

CHAPTER SIX

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are the physical components that give a town its identity. While some services are basic necessities, such as fire and police protection, others fulfill social or educational needs. These cultural functions bring the population together in a rural residential area like Dover and help create the very sense of community.

Community facilities are most often administered by a governmental agency or be a private not-for-profit organization. Generally, they are financed through taxation, user fees or public subscription. The demand for larger and more varied community facilities and services increases as population grows. With the increasing demands placed upon public budgets, intelligent planning of facilities is essential. The northern migration of new homeowners from the New York Metropolitan Area also tends to raise the level of expected community services to meet the standards of more developed municipalities to the south.

This chapter will examine Dover's community facilities and services in relation to current needs as of early 1991 and projected demands, including discussion of public buildings, fire, police and rescue squad facilities, schools, the library, parks and recreation, post office, water, sewer and solid waste disposal.

Town Hall

The Dover Town Hall is located on the south side of East Duncan Hill Road off Route 22. Built in 1985, the Town Hall contains 5,692 square feet of total floor space. The building houses the Town offices including the Town Clerk, Assessor, Building/Zoning Department, the office of the Supervisor and the Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals office. The Town Hall also includes two meeting halls, storage, utility and boiler rooms and a kitchen.

Early in 1991 a mechanical lift was installed in the building, making the meeting rooms fully accessible to disabled and elderly persons. Although there are no plans to expand the building, current space is inadequate. A study is being conducted in order to more efficiently use the space available within the Town Hall. The exterior of the site would benefit from increased landscaping, especially along the perimeter to provide buffering and shade for the parking area.

Highway Department

The Highway Department facilities are located in an approximately 16,000 square foot building next to the Dover Town Hall on East Duncan Hill Road. This building provides storage for all the highway equipment as well as the Highway Department offices.

The staff consists of the Highway Superintendent, nine full-time positions and one part-time position. The department is responsible for the maintenance of town roads, such as snow removal and routine road repair, as well as various other jobs throughout the Town.

At the present time, the Department's inventory of heavy equipment consists of one grader, one backhoe, two loaders, three dump trucks, three four-wheel-drive vehicles used for snow removal, and three pickup trucks. A fire truck was recently donated to the Highway Department and is used to flush out pipes. Currently the Department requests the replacement of equipment as needed; however, the Department would like to start a five-year program for equipment replacement.

Police

Police protection is furnished at the county and state levels. The Dutchess County Sheriff's Department has an outpost just south of the hamlet of Amenia. The New York State Police have a substation located on Route 22 at the northern edge of Dover Plains and the Troop K station at Washington Hollow in the Town of Pleasant Valley.

Fire and Rescue

The J.H. Ketcham Hose Company, a private volunteer fire company, provides fire and rescue services under contract with the Town. The fire company maintains two fire stations, one on Route 22 in Dover Plains and a second at the intersection of Route 55 and Wingdale Road (CR 21) in Wingdale. The fire company also provides fire protection for portions of the towns of Amenia, Washington and Beekman. The company is also part of the county's mutual aid system which provides assistance to and receives assistance from neighboring towns in case of major emergencies.

The company currently has approximately 60 active members, 40 fire fighters and 20 members of the rescue squad. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find volunteers and is estimated that by 1994 full-time, paid professional fire and ambulance personnel will be needed to adequately cover the 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. shift.

The current number and condition of the fire fighting equipment is satisfactory. Equipment includes five engines purchased in 1963 (although the body was refurbished in 1983), 1981, 1985, 1989 and 1990, a 1959 utility truck, a 1980 ladder truck, and two 1986 rescue trucks.

The J.H. Ketcham Hose Company also provides ambulance service to the Town. It has two vehicles, one in each firehouse. One ambulance was purchased in 1989, the second in 1991.

There are three serious problems experienced by the fire company which could adversely impact the community; the difficulty in getting volunteers to cover the daylight hours, the financing of new fire equipment, and the lack of sufficient space in the fire houses. As Dover increases in population these problems will only worsen.

School Facilities

All of the Town of Dover is served by the Dover Union Free School District. The District's three school buildings and other facilities are all located within the Town. The Wingdale Elementary School, built in 1974, contains kindergarten through grade 3. It is located on Route

55 across from Boyce Park. Dover Plains Elementary School is located in the center of the hamlet of Dover Plains. It was built in 1925 and houses grade 4 through grade 6. Dover Junior-Senior High School, grades 7 through 12, was built in 1962 on Route 22 near the southern intersection of Dover Furnace Road (CR 26).

Total enrollment in the three schools was 1,527 as of February 1991 (Wingdale Elementary-587 students, Dover Plains Elementary-337 students, Junior-Senior High-603 students). Eighty-one percent of the students enrolled in the three schools are residents of the Town of Dover.

