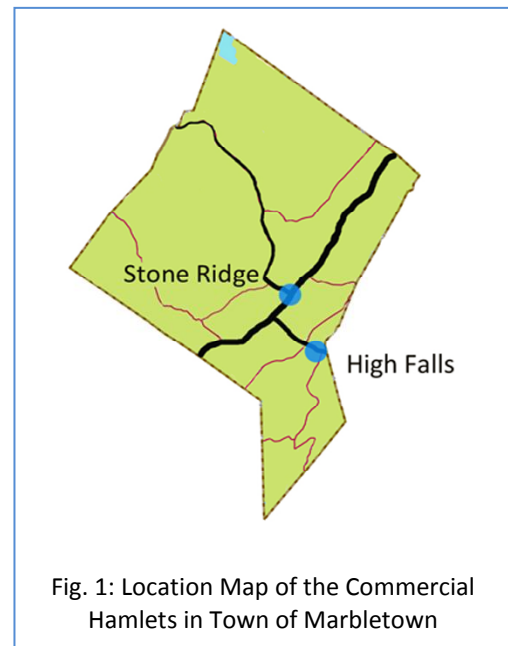


Fig. 1: Location Map of the Commercial Hamlets in Town of Marbletown

and long term, have been proposed in order to provide the essentials of a vibrant rural way of life. [These recommendations are for furtherance under the direction of the Town Board, and via governmental protocol for the spending of town funds, the seeking of outside consultation and grant funding, project implementation, and the solicitation of input from residents.](#)

We expect that this local effort will be engaged constructively as a call for responsible, collective action in seizing opportunities and facing challenges together, as the diverse, talented, and fortunate community that we are.

This document was made possible by a generous matching grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Grant Program.

B. THE TOWN PLAN AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE MARBLETOWN COMMUNITY

Marbletown received its patent in 1703. Since that time over three hundred years have passed, and still the Town's character is defined by the scenic landscape, rich farm soils and mountain views that no doubt attracted its early Dutch settlers.

These attributes remain today, along with many acres of active farmland and the seven historic hamlets that provide focal points for our rural neighborhoods. Marbletown's current population of approximately 5,900 is made up of a mix of long time local families, more recently arrived full-time residents, and weekend homeowners from the New York Metropolitan area. The hamlets of Stone Ridge and High Falls are the two commercial centers, providing services, shopping, and recreation for this diverse community.

One of the most significant changes to the town since its inception was Ulster County's decision to locate its Community College in Stone Ridge. The SUNY Ulster Stone Ridge campus opened in 1967 and has since become one of the success stories of the New York State community college system. The College now provides a wide menu of course offerings to over 3,000 students each year. In addition to an extensive network of classrooms, the campus boasts a large gymnasium, athletic fields, a modern library, a 500- seat theatre, an art gallery, conference rooms, and a daycare center. The college has become a valuable community resource and a venue for all kinds of cultural events that are open to the public.

In recent decades, the Town Government of Marbletown has maintained a strong record of listening to its residents, summoning available local expertise, and soliciting input on significant issues and changing collective needs, concerns, and opinions of the community. The resulting input has proven an effective guide for decision-making in the realms of zoning, capital projects, programs and financial planning. A professional survey conducted in 1997 by the town provided a major source of information and was an important springboard for action in subsequent years. During the same period, design guidelines were put in place for the business districts in the Town.

In the late 1990s the Community Development Committee and the Planning and Zoning Committee (PZC) became strong vehicles for new projects. Through a follow-up survey and a town-wide visioning workshop series in 2000 and 2002, ideas for action were prioritized and projects were selected for implementation, including but not limited to: the creation of the Marbletown Community Center, a renewed focus on the Rail Trail, the revitalization of the Environmental Conservation Commission, various land preservation efforts, and the formation of a Marbletown Arts Association. The information gained from the two written surveys and the visioning workshops were used in revising of the Town's Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2005.

Marbletown's Comprehensive Plan (also referred to as the "Town Plan") begins with a visioning statement. This vision for the future of Marbletown is:

"...one in which we will conserve open space, preserve our farmland and promote sound and responsible development through proactive planning."

At the same time, the Town Plan places special emphasis on the importance of preserving the qualities that make Marbletown unique and special:

*"...the rural character and small town atmosphere of our community...(we) embrace sound planning as a tool to balance growth and conservation."
(See Section IV, References: "Marbletown Town Plan, adopted Jan 2005")*

The Town Plan in Marbletown was specifically designed as a "living document", to [be reviewed periodically](#) and amended as planning work was completed and times and needs of the community changed.

With the new Town Plan completed, the Town launched a succession of key initiatives designed to answer the call for the protection of cherished natural resources, view-sheds, and farmland. Programs and plans put in place since 2005 include:

- 2006: Conservation Subdivision Regulations
- 2006: The passing of a referendum to authorize borrowing up to two million dollars for municipal Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)
- 2008: The adoption of the Marbletown Natural Heritage Plan
- 2010: The creation of a Farmland Protection Plan for the Town

In recognition of the value of its cultural history, the Town Board passed an Historic Heritage Law in 2007 which allows for the bestowing of local landmark status upon significant historic structures, thereby affording them special protection against irreparable alteration and demolition.

Just as the Town Plan speaks to the importance of preservation, so does it encourage the Town to protect its economic base and to allow for growth that is compatible with its existing character and quality of life. [Indeed, the town's ability to meet the challenge of preserving the](#)

qualities that have attracted new residents while maintaining Town residents' financial capacity to keep their roots here is identified as a future measure of its success. This challenge requires that new development be in keeping with the Town's (and the Hamlets') existing scale and character. These ideas include:

- Strengthening of Stone Ridge and High Falls as the focal points of activity in the Town.
- Increasing the depth of the hamlets where practical.
- Providing housing opportunities for the full economic and age range of the Town's population.
- Encouraging development in the two commercial hamlets as consistent with available infrastructure, design guidelines and protection of natural resources.
- Encouragement of small business, services and four season tourism.

Past surveys and visioning results show, alongside clear warnings against traffic and over-development, a strong interest in:

- The development of sidewalks and trails
- Infrastructure improvements
- Local niche businesses like shops and restaurants
- Recreation and tourism
- Senior housing
- Arts and culture

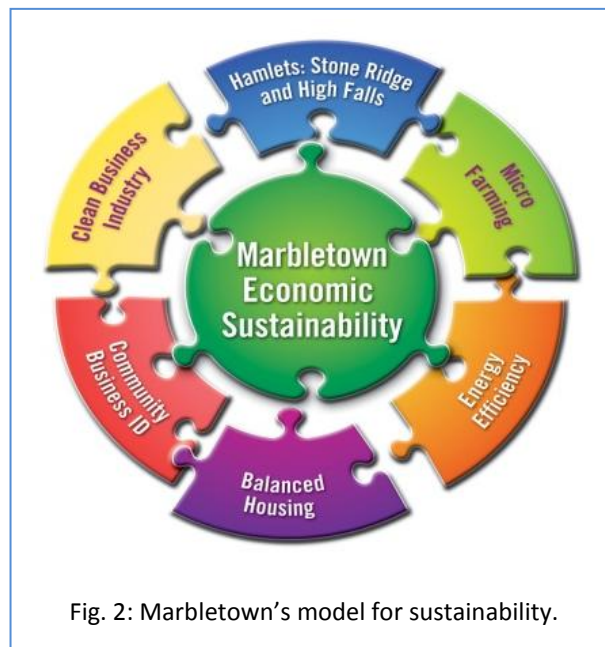
Some progress has been made in these areas, but there is more to be accomplished. Success will require a delicate balance: in order to sustain amenities like these a town needs a thriving, diverse community and a structure that supports them – both within the town and in the surrounding area. Yet it is only in having such amenities that a municipality can attract and retain a younger and economically innovative population, and entice visitors from outside of town.

In the context of this balancing act, community development and economic development are closely related. With progressive zoning laws and vehicles for land preservation now solidly in place, Marbletown is ready to turn to the task of considering how to direct future growth and business development in ways that will allow the town to thrive, and that will complement, not detract from, what is treasured about it.

C. A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SEDP) FOR MARBLETOWN

In 2009 the Marbletown Planning and Zoning Committee devised a strategy to address the economic and development-related themes touched on in the Town Plan. A comprehensive and integrated economic development strategy for Marbletown would be created that, if followed, could allow the community to evolve over the next decades in a way that is equitable, collaborative, and perhaps most important, sustainable. Sustainable solutions will allow for the continued use (not depletion) of our resources, foster a higher degree of self-reliance with regard to energy and food supplies, and contribute to the long term needs of many, rather than short term gain for a few.

Towards this goal, the Marbletown Economic Development Plan will introduce seemingly disparate focus areas in a holistic, integrated way. Realms such as farming, energy efficiency, housing and commerce will no longer be considered separate entities, but rather as interdependent parts of a whole that work in concert with one another.



The initial focus and the subject of this plan is *Focus Area 1: Commercial Hamlets of Stone Ridge and High Falls*. The overall integrated approach to planning will be noted as themes identified below in focus areas 2 – 6 and will appear in this plan as they relate to the hamlets. ([See Appendix F for full description of Focus Areas](#)).

D. THE HAMLET TASK FORCE

The Hamlet Vitality Task Force was formed by the Marbletown Planning and Zoning Committee and began meeting in the spring of 2009. The following question was posed as a starting challenge for the group to address:

“How can we develop and promote our core hamlets, enhance their sense of place, enable Marbletown to provide vibrant commerce, economic vitality and social balance while preserving our rural character, historic heritage, and environmental integrity?”

The work began with a series of needs assessments and visioning discussions. Initially task force members interviewed business owners and residents of the two hamlets to understand what they felt would help them improve their businesses.

When asked what would strengthen business in the hamlets, proprietors cited the following: more customers, a more business-friendly project approval process, flexibility for multi-use (live/work) buildings, sidewalks, parking, signage, an annual event and other efforts to make Stone Ridge and High Falls a “destination”. As for potential threats to the business environment, chief concerns were: tax increases, erosion of historic and rural character, chain stores and other new retail development that could drain business from the hamlet centers.

A group of senior citizens were also provided a questionnaire relative to their thoughts on housing in the hamlets. From these efforts, “Hamlet Vision” lists for each hamlet were created, a simple “Hamlet Vision Map” and set of goals and strategies were drawn up for discussion with a wider cross-section of the community.

Public Workshop: In October 2009 a public workshop was held in the Performing Arts Center at the High Meadow School in Stone Ridge. The workshop agenda included a presentation of Task Force findings and ideas followed by roundtable discussions designed to elicit feedback and provide some initial prioritizing of recommendations. Some 75 residents participated in discussions around the following three questions:

Question #1: How can we ensure the future economic vitality of the hamlets while maintaining our quality of life?

Question #2: What would make High Falls and Stone Ridge more attractive and more user-friendly for you and your family?

Question #3: If our success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might we pursue, short term and long term?

