Morris Economic Development Commission

Received 11:06 AM November 10, 2021 Susan J. Jeanfavre Assistant Town Clerk

Hybrid Meeting

SPECIAL MEETING:

Tuesday 11/9/2021 AT 6PM

Location: Morris Town Hall

Attendees: K. Finch, B. Paletsky, R. Taylor, J. Mangini, Guest: Richard Van Ness

Minutes:

- Richard Van Ness discussed the merits of creating a Route 209 Economic Development Zone with potential incentives for development (see attachments)
- Camp Columbia DEEP has been unresponsive, EDC will continue determining Point-of -Contacts
- ARPA Awaiting list to be furthered refined by ARPA committee, then EDC will provide feedback
- Agri-Tourism P&Z language is getting further reviewed. EDC intends to provide feedback.
- Motion to Adjourn [Finch, Mangini (2nd)]

Economic prosperity in Litchfield County requires growth of second and transplant home ownership and tourism

By Stephen Brighenti

The simple low-cost solution to improving Litchfield County's economic prosperity is greater second home development/ ownership, tourism and permanent resident transplants who primarily made their income outside of the County. Unlike other counties in CT, Litchfield County's greatest competitive advantage is its natural rural beauty and country life, historic and cultural assets, farms and vineyards, land preserves, recreational activities (on our lakes rivers, and ski mountains), and restaurants all within close proximity to NYC.

After attending many town and political events regarding Washington's, Roxbury's and the County's future, I realized no one was discussing supporting our largest economic growth generator and employment opportunity. The discussions were focused on providing more affordable housing (seniors, young families, emergency volunteers), attracting young families, tax incentives and land, farm and environmental preservation - all admirable efforts often at the cost of higher taxes and of questionable success This is exemplified by Roxbury's Draft Plan:

https://bit.lv/3avSQNg Almost all current statewide conversations revolve around our economic distress - Litchfield County and CT as a whole have declined precipitously over the past 10 years - declining employment (One of two states that has failed to recover jobs lost in the recession), declining population - the 4th greatest decline in the U.S. - 63 percent of CT moves are out of the state versus 37 percent moves in, 22,000 departures in 2019 and over 200,000 departures over nine years, declining school population, old and aging population, lower property values, growing unfunded pension liabilities (2nd highest in the nation per capita), 4th most burdensome regulatory environment, very high taxes, and the Federal Reserve predictions of economic contraction in 2020. Litchfield County can be the exception! Litchfield County has the resources (natural beauty) and proximity to NYC to reverse this downward spiral if town zoning boards recognize the true problem and reverse course to support development.

Most of our current problems and hopeful political dreams will be answered in large part by increased second home ownership and more permanent transplants — not the often-proposed solutions of restrictions on development and promoting growth through tax incentives to

various "need" groups. These second homeowners and transplants are primarily city dwellers and other professionals. They made their income in better employment markets and have chosen to spend part of it on a better quality of life. They tend to be low key, well-educated, high net worth, generous, and creative. Second homeowners are of all ages and transplants are typically retired but both bring and spend non-local sources of income.

Although second homeowners and transplants account for 25-35 percent of taxpayers in Litchfield County, they often contribute more than double that of our property tax base and cost less than 10 percent of town and school budgets. This results in very low tax rates for all residents, Our County's most desirable rural towns to second homeowners and transplants that offer the lowest taxes include Roxbury (15.85 mills), Salisbury (11.6 mills), Sharon (14.4 mills) and Washington (14.25 mills). Second homeowners often pay over \$15,000 a year in taxes with no public-school attendance and yet the average full-time family with two school children pays closer to \$5,000 in taxes and utilizes over \$50,000 in school budget.

Second homeowners and transplants are often the largest employers and income sources to our local services. They are often the backers of new creative businesses - look at our best boutiques, art galleries, restaurants and inns. They provide the greatest funding, attendance and support for arts, culture, and community non-profits.

Action Plan

Support high quality devel-opment designed for second homeowners and property improvement applications. The greatest impediment to growth is overly restrictive zoning boards and wetlands and historic commissions who deny or deter development rather than working with developers to achieve common goals maintaining the economic viability of the proposals. The power of the local zoning boards cannot be overstated. They often act in opposition to our Plans of Development and stated community goals. Just as a few loud opponents denied Amazon's proposed campus in Queens costing 25,000 high-paying jobs, our Zoning Boards and Commissions have denied numerous projects of similar impact relatively speaking often at the behest of intervenors.

