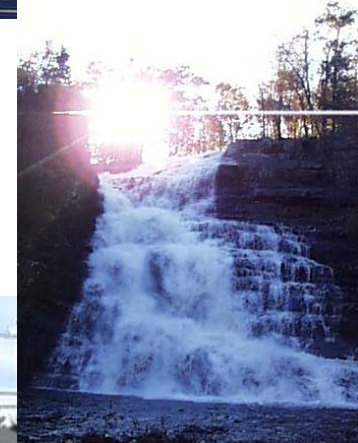


Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan



**November
2006**



The background of the page features a large, faint watermark of the Poestenkill New York seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "POESTENKILL" at the top and "NEW YORK" at the bottom. In the center of the seal is a landscape scene with a river, trees, and a building.

Vision Statement:

The Town of Poestenkill is a vital and prosperous community that is rural by choice. Future progress requires that the Town wisely protect and preserve its rich rural heritage and assets: traditional small town character, open space and scenic beauty, natural resources, diverse citizenry and strong community schools.

In the decades ahead, the Town will enjoy a stable and varied local economy and remain a desirable place to live, raise a family, work and retire. Poestenkill's lively hamlet - the center of community life - will be sustained, offering a growing mix of small locally-owned businesses, stores, professional services and community facilities. The Town will encourage residents to buy homes, improve their housing, and create suitable housing for seniors. The Town will endeavor to provide the infrastructure necessary to protect water quality and support existing commercial enterprises.

The Town of Poestenkill will accommodate carefully planned new residential development, commercial enterprises and public infrastructure which fit harmoniously into the Town fabric, are compatible with established neighborhoods, and are designed in a manner that conserves its important natural resources, waterways and aquifer, agricultural lands and family farms.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Public Hearings:

September 21, 2006

October 19, 2006

Adopted:

November 16, 2006

Town Board:

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The Poestenkill Town Board acknowledges and gratefully thanks the Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan Committee members who put in many long hours throughout several years to put together the first Draft Comprehensive Plan, and without whom, the plan would never have been completed.

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The Poestenkill Town Board would also like to thank Linda von der Heide, Principal Planner, Rensselaer County Economic Development and Planning for carefully updating and editing the final drafts of the Comprehensive Plan.

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Forward

The Planning Process

In 1996 the Town Board of Poestenkill appointed a steering committee composed of 16 citizens representing various interests within the Town to update the Town Comprehensive Plan that had been first adopted in 1970. The Committee's charge was to prepare a revised Comprehensive Plan for review and adoption by the Town Board. The Committee was to gather factual information to assess existing conditions and trends in Poestenkill and surrounding Towns; seek public views and input by survey and open/public meetings; define plans for the future; and propose implementation priorities, timetable and funding strategies for new aspects of the Plan.

Committee members educated themselves about comprehensive planning; talked to planners in other Towns; reviewed other Master Plans; conducted a survey of citizen interests; collected data necessary to determine trends in such areas as population growth, education, housing development and the local economy; and began the decision making process and writing of the Plan. In 1999, the Comprehensive Plan Committee decided that it needed a consultant to help complete the Comprehensive Plan, and hired River Street Planning & Development with approval of the Town Board.

In April 2000, the Committee organized a community meeting to share information with local residents and businesses about the comprehensive planning project and to get citizen feedback on the proposed vision and goals for the comprehensive plan. At this meeting, the Town Supervisor, Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and River Street Planning described the comprehensive planning process and presented key findings from the Existing Conditions Report. River Street Planning facilitated a discussion of the proposed vision statement and goals and then broke participants into small groups to further discuss each goal and to suggest projects that would implement the goals that demonstrated a high level of community support. Many of the specific recommendations in this Action Plan came directly from the citizen feedback received at that meeting.

In October 2004, the Town Board decided to revive the Comprehensive Plan, which had lain stagnant for four years. They requested Rensselaer County Economic Development and Planning to review and update the information in the Plan. Additional areas were added that were overlooked in the earlier version, including forest lands and forestry and hard rock mining. Since the results of the 2000 Census were not available until 2003, the new Census information was incorporated into the document as well as changing trends seen in the new Census. Several versions of the new draft Comprehensive Plans were put on the Poestenkill Library and then Town website. Two public hearings were held on September 21, 2006 and October 19, 2006.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan – Draft

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Under New York State law, municipalities are granted the authority and responsibility to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined in the state legislation, a comprehensive plan is a document that presents goals, objectives, guidelines and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement growth and community development of the community. Also known as a master plan, a comprehensive plan provides guidance to Town leaders and helps to ensure that the needs of the community will be met.

It is important to understand that the action items described in the plan are not requirements. Rather, they are recommendations designed to provide focus and direction as Poestenkill moves ahead to reach its preferred future. It will be up to the local community to decide on an ongoing basis which initiatives they wish to implement and how they wish to proceed. Although any future land use regulation must be in accordance with the principles of the Comprehensive Plan, there is no legally binding requirement that the Town implement each of the action items proposed in the plan. The Town Board should carefully examine proposed land use strategies to minimize the cost to residents and protect private property rights.

Organization of the Plan

The Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan is made up of ten chapters, the first chapter providing a brief community overview, the next eight describing existing conditions and the last, the Action Plan, including specific short and long range goals. Based on research and interviews, the chapters describing existing conditions describe the Town, its residents and its resources; identifies needs; and discusses key issues, opportunities, and challenges impacting future growth in Poestenkill. These chapters provide a profile of the Town of Poestenkill with respect to population, land uses, historic and natural resources, economic development, recreation, and other elements, and are designed to serve as a basis for developing community goals, objectives, strategies and policies.

The Action Plan begins with a vision statement and a list of goals, which will serve as the overall framework for addressing current, and future needs and changes in the Town of Poestenkill. Specific actions are proposed to address these goals and the priority issues identified by the Comprehensive Plan Committee and the public. The stakeholders and partners to be involved and, where appropriate, a list of funding sources are provided for each action plan element.

The Community – an Overview

Located in the center of Rensselaer County, the town of Poestenkill is primarily a rural community with one large and several small hamlets. It is approximately 32.5 square miles with a population of 4,154 during the 2000 Census.



The Rensselaer Plateau escarpment splits Poestenkill, with one half of the town rolling farmlands and the other half highland forests. The Poesten Kill, the creek from which the town and hamlet's name originates, breaches the escarpment just east of the hamlet of Poestenkill. The Poesten Kill is a major creek that provided much of the waterpower for the industrial revolution in the nearby city of Troy, as well as many of the mills that were located in the town itself. The creek led to much of the growth that occurred in the town after its initial settlement, as well as provided an easier path up the escarpment to the eastern part of the town and beyond.

The town has three major state highways that run through the western portion of the town and connect Poestenkill to its neighboring towns of Brunswick, North Greenbush and Sand Lake. County highways cross the eastern portion of the town connecting Poestenkill to Berlin, Grafton and highland area of Sand Lake. Poestenkill does not have any interstates or railroads, but does have a small, private airport located outside of the hamlet of Poestenkill.

Poestenkill's housing stock is varied. One can find old Colonial houses, Victorian houses replete with gingerbread accents, cozy log cabins in the woods, and new suburban houses in modern subdivisions. Most houses are single unit, owner-occupied, were built in the twentieth century, and have risen significantly in value in the past twenty years. Houses are still affordable, compared to that in New York State or the United States. Vacancy rates of housing are low.

The population of Poestenkill is white (98%), older and well educated. Population levels have risen steadily since 1980, with households growing at around twice the rate of the population. Traditional married-couple families are the norm, with the average household size being greater than Rensselaer County's, New York State's and the United States'. Median household and family income is significantly greater than that of Rensselaer County, New York State and the United States. Poestenkill has an extremely low unemployment rate of 0.8% during the 2000 Census.

The local economy, although small due to the town being primarily a bedroom community, is healthy. There are several small manufacturing facilities in the town, as well as micro-enterprises employing less than 5 people. The largest employer in the town is the Averill Park School District, which has two school facilities in the town. Several dairy farms are in operation in the town, along with a few horse facilities.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Professional and other private offices are increasing in residents' homes. A small, but growing, retail sector is located primarily in the hamlet of Poestenkill. This includes a gas station/repair shop, general store, pizzeria, beauty salon and auto parts store.

Although primarily in the Averill Park School District, portions of the town are also located in the Berlin and Brittonkill school districts. The Averill Park School District has two schools located within the town boundaries – the Poestenkill Elementary School in the hamlet of Poestenkill and the Algonquin Middle School located near the intersection of NY Routes 66 and 351.

Both the Averill Park and Brittonkill school districts have had recent construction projects to facilitate the influx of students due to growth in their communities. It is expected that additional construction will be required to support the student influx if recently proposed developments are built within a short time period.

Although the Town does not operate any formal recreational facilities, many such facilities are in use in Poestenkill. The recreational facilities at the school, firehouse, and VFW Hall as well as private clubs fulfill much of the outdoor recreational needs. Hiking trails at the Nature Conservancy Preserve in Barberville, the Pine Ridge cross-country skiing center, and several private riding stables/academies provide additional non-team recreational opportunities. Additional opportunities exist in neighboring towns in state parks and private recreational areas.



Poestenkill is a community steeped in the past of self-sufficiency and hard work, which have been the strengths of the community. These, along with a respect for individuality, have created the community as it is today. As the Town looks forward to the twenty-first century, it must build off these strengths to provide for the future and maintain its appeal

Natural Resources

Physical characteristics and natural resources have played an important role in the development of the Town of Poestenkill. Significant natural features include topography, geology, soils, water resources, and wetlands.

Water

Water is perhaps the most important natural resource in the town of Poestenkill. It helped shape the development of the land by providing water power for industry, a valley to climb the Rensselaer Plateau escarpment to allow the development of eastern Poestenkill, and an ample supply of water to the wells that supply most of the houses and businesses in the town. It has also created damage during periods of flooding, some of which is in the recent past.



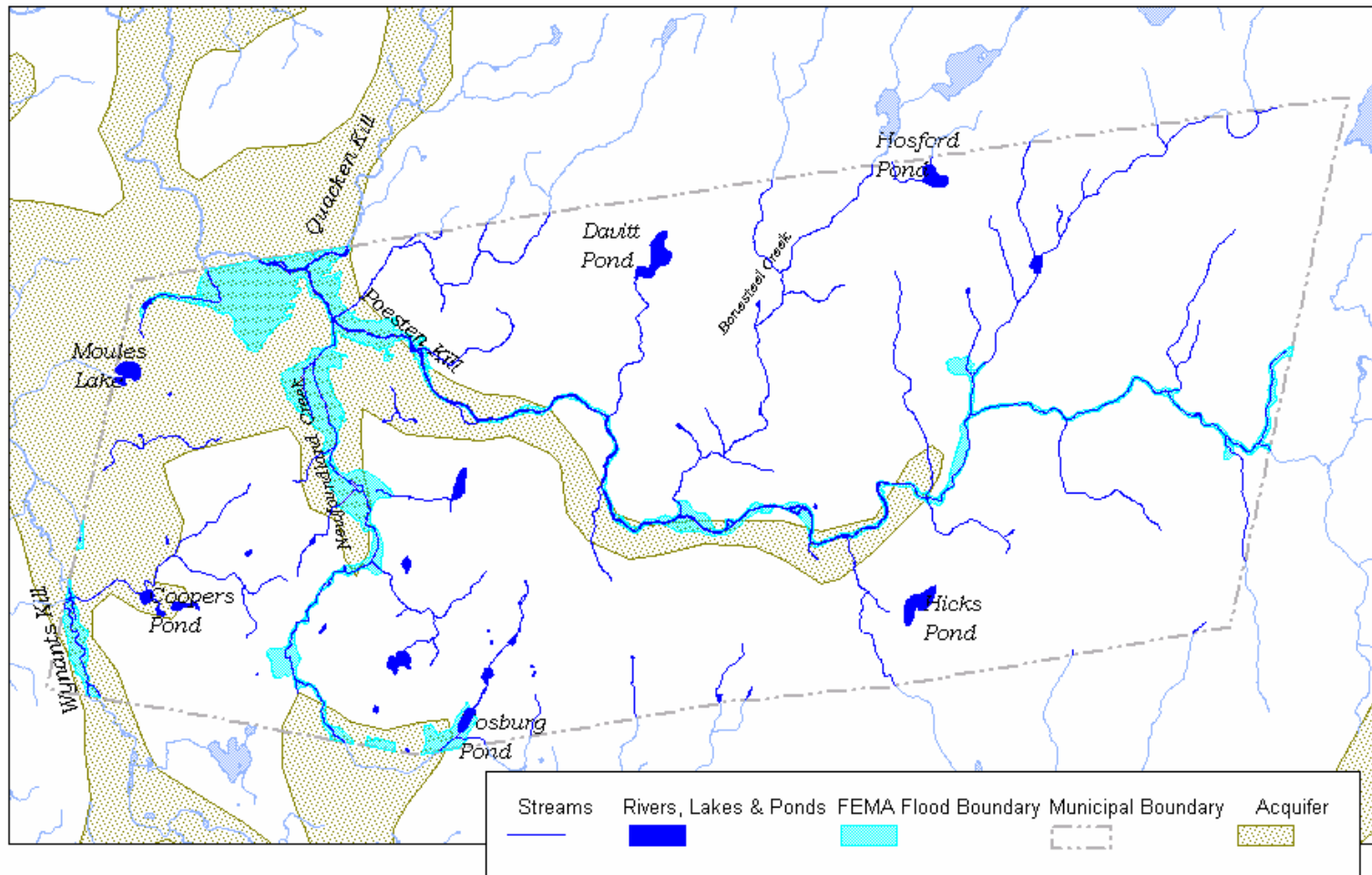
Groundwater Resources and Aquifers

An aquifer is a body of rock or soil deposit that is porous enough to conduct groundwater and to yield significant quantities of water to wells and springs. The Poestenkill Aquifer is located in the towns of Brunswick, North Greenbush, Poestenkill, and Sand Lake and covers 17.5 square miles. According to the Rensselaer County Water Quality Committee, approximately 89% of households in this area have wells and 47% have septic systems. Aquifers, being underground, are especially vulnerable to contamination from development above them and are nearly impossible to treat once contaminated. The Poestenkill Aquifer is vulnerable to the effects of agricultural and urban runoff, septic effluent overflow, the leaching of priority organics from landfills, and the demands of development on the presently unknown underground water capacities.

The Town Aquifer Protection Committee drafted a groundwater protection ordinance for the Town of Poestenkill in 1994. The purpose of the ordinance was to preserve and maintain the quality of groundwater in the Town. Rensselaer County had some concerns with it and for various reasons the Town Board never adopted it.

In 1995, the Town Board contracted with Spectra Environmental Group, Inc. to conduct a surficial geological and hydrogeological study of the Town of Poestenkill. The purpose of the project was to provide reference information upon which decisions regarding natural resources and land management could be made. Of particular concern was the identification and protection of groundwater resources. Elements of the study included field mapping of the surficial (soil) deposits, an inventory of water and well records from the Rensselaer County Health Department, and sampling and analysis of well waters selected for diversity of geologic setting.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan



AquiferSource: Aquifers - NYS Department of Health; U.S. Geological Survey Maps, Averill Park Quadrant and Taborton Quadrant

Map 1: Water Resources

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Based on the limited study, the consultants concluded that the natural water quality in Poestenkill is generally good:

The Town appears to have adequate and in many places abundant groundwater for household, commercial and, if necessary, public supply. Remediation of reported groundwater quality deterioration is indicated where long-term and crowded housing development has impacted the surficial aquifer. A review of options and costs of public supply and sewerage should be undertaken. The Town should be aware of efforts ongoing in Sand Lake to study feasibility of public water supply.¹

Correspondence from Allan Randall, a hydrologist working in Sand Lake notes that the first step in planning for public water supply and/or sewers would be to determine what areas would be served by the utilities. The Town would also need to solicit cost estimates and evaluate potential sources of municipal water supply, taking into consideration not only the amount of water available but also the distance to the service area and the land uses above the aquifer: “Planning for future public water supply and sewers cannot be separated from planning for future density of development. Requiring low density will make future public water supply and sewage unaffordable. Conversely, allowing high density will... eventually require public water supply and sewers whether or not they are affordable.”

The Spectra study did not investigate contamination of the water supply and water quality remains an issue in some areas of the Town. Hydrologist Allan Randall notes, for example, that contamination of private wells from on-lot septic systems is likely in two circumstances: where shallow wells tap surficial sand and gravel (e.g., near Deer Creek Road), and in upland areas of thin till and numerous bedrock outcrops (e.g., east of Weatherwax Road from Snyders Corners Road south to the Algonquin Middle School). The risk of water quality degradation could be reduced by providing municipal sewers in these areas; however, this option would have to be carefully evaluated since future development stimulated by the availability of sewers could preclude the future use of underlying aquifers as sources of public water supply, according to Randall.

Another area where water quality is a significant issue is around the former Town landfill, located near Coopers Pond off County Route 68. which was capped in 1992. The Closure Investigation Report and closure plan were completed by Clark Engineering and Surveying, P.C., consulting engineers hired by the Town of Poestenkill.

The site investigation for the Closure Investigation Report revealed elevated levels of Trichloroethylene (TCE) and/or Cis-1, 2 Dichloroethene (DCE) in monitoring wells and residential wells in the vicinity of the landfill. The tests found the highest levels in wells directly north and west of the old landfill. Additional details on the Closure Investigation Report and a subsequent groundwater investigation plan developed in May 1991 are included in the appendix.

In October 1993, Clark Engineering issued a report that presented six potential remediation alternatives to address contamination around the landfill. In response to the consultant’s findings, water filtration systems were installed at the Town’s expense, on the nine properties where contamination was found. In addition, the Town of Poestenkill pays for the wells to be tested twice annually. Although no contamination has

¹ Spectra Environmental Group. *Surficial Geology and Water Resources of the Town of Poestenkill, New York*, November 1995, p. 31.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

been found on other properties in the vicinity of the landfill, perimeter residential wells are monitored and tested once a year. These activities are designed to insure that additional residences with untreated wells are not affected, that the level of contamination is not increasing, and that the well treatment units continue to treat the water to drinking water standards. According to Clark Engineering, as long as monitoring continues to ensure that all affected wells have properly operating treatment systems, the health risks are minimal, although there may be an impact on fish since contamination of the groundwater will eventually reach the surface water bodies in the vicinity.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Preserve the quality of the groundwater to allow its continued use as a water supply in the town.
- Reduce contamination threats from aboveground sources.

Groundwater, either from an aquifer or non-aquifer source, is the sole source of water supply in Poestenkill. Contamination of this water supply comes from the infiltration of pollutants from human activities. Although the Poestenkill Landfill is now capped to keep additional water from flowing through the waste into the groundwater, other uses such as the waste transfer station, mining operations, residential and commercial uses all provide a threat to the water supply. All these uses can be safe if simple rules are followed, such as keeping polluted and possibly polluted water from running into the ground by providing closed catch basins which are regularly cleaned and the fluids sent to a treatment plant; working with hazardous materials on a concrete or other impervious surface, and providing a roof to keep rain and snow away from these materials in cases where the materials are often worked with; maintaining septic tanks and providing sewer service in high density areas; properly disposing of old medicines and chemicals instead of flushing down the toilet or dumping in the back yard; and promptly cleaning up spills when they occur.

- Maintain quantity or provide non-groundwater source in heavily developed areas.

High density of development usually means that there are many individual wells that pump out water for each building. The Rensselaer County Health Department uses the general rule of 400 gallons per day for each housing unit, although houses with single persons, especially elderly, may use less. Several wells pumping their daily ration of water can drop water levels, requiring deepening of wells or even water rationing in houses where the well may only provide water during a few hours of the day. In areas where water shortages begin to occur, new development should be examined as to whether the ground water supply will be able to provide sufficient water for the existing and new users. This would be done through test well and well pumping tests.

- Encourage NYS DOT, and the County and Town Highway Departments to use appropriate deicing techniques, limiting salting where appropriate and turning off salting equipment when turning around in areas, especially at the intersection of Spring Avenue Extension and NYS 355.

Testing on a well near the intersection of Spring Avenue Extension and NYS 355 has shown sodium levels at levels much greater than allowed for drinking water. As this area is not near any salt storage facility, the usual culprit for such high sodium levels in Rensselaer County, it is suspected that the salting of the roadway during the clearing of the Y-intersection and turning around of salt trucks is the likely culprit of the high levels.

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Surface Water Resources

The most significant stream in the town is the Poesten Kill, which gives the community its name and drains about 90 percent of its land mass. It also provides recreation in the way of trout fishing, swimming, and scenery. The Poesten Kill's headwaters rise in Dyken Pond and on Berlin Mountain in Berlin and flows for about eleven miles through the center of town before exiting at its northwestern boundary with the town of Brunswick. The Bonesteel and Newfoundland Creeks are tributaries of the Poesten Kill. Other streams that flow for short sections in the town are the Wynants Kill and the Quacken Kill, where it flows into the Poesten Kill.

There are at least 35 named and unnamed ponds and small lakes in Poestenkill. The largest is Davitt Pond at 24.5 acres. Others include Moules Lake, Vosburg Pond, Hosford Pond, Hicks Pond, Camp Kiwanis Lake, and Cooper's Pond. Several of the larger water bodies such as Davitt Pond, Moules Lake, and Vosburg Pond have fisheries suitable for recreational fishing. Warm-water fish found in many of these ponds include redbreast sunfish, pumpkinseed, bluegill, rock bass, largemouth bass, black crappie, brown bullhead, yellow perch, and chain pickerel.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Maintain water quality to allow for fisheries.

To maintain fish population without yearly stocking, conditions must be good enough for natural fish propagation. Fish such as trout require cool to cold water, and gravelly bottoms on the creeks and streams. Deep pools and tree shading of the water in summer time help fish such as trout survive our warm summers. Chemicals can kill fish outright, or create conditions such as algae blooms that create hazards for fish. Reducing erosion, whether stream bank or land disturbance, proper use and disposal of chemicals, proper disposal of automotive fluids including motor oil, and maintaining stream bank vegetation to allow the shading of streams can help Poestenkill to maintain its fish population.

- Reduce water degradation from erosion and other threats.



The largest threat to waterways in Poestenkill is erosion. Erosion fills in pools, suffocates fish, and creates sand and gravel bars that change the stream flow to eat into new stream banks. The federal Clean Water Act created requirements that new developments do not increase the amount of flooding, water pollution or erosion that will negatively affect water resources. Phase 2 of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requires all activities that disturb one or more acre, with the exception of agricultural practices following Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other exempt activities, to apply for a permit from New York State, which will address erosion, sediment control and stormwater

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

management. These permits require Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, Erosion & Sediment Control Plans and may also require Post-Construction Stormwater Control Plans.

Floodplains

The floodplains in the town of Poestenkill are contained within the ravines and associated lowlands of the natural waterways. The Poesten Kill, the Wynants Kill, and the Newfoundland Creek are the largest and most significant waterways within the town. Connecting with these are numerous small tributary creeks and streams that create sizable floodplains.

The town of Poestenkill has been participating in the National Flood Insurance Program since September 1981 and relies on official Flood Insurance Rate maps to minimize damage from flooding. The Flood Insurance Rate maps are the official maps on which the Federal Emergency Management Agency has delineated both areas of special flood hazard and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.

In Poestenkill, the 100-year floodplains are generally within 100 to 200 feet of either side of the shoreline of the waterways. In places where smaller tributary streams meet up with these waterways and where the waterways gently meander, curving back and forth in an “S-shaped” pattern, the floodplain often extends out farther.

The 500 year floodplains, while not numerous within the Town, are significant in size where they exist, generally extending outward from the 100 year floodplains where larger quantities of land area are covered. The most significant 500-year floodplain exists where the Newfoundland Creek and the Poesten Kill meet.

From the hamlet west to the municipal boundary and along Newfoundland Creek, the amount of land in the floodplain increases. The floodplain boundary varies in distance depending on the topography of the land. The area around Newfoundland Creek bordering the Rensselaer County Airport is extremely flat and therefore conducive to flooding. The same situation exists where the creek meets the Poesten Kill. The land is very flat for a significant distance and creates a sizable floodplain.

Another floodplain in the town of Poestenkill exists around the Wynants Kill. The floodplain extends out from each side of the creek by approximately fifty feet. The creek cuts through the southwest corner of the Town in an area with significant slopes. These slopes help keep the floodplain along the Wynants Kill to a relatively limited narrow area.

Within the last fifty years or so, there have been several major floods in the town, including one in 1949 and another in 1995. Plank Road, Garfield Road, and other areas have been flooded due to ice jams. In the late 1990s, the Town received a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to improve storm drainage in the Poestenkill hamlet. The project, which was completed in 1997, relieved the flooding of ditches along NY Route 355 and on Snyders Corners Road near the elementary school.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

In compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program, the Town of Poestenkill has established Flood Damage Prevention regulations under Chapter 86 of the Town Code. The purpose of the regulations is to promote public health, safety, and welfare and to minimize public and private losses due to flooding by provisions designed to:

- regulate uses which are dangerous to health, safety and property;
- require that uses vulnerable to floods are protected against flood damage at the time of initial construction;
- control the alteration of natural floodplains, stream channels and natural protective barriers involved in the accommodation of floodwaters;
- control filling, grading, dredging and other development which could increase erosion or flood damage;
- regulate the construction of flood barriers which might increase flood hazards to other lands; and
- qualify for and maintain participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Under Chapter 86, construction and development in special flood hazard areas is regulated above and beyond the Town's zoning and building code enforcement procedures. The special flood hazard areas are defined as "the land in the floodplain within a community subject to a one-percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year... [or] the 'one-hundred-year floodplain'" (§86-4). Builders must obtain a development permit before starting construction or development, and adhere to a list of general and specific standards for building in special flood hazard areas. The Code Enforcement Officer is responsible for administration and enforcement by granting or denying development permit applications in accordance with the provisions of the code.

Chapter 86 also designates floodways within the special flood hazard areas. These floodways are the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height, as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Because floodways can be extremely hazardous, the regulations for building in these areas are even more stringent.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Continue working with the National Flood Insurance Program so that residents can purchase flood insurance for their properties.

The Town of Poestenkill adopted its Flood Damage Prevention Local Law No. 1 in 1987, when it also adopted the Flood Insurance Rate Maps and attendant Flood Insurance Study, dated March 2, 1981. To remain in the National Flood Insurance Program, the Town must continue to fulfill its obligations under this local law.

- Work so that flooding does not increase with continued development.

Development can significantly increase the amount of water flowing into local streams, creeks and rivers. To this end, the federal Clean Water Act created requirements that new developments do not increase the amount of flooding, water pollution or erosion that will negatively affect water resources. Phase 2 of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requires all activities that disturb one or more acre, with the

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exception of agricultural practices following Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other exempt activities to apply for a permit from New York State, which will address erosion, sediment control and stormwater management. These permits require Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, Erosion & Sediment Control Plans and may also require Post-Construction Stormwater Control Plans. In addition to these requirements, Phase 2 of NPDES also requires municipalities of 50,000 or more, or municipalities within the surrounding area with a density of 1,000 people per square mile or more, to apply for a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) following six best management practices, one of which being that the municipality must also regulate activities that disturb one acre or more. A draft Erosion, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management Local Law is presently being reviewed that will fulfill Poestenkill's requirements under Phase 2 of NPDES. The Town is also required to inspect and regulate completed Stormwater Control facilities, as well as investigate and eliminate all illegal discharges to their Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) within the area of density of 1,000 or more population per acre. The Town is required to have public education and outreach, and public participation and involvement, including a public comment on the Town's Annual Report. The Town is working together with Rensselaer County and its fellow MS4 communities to achieve their necessary goals.



- Reduce erosion from stream bank flooding.

Erosion from stream bank flooding can eat away land until houses, roadways or other property are threatened. Although this often takes several years to occur, occasionally, rapid flooding can quickly endanger lives as well as property. Planting shrubs and other riparian plantings along the stream bank, as well as placing rip rap along the base of the eroding areas, changing stream flow through the elimination of sand and gravel bars, and the removal of snags may help alleviate and reduce stream bank flooding. The Rensselaer County Soil and Water Conservation District along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service have worked to reduce and eliminate stream bank erosion in parts of the county. They have partnered with the Rensselaer County Chapter of Trout Unlimited and other conservation groups to help maintain streams, as erosion destroys fish habitats by making streams more shallow and depositing sand and gravel on fish spawning areas.

- Mitigate where necessary to eliminate sources that create flooding and scouring.

In certain areas, sand and gravel bars build up in the Poesten Kill which change the direction of flow and current of the creek and create bank erosion and flooding. Some areas identified are the Empire Drive area and sections along Plank Road (County Route 40). Working with the Rensselaer County Soil and Water Conservation District, NYS DEC and the Army Corps of Engineers, the Town can reduce or eliminate severe areas of damage

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while allowing the creek to remain in a natural state. Occasionally, private enterprises will work with the communities to remove these hazards for the high quality sand and gravel contents of the bars.

Soils

There are approximately fifty different soil types in Poestenkill. Table B-1 in the appendix summarizes the soil types found in the town of Poestenkill and their characteristics and limitations.

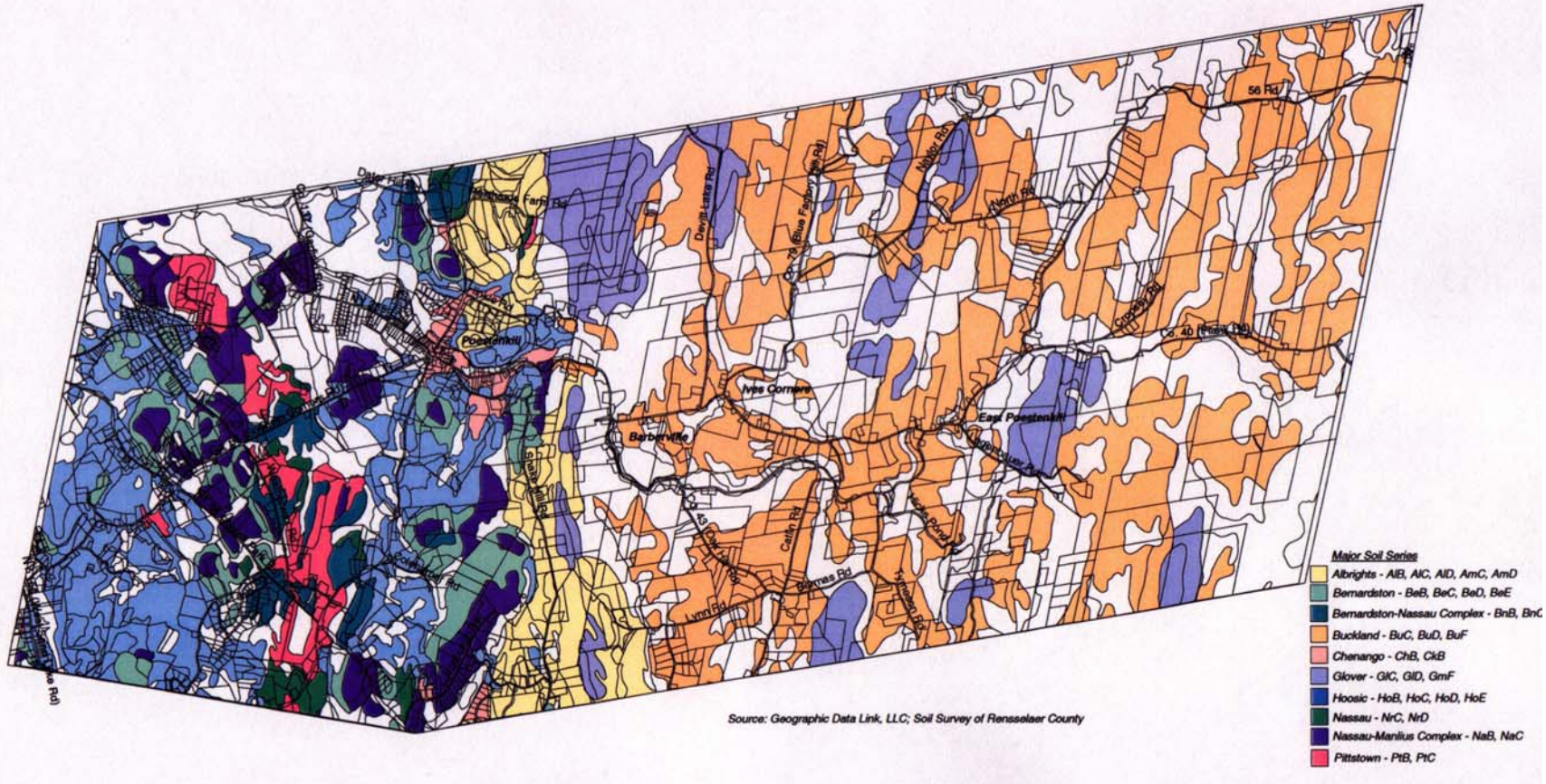
The Buckland-Glover soils dominate the eastern half of Poestenkill (see Map 2). These soils formed in glacial till derived mainly from sandstone. The sloping or moderately steep Buckland soils are found on convex hilltops, knolls, ridges, and long hillsides, while the Glover soils are located on the top of ridges, knolls and upper parts of hillsides where the bedrock is just 10 to 20 inches below the surface. The soils in this area are not well suited for farming, as numerous stones and boulders interfere with equipment use. In addition, seasonal wetness in the Buckland soils and the shallowness of Glover soils seriously limit development. Minor soils in this map unit include Brayton, Loxley, Beseman, and Hoosic soils.

The Bernardston-Albrights-Pittstown soils are located mainly east of NY Route 351 and west of the escarpment of the Rensselaer Plateau. These soils formed in shaley glacial till. The gently sloping to steep Bernardston soils are found on hillsides, ridges, and rolling areas between large hills. The gently sloping to steep Albrights soils are on hilltops, hillsides, and ridges, while the gently sloping to moderately steep Pittstown soils are found on hilltops, lower parts of hillsides, and rolling or undulating areas between hills. Many of the soils in this unit are currently used for farming or have been farmed in the past. Other soils exhibit seasonal wetness, slow permeability, and in some places numerous stones and boulders that limit development. Minor soils in this map unit include Scriba, Alden, and Nassau soils.

The gently sloping to hilly Bernardston-Pittstown-Nassau soils are located in western Poestenkill, in an area roughly bounded by NY Route 351 on the east and NY Route 66 on the west. These soils were formed in shaly glacial till. The topography in this area is complex because of the underlying folded shale and slate bedrock; the landscape is a series of ridges, knolls, and low hills. The Bernardston and Pittstown soils have a seasonally high water table, which can impact development. The Nassau soils also limit development due to their shallowness; bedrock is exposed in places, particularly on crests of ridges and on the top of knolls and hills. Some soils in this unit are prime farmland soils. Of minor extent in this map unit are Scriba, Alden, Manlius, Raynham, Hoosic, Teel, and Carlisle soils.

The Hoosic-Chenango soils dominate the southwestern portion of the Town. These soils formed in glacial outwash that has a high content of gravel and sand; soils in the Hoosic series are conducive to gravel mining. The nearly level to steep Hoosic soils are on terraces, outwash plains, and low hills and ridges that have been complex slopes. These soils tend to be droughty in summer. The nearly level or sloping Chenango soils are on terraces, alluvial fans, and outwash plains. Many areas of this unit are suitable for community development and farming, but pollution of ground water by septic tank effluent can be a hazard because water moves rapidly through the soil. Overall, however, the Hoosic-Chenango soils are the most developable in the town of Poestenkill. Minor soils in this map unit in Poestenkill include Castile, Fredon, Raynham, Palms and Carlisle soils.

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Map 2: Major Soil Series

As the above discussion suggests, development is inherently restricted by the characteristics of soil types present in the town of Poestenkill. Most of the major soil series in the town have moderate to severe limitations that affect building site development and septic tank absorption. Barring any future development of municipal infrastructure, it is possible to overcome or minimize these limitations through special planning, design, or maintenance, although there may be increased construction costs.

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Threats, Issues and Goals

- Encourage developers to use the Soil Survey to best use their lands.

Each different soil has its own capabilities for development, agricultural, forestry and other uses. Soils that do not drain easily are not good for septic systems, but do not let pollutants pass through quickly either. Soils that drain quickly may also drain too quickly for proper treatment of septage. Soils with bedrock near the surface may require blasting for the development of roads and water and sewer lines. Certain soils erode more quickly than others. Developers and other users of land may find that the review of the soils may help them budget better, create higher quality development, and save themselves from a headache or large fines when something goes wrong during development.

Prime Farmland Soils

Ten of the soil types found in the Town are considered prime farmland soils by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and are of particular importance to agricultural production (Map 3). These soils have characteristics that are considered to be favorable for the production of sustained high yields of crops. Although other soil types in the Town are also suitable for crop production and pasture, prime farmland soils produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources. Farming these soils results in the least damage to the environment. As shown on the map, the soils identified as prime farmland soils are found exclusively in the western half of the town, particularly in the floodplain of the Poesten Kill Creek in the vicinity of NY Route 355 and Garfield Road. Some of these areas are in active agricultural use.



Threats, Issues and Goals

- Use conservation or cluster development to preserve tracts of prime farmland.

Subdivisions where lots are clustered on soils that are not prime farmland can allow development to occur while preserving the significant natural resource of prime farmland soils. Lots would be allowed to be smaller than the underlying district to allow the clustering to preserve land.

- Preserve the best farmland by Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs), easements or other methods

The U. S. Department of Agriculture and New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets both have programs where funding is made available to purchase the development rights on properties to keep the properties in an agricultural use. An easement is then placed on the deed

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which allows the owners to use the property for agriculture and other uses agreed to during the PDR negotiate process. Easements do not have to be purchased, but can be donated freely to land conservation not-for-profits. Transfer of development rights (TDR) allows developers to develop more densely in one section of town (receiving zone) if they purchase development rights to properties proposed for conservation.



Map 3: Prime Agricultural Soils

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Mine-able Soils

According to the Soil Survey of Rensselaer County, there are six soil types in the Town of Poestenkill that are considered probable sources of sand and gravel. These are ChA and CkB in the Chenango soil series and HoB, HoC, HoD, and HoE in the Hoosic soil series. All of these soils are present in the western half of the Town, primarily around the Poestenkill hamlet and along the western municipal boundary. While extensive engineering studies would be necessary to determine the extractive value of individual sites, these areas of the Town appear to be most conducive to mining based on soil properties reported in the Soil Survey. Some soils with a high content of gravel and sand may also be found east of Barberville.

The Chenango and Hoosic soils are located in areas with a level or hilly topography. They formed in glacial outwash that had a high content of sand and gravel. These soils run deep into the earth and drain extremely well. (For additional information about the characteristics of individual soil types, see Table B-1 in the appendix.)

Several areas in the town have shallow soils above the underlying Rensselaer Graywacke, a favorite hard rock used for roadway construction due to its durability and hardness. The Rensselaer Plateau is comprised of Graywacke, a limestone formed in the lower Cambrian period. Areas on the edge of the plateau, where soils are shallow, provide the easiest access to the underlying bedrock and the easiest mining opportunities.

Mining is a high-intensity land use that may have an impact on the physical environment of a community. Mines serve as a source of employment and provide resources needed in the construction industry. Extraction and reclamation must be properly implemented to minimize the potential impact on the rural landscape.

