

form, and possibly historic design elements. Numerous photo exhibits within this Area Study provide details of the existing community character of the built environment. The following photo exhibits and Hamlet Core Area Concept Plans attempt to identify unifying themes, some from other communities, to illustrate the design concept.



Streetscape features such as street trees, antique lights, park benches, sidewalks and historic clocks help frame and define hamlet centers, providing for a sense of place, pedestrian-friendly amenities and small town “Main Street” charm. Pictured left is Main Street in the Village of Westhampton Beach, which has been designated a “Tree City USA” by the National Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association. Pictured right is the Montauk Highway intersection with Central Avenue in the Hamlet of East Quogue.

ACTION ITEMS

- Reach consensus within individual hamlet areas on appropriate design-related issues, including lighting, signage, street trees, “sidewalk districts” and architectural design elements for new development/redevelopment.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION STRATEGIES

Lands devoted to agricultural uses within the Study Area comprise some 350 acres, or four percent of the total land area. As indicated in previous sections, agricultural uses played a significant role in the history and development of

not only the Hamlet Study Area but also the eastern end of Suffolk County.

The community has indicated throughout the Area Study process that the remaining agricultural lands should be retained as they contribute to the rural ambiance and provide an added economic element that complements the area’s seasonal population. One of the key aspects of future farmland preservation will be to allow property owners the ability to get a reasonable economic return on the value of the property.

One of the proposals discussed in the prior “Issues and Opportunities Chapter” is the creation of a farmers market on the Surf Club nightclub property located on Montauk Highway in Westhampton, where locally grown produce could be made available to the public or brought in from points in eastern Southampton Town and the North Fork. This is an example of a symbiotic land use relationship, providing a convenient outlet for local farmers, such as is recommended in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan Update for agri-tourism and economic development purposes related to agriculture.

There are number of techniques that can potentially be employed to ensure long term preservation of existing farmland, including:

Community Preservation Funds

The Town of Southampton has Community Preservation Funds financed by revenues generated by a two percent real estate transfer tax. The Town updates a Community Preservation Project Plan every three to five years, outlining priorities for lands to be purchased within the Town through CPF funds. CPF funds can be used to purchase development rights or fee title.

Purchase of Development Rights

The purchase of development rights would allow the Town (or a non-profit nature conservancy) to purchase agricultural lands with the cooperation of landowners, while the landowners retain rights to use their land for agricultural uses. Further development of the land would not be permitted unless it was in keeping with the agricultural use (e.g., barns, greenhouses.)

Purchase of a Conservation Easement

The purchase of a conservation easement would occur with the cooperation of the landowner. The conservation easement would potentially restrict the use of the land to agricultural or open space use, foregoing the future potential to subdivide and develop all or portions of the property.

Transfer of Development Rights Program

The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) concept provides for a landowner to separate the development rights from the land and transfer them to a designated receiving area. When development rights are transferred, the property becomes encumbered with a conservation easement representing future development potential.

Extension of an Agricultural Overlay District

Extension of Agricultural District - Section 330-47 of the Town of Southampton Code provides for the opportunity to create an Agricultural Overlay District (AOD). The AOD provides for a coordinated and equitable approach to addressing an agricultural landowner's concerns relative to achieving an economic return on his or her property.

For those properties for which the district could apply, the landowner may voluntarily enter into an agreement that would permit the establishment of the full residential development

or capital value of the entire tract on a limited portion of the property in the form of a planned residential development through a compensatory increase in permitted residential density.⁴ This is a form of incentive zoning, permitting clustering to protecting prime soils and lands in agricultural production, with the ancillary benefit of preserving scenic views, while providing landowner economic incentive in terms of increases of additional yield.

