
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
Village of Nelsonville
Putnam County, New York

As Updated September 1991

Village of Nelsonville Planning Board
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Revised June 17, 1984
Update September 3, 1991

This document is an Update of the 1984 Village Comprehensive Master Plan. It was prepared under the direction of the Village Planning Board by Edward Buroughs, AICP and Michael Swee, planning consultants. The original Comprehensive Master Plan was prepared by Robert Bryan, AICP, planning consultant.

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INTRODUCTION

A "Village Master Plan" is a statement of policies and recommendations intended to provide long term direction on future use of land within a municipality and to provide a comprehensive set of policies and objectives which elected and appointed officials may use to guide the zoning and development decisions they must continually make. This Master Plan for Nelsonville is the third such document prepared by the Village and is an update and revision of the second.

A. Guide Plan 1990

The first Nelsonville master plan was prepared by the staff of the Putnam County Planning Board in 1971 under the title, "Nelsonville Guide Plan 1990". This land use guide provided the basis for the Village's first zoning ordinance - the actual regulations on land use - which was adopted later that same year.

The 1971 Guide Plan was prepared in a time when population in the New York Metropolitan and Mid-Hudson regions was expected to grow by three million people in twenty years. There were to be major Federal and State funding programs for new central sewer and water systems. The first oil crisis had not yet occurred. There was little evidence of the changes to come in family size and composition as well as the decline in the birth rate. This period also saw little discussion about the impact of anticipated growth on the environment and on quality of life. Growth, expansion and development across the landscape were generally seen as natural and beneficial phenomenon.

From this context, it was not surprising that the 1971 Guide Plan envisioned major growth occurring in the Village between 1971 and 1990, including a population rise from 583 to 1,900. The Plan foresaw sanitary sewers being extended throughout Nelsonville as development took place. It was assumed that adequate water supply would be readily available including a tap into the City of New York's Catskill Aqueduct. Within the Village, it was accepted that local streets could be improved to handle the additional traffic growth would bring and that funds would be available to provide the necessary increases in public services the expanded population would require.

By 1983, it was evident to the Village Planning Board that the Guide Plan had lost value as a reasonable basis for land use decisions.

B. Comprehensive Master Plan 1984

In June 1984, the Planning Board adopted a new master plan titled, "Comprehensive Master Plan for the Village of Nelsonville". The new plan recognized the changes in expectations for both population growth and funding levels for infrastructure construction. As a result, the

land use recommendations were revised. The 1984 plan included a discussion of the character and livability of the Village and added specific policies to help protect important features.

Subsequent to adoption of the new Plan, the Village Board of Trustees amended or adopted several new laws:

- o The Zoning Law was amended in June 1984,
- o An Administration and Enforcement Law for the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code was adopted in September 1985,
- o A Flood Damage Prevention Law was adopted in April 1987 and
- o A Freshwater and Wetlands Protection Law was adopted in April 1988.

In 1985, the Village Planning Board adopted Subdivision Regulations.

Since 1984, events have continued to move the Village further away from the context of the original 1971 Guide Plan, even as modified in 1984. Growth has continued to be very low. The 1990 US Census found the Village population to have increased by just 63 people since 1950 (522 to 585). The provision of central sewer service is far more unlikely in 1991 than it was in 1971. Traffic, however, continues to increase through the Village presenting new problems in providing access to undeveloped lands.

The past several years have seen more attention paid to the impacts on the environment that result from new construction and facilities. State laws require specific review and discussion of environmental aspects in the review of all new projects. Numerous government and private groups maintain close watch on development activities to insure degradation of the environment is avoided or at least reduced to an absolute minimum.

C. Master Plan Update 1991

Within this new context of environmental awareness, the Nelsonville Planning Board and Village Board proposed in 1990 to amend the Village's zoning regulations to account for limitations imposed by wetlands and steeply sloped lands. In their review of these amendments, Putnam County planners suggested that the Village conduct a comprehensive review of the 1984 Master Plan and consider if even broader amendments are justified.

Following through on this suggestion, the Planning Board reviewed the 1984 Plan to see where it is leading the village and to discuss if this is still a direction that makes sense. Information was collected and reviewed on physical features and man-made aspects such as buildings, land ownership and available services. New information became available through the results of the 1990 US Census as well as through work conducted by the Town of Philipstown in preparing a new master plan for the Town. A public information meeting was held on May 6, 1991 to discuss the findings.

The information session and the Planning Board's own work sessions reflected an ever-increasing awareness by the public of what qualities contribute to make Nelsonville the special independent community it has been for over a century. With nine structures on the National Register of Historic Places and a core Village center that has seen little change in fifty years, Nelsonville residents expressed a desire to maintain a community character that other communities have lost during the same time period.

The policies and direction of the 1984 Plan partly addressed this priority but it was recognized that some changes would be in order to protect the quality of the existing village character by more directly addressing the look and scale of future development. New development, anticipated but not initiated since 1971, should add to, not detract from, the Village. At the same time, new development should relate to the Village's hills, wetlands, woods, roads and services.

Although the 1984 Plan text set out policies and goals that address these concerns, the Planning Board and public review found the 1984 Plan Map to be inconsistent with some text recommendations. Problem aspects included:

- o Lack of clear rationale for dividing lines between recommended land use categories.
- o A recommended land use pattern that would result in a fragmented strip along Main Street in which commercial and residential uses would develop in alternate clusters.
- o Designation of land for high density development adjacent to land recommended for the lowest density development.
- o Provision for establishment of a second high density, private Village center which would create a barbell development pattern along Main Street.
- o Lack of recognition of the realistic development constraints imposed by wetlands, swamps and steeply sloped land.
- o Lack of a land use density category more directly related to actual lot sizes outside of the Village core.

After preparation, review and public discussion of alternative land use plans that addressed how these questionable aspects of the 1984 Plan could be corrected, the Planning Board has prepared this Master Plan update.

PART ONE: PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Master Plan for the Village of Nelsonville is prepared by the Village of Nelsonville Planning Board under the provisions of Section 7-722 of the Village Law of the State of New York. This Master Plan is the updated version of a Master Plan adopted by the Planning Board dated revised June 17, 1984.

The Comprehensive Master Plan pertains to the entire 669-acre area of the Village of Nelsonville and is to serve as a guide for growth, preservation and development activities that may occur in the future with the year 2010 in view. This Plan is intended to be compatible with the "Master Plan of Development and Conservation for the Town of Philipstown", as adopted by the Philipstown Planning Board on May 23, 1991.

The Nelsonville Planning Board is assigned the responsibility to prepare and maintain a plan for the Village. In carrying out this responsibility, the Board serves in an advisory capacity to the Village Board of Trustees and the residents and property owners of Nelsonville.

