

# **Town of Chatham**

## **Draft Comprehensive Plan**

**May 2007**

### **Part I**

**Prepared by the Town of Chatham Comprehensive  
Plan Steering Committee**

**Table of Contents**  
**Part I**

Acknowledgements..... 3

Introduction..... 5

Vision Statement..... 12

Goals and Recommended Strategies..... 13

    Rural Character ..... 14

    Economic Development..... 29

    Housing..... 37

    Infrastructure..... 45

    Recreation ..... 55

    Arts..... 61

    Historic Character ..... 64

    Farming ..... 69

    Natural Resources ..... 76

Sustaining and Implementing the Plan ..... 84

Maps..... 92

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## **Introduction**

### **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**

New York State considers adoption of a comprehensive plan to be a critical tool to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the town and to consider the needs of the people. A comprehensive plan is the policy foundation upon which communities are built -- a roadmap to a municipality's future. It is a written document, developed at the grass-roots level that identifies the goals, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, and strategies that can guide growth and development of the community.

The Town of Chatham is authorized to develop and adopt a comprehensive plan by New York State Town Law Section 272-a. All procedures and standards of that state law have been followed by the Town of Chatham to update the original 1972 town plan. This plan carries forth much of the original plan and maintains the general direction identified in 1972. This update contains new information and analysis, updated background information, and new strategies and tools which Chatham can use to help meet its long-range goals.

This updated Comprehensive Plan is not a local law. However, this comprehensive plan will at least partially be implemented through local laws and programs. Each time a local law is amended or developed by the Town Board, public hearing(s), review by the county planning board, and an environmental review will still be necessary. The Comprehensive Plan guides the development of these other local laws.

The Plan was developed to cover a 15 year time period with an expectation that it will be reviewed and updated as necessary. However, it should be formally reviewed a minimum of every five years to ensure that it remains a vital document to help guide Chatham in the future.

Once a comprehensive plan is adopted, there are several implications:

- 1) All government agencies involved in planning capital projects in Chatham must consider this plan before they start any capital project. That means the Town now has a much larger stake in what other governmental agencies want to do when they are proposing a project in Town.
- 2) Community consensus and support can be built on the shared vision, goals, and strategies presented in the plan.
- 3) Programs may be adopted to implement the plan to protect the Town's resources and encourage desired development and growth.
- 4) Comprehensive plans are also important documents to help the Town be successful in finding grant monies.
- 5) This plan is the basis for regulatory programs. It is not a law in itself, but state statutes require that all land use laws in a municipality be consistent with a comprehensive plan.

In essence, this Comprehensive Plan is designed to answer three questions. These are:

**Question 1. What are the current conditions, features, and character of Chatham?**

**Answer:** The Appendices (Part II) of this Plan answer this question. The Profile and Inventory found in Appendix A details demographic, municipal, cultural, historic, environmental, economic, recreational, and other information about resources in Chatham. Appendix B details public input received throughout the planning process. Appendix C summarizes information found in Appendices A and B and identifies issues, trends, and strengths of Chatham that must be addressed. Appendices D through I present information and analysis on the environmental and physical features of Chatham and include analysis on features such as ridgelines and priority farmlands. Appendix F also presents public input related to the aesthetic character of Chatham. Taken together, these materials details current conditions, attitudes, issues, and features in Town. All this work is important because the plan ultimately seeks to help Chatham protect the Town's strengths, improve its weaknesses, take advantage of its opportunities, and prevent threats from becoming a reality.

**Question 2. What does Chatham want for itself in the future?**

**Answer:** The Plan answers this question in the form of a vision statement and a series of goals. These forward-looking statements were developed from public input received and taken together, detail the desired long-range direction established for the Town.

**Question 3. How will Chatham attain that desired future state?**

**Answer:** The Plan offers a comprehensive set of recommendations that detail policies, capital improvements, programs, and regulatory changes that can be implemented to help Chatham attain its vision and goals.

**Development of the Comprehensive Plan**

The issues, goals and recommended strategies detailed in this comprehensive plan are based upon a multi-year study of information and data gathered about the Town of Chatham, as well as from the input of hundreds of Town residents. Beginning in the spring of 2003 the Town Board initiated the planning process by appointing a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Town Board initiated the planning process by appointing a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. This Committee, with help from many Chatham residents serving on sub-committees and a planning consultant, implemented a comprehensive effort to involve the public in development of this plan, identify issues, establish a vision, and develop strategies. This effort built on an earlier plan developed in 1972 and incorporates relevant information and strategies.

Specifically, the comprehensive planning process included the following general steps:

**1. Public Input Hosted by Steering Committee**

Two Community Conversations were held in May 2004 to involve the public in the planning process. These sessions, held in a collaborative learning format, were lead by Sue Senecah, Phd. Professor/consultant and student assistants from the S.U.N.Y. College of Environmental Science and Forestry.) The overall purpose was to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and issues facing Chatham. This resulted in development of a list of best and worst outcomes for Chatham. Seventy-eight people participated in these two events. In June and July 2005 (at the Reformed Church in Chatham and the North Chatham Fire Hall, another community conversation was held to present background information, present survey results, and gain feedback from residents on a set of vision and goal statements drafted by the various committees. Approximately 60 people attended the 2005 community conversation.

A Resident Survey was developed and mailed in November 2004 to all households. This survey asked questions on the full range of topics being covered in the Comprehensive Plan - 645 responses were received (about 35%). Appendix B outlines the results from this survey.

In August 2004, the members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee staffed a booth at the Columbia County fair for six days. Information on the Town’s efforts to revise the comprehensive plan was provided to fair goers. Additionally, the work of the aesthetics team was on display to illustrate some of the qualities that define Chatham. Approximately 240 visitors from Chatham as well as many from neighboring towns stopped to learn more about the Town’s planning process.

**2. Background Research on Chatham**

While general public input was being collected, other studies and analyses were also being conducted by either the sub-committees or the planning consultant including: background studies of land use; an economic analysis; population profiles; housing and community facilities analysis; evaluation of transportation and other infrastructures; evaluation of recreation, arts, historic, and educational resources; mapping and analysis of environmental conditions of the town; and analysis of the regional growth patterns and trends that have affected, and will continue to affect the area’s growth.

**3. Gather further public input and information on specific topics.**

The Steering Committee relied on a subcommittee structure to assist in this task. Groups of volunteers worked to gather information, identify issues, establish a vision, and develop strategies for a particular topic. To accomplish their work, many of the sub-committees held their own public input meetings and workshops. The sub-committee’s included:

Economic Development	Keep Farming	Natural Resources
Land Uses	Aesthetics	Housing
Uses	Recreation, Arts, and	Education
Infrastructure	History	

Each sub-committee worked independently to accomplish tasks assigned by the Steering Committee. The role of the Steering Committee was to consolidate and coordinate information from the various sub-committees into a unified plan. Each portion of this plan is built from individual sub-committee work.

Some sub-committees established their own planning processes that included additional public input. These efforts included:

### **Keep Farming**

The Farming Team began its work as part of the Economic Development Team. In early 2004, the Town of Chatham was selected as one of two national pilot sites for the Glynwood Center's Keep Farming Program, and the Farming Team became a separate entity at that point.

Program oversight was provided by 25 people who served as members of the Community Agricultural Partnership (CAP). Another 25 people served on teams that gathered data and made recommendations. 30 Chatham farms participated in the study, representing about 80% of the agricultural activity in the town. 450 citizens gave input regarding their buying habits and interest in local foods.

A Farmers' Forum was held in August, 2004, and a Community Agriculture Forum was held in November, 2004. Keep Farming recommendations were presented to the community on June 30, 2005.

The Town Board then created the Chatham Agricultural Partnership to provide oversight and guidance in enacting the recommendations. These recommendations also are included in the revised comprehensive plan.

### **Recreation, Arts, History**

The Recreation, Arts and History subcommittee membership included citizens with diverse backgrounds with an interest in at least one of the areas of focus. This sub-committee held meetings and focus groups that were publicized and held at the Morris Memorial building. The members collected information by contacting community leaders of organizations involved in these topic areas and personally interviewed or requested information from organizations. The sub-committee then wrote a vision, goals and strategies based on the data they had gained. This information was then submitted to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee for incorporation into the final document.

### **Housing**

Over the course of approximately fifteen months the Housing Subcommittee, comprised of eleven members of the public, met to develop the housing vision statement, goals and strategies. In the summer of 2004, an informal survey of realtors was conducted by one of the subcommittee members. Realtors reported

the following inquiries that often go unmet: affordable first home purchase, affordable small building lots, apartment rentals, housing on large acreage, and townhouse or condominiums for locals desiring to downsize. Although the number of respondents was small, the information confirmed public comments received during the four housing community "Conversations."

The housing subcommittee held four community "Conversations" throughout the town for senior and affordable housing to discuss housing options and to assess the housing needs of Chatham residents. Attendees at each "Conversation" participated in a professionally lead collaborative learning exercise and a formal survey. The information gathered was used to prepare recommendations for future housing as part of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Two events to discuss senior housing were held in December 2004, with approximately 40 members of the public in attendance and January 2005, with limited attendance of 10, due to a storm. A guest speaker with expertise in senior housing options presented. The results of the survey support the following: more supports for seniors to live independently at home, additional types of senior living or apartments and development of Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs). When asked for details about what kinds of supports for seniors to live independently at home were preferred, respondents expressed the following preferences: services/socialization in walking distance, public transport to villages, and safe sidewalks. When asked for details about what kinds of additional types of independent living or apartments were preferred, respondents expressed the following preferences: independent market rate (usually middle and above in terms of income), and enriched (meals and activities as well as building and ground maintenance is provided). When asked for details about what kinds of CCRCs were preferred, respondents expressed the following preferences: independent to nursing homes care on the same campus, and campus with walking distance or with transportation to shopping.

Two events to discuss affordable housing needs were held in February 2005, with approximately 20 members of the public in attendance, and March 2005 with approximately 10 in attendance. A guest speaker with expertise in affordable housing options presented. The results of the survey support the following types of affordable housing options: subsidized and market-rate single-family homes. Additionally, participants expressed need for affordable single and multi-unit family homes and townhouses or condominiums. When asked for details about obstacles to living affordably in Chatham, participants expressed the following: lack of rentals or rent too high when available, lack of affordable homes or building lots, high cost of taxes and lack of proximity to amenities (stores, public transportation).

### **Aesthetics**

There were two efforts related to aesthetics as described below:

1. A community image survey and analysis was conducted at various locations over the course of 4 months in 2006 with 110 participants. This included a wide cross-section of Chatham's community, as the Aesthetics Sub-Committee presented to groups as varied as the local branch of Rotary, Tri-Village Fire and Rescue, members of the North Chatham Free Library, and open meetings at Town Hall, Chatham Library and the Chatham Synagogue. The goals of the Visual Survey were to assess whether there was consensus among residents on issues of aesthetics, confirm that opinions expressed in the written survey (a year and a half ago) remain consistent with results of the visual survey, and analyze and present survey results that express consensus.

2. The second effort was to evaluate the visual character of Chatham and define rural character. This effort was included in the Keep Farming initiative. The group did a complete photographic inventory of Town. This inventory focused on roads, development in hamlets and in the countryside, spatial organization of roads and structures in the hamlets and countryside, vegetation, and other landscape features such as bridges, signs, and stone walls. This effort resulted in a visual identification of characteristics that were felt to define Chatham. See Appendix H for details.

### **Land Uses and Zoning**

Over the course of approximately fifteen months the Land Use and Zoning Subcommittee, comprised of eleven members of the public, met to develop the housing vision statement, goals and strategies. A second sub-committee concentrated solely on the land use table in the current zoning law. Members of the Uses subcommittee met extensively over the course of four months to develop recommended uses by zoning district. The subcommittee is comprised of fourteen members of the public.

**4. Analyze information received from the public, maps, and other data collected about the Town.** This step led to the development of a list of issues, trends, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that were to be addressed by the Plan.

**5. Develop an overall vision statement and topic-oriented vision statements.** The vision statements were developed by the sub-committees, reviewed by the public, and finalized by the Steering Committee after public input. These statements came directly from the community conversations, other public input such as the survey, and sub-committee public input efforts. They reflect the desired direction as articulated by the public.

**6. Establish goals for each topic.** Coming directly from the vision statements, the goals were developed by the sub-committees, reviewed by the public at community conversations and finalized by the Steering Committee. They offer more detail on

accomplishments that must be met in order to attain the vision statement. Each topic area has multiple goals.

**7. Establish strategies, actions, and policies for each goal.** For each goal, the sub-committees developed a series of actions, strategies, policies, and programs needed to meet the goals and vision established earlier in the process. The Steering Committee reviewed and finalized the strategies and worked to unify them into this Plan.

**8. Prioritize each of the strategies so that the Town Board has a plan of action to implement the plan.** The Town Board's role after adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that it is implemented over time. In order to assist them with this task. The Steering Committee prioritized all the strategies and organized them so that the Town Board can understand the relative importance of each strategy.

## **Vision Statement**

A vision statement is an important part of a comprehensive plan. It sets the overall tone and direction the plan is to take over the next 10 to 15 years. Visioning emphasizes community assets rather than needs. It establishes a shared purpose and set of values. It reflects the ultimate picture of what a community wishes to be in the future. Chatham's statement was developed through an intensive visioning process that involved the public via the written survey, community conversations, other public meetings, and input from the Steering Committee and sub-committee members. After the vision statement was drafted, a public meeting was held where people had the opportunity to comment. As a result of that public meeting, the draft vision statement was amended by the Steering Committee. For this updated plan, an overall vision statement is established and nine different topic-oriented vision statements are presented later in the document. The overall vision established for Chatham is:

**Drawn by good soil for farming, plentiful waterpower, and a location at the seam between Dutch and English Colonial America, settlers came here before the Revolution. They established the communal roots that remain visibly present, guiding our enduring dedication to community, the land, and a deep, shared sense of stewardship.**

**As a place where history, landscape, and community are tightly intertwined, the Town of Chatham is treasured by its residents. For over 250 years, Chatham has been distinguished by a special sense of place and the values that flow from its relationship to the land. With its historic settlement pattern of hamlets and farms connected by open space, woods, and streams, Chatham is noted for a singular vision that embraces the challenge and opportunity of change and an unwavering commitment to protecting our land and preserving our heritage.**

**Our quality of life is defined by the prized attributes of rural character: active, sustainable agriculture; scenic beauty; cultural and historic richness; a healthy environment; diverse housing resources; and economic vibrancy provides a touchstone for community decision making.**

## **Goals and Recommended Strategies**

The overall vision for Chatham will become a reality when the Town implements the actions, programs, and policies included in this updated plan. The overall vision statement sets a broad tone and direction. To further assist Chatham's goal in meeting that vision, nine different topic-oriented statements and a set of goals were developed to give more specificity. The topic-oriented vision statements were also presented and "fine-tuned" by the public at a public meeting.

Each of the nine topics has a vision statement, a set of associated goals and a detailed set of recommended actions, programs and policies that can be put to work to make those goals a reality.

A goal is a broad statement of the ultimate result of the change being undertaken. A goal reflects ideal future conditions desired by the Town. The goals offer more specific direction and are consistent with the stated vision for that topic, and with the overall vision statement. The goals are further refined with a set of recommended strategies and action steps that the Town can implement over the next 10 to 15 years.

These topic-oriented vision statements, goals, and recommended strategies are described in the following sections.

## ***Rural Character***

### **A Vision for Rural Character in Chatham**

We value and protect the Town of Chatham's rural character, which is distinguished by a well-defined, traditional settlement pattern consisting of small hamlets surrounded by working farms, forests and open space. The Town has an extraordinary stock of historic buildings, many unpaved roads and scenic by-ways, beautiful open views, hills and woodlands, streams and creeks and natural habitats that provide rich biodiversity. The hamlets and the natural and working landscape give the Town its unique rural quality and sense of place, shape its culture and community, help define its attractive quality of life and contribute to its economic vitality.

We are grateful for the forethought demonstrated by our Town in adopting its first comprehensive plan and zoning law over thirty years ago. We carry on the Town's tradition of successful planning by recognizing the new challenges facing us and updating our zoning law to continue to preserve rural character, while balancing growth and protecting our quality of life. We identify locations appropriate for residential and commercial growth, and for open space, agriculture and environmental conservation. We strive for no loss of farmland. We implement new land planning and zoning tools and update these tools on a regular basis. We accomplish this vision in a fiscally responsible manner that takes account of both current and future costs to our Town.

**What is rural character?** This term describes individual features or qualities of the human and natural landscape that when taken together, give an impression of the town as one that is 'settled' in a scattered or sparse manner and therefore is neither urban nor suburban. Chatham's rural landscape pattern is typically a patchwork of lands shaped by current or past 'countryside' economic activities such as agriculture, forestry, or low density residential uses, interspersed with open spaces left or reverting to a natural state. There are local concentrations of population and structures in hamlets or the Village of Chatham, but these are typically of limited size. The Village of Chatham is a typical rural village in that it is larger than hamlets and has a higher share of structures devoted fully or partially to commercial activity.

Rural villages do not have an extensive street grid or transportation network and have a pedestrian scale limited to a few blocks in breadth. Hamlets typically have a fairly well defined border/buffer of undeveloped open spaces and agricultural lands.

Our hamlets are typically located at key road crossings, near important civic structures such as places of worship, or adjacent to historically important natural features like streams. These areas have a diverse mix of lot size and architectural styles. Historic structures from various periods in the community's life are present.

Outside these population ‘centers’, residents typically occupy a range of residential types such as estates, farmsteads and more modest homes. Features of active or past agricultural activity are often present, including but not limited to: crop fields, hay fields, livestock pasture, corrals, orchards, farm buildings such as barns or silos, stone walls, windbreaks, hedgerows, or woodlots. Most of Chatham’s local roadways tend to be narrow and curvy with limited driveways or crossroads. Many rural roads are lined with trees, fences, or stone walls.

Rural character also embodies a quality of life based upon traditional rural landscapes, activities, lifestyles, and aesthetic values. Rural areas are characterized by a balance between the natural environment and human uses with low-density residential dwellings, farms, forests, mining areas, outdoor recreation and other open space activities and by citizens who understand and value the nature of farming and the role it plays in our town. "Rural character" can be defined as the patterns of land use and development:

- In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment;
- That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;
- That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;
- That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat;
- That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development;
- That generally do not require extensive municipal services; and
- That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

## **Goals and Strategies**

### **Goal 1. Chatham’s land use regulations protect working landscapes as well as other open spaces including forests and wildlife habitats.**

#### Strategy 1.1

Preserve open space by establishing a transfer of development rights program. This program would allow transferring development rights from important farm and other open space lands to areas more suitable for dense development such as the Village or existing hamlets<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to page 82, Appendix A- Citizens Planner Toolkit, Support New England Farms and Working Forests in *Community Rules; a New England Guide to Smart Growth Strategies*. Published by Conservation Law Strategies

### Strategy 1.2

Evaluate, designate and protect important resources by identifying and establishing Environmental Protection Overlay Districts (EPODs). These overlays shall protect sensitive environmental resources including among other features steep slopes, wetlands, streams, scenic views, ridge lines, flood plains, and wildlife resources. Overlay zoning districts have standards and regulations that are specifically designed to protect these specific resources. Overlay districts shall also be established to protect agricultural and historic areas (see also Natural Resources and Historic Character.) Further, district boundaries shall be evaluated and amended so that the boundaries match the locations of the resources being protected (See Conceptual Zoning map).

