

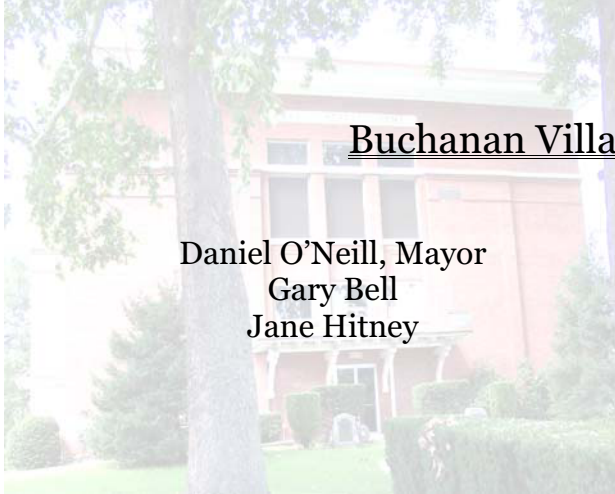
# Comprehensive Master Plan

*Remembering the Past, Improving the Present, Envisioning the Future*



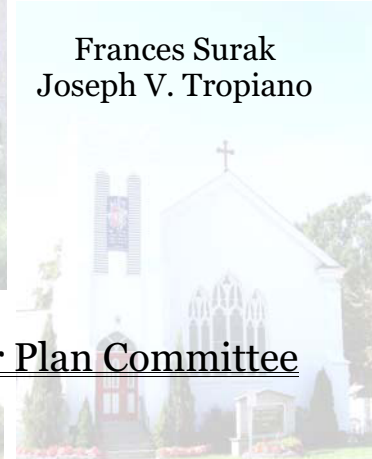
**Village of Buchanan**  
**New York**  
March 2005

# Village of Buchanan Comprehensive Master Plan



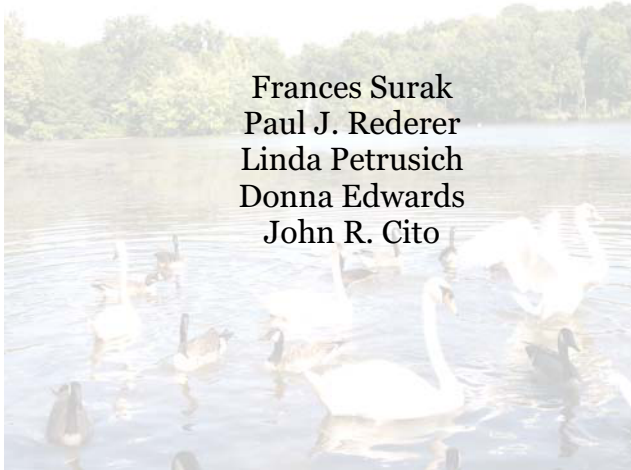
## Buchanan Village Board

Daniel O'Neill, Mayor  
Gary Bell  
Jane Hitney



Frances Surak  
Joseph V. Tropiano

## Comprehensive Master Plan Committee



Frances Surak  
Paul J. Rederer  
Linda Petrusich  
Donna Edwards  
John R. Cito



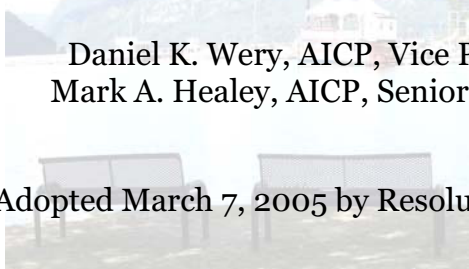
John Grady  
Diane Tangen  
Brian V. Burke  
Michelle O'Neill

## Project Consultants

Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.  
*Planning/ Development/ Environment/ Transportation*

Daniel K. Wery, AICP, Vice President/ Planning  
Mark A. Healey, AICP, Senior Associate/ Planning

Adopted March 7, 2005 by Resolution of the Village Board



# VILLAGE OF BUCHANAN



MAYOR  
DANIEL E. O'NEILL

TRUSTEES  
GARY BELL  
JANE HITNEY  
FRANCES E. SURAK  
JOSEPH V. TROPANO

THOMAS J. JANKOWSKI  
VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR  
CLERK & TREASURER

