

II. PREVIOUS PLANNING STUDIES

The Town of Southampton has been guided by many plans and studies over the past several decades, beginning with the 1970 Town Master Plan. This Area Study builds upon those studies while providing a closer look at the hamlets of Eastport, Speonk-Remsenburg, and Westhampton. In order to provide a better understanding of the Town's previous planning efforts, this Chapter provides an overview of each of the previous studies.

TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON MASTER PLAN (1970)

The 1970 Town Master Plan determined long-term planning goals, through an analysis of several issues, including the Town's physical characteristics, land use, environmental conditions, infrastructure, growth trends, and other relevant factors. The 1970 Master Plan outlined Town-wide planning objectives, and also highlighted various hamlet detail master plans.

Within the 1970 Master Plan was a detailed hamlet master plan for the Eastport-Remsenburg-Speonk-Westhampton Beach area. It stated that the future land use of the existing small farms within this area was residential. However, to preserve the open environmental qualities of these lands, planned residential development, or clustering was encouraged. The Village Residence area included: residential centers in the hamlets of Eastport, Speonk and Westhampton; and isolated older subdivisions of land into small lots that precluded Suburban Residence standards, which as discussed in the Master Plan, has a lower population density than Village Residence; (no further distinctions between these two districts were made).

The 1970 Master Plan also established five business-zoning categories: Village Business (VB), Shopping Center Business

(SCB), Highway Business (HB), Office District (OD), Motel Business (MTL), Resort and Waterfront Business (RWB) and Light Industry (LI). (See Exhibit II-1.)

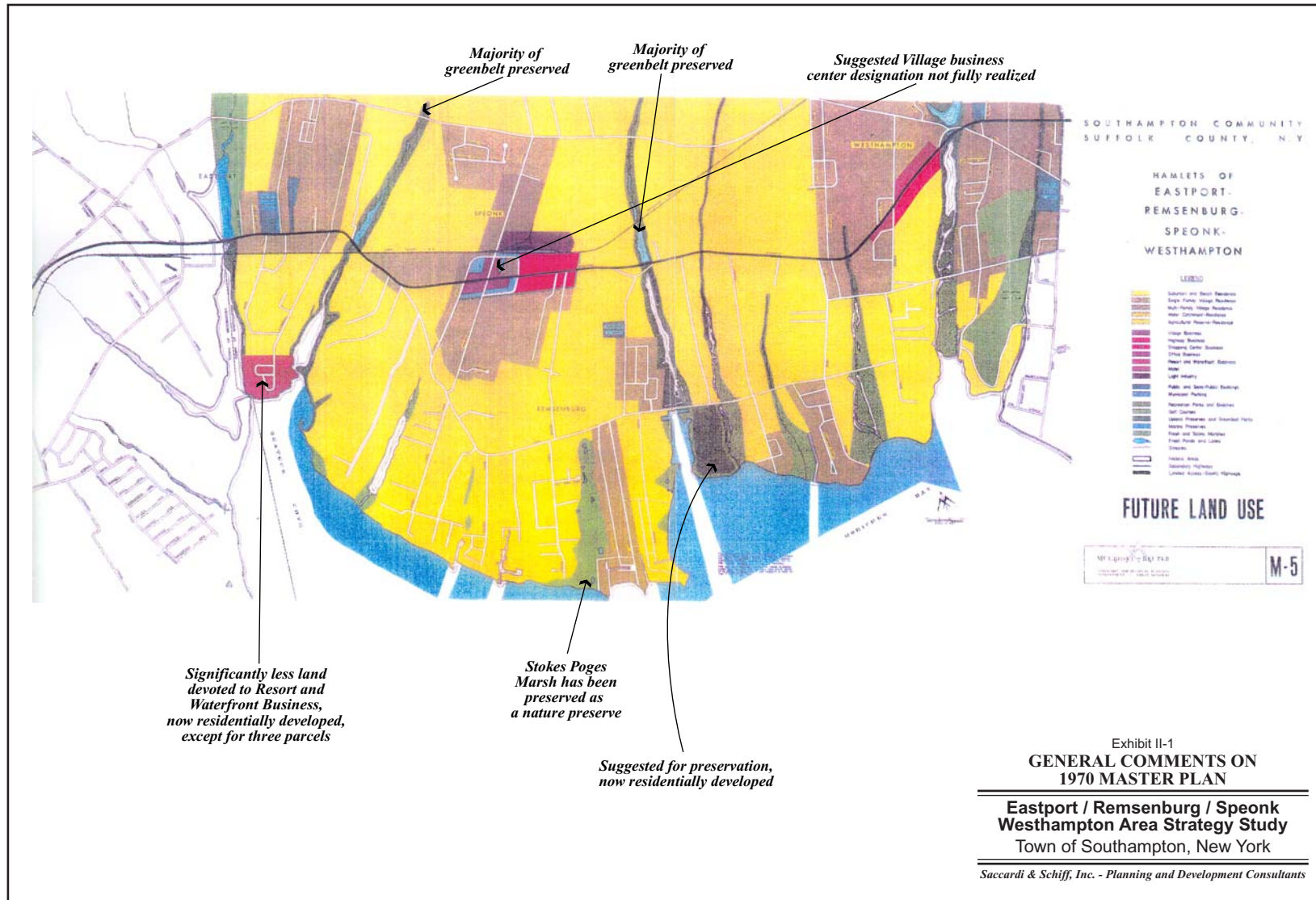
According to the 1970 Plan, Speonk would incorporate a Village Business center for convenience shopping, whereas Eastport's business center would be oriented towards Brookhaven, and Westhampton's towards Westhampton Beach. A Resort Waterfront Business district was proposed for the southerly terminus of South Bay Avenue in Eastport. A Motel District and Highway Business Zone were proposed for a stretch of Montauk Highway in Westhampton.

The Future Land Use Plan for the Hamlets of Eastport-Speonk-Remsenburg-Westhampton recognized the Seatuck Creek, East River, Speonk Creek, and Beaverdam Creek Greenbelt Parks as important scenic features within the Study Area, especially for motorists traveling along Montauk Highway and Old Country Road.

TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON MASTER PLAN UPDATES (1980S)

In 1983, the Town of Southampton completed an Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) prepared as an update to the 1970 Master Plan and amendments to the Town Code. The proposal identified eleven policy areas the Master Plan Update project would address:

1. Reduce the overall saturation population of the Town from 150,000 under then present day conditions to about 91,500 as recommended by the 1970 Master Plan.
2. Provide for an Aquifer Protection Overlay District over the Pine Barrens Management Area and Magothy Aquifer, which are essential for the maintenance of the quality of the Town's drinking water supply.



3. Create three new residential zoning districts (CR-120, R-120, R-80) to help effect the necessary density decreases as recommended by the 1970 Town Master Plan.
4. Create an Open Space Conservation District (OSC) for all existing federal, state, county and town parklands.
5. Create a “floating” Multi-Family Planned Residential District (MFPRD) with a density incentive for moderate income housing to provide medium density multi-family housing in proximity to business districts, community facilities and major access roads.
6. Provide for a density bonus in the CR-80, R-80, CR-60, R-60, CR-40, R-40 and R-20 districts for moderate income housing for either single-family or multi-family dwellings.
7. Allow accessory apartments in existing single-family dwellings as a special exception use.
8. Allow apartments over office or stores in the Office District (OD) and Village Business (VB) district as a special exception.
9. Reduce the minimum floor area for dwelling units particularly for low- or moderate-income housing units.
10. Revise the amendment process for the Town Zoning Code.
11. Remove multi-family housing quotas from the Town Code, but retain them as guidelines in the Master Plan.

The Town determined that due to the potential for significant impacts as a result of the plan amendments, a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) needed to be prepared to look at land use issues (most specifically housing) and the impact on groundwater quality in the

Town. Two Master Plan Update Reports were prepared as part of the Town’s review: 1) Town Wide Existing Land Use Analysis vs. Existing Zoning and Groundwater Quantity (“the First Report”); and 2) Recommendations to Establish an Optimum Balance Between Population and Water Supply with Incentives to Produce Affordable Housing (“the Second Report”). Together these reports constitute “the Master Plan Updates (1980s)”.

The primary conclusions of the First Report were that the Town should consider rezonings to provide for lower-density development, in conjunction with the purchase of development rights to preserve open space. It also suggested that there be “balanced development” with a mix of land uses.

The Second Report set forth recommendations, based on the conclusions of the former. The Town’s EAF proposal stated “the issue of drinking water quality is not solely related to density of population. Another component of protecting water quality relies on regulating types of land use.” The Second Report recommended an Aquifer Protection Overlay District (APOD) to limit development and protect natural features. The proposed zoning districts would provide for lower-density development, primarily in the Central Pine Barrens.

The Town of Southampton’s actions to protect drinking water quality and reduce population density and sprawl preceded the enactment of the Long Island Pine Barrens Maritime Reserve Act and New York State Central Pine Barrens Plan.

The Master Plan Update also recommended that a multifamily housing district (MFPRD) be established as a floating zone, so the Town Board could guide the appropriate development of the medium density multi-family units. This

type of housing should be located near business districts and community facilities. Accessory apartments in single-family homes would be permitted as a special exception use, as would apartments over stores and offices. The Second Report encouraged density incentives, providing “a density bonus of up to 50 percent in zones ranging from one half (1/2) acre to two acres, provided that at least half of the additional units are to be utilized for moderate income housing.” This density bonus would not apply in certain zoning districts and overlay districts (i.e., the Tidal Floodplain or Tidal Wetlands and Ocean Beach Overlay Districts). Clustering was also encouraged where density bonuses were applied.

SPEONK-REMSENBERG HAMLET STUDY (1992)

Following the 1970 Master Plan, the Town addressed specific hamlet areas through Master Plan Updates, including one for the hamlets of Speonk-Remsenburg in 1992. This Hamlet Study addressed the then existing conditions of land use, soils, historical profile, business and community profile, and community and cultural facilities. This planning effort also involved citizen participation through community surveys. From such information gathering, the Hamlet Study set forth the following community goals:

- **Character of Development** - Preserve the character of Speonk and Remsenburg. The residential neighborhoods, woodlands, fresh and saltwater wetlands, remaining farms and nurseries, scenic vistas, Moriches Bay, East Pond, East River and Speonk River, must be preserved from incongruent development;
- **Scale of the Hamlet Center** - Concentrate retail development at the existing center area;
- **Groundwater Supply** - Maintain and improve the existing levels of groundwater quality in the Pine

Barrens, and prevent excessive usage of groundwater for inappropriate and nonessential uses;

- **Residential Development** - Maintain the existing residential character of Speonk and Remsenburg;
- **Natural and Recreational Resources** - Preserve and protect in perpetuity those natural resources which provide ecological and recreational benefits to the community; and
- **Economic Base** - Foster small community-based employment opportunities compatible with the natural environment.

Development recommendations set forth in this Hamlet Study included the use of cluster development to encourage the preservation of open space, and the provision of higher density development near the hamlet centers, generally maintaining low densities in outlying areas.

With these goals in mind, the Study recommended an optimum plan, which “depicts the hamlets at full development with all essential recommendations in place, except for the future recreational sites.” Under this optimum plan, it was proposed that:

- Retail and business uses remain around the existing Village Business Zoning District located at Phillips Avenue and Montauk Highway.
- Residential development, south of Montauk Highway be the established and appropriate land use pattern.
- Existing zoning densities would remain for the area between Montauk Highway and Old Country Road. Due to the long, narrow shape of the lots north of Old County Road, cluster development would be more appropriate.