As a guide, this Plan intends to be a means by which the Village government, residents and property owners can all work together toward common goals of benefit to the community. From year to year as daily decisions are made, the Comprehensive Master Plan will:

- o Guide zoning decisions, project reviews and other activities for which the Village Board of Trustees and the Planning Board have responsibility,
- o Alert other government agencies to the policies and aspirations of the Village of Nelsonville when they prepare projects or conduct activities that may have a bearing on the Village,
- o Serve as a guide for development and preservation projects and programs of private individuals, groups and organizations that may wish to enhance the Village, its residents and its services and
- o Establish a framework or model by which the Village and the community can evaluate the effects of a particular project or proposal and can modify policy for the future as appropriate.

The Comprehensive Master Plan is prepared with the benefit of inventory and study of existing conditions such as population change, topography, soils, land use, traffic, utilities and community facilities.

While the area covered by the Plan is limited to the Village, the Plan was developed with full consideration of conditions, trends and policies in municipalities around the Village including the Village of Cold Spring and the Town of Philipstown. The role and location of Nelsonville in Putnam County has also been considered.

PART TWO: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

A. Regional Location

The Village of Nelsonville is located within one mile of the east bank of the Hudson River, approximately 55 miles north of New York City. The Village encompasses a land area of 669 acres, approximately one square mile, and lies within the Town of Philipstown, the westernmost town in Putnam County. Philipstown extends from the Town of Cortlandt in Westchester County to the south to the Town of Fishkill in Dutchess County to the north. Between Nelsonville and the Hudson is the Village of Cold Spring. See Figure 1.

This section of the Hudson River valley is known as the Hudson Highlands due to the steep hills that rise from both banks of the Hudson River between Peekskill (Bear Mountain area) and Newburgh/Beacon (Breakneck Ridge area). West Point is on the west bank of the Hudson opposite Cold Spring.

The rugged terrain has limited access in Philipstown and the two villages to two north/south road corridors - US Route 9 located one mile east of the Village and NYS Route 9D located parallel to the river and passing through Cold Spring. Route 9 intersects the east/west Interstate 84 seven miles north of Nelsonville.

NYS Route 301, the only east/west highway, begins in Cold Spring, serves as Nelsonville's Main Street and continues across the central Putnam County hills before ending at the county seat in Carmel, 18 miles to the east. Route 301 intersects the north/south Taconic Parkway seven miles east of the Village.

A train station in Cold Spring provides access to the Hudson Division line of Metro-North Commuter Railroad which provides regular service between Poughkeepsie and Manhattan.

While Putnam County as a whole is one of the fastest growing counties in New York State, the development that provides this growth has occurred entirely in the east half of the county where Interstates 84 and 684 intersect and the land is rolling farmland and woods.

The Village of Cold Spring, with a population over three times that of Nelsonville, has seen an economic resurgence in recent years based on tourism, specialized retailing and moderate cost village-type living conditions.

The Town of Philipstown has experienced a low level of growth with practically all new development consisting of single-family residences on large lots.

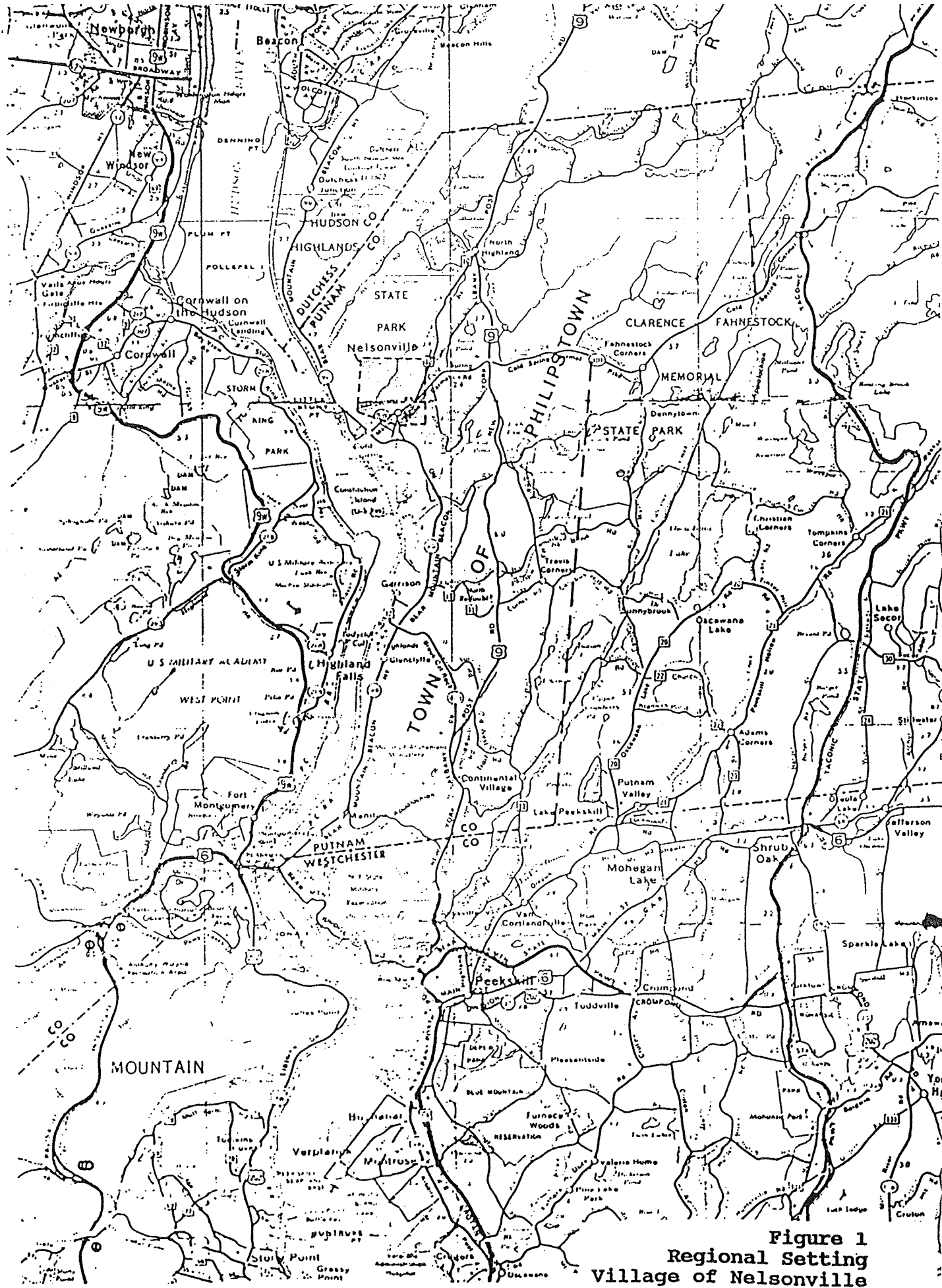


Figure 1
Regional Setting
Village of Nelsonville

B. Existing Land Use

Land use in Nelsonville has been relatively stable for over forty years. In summary, there is a historic center of high density development, a ring of more recent single-family homes on larger lots and, beyond this ring, large tracts of undeveloped land that encompass the rising terrain along the Village's borders. Interspersed in the historic center and at a few locations along Main Street and Peekskill Road are a limited number of commercial establishments. In general, these sites have historically been used by various businesses. For reference, see Figure 2.

The historic center of the Village remains intact and well-defined encompassing both sides of Main Street between the Cold Spring border on the west and approximately Peekskill Road on the east. The majority of buildings (more than 30) along this section of Main Street and on the side streets, particularly Division Street, were built between 1850 and 1865. These buildings are on small lots and located close together. The density in this area averages 4 to 5 houses per acre but some blocks have a density as high as 8 units per acre. Homes on the streets more than a block away from Main Street are generally 20th century on slightly larger lots.

Buildings located the farthest from Main Street and in the east end of the Village along Healy Road and Moffat Road are the newest and are homes sited on lots that range from one to five acres.

All of the residences, commercial sites, public facilities and road rights-of-way in Nelsonville occupy less than one-third of the total Village land area (194 acres of 669 acres in total). The vast majority of land has either been set aside as committed open space (210 acres) or is undeveloped, owned in large tracts by four parties (264 acres).

1. Residential. The 1990 US Census reported 247 housing units in the Village of Nelsonville. The characteristics of this housing in terms of type, value, tenure and household type establish that Nelsonville housing is far more diverse and more accessible to lower and moderate income households than surrounding municipalities.

This diversity of housing in Nelsonville reflects both historic development and the Village's zoning regulations which permit two-family homes as of right in all districts except General Commercial. The 247 housing units consist of a wide range of housing types of which only 141 (57%) are single-family homes. Based on Census and Town tax assessment records, the units are classified as follows:

Single-family	141	57%	
Two-family	59	24%	
Three to four family	37	15%	
Mobile home/trailer	<u>10</u>	<u>4%</u>	
	247	100%	housing units

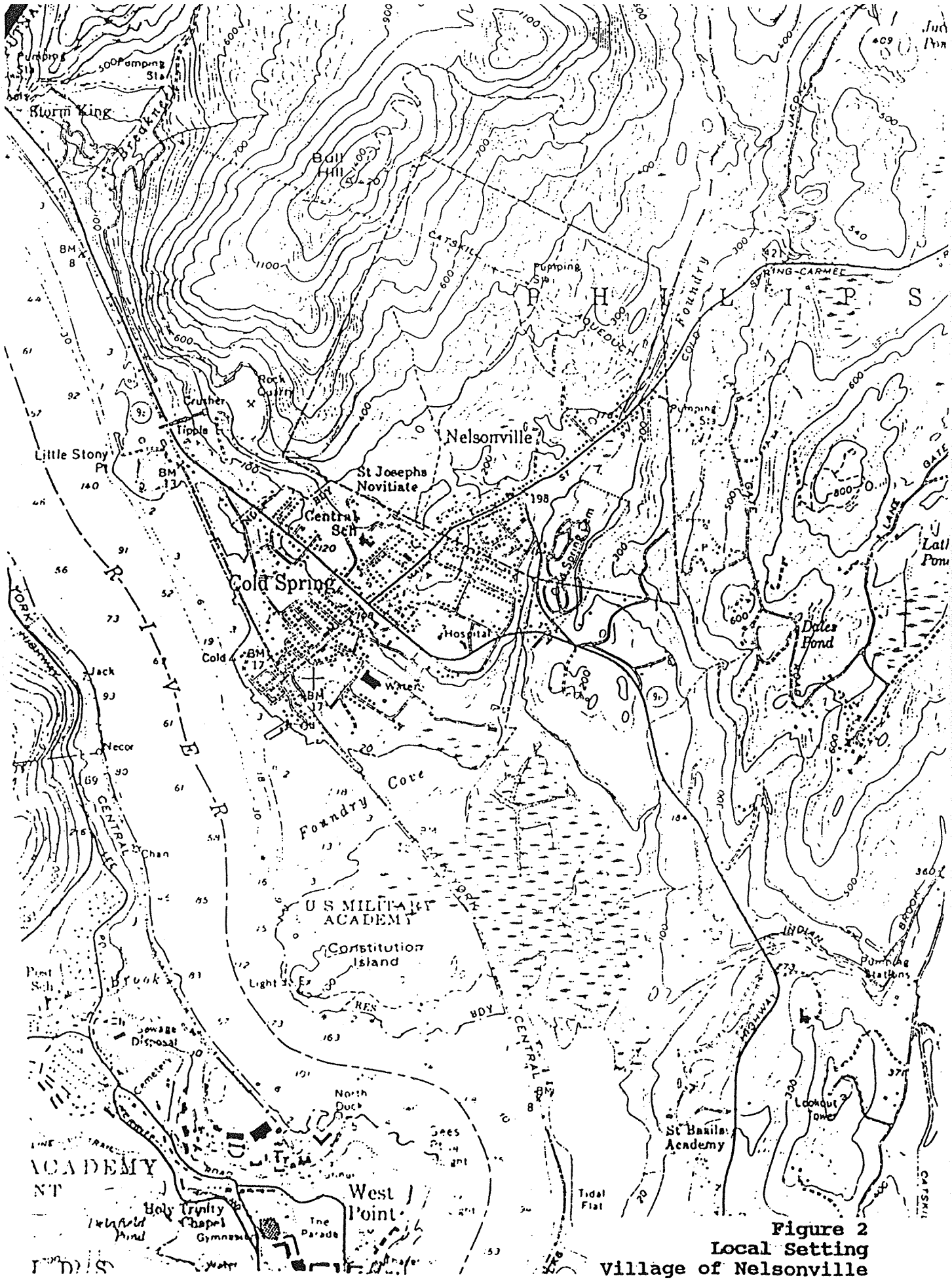


Figure 2
Local Setting
Village of Nelsonville

This available range of village housing is more apparent when compared to housing in Philipstown as a whole and to Putnam County. The Census reported that 75% of the Town's housing stock and 79% of Putnam County's housing was single-family. (Nelsonville accounts for 6% of the Town's total housing units.)

The 1990 Census also reported that the cost of housing in Nelsonville is significantly lower than housing in Philipstown as a whole and in Putnam County. The reported median value of owner occupied homes was \$169,000. The median value reported for Putnam County was 15% higher at \$195,000 and for the Town it was 22% higher at \$206,100. The lower quartile in Nelsonville was reported at \$124,000 while in the County and Town the lower quartile was not far from the median value in Nelsonville (\$157,000 in the County and \$162,400 in the Town).

The availability of rental housing increases housing options and allows residency of persons who may be unable or unwilling to purchase their own home. With regard to tenure, the Census reported that 33% of Nelsonville's housing units are rental compared to 23% in Philipstown as a whole and only 18% in Putnam County overall. The reported median contract rent was \$600 in Nelsonville, \$621 in Philipstown as a whole and \$672 in Putnam County.

The 1990 Census found that 46% of the occupied housing units were being lived in by families - married couple or single parent with children. This is a high figure in light of recent demographic changes which have seen a marked decline in traditional families. In comparison, families with children make up 38% of all Putnam County households and 39% of households in Philipstown as a whole. This Census finding indicates that the affordability of Nelsonville housing is attractive to families.