MUNICIPAL BUILDING, BUCHANAN, N.Y. 10511-1298

(914) 737-1033  
FAX (914) 737-6587

February 2, 2005

Dear fellow resident:

The new Comprehensive Master Plan for the Village of Buchanan is now completed, thanks to the diligence and thoughtfulness of the Master Plan Committee, headed by Chairperson, Trustee Fran Surak, planning consultants from Frederick P. Clark & Associates, and support from the entire Village Board. It is a document that is – and will remain for many years – vital to how we live and work in Buchanan.

The history of the Village of Buchanan is a living history. Many residents can trace their ancestry in this area for decades and even centuries. We are on the banks of one of the world's most beautiful and greatest rivers, the Hudson. Several historical buildings are still used by residents and businesses. The country's first peaceful atomic power plants were built at Indian Point and remain operating today. Using that history as a basis, the Comprehensive Master Plan seeks to preserve the Village's "small town" sensibility and essence while providing an outline on how to improve Buchanan for the present and future. The Comprehensive Master Plan reflects the desire of residents to maintain that character *and* to improve our quality of life.

But the Comprehensive Master Plan does more: It provides an outline *and* specific recommendations on how to improve Buchanan. The Master Plan Committee held a number of public hearings and meetings to listen to suggestions and concerns by Village residents and businesses. Many of these suggestions are contained in the report. The report adapted recommendations from the Village Circle Advisory Committee and added specific details on how to improve the Village Circle. Other suggestions were included in the final report.

The recommendations in the Comprehensive Master Plan are so positive and timely that the Village Board has already begun adopting some: Additional parking has been added to the Village Circle with financial assistance from a Community Development Block Grant. The Village Board has also applied for State and Federal grant money to help improve pedestrian access on Albany Post Road and Tate Avenue and is looking into ways of providing housing for seniors.

Fellow Resident, page 2  
February 2, 2005

The Comprehensive Master Plan is indeed a "living document" and will continue for many years to come. The document is so relevant and important to our community because of its high quality. The quality of the Comprehensive Master Plan is so high because of the intelligence, thoughtfulness and dedication of the Master Plan Committee members, Chairperson and the planning consultant. When I appointed Trustee Fran Surak to chair the Master Plan Committee, I knew she would do an excellent job. When I saw the names of those who had volunteered for the Committee, I knew this was a quality group who had extensive knowledge of Buchanan and brought considerable personal and professional expertise to the table - as well as a vision for our future. What is even more impressive is that all members were volunteers, giving their time and expertise without compensation other than the satisfaction of knowing they have contributed to their community. Having seen Dan Wery and Mark Healey guiding and working so well with our Planning and Zoning Boards, I knew they were the right choice as consultants. Despite my high expectations, the Committee members, Chairperson, planning consultants all outdid themselves. In addition, the other Village Board members - Trustees Gary Bell, Jane Hitney and Joe Tropiano - provided continuous support from the initiation of the Master Plan Committee to completion of this report. In addition, much thanks is due to the Village's administrative staff, Village Administrator Tom Jankowski, Deputy Clerk Penny Pierce-Baisley, Senior Account Clerk Cindy Kemptner and Bookkeeper Betty Travis.

The Comprehensive Master Plan will be a guide to residents, businesses, elected officials, Village employees and professional consultants for many, many years. It has been my honor to be your Mayor during the tenure of the Master Plan Committee. The entire Village can be proud of the Committee's work, which resulted in this Comprehensive Master Plan.

Very truly yours,



Daniel E. O'Neill  
Mayor

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**A. WELCOME TO BUCHANAN'S NEW COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN – A PLAN FOR ACTION**

Welcome to the Village of Buchanan's new Comprehensive Master Plan. This Plan contains a wealth of knowledge about the Village of Buchanan. More importantly, it includes many excellent, well-reasoned, realistic and practical ideas and recommendations - all of which are focused on making the Village of Buchanan one of the best communities in which to live and do business on the Hudson River.

