

Councilwoman Bonner and Town Board Implement 25A Land Use Plan

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Amend Zoning Definitions, Create Overlay Districts and Change Zones for Route 25A from Mount Sinai to Wading River



Map shows the 10.5 mile length of NYS Route 25A from Mt Sinai to the Riverhead town line in Wading River that is covered in the Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Land Use Plan

Farmingville, NY - A 2012 gift to residents of Brookhaven's North Shore, from Mt. Sinai to Wading River, was the implementation of zoning to protect the Route 25A corridor in these communities after a comprehensive public process that identified residents' visions of the future of their communities. The Town Board held public hearings to amend a number of zoning definitions, consider changes of zone to 79 properties in the Rocky Point business district from their current zoning from J2 (Neighborhood Business) to J6 (Main Street Business) and to create three new overlay districts as per the recommendations of the Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Land Use Plan. All of the amendments were unanimously adopted by the Town Board. The rezoning will help to bring properties into code conformity and are designed to stimulate investment and encourage redevelopment in the district. The rezoning will also permit building frontages to be close to the street to enhance pedestrian comfort and walkability, and will permit increased floor to area (FAR) ratios compared with the J-Business-2 District.

The Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Land Use Plan, which was spearheaded by Councilwoman Jane Bonner and initiated in the fall of 2009, covers a 10.5 mile stretch of Route 25A through the hamlets of Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Sound Beach, Rocky Point, Shoreham and Wading River to the Riverhead town line. Its development included extensive community participation in seven Community Planning Forums held from January through April of 2010. More than 300 residents, civic leaders and stakeholders participated in the visioning sessions.

"Adopting these amendments was vital to the future success of the Route 25A Draft Land Use Plan and it will encourage the kind of economic growth that we envision while at the same time preserving the rural character of the North Shore communities," said Councilwoman Jane Bonner, "I have been working on this plan for more than three years now and I'm very happy to see it being implemented." She added, "Informed community input helped ensure that the land use in this corridor will reflect the local vision and wishes for each hamlet - ensuring the preservation of the community character of each of the hamlets. I can't thank my constituents enough for coming out and contributing to this success story."

Supervisor Ed Romaine said, "I commend Councilwoman Bonner and our Planning Department for the work they did over the past three years to develop a plan that is very important to the future of our town. Retail sprawl has had a detrimental affect on our downtown business districts and this plan will help to reverse that trend while at the same time focus on environmental issues such as land conservation."

The new definitions added to Chapter 85-1 of the Town Code are as follows:

- **J Business 6** - Existing land uses defined; Clarify land uses; Land uses added based on other code changes;
- **J Business 6 Signs 57A** - Amendment to allow non-permanently affixed sign advertising goods for sale or services i.e., café or restaurant specials.
- **J Business 2** - Within the Route 25A Hamlet Center Overlay District the maximum size of a commercial structure will be limited to 60,000 to 75,000 square feet. The intent is to reduce the effects and impacts of large scale commercial developments along the corridor including excessive traffic, noise, air and light pollution.

The new overlay districts include:

- **PCOD (Planned Conservation Overlay District)** - Encourage responsible conservation subdivision of remaining farmland and open spaces of at least 35 acres which preserves a large proportion of open space and scenic vistas in perpetuity. Provides for parcels of land, 35 acres or more, to cluster detached or attached single family residential development, based on existing yield, on smaller lot sizes in order to preserve a minimum of 70% of the subject property.
- **Hamlet Center Overlay** - Offers protection of the corridor's aesthetic and visual character within hamlet centers by limiting the size of large format retail establishments and restricting their location along the corridor. Strengthens the Hamlet Centers identity and attractiveness through improved corridor aesthetics, setbacks, signage, streetscape, public spaces, architectural design, and landscaping.
- **Transitional Overlay** - Protect transition areas and contiguous residential districts from future suburban sprawl and the incursion of out-of-scale, large format commercial development and redevelopment. Preserve the rural nature and character of the corridor transition areas. Improve the aesthetic and visual character of transition areas through consistent setbacks, uniform sign criteria, and improved landscaping and architectural design.

In creating the Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Land Use Plan, Councilwoman Bonner's overriding concern was to preserve the current high quality of life enjoyed by corridor residents by preserving community character of the area, preventing future suburban sprawl, limiting "big box" retail, improving both the safety and appearance of Route 25A, and revitalizing local businesses and Main Streets along the corridor.

The Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Land Use Plan and Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) are available on the Town website at www.brookhaven.org.

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