

Part II - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Issue

The area is rich in its scenic, agricultural, and rural town character. Many residents want to see these characteristics maintained. Growth is viewed as being necessary but it is felt that it should be done with caution as to not disrupt the character of the Town. New development that takes place should be weighed to grant applicants the freedom to pursue future endeavors while keeping growth in line with the Town's character.

Goal

Protect and maintain the rural character and small town atmosphere of the Town of Sharon while promoting appropriate economic development.

Objective

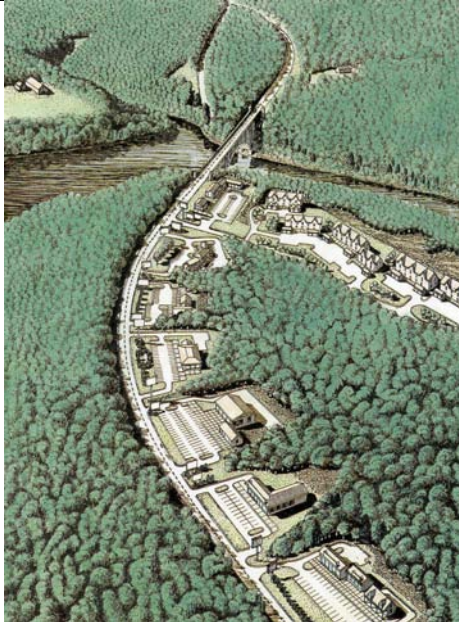
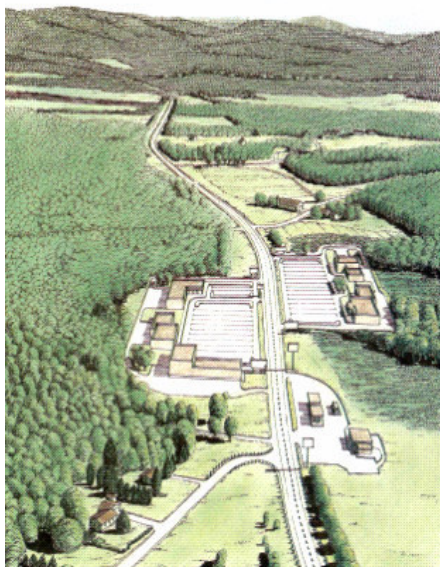
- 1-1: **The Town Subdivision and Zoning Laws will be easier to understand, more easily and fairly enforced, more flexible, and to better utilize and conserve resources.**

Actions

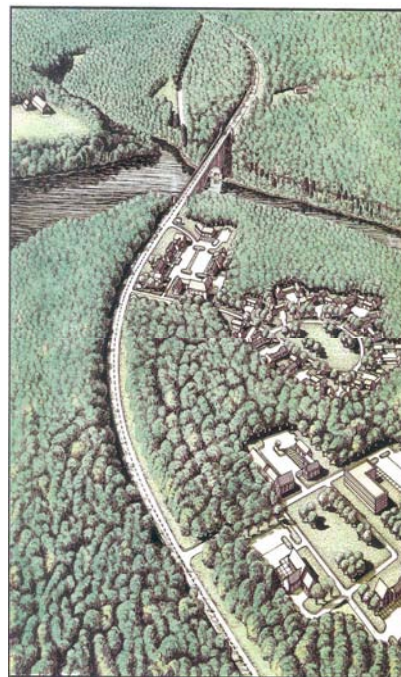
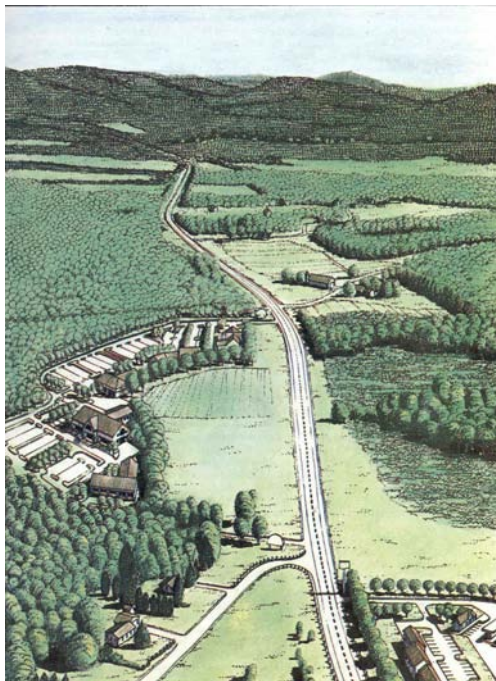
- 1-1A: Allow existing development that violates any new zoning law use requirement to come into compliance gradually to limit financial burden on the owner. Complete elimination of a legal nonconforming use is not the intent of zoning law changes. Existing development that violates any new zoning law square footage/ acreage area requirement can expand without the need of an area variance for lot size.
- 1-1B: Allow residents more freedom and flexibility to use their land by encouraging more uses Town wide that meet certain performance standards (physical, visual, and social impact to area) rather than adherence to only use categories. Such uses might include, but are not limited to, country inns, craft workshops, professional of-

