

**FILE**



**TOWN OF MARCELLUS**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
AND  
FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT**

**NOVEMBER 2001**

**TOWN OF MARCELLUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/  
FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**NOVEMBER, 2001**

**MEMBERS OF THE TOWN BOARD**

Frank T. Wilson, Supervisor

Albert C. Munro

James A. Sheridan \*

Daniel Ross \*

Donald G. Sherman

\* Also members of the Steering Committee

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Douglas Allen

Dr. Andrew Merritt

Judy Battaglia

Keith Ramsden

Brian Blackmer

Daniel Ross

Chris Christensen

Susan Seabury

Linda Christoff

James A. Sheridan

Jeffrey Chrysler

Helen Stevens

Daniel Cupoli, Planning Board Chairman

Dale Vollmer

Maureen Kantor

Jerry Wickett

**BARTON & LOGUIDICE, P.C. CONSULTING ENGINEERS**

Robert W. Hornaday, P.E., Principal

Nicholas J. Pinto, P.E., Principal

James J. Billings, P.E., Vice President

John P. Donohue, P.E., Associate

Kevin E. Voorhees, Senior Managing  
Environmental Specialist

Edward J. DeSocio, Environmental  
Analyst/Planner

**TOWN OF MARCELLUS  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

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Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement

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Town of Marcellus – *2001 Comprehensive Plan/Generic Environmental Impact Statement*

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Town of Marcellus, Onondaga County, New York

Lead Agency:

Marcellus Town Board  
Marcellus Town Hall  
24 East Main Street  
Marcellus, New York 13108  
Tel: (315) 673-3269

Contacts:

Frank T. Wilson, Town Supervisor  
Daniel Cupoli, Planning Board Chair

[Town Hall- (315) 673-3269]  
[Town Hall- (315) 673-3269]

Preparers:

Barton and Loguidice, P.C.  
Consulting Engineers  
290 Elwood Davis Road  
P.O. Box 3107  
Syracuse, New York 13220  
(315) 457-5200

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## SUMMARY

### FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

#### I. INTRODUCTION

This *Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS)* is issued in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law (the State Environmental Quality Review Act – “SEQRA”), and the regulations that implement SEQRA (6 NYCRR Part 617).

The proposed action addressed in the *FGEIS* is the adoption of a *Comprehensive Plan* by the Town of Marcellus, New York.

#### II. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The *Comprehensive Plan/Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement* may be reviewed at the Town Clerk’s office, 24 East Main Street, Marcellus, New York 13108.

#### III. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/DRAFT GEIS PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Section X of the *Comprehensive Plan/Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (CP/DGEIS)* describes the public comment opportunities that were provided by the Town during the development and preparation of the *CP/DGEIS*. In summary, work on the Town’s long-range planning efforts began in 1999, with the first public meeting held in September 1999. Since then, 17 additional public meetings were held during the developmental stages of the *CP/DGEIS*. Public input was received during those meetings and incorporated into the *CP/DGEIS*.

On April 23, 2001, a Public Information Meeting was held to provide an overview of the process and to present the *Draft Comprehensive Plan* and proposed revisions to the zoning maps.

A Public Hearing for the *CP/DGEIS* was held on August 20, 2001 at 7:00 PM at the Marcellus Fire House, Slate Hill Road, Marcellus, New York. The hearing was conducted by the Town Supervisor, Frank T. Wilson, with assistance from Town staff and representatives from Barton & Loguidice, P.C. Five (5) people presented oral comments on the *CP/DGEIS* at the Public Hearing, which ended at 7:56 PM. A stenographic transcript of the hearing is available for public review at the Town Clerk's office, 24 East Main Street, Marcellus, New York 13108, and is also included as Appendix 3 of the *CP/FGEIS*.

Additional written comments on the *CP/DGEIS* were accepted by the Town until 5:00 PM on September 20, 2001. These comments, and a list of those who presented or submitted comments, are included in Appendix 4 of the *CP/FGEIS*. The Town has reviewed the comments, and prepared written responses, which are also included in Appendix 4 of the *CP/FGEIS*.

#### **IV. CORRESPONDENCE**

Copies of correspondence received from individuals and agencies are included in Appendix 5.

#### **V. SUMMARY OF REVISIONS TO THE CP/DGEIS**

After review and consideration of comments from the public, Town officials, and other regulatory agencies, a number of revisions and corrections were made to the *Comprehensive Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement* that was initially presented to the public at the April 23, 2001 Public Information Meeting. Noteworthy changes include:

1. The schedule for completion of the *Comprehensive Plan* was revised to incorporate additional meetings of the Steering Committee and required Town Board actions.
2. Census information was updated to available 2000 data throughout the *Plan*.
3. Additional discussion regarding Mineral Resources in Section IV.D.

4. Additional discussion regarding Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's) in Section VII.E.2. The proposed locations of CEA's were also expanded to include all tributaries of Nine Mile Creek.
5. Parcel-based zoning in areas where residential strip-zoning currently exists, was removed from text and maps.
6. A discussion of pedestrian mobility was added (Section VII.D).
7. Additional discussion regarding Scenic Highway Overlay Zones (Section VII.E.3)
8. Recommendations regarding placement of future public utilities underground was added (p. 7).
9. A statement was added regarding the Town's participation in the Federal Flood Insurance Program, and the availability of FEMA maps at the Town Hall (Section IV.E).
10. A statement was added regarding EPA's recently-passed Storm Water Phase II program (Section V.A).
11. Corrections were made to several maps, including Highway Classifications (Figure 12), Water Distribution Network (Figure 13), Existing Zoning (Figure 18), Proposed Zoning (Figure 19), Existing Land Use (Figure 20), and Proposed Land Use (Figure 21). Several maps were also renumbered for consistency.
12. Added Appendices 3, 4, and 5 to include a transcript of the Public Hearing, as well as comments and responses to the *CP/Draft GEIS*.
13. A number of corrections, clarifications, and minor editorial/format changes were identified subsequent to issuance of the *CP/DGEIS*. The revisions were incorporated into the *CP/FGEIS*.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Town of Marcellus *Comprehensive Plan/Generic Environmental Impact Statement* is a report summarizing an in-depth planning effort by Town officials, State and local agencies, consultants and other participants. Discussions of the major planning elements are described in the following primary sections: Community Planning and Setting, Environmental Inventory and Considerations, Infrastructure, Development, and Land Use. Each section discusses existing factors that have shaped the Town, issues and known areas of concern, goals and objectives, and policy and regulatory recommendations for future Town actions.

The *Comprehensive Plan* has also been prepared in the form of a GEIS (Generic Environmental Impact Statement) to help provide opportunities for public comment, including a Public Hearing.

### **COMMUNITY PLANNING GOALS**

Over the course of the planning process, the Steering Committee, consisting of Town officials and other members of the community, met regularly to identify and discuss major components of the *Comprehensive Plan*. As a result, five basic goals were identified:

- Preserve the overall rural character of the Town, by advocating "smart growth" of new development;
- Accommodate desirable residential and other development that is consistent with local land use planning;
- Encourage protection and preservation of environmental resources;
- Coordinate Town policies with Federal, State and other local agencies for preservation of agricultural lands; and
- Promote cost-effective construction and use of public infrastructure as tools to maintain the Town's rural character and protect environmental resources.

## **COMMUNITY SETTING**

The Town of Marcellus is a small rural community characterized by large open space areas with active agricultural uses and areas of concentrated residential development. Development issues confronting the Town include addressing changes in agricultural lands, new housing subdivision locations over the next twenty years, and promoting appropriate light commercial and small business development that will contribute to the local tax base and diversify economic stability.

The Town of Marcellus has not historically encouraged industrial development, nor is it interested in accommodating industrial activities in the future, primarily due to limited infrastructure throughout the Town. The Town is generally known as a "bedroom community" due to its proximity to the City of Syracuse, and its largely residential population. Major attributes of the Town include a sense of "small town" character, scenic landscapes, an outstanding school district, vast agricultural lands, and unique environmental settings that support many outdoor recreational activities.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

The Town is affected by a variety of sensitive environmental resources and features. These include regulated wetlands; prime agricultural lands; major water bodies such as areas of Nine Mile Creek, Otisco and Disappearing Lakes; mineral deposits; woodlands; steep topography; and areas of restrictive soil conditions for on-site septic systems. Much of the Town is affected by one or more of these environmental factors.

Federal and State policies and regulation of environmental resources can be satisfied or even enhanced with proper coordination of Town policy. The public policy and regulation of environmental resources is important due to their wide impact and dispersal within the Town. Different levels of government subject to separate policies and regulations, administer each environmental resource. Federal and/or State agencies separately address wetlands, mining, drainage, and water bodies. Soils and topography are not specifically regulated, but are usually considered during the site plan review process for new development activities.

The Town currently relies on zoning and subdivision controls that were established in the early 1950's, prior to changes in some of the environmental programs and regulations. Although the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations have been amended periodically, zoning controls and district boundaries currently may allow development that is inconsistent with environmental policy and detrimental to some local environmental resources. The Town's development policies, together with Federal and State environmental regulations, can reduce potential problems for both property owners and the public, which clearly and effectively establishes the appropriate use and treatment of environmental resources.

The *Comprehensive Plan* proposes three broad objectives that apply to each environmental resource.

1. Maintain the integrity of environmental resources.
2. Encourage appropriate land development within and around critical environmental resources.
3. Improve the effectiveness of environmental protection procedures by promoting coordination among Town, County, State and Federal programs.

### **Environmental Policy Recommendations**

The Town should encourage future land development to be planned and designed to work within the capacity and function of identified sensitive environmental resources.

The Town should revise zoning districts and subdivision guidelines that promote development patterns consistent with the character and location of environmental resources.

The Town should institute cooperative efforts with other regulatory agencies to ensure that land development proposals and public services enhance the long-term preservation of significant environmental resources and minimize disturbance of these areas.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Town is confronting several broad infrastructure issues. Public infrastructure represents a major investment of financial and land resources. Funding for new construction and/or improvements is often difficult to obtain. Therefore, the Town should preserve and enhance the functions of existing facilities and services. The Town may seek to partner with Village services, where feasible. New facilities and/or services should be extended into appropriate areas of the Town to address existing environmental and projected development needs. The Town should promote patterns of development that provide for cost-effective extension of services, preserve environmental quality, and that are consistent with land use objectives and topographical limitations.

A Town objective is to use infrastructure as a tool in promoting desired economic land development in accordance with land use objectives, and to enhance protection of sensitive environmental resources.

### **Highway Policy Recommendations**

In January 1996, the Town adopted *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* prepared by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency. This Plan will be integrated into the *Comprehensive Plan* as a development tool by which the Town may consult with the New York State and Onondaga County Departments of Transportation regarding speed change requests and supporting the Plan's implementation measures.

The Town should utilize a functional classification approach to all highways within its jurisdiction, consistent with the definitions implemented by American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the New York State Department of Transportation, and the Onondaga County Department of Transportation. Functional classification is an analytical method of identifying types of highways. There are four major types within the Town: arterials, major collector/minor arterials, collectors, and local roads. These highway types reflect existing and projected importance within the Town's highway network.

The Town should require that all highway construction, improvements, or modifications be consistent with the road's functional class designation. It should encourage State and County governments to make improvements such as widening lanes and the addition of travel lanes if appropriate to meet the road's functional class. Private developers should be required through the site plan review process to make highway improvements consistent with highway function and with the objectives identified in the Transportation Plan.

The Town should form and assign zoning districts that encourage land development consistent with the functional classification approach in conjunction with the Town's overall highway network. Major land uses and development projects likely to generate higher volumes of traffic should be located along arterials or major collector/minor arterial roads.

The Town should review *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* no less than every five (5) years, to ensure that the goals, objectives and implementation measures complement and coincide with the goals, objectives and implementation measures established in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

### **Highway Regulatory Recommendations**

The Town should establish highway access standards for driveways and street intersections to promote highway safety as recommended in *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan*. Such standards may include requirements for minimum sight distance, turning radius and general access design and should be consistent with appropriate NYSDOT and OCDOT standards.

The Town should promote and require, when feasible, street interconnections between existing and proposed roads. This is to encourage the formation of a network of roads providing multiple travel routes that can serve as alternatives to the existing collectors and arterials.

### **Public Water and Sewer Policy Recommendations**

The Town should use the availability of public water, and continue to seek the utilization of the Village's sewer services to promote land use and development objectives primarily in proximity to the Village. It should coordinate the formation of water and sewer districts with its zoning ordinance and map. The formation of water and sewer districts should be discouraged in agricultural and rural portions of the Town, and should be encouraged in areas designated for residential and commercial development.

In order to promote the effectiveness of services and land development, public water and sewer services should, whenever feasible, be provided simultaneously to an area. Areas to be served only by public water should have a minimum one-acre residential lot area to ensure long-term adequacy of on-site septic systems. In certain areas of the Town, larger 2-acre residential lots will be necessary to ensure adequacy of on-site septic systems.

The Town should maintain conformance to the Town planning objectives and zoning ordinance by requiring the formation of water and sewer districts prior to the extension of any facilities. Within an existing service district, all facility extensions should be designed to maintain or enhance the long-term capacity of the system.

### **Public Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Recommendations**

The Town should initiate feasibility studies for design, cost, and environmental impacts of providing new water districts within the Town if ample public support is determined. Areas that are currently served with public water but contain many small parcels with older and potentially inadequate sewage disposal systems should be the first areas considered in constructing new public sewer systems. Expansion of sanitary sewers to these areas will reduce the likelihood of groundwater contamination, and enhance the ability of these areas to accommodate future development.

The Town is currently working with the Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) to investigate the feasibility of extending existing water service to the Limeledge areas in the northwest portion of the Town. This analysis should include an evaluation of the feasibility of constructing a cross-town water transmission line. In order to avoid adverse impacts to active agricultural lands, a transmission line may need to be constructed up Old Seneca Turnpike. Such measures are recommended in order to avoid inducing premature development activity in an agricultural area and to avoid strip development along this transportation corridor.

The Town should investigate the feasibility of establishing water supply and sanitary disposal systems to areas around the immediate periphery of the Village of Marcellus before investigating the feasibility of expanding these systems to other areas of the Town as a means to fully utilize existing infrastructure and reduce the possibility of urban sprawl into primarily agricultural sections of the Town.

#### **Public Utility Placement Recommendations**

The Town should recommend that the placement of future public utilities be placed underground when possible due to topographical considerations. Underground utilities are protected from the elements, eliminate visual obstruction and generally require less maintenance than above ground utilities. The initial cost of placing utilities underground can be reduced if they occur simultaneously with new road construction or during reconstruction within a road right-of-way.

#### **On-Site Systems Policy Recommendations**

The Town recognizes that major portions of the Town rely upon soil conditions and adequate groundwater supplies for sewage disposal and water supply. The Town should appropriately establish zone districts and encourage site planning and design in order to preserve and protect the long-term capability of these natural systems, and sensitive environmental resources.

### **On-Site Systems Regulatory Recommendations**

The Town should adopt a minimum two-acre residential lot size for districts in rural and agricultural areas of the Town that are known to have poor soil suitability characteristics for supporting on-site septic systems. A two-acre lot generally provides sufficient space within a property for adequate separation of a septic system from a well site. It also provides necessary space for replacement of a septic system when the usefulness of the initial system is outlived.

### **LAND USE AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

A major land use planning issue is the Town's existing zoning ordinance, which was established in the 1960's and revised in 1994. It does not fully address the environmental, infrastructure, and development trends that currently exist in the Town.

The Town's current zoning ordinance has a pyramidal-style structure. Land uses from one district are commonly duplicated and permitted in other districts, which may lead to loss of zoning purpose and control. Agricultural uses are not fully protected from residential development and are not given flexibility in allowable uses that can sustain fluctuating economic trends. Strip zoning along main transportation corridors also makes it difficult for the Town to promote consistent development patterns within portions of the Town. The lack of consistent development makes it hard to predict where adequate public services should be placed in the future. It is also difficult to ensure that the environment is protected and a desirable community character is maintained.

The overall land use and planning objectives are to promote the establishment of cohesive and compatible activities within the Town. The Plan seeks to focus land use and development activities and avoid dispersal of inappropriate commercial or residential growth throughout the Town. The land uses and development patterns of each area would be balanced with the availability and cost-effective use of public services and maximizing the protection of environmental resources. The Town should promote within each area and zone district an appropriate blend of compatible land uses that can effectively co-exist.

## **Land Use and Plan Regulatory Recommendations**

The Town should consider a series of comprehensive revisions to its zoning ordinance and map. New and substantially revised zone districts are recommended primarily for the residential portions of the Town. The following are the primary recommended zone changes.

**Residential** - One area of the Town is recommended for expanding R-1 (primarily single family) residential zone districts (see Section VII.E.4). A rural residential zone would be established where active farming is diminishing, and public water may become available in the future. This area will support agricultural activities but will also change the allowable uses to incorporate desirable residential development in sections that are best suited to accommodate this type of land use. Minimum residential lot size should be determined by a thorough review of site conditions.

**Scenic Highway Overlay** - A Scenic Highway Overlay Zone should be established along the Route 20 corridor to provide additional land use opportunities for those parcels located within the area. This would give the residents more flexibility over allowable uses that are compatible with agriculture, while ensuring that the natural viewsheds associated with this transportation corridor are not diminished, and development is consistent with local land use activities.

**Industrial** - The industrial area north of the Village and along Nine Mile Creek should be re-zoned to residential. Industrial activities are not generally desired by the Town, and this zone classification should be eliminated. The area currently designated as Light Industrial/Commercial, located south of the Village, has been determined to be adequate for the types of desired small business development that may occur in the future.

Small-scale commercial uses unrelated to entertainment and tourism development should be directed to the Light Industrial/Commercial zone. This area has good access to the highway network and public services, and is generally away from residential areas.

**Critical Environmental Areas** - The Town has many unique and valuable natural areas to promote recreational activities, preserve open space and provide drinking water. Some of these areas should be designated as Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's), which provides a more stringent review process for development activities in these areas. CEA's provide a benefit to human health, open space of important aesthetic or scenic quality, areas of agricultural value or an inherent ecological sensitivity to change that may be adversely affected by any change. The areas that should be designated as CEA's are Marcellus Park, Baltimore Woods, the Nine Mile Creek corridor and its tributaries, Disappearing Lake, and Rockwell Springs.

### **GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SUMMARY**

This *Comprehensive Plan* also serves as a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), and was prepared in accordance with the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). Identification and environmental evaluation of alternative actions is contained within each section of the *Plan*.

The GEIS identifies potential impacts from the proposed planning alternatives. Potential adverse impacts include growth inducements and diminishing agricultural lands. Mitigation measures, however, such as limited access to public sewer or trunk lines, and clustering development of proposed subdivision lots to minimize these adverse effects are recommended. Population growth is anticipated to occur in limited areas of the Town. Potential adverse environmental impacts in these specific areas would be minimized and mitigated by the recommended provisions or natural limitations of public water and sewer system installation, highway improvements, design standards and reviews, and zoning recommendations.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. What Is The Plan

This *Comprehensive Plan* is a tool prepared to facilitate the Town's vision for future growth, development, and environmental protection. The *Plan* was created through the visioning process of community members and synthesizing knowledge of the environment, infrastructure, land use, local and regional economy, and attributes of the Town's rural character. The evaluation and ecological relationship between these elements supports recommended actions for the Town in achieving the goals and objectives set forth in the *Plan*.

In order to develop the *Plan's* vision and rationale, many questions and issues were identified and discussed. Discussions included what the Town should look like, whether the infrastructure could support new development and what type, and how a functional relationship can be attained between different land uses and the environment. The *Plan* analyzes and recommends means for the Town to formulate and guide land development through policies, zoning, and design guidelines. These measures set the parameters in addressing where and when to establish sewer and water services, what approaches may be incorporated for the use and preservation of natural and environmental resources, and suggests regulations of land use by implementing zoning and subdivision controls.

The *Plan* is the product of a lengthy process conducted by a committee of Town representatives, interested stakeholders, the planning consultant team, and the public. During this time, the committee met monthly to discuss issues with residents, government officials, community leaders, and other non-governmental organizations. The *Plan* reflects community discussions and considerations of past development patterns, existing conditions, and assessments of probable future conditions.

**B. Why Was The Plan Prepared**

The *Plan* was prepared to address environmental, social, and economical factors affected by development within the Town of Marcellus. It is intended to help the Town pro-actively manage change and pursue the beneficial aspects of development, while avoiding the need for mitigative actions whenever possible. The *Plan* will also assist the Town when applying for Federal and State grant funding programs.

The Town relies on zoning ordinances to address land use related planning issues. It is possible that changes in technology, transportation, and population over the next 20 years will be greater than those changes that have occurred over the last 20 years. These changes will undoubtedly have a significant effect on the Town's future. Other changes that may be less obvious but are of equal importance are the declining number of farms, and increased residential development slowly replacing agricultural lands. The Town of Marcellus is known as a "bedroom community" for the City of Syracuse due to its proximity and largely residential population. Major employers throughout the County impact employment, commercial opportunities, and residential development within the Town. The Town's zoning ordinance, partnerships, education programs, and consistent community involvement together can recognize and respond to these changing issues.

**C. What Does The Plan Accomplish**

The *Plan* is a tool that will be used to facilitate consensus-building, dialogue, and direct future Town planning actions regarding development and quality of life issues. It accomplishes this by:

- 1) identifying and evaluating environmental factors
- 2) identifying and evaluating the local and regional economic conditions
- 3) communicating Town goals and objectives to other agencies
- 4) presenting recommended strategies to achieve the vision developed by the community

The recommended strategies will be the guidelines for future Town decisions and actions. In the future, the Town will implement the approved recommendations supported by the analysis and rationale of the *Comprehensive Plan*, develop or modify zoning and subdivision regulations, evaluate the conditions necessary for sewer and water services, decide how to balance land development with environmental preservation and conservation, and maintain the rural character of the community.

This *Plan* represents an on-going process of evaluation and planning at the local level. It will serve the Town for a number of years, but issues that promoted development of this *Plan* will also necessitate the need for the *Plan* to be periodically reviewed and modified. The *Plan* is intended to guide development in the Town over the next 15-20 years. During this period, the Town should monitor not only the physical impacts of the *Plan*, but also the implementation methods used to carry out the goals and objectives identified in the *Plan*. It is designed to accommodate and address minor change. Therefore, it should be reviewed every 5 years to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation policies. Major changes may diminish the effectiveness of the document to guide development in a manner consistent with the goals and objectives identified by the community during the planning process. Therefore, the Town may have to repeat the cycle and re-examine the relevancy of the *Plan* to further address changing conditions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## II. COMMUNITY PLANNING GOALS

The goals set forth in this *Comprehensive Plan* by the Town of Marcellus are designed to effectively achieve visions as a community. Town government will be most effective in controlling physical forms and structures such as land use and public facilities. However, interested community groups may effect implementation of policies and redefine goals and objectives. The following goals were identified and discussed.

**Community Character** - The Town should seek to maintain the overall rural character of the community by promoting open space areas and agriculture with support from local farmers. New residential and commercial development should be restricted in selected areas of the Town.

**Housing and Economic Development** - The Town should promote a variety of housing types and encourage economic growth consistent with preserving the Town's rural character and adjacent land uses. New housing and commercial development should be distributed in a manner that preserves the rural attributes, protects environmentally sensitive areas, considers infrastructure capacity and constraints, and effectively utilizes public services.

**Environmental** - The Town should coordinate all land uses to preserve and protect the natural environmental resources of the community. It should direct the location of land uses to ensure minimal environmental disturbances during appropriate development projects. It should seek the cooperation and coordination with the appropriate regulatory agencies to further promote the protection of the environment.

**Infrastructure** - The Town should promote the construction and maintenance of roads, sewers, water systems and other capital improvements that are cost-effective and enhance the rural character of the community while preserving its environmental resources.

### **III. COMMUNITY SETTING AND ISSUES**

#### **A. Town Setting**

The Town's demographic characteristics are in part reflected and determined by its location and topographical features. The Town of Marcellus is located approximately twenty miles southwest of Syracuse. Much of the Town is located in an area of rolling or steep hills formed by the last glacier period in this region approximately 12,000 years ago.

The Town is accessible by NYS Route 175 (Seneca Turnpike), which is located in the north area of the Town, and runs in an east-west direction. US Route 20 is the principal east-west arterial in the southern portion of the Town. Access into the Town from the north or south is primarily by NYS Route 174.

A significant amount of land acreage was identified as agriculture and forest. The majority of properties are single-family residential parcels. Limited areas of the Town have public sewer and water, and those areas have the greatest concentration of population and development. The Town is a very rural community that is experiencing some residential development pressures and a general decline in agricultural use.

#### **B. Demographics**

##### **1. Population**

The 2000 Federal Census is the most recent source of demographic data regarding population and housing statistics. It is important to note that demographic data produced by the U.S. Bureau of the Census regarding towns also includes village statistics. For example, the census data for the Town of Marcellus indicates that the population in 2000 was 6,319, which includes the Village of Marcellus (population 1,826). Therefore, the actual population for the Town of Marcellus, outside the Village, in 2000 was 4,493. The

2000 Census data indicates a slight decrease in population since 1990. According to the 1990 Census data, the population for the Town was 6,465, which includes the Village (population of 1,840). Therefore, the actual population for the Town in 1990 was 4,625. This represents a 2.3% decrease in population over the last ten years (See table below). It was possible to separate the Village of Marcellus statistics from the Town of Marcellus statistics for most of the demographic data described in this section. In some instances, however, where the Bureau of the Census reported averages or percentages, the raw data used in these formulas was not useful. Thus, in these cases, it was not possible to separate Village statistics from those of the Town as a whole.

<b>TOWN AND VILLAGE OF MARCELLUS POPULATION CHANGE FROM 1990-2000</b>			
Population (1990)	Population (2000)	Numeric Change From 1990-2000	% Change From 1990-2000
6,465	6,319	-146	-2.3

The results for the Town of Marcellus have been relatively consistent with many communities in New York State who have experienced some decline in population or have been relatively stable. The region's population stability is the result of a variety of factors, including a general outward migration by people from the northeast portion of the country for employment or retirement to the Sunbelt states. Another factor is the decline in the birth to death rate ratio. New suburban developments are attributed to some increase in population among local communities as people seek to move from older urban areas into newer modern housing tracts. Often, the impact of a stable or declining population is not comparably reflected in the housing characteristics of the community.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of households in the Town of Marcellus increased. In 2000, there were 2,378 households within the Town, which increased from 2,321 in 1990 (U.S. Census data). A household is defined as one or more persons occupying a living unit as a single housekeeping unit; examples include a traditional family, adults living alone or adults living with non-family members. Of the 2,378 households counted in 2000,

1,773 were identified as occupied by families. The increased number of households reflects a declining household size. Residents of the Town, as in many rural communities, are living in smaller groups or families. The table below presents household sizes for the Town of Marcellus in 2000.

<b>TOWN OF MARCELLUS HOUSEHOLD SIZE IN 2000</b>	
Households in Village of Marcellus	<b>785</b>
Households in Town outside of Village	<b>1,593</b>
Total number of Households	<b>2,378</b>
Source: 2000 Census, U.S. Bureau of Census	

It was noted that the numbers of persons living in a household has decreased over the years. This trend will effect what type of residential development may occur in the future. Another factor that will affect the type of housing stock needed in the future is dependent upon the age distribution of the population. The Town's age distribution is presented below.

<b>TOWN OF MARCELLUS AGE DISTRIBUTION IN 2000</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of Persons in Village of Marcellus</b>	<b>Number of Persons in Town outside Village</b>	<b>Total</b>
5 and under	115	386	501
5 to 9	146	495	641
10 to 14	149	568	717
15 to 19	136	487	623
20 to 24	85	224	309
25 to 34	234	640	874
35 to 44	306	1,067	1,373
45 to 54	214	1,023	1,237
55 to 59	85	334	419
60 to 64	63	260	323
65 to 74	144	476	620
75 to 84	122	288	410
85+	27	71	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,826</b>	<b>4,493</b>	<b>6,319</b>
Source: 2000 Census, U.S. Bureau of Census			

The population's "stage-in-life" (or age distribution) can further categorize the population distribution for the purpose of examining future housing stock needs. A comparison of 1990 and 2000 age distribution data was made to determine no significant changes in the Town's age distribution occurred between 1990 and 2000. Due to the difference in the age distribution ranges from the 1990 Census data to the available 2000 Census data, a reliable quantitative analysis cannot be ascertained. However, similar age distribution ranges were used for the 1980 and 1990 Census Data.

The Town's age distribution in 1990 was compared to the Town's age distribution in 1980. The comparison revealed that the largest percentage of change was in the under-21 age group. This age group decreased by approximately seven percent. All other age groups increased from one to four percent. When considering the increase in the Town's total population from 1980 to 1990, the changes in age distributions are very similar to the overall change in population. Since no significant changes in age distribution were found to occur from 1980 to 1990, it was assumed that the 1990 U.S. Census age distribution data would still be valid for the period from 1980 to 1999.

In 1990, approximately one-third of the Town's population (33%) was under the age of 21. This age group was excluded from the analysis of future housing needs because, in general, these individuals are dependent upon their parents. The age group from 22 to 29 represents persons that are at the early stage-in-life. In 1990, this group accounted for approximately 9% of the Town's population. This group is typically comprised of single individuals that tend to live in rental units in the moderate price range. The next stage-in-life age group is comprised of persons from 30 to 44 years in age. This group is generally comprised of professionals who have young children or children about to enter college. They generally live in smaller, less costly starter homes. In 1990, this age group made up approximately 25% of the Town's population. The next stage-in-life group is made up of persons 45-59 years of age who are seeking to purchase a larger and more modern house. In 1990, this category consisted of approximately 16% of the Town's population. The age group from 60 to 74 accounts for 12 % of the Town's population and is expected to increase because the life expectancy rate is increasing. Persons over the age of 75 account for 5% of the Town's population. This age group is also expected to increase in the future due to increased life expectancy. When the population age is broken down into stage-in-life categories, future housing demands in the Town are easier to assess.

In conclusion, a general overview of the age distribution between the 1990 and 2000 Census data does identify that the elderly population continues to increase, while the 5 and under age group declines, and the remaining population ranges have fluctuated only slightly.

## 2. Housing

In 2000, the housing Census data states that there were 1,650 housing units within the Town (excluding the Village) compared to 1653 in 1990. The difference between the number of households and number of housing units is attributed to vacancies and counting methodologies. A housing unit is the living portion of a building and is included in structures such as single and multiple family dwellings, apartments, and mobile homes. The housing unit classifications used for the 2000 Census data are slightly different than the classifications used in 1990. The 1990 classifications included farm units and therefore were used for the statistics listed below since there was only a difference of three total housing units between the 1990 and 2000 data. In 1990, twenty-five housing units were classified as farms and 1,628 were classified as non-farms. In the same year, there were 1,423 owner-occupied housing units. These represent approximately 86% of the housing units in the Town. The remaining housing units are rentals.

The age of housing structures in the Town will help to determine what units may have to be replaced or need major renovations to comply with building code safety standards in the future. Below is a list of the age of housing structures in the Town.

<b>STRUCTURES BUILT IN THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS (OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE)</b>	
<b>Year Housing Structure Built</b>	<b>Number of Housing Structures</b>
1995 to 1998	19
1991 to 1994	47
1985 to 1990	200

<b>STRUCTURES BUILT IN THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS (OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE)</b>	
1980 to 1984	36
1970 to 1979	387
1960 to 1969	295
1950 to 1959	180
1940 to 1949	56
1939 or Earlier	499
<b>Total Structures</b>	<b>1,719</b>
Source: Town of Marcellus permitting records and NYS Department of Economic Development	

The 2000 Federal Census data pertaining to housing values and employment is not available at the time of this writing, therefore the 1990 data is used for these sections.

In 1990, housing values for the Town, including the Village, had an estimated median value of \$92,000. The median housing value for the Village was slightly lower at an estimated cost of \$88,800.

Building permits issued by the Town authorizing the construction of dwellings are indicators of the potential change in the Town's housing stock. The total number of housing units in the community varies at any one time due to the conversion, damage, or loss of existing structures. Since 1990, building permits issued by the Town of Marcellus show a trend in home improvements. The top three home improvements are additions, porches and decks, and the installation of swimming pools. This trend could be inferred to indicate that residents opt to improve their homes instead of seeking to sell them and upgrade to a larger home. The number and types of building permits issued in the Town (outside the Village, excluding housing) are presented in the following table.

<b>SUMMARY OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Additions</b>	<b>Deck &amp; Porches</b>	<b>Swimming Pools</b>
1998	6	27	13
1997	7	17	11
1996	7	16	9
1995	13	15	15
1994	14	12	16
1993	11	15	13
1992	17	26	8
1991	8	22	13
1990	23	26	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>118</b>
Source: Town of Marcellus			

### 3. Employment

U.S. Census information reveals that in 1990 approximately 50% of the Town (including the Village) labor force (employed persons 16 years of age and older) was employed in four general categories: managerial & professional, technical, sales and administration, and manufacturing. In addition, over 20% of the labor force was employed by local, State or Federal government, and 62% were employed in the private for profit sector. A small portion of the labor force was self-employed (8%) and even less was employed by agriculture (3.4%). The balance of the labor force was employed by private not-for-profit entities.

In general, residents of the Town and Village of Marcellus have average incomes higher than many other towns and villages within Onondaga County. The median income for families in Onondaga County in 1989 was \$38,816. The median family income at that time for the Town (including the Village) of Marcellus was \$42,754. Below is a table of household and family incomes for the Town and Village of Marcellus in 1989.

**HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOMES FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS**

Income in 1989	Total Households	Village Households	Town (outside Village) Households	Total Families	Village Families	Town (outside Village) Families
\$0-12,499	225	140	85	81	60	21
\$12,500-19,999	256	100	156	139	41	98
\$20,000-27,499	305	110	195	195	50	145
\$27,500-34,999	261	69	192	211	42	169
\$35,000-42,499	298	75	223	269	66	203
\$42,500-49,999	202	49	153	182	39	143
\$50,000-59,999	248	75	173	237	68	169
\$60,000-74,999	225	67	158	203	64	139
\$75,000-99,999	221	31	190	214	29	185
\$100,000-149,999	62	23	39	54	20	34
\$150,000 Plus	18	5	13	18	5	13
Median	\$ 37,944	\$30,729	*	\$42,754	\$40,375	*
Mean	\$ 43,982	\$37,285	*	\$49,401	\$45,117	*

Source: 1990 Census, U.S. Bureau of Census

Note: \* indicates raw data was unavailable to calculate accurately

Mean and median household incomes in 1999 were estimated by compounding the 1989 figures at an annual rate of 2%, which is conservative compared to the annual inflation rate which is two to three percent. The 1999 median income is approximately \$47,177 and the mean income is approximately \$54,686 for the Town of Marcellus including the Village. Therefore, when compared with the 1989 data, the mean and median household incomes within the Town of Marcellus have exhibited steady growth.

**4. School Enrollment**

The quality of education in the Town of Marcellus is a major attraction to current residents and future incoming families. Public school enrollment in 1999 totaled 2,190 children. Seven hundred and twelve students (or 32.5% of the student population) are enrolled in kindergarten through third grade. Middle school enrollment accounts for 39% of the

student population (857 children). High School enrollment accounts for 28.5% (621 students) of total student enrollment. These public school enrollment figures include students outside the Town and Village of Marcellus that attend school in the Marcellus School District. The School District also includes students from the Towns of Onondaga, Camillus, Skaneateles, Elbridge, and Spafford.

#### **IV. ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY**

This section identifies principal environmental and physical characteristics within the Town of Marcellus that may be affected by development patterns. The environmental inventory consists of categories in agriculture, wetlands, woodlands, drainage basins and water bodies, open space, and historic places. Descriptions of soils and impacts are included within the categories of agriculture and drainage basins as they relate respectively.