Additional space is being built at two of the three schools. Wingdale Elementary is adding general classroom space, and specialized classroom space is being added at the Junior-Senior High School. Even with the additional space, all three schools are considered at capacity.

There are also day care programs operating throughout the district, including the Astor Head Start program in Amenia, the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center Children's Center and a latchkey program at Wingdale Elementary School. There is also the Dover Early Intervention Program which is funded through Dutchess County Youth Bureau and the Department of Social Services. This program works with existing human resources in the Dover area to encourage and support targeted families to enhance their personal, economic and social development.

There are no private schools in Dover, although some resident attend private schools elsewhere in Dutchess County and Connecticut.

Library

The Dover Library is located on Route 22 in Dover Plains on the first floor of the historic Tabor-Wing House. The library occupies a total of 1,506 square feet of space. The library is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. and from 6 to 8 P.M., and Thursday and Saturday from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. It also holds children's story hours every Wednesday, as well as private story hours for local day care programs. There are summer programs for children which include story hours and puppet shows. The library contains 10,150 volumes and has one full-time and one part-time employee. The Dover Library is funded for the most part by the Town.

The standards recommended by the Public Library Association, a branch of the American Library Association, state that a community with a population between 5,000 and 9,999 should have a library of 15,000 volumes plus two books for each person over 5,000. According to the 1990 Census, the Town of Dover has a population of 7,778. The library currently has less than half the recommended 20,556 volumes according to Public Library Association standards. The population projections in the Population and Economic Profile Chapter derive a population between 8,159 and 9,300 (a continuation of the 1980-1990 growth rate and the Department of Environmental Conservation, respectively) for the year 2010 in the Town of Dover. Comparing the population projections to the standards of the Public Library Association, in 2010 the Dover Library should have between 21,318 and 23,600 volumes.

The most important future concern for the Dover Library is the need for more space. According to figures compiled by the Dover Library Association, there is currently a 3,057 square feet deficit in the amount of space needed to function properly. This deficit could grow to 3,564 square feet by 2010 if the current library space is still in use. The Library Association is investigating possible options for relocation and expansion of the Dover Library.

Parks and Recreation

Total town public recreation space amounts to 218.59 acres. Public school facilities and a section of the Appalachian Trail also help supplement town-owned parkland. Existing public recreation facilities include:

1. Boyce Park, a town recreation area of approximately 199 acres off Route 55 north of the intersection with Route 22 in Wingdale. This park includes a pavilion, playground, horseshoe pits, basketball courts, two ballfields, a trap shooting area, horse ring and a small pond used for skating.
2. Fourteen acres of vacant land on the shore of the Ten Mile River off Lime Kiln Road. The Town has no plans to develop this land for recreational use and has considered selling the two adjoining parcels.
3. A town pool located on six acres of land off Maple Road in Dover Plains. Access to this land-locked parcel is through a parcel of land to the north owned by the American Legion.

The National Recreation and Park Association recommends between 6.25 and 10 acres of accessible public open space per 1,000 people to be served. Using the 1990 census count of 7,778, Dover should have between 48.6 and 77.8 acres of recreation space.

The Town of Dover, with over 200 acres of park property, more than meets the National Recreation and Park Association's recommendations. Even with such a large amount of accessible open space, the vast majority of the usable recreation area is concentrated in Wingdale in the southern half of the Town and only 15 percent of Boyce Park is generally used for recreational purposes. The hamlet of Dover Plains lacks a centrally located recreational area which is within walking distance of the higher density development located around the hamlet center. Such a central open space could serve as a focal point for the hamlet.

A 1988 master plan for Boyce Park outlined various improvements to the existing recreational area and the construction of additional park facilities. Suggested improvements include a multipurpose field, running track, trail network, athletic courts, additional ballfields, an amphitheater or band shell and community gardens. The Boyce Park plan also included cost breakdowns of each proposed change and priority listings of improvements.

The Town Recreation Commission has proposed various projects in response to two major grants. First, the Iroquois Gas Pipeline Land Preservation and Enhancement Program has approved a \$91,000 grant that is scheduled to be used for ballfields and a nature trail at Boyce Park and improved access to the Ten Mile River at a town-owned parcel on Lime Kiln Road. A recent private donation of \$75,000 for recreational purposes will make possible a new playground and storage shed at Boyce Park, as well as partial funding toward construction of a pavilion. Subdivision fees will also pay for resurfacing the pool in Dover Plains.

Post Offices

The Town of Dover is served by two post offices, in Wingdale and Dover Plains. The Wingdale Post Office is located on Wingdale Road (CR 21) west of its intersection with Route 22. This post office serves the southern half of Dover, from Cricket Hill Road (CR 26) to the town border with Pawling. There is approximately 805 square feet of space in the Wingdale Post Office. Although there are no immediate plans for an expansion or moving the facility, there is a need for more space to accommodate growth within the Town. This need is recognized in the United States Postal Service's five-year plan. The Wingdale Post Office lease will run out in 1992. The post office is not accessible to disabled persons.

The Dover Plains Post Office is located off of Mill Street across from the railroad station. This post office serves the area of Dover north of Cricket Hill Road. The facility contains 1,500 square feet of space and should be expanded to accommodate growth. The Dover Plains Post Office is also not wheelchair accessible.

Water Supply

The majority of residents of the Town of Dover rely upon individual on-lot wells for their water supply. There are four small water systems in Dover; Schrieber Waterworks, Reagan's Mill Water Company, the Dover Plains Water Company and at the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center which serves all of the Center's facilities.

The largest of the water systems is the Dover Plains Water Company which supplies water to the hamlet of Dover Plains. This system serves approximately 1,000 people within the hamlet. The supply comes from two wells which each pump around 250 gallons per minute. There is a 50,000 gallon pressure tank in which the water is stored. No treatment is applied to the water. The majority of the water system was built during the 1950s; however, parts of the system date back as far as 1900. There are no plans at this time to expand the system to serve more structures or accommodate any new development around the hamlet.

Water supplies for private apartment complexes and mobile home parks fall under different inspection requirements and regulations than the municipal and private water companies. Because they are less in the public eye and are not the Town's responsibility, they can easily be overlooked when long-term water supply problems and management needs are considered. According to information from the Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Agency, there are 12 mobile home parks and one apartment complex in Dover which have private water supplies.

Sewage Disposal

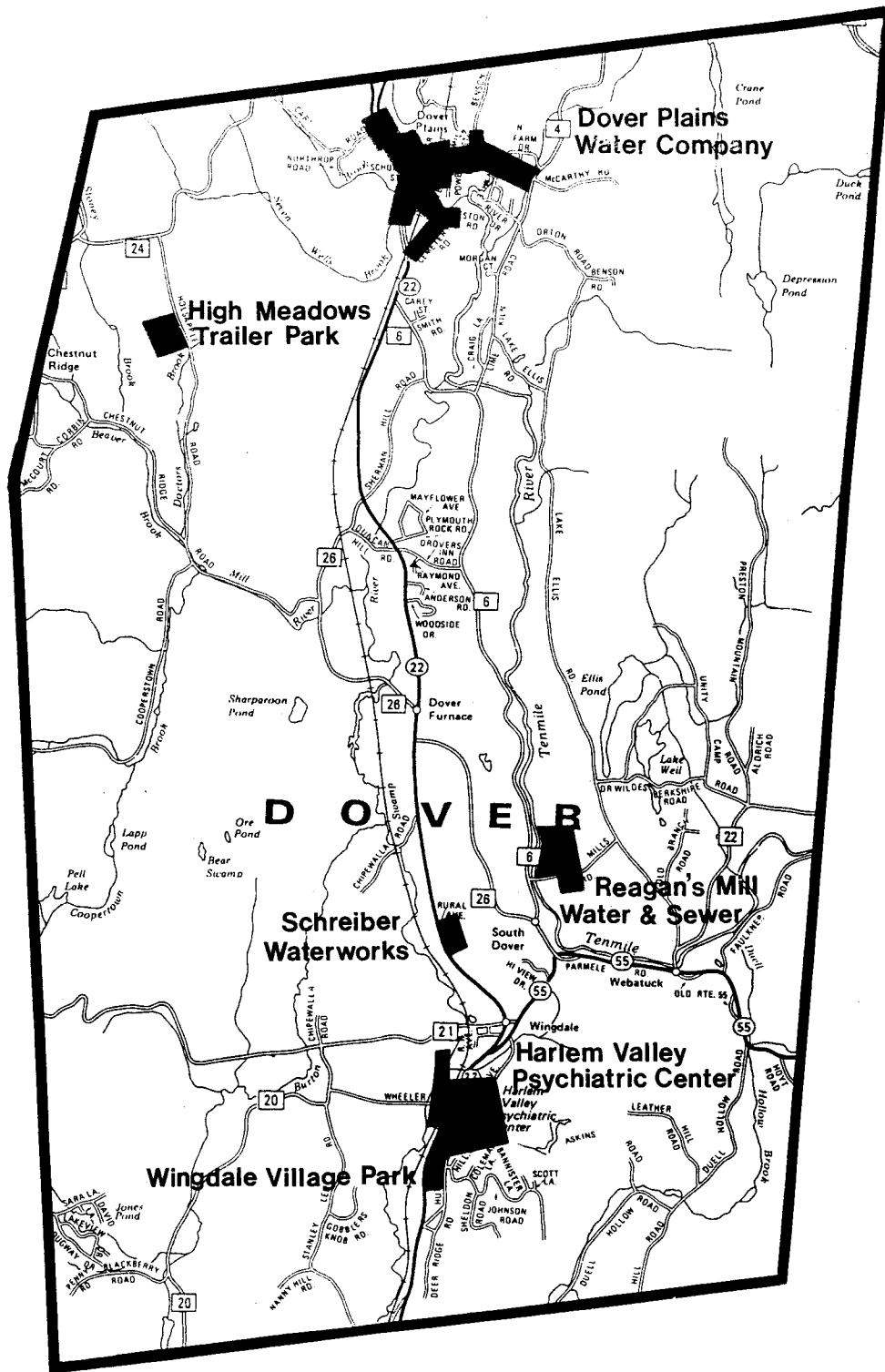
There are eight private sewage treatment plants listed in the Town of Dover. They include three trailer parks, two camp properties, the Reagan's Mill subdivisions, the Wingdale Elementary School and The Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center.