ices, antique shops, landscape nurseries, home-based businesses, and repair shops. Allow more flexibility for appropriate commercial and residential uses and one mobile home on parcels 30 acres or more in size (or 30 or more contiguous acres if under the same ownership) if detailed performance standards are met and property owners agree to keep such lot size or larger as long as the use is present.

- 1-1C: Attempt to limit curb cuts onto State Routes 10 and 145 and US Route 20 by concentrating nodes of commercial growth along the Town portion of New York State Route 10 and US Route 20 to protect some frontage and avoid sprawl stretching from the Village of Sharon Springs. Such nodes could be established around existing development and utilizing existing town and county roads and new access roads to allow interior property to be accessible and encourage access between commercial developments. See pictures 1 through 4 on following page. Pictures taken from "Dealing with change in the Connecticut River Valley".
- 1-1D: Discourage copyrighted architecture and give developers incentives to create unique structures and/or structures that enhance the rural nature of the area.
- 1-1E: Allow construction of unpaved roads for low-density development in the Town.
- 1-1F: Develop written and electronic applications (perhaps web based) and instructions for all types of permits, including forms for violations of local codes.
- 1-1G: Consider a moratorium on conventional subdivisions involving the creation of more than 10 individual lots in Town (especially in cases where 4 or more lots are less than 25 acres in size), or re-subdivisions resulting in the same within a 2-year period. If such subdivisions are proposed, planning boards may need to draft and recommend creative land use requirements to deal with the potential loss of open space and negative impacts to the rural landscape.



Above: Examples of multiple curb cut (undesired) development
 Below: Examples of same sites with creative, limited curb cut development.



Yaro, Robert D. et al. 1989. *Dealing With Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development.* 1-11:
 Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Research and consider adopting wind energy regulations.

1-1J Research and consider adopting an adult use regulation

1-1K: At the sketch plan phase and upon intent to receive a building permit, all subdividers, builders, and property owners should be given educational materials to consider general principals basic to good lot design/development and regulations for stormwater, floodplain, and wetlands. Design principals briefly include:

- *Avoid building in the center of a meadow.*
- *Reduce visual prominence by building into woodland edges.*
- *Maintain irregular field edges when they occur.*
- *Avoid large setbacks from the road if the lot is small or near a village or hamlet.*
- *Open up views through limb pruning and selective tree removal, as opposed to clear-cutting.*
- *Avoid critical wildlife areas and steep slopes.*
- *Preserve significant site features such as stone walls and large tree stands.*
- *Provide for road and trail linkages to future subdivisions.*
- *Consider using a landscape architect to help prepare subdivision plans.*
- *Regulations could be amended to provide such guidance and to encourage identification of building envelopes on lots, without invoking mandatory regulations. The sensitive overlay district would be the best area to first consider mandatory design regulations.*

Time

1-1: Zoning Rewrite Committee formed and draft zoning law presented to Municipal Boards within first 2 years after plan adoption.