Threats, Issues and Goals

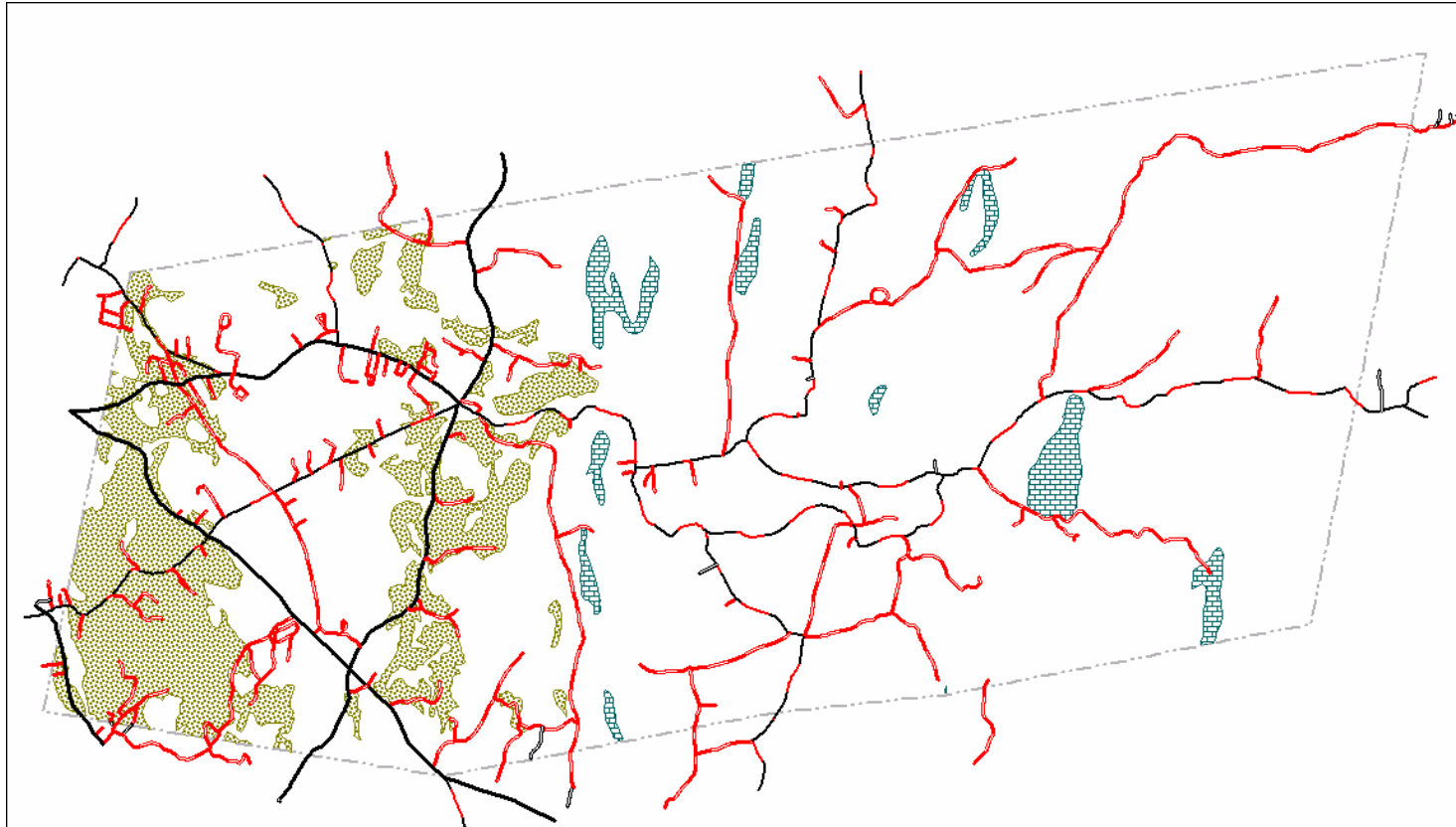
- Discourage DEC from allowing mining at or below the water table.

The gravel soils that are desired for mining are also the soils that hold the aquifer that provides drinking water. Allowing mining at the water table exposes the groundwater to possible contamination. Mining below the water table would require pumping out of the groundwater that would lower the water table and require new wells for surrounding properties and also expose the groundwater to possible contamination.

- Encourage mine owners to use best management practices to minimize the potential impacts of mining.

Mining is an exempt activity under Phase 2 of NPDES, and therefore does not require a stormwater and erosion control plan. Mining exposes large quantities of earth and bedrock, and creates a possibility of wind and water erosion. Best management practices including seeding of topsoil stock piles, diverting stormwater into the mine area, using calcium carbonate or other methods to reduce sand and dust blowing outside of the mine, and using explosives during correct weather conditions.

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Map 4: Mine able soils; sand and gravel deposits and major outcropping of greywacke. Source: Soil Survey of Rensselaer County, New York, United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service.

Topography

The Rensselaer Escarpment divides the town on the north-south axis just east of Poestenkill Center. The western third of the town has generally rolling slopes, while the eastern two-thirds of the town is the hilly Rensselaer Plateau. Elevations in the town range from 420 feet at the northwest corner to 1,891 feet in the southeast corner of the town. The map of slopes (Map 5) shows that the third of the town west of the escarpment is generally rolling with several areas of steep slopes. The eastern two-thirds is characterized by steep slopes of over 10 percent, thereby placing severe limitations on development. A number of significant ponds dot the town.

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Scenic Resources

As noted in the first Master Plan for the town of Poestenkill developed by Russell Bailey & Associates in 1970: “The community has many important assets; one of which is the scenic, rural character of the Town.” The mixture of farmland, woodlots, wetlands, successional fields and rolling hills gives western Poestenkill its rural scenic quality. Behind this rural landscape is the backdrop of the Rensselaer Escarpment, which rises 500 feet from the valley floor of the Poesten Kill. In contrast to western Poestenkill, the eastern section on top of the Rensselaer Plateau is hilly and largely forested with hardwood and conifer forests.

The western slope or escarpment of the Rensselaer Plateau in Poestenkill is an important scenic resource. The Rensselaer Escarpment is also an important regional landscape feature that can be seen from distant locations such as the Helderberg Escarpment in Albany County. Local roads and hilltops provide many open vistas of the



A view from the escarpment from Snake Hill Road with the Hudson Valley in the background.

Rensselaer Escarpment. Traveling northbound on NY Route 351 provides excellent views of the escarpment, especially during fall foliage season. Scenic vistas of the plateau can be seen from other roadway hilltops (e.g., Weatherwax Road) when viewing in an easterly direction.

Open panoramic views of western Poestenkill and distant views of the Catskill Mountains to the southwest and the Helderberg Hills to the west can be seen from roadways and residential properties along the western slopes of the Rensselaer Plateau. Open land such as the area south of Hinkle Road and along Snake Hill Road have been selected for residential development in part because of the panoramic views and distant scenic features which can be observed from the escarpment area. Similar views can be seen from cliffs located on the western slope of the Rensselaer Escarpment north of Hinkle Road. The growth of trees has reduced this view compared with turn-of-the-century photographs of the area. Private trails on Snake Hill also lead to scenic overlooks both to the west and towards eastern Poestenkill.

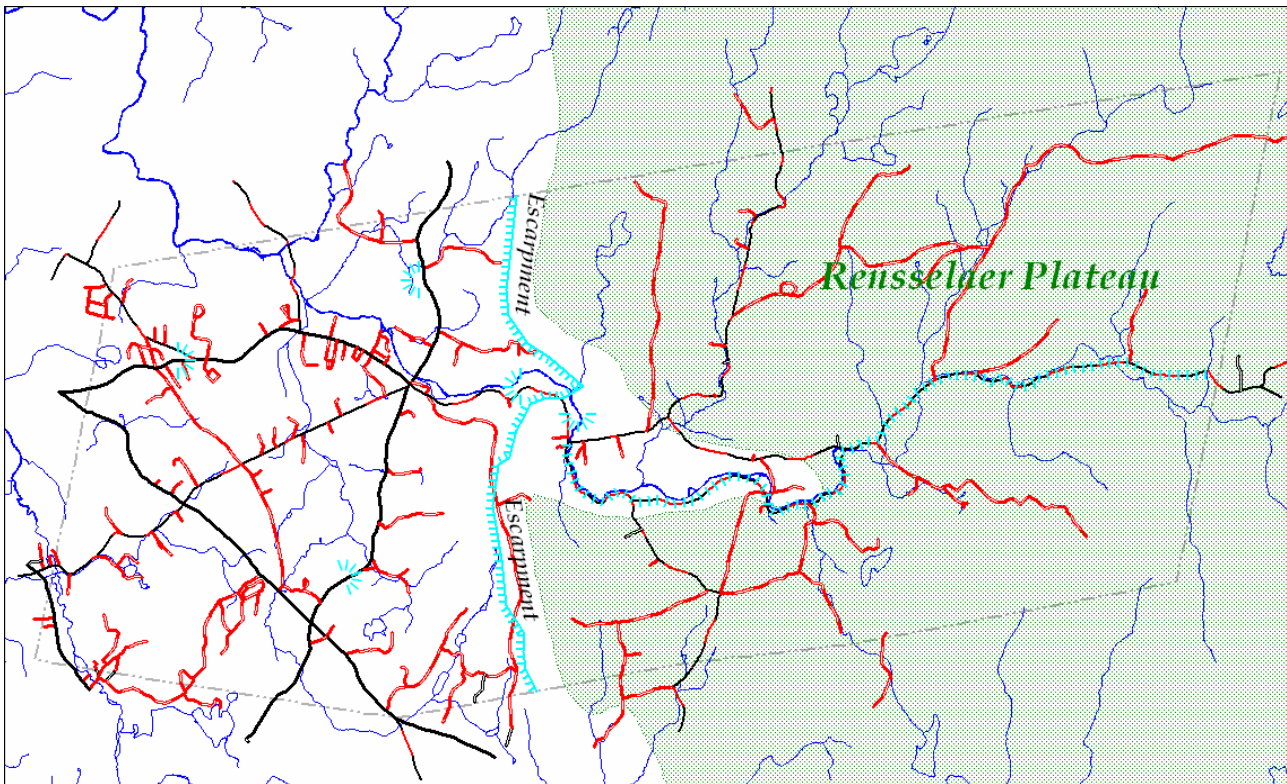
The Poesten Kill is another important natural scenic feature in the local landscape. The stream as it flows off the Rensselaer Plateau creates a spectacular waterfall at the hamlet of Barberville. The Nature Conservancy, a national conservation organization, has acquired property on the eastern side of Barberville Falls. A trail can be taken down to the falls from Blue Factory Road or from Plank Road, although the Crick Trail from Plank Road is extremely steep. Parking is provided across from the Brookside Cemetery on Plank Road. There are roads along most of the

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Poesten Kill throughout the Town, which provide many opportunities for the public to view this stream during the seasonal changes of the year. Late winter snowmelts can provide some spectacular views of this dynamic stream. The best viewing opportunities of the Poesten Kill can be seen along the corridor of Plank Road between Barberville and the last stream crossing near the border with the Town of Berlin. Pedestrian walkways on bridge crossings, such as NY Route 351 near Town Hall, also provide viewing locations of the Poesten Kill.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Encourage development behind ridgelines and set back from important scenic resources.
- Consider conservation and cluster developments to preserve scenic areas.



Map 6: Scenic Resources

Subdivisions that ignore slopes, natural features and open spaces often devalue the natural features they are trying to take advantage of. The clustering of lots away from a view can preserve the view for all the houses. The placement of lots and houses can detract from or improve scenic resources. Farm fields that appear to be growing houses that look like they are dropped from the sky are not as attractive as houses that are carefully sited to fit into their surroundings. Placing a house near the edge of woods in a farm field allows views of both the woods and farm field. Adding features such as hedgerows, stone or rustic wood fences and careful landscaping can soften a development's impacts.

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Special Resources

Wetlands

Most of the large wetlands in the town of Poestenkill are shown on freshwater wetland maps prepared by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The March 1986 maps, numbers 11 and 12 of Rensselaer County, show 25 mapped wetlands in Poestenkill (see Map 7). Most of these wetlands are Class II and are widely scattered about the town, mostly along tributaries of the Poesten Kill. Wetland AP-18, located on both sides of NY Route 66 near Vosburg Pond, is a Class I wetland and is the largest wetland in the town at 160 acres.

Two wetland communities of about 10 acres each associated with Hosford Pond are significant communities listed in the New York Natural Heritage Program. One is “Dwarf Shrub Bog” and the other is an “Inland Poor Fen,” both of which are rare to uncommon within New York State. Moules Lake also has a number of wetland community types associated with it.



State Wetland AP-14 off Columbia Hill Road

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Developers should have federal wetlands delineated before providing plans to the Planning Board.

Federal wetlands are not mapped as the NYS DEC wetlands are officially mapped. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the regulatory agency in charge of federal wetlands, encourages developers to have wetlands delineated by a certified consultant. The Army Corps personnel will review the maps in the field before certifying them.

- The Town may want to create buffer zones around wetlands and streams to protect these natural resources.

Wetlands provide water recharge areas, flood relief and water treatment as well as significant wildlife habitat. Erosion fills in wetlands significantly, reducing their capabilities to retain and filter stormwater, and leads to greater floods and lower water quality. Buffer zones, whether natural or landscaped, create an area where erosion is held back and stormwater is treated. The roots in the buffer zone will hold the stream bank.

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Forest Lands

Much of the eastern portion of the town is covered with upland eastern forest, including hemlock, oak, aspen, poplar, birch, maple, beech and white pine. Some smaller woodlands are also found in the lowland area. Many of these forest lands are managed and harvested for lumber and biomass as well as providing wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and areas for hunting. Forest lands also provide water filtering and flood management as trees absorb water from rain in the summer and reduce the speed of snow melt during winter thaws.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- The Town recognizes forestry as an important industry in the town and encourages the best forestry practices to maintain the viability of the forest.

Forests provide a working landscape in the town of Poestenkill. Forestry performed poorly can lead to major erosion, silting of streams, and land slides in areas of slumping soils. Poor stream crossings of skid trails can destroy sections of streams and also lead to vehicles becoming stuck and work downtime. The NYS DEC has forestry guidelines that denote best management practices for the forestry industry. Logging can produce a vibrant ecosystem if performed properly and carefully, and leave a stronger forest.



Wildlife

Commonly observed wildlife throughout the town includes white-tailed deer, gray squirrels, turkeys and songbirds. Red-tailed hawks, woodchucks, crows and geese are more commonly seen in the mixed agricultural and residential areas in the western part of Poestenkill.

Occasional sightings of martens, black bears, and signs of moose and mountain lion in the Rensselaer Plateau suggest that wildlife indicative of large, northern forests may be making a comeback to former cut-over forests of this area. Fox and coyote are common residents of the field and forest habitats. Bobcats, bear and larger cats are residents of the large forest tracts on the Rensselaer Plateau. Several moose are known to be living near the Poestenkill/Berlin boundary. A great blue heron rookery listed in the New York Natural Heritage Program has been associated with a beaver-flooded wetland near Dyken Pond.

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The New York State Museum and Science Service studied small mammals at eight locations in the town in 1953. Small mammals found in Poestenkill included Smokey shrew, short-tailed shrew, northern flying squirrel, white-footed mouse, deer mouse, northern red-back mouse, woodland vole and eastern chipmunk.

Counts of winter birds in the southwestern section of the town have been made by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club each December since about 1966 as part of their Southern Rensselaer County Bird Count (Poestenkill sector). Some winter birds commonly observed on these surveys include European starling, cardinal, downy woodpecker, black-capped chickadee, American crow, dark-eyed junco, tree sparrow, house sparrow, house finch, tufted titmouse, and white-breasted nuthatch. No threatened or endangered birds have been recorded, but species of special concern such as the Eastern bluebird and grasshopper sparrow have been recorded in Poestenkill.

Poestenkill contains suitable habitat for both warm-water fish and cold-water fish species. Many unnamed ponds and small lakes provide warm water fisheries habitat while the Poesten Kill, Quacken Kill and Wynants Kill provide cold-water fisheries habitat. The latter also provide habitat for aquatic wildlife such as beaver, muskrat, herons, ducks, and northern water snakes and are an important source of drinking water to wildlife during summer droughts. Fish likely to be found in the Poesten Kill in the town include brown trout, brook trout, satinfish shiner, cutlips minnow, common shiner, bluntnose dace, longnose dace, creek chub, white sucker, tessellated darter and slimy sculpin.

In 1999, the NYS DEC conducted an Amphibian and Reptile Atlas Program. Surveys were made in Poestenkill and the following species were identified in the town: red-spotted newt, redback salamander, northern spring peeper, gray treefrog, bullfrog, northern leopard frog, wood frog, snapping turtle, musk turtle, northern water snake, and garter snake.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- As larger mammals return to habitats in Poestenkill, the Town encourages its residents in the more rural areas to live sensibly with their new wild neighbors.

Bears, coyotes, mountain lions and moose, once hunted to oblivion in Rensselaer County, have made a comeback into the Rensselaer Plateau and rural areas. Although these large animals can be dangerous, they will usually leave residents and visitors alone if simple precautions are followed. Garbage should be kept in sturdy containers or indoors and bird feeders should be left empty during the summer season so as not to attract bears with a possible food source. Bears should not be fed by humans either as it inures them to humans. Bears and moose should not be challenged, and attempts should not be made to pet them. Coyotes and mountain lions are usually shy, retiring animals and any that do not make attempts to avoid human contact should be avoided due to rabies concerns. Residents and visitors should be reminded to back away from these large animals until a safe distance is between them. Whistling, humming and singing while hiking in the deep forest will announce your presence to these animals long before you notice them, allowing them to evade human contact.

Historic & Cultural Resources

Poestenkill's Past

Named for its principal stream, the town of Poestenkill was formed from part of the town of Sand Lake in 1848. The land on which the town was established was once part of the colony of Rensselaerwyck, a 700,000-acre area covering most of the present-day Albany and Rensselaer counties and part of Columbia County. A patroon, or wealthy Dutch landowner, named Kilean Van Rensselaer, owned the colony. Van Rensselaer and his descendants encouraged settlement in the upper Hudson Valley by providing tenant farmers with seeds, plows, and other farm implements, as well as some livestock. In return, occupants had to pay rent to the patroon's agent. Trappers and traders participating in the lucrative fur trade also located in the area.



The first permanent settlements in the town were made by farmers prior to the Revolutionary War. Archelaus Lynd was given the use of 300 acres of land for two years by the Van Rensselaers. This was done for the purpose of opening up and settling this section of the manor or patroonship. Lynd made his first clearing about 1775 on White Church Road near the vicinity of the cemetery, which is today called Hillside. Years ago the cemetery was known as the Lynd Cemetery, after Archelaus Lynd who founded it in 1762.

Other settlers who came to the area before the Revolutionary War included the Strunks, Ives, Whylands, Barringer, and Blewers families. Some pioneer families came during and immediately after the war from “over east,” which is western Massachusetts, southern Vermont, and New Hampshire. Many also emigrated to Poestenkill from Connecticut. Records show that several earlier families came up the Hudson River as far as Albany or Troy, then moved eastward into the wilderness of present-day Rensselaer County. Others followed the mountains to settle in the eastern section of Poestenkill. These small hamlets no longer exist. To the north and east of East Poestenkill are sites of Rogers Bridge, Red Rock, Oak Hill, and Four Corners. Four Corners was located on Perigo Mountain and was once populated by sturdy German settlers.

The trails that the settlers followed soon became roads that connected the growing industrial Troy with growing industrial communities in Massachusetts. These roadways also provided the routes for raw materials and food, as well as pieced materials bound for the mills. As all traffic went by foot power or horse power, inns were developed as rest stops for weary travelers to get food, fresh horses and the occasional bed for the night. Due to the traffic around some of these inns, additional services such as a store, competing inns, and blacksmith shops developed.

By the nineteenth century, the town of Poestenkill had four hamlets. The principal village, situated just west of the town's geographical center along the Poestenkill Creek, was known as Poestenkill Village. It contained several stores and churches, a hotel, and a sawmill. East Poestenkill,

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the second of four hamlets, was formerly known as Columbia and contained a Methodist and a Baptist Church, two stores, an inn, and about 100 inhabitants. Barberville, a small settlement east of Poestenkill Village, boasted a tollgate, a hotel, store, shoemaker shop, and about a dozen houses. Ives Corners, the smallest of the four hamlets, was further north and east.

Poestenkill was the site of a popular mineral spring health spa until it was destroyed by flood in 1813-14. The Poestenkill Creek supplied water power for mills located along its banks, such as a grist mill, saw mill, tannery, collar shop, etc. Craft industries developed early in the nineteenth century and were replaced by piecework and support industries serving the larger manufacturing concerns, which prospered with river and rail access in Troy and Rensselaer. Agricultural products, kindling, charcoal, ferns, and berries provided cash income for residents not involved in manufacturing. As transportation improved and subsistence farming declined into the twentieth century, Poestenkill followed the natural pattern of urbanization with increased reliance on the heavily developed areas along the Hudson River. Today, the town is primarily a bedroom community for residents working elsewhere in the Capital Region.

Sites and Buildings of Historical Significance

Table 1, below, provides examples of structures located in the Poestenkill hamlet that may be of historical and/or architectural significance. The list is by no means complete. It should be noted that a formal survey of Poestenkill’s historic resources has not been conducted. Additional research and documentation would be necessary to evaluate these and other potentially significant structures in the Town and determine their eligibility for National Historic Register listing and/or local protective measures.

Table 1: Buildings of Potential Historic/Architectural Significance, Poestenkill Hamlet		
Site	Location	Description
Poestenkill Christian Church	Snyders Corners Road	This church was organized in 1850. The present building was erected in 1900 and boasts some of the most spectacular stained glass windows in Rensselaer County.
Evangelical Lutheran Church	Round Top Road	This church originated when a group split off from the Lutheran congregation in West Sand Lake. A chapel was built and dedicated in 1832. By 1865, the congregation had outgrown the chapel so they demolished it, laid a new cornerstone, and constructed the present edifice.
Bubie’s General Store	Main Street, west of the Four Corners	Formerly the Woodbine Hotel, a place where alcoholic beverages and groceries were sold and lectures and entertainment were held.

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Table 1: Buildings of Potential Historic/Architectural Significance, Poestenkill Hamlet

Site	Location	Description
Sagendorf Home	Plank Road and Round Top Road	Built by Lysander Clickner around 1887. The house once housed a meat market. Original horse stalls and chicken coops are still in what is now the garage.
Liberty Home	Main Street	This home was known for many years as the Barringer home. The west side of the house was once a school house; living quarters for the teacher were provided upstairs.
Daley Home	Main Street	Built in 1863 by a Dutch family. Early owners were the Cottrells and the Whylands. It is a polychromed brick and slate Victorian with a cupola on the roof, unique for Poestenkill.
Lynd Home	Main Street near the firehouse	Three generations of Holsers lived in this gracious homestead, breeding and raising Leghorn chickens and registered Holstein cattle. The house was originally part of the Lynd estate.
Tank House	Main Street (behind Lynd home)	This structure was located on the Lynd farm and was a collar factory. The third floor of the building housed a big tank that was filled with water by the windmill and used to power the sewing machines on the lower floors.
Tripi Residence	White Church Road	Believed to be the oldest surviving home in Poestenkill; probably built by Archelaus Lynd shortly after moving to the Town in the 1750s. It has three original fireplaces made of adobe clay and brick. There are remains of a beehive fireplace in the basement. It is a typical example of an early yeoman's house.
Old Parsonage	Plank Road, across from the post office	This home was built in 1860 and is pictured in many of Joseph Hidley's paintings of Poestenkill village. It was a parsonage for the Poestenkill Christian Church until 1967 when it was sold. The home had many kerosene lamps of the type used during that period. Thought to have been built by the Ives family.
Dater Home	Plank Road, across from the post office	This home was probably built by the Ives family and then owned by the Dater family until the 1960s. It is pictured in many of Joseph Hidley's paintings. Mr. Dater was a local businessman manufacturing shirts in "The Shop" behind his house. He was also an accomplished musician and served as Town Clerk.
Select School	Foot of Snake Hill Road	This building was once a "select school," a private, post-graduate school that operated for only a few years in the 1850s. At one time, the basement contained a bone-grinding machine operated by Jacob Veith, a butcher as well as operator of the Eagle Hotel that was located across Plank Road.
Intestate Laminates	Main Street	In the years immediately following W.W.I, the town's economy was given a boost by the appearance of a "big business", the first and only of its kind to appear in Poestenkill. The mill was a branch of the Swans Down Mills of Hudson. It was this business that first brought electricity as far as the village in 1921. This business closed in 1927 and several years later, the 7-UP bottling company moved in and employed many people.
Poestenkill Town Hall	Farm-to-Market Road or White Church Road	This property was set aside in 1788 by Stephen Van Rensselaer for a school. Five acres were taken from lands leased to Barringer, Peck and Strunk, early settlers. After the school was built, officials leased the remaining lots, and only in the late 1900s was ownership finally resolved. The original 1788 school, known as District #7 of Sand Lake, was replaced in 1823, and the old school sold for \$45.00. Yet another replacement school was built in

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Table 1: Buildings of Potential Historic/Architectural Significance, Poestenkill Hamlet

Site	Location	Description
		1848, known as District #3, or "The Village School." The next "New School" was built in 1927. When it has ceased to be useful as a school, the building was bought by the Town and now houses the Town Offices.

Source: Linda Sagendorf, Town Historian.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- The Town encourages the listing of significant historical properties on the National Historic Register

In many towns, an important first step in recognizing and preserving the traditional character of the community is the identification of historic resources. This is formally done through the listing of historically or architecturally significant properties on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Established by an act of Congress in 1966, the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of properties significant in the history, architecture, archaeology, and culture of the United States. These are buildings, districts, sites, objects and structures that possess "integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association" and:

- that are associated with historic events; or
- that are associated with "the lives of persons significant in our past"; or
- that embody distinctive architectural or artistic characteristics; or
- that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years are not considered eligible for the National Register. Such properties may qualify, however, if they are a part of a designated historic district or if they fall within certain categories. In New York State, the State Register of Historic Places provides a parallel process for designation.



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Listing on the National Register provides access to public and private sector financial incentives, including tax credits. Property owners wishing to claim the tax credits must comply with the federal certification process that includes documentation of existing conditions, architectural drawings and specifications indicating compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings, and “as-built” documentation upon project completion. National Register designation also provides limited protective measures for the improvement of historic building, which generally come into play only when federal or state funding is used to finance a project; it *does not* prevent building demolition or alteration.

Despite Poestenkill’s rich history, currently there are no properties in the town listed on either the National or State Registers of Historic Places, nor has the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation formally identified any properties in the Town as eligible for listing. However, there may be properties in the Town worthy of designation on the National or State Registers.

- Identify houses and buildings outside of the hamlet that have historic significance to the town.

The map above shows buildings outside of the Poestenkill hamlet that were signified as significant for the Rensselaer County Natural Resources Inventory during the late 1980s. The sites of these buildings are in question as well as whether they still exist or are considered important to the Town. Additionally, houses in the hamlets of Barberville and East Poestenkill were not separately identified. Similarly, other buildings and sites may not be identified that should be included.

Archaeological Resources

There has never been any formal, dedicated archaeological work conducted in the town of Poestenkill. Given the physical characteristics of the town, however, Poestenkill may be an ideal site for archaeological exploration. The hill typology of the area was an attraction for Native Americans to settle and work. The terrain also precludes the use of heavy industrial equipment to mar the landscape for building or exploration. This situation may leave archaeological treasures in Poestenkill well preserved for future generations to find.

According to the New York State Museum’s Prehistoric Archaeological Site File, there are several areas of prehistoric archaeological resources in the northwestern part of the town and in the vicinity of East Poestenkill. Other areas, predominantly in the western half of the town, have been identified as having a high or medium probability of prehistoric archaeological resources. Additional research would be necessary to determine precisely where resources exist, and what those resources are. While some information on archaeologically sensitive areas is maintained by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, this is considered restricted information, provided on a “need-to-know” basis only, to prevent vandalism and looting.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Landmark Businesses

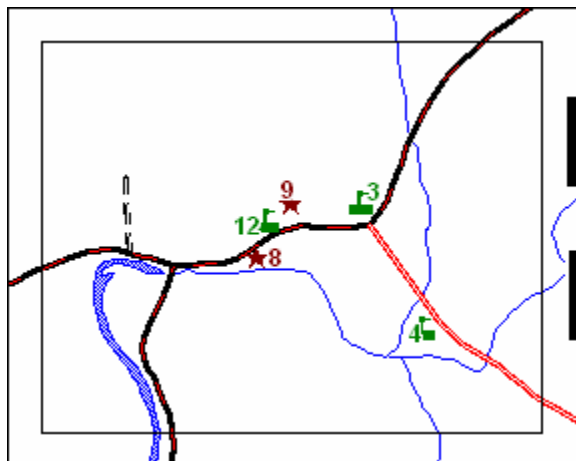
- 1 Bubie's General Store
- 2 Bubie's Apartments/House of Pizza
- 3 Bubie's Garage
- 4 Interstate Laminates
- 5 Eagle Hotel/Blue Post Tea Room
- 6 Moon Hotel
- 7 Ives Corners Hotel
- 8 Beebe's Hotel/Flint's Store
- 9 Deverno's Garage
- 10 Bubie's Auto Parts
- 11 Saint Gobain Performance Plastics
- 12 Ed's Garage
- 13 Dynamic Systems Inc.
- 14 Peggy's Hair Repair
- 15 Mona's Beauty Shop
- 16 Beauty Shop
- 17 Hotel (gone)
- 18 True Elgin Creamery
- 19 Ott's Garage

Landmark Public Buildings

- 1 Christian Church Disciples
- 2 Evangelical Lutheran Church
- 3 Union Gospel Church
- 4 First Baptist Church
- 5 St. Mary's of the Woods (destroyed)
- 6 Town Hall
- 7 Poestenkill Fire Company
- 8 Old Fire House
- 9 VFW/Sullivan Jones Post #7466
- 10 Poestenkill Elementary School
- 11 Algonquin Middle School
- 12 East Poestenkill Fire House
- 13 Beauty Shop
- 14 Poestenkill Library
- 15 Camp Rotary - Boy Scouts of America
- 16 Town Garage
- 17 Post Office

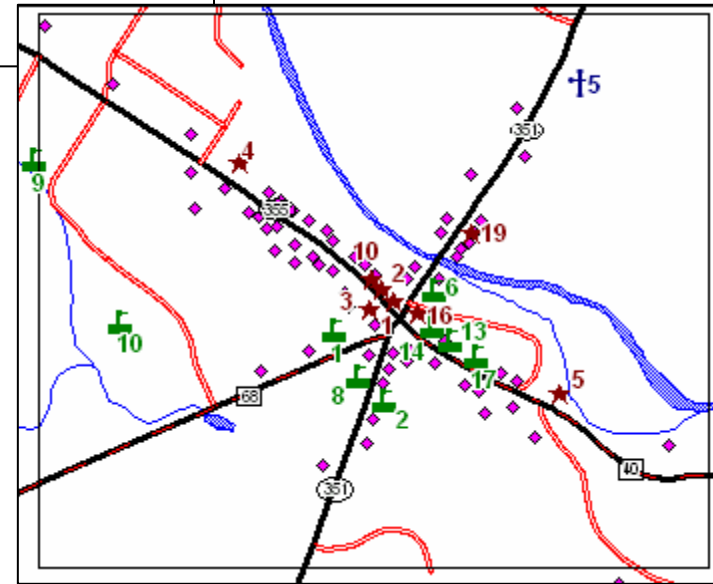
Cemeteries & Gravesites

- 1 Lockwood/Mason
- 2 Baker
- 3 Brookside
- 4 Herrington
- 5 Hillside
- 6 Himes (destroyed)
- 7 Minnick
- 8 Moody
- 9 Peek (Peck)
- 10 Read
- 11 Kilmer
- 12 Sliter
- 13 St. Mary's
- 14 Snyder/Whyland
- 15 Woodside (#56)
- 16 St. Mary's 2

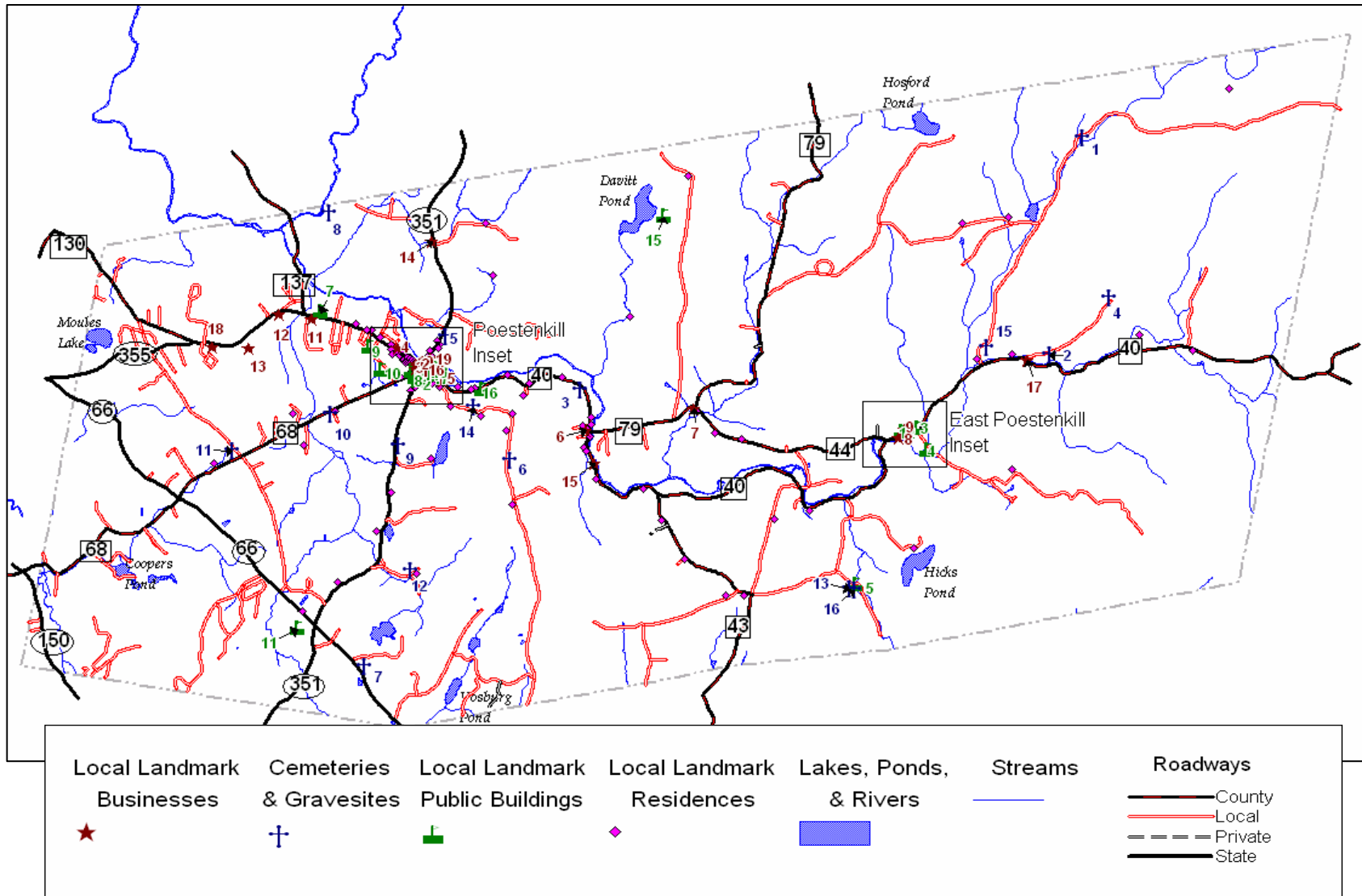


*East Poestenkill Inset
On Left*

Poestenkill Inset on right



Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan



Map 7: Historic Resources and Gravesites

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Over the years, some archaeological finds have been made known through an oral tradition. For example, a local resident once claimed to have found a fulsome (spear) point at a site near Weatherwax Road. If true, this artifact would date over 10,000 years. Additionally, there have been many claims of arrowhead finds that would date back 4,000 years. These have primarily been collected by local Boy Scout troops.

Threats, Issues & Goals

- The Town should consider creating a repository for finds, including artifacts from the prehistoric, colonial and industrial periods.

Artifacts donated to the town or collected by the Historical Society are presently housed in the records archive in the Town Hall. A rotating display by the Historical Society is presented in the entrance to the Town Hall. To allow the proper preservation and display of artifacts and donated historical items, a room which is air conditioned in the summer and heated in the winter has been provided for storage of items, with displays in public building such as the Town Hall and Library.

Cultural Resources

The Town of Poestenkill sponsors several events along with funding such organizations as the Poestenkill Public Library. The Town-funded Memorial Day Parade along Route 355 and the 4th of July Celebration provide the town residents a sense of community and pride.

Poestenkill Public Library

Since April 2001, the Poestenkill Library has been located in a lovely, renovated house in the center of town. It is considered by many to be the “jewel” of the Town of Poestenkill and the residents take great pride in its existence and appearance. It is staffed by five part-time paid employees and over 20 community volunteers. As of January 2005, the library had over 16,000 items in its collection. This includes books, videos, DVDs, magazines, and audio books. Poestenkill Library has over 1500 registered borrowers. The visits to the library in 2004 totaled 12, 315. The library offers free Internet access through three public access computers. The Poestenkill Library is a member of the Upper Hudson Library System which serves the 29 public libraries located in Albany and Rensselaer counties. This allows access to over one million items located in the various libraries. The Poestenkill Library holds a preschool story hour on Friday mornings. This program has been offered continually since 1992. The Friends of Poestenkill Library, the main source of fundraising for the library, also offers two adult book



Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

discussion groups. The spring and fall Market Day events and the Holiday Lights Annual Appeal are the major fundraisers for the Friends. The Poestenkill Library has depended on this source of income for operating expenses since it moved into the new location.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Additional funding is needed to expand programs and events for the community

The Poestenkill Library presently receives funding for its operating expenses from Rensselaer County, the Town of Poestenkill, Brittonkill School District and fund raising events. As fund raising events are not a reliable source of funding, the Library's services could be reduced during years that do not have successful fund raising events. The North Greenbush and East Greenbush libraries have their own taxing districts in which all property owners in the towns pay library taxes with their local taxes. The Brittonkill School District provides taxing for libraries in their school district, adding a small percentage onto the school district taxes that are dedicated to the town library of the taxpayer. With operating costs paid by the taxpayer, monies collected during fundraisers could go to special events and new programs for the town's residents. Another funding source could be a community chest type organization that raises funds for multiple organizations in the town. A community chest organization could also promote a sense of community in Poestenkill.

Poestenkill Historical Society

The Poestenkill Historical Society meets in the Town Hall every 4th Tuesday except July and August. The Historical Society uses the Poestenkill Library as a repository of research materials. The Library also has a local history section stocked by the Historical Society and Historian. The Historical Society provides changing displays at the Town Hall. Articles and artifacts belonging to the Historical Society are spread in several locations, making control of these items more difficult.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Space is needed to consolidate historical and archaeological items, documents and artifacts and to provide a base for the Town Historian and Historical Society.

The provision of heated and cooled space in which to consolidate collections would help preserve as well as add to the collections. Elderly owners of artifacts would be more likely to donate items if they knew that they would be preserved and maintained adequately. This space could be located within existing facilities, although if collections grew, a separate space may be needed.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post

The VFW Post hosts the Poestenkill Seniors, Poestenkill Business Association, Rensselaer County Conservation Alliance, Mark 20 and the Patroon Dog Club and Dog Show. The VFW also sponsors the Poestenkill Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. The facility is made available to community groups for meetings and events such as blood drives and classes. The facility is also available to be rented to non-members for events. The Sullivan Jones Post is presently collecting funds to sponsor memberships for returning veterans from Iraq.



Dyken Pond Environmental Center

The Dyken Pond Environmental Center is owned by Rensselaer County and located in the towns of Berlin, Grafton and Poestenkill. One small parcel of about 30 acres south of Dyken Pond Road and west of Dustin Swamp is located in the northeast corner of Poestenkill. The Environmental Education Center offers a mixture of forest habitats, wetlands, small streams, and Dyken Pond. The area is rich in animal and plant life.

