

# TOWN OF HAMILTON

## Comprehensive Plan Appendix

2017



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Town of Hamilton  
Madison County  
New York State

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## Acknowledgements

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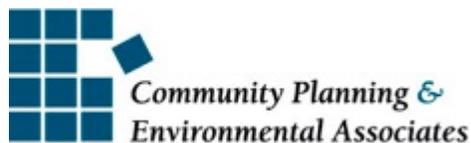
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## Supporting Information for Part I

The following information is provided to support, and offer more detail about some of the concepts recommended to be implemented in the Town of Hamilton. This section includes:

- A. Conservation Subdivision Technique
  - B. Overlay Zoning
  - C. Two-Lot Subdivision Exemption
  - D. Transfer of Development Rights
  - E. New York State Smart Growth Policies
  - F. Planning Board Analysis of Impact on Agriculture
  - G. Density
  - H. Sliding Scale Zoning
  - I. Farm Structures
  - J. Home Sharing
  - K. Capital Improvement Plans
  - L. New York State Agriculture and Markets Guidelines
  - M. Density
- 

### **A. The Conservation Subdivision Technique**

A conservation subdivision allows for a landowner to gain the full density of development the zoning allows, along with a requirement that at least 50% of the parcel be permanently preserved as open space. Open spaces to be preserved in could be farmlands, environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, stream areas, and floodplains, and slopes over 20%.

A conservation subdivision is a siting and design process. This process would take place within the normal procedures of the Town's subdivision law. With this technique, a landowner can subdivide his property but design the layout of the new lots in a way that preserves a minimum of 50% of the land as useable farmland or important open spaces.

To accomplish this, the conservation subdivision process allows for much flexibility in the design of lots and setbacks. This open space would be required to be permanently protected through a conservation easement. The process for designing a conservation subdivision follows four specific steps:

Step 1: Identify critical agricultural and environmental areas.

Step 2: Locate new house sites so each site will have direct or visual access to the agricultural lands or environmental areas.

Step 3: Connect houses with trails, roads and driveways that minimize road building.

Step 4: Draw in lot lines (the least important aspect).

Open Space must be defined and specific criteria of how much and what kind of open space to be preserved must be included in the details of a conservation subdivision section within the subdivision and/or zoning law. Local laws should include language that ensures any preserved land within a conservation subdivision includes agricultural land as open space.

The conservation subdivision technique can also be used, especially in large subdivisions, to encourage new development that is in a traditional, hamlet-style pattern (with small lots and structures closer to the street).

## **B. OVERLAY ZONING**

Overlay districts are used to augment a zoning law by instituting additional development standards or by establishing incentives for parcels that have certain characteristics.

Parcels in overlay districts may be permitted additional ag-related or compatible rural business uses, or be subject to additional development guidelines that allows development in a way that also conserves key agricultural or environmental resources.

## **C. THE TWO-LOT SUBDIVISION EXEMPTION**

Currently, the Town's subdivision regulations automatically exempt two lot subdivisions from the law. The result is that these lot splits are not reviewed by the Planning Board and thus, create a loophole where there is inequity between some landowners that require planning board reviews and others that do not. It also creates uncertainty as to how these lots are legally filed as separate tax parcels. One of the basic presumptions of subdivision regulation is that the town is approving creation of buildable lots – even if that building takes place in the future. The process ensures that all new lots COULD be built on. Any lot split is either a minor subdivision or a major subdivision, based largely on the number of lots to be created and whether new roads are planned.

## **D. TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

This method, pursuant to NYS Town law, allows the transfer of density allowed on one parcel to another. This method would allow a landowner in the area designated to be preserved (called the sending area) to sell their development rights, but retain use of the land for farming.

The density from the sending area is then moved to a location where a higher density is desired (receiving area) and able to be accommodated with infrastructure.

The sending area could for example, be priority farmlands having prime soils, and the receiving areas could be in designated growth areas around the villages or hamlet areas in Hamilton.

## **E. MORE ON NEW YORK STATE SMART GROWTH POLICIES**

The NYS Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act was signed into law on September 29, 2010. One of the most significant impacts of the Act is that all NYS funding agencies must now, formally, meet ten (10) Smart Growth goals. This provision, aimed at making targeted investments in public infrastructure (central water/sewer/stormwater), impacts where and how public grants and low interest loans are awarded. Within the body of the Act are ten goals:

1. Use, maintain or improve existing water and sewer services
2. Locate public infrastructure within municipal centers
3. Promote development projects in developed areas or in areas identified for development in a comprehensive plan, local waterfront revitalization plan or brownfield redevelopment plan.
4. Protect, preserve New York state resources.
5. Foster mixed land uses and compact development.
6. Provide for mobility through a variety of transportation choices.
7. Coordinate between state and local governments.
8. Promote community-based planning and collaboration.
9. Ensure predictability in land use codes.
10. Strengthen existing communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

## **F. HOW THE PLANNING BOARD CAN EVALUATE IMPACTS ON AGRICULTURE**

Some questions that the Planning Board should ask to determine if a project will negatively impact farms include:

- What potential conflicts between the existing farm and the new use will be created? How will these conflicts be prevented?
- Will the new use negatively impact a farmers' ability to use existing right-of-ways or farm roads needed to access fields?
- Will the new use affect land values and rental rates for agricultural uses?
- If new public roads are to be built, will they accommodate agricultural equipment and traffic?
- Will this new use spur additional non-farm development in the area in the future?
- Will the new use remove significant land from being available for farming?

## **G. DENSITY**

Density sets the overall number of new homes allowed in an area while minimum lot size requires every lot to be created to have a minimum amount of acreage. In rural areas, lot size is less important than

the total number of lots created. It is recommended that minimum lot size be de-emphasized as the control to how much development is allowed.

Density averaging allows landowners to create both small and large lots in a flexible way. For agriculture, several small lots (provided water and septic requirements can be met) can be created while keeping a larger part of the parcel available for farming.

**H. SLIDING SCALE ZONING**

**What is it?** Sliding scale zoning is used in many places to balance development with farmland protection. It is a technique that works by guiding a higher density of new house lots to areas where parcels of land are already smaller and farmlands already fragmented. It does this by allowing creation of proportionally fewer residential lots on large parcels than smaller ones. The technique allows smaller, already subdivided locations to receive more density.

**How does it work?** Sliding scale zoning sets the number of new parcels allowed to be created based on the size of the parcel. As the size of a parcel increases, the number of dwellings allowed in proportion to the total parcel area decreases. Through use of a sliding scale, communities can allow more housing to be developed on smaller lots and lower the density of development on larger lots. The chart below is an example of how a sliding scale could be set to manage housing development:

Lot Size of Parcel	Example Community 1: Number of New Lots Allowed to be Created	Example Community 2: Number of New Lots to be Created	How Density of Development Changes by Lot Size*
<1 acre	No new lots allowed	No new lots allowed	Highest Density        Lowest Density 
1-5 acres	1 new lot	2	
5-15 acres	2 new lots	3	
15-30 acres	3 new lots	5	
30-60 acres	4 new lots	7	
60-90 acres	5 new lots	9	
90-120 acres	6 new lots	10	

\*The sliding scale would need to be tailored to Hamilton’s parcels, conditions, and community goals.

**Sliding Scale and Lot Size:** In addition to the density set by a table such as shown above, sliding scale ALSO requires a maximum lot size – usually 1 to 3-acre maximum. This allows some land to be kept aside for farming or open space. In any case, there would also be a minimum lot size dependent on available water and sewer facilities. For example, using Community 1 from the chart above, a 30-acre parcel could be split into three new lots, with each lot being a maximum of 2 acres leaving a 24-acre lot for agriculture. Or, a 120-acre lot in Community 2 could be split into 10 new lots, each 2 acres in size that would use 20 acres for new housing and leave a 100-acre lot for farming.

**Advantages:** The advantages of a sliding scale zoning method are that it can preserve most of the original farm tract for farming and it can preserve the best farmlands on the parcel by requiring new dwellings to be located on poorer soils. And, it allows farmland owners to sell some of their land for non-farm uses at the same time for their family or for profit. This kind of zoning rule allows communities to set a density of development that meets many rural, farming, and small town goals but without removing all uses of a property.

**Where Does Sliding Scale Work Best?** Sliding scale zoning is most effective in areas where a wide range of parcel sizes exist and where non-farm residential development has already begun. It can be useful in agricultural areas like Hamilton where there are some critical, core areas of farmland that remain relatively un-fragmented mixed in with other locations that have had recent subdivision development

activity. A sliding scale could allow development to occur, but in a way that also preserves the ability to continue farming.

### **I. FARM STRUCTURES**

Farm operations are defined by the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law as the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise.

Generally, agricultural uses and the construction of on-farm buildings as part of a farm operation located within an agricultural district should be allowed uses and a farm-friendly approach to regulating small wind and solar for farms would be to have them go through a modified site plan review process.

### **J. HOME SHARING**

Home Sharing is different from simple rentals in that a homeowner offers accommodation to a home sharer in exchange for an agreed level of support in the form of financial exchange, assistance with household tasks, or both. Several home share services already exist in central New York, including [www.home-share.com](http://www.home-share.com) which helps provide a match program between homeowners and those interested in home sharing.

Shared living makes efficient use of existing housing stock, helps preserve the fabric of the neighborhood and, in certain cases, helps to lessen the need for costly chore/care services and long term institutional care. A home sharer might be a senior citizen, a person with disabilities, a working professional, someone at-risk of homelessness, a single parent, or simply a person wishing to share his or her life and home with others.

Home Sharing programs can offer a more secure alternative to other roommate options. Many programs have staff who are trained to carefully screen each program applicant through interviewing, background checking, and personal references.

### **K. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

This is a planning and budgeting tool, usually developed where the plan is updated each year, dropping off the previous year and adding one more year at the end of the cycle. It is composed of two parts, a capital budget and a capital program. The capital budget is the upcoming year's spending plan for capital items.

The capital program is a plan for capital expenditures that extends five years beyond the capital budget. A capital budget is updated annually as part of the Town's regular budget process. It shows what projects are already in progress, what projects will need funds in the current budget year, and what projects will be started in the current budget year.

Coordinating the capital budget with the annual operating budget gives more insight into long range planning and helps decision-makers improve coordination of services for greater efficiency.

## L. NYS AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS GUIDELINES

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has developed a series of guidelines to help local communities understand the role between land use regulations and the regulation of farms located within a New York State certified agricultural district. As the town implements this Comprehensive Plan, Hamilton should be mindful of the important role an agricultural district plays. To ensure Hamilton has acceptable, legal and farm-friendly land use regulations, the following documents should be referred to:

- [Application to Request a Review Pursuant to Section 305-a of the AML](#)
- [Start-up Farm Operations Must Also Complete and Submit this Questionnaire](#)
- [Brochure entitled Local Laws and Agricultural Districts: How Do They Relate](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Farm Worker Housing](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Nutrient Management Practices \(i.e. Land Application of Animal Waste, Recognizable and Non-recognizable Food Waste, Sewage Sludge and Septage, Animal Waste Storage/Management\)](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting the Control of Farm Animals](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Farm Operations' Use of Wetlands](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Direct Farm Marketing Activities](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting On-Farm Composting Facilities](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Temporary Greenhouses](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Zoning and Planning Laws](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Commercial Horse Boarding Operations and Commercial Equine Operations](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Junk and Junkyards](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Small Wind Energy Production Facilities and Solar Devices](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Nursery Operation](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting On-Farm Open Burning](#)
- [Guideline for Review of Local Laws Affecting Farm Distilleries, Breweries and Wineries](#)

## M. DESIGN STANDARDS

Specific standards that could be considered include:

1. Ensure that the Route 12B commercial district limits the length of road frontage so that commercial development expands in greater depth.
2. Commercial districts should be limited to no more than ½ mile in length.
3. Place parking areas of larger commercial uses to the rear or side of the structure.
4. Set building design to encourage more attractive storefronts.
5. Allow buildings to be set close to the road and along entrance drives to screen parking and establish a more traditional look.
6. Limit the number of driveways and use more shared entrance drives with linked parking lots.
7. Require upgraded landscaping for buffers and parking lots.

## Background and Historical Overview<sup>1</sup>

### Location and Regional Setting

The Town of Hamilton is in southern Madison County and is bordered by the towns of Brookfield to the east, Madison to the north, Lebanon to the west, and Sherburne in Chenango County, directly to the south. The Town covers a land area of 41.4 square miles. When the Villages of Earlville and Hamilton, portions of which are each found within Town boundaries, are included, Hamilton is the fourth most populous town in Madison County and, between 2000 and 2010, was its fastest-growing town, adding nearly 1,000 residents during that decade. See Map 1 (Aerial Photo)

### Villages

Located in the northwestern portion of the Town, the Village of Hamilton is the most densely populated area of the Town and accounts for nearly two-thirds of its population. The Village of Hamilton is the commercial center of southern Madison County and the home of Colgate University and Community Memorial Hospital. Commercial uses are concentrated in the village center but also along Route 12B to the north, where some industrial uses are also located. The university campus, neighborhoods, the public school complex, and open space make up the remainder of the village. Both villages contain historic housing stock and buildings currently still in use.

The Village of Hamilton covers approximately 2.5 square miles, and of this, approximately 2.0 square miles and virtually its entire population is found within the Town. Though steep slopes surrounding the village have constrained development, areas just north and east of the village boundaries have seen recent residential growth.

Located in the southwestern corner of the Town, is the Village of Earlville. It is divided between the Town of Hamilton in Madison County and the Town of Sherburne in Chenango County. Earlville has a small industrial area as well as a commercial section with retail and service businesses. Earlville is approximately 1.1 square miles in size, 0.5 square miles is situated within the Town. About 62% of Earlville's population lives within the Town boundaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Portions of this section are adapted from the 1999 Comprehensive Plan

## Rural Areas

The Town has four smaller communities of varied size and character. As in the villages, there are a multitude of historic houses and agricultural structures both in the communities and in the rural areas surrounding them. Perhaps the largest is Hubbardsville, which is located near the “four corners” of Poolville Road (Route 89) and Green Road in the northeastern quadrant of Hamilton. A post office with a general store and gas station forms its center, and while primarily residential, Hubbardsville hosts several businesses and a fire department.

Poolville is officially designated as a hamlet and is zoned as such. Primarily residential, the hamlet is in the south-central portion of the Town. A nonprofit organization owns and manages a community center and oversees the maintenance of the “Village Green” in the center of the hamlet. Also in the hamlet are the Poolville Country Store (a restaurant and bed and breakfast), the Poolville Rural Cemetery, and Camp Fiver, a summer camp run by the Fiver Foundation. Camp Fiver, along with a few homes and camps, is located on Poolville Pond, a small private lake nestled on the edge of the hamlet.

The smaller communities of East Hamilton and South Hamilton are primarily residential and agricultural in use. East Hamilton is situated in the east-central portion of the Town, near Route 12 and Humphrey Road and has a mix of single-family homes and dairy farms. South Hamilton is in the southeastern quadrant

## Town History

Much of the historical development of the Town of Hamilton is based on transportation, farming, and education. Commercial activity occurred as transportation routes—the Chenango Canal, rail lines and roads—were developed and linked the Town to other parts of the region. The Town of Hamilton was one of the Chenango Twenty Towns, a tract that was opened to settlers and land companies by the Clinton Treaty of 1788. The Oneida and Stockbridge Indian tribes occupied this region. Originally, Hamilton embraced four townships, but its final boundaries were drawn when the Towns of Eaton, Lebanon, and Madison were split off in 1807.

The growth of the Town of Hamilton (and of Madison County as a whole) was stimulated by several main roads crossing from east to west. Among them was the Hamilton and Skaneateles Turnpike, which ran from Plainfield, Otsego County, through the Madison County communities of Brookfield, East Hamilton and Hamilton, Eaton, Erieville, and New Woodstock.

Among the early settlers in the Town were Isaac Pool and Calvin Hubbard, who made Poolville and Hubbardsville into flourishing commercial centers. East Hamilton was settled in 1795 and was first known as Colchester Settlement. The Village of Earlville, known as The Forks until about 1833, became a small trade and farming community. The Village of Hamilton was founded by Elisha Payne in 1796 and was known as Payne's Corners until it was incorporated as Hamilton in 1816.

In 1836-37, the completion of the Chenango Canal opened the area to the metropolitan markets of the east. The Village of Hamilton became the leading community of southern Madison County and boasted a gristmill and tannery. Later industries included the manufacturing of cabinets and household furniture, wooden sashes, doors and blinds, snowplows, perfumes, low-slung wagons, and wire cloth. The Hamilton village green was planted by Ferdinand Walker in 1835 and included a swampy area that had been filled in when the canal was dug. The first village fire company was formed in Hamilton in 1832. In February 1895, a fire destroyed much of the village's business district. Companies from as far away as Utica came to the aid of the local volunteers to combat the blaze. Following the devastating fire, merchants set up shop on the village green, in what became known as Shantytown as new buildings were hastily erected. By 1898 the Village of Hamilton had 1,782 residents.

Like the Village of Hamilton, Poolville, Hubbardsville and the Village of Earlville were industrial centers. Poolville, established in 1825, had a woolen factory, a tannery and ashery, and manufactured boots and shoes. Household furniture, desks, low-slung wagons, and perfume were manufactured in Earlville. Hubbardsville also featured a tannery. The Town of Hamilton entered the twentieth century with the advent of electricity. In 1894 the Village of Hamilton created a village waterworks and electric light system. The first automobiles appeared in the Town about 1915, radios about 1925, and refrigerators ten years later.

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Town's countryside was primarily used for agriculture. Hop growing was a thriving industry in the Town until the blue mold hop disease, Prohibition, and competition from western growers took their toll in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century. Many of the grand old houses were built with hop money. Peas and beans became major cash crops in the wake of the hop industry, with dairy farming eventually becoming the major agricultural industry.

In 1816 the Hamilton Academy, located in the Village of Hamilton, became the first school in the area. It was discontinued in the 1850s with the beginnings of the Union School (1853) and the Hamilton Female Seminary. In 1819, the Hamilton Literary and Theological Seminary was founded, and in 1827 its first building was erected on land provided by Samuel Payne and his wife Betsey. The institution became Madison University in 1846, and was renamed Colgate University in 1890. During World War II, Colgate's civilian student body dwindled, but the availability of officer training programs led to several thousand young men arriving on campus during the war. Following the war in the 1950s married veterans began enrolling at the University and many took up residence in the "Vetville" housing built on College Street. In 1970, Colgate enrolled women as first-year students for the first time.

Hamilton High School, which stood on Broad Street, was built in 1901 with an adjacent grade school added in 1930. Both gave way to the new Hamilton Central School located on West Kendrick Avenue in the 1950s. The Hamilton Public Library was founded in 1903 and the Earlville Free Library was established in 1927. In 1948 the Hamilton Cooperative Nursery School was established in the Village of Hamilton by local parents. Incorporated as the Chenango Valley Nursery School in the mid-1960s, it is now located next to the Hamilton Central School, and offers extended day care options.

Throughout the Town's history, community groups and church organizations have played a vital role in the social and cultural life of the Town. Collectively and individually, they have provided and continue to provide a variety of social services.

Today, Colgate University remains a top employer for the Town and the County. In addition to employment the University provides cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities for the community. The Town outside of the villages remains primarily agricultural, with the growth of small-scale farming, brewing, and local food ventures. The area also serves as the base for artists, craftspeople, and musicians, with galleries and venues in the villages of Hamilton and Earlville. Future developments in the Town of Hamilton are likely to be influenced by demographic changes, environmental constraints, and the continued role of the agricultural and educational industries.

### Planning Initiatives

This document marks the third significant planning document for the Town. The Town adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1972, followed by a significant update in 1999.

#### Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan, 1972

The Town of Hamilton's 1972 Comprehensive Plan (the "1972 Comprehensive Plan") recommended retaining prime agricultural land for farming, leading to creation of several Agricultural Districts. Economic development strategies recommended in the plan included developing the airport, encouraging local businesses to strengthen marketing and service offerings in response to competition, and promoting light manufacturing, including food processing. The plan also detailed several recreation improvements that included creation of trail system along the former canal, preserving Poolville Pond, and creating Town parks.

#### Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan, 1999

The 1999 Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan (the "1999 Comprehensive Plan") outlines community needs and provided recommendations to guide the future development of the Town. The Plan had public input via focus groups, interviews with stakeholders, a public survey, and meetings.

Similar to findings of this planning effort, the 1999 Plan included several common themes that have been part of Hamilton since its first effort in 1972. These themes included maintaining the area's natural resources and rural character; increasing jobs and income through greater diversification of the local economy; strengthening existing commercial centers; retaining young people; encouraging community involvement; working with neighboring communities on areas of mutual interest; and expanding recreational resources.

The 1999 Plan remains relevant as a comparison document that can help identify trends and changes in the community. It is useful to see the commonalities in needs, issues, and future direction that has remained steady over the years even though different influences are affecting the Town. The Community Profile in the 1999 Plan should be referred to for additional information and as background material that supports this Plan.

A vision statement and seven goals were established for Hamilton in the 1999 Plan. These are:

"In the coming decades, the Town of Hamilton will preserve and promote its assets: rural character, natural beauty, strong community, family farms, and locally owned businesses. It will work actively with other area communities to create and support sustainable economic opportunities which strengthen

the vitality of the Town and the region.

Goal 1: To develop economic initiatives which provide good jobs, support the social fabric of the community, and preserve the environment.

Goal 2: To actively support and promote sustainable agriculture as a vital component of the local and regional economy through cooperative initiatives between neighboring communities, Town and County governments, and area educational institutions.

Goal 3: To strengthen the Town's villages as commercial, retail and entertainment centers.

Goal 4: To identify and promote year-round recreational opportunities throughout the Town.

Goal 5: To improve housing conditions throughout the Town.

Goal 6: To identify and protect the Town's vital groundwater aquifers.

Goal 7: To maintain the Town's position as an efficient provider of municipal services, and prepare for future technological, economic and population changes."

For each goal, the 1999 Plan offered a variety of actions for the Town to implement along with time frame, partners, and potential funding sources. Some of these actions have been accomplished, others are no longer relevant, and some are included again in this re-write to be addressed.

## Population Analysis

Outside of population centers, settlement in Hamilton is predominantly low density. Including those portions of the Villages of Earlville and Hamilton contained within its boundaries, the Town has a total area of 41.5 square miles, with only a small percentage of this under water. Approximately 6% of Town total area is found in the Villages, and when they are included, its 2010 population density was 161 persons per square mile; when the Villages are excluded, population density drops to 49 persons per square mile, which is lower than the County-wide density of 111 persons per square mile. By contrast, the Village of Hamilton and Village of Earlville have much higher densities of 1,583 and 808 persons per square mile, respectively.

## Population Size and Change

The Town's total 2012 population is estimated to be 6,650. Hamilton experienced significant growth in the post-World War II years due, in part, to the influx of GI's to attend Colgate University, and since 1940, the Town's population has exceeded 5,400 people. The Village of Hamilton has an estimated population of 3,986 (some of these being Colgate students) and represents about 60% of the Town's population; the much smaller Village of Earlville has an estimated population of 848, which is about 13% of the Town total. The 2012 estimate is 2,148 for those residing in the Town, but outside of the Villages of Hamilton and Earlville.

**Figure 1. Town and Village populations, 1990-2012.**



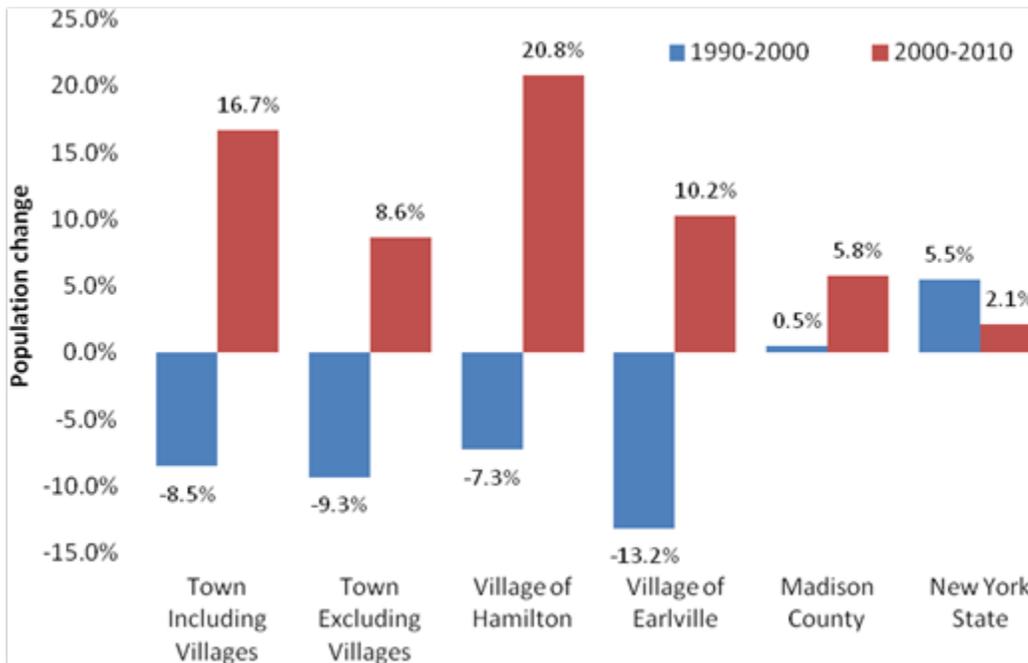
Source: 1999 Comprehensive Plan, US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Between 2000 and 2010, the Town of Hamilton was the fastest growing municipality in Madison County, growing at a rate of 16.7% when the villages are included, and over the past forty years, the trend has been toward modest population increases. This growth appears to be shared region-wide: Between 2000 and 2010, Madison County grew at a rate of 5.8%--more than double the State-wide rate of 2.1%--and is projected to have a population of 77,597 by 2030.<sup>2</sup>

As Figure 2 illustrates, the decade beginning in 2000 brought significant population gains to the Town, the villages, and Madison County. New York State’s population also grew in this period. This appears to be a reversal of declines during the preceding decade. Growth in the Town was led by the Village of Hamilton, which added 730 people, or over 20%. Earlville also posted strong growth of over 10%. When the villages are excluded, the Town of Hamilton also saw strong population growth of nearly 17%, or 151 people. Using the 2010 census count as a base, ESRI predicts modest population growth of 1.6% through 2017 for the Town including the villages.

