

Town of Dryden

Residential Development Design Guidelines



FINAL – DECEMBER 2008

Town of Dryden, NY

Residential Development Design Guidelines

December 3, 2008 Final Version

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Scenic views, open meadows and working farm land are part of the rural character of Dryden.

It is the intent of the Residential Development Design Guidelines to supplement, not supersede town land use regulations. New residential development in the town must continue to adhere to all applicable zoning, subdivision, and development regulations and procedures required by the town and other review agencies.

I. INTRODUCTION

Residential development is and will be a vital element of the future of the Town of Dryden. As the town becomes increasingly developed, proper management of this growth will influence, and ideally, enhance public safety, environmental quality, property values, economic opportunity, town character and quality of life for residents. However, given the incremental and individual parcel focus typical of the development process, there is an increasing need for guidance to achieve appropriate future development patterns in the town. Further, the long-term cumulative adverse impact of small, incremental developments which are not coordinated or considered as part of a whole community vision can have a significant detrimental effect on each of the positive values mentioned above. Strip residential development or, in other words, the continuous and almost random subdivision of lots up and down the roads in town is indicative of this concern and creates a problematic trend from a town-wide perspective.

Communities across the nation have found that more guidance is needed in the planning and design of new development. Improperly planned and designed developments can lead to decreased public safety for highway users, increase traffic and congestion, and can contribute to loss of community character and the decline or flattening of property values. While typical zoning and subdivision regulations define elements like minimum lot size and set backs, these regulations fall short in guiding the more subtle aspects of land planning for residential development, including site analysis and design that fits the landscape; or in addressing limitations to strip residential development and coordination of road access, future lot development, and design with community character in mind.



These homes utilize a shared driveway which reduces curb cuts and allows the homes to be tucked into the site behind existing vegetation.

These design guidelines have been prepared in response to the kind of residential development the Dryden town planning board has encountered over the past several decades—principally smaller scale subdivisions. The guidelines utilize a site in town to illustrate recommended site analysis and design principals. Also included are examples of development patterns to avoid where possible. The guidelines offer a means to address town-wide concerns, while providing individual applicants with a set of principals and examples to help plan and design for a wide-range of residential development opportunities. Ideally, as the town continues to grow, this can be accomplished while minimizing the adverse impacts of growth on the environment while encouraging new homes and neighborhoods that contribute positively to Dryden's character.

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Each of the design principals illustrated herein draw upon the goals and objectives of the town's comprehensive plan. Additionally, consideration has been given to the broader role the town plays in the county, and appropriately, the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan has been used as a point of reference—in particular, those elements of the county plan that reinforce the ideas and concepts in the town's plan. For example, both plans appropriately recognize the importance of ecological resources--resources that typically are not limited by municipal borders, such as Fall Creek or the expansive forest lands. As well, the county plan includes policies that support a balanced mix of housing and non-residential development distributed in a land use pattern that reduces the fragmentation and impact of growth on important resources, such as prime, working agricultural lands.

In particular, these design guidelines should be used to advance the following goals drawn from the town's comprehensive plan:

- Integrating new growth in a way that respects and protects existing natural and cultural resources in a reasonable manner.
- Provide reasonable examples of appropriate design concepts for landowners who choose to subdivide their property.
- Protect and where possible, enhance public safety along roadways.
- Establish development patterns that are cost-effective for the town and developers while creating a land use pattern that protects and strengthens the town's natural and economic attributes.

Like many other communities, the Town of Dryden has zoning and subdivision regulations to help protect the public interest as lots are created. Unfortunately, the typical set of zoning and subdivision regulations fall short on the more subtle, yet highly important aspects of good design. Applicants and the planning board can become mutually frustrated at the lack of clear guidance these regulations provide as to what will become an acceptable subdivision plat.

Over the long term, unchecked extensive road frontage development will create public safety issues, increase conflicts with agricultural use, and become increasingly detrimental to the town's highly esteemed rural character—a key element of property values.

Many communities across upstate New York have adopted design guidelines to supplement their zoning laws to address their particular concerns. The small town of Woodstock (population 7,000) in the Catskill Mountains region for example, has for more than a decade been using development guidelines to help people properly plan for new residential development along the ridgelines and other higher elevations in the town. Conservation of the rural character of the growing town of Milton in Saratoga County is an important element of their design guidelines adopted in 2001. Elsewhere in the state,

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some of the earliest design guidelines were established to maintain the integrity of historic districts.

One of the major issues for the Town of Dryden is the current trend of almost all newly constructed residential lots in the town having direct access to existing roadways. This “strip residential” pattern is increasingly creating a traffic safety issue. As the number of driveway cuts increases so to does the potential conflict between roadway traffic and vehicles entering and exiting driveways. This kind of pattern creates more of an acute safety problem along state and county highways and other roads with higher design speeds.



Frontage development in Le Ray, NY

The use of the guidelines will help achieve the goals expressed in the town's comprehensive plan including provision of a variety of housing options, protection of agricultural resources, and maintaining town rural character and land values.

II. DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to preserving local character and open space as land is developed in the town, these design guidelines are meant to assist landowners in making informed choices about their property. One of the goals of design guidelines is to illustrate how positive land use decisions can be mutually beneficial to both the landowner and the town.

It is important that a landowner is aware of some of the potential development and conservation options in planning for the future. These options may be thought of as a continuum that ranges from full development to full conservation of a property. Which can work best depends upon the landowner's needs and goals and the availability and potential interest from conservation partners and related funding sources. Each approach has financial and other benefits for the landowner.

Consultation with the town's environmental planner and other planning and zoning staff is part of the process. Town staff can help direct a property owner to other resources in the region to provide additional information and support as property owners consider their development options.

Not every landowner will have the same goals or plans for their property. Some landowners may wish to maximize development, while others may have conservation as a goal. And of course, there are many points in-between. The conceptual development scenarios described below – Full Development, Limited Development and Full Conservation – represent points along this spectrum of landowner goals.

FULL DEVELOPMENT

For landowners who ultimately expect to develop all of their property, sound planning in the early phases will provide increased options for good neighborhood design to be accomplished in later phases. This is particularly important for owners of larger properties. For smaller parcel owners, creative design can actually be more challenging as there is less space in which to locate development, and perhaps fewer feasible options for its development.

In terms of using these guidelines, the illustrated examples depicted in latter



One of the many country roads in the Town of Dryden

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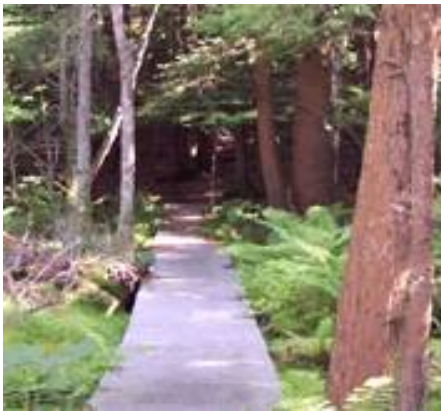
sections of these guidelines are not meant to show the only solution to a development design. Consider the sketches more as depicting a set of development principles. The sketches depict perhaps just one or two design solutions that address the principles. Each land owner is encouraged to develop plans that fit their particular needs and property.

LIMITED DEVELOPMENT

Limited development is simply creating a development that includes the permanent protection of more land than required by zoning. Permanent protection is typically achieved by the donation to a land trust or other public conservation entity of land in fee title or land restricted from development by a conservation easement. A limited development approach for a property may help a landowner achieve financial goals while maintaining a larger proportion of a property as open space. The rewards of a limited development include financial gains from sale of the development portion, potential income tax savings by land/conservation easement donations and a faster selling, more attractive/competitive product.

FULL CONSERVATION

Under this option, the overall goal is to protect all of a property or almost all of a property from future development. For example, the town and county have successfully partnered with local farmland owners to secure grants to fund farmland protection projects in Dryden.



Dryden is fortunate to have several nature preserves, many of which were the result of the generosity of local landowners. The O.D. Von Engeln Preserve is a 306-acre nature preserve managed by the Nature Conservancy (The trail is also known as the Malloryville Preserve; boardwalk pictured here). In January 2008, the Finger Lakes Land Trust announced the establishment of the Park Nature Preserve which protects 4,200 feet of frontage along 6-mile Creek in Dryden. The acquisition was made possible by a personal gift from the late Roy Park's daughter in honor of her father, a

well known resident of Tompkins County. Additional financial support was provided by several other key local donors (see: www.flit.org).

Full conservation of land as an option can be rewarding in many ways to landowners. Grant and other funding may be sought to support such projects in addition to potential significant tax benefits if a donation or partial donation of land is involved.

A listing of additional resources and further information for consideration on some of these concepts discussed above is provided in the appendix of this document.

III. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The following principles and design guidelines apply to new residential subdivisions within the Town of Dryden. Adherence to these general principles will help landowners develop their subdivision plans in conformance with town code. Town staff and the planning board will use these principals to evaluate applications and make decisions throughout the review process.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR DRYDEN

1. Ensure public health and safety.
2. Protect the scenic character of rural corridors.
3. Protect agricultural resources.
4. Design with nature.
5. Recognize neighborhood context

ENSURING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Keep driveway and road cuts to a minimum while providing maximum connectivity between neighborhoods. By limiting the number of entry points along town roadways, the town can significantly improve safety and reduce the number of emergency response calls related to traffic accidents. Utilizing shared driveways and other design concepts can ensure both public safety and reasonable development objectives can be achieved. Connector roads should be planned to link nearby roads in a way that ensures linkage but reduces impacts of cut-through traffic.

Clean and plentiful water is essential for life. Ensure site design provides protection of water resources and associated natural habitats both during construction and over the long term. This will serve to preserve key components of the rural qualities that are desired by Dryden's residents. Providing natural vegetated buffers is one of the most important elements of water resource protection.