We need to welcome and support new second home development and feeder inns instead of allowing the few, loud, anti-development forces to prevail. An influx of second homeowners and transplants will mean increasing home values and lower taxes for all. We should recognize and welcome second home development in Town Plans like Roxbury's now under consideration but lacking this as a stated goal.

Roxbury Woods' development denial was a perfect example of Roxbury's largest lost economic growth opportunity -a proposal for 11 "green" design modern cabins. Roxbury has only had, on average, two new home permits taken out per year over the past 10 years. If approved, the "Woods" would have increased property values in Roxbury, especially values of the homes in close proximity, listed in the \$150-200 per square foot range, and out of date and out of favor with second home buyers. They were designed for creative, environmentally conscious city dwellers willing to pay a premium to have a second home in Roxbury, yet would also be perfect for downsizing seniors.

Roxbury Woods, www.thewoodsroxbury.com/ homes, was modeled after Hudson Woods, www.hudsonwoods.com/, that

www.hudsonwoods.com/, that transformed Kerhonkson, NY. (a hamlet with a population of 1,684). The Kerhonkson assessor and numerous news articles confirm this transformation.

If Roxbury Woods had been approved, Roxbury's \$600 million Grand List and property values would have increased, reversing the 7 percent decline over the past 10 years reported by Zillow. The ever-increasing taxes would have stabilized or decreased and construction and service employment would have increased.

Like Hudson Woods, these modern environmentally friendly sustainable green homes would be copied and lead to further similar applications and Roxbury's goal of attracting 25 new families over the next 10 years will be far exceeded. Hopefully, Roxbury, the developer, and the neighbors will come up with an economically viable solution to proceed as it will benefit all.

Wykeham Rise in Washington is a perfect example of Zoning Board and NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) deterrence. Wykeham Rise, www.ykeham.rise.com/, a former school site, is a proposed 49-suite luxury inn and spabacked by local second homeowners and to be operated by Ocean House Management. If built, Wykeham Rise will transform Washington for the better—inst as the Mayflower, White

Hart Inn, Winvian and Ocean

House did for their communi-

ties. Each car carrying guests would generate over \$1,000 in room rentals and local sales per day. Affluent hotel guests would be prospective and likely second home buyers.

In one Wykeham Rise variation, potential condo unit sales for in excess of \$1,000 psf were proposed which would have retained our affluent downsizing seniors and further enhanced property values townwide. Guests would include private school parents, tourists, shoppers and diners. Wykeham Rise would increase the publicity, desirability, vitality of Washington and local home values especially those closest to it. Washington's \$1.2 billion grand list would increase substantially with a \$60 million project that would reduce everyone's taxes.

Support development of tourism, restaurants and cultural activities. The feeder market to second and transplant home ownership is tourism and hotel stays. Future second homeowners must see how beautiful and accessible Litchfield County is to take the next step of buying a home. We are a closer, year-round destination without hurricanes, earthquakes, forest fires, extreme temperatures and altitude sickness. Every \$1 spent in hotels generates \$6 in secondary revenues. Tourism expands employment opportunities especially for young people. The Washington business community has created an award winning web site to promote tourismwww.explorewashington ct.com/. This web site has worked. It has elevated the public perception of Washington as the best of country living. Other Litchfield towns should emulate this acclaimed professional presentation of their resources and smaller towns might join with more active towns (for example-Roxbury with Washington).

with no tax incentives needed, our Zoning Boards must support tourism, inns, and cultural activities to spur growth, to allow potential second homeowners to visit and to support our local private school visitor needs, restaurants and shops. It is a shame that new Washington restrictions limit small inns to State Highways contrary to historic precedent—the Lake Waramaug inns would never have existed under the new provisions.

Stephen Brighenti is a resident of Washington, CT and a founding partner of several classic inns and hotels in CT and NYC, and formerly a member of the boards of CT and NYC Tourism and Visitor Bureaus and Hotel Associations.