### Strategy 1.3

Identification and protection of sensitive environmental resources shall be an important part of any project review conducted by the ZBA, Planning Board or Town Board. These boards shall use the GIS maps and data included in this plan to assist in identification of these resources. All local land use laws shall be reviewed and amended, if necessary, to include use of these data during the permit review process.

Strategy 1.4 To prevent establishment of “cookie-cutter subdivisions” not consistent with rural character and to protect environmental resources, Chatham shall de-emphasize use of minimum lot sizes in zoning to control density. Instead, use a true density measurement of “dwellings per acre”. Minimum lot size shall only be used to meet set backs, septic and water requirements of a site. Using dwellings per acre as a measurement allows more flexibility in lot layout. Lot size would be dependent on the methods used for providing water and waste water treatment. For example, as expressed under current zoning, 100 acres in a 10 acre minimum lot zoning district would yield 10 houses of 10 acres each. Under this proposed zoning change, the same 10 houses could occupy some portion of the 100 acres but lots would not be limited to a minimum of 10 acres. The 10 houses could be established on 10 acres with the remaining 90 acres left as open space.

### Strategy 1.5

Amend zoning so that it requires calculation of density from net acreage rather than gross acreage as is currently required. Gross acreage requirements allow all lands on the parcel to be counted towards the density regardless if there are buildable portions or not. Net acreage requirements allow for density to be calculated based on the buildable portions of a parcel. Thus, use of a net acreage approach allows an adjustment of the density based on environmental limitations that may be present on a parcel. Incorporate use of net density as calculated by a formula (below) into the Town’s zoning code and apply to all subdivisions in all locations in Town.

a) Environmental Control Formula Land within a parcel that has some defined environmental sensitivity (e.g., wetlands, flood plains, steep slopes) or is a priority agricultural parcel would receive a percentage of density which is

calculated from a set formula. See Appendix D for additional details and an example application.

#### Strategy 1.6

Establish best management practices for timber harvesting. Use existing best management practices as detailed by NYS DEC and other organizations for this purpose<sup>2</sup>. These could be applied through use of a timber harvesting permit process.

#### Strategy 1.7

Utilize flexible subdivision techniques such as conservation subdivision and clustering to minimize land consumptive development. These techniques concentrate density and perpetuate our historic development patterns. Clustered subdivision designs shall seek to be consistent with our traditional hamlet setbacks, building design and siting location. Amend the existing cluster section of zoning (Section 180-19) to include a Conservation Subdivision section. This shall include the conservation subdivision steps and review procedures, such as those outlined in Arendt, R. *Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances*. This will allow creation of a density neutral “flexible or open space subdivision” provision. Any such zoning amendment will also need to be coordinated with the subdivision law which details when a conservation subdivision will take place along with procedures, standards, expectations, and methods for calculating density and designing open space. Further, it is recommended that:

- a) Clustering or conservation subdivisions shall be required for all major subdivisions and all subdivisions over three lots on parcels 50 acres or more. Additionally, the Planning Board shall be authorized at its discretion to require a clustered or conservation subdivision when environmental limitations, important agricultural considerations, or open spaces exist for smaller subdivisions below these mandatory numbers.

Chatham could also offer a density bonus (See Box 1) as an incentive when other Town amenities are offered during subdivision development by a landowner such as affordable housing, senior housing, public recreation, or lands dedicated for public open space use.

- 1) Mandatory cluster or conservation subdivision regulations may only be waived when site characteristics deem appropriate by the Planning Board.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to NYSDEC Timber Harvesting Guidelines, <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/privland/privassist/bmp.html> and *A Municipal Official's Guide to Forestry in New York State*, produced by the New York Planning Federation, Department of Environmental Conservation and Empire State Forest Products Association for guidance.

Box 1. Use of Incentive Zoning. Protection of open space and other resources may also be attained by offering incentives to a developer. The developer receives an economic incentive in the form of additional density while the community benefits because it receives amenities that it otherwise might not be able to provide its citizens.

The incentive offered is also called a “density bonus.” Chatham should explore lowering density in the 3 acre and 5 acre zones to accomplish the goals of this plan and simultaneously, offer a density bonus for open space, agricultural, or provision of affordable housing. For example, if the density for the R-2 area is changed from a minimum lot size of 5 acres to a density of 1 dwelling per 8 acres, an incentive can be offered whereby the developer could receive a density of 1 dwelling per 5 acres in exchange for permanent protection of 50% of the parcel. The advantage to this technique is that this is a positive tool and is at the option of the landowner/developer. The incentive would need to be attractive enough for someone to want to take advantage of it. Conversely, using a voluntary incentive means that the Town will

- b) Add details to the Subdivision law to coordinate with the Zoning law. This text goes beyond authorization of these techniques and details the procedures, review standards, and expectations for this type of subdivision.

#### Strategy 1.8

Require residential developments to provide a buffer area on that portion of land that abuts farmland. (See also farming strategies)

#### Strategy 1.9

Subdivisions proposed within 500 feet of working or active farmland and parcels which receive an agricultural exemption (as determined by town assessor), shall be required to provide an Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS), similar to those statements required by section 305(4)(b) of the Agricultural and Markets Law, Article 25AA and related sections. This would provide the Planning Board with additional information on the potential impacts of the proposed development on existing agricultural operations.

#### Strategy 1.10

For major subdivisions of any lot size, the Town shall consider requiring review by the Columbia County Health Department on well and septic system placement and full environmental evaluation of the parcel’s historical usage. This strategy was a recommendation by the Environmental Director of the Columbia County Health Department.

#### Strategy 1.11

The Planning Board shall, during project review, require a developer of a major site plan or subdivision to conduct a fiscal impact analysis (the entire public budget, such as impacts on school, infrastructure and other town expenses) for the proposed project, where 20 homes are built.

### Strategy 1.12

Institute growth management techniques to prevent unexpected land development spikes and so that infrastructure and other municipal services can keep pace with new development.

- a) Establish a Development Monitoring and Growth Threshold Program. Based on current and past rates of growth, Chatham shall establish a program where a Town Board review of zoning policies shall be initiated whenever an annual growth rate of 10 homes per year or 20 subdivisions per year is exceeded. In order to accomplish this, the Town Board shall closely monitor the number of subdivisions and building permit issued at least once a year. If that rate is exceeded, then the Town Board shall re-evaluate zoning density policies and institute measures to bring the level of growth back to a more sustainable level in keeping with the vision and goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

Box 2. Growth Management Techniques. A building permit cap limits the number of building permits that may be issued for a given type of development in a given year. The number of permits is often set at the average for the previous five or ten years to stabilize growth, but may be set lower or somewhat higher as desired by the community. Use of this technique can only pace the construction of dwellings on the newly-created lots. A building permit cap is primarily intended to slow the rate of new development, either permanently, or to give the municipality time to improve the infrastructure (build the sewer treatment plant, for example); or to give the municipality time to study the full implications of particular growth on town services, infrastructure, taxes and quality of life. Other benefits include spreading the financial burden of providing services to new residences over longer time periods, and allowing open space acquisition funds to better keep pace with development. The cap is usually imposed by a town or city bylaw or ordinance, but the number of permits may vary from year to year, through a vote of the municipal legislative body, based on variables such as adequacy of water supply, sewerage plant capacity, school population, and others. A Building Permit Cap shall not apply to land transfers between family members. Building Permit Caps shall be reviewed periodically (every 5 years is recommended) and revised if necessary.

Development Scheduling, also known as phased growth, is a technique that allows for the gradual buildout of approved subdivisions over a number of years. Small subdivisions are able to be constructed in one year, while larger subdivisions would be “phased” over a number of years. An option is to run the schedule as a “points” system where the more points a project earns the quicker the buildout. Points are awarded for good design, provision of open space or parks, affordable housing, etc.; they are subtracted for building on farmland, using scenic road frontage, etc.

- b) As a result of its review of development rates, the Town shall consider either building permit caps or development scheduling techniques (See Box 2) to establish appropriate levels of development.

**Goal 2. Chatham’s land use regulations perpetuate the historical settlement patterns of the Town, composed of higher density hamlets and village surrounded by traditionally low residential density, working landscapes and natural areas. Zoning allows for a mix of uses in the hamlets. Land use regulations preserve rural character.**

Strategy 2.1

Development in rural areas shall be done in a manner that preserves the rural character found in the non-hamlet areas of town. Thus, development standards in rural areas shall emulate traditional patterns that contribute to that rural character. The layout, siting, building, and dimensions of structures contribute to the historic and rural character in Chatham. Amend all land use laws to include rural siting guidelines, building design guidelines, and hamlet style development guidelines so that new buildings and signage are designed to be in keeping with the character of Chatham(e.g. clustering can emulate the traditional cluster of farm structures.

Amend Zoning (Section 180) to establish Rural Siting Guidelines for new uses in the rural land districts and hamlets to ensure siting of new commercial and residential structures in a way that preserves rural character (see Appendix F for details on guidelines).

- a) It is recommended that these standards be mandatory in all zoning districts for all development (minor and major subdivisions and projects requiring site plan approval).
- b) For development that is taking place on existing lots and when no subdivision is taking place, it is recommended that rural siting guidelines be applied through a required modified sketch plan review process.
- c) In addition, the Town shall establish development standards oriented at building design and preventing subdivision uniformity for all projects seeking site plan review or major subdivision approvals.
- d) The town shall also consider developing recommended design, siting and landscaping criteria for new hamlet development<sup>3</sup>.
- e) When developing the siting and standards, use the results of the community image survey (Appendix F) to identify design and siting elements that are preferred in Chatham.
- f) Subdivision development shall ensure that the following features are taken into consideration and incorporated into subdivision plats:

- Stone walls, mature trees, rock outcroppings

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<sup>3</sup> As reference see *Building with Little Compton in Mind: A Handbook of Ideas and Resources*, Town of Little Compton, Rhode Island (401-635-4400) for example handbook addressing residential building.

- Roadside trees
- Existing historic structures
- Hillside siting instead of crestline siting
- Siting house at the edge of a field instead of in the middle
- Siting away from a lake, stream or other waterbody instead of at the edge
- Avoid forest fragmentation
- Driveways shall follow natural contours, be located along edges of fields or forests, be of pervious surfaces, retain trees along the driveway edge, have a narrower width than the road it accesses

## Strategy 2.2

In order to meet the goals of Chatham’s Comprehensive Plan, zoning shall be amended to give the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals more direction on allowed and prohibited uses. Below is a list of recommendations for general types of uses for each zoning district divided into four categories: permitted, permitted with supplemental regulation, permitted with special permit and non-permitted. Refer to the Appendix E for more information on specific uses.

### a) Hamlet Residential (H1)

The intent of this district is to provide areas in or adjacent to the existing hamlets with a density of family living that is normally found in small villages. The density allowed depends on the availability of on or off-site water and septic. It is recommended that all newly built uses be subject to Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards<sup>4</sup>. It also is recommended that zoning develop siting criteria and size limitations for the non-residential uses such as home occupations and businesses, recreational facilities, houses of worship, small museums and libraries to ensure that these uses are in keeping with the rural residential nature of this zoning district. Additionally, zoning shall address standards for some accessory structures (e.g., garages, sheds, barns) and regulations for other type uses (e.g., pools, ponds).

Permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: single-family and two-family dwellings, accessory uses (such as garages, sheds and other outbuildings), and home occupations.

Permitted uses that require supplemental regulation<sup>5</sup> include but are not limited to the following: pools and ponds.

Permitted uses with special permit shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: accessory, Elder Cottage Housing (ECHO) or multi-unit residential dwellings, barns, home businesses, small non-profit recreational area, house of worship, small museum, library, residential cluster and group homes.

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<sup>4</sup> See reference to Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards in the Comprehensive Plan

<sup>5</sup> Supplemental regulations include Columbia County Department of Health requirements for pools and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation requirements for ponds.

Non-permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: those that store large quantities of hazardous chemicals, petrochemicals or coal, bulk storage facilities, warehouses, drive-in or drive-thru businesses and non-farm related buildings much larger than the existing buildings in the hamlet.

b) Hamlet Commercial (H2)

This district is recommended to contain the same uses as Hamlet Residential and further provides, by special permit, for limited commercial facilities to serve the hamlet in which they are located and the immediate surrounding areas. It is recommended that all newly built uses be subject to Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards and site plan review for all entities in this district. Lastly, it is recommended that all commercial structures be subject to special use permit to ensure these types of use are constructed in keeping with the rural and predominantly residential nature of the hamlet.

The same permitted and permitted with special permit uses recommended in hamlet residential apply to this district. Additionally, the following permitted by special permit are recommended: large day-care facilities, limited commercial facility, and public and essential service buildings.

c) Rural Lands One (RL-1)

The intent of zoning in this district is not to allow large commercial entities or significant businesses. This district consists of areas that have the lowest intensity of use, with a residential density of one dwelling per 10 acres. It is recommended that all uses (permitted and special permit) be subject to Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards and site plan review for major subdivisions. It also is recommended that accessory uses on residential properties be subject to total square foot limitations as a mechanism for reducing intensity of use. Additionally, it is recommended that all uses produce limited pollution (i.e., noise and discharge to air, water and soil), traffic to and from the site as well as be constructed in a manner that limits on-site parking and ambient lighting. For uses with potentially large impacts on the surrounding residential area, such as Continuing Care Retirement Communities, it is recommended that large minimum acreage requirements be developed. For additional examples of uses with potentially large impacts refer to Appendix E.

Permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: single-family and two-family dwellings, agricultural uses (such as farms, nurseries and greenhouses), commercial animal farms (e.g., horse, alpaca, llama) in agricultural districts, and home occupations. Limited lot coverage is recommended for garages, sheds, pool houses or greenhouses. One recreational facility as an accessory use is recommended to be permitted outright.

Permitted uses that require supplemental regulation shall include but not be limited to the following: pools and farm or residential ponds.

Permitted uses with special permit shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: accessory buildings (such as secondary, ECHO, caretaker dwellings, barns, and studio), commercial forestry operations (with forestry permit), home businesses, animal hospital, riding academies, clubhouse, nonprofit recreational facilities, public buildings, water storage facilities, recreational areas (including small outdoor, for profit and not-for-profit, and water recreation). Permitted uses with special permit that require minimum acreage shall include but not be limited to the following uses: firearm ranges, camp grounds, Continuing Care Retirement Communities, museums, art galleries, performing art centers, houses of worship, and cemeteries.

Non-permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: outdoor recreational activities that produce excessive noise, pollution, heavy traffic and require large parking lots and significant ambient lighting. Home occupations, home businesses or commercial entities which store large quantities of hazardous chemicals , petrochemicals or coal would be required to go through additional review to ensure environmental and public health safety. Large commercial facilities or significant businesses are not appropriate in this district.

#### d) Rural Lands Two (RL-2)

This district contains the majority of farm lands in Chatham. These lands require protection against incompatible uses which might destroy the agricultural environment and investments which make Chatham an agricultural community. It is recommended that the principal permitted uses be farming, related agricultural activities and a low density residential use. It is recommended that other types of uses be permitted only in special instances where the uses do not interfere with the agricultural activities or where they cannot be better accommodated in other areas of the town with the exception of uses outlined in the Farming Strategies. It is recommended that all uses (permitted and special permit) be subject to Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards and site plan review for major subdivisions.

The same permitted and permitted with special permit uses recommended in Rural Lands One (RL-1) shall apply to this district with one additional recommended restriction. Zoning shall consider decreasing the total allowable footprint occupied by all accessory uses on a single parcel for this district. Lastly, for uses with potentially large impacts on the surrounding residential area, it is recommended that large minimum acreage requirements be developed.

#### e) Rural Lands Three (RL-3)

These areas provide space for rural residences at a higher density where generally, soils have good surface drainage characteristics, and on-site sewer systems would

properly function. It is recommended that all uses (permitted and special permit) be subject to Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards, and site plan review for major subdivisions.

The same permitted and permitted with special permit uses recommended in Rural Lands One (RL-1) shall apply to this district with some additional restrictions such as limitations on lot coverage for buildings, prohibiting firearm ranges, and careful siting of buildings. Siting of public buildings shall depend on the nature of the public service and level of activity and shall be required to provide a buffer with neighboring residences. Lastly, for uses with potentially large impacts on the surrounding residential area, it is recommended that large minimum acreage requirements be developed.

#### f) Business

Areas for commercial activities are provided to supplement existing business areas in the town, especially to serve those businesses that are highway oriented and those requiring large areas, such as farm equipment dealers. The permitting of retail businesses in this district should serve local-scale needs. Zoning should support businesses but include performance criteria controlling large parking lots, large volumes of traffic, and environmental wastes (low air emissions and low volume of discharge to nearby water bodies). Businesses that employ green energy alternatives could be encouraged through incentives. All businesses shall follow Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards and must demonstrate adequate availability of water and waste water disposal. It is recommended that the total building footprint of commercial buildings be limited to 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup> to ensure consistency and scale with surrounding rural character. Building footprint calculations shall include walkways and adjoining buildings.

Permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: bank, dog/cat kennel, professional offices, health club, hotel or motel, public facility of government function and single-family dwelling. The following uses shall be permitted if placed in a preexisting building or newly constructed building is less than 2000 ft<sup>2</sup>: accessory use, greenhouse, office, personal service shop, and retail sales or retail store.

Permitted uses that require supplemental regulation shall include but not be limited to the following: pools and farm or residential ponds.

Permitted uses with special permit shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: auto service station, automotive repair, clubhouse, commercial recreation, dry cleaner, fuel storage facility, house of worship, mini-mart, mini-warehouse, motor vehicle salesroom and garage, multi-unit residential dwelling, parking lot, private club or school, public facility, research or testing laboratory, restaurant, and theater. A special permit shall apply to the following permitted uses when the building size

exceeds 2000 ft<sup>2</sup>: greenhouse, office, personal service shop, and retail sales or retail store.