An enormous amount of time, energy and love for the Village went into preparing this Plan for you. Please use its many ideas and recommendations to guide and inspire you to help Buchanan reach and exceed its optimistic yet realistic goals and fulfill its tremendous potential.

This Plan has been prepared to inform and provide guidance to anyone and everyone interested in the future of the Village of Buchanan. It is intended to be used daily by existing and future residents, elected and appointed officials, Village staff and consultants, business owners, investors, developers, community groups, and government agencies.

The Comprehensive Master Plan is intended to be a flexible, living document. It is a guide, with clear directions on achieving its stated goals. It is not a law. Nor is it self-effectuating. To be effective, it must be used and referenced constantly, by everyone. Its recommendations should be evaluated frequently and updated as necessary. The more this Plan is used, and the more people who use it, the more effective and meaningful it will be, and the more the Village of Buchanan will benefit as a result.

The Comprehensive Master Plan Committee has been working actively since late 2002 on the preparation of this Plan as a replacement for the Village's first Plan which was completed in 1986. In general, the purposes of this Plan are to:

- i. Maintain and enhance the Village's small town character;
- ii. Protect and reinforce its stable neighborhoods;
- iii. Improve the quality of life for Village residents; and
- iv. Revitalize and restore the Village Circle area as the proud and attractive center of community activity in Buchanan.

This Plan is focused on implementation. It makes many specific and targeted recommendations and is intended to serve as the primary resource in guiding all future decisions affecting land use.

In articulating the vision for the future of Buchanan, this new Comprehensive Master Plan includes seven (7) key chapters with 25 specific and well-defined objectives and recommends over 125 specific implementation strategies and actions designed to achieve those objectives. This Plan is a plan for action.

Despite the tremendous inherent strength and value of this new Comprehensive Master Plan, it, and all of the efforts that went into its preparation, will be wasted unless it is used. Completion and adoption of the Plan is not the end of the planning process. Rather, it is just the first step in the process of making the many informed and well-reasoned choices and decisions that will determine the long-term future of the Village of Buchanan.



- One freestanding sign per entry drive for institutional and municipal uses in residential districts is permitted - each such sign is permitted to be up to 30 square feet in area and 12 feet in height;
- Window signs in the C-1, C-2, M-1 and M-2 Districts are permitted to occupy up to 400 square feet in area;
- Wall signs in the C-1, C-2, M-1 and M-2 Districts are permitted to be up to 60 square feet in size;
- The standards for freestanding, canopy, marquee and projecting signs in the C-1 District are not consistent with the existing or desirable pattern of development (e.g., encouraging such signs to be located far back on the lot). Consideration should be given to prohibiting freestanding signs from the C-1 District all together.
- “Changeable-copy” signs are permitted in the C-2 District;
- The C-2 District allows two freestanding signs per lot;
- The M-1 and M-2 District allows a freestanding sign at each entrance drive - each such sign may be up to 40 square feet in size.

**#9:** *Improve parks and recreation in accordance with recreational needs and desires of Village residents.*

The Hudson River is one of the world’s greatest rivers, and is a National and State treasure. The Village of Buchanan is one of the very few communities with a significant amount of accessible Hudson River waterfront land. While this is undoubtedly one of the Village’s greatest physical assets, it has not been optimized.

Indian Point has become synonymous with the Con Edison and Entergy corporations’ nuclear energy generation plant. It is helpful to remember that before the energy plant, Indian Point was known for its peninsula and adjacent bay to the north, Lent’s Cove. Where the energy plant now exists was an amusement park with a pier, providing public access to the Hudson River on a large scale to general public. Although the future of the energy plant is likely to remain industrial for the foreseeable future, there is a large area between the plant and Lent’s Cove Park that is undeveloped.

This natural portion of Indian Point is approximately 45 acres in area, contains one-half mile of Hudson River waterfront, is largely forested and contains areas of steep slopes, wetlands and a large pond. It also enjoys spectacular views of the Hudson

River. This rare and extremely valuable physical asset should play a more prominent and positive role in the character of the Village of Buchanan.