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richard villageonbantamlake.com <richard@villageonbantamlake.com>

Introductory Information: Bantam Lake Development: Mixed-Use Village On Bantam Lake 23±02res plus Additional

To

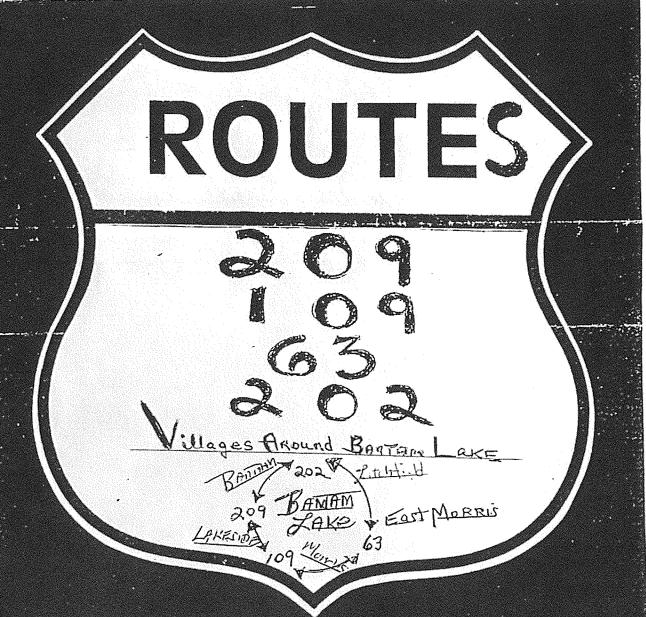
Copy villagesaroundthelakeandwoods@yahoo.com

Hello: Our website www.villageonbantamlake.com is a good introduction to a rare/one-of-kind single large Bantam Lake property served by town sewers and located within the Lake Commercial District once having been a boy's camp (Camp Quarta for many boys from Philadelphia, Pa.) and later a private vacation resort for Walter Mack (biography: "No Time Lost") when he was the president of Pepsi -a powerful force behind the establishment of PEPSI. Recently a neighboring one-acre teardown property (along with its boathouse located across the street at 200 Bantam Lake Rd) was acquired by my family for the purpose of expanding the potential for an important ""VILLAGE ON BANTAM LAKE". This recently acquired property is not described on our website: IMPORTANT: OTHER NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES ALONG ROUTE 209 www.villageonbantamlake.com HAVE RECENTLY BEEN PUT ON THE MARKET: Note: By themselves these neighboring properties suffer from poor steep grades; however, our property allows for a 'zig-zag' roadway from which these neighboring properties can be provided safe and important access/egress!!!!!!!!!!! Again, by themselves they enjoy limited value, but they can take on greater relevance and importance once they become part of our possible Lake Commercial development. Our present properties can accommodate abou \$50,000 square feet of buildable floor area - as is allowed by the present LCD zoning regulations. With long term planning as an important consideration other neighboring properties (those located along Route 209 and others located further West and along other borders of IMPORTANT: THE ADVANTAGE OF WATERFRONT PROPERTIES AND the main property (22 acres). THE USE OF TOWN SEWERS ARE TWO HIGHLY VALUABLE ADVANTAGES. ALSO A ""VILLAGE ON BANTAM LAKE" CAN ENTER TAIN THE POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT IN PROMOTING A !!!!!!!!!! BOARDWALK!!!!!!!!! GOING OUT IN THE DIRECTION OF WHITE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION'S SOUTH BAY WETLANDS. A !!!!!!!!!!THEATRE!!!!!!!!!!!! ALONG THE HILLTOP IS ALLOWED BY ZONING. Entertainment purposes can be important to the many cottages/home around Bantam Lake as well as visitors to these LITCHFIELD HILLS TOURISM. The circle of highways around Bantam Lake (Routes 109,209,202 & 63) create a tourism loop of highways which can offer visitors a complete list of tourism advantages in both Litchfield and Morris!!!!!!!! Spurs off of this tourism loop can take visitors to towns surrounding this important circular advantage: Washington, Watertown and beyond, Thomaston and beyond, Goshen and beyond, and Torrington and beyond can benefit from this opportunity to market the """Villages Around The Lake and Woods""" TOURISM !!!!!!!!!!! A MIXED USE VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT CAN INCLUDE AN IMPORTANT LOOP OF HIGHWAYS. UPSCALE -----CONDO/HOTEL ATOP THE HILL WALTER MACK CALLED """TOP O' WORLD" WELL AS VILLAGE SHOPS, OFFICES, BOUTIQUES, ETC. LOCATED ALONG ROUTE 209. AS A CONSEQUENCE OF (1) location along Rte 209, (2) Town Sewers, (3) Lake Commercial Zoning as a matter of right (4) Waterfront properties along Bantam Lake's West Shore (5) Buildable land -note: Our West Hill is a glacial hill with buildable land which does not have the disadvantage of other properties limited by wetlands (6) located along a tourism loop of highways, (7) The paucity of available land with access to Bantam Lake. , (8) As in the past New York City inhabitants continue to seek these Litchfield Hills as one of a limited number of opportunities for vacation and even retirement options. VERY VERY IMPORTANT: A VILLAGE ON BANTAM LAKE CAN BE SOLD OFF AS BUSINESS CONDOS FOR THE SHOPS, ETC AS WELL AS THE CONDO/HOTEL UNITS. NOTE: Long ago the Breezy Knoll development on Bantam Lake created a condo group of vacation units for the enjoyment of many from New York City. IN CONCLUSION:: I LOOK FORWARD TO DIALOGUE WITH YOU AS TO HOW A VILLAGE ON BANTAM LAKE MAY BECOME THE SUPERIOR RESORT DEVELPMENT TO THE SATISFACTION OF OUR SMALL TOWN OF MORRIS AS WELL AS ONE OF THE NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT' PREMIER MIXED-USE TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS.

