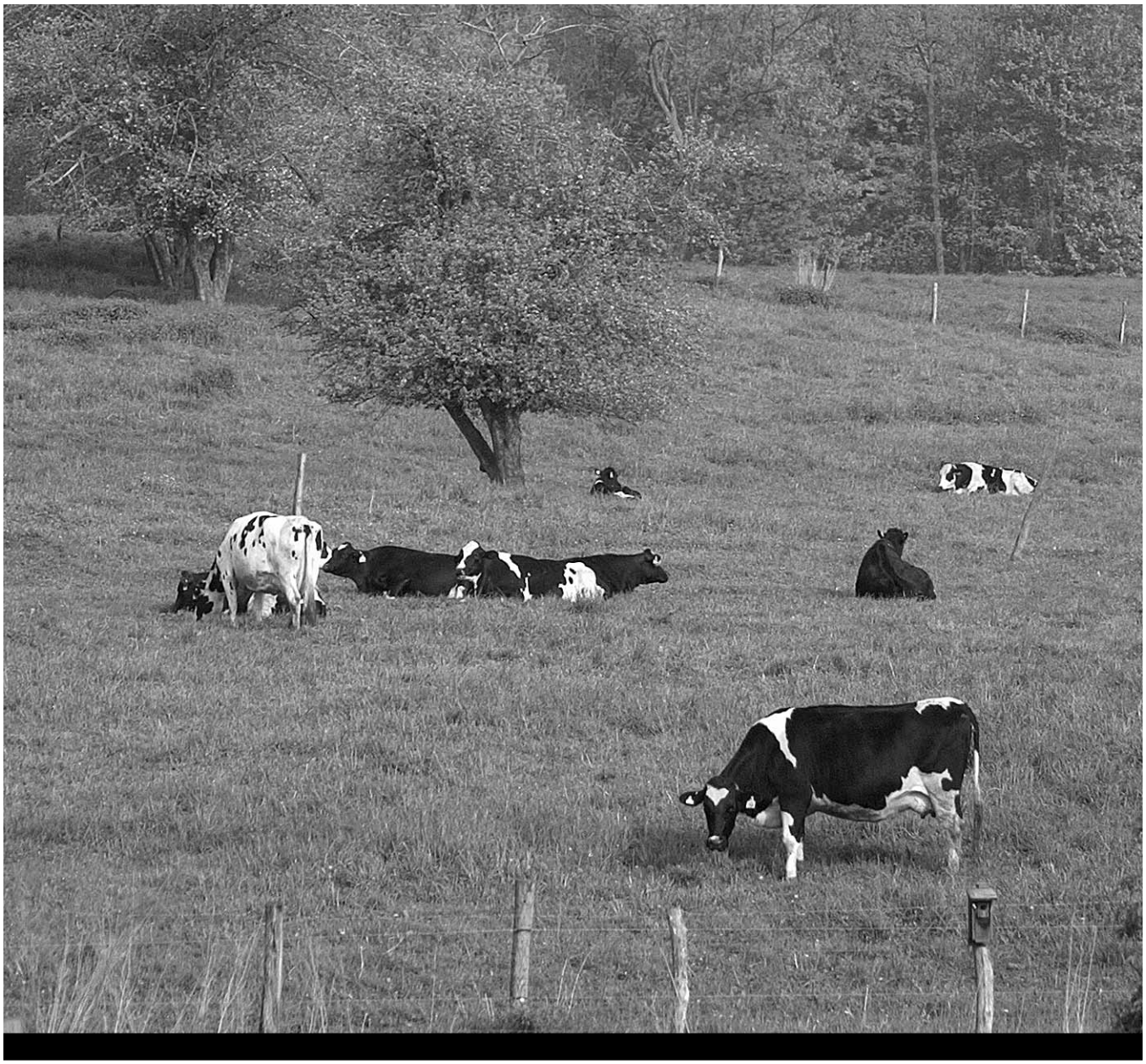
Town of Northumberland 2003
Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Preserving Agriculture,
Open Space and a Rural Lifestyle



Final Draft / July 2004

Our Vision

The Town of Northumberland is a community that celebrates its agriculture, open spaces and rural lifestyle.

Our goal is to preserve these special qualities by thoughtfully managing growth, so that we remain a desirable community in which to live and work for generations to come.

Summary of Recommendations

> Land Use

- Preserve and encourage agricultural uses within the Town of Northumberland
- Preserve the rural, open-space character of the town
- Provide incentives for the development of clean industry in appropriate areas within the town
- Provide for the limited development of modest commercial areas within the town sufficient to meet the needs of residents
- Encourage single-family development as the preferred density where soils and utilities are adequate
- Allow for the creation of affordable housing within the town

> Environment

- Preserve and protect the unique natural areas and plant and animal communities within the town
- Preserve and protect the water quality of Northumberland's streams, rivers, ponds and wetlands
- Preserve and protect the town's groundwater supplies
- Discourage building on steep slopes to prevent erosion and protect water quality
- Require that densities and development patterns are consistent with soil suitability and the protection of the town's agricultural resources
- Improve the visual quality of the town and protect view sheds and scenic vistas

> Economic

- Encourage creation of job opportunities

> Historic Resources

- Preserve and protect existing historic sites and structures
- Promote an awareness of the town's historic character

> Community Facilities

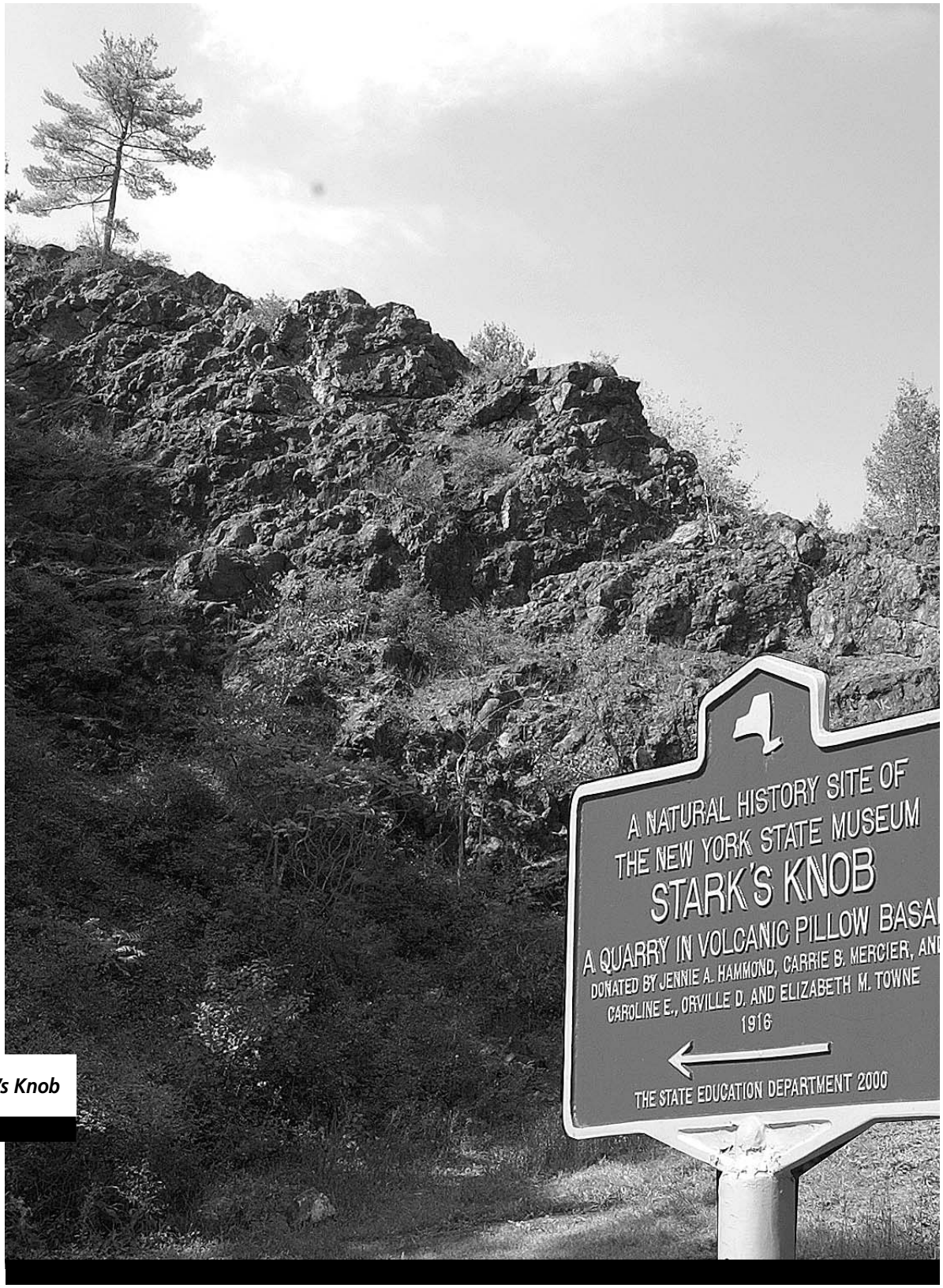
- Continue the town's policy of not owning or operating private water supply systems under any circumstances
- Continue to support town fire and emergency services for town residents; as growth continues, support the future fire and emergency needs of the community
- Support policies that assure sound solid-waste disposal practices
- Enforce the town Leash Law
- Continue funding and supporting the Town of Northumberland, Town of Wilton and Village of Schuylerville Youth Commissions
- Consider increasing areas serviced by street lights only through a petition of residents to form a lighting district
- Provide up-to-date information to both the Schuylerville Central School and South Glens Falls School districts regarding rates of growth and development within the town

> Transportation

- Preserve and enhance the functional capacity of roads within the town
- Require new roads, whether offered for public dedication or not, to be constructed to the town road standard
- Establish a rural road overlay district to help preserve certain town roadways
- Use access-management along NY 50 and other major roads for new developments
- Provide for linkage between present and future developments
- Continue to maintain and improve town roads; address problem areas previously identified on town, county and state roads

> Recreation

- Expand the scope of recreational opportunities available to town residents



Historic Stark's Knob

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Managing Growth in Northumberland

The Town of Northumberland faces the challenge of how to manage growth, provide services to its 4,600 residents, maintain and protect its infrastructure, and strengthen its tax base — even as it preserves its rural character, promotes active farming, and protects its open space and clean water. This is a task that many agricultural communities are undertaking with new urgency in the first decade of the 21st century.

The 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Town of Northumberland is an important tool in our efforts to meet that challenge. It expresses a strong intent to preserve the agricultural character of the town, foster a strong farm economy, and preserve open space and view sheds.

Northumberland's Unique Characteristics: The rural, agricultural nature of Northumberland gives the town a special quality of life and sense of community. These unique characteristics need to be protected through the use of various planning tools, including planning design, zoning laws, enforcement, tax abatement, incentives and other choices that are available to Northumberland's town boards and residents.

By carefully using these tools, the Town of Northumberland can manage growth, address specific goals identified by its citizenry, and still maintain the beauty and other characteristics of a small, rural community.