The largest private system is the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center. This system has a design flow of 1.2 million gallons per day, although its average daily flow is approximately 280,000 gpd, leaving an excess capacity of almost 1 million gallons. A consulting engineer inspected the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center sewer plant in 1992 and reported that all equipment was well maintained and in good operating condition. If the plant was to be expanded to full capacity over the long term, the addition of tertiary treatment with intermittent stream standards and dechlorination-phosphate removal may be recommended. However, it would be far more economical to add on to this existing plant than build a new facility in another location.

The majority of development in Dover relies on individual on-site septic systems. Septic tank sewage disposal systems function adequately for many years if properly installed and maintained, but only if placed in satisfactory soils and sufficiently separated from well sites and surface waters. As discussed in the Natural Resources chapter, most development in Dover is located on soil with some type of severe constraint. Percolation tests should be conducted in any area proposed for a leach field, and fill or specialized designs may be necessary. In order to avoid long-term pollution of the Town's water supply the expansion of existing sewage systems and the possible construction of new systems should be explored wherever there is concentrated growth within the Town.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Solid waste disposal for the Town of Dover is primarily handled by private carters. In the spring of 1991 a temporary transfer station was established on the site of the Town Hall and garage. This site was given a three-year permit until a more permanent site for a town transfer station could be found. This temporary facility is open selected days during the week for the recycling of newspaper, office paper, cardboard, glass, plastic and cans. Tire recycling services and a donation bin for clothing and household items are also available at the site. A truck to dispose of solid waste is at the facility once a week. Residents using this facility are charged a per bag fee for garbage and a yearly permit fee for solid waste disposal. As of April 1992, 275 households were using the solid waste drop-off services at the transfer station.



TOWN OF DOVER
 DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

CENTRAL UTILITIES

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING

As described above, several of the Town's key community facilities are approaching capacity or currently suffering from space constraints. Perhaps the most pressing condition is the Town library. The Dover Library Association should continue to investigate options to acquire additional space for the library. This facility should have adequate room to expand the library's collection and should be accessible to all members of the community.

The Town should also consider specific parks and recreational improvements, as well as funding mechanisms during the master plan process. The expansion of facilities at Boyce Park, as described in its master plan, can provide a wider range of activities that accommodate various segments of the community. In addition to Boyce Park, Dover should explore opportunities for new recreational space in the northern part of the Town. Park land should be geographically balanced, convenient to all townspeople, and ideally close to an existing concentration of people. A recreational space in Dover Plains could serve as a focal point for the hamlet and provide park space within walking distance of the higher density residential development in and around this community center.

The more rural, low density residential areas of the Town of Dover will continue to use individual wells and septic systems. As growth occurs, options for central water and sewer systems should be examined for areas of more concentrated development, especially where economics of scale can benefit all users. Many of the residential and commercial properties in Dover Plains and Wingdale are on lots which are less than 1/2 acre. Lots this size are generally considered too small to adequately support a septic system without overburdening the groundwater with pollutants, yet are small enough to economically connect to a central collection system.

The 1990 Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Plan recommends that the existing water system in Dover Plains be upgraded and expanded to meet future demands, and that a central water system connected to the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center to serve Wingdale be considered. The Plan's recommendations for wastewater disposal include investigating the connection of Dover Plains to the existing treatment plant at the Wassaic Developmental Center in Amenia, and the connection of Wingdale to the existing treatment plant at the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center. In the interim, a survey of recent septic system failures and regular monitoring of surrounding wells and surface water for excessive bacteria or elevated levels of nutrients would provide useful information for ongoing evaluation of the condition of the aquifer.

Private utility systems built in conjunction with clustered development could also be considered, but the County Health Department favors more centralized plants under public control because of past problems with private operators. Several towns in Dutchess County have had to take over private plants at great expense that were abandoned or poorly maintained over the long term. Leveraging infrastructure improvements with private dollars tied to development should be directed toward additions to existing systems whenever possible.