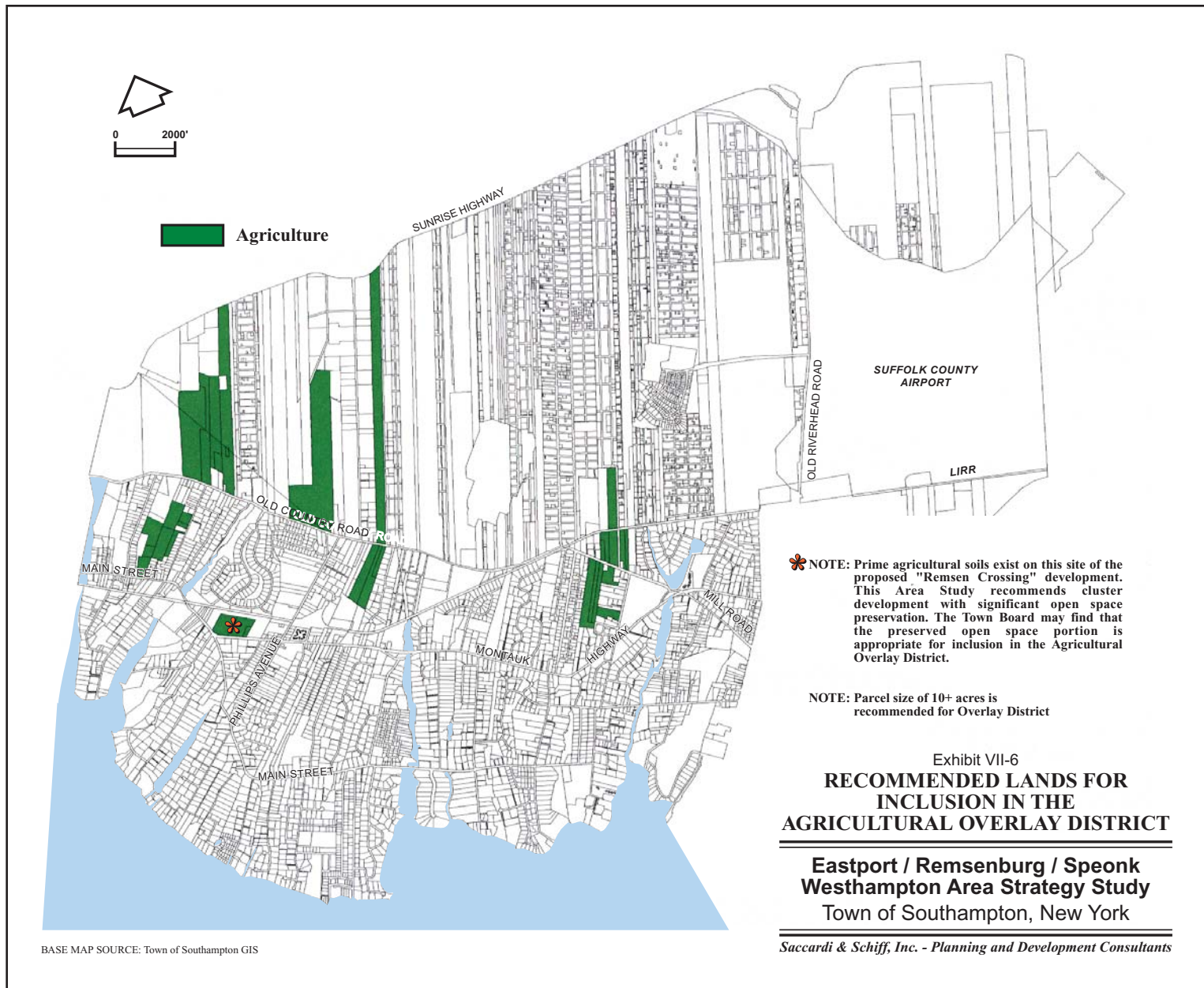
There is considerable community support to designate properties in the Study Area over 10 acres in size (or aggregating with adjoining parcels to a 10-acre or greater assemblage) and in agricultural use for inclusion in the Agricultural Overlay District, which allows the creation of agricultural reserve areas through the subdivision process, should the land come under development pressure.