##### **A. Agriculture**

Agriculture has shaped the character of many small communities in Central New York, including the Town of Marcellus. It formed the basis for how the road system, economy, and settlement patterns were initially established. Agriculture continues to influence communities through the sense of open space provided by the large amount of land it occupies and the lack of demand it places upon public services. In Marcellus, pastures and fields dominate the landscape using this land for the growth and production of food, livestock, fabric, decorative plants, and similar products. Agriculture has been the main industry of the community since the late 1800's and is also the number one industry in Onondaga County and New York State. Some farms are comprised of many individual parcels of land in the Town. Farm operations may include one or more residential units, exterior storage and equipment buildings (Roop, 1996).

Much of the Town of Marcellus is located within Agricultural District No. 9 (see Figure 1), which is the second largest in Onondaga County and includes a total of 41,473 acres of land. Approximately 14,500 acres are within the Town. Agricultural districts are designated areas where agriculture is encouraged and protected. Participating farmers receive benefits that help create a more secure climate for agriculture by preventing adverse impacts to farm practices. They also provide enhanced protection from development. The establishment of an agricultural district describes specific allowable uses within the district and proposed development and/or extension of public services must minimize the effects on adjacent agricultural lands. The results of the 1992 reassessment survey for Agricultural District No. 9 indicated that approximately 9,632 acres were

cropped, 2,987 acres were non-tillable, 1,165 acres were in pasture, and 143 acres were being held idle. In 1996, the majority of farms in Agricultural District No. 9 were dairy farms and approximately 20 were in the Town of Marcellus.

Agricultural land in the Town has been rated as having a high viability for agricultural uses. Approximately 43% (23,250 acres) of agricultural land in District No. 9 is classified as prime or unique farmland. These areas have the appropriate soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply required to produce sustained crop yields. Also, approximately 76% of the soils in the Town fall into the top five soil groups for the State (see Figure 2) (Roop, 1996).

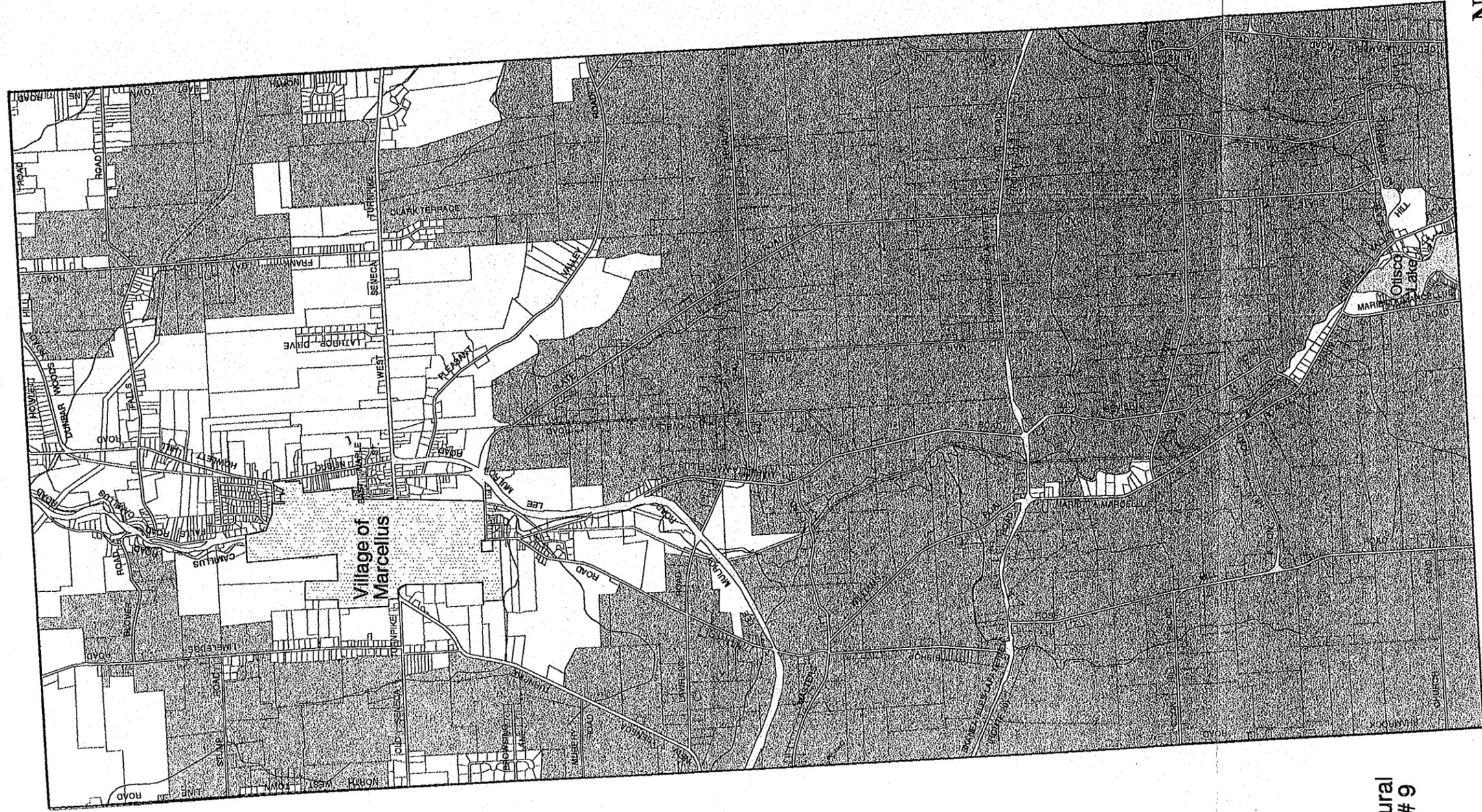
Soil conditions dictate suitable areas for agriculture and development where topography is favorable. The four major soil associations in the Town of Marcellus are Honeoye-Lima Association, Palmyra, Kars and Wampsville Association, Farmington, Shallow Honeoye, and Nellis Association, and the Schoharie-Odessa Association (Atkinson, 1975). The major soil association within the Town of Marcellus is Honeoye-Lima, which forms most of the Town's uplands. This is the largest soil association in the Syracuse area and is comprised of deep, high-lime soil formed from glacial till and is very fertile and ideal for agricultural use. The soils are also suitable for septic tank effluent because they are slowly to moderately permeable (SOCPA, 1973). Agricultural areas are generally not served by public water or sewer systems.

## **B. Wetlands**

Wetlands are ecosystems that display complex and dynamic relationships between soil, water, plants, animals and local land uses. They are transitional zones between uplands and open water areas such as streams. Wetlands are classified and delineated by specific characteristics of hydrology, soil conditions, and plant species. Many types of wetlands exist (for example, emergent marshes, forested wetlands, wet meadows, scrub-shrub wetlands, etc.) and many wetland areas are comprised of several different wetland types. Wetland ecosystems provide many benefits to the natural and human environment. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) identifies the following benefits of wetlands:

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT # 9



Agricultural District # 9



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BY THE SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY

FIGURE 1



- Prime Agricultural Soils (soil groups 1-5)
- Soils of Lesser Agricultural Importance (soil groups 6-10)

**Prime Agricultural Soils** (based on NYS Agricultural Land Classification System)  
 Town of Marcellus, June 1995  
 (Data Source: NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, 1987).



Not to Scale

R00D - 49

FIGURE 2

1. Water Supply Recharge Area
2. Water Quality (Natural Filtration and Runoff)
3. Fish Habitat
4. Food Chain Support of Fish and Wildlife Habitats
5. Recreational Opportunities for Hunting, Fishing, Hiking
6. Open Space and Aesthetic Areas
7. Educational and Research Opportunities
8. Flood and Storm Water Control and Storage
9. Wildlife Habitat

The importance of wetlands to the Town and property owners can be attributed to the following general benefits.

**Flood and Storm Water Control:** Many wetlands are natural basins that receive and hold storm water runoff until the excess water can be absorbed into the ground or discharged slowly to receiving waters. Wetlands located adjacent to streams also reduce the volume and flow rate in stream channels during storm and flood events, which lessens the impacts from erosion. One acre of wetland could have the capacity to absorb and hold 300,000 gallons of water under the right conditions (*General Plan*, Town of Elbridge, 1991).

**Water Supply:** Many wetland areas are points of groundwater and aquifer recharge. Water enters the ground through these areas and replenishes water supplies to local wells for area residents. Water-related natural resources such as wetlands, streams, creeks, depressions, and groundwater are all interrelated.

**Water Quality:** Wetlands can serve as "pollution sinks," filtering out many types of contaminants as they pass through the wetland. The specialized organisms and plants that occupy wetland ecosystems absorb and filter out excess nutrients and sediment. The result is improved water quality.

**Ecology:** Wetlands typically support a diverse variety of plants and animals, including some endangered and threatened species.

**Recreational:** Wetlands provide conditions for a wide range of recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking and canoeing.

**Open Space and Aesthetics:** Wetlands often provide buffer strips between developed areas and adjacent properties. Visually they are a natural alternative to the more organized and maintained farms or suburban tracts, and add character to the surrounding landscape.

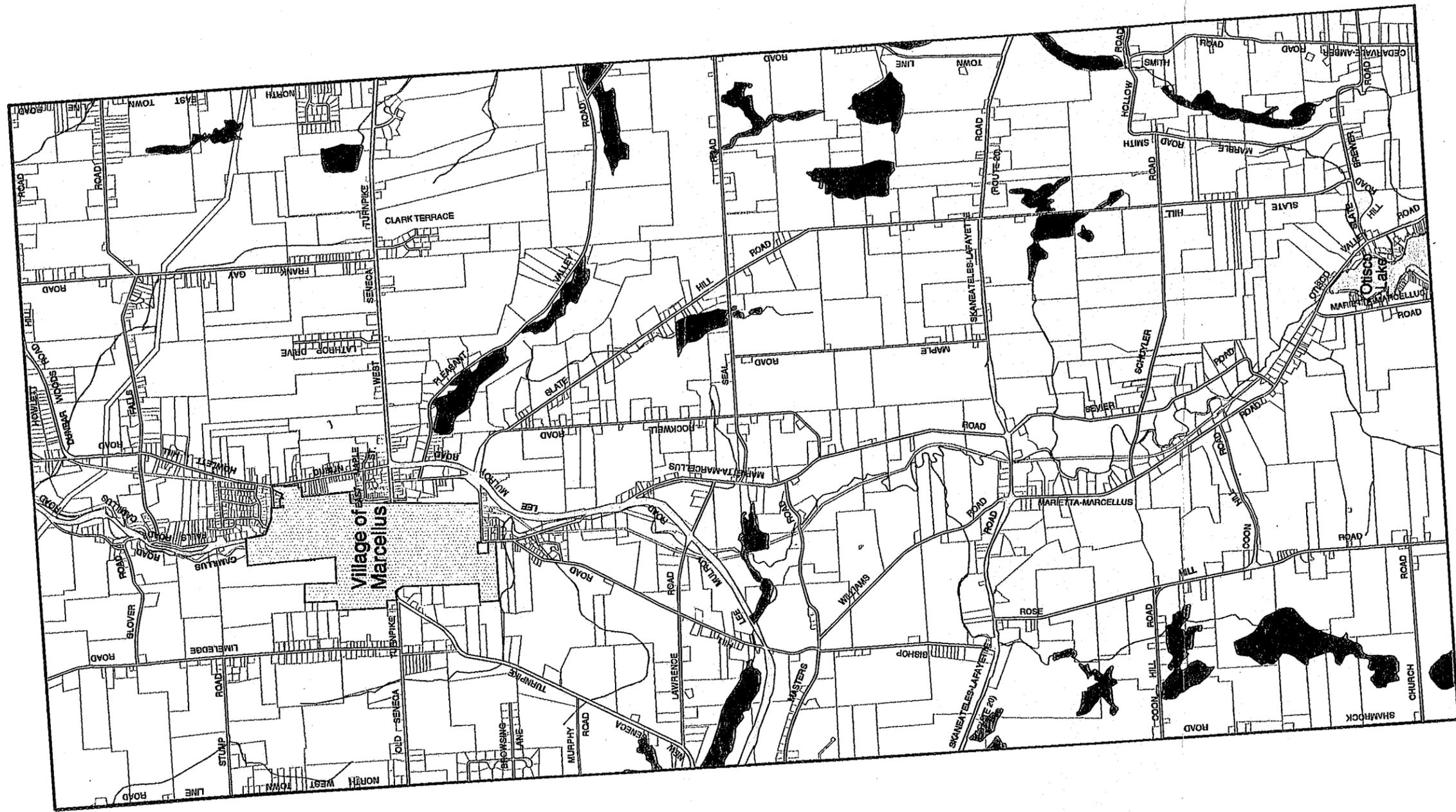
Most wetland areas in the Town are adjacent to streams or depressions in the landscape. Wetland areas in the Town that are mapped and regulated by the NYSDEC are shown in Figure 3. Development or alterations of wetland areas are subject to State and Federal regulations and permitting.

### C. Woodlands

Woodlands in the Town of Marcellus are identified in the 1996 report entitled *Open-Space Planning in Rural Communities of New York State - Investigations in Marcellus, New York* by Lisa Roop. Only woodland areas that are greater than 10 acres in size and which were more than 200 feet wide at any given point were inventoried for this report. Woodlands are important ecological resources. Their ability to stabilize soil and infiltrate surface water reduces erosion, which in turn reduces sedimentation of surface water resources. Many areas in the Town have steep slopes and woodland vegetation around these areas is especially important. Woodlands also act as important buffer zones, wildlife habitat and travel corridors, and are visually appealing to the landscape. The Town of Marcellus is heavily forested in many areas. In the *Open-Space Planning Report* (Roop, 1996), woodlands located in the Town were identified and categorized as having high, medium, and low importance. The woodland areas identified in this report are presented in Figure 4. Areas in the Town that are not forested are predominantly agricultural lands.

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## WETLANDS



PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS PLANNING BOARD  
BY THE SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY

**Disclaimer (provided with source wetland data):**  
This map depicts the approximate outline of freshwater wetlands regulated under Article 24 of the NYS Environmental Conservation Law, as maintained by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources in certain counties of the State. Freshwater wetland boundaries are subject to amendment. The boundaries depicted are current as of October 1997. The regulated freshwater wetlands for all filed counties are shown on official maps available at Regional Offices of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and at the office of the clerk of each local government.

FIGURE 3

#### **D. Mineral Resources**

Since the early 1880's, extraction of Limestone aggregate, sand and crushed stone has occurred in the Town of Marcellus. Several areas of the Town contain mineral and bedrock deposits of economic importance. Sand, gravel, and limestone are currently extracted from 9 active mines in the Town (see Figure 5). The largest active mine is owned and operated by W.F. Saunders and is partially located in the northwest portion of the Town. Several smaller mines are clustered in the west-central portion of the Town, and 3 mines are located in the southern portion of the Town. Mineral resources are finite in quantity and location. They are found only in areas where the geology has taken millions of years to form. The aggregates produced from these mines are of economic importance to central New York and are used to construct highways, sidewalks, parking lots, agricultural fertilizer and many other useful and necessary applications.

#### **E. Drainage Basins and Water Bodies**

The Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency identified three drainage basins in the Town of Marcellus (see Figure 6). They are the Onondaga Lake basin, the Skaneateles Creek basin, and the lower Seneca River basin. Two types of drainage are important when considering development: surface and subsurface. Within the Town, flooding is not a significant problem from surface drainage due to the rolling hills, which tend to divert water rapidly into local stream valleys. Most of the Town is located within the Nine Mile Creek watershed, which stretches along the Otisco Lake Valley from Cortland County to the mouth of Nine Mile Creek at Onondaga Lake. Otisco Lake at the south end of the Town acts as a natural flood retention reservoir for the upper third of the Nine Mile Creek watershed. Elevations in the watershed range from 600 feet above sea level in the valleys to 1,300 feet along the crest of Rose Hill.

Subsurface drainage is affected by one or more of the following conditions: slope, depth to bedrock, soil conditions, and height of the groundwater table. Subsurface drainage is restricted in many areas of the Town due to topography, soil conditions and depth to bedrock. Slopes in excess of 10% to 15% cause problems with drainage and soil erosion.

*Appendix III-E  
Open-Space Overlay Analysis Maps*



*Overlay Analysis --Base Map-*  
Town of Marcellus, June 1995

*Woodlands*

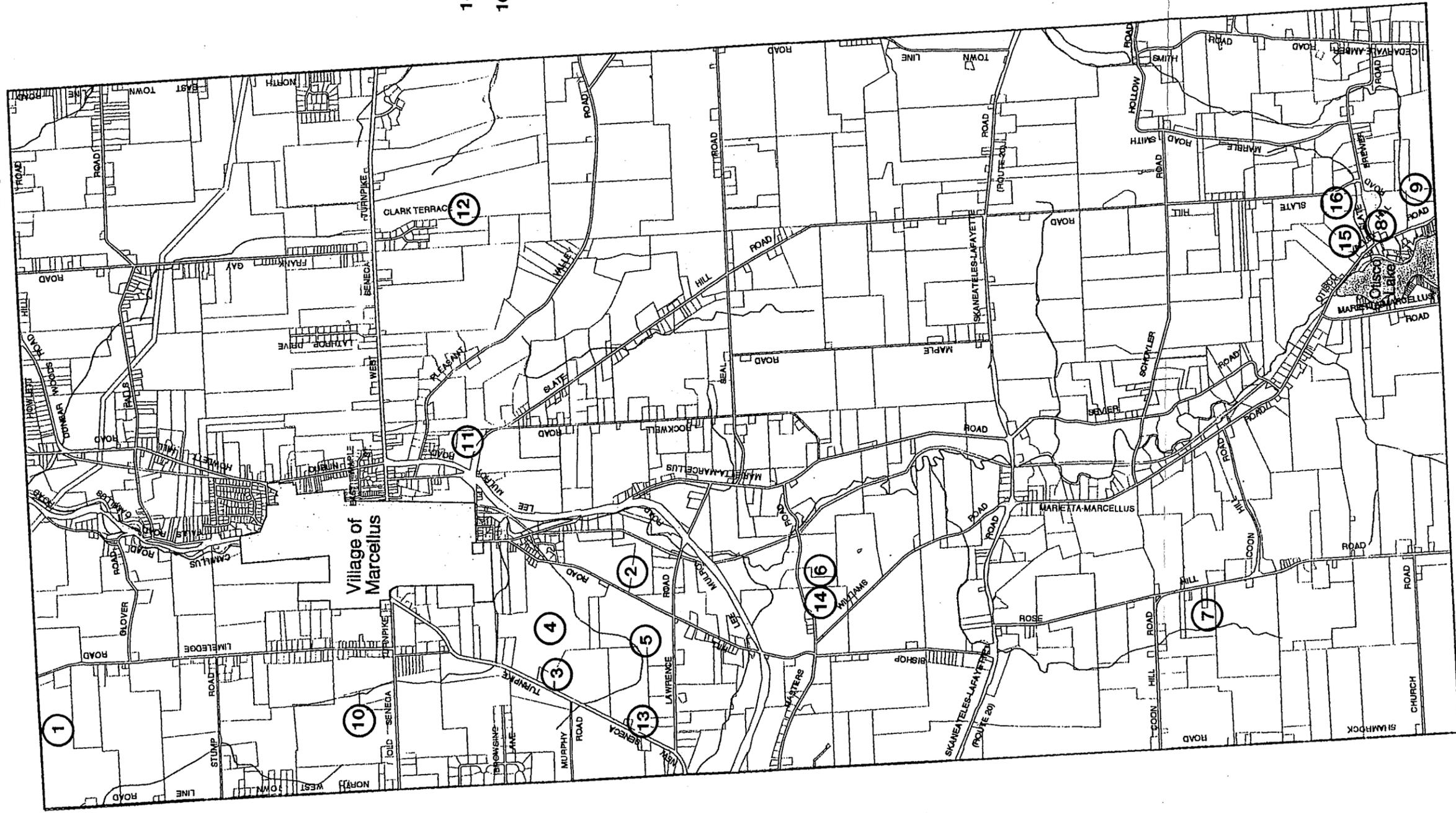


Not to Scale

FIGURE 4

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## ACTIVE/INACTIVE MINES



1-9 ACTIVE  
10-16 INACTIVE



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FIGURE 5

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## DRAINAGE BASINS

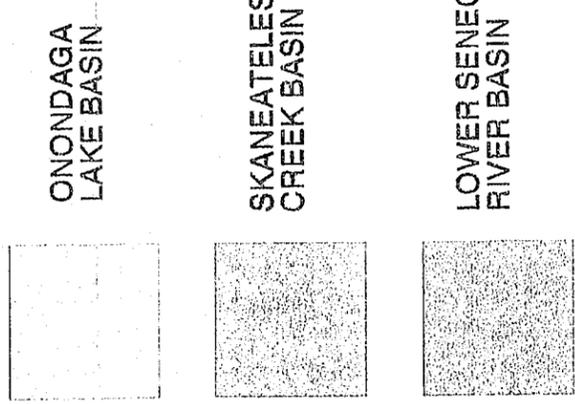
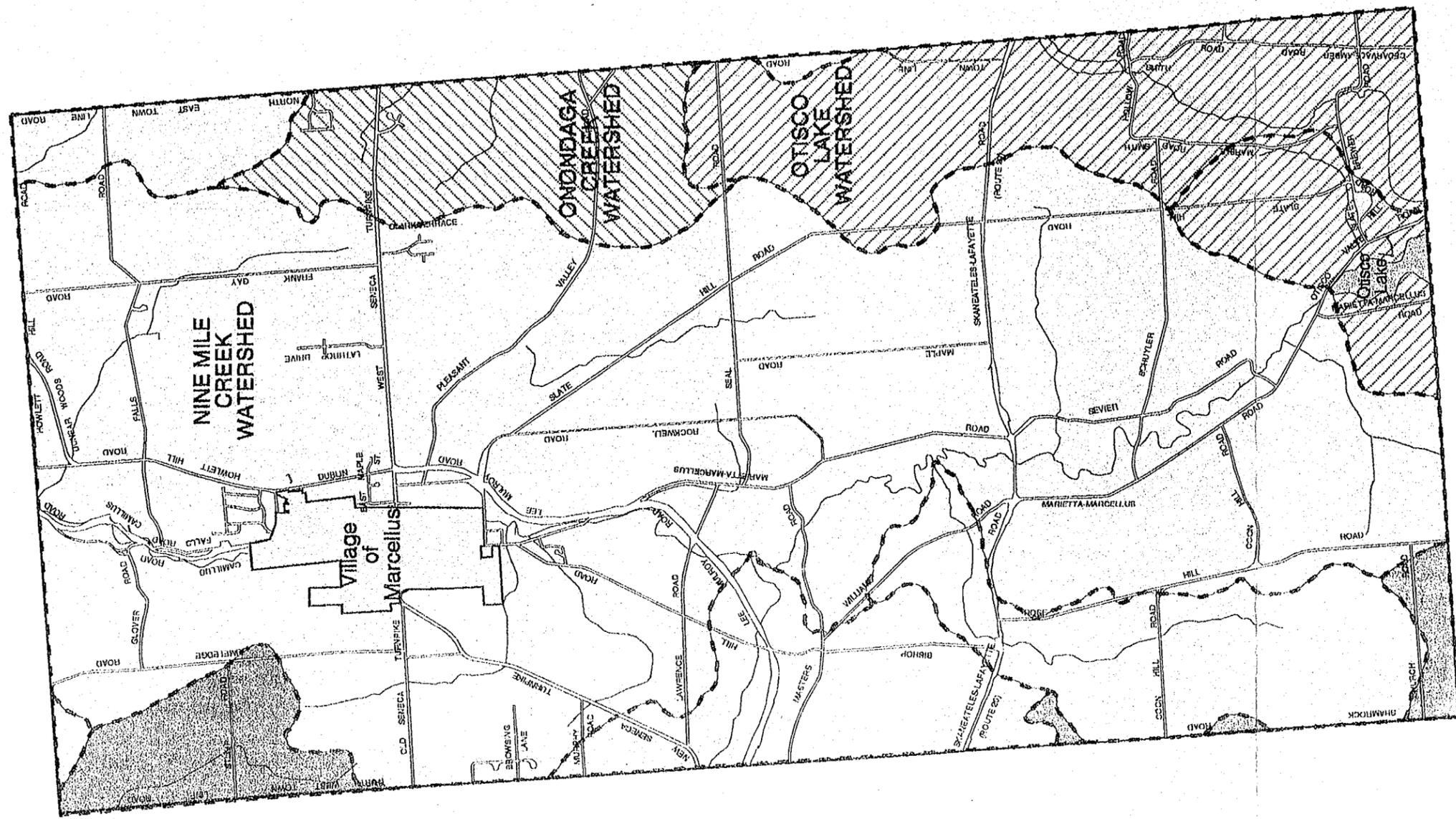


FIGURE 6

PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS PLANNING BOARD  
BY THE SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY

The Town participates in the Federal Flood Insurance Program and FEMA maps are available at the Town Hall.

Surface and subsurface drainage flows and patterns are important to local groundwater supplies and aquifers. This basin includes approximately 2,500 square miles in central New York and occupies almost all of Onondaga County. It is made up of three distinct physio-graphic regions - the Appalachian Upland region, the Ontario Mohawk Lowland region, and the Tug Hill Upland region. The Town of Marcellus is located entirely in the Appalachian Upland region (see Figure 8). Since availability of public water is limited, groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for much of the Town. The Town of Marcellus is located within the Eastern Oswego River Basin (see Figure 7). The main problem in this region is that in many areas, groundwater yield is likely to be less than 10 gpm (gallons per minute) due to the composition of the underlying bedrock. Approximate groundwater yields within the unconsolidated (soil) and consolidated (bedrock) deposits in the Town of Marcellus are identified in Figures 9 through 11.

Water quality problems in this region are generally associated with high mineral content in the groundwater. These problems include color, odor, taste, and hardness. These conditions are typically reduced when the groundwater sources and aquifers are recharged, usually during the winter and spring. During recharge the mineral content in the water is somewhat reduced. As previously mentioned, wetlands contribute to groundwater recharge and these areas should be protected to maintain the current level of water quantity and quality being drawn from local groundwater sources (NYS Water Resources Commission, 1970).

Major water bodies within the Town include Otisco Lake and Nine Mile Creek. These water bodies comprise approximately 156 acres within the Town (SOCPA). Otisco Lake is located in the southern portion of the Town while Nine Mile Creek bisects the Town in a north-south direction. Otisco Lake has been used as a water supply for the local area since the early 1900's. The Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) is responsible for delegating protection of the lake and watershed from pollutants. Otisco Lake is the smallest and shallowest of the Finger Lakes and has a maximum depth of 66 feet. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation







CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

FIGURE 9

Town of Marcellus  
 Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
 Groundwater Availability in  
 Unconsolidated Deposits



Base Map: Availability of Groundwater in the Unconsolidated Deposits of the Eastern Oswego River Basin, New York State Water Resources Commission Basin Planning Report ORB-2, 1970

Note: Water-bearing material and estimated yield of individual wells. In some areas more than one aquifer may be found in a vertical section; only the most productive one is shown on the map. Well yields are based on saturated thickness and estimated permeability of water-bearing material.

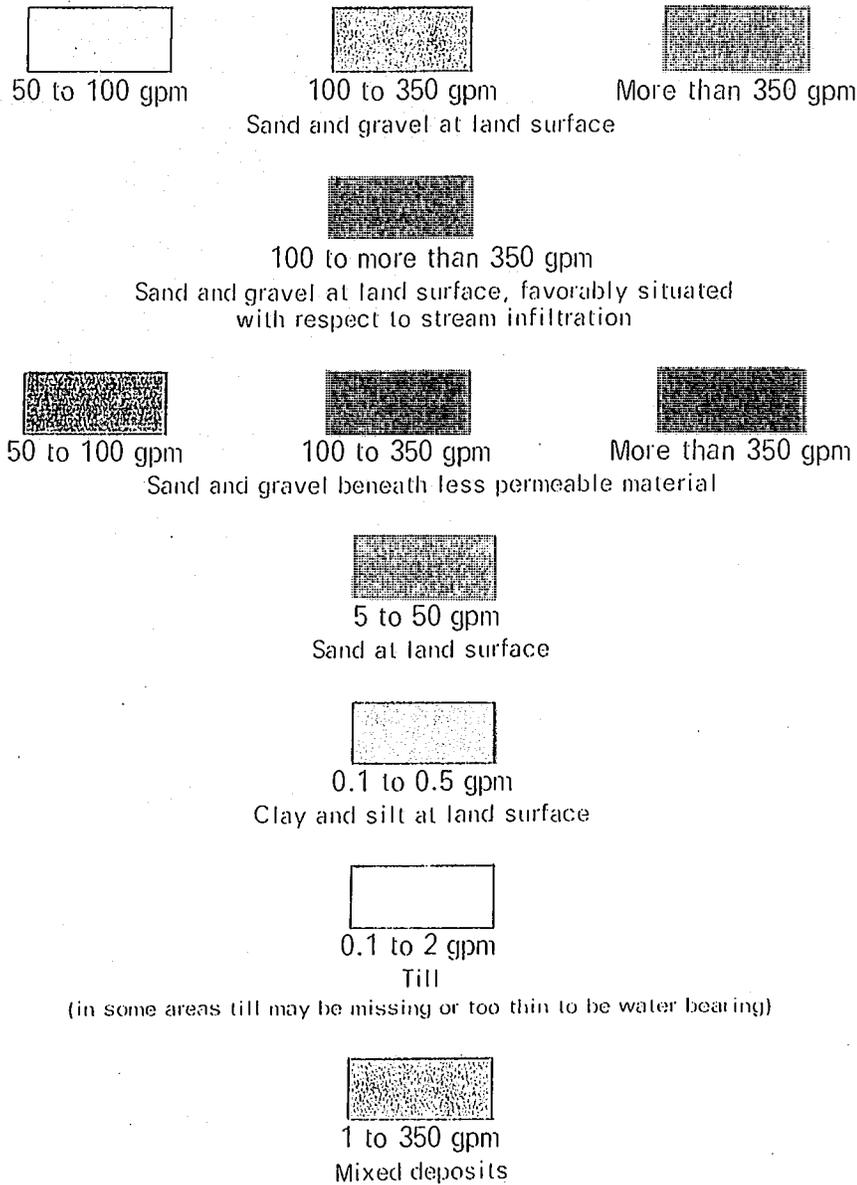
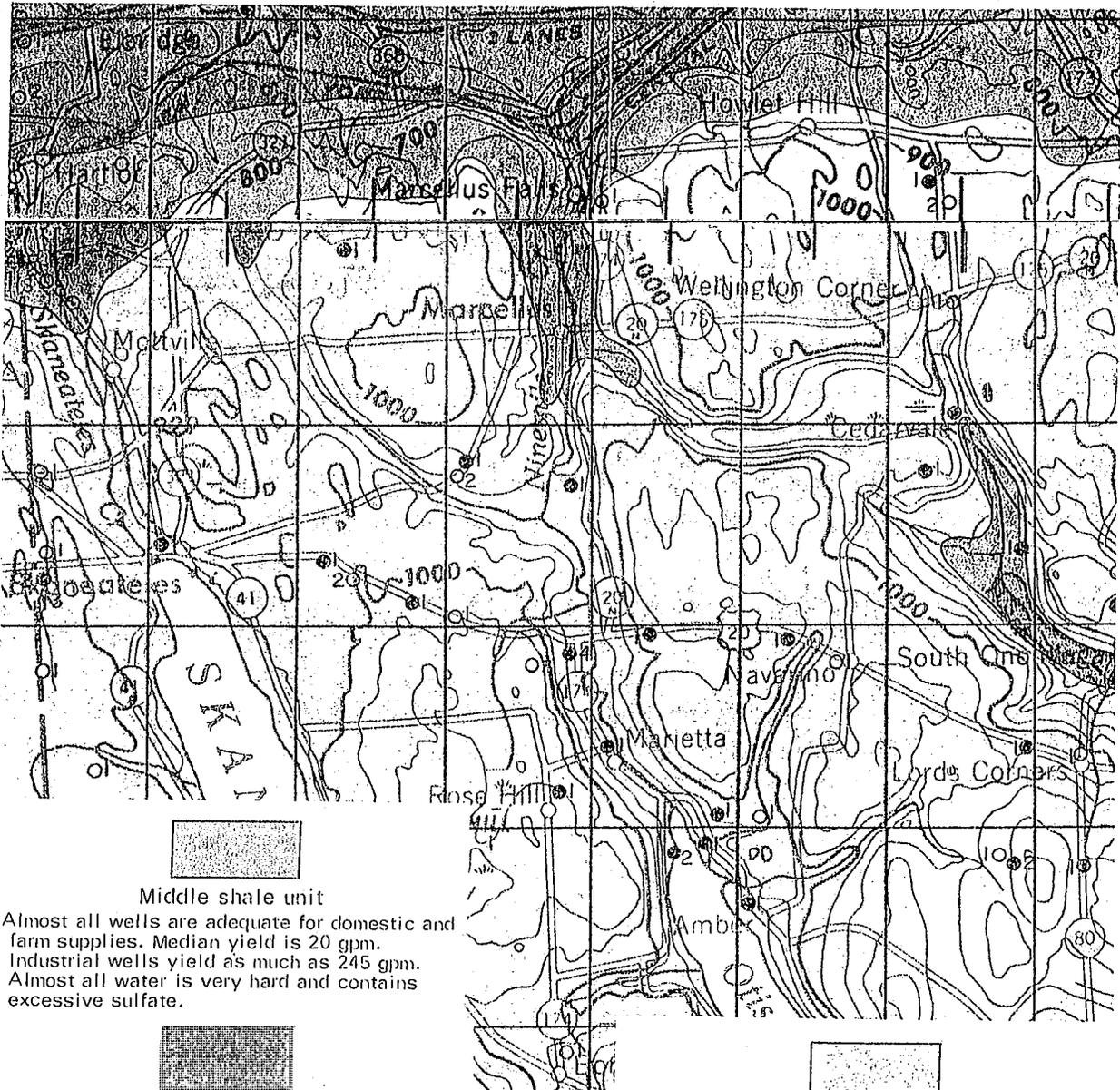


FIGURE 10

Town of Marcellus  
Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Groundwater Availability in  
Unconsolidated Deposits

**Barton**  
**& Loguidice, P.C.**  
Consulting Engineers

Base Map: Availability of Groundwater in the Unconsolidated Deposits of the Eastern Oswego River Basin, New York State Water Resources Commission Basin Planning Report ORB-2, 1970



Middle shale unit

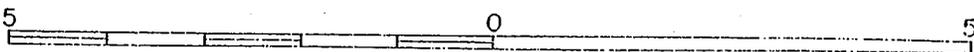
Almost all wells are adequate for domestic and farm supplies. Median yield is 20 gpm. Industrial wells yield as much as 245 gpm. Almost all water is very hard and contains excessive sulfate.

Limestone unit

Wells are adequate for domestic and farm supplies. Median yield is 25 gpm. Industrial wells yield as much as 700 gpm. Water is almost always hard.

Upper shale unit

Almost all wells are adequate for domestic and farm supplies. Median yield is 6 gpm. Water is frequently hard.



SCALE IN MILES

CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

FIGURE 11

Town of Marcellus  
Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Groundwater Availability in  
Consolidated Deposits

**Barton**  
**& Loguidice, P.C.**  
Consulting Engineers

Base Map: Distribution of Bedrock Units and Location of Selected Wells and Springs in the Eastern  
Oswego River Basin, New York State Water Resources Commission Basin Planning Report ORB-2, 1970

(NYSDEC) classification for Otisco Lake is "AA". This is the highest surface water quality category and is assigned to protect waters for uses including drinking and cooking. The Nine Mile Creek Valley is a major physiological feature dominating the landscape from the Otisco Lake "Narrows" northward through Marcellus Falls. The water quality of Nine Mile Creek has improved dramatically since the late 1960's and is now a prolific trout-fishing stream and also serves as a local open space recreational corridor.

Another local body of water that is significant in respects to drainage retention and which contributes to the Town's character is Disappearing Lake. This local phenomenon occasionally appears at the head of Pumpkin Hollow near the intersection of NYS Route 174 and Pleasant Valley Road. This "lake" is actually a swamp encompassing approximately 30 acres for most of the year. During periods of high water, usually in the spring due to snowmelt, the water level rises almost overnight to become a lake, and tends to disappear as rapidly as it formed.

#### **F. Open Space Resources**

Open space areas occupy a variety of land types and uses. They can be areas in the public or private sectors that are designated for a specific use, or areas that are simply not developed but used by the general public in some fashion. Open spaces in the traditional sense include lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands, beaches, and fields. However, open spaces also include cemeteries, ballparks, playgrounds, plazas, gardens, and picnic areas (Roop, 1996). Open spaces provide a multitude of recreational opportunities as well as contribute to a community's sense of place, and the local economy.

The 1996 *Open-Space Planning in Rural Communities of New York State - Investigations in Marcellus, New York* (Roop, 1996) report provides the most current data available concerning all aspects of open space inventory, analysis, and planning within the Town of Marcellus. The chart below is from Roop's report and shows the public-use open space areas in the Town.

<b>PUBLIC-USE OPEN SPACE IN THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Primary Use</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Marcellus Park	Town of Marcellus	Town park	51.4
NYSDEC Fishing Access	NYSDEC	Fishing access to Nine Mile Creek	Approx. .20
Baltimore Woods	Save the County, Centers for Nature Education, Inc	Nature center	169.39
Spinks Woods	Marcellus Citizens, Inc.	Boy scout camp	56.54
Marcellus Central Schools	Marcellus School District	School campus	Approx. 70
Burns Cemetery	Burns Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	.06
Catholic Cemetery	Catholic Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	1.85
Feather Tree Cemetery	Feather Tree Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	.22
Fellows Cemetery	Fellows Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	.20
Highland Cemetery	Highland Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	7.62
Jackson Cemetery	Jackson Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	1.17
St. Francis Cemetery	St. Francis Cemetery Assn.	Cemetery	15.42
OCWA R.O.W.	OCWA	Waterline R.O.W.	42.68
<b>Total Acreage:</b>			<b>416.75</b>

The largest areas of open space in the Town are Marcellus Park, Baltimore Woods, Spinks Woods, and Marcellus Central School. Marcellus Park is known throughout the County for its quality and draws large numbers of people during the summer months. It is used for educational purposes by school groups and by other groups for recreational activities and cook-outs. Baltimore Woods was identified as a unique natural area by "Save the County, Inc." It includes a variety of plant communities and old-growth forest and is known for its outstanding beauty. It is currently operated as a nature educational center. Spinks Woods is slightly larger in area than Marcellus Park and is primarily used as a Boy Scout out-camp. Other significant open space areas in the Town that are privately owned are the Marcellus Youth Soccer field, the Skaneateles Ski Club, and the Links at

Sunset Ridge Golf Course. The public use Otisco Lake Rod and Gun Club open space areas do not include natural open space areas such as wetlands, fields, lakes, streams and ponds. These areas are significant resources and should be considered as part of the open space inventory. Two of the most prominent natural open space areas in the Town are Navarino Swamp and Pumpkin Hollow Valley. Navarino Swamp is approximately 194 acres in size and is located in the southeastern portion of the Town. This area provides habitat for numerous wildlife species and migrating waterfowl. Pumpkin Hollow Valley is a scenic valley visible from Pleasant Valley Road. The wetlands in this valley are the headwaters for Disappearing Lake and the West Branch of Onondaga Creek (SOCPA,1973).

**G. Cultural and Historic Resources**

According to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) there are currently no structures or areas in the Town of Marcellus listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places. The NYSOPRHP stated that some structures within the Village and Town may be eligible for historic preservation classification and suggested that this should be explored by the Town and private property owners together. Potential historic structures and sites such as cemeteries within the Town should be protected.

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Town's principal environmental resources were identified in the previous section. These important natural resources are mapped and depicted throughout the Town. The major environmental resources identified were agriculture, wetlands, woodlands, mineral deposits, drainage basins and water bodies, and existing open spaces. This section summarizes:

- Previously identified environmental areas of concern
- Objectives for each environmental resource
- Discussions of the importance of each environmental resource
- Implementation alternatives for attaining the main objective
- Some trade-offs associated with protecting each environmental resource

This section includes the main environmental concerns, identified through the Steering Committee discussions, and identifies possible goals and measures directed to protect these resources. The environmental concerns outlined in this plan include: protecting Disappearing Lake, Nine Mile Creek, Baltimore Woods and mineral resources, identifying potential historic sites, and encouraging Best Management Practices (BMP's) for logging.

### A. Water Quality and Watershed Protection

**Objective:** To protect surface and subsurface water bodies from natural and human factors that will affect overall water quality.

Good water quality is necessary for public health, environmental stability and diversity, and attracting future economic and demographic growth to the area. As previously discussed, many of the Town's residents depend on wells for their primary source of drinking water. Protecting the Town's groundwater supply and water bodies is a primary concern.

Groundwater contamination can occur through a variety of sources including chemical spills, excessive runoff, mining operations, fertilizer and pesticide use, and leaking septic and fuel tank systems. Groundwater contamination can quickly spread and affect many wells depending on underground flow direction, type and amount of contamination, soil characteristics, and surrounding land uses.

A portion of the Town is located in the Otisco Lake watershed. This area is regulated by the Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) and has specific rules and regulations to maintain good water quality for the future. OCWA has implemented an Otisco Lake Watershed Protection Program that monitors development activities and created an information database to monitor activities in the watershed.

Areas of the Town that are outside the Otisco Lake watershed do not have a comprehensive database of information on activities pertaining to maintaining clean groundwater. In general, leaking septic systems are the most probable threat to groundwater contamination. General information on septic system numbers, age, capacity, records of last maintenance check, and distance from wells can be obtained from the Onondaga County Department of Health (OCDOH). The information can help prevent and identify possible contamination of groundwater.

### **Implementation Alternatives**

*The Otisco Lake Book – A Citizens Guide to Protecting Otisco Lake*, offers many simple measures that the Town could implement as a means to monitor septic systems and educate the public on contamination preventative measures.

1. Educating the public of the potential impacts to well water from faulty septic systems and underground fuel tanks can be achieved through periodically distributed informational pamphlets to residents who are not connected to public utility systems. Environmental problems associated with leaking septic or fuel tank systems are also required by banks to be disclosed prior to the transfer of any property.

2. Land development patterns that minimize erosion and surface runoff into streams will help to maintain and improve water quality, which is one of the Town's desired objectives. Surface and subsurface discharges carry sediments, organisms, and pollutants into Otisco Lake, Nine Mile Creek, Disappearing Lake, and local wetlands. Increased sediments can change a stream's channel and increase its chances of flooding. Sediments and organisms also affect aquatic vegetation, which can impact fish habitats, recreational uses, and the capacity of the water to accept sanitary discharges through overland and groundwater flows. Sedimentation is a natural process, but the Town should identify and monitor excess sedimentation, which may accelerate these natural processes.
  
3. Erosion should be minimized during construction in stream corridors through the State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES). SPDES permit applications are filed with the Town. The Town has expressed a concern about monitoring erosion and storm water management controls in environmentally sensitive areas to ensure water quality. The Town has addressed SPDES permits in its planning regulations, but should ensure that issues related to SPDES permits are addressed during the site plan review process.

In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recently passed the Storm Water Phase II program in an effort to preserve, protect and improve the Nation's water resources from polluted storm water runoff. By 2003, municipalities with separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) will be required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for construction activities disturbing 5 acres of land or more. Construction activities that require a NPDES will most likely apply for a general, rather than individual permit, and implement storm water discharge management controls (known as "Best Management Practices" or BMP's) and be administered through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). For additional information on the Phase II NPDES storm water program, refer to the EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/owm/sw/phase2](http://www.epa.gov/owm/sw/phase2).

4. Protection of wetlands is also important in maintaining local water quality. The beneficial functions of wetlands have been identified in the "Inventory and Analysis" section. Federal and State agencies generally control activities on properties containing wetlands.

Federal and State wetland regulations differ in how wetlands are legally defined and categorized. Both Federal and State regulations define wetlands using three parameters: hydric soils (a soil that is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions), wetland hydrology (the dominant water source and flow patterns), and the dominance of wetland plants.

Federal regulations are derived from several laws focusing primarily on navigable waterways and interstate commerce that incorporate wetlands as part of a larger waterway system. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates Federal wetlands. State regulations are based on the New York State Freshwater Wetlands Act and focus on the benefits of wetlands for water quality, recreation, habitat protection and open space.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) implements State environmental regulations. The Town of Marcellus is obligated under the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) to implement zoning and subdivision approvals in accordance with wetland protection regulations, but does not explicitly control activities in wetlands.

5. Protection of water quality through wetland preservation and storm water BMP's is encouraged through compatible development patterns that minimize intrusion and disturbance. When necessary, mitigation measures will be incorporated in the site plan review process to reduce conflict and environmental degradation. The Town may opt in the future to further protect wetlands above Federal and State regulations. The Town has numerous mechanisms that can be used to help protect and manage wetlands. These local mechanisms include acquisition, flexible zoning techniques (special use permits, cluster zoning and planned development, performance based zoning, overlay zones and

large lot zoning), restoration/creation of wetlands, incentives (capital improvement programming, use-value taxation), technical assistance and education.

6. Agriculture can be a major source of non-point pollution (the runoff from land surfaces during storm events) to surface and subsurface water supplies. Agricultural waste products and chemicals leach through the soil and are transported into water supplies and resources. Exposed soils from plowed fields are eroded by wind and water, which can produce excess dust, erosion and sedimentation into water bodies.

The Town's role in regulating farm practices is to ensure that environmentally hazardous activities are limited. The Town may control the size of an agricultural operation or structure and establish property setbacks for storage areas. The Town can also specify the types of land uses allowed in an area when water quality protection is a primary concern.

7. Null Alternative - Surface and subsurface water bodies would not be protected from natural and human factors that would affect overall water quality.

### **Trade-Offs**

Water quality protection measures may conflict with or limit other activities such as residential/commercial development, agricultural practices, mining, and other uses of private property. However, these activities may also be dependent upon clean water to exist or further expand. The Town should strive for a balance that incorporates and considers water quality protection measures as part of its planning and project review processes.

### **B. Agricultural Land and Open Space**

**Objective:** To maintain the Town's rural character and aesthetics by preserving optimal agricultural lands and community desired open space areas.

Agricultural land occupies much of the landscape in the Town of Marcellus. This contributes to the rural open space characteristic that has attracted many of the current residents to the area. The preservation of agricultural lands can help promote local economic stability and maintain small town character.

Conversion of agricultural land to other uses is a permanent fixture upon the landscape. Improvements to public infrastructure, such as widening roads, water and sewer line installation, can increase the tax burden and marketability of properties. Eventually, such tax burdens may not be supportable by agriculture alone. These factors collectively and individually diminish the continued viability of agricultural uses in portions of the Town. Over the years, it has become increasingly difficult for farmers in Marcellus to maintain their agricultural practices.

Open space areas include forestland, agriculture, and recreational areas. Open space areas help to preserve community character and visual quality, provide recreation and support natural ecological communities. The significance and value of parks and open spaces to the Town contribute both to the economic and social health of the community. The economic significance can be attributed to the amount of investment in land, facilities and management that is required for parks and open spaces to be maintained. This investment is often balanced through user fees or enhancement of private lands near open space areas. Social benefits that parks and open spaces provide vary from educational services, recreational opportunities and places for community and social gatherings.

The Town of Marcellus is also characterized by its abundance of open space. The preservation and enhancement of existing open space is an important component of the planning process. As development opportunities occur in the future, the Town will need to further examine the recreational and open space needs of the community. This consideration should include the budget demands of publicly owning and operating parklands and open spaces. These areas serve local and regional populations as well, and are a vital resource for the Town.

The amount of agricultural land and open space to be preserved in relation to the local tax base is a concern of the Town. In general, lands that are farmed or undeveloped do not contribute as much in taxes per square mile as do developed lands. However, farmed and undeveloped lands require less infrastructure and community services, thus reducing the Town's overall maintenance and operating costs. Agricultural land is considered open space land because if it becomes abandoned, it may be a temporary or permanent open space resource.

### **Implementation Alternatives**

1. The Town can exert some control over the location and operation of agricultural uses through its zoning and subdivision regulations. In addition, the State and Federal government regulate and influence agricultural operations through various environmental, health, occupational safety, and marketing programs.
2. The establishment and continuation of an agricultural district is one of the most common and significant programs for preserving agricultural lands. It is a protection and incentive program to encourage farming throughout the State. Districts offer tax reductions and incentives to a participating property owner. Also, the program offers certain disincentives to non-agricultural land development such as public sewer and water extensions and residential uses in those areas where development may infringe upon prime agricultural lands. Farmland within agricultural districts can be excluded from local water districts and extension of water lines must be approved by the County's Agricultural District Committee.

There are currently 4 agricultural districts in Onondaga County. There is one agricultural district in the Town of Marcellus, which serves approximately 20 active farmers. Each district is formed by the State, based upon advisory comments by the Town and County committees and is subject to review every 8 years. No changes are currently anticipated to the agricultural district in Marcellus.

3. The Town of Marcellus currently has a Farmland Advisory Board that addresses issues of agricultural preservation and current events in farming practices. Marcellus is one of the few towns in New York State that has established a Farmland Advisory Board. Its function is to review projects that come before the Town's Planning and Zoning Boards, and to provide input to those Boards with regard to agricultural issues that may be impacted by or otherwise related to the development of such projects. The Farmland Advisory Board should review all aspects and issues related to agriculture for the Town.

There are a variety of implementation alternatives for preserving agricultural lands in the Town of Marcellus. One possibility is to pursue provisions formulated in the Agricultural District Law, which was enacted in 1971. These provisions are designed to assist in farmland protection. The provisions include: (1) limiting local ordinances (zoning, subdivision regulations) affecting agriculture, (2) modifying eminent domain proceedings, (3) restricting public funds for non-farm development, (4) working with state agencies to encourage farming, (5) limiting special service tax assessments on farmlands, and (6) permitting agricultural property tax assessments.

Preservation of agricultural lands and open space can also be implemented through the use of Conservation Easement Programs. Conservation Easement Programs may also be used as a means to help transition farmlands into open space areas once the primary use has been abandoned. Other towns have implemented such programs under Section 247 of New York's General Municipal Law, which allows a municipality to "acquire by grant the easement to land within such a municipality" for "preservation of open spaces" that would maintain or enhance the conservation of natural lands and scenic resources (Roop, 1996).

A conservation easement constitutes a significant restriction on land use and development on real property for the purpose of maintaining the scenic or natural condition of the environment. It is considered a negative easement because of the restrictions conveyed to the property for the benefit of the grantee (Gibson, 1992).

Another program used to preserve open spaces and agricultural lands are land trusts. The major focus of a land trust is the permanent preservation of lands through acquisitions of donated conservation easements. A party transfers legal title to the property to a trustee (e.g. the Town) who manages it for the benefit of third parties, the beneficiaries of the trust (e.g. the public) (Gibson, 1992). Granting of an easement to a land trust may qualify the donor to take advantage of a deduction in taxable income by both the state and federal government. Easements donated to land trusts restrict uses on the land forever. The easement becomes part of the property's deed.

4. Private land development may contribute to creation of additional open spaces or parks as part of subdivision regulations for large development sites. This could be accomplished by allowing homeowner associations to be responsible for maintaining small neighborhood parks. A public acquisition program to preserve sensitive resources, in areas where zoning would otherwise allow development, may be considered with strong public support. Also by identifying potential public acquisition areas with detailed reasoning, potential acquisitions may help the Town qualify for Federal or State grants.
5. Null Alternative - The Town's rural character and aesthetics may be at risk, due to a lack of preservation of optimal agricultural lands and community desired open space areas.

### **Trade-Offs**

The Town can restrict the right to develop a certain parcel or piece of land to preserve agricultural or significant open space areas. However, such a restriction may place an economic burden on the property owner. The property owner may be able to recapture some of the economic loss through opportunities by transferring, via legal sale, the development rights from the restricted parcel to another parcel within the Town. For example, a local farmer may be entitled to cultivate another parcel of land that is owned by the Town or receive a tax reduction on their remaining property. Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's) are fashioned to alleviate some of the economic

burden of owning a landmark such as a wetland, a scenic vista or an archaeological site (Gibson, 1992).

Development rights purchased by the Town provide economic opportunities for a property owner and restrict future development on that parcel. This measure may be useful in areas where the Town would like to keep undeveloped but not change the current zoning, which may allow development. Purchasing development rights of lands zoned for agricultural use reduces the economic burden on the property owner and guarantees the preservation of the Town's rural character. This option also provides the opportunity for the Town to later purchase the lands that they hold the development rights to for possible recreational developments such as parks or trail systems.

It is important to consider all aspects involved in preserving agricultural lands and open space areas in respect to four primary categories: (1) administrative costs, (2) financial costs, (3) social legitimacy, (4) development trade-offs, and (5) ownership/maintenance conflicts.

Small neighborhood parks owned and operated by homeowner associations may create many open space pockets that are isolated and not connected to larger recreational systems. If this option is pursued, placement of neighborhood parks should be considered in relation to other open space and recreational opportunities.

### **C. Mining Activities**

Commercial mineral extraction contributes to the community's continued economic growth. Land use plans and zoning ordinances must consider and balance the need for sand, gravel, and limestone quarries with environmental and other concerns of residents and merchants. Restrictions and buffer zones should be designated for mineral extraction areas, which minimize conflicts between adjacent land uses and mining.

**Objective:** To ensure safe, yet commercially viable mining practices that will minimize adverse impacts on surrounding properties.

The bedrock beneath the Town of Marcellus is composed primarily of black shale, siltstone with calcareous shale and accessory limestone. The limestone and calcareous shale are commonly used as a source of lightweight aggregate material. Black shale is also mined for the production of Portland cement. The underlying bedrock was formed some 300 million years ago as a result of calcareous shells precipitating from the shallow sea that once covered the area. These original formations were further altered by the last glaciating period, which occurred between 1,000,000 and 10,000 years ago. Glaciers deposited huge quantities of rock, silt, clay, sand and gravel and carved out the areas natural land formations (Marcellus Environmental Commission, 1975).

Natural mineral deposits occur in many areas within the Town of Marcellus. Mining is a strong economic force in Central New York. Mining occurs only in areas that have been formed over millions of years of evolution. That cannot be changed. However, the affects of mining operations on the natural and social environment can be managed.

Several active mines are located within the Town. Concerns have been expressed that mining activities should be precluded in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, streams, and groundwater recharge zones. Mining is regulated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and permitting is required for actions involving more than 1000 tons of material in any 12 consecutive months. Reclamation and bonding is required by State law, which limits local municipal authority. Reclamation recommendations can only be made at the time of permit renewal or permit modifications requested by the mine owner/operator. Permit renewals normally occur every 5 years.

Mining is not provided for in the Town's current zoning ordinance, and hence only "grandfathered" mines may be allowed to continue. This means that mines can expand on land they already own, but not on land newly acquired by a mining company. Expansion of existing mines onto newly acquired land is likely to arise in areas of the Town where there are large amounts of sand and

gravel deposits that are located near existing operations, such as northeast of Otisco Lake. The Town may reinforce State environmental regulations by ensuring that proper preventative measures are incorporated into zoning regulations.

### **Implementation Alternatives**

Zoning can help ensure that objectionable features commonly associated with mining be minimized, by implementing measures that may include:

1. Planned use of the area after mineral extraction is complete
2. Improved and/or replaced natural vegetative cover to increase erosion control and screen unsightly excavation areas
3. Required sufficient setback standards from extremely sensitive areas
4. Imported topsoil/fill in the excavated area
5. Ensured that the natural drainage of the area be reestablished as much as possible
6. Dust control
7. Null Alternative – Measures would not be implemented that would help ensure that objectionable features associated with mining be minimized.

Zoning can also help protect mineral resources for future mining activities and perhaps limit the expansion of mines. Mining activities can be just as important as on-site monitoring and reclamation programs. Reclamation programs should tie into the *Comprehensive Plan* especially in significant adjacent areas such as Baltimore Woods. It is important to let mine owners know that adjacent properties are important and be further considered in mining practices. This may be addressed by placing all existing mines into a mining zone, or perhaps by establishing an overlay zone to monitor future mining on smaller cut and fill activities of less than 1000 tons. The latter approach would help limit potential environmental degradation that could otherwise occur due to the cumulative impact of small-unmonitored mining/excavation activities.

## **Trade-Offs**

The Town's ability to control mining activities is limited to well defined zoning guidelines, and such measures generally cannot go much beyond the types of controls that the NYSDEC includes in its permit program for mining activities (such as the mitigation measures listed above). New or amended zoning ordinances that attempt to effectively prohibit mining activities would be subject to legal challenge and could be overturned by the courts, if the zoning restrictions are judged to be overly burdensome.

### **D. Nine Mile Creek Corridor**

The Nine Mile Creek corridor is a unique natural formation, which extends through the Town of Marcellus. This riparian forest area provides an abundance of recreational opportunities. The Nine Mile Creek corridor features some of the best trout fishing in Central New York. The area also harbors a wide variety of flora and fauna that creates a unique ecosystem within the Town of Marcellus. Protection of Nine Mile Creek also provides a means to protect local water quality. The Nine Mile Creek Conservation Council (NMCC) is a grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and conservation of Nine Mile Creek and its watershed.

**Objective:** To protect Nine Mile Creek and it's riparian zone for enhanced recreational uses and maintain its natural state.

### **Implementation Alternatives**

1. The NMCC has expressed a willingness to coordinate a joint effort with the Town of Marcellus to help ensure that this area remains in its natural state and contributes to a favorable quality of life for local residents. This can be accomplished through a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) registered Critical Environmental Area (CEA) designation. The CEA designation begins with the Town's

acknowledgment that the corridor is a unique environmental resource that should be protected. The process should be coordinated with the Town of Camillus and the NMCC.

2. Zoning regulations can also be implemented to enforce specific land uses and restrictions along the Nine Mile Creek corridor. Much of the zoning adjacent to Nine Mile Creek is currently classified industrial. The uses allowed in these areas conflict with protecting this natural resource. Changing the zoning classification from industrial to residential along the Nine Mile Creek Corridor would establish future compatible uses desired within this specific area without totally precluding development options.
3. Null Alternative - Nine Mile Creek and it's riparian zone would not be protected for enhanced recreational uses and maintain its natural state.

#### **Trade-Offs**

A CEA designation would not produce conflicts among private property owners along the corridor. A CEA designation would not limit or infringe on private property rights, but would deter certain types of development in the area by setting a higher standard of review for proposed activities. On the other hand, zoning restrictions designed to protect the Nine Mile Creek corridor would need to balance private property interests with the protection goals for Nine Mile Creek.

#### **E. Recreational Trails**

**Objective:** Create and/or connect multi-use recreational trails to adjacent townships where possible.

Local recreational trails promote a higher quality of life to area residents and are now being included as one of the main amenities that prospective homeowners look for in a community. Many areas in the Town seem ideally suited for the location of recreational trails. For example, Baltimore Woods has a trail system that could eventually be connected to the Town of

Skaneateles. A trail system from Marcellus Park to Baltimore Woods, and to the proposed development adjacent to the Sunset Ridge golf course should be pursued. Other areas identified for the potential development of trail systems include the Nine Mile Creek corridor, which could potentially be connected to a trail system encompassing Disappearing Lake.

### **Implementation Alternatives**

1. The area south of Pumpkin Hollow has been identified as a potential location to create a recreational trail system. In 1995, a proposed Marcellus Greenway Trail was identified in Lisa Roop's report: *Open-space Planning in Rural Communities of New York State—Investigations in Marcellus, New York*. This report depicts a trail system that bisects the Town and is constructed in stages. This example could be modified to connect other potential trail systems in the Town and eventually provide trail access for all residents and connect to other trail systems in adjoining towns. It is also feasible to locate a recreational trail along the Nine Mile Creek corridor that connects with the Town of Camillus.

Implementation of a recreational trail system is contingent upon two factors: (1) widespread public support and (2) funding availability. First, all interested parties and stakeholders should be involved in the planning process and agree that the project benefits the "public interest". Consensus is imperative for such a project. Secondly, potential funding sources need to be investigated. Funding for recreational trails is traditionally sought through State grant programs, donations, and matching municipal allocations. In some cases acquisition of open space conservation projects may be funded in part by the State's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) or through the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act.

One concept described in the proposed *Onondaga County Settlement Plan*, is a county-wide recreational trail system. If this Plan is adopted, the concept may lead to County-sponsored proceedings that would alleviate much of the controversy and responsibility associated with construction of a trail system by the Town.

2. Null Alternative – Multi-use recreational trails would not be created or connected to adjacent townships.

### **Trade-Offs**

There are many issues involved in creating a trail system within the Town of Marcellus. Private property owners in the past have expressed their concern about property rights regarding a public trail system. In the past, opposition has resulted in abandonment of a proposed public recreational trail system. However, the Steering Committee has shown a renewed interest in a trail system and would like to continue efforts that could be implemented to reduce opposition and cost effectively provide this resource for Town residents.

### **F. Woodlands**

Woodlands have many natural, human, and economic benefits. In the 1800's, much of the Town's forests were cleared for agriculture. Today, there are substantially more wooded acres in the Town than at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to natural succession of abandoned farmland. The increase in forest areas has also increased the potential for logging. A concern with logging was identified because it is protected under agricultural practices as crop harvesting. Other towns in Central New York have also identified this concern and have incorporated protective measures for woodland areas into their comprehensive plans. Currently there are few options available to monitor or regulate timber removal on private lands. This is a concern of the Town because poor timber harvesting methods can cause increased erosion, siltation, loss of aesthetics, and wildlife habitat. Excessive erosion is especially a concern on steep slopes (greater than 15%) where logging may take place. Many of the steep slopes are composed of shale and the root systems from vegetation are necessary for erosion stabilization. Logging on steep slopes should be discouraged.

**Objective:** To protect woodlands from detrimental logging activities.

## Implementation Alternatives

1. The Town could increase the awareness of Best Management Practices (BMP's) through the distribution of informative pamphlets to residents who own large tracts of land. BMP's generally associated with logging are primarily directed towards reducing siltation and erosion that occurs during run-off from excessive rainfall or snowmelt. This usually includes the proper placement of skid roads to minimize intrusion to wildlife, maintain visual aesthetics, and scheduling activities during specific times of the year to ensure that the adverse affect from logging activities on surrounding immature trees is minimized. This method is expensive but may be the only option in some cases where the Town has a specific interest in protecting a sensitive area.
2. Another alternative is acquisition of land by the Town.
3. The first step in the management of woodlands requires an identification of the locations and volume of timber resources (Avery & Burkhart, 1994). The Town has a general overlay of the location of wooded areas provided in Lisa Roop's 1996 report on *Open Space Planning in Rural Communities of New York State—Investigations in Marcellus, New York*. However, the criteria used for delineating these areas are not ideal for the use of managing woodlands. Accordingly, one alternative that could be considered would involve retaining a professional forester to inventory wooded areas in the Town that have the potential to be harvested over the next 10 years.
4. Null Alternative - Woodlands would not be protected from detrimental logging activities.

### G. Other Unique Natural Features

1. As previously discussed, Disappearing Lake is a unique natural feature located at the head of Pumpkin Hollow, near the intersection of Route 174 and Pleasant Valley Road. For most of the year, this "lake" is better classified as a wetland, which covers approximately

30 acres south of Pleasant Valley Road (SOCPA, 1973). The Disappearing Lake area also plays an important part in flood attenuation.

Floodwater velocity is increased in this area due to the steep slopes that surround Disappearing Lake. This area attenuates spring floodwaters and also acts as a catch basin for sediment and pollutants carried from overland flow. Changes to the current zoning classification for this area (currently General Business and Agriculture) should be considered to ensure that it is protected from future development activities.

2. Marcellus Park is continually under development pressures, largely due to its location, which is partially within the southeastern portion of the Village. This further complicates addressing developmental pressures. Initial construction of Marcellus Park was funded by Federal and State grants, which established certain terms and conditions for development. The Town and the Village should strive to jointly address the potential problem, and develop a means to protect this shared social and environmental resource.
3. Baltimore Woods, covering approximately 170 acres and located in the southwest portion of the Village, is the largest public-use open space area in the Town of Marcellus. The facility is known throughout Onondaga County for its contribution to nature education and recreational opportunities. The main concern relating to the protection of this area is encroachment by adjacent mining operations. The Town should pursue protection of this area by incorporating stricter mining reclamation standards in the vicinity of Baltimore Woods. The Town should amend the current zoning classification to protect this resource from mining activities.

#### **H. Development in Floodplain Areas**

Flood problems in Marcellus are typically caused by high stormwater discharges that exceed drainage and stream channel capacities, primarily during spring high water periods between early February and late June. In 1960, the flood stage of Nine Mile Creek reached 8.25 feet at the

Camillus gauging station. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped out potential flood zones as part of the National Flood Insurance Study. The Flood Insurance Study investigates the potential for the severity and location of flood hazards in the Town (FEMA, 1982). The areas of concern for flooding occur primarily along Nine Mile Creek, Disappearing Lake, and Otisco Lake. As previously stated, copies of the FEMA floodplain maps are available at the Town Hall.

Flood patterns change over time in relation to development. Land use activities can affect storm flow response and flooding in several ways:

1. Removal of vegetation can increase the rate of surface runoff.
2. Activities such as logging, road construction, and other development can reduce the infiltration capacity of the soil, resulting in higher peak discharges during storm events.
3. Development activities from construction of roads, drainage ditches, and skid trails cause alterations to the overall conveyance system in a watershed, resulting in an increase in peak discharge.
4. Increased sediment and erosion in floodplain areas from development can reduce the capacity of stream channels both at the upstream and downstream locations, thereby resulting in streams rising above previously normal levels.

## VI. INFRASTRUCTURE

### A. Transportation

The highway network in the Town of Marcellus is consistent with other towns along the fringe of the City of Syracuse. State highways are the major commuting routes to neighboring municipalities. County roads consist of a mixture of major and minor highways. Town roads are primarily used for local access and residential streets. However, in the Town of Marcellus, the highway network is unlike other town networks in that few roads that serve a local function are under Town jurisdiction. Marcellus has the lowest percentage (24%) of Town roads to total road mileage of all towns in Onondaga County (SOCPA, 1996).

In 1996, the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA) prepared a transportation plan for the Town of Marcellus. This document provides the most recent transportation information concerning the Town's highway network, traffic patterns and volumes, public right-of-way widths, job destinations, functional classifications, road conditions, and proposed policies to establish a basis for estimating the future transportation needs of the Town. *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* was adopted by the Town Board in 1996 and has been integrated into the *Comprehensive Plan* as appendices to be used as a development management tool for the future. Much of the information contained in this section was derived from *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan*.

The primary transportation element within the *Comprehensive Plan* is the highway system, which includes mostly public lands reserved for motor vehicle use. These lands serve the entire Town and provide linkages throughout the area including destinations outside the Town. Each transportation system includes lands for the actual facility (highway pavement, rail line, etc.) and right-of-way (ROW) land for the supporting elements such as road shoulders, the unpaved portions of the ROW, drainage, signs and utilities. Right-of-way widths vary depending on the type of facility, its significance, function, age, and the immediate land use.

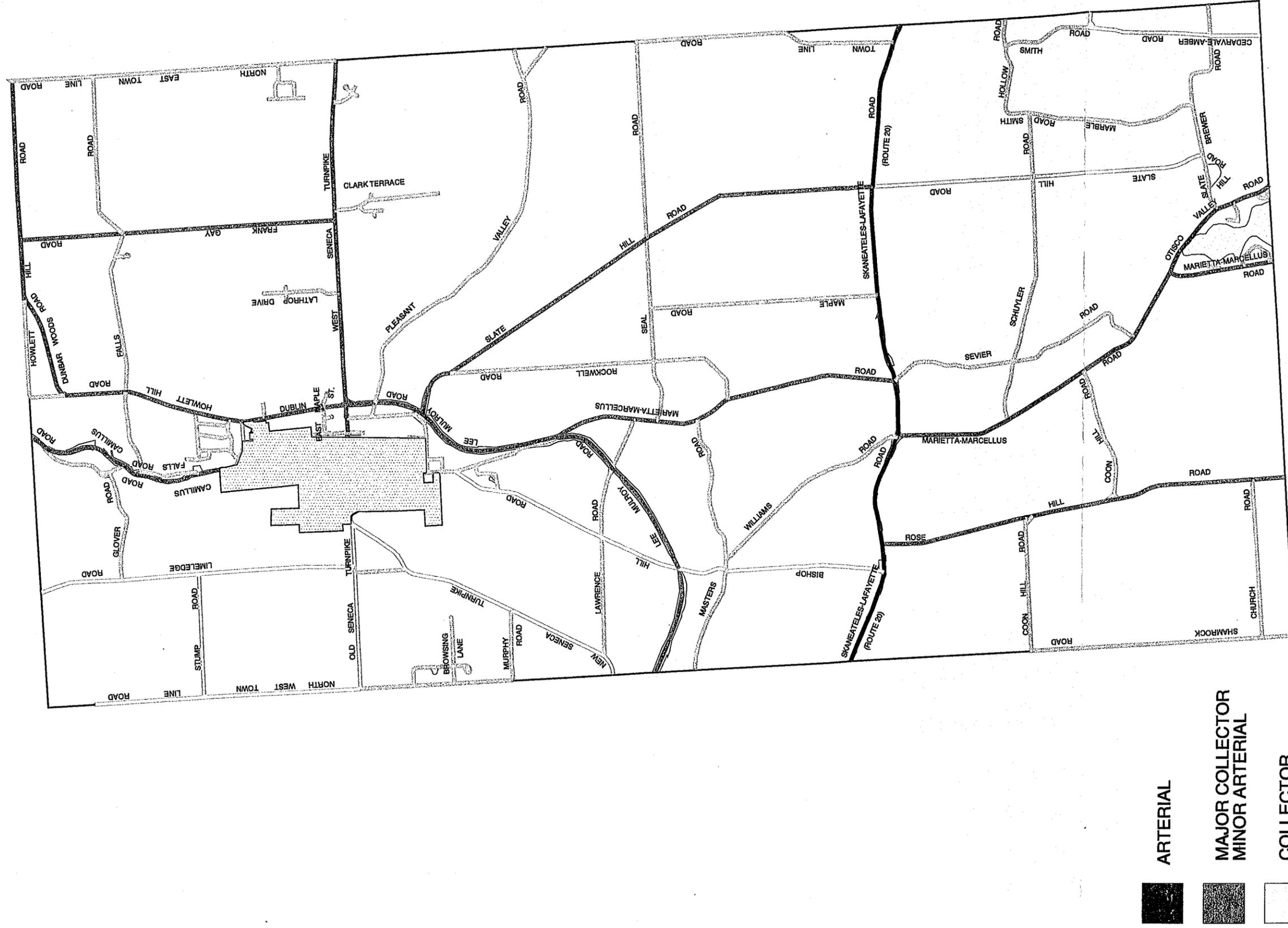
There are four major highway functional types in the Town of Marcellus: arterials, major collector/minor arterials, collectors and local roads. Each has specific traffic and physical characteristics. Arterials and major collectors/minor arterials are two-lane, high-speed roads, which carry higher volumes of traffic. Collectors typically have moderate speeds with numerous intersections of driveways and streets. Local roads typically carry lower volumes, have low speed traffic, and also have numerous intersections. Functional classifications are used for many purposes. The first is to group streets and highways into classes according to the character of the services they provide. Other purposes include establishment of eligibility for Federal/State aid, a basis for applying land use, access and speed limit regulations, and planning future development patterns that are appropriate with local road capacities. However, physical characteristics often overlap rather than exhibit specific parameters listed in the classification scheme.

The only road in the Town of Marcellus that is classified as an arterial highway is US Route 20. Roads that are classified as major collectors/minor arterials include sections of NYS Route 175 (Seneca Turnpike), Lee Mulroy Road, NYS Route 174 (County and State sections), Slate Hill Road, Rose Hill Road, Dunbar Woods Road, Otisco Valley Road, and Frank Gay Road. These roads typically have no major traffic generated by adjacent land uses along them. Collector roads in Marcellus include Bishop Hill Road, New Seneca Turnpike, Old Seneca Turnpike (West of the Village), Limeledge Road, North West Town Line Road, Stump Road, and certain sections of Slate Hill Road. All other roads in the Town are classified as local roads.