Responsibility

1-1: Municipal Boards/Zoning Rewrite Committee/Advisory Committee

Objective

- 1-2: **Attractive signs welcome people into the Town.**

Actions

- 1-2: Work with the Route 20 Scenic Byway to design and procure Town welcoming signage on US Route 20, State Route 10, and State Route 145.

Time

- 1-2: Town Board action within first 5 years after plan adoption.

Objective

- 1-3: **Housing stock improves and reflects the rural nature of Sharon**

Actions

- 1-3: Pursue grant funds to improve housing conditions wherever needed.

Time

- 1-3: Ongoing. Annual sources of funds can be researched and applications completed.

Responsibility

- 1-3: Advisory Committee/Municipal Boards. Schoharie County Rural Preservation Office should be contacted for help.

Objective

- 1-4: **Town boards and services function to their greatest potential and efficiently serve the needs of residents/landowners.**

Actions

- 1-4A: Require appropriate training for Planning and ZBA members.
1-4B: Explore consolidating Town/Village Zoning Board of Appeals.
1-4C: Pursue grants through NYS Department of State for the study of consolidating the Village

- and Town
1-4D: Pursue tax incentives for open space preservation and small businesses. Open space incentive could be similar to agricultural property tax exemption.

Time

- 1-4: 1-4A immediately after plan adoption. 1-4B-D within first decade after plan adoption.

Responsibility

- 1-4: Municipal Boards/Advisory Committee/
Superintendents

Objective

- 1-5: **Recreational opportunities for Town/Village residents and visitors are improved and plentiful.**

Actions

- 1-5A: Support efforts of the Sharon Historical Society.
1-5B: Improve the Town and Village parks and pursue expansion/improvement of property for recreational opportunities.
1-5C: Encourage snowmobile operation and horseback riding on defined trails throughout the Town/Village and exploit the economic benefits. Consider establishment of nighttime hours of no operation for snowmobiles (unless needed for emergency situations).
1-5D Pursue grants through NYS Parks and Recreation for snowmobile trails and/or recreation paths

Time

- 1-5 : Ongoing, within first decade after plan adoption

Responsibility

- 1-5: Advisory Committee and Municipal Boards

Objective

- 1-6: **Promote the Sharon area as a great place to live/do business.**

Actions

- 1-6A: Prepare a brochure to highlight safety, area character, value, school district, and easy commute times for distribution around the region (especially to real estate agents).
- 1-6B: Continue to improve and maintain the Town's web presence on the County web site for community promotion.
- 1-6C: Support annual events of the community (Clean-up day, Sharon Springs Music Festival, Garlic Festival, Tractor Show, Historic House Tour, MacFadden's Auction, Community-Wide Garage Sale).
- 1-6E: Consider maximizing efforts of event coordinators with Town/Village participation
- 1-6F: Support Tech Valley initiative and encourage such businesses in appropriate locations in Sharon.

Time

- 1-6: Ongoing, within first five years after plan adoption.

Responsibility

- 1-6: Advisory Committee/Planning Boards/Municipal Boards

Objective

- 1-7: **Maintain and promote agriculture as a foundation of the community**

Actions

- 1-7A: Maximize the possibility for voluntary farmland protection using tools such as purchase, lease, or transfer of development rights
- 1-7B Ensure that Town and County funded economic development programs support farmland protection
- 1-7C Promote industrial and commercial growth near areas that have access to water and waste water infrastructure
- 1-7D Identify and provide for areas that have greater density requirements for single family and multi-family residential development. These areas should be near an area that has access to a

- water and/or waste water infrastructure.
- 1-7E Promote local Agricultural products at community events.
 - 1-7F Allow for (or continue) roadside stands or pick your own operations by right (or with minimal review)
 - 1-7G Support Local Produce to be sold to local schools, hospitals, nursing homes

Issue

Traffic around the Sharon Hill area is of great concern to local residents due to speed of vehicles and the junctions of US Route 20, State Route 145, Slate Hill Road, and Argusville Road.

Goal

Improve pedestrian and traffic safety.

Objective

- 2-1 **Dangerous/high accident areas in the transportation system are identified and eliminated.**

Action

- 2-1A: Work with NYSDOT to solve problems associated US Route 20, State Route 145, Slate Hill Road, and Argusville Road
 - improved safety at the connection with the current intersection of US Route 20, State Route 145, Slate Hill Road, and Argusville Road
 - limit impacts to farmland, business, and residences in the area
- 2-1B: Work with NYSDOT to annually identify high accident prone areas.

Time

- 2-1 : 2-1A is ongoing, 2-1B within five to ten years after plan adoption.

Responsibility

- 2-1: Advisory Committee/Municipal Board

Issue

The Town of Sharon actively engage in endeavors that maintain or better the civic responsibilities that allow for the current quality of life.

Goal

Protect the quality of surface and ground-water supplies, protect the integrity of mapped floodplains, preserve the integrity of unique physical environments and preserve wildlife habitats.

Objective

3-1: **Town regulations reflect the importance of the environment to the community.**

Action

- 3-1A: Revise/aggressively enforce trash/junk regulations to clean up existing violations.
- 3-1B: Pursue incorporating storm water management and erosion control techniques in subdivision reviews.
- 3-1E: Encourage residential development in appropriate areas following traditional patterns of rural development by discouraging “sprawl” subdivisions containing lots that are uniform in size, shape, and building design and by requiring new building lots to follow existing waterways, hedgerows, stone walls, and other distinguishable features whenever possible.
- 3-1F: Encourage large-scale residential in appropriate zoning districts be clustered in a manner that preserves some open space and that fosters a sense of community.
- 3-1G: Working with County Health Department, distribute educational materials to residents in regard to proper septic system maintenance and private well maintenance.
- 3-1H: Action 1-1K (Page19) is important to accomplishing Objective 3-1.

Time

- 3-1 Within two years after plan adoption. Action 3-1G - also once every five years.

Responsibility:

- 3-1 Zoning Rewrite Committee/Advisory Committee/Municipal Boards

Objective

- 3-2: The Village water and sewer system are maintained to ensure adequacy and integrity of the systems.

Action

- 3-2A: Investigate extending water/sewer infrastructure, especially along US Route 20 or other more densely populated areas.
- 3-2B: Pursue capital plan for infrastructure and pursue funding to replace village water mains, leaking sewer pipes, and manhole covers.
- 3-2C: Clean village reservoirs and explore expanding reservoir capacity.

Time:

- 3-2 Within one to five years after plan adoption

Responsibility

- 3-2 Advisory Committee/Municipal Boards/Village Superintendent

Goal

Secure safety from all hazards in Sharon

Objective

- 4-1: **Sharon Volunteer Rescue Squad and Sharon Volunteer Fire Department are consulted/supported to help best protect Sharon.**

Action

- 4-1A: Maintain firefighting equipment and institute volunteer recruitment incentives.

Time

Ongoing

Responsibility:

Volunteer Departments/Advisory Committee/
Municipal Boards

Objective

4-2: **Existing and new development are protected from all hazards.**

Action

- 4-2A: Require boards to consult with fire department when reviewing large development projects to ensure fire services can adequately respond if development is established.
- 4-2B: Comply and implement applicable actions in the Schoharie County All- Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- 4-2C: Development in special flood hazard areas complies with Sharon Flood Damage Prevention Laws
- 4-2D: Make sure new buildings comply with New York State Building Code.
- 4-2E: Steer new development away from areas needed to help mitigate flooding and incorporate hazard reduction techniques into new buildings.

- 4-2F: Investigate measures to adequately protect village reservoirs from possible contamination.

Time:

4-2 Ongoing

Responsibility

4-2 Municipal Boards/Planning Board/Code Enforcement Officer