Exhibit VII-6 illustrates the properties that are recommended for inclusion in the Agricultural Overlay District.

The Town of Southampton has made it a policy preference to identify lands in agricultural production and work with landowners to continue productive use of the land as first priority. The Town's Agricultural Advisory Committee has noted that maintaining landowner equity is a priority concern.

Additionally, community members point out the country ambiance and bucolic qualities offered by farmland, farmstands, flower stands, barns and other agricultural structures. To the extent possible, the Town should consider relaxing the codes to allow for continuation of roadside stands as a permitted use accessory to a farm, regardless of the size of the farm operation and provided that it is considered a reasonable accessory related to the primary agricultural

⁴Section 330-47.B, Town of Southampton Zoning Code.

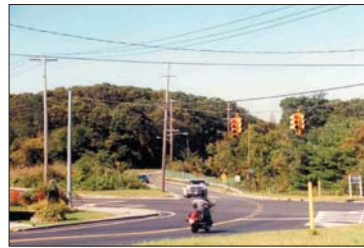




EASTPORT SCENIC GATEWAY



SPEONK SCENIC GATEWAY



WESTHAMPTON SCENIC GATEWAY



SOUTH ROAD SCENIC GATEWAY

SCENIC GATEWAYS

use (e.g., not peddling “odd” items). Visitors and residents alike often find such roadside stands enjoyable and part of the country experience of Eastern Long Island. However, §330-79.1 of the Town Code provides strict standards for the Building Division’s administration of temporary permits for accessory farmstands, likely enacted to address competing farmstand issues that arose in eastern portions of Southampton Town. For Example, the Town Code had special standards for such farmland permits specifically requiring a farmer-applicant to be one who farms at least 10 acres of lands within the Town of Southampton. The definition of farm products and crops include field crops, fruits, vegetables, and cut flowers. Additionally, although agriculture, horse farms, and plant nurseries are permitted in R-40, R-20, and OSC zones, “Temporary roadside stands for sale of farm products grown on the premises” are presently prohibited in R-20 and OSC zones.⁵



Agricultural resources in the Study Area comprise some 350 acres, or four percent of the total land area. Agricultural uses played a significant role in the history of Eastern Long Island. The community has indicated support for agricultural resource protection strategies as such land use contributes to the rural ambiance of the area and provides an added economic element that attracts the seasonal population. Town Officials say that one of the key aspects of farmland preservation is to ensure property owners maintain equity and reasonable economic return on the value of the property.

⁵The same zoning restriction holds true for the accessory use entitled “Temporary roadside stands for sale of fish and shellfish taken by the vendor from local waters.”

ACTION ITEMS

- Encourage the preservation of existing agricultural land, utilizing recommended techniques, including: purchase of conservation easements; transfer of development rights; expansion of the Agricultural Overlay District.
- Consider the designation of properties in the Study Area over 10 acres in size (or which aggregate with adjoining parcels to a 10-acre or greater assemblage) and in agricultural use for inclusion in the Agricultural Overlay District.
- Consider an incentive to encourage the continuation of farmstands and flower stands as bucolic features in the Study Area, perhaps as special allowances within the context of a Scenic Overlay District, such as that proposed for Old Country Road, or a Special Character Overlay District as described in later sections of this report.

SCENIC RESOURCE PROTECTION STRATEGIES

Area Gateways

There are a number of important gateways associated with the Study Area as a whole and for the individual hamlet areas. The identification and enhancement of gateways is important for several reasons: (1) It indicates to the traveler that they have arrived at a special place. This indication can be accomplished through the use of distinctive signage, coupled with landscaping and possibly decorative lighting. (2) The viewsheds related to area gateways provide the initial impression of the subject community.

Potential area gateway locations, including those that are interior to the Study Area, are identified on Exhibit VI-1 and listed below: