

CHAPTER NINE

MASTER PLAN SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Master Plan for the Town of Dover is designed to be used as a guide for managing growth and inspiring positive change. It consists of planning principles and maps that express the community's objectives for the Town's future. The plan takes into consideration the interests of those who answered the Community Values Survey described in chapter one, the information obtained from the basic studies presented in chapters two through eight, and the goals set forth in this chapter, as well as the comments from the public meetings and the deliberations of the Master Plan Committee and the Planning Board. It provides a framework for development up to ten years into the future by allocating land among several categories of uses, identifying specific improvements, and setting forth the policies that should guide the Town's land use decisions.

Although the plan does not have the legal status of a zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, building codes, or site plan review regulations, a planning process is a legal prerequisite to zoning, as authorized in sections 263 and 272-a of New York State Town Law. It helps to ensure that land use controls are based on a factual understanding of the community's needs.

As a policy statement of community intent, a master plan serves the following purposes:

- It operates as an overall guide to be used in day-to-day development decisions;
- It serves as a coordinating mechanism for officials responsible for implementing elements of the plan;
- It provides residents with information on how their community will develop;
- It gives developers a clear statement of what the community will expect in development proposals;
- It provides a basis for the specific land use regulations which will govern the structure of the community in the future.

Land use change is almost always initiated by the private sector, by hundreds of individual decisions to build homes, start new businesses, sell farms, or make other changes. However, the private sector responds to opportunities that governments create through zoning, subdivision regulations, and other official statements of local policy. Local governments can also take the initiative for the protection of valuable resources through the consistent application of master plan principles and other regulatory actions. The plan seeks to guide market forces so that development opportunities and land use goals will be compatible.

METHOD

The plan is based on technical studies as well as the input of town residents. Sources include:

1. The Community Values Survey conducted by the Town and the comments and recommendations of residents in the Master Plan Committee meetings held during the planning process.
2. The background studies of historical preservation, natural resources, population and economic profile, housing, community facilities, transportation, and land uses, which consider both existing conditions and future needs.
3. Analysis of the regional growth patterns and trends that have affected Dover's growth and will continue to influence the future development of the Town.
4. The information and local perspective provided by the Town of Dover Master Plan Committee which was appointed to oversee the plan's development.
5. Planning design techniques for retaining the quality of existing social, economic, and natural environments and improving future development.

The Dover Master Plan was prepared by the Master Plan Committee using the following steps:

1. Distributed, compiled, and analyzed the Town's Community Values Survey.
2. Identified pertinent planning issues.
3. Prepared background studies.
 - a. Documented existing conditions.
 - b. Highlighted apparent problems.
 - c. Projected future needs.
4. Compiled a survey of existing land use in the Town.
 - a. County planners conducted a field survey of all properties visible from the road.
 - b. Real property tax records and 1990 aerial photographs were reviewed to further distinguish land use.
 - c. The map was checked against committee members' personal knowledge.
5. Prepared a series of maps.
 - a. Natural Constraints (Water Resources, Steep Slopes, Aquifers, and Soil Constraints).
 - b. Community Facilities.
 - c. Traffic Volumes and Accidents.
 - d. Existing Land Use.

6. Interpreted all data for planning problems and opportunities.
 - a. Community Values Survey results - identified issues of concern and assessed degree of support for different land use controls.
 - b. Background studies - identified current and potential deficiencies, conflicts, and opportunities in local and regional context.
 - c. Natural constraints - identified areas with multiple constraints and areas with few constraints.
 - d. Existing land uses - identified existing concentrations of uses and existing or potential land use conflicts.
7. Presented draft background chapters for committee and public comment.
8. Outlined goal statements based on identified problems and opportunities and public comment.
9. Defined planning principles and land use categories that would meet the diverse goals.
10. Designated land use districts, open space objectives, and community center recommendations on plan maps.
11. Presented draft planning principles and maps to town officials and the public, and made changes based on comments received.

PLANNING POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The plan for the Town of Dover focuses on eight policy areas based on the community values and background chapters. These chapters provide the documentation and underlying rationale for the following planning principles. Some planning principles are statements of town policy. Others are recommendations for future action. They are the core elements of the plan. When adopted by the Master Plan Committee and the Planning Board, and forwarded to the Town Board for its endorsement, these planning principles become the guide for all future land use decisions.

1. Community Values

Goal: To enhance the character of Dover, improve the sense of community among its residents, and encourage interaction between different age and interest groups in the decision making process.

1.1 The Town should encourage the widest possible participation in the governmental process to ensure that the concerns of all are heard. Some techniques to encourage public involvement include:

- . regular press releases in addition to legal notices to announce agendas of meetings and events;
- . follow-up community surveys to elaborate on specific topics;
- . candidate or community issue forums in the Town Hall;
- . scheduled weekend walkabouts with local representatives to discuss problems or development proposals;
- . cable coverage of town meetings and events.