2. Commercial. The businesses, trades and manufacturing shops in Nelsonville are largely local in character. They are small and tend to serve the adjacent community. Employees are generally local residents. The largest single concentration of non-residential uses are on one lot located at the intersection of Main Street/Fishkill Road/Healy Road where there are a gas station, convenience store, oil distributor and trucking operation. The other uses are located along Main Street or Peekskill Road, often side by side with residential uses.

All major retail, personal service and trades business is conducted outside of the Village. A modern supermarket is located nearby in Cold Spring as are numerous other shops, restaurants and services. A complete range of commercial services is available six miles north of Nelsonville in Dutchess County along Route 9.

3. Community facilities. Community facilities in Nelsonville are located along Main Street and include the Village Hall, Nelsonville Fire Company and a church. The Philipstown highway garage is located at the east end of Nelsonville on a 1.1 acre lot

on Fishkill Road. A new ambulance corps building is located adjacent to the American Legion building on a 1.1 acre lot with access to both from Cedar Street in the Village of Cold Spring.

The Village owns three other parcels - a 4 acre tract near Wood Avenue to be developed for a Village park, an old cemetery located on a 1.6 acre tract off Cedar Street and undeveloped property of 4.1 acres located between the American Legion site and Secor Street.

Children in the Village may attend public schools of the Haldane Central School District. The school facilities are located adjacent to Nelsonville in Cold Spring west of Cedar Street. The district owned land extends into Nelsonville but this land is undeveloped (9 acres).

4. Committed open space. Almost one-third of the Village land area, 210 acres, is undeveloped land not likely to ever be developed. This type of land is classified as "committed open space" due to its ownership or designated use and includes public park land, land owned for conservation purposes and cemeteries. The land may not actually be available for public use.

As shown in the table below, the largest component of the open space system is the south end of Hudson Highlands State Park which encompasses all of the highest elevations along Nelsonville's northwest border. The second largest is the Cold Spring Cemetery.

Hudson Highlands State Park	150.00
Cold Spring Cemetery	32.50
City of New York Catskill Aqueduct	23.88
Village park site	<u>4.00</u>
Total	210.38 acres

5. Undeveloped land. Nearly 40% of Nelsonville land is contained within four large tracts and is undeveloped. These are:

Lone Star Properties	176.39
Villetto	53.43
Hatcher/Cunningham	20.40
H/W Lyons	<u>14.15</u>
Total	264.37 acres

As can be seen by the generalized locations shown on Figure 3, much of this land is located between the developed lands along Main Street and the south edge of Hudson Highlands State Park. The tracts do not have ready access to Main Street and are characterized by moderate to steeply sloped, wooded land that is crossed by stream corridors and wetlands.

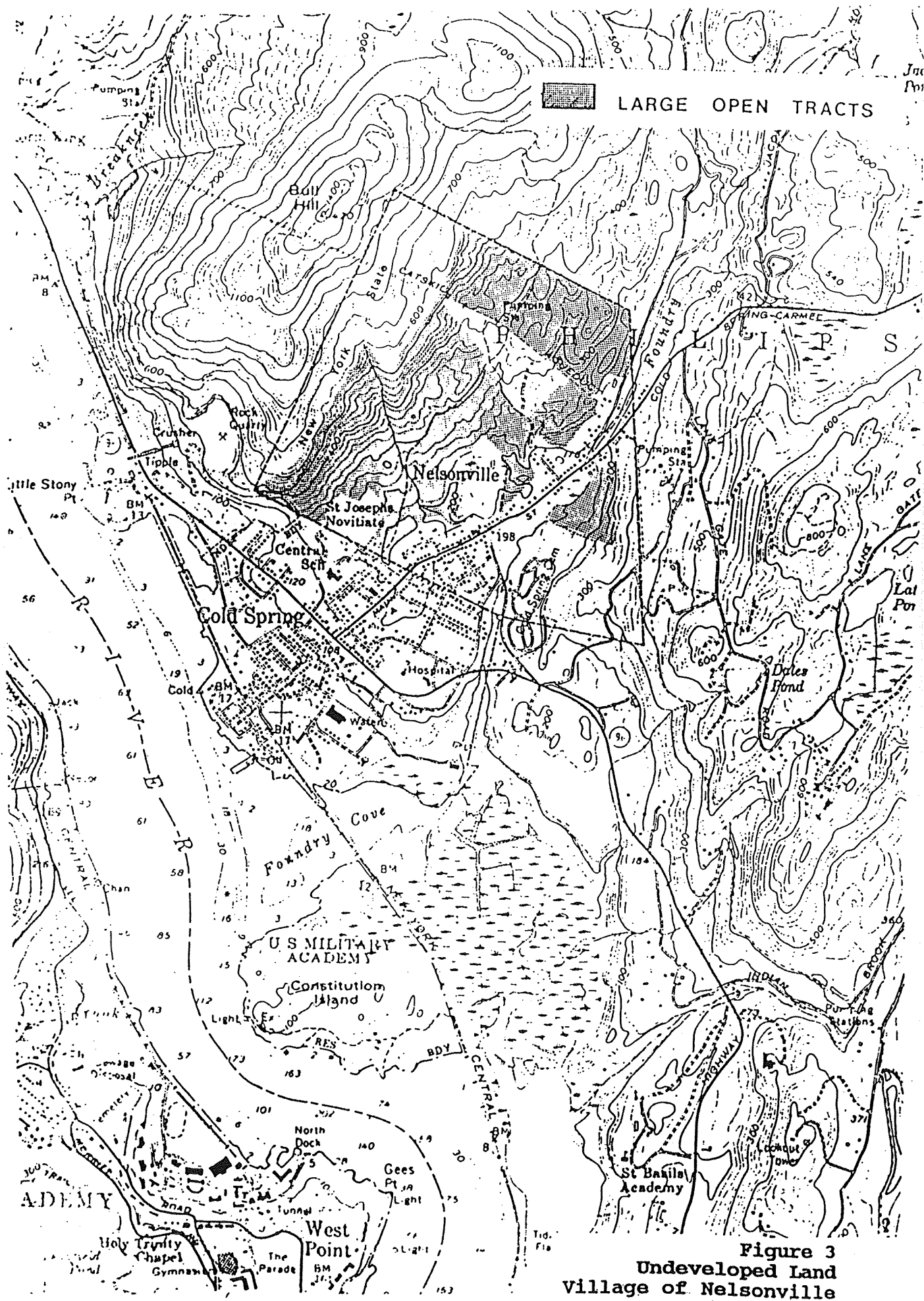


Figure 3
 Undeveloped Land
 Village of Nelsonville

C. Population

The population of Nelsonville has remained relatively stable since 1950 as the US Census results show:

1950	522
1960	555
1970	583
1980	567
1990	585

The experience in all Putnam County municipalities between 1980 and 1990 is shown in the following table:

POPULATION GROWTH IN PUTNAM MUNICIPALITIES 1980-1990

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Population</u>		<u>Increase</u>
	1980	1990	1980 to 1990
Carmel	27,948	28,816	868 (3.1%)
Southeast	11,416	14,927	3,511 (30.8%)
Kent	12,433	13,183	750 (6.0%)
Philipstown	9,155	9,242	87 (0.9%)
Putnam Valley	8,994	9,094	100 (1.1%)
Patterson	7,247	8,679	1,432 (19.8%)
Cold Spring V.	2,161	1,998	- 163 (-7.5%)
Brewster V.	1,650	1,566	- 84 (-5.1%)
NELSONVILLE V.	567	585	18 (3.2%)
Putnam County	77,193	83,941	6,748 (8.7%)

The 1990 Census reported that of the 585 residents of Nelsonville, 124 were under the age of twenty (21%), 309 were age 20 through 54 (53%) and 152 were age 55 and over (26%). The largest ten-year age group was 25 through 34 (10%). There were 28 residents age 75 or older, 5% of the total population.