One of Northumberland's most outstanding features is its location on a plateau bordered by the Southern Adirondack Mountains to the north and the Hudson River, one of the nation's great waterways, on the east. Farming, our main industry, and one from which many residents still make their living today, preserves this pleasant setting.

It is this bucolic environment that has led to an interest in development in our town. Should we falter in the wise preservation of our open space, we would lose not only our main industry — agriculture — but also the very appeal that has attracted many new and welcome residents to Northumberland.

How This Plan Was Developed: The Town of Northumberland developed its first Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 1991. At that time, specific goals were identified through a survey of town residents. With the availability of new data from the federal government's 2000 Census, the town began a review of that plan in the fall of 2001. Once again, residents identified specific needs and desires for the town in a survey carried out during the winter of 2001/02 (See Appendix). Many town residents' goals remain the same as they were over 12 years ago, but there is a new concern for the preservation of not just our agriculture, but our open space and beautiful view sheds.

A Working Document: This plan is a philosophical guide for the review of development projects, as well as for efforts to preserve open space and agricultural lands. It should be viewed as a working document. It is intended to be implemented through the town's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

We recommend that the plan be reviewed and updated every five years, or as the needs of the town change. The Northumberland Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals should actively use it as a guide to ensure that the decisions they make are consistent with the goals of the town.

Town of Northumberland Comprehensive Land Use Committee
November, 2003

Northumberland Today

A Brief History

The Town of Northumberland lies in northeastern Saratoga County, bordered on the east by the Hudson River, on the north by the Town of Moreau, on the west by the Town of Wilton and on the south by the Town of Saratoga. Northumberland was created early in the history of Saratoga County. It was taken from the Town of Saratoga in 1798 and originally included, in addition to its current boundaries, Wilton, Moreau, and parts of Hadley and Corinth.

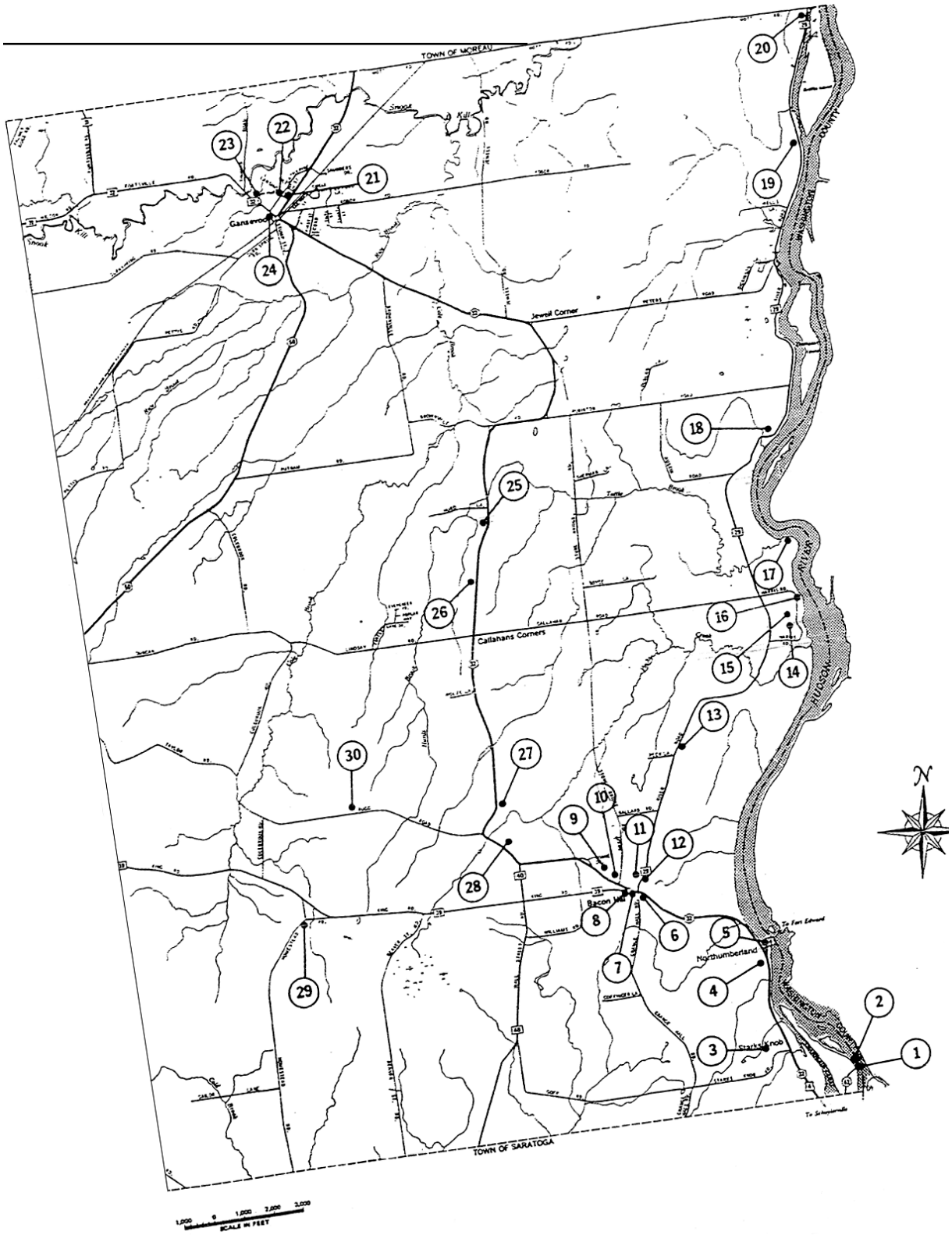
Early settlers in the late 18th century found much to admire in Northumberland. There were plentiful farmlands, forests for logging and streams to power mills. Ferries were established across various points of the Hudson to facilitate trade and transportation. Hotels and taverns characterized settlement clusters that were surprisingly well populated before the Revolution.

The agricultural economy of the post-revolutionary war times resulted in many more hamlets in the town than exist today. Hamlets at that time had 20 to 30 families and also had a mix of industry, retail and public facilities. The hamlets of Gansevoort, Bacon Hill and Northumberland are still in existence today. The opening of the Champlain Canal in 1823 made the hamlet of Northumberland an important shipping point for goods.

The town features a number of Revolutionary War-era sites and structures. The list that follows highlights significant sites and is accompanied by a location map.

The Gansevoort Mansion, circa 1800.

Historic Sites
Town of Northumberland



Historic Sites of Northumberland

1. Clarks Mill Bridge, 1899, built by R.F. Hawkins Iron Works, three-span, through-truss iron bridge

2. Site of Burgoyne's Bridge of Boats, 1777

3. Stark's Knob, hill of volcanic pillow basalt, one of only two examples in the U.S. The lookout was occupied by troops under American General John Stark during the Revolutionary War to prevent retreat of British troops after the Battle of Saratoga, 1777. A "pocket park" scenic walkway has recently been added to this location.

4. Jesse Billings Bank, 1875, built by local boat builder, first floor office contained built in vault, second floor used as living quarters

5. Northumberland Bridge, iron structure built in 1906, replaced wooden bridges of 1803 built by Theodore Burr known as Fort Miller Bridge and other wooden replacements in 1845, 1859 and c. 1890. Toll bridge for many years

6. Captain Martin J. Burke Home, c. 1820-30, national military figure, West Point graduate 1836, hero of Mexican War, where he was killed in 1847

7. Bacon Hill Grange, 1905, Grange #828, organized by County Deputy Wood of Milton Grange at home of George Slocum, 1897

8. Site of Ebenezer Bacon Home, 1794, built first frame tavern in Pope's Corners 1794, renamed Bacon Hill c. 1832 in his honor

9. Bacon Hill Schoolhouse, prior to 1866 part of District #7. Moved from original location just north of Bacon Hill

10. Bacon Hill Dutch Reformed Church, c. 1820, now known as Bacon Hill Church

11. Site of Fake Tavern, early site where town, state and general elections and town meetings held

12. Site of Fake Home, front constructed from parts of Fake tavern, c. 1868

13. Peck Home, prior 1836, former tavern owned by William Harris, later additions 1849

14. John Harris home and tavern, c. 1830, located in farming and mercantile settlement of several houses, saw and grist mill, store. Harris family cemetery can be seen from West River Road.

15. Site of outhouse of Harris home, constructed similar to Greek Revival Harris home with plastered and papered walls, columns, pediment, and six holes — three for men and three for women

16. Site of John Harris grist and saw mill, 1832, first used as mill site 1772, became farm trading center for miles around. A corner stone of the original mill remains at the site

17. Site of Fort Miller, 1755, fort built by English Col. Miller in angle of river bend on flat protected on three sides by the river and cove at entrance of small creek, further defended by small parapet of timber covered with earth and with a ditch in front, for use against possible French and Indian Attack

18. Site of British Bake Ovens, 1777, for preparation of army bread, on property of early resident Samuel Lewis

19. Site of John McCrae home, prior 1777. McCrae was a Revolutionary soldier and brother of Jane McCrae, whose slaughter by Burgoyne's Indians is famous among Revolutionary legends

20. Col. Sidney Berry home, c. 1800, early settler, Revolutionary soldier and first supervisor of Northumberland, 1798-1800, first president of the Temperance Society of Moreau

21. Gansevoort Methodist Church, c. 1838, land donated by Herman Gansevoort

***22. Site of Dutch Reformed Church**, 1839-41, erected by Herman Gansevoort, restored 1891-99

23. "Little Yellow House" of General Peter Gansevoort, 1797, who received title to the land in 1783 when it was confiscated from Troy Hugh Munro. There is also a tenant house behind the house

***24. Gansevoort Mansion**, c. 1800, home of Herman Gansevoort. Son of General Peter Gansevoort, renovation and porch addition, c. 1835. Herman Melville, nephew of Peter Gansevoort, spent time here.

25. James Carrigan House, c. 1830, one-time tavern on stage coach route; originally built by Vanderwerker family; known recently as the Hodgson residence

26. Vanderwerker Farm, c. 1840 Greek Revival farmhouse, pioneer family settled before the Revolution

27. Abraham Marshall home, purchased by Marshall from James McCready, 1838

28. Jesse Billings farm and schoolhouse, prior to 1866 brick home containing vault which Billings used as private bank. He was a prosperous farmer, boat builder and entrepreneur.

29. Site of Laurie West Schoolhouse, late 1850s, home of Laurie and William West located next to school

30. Rugg Tavern, 1802. Logs and produce going to river for shipping hauled past tavern, later home of Augustus G. Deyoe

*Source: Saratoga County Communities, a Historic Perspective, Prepared by Saratoga County Planning Board, 1980. Underscored numbers indicate State Marker at site. * indicates National Register site.*

As time passed, the hamlets became less industrialized, but agriculture remained strong. The town has maintained its rural, agricultural character to this day. The town has a number of historic sites and structures, many of them associated with the Revolutionary War Saratoga Campaign, which concluded just to the south of Northumberland in present-day Stillwater. These sites include General Burgoyne's "Bridge of Boats" across the Hudson River and Stark's Knob, used as an observation point by American troops.

