COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

for the

Town of Amboy Oswego County, New York

Prepared by:

Town of Amboy Comprehensive Plan Committee

Adopted October 27, 2003

Town of Amboy Board Members, Officers and Representatives

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INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan Committee

The Amboy Town Board established a Comprehensive Plan Committee in the winter of 2002/2003 to help develop a new plan for the town. The Committee was composed of members of the town board, the planning board, and other town and village officials and residents. This committee was charged with gathering base data and reporting to the town board their recommendations on a plan. The committee received assistance from the New York State Tug Hill Commission.

Purpose Of The Plan

The purpose of the plan is to provide a blueprint for the physical development of the town for the future. It prepares for potential residential and commercial development that Amboy may face as the growth of the Syracuse metropolitan area continues to expand into the region. The plan will provide a framework for future land development and land subdivision controls. It will also help assure that the growth of the area will be in concert with future plans for infrastructure and road development, and will protect natural resource values. Finally, it is hoped that other levels of government (state, county, and other local governments) will find the plan useful in shaping their future development activities. It is the purpose of this plan to help others to plan and develop in accord with the desires of the citizens of Amboy.

Previous Plan

The last plan for the town was prepared in the early 1980s. This was a multi-town plan prepared by the Salmon Rivers Cooperative Planning Board and Conservation Council that included the Town of Amboy.

Periodic Review And Update Of The Plan

It is the recommendation of the Plan Committee that this plan be periodically reviewed and updated by the Town Board and others, as designated by the Town board, at least once every five years. A five year review will refresh the Town Board's perspective on the longer range issues affecting Amboy, and help to reinforce the link between day-to-day development decisions and longer range town policies. In addition, a periodic update will keep the plan current with the ever-changing conditions of the town without the need for large-scale planning efforts.

The Organization Of This Document

This document is organized into the following parts:

Part I. Community Profile

This section presents a compilation of relevant facts about the demographics of the town based on U.S. Census and other data.

Part II. Land Use Policies

This section includes policies which guide development in the town and form the framework for any land use regulations. All development projects in the town should conform to these policies.

- Appendix A. Historic Resources Inventory
- Appendix B. Implementation Matrix

Appendix C. Maps

The Town of Amboy Land Use Plan is intended to further the following goals:

- 1. PROTECT SENSITIVE LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES
- 2. PRESERVE RURAL CHARACTER
- 3. PRESERVE THE CRITICAL ROAD NETWORK
- 4. CONSERVE AGRICULTURE AND WORKING LANDS
- 5. PROMOTE APPROPRIATE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
- 6. PROMOTE APPROPRIATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
- 7. STRENGTHEN THE TRADITIONAL HAMLETS AND CROSSROADS

HISTORIC OVERVIEW (EXCERPTED FROM "ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF OSWEGO COUNTY, Heritage Foundation of Oswego, Inc.)

Amboy lies on the eastern edge of the county about equal distance from the north and south boundaries. The town is bounded on the west by Parish, on the north by Williamstown, on the east by Oneida County, and on the south by Constantia. Amboy was organized in 1830 when it was taken from Williamstown; it has an area of 24,781 acres. The town is named for the city of Amboy in New Jersey.

There are no known Native American habitation sites or hunting-fishing sites in the town. Because of its isolation and lack of water transportation, settlers did not arrive as early as the newcomers along Oneida Lake. Joseph Perkins came in 1805 and settled east of Jamison Corner. The first settlement grew at "Five Corners" where present-day Turk Road, Mellon Road, Bryant Road cross NYS Rt. 69 (about two miles east of Amboy Center). Some newcomers such as David Smith (came in 1815), descendants of Isaac Claxton (who came in 1818), and John Drought (came in 1818), stayed for a few years then moved away, farther west.

Sage Parks, the first supervisor of the town, settled in Lots 14 & 29 (east of Jamison Corner) in 1821; he built the first grist mill located about 3/4 miles east of Amboy Center in 1824.

In 1822, Joseph Murphy built the first sawmill in Amboy located at Carterville. Up until the end of the Civil War, while there were still large tracts of uncut forests, ten sawmills produced large quantities of lumber. Gradually, the lumbering industry declined and, by the end of the century, only two or three mills still operated.

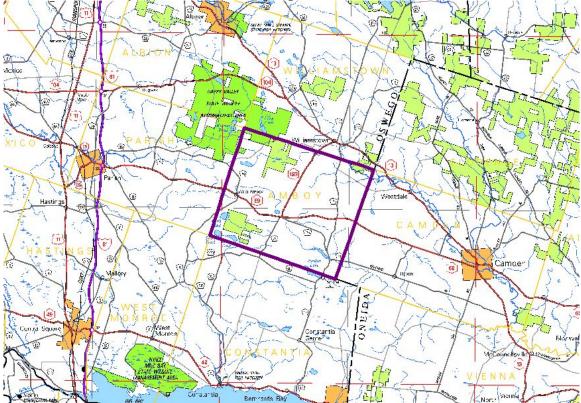
Farming became the most important industry in Amboy, starting with grain production, the growing of hops and, after the war, the production of milk. In the 20th century, farming has continued to decline and large areas of the town are now reforested.

In 1895 the town's seven school districts included: #1, Carterville; #2, East Amboy; #3 North Amboy; #4, Amboy Center; #5, West Amboy; #6, Stone Hill; and #7, Mud Hill. Today, all these districts have consolidated with the Altmar-Parish-Williamstown District.

The Freewill Baptist Church organized in 1824 and when it ceased to exist the church building was converted to the town hall (1892). The date for the organization of the Amboy Center Methodist Church is not known, but may be as early as 1830. The community has kept the building in good repair and the church is the center of most social life in Amboy. The small West Amboy Community Church was built c1980 on the site of the former Union Church.

The hamlet of West Amboy lies at the junction of Co. Rt. 26 and NYS Rt. 69 near the western edge of the town and, in the 19th century, had a hotel, a cheese factory, a grist mill, two blacksmith shops, a cheese box factory, a tannery, a post office, and a general store. Today, there are no business establishments. The Fire Department built a new firehouse in 1964; it replaced a horse barn which serviced the hotel across the street. The east side of the firebarn occupies the space of the former cheese factory and a blacksmith shop.

Amboy Center is located at the junction of NYS Rt. 69, NYS Rt. 183 and Co. Rt. 23. In the 19th century there were a couple of mercantile stores, a hotel, a cheese factory, and a post office. Today, residential buildings and the Methodist Church occupy the four corners.



The Town of Amboy and the surrounding region

PART I - COMMUNITY PROFILE

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

During the period from 1950 to 2000, the Town of Amboy grew tremendously, nearly tripling its population. Between 1990 and 2000, the town added 288 persons (an increase of 28%). During this period, the county and the state each showed moderate growth rates of 5%.

Table 1

Population Change 1950-2000

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Amboy	482	524	557	836	1024	1,312
Oswego County	77,181	86,118	100,897	113,901	121,771	122,377
New York State	14,830,192	16,782,304	18,242,584	17,558,165	17,990,455	18,976,457

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Households

While the town added 157 households (an increase of 50%) between 1990 and 2000, the average household size dropped from 3.29 to 2.8. Average household size also dropped in Oswego County and in the state during this period.

Table 2

Household Population

	# of	Average	# of	Average
	Households	Household	Households	Household
	1990	Size	2000	Size
Amboy	311	3.29	468	2.80
Oswego County	42,434	2.76	45,522	2.60
New York State	6,634,434	2.86	7,056,860	2.61

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Income

Median household incomes in the town were slightly lower than the Oswego County median according to the 2000 Census. Amboy's median income of \$33,315 was 77% of the state's median of \$43,393.

Table 3Median Household Income

	Median Household
	Income
Amboy	\$33,315
Oswego County	\$36,598
New York State	\$43,393

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

HOUSING

The town added 180 housing units during the 90s, a 33% increase. A housing unit is defined by the census as a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. The county and state added 9% and 6%, respectively.

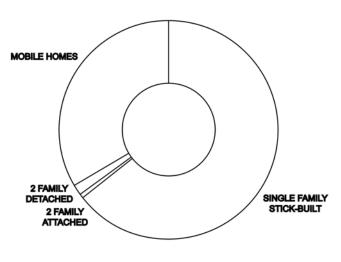
Table 4 Total Housing Stock

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Amboy	480	640	+33
Oswego County	48,548	52,831	+9
New York State	7,226,891	7,679,307	+6
<u> </u>	-		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The majority (64%) of housing units are in the form of single family detached "stick built" and modular houses. Mobile homes make up 33% of all housing units. The remaining 3% of units are in multi-family dwellings.

Figure 5 Dwelling Units by Number of Units in Structure



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Analysis of the median age of housing structures in Amboy reveals that the housing stock tends to be newer than that in the county and the state. This is consistent with Amboy's recent population growth.

Table 6Median Year Structure Built

_	_ Year_
Amboy	1974
Oswego County	1964
New York State	1954

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Housing vacancy rates are indicators of the housing supply situation in the town. A housing vacancy rate of around 5% (not including seasonal properties) is generally considered adequate (over 5% indicates an oversupply and under 5%, an undersupply). The town had an adequate homeowner vacancy rate of 4.4% compared to the county's 2.2% rate and the state's 1.6% rate. Rental vacancy rates were higher across the board with Amboy and Oswego County each showing rates of 9.6% and the state with 4.6%.

Housing affordability is measured by dividing median housing value by median household income in a given community. A score of 2 or lower is considered an indicator of affordability. Amboy scored 1.7 in the 2000 census, compared to 1.9 for the county and 3.4 for the state.

Housing vacane	су		
	Vacant Housing Units	Homeowner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate
Amboy	35	4.4%	9.6%
Oswego County	3,796	2.2%	9.6%
New York State	387404	1.6%	4.6%

Table 7 Housing Vacan

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 8 Housing Affordability

	Median Value for All Owner- Occupied Units	Median Household Income	Score	
Amboy	\$56,100	\$33,315	1.7	
Oswego County	\$69,800	\$36,598	1.9	
New York State	\$147,600	\$43,393	3.4	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

The unemployment rate in Amboy, as reported by the 2000 census, was slightly lower than that of the county and slightly higher than that of New York State. The civilian labor force includes the population 16 years of age and older not in the military.

Table 9 Employment Status 1999

	Civilian Labor Force	Percent Unemployed
Amboy	565	8.1
Oswego County	59,667	9.3
New York State	9,023,096	7.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

When the employed population is broken down in occupational groups, the top three groups in 1999 were 1) production, transportation, material moving, 2) construction, extraction, maintenance, and 3) sales and office occupations.

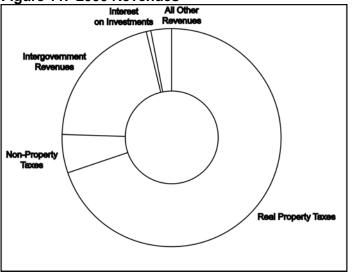
Figure 10 Employment by Occupation 1999 Production, Transportation, Material Moving Construction, Extraction, Maintenance Farming, Fishing, Forestry

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

FINANCE

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2000 revenues for the Town of Amboy totaled \$575,481 and were raised mostly from real property taxes (69%) and intergovernment revenues (21%). Next were non-property (sales) tax revenues (6%). *See definitions on page 10.*





Source: NYS Office of the Comptroller

During the same year, transportation made up the largest expenditure (72%), followed by general government expenditures (14%) and fire protection expenditures (9%). *See definitions on page 10.*

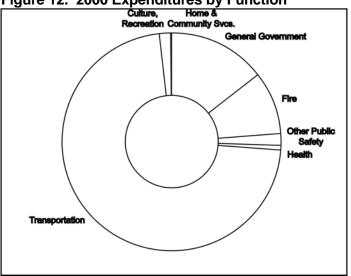


Figure 12. 2000 Expenditures by Function

Source: NYS Office of the Comptroller

DEFINITIONS

REVENUES

Real Property Taxes: represents the total amount of ad valorem real property taxes, plus special assessments levied on real property on the basis of benefit – includes interest and penalties on taxes, payments in lieu of taxes and gain from the sale of tax acquired property

Non- Property Taxes: includes revenues from sales tax distributed to the community by the county.

Intergovernment Revenues: state aid, federal aid, other government aid

Interest on Investments: interest from monies invested or deposited

All Other: revenues not otherwise classified, such as departmental income, licenses, permits, rentals, sales, fines and forfeits, recoveries, refunds, etc.

EXPENDITURES

General Government: includes expenditures for executive, legislative, judicial, and financial operations

Police: includes expenditures for police service

Fire: includes expenditures for fire prevention and protection

Other Public Safety: traffic control, public safety administration, on-street parking, animal control, building inspection, civil defense, examining boards, DARE program, etc.

Health: expenditures for ambulance services, public health administration, registrar of vital statistics, etc.

Transportation: expenditures for maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges, snow removal, street lighting, etc.

Economic Assistance: expenditures to promote the economic welfare of residents

Culture-Recreation: expenditures for parks, playgrounds, youth and adult recreation programs, libraries, etc.

Home and Community Services: expenditures for the operation and administration of a water, sewer, electric, gas or steam system, garbage collection, drainage and storm sewers, etc.

PROPERTY TAXES

Full taxable value (tax base) of real property in the Town of Amboy was \$40,914,243 in 2000.

In 2001, town property owners paid an average of \$33.62 per \$1000 assessed value in property taxes (this includes county, town and school taxes). Figure 13 depicts the breakdown of property tax payments by recipient government or school district.

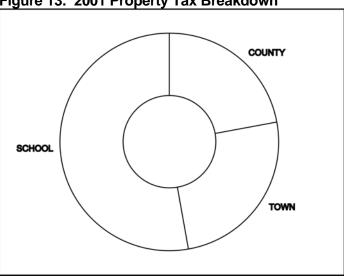


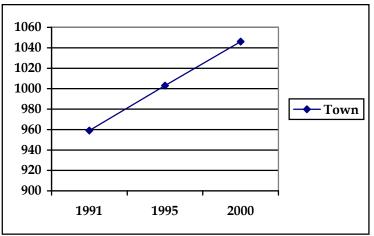
Figure 13. 2001 Property Tax Breakdown

Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

TOTAL TAX PARCELS

Land subdivision resulted in 81 new parcels in Amboy between 1991 and 2000. This 9% increase averages out to 9.7 new parcels per year during that period.

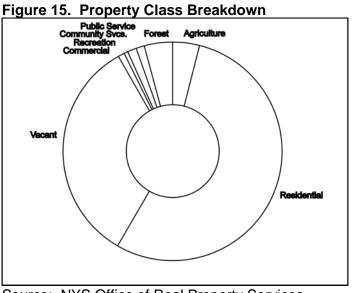
Figure 14. Total Tax Parcels



Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

TAX PARCELS BY PROPERTY CLASS

The majority (55%) of tax parcels in the town were assessed as residential in 2001. The next largest categories were vacant land (33%), agriculture (4%), and forest (4%).



Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

ASSESSED VALUE BY PROPERTY CLASS

When total assessed value is broken down by property class, a little over half of the value is in residential parcels. Next are public service (28%) and vacant parcels (6%).

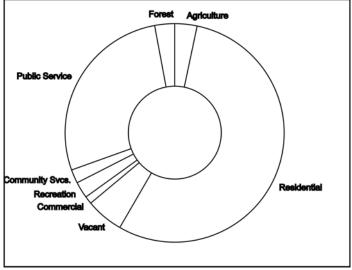


Figure 16. Assessed Value Breakdown

Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

The full taxable value of all parcels (which excludes property tax exemptions) breaks down similarly. In other words, Amboy doesn't have a substantial amount of tax exempt land.

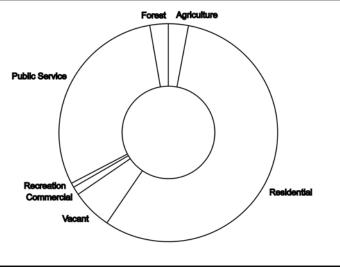


Figure 17. Full Taxable Value Breakdown

Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

PUBLIC LANDS

Amboy features approximately 3,097 acres of public land. This includes 2,490 acres of state land, 196 acres of county land and 11 acres of town owned land. 400 acres of the state property is part of the 14 square mile Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area, which also covers portions of the Towns of Albion, Williamstown and Parish. The town has plans to develop John J. Leeman Memorial Park on a 7 acre on County Route 23 in Amboy Center. The park will include multi-use fields and courts along with an exercise trail and picnic facilities.

PART II - LAND USE ISSUES AND POLICIES

As part of the planning process, land use character areas were defined and issues affecting them were identified. Policies were formulated to help guide development in the town and form the framework for any land use regulations. While the policies that follow are not law, it is the intention of the Town of Amboy that all development projects in the town should conform to them.

SENSITIVE LANDS & RESOURCES

There are many areas in the Town of Amboy which have a limited suitability or are inherently unsuitable for development. There are other areas in which development should be avoided due to the valuable natural character of the area, character which would be lost or damaged if disturbed. Areas which are either unsuitable or fragile include floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, hydric soils, and stream corridors.