1.2 Dover should support the formation of town associations and other local interest groups as a way of identifying collective concerns and organizing community involvement.

1.3 Town properties, such as the Town Hall and Boyce Park, should be available as centers for community-wide service activities.

1.4 Major gateways to the Town and historic hamlet areas should be designed to create a distinct visual impression with enhanced landscaping, pavement changes, and thematic signs to define the entrances and help maintain a sense of community identity.

1.5 The Town should ensure lead agencies implementing the State Environmental Quality Review Act follow the mandate [Section 617.1 (d)] to consider social as well as economic and environmental factors, produce documents understandable to the general population, and provide full opportunity for public comments and consideration of project alternatives that are compatible with the existing community character.

1.6 A committee should be appointed by the Town Board at least every five years after adoption to review and recommend amendments to this plan in conjunction with follow-up surveys and/or resident forums on current planning issues.

2. Historic Preservation

Goal: To identify, protect, and restore Dover's historic buildings, sites, and roadside cultural features, and ensure that new development respects historic traditions.

- 2.1 The Town of Dover's history, particularly its hamlet centers, should be promoted through the use of educational materials in the local schools and library, in displays at the Town Hall, and in conjunction with driving and walking tours.
- 2.2 A local history room for the collection of historic documents and photographs should be created in the Town Library or other accessible space.
- 2.3 The Dover historic survey should be supplemented with additional historic research for the purpose of National Register nominations and local landmark designation of historic districts and individual sites.
- 2.4 The Town should encourage historically sensitive rehabilitation of historic properties that are being restored or adapted to new uses.
- 2.5 The Town should require new development to be compatible with the setting, scale, and design of surrounding architecture and landscape elements.
- 2.6 Through the development review process and sensitive Highway Department policies, the Town should strive to retain stone walls, tree-lined roads, bluestone sidewalks, barns, and other cultural features of the landscape.
- 2.7 The Town should adopt design guidelines for the hamlet areas with recommendations on architecture, streetscapes, signs, and maintenance procedures to define the concept of architectural compatibility, to provide positive guidance to applicants, and to help streamline the development review process.
- 2.8 The Town's zoning law should require Planning Board approval for any major exterior alteration, demolition, or relocation of a structure designated a national or local historic landmark, as well as new construction directly adjacent to such landmarks, to protect the Town from historically destructive renovation, incompatible new architecture or unnecessary demolition.

3. Natural Resources

Goal: To protect and provide proper stewardship for the natural resource base on which the quality of life in Dover depends.

- 3.1 The Town should discourage the development and encourage permanent protection of state-regulated wetlands with their 100-foot buffers, slopes of 25 percent and over, and publicly visible ridgelines to ensure minimal disruption of their environmental functions and scenic qualities.

- 3.2 The Town should prohibit uses in the federally designated 100-year floodplains that may interfere with their flood carrying function, create safety hazards, increase the threat of property damage, or shift floodplain boundaries downstream. The flood hazard zones should be updated to conform to the latest federal floodplain maps.
- 3.3 Land use policies and regulations should provide for uses and densities which are compatible with the soils' ability to support development, while protecting prime agricultural soils and existing farmland whenever possible.
- 3.4 The Town should promote a land use pattern that protects surface and groundwater resources while working to eliminate or minimize all sources of pollution, such as road salt and leaching dump sites.
- 3.5 In prime aquifer recharge areas the Town should limit land use impacts and promote central or shared utility systems to prevent overuse or contamination of groundwater.
- 3.6 Important wildlife habitats, rare or endangered plant communities, and other significant environmental areas should be identified and protected.
- 3.7 The Town should enforce measures to control soil erosion and sedimentation during the construction process.
- 3.8 The Town should work with Department of Environmental Conservation to require the complete reclamation of mining sites and minimize the environmental and aesthetic damage caused by extractive operations.
- 3.9 A defined open space system should be part of every major site plan or subdivision proposal and, whenever possible, be linked to form continuous greenspace corridors. Natural corridors should be particularly encouraged along streambeds and wetlands to provide open space, wildlife habitat, and groundwater protection.
- 3.10 The Town should identify and protect its scenic resources, including open space views and vistas.
- 3.11 Reduced assessments, development plan trade-offs, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and similar approaches should be encouraged to help implement desired natural resource, open space, and prime agricultural soils protection.

4. Population and Economic Base

GOAL: To encourage economic opportunities that provide a stronger employment base, meet the needs of its residents, and are consistent with the rural character of the Town.

- 4.1 The Town should actively encourage businesses to locate and remain in Dover.