The highway network in the Town is presented in Figure 12. The three Federal or State roads, Routes 174, 175, and Route 20 all serve as primary traffic corridors for commuters, local residents, and commercial truck traffic. The County road system includes 24 highways that are either completely or partially within the Town. These roads vary in function from rural corridors serving primarily local residents to major commuting highways.

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATION



- 
**ARTERIAL**
- 
**MAJOR COLLECTOR  
MINOR ARTERIAL**
- 
**COLLECTOR**
- 
**LOCAL**



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BY THE SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY

FIGURE 12

All public roads within the Town of Marcellus are paved, and are two lanes (except where passing lanes on hills are needed for short distances along Route 20). Road widths vary and are generally dependent upon the functional classification and use. Specific road widths, criteria, and rights-of-way are detailed in *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan*.

### **Commuting Patterns**

Analyzing the destinations of commuters aids in determining which highways receive the most use, where congestion occurs and at what times, and where future infrastructure investments should be made. Traffic congestion is the result of specific work trip destinations, shopping and recreational trips, and special events that occur at regular intervals. For example, traditional peak congestion occurs during the morning and evening "rush hours". This is expected, predictable, and generally unavoidable. However, traffic congestion in the Town of Marcellus is not significant as compared to other areas within the County. The primary work destination for all workers in Onondaga County is the City of Syracuse with approximately 44% commuting into the City. It is important to consider the number and percent of workers in towns west of Marcellus that travel to the City of Syracuse when analyzing traffic flows and patterns that directly affect the Town. The two primary towns west and south of Marcellus that contribute to the traffic patterns within Marcellus are Skaneateles and Spafford. Included is a table showing the work destinations in 1990 for these towns. The numbers are based upon total workers older than 16 years of age.

Since the City of Syracuse is a major work destination, the east/west traffic flows place a heavy emphasis on collector and arterial roads, which distribute traffic through the Town of Marcellus. In general, 53% of Marcellus commuters travel east into the City, 19% work in the Town, 18% drive north, 9% drive to the west, and a fraction of one percent travel to the south to work. The average travel time to work in 1990 for Marcellus residents was 23 minutes. The prime time to leave for work was 7:00 to 7:30 AM. In 1990, the majority of commuters in the Town drove alone (2,472), while approximately 17% (427) carpooled.

In addition to the east/west predominance of work locations, several major shopping areas, recreational areas, colleges and a university are located east of the Town, in or near the City of Syracuse. These destinations also contribute to the heavy use of collectors and arterial roads within the Town.

<b>WORK DESTINATIONS FOR RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS AND ADJOINING TOWNS</b>						
	<b>Town of Marcellus</b>		<b>Town of Skaneateles</b>		<b>Town of Spafford</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Living in Town	3,227	100	3,571	100	738	100
Commute to City of Syracuse	1,034	32.0	738	20.7	191	25.9
Work Outside of Onondaga County	217	6.7	539	15.1	135	18.3
Work Inside Onondaga County	3,010	93.3	3,032	84.9	603	81.7
Work Outside of Town	2,631	81.5	2,227	62.4	682	92.4
Work Inside Town	596	18.5	1,344	37.6	56	7.6
Source: SOCPA, 1996						

The Centro Bus Company currently provides daily public transportation services to the Village of Marcellus. The public transportation route is from the City of Syracuse through Marcellus, continuing to Auburn, and returning to Syracuse 10 times per day (DeSocio, personal communication with Centro, 10/99). However, in 1990, only 1% of commuters used public transportation (SOCPA, 1996).

The only road in the Town of Marcellus that is classified as an arterial highway is US Route 20. Included is a list of the functional classifications of other key roads in the Town of Marcellus.

<b>Town of Marcellus - Highway Functional Classifications</b>		
<b>Minor Arterial/ Major Collector</b>	<b>Collector</b>	<b>Local</b>
Dunbar Woods Road	Amber Road (Townline to Townline)	Brewer Road
Frank Gay Road	Bishop Hill Road	Browsing Lane
Howlett Hill Road	Limeledge Road	Church Road
Marietta-Marcellus Road	Main Street	Coon Hill Road
NYS Route 174	New Seneca Turnpike	Deer Path Road
NYS Route 175 (including Lee Mulroy and West Seneca Tpke)	North Street	Falls Road
Otisco Valley Road	NW Townline Road	Gardner Road
Rose Hill Road	Old Seneca Turnpike	Glover Road
Slate Hill Road (US Route 20 to NYS Route 175)	Scotch Hill/Sheehan Road	Gypsy Road
	Slate Hill Road (US Route 20 To Brewer Road)	Old Howlett Hill Road
	South Street	Kelly Road
	Stump Road	Lawless Road
		Lawrence Road
		Maple Road
		Marble Road
		Masters Road
		Murphy Road
		NE Townline Road
		Platt Road
		Pleasant Valley Road
		Rockwell Road

Town of Marcellus - Highway Functional Classifications		
Minor Arterial/ Major Collector	Collector	Local
		Schuyler Road
		Seal Road
		Sevier Road
		Shamrock Road
		Slate Hill Road (Otisco Valley Road to Brewer Road)
		Slate Hill Road (NYS Route 175 to NYS Route 174)
		Smith Hollow Road
		Williams Road
Source: SOCPA 1996		

## Main Transportation Issues

### 1. Traffic Congestion

One issue of concern is the volume of truck traffic traveling on Route 175 (East Hill Road). Trucks from Saunder's Mine and Santaro Asphalt Plant move very slowly up the hill, especially during morning rush hour traffic. This creates a long queue of vehicles, due the absence of passing lanes.

As a First Class town, Camillus is allowed to set its own speed limits, and has reduced the speed limit to 35 mph along Howlett Hill Road. The reduced speed carries over into the Town of Marcellus. Preparation of a traffic impact analysis was discussed by the Steering Committee as a way to influence the need for changing the speed limit back to its original

setting to reduce congestion in Marcellus. However, the analysis would likely result in a recommendation to increase the speed limit in the Town of Camillus, in order to reduce congestion in Marcellus. This is beyond Marcellus's jurisdiction, and was removed from further consideration.

The installation of passing lanes may not be a viable alternative on East Hill Road. Passing lanes are not allowed in the vicinity of intersections. This regulation compiled with proper site distance requirements eliminates many areas where passing lanes could be installed to effectively reduce traffic congestion. However, providing adequate shoulders and/or turning lanes may be more practical and afford additional protection for passing traffic that is preparing to turn.

## 2. Sight Distance and Right-of-Way

The Town of Marcellus does not regulate speed limits, but can, however, implement and control sight distances, setback regulations and driveway widths to enhance traffic mobility. The Town is currently using the County's recommendations in *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* relating to these topics. The Town can also control the number of driveways on a particular road, thus influencing traffic speed and mobility patterns.

One concern of the Town is allowance of access roads and driveways to properties before the current sight regulations were enacted. Only parcels that have changed their property lines after 1986 are subject to the current review guidelines. Properties that have not changed their primary use or property lines cannot be denied an access permit. However, NYSDOT and/or OCDOT will locate access at the safest point on the property.

Section 239(f) of General Municipal Law and Section 136 of the Highway Law state that a building permit cannot be issued without legal access to a property. NYSDOT and OCDOT have predetermined criteria for location of driveways, and they are involved in the

review process for developments located adjacent to State and County highways. Representatives from the NYSDOT and OCDOT will usually meet with developers to identify restrictions that the developer will have to consider.

As a general rule, sight distance requirements can be determined by multiplying the road's speed limit by 10. When an application for an access permit is requested, DOT personnel visit the site to check the available sight distance, and also to determine if drainage modifications may be necessary. The goal is to consolidate driveways as much as possible to minimize access to and from roads, which improves both safety and mobility. The regulations generally coincide with the County's *2010 Development Guide for Onondaga County (2010 Plan)* recommendations to establish best highway access points and sight distances.

Right-of-way widths may also be of concern in some areas of the Town where steep topography affects the design of shoulder widths and drainage culverts. Existing right-of-way widths are outlined in *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan*. In general, right-of-way widths are between 66-80 feet, depending on the functional classification of the highway. The Town may adjust right-of-way widths to balance surrounding land use and topographical limitations.

### 3. Safety at Intersections

Another concern of the Town is the number of intersections that have excessive vehicle accidents due to minimal shoulder widths, steep topography and/or roadside obstacles such as drainage ditches. Specific locations are at the bottom of Schuyler Road, the intersections of Townline and Route 175, Glover Road and Route 174, Lee Mulroy Road and Pleasant Valley Road. The NYSDOT and the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) regularly evaluate the status of highway turning lanes, curb sections, sidewalks and drainage ditches to determine if they are eligible for funding. The review guidelines are designed as an infrastructure based program, which prioritizes 1) safety

projects 2) bridge projects and 3) capacity projects. NYSDOT and SMTC will begin the scoping phase for upgrading Route 174, which is tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2003.

#### 4. Pedestrian Mobility

Pedestrian mobility was also identified as a key element of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Connecting sidewalks or a trail system from future developments on East Hill Road to Marcellus Park was accepted as an objective by the Steering Committee. This can be achieved through implementing specific subdivision regulations at the inception of new development projects. Pedestrian access should be planned from Limeledge Road to the Village in the future if additional development occurs in this area. Pedestrian mobility is further discussed in the Land Use section.

The Town Planning Board is considering applying for a grant from SMTC to aid in the construction of a trail system from East Hill Road to Marcellus Park. The Village has also initiated preliminary studies for a trail system from Marcellus Park to the northern section of the Village near the old railroad tracks.

The Town and members of the community are concerned with the growing population of senior citizens. Another consideration is increased use of public transportation as a way of maintaining the current functional classifications of local roads. This will also be advantageous for the elderly who routinely rely on public transportation. Signs, pavement markings, and pedestrian signals may have to be enhanced in the future to provide a safer environment for people who do not have the ability to use other modes of transportation. The Town has expressed interest in working with the Village of Marcellus to possibly create and maintain a private bus or van program that would transport senior citizens to local destinations.

Centro has implemented a new policy that advocates effective public transportation throughout the County. However, increased public service into the Town of Marcellus is not anticipated at this time. It is estimated that in Onondaga County, more people ride their bike to work than utilize public transportation. With this in mind, construction of bicycle paths and enhanced pedestrian mobility should be encouraged. One way to increase pedestrian mobility is to maximize shoulder widths on roads.

### **Transportation Related Objectives**

In 1996, the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency prepared a transportation plan for the Town of Marcellus. This document provides the most recent transportation information concerning the Town's highway network, traffic patterns and volumes, right-of-way widths, job destinations, functional classifications, road conditions, and proposed policies to establish a basis for estimating the future transportation needs of the Town. *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* was adopted by the Town Board in 1996, was reviewed by the Steering Committee, and will be integrated into the *Comprehensive Plan* as a development and reference tool for guiding future transportation related issues in the Town. *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* should be referenced in conjunction with the zoning ordinances when considering recommendations for new projects.

#### **1. Preservation of Highway Function**

Highways serve two primary functions: access and mobility. Traffic mobility is an important part of all land use, zoning and subdivision regulation decisions, and provides access to surrounding destinations. By maintaining and preserving the functional capacities of arterials and collectors, the Town can minimize potential congestion problems that conflict with planned land use development. Highway access points (driveways and intersecting roads) along highway corridors should be minimized to maintain existing speed limits and highway functional classification.

2. Balance Land Use with Functional Classification

One way to address this is to consider highways as a land use. This means controlling development along highways to reflect the functional classification capacities. The intensity of abutting land uses is critical in ensuring the success of maintaining the highways primary function. Highway frontage should be buffered to separate uses by the roadway. Many planners advocate the preservation of open space abutting the highway as the primary means for protecting the mobility of an area while enhancing the viewsheds of the natural landscape. This can be attained through the zoning and site plan review process. Land uses with infrequent intersections should be established at locations along arterials or collectors to maintain traffic speed and mobility.

3. Discourage High Density Development Along Arterial/Major Collectors

The Town should discourage development that has multiple access points to major highways, and should evaluate the impacts of proposed projects upon traffic mobility and access to other land uses. Subdivision of land should be designed to encourage common highway access points through the use of road loops, shared driveways, adjacent access roads and other types of shared access when possible. Development on principal highways should be concentrated into specific geographic areas along the highway that considers topography to best control cumulative impacts on traffic mobility. Development along East Hill Road (West Seneca Turnpike) should be consistent with the restrictions to widen and expand capacity of the road with the consideration of future transient vehicle mobility.

4. Right-Of-Way Encroachments

Encroachment within the highway ROW and improper building setbacks can impede traffic movement and block important views for motorists especially at intersections where safety

issues are a concern. Setbacks for structures, parking and signs should be established in relation to highway classification.

## **Possible Transportation Implementation Strategies**

### 1. Policy Actions

The highway system occurs throughout the Town and serves two purposes - it provides a means to access abutting properties and movement through areas, and also serves as main corridors to supply other infrastructure needs. Highway functional classifications should reflect surrounding land uses and should be consistent with future land use decisions. This approach allows the Town to categorize roads with future development plans and objectives stated in the *Comprehensive Plan* and provide guidelines to the degree of highway improvements that may be needed in the future. The Town should review current Highway Functional Classifications and decide if they are consistent with current and future land use needs.

The existing main highway network should be preserved. Major development along these corridors with high traffic generating uses should be limited due to the steep topography, limited ROW widths and the availability of future funds for highway improvements. High development areas may need to maintain slow speeds and high access to primary routes of travel.

Access points influence traffic mobility in that multiple curb cuts, driveways, intersections, traffic lights, contributes to traffic congestion. Minimization of highway access points is a key objective to maintaining the highway functional classification. In addition, the physical condition of the road influences speed and traffic mobility. The road system should continue to be properly maintained by repairing potholes and broken pavement in order to maintain efficient traffic patterns.

## 2. Regulatory Actions

Development of Protection Overlay Zones for selected highways should be considered to protect arterial and collector highways. These highways in the Town are the only travel routes in the overall transportation network available for commercial access to the City of Syracuse. Zoning controls currently control minimum lot widths, frontage and setbacks for structures on properties abutting the highway. The current zoning should be reviewed and revisions made if necessary that coincide with the transportation related objectives. Zoning measures should protect the long-term mobility of highways, but be flexible enough to accommodate some moderate change in traffic volumes, road widths, improvements, preservation of abutting properties and landscape viewsheds along heavily traveled corridors.

The Town should adopt driveway and access point standards in areas where frequency, design and location of driveways near intersecting streets is a concern. These standards can be part of the site design review process to minimize the number of driveways to ensure the preservation of road functional classification.

Four major points to address in the site plan analysis are vehicle storage requirements (e.g. parking), circulation of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, and access (ingress and egress) to roads. By reducing the number of access points, the Town could also monitor and control the number of intersection in new subdivisions to maintain low thru-traffic volumes.

## 3. Initiating the NYSDOT Review Process

The Town could expedite the NYSDOT review process for improvements to highways in the Town of Marcellus by creating an Initial Project Proposal (IPP). The IPP is the initial planning and programming document by which projects are selected to achieve program goals. The IPP identifies initial information on a project's problems, project objectives,

preliminary project elements to be investigated and preliminary schedule, and cost estimates. An IPP receives system planning, analysis, and input in the Regional Planning and Program Manager's (RPPM) unit. The RPPM prioritizes and selects IPP's for recommendation to the Regional Director for approval.

The Town would likely be responsible for preparing an IPP. In addition, there is no guarantee that an IPP would be selected by the RPPM.

#### 4. Null Alternative

The Null Alternative would maintain existing policies and practices towards land use, development and current highway functional classifications. There would be no additional controls for highway or driveway access issues. There would be no changes or recommendations made to the existing zoning and subdivision review process as it affects transportation related issues.

### **Transportation Recommendations**

As previously discussed, *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* prepared by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency in 1996 was designed to be applicable for most towns and villages in Onondaga County in addressing transportation related issues. The Town has formally adopted this Plan, and should continue to apply the implementation strategies outlined in this document. *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* will be used as the primary vehicle to continue to address transportation related issues within the Town into the near future. The Town should periodically review *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* for changes that may be necessary to comply and/or advocate the overall land use objectives stated in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Finally, the zoning should be reviewed so that any revisions coincide with the objectives and the implementation strategies described in *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan*.

## **B. Water and Sewer Systems**

This section outlines the data reviewed on water and wastewater utilities within the Town. The research in this section is a culmination of information attained through Workshop and Vision Planning meetings, discussions and documentation from various agencies, Town records, and interpretation of natural constraints as depicted on the GIS (Geographical Information System) maps produced by the Syracuse Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA).

### **1. Public Water and Sewer Systems**

#### What are Public Water and Sewer Systems

Public water systems are typically municipally-owned systems, which usually include facilities for the extraction of water from a natural source (or from another public water system), and the infrastructure needed for distribution to individual properties. A public sewer system is a municipally-owned system, which collects wastewater from domestic, commercial, and/or industrial sources and transports the waste to a treatment facility where it is processed by a combination of physical, chemical, and biological methods to reduce pollutants prior to discharge into a natural body of water. Both water and sewer systems may require pumping and storage facilities to compensate for differences in topography, to augment capacity, and to maintain proper operating pressures.

Public water or sewer systems typically represent substantial physical and financial investments that can be made by a community to support existing and proposed development. A major characteristic of both public water and sewer systems is that many properties share in the investment and use of the facilities. In contrast, on-site systems serve and operate on a single site or property.

### Who Provides Public Water and Sewer Service

Public water and sewer systems are typically owned and operated by a governmental agency, but can, in limited instances, be provided by private entities. The Town of Marcellus, through special improvement districts, owns the distribution infrastructure, while the Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) provides the water supply, operation and maintenance. The Village of Marcellus owns and operates a separate public water supply, which utilizes a spring water source on Rockwell Road and services Village properties and some Town residences along its transmission main.

OCWA sells most of its water on a retail basis through lease agreements with municipalities. The water source for the Marcellus service area is Otisco Lake. OCWA's treatment plant for Otisco Lake water is located within the Town of Marcellus on Lawrence Road. Otisco Lake provides approximately 17 million gallons daily (mgd) and is estimated to provide safe yields of up to at least 25 mgd on an annual average basis (SOCPA, 1997). OCWA has indicated that an ample supply of water is available for future development in the Town.

Sewage collection and treatment facilities are provided within the Village and for a limited area of the Town immediately adjoining the Village. The sewage treatment facility is owned, operated, and maintained by the Village of Marcellus.

The Village provides public sewer service to several locations in the Town through an inter-municipal agreement with the Town. The Village's wastewater treatment facility is currently being modified to improve the plant's efficiency, but only limited uncommitted capacity is available. When the modifications are complete, the facility should be re-assessed to evaluate future capacity and the possibility of servicing additional areas.

## **The Significance of Public Systems**

### For the Property Owner

Public water and sewer systems augment the natural capacity of an area to support land use activities by eliminating or reducing natural site constraints upon development. Land uses and lot sizes are not constrained by soil or groundwater capabilities when public water and sewer systems are available. The proper collection and treatment of wastewater helps protect public health, the environment and also can facilitate the development of higher density land uses.

### For The Town

Public water and sewer systems can help the Town focus and concentrate development in areas best suited for higher density land uses. It also helps the Town to address or remove existing threats to the environment or public health resulting from past patterns of development inconsistent with "wise use" concepts. An example of this would be an area that utilized on-site systems that was at risk of being easily contaminated from one or more faulty systems located in limited soil conditions. By extending public services to this area, public health and possible environmental problems are minimized.

The Town can serve concentrations of existing or proposed development that may not have the natural capacity for on-site systems. Public sewer systems also act to reduce potential contamination of groundwater resources in an area and help maintain real estate value. Public safety is enhanced with a public water system by improving fire protection and improving the quality and quantity of water.

### **Current Public Water and Sewer Systems in the Town**

There are several water districts in the Town of Marcellus. Districts formed pursuant to NYS Town Law establish the boundaries of these service areas. All water districts in the

Town are currently provided with water, operation and maintenance services through OCWA. Listed below are water districts in the Town of Marcellus.

Howlett Hill - Falls Road	Northeast Townline
Seneca Turnpike	Amidon
Dublin Hydrant #1	Slate Hill
Dunbar Hydrant	Slate Hill Extension #1
Marcellus Knolls	Slate Hill Extension

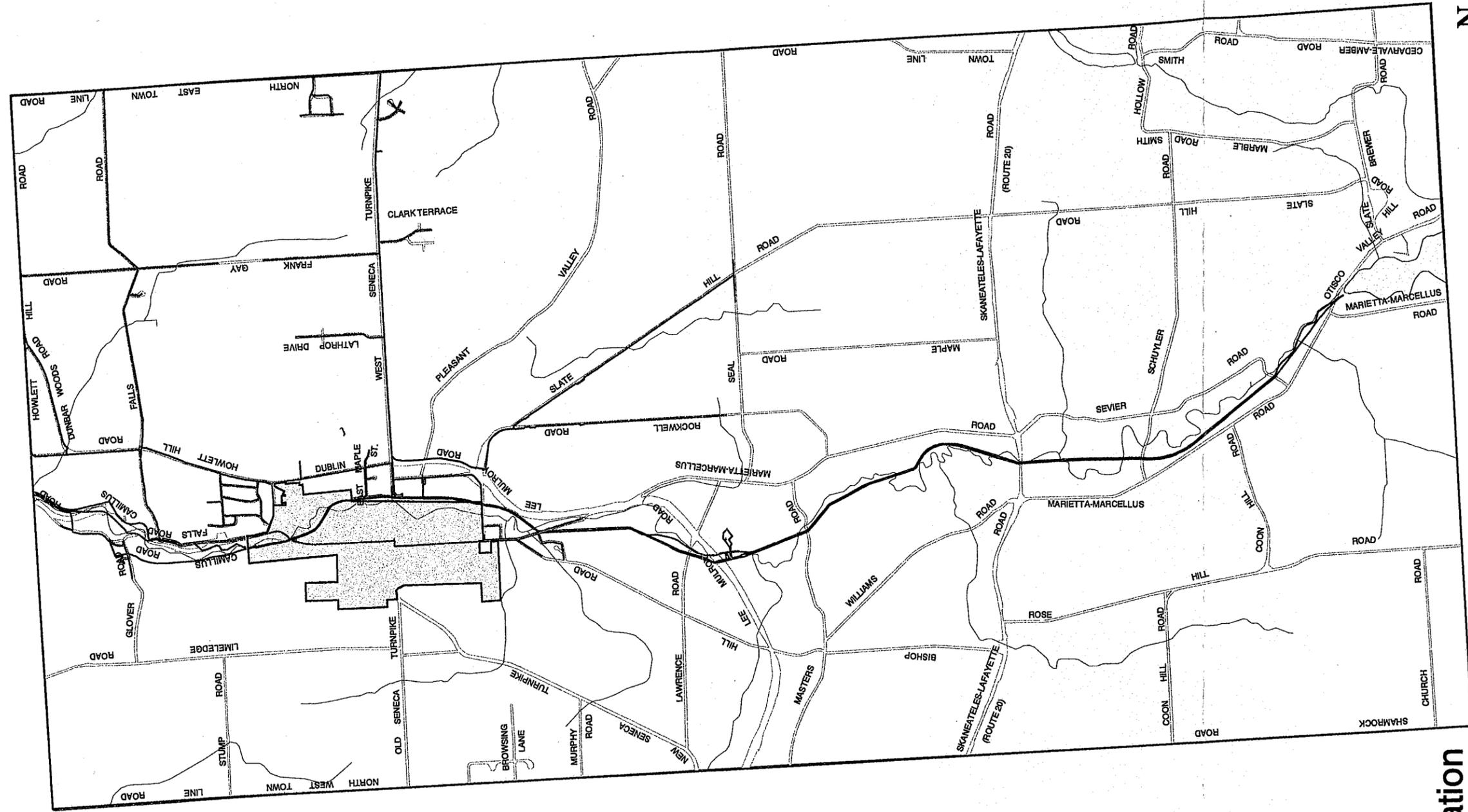
OCWA's raw water transmission line begins at the north end of Otisco Lake and extends northward from the Otisco Lake pumping station between NYS Route 174 and Slate Hill Road to the Otisco Lake Water Treatment Plant south of Lee Mulroy Road (see Figure 13). The water treatment plant filters and disinfects the water prior to delivery to the water transmission lines. The main transmission line runs north through the Village and continues along Falls Road into the Town of Camillus. Water distribution lines are located primarily in three sections of the Town. Distribution lines south of the Village are located on Rockwell and Slate Hill Roads and terminate at Seal Road. A small portion of Seal Road is also connected to this section. Distribution lines are also located east of the Village and extend along West Seneca Turnpike. To the north, distribution lines extend into "The Knolls" and continue through Howlett Hill and Falls Road.

The Town has investigated the possibility of extending public water supply systems to residential areas where private wells produce minimal yields and cost for treating for taste, odor and color are high. Since the Town does not have it's own water supply system, continued efforts with OCWA to supply other areas of the Town with water will likely be explored.

As previously discussed, public sewer service within the Town is limited to the Village of Marcellus and 3 areas located immediately adjacent to the Village boundary. The areas served by the public sewer system are shown in Figure 14.

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## WATER DISTRIBUTION NETWORK



### Pipe Classification

- Local Line
- Transmission Line

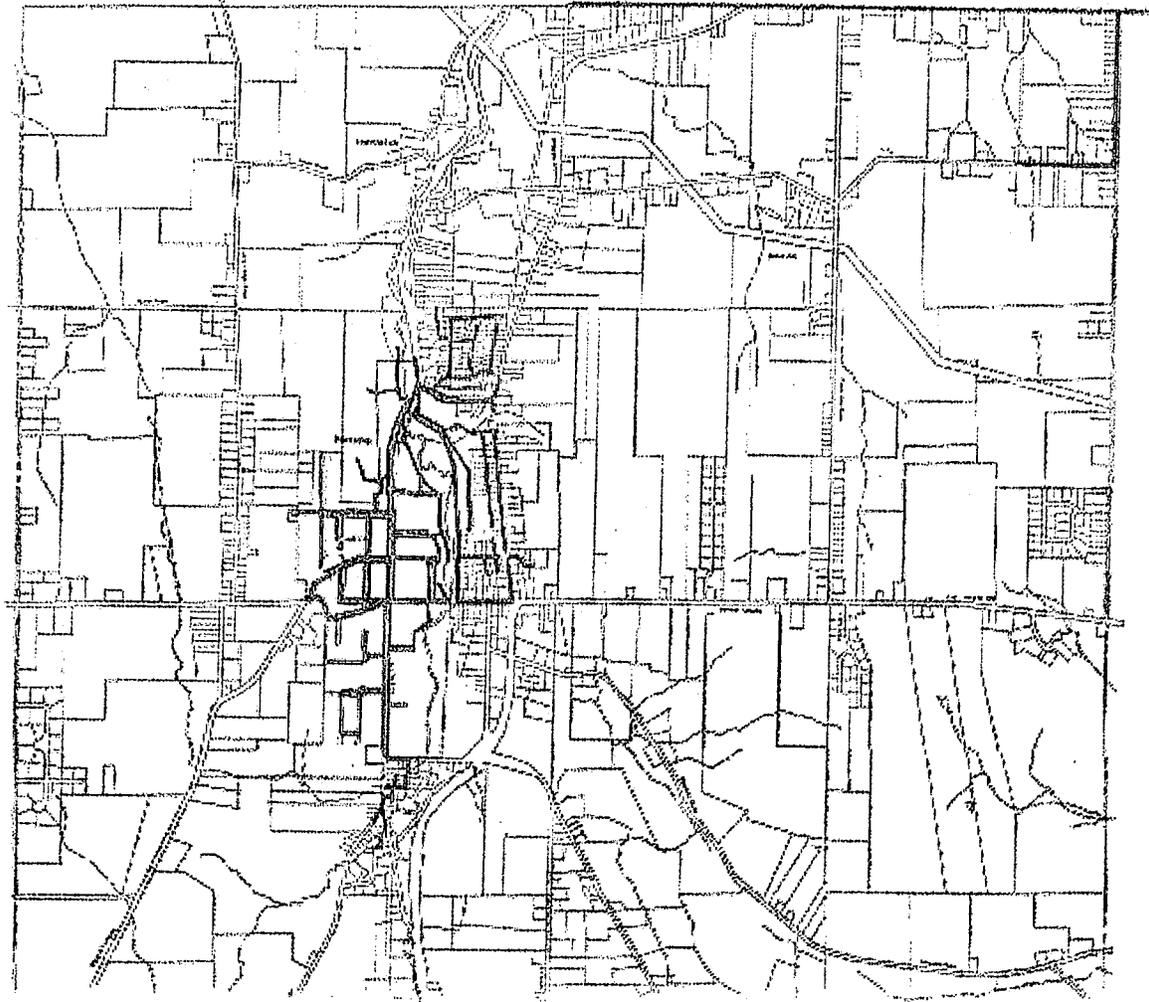


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5/99  
Updated 7/01

FIGURE 13

*Existing Water and Sewer Map*



- Existing Water Lines
- - Existing Sewer Lines

*Existing Water and Sewer Map*  
Town of Marcellus, June 1995

↑  
Not to Scale

FIGURE 14

The majority of the Town's residents rely on individual septic systems for wastewater treatment and disposal. Septic system problems are common in some areas of the Town, due to poor drainage, depth to bedrock, and soil limiting conditions. This is further discussed in Section VI.B.2.

As previously noted, the Town of Marcellus does not operate a wastewater treatment facility. Two portions of the Town are connected to the Village's Wastewater Treatment Facility.

These areas include Sewer District #1 ("the Knolls" just north of the Village, which services 114 residences), and Sewer District #2 (Dublin Road, Dublin Court, East Maple Street, East Maple Terrace, and East Main Street, east of the Village) and (Parsons Drive, Hall Ave, and Bishop Hill Road vicinity south of the Village), which services 159 residences.

### **Control and Regulation of Public Water and Sewer Systems**

Permits are required from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (water and sewer), and approval from the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) (water and some sewer improvements via the Onondaga County Department of Health (OCDOH)) when proposing new facilities or extension of services.

State and County agencies implement current regulatory controls and standards for the operation of public sewer systems. These regulations address the design and capacity of systems and control their impact upon water sources and the environment through the State Pollution Discharge Elimination Permit Program (SPDES) enforced through the NYSDEC. The SPDES permit program is a delegated program and the effluent limitations and other requirements are federal requirements according to the provisions of the Federal Water Pollution Act as amended (Clean Water Act of 1977).

District offices of NYSDOH and/or OCDOH may also review plans for public wastewater disposal systems in conjunction with the NYSDEC. A New York State licensed professional engineer must design wastewater disposal systems.

The Town controls locations of public water and sewer systems through special districts. These are taxing and municipal units that address the financing and construction of improvements, operation, and maintenance of public systems. Properties within a district benefit by water or sewer services, and fees are established by the Town and are paid by the property owners and users within the district boundary. These fees include components which provide for debt retirement as well as operation and maintenance of treatment plants, pumping stations, piping systems and water purchase/sewage disposal (where these are provided by others). Districts may contract with other public agencies to provide all or a portion of the special district function. Generally, the Town Board serves as the Board of Supervisors for a special district.

### **Public and On-Site System Objectives**

#### **Promoting Environmental Protection**

Public water and sewer systems are tools the Town can use to manage appropriate development patterns in order to protect the environment, community character, and local economic stability. In portions of the Town where on-site systems will remain the primary source for water supply and waste disposal, the Town should periodically distribute information that emphasizes the importance of, and guidance on, proper maintenance procedures. The average functional life of properly maintained conventional residential septic systems is approximately 25 years. This is estimated for systems that are properly serviced every 3 to 5 years. Alternative systems, such as mound and fill systems, can be expected to have significantly shorter functional lives, even with proper maintenance.

Provisions for water and sewer services should protect groundwater resources, wetlands and other sensitive environmental features such as Disappearing Lake and the Nine Mile Creek corridor. Three primary objectives to consider are:

- 1) Proposed public water and sewer service should be provided simultaneously, whenever possible.
- 2) Larger lot sizes should be considered where on-site septic disposal systems and public water services are used.
- 3) Larger lot sizes should be considered when on-site disposal systems are located in severely limited soils.

In conclusion, the need for larger lots to efficiently accommodate on-site septic systems is dependent upon soil conditions, topography and residential density of the area. In specific areas of the Town where on-site systems will need to be significantly modified, the zoning ordinances should be revised to support the need for a minimum of two acre lots or larger, depending upon the extent of environmental constraints.

#### Promoting Appropriate Land Use Activity

Water and sewer districts may be used to promote land use patterns that can financially support the improvements and are consistent with the Town's land use goals. Two primary goals to be considered are:

- 1) Proposed water and sewer districts should not be directed toward agricultural areas when possible.
- 2) Greater land use densities should be encouraged in areas that are served by public water and sewers.

On-site water supply and wastewater disposal systems are the primary means of service for most properties in the Town. On-site systems rely upon the natural capacity of the site to support the land use. Since public systems are available to limited portions of the Town, and may remain this way for some time, there will be a continuing need to effectively use the soil and groundwater resources for water and septic disposal.

In parts of the Town where groundwater is known to be problematic due to either quality or quantity and future public extension possibilities are unlikely, the Town should consider controlling development densities using zoning to regulate minimum lot sizes.

### **Implementation Strategies**

#### **Identifying Areas of Potential System Expansion**

Identifying areas in the Town where public services may be provided in the future is somewhat speculative. Many social, economic, natural and governmental constraints need to be considered and analyzed to effectively identify areas of the Town that may receive public services, while others areas may not. Natural conditions to consider include wetlands, available groundwater, soil limitations, topography, floodplains and prime agricultural soils. Social considerations involve health concerns, standard of living, sense of community and the right to choose and be involved in the decision-making process. Economically, constructing new public services is expensive, and must be cost-effective to both the Town and the residences before and after installation. Governmental constraints include state and federal permitting regulations and inclusion of regional and local planning goals and guidelines.

The method used for identifying areas of the Town that may potentially receive public services in the future is largely through the process of elimination. Identifying areas of the Town that clearly will not be considered for public water or sewer service due to extenuating natural, social, economic, demographic or governmental conditions is easier than identifying potential service areas. This elimination process was aided by analyzing

the natural condition depicted by GIS maps provided by the County Planning Agency (refer to Inventory Analysis section maps) and general information ascertained with the Steering Committee during the Workshop meetings.

Using this evaluation process, the Town was divided into four sections/quadrants – Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest sections. The selected quadrant dividing features are NYS Route 174, which runs north and south, and Seal Road, which runs east and west. These two roads intersect near the middle of the Town, and provide approximately equal size areas to aid in the analysis method. Refer to Figure 16 for identifying potential water and wastewater needs.

#### The Southeast Portion of the Town

Natural conditions in the Southeast quadrant of the Town indicate that approximately 60% of this area has prime agricultural soils, some significantly sized wetland areas (though not generally located next to roads), and that approximately 50% of this area is in the Otisco Lake watershed. Steep topography exists adjacent and parallel to NYS Route 174 and in the Smith Hollow area. Groundwater in this quadrant is generally suitable for domestic/public water supply, especially in the extreme southeast corner of the Town.

The soil suitability map for on-site wastewater systems indicates that only a small percentage of this area is unsuitable for septic systems. In unsuitable areas, septic systems may be installed with modifications to augment soil limitations. Problems with on-site systems have not been identified in this area. Also, OCWA has implemented a watershed protection program, which incorporates wellhead protection and monitors septic system problems in this area.

Development patterns over the last fifteen years indicate the highest residential development has occurred in the southeast corner of the Town primarily in the vicinity of Brewer and Cedarvale-Amber Roads. Development has also occurred on Slate Hill Road

just north of Schuyler Road. US Route 20 runs east to west in this quadrant and roadside development along this arterial road is still very rural. Extension of public services to this area in the future is unlikely.