A review of the participant feedback at the conclusion of the workshop shows the following ideas receiving the highest level of support:

- “Town Center/Town Green”
- “Infrastructure” and “Rail Trail” Improvements
- “Ecological Agricultural Center”
- “Improved Permitting Process”
- “Alternative Walking Paths/Bike Paths”
- “Housing for Everyone”
- “Jobs/Green Energy/Industry”

The following statement was simultaneously articulated: “Be cautious with bold moves” and was echoed by many, indicating widespread support for a carefully measured approach to change and growth in the Town. This desire for moderation is consistent with ideas expressed by community members through previous public workshops and surveys. Indeed, much of the information gleaned at the 2009 workshop is supportive of prior discussion and research, though a new emphasis on local food production and clean energy reflects the changing times and the importance of reaching out to the public at frequent intervals.

Draft Document and Public Presentations: In March 2011, after months of research, meetings, and writing by a team of Task Force “drafters”, the Task Force approved a draft document for presentation to the Marbletown Community. On April 2, an overview of the draft was presented to an audience of approximately 90 residents. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session. After the meeting, both verbal and written comments, suggestions and questions were summarized and reviewed by the Task Force. A second public meeting was held on May 5, during which comments and questions were further discussed. Subsequently, revisions were made to the document in preparation for presentation to the Town Board.

Section II: A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE HAMLETS

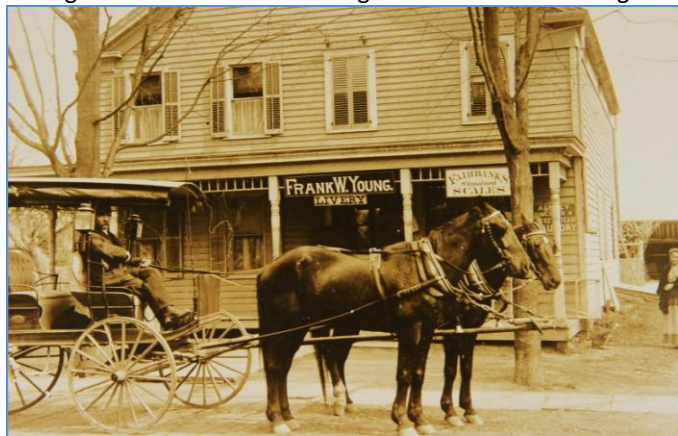
A. HAMLET BACKGROUNDS AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

Hamlet Background: Ever since Marbletown was first recognized as a town on March 7, 1788, its two commercial hamlets have been the focus of its economic and civic life. Records and photographs of earlier hamlet life show that in accordance with rural patterns of the time, activity was centered around the small mixed-use hamlets where churches, workshops, markets, hotels, stores and residences were the centers of commerce and community. By 1873 Stone Ridge had the following: Three churches (Reformed, Methodist and Episcopal); two hotels, four stores, four blacksmith shops, three carriage shops, a cabinet shop, three undertakers, a tailor shop, a boot and shoe shop, a tin shop, and several other mechanics of various kinds. High Falls had two churches, two hotels, five stores, a tin shop, two meat markets, a grist mill, a bakery, and an extensive cement manufactory, with blue stone shipped via the canal to Kingston. (*"History of Marbletown", Gazetteer and Business Directory of Ulster County, NY for 1872, published by Hamilton Child, Syracuse, NY*)

In the landmark town-wide public survey conducted in Marbletown in 1997 residents affirmed their preference for promoting this traditional historic development pattern of open spaces and lively hamlets (*See Section IV, References, "Future of Marbletown Survey, 1997"*)



Fig. 3: Above and Below: Images of historic Stone Ridge



Below: Rendering of historic High Falls



Stone Ridge and High Falls Today: Though not the geographical center of the Town, Stone Ridge and High Falls together still form the focal point of Marbletown from a commercial and social point of view. Located little over a mile from one another, each has its own historic flavor and provides a distinct shopping and recreational experience. For groceries, hardware, drugs, doctors and dentists, one must go to Stone Ridge, whereas for gifts, furniture and antiques, a food co-op and a wide selection of restaurants, High Falls is the destination. Each hamlet contains within it an historic district. Three of Marbletown's designated historic landmark buildings can be found on Main Street (Route 209) in Stone Ridge.

Stone Ridge currently houses a significant amount of professional office space. Many of these offices are occupied by individuals in the contemporary healing professions. Massage therapists, mental health providers, chiropractors exist alongside venues for classes in yoga, meditation and dance. A public library, two performing arts centers and SUNY Ulster offer potential for Stone Ridge as an arts and educational center for the region. Light industry, town offices, many historic and vernacular single-family residences, several restaurants, and the historic district, all of which are intersected by state highway Route 209, complete its current make-up. New bluestone sidewalks and crosswalks installed in 2010 as part of a NYS Department of Transportation stimulus funded project have significantly enhanced the look and feel of the core of the hamlet.

High Falls has a charismatic combination of dramatic geography and historical character. Though small, it has a number of stylish established retail businesses and restaurants, a new central water system, fairly strong regional name recognition, and a 'mixed-use' center of housing, commerce and tourism. [High Falls also has much of the Town's lodging stock: five B&Bs and a motel, all within walking distance to the hamlet center.](#)



Fig. 4: Stone Ridge sidewalk prior to stimulus project, and after.



Both of the commercial hamlets have the unique benefit of being strategically located in arguably the most scenic, convenient and well-traveled area in Ulster County. Their proximity to the historic Mohonk Mountain House, Minnewaska State Park, the Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway, and their position as a gateway to the Catskills makes them a natural draw for tourists. This scenario of twin gateway hamlets provides an excellent foundation on which to build stronger entry and exit points, a more obvious “sense of place”, a stronger physical and marketing connection between the two hamlets, and their promotion as a combined destination.

Current Climate for Local Business

At this writing, the climate for small business is challenging. The impact of the overall economy has been felt in the form of a slow housing market, lack of new construction, and sluggish retail sales. Lack of consistent year-round customer volume has been noted by business owners as the chief impediment to keeping their businesses healthy.

Formal and informal surveys of Marbletown residents have shown a strong desire to be able to patronize small local businesses and services in town. But the continued disappearance of these types of establishments could pose a threat to that ideal. Local business conditions need to improve so that the traditional village or hamlet-centered way of life can be maintained in the face of nearby competing big box stores and commercial sprawl, the likes of which Marbletown has been careful to disallow within its borders.

Future Success

Success in maintaining a healthy local clientele is most likely rooted in a community that welcomes visitors, is poised to keep its residents and attracts new people to live there. Marbletown should be a desirable location for young people, working professionals, retirees, and seniors when they consider settling in the Hudson Valley. The opening up of new living opportunities in the hamlets could be accomplished in a variety of ways: the rehabilitation of existing housing stock, infill projects and new appropriately scaled housing that is strategically located in the hamlets. In turn, these changes could translate into more user-friendly hamlets for everyone; with pedestrian access to shopping and services in a way that would support the historical character of our town’s vibrant core, meaning the two commercial hamlets.

This plan offers pro-active strategies toward the goal of enhancing Marbletown’s attractive, user-friendly hamlets while maintaining the nearby rural neighborhoods with their natural beauty of open fields, forests and the nearby mountains that make the hamlets attractive places in which to live, work and shop. To get there, both community-based marketing and physical planning are combined in order to develop our community’s niche potential in the larger region.

B. THE HAMLET STRATEGY

Successful hamlets are constantly changing and developing. The existing businesses in High Falls and Stone Ridge have to be supported and nurtured in order to maintain the hamlet's vitality. At the same time, new enterprises and new types of hamlet uses should be encouraged to provide the next infusion of energy into High Falls and Stone Ridge.

The Marbletown Hamlet Strategy is intended to promote sustainable development in the hamlets of Stone Ridge and High Falls by reflecting and responding to the realities of the market economy. Underlying this strategy is a method of linking environmental sustainability, historic and community character, and viable small-town retail that has been summarized by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in its handbook, "Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail". (See *Section III, Appendix B: "Community Character as Competitive Advantage: Changing Retail Strategies for Rural Communities"*)

1. Goals

The Marbletown Hamlet Strategy is a critical element of the Town's planning for Sustainable Economic Development. In order to improve environmental sustainability, economic competitiveness, and day-to-day quality of life in Marbletown, the hamlet strategy seeks to:

- **Preserve existing historic character**
- **Avoid sprawl along routes 209 and 213** by concentrating growth in existing activity centers as part of the overall SEDP and consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- **Protect gateways from strip-mall type development** while enhancing their potential to provide appealing hamlet approaches.
- **Enhance existing activity centers** as a means to provide a richer experience for residents and visitors, and to strengthen existing businesses in Marbletown.
- **Improve access to existing centers** by promoting parking and pedestrian linkages in locations that promote walkability and hamlet-scale density.
- **Accommodate new and emerging types of enterprises** and activities within the existing hamlets, through policies that direct such new uses in a way that stimulates private investment while complementing and strengthening existing hamlet businesses.
- **Allow for a broader range of hamlet living opportunities.**
- **Increase customer base** so as to bolster and sustain local businesses.

2. Opportunities

- **Existing Neighborhoods and Priority Growth Areas**
- **Target Local Business Niches**

This Hamlet Strategic Plan defines the opportunities in the hamlets in two ways. First, opportunities are defined **geographically**. The strategy outlines the priority areas in the hamlets, those locations with the greatest concentration of existing businesses and those that have the greatest potential to support new growth.

Second, the strategy defines opportunities by **types of businesses**. The target businesses defined in this strategy reflect the economic drivers in Marbletown and its hamlets. It is not meant as an exhaustive list, but rather it is intended to define the types of current establishments that are already contributing to the town's vitality, and which have significant potential for future success.