Condo (Hotel + Rectaurants) + spa + spa + spa + spail + Heatre + recreation medical + Retail service + bank + etc.

Private marina + underground parking

GET YOUR KICKS ON



ROADIRD

A COMPLETE TOURISM LOOP FOR ALL *

MORRE BIANNING & ZONNE COM

Phone: 860-567-6097 P.O. Box 66 Morris, CT 06763 Fax:860-567-7432

June 28, 2007

Mr. Richard Van Nesse 169 and 207 Bantam Lake road Morris, Ct 06763

Dear Mr. Van Nesse:

In reference to your request on June 26, 2007, for Zoning information in the take.

Commercial District (LCD), the following applies:

Restaurant: Section 33-3 permits restaurants

Hotel/Tourist Units: Section 33-2 permits hotel/tourist units

Retail and Professional offices: Section 33-4, 8, 9 permit retail and professional offices Recreation and Entertainment Uses: Section 33-5, 6, permit certain recreational and entertainment uses, and Section 12 may permit other certain recreational and entertainment uses.

Sincerely,

Leon Bouteiller

Zoning Enforcement Officer

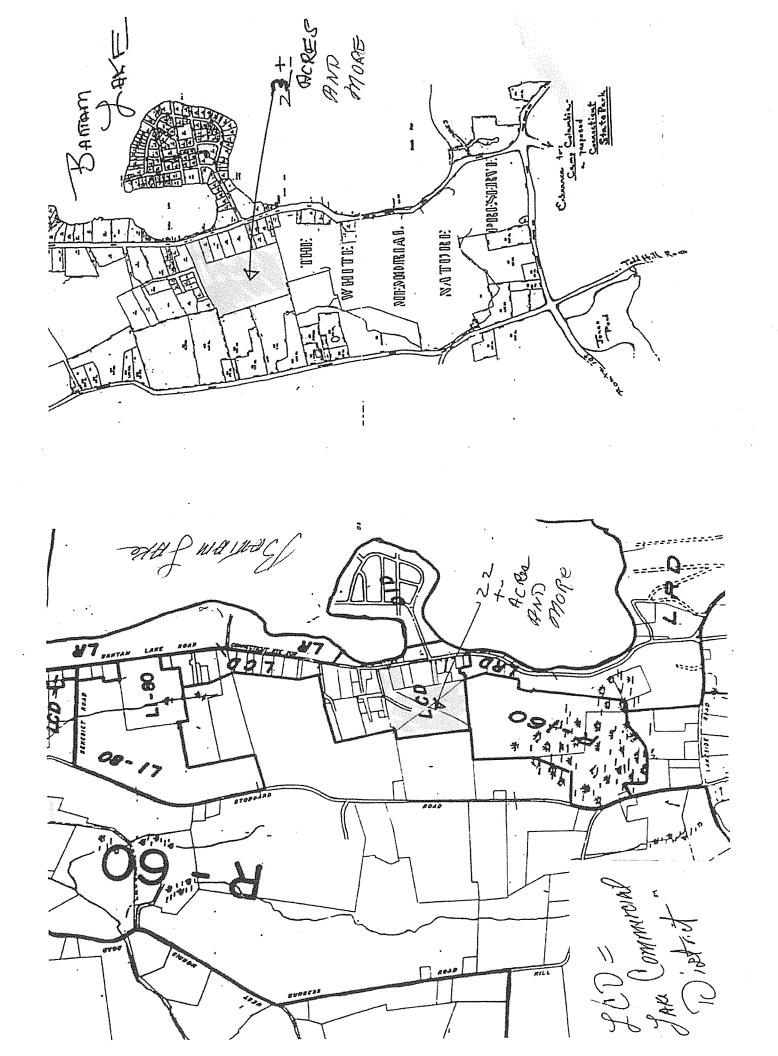
Enc: Section 33 - Lake Commercial District

