

# ***Farmingville: Our Vision for Tomorrow***

## **Community Redevelopment Plan**

**October 18, 2010**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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**Cover artwork:** Back cover drawing by Trinity Velez.



## BROOKHAVEN LONG ISLAND

Councilwoman, Connie Kepert  
4<sup>th</sup> Council District



September 22, 2010

### ***Farmingville: Our Vision for Tomorrow*** ***Community Redevelopment Plan***

The Farmingville visioning process has freed community and civic leaders from simply reacting to bad development, instead the process has invited the community to positively participate in the planning process.

The goal of the visioning process is to build a safer, stronger, healthier, and more vibrant Farmingville through citizen involvement. We've brought stakeholders into the planning process, connected them with the experts and resources needed to create a shared vision for the future of the community. Our mission now is to transform that vision into reality.

In order to meet the needs of the community and to forge connections the town has worked hard to insure that the process was both responsive, that is, designed to meet the needs of residents, and democratic, accessible to a diversity of community residents.

The process began 2008 and culminated in December of 2009 with a three day community meeting to work on a plan that includes short, medium and long-term goals. Dan Burden, nationally renowned community planning expert, facilitated the weekend and brought a level of enthusiasm to the process that has motivated all participants. He also brought to the attention of the community that attractive downtowns are lucrative and therefore sustainable.

The overarching goal of the plan is to reduce the negative impacts of suburban sprawl and to spur growth that is sustainable by creating interactive community spaces, recreational opportunities, and creation of an attractive streetscape along Horseblock Road, with landscaping and beautification, traffic calming and a stronger sense of place that will distinguish Farmingville from the surrounding communities.

This land use plan should be considered a large step in a continuing process. It's critical that all stakeholders continue their participation to ensure our efforts move forward and not languish.

I want to thank the Town's Planning staff, Sustainable Long Island and all the consultants for their efforts in crafting this plan. More importantly, I want to thank the community, residents and business owners, who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in the visioning process. Having their participation drive this plan will ensure its success. Finally, with continued support, we will transform Farmingville for the better.

Sincerely,

Councilwoman Connie Kepert  
Council District #4

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Farmingville Community Redevelopment Plan represents the results of a two-year community planning process involving a broad spectrum of community members and local organizations. The planning process culminated with a Community Planning Weekend facilitated by Dan Burden which produced a clear vision for the future of Farmingville.

The Plan describes the community's vision and contains 68 recommendations and strategies to achieve that vision over the coming months and years.

**The Executive Summary** gives a brief introduction to the purpose and development of the Community Redevelopment Plan and summarizes the recommendations the plan contains.

**The Introduction** is an overview of the community planning process and resulting community vision.

**Chapter 2** is the community profile, a look at Farmingville's demographic, geographical and social characteristics; its history; and factors that will affect further development.

**Chapter 3** outlines the planning process, from a community survey to focus groups with community officials and residents, to the final community planning weekend.

**Chapter 4** presents the vision itself, with recommendations for the Horseblock Road corridor and other parts of the community.

**Chapter 5** contains the Implementation Matrix, an outline of specific steps that should be carried out in order to fulfill each recommendation, the parties involved, and a suggested order for completing the steps.

The **Appendix** contains specific results of interactive exercises during the planning weekend, presentations given by Dan Burden, copies of outreach materials, relevant planning documents, and other useful material.

## **Recommendations**

This is a summary of recommendations made in Chapter 4.

### **Zoning, policies, and guidelines**

- Commission a land-use plan to determine how best to implement community desires as outlined in this vision plan.
- Revise zoning rules to encourage mixed-use development and other projects the community would value.
- Include Farmingville in the forthcoming Town-wide sewer study to consider how to handle sewage, and make way for future development and redevelopment.
- Conduct analyses of local transportation networks looking at traffic patterns and accident history, demand for public transportation, and bicycle access and use it to guide future development.

### Focus Areas

- Establish a hamlet center as the core element of the revitalization of Horseblock Road, encompassing the main commercial corridor from Blue Point and Granny Roads
- Redevelop commercial properties as appropriate to reflect recommendations in community plan, including landscaping, improved façade treatments, and buildings located closer to the road

### Business Environment

- Encourage small-business development while discouraging the building of new strip shopping centers and large-format retail outlets.
- Where possible, move existing stores or build new stores closer to the street, with parking lots behind rather than in front. Consider development or temporary uses on some of the larger parking lots, such as Expressway Plaza and Farmingville Plaza.
- Consider establishing a Business Improvement District in which businesses would raise funds among themselves for maintenance, marketing, landscaping, and other projects.
- Attract new businesses in which the community has expressed interest, including restaurants, a live-music café, a bookstore, and a clothing store.
- Develop community support for local businesses by involving them in community events.

### Landscaping & Beautification

- Plant trees, flowers and shrubs in the downtown area along Horseblock Road. Put trees between the sidewalk and the road to provide shade and enhance safety.
- Provide street furniture to enhance the pedestrian experience. This includes benches, trash cans, bicycle racks, hanging plants, and banners on lampposts.
- Improve lighting, positioning and spacing lampposts to enhance safety at night. Consider installing historic lampposts.
- Encourage development of public spaces—plazas, gazebos, fountains, and a “village green”—in addition to Triangle Park.
- Agree on a look, perhaps colonial, that would unify the storefronts and shopping centers.
- Consider adding signs to let people know they’re in Farmingville and enhance community identity.

### Transportation and Roads

- Calm, or slow, vehicular traffic on Horseblock Road by building medians,

simplifying traffic patterns, re-routing traffic to avoid dangerous turns, narrowing the lanes, and perhaps building roundabouts.

- Install crosswalks at all major intersections on Horseblock Road. Make sure they can be easily seen, perhaps by painting or using materials other than asphalt. Build medians or islands in the middle of the road to give pedestrians a place to pause safely when the lights change and install crossing signals where appropriate.
- Make the area more bicycle-friendly, creating bike paths, installing bike racks, and adding appropriate signage along Horseblock Road and perhaps North Ocean Avenue.
- Build paths to ensure that residents can walk or bicycle from their neighborhoods to parks and the downtown center. Install sidewalks where they do not now exist and repair sidewalks that are broken or buckled.
- Work with Suffolk County Transit to improve public transportation service, particularly between the downtown corridor and the Brookhaven Amphitheater Arts and Cultural Center at Bald Hill.

### Recreation

- Expand existing parks to incorporate more opportunities for active recreation, including sports such as basketball and tennis, skateboarding, playgrounds for children, and facilities for dogs. Create new parks where possible, particularly in or abutting residential areas.
- Build a community center in a central, easy-to-reach location that could house a gym, facilities for public meetings, and activities for young people and seniors.
- Make greater use of Farmingville Hills Park for public festivities, educational programs and other events.
- Open the historic Terry House and Bald Hills Schoolhouse to the public for educational purposes and community events.
- Expand programming at the Brookhaven Amphitheater Arts and Cultural Center at Bald Hill.
- Organize a volunteer group to help clean and maintain park property.

### Implementation

- Establish a Citizen's Advisory Committee to advise the Town throughout the implementation process.
- Present the plan to the Brookhaven Town Board and ask the Board to accept the plan and officially recognize it.
- Seek federal, state, and local grants and funding to provide the necessary support for specific projects.

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## INTRODUCTION

The afternoon outside was dark and rainy. But on the second floor of Brookhaven Town Hall, the atmosphere was bright with promise as small groups of Farmingville residents bent over maps, drawing proposed changes to the downtown area. The participants developed concepts for a vision plan that could change Horseblock Road from an undistinguished gray speedway to an area of small shops, tree-lined sidewalks, music cafes, landscaped medians, outdoor plazas, and bicycle paths.

That meeting took place during a three-day Community Planning Weekend in December 2009, near the end of a year-long process aimed at helping residents of Farmingville take control of their community, think about its future, and work on a vision plan to recommend improvements that can be achieved in short-term, medium-term or long-term time frames. The planning process involved residents and community organizations, guided by elected officials, Brookhaven Town planners, and community planning specialists Dan Burden and Sustainable Long Island. The process was designed to give community members a voice in planning for their future, to come together and create a shared vision.

Farmingville is demographically similar to the rest of Brookhaven Town, and it is laid out like much of Long Island. It contains many attractive developments of single-family housing, a couple of parks, some low-slung schools on large plots of land, and a standard Long Island downtown area with a scattering of small and medium-sized shopping centers and their sometimes enormous parking lots.

Most of the downtown is found along Horseblock Road, the main west-east route through Farmingville. Horseblock Road is a segment of County Road 16, which runs from Smithtown through much of Brookhaven and has five different names along its length.

Drivers on Horseblock Road who aren't paying attention should be forgiven if they can't tell when they leave Holtsville, enter Farmingville, and then leave Farmingville for Coram. Though there's Triangle Park, a small, attractive downtown plaza, little else distinguishes the stretch of road in Farmingville from those in adjacent communities.

Unless they're headed for a specific store, there's not much reason for drivers to stop, park, and walk around. They'd find few amenities such as benches, trash cans, or shade trees. Sidewalks are generally set between the road and the parking lots. Some of the shopping centers are widely spaced, separated by vacant parcels or the ever-present parking fields. Most buildings are in good condition, but others are dilapidated. There is no defining architectural style that would provide a community identity. No bike lanes are provided, and the wide streets and bare sidewalks are uninviting to pedestrians. Horseblock Road seems designed to take people through Farmingville, rather than to Farmingville.

The amorphous downtown is not the only factor working against a strong community identity for Farmingville. The hamlet does not have its own school district; the schools and the library, which is located in Holtsville, are part of the Sachem district, one of the largest suburban districts in the state.

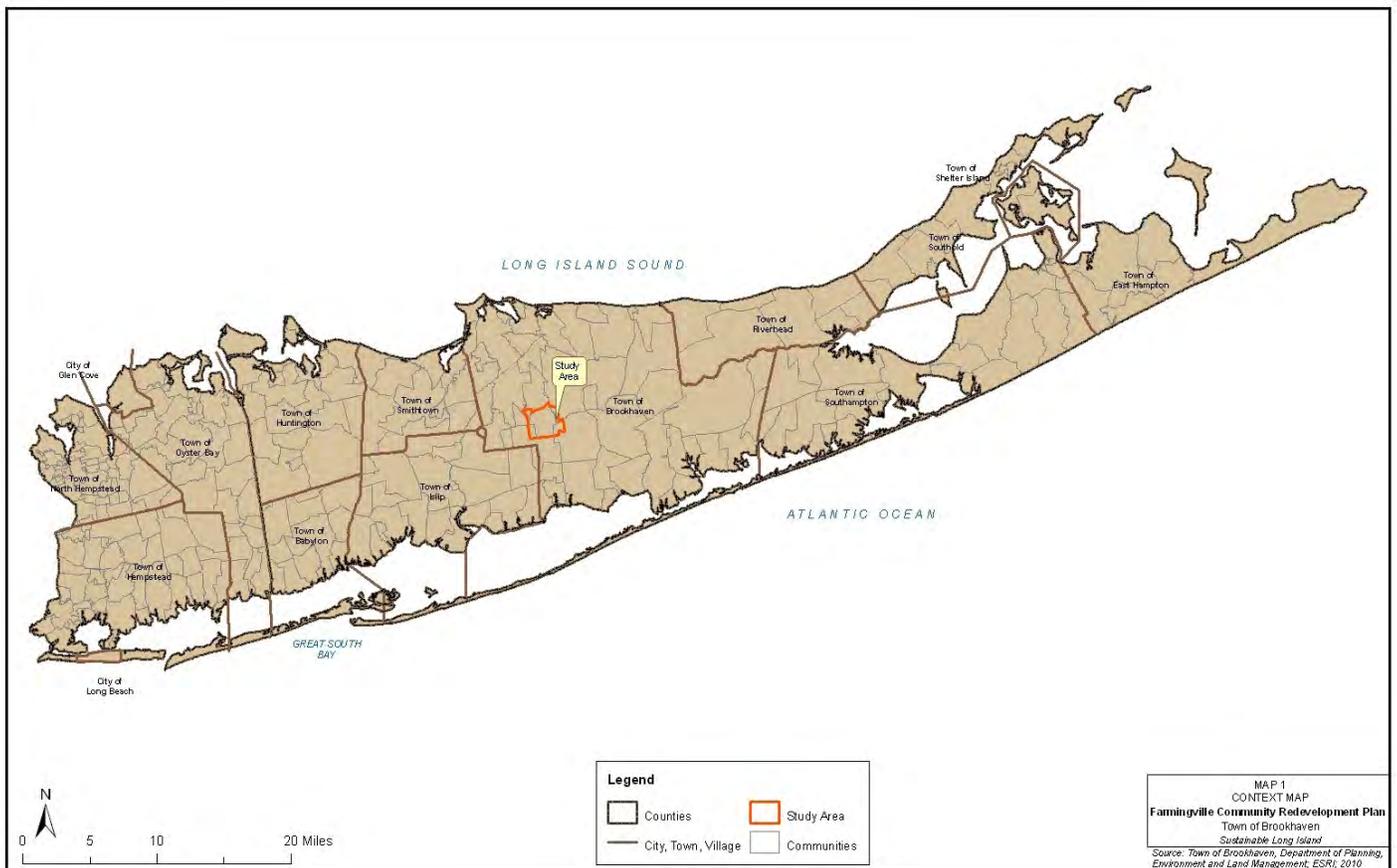
## INTRODUCTION

The community planning process was the first time residents had come together for a sustained project in many years. It was a rare opportunity to work side by side and discuss shared values. Community members came together to pinpoint assets and opportunities, put aside tensions and focus on the future.

Much of the discussion on potential improvements to the community focused on the Horseblock Road downtown corridor because that is the center of Farmingville. Residents envisioned a hamlet center on Horseblock between Blue Point and Granny Roads, where Triangle Park is located. They pictured a more walkable, vibrant, inviting downtown with a wider variety of services, more public spaces with attractions like fountains and greenery, benches and other street furniture, and cafes and music stores that would invite people to linger.

New development in the downtown area would encourage the use of green building techniques such as mixed-use developments that would cut down on the number of miles people would drive between the residential areas and downtown. Apartments could be provided above stores on the second floor, and townhouse-style condo units could be built on part of the Expressway Plaza parking lot.

Dan Burden, a nationally known community planning expert who was the facilitator at the Visioning Weekend, points out that attractive downtowns are profitable downtowns. People want to shop in walkable, nice-looking areas. Residents noted other community needs, in particular a community center and more land for sports fields and other active recreation.



MAP 2 - STUDY AREA

## CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

### 2.1 STUDY AREA

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Farmingville is a 4.5-square-mile hamlet in the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York, approximately 60 miles east of New York City and just north of the Long Island Expressway. Farmingville is one of seven hamlets that make up the Sachem school district, which is served by the Sachem Public Library. The other communities in the Sachem district are Holbrook, Holtsville, Ronkonkoma, Lake Ronkonkoma, Lake Grove, and Nesconset.

Farmingville is a product of the suburban development that moved eastward across Long Island in the second half of the 20th century. The hamlet grew substantially in the post-World War II era when the automobile dominated suburban communities, and it seems to have been developed with vehicles rather than people in mind.

The community has no clustered downtown except for a small group of businesses near Triangle Park, where Horseblock and Granny Roads meet. There is little along Horseblock Road, the main route through downtown, to distinguish Farmingville from any of the other dozens of suburbs in Suffolk County, or even to tell people that they are in Farmingville. The shopping area seems to be a place to drive *through*, rather than *to*.

Although people do walk in downtown Farmingville, it is not always comfortable to do so. Horseblock Road, which is as wide as five lanes plus shoulders at some points, can be quite dangerous. It allows traffic speeds as high as 50 mph and designated crosswalks are scarce. There are few amenities such as benches and trash cans. Public transportation is inadequate, and bike lanes nonexistent.

Commercial properties along the Horseblock Road corridor are characterized by typical strip mall layout, vast expanses of parking lots, and uncoordinated architectural styles. Farmingville has no community center, meeting hall or similar public facility and generally lacks a sense of place.



**Figure 1.** Signs welcome people to Farmingville

MAP 3 - OVERLAPPING BOUNDARIES

**Census Designated Place (CDP)**  
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a CDP is “a statistical entity... comprising a densely settled concentration of population that is not within an incorporated place, but is locally identified by a name. CDPs are delineated cooperatively by state and local officials and the Census Bureau, following Census Bureau guidelines.”

The study area roughly corresponds to the Census-Designated Place and to the 11738 zip code, and contains parts of both geographies. It is bounded by Nicolls Road (County Road 97) on the west, the hamlet of Selden to the north, the hamlet of Medford on the east, and the Long Island Expressway (I-495) to the south. Several surrounding communities have engaged in planning projects, and the boundaries of this one were chosen by the Town of Brookhaven in consultation with the community. (A portion of the area that lies west of Nicolls Road along Portion Road is not included because it has been covered under a previous planning project.)

The Farmingville study area falls within the boundaries of several Census tracts, 1585.07, 1585.08, and 1585.10, 1586.06, 1587.04, 1587.11 and 1587.12. The U.S. Census Bureau recognized the hamlet as a Census-Designated Place in 1980. Demographic and socioeconomic data for this report were taken from the 2000 Census unless more recent figures were available.

### History

The area was originally settled by American Indians. English settlers began arriving in the 1600s, and by the late 1700s farmers had settled the Bald Hill and Mooney Pond areas. These farms gave the area its name, although it turned out that Farmingville’s hilly terrain and sandy soil were not ideally suited for agriculture.

The first school opened in 1850 after residents of what was then known as Bald Hills requested a school district. The Bald Hills Schoolhouse served Farmingville and Holtsville until 1929, when a new school was built. The Farmingville Reunion Association then bought the original school. It served as a meeting place for the Congregational Church from 1858, when the church was founded, to 1890, when parishioners built their own building.

The school remains in its original location on Horseblock Road, and the home of Bald Hills’ first teacher, Elijah Terry, was moved next door. The National Register of Historic Places added the Historic Schoolhouse, which retains its 1850s historic stature, in 1988, and the county parks department works with the Farmingville Historical Society to maintain the site. The new Farmingville Hills County Park is adjacent to those buildings.



Figure 2. Bald Hills Schoolhouse.



Figure 3. Elijah Terry House, ca. 2009.

Farmingville eventually became part of the Sachem school district, which was founded in 1955 and is one of the largest in the state.

Bald Hill housed the Farmingville Ski Bowl from 1965 until 1980 and is now the site of the Brookhaven Amphitheater Arts and Cultural Center. Brookhaven Town Hall moved nearby in 2004.

Farmingville, like Suffolk County and Brookhaven Town, grew most rapidly during the 1960s and 70s. See table at right for historical populations (*Figure 4*). The county population rose from 666,784 people in 1960 to 1,127,030 people in 1970. During that time Brookhaven Town more than doubled its population, from 109,900 to 245,260 (Long Island Regional Planning Board, 1982).

For the unincorporated area known as Farmingville, the 1960 Census estimated the population at 2,134. In the 1970 Census, the area was not separately counted, although the Long Island Regional Planning Board, using new boundaries that roughly correspond to the 1980 Census Designated Place (CDP), estimated the population at 9,131. By the 1980 census, the Farmingville CDP had a population of 13,398.

Population growth slowed between 1980 and 2000. In that 20-year period, Farmingville grew by only 3,060 people, compared with approximately 11,000 between 1960 and 1980. The population in 2000 was 16,458. Population growth has tapered off tremendously since 2000; the most recent Long Island Power Authority estimates put the increase from 2007 to 2008 at 40 people.

**Figure 4. HISTORICAL POPULATION TRENDS**

Year	Farmingville	Town of Brookhaven	Suffolk County
<b>1960 Census</b>	<b>2,134</b>	109,900	666,784
<b>1970 Census</b>	<b>9,131*</b>	245,260	1,127,030
<i>% Change 1960-1970</i>	<i>327.88%</i>	<i>123.16%</i>	<i>69.02%</i>
<b>1980 Census</b>	<b>13,398</b>	365,015	1,284,231
<i>% Change 1970-1980</i>	<i>46.73%</i>	<i>48.28%</i>	<i>13.95%</i>
<b>1990 Census</b>	<b>14,842</b>	407,977	1,322,535
<b>2000 Census</b>	<b>16,458</b>	448,248	1,419,369
<b>2008 Estimate</b>	<b>17,614</b>	491,035	1,508,602
<i>% Change 2000-2008</i>	<i>7.02%</i>	<i>9.54%</i>	<i>6.29%</i>

*\*In the 1970 Census Farmingville was not surveyed separately. This number was computed by the Long Island Regional Planning Board from figures comparable to the boundaries used for the 1980 CDP designation.*

## 2: COMMUNITY PROFILE

Immigrants from Portugal began settling in Farmingville around 1960, and the hamlet now has a sizeable Portuguese community. Many of the immigrants became construction workers, building subdivisions and shopping centers during the construction boom of the 1960s and 1970s. They bought dilapidated homes in rougher parts of town and fixed them up. “They are the ones who built Farmingville,” John Moedas, then-president of the Portuguese-American Center of Suffolk and a former chamber of commerce president, told *The New York Times* in 2001 (Fischler, 2001). Farmingville now has several Portuguese restaurants and other Portuguese-run businesses.

Eventually the immigrants from Farmingville and neighboring communities built the Portuguese-American Center on Horseblock Road. When constructed in the 1980s it was the largest Portuguese social club on the East Coast. Among its other offerings, the center provides language courses in both English and Portuguese.

During the 1990s, during another building boom, Farmingville became a magnet for people coming from Central and South America in search of work. The Census Bureau found that by 2000 the Latino population had risen to 1,300 people. Many of the immigrants became day laborers, hired by contractors who pick them up along roadsides and at other outdoor sites where they congregate. Some residents objected to the outdoor gatherings and expressed alarm that workers were crowding by the dozen into small rental houses. The residents felt these factors were threatening the character of the community.

News coverage of the issue has tarnished Farmingville’s public image. In 2000, two men, one from Holbrook and the other from Queens, assaulted two laborers they picked up on the street in Farmingville. The Public Broadcasting Service aired a documentary, *Farmingville*, in 2004 that discussed the incident. The film showed strong feelings from residents who opposed the immigrants and those who supported them. Over the past few years, much of the heat surrounding this issue has dissipated, but some of the hard feelings remain.

*Newsday’s* front page showed Farmingville in a more favorable light on November 30, 2009. The paper showed 2,600 people lined up outside the local firehouse for tests to see whether they could donate bone marrow to a critically ill six-year-old. This coverage of the community coming together to help one of its members provided a boost to residents who don’t want to see Farmingville defined solely by the laborers issue.

In the early phases of the community planning project, residents expressed hope that the project would help unify the community and create a new, more positive image for Farmingville.

### Counting Hispanics

Under White House guidelines issued in 1997, the Census Bureau considers “Hispanic” an ethnicity and not a race.

**Race and ethnicity** are considered as separate and distinct concepts and data are reported separately. Under race questions there is no category for Hispanic and Hispanics may identify themselves as either black or white. A separate question asks every respondent whether he or she is Hispanic.

## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS

In many respects, Farmingville’s demographics are similar to those of Brookhaven Town as a whole.

The 2000 Census put Farmingville’s population at 16,458, or 3,287 people per square mile, an average density for the area. The population increased by about ten percent from 1990 to 2000. A 2008 estimate by the Long Island Power Authority found Farmingville’s population had risen a further seven percent since 2000. In the same eight-year period, Brookhaven Town’s population grew nine percent. The Census and the Suffolk County Department of Planning project that the county’s population will increase 18 percent by the year 2035. If Farmingville also grows at that rate, its population will then be 19,420 -- an increase of about 3,000 people, or roughly 20 percent, over the next 25 years.

**Figure 5. GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

	Farmingville		Brookhaven		Suffolk County		New York	
<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>16,458</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>448,249</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,419,369</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>18,976,457</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
White	15,396	93.5%	396,381	88.4%	1,200,755	84.6%	12,893,689	67.9%
African American	204	1.2%	19,411	4.3%	98,553	6.9%	3,014,385	15.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	23	0.1%	1,036	0.2%	3,807	0.3%	82,461	0.4%
Asian	292	1.8%	13,019	2.9%	34,711	2.4%	1,044,976	5.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	113	0.0%	484	0.0%	8,818	0.0%
Some other race	266	1.6%	9,902	2.2%	51,875	3.7%	1,341,946	7.1%
Two or more races	300	1.8%	8,386	1.9%	29,184	2.1%	590,182	3.1%
Hispanic ( <i>any race</i> )	1,336	8.1%	36,041	8.0%	149,411	10.5%	2,867,583	15.1%
<b>AGE</b>	<b>16,458</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>448,248</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,419,369</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>18,976,457</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Under 20 years	5062	30.8%	131,950	29.4%	402,482	28.4%	616,239	27.5%
20 to 24 years	940	5.7%	27,769	6.2%	75,665	5.3%	27,769	6.6%
25 to 44 years	5651	34.3%	141,168	31.5%	443,295	31.2%	243,129	30.7%
45 to 64 years	3705	22.5%	101,961	22.7%	330,369	23.3%	334,270	22.3%
65 and over	1,100	6.7%	45,400	10.1%	167,558	11.8%	166,035	12.9%
Median Age	34.1	--	36.5	--	36.5	--	35.9	--
<i>Source: US Census, 2000.</i>								

## 2: COMMUNITY PROFILE

Census statistics show that Farmingville residents are predominantly white; people of color represent less than seven percent of the population. African-Americans and Asians together make up about three percent of the population, as compared with seven percent for Brookhaven Town and nine percent for Suffolk County. Farmingville's Hispanic population of eight percent is comparable to nearby communities as well as the entire town, although it is lower than Suffolk County's and New York State's. The Hispanic population is expected to continue to grow throughout Long Island.

**Figure 6. SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

	Farmingville		Brookhaven		Suffolk County		New York	
<b>EDUCATION (25 Years &amp; Older)</b>	<b>10,482</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>288,870</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>942,401</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,542,536</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Less than High School	354	3.4%	10,401	3.6%	41,038	4.4%	1,005,805	8.0%
Some High School	985	9.4%	27,311	9.5%	89,136	9.5%	1,620,519	12.9%
High school graduate / GED	3,792	36.2%	95,332	33.0%	294,953	31.3%	3,480,768	27.8%
Some college (no degree)	2,115	20.2%	60,302	20.9%	183,330	19.5%	2,103,404	16.8%
College Degree (bachelor or associate)	2,554	24.4%	63,262	21.9%	222,403	23.6%	2,853,070	22.7%
Graduate/professional degree	682	6.5%	32,262	11.2%	111,541	11.8%	1,478,970	11.8%
3+ Enrolled in School (any level)	4,984	--	130,073	--	387,491	--	5,217,030	--
<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>								
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>5,040</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>146,904</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>469,535</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,060,595</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Less than \$24,999	505	10.0%	22,305	15.2%	71,747	15.3%	2,085,438	29.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	302	6.0%	11,883	8.1%	37,991	8.1%	807,043	11.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	819	16.3%	20,204	13.8%	60,667	12.9%	1,047,001	14.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,199	23.8%	35,082	23.9%	101,668	21.7%	1,297,712	18.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	831	16.5%	24,764	16.9%	77,601	16.5%	746,384	10.6%
\$100,000+	1,384	27.5%	32,666	22.2%	119,861	25.5%	1,077,017	15.3%
Median HH Income	\$69,148	n/a	\$62,475	n/a	\$65,288	n/a	\$43,393	n/a
Persons Below Poverty Level	489	2.97%	25,952	5.8%	83,171	5.9%	2,692,202	14.2%
Households Receiving Public Assistance	56	1.1%	2,586	1.8%	7,104	1.5%	344,175	4.9%

Source: US Census, 2000.

Farmingville is a relatively young community, and many residents report that the number of young families has risen in recent years. As of 2000, 31 percent of Farmingville residents were under age 20, 40 percent were between 20 and 44, 22 percent were between 45 and 64, and 7 percent were 65 or older. The median age was 34, about two years younger than the median age for all town, county, and state residents. Overall, Suffolk County's population continues to get older; the median age has been rising since 1970, when it was just 26 years, and increased by two years between 2000 and 2006. Brookhaven Town has slightly lower proportions of young people and a slightly higher proportion of those 65 and over.

The 2000 Census found Farmingville was home to 4,984 persons over age 3 who were enrolled in school, including post-secondary education. Nearly half of those students (46 percent) were in grades one through eight, while 20 percent were in high school and another 20 percent were in college or graduate programs. For adults, 36 percent ended their education with a high school diploma, 20 percent have some college education, 24 percent have a college degree, and 7 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Brookhaven Town has a slightly lower percentage of those whose education ended in high school and a slightly higher percentage of those who hold graduate or professional degrees.