The Poestenkill section of the Center was created in 1990 with the 10-acre Eischen parcel and added to in 1991 with 19 acres of the Mulson parcel. The Poestenkill section is crossed by the Long Trail and a loop trail. The trail crosses a western finger of Dustin Swamp, which is now a sedge meadow with a boardwalk. The Environmental Center holds public events regularly. The Center works with community groups that wish to use its facility and is open to the general public.

Barberville Falls Nature Preserve

Barberville Falls is a 119-acre nature preserve established by the Eastern New York Chapter of the Nature Conservancy through land purchases and gifts. The area was farmed during the 1800s, and around 1900, construction was begun on a community-financed hydroelectric plant at the top of the falls which was never completed. At the falls, the Poesten Kill flows 90 feet off the Rensselaer Plateau into a deep pool. Davitt Pond Brook flows into the Poesten Kill on the east side of the gorge. There are three trails in the preserve. Along the Ridge and Creek Trails in the gorge one can see a variety of wildflowers, mosses, lichens, horsetails, and ferns.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan



Issues, Threats and Goals

- Parking by visitors has created problems around the intersection of Plank Road (Co. Route 40) and Blue Factory Road (Co. Route 79).

Parking in the vicinity of the preserve is limited to two pull offs located on the north side of Plank Road near the Brookside Cemetery. No parking is available at the trailhead. According to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, residents living adjacent to the trailhead are frequently inconvenienced by illegal parking along the road near the intersection of Plank Road and Blue Factory Road. It has also been suggested that parking in this area represents a traffic safety concern. Parking for the Preserve should be more clearly marked to encourage visitors to park in legal parking areas, with better walking connections between the parking areas and the site itself.

Geiser Preserve

The Geiser preserve contains 95 acres of forest around Perigo Hill, the highest point in Poestenkill. The preserve was a gift to the Rensselaer-Taconic Land Conservancy from Ruth Nevin, a Taborton teacher, who purchased the land in 1932. The old, abandoned Eastern Turnpike that ran from Albany to Boston bisects the preserve. There is an impressive view from the peak when the leaves have fallen off the trees.

Boy Scout Troop 528 & Camp Rotary Scout Reservation

The local Boy Scout troop is sponsored by the Sullivan Jones VFW Post 7466 and meets in the Poestenkill Lutheran Church.

Camp Rotary Scout Reservation, located on Davitt Lake Road, serves the Twin Rivers Council of the Capital Region Boy Scouts. The reservation consists of over 1,250 acres in the Towns of Poestenkill and Grafton. The southern section of the reservation around Davitt Pond lies in Poestenkill. The Boy Scouts have marked trails throughout the reservation that can be used by permission only of the Twin Rivers Council. The area is covered by extensive stands of hemlock. Parts of the trails located in the southern section of the reservation cross onto private property and are not open to the public.

Poestenkill Folk Music Society

The Poestenkill Jam or “Friday Night Jam” is a folk music jamboree that meets two Friday nights a month in the Poestenkill Town Hall. Many of the musicians are from Poestenkill and reflect the musical talent found in the town.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Hollywood Drive-In

There are less than 300 drive-ins left in the United States and Poestenkill has one of them. The Hollywood Drive-In was built in 1952 and originally ran year round. It is now open from May to October and provides entertainment for residents of Rensselaer County and surrounding areas.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Traffic becomes backed up on Route 66

The entrance to the drive-in has been moved inward on the property, which has eased the traffic problem a bit. Signs to warn motorists may be useful to reduce the likelihood of accidents in this area.

Religious and Philanthropic Institutions

The following is a list of religious institutions in Poestenkill:

Averill Park Jehovah Witnesses
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Poestenkill
First Baptist Church of East Poestenkill
Poestenkill Christian Church
Union Gospel Church

Many of these institutions provide space for other community groups to meet



Housing

General Housing Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, the town of Poestenkill has a total of 1,628 housing units, of which 84.4% are owner-occupied and 15.6% are renter-occupied (Table 29). Although more than four-fifths of the housing in Poestenkill is single family, 12.3% of housing units are in multi-family structures with two or more units and 4.7% are mobile homes or trailers. A very low portion (6.2%) of the housing is vacant, whether for rent, for sale, seasonal or otherwise. In contrast to the neighboring communities of Berlin and Grafton, where a significant portion of the housing stock is seasonal, almost all of the housing units in the town of Poestenkill have year-round occupancy. No vacant houses were for sale in Poestenkill during the 2000 census.

In 2000, the median housing value in the town was \$117,600, an increase of 24% from 1990 and 231% from 1980. (The value is based on an estimate by a homeowner, at the time of the census, of how much their property would sell for if it were for sale.) The median value was lower in the town of Poestenkill than in the town of Sand Lake (\$123,500), but higher than in North Greenbush (\$116,200), Brunswick (\$115,400), Grafton (\$96,300) or Berlin (\$79,000). In the 2000 Census, the median housing value was the third highest of all the communities in Rensselaer County behind Sand Lake and Schodack.



In general, housing prices in the town are higher in newer developments such as Algonquin Estates, Deer Creek, and Winding Ridge than in other older established neighborhoods. Most of these new homes are constructed on large lots and are in the range of \$150,000 - \$200,000. Prices are lower in rural areas of east Poestenkill and in the Poestenkill hamlet where lots are smaller and the structures are older.

The town of Poestenkill has experienced modest amounts of new construction, with nearly 30% of the town's housing stock built during the 1980s and 1990s (Table 30). Many of these new units appear to have been constructed in the major subdivisions approved in Poestenkill during this time. In contrast, 20.8% of residential units were constructed before 1940 and 42.5% were built before 1960. The age of the town's housing stock generally reflects the steady population growth that has occurred over the last fifty years in Poestenkill.

Residential building permit activity in the town of Poestenkill was significant during most of the 1990s and grew during the early 2000s, with a total of 240 new housing units permitted since 1990. The majority of these units were single-family structures, including modular homes. Most of the new construction has been in the western and southern sections of the town, which are more accessible to Albany and Troy. In addition, soil conditions and easier topography have made construction more affordable in these areas.

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Housing Market Conditions and Recent Housing Activity

Chapter 139 of the Town Code defines a subdivision as the division of any parcel of land into three or more lots, blocks, or sites, with or without streets or highways, or any division of land containing a new street. A *major* subdivision is one with five or more lots, or any size subdivision requiring any new street or extension of municipal facilities. A *minor* subdivision consists of no more than four lots fronting on an existing street, not involving any new street or road and the extension of municipal facilities, and not adversely affecting the development of the remainder of the parcel or adjoining property.

Subdivisions usually occur when the housing market conditions are strong enough to make a profit from the subdivision of land. The cost of planning and engineering as well as construction costs of utilities and roadways often outweigh the actual profit received from the actual sale of land. Therefore, subdivisions usually occur when housing prices rise, such as was seen in the early and mid 1980s, mid 1990s and 2003 to present (2005). This can be seen in the subdivisions approved in Poestenkill.

Fifteen subdivisions have been approved in the town of Poestenkill since 1985. The majority of the subdivisions are located north, west, and south of the Poestenkill hamlet. The subdivisions listed in Table 2 are approved sites and do not necessarily have homes on them. However, most of the lots have been developed and sold. Approximately 30 vacant subdivision lots remain, with several purchased for construction. This low number of vacant lots has created a demand for additional subdivisions, which can be seen in the 3 major subdivisions with 28 lots that have been approved in 2004.

Table 2: Major Subdivisions Approved in the Town of Poestenkill, 1985-2004			
Subdivision Name	Location	Year Approved	Number of Lots
Heather Ridge	Vosburg Road & Holloway Lane	1985	48
Pleasant Hill	Hinkle Road	1985	15
Deer Creek	Route 351	1986	21
Algonquin Estates	Algonquin Beach Road	1986/1986	27/44
Nursery Estates	Route 355 & Dino Lisa Drive	1987	8
Pine Meadows	Laura Drive	1987	13
Reichard	Reichard Farm Road	1987	3
Moules Lake	Route 355; Carol Place; Daisy Lane; Todd Drive	1987/1987/2000/2004	3/3/8/5
Holser Subdivision	Lynn Road	1988/1995	13/ 6
Clayton Johnson	Oak Hill Road	1988	3
Common Farms	Hinkle Road	1988	8
Winding Ridge	Algonquin Beach Road	1991	7
Victorian Estates	Weatherwax Road	1993/94	14
Skyview Meadows	Snyders Corner Road	1994/1999	7/6
Shuhart	Grandview Drive	1997	6
Clemente	56 Road	1997	6
Henry Duncan	NY 355	1999	4
Futia/Laraway	Plank Road	2002	4
Hammond Hills	Weatherwax Road	2004	4
Buckingham Place	Abbey Road	2004	19

Source: Town Assessor & Building Inspector.

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Local builders indicate that the buyers tend to be families with children. The majority are Poestenkill natives or families relocating from other parts of Rensselaer County. Many of them have chosen to live in Poestenkill for the quality of life. The desirability of the Averill Park School District is another factor driving the demand for new housing development.

Rensselaer County has lagged behind the Capital Region in terms of housing sales and prices. Median selling prices for homes in Rensselaer County are lower than in Albany or Saratoga Counties. According to the Capital Region Multiple Listing Service, a subsidiary of the Greater Capital Association of Realtors, Inc., median prices of existing homes sold in Rensselaer County rose from \$94,000 in 1999 to \$133,000 in 2004. This, together with low mortgage prices, has resulted in a “seller’s market” in Rensselaer County.

Rensselaer County has been collecting information on single-family housing listed under the Multiple Listing Service for February in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005. In 2002, four houses were listed in the town with an average price of \$87,750. In 2003, only one house was listed

with a price of \$142,900. In 2004, two houses were listed with an average price of \$174,900. In 2005, eight houses were listed, one a sizeable farm listed at \$2,500,000. The average price of the seven remaining properties listed was \$214,129.

The low numbers of houses for sale in Poestenkill may be an aberration as the data was collected in February, not a popular month to sell houses in, but also shows that houses are less likely to come up for sale. The only other town with fewer houses for sale over the four years studied was Petersburg, a much smaller community with many fewer housing units. Another significant indicator was that the price of houses rose much higher than the county or region. The average price of houses rose 144% in those four years. The average sales price of houses in the Capital District rose 35% from \$135,565 in 2001 to \$184,965 in 2004, and rose 30% in Rensselaer County during the same time period. The actual sales prices are lower than the listed price, but the listed price shows the price that the property owners expect to receive for their property. The rise in listed prices does reflect that residences are becoming less affordable to those with moderate incomes. A family spending one third of its income purely on mortgage and property taxes for the average listed price house would need to make \$54,162 a year.

The town of Poestenkill has experienced significant residential growth in recent years. An estimated 30% of the housing stock in the Town was built since 1980, typically on large lots with the amenities common to newer homes in suburban communities. Much of the recent construction activity has been in the Averill Park School District, perceived as one of the most progressive districts in the County. This has attracted many families to Poestenkill from other areas of Rensselaer County. Convenience to employment in Albany and Troy is also a factor influencing the demand for housing.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

The range of housing options in Poestenkill does not include any condominiums, townhouses, or large apartment complexes. Rental units constitute less than 20% of Poestenkill’s housing stock and the number of rental units has dropped since 1990. As a result, there are relatively few lower-cost alternatives for singles, young families, or seniors on fixed incomes. This can be seen in the significant drop in the 20-24 year and 25-34 year age range. Since starter families and recent college graduates do not usually have the savings to put a down payment on a house, these households cannot find housing in the town unless they move in with family members.

Table 3: Single Family Residential Building Permit Activity, Town of Poestenkill					
Year	Number	Median Value	Average Value	Median Area	Average Area
1993	11	\$90,000	\$116,364	1,964	2,212
1994	14	\$145,000	\$132,321	2,485	2,338
1998	18	\$94,000	\$103,833	1,708	1,782
1999	15	\$114,300	\$113,687	1,652	1,845
2003	21	\$150,000	\$150,938	2,173	2,133
2004	35	\$140,000	\$149,571	1,860	1,874

Source: Poestenkill Building Permits; includes manufactured housing and housing replacement.

Threats, Issues and Goals

- Increase the amount of rental housing without lowering area property values.

Rental housing has had a negative stereotype as they are traditionally considered to attract undesirable, low-income families. This stereotype is reinforced when one considers urban areas that have many absentee landlord rental units. Other communities have considerable numbers of rental units, but they are part of the neighborhoods or are maintained due to surveillance from the community.

The town can increase rental units through the allowance of in-law apartments and apartments above garages, etc., where the septic systems will allow an increase of units. Owner-occupied two-family houses are maintained, and tenants are usually not uncontrolled as their landlords are nearby. Large rental complexes in areas of public water and sewer can provide high-quality housing. As these complexes age, the community must ensure that the units are maintained to code to prevent the degradation of these units.

- Provide housing assistance and alternatives for special needs groups such as the elderly.

People are living longer, healthier lives now as compared to 50 years ago. Elderly people are no longer being placed in nursing homes due to age, but are usually left to age in place in their homes. Many of the houses often become too much for the elderly to maintain, which causes the housing

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to deteriorate. As the elderly are most likely to be on fixed incomes, they cannot afford to pay for the maintenance of the home, or the heating or other costs.



Apartments on Route 66

Several programs exist to help low- and moderate-income households including the elderly to repair or maintain their homes. Rensselaer County Housing Resources runs a small repair program for the lower income elderly. The Commission on Economic Opportunity runs a HEAP program for the low income with a weatherization portion in it program. ROUSE RPC, Inc. owns and manages several senior housing complexes including the Brookside Senior Apartments in West Sand Lake. ROUSE occasionally receives RESTORE funds to help senior citizens with housing repairs.

Late middle-aged households are now found to downsize their housing from the typical three or four bedroom house to a smaller house or condominium, many years before going into the typical senior apartment complex. No subdivisions for smaller houses, or condominiums or senior apartments are proposed for the town at this time, although there are many proposed in the neighboring towns of North Greenbush and Brunswick. Condominiums and senior apartments would require community or public sewers as well as water.

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Transportation

Highways and Roads

The Town of Poestenkill contains 69.4 miles of recognized roadways. Jurisdictional classification identifies the level of government that holds responsibility for the maintenance and design of a given road. These jurisdictions are typically state, county, and local. Four road segments within the Town are considered non-state federal-aid roads. These are federal-aid roads, not part of the state touring route system, that are maintained by the County or Town, including:

- Plank Road from Columbia Hill Road to NY Route 351 (Co. Rt. 40)
- Snyders Corners Road from NY Route 66 to NY Route 150 (Co. Rt. 68)
- Spring Avenue Extension from the Poestenkill Town Line to NY Route 355 (Co. Rt. 130)
- Weatherwax Road from NY Route 66 to Spring Avenue Extension

Jurisdiction	Road Mileage in Poestenkill	Percent
New York State	7.4 miles	10.7%
Rensselaer County	22.0 miles	31.7%
Town of Poestenkill	50.0 miles	57.6%

State Highways

As shown in Table 19, New York State operates and maintains 10.7% of the roads in the Town of Poestenkill. State routes make up many of the vital links to and from other municipalities in the region.

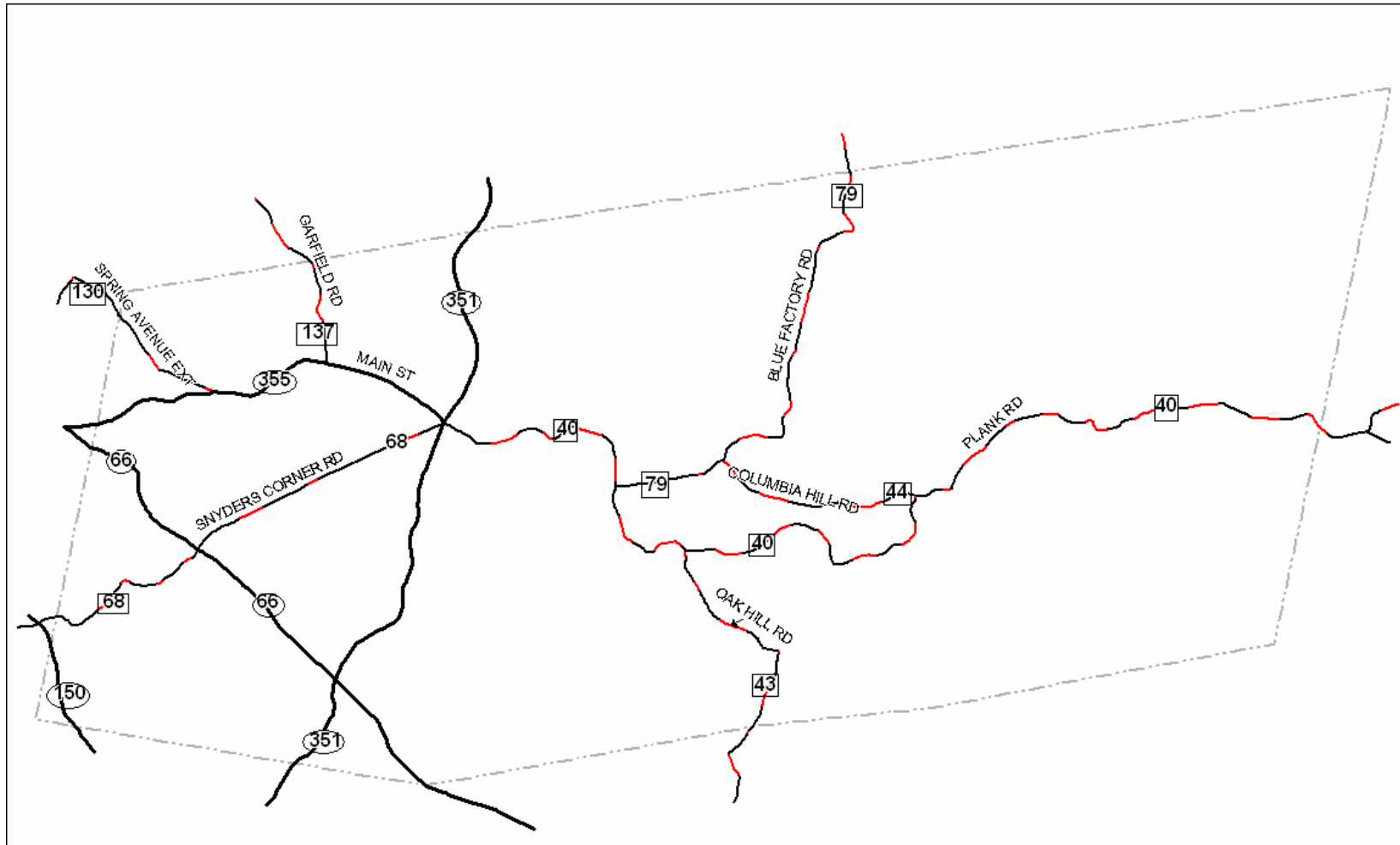
NY Route 66, known in Poestenkill as Averill Park Road, serves as a primary access route to the city of Troy. It links Poestenkill with the town of Sand Lake and Wynantskill in the town of North Greenbush, and intersects with NY Route 351. NY Route 351 runs north-south and connects NY Route 2 in the town of Brunswick with NY Route 43, a primary access route to Albany County via Interstate 90, in the town of Sand Lake.

NY Route 355 runs east-west through the Town of Poestenkill. It connects the Poestenkill hamlet with Wynantskill and terminates in the hamlet. It also provides access to the Rensselaer County Airport. A small portion of NY Route 150 (West Sand Lake Road) bisects the southwestern corner of the town, linking Wynantskill with West Sand Lake.

Traffic count information for state highways is collected by the NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) through the use of both permanent and portable (temporary) traffic counters. These counts are done throughout the year and vary in the number of days calculated and the number of highways that are counted each year. According to NYS DOT, each average annual daily traffic (AADT) entry represents the number of vehicles

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

traveling over a designation section of highway; roads are broken down into sections to allow for a more controlled count. The sections remain the same every year to allow for a comparable count number.



Map 8: State and County Highways

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Table 5: State Roads in the Town of Poestenkill Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)				
Road Segment	Four Most Recent NYSDOT Counts (Year)			
NY Route 66: From CR 45 to NY 351 jct. From NY 351 to NY 355 jct. (right)	5,607 (2001) 4,076 (2001)	5,972 (1998) 4,518 (1998)	5,125 (1994) 3,585 (1994)	3,050 (1988) 3,056 (1990)
NY Route 150: From NY 43 to CR 68	4,926 (2003)	4,573 (2000)	4,426 (1997)	4,482 (1995)
NY Route 351: From NY 43 jct. (Sand Lake) to NY 66 jct. From NY 66 to NY 355 From NY 355 to NY 2 (end of NY 351)	3,857 (2001) 3,602 (2002) 2,779 (2002)	3,184 (1999) 2,898 (1999) 2,521 (1999)	2,847 (1998) 3,177 (1997) 2,559 (1997)	3,078 (1995) 3,002 (1994) 2,693 (1994)
NY Route 355: From NY 66 jct. to CR 130 From NY 130 to NY 351 (end of NY 355)	2,716 (2001) 3,163 (2001)	2,490 (1998) 3,129 (1999)	2,201 (1996) 3,229 (1996)	2,237 (1992) 3,537 (1992)

Source: 2003 NYS Department of Transportation, Traffic Volume Report.

As shown in Table 5, the AADT for state routes in the town of Poestenkill increased on seven of the eight road segments measured. The largest increase in traffic on state roads over the four most recent AADT counts occurred on NY Route 66. Changes in the volume of traffic can be caused by many factors, including road conditions, speed limits, commutation patterns, and growth in the number of vehicles on the road, as well as by new development within the town of Poestenkill and/or in adjacent communities. Some commuter traffic may have shifted from driving through Troy to get to the interstate system to driving to West Sand Lake to get to the interstate system, when the new I-90 Exit 8 was opened in 1996. Other shifts may have occurred due to roadway construction. Although a more detailed hourly examination was not made, the AADT for these roads is low enough for two-lane rural highway to show that sufficient capacity exists on these roadways.

County Highways

County roads account for less than one-third of the total mileage in the Town of Poestenkill. These roads include County Route 40 (Plank Road), CR 43 (Oak Hill Road), CR 44 (Columbia Hill Road), CR 68 (Snyders Corners Road), CR 79 (Blue Factory Hill Road), CR 130 (Spring Avenue Extension), and CR 137 (Garfield Road). Most of the thru-roads in the eastern portion of the town are County roads.

Traffic count information for County roads is collected by the Rensselaer County Department of Engineering and Highways. The most recent data available from the County is shown in Table 22. As indicated by the table, the AADT counts for County routes vary dramatically. The differences may be attributable to the number of residences and businesses along a particular road, as well as the destinations available both within and outside the Town. For example, some County routes provide access from Poestenkill to key state roadways.

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From the most recent traffic count data, it is evident that County Routes 40, 44, 79, and 130 carry the most traffic of the County roads located in the Town of Poestenkill, with the heaviest traffic volume found along CR 130. This road links Poestenkill with the Town of Brunswick just outside the City of Troy municipal boundary, and provides residents with access to employment and shopping opportunities in Troy and other parts of the region.

There is one major infrastructure project planned by the County Highway Department. A proposal to conduct major work on the bridge on County Route 40, Plank Road, over the Poesten Kill is currently being developed.

Table 6: County Roads in the Town of Poestenkill Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	
Road Segment	Most Recent AADT
County Route 40: From NY Route 351 to CR 79** From CR 79 to Powers Road From Powers Road to CR 44 From CR 44 to Bridge From Bridge to Poestenkill/Berlin Municipal Line**	2,160 1,424 425 312 1,134
County Route 43: From CR 40 to Oak Hill Road** From Oak Hill Road to Poestenkill/Sand Lake Municipal Line	201 356
County Route 44: From CR 79 to CR 40**	1,301
County Route 68: From NY Route 351 to SR 66 From NY Route 66 to Poestenkill/North Greenbush Municipal Line	851 969
County Route 79: At Poestenkill/Grafton Town Line** From Poestenkill/Grafton Town Line to North Road From North Road to CR 44 From CR 44 to Poestenkill/Grafton Municipal Line	104 178 423 1,424
County Route 130: From North Greenbush/Poestenkill Municipal Line to NY Route 355, end of CR 130	3,890
County Route 137: From Poestenkill/Brunswick Municipal Line to NY Route 355	799*

Source: Rensselaer County Department of Engineering and Highways. No dates were provided. ** Taken from the 2003 NYS Department of Transportation Local Highway Traffic Volume Report.

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Town Highways

The remainder of the roads in Poestenkill are classified as Town highways. There are 40.0 miles of Town roads, an increase from 35.4 miles in 1970, when the last Master Plan was produced. The increase in Town roadways is due to the addition of subdivision roads. Information on traffic volumes on most Town roads is not available. In 2001, Legenbauer Road had an AADT of 94 cars per day. Like many rural communities, the Town of Poestenkill does not have the capacity to regularly monitor traffic counts. Counts for Town roads are generally only collected when development is proposed or a specific traffic problem has been identified.

Traffic data collected during 1995 and 1998 specifically regarding Weatherwax Road indicated increased traffic. The increased use of Weatherwax Road is in part attributed to new development and school-related traffic. The traffic volume increases may be related to growth in automobile ownership rather than increased population.

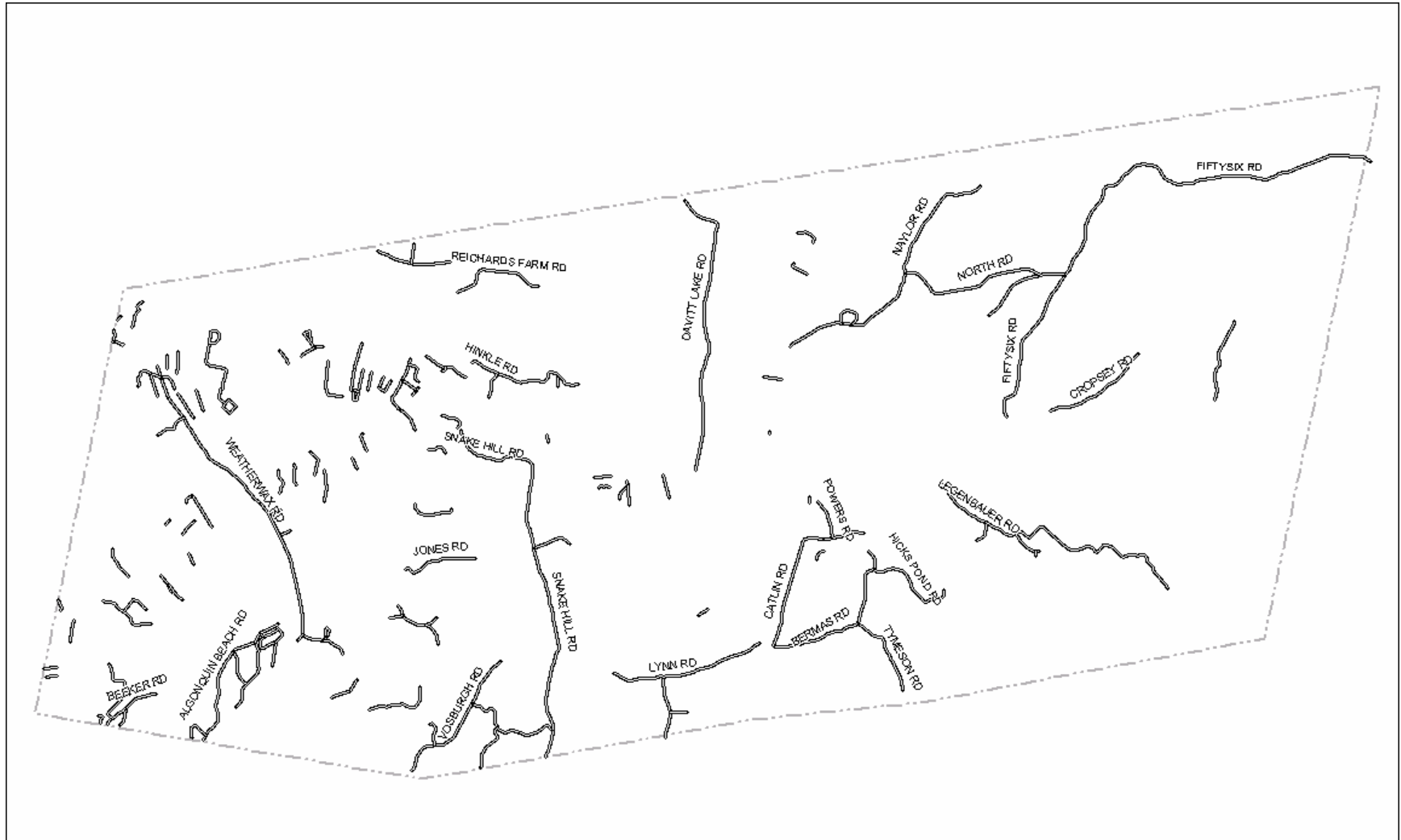
The Town roads are maintained by the Poestenkill Highway Department, which is located on Co. Route 40 (Plank Road). The Highway Department is managed by an elected Superintendent of Highways and staffed by six full-time employees. The Town currently owns eight trucks, two loaders, one grader, one backhoe, and one street sweeper.

There were three major infrastructure projects completed on Town Highways. The replacement of the bridges on Cropsey Road, Powers Road, and Fifty-six Road were completed by October 2005.



Snake Hill Road

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Map 9: Town Roadways

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Threats, Issues and Goals

- Although traffic volume is relatively low in Poestenkill, some intersections have non-standard angles, grades or other problems to make safe crossings or turning. The following are a listing of intersections that have had a greater share of accidents:
 - Co. Route 30 (Spring Avenue Extension) with NY Route 355
 - Co. Route 66 (Snyders Corners Road) with NY Route 66
 - NY Route 66 with NY Route 351

When these roadways are reconstructed, DOT and/or Rensselaer County should examine what can be done to reduce accidents at these locations. In intersections and other areas where the Town feels that the situation has become exceedingly dangerous, the Town can request the New York State Department of Transportation to review the area for hazards and ask for recommendations. In cases throughout Rensselaer County, these requests have resulted in reduced speed limits, flashing lights and cross walks in areas of pedestrian use.

- Other traffic problems such as excessive speed are common on state and county routes. The speed limit on Weatherwax Road, a local roadway, is actually set higher than NY Route 355, which it ends on. This higher speed limit has created hazards both on Weatherwax Road and NY Route 355.

The Town should request the New York State Police and Rensselaer County Sheriff's Department to enforce the speed limits on the major highways and in areas where speeding has created hazardous conditions.

- Drainage issues along roadways still create flooding hazards to residents and drivers in some low-lying areas.

The Town Highway Department, Rensselaer County Highway Department and NYS Department of Transportation should examine areas of flooding problems and what, if anything, can be done to alleviate the situation. The Town, under its Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) mandate can also require that new development in and near these areas does not worsen the situation by increasing storm water draining into these areas. The Town is presently in the process of adopting the MS4 required Stormwater Management and Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Laws as mandated by New York State and the EPA.



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Travel Behavior

The most reliable data regarding travel behavior in the Capital District is the U.S. Census of Population and Housing which was last conducted in 2000. Only 163 out of 2,237 workers residing in the town of Poestenkill and age sixteen or older worked in the town. The remainder commuted to employment outside Poestenkill. As shown in Table 7, Rensselaer County, including the town of Poestenkill, accounted for 40.7% of the destinations of commuters originating in Poestenkill. Albany County was the most popular destination for employment with 1,090 residents commuting to the county, most likely due to the number of state government jobs available in the city of Albany.

Due to the through nature and relatively low congestion of NY Routes 66, 351 and 355/County Route 40, these roadways are used for commuters from surrounding towns to connect into Troy or into the interstate system via NY Route 43 in Sand Lake. As congestion grows on roadways in the urbanized areas outside of Poestenkill, commuter routes will shift to find the roadway with the lowest delay.

Other Modes of Transportation



Rensselaer County Airport Runway and Hangar

Transportation for residents in the town of Poestenkill is solely passenger vehicle as there is no public transit service and the closest passenger rail access is in the city of Rensselaer. Some limited transportation is provided through the Rensselaer County Senior Services and Veterans Services to senior citizens and veterans. The closest bus service runs to Wynantskill to the west. The Capital District Transportation Authority Route 80 bus runs from Pleasantdale/Corliss Park to Wynantskill and turns around in the Clemente gravel pit at the intersection of NY Route 66 and NY Route 355.

The Rensselaer County Airport, which is located on NY Route 355, is a private, general aviation facility primarily used to provide access to non-urban areas. It is not a commercial airport, however, and services are limited. In 2005, thirteen aircraft were based at the airport and an average of 67 “operations,” referring to take-offs and landings at the airport, per month. In comparison, the Albany International Airport in Colonie, the nearest commercial airport, had 99 aircraft and an average 380 operations a day in 2005.

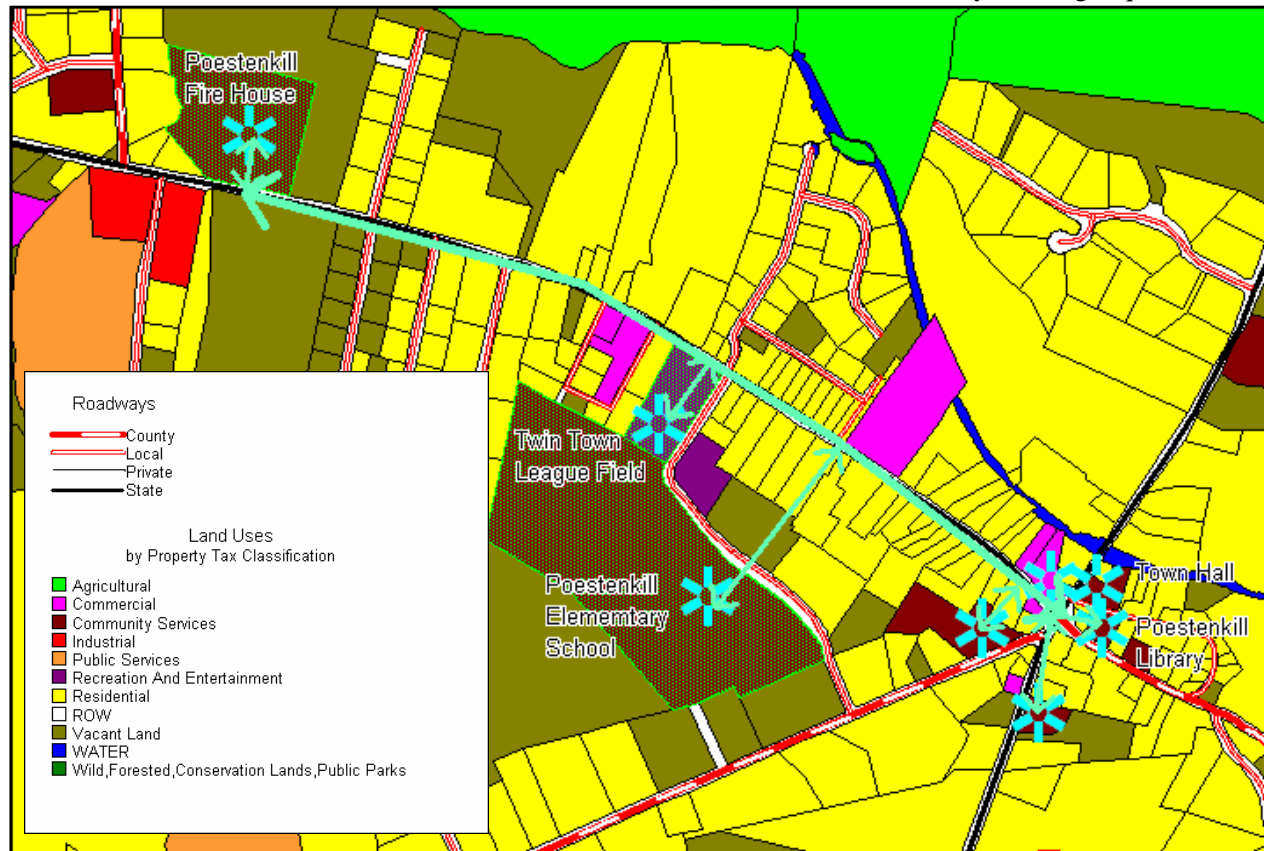
Destination	Number
City of Albany	640
Colonie Village	35
City of Watervliet	55
Remainder of Albany County	360
Town of Poestenkill	163
Remainder of Rensselaer County	747
Saratoga County	30
Berkshire County	25

Source: NYS Department of Transportation Journey to Work Application.

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There are no sidewalks or hiking/biking trails within Poestenkill, except between the bridge over the Poestenkill and the intersection of NY Route 355/Plank Road on NY Route 351 and in short sections along NY Route 355. Pedestrians presently walk along the shoulders of the state highways or on the edges of the county and town roadways.

In areas of relatively dense residential development, sidewalks, paths or trails can provide non-motorized access to neighbors, community resources and stores, and provide areas for walking for fitness. Several areas exist where these connections would be useful and provide great benefit to numbers of residents. Connections to the schools (Poestenkill Elementary and Algonquin Middle) can allow children to use playing



fields. A formalized trail between Algonquin Estates and Algonquin Middle School would provide residents access to the school without needing to drive.

Sidewalks in the hamlet leading to the elementary school would also provide access to residents in the hamlet. As the western portion of the town becomes subdivided, the Town may want to examine whether developers should plan for connections, whether as paths, sidewalks or minor streets that connect between developments.

Significant resources, such as the Barberville Falls, could also be connected with the hamlet, providing parking opportunities in the hamlet that would relieve parking problems in Barberville, and also provide customers to businesses in the hamlet.

Map 10: Important places within the hamlet and needed connections.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Since the Rensselaer County Senior and Veteran’s services vans only have limited services uses (i.e. transportation to senior centers, medical appointments), there is a need for transportation for shopping and other purposes.

Until several years ago, a Rensselaer Rural Bus ran once weekly to and from the city of Troy along County Route 40/NY Route 355. This route was dropped due to lack of riders. Unless significant subsidies are provided, public transportation will probably not return unless consistent ridership is provided. The residents of the town should be encouraged to assist their elderly and handicapped neighbors with car pools to the supermarket and shopping.

- Encourage CDTA to provide a park-and-ride facility that is effortless for Poestenkill residents to use.

The CDTA bus service stops at VanderHeyden Hall, 500 feet from the town line. If gasoline prices continue rising and Poestenkill remains a pass-through for commuters from other towns, extending the route to a park-and-ride facility along NY Route 355 may provide commuting alternatives for residents.



Sidewalk on left ends at end of property line. Sidewalks should be continuous to encourage their use.

- Provide safe walking routes in the hamlet and in areas where pedestrians are likely to be.

Providing sidewalks along roadways in the hamlet, especially NY Route 351, NY Route 355 and Plank Road, will provide safe walking areas for residents and children, and remove pedestrians from along side the driving path. Logical termini would be Deer Creek Road and the final driveway(s) to the south on NY Route 351, the firehouse on NY Route 355, and Davis Drive on Plank Road.

Sidewalks can be provided as part of a paving or reconstruction project, as well as through the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) through the Transportation Enhancement Program and Spot Improvement Program.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

- The Town should encourage the Rensselaer County Airport to continue its safety record by maintaining its facilities.

The Rensselaer County Airport may be eligible for funding of some safety improvements through the Federal Aviation Authority. The Town should encourage the Airport to work with the State and Federal governments to ensure the airport's and neighborhood's safety.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Infrastructure

Water

No public water system exists in the Town of Poestenkill at this time. The town is served by individual wells. Wells serving more than 5 dwelling units or 25 people for at least 60 days a year are considered “public water supply wells” and are required to perform testing on a regular basis. There are 11 community wells serving 7 public water supplies in the town of Poestenkill.

In 2006 the Town qualified for \$9 Million in a interest free loan financed for a 30 year term from the New York State Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund for the creation of a water system linking the hamlet of Poestenkill to the water system that ends at Vanderheyden Hall on NY Route 355 in the town of North Greenbush and Spring Avenue Extension in Brunswick. The proposed water system will serve the industrial properties of DSI, Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics and Interstate Laminates, all on NY Route 355, as well as the densely populated area of the hamlet. Proposed cost of the water system is estimated at \$9.0 Million in construction costs.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Public water should be supplied to contaminated groundwater areas.