Public sewer or water systems do not service the Southeast portion of the Town except for a few properties that are connected into OCWA's main transmission line. The need for extension of water service to this area in the future is considered minimal. OCWA is proceeding with a feasibility study to comply with treatment requirements for the few connections in this area. Connection to a public sewer facility is not needed at this time and unlikely to be implemented in the future unless this area experiences a dramatic increase in population density and development that would adversely affect the Otisco Lake watershed. An increase in development in this area is unlikely due to the presence of 4 active mines located east of Otisco Valley Road.

#### The Southwest Portion of the Town

This area of the Town is very rural and has not experienced much development over the last 15 years. The residential development that has occurred is located primarily on Rose Hill Road just north of Coon Hill Road and on Masters Road, west of Bishop Hill Road. Natural constraints in this area include very steep topography just west and parallel to NYS Route 174 up to approximately US Route 20. Significant wetland areas also exist south of Coon Hill Road in the southwest portion of the Town.

In proximity to the wetland areas, soil conditions for septic systems are generally characterized as unsuitable and may be subject to design modifications. Soils more suitable for septic systems exist just south of Masters Road and east of Williams Road. Groundwater supplies in the Southwest portion of the Town are generally unsuitable, due to minimal yields. Approximately 50% of the soil in this portion of the Town is classified as prime agricultural soils.

The northern portion of the Southwest quadrant in the Masters Road area is not served by public water or sewer systems. The proximity of this area to OCWA's main transmission line may lead it to be identified as a potential water district. The area has experienced moderate residential growth and has the ability to accommodate on-site septic systems. However, 2 active mines are located in this vicinity and extension of water services may increase residential development in an area where non-conforming land uses (residential vs. mining) should be considered. The natural constraints and past development patterns in the remaining Southwest portion of the Town indicate that public water and sewer services may not be cost-effective or warranted unless severe conditions such as several wells became contaminated or had very low yields and/or several septic systems became non-functional.

Approximately 95% percent of the Town south of Seal Road is within Agricultural District # 9. In agricultural districts, the extension and creation of public infrastructure is under higher review standards than within other portions of the Town.

#### The Northwest Portion of the Town

The Northwest portion of the Town has experienced some residential development since 1985. The Village is located within this portion of the Town. Development has occurred primarily in the Deer Path subdivision and along Limeledge Road. The Deer Path Road subdivision is not serviced by public water or sewer systems.

A portion of the Town in the Limeledge and Deer Path area (Glover Road, Limeledge Road, Stump Road, NW Townline Road, Lawrence Road and Bishop Hill Road) is currently being evaluated for extension of water services. This area has not yet reached a stage of development similar to what the Slate Hill area experienced prior to public water installation when several wells had dried up. However, by identifying areas that exhibit on-site problematic characteristics, the Town may have more time to address changing conditions. Public services to this area may be more costly than in other portions of the

Town due to the higher elevation of the area, which may require a series of pump stations to supply proper operating pressures.

Public sewer services to this area may be in greater demand if a new water district is formed. If future services were connected to the Village Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), the cost of transporting waste to the Village facility may be less, due to the lower elevation of the Village, which may reduce the need for pumping stations. However, since the availability of treatment capacity at the Village WWTP is limited and the Village does not have the financial ability to enlarge the facility, service to new areas outside the Village in the near future is unlikely.

Public support, combined with the increasing problems of well water quantity and quality identify this area as a prime location for the formation of a new water district, if residents are willing to pay for the service.

Approximately 50% of this part of the Town is in an agricultural district. As stated before, providing public services to residential properties in an agricultural district represents additional considerations such as maintenance costs due to lesser property tax assessments in the proposed service area. Also, active mines are located north of the study area, which may affect future development patterns in this area.

#### The Northeast Portion of the Town

This section of the Town has seen the most residential development since 1985, especially on Howlett Hill Road, Falls Road, Frank Gay Road, and Lathrop Drive. This area has the highest population and development densities within the Town, and is generally served by public water. Septic systems in this area have not been identified as problematic, which is sometimes associated with properties having the ability to use greater amounts of public water without significant failure of the on-site systems. Soils in this section of the Town are

not generally ideal for septic systems. However, with proper system modifications or implementing larger lot sizes, potential problems should be minimal.

Population projections indicate that future growth within the Village of Marcellus should be stagnant to minimal. However, a recent article in the Syracuse Herald-Journal (Fall 2000) stated that Central New York's job growth is higher than the national average for the first time in over a decade. This indicates there are more jobs than the number of people available to fill them. If this trend continues, there could be an increased demand for homes in the Town of Marcellus, due to its proximity to the City of Syracuse and the Town's role as a "bedroom community". The Town may need to consider the characteristics associated with this concept when addressing future infrastructure planning.

Public water and/or sewer systems may be necessary in certain areas to overcome poor natural conditions, and potential health concerns. Natural site conditions force developers or property owners to compensate for constraints by reducing or increasing the size or operation of a particular land use. Other options to commonly installed public facilities may be to construct community sewer facilities on a smaller scale when it would not be financially feasible for the Town to provide large-scale services. An added possibility to providing local public sewage treatment for this area may be to investigate the feasibility of the County Sanitation District extending its service area into the northeast portion of the Town (subject to legislative approval, assimilation capacity of receiving waters, and treatment plant capacity). The County Sanitation District and service area borders the northern part of the Town (see Figure17). This may be the only viable alternative to extending public sewer services to this area without the Town having to construct its own wastewater treatment facility. This possible scenario may be difficult to realize and would be very expensive based on potential County Sanitation District cost increases related to Onondaga Lake. However, the Town should explore every possible alternative in extending public sewer services to residences in the most cost-effective means available where on-site systems are not practical.

### Transmission Line Conflicts

The location and alignment of major water and sewer lines should be monitored and possibly restricted to avoid premature district extensions when possible. Main transmission lines commonly should be within existing service districts. Unless restricted, the proximity of these main lines to properties outside of a district can be an attraction for increased development that is premature and unwarranted by the Town.

### Larger Lot Sizes

To avoid possible groundwater or surface water contamination, the Town should require larger lots or the simultaneous installation of sewer service with water service when feasible. For areas unlikely to receive sewer service, larger lots may be necessary to provide sufficient area for an extended subsurface leach-field system to absorb and process increased wastewater discharges. Areas that can potentially receive sewer service do not need to restrict lot size when public sewers accompany land development (see Figure 16).

Tapping groundwater via wells sometimes requires drilling of considerable depths as experienced by some residences in the Deer Path subdivision. The proper siting of a well helps provide an adequate water supply and reduces risks of contamination specifically from septic systems. New York State does not regulate the siting of a well, but provides recommendations for its location. A qualified professional should be retained for the siting of any well. Similar to the impacts of soils on lot sizing, in areas of the Town where groundwater sources are limited due to volume or quality, larger lot sizes should be required to allow proper siting of replacement wells.

### Managing Service and District Extensions

The Town should review locations of potential water and sewer line extensions within existing service districts. Potential problems associated within a district are "piecemealing" development and failure to utilize infrastructure best use practices. This type of development occurs when a property owner decides to develop land on the periphery of the district that is not served by public utilities and is not adjacent to any existing facilities. Development in this fashion may result in premature extension of water and sewer lines. If this type of development is considered, the Town should ensure that there are sufficient line capacities to accommodate intervening properties for future development.

Failure to support the system capacity results when a developer installs water or sewer infrastructure, which only accommodate immediate development needs. This can occur anywhere within a district and result in sewer or waterline installations that do not have the capacity to serve other properties within the district. The Town should also ensure that facilities are designed and installed that can accommodate potential development of properties surrounding the site and towards the district boundary.

In setting district boundaries, the Town should balance physical and financial limits of service districts with the development patterns outside of these existing settlement areas. District boundaries establish the potential limits of water and sewer services. Active agricultural lands and low-density residential development surround and occasionally intrude into these areas. District extensions should not extend into opposing land use patterns when possible. Such extensions may induce higher development that discourages agricultural uses and disperses development throughout the service area.

The recommendations and discussions listed above are not intended to preclude development in any portion of the Town. They are intended to identify potential problematic areas that may require additional review and/or that may need to incorporate modifications of systems to function at normal capacity.

The Onondaga County Department of Health (OCDOH) has a major role in determining what areas in the Town may be served by on-site systems, or become part of public service systems. If the Town decides to pursue a detailed identification process, it would be advantageous for the Town to seek assistance with a representative from the OCDOH to minimize redundancy and improve location accuracy.

## **2. On-Site Water and Septic Systems**

### What are On-Site Systems

Most of the Town is not currently provided with public water service. For the area of the Town without public water or sewer systems, each lot use relies upon on-site systems to provide drinking water and to treat and dispose of domestic wastes. Drinking water is obtained from natural water sources such as an underground water-bearing strata or aquifers. Some residences purchase water (bulk or trucked) to compensate for increased water demands or during dry periods when groundwater levels are too low for proper well operation. Properly constructed and maintained water systems usually provide an adequate quantity of potable water year round. In the Town of Marcellus, the availability of groundwater is limited according to the water availability map in the County's *2010 Plan* (see Figures 9 & 10). Groundwater is water held in soil or pore spaces of sand or gravel deposits, which overlie bedrock or within openings of the bedrock itself. The availability of groundwater deposits vary in quantity and quality throughout the Town. A well taps into groundwater, which is usually pumped to the surface unless the water is under pressure from confining soil or rock layers (known as artesian systems). Local wells are not usually monitored by a governmental agency unless located in a protected watershed area where wellhead protection measures are part of a watershed protection plan. Properties in the Otisco Lake watershed have wellhead protection measures implemented by OCWA to ensure water quality from Otisco Lake.

Shallow wells in unconsolidated deposits are typically either low yielding due to low permeability of glacial till, or subject to contamination due to high permeability (the ability of wastewater to pass through the soil or excessively fast drainage that allows wastewater to pass too quickly through the soil before being sufficiently decomposed) of sand and gravel. Bedrock wells in Marcellus shale typically are low yielding and have taste, odor and hardness issues. Bedrock wells in limestone are better from a quality standpoint, but typically require great depths to reach and are therefore expensive to install, operate, and maintain. Groundwater sources are replenished through filtration of precipitation into the soil layers and occasionally through capillary action (water attracted to water sometimes against gravity) from lakes or streambeds.

Wastewater is disposed of on-site through systems that collect, filter and distribute the wastewater into the ground where they are filtered and decomposed by natural bacteria in the soil. A typical on-site system consists of a septic tank, which settles and removes larger solids from the wastewater, and a soil absorption system where the settled effluent is distributed to a network of pipes, which allows water to flow into the soil treatment field. Sufficient soil conditions provide the necessary environment needed to sustain microorganisms that decompose waste products. Soil characteristics determine how well the wastes are absorbed and decomposed. Many areas in the Town have some form of soil limitations for septic systems including steep topography, shallow soil depth to a confining bedrock layer, high groundwater and/or low (or high) soil permeability.

Soil limitation maps are developed to depict the general character of large geographic area to provide adequate wastewater treatment via on-site soil absorption systems. The basis for a soil limitation map is evaluation of soil type characteristics for soil absorption fields (see Figure 15). The USDA Soil Survey rates soil types as presenting slight, moderate, or severe limitations for septic system absorption fields. Ratings of slight and moderate limitations indicate that a soil problem exists but can be modified for improvement. A severe rating indicates the soil type has one or more serious limitations for septic systems.

However, soil limitation maps are not the best source for obtaining soil characteristics of a site. This can only be achieved through on-site percolation tests, which are usually conducted by a licensed professional and reviewed by the Onondaga County Department of Health (OCDOH).

### 3. Water and Sewer Issues

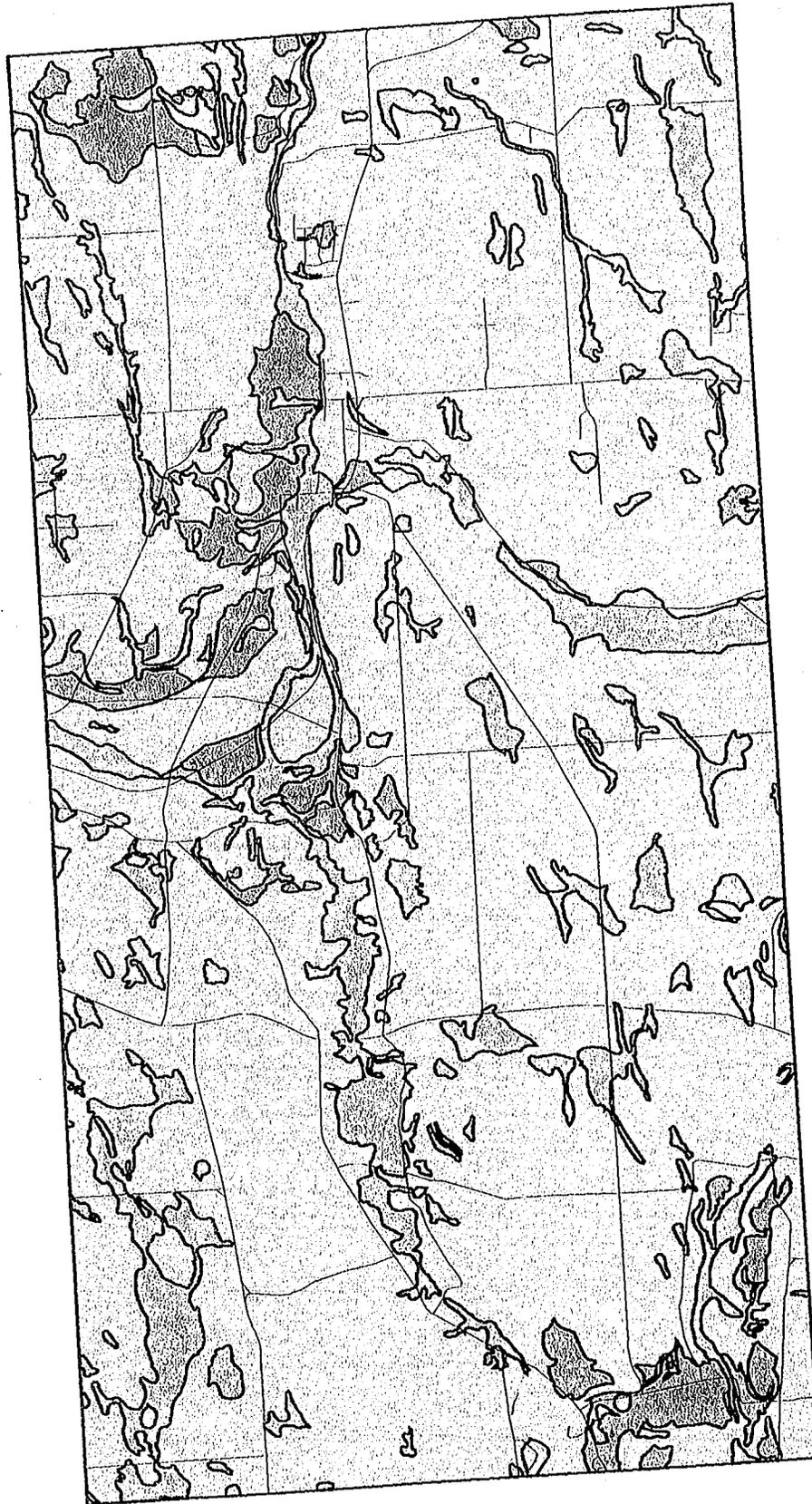
#### Meeting Water and Sewer Needs

Existing and projected needs for water and sewer services are objectives that the *Comprehensive Plan* addresses. Areas of the Town that have public services have been identified. Other areas that may need public services can be identified by analyzing development densities in specific portions of the Town (see Figure 16) where natural conditions are known to be less than desirable for on-site systems. This analysis must consider the availability of capacity to provide public facilities and/or the potential of developing such capacity.

In parts of the Town that are not served by public services and are located where less than desirable natural conditions exist, many factors have to be considered when deciding if public services should be extended to the area. Two major issues to consider are funding of new districts, and land use conflicts with infrastructure.

Areas of the Town that are most likely to be connected to public sewer services in the future are around the immediate periphery of the Village. This may be possible if the Village wastewater treatment plant has the capacity to extend services and the Village is willing to work with the Town in this matter. The Town may need to consider constructing its own wastewater treatment facility in the future, to provide additional public sewer services for residences in areas where public sewer systems are needed and desired by residences if partnering with another municipality is not feasible. Public or private water or waste removal systems can be provided or modified in parts of the Town; however, some areas may be more costly for construction, operation and maintenance than in others.

# Soil Suitability for On Site Wastewater Systems



Town of Marcellus



Suitable



Subject to Design or Location Modification



Unsuitable

Onondaga County  
2010 Development Guide  
Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency



FIGURE 15

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS NEEDS ASSESSMENT MAP



**LEGEND**

**POTENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICE AREAS**

- Water High, Sewer Unlikely
- Water Moderate, Sewer Unlikely
- Sewer Moderate
- Water & Sewer Unlikely
- Sewer Unlikely

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

- 1985-1989
- 1990-1994
- 1995-1999

**WATERLINE**

**SOIL SUITABILITY FOR ON-SITE SEPTIC**

- Suitable
- Unsuitable
- Subject To Modification



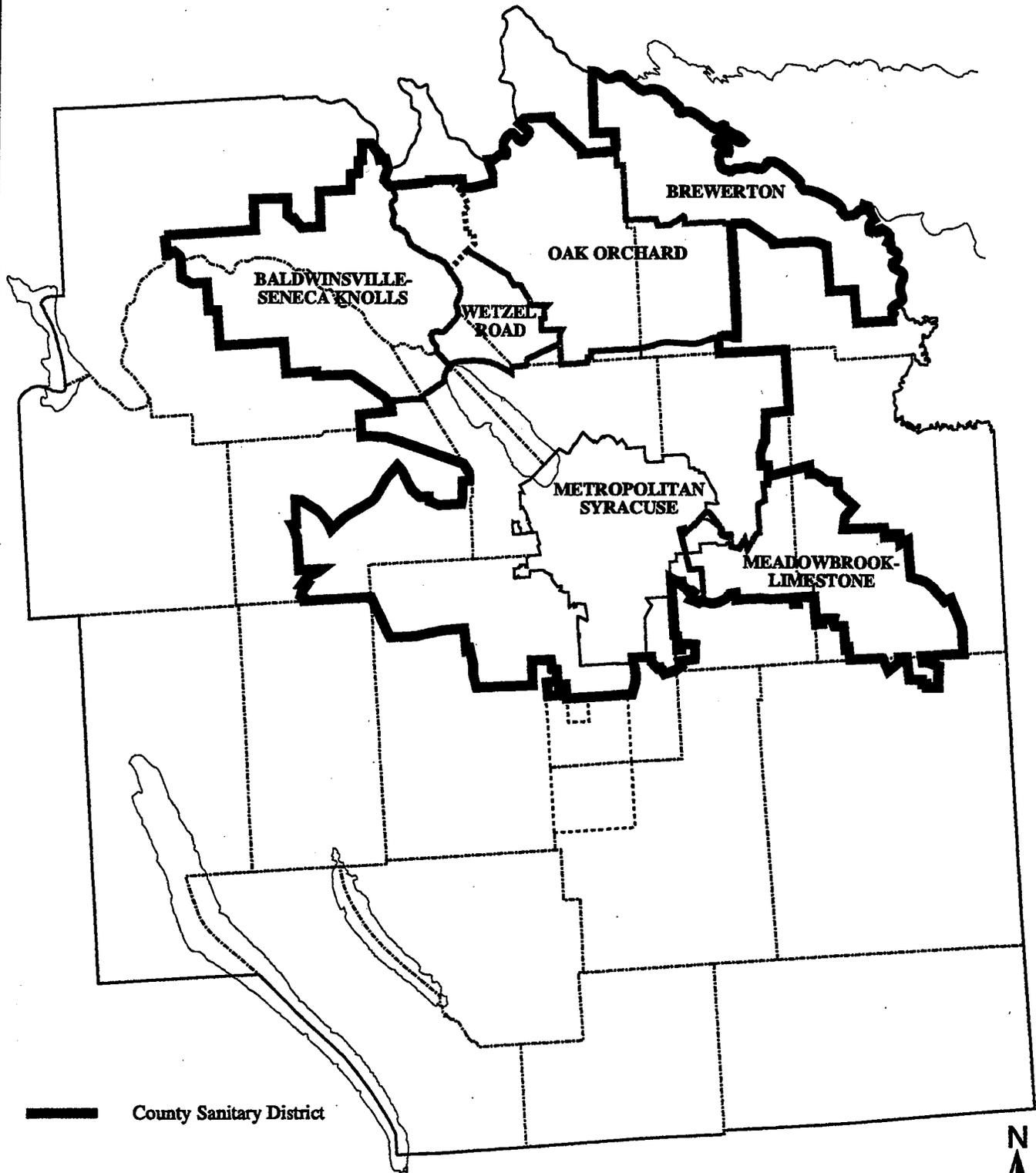
PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS  
DATA SOURCE THE SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA  
COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY



JUNE 2000

FIGURE 16

# Sanitary District and Treatment Plant Service Areas



County Sanitary District

Treatment Plant Service Areas

Onondaga County  
2010 Development Guide  
Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency



FIGURE 17

This is a concern in the proposed subdivision area on East Hill (Seneca Turnpike) next to the Links at Sunset Ridge. Severe soil limitations exist here and the area is not served by public sewer services. Poor soil conditions may require residences to install modified septic systems that require "raised bed" leach fields or similar alternative on-site system which can be cost prohibitive, or require larger lots. This area is served by public water, and septic systems should be designed to accommodate appropriate water usage.

#### Environmental Conflicts of Water Supply Systems

A common problem associated with providing public water service is over-stressing existing inadequate on-site septic disposal systems, due to increased water discharge associated with today's standard of living. This can result in groundwater contamination that may affect other properties on wells, and natural resources such as streams, lakes and wetlands. Residences that are provided public water service may consume more water than residences relying on wells. However, this is not always the case. In the past, some areas of the Town were serviced with public water because their lots could no longer support both groundwater wells and septic systems. The natural geologic bedrock and soil formations in the Town are reported to preclude significant long-term water supply and wastewater disposal capacities in some areas. Provisions of public water services may rectify water quality and quantity limitations, but does not fully address wastewater disposal issues.

#### Land Use Conflicts with Infrastructure and On-site Systems

Conforming land use development patterns within service districts efficiently support the Town's tax base, protect natural resources and maximize other public services (school busing, police, fire and ambulance coverage, and snow removal). Development that is scattered throughout the Town beyond service districts could have a negative cumulative effect on the environment and community.

Introduction of public utility services may also perpetuate additional development in those areas. In areas where public water is provided without public sewers, increased demand on septic systems may result in overloading and malfunctioning. As a consequence, residents could seek government help in implementing public sewer services to rectify the on-site problems associated with increased water use.

Another important issue is the effect of lot sizes in areas where public water services are available, but still utilize on-site wastewater treatment systems. The County suggests that minimum one-acre lots are acceptable in this type of situation. However, this is assuming good quality soil conditions for waste disposal. For many areas in the Town of Marcellus, larger minimum lot sizes may be needed to accommodate waste disposal under less-than-ideal conditions. In areas without public water or sewer services, lot sizes may need to be even larger to maintain safe well and septic distances under extremely poor soil conditions.

Without careful development planning and controls, the availability of public utilities along highway corridors may result in "strip development" along these important connecting routes. The increase in traffic and number of driveways may result in lower travel speed and greater congestion along roads classified to accommodate through traffic. The end result can have both inter-community and countywide impacts on mobility.

#### **4. Methods of Funding Future Infrastructure**

The County's *2010 Plan* discourages creation of new sewer or water districts until existing districts have been fully developed and utilized. This is to encourage higher density development in areas with existing public utilities to strengthen the local tax base, increase the area's sense of community, and dissuade scattered growth throughout the landscape. Funding for new public water and wastewater systems through the County is therefore currently somewhat restricted, in order to achieve this stated objective of limiting development outside of existing systems. New projects may have to be funded by the Town or in conjunction with State and Federal grants obtained.

In 1995, the Office of the State Comptroller reported that Federal and State grants contributed only 26% percent of the revenue needed for infrastructure (SOCPA, 1997). However, in the last several years, funding may have actually increased. The consequence is that local governments need to explore other options to generate revenue for new infrastructure expansion and become increasingly responsible for the financial burden of construction and maintenance.

Financing large infrastructure projects by borrowing is often the best way to fund a proposed project. The advantages associated with borrowing are facilitation of construction and acquisition, having a predictable payment schedule and having future generations pay for a portion of the costs for the services they receive.

Sources for borrowing can include revolving loan funds, notes and bonds, and purchase/lease agreements. Debt financing is usually the only way for the Town to fund large projects such as water line extensions, or a sewage treatment plant (SOCPA, 1997).

## **5. Alternative Water & Sewer Implementation Strategies**

### On-Site System Coordination with Zoning Ordinance

The Town should require specific minimum lot sizes, commensurate with available public water and sewer systems. Minimum lot sizes for areas served by only public water should be determined by soil limitations. Variable lot sizes should be required in areas identified as having severe soil limitations for septic systems as identified through a thorough on-site investigation.

### Zoning Map

The Town's Zoning Map reflects zoning ordinances adopted in 1994. As public services become available, the Town should entertain zone changes to other residential districts.

For example, residential areas currently zoned agricultural may be rezoned to an appropriate residential district to create conforming land uses.

#### Interim Wellhead Protection

Wellhead protection is regulated by the OCDOH in the Otisco Lake watershed. The Town should incorporate overlay zone districts to regulate specific land uses and/or activities to diminish potential contamination of groundwater resources in areas of the Town where wells will remain the primary source of drinking water in the future.

#### Village Water Supply

Areas around the periphery of the Village should attempt to connect with the Village water supply, if capacity is available and the Village approves the connection.

#### Subdivision Review

Other Towns require major subdivisions within residential and agricultural districts to include provisions for "dry sewers" to accept and transport sanitary waste to possible future public wastewater facilities. The Town of Marcellus Steering Committee has explored this possibility and determined that this alternative is not suited for the Town at this time. However, community septic systems may be considered for large subdivision tracts not served by public sewer systems.

#### Service Districts to Promote Development Goals

Special districts establish the boundaries of areas that will receive various infrastructure improvements. Special districts could be established in areas that have consistent and compatible development potential as allowed in zoning districts.

### Trunk Sewer Expansion

Expansion of existing sewer lines is highly unlikely at this time. However, the Village treatment plant may accommodate additional capacity in the future and re-evaluate its inter-municipal agreement with the Town. The Town should encourage developers to construct new trunk sewers at their expense and control expansion of the sewer trunk network through zoning and subdivision procedures if the capacity for expansion exists and the Village approves the proposed expansion.

Potential sewer trunk expansion will likely occur around the periphery of the Village and in close proximity to the Village wastewater treatment plant.

### Require District Formation Prior to Extension of Facilities

The process of forming a special district and extending services can be incorporated into the Town's planning process. The Town's objectives concerning development, infrastructure, and the environment should be considered before extension of further services. This evaluation process can reduce the extension of services beyond the boundaries of the current special district that may serve only a specific site with small diameter service lines, which could not serve other properties within the district.

### OCWA as an Alternative Water source

The Town may investigate the feasibility of extending public water services to areas of the Town where groundwater quantity and quality has become problematic. Transmission lines will need to be accompanied by district formations to implement policy and legal restrictions upon property connected to public water service.

### Null Alternative

Provide no new improvements to existing water or sewer districts/systems.

## VII. DEVELOPMENT/LAND USE AREAS

This section summarizes the primary land use issues identified by the Town, Steering Committee and the public expressed through the series of Workshop and Vision Planning Meetings held during the Land Use Planning phase of the *Comprehensive Plan* process. During this phase, the objective of the Steering Committee was to identify problems, determine specific goals and objectives, and explore possible trade-offs expected by implementing the preferred alternatives discussed.

The identified land use issues are attributed to the Town's zoning ordinances, past and present land use patterns, and economic trends that affect development. The Land Use Planning phase also incorporates many key issues raised during the previous phases of the Comprehensive Planning process. The objectives identified in this section are reflective upon information gathered during the Inventory and Analysis, Environmental Resource Planning, Water and Wastewater Utility Planning, and Transportation Planning phases of the *Comprehensive Plan* process.

### **The Adopted Transportation Plan**

One of the main transportation issues identified by the Town and Steering Committee involved traffic congestion along Seneca Turnpike and the need to address this problem. The issue of how *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* prepared by the Onondaga County Planning Agency should be incorporated into the Town's *Comprehensive Plan* was explored. The consensus was that the goals, objectives and implementation strategies stated in the adopted Transportation Plan are still relevant and generally coincide with the Town's goals and objectives relating to transportation and the local land use impacted by transportation corridors. *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan* will be referenced in the *Comprehensive Plan* and that these documents will complement each other in regards to implementation methods to achieve transportation related goals within the Town.

### **Infrastructure Limitations**

Infrastructure limitations have been identified and discussed as a main component to the decision of where the Town should support specific types of development. In regards to land use planning, the concept of building infrastructure to attract development is generally perceived as the accepted course of action. This may be misleading, however, since development can sometimes be the catalyst to require and build new infrastructure. The *Comprehensive Plan* is formulated to aid the Town in deciding where development should take place with respect to environmental conditions, existing infrastructure, and social and political factors.

### **Other Policies/Plans to Consider**

Building new infrastructure to attract development is not consistent with the goals and objectives listed within the County's *2010 Plan*. The County's development goals are to reduce urban sprawl and fully utilize existing infrastructure to help support diminishing tax bases of local municipalities. Infrastructure limitations and funding availability will apparently remain an issue within the Town. The Town's *Comprehensive Plan* does not have to follow the development goals and objectives established in the County's *2010 Plan* exactly, but should consider the recommendations made and attempt to achieve compatible guidelines.

### **Industrial Development**

Industrial zoning within the Town is currently designated north of the Village along the Nine Mile Creek corridor and should be changed to residential to conform to the proposed CEA designation. The Steering Committee began to identify other areas within the Town, which could be zoned Industrial or Light Industrial. The types of light industrial activities that the Town would consider appropriate should complement preserving open space and agricultural lands and be located in areas that do not conflict with the surrounding land uses. The consensus was that "heavy industrial" type development was not desired. In addition, future building(s) and/or light commercial parks should conform to landscaping and design guideline requirements that do not deter from the area's natural aesthetics.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The definition of goals and objectives may vary depending upon the context in which they are used. In general, objectives reflect the "larger idea" to attain, while goals provide the means or incremental steps necessary to attain the objective.

**Objectives:** Maintain current "small town" character, while establishing infrastructure alternatives to promote and control desirable development that minimizes urban sprawl.

**Goals:** Preserve open space and farms, create recreational areas, and encourage specific types of development and density.

One of the main objectives identified by the Town is that it would like to preserve "small town" character. To accomplish this objective, the Town would like to preserve its open space and agricultural lands while promoting appropriate types of development that may be interested in locating within the Town.

### **A. Commercial and Light Industrial Development**

This part of the Land Use Planning phase assessed economic development and trends that may have an effect on the Town in the future. During this stage, outside agencies were invited to discuss the local economy and ways that the Town could control the influences of development as well as explore programs available to initiate or support specific types of development.

#### **1. Appropriate Types of Commercial Development**

One purpose of the Land Use Planning phase is to examine what types of commercial and light industrial development may be appropriate within the Town. This section also explored what governmental agencies and funding opportunities may be available to aid the Town in its development goals. The approach used to

help the Town identify these issues was to invite representatives from outside agencies to participate in public Vision Planning meetings to discuss what their agencies do in terms of development guidance, and how the Town should begin to assess what type of development will be consistent with the their goals.

2. Assistance with Economic Development Issues

The agencies that participated included the Onondaga County Economic Development Agency, the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, FOCUS, and Empire State Development. During the first public Vision Planning meeting, Onondaga County's economic climate was explained as well as the history of the Town's past economic influences. These agencies offered valuable insight as to how industrial and commercial development is attracted to a community and what State and Federal funding possibilities may be available to support and maintain local businesses. The presentations emphasized the importance of preserving agricultural land and offered some alternatives such as conservation easements, land acquisition, and tax incentives to help farmers retain their farms.

The presentations from the agencies aided the Town in understanding what types of development are desirable versus what types of development are realistic given the environmental constraints, infrastructure limitations, and the political environment influencing funding allocations. The Economic Vision Planning meeting helped contribute to the Town's understanding why certain types of development are more feasible, and how they may progressively address infrastructure and environmental limitations, while trying to find available funding opportunities.

**-Goals and Objectives Identified**

**Objective:** Attract and retain a variety of small businesses to strengthen the local tax base, yet maintain "small town" character.

**Goals:**

- Promote agri-businesses
- Create new recreational areas
- Actively market the Town's natural resources
- Establish zoning that allows certain types of businesses to operate in a changing economic climate

The goals and objectives stated above are interpreted through the information presented by the outside agencies and the priority discussions initiated by the Steering Committee and public.

**Possible Implementation Alternatives**

1. Expand allowable uses of light industrial activities in non-industrial areas of the Town that would complement surrounding land uses.
2. Market the Town's assets to attract desired small businesses that are compatible with the Town's limited infrastructure and "Small Town" character.
3. Revise zoning to reflect more allowable uses in designated areas of the Town that may be able to accommodate small businesses within a primarily residential environment.
4. Null Alternative. The Town does not change its zoning to further define allowable or prohibited uses and does not seek to attract new businesses to the area.

**B. Agricultural Planning**

In examining the economic stability for the Town of Marcellus, the preservation of agricultural land and farms is a major component of the Land Use Plan. Much of the Town of Marcellus is within an Agricultural District and farming is still the main use of the land.

There is growing concern by the Steering Committee and Town residents about the viability of farming in the future. Agriculture is still the number one economic force within New York, with tourism being second. During this planning phase, a representative from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and from the 121<sup>st</sup> Assembly District provided insight to the farming community within central New York, and offered some methods that the Town should consider when addressing the preservation of agricultural lands and farms.

### **Diminishing Agricultural Land**

In Onondaga County, farming has been declining for years. According to the USDA, in the 1950's, there were approximately 1700 active farms in Onondaga County compared to 353 farms reported in 1997. Since 1997, the County has lost an additional 10% of its farms. One of the perceptions of some residents in Marcellus may be that farming is not an attractive way of life to be passed down to the next generation. The financial incentives and opportunities in other fields may be more desirable, which further hinders potential future farmers. Another concern related to farming is increasing property taxes. Many farmers find it difficult to pay property taxes on large farms. This becomes a problem economically for farmers as well as the Town in relation to the stability of the local tax base.

In general, once farmland is abandoned, sold, or developed for another use, it is seldom converted back to active farming. The Town of Marcellus has an abundance of good agricultural soils and the Steering Committee and residents are concerned about preserving this finite valuable resource.

### **Goals and Objectives Identified**

**Objective:** Preserve agricultural lands.

**Goals:**

- Assist farmers with seeking financial incentive programs.
- Allow variable agricultural uses to help farmers adapt to changing markets.
- Encourage farmers to explore "Transfer of Development Rights" in lieu of subdividing parcels.

**Possible Implementation Alternatives**

1. Assist farmers in utilizing Conservation Easements, Transfer of Development Rights, and acquiring tax incentives to stay in business in lieu of alternatives to subdivision development.
2. The Town would encourage farmland to be incorporated into a Trust Program for farming practices only.
3. Null Alternative. The Town would not actively assist farmers in seeking viable ways to maintain agricultural lands and farming practices. Further decline of the farming community would probably occur.

**C. Residential Planning**

Residential development is sometimes considered the driving economic force within a community. In many parts of the country, this is the progressive nature of attracting residents to an area. The phrase "if you build it, they will come" is still the accepted concept in many areas. An example of this type of development philosophy is associated with uncontrolled urban sprawl, which is taking place in parts of the Sunbelt states. However, many long-term problems in the form of sparse natural resources to support these communities arise and become very costly to taxpayers. In the Town of Marcellus, this approach is not warranted or appropriate in relation to the Town's long-term goals and objectives. Infrastructure availability, natural constraints and location within Onondaga County require the Town to review residential development in more detail.

During this section of the Land Use Planning phase, the Steering Committee examined what type(s) of residential development are currently in demand and what type(s) of residential development is lacking within the Town. The consensus of the Steering Committee was that the Town of Marcellus is primarily known as a "bedroom community" for the City of Syracuse. The Steering Committee has acknowledged that this role is not a detriment for the Town, and is actually desirable in lieu of other types of development.

### **Types of Desirable Residential Development**

The Steering Committee discussed and identified many types of residential development that would be desired and are needed within the Town. Specifically, the Town would like to address residential development that would accommodate the needs of the elderly population within the community. The type of housing development that is typically associated with the elderly is higher density, i.e. a senior community or a senior retirement facility that is designed to accommodate many people. This type of housing development would be encouraged if alternatives to infrastructure limitations could be engineered and the proximity of such housing be located near the Village, within walking distance of needed amenities.

Another type of residential development that was discussed by the Steering Committee to accommodate senior living standards are known as "patio homes". Patio homes are typically smaller units that require less maintenance and are sometimes clustered in a small neighborhood setting within walking distance of local amenities such as parks, stores and bus routes. Patio homes are usually less expensive than conventional residential development and are a good alternative to multi-unit senior living complexes in areas that do not have adequate infrastructure to facilitate larger complexes.

Traditional residential subdivisions continue to be built within the Town. This type of residential housing is accepted as long as the Town continues to control specific lot sizes, setbacks, location through zoning, and the subdivision review process. This would best

reflect the natural constraints within the Town, public access and rural character within these new subdivisions.

Residential cluster development has been identified as desirable in certain areas of the Town. Cluster development encourages higher land use density by increasing the number of homes in a proposed neighborhood. Lot sizes do not necessarily decrease to accommodate more homes in cluster developments. The homes are usually positioned closer together to create and preserve additional open space from the remaining undeveloped lot areas. These areas form a contiguous additional recreational area within the community. Cluster development also maximizes existing infrastructure and often shared community septic systems can be built and efficiently utilized. In the case of Marcellus, this is an encouraged type of residential development in appropriate areas of the Town.

#### **Goals and Objectives Identified**

**Objective:** Maintain and attract appropriate housing stock that complements the local tax base, natural constraints and needs of the community.

#### **Goals:**

- Determine and allocate the best areas within the Town to expand residential development
- Provide diverse housing types to accommodate all income levels and age groups
- Promote areas where soil suitability is better for on-site septic systems
- Preserve green space by encouraging private and public open spaces to connect where possible to enhance small town character

## **Possible Implementation Alternatives**

1. Encourage development in areas of the Town where lot sizes are consistent with the Town's goal of reducing sprawl and condensing neighborhoods.
2. Continue to work with OCWA to bring public water to areas that can accommodate on-site septic systems and/or are likely to be in areas where future public wastewater services may be constructed.
3. Modify zoning to expand the types of allowable residential development, which is consistent with present development patterns and on-site natural limitations.
4. Continue to work with the Village to explore ways to share and/or expand the capacity of the Village's wastewater treatment facility to accommodate future development around the periphery of the Village.
5. Null alternative. The Town would not actively guide residential development within the Town to reduce sprawl and preserve open space and agricultural lands.

### **D. Pedestrian Mobility**

Pedestrian mobility is an important component in long-term land use planning. The ability to walk or cycle to local recreational areas and amenities gives residents a sense of place and reduces the need to depend on motor vehicles. Sidewalks and recreational paths serve a basic function to allow pedestrians to move unrestricted between multiple destination points. Without sidewalks and recreational paths, pedestrians must either walk or bicycle in the street edge, which can create conflicts with automobiles or rely on public transit.

In the Town of Marcellus, previously developed subdivisions have not incorporated sidewalks or fully addressed the future needs for pedestrian mobility into the Village, surrounding parks and nearby neighborhoods.

Assessing the need, location and design of sidewalks usually begins from the core or center of a community (e.g., the Village). The assessment process is usually depicted as pedestrian precincts. This concept identifies expanding concentric rings around the core of the Village or neighborhood in minutes of walking distance. For example, a pedestrian precinct with a radius of 1,500 feet from the Village core would equate to a five-minute walk and encompass an area of approximately 162 acres. In general, if people have to walk more than five-minutes, especially on steep grades, they will often drive.

Using this analysis methodology, a pedestrian precinct would not expand into much of the Town outside the immediate periphery of the Village. However, creating smaller neighborhood sized pedestrian precincts, which establish links between existing and proposed subdivision(s) may be the best alternative for enhancing pedestrian mobility and the quality of life for Town residents in the future. This concept of creating many smaller pedestrian precincts that overlap within areas of the Town just outside the Village would enhance overall pedestrian mobility.

**Objective:** Support and enhance pedestrian mobility.

**Goals:**

- Provide pedestrian access or "links" to the Village, surrounding neighborhoods and recreational areas.

**Possible Implementation Alternatives**

1. Define basic sidewalk and recreational path guidelines to be used by the Planning Board.

2. Incorporate a Pedestrian Mobility Plan into the site plan review process, advocating developers to construct sidewalks for developments within a one-mile radius of the Village boundary or within 1500 feet of an existing neighborhood with sidewalks.
3. Seek funding assistance from government agencies such as categorical or block grants to aid in development of sidewalks within existing neighborhoods that fall within the limits of the Pedestrian Mobility Plan.
4. Create a Consolidated Sidewalk Improvement District (Town Board action required) that encompasses those subdivisions within the Town where sidewalks are constructed. The district will be responsible for future maintenance of the sidewalk system.
5. Continue to work with the Village to connect sidewalks or recreational paths around the periphery of the Village.
6. Null alternative. The Town would not actively take part in or advocate the need for increased pedestrian mobility.

**E. Zoning Change Recommendations**

The Steering Committee examined the Town's current zoning map in conjunction with the soils suitability map, land use plan map, and development trends, and began to identify areas within the Town that would be likely candidates for future growth. Proposed changes include eliminating the Industrial Zone north of the Village along Nine Mile Creek, designating some areas as Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's), expansion of some R-1 residential zones, and implementing a scenic overlay zone along Route 20.

## **1. Industrial Zone**

This zone will be eliminated to coincide with the Town's goals of designating the Nine Mile Creek Corridor as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) to preserve this natural resource. The Steering Committee has determined that industrial development is not practical within the Town due the lack of infrastructure and goal to preserve the "small town" character of Marcellus. Additionally, the location of the Town's existing Industrial Zone is along Nine Mile Creek, which will be established as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA).

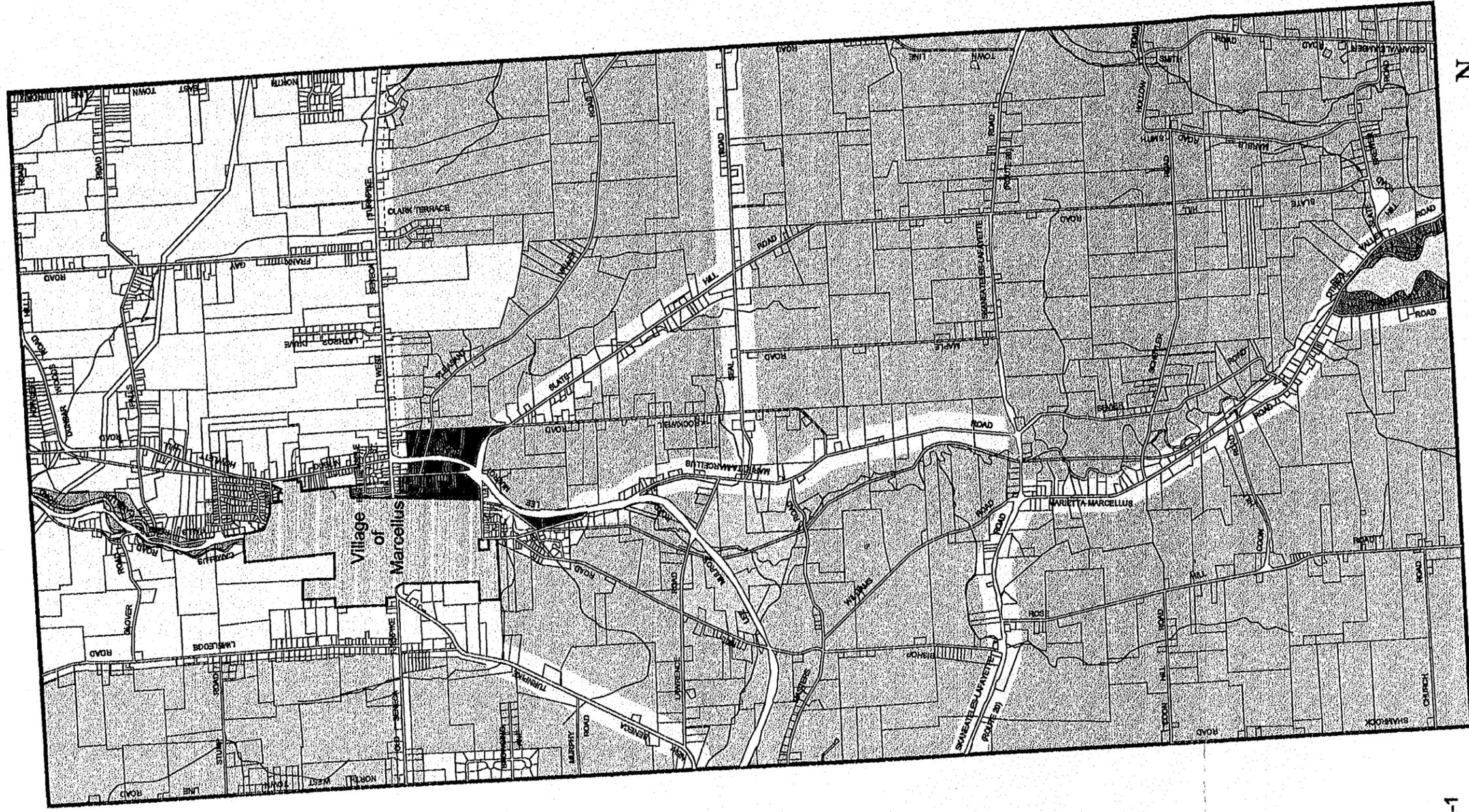
The Light Industrial Zone located along Lee Mulroy Road was discussed for the possibility of expanding this area to accommodate further light industrial and small business development. The conclusion was that the existing zone has the capacity to accommodate future small business development. Expanding this zone was determined to be undesirable, due to the infrastructure and natural topographical constraints within this area.

## **2. Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's)**

The CEA designation is proposed for the entire Nine Mile Creek Corridor within the Town, Disappearing Lake, Marcellus Park, Baltimore Woods and the area surrounding Rockwell Springs. The purpose for assigning CEA's is to protect the Town's unique natural resources. The CEA designation does not preclude development in a CEA designated area. However, it will establish a stricter review process for proposed development or land use patterns.

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## ZONING



### ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS

- RESIDENTIAL R-1
- RESIDENTIAL R-2
- RESIDENTIAL R-4
- BUSINESS B-1
- AGRICULTURAL A-1
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL L-1
- INDUSTRIAL I-1

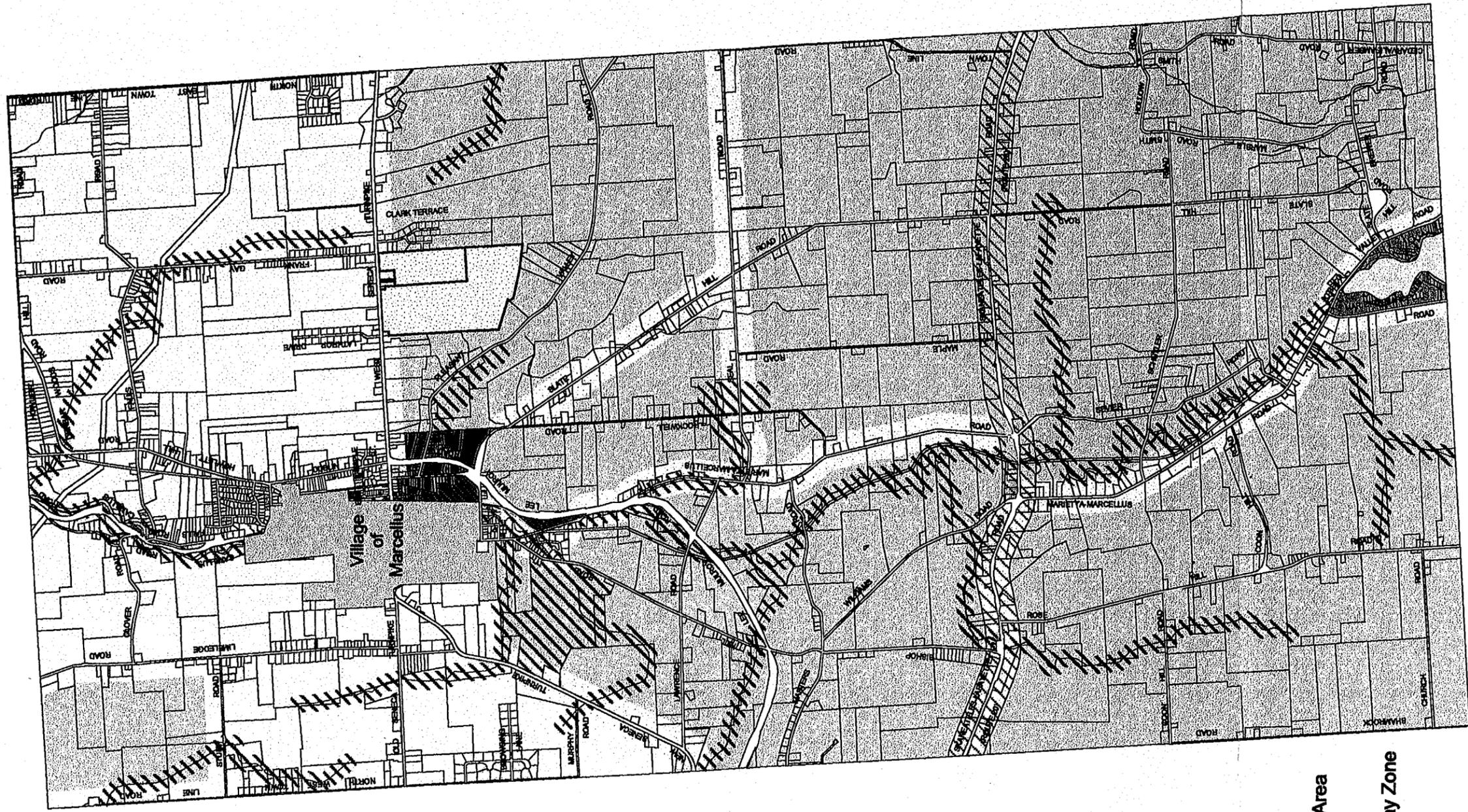
PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS PLANNING BOARD  
 BY THE SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY.



FIGURE 18

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## PROPOSED ZONING



### Zoning Classifications

-  Residential R-1
-  Residential R-2
-  Residential R-4
-  Business B-1
-  Agricultural A-1
-  Light Industrial L-1
-  Critical Environmental Area
-  Scenic Highway Overlay Zone

**Barton**  
**Bogulice, P.C.**  
*Consulting Engineers*

PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS PLANNING BOARD  
 BASE DATA AND EXISTING ZONING DATA PROVIDED BY THE  
 SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY



FIGURE 19

To be designated a CEA, an area must have exceptional or unique attributes with respect to one or more of the following:

- a benefit to human health;
- a natural setting (e.g., fish and wildlife habitat, forest, and vegetation, open space and areas of important aesthetic or scenic quality);
- agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values; or
- an inherent ecological, geological, or hydrological sensitivity to change that may be adversely affected by any change.

Following designation, potential impacts of Type I or Unlisted Actions on the environmental characteristics of the CEA would require an evaluation of significance prepared pursuant to Section 617.7 of SEQR (<http://www.dec.state.ny.us>., May, 2001).

### **3. Scenic Highway Overlay Zone**

The Steering Committee discussed incorporating a Scenic Overlay zone within the Town to allow some types of small businesses in areas that do not currently provide for it. The Route 20 corridor was identified as an area where the Scenic Overlay Zone could be incorporated to accommodate this future need, while maintaining the visual aesthetics of the surrounding landscape. Scenic or environmental overlay zones involve the establishment of zoning districts that simultaneously provide an added layer of standards with the existing zoning. Regulations determined by the base zoning would supercede the overlay zone, but for projects within overlay zones, compliance with additional resource protection standards is mandated. Overlay zones are extremely useful in protecting environmentally significant (scenic) areas that may be sensitive to development. For example, they provide an additional means of overview for projects that could have negative impacts within an area that do not coincide with the underlying zone boundaries.

#### **4. Expansion of Residential (R1) Zones**

The Steering Committee recommended that Residential zoning be extended in the northwest portion of the Town south of Stump Road and west of Limeledge Road and New Seneca Turnpike. The area is currently zoned Agricultural. Residential (R-1) would be applied 500 feet on both sides of the road, north of Stump Road, and east of Northwest Town Line Road from Stump Road (see Figure 19). This zone change would not affect farming in this area but would allow more flexibility for residential development. A recommendation was made to revise the definitions in the Agricultural zoning classification, which would provide a mechanism to expand or change certain types of allowable uses needed to adapt to economic changes. This area has experienced much residential growth over the last ten years, and public water service is being considered for extension into this area. The past residential development patterns support the recommendation to change zoning to residential, in order to further support this type of development.

## VIII. PROPOSED LAND USE AND ZONING MAPS

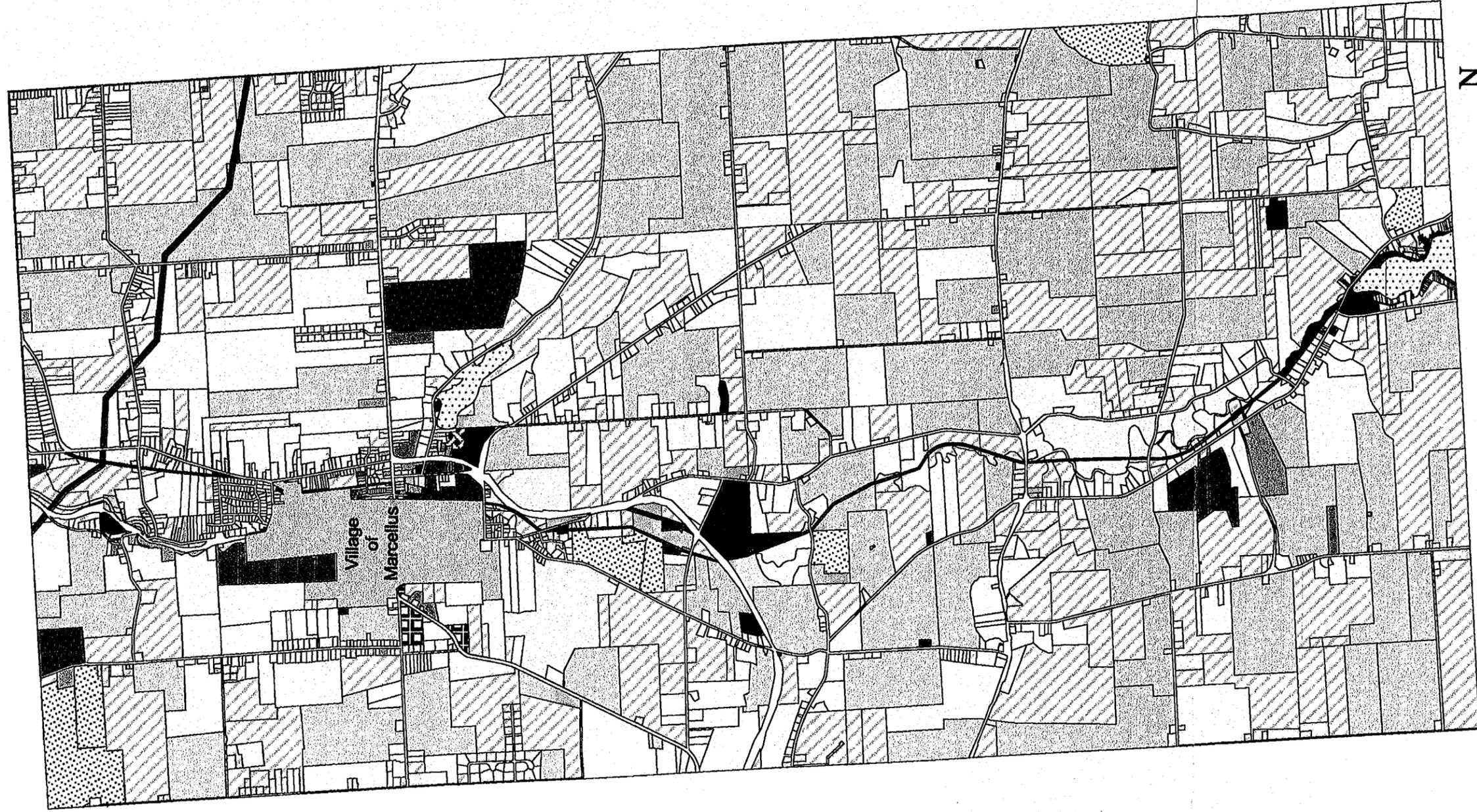
The Town's existing Land Use map depicts multiple types of land uses consistent with other towns in Onondaga County. Projecting what type(s) of land uses will diminish, expand, or cease over the next ten to twenty years is based on many factors such as economic trends, available municipal funding, and adoption of the Town's *Comprehensive Plan*. However, if the Town adopts and implements the goals, objectives, and zoning recommendations discussed in the *Comprehensive Plan*, general assumptions of land use patterns can be identified.

The Steering Committee concluded that the only significant change to the Land Use Plan map that could be reasonably predicted would incorporate additional residential development in parts of the Town where Residential (R-1) zoning was recommended to be expanded. The changes to the Town's current Land Use Plan map were to areas that are identified as vacant agricultural land. These areas are now depicted as vacant or potential single-family residential uses (see Figure 20). This change to the Land Use Plan map is consistent with current development patterns and the goals and objectives stated in the Residential section of this document.

The projected changes in the Land Use Plan map do not necessarily reduce the amount of active agricultural land available within the Town - it simply depicts that additional single-family residential development is likely within that zone. Natural topography, wetland areas, and soil suitability for on-site systems will significantly dictate where single-family residential dwellings will be located within the expanded Residential (R-1) zones (see Figure 21).

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## LAND USE



### LEGEND

	Single Family
	2/3 Family
	Multi-Family
	Agricultural
	Retail
	Office
	Automotive
	Parking Lot
	Utilities
	Warehouse/ Light Manufacturing
	Manufacturing
	Quasi-Government Religious
	Public
	Cemeteries
	Landfills/Dumps
	Sand/Gravel Excavation
	Outdoor Recreation
	Vacant
	Water Bodies



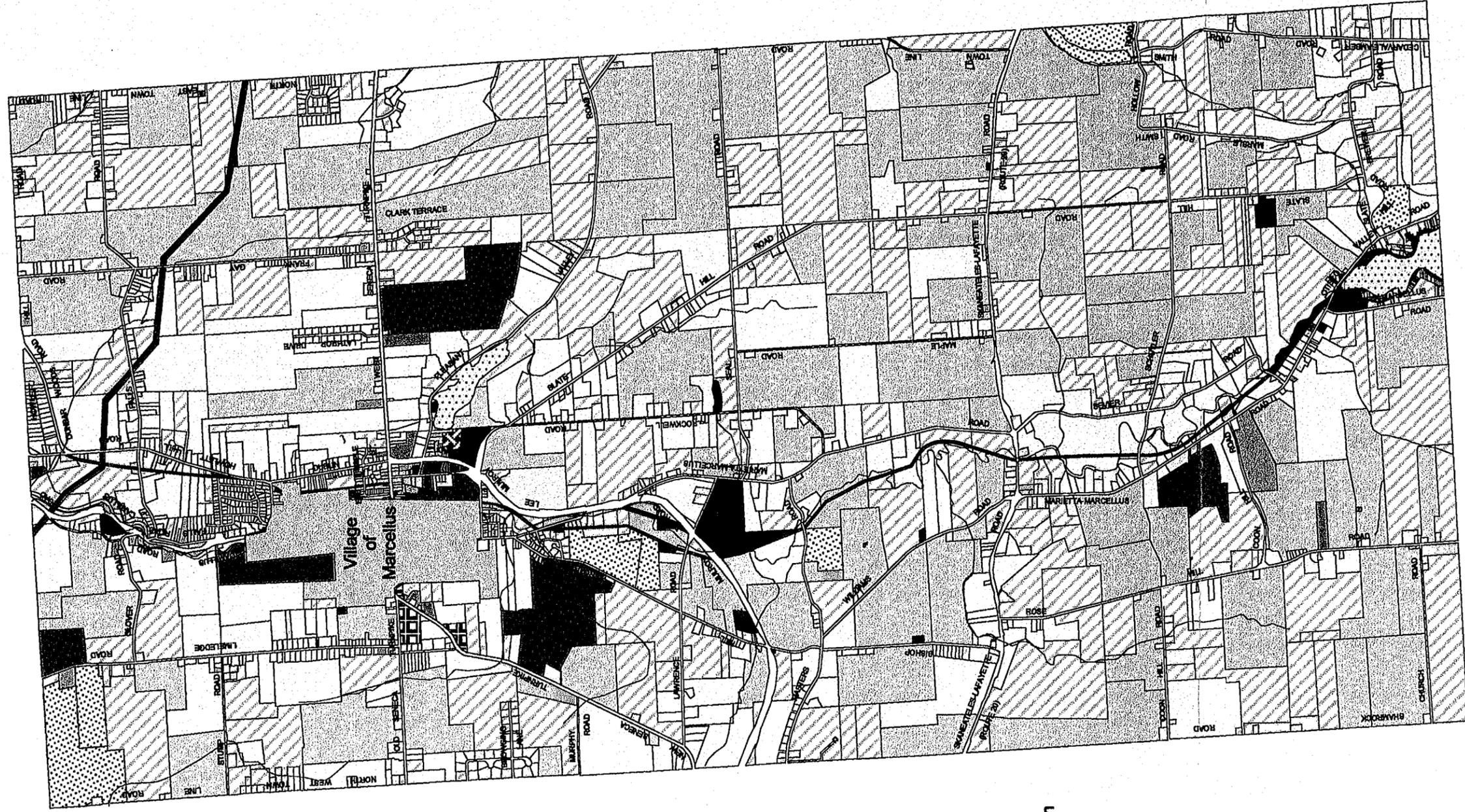
PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS PLANNING BOARD  
BY THE SYRACUSE-ONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY

5/99  
Revised by Barton & Loguidice, P.C. 10/01

FIGURE 20

# TOWN OF MARCELLUS

## PROPOSED LAND USE



### LEGEND

- Single Family
- 2/3 Family
- Multi-Family
- Agricultural
- Retail
- Office
- Automotive
- Parking Lot
- Utilities
- Warehouse/  
Light Manufacturing
- Manufacturing
- Quasi-Government  
Religious
- Public
- Cemeteries
- Landfills/Dumps
- Sand/Gravel Excavation
- Outdoor Recreation
- Vacant
- Water Bodies

**Baron**  
**B&B** Loguidice, P.C.  
Consulting Engineers

PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS PLANNING BOARD  
BASE DATA AND EXISTING LAND USE DATA PROVIDED BY THE  
SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY



FIGURE 21

## **IX. FUTURE ACTIONS**

### **A. Adoption Of The Comprehensive Plan**

This Generic Environmental Impact Statement is integrated within the *Comprehensive Plan* for the Town of Marcellus. Major Town actions anticipated by the *Plan* include preparation and adoption of:

- revised zoning and subdivision regulations;
- revised and new policies for the protection of environmental resources;
- feasibility or design studies for construction of capital improvements; and
- additional planning studies for specific areas or issues.

These subsequent actions are intended to implement the goals and objectives of the *Plan*. Beneficial environmental impacts and/or minimal adverse impacts are anticipated by balancing and coordinating these actions with each other. The recommended strategies for land development, infrastructure and environment are intended to be pursued in a manner such that they jointly enhance and support the overall rural character of the community, preserve sensitive environmental and natural resources and promote cost-effective use of public services.

### **B. Future SEQR Actions**

Future Town-wide planning decisions consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* will not generally require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement, since potential environmental impacts associated with Town-wide planning are addressed in the GEIS. However, future activities that are not explicitly addressed in the *Comprehensive Plan/GEIS*, whether such actions are initiated by the Town (e.g., revised zoning ordinance, if such a zoning change is not addressed in the *Comprehensive Plan/GEIS*) or by a local developer (e.g., subdivision proposal), will need to be independently assessed under SEQR. Future SEQR assessments should also state that they have been evaluated in conformance with the Town's *Comprehensive Plan*.

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Steering Committee initiated work on the Town's long range planning efforts in 1999. The first public meeting on Town planning issues was held in September 1999. Since this initial public meeting, an additional 17 public meetings were held during the developmental stages of the *Comprehensive Plan* over a one and a half year time period. Public input that was provided at these meetings was taken into consideration during the development of the planning document. The dates of the Steering Committee meetings and the topics discussed at each meeting are summarized in Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 1

STEERING COMMITTEE AND VISION PLANNING MEETINGS

## APPENDIX 1

### STEERING COMMITTEE AND VISION PLANNING MEETINGS

- September 29, 1999      Workshop Meeting #1 - Project Kickoff Meeting-Introductions, Overview of Planning Process, Overall Project Schedule, Responsibilities of Steering Committee.
- November 15, 1999      Workshop Meeting #2 - Inventory and Analysis of Natural and Cultural Resources.
- January 17, 2000      Vision Planning Meeting #1 - Environmental Resource Planning.  
Ralph Manna - Regional Permit Administrator with NYSDEC Region 7.  
Tony Geiss - Chief Engineer with OCWA  
Mark Murphy - OCWA  
Robert Asanoma - Save the County  
Patty Weiss - Director of Baltimore Woods  
Dan Palm - President of Nine Mile Creek Conservation Council  
Fred Miller - Nine Mile Creek Conservation Council
- February 21, 2000      Workshop Meeting #3 - Environmental Resource Planning White Paper Issues and environmental resources that should be protected.
- March 20, 2000      Workshop Meeting #4 - Water & Wastewater Issues/Concerns.
- April 17, 2000      Vision Planning Meeting #2 - Water and Wastewater Utility Planning.  
Rick March - Public Health Engineer with OCDOH  
Bruce Douglas - Public Health Sanitarian with OCDOH  
Doug Morris - Planner with the Onondaga County Planning Agency  
Mike Hooker - Executive Director of OCWA  
Tony Geiss - Chief Engineer with OCWA
- May 15, 2000      Workshop Meeting #5 - Water & Wastewater Needs Assessment Summary. Where should future infrastructure be located.
- June 19, 2000      Workshop Meeting #6 - Transportation Scoping. Current and projected issues relating to the transportation network.
- July 17, 2000      Vision Planning Meeting #3 - Transportation Issues.  
Jim Stelter - Permit Officer with OCDOT  
Steve Vetter - Regional Planning and Program Manager with NYSDOT  
Doug Morris - Planner with Onondaga County Planning Agency  
Thomas Lathrop - Town of Marcellus Highway Superintendent  
Bob Crysler - Village of Marcellus Highway Superintendent

- August 21, 2000 Workshop Meeting #7 - Review of Transportation Issues and integration of *The Marcellus Highway Transportation Plan*.
- September 18, 2000 Workshop Meeting #8 - Land Use Planning Scoping. What type of development is desirable in the Town and where should it be located.
- October 16, 2000 Vision Planning Meeting #4 - Economic (Commercial and Industrial) Planning.  
Don Western - Director of Onondaga County Economic Development  
David Duerr - Executive Vice President of the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce  
Gracia Sears - Volunteer with F.O.C.U.S.  
Tom Gillison - Regional Director of Empire State Development
- October 30, 2000 Supplemental Workshop Meeting - Discuss issues raised during the two previous meetings and begin to identify potential recommendations to zoning changes.
- November 20, 2000 Vision Planning Meeting #5 - Agricultural Planning  
Harold Brown, Jr. - New York State Assembly, 121<sup>st</sup> District  
Mark Smith - State Executive Director of the USDA
- January 15, 2001 Vision Planning Meeting #6 - Residential Planning  
Scott Mac Clurg - Member of CNY Homebuilders Association
- February 15, 2001 Workshop Meeting #9 - Land Use Planning White Paper review. Review of *Comprehensive Plan* and proposed zoning map.
- April 23, 2001 Public Informational Meeting to give overview of planning process and present Draft *Comprehensive Plan* and Zoning Map.
- May 21, 2001 Workshop Meeting #10 - Land use issues raised at public informational meeting and revisions to Draft *Comprehensive Plan*.
- August 20, 2001 SEQR Public Hearing to summarize and discuss comments on the *Comprehensive Plan* contents and proposed zoning and land use maps.

APPENDIX 2

LITERATURE REFERENCE

## APPENDIX 2 - LITERATURE REFERENCE

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<http://www.dec.state.ny.us>

APPENDIX 3

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING

ORIGINAL

1

1  
2 TOWN OF MARCELLUS

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA  
STATE OF NEW YORK

3 -----  
4 PUBLIC HEARING:

5 In the Matter of the

6 TOWN of MARCELLUS,

7 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/ DRAFT  
8 GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
9 STATEMENT.  
-----

10 Public Hearing held in the above-entitled matter,  
11 in the Town of Marcellus, at the Marcellus Firehouse,  
12 Slate Hill Road, Marcellus, New York, on Monday August 20,  
13 2001, at 7:00 p.m.

14 APPEARANCES:

15 FRANK T. WILSON, Marcellus Town Supervisor, and

16 Town Board members:

17 James A. Sheridan

18 Donald G. Sherman

19 Daniel J. Ross

20 Albert C. Munro

21 And Town Clerk: Joyce Potucek

22 Also present: Fred Eisenberg, Marcellus Village Mayor

23 Consulting Engineers: ROBERT HORNADAY

24 and JAMES J. BILLINGS

25 Barton & Loguidice, P.C.

290 Elwood Davis Road

Syracuse, New York 13220

Reported By:

Patrick J. Reagan, CSR  
Court Reporter

- Wilson - 8/20/01 -

(Hearing commenced at 7:00 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 SUPERVISOR WILSON: If I could have your attention  
4 please? It is seven o'clock and we will call the public  
5 hearing to order. And just in the case of clarification,  
6 this is a public hearing to comment on the SEQR, the  
7 environmental impact on the proposed comprehensive plan as  
8 well as any comments relative to the comprehensive plan  
9 that you care to make. This evening the meeting is going  
10 to be conducted by our consulting engineers and the people  
11 that we chose to lead us on this journey that's been going  
12 on for pretty close to two years now, and that would be  
13 Bob Hornaday, a principal with the Barton Loguidice firm  
14 and Jim Billings from the Barton Loguidice firm.  
15 Everything tonight that you folks wish to express is going  
16 to be recorded by Patrick Reagan over here, professional  
17 stenographer. And there will be a complete and  
18 comprehensive detailing of everything that is said tonight  
19 here.

20 Once again, this is a public hearing, and I emphasize  
21 the word hearing. Because that is what we are here to  
22 listen to, your thoughts and comments. We are not going  
23 to enter into a lot of dialogue back and forth tonight.  
24 The purpose being that this is an opportunity for you the  
25 citizens of Marcellus to comment either publicly or if you

- Wilson - 8/20/01 -

1  
2 will notice on the back of the literature you were given,  
3 there is a paper available for you to put any comments  
4 that you want to, part of this official record and submit  
5 them at the end of the meeting. Patrick will take those  
6 and they will be made part of this hearing.