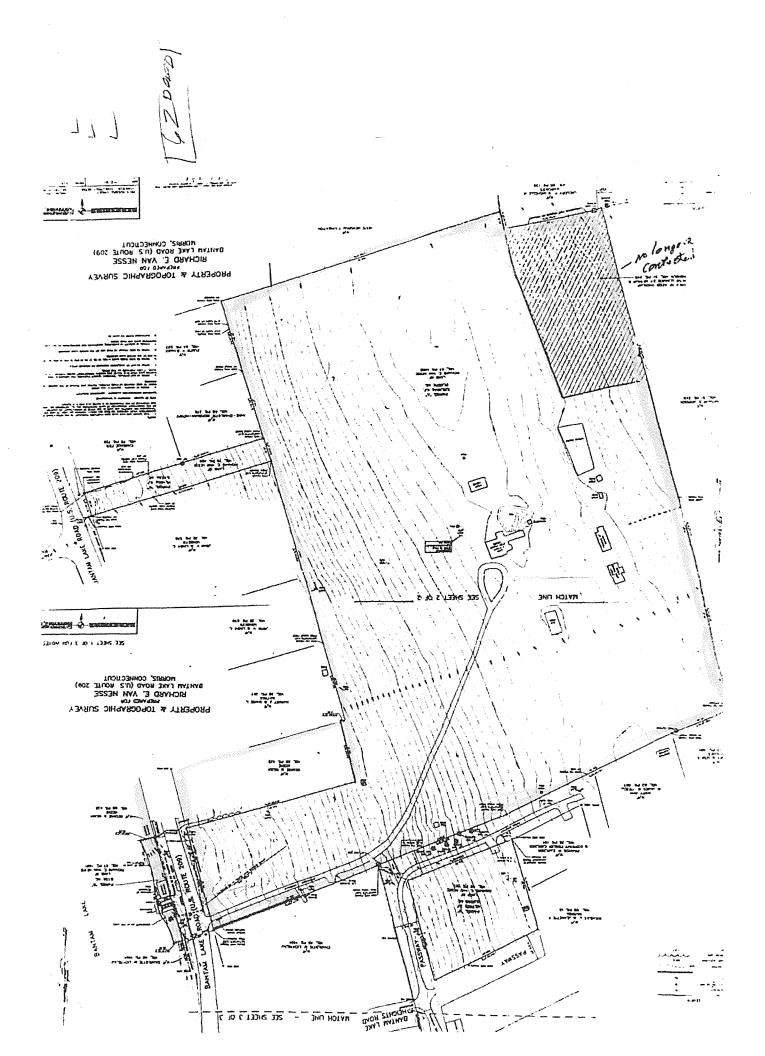
A DEVELOPER MAY CHOOSE FROM THREE OPTIONS ALLOWED BY MORRIS PLANNING AND ZONING

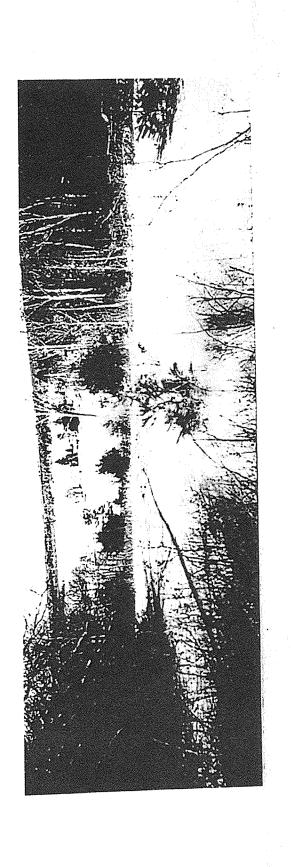
- (1) A long list of commercial uses because these lots are located in the LAKE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.
- (2) Any use permitted in the LAKE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT is permitted.
- (3) Although subject to review and approval granted by the Morris Planning & Zoning Commission, a development proposal can be made which varies from existing rules and regulations when the property is 10 acres or larger.