Farmingville's median household income in 2000 was \$69,148, well above the \$62,475 for Brookhaven Town as a whole. Twenty-eight percent of Farmingville's households had an income of \$100,000 or higher, compared to 22 percent of the town's. Only three percent of Farmingville's residents were below the poverty level, compared with six percent for the town.

*Note: Demographic figures reported in 2000 have likely changed since that time and new census data may reveal different statistics.*

### 2.3 LAND USE AND ZONING

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The three primary land uses in Farmingville are residential, commercial, and industrial. As is typical of Long Island communities, single-family residential uses dominate. Commercial properties are concentrated in a thin strip along the east-west corridor made up of Horseblock and Portion Roads. Most such properties are suburban-style strip centers, small office buildings, or stand-alone stores, like many that can be found in commercial areas all over Long Island.

The hamlet's major recreational area, Farmingville Hills County Park, fronts on Horseblock Road at the heart of the study area. It is about 100 acres in size and was preserved as open space in 2009.

Farmingville also has a small redeveloped plaza known as Triangle Park on Horseblock Road at Woodycrest Drive. The park contains brick sidewalks, benches, a large tree, and smaller plantings. The area also includes a driveway off the main road that buses use to pick up passengers. Triangle Park is one of the few outdoor community spaces in the hamlet.

Brookhaven Town adopted its first zoning code in 1937, setting the stage for the suburban-style development that began during the 1950s. The current zoning code was adopted by the Town Board in 1990. The Town is in the process of creating a new comprehensive master plan, Brookhaven 2030. But much of the town, like many suburban communities, is zoned according to conventional Euclidean policies, so that land uses are segregated into distinct districts by type. This creates patterns of sprawl, because housing is separated from commercial uses such as stores or offices, which are both separated from industry.

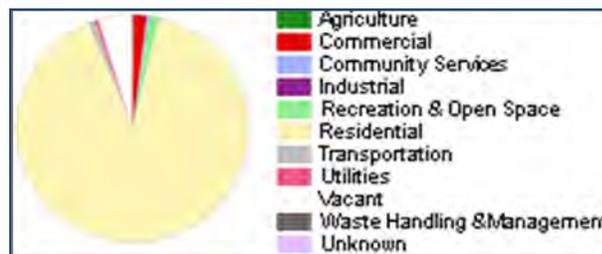
**Zoning philosophies**

Traditional **Euclidean zoning** (named not for the Greek mathematician, but for the city in Ohio that was a party to the case that established it) calls for separating what were once seen as incompatible land uses. Zoning regulates what uses can operate on a particular parcel. Standard zoning categories are single-family housing, multi-family housing, commercial, and industrial.

As shown in Figure 7, most of Farmingville is zoned for single-family low-density residential use. Such zoning allows development of detached homes on lots that generally range from a quarter-acre to ten acres. The predominant zoning category in Farmingville is the Residence A-1 District, which permits one dwelling unit per acre. This zoning is not consistent with actual development patterns, as most homes in the hamlet are on quarter- or half-acre lots.

Commercial districts are concentrated along Horseblock Road and at the intersection of North Ocean and Horseblock, where several shopping centers are located (see map below). Horseblock Road and Portion Road, which runs just west of the study area, are zoned primarily for J-2 Neighborhood Business. These roads are not as intensively developed as nearby corridors such as Middle Country Road, but are major connectors to shopping centers such as the Stop & Shop at North Ocean and Horseblock.

To encourage downtown redevelopment, Brookhaven Town created a J Business 6 (J-6) zone that the town says is meant to encourage “fully integrated mixed-use pedestrian-oriented main street centers.” In addition to stores, restaurants, and bars, J-6 allows theaters, museums, indoor recreation, and second-story residential use. A Main Street Business Design Manual adopted in 2003 includes illustrations to guide the design of buildings, landscaping, sidewalks, parks, and multi-family housing so they reflect similar themes. Farmingville currently has no areas zoned J-6, but would like to see appropriate areas rezoned to J-6 to encourage Main Street type redevelopment.



**Figure 7.** Proportion of Farmingville land use by number of parcels. (Source: Long Island Index. <http://longislandindex.org/>, 2009)

MAP 4—ZONING

Although the use of a J-6 business district could significantly improve the look and feel of the Horseblock Road corridor, changing the zoning can be a lengthy and difficult process. To help alleviate those complications, the town has favored creating overlay zoning districts. The town has designated zones for Hamlet Center and Transitional Overlay districts, which can encourage the type of mixed-use development necessary to create a hamlet center or downtown.

**Figure 8. CURRENT ZONING CLASSIFICATION - FARMINGVILLE\***

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Permitted Uses</b>
<b>Residential</b>	
<b>A Residence 1</b>	One-family dwellings; churches; convents and monasteries; open farming; public, parochial and private schools
<b>A Residence 5</b>	
<b>B Residence</b>	
<b>B Residence 1</b>	
<b>D Residence:</b> Two-Family Residence and Compatible Business	One-family dwellings; churches; convents and monasteries; open farming; public, parochial and private schools; owner-occupied two-family dwellings.
<b>MF Residence:</b> Multi-Family	Rental housing units; Attached or semi-attached single-family residences; Detached single-family residences.
<b>Business</b>	
<b>J Business:</b> Transitional Business	Art galleries, artist studios, museums or nonprofit cultural centers; Churches or similar places of worship, parish house, libraries or municipal buildings; mixed-use buildings, excluding retail operations; offices; single- or two-family dwellings.
<b>J Business 2:</b> Neighborhood Business	Bank (no drive-thru); bowling alley; church or similar place of worship; commercial center; day-care; deli; dry-cleaner; health club; Laundromat; schools; office; personal service (i.e. barber, beauty parlor); pharmacy (no drive-thru); retail; take-out restaurant; undertaking; veterinarian.
<b>J Business 4:</b> Professional and Business Offices	Administrative, financial, business and professional offices; art galleries; bank; day-care; exhibit halls; undertaking.
<b>J Business 5:</b> High Intensity Business	n/a
<b>J Business 8:</b> Hotel-Motel	Hotels and motels, including residence hotels.
<b>Industrial</b>	
<b>L Industrial 1:</b> Light Industry	Agricultural or nursery including retail sale of products raised on premises; bank; church or similar place of worship; commercial laundry; day-care; health club; historical or memorial monument; lodge; manufacturing; office; printing plants; research and development including labs; veterinarian (provided that all activities take place within the building); warehouse.
<b>ROW:</b> Right-of-Way	n/a
<i>*As applied to parcels in the Hamlet of Farmingville.</i>	

MAP 5—GENERALIZED LAND USE

**2.4 PENDING PROJECTS**

There were several pending and approved change-of-zone projects within the Farmingville study area at the time of writing, summarized in the tables below. Most of the projects under way in Farmingville are minor changes to buildings or subdivisions of plots of land. One project however, a proposal for a mixed-use “village green” concept near the Post Office,\* features a mix of single-family, condominiums and townhouse residences, office space, and community space – a village green – available for events and community use. It is the type of project that has the potential to positively impact the community and can help advance many of the objectives of the community planning process. One of the potential benefits of this project is its ability to potentially provide excess sewage capacity that can help spur revitalization in the surrounding area.

**Figure 9. PENDING SITE PLANS**

SC Tax Number	Location	Acreage:	Zoning	Purpose	File Status
0200 62800 1100 004000	C/O Granny Rd. & N. Ocean Ave.	1.59	J-4 Bus.	construct one story 7,950 s.f. office building with typical parking, drainage & sanitary	Pending
0200 65400 0600 041000	S/side Horse Block Rd, at intersection of HB Rd & Oriole Pl	0.34	J-2 Bus.	Construction of a one-story office Bldg w/related site improvements.	Pending
0200 65600 0300 008000	N/S Horseblock Rd. approx. 402' east of Old Medford Ave.	4.73	J-2 Bus.	Construction of a 35,277 s.f. multi-tenant retail building with site improvements.	Pending
0200 65400 0600 019000	S/E/C Horseblock Road and Blue Point Road	0.44	J-2 Bus.	Proposal for construction of a 3,000 s.f. office building.	Pending
0200 62700 0700 003000	s/w/c Horseblock Rd & Hanrahan Ave	0.66	A-1 Res.	Proposal to construct a one-story 4,143 sq. ft. masonry building	
0200 65600 0100 025004 0200 65100 0100 025005 0200 65500 0600 014000	N/S Horseblock Rd., 200' E/O North Ocean Ave.	19.4	A-1 Res. & J-2 Bus.	Remove existing structures and construct a on story 14,484 s.f. pharmacy with drive-thru and a 3 story 25,000 s.f. footprint office/bank building with basement.	Pending
0200 65600 0200 005000	Medford Ave & Horse Block Rd	2.67	L-1 Ind.	Concrete & industrial Business w/outdoor storage & overnight parking	Approved
0200 69700 0100 004000	N/S LIE North Service Road, 425' east of North Ocean Ave.	7.14	L-1 Ind.	Construction of a 66,552 s.f. bank and office building with site improvements.	Pending

Source: Town of Brookhaven. November 2010.

MAP 6—PENDING PROJECTS

**Figure 9. PENDING CHANGES OF ZONE**

Location	SCTax	AddTax	Proposed Zoning	Existing Zoning	Acreage	File Status
Granny Road N/s, E/o Berkshire	0200 62800 0900 006000		Special Use Permit	J2	0.08	Approved Not Effective
N/E/c Granny Rd., & Woodycrest	0200 65500 0100 027000		Special Use Permit	<u>J2</u>	0.493	Effective
S/E/c Lidge Dr. & Mooney Pond Rd., N/E/c Beech Avenue	0200 53900 0200 011000		J-2 & Special Permit	J2	0.021	Approved Not Effective
S/E/c Horseblock Rd. & Greenlawn Pl.	0200 65500 0200 047000	0200 65500 0200 048000	J6	A1 & J2	0.659	Effective
Hanrahan Ave. W/s, Horseblock Rd.	0200 62700 0700 003000		J	A1	0.7	Approved Not Effective

Source: Town of Brookhaven. October 2010

\*Note: this project is not reflected in tables 9 or 10 as it is still pending review.

## 2.5 THE PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

Farmingville, like many neighboring hamlets and villages across Long Island, has lacked a focused planning strategy. No plans have specifically addressed the hamlet, although studies have been done in neighboring areas.

Brookhaven, on the other hand, has been through several comprehensive plans over the past 50 years. The first plan was adopted in 1958 and was updated in 1969 and 1984. The most recent plan was adopted in 1997. The town is now working on Brookhaven 2030, a blueprint for how Brookhaven should look in 20 years and how to accommodate the projected growth of the Town.

The Brookhaven 2030 study team is considering ways of dealing with an expected growth in population, particularly among the elderly, and the concomitant need for housing. Planners would also like to shift the development pattern from disconnected suburban sprawl to clustered growth within neighborhoods, emphasizing clustered development around transit, nodes, and existing downtowns. The idea is that this new development pattern will reduce government spending and automobile traffic while improving the environment, preserving open space and the character of individual communities. The resulting plan will provide an overall framework for implementing options that allow the Town to grow in a sustainable manner while providing necessary infrastructure, transportation system, diversity of housing options and public services.

### Goals of Brookhaven 2030

- Preserve open space
- Protect and restore the environment
- Build consensus with residents, community leaders, stakeholders and public agencies
- Redirect growth to areas served by infrastructure, revitalize downtowns, and establish pedestrian-oriented centers that have a sense of place
- Promote healthy communities
- Expand the range of transportation options
- Ensure a sustainable tax base through business and job development

Brookhaven residents polled informally said their top priorities were coastal resources, Main Street development, roads, and bicycle and pedestrian networks.

Brookhaven has worked in the past several years on developing long-range plans for communities within the town, including Greater Bellport, the Middle Country area (Selden and Centereach), Mastic-Shirley, Gordon Heights, Mastic Beach, and Port Jefferson Station/Terryville/Comsewogue. Many of these plans reflect the kind of sustainable goals found in the Brookhaven 2030 project.

In August of 2009 Suffolk County announced that it will update its current comprehensive plan to carry the county through 2035. An announcement on the county executive's website on August 2 said the update will wrap in data on existing conditions, previous planning efforts by municipalities within the county, and projections on demographic and socioeconomic changes, preservation areas, housing and sewer needs, job creation and economic development, transportation, and health care. The update, to be done by the county's planning staff, will encourage participation from towns and villages.

"The Suffolk we envision in the future should have a vibrant economy, thriving downtowns, an abundant supply of housing for all generations, clean water and green open spaces, an enhanced sewer infrastructure and a suitable mass transit system, and this comprehensive plan update will help us set that course," County Executive Steve Levy said in the announcement.

## 2.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

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Perhaps the highest hurdle to development in the Farmingville area is the lack of public sewers. Suffolk County has limited the density of development in the nearly 70 percent of the land that does not have sewers. The county's goal is to protect the underground aquifers that supply Long Island's drinking water.

When federal funding was available for sewers and other big infrastructure projects 40 or 50 years ago, most of Suffolk was not dense enough to justify them. Now that large parts of Suffolk need sewers, there is little to no federal money, and sewer districts are often too expensive for counties or private developers to fund on their own. The legacy

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of corruption and cost overruns left by the Southwest Sewer District, which was built in the 1970s, left a bad taste in voters' mouths and is another reason officials are reluctant to push for public sewerage projects. Five sewage treatment plants exist in the study area, and only the one at Suffolk Community College is a district.

Without sewers, developers must use septic tanks, a practice that encourages sprawl because of health codes and requirements for open space around such tanks. The sewer problem discourages—or simply makes impossible—expansion of downtowns, commercial development, and multi-family housing. In 2009, Rep. Steve Israel (D-Huntington) said the "single most important element to revitalize Wyandanch is economic development, and that depends on wastewater infrastructure" (Indelicato, N. 2009, July 6, *Newsday*). Health regulations put in place after the Southwest Sewer District prohibit building a new restaurant in many parts of the county that are not served by sewers.

Suffolk County Executive Levy Suffolk and Legislator Wayne Horsley appointed a task force to act "as a county wide forum for the examination of existing wastewater facilities, including the dissemination of public information detailing environmental benefits and the identification of public and private funding to expand the inventory of wastewater facilities where determined to be suitable and desired"(Suffolk County Sewer Summit website).

A Sewer Summit, held in 2008, brought together municipal and community leaders to examine potential plans for future growth strategies, emphasizing the need to maintain existing sewers and build new infrastructure. Following up on the summit's proceedings, the task force was also charged with determining ways in which to bring community, business and government leaders together to further advance sewer initiatives, and held public hearings and pinpointed "shovel-ready" areas in need of sewerage.

The County Legislature included \$1.2 million in the 2009 Capital Budget for a study to assess the current sewer situation and figure out what can be improved upon. According to a press release (2010), the study, for which an RFP is in the approval process, will assess projects identified through Task Force activities, including the feasibility of squaring off the South West Sewer District providing sewers to all of the Town of Babylon, and sewerage 11 other critical areas throughout Suffolk County.

Recently there has been interest in installing public sewers in commercial areas, but little actual progress has been made. The sole exception is Wyandanch, in Babylon Town, which announced in 2009 plans to extend public sewers from West Babylon into Wyandanch, for which the Town is seeking \$10 to \$12 million in federal money to supplement state and town funds that allow the community to expand into the Southwest Sewer District (Long Island Business News. 2009, July 2). A second Suffolk County Sewer Summit, held in October 2010, aimed to "target areas where sewer development would be most appropriate and to seek revolving funds from the state and federal government as once existed" (2010, October 15. *The Village Tattler*.).

The sewer issue means that anyone planning a new development must build a sewage-treatment plant, an option that's usually seen as viable only for large-scale projects. It's likely that any major development in Farmingville will require such a plant. The community should be aware that treatment plants may be necessary to protect drinking

water and support future development. Residents should also consider advocating for public sewers, which would include excess capacity to accommodate future construction. Another option may be to consider ways to encourage private developers to cover a “fair share” of the cost of providing necessary sanitary treatment, perhaps asking developers to build in excess capacity to accommodate future development or explore the possibility of hooking into existing treatment facilities. One of the recommendations found later in the plan is for the Town to include Farmingville as a focus area in the forthcoming Town-wide sewer study (see *Section 4.2, Recommendation 6*).

## 2.7 TRANSPORTATION

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### Roads and vehicles

Development patterns in Farmingville, as in much of the rest of Long Island, favor automobiles. Alternative modes of transport such as buses are severely limited. Sidewalks, if they exist at all, are often poorly maintained. There are few bike lanes. Concerns about lighting, traffic speeds, and other safety issues further limit transportation choices.

Farmingville residents overwhelmingly rely on automobiles. According to the 2000 Census, four out of five people drive to work alone. Nine percent carpool. Less than six percent use public transit to get to their jobs and less than one percent walk to work even though many residents are employed within the hamlet. The average one-way commute for a Farmingville resident is 35 minutes. Nineteen percent of workers have a commute of less than 15 minutes; 17 percent spend more than an hour getting to work.

Cars are also necessary to travel within the community because of separation between residential and commercial areas. Ninety-three percent of Farmingville households have at least one vehicle, compared with 70 percent of households in the state. The hamlet is located just off the Long Island Expressway at Exit 63 (North Ocean Avenue), making for relatively easy access to New York City and other parts of Long Island.

Farmingville is served primarily by three county roads: Nicolls Road (CR-97), North Ocean Avenue (CR-83), and Horseblock/Portion Road (CR-16), which is the main corridor through the hamlet. These roads are designed to move vehicles and have little to offer bikers, pedestrians, and those who would walk from shop to shop. Horseblock Road is heavily trafficked during rush hours, and the intersections at North Ocean Avenue, Portion Road, College Road, and Nicolls Road are particularly congested. Drivers must sometimes wait through several changes of lights to turn left from North Ocean to Horseblock, for example.

The New York State Department of Transportation rates road conditions from A (best) to F (worst), with C or better desirable. Factors it considers in its ratings are travel time, speed, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, and convenience. Most county roads in Suffolk are rated D (approaching unstable flow of traffic) or worse.

Figure 11. TRAFFIC VOLUME ON SELECTED MAJOR ROADS

Road	From	To	AADT* One Way Count	AADT* One Way Count	Date of Count
CR-83 / N. Ocean	I-495/LIE	CR-16/Horseblock	28476 (Northbound)	34125 (Southbound)	11/12/2008
CR-83 / N. Ocean	CR-16/Horseblock	SR-25/Middle Country Rd.	24842 (Northbound)	26500 (Southbound)	11/12/2008
CR-16/Horseblock	CR-97/Nicolls Rd	Waverly Ave	9168 (Eastbound)	8653 (Westbound)	8/22/2006
CR-16/Horseblock	Waverly Ave	Blue Point Rd	9634 (Eastbound)	9503 (Westbound)	8/22/2006
CR-16/Horseblock	CR-97/Nicolls Rd	CR-83/N. Ocean	13035 (Eastbound)	12901 (Westbound)	2/7/2007

Source: NYS DOT \*Annual average daily traffic

Horseblock Road is currently rated C along some portions and D along others. It is comparable to other county roads in the area, but like most county roads on Long Island it has dual, and conflicting, purposes. It was built as, and remains, a commercial corridor, but it has also become an arterial route connecting the Long Island Expressway and Sunrise Highway. Such conflicts cannot be resolved until the local government can relate the land’s purpose to the surrounding land use.

Recent projects have addressed traffic in or near Farmingville. In 2006, the Suffolk County Department of Public Works commissioned a study to assess potential noise impacts associated with construction of additional travel lanes being considered for North Ocean Avenue between Granny and Mooney Pond Roads. The study looked at both traffic noise as well as potential construction noise. Recommendations included a

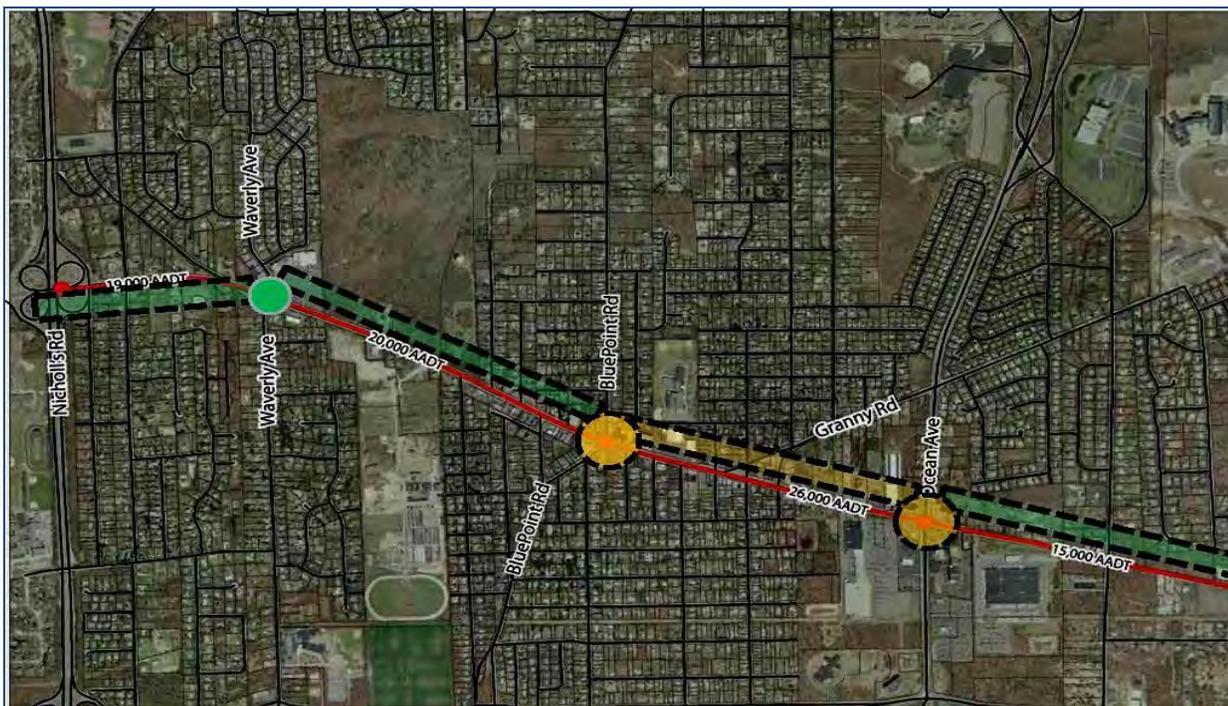


Figure 12. Traffic counts along Horseblock Rd.

sound wall along North Ocean Avenue. As the road is a major north-south thoroughfare, it is likely that it will undergo future planning efforts as well.

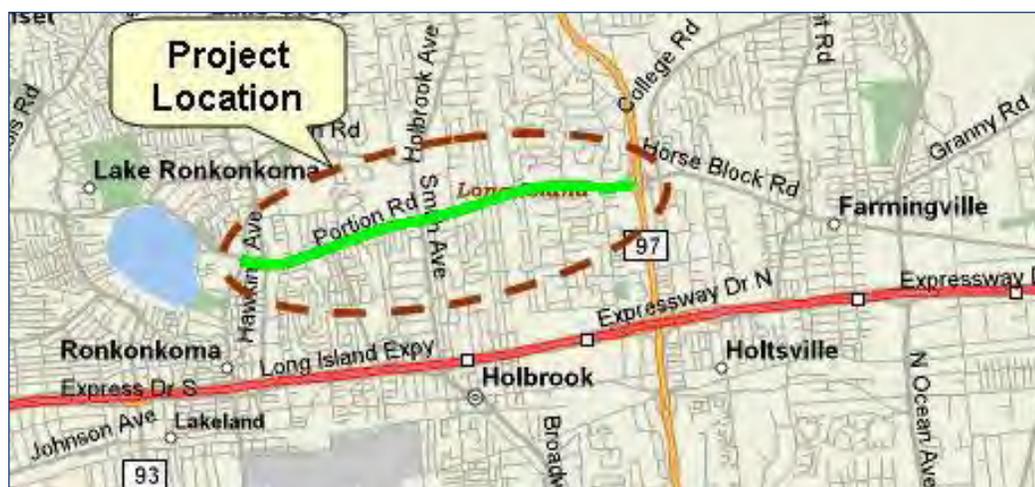
In the fall of 2008, Suffolk County undertook road improvements, including additional turning lanes, along North Ocean Avenue.

The state has proposed converting Nicolls Road into a six-lane expressway with exits at Portion Road and at South Coleman Road for Suffolk Community College, but the plan has been postponed because of costs. In the meantime, a traffic light near the Portion Road intersection has been removed to increase roadway capacity, and the road has been widened at College Road. A new entrance to Suffolk County Community College was constructed on the east side of Nicolls Road.

Beginning in 1999-2000 the Town of Brookhaven and Suffolk County engaged area residents in a study of Portion Road in Lake Ronkonkoma and Farmingville (see *Figure 13 below*). A community visioning session was held in 2004. The resulting plan included elements of form-based zoning, including descriptions and sketches of the way buildings and signs should look. It also recommended the construction of multi-family housing, particularly condominiums, and pointed out the need for public parks and playgrounds. The plan proposed improving bus service and building bicycle lanes, better crosswalks, and bus shelters along the road.

As of early 2010, improvements along Portion Road stretched to Nicolls Road, the western border of the Farmingville study area. The work includes a median in portions of the road, street-trees, sidewalk reconstruction, installation of new lampposts, and new curb cuts or driveways into various businesses.

Horseblock east of Nicolls Road was recently widened and improved, and according to Suffolk County Department of Public Works, there are no plans for further improvements between Nicolls and North Ocean at this time. Work is currently underway at the entrance and exit ramps to Nicolls Road and there are plans for



**Figure 13.** Portion Road Improvement project. *Image courtesy of Suffolk County Department of Public Works, Nov. 2009.*

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functional improvements at the North Ocean and Horseblock Road intersection, including additional dedicated turn lanes and signal improvements.

### Public transit

The primary form of public transportation available is buses provided by Suffolk County Transit. Five bus routes pass through Farmingville. Residents generally agree this service is inadequate.

As shown in figure 14 (right), these routes are not integrated into neighborhoods, and passengers must make their way to main roads in order to reach bus stops. Community members report that current service is particularly lacking for seniors and youth, who rely most on public transportation. Buses generally do not run more than once per hour, and each stop is served about twelve times a day. No buses run on Sundays.



**Figure 14. Suffolk Transit Service Map.** Courtesy of [www.sct-bus.org](http://www.sct-bus.org). Note: Map NOT to scale.

**Figure 15. SUFFOLK COUNTY TRANSIT BUS ROUTES IN FARMINGVILLE**

Route	Main Corridor	Major Landmarks	Connections
<b>Route S58</b>	Selden-Suffolk Community College, along Selden border, from College Rd. to Middle Country Rd.	Riverhead County Center, Tanger Outlet Center, County Health Center, Smith Haven Mall, Huntington Square Mall, Suffolk Community College	LIRR (Smithtown, Port Jefferson Branch and Riverhead, Greenport Branch); S41, S45, S56, S56, S57, S59, S60, S62, S63, 3D, S60, S61, 6A, S62, S66, S90, S92, 8A, S63, S71, 6A, 6B, 5A
<b>Route S63</b>	College Rd., Horseblock Rd., Woodycrest Drive	Triangle Park, Brookhaven Health Center (Patchogue), IRS Center (Holtsville)	LIRR (Patchogue, Montauk Branch); S40, S54, S61, S66, S68, 7A, 7B, S56, S57, S59, S60, S62, 3D, S58, S71, 6A, 6B
<b>Route S71</b>	Nicolls Rd., College Rd., Horseblock Rd., N. Ocean, Bicycle Path	Brookhaven Town Hall, Suffolk Community College, LI State Veterans Home, SUNY University Hospital	LIRR (Mastic – Shirley, Montauk Branch and Stony Brook, Port Jefferson Branch); S58, S63, 6A, 6B, S60, 3D, S61, S62, S66, S68, 7D, 7E,
<b>Route 6A</b>	Selden border along Portion Rd., College Rd., Mooney Pond	Ronkonkoma LIRR station, Suffolk Community College, Mooney Pond/Blue Point Rd, and Coram Plaza	LIRR (Ronkonkoma, Ronkonkoma Branch); S57, S59, 7A, S58, S60, S61, S63, S71, 6B
<b>Route 6B</b>	Selden border along Portion Rd., College Rd., Mooney Pond	Smith Haven Mall, Suffolk Community College, County Offices, College Plaza (Selden)	LIRR (Ronkonkoma, Ronkonkoma Branch); S56, S57, S59, S60, S62, S69, 3D, S58, S63, S71, 6A

Source: Suffolk County Transit, 2009.