- 4.2 The Town should attempt to diversify its economic base by encouraging a variety of businesses and employment opportunities.
- 4.3 The Town should encourage the coordination of promotional and merchandising efforts among business merchants.
- 4.4 Dover should promote tourist activities that are compatible in scale and character with the rural aspects of the Town's hamlet centers and open areas.
- 4.5 The Town should encourage agricultural operations, including farm-related businesses, the on-site sale of farm products primarily produced on the property, lower taxation of active farmlands, and the protection of farm activities from constraints associated with adjacent non-agricultural development.
- 4.6 The Town should permit home occupations, including professional uses, with standards that prevent disruption of neighborhood character.
- 4.7 Access for disabled persons should be a basic requirement of any community project or new development proposal.
- 4.8 The Town should implement the recommendations of the Harlem Valley Economic Development Study including, but not limited to, the following:
 - A distinctive retail identity should be developed for the two hamlet centers with a concentrated mix of businesses that build on each other's proximity.
 - Floating light industrial zoning provisions should be enacted to supplement the mapped districts in the Land Use Plan. To ensure protection of natural and cultural resources, existing residential areas, and transportation capacity, however, floating light industrial zone regulations shall incorporate detailed performance criteria that must be met before approval by the Town Board. At least the following issues need to be addressed in the standards:
 1. access to a state highway that does not allow industrial traffic through an established residential area;
 2. sufficient acreage, setbacks, and screening to cause no substantial impacts on the value of residential property in the area;
 3. protection of important natural features, aquifers, and prime agricultural soils;
 4. limits on noise, glare, vibration, pollution, and other potentially noxious activities.

Uses allowed in this floating zone should be limited to manufacturing, assembly, warehousing and storage, offices, and limited commercial establishments that do not need highway frontage. Communication antenna towers should not be permitted as a principal use.

- The Town must recognize that its most important asset for attracting tourism and future economic development is its remaining scenic and pastoral settings.
- The municipalities of the Harlem Valley should work together through the Harlem Valley Partnership and other mutual agreements to promote a cooperative rather than competitive approach to economic development.
- A regional visitor's guide and tourist map should be distributed to help market businesses in a coordinated way.
- Zoning changes should be adopted to encourage farming, agricultural support businesses, and direct marketing strategies.
- The Town should work with the state and county governments to plan for an orderly transition at the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center and to actively market and find alternative uses for surplus property or structures before any state withdrawal.

5. Housing

Goal: To provide a broad range of housing options for all present and future Town residents, including young people, families with children, the elderly, higher income residents, and households who earn less than the median income.

- 5.1 The Town should ensure that equal housing laws are enforced and all housing meets public health, safety and zoning codes, with sufficient funds provided for enforcement.
- 5.2 The Town should encourage local zoning strategies, private incentives, and government programs that promote the development of housing appropriate in size, location, accessibility and cost for many different types of households.
- 5.3 The Town should work with the Harlem Valley Partnership, church groups, government agencies, and not-for-profit housing organizations to help implement a variety of affordable housing options, from assistance for first time home buyers to shared or congregate housing for seniors.
- 5.4 The Dover Plains and Wingdale areas should be the focus for higher density units and housing for seniors and commuters to alleviate dependency on the automobile and reinforce the traditional community center land use pattern.

- 5.5 Accessory apartments that meet standards of compatibility with the existing structure and the surrounding neighborhood should be permitted throughout the Town. Illegal or substandard apartments should be upgraded to current standards.
- 5.6 Zoning standards should be established for conversions of existing structures, such as large older homes or unused agricultural building, for rental or other residential uses.
- 5.7 Mobile homes should continue to be allowed in Dover with updated design standards and central utilities.
- 5.8 The Town should allow by special permit the placement of non-permanent elder cottages (ECHO units) or temporary accessory apartments within existing structures to provide for care of the elderly or disabled.
- 5.9 The Town should encourage the traditional mixed land use pattern of apartments above commercial storefronts in the community center areas.
- 5.10 The Town should support the construction of weekend or second homes that add to the tax base and promote tourism, while requiring only limited local services.
- 5.11 The Town should encourage cluster or average density development with preservation of usable open spaces, and consider density bonuses in exchange for a designated percentage of affordable units.
- 5.12 Once the 1990 census figures are fully available, the Town should reassess its housing projections (Table), identify target groups that need assistance, and set specific long-term goals for the creation of affordable units. Once adopted, these goals will help provide additional criteria by which development proposals and zoning decisions can be evaluated in the State Environmental Quality Review process.

6. Community Facilities

Goal: To provide municipal facilities and services that will meet the residents' common needs and improve opportunities for community activities.

- 6.1 The Town should establish a five-year operations and capital improvement program which will set priorities for future staffing, equipment, and facility requirements for the Highway Department, recreation programs, and other essential services.
- 6.2 The Town should actively promote volunteer staffing for the fire company and, if necessary, consider incentives or paid positions to ensure adequate coverage during all shifts.