<sup>2</sup> Cornell Program on Applied Demographics. *Madison, County Profile 2013, A collection of recent demographic, social, economic, and agricultural data*, p. 7.

**Figure 2. Population change comparison, 1990 through 2012**



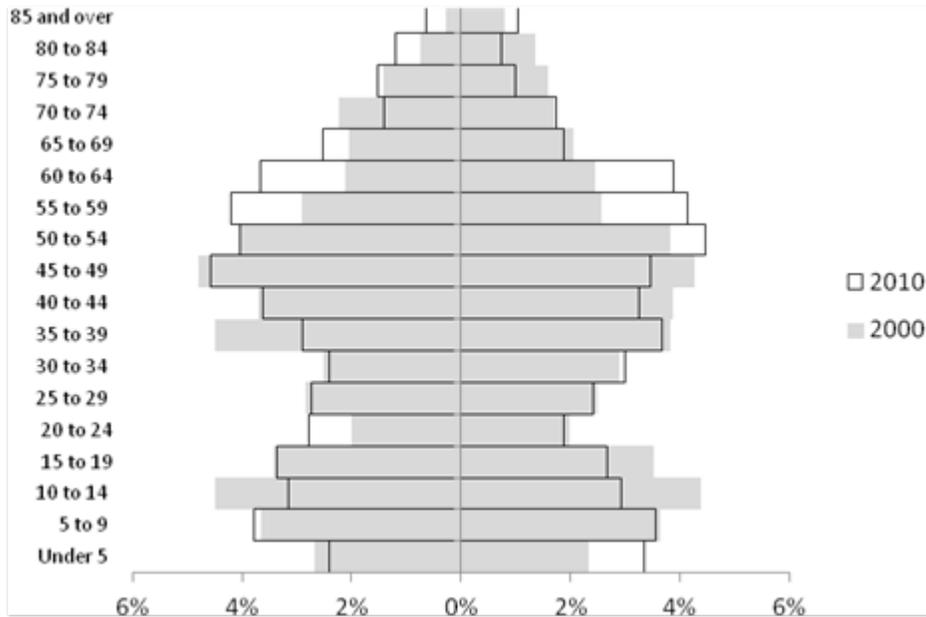
Source: US Census Bureau

### Age Structure

Several trends in age composition are apparent from Figure 3, which is marked by an hourglass shape, showing the baby boom and so-called “echo boom.” Those aged between 45 and 64 in 2010 have largely remained in the Town. Many residents age 65 and older appear to leave the Town and are not replaced, as illustrated by the constriction at the top of Figure 3. As the chart shows, between 2000 and 2010, the upper half of the distribution is the most dynamic, caused, in part, by those aging in place. Indicative of this trend, the median age in Madison County increased 9% from 36.1 to 39.5.

Figure 3 also illustrates the loss of young people of college or working age, which is common in many rural New York towns and is evidenced by the stability of the relative size of age groups 20 through 34. This is in stark contrast to the Village of Hamilton, where the presence of Colgate University attracts young people: the median age in the Village was 21.3 in 2010. Indeed, in the Village of Hamilton, 48% of the 2010 population was housed in group quarters—likely students living in housing on the Colgate campus.

**Figure 3. Age structure for Town of Hamilton by Male (left) and Female (Right), excluding villages, 2000 and 2010.**



Source: US Census Bureau

### Households

Households are the basic unit of census counts, and household formation and composition relate closely to issues like housing and service provision. Between 2000 and 2010, Hamilton added households at close to the same rate as it added population, a situation that can mean less development pressure. Growth during this decade was driven by increases in the number of married-couple families. Between 2010 and 2012, it household growth appears to have continued, particularly growth in the number of unmarried family (i.e. groups of related individuals sharing a housing unit) households.

**Table 1. Households for Town of Hamilton (excluding villages), 2000-2012**

	2012		2010	2000
	Estimate	MOE		
Total	829	±131	728	671
Family households	681	±110	541	489
Married-couple family	484	±127	447	397
Other family	197	±106	94	92
Male-headed	88	±68	34	33

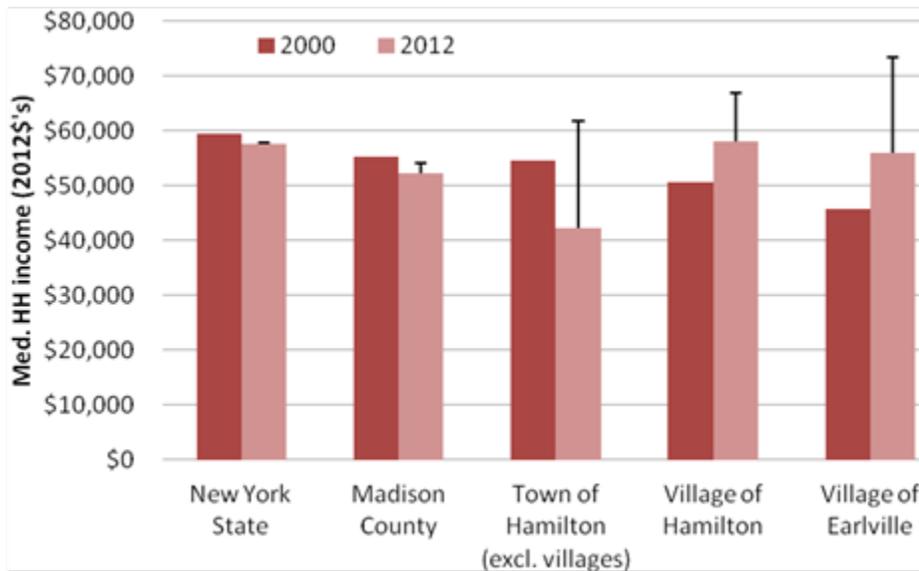
	2012		2010	2000
	Estimate	MOE		
Female-headed	109	±74	60	59
Nonfamily households	148	±85	187	182
Householder living alone	133	±83	145	136
Householder not living alone	15	±23	42	46

Source: US Census Bureau

### Socio-Economic Indicators

Median household income provides a measure of socio-economic well-being for a broad cross section of the Town’s population. In 2012, median household income in the Town was \$42,205. While this figure is likely slightly lower than incomes in the County and for the villages, it is also much more variable, and with the 90% confidence interval ranging from just below \$20,000 to more than \$60,000.

**Figure 4. Median household income comparison, 2000 & 2012.**



Source: US Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics

When adjusted for inflation, household incomes have either remained constant or decreased in the Town of Hamilton since 2000. This mirrors similar decreases at the County and State levels. However, household incomes in both villages appear to have increased over the same period.

A second important measure of economic well-being is the poverty rate. According to the most current estimates, the poverty rate in the Town of Hamilton (excluding the villages) is about 3%, down significantly from 11.8% in 2000. This is much lower than the poverty rate of 10% for Madison County,

11% for the Village of Earlville, and the State poverty rate of 15%. The Village of Hamilton's large student population results in a higher estimate of 17%. In general, these figures have remained similar since 2000, the Town's marked decrease notwithstanding.

## Housing Characteristics

### Occupancy, Tenure, and Structure Type

In 2012, the Town had an estimated 1,009 housing units. Including the villages increases the 2012 count by 801 units, or 40%, to 2,025. Most of these units are in the Village of Hamilton, and approximately 215 units are situated in the Village of Earlville.

The vast majority of units in the Town are owner-occupied (Table 2), and less than a fifth were rental units. Of the approximately 180 vacant units, about a quarter are seasonal use properties, such as vacation homes or cottages not designed for year-round use. In 2010, about half of all vacant units fell into the "other vacant" category. When compared to year-round vacant housing at a national level, other vacant housing tends to be units with three or more bedrooms, that are single-family homes, that have a long (>1 year) duration of vacancy, and that are built before 1969.<sup>3</sup> This could be an indication of decreasing housing stock quality in the Town.

In the Town (excluding the villages), the 2012 total likely represents a small increase over the 2010 number of 875. Between 1990 and 2012, the Town (including the villages) added approximately 225 units, a 13% increase.

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<sup>3</sup> See US Census Bureau, "Other" Vacant Housing Units: An Analysis from the Current Population Survey/Housing vacancy Survey, <http://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/files/qtr113/PAA-poster.pdf>

**Table 2. Housing unit occupancy and tenure characteristics, Town of Hamilton (excl. villages), 2010 & 2012**

	2010	2012	
		Estimate	MOE
Occupied	728	829	±131
Rental	121	202	±106
By owner	607	627	±111
Vacant	147	180	±113
For rent	12	0	±12
Rented, not occupied	1	32	±41
For sale only	8	43	±65
Sold, not occupied	8	0	±12
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	65	21	±33
Other vacant	53	84	±88
Total	875	1,009	±165

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey and 2010 Census

Census data indicate that in 2012, most housing units in the Town were single unit detached (i.e. single-family homes). There were 857 such units. The second-most common housing type was mobile home, at 105 units, and the remaining units were in duplexes (16) or small apartment buildings (31). New single unit detached units made up a large share of the approximately 267 units added between 2000 and 2012.

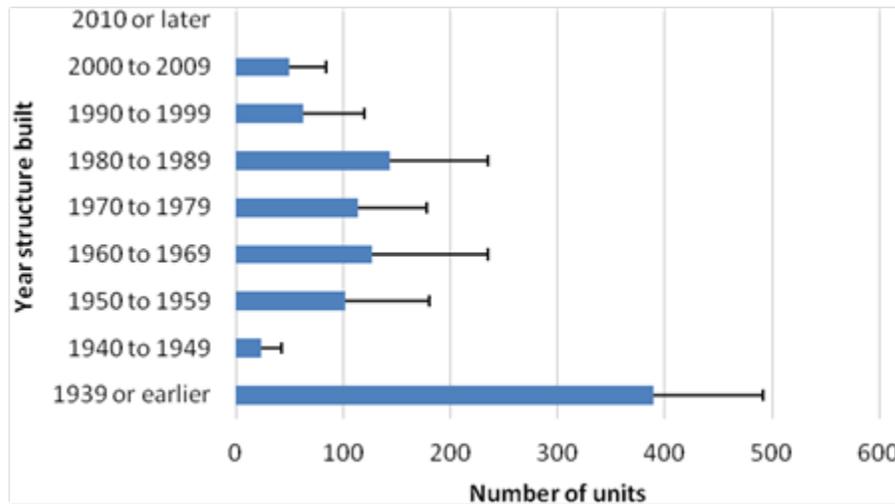
**Table 3. Units in structure, Town of Hamilton (excl. villages), 2000 & 2012**

	2000	2012	
		Estimate	MOE
1, detached	584	857	±145
1, attached	5	0	±12
2	5	16	±26
3 or 4	12	31	±46
5 to 9	9	0	±12
Mobile home	127	105	±75
Total housing units	742	1,009	±165

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey and 2000 Census.

Housing age can provide information about quality, desirability, and suitability in an area. Of the Town’s 1,009 units, about 39% were built before 1940, and the median year of construction is 1971. There has also been relatively little recent construction: As Figure 5 illustrates, a large proportion of the stock was installed before 1990.

**Figure 5. Year structure built, Town of Hamilton (excl. villages) 2012.**



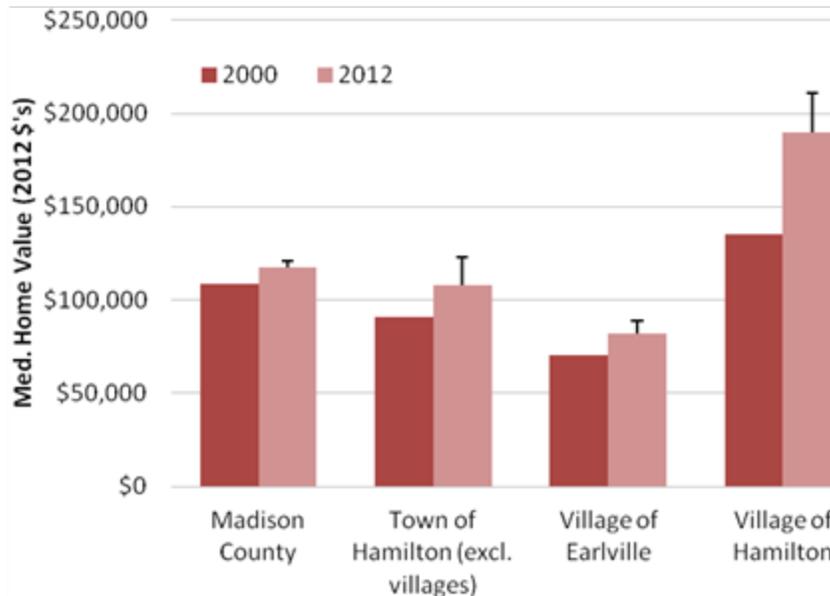
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey

### Home Value and Rental Costs

Home values in the Town are like values in Madison County. In 2012, the median value of owner-occupied units of \$107,900 fell in a narrow range of roughly \$93,000 and \$123,000. In comparison, the

Village of Hamilton has significantly higher property values, which have also increased more quickly. In Earlville, as in the County, prices show modest increases between 2000 and 2012. Renters in the Town have also seen price increases: Median monthly rental costs, roughly \$650 in 2000, increased to \$769 in 2012, which is slightly greater than the median gross rental cost of \$722 in Madison County but less than the Villages of Earlville and Hamilton, which were \$798 and \$834, respectively.

**Figure 6. Median home value comparison, 2000 & 2012**



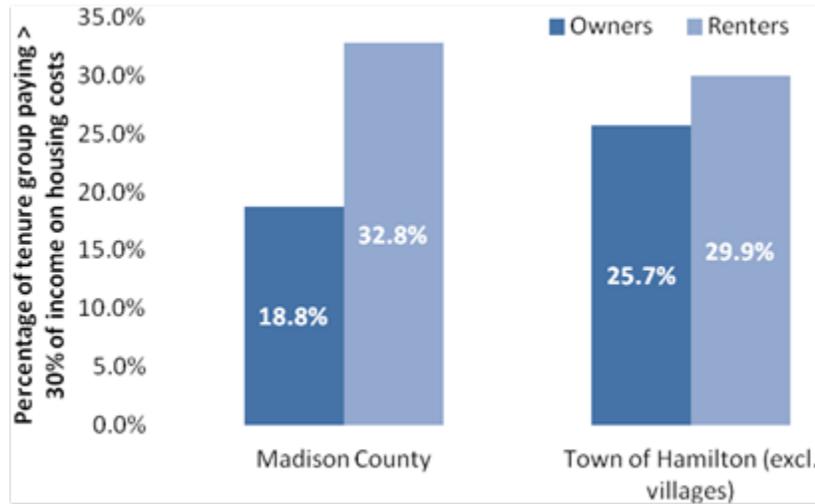
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey and 2000 Census

### Affordability

There are several ways to measure housing affordability. One way is to create a ratio of house price and income statistics. Nationally, a ratio of 2.0 or less is considered “affordable.” For instance, to purchase of home costing \$200,000, a buyer would need an income of \$100,000 per year, according to this standard. In 2000, the affordability ratios for Madison County and the Town of Hamilton were 1.97 and 1.67, respectively, making this region relatively affordable. However, since then, housing has become less affordable: increasing prices and decreasing incomes have created affordability ratios of 2.25 and 2.56 for the County and the Town, respectively.

A second way to measure is to measure the proportion of income spent on monthly housing costs. This statistic has the advantage of capturing conditions experienced by homeowners *and* renters, and it includes costs beyond price (e.g. utility costs). The American Community Survey tabulates this information, which is depicted by Figure 7. It shows that, as is common, renters are more cost burdened than homeowners. But it also shows that housing in the Town may be relatively less affordable for homeowners than in other parts of the County.

**Figure 7. Cost burden comparison for owner-occupiers and renters, 2012.**



Note: Owner-occupiers Madison County n = 26,930, Town of Hamilton, n = 805; renters Madison County n = 6,555, Town of Hamilton, n = 167. Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey

## Physical and Environmental Features

Hamilton lies near the northern extent of the Allegheny Plateau. This physiographic region is characterized by the lower relief and more gentle slopes caused during the last glaciation. As these ice sheets moved southward through the Appalachian region, valleys like the Sangerfield River valley were created, which, over time, became filled with eroded soils deposited from surrounding hillsides.

Due to their fertility, access to water, and favorable topography, these valleys became the primary locations of settlement. As the 1999 Comprehensive Plan notes, the steeper hillsides surrounding these valleys limited and channeled development and, when combined with the Town’s ongoing agricultural activities and distance from metropolitan centers, have created the scenic landscape of rolling pastures, forests, and small communities found in Hamilton.

### Susquehanna River Basin

The Town of Hamilton is situated entirely within the Susquehanna River Basin (See Map: Watersheds). This basin is the second largest river basin, after the Ohio River Basin, east of the Mississippi River, and is the largest on the Atlantic seaboard. The 444-mile Susquehanna River drains portions of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland before emptying into the Chesapeake Bay. Much of the basin is forested, and many of its river valleys are scattered with small settlements and agricultural operations.

An interstate compact commission, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC), is responsible for regulating water quality and quantity in this basin. It has installed a real-time monitoring station on the Sangerfield near Poolville as part of its real-time water quality monitoring network designed to measure effects of energy developments lower in the basin. It is one of 51 such stations that provide continuous measurements of various water quality conditions.

According to SRBC, major sources of water impairment in the New York State portion of the basin are atmospheric deposition (i.e. mercury) and agricultural activities. Other sources of impacts are inadequate on-site septic systems and stream bank erosion. Hamilton is situated within the northerly reaches of the Upper Susquehanna sub-basin, which is defined as the area above the City of Binghamton.

### Water Features and Wetlands

The Town has a diversity of important water bodies and lies in the Upper Susquehanna Basin (See Map: Wetlands and Flood Hazards). The Sangerfield River runs diagonally from the northeast to the southwest corner of the Town. It begins in Oneida County and flows for 18 miles before eventually feeding into the Chenango River south of the Village of Earlville. Primary land uses in the river valley include open space and farms.

From a recreational standpoint, the Sangerfield is a slow, meandering river for most of its length making it suitable for canoeing. Game fish species include brown trout, northern pike, walleye, and black bass. Other fish species found here include bluegill, rock bass, brown bullhead, and common carp. The NYSDEC stocks the section between Poolville and Hubbardsville. Sampling has determined that the Sangerfield has no known use impairment and is classified as a Class C (t) stream.

The Sangerfield flows through Nine Mile Swamp, which is in the extreme northeast corner of the Town and extends around the river. It is considered a Class A wetland under New York State water quality standards.

Payne Brook is a Class C stream located in the northwest corner of the Town near the Village of Hamilton. It is fed by Lake Morraine, created as part of the system to feed the Chenango Canal in the mid-19th century. Payne Brook has been sampled since the 1980's to measure the effects of the Village of Hamilton WWTP discharge and its water quality has historically been slightly to moderately impacted due to agriculture and municipal activities.<sup>4</sup> For these reasons it is listed on the New York State Susquehanna River Basin Priority Waterbodies List.

In addition to Hamilton's streams and the Sangerfield River, the largest self-contained body of water in the Town is Poolville Pond, located directly east of the Hamlet of Poolville. It has a surface area of approximately 37 acres and is surrounded by residential development.

According to the Madison County Water Quality Coordinating Committee,<sup>5</sup> the most common water quality issues in the Chenango basin include sedimentation, nutrient loading (especially nitrogen and

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water\\_pdf/sbu30yrbs06.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/sbu30yrbs06.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> *2011 Water Quality Strategy*

phosphorous), septic system failures, gaps in aquifer protection, the potential for gas drilling activities, and land use changes.

### Floodplains

Approximately 1,073 acres, or 4% of the Town of Hamilton (including the villages) are located in the 100-year floodplain (See Map: Wetlands and Flood Hazards). These include stretches of the Sangerfield River valley, particularly the area around Poolville Pond and Nine Mile Swamp. Areas around the Village of Hamilton, including a cluster of wetlands along Payne Brook to the south of the Village, are also within the 100-year floodplain.

According to the Town of Hamilton annex of the Madison County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, approximately 158 parcels have land area within the 100-year floodplain, 12 of which also have structures situated in the 100-year floodplain. The plan identifies the following areas as prone to flooding: The Hamlet of Poolville, especially during severe summer storms and spring snowmelt; stream crossings at Williams Road and Pleasant Brook, Borden Road and an unnamed Sangerfield tributary, and Payne Street and an unnamed Payne Brook tributary; and a section of Bonney Hill Road.

### Topography

Elevations in Hamilton range from a low of 1,020 feet above sea level in the Village of Earlville to a high of 1,933 feet near Larkin Road and the Skaneateles Turnpike (See Map: Topography). The topography is shaped by the routes of the main watercourses, with ribbons of higher elevations stretching southwest to northeast outside of these valleys, where average elevations tend to be higher. In general, slopes of over 15% can be found across Hamilton (See Map: Steep Slopes). The steepest slopes can be found along the southern portion of the Sangerfield River valley, especially its eastern half in the Town, along the Town's western boundary, and in various areas outside the Village of Hamilton.

### Soils

The surficial geology of Hamilton is a mixture of tills of variable texture, glaciofluvial deposits (kame and outwash), moraine sediments, alluvial deposition, and swamp deposits around Nine Mile Swamp. Outside of the Sangerfield River and Payne Brook valleys, glacial tills predominate. Soil types include soils in the Bath, Howard, Lordstown, Mardin, Palmyra, and Stockbridge soil series. According to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, soils with severe limitations for development (i.e. septic system installation) cover about 50% of the Town. These limitations are primarily related to shallow depth to bedrock and/or high clay content. Howard and Palmyra soils, found in the Sangerfield River valley and near Earlville, respectively, pose less challenging conditions in the presence of favorable slopes.

### Ecology

Hamilton is part of the Northern Appalachian Plateau and Uplands eco-region. This regional ecosystem comprises a transition region between the less irregular, more agricultural and urbanized Erie/Ontario Drift and Lake Plain and Eastern Great Lakes and Hudson Lowlands eco-regions to the north and west, and the more mountainous and forested, less populated North Central Appalachians and Northeastern Highlands eco-regions to the south and east. Much of this region is farmed and in pasture, but large

areas are in forests of oak and northern hardwoods.<sup>6</sup> This mosaic of agriculture and open space provides for a unique assemblage of flora and fauna.

A review of Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) information suggests that significant Neotropical migrants, such as Baltimore Orioles, America Redstarts, and wood warblers, visit the area. This, in turn, indicates the presence of some extensive forests in the Town. These birds prefer deep forests, and some require nearby wetlands for early stages of fledgling-hood. Data is available for time periods 1980 to 1985 and again for 2000 to 2005. No threatened or endangered bird species were inventoried during either of those time frames, however, several species that are listed as species of special concern were found. These species are those that are at risk of becoming threatened or endangered species. In the eight bird census blocks that cover the Town of Hamilton, the special concern species found include the red-shouldered hawk, osprey, sharp shinned hawk, horned lark, and vesper sparrow. One note is that the 1980 to 1985 census included several other species of special concern that were not re-found in the later census. These included the northern goshawk, golden-winged warbler, cooper's hawk, common nighthawk, red-headed woodpecker. These special concern species were found in most areas of Town in the first census, but not the later. Some of these species require open grasslands as habitats, while others such as the northern goshawk need larger expanses of forested lands for nesting.

Hamilton is considered part of the North Atlantic flyway and would most likely see an influx of migratory waterfowl in the spring and summer months – especially on lakes and in wetlands. Grassland nesting birds, such as the bobolink, were recorded by the BBA, pointing toward the long-term persistence of suitable grassland nesting habitat for such species. Red-shouldered and red-tailed hawks and the American kestrel are listed, also point to the grasslands and edge habitat associated with this landscape mosaic. These edges provide roosts from which to hunt for prey.

Indicative of the wetlands found in Hamilton, there is also bird species associated with these habitats, such as red-winged black birds, wood ducks, mallards, great-blue herons, green heron, belted kingfisher. Presence of the belted kingfisher can suggest streams and other water features.

Rodent species associated with New York State grasslands include a variety of rats, mice, and voles. Beaver, muskrat and mink are closely associated with wetlands. Rabbit species include Eastern Cottontail, New England Cottontail and Snowshoe Hare. There are also black bear, bobcat and coyotes in areas, particularly those with low population density. White-tailed deer are common, as are porcupines and weasels. Skunks, fox, woodchucks and raccoons are across the landscape. Bats are also a part of the landscape as well as red squirrels in coniferous forests and gray squirrels with the heavy mast trees, such as oak.

According to NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Natural Heritage Program, there are several significant ecological areas in Town (See Map: Rare Plants and Animals and Significant Natural Communities). There are known areas for rare plants and animals located in or near both the villages of Earlville and Hamilton. The NY Natural Heritage Program identifies a floodplain forest, northern white cedar swamp, and rich shrub Fen at Nine Mile Swamp as rare communities. A freshwater mussel (Brook Floater) is listed in the Sangerfield River as being a threatened species. Near the Village of Hamilton, a

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<sup>6</sup> Adapted from *The National Atlas of the United States*, <http://nationalatlas.gov/mld/ecoregp.html>

threatened sedge species (a plant) is also known to exist. The Nine Mile Swamp area is a wetland identified as a significant natural community. The Map shows the wetland area and a buffer.

The public has identified an over-abundant deer herd in the Hamilton area as an issue and concern. Related to this, Colgate students in 2003 conducted a study in the Town of Hamilton that evaluated the status of the resident deer herd and options to control it. This study concluded that the deer are overabundant and starting to produce negative impacts on both the ecosystem and the Hamilton community. Several recommendations were made to reduce the deer population including creation of a deer-focused working group to continue monitoring the population and work to initiate a culling program to reduce the herd to manageable levels.

## Agriculture

The Town of Hamilton's landscape and historic settlement patterns have been influenced by its agricultural history, and farming continues in Hamilton today. There are several ways to measure the extent, impact, and characteristics of farming and agricultural operations in Hamilton, and this section presents data from several sources to detail the role of agriculture in the Town.

### Farm Soils

Soils conducive to farming can be found across a substantial proportion of Hamilton (See Map: Farmland Soils). The river valleys host the bulk of the Town's Prime Farmland soils, and ribbons of these soils can be found along the Sangerfield River, Pleasant Brook, and Payne Brook. In the higher elevations, Farmland of Statewide Importance can be found largely where slopes are less than 15%. Approximately 5,986 acres (23%) of the town contains Prime Farmland soils, including about 367 acres considered Prime Farmland if it is drained. Approximately 12,461 (47%) acres of the town contain Soils of Statewide Importance.

Soil quality is an essential consideration when assessing the potential viability and productivity of agricultural practices. One must consider the locations of the most agriculturally productive soils when forming land use strategies that promote agriculture. Soils vary in terms of drainage, fertility, texture, tillage, elevation, depth, and slope. Knowledge of these features can help farmers, foresters, planners, and engineers determine the most practical uses of the land.

Slope is an important consideration when determining the suitability of certain soil types for agricultural uses. Erosion, a principal source of sediment pollution, often occurs on steep slopes. Cultivation of crops on these slopes increases the risk of erosion, often because the vegetation that would normally inhibit the erosion is removed. It is difficult, and often dangerous, to operate heavy farming equipment along steep slopes.

The soils in the northwest portion of the Town, those just outside the Village of Hamilton, are mostly limited by slope. The most common soils in this area are Bath-Lordstown-Mardin, Mardin-Volusia, and Lordstown. These soils are used for some cultivated crops. The most popular uses for these lands are pasture, woodland, and hay. Slopes in this region are moderate to steep. Elevations are generally high, making short season crop varieties desirable.

In the southwest portion of the Town, the area surrounding the Village of Earlville, slope is less of a

concern. In fact, this area has the largest acreage of active farmland in the Town of Hamilton. The valley in this area is generally covered with Howard-Chenango, and Palmyra-Phelps undulating soils. These soils are used mainly for cultivated crops. They are well-suited to early planted and deep-rooted crops. Bath-Lordstown-Mardin and Mardin-Volusia are common at the higher elevations.

Many active farms also operate in the northeast corner of the Town, near Hubbardsville. The common soils in the valley are Howard-Chenango, Wayland, and Carlisle-Palms. As mentioned previously, Howard-Chenango soils are commonly used for cultivated crops. Carlisle-Palms soils can be used for high value specialty crops if the proper drainage is provided. It is extremely difficult to provide the proper drainage for Wayland soils, and they are often left covered with native wetland vegetation or used as pasture. Bath-Lordstown-Mardin and Mardin-Volusia are found on the hillsides in this area.

Forestland is the dominant feature in the southeast portion of the Town. Soils in the higher elevations of this region, such as Mardin-Volusia and Lordstown, are best suited for short season crop varieties, hay, pasture, and woodland. Steep slopes are more prevalent here than in other areas of the Town, making cultivated crops more difficult to farm. The soils in the low-lying lands are Stockbridge. These generally lend themselves to dairy farming, hay, and pasture.

The Sangerfield River and Poolville Pond are two major water bodies located in the central portion of the Town. This area also has an abundance of Howard-Chenango soils, possibly the best-suited soils for cultivated crops present in the Town. Other soils common to this area are Wayland and Palmyra-Howard. The Palmyra-Howard soils present a challenge for cultivated crops because they generally lie on hills and steep slopes.

### Farmed Parcels

Farmed parcels, defined by tax assessment data and aerial imagery, can be found across a broad swath of covering most Hamilton and stretching from northeast to southwest (See Map: Agricultural Parcels). The primary areas without identified farmland include the Village of Hamilton, the area to immediate south and east of the village, and the extreme southeastern corner of the Town. Data from real property indicated that there were 39 farm/farm owners in Town. The following table lists the various property classes of these farmed parcels and their total area.

**Table 4. Number and area of parcels by property class**

Property Class	Number of Parcels	Total Area of Parcels
Agricultural Vacant Land (productive)	52	3,220 acres
Dairy Products: Milk, butter, cheese	11	1,391 acres
Cattle, Calves, Hogs	5	1,365 acres
Field Crops	3	384 acres
Residential, also used in Ag Production	12	1,112 acres
Other Residential uses	68	3,486 acres
Multi-Purpose, Multi-Structure	4	478 acres
Various vacant land categories	58	3,078 acres
Totals	213	14,516 acres

### Ag Districts

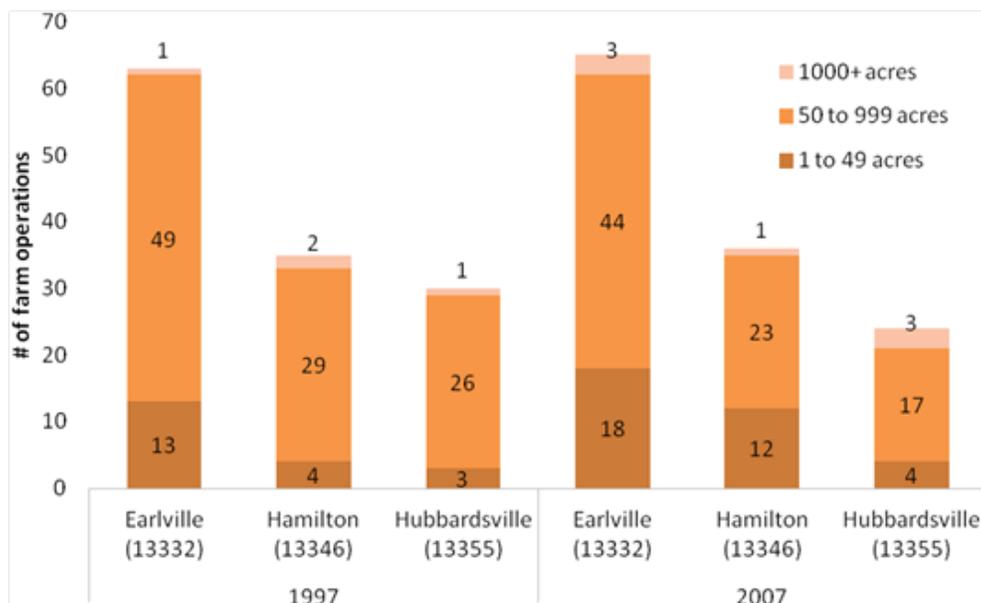
Agricultural districts are intended to conserve agricultural land and promote farming (See Map: Agricultural Districts). Participation in a district is voluntary and provides those in a district certain tax, review of planning and zoning actions, benefit assessment limitations, eminent domain limitations, and other policy protections. Portions of four districts, including Madison County Districts 4, 5, 8, and 10, are found in the Town, representing 8,906 acres and 239 parcels. According to the Madison County Planning Department, plans were underway to create an additional four districts in 2013.

### Ag Census Data

The USDA conducts a census of farm operations at five-year intervals. A principal advantage of Ag Census datasets is that they make historical comparisons possible and can help spot trends in agriculture at the local (zip code) level. The most current information aggregated to the zip code level dates to 2007. Zip codes used here are: Earlville (13332), Hamilton (13346), and Hubbardsville (13355) (the “Hamilton zip codes”).

In 2007, there were a total of 125 farm operations recorded in the Hamilton zip codes, a decrease of 3 operations, or 2.3%. Mirroring national trends, the number of small and large farms grew between 1997 and 2007, while medium-sized operations decreased by 20 operations, or 19.2%. Over this period, the area added 3 large farms and 14 small farms, both gains of over 70%. Figure 8 shows the distribution of farm operations by size among the three zip codes. Earlville represents about half of all farm operations recorded, and gained the greatest number of large farms over this decade. Over the same period, Hamilton added 8 small farms; Hubbardsville lost the most operations, but given the increase in large operations, this could have been the result of consolidation.

**Figure 8. Number of farm operations by size, Hamilton zip codes, 1997-2007**

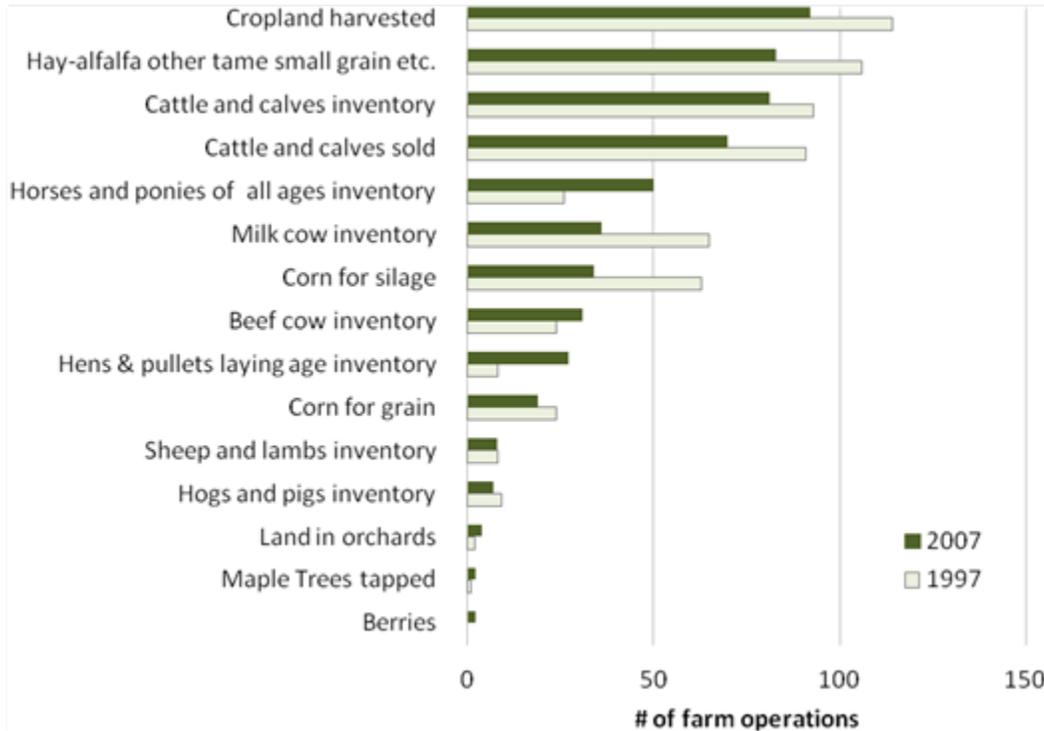


Source: Ag Census

The Ag Census also provides an indication of the types of farm activities. Crops, hay, cattle and calves, horses and ponies, and dairies were all important types of ag practices in Hamilton. In 2007, the top three activities as a percentage of total operations were cropland (73.6% of farms), hay (66.4% of farms), and cattle and calves (64.8% of farms). Two fifths of operations had horses and ponies, and more than a fifth of farms had laying chickens, beef cows, and milk cows.

These data also indicate that the ag sector is becoming more diversified. The number of operations with horses, laying chickens, and beef cows all increased, and the region added orchards and berry farms. However, dairy farms, cattle operations, and those with cropland and hay all decreased. As noted above, it is difficult to ascertain from the data whether the magnitude of the loss or gain of particular types of operations is the result of consolidation.

**Figure 9. Comparison of number of farm operations by ag practices, 1997 & 2007**



Source: Ag Census

According to the Ag Census, the majority of farm operators lived on the operation they ran in 2007, a situation that has remained relatively stable since 1997, and the percentage of full owners increased by half between 1997 and 2007. There are few purely tenant farmers in the region. However, the percentage of operators describing their principal occupation as farming has decreased from 70% to 56%, though the proportion of those reporting working off the farm has remained stable. The number of operations reporting participation in various types of conservation programs nearly doubled between 1997 and 2007, from 9 to 17.

**Figure 10. Operator characteristics, Hamilton zip codes, 1997 & 2007**



Source: Ag Census

## Local Government

The Hamilton Town Council is composed of 4 council members and one town supervisor. The Town of Hamilton Supervisor is a voting member of the Town Council. In addition to serving as the head of town government, the Supervisor also represents the Town of Hamilton on the Madison County Board of Supervisors. These are all elected positions.

Supervisor – 2 year elected position

Town Council – 4 elected 4-year positions

Town Justice – elected 4 year

These positions are filled by appointment by the Town Council and Supervisor:

- Highway superintendent
- Town Clerk
- Bookkeeper/deputy clerk
- Assessor
- Codes Enforcement officer
- Historian
- Dog Warden

Committees –

- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Planning Board

## Town Budget

Stability characterizes Hamilton's budget. It is composed of two general funds, two highway funds, and five special district funds. The Town is required by State statute to maintain separate general and highway funds to record transactions charged to town-outside-the-village residents; village residents receive a separate tax rate and bill for village-only services.

Special district funds include the Hubbardsville and Poolville Lighting Districts, the Hamilton Fire District and the Earlville and Hubbardsville Fire Protection districts. Appropriations for these special districts have remained stable over the past three years, with the vast majority of the total allocated to fire protection.

Like many New York State towns, expenditures for highways constitute a significant outlay, and spending on Town roads and related services in Hamilton amounted to 60% of total 2013 appropriations. Major recent expenditure changes include spending on bridge and equipment, with the latter, in turn, partially balanced by sale of equipment. Much of the remaining expenditures are devoted to general government support, which includes, among other things, salaries, equipment, and contractual expenses for basic services, such as legal, highway superintendent, assessment, and finance, among others. The Town is currently unburdened by debt service.

Town-wide revenues in 2013 decreased due to loss of a significant proportion of payments in lieu of taxes, but revenues in the town outside the village have been increased to reflect payment of the Town's portion of County sales taxes. In addition, state aid per capita and state mortgage tax payments have also been increased to near-2011 levels.

## Fiscal Trends

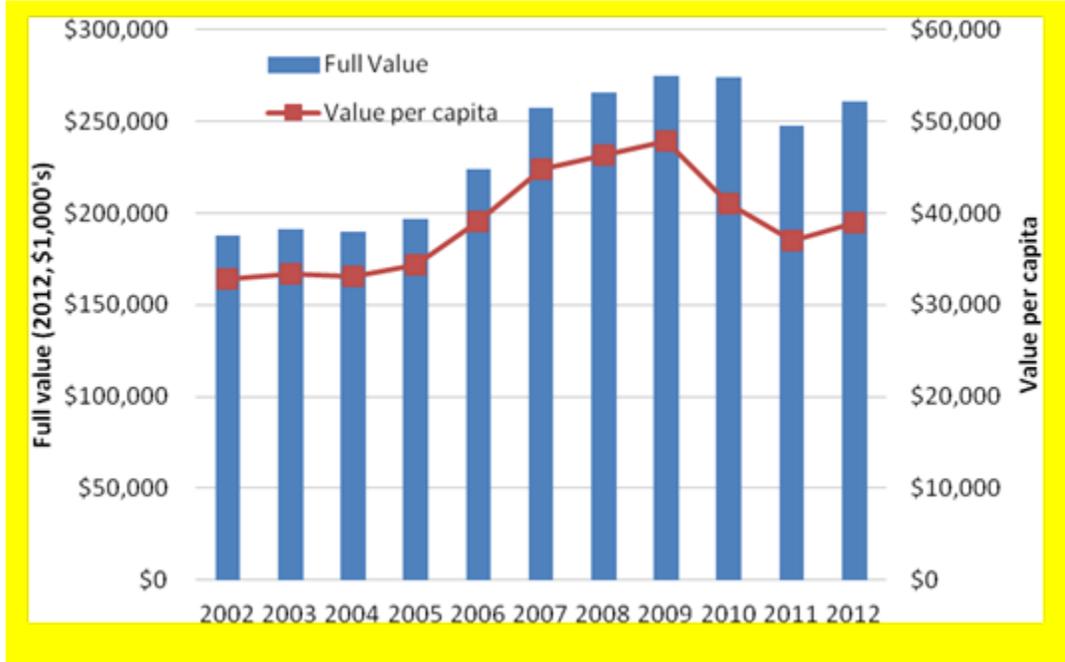
Analysis of local government finance and fiscal health involves a combination of environmental, financial, and organizational factors.<sup>7</sup> Population growth, stability of median household income, low poverty rate, and increases in median home value indicate favorable environmental factors. Moreover, the presence of Colgate University and its effect on age structure also should provide favorable conditions and a measure of population stability.

As Figure 11 depicts, the value of property in the Town (including the villages) has steadily increased and retained much of its value post-2008. Increases in the Town's population recorded by the 2010 census lowered per capita property value, and in 2012, the Town's figure of about \$39,000 per capita was less than the County median of \$49,810, primarily reflecting the large student population in the Village of Hamilton. It should also be noted that the presence of several nonprofits, including Colgate University, serves to reduce the Town's taxable base, and State data show that exemptions (including nonprofit status, but also programs like STAR) affected 568 parcels.

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<sup>7</sup> Office of the New York State Comptroller, *Financial Condition Analysis*, <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/lmgmg/financialconditionanalysis.pdf>

**Figure 11. Full value and value per capita, 2002-2012, Town of Hamilton**



Source: New York State Office of the State Comptroller, US Census Bureau

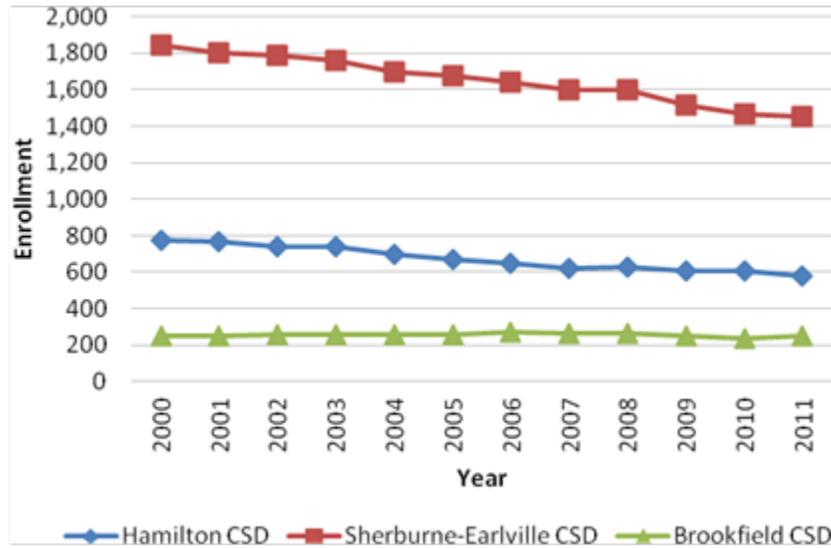
## Organizations and Resources

### Local Schools and Education

Hamilton Central School District (HCSD) and Sherburne-Earlville Central School District (SECSD) serve most of the Town of Hamilton. Approximately two-thirds of the Town is served by HCSD; SECSD serves most of the remaining third. A much smaller portion of the Town is also served by Brookfield Central School District (BCSD).

Like many small school districts across Upstate New York, both Hamilton CSD and Sherburne-Earlville CSD have experienced declining total enrollments, with each decreasing by 20% or more since 2000. Recent information indicates an uptick in enrollment at Sherburne. In contrast, enrollments at Brookfield CSD have changed little over the past decade.

**Figure 12. Town of Hamilton school district enrollments, 2000-2011**



Source: NYS Center for Rural Schools

HCSD facilities are in the Village of Hamilton. SECSO facilities, located in the Village of Sherburne, include separate buildings for elementary, middle, and high school students. In addition to the local school districts, Town residents have access to several early childhood education options as well as a private school with grades pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup>.

Colgate University is perhaps the most visible institution of higher education. As noted elsewhere, the university campus and university programs provide Hamilton residents access to a variety of amenities and services. Among these is the Lifelong Learning Program, based at Colgate’s Upstate Institute, and formed from a partnership between Colgate and the community to provide adult educational opportunities. Other colleges and universities in Madison County include Cazenovia College and the State University of New York at Morrisville.

### Community Organizations

This section includes information on a range of non-profit, community-oriented organizations in the Town.

Among these are Community Memorial Hospital, a non-profit healthcare institution and teaching hospital affiliated with Albany Medical College, and SUNY Upstate Medical University, and LeMoyne College. It is licensed to operate 40 beds and has a Primary Service Area that includes Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, and Otsego counties. The Southern Madison County Volunteer Ambulance Corps (SOMAC) also provides EMS service in the Town (see Emergency Services).

The following is a list of additional organizations found in Hamilton:

- **Cultural** organizations include: the Earlville Opera House, Earlville Free Library, Hamilton Public Library, Palace Theater, Camp Fiver, and Poolville Community Center.

- Business groups include the Municipal Airport and Airpark, the Rotary Club of Hamilton, the Hamilton Business Alliance, the Southern Madison County Chamber of Commerce, and the Partnership for Community Development.
- Food and Housing providers are the Hamilton Food Cupboard and Madison Lane Apartments.
- Land Trusts operating in Hamilton include the Southern Madison Heritage Trust (SMHT) (based in Hamilton), which owns several parcels totaling 22 acres: the Leland Reserve (an 18 acre fee owned parcel); and the Gateway Reserve (a 4 acre fee owned parcel), Pecksport Farmland (a 31 acre conservation easement.)
- Environment and Historic Preservation organizations include the Hamilton Historical Commission, the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FL-LOWPA, an organization of 25 counties in the New York portion of the Lake Ontario basin), and the Earlville Conservation Club.
- Houses of Worship include The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Colgate-Hamilton Jewish Community, Cornerstone Baptist Church, Earlville United Methodist Church, East Hamilton United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church of Earlville, First Baptist Church of Hamilton, Hamilton Bible Fellowship, Park United Methodist Church, Randallsville New Life Church, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), St. Mary's Catholic Church, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Poolville United Methodist Church,

## Historic Resources<sup>8</sup>

As noted by the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, historic resources in the Town of Hamilton can be defined broadly. These include remnants of the Chenango Canal, acres of farmland dotted with old barns and farmhouses, churches and houses, Native American archaeological sites, several architecturally significant building on the Colgate University campus, and federally-designated historic properties and districts in the Villages of Hamilton and Earlville.

### National Register of Historic Places Listings

The following properties or districts in the Town have been listed on the National Register (See Map: State Land, Historical Resources, Conservation Easements and Snowmobile Trails):

1. Old Biology Hall. Listed in September 1973, this building on the Colgate University campus is a Richardsonian Romanesque building built in 1884 with a 1906 addition.
2. Adon Smith House. Located at 3 Broad Street in the Hamilton Village Historic District, this Italianate brick residence was constructed in 1850 and listed in 1974. It is currently the Village Office.
3. U.S. Post Office. Hamilton's Colonial Revival brick post office, located at 32 Broad Street, was designated in May 1989. The building was constructed 1936-37 and contains an interior sculptural relief (1938) by Humbert Albrizio.

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<sup>8</sup> This section is adapted from the 1999 Comprehensive Plan.

4. The Hamilton Village Historic District was listed in 1894 and contains 157 contributing structures in the center and southern portion of the Village. The district reflects a full range of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture including a mix of commercial and residential buildings, churches, and other public buildings. Of particular significance are the First Baptist Church (1842), and the gothic revival St. Thomas' Church (1846), which was designed by renowned architect Richard Upjohn. The commercial center of the village is well preserved and relatively uniform in age and style having been built after a disastrous fire that destroyed the commercial core in 1895.
  
5. The Earlville Historic District, found in the Village of Earlville, contains 165 properties and was listed in 1982. It reflects a full range of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture and encompasses a mix of commercial and residential buildings. Among these is the Earlville Opera House, a three-story Queen Anne brick commercial building constructed in 1890 and listed on the National Register in 1973. It is the focus of the Earlville Opera House, founded in 1970 as a not-for-profit, volunteer-based, community service organization.

### The Chenango Canal

A portion of the Chenango Canal, a 97-mile towpath canal that historically connected Binghamton to the south with Utica to the north, runs along the western Town line between the Villages of Earlville and Hamilton. The canal was constructed between 1834 and 1836 and was dug largely by hand by Irish and Scottish immigrants.

As indicated in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, conditions along its length in the Town range from fully intact and complete with a recreational trail (the Chenango Canal Towpath Trail) and related improvements, to filled in and converted to residential use in the Village of Hamilton, to overgrown and situated on private property south between the two villages.

### Agricultural Lands and Structures

Much of the Town's land area has historically been farmed, with over 90% it devoted to agriculture in 1900. There are many historic farmhouses and barns in the town dating to the nineteenth century, some of which have been recognized by the Madison County Historical Society as significant representations of period building practices.

### Native American Sites

Sites frequented by Native Americans can be found throughout the town. Many of these sites are linked to wetlands, waterways, lakes, and ponds and were likely hunting camps (See Map: Archeological Sensitive Areas).

The grey circles on the Archeological Sensitive Areas map depict known areas of archeological sensitivity identified by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The Archeological Sensitivity Maps for New York State define areas within the state where the discovery of archeological sites is predicted. These areas also contain the locations of all known sites that are included in the SHPO Archeological Site files and the New York State Museum Archeological Site files. The exact locations are not displayed since

they are protected from disclosure by Section 304 (16 USC 4702-3) of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and Section 427.8 of the implementing regulations for the State Historic Preservation Act of 1980. This information can only be accessed at the SHPO in accordance with the SHPO's Policy on Access to Files, Data, and Information.

## Recreation Resources

Hamilton residents enjoy a range of recreational opportunities, both indoor and outdoor. There are a number of parks, trails, and active recreation sites, and residents benefit from Colgate's excellent facilities and events. Town residents who reside within the Hamilton School District enjoy access to Colgate's tennis courts, swimming pool and fitness center for fees well below what comparable private facilities would cost to users in other areas. Hamilton residents have access to a number of parks and open spaces, and Table 5 provides a partial list.

**Table 5. Recreation resources in the Town of Hamilton**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Responsible Entity and Funding</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Improvement plans</b>
<u>Hamilton Village Green</u>	Located in the heart of Hamilton Village, on Broad Street	Green includes picnic tables, benches, fountains, and a gazebo. Suitable for concerts, outdoor gatherings, farmer's market.	Village of Hamilton	Well used by town/village residents, near capacity	Upkeep of plants around gazebo and fountains
<u>Earlville Park</u>	Village of Earlville	Venue for outdoor music, gatherings	Village of Earlville		
<u>Hamilton Central School Playground</u>	adjacent to Hamilton Central School	Swings, play structure, etc. for children three years of age and older. Renovated in 2012	Village of Hamilton (Parks and Recreation Board); funding from the Village, donations, volunteers, etc.	Well used, school time and recreationally	No current improvements needed, many programs being offered through parks and recs including arts and crafts at the playground
<u>Triangle Park</u>	intersection of Lebanon and Eaton Streets	Park includes grassy area, trees, benches, flowers; winter skating pond is recent addition	Village of Hamilton (Parks Advisory Commission)	Well used, many children play here	maintain skating ring

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Responsible Entity and Funding</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Improvement plans</b>
<u>Eaton St. Park/Hook Wiltse Ballfield</u>	Eaton Street	Park includes softball/baseball fields, bathroom/concession facility, and a pavilion which can be rented for events	Village of Hamilton (Parks Advisory Commission); funding from Village of Hamilton and rental fees	Well used, Little Leagues play here, and other teams rent out the fields, residents of town rent pavilion	No immediate improvement plans for the future
Poolville Community Center	Willey Road	Former School with 70 person occupancy Great room and kitchen Large lawn with swings and ballfield.	Community Club of Poolville; Cared for by volunteers from the town	Used regularly for public & private meetings, family parties & winter Farmers market	Building maintenance, wheel chair ramp and upgrades to kitchen desired

Source: Town of Hamilton

In addition to the resources listed in Table 4, there are also several sites for passive recreation that have trails and other amenities. These include:

- a. Brook View RV Park & Campground. Located in Hubbardsville on NY-12, this private campground has RV and tent sites, as well as mini golf, fishing, horseshoe pits, volleyball, basketball, game room.
- b. Colgate University trails. The Harry Lang XC Ski and Fitness trails located on the university campus offer several miles of maintained surface for cross-country running, skiing, walking and hiking.
- c. Brookfield State Forest trails. Located in the 9,414 acre Charles E. Baker State Forest, this 130-mile system of roads, truck trails, and off-road trails offers a number of uses, including mountain biking, horse riding, snowmobiling, hiking, and walking. A small portion of this State Forest is located in the Town.
- d. Chenango Canal Trail. Located in Hamilton, this 8.3 mile trail has benefitted from recent improvements. Its southern terminus is on College Street, in the Village of Hamilton, and it extends north of NY-20. Amenities include fishing access, parking areas, and interpretive signage.
- e. Madison Lane Apartments. There is a park and recreation area with hiking trails.
- f. New York State Snowmobile trails. The State Land, Historic Resources, Conservation Easement, and Snowmobile Trails map shows that Hamilton is well-served by a network of trails. The Shasta Snowmobile Club maintains over 20 miles of trail throughout the town.
- g. Nine-mile Swamp in Hubbardsville.
- h. The Sangerfield River is accessible for boating and fishing from a point in Hubbardsville
- i. As the 1999 Comprehensive Plan notes, there is an extensive youth recreation league, coordinated jointly by the Village Recreation Committee and Colgate University, and it offers a number of organized athletic events. Local school districts also provide youth recreation activities, and the presence of Colgate University also provides a number of indoor recreation spaces, clubs, and other organized activities. The University athletic facilities and the Seven Oaks Golf Course are also available to Town residents.

## Facilities and Infrastructure

### Transportation and Highways

#### Roads

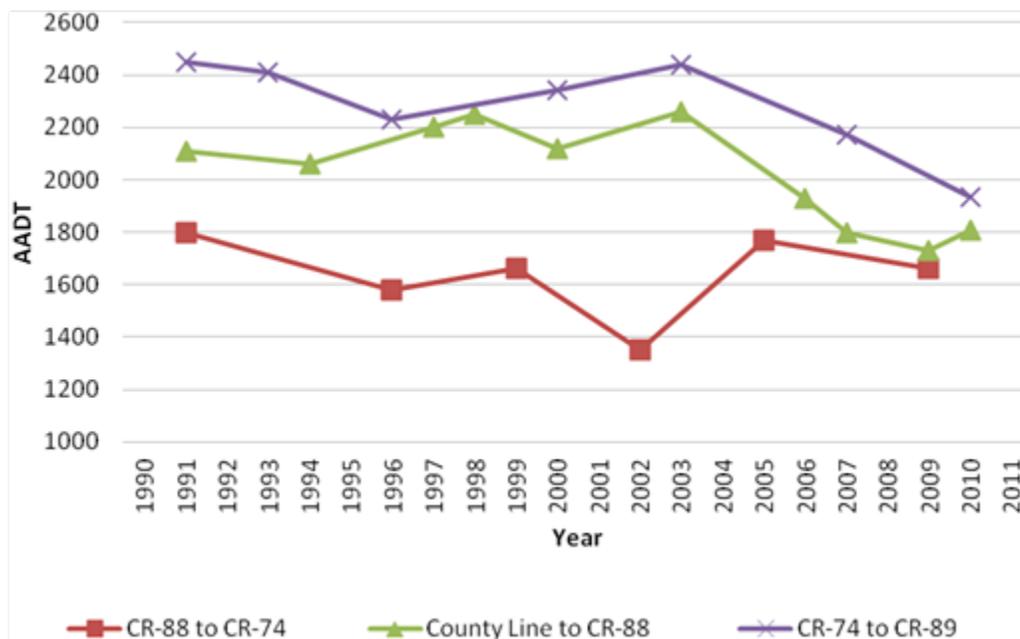
Most roads in the Town are rural routes experiencing low traffic volumes, though the villages are hubs of activity and, therefore, concentrate traffic (See Map: Roads and Property Boundaries). The majority of Town roads are chip and seal construction. While the lack of a major interstate in close proximity has reduced growth pressure, Hamilton is well-served by the presence of several State routes. The highest traffic volumes are on State roads as they pass through the Villages of Earlville and Hamilton.

## State Routes

There are two north-south state highways running through Hamilton. Route 12 connects Utica to the north with Norwich and Binghamton to the south. Route 12B connects with Route 12 just north of Sherburne, constituting an important link between the Syracuse area and the Southern Tier region. Route 12B runs along the Town's western border down the Chenango River valley between the Villages of Hamilton and Earlville. To the north, both 12 and 12B join Route 20, a major east-west state highway.

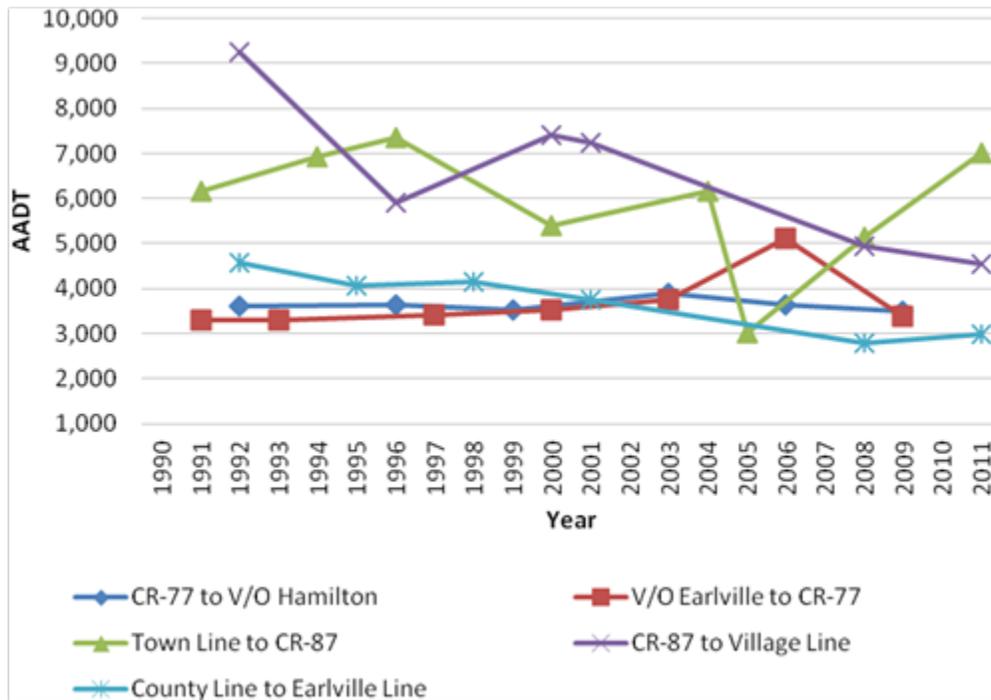
Traffic levels on state roads in Hamilton have generally remained stable or shown slight declines between 1990 and 2011. An exception to this is the segment of NY-12B in the Village of Hamilton from Payne Street to the village boundary; traffic counts show an increase each count since 2005. Traffic volumes on NY-12B are generally lower south of the Village of Hamilton.

**Figure 13. NY-12 traffic counts, 1990-2011.**



Source: NYSDOT

Figure 14. NY-12B traffic counts, 1990-2011.



Source: NYSDOT

### County Routes

There are approximately 40 miles of County roads in Hamilton. While most County roads in the Town have low traffic volumes, several segments have volumes approaching that of the State roads, including Hamilton Street (CR-70) and E Main Street, both which connect the villages to NY-12. Traffic counts (data not shown) show that volumes here have generally remained stable on County roads over the past decade.

### Town Roads

There are 60 miles of Town roads in Hamilton. About 39 miles, or 66%, of Town roads are a chip seal surface. Identified issues on Town roads include drainage, flooding, and traffic concerns. Road maintenance is a primary function of Town government (see Town Budgets). Highway department facilities are in Earlville, and total employment is 5 (4 full time and 1 per Diem) along with an appointed superintendent. The Department has a fleet of plow trucks as well as an array of smaller trucks, mowing, and earthmoving equipment. All vehicles are on a replacement schedule which minimizes costs of repair.

The Department has a formal agreement with Madison County to remove snow from county roads within the township and an informal shared service agreement with several area municipalities, including Lebanon, Brookfield, Smyrna, Sherburne, the Village of Hamilton, Madison, Eaton, and the Village of Earlville. These informal agreements mostly involve resurfacing of roads, sharing of trucks, other services.

## Public Transportation

Madison County operates the Madison Transit System, a deviated fixed-route service run by a contractor. There are four routes, three of which service various locations in the Town of Hamilton. According to Madison County, a number of additional private, governmental and non-profit transportation providers service portions of the County.<sup>9</sup> The Colgate Cruiser is sponsored by Colgate University and is available to the public when college is in session.

## Non-Motorized

There are sidewalks in the Villages of Hamilton and Earlville, and available data indicate that many people rely on these networks to get to work (see Figure 16). The 1999 Comprehensive Plan also indicated that bicyclists use many of the Town's roads, and NYSDOT inventory data suggest that some Town and many County roads have shoulders of 6 feet, which are conducive to walking and bicycling. Some however, are not paved shoulders, and are not conducive to cycling.

## Aviation

The Hamilton Municipal Airport, owned by the Village of Hamilton, is one of 70 general aviation<sup>10</sup> airports statewide. It is located north of the Village and is classified as a "Large" Business Airport, according to the New York State Airport System Plan (NYSASP). This means that it offers runway length, related services, ready access to the road network, and proximity to a business district/industrial park to accommodate a full range of business users. According to the NYSASP, total landings and takeoffs at the airport was projected to grow faster than the average for all general aviation airports between 2010 and 2025, suggesting potential need for improvements to airfield capacity.<sup>11</sup>

Currently, the airport offers fueling, inspection, and mechanic services are provided by a contractor. The site is also home to the "Airpark," a collection of industrial and commercial sites (See the Economy section). The nearest scheduled passenger service is provided at Syracuse Hancock Int'l.

## Rail

A portion of the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway (NYSW) is in Hamilton. The tracks found in Hamilton are part of the NYSW's Utica Branch, a line that extends from Utica to Chenango Forks. The combined damage from an isolated 2006 storm, Tropical Storm Lee, and Hurricane Irene have put the Utica Branch out of service. The Chenango County Industrial Development Agency is sponsoring a \$5.9 million project to bring the line back into service through repair/restoration of about 45.5 miles of track in Chenango County.

According to its website, the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway operates over 400 miles of track in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania and is 286,000-pound gross weight capable on all lines. The railway transports a wide range of commodities such as feed ingredients, lumber and other building materials, chemicals and aggregates for Customers in New York State; and plastics, lumber, food

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/sites/default/files/Final%20Coordinated%20Transportation%20Plan%20small.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> General Aviation airports do not offer scheduled passenger service or air transport operations.

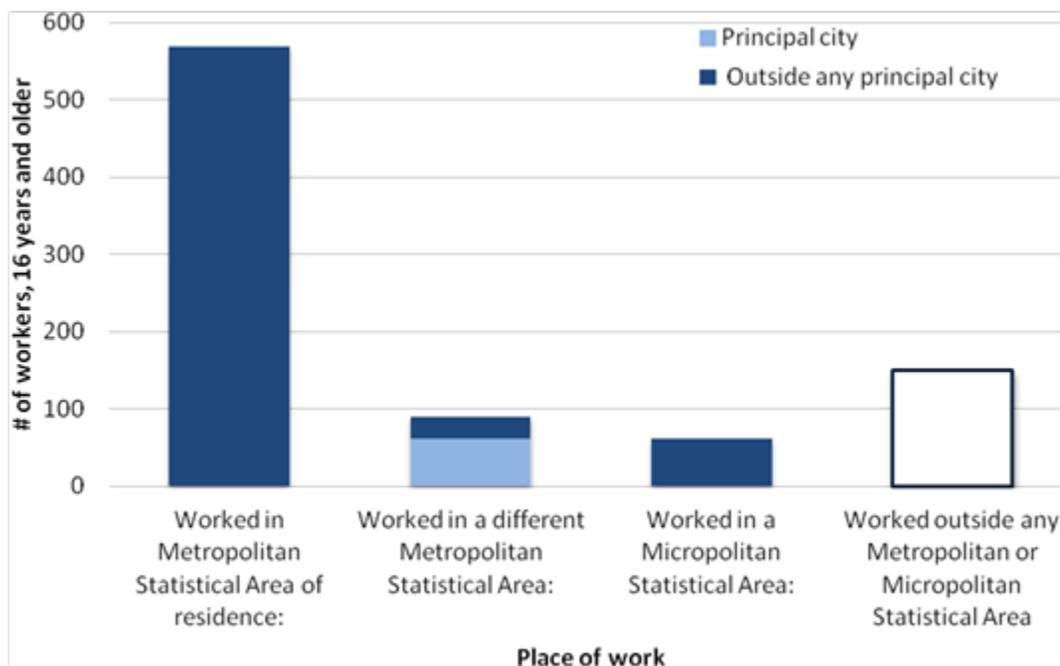
<sup>11</sup> CITE TO NYSASP, 3-10, p. 76.

products, paper products, motor vehicles, chemicals, aggregates, and metals in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

### Commuting Data

According to American Community Survey data, most Town residents work in the 3-county Onondaga, Oswego, and Madison region, with the majority working within Madison County. Of the smaller number of those workers reporting travelling to work outside their Metropolitan Statistical Area of residence, it seems likely that many travel to Utica or Rome, both nearby principal cities. Some Hamilton residents likely work in Oneonta (the nearest Micropolitan Statistical Area), while many also appear to work in Chenango County. When compared with Village of Hamilton data, it appears that Town residents are more likely to work outside Madison County on a percentage basis.

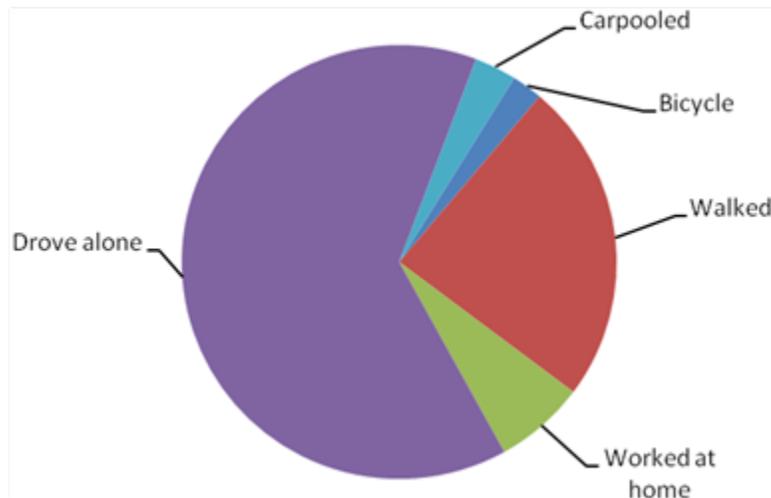
**Figure 15. Place of work for workers 16-years and older, Town of Hamilton (excl. villages)**



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey

The most recent census data show that most people in Hamilton commute using personal vehicles. Most of these people drove alone, though a small share did carpool. The comparatively large share of people walking to work likely reflects those living in the villages, and the number of those commuting by bicycle is nearly equal to the number carpooling. A number of people also work at home. This picture is likely to have remained stable since at least 2009: While a review of these data for previous years does show some variability, this may be due to sampling protocols.

**Figure 16. Journey-to-work data, 2012.**



Source: ACS 2007–2012

## Emergency Services

The Town is served by the New York State Police, the Madison County Sheriff's Department, and village police departments in Earlville and Hamilton. Colgate University also employs security personnel.

Southern Madison County Volunteer Ambulance Corps (SOMAC) provides emergency medical and transport services throughout the Town of Hamilton and approximately half of the Town of Lebanon. It responds to about 800 calls per year, roughly divided between 911 calls and hospital transfers. It has mutual aid agreements with neighboring services.

SOMAC currently has 24 volunteers, including about two-dozen Colgate students during the academic year. But maintaining volunteer levels is a challenge. SOMAC maintains a fleet of three vehicles, one of which is a backup and is loaned to area organizations as needed. It has recently acquired two new ambulances.

## Fire

A network of volunteer fire departments provides fire protection. This network includes cooperation among area organizations through mutual aid agreements. There are three principal districts serving the Town:

The Hamilton Fire Department serves the Village of Hamilton, the Hamilton Municipal Airport, and Colgate University. Under contract, the Department also provides protection in a district made up of certain portions of the Towns of Hamilton, Madison, and Lebanon within Madison County, forming a total primary/first response area estimated at 27 square miles and 6500 permanent residents. The Hamilton Fire Department also provides Rapid Intervention Team service to surrounding departments in Madison, Chenango, and Oneida Counties.

The Hamilton Fire Department has 55 active members. About 25% of its members come from Colgate University, which makes staffing during the summer season a challenge. The department has two pumpers, one 95 ft. tower ladder, one heavy rescue, one mini rescue, and one 1,800-gallon tanker and is planning to purchase smaller, portable equipment in the near term. It responded to 629 calls in 2012, which is a decrease from 640 calls in 2011.

The Earlville Volunteer Fire Department serves the Village of Earlville and its immediate surrounding area with approximately 42 volunteers. Finally, the Hubbardsville Fire Department serves Hubbardsville and its immediate surrounding area with approximately 30 volunteers.

## Law Enforcement

The New York State Police and Madison County Sherriff provide police protection in the Town of Hamilton. However, the villages of Earlville and Hamilton each maintain police forces. In addition, Colgate University has its own security force. Madison County provides E911 service, which is located at the Madison County Emergency Communications Center in Wampsville.

## Public Services and Utilities

### Energy

Most Town residents obtain electricity from NYSEG. However, the Village of Hamilton operates an electric utility and distribution system, and a limited number of Town residents in two areas receive electricity from this system: to the east of the village, along Payne Street, Spring Street, and Spring Hill Road; and to the south and east of the village, along a portion of Hamilton Street, Sacco Road, Gorton Road, and Horton Road. The source for most of the electricity supplied to the Village of Hamilton comes from hydropower.

The Village recently voted to establish its own natural gas distribution system. It is anticipated that the system will be available for commercial and residential use in 2014.

### Communications

A review of the New York State Broadband Mapping Project indicates that a majority of the Town is served through the combination of Cable and DSL broadband service. Coverage gaps are found in the northwestern and southwestern quadrants. This information also suggests that Hamilton is served by wireless broadband coverage, though not always adequately. Verizon provides the majority of cellular services as those from AT&T, T-Mobile and Sprint are limited.

### Water

There are two public water supply systems in the Town, and each supplies a limited number of Town residents. One system serves the Village of Hamilton and has a combined source yield of 2,200 gpm

from two drilled wells. This system had 859 service connections in 2012. About 20 or fewer of these connections are in the Town; all are located along Spring Street.

The other, smaller system serves the Village of Earlville and has a combined source yield of 688 gpm. Outside of the areas served by these systems, residents rely upon on-site private wells and groundwater. Personnel from the Madison County Department of Health (specifically environmental health subdivision) oversee water systems for the county.

## Wastewater

The Village of Hamilton operates a wastewater treatment system, which serves only residents located within Village boundaries. The remainder of the Town, as well as the Village of Earlville, relies upon on-site septic or other means of wastewater disposal.

An issue of concern especially in the southern part of the county is the high percolation rate for certain soil types which can contribute to groundwater contamination from agricultural and septic sources. Groundwater contaminants of concern in Madison County are total coliform bacteria, nitrates, herbicides, and pesticides.

## Solid Waste

Madison County operates an integrated solid waste management system consisting of one central sanitary landfill in the Town of Lincoln, three transfer stations (including one in the Town of Hamilton on Cranston Road.), a central materials recovery facility, and four yard waste and recyclables drop-off locations. In addition, at the transfer station in the Town of Lincoln the County recycles special wastes such as used oil, antifreeze, vehicle tires, vehicle batteries, dry cell batteries, white goods and other scrap metals.

According to the County, revenues from tipping fees on non-recyclable wastes and from the sale of recyclable materials are used to pay for system operating and debt service costs, cost of future landfill development, and to fund an account that will be used to pay for future landfill closure and post-closure costs. A temporary landfill cap for phases one and two has been put on the west side of the landfill. The County Department of Solid Waste and Sanitation has several leading programs in the areas of recycling, reuse, solar energy generation, and waste to energy.

In the Village of Hamilton, trash pickup is provided by the municipality. Outside of the village, residents use private haulers or take trash to a transfer station individually. Colgate has private haulers to take waste directly to landfill.

## Land Use

Like other parts of the southeastern Madison County region, current land use patterns in Hamilton have been influenced by the combination of agricultural uses, steep slopes, and distance from urban centers. The current pattern is rural, characterized by large tracts of farmland and open space interspersed with

single-family homes, farm structures, and smaller population concentration in the villages and small communities, where settlement density is highest.

Colgate University owns a significant amount of land in the Town of Hamilton and surrounding communities, adding up to about 1500 acres. Lands outside the main campus facility are largely undeveloped and possess great scenic, environmental, and recreational value. These lands are quite diverse and include farmlands, wetlands, forests, and grassy flatlands. The majority of this land is received through individual donations. Acquisition of land is not a top priority of the University now, except for areas close to the campus borders (e.g. Hamilton Street and ‘frat row’).

Portions of Colgate's undeveloped lands, particularly the extensive and well-maintained trail system behind the University, have been utilized for recreational use. These trails are suitable for running, hiking, and biking, as well as cross-country skiing. No hunting is allowed and no water resources exist for fishing in these areas. However, the Beattie Reserve on Bonney Hill Road, used for outdoor education purposes, contains a well-maintained trap range.

Some of the land owned by the University is suitable and/or leased for farming or grazing purposes. Land suitable for agriculture includes Parker's Farm located just north of Randallsville and east of the Chenango River, and the Bewkes Property, a natural area with a pond situated near the Lebanon Reservoir in the Town of Lebanon.

Colgate University has been involved with the development of a Forest Management Plan for approximately 860 acres of its undeveloped land. The project is being spearheaded by a Forest Management Committee, which hired a consultant to develop the plan. The consultants are classifying land tracts and developing a management strategy to protect these forested areas so that they remain ecologically healthy, allow for new growth, and preserve valuable wildlife habitats. Selective harvest and timber sales will likely cover the cost of managing the lands. The management plan is near completion.

Current parcel data (See Map: Property Class) show some development in the areas identified in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, namely south of the Village of Hamilton along NY-12B and Gorton Road; and east of the Village near Spring Street and Bonney Hill. Outside of these areas, as well as Poolville, and Hubbardsville, large vacant, farm, and residential tracts dominate. Commercial development is taking place along the Route 12B corridor.

### Parcel Data

The following table lists the various classifications of tax parcels in the town, outside of the villages.

**Table 6. Number and Acres of Parcels by Property Class.**

Property Class	Number of Parcels	Number of Acres
Agricultural	67	6,211
Residential	754	8,705
Commercial	9	156
Industrial	3	88
Community Services	13	165
Public Services	9	57

Property Class	Number of Parcels	Number of Acres
Recreation and Entertainment	5	205
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks	8	431
Vacant Land	383	8,326
Totals	1,251	24,343

**Subdivisions and Building Permits**

Since 2007, relatively modest subdivision activity has created, on average, 5 buildable lots per year. Over this period, a total of 28 lots have been created involving 420 acres. While the average number of acres involved skews toward larger subdivisions, roughly half of the subdivisions since 2007 have been 6 acres or less.

**Table 7. Building permit and subdivision activity, Town of Hamilton**

Year	Building Permits	Subdivisions	
		Number of Lots	Total Acres
2007	1	8	139.088
2008	5	7	48.999
2009	4	5	103.5
2010	3	3	2.684
2011	1	1	0.25
2012	1	4	126.065
2013	0	0	0
Total	15	28	420.586

Source: Town of Hamilton

Over this period, a total of 16 building permits have been issued. The majority of these have been issued for residential construction, including nine single family residences and four manufactured homes. There have been two commercial permits, one for a health center building at a camp and one for a motorsports store and workshop.

**Mining**

Soils favorable to the mining of gravel deposits, including the Howard varieties, are found around the Sangerfield River, and gravel mines have historically operated in this area, particularly in the Poolville area.

Information from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) indicates the presence of three permitted mines in Hamilton, all of which are less than 30 acres and extract sand and gravel. One mine has been reclaimed, one mine has reached its maximum size, and one mine is currently permitted to operate on 16.5 acres of a 24.1-acre life of mine area.

## Land Use Regulations

The Town of Hamilton has adopted the following land use-related laws:

- Zoning (with several updates and amendments over the years)
- Subdivision (with several updates and amendments over the years)
- Licensing of Dogs (LL 1 of 2010)
- Flood Damage Prevention (LL1 of 1987 with several subsequent updates including LL1 of 2002)
- Adopting NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (LL1 of 1986)
- Regulation of Parking on Certain Town Roads (LL 2 of 2000)
- Classification of Low Volume Rural Roads in Hamilton and Establishment of Maintenance and Rehabilitation Guidelines (LL1 of 2000)

See this Appendix for a review of the zoning and subdivision law in relation to the goals of this Plan.

## Economy

The economy of Madison County is based primarily on agriculture, which accounts for about 4% of total employment in the County, and the dairy, dairy processing, and equine sectors are particularly important. Agriculture is also important in Hamilton. Other locally-important sectors include manufacturing, education, retail, and healthcare.

While most businesses in the Town of Hamilton are located inside the Village of Hamilton, there are some retail establishments located outside of the Village limits. Hubbardsville and Poolville, as well as the Village of Earlville have businesses ranging from a general store to a restaurant. There are also businesses located along some of the main routes outside of the villages, as well as Hubbardsville and Poolville, such as on the Route 12 corridor. The following is a list of the types of businesses found outside the Village of Hamilton:

- Motorsports
- Snowmobile
- Furniture
- Tree Farm/Nursery
- Campground
- Fuel Oil
- Country General Store
- Bed and Breakfast
- Agri-Tourism
- Gravel Mine
- Cheese
- Trash Hauler
- Auto Repair
- Used Car Dealer

- Restaurant/Bakery
- Farm Equipment Repair
- Hair Salon

Land zoned for business is found along Route 12B. Many non-farm commercial uses are allowed in the Commercial, Ag-Res, and the Hamlet district in Poolville. Business uses are restricted in the Res district. Businesses are permitted with either site plan review or special use permits. Some of the business uses allowed include hotel, motel, home occupations, commercial campsite, indoor and outdoor recreation businesses, food and beverage services with or without a drive-through, retail, mixed uses, motor vehicle services, offices, and personal services. Both the Ag Res and Commercial districts allow for some light industrial uses as well including contractor yard, manufacturing, research facility, storage, trucking terminal, and warehouses.

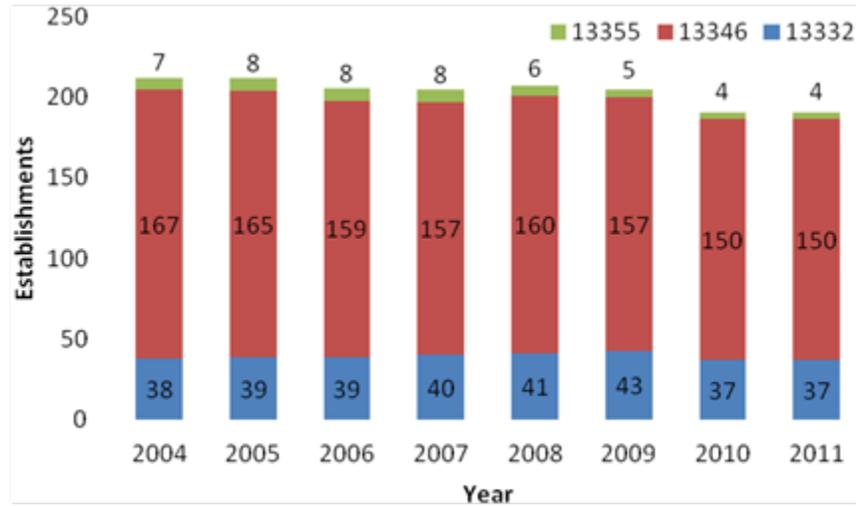
Available data show that 191 business establishments<sup>12</sup> were in the Hamilton zip codes in 2011. While there are a few larger employers, most establishments employed fewer than 100 people. Hubbardsville (13355) had the fewest establishments, with a concentration in the retail sector, and they employed about 11 people. Hamilton (13346) had the greatest number and the highest diversity of establishments employing over 3,500 people. Earlville (13332) had 37 establishments employing 102 people. Though the trend since 2004 indicates modest declines in the total number of establishments, these declines have not been severe, and relative stability characterizes the Hamilton zip codes.

The largest employer is Colgate University, with over 1,000 employees on its payroll, which is likely an increase over the 805 permanent employees reported in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. The manufacturing firms recorded were small, mostly employing fewer than 20 people. An informal inventory conducted by the planning committee indicates that there are two manufacturing establishments in the Town, both of which are at the “Airpark” commercial/industrial complex.

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<sup>12</sup> An “establishment” is defined as “a single physical location at which business is conducted or services or industrial operations are performed.” Excluded from this count are self-employed individuals, employees of private households, railroad employees, agricultural production employees, and most government employees.

**Figure 17. Hamilton zip codes change in establishments, 2004-2011.**



Source: US Census Bureau, ZIP Business Patterns

Table 8 shows a detailed breakdown of the firms by sector in the Hamilton zip codes. The combination of accommodation and food service, retail, health care, and other services (e.g. equipment repair or dry cleaning) make up two-thirds of all firms surveyed. There was a smaller concentration of firms in the construction sector, including various contractors and plumbers.

**Table 8. Hamilton Zip Codes share of Madison County business activity, 2011.**

	Hamilton Zip Codes	Madison County	Hamilton Share
Employees	3,670	17,128	0.214
Annual payroll (in \$1,000)	109,035	533,144	0.205
Firms By Sector			
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2	2	1.000
Industries not classified	1	3	0.333
Educational services	5	16	0.313
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2	8	0.250
Other services (except public administration)	28	139	0.201
Accommodation and food services	33	164	0.201

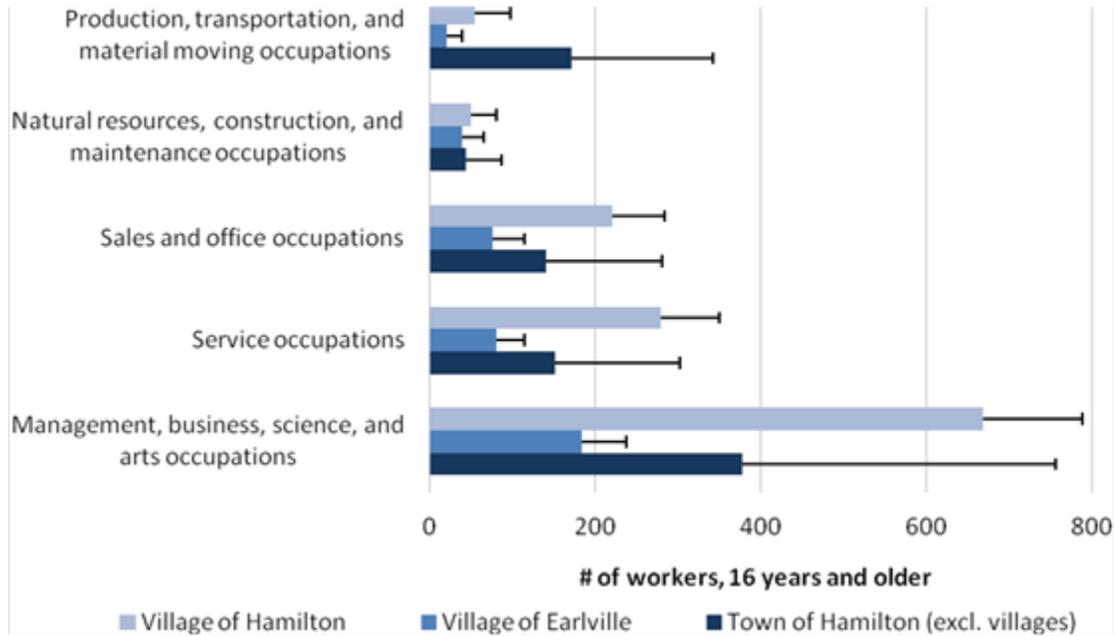
	<b>Hamilton Zip Codes</b>	<b>Madison County</b>	<b>Hamilton Share</b>
Retail trade	35	208	0.168
Real estate and rental and leasing	7	45	0.156
Health care and social assistance	24	163	0.147
Information	2	17	0.118
Finance and insurance	7	62	0.113
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	4	38	0.105
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	7	68	0.103
Construction	17	198	0.086
Manufacturing	5	61	0.082
Professional, scientific, and technical services	10	123	0.081
Transportation and warehousing	2	29	0.069
Total for all sectors	191	1,400	0.136

Source: US Census Bureau, ZIP Business Patterns

Table 8 also shows these zip codes' share of Madison County Totals. The data indicate that, in 2011, while this area had about 13% of total County establishments, they represented about 20% of total employment and payroll countywide. Local concentrations in the educational services, agriculture, accommodation and food service, other services, retail, and mining sectors are apparent.

The American Community Survey provides data on occupation and industry for the working age population, 16 years and older. In 2012, the working age population in the Town tracked the Village of Hamilton, which centered on management, business, science, and the arts. However, more people in the Town were employed in production and related activities when compared to either Earlville or Hamilton.

**Figure 18. Employment by occupation comparison, 2012**



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey

A third source of data is a recent study of the businesses and commercial space in the Hamilton Commercial Core (roughly an 800-foot radius from Payne Street and Broad Street) and Utica Street Corridor (roughly NY-12B from Wylie Street north to Airport Road) areas, the *Hamilton Village Retail Assessment*. It provides a detailed inventory and assessment of market demand and market gaps, which is summarized by Table 9.

**Table 9. Business and commercial space inventory, Village of Hamilton**

Commercial Space Category	Hamilton Commercial Core		Utica Street Corridor		Total entities	Total s.f.
	# of entities	gross s.f.	# of entities.	gross s.f.		
Personal Care	14	22,200	2	10,700	16	32,900
Goods & Supplies	10	18,300	5	37,300	15	55,600
Auto & Maintenance	2	19,200	12	60,800	14	80,000
Food & Beverage	5	15,300	2	38,000	7	53,300
Arts & Entertainment	5	9,600	2	9,600	7	19,200
Dining	15	25,800	3	9,700	18	35,500
Office & Community	14	59,300	4	28,700	18	88,000
Vacant	0	21,900	0	58,100	0	80,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>191,600</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>252,900</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>444,500</b>

Source: Colgate University, Hamilton Village Retail Assessment

A total of 95 entities (a mix of businesses and institutional uses) occupying roughly 350,000 sq. ft. were recorded. Approximately 18% of total space surveyed was found to be vacant, three-quarters of which is in the Utica Street Corridor, which offers much larger spaces in general and is auto-oriented. About a fourth of all entities in the Core consist of banks, municipal offices, and other office space, and these occupy 30% of space available.

## Relevant Planning Efforts Outside of Town

### Village

The Village of Hamilton has plans and systems in place for water, wastewater, a municipal electric department, and the airport/industrial park. They have produced a drinking water report and a comprehensive plan (1972 and 1992 Master Plan).

The Village of Hamilton completed an update of its 1972 Master Plan in 1992. The plan provided policy goals and actions to guide future changes in the Village. It also contained a review of the Village zoning law and suggested modifications based on the updated Master Plan. Key findings included support for some increase in population growth while protecting the Village's "small town, low density, single family college community qualities"; strengthening the commercial center; attracting new and expanding

businesses consistent with the educational-medical-agricultural character of the community; annexation of adjacent land if it fits in with the Village's development goals; extending municipal utilities only to annexed areas when cost-effective; controlling erosion of steep slopes and preserving wetlands and flood plains; use of traffic control mechanisms to improve public safety; expanding recreational resources; and retaining the existing housing mix, with an emphasis on moderate density, single family detached housing.

The Hamilton Partnership of Community Development (PCD) provides services related to small business support, micro assistance grants, and marketing the Shop Local program. The Hamilton Business Alliance also provides a variety of business related services.

The Village has the following laws related to land use:

- Unsafe Buildings
- Energy Conservation (NYS Energy Code Compliance)
- Excavation, Grading and Filling
- Farmers Markets (license and permits)
- Flood Damage Prevention
- Satellite Antennas
- Signs
- Subdivision
- Zoning (including a Noise Overlay for Airport)

## County

The County has a variety of plans that are relevant to the Town of Hamilton. These plans and efforts include:

- Madison County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Madison County Smart Growth Program
- Economic Development Strategy for Madison County
- Madison County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan
- Coordinated Transportation Plan
- Madison County Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Healthy Design for Madison County – Primer for Smart Growth
- Bicyclists Bring Business Guide
- Madison County Water Quality Strategy
- Solarize Madison
- Buy Madison
- ARE Business Park
- FL-LOWPA (Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Water Protection Alliance)

## Regional

Madison County is part of the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. They have a variety of planning and economic development initiatives including:

Central New York Regional Economic Development Council Strategy

Central New York Regional Sustainability Plan

Central New York Naturally Chilled Water

Green Infrastructure Planning for Improved Stormwater Management in Central New York

Central New York Cleaner Greener Plan

# Details on Public Input

## Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan Survey Summary

### 1. Do you own or rent your home?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Own	88.4%	451
Rent	11.6%	59
<i>answered question</i>		<b>510</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>11</b>

### 2. If you own property, how many acres?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
under 1 acre	50.9%	232
1 to 5 acres	25.4%	116
6 to 10 acres	4.6%	21
11 to 50 acres	9.2%	42
51 to 100 acres	3.3%	15
over 100 acres	6.6%	30
<i>answered question</i>		<b>456</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>65</b>

### 3. Do you live in the Town of Hamilton?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	89.9%	461
No	10.1%	52
<i>answered question</i>		<b>513</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>8</b>

### 4. If yes, how long have you lived in the Town of Hamilton?

Answer Options	Response
	Average = 23.8 years, 56 people lived in Town 5 years or less
<i>answered question</i>	<b>392</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>129</b>

### 5. Where do you live in the Town of Hamilton? Are you in or near the following?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Hamilton Village	53.1%	252

Earlville Village	7.8%	37
the Hamlet of Hubbardsville	6.9%	33
the Hamlet of Poolville	5.9%	28
the Hamlet of East Hamilton	1.7%	8
the Hamlet of South Hamilton	2.7%	13
outside of a village or hamlet	21.9%	104
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>475</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>46</b>

**6. If you are employed, how far do you commute to work?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
work from home	18.0%	65
1-10 miles	59.6%	215
11-30 miles	14.7%	53
30+ miles	7.8%	28
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>361</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>160</b>

**7. Do you have school-aged children under the age of 18 at home?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	23.5%	119
No	76.5%	388
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>507</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>14</b>

**8. Are you retired?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	34.1%	172
No	65.9%	332
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>504</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>17</b>

**9. If no, do you plan to retire in the Town of Hamilton?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	64.2%	174
No	35.8%	97
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>271</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>250</b>

**10. How old are you?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18-24yrs	1.6%	8
25-34 yrs	5.8%	30
35-44yrs	14.6%	75
45-54yrs	16.9%	87
55-64yrs	25.8%	133
65-74yrs	17.5%	90
75-84yrs	14.4%	74
85+yrs	3.5%	18
<i>answered question</i>		<b>515</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>6</b>

**11. How important is local agriculture to you?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
very important	69.5%	353
somewhat important	27.8%	141
not important at all	2.0%	10
no opinion	0.8%	4
<i>answered question</i>		<b>508</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>13</b>

**12. If local agriculture is important to you, why? (check all that apply)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
agriculture is part of the regional economy	88.6%	437
agriculture maintains the town's rural character	72.8%	359
availability of fresh local food	84.6%	417
agriculture preserves open space	71.4%	352
Other (please specify)	12.0%	59
<i>answered question</i>		<b>493</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>28</b>

**13. Should Town government play a role in supporting local agriculture?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	79.4%	385
No	6.4%	31
No Opinion	14.2%	69
<i>answered question</i>		<b>485</b>

**14. How? (check all that apply)**

Answer Options	Yes	No
assist with obtaining grants for promoting agriculture and recruiting new farming operations	337	35
have zoning that works to promote agriculture	326	27
support conservation easements (purchase of development rights)	234	74
promote agricultural economic development	327	21
facilitate first time farmer financing programs	252	60
develop tax incentives	240	57
Other (please specify)		
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>

**15. Are you actively engaged in farming in the Town of Hamilton?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	8.8%	44
No	91.2%	458
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>
		<b>502</b>
		<b>19</b>

**16. If yes, what type of farming?**

Answer Options	Response Count
	42 people answered, most common answer was dairy, livestock, beef, but also hay, poultry, vegetables, bees, and homesteading were also mentioned.
<i>answered question</i>	<b>42</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>479</b>

**17. If yes, how many acres do you farm?**

Answer Options	Response Count
	35, representing over 6,000 acres with average = 173 acres.

<i>answered question</i>	35
<i>skipped question</i>	486

18. Do you rent your land or use rented land in the Town of Hamilton for farming?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	7.9%	35
No	92.1%	410
<i>answered question</i>		445
<i>skipped question</i>		76

19. Check all that apply

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I rent another person's land for farming	48.4%	15
I rent my land to a farmer	54.8%	17
<i>answered question</i>		31
<i>skipped question</i>		490

20. If you rent another person's land for farming, how many acres do you rent?

Answer Options	Response Count
16, with totaling almost 1200 acres, averaging 71 acres	
<i>answered question</i>	16
<i>skipped question</i>	505

21. If you rent your land to a farmer, how many acres do you rent?

Answer Options	Response Count
20, with totaling about 1600 acres, averaging 83 acres	
<i>answered question</i>	20
<i>skipped question</i>	501

22. Should the Town of Hamilton be actively involved in attracting new local businesses?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	87.0%	421
No	5.8%	28
No Opinion	7.2%	35
<i>answered question</i>		484
<i>skipped question</i>		37

**23. If yes, in what way? (check all that apply)**

Answer Options	Yes	No
marketing and promotion	324	29
increased support of the Partnership for Community Development	281	48
extend hi-speed internet throughout the town	266	48
assist with grant writing for business retention and expansion	321	36
tax incentives	230	81
Other (please specify)		
	<i>answered question</i>	
	<i>skipped question</i>	

**24. What sort of business or industry would you like to see in the Town?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1.	100.0%	278
2.	60.1%	167
3.	34.5%	96
	<i>answered question</i>	
	<b>278</b>	
	<i>skipped question</i>	
	<b>243</b>	

**25. Where would you like to see new business located in the Town? (Number in order of preference with 1 as top choice.)**

Answer Options	Response Average	Response Total
Village of Hamilton	1.36	435
Village of Earlville	2.51	579
on rte.12	2.55	516
south of the Village on rte.12b	7.11	1,606
hamlets	3.71	593
	<i>answered question</i>	
	<i>skipped question</i>	

**26. Is there another place you would like to see new business located that's not listed above?**

Answer Options	Response Count
	55, common responses were north of village, on Route 12b, at or near the airport, and it depends on the type of business
<i>answered question</i>	<b>55</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>466</b>

**27. Are any of the following housing topics problems in the Town of Hamilton? (choose all that apply)**

Answer Options	Yes	No
availability of Senior citizen housing	211	106
vacant houses	100	172
housing stock in disrepair	179	120
absentee homeowners	140	134
student rentals in residential areas	218	103
high housing costs	236	82
Other (please specify)		
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>

**28. Should the Town of Hamilton pursue any of the following? (choose all that apply)**

Answer Options	Yes	No
grants to help fund residential home improvements	267	105
promote development that conserves open space	302	65
facilitate a first time home buyer programs	235	118
tax incentives when builders address housing needs	199	139
Other (please specify)		
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>

**29. Do you support Commercial Wind Power Development in the Town of Hamilton?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
support with Town regulation	61.8%	294
oppose	25.8%	123
no opinion	12.4%	59
		<i>answered question</i> 476
		<i>skipped question</i> 45

**30. Do you support Private Wind Power in the Town of Hamilton?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
support with Town regulation	68.4%	325
oppose	17.7%	84
no opinion	13.9%	66
		<i>answered question</i> 475

*skipped question* 46

**31. Is High Volume Hydrofracking gas development (HVHF) now an important issue for the Town of Hamilton?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	80.5%	380
No	10.4%	49
No Opinion	9.1%	43
<i>answered question</i>		<b>472</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>49</b>

**32. Should the Town of Hamilton:**

Answer Options	Yes	No
Take no action, and allow HVHF gas development according to New York State regulation	114	268
Revise the existing Town of Hamilton zoning to identify areas in the Town that can accommodate HVHF with the least impact, and allow HVHF in those areas	160	222
Prohibit HVHF everywhere in the Town of Hamilton	245	154
<i>answered question</i>		
<i>skipped question</i>		

**33. Should the Town of Hamilton pursue more green energy projects for the town office, garage, and the community?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	83.2%	381
No	7.0%	32
No Opinion	9.8%	45
<i>answered question</i>		<b>458</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>63</b>

**34. Which ones?**

Answer Options	Yes	No
solar projects	335	25
community bio-digester (to produce energy from farm and food waste)	307	29
energy conservation	368	12

attract green energy businesses	305	29
Other (please specify)		
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>

35. Is the Town of Hamilton's natural environment important to you?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.7%	464
No	1.0%	5
No Opinion	2.3%	11
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>
		480
		41

36. If yes, what aspects are important to you? (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
natural resources (water, streams, wetlands, forests)	97.2%	447
scenic views	83.0%	382
open spaces	84.6%	389
wildlife	77.8%	358
outdoor recreation	76.1%	350
Other (please specify)	7.4%	34
		<i>answered question</i>
		<i>skipped question</i>
		460
		61

37. How can the Town support these resources?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	165, common responses were to provide incentives, education, ban HVHF, support agriculture, control development, careful use of zoning, avoid sprawl
	<i>answered question</i>
	<i>skipped question</i>
	165
	356

38. What outdoor recreational activities are important to you? (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
biking	65.4%	276
hiking	79.4%	335
skiing/snowshoeing	50.2%	212
boating	38.2%	161
hunting	27.5%	116
running	37.9%	160

fishing	36.7%	155
snowmobiling	11.4%	48
Other (please specify)	20.6%	87
		<b>answered question</b> 422
		<b>skipped question</b> 99

**39. How can the Town support or promote these activities?**

Answer Options	Response Count
	178, common responses were more trails, hiking, bike paths, bike lanes, safe biking, sidewalks, special events, protect lands, and more advertising
<b>answered question</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>343</b>

**40. Are you satisfied with the following services from Town government? (check all that apply)**

Answer Options	Yes	No
Hours of operation of Town Office	311	49
Ease of access to Town officials and employees	283	35
Responsiveness of Town officials to your concerns	208	41
Access to Town records/minutes from meetings	187	25
Town Road maintenance and snow removal	355	45
Building & Code enforcement process	167	61
Building permit process	161	37
Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals	152	45
The Town of Hamilton website	165	38
		<b>answered question</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>

**41. Which of the following actions do you think the Town should pursue? (check those you feel are important)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
shared Town and Village services	69.4%	311
high-speed internet throughout the town	52.5%	235
more funding for extreme weather events	21.0%	94
increased public transportation in the Town of Hamilton	31.7%	142
support for recreational	40.8%	183

programs		
more financial support for local libraries	43.3%	194
more financial support for cultural events	29.7%	133
provide services for seniors	46.0%	206
more financial support for SOMAC (local ambulance service)	52.0%	233
Other (please specify)	12.3%	55
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>448</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>73</b>

**42. Would you support modest tax increases to finance any of the actions discussed in this survey?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.7%	241
No	32.3%	135
No Opinion	10.0%	42
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>418</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>103</b>

**43. If so, which ones?**

Answer Options	Yes	No
agricultural programs	128	57
economic development	135	52
housing initiatives	111	58
energy initiatives	177	37
environmental programs	190	35
town services	139	41
	<i>answered question</i>	
	<i>skipped question</i>	

**44. How would you describe the Town of Hamilton's character in 5 words? (list in order of importance, with 1. most important)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
The most common answers were RURAL and FRIENDLY. Other common descriptions include scenic, beautiful, quiet, peaceful, small, small community, diverse, good, charming, safe, quant and clean		
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>280</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>241</b>

**45. What would you like to change about the Town of Hamilton?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
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1. See Town Clerk Archives	99.6%	266
2.	55.4%	148
3.	35.2%	94
<i>answered question</i>		<b>267</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>254</b>

46. The questions in this survey have been grouped into seven "Topic Areas", which appear at the top of each page. They are: Agriculture Economic Development Housing Energy Development Natural Environment Town Services Community Character Which 3 of these topic areas are the most important issues facing our town? (list in order of importance, with 1. most important)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
The top three issues (in order) were energy development, economic development, and housing, followed by the natural environment, agriculture, community character, and town services.		
<i>answered question</i>		<b>284</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>237</b>

47. Other topic of importance to you, not listed in survey:

Answer Options	Response Count
See Town Clerk Archives	79
<i>answered question</i>	
<b>79</b>	
<i>skipped question</i>	
<b>442</b>	

## Focus Groups

### Economics Focus Group Notes

Date of session: March 29, 2014, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Scribe: Harvey L. Kliman - Facilitator Don Meltz

**Present:** Sean Fadale, Michael Zahn, Denise Kolb, Clay Skinner, Mary Santos, Russ Lura, and Will Shoemaker

#### Summarized notes from the discussion:

The group allowed Harvey to participate in the discussion and agreed that the mission statement was acceptable as presented.

In the initial expression of ideas, the group highlighted the following:

- Develop in all settled areas e.g. along Route 12, to avoid sprawl, not just focus on the Village. “There’s more to Hamilton than the Village.”
- The area is “ripe” for development, but it should be smart growth, not shotgun, but focused. All should dovetail together. “Small growth”
- Diversify the types of businesses and not compete with existing businesses. “Support each other.”
- Look for opportunities in keeping with the regional character, e.g. the brewery, and accept the potential of Hamilton as a college oriented village in a rural/agricultural town setting
- Promote entrepreneurship possibly by establishing a local business incubator.
- Don’t want to promote “extractive” businesses, like power lines, hydro-fracking.
- Lack of cooperation with surrounding towns.
- An unfortunate – long-time locals have a lack of appreciation for the opportunities Colgate brings. Embrace what we are – a college village in a rural setting.
- We don’t have a “bike shop to replace the cobbler”
- We cannot survive duplicated businesses
- Bike shop, kayak, specialty shops, willing to start small. Fits in with canal towpath, if that gets developed further. It fits in with recreation opportunities.
- Shuttle service for end-to-end bike rides
- We should be open and flexible to those willing to come into town and want to do business
- There is very low population surrounding the town to support much growth
- Airport development park – not much happening there. Trying for small-tech, but got a car wash. How can we market it? What would fill it? Is NYS taxation a big impediment to bringing in outside manufacturing?
- Tax incentives can be used to bring in new businesses, but should not compete with existing businesses. Identify what’s missing, and encourage that.
- Service based business are doing well, as long as the market is there. Retail, not so much.
- Diversify individual businesses – e.g. Snowmobiles and furniture shop (there is one in town)
- Nelson farms products – supplies local mom & pop’s, they market what they make.
- Route 12 has the traffic – people going to the Adirondacks, Old Forge, etc. Recreation type businesses could draw them into town. Stop here for a longer stay.
- Trail walks, village to village, as in European model. Farm “tractor trails” are there, but need permission and agreements with farmers.
- We must be considered a destination to get people to come here. How do we do this? Build links with other towns, by trail, water, canal, to be a place along a route.

- Erect a structure at the air-park as an incentive. We are surrounded by strong colleges – match this with an incubator.
- We have land. Get them out there, and provide a place to eat and sleep.
- Rentals for ATV, snowmobiles - if the town was open to this. Need the trail routes. Surrounding town's openness would make it even better.

### **Opportunities for Economic Development:**

Problems and Opportunities: How to keep shops from failing, and how to bring new businesses which can succeed into the town. "How can we focus on our strengths?" is a theme.

- Improve and focus on existing plusses: e.g. improve the Towpath Trail to foster biking and historic tourism which would also support restaurants and lodging. Regionalize opportunities with adjoining towns, as with Brookfield trails and the many surrounding lakes which are within 10 miles for boating. Use snowmobile trails in the summer for hiking where feasible and link with existing trails.
- Specialized tourism based on existing resources. Leverage existing strengths. A recent study showed 44,000 parents visited Colgate in college searches for their children. Could this be a resource? "Consider 'Loomis Gang Swamp Tours'." Build on local strengths such as visitors to the Bouckville antique show. Any way to help farmers with ecotourism – agritourism?
- Hamilton/Brookfield/Madison make a group of towns that could/should work together. Brookfield has the horse trails. Hamilton could provide the dining after.
- People come to enjoy the "lakes, or lake homes" and come to Hamilton to dine.
- Good farmers' market in the village.
- Arts are becoming more of an industry: The Palace, Earlville Opera House, summer symphony concerts, the future Colgate Arts Center etc. Link up neighboring communities and events. Could advertise these more, as they are greatly under-attended. These are world-class events.
- Nurture local businesses by encouraging "buy local". Specialty shops may survive even if more expensive, e.g. mention of a successful Hot Sauce shop.
- Service based businesses are surviving despite the low population density and small retail market.
- Take advantage of the traffic flow along Route 12 to capture tourists on the way to the Adirondacks. Encourage them to stop here instead with the right mix of attractions.
- Improve the distribution system for small producers of local products, salad dressings from the Landmark, Kriemhild butter, Jewett's cheeses Drover Hill Farms products and others. Coordinate efforts of Nelson Farms, Madison Bounty, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Morrisville incubator into an effective marketing and distribution system.
- Develop high tech businesses based on the academic resources in Hamilton, Clinton and Morrisville with location at the Airpark for light manufacturing startups.
- Low population density is a problem for small retail shops, but if more transients could be attracted to the area, survival might be easier.
- Summer strengths need emphasis to make up for loss of students. Lakes as an attraction for summer residents and visitors, summer menu with local food in restaurants (although the short growing season makes this very hard for the restaurants). Could greenhouse agriculture improve the opportunity for more locally grown foods?
- Summer sessions at the college, or some other summer events/conferences that fill the vacant rooms could bridge the summer gap.
- B&Bs have done well catering to college parents.
- The Farmers Market in the summer is a big success and attraction. The winter markets serve to familiarize vendors and customers for the summer. Develop more value-added foods for preservation and year-round sales.

- Take better advantage of the PCD, the HBA and Hamilton Initiative, but perception is that their organizations have not been very effective especially for bringing new businesses into the area and supporting existing businesses. “Time waster”.
- Hamilton business alliance, and PCD (partnership for community development?) has staff. Provides some networking and promotion, but not worth the effort for what (the focus group attendees) get out of it. Too much time, effort to participate fully.

#### **Barriers to Economic Development:**

- There are a lot of one-person businesses but support for them is lacking
- The growing season is short, limits potential use of local products. Greenhouse/hydroponics could help extend the season.
- Restaurants could use a ‘local menu’ insert for special items
- Need town-wide broadband service, would lead to more single person businesses in the town.
- Only Verizon has sufficient cell coverage across the town, ATT&T spotty, T-Mobile absent
- Village electric and soon natural gas distribution is a local benefit.
- Village has cheap coop electricity. Extending this would help economic development i.e. greenhouses and other high-energy uses.
- Zoning is not a barrier
- Colgate may inadvertently limit competition in some areas by subsidized operations, as the barge offers more lunch food options it competes with other lunch vendors.
- Colgate concerts are not well advertised despite the high quality of the performers and performances. Don’t reinvent or invent new tourism opportunities, but take advantage of existing ones (see opportunities above). Summer concerts, summer sports camps etc.
- Do better linking of events, businesses and Colgate with regional marketing. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and the symphony concert draw huge crowds from the region; less so for the Chocolate Train Wreck.
- Entrepreneurship storefront last year was a success, but what will be the follow-through? No lasting commitment to an incubator environment for graduating students who are a potential resource for starting a local enterprise.

**Natural gas development and windmills** are economic drivers, even if it’s just the transmission lines that run through. The consensus was that these are generally short term boosts to the economy, and they do retain a few maintenance jobs in the area, but there are risks that have not been fully evaluated. Best to wait and see how serious the problems are in PA and elsewhere and if solutions to the known problems with pollution, for example, have been dealt with successfully. These developments may benefit farmers, but windmills in Madison would have an impact on the Hamilton Airport. The group generally espoused a cautious approach to hydrofracking – wait and see “The gas will still be there in a few years.”

Windmills do provide income to farmers, they now come into town and spend money. A few windmills seem to be an amenity. A landscape full of them is a huge impact, and may affect the airport significantly.

There has to be a way to do this safely (wind and hydrofracking).

## Recreational Focus Group Notes from 3/29/14

### *Introduction by participants with brief statement about individual interests:*

- four wheeling and snowmobiling. Wants to see increased use of four wheelers (all-terrain vehicles) outside of individual private properties.
- Turkey, deer, coyote hunting opportunities, part of our local culture.
- Equine
- involvement with youth recreation and sports. Regular (road) walker in and around the village.
- my children are involved in soccer, softball, and basketball. I'm a walker but family's main passion is competitive horseback riding. We also hunt deer, turkey and coyote.
- avid cyclist but interested in a general conversation about recreation.
- not sure why I'm here but I run, bike and cross country ski.
- responsible for serving the recreational needs of Colgate University community. Physical education is a requirement of all students. I also mountain bike and cross country ski and once got hit by a car while riding bike.
- involved with village's summer youth recreation program; coach of little league baseball and soccer. Most interested in maintaining good relationship with Colgate to continue use of their recreational facilities at a low cost to non- Colgate people.

### *Discussion of Recreation Vision Statement*

**The Town of Hamilton promotes a multitude of cultural and recreational activities that enhance the quality of life for all citizens.** (not: The Town of Hamilton promotes a multitude of cultural activities and protects recreational resources that enhance the quality of life for all citizens) – develop more opportunities, and promote both cultural and recreational

-do not see Hamilton's natural resources at risk; there's an abundance of resources but the problem is that they are not accessible to people.

### *What are some conflicts:*

-no place to ride four wheeler. I don't blame farmers for not permitting access to their fields but there should be some place to ride. The state doesn't even let us use (State Forest) truck trails. Snowmobiling brings \$800 million into state's economy. This area is missing out on lots of money by not having tourism based on four wheelers. We need a place for people to ride. (DEC) won't let us use state land. They'll take our registration money but won't let us use truck trails. Four wheeling is good for other recreation trails because it keeps the brush down. Seasonal roads are open to four wheelers in Tug Hill, town of Ohio. Why can't (Hamilton) open up seasonal roads (secondary roads) to four wheelers?

-I'm afraid to ride my bike around town because it's too dangerous. Same with walking. Motorists have no regard for other users. A woman got hit by gravel kicked up from a speeding car.

-sharing the road is important. There needs to be a change in the culture of cycling where people respect other users, including drivers. Sharing the road, lots of open road but it is not walking/running/cycle friendly.

-there were conflicts on the canal trail this winter between snowmobilers, cross country skiers and hikers. There are also hiker and horse conflicts-when it's wet, horses can chew up the trail. Same with four wheelers. When it's wet, there are problems with trails. Not everybody is bad but some people rip it up.

-cycling isn't just a recreational issue, it's a transportation issue. This is a State (government) issue not a local/ town (government) issue. The state needs to do something about road conflicts between cyclists/runners/walkers and motorists.

-would not support more multi-use trails. Trails should be developed that are single use to avoid conflicts. Canal trail should not be multi-use, ski/walk only.

-by and large the village and town have an enviable (recreation) record. They are open about use. (Central)School's recreational facilities should be treated as taxpayer resources not exclusively school resources.

-there needs to be more common sense and education about road conflicts with runners and motorists. Safety issues need to be addresses. Group running/training causes traffic flow conflicts (college).

*Don displayed maps and requested participants to identify favorite recreational routes or propose new ones: (I have the maps with notes drawn on them)*

-Madison Street-Spillway Drive-East Lake Road (walk/run).

-Village of Hamilton-Hamilton Street-Gorton Road-Poolville-Earlville Road to Earlville and back again (not 12B) for biking.

-River Road is the most dangerous route in the area. There have been fist fights between motorists and bikers. Cars use it as a commuter route and drive at 70mph. There are also problems with dogs.

-install "Share the Road" signs and request that State Troopers issue more tickets to motorists.

-there are a number of loosely organized bike groups: OffTheBack (.com) and Colgate Cycling Club.

-local snowmobiling clubs include: Moonlight Riders, Shasta and Waterville Club (WASTA)

-extend existing canal trail south to Earlville. As an alternative for linking the villages of Hamilton and Earlville consider Colgate trails connecting with Leland Reserve and following ridge (east of 12B) south to Earlville. A link between the two villages would be fantastic.

-lots of people (from Bonney Road, Mason Road) walk around the loop of Mason-Bonney-Bonney Hill Roads.

-lots of village people walk the Spring Street Loop (Payne-Spring-Hamilton Streets). The Section of Hamilton Street without sidewalks is very dangerous. People come into the Village, park their car, and walk this loop.

-use designated snowmobile trails in the town for new four wheeler trail.

-Colgate recently acquired additional property that connects campus with Beattie Reserve providing an opportunity for a new recreation trail. Students are a potential work force but this is not my responsibility.

-there needs to be a better recreation (running) route to Lake Moraine. Runners don't respect motorists on West Lake Road/ Madison Street. There are lots of student athletes using this route and resolution of conflicts must involve coaching staff (rowing crew) that recommend/require this route to their team.

-railroad bed that runs through town provides a recreational opportunity but apparently owner does not want to give it up.

### *General discussion*

-want to have a larger conversation about more collaboration between town and Colgate.

-Students would be interested in working on these projects, but can't be required, or totally relied upon.

-Put together a "tourists routes" map/brochure for biking safely.

-The railroad is currently not in operation. Doubtful if it ever will be again.

-my experience at Rogers Center is people who want to volunteer prefer to do trail work. But need planners to design and schedule the work.

- DOT and DEC need to be involved in any discussion about recreational development, otherwise the state can just say “screw you”, town has no power. (Don replied that state agencies are required to consider language in a town’s comprehensive plan when proposing a project.)
- interested in enhancing tourism through attractions in the area. How do we market local resources to an outside audience (i.e. Colgate parents)? Recreational and other developments should be considered with an eye toward tourism. What do we have that’s distinctive? We need to market our local resources, not necessarily by making physical connections (trail corridor linkages), but human connections that attract people to this area.
- there’s a 6-8 mile mountain bike trail at Colgate that’s distinctive but school has a policy that discourages advertising these assets because of fear of liability and also recreational congestion. There’s also concern from adjacent landowners-one in particular who was chair of the board of directors-and does not want trail users trespassing from Colgate trails onto his property.
- Colgate boathouse is a distinctive asset that could potentially be open to the public for boating on Lake Morrairie. Current demand is such that there is room for additional people to use facility. Again there is fear about liability and (boater) recreational congestion.
- Seven Oaks golf course is a distinctive asset that is currently under-utilized. A “world-class” asset. Golf packages could be offered to attract people to community who would also patronize local restaurants and other businesses.
- groomed cross country ski trails are another distinctive asset. There are few in this region-and those that do provide grooming (Highland Forest in Onondaga County and Tug Hill in Oswego County) charge a \$10 fee.
- Colgate Outdoor Education program rents recreation equipment. Possibly increase visibility of this program through advertising.
- hunting is a massive recreational resource that is an important part of regional tourism. It is also an important part of local tradition/ heritage and provides supplemental food.
- increased posting of private property has resulted in fewer hunting opportunities. It has also resulted in overpopulation of certain wildlife species.
- we actively hunt our property to protect it from trespass during hunting season. This is a chronic problem.
- consider winter access to canal for ice skating.
- Sangerfield River and Nine Mile Swamp are important canoe and kayak sites. Consider improving (navigability) of river by removing barriers and extending (seasonal) boating opportunities south to Earlville where it flows into Chenango River.
- Parking would help promote recreational use and integration with tourism.
- 20,000 acres of State land, southeast corner of the town. Has hiking/horse trails. Can advertise.
- Advertise all resources in a coordinated way.
- lots of agriculture in the town of Hamilton. Propose moving the Madison County Fair from Brookfield, which is very remote, to Hamilton where it would have more visibility. This effort could be combined with the development of “Equine Alley” along Rt. 20 to establish an important horse-riding destination.
- There is a Cazenovia group attempting to market Route 20 as an “Equine Ally”.
- there needs to be additional communication between the town of Hamilton and other towns and Madison County (to advance recreational development).
- school and Eaton Street ballfields are important recreational assets.

## Energy Development Focus Group

Date of session: March 29, 2014, 1:30 AM to 3:30 PM (submitted 3/31/14)

Scribe: Chris Rossi - Facilitator Nan Stolzenburg and Don Meltz

**Present:** Mike Welshko, Bob Tackabury, Sr., John Basher, Adam Schoonmaker, Debby Zahn, Kurt Reymers, John Pumilio, John Schell, Joyce Nevison

**Vision Statement and Goals** - The group considered the overall Vision Statement for the Town and the economic and environmental goal statements, in terms of all types of energy development (from sustainable to HVHF and industrial wind). The group agreed that energy was relevant to these topics, and that the relationship between these goals and energy should be better defined.

- examine where energy comes from and its local use in homes and businesses
  - local energy development should give direct benefit to community through local use of that energy, when possible
  - concerns were raised over state, national, global impacts of our local energy development
- all energy sources need to be sustainable = safe, reliable, affordable
  - emphasize responsible energy development ensuring minimal negative impacts to community and environment
  - long term effects and maintenance need to be considered

Add 'while minimizing negative impacts' to statements  
Add water as a resource for renewable energy (micro-hydro)  
Add statement about 'responsible' energy development  
Add to plan to keep local and self-sustaining.

**Sustainable Energy** – The group listed a variety of sustainable energy sources beyond those noted on the survey that could be used in the TOH:

- Bio-mass (waste wood, switch grass)
- Wind
- Solar PV and Solar Thermal
- Micro-hydro
- Geothermal

All of these sustainable options, as with more industrialized energy sources (large wind, HVHF) need to be considered in terms of impacts on community. Location has to be carefully considered to minimize negative impacts on neighbors. This can be an area of contention between a landowner's right to develop their land and preserving quality of life for neighbors. Some of the participants favored town regulations to minimize negative impacts on neighbors and community.

### What can the Town do?

- The TOH needs to consider the social/community aspects of energy development, rather than just financial or technical
  - The TOH should maintain transparency in any energy related projects or conversation, and work with the community.

- The Town of Madison was sited as a cautionary tale for its work on the recent wind project, which divided the community.

**Energy Efficiency for the TOH:** Conservation should be first step in town energy policy. How do we achieve that goal:

- The TOH should actively engage in pursuing energy efficiency in its operations, and they should promote information and opportunities to the community:
  - Make sure all municipal buildings are energy efficient
  - Publicize State initiatives for businesses and homeowners
    - Energy Star, NYSERTA, etc.
  - Revise Town building codes to require or reward energy efficiencies in all remodeling and new construction
  - Create co-operative purchasing opportunities for items such as insulation, windows, and solar equipment
  - Work on cost of water use, especially for farmers
  - find and promote public transportation options for community
  - Educate the community on the benefits of energy efficiency, and programs available
    - economic incentives
    - more recycling
    - don't plow and use road trucks unless really needed in winter
    - compost

**Energy Development Negatives:** The groups discussed the downside of energy development in general, although HVHF and Wind were sometimes singled out.

- Size & safety of infrastructure (windmills)
- up-front costs, (Village not qualified for NYSERDA Funding)
- social divisions in community (for and against projects)
- small renewables can't address entire energy need
- pollution – noise, air, water - environmental damage
- what happens when things go wrong – disaster response and mitigation, liability, remediation, who deals with it, are we prepared for when something goes wrong
  - cost of local production converted to local use
  - rising cost of electricity
  - impacts on town infrastructure
  - impacts on character of community – where do we live, how it looks
  - loss of property value and impact on tax base
  - boom and bust cycles
  - debris left after development
  - green house gas production

**Energy Development Positives:** The groups discussed the upside of energy development in general, although HVHF was sometimes singled out.

- local production can add to local control and socially responsible development
- economic benefits and jobs
- new sources of energy can preserve the community
- creating new infrastructure can benefit economy
- resiliency and long range stability could come with the development of renewables

**Local production:** The group was asked if the local aspect of production and use was key to making different types of energy development more acceptable. It was agreed that the local control aspect was very important, and that any risk engendered by energy development needed to be offset by benefit to the community. If there is no local benefit then the risks may be too great.

- The Town can't control where all of the energy it might generate goes – eg. Locally produced gas may or not be used in the Village, as we may not have control over that.
- The Town can increase sustainability through the use of diverse sustainable projects and conservation.
- Can the Town create an energy co-op like the Village electric utility?
- Opportunities to work with Colgate University on offsetting their carbon footprint locally (Solar hot water for farms, bio-mass), and Morrisville University (green energy initiatives)

**Leveraging positives against negatives:** The meeting ended with a discussion about how to reconcile the positives and negatives expressed. Once again local regulation was discussed, with some expressing concern over loss of landowner's rights to develop their land. Many in the group agreed that the Town should regulate energy development, but in a way that allowed development when it was respectful of the community. (The local landowners' coalition could be a good resource for this.)

We won't get rid of reliance of energy use. Anything to incentivize energy efficiency coupled with smaller renewable systems. Keep process open and transparent. Regulation for responsible development. Must be a compromise to allow development but in a way that doesn't damage others. Regulate infrastructure (pipelines, compressor station, areas where they can go, etc.) Town has responsibility in education to help people understand. Don't want arbitrary regulations, but balanced. It was suggested that the Town be open and transparent in all energy matters that they work with other communities, and educate the public on the issues.

Another suggestion was to have a regional energy group to purchase a block of energy – buy in bulk like a co-op idea.

Buy local and spend local has real economic benefits. Biomass has to be a local product. Do a better job of managing forests for better timber, wildlife, and carbon sequestration. There was a discussion of how Colgate is committed to carbon neutrality. Suggested that this be added as a strategy – to work with Colgate on this effort and that partnership could help Colgate get carbon credits as well as invest in local projects that benefit the local community. See Oberlin, Ohio that looked at farmland, energy, building LEED requirements as a model to look at.

## Ag Focus Group – Darrell Griff Scribe

-introductions

-background

Q. 1- response to the Ag. visioning statement?

-diversity key to our community

- niche and value added are important

- "open space" What does it mean to ag.? There needs to be more explanation about what this means. How are we going to do this?

-young farmers, tough to start up, cost of land. Concerns How do new farmers acquire land for farming?

-sustainable – likes have the word 'sustainable' in the vision, likes to see reference to local too.

Group consensus: Change "open space" to "ag. uses"...or maintaining land for ag uses.

Q. 2-Biggest issue facing ag. in Town of Hamilton?

-How can a big institution ( college,hospital,school) support local farms? They have a big economic impact. Food service provider puts barriers to using local food.

- supply issues – there is need for steady supply. And reconcile pricing. Have to get the price right.

- hard time to get into farming. Availability of land and cost of getting into farming is a barrier.

No problems if taxes are low and milk price high.

-Price vs Market tolerance. availability, consistent quality

-Taxes, No zoning, No restrictions – will help farmers get into farming

No grants on the local level

-Dairy stays up, taxes don't go up. Dairy farmers will be profitable.

-Just leave us alone – don't use local level money to pay for farm programs.

-Purchase of development rights to remain voluntary

-Windmills and Natural gas development will keep farms farming

- local government should not protect farmland. Voluntary PDR is OK as long as it is voluntary.

Our farmers are in it for the long haul. The purview of the Town is that they can't really influence farms as it is a regional issue. But generally have a supportive attitude and not get in the way.

Q. 3-Are there opportunities for non-dairy farms in the Town of Hamilton?

-Town has No control on creating opportunities.

Nan explained several programs being done by other towns.

Talked about+/- of zoning. briefly

Food Hub value added dairy – help facilitate this.

Facilitate local markets

Link consumers and producers

fewer dairy farms, more small farms is the trend

FFA is still really important. We need to inspire ag lifestyle to youth.

A Right to Farm Law would be good.

Don't want stricter zoning...lot sizes should be flexible.

Be wary of zoning changes that prevent small farmers from starting

Solar, wind and gas – allow on farms

Town shouldn't regulate natural resources.

Q. 4-How to start a farm?

-Farm transfer issues.

Q. 5-If selling your farm, what are your options?

- family development    downsize

Q. 6- 12:00 noon    vegetable farms    no comments

Role of Ag. class in the school.    important

Q. 7-Zoning, current issues

-no issues for mushroom farmers

-right to farm laws

-Nan explained some zoning, Ag. related issues, to push discussion.

-concern about zoning prohibiting the ability to purchase farms or farm land.

Talked about housing, not seeing development pressure.

Allow energy development in the town

Plan for change, climate change, market changes, weather changes in other parts of the world/country will effect local conditions, Adaptability.

Sustainable. What does it mean?

Town needs to be open to change, not restrictive.

Chris – don't assume things will be same in 20 years as now. There will be more changes related to climate change. Don't assume it will be same as now. Vision has to discuss this. Climate change will impact people that farm. Now is time to plan for it. Be more locally resilient. Markets need to be more local. People who can adapt to change will do OK. How can we facilitate adaptation to this change?

Needs to be adaptation – goes to term of 'sustainable' in vision statement.

Spell out in plan more about sustainable...ie ..sustainable in the face of what? Define term more explicitly. They suggested it means 'don't build economy on non-renewable resource', or 'local resiliency and local economy to be isolated from turbulence elsewhere'. There needs to be ideas on HOW we can be sustainable – add real actionable items to do this.

Town might be increased in importance to offer sustainability actions.

Town shouldn't get in the way to stop people from adapting in a reasonable way.

12:30 PM Talked about comp. planning process, possible time frame.

discussion review by group

Town cannot and should not be involved in Ag. zoning or promotion. Should be done by county, state, and country.

## HOUSING FOCUS GROUP

March 19, 2014; 8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Facilitator: Nan Stolzenburg

Scribe: Peter Darby

### **Present:**

Sue Martin, Tracie Debisschop, Becky Hubler, Ariel Sherry, Or Oren, Ed Vantine, Sami Martinez, Bruce Ward, Sharon Polansky, Debbie Kliman

Nan reviewed the results of the survey: the problems identified and solutions supported. There were no additional suggestions from the group.

**Comments on the vision statement:** there was general agreement that the issue of diversity needed to be added. There was also concern that the statement was too village centric and that it was too generic, not Hamilton specific enough.

Nan asked that we go around the room and each describe one characteristic of housing in the town of Hamilton.

Sue: lack of diversity.

Tracie: exorbitant property taxes.

Becky: higher housing costs than surrounding areas.

Ariel: tension between students and surrounding community.

Or: Hamilton a high priced and stable bubble compared to surrounding areas.

Ed: unique because of Colgate, resulting in higher costs. High taxes are appropriate for the level of services received.

Sami: agreed services justified high taxes.

Bruce: old housing stock in need of upgrade. Also need more available.

Sharron: static, lack of suitable options for new residents and downsizing.

Debbie: lack of diversity and high cost.

Ed: inability to bring a senior housing community to fruition and the problem that there is no room in the village for such a development.

Bruce: lack of parking for additional residents

### **Affordability:**

- Or and Tracie both said that when you add together the purchase cost, the cost of renovations, energy efficiency upgrade, taxes, utilities and insurance that the current housing stock in Hamilton is out of reach for most people. Nan said the federal definition of affordable is 30% of income is spent on housing.
- Sue said that the local banks have programs to help to make mortgages more affordable. Some of these programs are specific to the Hamilton area. Sharon said Colgate has assistance programs for first time home buyers, but it doesn't seem to be enough to make a difference.
- Two segments that need lower costs are young professionals and seniors. We need to address the type of housing that is available.
- Town has issues with the student housing in the Village only at the borders closest to the Town.

- Impediments to developing housing outside the village:
- Lack of public transportation and city water and sewage limit the demand for housing outside Hamilton village.
- Bruce commented that developments close to the village could be served by an extension of the Bernie bus route. He also stated that we should move towards allowing more population density in the downtown because it is more energy efficient and as climate change advances that will become more imperative.
- Cost of construction is higher in Town but taxes are lower in Town.
- Sami said that future developments should try to achieve a mix of students, young families and seniors. Ariel agreed that there are benefits of multigenerational neighborhoods.

#### **Suggested solutions:**

- Sue- encourage diversity: town houses, condominiums, low maintenance housing. Smaller houses appropriate for downsizing would free up existing housing. Taxes are a concern.
- Or- There are too many levels of government. Perhaps the tax structure could be changed; seniors could be exempt from school taxes.
- *Look into shared services to decrease taxes. Also use shared space and shared taxes.*
- Sami- There is a waiting list for Madison Lane.
- Sharon- Attract businesses to add to tax base and feet on the street. Perhaps the addition of natural gas will make the Air Park more attractive.
- Tracie- Colgate could follow Dartmouth's example and put its dormitories on the tax role. We could look into a student tax like Boston.
- Peter- There may be examples of colleges that contribute more to their communities than Colgate, but there are not many. Caz College, for example, contributes \$500 a year to the fire department and does not make its athletic facilities available to the community.
- Debbie- Hamilton college does not offer Clinton the same level of support.
- Bruce- We could provide tax incentives for development. Living Communities was interested in developing a senior housing complex, but failed.
- Sue- Living communities failed because they couldn't get financing. That was because of the tight banking market at the time and because of family issues that hurt their credit.
- Nan- Are town houses acceptable in the town?
- Debbie- Would be more attractive with available public transportation. *Bus service is critical.*
- Or- Housing location that permits families to own only one car are more attractive.
- *Multi-family structures offer cost savings and efficiency of scale. This is the most likely scenario to be achievable.*
- Nan- Should the town change zoning to allow higher density?
- Bruce- Zoning is not the issue. We need a developer with cash.
- Sharon- Randy Ruttenberg, a developer from Cleveland, seems to have recognized potential in Hamilton that locals have not seen.
- Ed- We should encourage Colgate alums to retire here, although snow birds leave empty houses in the winter.
- Bruce- We should target the different demographics: young families, young retirees, downsizing retirees.
- Sharon- Consider "Habitat for Hamilton," a dedicated initiative to find funding for local housing development.
- Sami- Madison Lane doesn't meet income level requirements for aid.

- *There ought to be a mix of ages to promote diversity – shared housing that is intergenerational is needed. Put dense and diverse housing near the village boundary.*
- Nan- Sources of housing grants: HUD, Rural Development (USDA), Community Development Block Grants. There is now a consolidated funding application to the Regional Economic Development Councils.
- Bruce- NYSEERDA is another source of funding for energy efficient development.
- Nan- Do you have suggested locations for housing development?
- Ed- Bonny Hill?
  
- Sharon- Randy Ruttenberg saw potential not only in open space, but also in already built space.
- Tracie- Poolville
- Bruce- Randellsville Rd. and Armstrong Rd. area. 12B South does not offer attractive sites. Madison and Lebanon towns have better developable land near the village.
- Sharon- White Eagle is available and a beautiful setting.
- Becky- People are buying outside of the Hamilton School District because of lower costs.
- *Be more aggressive in finding developers – have incentives to attract buildings. Use materials done like the Hamilton initiative to market itself. Disseminate the document to advertise Hamilton as a place to build housing. Develop a housing program that aggressively promotes housing.*
- *Develop upscale housing for retirees. Or identify demographic groups you want to target programs to. Managed growth is important. Want to have growth in a manner consistent with Hamilton.*
- Nan asked if there was support for cluster development which preserved open space.
- Ed- Hamilton Village can sustain some growth but every idea meets objections.
- Debbie- Her previous home, Chads Ford, PA, was more open to town houses and cluster development there here.
- Or- Depends on the target demographic. Condominiums and cluster development seem better suited to young home buyers and seniors. Stand alone homes and homes out in the country more suitable to middle aged.
- Sami- We have single family houses on lots. We need alternatives: town houses, cluster development, senior housing, senior community.
- Debbie- More seniors seem to want to stay in their homes. We need to provide in home care services.
- Bruce- We need more multi-family housing
- Becky- We need housing in the \$115,000 - \$160,000 priced range.
- Sue- We are seeing more younger alums retiring here. They are thrilled with the down town, the friendliness of the community and openness and generosity of the college.
- Tracie- gentrification of the village is pushing up housing costs and pushing people out.
- Or- Home improvement grants need to be more generous.
- Peter- We have not mentioned ADUs, auxiliary dwelling units (granny flats).
- Tracie- That would open a can of worms and change the nature of the neighborhoods.
- *\$115,000 to \$160,000 is the price range for young families. Promote intergenerational housing program. Higher density living will be more important in the future due to climate change. Need to increase density some places to address sustainability. Home improvement grants have unrealistic cost reimbursement associated with them. They should be reviewed and made more proportional.*

## Conclusions

Most of the discussion centered on Hamilton Village and the surrounding area. There was consensus that the village needs more diverse housing, which could increase density: town houses, affordable, low maintenance housing, housing for downsizing seniors, housing to attract young active retirees. Zoning and regulations may have to be changed to facilitate growth. The periphery of the village would be more attractive with good public transportation and make it an acceptable alternative to walkable downtown. We should try to find a way to expand Madison Lane.

Public Workshop

Positive and Negative Features Identified

Categories	Negative Feature	Priority Stickers
Agriculture	Abandoned farms	4
Agriculture	Not a farming community	
Agriculture	Consolidation of farms - traffic, smell, environmental	1
Apathy	Indifference about involvement in community, feeling of powerlessness	
Apathy	Lack of participation (in this meeting)	
Apathy	No one from Colgate representing Colgate	
Apathy	Young people not involved	1
Apathy	People in Madison, e.g., don't participate	
Business	Decline of local retail	
Business	No major stores, have to drive	
Business	Non-trendy businesses not accepted	1
Business	No regular business (i.e. grocery store)	
Business	There's not a place to buy a loaf of bread, or pair of underwear, or get a job, or keep people in the community	
Business	Limited business development opportunities	2
Business	Loss of locally owned business	1
Colgate conflicts	Colgate weekends	
Colgate conflicts	Division between Colgate and village, and rest of town	3
Colgate conflicts	Colgate plans separate from municipality. Municipality is reactive	1
Colgate conflicts	Student rentals	1
Colgate conflicts	Colgate vs. non-Colgate. Social polarization	3
Colgate conflicts	Colgate people and visitors overwhelm local culture; town seems like tourist attraction.	
Community Character	Hate mess on Sunday mornings in village of Hamilton - trash	1
Community Character	Abandoned/run down housing stock in bad shape	1
Community Character	Loss of former Town/Village	
Community Character	Loss of rural character	
Economic Divisions	Discrepancy of income	
Economic Divisions	High cost of living, economic disparity	2
Economic Divisions	Lack of good jobs	1
Economic Divisions	People coming in and paying huge prices for property and local people not being able to afford it	

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Negative Feature</b>	<b>Priority Stickers</b>
Economic Divisions	Lack of jobs	2
Economic Divisions	Lack of financial resources	1
Economic Divisions	Poverty level	1
Economic Divisions	High housing cost in Village	
Land uses	Open-pit gravel mine	1
Land uses	No places for teenagers to play	
Land uses	There is no good social place for adults and seniors	1
Land uses	No town park	
Land uses	Hamilton Village at border of Madison shopping	1
Land uses	Land fragmentation	
Land uses	Sprawl	2
Land uses	Deer population problem - Lyme disease	1
Local Services	Village has police, Town has only Sheriff. More local policing for immediate response	1
Local Services	Different jurisdictions, governments, in regard to services and cooperation	2
Local Services	Lack of fire protection	1
Local Services	Burden of paying for services falls on lowest rung (County cuts - Town costs)	2
Regulations	Over-regulation of farms - state level	1
Regulations	Difficult to build on existing flag lots due to zoning requirements	4
Regulations	Lack of oversight of business signs in village	
Regulations	Too much zoning	
Regulations	Too much local government	
Regulations	There hasn't been a plan, individuals and entities have influenced developments	1
Seniors	Lack of senior housing	1
Seniors	Insufficient senior houses	2
Seniors	Lack of senior housing	1
Social Divisions	Other towns despise Hamilton, stigma attached to Hamilton	
Social Divisions	Territorial divisions, local and regional. Example: In from Earlville	3
Social Divisions	Negative attitudes that shut down meaningful dialogue	2
Social Divisions	Rural insulation - young people move away	
Social Divisions	Perception of liberal college people vs. conservative outlying areas	3
Social Divisions	Concentrate too much on Colgate's importance rather than local landowners	1
Social Divisions	Perception of Village and Colgate telling people how to live in country	1

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Negative Feature</b>	<b>Priority Stickers</b>
Social Divisions	Village has say over town issues, but town has no say in Village issues	2
Social Divisions	Intolerance	
Social Divisions	Town people have less influence over village than village has over town	2
Social Divisions	Village and town division	3
Social Divisions	Colgate and town division	2
Social Divisions	Colgate controlling too much - daycare, town, school, deer(?), Village Board	3
Social Divisions	Contentious issues, i.e. natural gas	1
Social Divisions	Colgate people live out of town	1
Taxes	Tax assessment - last one by Maxwell, methodology/approach done badly. Used computer model/pictures, but not visits on site.	
Taxes	Dual taxation - village tax and town tax	
Taxes	Tax exempt property puts burden on citizens - bringing up taxes to pay for services	1
Taxes	High taxes	2
Taxes	College not paying taxes	1
Taxes	Colgate not paying enough taxes	1
Taxes	Colgate overpowers the community with tax-free property. Payment in lieu of taxes is not enough	4
Taxes	High taxes - school	
Transportation	Parking in the Village	
Transportation	12B intersection	1
Transportation	No public transport	1
Transportation	Not enough sidewalks	

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Positive Feature</b>	<b>Priority Stickers</b>
Access to businesses, daily needs	Available hardware and farm supply	1
Access to businesses, daily needs	Food, restaurants, diverse	
Access to businesses, daily needs	Hospital and health care	
Access to businesses, daily needs	Easy parking	
Access to businesses, daily needs	Hospital, fire, SOMAC	3
Access to businesses, daily needs	Walkability	
Access to businesses, daily needs	Senior housing is affordable	
Activities	Free entertainment - Colgate, bookstore, etc. - always something to do	1
Activities	Multi-generational activities	1
Activities	Lots to do in the village - Farmer's market, LLP	
Activities	Lots to do - recreational, cultural, educational, sports	1
Activities	Love outdoor activities - hike/trails	
Activities	Children's activities	
Aesthetics	Beauty, scenery	2
Aesthetics	Classiness, no ghetto	
Aesthetics	Open Space	3
Aesthetics	Historic built landscape	2
Aesthetics	Highly productive and beautiful land	1
Aesthetics	Beauty of township	
Aesthetics	Green open space	1
Aesthetics	Beauty of farms	1
Aesthetics	Beautiful town and village	
Aesthetics	Beauty of environment	2
Aesthetics	Town centers separated by open space	2
Agriculture	Farmer's market	2
Agriculture	Agriculture	1
Agriculture	Farmer's market's and local foods movement	1
Agriculture	Farmer's markets - Community center and ag development tool	2
Agriculture	Agriculture	1
Agriculture	Right to farm	2
Businesses	Business appeal	
Businesses	High quality small businesses	
Businesses	Beer - local brewery	

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Positive Feature</b>	<b>Priority Stickers</b>
Colgate	Presence of Colgate	
Colgate	Colgate resources	2
Colgate	Being a college town	
Colgate	College that is open to the public	2
Community	Friendliness	
Community	Friendly small-town, everyone knows your name	2
Community	Rural and small compatibility, amicability	
Community	Neighborliness	1
Community	Strong sense of community	
Community	Able to attract families back to the town	
Community	Strong community bonds - strong community sense and support	1
Community	Good volunteer ethic	1
Community	Community pride	
Community	Community has high aspirations and standards	1
Community	Friendly community	
Community	Friendly people	
Community	Easy place to live	
Community	Don't need to worry about factors of other places	
Community	Kids can develop a sense of independence at a younger age	
Community	Sense of community	2
Community	Friendliness	
Community	Engaged community	
Community	New life comes into the town	1
Cultural	Entertainment	
Cultural	Strong cultural offerings - music, art, food, theater	1
Cultural	Cultural activity and diversity	3
Diversity	Variety of living situations, single family houses to town houses, apartments	1
Diversity	Diverse population	
Diversity	Diverse community as a small rural town	1
Diversity	Diversity of the town people	
Diversity	Young people in the area	
Diversity	Diversity of people and trades	
Environment	Healthy environment and change of climate	2
Environment	See animals, natural wildlife	1
Environment	Great environment - Clean air, open land	
Environment	Clean environment, air, water	1
Infrastructure	Maintain and improve infrastructure in Village	
Infrastructure	Good infrastructure	
Local government	Progressive government	

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Positive Feature</b>	<b>Priority Stickers</b>
Local government	Ability to talk to local officials	
Local government	Partnership of town, village, Colgate	1
Local government	Road maintenance well done.	1
Local government	Good clear Roads in the winter - Highway department	
Local government	Very efficient and accessible town government	
Local government	The best town roads	2
Local government	Town and county services and roads are good	1
Local government	It's good to know the people on the town board, and are able to voice opinions; small accessible government	2
Local government	It's good to know that town and village government minutes are now accessible	
Local government	Good emergency services	2
Local government	Highways well maintained	2
Local government	A place where people can affect change	
Local government	Healthy mix of conservative and liberal-minded people	
Peacefulness	Tranquility, serenity	
Peacefulness	Peaceful/quiet area	
Peacefulness	Comfortable place to live	1
Rural, small-town	Rural nature	2
Rural, small-town	Lack of Big-box stores	
Rural, small-town	Hamlets, compactness	
Rural, small-town	Rural character	1
Rural, small-town	Low development - rural open lands	
Rural, small-town	Small town	
Safety	Safe	2
Safety	Lack of crime	1
Safety	Low crime	1
Safety	Secure, safe	2
Safety	Safety	
Safety	Low crime rate	3
Safety	Safety	2
Schools	Good school system	1
Schools	Class D school	
Schools	Good school districts	
Schools	Highly rated school	
Schools	Local school, should not be merged	3
Schools	Great schools	

## Public Workshop - Vision Statements

<b>Vision Element</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Priority Stickers Received</b>
Agriculture	Hamilton has a youthful, vital ag base with local farms successfully direct marketing their products. Hamilton supports local agriculture. If you want to farm you can, and the community supports your right to farm. Strong agricultural presence	12
Gas	Gas drilling should be allowed if water wells and land are protected	10
Economic	Hamilton has a thriving business community with a combination of large name stores, value added agricultural-businesses, green energy ventures, and other entrepreneurial possibilities. Town should promote clean businesses that provide jobs. We have a healthy business community in and out. Welcoming, supportive, thriving business environment. We have a variety of small businesses that provide jobs	9
Housing	Encourage varied housing options. We have affordable quality housing. Sufficient, affordable and quality housing and senior housing/assisted living opportunities. Integrated ages and income levels	8
Energy	Hamilton has become a model community for self-sufficient energy which encompasses types of energy. District energy from renewable sources that is affordable and builds economic resiliency	6
Culture	Hamilton is a regional center for arts and culture with a deep and diverse creative community	4
Environment	Maintain high quality rural and village environments. Maintain our natural beauty	4
Quality of life	Hamilton is an affordable, culturally rich, green town with a friendly, caring, community with a growing population of younger people. It is a thriving community with strong schools and services. Preserve agricultural and environmental integrity of the rural landscape	4
Recreation	Hamilton has an accessible trail system and outdoor recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities. Increase opportunities for recreation. We have expanded outdoor recreation (such as ATV's). Abundance of cultural, athletic, educational and social activities for kids and adults	4
Bike/Walk Paths	Citizens can safely walk/bike anywhere	3
Colgate Town/Gown	Colgate is more sensitive and communicative	3
School	Stay same, do not combine. We have excellent quality schools. We have a good local school with a variety of opportunities	3

Vision Element	Direction	Priority Stickers Received
Integration	Hamiltonians provide harmony/unity through mutually supported farms, businesses and education. A place in the township for everybody	2
Less Local Government	Small, lean local government	1
Politics	Compromise the majority can live with	1
Senior Housing	Should be a private company and not government funded	1
Town Services	Hamilton has an efficient, friendly, financially solvent town government that works to ensure important services such as diverse housing needs and townwide public transportation	1
Community	Engaged community where people can make a difference. Safe, quiet and friendly	
Sameness	Keep the same except with the addition of a grocery store	

**Full List of Topics Included in Visioning (Number indicates # of tables that topic was raised at)**

- Agriculture (5)
- Balanced Economic Growth
- Bike/Hike Paths
- Business (2)
- Colgate/ Town-Gown
- Community
- Community Involvement
- Culture
- Economic
- Energy (3)
- Environment (2)
- Gas
- Government
- Housing (2)
- Integration/Social Diversity (2)
- Land Use
- Less Government
- Politics
- Quality of life (2)
- Recreation and Activities (5)
- Sameness
- Schools (3)
- Senior Housing
- Social
- Town Services
- Village/Hamlet Development

## Individual Vision Statements from Post-It Notes

### Agriculture (5)

If you want to farm you can farm and if you don't want to smell manure or hear tractors you don't; beautiful landscapes; maintain agricultural character; organic family farms; rural spaces preserved; contiguous stretches of healthy, well-managed forest lands; Farms active some small, some large; local farms; rural; many small farms engaged in different types of farming; thriving farms; preserve remaining farms; little development in rural parts of town except new, renovated healthy farms; more local farms are successfully direct marketing their products; rural agriculture; the average age of the farmer in town has dropped to 45 years

### Balanced Economic Growth

Mix of village, farms, and undeveloped green space; jobs available at clean businesses, farms and others; develop clean industries

### Bike/Hike Paths

Bike paths; sidewalks in hamlet; bike and walk lanes; drivers care about walkers and bikers; roads wider with walking and biking spaces.

### Business (2)

More local businesses not tied to Colgate; municipalities keeping up with growth; there is adequate shopping for daily essentials in the town; wind and natural gas resources are used; thriving business in town and outside of town; great shopping with local, unique artists; good jobs; good variety of small businesses; rural poverty greatly decreased

### Colgate/ Town-Gown

#### Community

Low crime; local sports teams brought back; the hospital is offering fuller services including maternity; people are glad to have a fine college here; HCS is now thriving in a consolidated school district; the tensions between Village and rural communities have resolved; The college has survived without losing business to computerized learning; community involvement in governance and decision making

#### Culture

Educational and cultural center; cultural diversity; tourism and recreation; deep and diverse local arts

#### Economic

Major stores include target, trader joes, Wegmans, shoes, skis, bikes, smartsocs, etc; Hamilton has exciting new businesses based on valued added agriculture, alternatives energy and tourism

#### Energy (3)

District energy from renewable sources (bio-digesters); Natural gas development and windmills; Renewable energy widespread; green energy; energy self-sufficient; no fossil fuel production

#### Environment (2)

The town has beautifully restored hamlet and villages; keep the beauty of the country; clean environment; the town is a beautiful, natural, rural environment with clean air and water; community working together; low development; maintenance of farm lands and woods; carbon neutrality; conservation development; beautiful

#### Gas

If you want to drill for natural gas you can and if you don't want your well or land contaminated, it isn't;

## Government

Small government; combined village and town offices; affordable taxes; improved tax structure; A place where you can live your life without interference from local government; less restrictive zoning

## Housing (2)

Affordable housing for young families; senior housing and assisted living facilities; affordable housing in village and hamlet centers; Encourage varied housing options; all Colgate students live on campus; ages integrated; adequate senior housing for all income levels and variety of choices

## Integration/Social Diversity (2)

Harmonious; unity between all citizens; green space; towns people use of college facilities; preservation of the landscape; lots of small and local businesses and artists; mutually reinforcing local businesses and agriculture; businesses, farms and residences are integrated; very good planning of building; light industry integrating with local agriculture

## Land Use

There is adequate moderate pricing housing for young adults and their families; less low income rental properties; there is adequate housing for seniors who cannot qualify for Madison Lane; land use determined by owner

## Less Government

## Politics

## Quality of life (2)

Appearance – where the outward appearance downtown is fresh, painted, swept and all historic buildings kept up; physically attractive; garden group that does more with business gardens in front of new, clean laundry mat, etc; green; cultural; cooperative; friendly and caring; cost of living (taxes, cost of services, transportation, medical care that allows citizens to live comfortably in their homes; the percent of young people between 25 and 45 has increased by 20% in the last 10 years; Very low crime rate; safe; quiet

## Recreation and Activities (5)

I can ride to Binghamton or Utica by bike on rail bed; recreational areas to swim, bike, walk, explore; cultural, athletic, educational opportunities available for adults and kids; abundance of activities; ATV and snowmobiling trails for families; ATV and UTV allowed on secondary roads; ATV and snowmobiling; walkable neighborhoods, bike lanes in village and town; walking trails; bike paths next to roads wherever in town; Hamilton has a system of hiking and biking trails both on existing roads and on the former railroad bed; activities and facilities to meet recreational interests for all ages and physical conditions are available

## Sameness

Wouldn't mind it being like it is now with the addition of a grocery store

## Schools (3)

Excellent schools; active, thriving school district; Successful school system for townies and profs kids alike; HCS stays in Hamilton, financial issues improved and improving; school system; many learning opportunities; educational opportunities for all ages

## Senior Housing

Ideal elder care housing and nursing home care as in Eden idea

## Social - friendly

## Town Services

Hamilton government services have consolidated and the tax load on all tax payers is reduced; transportation is available to travel to other communities; town is solvent financially; senior housing and park surrounding; technologically current; housing to meet demographics of community, senior, mixed income, extended stay, assisted living, renter, owner, multi-family.

### Village/Hamlet Development

Attractive area for business development; economically thriving; dense village/hamlet centers; small family owned and local businesses; businesses, residences and entertainment in village and hamlet centers; pedestrian/bike communities

## Review of Zoning Law

May 2014, Submitted by Town Consultant Nan Stolzenburg, AICP CEP

The Town of Hamilton Zoning Law was reviewed to analyze consistency between the updated Comprehensive Plan vision and goals, and the likely outcome of the zoning requirements “at build-out”. This review identifies areas where the Town can consider making changes to zoning requirements in a way that will help the Town implement the vision and goals better. The review included the text, map, and schedule of uses.

The review also includes several other items that were noted as potentially problematic due to language or lack of clarity even though these do not necessarily relate to vision and goals. I felt they may be helpful to include in the plan in a general “update zoning to clarify” recommendation.

Overall, the zoning is in relatively good shape. The purpose statements, which are very important, do a good job reflecting the updated vision and goals for the town. This is a very good place to start and the purpose statements are a critical part of the zoning. In many respects, the zoning is very consistent with ‘farm-friendly’ elements that are usually recommended. I have several broad concerns related to allowable density of residential development, to potentially not being fine-tuned to reflect natural resource patterns as well as it could, and to the use schedule. See below for more on these.

There are a few items that should be considered however, and these are noted below – one notably that we will discuss later is the density of development issues.

The procedures outlined in the zoning law are in very good shape and seem to be up-to-date with State requirements, especially for site plan and special use permits and variances. That was great seeing them in such good shape procedurally.

The following comments are offered for your consideration. These are not in any kind of priority order – most follow the order of the zoning and I commented as I read. This audit can be used as a guide to develop more detailed recommendations for the plan.

1. The acronyms used in the text at 4.1-1 for Residential District says ‘AB’ instead of ‘RD’.
2. The text mentions that there are overlay districts included on map sheets, but no maps have been located yet and the rest of the law does not mention or address these overlay districts in anyway. Overlays are beneficial to address resource-based needs in zoning. I will be offering you some recommendations on ones to be discussed in the Committee if we can’t find the ones referred to in the law.
3. The goal set for the Ag Res District (ARD) is quite strong and stated to be to allow for a lower density than the RD district. However, the residential density for this district is the same as RD – that being 1 dwelling per acre. This district further requires a farm to have 5 acres. I see two issues with this: The development standards do not appear to distinguish between the RD and ARD as stated in the zoning. First, both have a residential density of 1 acre. A 1 acre lot is not what I would consider low density, and it certainly is not ‘lower’ than that in the RD district. I understand the issues related to lowering the density in terms of landowner’s land values. However, if the Town wants to implement its goals for low density, I do not think a 1-acre rule is

the correct way to go. I will be offering several suggestions for Committee discussion on this one.

Further, a 1 acre lot density, without other kind of expectation for siting of that new lot through use of clustering or conservation subdivisions means that at full-build out, when all parcels that could be developed are, would not likely result in either farms or open space left. If you consider all the buildable acreage in town being actually built on as allowed then the zoning sets the potential for one dwelling every acre. That seems inconsistent with the vision and goals of the Town.

Secondly, the way I see it worded, the zoning requires 5 acres for a farm. Which means that anything less than 5 acres can't be a farm in the eyes of the zoning. This is problematic in several ways. Setting an acreage for defining a farm is not what I would consider farm-friendly. Nor is it consistent with NYS Agriculture and Markets which does not have any acreage associated with what a farm operation is. Note that Ag and Markets does have an acreage for what type of farm is eligible for receive an ag assessment, but not for being considered a farm.

Also, the zoning does not specifically define 'farm'. It does define 'agriculture' and that definition does not include any acreage requirement for something to be considered ag. 'Farm' should be defined at the very least. I do not recommend that the Town place any acreage requirement on a farm however. The trend in NY is clear – there are many more 'small' farms. These are often start-ups, or niche farms that can operate on small acreages. I am just not sure what requiring 5 acres does for you or how it helps you meet the stated goal of this district.

4. The ARD also requires front, rear, and side yard setbacks for farms. It is important to note that these zoning standards may be inconsistent with the NYS Agriculture and Markets standards for farms located in NYS Agriculture Districts. The Department of Ag and Markets' has overturned many such setbacks as being too restrictive upon the farm operation. Outside the NYS Ag District, these setbacks are fine if that is what you want, but you may want to re-consider the need to regulate farm operations in that way within the NYS Ag District. Such setbacks are generally seen as not being farm-friendly, especially in a zoning district whose major purpose is to promote farms.

I also have concerns about how the lot and building coverage requirements are used. Many farms have a good portion of their land covered in barns, greenhouses, etc. What if you had a greenhouse operation that had 20 acres? Under the current rules, the farmer would only be able to have greenhouses cover 4 acres. That seems very restrictive to me. In the NYS Ag District, that would most likely be seen as unreasonable regulation of a farm and overturned.

Many of the other sections relating to Ag Buffers, Ag Data Statement, Ag Disclosure – etc. are great. It is terrific to see these already included in the law. Good job on that!

Related to other dimensions required for new development, the zoning allows for both two- and multi-family dwellings, but at the same density as single family houses. That means that multi-family dwellings must have 1 acre for each dwelling unit. Given the discussions in the housing focus group, such a requirement may prevent development of the kind of housing you want. Of

course, you need larger parcels for multi-families, which is appropriate, but there are no other regulations that address the density of units within the structure, how many structures may be allowed, size limitations of buildings, or other standards for parking, lighting, etc. that are important with multi-family development. I suggest you add a multi-family housing section that outlines the specific requirements for a multi-family dwelling. Further, you may want to discuss how many dwelling units are allowed in any given multi-family structure.

5. Section 5.6 could be strengthened to incorporate new methodologies related to stormwater runoff, including requiring use of low impact designs (LID). These are advocated by DEC and are now considered best management practices for stormwater. Consider including low impact development standards to reduce stormwater impacts.
6. Section 5.8 discusses the need to have a special use permit to develop on slopes >15%. This is a good practice and I am glad to see that in there. However, are all slopes equally developable? What about slopes >30% or 35%? These exist in Town. Are these very steep locations similarly suitable for development? I would say that building on a 15% slope is very different than a 25% slope. Given there are many negative impacts associated with hillside development such as erosion, changes in runoff, removal of microhabitats, changes in the character of the area, etc, does the Town want to consider prohibiting or limiting development on such excessive slopes?
7. Section 5.10-3 (Signs). The law allows for signs up to 40 square feet in size. These are large signs indeed. I usually recommend no more than 24 square feet – especially in a community concerned about its community character. Sign design and size have very large impacts on streetscapes and community character and you might want to consider reducing the allowable sign size. Many communities are reducing both sign size and sign height (or requiring ground mounted signs instead of on poles) to address the visual impact of signs. Also, the sign section does not address sign design. Often communities make the sign size smaller, and then offer an incentive to allow for a bigger sign if certain design features are included (such as being externally lighted). Also, the new signs out there are all the LED signs. Your section does not address these types of signs at all. I recommend some updating to the sign section.
8. 6.2.1 (B) – Ag Disclosure – this is great that it is in here. The Ag Disclosure Notice is required via NYS AML 25-aa for any project adjacent to OR WITHIN 500 feet of a farm operation located in a NYS Ag District. This section only requires the disclosure notice when it is abutting a farm operation. I recommend this section be amended to use the language consistent with NYS AML 25-aa.
9. 6.2.3 – Ag Data Statement. Again, it is great that this is in here. You might want to be sure that the PB and ZBA use the ag data statement to identify and notify farm landowners about a proposed development project. It is not enough to just collect the ag data statement. What you want is for the PB and ZBA to use it to help those adjacent farmers become aware of a project that may impact their farm.
10. Section 6.3 – CAFO's. This regulates Concentrated Agricultural Feeding Operations. It requires any CAFO to get a Special Permit and Site Plan. This would apply to new farms, not existing farms, although that is not clear how it is to be applied. NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets has a guidance document for Towns on how to deal with CAFO's that are in the NYS Ag District. Overall, the Department does not like to see farms require any kind of special use or site plan review permit. However, related to CAFO's, their decision has been that it is not unreasonable to require special permits and site reviews PROVIDED the local requirements do

not exceed the DEC CAFO ones. In reading the text of this section, I am concerned that what you have is NOT consistent though. First, new CAFO rules will be in place on July 1, 2014. You will need to review those new rules to make sure that your definition of CAFO matches the one used by DEC. Also, the DEC CAFO rules do not require setbacks from property lines (only water-related features). Yes the Town requires a 400 foot setback. I have put in a call to DEC to confirm this, but I think that is a local regulation that exceeds State requirements and thus it is not consistent. It would be better to just mirror the DEC rules. Further, not all CAFO's require discharge permits so your requirement that the CAFO requires a discharge permit from the State may not be accurate. Again, it is probably just better to reference in the zoning that all DEC CAFO rules must be met so as not to run into any problem. (Note that Ag and Markets does not cover how you regulate farms outside the NYS Ag District so if you want a 400-foot setback you can require it there.)

11. Section 6.5.1 – Mining. The law defines a mine to be one that would also require a DEC Mining Permit. You should check with your town attorney to determine if this zoning section is consistent with the NYS Mining Reclamation Act. From my experience, Hamilton's zoning regulates areas related to mines that are not in the purview of the Town, but are instead regulated via the NYS Mining Permit. This one is very important to get it right as there are lots of lawsuits related to mines and what a local community can regulate and what it can't.
12. Article 7 – Floodplains. The floodplain section does not meet typical FEMA/DEC standards for floodplains. While you do not have many floodplains in Town, you do have some, and it might be a good idea to include in the plan a recommendation to review recommended floodplain requirements and then update the zoning law to be consistent with that.
13. Note that some places refer to the ZBA as issuing the special permit, and in others, it is the Planning Board. In particular, Section 2-3.3 and 5.1.1-4 refers to the ZBA. Just a housekeeping item that should be checked on.
14. Article 9 – Site Plan. One of the easiest ways to ensure that the goals of the Town are met is to have a comprehensive site plan review process. Site plan is required for most commercial building. In general, this is in good shape. However, I would recommend adding to the site plan checklist to ensure applications provide data on their plans and narratives to include identification of wetlands, steep slopes, and other environmental features. I also recommend that the site plan submittal include ag related data such as if the parcel is in the NYS Ag District, has prime or statewide soils, or on a parcel that has received an Ag Assessment. This will help the Planning Board determine if there are any impacts to surrounding agriculture. Other items that are not on the checklist now, but that if added, could help the PB review the proposal include soil and erosion plans, identification of surrounding landowners, and elevation and façade plans. Elevation and façade plans offer visual tools to help the PB evaluate the design of the structure. Also, it would be beneficial to also give the PB authority to ask for a traffic impact analysis and a visual impact analysis, if it was deemed important.
15. Section 9.3.6 – The site plan process currently does not require a public hearing – it is at the discretion of the PB. While this approach is consistent with state law, I think that holding a public hearing is always a good idea. I recommend you change this to require a public hearing.
16. The zoning does not refer to or have a section on escrow accounts. Escrow accounts are used to fund the technical review of the proposal and assist the PB through a review. The law does indicate that any such expenses will be borne by the applicant, but it is always good practice to

say 'how' that will be done. A section on setting up and funding escrow accounts before the PB reviews an application would be helpful. Perhaps you have another local law that already does this? It is sometimes a stand-alone local law.

17. There is a slight conflict between the languages used in the text for home occupations: The text refers to minimal and moderate impact home occupations but the definitions section calls them minimal and non-minimal. This should be fixed.
18. Comments on Schedule of Uses:
  - a. You prohibit adult uses in all zoning districts. If you were ever sued over this, it would probably not stand. You can't prohibit them everywhere. This is a free speech item, not a zoning item.
  - b. You allow for 'wind power equipment', but that is not defined anywhere. Do you mean wind power facility, commercial? It is unclear from the use table whether commercial wind facilities are allowed. As it is now, they are not included in the table and thus, would be considered prohibited. Is that what the Town meant? Also, there is no line for personal use of wind towers so these are potentially prohibited too. I think the section that regulates wind turbines is fine, but there is not consistency in the Use Table. How did the town want to deal with these uses?
  - c. The following definitions of uses allowed as per the Table are missing from the definition section:
    - i. Mobile dwelling on individual lot
    - ii. Home occupation - moderate impact (see above comment)
    - iii. Agriculture – farm – Agriculture is defined, but farm is not. What do you mean by this?
    - iv. Airport – commercial
    - v. Manufacturing
    - vi. Storage facility (indoor and outdoor)
    - vii. Trucking terminal
    - viii. Warehouse
    - ix. Wind power equipment (see above)
19. Related to the use table overall, I note that most of the business uses are allowed with a special permit in all locations of Town. This means from small to large retail, warehousing, and everything in-between could pretty much go anywhere. This is a topic that needs discussion in the committee and potential addressing in the plan. It is my opinion that long-term, such wide allowance of business uses everywhere will erode the ability to maintain the Ag Res district's purpose of maintaining farming as the primary land use. There are many ways to allow for small business development (for instance by a building footprint limitation in certain areas), or by creating new business districts, floating business districts, or other ways that do allow such uses. I see the ARD district, which takes up 90% of the town, as allowing anything anywhere provided it can meet the special use and site plan requirements. Is that what the Town wants to meet its goals? I think it is important that the Comprehensive Plan analyze that, address it, and either change it or reconfirm that is what you want. More recommendations on this to come when I submit my full set of recommendations to you.
20. Zoning Map. This is another area that I recommend discussion in the Committee and in the Plan. The RD and Hamlet zoning districts are good. But does one large Ag Res district help the

town meet its goals? Does it reflect what is on the ground? Can we do a better job of targeting different types of development to appropriate areas? You have created a hamlet district for Poolville, but what about other areas that are or could be a hamlet? Can there be more business districts? Or several small mixed business/residential districts for neighborhood scale business development? Should there be another hamlet district (around Hubbardsville)? Should we look at expanding the RD district around the Village to promote more dense growth where infrastructure could exist? These are all questions that I recommend you ponder in this next phase of our planning.



# NYSDOT Sustainability & GreenLITES

*“What gets measured gets done.”*



## Growing GreenLITES

NYSDOT developed the GreenLITES (Leadership In Transportation and Environmental Sustainability) certification program to help integrate sustainability principles into transportation using the building industry’s LEED system as a model. The program is used on a continuous basis and formally ranks capital projects, operations/ maintenance work on a sub-regional basis, and all region-wide investments made (and not made) on an annual cycle for internal review and comparison.

Initially used as a tool for the assessment of environmental sustainability on individual capital projects, GreenLITES’ potential to address transporta-

tion investments across a range of program areas soon became apparent, and a more holistic approach to the “triple bottom line” of economy, society, and environment was adopted. As a result, the GreenLITES program now includes a growing collection of tools (rating systems, spreadsheets, and other metrics) for the planning and assessment of projects, operational activities, maintenance programs, and regional investments.

GreenLITES is a transparent, metrics based, self-assessment program to institutionalize triple bottom line thinking, continuously measure performance, and foster best practices throughout NYSDOT. GreenLITES also

provides an impetus for partnering with others and helps relate transportation investments to jobs, quality of life, and environmental stewardship.

A continuing work in progress, the program has been implemented in stages, starting with the September 2008 GreenLITES Project Design Program, followed by the April 2009 GreenLITES Maintenance/ Operations Plan Spreadsheet, and the ongoing March 2010 Regional Pilot Program.

*The GreenLITES program continues to evolve and grow and needs your input and suggestions. Please send comments to Paul Krekeler at [pkrekeler@dot.state.ny.us](mailto:pkrekeler@dot.state.ny.us).*

*Thank you.*



*“A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they will not sit.”*

Ancient Greek Proverb

## Sustainability at NYSDOT

*“The Department of Transportation is more than concrete, asphalt and steel. We are, in fact, a vital connection to and part of the path toward economic recovery. As we plan for the future, our transportation investments must be done in a manner that is both environmentally sensitive and sustainable. GreenLITES is the Department’s nationally recognized program which keeps us focused on making transportation decisions that support a sustainable society.”*

- Commissioner Joan McDonald, April 21, 2011

The principles of sustainability are rooted in the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA), passed in 1969, in which Congress declared a national environmental policy (Sec. 101 NEPA [42 USC § 4331]):

*"The Congress . . . declares that it is the continuing policy . . . to use all practicable means and measures . . . to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans."*

<http://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/greenlites>

*Assesses all projects, all residencies, and all activities as they influence sustainability across the region.*

GreenLITES Project Environmental Sustainability Rating System Scorecard v 2.0.1			POINTS	Project:	Element Specific?
Please fill in all yellow highlighted cells and follow all instructions in red text.			Available	PIN:	Type:
			Scored	Contact Name:	Ph #:
CATEGORY	ID	DESCRIPTION	POINTS	INSTRUCTIONS	EXPLANATION OR COMMENTS (optional)
S-1 Alignment Selection	S-1a	Avoidance of previously undeveloped lands (open spaces or "greenfields").	2	<= Please enter 0 or 2	
	S-1b	Selecting an alignment that establishes a minimum 100-foot buffer zone between the edge of pavement and a natural watercourse or significantly sized natural wetland to serve the purpose of stormwater filtration.	2	<= Please enter 0 or 2	
	S-1c	Alignments which minimize overall construction "footprint." Examples: use of retaining walls, selecting design option with minimal footprint.	2	<= Please enter 0 or 2	
	S-1d	Design vertical alignments which minimize total earthwork.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-1e	Adjust alignment to avoid or minimize impacts to social/environmental resources (avoidance of parklands, wetlands, historic sites, farmlands, residential and commercial buildings, etc.).	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-1f	Alignments that optimize benefits among competing constraints (the goal is not always the minimum-length alignment, but the one with the best benefit overall).	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-1g	Micro-adjustments that do not compromise safety or operation but that might make the difference in providing sufficient clear area for tree planting.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-1h	Clear zones seeded with seed mixtures that help to reduce maintenance needs and increase carbon sequestration.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-1i	Provide a depressed roadway alignment.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-1j	Use of launched soil nails as a more cost effective option to stabilize a slope rather than, for example, closing a road to construct a retaining wall which may negatively affect traffic flow and neighboring properties.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
S-2 Context Sensitive Solutions	S-2a	Adjust or incorporate highway features to respond to the unique character or sense of place (both natural and built) of the area ("Unique character" means whatever identifiable elements make a place distinctive, memorable, important to the community, etc. - landmarks, views, historic bridges & buildings, parkways, characteristic use of materials, a notable stand of trees, etc.).	2	<= Please enter 0 or 2	
	S-2b	Incorporate local or natural materials for substantial visual elements (e.g., bridge fascia, retaining walls).	2	<= Please enter 0 or 2	
	S-2c	Visual enhancements (screening objectionable views, strategic placement of vegetation, enhancing scenic views, burying utilities, etc.).	2	<= Please enter 0 or 2	
	S-2d	Period street furniture/lighting/appliances.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-2e	Inclusion of visually-contrasting (colored and/or textured) pedestrian crosswalk treatments.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-2g	Follows the NYS Bridge Manual, Section 23 - Aesthetics.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-2h	Site materials selection & detailing to reduce overall urban "heat island" effect.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	
	S-2i	Permanently protect viewsheds via environmental or conservation easements.	1	<= Please enter 0 or 1	

*Evaluates individual projects for incorporation of sustainable practices.*

**GreenLITES: 2010-11 Sustainability Assessment Pilot**  
Mar 3, 2010

**Draft GreenLITES Regional Assessment Table**  
Region: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Economy	Current State	Desired State
Access to jobs and labor		
Access to non-work activities (Quality of Life: recreation, schools, etc.)		
System Connectivity		
Transportation Preservation (Maintenance backlog)		
Competitiveness (All modes):		
Reliability		
Timely		
Predictability		
Attractiveness to business		
Transit passenger miles		
Other:		
<b>Environment</b>		
Petroleum consumption reduction		
Air Quality - CO2 emissions		
Water Quality:		
Groundwater		
Surface water		
Habitat:		
Terrestrial		
Aquatic		
Visual / Aesthetics		
Electrical energy reduction		
Noise reduction		
Other:		
<b>Social Equity (Includes Livability &amp; Safety)</b>		
Fatality and injury reductions per VMT		
Improved mobility for all including the disadvantaged and disabled		
Improved mobility options & choices		
Generational Equity		
Access to affordable transportation		
Incorporate community cohesion, long range land use plans and smart growth principles		
Progress Environmental Justice & ADA		
Other:		

For ease of access, this table is posted to the NYSDOT GreenLITES web page at: <https://www.nysdot.gov/programs/greenlites>.

*Integrates sustainability into Maintenance and Operations Plans.*

Maintenance and Operations Plan for Program Update				Region:	TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE				MAINTENANCE	
Cover Years 09/10 through 14/15				Prepared by:	Total Units	Ideal # per yr	Target Treated # per yr	% on Cycle	Total # Treated by S.F.	Current Balance (\$M)
Red rows are for M&O Programs				Submitted by:	Submitted by:	Submitted by:	Submitted by:	Submitted by:	Submitted by:	Submitted by:
Program	Line	Asset Type	Activity	Cycle (yrs)	Accomplishment	Unit of Measure	Unit of Measure	Unit of Measure	Unit of Measure	Unit of Measure
Bridges	10	Bridges	Bridge Cleaning	1	Each Span					
	20	Bridges	Bridge Painting	12	Each Bridge					
	30	Bridges	Dock Sealing	4	Each Bridge					
	40	Bridges	Dock Treatment	12	Each Bridge					
	50	Bridges	Joints	MOF pg. 9	Each Joint					
	60	Bridges	Bearing Rebration	As Needed	Each Bearing					
	70	Bridges	Concrete Repair (includes S & V Seal)	As Needed	Each Bridge					
	80	Bridges	Demand Repair	N/A	Each Bridge					
	90	Bridges	Dock Rehabilitation	N/A	Each Bridge					
	100	Bridges	Rehabilitation & Repairs	N/A	Each Bridge					
	110	Bridges	New Bridges/Re Locations	N/A	Each Bridge					
	120	Bridges	M&O Program	N/A	Each Bridge					
	130	GreenLITES	Use Environmental Protection during Bridge Repair	1	Each Bridge					
	140	GreenLITES	Environmental Training	3	Each Employee					
	150	GreenLITES	Screen for Public Access to Stream	3	Each Bridge					
160	GreenLITES	Construct Public Access	2	Each Access						
170	GreenLITES	Prohibit Graffiti Repairs	4	Each Grade						
180	GreenLITES	Improve or Repair Bridge Aesthetics	5	Each Bridge						
190	GreenLITES	Use High Production Vacuum Paint Removal System	N/A	Each Region						
200	GreenLITES	Use Quality Concrete Production Tools	N/A	Each Region						
210	GreenLITES	Spot Preparation	1	Each Crew						
220	GreenLITES	Innovative and/or Unfired Activities	1	Each Bridge						
230	GreenLITES	Regulatory Cost Plans	1	Each Region						
240	Bridges	Crack Sealing	4	Lane-Miles						
250	Pavement	Single Course Overlay	12	Lane-Miles						
260	Pavement	Liquid Asphalt Treatments	7	Lane-Miles						
270	Pavement	Pavement Patch (Temporary and Permanent)	As Needed	Tons						
280	Pavement	Joint Sealing	8	Lane-Miles						
290	Pavement	Shoulder Maintenance / Treatments	As Needed	Shoulder-Miles						
300	Pavement	Regional Asset Maintenance Agreements	1	Lane-Miles						
310	Pavement	Multi-county equity	50	Lane-Miles						
320	Pavement	Rehabilitation, CR & Seal, Rubbers, CPR	25	Lane-Miles						
330	Pavement	Reconstruction	100	Lane-Miles						
340	Pavement	New Highway Interchange/Intersections	20	Lane-Miles						
350	Pavement	Alignment/Characterization/Grade Separation/As	As Needed	Lane-Miles						
360	M&O Program	Annual Maintenance Agreements	1	Lane-Miles						
370	M&O Program	M&O Variable PM	N/A	N/A						
380	GreenLITES	Plan with Recycled Asphalt	12	Lane-Miles						
390	GreenLITES	Use Green Cleaning Products	1	Option						
400	GreenLITES	Implement Greenhouse Gas Reporting, Re Use by CMH	1	Option						
410	GreenLITES	Shoulder Preparation for Ped/Bicycle Safety	1	Shoulder Miles						
420	GreenLITES	Reduce Impervious Surface Area	1	Acres						
430	GreenLITES	Innovative and/or Unfired Activities	1	Each						

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*NYSDOT is working to better align transportation with the needs of a sustainable society. GreenLITES is helping us incorporate sustainability principles into all we can do.*



New York State Department of Transportation

Joan McDonald  
NYSDOT Commissioner

Andrew M. Cuomo  
NYS Governor

## Southern Madison Heritage Trust Plan

See File Copy for Full Text of the Southern Madison Heritage Trust Plan (Fall 2005). This Plan was designed for SMHT, but it provides detailed information of use to the Town of Hamilton in their long-term planning as many of the Town's goals are similar to those of SMHT.

This Plan, developed by the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University, creates a vision for the region. The plan is based on demographic research and inventories of both natural and scenic resources. Using these inventories, models in a Geographic Information System (GIS) were created to display various land protection scenarios.

The Plan includes a proposed greenway for recreational uses, natural resources functions and growth management. As the Chenango Canal is an integral part of the Proposed Empire State Greenway, the long-term protection of this corridor is a major concern for the Southern Madison Heritage Trust. For this Plan the students modeled a greenbelt surrounding the four major municipalities in the region. It is designed to allow growth while protecting the gateways to the villages, surrounding farmland and biodiversity of the region.

The Plan includes data, analysis, and recommendations related to regional demographics, natural resources, a scenic inventory and analysis, a greenway plan, suitability analyses and cost estimation for the recommended projects.

The conservation of the proposed 16,000-acres greenbelt in the region, including lands in Hamilton, can be achieved with regulatory tools, transfer of lands to SMHT, improved land management by private landowners as well as SMHT securing lands through outright purchase or donation from willing Landowners.

## Environmental Analysis on High Volume Hydrofracking (HVHF)

\*Note: As of the adoption of this plan, HVHF is banned in NYS, an action that occurred in the midst of work on this Comprehensive Plan and discussion about HVHF in Hamilton. If the HVHF ban is lifted it is suggested that the Town Council use the research done by this committee, along with subsequent information and experience, to consider community perspective on HVHF and concerns over potential impacts. The following research and possible actions are offered to assist in decision-making.

- A. Use a timed moratorium to gain time to consider and implement needed actions in a transparent manner to protect the health, safety and welfare of Town residents.
- B. Identify areas in the Town that where gas drilling should be prohibited for specific reasons such as potential impacts on environmental, historical, cultural, scenic or other resource values.
  - 1. As recommended above, consider adopting a natural resource or environmental protection overlay district that also allows for control of or mitigation of negative impacts on scenic areas. Within that overlay, the Town could require a visual assessment review and mitigation measures for large scale commercial and industrial uses. To aid in development of this overlay district, Hamilton could conduct a community-wide scenic view assessment. Further, the Zoning Law should be updated to require viewshed analysis for allowed industrial uses.
- C. Gathering lines for natural gas that fall below thresholds for which the Public Service Commission regulates mean those land uses are not regulated by any agency (except where lines go through environmentally sensitive areas). The Town should consider regulating gathering lines by adopting a local law or including a section in zoning that specifies the conditions and requirements for building and inspecting these gathering lines. The Town should also require that all gathering lines be mapped, with the map filed with the Town of Hamilton, and enrolled in the Dig Safely NY program.
- D. Temporary or transient workers associated with gas drilling or other high impact uses can increase the pressure on the current housing stock in the area. Landowners or developers may consider adding manufactured homes, use of RV's and campers (individually or in parks) as a temporary housing measure for gas industry or other workers. Currently, seasonal accommodations are loosely defined in the Zoning Law and allowed as a permitted right. This could be interpreted that campers, trailers, or other such housing could be placed anywhere and with no Planning Board review.
  - 1. Should gas drilling be allowed, the Town should update its regulation of transient housing so that there is more review and control. Seasonal accommodations for residents is quite different from transient housing for workers and should be distinguished in the Zoning. Transient housing for workers should be prohibited from roadsides, parks, parking lots, and other similar locations and limited in number on private properties. Should a landowner desire to have multiple transient housing units on their property it should be defined and regulated as a mobile home park.

2. Transient and seasonal housing definitions in the Zoning Law should be updated and expanded to include campers, RV units, and similar. Mobile home parks area currently allowed with a special use permit in all locations within the ARD. Two options could be considered by the Town to improve regulation of these housing types, which can be very impacting on a community when gas drilling activities occur.
  3. The Town could create a mobile home park district as a floating zone. This means that the zoning text includes all the regulations to control development of a mobile home park, but that it is not mapped until the time that someone proposes one. Then the process to approve the mobile home is done in two stages: first an approval from the Town Board to map and designate the location, size, and basic parameters for the park, and second a site plan review and special permit from the Planning Board.
  4. The Town could alternatively designate certain, appropriate location(s) for mobile home parks on the zoning map, and ensure review and permitting adequately addresses water, sewage, and health and safety issues related to transient housing for workers.
- E. Update the zoning so that the broader social and community impacts of energy development, not just technical and economic are examined for consistency with this Comprehensive Plan.
- F. Update zoning to address compressor stations and require site plan and special use permits where these uses are allowed. The Town should regulate noise, emissions, safety, and siting of these facilities to minimize adverse impacts.