

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map is intended as a guide to the revision of the Town's zoning regulations and zoning map. The Town's zoning needs to be consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Future Land Use Map (Map 3) identifies four categories of land use: Lakeshore, Residential, Agricultural/ Rural Residential, and Public/ Recreation/ Community Service. In addition, the map depicts the location of areas with sensitive environmental features such as wetlands, woodlots, and floodplains.

Business districts are not shown on the map, as the sites of existing businesses are small and contained within residential areas. The Comprehensive Plan encourages existing businesses to continue at their current locations, with continued sensitivity to neighboring residences.

The following narrative describes the location and existing uses within each of the future land use category, the issues affecting these areas, the relation of the future land use areas to existing zoning districts, and recommendations for zoning changes.

Lakeshore

Location

The Lakeshore land use category encompasses land west of Route 38A and Rockefeller Road, along the shore of Owasco Lake and Owasco River (Outlet.)

Existing Land Use

The land uses in this area are primarily single family dwellings, with a small number of commercial and recreational properties. Tax records indicate that approximately 90 residences in the Town are "seasonal." Nearly all of these are located along the lake shore. Numerous seasonal dwellings have been converted into year-round dwellings during the past several years.

In the northern part of the Town, parcels adjoining the Owasco Lake Outlet have driveways onto Owasco Road (Route 38A). Most of the lots are relatively narrow, with houses close to the highway and rear property extending up to 400 feet west to the Outlet.

Issues and Opportunities

In the central and southern portion of the Town, most of the lakeshore lots are only accessible by private roads, marked and numbered as "fire lanes." Most of the fire lanes were constructed to serve seasonal dwellings, and do not meet Town standards. As they are private roads, Town services are limited. Emergency response personnel have expressed concerns about the ability to negotiate these narrow roads with their large trucks in case of emergency.

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The lakeshore is nearly entirely developed with residences. Exceptions include Emerson Park, vacant land just south of Willowbrook Drive, a small stretch of lake frontage on the south side of Burtis Point, and parcels owned by the Owasco Yacht Club and Camp Columbus.

A few parcels shown as "Rural Residence" on the Existing Land Use Map, are large enough to be subdivided to create new residential lots. Most of these are located between the residences along Route 38A and those with lakeshore frontage, although a few have lakeshore frontage.

The replacement of small seasonal cottages, with large buildings that are out of scale with the surroundings, and the more intensive use of accessory buildings, have raised concerns in certain areas along the Lake. It may be appropriate to further limit the bulk, or gross floor area, of buildings in proportion to the lot size, and to provide additional guidance in the zoning for the construction or re-use of accessory buildings.

Relation to Existing Zoning

This proposed land use category corresponds to the boundaries of the existing Lakeshore Zoning District. Existing zoning requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet, representing an average density of approximately 2.1 houses per acre. Minimum lot width at the road frontage is 100 feet. Docks built on floats, columns, open timber piles or other open-work supports are allowed, provided that they meet the requirements of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). Development within areas of flood hazard must meet the requirement of the Federal Flood Insurance program and the local law that administers this program.

Recommendations

- Require site plan review for all new development and redevelopment of property with lakeshore frontage. Revise zoning regulations to ensure that the bulk/ gross floor area of replacement structures and additions are not disproportionate to the size of the lot.
- Ensure that erosion and sediment control plans are created and carried out when development occurs on steep slopes.
- Increase the lot size requirement per dwelling from 20,000 sq. ft to 22,000 sq. ft. Retain the existing lot width requirement of 100 feet at the road frontage.
- Encourage homeowners to improve fire lanes so that they are reasonably accessible to emergency vehicles
- Revise zoning regulations to set standards for development on existing undersized lots.
- Utilize cluster subdivision procedures to maximize the retention of open space in large undeveloped areas along the lakeshore, such as at Burtis Point.

Residential

Location

The proposed Residential category incorporates existing residential neighborhoods in the northwestern portion of the Town, the Hamlet of Owasco, existing residences along the east side of Route 38A and Rockefeller Road, as well as residences along Route 38A to the Hamlet of Owasco, Bevier Road Byrne Road, and portions of Honeysuckle Road, Swartout Road, Melrose Road, and Giza Road.

Issues and Opportunities

This area includes all of the land within the Town's water service area, as well as all of the area within the Town's existing Sewer Service District #1 and Sewer Service District #2 as approved. Land that is served by public sanitary sewer service can support development at a higher density, as on-site septic systems are not required. Where public sewer service is not available, the lot must be large enough to accommodate a leach field. A relatively higher density of development where public water service is available helps to make more efficient use of the water lines and treatment systems that have been constructed.

The area also includes a considerable amount of additional land that adjoins the existing water service area. These areas may be developed into residential subdivisions in the future; if the number of residences warrants it, public water and possibly public sewer service may be extended to these areas to serve new residential development.

Relation to Existing Zoning

The existing Residential zoning district encompasses land to the east of the proposed Residential category in the Future Land Use Map, to Town Hall Road, and Martin Road. The Future Land Use map recommends that the boundary be placed closer to existing lot lines in most places.

All of the area proposed to be included in the Residential category on the Future Land Use Map is currently in the Residential zoning district. The existing Residential zoning district requires a minimum lot size/ density of 20,000 square feet of lot area per dwelling.

Recommendations

- Any new residential development needs to be designed in such a way that stormwater runoff is minimized and vistas are preserved. Open space should be incorporated into new subdivisions through the use of conservation design (clustering or density averaging.) Guidelines and examples of conservation subdivisions are included in the Reference Packet that accompanies this Comprehensive Plan.

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- New development adjoining the Hamlet of Owasco should be designed in such a way that the central focus of the Hamlet is preserved. Design guidelines for hamlet development are included in the Reference Packet.
- Residential density in areas served by public sanitary sewers should increase from 20,000 to 22,000 square feet per lot. In areas that are not served by public sanitary sewers, the minimum lot size/ density should be increased to at least 44,000 square feet (approximately one acre).
- Revise zoning regulations to limit the portion of a lot that can be occupied by buildings (maximum lot coverage) as well as to specify that proportion of a lot that must remain impermeable or devoted to vegetative cover (minimum “green space.”)

Agricultural/ Rural Residential

The remaining area of the Town is proposed to be included in the Agricultural/ Rural Residential category. This category is intended to promote continued agricultural use of farmland, conservation of open space, and maintenance of vistas. Residential development is envisioned to occur at low densities, with a minimum lot size/ density of at least three acres per dwelling.

Relation to existing zoning

This area includes all of the land that is currently zoned Agriculture/ Residential, as well as some land that is currently zoned Residential. The existing Agriculture/ Residential zone requires a minimum lot size/ density of three acres per dwelling. Several uses are currently permitted in the A/R zone but not in the R zone, including riding stables, non-profit recreation facilities, greenhouses, and mineral extraction as an accessory use. Private clubs, commercial antennas, and the raising of livestock are permitted “by right” in the AR district but require a special permit in the R district.

Issues and Opportunities

This area contains most of the Town’s agricultural operations, and large areas of open space. None of the area is served by public water or sanitary sewer service.

Recommendations

- Minimum lot size/ density of at least three acres per dwelling
- Minimum road frontage and/or distance between driveways of 300 feet
- Encourage density averaging/ conservation subdivision designs to preserve open space, natural resources, and significant views

Public/ Community Service

Areas shown as Public/ Community Service include government facilities such as the Town Hall, Fire Departments, water treatment plant, as well as schools, parks, and private recreational facilities. These areas are designated on the Future Land Use map in order to demonstrate that the Town's policy is to keep these areas in public, community service, or recreational use.

Recommendations

- Encourage the continued use of significant private recreation land, including three golf courses (Owasco Country Club, Auburn Golf and Country Club and Dutch Hollow Country Club), the Owasco Yacht Club, and the Cayuga County Sportsmen's Club, for community service.

Conservation Overlays

Conservation overlays are superimposed over the underlying land use category. Additional guidelines are proposed to protect the Town's natural resources, including stream corridors, steep slopes, woodlots, and flood hazard areas. As wetlands are regulated by New York State and the Army Corps of Engineers (see the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection chapter), additional town involvement in their protection is not necessary.

Recommendations

Enact Conservation Overlay zoning provisions, as a supplement to the underlying zoning designation, to protect stream corridors and woodlots. Sample regulations are included in the Reference Packet that accompanies the Comprehensive Plan.

The woodlot overlay would require Town approval before trees are removed from woodlots designated as "significant" by the Town.

The stream corridor overlay would apply to land along both sides of Dutch Hollow Brook, Sucker Brook and their tributaries, within 50 feet of the stream bank or a distance sufficient to protect the stream banks. Development guidelines would restrict the removal of vegetation, and ensure effective erosion and sediment control.

The steep slope overlay would include additional provisions to minimize erosion and sedimentation due to development.

Maps of these resources are included in the Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP --

Please see maps sent to you previously. No changes have been made.