Terrel Hills, Northumberland's largest residential subdivision

Demographics:

We've Grown Rapidly

The Town of Northumberland has experienced incredible growth over the last 20 years, increasing in population from 2,732 in 1980 to 4,603 in 2000, for an increase of 68.5 percent. Most of that growth has occurred at the southern end of the town, which is served by the Schuylerville Central School District. Until the 1960s and 1970s, population growth within the town lagged behind most neighboring towns in Saratoga County, but that has now changed.

Table 1 illustrates Northumberland's growth in population over the last 40 years. Northumberland's population growth in the last 10 years is double the growth rate for the entire county, according to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau. Northumberland's growth rate during the last decade is also much higher than its neighbors, the towns of Moreau, Wilton and Saratoga.

As a regional comparison, Northumberland has the 4th-highest growth rate in Saratoga County, behind the towns of Providence, Edinburgh and Halfmoon. In the 1980s, Northumberland surpassed its neighboring towns of Moreau and Saratoga in rate of growth.

Table 1

Population Change for Northumberland and Its Neighbors, 1960-2000

Town	1960	% Increase	1970	% Increase	1980	% Increase	1990	% Increase	2000
Northumberland	1,353	7.1	1,779	31.5	2,732	35	3,645	26	4,603
Moreau	8,406	39.5	10,411	23.9	11,188	7	13,022	6	13,826
Wilton	1,902	35.2	2,984	56.9	7,221	59	10,626	18	12,511
Saratoga	3,515	9	4,206	19.7	4,595	8.4	5,069	1.4	5,141
Saratoga County	89,096	19	121,764	36.7	153,759	21	181,276	10.6	200,635

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission

According to the 2000 Census, the median age of Northumberland's population is 33. That young median age suggests that even more growth can be expected due to growth of families. The table below illustrates the expected growth in the town over the next 37 years.

Table 2

Population Projection for Northumberland and its Neighbors, 1990–2040

Town	1990	% Increase	2000	% Increase	2010	% Increase	2020	% Increase	2030	% Increase	2040
Northumberland	3,645	26	4,603	6	4,867	5	5,131	5	5,395	4	5,632
Moreau*	16,528	2	16,917	5	17,802	5	18,616	3	19,210	2.6	19,722
Wilton	10,623	18	12,541	19	14,961	7.3	16,060	5	16,970	3.6	17,590
Saratoga*	7,014	2	6,855	3	7,094	3.4	7,336	2	7,535	2.8	7,741
Saratoga County	181,276	11	200,635	8.8	218,373	6	231,855	5	244,279	4.4	254,934

**Villages included*

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission

Northumberland is projected to continue growing at a rate of 6 percent between 2000 and 2010, which is a significantly slower rate than in the past. The number of households has almost doubled since 1980 from 841 to 1,593. The average household size is 2.89, a decrease since 1980.

In 1991, Northumberland's population was slated to grow rapidly until 2000 and then even off, surpassing even Wilton's growth. That has not happened, but the development dynamics that have played a role in Wilton's growth could not have been projected. Northumberland's population is projected to be 5,395 in the year 2030, compared with its 2000 population of 4,603.

Northumberland is served by two school districts, South Glens Falls and Schuylerville. Both districts showed a decline in enrollment during the 1980s — a trend that occurred

throughout Saratoga County — even though housing starts had generally increased. Development has been accompanied by a demand for greater school service. The South Glens Falls District, which encompasses the northern portion of the town, including the NY 50 corridor, and the Schuylerville Central School District, which encompasses the southern portion of the town, have both seen significant increases in enrollment since 1990 as illustarted by Table 4 below.

Table 3

School District Enrollment

	1990-1991	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Schuylerville	1426	1421	1467	1549	1568	1608	1616	1624	1649	1672	1619
S. Glens Falls	2707	2787	2890	2876	2922	2975	2966	3120	3162	3164	3164

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission

During the 1990s, enrollments for both Schuylerville and South Glens Falls school districts have grown steadily. Towards the late '90s, as indicated by Table 3, Schuylerville had leveled off, but South Glens Falls continued to increase at a steady rate until the 2000-01 school year, when enrollment was unchanged.

Current Land Use:

Farming Predominates

The Town of Northumberland consists of 20,738 acres or 32.4 square miles. Farming is our predominant land use, accounting for roughly two-thirds of the town's land. Agriculture has been encouraged and protected through the Saratoga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 1, which encompasses the eastern and northern portions of the town.

Saratoga County also has an Agricultural Farmland Protection Board, which has developed an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan for Saratoga County with the assistance of the County's Planning Department.

Three hamlets within the Town of Northumberland support a higher intensity of land use. In descending order of size they are Gansevoort, Northumberland and Bacon Hill. Several other clusters of residences on US 4 and NY 50 display some of the characteristics of hamlets, but they lack significant commercial or other non-residential components.

Residential Development

Northumberland experienced an increase in the number of subdivisions and housing developments during the 1990s. This increase was most noticeable in the western portion of the town. The town's 1991 Comprehensive Plan noted only five subdivisions that were either developed or filed with the county to be developed.

Agriculture is the most important industry in Northumberland.

A number of major housing developments have been initiated within Northumberland since 1991:

- Homestead Estates, on Homestead Road off NY 29, an open-space, cluster subdivision whose design retained open space, has 25 building lots.
- Schuyler Heights, off NY 32, is approved for 23 total lots.
- Rimbrave Estates, off NY 50 and Duncan Road, is approved for 49 lots.
- Beaver Ridge, off Duncan Road, is approved for nine lots.
- Castlewood and Queens Court developments, adjoining one another on King Road, each have 46 building lots.
- Tanager Woods is a subdivision mentioned in the 1991 plan as having 47 single- and multi-family lots. To date this development has changed hands several times and is now named Woodland Manor.

As Table 4 shows, the town issued an average of 47 building permits annually during the 1990s, almost exclusively for single-family homes.

Table 4

Town of Northumberland Building Permits 1991-2002

Year	Residential	Single Family	Multi-Family
1991	52	48	4
1992	43	43	0
1993	39	38	1
1994	53	53	0
1995	31	30	1
1996	58	58	0
1997	51	51	0
1998	47	47	0
1999	50	50	0
2000	22	22	0
2001	13	13	0
2002	16	16	0

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission

There are also approximately 118 mobile-home units in the Town of Northumberland, mainly located in four separate mobile-home parks. Under the town's zoning regulations, new mobile homes are allowed only in parks.

Mobile home parks in the town are located at the intersection of County Routes 31 and 32, on Putnam Road, at the intersection of Colebrook Road and Duncan Road, and on County Route 32. Mobile homes are primarily found in the northwestern corner of the town. The Shelley Mobile Home Park has had the most recent development activity, with a projected maximum build-out of 200 mobile home sites. As of 2003, the Town Planning Board had granted the owner approval of 56 mobile home sites, contingent upon favorable review by the New York State Department of Health.

The NY 50 corridor, which transects the northwestern portion of the town, is a mixture of uses, including commercial, residential, mobile homes and light industrial. This corridor is currently zoned Residential Office under the 1991 Plan as an incentive to develop a mixed-use corridor. Most of the commercial uses in the town remain in the hamlets and are limited to convenience stores. Home occupations, which are allowed by special use permit, are a growing trend in the town.

There are few industrial uses in the town. The largest facility is Stone Bridge Iron and Steel Co., Inc., which is located at NY 32 and Stone Bridge Road. It is currently undergoing expansion. West Side Iron Works, a metal-fabrication firm, is located just south of Gansevoort on Pettis Road. Fane Concrete, which is not currently operating, and Amerigas propane sales are both located in the hamlet of Northumberland, in the southeastern part of the town along US 4. The other industrially zoned property within the town is located in the northwestern portion of the town contiguous to a rail line and is currently undeveloped.

Current Zoning in Northumberland

Existing residential zones in the town are one-acre and three-acre zones. The zoning revisions that followed the 1991 Master Plan used soils and topography to create these residential zoning boundaries. The function of the R-3 district was to serve as a transition zone between residential and agricultural lands, creating a buffer of at least three acres around agricultural lands so that houses would not be visible from them. A zoning map of the town is found in the pocket appendix of this document.

Approximately 433 acres in the town are zoned industrial. Many of the lands along Pettis Road are zoned industrial, but have residential uses on them. Stone Bridge Iron and Steel is a heavy industrial use on NY 32 in the Agricultural District in the center of town. West Side Iron Works, a metal-fabrication firm, is located just south of Gansevoort on Pettis Road. Amerigas Propane Sales and Fane Concrete are both located north of Schuylerville on US 4. (Fane is not currently in operation.)

Northumberland's hamlets have the town's highest density housing. These areas are also located along major roadways and serve as the service centers for Northumberland. These areas do not have public utilities other than streetlights. The Gansevoort hamlet in particular offers a mixed-use area with residential homes and public services such as town facilities, post offices, ball fields, retail shops and even a small theater. The town also has four parcels of designated Empire Zones, which are designed to create jobs.

The NY 50 corridor is currently zoned Residential Office to promote development of residential and professional office space. The goal of this district was to discourage strip commercial uses on NY 50 and to encourage that development into the hamlet areas that are already commercial in nature. This area has not seen an increase in office growth, but residential uses have increased.

Northumberland's Hudson River Overlay District is a 500-foot zone that was placed along the river to preserve and protect the waterways natural characteristics. A similar overlay district may be considered to protect the integrity of the Colebrook, a classified trout stream according to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Using special setbacks for development in addition to DEC wetland buffers could protect and enhance the quality of the waterway.

Saratoga County also has forestlands within the town that provide open space and passive recreation opportunities for town residents. The county maintains these lands, and it is expected that they will remain forested.

The town historian lists 14 cemeteries within the Town of Northumberland. Northumberland also has three churches: St. Therese Roman Catholic Chapel and the Maranatha Bible Church, both located in the hamlet of Gansevoort, and the Dutch Reformed Church, in the hamlet of Bacon Hill. The town hall, highway garage, post office and fire house are all located in Gansevoort.

Table 5

Cemeteries in Northumberland

Name	Location	Contact
Bacon Hill	Stonebridge Road	Bacon Hill Cemetery Association
Brownville	Brownville Road	N/A
Burt	West of NYS Route 32	N/A
Davis	East side of Thomas Road	Town of Moreau
Garnsey	NYS Route 32	N/A
Gansevoort (new)	NYS Route 32, Gansevoort	Floyd Rourke
Ganesvoort (old)	Catherine Street, Gansevoort	Old Gansevoort Methodist Church and Dutch Reformed Church
Harris	River Road	Harris Family
Houseworth	West of NYS Route 32	N/A
Johnston	Between Champlain Canal and Hudson River	Prospect Cemetery Association
Laing	NYS Route 32	N/A
Lansing	Off NYS Route 32, Gansevoort	N/A
Mott	NYS Route 29	N/A
Nevins	West River Road, Co. Rd. #29	N/A
Thompson-Griffen	West River Road, Co. Rd. #29	N/A
Vanderwerker	NYS Route 32, Vanderwerker Farm	N/A
Williams	King Road	N/A

Source: Association of Municipal Historians of New York State

New York State owns several land holdings on the Hudson River, including the island immediately east of Lock 5 of the Champlain Canal. Saratoga County owns 377 acres of reforestation lands in the central portion of the town bordered by Duncan, Colebrook and Taylor roads. A 123-acre county forest lot known as the Fire Pond lot is located off Pettis Road. The 104-acre Kalabus woodlot, which is managed by BOCES students, is located at the end of Gailor Lane in the southern section of Northumberland. The county manages these lands for timber production, and town residents use them for hiking, snowmobiling, and various other forestry-compatible recreational uses. Historically, there have been problems with the use of this land with respect to litter and dumping. The county has placed gates along portions of its forest lands in Northumberland to try to curb these activities.