- 6.3 To enhance the use of the Town Hall as a focus for local services and community events, the Town should find a centrally located permanent site on Route 22 for the transfer station as soon as possible. The Town should then provide landscaping improvements to break up and shade the expanded parking area and to screen the lot from neighboring residential properties.
- 6.4 The Town should continue to support the Town Library operations and find adequate alternative space for expanded facilities in a prominent location in one of the community centers.
- 6.5 The Town should work with churches or other not-for-profits groups in both major hamlets to provide a community center space designed for various age groups and uses.
- 6.6 The post offices should be encouraged by all possible means to stay in the core of the hamlet centers.
- 6.7 The Town should implement the long-term program outlined in the Boyce Park Master Plan to provide a wider range of recreational opportunities and parking lot improvements at the park.
- 6.8 Additional park space should be acquired in the Dover Plains area, including, most importantly, the retention of Palmer Field as a playfield and centrally located greenspace fronting Railroad Square.
- 6.9 The Town should take advantage of any reasonable opportunity to gain public access to the Ten Mile or Swamp rivers.
- 6.10 The Town should promote a town-wide trail network connected to a larger Harlem Valley Greenway system, specifically including a loop trail linking Nellie Hill with the center of Dover Plains, a continuous trail along the Ten Mile River, and a trail from Boyce Park to the Appalachian Trail.
- 6.11 The Town should work with the private, tax exempt organizations in Dover to allow community access to facilities, promote shared services, or receive payments in lieu of taxes in consideration for the ongoing use of town services.
- 6.12 In order to encourage economic development and protect the underlying aquifer, the Town should look for opportunities, coordinated with private development, to improve and expand the Dover Plains water system and provide a future sewer system in the same service area.
- 6.13 The Town should work with state officials and potential private developers to use the excess capacity in the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center's water and sewer systems to encourage industrial, commercial and residential development in the Wingdale hamlet center area.

7. Transportation

Goal: To provide a safe and efficient transportation system, while preserving the Town's scenic and historic roadside features.

- 7.1 Dover should recognize that its roads and rights-of-way are the Town's most prominent public spaces, the means by which residents visualize their community, and are areas where the Town can most directly control its future character.
- 7.2 The Town should promote a program to enhance its roadside views by, for example, rebuilding stone walls, planting buffers to block views at visually disruptive locations, selectively pruning to reveal open space vistas and adopting guidelines for the maintenance of locally designated scenic roads.
- 7.3 The Town should establish an official town map which would include lands and roads owned by the Town and other government agencies, town roads "by use" and future designated road rights-of-way.
- 7.4 In reviewing proposed subdivisions and site plans, the Town should strictly limit the number of access points on collector roads and highways by discouraging strip patterns and promoting cluster development.
- 7.5 As a means to lower housing costs and limit multiple access points, the Town should investigate standards permitting private roads and roads built to reduced specifications, but with legal safeguards for quality construction.
- 7.6 The Town should encourage alternatives to the dependence on individual automobiles by promoting employee-sponsored and privately arranged ride sharing and increased use of commuter bus service with direct connections to the train stations.
- 7.7 Dover should evaluate the need for Dial-A-Ride service for seniors in the Town.
- 7.8 The Town should work with Metro-North Commuter Railroad to upgrade service on the Harlem Line, improve the aesthetics in the train station areas, and provide for all-day parking lots that do not conflict with short-term business parking needs.
- 7.9 The Town should implement land use regulations that seek to preserve the traffic capacities of its major roadways, particularly Route 22 and Route 55.
- 7.10 Route 22 should be viewed as an asset for the economic development of the Town and plans should focus on how best to take advantage of it without losing its traffic carrying function or diminishing highway speeds between the hamlet centers.

- 7.11 New commercial and industrial development should be required, whenever feasible, to shield parking lots to the rear or side of the structure, share driveways, and provide for internally linked circulation or service roads between adjacent parcels.
- 7.12 A survey of roadway problems should be taken and a priority list of roads and intersections should be targeted for repair and improvement.
- 7.13 The Town should work with the State Department of Transportation and the Dutchess County Department of Public Works to address intersection and road improvements. Specifically, this plan recommends a new road be built connecting Route 22 with the Metro-North property north of the Dover Plains train station. The Town should facilitate acquisition of the right-of-way or construction of the Dover Plains connector road during the subdivision or site plan review process or during any rezoning request. Improvements or realignment at the intersection of Route 22 and Cricket Hill Road should also be investigated.
- 7.14 The Town should work with the State Department of Transportation and police to reduce speeds along Route 22 through the hamlet center business districts to 30 miles per hour.
- 7.15 The Town should support a more equitable balance between motor vehicles and other means of transportation by promoting the hamlet centers as pedestrian-oriented places, by repairing and extending the sidewalk system along primary connecting streets, and by integrating bicycle/walkways with a town-wide trail system. Sidewalks connecting heavily populated areas with town recreation centers should be a high priority.

8. Land Use

Goal: To create a pattern of land use that reinforces the Dover Plains and Wingdale hamlet centers, preserves the Town's natural resources, and enhances the overall rural character, while promoting appropriate areas for the development of economic opportunities.