The situation for the disabled is worse. Suffolk County Accessible Transportation provides buses Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 8:30 pm and Saturday from 7:00 am to 8:30 pm. Later, earlier, or holiday service is provided only where regular buses are running. The accessible buses will stop no more than three-quarters of a mile from the regular routes.

The Town of Brookhaven operates a Jitney Transportation Program through its Senior Citizens Division. The jitneys transport residents over 60 to shops and medical appointments. However, the service is so popular that seniors must make appointments weeks in advance to use the jitneys, limiting their utility.

Farmingville has no Long Island Rail Road station. The closest one is in Medford, and some residents travel to Ronkonkoma for a direct connection to New York City.

## 2.8 HOUSING

Eighty-one percent of houses in Farmingville are occupied by their owners, as opposed to 75 percent for Brookhaven Town as a whole. Most homes in the hamlet are single-family houses. Few apartments and condominiums are available. This lack of diversity in housing options makes it difficult for young people and the elderly to find affordable, accessible housing. The vacancy rate in 2000 was three percent, compared with six percent for the town. Vacancy rates have probably risen since then because of economic conditions. The average Farmingville household has 3.3 members.

The on-line research service RealtyTrac estimated the median home value in Farmingville at \$295,820 in December of 2009. That was 11 percent lower than a year earlier. In contrast, the median home value for all of Suffolk County was \$327,972, which was 16 percent lower than the previous year.

The 2000 Census found that nearly 80 percent of Farmingville's housing units are more than 30 years old, a slightly larger percentage than for the town as a whole.

Farmingville and Brookhaven Town, like much of Suffolk County, face high property taxes and a severe shortage of affordable and rental housing. As a result, many communities, including Farmingville, experience overcrowding of existing housing.

**Figure 16. HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

	Farmingville		Brookhaven		Suffolk County		New York	
<b>HOUSING (total units)</b>	<b>5,170</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>155,406</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>522,323</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,679,307</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Owner-occupied	<b>4,168</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	115,882	74.6%	374,360	71.7%	3,739,166	48.7%
Renter occupied	<b>873</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	30,946	19.9%	94,939	18.2%	3,317,694	43.2%
Vacant	<b>129</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	8,578	5.5%	53,024	10.2%	622,447	8.1%
Built before 1980	<b>4,056</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	116,730	75.1%	417,113	79.9%	6,559,721	85.4%
Households with at least one vehicle	<b>4,814</b>	<b>93.1%</b>	138,767	94.5%	443,806	94.6%	4,964,104	70.3%

Source: 2000 US Census

The town has created a Quality of Life Task Force to address the issue. The task force and the town’s Building Department have stepped up code enforcement efforts throughout the town, and they have given landlords citations for overcrowding. As a result of these efforts, the number of reported violations has decreased significantly and efforts to ensure enforcement continue.

### 2.9 ECONOMY

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There are a total of nine shopping centers in the study area, ranging from 5,000 square feet to 236,000 square feet in size. Altogether these shopping centers account for 431,000 total square feet of retail space (Suffolk County Department of Planning, 2006). Farmingville’s retail community is a mixture of local businesses and larger

regional and national chains. Two large grocery stores, Compare and Stop & Shop, anchor shopping centers on the east and west sides of town, and recently C-Town opened in a shopping center at Old Medford Avenue. The Stop & Shop shopping center, the largest in the hamlet, also includes a K-Mart, and a number of other large-scale retailers are located just outside the study area.

Convenience stores such as CVS and 7-Eleven are located around town in stand-alone buildings. A few national chain restaurants are concentrated along North Ocean Avenue between the LIE and Horseblock Road, and a scattering of locally owned restaurants is found along Horseblock and Portion Roads.

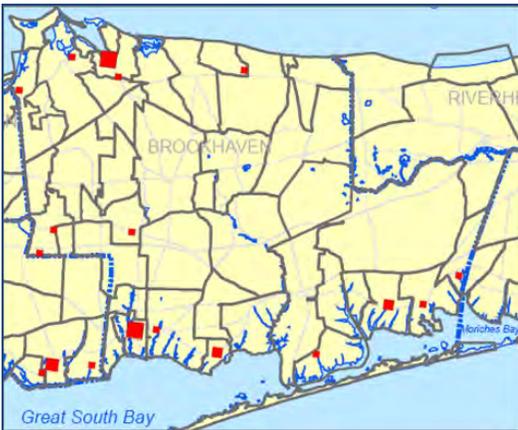
Most shopping and retail in Farmingville is housed in strip centers. The shopping centers contained a total of 112 stores when they were counted for the Suffolk County Retail Center Survey in 2005. At that time fifty-six were retail stores and 45 were used for other functions. Eleven were empty, meaning a vacancy rate of about ten percent. This is down from 20 percent in the year 2000, although given recent economic circumstances, that rate has likely increased since 2005. A ten-percent vacancy rate is comparable to neighboring hamlets including Centereach, Holtsville, and East Patchogue. The Town of Brookhaven was one of only two Suffolk County towns that had a shopping center vacancy rate higher than ten percent (10.6) in 2005, (the other was Southold at 12.9 percent) (Suffolk County Department of Planning, 2006). Farmingville is also home to one major shopping center, defined as 100,000 square feet or larger: Expressway Plaza, located on North Ocean Avenue, is 236,000 square feet and contains 19 stores.

Farmingville is one of 14 Brookhaven communities to have a central business district. At the intersection of Granny and Horseblock Roads, the district is home to 20 stores and accommodates 28,000 square feet of commercial space. The Suffolk County Retail Center Survey in 2005 found the district contained eight retail stores, ten non-retail stores, and two vacant stores, for a vacancy rate of ten percent, on par with the rate for downtowns in Brookhaven (10.2 percent), compared with 7.3 percent in all Suffolk County towns.

Overall, the percentage of stores in both downtowns and shopping centers used for retail has been declining since the late 1980s. Many stores now house



**Figure 17.** Examples of typical retail along Horseblock Road in Farmingville. Top: Farmingville Plaza; Middle: Farmingville Shopping Center; Bottom: the Central Business District (across from Triangle Park)



**Figure 18.** Farmingville Central Business District. Source: Suffolk County Planning Department, 2006

service business such as coin-operated laundries. Smaller downtowns tend to be more service-oriented, as is the case in Farmingville.

Brookhaven’s new town hall opened on Bald Hill in 2004. The town purchased and renovated the old Allstate world headquarters building, spending \$25 million to consolidate offices housed in separate facilities into one space. About 1,000 employees work there, and the building also includes a cafeteria and rooms for public meetings.

The only major private office building in Farmingville is the Long Island Business Center. Built in 1990, it contains 85,000 square feet and sits on 5.3 acres on Portion Road. Nearby office centers include the Holbrook Medical Center on Union Avenue in Holbrook, the Greenpoint Bank

**Figure 19. INVENTORY OF SHOPPING CENTERS & DOWNTOWNS (CBDs), 2006**

Center Name	Anchor Stores	Street Location		Area (sq. ft.)	Year Open	# Stores
<b>Expressway Plaza</b>	<b>Kmart, Stop&amp;Shop, Compare Foods, Eckerd</b>	<b>W/N. Ocean</b>	<b>S/Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>236,000</b>	<b>1979, 1994</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>College Plaza</b>	<b>Family Dollar</b>	<b>N/Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>E/Waverly Av.</b>	<b>82,000</b>	<b>1972</b>	<b>19</b>
Tiffany Plaza	--	N/Portion Rd	W/Morris Av.	60,000	1991	26
<b>Farmingville Plaza</b>	<b>KK Athletics</b>	<b>N/Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>Opp/Oriole Pl</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>(Farmingville CBD)</b>	--	<b>Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>E/Woodmont Pl</b>	<b>28,000</b>	--	<b>20</b>
American Arcade	Xtreme Fitness Center	N/Portion Rd	W/S. Howell Av	25,000	1989	10
<b>The Commons</b>	--	<b>S/Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>E/Waverly Av.</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Blue Spruce Center</b>	--	<b>S/Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>W/Pommer Av</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Horse Block Shopping Plaza</b>	--	<b>S/Horseblock Rd</b>	<b>Opp E/Lidge Dr</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Campus Square</b>	--	<b>W/Waverly Av</b>	<b>Opp/Campus Dr.</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>1978</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Mooney Pond Plaza</b>	--	<b>S/Mooney Pond</b>	<b>E/Hillside Rd</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>4</b>
Ruggiero Center	--	N/Portion Rd	E/S. Howell Av.	5,000	1985	6
<b>Total:</b>				<b>521000</b>		<b>137</b>

Centers listed in **bold** are within the boundaries of the study area. Source: Suffolk County Dept. of Planning - Shopping Centers and Downtowns, Suffolk County NY May 2006. Since that time some of the stores have relocated and College Plaza was re-named to Farmingville Shopping Center in 2009.

## 2: COMMUNITY PROFILE

building on Portion Road in Lake Ronkonkoma, and 5000 Corporate Court and Symbol Technologies, both in Holtsville.

Other major employers in the area include Suffolk Community College, Teachers Federal Credit Union, and United Parcel Service (UPS). The most popular employment fields for Farmingville residents at the time of the Census were education/health and social services (21 percent), retail trade (12 percent), manufacturing and professional/scientific/management (10 percent each), and construction (9 percent).

**Figure 20. EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

	Farmingville		Brookhaven		Suffolk County		New York	
LABOR	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Total Labor Force</b> (Population 16 & over)	<b>12,283</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>341,196</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,086,848</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14,805,912</b>	<b>100</b>
Employed	8,330	67.8	219,004	64.2	683,062	62.8	8,382,988	56.6
Unemployed	409	3.3	9,882	2.9	27,964	2.6	640,108	4.3
Not in labor force	3,537	28.8	112,109	32.9	375,223	34.5	5,759,107	38.9
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>								
<b>Total employed civilian labor force</b>	<b>8,330</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>219,004</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>683,062</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8,382,988</b>	<b>100</b>
Ag; forestry; fish and hunting; mining	15	0.18	620	0.28	2,369	0.35	54,372	0.65
Construction	754	9.05	17,277	7.89	51,079	7.48	433,787	5.17
Manufacturing	884	10.61	19,219	8.78	65,316	9.56	839,425	10.01
Wholesale trade	396	4.75	9,144	4.18	29,859	4.37	283,375	3.38
Retail trade	1,013	12.16	28,489	13.01	82,376	12.06	877,430	10.47
Transportation & warehousing; utilities	541	6.49	12,919	5.90	40,393	5.91	460,485	5.49
Information	467	5.61	8,781	4.01	27,290	4.00	340,713	4.06
Fire, insurance, real estate; rental & leasing	531	6.37	14,233	6.50	53,510	7.83	736,687	8.79
Professional; scientific; management; administrative; & waste management services	871	10.46	20,417	9.32	70,611	10.34	849,124	10.13
Educational; health and social services	1,752	21.03	52,762	24.09	154,495	22.62	2,039,182	24.33
Art; entertain; recreation; accommodation & food service	290	3.48	12,121	5.53	38,438	5.63	611,280	7.29
Other services	332	3.99	9,139	4.17	29,202	4.28	423,756	5.05
Public administration	484	5.81	13,883	6.34	38,124	5.58	433,372	5.17

Source: US Census, 2000.

## 2.10 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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In general, residents are proud of the high quality of the schools and the library, and they believe there is not enough space for competitive sports and other active recreation.

### Education

The Farmingville community is part of the Sachem Central School District, one of the state's largest. The district serves more than 15,000 students from Farmingville and six other communities. It includes twelve elementary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools, Sachem High School East and Sachem High School North. Statistical indicators show that the Sachem district is one of the better school districts in New York State.

Farmingville is home to Tecumseh and Lynwood elementary schools and Sachem East, which is located near Town Hall and Bald Hill. Sachem East, opened in 2004, is the district's newest school. It has about 2,600 students and 300 teachers and other staff members.

Eighty-nine percent of Sachem East's graduates received Regents diplomas in 2007, and 86 percent planned to attend a two- or four-year college.

State tests administered to seventh graders in 2007-2008 showed that 83 percent of Sachem's students were at or above proficiency level in English, compared with 70 percent statewide, and 96 percent were at or above proficiency in math, compared with 79 percent statewide. After four years of high school, 89 percent of students showed proficiency in English, compared with 80 percent statewide, and 92 percent showed proficiency in math, compared with 76 percent statewide.

Suffolk Community College's Ammerman campus, one of three locations for the college, is just northwest of Farmingville in Selden (although it is located inside the study area). Ammerman, with 11,000 students, is the largest of the three campuses. It offers associate degrees or certificates in nursing and other health-care areas, paralegal studies, liberal arts and sciences, performing and visual arts, engineering and computer sciences, electronics, computers, construction, and automotive services.

Stony Brook University, part of the State University of New York, is less than ten miles from Farmingville. Stony Brook has more than 30,000 students in a range of undergraduate and graduate programs in arts and sciences, business, health professions, engineering, marine sciences, journalism, and social work. U.S. News & World Report ranked the school in the top 100 national universities and the top 50 public national universities in 2009. Its campus includes Stony Brook University Medical Center, the only academic medical center on Long Island and the only Level 1 trauma center in Suffolk County.

Library

The Sachem Public Library is one of the largest school district libraries in New York State, serving roughly 82,000 people. Voters approved construction of the main building in 1961, and it was built at 150 Holbrook Road. After several expansions, it now encompasses nearly 160,000 square feet of space and houses 260,000 books, 500 periodical subscriptions, and 40,000 DVDs, CDs, and audio books. Computer centers for adults, children, and teens contain a total of 64 computers. The library has no branches.

Library programs, which are heavily subscribed, include workshops for parents and their infants and toddlers. Story hours, reading clubs, and craft opportunities are available for primary-school-age children. Computer instruction, crafts, game nights, book groups, SAT coaching, and Regents preparation are offered for teens. Adults may take advantage of concerts, poetry readings, films, book discussion groups, workshops for parents and infants, coaching on using search engines, instruction in written and spoken English, and other services. The library is the only public agency in the area offering some of these programs.

In 2010, the library plans to open a 40,000-square-foot outdoor garden that will expand opportunities for programming, wireless computing, and recreational reading throughout the warmer months.

Public safety and emergency responders

The Farmingville Fire Department is based at 780 Horseblock Road, with a second station at 1080 Portion Road. The Suffolk County Police Department’s Sixth Precinct provides law enforcement services. The precinct, which is located in Selden, also covers 21 other communities.

The Town of Brookhaven maintains a Department of Public Safety that is responsible for fire prevention, code enforcement, vehicle control and parking enforcement, airport and town hall security, and other duties.

Parks and recreation

Residents express deep concern at the lack of recreation space for active uses such as sports, bicycling, and skateboarding as a major concern. The 102-acre Farmingville Hills County Park, dedicated in January 2009, cannot be used for such pastimes because the open space preservation funding that paid for its purchase allows only passive activities such as hiking. The county opened walking trails in the park in April 2009.

Looked at from a purely technical standpoint, Farmingville has plenty of park space. The study area contains about 216 acres of parkland, yielding a ratio of 12 acres per 1,000 residents. That’s above the most widely accepted standard of 6.5 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 people set by



**Figure 21.** Firehouse at 780 Horseblock Road. (Photo: Sustainable Long Island 2008)



**Figure 22.** Closed Town recreation center. (Photo: Sustainable Long Island 2009)

MAP 7 - PARKS & PUBLIC LANDS

## 2: COMMUNITY PROFILE

the National Recreation and Park Association. However, removing the 102 acres of Farmingville Hills County Park, most of which is wooded area, from the total amount of parkland yields a ratio of 6.48, just below the national standard. The general community perception is that there is insufficient usable park space for children or adults.

Despite the lack of active parks, there are some opportunities for youth to play. Not counted as parkland in these calculations are the soccer fields just north of the LIE, which are owned by the school district and used for league play.

In addition, the area is home to Sachem Little League, which was founded in 1958 and serves the communities of the Sachem school district. The league is Williamsport-sanctioned, which allows it to compete in the Little League World Series. The league plays some of its games at Tecumseh Elementary.

Farmingville has two other sources of sponsored sports activity.

The Sachem Youth Advisory Group, incorporated in 1966, serves more than 4,000 children between the ages of 5 and 17 throughout the Sachem community. Programs include soccer, baseball, softball, basketball, lacrosse, and cheerleading.

KK Athletics Indoor Sports is Long Island's largest indoor sports complex. The facility serves 220 soccer teams from all over Long Island. It includes three indoor soccer fields and offers youth and adult leagues and year-round training. KK Athletics opened in a converted shopping center once anchored by a supermarket that had closed several years before.

A Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated on an overlook near Bald Hill in 1991. The overlook is the only site on Long Island with a view of the Long Island Sound, the Great South Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean all at once.

Nearby is the Brookhaven Amphitheater Art and Cultural Center at Bald Hill. The town runs the 7,000-seat outdoor facility, which has presented concerts by Led Zeppelin, Steppenwolf, and others. Movies are shown in July and August.



**Figure 23.** Vietnam Veterans War Memorial. (Image from Google Maps)

### Religion

Several churches are located in or near Farmingville, including St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church, Congregational Church, Church of the Resurrection, Helping Hands Ministries, and One More for Jesus Christian Center. The nearest synagogues are in Lake Ronkonkoma, Patchogue, and Coram. The nearest mosques are in Moriches and Dix Hills.

### Community groups

Sachem Community Youth Services, also known as the Sachem Teen Center, is a non-profit organization based in Lake Ronkonkoma that for 30 years has provided activities for area young people between 5 and 20. The group hosts movie nights, tutoring, basketball games, counseling, arts and crafts, karate, summer recreation programs, sports, and dances. It also helps young people find jobs and provides counseling. A youth council performs community service, including visits to senior centers. The walk-in Teen Center offers activities such as foosball, chess, ping pong, movies, karaoke, and video games.

The Brookhaven Youth Bureau is a town department responsible for providing activities for young people up to age 21. It hosts town-wide youth councils that recommend and assist with activities, operates a sanctuary program for homeless and runaway youth, offers a free summer camp program called Regeneration for youth ages 5-12, runs food and toy drives, and provides funding for community-based youth groups.

VFW Post 400, on College Road in Farmingville, runs a number of community outreach services and activities for local veterans, including an annual Memorial Day Parade.

Other active local community groups include the Farmingville Residents Association, the Farmingville Historical Society, the Farmingville Civic Association, the Portuguese-American Center of Suffolk, the Farmingville-Holtsville Chamber of Commerce, and Friends of the Sachem Library.

**Figure 24. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (Note: this list is not exhaustive)**

Name	Location/Contact	About
<b>Farmingville Civic Association</b>	P.O. Box 204 Farmingville, NY 11738 <a href="http://www.farmingvillecivic.com/">http://www.farmingvillecivic.com/</a>	"The Farmingville Civic Association is a non-partisan issue driven organization of individuals dedicated to educating members and the general public on matters relating to Farmingville, Brookhaven, New York State and the United States of America"
<b>Farmingville Historical Society</b>	P.O. Box 311 Farmingville, NY 11738	
<b>Farmingville Residents Association</b>	P.O. Box 302 Farmingville, NY 11738 <a href="http://www.farmingvilleresidents.org">http://www.farmingvilleresidents.org</a>	A non-profit organization whose mission is "to improve and develop community relations for a unified Farmingville."
<b>Farmingville-Holtsville Chamber of Commerce</b>	P.O. Box 66 Holtsville, NY 11742	
<b>Friends of Sachem Library</b>	<a href="http://www.sachemlibrary.org/pages/friends.aspx">http://www.sachemlibrary.org/pages/friends.aspx</a>	A non-profit group dedicated to supporting Sachem Public Library since 1986, sponsoring events and scholarships for high school seniors.
<b>Portuguese American Center of Suffolk</b>	P.O. Box 442 Farmingville, NY 11738	A non-profit social club for Portuguese Americans.
<b>VFW Post 400</b>	400 College Rd., Farmingville, NY 1738 <a href="http://vfwfarmingvillememorialpost400.com">http://vfwfarmingvillememorialpost400.com</a>	Local Farmingville Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States with services and programs to support veterans.
<b>Sachem Community Youth Services</b>	<a href="http://sachemteencenter.tripod.com/">http://sachemteencenter.tripod.com/</a>	Non-profit organization providing activities and services for youth ages 5-20.

## **CHAPTER 3. COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS**

To revitalize a community, local groups, residents, and local government officials must work together. First they must cooperate to survey community needs and develop a visioning plan. Then they have to work with each other to implement the plan. An important part of this is empowering civic groups, local organizations and other residents so they can push for the plan on a long-term basis, regardless of changes in the roster of elected officials and outside organizations involved.

### **Start of the project**

The visioning process was initiated in Brookhaven Town Councilwoman Connie Kepert's office. The community interviewed firms to conduct the visioning and selected Sustainable Long Island. The nonprofit agency was charged with guiding community members to create a shared vision for future community development and then working with town officials and community partners to develop a plan to implement that vision.

### **Community-building**

Sustainable Long Island conducted dozens of meetings with community residents and officials over an 18-month period. The first round of meetings began in the spring of 2008 to begin uncovering issues of community concern and to identify community partners who could take the lead in the planning process.

Sustainable Long Island held meetings to give interested members of the community an understanding of the planning process. Sustainable Long Island gathered suggestions about what people and groups it should reach out to and about effective outreach techniques. Another goal of these meetings was to build support among community partners for the planning project and for its eventual implementation. Through these meetings, Sustainable Long Island gained information about community assets and opportunities.

Support from elected officials and town employees is also key to the community planning process. Brookhaven Town officials, particularly in the Planning Department, have been especially committed to community planning in general and to this project in particular. Sustainable Long Island and its community partners enjoyed the backing of Connie Kepert, Brookhaven Town Council member from Farmingville, and then-Suffolk County Legislator Brian Beedenbender throughout the planning process.

### **3.1 ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY**

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Sustainable Long Island met regularly with community residents and with town and county officials to encourage the planning process and the implementation stage that follows.

### Focus groups

Sustainable Long Island and Brookhaven Town officials held five focus groups in July 2009 with community members, local officials, and service providers. The sessions were conducted by specialty (business owners, clergy, etc.) so that participants could discuss issues specific to their constituencies and each session identified community assets, challenges, and opportunities. Information gained from the focus groups was used to direct community discussions for the planning weekend.

#### Focus group meetings

- **Business and property owners.** Commercial property and business owners as well as real-estate professionals.
- **Public service agencies.** Officials of public safety, buildings, public works, and other agencies.
- **Religious leaders.** Leaders of local churches and religious organizations.
- **Youth-related professionals.** Representatives of groups such as the town youth bureau, library, schools, and parent-teacher associations.
- **Elected officials.** Elected officials and staff of officials who represent the community at the town, county, and state levels.

During the focus groups, participants discussed assets, challenges, and opportunities facing the community as well as what they would like to see in the future. Community assets highlighted include Farmingville Hills Park, cultural diversity, accessibility to expressway and major arterial roads, an active civic community, good schools and a good starting point for a hamlet center in the old central business district. Challenges identified included barriers to pedestrian activity and walkability, speed of traffic along Horseblock Road, a lack of activities for young people, underutilized shopping centers and parking lots, limited availability of housing appropriate for young adults and seniors, the need to attract additional retail or businesses, and challenges presented by sewer capacity. *(Notes from the focus group sessions can be found in appendix D).*

### Best Practices Tour

Sustainable Long Island took a group of Farmingville residents on a tour of three nearby areas engaged in community revitalization: Patchogue, Sayville, and Port Jefferson. The goal was to give the residents a sense of what was being done in other communities and what could be done in Farmingville. Participants were asked to look at several elements that contribute to successful downtowns.

In Patchogue, Mayor Paul Pontieri talked about Copper Beech, a townhouse development just a few blocks from downtown that includes workforce housing units. The proximity to downtown gives Copper Beach residents easy access to services and reduces the need for driving. Participants also saw the Patchogue Theater for the

### 3: COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

Performing Arts, which was recently renovated and reopened as a downtown anchor attraction.

In Port Jefferson, village board member Virginia Capon and Michael Schwarting, an architect and urban designer, showed participants the Port Jefferson Village Center, which offers community services including meeting spaces, classes, and children’s events. Participants walked the streets of the community, observing pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks and benches, landscaping, and public spaces.



**Figure 25.** Mayor Pontieri talks to best practice tour participants about revitalization efforts in Patchogue.

In Sayville, Kay Cameron from the Greater Sayville Chamber of Commerce spoke about her group’s role in maintaining the downtown area, organizing events and clean-ups, applying for grants, establishing partnerships with businesses to maintain sections of downtown, and contracting for street cleaning.

After the tour, participants said they saw the importance of dealing with traffic and parking problems and addressing aesthetic issues such as signage and design of crosswalks. They talked about the need to involve businesses and community groups in the upkeep of sidewalks and plantings. They also saw that building housing closer to stores could relieve some need for parking and increase pedestrian traffic in downtown areas, making them more vibrant and reducing reliance on cars.

#### 3.2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Successful community planning requires active community involvement. Various methods can be used to inform residents about how the process works, how they can participate, and what might be included in the eventual plan.

Sustainable Long Island worked with community members, officials, and organizations to create a comprehensive outreach strategy designed to make people aware of the importance of their participation in the Community Planning Weekend and to generate buzz about the future.

This strategy was designed according to Sustainable Long Island’s Seven Points of Contact method, which holds that at least seven contact points must be used in order to reach each community resident at least once with information about the process. Twelve outreach methods used for the Farmingville project are listed at left. The Town also issued press releases. Sample outreach materials can be found here and in Appendix B.



**Figure 26.** Lawn sign used to announce community planning weekend.

**Encouraging participation**

The extensive outreach efforts coordinated for the Community Planning Weekend included the following activities and sought to reach each community member

- **Presentations** to groups in the community
- **Door-to-door survey**, reaching over 1,000 households with an informational handout about planning weekend
- **Postcard** mailed to households and businesses in study area
- **Ads in Yankee Trader and Penny Saver**
- **Flyers** placed at important community locations such as the library, businesses, and churches, and handed out in-person and at events
- Announcements in local **church bulletins**
- **Lawn signs** throughout town
- Creation of project **website** and **announcement on Town of Brookhaven website**
- **Banner** hung over Horseblock Road
- **Public service announcements** on numerous radio stations
- Word-of-mouth through individuals and community groups
- **Digital variable-message signs** posted along Horseblock Road for the planning weekend

**Survey**

To gather broad input from Farmingville residents, Sustainable Long Island conducted a door-to-door survey of the study area asking people about their areas of concern and their desires for their community. Surveyors knocked on over 1,000 doors—one of nearly every five households in the hamlet—and collected 545 responses. Results reveal that residents appreciate Farmingville because of the high quality of Sachem schools, the nice, quiet neighborhood feel and friendly people. Community amenities such as shops, restaurants, parks and public transportation are generally within walking distance of residents' homes and residents are interested in being able to walk to these places. Other questions indicate that retail stores, safety, cleanliness, and restaurants are the most important elements of a downtown-type area. 89 percent of respondents feel it is important to have a park within their community, and among those respondents, play areas, walking trails and sports facilities are the most desirable elements of a park. (For a breakdown of responses, see Appendix C).

**3.3 COMMUNITY PLANNING WEEKEND**

The Community Planning Weekend on December 4-7, 2009, was the culmination of all of Sustainable Long Island's outreach, research, and education efforts. Dozens of community members came together in three days of meetings and interactive workshops to give their ideas about revitalizing Farmingville, prioritize community needs, and suggest new designs for the Horseblock Road corridor.

**Friday evening, December 4, 2009: Opening workshop**

The Town of Brookhaven hired renowned land use planner Dan Burden of Walkable Communities Inc. to lead the weekend activities along with Sustainable Long Island. Dan gave Farmingville residents a short course in community development. Displaying slides of leafy, well-traffic sidewalks and streets, he showed the more than 50 participants what other communities have done to increase walkability – the

**FARMINGVILLE: OUR VISION for TOMORROW**  
**Community Planning Weekend**  
 at Brookhaven Town Hall  
 Dec. 4 - 7 pm ★ Dec. 5 - 9:30 am & 1:30 pm ★ Dec. 7 - 7 pm  
 For More Info.  
[www.FarmingvilleTomorrow.com](http://www.FarmingvilleTomorrow.com)  
 516-873-0230

Figure 27. Banner hung across Horseblock Road announcing the planning weekend.

### 3: COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

combination of slower traffic, easier walking and biking, parks, mixed residential/business/civic uses, and other factors that make communities more livable and inviting. He also led community members through a series of exercises designed to identify shared values, craft individual visions for the future, name possible community improvement projects, and vote on them.

Community value statements showed be many similarities between responses. The types of words that appeared the most in the participants' responses include moral values such as faith, neighbors and community, land and openness, location and accessibility, and

schools and education. The different value-statements given by the individual community members strongly reflect the values of the community as a whole.

Another exercise asked participants to list important issues and opportunities for future development in their community. Each person then had the opportunity to vote on six different items they'd like to see addressed. The issues and opportunities that received the most votes include a community center, landscaping, playgrounds and parks, a live music café, a clean-up campaign, and farmers markets.

Participants were also asked to imagine that they left Farmingville for twenty years and then came back. Common responses among include cleanliness, walkability, safety, beautification, landscaping, improved roads, parks, and playgrounds. The activity was both informative and engaging for the community members, in that it provided them with a true feel for what they'd all like to see their community become in the future.

These exercises guided discussions and activities throughout the weekend and formed the basis for the community's vision and recommendations, outlined in chapter 4. (*The results of the exercises are detailed in Appendix D.*)

#### Saturday, December 5, 2009: Walking tour and design workshop

More than 40 community members braved the cold, wet weather to participate in the first part of the Community Vision Design Day, a walking/bus tour. Participants took

**Dan Burden** is one of the nation's top authorities on designing neighborhoods that encourage fewer cars, more biking and walking, and mixed uses including shopping, office, residential and government. Combining these factors invites people to spend more time and money in a community, he says. Time Magazine recently listed him as one of the six most important civic innovators in the world. Burden has led charrettes in more than 400 cities. He is beginning a new career teaching other urban planners how to involve community residents in the planning process.



**Figure 28.** Walking tour group. (Photo: Dan Burden)



**Figure 29.** Design workshop. (Photo: Sustainable Long Island)



**Figure 30.** Youth summit. (Photo: Sustainable Long Island)

buses from Brookhaven Town Hall to walk specific sections of the Horseblock Road corridor, identified by the Town and community members in previous sessions, reviewing existing conditions and considering changes.

After lunch, residents joined in the design session. Community members were assigned randomly to small groups, each with maps of the study area. Participants drew elements of their vision for future development and community enhancements on the maps. Discussions centered on traffic calming, safety, and streetscape improvements such as medians, crosswalks, sidewalks, and trees planted between the street and the sidewalk. For details, see recommendations in Chapter 4 and from the workshops in Appendix D.

Children were invited to design their own vision with blocks, markers, paper, and glue. They shared their ideas with all participants in a brief presentation.

#### Monday evening, December 7, 2009: The vision unveiled



**Figure 31.** Monday night: vision presentation and celebration.

The visioning weekend ended with a public celebration to unveil the core elements of the community's proposals and build momentum to move forward with writing the plan.

Burden's presentation to the more than 70 residents who attended included conceptual computer and hand-drawn renderings of potential roadway improvements. The renderings showed sterile strips of sidewalk, road, and parking lot brought alive with tree plantings, brick walkways and turning lanes, benches, outdoor eating areas, tree-lined sidewalks, bicycle parking, smaller parking areas for vehicles, and landscaped medians. Burden also suggested policy recommendations based on the community's proposals. Final recommendations are presented in Chapter 4.

The celebration, complete with a Farmingville cake, recognized the efforts of the residents who participated in the weekend. The evening also served as an affirmation of the community's desire to move forward. Sustainable Long Island, community members, and government planners then conferred to write the formal plan and implementation strategy.

Throughout the course of the mapping and design workshop on Saturday afternoon, design work built on preliminary ideas developed and shared on Friday as well as observations from the walking tour Saturday morning. As participants presented their concepts several themes and big ideas emerged. On the next page is a list of those themes, as included in Dan's presentation.

**Major Themes and “Big Ideas” from Community Planning Weekend**

1. *Preserve the small town feel and enhance character. Preserve and strengthen neighborhoods.*
2. *Create an identity for Farmingville that defines its boundaries and enhances its character – using landmarks and monuments to let everyone know they’re entering Farmingville.*
3. *Develop and enhance the concept of "complete streets:" traffic calming to slow vehicle speeds while preserving capacity and accommodating all forms of transportation. Capacity may be preserved through the use of roundabouts and streetscaping, while other modes of transportation such as walking and biking may be accommodated by exploring the creation of bike lanes and paths where appropriate and bike racks throughout town. Pedestrian safety and walkability should be enhanced through the installation of additional properly designed sidewalks as well as repair of existing sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian crossing signage, medians, islands, etc.*
4. *Possible redevelopment of KK Athletics and Compare Foods shopping centers: when opportunities to redevelop these properties, bring the buildings closer to the street and utilize parking lots better. In the meantime establish seasonal or periodic use of the parking lots for farmers' markets, festivals, etc.*
5. *Community center - Community members expressed a desire for a community center that serves as a resource for community members young and old. Possible functions and services to be provided include: space for events, sports and recreation, artistic performance, medical or other services.*
6. *Beautification of streetscape: In nearly every design session community members mentioned the importance of improving the look and feel of the landscape and streetscape by adding lighting, furniture, public or community art, outdoor seating, trees and other greenery.*
7. *Clean-up: a top concern among many community members is the litter scattering the landscape. Residents would like to have trash receptacles available throughout town, encourage property owners to take responsibility for maintaining clean areas in front of their businesses, and to organize downtown clean-ups.*
8. *Celebrate the historic character of Farmingville. Establish an historic theme through the use of decorative features such as lamp posts, banners, signage, etc. In addition, the community would like to help facilitate the renovation and opening of the historic Terry House and Schoolhouse for a wide range of uses by the community.*
9. *Expand existing and create new recreational opportunities. Identify possible sites for additional parks and playgrounds. Then determine what types of uses should be allowed and build such new parks, including play areas for kids and facilities for older youth as well.*
10. *Explore potential for redevelopment of Expressway Plaza (Stop & Shop center) into a mixed-use village as per the community's vision. Potential desired uses include new businesses, community facilities, and new housing (condos).*
11. *Investigate the applicability of J-6 Main St. Business District as zoning option to help achieve community goals identified in visioning (a feasibility study). This type of zoning would help promote development of local shops, main street type businesses, and a town or hamlet center.*

With the completion of this community plan, the final stage of Farmingville visioning begins. We hope the town will commit to using this plan as a guide for future development of Farmingville. Community members and elected officials will need to work with town planners and other key partners to see that the recommendations contained in Chapter 4 are implemented. Chapter 5 contains a matrix outlining short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations. An ongoing relationship that involves elected officials, town officials, private developers and residents will ensure the plan's success.

### 3.4 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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While residents are generally happy living in Farmingville, they identified issues and suggestions for improvements that they would like to see addressed. These issues and recommendations on how to advance them are dealt with in greater detail later in the report, but here is a brief summary:

**The Horseblock Road commercial corridor is not inviting.** Shopping centers vary in design and physical condition. More restaurants and additional types of merchants should be added to the mix. The long stretches of road, bare sidewalks, and large parking lots in front of the bigger shopping centers are unattractive.

**Community lacks center.** There is no clear town center and little to differentiate Farmingville from the rest of Long Island's suburban sprawl. The community lacks a gathering place that can accommodate community events and functions.

**Traffic is a problem.** Horseblock Road is very wide, often congested, and invites speeding when it's not congested. Public transportation is insufficient. Buses don't run frequently and the routes are too spread out.

**Horseblock Road is not welcoming to pedestrians or bicyclists.** For much of the route, people who walk on sidewalks see roadway on one side and parking lots on the other. Amenities such as trash cans, benches, and shade are rare. Crossing Horseblock Road is intimidating, especially during rush hours. There are no bike lanes.

**Recreational opportunities are inadequate.** Although Farmingville has a large expanse of open space in Farmingville Hills Park, the community has limited space for active recreation. There are few playgrounds or appropriate locations for organized sports and outdoor activities, leaving little for youth and teenagers to do outside of school. Community members report frequent use of parking lots for skateboarding.

## **CHAPTER 4. COMMUNITY VISION**

### ***Farmingville Vision – An Historic Hamlet in the Center of Suffolk County***

*The Farmingville community envisions the hamlet of the future as one with a well-lit, tree-filled corridor that features a mix of businesses and services, including grocery stores, restaurants, and offices. There is sufficient angled, on-street parking and shared parking behind stores so that shoppers are able to quickly and conveniently park their cars and go about their business on foot. The hamlet is a vibrant, healthy one where children have ample opportunity to be active, and can safely walk to school. Every day people walk and bike through town, to and from work, before and after school. Traffic moves at a steady pace, but pedestrians cross safely and easily at the brightly painted signalized crosswalks. Lampposts accented with hanging flower baskets and trash receptacles line the road. Benches and small café tables provide places for people to sit along the way, sipping coffee and chatting with business owners before going to get their hair or nails done at the salon or barber shop. In the afternoon school children from local schools are accompanied by their teachers as they enter the old Bald Hills Schoolhouse, where they stop for a history lesson before they picnic and hike in Farmingville Hills Park. Banners hanging from the lampposts and signs donated by local businesses in planted medians accompanied by dedicated turning lanes at either end of the hamlet center remind you that “Farmingville Welcomes You.”*

*A variety of businesses line the roadway and the parking behind the buildings leaves attractive storefronts and street life for people to see as they walk down the street for a treat at Ralph’s. Each grouping of businesses has unique characteristics, but they all look as if they belong. Sculptures stand prominently in the plaza near the post office and in Triangle Park, and decorative bike racks are stationed outside each of the shopping centers. A new community pride and clean-up campaign helps keep the street litter-free.*

*Residents enjoy getting together to hear music in one of the frequent community festivals in the new “Village Green” provided as a community benefit when a new mixed use project was constructed in the hamlet center, at the recently dedicated Farmingville Hills park, the street behind Triangle Park, at Bald Hill or in conjunction with the local farmers’ market. On weekends, kids play at the playground in warm weather and can be found at the new community center skating or playing ball in cold weather.*

The above unified vision emerged from the planning process as a result of countless hours of collaborative discussion, brainstorming, and designing by community residents, town officials, and experts, including Town planners, consultant Dan Burden, and Sustainable Long Island. The overarching vision is one in which Farmingville has a renewed, positive identity and sense of place. It features a neighborhood-scale hamlet center where people can walk, meet friends and family, shop, eat and so on. During the community planning weekend, several priorities became clear:

- Preserve the small-town feel which is the essence of Farmingville
- Foster community pride and enhance community identity
- Calm traffic and make the area more inviting to pedestrians

- Landscape and further beautify the community
- Create public space and define a town or “hamlet center”
- Strengthen the local economy, particularly small, locally owned businesses
- Expand and enhance recreational opportunities

The essence of the vision is a clearly defined hamlet center that is recognizable and feels livelier, where people and cars are equally important, where businesses thrive, trees line the streets, and residents have access to a range of activities. The result is a community of quiet residential streets, a hamlet center and commercial corridor, a variety of recreational activities, pedestrian amenities and venues for cultural events.

Building on the themes above, community recommendations were distilled into several goals:

### **Community Planning Goals**

- Preserve the small-town feel and enhance the area’s character. Preserve and strengthen existing residential neighborhoods.
- Foster community pride and create a positive identity for Farmingville that makes its boundaries clear, and celebrates and enhances its historic character.
- Make the community more attractive through improved landscaping, the inclusion of streetscape elements, beautification, and maintenance and periodic community clean-up programs.
- Enhance and implement the concept of “complete streets,” that welcome everyone, slowing vehicle speeds while preserving capacity and accommodating all forms of transportation and to create a pedestrian-friendly, walkable community.
- Define and create a recognizable hamlet center that promotes an appropriate mix of desirable uses and building forms, including local shops, Main Street-type businesses and public space, and fosters positive economic development, especially for locally owned businesses.
- Increase recreational opportunities in the community, especially for local youth, and work with the Town to develop linkages with the Bald Hill recreation center to benefit both the Farmingville community and the Town.
- Explore potential redevelopment scenarios for underutilized or antiquated shopping centers and vacant parcels to achieve hamlet center goals identified in the community planning process

The following plan focuses on the Horseblock Road corridor from Nicolls Road, just past North Ocean Avenue to Old Medford. As with many vision plans, “Farmingville: Our Vision for Tomorrow” consists of different elements and treatments for the study area as a whole, as well as visions for distinct areas with their own characteristics and potential. It is important to look at the vision as a puzzle with many different pieces – to consider the individual elements and visions as parts of the whole.

### THE PLAN

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Farmingville is divided by County Road 16, Horseblock Road, its main corridor, which is flanked by a variety of commercial establishments, from law offices, banks and small businesses, to grocery stores and an indoor soccer facility. Immediately north and south of these businesses, just blocks off the main road are quiet residential neighborhoods of mostly single-family homes and tree-lined streets.

This plan builds upon the hamlet's assets and is designed to breathe new life into Farmingville by creating a "center" in keeping with the community's desires as well as concepts and goals of regional planning strategies such as Brookhaven 2030 and other area plans. When designed thoughtfully and planned for carefully town or hamlet centers allow for efficient use of land, energy, infrastructure, satisfying environmental, economic and social equity goals. Such centers provide jobs, housing, education, shopping, business and recreation opportunities and bring people out, helping to activate the space.

The vision outlined in this plan aims to capitalize on the potential of the underutilized corridor and transform it from a typical suburban, auto-oriented road with an unrelated mix of uses into a cohesive, green, walkable place where people, bicycles and cars share the roadway. The many recommendations contained in this plan are the groundwork for achieving this vision. Slowing traffic speeds, increasing pedestrian safety, greening the landscape and enhancing the streetscape will improve the road. Economic and environmental health will benefit from strategies to attract new businesses, green building techniques, increased recreational opportunities and incentives and policies to support them, such as building codes, zoning and design guidelines.

This chapter begins with common tools that can be used to facilitate community revitalization. Next is the Vision Plan (Section 4.2) which begins with policies, zoning, and guidelines that will set the stage for revitalization. During the community planning weekend, four focus areas were identified. The next section, 4.3, describes visions for these areas and recommendations for how to achieve them. The remainder of the chapter is dedicated to overall or area-wide vision. This section presents elements of the vision that apply broadly to the entire length of the roughly 2-mile Horseblock Road corridor in Farmingville, broken into sections: Community Planning and Capacity Building; Local Economy and Business Environment; Landscaping and Beautification; Transportation and Mobility; Recreation and Entertainment; Infrastructure and Environment; and Community Pride and Identity. Each section contains a brief synopsis of current conditions, followed by the community's vision elements (bullet points) and recommendations synthesized from those vision elements for how to achieve them. Potential financial resources are listed in the final section of the chapter, 4.5.

Recommendations are summarized in the implementation matrix (*Chapter 5*), which is intended to be used to guide partners through implementing the plan.

## 4.1 TOOLS

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A successful community revitalization plan relies on a combination of individual projects, regulatory action, and new policies to transform vision into reality. Tools such as zoning, design guidelines, development incentives and application processes, can encourage revitalization. Carefully crafted policies can streamline the development process, attracting the types of projects a community desires. Brief examples of frequently used tools in community planning around the country, from codes and ordinances to fiscal incentives and partnerships, are given below.

Codes, ordinances, statutes – For decades the trend has been to regulate development by separating similar and dissimilar uses, which over time, has contributed to suburban sprawl and reduced the diversity of uses desired in today’s Main Street areas and Hamlet Centers. Municipalities can also use regulatory tools to foster the types of development they *do* want by articulating broader objectives, specifying the type and form of buildings and uses they would like to see, and allowing the private sector to get creative to achieve these objectives. Examples:

- **Zoning:** Conventional zoning is used by municipal governments to regulate the types of land uses, or activities in a given area. Governments can change or update these uses by revising zoning designations to achieve development patterns that are more in line with community goals. Changes may be made to particular geographic areas (rezoning an area from one type of commercial use to another), to the types of uses permitted, or to the form of development allowed (building height, distance from street, size of lots, etc.). Municipalities may create new primary zoning districts, such as the J-6 Main Street District the Town created in 2004 to stimulate diverse uses in hamlet centers and Main Streets, to achieve certain desired uses and forms, or overlay districts to protect natural features or promote and regulate certain types of development such as commercial or mixed-use. (An overlay district is superimposed on portions of another district and supersedes, modifies or supplements the underlying regulations).
  - Form-based zoning codes are a way to shape an attractive environment because they focus on the *form* of buildings rather than the use. They are prescriptive (stating what is wanted), rather than proscriptive (stating what is not wanted). Because of this, form-based codes are more flexible: they can achieve a more predictable physical result and encourage creativity. Multiple uses are encouraged as long as they fit within the building envelope. They can be appropriate tools to guide development in established neighborhoods with a definable character or for areas where a specific look and feel is desired. Several design workshop participants suggested a form-based code as a potentially viable option for the Horseblock Road corridor.
- **Landscape design standards** are codified requirements proscribing trees and other shade structures into the pedestrian realm, especially in mixed-use districts. Such standards may be desirable in a hamlet center or other commercial areas as a way to ensure that the community’s desire for a ‘greener’ corridor is met. Landscape design guidelines are voluntary and are meant to achieve outcomes

similar to design standards. They should include provisions for maintenance, irrigation, and landowner responsibilities.

- **Street-design standards** are often used to improve pedestrian safety and convenience as part of routine public works projects and ongoing redevelopment. “Complete streets” initiatives are gaining momentum in communities across the country, requiring roadway projects to balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transportation, and automobiles. Four communities in New York have passed such policies – Buffalo, Erie County, and Binghamton, and most recently, the Town of Babylon. Recommendations in this plan reflect the community’s desire to make Farmingville more accessible for cyclists and pedestrians and to calm automobile traffic, with concepts often used in complete streets policies.
- **Design guidelines**, sometimes called development guidelines, protect and enhance a community’s character by offering principles to guide building construction, renovation, and site development. They should clearly outline minimum design standards and encourage developers to find creative ways to achieve or even exceed those standards. In addition, guidelines should create a level playing field by holding conventional strip development to the same design standards required for mixed-use developments.

Design guidelines come in many forms, from professionally developed documents to simple posters or booklets with sketches, images, and concise guidelines. Such guidelines have been used in cities, towns, and districts across the country, including several communities in New York, such as Webster, Dryden, Rome, Newburgh and others.

Proactive policies and incentives – Communities can design policies to attract and reward the types of development they seek by providing density bonuses, streamlined permitting processes, or tax credits for projects that meet certain criteria or achieve specific objectives. Objectives may include reducing storm water runoff or increasing impervious surfaces, using green building techniques, providing affordable housing, preserving high-quality open space, and generating or using renewable energy. Incentives should make mixed-use development more attractive by promoting a broad array of uses in mixed-use districts, increased density where appropriate, and accelerated processing of applications. The Town of Brookhaven has policies in place to encourage desirable development, such as in identified hamlet centers or nodes.

Policies can also be used to promote broader community goals outside the realm of zoning and development. For example, policies that allow temporary use of public spaces for “Saturday markets,” (such as craft or farmers’ markets) and similar types of activities can go a long way towards creating vibrant public spaces.

Similarly, allowing merchandise to be displayed on sidewalks can create visual interest along streets and walkways.



**Figure 32.** A market such as a farmers’ or craft market is one way to repurpose under-utilized space, like expansive parking lots.

Seasonal vendors such as flower carts along the roadway and musicians playing in public plazas and parks can also create vibrant streetscapes. Several recommendations were made during the community planning weekend for better utilizing the large parking lots that dot Horseblock Road and improving the aesthetic quality of the roadway.

Community benefits– To help balance the costs of infrastructure or amenities, some municipalities require private developers to provide benefits to the community in return for permission to build a project. In general such amenities are required to be provided on the site of the development, but in certain cases, a municipality may allow them to be built elsewhere within the same jurisdiction. In some cases, a builder may pay fees in lieu of developing those amenities (parklands, for example) as part of a subdivision application, to provide flexibility for times when building compliance is not feasible due to land constraints, financing or other limitations. For example, a developer subject to an inclusionary housing requirement may be granted permission to pay a fee instead of developing affordable units. Article 16-A, the Long Island Workforce Housing Act (see Appendix F), provides an incentive in the form of a density bonus for developers building workforce housing or paying a fee to contribute towards workforce housing development. The Act, which has not been adopted as of the writing of this plan, provides a ten percent density bonus over the allowable maximum under applicable zoning if a developer provides a) ten percent affordable workforce housing on-site; b) required workforce housing on another site within the same local government; or c) payment of a fee equal to two times the area median income for a family of four. This Act, recommended for adoption elsewhere in this plan, and others like it are important tools because they create mechanisms for providing much needed housing. (See *Section 4.2 Recommendation 2, page 60 for recommendation to Adopt Article 16-A*).

To provide infrastructure such as sidewalks in new subdivisions, a municipality may require these amenities at the time of subdivision or site plan approval. The Town of Brookhaven requires developers to install public amenities like sidewalks, curbs, and public space when developing subdivisions. This policy helps ensure that community recommendations, such as additional public space and sidewalks will be integrated into new developments and redevelopment projects.

Public-private partnerships – Partnerships between private companies and public agencies or organizations can be established to help develop and operate capital facilities and/or services to help offset the cost of future roadway and other costly improvements. A community center, one of the recommendations that came out of the planning weekend, is an example of a facility that could be provided through a public-private partnership.

Transfer of Development Rights – Transfer of development rights (TDR) programs allow property owners to sever development rights from property in specially designated areas, often open space or environmentally sensitive areas or those designated for low-density uses, and sell them or transfer them to property owners who want to increase the density of development in another appropriately designated area. Often TDR programs are used on historically significant, open space, or farmland property. Section 85-408 of the Town Code authorizes the Town to establish a transfer

of development rights program. As of the writing of this report, the TDR program has not yet been implemented. This plan therefore recommends that the Town implement a TDR program, allowing the Town to concentrate and focus future development while preserving and protecting essential farmland and open space.

The Farmingville Community Redevelopment plan draws on a variety of these tools and lays out strategies that require the community and the public and private sectors to cooperate to realize the community's vision:

- Partnerships, workgroups and committees made up of residents, developers, government agencies, and elected officials are key to the success of the vision.
- Further studies and plans may be necessary to obtain more information to evaluate the opportunities, constraints, and feasibility of certain recommendations and to lay out additional steps to achieve them.
- Incentives and policies should expedite desirable development and attract interested developers
- Zoning, development codes, and design guidelines will help shape and direct investment along the corridor

During the community planning weekend, community members participated in exercises designed to elicit shared values, assets and opportunities for redevelopment, and elements of their personal visions for the future of Farmingville. The remainder of this chapter summarizes overarching ideas, priorities, and vision elements compiled from hundreds of comments received during the process. Residents' visions are combined with ideas about how to enhance the community.

### 4.2 GOVERNMENT, ZONING, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES

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*Objective: Revise or otherwise amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance, operational policies, and guidelines, and conduct needed studies to facilitate the creation of walkable and compact hamlet centers and downtowns in conformance with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Advance planning initiatives by adopting appropriate policies and codes and conducting necessary studies.*

#### Community Vision & Recommendations:

- *"Establish design standards for architecture and landscaping"*
- *"Conduct retail study"*
- *"Find ways to encourage creation of adequate sewer capacity"*
- *"Create guidelines with designated zones for walking, trees and landscaping, and furniture in front of businesses"*
- *"Incentivize owners to bring buildings closer to street"*
- *"Investigate the applicability of J-6 zoning district to certain properties along Horseblock Road"*
- *"Improve land uses, revise zoning as appropriate"*
- *"Create unified look for businesses"*

1. **Revise zoning to reflect the Community Redevelopment Plan: Promote a better mix of uses where appropriate. Consider overlay district for hamlet center consistent with land use plan (Sec. 4.2, Rec. 3) that would allow targeted mixed uses and rezone selected parcels outside core hamlet center, possibly to J-6 District or other appropriate districts. Consider form-based code to help achieve desired look and feel for commercial areas.**

Most of the commercial development along Horseblock Road is currently zoned J-2, Neighborhood Business. To achieve the community's vision of a more "Main Street" type environment, it will be important to revise zoning in the area to allow and encourage development the community would like to see and that will positively impact the local economy and environment. Town Code includes a J Business 6 zoning district – a Main Street Business District that allows "for development and redevelopment of fully integrated mixed-use pedestrian oriented main street centers." As such it can help preserve and enhance the sense of place that main street centers and traditional neighborhoods provide and may be appropriate for portions of the Horseblock Road corridor between CR-83 and CR-97. Mixed use zoning would benefit the Horseblock Road corridor by allowing and encouraging a variety of commerce thus attracting more shoppers to Farmingville.

The Town should examine a variety of options for revising the zoning along Horseblock Road to achieve the community's vision, including allowing for a mix of uses, either horizontally or vertically (where appropriate), allowing two-story buildings that could accommodate housing or offices above retail within the hamlet center.

Conventional zoning is based on the separation of uses which were traditionally viewed as incompatible. This separation of uses creates patterns of sprawl, requiring that schools, churches and housing are separated from retail shops, restaurants and offices. The result is that residents have to travel, and often the default is to drive, longer distances to get to their jobs, school, and to run errands, making people less active (which can lead to increased health problems), emitting more air pollution, and relying on burning fossil fuels.

One way to address these issues is to encourage (and in some cases require) more mixed use zoning. According to the USEPA, "the health and safety goals of separating uses must now be placed in context with a range of other problems that are created by not allowing uses where they will be most efficient." Mixed-use zoning can take many shapes and forms and will look different in each neighborhood, depending on the existing context and character. Integrating multiple types of uses can promote downtown development, commercial corridors and neighborhood centers. Uses can be mixed vertically with housing over office or retail for example, or uses can be mixed horizontally with different types of stores and offices to break up areas of similar uses, enlivening the street. Mixing uses serves to bring shops, services and work places closer to residents, reducing travel distances and time, which in turn can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, commuting costs and congestion.

Other benefits include:

- Transportation systems that can accommodate cars and public transportation as well as biking and walking
- Livelier atmospheres with public gathering places and a sense of place
- Neighborhoods where people can live, work and play
- Diverse housing types that can accommodate people within a range of incomes and at all stages of life
- More vibrant commercial areas where retail and services attract patrons for one another
- More compact development patterns that help preserve open space and protect environmentally sensitive areas by reducing demand for lower density, sprawling development in open spaces or greenfields
- More efficient use of infrastructure and related services

Achieving the goals and objectives of this plan will require changes to the current zoning in Farmingville, which should be based on recommendations in this community redevelopment plan and should also be consistent with Brookhaven2030 to encourage appropriate mixing of uses and a distinguished Hamlet Center. Consultant Dan Burden suggested an overlay district that would define several districts along the corridor and corresponding building forms (see figure 31). Emphasis should be placed on creating a cohesive look and feel for buildings that fits the scale and enhances the character of the surrounding context.

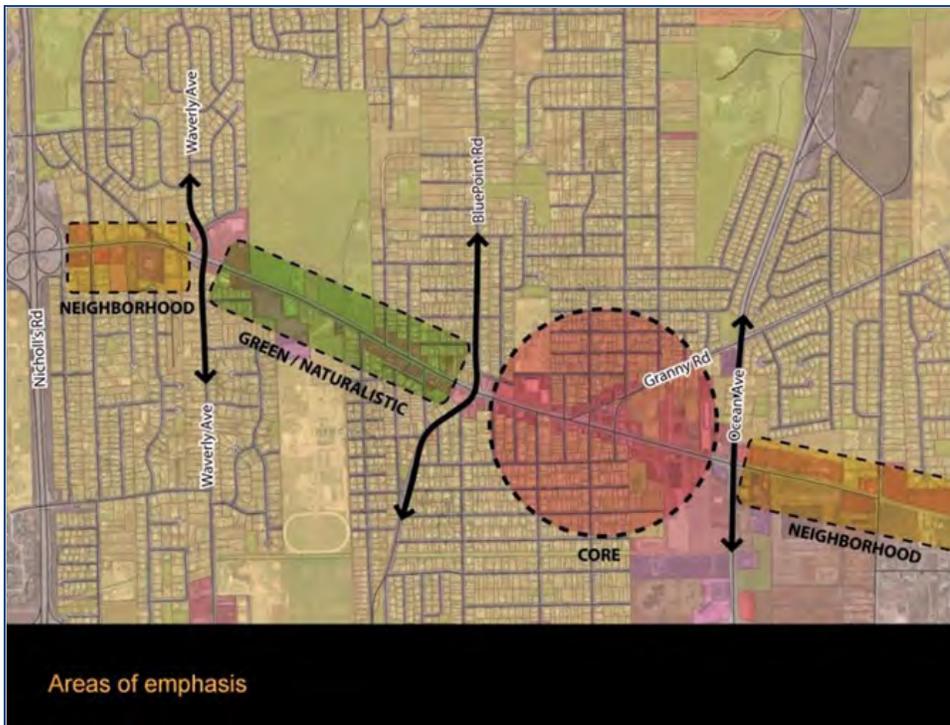


Figure 33. Areas of emphasis, suggested by Dan Burden to be considered in zoning

Another option for achieving the desired effect of creating an attractive “Main Street” in Farmingville is to revise the zoning through creation and adoption of a form-based code. Community members have expressed a desire for form-based codes to meet design objectives. Form based codes are tools for encouraging independent development by multiple property owners because they can regulate development at the scale of an individual building or lot, eliminating the need for large land assemblies and mega projects. Form-based codes would govern relationships between buildings, streets, and public spaces throughout the community or within the boundaries specified in the overlay district (such as along the Horseblock Road corridor).