Economic Activity:

The Key Role of Agriculture

Agriculture, the most important industry in Northumberland, is vital to the town's economic well-being. There are several other industries and commercial businesses located within the town. But less than 20 percent of Northumberland's working residents have jobs within the town, according to the 2000 Census.

Natural Resources

Land-use planning requires a thorough understanding of the natural resources of the community. This information is gathered through inventory and analysis of each resource.

Table 6

Income Data, Town of Northumberland

1989 Per Capita Income $12,185
1989 Median Household Income $34,681

Median Per Capita $19,492 (1999)
Median Family Income $47,788(1999)

Income Range	No. of Households	Income Range	No. of Households
Less than $10,000	74	$50,000 to $74,999	525
$10,000 to $14,999	68	$75,000 to $99,999	207
$15,000 to $24,999	134	$100,000 to $149,999	107
$25,000 to $34,999	149	$150,000 to $199,999	0
$35,000 to $49,999	316	$200,000 & Over	13

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census

Table 7

Employment Projections by Place of Work, Town of Northumberland

Industry	1990	2000	2010	2020
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, & Mining	63	76	83	82
Construction	44	51	53	55
Manufacturing	12	12	12	12
Transportation, Communications & Public Utilities	5	5	5	5
Wholesale & Retail Trade	165	167	174	178
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	0	0	0	0
Services	16	110	115	119
Public Administration	7	7	8	8
Total	412	428	450	459

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census

Table 8

2000 Employment by Industry and Place of Residence, Town of Northumberland

Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Mining	82
Construction	180
Manufacturing	414
Transportation, Communications and Public Utilities	94
Wholesale Trade	64
Retail Trade	336
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	45
Services	524
Public Administration	67
Total	1,806

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission, 2000 Census

Table 9

2000 Employment by Industry and Place of Residence, Town of Northumberland

Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Mining	35
Construction	123
Manufacturing	429
Wholesale Trade	51
Retail Trade	392
Transportation, Warehousing Utilities	64
Information	23
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Rental and Leasing	90
Professional Scientific Management, Admin & Waste Mgmt	191
Educational, Health & Social Services	431
Arts Entertainment Recreation Accommodation & Food Services	137
Public Administration	173
Other Services	127
Total	2,266

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission, 2000 Census

After each resource is examined, it is then placed on a map and, through an overlay process, the land most suitable for development is identified, as well as the areas within the town which are not suitable for development.

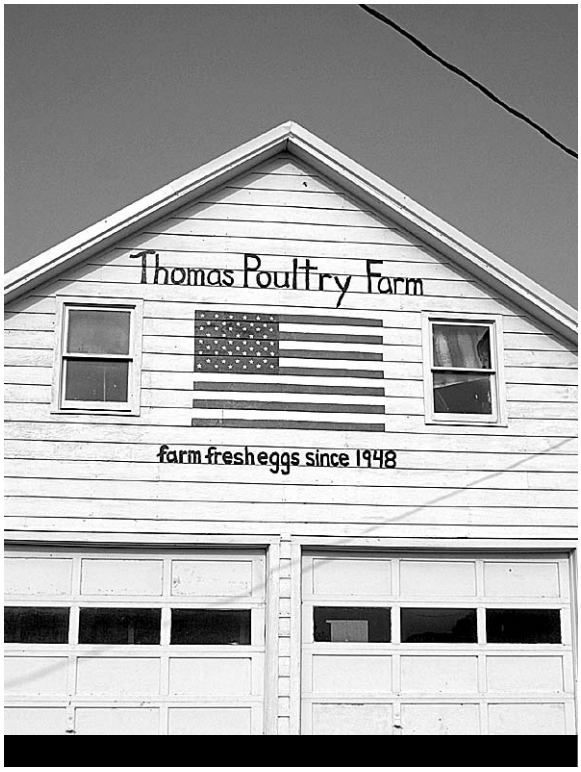
Topography and Slope

Most of Northumberland is an undulating plain with elevations ranging from 200 to 300 feet above sea level. One of its major topographic features is Palmer Ridge, a drumlin-shaped hill running northeast/southwest across Wilton, Moreau and Northumberland. Along the eastern border of the town, the land rises in a gentle escarpment approximately 100 feet above sea level. The escarpment is a result of erosion in the Hudson River flood-plain before the damming of the river. The town also has some steep slopes and ravines cut by streams flowing east on their way to the Hudson River on the town's eastern border.

Slope is a measure of steepness of land over a given distance. For development purposes, lands which can be categorized as having 0-8 percent slope have none to few limitations for development. Slope of 8-15 percent is moderate, and some slope stabilization measures such as retaining walls or rip-rap may be required to develop. Slopes of 15-25 percent have severe limitations for development and are typically not buildable.

Geology and Soils

Most of Northumberland sits atop Canajoharie shale. This shale was formed in Ordovician times (435-500 million years ago) as a deep, black ocean mud. The shale was later exposed after the sea drained away and softer rocks lying above the shale were stripped away by erosion.



Bedrock outcrops are common along a low, northeast/southwest axis in the northeast corner of town and in many streambeds. The shale is mined in several locations for driveway or private road construction. It is soft and friable and relatively easy for heavy equipment to rip or break. There are minor outcroppings of the Mount Merino and Indian River shale formations in the extreme southeast corner of the town. These shales are similar to the Canajoharie. This portion of town also has a few rocks altered by metamorphism associated with the Taconic Mountains in the east.

Northumberland also has the geologic curiosity of Stark's Knob located near the Hudson River in the southeast corner of town. The knob is a pillow basalt extruded during crustal upheaval as result of the Taconic Mountain-building episode, and is one of only two known pillow lavas in the United States. The knob, which has been mined in the past, is an historic place, a scenic viewpoint, and an area of interest for rock climbers.

Depth-to-bedrock maps have been prepared by the Saratoga County Planning Office and may be found there. Depth to bedrock is a factor in rating the suitability of soils for development.

The Town of Northumberland is part of the Hudson Valley subdivision of the Hudson-Mohawk lowland. The surface geology of soils is a product of recent glaciation. Sandy soils generally represent beaches and shallow lake environments, while heavier clay soils are the result of deposits in deep-water lake environments. Recently formed alluvial soils are the result of streams and rivers depositing silt and sediment in floodplains. Soils in Northumberland can be divided into four distinct groups. Soils in the west and central parts of the town are generally sands while the eastern parts of the town are generally characterized by heavy clays. Shallow, shaley soils and alluvial soils are also found in the town.

The sandy soils were formed in glacial outwash deltas and near the shores of glacial lakes. Oakville, Claverack, Deerfield, Cosa and Scio soils are characteristic. The clay soils were formed in the deeper portions of glacial lakes. As noted above, there is a thin ridge of shaley soils and rock outcrop beginning near the intersection of Callahan and Stone Bridge Roads and trending northeast to the Hudson River. These include Nassau Broadalbin Rock Outcrop complex, and include areas where shale is mined. Along the Hudson River is a thin strip of recently formed alluvial soils, the Teel and Limerick silt loams.

Each of the general soil types presents different opportunities and suitabilities for development. The sandy soils are best suited for development. However, many are characterized by a seasonally high groundwater table which hinders their use for septic disposal. Also, some of the sandy soils have an excessively rapid percolation rate, which can lead to pollution of groundwater supplies by seepage.

The clay soils, although not considered prime agricultural soils according to the New York State rating system, are generally well suited for agriculture and are used for such. On the other hand, they are poorly suited for development because of a high groundwater table and slow percolation rate. The shale-derived soils are poorly suited for development because of the lack of available soil to allow percolation for septic systems. Alluvial soils generally have a high groundwater table and are located in floodplains and are also not suitable for development.

The eastern half of the town is characterized by soils with severe development constraints due to a high water table, slow percolation rate, and in some cases, shallow depth to bedrock. Other areas with restrictive soils are the northwest corner of town on either side of County Routes 31 and 32, and the southeast corner of town around Gailor Lane and west of Homestead Road.

Areas with soils best suited to development are found in the central and western portions of town.

Surface Water Resources

Northumberland is located within the Hudson River drainage basin; most drainage flows north and east to the Hudson River. The town's major stream is the Snook Kill, which enters from the Town of Wilton just south of County Route 32 and meanders through Northumberland before entering Moreau and discharging into the Hudson River. The Snook Kill drops over Big Falls in a scenic ravine northwest of the hamlet of Gansevoort.

The Cole Brook is a major tributary of the Snook Kill draining the western portion of Northumberland. Rice Brook is a large tributary of Cole Brook.

Several small streams empty directly into the Hudson. These include Peck's Creek, Tuttle Brook and several unnamed streams. Additionally, several streams in the southern part of town flow southerly, emptying into Fish Creek located within the Town of Saratoga.

The Hudson River shoreline, which forms the eastern boundary of Northumberland, is very scenic and not heavily developed. The river drops 40 feet over three dams creating rapids in some stretches as it flows south. These dams are located at the north end of Thompson Island, at Lock No. 6 at Fort Miller, and north of Lock No. 5 at Thomson. Griffin Island and Thompson Island, both privately owned, and the islands immediately east of Lock No. 5 of the Champlain Canal (owned by New York State) are all located within the Town of Northumberland.

Other Water Resources

Other water resources in Northumberland include a scattering of farm ponds, several impoundments of Rice Brook along Pettis Road and what appear to be glacial kettle-type ponds located in the southwest corner of town. One of the larger ponds in Northumberland is the County Fire Pond located on Rice Brook off Pettis Road. This pond is stocked with trout by Saratoga County and is heavily used by fishermen in the spring.

The Hudson River and Snook Kill have floodplains associated with them. Floodplains are mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which requires that municipalities adopt regulations for construction within the 100-year floodplain of a water body. A 100-year floodplain is an area with a 1 percent statistical chance of flooding in any given year. These regulations are administered by the Town of Northumberland and essentially require that new construction in the floodplain be at or above the water level calculated to occur during the 100-year flood, or that the structures be flood-proofed.

Two General Electric Company capacitor-manufacturing plants in Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, upstream from Northumberland, discharged up to an estimated 1.1 million pounds of PCBs into the Hudson River during a 30-year period ending in 1977. As the result, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified the Hudson River from the New York Battery north to Hudson Falls as a federal Superfund site. After more than a decade of study, the EPA reached a Record of Decision in February 2002 to require that GE selectively dredge approximately 2.65 million cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediments from the Hudson River between Fort Edward and the Troy Dam.

The EPA has stated that remedial dredging of the Hudson River will begin in the spring of 2006 and be completed by 2011. It is expected that a major portion of the dredging

will occur on the Town of Northumberland's eastern boundary. The impact of the dredging on the town was unclear at the time of this writing. Northumberland will rely upon Saratoga County's assistance to monitor the design and implementation of the project to assure minimal disruption.

The Town of Northumberland has consistently opposed New York State's fishing ban enacted in 1976 on the Hudson River due to PCB contamination. The river is an important water resource of the Town of Northumberland, and town officials felt the State should continue to allow catch-and-release fishing in the PCB-affected upper Hudson River. The fishing ban was lifted in 1995 and was replaced with a "catch-and-release only" fishing program for this area which has since gained popularity, thereby allowing this resource to be used for sport fishing.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) classifies and regulates streams by their highest and best use. The classification system goes from AA (highest) to D (lowest), and includes a C (t) designation for those waters capable of supporting trout. Water quality standards and thus regulations governing discharges to streams are highest for AA- and A-rated streams and lowest for D-rated streams. In addition, a permit is required from the DEC for any activity which may disturb a C (t) or higher classification stream bed or its bank.

Within Northumberland, the Snook Kill is rated C to a point just above Gansevoort and C (t) upstream from this point. All tributaries to the Snook Kill are classified as D except Cole Brook, which is a Class C (t) stream. Some tributaries of Cole Brook are rated C (t). The remaining streams in the town are class D. There are no Class A or B streams in the town.

Wetlands

Northumberland has numerous wetland areas within its borders. They are located along the Hudson River in the northeast part of Town, along the Cole Brook and its tributaries, along the Snook Kill, in the low-lying areas north of Gurn Spring Road, parallel to Palmer Ridge, in the southwestern section of town near the headwaters of Cole Brook, and along small tributaries of Fish Creek.

Wetlands serve a number of valuable functions, including providing wildlife habitat, recharging groundwater supplies, filtering and cleansing surface waters, attenuating stormwater flows, and providing aesthetic, open space and educational benefits.
New York State regulates and classifies all wetlands of 12.4 acres or more. There are 12 such wetlands within the town, some extending linearly along streams for several miles. The classification system spans from I (highest quality) to IV (lowest quality). Construction or disturbance in a State-regulated wetland or within 100 feet of its boundaries, except for activities related to most agricultural pursuits, requires a permit from the DEC.

In addition, the Federal government, through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, regulates filling activities within many smaller wetland areas. Such activities require notification and a possible permit from the Corps. Regulatory mapping of Corps wetlands had not been completed as of this writing. National Wetland Inventory maps, although non-regulatory, have been produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and may provide guidance. Landowners must be aware of the potential for regulation of wetlands, even where there is

no apparent DEC mapping. Where the presence of wetlands is suspected, a field check by a qualified person is the only accurate way to verify the boundaries. This is especially important since Federal regulations do not recognize ignorance of the wetlands' presence as an excuse, and provide for severe civil and criminal penalties for disturbance of wetlands.

Groundwater Resources

Most houses in Northumberland derive their water from individual wells. Terrel Hills, Shelley Park Mobile Home Park, and Colebrook Mobile Home Park are the only developments which are served by community groundwater systems.

Wells supplying groundwater in Northumberland are found in both bedrock and unconsolidated deposits (i.e., "loose" deposits such as sand and gravel). Wells driven in clay and silt in Northumberland have poor yields. Wells driven in sand and gravel have much higher yields. The western portion of the town has been mapped as an unconsolidated aquifer by New York State. Wells drilled in the unconsolidated aquifer can be expected to yield 10 gallons per minute (gpm). Larger supplies can be developed in the unconsolidated aquifer, as evidenced by the privately operated Terrel Hills water supply system.

There is also an unconsolidated aquifer located immediately adjacent to the Hudson River. This aquifer is associated with the river and would be expected to yield significant quantities of water, a least 100 gpm. Most unconsolidated aquifers are more vulnerable to pollution than are bedrock aquifers because they are relatively shallow, recharged from the surface and transmit water readily. Thus, they have a higher likelihood of being polluted on a small scale by improperly functioning septic systems or high density development and on a larger scale by spills, leaking fuel tanks or similar occurrences.

Bedrock groundwater supplies within the Town of Northumberland are derived from the Canajoharie Shale. Most wells east of NY 32, except those very close to the Hudson River, derive water from shale bedrock. Shale is typically not a good water producer; however the Canajoharie formation is fissile (i.e. thinly bedded and easily broken) and therefore able to transmit greater quantities of water along bedding planes and cracks than more thickly bedded shales. The average yield of wells found in the Canajoharie shale in Saratoga County is 9 gallons per minute (gpm); the range is from 0.5-80 gpm.

Wells drilled in the Canajoharie Shale often are unable to produce adequate quantities of water for domestic use. This groundwater sometimes contains hydrogen sulfide gas, which gives the water an unpleasant odor, and iron in varying concentrations.

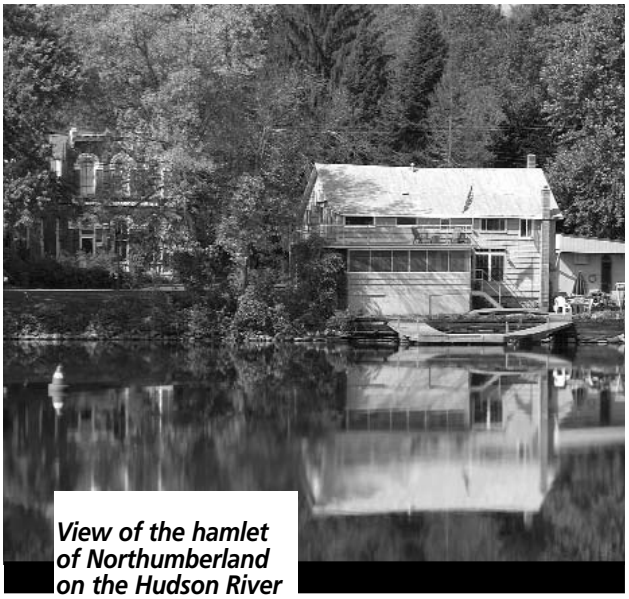
Plants and Animals

Northumberland lies in the Oak-Northern Hardwood vegetation zone. The town has a patchwork of cropland, pasture, brush and second growth wood lots. Most of the forests are cut-over woodlots. A few stands of relatively mature forest with large individual trees do exist. The western portion of the town has four Saratoga County reforestation areas that support several hundred acres of red and white pine plantations.

The Town of Northumberland is home to an endangered plant species called the Climbing Fern. It is found in the northwestern corner of town and is protected by an

agreement between the landowner and the Nature Conservancy. There are also several endangered animal species that live in Northumberland, according to the State's Natural Heritage program. The names of the species and locations of their habitat are kept confidential, but the Planning Board is aware of the approximate location for review purposes. The town also has several significant wildlife habitats — the Climbing Fern area and a number of Pine Barrens areas along NY 50 corridor in the western portion of the town. Pine Barrens, a relatively rare and unique habitat, are home to the Karner Blue Butterfly, an endangered species.

Northumberland has a wildlife assemblage typical of upland farming communities. Deer, turkey and rabbits are popular species for hunters. The Hudson River, adjacent wetlands and agricultural lands are important sources of food and shelter for migrating water fowl, including large flocks of geese. Historically the Hudson River has been an excellent fishery. Fishing is also possible in the Snook Kill, Cole Brook and in the stocked County Fire Pond. Wetlands, wooded ravines and woodlots provide food and shelter for the array of upland species which inhabit Northumberland.



View of the hamlet of Northumberland on the Hudson River

Air Quality

Air quality is an important factor in the Town's quality of life. It should be protected by encouraging residents to dispose of trash properly, including using the local transfer station and recycling facilities. Open burning should be discouraged. Burning plastics, pesticides, rubber or any other noxious odor-causing materials is illegal under New York State Law, and violators can be fined.

The majority of the town is agriculture, which produces farm-related odors as a part of daily operation. The Right to Farm Law in Northumberland notifies adjacent landowners that there are agricultural pursuits in progress and that they may produce odors on any given day.

Open Space and View Sheds

Because of its agricultural nature, its diverse topography, its location and its rich history, the Town of Northumberland offers some of the most beautiful and unique open space and view sheds in Saratoga County. These "green" resources include Hudson River overlooks, rolling farm fields, woodlands and stream corridors, views of the Adirondack and Green mountains, turn-of-the-century barns, Revolutionary-era homes, historic landmarks, and geological curiosities like Stark's Knob.

Northumberland's open space and view sheds need to be protected. They help protect streams and water quality, preserve habitat for plants and animals, preserve the town's rural character, provide recreational areas, protect home values and reduce costs of municipal services.

Of equal importance is the preservation of the town's environmentally sensitive lands. These include steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, forests and stream corridors.

Despite its abundant open space, the town has no designated trail system or any kind of formal program to actively preserve its valuable green resources.

Alfalfa chopping at the Carr Family Farm on King Road.

Agriculture:

The Economic Backbone of the Town

Northumberland has a vibrant agricultural base that is the economic backbone of the town. The Comprehensive Land Use Committee, whose members include a number of farmers, estimates that about a dozen farms in the town now generate annual gross retail sales exceeding $20 million, making Northumberland one of the highest grossing towns in Saratoga County in terms of agricultural production.

But the town's most important industry is under significant development pressure. One of the leading goals of this plan is to maintain and protect agricultural pursuits within Northumberland.

Most of the agricultural lands in Northumberland are within the Saratoga County Agricultural Consolidated District No.1, which includes 58,934 acres in five towns.

Approximately 64 percent of Northumberland is situated within Saratoga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 1, which also includes portions of the towns of Saratoga, Wilton, Stillwater and Moreau. Of this land in agricultural use, 23,958 acres are owned by farmers and 12,890 acres are rented by farmers. Cornell Cooperative Extension gathered annual gross farm sales for the district in 1996 (Table 10).

The State passed the Agricultural District Law in 1971 to protect commercial farm land and preserve agricultural soil and water resources. It is based on the premise that a "critical mass" of farmland in any given area is necessary if the area is to remain agriculturally viable. Once an agricultural district is approved by Saratoga County and New York State, it becomes a defined agricultural area subject to the following provisions:

- Municipalities may not enact local laws which would inhibit normal farm operation;

- Prior to an eminent-domain action by government or quasi-governmental agencies, the agency must demonstrate that no feasible alternative exists;

- Levies and assessments for non-farm service districts can only be applied against the one-half acre surrounding each non-farm structure;

- State agencies must develop their policies and operation procedures to be supportive of agriculture; thirteen towns in Saratoga County have now adopted Right to Farm Laws with Northumberland being the first to enact the law in 1991.

Table 10

Annual Gross Farm Sales, Agricultural District No. 1, Saratoga County, 1996

33 farms	—	$10,000 or below
22 farms	—	$10-39,000
12 farms	—	$40-$99,999
15 farms	—	$100,000-$199,999
21 farms	—	$200,000-$499,999
12 farms	—	over $500,000

Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension

In 1997, the Saratoga County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board proposed a farmland protection plan for Saratoga County. The plan established a set of goals to achieve better understanding of the various agricultural practices found in Saratoga County and their contribution to the county's economy and quality of life. The Farmland Protection Board is comprised of farmers, county agencies and community organizations, all of whom have worked together to develop a plan to promote and enhance the economic viability of Saratoga's agricultural sector by protecting the natural resource base upon which it depends. This plan identifies and recommends various land-use tools and methods, which if adopted by local governments would provide protection for farmers and their land. Some of the tools recommended in the plan include local Right to Farm Ordinances, Average Density zoning, Purchase of Development Rights, Tax Abatements, Conservation Easements, and Cluster or Conservation subdivision designs.