Floodplains

Character. Floodplains are areas which are completely inundated at certain times with water. They are usually divided between a floodway and a fringe area. The floodway is the area where floodwaters must be free to flow completely unrestricted. The adjacent fringe areas are flooded but are not as critical to floodwater flow.

Where located: Certain floodplains have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (see the Development Constraints map in Appendix C). These include flood hazard areas which have a probability of flooding at least once in 100 years. These areas are located in the vicinity of North Pond, South Pond, Carterville Pond, Hotel Pond, Coan Pond, Little Coan Pond, Panther Lake and the West Branch of Fish Creek. It is also noted that Little Pond Road and Tanner Road have problems with flooding due to beaver activity.

Consequences of Development. These areas are considered severe hazards to development. Floodway areas must remain completely undeveloped, as any structures in these areas may act as obstructions which impede floodwaters, thus increasing damage and loss further upstream of the obstruction. The fringe areas may be subject to limited development where base flood elevations will not be increased. Any development which increases base flood elevations will increase flooding upstream.

Wetlands

Character. Wetlands are areas where groundwater is exposed on the surface of the ground. These areas often act as recharge areas, areas for filtering and cleaning water, and as significant wildlife habitat.

Where located: Certain major wetlands have been mapped by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). These include only wetlands of greater than 12.4

acres. Amboy has an abundance of these wetlands – approximately 4,081 acres. They are scattered throughout the town (see the Development Constraints map in Appendix C).

Consequences of Development. Wetlands are generally considered a severe hazard to development. Development can lead to loss of valuable and irreplaceable wildlife habitat. Wetlands are particularly important as they may directly recharge groundwater supplies and are vulnerable to pollution. Thus, in areas where potable water is obtained from ground water, as in Amboy, some wetlands need a high level of protection. Development can also lead to a loss of valuable open space. Development of these areas is expensive, as landfill is usually needed and flood protection is often necessary.

Steep Slopes

Character. These are areas which have slopes greater than 10 percent, which means that there is a vertical rise of ten feet for each 100 feet of horizontal distance.

Where located: Steep slopes are scattered throughout the town, with the highest concentration in the northeastern corner, north of Finnerty Road (see the Development Constraints map in Appendix C).

Consequences of Development. Slopes of less than 10 percent are generally considered slight constraints on development. Slopes of between 10 and 15 percent are generally considered moderate constraints on development. Slopes of greater than 15 percent are considered severe constraints on development. The development of slopes is not recommended for several reasons. There are some environmental concerns, such as erosion and stream sedimentation. It is also more expensive for communities to service development on steep slopes with roads, water lines, and sewerage facilities.

Hydric Soils

Character: Hydric soils are soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in their upper parts. Hydric soils include soils developed under sufficiently wet conditions to support the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation.

Where located: Hydric soils are prevalent and evenly scattered throughout the town.

Consequences of development.

Hydric soils present hazards to development, particularly on-site septic systems, due to their poor drainage characteristics.

Stream Corridors

Character. Stream corridors act as important fish and wildlife habitats. They may be important for their significance as drainage conduits. Some have relatively steep slopes.

Where located: The southern and eastern portions of Amboy are drained by Scriba Creek and the West Branch of Fish Creek into Oneida Lake. The northwest portion is drained by tributaries of the Little Salmon River into Lake Ontario.

Consequences of Development: Stream corridors must be developed very carefully so as not to destroy their amenity. Improper development can lead to erosion of the stream banks, resulting in siltation of the stream and the loss of stabilizing soil. Water quality can be impaired, and the recreational use of the stream degraded. The aesthetic qualities of the stream may likewise be destroyed by improper development, thus degrading the quality of life in the town.

SENSITIVE LANDS AND RESOURCES POLICIES

- 1. Development taking place in floodplain areas, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas should be limited to those uses that will not adversely affect water quality.
- 2. Sewage disposal systems should be properly separated from drinking water sources.
- 3. Lots should be large enough to ensure that sewage which is disposed of by conventional on-site septic systems can safely percolate, and that wells will not overdraw groundwater supplies (typically 1.5 3.0 acres).
- 4. Uses and structures should be properly set back from streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands.
- 5. Land disturbing activities should be conducted in accordance with proper erosion control measures and/or NYS mining regulations.
- 6. Landfills, toxic and nontoxic, should be prohibited townwide.

RURAL AREAS ISSUES

RURAL CHARACTER

An important attribute of the Town of Amboy is its rural character. Low-density development, scenic views, ample open spaces, and a diverse landscape are all identified as important characteristics of Amboy's physical environment. An abundance of forests, brushlands, wetlands and open farmlands contribute to a varied and diverse landscape, which gives the town its rural flavor.

Rural character can be quickly destroyed by poorly planned or unplanned development. Rural sprawl; a lack of effective buffering, screening, and landscaping techniques; the proliferation of unattractive commercial signs and billboards; and the strip development of road frontages all contribute to a loss of rural character.

It is recognized that the maintenance of rural character is increasingly important to the economy of the North Country, both as a means of accommodating tourism, and as a means of providing an attractive quality of life to potential employees and employers looking to locate in the area. This can be accomplished, in part, by keeping development density low, and retaining appropriate open spaces, trees and other vegetation on the site of new development.

CRITICAL ROAD NETWORK

State and County Highways (Routes 69, 183, 26, 23, 17, and 17A) connect Amboy to the region. It is critically important that the function of these routes be maintained. A major threat to this is strip development. This type of development encourages usage of principal highways for local traffic and degrades the ability of the highway to convey regional traffic. Strip development leads to numerous "curb cuts" or access points on the highway. An increasing number of access points increases the number of points where conflicts between automobiles can occur, thus increasing accidents. This reduces the ability of the highway to accommodate high speed travel. The primary function of the road, which is to provide inter-municipal mobility, is gradually undermined by the competing function of serving as a local road to provide access to individual properties. This is a serious consideration for a community like Amboy which is not serviced by an interstate highway.

AGRICULTURE AND WORKING LANDS

Productive farm and forest lands are important and valuable economic and cultural assets, which must be managed wisely.

Potential Threats To Agriculture in the Town of Amboy

Nonfarm uses mixed into agricultural area may be a problem, particularly when they are residential in nature. Agriculture is an industry. It involves many activities which may be incompatible with residential living such as irregular hours of operation, the use of heavy machinery, the spraying of chemicals, the spreading of manure---unpleasant noise, lights, and smells. Urban and suburban residents often move to rural areas for open space, peace, and quiet, then complain about the industrial aspects of agriculture. Residents often become antagonists to agricultural operations, advocating interference with, and limitations on agriculture operations making coexistence difficult.

There is evidence of a general decline in the efficiency of farm operations when nonfarm dwellings become too prevalent. Nonfarm land uses scattered throughout farming areas make it less economical to operate farms. At some point, farms are driven out of operation by the difficulties of competing with nonfarm uses. Studies have indicated that between 2 and 2.5 nonfarm dwellings per 100 acres of farmland can make agricultural operation too difficult to conduct.

Means of Protecting and Preserving Agriculture

There are several means of preserving and protecting agriculture. Most of these means may only be initiated through local action. As New York State has an agricultural protection program initiated through the counties, this will be discussed as well.

New York State, through the Department of Agriculture and Markets, has established "agricultural districts" for the protection of farmlands. Several properties in the central part of the town are included in Oswego County Agricultural District #_. These districts are designed to protect agriculture from the following threats 1) over restrictive zoning, 2) excessive real property taxation assessments, 3) ad valorem assessments for special improvements, 4) the exercise of eminent domain, and 5) certain policies of State agencies. It is not believed that any of these threats exist at present in the town, but such protection has been afforded to most agricultural operations in the town.

There are other techniques which afford some protection to farmers from excessive land taxation. One such technique is to voluntarily convey conservation easements to another entity such as a local government or a nonprofit organization pursuant to the New York Environmental Conservation Law. Similar to this are purchase of development rights (PDR), lease of development rights (LDR), and transfer of development rights (TDR) schemes. With such schemes, a farmer will relinquish some or all of his development rights, usually on a voluntary basis. In return, the farmer is financially reimbursed for his loss of development rights in some manner, and his land assessment is reduced to reflect the reduced value of his property. These schemes are all designed to remove development rights from selected farmlands and thus afford their preservation as viable agricultural operations.

Analysis of Farmland Protection Schemes

The loss of farmlands to development in this region has been characterized mainly by small, incremental development decisions being made by farmers to subdivide small parcels over long periods of time. Much of the farmland that has been abandoned has not been developed, but has reverted to succession growth. Therefore, development pressures are not a major factor in agricultural loss in this region. The general health of the dairy farming industry appears to be the primary factor in farmland loss.