7 I just want to make a few introductions -- and  
8 really, not to miss anyone here but this process has been  
9 going on for almost two years now. And the Town Board,  
10 when we started, began this, we appointed some folks to  
11 designate and help select a Steering Committee. And this  
12 Steering Committee in conjunction with the organization  
13 that we chose to deal with in this instance it was Barton  
14 Loguidice, the two of them have guided each other and the  
15 community through this process. We are meeting on a  
16 regular basis of basically once a month, and then the  
17 following month there would be a public hearing. Many of  
18 the hearings were up at the Grange building, some were  
19 well attended, some were not so well attended. But again  
20 we have tried as we go along here to make use of every  
21 opportunity that we had to have public input from the  
22 community. That has been done. There have been some  
23 changes made from the original comprehensive plan when we  
24 had a meeting in June of this year and once again, we give  
25 you folks the opportunity to comment on what is done.

- Wilson - 8/20/01 -

1  
2 I was going to introduce all of the people involved  
3 beginning with the Town Board. But I think I am going to  
4 leave that. There is going to be a slide that goes up  
5 here that shows you the people that were on the Steering  
6 Committee but one person I would like to introduce is  
7 Phyllis Budell. Phyllis led the Steering Committee, she  
8 was chairperson of that, she has had a long, long  
9 background in, and she spent a lot of time in the zoning  
10 regulations in the Town of Marcellus. So she was one of  
11 the founders, when the original zoning was put into place  
12 and we thank her for all the work she has given and we  
13 thank all of the people on the Steering Committee. I  
14 think if we were to name all the people on the Steering  
15 Committee and the Town Board, we far outnumber the  
16 citizens that are here to speak tonight. That  
17 notwithstanding, we look forward to any comment that you  
18 have.

19 Having said that, what we are going to do is go  
20 through with the presentation. At that time if people  
21 have questions we would -- request you to speak, go over  
22 to the microphone right there on the side, identify  
23 yourselves, where you live, and then just direct your  
24 question right up here to this table so that Patrick can  
25 get it down and then whoever is up to bat, so to speak,

- Wilson - 8/20/01 -

1  
2 between Bob or Jim they will handle the questions. So  
3 without further ado I would like to introduce Bob Hornaday  
4 from Barton Loguidice to guide you through this evening's  
5 presentation and program thank you.

6 MR. HORNADAY: Thanks, Brud. Well, thanks all of  
7 you, ladies and gentlemen, for taking your time on a nice  
8 evening like tonight to come and listen to such a hefty  
9 topic as our Comprehensive Plan for the Town of  
10 Marcellus. Brud says we have been working on this for a  
11 couple years. And really I would say the Town is probably  
12 at this point only midway through the overall process  
13 because this is just, I will describe it as the direction  
14 setting process giving overall direction of the planning  
15 policies and procedures that the Town will be looking then  
16 to implement. And I will go through a slide in just a  
17 couple minutes to show you what other steps we have got to  
18 take but this is an important part of our journey through  
19 this process tonight to gather input from the public.

20 As Brud said, we had an informational meeting back in  
21 the spring where we talked to a larger audience down at  
22 the high school auditorium. And since then, some of the  
23 questions that were raised at that meeting we have come up  
24 with what I will call a final draft, that was subsequently  
25 circulated to the County planning agency and we have

- Hornaday -

1  
2 received input from public agencies. So this is an  
3 important step as I said of getting public input. Again I  
4 will describe the planning effort as direction setting and  
5 it's important that, and you will see as we go through our  
6 little slide presentation which should take no more than  
7 10 minutes, that the whole idea is we are building a  
8 consensus in the community as to what the vision for the  
9 community should be over the next 10, maybe 20 years at  
10 most. Then I think this helps not only the Town fathers  
11 but your Planning Board who are appointed officials not  
12 elected officials, your Zoning Board, again appointed  
13 officials, to have a common vision developed through  
14 consensus building as to where do we see the Town, where  
15 do we want the Town to be 10 or 20 years from now, it's  
16 developing that vision that this process is all about.

17 So with that, let me move ahead. (Indicating on  
18 screen.)

19 MR. HORNADAY: Again there was a broad range of  
20 people involved in the Steering Committee: Members of the  
21 Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, other  
22 people from all sectors of the Town. And I see a number  
23 of them here tonight. The purpose of the comprehensive  
24 plan is to address environmental, social and economic  
25 factors affected by development for the Town. Again

- Hornaday -

1  
2 providing that broad outline, that broad vision where we  
3 want to be. Assist the community in attaining positive  
4 development and -- projecting what the Town may look like  
5 in the next 10 to 20 years. And to facilitate consensus  
6 building, dialogue and direct future Town planning actions  
7 regarding the development and the quality of life issues  
8 here in the Town of Marcellus.

9 The process -- I am going to run through this very  
10 quickly, some of you have seen this in greater detail  
11 before. Brud said it started back in the Spring of 1999.  
12 We were selected to assist in developing the plan.  
13 Simultaneously or just prior to that a Steering Committee  
14 of local officials and volunteers were formed. They  
15 invited local groups and organizations to participate  
16 through a series of planning sessions, vision planning  
17 meetings. We held 10 workshops to identify and discuss  
18 areas of concern. Broad range of topics. We also held  
19 six vision planning meetings where we brought experts in  
20 from the outside, dealing in environmental, water,  
21 wastewater, transportation, land use planning, and because  
22 planning can't be done before, there were a lot of other  
23 agencies, a lot of other entities that the Town must be  
24 working with through its land development and land-use  
25 planning process.



- Hornaday -

1  
2 either the availability of public utilities or the  
3 presence of good soils for onsite water, well water, or  
4 onsite septic, sewage disposal are available. With the  
5 transportation network, obviously Marcellus is largely a  
6 commuter bedroom community and transportation is the  
7 lifeblood we have people to their jobs and home. And  
8 then, culminated with a land use planning phase.

9 Over here are two larger blowups, both your existing  
10 zoning, and the proposed zoning map. You will notice --  
11 you will notice, I am going to point up on this one, that  
12 if you recall if there were any of you who were here at  
13 the initial meeting, or excuse me, the informational  
14 meeting in June, that at that point in time this area in  
15 the southwest quadrant of the Town, we had at that point  
16 the map showed that that area would be moving more towards  
17 a residential area and there were some comments, some  
18 significant comments that came out of the meeting that  
19 convinced the committee that that area should be sustained  
20 in an agricultural setting. So, really, if you compare  
21 these two maps now, you will see that with the exception  
22 of this area what I will call the West Hill area, most of  
23 the land use or of the zoning as proposed is going to  
24 mimic closely what you see on the existing zoning map. Of  
25 course there have been some additions critical

- Hornaday -

1  
2 environmental areas, how we -- overlays and I will get to  
3 those items in just a second.

4 Our purpose here tonight is to give you a quick  
5 presentation, update you on the status. We want to get  
6 your input, and then discuss where we go from here in this  
7 whole process. What are the remaining steps? We have a  
8 30 day comment period starting tonight where we will take  
9 your comments by transcript tonight, or any time from here  
10 on in, in writing on this type of comment card or letter  
11 or E-mail, or anyway that you want to address those  
12 comments to us, we are all ears. And we want to get your  
13 input publicly and officially at this point in time.

14 Once we get those comments, we will go through and  
15 respond to every comment. Now, let me clarify that if we  
16 have 10 comments that are basically the same, we are going  
17 to respond to those once. But we will acknowledge in the  
18 Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement that these  
19 people have primarily the same type of comments and this  
20 is how we are addressing that comments in the Final  
21 Comprehensive Plan and the Generic Environmental Impact  
22 Statement.

23 Just one other thing, obviously, we will be meeting  
24 with the Steering Committee again to go through and  
25 discuss the comment resolution so it's not just Barton

- Hornaday -

1  
2 Loguidice, it's really the Town with our assistance  
3 facilitating the process, going through and addressing how  
4 do we want to incorporate or address the comment in this  
5 final plan? Then we anticipate that in September or  
6 October, depending on how long it takes us to address the  
7 comments that the Board will ultimately have a resolution  
8 on their agenda to accept the Comprehensive Plan and Final  
9 Generic Environmental Impact Statement. We will submit  
10 the SEQR finding statement. There is a process of going  
11 through the environmental notice bulletin which is a state  
12 published document, etc. So that will take some time, but  
13 ultimately with the finding statement, which supports the  
14 Town adoption, the Town would be able to adopt a SEQR  
15 finding statement and once they have done that, then they  
16 could go ahead and adopt the final comprehensive plan  
17 again with any or all of the comments incorporated into  
18 that that come out of this 30 day comment period.

19 So that gets the Town to a point where they have this  
20 directional document in place. What else might they have  
21 on their agenda at that point? Well, there's the actual  
22 implementation of those strategies identified in the  
23 plan. I will give you one example: There is a section of  
24 the plan that talks about increased pedestrian mobility.  
25 Within those areas developing in the Town that are within

- Hornaday -

1  
2 1,500 feet of the Village or 1,500 feet of an area outside  
3 the Village that may have sidewalks developed. The idea  
4 is the Village is the commercial heart of the Town of  
5 Marcellus. If people can have improved access into the  
6 Village without in each trip having to find a parking  
7 place, move from one store to the next by having to drive,  
8 if the kids can get down to the school district for their  
9 after-school or pre-school activities through pedestrian  
10 access, all those types of things are going to make the  
11 Village and the Town a more livable place. Improved  
12 access means improved quality of life. So how do we do  
13 that? Well, one of the things we suggested in the plan is  
14 that the Town should look at all new subdivisions within  
15 this the vicinity that I talked about and look to adopt a  
16 consolidated sidewalk district where developers are  
17 required in those areas in close proximity to the Village  
18 to put sidewalks in as part of the development of roads  
19 and other infrastructure which they would then turn over  
20 to the Town, and then the Town through this consolidated  
21 sidewalk district would have the means to maintain that  
22 without it being a burden on all of the taxpayers of the  
23 Town. Only those people that would benefit that live in  
24 those areas would pay for the ongoing operation of  
25 maintenance of the sidewalks. So that's one initiative,

- Hornaday -

1  
2 and the Town is already considering a map plan report from  
3 two developers to generate this initial boundary of the  
4 consolidated sidewalk district. And there are some other  
5 documents that we are putting together that would form  
6 policies and procedures giving the standards and  
7 specifications that a developer would follow and install,  
8 locating and installing those types of facilities. So  
9 that's an example of the implementation of one of the  
10 strategies that the plan calls for.

11 The Town also has some other things already in  
12 place. They have the zoning law. They have the a  
13 subdivision law. They have the zoning map. And those  
14 documents will need to be updated as a result of this  
15 process. There are new things in the plan that will  
16 require changes in some of your current ordinances, that  
17 control land use development within the Town. So, those  
18 updates will spawn a second generation of meetings and  
19 discussions that even this Steering Committee or a  
20 subsequent committee appointed by the Town Board will be  
21 involved in working through the actual detailed  
22 implementation steps and again that whole process will be  
23 subject to public input, consensus building, informational  
24 meetings and ultimately public hearings because that's  
25 where the rubber really starts to hit the road. Once you

- Hornaday -

1  
2 take a zoning map like the -- other jumped ahead there, a  
3 zoning map like we see over here and start to say well, on  
4 this given parcel right here, we are going to change the  
5 zone from Agricultural to Residential One. That has an  
6 impact on the property owners and it's much more specific  
7 than the generic types of things that we are discussing in  
8 the overall plan. This sets direction. That becomes the  
9 actual, not only road map but the actual implementation in  
10 detail, it's where it starts to affect each of you  
11 potentially on an individual basis. So again, that will  
12 be an important step to get your input on.

13 And then subsequently, we propose, we suggest that  
14 the Town continue to consistently look at and update  
15 monitor and update the plan on a three to five year  
16 basis. Depending upon the direction the Town takes, our  
17 crystal ball, the crystal ball in the committee is only so  
18 good whether you're looking out 10 years 20 years, things  
19 start to evolve somewhat differently, that's when the plan  
20 has to be picked up, dusted off and say how germane is  
21 this in today's world and today's environment with what's  
22 happened in the Town of Marcellus over the last x-number  
23 of years? Does the plan still address our needs or do we  
24 need to make minor changes? The longer the Town takes in  
25 between picking this up, the more likely it is to be off

- Hornaday -

1  
2 track. So, we feel that that three to five year process  
3 is one where it won't get so stale that you have got to  
4 start over. It should be fairly easy to look at and say  
5 what is still germane, what needs to be changed and then  
6 address just those areas that you change. And as I said  
7 before, obviously this whole process only works if we  
8 continue to involve the public, other local and public and  
9 governmental agencies.

10 So, that's our spiel tonight, sort of bringing you  
11 up-to-date with where we are. And with that, I will open  
12 the hearing to any comments, questions, you may have some  
13 statements that we really can't respond to. Our intent is  
14 not to say we are right and you're wrong. We want to  
15 listen to you. And again I would ask for the  
16 stenographer's ease in keeping track of who is speaking,  
17 speak one at a time, please identify yourself by name and  
18 address and it will help to keep the transcript cleaner,  
19 and it will help us in responding more accurately to your  
20 comments. So, who wants to start us off?

21 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Sir?

22 \* \* \*

23 MR. V. MURPHY: I am Vincent Murphy, 2259 Glover Road.  
24 I am a member, last member of the Homeowner's --  
25 Limeledge Homeowner's Association. It started years ago

1                                   - Public Hearing - Murphy -

2           by the late Dave Driscoll. I was a helper in a lot of  
3           things in regards to the mine in this area. My question  
4           to you people is, I don't know if you expressed it yet,  
5           what is the plan for the mining and blasting in the Town  
6           of Marcellus in the next few years? That's one question I  
7           have. I have another one, and I will take the first one  
8           first.

9                   MR. HORNADAY: Jim, do you want to address that?

10                   MR. BILLINGS: Well, I think the plan addresses it in  
11           generic terms but, obviously there are existing  
12           facilities, existing mining facilities in the Town. Our  
13           direction or our thought is not obviously not to impact  
14           those directly. We are not going to change the operations  
15           of your business based on this plan, that's not what this  
16           plan is all about.

17                   MR. MURPHY: Yes. But what I would like to have a  
18           resolution or a plan for any future, future mining in the  
19           Town.

20                   MR. BILLINGS: Well, I think it's as Bob points out,  
21           the plan isn't here to determine that. The plan is here  
22           to provide guidance to the Town in their determination of  
23           where the Town is going, as it relates to mining among  
24           many other things.

25                   MR. MURPHY: Certainly no changes in the policy?

1 - Public Hearing - Murphy -

2 MR. BILLINGS: As of this date, I don't think that's  
3 the case.

4 MR. MURPHY: And, there is a need for that and there  
5 is people, I understand that, but we also have to live  
6 with us as a neighbor. I live up on Limeledge and we have  
7 to live with these. Now the second question is, how does  
8 -- my voice sounds funny coming out of here -- what is  
9 the status of the existing Saunders Quarry up on Limeledge  
10 in regards to moving to the south? I never seem to get  
11 that answer. Are they into the Town of Marcellus now and  
12 could they move further to the south?

13 MR. HORNADAY: My recollection is that part of that,  
14 the Town line between Marcellus and Camillus runs through  
15 the Quarry, isn't that right, Brud?

16 SUPERVISOR WILSON: That's correct.

17 MR. HORNADAY: And that a lot of the processing  
18 facilities are each in the Town of Camillus. The asphalt  
19 plant, and the rock crusher and sorting sieves, my  
20 recollection that reviewing the site plan many years ago,  
21 that that all sits within the Town of Camillus.

22 MR. MURPHY: Nothing in the Town of Marcellus?

23 MR. HORNADAY: Well, the extraction itself is in the  
24 Town of Marcellus but I am under the impression -- that  
25 of the processing facilities and the asphalt plant sit

1 - Public Hearing - Murphy -

2 within the Town of Camillus.

3 MR. MURPHY: But if there are, if there are in there  
4 now, they could move to the south. That was my question:  
5 Could they move on?

6 MR. HORNADAY: Can the processing?

7 MR. MURPHY: Continue on through there?

8 MR. HORNADAY: Can the extraction move further to the  
9 south? Well, they have a limit that's been established, I  
10 don't know, it's got to be eight or 10 years ago when it  
11 came in and started the work on the new parcel, that  
12 limits how far south they can proceed.

13 MR. MURPHY: I was wondering just with that line was  
14 but there is a limit where they can move, that's my  
15 question?

16 MR. HORNADAY: There is a site plan that the Planning  
17 Board and Zoning Board, I guess it was the Planning Board,  
18 wasn't it? There is a line there. You can check with me  
19 in my office.

20 MR. MURPHY: That's what the law says, that doesn't  
21 mean it's going to happen. I think that's all, except I  
22 appreciate you taking your time.

23 MR. HORNADAY: Any time.

24 \* \* \*

25 MR. HORNADAY: Mr. Mayor?

1                   - Public Hearing - Eisenberg -

2                   MR. EISENBERG: My name is Fred Eisenberg. I live at  
3                   38 North Street in Marcellus. And I am the mayor of the  
4                   Village. My question is and I you need to help clear this  
5                   up for me, the Village's water supply which is for the  
6                   Village and some Town residents on Rockwell Road, and it's  
7                   never had a water protection plan in the past. The Town  
8                   or the Village has never put one together. We recently  
9                   started to work on it and I understand it's in this  
10                  document. And I just want to make sure it's perfectly  
11                  clear or you could clarify it for me so that I understand  
12                  that for the future, long years away, that our Village  
13                  water supply will --

14                 MR. HORNADAY: Let me take a look at page V-1 in the  
15                 plan, Mayor, that deals with watershed protection. Of  
16                 course the Village's water supply is not the only water  
17                 supply in the Town of Marcellus.

18                 MR. EISENBERG: Correct.

19                 MR. HORNADAY: Otisco Lake is also a water supply for  
20                 the, also for the Onondaga County Water Authority.

21                 MR. EISENBERG: We at times buy water from Onondaga  
22                 County Water.

23                 MR. HORNADAY: Right.

24                 MR. EISENBERG: We use both, and mostly Rockwell  
25                 supplies. Just long-term, nothing has been done in the

1 - Public Hearing - Eisenberg -

2 past. We have been working on that, working with the  
3 Town. I just want to make sure that in this plan,  
4 long-term, that --

5 MR. HORNADAY: The plan identifies both water  
6 supplies as being not only critical environmental areas,  
7 but areas where further watershed protection steps need to  
8 be taken. So I think that in that broad statement, the  
9 Town is saying that they want to work with the owners and  
10 purveyors of those water supplies do what they can --

11 MR. EISENBERG: Okay.

12 MR. HORNADAY: -- In further implementing steps,  
13 whether it's the adoption of a watershed protection plan  
14 that you're in the process of preparing or --

15 MR. EISENBERG: Okay.

16 MR. HORNADAY: -- Or whatever the water authorities  
17 might do doing a similar track, to work with you to help  
18 protect those important resources to the community.

19 MR. EISENBERG: So we should continue to work with  
20 the Town?

21 MR. HORNADAY: Yes, it's a policy statement in here.

22 MR. EISENBERG: Okay, I wasn't sure. I had been kind  
23 of told as I understand it that there was specific  
24 statements in here and I wanted to get it clear because  
25 we, long-term, I am sure for the Town and for the Village,

1 - Public Hearing - Eisenberg -

2 we need to, you know, put that in place.

3 MR. HORNADAY: Right.

4 MR. EISENBERG: Okay, thank you.

5 \* \* \*

6 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Anyone else? I would encourage  
7 you to, there is no question that is a foolish question or  
8 one that shouldn't be asked. So if you have anything on  
9 your mind I certainly would encourage you to please.

10 MS. NUTTING: My name is Barbara Nutting, I live at  
11 2576 Route 20. And my husband Andrew and I also own the  
12 Valley Inn. This is the first time we have heard of these  
13 meetings which is why we haven't come beforehand. Our  
14 question has to do with the Scenic Overlay. Basically  
15 like I said, this is the first time we have heard of it.  
16 Kind of what is it? And what is it going to do to our  
17 business? Because we are right on Route 20?

18 MR. HORNADAY: The Town recognized through this  
19 process that Route 20 is an important transportation  
20 corridor, from two aspects. That there is a lot of  
21 traffic east-west that uses the corridor. And that also  
22 it's for people that are traversing from west of  
23 Skaneateles through Onondaga County they have a short view  
24 of some very scenic areas as they pass through the Town of  
25 Marcellus on their journey -- or destination. What that

- Public Hearing - Nutting -

1  
2 says is that there probably could be a greater commercial  
3 development and pressures for commercial development along  
4 that area. However, without some type of land use  
5 controls, beyond what the existing zoning ordinance  
6 provides, it may tend to inhibit some of the scenic views  
7 and vistas and what really makes it a special area in the  
8 Town. So the intent without being too specific in here is  
9 to provide the umbrella of an overlay district that would  
10 allow more commercial development with stricter controls.  
11 All right? To provide just one without the other may end  
12 up ruining some of the scenic vistas and what's special  
13 about that area. So the Town recognizes this. It  
14 probably will never be public water or sewer down in that  
15 area, so development has to be looked at very carefully.  
16 But, with the right controls that the overlay would  
17 require, in addition, in addition to normal commercial  
18 areas, this may allow the Town through this overlay to  
19 open up more of the area for commercial development than  
20 is currently open, that is currently opened for that.

21 MS. NUTTING: Okay.

22 MR. HORNADAY: It's a two-sided coin. One is giving  
23 more, the other is protecting more.

24 MS. NUTTING: Okay. Then as a follow-up, what does  
25 that mean for existing businesses? Because there are

1 - Public Hearing - Nutting -

2 businesses there already?

3 MR. HORNADAY: What you will find is an underlying  
4 tenet of any zoning ordinances that any business -- and  
5 this goes to the question about Saunders and your mineral  
6 extraction, it's an operation in a point in time when a  
7 municipality starts to make changes in those zoning  
8 ordinances, is grandfathered, that these new regulations  
9 do not impact or affect that new business as far as its  
10 current operation, its current size. If on the other  
11 hand, five years from now you wanted to double the size of  
12 your business, these regulations would affect the  
13 expansion of the business. When we talked about the  
14 process of actually implementing changes to the zoning  
15 ordinance and the zoning map with this type of Scenic  
16 Overlay, would be changed to a zoning ordinance, I am  
17 going to project that it might be another year, maybe a  
18 two-year process. And one of the things that you will  
19 find when the Board, if and when the Board adopts this  
20 plan is that there will be lead time for any existing  
21 business, if you want to make some changes without being  
22 governed by the new zoning ordinance, there will be at  
23 least a year, probably two years of I call it a grace  
24 period, it's the period where the Town is going through  
25 these changes that you will have the opportunity to be

1 - Public Hearing - Nutting -

2 making changes to your business without being impacted.

3 MS. NUTTING: Okay.

4 MR. HORNADAY: Anything you have in place before the  
5 date of the adoption of any new regulations that arises  
6 out of this plan, is grandfathered, and it does not affect  
7 your current operation. You may not have enough parking.  
8 Your sidelines may not, your sideline setbacks may be  
9 insufficient. The zoning may not even be correct. But as  
10 long as you're there, and in a preexisting business,  
11 you're grandfathered.

12 MS. NUTTING: Okay, thank you.

13 MR. HORNADAY: All right? So it's a basic tenet in  
14 the zoning.

15 MR. NORRIS: Okay, Wayne Norris, Route 20. We have a  
16 dairy farm up on southeast corner. I think it would be  
17 better if this overlay was not put in at all. Leave us to  
18 our Agricultural A-1. We don't need a whole lot of frills  
19 and things and lights you have got to contend with. We  
20 don't need that. We have the existing laws right now to  
21 live with, we have to deal with, no matter what you do up  
22 there. You have got to come down to the Planning Board,  
23 and you have got to get all your ducks in a row before you  
24 can do anything. All right, you add this Scenic Overlay  
25 over the thing, it's just one more hurdle you have got to

1 - Public Hearing - Norris -

2 jump through. And I don't think we need it out on Route  
3 20. I have lived out there for 60 years, and we have  
4 never run into this crap, and I don't think we need it now  
5 or in the future. So, as long as it stays as agriculture  
6 the way it is right now -- it's granted. Down in the  
7 hollow, down in Tyler Hollow, there is no agriculture in  
8 there, and that's a good place for the business that want  
9 to develop.

10 MR. HORNADAY: Would you feel differently if the  
11 Scenic Overlay was just in the area of the hollow?

12 MR. NORRIS: I think for the people that live there  
13 with the commercial business down there, I don't think  
14 they need that. It's just one more hurdle. I mean, there  
15 is no, no rules or regulations been written for this  
16 Scenic Overlay. I mean, this is, you're picking it out of  
17 the air and we are going to write it as we come along as  
18 conditions need. I don't think we need that. What I  
19 think we need is we have got the A-1, we have got the  
20 commercial, and it's only six, seven miles between the two  
21 borders. And I don't know if any of you people have ever  
22 gone from Sangerfield to Auburn, but I mean, them other  
23 towns, there is a million towns along there and everybody  
24 has got their own idea of how Route 20 goes. So I can't  
25 see why Marcellus has got to dictate how the scenic

1 - Public Hearing - Norris -

2 overview looks, and they have got a lot more view than we  
3 have got. All we have got is a tunnel of trees you drive  
4 down through. So, I really, personally think that this  
5 overlay should not be even part of this comprehensive  
6 plan. I think that we should go the way we have, whatever  
7 changes else you want to make in Town, it doesn't, it  
8 doesn't affect me, I can't comment on it. I don't live in  
9 those areas, I can't say. But where I live, I don't  
10 believe we need that. Okay?

11 MR. HORNADAY: Thank you.

12 \* \* \*

13 MR. MURPHY: I have just one more question. It deals  
14 again with the zoning, I don't quite understand how the  
15 mining.

16 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Just identify yourself.

17 MR. MURPHY: Vincent Murphy, again from Glover Road.  
18 On the mining, I see it's listed as mining, as an  
19 Agricultural district, I don't understand that proposal in  
20 the zoning?

21 (Indicating on Map 2.)

22 MR. MURPHY: This is the quarry right here, it's  
23 Agricultural, I don't understand that as far as zoning.

24 MR. HORNADAY: All right. This is the existing  
25 zoning map here.

1 - Public Hearing - Murphy -

2 MR. MURPHY: It's the same here.

3 MR. HORNADAY: Yes.

4 MR. MURPHY: I can see at one time it was  
5 Agricultural, now it's still Agricultural yet it's mining.

6 MR. HORNADAY: We are continuing to maintain it as  
7 Agricultural.

8 MR. MURPHY: Although it's mining, it's mining  
9 there?

10 MR. HORNADAY: The land use, as you see over here is  
11 mining. All right?

12 MR. MURPHY: Here?

13 MR. HORNADAY: Yes, that's the land use.

14 MR. MURPHY: This is farming.

15 MR. HORNADAY: That's correct.

16 MR. MURPHY: But here, here now it shows all farming  
17 and here.

18 MR. HORNADAY: Right.

19 MR. MURPHY: And here all Agricultural.

20 MR. HORNADAY: The Town had -- let's explore for a  
21 second what the other options were, because the existing  
22 land use is minimal extraction, and as I understand  
23 before, basic tenet of zoning, any zoning law is what's  
24 there as a land use is grandfathered.

25 MR. MURPHY: A-hum.

1 - Public Hearing - Murphy -

2 MR. HORNADAY: Okay. They were ever to cease mineral  
3 extraction, your zoning ordinance reads that there is a  
4 certain period of time, it might be six months, nine  
5 months, I don't have that part of your zoning law  
6 memorized. If they cease the operation, that the land use  
7 is no longer grandfathered. Now they would have to come  
8 in and start from scratch, within the permit. One of the  
9 things that the committee, Steering Committee talked about  
10 whatnot doing was changing the zoning to a commercial or  
11 industrial zone that would then make this a no only not a  
12 grandfathered non-conforming use but it would make it a  
13 conforming use, so we want to make it clearer that the use  
14 is non-conforming. It is grandfathered, we don't want to  
15 further legitimatize it by changing the zoning.

16 MR. MURPHY: Yes, that was passed before.

17 MR. HORNADAY: The way to do that is to leave the  
18 area zoned the same way it is right now, as Agricultural.

19 MR. MURPHY: No commercial?

20 MR. HORNADAY: Right. No commercial. That way  
21 you're not legitimatizing the non-conforming use, as long  
22 as they're there and they operate within the permit.

23 MR. MURPHY: Yes.

24 MR. HORNADAY: Then they are going to have the  
25 opportunity to continue doing that.

1 - Public Hearing - Murphy -

2 MR. MURPHY: I understand. I want to just make sure.

3 MR. HORNADAY: Okay.

4 \* \* \*

5 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Anyone else? Once again, no  
6 comments are good or bad. It's just comments.

7 MS. BINGHAM: My name's Michelle Bingham, 4469  
8 Rustler's Road. I was just wondering, on page 4-6, you  
9 list the D.E.C. regulated wetlands?

10 MR. HORNADAY: 4-6.

11 MS. BINGHAM: Yes, there are federal wetland maps,  
12 correct, still?

13 MR. HORNADAY: Yes.

14 MS. BINGHAM: Could you put those in or is there one  
15 available for Marcellus?

16 MR. HORNADAY: I am sure there is a national  
17 inventory of wetlands and a lot of the mapping that is in  
18 here was prepared by the County planning agency. So  
19 basically we had included that mapping that was done,  
20 Helen, is it fair to say that was done -- by the Town  
21 planning agency?

22 MS. STEVENS: It was a pilot program.

23 MR. HORNADAY: Pilot program, rather than looking at  
24 a gift horse in the mouth saying why didn't you do more  
25 for -- thank you, with federal wetlands, it's essential

- Public Hearing - Murphy -

1  
2 that the developer go out and actually delineate onsite  
3 the boundary of the federal wetlands. So, while we might  
4 show the national wetlands inventory map, as an insert in  
5 here, it would not negate the need for a developer to hire  
6 a wetland scientist to go out and delineate in the field,  
7 and I think the Planning Board requires that that  
8 delineation be presented. We are talking for mainly  
9 subdivisions or site plans, to make sure that there are no  
10 federal wetlands involved in the site.

11 And the process is changing slightly. As of around  
12 the first of the year, I think there was a Supreme Court  
13 decision, a Court of Appeals decision that has somewhat  
14 limited the Corps of Engineers' interpretation where those  
15 federal wetland boundaries are. That has made it, will  
16 make it somewhat easier for developers to proceed if the  
17 wetlands are isolated, not connected to some major stream  
18 system downstream. The Corps has been cut back through  
19 this Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court decision as to  
20 what they have jurisdiction over. So, the national  
21 wetland inventory maps are somewhat outdated. Too many --  
22 and I don't want anybody, we wouldn't want anybody to  
23 simply rely on those maps when in fact a field delineation  
24 is needed. On the contrary, D.E.C.'s regulatory wetlands  
25 were pretty much pre-identified, and they're much bigger.

1 - Public Hearing - Bingham/Hornaday -

2 I think it's a minimum of seven and-a-half acres -- and  
3 D.E.C.'s is --

4 MS. BINGHAM: I thought it was 12.4.

5 MR. HORNADAY: Maybe it is, 12.

6 MR. BILLINGS: Yes.

7 MR. HORNADAY: Is that right? 12 and change.

8 Whereas a federal wetlands can be much much smaller.

9 That's the need to go out and do the outside.

10 MS. BINGHAM: You're saying it's a good indication of  
11 what's there so it would be just nice to have as a  
12 reference.

13 MR. HORNADAY: It's a good comment. I appreciate  
14 your insight.

15 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Anyone else?

16 MR. HORNADAY: You have got to help me win a bet.  
17 Brud said we would be done before eight o'clock and I said  
18 I didn't believe it.

19 SUPERVISOR WILSON: I have got to get up and mow the  
20 soccer field.

21 MR. NORRIS: You could do it quicker. I found a big  
22 lawnmower.

23 SUPERVISOR WILSON: If there are no further  
24 questions, I want to, I want to begin by thanking you all  
25 for coming tonight. You know, we talk about these

1 - Public Hearing - 8/20/01 -

2 comments but the comments really are about this place we  
3 all call home and where we live. And I know that I want  
4 to extend my sincere appreciation to all the people that  
5 were on the Steering Committee, and it was a nice  
6 cross-section from the community. And I know in talking  
7 with a number of them that they have indicated to me that  
8 it was really a somewhat pleasurable task beyond the size  
9 and the scope of the number of meetings and the time  
10 involved, but to be part of the process where you're  
11 looking at yourself and trying to evaluate where you want  
12 to be, what you want to look like, and what we are talking  
13 in terms of what this community is going to be. And none  
14 of us really do that enough, I guess, in our own self and  
15 in our own lives is to sit down and evaluate and look at  
16 ourselves and see where we are, and again where we want to  
17 be. But the nice thing about this process is it just  
18 gives us a blueprint, a place to work from.

19 And as Bob indicated in his opening remarks, we are  
20 only halfway to that point now. We need to keep moving  
21 forward for the Town Board to look at this to evaluate it,  
22 to accept it and then move on to the next step that  
23 involves the changes relative to the zoning and so on.  
24 And I just need to say to you that Marcellus really is a  
25 wonderful place to live, but the 10 years, going back 10

- Wilson - 8/20/01 -

1  
2 years to the late 80s, and the 90s, to see the transition  
3 that's taken place in the community, it's really amazing  
4 when you sit back and look at it, and that's inevitable,  
5 it's changes going to take place. And we hope that you  
6 know the economy keeps going on, but as the economy keeps  
7 growing if it grows in Syracuse, that means there are  
8 going to be more people living in Marcellus. As long as  
9 Marcellus maintains the kind of school system that you  
10 folks have been proud of and have supported, you're going  
11 to have more people moving in here. And I know that Fred  
12 is working hard to have more people in business down in  
13 the center of Marcellus. And going back some eight or  
14 nine years ago when we did the original, our Town program,  
15 and we sampled some -- I don't know upwards of 200  
16 people, the consensus was always the same: We want to  
17 keep the center of the community, the community right down  
18 there on Main Street. So that's what's happening. And  
19 again this process is kind of going along and I know a lot  
20 of the terminology and the word usage is foreign to many  
21 of us. So it's a learning process and it's a learning  
22 curve but it's an exciting time, it's an exciting time in  
23 this community.

24 And I thank you all for coming and partaking of  
25 this. And as we move forward in this, it's important to

- Wilson - 8/20/01 -

1  
2 be involved in the process that's going to be taking  
3 place. So I hope you all keep that in mind. And I am  
4 sorry, you know, we tried our very best. I have to sign  
5 off on all the bills down there. So when I see that ad we  
6 took in the Pennysaver and the Observer or the meetings  
7 then held, I know that we were out there, not everybody  
8 reads the Pennysaver or the Observer but that's where we  
9 ran ads to make sure people were aware of the meetings  
10 that were being held, both the Steering Committee meetings  
11 and then the public meetings, where we brought people in  
12 to talk to specific issues and so on. Yes, Wayne, you  
13 have a question?

14 MR. NORRIS: One question if you want to send  
15 comments in you have got the next 20 days?

16 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Next 30 days.

17 MR. NORRIS: 30 days.

18 SUPERVISOR WILSON: 30-day comment period. I would  
19 encourage you, there is a sheet right on the back of that  
20 packet that you have got.

21 MR. NORRIS: Okay.

22 SUPERVISOR WILSON: I would encourage you to send  
23 your comments in.

24 MR. NORRIS: Now where do you send them to?

25 SUPERVISOR WILSON: You could send them right to me

1 - Public Hearing - 8/20/01 -

2 at the Town Hall, my attention, 24 East Main Street.

3 MR. NORRIS: Okay.

4 SUPERVISOR WILSON: Is there anything else? Is there  
5 anyone else who would like to comment before I call the  
6 meeting to a close? If not, once again I thank you all  
7 for coming and at this time at what is it 7:56, I will  
8 call the public hearing to a close. Thank you very much.

9 MR. HORNADAY: Guess he wins.

10 (Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.)

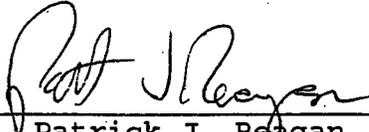
11 \* \* \*

12  
13  
14  
15 C E R T I F I C A T E

16 STATE OF NEW YORK  
17 COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

18 I, PATRICK J. REAGAN, a Certified Shorthand Reporter,  
19 and Registered Professional Reporter, in and for the State of  
20 New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of  
the Public Hearing, Town of Marcellus, recorded at the time and  
place first above-mentioned is true and accurate to the best of  
my knowledge, skill and ability.

21 Date: 8/22/01

22   
23 \_\_\_\_\_  
Patrick J. Reagan, CSR  
24  
25

APPENDIX 4

COMMENTS TO  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT (CP/DGEIS)  
AND RESPONSES

## APPENDIX 4

### COMMENTS TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/DGEIS AND RESPONSES

#### INDEX OF PERSONS WHO SUBMITTED COMMENTS

The names of persons who submitted comments on the *CP/DGEIS* are listed below in alphabetical order. Next to each person's name is the comment number(s) on which a summary of the comment and Town's response can be found. A complete transcript of the August 20, 2001 Public Hearing can be found in Appendix 3.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comment #</u>
Bingham, Michelle	7
Eisenberg, Fred	3
Fish, D.E.	8
Harrison, Roberta	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
Laird, Robert H.	15, 16, 17
Murphy, Vincent	1, 2, 6, 18
Norris, Wayne	5, 20
Nutting, Andrew D.	19
Nutting, Barbara	4
Saunders & Sons, W.F.	21

## COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

The comments and responses included herein are summarized from the written comments submitted to the Town subsequent to the April 23, 2001 Public Information Meeting, during the August 20, 2001 Public Hearing, and during the comment period following the Public Hearing. The designations that follow the name of the commentor are used to distinguish between oral comments that were presented at the Public Hearing and recorded on the official transcript included in Appendix 3 (T), and written comments (W). The date of the written comment(s) follows the W designation, and the page number follows the T designation. In the event of discrepancies between responses that were provided at the Public Hearing and the written responses that follow, the written responses herein shall control.

**1      Comment**      Submitted by V. Murphy (T, 15-16)

What is the plan for mining and blasting in the Town?

**Response**      The *Comprehensive Plan* will not directly impact or attempt to regulate existing mine facilities in the Town. It will, however, provide guidance for future development as it relates to many issues, including mining.

**2      Comment**      Submitted by V. Murphy (T, 17-18)

Will the existing Saunders Quarry be moving south? Is it currently in the Town of Marcellus?

**Response**      The Marcellus-Camillus Town line runs through the quarry. Many of the processing facilities, however, are in the Town of Camillus. There is an approved Site Plan that establishes the limits of the quarry.

**3      Comment**      Submitted by F. Eisenberg, Mayor, Village of Marcellus (T, 19-21)

Is the Town planning to develop a Watershed Protection Plan?

**Response**      The *Comprehensive Plan* identifies a number of locations to be considered Critical Environmental Areas, as well as areas where further watershed protection steps need to be taken. The Plan also recommends that the Town continue to work with the Village in watershed protection.

4      **Comment**      Submitted by B. Nutting (T, 21-24)

What is the Scenic Overlay District and how will it impact our business?

**Response**      The Town recognizes that Route 20 is an important transportation corridor. It is also anticipated that there could be greater development pressures in this area. An overlay district would allow more commercial development, although with stricter controls than the underlying zoning may require. It would also protect the scenic views and vistas, as well as other environmental considerations. As far as impacts to existing businesses, they would not be impacted by the new regulations until such time as significant changes are proposed for the business, such as operations, size, etc. Existing facilities and operations of these businesses would be "grandfathered".

5      **Comment**      Submitted by W. Norris (T, 24-26)

The Scenic Overlay District is unnecessary and will just add one more hurdle to development.

**Response**      Comment noted.

6      **Comment**      Submitted by V. Murphy (T, 26-29)

The existing quarry is located in an agricultural zone – I don't understand how that works.

**Response**      Mining is a land use that currently exists in the Town's agricultural zone. If the mine ceased to operate, there would be a period of time, after which, that permitted use would have to be re-examined and approved by the Town.

7      **Comment**      Submitted by M. Bingham (T, 29-31)

Could we add federal wetlands maps to the *Comprehensive Plan*?

**Response**      There is a national inventory of federal wetlands, but including those maps in the *Comprehensive Plan* would not relieve developers of their current responsibility to delineate these areas on a case-by-case basis. The maps may also be outdated, so the Town made the decision to only put in the NYSDEC-regulated wetlands. These maps were prepared by the Onondaga County Planning Agency.

8      **Comment**      Submitted by D. Fish (W, 5/8/01)

Our property, consisting of 62.15 acres, is inaccurately shown on the map as having the wrong classification. It's shown as sand and gravel excavation. There is no sand and gravel being removed from the site, only dirt. Also, our plan is to make our property into a wildlife sanctuary, and it should be considered a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

**Response**      The Town's Land Use map (as prepared by the County) does show the property as sand/gravel excavation, which generally describes parcels in the "resource removal" category. It is consistent with the County's terminology for this type of land use. The Steering Committee discussed the areas that should be recommended as CEA's - those areas are reflected on the Proposed Zoning Map (Figure 19).

9      **Comment**      Submitted by R. Harrison (W, 5/10/01)

We should be careful about making blanket statements regarding the viability of agriculture and number of new residential units constructed on agricultural land. Loss of agricultural land has not been documented in specific towns, but it has on a County-wide basis. Is the trend in the Town significantly different than in the County?

**Response**      The comment regarding blanket statements was noted. The trend in the Town is believed by the Steering Committee to be consistent with that observed County-wide.

10     **Comment**      Submitted by R. Harrison (W, 5/10/01)

Regarding the statement that agriculture can be a major source of non-point pollution to surface and subsurface water supplies, it should be noted that New York State has some of the strictest pesticide regulations in the United States. Also, stricter EPA regulations will be in place by 2009.

**Response**      The statement in the *Comprehensive Plan* regarding non-point pollution reflects factual information by the USDA. The comment regarding strict regulations was noted.

- 11     **Comment**     Submitted by R. Harrison (W, 5/10/01)
- Some of the language regarding preservation of agricultural lands (pages V-7 and 8) is confusing. There was extensive discussion about land trusts, and other types of farmland protection. The commentor encourages preservation.
- Response**     Comment noted.
- 12     **Comment**     Submitted by R. Harrison (W, 5/10/01)
- Would it be possible to consider Residential-Agricultural zoning in some areas of the Town? It would more accurately reflect allowable uses and incorporate residential development.
- Response**     Current zoning regulations in the Town of Marcellus allow residential uses in agricultural zones. It is recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan* that all zoning be reviewed by the Town for appropriateness with current and future land uses.
- 13     **Comment**     Submitted by R. Harrison (W, 5/10/01)
- Encourage the Town and Village to work together to increase the capacity of the sewage treatment plant to promote development near the Village.
- Response**     The *Comprehensive Plan* does discuss those recommendations.
- 14     **Comment**     Submitted by R. Harrison (W, 5/10/01)
- The *Comprehensive Plan* seems to be in sync with the County's *2010 Plan*. But, what about Andres Duany's Settlement Plan? The *Comprehensive Plan* should also include 2000 Census Data.
- Response**     The Town's *Comprehensive Plan* is intended to be a "living" document, which will be reviewed and updated, as necessary, on a regular basis. It is generally consistent with the County's *2010 Plan*. Influences of other proposed planning efforts would be part of ongoing update efforts. The *Comprehensive Plan* has been revised to incorporate the 2000 Census data.

- 15      **Comment**      Submitted by R. H. Laird (W, 5/10/01)
- How far should the process go before it conflicts with property rights and freedoms?
- Response**      The *Comprehensive Plan* is a tool that was prepared to assist the Town in effectively managing development changes, while addressing social, environmental, and economic issues, including the rights and freedoms of property owners. It is intended as a guide to help the Town balance beneficial aspects of development, while minimizing the need for mitigative actions wherever possible.
- 16      **Comment**      Submitted by R. H. Laird (W, 5/10/01)
- The *Comprehensive Plan* is not consistent with regard to establishing new water districts.
- Response**      The *Comprehensive Plan* provides overall recommendations for development of public water and sewers. However, the Town will need to evaluate future needs for public utilities in specific areas on a case-by-case basis.
- 17      **Comment**      Submitted by R. H. Laird (W, 5/10/01)
- Public water in the Limeledge Road area would necessitate public sewers in the near future.
- Response**      This issue is discussed in the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- 18      **Comment**      Submitted by V. Murphy (W, 9/5/01)
- Discussion at Public Hearing was for existing mining activities, not future. Would like future Town's plans for future mines addresses in *Comprehensive Plan*.
- Response**      The *Comprehensive Plan* does not make recommendations to revise any current zoning or land use patterns that would alter mining in the Town. There are strict regulations regarding mining activities at both the State and local levels. Any new or expanded mines would require a rigorous review process. Refer to Section V of the *Comprehensive Plan* for a discussion of mining activities.

- 19**     **Comment**     Submitted by A. Nutting (W, 9/20/01)
- Opposed to Scenic Overlay District, because it will hinder development on Route 20. Also, what will be the controls and who will determine what is needed for Route 20? Finally, notice for public meetings should be more widespread than what is legally required. The other comments are noted.
- Response**     Although a Scenic Highway Overlay zone is recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan* (Section VII), it does not set controls or determine specific needs for an overlay district. The Town Board would evaluate and establish specific regulatory controls and uses at the time the overlay district is created.
- 20**     **Comment**     Submitted by W. Norris (W, 9/20/01)
- Restatement of comment #5 – opposition to Scenic Overlay District.
- Response**     Comment noted.
- 21**     **Comment**     Submitted by W.F. Saunders & Sons (W, April 2001)
- General support for mining operations. Also, opposed to changing the zoning in the northwest part of the Town from agricultural to residential.
- Response**     Comment noted. It is understood that there may be economic and other benefits to mining activities. Refer to response to Comment #18.

APPENDIX 5

CORRESPONDENCE

Reviewed 7/17 EJD

# Public Comments

#8

D. E. Fish  
3045 Smith Road  
Marietta, NY 13110

May 8, 2001

Town of Marcellus  
Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Marcellus Town Hall  
24 East Main Street  
Marcellus, NY 13108

ATTN.: Phyllis Budell, Chairperson Steering Committee

When I attended the 4/23 informational meeting at the high school it became apparent to me that our property (Tax map number 314089020.-02-0(0.0); consisting of 62.15 acres has the wrong RS: classification which is listed as sand and gravel. There is no sand and gravel being removed from the site - only dirt.

The 20 acre Smith Hollow Pond which is the registered wetlands part of the parcel, is presently drained and the accumulated dirt sediment is being excavated before rebuilding the dam to restore the pond to its original water level.

Our plan is to make the entire 62.15 acres into a wildlife sanctuary in the future, therefore it should be considered a Critical Environmental Area in your Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

If there are any questions regarding this correction, please call me.

Yours truly,

*D. E. Fish*

D.E. Fish  
673-3110

May 10, 2001

#9-14

Steering Committee  
Comprehensive Plan and  
Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement  
Town of Marcellus  
Main Street  
Marcellus, NY 13108

Dear Mrs. Budell,

I am very appreciative of the hard work and time that the Steering Committee devoted to the review and preparation of the Town of Marcellus Comprehensive Plan and Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement. I wanted to share some of my thoughts as I reviewed the draft.

I believe that the Plan should be careful in making blanket statements about the viability of agriculture in the Town and number of new residential units being constructed on agricultural land. Based on the table in the Draft Comprehensive Plan, "Structures Built in the Town of Marcellus (Outside of the Village)," 623 houses were constructed from the period of 1970 to 1990 (approximately 30 per year). New housing construction has diminished during the last nine years (approximately 7 per year). Recent United States Census data indicates that there has been a net loss in residents in Onondaga Co. and the Town of Marcellus has experienced a loss in population between 0.0% and 4.9%.

Loss of agricultural land in specific towns has not been documented but loss of agricultural land on an individual county basis has. The 1997 USDA Census of Agriculture (page 281) indicates that in 1992 there were 359 farm businesses (gross sales over \$10,000) that managed 126,618 acres. In 1997, 333 farm businesses managed 129,922 acres. While consolidation of farm businesses is happening, the loss in agricultural land has stabilized. Is the trend in the Town significantly different than the County?

Regarding Section V. Environmental Considerations, page 4 "Agriculture can be a major source of non-point pollution (the runoff from land surfaces during storm events) to surface and subsurface water supplies...."

Large farms, over 1,000 animal units will be under strict guidelines to reduce potential ground and surface water contamination through whole farm nutrient management plans to comply with Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) regulations as required by the Environmental Protection Agency. By 2009, all farms will have to comply with Animal Feeding Operation (AFO) regulations that will also include whole farm nutrient management planning in compliance with total daily maximum loads (TDML). This will regulate the amount of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium that can be applied to a particular soil class as recognized by the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Chemicals are also applied to agricultural crops. It should be noted that NYS has some of the strictest pesticide regulations in the United States.

I felt some of the language (conservation easements) regarding preservation of agricultural lands was a bit confusing (V-7 and V-8). During the public meeting, Marc Smith with the USDA talked about the Conservation Reserve Program and Wetland Reserve Program that are administered through the USDA. Neither one of these programs require a property owner to

- place the entire parcel in the program and development or cultivation may or may not occur based on the preference of the owner and the agreement reached. The Wetland Reserve Program is used as a means to protect wetlands and riparian areas. While the property cannot be built upon, there are also restrictions as to what sort of cultivation practices can or cannot be done on the property.

The current Farmland Protection Program administered through NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) allows for the development rights to held by a land trust (American Farmland Trust is currently designated). To date, Onondaga County farms that have participated in this program have included all of their fee simple property. This is not a requirement of the program, however. The development rights are removed from the property in perpetuity. Agricultural production practices continue. American Farmland Trust is responsible for monitoring the property to make sure the terms of the language in the conservation easement are honored. The conservation easement is a deed encumbrance. If a farm is selected for this program and also receives some additional funding from the federal government, then the local municipality is responsible for holding the development rights. The local municipality may be responsible for monitoring the property to make sure that the terms of the agreement are honored. Possibly they could sub-contract with a land trust to have them monitor the agreement.

The Finger Lakes Land Trust is another organization interested in preserving open space and scenic areas. Some property owners have donated land to the organization. Other property owners have donated their development rights to the organization. These development rights have value and can be used as a charitable contribution for income tax purposes or as a means to remove some of the wealth for estate planning purposes. Most of the land that Finger Lakes has been involved with is wooded. They are interested in expanding into farmland protection.

On page 9 of the Draft Plan, I see two areas of the town are recommended for expansion of R-1 zoning. Would it be possible to consider Residential-Agricultural Zoning? It is my opinion that this designation would more accurately reflect allowable uses and incorporate residential development.

It is my understanding that the sewage treatment plant is at maximum capacity. Residential development near the Village makes most sense and I believe Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency encourages sewer and water infrastructure development near villages. The Draft Plan makes note of the need to collaborate with the Village. I would encourage the Town and Village to work together to increase the capacity of the treatment plant which would allow for development near the village.

This Draft Plan seems to be in synch with the County 2010 Plan. But what about Andres Duany's proposed settlement plan and the concept of rural hamlets? Minimum one to five acre residential lots encourage rather than reduce sprawl. I believe some sort of cost-benefit analysis should be conducted to determine if the Town could afford the infrastructure to support this kind of development. I would also encourage the Town to not accept the Draft Plan without 2000 Census data and any changes that would be needed based on new information that the Census might provide.

Sincerely,

*Roberta Harrison*

Roberta Harrison  
(Phone 673-9927)

**COMMENTS REGARDING**  
**the**  
**TOWN OF MARCELLUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

May 10, 2001

While it is commendable for the Town of Marcellus to establish a set of rules aimed at maintaining the quality of life for the residents of Marcellus, reading the document brings up several questions as follows:

1. How far should this process go before it conflicts with the entire concept of property rights and constitutional freedoms. Throughout the document the words "in order to maintain control" are repeated. Since when should the government maintain totalitarian control over private property? When does an individual's property rights end? Is one's use of property to be subject to the whims and opinions of government officials? If one is not so subjected, what limits are imposed upon the government?
2. The plan contains conflicting statements. On the one hand it states that establishing new public water zones in areas where large distances exist between houses should be avoided because of the excessive costs, attributable to the relatively few households available to share the costs of the long runs required. On the other hand it indicates that because of the groundwater quantity and quality issues in the area, it may be desirable to establish a water district in the NW Marcellus area. Neither the rule about avoiding sparsely inhabited regions nor the rule about extending into conflicting use patterns such as R1 and agricultural regions seems to apply. However, the convenient rezoning in 1994 to R1 technically negates the technical conflict, despite the fact it is still, for the most part, active farmland.
3. It is heartwarming to know that the Town Board wants to help those residents who have problems with their water. But so far it has not been disclosed which of the board members has volunteered to help pay for the new district's water. On the other hand it has been proposed that the residents of Limeledge Road help pay for water for the entire newly rezoned R1 district in the NW part of town. This includes open areas along New Seneca Turnpike, Murphy Road, Lawrence Road and the like. Wouldn't it be reasonable to

wait until the unpopulated areas are populated, as stated in the plan, and then establish a district once a need exists? It is unreasonable for the residents of Limeledge Road to pay for the improvement of the infrastructure which enhances the development and growth plans of the town board and the developers. If it is in the best interests of the entire town to pay for infrastructure to promote growth, then let's have the whole town pay for it through a referendum.

4. The plan acknowledges that adding a new water district will increase the demand for public sewers. It also states that the proposed Limeledge Road district is not likely to get sewers since present facilities are inadequate. Considering the type of land involved and the expected new sewer demand caused by the new district, it would seem that soon there will be a need for sewers. What are the plans to deal with this situation? The plan stipulates that the cost of the proposed water district will be unusually high. Building a new sewer system on top of that large cost will result in a catastrophic obligation to the residents of the district.
5. The plan states the district is a prime area for public water "if the residents are willing to pay for it." Are the residents aware of the total potential cost of water including the implied need for sewers? The area has many households which do not need water, primarily on Limeledge Road. In fact if Limeledge Road were a district of its own, because of its higher population density, the cost would be far less than for the whole district which is strangely shaped (gerrymandered) and has a low average population density.
6. A significant number of the residents of Limeledge Road are retired and living on a fixed income. They haven't the resources to pay for infrastructure investment in Marcellus. A reasonable approach is to establish a public water district when a need is established and, as well, when a sufficient number of households exist to finance the project. Again let's finance infrastructure improvements by Town referendum.

Robert H. Laird  
4407 Limeledge Road  
Marcellus, New York 13108  
673-4095

**COPY** TOWN OF MARCELLUS  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/  
DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

**PUBLIC HEARING  
AUGUST 20, 2001**

**WRITTEN COMMENTS**

Written comments are invited from anyone interested in the project, and may be submitted at the end of the meeting, or mailed to Mr. Frank Wilson, Supervisor, Town of Marcellus, 24 East Main Street, Marcellus, New York, 13108. Comments should be received by September 20, 2001.

After attending the above meeting I asked a series of questions in regards to "future mining in the town" and was answered about "existing mining operations". I feel the town should restrict any future mining. This committee should have addressed this issue more fully. I have read your plan and I can see a need to look to the future but we do not need more zoning and restrictions. We should instead remove some. We as a people should have our rights to our homes and lives. They stated the need for the above mining material but not the welfare of us who live by these operations.

Name: Vincent J. Murphy

Address: 2259 GLOVER ROAD

Marcellus, New York

Representing: \_\_\_\_\_

(Attach additional sheets as required)

**RECEIVED**  
SEP 05 2001  
TOWN OF MARCELLUS

**COPY****Valley Inn**2574 County Route 20  
Marcellus, New York 13108  
315-673-9045**Andrew D. Nutting, Proprietor****RECEIVED**

SEP 20 2001

TOWN OF MARCELLUS

Dear Mr. Wilson;

I am opposed to the scenic overlay that is being proposed for Rte 20, for a number of reasons. First and for most in my mind is that this will hinder development on route 20 of any type of business or the expansion of any existing business including my own. My question to you is why do I as a business owner want to be here with what you are proposing. Is it worth my time to grow my business to a level that needs to externally will the town help me or oppose me within reason. Of the comments I heard at the meeting none of them made me feel good about it.

I hear the rumbles of other business owners who have dealt with this town out here in which they are to a point of no longer doing business in the Marcellus area this includes expansion. Who I hear from are construction workers and owners, potential new business that works out of the house, and larger business I would assume. These are the people that give you a good or bad face to outside people and business, looking to locate into this area.

This in simple terms means loss revenue to the town to the county and to the school. This is the area to expanded. This area has the greatest long term potential for tourism and to draw people from the surrounding towns and villages with out effect established business in the village area. What more can I say this area has the potential.

To this point my second concern is what controls will be in place on this overlay and who going to decide what is need for Route 20? Some of your members' of the planning board and officials of government have never to my information ever even eaten out here or do business with anyone out here in any aspect. Looking in some manual is not the answer. Yes, Maybe some residents of Route 20 are not the answer either, but they are the ones who live and work out here. They know our needs the history and topography not someone from the other side of town is my thought on this. My solution is simple a sub planning board composed of residents of route 20, if this measure passes.

My third problem is the notification. Yes, as you said the town did everything they where legally required to do by law. Well maybe it is time government did more than what is required. I have read that this is to help restaurants and lodging locations. Would it not have been logical to talk to the solo Restaurant owner open in the proposed area or better yet the past owner with long track record. To tell me your committee of seventeen people not a one had the time or inclination to call myself or Mr. Schmidt tells me something. This along with the rumors makes me not trust this town government. I feel there is more information out there.

## Valley Inn

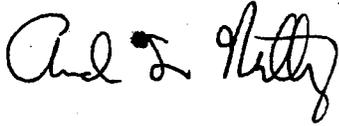
2574 County Route 20  
Marcellus, New York 13108  
315-673-9045

**Andrew D. Nutting, Proprietor**

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In Conclusion, I oppose this proposed over lay. I feel I have not been given enough information to make an informed decision. How the information has been released in some cases makes me cautious of peoples intentions This with other reasons makes me unable to support is idea.

Sincerely:



Andrew D Nutting

## COPY

TO THE MARCELLUS TOWN BOARD,

I AM WRITING THIS IN CONCERN OF THE SCENIC OVERLAY THAT YOU WISH TO PUT ON ROUTE 20.

IT IS MY FEELING THAT THIS IS SOMETHING THAT NO OTHER TOWN HAS ATTEMPTED. THERE ARE NO SET RULES AS TO WHAT THE OVERLAY MIGHT ACCOMPLISH. THEREFORE THE RESIDENTS HAVE NO IDEA AS WHAT TO EXPECT.

I DON'T THINK IT IS FAIR TO THE RESIDENTS TO LEAVE THIS OPEN ENDED AND TO BE INTERPRETED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT RESIDE ON ROUTE 20.

NOR IS IT FAIR TO HAVE TO LIVE IN WONDER AS TO WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT IN THE FUTURE.

TWENTY FIVE RESIDENTS HAVE SIGNED A PETITION ALREADY THAT THEY DO NOT WISH TO HAVE THIS OVERLAY.

IT IS MY HOPE THAT YOU WILL CONSIDER THIS AND THE PETITION WHEN THE FINAL ANALYSIS IS VOTED ON.

THANK-YOU

Wayne Morris

RECEIVED

SEP 20 2001

TOWN OF MARCELLUS

COMMENTS ON  
TOWN OF MARCELLUS  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
and  
GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(April 2001)

This document is being submitted in response to the proposed Town of Marcellus combined Comprehensive Plan and Generic Environmental Impact Statement, dated April 2001. W.F. Saunders & Sons, Inc. ("Saunders")<sup>1</sup> owns and operates mining operations in the Town of Marcellus. In fact, the Saunders Quarry on Limeledge Road in the northwestern portion of the Town was started in the 1920's and has been a major business, employer, and influence on the growth of the Town. The comprehensive plan for any community has a great impact on the future of the existing businesses within the town as well as providing guidance on the growth and development of the entire community. Sherman Saunders, the principle owner of Saunders has the unique prospective of having first-hand knowledge of the evolution of Marcellus from the early 1900's to present and the impact of the development and growth of business and residential areas within the Town. Saunders's comments on the proposed future plan for the Town of Marcellus are made against this backdrop.

Section 272-a of the New York State Town Law is the governing section with respect to comprehensive plans. In this section, the State Legislature recognizes the formidable power a municipality has in its authority to regulate land uses within its borders: "Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a town government is the authority and

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<sup>1</sup>While Saunders is the entity responsible for operation of the quarry, the property is owned by its sister companies, Fletcher Gravel Company and Dearborn Deposits. Reference to "Saunders" throughout this document refers to all three companies.

responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens." Town Law §272-a(1)(b).

Further, this section of the Town Law sets parameters to guide towns in the comprehensive planning process. The State Legislature has directed towns to consider the "great diversity of resources and conditions that exist within and among the towns of the state" in development of the town's comprehensive plan. Town Law §272-a(1)(d). Moreover, the Town Law instructs the drafters of the comprehensive plan to "give due consideration to the needs of the people of the region of which the town is a part." Town Law §272-a(1)(f). The directives of Town Law §272-a are particularly important with respect to minerals since these valuable natural resources are not only finite in quantity, variable in quality, but also found only in locations where geologically deposited millions of years ago.

In contrast, the need for mineral resources is universal. It is estimated that the average new home construction requires 120 tons of aggregate for the foundation, concrete blocks, bricks, mortar and roofing shingles among other things. Each American is estimated to use approximately 8 tons of aggregate material per year. It takes 20,000 tons of crushed stone to construct a single mile of four-lane highway. And, proximity to the source of the minerals is important. Sand, gravel and stone generally can be considered to double in price for each 20 miles it is required to be transported. It is estimated that for each additional mile that the material has to be transported, the cost of construction of that one mile of road mentioned above will increase by as much as \$20,000.00.

The aggregates produced from the mineral resources at Saunders' Quarries are used to construct highways, driveways, sidewalks, and parking lots, in making concrete blocks, roofing

tiles, agricultural fertilizer and in the construction of all types of buildings and homes. The market for Saunders' products extends throughout Onondaga County and into portions of Cortland and Cayuga Counties.

There are also numerous environmental uses for the type of aggregate material which is produced at Saunders' mines. Crushed stone is used to purify water, in the recycling of waste materials, for erosion control and to remove sulphur from smokestack emissions. In addition, limestone is an essential component of most fertilizers used in agricultural operations.

Notwithstanding the plethora of essential and beneficial uses, available mineral resources are increasingly becoming more and more difficult to locate. Minerals can only be found and extracted from places where they were deposited millions of years ago and the resources are non-renewable. Thus, although there are existing mines within the Town of Marcellus, they are continually being depleted. In order to assure a future supply for the Town and region and to support the development envisioned by the proposed Comprehensive Plan, the Town must provide for and protect future reserves.

The Saunders Quarry on Limeledge Road presents a unique opportunity for the Town to do just that. It only makes economic and environmental sense to extract minerals from places where they are abundant, where they are of sufficient grade and quality suitable for the above uses, where there is a demand for them, where they are close to transportation networks, where they can be permitted by the State Department of Environmental Conservation and where mining is already an established use. The Saunders Quarry on Limeledge Road meets all these requirements. However, nearly half of the existing quarry property owned by Saunders at this location is proposed to be zoned residential.

The Plan's oversight in not examining the needs of the community and region for an available supply of aggregate material and proposing to rezone a substantial portion of the Quarry for residential use will have a resounding effect on development, existing and future businesses and residents of the Town and region. The DGEIS has not looked at where alternative supplies of sand, gravel and stone will be found once the limited reserves located at the current active mines in the Town are depleted. Among the impacts associated with the eventual elimination of mining are :

Impact on the availability of necessary aggregate materials for road construction, repaving, road maintenance, residential construction, water purification, erosion control and agricultural use.

Impact on transporting necessary construction materials into the Town and region from elsewhere, including impact on roadways, traffic, highway safety and economy.

Impact of use of otherwise minable land for other purposes including impact on rural character of the Town, impact on necessary services (infrastructure, septic or sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, police, fire and ambulance, schools), impact on traffic, population and population density.

Impact of the loss of a substantial employer will have on the Town and its residents including impact on employment, impact on the tax base and impact on the local economy.

In promoting residential development in lieu of industrial, and specifically mining, the Town needs to consider that residential uses cause an increased demand for services beyond the increased tax revenue generated by the additional homes. Additionally, if the Town does not plan for the future of the Saunders' Quarry in this Comprehensive Plan, but rather allows unbridled residential development in this area, then the Town must first analyze and consider the consequences the loss of the tax revenues, employment and business will have on the local economy.

The Plan also does not consider the far-reaching effect the Quarry has on the local economy. Saunders directly employs 45 people at the Limeledge Quarry. In addition, there are several hundred more individuals who visit the Quarry as either suppliers of materials or services, drivers or customers. These people significantly contribute to the vitality of the local economy, frequenting the local stores and shops, gas stations, restaurants and other local businesses.

Furthermore, the Plan recognizes that the Saunders' property is unsuitable for residential development because of the difficulty in providing public water supply to the area because of its higher elevation and the poor quality of the soil for septic systems. Yet, at the same time, the Plan sets aside this area for residential development.

And, perhaps most importantly, the Plan does not consider the effect of the Quarry in helping achieve the stated goals of preservation of the Town's rural character and agricultural lands. The proposed Comprehensive Plan states:

*Community Character - The Town should seek to maintain the overall rural character of the community by promoting open space areas and agriculture with support from local framers. New residential and commercial development should be restricted in selected areas of the Town...*

*Agriculture has shaped the character of many small communities in central New York, including the Town of Marcellus. It formed the basis for how the road system, economy, and settlement patterns were initially established. Agriculture continues to influence communities through the sense of open space provided by the large amount of land it occupies and the lack of demand it places upon public services.*

The Plan fails to provide a means to accomplish these goals and, in fact, jeopardizes both the Town's rural character and existing agricultural lands by promoting residential development. The proposed Comprehensive Plan ignores mining's inherent promotion of both these goals. In many communities in New York State, agriculture relies on mining as a secondary income. Since

mining is a progressive use of the land, lands reserved for future mining which are not actively being mined are often put into active agricultural use. This is precisely the case with Saunders' Limeledge Quarry. Close to 200 acres reserved for future mining are being actively farmed today.<sup>2</sup> This common scenario allows the farmer to continue using large tracts of land needed for his agricultural operation, while relieving him of the crippling burden otherwise imposed by property taxes which will increase exponentially with new residential development.

Mining also achieves the Town's goal to preserve open space. In fact, mining itself, independent of agriculture, inherently provides the open space so greedily sought by residents whose very homes threaten it. Only a proportionately small area of the entire mine is involved in the active extraction operations at any one time, leaving the remainder as open space. Moreover, the State Mined Land Reclamation Law requires stringent reclamation standards, including stockpiling of topsoil for reuse in reclamation, achieving successful and permanent revegetation, bonding to ensure reclamation is completed and where ever possible, requiring that reclamation and revegetation occur concurrently with mining.

As the Town knows, Saunders has proposed a reclamation plan which would ensure open space within the Town for the long-term future. Saunders conducted a survey of the Town residents to obtain community input prior to proposing a final reclamation plan for this area. Nearly 300 residents indicated their desire to see the Saunders' Quarry reclaimed as open space. Saunders took this into account and the current approved reclamation plan for the Limeledge Quarry is to reclaim the quarry as a community park. Submitted with these comments are actual

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<sup>2</sup> The Proposed Land Use Plan, Figure 20, and other references in the Plan that this area is vacant and not in agricultural use are erroneous. The area is actively being farmed.

reclamation projects of other mining operations in this state, the country and Canada. The photograph of the Butchart Gardens near Victoria, British Columbia is very similar to the reclamation plan proposed by Saunders for its Limeledge Quarry. In addition, Saunders has voluntarily provided for an 82-acre buffer between its quarry and the residential uses to the south. It also agreed to establish a 500-foot buffer between its quarry and residences to the east, well in excess of the State mandated setback distance. Given this, the proposed residential zoning of the southern portion of Saunders' property is contrary to the stated goals of the Town.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan recognizes that "Federal and State policies and regulation of environmental resources can be satisfied or even enhanced with proper coordination of Town policy," yet fails to provide for this when it addresses the issue of mining.

Environmental Conservation Law §23-2701(1) states:

The legislature hereby declares that it is the policy of this state to foster and encourage the development of an economically sound and stable mining industry, and the orderly development of domestic mineral resources and reserves necessary to assure satisfaction of economic needs compatible with sound environmental management practices. The legislature further declares it to be the policy of this state to provide for the management and planning for the use of these non-renewable natural resources...

Promoting an economically sound and stable mining industry on the local level means providing access to mineral reserves through proper zoning of the areas where the reserves are found. In Marcellus, orderly development of domestic mineral resources necessary to assure satisfaction of economic needs compatible with sound environmental management practices occurs with the proper future zoning of the Quarry lands owned by Saunders. In contrast, proposing residential development over these same reserves, as the Plan as currently drafted does, means these mineral resources will be lost forever. Once houses are constructed on the lands above the minerals, the

mineral reserves become inaccessible.

There are several other goals and guidelines proposed in the Comprehensive Plan which the proposed residential zoning of this area is in conflict with, but which mining would help achieve. For instance:

*The Town should revise zoning districts and subdivision guidelines that promote development patterns consistent with the character and location of environmental resources.*

By proposing residential zoning for nearly half of Saunders' Quarry, the Plan does not do this.

*The Town should institute cooperative efforts with other regulatory agencies to ensure that land development proposals and public services enhance the long-term preservation of significant environmental resources and minimize disturbance of those areas.*

The Saunders' Quarry is already permitted by DEC for mining and reclamation discussed above and is actively being mined. Therefore, zoning all lands owned by Saunders at this location for mining would be consistent with this goal.

*[The Town] should encourage State and County governments to make improvements such as widening lanes and the addition of travel lanes if appropriate to meet the road's functional class.*

The availability of reasonable priced supply of quality construction aggregates in close proximity to these roadways only helps achieve this goal.

Specifically, the need for minerals to support continued development in the Town and region has not been addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Plan. The Plan merely identifies existing active and inactive mines within the Town. This list does not take into account the types of aggregate, quality, variations within a deposit, and other aspects of the reserves which determine their usability and use. In preparing the Town's comprehensive plan for the growth of our community over the next 15-20 years, the Town must consider the importance of a continued

supply of mineral resources and the far reaching consequences of zoning areas of available, permitted reserves for residential use. The types of decisions being made as part of the Plan, could result in devastating and permanent adverse environmental impacts.

Saunders has been in a major business in the Town of Marcellus, supplying aggregate and construction materials from the Limeledge Quarry for nearly a century. Indeed, the southern portion of Saunders's quarry property on Limeledge Road was recognized in both Onondaga County's 2010 Plan and a plan prepared for the Town of Marcellus in 1975 as being set aside for future extraction of the mineral reserves which are located to the south of the existing quarry. Yet, the Comprehensive Plan now proposes the lands to the south of the existing quarry for residential development. Further, an environmental impact statement for the mining and subsequent reclamation of this parcel was prepared and accepted pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). In contrast, the impacts of designating this area residential under the proposed Plan, including the loss of business, loss of supply of aggregate, loss of employment and the loss of tax revenues, have not been addressed.

In conclusion, Saunders urges the Committee at its next work shop to consider the above in complying with the Legislative mandates in Town Law §272-a to consider the great diversity of resources and conditions that exist within the Town of Marcellus and to give due consideration to the needs of the people of the region, specifically their need for a economical supply of mineral reserves. As the Town Law acknowledges, the task of the Committee in formulating the

comprehensive plan upon which the future of Marcellus will be determined is one of the most important responsibilities a municipality undertakes. The designation of large areas of the Town for future residential development and the planned eventual elimination of industrial employers from the Town should not be dealt with lightly or done without full consideration of the lasting and far-reaching impacts such decisions will have.

Respectfully Submitted,

W.F. Saunders & Sons, Inc.  
P.O. Drawer A  
4276 South Onondaga Road  
Nedrow, NY 13120