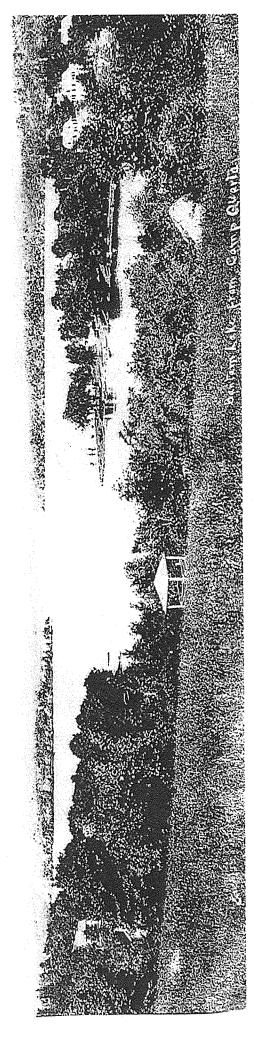
A recent proposal by the Smith family was granted by the P&Z Commission allowing a residential property to become a PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT which allows a resort development with commercial uses.

This PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT option could allow a developer to present a proposal which has a mix of commercial uses along with residential uses. Example: A mixed use West Shore Village with both residential and commercial features could be a "smart growth" option especially if the project scope is expanded.

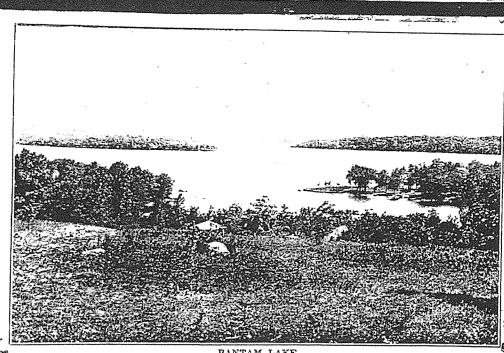








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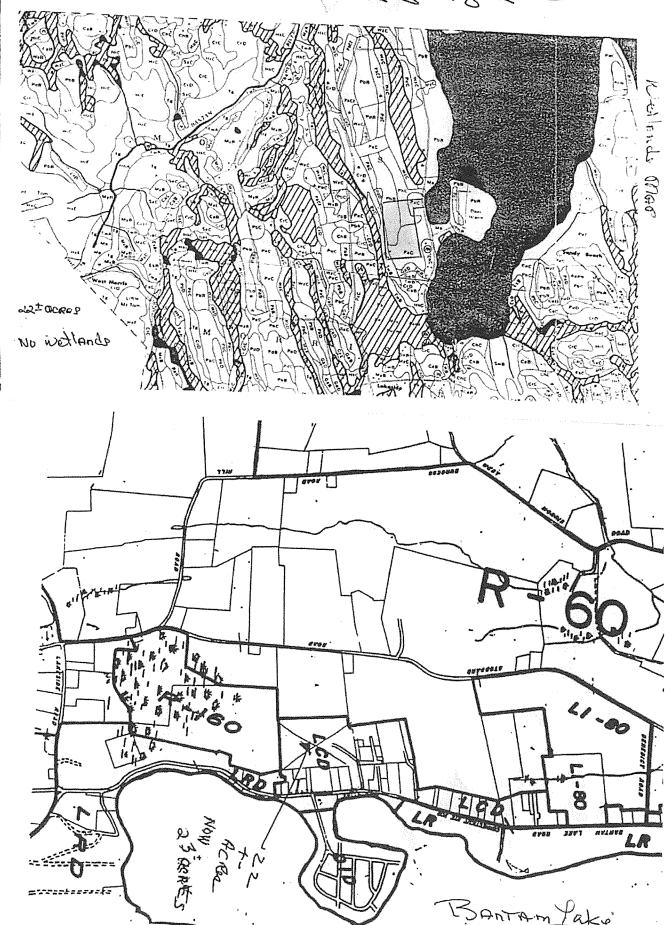


BANTAM LAKE

The Old Road John Calvin Goddard Don't Wait Too Long Charles Colebaugh New Milford's Quiet Charm Scoville Two Centuries to Build Litchfield

BY THE LITCHFIELD HILLS FEDERAL

Westerd Sandrage Sand



"Lakeside Village Development" 207 Bantam Lake Road Preliminary Plans for a

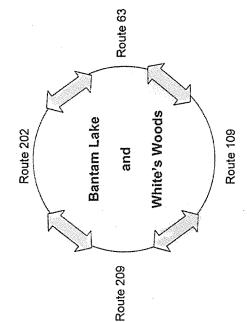
IMPORTANT AND VALUBLE TOURISM LOOP

"VILLAGES-AROUND-THE-LAKES-AND-WOODS",

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visitor's to Litchfield and Morris with the introduction of this Lakeside Village, especially with the replica of the historic South Farms Inn. surrounding our Central Park setting of Bantam lake and White's Woods will be more complete as a TOURISM DESTINATION for a tourism loop of highways (Routes 209 & 202 & 63 & 109)

tourism and recreation has occurred in the past. A Lakeside Village will recapture the importance of Bantam Lake's West Shore once again. The west shore of Bantam Lake has an important history where



OF.

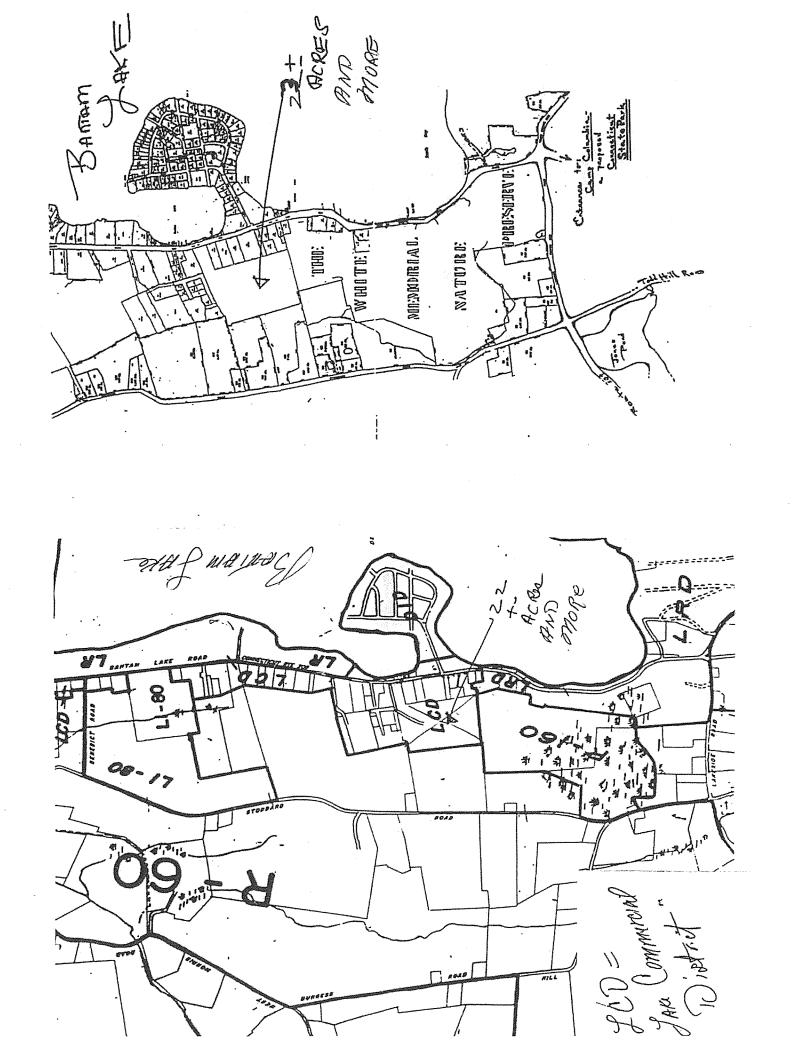
RATURAL DELIGIT

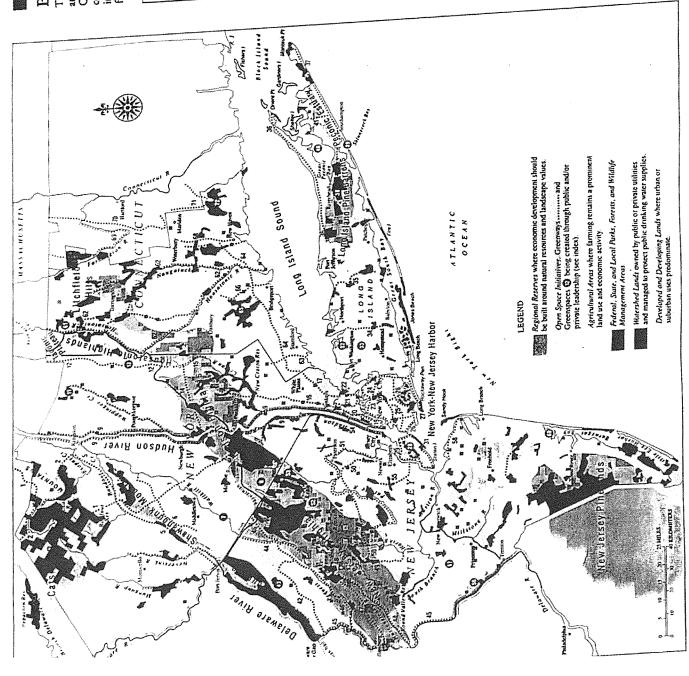
BANTAN LAKE IS SURPOUNDED BY THOUSANDS OF ACRES USED FOR RECREATION AND A COMMECTING THE AROUND