Areas with water contamination should be added to a public water system including the area around the closed Poestenkill Landfill off Snyders Corners Road and the area around the Waste Management waste transfer station near the corner of NY Route 66 and NY Route 351 if not too cost prohibitive. Extension of public water may be more costly than other methods of filtering water if the distance between the existing water mains and areas to be served are great, and few users can be found at the site and along the route to share the expenses.

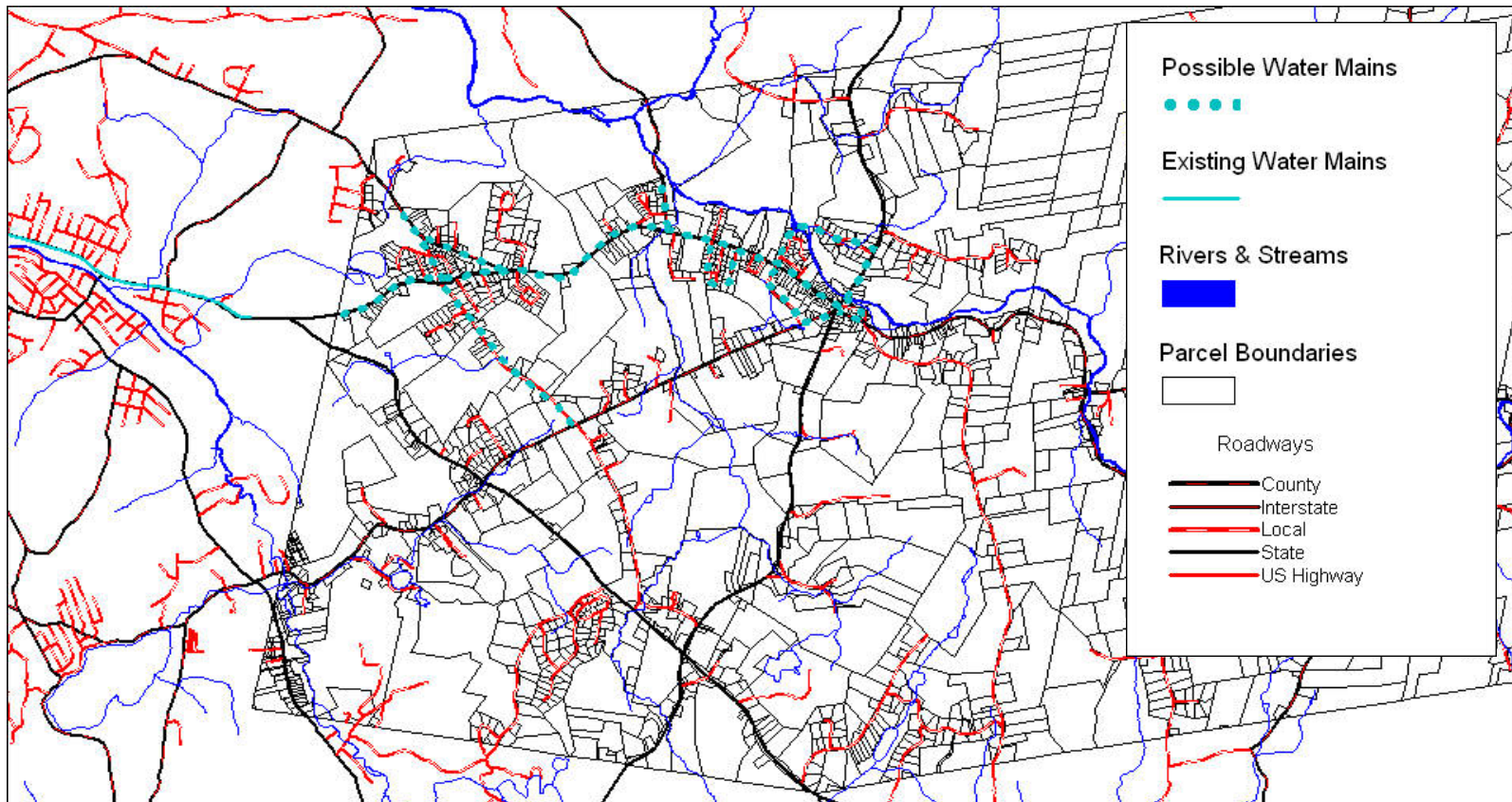
- Public water would help the growth and expansion of industrial and commercial concerns in areas where the Town would like such growth.

The Town may want to examine extending public water to possible commercial areas within the town, as well as serve areas of contamination. Businesses prefer the provision of a reliable public water supply to the limitations that private wells may create. A public water supply with sufficient storage and pressure provides relief to businesses on their insurance by providing sufficient water for sprinklers and for fire fighting.

- Public water should be extended into areas where it is most needed for the health and safety of our population.

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Developers prefer developing in areas where public water service exists as it saves time and money during the development process, and more money can be charged for lots with public water. Providing public water in areas the Town would prefer to preserve and protect as rural would be counter productive as it would encourage development where the Town wants to discourage it.



Map 11: Possible Public Water Connections

- The installation of public water mains and the creation and maintenance of water supplies are expensive and can be cost prohibitive.

The Town has qualified for a \$9 Million loan from the New York State Drinking Water Revolving Loan fund for the creation of the water system to supply the hamlet area, as well as the western most areas of the town. The Town is looking at other funding sources to ameliorate the cost of water systems include Community Development Block Grant funding to provide service to low- and moderate-income households or to assist in

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

the creation of jobs for low- and moderate-income households, long term bonding and the Self-Help program in which the community does much of the work on its own with its own employees. The cost of extending water from North Greenbush may be too high for the community to approve the water district. The Town may want to more closely examine using its aquifer as a water source, installing a water reservoir above the hamlet and creating a smaller district initially, focusing on the immediate hamlet area.

Sewer

The sewer main that services the town of Sand Lake runs parallel to NY Route 66 is presentaly the sole sewer main in Poestenkill. A Wynantskill Sewer District sewer main runs up NY Route 355 to the North Greenbush/Poestenkill line. The entire town is dependent on on-site septic systems, typically raised-bed systems that are used throughout much of rural Rensselaer County. Public sewerage is recommended in areas of high density with wells to prevent contamination of water supply, and areas where the Town would promote commercial and industrial uses.

The nearest public sewers can be found in Wynantskill and West Sand Lake. Connections to these sewer systems can be along NY Route 355 and NY Route 351. Sewer mains can be run along these roadways to service the hamlet area and the area around the corner of NY Route 66 and NY Route 351, but will be expensive to install. There may be some expansion limitations to the sewer system in West Sand Lake due to capacity constraints.

Issues, Threats and Goals

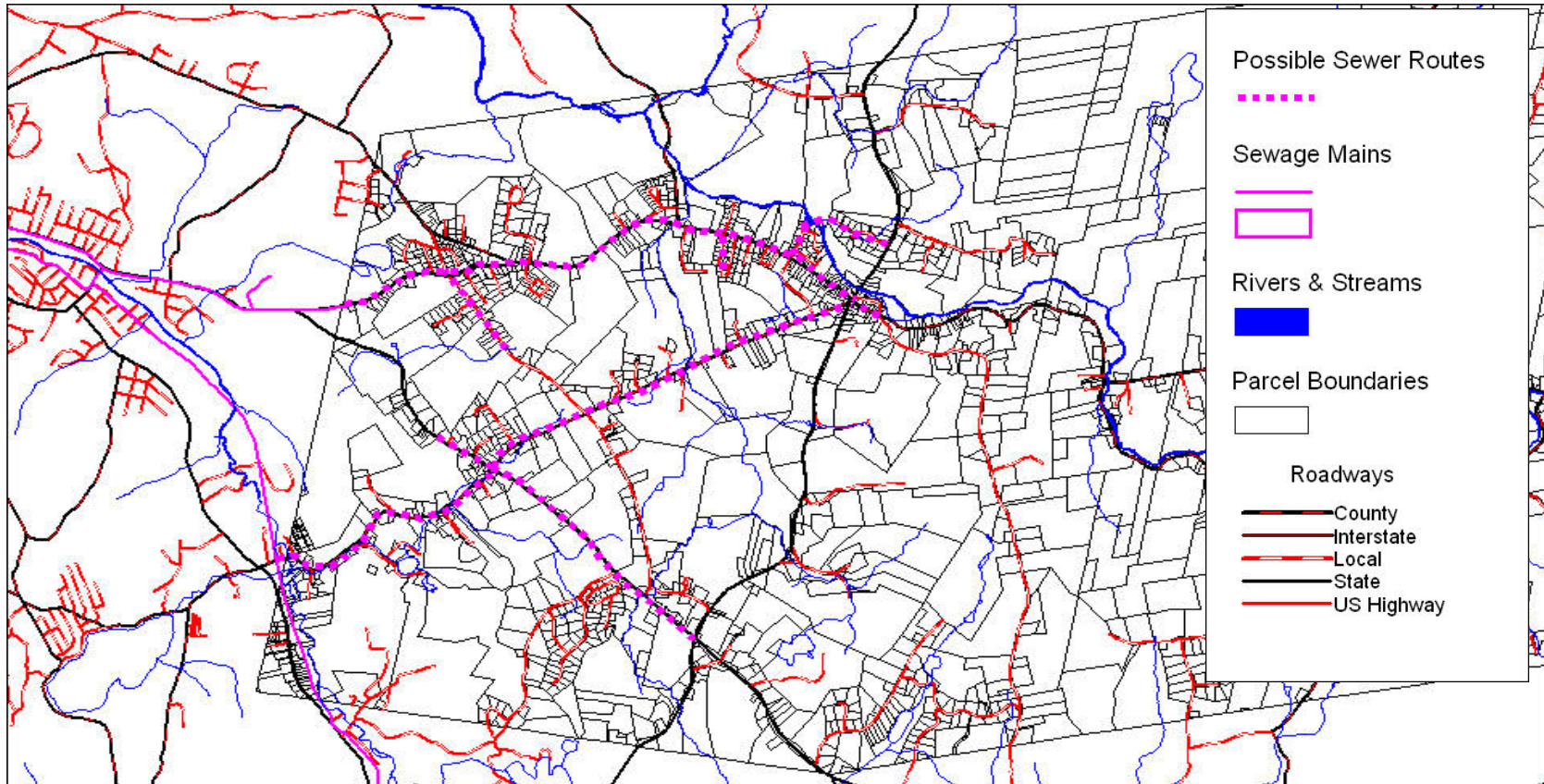
- Public sewer would help the growth and expansion of industrial and commercial concerns in areas where the Town would like such growth.

Extending public sewers along NY Route 355 would provide sewerage to three industrial concerns, and allow expansion at DSI. It would reduce the possibility of contamination by transporting sewage waste to the Rensselaer County Sewer District #1 treatment plant in North Greenbush, rather than processing in an on-site treatment system.

- Public sewer should not be extended into areas where the Town does not want to promote growth, such as agricultural areas and areas with special resources.

Developers prefer developing in areas where public sewer service exists as it saves a lot of time and money during the development process, and more money can be charged for lots with public sewer. Providing public sewer in areas the Town would prefer to preserve and protect as rural would be counter productive as it would encourage development where the Town wants to discourage it.

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Map 12: Possible Sewer Connections

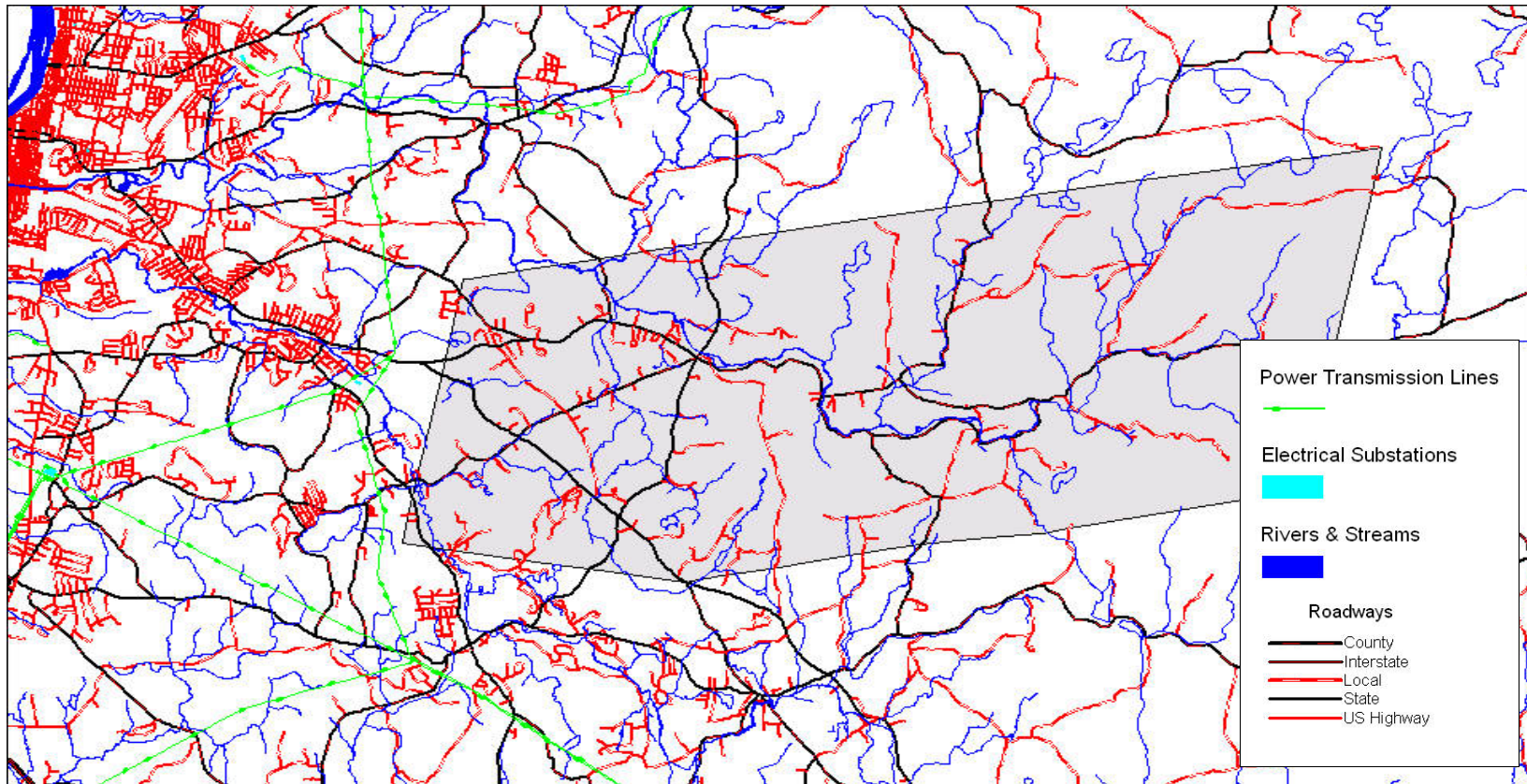
- The installation of public sewer mains is expensive and can be cost prohibitive.

Funding sources to ameliorate the cost of sewer systems include Clean Water State Revolving Fund for Water Pollution Control, Community Development Block Grant funding to provide service to low- and moderate-income households or to assist in the creation of jobs for low- and moderate-income households, long term bonding and the Self-Help program in which the community does much of the work on its own with its own employees.

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Electricity

National Grid provides electrical service to the town of Poestenkill. The town is serviced by above ground wires that are serviced through substations in Wynantskill and Eagle Mills. All roadways presently have electrical service on them. Three-phase service runs from Garfield Rd. into the Village and heads out past the Town Garage over Snake Hill Rd, Blue Factory Rd, and ends on Columbia Hill. No major transmission lines run through the town, although one runs along the North Greenbush/Poestenkill border in the town of North Greenbush.



Map 13: Major Electrical Infrastructure

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Issues, Threats and Goals

- Alternative renewable energy sources should be investigated and examined.

The town of Poestenkill, with its rich natural resources, is ripe for the development of alternative energy sources. The creation of electricity from water, wind and biosource digesters may reduce the town's need for electricity from outside sources.

The Rensselaer Plateau may provide a sufficient height for winds for wind turbine production. Siting review should examine whether placing turbines away from the ridgelines on higher ground may provide as great wind capacity while minimizing the visual impacts. The visual impacts of power transmission lines to the turbines should also be examined. Running power lines toward the interior of the plateau instead of down the escarpment would preserve the visual resources that are valued by the citizens of Poestenkill.

Biofuels can provide energy through many sources. Digesters that use cow manure, silage, compost and other organic materials (waste and other) are electrical sources that provides energy out of waste or other common materials. Wastes from the digesters can be used as compost or cattle feed, depending on what was digested.

Natural Gas

A natural gas franchise was granted to Niagara Mohawk in 1986. At this time, no gas service exists in the town. Service was to be provided through the town of Brunswick along Spring Avenue Extension.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Natural gas service should be provided along NY Route 66 and NY Route 351 to provide natural gas to the businesses, schools and residences along these roads.

Many of the residences and businesses in Poestenkill can be found along or near these two main roadways. Niagara Mohawk could effectively provide natural gas to many prospective customers by extending service along these two routes, with radiating services along subdivision roads and roads such as Weatherwax Road.

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Telephone/Fiber Optic

Verizon owns the telephone wires along all the roads in the town. A switching center that services the town is located in Wynantskill. Fiber Optic service is provided to the hamlet and along Snake Hill Road. Multiple private telephone service providers service the houses, businesses and schools in Poestenkill.

Cellular service is available through much of the town, although somewhat interrupted in the eastern portion of the town and where topography makes reception difficult. A cellular tower on the edge of the Rensselaer Plateau overlooks the town and provides service to much of the town.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Cellular towers, though vital to such phone service, can destroy the aesthetics of viewsheds and provide hazards to users of the Rensselaer County Airport.

The Town of Poestenkill enacted a Cellular Telecommunications Facilities law in 2004 that regulates the placement of towers and encourages the placement of facilities on preexisting towers or other tall structure in town. Placement of cellular facilities in steeples or other tall buildings, such as can be found on the Gilead Lutheran Church in Brunswick, can preserve views and provide funding sources for churches and owners of tall structures.

Cable/Broadband

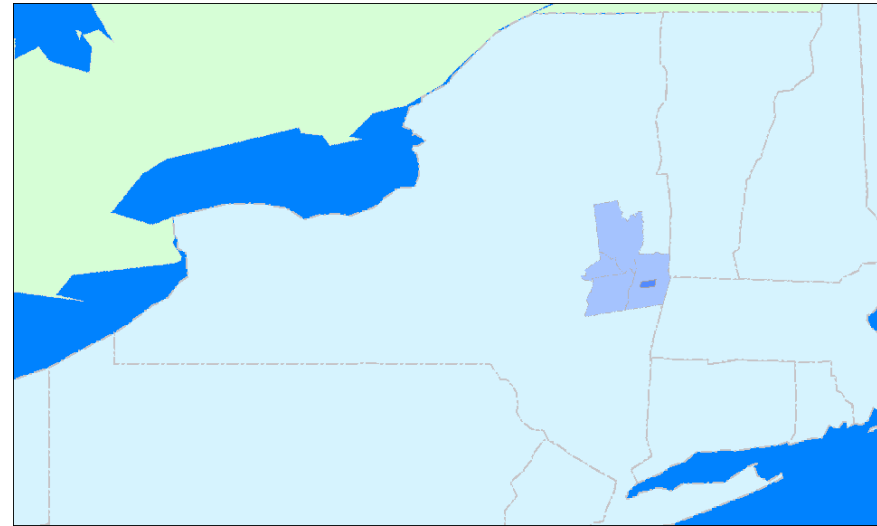
The cable franchise owner in the town of Poestenkill is Time Warner, which provides service in much of the developed area of town. More rural roads and most of the eastern portion of town do not have cable service. Along with cable service, customers can purchase broadband computer hook-up and computer based telephone services.

Properties not in cable service areas must rely on regular television transmission or satellite transmission for television reception, dial-up internet service and standard or cellular telephone service. In the future, broadband service may be supplied through power lines, providing the ability to service the entire town with high speed internet connect.

Local Economy

Regional Economic Context

The area known as the Capital Region, in which the Town of Poestenkill is located, developed as an important transportation and trade center, with the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers providing natural transportation corridors for the movement of goods from the eastern seaboard. The utilization of plentiful waterpower fueled the area's early manufacturing industries. Later, rail transportation served as a major stimulus for regional economic growth. More recently, the development of an extensive interstate highway system replaced the role of the canals and the railroads in the movement and transfer of goods and continues to be one of the major forces shaping the Capital Region's development. The location of the Capital District is directly between New York City and Montreal, and Boston and Buffalo, providing easy access to these markets.



The economic structure of the region is characterized by its diversity of employment, with varied services, government, education, wholesale and retail trade, and manufacturing accounting for the vast majority of jobs. Over the last several decades, however, there has been a gradual shifting in the region's economic structure that mirrors the national trend of becoming more service-based and less manufacturing-oriented. A new impetus on biotechnology and nanotechnology, as well as power technology, is presently the new driving force in the region, as seen by the push of the Hudson Valley Consortium's "Tech Valley" marketing campaign, and the growth in RPI and SUNY East Campus as well as Nanotech East.

Traditionally based on agriculture, with the steel, iron, and textile industries concentrated in the cities and near the major rivers, Rensselaer County's economy reflects the economic changes occurring throughout the Capital Region. Although approximately 54% of all County residents commute to jobs in other parts of the region, Rensselaer County has an increasingly diverse employment base characterized by rapid growth in the service sector. In 2002, according to data from *County Business Patterns*, there were almost 42,000 private sector jobs in Rensselaer County (excluding agriculture and self-employed persons). The health care and social assistance sector is the County's largest industry category, with 7,274 jobs, or 17.4% of the total. Other large employment sectors include retail trade, 6,036 (14.4%); educational services, 5,101 (12.2%); manufacturing, 3,876 (9.3%); professional, scientific & technical services, 3,437 (8.2%); accommodation and food services, 3,226 (7.7%) and construction, 2,359 (5.6%).

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According to the Rensselaer County Bureau of Economic Development and Planning, the largest private employers in the County include Northeast Health, Dake Bros./Stewarts Ice Cream Co., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Seton Health System and MapInfo. The largest governmental employers include New York State, Rensselaer County, Troy City School District, East Greenbush Central School District, and Hudson Valley Community College

Labor Force Characteristics

In 2000, the civilian labor force in Poestenkill, individuals age 16 and older who are employed or looking for work excluding those enrolled in the armed forces, numbered 2,237, or 72.2% of the population. The labor force participation rate was higher among men than women, but the gap has narrowed substantially as more women have entered the workforce. Between 1980 and 2000, the civilian labor force increased 32.4% overall, while the number of women in the civilian labor force increased 53.3%. This increase mirrors the national trend of increasing numbers of women who are working outside the home. The unemployment rate in Poestenkill reported by the 2000 Census was 0.8%, compared to 4.3% for New York State and 4.1% for Rensselaer County. The extremely low level of unemployment among Town residents is attributable to the strong economy in 2000, high education attainment and lack of subsidized housing.



An example of a small, Poestenkill-based service business now more common in the town than 20 years ago.

According to the 2000 Census, 42.2% of Poestenkill residents who are employed work in the service sector, including 230 (10.2%) in educational services and 238 (10.6%) in business & repair services. Approximately 10% are employed in the retail sector, while 10.7% work in public administration, a reflection of the opportunities residents have to work in state government in the Capital Region. Manufacturing, the predominant source of employment for Poestenkill residents in 1960, now only employs 8.3% of Poestenkill residents. During the 1980s and 1990s, resident employment in manufacturing and agriculture declined dramatically, whereas a significant increase in resident employment in construction, transportation, finance, insurance and real estate, business & repair services and personal, entertainment and recreation services occurred. Growth in the town's population and work force provided some of the increases seen in the employment sectors.

There have been some changes in the occupation of residents over the last decade. In 1980, the top three occupational categories were administrative support (19.8%), professional (14.9%), and service occupations (11.6%). In 2000, administrative support was still the largest category, but executive/managerial replaced professional as the second greatest occupation.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

According to the 2000 Census, a growing number of Town residents (2.5%) work within Poestenkill, reflecting an increase in home occupations and a widening of business opportunities within the town. Most residents work outside Rensselaer County in the Albany-Schenectady-Troy area.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Maintain the low levels of unemployment by ensuring high quality of education and the ability for additional training through adult education courses in the local school districts or at Hudson Valley Community College.

The town of Poestenkill is served by three strong school systems that provide quality education for its school-aged residents. Poestenkill is also served by Hudson Valley Community College, which provides employee-training programs, evening courses and distance learning courses for those looking to gain an associates degree, expand their knowledge in a different field, or change employment directions. The Capital District is also home to other two-year degree institutions as well as many four year plus colleges and universities that also provide higher level course work for those needing additional degrees.

- Provide employment opportunities in the town by ensuring that non-obtrusive home occupations are allowed by right or through special permit.

With the advent of high-speed home connections to the internet, traditional office occupations can now be done from home. These occupations include engineers, software developers and office sales. In addition, small retail, such as E-bay vendors, are now operating out of living rooms, basements and garages, with customers being fulfilled through UPS, FedEx and DHL. The presence of workers in primarily residential areas provides security, possible daytime volunteer firemen, and people more likely to buy necessities close to home in the community.

Income Levels

Personal income is one of the most critical indicators of the economy. The income characteristics of the community are important in determining a community's wealth and economic-well being. Income can also be used to determine the ability of residents to maintain their housing, contribute to the local tax base, and participate in the economy.

Income levels among Poestenkill households are high relative to Rensselaer County as a whole, New York State and the United States. A median household income divides the income received by all household members age 15 years old and over into two equal parts, one having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below it. In 1999, the median household income level in the town of Poestenkill was \$58,945. Thus,



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half of all households in the town had incomes below \$58,945 and half had incomes above it. Poestenkill had the highest median income of all communities in Rensselaer County. In comparison, residents of Rensselaer County posted a median household income of \$42,905, significantly lower than that of the town. Although approximately 80 Poestenkill households (5.3% of the total) had a household income of less than \$15,000 in 1999, the Town has a low poverty rate (1.7%) relative to most other Rensselaer County communities. Moreover, the rates declined significantly between 1990 and 2000. In 1999, Poestenkill residents had a per capita income of \$22,143, about 105% of the per capita income level for Rensselaer County. This was not the highest in Rensselaer County, though.

Businesses in the Town of Poestenkill

As shown in Table 8, major employers in the Town of Poestenkill include educational institutions, manufacturing businesses, and retail and service establishments. All businesses in the Town are small, providing fewer than 50 jobs.

Commercial and light industrial uses are primarily located on the state highways in the Town. According to 2003 tax assessment data, there are 51 parcels in Poestenkill classified as commercial or industrial. This includes nine parcels used for sand and gravel mining and eleven used for apartments. Approximately 5% of the Town's assessed tax base is in commercial or industrial use.

Home-based businesses (which are regulated by the Town's land use ordinance) appear to be growing in Poestenkill; an estimated 100 people in the Town are self-employed as electricians, architects, cabinet makers, engineers, computer consultants and other occupations. Types of businesses that are declining in terms of employment include agriculture, manufacturing, and gravel extraction.

The Poestenkill Business Association was formed in 1992 to advocate for the local business community and promote the benefits of economic development. It has approximately fifty members and has produced and distributed a member directory.

Table 8: Major Employers in Poestenkill		
Name of Employer	General Location	Employees
Algonquin Middle School	Route 66 and 351	105
Poestenkill Elementary School	Route 68 and 355	60
Interstate Laminates Inc.	Route 355	45
Saint Gobain Performance Plastics	Route 355	40
Dynamic Systems, Inc.	Route 355	25
L. J. Valente Lumber	Route 66 and 351	9
Casale Excavating Inc.	Snyders Corners Road	12
James Schirmer & Sons Plumbing and Heating	Snyders Corners Road	12
Iron Braid	Route 66	4
Town of Poestenkill	Route 351 and 355	8
Haas Manufacturing	Route 355	4

Source: Phone calls to individual employers, 2005. The number of Town employees indicates full-time paid employment only and does not include elected or appointed positions.

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Rensselaer County presently has an Empire Zone that encompasses the county beyond Troy's Empire Zone. Two sections of the Empire Zone are in the town of Poestenkill, the buildings of Dynamic Systems, Inc. and Ironbraid. The Empire Zone provides income tax credits for businesses that expand employment or increase investment in the Empire Zone. Tax credits include Wage Tax Credit, Investment Tax Credit, Employment Incentive Credit, Capital Tax Credit and Sales Tax Refund. The Rensselaer County Empire Zone Board reviews requests for addition to the Empire Zone yearly.

Only two areas zoned commercial, both extending south from NY Route 355, are designated on the Town zoning map; one encompasses the Dynamic Systems property, while the other includes the Rensselaer County Airport and Saint Gobain Performance Plastics. Other commercial/industrial businesses in the Town operate under a "grandfather clause," which allows them to continue as non-conforming uses in areas zoned as Residential or Hamlet, but variances are necessary for additions and expansions.

Several factors potentially inhibit business development in the Town. For example, Poestenkill does not currently have municipal water and sewer systems. Businesses requiring large amounts of water resources would be unlikely to locate in the Town. Additionally, many areas of the Town are inappropriate for intensive commercial or industrial development due to poor soil conditions, topography, and limited road access.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Ensure that sufficient area is zoned for commercial and industrial uses in areas that can support such uses.

Commercial and industrial uses usually require good transportation routes, with the possibility of water and sewer infrastructure. Although water and sewer infrastructure is presently lacking in the town, there are several areas with concentrations of commercial uses that are presently grandfathered in or operate by variance. Such areas should be examined as to whether commercial zoning should be applied to the area. Areas presently zoned Commercial/Industrial should also be examined as to whether the zone should be expanded.

- Provide water and sewer infrastructure to areas intended for commercial and industrial uses when it is cost efficient.

The Town of Poestenkill is presently examining the creating of water infrastructure in portions of the town. Installation and the actual water mains themselves are the most significant cost to this project. Installing water mains for a mile to service one business would be cost prohibitive due to the high costs of the service lines. See the preceding chapter's sections on water and sewer infrastructure.

- Use the high town incomes and residential growth factors to encourage service businesses that support residences such as a pizzeria or other restaurants, recreation and entertainment (non-adult.)

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There are limited restaurant/bar facilities in the town, including one juice bar, the VFW, a pizzeria and Bubies General Store/Restaurant. Presently, those wanting to eat out or buy take-out other than pizza must go to Wynantskill, West Sand Lake or Averill Park.

Natural Products

The town of Poestenkill is rich with natural resources and several businesses are presently using these resources to provide important products to the region. The agricultural industry relies on the prime farm soils and ample water resources found in the town. Lumber mills both in the town and in surrounding towns rely on the forests to receive their raw materials. Their output then goes into the construction industry and cabinet, furniture and craft making. The mining industry removes sand and gravel deposits to use for building and road construction.



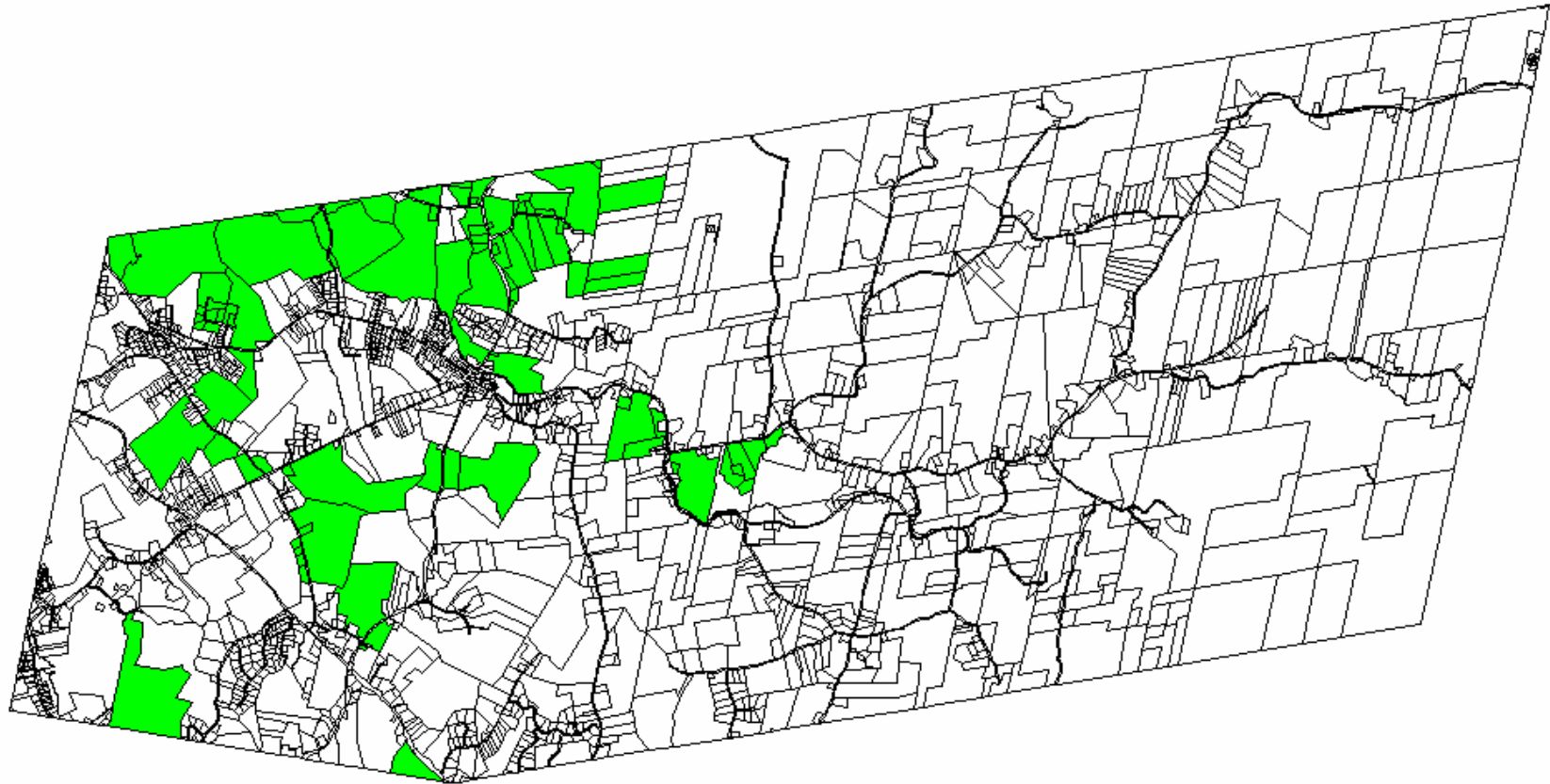
Agriculture

Agriculture has played an important role in the economy of Rensselaer County for many years. Local agricultural products include milk and dairy products, corn, beef, and vegetable crops. However, recent trends reveal a steady decline in the number of farms and acreage used for farming. According to the Census of Agriculture, there were 549 farms², and 92,344 acres of land in farms, in Rensselaer County in 2002. This represents a 2.3% decrease in the number of farms and a decline of 14% in farmland acres since 1997. In 2002, there were 82 dairy farms in Rensselaer County with 5,890 milk cows. These figures indicate a 10% decline in the number of dairy farms and a 17% decline in the size of the County 's milk herd in the period between 1997 and 2002.

Rensselaer County completed an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan in 2001. The plan created a "Keep It Growing" guide for each of the towns in the County providing information on agriculture in each of the communities, providing information on making communities "farm friendly," and providing education on the plight of farmers in Rensselaer County. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan also provides guidance on assisting farmers to remain economically viable.

² The Census of Agriculture defines a farm as a place which produced and sold... \$1,000 or more of agricultural products during the year of the census. This may exclude some part-time agriculture-related operations.

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Map 14: Land in Agricultural District #2

There is currently one state-certified Agricultural District in the Town of Poestenkill: District #2, or the Tamarac Agricultural District, which also covers areas of the Towns of Brunswick, Pittstown, Sand Lake, East Greenbush, and North Greenbush totaling 22,461.94 acres. The Rensselaer County Agricultural Districts were created as a result of the Agricultural Districts Law enacted by New York State in 1971. This law was passed to encourage the protection of farmland by providing incentives to farmers to keep their land in production. A key benefit for farms within an Agricultural District is a tax benefit for owners of seven or more acres that generate at least \$10,000 in gross sales during the preceding two years or less than seven acres that generate average gross sales of \$50,000 or more. The Agricultural Districts Law also provides other protections to

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limit restrictions on agricultural operations other than those necessary to protect health and safety. Currently, approximately 1,955 acres of property in Poestenkill are located in Rensselaer County Agricultural District #2; however, not all of the property in the district is in agricultural use.

According to the Rensselaer County Bureau of Economic Development and Planning, Agricultural District #2 will be up for its 8-year review by the County Legislature in 2007. During this review, the County notifies all property owners in the district and asks them whether or not they would like their property to remain in the Agricultural District. The County also holds a public information session to provide other landowners with an opportunity to place their land in the district.

Eleven parcels representing more than 944 acres in the Town of Poestenkill are assessed as agricultural, according to 2003 tax assessment records. This represents 5% of the total acreage in the Town, 3% of the assessed land value and 1% of the total assessed value. It should be noted that some parcels where agricultural operations are known to exist are assessed in other categories. For example, there are several parcels of land along NY Route 351 south of the Poestenkill hamlet, which are rented for growing corn and alfalfa, but are assessed as residential.



Products produced in Poestenkill include fluid milk which is shipped to cooperatives outside Rensselaer County and made into butter and cheese; beef, primarily cull cows from the dairy operations but increasingly steers; hay, corn, rye, oats, and wheat straw; bedding plants that are sold at the Menands market; dried flowers, shrubs, and ornamental bushes; produce and vegetables which are sold seasonally at farm stands; Christmas trees; and maple syrup. There are at least two greenhouse operations and several horse boarding and stable facilities.

The largest farms located in Poestenkill are the farms owned by the Wagner, Dzembo, Schmidt, and Moody families. Some of these farms have between forty and one hundred milk cows and up to several hundred total animals and also grow rotational crops of corn and alfalfa, vegetables, and compost.

The majority of active agricultural lands lie in the western third of the Town, west of the Rensselaer Plateau, although some small fields scattered in eastern Poestenkill are reportedly used for cutting hay or cattle and horse pasturage. The most productive agricultural lands and the largest farms are situated in the floodplain of the Poesten Kill in the northwest section of the town (see Natural Resources section for discussion of prime farmland soils).

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Issues, Threats and Goals

- Review local laws and ordinances to ensure that the laws and ordinances are not onerous to the agricultural community.

Although farms located in Agricultural Districts are somewhat protected from nuisance laws created by local governments, not all farms may be located within an Agricultural District. Poestenkill's Right to Farm Life Law addresses nuisance laws for all agricultural endeavors. The Town should review its present laws and any proposed laws as to whether it penalizes farms for following standard agricultural practices, and whether agriculture is regulated more than other industries within the town.

- Provide buffers between developments and agricultural uses.

As more residents are built around farm fields and farmsteads, a greater likelihood of conflict between resident and farmer will exist. Fifty years ago, most of the residents within the rural portions of the town had some tie to agriculture. Now, most residents have little understanding of agriculture and its practices. Providing buffers in new subdivisions along areas that abut farm operations provides a little screening to both farmer and homeowner.



Farmer's Market in North Greenbush

- Create a farmers market in the hamlet area to provide a direct marketing and contact opportunities for farmers/growers and residents.