Non-permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: billboards, firearm ranges, junkyard, amusement parks, racetracks, and trucking or warehouse terminals. Commercial entities which store large quantities of hazardous chemicals, petrochemicals or coal shall be required to go through additional review to ensure environmental and public health safety.

g) Industrial

This area provides locations for the establishment of small-scale manufacturing and industry to provide employment opportunities and a broadening of the tax base in Chatham. The permitting of retail businesses in this district should serve local-scale needs. The locations provide easy highway access points and do not conflict with major residential areas. Zoning should support businesses but should control large parking lots, large volumes of traffic, and environmental wastes (low air emissions and low volume of discharge to nearby water bodies). Businesses that employ green energy alternatives also will be encouraged. All business shall provide adequate parking and/or use of existing parking lot and must demonstrate adequate availability of water and waste water disposal. Zoning shall be amended to require that overall impact of businesses will be positive, preserving the rural character of the area through the implementation of Rural Siting Guidelines and Development Standards on all new development in this district. Finally it is recommended that zoning limit the square footage of buildings (inclusive of other buildings connected by adjoining walkways) in this district to 30,000 ft<sup>2</sup> with the potential for an additional 10,000 ft<sup>2</sup> for buildings that are designed to blend into the surrounding landscape or can not be seen from the road.

Permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: health club and public facility of government function. The following uses shall be permitted if placed in a preexisting building or newly constructed building is less than 2000 ft<sup>2</sup>: accessory use, greenhouse, office, and retail sales or retail store.

Permitted uses that require supplemental regulation shall include but not be limited to the following: pools and farm or residential ponds.

Permitted uses with special permit shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: auto service station, automotive repair, clubhouse, dry cleaner, fuel storage facility, house of worship, small scale industry and manufacturing, mini-mart, mini-warehouse, warehouse, motor vehicle salesroom and garage, office, research or testing laboratory, restaurant, and theater. A special permit shall apply to the following permitted uses when the building size exceeds 2000 ft<sup>2</sup>: greenhouse, office, and retail sales or retail store.

Non-permitted uses shall include but not be limited to such types as the following: billboards, firearm ranges, junkyard, amusement parks, racetracks, and trucking or warehouse terminals. Commercial entities which store large quantities of hazardous chemicals, petrochemicals or coal shall be required to go through additional review to ensure environmental and public health safety.

#### h) Farm Animals

The Town acknowledges the importance of addressing allowances and restrictions for animals (both farm and domestic) across the different zoning districts and recognizes the value and integral role that keeping and raising of animals has played in our community, not only as a means of providing food and clothing but also for recreation and for enjoyment as pets. Therefore, it is recommended that future zoning address both farm and domestic animals, in a manner consistent with our rural heritage, in all districts in the town.

#### Strategy 2.3

Performance criteria shall be considered for the types of uses outlined above in each district to ensure that newly built structures are consistent in scale and in keeping with the rural and historic character of the surrounding area. The following performance criteria shall be considered when developing zoning standards for the uses in each district: Adequate Public Facilities (APF) regulation, limitations on building square footage and lot coverage, standards for siting, lighting, parking and signage, and recommendations for landscaping and infrastructure. Moreover, it is recommended that all commercial structures be subject to special use permit and site plan reviews to ensure these uses are constructed in keeping with the rural and historic character.

#### Strategy 2.4

Expansion of our existing hamlets and Village is our preferred growth pattern through both in-fill development and possible extension of hamlet boundaries. Town policies shall restrict any future public water and sewer infrastructure to the hamlets and any major conservation or cluster subdivisions that have been developed. Consider changing zoning to allow development of a new hamlet (called Indian Brook) in the southeastern corner of Town (See Conceptual Zoning Map).

#### Strategy 2.5

Zoning shall be modified to allow mixed uses in hamlets but only with development standards designed to ensure that they are compatible with hamlets.

#### Strategy 2.6

Direct growth to the hamlets and areas adjacent to the Village by increasing allowable residential density, decreasing lot size, allowing for multi-family housing, and allowing for conversion of existing structures (i.e., out buildings) to residential, provided water and septic capacity are adequate. It is recommended that in areas having a traditional main street style, allow conversion of an existing structure only to

mixed commercial/residential use. This would preserve traditional patterns and allow continuation of mixed use activities.

#### Strategy 2.7

Each hamlet has its own unique character and new development patterns should respect and be consistent with the individual hamlet character. Ensure that land use regulations such as setbacks, lot sizes, etc. are fine-tuned for each hamlet.

#### Strategy 2.8

Further, to prevent monotony-set houses, too-big houses, and teardowns, especially in the hamlets, Chatham shall consider the following<sup>6</sup> (See explanation box):

- a) Allow for back lane or alley access to structures in hamlet or hamlet settings.
- b) Address blandness of repetitive single-family detached house designs by requiring a roof overhang on all units (to provide visual interest), eliminate fancy false fronts and blank side and rear walls (architecture should be 360-degree), and mandate changes to the front facades of a house model repetitively used in a subdivision (roof changes, flipping and rotating the house design).
- c) Rely on floor area controls along with setbacks to control building size and impacts on the community. For additional components of standards, refer to appendices A, B, C - Maintaining Small Town Character in *Rural by Design*.
- d) Creation of clear standards by an Architectural and Historic Advisory Review Council.
- e) The bulk, use, and density standards shall be tailored to each hamlet in order to fine-tune and capture the unique development patterns for each.

#### Strategy 2.9

Strengthen the subdivision law (Section 170) significantly by adding in purpose statements, review procedures, and standards oriented to preserving rural character and natural features. Rural character and environmental protection need to take a more prominent role in the purposes and standards of the subdivision law.

- a) Significantly expand the definition section of the subdivision law. It shall include all the terms discussed in this plan such as impervious surface, open space, cluster, conservation subdivision, rural character, etc.
- b) Add in additional purpose statements to reflect the goals established in this comprehensive plan, especially related to environmental protection and rural character.
- c) Review codes to ensure they are not in conflict with new cluster and conservation subdivision guidelines or Rural Standard Guidelines, as recommended in this Plan.
- d) Areas that need to be addressed in a more comprehensive manner include minimizing impervious surfaces, decreasing disturbances to creeks and streams, protecting important farmlands and farm soils, preventing erosion, protecting

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<sup>6</sup> Reference: Kendig, L. *Too Big, Boring, or Ugly: Planning and Design Tools to Combat Monotony, the Too-Big House, and Teardowns*. American Planning Association, 2004.

historic resources, and preserving scenic views and corridors and provisions for landscaping so that new development better acclimates with its surroundings.

#### Strategy 2.10

Significantly amend the site plan section of zoning. It lacks proper procedures, standards, purpose statements and performance expectations. Add in design standards and siting/layout standards oriented towards environmental protection and preservation of rural and historic character. Include a requirement for a sketch plan in site plan review procedures.

#### Strategy 2.11

Evaluate and change where needed, development standards and expectations for lot size, dimensions, yards, and setbacks so that development is consistent with rural character (in the rural land districts) and with historic character (in the hamlet districts). (See also Economic Development and Historic Character goals.) Consider removing or being more flexible with side lines of new lots (Section 170-17(B)). Strict adherence to right angles on lots may not mesh well with the use of a conservation subdivision.

#### Strategy 2.12

Existing natural landscapes shall be protected as much as possible. Further, in areas lacking landscaping, Chatham shall require street tree planting and landscaping during new development. All new plantings shall replicate the natural, existing landscape of the area.

#### Strategy 2.13

Amend Zoning (Section 180) to include provisions for establishment of a building envelope. To achieve the goals of maximizing open space and protection of the environment, land use laws shall require the identification of building envelopes for a new structure and its accessories such as driveway, outbuildings and septic systems. Additionally, land use laws shall be amended to authorize the Planning Board to include a building envelope on all plats reviewed for subdivision.

- a) Use building envelopes to adjust the siting of the structure to better preserve natural resources, vistas, aesthetic features, wildlife resources and other environmental features on parcels.

## ***Economic Development***

### **A Vision for Chatham's Economy**

The Town of Chatham has a thriving economy consistent with its rural character. The town understands that its quality of life is the critical factor in attracting and retaining desirable businesses and appropriately growing our local economy. Our policies and regulations acknowledge and support both our traditional and emerging agricultural sector as well as locally owned and operated businesses, Chatham's artistic community, and the significant number of entrepreneurs in town including those who use technology to create employment.

The commercial development that has taken place has been concentrated in and around the village, the hamlets, and in existing commercial areas. New businesses are designed to fit into the town's aesthetic, and small, "one of a kind" businesses are the norm. As a result, their environmental impact has been kept low and their visual appeal is consistent with the town's historic, rural character.

Opportunity abounds. The town has partnered with surrounding municipalities and local business organizations to create a business friendly environment in which start-ups are encouraged and people who want jobs in town can find them. Town-wide high-speed Internet access permits a high level of telecommuting, and other infrastructure improvements accommodate visitors drawn to Chatham's singular charm. As a result of the strength and diversity of this economic activity, the town has stable finances. It benefits from several significant revenue streams and is not overly dependent on the property tax levy.

### **Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1. Chatham encourages the development of small-scale retail and service businesses to diversify its tax base and provide a variety of job opportunities. These businesses are located in and around the Village of Chatham, the town's hamlets, and its existing commercial areas; and are in keeping with our rural character. Chatham's land use regulations support commercial development in designated locations that minimize adverse environmental and fiscal impacts on the community. Zoning allows for low impact businesses in the hamlets, discourages automobile dependency and strengthens community. To this end:**

#### Strategy 1.1

The town board shall create an advisory board called the Chatham Economic Partnership (CEP), modeled on the Chatham Agricultural Partnership. The mission of the CEP shall be to assist the Town Board with the implementation of the economic development strategies included in this Plan. Particular emphasis shall be

given to businesses in the areas of local agriculture, tourism, retail, artisan manufacturing, and intellectual property. The CEP shall make itself available to commercial interests and function as a facilitator of appropriate economic development in the town.

#### Strategy 1.2

The town board shall revise town zoning to allow and encourage small-scale businesses but at the same time shall ensure that these businesses are built and operated in a manner consistent with the environment, character, scale, style, and mixed-use nature of the town's hamlets. Specifically:

- a) Businesses in hamlets shall be allowed only after site plan review and the issuance of a special use permit. Such a process is necessary to ensure that new businesses are consistent with the existing character of the hamlets.
- b) Amend town zoning to permit limited commercial and mixed uses in appropriate areas within the hamlets, including mixed-use structures.
- c) Encourage retail businesses that fill community needs and that are in keeping with the town's character; retail businesses that are not in keeping with the town character shall not be permitted. To this end, the term *neighborhood commercial facility* shall be redefined in town zoning (in both the definitions section and the expanded use schedule). See Appendix E for recommended uses.)

#### Strategy 1.3

The town's rural character is an important economic asset and shall be the centerpiece to promote desirable economic development. Establish design standards to protect the town's rural character, as detailed in Strategy 2.10, page 28.

- a) In addition to the recommended design standards, in business districts the town shall:
  1. Allow and encourage mixed-use structures and mixed-use neighborhoods in hamlets.
  2. Evaluate and consider redefining the locations of existing business districts to ensure that they retain the current nodal pattern and avoid commercial sprawl along our highways. Determine the appropriateness of zoning district designation and boundaries in terms of the area's character.
  3. Deemphasize road frontage requirements to retain the town's existing commercial nodal patterns.
  4. Establish performance standards for commercial development. Although the use schedule will remain an important tool to target the type of business growth desired in Chatham, more reliance shall be placed on performance standards such as:
    - impervious surface ratios
    - open space ratios
    - floor area ratios
    - landscape ratios

5. Create standards for maximum commercial building square footage, building and parking lot siting, lighting, landscaping and signage.
  6. Review Village of Chatham zoning and work to have town zoning complement it.
- b) In addition to the recommended design standards in industrial districts, the town shall:
1. Keep structures in scale by establishing maximum sizes for building square footage and the amount of impervious surface coverage, as well as minimum set-back standards.
  2. Allow and encourage mixed-use structures.
  3. Evaluate and consider redefining the locations of industrial districts to ensure that they are placed appropriately in the town.
  4. Deemphasize road frontage requirements to retain the town's existing commercial nodal patterns.
  5. Evaluate and amend the industrial district permitted uses section in town zoning to define more specifically what is permissible so that the current vague terminology does not permit unwanted and inappropriate industrial development.
- c) In addition to the recommended design standards, the Town shall amend zoning for all commercial uses to strengthen zoning controls related to parking, signage, and outdoor lighting to ensure new structures are compatible with the town. Amend zoning to:
1. Include parking standards that consider such issues as the importance of aesthetics, public safety and drainage.
  2. Add in more flexibility in parking lot size to prevent overbuilt parking lots. Give the Planning Board flexibility to plan for the particular use rather than relying on a rigid parking schedule.
  3. Identify where parking lots should be placed. The preferred location is to the side or rear of the structure. Amend zoning to allow the use of and possible incentive increases for underground parking.
  4. Add standards for lighting of commercial buildings and parking lots. Use lighting fixtures that are no taller than 18 feet and that have full cut-off (shielded) lights to prevent glare. (See Goal 5)
  5. Add parking lot screening and landscaping maintenance requirements.
  6. Add in provisions for traffic access management in parking lots including the flexible use of cross easements, shared parking lots, and rear access roads.
  7. Encourage loading docks to be placed in rear of buildings. Include screening and landscaping requirements to hide or buffer front loading docks.
  8. Lowering maximum sign heights throughout the Town. Sign sizes, lighting and materials shall reflect the rural character of our Town. Develop mandatory sign standards that detail expectations for sign material, lighting and landscaping. Additionally, develop a process that streamlines the

permitting of signs during site review with some flexibility for new businesses.

- 9 Consider presenting sign standards in a table that shows dimensions district by district.
10. Eliminate the allowance for internally lighted signs.
11. The current maximum sign sizes are very large and inconsistent with the rural and historic character goals of this plan. Consider reducing the maximum square footage of signs allowed.
12. Add standards and procedures that are not presented in current zoning law. Consider adding the following sections to more appropriately regulate signs:
  - a. permitted location for signs on a parcel
  - b. illumination standards for after-hours
  - c.. removal of signs after cessation of business
  - d. process for permitting and review of signs
  - e. use of portable signs
  - f. use of sandwich board signs (with appropriate exceptions for community-based organizations)
  - g. temporary signs (strengthen language that is in place)
  - h. prohibition on billboards
  - i. multiple stacked signs along roadway
  - j. prohibit containers or trailers serving as a sign
13. Strengthen zoning sections on nonconforming signs .
14. Clearly list signs not needing a permit (current list is incomplete)

#### Strategy 1.4

The viability of low-impact home-based occupations shall be enhanced to promote economic vitality and diversity in Chatham. To this end, the town board shall amend regulations for home occupations that define minor home occupations (requiring no special permits), intermediate home occupations (requiring only site plan review), and major home occupations (requiring site plan review and special permits). The town board shall further determine where in the town each of these classes of home occupations can occur.

#### Strategy 1.5

Remove Planned Business Development (PBD) provisions so that town zoning may not be bypassed by large developments.

#### Strategy 1.6

Amend zoning related special use permits. Current zoning lacks detail and it will be advantageous for both review and enforcement when zoning clearly articulates criteria and standards for review.

#### Strategy 1.7

Regulate the use of portable commercial storage units

**Goal 2. Chatham promotes and protects the viability of jobs that take advantage of its unique human, natural, and cultural resources—including its agriculture, recreation opportunities, historic sites, and arts community—without negatively impacting its rural character. To this end, the town board shall:**

Strategy 2.1

Implement land use management policies that support the economic viability of farm operations. (See also Farming Strategies, Page 69)

- a) Ensure that zoning allows a variety of agricultural uses and permits non-farm uses on farms consistent with farming operations.
- b) Maintain flexible standards for business operations on farms. Ensure that the zoning use schedule permits a wide range of agri-businesses including bed and breakfasts, inns, pick-your-businesses, farm stands, etc.
- c) Ensure that zoning allows accessory uses to agriculture such as veterinarians, equipment and supply dealers, feed milling, etc.
- d) Create standards that support farming as it is envisioned in the future, not just farming the way it has traditionally occurred.
- e) When evaluating whether a new non-farm business use or commercial building is compatible with agriculture, consider whether:
  1. The use will be of a nature, intensity, scope, size, appearance, type and quantity conforming to the existing personal or agricultural structures.
  2. New commercial buildings will be located in a way that minimizes negative impact on future operations and expansion of agricultural uses and does not interfere with current agricultural operations or displace farm storage, use, or functions.
  3. The use is related to agriculture, forestry, or open spaces.
  4. The business will be conducted primarily by persons who reside on the farm or members of the farm family or farm employees.
  5. The use is subordinate to the farm operation. Subordination is based on the proportion of land and structures employed by the rural enterprise to those employed directly in the agricultural enterprise as well as the amount of time and resources the farmer diverts from the agricultural operation to the rural enterprise.
  6. The proposed use is not excessively more valuable than existing structures so that it would make the subsequent sale of the farm to bona fide farmers impossible.

Strategy 2.2

Promote within the town a “creative economy” composed of companies and entrepreneurs whose products or services rely on a distinctive appearance, form, content, or sound. Specifically:

- a) The CEP shall work with the County and other communities to identify and cultivate such companies, support incubators, develop entrepreneur networks, support the implementation of relevant technologies, and identify sources of seed funding and other incentives.
- b) The town board shall encourage development of low-cost living and working spaces for people involved in the creative economy in all zoning districts.

#### Strategy 2.3

Develop a strategy to market Chatham more effectively, including as a tourist destination. Specifically:

- a) The CEP shall work with county tourism officials and local tourism businesses to maximize the local impact of county marketing efforts. This effort should include the creation of a distinct marketing tag for Chatham.
- b) The CEP shall work with surrounding communities to create a regional marketing effort based on the creative economy.
- c) The CEP shall work with surrounding communities to create a regional tourism signage system to provide visitors with easy-to-read and understandable information.
- d) The town board shall create and promote safe and well-defined walking and biking routes connecting the Village of Chatham to the rest of the town and surrounding areas.

### **Goal 3. Chatham promotes town-wide access to state-of-the art communications technology. To this end:**

#### Strategy 3.1

The town board shall work to establish the town as its own communications technology provider by monitoring the state of such technology and, when appropriate technology becomes available, funding the construction of a town-wide access system. See Box 3.

Box 3. Technology Options in Rural Areas. While DSL is not widely available, most carriers offer ISDN Basic Rate telephone service, and in some cases an ISDN-like flavor of DSL called ISDL. It can be offered in a lot of situations where DSL will not work, and is generally supported by most telephone switches since ISDN was part of the plan to digitize the telephone network in the 1980s.

A rural telephone cooperative or ad hoc community organization can easily muster the resources to build a broadband wireless network using off the shelf wireless networking gear.

While Wi-Fi networks are limited to a distance of a few hundred feet, this is because they generally use omnidirectional antennas. By refitting wireless access points and repeaters with directional antennas that throw signals in spot beams akin to flashlights, it is possible to greatly extend their range, sometimes to several miles.

A detailed discussion of wireless community networks can be found in Rob Flickenger's book *Building Wireless Community Networks*. The general steps include:

- 1) Identify one or more locations in your community where someone can get reasonably priced broadband service (e.g. T-1, Cable, DS-3), pool resources across the user community to pay for the links.
- 2) Use directional antennas and repeaters to build a wireless mesh network out from these terrestrial links to sites that wish to share them. For example, by mounting parabolic antennas and repeaters on the sides of homes, one can relay a wireless link, in bucket brigade fashion from house to house, several miles along a sparsely populated valley.

#### Useful Links

[Rural Utilities Service](http://www.wcai.com/pdf/2003/ts9_purcellR.pdf): [www.wcai.com/pdf/2003/ts9\\_purcellR.pdf](http://www.wcai.com/pdf/2003/ts9_purcellR.pdf)

[FCC: Telecommunications Service for Rural America](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural/):

[www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural/](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural/)

[Rural Utilities Service](http://www.usda.gov/rus): [www.usda.gov/rus](http://www.usda.gov/rus)

[Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program Application Guide and Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Advance and Construction Procedures Guide](http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/broadband.htm): [www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/broadband.htm](http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/broadband.htm)

### Strategy 3.2

The town board shall establish a CEP subcommittee made up of members with relevant expertise to monitor technological developments and provide an annual feasibility report to the town board. When the decision to implement town-wide access is made, the town board shall transform this subcommittee into an authority that can manage construction and operation of the system.

**Goal 4. The town actively partners with the Village of Chatham, surrounding communities, and local business organizations to achieve its economic development goals. To this end, the CEP shall:**

Strategy 4.1

Work with the Village of Chatham to create a formal town-village working group.

Strategy 4.2

Work with adjacent towns, beginning with New Lebanon, in the Hudson River Greenway Scenic Byways program.

## ***Housing***

### **A Vision for Housing in Chatham**

The residents of the town of Chatham relish its beauty, enjoy its small town atmosphere and appreciate the diversity of its inhabitants. Our town is characterized by open rural space and farms, interspersed with hamlets containing homes on small lots. We achieve these qualities through the tradition of hamlet style communities. New development reflects its rural surroundings and does not negatively impact the open space, view sheds or historic character of the community.

Housing needs across all economic strata and age groups are fulfilled. Chatham creates communities, as opposed to subdivisions. In the interest of public health, housing and commerce is closely situated to encourage walking within the community. Our planning to eliminate reliance on the creation of new roads and use of the individual automobile is successful. Public transportation is available wherever possible. And throughout, consumption of farmland for all of these purposes has been severely restricted.

### **Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1. Chatham’s land use regulations perpetuate the historical settlement patterns of the Town, composed of higher density hamlets and village surrounded by traditionally low residential density and open and rural lands.**

#### Strategy 1.1

Zoning for new housing in hamlets shall have adequate water and sewer treatments and shall:

- a) Allow for smaller acreage, multiple-unit homes/apartments in one structure in the hamlets (see also strategies in Goal 2 of the Housing Section).
- b) Allow for mixed uses in Hamlets. Hamlets shall be interspersed with amenities, services and transportation, each of which however, must be consistent with design, style and scale standards established in zoning.
- c) Leave hamlet core H2 as is but allow the expansion or contraction, in some areas, of the H1 zone. See Conceptual Zoning Districts Map.
- d) Allow for accessory apartments, secondary dwellings and Elder Cottage Housing (ECHO)<sup>7</sup> on residential parcels as specially permitted uses provided adequate water and waste water treatment exist. Accessory apartments, secondary and ECHO dwellings shall be constructed to be consistent with the recommended Rural Siting Guidelines. Secondary and ECHO dwellings shall be required to

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<sup>7</sup> See Attachment A - Elder Cottage Housing - for description and example zoning language. ECHO housing also refers to small cottage-like outbuildings modeled after the principal residence.

have a shared driveway, and well and septic and sited within 100ft (or some predetermined figure) of the primary dwelling. Ensure that zoning allows accessory apartments and secondary and ECHO dwellings only use by a caretaker or a relative of primary dweller. The following standards shall apply:

- (1) Rental and size restrictions will apply.
- (2) Detached units will follow cottage zoning<sup>8</sup> standards.
- (3) The total floor area of each secondary or ECHO dwelling shall not exceed either 1.5 times the area of the dwellings' main floor or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less.
- (4) Accessory apartments shall not exceed 30% of the gross floor area of the primary dwelling.
- (5) Zoning will outline standards to ensure that accessory apartments, secondary and ECHO dwellings can be accommodated on the parcel, neighborhood, and district. (See Explanation Box 4 for further restrictions.)
- (6) Development of accessory apartments, secondary and ECHO dwellings will be allowed as long as appropriate public health, safety and design (Rural Standard Guidelines) are met and neighborhood character is maintained.
- (7) Secondary dwellings will require a permit renewal every three years.
- (8) In order to ensure that housing in accessory structures, secondary and ECHO dwellings or multi-family units fit into the community, provide ample opportunity for the public to be heard at the beginning of the review process.

Box 4: Other methods to deal with issues related to these types of housing are: a) Accessory structure special use permits could be renewable and revocable and issued to property owner, not to property itself, b) Owners of accessory units are required to live on premises, c) Exterior alterations of structures holding accessory units should be minimal and new accessory structures should not detract from the character of the single-family neighborhood, d) The town could set a ceiling on the percentage of homes in a given area that can be converted to multi-family dwellings<sup>9</sup>, e) The town could set up a system whereby neighbors can be reassured that valid complaints will be heard prior to permit renewal, and f) For large developments, consider adding density bonuses for those projects that include a variety of housing types and levels of affordability such as creating several affordable priced house lots within each subdivision.

- e) Permit the adaptive reuse of existing structures to allow for development of multi-unit dwellings, permitted by special use permit and subject to Rural Standard Guidelines and to contain no more than four units. Additionally, adaptive reuse of farm structures to non-farm uses need to be consistent with the character of existing dwellings and located within the footprint of existing structures.
- f) Allow approval of a mobile or modular home on a temporary foundation through a special use permit for up to three years in cases where a family member needs an onsite caregiver. Reapplication would be required every three years. Such an

<sup>8</sup> See Attachment B - Cottage Zoning - for description and example zoning language.

<sup>9</sup> For example, a limit of 10% of properties within 500 feet of an existing accessory unit could be established and could be relaxed after an initial period of time.

arrangement is a response to immediate medical needs of a family and not to be interpreted as a general permit for mobile or modular home use. To protect neighborhood character, placement of a mobile or modular unit shall not be intrusive and shall follow rural siting guidelines. As with all accessory uses, the site must demonstrate that water and waste water treatment and lot capacity exists to support an additional unit. Upon expiration of permit, discontinued need or transfer of ownership of the primary dwelling, zoning shall specify that the supplemental unit must be removed within 90 days.

- g) Lot sizes in hamlets shall have the following dimensions:
- 1) Half (0.5) acre lots when on-site septic and water are used and with provisions (in zoning or as a stand-alone local law) to ensure proper maintenance and functioning of septic systems<sup>10</sup>.
  - 2) This will create lot variability.
- h) Limit new home sizes in hamlets to no greater than 3600 ft<sup>2</sup> allowed as-of-right with no special use permits required.
- i) For subdivisions over 20 homes in hamlets, a 30% or more open space will be required. The open space in the hamlet could be designed for the following uses; village green, pocket park, playground and/or community garden or determination of the most appropriate use by the town.
- j) Cottage zoning with mixed lot sizes in proportion to dwelling size but with a maximum dwelling size 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>. Off site septic and water for cottage houses can be installed in an area designated as permanent 'open space' such as a village green or open field.
- k) If a developer provides septic and water system, allow for mixed lot sizes. For parcels proposed to have more than three lots the lot size requirement will be as follows: 50% of new lots shall be 0.25 acre in size, 25% of lots shall be 0.50 acre, and 25% shall be 1.0 acre if water and septic are installed in an area on the parcel designated as permanent 'open space' such as a village green or open field. For these subdivisions, a requirement of no less than 30% open space designation will apply. The open space in the hamlet could be designed for the following uses; village green, pocket park, playground and/or community garden or determination of the most appropriate use by the town.
- l) Establish a buffer for new hamlet development that occurs adjacent to working farms. A minimum buffer of 200 feet shall be established on the non-farm lot with provision for extension of this width if the nature of the farming operation requires.

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<sup>10</sup> For lot sizes of 0.5 acres or less with on-site septic zoning should be modified to include provisions for the following: a) inspection of newly built system and comparison to original approved plan; b) maintenance requirements of property owners (to have their septic tanks inspected every 3 years and septage removed whenever the tank is filled with solids in excess of 25% of the liquid depth); c) replacement of the inlet or outlet baffles if found to be in a deteriorated condition; d) reporting of malfunctions; and e) registration and reporting from septage haulers.

- m) Siting of new structures in hamlets shall follow the Rural Siting Guidelines. These guidelines shall require that new roads be interconnected and setbacks shall match an average of five contiguous houses (applicable only to front row of dwellings.)

#### Strategy 1.2

Housing development in all other districts of the town shall be consistent with maintaining rural and historic character, farming, the environment, and affordable housing conditions. To this end,

- a) Consider limiting the square footage on single-family dwelling in R1, R2, and R3 zones to no larger than 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>.
- b) Amend zoning to prohibit secondary principal homes on residential lots in R1, R2, and R3 zoning districts.
- c) Allow by special use permit, condominiums and townhouses in R1, R2, and R3 zoning districts with limitations (e.g., 40 units in a five year time period) on the number of permitted units each year.
- d) Continue current regulations related to the permitting of mobile homes including allowing temporary siting of a mobile home during residential construction and permitting uses within existing parks only.
- e) Permit the adaptive reuse of existing structures to allow for development of multi-unit dwellings, permitted by special use permit and subject to Rural Standard Guidelines and to contain no more than four units. Additionally, adaptive reuse of farm structures to non-farm uses need to be consistent with the character of existing dwellings and located within the footprint of existing structures.
- f) Allow approval of a mobile or modular home on a temporary foundation through a special use permit for up to three years in cases where a family member needs an onsite caregiver. Reapplication would be required every three years. Such an arrangement is a response to immediate medical needs of a family and not to be interpreted as a general permit for mobile or modular home use. To protect neighborhood character, placement of a mobile or modular unit shall not be intrusive and shall follow rural siting guidelines. As with all accessory uses, the site must demonstrate that water and waste water treatment and other lot capacity exists to support an additional unit. Upon expiration of permit, discontinued need or transfer of ownership of the primary dwelling, zoning shall specify that the supplemental unit must be removed within 90 days.

**Goal 2. Regulations and programs exist allowing for mixed income housing for those who need it - seniors, first time homebuyers, special needs residents and those in need of rental units.**

Strategy 2.1

Establish a first-time home-buyer and revolving loan fund to fund down payments and closing costs. This program shall be tied with long-term deed restrictions to keep dwellings affordable in the future. Make this program available to all residents throughout the Town.

Strategy 2.2

For developments of four lots or more, zoning shall be expanded to adequately allow for future affordable housing (See Box 5, below) through use of inclusionary zoning<sup>11</sup> techniques.

- a) Except in the RL1 District, future developments of more than four dwellings<sup>12</sup> or subdivisions of more than four lots, must be required to construct or provide medium-priced workforce lots at a price range defined at 80% the county median income (See Box 5). Table 1 provides a schedule of the recommended number of required workforce dwellings or lots. Lot subdivisions shall be tied to parcel history<sup>13</sup>. Amend zoning to include a management component for this provision.

Table 1. Schedule of required ‘workforce housing’ dwellings or lots

Number of workforce housing dwellings or lots	Total number of dwellings constructed or lots created
1	5
2	10
3	12
25% thereafter	

Box 5: Workforce housing shall be defined as housing which when purchased, shall use no more than 30% of the home buyer’s family income for principal, interest, taxes and insurance as determined by US Department of Housing and Urban Development median income for Columbia County. For example, if median income is determined to be \$50,000 a workforce housing unit would cost the family no more than \$15,000 in principal, interest, taxes and insurance annually (\$1,250 per month). The purchaser of an affordable home must contractually agree to limit the future resale price of his/her/their affordable unit, for example, to no more than the original price multiplied by the

<sup>11</sup> Inclusionary zoning is when a developer is required to dedicate a certain percentage of new dwelling units as permanently affordable.

<sup>12</sup> Dwellings shall include homes, townhouses, condominiums and apartments.

<sup>13</sup> Need to determine look back period of time.

compounded annual increase in the consumer price index from the time of purchase to the time of resale, each successive owner being bound in the same manner or some other predetermined resale price restriction<sup>14</sup>.

### Strategy 2.3

For all districts, zoning shall permit multi-unit structures as needed to encourage affordable, workforce and senior housing while requiring that these structures be consistent with the maintenance of the town's rural character. The town shall allow these as special use permits and may consider the following restrictions for these multi-unit buildings to accomplish consistency with its rural character:

- a) Limit the number of acres per hamlet devoted to affordable, workplace and senior housing;
- b) Allow no more than four family units per acre, but permit higher density per building for senior housing;
- c) Require the provision of adequate on-site water and waste water or, if off-site, in a grassed-over common-use plot;
- d) Ensure parking is screened from surrounding area;
- e) Multi-family development shall follow Rural Standard Guidelines to ensure that these units will not detract from neighborhoods;
- f) Provide ample opportunity for the public to be heard at the beginning of the review process in order to help ensure that these developments fit into the community;
- g) Developments shall have a mix of single and multi-family dwellings with a minimum of 15% multi-family, and maximum of 25%.

### Strategy 2.4

The Town shall work with non-profit housing organizations and set up programs that promote subsidized and market-rate rental units.

### Strategy 2.5

Consider having the Town and/or a nonprofit housing organization act as the owner-developer of workforce housing communities and purchase land to be developed for affordable housing<sup>15</sup>.

### Strategy 2.6

To enhance creation of affordable lots, place more emphasis in zoning on density rather than lot size. Large lot sizes do not create affordable conditions. This will offer flexible development options, different lot sizes, and housing type choices.

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<sup>14</sup> The resale price could be 75% of the market value when sold (*Arendt - Rural by Design*) or local replacement costs of building less depreciation, obsolescence and damage (*Community Land Trust in the Southern Berkshires, Inc.*)

<sup>15</sup> A community land trust could be created to oversee the creation, maintenance and legalities of the workforce housing. See <http://www.schumachersociety.org/clts.html> for example of local Community Land Trust.

Strategy 2.7

Allow for the adaptive reuse of buildings for mixed-income residences.

Strategy 2.8

As an option, use of zero-lot line development in hamlets and conservation subdivisions (See Box 6).

Box 6: Zero Lot Lines create cost savings by allowing more compact lot sizes. Zero Lot Line standards allow buildings to abut one another on common lot boundaries and eliminate the side-yard setback. In order to maintain privacy, zero lot line regulations should prohibit openings on walls abutting the lot lines. This may not be appropriate in all neighborhoods or districts.

Strategy 2.9

Collaborate with other towns to provide workforce housing county-wide by partnering applications to federal and state agencies. To achieve economy-of-scale, the Town will collaborate with other towns and local agencies (e.g., Tri-corner Community Development Corporation, Columbia County Housing Resources and other liaisons) in the development of work-force housing projects.

Strategy 2.10

Hire a grant developer/writer to find more creative ways to fund workforce housing.

**Goal 3. In response to census data indicating an increasing number of seniors within the township, smaller housing units are available for the diverse needs of this age group, including but not limited to the following: senior housing apartments, townhouses, accessory apartments, assisted housing facilities and Continuing Care Retirement Communities.**

Strategy 3.1

The use table included in zoning shall be clarified to allow the following types of senior housing through special use permits. (All water, waste water and site criteria guidelines must also be met.)

- a) Building or renovation of existing structures to allow for senior apartments, “granny flats” with or without support services. It is recommended that granny-flats be permitted on a temporary basis; permit granted for a period of up to three years and a renewal by application. Residents may consider an accessory apartment application rather than granny-flat, if other future use is considered by applicant.
- b) Group homes for unrelated senior resident occupants.
- c) Future development shall allow and encourage the building of Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC).
- d) Multi-unit dwellings.

Strategy 3.2

Zoning shall be written to include state law requirements for design and building of senior housing.

Strategy 3.3

Establish an “aging in place” program. Some of the components of this program could be:

- a) Set up an advisory committee to formulate an aging in place blueprint.
- b) Implement plans for transportation and street design in hamlets to accommodate seniors.

**Goal 4. To protect public health and safety, future development utilizes best environmental management practices.**

Strategy 4.1

For major subdivisions located in hamlets, establish site development requirements to include sidewalks, bicycle-friendly street design, and public green space including play areas for people of all ages (See also Infrastructure Strategies, Page 45, and Recreation Strategies, Page 55.)

## ***Infrastructure***

### **A Vision for Chatham's Infrastructure**

The Town recognizes the role roads play in rural character and works to ensure that new roads are built and existing roads are maintained consistent with rural character. The Town enhances town roads for car, bike, pedestrian, and non-motorized recreational purposes. Traffic resulting from future development is managed and controlled. Wastewater needs are addressed in cost effective ways that utilize the most up-to-date technologies and programs. Infrastructure is not an agent for driving further development. Alternate "Green" energy sources that maintain the rural and scenic characteristics of the Town are sought and encouraged. The Town works with the Village of Chatham to strengthen their relationship and to develop more effective and coordinated infrastructure planning. Bridges throughout the Town are repaired and safe to ensure they remain a functioning component of our infrastructure. Chatham is a safe community and has quality emergency services. High speed, robust telecommunication technology is available Town-wide for personal and commercial use.

### **Goals and Strategies**

#### **Goal 1. Town infrastructure will not be developed to stimulate growth.**

##### Strategy 1.1

The two-lane nature of local, county and state roads shall be maintained. Recognize that widening roads as a method to deal with increased traffic levels is not a desired solution in Chatham. Instead, institute traffic access management requirements in subdivision, site plan, and zoning.

##### Strategy 1.2.

Promote compact development to avoid unnecessary development or extension of water and sewer lines. Focus public services in areas of Chatham such as hamlets, business districts, and in areas adjacent to the village.

- a) Should public water or sewer systems be necessary in the future, the Town shall ensure that such infrastructure is concentrated in hamlets, around the village and potentially in business nodes. It shall be a policy of the Town not to allow extension of these public services beyond these boundaries.
- b) When building water and sewer infrastructure, the systems shall not be designed and built with extensions as a goal. Do not extend water lines into agricultural areas.

##### Strategy 1.3

To ensure that growth matches infrastructure, consider initiating an Adequate Public Facilities (APF) regulation. This is a town law that requires that there be detailed information provided by the applicant for development regarding the availability of

adequate road to handle peak traffic, sewer, water, schools, and other critical facility capacity to serve proposed development prior to that development. Such regulations can require developers to wait until the necessary infrastructure to make the development safe, accessible and in compliance with health standards is in place. The net effect is typically to keep development more compact and contiguous to existing development, or to cause it to locate in nodes around other service providers. A basic set of APF controls provides that development shall be approved only if the Planning Board analyzes information provided by the developer and makes explicit findings that

- a) There is, or will be at the time of actual development,
- b) An adequate supply of water to serve the needs of the project, adequate capacity to collect and treat wastewater from the project,
- c) Adequate road capacity to handle traffic to and from the project,
- d) Adequate capacity in stormwater drainage to handle stormwater runoff from the project,
- e) Adequate school facilities to handle the growth, and
- f) Adequate emergency services.

#### Strategy 1.4

Utilize a Capital Improvement Plan showing the proposed expansion, upgrading, maintenance and financing of infrastructure projects.

#### Strategy 1.5

Develop inter-municipal agreements between Chatham and neighboring towns to coordinate growth management efforts.

### **Goal 2. Any new water or sewer infrastructure utilizes the most up-to-date technology and management systems suitable for rural areas.**

#### Strategy 2.1

Should critical needs exist to more effectively manage on-site septic systems, Chatham shall explore alternate types of waste treatment systems to serve the Town instead of public sewers. Chatham shall consider all available water treatment options including decentralized management systems, constructed wetlands, small package plants, biological treatments, and other technologies that are available for its small community infrastructure needs.

#### Strategy 2.2

Consider enhancing effectiveness of on-site septic systems by developing a septic system maintenance law with provisions for

- a) Maintenance requirements of property owners (to have their septic tanks inspected every 3 years and removal of septage whenever the tank is filled with solids in excess of 25% of the liquid depth);

- b) Replacement of the inlet or outlet baffles if found to be in a deteriorated condition;
- c) Reporting of malfunctions; and
- d) Registration and reporting from septage haulers.

**Goal 3. Construction of new, and maintenance of existing roads are consistent with low volume road designs and rural character.**

Strategy 3.1

Amend zoning to minimize use of cul-de-sacs. Where dead end roads are necessary, utilize T and Y ends instead of cul-de-sacs where possible. For new development within hamlets, all new streets shall be interconnected with no dead ends and they shall use a grid or modified grid pattern.

Strategy 3.2

Change highway design standards to be consistent with rural road standards such as to decrease pavement widths (no more than 20 feet of pavement), establish maximum grades (5%), and reduce the radius of cul-de-sacs (40 or 50' maximum). Require that the "bulb" of cul-de-sacs be landscaped but continue the current requirements for surface and subsurface construction standards. Section 164 of the Chatham Code (Road Specifications) and the Subdivision Law (Section 170) needs to be coordinated with each other and shall be amended to be consistent with rural road standards.

Strategy 3.3

Roads have a large and often negative impact on rural character. In particular, Chatham shall:

- a) Allow for controlled use of shared driveways.
- b) The town does not endorse the use of cul-de-sacs or dead end roads but in cases where they must be used Rural Standard Guidelines will apply. Rural Standard Guidelines would address cul-de-sac length and radius, and include language to discourage use of cul-de-sac roads and dead-end streets. All roads shall be interconnected, following the official Town map<sup>16</sup>. Add in language to create alternatives to cul-de-sac roads such as hammerhead roads.
- c) Establish a rural road classification system. Excellent models can be found in the Cornell Local Roads Program (Classifying and Managing Low-Volume Local Roads and the Manual: Guidelines for Rural Town and County Roads) or from the Dutchess County Design Guide for Rural Roads.
- d) Include in zoning, subdivision, and site plan laws standards to require access management to control traffic congestion and maintain rural road character. Utilize the New York State Model Access Management Ordinance for this purpose.

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<sup>16</sup> The official Town map - lays out the future potential road structure but should not be construed as an endorsement of development.

- e) When state and county road projects are undertaken, ensure that these agencies coordinate with the Town Comprehensive Plan.

#### Strategy 3.4

Develop and utilize “context sensitive design” standards for new roads built in Chatham. Context Sensitive Design (CSD) is "an approach that places preservation of historic, scenic, natural environment, and other community values on an equal basis with mobility, safety and economics," according to the Federal Highway Administration. Use as a reference, the Vermont design standards for this purpose which are recognized nationally for their flexibility and ability to preserve rural character, while providing for safe multi-modal travel. Do not rely totally on the common references for road standards which tend to ignore entirely or consider only secondarily other important functions of the road corridor such as safe access for children, bicyclists, pedestrians and other potential users such as equestrians.

#### Strategy 3.5

Subdivision review shall carefully evaluate driveway placement and culvert and drainage measures to ensure public safety.

### **Goal 4. Infrastructure planning incorporates the need to create or maintain affordable housing potential during new development.**

#### Strategy 4.1<sup>17</sup>

Overbuilt roads and lot layouts that result in large, sprawling public water and sewer services do not support affordable housing opportunities. Ensure that the town uses rural road standards and establish zoning and subdivision procedures to allow for the most compact growth feasible on each lot. A reduction of street-width, cul-de-sac turnaround width, minimal use of curbs and gutters, allowing natural stormwater management systems, and use of easements or sidewalks/bike paths for utilities as an alternative to large right-of-ways are all infrastructure related reforms that influence affordability. (The current 50’ right-of-way requirement may be too large as 35’ to a maximum of 50’ is recommended.)

### **Goal 5. Emergency services have the necessary equipment and resources to effectively service the Town, and volunteer staffing is supported and enhanced.**

#### Strategy 5.1

The Town shall form an Emergency Services Advisory Board with members representing the various emergency service departments and the Town Board. The

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<sup>17</sup> See also the HUD publication: *Affordable Housing Development Guidelines for State and Local Governments* that is available from HUD for \$15.00.

role of this advisory group is to determine the needs for and respond to the additional equipment, facility and personnel needs to provide quality emergency services. This group shall evaluate the desirability and fiscal impacts of using regionalized services or paid staff to augment the volunteer system.

#### Strategy 5.2

The Town shall encourage emergency service providers to consider the vision and goals of the comprehensive plan when preparing their own long-range plans for facilities and for their ability to provide services to a growing community. Chatham shall also provide assistance to help those fire and emergency services providers coordinate long-term planning for facilities, inventory and needs assessment. The Town and the newly created Emergency Advisory Board (above) could work collectively to establish an inventory and needs assessment for fire and emergency services. Emergency service facilities shall be allowable uses subject to site plan review.

#### Strategy 5.3

Recognize the future need for adequate police services and evaluate cost effective methods of providing adequate police services.

#### Strategy 5.4

Support aggressive volunteer recruiting programs.

- a) Improve existing tax incentives for emergency service volunteers.
- b) Work with the emergency departments to identify other mechanisms to recruit and retain volunteers.

#### Strategy 5.5

Assist emergency departments' applications for FEMA and other grants in order to expand and improve programs and initiatives.

#### Strategy 5.6

Ensure that adequate mitigation is sought to reduce negative impacts on town services, including fire, ambulance, and roads when reviewing a project subject to SEQRA.

### **Goal 6. Public transportation opportunities are enhanced.**

#### Strategy 6.1

Currently, public transportation is available from Chatham to Greenport shopping areas and health care providers by Columbia County on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This service is available to all residents and is half-price for senior citizens. Work with Columbia County and the Healthcare Consortium to explore ways to expand this service to other locations in the town.

**Goal 7. Chatham utilizes a Capital Improvement Planning to manage and process all capital expenditures related to infrastructure in town.**

Strategy 7.1

Initiate capital improvement planning. This is accomplished through development of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). See Box 7, below.

Box 7: A CIP is a multi-year schedule that lays out a series of Town projects, facilities and large equipment, and their associated costs. Over the five-year period considered by the CIP, the plan shows how the Town will maintain, expand or renovate facilities and services as needed to meet the demands of existing or new population. These documents are excellent planning and budgeting tools and are usually “rolling plans” where the plan is updated each year, dropping off the previous year and adding one more year at the end of the cycle. A capital budget is updated annually as part of the Town's regular budget process. It will show what projects are already on line, what projects will need funds in the current budget year, and what projects will be started in the current budget year. Coordinating the comprehensive capital budget with the operating budget should give Chatham more insight into long range planning. The information helps decision-makers improve coordination of services for greater efficiency and assess short-run financing requirements in the context of long-run fiscal needs and constraints. It coordinates community planning, financial capacity and physical development. A capital improvements program is composed of two parts -- **a capital budget** and **a capital program**. The capital budget is the upcoming year's spending plan for capital items (tangible assets or projects that cost at least \$10,000 and have a useful life of at least five years). The capital program is a plan for capital expenditures that extends five years beyond the capital budget. The Town should establish a formal CIP process, by adopting a resolution to create and empower a CIP committee. The following outline the major steps needed to effectively develop a CIP:

- Prepare and inventory of existing facilities
- Determine the status of previously approved projects
- Assess the Town's financial capacity
- Solicit, compile and evaluate project and budget requests
- Establish project priority
- Develop a CIP financing plan
- Adopt a capital improvement program
- Monitor approved projects
- Update the capital program annually

**Goal 8. Impacts of increased traffic are minimized.**

Strategy 8.1

Institute traffic access management and traffic calming for all new development throughout Town. These are traffic volume restriction and speed reduction methods. Mechanisms appropriate to most of the rural roads in Chatham shall use, and be consistent with, the New York State Department of Transportation Highway Design Manual, Chapter 25 – Traffic Calming, Revision 33, August 31, 1998 or most current version. Traffic calming may not be applicable to every project proposed. Individual projects shall be assessed to determine if necessary and feasible. In order for traffic

calming techniques to be applied by the Planning Board during the project review process, ensure that adopted local highway standards incorporate and allow use of these techniques.

- a) The main traffic access management tools are:
  - Limit number of curb cuts permitted per parcel and reduce the number of curb cuts along a highway corridor. Allow for use of shared driveways, shared parking lots, and shared commercial access roads.
  - Separate curb cuts and intersections.
  - Align driveways so they are opposite each other or offset at least 125 feet.
  
- b) The main traffic calming and mitigation measures that can be used are:
  - Speed limits
  - Access Restrictions (gated roads, physical closures, legal orders)
  - Signs (standard, vehicle actuated)
  - Road Markings
  - Surface treatment; (rumble strips, bar markings)
  - Road narrowings (chicanes, islands, curb build-outs, chokers or neckdowns, footway extensions)
  - Reduced intersection radii (also are very important to have when trying to maintain rural character)
  - Streetscaping such as use of street furniture, lighting, and landscaping (especially street trees)
  - Use of shoulders and sidewalks
  - Use of sidewalks (only in areas with more dense development)
  - Surface textures (one portion of the roadway has a different texture than others) or use of dirt roads
  - Modified intersections/channelization and higher visibility crosswalks

#### Strategy 8.2

The Planning Board shall be authorized to require peak hour traffic studies when reviewing applications.

### **Goal 9. Multi-modal opportunities along state, county and town roads exist.**

#### Strategy 9.1

Initiate a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee to identify specific roadways that could be used for bicycles and pedestrians and develop a plan for roadway improvements that are needed.

#### Strategy 9.2

Design new roadways, and upgrade existing roads to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians and other non-motorized users. Ensure that the local subdivision and

zoning law has standards that bring about improvements needed for shared use of roadways. Some of these standards include, but are not limited to:

- a) On those roads with the lowest volume of traffic, a shared roadway lane may be feasible.
- b) Have an outside travel lane with a width of 14 feet to provide space for cars and bicyclists and pedestrians.
- c) Dedicate a portion of the roadway for exclusive use by bicyclists and pedestrians with striping and/or signage.
- d) Allow a portion of the roadway to the right of the edge strip to be designed for bicyclists and pedestrians.

#### Strategy 9.3

Use the NYS DOT Highway Design Manual (Chapter 18: Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicyclists or most current version) and other guides to plan for pedestrian and bicycle use in town.

**Goal 10. Up-to-date internet and communications technology exists to meet the needs of businesses, home based businesses, organizations and institutions, and residences.**

#### Strategy 10.1

Review franchise and service agreements and require franchises to provide expanded service.

#### Strategy 10.2

Franchise agreements shall have performance requirements and means to ensure performance.

#### Strategy 10.3

The agreement shall require annual reporting to the Town.

See also strategies related to Economic Development, Page 29.

**Goal 11. Native green energy sources are developed and utilized that are consistent with our rural and scenic goals.**

#### Strategy 11.1

Allow for single family, individual and farm usage of wind mills by special use permit and with site plan review and establish standards for these uses that will protect the rural and scenic character of Chatham such as minimum setbacks, buffer distances, and host-community agreements. Prohibit large-scale wind farms.

#### Strategy 11.2

Promote use of zero energy homes. Zoning and other land use regulations shall not

place barriers for building these types of structures. See Box 8.

Box 8: A Zero Energy Home combines state of the art, energy-efficient construction and appliances with commercially available renewable energy systems such as solar water heating and electricity. This combination can result in zero energy consumption from the utility company. This concept could be implemented both in terms of incentives for new homes built or existing buildings retrofitted in subdivisions and in terms of seeking to recruit companies that build zero-energy homes. The spin-offs associated with this concept are many and include: solar panels, super insulation, wind power and many other emerging technologies around this topic. Initiatives at regional universities like Syracuse and Cornell are creating these technologies. Also utilize information from the United States Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory and their northeast team member Steven Winter Associates in Norwalk, Connecticut ([http://www/swinter.com/](http://www.swinter.com/)) for assistance.

### Strategy 11.3

Encourage use of and remove impediments to using solar, green buildings, and small scale/micro-hydro-electric facilities.

- a) Encourage the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for new development and redevelopment of buildings and sites in the town. Consider use of a density bonus to developers willing to undertake this. The LEED Green Building Rating System® is the national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Participation in LEED is voluntary. The standards have been developed by the U.S. Green Building Council through consensus by all members of the building industry. LEED standards address a variety of site design, building design and construction materials based on the long-term sustainability of the community. LEED information could be provided through the Building Inspector and distributed as potential developers seek information regarding building in Chatham. The following is a list of categories that LEED standards consider:
- Erosion and sedimentation control
  - Site selection
  - Alternative transportation, public transportation access
  - Alternative transportation, bicycle friendly
  - Alternative transportation, parking reductions
  - Reduced site disturbance, protect and restore open space
  - Reduced site disturbance, maximize open space
  - Stormwater management, flow treatment and reduction
  - Landscape and exterior design to reduce heat islands, non-roof and roof surfaces
  - Light pollution reduction

Strategy 11.4

Growing bio-fuels may be an alternative farm crop that could be profitable for local farmers.

Strategy 11.5

Help promote other native green energy sources to include, but not limited to methane, hydroelectric and bio-fuels.

## **Recreation**

### **A Vision for Recreation in Chatham**

The townspeople of Chatham are highly aware of and engaged in recreational activities. They make use of the many and diverse opportunities available within the town on a year-round basis, such as: soccer, swimming, basketball, tennis, softball and gardening at Crellin Park; bird watching and hiking at the Powell Sanctuary and the Rutland Rail trail; fishing in the Kinderhook Creek and Sutherland Pond; cycling or jogging along our roadways and pathways; equestrian activities; and hunting on private lands. Our youngsters enjoy many recreational programs provided by The Crellin Morris Association, public schools and other public and private organizations. Residents also benefit from other regional opportunities available nearby such as golfing in Ghent and Kinderhook, skiing in the Berkshires and boating on area lakes, streams and rivers. We especially value the town's rural character and those recreational activities that allow them to appreciate Chatham's natural beauty. The recreational emphasis in Chatham complements the town's rural character, minimizing any negative environmental impacts and, more importantly, promoting an appreciation of the land.

### **Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1. Recreation in the Town encourages present and future generations to actively participate in indoor and outdoor activities for the benefit of their physical and emotional health. The Town's recreation programs provide high quality, active and passive recreation for all ages and abilities.**

#### Strategy 1.1

Provide for a permanent Parks and Resource Lands Committee to assist the town in implementing the recommendations that follow. This group could also develop a comprehensive recreation and open space plan that identifies locations for creek access, trail and greenways, and lands suitable for recreational use. The Town Board shall appoint this committee and ensure that people representing the various interests outlined in this plan be members. This committee shall actively work with the Keep Farming CAP to accomplish the goal of linking agricultural land, wildlife habitat, blocks of contiguous forest lands and public and volunteered private recreational lands.

#### Strategy 1.2

Town and Village governments are cooperative and coordinate resources to establish an effective recreational program. One way to build a collaborative relationship to accomplish the recreation goals would be to include a village representative on the above suggested Parks and Resource Lands Committee.

### Strategy 1.3

Create and develop dedicated and predictable funding for recreation.

- a) Based on the recommendations of the newly created Parks and Resource Lands Committee, develop a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and address recreation and facility needs for current and increased populations.
- b) Secure the services of a grant writer to aggressively pursue and take advantage of all private, state, county and federal aid that may be available.
- c) Establish a per lot recreation fee to be assessed for every lot subdivided within the town.
- d) Explore use of a recreation user-fee for programs and facilities, where appropriate.

### Strategy 1.4

Work with the school districts serving the town.

- a) Promote cooperation between the town and the school districts in innovative ways such as joint planning and land acquisition for recreation and/or facilities cost-sharing.
- b) Encourage increased municipal use of existing school facilities during non-school hours.
- c) Provide a link between Crellin Park and the school property to enhance school use of improved athletic facilities.

### Strategy 1.5

The Town's recreational program addresses the needs of all residents

- a) Involve teens and senior citizens in any park planning efforts to make sure that their needs, concerns, and interests are considered at those town facilities.
- b) Assess the need for, and feasibility of developing a teen center, and if indicated, plan and provide for one.
- c) Ensure that the recreational experiences of people with special needs are integrated with those of the community at large.

### Strategy 1.6

Foster diverse partnerships in recreational planning. These partnerships could include public, private, civic, and not for profit interests. Work with service groups in the area to help with meeting recreational needs and to supplement municipal financial resources and volunteer labor.

## **Goal 2. The residents of the Town will sustain and enhance their appreciation for the Town's rural character through outdoor recreation.**

### Strategy 2.1

The natural resource base, which provides the foundation for outdoor recreation is protected and enhanced (See natural resource and other goals established in this plan for this purpose).

### Strategy 2.2

Work with parties with mutual goals, such as the Columbia Land Conservancy and the Hudson River Valley Greenway to find ways to further the development of greenway connections and multi-use trails through town.

- a) Work to link trails within Chatham to the proposed Countryside Corridor of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail System along the Kinderhook Lake.
- b) Find ways to link preserved lands and other trails to the proposed Harlem Valley Rail Trail starting in the Village of Chatham.

### Strategy 2.3

Provide multimodal connections between the parks and the Village center.

### Strategy 2.4

Establish greenway along Stony Kill between the Park sites and the Hudson River Valley Trail (and the Rutland ROW).

### Strategy 2.5

Develop a watchable wildlife program that includes wildlife viewing pull-offs (where appropriate) along with signs and maps. This can be modeled after the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation program, or similar programs.

### Strategy 2.6

Add winter recreation activities such as sledding and skating to existing facilities.

### Strategy 2.7

The Town seeks to create a network of trails through voluntary easement and public acquisition for use as a linear park. A future goal would be the acquisition of the Rutland Railroad, the Dorland Road property and other vital links into the network of trails.

## **Goal 3. Careful planning will determine the most effective recreational utilization of Town owned land.**

### Strategy 3.1

Implement the Crellin Park Plan and plans for recreational enhancements on town-owned lands behind the Town Hall. This plan recommends that Crellin Park shall be the active recreational component of Chatham's future center of activity for art, entertainment and outdoor recreation and that the new Town Park will be the focus of passive recreation and outdoor interpretation in keeping with community appreciation for open space and the natural environment.

## **Goal 4. The Town encourages interested private land owners to make land available for public recreational uses.**

#### Strategy 4.1

Work with willing landowners and the appropriate organizations (ex. The Columbia Land Conservancy) to donate lands for recreation use, especially those lands that would have access to the creeks and to potential multi-use trails.

- a) Develop land use agreements with willing landowners to allow for public use on their property.
- b) User groups or the Town of Chatham could consider making lease payments to landowners on a per acre basis for recreational uses of woodlands and pasturelands.
- c) Help landowners understand their options, benefits and implications of providing public access on their lands for recreation. Provide information on the New York Recreation Use Statute that indemnifies landowners from liability.

### **Goal 5. The Town has quality, aesthetically pleasing, and safe roads and pathways for vehicular traffic, walking, horseback riding and cycling.**

#### Strategy 5.1

Develop signed and mapped scenic road routes

#### Strategy 5.2

Utilization of trails and shared roadways around town will be encouraged through the creation and distribution of guides and other written materials.

#### Strategy 5.3

Initiate community beautification programs to ensure that town roads are aesthetically pleasing.

#### Strategy 5.4

Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in any local, county and state road project and build facilities to accommodate shared use of roads accordingly.

- a) Identify roads in Chatham that are desirable as bike and/or pedestrian routes. Work with State and County highway departments to explore and implement improved multi-modal roadways. This discussion should explore shared use of the highway, designating a bicycle route, designating and building a bicycle lane, and development of a separated bicycle path. For many of the state and county roads, traffic speeds may make it uncomfortable for pedestrians to use shoulders. Therefore, separate bicycle paths are likely the preferred alternative to explore.
- b) Rural road standards for new town roads could be modified, where appropriate, to provide adequate paved shoulders as part of the typical required cross section, where needed.

**Goal 6. The Town encourages growth and development that supports recreation.**

Strategy 6.1

Zoning shall protect stream banks, wetlands, floodplains and agricultural lands. These lands are not only important for environmental protection, but for recreation.

Strategy 6.2

Create new open spaces and parkland via dedications made during the existing subdivision process (Section 170-19), or through land or easement purchases through payment-in-lieu of land dedication.

Strategy 6.3

Existing hamlets and any new hamlets or housing clusters to be created in the future shall be pedestrian friendly and planned with small pocket parks for passive recreation. Each hamlet shall be linked with a town-wide multi-use greenway trail system.

Strategy 6.5

During subdivision and/or site plan reviews for any nursing, retirement or other type of senior housing facility, ensure that small, passive-use parks and gardens with walkways are included in the site plans.

Strategy 6.6

When land is preserved as a result of a clustered or conservation subdivision design, work to link these protected lands with trails and greenways pursuant to the towns plan for paths and trails. Use the Town's GIS to assist in this endeavor.

Strategy 6.7

Develop greenways to connect hamlets, business centers, and other regional locations.

- a) Ensure that the local subdivision and zoning law has standards that bring about development of new greenways. Local laws can require various types of improvements and developer dedications to help foster hiking and biking. There is a great need for paths within Chatham. All decisions related to new subdivisions shall incorporate the need for planning for greenway trails.
- b) Work with other communities in the region to develop a regional bikeway plan. Also, work with the Hudson River Valley Greenway to expand that Greenway trail into Chatham.

Strategy 6.8

Continue the town's tradition of equestrian trails'. Catalog and include on the town's digital mapping system, the network of equestrian trails for landowner cooperative. Encourage real estate agents and new landowners to work together to protect access to these trails and enlighten them on the town's equestrian tradition.

Strategy 6.9

The town shall use tax incentive policies as tools to encourage landowner participation for the achievement of the goal listed above.

Strategy 6.10

For new developments where the only possible ingress and egress is a dead-end road, a public trail with interconnection to a public road (i.e., a road other than the one where the cul-de-sac originates) will be provided.

## **Arts**

### **A Vision for Arts in Chatham**

Our town is fortunate to enjoy a vibrant arts community. Our townspeople understand the need for and appreciate the arts. We have access to a diverse variety of arts venues both within our town and nearby. Our public schools offer many opportunities in the arts both for our young students and for older people through an excellent adult education program. We continue to enjoy the diverse arts related businesses both within Chatham and neighboring towns which expand our arts experience. The arts are complemented and further promoted by our easy access to Hudson, Albany, and the Berkshires. Our town is known for major arts events, such as the Chatham Film Festival, drawing people to Chatham. Our artisans are supported by a state-of-the-art infrastructure allowing them to work in Chatham and not in a typical urban setting.

### **Goals and Strategies**

#### **Goal 1. The Town is an arts friendly community.**

##### Strategy 1.1

Include arts and culture as integral components of land use planning and long-range strategies.

- a) Site plan, zoning, and subdivision review processes shall pay careful attention on how new development impacts the cultural (including historic) character of Chatham. Amend these laws to include this philosophy.

##### Strategy 1.2

Review regulations, identify, and remove unnecessary barriers to arts-related activities and enterprises.

##### Strategy 1.3

Make cultural experiences accessible to the widest possible public by removing economic, physical or other barriers to participation. Ensure that all public facilities are ADA (Americans with Disability Act) compliant.

##### Strategy 1.4

Develop programs that consider the interests and diversity of the entire community.

##### Strategy 1.5

Use marketing and signage to promote the arts and culture to residents and visitors.

**Goal 2. Cooperation between the Town, local schools, private business owners, local artisans and arts related organizations creates quality opportunities for participating in and appreciating the arts.**

Strategy 2.1

Encourage non-arts organizations, such as community development groups, human services, and development organizations to sponsor arts and cultural venues, programs and events.

Strategy 2.2

Include artistic and cultural organizations, institutions and businesses in any business recruitment and retention efforts in Chatham.

Strategy 2.3

Support development of a regional alliance with other organizations to market and promote Chatham's arts and cultural offerings.

Strategy 2.4

Support grant writing and actively seek funds for arts and cultural programs.

**Goal 3. The Town encourages growth and development that supports recreation, arts and our historical character.**

Strategy 3.1

Encourage non-profit and private arts organizations to work closely with historic preservation organizations to find ways to preserve historic structures for adaptive reuse in arts and culture.

Strategy 3.2

Promote transportation planning that increases access to all locations in Chatham.

Strategy 3.3

Establish a per lot recreation and arts fee to be collected when properties are subdivided. This fee must be dedicated to support recreational and arts activities in Chatham.

**Goal 4. The arts programs within the Town provide high quality opportunities for education and cultural development for all ages.**

Strategy 4.1

The Town, Public Schools and other community organizations collaborate to provide adequate facilities and after school programs for the arts.

Strategy 4.2

Assist in the development of partnerships that increases exposure of students to arts and cultural activities.

Strategy 4.3

The Town requires adequate parking for arts related activities.

## ***Historic Character***

### **A Vision for the Historic Character in Chatham's**

We, the residents of Chatham, cherish our long and proud history. We work hard to retain our community's historic character because we recognize, as did our predecessors, the roots of our rich rural, agricultural and railroad heritage. As residents we value the breathtaking beauty and splendid landscapes all of which continue to attract people to our town and contribute to our quality of life. The Town's extraordinary number of historic buildings, structures, scenic roadways, places of worship, burial grounds, stonewalls, and powerful streams are integral to its beauty, sense of place, sense of community, economy and attraction as a visitor destination and residential home market. Through support of both the Town and Village governments and other public and private sources we are able to preserve an unusually high number of historic register-eligible homes and structures. Residents and businesses are supportive of new residential and commercial development that minimally impacts our open spaces and is consistent with our historical, architectural and rural character. They support the traditional settlement pattern of our hamlets, farms, open spaces and beautiful country roads and byways. We have several historical societies that work together and assist our local schools in educating our young and new residents about our historical character so that they too learn to appreciate this important part of our community. Through their efforts our children, new-comers and visitors come to know, understand and appreciate the extraordinary legacy of those who came before us and join with us to preserve our bond with our shared past.

**What is Historic Character?** This term describes the individual or collective qualities and attributes of Chatham's physical and visual landscape that embody or evoke the events, places, traditions, struggles, fashions, movements, and personalities of its past. Historic character also describes the unique architectural style and scale, including color, proportion, form, and architectural detail.

Unique to each community, historic character provides a modern resident or visitor connections to the past life and narrative of the community as well as conveying its unique role within the regional context. However, the physical layout of the community, its landscape patterns, the pre-automobile network of roads, and other elements also contribute strongly to Chatham's historic character. Among these elements are active agricultural operations with low density residential development interspersed with denser population centers such as the hamlets and village, roads and windbreaks lined with old mature trees, stone walls, deep rural setbacks, and small/irregular field or pasture dimensions.

Specifically, Chatham's historic character is strengthened by the presence of historic farmhouses, barns and out-buildings from the periods of its settlement by Dutch farmers in the 1700's, its growth into an established farm community during the early 1800's, the founding and expansion of Shaker settlements in and around New Lebanon from the end

of the 18<sup>th</sup> through the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its heyday as both a farm and commercial center under the influence of the railroads during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Chatham's historic character is also boosted by the presence of sites or qualities related to the following NY State and Federal Historic Register listed properties: Riders Mills Historic District, James Van Valkenburgh House, Taconic State Parkway, Spangler Bridge, Knollcroft, 303 Kinderhook Lane, John S. Williams House & Farm, Wilbor House, and Peck House.

## **Goals and Strategies**

### **Goal 1. Growth and development is consistent with our historic character.**

#### Strategy 1.1

Include historical character in the Site Plan review section of Zoning by significantly strengthening 180-17 to specifically require that the Planning Board review proposals for their compatibility with the historical character of the neighborhood (especially in the hamlet) and provide standards for that review.

- a) Create an Architectural and Historic Advisory Review Council to act in an advisory capacity to the code and zoning enforcement officer, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Town Board. Similar in function to the Conservation Advisory Council (Section 134 of the Chatham Code), the town shall clearly define the role and procedures for this council.

#### Strategy 1.2

Require exterior building design standards for commercial uses to ensure they are consistent with the traditional and historical character of the area. These would be standards required through a strengthened Site Plan Review section of the zoning law and would be administered by the Planning Board.

- a) The Town could set up a voluntary advisory committee to support the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals in their reviews.

#### Strategy 1.3

Zoning shall be amended so that Hamlet lot size and dimension requirements match the historic development patterns in that hamlet. Hamlet standards shall be different from that in the Rural Land districts. The purpose of hamlet districts shall be to strengthen and continue the traditional growth patterns of a hamlet setting, (e.g. Minimum setbacks consistent with hamlet development are needed). See also Strategy 1.1, Page 37.

#### Strategy 1.4

Very long setbacks may be needed instead of the existing 50' setback, and allow for use of flag lots as long as specific standards are met.). See also Housing subcommittee goals and strategies for discussion of Rural Standards Guidelines<sup>18</sup>.

#### Strategy 1.5

Include historic character during subdivision review.

#### Strategy 1.6

For publicly funded projects that come before the Planning Board, ZBA or Town Board, ensure that the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau of the State Historic Preservation Office is involved in project review. Through its review, the Bureau identifies historic resources involved in public projects and assists with developing preservation approaches. This environmental review process ensures that historic preservation is considered in the planning of publicly funded projects.

#### Strategy 1.7

Use the applicable laws that can help Chatham protect historic resources. These include Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 which directs federal agencies to consider historic resources in their project planning. New York State has a parallel law for state agencies in Section 14.09 of the State Preservation Act of 1980.

#### Strategy 1.8

Ensure that the impact on historic character, landscapes, and structures is evaluated for all projects that are subject to SEQRA.

#### Strategy 1.9

Create an inventory of historic buildings town-wide. Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings that retains its historic character. This can for example, be accomplished through creation of a revolving restoration loan fund to assist owners in improving historic properties, building façade improvement grants, and tax incentives. Zoning shall specifically allow conversion of buildings to new uses as a specially permitted use, rather than promote demolition of existing buildings. Site plan review and special use permit review processes shall ensure that historic character is retained when a structure is adaptively reused.

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<sup>18</sup> Refer to the following resources for Rural Standard Guidelines which shall be inclusive of hamlet structures, accessory apartments, secondary and ECHO dwellings and rural residential and details standards for siting and design guidelines. Additionally, see Land use subcommittee strategies. Resources: 1) Kendig, L. *Too Big, Boring, or Ugly: Planning and Design Tools to Combat Monotony, the Too-Big House, and Teardowns*. American Planning Association, 2004. 2) Stolzenburg, N. *Town of Berne Hamlet Design Guidelines*. Draft October 2003. 3) Town of Warwick: *A Manual of Design Guidelines*, 2002. 4) Arendt, R. *Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods, Old and New*. American Planning Association, 1999.

#### Strategy 1.10

All land use regulations shall define a historic structure to be more inclusive and include out-buildings, stone walls, mill remnants, rail road beds, barns, etc.

#### Strategy 1.11

A new section shall be added to zoning to review demolition in the Hamlets. This new language shall endeavor to preserve those structures listed or eligible for listing as a historic structure. Until an inventory has been created identifying these structures, use the standard that demolition of any structure over 125 years would be reviewed by the Town. The review shall also concentrate on safety and shall require a special use permit for demolition when the structure is within 30 feet of an adjacent structure. Demolition could be required to go through a site plan review process, or could be a separate process whereby a demolition permit is issued. In this way, the Town not only help protect historic structures, but could ensure that conditions are created after demolition that does not create hazards, safety concerns, or aesthetic impacts to historic and other neighborhood resources. This would allow some review prior to demolition of historic structures. As an alternative, Chatham can consider adopting a local historic district law that would require establishment of a historic review commission. The historic review commission could recommend and administer permitting criteria and evaluate and review demolition requests. Additionally, the commission could designate zones in which permitting requirements would apply.

### **Goal 2. The Town's historic structures, landscapes and cemeteries are identified, protected and preserved for the enjoyment of all.**

#### Strategy 2.1

The Town shall support and encourage placement of homes, structures and districts throughout Town on the national and state registers of historic places through the effort of the Town Historian.

#### Strategy 2.2

Digitize information from any updated historic inventory and develop a comprehensive map of historic resources for the town that includes the GIS map of structures known to be built prior to 1950 and cemeteries. Make this map and information widely available for use.

#### Strategy 2.3

Evaluate the historic resource inventory in Chatham and determine if it is feasible to move forward with a nomination for a national historic district in one or more of the following locations: Chatham Center, East Chatham, North Chatham, Old Chatham, Malden Bridge, New Concord and Rayville.

#### Strategy 2.4

Expand use of historic markers in town. Identify through deed records and other information, construction dates of historic buildings, and provide each landowner

with a small plaque indicating the buildings date. The plaque is mounted on the exterior of the structure. Work with the New York Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation to obtain markers for historical sites. Add all markers to the historic inventory map.

#### Strategy 2.5

Provide local incentives to private landowners that preserve and rehabilitate historic structures or locations. These incentives can include a) educating them about state and national tax benefits already available for historic properties on the register, b) a historic landowner recognition program (awards, certificates, plaques, etc.), c) local tax incentives, or d) use of façade easement programs (The Town can hold a historic easement on a structure to ensure that the historic qualities are preserved permanently).

### **Goal 3. Historical programs provide high quality opportunities for education and an appreciation for our history and heritage for all ages.**

#### Strategy 3.1

Develop a historic home/structure tour of the Town for the public.

#### Strategy 3.2

Create a space for historical exhibits, documents, and programs.

#### Strategy 3.3

Sponsor a town newsletter that contains a regular historic and cultural column and/or sponsor a regular column in the local paper for this purpose. You may want to expand the role of the historian to accomplish this, or you may want to fund a professional writer. All articles created for this purpose could also be in brochure format and on a web site.

#### Strategy 3.4

The Town can sponsor an oral history program where those who are knowledgeable about town's history, places, stories, items, etc. come together to discuss it and the conversation is recorded permanently as a permanent archive.

## ***Farming***

### **A Vision for Farming in Chatham**

Chatham has made a long-term commitment to being and remaining a farm community, and we make every effort to honor this commitment. We believe that by preserving the town's farmland, we protect open rural space, natural resources, and the agrarian roots that make Chatham a special place to live. We continue to commit significant resources dedicated to the long-term preservation of farmland. We believe that farming and ag-related business are a significant part of Chatham's economy. The town is recognized as a farm-friendly community. Policies and procedures reflect this status and facilitate rather than hinder farming operations as businesses. The town understands the true cost of services to farms, residences, and businesses and makes policy decisions that equalize the financial burden among these entities. We believe in the importance of locally grown, healthy, fresh food. We work, often in partnership with other organizations, to ensure a sustainable local food network for our town.

### **Goals and Strategies**

#### **Goal 1. Chatham nurtures and sustains a viable agricultural economy.**

##### Strategy 1.1

The town board maintains an advisory board called the Chatham Agricultural Partnership (CAP) to assist with the implementation of the farming strategies contained herein. The CAP also promotes agriculture, coordinates citizen involvement, and investigates and coordinates access to private and public funds for ag-related initiatives. The CAP reports to the town board and includes at least one town board member and members of the farm community.

##### Strategy 1.2

The CAP shall facilitate a mutually beneficial relationship between farmers and landowners to promote stability in the agricultural economy.

- a) Disseminate a model lease, economic data, and other relevant information on the Keep Farming website.
- b) Create mechanisms, including the website, to help interested farmers and landowners find each other and enter into relationships that are mutually beneficial.
- c) Promote agricultural assessments with landowners and farmers. Increase the number of farmers and landowners participating in the current ag assessment program and work to provide accurate information, methods, and techniques on the program requirements.
- d) Promote ways to engage, educate, and recognize landowners on an ongoing basis to reinforce their understanding of and commitment to their role in the local farming community.

- e) Encourage farmers to serve on the County Industrial Development Agency, the Chamber of Commerce, any local economic development committee that forms, as well as on various town boards and committees.
- f) Provide easy linkage between the town website and the Keep Farming website and/or put some of the material on both sites.
- g) 2/3's of Chatham's farmland is used for dairy farming, a sector at high risk. The town should strive to achieve a "zero net loss" of active farmland by providing assistance for those interested in transitioning into new types of farming and those interested in entering farming.
- h) Look for opportunities to help farmers take advantage of diversifying their farming operations and catering to niche markets. The town shall support the development of small, niche farms.
- i) Provide information on the website to help farmers seek assistance in diversification efforts.
- j) The CAP could work with a) an interested dairy farmer; or b) someone interested in entering farming; or c) someone who owns a large tract of land who wishes to convert to agricultural use to secure funding for a feasibility study to determine the best way to convert the active farmland to a different, more economically healthy agricultural option.
- k) Support the use of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to provide working capital for farming conversions and transitions. This includes a) supporting applications for state PDR funds in conjunction with individual farms and the Columbia Land Conservancy; and b) generating funds for a dedicated Farmland Preservation Fund at the town level.
- l) Act with other towns in the Hudson Valley to promote a regional farming agenda and to enhance the town's ability to impact issues such as farm policies, taxes, and enhanced funding for agricultural issues.
- m) As part of regional activism, place a high priority on getting the State to apply agricultural exemptions to both land and buildings as long as the land is being farmed.
- n) Leverage the capabilities of local organizations to act in areas of mutual interest.
- o) Encourage town assessors to seek special training about the assessment of farm structures to ensure that farm building assessments are fair and accurate.
- p) Investigate and consider establishing additional tax incentive programs for farms at the local and regional levels.
- q) Implement land use management policies that support the economic viability of farm operations.
- r) Review existing land use patterns and ensure that the NYS agricultural district designation is applicable to most working farmland.
- s) Ensure that zoning is "farm friendly" and allows a variety of agricultural uses and permits other uses that are consistent with farming operations and meet the requirements of being in a NYS agricultural district. Use the NYS Agricultural and Markets guidelines to:
  1. Ensure that definitions in land use regulations are consistent with state guidelines.

2. Review and make any modifications needed to the zoning use schedule. Ensure that the schedule is flexible and permits a wide range of farm-related businesses, including bed and breakfasts, pick-your-own businesses, farm stands, and a variety of agri-tourism operations.
  3. Remove any barriers to farm operations, such as minimum acreages, as long as public health requirements are met.
  4. Modify the site review plan procedures for farm-related operations to align with the NYS model for ag site plans.
- t) Ensure that zoning allows accessory uses to agriculture such as veterinarians, equipment and supply dealers, feed milling, etc.
- u) Allow non-farm businesses on a farm property that are compatible with farm businesses, based on the following considerations:
1. The use will be of a nature, intensity, scope, size, appearance, type and quantity conforming to the existing personal or agricultural structures.
  2. New commercial buildings will be located in a way that minimizes negative impact on future operations and expansion of agricultural uses and does not interfere with current agricultural operations or displace farm storage, use, or functions. Whenever possible, new buildings shall be placed on or adjacent to the existing footprint.
  3. The business will be conducted primarily by persons who reside on the farm or members of the farm family or farm employees.
  4. The non-farm use is subordinate to the farm operation.
  5. The proposed use is not excessively more valuable than existing structures that would make the subsequent sale of the farm to a bona fide farmer unlikely.
- v) Protect agricultural operations from disruptions or constraints associated with adjacent non-agricultural development by developing standards that require buffer zones, maintenance of farm roads, and access to back farm fields.
- w) Develop and adopt a right-to-farm law to provide legal protection for farmers. Include in this law a requirement for mediation between farmers and non-farm neighbors before the courts are involved. The right-to-farm law shall contain language to be legally sustainable. It shall include clear definitions of sound agricultural practices, mechanisms for dispute resolution, and statements of intent and purpose.

## **Goal 2. Chatham supports and sustains a system of locally grown, healthy foods.**

### Strategy 2.1

Support the development of the infrastructure necessary to provide a sustainable, local healthy food system.

- a) Work with existing vegetable farmers, the Columbia Hudson Partnership, and other local cold storage facilities to provide adequate, cost-effective vegetable cold storage, particularly for seasonal storage of root crops, and potentially other vegetables as well.

- b) Work with existing Columbia County organic farmers (e.g. Hawthorne Valley, Little Seed Gardens, Miller’s Crossing, Roxbury and Threshold) and compost processors (e.g. Hudson Valley, Gro-Max, and McEnroe) to ensure the availability of sufficient bulk compost for organic farming.
- c) Support local food retail and distribution facilities through advertising and community education campaigns.
- d) Continue to use the brand for “Chatham Grown” products.
- e) Act with other towns in the Hudson Valley to help form partnerships that enhance the ability of Chatham farmers to store, package, market and distribute local products more effectively.

**Goal 3. Chatham is a “farm friendly” town.**

Strategy 3.1

Work with the Town Board to establish an identity consistent with the town’s vision for agriculture.

- a) The town to pass a declaration proclaiming that we are a “farm friendly” community.
- b) The town to place signs on major entry points to Chatham saying, “Welcome to Chatham: A Farm Friendly Community.”
- c) Increase understanding of the town board, planning board, and ZBA on the range of farmland protection techniques that are available for their use.
- d) Use the New York State Agricultural District designation that covers much of the town (8,371 acres) to protect farms and farming.
  - 1. Promote agricultural assessments for all eligible landowners.
  - 2. Promote understanding of the requirements and benefits of being an agricultural district with farmers, landowners, residents, and elected officials.
  - 3. The town shall review policies and make amendments where necessary to ensure compliance with relevant Ag and Market laws.
  - 4. The Planning Board or ZBA shall carefully evaluate the impacts of any project being reviewed and subject to SEQRA in an agricultural district. This shall be done for any project within the agricultural district and within 500’ of the boundary of the district.
  - 5. Develop a review process for the Planning Board and/or ZBA to use to enhance their evaluation of projects and their impact on agriculture. This review process could that include the following steps:
    - a) Determine the existing farming conditions to ensure the proposed land uses do not conflict with these farming activities.
    - b) Ensure the proposal complies with the town’s comprehensive plan and zoning documents and is in accordance with other town laws regarding land development.
    - c) Assess any negative impact, including:

1. Will the new use negatively impact a farmer's ability to use existing right-of-ways or farm roads needed to access fields?
2. Will the new use affect land values and rental rates for agriculture?
3. If new public roads are to be built, will they accommodate agricultural equipment and traffic?
4. Will the new use spur additional non-farm development in the future?
5. Is the landowner familiar with nearby agricultural practices that will be used?
6. Will the new use remove significant amount of land from being available for farming?

**Goal 4. Community awareness of the importance of agriculture in Chatham is promoted.**

Strategy 4.1

Provide ongoing community education and awareness.

- a) Educate residents about cost of services and the value of having land in farm production.
- b) Educate residents about the importance of agriculture to the town's economy.
- c) Building permits for ag districts shall include a disclosure statement to be signed.
- d) Work with realtors to educate people moving to Chatham about what living in an agricultural district means. Sellers of land, buyers of land, and real estate agents must be made aware of the disclosure requirements of AML Article 25-AA, Section 310. The town shall ensure that this is done.

**Goal 5. By protecting farmland, Chatham preserves property values, stabilizes property taxes, and maintains the attractiveness and unique rural character of the community.**

Strategy 5.1

Preserve as much of the town's remaining active farmland as possible through a multi-pronged strategy:

- a) Encourage voluntary conservation easements, especially on parcels of land used for agriculture but not owned by farmers. Partner with the Columbia Land Conservancy and similar organizations to promote and support these efforts.
- b) Partner with the Columbia Land Conservancy and similar organizations to encourage term easements as a way to an alternative way to conserve land.
- c) Investigate and consider joining conservation easements (permanent or term) with a tax incentive.
- d) Develop a PDR or LDR program with willing landowners on lands identified by the Chatham Agricultural Partnership and included in this plan as being the highest priority land to preserve.
- e) The town shall create a long-range Community Preservation Plan for the town that uses innovative land use management policies to keep agricultural land open

- and available for farming in the future while respecting the current landowner's financial position and rights. The Plan shall use the Farmland Prioritization criteria and rankings developed by the Chatham Agricultural Partnership and included in this plan to prioritize requests for PDR or LDR funding.
- f) The town shall create a PDR/LDR program where the non-agricultural rights of important farmland are purchased from landowners on a voluntary basis by a non-profit conservation organization such as the Columbia Land Conservancy or other similar organizations. Land preserved this way is permanently protected through deed restrictions. In addition to preserving land for agricultural use, a PDR program will offer other advantages, such as:
1. Be structured as long-term installment purchases to leverage PDR funds.
  2. Be used to lease development rights in order to provide short-term protection while other conservation funds are sought.
  3. Provide capital to farmers interested in expanding or converting their business operations in some way.
  4. Provide capital to new farmers.
  5. Protects farmland while keeping it in private ownership and on the tax rolls.
- g) The PDR program could be funded through some type of bond and the monies could be used to seek matching funds. The town could submit a bond proposal to the public to generate funds specifically for the preservation of farmland, based on the criteria developed by the Chatham Keep Farming Land Team and incorporated into this comprehensive plan.
1. The Chatham Agricultural Partnership (CAP) could be authorized to move the process forward, including seeking funds and contracting to complete a fiscal analysis. The town could contract with an entity that specializes in PDR bond financing to assist the town in the technical requirements of issuing a bond.
  2. The monies generated through the bond referendum would be used principally for the purchase of development rights (PDR) while keeping the leasing of development rights (LDR) as an option to help the town buy time and stabilize its farmland base while farmers expand, diversify, or transfer their operations.
- h) The town shall petition the State to take actions consistent with those in the proposed Community Preservation Act that allow the town to create a 2% real estate transfer fee locally. This action requires the town to pass a local law and voter referendum to create a program where home buyers would pay a one-time fee up to 2% of the purchase price above the median home value in Columbia County for the purpose of farmland protection. In the short-term, the money generated by this fee could be leveraged to obtain state, federal, and private funds for a PDR program; in the long-term the money could be used to fund the debt service on bond.
- i) Amend Chapter 156 of the Chatham code to allow for placement of an agricultural member on the Town Planning Board.

- j) Require new multi-house residential development to provide their own buffer zone and/or landscape plantings for screening when the property abuts active farmland.
- k) Adaptive reuse of existing structures farm structures shall be permitted, by special use permit and subject to Rural Standard Guidelines, to become multi-unit dwellings, mixed-use dwelling, and potentially for commercial use. Adaptive reuse of farm structures shall be required to be consistent with the character of existing dwellings and within the footprint of existing lot structures. (Note: The Farming Team supports this strategy but doesn't think it belongs in this section of the plan.)
- l) A buffer will be established for hamlet development adjacent to working farms. A minimum buffer of 200 feet adjacent to hamlets and residential development will be implemented, to be extended if the nature of the farming operation requires.

## ***Natural Resources***

### **A Vision for Natural Resources in Chatham**

The Town of Chatham is rich in natural resources. Its residents and visitors respect and protect those Natural Resources: land, water, air, wildlife, rural character, scenic views, and its mineral, groundwater, and surface water rights. Those resources, in addition to Chatham's people, are an essential part of why residents choose Chatham for their primary and secondary homes and are appreciated by those who visit here. Protection and wise management of those Natural Resources through preservation of natural habitats, careful management of land/water resources, and preservation of existing agricultural lands is a mandate for the Town and its residents. The Town and its Comprehensive Plan supports preservation of those Resources and assure that they are considered in all other things it recommends.

### **Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1. The Town of Chatham includes natural resource considerations, costs, and benefits in all of its policies, programs, and regulations.**

#### Strategy 1.1

A comprehensive State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process shall be undertaken for all actions subject to this review law. All discretionary actions by the Town, including passage of new laws, plans, and approvals are subject to SEQRA.

- a) Consider establishing a local Type I list of actions that the Town feels are likely to have significant impacts on the community to be sure that they are subject to a comprehensive environmental review.
- b) All board members shall receive training in SEQRA in order to maximize the effectiveness of this law.
- c) Chatham shall utilize its local law 134 to initiate a strong Conservation Advisory Council (CAC). Consider amending this local law so that the CAC can also assist the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals on matters affecting the natural environment. Involve the CAC as the environmental advisors for all boards in the Town. (For example, the CAC can do a site visit to a proposed subdivision and make recommendations to the planning board about mitigating any possible environmental impacts.)
- d) All local laws shall be reviewed and amended where necessary to strengthen the role and requirements of SEQRA in each review process.

#### Strategy 1.2

Develop native green energy sources (See also Goal 11, Infrastructure).

**Goal 2. Chatham preserves and protects those areas that are most valuable for agricultural use, as well as wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, and areas which are environmentally sensitive.**

Strategy 2.1

See farming related strategies. Preservation of farm land and active farms is important to also protecting wildlife habitats, scenic vistas and environmentally sensitive areas.

Strategy 2.2 Wildlife Habitats

- a) Develop and implement a program to survey wildlife and wildlife habitats (including old growth trees) in order to identify species and their habitats which require protection. Specifically try to identify natural areas that are not currently fragmented by roads or residential development and strive to protect these areas. Discourage development in areas that require protection. Refer to the New York State Natural Heritage Program definitions of rare and critical species and habitats for this purpose.
  - 1. Participate in the wildlife inventory program such as the one sponsored by Hudsonia.
  - 2. The CAC (discussed above) shall take a lead role in coordinating the inventory effort. This group shall involve the public in a significant way to complete this inventory. They shall also involve DEC and Natural Heritage staff and resources.
  - 3. Map all inventoried resources on the town's GIS and utilize this information during project review. (See all maps contained in Part II.)
  
- b) During site plan review and subdivision development review for projects throughout Town, map and seek to protect important wildlife habitats (as defined by New York State Natural Heritage Program or other similar programs.)
  - 1. Maintain buffers between areas dominated by human activities and important wildlife habitats.
  - 2. Provide for parcels of land that are as large and contiguous as possible and maintain connectivity between these sites to preserve wildlife habitats.
  - 3. Minimize habitat alterations during construction and manage vegetation to enhance habitats to mimic natural features.
  
- c) Provide special protection for smaller wetland habitats including vernal pools that are important for avian, amphibian, and reptilian species as well as rare or threatened plants. Smaller wetlands would include all of those already regulated by the NYDEC as well as those regulated by EPA and Corps of Engineers wetlands regulations. They are usually classified according to their plant species, soils, and size and their importance to the wildlife and plant ecology of an area.

1. Place a minimum 100' buffer or greater as warranted by site conditions around all wetlands.
  2. Ensure that during development critical hydrogeological and environmental connections between small wetlands are maintained to preserve ecological functioning and wildlife travel corridors.
  3. Place a setback or buffer of development from all flowing streams.
- d) Ensure that site plan, subdivision and other town laws authorize the Planning Board to review projects for effective site planning related to wildlife and wildlife habitats.

### **Goal 3. Scenic Vistas and Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

#### Strategy 3.1

Use the ridgeline analysis included in this plan to evaluate impacts of development on ridgelines and to determine the view potential associated with that ridgeline. Further, use this information during project review to mitigate or eliminate negative impacts on important viewsheds. See Appendix G for additional information on ridgelines in Town and recommendations to protect those resources.

#### Strategy 3.2

Use other information such as ridgelines, important scenic and environmentally sensitive locations (such as wetlands, ridges, steep slopes, streams and stream banks, critical habitats, etc.) that is mapped and included in the town's GIS database during project review to mitigate negative impacts on these resources.

#### Strategy 3.3

Protection of views and critical environmental locations shall be an important component of zoning, site plan, and subdivision review processes. Develop other regulatory controls to protect critical scenic areas:

- a) Consider use of a density bonus for those landowners/developers who voluntarily protect important views that may be included in their property.
- c) All waterbodies, streams, wetlands, and other critical environmental locations in Chatham shall be excluded from the land area used by an applicant for development in the calculation of permitted densities for construction. This is a net density approach. (See Also Strategy 1.5, Page 16 and Appendix D).
- d) During site plan review, applications shall be required to demonstrate the impact of proposed building and landscaping on neighboring properties and authorize the planning board to place conditions on approvals to mitigate negative impacts to viewsheds.
- e) Clustering and/or conservation subdivision layouts shall be utilized to protect scenic views.

- f.) The Planning Board shall be required to visit and view each property before any Planning Board decision is made regarding that property and area. This shall be incorporated into the review procedures of the Planning Board.
- g) Sign controls: amend zoning to more effectively regulate height of signs, as well as more details on placement, lighting and landscaping of signs. Also consider adding design standards or guidelines for signs and billboards.
- h) Incorporate natural vegetation and native plants to maintain and blend in with rural character and views during development.
- i) Setback requirements: Setbacks of structures significantly affects the character as viewed from the road. Consider implementing alternative or flexible setbacks to protect viewsheds.
- j) Slope protection standards: Consider establishing additional regulations for erosion and sediment control when building on slopes in excess of 15% or 20%.
- k) Establish a building envelope for each site in subdivision. The envelope would include site disturbances of the structure, accessory structures, utilities, services, drainage areas and septic fields. Amend subdivision law to require establishment of building envelopes on the subdivision plat using criteria designed to minimize visual impacts, prevent erosion, and promote fire prevention and safety, and preservation of significant vegetation, if present.
- l) Consider the effects of “light pollution” from developments, especially those located high on ridges. All night lighting (dusk to dawn automatic) is probably unnecessary.
- m) Identify and prioritize vistas. Some of the areas that relate to scenic vistas that shall be studied include long and short views from public roads and places, loss of historic character, use of underground wires, lighting standards and glare, cell and wind tower placement, and views of ridgeline (see Ridgeline Identification maps.)

#### Strategy 3.4

Chatham shall consider other permanent ways to preserve important locations and scenic views including fee simple purchases, easements and purchase of development rights programs or a leaseback arrangement where the land is purchased by the town from a willing landowner and then leased back, subject to certain restrictions for management of the scenic (or other) resources.

#### Strategy 3.5

Develop non-regulatory programs to protect scenic locations such as:

- a) A Chatham Landscape Field Guide illustrating and describing the component parts of the towns rural landscape, developing an interpretive tour guide for local roads, and developing roadside viewing pull offs.
- b) Develop a property owner’s guide that provides information to people who own land with scenic resources on how to make changes to their property in keeping with the visual character of the area. This guide could contain information on planting, paving, clearing vegetation, fencing, etc.

- c) Develop a citizen educational program to inform citizens about the importance of scenic vistas and viewsheds and to encourage voluntary protection. This could include community walks or drives, photographic exhibitions, or slide shows.
- d) The recommended rural siting and development standards shall include tools to protect scenic views. This document shall include a discussion of use of setbacks, screening (or lack of), land clearing, and alternate layouts of new homes using clustering or conservation subdivision design so that new landowners are aware of these resources and issues.
- e) Consider use of monetary incentives through use of tax abatement programs, assistance through grants and loans, a density bonus, or reimbursement for expenses to protect these resources.
- f) Designate local roads as “Scenic”. The goal of having one or more scenic roads is to educate the public, protect and enhance the resources, and enhance opportunities for recreation. Designation without other controls through zoning could help accomplish the educational and recreational goals most effectively. (See below.) Designation without further controls is considered to be a good place to start as it can help achieve a strong base of community support.

**Goal 4. The Town of Chatham protects and preserves its ground and surface water resources from pollution and overuse.**

Strategy 4.1

Set up a program to track water use and water quality for ground and surface waters. There is a County-wide program which requires the logging of drilled wells. The Town should tap into this resource to follow water use and resources.

- a) Consider having a local requirement for filing of well logs so that information is readily available for water evaluations. Periodically obtain well logs that may be filed at the County to have that data available as well. When this data becomes available, it can be mapped and evaluated by a geologist or hydrogeologist to help you determine any ground or surface water issues that need to be incorporated into future planning. This is one of the easiest ways to obtain valuable information on ground water resources.

Strategy 4.2

Ensure that development meets DEC stormwater discharge regulations and that town personnel are properly trained on an on-going basis related to these regulations.

Strategy 4.3

It shall be a policy of the town to ensure that stormwater runoff rate after development does not exceed the rate that existed prior to the site being developed. Maintain and strengthen drainage improvement language in the Subdivision law, as follows: Consider placing impervious surface limits, and building retention and detention ponds, swales, and infiltration devices. All site plans and major subdivisions shall incorporate soil erosion and sediment control programs.

#### Strategy 4.5

Consider implementing Low Impact Development (LID) standards in subdivision and zoning to reduce the volume of runoff and improve water quality by preserving the natural hydrology of a site. Some of the methods of LID are:

- a) Where soil permeability is minimal, or where lot sizes are small, require driveways to be constructed of pervious materials (concrete pavers or crushed stone, for example) and recommend it in other areas.
- b) Clarify existing zoning use of “lot occupancy total” and instead establish a maximum impervious surface ratio for new development (number of acres of impervious surface divided by the total site area). This usually ranges from 30 to 50%.
- c) New road standards, adopted by the Town in a highway law, shall allow for construction of narrower roads (20 to 22 feet).
- d) Utilize clustering or conservation subdivision design to keep floodplains and highly erodible areas free from development.
- e) Apply setback standards from streams to protect waterways from erosion and water-quality degradation due to runoff caused by development. A typical setback is 100 feet, but it can vary due to slope. (This is same as strategy for other goals)
- h) Use cisterns for rainwater capture and reuse, and bio-retention techniques.

#### Strategy 4.6

Provide educational materials on drainage and water quality to all who seek a building permit for constructing a new home. Use the list already developed by DEC.

#### Strategy 4.7

Ensure that all highway personnel receive training on the state and federal Storm Water Regulations as they are updated to minimize impact of road building and maintenance activities.

#### Strategy 4.8

Implement Best Management Practices as soon as possible after road construction or maintenance activities (use hydro-seeding or other approved methods) to re-vegetate areas left bare. (See also strategies related to Infrastructure, page 45.)

#### Strategy 4.9

The Town Highway Department shall develop a plan, subject to available funding, to remediate ditches in poor condition as these can contribute high levels of sedimentation to the towns’ waterways.

#### Strategy 4.10

Encourage voluntary adoption of Best Management Practices by farm operations and encourage participation in the federally sponsored Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program for farms.

Strategy 4.11

Ensure that reviewing boards are familiar with and utilize the most recent version of the New York Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control.

Strategy 4.12

During project review, provide applicants with a stormwater pollution prevention plan checklist. This could be modeled after the sample provided in New York Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control.

Strategy 4.13

Significantly strengthen site plan sections of zoning related to site plan review so that standards and expectations for new development related to water quality are clearly detailed.

Strategy 4.14

Initiate a logging permit program.

Strategy 4.15

Encourage people to take advantage of existing training programs related to logging and timber programs.

Strategy 4.16

Maintain current zoning regulations related to mining.

**Goal 5. Chatham is sensitive to and aware of local and regional air quality issues.**

Strategy 5.1

All actions subject to SEQRA shall be comprehensively analyzed for impacts to air quality.

Strategy 5.2

Adopt regulations that control outdoor furnaces.

Strategy 5.3

Adopt prohibition to burn barrels.

**Goal 6. Chatham has regulations addressing outdoor lighting to limit its effects on neighboring properties and to reduce environmental glare from new commercial and residential building. Outdoor lights can have serious impacts to rural character and many people value dark skies.**

Strategy 6.1

Strengthen Outdoor Lighting, Section 180-33(B).

Strategy 6.2

Develop standards for outdoor lighting (e.g., sodium vapor) which limits lighting intensity and directs light downward to minimize glare.

Strategy 6.3

Create outdoor lighting standards specific to each of the following: commercial, rural residential, and hamlet residential.

Strategy 6.4

Reference use standards from professional lighting associations such as International Dark-Sky Association, New England Light Pollution Advisory Group, and Illumination Society of North America.

Strategy 6.5

Amend town code to address violations of over lighting and strengthen zoning to ensure enforcement provisions are in place.

Strategy 6.6

Consider ways to encourage voluntary compliance of existing residences and businesses for the new lighting standards.

Strategy 6.7

Allow for a density bonus as an incentive to “build green” for developers of major subdivisions. This would be an incentive to provide or construct infrastructure in as green a manner as possible, including water and sewer.

## **Sustaining and Implementing the Plan**

This section outlines an action plan to implement the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations over the next 10 to 15 years. To accomplish these tasks, leadership from the Town Board is critical and it is that Board that has the ultimate responsibility to put this plan into action. Although the Town Board has the ultimate responsibility in implementing this plan, they will need assistance from various boards, agencies, and organizations for specific strategies recommended in the plan.

The Town Board should begin implementation of the plan by establishing an annual "implementation work plan". Some of the strategies recommended in this plan rely on other steps to be initiated before they can be successfully implemented. For example, grant or other funding should be in place first in order to fund an historic inventory. Another example would be that an inventory and analysis of viewsheds would need to be completed before a scenic view overlay district would be set up. Thus, certain strategies could be considered to be "enabling" for other strategies. These "enabling" strategies include those related to finding funding or funding sources, creation of committees and lining up the organizational structure to support plan implementation, inventory and analysis of resources in a more detailed manner, and initiation of other planning efforts such as the Capital Improvement Plan. The following goals and strategies offer additional insight, ideas, and steps that the Town Board can put to work to ensure that this plan is sustained and implemented over time.

### **Goal 1. Chatham has well trained town officials that are supported with guidance documents and enforcement provisions to implement the Comprehensive Plan and local laws.**

#### Strategy 1.1

Evaluate, on an on-going basis, the need for a full-time building code and zoning enforcement officer, whose duties include (for example) site inspections, and review of site layouts and the required development standards of the town law. The building code and enforcement officer will operate under the guidance and direction of town boards and councils.

#### Strategy 1.12

Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning and Town Board, as well as any appointed advisory council, and building inspector shall be provided with on-going training in new land use techniques, SEQRA, and legal procedures, and demonstrate established training requirements to remain on the board.

- a) Consider adopting a local law requiring annual training of all previously mentioned members of boards, councils and building inspector and ensure that the Town funds these efforts. The Town Board shall establish minimum education training requirements.

### Strategy 1.3

Have access to all relevant guidance documents available for reference by the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, and Town Board, especially those produced by the Department of Agriculture and Markets, Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation and the Town of Chatham.

### Strategy 1.4

Amend zoning to address performance bonds, escrow accounts, inspection fees and developer agreements required for major subdivisions and non-residential projects. Amend zoning to provide the Planning Board and Town Board with the authority to require performance bond, escrow accounts, inspection fees and developer agreements for necessary projects.

### Strategy 1.5

Develop and strengthen provisions for remedies for failure to adhere to zoning ordinances (such ordinances for sign and parking lot standards) and town laws.

## **Goal 2. Enhance public participation.**

### Strategy 2.1

To ensure adequate public participation, citizens shall have electronic access to town documents (e.g., Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations). Town codes shall be placed on a publicly accessible web site such as the Town of Chatham web site and 'E-Codes municipal codes on the internet' (<http://www.e-codes.generalcode.com>) and updated in a timely fashion. All applications and related documents would be available for access on the Town web site.

### Strategy 2.2

To aid in development of a review process having a high level of public participation, require applicants to submit proposals electronically so that they can be posted on the town web site during the review process.

### Strategy 2.3

Zoning shall include early public participation through a participatory design process. The key to success of creating multi-units and major subdivisions is attractive housing and site layout, provisions for amenities, and treating all residents the same. Zoning and subdivision laws shall be changed to require early community and public participation to determine the appropriateness of the new housing proposal before detailed plans have been submitted. This shall take place during the required sketch plan review process.

- a) Include guides, checklists, illustrations, and other educational materials to be given out to all those who seek a zoning, subdivision, or building permit. Through the building inspector and sketch plan phases of review, the town shall make every effort to clearly outline Chatham's expectations for

development and help applicants understand the land use planning techniques being utilized in the town.

**Goal 3. Chatham implements zoning that is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Board of Appeals, and Planning and Town Boards use this comprehensive plan for interpretation and guidance during decision making. Chatham regularly updates its comprehensive plan.**

Strategy 3.1

All board members (i.e., Town, Planning, Zoning Board of Appeals) are provided with the current Comprehensive Plan and the town code.

Strategy 3.2

The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals shall conduct an annual review of the land use laws and make recommendations for potential changes to the Town Board on an annual basis.

Strategy 3.3

To ensure continuing relevance of the Comprehensive Plan, the town shall adopt a local law requiring review of the Comprehensive Plan every five years and further the Town will make any required changes to local law reflecting the review. Additionally, the Town will conduct a town-wide survey every 10-years. The results of that review shall be completed and reported by the Town Board no later than 120 days following each five year anniversary of plan adoption. The Town Board shall develop an annual report on implementation progress for citizens.

Strategy 3.4

Chatham has clear definitions for each type of use category – permitted uses, permitted uses with special permits and non-permitted uses – as well as definitions of important words and phrases in its zoning codes. These use categories will be reviewed annually. (See Appendix E for more information.)

**Goal 4. Chatham provides guidance and a step-by-step process to developers and landowners illustrating the Town’s land-use vision, its requirements and the regulatory and participatory review process.**

Strategy 4.1

Develop resources, checklists, application forms, and other materials to provide necessary information to both applicants and reviewing boards. These resources shall be available in electronic format, posted to the town’s web site.

Strategy 4.2

To support public participation, all subdivisions and site plan reviews shall first require a sketch plan phase. This allows the applicant to discuss with the Planning Board local requirements and expectations and to demonstrate their projects conformance with town law and the comprehensive plan. The sketch plan phase also

includes public participation in the form of a hearing so that needs and issues related to the proposal can be identified as early in the review process as possible.

Strategy 4.3

Chatham requires an environmental assessment early in the review process. All local laws shall clearly detail the environmental review process and timing.

Strategy 4.4

Maintain, update, and utilize the maps (in Part II) created through the GIS for this Comprehensive Plan at all Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings and also make these available to landowners and the public, preferably via the town web site.

Strategy 4.5

Amend local laws to require that applicants prepare a public hearing notification for all property owners within 500 ft of a property subject to a review. In cases where more than one address (e.g., local and out-of-town) is provided in the tax records, notification shall be mailed to all.

Strategy 4.6

Give the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board the authority to require, at any point during site plan review, that the applicant or principal of an entity of a project personally attend a meeting.

**Goal 5. Chatham has strong working relationships among the town's boards (i.e., Town Board, Planning, Zoning Board of Appeals) and committees (e.g., Architectural and Historic Advisory Review, Comprehensive Plan Review) and with the Village of Chatham's boards and committees to support the implementation of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Chatham reaches out to surrounding towns and communities to coordinate land use planning.**

Strategy 5.1

As the town moves forward in implementing and updating this comprehensive plan, formalize a close working relationship with the Village of Chatham and bordering townships.

Strategy 5.2

Establish Chatham as an Interested Agency as per SEQRA with the Village of Chatham and bordering Townships for all actions that require an environmental review that may impact the town.

Strategy 5.3

Have representatives attend Village and other community planning boards' meetings, periodically, or at least establish a liaison with them.

Strategy 5.4

Require an annual meeting between the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to discuss issues, problems, and solutions related to land use in the Town. Consider using this annual meeting as a training opportunity with outside agencies.

Strategy 5.5

Encourage community involvement and tap into local expertise by creating a Conservation Advisory Council, an Architecture and Historic Review Advisory Council, and Park and Recreation Council. Additionally, clearly define roles and responsibilities for these councils.

Strategy 5.6

Include a provision in local laws that require the developer to establish an escrow account so that the town can be reimbursed for costs related to review of a development. Similarly, zoning shall clearly authorize reviewing boards (Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals) to hire consultants and experts, which may be needed to complete a project review. The costs of which shall be borne by the developer.

In addition to the “enabling” strategies and the sustaining strategies just listed above, it is important that the Town Board also have a tool to use to know which strategies in the Plan are of high priority. The following table is such a tool.

This table shows high, medium, and low priority strategies. High priority strategies are those that should be implemented 1 to 3 years after plan adoption. Medium priority strategies are those that should be implemented 4 to 5 years after adoption and low priority strategies are those that should be worked on after year 5. The table below has given a “ranking” to each strategy and is a compilation of all the actions identified in Volume 1 of the Town of Chatham Comprehensive Plan. Each strategy was given a ranking on a scale of 1 to 5 by the Steering Committee, with 5 being the most important. The column labeled “Ranking” is simply the summation of all the rankings given to that strategy by the Steering Committee members. Thus, the higher the number, the more consensus there was among the Steering Committee that the strategy was of high priority. It is anticipated that the table below will serve as a checklist for the Town Board and their implementing committees to use during implementation.

**Table 1: Prioritization of Strategies, listed by number.\***

	Ranking**	Rural Character	Economic Development	Housing	Infrastructure	Recreation	Arts	Historic Character	Farming	Natural Resources	Sustaining and Implementing the Plan
		See Pages 14 to 28	See Pages 29 to 36	See Pages 37 to 44	See Pages 45 to 54	See Pages 55 to 60	See Pages 61 to 63	See Pages 64 to 68	See Pages 69 to 75	See Pages 76 to 83	See Pages 84 to 91
High Priority for Years 1 through 3	35	1.7									
	34				1.3					2.1, 3.1, 3.2	3.3
	33	1.1, 2.2, 2.9, 2.10	1.5						1.2, 5.1	4.3	3.1, 3.4, 4.2
	32	1.3, 2.1, 2.7, 2.13		1.2				1.3	1.1	4.2, 4.13, 5.1	1.2
	31	1.4, 1.9, 2.3	2.1		1.1, 3.2, 3.4	6.1		1.8		4.16	1.3, 1.5, 3.2, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.4
	30	1.12, 2.11		1.1, 2.3	11.1, 11.3	2.1		1.5		4.5, 4.14	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 5.2
	29	1.2, 1.10, 2.5		2.2, 3.2	11.2			1.1, 1.4, 1.7	2.1, 3.1	3.3, 3.4, 4.11, 4.12, 6.7	
	28	1.8, 1.11, 2.4, 2.6	1.2, 1.6	2.6	2.1, 5.6			1.2, 1.6		1.1, 5.2, 6.4	2.3

		Rural Character	Economic Development	Housing	Infrastructure	Recreation	Arts	Historic Character	Farming	Natural Resources	Sustaining and Implementing the Plan
		See Pages 14 to 28	See Pages 29 to 36	See Pages 37 to 44	See Pages 45 to 54	See Pages 55 to 60	See Pages 61 to 63	See Pages 64 to 68	See Pages 69 to 75	See Pages 76 to 83	See Pages 84 to 91
Medium Priority for Years 4 through 5	Ranking** 27	1.5	1.3		1.2, 2.2, 3.5, 4.1					4.8, 4.9, 4.15, 6.2	2.2, 5.6
	26	2.8	1.4	3.1, 4.1	3.1, 3.3, 5.2, 5.4, 8.1, 11.5	6.6			4.1	4.6, 4.10, 6.1	
	25		1.7	2.7	5.1, 5.5, 8.2	6.2, 6.3		1.10, 2.2		2.2, 4.7, 6.3, 6.5	5.3
	24	2.12		2.8, 3.3		3.1, 6.5				3.5, 4.1	5.5
	23				7.1, 11.4	1.1, 1.5, 4.1	1.2	1.9, 1.11			4.6
	22	1.6				5.4				5.3	
	21		1.1	2.9	9.1, 9.2, 9.3		1.3	2.1		6.6	5.1
Lower Priority for Years 5+	20			2.10	1.4, 10.2	2.2, 6.7, 6.8	3.1				
	19		2.2, 3.2			1.2, 1.3, 2.7, 6.10	1.1				
	18		3.1, 4.2		1.5, 5.3, 10.1, 10.3	1.4, 1.6, 6.9	2.4	2.3, 2.4, 2.5			

17

4.1

2.5

2.4

1.4,  
1.5,  
3.2,

	<b>Rural Character</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Housing</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Arts</b>	<b>Historic Character</b>	<b>Farming</b>	<b>Natural Resources</b>	<b>Sustaining and Implementing the Plan</b>
	See Pages 14 to 28	See Pages 29 to 36	See Pages 37 to 44	See Pages 45 to 54	See Pages 55 to 60	See Pages 61 to 63	See Pages 64 to 68	See Pages 69 to 75	See Pages 76 to 83	See Pages 84 to 91
<b>Ranking**</b>						4.3				
<b>16</b>			2.4		2.3, 5.1	2.2	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4			
<b>15</b>			2.1	6.1	5.3	2.1, 2.3				
<b>14</b>		2.3			2.6					
<b>13</b>					2.5	4.1				
<b>12</b>					5.2	4.2				
<b>11</b>										
<b>10</b>						3.3				

\* Strategies listed in this table in a shaded box indicate that it is an enabling strategy that other strategies might depend on.

\*\* Ranking: Were calculated from a summation of rankings by the Steering Committee membership.

## Maps

- A. The following maps are included in the plan and are located on the Town of Chatham Comprehensive Plan Map CD attached to this document.

### Resource Maps:

- Roads and Property Boundaries
- Topography
- Steep Slopes
- Bedrock Geology
- Surficial Geology
- Watersheds
- Water Features
- Property Class
- Agriculture
- Farmland
- Farmland Soils
- Agriculture Class Parcels
- Chatham Agricultural Partnership - Identified Farmland in Chatham
- Protected Lands
- Zoning
- Historic Sites
- Year Built - Before 1980
- Aerial Photos - 1994
- Aerial Photos - 2004
- School Districts

### Analysis Maps:

- Buildout Analysis - Existing Residential Uses
- Buildout Analysis - Fully Built Parcels
- Buildout Analysis - Buildable Parcels
- Buildout Analysis - Environmental Constraints
- Buildout Analysis - Potential New Residential Uses (Using Current Zoning and Without Considering Environmental Constraints)
- Buildout Analysis - Potential New Residential Uses (Using Current Zoning and Considering Environmental Constraints)
- Conceptual Zoning Districts
- Buildout Analysis Using Conceptual Zoning - Potential New Residential Uses (Proposed Zoning without Considering Environmental Constraints)
- Buildout Analysis Using Conceptual Zoning - Potential New Residential Uses (Proposed Zoning Considering Environmental Constraints)
- Buildout Analysis Using Conceptual Zoning - Potential New Residential Uses (Proposed Zoning Using Environmental Control Formula)
- Ranking for Prioritizing Agriculture Protection Efforts Draft
- Ridgeline Identification

Ridgeline Aerial Photos  
Ridgeline Identification without Ranking