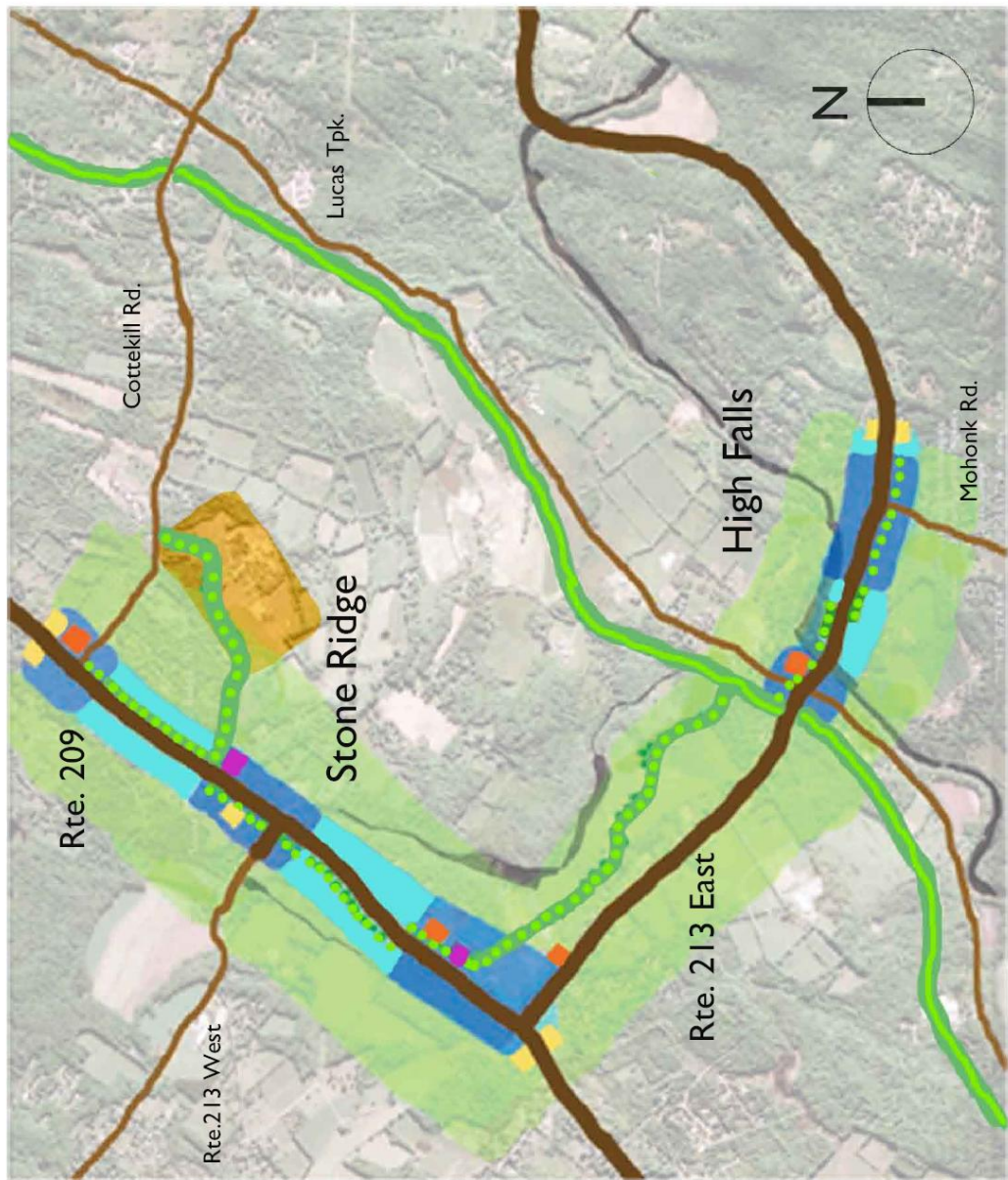
Existing Neighborhoods and Priority Growth Areas

The Hamlet Potential Vision Map on the following page is intended as a conceptual view of the broad ideas contained in the Hamlet Plan recommendations to strengthen the hamlets' sense of place. *

The map shows a series of linked walkable hamlet activity centers (dark blue) loosely connecting High Falls at one end and the SUNY Ulster Campus at the other. These "activity centers" would have a mix of uses, each with its own feel, character, role in, and contribution to the Marbletown Community. Linking these centers are areas including historic districts, residential neighborhoods, public trails and green spaces, and agricultural properties which ideally can be traversed on foot and by bike.

The area in green labeled "Hamlet Housing Opportunities" indicates the general geographic area in which residential units may be considered "walkable" to the hamlets.

**The map represents a conceptual "vision" and does not include assessments of topographical limitations, environmental and economic impacts, or of infrastructural requirements.*



MAP LEGEND

- Existing Financial Services
- Local Food Retailers
- Linking Pedestrian Trails
- Walkable Hamlet Centers
- Business & Historic Districts
- Gateway & Tourist Info
- Hamlet Housing Opportunities
- SUNY Ulster Campus
- Major Roadways

HAMLET POTENTIAL VISION MAP
(ENLARGED)

Fig. 5: Draft Concepts for Hamlet Strategic Plan: January 2011

HIGH FALLS

High Falls already enjoys a strong sense of place, has a central water supply, established businesses, an engaged Civic Association, a balance of residential and commercial (“mixed use”) activity, [an historic district, and structural remnants of its history as a canal town](#). The steps that are needed to allow central High Falls to thrive have been identified by many residents and business owners. Highlighting these ideas within the context of Marbletown’s hamlet strategy is intended to emphasize their importance to the entire community.

High Falls Center (*Rock Cliff House to Northern Spy*)

Commercial parking and safe sidewalks are perhaps the highest priorities, [in addition to central sewage treatment](#). A systematic examination of opportunities and potential solutions should be done in the short term. These can be aided by zoning incentives and local planning efforts to accomplish them. (See Section III, Appendix A: “Optimizing Hamlet Parking Practices”)

A NYS DOT Route 213 reconstruction project, included in the Ulster County Transportation Improvement Plan, includes sidewalks for the hamlet. This major project will have a strong positive impact on the business and social environment in High Falls. It will also make municipal parking a high priority and planning in time for this work essential. [During the design phase, special attention should be paid to the historic district to ensure aesthetic compatibility of sidewalks, curbing and additional features.](#)

[The sidewalk project should present opportunities to shape a more successful integration of the hamlet center with the historic structures of the D&H Canal \(its locks, abutments, the remains of the aqueduct\), and the D&H Canal Museum and Five Locks Walk. This could include creating a focal point at the corner of Second Street and Route 213 around Lock #16 and the small “green” that is framed by the Canal House, the Lock, the “Linger” building and the street. The property used for the Flea Market on Sundays is limited in size, but could be suitable for community events on other days.](#)

In addition, there are opportunities for infill and small-scale new housing around the periphery of the High Falls center that could be explored. Applying two or three micro-zones or overlay districts, small as they may be geographically, each promoting different functions within the hamlet, may also be useful in guiding the location and quality of projects.

High Falls Western Intersection (*Lucas Turnpike and Route 213*)

A small but important pocket of retail activity exists at the intersection of Route 213 and Lucas Turnpike just over the bridge and west of the center of High Falls. This “Four corners” currently includes a food coop, an auto body shop, a deli/restaurant, a multi-family residence, a pottery studio, and a home furnishing store.

Entrances to the Rail Trail are also situated here, offering potential for a pedestrian and biking hub, with a possible trail connector to Stone Ridge. An already funded sidewalk

project currently in design with NYS DOT will bring trail users to the intersection at a new crosswalk, thus integrating the trail into the four corners. Ultimately this area, and by extension the trail, will be connected via sidewalks down to High Falls proper.

This intersection is also the location where the NYS Shawangunk Scenic Byway route directs motorists to turn southward as it proceeds on Lucas Turnpike to the Town of Rochester. This is the northwestern-most “corner” of the byway loop.

STONE RIDGE

The hamlet of Stone Ridge has taken its name and much of its character and shape from its historical location on a narrow length of high ‘stony’ ground along Rte. 209. As such, the hamlet has limited opportunity for walkable neighborhood development in an east-west direction (i.e. in depth rather than length). However, new sidewalks and prospects for central water coming to both Stone Ridge and the adjacent SUNY Ulster campus will also bring the potential for increased concentration of activity to the hamlet. If well planned, Stone Ridge could provide a better balance of livability, economic activity, and even of the former charm we see from old photographs. Three areas lend themselves to specific types of opportunities.

Historic Stone Ridge (*Inn at Stone Ridge to Leggett Road intersection*)

A systematic focus on several smaller locations linked along the center stretch of Rt. 209 could provide Stone Ridge with more walkable activity, so that the historic districts, the professional offices to the north, and the Emmanuel’s plaza to the south can be experienced as connected but distinct neighborhoods. These include:

- **Inn at Stone Ridge to Route 213 West:** Some of the Town’s most important historic houses are located in this section of Stone Ridge, and thus the character of the streetscape is key at this location. The Stone Ridge Library is situated here. Across Main Street, two other public buildings generate significant activity: The Marbletown Town Hall and the Post Office. Ideas for new government facilities have been, and will continue to be, explored by the Town. In the meantime, the neighborhood would be well served by upgrades to both Town Hall and the Post Office properties and their (currently inadequate) parking. The installation of sidewalks on the east side of Main Street would provide a more complete pedestrian link between these two institutions and the rest of Stone Ridge while alleviating traffic congestion.
- **Route 213 West to Marbletown Multi-Arts (MaMA):** The parcels between 213 west and Marbletown Multi-Arts, with special opportunities centered on the acreage behind Marbletown Hardware for municipal parking, housing and additional retail, and perhaps access to Rt. 213 West that would help limit congestion at the new traffic light. [The abutting Marbletown Multi-Arts land offers expanded possibilities here for a combination of parking, gathering space, and amphitheater, with a backstreet walking connection to the Marbletown Community Center. Opportunities for collaboration between these business/property owners and the Town should be explored.](#)

- **Albright Lane to Acorn Way:** The businesses, parking and acreage between High Meadow School, Momiji, and the Moylan Funeral Home, where further coordination of parking could create a desirable 'backstreet' setting for a mixed-use micro- center.
- **The corner of Leggett Road and Route 209:** This includes Key Bank, The Ridge Gym, and across Route 209 to include Nibble Nook, SPS Industries, the Community Center, and Community Center Annex building. This location offers potential for linking several businesses, civic buildings, a tourist/business information center, and MAMA with much needed parking, a connection to SUNY Ulster Campus, and the new cross walk.

Stone Ridge Northern Gateway (*Leggett Road to Cottekill Road intersection*)

Traveling north along Route 209 from the Leggett Road intersection to Cottekill Road, drivers pass two attractively designed new office buildings, a former antiques center (Marbletown Square), side streets to small residential neighborhoods, and a cluster of homes on the Main Street. The intersection with the Stone Ridge Firehouse and Davenport's Farm Market marks the outer boundary of the Hamlet. This intersection is also the primary access to the SUNY Ulster campus.

Davenport's Farm Market provides a center of activity, making it a lively entrance to the Town for those approaching from Kingston. Efforts should be made to mark this as the northern gateway of Stone Ridge with signage and a decreased speed limit at this junction. Residents, visitors plus college students and faculty would be well served by sidewalks to provide a connection between this key intersection and the Stone Ridge Historic District.

Stone Ridge Southern Gateway (*Town Centre/Emmanuel's to intersection at Rte's 209 & 213 East*)

Because Stone Ridge and High Falls are limited topographically, [siting](#) certain types of amenities such as senior, rental or first-buyer housing, public transit oriented development (TOD), or a village green may be challenging. For these, available properties south of the historic district should be considered for projects that present longer-term prospects of achieving true affordability, walkability, and high degree of energy efficiency without posing competition or upheaval to the historic and commercial fabric of the existing commercial hamlets.