Several towns in Saratoga County have recently instituted the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) as a planning tool to preserve and protect farmland and open space, using state and federal grants. The Town of Malta recently budgeted $500,000 for preservation of open space and to meet its local contribution as a part of a state PDR grant application program. The Town of Saratoga and Stillwater both have completed PDR projects, and two other projects have been accepted by the state and are in the final steps of the PDR approval process. Saratoga County has budgeted $1 million over 3 years (2003-05) to provide matching agricultural and open space protection grants to Saratoga County's municipalities. The Town of Northumberland may want to take advantage of this program and other planning tools outlined in this Master Plan to preserve and protect its farmland and open space.

Transportation

The Town of Northumberland has an excellent highway system which is an important contributor to the town's vitality and quality of life. Constructed at great public cost over many years, our transportation systems are often overlooked or undervalued when a community considers its land-use policies.

As growth continues throughout the county, and as population and vehicle use rises, it is inevitable that even the most rural communities like Northumberland will feel the effect of increasing delays caused by traffic congestion. Unlike public water and sewer systems, our transportation infrastructure cannot by its nature be readily expanded. There is a finite capacity or functional capacity in the highway system, and once it is degraded by poorly planned growth, it cannot be restored. The amount of federal and state transportation improvement funds are being reduced year to year and the bulk of these monies are now being dedicated to maintaining the current system.

Communities cannot rely upon the state or the county to preserve their highway system. As a "home rule state," land use decisions in New York State which affect the transportation system are almost exclusively the responsibility of the local municipality.

The Town of Northumberland is committed to preserving the capacity and efficiency of its transportation system for future generations.

The Importance of Access Management: A public road has two essential functions: a public one, moving people and goods, and a private one, providing access to adjoining lands. These two functions often come into conflict as development occurs. Every new driveway onto a public road represents a new intersection. Turning into and out of these driveways conflicts with through traffic. As the number of intersections and resulting turning movements increase, the level of service of the roadway decreases. It is imperative, then, that town land use regulations and the review of development proposals by local boards is based on the principles of access management.

Access management is a transportation-planning discipline based on a set of goals which recognize the hierarchy of the highway system. All highway systems are based on

the ascending importance of local, county and state roads. In Northumberland, NY 50 is an arterial highway capable of safely serving thousands of vehicles at high speeds and connecting the town to adjacent municipalities, the region and beyond. County roads which developed from the historic farm-to-market system are important collectors which provide a connection between the arterial system and the local street system. Local roads should be viewed as the primary providers of access to private property. The purpose of arterials and collectors is weighted towards the public function of moving people and goods while local roads serve the private function of providing access to property.

Understanding this distinction is important if a community wishes to implement a successful access management program. Access management goals and specific tools to be utilized by the Town Planning Board are listed in Table 11.

Preserving Our Rural Roads: Northumberland's local road system is a reflection of the town's historic rural character and natural beauty. Narrow two-lane roads, often gravel or oil and stone, and lined with mature trees, reflect a natural beauty and peacefulness of a time long past. Preserving this unique and dwindling asset is a specific goal of this plan.

It is recommended that a photographic survey be conducted to catalog the town's rural roads worthy of preservation for future generations. Following completion of the survey, a rural road overlay district should be incorporated into the town's zoning and planning processes to insure the preservation of these unique highways. The overlay district should require special setbacks for all new development and minimum buffers designed to preserve natural vegetation along the roads' frontage. Driveways should be offset in such a way that vistas are maintained. This goal may justify the granting of development incentives to induce landowners to design developments which preserve the public viewshed.

Table 11

Transportation Policies and Objectives

GENERAL (Applies to All)	STATE	COUNTY	LOCAL
The public interest and investment in the highway system takes precedence over individual property rights to access when the two are in conflict.	Local governments will have to shoulder a greater share of the cost of improving transportation system.	County highway system must be able to insure the rapid movement of large volumes of traffic. Functional capacity must be reserved for future	Land use should be balanced with transportation facilities.
Traffic studies will be required to assess impact of major projects.	Shrinking resources will limit DOTs ability to solve transportation problems brought on by growth and development.	County highways serve primarily as traffic carriers, they shall serve other functions such as access only to the extent and off-street that such other functions do not compromise their primary function.	Comp plans should reflect transportation planning policies. preserved.
Future right-of-way for expansion of major highways and development of new highways should be preserved.	Where specific unacceptable impacts can be linked to individual proposals approval will be conditioned upon construction of mitigation measures by the developer.	Traffic studies for major projects must identify existing level of service and future L.O.S. after project's completion. Developer responsible for any mitigation measures required to maintain L.O.S.	Adopt minimum frontage, setback and off-street parking standards to control access, provide for density bonuses to induce interior development.
Enhance value, efficiency capacity of highways thru implementation of transportation planning practices.	Access standards will insure orderly traffic control, safeguard capacities, and insure uniform design practices.	Request additional right-of-way along County collectors as condition of approvals.	Traffic studies for major projects must identify existing level of service and future L.O.S. after completion. Developer responsible for any mitigation measures required to measures required to maintain L.O.S.
Promote control of development along arterial and collector highways.			Promote joint or common access for all land uses.
			Promote inter-site circulation between common uses.
			Utilize PUD and cluster provisions to conserve highway frontage.
			Reserve future access to vacant lands adjoining project.
			Utilize a rural road standard in conjunction with open space design as an alternative to individual driveways.

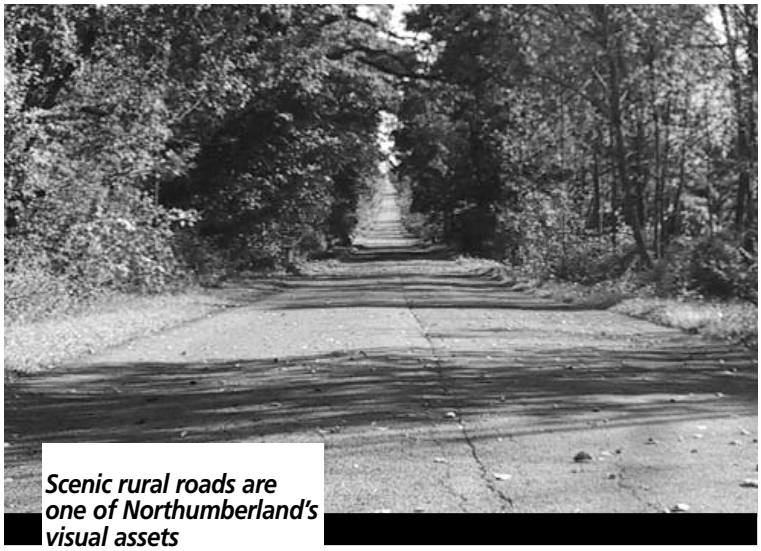
Source: Saratoga County Planning office

It is essential that the town highway superintendent be a partner in this process. Highway departments must be aware of the effect of widening travel lanes and paving shoulders simply to accommodate a segment of the public which demands wide, flat and high-speed highways.

Rural roads, like the entire highway system, are a public asset, and their preservation takes precedence over the interests of a few private developers or landowners. Growth and development will, and should, occur, but that development need not happen at the expense of the town's highway system.

Northumberland's Roads: Northumberland has approximately 60 miles of town roads. Fifty-two miles are hard surfaced, consisting of blacktop, stone and oil. About nine miles are gravel roads and lanes. The town road system is generally in good condition. Fourteen miles of roadway in the town are owned by the county. They are West River Road (CR 29), Fortsville Road (CR 31), Wilton-Gansevoort Road (CR 32), King Road (CR 39), Wall Street (CR40) and Clarks Mill Road (CR 42). State Highways in the town include NY 32, NY 32 and US 4, and NY 50, for a total of 14 miles.

In an effort to maintain the county highways, the Saratoga County Department of Public Works takes traffic counts every fall. Northumberland has six county routes within the town that serve as the major collector roads from the arterials such as NY 50 and NY 32 to the small rural roads that traverse the town. Table 12 shows the change in traffic counts since 1991 when the original Comprehensive Plan was written. It iluustrates that CR 39, King Road, has seen explosive increases due to residential growth.



Scenic rural roads are one of Northumberland's visual assets

One problem area for state roads is at the intersection of NY Routes 50 and 32 in Gansevoort, where a "T" intersection should be constructed to replace the current angled intersection.
Traffic in Northumberland has increased on NY 50 due in part to the development that has occurred in Wilton.

NY 50 is the arterial road that leads traffic to Interstate 87, the Adirondack Northway, at Exits 15 and 16. Two other town roadways experiencing significant increases in traffic volume are Duncan and Taylor roads, both of which are collector roads for NY 50 in the eastern portion of the town.

Airports: Heber Airport is a privately owned facility in the town. It is located on Brownville Road and is available for public use. The airport features a 2200-foot by 24-foot blacktop runway used mostly by general aviation.

Table 12

Traffic Counts on Six County Routes in Northumberland

Section	1989	2001	% Change
CR 29, Bacon Hill-River Road			
North of Clark Road	683	674	-1.3
North of Purinton Road	955	280	-70
North of NY 32	519	522	+.6
South of NY 197	1,005	856	-.14
CR 31, Fortsville			
South of U.S. 9	1,238	917	-26
North of CR 32	951	877	-7.8
CR 32, Gansevoort - Wilton			
East of CR 34	517	634	+23
West of Gansevoort	1,454	1,474	+1.3
CR 39, King Road			
East of NY 50	734	2,044	+178
West of CR 40	501	1,388	+177
CR 40, Grangerville Rd.			
South of CR 39	412	491	+19
North of NY 29	543	596	+5.7
CR 42, Clarks Mills			
East of US 4	1,888	N/A	

Source: Saratoga County Department of Public Works

Utilities

Northumberland does not currently maintain any municipal water-supply system, and it is unlikely to develop one in the near future for two reasons. One is cost. The other is because those areas best suited for development are underlain by an unconsolidated aquifer which provides good water quantities and quality.

Community water systems serve three areas in Northumberland: Terrel Hills, Colebrook Mobil Home Park, and Shelley Park. The state Health Department requires private systems for subdivisions exceeding 49 lots when municipal water is not available.

Terrel Hills, a residential subdivision south of Taylor Road in the west-central part of town, was originally filed in 1975 and contains 229 occupied single-family residences. The subdivision's private water supply and distribution system is supplied by both shallow and deep wells. Shelley Park, located south of Putnam Road in the central part of town, is a 78-site trailer park with an additional 126 sites available for future expansion. In the mid 1990s, a pump test yielded enough water for the build-out of the park and an additional 196 residential homes.

Sewers within the Town of Northumberland are similarly limited. The Gansevoort Sewer System serves approximately 22 homes along Third and Fourth streets. The system is financed by Gansevoort Sewer District funds. Treatment consists of a series of septic tanks and a leach field located at the end of Fourth Street.

First, Second, Third and Fourth streets in Gansevoort are served by a stormwater drainage system which was originally paid for with Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds. Maintenance is performed by the Town Highway Department.

Street lights within the hamlets of Northumberland, Bacon Hill and Gansevoort are paid for out of the Town General Fund.

Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NiMo) provides electric services to the Town of Northumberland. A few areas are served by three-phase power, but most of the town is served by single-phase power. The location of these power lines and any upgrading that NiMo has carried out is not available to the public due to security concerns.
NiMo maintains two natural gas transmission lines that run through the Town of Northumberland. One transmission line enters the town from the west along King Road (CR 39) and proceeds easterly to Bacon Hill, where it turns south along Grange Hall Road for a short distance, then east over a right-of-way to NY 32. It then proceeds south to the Northumberland US 4 bridge. A natural gas distribution line also runs south past Stark's Knob to the village of Schuylerville.

Two privately owned hydroelectric generating facilities are located along the Hudson River within the Town of Northumberland. The hydroelectric facilities are at the north end of Thompson Island and at Lock No. 6 at Fort Miller.

Community Facilities

Community facilities within the Town of Northumberland are modest. The Town Hall and Town Highway Department are located in the hamlet of Gansevoort. The Highway Garage repairs and maintains all town highways. The Gansevoort Volunteer Fire House in Gansevoort provides coverage for the northern portion of the town, while the Schuyler Hose Volunteer Fire Department, in Schuylerville, serves the southern half of town. The Moreau Emergency Squad and the General Schuyler Emergency Squad provide emergency medical services for the town. Gansevoort, with 12831 as its zip code, has the only U.S. post office in the town.

Table 13

Community Services in Northumberland

SERVICE	PROVIDER	LOCATION
911	County-wide	
Airports	Heber Airport, Inc.* Albany International Airport Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Saratoga County Airport	Northumberland* Albany, N.Y. Glens Falls, N.Y. Ballston Spa, N.Y.
Ambulance Service	Moreau EMS Schuylerville EMS	Moreau Schuylerville
Cemeteries		(See Table 5)
Churches	Bacon Hill Reformed St. Therese's Roman Catholic Maranatha Bible	Bacon Hill* Gansevoort* Gansevoort*
Fire Protection	Schuyler Volunteer Gansevoort Volunteer	Schuylerville Gansevoort*
Garbage	Transfer Stations/Recycling Various Other Facilities	Northumberland* Saratoga Springs Moreau Middle Falls
Garbage Pickup	Various Private Haulers	At Home
Home Care	Saratoga Public Health Schenectady VNA Eddy VNA Seton Health In Home	In Home In Home In Home In Home
Hospitals	Saratoga Hospital Glens Falls Hospital	Saratoga Springs Glens Falls
Library	Glens Falls Saratoga Schuylerville SALS – Books by Mail	Glens Falls Saratoga Springs Schuylerville
Meals on Wheels	Saratoga County Office for the Aging	Schuylerville
Police	State Police County Sheriff*	Schuylerville Substation, Wilton Substation, Northumberland Town Hall
Postal Services	Gansevoort — 12831 Schuylerville — 12871 Saratoga Springs — 12866	Gansevoort* Schuylerville Saratoga Springs
Schools	Schuylerville Central South Glens Falls Various Private/Religious	Schuylerville South Glens Falls Various
Senior Citizen Program	Town	Gansevoort*
Senior Transportation	County	Gansevoort*
Youth Program	Town	Ballston Spa

* In Town of Northumberland

Gansevoort Volunteer Fire House

As previously noted, two school districts serve the residents of the Town of Northumberland. Students in the northern half of town attend schools in the South Glens Falls Central School District. Students in the southern half attend the Schuylerville Central School District.

Recreation

Northumberland offers a mix of municipal and private recreation areas, as well as an inter-municipal recreation area in the Village of Schuylerville known as Fort Hardy Park. The Town of Northumberland has several municipal recreation areas. The Bertha Smith Ball Park on Kobor Rd. in the hamlet of Gansevoort was recently renovated by volunteer parents and is now maintained by the town. The County-owned fire pond on the McGowan reforestation lot on Pettis Rd. is still used and has had improvements over the last ten years, including installation of a parking area and signs. A 3.6-acre park was created in the Terrel Hills subdivision in the mid-1990s. Recent additions to the park include a basketball court, swings and a perimeter fence.

The Town of Northumberland has a Recreation Commission which promotes and sponsors activities for youth such as arts and crafts, dances and sports. The Town Hall serves as a youth center and senior citizen center.

Several residents made comments about recreation in the Comprehensive Plan survey. Suggestions included general park improvements and increased recreation for families, a community pool, social activities and a play area for small children, hiking/cross country ski trails, and a bike path.

Saratoga County owns approximately 500 acres of reforestation property in the central portion of the town along Pettis Rd., Taylor Rd., Duncan Rd. and at the end of Gailor Lane, which can be used for forestry-compatible public recreational.

Areas of Concern

Infrastructure

With Saratoga County experiencing one of the highest growth rates in New York State, the county's towns and villages, including Northumberland, are facing increased development pressure. The Town of Wilton, Northumberland's neighbor to the west, has experienced an

explosive amount of commercial development along its NY 50 corridor — a highway that extends north into Northumberland. Much of the Town of Wilton's agricultural and open space lands have been developed to meet the housing and commercial needs of the greater Saratoga Springs area. Residential subdivisions have been constructed north of Interstate 87's Exit 15 in the NY 50 corridor and into the western portions of Northumberland. This has created an increased demand for infrastructure. The potential extension of public services into the Town of Northumberland could pose a threat to the town's rural character and the agrarian economic base it supports.

Historically, several developments within the town have had difficulty meeting the water demands of their residents. New regulations implemented by Northumberland and the State Department of Health have helped to alleviate future water-supply problems, however. The town's Planning Board, in cooperation with the town engineer and building inspector, rigorously review site plans to ensure that there is an adequate water supply and proper conditions for sewage systems necessitated by development.

It has been a policy of Northumberland not to support the formation of private water transportation corporations within the town. Any failure may obligate the town to assume their ownership and operation, which could be financially and administratively onerous for a small, rural town. There are currently three community water systems in the town: one which serves 229 homes in the Terrel Hills development on Taylor Road, the Shelley Park Mobile Home Park on Putnam Road serving approximately 24 homes, and Colebrook Mobile Home Park serving 20 homes.

Implementation

Implementing Northumberland's zoning ordinance, local laws and building permit activity has posed many challenges since the Town of Northumberland wrote its first Comprehensive Plan in 1991. The town needs to implement a monitoring system for special permits it issues. This will allow the town to track the intensity of uses permitted and to assure they are not having negative impacts on surrounding properties and the town's road system. Strict guidelines should be written so that when a special use has exceeded its time limit, it is re-examined for the scope of the permitted use. The Planning Board can then either re-issue the permit or subject it to additional review. The town has the ability through its special permitting process to limit the number of times that a special use may be renewed before it is subject to review by the planning board.

Enforcement

The town has a part-time code enforcement officer who oversees building permits, zoning violations and any land use/ zoning complaints that the town receives on a daily basis. The increased development being experienced within the town has made enforcement of zoning regulations and monitoring building permits a challenging task.

The ability of the town to enforce its new plan and any subsequent changes to its land use regulations is critical to the success of the plan. The town may want to take the opportunity during the updating process to assess enforcement issues, re-evaluate its personnel needs, and devise a strategy to deal with the necessary changes that arise.

Recommendations

And How to Achieve Them

The agricultural and open nature of Northumberland provides the town with its quality of life, economic strength, and special sense of community. These are characteristics unique to Northumberland. Preserving them should play a central role in the town's decisions as it manages development during the first decade of the 21st century.

The challenge facing the Town of Northumberland is to use thoughtful planning to manage future growth while protecting the beauty and character of our small, rural community. These goals have been established by examining the Community Survey responses and inventorying the physical resources of the town.

> Land Use Goals and Implementation

Preserve and encourage agricultural uses within the town

- Continue to participate in Saratoga County's Agricultural District program, which assesses the land for agricultural use, thus encouraging Northumberland farmers to keep their land in farming.
- Continue to use agricultural use value assessment for viable farms
- Mandate clustering or other open-space preservation techniques, where possible, for subdivisions
- Maintain a suitable buffer between R1 (1-acre) lands and agricultural lands (5 acres) by use of R3 (3-acre) zoning where needed.
- Encourage public, private and not for profit groups to purchase or secure by other means development rights from farmland while allowing agricultural use to continue.

Preserve the rural, open-space character of the town

- Housing densities should be managed to maintain the rural character of the town. The highest-density housing should be contained within the hamlets and lowest densities in agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas
- Require open space/green space set-asides from new subdivisions where possible; otherwise, continue to apply the recreation fee requirement to new subdivisions
- Amend the town's subdivision regulations and the zoning ordinance to require that houses be sited so that agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands and vistas are preserved through buffer zones and open-space design

- Encourage clustering in all land use areas by mandating clustering for subdivisions in agricultural districts and other areas as determined by the Planning Board

- Encourage the use of scenic overlay zones, including a rural road overlay zone to protect scenic vistas

Provide incentives for the development of clean industry in appropriate areas within the town

- Create suitable industrial zones in appropriate areas within the town.

- Use Planned Unit Developments and Empire Zones as economic and zoning incentives

- Provide for screening, buffering and environmental performance standards during the site plan review process

Provide for the limited development of modest commercial areas within the town sufficient to meet the needs of residents

- Continue neighborhood-scale (such as small businesses and stores), commercial development within the hamlets of Gansevoort, Bacon Hill and limited areas along NY 50 in Northumberland.

- Encourage commercial uses in the hamlets

- Control the visual appearance of new commercial uses within the town through the special permit and site plan review process. These should also include the detailed review of architectural, signage and lighting criteria.

Encourage single-family development as the preferred density where soils and utilities are adequate

- Evaluate the housing densities specified in the existing zoning ordinance as to their compatibility with existing agricultural uses and the rural character of the town

Allow for the creation of affordable housing within the town

- Consider creative options for affordable housing, such as density bonuses in selected areas of the town

- Amend the zoning ordinance to allow frontage bonuses for residential lots which use interior subdivision streets rather than town roads.

- Continue to allow existing mobile homes to be upgraded and new mobile homes to be placed in mobile home parks

> Environmental Goals and Implementation

Preserve and protect the unique natural areas and plant and animal communities within the town

- Recognize the following natural resources as unique environmental areas:
  - "Big Falls" of the Snook Kill
  - Hudson River shoreline from US 4 bridge north to Town of Moreau line
  - Stark's Knob
  - Climbing Fern colony
  - County fire pond
  - Designated areas containing threatened and endangered species
  - Saratoga County Agricultural District 1
  - Pine Barrens
  - Scenic vistas and view sheds

- Encourage private groups such as Saratoga PLAN to implement conservation easements to protect the town's unique environmental areas

- Continue to protect existing natural areas within the town; note the location of rare, threatened, or endangered species on development plans as part of the site plan, special permit and subdivision review process.

Preserve and protect the water quality of Northumberland's streams, rivers, ponds and wetlands

- Continue to require mandatory setbacks for developments adjoining surface water resources within the town

- Require that erosion- and sediment-control plans be approved by the town in compliance with New York State Phase 2 Stormwater Management regulations for soil disturbing activities on areas of one acre or more

- Continue to monitor and comment on the Hudson River PCB Superfund remediation project to reduce community impact

- Enact stream corridor management guidelines per NYSDEC recommendations

- Manage stormwater runoff so that post development runoff conditions are equal to or less than the pre development conditions.

- Continue to regulate clear cutting and selective harvesting under the town's Watercourse Protection Local Law #1 and the Soil Disturbing Activities Local Law # 2 of 1991

- Regulate development in floodplains and floodways in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines

Preserve and protect the town's groundwater supplies

- Install all wells and sanitary facilities in accordance with state standards
- Prohibit certain potentially polluting uses on lands overlying the town's aquifers
- Require special permit site plan review for certain less potentially polluting uses located over the town's unconsolidated aquifer
- Require all landfills, whether public or private, to be sited, constructed and monitored to assure that groundwater contamination does not occur
- Support the investigation and mitigation of any construction and demolition debris landfill

Avoid building on steep slopes to prevent erosion and protect water quality

- Prohibit new construction on slopes greater that 25 percent and carefully review construction proposed on slopes of 15-25 percent grade
- Require erosion and sediment control plans as appropriate
- Require applicants to comply with the general State permit requirements of the Phase 2 Stormwater Management program

Require that densities and development patterns are consistent with soil suitability and protection of agricultural and open space resources

- Continue to use residential densities as recommended in the Land Use Plan component of the Town's Comprehensive Plan
- Use viable agricultural soils for agricultural purposes

Improve the visual quality of the town and protect view sheds and vistas where possible

- Establish a scenic rural road overlay zone to protect the visual quality of certain roadways and areas within the town
- Carefully review all new commercial, industrial, office and residential development to ensure visual quality
- Strictly enforce the town's Local Law #1 of 1989 prohibiting auto junk yards
- Continue to enforce the town's Local Laws # 1 and # 2 of 1991, which protect watercourses and regulate soil disturbance

> Economic Goals and Implementation

Encourage creation of job opportunities

- Provide appropriate areas for commercial, industrial and office growth
- Promote establishment of appropriate Empire Zones within the town
- Work with local economic development entities to attract new businesses, especially industries and businesses compatible with rural character.
- Encourage home occupations, including the use of barns and similar outbuildings
- Ensure quality in planning and design through the site plan review process

Recoup development review costs through planning and zoning application and review fees

- Amend the zoning ordinance and the subdivision regulations to allow the Planning and Zoning Board to recoup project review costs

> Community Facilities Goals and Implementation

Continue to support the policy of the town's not owning or operating private water supply systems under any circumstances

Continue to support town fire and emergency services for town residents; as growth continues, support the future fire and emergency needs of the community

- Continue to encourage local fire departments and emergency personnel to examine new projects for their emergency services implications
- Continue to support the town's emergency 911 program

Support policies that assure sound solid-waste disposal practices

- Encourage town residents and agricultural operations to make full use of the town's transfer station and recycling facilities
- Encourage agricultural operations tp participate in agricultural hazardous waste disposal programs sponsored by Saratoga County

Enforce the town leash law

Continue funding and supporting the Town of Northumberland, Town of Wilton and Village of Schuylerville Youth Commissions

Consider increasing areas serviced by street lights only through a petition of residents to form a lighting district

Provide up-to-date information to both the Schuylerville Central School and South Glens Falls School districts regarding rates of growth and development within the town.

> Transportation Goals and Implementation

Preserve and enhance the functional capacity of all roads within the Town of Northumberland

- Adopt rural road standards in Northumberland's Subdivision Regulations for all new developments when a new street is created so that rural character can be maintained

Require all new roads, whether offered for public dedication or not, to be constructed to the town road standard

- Strictly enforce the road standards, recognizing that some modifications may have to occur due to soil and other environmental conditions

Establish a rural road overlay district to help preserve certain town highways

Use access-management techniques along NY 50 and other major roads for new developments

- Ensure adequate spacing of entrances
- Require adequate site distances for proposed driveways and entrance roads
- Encourage shared access and paired access between adjoining uses and promote circulation between adjacent sites
- Adopt setback requirements that will allow for additional rights-of-way for possible widening of NY 50 in the future
- Provide for future access points in the site plan review process

Provide linkage between present and future developments

- Reserve potential areas for future access easements during site plan review where feasible

Continue to maintain and improve town roads; address problem areas previously identified on town, county and state roads

- Support the reopening of the Dix Bridge across the Hudson River in the hamlet of Northumberland for pedestrian and recreational uses

> Recreational Goals and Implementation

Expand the scope of recreational opportunities available to Town of Northumberland residents

- Create an Open Space Committee to identify and develop such opportunities as a town walking/nature trail
- Charge the Recreation Commission with creating a recreation plan prioritizing recommended improvements and costs
- In cooperation with Saratoga County, develop the County Fire Pond as a town park
- Develop a ball field/recreation area within the town
- Develop picnic areas at scenic locations identified by either the Recreation Commission or a possible new Open Space Committee
- Develop one or more town recreation areas, possibly through the use of easements, on the Hudson River. Explore the use of State land for recreational purposes; the long-term objective would be to acquire public land for use as a boat launch/swimming area when the Hudson River is cleaned up
- Continue to support and participate in development of the "Hudson Crossing" bi-county park and the "Lakes to Locks" initiatives in the hamlet of Northumberland
- Continue to fund town recreation improvements through the use of recreation fees required under the town's subdivision regulations and the general fund as appropriate.

> Historic Resource Goals and Implementation

Preserve and protect existing historic sites and structures

- Consider establishing a historic preservation committee charged with identifying historic structures and developing a plan for their preservation
- Adopt site plan review and buffer requirements for new uses located within a specified distance of historic sites and structures

Promote an awareness of the town's historic character

- Continue to fund the town historian position and historic awareness projects as appropriate

Land Use Tools for the Future

Fortunately for Northumberland and its Planning Board, there are many planning tools available to protect, preserve and promote the agriculture and open spaces that give the town its special character. These tools include, but are not limited to, the following:

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR): Purchase of Development Rights is a local, voluntary program that would pay certain owners the value of their land's development rights in exchange for a conservation easement. The value of development rights would be equal to the value of the land if it were sold for development (market value), minus the agricultural value of the land (agricultural value). Only parcels within targeted areas would be eligible for PDR consideration.

Easements can be tailored to each situation upon agreement of the municipality and the landowner. Buildings associated with the future expansion of the farm can also be included in the agreement. Beginning in 2003, Saratoga County funded a three-year, $1 million PDR program for its communities. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets also administers a PDR program funded under the Environmental Protection Fund and the Clean Air/Clean Water Bond Act. Grants awarded competitively each year require 25 percent in matching dollars. Saratoga County has been successful in securing grant money through this program.

Average Density Zoning: Average Density Zoning is a land preservation technique based upon the granting of specific physical, social or cultural benefits or amenities to the community. These amenities or bonuses could include adjustments to use, density, area requirements or any other provisions found in the town's zoning ordinance. Community amenities or benefits are defined by Town Law as "open space, housing for persons of low or moderate income, parks, elder care, day care or other specific physical, social, cultural amenities or cash in lieu thereof, of benefit to the residents of the community authorized by the town board." Average density or incentive zoning can have numerous applications from agricultural land protection to parkland, trail development, permanent open space, or as a source of funding for PDR.

The Town of Malta recently amended its zoning ordinance to authorize its Planning Board to grant a 5 percent increase in home sites within open space subdivisions that provide "special" community benefits. The Town of Milton's recently revised zoning ordinance allows a 50 percent increase in the number of lots where the owner/subdivider is able to preserve at least 50 percent of the site as open space.

Open Space/Conservation/Cluster Subdivisions: Using this method of design, a developer is allowed to vary the dimensional requirements (lots size, frontages, setbacks, etc.) of the existing zoning in order to "cluster" the residences and create greater areas of open space. The enabling statute states that overall density of the site may not be greater than the existing zoning would otherwise allow. Cluster subdivisions typically maximize development density away from agricultural land, parkland, or the natural resource area to be preserved such as wetlands or stream corridors. The resultant open space created may be owned by a homeowners association, dedicated to the town as parkland, donated to a conservation organization or added to a single private lot with a conservation easement. A local law empowers the Planning Board to require submission of both conventional and cluster lot layouts for new subdivisions.

Planned Development Districts (PDD): Planned Development Districts involve site-specific rezoning of parcels to provide flexibility to developers while maintaining a high degree of local control and providing certain benefits to the community. PDD ordinances may allow mixed uses, greater densities, and design flexibility. From the town's point of view, PDDs may require the payment of impact fees to the town, provision of infrastructure, or other community benefits. A PDD may be used as a vehicle to combine the benefits of clustering and incentive zoning by providing a density bonus in exchange for the preservation of prime open space or agricultural lands.

Environmental, Agriculture or Scenic Overlay Zoning Districts: Overlay districts act as an additional protective layer over existing zoning districts. Their boundaries typically follow natural resources and therefore, are not parcel-based and cross other districts. Overlay districts could be created for parcels in the Agricultural District, scenic view sheds, and/or environmentally significant areas such as stream corridors, wetlands, etc.

Comprehensive Plan: A comprehensive plan is a community's fundamental land management plan, and the basis for the community's zoning ordinance. Within the plan, provisions can be made for open-space planning and open-space preservation goals of the community.

Open Space Plan: The creation of an open space plan is often a direct result of the comprehensive plan. A committee is appointed to focus on agriculture and open space resources within the municipality to be protected through various tools. Some of the tools are listed above, such as purchase of development rights, conservation design, average density zoning, etc. Within the plan itself, the committee identifies specific parcels of land that are considered important to preserve through various criteria such as soils, views, topography and wetlands.

The Comprehensive Land Use Committee recommends that the town's Planning Board, Zoning Revision Committee, and the Town Board review and implement these land-use tools as appropriate for the long-term protection of agriculture, the rural character, and the natural resources of the Town of Northumberland.

Appendix

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Acknowledgements

The Comprehensive Land Use Committee would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals for their assistance and expertise in assembling this document:

James McKnight, Photography

George Hodgson, Town Councilman

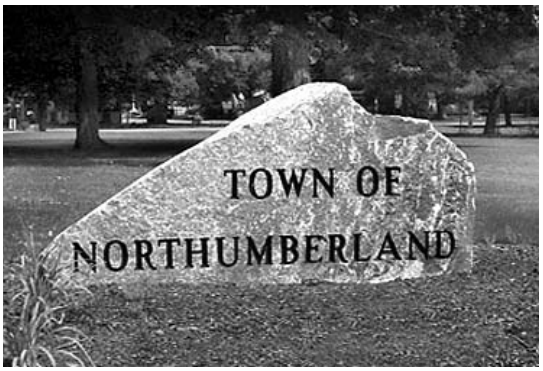
Howard Doster, Town Engineer

Richard Colozza, Town Building Department

Lawrence Benton, Director, Saratoga County Planning Department

And a special thank you to: **Jaime O'Neill** of the Saratoga County Planning Department for her diligence and expertise.

Pocket: • Community Survey



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