- 8.1 The Town should update its zoning and subdivision regulations to reflect the policy recommendations within the master plan and require future development to conform to community goals.
- 8.2 The Town should encourage high quality design and construction, with the retention of existing trees and natural features whenever possible, and the sensitive use of landscaping and architecturally compatible elements to integrate new development with the surrounding area.
- 8.3 The Town should enact and enforce sign regulations that eliminate non-essential, off-site, or excessively large signs and encourage graphics that are compatible with the building and neighborhood.

- 8.4 To reinforce Dover Plains and Wingdale as community centers, the Town's land use policies should encourage compatible commercial and higher density residential development in and adjacent to the existing hamlet areas and limit development in the traditionally more rural, open areas. Strip commercial or spot commercial uses outside the hamlet center or neighborhood center districts should be strictly avoided.
- 8.5 The Town should actively promote the development of high quality commercial uses within the Dover Plains and Wingdale hamlet centers. The plan also supports the following additional opportunities for commercial growth:
- Industrial districts should permit a wider range of business park uses such as offices, research and storage facilities, and limited commercial establishments;
 - Commercial uses should be allowed in conjunction with large planned residential developments, if designed not as strip commercial plazas, but primarily to serve the new residential units as a central focus for the development;
 - The Town should be flexible in permitting home occupations and accessory commercial uses to farming operations, with appropriate standards that prevent disruption of neighborhood character;
 - Land in commercial districts should be developed more intensively, in cluster rather than strip patterns, with multiple uses sharing access and parking facilities;
 - Several small neighborhood commercial districts could be designated to serve areas away from the hamlet centers.
- 8.6 A detailed community design plan should be developed for the Dover Plains and Wingdale hamlet centers to recommend landscaping, parking, circulation, sign and public space improvements, with suggestions for the enhancement of historic buildings and the development of vacant land in the area.
- 8.7 The Town should allow the development of light industries and offices in designated locations with landscape buffering and direct access to a state highway. New single parcel industrial uses in residential areas off state highways should be avoided.
- 8.8 In areas suitable for farming with prime agricultural soils, development should be clustered so as to preserve the best soils, with construction in areas of marginal soils or woodlands.
- 8.9 The Town should actively work with state and county officials to promote a plan for the future of the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center that is consistent with policies in this master plan.
- 8.10 The Town should take full advantage of the State Environmental Quality Review Act as a means to obtain detailed information on the environmental and community impacts of proposed development, make potential concerns open to public comment, and explore project alternatives.

LAND USE PLAN

Given the goals, background information, and planning principles outlined above, the land use plan for the Town of Dover focuses a higher level of density and a wider variety of uses in and around the existing hamlet centers of Wingdale and Dover Plains. Except for targeted industrial sites, the areas outside the community centers are projected for lower density development potential, primarily agricultural and residential uses consistent with the existing rural character. The resulting plan is meant to help re-establish the traditional settlement pattern of Dover and the larger Harlem Valley by reinforcing the main hamlets while preserving, as much as possible, the natural beauty and non-suburban appearance of the outlying areas. These overall goals and the recommended pattern of development are entirely consistent with the general responses from the Community Values Survey given in the beginning of the planning process.

Use classifications, relative density recommendations, and boundary lines are primarily based on the wide variety of natural constraints of the land, transportation access availability, existing land use patterns, and the planning principles that emerged out of the study of background conditions and discussions with the Master Plan Committee. Floodplain corridors are noted as a separate category, as they are on the existing zoning map, but the numerous areas of steep slopes and wetlands, because of their scattered locations, will be more efficiently protected through specific standards in the zoning law.

Because so much of Dover is currently undeveloped, subject to severe environmental constraints, or already developed at a rural residential scale, the plan does not propose any fundamental rearrangement of the land use system. Instead, it seeks to organize and consolidate existing patterns, while providing for additional growth areas that will be compatible with Dover's historic character and concerns for natural resource protection.

Ten land use categories appear on the Land Use Plan Map. It is important to note that the boundaries and density classifications are generalized at this point. Specific district lines and acreage designations will be defined in the subsequent zoning update. The objectives and general location of each of the following use categories are described below:

- Conservation Residential
- Rural Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Hamlet Density Residential
- Commercial
- Planned Business
- Office - Industry
- Office - Institutional
- Recreation - Protected Greenspace
- Floodplain

Conservation Residential

This category includes the existing wilderness sections of East and West mountains. The boundaries were largely determined during the recently completed Town of Dover Open Space Inventory, which contains more complete documentation of the areas' specific qualities. These portions of the Town contain rare plant and animal species, provide prime wildlife habitat, and are arguably the Town's finest scenic areas. Both East and West Mountain have been recognized by the Dutchess County Environmental Management Council on their list of 33 Significant Areas of countywide importance and East Mountain was also named to the list of New York Significant Habitats.

East Mountain is considered the largest remaining wilderness in Dutchess County. Along the western escarpment running from Dogtail Corners Road north into Amenia elevations rise from 400 to 500 feet above sea level on the valley floor to over 1,400 feet. The wooded mountain top consists of a series of hills and knobs with intermingled wetlands and exposed bedrock. The area contains Crane and Depression ponds and a rare tamarack wetland that the Open Space Inventory also listed as priority sites. The exposed bedrock provides habitat for the timber rattlesnake, which is on the state threatened species list. The largest existing land holding is a private hunting and fishing club.

The designated portion of West Mountain on the slopes immediately west of Route 22 contain fragile pine barren plant communities caused by the extreme weather conditions along the rocky surfaces of the higher elevations and the thin, acidic, and infertile soils. Pitch pine and other stunted and drought resistant plant species survive here, as well as copperhead and timber rattlesnake populations. The deep ravines cut by Stone Church Brook and Seven Wells Brook not only contain rare plant species, but also two unique and beautiful geological formations that are individually listed as priority open space sites. The large lot land holdings in this area are characterized by steep slopes and poor access potential.

These sections of the Town are recommended for the lowest residential density classification. The combination of slopes, wetlands, thin soils, and exposed bedrock make the siting of septic systems and foundations very difficult in most areas. Road access is poor to virtually impossible. Certainly the Town would not want to encourage the expansion of the road system into the more isolated and fragile areas, with the subsequent need for extended snowplowing and school bus pick-ups. Although too large to consider for permanent preservation in their entirety, land uses should be limited to low density single-family residential, recreation, and other minimal impact activities that protect the unique features of these regions. All uses, including agriculture, should be sensitive to the vulnerability of these areas to long-term damage.

Rural Residential

This land use category contains the portions of West Mountain not in the previous conservation district, the Chestnut Ridge area in northwest Dover, the Duell Hollow and West Dover Road areas in southern Dover, and the more rural or farming areas in the central valley. It is the largest district in the Town.

Much of the West Mountain portion of this category is rugged woodlands, isolated from roads, and subject to steep slopes and shallow soils. Hunt clubs and camp properties are the largest existing land uses. The Duell Hollow vicinity also contains some severe environmental constraints and rare species. The Duell Hollow Critical Environmental Area was listed as a priority site in the Dover Open Space Inventory.

Other sections of the Town were included in this district because of their agricultural use or potential. The areas surrounding Chestnut Ridge Road, West Dover Road, Cricket Hill Road, Sherman Hill Road, Berkshire Road and Benson Hill Road all have extensive farmland and soils identified by the Soil Conservation Service as prime agricultural soils. Protecting agriculture and the necessary food growing potential of the land is not only important to Dover's economy, it also contributes to the scenic and rural qualities that residents in the Community Values Survey so highly supported.

This category of land is primarily designed for activities compatible with farming or farm-related activities and low density residential and accessory uses. Recreation, low-impact resort uses, camps, and fish and game preserves or clubs are also appropriate. A lower density residential designation, by itself, will not protect farm properties or rural qualities, but lower densities allow for more creative land siting decisions and clustering techniques. Where development at one-acre density will completely inundate a site, clustering from a lower overall density allows growth to be carefully placed off prime farm soils or within the wood line. Clustering, conservation density development, and other open space preservation techniques should be strongly encouraged in this district. The intent is to discourage sprawl through the central valley and limit suburban-scale densities over large areas of the valley's underlying prime aquifer. All development should be compatible with the natural limitations of the land.

Mining and quarrying are other more controversial activities now prevalent in these rural areas. Small scale mining associated with farm operations are often benign and are consistent with the master plan objective to support the viability of agriculture in Dover. Mining is an essential component of the construction industry, but the impacts of larger scale or poorly run operations can extend far beyond their property boundaries. In Dover's case, large-scale mining operations not only have potential noise, dust, traffic and erosion impacts, but by removing deep sand and gravel deposits that are both the water carrying layers of surficial aquifers and the filtering materials for the underlying bedrock aquifers, the valley's prime water producing aquifer could be threatened. Given the Town's primary reliance on scattered individual wells, the cumulative impacts of many mines exposing the aquifer to higher levels of surface pollution also needs to be considered in the permit process.

The Community Values Survey opinions, by a wide margin, were not supportive of gravel mining and quarrying and were strongly in favor of strict regulation of mining practices and reclamation. Under a recently enacted state law, local governments have very limited control of larger mining operations, but can determine through zoning where mining and truck access through local roads are

permitted. Although the decision is ultimately a zoning question, a more restrictive mining district or overlay zone would be more appropriate than allowing extractive industries throughout the Rural Residential district.

Medium Density Residential

This category includes many of the areas of Dover that already contain traditional and suburban style single family home development. Further development in this district should match the average density of already developed parcels. This land use category serves as a buffer for the less populated, more rural surrounding areas and helps maintain the focus of development in the hamlet centers.

Large pockets of this type of development are generally focused around existing hamlet centers. However, several existing areas are located away from hamlet centers on Pawling Mountain, around the Town Hall and throughout the easternmost section of the Ten Mile River Valley. The Dover Furnace area west of the railroad tracks has also been included in this district. Because of its former hamlet history, large remaining parcels, and the ability of County Route 26 to act as a feeder road to Route 22, this area may be an appropriate location for a clustered, hamlet-scale development with a mix of housing types and commercial uses. A provision for the area similar to the Planned Development Area in the existing zoning law could provide for central utilities and additional benefits such as open space and natural resource protection.

Natural limitations in these areas vary, with some areas containing good soils for development and others having more marginal soils. Because of their distance from community centers, central water and sewer connections are not projected. Actual density for any given project will be determined by the features of the particular parcel and the restraints placed on the land by the provision of individual wells and septic systems. While much existing development in these areas has taken on a pattern more typical of suburban locations, care should be used in new developments to preserve the more rural features, including existing tree cover, areas of wetlands, steep slopes and other natural features, and traditional agricultural forms like hedgerows and stone walls.

Hamlet Density Residential

Dover contains two traditional hamlet areas, Wingdale and Dover Plains. They are traditional in the sense that they developed around transportation hubs, Route 22 and the rail line, and that they serve as the focal point for commercial and residential development. Residential and commercial density in these areas exceeds all other areas of the Town. This land use category recommends that the pattern of higher density residential development continue. A key component to the plan's success will be these areas ability to expand and absorb additional residential and commercial growth, thus relieving pressure on the more rural areas of the Town. Separate hamlet center plans have been developed for both Wingdale and Dover Plains as part of the master plan.

While this plan does not specifically recommend the immediate development of centralized sewer services in these areas, the two main hamlets have the advantage of relatively high existing density, both residential and commercial. A central sewer would, among other things, promote commercial and light industrial growth in these areas and assist with the preservation of the natural features that are key to the hamlets. Already both areas are served to some extent by central services. Dover Plains has a central water district. Wingdale could take advantage of the abundant existing sewer and water capacity of the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center.

While the plan for the hamlets does not depend on the imminent development of central services, such services would certainly help in maintaining these areas as focal points for the community. Functioning, mixed use communities could be reinforced with the addition of new housing units at relatively high density. Private development could then help build the utility infrastructure. Certainly the plan does not foresee high-rise apartment buildings, but the construction of new homes at the density already existing in some of the more tightly clustered parts of the hamlets would be beneficial. Residents would enjoy proximity to commercial, transportation and community facilities. The Wingdale and Dover Plains business centers would become places that draw residents not only from Dover, but from surrounding communities. They might also eventually provide Dover with an identity which could attract a significant number of tourists who now bypass the Town.

One further benefit of developing more intensely in these areas would be the preservation of the capacity of Dover's roads. In addition to enabling more residents to walk to take care of their needs, car trips would occur on a more localized basis, thus freeing up Route 22 and other major roads for through traffic. The traffic congesting influence of multiple driveways and commercial entrances would be limited to short, slow-speed zones, with Route 22 traffic flowing smoothly between the hamlet centers.

Commercial

Commercial districts have been laid out to emphasize growth in and around existing concentrations of commercial development. Three principal areas of concentration are recommended: Dover Plains, Wingdale and Webatuck. The Wingdale commercial area is envisioned as two areas, both complementing each other - the traditional area around the intersection of Route 22 and Pleasant Ridge Road and a revitalized area centered around the Psychiatric Center and Route 22 to the south. Webatuck functions more as a regional location serving principally tourists and people from outside Dover.

Two neighborhood commercial districts are also possible - one around the Old Drover's Inn off Route 22 in central Dover, and another near the modular home plant and new housing development on Reagan's Mill Road. They would provide for smaller-scale retail opportunities for local use without pulling business away from the main hamlet centers.

Commercial development provides important benefits to the Town. It gives residents a place to take care of daily needs, provides employment, and helps give the community a focal point, a central place that residents can identify with. The most successful commercial districts are those that encourage the

interaction of residents. Of course, the designated commercial districts will be supplemented by more scattered home occupations and farm stands that do not conflict with the rural character of the outlying areas.

Future development in these areas should provide increased opportunities for Dover residents to shop, work and meet. The concentration of commercial development around existing centers will ensure that roadway capacity does not get consumed by multiple entrances and exits. A well planned place to drive and walk will attract not only Dover residents, but residents from other places that do not have Dover's convenience and ease of use. Wherever appropriate, commercial uses should also mix with residential uses. The combination of commercial and residential uses creates a mutually supportive environment.

Planned Business

Two planned business areas have been designated. These districts provide opportunities to provide large scale, integrated commercial development in and around existing community centers. One each has been designated for the southern entrances to Wingdale and Dover Plains.

These areas work by incorporating many uses onto one large parcel. Opportunities are created to limit the number of access points on and off Route 22, to form a comprehensive landscaping plan, and to include multiple uses at one place. Generally, uses in this category will be more highway dependent and should include non-retail commercial uses such as offices. An integrated site plan with buildings, parking areas and landscaping treatment all relating to and complementing each other will make these areas successful.

Office - Industry

Areas of existing industrial development have been included in this category as well as several new areas. Existing industrial operations such as Palumbo Block, J & J Log and Lumber, Hunts Country Furniture, Westchester Modular and a large area around the Mica plant have been designated to remain in this category. New industrial sites are planned for the area bounded by the Dover Plains hamlet to the south and Route 22 to the east, an area due west of the sewage treatment facility at the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center, and the industrially zoned land on the northeast corner of Route 22 and Wheeler Road on the Psychiatric Center property.

Office and industrial uses provide Dover with the opportunity to create jobs and diversify the tax base. While they contribute to the economic well being of the Town, improperly sited and controlled uses can detract from the Town by, among other things, funneling heavy truck traffic onto residential streets and country roads, and consuming large amounts of land for operations which may not be compatible with the more rural characteristics of the area.

New districts have been proposed where good access is available and where uses will pose a minimum of disturbance to existing residential development. They are also located so as to reinforce the commercial centers of Wingdale and Dover Plains, with the hope of allowing residents to walk or drive shorter distances to jobs, thereby minimizing impacts on Route 22. Uses envisioned

for these areas include: light manufacturing, warehousing and storage, and general offices. No changes in use are proposed for existing and operating industrial properties. A key to the success of these areas will be their sensitivity to the visual and natural environment that surrounds them.

Office - Institutional

Four areas of office-institutional use have been designated, two each in Wingdale and Dover Plains. These areas are intended to allow for traditional office uses for professionals and services. They have been drawn to also include existing institutional uses such as the elementary schools, the Ketcham Hose Company, the State Police barracks, and the infirmary at the Psychiatric Center.

These areas, like the other commercial districts, provide essential services and employment opportunities for residents. They complement the existing commercial areas, but also provide specific spaces for services such as legal, medical, accounting and travel in buildings and areas appropriate for these uses. Some of the large houses lining Route 22 in Dover Plains, for example, are more suitable for conversion to office buildings than retail development. Particularly in the Dover Plains hamlet, it is envisioned that buildings containing offices will also contain residences. The master plan acknowledges the beneficial relationship between commercial and residential uses and seeks to encourage their mixture within buildings and districts.

While the plan does not foresee the school facilities, the fire company or the police barracks ceasing operation in the course of the master plan cycle, a use for these properties needs to be provided for zoning purposes. The creation of this category also allows for plans to be made for the possible closure of the Psychiatric Center Infirmary, and for the expansion of office uses where they are sorely needed in the Dover Plains hamlet. The large area to the rear of the Psychiatric Center complex allows for a significant public or private institutional presence even if the HVPC is closed.

Recreation - Protected Greenspace

The Land Use Plan Map designates several areas in this category. Description of these areas can be found in more detail in the open space plan section to follow.

For the most part, the master plan map shows lands which are already preserved for recreation or greenspace. These areas include: the Appalachian Trail, the Nature Conservancy properties, the Psychiatric Center Golf Course, the J.H. Ketcham Park and pool facilities in Dover Plains and town-owned Boyce Park. These areas provide essential and diverse recreational and educational opportunities for residents. Also included on the land use map are other areas which currently serve recreational or greenspace uses, but have no formal protection. Those areas include: Palmer Field in Dover Plains, the Dover Plains Cemetery, the agricultural lands on the western part of the Psychiatric Center property and the ridge connecting the Appalachian Trail with Boyce Park. These areas, with the exception of the cemetery, are recommended for more formal protection. The hamlet center plans and the open space plan provide more detail on these areas.

100-Year Floodplain

The 100-year floodplain category contains the low-lying areas and major stream corridors defined on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's maps as 100-year floodplains. It primarily consists of the banks of the Swamp and Ten Mile rivers. The Great Swamp and DEC wetland DP-1 in Dover Plains also comprise portions of the floodplain. In contrast to the scattered state-regulated and smaller wetlands in Dover, the 100-year floodplains form continuous corridors. This category is an updated version of the existing flood hazard zone as designated on Dover's current zoning map.

Uses in the floodplain district should be limited to agriculture, forestry, recreation and other uses that would be minimally impacted by high water. Structures, especially those that would house either humans or livestock, should be restricted. Floodplain setbacks also provide stream protection, although the Town may want to supplement this category with separate stream protection guidelines that would help preserve and maintain the integrity of the more minor waterways. Finally, it should be noted that significant recreational opportunities are created by floodplains. Dover already has informal public access to the Ten Mile River along Route 55. Other access points linked to a continuous trail system should be developed along the Swamp River and the Ten Mile so that residents may enjoy recreational activities such as fishing, boating and nature observation.