With the global markets now providing much of the food found in supermarkets, concerns about the possibility of disease, heavy metals and other toxins on fruits and vegetables has become an issue in some households. Farm fresh fruits, vegetables and meats have a better taste and quality than that produce which has been picked or processed a week or more before. A farmers market would provide the residents in the town as well as neighboring towns better access to local produce. The farmers market could also provide an outlet for crafts makers and other home occupations to provide wares made in Poestenkill. It would also educate the non-farming residents about where their food comes from and how it is produced, creating a greater understanding between the community at large and the agricultural community.

- Work with the agricultural community and Rensselaer County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board on purchasing development rights on the best quality farmland in the town.

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The Rensselaer County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board has applied annually for NYS Agriculture and Markets Farmland Protection Program funding. Towns may also apply for such funding if such action is also part of their Comprehensive Plan. Under the Farmland Protection Program, funding is made available to purchase the development rights on properties to keep the properties in an agricultural use. An easement is then placed on the deed, which allows the owners to use the property for agriculture and other uses agreed to during the Purchase of Development Rights negotiation process.

Forestry

Forestry is an important, but often overlooked, portion of the Rensselaer County economy. Large portions of the county are forestlands, and in Poestenkill, much of the area on the Rensselaer Plateau is forested land. Forestlands provide wood for lumber, firewood, wood sculpting and biomass, habitat for wildlife, hunting lands, recreation lands and clean aquifer recharge areas.



L.J. Valente Lumber Mill

Property forestry methods that include selective logging can maintain a healthy forest that is resistant to forest fires and diseases and can be harvested regularly. The clearings that are made through property forestry will also provide under-story growth that deer and other browsers depend upon during the winter months.

WJ Cowee owns 479 acres of forests on the Rensselaer Plateau in Poestenkill, which have been harvested throughout the years for use in their wood products manufacturing in Berlin. Other large, privately owned tracts are timber harvested by local logging companies as well as private citizens. Logs are shipped to local lumber mills, such as L.J. Valente, or can be sent to specialized mills supporting the furniture industry, in the case of valuable hardwoods. Another common use for harvested wood is the delivery of firewood, cut up or in long lengths.

The local lumber industry provides locally harvest wood products to contractors, homeowners and crafters, often providing better quality lumber than is found in the discount hardware store, and at similar or lower prices. Other products include bark mulch made from the bark removed from trees before milling, sawdust used in livestock bedding, and sawdust that is shipped to manufactured lumber plants. L.J. Valente Lumber is the only sawmill operating in the town of Poestenkill. There are several other sawmills in surrounding towns that also use harvested timber from Poestenkill.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Encourage the use of the NY State Forestry BMP Field Guide in the harvesting of lumber to reduce erosion, water impacts and improve future harvesting opportunities.

Forest harvesting provides many benefits to the property owner, the forest, and to the community, but only if it is done properly. If done improperly, it can increase the threat of flooding, stream silting and land slides, as well as destroy valuable ecosystems. Following best management practices of tree selection, cutting, building skid trails and access roads, and providing erosion control in sensitive areas can provide benefits to all.

- Encourage the owners of forested lands to have long-term timber harvesting plans.

Sustainable forestry requires that some trees be left to be harvest in a medium-term period and a longer-term period. Clear cutting of large tracts of land provides a one-time gain for the property owner, and then a large possibility of flooding, erosion and other problems on the land, which can affect neighboring properties and the community as a whole. Sustainable forestry provides a steady income from the woodlots by selective cutting those trees that either are ripe for harvest or need to be culled as the growth is too thick to provide desirable growth. In sustainable forestry, trees are left to provide protection from flooding and whose roots will hold back the soils. These trees would then be harvested in a few years when smaller trees are growing in areas previously harvested. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has a Cooperating Forester program that provides a listing of foresters who can help property owners manage their woodlots. This list can be found on the DEC's website (<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/df/privland/privassist/coopprogram.html>).



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Mining

Currently, there are five sand and gravel mining operations in Natural Products (NP) zones in the town of Poestenkill (Table 17). The largest is the Clemente Latham/Callanan/Valente operation, permitted since 1974, which utilizes 292.55 acres of land. No hard rock mine presently exists in the town.

Table 9: Mining Operations in the Town of Poestenkill			
Name	Acres	Initial Town Permit Date	Status
Dzembo Farm/Rifenburg Construction	6.4	1990	Renewed permit
Kronau/Deer Creek	4.0	1990	Active/operating
Van Slyke	10.5	1974	Renewed permit
Polaro	4.7	2005	Active/operating
Clemente Latham/Callanan/Valente	292.55	1974	Active/operating

Source: Research by Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

According to the Soil Survey of Rensselaer County, there are six soil types in the Town of Poestenkill that are considered probable sources of sand and gravel (Map 4). These are ChA and CkB in the Chenango soil series and HoB, HoC, HoD, and HoE in the Hoosic soil series. All of these soils are present in the western half of the Town, primarily around the Poestenkill hamlet and along the western municipal boundary. While extensive engineering studies would be necessary to determine the extractive value of individual sites, these areas of the Town appear to be most conducive to mining based on soil properties reported in the Soil Survey. Some soils with a high content of gravel and sand may also be found east of Barberville.

Hard rock mines in Rensselaer County extract the Rensselaer greywacke that comprises most of the Rensselaer Plateau. This limestone is preferred by NYS Department of Transportation in its asphalt as it does not wear as quickly as other sandstones previously used and does not become slick with wear. Rensselaer greywacke underlies approximately the eastern two thirds of the town. Mining operations prefer to start mining areas where

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the bedrock lies close to the surface, so the most likely areas where mines would be proposed would be along the escarpment and along areas where the rock has been cut away by erosion by streams or long disappeared glaciers.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- The Town recognizes the necessity to balance the local and regional needs for mined materials with the impacts of mines on roadways, residences and other businesses, and water resources.

Mined materials are necessary for our daily lives. Sand and gravel are used for septic systems, drainage around buildings, underlayment of roads, protection from sliding on ice, and sand for the sand box. Mined stone is used for paving roads, highway and driveways, and is used to prevent erosion. Poestenkill has large resources of sand, gravel and rock.

Mining can create dust, increase heavy trucks on roads, loss of ground water for wells, and flying rocks and debris if explosives are not used properly. Following best management practices, mines can be relatively unobtrusive, providing additional traffic on the highways, and occasional noise, but no major community impacts. Siting mines away from houses, providing buffers beyond the minimum required, seeding areas not in active use, using dust control methods and operating in reasonable time periods can provide needed materials without impacting the community.

- The Town greatly discourages the mining of sand and gravel below the ground water elevation in the town and surrounding areas, especially in the Poestenkill Aquifer.

Since there is no public water system in the town of Poestenkill, all residents presently rely on wells for their drinking water. Gravel mining below the ground water elevation can drop the level of the ground water as water is pumped out of the mining area to allow mining to continue. This lowers water levels in wells, and can, ultimately dry out wells, requiring the deepening of wells, the drilling of new wells, or the need to provide public water to areas without available ground water.

Municipal and Other Services



Town may not commit or spend any money except in conformance
Poestenkill Town Hall

Town Government

Like other towns in New York State, the Town of Poestenkill is governed by a Town Supervisor and a four member Town Board. The Town provides municipal services including fire protection through a special fire district and highway department services such as snow removal, and road improvements and maintenance. Other Town officials include two justices, a town clerk (who also serves as tax collector), a town superintendent of highways, a tax assessor and a code enforcement officer. All of these offices, with the exception of the Tax Assessor and Code Enforcement Officer are elective. The supervisor's term is two years; the council members and town justices serve four-year terms; the town clerk has a two-year term; and the assessor's term is six years.

The Town Board has responsibility for the general management and control of the financial affairs of the Town. It must estimate and aggregate all sources of revenues and adopt a budget for the fiscal (calendar) year providing for the expenditure of such funds. The

with appropriations contained in the annual budget.

Town Planning and Zoning

The Town of Poestenkill has a Planning Board comprised of seven members to act in an advisory capacity on policy related to development, existing or proposed comprehensive plans, and land use ordinances. The Planning Board also reviews and approves subdivisions, site plans and special permit applications. The Planning Board members serve on a volunteer basis and receive a stipend for their time served on the Planning Board.

The Zoning Board of Appeals was created when Poestenkill adopted its first Land Use Ordinance in 1970. The Town has created a five-member Zoning Board of Appeals for the purpose of interpreting law and considering applications for variances from the Land Use Ordinance. The Zoning Board members also serve on a volunteer basis and receive a stipend for their time served.

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Fiscal Trends

The Town's budget is comprised of three primary funds each with its individual budget appropriation and revenues. General Fund expenditures, including town employees, town planning, zoning, library services, the youth program, the Town garage, streetlights and other expenditures, account for approximately 49.2% of the Town's overall expenditures in 2005. The Town's highway department budget includes appropriations for road construction, repair and maintenance, accounting for 38.7% of expenditures. The remaining 12.1% of the budget is allocated to the Fire District for fire protection as well as ambulance and emergency services. This proportional breakdown of appropriations has been fairly consistent in the past four years.

The budget for the Town of Poestenkill for the year 2005 authorizes total expenditures of \$1,525,933. As the charts above and below illustrate, the most significant expenditures include general government support expenses for the salaries, services and employee benefits of public officials and others employed by the Town. Other expenditures include those for fire district expenses, other community services, and highway department and road maintenance expenses. Most of the public safety expenditures were for building inspection and animal control. Many program costs have dropped in the past five years. The greatest increase in appropriations in both the General Fund and Highway fund were Employee Benefits, which increased 242% and 97% respectively. This can be accounted through the rapid increase of health care premiums and the State Retirement System payment. Most accounts followed a linear trend of increase or decrease within the five-year period.

Based on the Town of Poestenkill's budgets for 2001 through 2005, revenue trends have been fairly stable and consistent in recent years. For the 2005 fiscal year, real property taxes of \$822,194 will account for 60% of total revenues; \$274,000 in sales taxes will account for 20% of revenues; and \$100,000 in mortgage recording taxes will account for 7% of total revenues. Other sources of revenue such as state revenue sharing, and state aid are projected at \$206,230 accounting for 13% of total Town revenue.

In the past five years, the distribution of revenue has been apportioned to a greater extent to the highway funds. Revenues from Town property taxes have increased at a steady pace, increasing by 9.2% from 2001 to 2005. Appropriations have increased by 33.2% from \$1,226,439 in 2001 to \$1,633,459 for fiscal year 2005. Although yearly appropriations in the General and Highway funds exceed revenues in the Town Budgets, normally revenues exceed their projections, allowing additional spending during the upcoming year without additional tax increases.

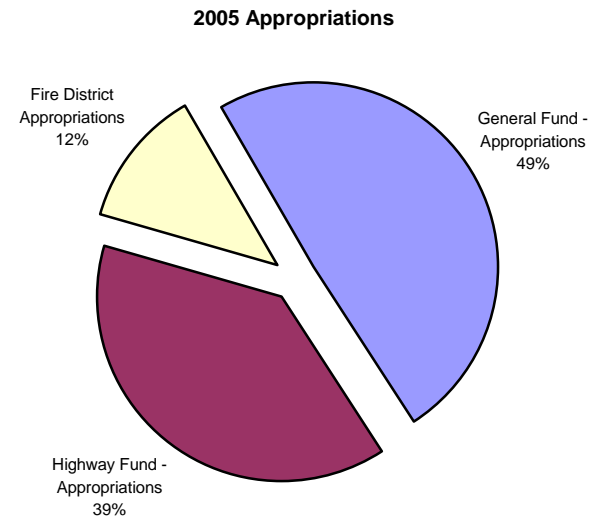


Chart 1: 2005 Appropriations

Table 10: Poestenkill Town Budgets

<i>General Fund - Appropriations</i>	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Culture & Recreation	\$ 70,827	\$ 74,362	\$ 75,771	\$ 80,270	\$ 83,912
Debt Service	\$ 57,838	\$ 56,000	\$ 54,163	\$ 52,325	\$ 50,488
Economic Assistance	\$ 1,600	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,100
Employee Benefits	\$ 30,900	\$ 40,000	\$ 41,711	\$ 76,832	\$ 105,650
General Government Support	\$ 285,449	\$ 283,781	\$ 292,497	\$ 309,797	\$ 342,530
Health	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Home & Community Service	\$ 79,755	\$ 60,315	\$ 62,744	\$ 63,646	\$ 66,625
Inter-Fund Transfers	\$ 40,000	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Public Safety	\$ 47,647	\$ 48,392	\$ 45,859	\$ 27,561	\$ 27,194
Transportation	\$ 57,931	\$ 64,063	\$ 63,229	\$ 64,090	\$ 68,630
Total	\$ 673,147	\$ 660,113	\$ 639,174	\$ 677,721	\$ 748,329
 <i>Highway Fund - Appropriations</i>					
Debt Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Employee Benefits	\$ 58,800	\$ 64,700	\$ 78,158	\$ 104,167	\$ 115,950
Inter-Fund Transfers	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Transportation	\$ 348,220	\$ 393,100	\$ 404,893	\$ 417,340	\$ 474,000
Total	\$ 407,020	\$ 457,800	\$ 483,051	\$ 521,507	\$ 589,950
 <i>Fire District Appropriations</i>	 \$ 144,271	 \$ 151,520	 \$ 162,463	 \$ 171,707	 \$ 185,649
 <i>General Fund Revenues</i>					
Real Property Taxes	\$ 296,877	\$ 212,763	\$ 198,304	\$ 145,228	\$ 101,595
Int. & Pent. on Property Taxes	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,500
Sales Tax Distribution	\$ 180,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 274,000
Franchises	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 12,500
Fees	\$ 5,500	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,400	\$ 4,500	\$ 6,900
Interest & Earnings	\$ 17,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 6,000
Licenses	\$ 2,470	\$ 2,150	\$ 2,370	\$ 2,370	\$ 2,370
Building Permits	\$ 9,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 16,000
Fines & Forfeited Bail	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 7,000
Gifts - Youth Program	\$ 12,500	\$ 21,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 11,000
State Revenue Sharing	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000
Mortgage Tax	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 100,000
State Aid STAR Program	\$ 3,200	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,000
State Aid Youth Program	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,300
Miscellaneous Gifts & Grants	\$ 15,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,664
Total	\$ 632,147	\$ 550,113	\$ 523,174	\$ 530,198	\$ 586,829
 <i>Highway Fund Revenues</i>					
Real Property Taxes	\$ 312,020	\$ 405,800	\$ 427,551	\$ 447,960	\$ 534,950
Interest & Earnings	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500	\$ 3,500
Maintenance RC	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Consolidated Highway Aid	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 48,000	\$ 48,000	\$ 48,500
Total	\$ 365,020	\$ 457,800	\$ 483,051	\$ 503,460	\$ 589,950
 <i>Fire District Revenues</i>					
Real Property Taxes	\$ 144,271	\$ 151,520	\$ 162,463	\$ 171,707	\$ 185,649

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Other	\$ 700	\$ 700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ 144,971	\$ 152,220	\$ 162,463	\$ 171,707	\$ 185,649

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Issues, Threats and Goals

- The rapid increase in Employee Benefits may outstrip the increases in other non-property tax revenues, such as mortgage tax and sales tax distribution.

Although the Town of Poestenkill has no control over health insurance costs, New York State Retirement municipal payment requirements or other such costs, these costs are rising significantly faster than inflation and will soon be a major cost to the Town if present trends continue. In the 2005 budget, Employee benefits were 14.5% of the total combined appropriations, including fire district payments.

Property Tax Base

The economic growth of a municipality can, in part, be measured by net additions to the assessment rolls over time. New construction activity and improvements to existing property generally have a direct positive impact on overall property values. This broadens the tax base from which municipalities can draw needed revenues to provide residents with desired services. To evaluate trends in the Town's assessed tax base, assessment and tax rate data were analyzed for the period 2001-2005, and are summarized in Tables 11 and 12.

Table 11: Tax Assessment Trends, Town of Poestenkill					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total Assessed Value (000)	\$76,848	\$78,676	\$80,181	\$83,707	\$84,417
Taxable Value (000)	\$67,737	\$69,716	\$71,377	\$74,879	\$75,381
Tax Exempt Value (000)	\$9,481	\$9,336	\$9,168	\$9,285	\$9,431
Tax Exempt %	12.3%	11.9%	11.4%	11.1%	11.2%

The total assessed valuation of Poestenkill in 2005 was \$84,417,278, which is an increase of 9.8% since 2001. The value of tax-exempt land has remained approximately the same over the five-year period, although the *percent* of exempt valuation has decreased by 1.1%.

Source: Reports of the Director of the Bureau of Tax Services

The combined tax rate of the Town, Rensselaer County, Poestenkill Fire District and the Averill Park School District, which serves the majority of the Town of Poestenkill, increased by 21.2% from \$68.27 per \$1,000 in 2001 to \$82.73 per \$1,000 assessed value in 2005. The tax rate increase over this period ranged from 24.8% in the Berlin School District and 25.2% in the Brittonkill School District. The significant increases are due to large increases in County tax rates (\$5.43 or 41.1%) and more significant school district tax rate increases (\$9.25 - \$12.99 or 21.0% - 27.1%). The Poestenkill Town tax rates decreased slightly and the fire district rates increased slightly.

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Table 12: Real Property Tax Rates, Town of Poestenkill

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
County Rates	\$13.215558	\$13.367024	\$15.466501	\$17.870939	\$18.648358
Town Rates	\$8.989120	\$8.872632	\$8.768270	\$8.031471	\$8.444331
Fire District Rate	\$2.006986	\$2.055461	\$2.159832	\$2.181425	\$2.335656
School District Rates					
Averill Park	\$44.053721	\$47.193420	\$46.698004	\$52.487989	\$53.303470
Berlin	\$42.231899	\$43.996027	\$46.965657	\$50.599273	\$53.467137
Brittonkill	\$48.011478	\$50.383123	\$51.310891	\$59.591990	\$61.000270
Total Tax Rate Per \$1,000	\$66.44 - \$72.22	\$68.29 - \$74.69	\$73.09 - \$77.71	\$78.68 - \$87.68	\$82.73 - \$90.43
Equalization Rate	42.41	41.54	42.41	37.79	35.90
Equalized Tax Rate Per \$1,000	\$28.18 - \$30.63	\$28.37 - \$30.03	\$31.00 - \$32.96	\$29.73 - \$33.13	\$29.70 - \$32.46

County Rates includes NYS mandates and chargebacks. Town Rates include Highway Rate.

Town Facilities and Services

The Town Hall is located in the hamlet of Poestenkill on Davis Road. Built in 1921, the Town Hall building houses the offices of the Supervisor, Town Clerk, Assessor and Building Inspector. The Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meet in the basement meeting room. The room also functions as the Town Court. Parking at the Town Hall is a concern because it can only accommodate 15 cars.

The Town Landfill, which operated from 1966 to 1989, was capped in 1992. Since that time the Town has had a year-to-year agreement with a private hauler to allow residents to take trash and recyclables to a transfer station for a fee on Saturdays. Private haulers can also provide pick up service for residents who do not wish to use the transfer station.

The Town Garage is located on Plank Road/County Route 40 just east of the hamlet of Poestenkill. The Highway Department equipment is stored at this site along with supplies of deicing materials. In 1998, the Town completed an addition to the existing Town garage.

Poestenkill provides general governance, town court, dog control, rabies clinic, building inspection, a summer youth program, library funding, adult recreation and funding for veterans services.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Maintain a steady tax rate through fiscal responsibility and sustainable growth.

A consistent tax rate enables property owners to financially plan ahead to pay taxes. Sudden and large increases in the tax rate creates difficulties for payment of taxes. Having sufficient growth in the tax base allows that growth to shoulder some of the increased tax burden. Capital plans allow the Town to also financially plan ahead for needed infrastructure and building construction and repairs. Capital plans examine the present and future needs of the community, and create a strategy to fulfill those needs.



Schools

The public school system is a critical factor in the future development of the town of Poestenkill. Public education opportunities in the town are provided by three centralized school districts; Averill Park, Berlin, and Brittonkill. The Averill Park School District covers 93% of the Town while Berlin covers 4% in a sparsely populated section of the northeast corner and Brittonkill covers a small portion of the northwest corner bordering the town of Brunswick.

Averill Park Central School District completed a merger in the 1990s with the *George Washington School District*, a small K-6 district in the neighboring town of Brunswick. As a result of this merger the District presently has five, K-5 elementary schools, Algonquin Middle School which houses grades 6-8, and a high school. The district has completed additions and renovations to all of the school buildings to alleviate overcrowding. In keeping with the neighborhood school concept, the Poestenkill Elementary School located near the hamlet in Poestenkill provides education opportunities to virtually all children in the town who attend public school at the elementary level. Based on the 2003-2004 enrollment of 325 and the current rate of growth in the town, it is the Town's belief that this facility will be more than adequate for many years. The Algonquin Middle School situated in the town of Poestenkill at the corner of NY Routes 351 and 66 has a current enrollment of 872 students, which places it at less than 80% of its capacity. The Averill Park High School, which has a current enrollment of 1,060 students, is not yet at capacity.

Berlin Central School District completed reorganization in 1989, which resulted in a grade configuration for its three elementary schools and the combining of a middle school and high school into one building. The Stephentown Elementary School houses grades K-3 with a population of 75 students (2003-2004 school year), Grafton Elementary School houses grades K-3 with an enrollment of 74 students, and Berlin Elementary School, which would be attended by Poestenkill students K-3 plus grades 4 and 5 for the entire district has an enrollment of 290. The Middle School/High School is located in Cherry Plain and has enrollment of 601. The elementary schools population has dropped slightly since 1997 while the Middle School/High School has seen a moderate increase, although, with the populations dropping in the elementary schools, this trend will probably reverse slightly. No future plans are presently being considered for expanding facilities.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Brittonkill Central School District is a single campus site located on NY Route 2 in the town of Brunswick. The school district also owns a building six miles away that is not being presently used for general education by the district. The Elementary School, grades K-5, has a current student population of 581 students. The middle school population is 369 students and the High School has 445 students. While there has been significant commercial development in the town of Brunswick within the past few years, the residential population has remained stable to this point. The school district recently expanded its high school and elementary facilities.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Provide a high quality education for the town's school aged population while maintaining affordable tax rates.

Fire & Ambulance

The town of Poestenkill is served by a single volunteer fire company, which also provides ambulance service to town residents. Like most fire companies in this area, it provides and receives mutual aid assistance to and from other towns. This company has two stations, one near the hamlet and the other in East Poestenkill. Currently, there is adequate staffing. The fire company believes there is a need for some expansion of the existing building near the hamlet to accommodate the volunteers' equipment. The structure in East Poestenkill is adequate. The Fire Company also believes that 20-25 new dry hydrants are needed to help aid in fire protection. The Town of Poestenkill is part of the Rensselaer County Enhanced Emergency 9-1-1 system. If a public water system is installed in Poestenkill, fire hydrants will be required in areas covered by the water district. Fire hydrants are required to be installed on water mains at least every 500 feet.



Poestenkill Fire House

As shown in Table 13, the Town's Special Fire District appropriations and subsequent tax levies have increased over the past five years, although not when the drop in assessed value is taken into account. From 2001 to 2005, the tax rate grew by \$0.328670 or 16.4%. The equalization rate, the percent of actual value the average assessed value of properties, in the same period dropped to 15.4%. Subsequently, the tax rate per \$1,000 of actual value decreased by 1% over the five-year period.

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Table 13: Fire District Tax Rates Per \$1,000, Town of Poestenkill

Year	Equalization Rate	Fire District Tax	Full Value Tax	% Change from Previous Year
2001	42.41	\$2.006986	\$0.851163	
2002	41.54	\$2.055461	\$0.858385	0.8%
2003	42.41	\$2.159832	\$0.915985	6.3%
2004	37.79	\$2.181425	\$0.824361	-10.0%
2005	35.90	\$2.335656	\$0.838501	1.7%

Source: Reports of the Director of the Bureau of Tax Services, December 31, 2000 – December 31, 2004

Law Enforcement

The town of Poestenkill has no police force of its own. Rather, the town is served by both the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Department and the State Police. The closest Sheriff's Department Substation is in the town of Sand Lake at Gettle Road and nearest State Police Barracks is in Averill Park. Data obtained from the County Sheriff indicates that the number of Incident Reports in the town has declined over the past fifteen years from 154 in 1982 to 137 in 1990 and 127 in 1997.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Maintain the safety of the town's residents.
- Slow traffic along thoroughfares to speed limits for the safety of all on and along the roadways.

Speeding traffic has become a lifestyle now in the early twenty-first century. Light traffic, few traffic signals and stop signs and little enforcement allows such behavior to continue. In a rural community such as Poestenkill, regular enforcement of traffic laws is the only plausible method to keep drivers within safe speeds and driving in a safe manner.

Recreation

Although the Town does not operate any recreational facilities of its own, numerous public and private facilities exist which serve town residents. For example, Poestenkill Elementary School (PES) has a playground in back of the school as well as a basketball court near School Road.

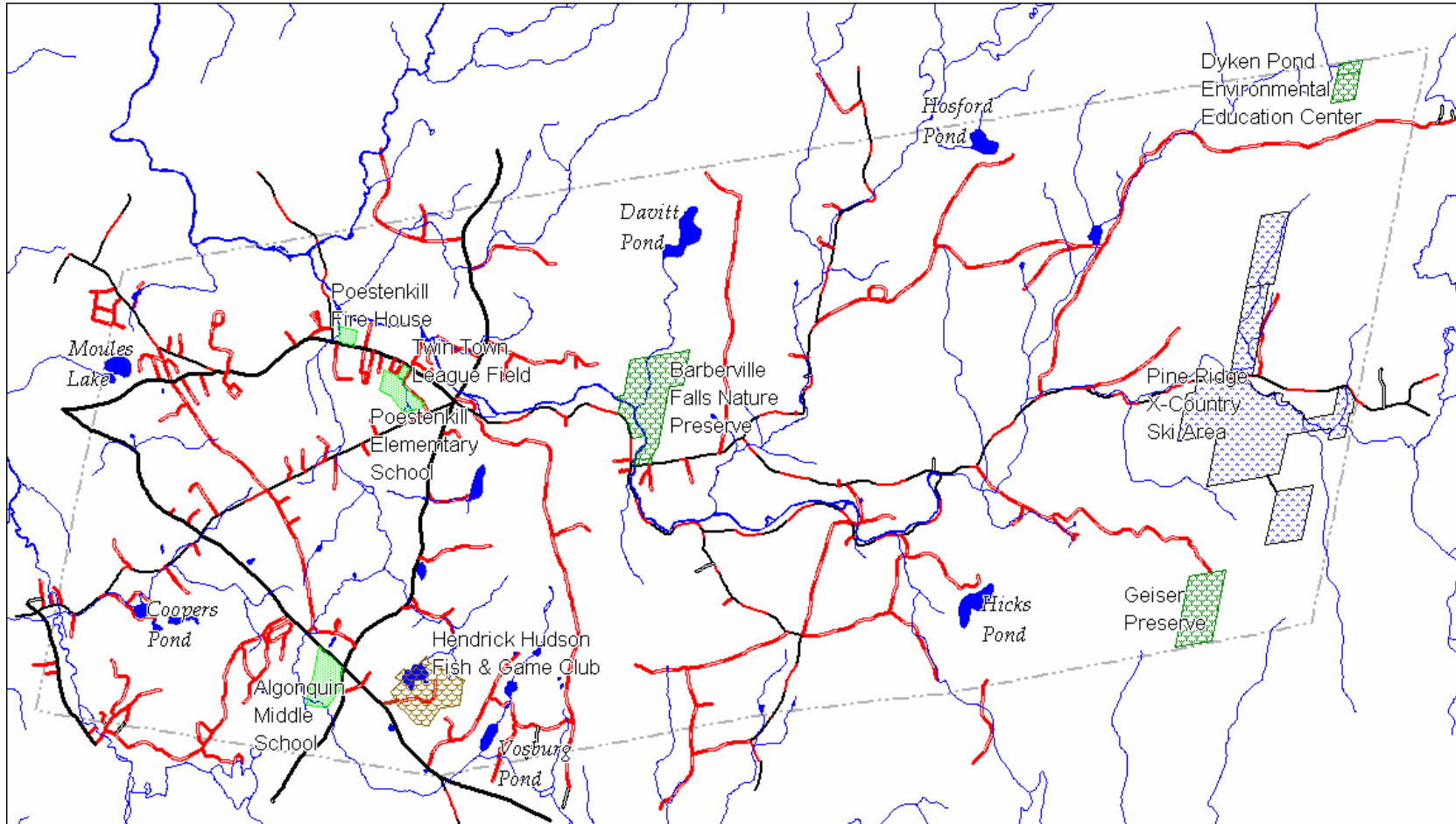
Issues, Threats and Goals

- Find volunteers, especially during daytime hours to provide sufficient coverage to protect the well-being of the town's population, buildings and resources.

Daytime coverage has become difficult for many of the volunteer companies in the Capital Region. Volunteers often were farmers and others employed in the community. As full time farming disappears from countryside, a gap has been created in these community services. Businesses within the town should be encouraged to allow workers to participate as volunteers.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Currently, PES serves as host for the Town's summer camp program as well as other community functions. Algonquin Middle School has soccer fields that serve many organizations, including the Averill Park Youth Soccer League, a popular activity for many of the town's school-age children. The school also has a short hiking trail behind the fields.



Map 15: Recreational Facilities

Pine Ridge, located on Plank Road, is a private cross-country skiing facility. The Twin Town League Field, located on Veterans Road, is a private recreation site that is home to the area's spring little league program. The Hendrick Hudson Fish and Game Club, located on NY Route 66, is a private club that has also served events sponsored by local organizations. The Poesten Kill offers fishing, although public access to the creek is

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

limited. Two state parks, Cherry Plain State Park in Berlin and Grafton Lakes State Park in Grafton are within 12 miles and 17 miles of the town, respectively.

There are several natural areas used for recreation in Poestenkill: Barberville Falls Nature Preserve; Geiser Preserve with its summit of historic Perigo Hill; and the southwestern part of Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center.

Some wildlife species provide opportunities for recreational hunting in the town, especially white-tailed deer and small game hunting of grouse, rabbits and squirrels. The western portion of the town is now located in DEC's Wildlife Management Unit 4K and the eastern area in Unit 4L (2004-05 NYS Hunting and Trapping Regulations Guide). Some Canadian geese hunting occurs in the agricultural areas and some duck hunting in the wetlands along Newfoundland Creek.

Several of the larger water bodies such as Davitt Pond, Moules Lake and Vosburg Pond have fisheries suitable for recreational fishing. Warm-water fish found in many of these ponds include redbreast sunfish, pumpkinseed, bluegill, rock bass, largemouth bass, black crappie, brown bullhead, yellow perch and chain pickerel.

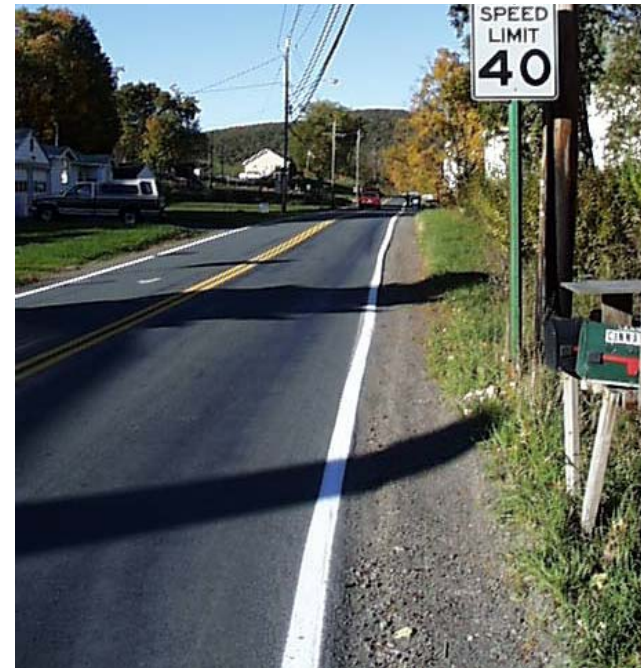
Issues, Threats and Goals

- Provide sufficient recreational opportunities through private, not-for-profit and public entities for town residents.

Presently, all the recreational opportunities beyond the summer youth program are on private, not-for-profit or school district or fire district lands. Much of the work for the recreational opportunities is done through volunteer labor. The Town should work with volunteer and not-for-profit organizations that provide recreational opportunities, especially for the town's youth. The Town should work with for-profit entities that will fulfill recognized needed recreational opportunities.

- Maintain and preserve natural resources presently used for recreation so that their uses are not bothersome to neighboring residents or dangerous to users and the public at large.

Parking around the Barberville Falls Preserve has become an issue due to the fact that visitors block resident's driveways and public roadways, and create difficulties for residents neighboring the falls. Parking is allowed on Plank Road near Brookside Cemetery for the Preserve. Unfortunately, this area is not well signed, and on the opposite side of the Poesten Kill for prime falls viewing. Plank Road is also narrow with



This shoulder is the walkway between the Barberville Falls parking area and top of the trailhead.

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small shoulders, which does not provide good pedestrian access to the trails off Blue Factory Road. Good pedestrian access between the parking area and viewing area would ease the problem parking on Blue Factory Road.

- Maintain or increase fishing and other access to major streams and lakes.

Fishing access to the major streams should be formalized to discourage trespassing where it has become an issue. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has a program in place to purchase or negotiate fishing access easements along streams with significant fishing possibilities. The Town can work together with the DEC on identifying areas for obtaining fishing access. The Planning Board should also take into account any fishing access easements during the subdivision process to maintain fishing access after development.

Land Use and Zoning

In 2003, there were 20,139 acres of non-highway land in the town of Poestenkill. The uses of land based on the 2003 assessment classifications are shown on Map 16 and in the box at right. Parcels assessed as vacant land account for 36.2% of the land in the town. The vacant land is predominantly located in areas zoned residential or rural residential. It should be mentioned that the assessed land uses may not illustrate all uses on a certain property. For example, a large residential parcel may contain fields used for the production of hay or corn, but may not be owned by a farmer. Such parcels will be assessed as residential instead of agricultural.

A significant portion of the Town’s land is used for residential purposes, including single-family homes, rural residences with acreage, multiple family homes, mobile homes and seasonal homes. Parcels assessed as residential account for 46.8% of the land in Poestenkill, while those assessed as agricultural comprise 4.4%. Agricultural uses include livestock, dairy, and other products, and land that is in productive agricultural use.

Recreational and entertainment uses including camps, camping facilities, resorts, amusement facilities, and outdoor sports activities use 4.5% of the land in Poestenkill. Parcels assessed as commercial, including commercial apartment properties, retail businesses, lumber yards, automotive related shops and service stations, kennels, and storage, distribution, and warehouse facilities account for 3.3% of the total acreage in the Town. Approximately 3.4% of the land is assessed as industrial, which for purposes of assessment includes manufacturing and mining. In fact, all but three of the twelve parcels classified as industrial are used for sand and gravel mining.

Slightly more than one percent of the land in Poestenkill is assessed either as community services (e.g., religious, educational, and government facilities) or public services (e.g., the airport, the Town landfill) or wild, forested, parks or conservation.

General Development Patterns

Development patterns in the town of Poestenkill vary from rural, sparsely developed areas to dense lots of less than a half-acre in the town’s hamlet. The original patterns of development appear to have evolved around major intersections within the town. Today, development is more concentrated at these intersections than along the secondary roads and in outlying areas. The eastern part of the town of Poestenkill is generally far less developed, with much more vacant land, than the western part. This is not surprising, as more densely populated urban and suburban municipalities lie to the west of Poestenkill, while the eastern section of the town contains steep topography and rocky soils that makes development more difficult.

**Table 14: 2003 Poestenkill Assessed Land Uses
(By Acreage)**

Residential	9,419.90
Agricultural	891.56
Recreation/Entertainment	898.21
Commercial	673.78
Industrial	689.17
Community Services	109.80
Public Service	77.82
Wild/Conservation	87.32
Vacant Land	<u>7,291.46</u>
Total	20,139.02

Source: 2003 Tax Assessment Data.

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East Side

The northeastern corner of the town of Poestenkill is the least developed section of the town. Most of the land on Blue Factory Hill, Columbia Hill, Fifty six, and Plank Roads is rural with some small farms and is sparsely populated. There is a concentration of commercial, residential, and public and community service buildings, including a fire department building and two churches in East Poestenkill at the intersection of County Routes 40 and 44. The intersection of County Routes 44 and 79 in Ives Corners has fewer building structures than the East Poestenkill intersection; however, the area has several residences and a woodworking shop. Barberville, the third significant intersection on the eastern side of the Town, is located where County Routes 79 and 40 meet. South of CR 40 (Plank Road), the secondary roads contain single-family homes, although the area is still heavily wooded and the lots are large. The Poesten Kill winds along County Route 40 in this area.



East Poestenkill

West Side

The western section of Poestenkill is the more densely populated portion of the town. The area includes several housing developments and the Poestenkill hamlet that is considered the town center. The southwestern part of the town has numerous single-family housing developments, many of which were constructed in the 1980s to the 2000s. Houses in large lot developments have been constructed along the southern borders of the town on Vosburgh Road and Holloway Lane (Heather Ridge); a mix of small and large lot sizes exists in the residential developments on Laura Drive (Pine Meadows).

The Algonquin Middle School, a transfer station, a private fish and game club, a lumber company, and several other commercial businesses are located at or near the intersection of NY Routes 66 and 351. Fanning out from the intersection, residences are scattered along NY Routes 66 and 351 and the secondary roads. Algonquin Estates, a residential subdivision along NY Route 66 and Algonquin Beach Road is located in this area. Built in phases over a period of years, this is among the largest subdivisions in Poestenkill. The Winding Ridge subdivision is also on Algonquin Beach Road.

Around the intersection of NY Route 66 and County Route 68 (Snyders Corners Road), there are more single-family homes and mobile homes as well as a drive-in movie theater and several other commercial businesses. A large gravel mine lies northwest of this intersection. Single-family

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homes are located to the west along Snyders Corners Road between NY Route 66 and County Route 150, and along the short segment of NY Route 150 that passes through the town of Poestenkill.



Located at the intersection of NY Routes 351 and 355 and County Routes 40 and 68 in the north-central section of the town, the Poestenkill hamlet is the most densely developed area of the township. The hamlet has a mix of commercial, residential, light industrial, religious, and government structures, including the Town Hall, library, fire house, post office, a general store, and two churches, on lots of half an acre or less. The Rensselaer County Airport (a private facility) and two light industrial businesses are located just west of the town center on NY Route 355.

