

are established to protect and promote a farmer's opportunity to operate a successful business. Protection from nuisance suits, crippling regulations, and eminent domain as well as the assistance of the NY State Department of Agriculture is provided. Agricultural enterprises do not enjoy exemption from all land use regulations, only those regulations that are not conducive to the operation of the farm. Requesting inclusion in an agricultural district can be done through the County annually. Active farms and viable farmland should be encouraged to enter the Agricultural District program.



Commercial development is concentrated along US Route 20 with the greatest concentration in the Sharon Hill area. (Map 7B) There are also spots of commercial development within a mile and half to the west to south west of the Village of Sharon Springs.

Current zoning for one and two family dwellings allows for 3 to 4 acre lots in the R-R and R-A zones respectively and 15 acre lots in the O-S zone throughout the town. The R zone near the village and the R-C zone in the town currently require a 1 acre lot size, the survey results support the continuation of these lot sizes. If the town witnesses a trend of development on small lots, outside of the R zone, larger lot size requirements may be warranted. Use of a moratorium is one option that may be invoked if development pressure increases.

Commercial development is currently supported in the R-C zones in the Sharon Hill, Leesville, and Argusville areas as a standard use. It is demonstrated through the accompanying maps 7A—7H, that there is a greater concentration of commercial use in the Sharon Hill area. Consideration may be given to emphasize greater commercial development in Sharon Hill.

The slopes and hillsides that constitute much of the town land area should be restricted from future intensive development and could remain



as open space and farming areas. Residences with larger lot sizes should be encouraged.

Recreational Facilities

There was a high favorable response from the public survey that the Town should pursue more recreational facilities. The Town and Village operate a Pool located in the Village, and the park at Bowmaker Pond. A recreation path could be proposed to utilize the old rail beds.



Emergency Services

The town is serviced by the Sharon Springs Joint Fire District. Originally a Village Fire Department, in 1964 the current fire district was created. The district consists of 66 active members, and relies solely on volunteers for its staffing. The district operates 3 pumpers, 1 tanker, 1 R.T.V, and 1 ambulance and services the entire town of Sharon and parts of the Town of Seward.

School System



Most of the Town of Sharon is in the Sharon Springs Central School District. The district school is located in the Village of Sharon Springs. There is one parcel adjacent to Montgomery County that is in the Canajoharie School District. The school district has a total of 421 students, 42 teachers and 92 employees overall. Construction on the school began in 1929 and the first class graduated in the fall of 1931. An addition made in 1969 is now the location of the library. In 2003, a 7.2 million dollar project was completed adding an audito-

rium, bus garage, concession stand, additional classrooms, a new gymnasium and a parking lot. In 2008 there was a 3 million dollar EXCEL Project aimed at upgrading playgrounds, bathroom replacements, locker replacements, and roof repairs. Due to current population growth, additional major improvements are not foreseen, but impacts must be considered when reviewing large residential projects/subdivisions.

Sewerage—Private

The scattered development within the Town and the increased sophistication of individual septic systems warrants continued use in a majority of the Town. In order to help ensure proper functioning of individual septic systems, the problem of “out of sight, out of mind” as it pertains to maintenance (pumping out septic tanks) should be remedied. Education about proper septic system management could be pursued by the Town Planning Board in conjunction with the Schoharie County Health Department. Distributing educational materials to planning board applicants and new building permit applicants could help increase septic maintenance awareness.



Water—Private

A majority of residences and businesses in the Town of Sharon are supplied with water via individual wells. Problems with water quantity and quality have been identified in the Sharon Hill Area.

Consideration may be taken to undergo a study to identify problematic areas for acquiring water in order to create a necessary density requirement that may lessen the impact of new wells on existing uses. The relatively low density nature of development outside any known problematic area should ensure that a plentiful supply of high-quality groundwater continues to be supplied.

Water—Public

The Town of Sharon does not have any public water infrastructure in place as of the adoption date of this plan. However, the Village water supply is located within the Town's boundaries. As a result the Town should strive to take the greatest amount of precautions in protecting this resource.

Stormwater Management

A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan is “a plan for controlling stormwater runoff and pollutants from a site during and after construction activities”. Developed by the applicant, the plan is required by New York State Department of Conservation when “land development activity” or a “larger plan of development or sale” of one acre of land or greater is disturbed. The terms “land development activity” and “larger plan of development or sale” are defined as:

Land Development Activity: Construction activity including clearing, grading, excavating, soil disturbance or placement of fill that results in land disturbance of equal to or greater than one acre, or activities disturbing less than one acre of total land area that is part of a larger common plan of development or sale, even though multiple separate and distinct land development activities may take place at different times on different schedules.

Larger Plan of Development or Sale: A situation in which multiple construction activities are occurring, or will occur, on a contiguous area. Permit coverage is needed if disturbance of one or more acres is occurring or is anticipated to occur in conjunction with the initial disturbance.



For discrete construction projects that are located within a larger common plan of development or sale that are at least one-quarter mile apart, each project can be treated as a separate plan of development or sale provided any interconnecting road, pipeline or utility project that is part of the same “common plan” is not concurrently disturbed. The Town of Sharon could inform applicants for building permits and zoning permits of the applicable requirements for the State Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

Transportation

US Route 20 crosses through the Town and Village. Providing fast access to the Village and Town from the Albany area, the existence of Route 20 had a major impact on the historic fabric of this area. Approximately 2860 vehicles per day pass through Sharon via Route 20 (see Traffic Volume Report Appendix C). New York State Route 145 and NYS Route 10 also serve as main access roads to the Town. Historically the Railroad served the Village of Sharon Springs until 1956. The Thruway, approximately 10 miles north of Sharon, runs parallel to Route 20. The completion of the Thruway in 1955 led to a sharp decline in traffic along Route 20 and a decline in tourism based business in the Town of Sharon.



There have been recent discussions between the Town and Schoharie County to develop speed limits on the town's roads. The concept to develop speed limits on town roads to promote safety should be continued.

One area that merits safety consideration is in the Sharon Hill area at the Intersection of NYS Route 145 and US Route 20. Numerous complaints about the speed of traffic on Route 20 and visibility from Route 145 have been heard. It is feared that there will be a fatality in this area if nothing is done to mitigate the speed/visibility issue.