A comparison of Nelsonville with adjacent communities is shown on the table on the next page. The Philipstown figures include the two villages. Both Nelsonville and Cold Spring have higher percentages of seniors than the larger suburban towns and Putnam County as a whole.

In 1980, the median age in Nelsonville was 33.6 years, the same as the Town as a whole and slightly lower than Cold Spring (34.7 years). The median age of males was 29.8 years and for females it was 37.1 years.

The 1990 Census reported that household size in Nelsonville has continued to decline. It was reported as 2.8 persons per household in 1970, 2.7 in 1980 and 2.5 in 1990.

AGE COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION 1990
Comparison of Area Municipalities
(by percentage of total population)

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>0-9</u>	<u>10-19</u>	<u>20-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-44</u>	<u>45-54</u>	<u>55-64</u>	<u>65-74</u>	<u>75-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Nelsonville	9	12	6	17	15	14	10	11	4	*
Cold Spring	12	9	5	17	17	9	10	10	8	2
Philipstown	13	12	5	15	19	13	10	7	5	1
Putnam Co	15	13	7	17	18	13	8	5	3	*

Source: US Census

* Less than one percent.

D. Natural Features

Nelsonville is centered on an east/west valley with Main Street (Route 301) at the approximate center. Foundry Brook flows through this valley collecting water from smaller streams. It originates at Breakneck and Scofield Ridges to the northeast of Nelsonville within Philipstown and passes through two public water supply reservoirs. Through Nelsonville, the Brook parallels Main Street and is in close proximity to most Village homes and businesses. Foundry Brook then passes through the West Point Foundry site to discharge into Constitution Marsh and Foundry Cove. Through Nelsonville, the lands around the stream have been flagged for potential flooding.

To the southeast of Foundry Brook, the land rises 200 feet in elevation from approximately the 165 foot contour level at the stream to 375 feet along Moffat Road.

On the northwest side, the land also rises, at places very steeply. The highpoint in the Village is approximately 1,050 feet at the north corner in Hudson Highlands State Park. From Foundry Brook to this highpoint there is an elevation change of nearly 900 feet over a horizontal distance of 3,100 feet.

E. Community Character

Main Street is the heart of the Village and the built-up area extends in a linear pattern along it. To the west, Main Street continues as the main street and central feature of Cold Spring, extending to the railroad crossing and station and ending at the Hudson River dock.

Almost all buildings in Nelsonville, including residences, are one and two stories in height. The pitched roof is typical for houses. The wood frame style reflects Hudson River village architecture.

Main Street is lined with a mix of churches, public buildings, stores, shops and dominated by residences. Side streets connect Main Street with a few parallel side streets. Main Street serves as the main pedestrian way with sidewalks. It is convenient and customary to walk from homes to visit friends, attend schools, participate in recreation and conduct convenience shopping.

More than 30 structures in the historic center of the Village were built before 1865. Nine structures are on the National and State Registers of Historic Properties.

F. Streets

While Main Street is the principal street of Nelsonville it also serves a regional role as Route 301, a thoroughfare connecting Route 9D in Cold Spring with both Route 9 to the east, the Taconic Parkway and eastern Putnam County. Fishkill Road and Peekskill Road both serve as short-cuts for traffic on Route 301 with Fishkill Road providing direct access to route 9 north and Peekskill Road providing direct access to Route 9D south.

Main Street, Fishkill Road and Peekskill Road are two-lane facilities (average 10 foot wide lanes) with minimal shoulders. The rights-of-way are 50 feet although Main Street has a wider right-of-way near Cold Spring and narrower at the east end of the Village. Many buildings are very close to the right-of-way. Much of the right-of-way is often used for curb parking as in some sections it is the only area available for parking.

Annual average daily traffic counts (AADT), seasonally adjusted, are shown on Figure 4.

Other Village streets are local in nature. Healy and Moffat Roads serve the southeast hillside and connect to Lane Gate Road and minor roads in Philipstown. Wood Lane and Secor Road provide access to residences on the north side of Main Street. Cedar Street in Cold Spring parallels the village border and provides access to tracts in the northwest section of Nelsonville.

The increasing traffic on the three through roads create more conflicts between through traffic, turning movements, on-street parking and pedestrian activity. The question has regularly been raised if a bypass for Route 301 is possible so as to redirect through traffic away from the Village's Main Street. The conclusion has been that such a diversion is not realistic. The current roads follow the gentlest topography. Any new routing would confront developed properties, cemetery use, steep hillsides and a new crossing of the New York City aqueduct.

However, it remains clear that any development of the large open tracts will require new access, possibly through already developed neighborhoods. Unless multiple access points can be provided or a crossing of the New York City aqueduct can be implemented, significant problems can be expected.