Many property owners and developers find form-based codes to be easier to read and use than conventional codes because they tend to be shorter, more concise, and organized for visual access and readability. These features make it easier for non-planners to determine whether compliance has been achieved, often resulting in a smoother development process that is easier for developers to navigate.

Given that each community is different, it may not be feasible to regulate the form of buildings across all of Brookhaven Town; however, creating form-based overlay districts to facilitate area-specific plans and corresponding objectives should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Town should consider whether to supplement the existing zoning code text and map with form-based codes or to eventually replace the existing zoning with a form-based code, especially where it would facilitate the creation of compact, mixed use centers.

**2. Develop and implement incentives to encourage desirable private development consistent with the principles of Brookhaven2030 and the Farmingville community redevelopment plan. This includes small density bonuses (in appropriate locations like neighborhood retail clusters), tax credits, or an expedited permitting process for projects that achieve goals related to the vision plan.**

Projects that merit incentives should be limited to those that achieve goals of the community redevelopment plan, such as those that connect to public sewers, protect high-quality open space, provide affordable housing, or use green building techniques (i.e. Low-Impact Development (LID) or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)). Incentives might include small density bonuses for retail or mixed-use development in appropriate locations like neighborhood retail clusters, reduced parking requirements, streamlined permitting processes and fast-track development.

The Brookhaven Town Planning Board is authorized (under §85-276 of the Town Code) to grant zoning incentives within the J Business 6 Main Street Business District as part of its site plan review. Incentives offered include, but are not limited to, increasing the floor-area-ratio, reducing parking requirements or other land development standards as appropriate for the development, dedication or contribution of one or more of the following: public parking, sewage treatment plan capacity, civic or park space (as set forth in the Main Street Business District Design Manual), and downtown infrastructure improvements, such as street furniture, lighting, pavers, plazas, and related public amenities. The Town should consider creating additional incentives to encourage

development and redevelopment such as FAR bonuses for providing significant community benefits, such as village greens, maintenance services for such benefits, and donation of undeveloped land for open space preservation.

The Industrial/Commercial Incentive Program (I/C IP) provides for declining tax abatements in 14 designated commercial corridors in Brookhaven. In 2009 the Town drafted amendments to this program intended to reduce sprawl and expand the program to include nine additional target-areas to concentrate incentives in Hamlet centers, nodes, and transit hubs, consistent with the Brookhaven2030 plan. As of the writing of this report, Farmingville was not included in the designated corridors and the amendments had not yet been approved by the Town Board.

**It is therefore recommended that the Town Planning Department and Economic Development Division add the Farmingville Hamlet Center to the unapproved 2009 amendments, and that subsequently, the Town Board adopt these amendments.** The Town should then transfer them to the Suffolk County Industrial and Commercial Incentive Board to amend the Suffolk County Plan so that Farmingville and the Town as a whole can better take advantage of this State program.

In addition, **this plan recommends that the Town adopt Article 16-A**, the Long Island Workforce Housing Act. Implementing this Act will provide incentives to encourage and attract development of housing needed to preserve diversity and accommodate the growing young adult and aging baby boomer populations in Farmingville and throughout the Town.

**3. Commission a land use plan to detail needed zoning and code changes, and prepare a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) to assess impacts and possible needed mitigation measures for implementation of the Farmingville Community Redevelopment Plan.**

In order to achieve the desired look and feel and generate the kind of redevelopment envisioned during the community planning process, particularly in the area designated as a potential hamlet center, the zoning of certain commercial parcels along the Horseblock Road corridor should be changed. The Town should initiate a land use plan to examine how best to make needed zone and code changes, including a possible overlay district, to achieve the plan's vision.

During the community planning weekend, residents expressed a desire for the following types of changes, which may require zoning changes and should therefore be addressed in the land-use plan.

Community Planning Weekend Recommendations

- Consider applicability of J-6 (Main St. Business District) zoning to parcels along corridor, particularly at retail clusters and in the hamlet center.
- Consider form-based overlay district for the corridor featuring several areas or districts with different scales and characters for the buildings.

- Ensure that landscaped buffer remains between residential and commercial uses as shopping centers and other properties are redeveloped, as consistent with current zoning standards and Brookhaven 2030.
- Create a hamlet center, focusing on area between Blue Point and Granny Roads, enhancing the feel of the area and allowing current businesses to remain, but encouraging new and redevelopment of properties to create an inviting pedestrian atmosphere. The area would mostly consist of contiguous buildings in the area around the Granny Road intersection and buildings should be oriented to the street with landscaped storefront facades.
  - o Allow increased mix of uses as designated in Plan to allow/encourage people to live, work, play, shop, and learn in close proximity
  - o Encourage commercial buildings to locate closer to the street along corridor as much as possible, especially in the hamlet center
  - o Encourage parking areas behind buildings where on-street parking is not feasible
  - o Explore the possibility of adding office or condos to second floor, above retail, in hamlet center area
  - o Allow development of public space, such as plazas, and outdoor cafes and seating areas
  - o Include provisions for landscaping and the addition of street furniture such as benches, planters, and new lighting

#### Preparatory Studies

It is vital to the success of the Farmingville Community Redevelopment Plan that several studies and a land use plan be conducted to prepare the community, Town, County and other agencies to carry out the recommendations within the plan. The following studies are recommended to be carried out in the near future and land use plan is most essential, as it will set the stage for redevelopment.

**4. As part of the above recommended land use plan, commission a retail market study to determine how much and what types of retail can be supported. Publish and share the findings.**

A consultant should be commissioned to conduct a retail market study to help the community and local agencies better understand the current retail market, including consumer trends, retail demographics and the existing mix of businesses. In addition, a retail study will examine “gaps” or opportunities for additional types of retail – sectors or types of stores the community could support but are not currently located reasonably close by. This study would help determine which types of businesses could be supported and should be attracted to the area. The resulting report should be shared with community stakeholders, officials and agencies.

- 5. As part of the previously recommended land use plan, and in concert with Suffolk County, conduct a transportation analysis to evaluate traffic patterns, accident history, access management, use of and demand for public transportation, and potential bicycle access and use along CR-16 in Farmingville.**

The community's vision centers on a vibrant, recognizable hamlet center, accessible by car, but also pedestrian-friendly and reachable by other forms of transportation such as bus and bicycle. The analysis should be conducted to investigate accident history along the Horseblock Road corridor and current conditions in order to provide better insight into traffic patterns and volumes, current use and demand for bus service and bicycle access. The study could also analyze feasibility of transportation-related recommendations, including retiming of lights at major intersections and traffic-calming measures such as medians, pedestrian refuge islands and roundabouts. The study will help the community, elected officials and public agencies evaluate these and related recommendations and determine how best to move forward. Findings from the studies should be published and shared among potential project partners and used to guide future projects and implementation.

- 6. Ensure that Farmingville and the Farmingville hamlet center are included as a Focus Area in the Town-wide sewer study initiated by the Town of Brookhaven planned for 2010.**

Unlike many areas, Long Island gets its drinking water from a sole source aquifer under the Earth's surface; put another way, Long Islanders drink groundwater. Protecting the quality of this water is critical to ensuring a healthy future. For this reason, there are many stringent health and environmental standards that regulate treatment of waste water through septic and sewer systems. However, Suffolk County is largely unsewered, which can in some cases pose threats to water quality, human health, and development.

As of the writing of this report, the Town is set to initiate a Town-wide sewer study to analyze existing capacity and options for new or expanded capacity to help accommodate and target future growth, prevent sprawl, and preserve open space, in accordance with Brookhaven 2030. Farmingville should be among the focus areas included in the study to examine existing and potential future capacity and recommendations for promoting development and redevelopment in accordance with this and other local plans.

- 7. Craft and adopt comprehensive design guidelines focusing on commercial property within the core area of the study area (hamlet center); include provisions for architecture, signs, and landscaping. Guidelines should be referenced in revised zoning to ensure implementation.**

During the community planning weekend, there was much interest in achieving consistency in the design and appearance of buildings along the corridor, particularly in the hamlet center. Although time did not permit the undertaking of a formal visual

preference survey, a preference was stated for historical and/or colonial-type buildings. As a next step the Town should consider holding focus groups to determine specific preferences for building types and design elements.

Small towns and municipalities are able to develop design guidelines in the New York State due to laws and statutes that have been established in the recent past that support these aesthetic regulations. NYS Municipal Home Rule Law states that municipalities may adopt local laws for the “protection and enhancement of its physical and visual environment,” thus, it the grants towns the authority to regulate private property appearance. §274-a of the New York State Town Law authorizes town boards to protect and enhance the physical and visual environment by requiring certain elements in site plans such as, screening, landscaping, signs, and other architectural features.

A Main Street Business District Pattern Book was created to accompany the J-6 Business District, but other areas of the community should also conform to some type of design regulations. Building on that pattern book or other design guidelines as a reference, the Town should work with the Citizen’s Advisory Committee (*see Section 4.4.2, Recommendation 1*) to conduct a series of focus groups that will elicit the community’s specific preferences for architecture, signs, and landscaping. As an alternative, public design competitions could be held to generate concepts for architectural elements, such as signs or street furniture. The landscape section should address lighting, street furniture, sidewalks (building/pedestrian/planting zones), landscaping, and incorporate principles of sustainability such as runoff filtration, etc. Architectural guidelines should address facades, signage, building frontages, materials, and roofs.

### **8. Ensure continued code enforcement.**

Community members should continue to work with the Town and other partners to continue code enforcement efforts and ensure safety. In addition to continuing to raise awareness about the Town’s 451-TOWN service, Town code enforcement units should continue to publicize the procedure for reporting violations and document progress.



**Figure 34.** Design guidelines can achieve desired results when it comes to street furniture, signage and storefront facades.

One way to improve reporting and document progress could be to implement an online system for tracking responses to complaints, such as a Constituent Response System (CRS), a system that was once considered by the Town, but never fully implemented. Recently, the Town's website was enhanced to include suggestion forms on the elected officials pages, allowing constituents to communicate directly with the offices of elected officials. Generic comment forms could facilitate direct communication about issues particular to those agencies, and enable citizens to make suggestions for improvements and log complaints about applicable code violations. Such comment forms could be on the main homepage, with a department or subject menu to direct comments to the appropriate agency or person.

The Town's Quality of Life Task Force has made significant strides in improving code enforcement efforts and should continue to build on those successes. The Citizen's Advisory Committee has expressed interest in working with the Town to monitor code enforcement and could do so through a designated subcommittee.

**9. Maintain good relationship with local Suffolk County Community Oriented Police Enforcement officers to ensure continued community safety.**

Suffolk County Police Department maintains a Community Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE) program, and has COPE officers in the 6<sup>th</sup> Precinct, but the program is not well known in the community. A visit to a Farmingville Residents Association meeting in 2010 by the 6<sup>th</sup> Precinct's new Inspector Oswald and one of the COPE officers shed light on this important program. The Association, CAC, and other community groups should continue to build on this newly formed relationship and promote awareness of the program and its officers as way to promote community safety. The COPE Unit can lend assistance with public safety and coordination for community-wide events such as Community Day.

**10. Continue to work to address loitering on streets.**

Community members remain concerned about issues of concentrated loitering by perceived undocumented workers at several locations within Farmingville. Significant progress has been made, in part as a result of the community planning process, in bringing community groups together. Continuing to build upon these relationships will enhance the community's capacity to work together to promote positive change. Maintaining good working relationships and establishing partnerships with local enforcement agencies, community organizations, and business owners is essential to continuing to address this and other issues facing the community.

### 4.3 FOCUS AREAS

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This section examines several sites identified by the community as either ripe or likely to be ready soon for redevelopment in the near future. It includes descriptions of current conditions as well as a vision for how the community would like to see it redeveloped.

The recommendations that follow are a careful balance between community interests. Community members emphasized the importance of developing facilities for shopping, recreation, and dining within a more attractive, pedestrian friendly environment that is no longer dominated by traffic.

#### **4.3.1 HAMLET CENTER**

***Objective:** Define and create a recognizable hamlet center as neighborhood-scale community and retail center*

***Existing Conditions:** The stretch of Horseblock Road between Blue Point Road and Granny Road is approximately 0.37 miles long, or roughly 655 yards. It encompasses the Fire Station, Farmingville Plaza (KK Athletics), Triangle Park, and across the street from the plaza, the original “downtown” – the central business district. The area is difficult for pedestrians to navigate, with only three crosswalks across Horseblock and none across side streets that intersect the corridor. The buildings on the south side of Horseblock Road are set much closer to the street than in other areas, and help to set the stage for a pedestrian-scaled downtown. On the north side of the road, a large parking lot separates the shopping center from the sidewalk and street. The central business district, with a wider sidewalk, some on-street parking, a small lot in the rear of the buildings for employees, and a public plaza across the street, is the backbone of a promising hamlet center.*

***Community Vision & Recommendations:***

- “Create a cohesive village/community “center””
- “Create an overlay district that includes the hamlet center and the intersections at Blue Point and Granny Roads”
- “Create community gateway(s)” at:
  - Triangle Park
  - Lions Club property
  - Future roundabouts (if built)
- “Attract a restaurant with seasonal outdoor seating, and an outdoor music café with internet access”
- “Provide places for people to mingle”
- “Consider 2<sup>nd</sup>-floor uses such as offices or condos”
- “Create a commercial district and attract new businesses consistent with market analysis.” Many suggestions were offered, including: a family-style restaurant, an electronics store, a café with outdoor seating, a catering hall, a book store, an office supply store, and a movie theater
- “Develop strategies for slowing traffic such as medians and roundabouts”

## 4: COMMUNITY VISION

- *“Allow on-street parking within the hamlet center”*
- *“Encourage locally owned businesses and strengthen their relationship with community through programs to support local merchants (i.e. ‘buy local campaign’), business improvement district or other means”*
- *“Commission a market retail analysis to determine what businesses and how many the local economy can support”*
- *“Develop incentives to encourage private development”*
- *“Create zones on the sidewalk, for walking, planting trees, and placing furniture between the sidewalk and the road”*
- *“Include provisions for new housing in the hamlet center”*

Traffic on Horseblock Road now dominates the central business district that exists at the heart of this area near Granny Road. A hamlet center here will serve as the center of the community – a place for people to shop, work, eat, live, and have fun. Pedestrian safety should be a top priority, and buildings and streetscape should be pedestrian oriented with landscaped facades and outdoor seating. Buildings should be no more than two stories and have consistent façade treatments.

To encourage creation of a hamlet center, a combination of strategies should be undertaken, including adopting an overlay zoning district that facilitates and encourages mixed-use development, beautification, traffic calming strategies, and pedestrian safety measures. Many of these strategies are addressed elsewhere in the plan. This section includes recommendations specific to the hamlet center, although it is understood that general recommendations for beautification, streetscape, and transportation also apply.

### **1. Create and adopt overlay zoning district facilitating the location of uses consistent with community redevelopment plan, including hamlet center area.**

As described elsewhere in this plan, the overlay district should create a small “downtown” feel at the core of the community and eliminate the suburban style development that characterizes much of the rest of the corridor. The overlay district should:

- Establish boundaries for the hamlet center
- Encourage new and redeveloped buildings to locate closer to the street, outlining maximum setbacks to ensure that community character and pedestrian activity are maintained
- Move parking to the rear of redeveloped buildings and allow and encourage on-street parking
- Allow some mixed-use development, including possible office or residential above retail
- Consider an array of housing options, such as “next generation” residential units
- Widen sidewalks to encourage pedestrian activity and outdoor seating areas
- Include or refer to design guidelines to guide architecture, signs, and landscaping
- Allow medians to be developed in roadways

### Hamlet Center Boundary

The hamlet center should encompass the main commercial section of the corridor. During the community planning weekend, specific boundaries of the hamlet center were not discussed per se; however, it was generally agreed that the hamlet center should include the intersections at Blue Point Road and Granny Road. Given the uses in the surrounding area it is reasonable to extend the hamlet center's boundaries just beyond those two spots to ensure continuity between commercial uses. It is thus recommended that the boundaries of the hamlet center stretch from the eastern corner of Granny Road to Raymond Avenue or Lidge Drive, including the two small strip centers on the south side of Horseblock Road. The hamlet center will thus encompass most of the commercial property in the area and allow for a transition into a less commercially oriented area to the west.

In its role as an advisory committee, the Citizen's Advisory Committee should have an opportunity to review the boundaries and language of the proposed overlay district, to ensure it is consistent with recommendations of this community redevelopment plan.

### Housing

Little discussion of housing occurred during the Community Planning Weekend. But, participants recognized the need for housing to accommodate a growing population of young adults and aging baby boomers. This requires balancing rented and owner-occupied units, diversity of housing types, and price levels.

Residents would like to maintain the primarily single-family neighborhoods and preserve the open space within them. Community members strongly preferred owner-occupied housing such as condominiums or co-ops. In order to preserve the single-family neighborhoods while accommodating a growing population, consideration should be given to additional housing options in the hamlet center area, or in redeveloped clusters. The Town, County and CAC should identify areas for developing "next-generation" housing. Zoning revisions should allow such housing where appropriate to accommodate aging boomers and young adults.

#### **A vision for Expressway Plaza -**

The consultant presented as food for thought an alternative scenario for redevelopment of the Expressway Plaza at North Ocean Avenue/CR-86 (see section 4.3.4 for more recommendations about this site). Should an opportunity arise to redevelop the center, he said, consideration should be given to a mixed-use village style development that includes apartments or condos above retail. Consideration should also be given to apartments or condos on the second floor of buildings in the hamlet center area. Allowing these uses will necessitate a rezoning or creation of an overlay district. Ordinances should be sensitive to the surrounding community. Two stories should be sufficient in the hamlet center area, while Expressway Plaza could potentially support three stories, provided that the ground floor remained retail.

Town code currently requires that 10 percent of all newly developed housing meet affordable income levels of up to 130% of Nassau-Suffolk area median income, or approximately \$130,000. The draft Brookhaven 2030 Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Long Island Affordable Housing Act be implemented, that the required percentage of affordable housing be increased beyond the current 10% requirement, and that a five (5) year plan be prepared together with the private sector to meet Brookhaven's affordable housing needs. The Town should ensure that zoning revisions allow for inclusion of

such housing where appropriate to accommodate aging baby-boomers and young adults. (See Appendix F for the proposed Article 16-A Long Island Affordable Housing Act).

### Gateways

A community gateway is an important feature in it's identity. Gateways signify entry into the community and are a symbol of that community and can help with branding, recognition and business attraction. They can range in material, shape and size from boards, signs and banners to plazas, fountains, and elaborate structures. Gateways should be established at either end of the community or hamlet center to identify Farmingville. It has been suggested that an identifying logo or symbol be established for Farmingville, perhaps showing an identifying feature, such as the Bald Hill Monument.

Gateways for Farmingville should include design elements that clearly signify entry into Farmingville, create identity and can be consistently recognized as symbols of the community. Gateway signs will build community pride and identity and will remind commuters and others passing through where they are. They should incorporate some form of public art. The gateways should be lit at night and be located in a prominent position, such as a median or a roundabouts. Triangle Park was listed as a suggested location for such a gateway.

The CAC and local community groups should work with local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, and other local groups to identify one or more landscapers or organizations willing to donate landscaping and maintenance in exchange for recognition at the gateway (i.e. "Maintained by Smith Bros."). This kind of partnership was established for the sign at Horseblock Road and Old Medford Avenue, near Town Hall.



**Figure 35.** Neighborhood gateway signage, Boston MA.



**Figure 36.** Triangle Park has the potential to serve as a community gateway.

### Parking

To encourage commercial activity, on-street parking should be provided in the hamlet center. This may not be immediately feasible, but as the hamlet center develops it will become important to plan for additional business and activity. On-street parking will enable people to park in one location and visit multiple businesses on foot rather than driving from store to store. In addition, cars parked on the side of the street will help to slow traffic in adjacent lanes and protect pedestrians on the sidewalks, separating them from road traffic.

As the hamlet center develops more fully, the Town may need to consider a parking management system, such as time limits or meters.

### Encourage Private Investment and Development

Redeveloping the hamlet center will require private funds. Community groups should be on the look-out for interested parties to explore recommended redevelopment concepts. The Town can help by promoting the incentives it offers and perhaps expediting the application process for priority projects.



**Figure 37.** Rendering of vision for Horseblock Road with on-street, back-in angled parking. (Image: Fabian De La Espriella and Dan Burden)

### 4.3.2 FARMINGVILLE PLAZA

*Existing Conditions:* Farmingville Plaza is a 50,000-square-foot shopping center and home to KK Athletics, the indoor soccer facility for which the plaza is often known. The center, built in 1973, is home to nine storefronts and seven businesses (at the time of writing). The buildings are set back from the street in an “L” shape, with a large parking lot in front of both buildings. The parking lot continues west beyond the buildings, with space for additional parking. A few trees are planted at the edge of the parking lot along Horseblock Road. There is minimal landscaping in the parking lot and a few trees line Horseblock Road. Streetlights are positioned throughout the parking lot for illumination. There are no plants, trees, water retention areas, or garbage receptacles within the lot or at the store entrances.



**Figure 38.** Aerial view of Farmingville Plaza (Bing Maps, 2010).

#### Community Vision & Recommendations:

- “Provide incentives for the site to be redeveloped closer to the street, with a mix of uses, parking in the rear, public space, and other amenities to support the hamlet center”
- “Repurpose parking lot. Consider temporary uses, such as a farmers or Saturday market”
- “Create brick or special walkway in parking lot to guide pedestrians to stores”
- “Add new uses such as a café with music, coffee shop, bakery, or butcher”
- “Remove excess parking”



**Figure 39.** Farmingville Plaza

This highly visible shopping center is positioned at the heart of the Horseblock Road corridor and the community is very interested in seeing the center redeveloped into a more attractive facility. Knowing that redevelopment scenarios will take some time to develop, community members suggested the space could host temporary uses such as a festival or farmers’ market to help enliven the community and give people a place to hold events or gather socially. Such events should be planned for weekends or evenings so as not to interfere with business. (See section 4.4.8 recommendation 3 for information on development of a farmers’ market in Farmingville).

When the shopping center is redeveloped, the community would like to see new businesses, particularly those that give people a place to socialize, such as a café, coffee shop or bakery. The retail market analysis will determine the potential for supporting these businesses. The site could be a good candidate for a community recreation center, which would complement the indoor soccer center and other existing facilities. The property will likely need to be rezoned to accommodate the community’s recommendations, although it should be included in the hamlet center overlay district. This will set the stage for redeveloping the site to be consistent with the vision.

The buildings themselves should be brought closer to the street, or new buildings should be constructed along the street, and parking should be provided behind the buildings to create a “Main Street” feel consistent with zoning and design standards. If existing buildings remain in place, they should be rejuvenated with new façades, signage and lighting.

The streetscape should be scaled for pedestrians and include trees or other plants, historic lighting, appropriate signage and street furniture such as trash receptacles and benches. Bicycle and pedestrian access should be provided. A different material should be used to distinguish the sidewalk from the driveway and parking lot to improve safety and aesthetics. Walkways throughout the parking lot should be paved in a similar manner to help ensure pedestrian safety.

Part of the large parking lot, which is rarely full to capacity could be transformed to another use perhaps to include a public space with street furniture or a small band shell for outdoor performances after discussions with business and property owners. It was suggested during the community planning weekend that the excess parking off to the side could accommodate a skateboard park. More businesses or an outdoor community facility such as a plaza could be provided. Depending on future uses, landscaped outdoor seating or public space should be incorporated.

#### **4.3.3 FARMINGVILLE SHOPPING CENTER** (Formerly College Plaza, home to Compare Foods)

*Existing Conditions: The shopping center has 19 storefronts. The entrance includes a small green space that incorporates signage, a few trees and bushes, and a bench. The lawn and trees that line Horseblock Road and the entrance to the shopping center are well manicured, but sparse. Within the parking lot there is no plant life and few streetlights. A few trash receptacles are located at the store entrances, but otherwise there are no plants or efforts of beautification in front of the entrances.*

#### **Community Vision & Recommendations:**



**Figure 40.** Farmingville Shopping Center (Image: Dan Burden, ca. 2010)

- “Create new park next to Compare Foods”
- “Rename the center “Waverly Commons””
- “Rezone the property to J-6 for Main Street Businesses”
- “Bring buildings to street, and attract new businesses such as a movie theater, sit-down restaurant, gym, Chuck E. Cheese, or performing arts center ”
- “Improve land use”
- “If a roundabout is created, eliminate the existing entrance and build a new one at the roundabout”

Farmingville Shopping Center, is one of the first commercial properties a driver sees entering the hamlet from the west, so it should set a tone for the community. It was suggested that the name

could be changed and the plaza be rezoned to J Business 6 to bring about more of a “Main Street” look and feel. There was wide support for attracting new businesses and opening community or cultural facilities, including a gym, movie theater, or performing arts center. The market retail study will analyze the potential for such businesses. Existing retail facilities should remain on the site and can be upgraded to match the community’s vision. During the community planning weekend community members suggested creating a community or recreation center in this location.



**Figure 41.** Aerial view of Farmingville Shopping Center (Bing Maps, 2010).

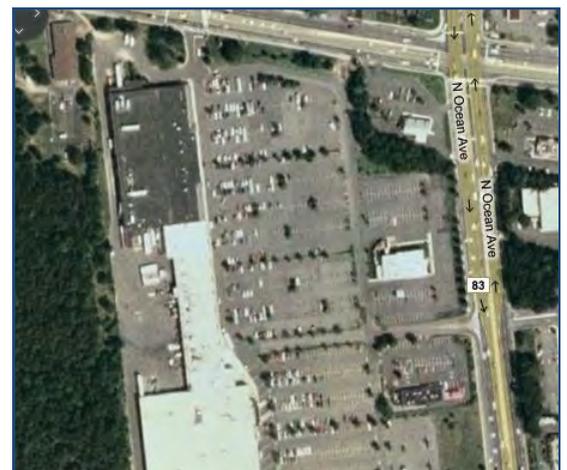
The vision includes a mix of uses, buildings set closer to the street, a landscaped sidewalk out front, and parking in the rear. Landscaping, sidewalks, and façade treatments can create an attractive street frontage. Storefront facades should be even with one another and look similar, like side-by-side buildings rather than stores in a strip mall. The façade treatments will make stores visible and engaging to pedestrians and motorists. Sidewalks will be lined with trees and attractive street lamps, and the color of the sidewalk will be distinguished from the driveway to increase pedestrian safety. The parking lot should include plenty of shade trees and landscaped medians. The landscaped buffer and clusters of trees that separate the site from the houses to the rear behind it should be maintained.

**4.3.4 EXPRESSWAY PLAZA** (Stop & Shop center)

*Existing Conditions:* The 19-store, 236,000-square-foot shopping center was built in 1979 and renovated in 1994. It sits on 38 acres and is anchored by K-Mart and Stop & Shop. The main buildings are set back from the street, parallel to North Ocean Avenue. The large parking lot, accessible from both Horseblock Road and North Ocean Avenue, is bordered by a wide grassy strip and trees. A Burger King and TGI Friday’s are set at its outer edge. Sidewalks line North Ocean Avenue but crosswalks are lacking. The parking lot includes ample space for vehicles but has few trees and planted medians. At the corner of North Ocean Avenue and Horseblock Road a cluster of trees blocks the view of the shopping center from the street. Five crosswalks connect the parking lot to the store entrances.