Agricultural Protection in Amboy

A balanced approach to agricultural protection would seem to be appropriate in the Town of Amboy. There is recognition that agriculture may be increasingly less economically viable in the future. The trend towards the abandonment of farms and the decline of the farm economy will most likely continue, although at an unknown rate. This may eventually lead to significant loss of agricultural support infrastructure, which in turn will lead to an acceleration of the decline in agriculture. Agriculture may not decline, however. In hopes that economic conditions may change in favor of this region, it would be prudent to secure some degree of viable agricultural lands for future production.

COMMERCIAL USES

The town should be prepared to locate mixed residential/commercial or purely commercial nodes in suitable areas where market forces dictate. Some of these nodes

might then have the potential to become the focus for hamlet development combining appropriate commercial and residential mixes of uses. The hamlets of Amboy Center and West Amboy are two such areas. Jamieson Corners is also an area with hamlet potential (discussed further in following pages).

Scattered site commercial development is appropriate in the town, but should be restricted to those types of developments, which have an appropriate scale and character in relation to the existing surrounding area, and have a vital economic reason to locate this way. Scattered-site development should be only sparingly permitted, preferably near road intersections, and should be carefully regulated by performance criteria, which significantly reduce impacts on adjacent lands.

Home-based businesses

Many business start-ups in rural areas are undercapitalized. There is continual pressure for these low-capital start-ups to locate in dwellings in residential areas, to reduce cost. It is important to the health of the local economy to accommodate such business startups where the use can be demonstrated to be in harmony with the neighborhood, and will not detract from or compete with businesses in hamlet commercial areas. Nonresidential uses located in close proximity to residences need special care to mitigate any negative impacts, particularly in higher density residential areas. Controls on the intensity of the use---site lighting, signs, parking, aesthetics, traffic generation, noise, and other such characteristics are important. The allowed use of the site must be clearly defined so that subsequent owners and changes in use do not alter the site so as to detract from the neighborhood.

RESIDENTIAL USES

Historical Patterns of Residential Development

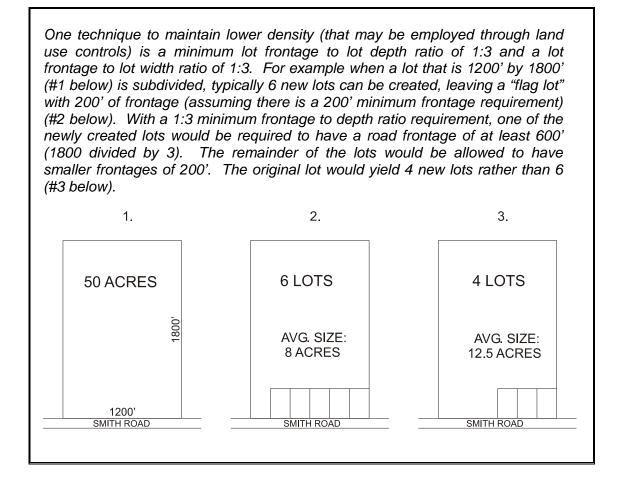
The majority of the existing and new residential construction in the town is single-family detached dwellings. The single family dwelling pattern has historically predominated, usually at very low densities, on isolated tracts of land, scattered throughout the town. Houses are usually on lots, which have been subdivided, one or two at a time, out of former farmlands. There are very few larger scale subdivisions of land and there are no examples of large-tract subdivisions (like those found in suburban areas). Mobile homes are an important part of the local housing stock. They are popular as affordable housing, and are a traditional housing type of the region.

Reasons For the Existing Pattern

Residential development has been forced to locate largely based upon the availability of well water, and soil suitability for on-site sewage disposal. Existing constraints created by these factors have necessitated very low-density construction, as on-site sewage disposal systems often require at least 20,000 square feet (and often up to 2 acres) for proper functioning.

Density

The density of dwellings (the number of dwelling units per square mile) should remain low for several reasons. Not only does increasing residential density have a deleterious effect on working lands, open space, and rural character, it also increases traffic problems, especially at intersections. The intersections of Bryant Road and 183 and Turk Road and 183 are noted busy intersections. Also, the more development that takes place on town roads, the more use these roads receive, and the more maintenance costs rise. This is an issue as transportation costs made up 72% of the 2000 town budget.



Variety in Residential Development Patterns

There are a number of forms that residential developments can take, depending on the economics of the development and the goals to be achieved. Larger scale single-family subdivisions in rural areas are usually of three patterns. They can be linear along existing roads, they can cover entire tracts of land, or they can be in a clustered configuration.

Linear roadside subdivisions have a negative effect on the function of major highways, by allowing an excessive number of entrances, which endanger traffic flows. While the preservation of open space may be a desirable goal, a pattern of open space locked up behind a row of houses along the road is often an undesirable pattern. The open space may be inaccessible to the public for recreation and enjoyment. It may be unseen. It places new housing construction on display, not the unique landforms, vistas,

vegetation, and agricultural activities which form the character of the town. The linear pattern may contribute little to, and may ultimately detract from, the preservation of the rural character and quality of life which makes Amboy a unique place.

Conventional subdivisions (typically seen in suburban areas) completely consume all land in the subdivision area. The open space is dispersed in small pieces to individual homeowners. While giving each landowner a small piece of private property, conventional subdivision does not reserve enough open space to meet many important community objectives. The open space in a conventional subdivision, while constituting a major part of the subdivision is configured in such a way that its visual impact is significantly diminished or negated. A conventional subdivision, even with massive amounts of open space, has no rural character.

The cluster development pattern has the advantage of configuring open space in a manner where it more suitably meets community needs. It can be consolidated to protect large areas of sensitive lands or agricultural areas, or it can be used for parklands or recreation areas. More importantly, strategically placed open space can be used to help retain community character. Cluster subdivision also reduces the amount of public facilities needed, where they are necessary, as distances between dwelling units are reduced.

The disadvantages of cluster subdivisions are that the clustered units sometimes require public facilities, which would not be necessary in a more dispersed development configuration. Cluster developments are often required to feature community water and/or sewage disposal systems in order to comply with health code requirements. Thus, unit cost may be significantly increased in some cases. A second disadvantage is that the cluster open space must be managed. This means that the municipality, the developer, a homeowners association, or some other party such as a land trust, must be created or induce to accept responsibility for maintenance of, and liability for the open space.

Variety in Residential Dwelling Types

It is important that the town provide opportunities for a variety of residential types and situations. Opportunities should be provided for homes for people of all ages and income levels, at various densities. In pursuing this objective, it is important to accommodate accessory apartments, mobile homes on individual lots, mobile home parks, single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multiple-family dwellings.

Accessory Apartments

One type of living arrangement is the accessory apartment, also known as the "granny flat" or "ECHO" (elder cottage housing opportunity) housing. This is commonly a small apartment allowed in a single-family dwelling or on the same lot with a single-family dwelling, usually no more than 500 square feet in area. It is designed to be clearly subordinate to the single-family use on the premises, so as not to have the impacts of a multi-family dwelling. Additional regulations may be placed on accessory apartments such as restricting entrances to the side or rear of the principal structure. This provides an apartment large enough for one or two people, but small enough to maintain the character of the area as a predominantly single-family neighborhood. This idea has been very popular in the North Country as a means of providing additional housing

opportunities as well as for providing extra income to homeowners without seriously impacting the character of the neighborhood. This type of living arrangement usually has very low impact on neighborhoods, and may be quite popular with the public, as well as providing badly needed housing opportunities.

Mobile Homes

Mobile homes are also a popular North Country housing opportunity. They can create problems, however, when a preponderance of them in an area begins to discourage other higher valued housing types from locating in that area. The experience of many communities is that large numbers of unregulated mobile homes may have the effect of eroding the local tax base due to rapid depreciation and aesthetic deterioration.

There are two things that can be done to lessen the impact of mobile homes. These are 1) prohibit mobile homes in some areas of the town, thus leaving land free and available for higher valued development, 2) establish mobile home design standards in some areas of the town, thus making mobile homes better neighbors to conventional housing.

Design standards can make a significant difference to mobile home appearance. The most effective design considerations include providing 1) a pitched roof, 2) the exterior siding of traditional site-built homes, and 3) horizontal dimensions more approximating site-built homes. Proper site location along with accessory buildings and screening can significantly change the appearance of horizontal dimensions.

These design improvements can make mobile homes fit much better into neighborhoods of conventional housing, protecting housing values and the community tax base. These design improvements will increase the cost of housing, however, so they may not be appropriate in all areas allowing mobile homes. Some communities set aside areas of the town, as well as mobile home parks, for mobile homes without design improvements.

RURAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Rural Character

- 1. Development density (the number of lots per square mile) should be compatible with a rural environment and lower than in the hamlets.
- 2. Scenic vistas should be protected from intrusions such as cell towers.
- 3. Land should be developed in a manner that preserves important habitats and Natural Heritage program sites.
- 4. Trees, vegetation and other landscape features should be retained as much as possible on development sites. Uses should be appropriately landscaped with native species so as to fit into the rural setting.
- 5. The proliferation of commercial signs and billboards should be prohibited and permitted signs should be compatible with the rural character of the town.

- 6. Historic sites, buildings and other structures which are fundamental to the character of the town should be preserved and protected.
- 7. Messy conditions should be prohibited.

Critical Road Network

- 8. Land parcels fronting on major highways should have adequate frontage (~220 feet) to prevent an excessive number of highway access points.
- 9. Highway access points should be placed at safe locations.
- 10. Adequate setbacks should be required for structures built on major roads.

Agriculture and Working Lands

- 11. Nonfarm intrusions into agricultural areas should be minimized, thus decreasing conflicts with existing agricultural operations.
- 12. Agricultural support uses should be allowed in close proximity to primary agricultural areas.

Commercial Uses

- 13. Commercial uses should preferably be sited at road intersections.
- 14. Scattered commercial/industrial site development can be allowed in certain parts of the town. Standards for buffer zones, screening, building size and bulk, impervious surfaces, lighting, noise, odor, signs, on-site circulation, parking and loading, access, drainage and erosion control should be used to ensure that the impacts of scattered-site development are controlled.
- 15. Home based businesses should be allowed but must not negatively impact neighboring properties in terms of aesthetics, increased traffic, noise and pollution.
- 16. Commercial parking areas should generally be to the side or rear of uses, and appropriately screened from public view.

Residential Uses

- 17. Cluster residential developments preserving agricultural and wooded open space should be encouraged whenever possible.
- 18. Multi-family dwellings should be permitted, but should maintain the appearance of single family dwellings.
- 19. Accessory apartments should be permitted, but with appropriate standards for the areas where they are located.

20. Mobile homes should be permitted in most areas, but in some areas should be subject to design controls appropriate for the particular neighborhood.

HAMLET AND CROSSROADS ISSUES

The Town of Amboy has two small hamlets that may be better described as crossroads. West Amboy, at the intersection of State Route 69 and County Route 26 has approximately 25 structures including a church. Amboy Center lies at the intersection of State Route 69 and State Route 183. Amboy Center contains approximately 30 structures including a church and the town hall. Jamieson Corners (labeled Jefferson Corners on the map below), at the intersection of Route 69 and County Route 17, while definitely not a hamlet, contains one of the town's only commercial uses, a convenience store/gas station.

1906 Topographic Map

Why channel development to these areas?

It is the traditional pattern in the North Country. The 1906 topographic map above clearly shows the pattern of development clustered at crossroads. Communities sprang up in locations with access to multiple transportation routes, be they waterways, roads or railroads. These locations were well suited for commerce and industry. Residences were established with walking distance of employment opportunities.

Aside from the fact that these locations give a business better access, these locations alleviate traffic because cars can disperse in three or more directions (as opposed to two if a business is located in the middle of a road segment). These locations are also safer in that traffic generally slows at intersections due to cars making turns (ex. traffic coming into Amboy Center sometimes slows due to people turning left onto Rt. 183).

Businesses that locate in hamlets are also accessible by pedestrians who live nearby, alleviating some off-street parking needs which saves costs for the operators and cuts down on the environmental problems associated with parking areas, such as stormwater runoff pollution.

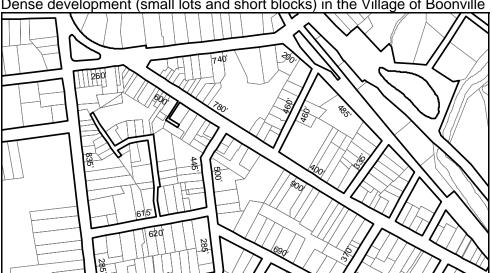
Channeling residential development to intersections makes public transit more viable, be it a county bus system or school buses (Jamieson Corners is a stop on Oswego

County's bus route). It also cuts down on the use and therefore maintenance on other town roads. For instance, residents of Amboy Center can travel to Parish (and Interstate 81), Williamstown, Camden (and points east), and Constantia without using any town roads. This is not to say that people shouldn't live on town roads, just that the residential density should be kept lower on them.

Finally, these areas contribute to a sense of place for the town, something participants in this planning process have said Amboy is lacking.

Design characteristics

Hamlets are typically about a guarter mile in radius with lots that are small, ranging from around 9000 square feet to 20000 square feet with frontages ranging from approximately 20 ft. to 160 ft. Buildings are typically two to three stories and are located relatively close to the street. The relationship between building height and the space between buildings on opposite sides of a street creates spatial enclosure which is very comforting to pedestrians. This is because the human eye prefers a 1:3 building height to street width ratio with 1:6 being an absolute minimum. This dense pattern also allows efficient use of street infrastructure such as sidewalks, curbing, street lighting, etc.



Dense development (small lots and short blocks) in the Village of Boonville

Impediments and "work-arounds" to crossroads and hamlet development

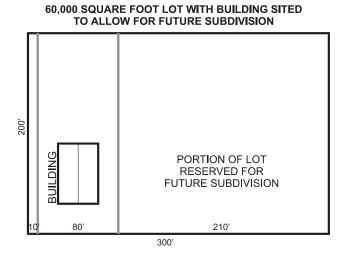
The growth of these areas in towns like Amboy is hampered due to the very fact that they need the design features listed above to work. This type of development requires lower speed limits and usually some type of shared sewage system.

The greater impediment is most likely the lack of speed zones. The speed limit on Route 69 is 55 mph along its entire run through the town. This problem is a welldocumented concern among town residents. Dense development with narrower road frontages and frequent curb cuts is unsafe here as has been discussed in this plan. A comfortable pedestrian environment also cannot be created in areas with speeding automobiles.

Small lots also pose problem for individual on-site septic systems. It is difficult get the proper separation of a well and leachfield with lots under 2 acres. Also, the density probably contributes to a higher than recommended level of nitrate and other pollutants in the groundwater.

Small-scale sewage treatment plants are becoming available and affordable. Some communities in New England have systems that service only 20 - 30 units. This may be an option in the future for Amboy's hamlets. At the present, it is unknown whether the market for development in these areas would warrant investment is such systems.

An alternative for the near term may be to develop these areas with larger lots with larger frontages, but with structures sited so that the lots could be subdivided into two or three smaller lots in the future when some type of shared system becomes available. Another alternative would be to allow smaller lots with alternative septic systems such as composting toilets or holding tanks.



HAMLETS AND CROSSROADS DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- 1. A mixture of residential and compatible nonresidential uses should be encouraged
- 2. A higher intensity of development should be encouraged, but only when/if speed limits are lowered and alternative sewage disposal facilities exist.
- 3. Public and semi-public institutional uses (such as town buildings, libraries and churches) should be highly encouraged.

- 4. Retail sales of small products and small scale retail service uses should be highly encouraged in the hamlet cores.
- 5. Commercial signs, site lighting and parking areas should be compatible with a close mix of residential uses, and a pedestrian/human scale.
- 6. Messy conditions should be prohibited and junkyards operated as businesses should be not be permitted.
- 7. Home based businesses should be allowed but must not negatively impact neighboring properties in terms of aesthetics, increased traffic, noise and pollution.
- 8. A variety of types of housing, including multi-family homes and accessory apartments, should be allowed, but these uses must be designed to fit in architecturally with and minimize negative impacts on adjacent properties.
- 9. Residential uses should be encouraged as second floor apartments above commercial storefronts in the hamlet cores.
- 10. New construction should respect the existing building setback line, minimizing front yards.
- 11. Buildings in the hamlet cores should have a maximum footprint size of 20,000 square feet and range from 20 to 35 feet in height.
- 12. New construction should respect the architectural character of neighboring buildings.