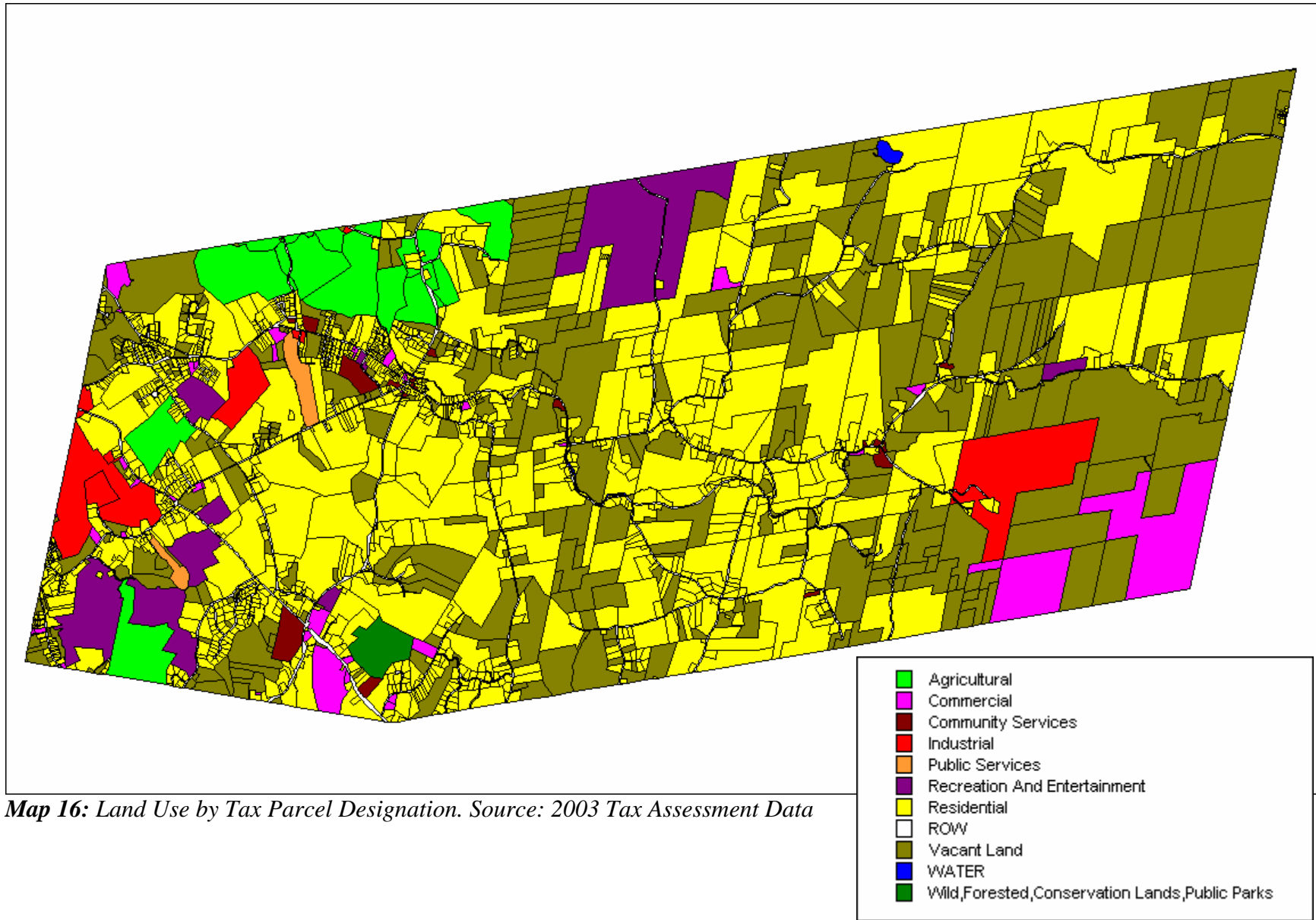
Several residential developments are located in the northwestern section of the town. Large lot, single family homes have been constructed on Hinkle Road (Pleasant Hill) and Reichard Farm Road off NY Route 351.

There is a concentration of single-family homes in the Deer Creek development on Route 351 and in Nursery Estates on NY Route 355 west of the hamlet. Skyview Drive, the Victorian Estates development on Weatherwax Road and the Shuhart subdivision on Grandview Drive off NY Route 355 east of Weatherwax Road contain more densely developed single-family homes of differing styles, sizes, and ages.

There are several large farms along Garfield Road near the municipal border with the town of Brunswick, on NY Route 351, and on Dater Hill Road. Several older homes are also located in the Garfield Road area.



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Map 16: Land Use by Tax Parcel Designation. Source: 2003 Tax Assessment Data

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Overview of Land Use Code

The original Land Use Ordinance for the Town of Poestenkill was drafted as part of its first Master Plan in 1970. Significant modifications to the ordinance were made in 1975 and again in 1985, with a few minor modifications in 1995 and 1997.

The Land Use Ordinance includes four defined Residential Districts that differ in their density and use requirements. The Hamlet is a unique district established to accommodate mixed uses on smaller lots within the town center. Other established districts include Commercial/Light Industrial, and Natural Products. Provisions for future Planned Development Districts, either new or converted from existing uses, have also been incorporated. In addition to the Land Use Ordinance, requirements for subdivisions, flood plain management, junkyards, and dumps are defined in the Poestenkill Town Code.

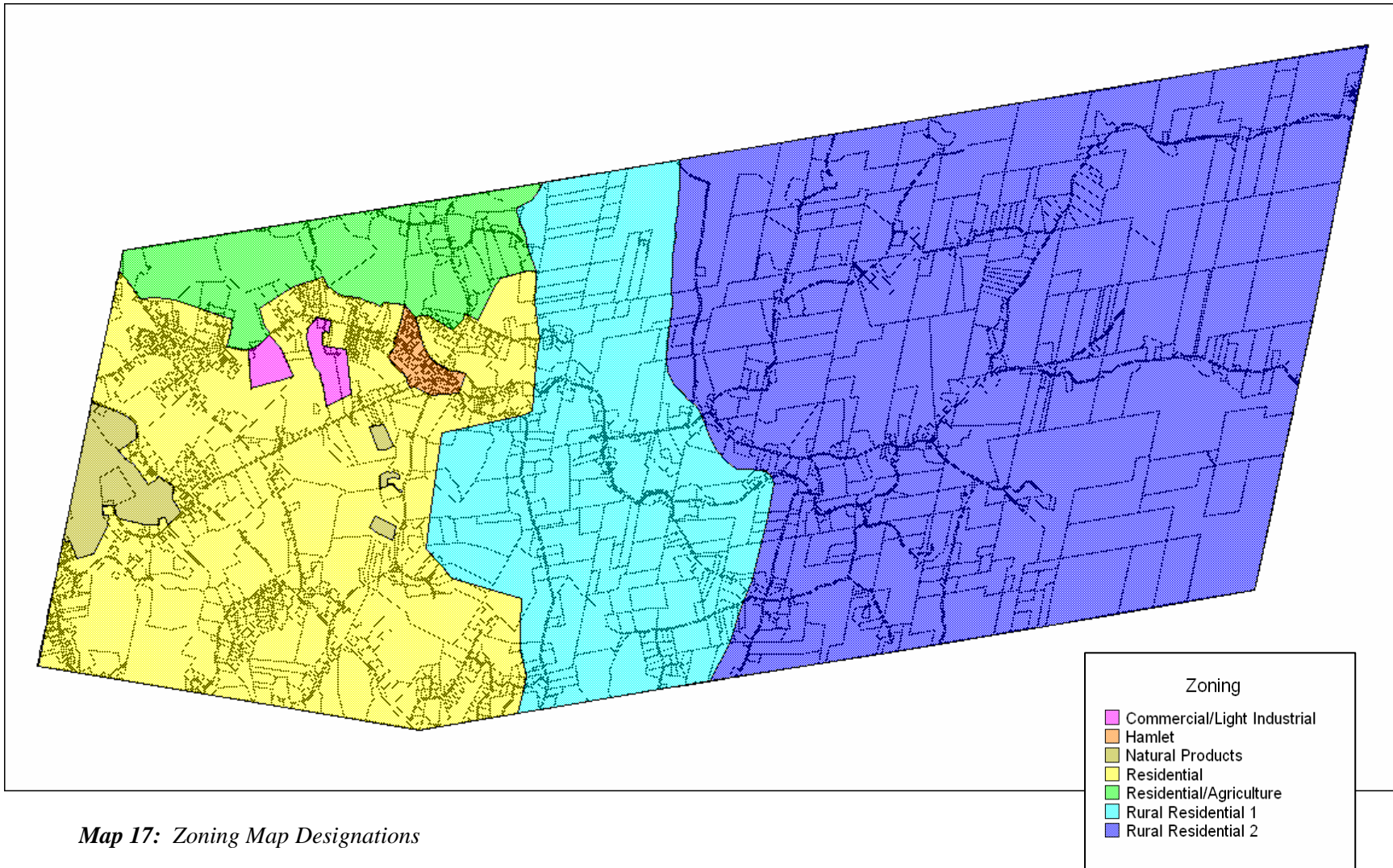
Special use permit reviews and approvals and subdivision proposals come under the purview of the Planning Board. The Zoning Board of Appeals rules on variances to the Land Use Code and makes official interpretations of the Land Use Code. The amendment of the Zoning Code or Map is the responsibility of the Town Board.

Residential

There are five districts permitting residential uses including Residential (R); Residential/Agriculture (RA); Rural Residential 1 (RR1); Rural Residential 2 (RR2) and Hamlet (H). The RR2 District is located in the mountainous eastern portion of Poestenkill. The RR1 District is in the central part of the Town and the RA and R districts are in the western portion. The Hamlet District is in the Town center. The districts differ in their area and bulk regulations; for instance, the minimum lot areas are one acre in the Residential district, two acres in the RA, RR1 and RR2 Districts, and a half-acre in the Hamlet. The RA, RR1 and RR2 have the same area and bulk regulations and differ only in their allowed uses.

Each residential district contains several defined permitted and special residential, general and commercial uses. One and two family homes are permitted in all residential use districts. Multifamily homes are only permitted in the RR1, RR2, and Hamlet Districts and may not exceed six units per structure or 20 units for multiple structures. With a special permit, community residences and boarding/rooming housing are permitted within the residential districts. Community residences are not permitted in the Hamlet. Mobile homes are only permitted in the Rural Residential (RR2) district. Many of the permitted and special uses in the residential districts require site plan review -- particularly those listed under the categories of general and commercial uses.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan



Map 17: Zoning Map Designations

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Mixed-Use

Although the RR1 and RR2 districts allow some commercial uses by special permit, the only mixed-use district in the town of Poestenkill is the Hamlet (H) district. The district permits commercial uses as offices, retail businesses and services, and personal services by right with site plan review. Restaurants and gasoline stations are allowed with a special permit. Lot area is listed at half an acre. The Hamlet District is located in the traditional business center of the town.

Commercial/Light Industrial

The Commercial/Light Industrial District accommodates a variety of uses under the categories of general, commercial, and light industrial. Heavy industrial uses are not permitted in the town. With the exception of agricultural uses, kennels, and home occupations, most of the permitted special uses in the Commercial/Light Industrial District require a site plan review and sketch plan. Two Commercial/Light Industrial Districts exist within the town; both are located on NY Route 355 west of the Poestenkill hamlet. The minimum lot size for any use in the Commercial/Light Industrial Districts is two acres.

Natural Products

The Natural Products Districts are reserved for commercial excavation, including extractive operations and soil mining. A special use permit is required for all mining operations in these Districts except for grading, which only requires a grading permit. Other than mining, only some agricultural uses are permitted in these districts. The three Natural Product Districts shown on the Town's zoning map are located in the western portion of the town. (See the Local Economy section for a greater discussion of this issue.)

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulates all extractive activities, including requirements for the reclamation of mined-out acreage, through the Mined Land Reclamation Law (MLRL)³. The MLRL, which became effective in 1975, has three main policies: to provide for the wise and efficient use of natural resources and the reclamation of disturbed lands; assure the satisfaction of economic needs compatible with sound environmental practice; and foster and encourage an economically sound mining industry. The MLRL supercedes all state and local laws related to extractive mining, although local governments may regulate small mines not required to be permitted by the state.

Under the MLRL, a property owner seeking to operate a mine must apply to the DEC for a mining permit. An applicant for a Mined Land Reclamation Permit must submit completed application forms, pay a mining permit fee, and submit a completed Environmental Assessment Form, which is required for Type I actions under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The applicant is also required to provide a

³ The state's mining jurisdiction covers any person who mines or proposes to mine from each mine site more than 1,000 tons or 750 cubic yards, whichever is less, within twelve successive calendar months.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

mined land use plan which explains in detail the proposed mining operations and reclamation activities. Permits are issued for a term of up to five years.

Major amendments to the MLRL were passed in 1991. According to the DEC, the amendments were intended to simplify the permit process, codify existing case law, clarify the roles of state government and local governments with respect to the regulation of mining and reclamation, and provide input from local governments on the local impacts from applications. Provisions related to local governments can be summarized as follows⁴:

Mining prohibitions: Although local governments may not pass laws or ordinances restricting mining or reclamation activities regulated by the MLRL, localities can enact and enforce zoning ordinances that determine permissible uses in zoning districts. These uses may include the prohibition of mining.

Local permits and enforcement: Where mining is a permissible use under local zoning, localities may issue special use permits and enforce conditions concerning only the following activities: (1) entrance and exit to and from the mine on roads controlled by the locality; (2) identification and approval of haul roads controlled by the locality; (3) mining or mined land reclamation activities not regulated by state law; and (4) enforcement of DEC mining permit reclamation requirements and special conditions regarding setbacks, barriers to restrict access, dust control, and hours of operation.

Notice of applications: DEC must send notice of all complete applications for new mining projects to the chief administrative officer of the affected locality. The local government has thirty days to make determinations as recommendations to the DEC on the application with regard to setbacks, barriers to restrict access, dust control, hours of operation, and whether the proposed mine is in an area where mining is a permissible activity. If the DEC finds that the determinations made by the local government are reasonable and necessary, the DEC will incorporate these into the permit, if one is issued. If the DEC does not agree that the determinations are justifiable, the DEC must provide a written explanation to the local government and the applicant.

Several legal cases since the MLRL became effective have addressed the division of authority between state regulation of mining under the MLRL and local zoning authority. In general, while the state courts have rejected local laws which deal with the actual operation and process of mining regulated by the state, they have upheld local laws of general applicability -- e.g., building codes, which apply broadly to other land uses -- as well as local zoning ordinances which regulate or prohibit the use of land within municipal boundaries for mining operations⁵.

⁴ This summary is taken from the DEC's Mined-Land Reclamation Program Update (November 1, 1991) and is used with their permission. Additional information comes from Technical Guidance Memo MLR92-2 (May 4, 1992), available on the website of the DEC's Division of Mineral Resources (www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dmn).

⁵ According to Arlene Lotters of the DEC's Division of Legal Affairs, mines that were operating at the time of zoning change *may* be allowed to continue operations as a nonconforming use if the operator has a valid DEC permit, is continuously engaged in mining activity on the site, and has a mined land-use plan indicating the intent to mine the entire parcel.

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The Town of Poestenkill's land use ordinance has included provisions for the location of mines since 1970. In 1994, the zoning law was amended to allow applications for rezoning of areas from Residential to Natural Products (NP) districts, as long as the area to be affected encompasses less than ten acres of land. Rezoning to NP is not allowed in a Hamlet district, a wetlands area, or a designated critical environmental area within the Town. The NP zoning district is the only district in the Town of Poestenkill within which mining is a permissible use. Most of the current NP zones in the Town were established prior to the 1994 law, however.

The Town's land use ordinance (§102-4 of the Town Code) defines a mine as "any pits or workings, whether above or below ground, from which any natural product is produced for commercial, industrial or municipal use; and all shafts, slopes, drifts, faces; and including all equipment above, on or below the surface of the ground used in connection with such pits or workings." Further, mining is defined as "the extraction or removal of overburden on natural products from the ground or surface, including any activities at the mine location for the washing, cleaning, crushing, stockpiling or other preparation of natural products for use or sale, and the disposal of overburden and other wash material." Natural products include "aggregate, cement rock, clay, curbing stone, flagstone, road stone, stone, gravel, ore, riprap, sand, sandstone, shale, slate or any other solid material or substance of commercial value found in or on the earth and produced for use or sale as part of any type of mining activity."

The purpose of the Natural Products district is to protect residents by safeguarding residential and agricultural land as well as water resources and environmental features of the Town. Owners of small mines that extract less than 1,000 tons or 750 cubic yards per year must obtain a special use permit. The application for a small-scale mine must include a mining plan and reclamation plan. If approved, the special use permit is issued for a three-year period. Those extracting and removing less than 100 cubic yards per year must obtain a grading permit issued by the Code Enforcement Officer. All other mining uses must obtain a special use permit from the Town Planning Board in addition to permits required by the DEC. The ordinance provides a number of exceptions for general construction, farming, sewage disposal, and farm ponds.

According to §102-66 of the Town Code, the NP zone is intended to be the land use zoning classification for mining operations only during the period of time when active mining is underway. After completion of mining operations, including reclamation, or nonuse for a one-year period, the district must revert back to the pre-application land use classification.

Flood-Fringe Overlay District

A Flood-Fringe Overlay District (FF-O) is established in the Town Land Use Code. The boundary of the district is indicated as being delineated on the most current edition of the federal Flood Insurance Rate Map, but there is no reference to the FF-O on the map or in the Flood Damage Prevention Regulations established under Chapter 86 of the Town Code. Should a specific location of the FF-O district be identified in the future and incorporated into the Land Use Code, all proposed uses within the FF-O would be considered special uses and would be subject to review by the Planning Board. The standards for uses within the district include structural design specifications and use restrictions.

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Planned Development District

A Planned Development District (PDD) may be authorized with the use of performance criteria to set standards for site specific Planned Developments. Planned Developments may provide flexibility within standard zoning and subdivision requirements. A Planned Development may be established in any location if recommended by the Planning Board and approved by the Town Board; however, there must be a minimum of five contiguous acres of residential land or general use land, or ten contiguous acres for commercial or light industrial uses. Permitted uses and the intensity of uses are determined on a plan-by-plan basis.

Other Land Use Provisions

The Town of Poestenkill's Town Code includes regulations for fences and walls. For residential uses, fences and walls cannot exceed six feet for side or rear walls and four feet if erected within 25 feet of the front of the lot-line or highway right-of-way. In Commercial/Light Industrial Districts, fence and wall heights may not exceed eight feet unless along a residential boundary, where the limit is six feet. There are additional specifications for specific site locations.

Signs are permitted if they pertain exclusively to the premises on which the sign is located; however, they must meet certain standards. Signs that move, flash, or have lights of any kind are prohibited.

The Town's code requires off-street parking for any new or enlarged building/structure. This also applies to any change in use of land or building. The number of spaces varies depending on use and intensity of such use. The code provides design specifications of the parking spaces.

Issues, Threats and Goals

- Many of the commercial and some industrial establishments are located in residential zones and are “grandfathered” or have use variances, and may not expand unless additional use variances are received.

Some of the commercial and industrial establishments are in concentrated areas such as the intersection of NY Routes 66 and 351. The Town should examine whether the area along NY Route 66 from Weatherwax Road to Vosburgh Road should be rezoned to Commercial to allow some of the existing businesses by right. These businesses include Iron Braid, LC Valente Lumber Mill, as well as apartment buildings across the street.

Businesses that do not affect neighboring residences could be zoned under a “floating” commercial zone which would have strong performance requirements and may only be allowed in certain zoning areas. The floating zone could have sunset provisions if a business closes or is inactive for a period of time.

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- The review and expansion of the zoning uses may assist the Town in allowing uses that were not common or in existence during the 1980s when the zoning regulations were written.

Several commercial uses are lumped into “Retail business or service, not otherwise mentioned herein” that may not have been expected in Poestenkill, such as Bed and Breakfast/Inn and Agri-Tourism. Additionally, Commercial Recreation Facility may need to be split from Commercial Amusements as such uses including ski venues, beaches and water recreation, indoor soccer arenas and the like require more land and are often not found in the central business district. These can be allowed by special permit in the rural districts where such uses may be compatible.

Action Plan

The action plan component of this Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide the Town of Poestenkill leaders and other stakeholders, both current and future, with guidance regarding the kind of place residents would like the town of Poestenkill to be in the future, a set of goals for achieving that future vision and objectives that will facilitate the accomplishment of each goal.

The purpose of a vision statement is to provide direction regarding the community's growth and development, serving as a foundation underlying the development of goals and strategies for implementation. Reflecting the common values of local residents it expresses the "ideal" future that the community hopes to attain. Residents and leaders of the Town of Poestenkill have established the following vision statement for Poestenkill:

The Town of Poestenkill is a vital and prosperous community that is rural by choice. Future progress requires that the Town wisely protect and preserve its rich rural heritage and assets: traditional small town character, open space and scenic beauty, natural resources, diverse citizenry and strong community schools.

In the decades ahead, the Town will enjoy a stable and varied local economy and remain a desirable place to live, raise a family, work and retire. Poestenkill's lively hamlet - the center of community life - will be sustained, offering a growing mix of small locally-owned businesses, stores, professional services and community facilities. The Town will encourage residents to buy homes, improve their housing, and create suitable housing for seniors. The Town will endeavor to provide the infrastructure necessary to protect water quality and support existing commercial enterprises.

The Town of Poestenkill endeavors to accommodate carefully planned new residential development, commercial enterprises and public infrastructure which fit harmoniously into the town fabric, are compatible with established neighborhoods, and are designed in a manner that conserves its important natural resources, waterways and aquifer, agricultural lands and family farms.

To fulfill this vision and maintain the town of Poestenkill as a good place to live, work and visit today and in the future, goals and objectives were originally developed by the Comprehensive Plan Committee based on the above vision statement, inventory and analysis of the existing conditions in the town of Poestenkill and on input from the community gathered from the Community Survey and at the Public Workshop. Further additions of goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, along with some deletions (due to completion in some cases) were agreed upon by the Town Board. It should be noted that with regard to the issue of aggregate deposits and mined areas discussed in Section E of the Existing Conditions Report, there are no new actions recommended.

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- Goal 1:** The Town will endeavor to foster Poestenkill's sense of community and mutual responsibility, focused on the hamlet as the center of community life, by preserving public safety, promoting recreational opportunities and encouraging access to needed professional services.
- Goal 2:** The Town will endeavor to conserve its natural wonders including unmarred vistas and waterways consistent with our desire to maintain a rural character.
- Goal 3:** The Town will endeavor to foster its awareness of pride in and conservation of its history embodied in its written records, homes and structures of historical significance.
- Goal 4:** The Town will endeavor to work to maintain, and ensure for the future, a clean water supply and promote the disposal of wastes in a manner that protects Town Water Resources, the aquifer and resident health and property values.
- Goal 5:** The Town will endeavor to encourage development of housing options, with emphasis on home ownership, for its residents at all life stages, which will complement the rural character of the town and not place an undue burden on the environment.
- Goal 6:** The Town will endeavor to encourage the development of new, and the expansion of current business enterprise that is compatible with the existing character of the town of Poestenkill.
- Goal 7:** The Town will endeavor to balance the rights of individuals with the needs and welfare of the community.

These goals guided the action planning process and allowed for the development of the initiatives and projects outlined in this action plan.

Plan Implementation

Plan implementation should begin when the Town Board formally adopts this document. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan means that the Town Board, acting for the citizens of Poestenkill accept this plan, as the guide to future development in Poestenkill. Municipal leaders and other stakeholders should use the plan to assist in making decisions and setting priorities, including those established by the annual Town budget.

As required under state law, any new land use regulations or amendments in the Town must be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, an important role of the Town Planning Board will be to review this document to make sure that the goals and ideas of the plan are integrated into land use and development decisions. State law also stipulates that all plans for capital projects of another

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governmental agency on land included in the plan take the plan into consideration. This provision is designed to prevent government actions from disregarding the recommendations of a comprehensive plan.

Involvement of local residents and the local community is vital in helping the Town to successfully achieve the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Although some actions will be appropriate for implementation by the Town Board and/or municipal department staff, others will call for participation by civic organizations, public/private partnerships, citizen committees, and other entities.

Periodic Review

The Town Board will arrange for periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan at least every five years. The review will assess the need for amending or updating the plan to address emerging issues as appropriate. For instance, it will be important to update the plan with the new demographic data from the next decennial Census. Any emerging issues uncovered during the Comprehensive Plan review should be addressed in an amended Action Plan for the Comprehensive Plan.

A committee responsible for conducting the five-year reviews of the Comprehensive Plan should be formed. This committee would review the Comprehensive Plan for land use and zoning needs and updates, new issues and completed or irrelevant issues that no longer need to be in the Comprehensive Plan. Data in the Plan should be reviewed and updated, where possible, to review trends. This committee would be appointed by the Town Board.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: The Town will endeavor to foster Poestenkill's sense of community and mutual responsibility, focused on the hamlet as the center of community life, by preserving public safety, promoting recreational opportunities and encouraging access to needed professional services.

Objectives

1-1: The Town will endeavor to improve public safety by enhancing police protection from existing agencies and encouraging and supporting responsive, expert volunteer EMS and fire-fighting services.

The provision of public safety services is very important to the quality of life of any community. As the Town of Poestenkill does not directly provide police protection it will work toward enhancing police protection by working with the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police in East Greenbush. The Town will continue to regularly evaluate its volunteer emergency medical services and fire-fighting services to ensure that their facilities and equipment are adequate.

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1-2: The Town will endeavor to emphasize and enhance the concept of the hamlet as the hub of community life.

The hamlet in the town of Poestenkill has traditionally been the center of the community as it is both the original center of town and continues to be the location of such community facilities as the Town Hall, Post Office and Library, as well as the location of several churches and commercial businesses. As the town continues to be developed and to increase in population, the hamlet should be enhanced to reinforce its concept as the central hub of community life. This may be accomplished by:

- ❖ Supporting the Town Library
- ❖ Establishing a community center as close to the hamlet as may be feasible
- ❖ Supporting the establishment of a small landscaped community greenspace or “pocket park” in the center of the hamlet for passive activities
- ❖ Providing public water and/or sewer in the hamlet area to allow healthy expansion and business uses
- ❖ Providing safe walking routes such as sidewalks in the hamlet area
- ❖ Encouraging service businesses in the hamlet area
- ❖ Supporting a farmer’s market

The Town will endeavor to pursue the acquisition of land in the hamlet and adjacent to the hamlet as it becomes available for the construction of a community center and community park. The Town will pursue funding possibilities for site acquisition and construction through the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the NYS Environmental Protection Fund, or other such funding sources for site acquisition and construction.

1-3: The Town will endeavor to promote existing and expanded recreational opportunities.

The town of Poestenkill has a variety of recreational opportunities including trails, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and biking on the nature preserves located in and around the town and the two state parks within 17 miles of the town. While there is no community park within the town, children have access to playgrounds and sports fields at the Poestenkill elementary school and Algonquin Middle School. To build on the existing opportunities for recreational facilities and programs the Town will endeavor to:

- ❖ Encourage the creation and expansion of hiking and bicycling trails and fishing opportunities that are consistent with individual private property rights
- ❖ Support the availability of playgrounds for children
- ❖ Continue support for programs and services for youth, including the summer day camp and athletics
- ❖ Establish a Town Park beside the Poesten Kill
- ❖ Encourage the purchase of fishing rights access to the Poesten Kill and other fishing streams by DEC

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- ❖ Work with owner of existing facilities to mitigate traffic or other neighborhood problems caused by the facility

Public access to hiking and fishing can be accomplished through the use of signage to trails and public parking at major intersections and on roadsides near trailheads. Creating pamphlets highlighting the recreational opportunities and other attractions available in Poestenkill and providing the pamphlets at the Town Hall, library, schools, convenience stores in surrounding towns, will promote Poestenkill's recreational and tourism opportunities.

The Town will endeavor to pursue funding for the creation of a Town Park that would be large enough to include such facilities as a playground for children, picnicking facilities, walking paths and other recreational facilities as appropriate. Funding for trails and playgrounds may be available through the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the NYS Environmental Protection Fund. Other recreational opportunities may be provided through not-for-profits and for-profit groups and businesses.

1-4: The Town will endeavor to cultivate and promote a sense of community and mutual responsibility.

The Town will endeavor to cultivate and promote a sense of community and mutual responsibility by sponsoring town-wide social events, creating a repository for town artifacts and archaeological items, supporting a farmers market and/or adopting a volunteer service approach to specific projects to be undertaken consistent with this plan.

Mutual responsibility also requires that the members of the community respect their communities by using best management practices for mining, forestry and agricultural operations as well as the Rensselaer County Airport. Residents and visitors should also practice respect for the larger animals that are starting to make a come back into the town, such as bears, moose, deer and mountain lions.

1-5: The Town will endeavor to promote better public transportation and/or access to medical and other professional services for town residents.

The town's location in a rural setting can hinder those residents who are unable to drive to access health and other professional services because the services are not available within a short distance and there is no public transit service. As the population of Poestenkill continues to age, accessibility of services becomes more important. The Town will therefore encourage increased availability of medical and other service providers in the community. Furthermore, the Town will support a volunteer ride program for disabled and elderly residents to health and other professional services. Provision of a Park and Ride lot in the western side of the town will provide easier access to existing public transportation services.

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- 1-6: **The Town should actively work together with NYS DOT, Rensselaer County Highway and Sheriff Departments and the New York State Police in correcting dangerous conditions on some highway areas.**

Although traffic volume is relatively low in Poestenkill, some intersections have non-standard angles, grades or other problems to block views and make safe crossings or turnings difficult. Other traffic problems such as excessive speed are common on state and county routes. The speed limit on Weatherwax Road, a local roadway, is actually set higher than NYS Route 355, which it ends on. This higher speed limit has created hazards both on Weatherwax Road and NYS Route 355. If traffic was slowed along thoroughfares to speed limits, many of the hazards would be reduced.

Some corrective work has been completed along NYS Route 355 to prevent flooding which was becoming an annual event west of the hamlet. Drainage issues along some roadways still create flooding hazards to residents and drivers in some low-lying areas.

- Goal 2: *The Town will endeavor to conserve our natural wonders including unmarred vistas and waterways consistent with our desire to maintain a rural character.***

Objectives

- 2-1: **The Town, through the Conservation Advisory Committee, will evaluate development patterns in the town of Poestenkill every five years to determine if a land conservation plan is necessary to maintain the natural beauty and rural character of the town.**

The rural character and natural beauty of the town of Poestenkill have not, to date, been significantly compromised by development. Natural topography (soils, steep slopes etc.) is a barrier to development in many areas of the town because it is difficult to build on. However, unforeseen development demands and patterns might one day threaten the existing rural integrity of the town. Therefore, the Town's Conservation Advisory Committee will monitor the development patterns and upon determining that it is necessary to maintain open space as a means of preserving the rural quality of life and natural resources, will develop a land conservation plan for the Town which will be incorporated into the subsequent update of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Conservation Advisory Committee can work with the Planning Board to encourage the preservation of the natural beauty and rural character of the town by examining whether parcels proposed for subdivision would be enhanced by conservation or cluster development, which could provide setbacks from ridgelines and buffers around wetlands and streams. The Conservation Advisory Committee could also review proposed expansion plans for water, sewer and other infrastructure as to its encouragement of development in sensitive lands.

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2-2: The Town will endeavor to identify and seek to protect critical environmental areas that are presently impacted or at significant risk of negative environmental impacts.

The town has several areas that might be considered critical environmental areas including the Poestenkill Aquifer, the Poesten Kill and the wetlands. A critical environmental area is an area with one or more of the following environmental characteristics: steep slopes (to be defined by Town); flood plain; soils classified as having high water tables (to be defined by Town); soils classified as highly erodible, subject to erosion, or highly acidic; land incapable of meeting percolation requirements; land formerly or currently used for landfill operations or hazardous industrial use; stream corridors; mature stands of native vegetation; aquifer recharge and discharge areas; wetlands and wetland transition areas; and habitats of endangered species.

The Poestenkill Aquifer is partially located in the town and is considered vulnerable to contamination from development above, commercial and agricultural run-off, the leaching from landfills and other threats. West of Poestenkill, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has approved a request to mine below the groundwater level, allowing the removal of groundwater and possibly dropping water levels in surrounding properties' wells.

Furthermore, the town has 25 wetlands and 2 wetland communities that are uncommon to New York State and are listed in the New York Natural Heritage Program. Wetlands serve many important ecological and environmental functions and help to protect public health, safety and welfare by providing flood storage and conveyance, erosion control, sediment control, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, water quality protection, water supply, education and scientific research. Wetlands should be preserved and protected to prevent their loss or degradation. Federally protected wetlands are not mapped and require mapping by developers or property owners before projects are approved. The Planning Board should require that all federally protected wetlands are mapped before applications for subdivision or site plan review are submitted.

Using such resources as the freshwater wetland map prepared by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, studies and the maps included in the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Poestenkill will endeavor to identify its environmentally sensitive areas and determine the risk of negative environmental impacts. The Town will use the SEQR process and site plan review process to protect these critical areas.

2-3: In conjunction with SEQR, the Town will continue to look at the cumulative effects of development on water, sewage disposal, soil and scenic qualities in Poestenkill and in neighboring towns.

As the Town Planning Board considers new development, the Board will take into consideration the effect that such development will have on water resources, the environment and the rural character of the town of Poestenkill and the surrounding communities.

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Furthermore, through the process of updating the Town of Poestenkill's Comprehensive Plan every five years, the Town will revisit the issue of development and the impact that it is having on the environment, water resources, and the rural character of the town to ensure that the Town continues to develop in a manner that is consistent with the intent of the Vision Statement of this Comprehensive Plan.

Tools available to the Planning Board in providing information for SEQR include the Rensselaer County Soil Survey and wetland maps. Tools available to mitigate negative effects include using conservation or cluster development to protect ridgelines, scenic areas, important farm parcels, wetlands and flooding areas.

2-4: The Town will endeavor to protect archaeological resources by using the required SEQR process.

According to the New York State Museum's Prehistoric Archaeological Site file, the town of Poestenkill has several areas of prehistoric archaeological resources in the northwestern part of the town and in the vicinity of East Poestenkill. Other areas, predominantly in the western portion of the town, have been identified as having a high or medium probability of prehistoric archaeological resources, however, additional research is needed to determine what precise resources exist.

Archaeological resources, due to their finite nature, are valuable links to our past and should be considered whenever a development is proposed. As these resources are not only important to the history of the town, but also to the State and Region, the Town will thoroughly consider archaeological resources when applying the SEQR process to any proposed development.

2-5: The Town will maintain a Conservation Advisory Committee and seek the involvement of this body in the designation of future Critical Environmental Areas.

As discussed in Objective 2-2, Poestenkill has many critical environmental areas that must be protected. This Conservation Advisory Committee will work with the Town to identify and protect these sensitive areas.

2-6: The Town should work together with neighboring municipalities, Rensselaer County, State and Federal agencies to protect and maintain its ground and surface waters.

Water does not honor municipal boundaries. Much of the groundwater and surface waters originate as snow and rain up on the Rensselaer Plateau, not necessarily in the town of Poestenkill. These waters flow out from the town boundaries toward the Hudson River and ultimately Atlantic Ocean. As the waters flow through many communities, so must the efforts to protect the waters be coordinated between these communities. Federal and state laws also affect what the Town can do.

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The federal government has two required programs that Poestenkill must follow to protect the community and prevent lawsuits – the National Flood Insurance Program and the Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) Program. The first program requires the Town to regulate development in flood boundaries to prevent flood damage and allow residents to purchase flood insurance. The second program requires the Town to regulated development in its urbanized area to prevent flooding, erosion and pollution. The federal government also has programs to mitigate flooding hazards, some of which the Town has already taken advantage.

New York State, in many cases, operates the programs that the federal government creates for the federal government. Some of the actions that are taken by New York State agencies can also affect the water quality in Poestenkill. Actions such as allowing the mining of sand and gravel located in the Poestenkill Aquifer, although outside the Town’s borders, may drop groundwater levels in the western portion of the town. NYS DOT along with the County Highway deicers have raised the salinity of the groundwater at the intersection of Spring Avenue Extension and NYS 355, due to running their salting equipment when clearing the slip ramps. The Town encourages the State to work with County Highway to protect its waters.

Along with the salting issue, Rensselaer County has taken the initiative of coordinating the MS4 program in the county. Not all communities in the county fall under the MS4 program presently, but the surrounding towns of Brunswick, Sand Lake and North Greenbush are required to participate in the program. Rensselaer County Soil and Water Conservation District has also assisted in trying to maintain surface waters, especially for the maintenance of fisheries.

Goal 3: ***The Town will foster awareness of pride in and conservation of its history embodied in its written records, homes and structures of historical significance.***

Objectives

3-1: **The Town will endeavor to create a local historical registry including houses, buildings and structures.**

The town of Poestenkill has a rich, self-sufficient rural history. Substantial time and energy has been expended to document the history. Many structures and features of historical importance within the town have been documented in various publications. Despite Poestenkill’s rich history and documentation of that history, currently there are no properties in the town listed on either the National or State Registers of Historic places.

The Town Historian will work with the Town to create a local Historical Registry of houses, buildings and structures that are considered historic. The historian will work with the town to define what is considered historic and then work with the community to identify buildings that fit the definition. This Registry will provide the community with a record that may be

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used as a historical resource for the town, as part of a heritage tourism activity or solely for local recognition. The registry will be reviewed by the Town Board and formally adopted so that such buildings may be formally recognized.

Goal 4: *The Town will endeavor to work to maintain, and ensure for the future, a clean water supply and promote the disposal of wastes in a manner that protects town water resources, the aquifer and resident health and property values.*

Objectives

4-1: **The Town will endeavor to regulate the type and density of land development on areas requiring special protection as necessary to protect drinking water and aquifer.**

As discussed in Objective 2-3, the Poestenkill Aquifer is partially located in the town of Poestenkill as well as in the towns of Brunswick, North Greenbush and Sand Lake. This underground aquifer is considered vulnerable to contamination from development above, commercial and agricultural run-off, leachate from landfills and other threats. The Town will therefore take into consideration the existence of the aquifer and the impact that any proposed development above or near the aquifer will have on the aquifer by requiring an environmental assessment by using the SEQR process for any development above the aquifer.

4-2: **The Town will reactivate the Water Task Force to examine new projects to create new water systems as such projects arise, and will support the Task Force in that role.**

The Poestenkill Water Task Force has been reactivated and is reviewing the public water project.

4-3: **The Town will endeavor to monitor and record information about the water table periodically.**

The Town will monitor and record information regarding the water table by collecting data from residents, developers and well drillers as water services are installed to ensure that development densities do not have a negative effect on the water table.

4-4: **The Town will endeavor to revisit its efforts to draft appropriate ground water and aquifer protection regulations.**

In 1994 the Town Aquifer Protection Committee drafted a groundwater protection ordinance for the Town of Poestenkill. The purpose of the ordinance was to preserve and maintain the quality of groundwater in the town. The Town never

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adopted this ordinance as concerns were raised about it. The proposed ordinance and the concerns raised should be revisited in an effort to draft appropriate ground water and aquifer protection regulations.

4-5: The Town will endeavor to offer information to town citizens about pollution prevention and environmental issues.

The Town will work with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and others to access available brochures and training resources regarding pollution prevention and other environmental issues. These resources will be circulated by the Town to the citizens of Poestenkill.

Goal 5: *The Town will endeavor to encourage development of housing options, with emphasis on home ownership, for its residents at all life stages, which will complement the rural character of the town and not place an undue burden on the environment.*

Objectives:

5-1: The Town should encourage the development of housing units suitable for senior citizens.

The increasing age of Poestenkill's population coupled with the limited housing options for more elderly residents who no longer wish to own or maintain a single family home, suggest that the town may have a senior housing shortage now or in the near future. The median age rose significantly from 1990 to 2000 and the number of residents 65 years of age or older nearly doubled. Poestenkill's housing options do not include condominiums or townhouses and rental units constitute less than 20% of the housing stock. As a result, there are limited lower-cost alternatives for seniors.

The prospect of public funding for senior housing has been investigated in the past from federal and state resources. The funding prospects that might meet with the greatest success might be a partnership with a not-for-profit such as a rural preservation organization.

To facilitate private senior housing development the Town will consider changing the Town code to allow multi-unit housing development (apartments) specifically for senior citizens (i.e. handicapped accessible, ground floor, etc.) in the R zones if it is compatible with the residential character of those zones.

5-2: The Town will endeavor to, by special permit, allow residents to add accessory dwelling units to their houses where sanitary facilities allow, to facilitate the ability of residents to care for persons in need (i.e. elderly, disabled) and maintain separate living quarters.

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As discussed in Objective 5-1, the Town of Poestenkill should provide lower-cost housing options for its elderly population. An additional housing option would be available for some residents if the town were to permit attached accessory dwelling units so that a caretaker and a person in need, or a relative of the occupant of the home, may live in the same single family home, but with separate living quarters. This could be accomplished through the following Code changes:

- ❖ Define accessory apartments or accessory dwelling units as a residence where the accessory apartment may have separate kitchen, bathing and sleeping areas while utilizing the primary residence utilities (i.e. heat, electricity, water).
- ❖ Permit such accessory apartments in residential zones with a provision for code enforcement including providing minimum and maximum floor areas for the accessory apartment and requiring proof of a caretaker or family relationship (such as a contract).

5-3: The Town will continue to seek funding for housing rehabilitation programs through grants but may want to develop another program such as a property tax abatement program to encourage upgrade and maintenance of older homes.

Approximately 28% of the town housing units were built prior to 1940, many of which are in need of major repairs. The Town has actively sought grants through state and federal agencies for rehabilitation of housing but has not yet been successful. The Town will explore the possibility of working with not-for-profit rural preservation organizations or like-organizations to establish a housing rehabilitation program for low-income residents in Poestenkill who lack the financial resources to maintain their homes.

Many homeowners are reluctant to make improvement to their residences because they fear a property tax increase. Although not all types of home improvement projects result in increased taxes, it is a common misconception that often serves as a disincentive for housing rehabilitation.

To encourage enhancement of Poestenkill's residential neighborhoods, the Town will consider adoption of a NYS Real Property Tax Law 485(b) program. New York State authorizes this program but a municipal resolution is required for a community to adopt it. The 485(b) program will allow the Town to give a property owner a 50% tax exemption on the increase in assessed valuation in the first year after an improvement has been made, decreasing at 5% per year for a period of ten years. The program will be complimented by a public outreach effort to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation.

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Goal 6: *The Town will encourage the development of new, and the expansion of current business enterprise that is compatible with the existing character of the town of Poestenkill.*

Objectives

6-1: **The Town will examine expanding the existing Commercial/Light Industrial (CLI) zone.**

To create opportunities for increased local employment and economic activity, consideration should be given to expanding to the west the existing commercial light industrial zone (see Chapter IX Land Use and Zoning for a definition of this zone) located on NY Route 355 in a manner and scale consistent with and appropriate to the surrounding area and character of the town. Expanding the CLI zone into the Route 66 area, between Weatherwax Road and Vosburgh Road, will enable existing businesses not currently in the CLI zone to seek expansion, as well as provide the Town with the opportunity for new industry.

When considering proposals for commercial and light industrial uses, the Town should be cognizant of the following:

- ❖ Threats to natural and agricultural resources, the environment and the rural character of the town.
- ❖ Proposed expansions of zone should take into consideration the existing infrastructure such as roadways, site conditions, water supply (lack of county water and sewer service).
- ❖ Actions taken in this area should be designed so as not to discourage the existing pattern of residential development.
- ❖ “Clean industry” should be encouraged.

6-2: **The Town will endeavor to provide a mechanism that will support the retention and expansion of nonconforming use businesses within the town with limitations that ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.**

The existing Town of Poestenkill Zoning Ordinance requires a use variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals to change a nonconforming use to another nonconforming use and does not permit the “extension, alteration, enlargement or reconstruction” of a nonconforming use. As many of the nonconforming businesses in the town are important to the community, it is recommended that the Town support the continuation of the nonconforming uses when it is determined that the business is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and the highest and best use of the land. It is specifically recommended that the Town:

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- ❖ Create floating zones that allow certain commercial and/or light industrial uses outside of the CLI zone if the proposed use fulfills requirements that will ensure that the use will not impose on surrounding residential parcels. The floating zones could have a sunset provision that reverts the zoning back to the underlying zone should the use be discontinued for a period of time. The zones could also have additional requirements on minimum lot size, buffers and/or setbacks, noise, hours of service and other issues that may interfere with neighboring residential uses. Floating zones can be limited to certain zones, where the addition of commercial and/or light industrial uses will not create as great an imposition.

6-3: The Town will endeavor to allow for professional offices to be established in all residential zones, where appropriate by virtue of the existing special permitting process, in order to provide services for residents.

As the Town of Poestenkill ages and increases in population, more services for families and the elderly will be necessary for residents to maintain their quality of life in the town. In order to attract additional professional offices such as medical services, the Town will allow, with a special permit, the establishment of professional offices in all residential zones.

Professional offices would include allowing persons with professional occupations to maintain home offices within their existing homes in all residential zones. If a professional practice is not to be occupied within the home of the professional, but rather in a free standing structure, said structure may be permitted in all residential zones as long as it has a similar residential design in size, nature, character and aesthetics so as to blend with existing residential neighborhood.

During the permitting process, the Town will take into consideration traffic volume likely to be engendered by location of new professional office in that it must be consistent with existing levels in the community. Furthermore, the signage regulations will be strictly enforced and signage is encouraged to be designed in a manner that is not obtrusive or offensive to residential neighborhood.

6-4: The Town will support development of programs that encourage sustainable owner operator farming in the town.

The Town of Poestenkill recognizes the importance of agriculture, both as an industry and as a land use. As a land use, agriculture provides such unique benefits as the aesthetic quality of scenic landscapes, the preservation of open spaces, and the productive use of prime soils. To encourage the continuation of agricultural use of land, the Town will:

- ❖ Recognize the desire of our residents and those residents in surrounding towns and villages to obtain local “home grown” vegetables and fruits and other farm products;

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- ❖ Establish incentives to promote the agricultural industry. The Right to Farm Law is important as it provides a formal statement of local support for agricultural operations. The Town should go further by working with federal, state and local entities to obtain increased technical assistance and capital support for local farms;
- ❖ Encourage to work with the Rensselaer County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, Rensselaer Taconic Land Conservancy and similar organizations in exploring techniques for preservation of farm land, open spaces, wooded areas and natural vegetation, e.g., purchasing development rights for farming, exploring land trust options, creating land conservation zones;
- ❖ Promote local farmers' market for Poestenkill farmers to sell their produce, farm products and value-added farm products;
- ❖ Encourage consumer/resident support for local farmers through education and awareness activities, such as community gardening projects, 4-H demonstrations and school and church presentations; and
- ❖ Take a leadership role in establishing an Agricultural Development Advisory Council composed of local farmers, 4- H leaders, representative from Cooperative Extension, representative from Soil Conservation, representatives from Poestenkill Town and Planning Boards and other relevant parties and organizations from the local, county and state level.
- ❖ Review local laws and ordinances to ensure that they are not onerous to the agricultural community.
- ❖ Not extend public water and/or sewer infrastructure into prime agricultural areas.
- ❖ Require buffers between new development and agricultural operations.
- ❖ Maintain steady tax rates to keep farm operations profitable.

6-5: The Town will encourage small retail commercial development in, and in proximity to, the hamlet in order to strengthen the hamlet as a commercial, retail, entertainment/tourism center, without sacrificing its rural small town character.

Additional retail and services-related commercial will be encouraged by creating a new, mixed use Hamlet District (Hamlet 2) for lands adjacent to the current Hamlet District. The Hamlet 2 District will be the same in all aspects as the existing Hamlet District with the following exceptions:

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- ❖ Commercial uses defined as “retail business or services, not otherwise mentioned herein” in the “District Schedule of Use Regulations” will only be permitted with a special use permit.
- ❖ Uses defined as a “community residence,” “nonprofit recreation or athletic facility” or “veterinarian’s office or animal hospital” will be permitted with a special use permit.
- ❖ Minimum lot size may be increased to a size to be determined by the Town Board.

The Town will seek to attract independently owned businesses such as specialty retail shops, craft businesses, antique shops, bed and breakfast establishments, inns, country stores, book shops, galleries, etc. in and around the hamlet, designed to attract and encourage a seasonal tourist business.

The Town will explore opportunities to expand and create parking in and near the hamlet that will improve convenience for customers and will encourage new businesses to locate in the vicinity of the hamlet.

The Town will work with local microenterprise programs to encourage more Poestenkill residents to participate. Microenterprise programs can provide comprehensive technical assistance, job training and education, and financing of business start-up and expansion of existing small business.

6-6: The Town will encourage home occupations including crafts, woodworking and other cottage industries.

The number of home occupation establishments in Poestenkill is growing and is likely to continue to grow. The Town should maintain its support for these businesses.

6-7: Provide water and sewer infrastructure to areas intended for commercial and industrial uses when it is cost efficient and to areas with contaminated groundwater. Encourage the provision of infrastructure such as natural gas and T-1 telephone lines to areas of commercial and industrial uses, the schools and the hamlet area.

Public water and sewer would help the growth and expansion of industrial and commercial concerns in areas where the Town would like such growth. It would also allow the creation of higher density senior apartments, as well as allow more businesses such as restaurants and laundromats in the hamlet area, where lots are small for the size septic systems that would be required. Unfortunately, the installation of public water mains and the creation and maintenance of water supplies are expensive and can be cost prohibitive. Alternative funding sources to standard bonding, such as the NYS revolving loan programs for both water and sewer, the Self Help Program, CDBG Small Cities and USDA Rural Community Development funds can help ameliorate costs.

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Private companies and franchises provide much of the existing non-transportation infrastructure in the town. Niagara Mohawk, as holder of the natural gas service franchise in the town, should be encouraged to provide gas service along NYS 66 and NYS 351 to supply to the businesses, schools and residences along these roads.

Goal 7: *The Town will endeavor to balance the rights of individuals with the needs and welfare of the community.*

In adopting regulations and laws, including zoning laws in particular, the Town should, to the greatest extent possible, maximize both individual and neighborhood property rights. It can do this by considering all appropriate factors that can be used to minimize the negative impact of individual actions on others while at the same time imposing the fewest possible limitations on the individual property owner's actions. Items to consider which can maintain the character of affected areas without excessive restriction of property owners in the use of their own land include, among others, lot sizes, density of residential settlement and the creation of buffer zones. The Town Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals should also provide such a balance when applying zoning laws to applications in front of them.

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Town of Poestenkill Action Plan Matrix

Short- Short term actions to be implemented within one year of Comprehensive Plan adoption
Medium – Medium term actions to be implemented within two to five years of Comprehensive Plan adoption
Long – Long term actions to be implemented within five to ten years of Comprehensive Plan implementation

Ongoing – Actions that may continue throughout the life of the Comprehensive Plan

Recommended Action	Time Frame	Potential Partners/Stakeholders⁶	Potential Resources
<i>Goal 1: The Town will endeavor to foster Poestenkill’s sense of community and mutual responsibility, focused on the hamlet as the center of community life, by preserving public safety, promoting recreational opportunities and encouraging access to needed professional services.</i>			
1-1: Improve public safety to enhancing police protection from existing agencies and encouraging and supporting responsive, expert volunteer EMS and fire fighting services.	Medium	Poestenkill Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulatory Services, Rensselaer County Sheriff’s Dept., NYS Police	Rensselaer County Sheriff’s Dept., NYS Police
1-2: Emphasize and enhance the concept of the hamlet as the hub of community life.	Long	Poestenkill Public Library, NYS Office of Parks (OPRHP), Recreation and Historic Preservation, Community Groups	Environmental Protection Fund – OPRHP, Local Groups
1-3: Promote existing and expanded recreational opportunities.	Ongoing	Averill Park Central School District, private youth athletic leagues, Rensselaer Taconic Land Conservancy, OPRHR	OPRHP, Rensselaer Taconic Land Conservancy
1-4: Cultivate and promote a sense of community and mutual responsibility	Short/ Ongoing	Poestenkill agricultural community, school districts, community groups	N/A
1-5: Promote better public transportation and/or access to medical and other professional services.	Medium	Rensselaer County Office of the Aging, Capital District Transportation Authority	Rensselaer County Office of the Aging, Capital District Transportation Authority
1-6: Work together with NYS DOT, Rensselaer County Highway and Sheriff Depts., and the NY State Police in correcting dangerous conditions on some highway areas.	Short/ Ongoing	NYS DOT, NY State Police, Rensselaer County Highway Dept, Rensselaer County Sheriff’s Dept.	NYS DOT, NY State Police, Rensselaer County Highway Dept, Rensselaer County Sheriff’s Dept.

⁶ In this document it is assumed that the Poestenkill Town Board will assume a leadership role in implementing the Action Plan and that it will act on behalf of the citizens of Poestenkill - the primary partner and stakeholder. The “Partners and Stakeholders” category in the matrix refers to public and private organizations that may be able to provide guidance and other resources that will assist the Town in meeting the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan’s Action Plan.

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<i>Goal 2: The Town will endeavor to conserve our natural wonders including unmarred vistas and waterways consistent with our desire to maintain a rural character.</i>			
2-1 Evaluate development patterns in the town every five years to determine if a land conservation plan is necessary to maintain the natural beauty and rural character of the town.	Ongoing	Planning Board	N/A
2-2: Identify and seek to protect environmentally sensitive areas that are presently impacted or at imminent risk of negative environmental impacts.	Short	Planning Board, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Conservation Advisory Committee, Previous members of Poestenkill Aquifer Protection Committee	DEC
2-3: Continue, in conjunction with SEQR, to look at the cumulative effects of development on water, sewage disposal, soil, and scenic qualities in Poestenkill and in neighboring towns.	Ongoing	Planning Board	N/A
2-4: Protect archaeological resources by using the required SEQR process.	Ongoing	NYS Museum	NYS Museum
2-5: Maintain a Conservation Advisory Committee and seek the involvement of this body in the designation of future Critical Environmental Areas.	Ongoing	Planning Board	N/A
2-6: Work together with neighboring municipalities, Rensselaer County, State and Federal agencies to protect and maintain ground and surface waters.	Ongoing	NYS DEC, NRCS, FEMA, NYS DOT, Rensselaer County, towns of Brunswick, North Greenbush, Sand Lake, Rensselaer County Soil & Water Conservation District, Rensselaer County Water Quality Committee, CDRPC,	NYS DEC, NRCS, FEMA, NYS DOT, Rensselaer County, Rensselaer County Soil & Water Conservation District, Rensselaer County Water Quality Committee, CDRPC,
<i>Goal 3: The Town will foster awareness of pride in and conservation of its history embodied in its written records, artifacts, homes, and structures of historical significance.</i>			
3-1: Create a local historical registry including houses, buildings, and structures.	Medium	Town of Poestenkill Historian, Poestenkill Historical Society, OPRHP	OPRHR
<i>Goal 4: The Town will endeavor to work to maintain, and ensure for the future, a clean water supply, and promote the disposal of wastes in a manner that protects Town water resources, the aquifer, and resident health and property values.</i>			
4-1: Regulate the type and density of land development on areas requiring special protection as necessary to protect drinking water and aquifer.	Ongoing	Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council, previous members of the Poestenkill Aquifer Protection Committee	N/A

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4-2: Reinstate the Water and Sewer Task Force to examine new projects to create new water and sewer systems as such projects arise, and will support the Task Force in that role.	Short	Poestenkill Water and Sewer Task Force, residents, Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority (RCWSA), NYS Department of Health (DOH), NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation, DEC	RCWSA, DOH, NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation, DEC, Bond Act Funding
4-3: Monitor and record information about the water table periodically	Ongoing	Poestenkill Water and Sewer Task Force, residents, well drillers, real estate developers	N/A
4-4: Evaluate revisiting Town efforts to draft appropriate ground water and aquifer protection regulations.	Short	Poestenkill Water and Sewer Task Force, Conservation Advisory Council, previous members of Poestenkill Aquifer Protection, DEC	DEC, Bond Act funding
4-5: Offer information to town citizens about pollution prevention and environmental issues	Ongoing	Poestenkill Water and Sewer Task Force, Conservation Advisory Council, previous members of Poestekill Aquifer Protection Committee, Rensselaer County Water Quality Committee, DEC	DEC
<i>Goal 5: The Town will encourage development of housing options, with emphasis on home ownership, for its residents at all life stages, which will complement the rural character of the town and not place an undue burden on the environment.</i>			
5-1: Encourage the development of housing units suitable for senior citizens in the Residential (R) zone.	Long	Housing development not-for-profit organizations, NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR)	Housing development not-for-profit organizations, DHCR
5-2: Allow, by special permit, residents to add accessory dwelling units to their houses where sanitary facilities allow, to facilitate the ability of residents to care for persons in need (i.e. elderly, disabled) and maintain separate living quarters.	Short	Planning Board	N/A

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5-3: Continue to seek funding for housing rehabilitation programs through grants, but may want to develop another program such as a property tax abatement program to encourage upgrade and maintenance of older homes.	Medium	Housing development not-for-profit organizations, DHCR, Governor's Office for Small Cities (GOSC)	Housing development not-for-profit organizations, DHCR, GOSC
<i>Goal 6: The Town will encourage the development of new and expansion of current business enterprise that is compatible with the existing character of the town of Poestenkill.</i>			
6-1: Expand existing Commercial/Industrial (CLI) zone.	Short	Planning Board, industrial businesses located in the CLI zones, residential property owners adjacent to the CLI zone.	N/A
6-2: Provide a mechanism to support the retention and expansion of nonconforming use businesses within the town with limitations that ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods.	Short	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, nonconforming businesses, residents living adjacent to nonconforming businesses	N/A
6-3: Allow for professional offices to be established in all residential zones, where appropriate by virtue of the existing special permitting process, in order to provide services for residents.	Short	Planning Board, business community	N/A
6-4: Encourage small retain commercial development in and in proximity to the hamlet in order to strengthen the hamlet as a commercial, retail, entertainment/tourism center without sacrificing its rural small town character.	Long	Planning Board, business community in the hamlet, residential property owners in the hamlet and adjacent properties	N/A
6-5: Support development of programs that encourage sustainable owner operator farming in the town.	Ongoing	Agricultural community, Planning Board, 4-H leaders, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Rensselaer County Agricultural Economic Developer	4-H, Cornell Cooperative Extension, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
6-6: Encourage home occupations including crafts, woodworking and other cottage industries.	Short		
6-7: Provide water and sewer infrastructure to areas intended for commercial and industrial uses where cost efficient, and to areas of contaminated groundwater. Encourage private infrastructure to areas of commercial and industrial uses, school and the hamlet area.	Ongoing	NYSDEC, NYS Dept. of Health, National Grid, Verizon, Time Warner, NY Environmental Facilities Corporation, RCWSA	NYSDEC, NYS Dept. of Health, National Grid, Verizon, Time Warner, NY Environmental Facilities Corporation, RCWSA
<i>Goal 7: The Town will endeavor to balance the rights of individuals with the needs and welfare of the community.</i>			
7-1: Balance the rights of the individuals with the needs and welfare of the community.	Ongoing	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals	N/A

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Appendix A: Demographics

Table 16: Population, Town of Poestenkill					
Year	Population	Ten Year Change	Percent Change	County Population	County Change
1940	1,438	--	--	121,834	--
1950	1,799	361	25.1%	132,607	8.8%
1960	2,493	694	38.6%	142,585	7.5%
1970	3,426	933	37.4%	152,510	7.0%
1980	3,664	238	6.9%	151,966	-0.4%
1990	3,809	145	4.0%	154,429	1.6%
2000	4,054	245	6.4%	152,538	-1.2%
2010*	4,188	134	3.3%	156,602	2.7%
2020*	4,315	127	3.0%	158,579	1.3%
2030*	4,451	136	3.2%	159,995	0.9%
2040*	4,587	136	3.1%	161,379	0.9%

Source: Bureau of the Census, except (*), population projections from the Capital District Regional Planning Commission.

Table 17: Comparative Population Change, 1960 - 2000					
	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Rensselaer County	142,585	152,510	151,966	154,429	152,538
Town of Poestenkill	2,493	3,426	3,664	3,809	4,054
Town of Berlin	1,329	1,562	1,696	1,929	1,901
Town of Brunswick	9,004	11,193	10,974	11,093	11,664
Town of Grafton	1,009	1,307	1,665	1,917	1,987
Town of North Greenbush	8,161	10,513	10,396	10,891	10,805
Town of Sand Lake	4,629	5,843	7,022	7,642	7,987

Source: Bureau of the Census.

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Table 18: Comparative Racial Makeup – Town of Poestenkill			
	1980	1990	2000
White	3,650	3,769	3,987
Black	0	0	7
American Indian, Eskimo or Aleutian	7	14	12
Asian or Pacific Islander	4	26	14
Other	4	0	34
Hispanic	12	0	27

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Table 19: Comparative Age Makeup – Town of Poestenkill			
	1980	1990	2000
Under 5 years	245	279	234
5 to 9 years	285	284	313
10 to 14 years	359	256	342
15 to 19 years	383	262	286
20 to 24 years	297	208	160
25 to 34 years	603	613	483
35 to 44 years	468	711	756
45 to 54 years	404	435	682
55 to 59 years	178	190	193
60 to 64 years	171	165	168
65 to 74 years	175	265	255
75 to 84 years	77	124	148
85 years and over	19	17	34
Median Age	29.9	35.0	38.0

Source: Bureau of the Census.

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Table 20: Household Projections, Town of Poestenkill			
Year	Number of Households	Ten-Year Change	Persons Per Household
1980	1,210		3.03
1990	1,382	172/14.2%	2.76
2000	1,527	145/10.5%	2.58
2010*	1,639	112/7.3%	2.56
2020*	1,742	103/6.3%	2.48
2030*	1,840	98/5.6%	2.42
2040*	1935	95/5.2%	2.37

Source: Bureau of the Census, except (*) projections from the Capital District Regional Planning Commission.

Table 21: Households by Type, 1980 - 2000, Town of Poestenkill			
Type	1980	1990	2000
Married couple families	879 (72.6%)	875 (63.5%)	940 (61.6%)
Male headed household, no wife	29 (2.4%)	47 (3.4%)	61 (4.0%)
Female headed household, no husband	68 (5.6%)	112 (8.1%)	137 (9.0%)
Non-family households	234 (19.3%)	345 (25.0%)	389 (25.5%)

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Table 22: Educational Attainment, Town of Poestenkill and Rensselaer County					
Attainment Level	1980 (Town)	1990 (Town)	2000 (Town)	1990 (County)	2000 (County)
Less than high school diploma	21.0%	19.1%	10.0%	22.3%	15.1%
High school diploma or higher	79.0%	80.9%	90.0%	77.9%	84.9%
Bachelors degree or higher	17.0%	21.6%	20.7%	19.6%	23.7%

Source: Bureau of the Census.

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Table 23: Labor Force Data, Town of Poestenkill			
	1980	1990	2000
Total civilian labor force	1,720	2,078	2,277
Civilian labor force participation rate	63.8%	70.3%	72.2%
Total unemployed	84 (4.9%)	102 (4.9%)	24 (0.8%)
Male civilian labor force	1,031	1,131	1,221
Male civilian labor force participation rate	77.4%	78.3%	78.5%
Males unemployed	66 (6.4%)	42 (3.7%)	14 (1.1%)
Female civilian labor force	689	947	1,056
Female civilian labor force participation rate	50.4%	62.6%	67.6%
Female unemployed	18 (2.6%)	60 (6.3%)	10 (0.9%)

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Table 24: Resident Employment by Industry, Town of Poestenkill			
Industry	1980	1990	2000
Agriculture, forestry, mining	33 (2.0%)	42 (2.1%)	9 (0.4%)
Construction	99 (6.1%)	154 (7.8%)	228 (10.1%)
Manufacturing, total	287 (17.5%)	229 (14.0%)	186 (8.3%)
Nondurable goods	126 (7.7%)	103 (5.2%)	
Durable goods	161 (9.8%)	126 (6.4%)	
Transportation	47 (2.9%)	61 (3.1%)	97 (4.3%)
Communications and public utilities	56 (3.4%)	45 (2.3%)	92 (4.1%)
Wholesale trade	69 (4.2%)	83 (4.2%)	78 (3.5%)
Retail trade	241 (14.7%)	385 (19.5%)	220 (9.8%)
Finance, insurance, and real estate	67 (4.1%)	149 (7.5%)	197 (8.7%)
Services, total	535 (32.7%)	545 (27.6%)	905 (42.2%)
Business & repair services	78 (4.8%)	56 (2.8%)	238 (10.6%)
Personal, entertainment, and recreation	25 (1.5%)	12 (0.6%)	140 (6.2%)
Health services	117 (7.2%)	98 (5.0%)	188 (8.3%)
Educational services	225 (13.8%)	288 (14.6%)	230 (10.2%)
Other professional services	90 (5.5%)	91 (4.6%)	109 (4.8%)
Public administration	202 (12.3%)	283 (14.3%)	241 (10.7%)

Source: Bureau of the Census. Overall change in the number of employed workers 1980-1990 was 20.8%.

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Table 25: Resident Employment by Occupation, Town of Poestenkill			
Occupation	1980	1990	2000
Executive/managerial	161 (9.8%)	276 (14.0%)	393 (17.4 %)
Professional	243 (14.9%)	294 (14.9%)	385 (14.1 %)
Technical occupations	80 (4.9%)	49 (2.5%)	68 (3.0 %)
Sales occupations	107 (6.5%)	173 (8.8%)	169 (7.5 %)
Administrative support	324 (19.8%)	390 (19.7%)	478 (21.2 %)
Service occupations	189 (11.6%)	198 (10.0%)	286 (12.7 %)
Farming/forestry	27 (1.7%)	45 (2.3%)	7 (0.3 %)
Production, craft, and repair occupations	183 (11.2%)	291 (14.7%)	259 (11.5 %)
Operators and inspectors	123 (7.5%)	90 (4.6%)	N.A.*
Transportation and moving occupations	104 (6.4%)	101 (5.1%)	130 (5.8 %)
Laborers	95 (5.8%)	69 (3.5%)	N.A.*
Construction and extraction workers*	N.A.	N.A.	146 (6.5 %)

Source: Bureau of the Census. * Due to the changing nature of employment, the categories were changed in the 2000 Census. Traditional manufacturing categories such as Operators and inspectors and Laborers were removed and Construction was added. The categories removed were absorbed into other categories.

Table 26: Resident Commutation Patterns, 1990-2000, Town of Poestenkill		
	1990	2000
Worked in Poestenkill	134 (6.8%)	163 (7.3%)
Worked outside Poestenkill (total)	1,825(93.2%)	2,074 (92.8%)
<i>Worked elsewhere in Rensselaer County</i>	789 (40.3%)	747 (33.4%)
<i>Worked outside Rensselaer County but in the Albany MSA</i>	910 (46.5%)	1,239(55.4%)
<i>Worked outside the Albany MSA</i>	126 (6.4%)	88 (3.9%)

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission and Bureau of the Census.

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Table 27: Income Data, Town of Poestenkill 1980-2000			
	1980	1990	2000
Median household income	\$18,363	\$38,854	\$58,945
Median family income	\$20,530	\$44,485	\$63,819
Per capita income	\$6,491	\$15,135	\$22,143
Individuals below poverty level (%)	4.8%	3.8%	1.7%
Families below poverty level (%)	1.9%	1.5%	0.5%

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Table 28: Comparative Data, Town, County, State and Nation, 2000				
	Town of Poestenkill	Rensselaer County	New York State	United States
Population Change, 1990-2000	6.4%	-1.2%	5.5%	13.1%
Households Change, 1990-2000	10.5%	4.0%	15.7%	14.7%
Percent Minorities	2.0%	9.8%	38.0%	30.9%
Median Age	38.0	36.7	35.9	35.3
Average Household Size	2.64	2.46	2.61	2.59
Average Family Size	3.07	3.02	3.22	3.14
Percent with High School Diploma	90.0%	84.9%	79.1%	80.4%
Percent with Bachelors Degree or higher	20.7%	23.7%	27.4%	24.4%
Labor Force Participation Rate	72.2%	66.9%	61.1%	63.9%
Unemployment Rate	0.8%	4.1%	4.3%	3.7%
Median Household Income	\$58,945	\$42,905	\$43,393	\$41,994
Median Family Income	\$63,819	\$52,864	\$51,691	\$50,046
Per Capital Income	\$22,143	\$21,095	\$23,389	\$21,587
Percent Individuals Below Poverty Level	4.8%	9.5%	14.6%	12.4%
Percent 1-Unit Housing	83.0%	58.3%	46.6%	65.9%
Percent Owner-Occupied Housing	84.4%	64.9%	53.0%	66.2%
Percent Vacant Housing	6.2%	9.4%	8.1%	9.0%
Median Housing Value	\$117,600	\$102,900	\$148,700	\$119,600
Median Gross Rent	\$597	\$547	\$672	\$602

Source: Bureau of the Census.

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Table 29: Housing Data, Town of Poestenkill			
	1980	1990	2000
Number of housing units	1,269	1,437	1,628
Number of occupied housing units	1,210	1,382	1,527
Owner occupied housing units	959 (79.3% of occupied units)	1,133 (82.0% of occupied units)	1,289 (84.4% of occupied units)
Renter occupied housing units	251 (20.7% of occupied units)	249 (18.0% of occupied units)	238 (15.6% of occupied units)
Vacant units	59	55	101
Number and type of unit:			
Single family	995 (78.4%)	1,094 (76.1%)	1,350 (83.0%)
Multi-family	162 (12.8%)	197 (13.7%)	201 (12.3%)
Mobile homes/trailers	82 (6.5%)	112 (7.8%)	77 (4.7%)
Other	30 (2.4%)	34 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)
Median housing value	\$35,500	\$94,700	\$117,600
Median gross rent	\$176	\$382	\$597

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Table 30: Age of Housing, 1990-2000, Town of Poestenkill		
Year Built	1990	2000
1995 – 2000 (March)	--	66 (4.1%)
1990 - 1994	--	150 (9.2%)
1980 - 1989	273 (19.0%)	260 (16.0%)
1970 - 1979	162 (11.3%)	235 (14.4%)
1960 - 1969	248 (17.3%)	226 (13.9%)
1940 - 1959	346 (24.1%)	338 (20.8%)
1939 or earlier	408 (28.4%)	353 (21.7%)
Median year built	1959	1965

Source: Bureau of the Census.

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Table 31: Residence in 1995 for the Population 5 years and over – 2000 Census		
	Poestenkill town	Rensselaer County
Total	3,824 (100%)	143,234 (100%)
Same house in 1995	2,646 (69.2%)	89,953 (62.8%)
Different house in 1995	1,178 (30.8%)	53,281 (37.2%)
In United States in 1995	1,178 (30.8%)	51,361 (35.9%)
Same city or town	58 (1.5%)	11,899 (8.3%)
Not same city or town	1,120 (29.3%)	39,462 (27.6%)
Same county	779 (20.4%)	17,125 (12.0%)
Different county	341 (8.9%)	22,337 (15.6%)
Same state	284 (7.4%)	15,944 (11.1%)
Different state	57 (1.5%)	6,393 (4.5%)
Northeast	14 (0.4%)	3,507 (2.4%)
Midwest	0 (0%)	572 (0.4%)
South	33 (0.9%)	1,586 (1.1%)
West	10 (0.3%)	728 (0.5%)
Elsewhere in 1995	0 (0%)	1,920 (1.3%)
U.S. Island Areas	0 (0%)	126 (>0.1%)
Foreign country or at sea	0 (0%)	1,794 (1.3%)

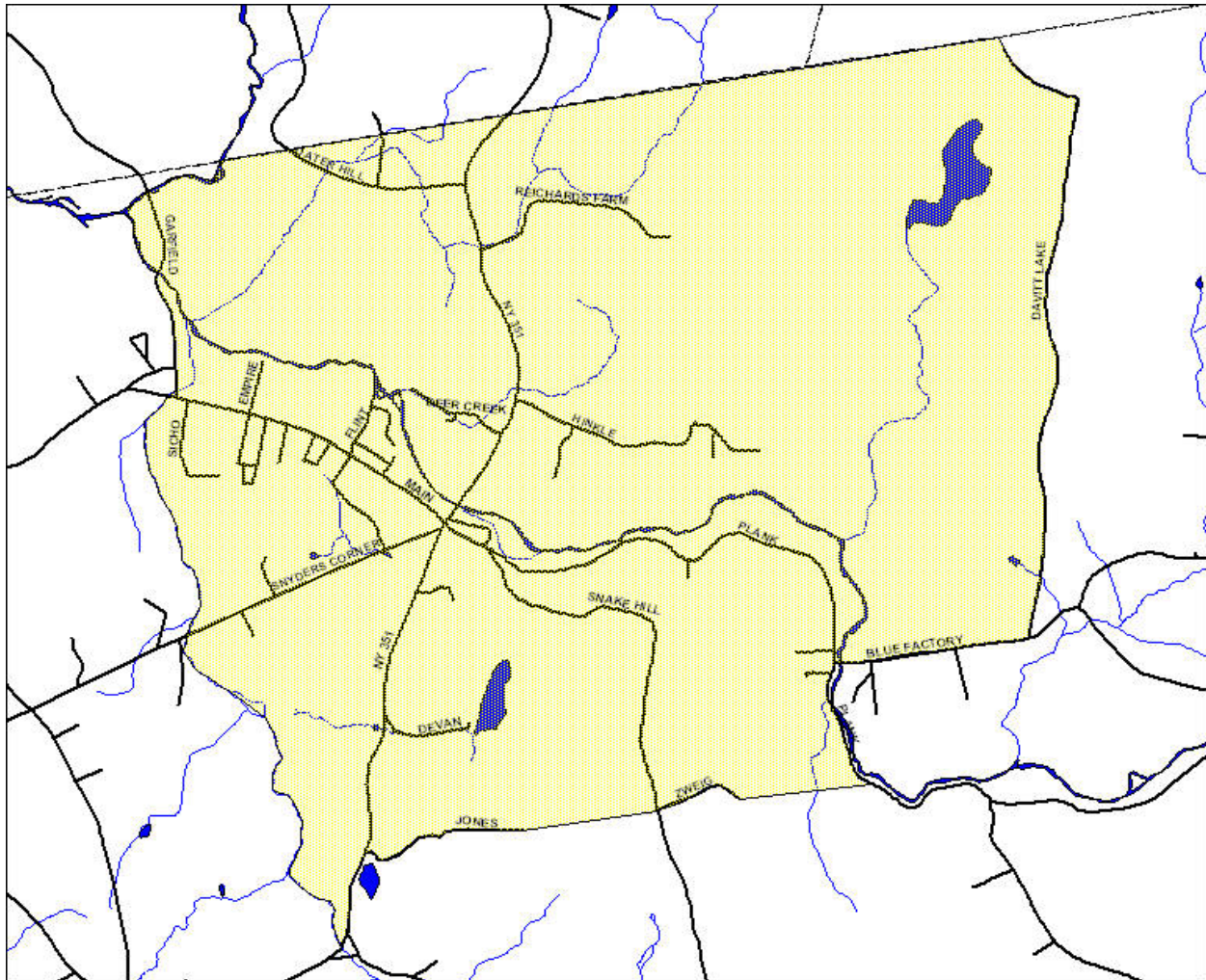
Source: Bureau of the Census.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

Poestenkill Census Designated Place (hamlet area plus)

Population	1,031	Total civilian labor force	525
Percent Minority	0%	Civilian labor force participation rate	65.5%
Male	462	Total unemployed	0
Female	569	Unemployment rate	0%
Under 5 years	37	Median household income	\$54,214
5 to 9 years	118	Median family income	\$62,885
10 to 14 years	64	Per capita income	\$21,946
15 to 19 years	62	Individuals below poverty rate	12 (1.2%)
20 to 24 years	11	Housing units	415
25 to 34 years	82	Occupied units	408 (98.3%)
35 to 44 years	192	Vacant units	7 (1.7%)
45 to 54 years	149	Owner occupied units	366 (89.7%)
55 to 59 years	67	Renter occupied units	42 (10.3%)
60 to 64 years	47	Median year structure built	1958
65 to 74 years	125	Median gross rent	\$582
75 to 84 years	63	Median house value	\$100,400
85 years and over	14		
Households	446		
Families	292		
Married couple families	255		
Male headed families/no wife	12		
Female headed/no husband	24		
Less than high school diploma	96 (13.0%)		
High school diploma or higher	643 (87.0%)		
Bachelors degree or higher	130 (17.6%)		
High school diploma	349 (47.0%)		
Associate degree	39 (5.3%)		
Bachelors degree	68 (9.2%)		
Masters, professional or doctorate	62 (8.4%)		

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Map 18: Poestenkill Census Designated Place Boundaries; U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau

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Appendix B, Table 33: Soils Found in the Town of Poestenkill						
Soil Code	Prime Farmland (yes/no)	Percent Slope	Building Site Development	Depth to Water Table (ft.)	Depth to Bedrock (in.)	Septic Tank Absorption
AIB (Albrights)	yes	3 to 8	Moderate/severe; wetness	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
AIC (Albrights)	no	8 to 15	Moderate/severe; wetness, slope	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
AID (Albrights)	no	15 to 25	Severe; wetness, slope	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc, slope
AmC (Albrights)	no	3 to 15	Moderate/severe; wetness, slope	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
AmD (Albrights)	no	15 to 40	Severe; wetness, slope	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc, slope
AnA (Alden)	no	0 to 3	Severe; wetness	0-0.5	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
BeB (Bernardston)	yes	3 to 8	Moderate; wetness	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc
BeC (Bernardston)	no	8 to 15	Moderate; wetness	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc
BeD (Bernardston)	no	15 to 25	Severe; slope	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc, slope
BeE (Bernardston)	no	25 to 35	Severe; slope	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc, slope
BnB (Bernardston)	no	1 to 8	Moderate; wetness	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc
BnB (Nassau)	no	1 to 8	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; depth to rock
BnC (Bernardston)	no	5 to 16	Moderate; wetness, slope	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc
BnC (Nassau)	no	5 to 16	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; depth to rock

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Soil Code	Prime Farmland (yes/no)	Percent Slope	Building Site Development	Depth to Water Table (ft.)	Depth to Bedrock (in.)	Septic Tank Absorption
BuD, BuF (Buckland)	no	15 to 35, 35 to 50	Severe; slope, wetness	1.0-2.0	>60	Severe; slope, slow perc, wetness
BuC (Buckland)	no	3 to 15	Moderate/severe; wetness	1.0-2.0	>60	Severe; slow perc, wetness
BrA (Brayton)	no	0 to 3	Severe; wetness	0-1.5	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
CaA (Carlisle)	no	0 to 1	Severe; ponding, low strength, flooding	*1-1.0	>60	Severe; flooding, ponding
CbA (Castile)	yes	0 to 5	Moderate/severe; wetness	1.5-2.0	>60	Severe; wetness, poor filter
ChB (Chenango)	yes	3 to 8	Slight	>6.0	>60	Severe; poor filter
CkB (Chenango)	yes	3 to 8	Severe; flooding	3.0-6.0	>60	Severe; poor filter
FIA (Fluvaquents-Udifluvents complex)	no	0 to 3	Not suitable - frequent flooding and wetness	NA - varies	NA - varies	Not suitable - frequent flooding and wetness
FrA (Fredon)	yes	0 to 4	Severe; wetness	0-1.5	>60	Severe; wetness, poor filter
GIC (Glover)	no	3 to 15	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; depth to rock
GID (Glover)	no	15 to 35	Severe; slope, depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; slope, depth to rock
GmF (Glover)	no	35 to 50	Severe; slope, depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; slope, depth to rock
HaA (Hamlin)	yes	0 to 3	Severe; flooding	3.0-6.0	>60	Severe; flooding, wetness
HoB (Hoosic)	no	3 to 8	Slight	>6.0	>60	Severe; poor filter

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Soil Code	Prime Farmland (yes/no)	Percent Slope	Building Site Development	Depth to Water Table (ft.)	Depth to Bedrock (in.)	Septic Tank Absorption
HoC (Hoosic)	no	5 to 16	Moderate; slope	>6.0	>60	Severe; poor filter
HoD, HoE (Hoosic)	no	10 to 30, 25 to 50	Severe; slope	>6.0	>60	Severe; poor filter, slope
LmA (Limerick)	no	0 to 3	Severe; flooding, wetness	0.5-1.5	>60	Severe; flooding, wetness
LoA (Loxley, Beseman)	no	0 to 1	Severe; flooding, ponding, low strength	*1-1.0, *2-1.0	>60	Severe; ponding, percs slowly
MbA (Madalin)	no	0 to 3	Severe; wetness	0-0.5	>60	Severe; slow perc, wetness
NaB (Nassau)	no	1 to 8	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; depth to rock
NaB (Manlius)	no	1 to 8	Moderate/severe; depth to rock	>6.0	20-40	Severe; depth to rock
NaC (Nassau)	no	5 to 16	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; depth to rock
NaC (Manlius)	no	5 to 16	Moderate/severe; slope, depth to rock	>6.0	20-40	Severe; depth to rock
NrC (Nassau)	no	1 to 16	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; depth to rock
NrD (Nassau)	no	16 to 50	Severe; depth to rock	>6.0	10-20	Severe; slope, depth to rock
PaA (Palms)	no	0 to 1	Severe; ponding, low strength, flooding	*1-1.0	>60	Severe; flooding, subsides, ponding
PtB (Pittstown)	yes	3 to 8	Moderate/severe; wetness	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
PtC (Pittstown)	no	8 to 15	Moderate/severe; slope, wetness	1.5-3.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc

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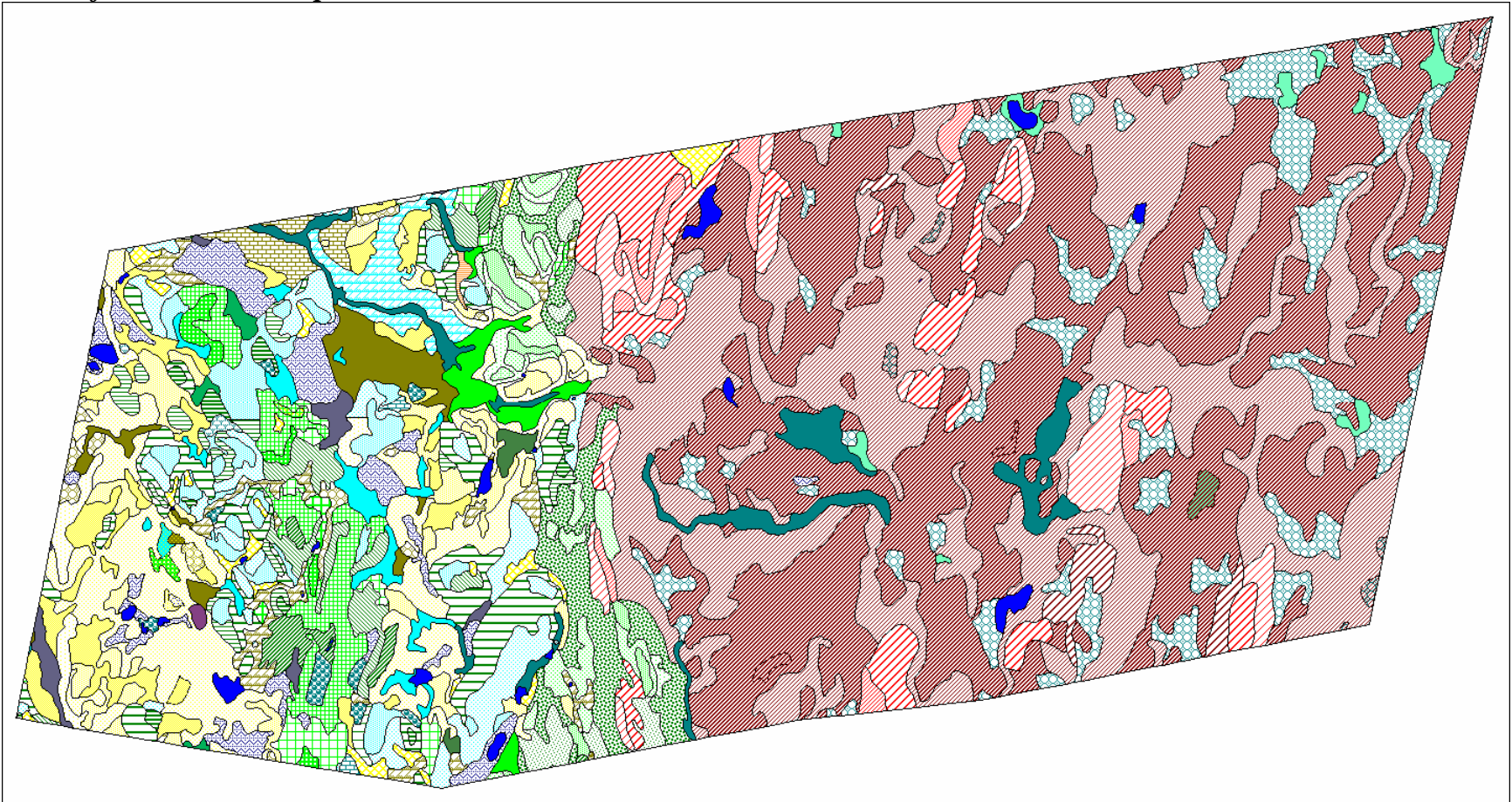
Soil Code	Prime Farmland (yes/no)	Percent Slope	Building Site Development	Depth to Water Table (ft.)	Depth to Bedrock (in.)	Septic Tank Absorption
RaA (Raynham)	yes	0 to 5	Severe; wetness	0.5-2.0	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
Sa (Sapristis and Aquents)	no	0 to 1	Not suitable - areas covered with shallow water	NA	>60	Not suitable - areas covered with shallow water
SrB (Scriba)	no	3 to 8	Severe; wetness	0.5-1.5	>60	Severe; wetness, slow perc
TeA (Teel)	yes	0 to 3	Severe; flooding, wetness	0.5-2.0	>60	Severe; flooding, wetness
Ud (Udorthents)	no	0 to 5	Variable - onsite evaluation necessary	NA	NA	Variable - onsite evaluation necessary

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. *Soil Survey of Rensselaer County, New York.*

* - In the “Depth to water table” column, an asterisk (*) preceding the range indicates that the water table rises above the surface. The first numeral in the range indicates the highest level of water above the surface. The second numeral indicates the depth below the surface.

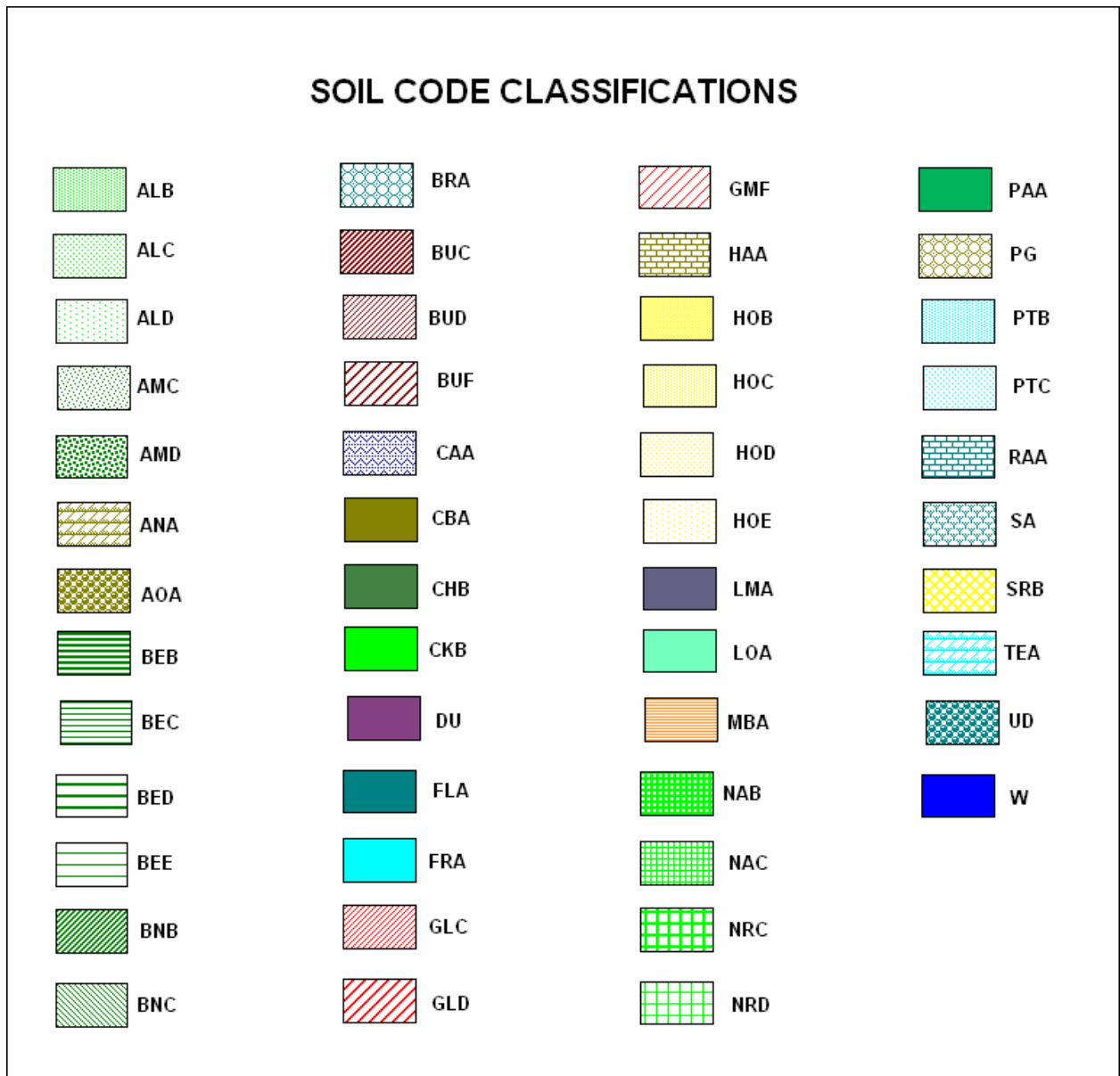
“Building site development” shows the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect dwellings with or without basements, while “septic tank absorption” shows the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect septic tank absorption fields. The limitations are considered *slight* if soil properties and site features are generally favorable for the intended use and limitations are minor and easily overcome; *moderate* if soils or site properties are not favorable for the intended use and special planning and design is needed to overcome or minimize the limitations; and *severe* if soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or so difficult to overcome that special design, significant increases in construction costs, and possibly increased maintenance are required.

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Map 19: Soils

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Appendix C:

Summary of Report Findings on the Town Landfill

The Town of Poestenkill operated a municipal solid waste landfill at a site on the end of Dennis Road in the Town of Poestenkill from 1966 to 1989. The landfill closure occurred over a three-year period and was completed in June 1992. The Closure Investigation Report and closure plan were prepared by Clark Engineering P.C., consulting engineers hired by the Town of Poestenkill.

The site investigation for the Closure Investigation Report revealed elevated levels of Trichlorethylene (TCE) and/or Cis-1, 2 Dichloroethene (DCE) in monitoring wells and residential wells in the vicinity of the landfill. Ultimately nine (9) residential wells were found to contain levels of DCE and/or TCE above the drinking water standards of 5 micrograms per liter (parts per billion). Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) Filter systems were installed at these 9 homes at the Town's expense. The system includes a primary filter, backup filter and an ultraviolet disinfection unit.

Three monitoring wells had been initially installed at the landfill in 1982, however they were eventually to be abandoned because they had not been installed and grouted according to present standards. As part of the initial site investigation for the landfill closure, five (5) monitoring wells were installed. A recommended sixth well was not installed until August 1991, due to lack of access to the former lands of Perry Sand & Gravel. After the TCE contamination was discovered, three additional wells were installed. As of 1993, a total of 16 monitoring wells had been installed and of the 15 tested at various times (as of October 1993) 14 of the monitoring wells showed elevated levels of TCE and/or DCE.

To further address the source and extent of contamination, a groundwater investigation plan was developed in May of 1991. In May of 1991, representatives of Clark Engineering, Empire Soils Investigations, Inc. and the NYSDEC, field delineated six (6) locations for the installation of temporary well points to allow sampling of shallow groundwater over a wide area in the vicinity of the landfill. Due to the inability to access the lands of Perry Sand & Gravel, the work was delayed until the summer of 1993.

In October 1993, Clark Engineering issued a report that discussed the findings of the groundwater investigation and potential remediation alternatives, including no action with continued monitoring and presented recommendations. According to the 1993 Clark report, the well points did not lead to the discovery of other potential sources of contamination. The Town continues to test the monitoring wells and residential wells of the houses where GAC filters have been installed.

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The 1993 Clark Report outlined the following 6 remediation plan alternatives for the contamination: (a) excavation and removal; (b) soil vapor extraction; (c) containment; (d) municipal water system; (e) other soil treatment methods; (f) pump and treat. For this purpose, the Clark Report assumed that the source of the contamination was the landfill. Excavation and removal was not considered economically feasible.

Soil vapor extraction was not appropriate at the time since inaccessibility to the covered landfill prevented detection of a “hot spots” in the vicinity of the original spill to which the procedure could be applied. Although the landfill was given a cap on the top surface which should serve to reduce the chances of leachate of the contamination by preventing vertical percolation of rainfall into the site, there is no bottom layer other than the confining layer of till and bedrock some 30' to 70' below grade. Thus, there is nothing to contain the horizontal flow of contaminants through the sand and gravel under the landfill and above the till and bedrock. The containment alternative would require that a vertical barrier be constructed down to the till and bedrock to contain the contamination. The 1993 Clark Report recommends that such a containment alternative not be considered unless and until the monitoring of these wells along the perimeter show a significant increase in contamination levels because, although it would help prevent contamination from escaping the landfill, it does not address existing contamination in off site groundwater; it is unknown whether or not much of the contaminate has already moved beyond the landfill; or it may be that the landfill cap is already sufficiently containing the contamination.

Providing a municipal water system with wells located a considerable distance up gradient from the contamination would, according to the Clark Report, eliminate the highest potential health risk to humans from the contamination: consumption of contaminated drinking water. This would not, however, reduce the levels of contamination in the ground water. This alternative was not further considered because of the high costs of the system, operation and maintenance when weighed against the limited number of customers that would be served. Other soil treatment methods were rejected because they were either cost prohibitive or not tailored for the nature of the problem.

The pump and treatment remediation method is pumping out the groundwater, treating it, testing it, and returning it to groundwater, surface water or disposing of it depending upon the level of the contaminate recovered and remaining after treatment was also rejected since (i) it does not address the source of the contamination which may be continuing to pollute the groundwater, (ii) it does not address contamination down gradient from the recovery wells, (iii) the volume of water to be pumped and treated is too great because of the presence of the highly productive aquifer under the landfill.

The Town did not undertake any of the six remediation alternatives offered. Instead, it continues to monitor the monitoring wells and the residential wells in the vicinity to insure that additional residences with untreated wells are not affected, that the level of contamination is not found to be increasing, and that the well treatment units continue to treat the water to drinking water standards. The 1993 Clark Report underscores that the highest health risks and most probable pathway for exposure to the contaminants is from human consumption of the contaminated well water. Prior to treatment with the filter systems, one of the residential wells tested showed that it contained levels of the contaminants high enough to pose a health risk from human contact with the contaminated water. The informal risk assessment contained in the Clark Report concluded that

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risks to humans and wildlife are minimal provided that monitoring continues to ensure that all affected wells have properly operating treatment systems. Some potential risk to fish remains, since contamination of the groundwater will eventually reach the surface water bodies in the vicinity.

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Appendix D:

1997 Town of Poestenkill Questionnaire

In March 1997, the Poestenkill Steering Committee conducted a survey of town residents to solicit public opinion and participation in the formulation of the comprehensive plan. A total of 553 surveys were completed and returned. Approximately half of all respondents provided a written response to the final series of questions, and those responses are summarized below.

What do you like most about Poestenkill?

- ❖ Rural and residential character (quiet) family environment and community (yet close to city) AND good quality of life, not overdeveloped (244 responses)
- ❖ Good school system (12 responses)

What do you like least about Poestenkill?

- ❖ Do not expand gravel mining, threats to people and property from expanding mine (39 responses)
- ❖ Lack of small businesses/medical facilities/convenience-type stores (28 responses)
- ❖ Need public water supply/sewer, want gas line, cable (lack of services) (25 responses)
- ❖ Taxes too high, keep increasing w/ no increase in services (school taxes) (20 responses)
- ❖ Need sidewalks (12 responses)
- ❖ Expansion of waste facility (Rt. 66 and 351) (11 responses)
- ❖ Zoning laws are not enforced (9 responses)
- ❖ Politics (7 responses)
- ❖ Increase in large trucks (5 responses)
- ❖ Bigger library (5 responses)
- ❖ Increased garbage on road and in yards (5 responses)
- ❖ Reduced speed limit coming into Village (30 mph)/traffic (5 responses)
- ❖ No spring clean up - haul away (4 responses)
- ❖ Must plan for more business (3 responses)
- ❖ Commercial development (3 responses)
- ❖ Too many unkept homes (3 responses)
- ❖ No police force (2 responses)

Do you have any special concerns that are not covered in this survey and pertain to Town development issues over the next five to ten years?

- ❖ Survey was not clear/difficult to understand; almost tricky (24 responses)
- ❖ Need more activities for children (13 responses)
- ❖ Need a Town park/picnic area/pool/trails/ice rink (12 responses)
- ❖ No sewer and water, if it does happen, the people not getting benefit do not want to pay for it OR the sewer line should extend to everyone in the town (12 responses)

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- ❖ 1 and 2 acre building lots should not be compromised/ increase lot size (11 responses)
- ❖ Dirt roads not maintained/ country roads in bad shape (references to CR 40) (10 responses)
- ❖ If any development is going to occur, make it centralized (9 responses)
- ❖ Smaller lots could be done if sewers are brought in, large lots required by county for septic systems (3 responses)
- ❖ Need to preserve farmland (3 responses)
- ❖ Should create fishing access to the Poesten Kill (2 responses)

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Appendix E Public Workshop #1

Date: April 26, 2000

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Review of Committee Tasks and Schedules
- III. What is a Comprehensive Plan and What are Its Benefits?
- IV. Existing Conditions Report
 - a. Demographic Trends
 - b. Land Uses
 - c. Economic Development
 - d. Historic & Cultural Resources
 - e. Environmental & Natural Resources
 - f. Housing
 - g. Parks & Recreation
 - h. Infrastructure & Transportation
 - i. Local Government Administration
- V. Issues and Trends Facing Poestenkill Tomorrow
- VI. Vision Statement Review
- VII. Group Breakouts
 - a. Water Quality and Pollution Prevention
 - b. Community Services
 - c. Historic Resources
 - d. Housing
 - e. Managing Development & Property Rights
 - f. Commercial/Business
- VIII. Report Group Findings
- IX. Questions & Answers

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Water Quality and Pollution Prevention Breakout Group Notes

- Create critical environmental areas to protect the aquifer (i.e. protect wetlands)
- Regulate commercial development and traffic to prevent pollution (i.e. air pollution from cars and trucks stopping at the four-way stop sign in hamlet)
- Provide municipal water and sewers where it is the best alternative and at the same time protect the aquifer as a community resource
- Allocate sufficient funding and staff to enforce existing environmental laws and permits
- Protect tree cover to prevent runoff and air quality

There were lots of side discussions during the meeting on: people's contaminated wells; about the stop sign on NY 66 that used to be on NY 355; about where people live relative to the contamination from the landfill; and about the size, location and quality of, and threats to the aquifer. Several people who attended live in the flats/hamlet area and are advocates of the town providing water and sewer there.

One stray issue recorded was the "lighting on NY 355."

An overarching goal statement was created: "We will help the citizen of our town to secure clean water and dispose of wastes in a way that protects their health and the value of their property. We will find a timely way to finance this protection fairly and as a partnership between residents and the town government." This statement did not have much following among group participants.

Discussions on financing water and sewer infrastructure did not get far. Some discussion as to whether the Town had been very successful on receiving grant funding and a comment on an existing report that stated that water and sewer would be prohibitively expensive.

Discussion on water sources for a public source proceeded toward the aquifer and whether it could be a source. Assuming it would, a participant suggested that the town secure a site for wellheads now, in anticipation of needing it someday. Apparently that was the thought when the Deer Creek subdivision was designed, with the idea that Kevin Kronau would set aside a couple of acres for the town as part of the approval, but it didn't happen. Participants noted that the existing conditions report does not include a map of the aquifer, but there is a lot of interest in seeing its location(s).

Someone recommended signs along the roadways in town that indicate when the traveler is in the "aquifer zone." This would help raise consciousness of the aquifer when development is present.

Town of Poestenkill Comprehensive Plan

One couple in attendance have just learned from the Health Department that their well in the hamlet is contaminated by a gasoline additive. The source is not yet known. DEC put filters on the affected wells but the residents don't drink it.

Another noise pollution source mentioned was gravel mining. One person said her primary concerns were the transfer station (truck traffic, debris in the area) and the proposed asphalt plant in West Sand Lake, just over the line from Poestenkill.

Community Services Breakout Group Notes

1. Community/Municipal Services
 - Improve police protection (provide location for DSP or Sheriff substation?)
 - Ensure continued high quality, responsive EMS and fire fighting services
 - Locate and distribute dry hydrants throughout the Town

2. Develop/Expand Concept of Hamlet as the “Hub” of The Community
 - Sidewalks to facilitate safe pedestrian traffic
 - Library development (cultural/informational/educational center of Town life)
 - Build a community center/convert existing structure
 - Support/establish services and programs for seniors
 - Develop a Town Park (pocket park in hamlet?)
 - Reexamine the utility of the blinking light in the hamlet

3. Recreational Resources
 - Establish a playground/park with appropriate kids play equipment
 - Establish bike paths and hiking trails around Town
 - Provide recreational services/program for youth

4. Historic Preservation
 - Support the identification, designation and preservation of historical structures in Town

5. Cultivate a Sense of Community and Mutual Responsibility
 - Designate an annual “First Night” event
 - Create a Farmer’s Market to support community agriculture

6. Miscellaneous
 - Foster/encourage/subsidize public transportation
 - Start a public access video studio as provided for in the existing cable TV franchise
 - Encourage/recruit/subsidize/offer space for medical and other professional services in Town (needs to be considered in tandem with public transportation – the issue is

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access for people with transportation or mobility problems, perhaps a subject for a community volunteer service project)

Historic Resources Breakout Group Notes

1. The creation of a local historical registry, approved by the Town Board and to include houses, buildings, sites, people, and events of time.
2. The creation of a depository of historical items, to include, but never limited to, documents, writings, artifacts, and farm equipment. Recognize the history of our school district.
3. Continued and greater support of the Poestenkill Historical Society.
4. The creation of incentives being offered to people who restore and protect historical resources.
5. Greater awareness of Joseph Hidley, his work, residence and life in Poestenkill.
6. Historical Committee from within the Town Board.

Housing Breakout Group Notes

1. The current lot sizes of 1 and 2 acres minimum
 - Increases building costs
 - May lead to sprawl
 - Cannot accommodate dense townhouses, condominiums, apartments or senior housing
 - Cluster developments
 - 82% home ownership

Conclusions: The community members felt that lot sizes were adequate and large enough to leave open areas between buildings, which would offset the feeling of sprawl development. Several members were pleasantly surprised by the high percentage of home ownership and felt that this trend should be encouraged to continue. As a result, there was not a great deal of discussion of townhouses, condominiums, or apartment complexes. However, everyone was in favor of senior housing. No one had major objections to exploring the possibility of cluster development as long as they were on a small scale and fit the character of the town. A few people did express concerns over large clusters, which would present “a sea of roofs” and “cookie cutter” houses, which is not in character with the town.

2. Due to the topography, soil conditions, and minimum building lot size, the town may have difficulty attracting younger residents who cannot afford the cost of housing in the town. As the current population ages, this could cause a large imbalance in age ranges in the town.

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Conclusions: It was suggested that first time home buyers may find homes in the town, which are older and possibly in need of some rehabilitation that could be affordable to them. The town should encourage this since it offers first time buyers an opportunity to become property owners and may lead to the eventual rehabilitation of older properties that have fallen into disrepair.

Managing Development & Protection Property Rights Breakout Group Notes

- Protect Individual Property Rights
 - Protect Residential Property from Industrial and Large Scale Gravel Mining and Commercial Enterprises
 - Participate in Regional Planning
 - Planning with Neighborhood Towns
1. Limit commercial strip development as in Wynantskill
 2. Limit large scale commercial development that impinges on rural residential nature of town
 3. Property rights are defined in law; property rights are defined in deeds. Town has to recognize property rights – area in which there has been a failing
 4. Need to recognize property rights that existed since 1970 – 2000
 5. Protect property rights of owners near transfer station (Benson)
 6. Large property owners (may be zoned residential – fear that owner will be infringed on, from doing what he wants, e.g. cutting lumber on residentially zoned property since 1970)
 7. On property currently zoned commercial – don't further restrict
 8. Fear we are losing rights we have today (e.g. jumping in pool at 3 AM)
 9. Fear open spaces being lost to residential housing development (hayfields to houses)
 10. Protect all property right owners – not just residential
 11. Protect property rights of people who have lived here longer than others
 12. People who move in knowing what they are moving in next to don't have the right to complain (i.e. Valente gravel)
 13. Not to interfere with how people live
 14. All people have rights, not just vocal ones
 15. Have to have a way for businesses that are here to grow and expand in a timely fashion
 16. Don't regulate out business just because you don't like it
 17. Code issues – zoning – change it when it needs to be changed
 18. Fear – boned asphalt plant proposal will damage the environment and pollute air
 19. Industrial uses should be prohibited if they will damage the environment
 20. Take community wide action to increase rather than decrease property values
 21. Make sure everyone is behind the vision statement
 22. Individual residential property rights should be protected

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23. No expansion of Waste Management
24. Concerned about expansion or new commercial enterprises that will reduce property values
25. Restrict noise and truck traffic in Poestenkill
26. Keep roads safe
27. Protect quality of life we have in Poestenkill
28. Stability
29. MUST USE COMMON SENSE
30. Residential development over natural resources is fear.

Commercial/Business Breakout Group Notes

1. Provide for an acceptable area in the town of light industry. (*One suggestion was to expand the existing zoned light industrial area behind Dynamic Systems*)
2. Plan should support existing local businesses by allowing them to expand (if possible) at their existing locations.
3. Rezone farming operations in the town that are currently zoned residential to agricultural.
4. Modify town signage ordinance to allow more freedom for commercial signs.
5. Identify areas for local retail businesses. (*One area discussed was in the hamlet – allow replacement of existing establishments with new stores. It was generally agreed that we should not support “strip malls” in the town.*)
6. Conduct study to determine how increased business in Poestenkill would affect the tax rate.

Appendix F Poestenkill Town Board SWOT Analysis & Needs Analysis 2005

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Rich in gravel (2) O (T)
- Agriculture (2) O
- Logging (2) O
- Barberville Falls O
- Historical buildings/roads/cemeteries O
- Close to Albany (commute) O
- Excellent school system O
- Aquifer (2) O
- Ability to obtain public water from Troy O
- Sense of Community O
- Rural setting O
- Rural character *Ag Unprotected*
- Central to Rensselaer County
- Airport *Tourism*
- Good school system *more more*
Homes services needed
- State highways intersect (355 & 351) *Tourism Traffic*
- Rural nature of most of the town makes it an attractive place to live - however, sprawl development threatens that rural nature

Weaknesses

- No senior housing (2) T
- No town park T
- Flooding from the Poesten Kill T
- No public transportation T
- Very limited commercial zoning T
- Limited youth activities T
- No public water or sewer T
- No housing for historical artifacts T

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passive & picnicking areas, parking facilities (at Barberville Falls), housing choices, banking, and area designated for other apartments, although these needs were not significant or priority. There was a general agreement that there was a significant or priority need for flood drain improvements along the Poesten Kill, water infrastructure, sewer infrastructure, senior center, community center, senior services, youth services, medical services, affordable housing, senior housing, and recreation and entertainment.

Issues described in the comments include the problems of erosion by the Poesten Kill; water and sewer along with other community infrastructure needs being tied to development, an issue the community is divided about, but which is needed to keep the taxes down, provide volunteers for the fire district and ambulance (especially commercial/industrial); the need to save tax payers dollars, but also needs for a community center, senior center, and youth center; a need for young adult activities; a need for transportation services, especially to go shopping; that medical and other services would not come into the town due to the lack of market, but that these services are needed; the fire company and ambulance need volunteers more than equipment; the dependency on sheriff and state police, but lack of control and the need for more police coverage; the need to balance housing needs; the need for volunteers for emergency services makes the need for an employment base; the questioning of a market for commercial uses, but a desire for restaurants, recreation and entertainment; and the need to locate commercial zoning in areas proposed for water and sewer, and keeping the water and sewer in populated areas.

Many of the needs and comments are interrelated, although some are conflicting. The fact that there was not complete or relative consensus for a priority or significant need confirms that there is no immediate crisis present or looming. The highest priority need shown through the survey was the need for flooding and erosion control along the Poesten Kill. The needs that ranked second are water and sewer infrastructure. The third tier needs that were shown were medical services and senior housing.

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Appendix G: Public Hearing #1

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
TOWN OF POESTENKILL
SEPTEMBER 21, 2006

Members Present: Councilman Bayly; Councilwoman Bentley; Councilman Hammond; Councilwoman Sager; Supervisor Schmidt; Town Clerk Kelly; Patrick Tomaselli, Town Attorney.

The first item on the agenda was the public hearing on the Comprehensive Draft of August 2006. The hearing was opened by Supervisor Schmidt at 6 p.m. with approximately 60 people in attendance. Mr. Tomaselli read a list of rules pertaining to the procedures that will be followed as this hearing which included limiting time to speak to three (3) minutes per person. L. von der Heide, Rensselaer County Planner, was present to review her role in the document. The Affidavit of Publication was available for review. A summary of the comments is as follows:

W. Lochridge – He has read the Comprehensive Plan Draft and feels that the Board and other involved participants have done a very good job in the writing of the document. He stated that his reason for being present this evening was that he was informed that there was going to be a zone change on the strip of Rt. 66 from Vosburgh Rd. to the Algonquin Middle School. Mr. Tomaselli responded by stating that this is a comprehensive plan and not a land use enactment. It is a vision as to where the Town is going in the future; any specific zone change would have to be accomplished by an amendment to the Town's Land Use Code. Councilman Bayly reiterated that fact that there is no zoning change in the Comprehensive Plan Draft. Mr. Lochridge stated that residents received notices in their mailboxes that there was going to be a zoning change in the Rt. 66 area. It was stated that these notices did not come from the Town Board. Supervisor Schmidt stated that the Comprehensive Plan is just that, a plan.

S. Keller – He is also concerned over the issue of a Commercial/Industrial Commercial Zone along Rt. 66. He stated that he is not against small business. Supervisor Schmidt stated that she does not foresee the rezoning of Rt. 66 in the near future, but who knows what could happen ten years from now. Councilwoman Bentley stated that the Town wants to encourage small businesses and it is not the Board's intent to bring in a Walmart or a Home Depot. Mr. Keller wanted to know if it was possible for a final Plan that does not use the terminology Industrial for the Rt. 66 area. Mr. Tomaselli reviewed the zones in the town and the Use Schedule and reported that the terminology of Commercial/Industrial was used in the original Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in the 1970s and was just carried over into the new Draft.

R. Tannenbaum – She has concerns over the development of the Rt. 66 corridor because she feels her neighborhood already carries a burden of noise pollution with the Hendrick Hudson in close proximity of her property.

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R. Karpian – He also stated that he is not against small business but he is against crating a Commercial Zone along Rt. 66.

P. Kietzman – He feels that there is so little vacant property along that corridor now, what benefit would it be for the Town to change the zoning? His feeling is by adopting a Comprehensive Plan with the language the way it is written now will be very hard to sustain the denial of anything that fits within any permitted uses in the area. Mr. Kietzman further stated that the Comprehensive Plan is the “over arching document” that announces what the Town expects to happen. He also feels that the one particular part of the text of the Draft Plan regarding the Rt. 66 corridor is in some ways worse than rezoning. Zoning statutes can be amended by the Town Board. The Comprehensive Plan is the framework of which all zoning and land use determinations have to be made until the Comprehensive Plan is once again updated.

G. Pattenaude – He was a member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee and agrees with Mr. Kietzman’s analysis. He further stated that he feels the Town Board now has an opportunity in this Plan to clearly state that the large-scale gravel mining is not a compatible use in the Town and he encourages the Board to write this into the Plan.

S. Valente – He also stated that he was a member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee and there never was a consensus on the Rt. 66 corridor when it was discussed. He further stated that the Town is way behind in commercial development. He then spoke on the flyer that was distributed to many households and that the intent was to intimidate the townspeople and not to inform them.

S. Roman – He also served on the Comprehensive Plan Committee and stated that there never was a consensus on the Rt. 66 and Rt. 351 corner and it was a major sticking point. He thought perhaps a “professional zone” could be created along that corner.

M. Hopple – She was also on the Comprehensive Plan Committee and she is happy that it is too a point now where the Town Board is holding a public hearing and she is behind most of the document. She further stated that during the discussions at the Committee level on the Rt. 66 and Rt. 351 corridor, there was too much disagreement to come to any recommendation.

R. Gettig – He also was a member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee and there was not consensus on the Rt. 66 corridor. He feels that the proposal under 6.1 of the document “The Town will examine expanding the existing Commercial/Light Industrial zone (mentioning Rt. 66 and Rt. 351) should be removed from the document. Councilman Bayly stated that the Town Board is trying to get a Plan in place. Mr. Gettig wanted to know why this proposal for the expansion of the Commercial Zone was now a vision when the Committee could not reach a consensus on the issue. Councilman Hammond thought perhaps the terminology should be changed, but he does not see a problem with putting in professional offices, etc., in that area and he doesn’t want to see a Walmart or Home Depot either.

D. Niebuhr – She feels the document is well written and she appreciates the allowance of growth and vision.

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L. von der Heide – She cited the text of the document on pg. 91 which stated that the Town should examine whether the area should be rezoned or not.

N. Lord – She also was a member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee and she wanted to clarify a matter that was just stated by Ms. von der Heide. Ms. Lord read the text (pg. 105 second sentence) that state “Expanding the CLI zone into the Rt. 66 area, between Weatherwax Rd. and Vosburgh Rd. will enable existing businesses not currently in the CLI zone to seek expansion, as well as provide the Town with the opportunity for new industry.” She also cited 6.3 regarding professional offices being allowed in all R zones with the existing special permitting process. She does not want to see this corridor commercial and she also spoke for her husband who is also against a zone change in the area.

Adam Schultz (representing Callanan Industries) – He has reviewed the Comprehensive Plan August draft and stated that it is very important that the document be factual. In regards to gravel mining in the Town, he stated that the document contains a multitude of factually inaccurate statements and conclusions that are contrary to established facts and science, and asked that these statements be removed from the Plan and/or modified to correctly reflect the accepted science and analysis as provided by Spectra. He further stated that in the August Draft Plan, the Town asserts that mining threatens the Town’s groundwater and will affect the quality and quantity of the Town’s water supply. Mr. Schultz stated that these comments were submitted by the Town to DEC in 2003 and DEC found the Town’s position to be unsubstantiated and without merit. Mr. Schultz presented Board members with a copy of his comments and he wants his letter in the record of the Board’s consideration of the Comprehensive Plan.

J. Kappel – He is employed by Spectra Environmental Group, who has been retained by Callanan Industries to review the August Draft of the Comprehensive Plan. He did distribute his comments/corrections on the Plan to Board members. He started on pg. 6 of the Plan where it talks about the capped landfill. He stated that the text leads the reader to believe that the landfill cap eliminates the landfill waste as a continuing source of groundwater contamination; and this is not the case. His other comment was on mining and he states that NYSDEC has approved a request to mine below the groundwater level, allowing the removal of groundwater and possibly dropping water levels in surrounding properties’ wells in is provided without explanation or fact.

When everyone had been given the opportunity to speak, Supervisor Schmidt closed the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. and stated that the next public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan would be October 19th at 6 p.m.

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Appendix H Public Hearing #2

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
TOWN OF POESTENKILL
OCTOBER 19, 2006

Members Present: Councilman Bayly; Councilwoman Bentley; Councilman Hammond; Councilwoman Sager; Supervisor Schmidt; Town Clerk Kelly; Patrick Tomaselli, Town Attorney.

Supervisor Schmidt opened the public hearing (one of two public hearings) at 6 p.m. for the purpose of considering the adoption of a new Comprehensive Plan relating to land use planning and regulation for the purpose of protecting public health, safety and general welfare. The comments are summarized as follows:

B. Moody – He distributed a memo from the Poestenkill Business Association to Town Board members which state that the Rt. 66 and Rt. 351 corridor has a long history of businesses. It further stated that when the Town was first zoned, making this particular area wrongly agricultural residential, it created a hardship on the current businesses as they could not diversify or capitalize in their investments outside of the grandfathered use. The Business Association believes this area should be rezoned commercial as it historically has always been.

S. Valente – He feels the Town should move forward to create some tax base.

M. Hopple – She stated that because water is such an important issue and is part of the Comprehensive Plan, could she be updated with a quick review of the water informational meeting that was held in September at the Fire House. Supervisor Schmidt responded by stating that the information a meeting was well attended and that the presentation was excellent. Mr. Tomaselli once again reviewed the legal steps in how to proceed with the creation of the proposed water district. Supervisor Schmidt feels that the people (approximately 220 people) who attended the water informational meeting were equally split for and against creation; however, Councilman Hammond stated that he felt more people are opposed to the water district because they do not want the extra financial burden.

J. Mereson of Vosburgh Rd. – She has concerns over the development of the Rt. 66 corridor. She doesn't want to see Poestenkill lose its character. Councilman Bayly asked Ms. Mereson what her opinion was of the new business located on the corner of Rt. 66 and Rt. 351. She was unaware of a business being located there.

R. Matthews – He wanted to know if the Town Board members had read the Comprehensive Plan that the Committee had drafted. All Board members stated that they had read the document except Councilwoman Sager who stated that she will read it prior to the next discussion. Councilman Bayly stated that by the time the Town Board visited the Comprehensive Plan, once again, the material that was originally submitted by the Comprehensive Plan Committee was

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already outdated. Mr. Matthews also wanted to know when the Town Board would vote on the Comprehensive Plan, and was told that a vote would take place when there were not more changes to be made to the document.

Supervisor Schmidt explained that the Town Board would evaluate the comments that have been presented. The hearing was closed at 7 p.m.

Acronyms Used in this Document

AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic (counts)
BMP	Best management practices
CDRPC	Capital District Regional Planning Commission
CDTA	Capital District Transportation Authority
ChA	Chenango gravely loam, 1-3 percent grade
CkB	Chenango gravely loam, 3-8 percent grade
CLI	Commercial/Light Industrial zoning district
CR	County Route
DCE	Ces-1, 2 Dichloroethene
DEC	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
DHCR	NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal
DOH	Department of Health (may be county or state)
DOT	NYS Department of Transportation
DSI	Dynamic Systems, Inc.
EMS	Emergency Medical Squad
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FF-O	Flood Fringe Overlay zoning district
GOSC	NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities
H	Hamlet zoning district
HEAP	Home Energy Assistance Program
HoB	Hoosic gravely loam, 3-8 percent grades
HoC	Hoosic gravely loam, 8-15 percent grades
HoD	Hoosic gravely loam, 15-25 percent grades
HoE	Hoosic gravely loam, 25-35 percent grades
MLRL	Mined Land Reclamation Law
MS4	Municipal separate stormwater sewer system
NRCS	U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service

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NP	Natural Products zoning district
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NY or NYS	New York State
OPRHP	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
PDD	Planned Development District
PDR	Purchase of development rights
PES	Poestenkill Elementary School
R	Residential zoning district
RA	Residential Agricultural zoning district
RCWSA	Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority
RESTORE	Residential Emergency Services to Offer (Home) Repair Services to the Elderly
ROUSE, RPC	Rensselaer Organization United for Senior Endeavors, Rural Preservation Corporation
RPI	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
RR1	Rural Residential 1 zoning district
RR2	Rural Residential 2 zoning district
SEQR	State Environmental Quality Review
SEQRA	State Environmental Quality Review Act
SPDES	State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
SUNY	State University of New York (at Albany)
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunities Threat analysis
TCE	Trichloroethylene
TDR	Transfer of development rights
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
U.S.	United States of America
VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars