



# Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Community Visioning

Final Visioning Report  
Town of Brookhaven, New York  
September 2010



BFJ Planning



# Route 25A Corridor Study Final Visioning Report

Route 25A – Mount Sinai to Wading River  
Town of Brookhaven  
Suffolk County, NY

September 2010

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## 1.0 Introduction

The goal of this Route 25A Community Visioning Report is threefold: 1) To provide updated community visions for each of the five hamlets of Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Rocky Point, Shoreham and Wading River; 2) To identify both unique and shared elements along the Route 25A corridor; and 3) To devise strategies to help achieve the visions in the land use implementation phase of the project.

The Report is a snapshot of community sentiment in the period October 2009 through August 2010. It reflects the input of over 300-residents and stakeholders who participated in five Community Planning Forums held to address needed improvements along the Route 25A corridor.

It is recognized that the visions presented are advisory in nature, and that over time, changing local conditions will need to be considered during the land use implementation phase of the project.

### 1.1 Background

During the last 40 years, the Route 25A corridor has lacked an overall vision. As a result, planning has been reactionary rather than proactive in solving the corridor's problems. In recent years, the character of the corridor has changed, due to increases in population and development. This can be seen in the many strip centers along Route 25A. These changes have led to accompanying increases in traffic congestion, as well as adverse impacts on local businesses, the environment, and overall corridor aesthetics.

Hamlets along the corridor have long recognized the need to find the right balance between economic development and the preservation of

the area's suburban and semi-rural character, and especially its environmental resources. The Town of Brookhaven has addressed these issues through past hamlet studies along the corridor, including the following: Mount Sinai (January 1996); Miller Place (February 1996), Rocky Point Hamlet Comprehensive Plan (June 2003) and Downtown Visioning (2008), Shoreham (July 2002, updates in March 2004 and June 2005); and, Wading River (December 1988 – Riverhead Town publication). However, most of these studies are now outdated and while some issues continue, new issues have arisen.

Past hamlet studies were undertaken on a rolling basis with some common issues, elements, and goals being identified as each study was completed. The current effort seeks to build upon this foundation by concurrently updating the Route 25A components of these visions, identifying common elements, and developing an overall vision for the corridor as a whole, which takes into account the growth and change that has occurred over the past decades.

Maximizing citizen participation has been the essential part of creating a consensus vision for the future of the area. The visions for each hamlet along the corridor have been guided by input from stakeholders, including the Town, residents and business owners in each hamlet. Feedback from residents will help guide development recommendations so as to create a corridor that has a well functioning road, quality building and site design, standard pedestrian and bicycle friendly facilities, and preserved historic and natural open spaces.

This Route 25A Visioning Report aims to preserve resources, guide future development, enhance community character, and promote standards for a high quality of life. The Visioning Report will be integrated into the Brookhaven Comprehensive Plan once it is completed.

## 1.2 Timeline

In the fall of 2009, the Town of Brookhaven selected a team of consultants to work on the first phase of the project. The first phase included three main tasks: Study Initiation and Data Collection, the facilitation of Working Group Sessions and Community Planning Forums, and the production of a Final Visioning Report (see Table 1-1). The second phase of this project envisions a Land Use and Zoning Plan and implementation program.

In Phase 1, community planning forums were held to bring residents, business owners, community organizations and local leaders together to address the corridor's five existing hamlets in the Town of Brookhaven. Residents of the Hamlet of Sound Beach were encouraged to attend either the Miller Place or Rocky Point Community Planning Forums.



*Councilwoman Jane Bonner, Assemblyman Marc Alessi, and Town of Brookhaven Planning Commissioner Tullio Bertoli kick-off the first forum in Mount Sinai*

After each forum, the consultants compiled a detailed summary report for the Town, which was posted on the project web site for input and review by the community. A final "All Hamlet Forum" included a review of preliminary recommendations for the Route 25A corridor in the Hamlets of Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Rocky Point, Shoreham and Wading River, as well as recommendations for the corridor as a whole. This combined forum provided an opportunity for residents to see the interconnectedness of issues facing their hamlets along the

corridor and for them to comment on and discuss the ideas put forward.

The forums were integral in helping the consultants outline each community's vision. In addition to the community, consultants worked with town staff, the Citizens Advisory Committee and hamlet representatives to ensure that the plan that is developed is supported by those who live and work in the corridor.

Phase II of the corridor study will consist of a land use and implementation plan and a generic environmental impact statement for the five hamlet Route 25A corridor from Mount Sinai to the Riverhead Town line.

## 1.3 Study Goals

The initial goals for the Corridor Study included the following:

1. Improve vehicular and pedestrian safety
2. Coordinate town land use and hamlet planning with county and state transportation planning, and county and state economic development opportunities
3. Identify and redevelop blighted parcels
4. Revitalize existing hamlets and preserve unique attributes
5. Strengthen neighborhood businesses and encourage walkable/green areas
6. Assess development pressure/ensure open space and community amenities
7. Maximize citizen participation and chambers of commerce/civic involvement
8. Integrate and update past hamlet studies/coordinate the Corridor Study with the Brookhaven Comprehensive Plan

Table 1-1: Phase 1 Project Timeline

		Month									
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Task	Description	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Task 1	Study Initiation and Data Collection	[Bar from Oct 1 to Dec 3]									
Task 2a	Working Group Sessions				[Bar from Jan 4 to Feb 5]						
Task 2b	Community Planning Forums				[Bar from Jan 4 to Apr 7]						
Task 3	Draft Visioning Final Report							[Bar from May 8 to Jun 9]			
Task 4	Final Visioning Report									[Bar on Jun 9]	
Meetings	Working Group Sessions				1/11	2/1	3/1	3/22			
	Community Planning Forums				1/30		3/13	4/10	4/17	5/22	

**Key:** Working Group Sessions   
Community Planning Forums 

**Community Planning Forums**

- 1/30/10: Mount Sinai
  - 3/13/10: Rocky Point\*
  - 4/10/10: Shoreham/Wading River
  - 4/17/10: Miller Place\* (rescheduled from 2/27)
  - 5/22/10: All Hamlets Report Back
- \*Sound Beach residents were encouraged to participate in either the Miller Place or Rocky Point Community Planning Forums.



## 2.0 Existing Conditions

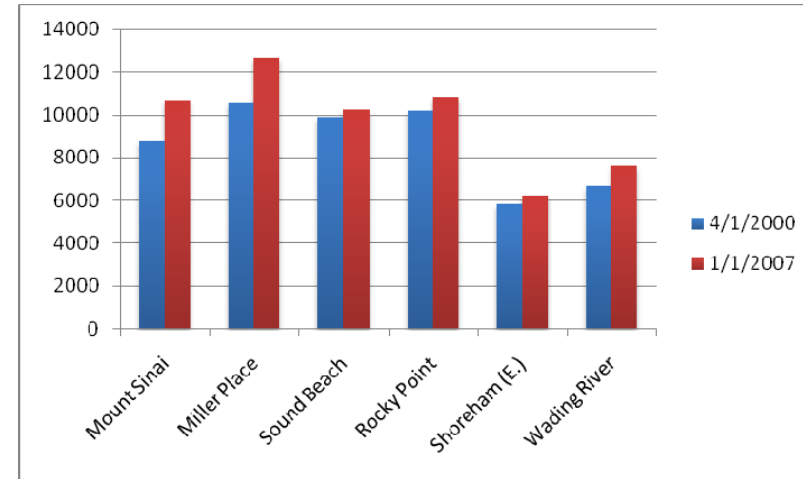
### 2.1 Regional Context

The Town of Brookhaven, founded in 1655, is located in Suffolk County, New York. It is the second largest town in population in New York State and its border extends from the North Shore to the South Shore of Long Island. The 10-mile long study area along Route 25A includes five hamlets: Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Rocky Point, Shoreham and Wading River. Sound Beach, although not directly located on the corridor, is contiguous to Miller Place to the west and Rocky Point to the east (see Figure 2-1: Regional Context and Figure 2-2: Route 25A Corridor Study Area). These hamlets are located along the North Shore, approximately 50 miles east of Manhattan. The study area is bounded by Crystal Brook Hollow Road to the West and by the Town of Riverhead to the East. Route 25A in the Riverhead portion of Wading River is not included in the study area.

### 2.2 Demographics

Since 2000, there has been significant population growth in the Town's northeast corridor. This area has experienced a 13% increase (6,411 people) vs. a 9% increase town-wide (41,007 people) during the same period. Mount Sinai and Miller Place were the fastest growing hamlets with 22% and 20% growth respectively. These two hamlets accounted for 70% of the corridor's population increase during this period, and had a rate of increase more than double the town-wide rate of increase for the same period. The other three hamlets in the corridor experienced rates of increase comparable to the rest of Brookhaven.

Chart 2-1: Study Area Population (2000 – 2007)



Source: US Census/Town of Brookhaven

The combined population increases around the corridor have resulted in an estimated 2,166 new households. The increase in households has a related increase in automobile ownership of between 4,938 – 7,365 automobiles. Total automobile ownership in the corridor as of 2007 is estimated to be between 36,994 and 55,166.



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Figure 2-1: Regional Context  
 June 2010 | BfJ Planning  
 Source: Town of Brookhaven

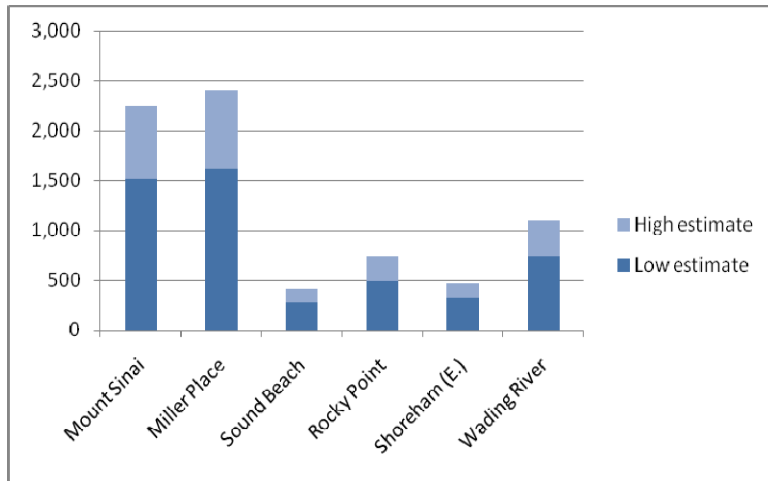


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Figure 2-2: Route 25A Corridor Study Area

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 Source: Hagstrom Map

**Chart 2-2: Estimated change in Automobile Ownership (2000 – 2007)**



Source: US Census/Town of Brookhaven

Note: 2.28 (National) – 3.4 (Long Island) automobiles per household

### 2.3 Roadway Conditions

Route 25A is a major east-west corridor in Brookhaven. The entire road is approximately 73 miles in length and runs from the Queensboro Bridge in Queens County to Riverhead in Suffolk County. In 1997, a widening of NYS Route 25A was completed in Mount Sinai, Miller Place and Rocky Point. Route 25A is at its widest point in these three hamlets, as the road consists of two travel lanes in each direction, a two-way left turn lane and a shoulder on each side (see Figure 2-3: Route 25A Typical R.O.W. Dimensions). At the eastern end of the study area, the road narrows to one lane in each direction with shoulders. In addition to the road widening, a 1.4 mile by-pass was constructed south of the Rocky Point Business District to Shoreham. The traffic improvements, together with substantial

population growth in the area, have resulted in a marked increase in corridor traffic, peak hour congestion, vehicular accidents, and decreased pedestrian safety.

There is an On Road State Bicycle Route (Class 3) in both east and west shoulders of Route 25A from Fairway Drive in Rocky Point to the Brookhaven town line in Wading River. Though these non-buffered lanes do exist, many stakeholders have expressed concern that the current high traffic speeds along the corridor make biking unsafe for leisure or commuting.

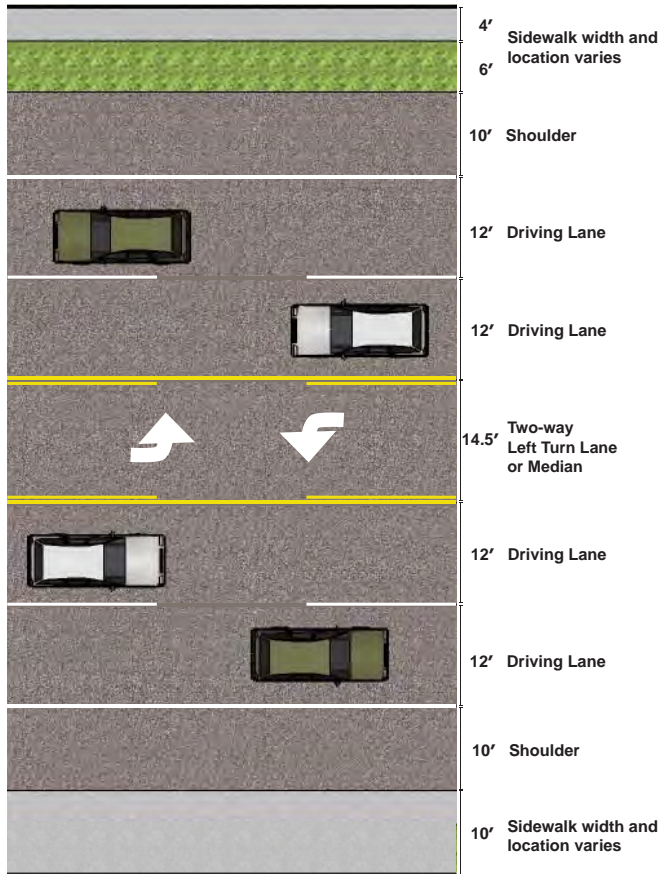
Traffic congestion, speeding, automobile fatalities, pedestrian safety, pollution and negative impacts upon local businesses and the environment are major transportation related concerns in the corridor. Data from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) show that traffic tapers west to east from approximately 50,000 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) down to 24,000 AADT (see Figure 2-4: Route 25A Corridor Traffic Volumes).

Although the crash rate is less than nearby comparable stretches of road on Route 25 and Route 347, crash incidents are still high. On average, there are 12 crashes per mile per year that result in injuries (See Figure 2-5: Route 25A Corridor Crash Summary).

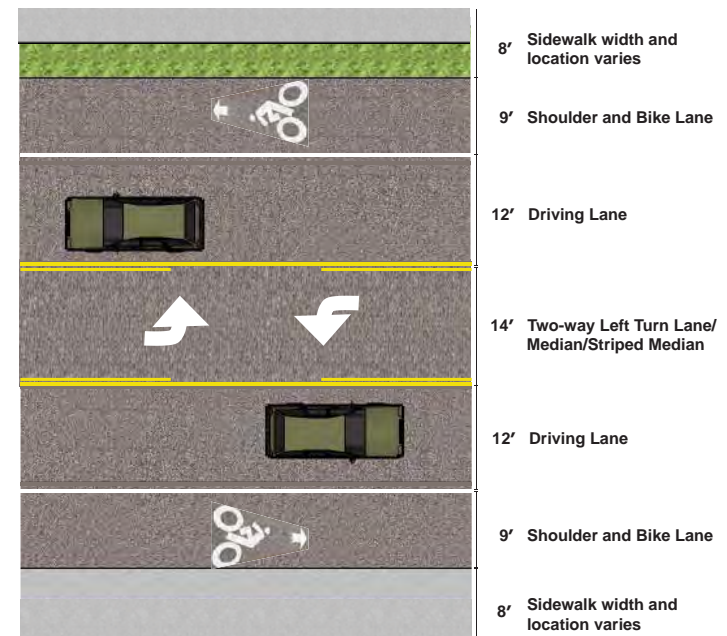
### 2.4 NYSDOT Guiding Principles

One of the plan’s objectives is to coordinate Town planning and economic development efforts in the corridor with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). Town representatives and the consultant team, BFJ Planning, met with the NYSDOT Region 10 Planning and Design Public Involvement Unit on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009. At the meeting, corridor safety, traffic speeds, volume, and design were discussed, as well as what types of design strategies the

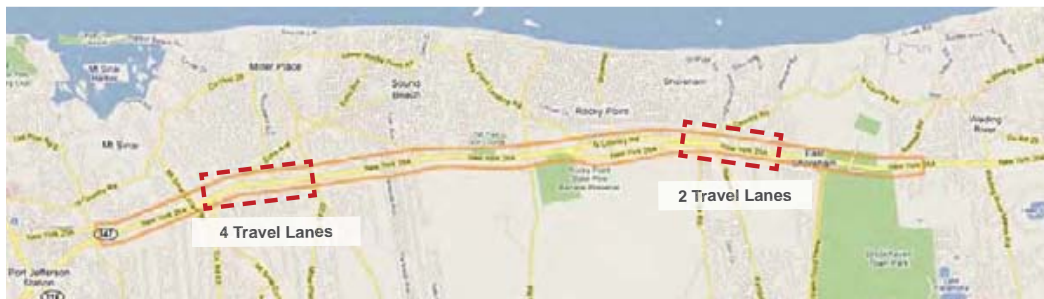
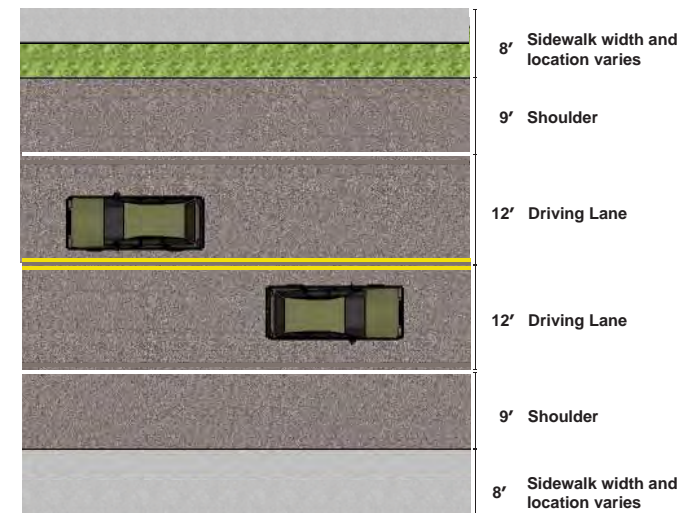
Typical Route 25A 4 Lane Street in Mount Sinai & Miller Place

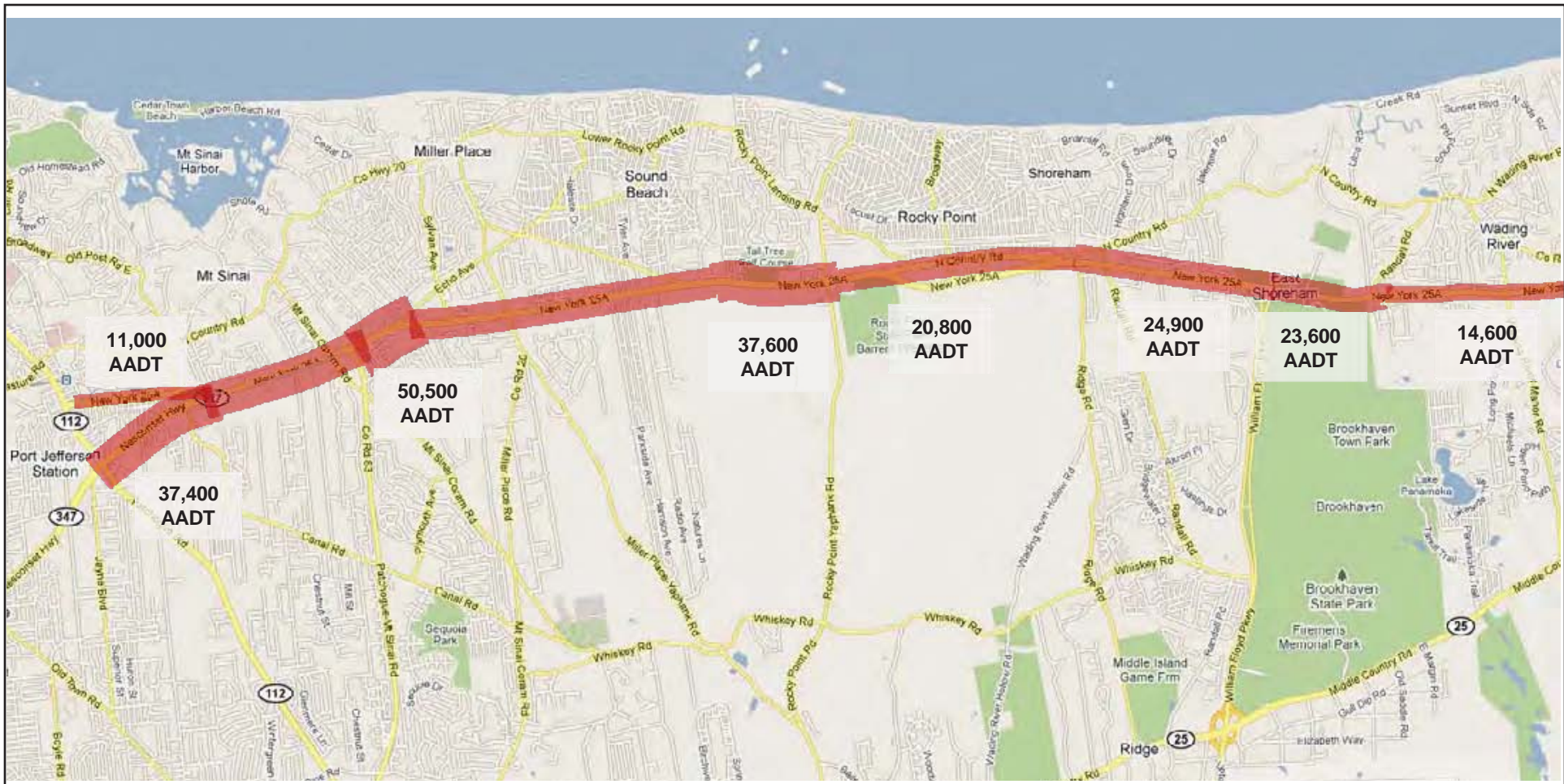


Typical Route 25A Street in Rocky Point and Shoreham

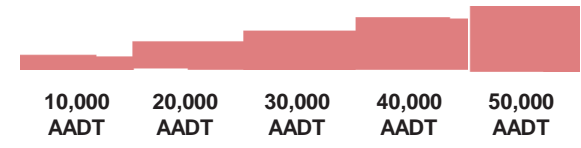


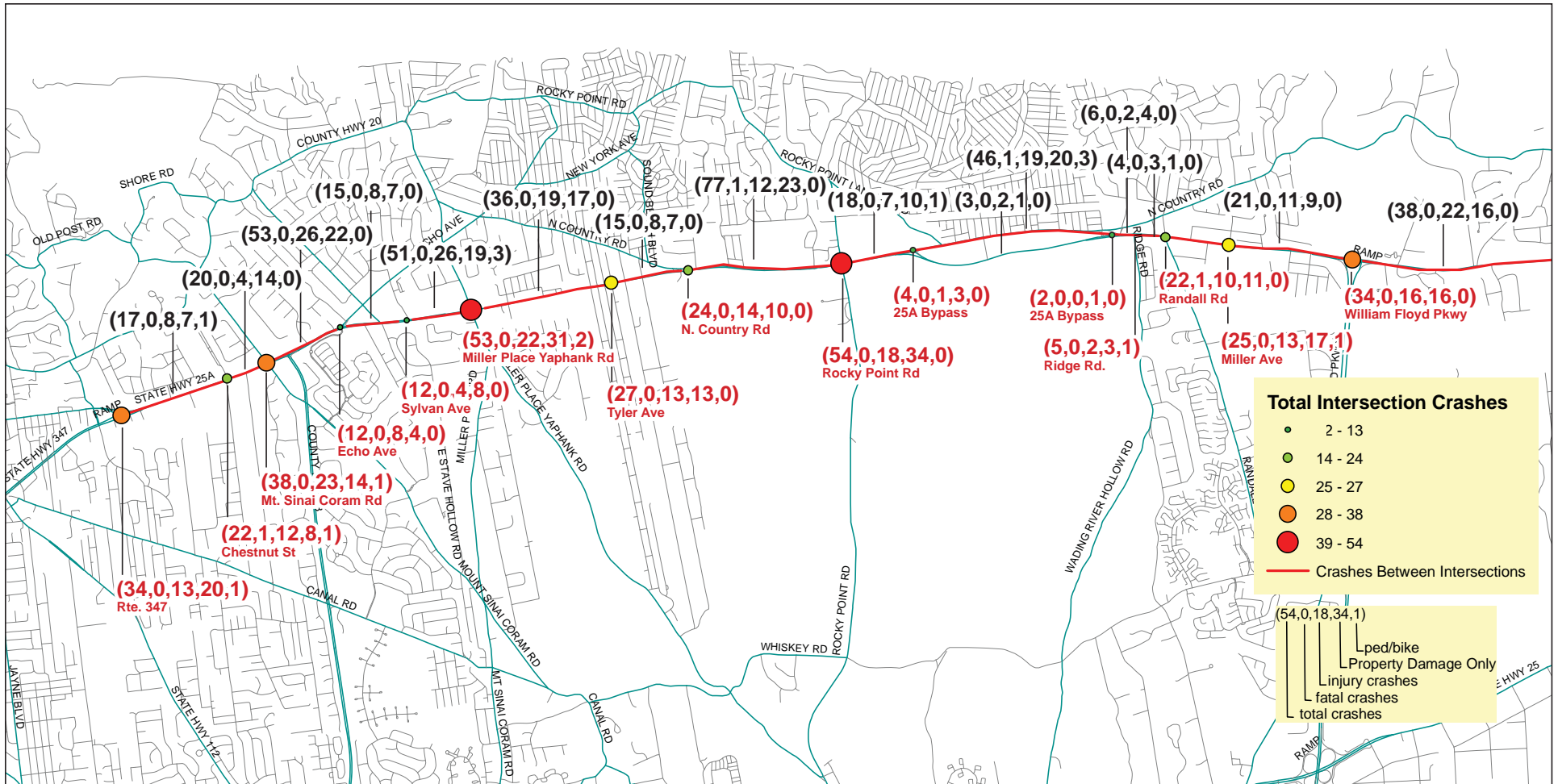
Typical Route 25A 2 Lane Street in Wading River





Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)  
Average Total Volume of Vehicle Traffic per 24-hour period





**Crash Rates (Per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled)**

Corridor	Total Crashes	Injuries/Fatalities	Property Damage Only
Route 25A	258	128	130
Route 25	350	200	150
Route 347	377	142	230

Figure 2-5: Route 25A Corridor Crash Summary (August 01, 2006 - July 31, 2009)

NYSDOT was able to support. Changes acceptable to NYSDOT included speed reductions that did not reduce capacity of the corridor, street trees adjacent to the roadway (preferably at the back of the sidewalk, not adjacent to the roadway), landscaped medians, bike lanes and roundabouts. Some discouraged items included pedestrian over- and underpasses, trees within medians, midblock crosswalks and textured/colored pavements. It was also learned that NYSDOT currently had no improvement plans for the corridor.

With regard to medians, NYSDOT indicated that although they supported medians, they should not deny access to pre-existing businesses without first receiving individual property owner acceptance of the median. Landscaping in medians should also not be so high as to obscure the view of businesses. Furthermore, the Town would have to provide a Memorandum of Understanding that maintenance would be carried out by the Town and not NYSDOT.

At the meeting, BFJ Planning also discussed the current NYSDOT Vision Plan for Route 347, which features landscaped medians, sidewalk buffers and crosswalks, as a good example of acceptable streetscape improvements.

Figure 2-6: Vision Plan for a Green Route 347



Source: NYSDOT, 2009

## 2.5 Existing Zoning and Land Uses

The Study Area is 10 miles long and contains approximately 1,600-acres and 515-tax parcels. Zoning is predominantly single family residential (1,452-acres of A Residential 1, A Residential 10, and B Residential 1). Remaining zoning districts consist of commercial zoning (mainly J Business 2 with some J Business 4, J Business 5 and J Business 6), industrial (mainly L Industrial 1), Planned Development District (PDD) or split-zoned (A1/J2, B1/J2) (see Figure 2-7: Route 25A Corridor Zoning). Chapter 5.0 Hamlet Visions provides more information on specific land uses and zoning in each hamlet study area. In addition, the Appendices contain the Town of Brookhaven Table of Dimension Requirements and Permitted Uses (with zoning district explanations).



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Figure 2-7:  
 Route 25A Corridor Zoning

June 2010 | BFJ Planning  
 Source: Town of Brookhaven



### 3.0 Stakeholder Participation

The focus of the outreach effort was to directly involve those who live, work, and travel in the Route 25A Study Area to take a leading role in developing a vision for the five-hamlet corridor. Every effort was made to maximize attendance and assure participation of diverse interests. Furthermore, an emphasis was placed on creating lively and interactive, community planning forums in a way that produced relevant input from each.

#### 3.1 Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee laid the foundation for forming the Working Groups, which would ultimately plan the forums. The Citizens Advisory Committee was composed of the following members:

Sid Bail, President, Wading River Civic Association  
Rick Batcheldor, Miller Place Fire Department  
Richard Belsky, President, Shoreham Civic Organization  
Woody Brown, Miller Place Civic Association  
Robert Caggiano, Sound Beach Civic Association  
Linda Cathcart, Rocky Point Civic Association  
Deirdre Dubato, President, Mount Sinai Civic Association  
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Ann O'Brien, President, Miller Place Board of Education  
William Pellenz, President, Sound Beach Civic Association

Michael Roth, Wading River-Shoreham Chamber of Commerce  
Kathy Rousseau, President, Miller Place Civic Association  
Marshal Schwartz, Rocky Point Civic Association  
John Yavorka, Mount Sinai Board of Education

#### Discussion and Outcome

An initial meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee was held on November 12, 2009 at the Rose Caracappa Recreation Center in Mount Sinai, NY. At the meeting, there was consensus on the need for publicity, coordinated by Councilwoman Jane Bonner's office, to inform the community that the project had started. Councilwoman Bonner highlighted the need for an implementable plan and the updating of out-of-date hamlet studies to better capture their individual goals and objectives.

The Citizens Advisory Committee decided that the forums would be initiated in January 2010 so as not to conflict with the year-end holidays, and be held approximately one per month thereafter. It was decided that there would be four hamlet forums and that they would be undertaken from west to east along the corridor as follows: 1) Mount Sinai; 2) Miller Place; 3) Rocky Point; and 4) Shoreham and Wading River, which were combined as agreed by the civic presidents in the two communities. It was also decided that a fifth forum would be held, which would summarize the results of the four prior forums (see the Appendices for Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes).

It was decided that Working Groups would be established for each hamlet and would consist of between 15 to 20 people each. The Citizens Advisory Committee was charged with both publicizing and helping to design each forum. The Brookhaven Planning Department contacted each hamlet's school district regarding dates and locations for the Working Group meetings and forums. The Town also reached out to key community organizations to solicit participation in hamlet-

specific Working Groups, which were charged with informing the consultants about unique local conditions, and publicizing and helping to design each forum.

There was consensus that zip code wide mailings would be an appropriate way to alert the corridor communities to the upcoming schedule of events. There was also consensus that each forum would build upon past hamlet studies and that each successive forum would likely be significantly different from previous ones based upon unique needs and perspectives. Furthermore, it was agreed that the goal of each forum was to inform the future land use plan component of the study and provide a corridor-wide perspective.

Attendees identified preliminary issues for the corridor and surrounding hamlets, which included high school taxes and the need for more ratables, the young adult “brain drain”, the need for anchor businesses or destination stores to keep mom and pop stores alive, and to support the local economy.

The Citizens Advisory Committee also identified preliminary issues for individual hamlets. For Mount Sinai, key points included understanding traffic and circulation to/from Route 347; possibly making Mount Sinai a “downtown” area as well as a “gateway” for other hamlets; and opposition to making Route 25A a “super highway”, which would encourage more traffic. A key point for Miller Place was the concern that traffic from Route 25A should not be diverted to North Country Road. Regarding Rocky Point, the main concerns were the safety issue of too many curb cuts and inadequate sewer infrastructure. For Shoreham and Wading River, the salient points regarded preserving their natural character and addressing development pressure on large plots of vacant land and from the Town of Riverhead.

### 3.2 Working Groups

Members of the Citizens Advisory Committee were asked to nominate key stakeholders in each hamlet to form the Working Groups. In addition, the Town of Brookhaven Planning Department reached out to key institutions in each hamlet to ensure that all major community organizations were represented, including the schools, fire departments, civic and fraternal organizations, and historic and environmental organizations.

Four Working Group meetings were held:

**Mount Sinai** – January 11, 2010, 6:30pm, Rose Caracappa Center

**Miller Place** – February 1, 2010, 6:30pm, Miller Place High School

**Rocky Point** – March 1, 2010, 6:30pm at Joseph A. Edgar Intermediate School

**Shoreham-Wading River** - March 22, 2010, 6:30pm, Shoreham-Wading River High School

At each of the Working Group meetings participants 1) were introduced to the Project Team, 2) assessed meeting locations for the forums, 3) reviewed deliverables and their timelines, and 4) discussed preliminary issues relating to each hamlet and the Route 25A corridor as a whole. The Working Group participants also helped to develop an agenda for each forum, which took into account unique local conditions. Summaries of each Working Group meeting were prepared by the consultants, and together with meeting agendas and handouts, posted on the project web site for broad community information and review.

### 3.3 Community Planning Forums

#### Format

The first forum was held in Mount Sinai at the Rose Caracappa Center on January 30, 2010, from 10:00 am to 3:30 pm. It was attended by approximately 40 residents and business owners. The format, used in most of the subsequent meetings, included welcoming remarks, a "first impressions" exercise, presentation, assets and liabilities discussion, roundtable discussions, and public sharing of roundtable outcomes.

The next forum was scheduled to be held in Miller Place on February 27, 2010. However, it was postponed due to inclement weather and rescheduled for April 17, 2010 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, taking place at Miller Place High School. Over 80 residents, business owners, and local officials attended the Miller Place Community Planning Forum.

The Rocky Point Community Planning Forum was held at the Joseph A. Edgar Intermediate School on March 13, 2010 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and was attended by approximately 70 residents and business owners. The format included welcoming remarks, presentation, roundtable discussions, and roundtable presentations.

The Shoreham/Wading River Community Planning Forum was held at Shoreham-Wading River High School on April 10, 2010 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and was attended by approximately 40 residents and business owners.

An All Hamlet Forum was held on May 22, 2010 at the Rose Caracappa Center in Mount Sinai from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm and was attended by approximately 60 residents and business owners. The forum consisted of opening remarks and a presentation given by BFJ Planning as a recap of the visioning process, as well as a summary of

each individual hamlet forum and best practices for roads, streetscape and design guidelines. A discussion of each preliminary hamlet vision was held at individual roundtables with a report-back of findings by selected reporters (see the Appendices for copies of Community Planning Forum Summary Reports).

#### Advertising

Councilwoman Bonner's office had separate mailers and posters prepared for each forum (see the Appendices for copies of flyers). Mailings were sent to every address in the respective hamlet zip codes. In addition, posters were placed on community bulletin boards. Each local school district and some civics posted a flyer announcing the forum on their respective websites. The local school districts made automated calls encouraging local citizens to attend. The forums were featured on the Town of Brookhaven website's "In the Spotlight" section. A dedicated website was also set up for the project, [www.route25acorridorstudy.com](http://www.route25acorridorstudy.com), which included extensive information about the project's goals and objectives, meeting announcements, working group meeting summaries and handouts, agendas for the forums, and project schedules. The Town of Brookhaven issued press releases for each forum and local newspapers published articles before and after each forum were held. Lastly, the Town videotaped each forum and aired each of them several times on Channel 18, a public service cable station. The table below shows the number of households in each hamlet to which flyers were sent.

**Table 3-1: Mailing Summary**

Hamlet	Total Number of Household Mailings
Mount Sinai	3,511
Miller Place/Sound Beach	4,258
Rocky Point/Sound Beach	4,229
Shoreham	2,007
Wading River	2,740
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,745</b>

**Results**

The combined attendance for the Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Rocky Point, and Shoreham/Wading River forums was 230 (40, 70, 40, and 80, respectively). Attendees represented a range of interests including residents, business owners, civic associations, school board members, teachers, government officials, transportation agencies, and newspapers.

As previously mentioned, each forum was videotaped and broadcast on Channel 18, the local public service channel. There was also an article on the forums published in the North Shore Sun on May 28, 2010 titled "Route 25A community forums come to close: Planners will submit findings to town" ([http://www.northshoresun.com/news/news-profile.php?Subcategory\\_ID=89&ID=694](http://www.northshoresun.com/news/news-profile.php?Subcategory_ID=89&ID=694)).

At each forum, comment sheets were provided to attendees to provide another medium by which to give feedback. These could be mailed or faxed to the Brookhaven Planning Department. Attendees were also given a contact name and e-mail address in the Brookhaven Planning Department so any further thoughts and comments could be submitted electronically. These comments were then shared with the consultants.

Public comments (forms and e-mails) received can be summarized as follows:

- Several comments from Mount Sinai echoed residents' concerns regarding overdevelopment, particularly when it involves big box stores and affordable housing.
- The focus of the comments from Miller Place was safety in the corridor and preservation of its low-development character.
- Rocky Point comments focused on the installation of roundabouts to slow speeds and reduce accidents, and finding creative parking solutions downtown. A Rocky Point forum participant also submitted a "The Preservation Growth Plan" for revitalizing Rocky Point's downtown business district.
- Shoreham-Wading River comments included concerns for improving community participation through improved communication, connecting open space areas and improving their landscaping through the use of native plants and creative stormwater management, and that there should be no new sewers or "workforce housing."
- Key issues noted from the All Hamlet Forum were better facilities for seniors and children (i.e. cross walks and signage) and the need for the vision study to be flexible as conditions change in the future.
- In addition, comments were received from local civic associations and are reflected in Chapter 5.0 of this report.

**3.4 Review of Past Hamlet Studies**

A secondary part of the outreach component of this Visioning Report involved the review of past studies conducted for each individual hamlet in the study area. In doing so, participants in this process gained a more holistic understanding of the ongoing challenges facing their communities and how these challenges – political, social,

economic or otherwise –interrelate. The background analysis provided the opportunity to measure the extent to which – if at all – the past studies’ respective visions and goals represented an appropriate direction for the future growth and change of the various communities. For example, new sewers were generally not supported in the forums held for this Study but were originally considered in the 2008 *Rocky Point Vision for Downtown Revitalization*.

The following paragraphs briefly summarize the past studies consulted for the Route 25A Corridor Study. It should be emphasized that the following is intended *only as a summary* of the major visions, goals and/or objectives set forth in previous reports; the content should not be viewed as representing the vision, goals and/or objectives of this report.

#### **Mount Sinai Hamlet Study**

In 1996, Mount Sinai released a Hamlet Study detailing a program of recommendations intended to help guide future land use and zoning decisions for the hamlet. Major recommendations for the 25A corridor included:

- Maintain existing zoning along the north side of 25A from Mt Sinai-Coram Road to Crystal Brook Hollow Road
- Preserve in their natural state the two parcels on either side of Peachtree Lane fronting 25A westbound
- Conservation (cluster) subdivisions
- Bicycle and jogging paths
- Access management; in particular, interconnecting existing and new parking lots
- Establish a Business Improvement District
- Streetscape improvements

#### **Miller Place Hamlet Study**

The Miller Place Hamlet Study (1996) focused on several key community planning issues including land use and zoning, transportation and parks and open space. Major recommendations for the Route 25A corridor included:

##### *Land Use/Zoning/Aesthetics*

- Create a hamlet town center near Sylvan Avenue Park
- Meet the housing needs of seniors and promote medical and professional office space
- Renovate existing shopping centers and manage high vacancy rates
- Preserve large farmland (DeLea Sod Farm)
- Two acre zoning for vacant parcels (south of 25A)
- Undeveloped/unimproved lands along the south side of 25A should set aside approximately 100 feet in depth to create a natural buffer zone
- Improve Route 25A aesthetics through enhanced signage ordinances and landscaping

##### *Transportation*

- Implement access management strategies; in particular, interconnecting adjacent parking lots
- “Streets of Concern”
  - Historic preservation of N. Country Road
  - Route 25A aesthetic improvements & access management
  - All Streets of Concern:
    - Prohibit commercial traffic on local roads
    - Better drainage, lighting, curbing & sidewalks in commercial areas
    - Speed limit enforcement
    - Provide shoulders for on-street parking
    - Plant more street trees & create maintenance program

#### *Parks and Open Space*

- Community wide greenway & expansion of park system (e.g. ball fields)
- Initiate a “Rails-to-Trails” program for the LIPA right-of-way

#### **Rocky Point Hamlet Study**

Rocky Point underwent hamlet studies recently in 2003 and 2008. The *Rocky Point Hamlet Comprehensive Plan* (June, 2003) recommended the preservation of open space and protection of the environment. The plan suggested that there be a common aesthetic theme for businesses to help create a hamlet identity. Creating a “Restaurant Row” was one idea mentioned to help spur economic growth. *The Rocky Point Vision for Downtown Revitalization* (Feb, 2008) focused on the area between the start and end of the 25A Bypass. The study examined how to increase retail attraction, mixed uses, and housing opportunities, create public parking and civic open space, improve maintenance and beautify the area. Market driven retail along the corridor and gateway features at specific entry locations were also recommended to help draw traffic away from the 25A bypass.

#### **Shoreham Hamlet Study**

In 2000, the Shoreham Civic Organization, with the support of the Town of Brookhaven, undertook a hamlet study with the intent of communicating to the Town Shoreham’s unified vision for the future of the community. Completed in 2002, the Shoreham Hamlet Study considered key community issues including land use, open space, historic preservation, transportation, recreation needs, environmental resources and institutional services. It presented a vision for Shoreham’s future, consisting of four primary goals:

- Create a physical and social center
- Create housing opportunities for all stages of home ownership

- Develop and unify properties for recreation needs
- Make Shoreham a prime example of Smart Growth development

#### **Town of Riverhead Comprehensive Plan**

While Wading River has not undertaken a hamlet study in more than 20 years, the portion of Wading River that lay within the Town of Riverhead is discussed in Riverhead’s 2003 Comprehensive Plan. The vision for Wading River set forth in the Plan called for keeping the hamlet “an intimate rural crossroads.” Among the goals outlined were the following:

- Keep Wading River a small, quaint hamlet center catering to local residents
- Allow moderate scale professional office development along Route 25A in the Wading River area
- Reduce commercial zoning in areas with underdeveloped commercial zoning

## 4.0 Planning and Design Guidelines

A key objective of the Visioning Report includes the development of strategies aimed at improving the Route 25A corridor through the Town of Brookhaven. The planning and design guidelines in the following sections provide the Town with tools to help create a more efficient, safe and attractive streetscape.

### 4.1 Roads

The main objective for Route 25A is to enhance safety for its users while maintaining roadway capacity. The capacity of the roadway needs to be maintained in order to avoid further congestion and using alternative roads, such as North Country Road. Any diversion of drivers to local and collector roads would degrade the quality of life in all the hamlets. This basic roadway objective was consistently expressed in all of the hamlet forums.

This roadway capacity concern by forum participants also represents sound planning. The regional road system must function well or drivers will seek short cuts and utilize collector and local roads, thereby overloading the local road system with regional traffic. This would negatively affect local neighborhoods throughout the Route 25A corridor.

A second objective expressed by hamlet forum participants was to enhance the safety of the users of Route 25A. One repeated theme at all the forums was to reduce vehicular speed on the roadway, while maintaining capacity. Traffic studies have consistently found that speeds in the range of 30-35 miles per hour allow the maximum number of cars to use a roadway (the so-called roadway capacity). As speeds increase, capacity slightly decreases because cars spread

out more along the road. The average driver will correctly seek a greater distance from other cars as speed increases.

### Complete Streets

A complete street is a street that is designed to accommodate all users regardless of transportation mode, age, or physical ability. Complete streets ensure that motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit riders can all safely and conveniently use these public spaces. While traditional roadway engineering philosophies have tended to center on how best to accommodate the automobile, the complete streets concept takes into consideration how a right-of-way serves all potential users in a community.

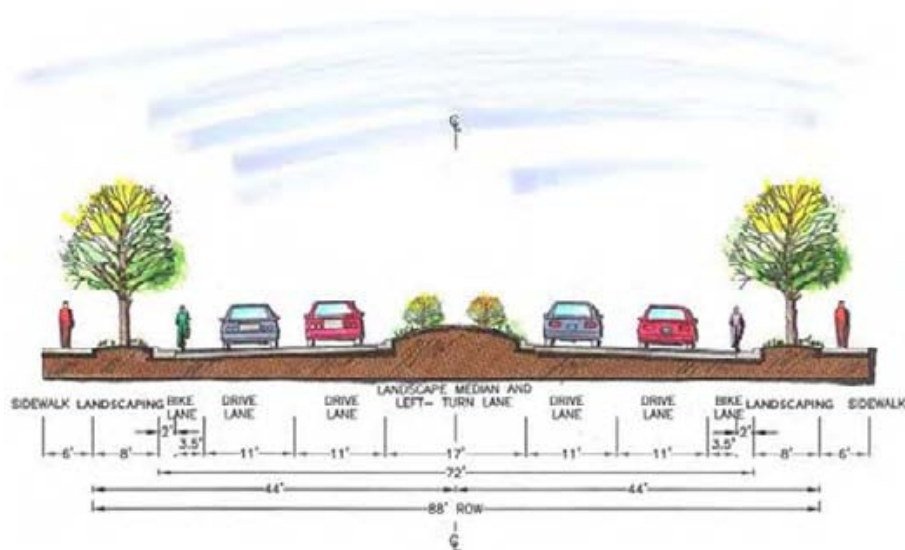
Complete streets vary by design and function, depending in large part on the surrounding land use activities. There is no “one-size-fits-all” design standard for a complete street. For example, although the Complete Streets Concept figure below shows bicycle lanes the community planning forums for the Route 25A corridor did not reach a consensus on this issue. There was a safety concern with bicycle lanes on Route 25A because of high traffic volumes and speeds. However, the principles of complete streets – safety, accessibility, and efficiency for all users – should be promoted when designing or improving a right-of-way, or reviewing site plan or subdivision applications of property fronting the roadway, or in close proximity to the roadway.

The cross-section illustrated below depicts the components and optimal dimensions of a “complete street” possible for the Route 25A corridor. As shown, the configuration consists of a:

- Landscaped median that also would serve as a pedestrian refuge island at major intersections
- 11-foot wide vehicular lanes when feasible (reduced from the existing 12-foot wide lanes along 25A)

- Bicycle lanes in each direction (but buffered with striping to separate them from the vehicular lanes)
- Landscaped buffer between the vehicular and bicycle lanes and the pedestrian sidewalks
- Pedestrian sidewalks on either side

Figure 4-1: Complete Streets Concept

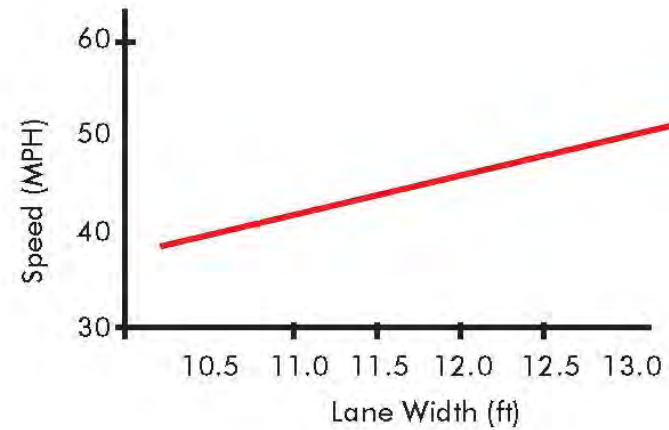


Source: Utah Department of Health

Note: The above figure is conceptual in nature and may need to be adjusted based on actual roadway conditions.

A reduction in lane width for some sections of Route 25A can assist in reducing the travel speed of cars without reducing capacity (see Chart 4-1: Relationship between Lane Width and Average Speed).

Chart 4-1: Relationship between Lane Width and Average Speed



Source: Fitzpatrick et al. 2001

### Access Management

Access Management is defined as the “systematic control of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges, and street connections to a roadway. It also involves roadway design applications, such as median treatments and auxiliary lanes, and the appropriate spacing of traffic signals” (*Access Management Manual*, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, 2003). The purpose of access management is to ensure that a roadway functions safely and efficiently while providing the appropriate degree of access to adjacent properties. Good access management reduces traffic congestion and improves safety for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians alike.

Access management strategies aim to alleviate conflicts between the through-traffic function of an arterial and the local function of access to abutting properties. One key to access management is connecting adjacent properties (for example, a shopping strip) with driveways or

service roads. This allows pedestrians and motorists to travel between two abutting parking areas without having to use the main road. These connections also minimize the number of ingress and egress points (curb cuts) from the main road to the adjacent properties, thereby reducing the number of turning movements. The collective result is increased traffic flow along the main road, as well as a safer environment for motorists and pedestrians. Figure 4-2: Typical Access Management Strategy depicts an illustrative concept of this tool for existing adjacent commercial uses along Route 25A in Rocky Point.

### Modern Roundabouts

It is important not to confuse the successful modern roundabout with the older traffic circles built in the early- or mid-20th century in the United States. The two main deficiencies of old traffic circles are that 1) entering traffic often had the right-of-way, which tended to cause lock-ups at higher volumes; and 2) the circles were often designed for high-speed entries, increasing the likelihood of accidents and making the old traffic circles dangerous. In contrast, the modern roundabout system of yield-at-entry requires that vehicles in the circulatory roadway have the right-of-way and all entering vehicles must wait for a gap in the circulating flow. Also, modern roundabouts are designed for slow entry speeds (typically 10 to 20 mph) making them very safe.

The increased acceptance of roundabouts in the United States is due to two main factors:

#### 1. Increased capacity and reduced vehicle delay

A high degree of capacity and fluidity can be achieved by the modern roundabout. When greater capacity is required, relatively simple improvements can be implemented such as widening the entries to provide more than one entry lane, and widening the circulatory roadway.

#### 2. Improved Safety

Roundabout design has consistently proven to be superior in safety to cross intersections. Reduced speeds alone make impacts less likely and less severe when they do occur. Driver error is less likely because the driver who enters the roundabout must be alert to only one traffic movement – he looks left for an acceptable gap to enter into the flow. By contrast, a driver at a four-way intersection has to deal with two or three different movements. In a roundabout, no driver can run a red light; therefore, right-angle collisions are not possible. Crashes that might occur are generally side-swipe or rear-end types. The presence of the center island interrupts an otherwise straight path, forcing speed reduction and heightened awareness in the roundabout. It also is worth noting that reduced delays at roundabouts compared to signalized intersections have the effect of decreasing the level of frustration and aggressiveness of drivers. Chart 4-1 shows the safety impacts of modern roundabouts.

**Table 4-1: Safety Impacts of Modern Roundabouts**

Type of Roundabout	Converted From <sup>1</sup>	# of Conversions <sup>2</sup>	% Reduction of All Crashes	% Reduction of Injury Crashes
Single Lane, Urban	Stop controlled	12	69%	80%
Single Lane, Rural	Stop controlled	9	65%	68%
Multi-Lane, Urban	Stop controlled	7	8%	73%
Urban	Signalized	5	37%	75%
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>33</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>72%</b>

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, March 2000.

<sup>1</sup> Stop controlled intersections are those that have stop signs. Signalized intersections contain traffic signals.

<sup>2</sup> The number of conversions indicates the number of intersections that were converted from either a stop controlled or signalized intersection to a modern roundabout, and that were used for this analysis.



Before Access Management



After Access Management

Figure 4-2: Typical Access Management Strategy  
 (25A between Fairway Drive and Hallock Landing Road, Rocky Point)

### *Appropriate Locations for a Roundabout*

The most appropriate locations identified for successful roundabout construction include, but are not limited to the following:

- High accident locations, especially those related to cross movements or turning movements
- Locations with high delays (especially if there is limited space to accommodate lanes of waiting traffic)
- Locations where traffic signals are not warranted
- Intersections where it is difficult or expensive to widen the approaches sufficiently to provide the approach width needed for signalized intersections. Roundabouts function well with narrow approaches

Along Route 25A, traffic signals are already present at most key intersections, such as Route 25A/County Road 83 in Mount Sinai and Route 25A/Miller Place Road in Miller Place. The approaches to these intersections are already wide. As a result, modern roundabouts are not as desirable in these locations. Roundabouts typically require more right-of-way to accommodate the center island and circulatory roadway when compared with the corresponding portion of a conventional intersection. However, some roadway intersections in Rocky Point, such as 25A/25A Bypass and 25A/Hallock Landing Road - and possibly Route 25A/Route 347 in Mount Sinai – merit further study by the NYSDOT. The cost and maintenance issues of roundabouts would need to be weighed against more incremental intersection improvements.

### **Transit**

Suffolk Transit provides bus service along Route 25A. The S62 bus offers service between Hauppauge – Riverhead, including a connection to the Port Jefferson Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Station, Smith Haven Mall in Lake Grove, and to NYS 25 (via Fresh Pond Avenue) among its other stops. The S5A bus also offers service along

25A between Port Jefferson and Middle Island. The S5A bus also stops at the Port Jefferson LIRR Station. Although not examined in detail in this report, the second phase of the Route 25A Corridor Study should further analyze potential service enhancements for Suffolk Transit, as well as bus turn-outs along 25A, bus infrastructure (i.e. bus shelters), and other possible improvements along the corridor.

## **4.2 Streetscape**

### **Streetscape Design Opportunities**

The most feasible and important opportunities for enhancing the visual quality and safety of the Route 25A corridor streetscape include:

- Landscaped medians with low vegetation
- Sidewalks with landscaped buffers
- Street trees adjacent to the roadway
- Bike lanes with painted buffers
- White painted crosswalks
- Sidewalk furniture (e.g. benches)
- Decorative lighting
- Trash receptacles

At present, the center two-way left turn lane, found along sections of Route 25A, typically is used as a turning lane, providing a place for cars to wait before making a left turn without impeding the movement of through traffic. However, this lane is often misused by motorists who utilize the lane as an additional driving lane, possibly contributing to the corridor's many vehicular crashes. There are places throughout the corridor where this lane is not needed for turns and could be designed as a landscaped median. This is especially the case in Mount Sinai, Miller Place, and Rocky Point where the center two-way left turn lane is most prevalent along the 25A corridor.

From west to east, some of these areas include Route 25A in Mount Sinai, just east of the Route 347 merge with 25A, the approach up to the 25A/Miller Place Road intersection in Miller Place, and leading up to the 25A/Hallock Landing Road intersection in Rocky Point (in front of the Kohl's shopping center).

The existing center two-way left turn lane appears to be at least 16 feet wide in most areas. NYSDOT's *Highway Design Manual* allows 11 feet as the minimum width for a continuous left turn lane. If the travel lanes are reduced, the continuous left turn lane could also be narrowed in areas where a landscaped median is not feasible. Similarly, shoulder width minimums (as per NYSDOT) are eight feet wide where parking is allowed and five feet wide where parking is not permitted.

NYSDOT discourages the planting of large trees in the center median because of the potential for falling limbs in the adjacent travel lanes. But the planting of relatively low vegetation is acceptable and can be a substantial improvement to both the appearance and the safety of the corridor. Attractive and well maintained plantings can substantially improve the visual quality of the driver's experience. In addition, they can enhance the safety of the road by screening distractions from oncoming traffic, in particular the glare of headlights. Finally, given the approximately eighty foot width that is typical along much of the corridor, the volumes of traffic, and relatively high speeds, the median can provide an important place of refuge for pedestrians crossing at intersections.

Two other recommended improvements for the corridor are the addition of sidewalks with landscaped buffers and the inclusion of street trees between the sidewalk and the road. Each of these elements helps to create a safer and more comfortable environment for pedestrians. At present, although they exist in some places, sidewalks are often discontinuous or nonexistent such that pedestrian

travel is difficult and unsafe. Where possible, sidewalks should be installed and should be set back from the curb line at least four to five feet to provide a planted zone between the sidewalk and the road. The separation will allow for street trees and other plantings to provide a buffer between the pedestrians and the cars. Street trees provide shade and a sense of shelter for pedestrians as well as creating a more attractive environment. In addition, the separation allows pedestrians to feel somewhat removed from the fast moving traffic, while the trees and other plantings provide an added sense of security in that they establish a physical barrier.

In its present configuration, the road generally has relatively wide shoulders of approximately ten feet in width, which are used as break down lanes in emergencies. Since bicyclists already share the road with the fast moving traffic, it is recommended that the shoulders be used to provide striped bike lanes with painted buffers. The striped buffers will afford some measure of protection for bikers by providing a visual separation between the bike lane and the vehicular travel lanes and will not inhibit the use of the shoulder by buses or vehicles in an emergency. Lastly, it should be noted that biking on Route 25A was thought to be dangerous by some participants at the Community Planning Forums but it was recognized by many participants that bicyclists currently use 25A and that safety for bicyclists needed to be improved.

Finally, intersections should be consistently marked to indicate safe pedestrian crossing points. NYSDOT recommends that white painted markings be used rather than colored or textured pavement. Painted markings are preferred because they are the most visible to drivers and therefore are the safest method for indicating crosswalks. In addition, painted crosswalks do not present the possibility of differential settlement or other maintenance issues that sometimes occur when unit pavers are inserted to mark pedestrian crossings.

### Streetscape Illustrations

These recommended improvements are illustrated in a series of before and after photographs and photo-simulations at several key points along the Route 25A corridor. The following renderings are for illustrative purposes only for how the corridor could look if these recommendations were implemented in the future. These graphics generally reflect the corridor-wide vision that was expressed by the public during the various forums and the All Hamlet Forum.

### Route 25A / Highland Avenue – Mount Sinai



Existing View

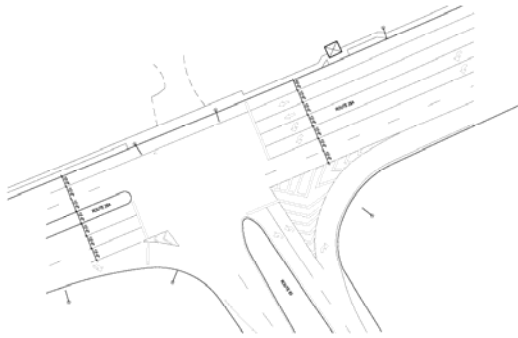


Proposed – Landscaped Median,  
Buffered Bike Lane



Proposed – Street Trees, Sidewalk,  
Parking Buffer Plantings

Route 25A / C.R. 83 – Mount Sinai



Existing Plan View



Proposed – Landscaped Medians,  
Street Trees, Pedestrian Refuge Islands,  
Crosswalks

Route 25A / C.R. 83 – Mount Sinai



Existing View



Proposed – Landscaped Median, Street  
Trees, Pedestrian Refuge Island

Route 25A / Miller Place Road – Miller Place



Existing Plan View

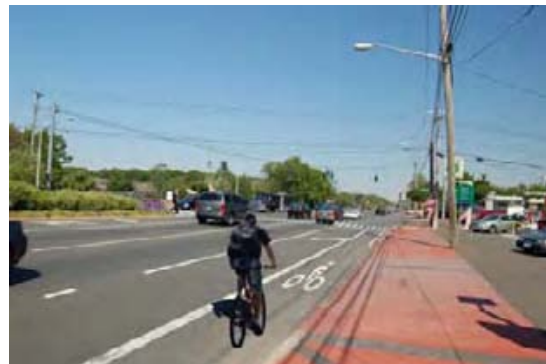


Proposed – Landscaped Medians,  
Street Trees, Repainted Crosswalks

Route 25A / Miller Place Road – Miller Place



Existing View



Proposed – Landscaped Median,  
Buffered Bike Lane



Proposed – Street Trees, Parking Buffer  
Plantings

Route 25A / Miller Avenue - Shoreham



Existing View



Proposed – Landscaped Median,  
Buffered Bike Lane

Route 25A / Miller Avenue – Shoreham (continued)



Proposed – Curb, Street Trees



Proposed – Sidewalk, Utility Lines  
Removed

### 4.3 Design Guidelines

A number of strategies and design guidelines are proposed that are intended to improve the overall functioning and visual quality of the Route 25A corridor, including:

- Encouraging an overall improvement in design quality that will support existing development and ensure high quality new investment within the Town
- Providing a design vocabulary that will establish a clear and attractive identity for the corridor
- Establishing criteria that will allow design flexibility and choice and encourage creative and imaginative site layout and design in concert with local character
- Providing reference to existing, positive examples of development within the local area, thereby recognizing the existing character and heritage of the local area
- Helping to ensure that traffic safety requirements are met

The guidelines that follow are illustrated with examples that include images drawn from development along the Route 25A corridor. They are grouped into four categories:

1. **Site Planning**
2. **Architectural Design**
3. **Gateways**
4. **Signage**



*The scale of the Aliano Shopping Plaza is reduced by the mix of building forms and varied roof treatments*



*A number of older buildings along Route 25A reflect the use of traditional building forms and materials*

#### Site Planning

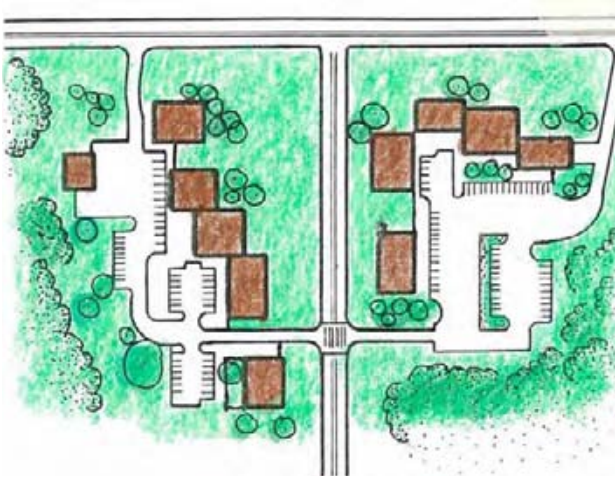
##### *Mixed Use*

Mixed land uses within a single development parcel – for example, retail use, offices and community facilities – should be encouraged. Some of the benefits include: 1) ensuring an attractive blend of building scales, densities, and purposes (and limiting the risk of single-strip development), 2) encouraging pedestrian use between groups of buildings and thus removing traffic from Route 25A for short trips and, 3) creating the potential for fewer paved areas, since parking spaces can be shared among land uses with different peak parking periods.

##### *Modest-scaled buildings*

Where multiple structures and uses are proposed, buildings should be clustered with access provided by common road entrances and exterior road systems. Large-scale building footprints are discouraged (see Figure 4-3: Typical Commercial Cluster).

Figure 4-3: Typical Commercial Cluster



*Clusters of smaller-scale buildings provide opportunities to reduce the scale of commercial development and to screen car parking*

#### *Parking Areas*

Surface parking areas can often represent the largest land use within a business zone. The siting and treatment of parking lots is therefore an important factor in the overall design of the corridor. To the maximum extent practicable, parking and service areas should be located to the side and /or rear of primary buildings. In general, no lot should be allowed more than one curb cut in order to encourage connections and coordinated circulation between adjoining internal parking lots. Since 25A is a state roadway, the cooperation of NYS DOT is essential in implementing the recommendation to limit curb cuts to one per building or preferably group of buildings, instead of the traditional two curb cuts with one out and one into the site.



*An example of attractive landscaping treatment at CVS in Miller Place*



*Hedge rows and trees help to screen car parking areas at the Southbury Green development near Bethel, CT*

#### *Landscaping*

Surface parking lots and loading and service areas should be screened from Route 25A by buildings, fencing or landscaping. Natural landscape elements should be preserved to the maximum degree possible, with re-grading of land kept to a minimum. Maintenance of existing woodland edges along the town's major highways is a particularly important goal. Where feasible, landscaping plans should incorporate native species and low maintenance plants so that individual parcels work as part of an overall system carefully linked to the surrounding natural landscape. The Town's current land development standards support these concepts and can be found in §85-50 of the Town Code.

#### **Architectural Design**

##### *Architectural Character*

Future development along the corridor will likely focus on commercial development that will include retail and office uses, supported by residential development. The existence of several large scale, undeveloped parcels means that careful consideration should be given to siting and building scale. Architectural designs that reflect or

are sympathetic to New England or traditional architectural character are preferred.

### *Façade Design*

The design of the main façades of buildings should reflect the scale of local development through modulation of vertical and horizontal elements, including changes in the predominant wall plane, use of projections, and alignment of cornices.

Building entries should be emphasized through canopies, awnings and other architectural elements. The use of covered arcades and canopies are encouraged as an architectural feature in façade design to provide weather protection. The use of materials having a historic context is encouraged.

### *Building Height and Form*

Varied building heights are encouraged to create visual interest. Roof designs should incorporate varied roof types and forms. For example, a main pitched roof could be combined with secondary roof types. Large roof expanses should incorporate dormers, cupolas and other features to



*The incorporation of pitched roofs, dormers, and recessed ground floor walls help to create a strong architectural character*



*Strong architectural emphasis is placed on the building entrance to the Rose Caracappa Community Center*

help reduce the scale of pitched roofs.

### **Gateways**

*Emphasize/highlight Hamlet Centers*

Signage and landscaping should be considered to help identify the various hamlet areas and centers along the highway. An existing example is the attractive “Welcome to Mount Sinai” sign.



### *Site Entries*

Site entry points from Route 25A should be emphasized as “gateways” for larger-scale developments. These entries should be designed as attractive landscaped features that incorporate an integrated set of signage, lighting and planting elements.



*Attractively designed signage for the Mount Sinai School District creates an attractive gateway feature on Route 25A*

### **Signage**

Commercial signage plays an important role in determining the visual quality of the corridor due to the number of large free-standing signs that compete for the attention of passing motorists. The following guidelines are designed to provide a more attractive and consistent design approach for the corridor:

- The location of free-standing signs should be carefully related to other site features such as landscaped setbacks, trees and plantings. Signs should be designed so that they are informative and visible at the pedestrian scale. Tall pole and pylon signs are discouraged.



*An example of free standing signage set within attractive landscaping*

- Signage design should relate to adjacent buildings in terms of general appearance and choice of materials.
- Grouped signs designed for commercial plazas should have a consistent design character and quality in terms of materials, colors and typeface.
- Low, monument-style free-standing signs are recommended rather than tall pole or pylon signs because ground-based signs can be more easily integrated with landscaping. At four to seven feet high, they can also be directly seen from eye level and are less likely to obstruct views of neighboring properties.
- Signs should have a minimum of information to avoid clutter and confusion. The use of bold, easily recognized symbols, logos and simple illustrations that identify a business or activity is encouraged.



*Group signage helps to identify entry points to commercial places along Route 25A and eliminates the need for multiple single tenant signs, which are unsightly.*

## 5.0 Hamlet Visions

The community visions presented in this report were formulated in the Community Planning Forums held in each community. At each forum (except Rocky Point), participants were asked to identify assets and liabilities along Route 25A. By participating in this exercise, attendees helped to identify the unique attributes of each hamlet, as well as many of the similar assets and issues that they share.

Attendees at forums also participated in roundtable discussions on 1) land use and zoning, 2) economic development, 3) transportation, 4) environment and natural resources, and 5) streetscape and open space. This exercise further reinforced the existing characteristics of each hamlet, and how each hamlet envisioned itself in the future.

Finally, the community planning forums helped identify the interrelatedness between the hamlets, such as the suburban qualities that they share and their desire to retain a quality of life that can be passed down through the generations. From a physical perspective, this interrelatedness could be seen in the types of land uses that are currently present along the corridor and other factors discussed in more detail in this section. Detailed summaries of each of the forums are included in Appendix 3.

### 5.1 Mount Sinai

#### Existing Conditions

The Study Area for the Route 25A Corridor Study begins in the Hamlet of Mount Sinai, where New York State Route 347 merges with Route 25A at Crystal Brook Hollow Road. At this merger, 25A is a four-lane highway (two lanes in each direction) with a center two-way left-turn lane and a 10-foot wide shoulder in each direction. Route 25A

maintains this configuration for the nearly entire length of its approximately 1.5-mile stretch through Mount Sinai, except for the two segments between Mount Sinai-Coram Road and County Road 83 and Peachtree Lane and Echo Avenue, which each contain a paved or landscaped median. There are no marked bicycle lanes along 25A through Mount Sinai; however the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) recognizes this portion as a “connecting route” between nearby designated bicycle routes. Pedestrian sidewalks run along one or both sides of 25A through the entire hamlet, with intermittent ribbons of landscaping separating them from the highway (See Figure 5-1: Mt. Sinai Study Area Aerial Map).

The Route 25A corridor through Mount Sinai contains a diversity of land uses including residential, commercial, industrial, community and public facilities and open space. Higher concentrations of commercial and industrial uses are located west of the Route 25A intersection with Mount Sinai-Coram Road, including a grocery store, a fast food restaurant, a gas station, numerous automotive repair shops and a storage facility. By contrast, residential and open space uses dominate to the east of this intersection, lending this short stretch a more rural character (See Figure 5-2: Mt. Sinai Land Use).

The majority of commercial parcels along 25A through Mount Sinai are zoned J Business 2 (J2) (Neighborhood Business), although there are three parcels zoned J Business 4 (J4) (Professional and Business Offices), and J Business 5 (J5) (High Intensity Business). Existing residential parcels are zoned A Residence 1 (A1) (See Figure 5-3: Zoning). See Appendix 5 for zoning district explanations.

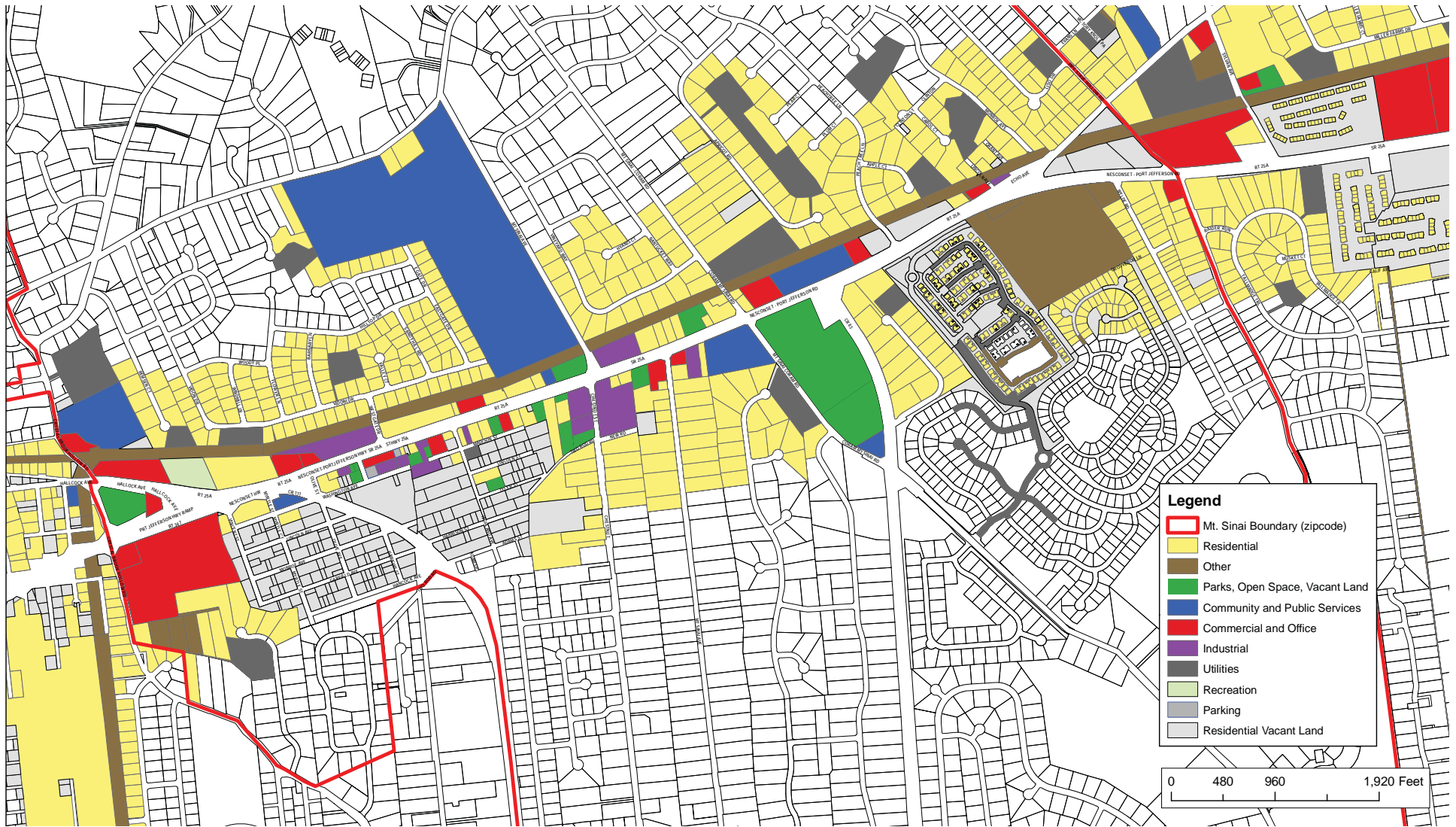
According to NYSDOT traffic volume data, the segment of 25A between the Route 347 merger and County Road 83 carried approximately 37,400 vehicles in both directions on an average day in 2008. The segment between County Road 83 and Echo Avenue

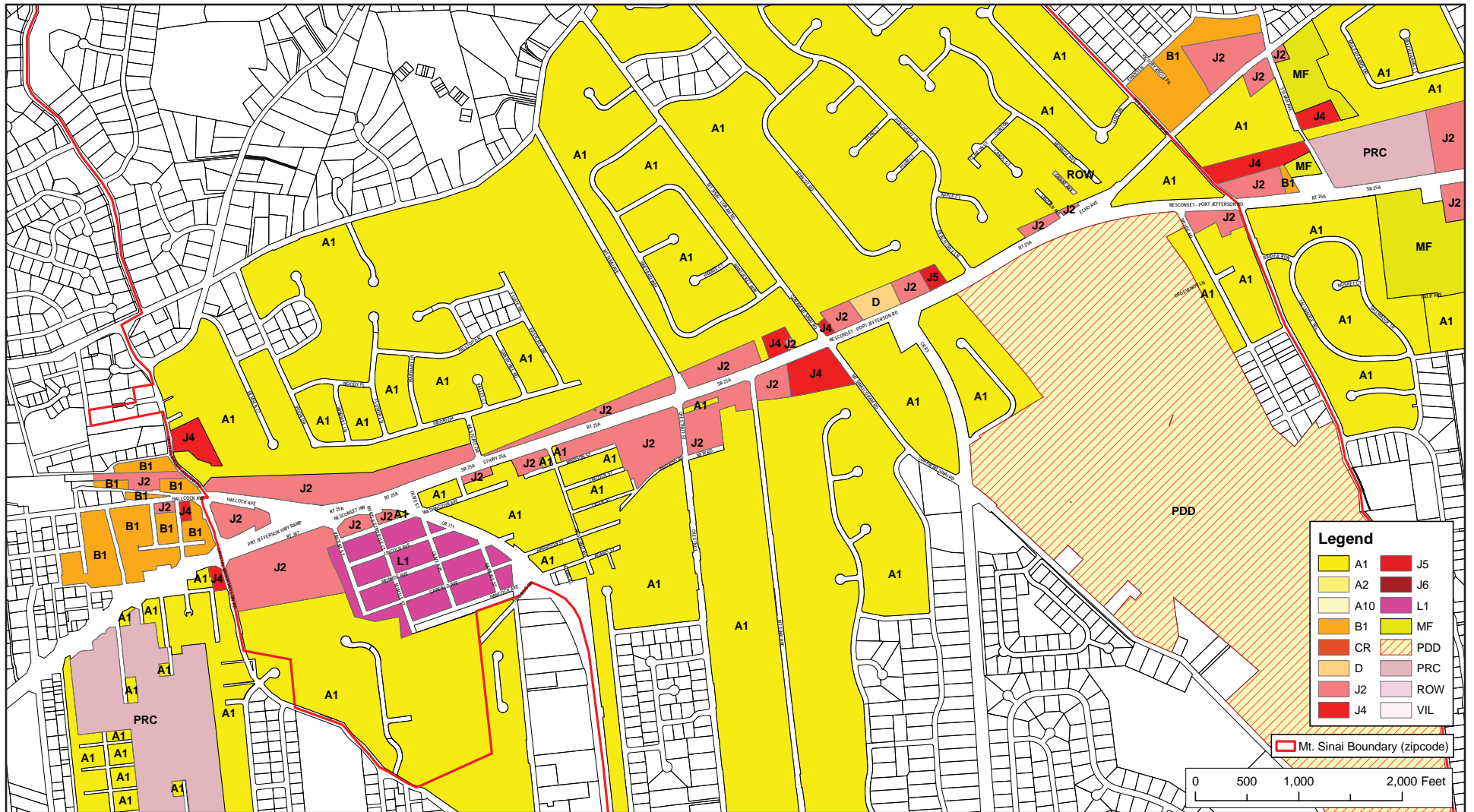


Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Community Visioning  
Brookhaven, New York

Figure 5-1: Mount Sinai: Study Area Aerial Map

June 2010 | BfJ Planning  
Source: Google





carried on average approximately 50,500 vehicles daily—the highest number of vehicles among all segments of 25A within the study area. NYSDOT further reports that, between 2006 and 2008, there was a combined total of 106 reported vehicle crashes along the portion of Route 25A through Mount Sinai, 56 of which resulted in injuries; one crash resulted in a fatality. Two locations are reported as particularly problematic: (1) the Route 25A and Route 347 merger and (2) the signalized intersection of Route 25A with Mt. Sinai-Coram Road (see Figure 5-4: Mt. Sinai Detail Maps (Bird’s Eye View)). NYSDOT recently installed additional left turn phases at the Mt. Sinai-Coram Road/Route 25A intersection traffic signal, which may improve current crash statistics for this area.

### Mount Sinai Community Planning Forum

The first forum was held in Mount Sinai at the Rose Caracappa Center on January 30, 2010. It was attended by approximately 40 residents and business owners. The format included welcoming remarks, a “first impressions” exercise, presentation, assets and liabilities discussion, roundtable discussions, and public sharing of roundtable outcomes. A summary of the forums’ key findings are as follows:



#### *Assets and Liabilities*

Important assets listed were Heritage Park, landscaping, trees along Route 25A, and community character. Liabilities included high property taxes, safety problems faced by drivers and pedestrians, and “out-of-character” development.

#### *Key Breakout Group Findings*

Key issues that emerged from the Mount Sinai forum included balancing “smart growth” (growth that is environmentally, fiscally, and economically smart that generally includes a mix of compatible uses) with the preservation of open space; preserving Mount Sinai’s suburban character, creating a mixed-use hamlet center and supporting small businesses; attracting office uses, retaining young adults and seniors, increasing safety of the corridor through traffic calming, improving the intersection of Route 347 and Route 25A (possibly with a roundabout), and using the LIPA right-of-way for off-road bicycle and recreation use.

Participants at the Land Use table expressed concerns about both commercial and residential overdevelopment and high property taxes. They felt that a priority should be to refurbish existing strip malls and improve access through cross easements (at adjacent commercial properties and perhaps at the Rose Caracappa Senior Center) and shared parking. Participants agreed that architectural integrity and landscaping are important and big box stores should be discouraged. Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) was discussed as a possible zoning tool, which could protect open space along the corridor while allowing for appropriate commercial development without an increase in overall density along the corridor. It should be noted, however, that the All Hamlet Forum limited support for TDR’s to intra-school district use, as is currently provided by Town Code. Housing for senior citizens and students was also seen by some as a necessity for the community if planned properly; although, this idea was not supported by everyone and there were mixed feelings about locating housing above stores.

At the Transportation table, participants were primarily concerned with vehicular speeds along the corridor and were made aware that it may be possible to reduce speeds without reducing capacity along 25A. They also expressed concerns with increased congestion, as well



Rt. 25A & Rt. 347



Rt. 25A & Chestnut Street



Rt. 25A & Mt. Sinai Ave S



Rt. 25A & Mt. Sinai Coram Rd.



Rt. 25A & County Rd. 83



Rt. 25A & Echo Ave



Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Community Visioning  
Brookhaven, New York

Figure 5-4: Mt. Sinai:  
Study Area Detail Maps (Bird's Eye View)

June 2010 | BfJ Planning  
Source: Bing Maps

as spillover onto neighboring roads. Participants agreed that traffic calming is a priority, especially at the intersection of route 347 and 25A. The pros and cons of a roundabout for this intersection were discussed and a roundabout seemed to be favored by most. Other traffic calming improvements mentioned were medians, trees, narrowed lane widths, street parking, and reduction in curb cuts paired with shared parking layouts. Participants weren't entirely in agreement as to whether 25A should embrace a walkable "downtown concept" because of safety issues due to the heavy traffic volume.

The Streetscape and Open Space table felt that planted medians, burying power lines and restoring open vistas could help enhance community gateways and beautify the street. In addition, consistent signage could be used to create a sense of place and identify businesses to motorists.



Creating safer pedestrian crossings near the school, Heritage Park and the post office were all priorities, as was establishing Heritage Park as a focal point in the community. Although medians were seen as ways to reduce unsafe and illegal use of the two-way left turn lane, some participants stressed that they should not reduce access to local businesses.

The Economic Development table discussed ways to increase business, housing and jobs, while maintaining the beauty and character of the community. Priorities included revitalizing commercial centers, slowing down traffic and bringing in small retail as opposed to big box stores. Participants suggested changes in zoning to encourage parking in the rear of commercial buildings,

clustering homes for open space conservation, and tax incentives to support new businesses.

Despite the wide array of issues discussed at the Mt. Sinai workshop, several key themes emerged. Workshop participants may not have agreed on all of these points but the end goal was the same: to improve the Route 25A corridor and the quality of life of its residents and business owners. Basic themes that emerged were:

- Balancing smart growth and preservation of open space
- Preserving Mount Sinai's suburban character, while creating a mixed-use hamlet center with a variety of commercial and office uses
- Supporting small business and attracting office uses
- Retaining young adults and seniors
- Increasing safety of the corridor through traffic calming
- Improving the intersection of Route 347 and Route 25A, possibly with a roundabout
- Using of the LIPA right-of-way for off-road bicycle use
- Beautifying the commercial corridor through attractive signage, shared parking, trees and landscaping
- Reducing illegal and dangerous use of the two-way left turn lane
- Incorporating a median without reducing safety or access to businesses

#### **All Hamlet Forum – Mount Sinai Breakout Group**

At the All Hamlet Forum, participants provided feedback on the preliminary Mt. Sinai Hamlet vision, as well as the main issues and possible recommendations discussed at the Mt. Sinai forum that was held on January 30<sup>th</sup>.

A great deal of the discussion dealt with transportation issues. First, there was support for the consideration and study of a modern roundabout at the intersection of Routes 347 and 25A. Participants noted several issues, including a new gas station currently in the site plan stage at the intersection, the existing ambulance station on Crystal Brook Hollow Road, and traffic at the nearby Hallock Avenue/ Route 25A intersection.



Second, conversation focused on the Route 83 intersection along Route 25A. At this intersection, the pedestrian crossings to Heritage Park need to be improved, particularly the sidewalks and pedestrian signals. A new connection should be considered between the Rose Caracappa Senior Center and the park. This later connection should also link the park with the LIPA ROW when the rails-to-trails project is implemented. The group responded well to the suggestion of signaling the right-turn lane where northbound Route 83 intersects Route 25A. This would minimize the weaving created by many vehicles coming off Route 83 and needing to cross a steady traffic stream on Route 25A in order to make a left at Echo Avenue.

Third, there was some support for considering a change in the Echo Avenue/Route 25A/Pipe Stove Hollow Road intersections. The change would involve taking a piece of the vacant wedge to make two left turn lanes on eastbound 25A, allowing access to Pipe Stove Hollow Road, and then onto Echo Avenue. The wedge could be converted into a more attractive open space. Echo Avenue would then become one-way westbound from Pipe Stove Hollow to 25A. Two possible issues that were cited were the potential impact on the chiropractor's

office on Echo Avenue between Monroe and Pipe Stove Hollow, as well as issues with vehicular queuing.

Fourth, participants supported the concept of increasing safety by lowering speeds and maintaining roadway capacity. Participants asked for more police presence to maintain vehicular safety. Some participants did not want to see Route 25A used as a bicycle route; riders should be encouraged to use other parallel streets that are considered safer. Better yet, many participants liked the idea of converting the LIPA right-of-way to a bicycle/pedestrian trail, though some were concerned with making the trail secure and safe.



Two non-transportation issues were discussed. A strong majority of participants agreed that there should not be any more “big box stores” along the corridor, citing their negative impact upon local businesses and traffic congestion, and the need to preserve individual hamlet ‘sense of place’ along the corridor. This group thought that smaller anchor stores should only be considered on a case-by-case basis and only if they were in character with the existing community.

A small number of participants saw clear benefits of what they called “anchor stores” (defining them as big stores set back from the road, anchoring a new shopping center), citing that these would attract new small business and provide needed tax base support for schools.

Finally, the table agreed that there were enough Planned Retirement Communities either existing, being built, or in the approval process, and that no additional independent living developments should be built.

### **Mount Sinai Hamlet Vision**

The goal of this vision is to promote a mixed-use hamlet Center as the gateway to the Route 25A corridor. This will be achieved by responsible economic development and a balance of commercial and residential development that offers needed public amenities. New development will consist of businesses that are within context of the community and that will support and enhance small businesses. Residential uses will support both young adults and seniors. Improvements, such as access management, enhanced building façades, signage, architectural lighting, and trees and landscaping will help make the 25A corridor safer, more attractive and accessible for all users. This vision promotes improved pedestrian crossings and linkages between community and recreation facilities.

## **5.2 Miller Place**

### **Existing Conditions**

From the west, Route 25A enters Miller Place just after Echo Avenue. Similar to the highway configuration in Mount Sinai, the approximately two mile stretch of Route 25A in Miller Place consists of a four-lane highway (two lanes in each direction) with a center two-way left turn lane or landscaped median in some sections (See Figure 5-5: Miller Place Aerial Map). The right-of-way also includes relatively wide shoulders of about 10 feet wide on both sides of the street, as well as sidewalks intermittently placed along sections of roadway (see Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2.0 for a typical Route 25A R.O.W. plan view in Miller Place). The overall right-of-way width of about 100 feet - coupled with the wide driving lanes and center two-way left turn lane - contributes to the high traffic speeds experienced today. The number of vehicular crashes is high in Miller Place relative to the other hamlets in the study area. This is especially prevalent at the intersection of Miller Place Road with Route 25A, where 53

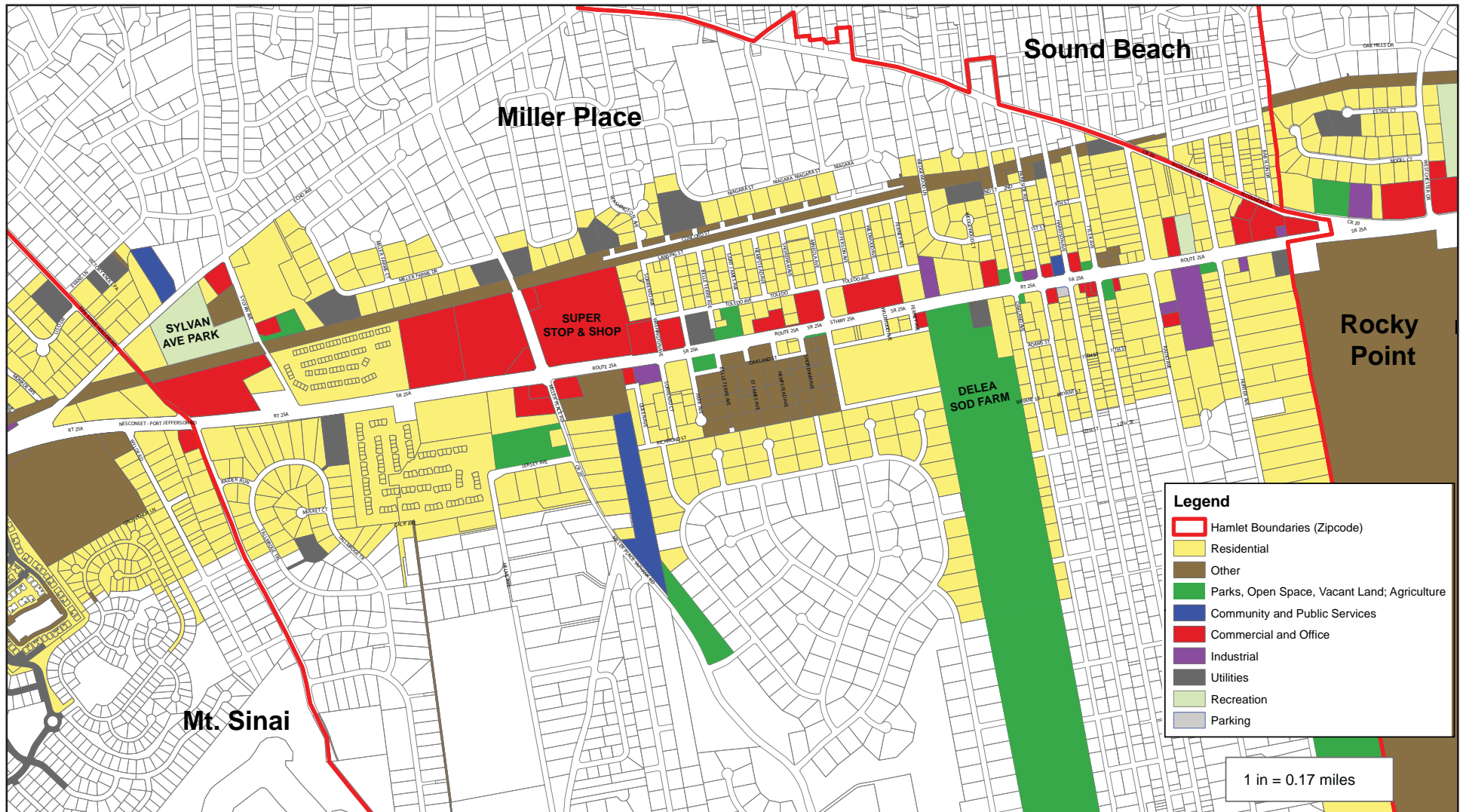
crashes, including two pedestrian/bicycle crashes, were reported between 2006 and 2009 (see Figure 2-5 in Chapter 2.0). The 25A highway segment between Miller Place Road and Echo Avenue also experienced a high number of crashes totaling 78 crashes or averaging 26 crashes per year for this less than one mile stretch of Route 25A.

Land uses along Route 25A in Miller Place mainly consist of retail and other commercial establishments supported by single family homes and townhomes/condos that are generally located behind commercial uses that front 25A (see Figure 5-6: Miller Place Land Use). However, there are sections of 25A where residential developments back up to the corridor, such as The Vineyards Active Adult Community near Sylvan Avenue. The Vineyards and other newer residential subdivisions off of Pipe Stove Hollow and Miller Place Roads contain generous landscaped or natural buffers to Route 25A.

The commercial center in Miller Place extends from the commercial businesses located near the Miller Place Road/25A intersection (near Super Stop & Shop) to the Miller Place/Rocky Point border at North Country Road. Commercial strip centers and other small commercial uses continue into Rocky Point to the east.

The combination of low density commercial uses along 25A and single and multi family homes contributes to the suburban character of Miller Place and several areas of Miller Place contribute to its rural heritage. These areas include the large DeLea Sod Farm property, several sections of 25A that have naturally wooded buffers and the Miller Place Historic District on North Country Road. Additionally, the 64-acre Vasillaros property has been acquired by the County and Town as open space, which assures it will be preserved in its natural





state. Within the study area, Sylvan Avenue Park and the North Shore Little League Park also offer passive and active recreation to hamlet residents.