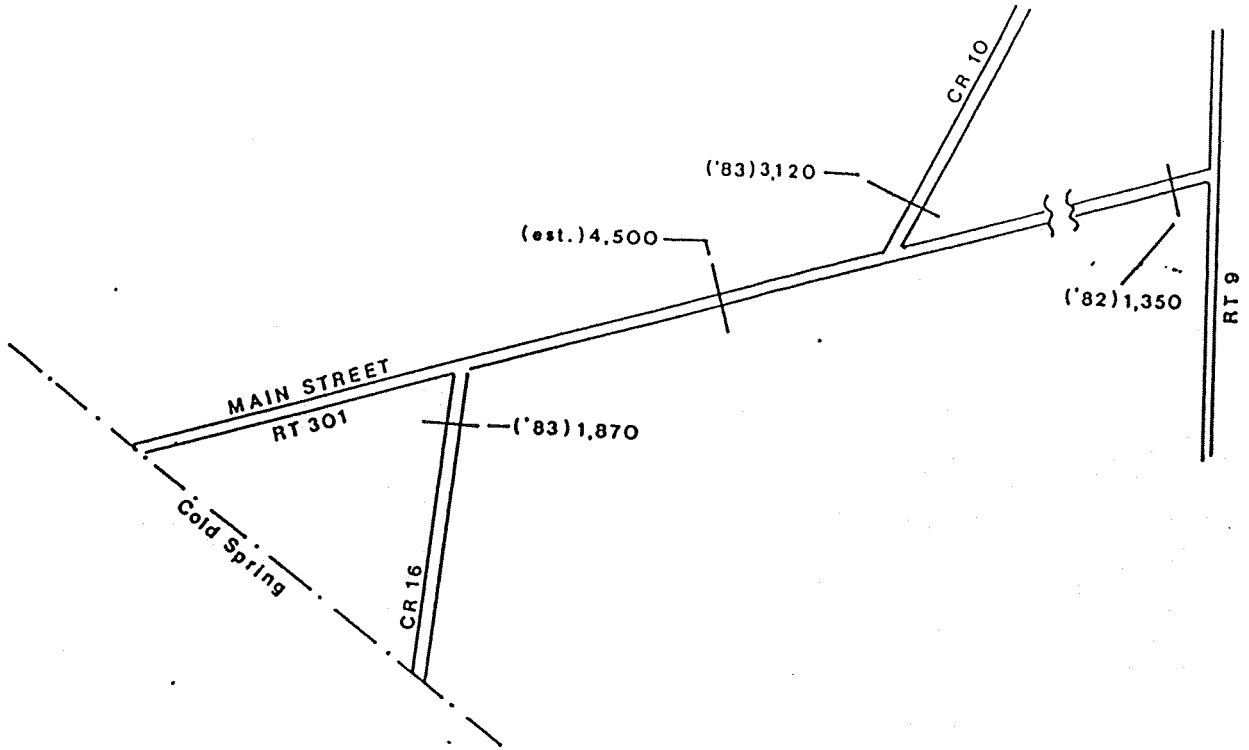


Figure 4
Traffic Volumes
Village of Nelsonville

G. Utilities

1. Water supply. Water supply for practically all buildings in Nelsonville is provided through central public water supply owned and operated by the Village of Cold Spring. The supply originates at surface reservoirs located off Lake Surprise Road within the upper Foundry Brook watershed in Philipstown, northeast of Nelsonville. The connecting feeder main passes through Nelsonville. The Cold Spring reservoirs have very limited capacity and there are no major protected lands around them. Much of the system, including the dams, were built decades ago and pipes have been subject to occasional failure. There is also a significant problem with water pressure at the higher elevations served by the system.

The Village of Cold Spring has been studying how to upgrade and strengthen its system. Establishment of new wells and a possible tap into the Catskill Aqueduct have been explored but no program has yet been defined.

2. Sewer service. Sewage disposal in Nelsonville is almost entirely dependent on individual on-lot subsurface sewage disposal systems. A central sanitary sewage collection and treatment system is operated by the Village of Cold Spring. As with the water system, the collecting lines were placed many years ago and there is a significant groundwater infiltration system. The treatment plant is a modern facility operated by the State Environmental Facilities Corporation and has a design capacity that was intended to be adequate to treat effluent from Nelsonville. If the infiltration problems can be identified and corrected, there may be a possibility for service to be extended to Nelsonville village center area where there is a concentration of development that could benefit from central sewers.

Only a few lots in Nelsonville, located close to the Cold Spring border, are connected to the Cold Spring system.

PART THREE: ASSUMPTIONS AND POLICIES

The Comprehensive Master Plan for Nelsonville is based on key assumptions and policies. The following assumptions were formulated with knowledge of given conditions and facts that shape the context of development and the environment. Much of the background is discussed in the preceding chapters. The policies are intended to be realistic and feasible while reflecting attitudes of the community, current issues and sound principles of village planning.

A. Assumptions

1. The Village adjoins Cold Spring and both villages are part of the Hudson Highlands where only small to moderate change and growth are foreseen.
2. A low to moderate rate of change may result from continued economic renewal in the Cold Spring-Nelsonville villages and from development of sites in the surrounding areas of the Town of Philipstown. Much of this change will arise from families and individuals who work elsewhere but seek residences in the rural Hudson Highlands or in a village environment.
3. There will be no new, major transportation corridors created in Philipstown and affecting Nelsonville. Highways such as Route 9 may be upgraded to improve safety and capacity aspects.
4. A stable population is the expected norm.
5. Extension of the central sanitary sewer collection system based in Cold Spring beyond the historic center of the Village is not realistic nor necessary. Development in Mountain, Hillside and Village Secondary land use areas will rely on individual on-site wells and septic systems, properly designed and maintained to protect the public health.
6. Large open tracts have a potential for development that could fit the character and resources of the Village or could have a substantial negative impact on the livability and convenience of the Village. Development must relate to the natural land features.
7. The existing road network must serve as the basis for all future development.
8. There will a need for improved or new access from the existing streets, primarily Main Street, to interior land parcels when large open tracts are developed.

B. Policies

1. To enable or encourage new dwelling construction of a type and magnitude that fits the character, livability and resources of the Village.
2. To continue, conserve and enrich the pleasant and convenient Village living environment.
3. To assure that new building, as it occurs, blends with the scale and style of the existing Village, particularly with regard to height, bulk, exterior finish and architecture.
4. To maintain the continuity of building facades close to Main Street and the system of sidewalks and trees that establish the character of this feature of the Village.
5. To cooperate with the Village of Cold Spring to work toward mutually beneficial public water supply and sanitary sewer systems that can serve the historic core (Village Center) of Nelsonville.
6. To avoid establishment of small, independent central water and sanitary sewer systems in new developments.
7. To assure that when and if large open tracts are developed, such development has a scale, density, appearance and time schedule that conserves the Village living environment and does not overtax the existing systems of streets, drainage, utilities and services.
8. To continue the convenience of mixed uses in the historic Village Center along Main Street while assuring that there is adequate transition between lot occupancies and an attractive appearance for the community is maintained.
9. To encourage the continued rehabilitation of older buildings, conserving the heritage of Nelsonville.
10. To provide for continuation of existing and the addition of new businesses and shops that have a local orientation and walk-to support.
11. To assure that new commercial development has adequate off-street parking and site development components but in a manner that maintains the Village character of Main Street.
12. To provide opportunities for new multi-family housing oriented to seniors so as to allow them the option to continue residence in the Village.
13. To allow development of small multi-family units in buildings with a size consistent with the scale of the Village Center for those unable or unwilling to purchase single-family homes.
14. To manage land use and traffic relationships along Main Street

through adequate traffic controls and proper design of street intersections and driveways so as to assure safe and convenient travel and to avoid congestion.

15. To avoid a build-up of traffic or occurrence of congestion that would necessitate major reconstruction and widening of Main Street.
16. To be watchful of potential developments in Cold Spring or Philipstown that might result in major increases in traffic generation, including truck traffic, that could affect Nelsonville's fixed road system.
17. To consider all reasonable alternatives for establishing multiple access points and through road connections - both short and long term options - at the time development is proposed for a large open tract.

PART FOUR: PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

With the assumptions and policies of the preceding chapter as reference point, the Comprehensive Master Plan Map has been developed to show how these policies can and should be implemented through designated land use. The Plan Update Map, included at the back of the Plan text, identifies ten categories of recommended land use. Each of these categories is discussed in this chapter as well as more specific recommended guidelines for review of new development proposals.

A. Wetland/Stream

All wetlands as identified by Putnam County Soil and Water Conservation District mapping and significant streams are identified on the Plan Map. These features are identified without any recommended land use as they are recommended to be preserved and protected in their natural state.

Wetlands, swamps and streams have an inherent environmental value that designation on the Plan Map is intended to highlight. Part of the designated areas are also flood hazard zones. These land areas would pose significant constraints for any land use that would require alteration of the terrain. Any such proposed alteration must be considered within the context of the Village's "Freshwater and Wetlands Protection Law".

As can be seen on the Plan Map, wetlands and streams also provide effective natural dividers or buffers between types and densities of land use. Stream corridors should be seen as linear open space corridors.

B. Open Space

This Plan supports the maintenance of existing open space parcels in Nelsonville. Shown on the Plan Map are Hudson Highlands State Park, the City of New York Catskill Aqueduct property, the Village park land and the Cold Spring and Village cemeteries.

In addition, this Plan continues the recommendation of the Village's first Master Plan that existing foot trails, in particular the Blue/Three Notch Trail, be maintained for public access and that new foot trail access be established where feasible (perhaps along stream corridors) to permit interconnection with the main trail, Village local streets and Hudson Highlands State Park.

A community based volunteer program could be organized to restore the overgrown cemetery on the east side of Cedar Street.

C. Community Facilities

The Plan Map identifies existing community facilities, both public and private, and recommends they continue to serve their current purposes.

Although the available public services and facilities in the Village are very limited, they are generally adequate. The Village offices were expanded through a meeting room addition with substantial volunteer help in 1990.

The scale of potential development in the Village would not warrant the expense of major new land acquisition or construction for additional facilities for the Village or fire department. However, the Village should seek to develop an understanding with the private and semi-private non-profit organizations that own land in the Village so that in the event the land is ever to be sold, the Village will have an opportunity to acquire it.

D. Mountain Residential

The outer reaches of the Village are designated for Mountain Residential use on the Plan Map. Much of the Village's undeveloped land is in this category. The land has remained undeveloped due to poor access, lack of utilities and severe physical constraints imposed by the land. Future provision of central sewer and water services is not contemplated by this Plan.

Residential density in this area should be based on two acres per one or two family residence. Each proposed lot should be shown to be capable of containing within it a contiguous "buildable" area unimpeded by wetlands or land with very steep slopes (25% or over). This buildable area should be adequate for house construction, utility placement and uses customarily accessory to a single-family residence.

All development should be designed so as to best relate to the physical land, reducing potential adverse impacts of soil erosion and sedimentation, tree and vegetation clearing and steep slope disturbance. The review of most development proposals would require public consideration of a cluster subdivision plan as an alternative to a conventional lot layout. Actual construction on steeply sloped land should be subject to special review standards.

Provision of access is of critical concern. Although for a low number of lots construction of a lane instead of a full design public road may be appropriate, such a determination can only be made after all feasible potential access points have been explored consistent with the policies of this Plan to provide multiple access points which would improve safety, reduce the traffic burden on existing residential local streets and avoid adding to congestion at Main Street intersections.

E. Hillside Residential

Land closer to the Village center and on less steeply sloped hillsides are recommended for Hillside Residential development. Ownership of

some of this land overlaps with the large undeveloped tracts in the Mountain Residential category.

In this category, the land in general is less constrained by severe physical features and it often abuts already developed land. However, spot physical problems are present, access may be poor and there is a lack of utilities: Future provision of central sewer and water services is not contemplated by this Plan.

Residential density in this area should be based on 1 1/2 acres per one or two family residence. Each proposed lot should be shown to be capable of containing within it a contiguous "buildable" area unimpeded by wetlands or land with very steep slopes (25% or over). This buildable area should be adequate for house construction, utility placement and uses customarily accessory to a single-family residence.

All development should be designed so as to best relate to the physical land, reducing potential adverse impacts of soil erosion and sedimentation, tree and vegetation clearing and steep slope disturbance. The review of development proposals may require public consideration of a cluster subdivision plan as an alternative to a conventional lot layout, depending on the nature of the specific land area and its relationship to adjacent development. Actual construction on steeply sloped land should be subject to special review standards.

Provision of access is also of critical concern in the Hillside areas. All feasible potential access points must be explored with each application so as to insure consistency with the policies of this Plan to provide multiple access points which would improve safety, reduce the traffic burden on existing residential local streets and avoid adding to congestion at Main Street intersections.

F. Village Secondary Residential

The Village Secondary Residential category includes most of the lots along Main Street east of the Village Center and Peekskill Road. It also includes land on the north side of the Village Center and serves as a transition zone between the dense Village Center and the more rural Hillside and Mountain areas. Much of the land area is developed and the category recognizes this fact. The lots are generally larger than those on the Village Center but smaller than what is considered advisable in Hillside areas.

Residential density in this area should be based on 1/2 acre per one or two family residence. If any new lots are created in this area, they should first be shown capable of containing within the contiguous "buildable" area unimpeded by wetlands or land with very steep slopes (25% or over) required of new lots in the more rural districts. Demonstrating available land for house construction, utility placement and uses customarily accessory to a single-family residence is necessary as it is now unlikely that central sewer services will ever be provided for land in this land use category. Actual construction on steeply sloped land should be subject to special review standards.

Access to lots in Village Secondary will generally involve new driveways to existing roads. Each lot should be reviewed to determine if there are options to direct access to Main Street or if combined driveways are possible.

G. Village Center

This Plan affirms recognition, protection and enhancement of the historic core of Nelsonville. Preservation and renovation of the dozens of 100 to 125 year old buildings is to be encouraged. New construction should be designed to fit within the established building scale and mass so as to add to the Village Center's image. A program to improve the parking and pedestrian flow along Main Street should be undertaken. This area has potential for central sewer service but only through extension of the Village of Cold Spring systems after the current deficiencies are resolved.

1. Village residential. Most of the Village Center is developed with one and two family homes. New construction is reasonable at a density of 9,000 square feet per dwelling but may not be practical due to limitations imposed by septic field requirements. Some areas may be suitable for three family structures or conversions subject to applicable building codes.
2. Village business. This Plan continues to be based on a policy that supermarket and comparison shopping as well as large service and office operations are appropriately located outside of Nelsonville to the historic characteristics of the Village businesses, the lack of safe access and incompatibility with the existing character of Main Street. Existing businesses in the Village Center on Main Street are few in number and include a country store/delicatessen and an antique store.

These existing businesses add to the fabric of the Village Center. The addition of new small scale retail, services and trades within existing structures along Main Street, perhaps in mixed use buildings with residential apartments, would be consistent with this Plan. Establishment of new commercial uses should not require the demolition of buildings so as to replace the current mix of buildings with larger, modern commercial structures and parking lots.

Clearly, new uses will be limited by their need for parking and ability to depend on local trade. In general, businesses with approximately 500 square feet maximum may meet this criteria.

But even with limited expansion of commercial uses, parking will likely become a critical issue. Several options are available:

- a) On-street parking. The first option is to insure that existing on-street parking is being utilized as efficiently and safely as possible. Through cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation, the Village could develop a parking program that delineates parking areas and

improves curb and sidewalk definition. A better defined parking and mixed commercial/residential area might also aid in controlling traffic speeds through the Village Center. Similar review could be made of side streets but conflicts with residents are more likely.

- b) Develop parking on Secor Street. A second option is to explore the use of Secor Street for on-street parking, perhaps in combination with use of the rear of Main Street lots for a new parking area. This approach could raise direct conflicts with residential use properties and could only be pursued if several Main Street properties sought commercial uses.
- c) Develop on-site parking with lot-to-lot links. A more complicated approach would entail preparation of an area site plan. This plan would identify all possibilities for coordinating parking across several lots with the objective of minimizing the number of actual access driveways while increasing the layout possibilities for efficient use of land. Of course, the plan could only be realized over time and must be based on an assumption that commercial uses will eventually be established and the parking improvements required.

H. Multi-Family Residential

Approximately 40% of the existing housing units in Nelsonville are in buildings with more than one housing unit. Fifteen percent are in buildings with three to four dwellings. This wide range of housing has been accomplished in the Village through both historical use and a zoning ordinance that permits two-family homes to be constructed anywhere in the Village without special conditions. The Village Center density ranges from five to eight residences per acre.

The physical nature of the Village's multi-family housing has also been a critical component of insuring availability of other than single-family homes at a reasonable cost. Throughout Nelsonville, but particularly in the Village Center, buildings are of a small scale even when compared to modern single-family homes. The existing multi-family dwellings are unattached buildings that generally have the appearance of single-family houses.

This Plan recommends that the Village Center remain the focal, high density center of Nelsonville. Other areas of the Village should not have a density that exceeds that in the Village Center. New development should not overpower the image, scale and role of this area.

The recommendations of the 1984 Comprehensive Master Plan and Plan Map on multi-family land use were not consistent with this policy nor with many of the policies set forth elsewhere in that Plan. The Plan provided for:

- o Development of a large multi-family project on a site removed from the Village Center,
- o Recommended design guidelines at odds with the scale and mass of the Village's existing buildings and
- o A recommended density equal to that of the existing Village Center which would have had the impact of creating a second village center.

If established, this second center would be a private community that would, in one step, increase Nelsonville's population by 36%. Based on the 1990 Census findings of population and housing characteristics, it is unlikely that this housing could better address housing needs or affordability than the current housing stock in the Village.

This Plan recommends that provision be made for additional multi-family units to be constructed in Nelsonville in approximately the same quantity envisioned in the 1984 Plan but in manner and configuration that addresses two concerns - the specific gaps in housing availability that may be expected to develop in Nelsonville and the integration of new multi-family housing with the historic fabric and development trends of the Village.

As the lowest cost housing in the region can now be found in Nelsonville, cost of housing per se is not a primary issue. Neither, as discussed above, is blanket provision of multi-family housing. However, demographic trends indicate that the elderly population will continue to steadily increase both in total numbers and as a percentage of the population. The 1990 Census found a high percentage of the Village population to be elderly. Studies have also shown that the vast majority of seniors prefer to continue living in the same area.

The update Plan Map designates a site on Secor Street for multi-family housing for seniors. The property is now owned by the Village and is adjacent to the American Legion and Ambulance Corps site. The American Legion site is currently used for a senior citizen meal program. As mentioned elsewhere in this Plan, the Village should explore the possibility of acquiring this site which would make additional land available for a senior housing development.

Another housing segment that can be addressed is the provision of smaller apartments for singles of all ages or couples without children. One means of encouraging the development of such units is to permit three to four dwelling unit buildings within the Village Center on lots that are on blocks that have frontage on Main Street. Zoning regulations should include a restriction to one bedroom.

The zoning regulations applicable to a new multi-family development should establish the same minimum land area per dwelling as applies in the Village Center (9,000 square feet). No more than five dwelling units should be permitted in one building. Special provisions should be established for review of type of construction, architectural finish and exterior elevation. The parking standard should be set at two spaces for each dwelling unit.

I. Commercial

The Plan Map designates three land areas on the south side of Main Street between Peekskill Road and Fishkill Road for Commercial uses. Most of this land is now occupied by such uses including a few small industries and the complex of uses at the intersection of Fishkill Road and Main Street. Due to the lack of suitable land, access limitations and proximity to residences, there is no significant opportunity for expansion. Continuation of the current uses is appropriate. As the opportunity arises, the Village should encourage or require the owners to improve the appearance of these sites and implement sufficient access control, off-street parking signage and landscaping.

PART FIVE: IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Comprehensive Master Plan will be a continuing endeavor. Investment by property owners in new construction and rehabilitation will be the primary source of change and growth. The Nelsonville Planning Board has a responsibility to observe and review change and to encourage design and land use that support the policy and goals of the Village. The Village should also seek the cooperation of other governments such as the Village of Cold Spring, the Town of Philipstown and Putnam County on matters of mutual interest.

To prepare for implementation of the Plan, two important steps are recommended for immediate consideration:

1. Update and revise the Zoning Law to support the Master Plan.

Various zoning districts need to be adjusted as to location, uses and standards so as to reflect the policy and goals of the Plan and Plan Map. Actual implementation is the responsibility of the Village Board of Trustees with the advice and recommendation of the Planning Board.

2. Encourage citizen participation.

The Nelsonville Planning Board is only the committee or agent for preparing the Master Plan on behalf of the community. The intent of the Plan is to achieve a community consensus as to how the Village will address the future. It is essential that there be public understanding of the basis and rationale for the Plan and the external factors that need to be considered. The Planning Board has the responsibility to bring information to the public and to reach out for comment and suggestions.

PART SIX: ADMINISTRATION

Under Section 7-722 of the Village Law, the Planning Board is authorized to prepare and change a comprehensive master plan for the development of the entire area of the Village of Nelsonville. The Planning Board may advertise and hold public hearings on a plan for the Village as the Board so desires.

The comprehensive master plan and all modifications thereto shall be on file in the office of the Planning Board and the Board shall file certified copies with the Village Clerk.

The Planning Board has a continuing responsibility to maintain the comprehensive master plan - that is to review and improve its substance and effectiveness, to incorporate new information, to refine its recommendations and to recommend new directions for the Village when warranted. The comprehensive master plan is a document that is prepared and changed from time to time as part of the on-going process of planning for the future of the Village.

Changes in this comprehensive master plan will occur as follows:

1. By amendment, so as to modify the substance, policy or recommendations of the Plan as a whole or any part of the Plan.
2. By addition of programs which detail or elaborate on features of this Plan.
3. By addition of technical supplements containing data and information in support of the Plan.
4. By the addition or correction of factual information in the Plan, including the maps, such as identification of new streets, development sites and land conditions.

MOUNTAIN RESIDENTIAL
 HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL
 VILLAGE SECONDARY RESIDENTIAL
 VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL
 VILLAGE BUSINESS
 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 COMMERCIAL
 COMMUNITY FACILITY
 OPEN SPACE
 WETLAND/STREAM

MR
 HR
 SR
 VR
 VB
 MF
 C
 CF
 OS
 W