GLOSSARY

ad valorem - in proportion to the value

anaerobic – pertaining to or caused by the absence of oxygen

conventional housing – housing built on site from wood, concrete or steel framing materials or factory manufactured homes known as "modular homes" bearing an insignia issued by the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council as required in 9 NYCRR section 1212

dwelling, single family – a principal building containing one dwelling unit

dwelling, multi-family - a principal building containing three or more dwelling units

dwelling, two family - a principal building containing two dwelling units

eminent domain – the authority to acquire or take, or to authorize the taking of, private property for public use or public purpose

frontage - the side of a lot abutting on a public road or private road

hydrophytic - growing in water or very moist ground

mobile home - a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling unit, with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities

on-site septic system – an underground system with a septic tank used for the decomposition of domestic wastes

sedimentation - the deposition or accumulation of sediment

sense of place – the characteristics of a location that make it readily recognizable as being unique and different from its surroundings (Schultz and Kasen 1984)

siltation - The deposition of finely divided particles of soil or rock

subdivision - Division of any parcel or parcels of land whether or not contiguous into two or more lots

tract subdivision - A subdivision containing five or more lots, or any subdivision requiring a new road

working lands - actively maintained agricultural and/or forest lands

APPENDIX A – HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

(EXCERPTED FROM "ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF OSWEGO COUNTY", Heritage Foundation of Oswego, Inc.)

The property types sought for this reconnaissance survey were determined by an examination of the History of the Town of Amboy and selected from the list of Contexts and Study Units prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office. Of the properties considered, only those with significance in town or county history and with acceptable levels of integrity based on configuration and period architectural detail are listed below. Other property types, once significant but now lacking integrity, are briefly noted. All buildings and sites included in the annotated list have been assigned an approximate date based largely on architectural character visible on the exterior of the building. Numbers included in parentheses refer to the 1976 survey.

- 1) 1991. **Carterville dam**, at intersection of Co. Rt. 17 & Co. Rt. 56. The Little River flows east into Oneida County. In the 19th century there was a sawmill, a grist mill, and a large tannery at Carterville. The mill ruins could not be found, and were presumed to be destroyed when the new dam was built. (2.0.9.1)
- 2) c1900. **Frank Moteyunas Farm Barn**, Foil Road. Large dairy barn, perpendicular siding; covered entrance to hayloft, its foundation of red sandstone, although foundation is not solid against the wall of the barn.
- 3) c1920. **Kenneth Drought Farm Barn**, NYS Rt. 69. Large dairy barn, wooden clapboards, gambrel roof, covered entrance to the hayloft, seamed tin roof; silo; interesting pictures of Holstein dairy cows painted on side of front of barn.
- 4) c1900. Richard Bryant Farm Barn, SW corner of Frank Bryant Road & Co. Rt. 17A. A rectangular barn, gable roof, perpendicular siding. The structure stands so high on the size of the base that one wonders if the building could have been used for hops or tobacco.
- 5) c1860. **THE BARN**, owned by John & Mary Monkman, Foil Road. A large dairy barn, gable roof, perpendicular siding; 122 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 35 feet from ground to roof peak. The barn has been adapted for use as a dinner-theater (used about four times a year).
- 6) 1829. **Williams-Goly Farm**, owned by Steven & Diane Goly, Co. Rt. 17, R.D. 2, Box 234, Camden, NY 13316, south of Jamison Corner. Two-story, 4-bay, Federal style house, gable roof, wooden clapboards. Large dairy barn (early 1900s); horse barn, gambrel roof, shed on either side (early 1900s); hop barn & carriage house, board & batten siding (1870); ice house, gable roof, horizontal boards, tall entrance way with wood squares to fill in space as ice blocks are added (c1900s). (2.0.10)

- 7) 1970s. **Camp Glengarra**, "Foothill's Girl Scout Council," Utica, NY. Birmingham Drive, off Co. Rt. 17. Pictured are playgrounds and shelters. There is an interesting complex of six-sided modern houses. (2.0.1.12)
- 8) c1980. Lodge, "Camp Near Wilderness," Girl Scout Drive, off Co. Rt. 26. Sponsored by Girl Scout Council of Syracuse. Contemporary lodge, board & batten siding, field stone fireplace.
- 9) c1977. Lodge, Amboy 4-H Environmental Center, NYS Rt. 183, just south of Williamstown town line. A small rectangular building, gable roof, perpendicular siding, concrete block foundation, seamed tin roof. Two other small similar buildings. Log lean-to (c1984); three miles nature trails; 150 acres.
- 10) 1835. Amboy Center Methodist Church, NYS Rt. 69 & NYS Rt. 183. Greek Revival church with Gothic windows in the bell tower (the steeple may have had a spire). The bell formerly hung in the Baptist Church, now the town hall. Stained glass memorial windows installed in 1939. Adjacent building used for church activities, Sunday schools, community breakfast. (2.0.3.1)
- Between 1824 & 1842. Former Baptist Church, today used for Amboy Town Hall. NYS Rt. 69, west of NYS Rt. 183, Amboy Center. Purchased by town in 1893. One-story rectangular building, gable roof, with Greek Revival elements; portico supported by four square columns on pedestals. Resided in summer 1993. (2.0.1.14)
- 12) c1976. **West Amboy Community Church**, Co. Rt. 26, West Amboy. Built on site of former Union Church (1864) which burned. One-story rectangular building, small bell tower & spire with a cross on top. Large dining room in basement.
- 13) c1840. **West Amboy Cemetery**, Co. Rt. 26, south of West Amboy. 4.45 acres; land donated by Seamans family and the Schaad family.
- 14) c1830. **Amboy Center Cemetery**, NYS Rt. 69, east of Amboy Center. 1.5 acres; double iron gates, iron posts with iron fencing. Unusual stones include "Mother / Lavina Hall Gowdy / over / 50 y'rs a teacher / 1833 - ." - bottom text reads "Ezra C. Gowdy / died in Kansas / 1865-1905."

A stone cut by A. Salladin, Mexico, exhibits a typical Salladin design: angel with wings, open book, sun rays & puffy clouds. Text reads "Harriet/ Wife of/ Thomas S. Brownell / Died Jan. 1, 1847 / Age 25 years & 2 mo." The verse below is indecipherable.

- 15) c1840. **Kinney Cemetery**, NYS Rt. 69 & Turk Road. Abandoned cemetery (privately owned).
- 16) c1850. Butler Cemetery, NYS Rt. 183. Frontage, 148.5 ft; depth, 148.5 feet. Mortarless stone wall forms west side; mature maple trees line the perimeter; poor maintenance. A Butler monument reads "Eliza M. Butler / died/ March 7, 1870 / AE 19 yrs old 10 m 22 d." Lower right reads: "Erected by Silas Merrell."

- 17) c1840. **Klondike Road Cemetery**, located on Klondike Road which branched off Cusson Drive and ended at Stark Road. No picture; I did not personally see this burying ground.
- 18) Before 1854. Pero-Stanton House, NYS Rt. 69, west of Co. Rt. 26, West Amboy. Dr. Joseph Pero built this house and sold it to C. T. Stanton sometime before 1854. A carefully crafted Greek Revival house; a curved roof overhang with mitered corners; square fluted pillars support front portico; a classical front door with sidelights. The wrap-around porch is not common in this area. (2.0.1.15)
- 19) 1935. **Sign Fast Shop**, intersection NYS Rt. 69 & NYS Rt. 183. Small rectangular 1 1/2 story wooden building, gable roof. Center doors flanked by a pair of windows on each side (is this a duplex?) (2.0.2.1)
- 20) c1850. West Amboy store-stagecoach stop, now owned by Ed Lescenski, NYS Rt. 69, West Amboy. Two-story wooden Italianate commercial building, paired brackets, covered porch across front; a stagecoach stop in the 1850s; in 1930s building used a hotel, hotel closed in 1947. Tradition says the building was a stop on the Underground Railroad (2.0.2.3)

APPENDIX B – IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

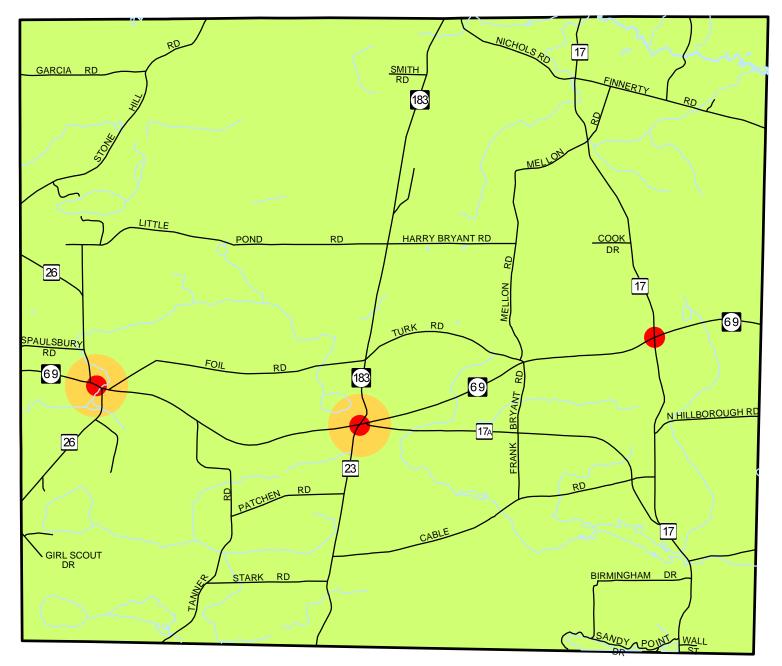
The land use policies presented in this plan may be implemented through land use regulations, including:

	ADOPTED BY	ADMINISTERED BY	ADOPTION PRIORITY
CLUTTER LITTER AND DEBRIS LAW	TOWN BOARD	TOWN BOARD, ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	HIGH
LAND USE LAW	TOWN BOARD	PLANNING BOARD, BOARD OF APPEALS, ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	MEDIUM
SUBDIVISION LAW	TOWN BOARD	PLANNING BOARD, ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	MEDIUM

Preservation of historic structures may be enhanced through the town's participation in the NYS Certified Local Government (CLG) program. Admission into the CLG program is granted only after careful review of a municipality's historic preservation law and procedures, with advice and assistance from Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation staff to improve and support local programs. Participation in the program allows municipalities to gain access to federal historic preservation funds set aside by the state.

APPENDIX C - MAPS

Land Use Policy Areas Town of Amboy



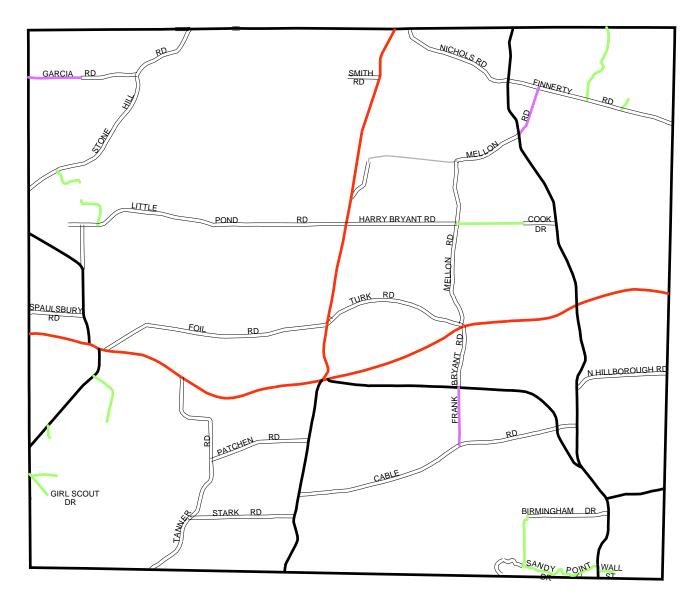
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Legend RURAL AREAS HAMLET CORES / CROSSROADS HAMLET AREAS





Road Network Town of Amboy



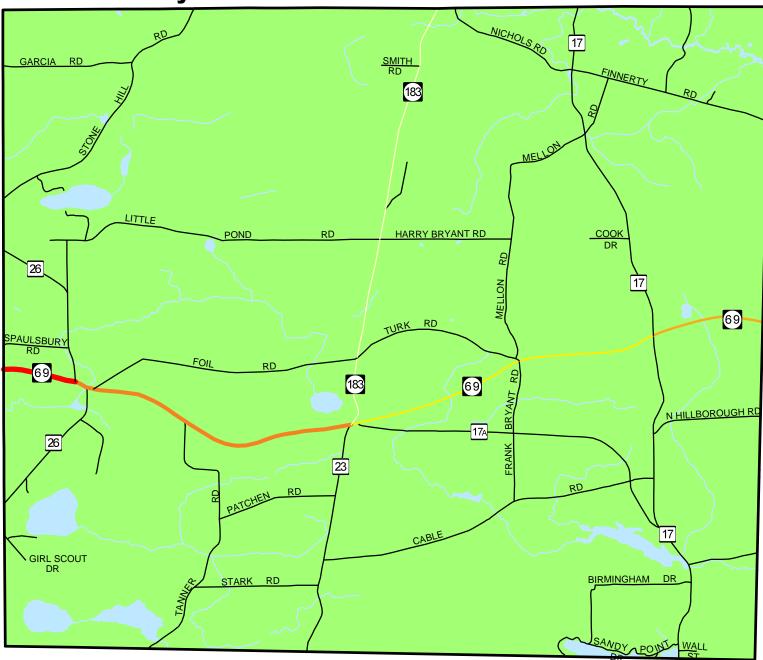


Legend

CATEGORY

- ----- ABANDONED
- ----- COUNTY
- TOWN
- ----- STATE
- PRIVATE
- BOUNDARY

Daily Traffic for Routes 69 & 183



Town of Amboy



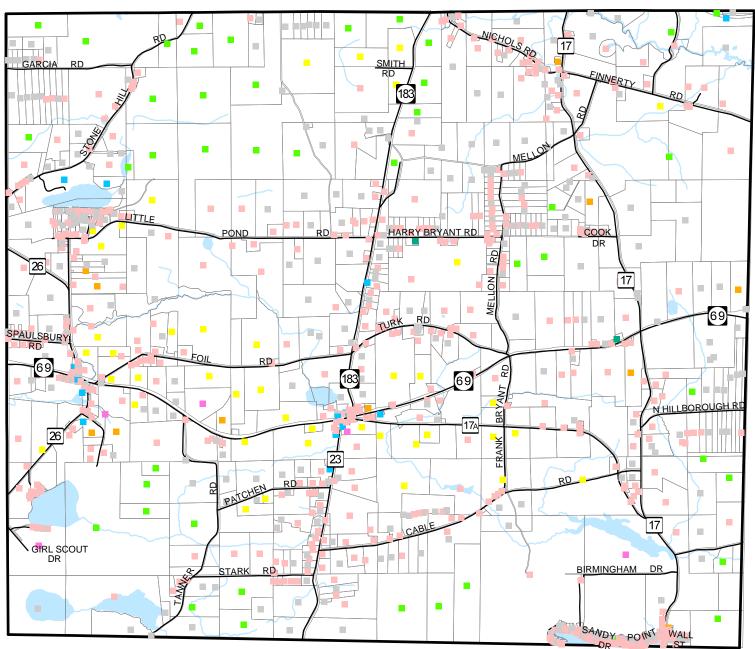
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Average Annual Daily Traffic

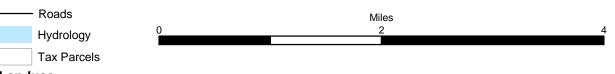




Landuse Town of Amboy



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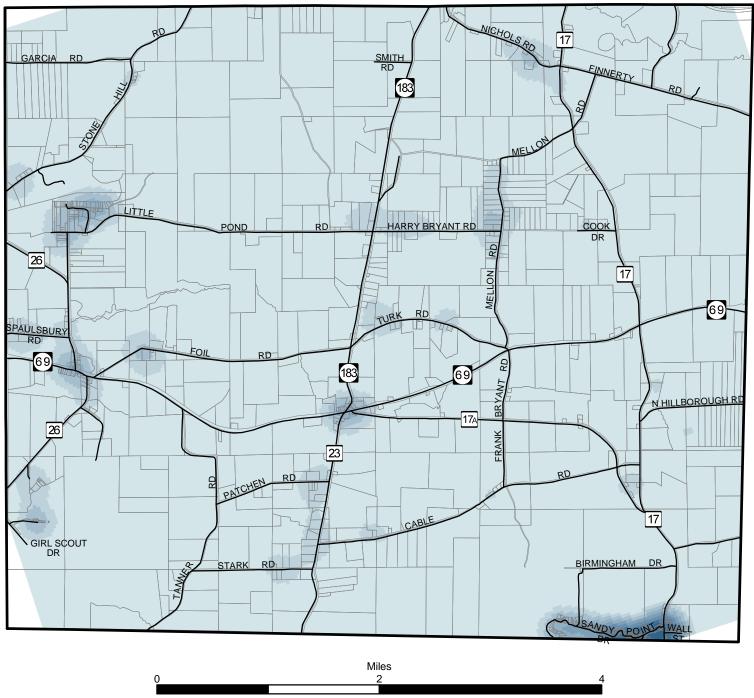
Landuse

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Vacant
- Commercial
- Recreational
- Community Services
- Public Services
- Forest



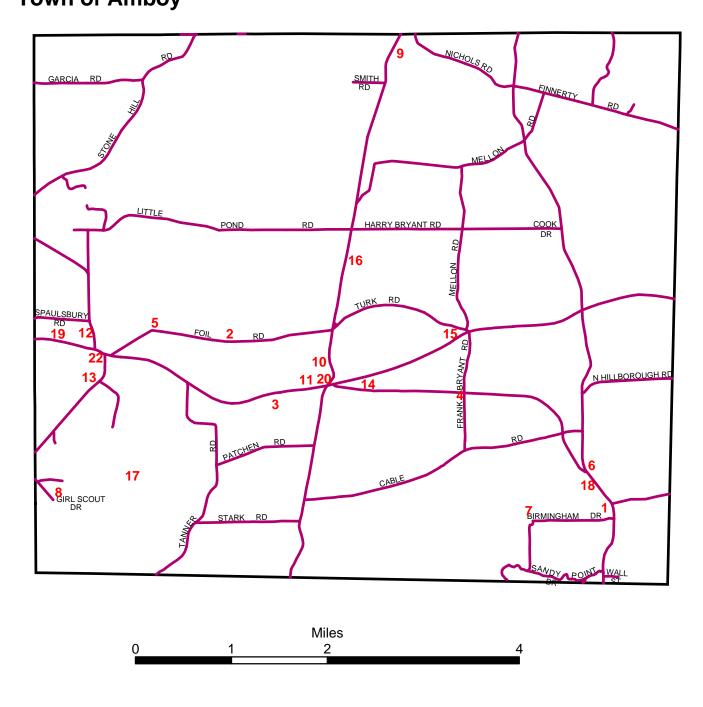


Population Density Town of Amboy





Historic Resources Town of Amboy

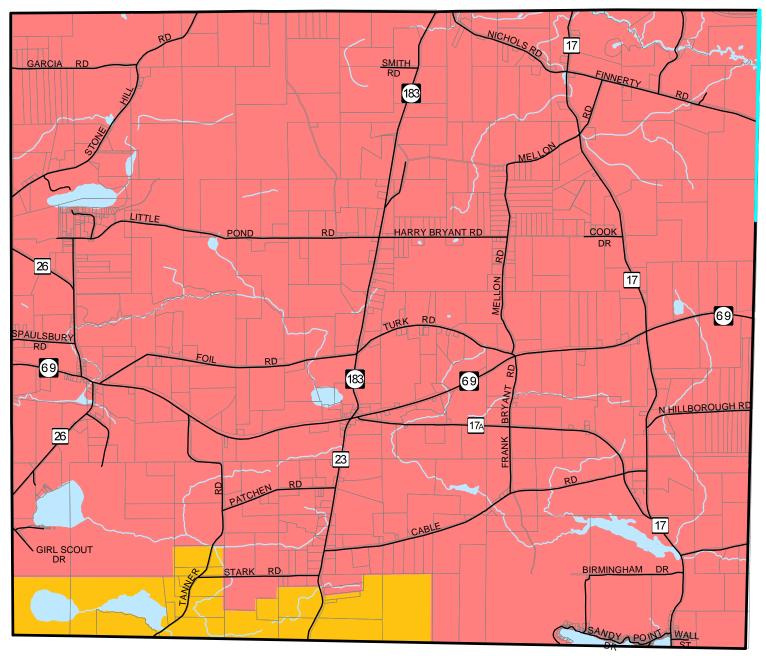


Legend

BOUNDARY Roads

•

School Districts Town of Amboy





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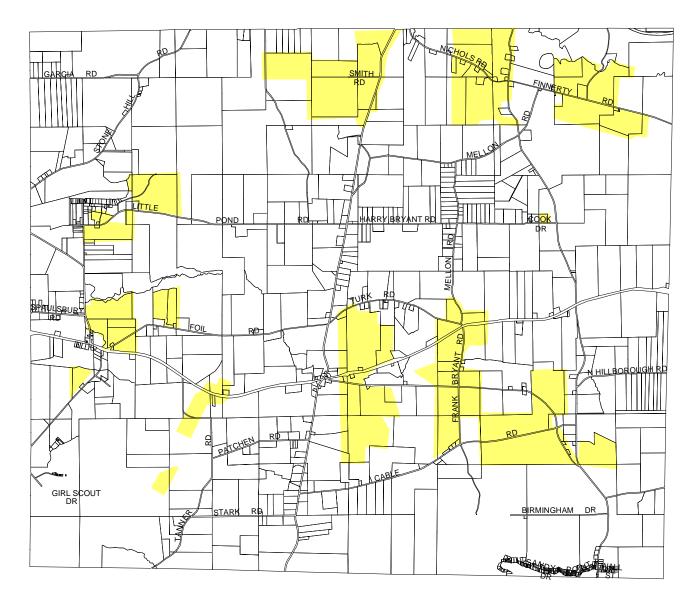






Agricultural Districts

Town of Amboy

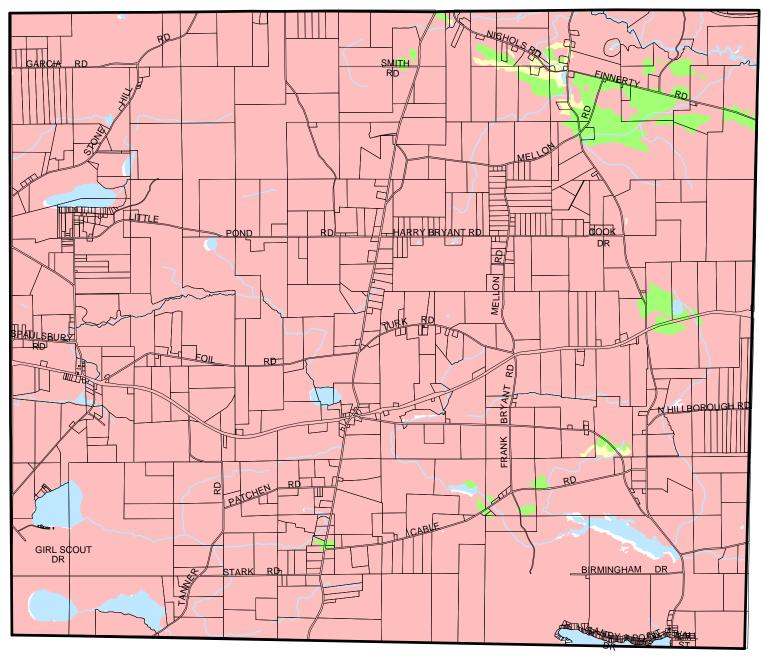






TAX PARCELS AG DISTRICTS

Septic System Suitability Town of Amboy





Legend

- Tax Parcels
 - Hydrology

Septic System Limitations

Slight Moderate

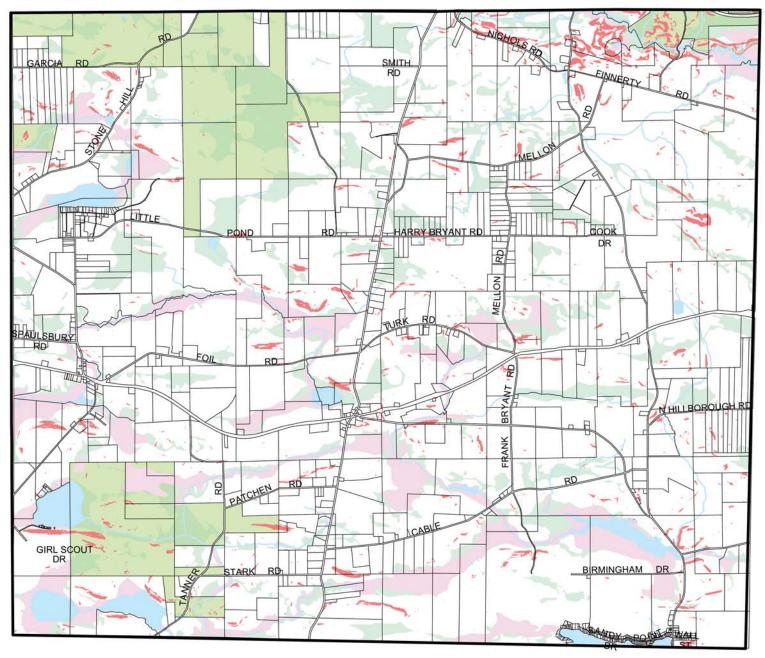








Development Constraints Town of Amboy



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Legend

Tax Parcels
DEC Wetlands
Flood Hazard Areas
Steep Slopes
Streams
Waterbodies
Public Lands