*DeLea Sod Farm*

Similar to Mount Sinai, existing zoning along Route 25A includes the J2 District, which allows a variety of commercial uses, including a commercial or strip commercial center (see Figure 5-7: Miller Place: Zoning). The Super Stop & Shop, CVS Pharmacy shopping center, and Aliano Shoppes are examples of commercial strips in Miller Place. Smaller, free-standing commercial businesses are also located along Route 25A in Miller Place and are mainly zoned J2. There are a few J4 districts scattered throughout Miller Place near Route 25A, two gas stations that are located on Route 25A in the J5 district, and two L1 districts that are also located in the Miller Place Study area.

Single-family zoning dominates the types of zoning that is located behind the J2 Districts along 25A. These districts consist of A1, which requires one acre (40,000 SF) lots, and B Residence 1 (B1), which has a minimum lot size of 1/2 acre (22,500 SF). Other residential zoning districts located in the Miller Place study area include two Multifamily

Residential Districts and one Planned Retirement Community (The Vineyards).

### **Miller Place Community Planning Forum**

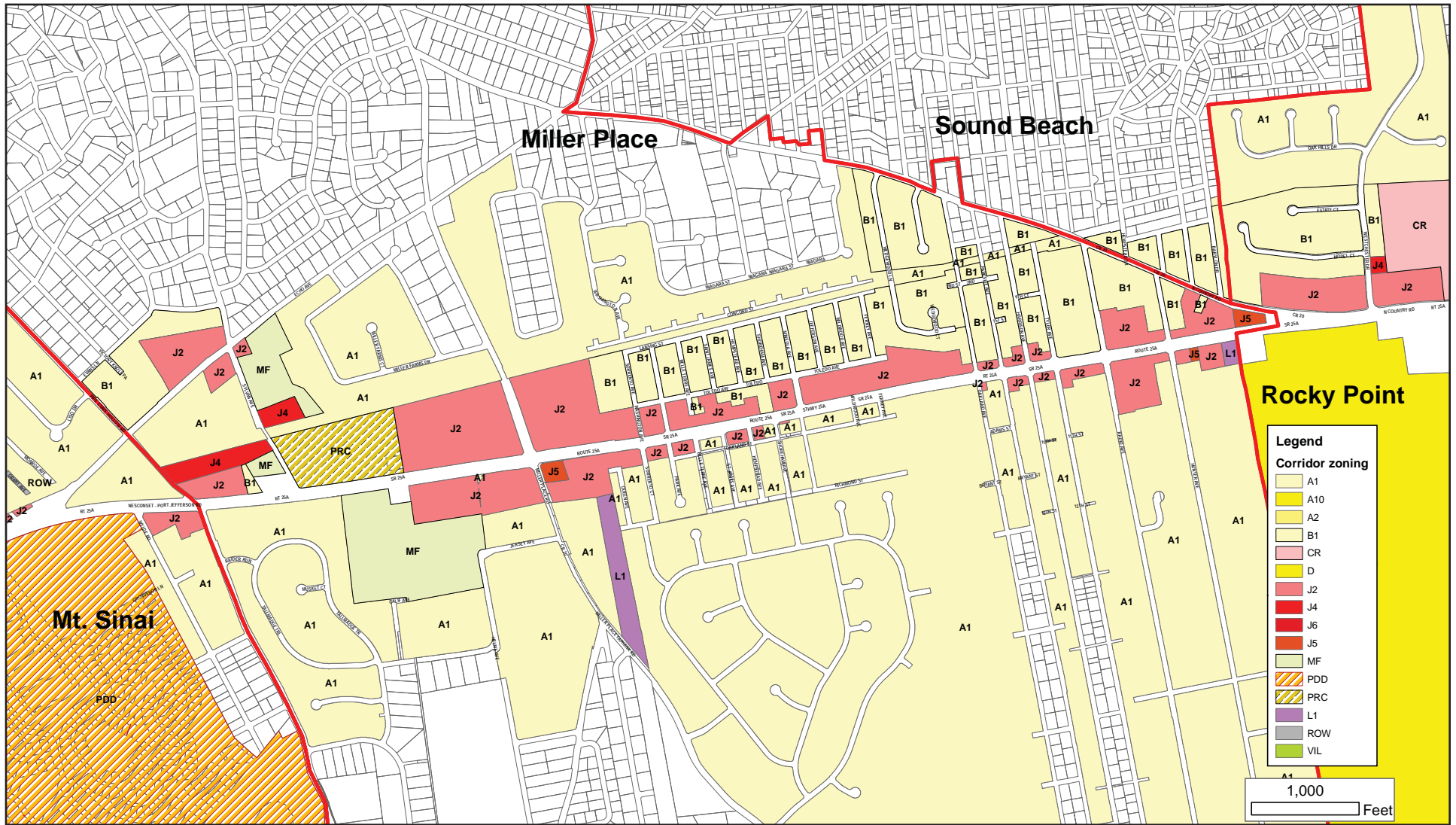
The Miller Place forum was held on April 17, 2010 at the Miller Place High School. The original Community Planning Forum was rescheduled from February 22, 2010 due to inclement weather. The workshop was one of the largest attended, with over 80 residents, business owners, and local officials. In addition to participants from Miller Place, there were also attendees representing Sound Beach. A summary of the forum's key findings are as follows:

#### *Assets and Liabilities*

Assets identified by participants included low density development and rural character, Sylvan Avenue Park and Heritage Park (in Mount Sinai), the Miller Place Historic District, and small family businesses. Liabilities included a lack of speed enforcement along



Route 25A, the need for improved traffic signaling at the intersection of Route 25A and County Road 83, the dangerous intersection of Route 25A and Miller Place Road (see Figure 5-8: Miller Place Study Area Detail Maps (Bird's Eye View)), lack of aesthetic continuity along 25A and the entire corridor, lack of maintenance and litter removal within existing medians, the need for ratables from commercial or professional uses to help support existing high school taxes, and the lack of well paying employment opportunities for local residents.





Rt. 25A & Pipe Stave Hollow Rd.



Rt. 25A & Miller Place



Rt. 25A & Panther Path



Rt. 25A & Mineola Ave.



Rt. 25A & Harrison Ave.



Rt. 25A & North County Rd.



### *Key Breakout Group Findings*

One of the major issues facing Miller Place is the future of the DeLea Sod Farm. Participants expressed a strong desire to preserve the sod farm as a preferred scenario. If this is not possible, then participants offered several development suggestions that would be in



character with the surrounding community. These options included a potential mixed-use professional office and residential development that would be at an appropriate scale and supported by a public park or ball fields. Another possible development scenario was the conversion of the sod farm to a solar farm. It should be noted that not all residents agreed on potential future uses for the sod farm. Due to the site's significance, residents expressed the need for a separate meeting at which time all the relevant issues concerning the sod farm could be carefully delineated and analyzed.

Other key issues from the breakout groups included preserving Miller Place's suburban, rural and historic character, preserving open space, expanding sidewalk and bicycle connections, slowing traffic in the Miller Place Historic District, and increasing corridor safety with traffic calming measures.

The Land Use/Economic Development table identified several key issues that were reinforced at other roundtable discussion tables. These issues included reevaluating existing commercial zoning to discourage big box stores and encouraging parking behind buildings, a possible 25A design overlay district that would promote common aesthetic design elements, as well as recognizing unique attributes of

their respective hamlet, limiting future residential development, and selectively increasing rates to help counter high school taxes. This group also suggested that developers should provide public amenities for development projects, which should have generous landscaped buffers. Finally, the group identified the expansion of Sylvan Avenue Park, possibly with a picnic area to include a connection to the proposed rails-to-trails pedestrian/bike pathway along the LIPA right-of-way, as well as the possible need for a teen/community center within the vicinity of the park, as potential improvements within Miller Place.



The Transportation and Streetscape/Open Space tables identified several priorities including improving/expanding sidewalks and curb-to-sidewalk buffers, extending the landscaped median in sections of Route 25A and Sylvan Avenue with low lying vegetation that can be easily maintained, utilizing access management to reduce the number of curb cuts and connect adjacent commercial parking lots, and addressing the current frequent practice of cars using the wide shoulders to pass other cars on the right. Additional suggestions from these tables included improving scheduling and coordination among Suffolk County buses, adding buffered bike lanes, the use of permeable pavement in parking lots, and considering smaller housing plots with a focus on land conservation. As noted in Section 4.2 of this report, biking on Route 25A was not accepted by all participants; however, it was recognized by many participants that bicyclists currently use 25A and that safety for bicyclists needed to be improved.

### All Hamlet Forum – Miller Place Breakout Group

At the All Hamlet Forum, Miller Place, Sound Beach, and other interested residents and business owners provided feedback on the preliminary Miller Place Hamlet vision, as well as the main issues and



possible recommendations discussed at the Miller Place forum that was held on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Several recommendations were reinforced, such as the expansion of Sylvan Avenue Park for passive picnic areas, access management strategies to improve safety along the corridor, design guidelines for and enforcement of commercial signage, preserving/enhancing the hamlet’s uniqueness, and the need for increased vehicular speed enforcement. In addition, Sound Beach participants urged that any potential future improvements to Route 25A be designed in such a way to avoid negative impacts upon their community.

One of the main issues discussed was concern about future growth in the hamlet and the importance of redeveloping existing parcels (without increasing density) for future sustainability rather than developing new parcels, such as the DeLea Sod Farm. Attendees reinforced their desire to preserve the sod farm as a priority before any type of development was considered there. In support of this view attendees asked that this study effort identify planning and financing tools for acquiring or preserving the DeLea Sod Farm, such as a Community Preservation Fund, as well as redevelopment incentives for other parcels.

As a potential open space preservation tool, the benefits and possible detriments of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) were discussed.

It was agreed that TDRs would only be an option if both the sending and receiving areas were located in the same school district, no absolute density increases were slated for Miller Place, and the school district residents could vote on the TDR action. Although attendees felt that more time was needed for proper planning of the sod farm, they discussed other potential development options, such as retaining the sod farm’s agricultural use and promoting agricultural tourism.

Attendees also expressed the need to diversify businesses in Miller Place. In doing so, Miller Place could remain competitive during varying market conditions. The need for commercial ratables was discussed but a distinction was made between retail jobs with low paying salaries versus higher paying jobs that contribute to the economic well being of the hamlet. It was noted that higher paying jobs are needed to ensure housing affordability and that the next phase of this study should examine the economic impacts of land use decisions and seek to implement zoning and policy changes that increase the quality of life of Miller Place residents and create a more sustainable community.

The possible expansion of Sylvan Avenue Park was discussed in more detail than during the Miller Place forum, and two possible nearby locations for its expansion were suggested. The availability of parking was discussed and proper planning for off-street parking would be needed.

As a wrap-up to the Miller Place roundtable discussion, attendees identified possible next steps of the Route 25A study, including integrating the Route 25A study into the Town’s Comprehensive Plan once it is completed, and the desire of the community for an updated Miller Place Hamlet Plan.

### Miller Place Hamlet Vision

The Hamlet of Miller Place is proud of its suburban, rural, and historic qualities. Its vision is to preserve these unique attributes over the coming decades by retaining its current build-out, redeveloping existing vacant buildings, and preserving its remaining open space. At the same time, residents and business owners recognize the importance of encouraging limited economic and commercial development that will sustain and enhance the community's quality of life. The delicate balance between preservation and small-scale development and redevelopment will ensure that Miller Place will remain safe, attractive and affordable for families to live and play. Route 25A corridor improvements that establish aesthetic continuity, support rural and historic qualities, and provide for needed expansion of parkland and community spaces, support this vision.

## 5.3 Rocky Point

### Existing Conditions

In Rocky Point, the Route 25A corridor stretches less than three miles from the intersection of Route 25A & N. Country Road on the west to the intersection of Route 25A and Water Road on the east. The study area includes both Route 25A as well as the 1.4 mile long 25A Bypass (see Figure 5-9: Rocky Point Aerial Map). Between the start and end of the bypass, Route 25A narrows from a four lane road with a shoulder and two-way left turn lane to a two lane road with a shoulder. There is an on-road state bicycle route (Class 3) in the shoulder, which extends along Route 25A from Fairway Drive to the Brookhaven Town line in Wading River.

Rocky Point has both a commercial center, which includes the areas adjacent to the intersection of Route 25A and Rocky Point Road including the Kohls shopping center, and a traditional hamlet center located on Broadway, north of Route 25A and south of King Road.

These areas, along with most of the parcels that front 25A are zoned J2 for general commercial uses. There are also A1 and B1 residential uses along the study area. The preserved open spaces, including the 5,100 acre Rocky Point Natural Resource Area south of Route 25A and the 25A Bypass, is zoned A-10 (see Figure 5-10: Rocky Point Land Use and Figure 5-11: Rocky Point Zoning).

According to NYSDOT traffic volume data, the segment of 25A between Rocky Point Yaphank Road and Ridge Road carried approximately 20,800 vehicles in both directions on an average day in 2008; a considerable drop-off from recorded traffic volumes in Miller Place, probably due to the reduction in the number of lanes between Miller Place and Rocky Point. According to NYSDOT data between 2006 and 2008, Route 25A in Rocky Point experienced some of the highest concentrations of vehicular crashes, including 54 crashes at the Rocky Point Road/Route 25A intersection and 64 crashes along 25A, between Rocky Point Road and the merger of 25A with the 25A Bypass to the east. Additionally, the Route 25A Bypass experienced only six crashes during this time (see Figure 2-4: Route 25A Corridor Traffic Volumes and Figure 2-5: Route 25A Corridor Crash Summary for more information).

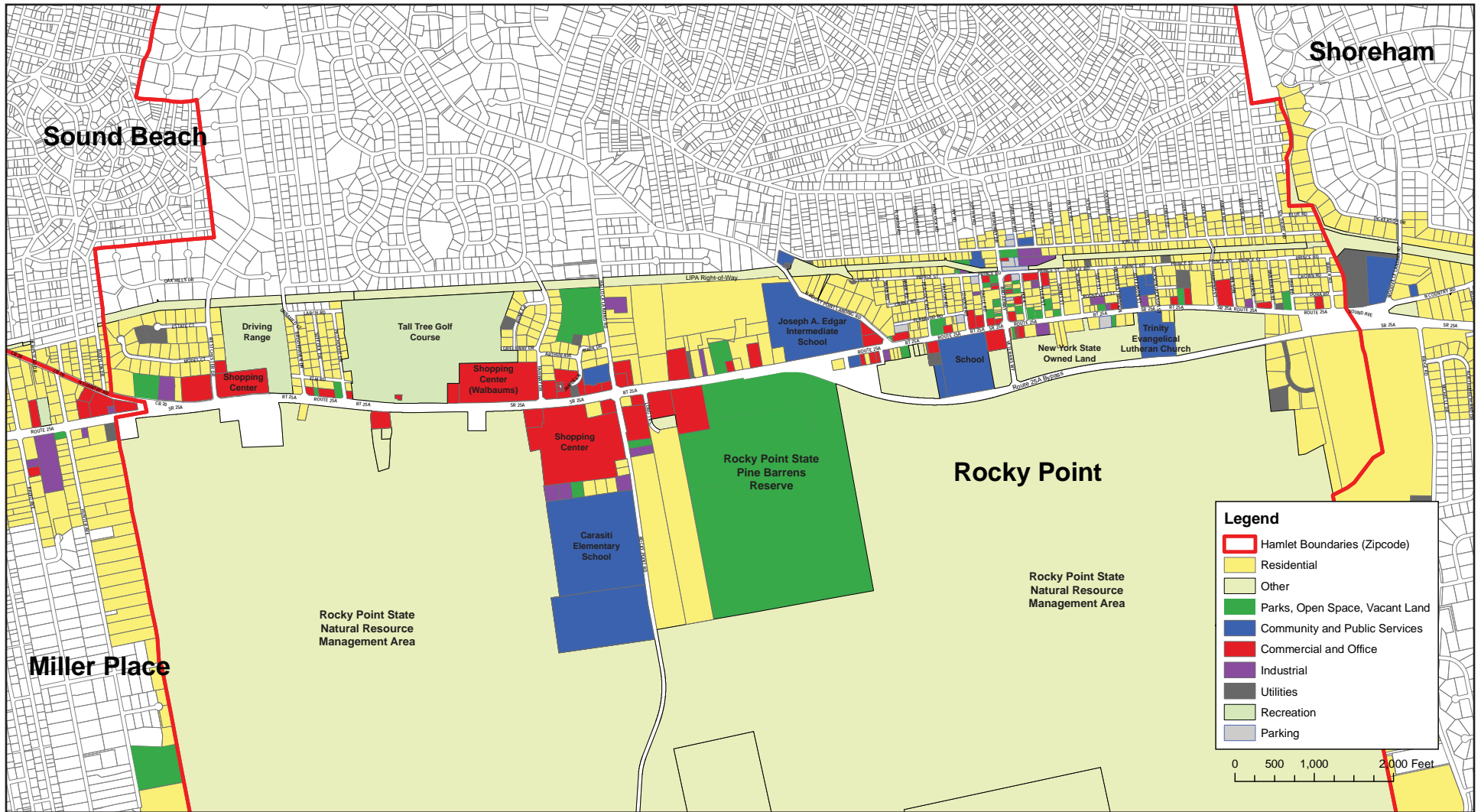
### Rocky Point Community Planning Forum

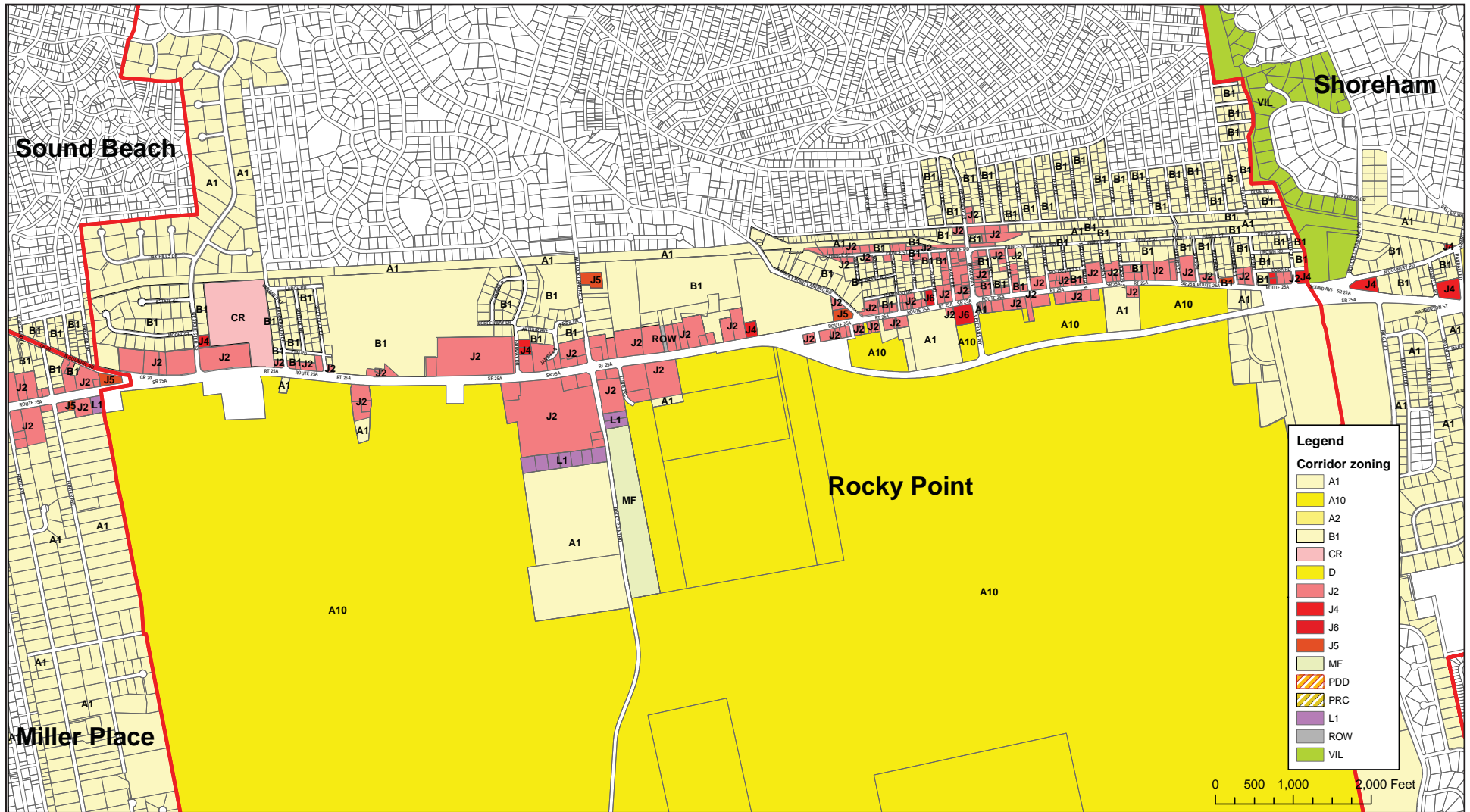
The Rocky Point Community Planning Forum was held on March 13<sup>th</sup> at the Joseph A. Edgar Intermediate School; there were 70 attendees. Some key points from the forum included balancing growth and the preservation of open space, preserving



Rocky Point's suburban character while revitalizing the downtown area and the Route 25A corridor, establishing a farmers market, improving







parking in the downtown area, increasing road safety through traffic calming, and beautifying the downtown commercial corridor. Burying the overhead power lines was discussed in multiple groups as a possible improvement on 25A and Broadway.

There was discussion on how best to link the LIPA right-of-way for off-road bicycle use with both the downtown area and the NYSDEC nature preserve south of Route 25A and the Route 25A Bypass. Residents expressed the desire for a large hamlet park, similar to Heritage Park in Mount Sinai, and a community center. The old drive-in movie site was discussed as a possible location. With regard to development along the commercial corridor, participants agreed that existing properties should be developed and improved before considering any new development. There was a contentious discussion on the need for sewers in the downtown hamlet center with the result that a majority of the participants were opposed to any new sewers in Rocky Point because of their growth inducing impacts.



### All Hamlet Forum – Rocky Point Breakout Group

Participants at the All Hamlet Forum felt that the priorities for 25A in Rocky Point should include revitalizing the downtown area and slowing traffic. Complete streets best practices were supported and medians were seen as a positive so long as they didn't reduce safety or access to businesses. Roundabouts were discussed to improve traffic conditions at three different intersections along 25A: Hallock Landing Road, and at the entrance and exit merges to the 25A Bypass (See Figure 5-12: Rocky Point: Study Area Detail Maps (Bird's Eye

View)). Creating a roundabout, along with entry signage would also help create a gateway to the downtown commercial area.

Improving access management was seen as a smart way to share resources and improve safety, while reducing curb cuts. Some specific locations for cross connections that were identified include: (1) the parcels on the North side of 25A between Hallock Landing Road and Fairway Drive and (2) both sides of the Rocky Point Road just south of 25A. Participants generally agreed that the Rocky Point Road and Route 25A intersection was dangerous and problematic to navigate. In addition to access management, street design interventions, including traffic signalization changes should be investigated at this location.

Participants stressed that priority should be to refurbish/revitalize existing structures rather than developing virgin parcels, particularly in the downtown area. Improving the facades and the streetscape was seen as an important way to maintain the character of the neighborhood. Although big box stores were generally discouraged, there was some discussion as to whether incorporating a somewhat smaller sized anchor tenant had merit, so long as the architecture was compatible with the streetscape. Participants agreed that mixed uses should be investigated on Broadway. In addition, tax abatement incentives should be investigated for the downtown area to stimulate business improvement. There was a general consensus that parking was needed in the downtown area in order to facilitate its redevelopment. Parcels on Polk Street and Eagle Road were discussed as possible shared parking facility locations.





Rt. 25A & N. Country Rd.



Rt. 25A & Fairway Dr.



Rt. 25A & Rocky Point Road



Rt. 25A & Rocky Point Landing Road



Rt. 25A & Broadway



Rt. 25A & Woodville Rd.



Although there is a significant amount of open space in Rocky Point, the community stressed the need for strong civic and public space, comparable to Heritage Park in Mount Sinai. The abandoned driving range was mentioned as a possible site for a park and/or community center. Residents felt that teens and young adults should be included in any park or open space planning. Also discussed was the potential for a farmers market to be held one morning per week between May and October. Several possible locations were discussed. One major asset of Rocky point is its network of bike trails in the natural resource management area. Residents discussed ways to link this network with the downtown area and the rails-to-trails project on the LIPA right-of-way.



*Rocky Point Vacant Drive-In/  
Driving Range Site*

Participants corrected the previous Rocky Point Community Planning Forum Summary Report, which incorrectly stated that there was an expressed need for increased jobs and housing. They also debated the possibility of installing sewers in downtown Rocky Point to facilitate revitalization of this traditional hamlet center. Although participants at the original Rocky Point forum were generally opposed to sewers,

some attendees at the All Hamlet Forum expressed support for sewers so long as the character of the Downtown area was preserved.

### **Rocky Point Hamlet Vision**

Rocky Point's shared vision for the Route 25A corridor is to protect and enhance its natural resources and suburban character while promoting responsible economic development. Improvements that focus on access management, gateways, attractive building façades and signage, trees and landscaping will help make the corridor safer, more attractive and accessible for all users. In the downtown area, development should focus on the revitalization of existing vacant and underutilized parcels, an attractive streetscape, small businesses that meet community needs, and the provision of shared parking. These improvements will help to increase linkages between the downtown area, preserved open spaces and the LIPA right-of-way rails-to-trails project.

## **5.4 Shoreham and Wading River**

### **Existing Conditions**

From the west, Route 25A enters the Hamlet of Shoreham near the T-intersection with Woodville Road. Here, it widens from a two-lane highway (one in each direction) to a four-lane highway (two in each direction) with a landscaped median. The highway runs in an easterly direction for approximately one-half mile before entering the four-way signalized intersection with Randall Road. At this point, 25A becomes a two-lane road with a center two-way left-turn lane. At the three-way junction with County Road 46 (William Floyd Parkway), 25A regains its status as a traditional two-lane highway, continuing east to the eastern terminus of the Study Area. There is an on-road numbered bicycle route with striped lane along the entire portion of 25A in both directions through Shoreham and Wading River.

The nearly 3.5-mile stretch of Route 25A through Shoreham and Wading River is a low-density corridor lined mostly with residential uses. Along the north side of 25A (westbound) in Shoreham, nearly all residential properties back up to the highway; there is only one direct access to an adjacent residential property. By contrast, along the south side of 25A (eastbound) in Shoreham, nearly all of the residential properties front the highway, thereby resulting in frequent and direct access points to the adjacent residential properties. This is particularly the case along the segment between East Street and the William Floyd Parkway junction, wherein some 17 residential driveways connect directly with the highway. Conversely, the short stretch of Route 25A through Wading River contains only three direct access residential driveways along the south side (eastbound), whereas the north side (westbound) contains at least 10 (See Figure 5-13: Shoreham/Wading River: Aerial Map).

Major open space holdings along 25A in Shoreham and Wading River include the DeLalio Sod Farm between Randall Road (Shoreham) and the southward extension of East Street, and Brookhaven State Park between William Floyd Parkway and Randall Road (Wading River). There are two commercial sites and two industrial sites located on the north side of the highway between Rosewell and Miller Avenues in Shoreham. Additional land uses along the corridor include the grouping of community and public service parcels between William Floyd Parkway and Wading River Road and two community and public service parcels at the midway point of the highway's segment through Wading River (See Figure 5-14: Shoreham/Wading River: Land Use).

Existing residential zones along Route 25A through Shoreham and Wading River include A1, A10 and B1. There are a total of four sites zoned for commercial use – two J Business 2 and two J Business 4 Districts – all of which are located in Shoreham. Parcels zoned J2 allow for a variety of commercial uses including a commercial or strip

commercial center, while those zoned J4 permit professional and business offices (See Figure 5-15: Shoreham/Wading River: Zoning).

According to the New York State Department of Transportation, the segment of Route 25A through Shoreham carried approximately 24,250 vehicles in both directions on an average day in 2008, while the segment through Wading River carried an average of approximately 14,600 vehicles. With the exception of the segment between Rocky Point-Yaphank and Ridge Roads in Rocky Point, 25A through Shoreham and Wading River carried notably fewer vehicles on an average day than the rest of the study area. However, NYS DOT reports that, between 2006 and 2008, there were three locations along the Shoreham segment of 25A where a combined total of 81 vehicle crashes occurred, 39 of which resulted in injuries. One reported crash – at the intersection of 25A and Randall Road – resulted in a fatality (See Figure 2-5 in Chapter 2.0 for crash locations).

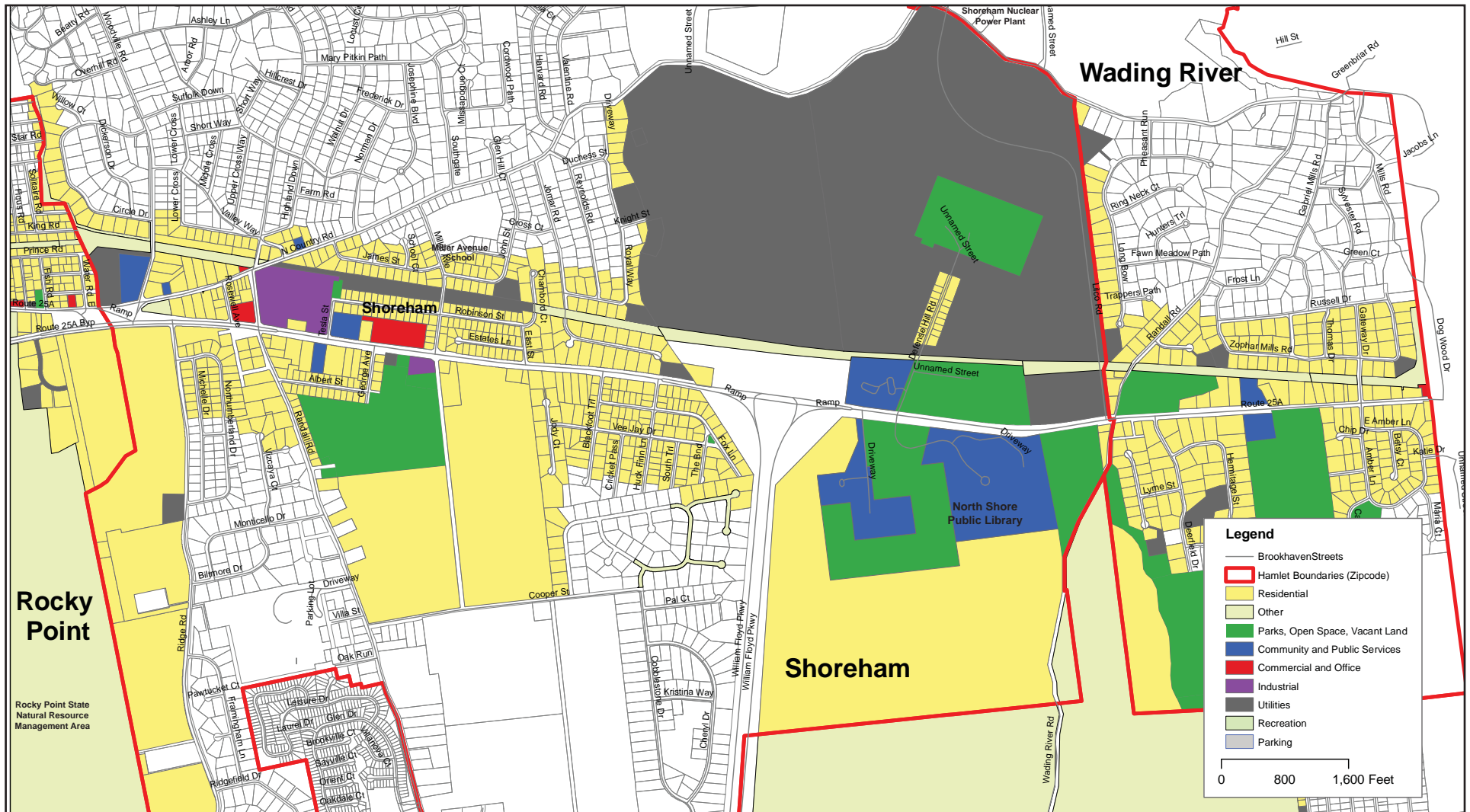
### Shoreham – Wading River Community Planning Forum

The Shoreham-Wading River Community Planning Forum was held on April 10, 2010 at the Shoreham-Wading River High School in Shoreham. The workshop was attended by approximately 40 residents, business owners, and public



officials who enthusiastically shared their ideas and experiences to inform the planning process. A summary of the forum's key findings are as follows:

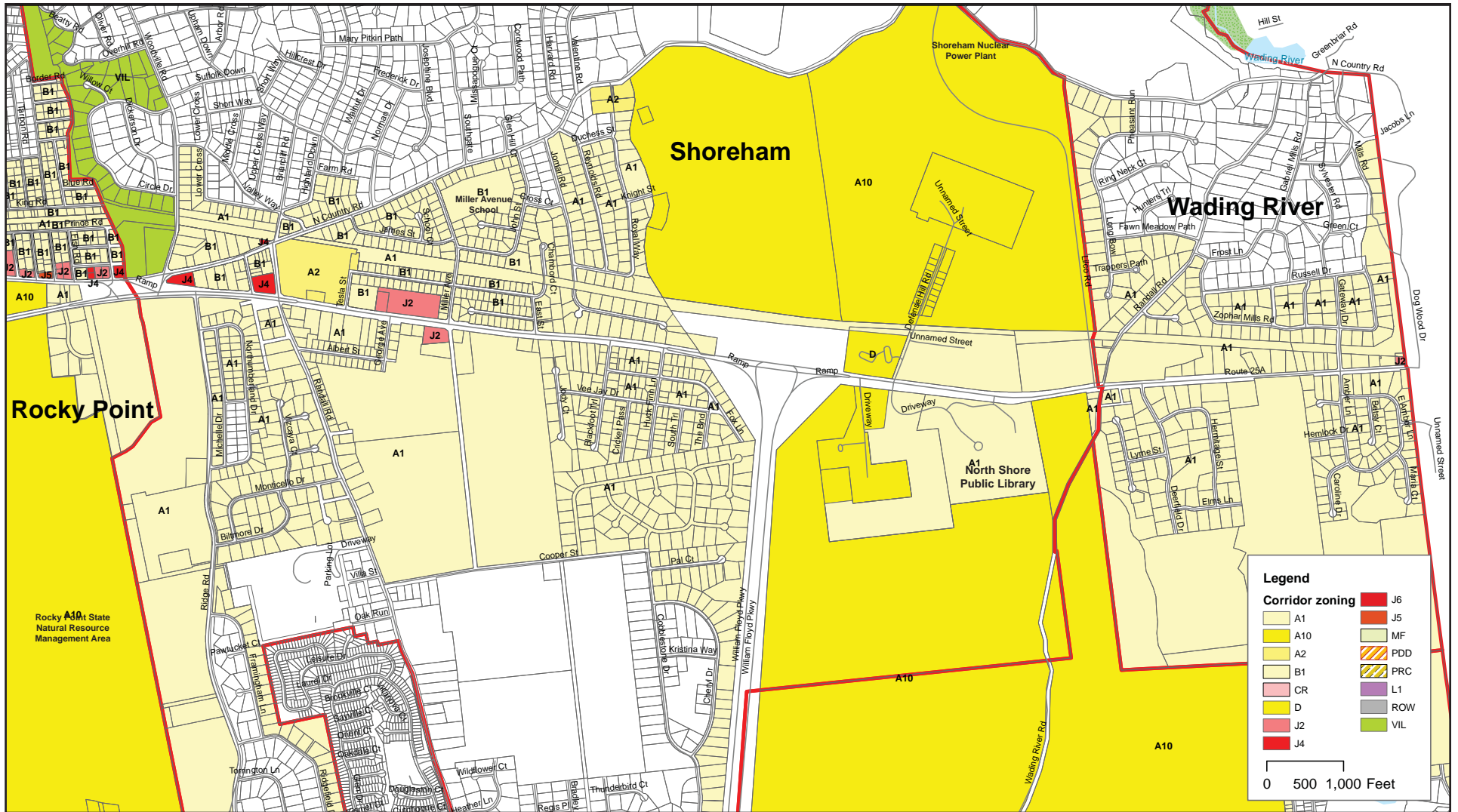




Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Community Visioning  
 Brookhaven, New York

Figure 5-14: Shoreham/Wading River: Study Area Land Use

June 2010 | BFI Planning  
 Source: Town of Brookhaven



Route 25A Mount Sinai to Wading River Community Visioning  
 Brookhaven, New York

Figure 5-15: Shoreham/Wading River: Study Area Zoning

June 2010 | BFJ Planning  
 Source: Town of Brookhaven

*Assets and Liabilities*

Assets identified by participants in the public workshop included the area’s rural character, minimal commercial development, existing open space, and the potential for additional open space acquisitions. Liabilities included the lack of adequate ratables, the uncertain future of the 800-acre National Grid property, the threat of out-of-character development, corridor safety, and the lack of a recreational park.

*Key Breakout Group Findings*

Among the higher-priority issues facing the Hamlets of Shoreham and Wading River are the respective futures of the DeLalio Sod Farm and Tesla property. In addition, participants at the workshop expressed a desire to relocate the bus depot on Route 25A between George and Miller Avenues and use the property for a community center. Other key issues from the breakout groups included increasing road safety in the corridor, beautifying the corridor, and using the LIPA right-of-way for shared bicycle/pedestrian use as part of the rails-to-trails project. It should also be noted that some participants expressed the desire to undertake a new Shoreham hamlet study, as the past study was seen as outdated.

Participants at the Land Use & Zoning, Environment & Natural Resources and Streetscape & Open Space tables all expressed concern regarding the potential future development of large existing parcels, such as the 800-acre National Grid property, the 320-acre DeLalio Sod Farm and Tallgrass Country Club, and the 13-acre Tesla property. Their vision for the sod farm and Tallgrass was to preserve all or part of it as an agricultural use; recreational uses were also discussed for part of the sod farm. An emphasis was placed on the need to preserve all or part of the National Grid Property, or permitting a research facility on a portion of the property while preserving a large portion of the property with expansive buffers to adjacent residential uses.



*DeLalio Sod Farm and Tallgrass Country Club*



*Tesla Property*

More than a few participants expressed their opposition to the proposed Planned Development District (PDD) designation (from the

2002 to 2005 Shoreham Hamlet Studies) for the DeLalio Sod Farm and Tallgrass property—reflective of their desire to retain Shoreham and Wading River’s rural character. On the other hand, some participants realized that limited commercial development could help with ratables and help to moderate residential property taxes.

Participants envisioned a possible museum at the Tesla property – sponsored by the Town of Brookhaven or a non-profit entity – and would like to see the bus depot use (adjacent to the sod farm) relocated and redeveloped. The intent of relocating the bus depot would be to revitalize an existing parcel that is out of character with the neighborhood with a more appropriate use, such as a community center, and to improve air quality and traffic on 25A.

The Economic Development roundtable discussed ways to increase the tax base by directing commercial development to several key areas. Participants discussed keeping the sod farm as an agricultural use, and possibly having a vineyard located there as an agriculture destination (acting as a gateway to the vineyards in the Town of Riverhead). Participants felt that a light industrial or commercial use would be appropriate for the National Grid property and that development should be concentrated there rather than on 25A.

Participants at the Transportation table were primarily concerned with traffic congestion and managing the existing traffic flow along the corridor. Participants agreed that no additional lanes should be constructed and that road congestion was particularly bad during the work week in the a.m. and p.m. rush hours in both Shoreham and Wading River. A number of recommendations aimed at alleviating traffic congestion and roadway safety were proposed, such as intersection improvements, designated left and right turn lanes, the use of digital traffic conditions signage, access management, and coordination between the Towns of Brookhaven and Riverhead regarding land use decisions. Participants also suggested the

possibility of converting two signalized intersections to modern roundabouts: (1) the intersection of Woodville Road with Route 25A and N. Country Road and (2) the three-way junction of County Road 46 (William Floyd Parkway) and 25A (See Figure 5-16: Shoreham/Wading River: Study Area Detail Maps (Bird’s Eye View)). Finally, participants felt that biking would be more appropriate on the LIPA right-of-way than on 25A.

#### **All Hamlet Forum – Shoreham and Wading River Breakout Group**

The community’s desire to maintain the rural character of Shoreham and Wading River was reiterated as the top priority at the All Hamlet Forum. Participants once again expressed their opposition to a Planned Development District for the DeLalio Sod Farm and



Tallgrass properties. Consensus could not be reached regarding the possibility of allowing some limited commercial development along the portion of the sod farm fronting 25A as participants weighed the benefits of allowing some limited commercial development versus continuing to utilize the existing limited commercial uses along 25A in the Town of Riverhead. It was noted that commercial development pressure within Riverhead has not been fully realized yet and that Riverhead’s commercial lots along Route 25A are not completely built-out yet. One option mentioned was to retain the current low density residential transition area between the Riverhead town line and the Shoreham-Wading River High School but improving the streetscape aesthetics in this area. Some participants suggested the possibility of allowing some development on a portion of the 800-acre National Grid property, such as a research and development facility.



Rt. 25A & Woodville Rd.



Rt. 25A & Randall Rd.



Rt. 25A between Tesla St. and Miller Ave.



Rt. 25A & William Floyd Parkway



Rt. 25A & Defense Hill Rd.



Rt. 25A & Randall Rd.



Responding to the need to increase overall roadway safety and efficiency along 25A, participants expressed their support for implementing “complete streets” policies for Route 25A, as well as for some streets that feed into 25A. A sustainable complete streets plan - that was recently



adopted by the Town of Babylon – was identified as a possible guideline for Brookhaven. Approaches to “completing the street” would vary according to need and location, and could include strategies such as landscaped medians to replace center two-way left-turn lanes, buffered bike lanes, high-visibility pedestrian crosswalks and accessible curb cuts, comfortable and aesthetically-pleasing bus shelters, narrowing of vehicular lanes and sidewalk improvements. Roundabouts at the two major intersections cited above were once again the suggested approach for increasing safety and efficiency along 25A.

### **Shoreham and Wading River Hamlet Vision**

The Hamlets of Shoreham and Wading River are communities defined by their abundant natural settings and rural, small-town character. The collective vision of Shoreham and Wading River is to retain this rural spirit over the coming decades. At the same time, residents and business owners recognize the importance of encouraging some economically beneficial development that would allow limited commercial uses. The delicate balance between preservation and small-scale development will ensure that the Hamlets of Shoreham and Wading River remain safe, attractive and affordable communities for future generations of residents.



## 6.0 Implementation

The next step in planning for the Route 25A corridor is to develop a Land Use and Zoning Plan and a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), which will be undertaken in the second phase of the Route 25A Corridor Study. This effort will entail corridor-wide and site specific strategic planning analysis, recommendations, and Town of Brookhaven zoning changes and Town code modifications that will help achieve the visions for Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Rocky Point, Shoreham, Wading River and the corridor as a whole. Upon completion, the land use element will be adopted by the Town Board and become a chapter in the Town's Comprehensive Plan once it is completed.

### 6.1 Overall Land Use Approach

The overall land use approach reflects the potential types of land uses that could occur based on the above zoning suggestions and Hamlet Visions. Figure 6-1: Overall Land Use Approach depicts both current and potential land uses for various areas along the corridor, including the following land uses and corresponding areas:

#### *Existing Commercial*

Various Segments in each hamlet

#### *Potential Mixed Use*

Key soft site in Mount Sinai (next to King Kullen)

#### *Community/Recreation Center*

Heritage and Sylvan Avenue Parks

#### *Commercial Recreation ("Drive-In" Site)*

Abandoned Drive-In/Driving Range soft site in Rocky Point

#### *Potential Cluster/Open Space Development*

DeLea Sod Farm (Miller Place) and DeLalio Sod Farm (Shoreham)

#### *Historic Preservation/Museum*

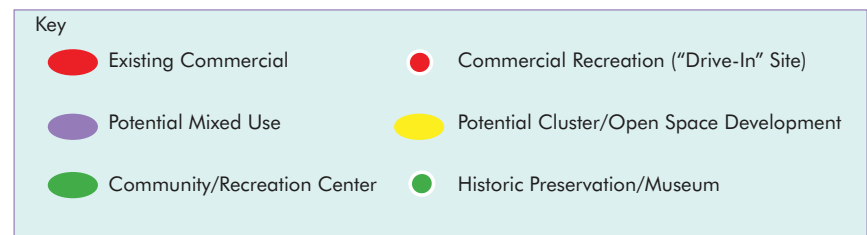
Tesla property in Shoreham

As part of the overall land use approach, many participants expressed a desire to retain the intervals of natural woodlands between existing commercial buildings in order to retain the current rural character of their communities. In support of this, the next phase of this project should consider various land use techniques to help preserve these transitional areas.

### 6.2 Key Soft Sites

A number of the larger vacant properties along the Route 25A corridor have been the subject of preliminary development proposals or are currently under pressure for potential development. These sites include the following (see Figure 6-2: Key Soft Sites):

- Mount Sinai – 30-acre vacant L-I property southeast of King Kullen
- Miller Place – 300-acre DeLea Sod Farm
- Rocky Point – 17-acre former Rocky Point Drive-In Theatre/Driving Range
- Shoreham – 13-acre Tesla property
- Shoreham – 320-acre DeLalio Sod Farm and Tallgrass Country Club





Although not located in the Route 25A study area, the 800 acre National Grid property and LIPA owned Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant site are also key soft sites with preservation and/or development potential.

*Mount Sinai Major Soft Site*

The large, vacant 30-acre parcel southeast of the King Kullen Shopping Center is under immediate pressure to be developed. The site, which is currently zoned L Industrial 1 (L1), allows up to 60% building lot coverage.



*Large vacant site in Mount Sinai*

In keeping with the community vision for Mount Sinai a new zoning district is recommended. The zoning district would prohibit large big box stores and instead encourage mixed commercial uses with small building footprints. The new zoning district would also provide generous open spaces for use by the public. Similar to the current L1 zoning for the site, the maximum allowable building height of three stories/50 feet would be maintained.

Figure 6-3: Mt. Sinai Soft Site Illustrative Plans responds to the community planning forums by depicting two conceptual drawings for this site that reflects the above principles, including small building footprints - instead of large format buildings - and passive open spaces for the public.

An alternative to a new zoning district (above) could be an amendment to the current J-2 District to limit the size of large format retail to 90,000 SF or less, with a required range of community benefits to be provided by the developer in keeping with the draft Town Comprehensive Plan's emphasis upon the creation of walkable mixed-use hamlet and commercial centers.

Still another alternative could be for the Town of Brookhaven to investigate whether a special large format zoning district might be established town-wide, which would limit the siting of such large format retail to designated locations in the town where necessary infrastructure and buffers from residential districts already exist or can be easily installed.

*DeLea and DeLalio Sod Farms*

Both the DeLea (Miller Place) and DeLalio (Shoreham) sod farms provide opportunities for preservation or agricultural tourism as participants at the forums expressed their desires for the Town of Brookhaven or Suffolk County to purchase these properties in order to preserve them in their natural state. If this scenario is not possible in both cases any future development plans will need to respond to a number of guidelines that have been expressed by the involved local communities. These guidelines include:

- A requirement that housing development should focus on single-family homes or townhomes

- Allocation of at least 50 percent of the site as open-space (and possibly up to 75 percent) through the clustering of housing development
- Generous natural and landscaped buffers to surrounding residential uses
- Provision of on-site amenities such as recreation facilities, landscaped open space and community facilities
- The need to address community concerns regarding the potential growth in the number of school children. In this regard consideration should be given, for example, to the development of housing for older, retired residents, or younger residents who have not yet begun families
- Limited commercial uses fronting 25A that are low density, attractive, and within character of the existing neighborhood

The clustering of homes in new residential developments allows for the preservation of natural site features and wildlife habitats and can provide savings in infrastructure costs.

Figure 6-4: Conventional v. Conservation (Cluster) Subdivision illustrates the basic concept behind clustering and shows the major stages undertaken in the planning of a potential clustered subdivision.

### 6.3 Zoning

This section outlines preliminary zoning ideas discussed in the forums. The zoning toolbox encompasses a combination of tools that can assist with the implementation of the Hamlet Visions during the second phase of this project. These tools recognize the current development pressure that is facing the Route 25A corridor and responds to the desire of forum participants to preserve open space. They highlight aspects of Town zoning districts that should remain and propose regulatory changes to the Town Zoning Code where needed.

Zoning tools listed in the toolbox are organized by hamlet or topic area, such as a particular zoning district or type of land use.

#### J2 Zoning District

As previously mentioned in Chapters 2.0 and 5.0, the majority of commercially zoned parcels fronting Route 25A are zoned J2 Neighborhood Business. General permitted uses in the J2 district include banks (drive-through is permitted via Special Permit), personal service shops (e.g. barbershops), pharmacies, take-out restaurants, other retail establishments, commercial centers, and major restaurants as an accessory to commercial centers.

Throughout the visioning process a majority of forum attendees expressed their desire to discourage large format retail (or “big box” stores) from the corridor, which are currently permitted in the J2 zone as a commercial center. Specifically, the overall size of big box stores was of concern, as was their impacts upon neighborhoods, existing small scale retail, and traffic congestion and safety.

The next phase of Route 25A Corridor Study should examine restricting the size of big box stores in the J2 zoning district to perhaps 90,000 square feet or less. This would have the effect of discouraging the largest retail formats, which have the most impacts on the community.

In an effort to retain the existing character of the Route 25A corridor, the J2 zoning district should continue to maintain its current maximum allowable lot coverage of 50% and the current maximum allowable building height of three stories/50 feet.

<-- Route 25A -->



Illustrative Plan A

<-- Route 25A -->



Illustrative Plan B

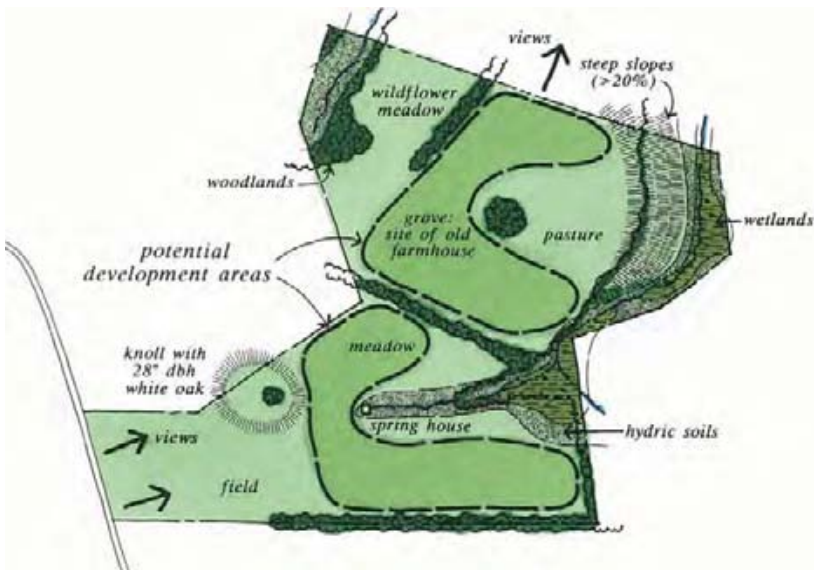
A) Before Development



B) Yield Plan



C) Environmental Features



D) Cluster Subdivision



Designing Open Space Subdivisions by Randall Arendt

### **J6 Main Street District**

In the next phase of the study, the town should carefully evaluate the applicability of utilizing the existing J6 Main Street Zoning District to achieve some of the desired outcomes revealed throughout the visioning process, such as the vibrant, mixed use walkable hamlet centers desired in Mount Sinai and downtown Rocky Point. As reflected during the Community Planning Forums, the Town should restrict building height in these areas to two to three stories maximum. In addition, there may be additional locations along the corridor where this district might help achieve study goals.

### **Route 25A Design Overlay**

To support the design concepts and guidelines discussed in Chapter 4.0, the next phase of the study should evaluate the potential of creating a Route 25A Design Overlay District. This new district would provide design criteria for new and renovated buildings, such as façade treatments and signage standards, while retaining the existing zoning along the corridor. For example, an existing developed parcel zoned for J2 could remain and allow the same land uses that are already permitted in that zone. However, any new site plan application would be required to follow the new Route 25A Design Overlay District design criteria as outlined in Section 4.3 of this report. The overlay could be implemented through the Town's existing site plan review process or through an Architectural Review Board. In either case, it is essential that community participation in both design standards and site plan review be included in the process.

## **6.4 Summary**

In Chapter 4.0, road, streetscape, and design guidelines are discussed for the Route 25A corridor. In this chapter, potential zoning and land use strategies are highlighted as recommendations that should be further considered in Phase 2 of the Route 25A Corridor

Study (i.e. Land Use/Zoning Plan and Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS)). The following table (Table 6-1) identifies these planning and zoning actions, as well as those responsible for their implementation and anticipated time frame.

In Phase 2 potential federal, state and local funding resources for open space preservation (e.g. Community Preservation Funds, public-private partnerships, tax credits, etc.) and roadway/streetscape improvements (e.g. NYS Transportation Improvement Program, NYS Transportation Enhancement Program, Business Improvement Districts, etc.) will be discussed as ways to help finance and implement these strategies.

**Table 6-1: Summary of Planning and Zoning Implementation**

Action	Responsible Agency/Entity	Time Frame (short, medium, or long term) (=1-5, 5-10, or 10+ years)
<b>Roads and Streetscape</b>		
Access management	Developer/property owner, adjacent property owner, NYSDOT	Short to Long Term
Bike lane buffers/curb to sidewalk buffers	NYSDOT	Short to Medium Term
Roundabouts	NYSDOT	Long Term
Street trees (between sidewalk & street) & maintenance	NYSDOT	Short to Medium Term
Landscaped medians & dedicated turning lanes	NYSDOT, TOB (Maintenance MOA)	Medium to Long Term
Traffic safety	TOB, Suffolk County	Short to Long Term
Complete Streets	TOB, NYSDOT	Short to Medium Term
<b>Design</b>		
Design guidelines (massing, siting)	TOB	Short Term
Entry gateways & signage	Developer/property owner, TOB	Short to Medium Term
Landscaping (islands, diamonds, etc.)	Developer/property owner	Short to Medium Term
Use of porous pavements within parking stalls	Developer/property owner	Short to Medium Term
<b>Economic Development / Downtown Revitalization</b>		
Business Improvement District (e.g. Rocky Point)	TOB, property owner	Short Term
Façade Improvement Program	TOB, property owner	Short Term
Redevelop underutilized parcels	TOB, developer/property owner	Short to Long Term
<b>Land Conservation</b>		
Clustering with 50% to 75% open space goal	TOB, developer/property owner	Short to Long Term
Open space acquisition	TOB, Suffolk County	Short to Medium Term
<b>Zoning</b>		
J2 Amendments	TOB	Short Term
Design (or Business) Overlay Zone	TOB	Short Term
New zone for Mount Sinai vacant parcel	TOB	Short Term
Investigate feasibility of utilizing J-6 Main Street District for Mount Sinai hamlet center and downtown Rocky Point (with height limitations)	Developer/property owner, TOB	Short to Medium Term

TOB = Town of Brookhaven  
 NYSDOT = New York State Department of Transportation  
 MOA = Memo of Agreement