Community Vision & Recommendations:

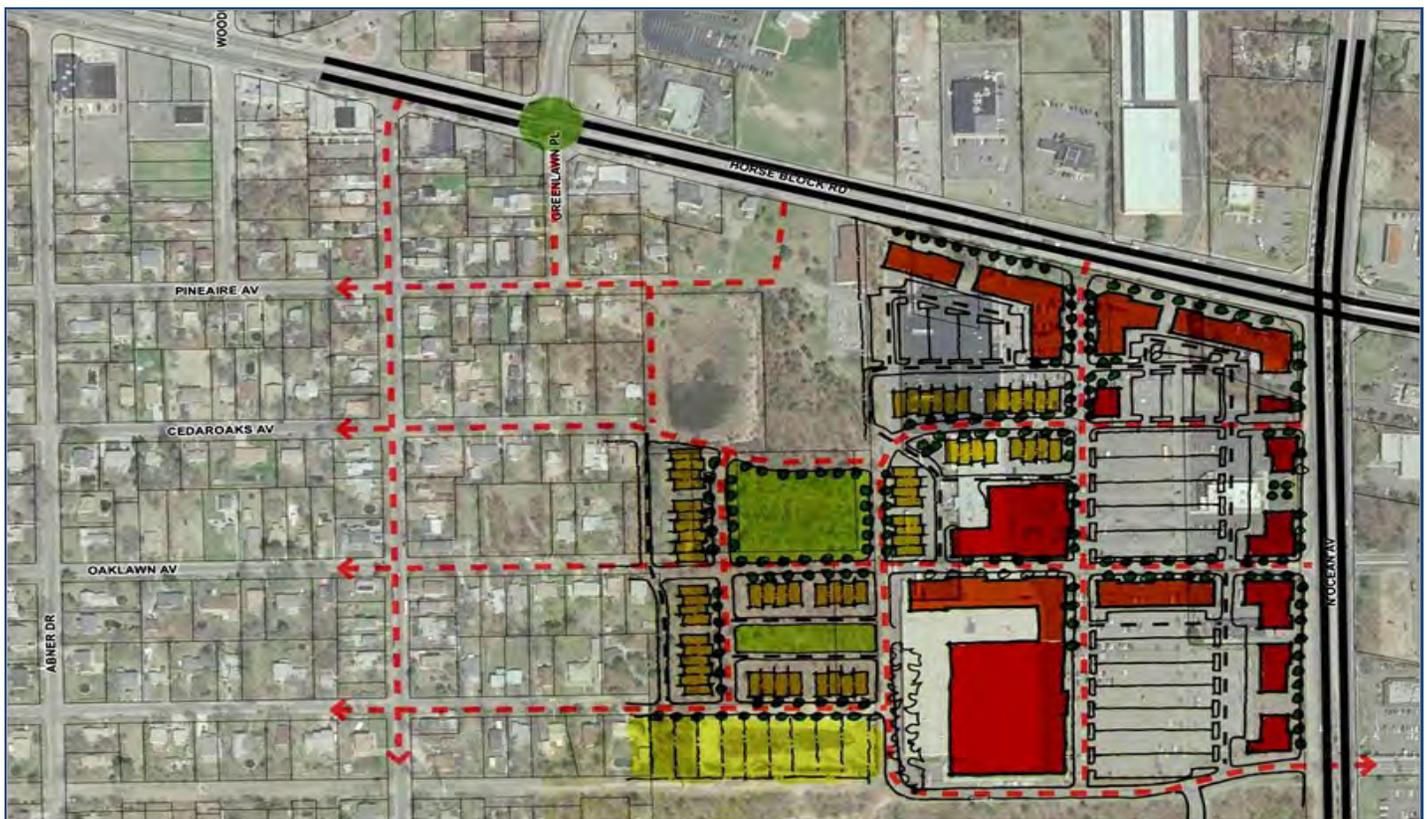
Community members did not focus on this property during the design workshop, although it was suggested generally that “improved land use” be a goal when an opportunity arises to redevelop the site.



**Figure 42.** Aerial view, Expressway Plaza (Bing Maps, 2010).

Dan Burden and his team presented several concepts for consideration as potential redevelopment scenarios for this shopping center (see figure 43 below). The suggestions were for an eventual mixed-use village concept, to include office space and residential units on the second floor, above retail. An internal street network would be built and the new streets would be connected to those in nearby neighborhoods to ensure that the village is integrated into the existing fabric of the community. Streets would include desired streetscape features, including landscaping, benches, lighting and sidewalks consistent with the community's vision. Residential, retail and office users would share parking and bicycle racks would be provided in multiple locations. Landscaped medians within the parking lot should accommodate storm water filtration, allowing runoff to pass through plants and soil and filter back into the groundwater, improving the environment and water quality.

In this concept (see next page), buildings would be shifted to the front of the street along Horseblock Road and North Ocean Avenue to create a consistent street wall and a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere, consistent with the community's vision, zoning and design guidelines. Parking would be provided behind buildings, on the interior of the site. A public plaza or village green would be built close to the existing neighborhood on the western end of the site. Outdoor seating for restaurants and cafés would help enliven the pedestrian environment.



**Figure 43.** Rendering by Fabian De La Espriella showing conceptual redevelopment of Expressway Plaza.

## 4: COMMUNITY VISION

The CAC should work with the Town to ensure it stays up-to-speed on redevelopment proposals, and the community and Town should work with developers to integrate these vision elements into the plan. The CAC should continue to identify other properties that are ready to be redeveloped and promote redevelopment of these sites in a manner consistent with the goals and recommendations of this plan.

### 4.4 AREA-WIDE VISION AND OVERALL ELEMENTS/TREATMENTS

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#### Section 4.4.1 IMPLEMENTATION: KEEP THE PLAN ALIVE

*Objective: Maintain momentum by sharing the vision and success along the way and ensure success by keeping the community engaged.*

Once a community's vision is created and written down, the next step is to implement that vision. Implementation of the vision plan will lead to the creation of a small-town hamlet center with a distinct character. Turning this vision into reality will take time and requires coordinated efforts on the part of many players. The process requires involvement of designers and developers, public and private investment, and ongoing support from the community, including local leaders, elected officials, and public agencies.



**Figure 44.** Graphic rendering of potential redesign of Expressway Plaza as mixed-use center. (Image: Dan Burden, Fabian De La Espriella)

This section outlines the implementation process for turning the community's vision into reality. It describes strategies and a series of actions or projects in immediate, short-term, intermediate, and long-term time frames, some over a period of outlining steps necessary to carry out the plan and a recommended timeframe, key players, potential resources, including possible funding sources in some cases.

*Recommendations:*

**1. Distribute copies of the plan to community partners, local officials, and community groups.**

It is critical to share the community's vision to continue to build support for the plan and build momentum to implement projects and recommendations. The CAC, other community partners, and the Town should make copies of the Plan available electronically on Town and community websites as well as at the local library, in government offices, and in other important community resource centers. The more people who know about the plan, the easier it is to recruit support and move projects forward.

**2. Use the Community Redevelopment Plan as a resource to guide Town site plan, subdivision, change of zone and use development and redevelopment applications for the Farmingville community.**

Evaluating proposed projects based on the community redevelopment plan is essential in ensuring that projects meet the community's stated objectives and contribute positively to implementation of the vision. In their reviews of projects, Town staff should keep the Town Board, Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals apprised of how each project conforms to the vision.

The CAC should have an opportunity to review project proposals and meet with local elected officials and the Town Planning Department staff to discuss how projects are or are not compatible with the community plan.

The committee should first look at zoning and proposed uses (how they compare to the land-use plan) and the proposed landscaping, positioning, and form of the buildings. The CAC should think about how it will affect or contribute to the surrounding area. Town officials should do the same, taking into consideration recommendations and results of accompanying studies and the land use plan. Only projects which meet Community Redevelopment Plan objectives should be supported, and those which fall short should either be amended to conform to the plan or rejected.

**3. Track project status and issue regular reports on progress and accomplishments. Convene regular inter-agency meetings with Town and County departments and officials.**

Regular meetings with representatives from community organizations, Town and County agencies, and elected officials are an effective way to communicate updates on project status and accomplishments. The community redevelopment plan should be used as a guide to ensure that project meet the community's stated goals and recommendations. Development applications and proposals should be evaluated for consistency with the community plan. Where there are inconsistencies, community members and local officials can work with developers to integrate community recommendations.

#### **4. Issue press releases and inform local officials of progress and accomplishments.**

It is essential to keep local officials and the community at-large apprised of progress and to demonstrate the successes resulting from the planning process. This will not only motivate the CAC and other groups that oversee implementation of a project, it also will demonstrate community commitment, follow-through and success, encouraging elected officials and community members happy to want to continue to work on implementing the plan.

#### **5. Revisit and update the community redevelopment plan regularly.**

In order to make the vision a reality, a number of steps and projects will have to be undertaken. Small-town and neighborhood planning experts Al Zelinka and Susan Jackson Harden, authors of *Placemaking on a Budget* recommend creating action plans for complex projects that entail multiple team members, fund-raising efforts, and phased schedules and multiple steps. Project action plans answer questions such as: What is the project? Why is it important? Where will it occur? The action plan should identify team members needed to complete the project, key action steps, a schedule, and a budget. One way to capture all of this information is by using a project implementation matrix – an at-a-glance summary of what, where, why, when, who, how much, and how. (See *Appendix G* for a sample project implementation matrix from *Placemaking on a Budget*, which can be copied and used to assist with project implementation and tracking.)

Finally, plans are living documents. As such, they should be updated and revised periodically to ensure that they continue to meet community goals and objectives. The CAC or other community group should evaluate project priorities every year or so and conduct surveys every few years to be sure the plan still reflects the community's desires. As priorities change, implementation project schedules may be rearranged accordingly.

### Section 4.4.2 COMMUNITY PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

*Objective: Strengthen community capacity and set the stage for revitalization by establishing work-groups, defining roles and relationships, and recognizing the community plan.*

**1. Establish a Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC) as a partner in implementing the Farmingville Community Redevelopment Plan.**

Articulating a vision is easy compared to making that vision come to life. One key element in implementing a community plan is to establish a work-group that can spearhead the implementation process, working with community partners, public agencies and other stakeholders. This group should meet regularly and use the community plan as a guide. A community’s capacity to implement a plan lies in the commitment and dedication of community members and their ability to stay organized and work with local elected officials, agencies, and individuals or private companies. A Citizen’s Advisory Committee, established under the auspices of the Town and staffed by the Town Planning Department, should become the lead organization advocating and assisting in the implementation of the plan.

**2. Include the Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC) in reviewing and commenting on pending development and redevelopment applications to ensure consistency with the Community Redevelopment Plan.**

The communities that have been most successful in realizing their plans are those in which residents meet regularly with elected officials and local agencies about upcoming projects. In some communities, officials turn to community groups for determining whether they are consistent with community plans and goals and recommending improvements.

Under guidance from Town staff, the CAC will have opportunities to review and comment on pending development and change of zone applications. The CAC will serve as an advisory committee and procedures will be developed for providing feedback to the Town to ensure that as redevelopment proceeds it is consistent with the community’s plan.

**3. Seek the Town Board’s acceptance of the Community Redevelopment Plan.**

It is important that the plan be recognized by local elected officials and other agencies. To gain public recognition of the plan, Town planning staff and the CAC should present it to the Town Board and ask that the Board officially recognize the plan by accepting it. This act is a symbol that the Town recognizes the importance of the community redevelopment plan and that the plan represents the community’s vision for the future of Farmingville. It is also a way for the Town to show commitment to the community’s vision and to helping make that vision come to life.

### Section 4.4.3 LOCAL ECONOMY AND BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

*Objective: Strengthen the local business community and economic development by enhancing the relationship with the community, encouraging economic development and redeveloping commercial properties*

*Current snapshot: Farmingville is home to a mix of stand-alone businesses and strip shopping centers. It features several larger shopping centers and a small aging central business district at the heart of what some refer to as “downtown” Farmingville. The corridor is lined with an array of mostly commercial uses, but it also includes some civic uses such as the historic Terry House and Bald Hills Schoolhouse, a Post Office and a firehouse. The disjointed uses, along with the huge parking lots and hardscape that dominate the landscape, make for an underutilized business environment and has not helped to foster a strong relationship between local residents and the business community.*

*Community Vision & Recommendations:*

- *“Fewer mid-century style shopping centers and more stand-alone or side-by-side independent stores - mom and pop businesses or quaint shops”*
- *“Attract more small businesses, including arts and cultural institutions, restaurants, book store, electronics store, clothing stores. Encourage businesses and programs that are compatible with Bald Hill attractions”*
- *“Invite a diversity of businesses and variety of stores that reflect community needs”*
- *“Develop a close-knit business community that promotes local business”*
- *“Construct commercial buildings on vacant lots along Horseblock Road”*
- *“Encourage merchants to take responsibility for the community through BIDs, maintenance agreements, etc.”*
- *“Allow an increased mix of uses and encourage mixed-use developments as appropriate”*

**1. Encourage small business development and discourage development of new mid-century style shopping centers and large format retail centers.**

The Farmingville community is accepting of additional commercial development, but would like to see it happen in a more pedestrian-scale, hamlet-center manner. Using zoning and policy changes the Town should promote development of a horizontal mix of uses, where stores sit side by side with more of a neighborhood character than strip centers set back from the road. Community members suggested that in some areas, particularly the existing shopping centers, the J-6 Main St. Business District would be more in line with the community’s vision than the current zoning designation, which in many cases is J-2. To create a neighborhood commercial scale (storefronts, rather than strip centers) and prevent the construction of additional shopping centers along Horseblock Road, the Town should consider rezoning targeted areas to J Business 6.

The J Business 6, or Main Street Business District, allows for development and redevelopment of fully integrated mixed-use pedestrian-oriented Main Street centers

and is intended for established downtown areas, central business districts and adjacent planned or existing commercial areas or mixed-use development. Where rezoning to J-6 is not possible, the Town should work with the community and individual developers to discourage shopping centers and strip-like development.

**2. Support local businesses and strengthen the relationship between businesses community and the community at large.**

The Farmingville community expressed strong support for building a better relationship between local businesses and the community. Community members should work with local businesses and associations to encourage them to get involved in community events. The existing Chamber of Commerce, which serves Farmingville and Holtsville does not have a strong presence in the community. Community members expressed desire for a stronger, more active Chamber of Commerce that could serve Farmingville more specifically. In partnership with local merchants and the Chamber of Commerce or Business Improvement District (if one is established - *see page 80*), the CAC should consider instituting a “buy local” campaign or series of events, such as a “Support Farmingville Week.” Local businesses should be given an opportunity to advertise during community events, especially at Bald Hill recreational and cultural events. This will help business and area institutions develop a symbiotic relationship.

**3. Attract new businesses compatible with the findings of the retail market study, including: family-style restaurants, a live music café, a book store, a clothing store, an electronics store, etc.**

While various businesses exist within Farmingville, the community indicated that current stores do not necessarily meet community needs and expressed a desire to do more shopping locally if more types of businesses were present. The community should work with Town economic development officials to attract the types of businesses the local retail market can support. This can be determined in the market retail study suggested previously (*see section 4.2*). Strategies for attracting such businesses can include sharing this community plan with developers so they can see community desires clearly laid out, individual or one-on-one conversations between developers, and CAC members working with a local merchant association or creating incentives that make those businesses want to locate in the community. Attracting new business, especially restaurants, will depend on County Health regulations and the availability of sanitary waste treatment (*see also Sections 4.2 Recommendation 6 and 4.4.7 Recommendation 2* regarding the Town-wide sewer study).

**4. Create opportunities for and attract arts and cultural businesses and services.**

During the community planning process, a desire was stated for encouraging art and cultural venues and related businesses. The Town’s J Business 6 District permits art studios, retail sales and live performance or cultural centers. In order to create opportunities for such businesses in Farmingville, future zoning revisions (whether rezoning or creation of an overlay district) should ensure that these types of establishments are permitted within the study area, particularly in the hamlet center, by

designating certain appropriate parcels J-6 or J-4 Business. In order to encourage art-related businesses, the community should work with the Chamber, BID or local cultural groups and non-profits to demonstrate interest in such businesses, perhaps by showcasing local art or holding a festivals.

As the Historic Terry House is rehabilitated it could be used as an art gallery or display space. The Farmingville Historical Society and FarmingvilleRocks.com have been working to get this iconic site open to the public (see *Section 4.4.6, Recommendation 7*).

### **5. Evaluate feasibility of creating a Business Improvement District.**

To help maintain the hamlet center, support local businesses and create a cohesive look and feel, consideration should be given to creating a local merchants association or a Business Improvement District (BID). A BID is a public/private partnership in which property and business owners elect to contribute financially to the maintenance, development and promotion of a designated commercial district, in addition to those publicly provided by the municipality. Local merchants, service providers, other business owners, and the Chamber of Commerce should work with the Town to investigate whether a BID is feasible for Farmingville, and if so, launch one. BIDs may serve several functions including, but not limited to:

- Consumer marketing and advertising or promotion, newsletters
- Maintenance and capital improvement programs:
  - brick paving, sidewalk improvements
  - signs, lighting
  - landscaping – planting trees, flowers
  - benches
  - trash receptacles and special street-lighting
  - including the purchase of any necessary equipment
  - street cleaning, litter or graffiti removal, snow shoveling
- Economic development, business recruitment and retention
- Public space regulation, safety, security and hospitality
  - Hiring uniformed security guards and street guides, installing electronic security equipment, staffing visitor centers
  - Managing street performances, installing and maintaining street furniture,
- Parking and transportation
  - Regulating parking systems, maintaining transit shelters, operating ride-share programs
- Festivals and special events

Initially the interested parties should form a committee, perhaps with the involvement of the Town's Division of Economic Development, to determine interest among property owners in the potential BID area. Hundreds of BIDs exist across the country. Many have already formed on Long Island and may be of assistance in preparing for this process (see *sidebar on Downtown Blacksburg*).

Typical steps to create a BID include (adapted from NYC Department of Small Business Services BID Project plan):

1. Form a steering committee
2. Conduct case studies and determine if a BID is right for your neighborhood
3. Develop a list of desired services and a vision for the BID
4. Develop preliminary boundaries for the district, create a database of properties
5. Identify resource needs and potential funding sources
6. Conduct a survey to determine the need for a BID and the services desired
7. Determine what services and improvements or functions to provide
8. Estimate costs and how to pay them, based on revenues that could be generated through special assessments
9. Hire a consultant to prepare a conceptual service plan
10. Inform property owners about the plan to create a BID and hold a community meeting to address questions

#### **Downtown Blacksburg, VA**

*Downtown Blacksburg, Inc. (DBI) is an association of merchants, property owners, and downtown advocates whose mission is to sustain a dynamic, vital, and diverse community through marketing, events, economic development, and leadership. The association, comprised of retail merchants, service providers, non-profits, property owners, and corporations, offers programs such as senior discounts on Tuesdays, gift certificates for local businesses, fair, festivals, and marketing.*

For more information, contact:  
 Downtown Blacksburg, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 233  
 Blacksburg, Virginia 24063  
 (540) 951-0454  
[dbi@downtownblacksburg.com](mailto:dbi@downtownblacksburg.com) or  
[www.downtownblacksburg.com/index.aspx](http://www.downtownblacksburg.com/index.aspx)

Once these steps have been taken, the steering committee should work with the Town to secure Board approval to create the BID and pursue the passage of legislation to authorize it.

#### **Section 4.4.4 LANDSCAPING AND BEAUTIFICATION**

Objective: Foster creation of a safe, healthy, attractive and well-maintained community.

Current snapshot: *The neighborhoods of Farmingville are filled with lush trees and green lawns, but the Horseblock Road corridor is only sparsely landscaped. Scattered plantings and a handful of trees line the road. Where trees do exist, they are often on the inside of the sidewalk, closer to the buildings rather than in the public right-of-way next to the street. There is little in the way of street furniture except in Triangle Park and the old downtown/CBD area, making for a poor pedestrian experience. Walking certain stretches of road, it is easy to think that perhaps sidewalks and pedestrians were almost an afterthought.*

#### Landscape & Streetscape

Community Vision & Recommendations:

**Trees**

In order to survive, trees need adequate soil and water. Instead of installing tree grates or covering tree wells with pavers, leave the soil exposed, covered with mulch, stone dust, or other substances, or planted with flowers. In heavily trafficked areas, it may be necessary to install a fence or other barrier to keep pedestrians, bicycles, and animals from trampling on the base of the tree. Automatic irrigation is usually unnecessary as long as the trees have a reasonable quantity of high-quality, uncompacted soil. Trees should be chosen carefully to ensure they are appropriate species for the desired location. Along major roadways, plant trees that are of appropriate height that they will not interfere with overhead wires, salt-tolerant species, and those that do not require lots of care and maintenance. §85-50.1 of Brookhaven Town Code contains a list of preferred tree species.

- *“Beautify the community at large with landscaping: provide additional landscaping & greenery; increase tree cover”*
- *“Place trash receptacles throughout community on each block along commercial roads, especially Horseblock/Portion from Waverly Ave. to CR-83”*
- *“Create community gateways at either end of Horseblock Road corridor”*
- *“Install decorative paving/sidewalks (like on Portion Rd. west of Nicolls Rd.)”*
- *“Install street furniture along Horseblock Road, particularly between Woodycrest and Blue Point”*
- *“Create a new community plaza or ‘village green’”*
- *“Install banners along lampposts”*
- *“Install welcome signs, in medians or roundabouts ‘Welcome to Farmingville’ or ‘hamlet established [year]’”*
- *“Install planted/landscaped medians”*
- *“Install historic lighting, especially in hamlet center and leading to historic houses (Terry House)”*
- *“Install hanging flower baskets”*
- *“Preserve additional open space, wooded areas”*

**1. Plant more landscaping: particularly street trees between sidewalk and roadway to provide shade, pedestrian safety.**

Nearly all the community members who participated in the community planning process agreed that additional trees, flowers—some hanging from lampposts, and decorative plantings would enhance the community and make for a more pleasant pedestrian experience, slow traffic and create a “downtown” feel, and generally make the community more attractive. Community members want to create a unique identity for Farmingville and are mindful to accent the streetscape rather than cover it up.



**Figure 45.** Horseblock Road (Photo: Fabian De La Espriella, 2010).



**Figure 46.** Rendering of what Horseblock Road could look like with new landscaping and on-street parking. (Image: Fabian De La Espriella, 2010).

The Citizen's Advisory Committee should work with the Town and County to identify appropriate locations and species for planting trees, shrubs and flowers. It is important to ensure species are appropriate in height and adapted to the local climate. These plantings should be incorporated into other community improvements and maintenance agreements developed. Landscaping may be integrated into medians and streetscaping through beautification programs and design guidelines that clearly outline options for future projects and can be implemented by the Town during the site plan review process.

The Citizen's Advisory Committee or another group should consider implementing an adopt-a-tree program in partnership with the Town or County. The program would allow companies, non-profits, community groups, or other organizations to maintain trees within public rights-of-way, public spaces, and on vacant properties.

## 2. Install streetscape improvements.

A quick survey of existing streetscape elements would serve as a starting point for the development of a streetscape plan, detailing the number and level of streetscape improvements needed.

Once the survey is completed and recommendations are developed, the Citizen's Advisory Committee and the Town should work together to develop a streetscape program. These tend to work well as partnerships between municipalities and community groups that manage projects. Each party in the partnership contributes an equal share of required funding up to an agreed-upon maximum. In Farmingville the local partner(s) should be an existing organization – a civic group or the Chamber of Commerce, or the citizens advisory committee, if it chooses to take on this project and secure necessary funding. If a Business Improvement District is formed, streetscape improvements may be incorporated into the responsibilities of the BID and perhaps continued outside the BID area through a streetscape program.

Improvements should encourage pedestrian activity and improve the aesthetics of the corridor. Most of the improvements should be concentrated in the hamlet center and surrounding area, from Woodycrest to Blue Point, starting with the gateway areas, and then they should be incorporated into select other locations

### Streetscape Improvement Project Morristown, NJ

“New sidewalks and curbs, concrete-paved crosswalks and decorative turn-of-the-century style lampposts adorn the streetscapes of the Morristown Partnership's first two major beautification projects along Washington and Morris Streets. The current project in front of the train station on Morris Street including Blachley Place, the Hiker Monument and a portion of Elm Street is nearing completion. Phase II, scheduled for early fall, will continue along Morris Street up to the Green and feature similar streetscape elements.” Funding for the projects is provided by a partnership of local businesses and organizations, through a special assessment on commercial properties and business owners (like a BID) and through funding from the New Jersey Department of Transportation for capital improvements. For more information: <http://www.morristown-nj.org/invest.html>



**Figure. 47** Examples of desirable streetscape improvements and amenities.

where clusters of retail or civic space exist (or will be developed). Business or property owners could be asked to maintain items such as trash cans. Desired improvements include benches or places to sit, trash receptacles on each block, bicycle racks, decorative street signs and places to hang flowers or banners on lampposts.

**3. Improve lighting on streets and in public spaces.**

Inadequate street lighting discourages pedestrian activity and raises public safety issues in peoples’ minds. Farmingville community members are concerned with maintaining street lights in good working order. The Town’s Division of Streetlighting has a Streetlighting Inventory and Maintenance System (SIMS), which is used to track the status, maintenance, and history of all of the Town’s 44,000 streetlights. The Division can be reached through the Town’s 451-TOWN number for streetlight repair issues.

The community expressed a strong desire to enhance safety and the look of the corridor by installing historic-themed lampposts. The CAC should identify the desired lampposts and discuss with the County Department of Public Works in discussions about how best to get them installed. One option is to include lampposts in the streetscape improvement program or have the potential BID handle them.

**4. Install banners, wayfinding, and other identifying signage to help distinguish the hamlet center and enhance sense of place.**

A community’s identity can be communicated through signs and identifying markers that point out places of interest, designate a downtown area, or give directions to places in town. Residents desire tasteful community signage throughout Farmingville to promote a new identity for the community. Community members expressed interest in creating a logo or symbol for Farmingville to be used in signs and banners throughout the hamlet. Specifically it was suggested that an iconic feature of Farmingville be used as the logo, such as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In addition to promising a new, positive identify, this will help distinguish the hamlet center and draw attention to unique assets, like the historic Terry House, Farmingville Hills Park and Bald Hill.

Community groups could partner with local companies to increase the visibility of existing signage, like the Welcome to Farmingville sign near 7-Eleven at North Ocean with lighting and landscaping. New signs should be donated by local businesses or paid for through grants and fundraising by local organizations. In September 2010 the Farmingville Residents Association had applied for grant funding for a community information kiosk and accompanying bench (see Section 4.4.8 for recommendations about enhancing public space and community identity). Examples of the kinds of signs the community would like to see are banners that identify the community by name, refer to its history, or welcome visitors to Farmingville.



**Figure 48.** Signs and banners can direct visitors and residents to community focal points and help create an identity for a community. Left to right: Ann Arbor, MI; Sayville, NY; Vancouver, BC Canada; Adelaide, Australia.

**5. Encourage, allow and facilitate development of public spaces - plazas, gazebo or pavilion, fountain, and "village green."**

Community gathering spaces, indoor and outdoor, are limited in Farmingville. Residents expressed considerable interest in creating additional public space for people to hold events or ceremonies, or get together with friends. A clearly delineated public space with a defining characteristic or feature such as a gazebo or fountain is important to creating a sense of place in Farmingville. One of Farmingville's most recognizable icons – the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park atop Bald Hill, north of Horseblock Road along CR-83— is not located in the center of the community. The community would benefit greatly from a place where celebrations and events can be held and where people can meet while shopping, working, or playing in town.

The Town of Brookhaven offers zoning incentives (§85-276 of Town Code) including, but not limited to, increased FAR and reducing parking requirements to developers with property zoned J-6 who are willing to install public amenities such as parking, sewage treatment capacity, civic or park space, or infrastructure such as street furniture, lighting or plazas, as set forth in the Main Street Business District Design Manual. The Town should take advantage of this incentive and ensure that as property is redeveloped in Farmingville, the community gets the additional public space it desires. Community members and the Town's Planning Board can negotiate with private developers on a case-by-case basis during the site plan review process to provide usable public space as part of their site plans.

Existing public spaces should be enhanced, upgraded, or renovated to make them more appealing to community members and more visible to passers-by. The community would benefit from additional amenities such as a gazebo in existing prominent locations. Triangle Park, with its central location, is an ideal spot to create a potential "gateway" or significant public space. It has also been recommended that a gazebo or water feature be placed in Farmingville Hills Park or at the pending development at the Bissett Nursery on the South side of Horseblock Road.

The CAC and local businesses could organize to carry out such improvements by holding fundraisers and soliciting financial contributions and volunteers to help with installation and maintenance.

**Beautification & Maintenance**

**Community Vision & Recommendations:**

- *"Create a unified look and feel for businesses along the Horseblock Road corridor"*
- *"Establish a community clean-up program to address litter on streets and sidewalks"*
- *"Work with business owners on property clean-up and maintenance; downtown clean-up. Develop programs for maintenance and clean-up of property along Horseblock"*
- *"Provide trash receptacles"*

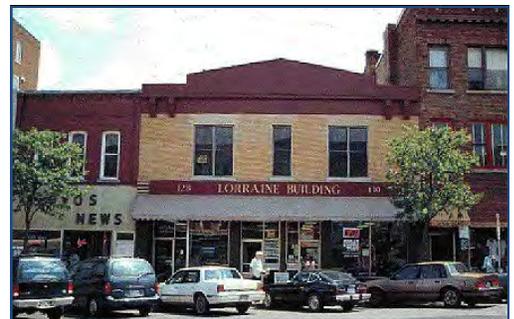
**6. Develop a storefront façade improvement program.**

Many municipalities offer matching grants for improvement of storefront facades to encourage business and commercial property owners to improve their buildings and create a more aesthetically pleasing streetscape, and to ensure accessibility to stores by all people, including those with limited mobility, such as those in wheel chairs. For example, the Village of Freeport in Nassau County, NY operates a façade improvement program through the Village Community Development Agency (CDA). The program is a joint effort between the Village and the business community and targets façade improvements and fixture replacement to improve the visual character of each designated business improvement area. It is a voluntary program in which each business owner or tenant must apply to participate. The Village provides financial assistance through allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds as well as technical assistance with plans and specifications, cost estimates and supervision of improvements. Eligible improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Sign replacement
- Replacement, painting, cleaning of storefront facades
- Removal of old awnings and installation of new awnings
- Store window and glass replacement
- Door replacement
- Exterior lighting installation and/or replacement
- Reconstruction of rear entrances, as necessary in those instances where access is available to the store from a Village parking lot
- Exterior landscaping including shrubbery, planters, etc.

For more information about the Village of Freeport façade improvement program, visit <http://www.freeportny.com/index.aspx?NID=276>

The Town of Brookhaven should consider implementing a façade improvement program aimed at spurring business and building owners to improve the appearance of their properties to facilitate revitalization efforts. The program should be targeted to those communities undergoing redevelopment or targeted for revitalization in the Brookhaven 2030 plan, such as those with existing downtowns, central business districts, or near transit hubs. The Town should consider offering matching funds for improvements to building facades, signs and awnings, and perhaps streetscape elements. Federal (stimulus), State (Main Street), or County funding may be available to assist with launching such a program and local Farmingville organizations may be tapped to assist with this effort by offering small amounts of funding, donation of products or services. A façade improvement program in Farmingville would contribute significantly to an enhanced pedestrian experience, business environment, and a



**Figure 49.** Façade improvement programs can result in a look and feel consistent with the community’s preferences for commercial areas. (Lorraine Building, Auburn NY; Village of Westbury, NY).

recognizable hamlet center, helping to unify the businesses and create a consistent street wall of newly renovated facades.

### **7. Establish a community cleanup program.**

Much like a Business Improvement District or a streetscape improvement program, community cleanup programs are essential to revitalization projects to ensure that streets are well-maintained and that trash, graffiti, and other debris are removed quickly and regularly. In the absence of a formal association to take on the clean-up responsibilities, community members and organizations including civics, faith-based groups, youth, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and other youth groups, could take on the responsibility of organizing clean-up events. An anti-graffiti task force could be established to help clean and deter graffiti.

Twice each year the Farmingville Residents Association conducts a local clean-up program in conjunction with Town clean-up (The Great Brookhaven Cleanup) events and FarmingvilleRocks.com has organized two community clean-up events since its inception in 2010, but more frequent cleaning is necessary in order facilitate revitalization. The CAC should identify another local organization or individual to champion this effort and create a crew of volunteers responsible for cleaning and picking up litter in designated areas, such a group responsible for park clean-up (see *section 4.4.6 Recommendation 3*) on a regular basis depending on the area (preferably bi-weekly or monthly, but quarterly is acceptable if that's what it takes to get the program started). Expanded clean-up efforts involving local would both improve the cleanliness of the area and get more people actively involved in the community.

## **Section 4.4.5 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY**

*Objective: Implement traffic-calming measures and improve the pedestrian environment by promoting and implementing "complete streets." Create balance between all forms of transportation. Maintain capacity while reducing traffic speed in the hamlet center to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.*

*Current snapshot: Farmingville in its current state is not very pedestrian-friendly. Horseblock Road has relatively few opportunities for crossing. Where they do exist, pedestrians often do not have sufficient time to cross the entire four or five lane roadway. The streetscape generally lacks trees and other greenery and where they have been planted, they are often located on the inside of the sidewalk rather than separating pedestrians from the road. Speed limits range from 30 to 40 miles per hour, although it is not unusual for cars to travel much faster than that (during a walking audit one group clocked a speeding car at over 50mph) in the center of town. Bicyclists often travel down the middle of the road for lack of a designated bike lane.*

### **Pedestrian environment**

*Community Vision & Recommendations:*

## 4: COMMUNITY VISION

- *“Improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists through traffic calming measures”*
- *“Install landscaped medians and islands that give pedestrians refuge”*
- *“Encourage walking and pedestrian activity by increasing safety, and accessibility, and improving aesthetics. Create bike and walking paths in open space areas, linking to parks and center of town or businesses” (see also recreation)*
- *“Install and repair streetlights” (see also beautification)*
- *“Install and repair sidewalks on both sides of Horseblock and Portion Roads, and along North Ocean Avenue”*
- *“Install crosswalks at strategic locations along major corridors. Consider using different material to set apart from street :*
  - *Post office*
  - *Waverly*
  - *Granny*
  - *Fire Department”*
- *“Provide walkways and paths between recreation, commercial, and residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists, such as lighted bike paths or lanes, sidewalks so people can move easily between destinations”*
- *“Improve Americans with Disabilities Act access on sidewalks, streets, and to storefronts (see also façade improvement program, above)”*
- *“Add bike lanes, if feasible along Horseblock and North Ocean”*

The community’s vision would make Horseblock Road the major unifying element of the study area, making the road and surrounding area more inviting to pedestrians and cyclists, taming traffic, and improving its aesthetic qualities.

Street design influences character by setting the stage for different types of uses, affecting how streets handle storm water runoff, and controlling traffic patterns, all of which shape the physical environment and pedestrian experience. Streets can be designed to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, divert and guide traffic through the use of striping/painting, medians, and curbs. This section outlines recommendations to improve Horseblock Road to ensure that the road can support implementation of the community’s vision without negatively impacting traffic flow.

As mentioned elsewhere in the plan, further studies and analyses can help convey a better sense of how recommendations may affect the community and physical environment. Section 4.2.1 recommends a number of studies and analyses and specifically calls for a transportation and traffic analysis, looking at the feasibility



**Figure 50.** Sidewalks along Horseblock Road often lack trees and in many locations are in need of repair. (Photo: Fabian De La Espriella, 2009).



**Figure 51.** Many intersections throughout Farmingville lack adequate crosswalks and pedestrian safety features. (Photo; Fabian De La Espriella 2009).

of transportation-related vision elements, including bike lanes, medians, roundabouts and other traffic calming strategies. Recommendations contained in the section below should be considered in conjunction with the results of these analyses.

**1. Ensure roadway improvements in Farmingville are consistent with Brookhaven complete streets policies, ensuring that roads accommodate all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, and automobiles.**

Momentum is building around creation of Complete Streets policies and programs throughout the country and New York State. Nearby, New York City and New Haven CT have recently adopted policies and design manuals for complete streets. Brookhaven Town is considering similar measures; in September 2010 Councilwoman Kepert advanced a complete streets policy to the Town Board and sample design manuals were under consideration. Ideas and community recommendations included in the Farmingville Community Redevelopment Plan are generally consistent with complete streets concepts; therefore Farmingville should serve as a test community for implementation of Brookhaven complete streets policies and concepts.



**Figure 52.** Top: Traditional painted crosswalks with lines that match the direction of traffic wear off over time. Middle: Throughout Farmingville a lack of crosswalk makes crossing more dangerous. Bottom: very little separates pedestrians from the road. (Photos: Fabian De La Espriella, 2009).

**2. Enhance visibility and install crosswalks in strategic locations on Horseblock Road such as major points of interest or intersections.**

*Locations identified by the community for crosswalks along Horseblock Rd. include, but are not limited to:*

- Post Office (across from Farmingville Hills Park)
- Fire Department (Abner Drive)
- Waverly Avenue
- Blue Point Avenue
- Granny Road and/or Woodycrest
- North Ocean Avenue

Few crosswalks exist along Horseblock Road. Crosswalks should be installed at all major intersections, including across side streets to facilitate east-west crossing along Horseblock. All intersections should be analyzed to determine whether crosswalks are needed. Crosswalks should be highly visible to traveling vehicles. Those across Horseblock at important pedestrian crossings should be textured or otherwise visually differentiated from the roadway. Pedestrian crossing signs should be installed so as to indicate to motorists that they are approaching the crosswalks, particularly at non-signalized intersections. Timed signals that count down the remaining time to safely cross the road should be installed at all signalized crossings. Textured and differentiated sidewalks draw attention to presence of pedestrians, as shown in examples below.

To maintain the flow of traffic, signalized intersections should include buttons that allow pedestrians to initiate crossing so that lights respond to their presence and do not stop traffic unnecessarily. Research should be conducted to determine the appropriate amount of time needed to cross at various locations.

The CAC should approach the Suffolk County DPW, which is responsible for County road maintenance and improvements, to initiate these changes. The group should work with the DPW to determine appropriate materials and strategies for implementation.

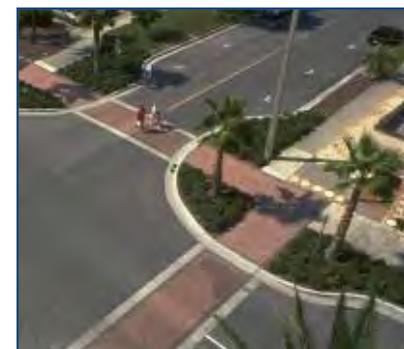
**3. Explore implementation of "walking school bus" program for children who walk to school and participate in National Walk to School Day (in October).**

Encouraging pedestrian activity and making the community more walkable was a common theme throughout the community planning process. Promoting such activity among children and young adults is essential to improving community health. In addition to improvements to roads, sidewalks and other physical elements, local schools, community or youth groups, churches and others should establish programs that encourage children to walk more. Community members suggested starting by initiating a local program that promotes walking to school, such as a "walking school bus," in which children walk in groups, accompanied by at least one adult. The program encourages physical activity and following safe routes. Perhaps the program could be initiated in time for National Walk to School Day in October 2011, or sooner, if the community desires and finds it feasible. It could be continued thereafter, with special walk-to-school events each October.

**4. Consider expanding policies requiring new development to include public facilities or pay into a fund to promote pedestrian and bicycle mobility such as paths or lanes, bike racks, and safe crossing points.**

Private sources of funding are tremendously helpful in implementing transportation-related recommendations. While many of the proposals in this section are low-cost and relatively low-maintenance, maintaining sidewalks, bike lanes or walking paths requires time and money. The Town currently collects fees for support and maintenance of recreation facilities and areas as part of the development and redevelopment process.

Consideration should be given to additional ways to encourage cost-sharing of these types of improvements to help offset the cost of installation and maintenance. Brookhaven Town Code requires that as part of the site plan and subdivision approval process, fees are



**Figure 53.** Crossing signage and textured and colored concrete or pavement helps draw attention to pedestrians in the road; Bump-outs allow pedestrians to see around parked cars and narrow the street, slowing traffic.

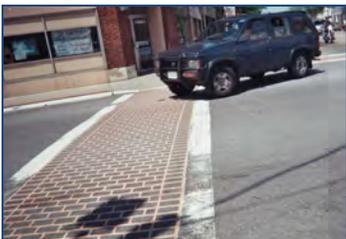
paid (as stated in Chapter 29 of the Town Code) for on-site improvements, including but not limited to drainage facilities, installation of curbs and sidewalks, and paving of parking fields. The Town Code (§SR-26) also requires new that new subdivisions include construction of certain public amenities: concrete curbs, sidewalks (in C and D Residence zones), drainage facilities, street trees and landscaping, street signs, park areas, and streetlights. Consideration should be given to expanding these requirements to cover new developments in A and B Residence districts as well as to include bike racks, signals or other amenities, or install these amenities in another location within the community or contribute to a fund to pay for improvements at a later time.

### 5. Repair or install sidewalks at strategic targeted locations.

Sidewalks increase pedestrian activity and improve pedestrian safety, particularly seniors or youth, who often rely more heavily on walking to get around. There are several locations throughout the hamlet where sidewalks do not exist. The Citizen's Advisory Committee should inventory these locations and provide the Town with a prioritized list of locations needing sidewalks installed and repaired. Priority should be given to areas around schools, youth or senior oriented locations, the hamlet center and roads that link neighborhoods to the hamlet center.

In the hamlet center sidewalks should be reconfigured to include elements that increase safety, such as textured or colorful markings to differentiate sidewalks from driveways that cross them or bump-outs that allow pedestrians to see around parked cars when waiting to cross at designated crossing locations.

#### Ensure Safe Access Under Nicolls Road



**Figure 54.** Textured street crossing in Patchogue, NY (Photo from 'Best Practices Tour' June 2009)



**Figure 55.** Decorative crosswalk and sidewalk treatments, La Mesa CA.

There was strong support for increasing easy access between the two "sides" of Farmingville — that is, the portions east and west of Nicolls



**Figure 56.** Much of the Central Business District lacks pedestrian crosswalks and signals. (Aerial image: Bing Maps, 2010)

Road. The County Department of Public Works (DPW) should ensure that the Nicolls Road underpass is maintained in good condition, well-lighted, and free of litter to facilitate safe and easy pedestrian and bicycle access.

ADA Compliance

Roadway and sidewalk improvements should be constructed or modified to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act provisions, increasing accessibility for all populations, particularly seniors and those with physical limitations. This would include ensuring that ramps are installed at all intersections and road crossings and that sidewalk grades are not too steep to prevent wheelchair access.

**6. Institute a bicycle and pedestrian signage program to promote awareness and increase safety.**

Signs are a relatively low-cost way of increasing safety by alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians and bicyclists. Pedestrian-crossing signs should be installed at all major intersections and crosswalks, with overhead signs at mid-block crossings or smaller intersections, identified in the first recommendation in this section (see “1” above). Signs and crossing signals should use state-of-the-art technology and be lit and visible at night. Bike lanes and paths can be colorized to help draw attention to the presence of cyclists.



As bicycle activity becomes more popular and bike amenities are installed throughout town, signage should also be installed to raise awareness about bicycle traffic and increase safety. Signs should clearly indicate where bicycle traffic is present and demarcate any special lanes or paths for bicycles.

The CAC should work with Suffolk County and the Town to initiate these recommendations. Funding may be provided by one or more public agencies, and in some cases could be sponsored by local businesses or community organizations or donated by private developers.



**Figure 57.** Signage and marked lanes are good ways to promote bike safety.

**7. Enhance connectivity between recreation, commercial, and residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists.**

Pedestrians and bicycle riders should have easy access to streets throughout the hamlet. Connections should be prioritized in and around the hamlet center, where residential neighborhoods abut commercial districts. While buffers are required to separate residential areas from commercial ones, pedestrian connections are generally not provided. This often results in more car trips for errands or shopping and can deter people from shopping locally since once they're in their cars people may choose to drive to another area.

The Town should consider requiring construction of facilities such as paths, crossings, lanes, and similar facilities, as part of the zoning and development process, especially

to connect public parks, trails, and greenways with the hamlet center. If it is not feasible to require these improvements, the Town can encourage them during the site plan and subdivision review process. Safe crossing points at major road intersections should be emphasized.

### Bike Lanes

Although the County DPW, which maintains County Roads, does not openly support bike lanes on major roadways, bicyclists nonetheless utilize CR-16 on a daily basis. Bike lanes are being created and installed safely and successfully across the country. Community members expressed significant interest in encouraging additional bike activity in Farmingville, both as a mode of transportation and for recreational purposes. To promote additional bike use, the County should analyze the feasibility of installing bike lanes along one or both sides of Horseblock Road and North Ocean Avenue. Bike lanes should link with connecting routes and existing bike lanes on County, State and Town roads.

The Town's Division of Traffic Safety has identified Granny Road and Horseblock Road as proposed bike routes in the draft 2030 Comprehensive Plan. North Ocean Avenue north of Horseblock Road is a *potential* bike route. The Division of Traffic Safety applied for a NYSDOT Local Safe Streets and Traffic Calming grant for establishment of a bike route along Granny Road between Route 112 and Mill Road in Coram. Rather than widen the roadway to construct designated bike lanes, the Division of Traffic Safety proposes a shared vehicle/bike lane in areas with speeds of 35mph or lower, with markings to alert motorists to the presence of bicyclists (see Appendix H for an example). These markings could be considered for use in Farmingville.

Bike lanes or paths will enable safe cycling that does not crowd the sidewalk and create unsafe conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists. They will also guide bicyclists riding through town. Without dedicated bike lanes or paths, cyclists travel in car lanes and often disrupt the flow of traffic, risking their own safety as well as that of motorists. Clearly marked bike paths not only promote bike usage and consequently reduce the number of automobile trips, but give cyclists a safe space to ride that does not compete with traffic.

Bike lanes adjacent to the sidewalk could effectively become an extension of the sidewalk, but would be designated specifically for bicycles with markings on the pavement. This option is perhaps suitable for stretches of North Ocean, while a dedicated bike lane in the roadway may be preferable along certain stretches of Horseblock Road. Project consultant Dan Burden, a use and walkability expert, advised that Horseblock Road is wide enough to accommodate a bike lane without reducing the width of the lanes. If bike paths are provided next to the sidewalk along Horseblock (as opposed to on the street), they should be discontinued in the core hamlet center area so as not to interfere with pedestrian activity and on-street parking, which could cause safety hazards (signage should encourage bicyclists to walk bikes through this area). The



**Figure 58.** Colorized bike lane.

CAC and local bicycle advocates should recommend additional roads for potential bike lanes or paths.

### Roadway and Traffic Calming

Traffic calming is based on the notion that both safety and traffic capacity can be improved through measures that reduce the speed of vehicles moving through a given area. The concept is perhaps difficult to understand because for years traffic problems were dealt with through engineering solutions which result in added travel lanes and increased traffic speeds. It is now known that gains achieved through such solutions are temporary and that such improvements quickly lead to even higher levels of traffic and congestion.

Recently, traffic calming has been gaining in popularity and proven successful at balancing the needs of cars, pedestrians and bicycles by reducing the amount and speed of motor vehicle traffic. While wide, straight roads—like Horseblock—encourage motorists to drive faster, traffic calming seeks to slow traffic either by physically changing the road or by changing how drivers react to the road. The challenges of traffic calming are to use mechanisms that are strong enough to slow speeds but do not restrict access by emergency vehicles, that are substantial enough to have an impact but tough enough to withstand an occasional bump or hit, and that are attractive and accepted by drivers and community members.

This section outlines recommendations made by community members to slow and improve the flow of traffic, improve traffic patterns, and achieve a safer, more appealing “Main Street” corridor.

### Community Vision & Recommendations:

- *“Improve roadways“*
- *“Promote public transit as means of transportation, including expanding and improving service and access “*
- *“Slow traffic through center of town and initiate traffic calming, including landscaping.*
  - *Explore the installation of roundabouts at strategic locations along Horseblock Road, particularly Waverly Ave. and Blue Point*
  - *Center medians or islands should be landscaped and lit”*
- *“Analyze and improve traffic patterns: explore eliminating left turn where Horseblock & Portion split (north side of Horseblock), turning from Portion Road (heading eastward) north onto Horseblock”*
- *“Address traffic flow at North Ocean and Horseblock Road (timing of traffic lights) and east of North Ocean along Granny Road (near school) and Horseblock (outside the study area), leading toward Rt. 112”*
- *Consider traffic calming measures on Leeds Boulevard, which serves as a cut-through from Nicolls Road to Middle Country Road*



**Figure 59.** Community design work from Saturday workshop.

**8. Promote public transit by expanding and improving service and access.**  
(based on recommendations from transportation analysis, see section 4.2 )

County and regional studies of bus usage on Long Island have documented disproportionate usage by the newly arrived ethnic minorities. Insofar as Farmingville has a substantial immigrant population, like many communities on Long Island, it is important to ensure that bus service provides access to employment centers and educational institutions. Convenient and accessible bus service will also benefit those who are less likely to have access to vehicles, such as students and senior citizens, making it more desirable for people in these groups to live in areas serviced by public transportation.

To increase ridership, the Town and community members should work with Suffolk County Transit and the necessary partners to build bus shelters at busy stops in Farmingville, particularly near shopping centers and the hamlet center. The shelters should be visible but must be transparent so as not to obscure sight lines, block the wind and provide shade. Comfortable benches should be provided.

Taking into consideration recommendations of the transportation analysis, the Town of Brookhaven, Citizen's Advisory Committee and other community representatives should collaborate with Suffolk County Transit to improve local bus service. Better connections between Bald Hill and the town center were suggested. Other recommendations for service improvements can be developed collectively by project partners.

In these tough economic times, it is perhaps unfair to seek increased service, but, improvements to service can also increase ridership and thus generate more revenue. Other improvements may not require expanded service, but rather simple enhancements, such as the addition of one or two key stops on a particular route or moving the location of a stop. The community expressed interest in operating a shuttle between Bald Hill and the hamlet center during special events.

**9. Install pedestrian refuge islands and/or planted medians along Horseblock Road.**

Landscaped medians should be installed along the Horseblock Road corridor, from Nicolls Road to North Ocean Avenue, particularly east of Waverly Avenue. These medians will have an important visual impact on the corridor and will help to slow traffic, provide shade and give pedestrians crossing the road safe points at which to stop. Medians should be broken up with periodic dedicated turn lanes to allow traffic to cross the road and not create an impassible barrier. In addition, non-landscaped mountable medians should be used as an alternative in strategic locations where emergency vehicles must cross or pass traffic. Medians should be able to accommodate pedestrian crossing at unsignalized intersections, where crossing are highly visible and supplemented with appropriate warning signs to alert motorists.

Medians should be raised to prevent incursion from passing cars and to prevent salt and runoff from the roadway from damaging the trees. Cuts should be provided in the

median curbs to allow some water to flow into areas designated for storm water filtration (bioswales). Medians should be planted with appropriate low-maintenance, native and non-intrusive species, primarily grasses and shrubs, with trees in strategic, safe locations. Shrubs and plantings should be carefully chosen so that they do not grow too tall and block motorists' sight distance.

**10. Explore feasibility of introducing roundabouts as means of traffic calming and helping to define hamlet center.**

The community expressed a desire for roundabouts as a mean of slowing traffic without reducing capacity and to create gateways to the hamlet center. Several locations were suggested initially, but Blue Point and Granny Roads were considered the preferred intersections.



**Figure 60.** Community design work showing desire for landscaped medians.



**Figure 61.** Medians can ease pedestrian crossing, beautify a community, and slow traffic.

Roundabouts are desirable for their ability to maintain or even increase capacity of a road while slowing speeds and increasing pedestrian safety. In Farmingville, they serve to visually identify the hamlet center and improve traffic flow, maximizing vehicular capacity, and eliminating the need for stop signs and traffic signals. When properly designed, roundabouts include raised splitter islands to channel incoming traffic approaching from the right.

Roundabouts, along with other traffic-calming measures, are being considered in other communities, such as the 25A corridor also in Brookhaven Town. Because of this, it is recommended that community engage the Town and County DPW in discussions about installing roundabouts on Horseblock Road at Blue Point and Granny Roads. Next steps should include a feasibility and engineering study to look at how the roundabouts should be configured (i.e. one lane vs. two lanes, pedestrian signals, pedestrian medians, etc.). Funding sources will need to be identified. Private developers should be encouraged to contribute to this project, and funding may also be available through state and federal transportation sources.



**Figure 62.** Community design work showing potential configuration of roundabouts.



**Figure 63.** Conceptual image of roundabout at Granny Road. Left: Before (ca. 2009); Right: After. (Images: Dan Burden and Fabian De La Espriella)

For more information about traffic calming, see the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's guidebook on sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian access (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/sidewalks209.htm>).

### **11. Implement operational improvements to the roadway.**

Although roads may be congested at times, traffic counts obtained from the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT), conducted in 2006 and 2007 revealed an annual average daily traffic level of about 26,000 cars per day on Horseblock Road between CR-97 and CR-83. Horseblock Road in Farmingville is functionally classified as a minor arterial by the State DOT, while North Ocean Avenue (CR-83) and Nicolls Road (CR-97) are both classified as principal arterials, and Blue Point is classified as a collector street.

Traffic flow could be improved with several small changes to allow cars to travel and still accommodate pedestrians. To improve the flow of traffic and increase pedestrian safety, Suffolk County DPW should examine and implement operational improvements to Horseblock Road, starting with low-cost projects such as signage, striping or marking, and creating dedicated turn lanes to improve traffic flow and facilitate creation of a hamlet center. In particular, community members expressed concern about traffic turning left from North Ocean onto Horseblock, heading west. The light is too short and only a few cars at a time tend to get through. As a result, drivers run red lights and increase the risk of accidents. Changes to traffic signals could address this problem.

Residents also mentioned that traffic does not flow well along Granny Road approaching the elementary school. One community member suggested widening that stretch of road to accommodate the relatively recent increase in traffic volumes due in part to the opening of Sachem High School East in 2004. The DPW should investigate traffic in this area.



**Figure 64.** Dedicated turn lanes can help ease the flow of traffic.

### **12. Install landscaping along Horseblock Road.**

Streetscape work should build on recent improvements to Portion Road, west of Nicolls Road, creating a continuous look and feel, helping to unify the two sections of Farmingville (east and west of Nicolls). Increased landscaping and streetscape improvements in the hamlet center, along with safer, more visible crosswalks will make the

area more walkable and pedestrian friendly. In addition to the planted medians recommended above, there is strong interest in additional landscaping to create a visual reminder that the road is shared by pedestrians, bikes, and automobiles and to break up long vistas of signage and pavement. Landscaping has been proven to increase the visibility of traffic-calming devices, such as medians or roundabouts, and the effects they have on drivers.

Landscaping must be designed to ensure safety and maintain visibility of pedestrians and other vehicles. Shrubs and bushes should be limited to 30 inches in height and trees should be trimmed up to six feet above the street level, allowing drivers to see under them. Plant species should be carefully selected for visibility and maintenance.

Landscaping can also increase demands on municipal budgets, and if not properly maintained, it may become an eyesore. Volunteers from community groups, schools, and churches should organize regular litter removal, weeding and other maintenance work. In the City of Seattle, residents are required to maintain landscaping in traffic-calming devices. Volunteers should be taught how to maintain plantings: the Town or County could partner with a local nursery to hold workshops. A local community group should take charge of creating a maintenance partnership and recruiting volunteers.



**Figure 65.** Rendering of potential improvements to Horseblock Road. (Image: Dan Burden and Fabian De La Espriella)

### Section 4.4.6 RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

*Objective: Expand and enhance recreational opportunities throughout the Farmingville community*

*Current snapshot: Although Farmingville has hundreds of acres of parkland, most of that land is contained within the 100+ acre Farmingville Hills Park and is forested land. Its use is restricted to passive recreation, such as walking or biking. The community has been working with the County Parks Department and local groups to mark the trails, which will increase usability; however, there are few other outdoor places for children and families to engage in active play. There are a number of soccer fields and a few neighborhood parks, but residents repeatedly stated the need for additional space to accommodate play areas for kids, sports activities, and space for kids and adults to be active. The Town of Brookhaven maintains only one park within the study area, Waverly Avenue Park (behind VFW Post 400, across from Suffolk Community College). The Morris Avenue Park, featuring a playground and ball field, is also in Farmingville, but just outside the study area, west of Nicolls Road. A Town recreation center on Fairmont Avenue on the eastern boundary of the study area was closed*

several years ago. Existing parks are in need of upgrades and more parks are needed throughout the community.

Bald Hill and the accompanying Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park and outdoor Amphitheater are located in Farmingville. But while Bald Hill has baseball diamonds and hosts concerts, festivals, and a flea market throughout the spring and summer, the community feels little connection to the site. Participants said on several occasions that the activities generally do not appeal to the local population and that it does not meet local needs. This Town-owned facility presents an enormous opportunity to improve recreation and entertainment opportunities, and throughout the planning process, there was much interest in expanding the use of Bald Hill.

#### Community Vision & Recommendations:

- “Build upon existing trails at Farmingville Hills park to facilitate biking”
- “Expand opportunities for biking and walking by creating new trails and bike lanes throughout town”
- “Expand existing and create new parks on appropriate lands
  - One location could be on Portion Road, west of Compare Foods, with a pond and benches
  - Dog park
  - Playground for kids
  - Skateboard park (possibly in an existing parking lot, such as KK Athletics)”
- “Develop a gym or recreation center/community center, possibly with dancing and seasonal sports“
- “Start recreational or other programs for youth of all ages”
- “Establish new facilities for basketball, soccer, and volleyball”

#### Parks, Trails and Playgrounds

##### **1. Expand and promote the use of Farmingville Hills Park.**

The community has rallied around the opening of Farmingville Hills Park and many community groups, including the Farmingville Historical Society and the Farmingville Residents Association, and volunteers have championed efforts to increase use of the park in conjunction with the restoration and opening of the Terry House and Bald Hill School House next door. Recently great strides have been made in recruiting volunteers to mark the trails and prepare them for walkers, runners, and bicyclists. These groups should continue these efforts and promote use of the park by local community groups for picnics, as a starting point for other festivities. Other passive uses should be promoted, such as nature walks by local schools and bird watching. Community partners should consider partnering with the Sachus Public Library or Holtsville Ecology Center to host educational programs at the park (see #7 and 8 below for more recommendations on cultural awareness and education). In addition, the park should be promoted as part of the Suffolk County Parks system: as of May 2010 it was

not listed on the Suffolk County Parks website (<http://suffolkcountyny.gov/Home/departments/parks/Parks.aspx>).

**2. Hold a public input workshop for youth to design parks and playgrounds.**

To determine the types of structures, facilities, and amenities local youth would like to have in their parks, the CAC or another local organization (such as a Friends of Parks group; see below) should hold a workshop where kids are invited to look at images of different play structures and elements that could be incorporated into future new or redeveloped parks. This workshop will make clear what types of activities kids are interested in and will help build excitement and ownership in the park creation process. Ideas identified by the community during the planning process include skate parks, basketball courts, tennis courts, ice rinks, and play areas.

**3. Organize volunteer group (Friends of Farmingville Hills, or Friends of Farmingville parks) to help clean up and maintain park property.**

Building on the momentum surrounding the opening of Farmingville Hills and in conjunction with community clean-up efforts (see Sec. 4.4.4, Recommendation 7) , community park advocates should consider organizing a sub-group of volunteers to raise funds and help with clean-up and ongoing maintenance of parks. A group like this creates a sense of ownership of the parks and makes it more likely that local government entities will be willing and able to create and renovate parks.

**4. Expand or renovate existing parks on public lands. Consider a dog park.**

The community expressed significant interest in expanding existing parks to incorporate more opportunities for active recreation, including sports facilities (skating rink, basketball, tennis, and handball courts), skateboarding, biking, walking, playgrounds for children, and dog walks or parks. Town or County-owned lands and former park facilities are ideal starting points for expanding or providing these recreational activities. Parks the community has identified for upgrades and renovations include:

- Greentree Park (at Gaymor and Radburn, outside study area)
- Former recreation center on Fairmont Avenue (North of Horseblock)
- Bald Hill – consider adding playground and additional sports facilities

Community groups, including perhaps an organized parks advocacy group (*above*) should work with the Town or County to negotiate use of the land for one or more of the elements described in this section. The groups should work with government officials on a memorandum of understanding describing the proposed uses of the land and establishing an upkeep and maintenance program or

**Dog Park -**  
**Old Bethpage Restoration Dog Run**

Nassau County opened its sixth dog run at the Old Bethpage Restoration on Round Swamp Road in Old Bethpage on Oct. 1, 2009. The dog run has two areas - one for small dogs and one for large dogs. It features “green” water systems that collect and filter rain water for the dogs to drink. Local Boy Scouts donated benches. The park is open Wednesdays through Sundays and there is no fee for using the dog run.

For more information about the design and benefits of dog parks, visit:  
Long Island Dog Parks - [http://www.lidog.org/li\\_dogparks.htm](http://www.lidog.org/li_dogparks.htm)  
Dogpark.com - <http://www.dogpark.com/>

partnership. Funding for such improvements may be raised by community groups (grants, donations, fundraising), with contributions from local elected officials or the Town.

**5. Create new parks on appropriate lands.**

The community is overwhelmingly interested in creating new parks. Around the country, many communities are giving every neighborhood access to a park within walking distance (roughly one quarter of a mile). While new publicly-owned, -maintained and -operated parks may not be feasible in every neighborhood, the Citizen's Advisory Committee and local park advocates should work with public and private property owners to identify sites for creating new park space and acceptable uses for that space. Parks may be incorporated into future mixed-use developments or a community recreation center for example.

Children in and around Farmingville have few options for recreational activities. They need outdoor spaces for skateboarding, handball, basketball and other activities. New parks could fill this need and help children remain active and healthy.

Town code allows the Planning Board to offer zoning incentives to developers who create civic or park space on property zoned J-6, in accordance with the Main Street Business District Design Guideline Manual. Parks provided under this type of agreement should be maintained by the property owner to reduce the burden on Town government. Community groups can work with property owners as needed to provide occasional assistance with maintenance or clean-up.

**6. Expand opportunities for biking and walking by creating new trails and bike lanes throughout town.** *(see section 4.4.5 on transportation as well)*

Trails already exist at Farmingville Hills and Glacier Ridge Town Park, but the community is generally very interested in creating additional opportunities for biking and walking throughout the community, not just in parks. Exercise trails exist at Brookhaven Town Hall, which was suggested as a possible location for new walking trails. New trails should be connected with the existing exercise trails and integrated with any future bike lanes or paths and could also help connect residential areas and the hamlet center with Bald Hill, Sachem East High School, and the Veterans Memorial. In general, connections should be provided between residential neighborhoods, schools, parks and the hamlet center via existing trails, sidewalks, and eventually, bike lanes in certain areas. Trails should be designed to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians and clearly marked with signs to protect safety.

**Sports, Recreation, and Cultural Activities**

**7. Facilitate opening of historic Terry House and Bald Hill Schoolhouse to public for educational purposes and community events.**

Under the leadership of the Farmingville Historical Society, community groups and local residents have been working with the County Parks Department to renovate and open

the historic Terry House and adjacent Bald Hill Schoolhouse to the public of educational activities and community events. The Terry House still needs much construction inside and there are plans to make it an art gallery and old-fashioned gift shop/candy store. The Historic Schoolhouse retains its 1850s historic stature. There are plans to open it up more regularly to the public and host field trips with the local elementary schools. The site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, opened to the public in the summer of 2010 during a “Community Day” event. The Historical Society should slowly build a schedule of educational activities and events for school groups and the general public, to be held on a monthly basis, for example. Potential partners for such events and programming include farmingvillerocks.com, local schools, youth groups (Boy and/or Girl Scouts), and the Sachem Public Library. Eventually the site could serve as a local history museum.

**8. Strive to increase public awareness of historical and cultural resources and organizations within the community.**

Using the opening of the Terry House and Schoolhouse as a starting point, the Historical Society and other community organizations should partner to promote awareness and understanding of Farmingville’s history and cultural resources. Presentations should be given to local school groups and events held at cultural sites, such as Vietnam Veterans Memorial or the Terry House should draw attention to local history. Local churches, art and music groups, farmingvillerocks.com and perhaps organizations at Suffolk Community College are likely partners in this effort.

**9. Accommodate wider variety of activities at Bald Hill, and encourage better connectivity to the hamlet center.**

Bald Hill is an excellent but underused asset in the Farmingville community. During the “off” times when performances and festivals are not taking place, the park and the area surrounding the Amphitheater sit unused. The facility features plenty of open space, much of which can accommodate outdoor sports. Bald Hill is an ideal candidate for shared-use agreements, allowing local sports organizations or other groups use it during times when performances and festivals are scheduled. The Town, which owns the facility, should work with community members to develop a wider range of programming that appeals to a broader audience, including jazz or folk music performances, craft or art fairs, and daytime story time events for young children during the summer. It was suggested that a public-private partnership could be a workable alternative solution, breathing new life into the amphitheater and generating revenue for the Town. Additional research is needed to further explore this option before it is presented for consideration.

The community would also like to establish a better connection between the site and the hamlet center, reinventing Bald Hill as a destination for locals as well as visitors. Suggestions for encouraging area residents to make better use of Bald Hill include dinner and movie or show deals with local restaurants, shuttles from the hamlet center, reduced entrance fees, or more frequent free activities. Another suggestion was offered to run a trolley service during special events or festivals to provide transportation between the amphitheater and significant places within the community, such as Farmingville Hills Park.

### **10. Partner to plan for and open a community center.**

The Sachem Teen Center and the Brookhaven Youth Bureau both accommodate populations from a large geographic area. The lack of activities for kids and teens in Farmingville was a top concern of community members during the planning process. Parents, teen and youth librarians, church groups and an array of community members, along with kids themselves, expressed the need for more activities closer to home. There was wide support for the creation of a community recreation center, which could house a gym or athletic facilities as well as services and activities geared toward youth and seniors. This would benefit the children in and surrounding Farmingville—they need a place to congregate safely and enjoy physical activities, such as skateboarding, bicycling and handball.

The current economic climate makes it difficult for a local non-profit or municipal government to take on sole responsibility for a community center. Instead, interested parties, including the Town (especially the Youth Bureau and Senior Citizens Division), local community groups or sports leagues, and perhaps a private developer should consider a partnership to create such a facility in a centrally located site. The facility must be located in an area that is friendly to pedestrians and accessible by public transit, so its target population, most of which does not have access to vehicles, may use it. Some residents suggested including a community center when redeveloping one of the shopping centers. Community groups should conduct a survey to determine services desired by youth and seniors, identify potential private-sector partners and locations, and then engage the Town to carry out the development process. (*\*Note: this may require rezoning of property depending on location*).

### **Section 4.4.7 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

*Objective: Encourage long-term redevelopment strategies that advance environmental sustainability*

*Current snapshot: Farmingville has several private sewer districts that serve Suffolk Community College and the hotel near North Ocean and the Long Island Expressway. The rest of the hamlet is largely without sewers, and residences primarily have septic systems. Green building techniques have yet to become standard in Farmingville, as in much of the rest of the County, although there is significant interest in preserving and improving environmental health. Utility lines clutter the view along Horseblock Road.*

*Recommendations:*

- *“Investigate ways to spur redevelopment by encouraging or allowing additional sewer capacity”*
- *“Encourage green development and smart growth technologies to protect and enhance the environment”*

Recognizing the water quality and health implications as well as the potential to incite desirable redevelopment in targeted locations throughout the study area, the Town and community partners should work together to identify potential solutions from the information and recommendations presented in the sewer study (*see below*). It is important to develop sound plans for proper treatment of waste without jeopardizing water quality or community health. During the community planning weekend, there was talk of a potential new residential development near the Post Office on the Bissett Nursery property that could incorporate a sewage treatment plant, possibly with excess capacity to help spur other desirable development in the immediate area. (As of September 2010 this project is still pending).

**1. As projects develop, consider ways to ensure that sewage treatment facilities build in excess capacity that can be used by other projects and facilitate revitalization in and around the area.**

The Town should consider providing additional incentives to developers who agree to build excess sewer capacity into projects where additional capacity is currently needed or will be needed in accordance with approved community vision plans, land use plans, and Brookhaven 2030. Examples of such incentives include additional FAR (floor to area ratio) permitting greater square footage or lot coverage, or reduced parking requirements for properties within the J Business 6 District. The Town should consider adding a similar incentive to the zoning overlay district applied for the Farmingville hamlet center to ensure that sewer capacity is adequate to facilitate revitalization in targeted areas, even for those that are not rezoned to J-6. Another option would be to offer diminished application fees or an expedited application process for a project that guarantees excess capacity.

**2. Include Farmingville among the focus areas to be investigated as part of the Town-wide sewer study to be initiated in 2010.**

The Town of Brookhaven plans to initiate a Town-wide sewer study to analyze existing capacity and options for new or expanded capacity to help accommodate and target future growth, prevent sprawl, and preserve open space, in accordance with Brookhaven 2030. The Town should see that Farmingville is included as a focus area in the study which will examine existing and potential future capacity and recommendations for promoting development and redevelopment in accordance with this and other local plans, as well as protecting and enhancing local water quality.

**3. Encourage green or sustainable development such as alternative or renewable energy, stormwater filtration and run-off prevention. Promote LEED certification. Use existing incentives and explore creation of new ones.**

In order to continue promoting environmental health and sustainability the Town should provide incentives for practices that protect groundwater, reduce energy or water consumption, promote cluster development to leave as much open space as possible, and incorporate porous paving materials or stormwater filtration techniques such as bioswales or rain gardens in parking lots. In addition green development and smart growth technologies can be encouraged through changes to Town codes.



**Figure 66.** Vegetated swales can help filter storm water runoff and beautify the landscape.

The Town currently offers a one-percent bonus in the ratio of building floor area to lot size (FAR) for each level of LEED certification obtained by large scale commercial projects in the J Business 2 District. This program should be expanded. The Town should consider offering additional incentives such as tax credits or reduced application fees for LEED-certified projects to promote enhanced water quality and environmental protection. These incentives, whether expanded or not, should be incorporated into the J Business 6 District. Given that development patterns are shifting towards “main street” environments — focusing development and revitalization efforts on existing nodes, downtowns and central business districts — it is reasonable to assume that the J-6 District will be applied more widely across Brookhaven Town in the future. These incentives will help Brookhaven become a leader in ensuring the region’s long term health and sustainability.

Incentives offered by other municipalities for projects that meet green building objectives range from tax credits and rebates, flexible zoning and design standards, to technical assistance or expedited application and permitting processes. San Luis Obispo County (CA) created a list of potential incentives to encourage Low Impact Development (LID) (<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/PW/stormwater/Potential+LID+Incentives.pdf>), while Arlington County, VA, San Diego County, CA, the Cities of Chicago and Seattle, and Oregon are leaders in green building incentives.

The Town should offer incentives geared toward homeowners as well as developers. The program should create a list of desirable green building and low-impact development techniques and assign point values for each one. It should set threshold point levels that allow new residential and commercial developments to qualify for certain bonuses, credits, and other incentives. And there ought to be a minimum standard that all new development must exceed. This type of program has been successful in Boulder, CO and West Hollywood, CA.

Community members also expressed concern about utility lines that clutter the landscape along Horseblock Road, detracting from the aesthetic quality of the hamlet, in some cases blocking views of businesses and creating safety hazards. Community members are looking to make Farmingville an attractive community and enhance the character of the Horseblock Road corridor. Burying utility lines underground rather than hanging them from utility poles would significantly reduce the visual clutter and increase safety and could also reduce potential conflicts with trees and other landscaping. Although burying utilities is desirable in Farmingville, a project such as this would require significant time and resources and additional funding would need to be identified in order to advance. It is recommended that this be explored as a potential long-term option and in the meantime, developers should be encouraged to relocate lines to less visible locations, such as behind buildings, whenever possible.

### Section 4.4.8 COMMUNITY PRIDE AND IDENTITY

*Objective: Foster community pride and create renewed positive identity, enhancing community character.*

*Current snapshot: Farmingville is home to an active civic-minded community and a number of community organizations, churches and other groups. The hamlet is home to Bald Hill, Brookhaven Town Hall, the newly opened Farmingville Hills Park, and a small central business district, but it has become better known for the roads that surround it. The name often conjures up images of day laborers who congregate on the streets. However, there is a strong interest in using the vision process to build on the community's small-town character and historic roots of the community and move away from these negative connotations, renewing a positive identity for and sense of place in Farmingville.*

*Community Vision & Recommendations:*

- *“Institute public arts program: murals, sculptures, and decorative streetscape or furniture in public spaces can enhance the community's image, and celebrate the community”*
- *“Institute a community festival or celebration such as ‘Farmingville Day’”*
- *“Set up short-term temporary uses of underutilized parking lots (such as those at KK Athletics and Compare Foods) and vacant properties for farmers' markets, festivals or similar uses”*
- *“Implement a holiday lighting program”*
- *“Start a series of special events in the hamlet center. Possibilities include an Earth Day celebration; an event featuring local artists, artisans and craftspeople; a concert by local musicians; and holiday festivals”*
- *“Establish unique design elements that trumpet “You’re in Farmingville!”*
- *“Create focal points within parks and community facilities; identify visible locations for important civic architecture, art, and other features”*

#### **1. Create and institute a public arts program.**

Art in public spaces is an excellent way to enliven and beautify an area and a great way to support local artists. Murals, sculptures, and decorative streetscape or furniture in public spaces can enhance the community's image, add unique character, and celebrate the community. The CAC should work with the Town and private businesses to commission sculptures, murals, paintings, or other works of art in highly visible locations.

Consideration should be given to creating focal points within parks, public buildings and other community facilities. In addition, it was suggested during the community planning weekend that perhaps a community bulletin or notice board in the hamlet center could be a great way for the community to share information. (See Section 4.4.4 Landscaping & Beautification for recommendations on enhancing visual identity through signage).

Additionally, the Terry House and empty storefronts can be used to display artwork. Riverhead has a program in which vacant offices and other storefronts temporarily display art. The CAC and other community organizations should consider such a program and speak with individual business or property owners to gauge interest.

**2. Institute a series of special events in hamlet center, including a community festival or celebration, such as "Farmingville Day."**

The CAC should tap local resources to establish a series of special events and celebrations or festivals to help connect people with one another and build a sense of community and pride. The events should be regularly scheduled (monthly or seasonally) and widely publicized to help build recognition. Local organizations as well as elected officials should be invited to participate and contribute.

Local community groups have already put together a series of events that will take advantage of the newly opened Farmingville Hills Park. The Historical Society and farmingvillerocks.com hosted a Community Day in August 2010. This and other similar events should continue on a regular basis.

**3. Set up short-term temporary uses of underutilized parking lots and vacant properties, such as seasonal Saturday, craft, or farmers' markets or festivals.**

Farmingville has a number of huge parking lots that are aesthetically uninviting. In the interest of creating community focal points and revitalizing the hamlet, these areas should be programmed with holiday or event festivals, arts or crafts fairs, or perhaps a farmers' market. Residents expressed wide support during the community planning weekend for regularly scheduled fairs and farmers' markets.

As of September 2010 members of the Farmingville Residents Association have begun planning for a farmers' market to open in Farmingville. The CAC and other local organizations should lend support to this effort and could explore the possibility of creating a agreements for markets and similar events in locations throughout the hamlet. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, churches and other groups should also participate in



**Figure 67.** Examples of public art. Left: Blackburn Avenue; middle: Chicago Fire Dept.; right: Islip, NY.

organizing them. Local farmers, crafts persons or vendors could be contacted to sell their goods.

Information on starting a farmers' market is available from the Farmers' Market Federation of New York: Diane Eggert, Executive Director (315) 637-4690  
<http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/>

#### **4. Implement a winter holiday lighting program.**

The CAC should approach the Chamber of Commerce, the BID (if one is formed), or other business associations as well as the Town Streetlighting Division to develop a holiday light program to build community pride and a sense of identity. The business association or merchants' alliance should manage the program and business owners within the lighted area would pay for installation, maintenance and electricity.

In the interest of sustainability and conserving resources, lights should be LED (Light Emitting Diodes), which use significantly less energy and last longer than standard bulbs. The Town and County Parks Departments should help oversee installation so trees are not damaged during the process.

The Portland Alliance in Portland, Oregon has a very successful holiday lighting program. More information is available at the website: [http://www.portlandalliance.com/downtown\\_services/holiday-lighting-program.html](http://www.portlandalliance.com/downtown_services/holiday-lighting-program.html)

## SECTION 4.5 POTENTIAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES

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One key component of successful implementation is securing funding. The list below describes several potential sources available to non-profit and governmental entities for community revitalization and related projects. Regular contact with local elected officials and public agencies is another opportunity to learn about grant opportunities and potential funding sources.

- **New York Main Street Program:** The New York Main Street program provides financial resources and technical assistance to communities to strengthen the economic vitality of traditional Main Streets and neighborhoods. It provides funds from the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) to units of local government, business improvement districts and other not-for-profit organizations that are committed to revitalizing historic downtowns, mixed-use neighborhood commercial districts, and village centers. **Contact:** Senior Community Developer, Capital and New York City Region, Hampton Plaza 38-40 State Street, 9th Floor, Albany, NY 12207. Phone: (518) 474-2057 *\*Note: requires a municipal resolution for submission.* (<http://www.dhcr.state.ny.us/Programs/NYMainStreet/>)
- **NYS Safe Routes to Schools:** Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal, state and local effort to encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school and to make walking and bicycling safe and appealing. The SRTS application process is currently awaiting authorization by the Federal Government and the next multiyear transportation bill. (<https://www.nysdot.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/srts>)
- **NYSDOT Local Safe Streets and Traffic Calming** grant program: LSSTC aims to increase safe bicycling and walking within local communities on Long Island. The program is administered by NYSDOT's Region 10 in Hauppauge, and can provide Federal funds for up to 80% of construction and inspection costs for the installation of traffic calming measures on non-State roadways. A maximum of \$3.6 million will be made available over a three-year period, up to \$1.2 million annually beginning October 1, 2010. Funding can be used for construction and construction inspection only. An application packet is available at [https://www.nysdot.gov/regional-offices/region10/repository/LSSTC%20Application%20%20May%20%202010\\_Secure.pdf](https://www.nysdot.gov/regional-offices/region10/repository/LSSTC%20Application%20%20May%20%202010_Secure.pdf) **Contact:**(631) 952-6108.
- **National Park Service: Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit:** Administered by the National Park Service, IRS and State Historic Preservation Office, this program involves a Federal income tax credit for 20% of the cost to rehabilitate a certified historic structure. Some older non-certified historic buildings are eligible for a 10% tax credit. The credits cannot be used to fund renovations by owners on their own homes, although there may be exceptions if owner uses personal residence as a place of business. The building must be registered in the National Register of Historic Places or included in a National Register historic district to qualify. Some buildings that have been deemed eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office for individual listing in the National Register or that are included in a local certified historic district or in a historic district that is potentially eligible for listing in the

National Register may also qualify. **Contact:** Historic Preservation Services - National Park Service. 1849 C Street, NW (2255), Washington, DC 20240. Phone: (202) 513-7270, Email: NPS\_HPS-info@nps.gov

- **National Park Service: Tax Credit Program for Income-Producing Properties:** Tax credit covers 20 percent of costs for substantial rehabilitation of historic income-producing properties. Must be used with the Federal Investment Tax Credit Program for Income-Producing Properties. Qualifying properties are historic commercial, office, industrial or rental residential (not owner residential) buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Final dollar amount depends upon the total cost of work done. The interior and exterior work performed must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be approved by the National Park Service. **Contact:** National Register and Survey Unit (518) 237-8643 x 3256 OR Technical Assistance and Compliance Unit (518) 237-8643, ext. 3252. More information at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/incentives/index.htm>
- **Federal Recovery Effort:** The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is a federal program created as a response to the economic crisis intended to create jobs, save existing jobs and invest in long-term economic growth. Grants and loans are available for "shovel ready" projects. ARRA opportunities are available on <http://www.grants.gov>
- **New York State Council on the Arts:** The Council awards grants to nonprofit organizations incorporated in New York State, Indian tribes, and local government. The grants support a wide range of arts initiatives. The NYSCA also offers capital project grants that support the improvement, expansion, or rehabilitation of existing buildings owned or leased by nonprofit cultural institutions *receiving funding from the Council*. The grants are restricted to funding construction costs and must be used within one year. Projects should demonstrate "design excellence" and address at least one of the Council's project priorities. Organizations approved for capital funding by other New York State programs or agencies for the same project are not eligible to apply for Capital Projects support. The Council will award up to 50 percent of the cost of construction materials and labor. The maximum grant is \$50,000. **Contact:** Anne Van Ingen, Director. (212) 741-7013, [avaningen@nysca.org](mailto:avaningen@nysca.org) OR Nancy Cohn, Associate. (212) 741-7014, Email: [ncohn@nysca.org](mailto:ncohn@nysca.org)
- **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: Environmental Restoration Program:** This fund supports clean-up and redevelopment of Brownfield sites. Under the Environmental Restoration Program, the State provides grants to municipalities to reimburse up to 90 percent of on-site eligible costs and 100 percent of off-site costs for site investigation and remediation activities. Once remediated, the property may be reused for commercial, industrial, residential, or public purposes. Eligible New York municipalities must own the property and must not be responsible for contamination. Their property cannot be listed as a Class 1 or 2 site on the State Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites. There are two types of grants: Investigation Grants to determine the nature and extent of

contamination, and the appropriate remedy; and Remediation Grants to support the design and construction of the cleanup selected in the ROD. **Contact:** Director of Remedial Bureau A (Regions 1 and 5) (518) 402-9625. Email: [derweb@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:derweb@gw.dec.state.ny.us). For more information, visit: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8444.html>

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Department of Transportation (DOT): Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities:** Through a set of livability principles and a partnership agreement, this newly formed partnership will coordinate federal housing, transportation, and other infrastructure investments to help improve access to affordable housing, promote equitable development, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment and addressing the challenges of climate change in communities nationwide. As part of the Partnership, **HUD launched a \$100 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program**, to create stronger, more sustainable communities by connecting housing to jobs, fostering local innovation and building a clean energy economy. Regional Planning grants were awarded to multi-jurisdictional and multi-sector partnerships as well as regional consortia consisting of state and local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and philanthropic organizations in October 2010. In addition HUD and DOT announced \$35 million in TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) II Planning Grants and \$40 million in Sustainable Community Challenge Grants for planning activities that lead to projects that integrate transportation, housing and economic development. Recipients will be announced in the fall of 2010. For more info: <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/partnership/index.html>. Additional funding opportunities through HUD may be found here: [http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program\\_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail](http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail).
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Smart Growth Grants:** Grants support activities that improve the quality of development and protect human health and the environment. Eligibility and funding levels vary depending on the grant. RFPs will be posted on EPA Smart Growth Grants website and Grants.gov and <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/grants/index.htm>
- **New York State Smart Growth: Grants Resource List:** List of multiple public and private grant opportunities. <http://www.smartgrowthny.com/grants.shtml>
- **New York State Assembly:** Monthly Grants Action News. Monthly newsletter of public and private grant opportunities. <http://assembly.state.ny.us/gan/>
- **Small Business Administration: Office of Women's Business Ownership:** Women's Business Centers (WBC) provide management and technical assistance to women entrepreneurs and small business owners. The office focuses on women who are economically or socially disadvantaged. It provides comprehensive

## POTENTIAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES

training and counseling to help women start and grow their own business.  
<http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/onlinewbc/index.html>

- **Federal Grants Database:** Centralized database of federal grant opportunities. Houses information on over 1,000 grant programs and provides access to approximately \$500 billion in annual awards. Managed by the US Department of Health and Human Services. <http://www.grants.gov/> Additionally, the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance provides descriptions and information regarding 2,052 federal assistance programs. <https://www.cfda.gov/>
- **Further Financial Incentives:** The Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency includes further financial incentives including a Corporate Tax Credit, Green Building Incentive, Industry Recruitment/Support, Local Loan Program, PACE Financing, Personal Tax Credit, Property Tax Credit, Property Tax Incentive, Sales Tax Incentive, State Grant Program, State Loan Program, State Rebate Program, and Utility Rebate Program. For more information: <http://www.dsireusa.org/incentives/index.cfm?re=1&ee=1&spv=0&st=0&srp=1&state=NY>
- **Creative fundraising:** Fundraising can also help to advance revitalization goals. If a community group needs to raise money for a project, the group may be able to use it as an opportunity to contribute creatively to the community. For example, selling engraved brick pavers with names of sponsors or offering donor recognition plaques for groups and individuals who purchase trees or greenery.

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## **Chapter 5. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

The following matrix outlines specific steps that should be carried out in order to fulfill recommendations contained within the Community Redevelopment Plan, the parties involved, and an initial priority order for completing the steps.

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**APPENDIX A:** “Neighborhood-Scale Planning Tools to Create Active, Livable Communities”



## **APPENDIX B:** Copies of outreach materials



## **APPENDIX C:** Survey and survey results



**APPENDIX D:** Community input and results from mapping and design workshop



**APPENDIX E:** PowerPoint presentations given by Dan Burden during Community Planning Weekend

- Friday December 4, 2009
- Saturday December 5, 2009
- Monday December 7, 2009



**APPENDIX F:** Article 16-A, Proposed Long Island Workforce  
Housing Act



**APPENDIX G:** *Planning on a Budget* Project Matrix (POAB Matrix)



**APPENDIX H:** Town of Brookhaven, Division of Traffic Safety  
Recommendations for Markings for Shared Bike Lanes



# Farmingville: Our Vision for Tomorrow

## Community Redevelopment Plan



OCTOBER 2010