d MORRIS

ROOTE 202 New Mile ROUTE 63 ROGTE 209 Bankowy North of ROOTE 109

2 OF 4





BUILDING A METROPOLITAN GREENSWARD

conserve its critical natural resource systems, its recreational opportunities and the work-ing landscapes of farms and forests. Together, these protected open lands will help shape The Metropolitan Greensward is a vision of a system of protected open spaces, greenways and rural landscapes that distinguish the cities and suburbs of the New York/New Jersey/ Connecticut metropolitan region. By implementing the Greensward, the Region will future patterns of growth in the Tri-State Region.

REGIONAL RESERVES

important scenic, biological and water resources and which are now threatened by To construct the Greensward, the Region must help communities manage change in nine special places, or "regional reserves," which encompass the Region's most urban sprawl.

Hew York—Hew Jessey Harbot Shawanyank Mountains/Kittofiany The Appolachian Explands of How York, Hew lersey and Connecticut New Jersey Finelands long Island Sound Long Island Fine Barrens/Perconic Estuary Catskill Park Dekoware Kivri Valley Huckson Rivei Valley

Greenway and Greenspace Initiatives

Building the Greensward also means weaving together a network of Greenways and Greenspaces that protects and enhances individual rivers, trails, ridgelines and urban open lands. Seventy-two of the most important public and private initiatives are listed below.

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and seed		52. Prescrid Nountela/Turkey
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This map was prepared with the assistance of the Mary Flagher Cary Charitable Trust and the Amer

SECTION 33 - LAKE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT L.C.D.

Permitted Uses

- 1. Any Permitted Use in the Lake Residential District.
- A hotel or attached tourist unit or a motel, provided that the lot area is equal to or not less than 2,000 square feet for each guest sleeping accommodation, but not less than 40,000 square feet total area.
- Indoor restaurants and other indoor food and beverage service establishments, with take out service as an accessory and incidental use subject to the provisions of Art. I, Section 8.
- A retail business or retail service occupation.
- Bowling alleys and similar recreational establishments.
- Theaters for indoor motion picture projection or dramatic or musical productions.
- Stores and other buildings and structures where goods are sold or services rendered primarily at
- 9. Business and professional offices; banks and other financial institutions; medical and dental clinics
 - 10. Off-street parking facilities whether accessory to a permitted use or not.
- 11. Signs as provided in Section 62.
- care as an accessory use in a single dwelling for one family and in accordance with the provisions of 12. Accessory uses customary with and incidental to any aforesaid permitted use, including family day the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 8-23j.

Special Exception Uses: The following Special Exception uses shall be subject to the general and specific requirements of Section 52, and, where applicable, requirements of Section 67

- 1. Accessory apartment in a single dwelling for one family.
- Bed and Breakfast
- Apartment Use in a Business Building.
- Outdoor dining as an accessory use to an indoor restaurant subject to the requirements of Art. V, Section 52 ₹

ot Area. Shape, and Frontage:

- 40,000 square feet Minimum lot area
- 150 feet Minimum frontage

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Height:

2½ stories 1. Maximum number of stories

Maximum height

35 feet

1. Minimum setback - principal building* from all property lines

15 feet

3 feet Maximum projection of principal or accessory building or structure into serback area 3. Minimum setback for all detached accessory buildings and structures from all property lines 10 feet

* An accessory building or structure which is attached to or located within five feet of the principal building shall be subject to the minimum setback requirements for the principal building.

Building bulk and coverage

Maximum coverage by buildings and structures;

Living Area Requirements per Dwelling Unit (in square feet):

1. Minimum for first floor area ston

1,000 700 600 11/2 stories

2 or more stories

where adjacent to a Residential District which strip of land shall be suitably landscaped and not used Site Plan: Prior to approval of any application for a Zoning Permit (other than single dwelling for one submitted hereunder shall show a strip of land not less than 30 feet wide in all side and rear yards accordance with the provisions of Section 51 and Section 67, where applicable. Any Site Plan family) for a use permitted under this Section, a Site Plan shall be submitted and approved in for parking or for any use prohibited in such adjacent Residential District.

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