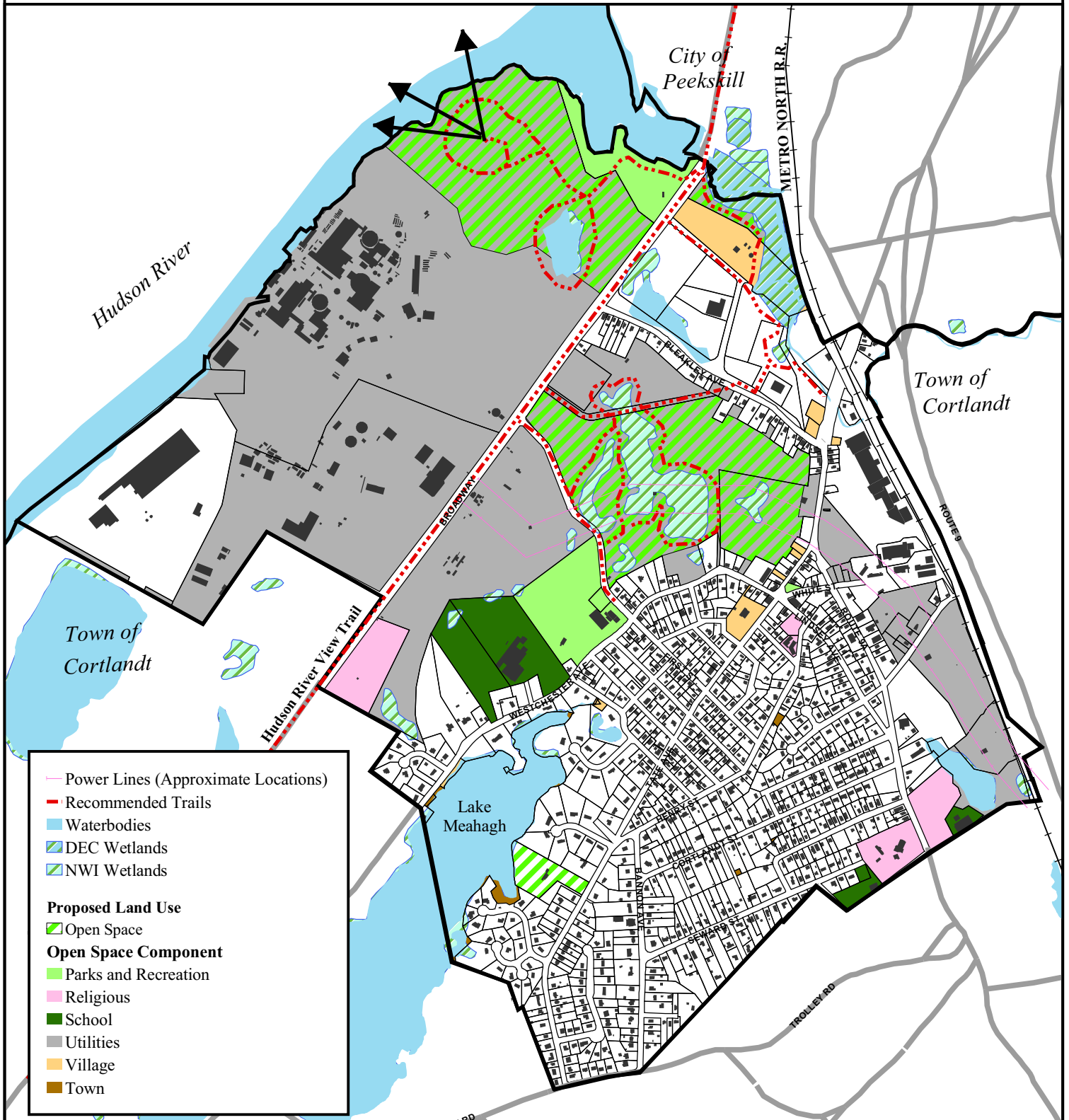
- This plan calls for the preservation of this land as open space. The Village should seek to improve and increase access and use of the property for passive trails and park, and enjoying the views and waterfront, as a logical extension of Lent's Cove Park. This area should be integrated into the proposed Hudson River Walk Greenway Trail which is proposed to run along Broadway. (See Figure II-4)

(<http://www.westchestergov.com/planning/docs/RiverWalk/RivWalkMap.pdf>)

The Village should working closely with the County, Peekskill and Cortlandt in developing the trail. Measurable objectives or milestones, such as a monetary and/or time period for a certain action, are useful in making commitments.

- The Village should seek to preserve the area known as Bleakley Woods. Located west of Westchester Avenue, this area is large, forested, contains trails and significant areas of steep slopes and wetlands. Most of the land is owned by Con Edison. Any future development of the property should provide naturally vegetated buffers along the rear of the homes along Westchester Avenue.
  - The Village should investigate ways to control the goose problem at Lent's Cove Park.
  - The Village should seek protection of the pond located east of NYS Route 9A near the Village's southern boundary and the school bus repair garage. This pond has historically been used for fishing and ice-skating. The Village should seek improved access and use of the pond for fishing and ice-skating.
- #10: *Improve Water Distribution System.* The Village should budget the upgrading of water lines on a regular basis in order to reduce potential ruptures in water lines. Also, improvements to correct low pressure areas, possibly via improved connection and looping of dead end areas, should be investigated.
- #11: *Improve Communication.* The Village should continue to improve communication with residents. The new village web site should be amended to include notices, board agendas, copies of the newsletters and current and searchable versions of the Village's Comprehensive Master Plan, studies, and laws and regulations.
- #12: *Update the Zoning Code* – The Zoning Code is out-of-date and self-contradictory and is therefore is significant need of substantial revision. The zoning code should be reviewed and updated comprehensively to eliminate and correct errors and contradictions; improve and update standards, procedural requirements, and

# OPEN SPACE COMPONENTS



- Power Lines (Approximate Locations)
  - - - Recommended Trails
  - Waterbodies
  - DEC Wetlands
  - NWI Wetlands
- Proposed Land Use**
- Open Space
- Open Space Component**
- Parks and Recreation
  - Religious
  - School
  - Utilities
  - Village
  - Town

## COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

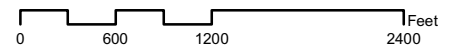
Village of Buchanan, Westchester County, NY

Note: Tax parcel data obtained from the Town of Cortlandt.  
Map created in ArcView software and is intended to be used for GENERAL PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.

March 2005

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FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.  
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation



**Figure II-4**

## **G. FUTURE LAND USE**

### **1. Overview**

The Future Land Use chapter is intended to be a generalized policy guide for the overall future growth and development of the Village. The vision for the future of the Village of Buchanan is one of development that is appropriate in terms of type, amount, scale, context and location; and which is compatible with and gives appropriate consideration to the Village's existing character; preservation of natural resources; a strong economy with employment opportunities and services; and sufficient community services and facilities.

The vision for Buchanan's future is reflected in the Land Use Plan as well as in the concepts, goals, objectives and implementation strategies described in this and in previous chapters. The Future Land Use chapter, including the goals and objectives, implementation strategies, and the *Land Use Plan* described below, essentially serves as a synthesis of the recommendations made in the earlier chapters of this Plan.

### **2. Planning Objectives:**

- #1: Control the scale, intensity and location of land use development to levels that minimize traffic congestion on area roadways, that encourage use of public transportation, and that improves and increases pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- #2: Ensure that additional development occurs in locations that are most suitable for such development in consideration of surrounding land uses, transportation capacity, and availability and capacity of infrastructure.
- #3: Ensure that additional development occurs at a scale that is appropriate to the area and that appropriate measures are taken to reduce potential impacts to nearby residential areas.
- #4: Encourage opportunities for a broad range of light industrial and commercial uses so as to provide a variety of employment opportunities, encourage a diversified economy and tax base, and provide goods and services for the Village's residents and businesses.
- #5: Maintain the predominately single-family nature of Buchanan while providing an appropriate range of residential opportunities in terms of density, housing type and prices.
- #6: Make the Village Circle a primary focus of civic and community identity and activity.

- #7: Preserve, protect, enhance and increase access to the Hudson River, Lake Meahagh, and the remaining open space resources within the Village.
- #8: Protect, preserve and enhance the environmental resources within the Village.
- #9: Plan for the possible future use of the Indian Point and LaFarge lands.

### **3. Land Use Plan**

The *Land Use Plan* (Figure II-6) depicts the recommended land uses and development intensities throughout the Village. The *Land Use Plan* is intended to serve as a general guide for future development in the Village. The overall pattern of land uses and intensities recommended on the *Land Use Plan* generally mirrors the existing zoning in the Village. However, certain deviations from existing zoning are proposed in order to achieve specific planning recommendations outlined in the Plan.

Following is a description of each of the proposed land use categories on the *Land Use Plan*.

#### Residential Development

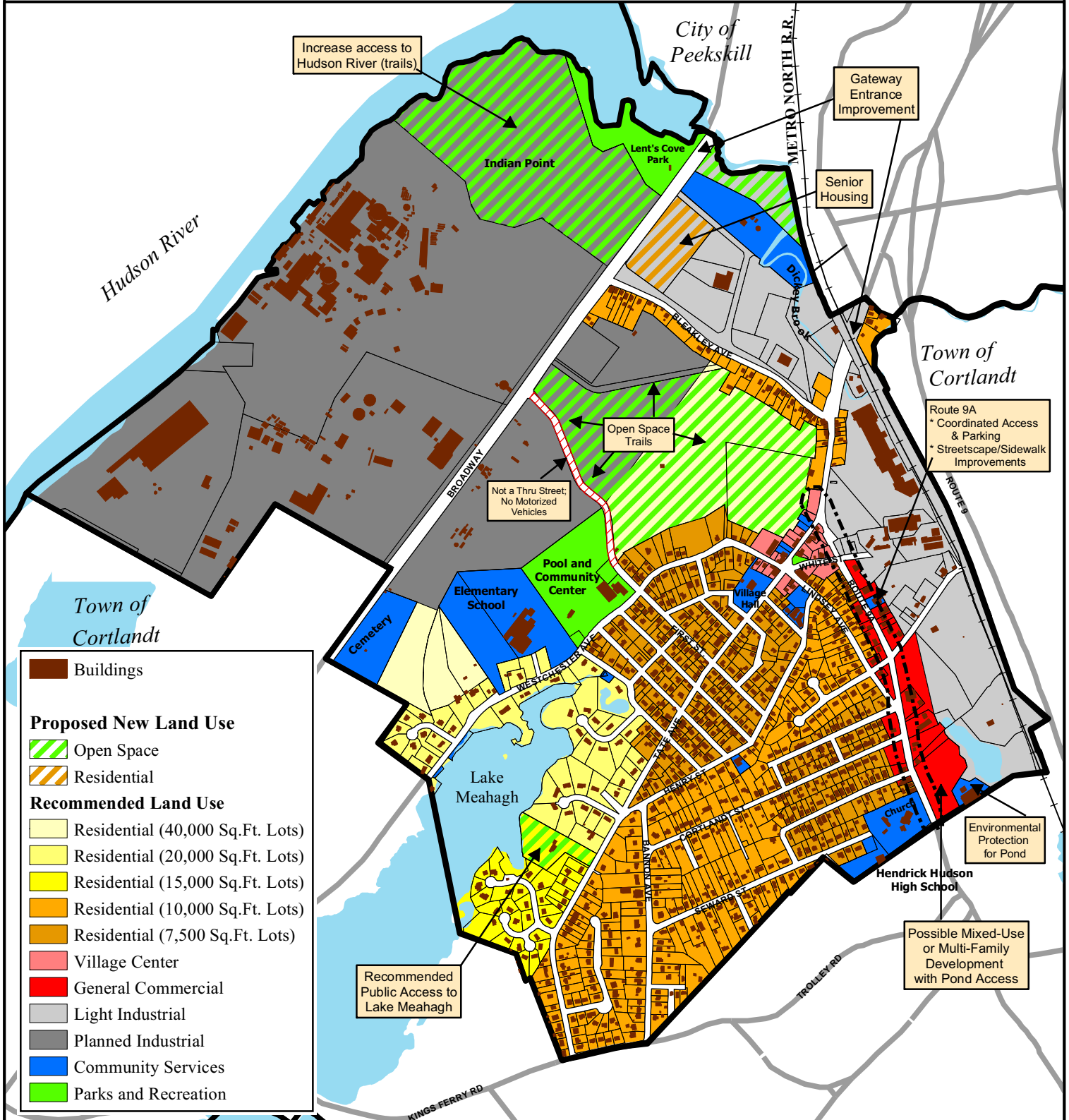
As suggested above, the overall pattern of development density recommended in this Plan generally mirrors the existing zoning and development in the Village. The appropriate residential density results from an examination of many factors including:

- The form and intensity of existing residential development in relation to the nature of the surrounding neighborhood;
- The capacity of the land and surrounding area to accommodate additional residential development in consideration of: the surrounding road system and opportunities for use of public transportation; sanitary sewer and public water systems; accommodation of increased stormwater runoff; and minimization of adverse impacts to natural resources; and
- The secondary impacts of residential uses in terms of demand for public services such as schools, places of worship, recreation, and protective services.

A prevailing theme of this Plan is the preservation and protection of Buchanan's neighborhoods. As such, the residential land use categories shown on the *Land Use Plan* are directly reflective of the Village's existing zoning and development pattern, as described below:

- *Residential (40,000 square foot lots)* – This land use category corresponds to the Village's R-40 District. The properties shown within this land use category are

# LAND USE PLAN

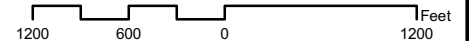


## COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Village of Buchanan, Westchester County, NY

FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.  
 Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation

Note: Tax parcel data obtained from the Town of Cortlandt.  
 Map created in ArcView software and is intended to be used for GENERAL PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.



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**Figure II-6**

undeveloped or residentially-used properties currently located within the Village's R-40 District.

This Plan recommends rezoning the properties located between Pheasant Run and the Village Recreation Center on the west side of Westchester Avenue from the R-20 to R-40 District.

- *Residential (20,000 square foot lots)* - This land use category corresponds to the Village's R-20 District. The properties shown within this land use category are undeveloped or residentially-used properties currently located within the Village's R-20 District.
- *Residential (15,000 square foot lots)* - This land use category corresponds to the Village's R-15 District. The properties shown within this land use category are undeveloped or residentially-used properties currently located within the Village's R-15 District.
- *Residential (10,000 square foot lots)* - This land use category corresponds to the Village's R-10 District. The properties shown within this land use category are undeveloped or residentially-used properties currently located within the Village's R-10 District.
- *Residential (7,500 square foot lots)* - This land use category corresponds to the Village's R-7.5 District. The properties shown within this land use category consist of undeveloped or residentially-used properties currently located within the Village's R-7.5 District, as well as a limited number of commercially-zoned properties recommended for rezoning to this District.

[Note: While the residential land use categories discussed above are based on the recommended overall density of residential development within these areas, other non-residential uses such as places of worship and schools would continue to be permitted in residential areas subject to appropriate requirements.]

### Commercial and Industrial Development

Providing a well-balanced mix of residential and business zones is an important planning consideration for any community. As a result, an important objective of this Plan is to encourage opportunities for an appropriate range of industrial and commercial uses so as to provide a variety of employment opportunities, encourage a diversified economy and tax base, and to provide goods and services for the Village's residents and businesses.

The Village must select areas that are suitable for commercial and industrial development in terms of location, access, and environmental constraints, making certain that sites avoid conflicts with nearby uses and residential neighborhoods. The Village's current land use plan, as reflected in the Village's Zoning Map, generally accomplishes this. For example, the

Village's commercial and industrial zones are generally located in areas of Village that are suitable for such development in terms of traffic access and roadway capacity, that minimize potential impacts to residential neighborhoods and that can accommodate such development with minimal impacts to natural resources. However, certain areas within the Village have been zoned for commercial or light industrial uses but have not been used for such purposes or have remained undeveloped or vacant for a long period of time suggesting that the zoning of such areas does not reflect the needs of the respective markets. Such areas should be considered for rezoning to a zone that would permit development consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan. This Plan specifically recommends rezoning of certain properties from commercial to residential in order to achieve specific planning objectives outlined in earlier chapters. These areas include portions of the existing C-1 District on Tate Avenue, and portions of the M-1 and C-2 zoned lands along Route 9A near Bleakley Avenue. Other areas were also identified for such rezonings, but require further review and consideration.

The following commercial and industrial land use categories are reflected on the *Land Use Plan*:

- *Village Center* - This land use category consists of lands currently located within the Village's C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) District with the exception of certain properties recommended to be rezoned to the R-7.5 District (i.e., certain properties along Tate Avenue south and west of Village Hall, as well as three properties fronting on Lindsey Avenue). The Plan also recommends that three properties located at the northwest corner of Tate Avenue/ Route 9A intersection be rezoned from the C-2 General Commercial to the C-1 Neighborhood Commercial District. As explained in Section III.A, *The Village Circle Area*, it is envisioned that the Village Circle area would be redeveloped and improved so that it becomes an attractive and active traditional, pedestrian oriented, "Main Street" style commercial area that contains small-scale businesses that primarily serve the retail, office and personal service needs of the local community.
- *General Business* - This land use category consists of properties currently located within the Village' C-2 (General Commercial) District. This category is located along Route 9A and essentially functions as a typical highway business type zone. No properties are proposed to be rezoned to correspond to this land use category. Conversely, a limited number of very small, residentially-used properties within this zone have been recommended for placement within the R-7.5 District. Sections II-B and II-D of this Plan recommend certain amendments to C-2 District.

There are a number of undeveloped commercially-zoned properties along Route 9A that should be evaluated further. Rezoning or amendments to the existing permitted uses and dimensional standards within the C-2 District should be considered to encourage other types of development on these remaining vacant parcels.

This Plan recommends the rezoning of the C-2 zoned properties along west side of NYS Route 9A, generally between Tate Avenue to the two Village-owned parcels on the north side of Bleakley Avenue. These properties are very small, not ideally located for commercial use and are either vacant or occupied by residences, or are undeveloped and



are very steep and rocky, which along with potential access problems, would make commercial development infeasible or undesirable.

- *Light Industry* - This land use category consists of properties currently located within the Village's M-1 (Light Industrial) District – a district that allows a number of auto and light industrial uses. Section II-D of this Plan recommends certain amendments to M-1 District.

This Plan recommends rezoning the small, primarily residential properties along the east side of NYS Route 9A generally between the Westchester Industrial Complex property and the railroad bridge from M-1 to R-10 District consistent with the proposed rezoning of the C-2 District on the east side of Route 9A.

Further, this Plan recommends strong consideration for the use of the currently M-1 Light Industrially zoned land located on the east side of Broadway opposite Lent's Cove Park for senior housing.

- *Planned Industry* - This land use category consists of properties currently located within the Village's M-2 (Planned Industrial) District – a district that allows the same uses as the M-1 District, as well as the generation of energy. This area covers the Indian Point Energy Center as well as energy company owned lands on the east side of Broadway.

#### Public and Quasi-Public Uses

The *Land Use Plan* indicates certain areas in Buchanan within the following land use categories based on the existing use of the land:

- *Public Park/Open Space* - This land use category consists of the Village's three park/recreational sites.

This Plan recommends obtaining direct waterfront access to Lake Meahagh for public use and recreation via the last remaining large parcel (approximately 4 acres in area) located between Tate Avenue and the east side of Lake Meahagh.

The undeveloped northern portion of the Entergy property located between the energy generation facilities and Lent's Cove Park should be preserved as permanent open space. This extremely rare and valuable Hudson River waterfront land should be made more accessible for passive enjoyment of the Hudson River and its own scenic features. Trails and access to the waterfront, and possible expansion of the park facilities should be considered, while ensuring the security of the energy generation plant.

- *Community Services* - This category includes a variety of uses including an elementary school, a cemetery, places of worship, Village Hall, cultural facilities, the sewage treatment facility, properties devoted to public parking and other such public and quasi-public community services located in the Village.

This Plan recommends that essential community services including the Post Office and banking be located in the Village Circle to reinforce it as the heart of civic activity.