The most practical location for the accommodation of such growth in the hamlet would be in the parcels along both sides of Route 209 from the vicinity of Emmanuel's southwest to the corner of Rt. 213 East and Rt. 209, where potential strip development pressure already exists and needs to be directed to a more pedestrian oriented form. Such a location could provide opportunities for amenities such as:

- A village green and/or open market area with parking and recreational features
- Civic amenities such as a new Town Hall or Post Office [if existing locations are deemed inadequate for the future.](#)
- [Hamlet based housing with](#) park & ride facilities to NYC
- An attractive and clear southern hamlet gateway with tourist information

Further benefits include the potential for a project with affordable local energy production and integrated housing where seniors, working families and young residents could live side-by-side within walking distance to Emmanuel's and the "Towne Centre" plaza. Such housing could be buffered by existing vegetation if a lesser visual impact is desired, and could extend a walkable neighborhood away from Route 209, thus expanding hamlet living in depth rather than length.

Target Local Business Niches

One of the fundamentals of economic development is to support existing businesses as a way of creating jobs and encouraging new businesses. With that approach in mind, the hamlet strategy focuses on the following types of businesses and enterprises as essential building blocks in the ongoing revitalization of Stone Ridge and High Falls.

Local Food, Agriculture and Restaurants: The Hudson Valley region is now synonymous with good food in the NYC area and beyond, and the Rondout Valley and Marbletown have historically been among the best destinations within it. By building on the increased enthusiasm for local food, the community could strengthen its retail, agriculture, and second home housing markets at the same time. Enterprises that are part of this target business include restaurants serving local food, specialty food producers, farmers' markets, green grocers and other agricultural related concerns. All of these can be



promoted and enhanced by the Town together with the Rondout Valley Growers Association.

Recommendations in the Marbletown Farmland Protection Plan (completed and approved in 2010) emphasize the integration of local food and farming with economic development efforts in the town. Because of its location and reputation, Stone Ridge is highlighted in the plan as an ideal location for a farmers market. Also recommended are the exploration of a niche oriented agricultural and culinary arts center and the integration of a farmers market with a farm incubator project. These types of initiatives, if located in or between High Falls and Stone Ridge could significantly strengthen hamlet life and business activity in both. (See Section IV, References: Marbletown Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, Sept. 2010).

Culture & Education: Marbletown is increasingly recognized for the many businesses and organizations in the community that focus on arts and education. This includes organizations both large and small such as:

- SUNY Ulster

- Elementary, Secondary Schools, and Daycare
- Stone Ridge Library
- Marbletown Multi-Arts (MaMA)
- High Meadow Performing Arts Center
- Private galleries, artist studios, classrooms
- Important historic architectural sites, including D&H Canal Museum, Bevier House/Ulster County Historical Society

These enterprises and others like them are an important part of the economic base in Marbletown's hamlets, and opportunities to expand their presence and network their programs as assets in the hamlets should be explored. [In particular, SUNY Ulster should be further integrated into the local community and the hamlet of Stone Ridge. The community could establish a degree of 'college town' partnership with this leading institution.](#)

Small-scale Retail Shops: Many of the hamlets' strongest businesses have been purveyors of good design, services, and retail goods, from jewelry to furniture, wines, interiors, house-wares and flowers. These businesses seem a natural extension of a demographic group that has chosen to live here, complement all other hamlet target industries, and bring many secondary benefits to residents and visitors alike. Encouraging a unified and robust presence for design-oriented and storefront retail trades within the hamlets' overall marketing plan can help these businesses gain customers as Marbletown emerges as a small regional hub for culture, design, shopping, food, wellness, recreation, and history.

Professional/Technical Services: Such services help support other businesses in the area. Professional/technical services include such services as architecture, engineering, Internet service providers, design services (e.g., graphic artists, web designers, etc.), general business support services such as packing and shipping, and new business incubator office facilities.

Health, Wellness & the Healing Arts: Marbletown is home to many healing arts practitioners and its identity as a destination for wellness-related services and renewal could be strengthened by encouraging the growth and development of businesses in health, wellness and the healing arts.

Recreational Tourism: The combination good restaurants, rail-trails, mountain trails and streams, spas and a wide-range of B&B hotel accommodations makes Marbletown a natural destination for recreational oriented tourists. Therefore, businesses that cater to this clientele are a logical focus for the Marbletown hamlets.

Home-based Occupations & Businesses: Thanks to the emergence of the Internet, it is much easier for people to conduct income-earning activities in their homes. This includes telecommuters who work for large organizations but conduct much of their business from their homes. Marbletown's high quality of life and proximity to the New York City area make it an attractive location for telecommuters. Other home occupations include people with their own business in such fields as professional services or design enterprises who work out of a home office.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the specific steps to be taken to enhance Marbletown's commercial hamlets. The recommendations are provided as four major initiatives:

1. Fostering a Model Business Environment
2. Branding & Marketing
3. Infrastructure Investments
4. Land Use: Smart Growth Planning for the Hamlets

1. Fostering a Model Business Environment

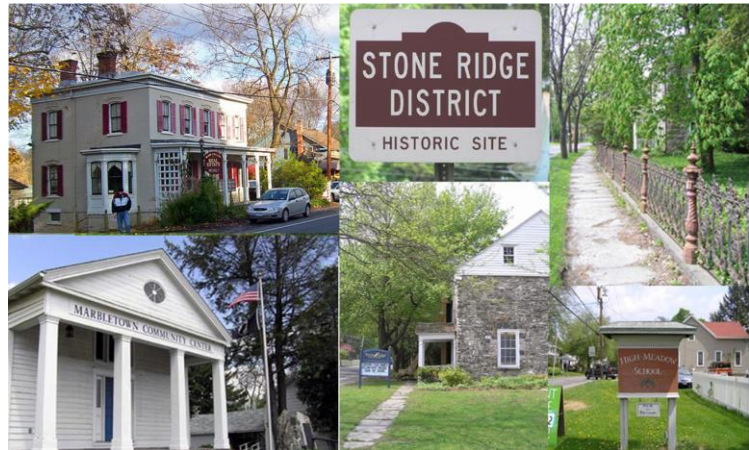
A primary requisite for attracting desirable future commercial and residential investment is the degree to which a community has established a plan to manage its own future. Few rural communities have been able to accomplish this as well as Marbletown has to date, and this strategy now builds on this legacy heading into the future. In marketing and branding terms, this is a way to differentiate Marbletown's assets from other communities whose planning documents may not provide its residents and future employers with clarity about its goals, vision, values, expectations, and positive economic prospects. Marbletown's "model business environment" should include the following elements:



- **Streamline the planning approval process** by creating a pre-approved project compliance checklist and providing applicant assistance through the approvals process.
- **Prepare and market a "Guide to Business Opportunities and Development in Marbletown"** based on the checklist.
- **Pursue gateway signage** projects for both hamlets.
- **Enhance municipal/shared parking facilities** and pedestrian connections between them and retail establishments with sidewalks and walking paths.
- **Review local sign regulations** to ensure they provide appropriate business support without compromising the historic character of the hamlets.
- **Review zoning in B-1 and I-1 (Industrial) districts** to ensure that they foster the growth and development of target businesses in appropriate locations.

2. Branding & Marketing

A strong branding and marketing program is needed to further promote hamlet name recognition and stimulate a healthy customer base. In a relatively small community, businesses depend on attracting a mix of customers from near and far: from out of town (tourists), neighboring towns (regional shoppers), and from home (local residents). Lack of customer volume in Marbletown has made it difficult for local businesses to generate sufficient sales throughout the year.



Many local businesses, in particular restaurants, specialty retail shops and B&Bs, would benefit from stronger, more consistent tourism. But the benefits of a healthy tourism industry would extend beyond retail establishments alone. Communities that are successful in attracting tourists generally have a healthy mix of shops and businesses that serve local residents as well. It is this critical mix that allows a community to take in revenue from outside while also retaining local dollars otherwise spent elsewhere at larger commercial centers. *(For further information on tourism and economic development, see “Tourism and Retail Development; Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses” by Bloms, Ryan, Hovland and Scheler, The University of Wisconsin Center for Community & Economic Development, 1999 (www.uwex.edu/ces/cced)).*

In addition, potential customers from around the region pass through Marbletown’s borders on a daily basis. Data from Ulster County Transportation reports an average of over 12,000 cars traveling through Stone Ridge per day. As commuters and travelers continue through town without stopping, potential dollars pass through, rather than flow into, Marbletown. At least a portion of this readily available customer base could be attracted by physical enhancements to the hamlets (signs, parking, etc) and a superior branding and marketing approach. *(See Section IV.B, “Ulster County Transportation Council 2009 Traffic Monitoring Program, Ulster County, N.Y.” December 2009).*

Opportunities also exist for High Falls businesses to attract visitors from the east by complementing events and offerings in the neighboring town of Rosendale.

Residents form the backbone of the year-round retail trade. The seasonal nature of the current customer base is a challenge for retailers whose operations, and overhead, must be maintained through all twelve months of the year. The past decade’s demographic shift has significantly raised the number of weekend and summer residents. Promoting a “buy local” mentality among residents is important, as is increasing year-round tenancy. The latter will require amenities to draw long-term residents to invest and put down roots in the town.

The Town of Marbletown is not a name that is widely known. However the commercial hamlets of Stone Ridge and High Falls do have very distinct identities and are well known locally and regionally as destinations within the Rondout Valley. From a marketing standpoint there is ample opportunity for a “branding” effort that could convey our distinct community offerings within the larger regional destination of the lovely valley and mountains that surrounds us. This would involve the following:

- **Develop a market identity through branding and a corresponding marketing plan** that would include the following elements:
 - Upgrade the Town website and print materials to incorporate accepted positioning, **and incorporate consistent mention of Stone Ridge and High Falls.**
 - Participate in selected regional promotional campaigns and **“buy local” efforts through** agencies such as the Rondout Valley Business Association.
 - Create Visitors Center(s) at hamlet activity centers including High Falls Flea market, Stone Ridge Town Center and Stone Ridge Community Center Annex.
 - Establish signage at Hamlet gateways and possibly at NYS Thruway exits.
 - Promote Marbletown’s pro-active planning and progressive community vision as a brand differentiator in and of itself.
 - Coordinate events that could potentially include such steps as:
 - Leveraging the Town website to market events, **and creating a master events calendar**
 - Signage for events
 - Assisting local arts organizations **with promotional endeavors and events.**
 - Inventory and promote overnight accommodations (B&Bs, motel/hotel, guest houses) in Marbletown and environs.
- **Build promotions around the hamlets’ “target niches”.** Examples of such efforts are given below:
 - Local Food, Agriculture and Restaurants:
 - Explore the feasibility of regular weekend regional green and crafts market and suitable location for outdoor events/gatherings in one of the hamlets. *(See also Sec II-C, Infrastructure Investments: “Explore Central Open Market Location and Design”).*
 - Prepare a Marbletown ‘foodie’s guide’, highlighting existing restaurants, and including its agricultural heritage, burgeoning micro farms and market locations.
 - Consider a social media page such as Facebook for dining and farming enthusiasts.
 - Support an event showcasing both culinary and creative arts such as a proposed “Come to Your Senses” annual event.
 - Culture:
 - Develop a “Cultural Corridor” along Route 209.
 - Promote the current county-wide push for Rt. 209 as a ‘Food Corridor’:

find niches and marketing position for value-added food processing and sales in this corridor as these components develop.

- [Work with D&H Canal Society and Museum to preserve and highlight High Falls canal history and the historic structures associated with it.](#)
- Education:
 - Promote awareness of the broad educational resources in the Town.
 - Highlight Marbletown as a location for educational forums/events via existing rentable venues.
 - [Enhance dialogue with Rondout Valley School District to integrate Marbletown Elementary School into Stone Ridge initiatives and explore the School's potential as a site for events.](#)
 - Explore future areas of common benefit with SUNY Ulster.
- Health, Wellness & the Healing Arts:
 - Promote High Falls and Stone Ridge as a “wellness” destination, also capitalizing on proximity to neighboring facilities such as Mohonk Spa.
 - Consider the development of a Marbletown Wellness Guide.
- Recreational Tourism ([See Regional Map, Appendix G](#))
 - Promote Stone Ridge and High Falls as home base to outdoor recreational offerings, capitalizing on proximity to Catskills, Shawangunk Ridge, hiking, skiing etc.
 - Work with neighboring towns to expand and promote Rail Trail.
 - Produce Rail Trail map brochure and info on website.

3. Infrastructure Investments

Economic development depends upon creating and sustaining interactions among businesses and their suppliers and customers. It also requires the shaping of appealing functional commercial environments that can attract and accommodate tourists, small business owners, and residents. This cannot be achieved without investments in the physical structures that make that interaction possible.



- **Provide Commercial/Municipal Parking with pedestrian connections:** Greater access to parking is an important short-term infrastructure improvement for both Stone Ridge and High Falls. Such improved parking access could be provided through the creation or expansion of town-maintained public parking as well as an incentive-based zoning approach to promote shared usage of private parking facilities (*See Section III, Appendix A: “Incentive Zoning for Parking and Sidewalks”*). Potential projects to be initiated as part of this recommendation include

the creation of:

- Municipal parking lots in Stone Ridge and High Falls (in Stone Ridge, potential locations include behind Marbletown Hardware and Marbletown First Aid property on Leggett Road).
 - A series of shared parking lots. An example of a potential location for this is, in Stone Ridge, between Acorn Way and Albright Lane.
 - Incorporate low impact site design practices into planning and review of new municipal parking projects to preserve natural features, manage storm water run-off, and reduce impervious surface cover where feasible.
 - Review design guidelines for parking lots (including lighting, locations, and landscaping) in the hamlets to ensure compatibility with historic character, especially in the SR Districts.
- **Build non-automobile connections via sidewalks, jitneys and trails:** Carefully planned connectivity should include increased access to and around our hamlets without relying solely on automobiles. This will be essential for planning that will not compromise or destroy the rural and historic character of Marbletown.

Sidewalks, bike routes, and even trails will make the hamlets more easily enjoyed and accessible. They are critical to long-term minimization of vehicular traffic impact and must be considered part of the eventual transportation infrastructure of the hamlets. In the Historic Districts, sidewalks should be maintained, when possible, in their historic dimensions and materials, and reinstated in their former locations when missing.

Well planned connectivity could include the following options:

- **Around and between the Hamlets:**
 - Create a trail connection between High Falls and Stone Ridge over the Stone Ridge Orchard property, and connecting with the existing Kingston-Ellenville (O&W) Rail Trail.
 - Connecting sidewalk from the center of High Falls across the bridge to the four corners and continuing on to the Rail Trail entrance.
 - Establish a trail connection between SUNY Ulster and Main Street in Stone Ridge.
 - Establish bike lanes between hamlets if eventually feasible.
 - Pursue Pine Hill Trailways bus stops for transportation to and from New York City.
 - Establish a Jitney or UCAT bus loop to connect SUNY Ulster, Stone Ridge and High Falls.
 - Improve Rail Trail condition and create designated parking and signage, at Rt.213 trail entrance.
 - Explore locations for bike racks in the hamlets and at selected Rail Trail parking areas.

- **Within the hamlets:**
 - Extended sidewalks on Route 209 in Stone Ridge to reach Town Centre and Cottekill Road.
 - Sidewalks on Route 213 in the center of High Falls with one or two crosswalks across Route 213.
 - A walking path perpendicular to Rt. 213 connecting points of interest such as The Canal Museum and Canal Locks plus local retail establishments.
 - A more clearly delineated corner and gathering place at the corner of Rt.213 and Second Street in High Falls
- **Pursue central water and sewage utilities for Stone Ridge:** A fundamental priority for our hamlet goals is the provision of a secure centralized water supply for Stone Ridge. Central water is already needed to meet our current demand, but critical for any future growth. Efforts to explore alternate plans, potential public and private partners and funding sources that meet the community's hamlet goals should be aggressively pursued. Following are some recommended steps to develop a plan and proposal for providing municipal water to the Stone Ridge hamlet:
 - Complete a preliminary local water needs identification process.
 - Explore extension to Stone Ridge of proposed SUNY Ulster/High Falls water project, including potential funding sources.
 - Establish annual review of central utility district planning efforts.
 - Pursue grant for water and sewer planning study.
 - Establish aquifer protection measures.
 - Assess the potential for a new mixed-use hamlet overlay zone to also provide central water or sewer to the existing Stone Ridge hamlet.
 - Incentivize low-impact clustered waste treatment systems in new zoning.
- **Pursue public transit connection to NYC and Kingston:** Securing a way for local residents to more easily access public transit to NYC, regional airports, and Kingston would have substantial positive impacts. A key step may be to provide a single Park-n'-Ride type location somewhere in or between the hamlets with adequate parking. In addition, such a facility could be connected to, and would enhance, any new hamlet housing, and would put the hamlets among the most desirable and efficient locations for people to live and work in the entire region.
- **Wire the Hamlets:** The rapid evolution in information technology has now advanced to the point where geographical limitations on employment have already begun to transform our own local workforce. This presents opportunities for rural communities such as ours to accommodate a more diverse and successful local workforce who can connect via the internet to their everyday jobs around the world. Hamlet-wide wireless service and high-speed data would be visionary investments for the Town to make, in connection with encouraging internet-based business startups to move here.

- **Explore Central Village Green Location and Design:** The Sunday Flea Market area in High Falls provides the hamlet with a modest public gathering space. In addition, the small area at the corner of Second Street and Route 213 at Lock 16 functions as a focal point for the annual holiday tree lighting and other High Falls events. These, and the occasional use of the street itself and the Church parking lot provide a network of small venues that could be enhanced through physical improvements and a higher degree of coordination between civic, private and governmental entities.

Local enthusiasm exists for creating a central gathering place beyond the limited size and range that can be accommodated in High Falls. Opportunities in the Stone Ridge business district for an appropriately scaled outdoor public space with parking should be explored (see Page 15 “Route 213 West to MaMA”).

In addition, further ideas should be gathered about the potential for an open market structure, as well as for recreational/green space, parking, and other amenities that would create a new place for local and regional people to meet each other, share goods and services, and connect to the hamlets. This could fill a missing piece of civic life here in Marbletown, could support a broad range of new activities such as a regional farmers’ market or outdoor concerts and festivals, and further link the hamlets together with a common public venue.

- **Work Toward Providing Clean Local Energy Sources:** Green technology development presents opportunities for local employment, energy savings, investment, pride, and connection to the larger efforts and issues in the region and beyond. Within a short period of time, for example, the development of larger solar farms, each needing careful siting and community planning, will be financeable undertakings that meet many of the planning goals outlined in this report. In addition, entrepreneurial potential exists for using local biomass to facilitate farm-based energy operations. With substantial efforts and successes in stimulating green technology sector growth in Ulster County and the mid-Hudson region, Marbletown could prepare itself to benefit and promote this positive direction across virtually all the topics covered in this plan.
- **Pursue Buried Power Lines:** Stone Ridge Historic District in particular could benefit greatly from the burying of its power lines. While not an economic necessity, should funding and/or opportunities arise during installment of water utilities or extended sidewalks along Rte 209, advanced coordination with telecommunications and electricity providers and the NYS DOT would be beneficial.

4. Land Use: Smart Growth Planning for the Hamlets

Note: This section has been generally re-organized, some text reduced and/or re-worded.

A good many of the community benefits and goals outlined in this Hamlet Strategic Plan might be gained from enabling residents to more easily gather, recreate, shop, work and for some, to dwell among their neighbors and visitors in a hamlet setting. The benefits of encouraging traditional neighborhood development in our hamlets stretch from the social, civic, and economic, to the overall environmental well-being of Marbletown. And the desire for this largely missing central component of local life has been repeatedly singled out among its residents as needing improvement.



To meet these opportunities and challenges, the land use portion of the Hamlet Strategic Plan employs the broad principles of Smart Growth already widely adopted in the Hudson Valley region. The recommendations in this section are aimed at accommodating and redirecting appropriate, gradual, and concentrated commercial and residential growth into the hamlet areas in order to help contain sprawl, support a vibrant local economy, and maintain the rural and historic identity of the town. *(For information on Smart Growth, see Appendix E.4: Planning Terms Defined, and E.3: Websites Related to Smart Growth).*

Hamlet growth planning must be considered within a context of overall economic sustainability of the community, *(see SED Plan description and jigsaw puzzle image)* for **balanced housing opportunities** to permit a diverse population to live here through different stages of their lives including a local workforce that will attract and sustain **clean industry and business**; and the capacity for future homes and businesses to endure volatile energy costs and to participate in the national and global effort to reduce carbon usage through access to renewable and high-efficiency **renewable energy**. In addition, the **local farming** economy can be enhanced by vibrant hamlets that support ‘buy local’ shopping, easy access to locally produced and prepared foods, and by highly visible marketing of our productive local soils and the people who work them.

Diversity of Building Uses and Expanding Hamlet Living Opportunities: Two key ideas behind the land use recommendations are the encouraging of diversity of uses and the expansion of living opportunities in Marbletown’s hamlets. Increasing the diversity of building uses contributes to the sustainability and livability of hamlet areas by ensuring that the economic

base is not dependent upon one type of business or one segment of the housing market for its economic well-being. (e.g. additional storefront spaces, apartment over retail living, co-housing, and live-work studios for artisans). Furthermore, concentrating a mix of residential and commercial activity in the hamlets can contribute to their liveliness by fostering the interaction and interchange of residents and visitors that make for vibrant communities.

A gap in affordability of housing for both younger and older residents has limited the options available in the community for attracting and retaining residents and businesses. (See Section III, Appendix D: “Expanding Options for Hamlet based Housing”). A balanced local economy requires a balanced array of housing opportunities in order to ensure diversity, vitality, and life-long continuity of local residents who will protect, invest, defend, and sustain its character, environment, and local culture. Marbletown has significant gaps in this broad housing spectrum which may best be solved by looking primarily to the commercial hamlet areas to locate walkable, energy efficient, affordable housing and mixed-use development where it can best be accommodated with the least adverse impact on traffic, roads and open lands.

Shifting Population Trends: The long-term trend of modest local population growth in the community was reversed in the last decade, and for the first time in many years Marbletown’s local population actually declined. Combined with the recent economic downturn, this indicates that a re-evaluation of the costs and benefits of a return to modest growth that will support local schools, businesses, and the local tax base is due.

In previous decades, for example, any additional housing proposals aimed at increasing our population were burdened by concerns about significant increases in the school taxes. The physical buildings were at maximum occupancy levels. Today a shrinking school population has significantly reduced the potential impact of modest growth on local school taxes. (See Section III, Appendix C “School Taxes and Hamlet Growth: A Shifting Balance”). There is additional concern that a shrinking public school population will undermine the quality of local education.

Implementing New Choices: Any plan must find a balance between strengthening the hamlets that we already have, and recognizing the geographical limits and historical fabric that must not be lost. Still, the possibilities for planning for the hamlets can be categorized in the following three ways: 1) Refurbishing existing building stock to accommodate smaller or more versatile living spaces and professional uses; 2) Infill projects that utilize available properties in between existing structures (thereby literally “filling in” current neighborhoods); 3) and new appropriately designed housing or mixed-use projects on suitable properties in and adjacent to the hamlets. (See Section III, Appendix D: “Expanding Options for Hamlet Based Housing”).

Initiatives that promote any of these three approaches should be carefully evaluated as to overall tax and infrastructure cost/benefit to the community, and implemented in such a way that respects the integrity of the historic districts, recognizes distinctions between established zoning districts (for example SR and B-1), and ensures that new projects are in keeping with traditional elements of scale and architectural character. Infill, for example, should be examined as a tool for B-1 and SR under separate review, as infill in historic districts would necessitate a stricter consideration of the impacts to the existing built environment. On the

other side, incentives should be considered for projects which meet the highest pre-established standards that may include density bonuses, expedited permitting paths, and municipal networking guidance.

- **Evaluate examples of best practice models of sustainable small town development.**
 - Research Traditional Neighborhood, co-housing, and eco-hamlet projects that have been tried elsewhere.
 - Compare outcomes and select preferred techniques appropriate to Stone Ridge and High Falls.
 - Consider potential build-out study and cost-benefit analyses to understand long-term implications.
- **Develop a Planning and Zoning strategy to guide appropriate future hamlet growth.**

These could include the following:

 - Develop zoning changes to promote suitable opportunities in all 3 categories of refurbishing, infill and mixed-use hamlet projects.
 - Develop design guidelines to ensure that various types of housing (such as townhouses and mixed-use structures) are compatible with the local and regional context and meet high energy efficiency and architectural standards.
 - Develop general requirements for hamlet overlay zones that can be tailored to specific applications and goals (i.e. senior living, hamlet centers, gateway districts, clean energy production, and new residential, public transportation or mixed use development.)
 - Prepare new hamlet overlay zones or comparable zoning tools with specific locations, goals, incentives and provisions that will promote the community goals outlined in this plan and that will ensure compatible site and building design.

D. NEXT STEPS

Overview of Implementation Strategy

The overall Sustainable Economic Development (SED) Plan outlined at the beginning of this document represents a new step in Marbletown planning. This vision is one in which the town residents extend the definition of community preservation to include a plan for their own economic future as well. We hope this work will be embraced by volunteers and local officials as an urgent and groundbreaking step for our town and others like it in the region.

We anticipate that this will require a broad range of volunteer efforts, similar to those achieved more than a decade ago following the town visioning sessions and survey work that yielded many specific initiatives that have since been realized. The Task Force hopes to engender a new structure of very small working teams donating professional expertise where it is available, and a commitment to use the Plan itself to attract available public funding for outside

professional expertise where it is not.

The Process

The recommendations for the hamlets in this document are many and varied. They are intended as a strong and positive message of encouragement to the Town as it proceeds with the challenge of helping Stone Ridge and High Falls to fulfill their potential as vital centers of community and commercial life. The Marbletown Town Board, together with the assistance of the Town's committees and board members, must proceed judiciously so as to ensure that projects are in harmony with conservation goals.

The Town Board is obligated to make decisions under the "umbrella" of the approved Town Plan and the guidance that it provides. Where funds are concerned, all projects involving the expenditure of public funds or the seeking of outside financial assistance are discussed and voted on by the Town Board. If approved, projects must be completed in accordance with local and state municipal laws.

Because changes to zoning are amendments to local laws, any proposals of this nature require review by the Town Board and the Town's legal counsel, with adoption subject to public hearing and required review procedures.

Short Term Steps

With so much work to be done to implement the Hamlet Plan, once finalized, the Task Force will then need to prioritize the most urgent of its many recommendations. A strategy will be set for accomplishing key tasks, assembling available local expertise, and pursuing available funding. We currently see this work as being done, as it has for the last dozen years or so, by the Planning and Zoning Committee (PZC): the mostly volunteer group that develops long term planning and zoning initiatives for consideration by the Town Board.

Key items that should be initiated in 2011:

- Parking
- Gateway Signage
- Pursue Trailways bus stop
- Zoning review including Density Control Schedule to allow for multiple use in hamlets.
- Marketing for Marbletown and its hamlets, including website, brochure upgrades and locations for tourist information
- [Research](#) overlay districts: [examples and methods](#).
- Create pre-approval project compliance checklist

Many recommendations outlined in the plan will require ongoing partnership discussions with relevant local community organizations and institutions (Rondout Valley Business Association, SUNY Ulster, Rondout Valley Growers Association, [Ulster County Planning and Ulster County Tourism](#)). Joint exploration should be initiated around:

- Town-wide events

- Promotional literature
- Further development of niche businesses like local food and culture
- Identifying needs of sole proprietors

At the same time [funding should be explored](#) for critical longer term elements:

- Water and sewer studies
- Build out analysis

Medium Term Steps

Once immediate action items are under way, mid-term steps, or projects should begin such as:

- Zoning evaluation and adjustments to zoning
- [Cost analysis and](#) funding for infrastructure and infrastructure planning
- Planning for key pedestrian connections and hamlet development design
- Ongoing pursuit of high speed internet coverage and public transportation
- Exploration of central open market/village green
- [Exploration of Traditional Neighborhood projects and identification of potential](#) overlay districts

Longer Term Steps

The Hamlet Strategic Plan is the key first step of an integrated approach to overall town-wide sustainability proposed above. Those recommendations that prove viable in the earlier study phases will be implemented as funds become available.

The rest of the five remaining focus areas of the Sustainable Economic Development Plan for Marbletown also need to be developed in order to guide and balance overall planning policy. *(See Section I-C, the jigsaw puzzle image and text, “Sustainable Economic Plan for Marbletown-Six Focus Areas”).* We hope to foster early discussions and exploration of the issues within a year of this plan’s adoption, and then to organize separate task forces, similar to the Hamlet Task Force process recently completed, in each of the remaining areas.

Section III: Appendices

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

- A. Optimizing Hamlet Parking Practices
- B. Community Character as Competitive Advantage – Trends and Principles
- C. School Taxes and Hamlet Growth: A Shifting Balance – Overview and Analysis
- D. Expanding Options for Hamlet-Based Housing – Alternatives Discussion
- E. References
- F. Sustainable Economic Development Focus Areas Defined
- G. Regional Map

Appendix A. Optimizing Hamlet Parking Practices

- **Best Practices for Shared Parking:** For ideas on shared parking see “Parking Fact Sheet”, a best practices manual prepared for City of Portland OR by Abeles Phillips Preiss and Shapiro, 2002. (<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/SharedParkingFactSheet.pdf>).
- **Incentive Zoning for Parking and Sidewalks:** Incentive zoning can be used to improve parking and promote the construction of sidewalks in important areas of the hamlet. For example, the *Saugerties Mobility Study* provides a model ordinance from the town of Farmington in Ontario County, NY that provides density bonuses for situations where commercial properties can share parking spaces and driveway access. The law enables the Town Board to make “adjustments to the permissible density, area, height, or open space otherwise required in the zoning district when such lot owner elects to provide and maintain shared driveways, cross access driveways, access and service roads, internal circulation systems, or interconnected parking.” (Source: Town & Village of Saugerties & Town of Ulster, NY, Saugerties Area Mobility Analysis, 2007. Appendix D – Model Access Management, Zoning Ordinances: Town of Farmington, Local Law No. 4 of the year 1998, (<http://village.saugerties.ny.us/content/Generice/View/7:field=documents;/content/Documents/File/73.pdf>).

The Town of Pittsford in Monroe County, NY has incentive zoning in place that enables the Town Board to increase densities, change setbacks and other requirements for development projects in residential zones provided that the developer provides certain specified community benefits “such as extending sidewalks, connecting residential areas with schools or providing stormwater detention and treatment basins in excess of that necessitated by immediate project demand,” (Source: Town of Pittsford Zoning Ordinance, ARTICLE XXXVIII Incentive Zoning [Added 2-6-1996 by L.L. No. 3-1996, (http://www.behanplanning.com/bpafiles/F_DRUM/Final/1%20-%20Incentive%20Zoning%20Ordinance.pdf).

Appendix B. Community Character as Competitive Advantage – Trends and Principles

Two recent trends have helped offset some of the losses experienced by small retailers as a result of the proliferation of big box stores and the rise of on-line shopping. First, merchants have realized they can resist this onslaught by offering specialty products and services that aren't available in the "big boxes", and by providing a level of customer service the big chains cannot match. Second, they have found that in order to hold onto their customers, they must create a compelling experience to lure their customers away from the mall. This is known as "experienced-based retail".

The combined effect of these two trends provides a new opportunity for traditional hamlet shopping districts. Places like Stone Ridge and High Falls can, by their very natures, immerse shoppers in vivid experiences of history, local culture and scenic beauty. The very features that make the hamlets sources of civic pride and that have spurred preservation efforts can now provide the basis for a more competitive retail environment for hamlet businesses.

Important Principles for Hamlet Development

Great Hamlets need Great Champions: Hamlet revitalization happens when there is a small group dedicated to making it happen. This strategy will only succeed to the extent a small group of hamlet residents, business people and local officials are willing to advocate for it over many years.

It Takes a Vision: The champions need to know where to go and how to get there. This strategy is intended to supply that for Marbletown's hamlets.

Think Residential: Housing has to be an essential ingredient in any hamlet revitalization effort. Successful business districts need customers. And the best customers for local businesses are the residents who live nearby.

Honor the Pedestrian: In the modern retail environment, people who just want to buy stuff can always shop online. Successful retail areas attract people by providing them with memorable experiences. And those experiences are possible only if potential customers are comfortable walking around the hamlet.

Parking is Power: By itself, the availability of parking has never made a downtown area successful. However, the lack of adequate parking can prevent an otherwise competitive downtown from being successful. This doesn't necessarily mean putting a parking lot on every block. A mix of well-placed public lots, shared private lots and other creative approaches can do the trick.

Manage for Change: Success for a downtown area or hamlet is a moving target. It requires tending to the things that are already working or need fixing while you are simultaneously creating new venues and experiences so that your hamlet and its businesses will benefit from the "next big thing" rather than having it pass you by.

Source: Adapted from Michael D. Beyard, Michael Pawlukiewicz and Alex Bond, *Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail*, Urban Land Institute, 2003.

Appendix C. School Taxes and Hamlet Growth: A Shifting Balance – Overview and Analysis

I. Summary

Careful growth planning can help a community to mitigate, indeed avoid, the potentially negative impacts of new residents and housing on the natural environment and infrastructure. But what about the impact on the already large tax burden? Whenever growth is discussed, many voice concerns that new families will increase the school tax burden for Marbletown residents. A decade ago this may have been true:

- In particular the Rondout Valley Central School District (“RVCS D” or the “District”) middle school and high school were bulging at the seams with students, making growth problematic;
- The 9/11 terrorist attacks caused increased demand for homes in Marbletown, and Post 9/11 economic recovery further drove demand for homes in the Marbletown area as its desirable characteristics for second home ownership became better known;
- Prior to 2006 Marbletown did not have the current building laws and regulations, making development easier than today. A large influx of people into Marbletown could have placed significant strain on natural resources and limited infrastructure, perhaps even requiring infrastructure expenditure.

As we begin the next decade, though, the situation has changed substantially:

- There has been a significant economic downturn on the national, state and local levels, particularly within the housing sector. Development pressure on Marbletown is minimal;
- Student enrollment in the RVCS D has dropped 18% since the 2005-2006 school year;
- Over this same time period District staffing has declined only 3%, while physical capacity is being increased in the high school. By the 2011-2012 school year, physical capacity use rate will be under 60% at every school in the District.
- As such, RVCS D can handle a large significant enrollment increase with virtually no incremental costs for personnel and facilities, which make up 75% of total costs. At the same time, the state aid that the District receives is dependent in large measure on student population (and costs), reducing the net incremental cost to local taxpayers. Though average costs are high, each additional student would add marginal costs, not average costs. Even with anticipated reductions in NYS aid, the net incremental cost per student in the District should be a maximum of several thousand dollars, primarily

transportation, textbooks and assumed additional costs for special education. Since Marbletown is responsible for just under half the costs of the District (Rochester, Rosendale and Wawarsing are responsible for the rest), each incremental student should cost Marbletown under \$2,000.

- Growth anywhere in the District has the same cost to Marbletown as measured by the net change in the District's budget, but without benefits to town business and employment were growth to occur within Marbletown. If a family with two school age children were to move into Marbletown, while the incremental cost of the District may increase \$8,000, the cost to Marbletown would be under \$4,000. This would be significantly, if not fully, offset by the economic benefits to the town. Were that family to move to another town in the District, the cost to current Marbletown residents would be the same, but the economic benefits would accrue largely to the other town(s).
- Marbletown's attraction to second home buyers further reduces the pressure on school taxes, as these new residents pay school taxes, but their children do not attend the schools.

II. Student Enrollment

Table 1 shows the District's 5-year decline in student enrollment of 18% through the 2010-2011 school year, with a further 4.5 percentage point decline projected for the 2011-2012 school year.

III. Excess Capacity

A. Staffing

Over the past five years, declining enrollment has significantly outpaced staff reduction.

This is to be expected somewhat as there must be certain personnel no matter the student enrollment, e.g., by law each school must have a principal. In addition, with five school buildings the District requires maintenance staff and cafeteria workers, and incurs other expenses, e.g. heating and electricity, that change little with enrollment. Note that while overall student enrollment has declined,

Table 1

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

School Year	Student Enrollment	Change from 2005-2006 No.	%
2005-2006	2,719	--	--
2006-2007	2,643	-76	-2.8%
2007-2008	2,566	-153	-5.6%
2008-2009	2,385	-334	-12.2%
2009-2010	2,316	-403	-14.8%
2010-2011	2,230	-489	-18.0%
2011-2012p	2,147	-572	-21.0%

p Projected

Source: RVCSD

Table 2

STAFFING VS. ENROLLMENT

School Year	Staffing (FTE)	Student Enrollment	Students per Staff	Staff per 100 Students
2005-2006	474.3	2,719	5.73	17.44
2006-2007	477.2	2,643	5.54	18.06
2007-2008	483.9	2,566	5.30	18.86
2008-2009	483.9	2,385	4.93	20.29
2009-2010	478.3	2,316	4.84	20.65
2010-2011	460.1	2,230	4.85	20.63
5-Year Change	-3.0%	-18.0%		+18.3%

FTE Fulltime Equivalent

Source: RVCSD

special education enrollment has remained about the same, which accounts for some of the increase in staff per student. Nevertheless, these metrics indicate that RVCSD could increase student enrollment substantially, with little if any, increase in staffing. Given that staff expenses are just under three quarters of total expense, incremental cost of growth would be modest.

There is substantial space at each of the five schools (See Section B. below), and as of this writing, RVCSD Superintendent Agostaro has appointed a task force representing the district community to recommend alternatives for closing an elementary school after the 2010-2011 school year.

B. Facilities

RVCSD has substantial excess physical capacity. Note that the two schools that would accept new elementary students from Marbletown, the Marbletown and Rosendale schools, are at 45% capacity combined, while the middle school and high school enrollments continue to fall, and have significant capacity to accept new students. Therefore, even should an elementary school be closed after the 2010-2011 school year, there would still be adequate capacity district-wide to handle a significant number of new students.

Table 3

FACILITIES CAPACITY BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS			
<u>School / Grade Levels</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Enrollment / Use Rate</u>	
		<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2011-12^p</u>
Kerhonkson Elementary / K-4	540	296 / 55%	302 / 56%
Marbletown Elementary / K-4	540	272 / 50%	272 / 50%
Rosendale Elementary / K-4	513	216 / 42%	218 / 42%
RV Middle School / 5-8	1,200	644 / 54%	637 / 53%
RV High School / 9-12	1,200 ¹	802 / 67%	718 / 60%
All Schools	3,993	2,230 / 56%	2,147 / 54%

^p Projected

¹ Excludes new addition expected to be completed in 2011.

Source: RVCSD

IV. Calculation of School Tax Impact on Marbletown Taxpayers

Due to RVCSD's excess capacity, the impact of growth upon school taxes of Marbletown residents would be modest. The actual dollar effect is dependent upon the number of new students and impact on tax assessments.

In Table 4, we assume that 50 additional families move into the District at the start of the 2010-2011 school year, with a total of 100 new students at a cost to the District of \$400,000 (\$4,000 per student – See Section I). We assume further that the new students are evenly distributed throughout grades K-12, and that 20% are special education,

Table 4

**Increase in Annual School Taxes
for Marbletown Residents
Due to Increase of 50 Families in Marbletown:
New Residents Move into Existing Homes**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Per Student</u>
Total Marbletown	\$179,802	\$1,798
<u>Assessed Value of Home</u>		
\$200,000	\$38.65	\$0.39
\$300,000	\$57.97	\$0.58
\$400,000	\$77.29	\$0.77

Assumes no change in assessments of the homes sold to the 50 new families in Marbletown.

the current proportion in the District. Finally, we utilized the actual 2010-2011 RVCSD tax levy and assessments for the towns comprising the RVCSD, and assumed no change in assessments of those homes sold to the 50 new families in Marbletown.

Note that while the 2010-2011 budgeted cost per student in RVCSD is over \$26,000, the incremental cost to Marbletown of 100 new students is under \$1,800 per student. For residents with a \$300,000 home, the total annual increase in school taxes would be just under \$58, or \$0.58 per student.

This will change somewhat with increased assessments. In Table 5 we leave all other assumptions the same, except that the 50 families (with 100 school age children) that move to Marbletown all build new homes at an average cost of \$300,000.

The benefits of the increased tax base for Marbletown town taxes and employment in the building trades will partially mitigate this increase in school tax levy. Most important, in all scenarios new Marbletown residents will be more likely to purchase goods and services from Marbletown businesses, than were they to live in another town within the RVCSD.

Second Homeowners:

A key aspect of Marbletown's tax base is its sizable population of second homeowners. Second homeowners pay school tax, but their children do not use the school system, and thereby do not increase the RVCDS budget.

Table 6 shows the impact of second homebuyers on school taxes paid by Marbletown taxpayers. Again we assume that the 50 families all build homes with an average cost per home of \$300,000. Note that the first column in Table 6, no second homebuyers, is identical to that scenario shown in Table 5. In the case of 50% second homebuyers the tax impact is reduced by nearly 30%.

Table 5

**Increase in Annual School Taxes
for Marbletown Residents
Due to Increase of 50 Families in Marbletown:
All New Residents Build Homes**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Per Student</u>
Total Marbletown	\$308,987	\$3,090
<u>Assessed Value of Home</u>		
\$200,000	\$65.67	\$0.66
\$300,000	\$98.51	\$0.99
\$400,000	\$131.34	\$1.31

Assumes 50 new homes are built in Marbletown at an average cost per home of \$300,000.

Table 6

**Second Homebuyer Effect:
Increase in Annual School Taxes for Marbletown Residents
Due to Increase of 50 Families in Marbletown:
All New Residents Build Homes**

	<u>Percent Second Homebuyers</u>		
	<u>0%</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>50%</u>
Total Marbletown	\$308,987	\$263,856	\$218,725
<u>Assessed Value of Home</u>			
\$200,000	\$65.67	\$56.08	\$46.49
\$300,000	\$98.51	\$84.12	\$69.73
\$400,000	\$131.34	\$112.16	\$92.98

Assumes 50 new homes are built in Marbletown at an average cost per home of \$300,000.

Appendix D. Expanding Options for Hamlet-Based Housing – Alternatives Discussion

Marbletown has a limited range of housing opportunities beyond single-family homes on larger acreage (See Section IV, References B: Selected Ulster County and Regional Plans and Reports, “A Three County Housing Needs Assessment”), a type which is now outside the range of affordability for many who would like to stay in the community. Hamlet-oriented development poses significant opportunities to both diversify the housing offerings in town while achieving many other parallel goals outlined in this report.

Regarding affordability, like all other municipalities, Marbletown has a long-term interest in encouraging a balance of housing for all its residents, including families with children, the elderly, young households, empty nesters, people just entering the workforce, and families of limited or fixed income, tradesmen as well as professional service providers, the self-employed such as: artisans, therapists/counseling, and internet-based professionals. This concept is articulated in the recent Rhinebeck Comprehensive Draft Plan as follows:

“Providing a diversity of housing types and costs is important for sustaining businesses and encouraging economic growth, since businesses are unlikely to establish themselves or remain in an area where their employees cannot afford to live. Moreover, as housing costs increase, people must work longer hours, leaving them little time to volunteer. Many critical local services and institutions are staffed through volunteers. If a shortage of volunteers forces these services to convert to paid positions, the town’s municipal budget will be strained. Finally, when employees cannot afford to live in the community where they work, they are forced to commute, which contributes to automobile dependency and traffic congestion. (“Rhinebeck Comprehensive Plan”, adopted 2009. www.rhinebeck-ny.gov)

Marbletown residents highly value the diversity of their community. Retaining that diversity depends upon providing a variety of housing choices for households with different needs and income levels to house high wage earners and young professionals. Since market conditions alone do not necessarily encourage housing diversity, the Marbletown community recognizes a need to close the “affordability gap” that it shares with many other desirable communities in the region, and to help strengthen the local economy at the same time. Finally, a wide historical vernacular exists in the villages and hamlets of the valley and region for designing housing on smaller lots that if carefully designed, can provide energy efficiency, affordability, and a village lifestyle that many people seek. Properly done, such smart growth planning could maintain the historical patterns of the community by discouraging further future sprawl, habitat, farming and view-shed loss.

For purposes of discussion, hamlet-based housing efforts can be divided into three categories:

- **Refurbished Existing Housing Stock:** The refurbishment of existing structures to accommodate apartment and other smaller living units in the hamlets is a preferred path to accommodating hamlet growth for several reasons:
 - Improves the appearance and architectural continuity of hamlets
 - Provides upgrades to mechanical and energy efficiency of older buildings
 - Provides income sources for local property owners
 - Contributes to the vitality of the hamlets
 - Permits more affordable DIY-type investments by owners
 - Uses less material resources and land than new construction

In many cases, though, existing houses in the hamlets are too expensive or small to renovate into multi-family dwellings, or current fire and building codes are prohibitive. An examination of incentives, grants, and adjustment/easing of local zoning restrictions to favor such projects should be done, and modifications recommended where feasible. In addition, the encouragement of local networking to locate potential tenants, financing, or initial free design input for interested hamlet homeowners in designated priority areas could be organized. Beyond these steps, the next most desirable form of hamlet growth may be new construction adjacent to or between existing structures, also known as *infill* projects.

- **Infill Housing:** The construction of new small-scale dwelling units within the commercial hamlets has potential to meet many of the above goals while also minimizing the impacts of potentially larger scale projects on the current historic hamlets. Often the restriction to viable infill projects is the availability of lots that are large enough to also responsibly accommodate parking, sewage treatment, and water. Looking to a future in which some of these requirements may be met through centralized infrastructure or living arrangements that could permit owning fewer or no cars. It is also possible to imagine encouraging new small-scale hamlet infill projects by permitting greater density on smaller lots. In these cases, architectural guidelines and zoning play an important role in protecting the hamlet's historic identity and livability, and the property values of adjacent property owners.

As with existing housing stock, infill project possibilities could be encouraged through an examination of existing hamlet density and zoning requirements and where new infrastructure or new priorities permit it, some revisions made. In addition, special areas of larger potential, such as those with unimproved acreage in the hamlets, or special adjacency to the hamlet centers, could be collectively networked. But beyond these smaller scale opportunities afforded by existing and infill projects, the community may also need to look at new projects that could help meet the goals identified in this report.

- **New Hamlet-Based Projects:** New projects sited in and around existing hamlets hold a number of advantages and disadvantages and are therefore often controversial. Among these, they potentially offer the scale and lower construction costs to be economically viable, and therefore able to meet the goals this report prioritizes for housing that is less expensive, energy efficient, and adjacent to the hamlets. On the other hand, new projects can displace current usage patterns and undeveloped places, and therefore raise a variety of concerns on the part of existing residents.

Therefore, the promotion or approval of any new project in the hamlets should necessarily only be done under conditions where important community goals are met and adverse impacts are minimized. Any larger projects should build out a community's stated vision of its future rather than a developer's. In order to accomplish this, communities can plan and zone for such projects in advance of a development proposal being made by the private sector. This has the advantage of both allowing for local control of the project's design and location, as well as attracting developers who can easily understand and meet the community's visions and goals. This is a viable method for ensuring adequate collaboration between the community and the private sector on any projects that may be proposed in the future.

Some of the first steps toward achieving a strong local plan for any new hamlet development proposals should include comparing many of the traditional neighborhood developments, eco villages, and co-housing projects that have been tried elsewhere. Another would be to investigate marketing potential for attracting small-scale clean industry to Marbletown that may also be interested in partnering with the town on a project for sustainable workforce housing. Yet another would be to establish a floating workforce housing zone where significant density bonuses could be achieved in exchange for meeting comparably highest standards of a combination of affordability, age diversity, community amenities and infrastructure, low visibility and traffic impacts, design excellence, walkability, transit-oriented development and green project certification.

Appendix E. References

1. Marbletown Town Plans, Surveys, and Related Documents (by year of approval or issue)*

Marbletown Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, September, 2010
American Community Development Services

Marbletown Natural Heritage Plan, February, 2008
Behan Associates, Marbletown Environmental Commission

Marbletown Town-wide Survey Report, January, 2007
Fairweather Associates, Marbletown Community Development Committee

Conservation Subdivision Regulations for the Town of Marbletown, 2007
Town of Marbletown, Town Code

Marbletown Affordable Housing Task Force Report, 2006
Marbletown Affordable Housing Task Force

Marbletown Town Plan, January, 2005
Shuster Associates, Marbletown Planning and Zoning Committee

Marbletown Index of Natural Cultural and Historical Resources, April, 2005
Conway School of Landscape Design

Marbletown Aquifer Protection Study, September, 2005
Mid-Hudson Geosciences

Future of Marbletown Report: Summary of findings and recommendations of the community visioning process, December, 2002
Catskill Center for Conservation and Development

Future of Marbletown Survey, November, 1997

** All documents are available for viewing either on the Town website: www.marbletown.net or in hard copy at Town hall.*

2. Selected Ulster County & Regional Plans and Reports

Private Lands, Public Benefits; Open Space Resources and Preferred Growth Areas in the Catskills, Open Space Institute, 2011

Ulster County Transportation Council 2009 Traffic Monitoring Program Report, Ulster County Transportation Council, 2009

A Three-County Regional Housing Needs Assessment: Ulster, Orange and Dutchess Counties From 2006 to 2020, Planning Departments of Ulster, Orange and Dutchess Counties with Project Consultation from Economic & Policy Resources, Inc., 2009

Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway Open Space Plan, Shawangunk Mountains Regional Partnership, 2008

Ulster County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, Ulster County Transportation Council, 2008

Ulster Tomorrow, A Sustainable Economic Development Plan for Ulster County, UC Development Corporation, UC Industrial Development Agency, & UC Planning, 2008

Ulster Economic Transition Task Force Report to the County Executive, 2008

Ulster County Open Space Plan, Ulster County Planning, 2007

Ulster County Housing Strategies Report, Ulster County Housing Consortium, 2005

Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan, Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway Steering Committee, 2005

3. Websites Related to Smart Growth

1) The following are some general websites for learning more about smart growth and sustainable hamlet development:

Smart Growth

<http://smartgrowthny.org/index.asp>

Smart Communities Network - Creating Energy Smart Communities

<http://www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/>

Transition US

<http://www.transitionus.org/>

Smart Growth Initiatives Underway - NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/57517.html>

2) The following is a sample of web-links for sustainable hamlet-based projects in the U.S.:

New Hampshire

<http://www.peterboroughcohousing.org/>

Georgia

[Serenbe Community.webloc](http://serenbe.com/community/webloc)

Washington

<http://www.buildinggreen.com/hpb/overview.cfm?projectid=843>

Colorado

<http://www.discovergeos.com/>

California

<http://travel.nytimes.com/2008/12/14/travel/14SeaRanch.html>

Texas

<http://www.solaustin.com/>

Website on community-generated design:

<http://www.livingneighborhoods.org/ht-0/bln-exp.htm>

4. Planning Terms Defined

Build-Out Analysis: A projection of the maximum, theoretical development of all lands under current zoning, in order to determine the potential impact and pattern of a community's growth

Co-housing: Semi-communal housing consisting of a cluster of private residences with some shared community spaces (such as guest rooms, cooking, laundry facilities) or tasks.

Floating Zone: A zone that is to be used for a designated purpose and that is approved as to particular characteristics (such as size and type of buildings) but whose location is to be determined in the future.

Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) is an internationally recognized green building certification system of the US Green Building Council, providing third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies intended to improve performance in metrics such as energy savings, water efficiency, CO₂ emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

Mixed-Use Development: A development that allows multiple compatible uses (such as residential, commercial, institutional and recreational) to be in close proximity to one another in order to minimize transportation and other infrastructure impacts and to create a compact, efficient neighborhood.

Overlay Zone: An additional land use or zoning requirement that modifies the basic requirements of the underlying designation in order to promote specific additional community goals

Smart Growth: An approach to land-use planning and growth management that recognizes connections between development and quality of life. The features that distinguish smart growth approaches vary. But it is generally town-centered, is transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial, and retail uses. Smart-growth approaches preserve open space and other environmental amenities.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Promotes a preference for moderate or higher-density housing to be concentrated in mixed-use developments to encourage the use of public transportation and sustainability.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND): New or existing compact, mixed-use neighborhoods where residential, commercial, and civic buildings are within a close proximity.

Walkable Housing and Walkable Mixed Use Development: The extent to which the built environment is friendly to the presence of people living, shopping, visiting or spending time in an area (e.g. the hamlets). Factors such as the presence and quality of parking, connectors such as sidewalks and footpaths, and vibrant activity centers combine to determine the resulting "walkability" of any design. Walkability is a concept in sustainable hamlet design.

APPENDIX F. The Sustainable Economic Development Plan: Six Focus Areas

Six focus areas were developed by the PZC prior to the Task Force beginning their work, and are illustrated as connecting pieces of a single interlocked puzzle, and each accompanied by a challenge statement:

1. Commercial Hamlets of High Falls and Stone Ridge

How can we identify ways to strengthen our commercial hamlets in order to enable them to thrive as the focal points for activity in the Town? (Focus area 1 is the subject of this Hamlet Strategic Plan)

2. Micro-Farming

How can we identify support mechanisms for economically and ecologically sustainable small farming operations in order to strengthen local markets, enhance rural character, and provide new employment opportunities for the emerging micro-farm resurgence? (See Section IV, References, “Marbletown Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan”)

3. Community Business Identity and Marketing Plan

How can we assemble a community-wide strategy for Marbletown that provides for a more unified approach to niche business growth and community identity marketing, plus more direct coordination with regional plans for economic development and tourism?

4. Clean Business and Industry

How can we define methods for supporting existing businesses and attracting new clean business and industry to the Hamlets in order to fill existing business gaps and provide needed jobs?

5. Balanced Housing

How can we identify the Town’s needs for housing, including seniors, young professionals, local workforce, tourism and rental housing?

6. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

How can we encourage and assist local residents and businesses toward a significant reduction of their energy costs and carbon output, incentivize energy efficient construction, and attract green industries?

APPENDIX G.

REGIONAL MAP