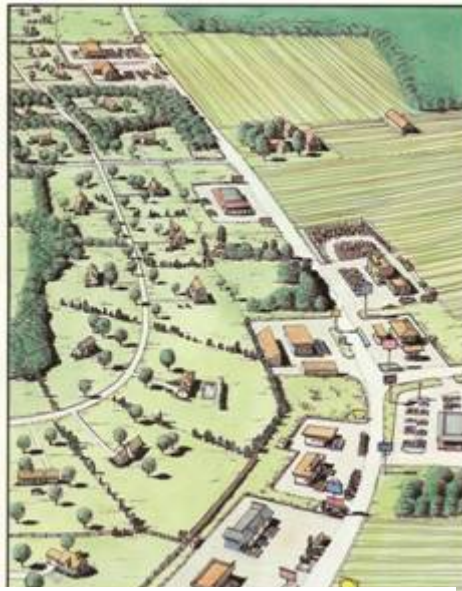
Ensure site design provides protection of water resources and associated natural habitats both during construction and over the long term.

PROTECT THE CHARACTER OF RURAL CORRIDORS AND ROADS

The visual and scenic resources of rural road corridors and roads should be conserved. The site layout of new development in the countryside should protect roadside views to the extent practicable and ensure that home sites blend into the landscape to the greatest extent possible. Open space and natural areas should be designed to maintain the integrity and character of existing roads and maximize visibility for persons passing the site wherever possible.



This rural corridor has valuable scenic resources with little development occurring.



Undesirable: The same corridor under a conventional development scenario.



Desirable: Development has been tucked away and clustered to maintain the rural character of the road.

Images: © Copyright 1995-1996 Center for Rural Massachusetts, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, used by permission.

PROTECT AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Efforts should be made to limit the impact of development on agricultural operations and productive farm soils. In particular, avoid locating new homes near existing farms and farmlands as much as possible, buffer residential uses from active farms, and avoid fragmentation of core agricultural areas.



Existing farm on town road.



Undesirable: Development of the farm under conventional zoning.



Desirable: Alternative development protects the farm and locates all homes along the edge of the wooded area.

Images: © Copyright 1995-1996 Center for Rural Massachusetts, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, used by permission.

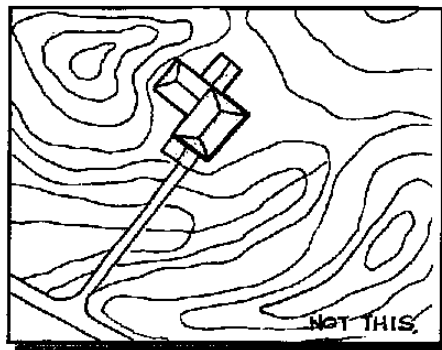
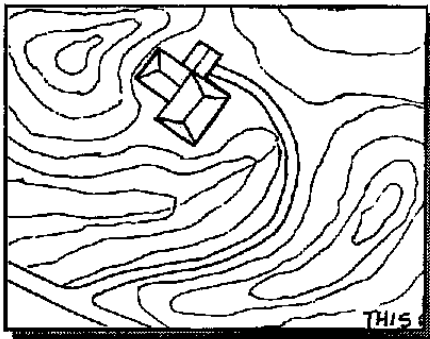
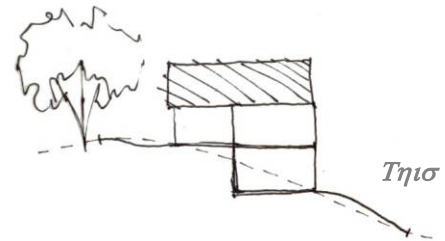
DESIGN WITH NATURE

Building and home sites should be arranged to minimize clearing of forest and vegetation and the landscape shall be preserved in its natural state to the greatest practical extent. The orientation of individual building sites should maintain natural topography and cover. Site planning and landscaping should consider the following:

- Existing groves of mature trees should be maintained where feasible. Introduce buffer plantings, in particular where open, former farm fields are being subdivided. Species selected for planting should be appropriate for this region and microclimate of the setting.
- Development should minimize cut and fill, utilize gentle grading and avoid abrupt grade transitions. Any grade changes shall be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.
- Include natural drainage and naturalized stormwater treatment elements into the site drainage design.
- Where possible, buildings should not be located in the center of open fields. Structures should be placed at the edges of fields along more heavily vegetated areas.



Minimize cut and fill



Work with natural land contours whenever possible



Desirable: This home is sited at the edge of the woodland and blends into the site. As a result, views to and from the site are not harmed and rural character is maintained.



Undesirable: While this subdivision uses a shared curb cut to the main roadway, these homes are sited in the middle of an open field—a detriment to rural character and rendering the land virtually unusable for farming. The remaining open space does not contribute to the rural quality of the area.

RECOGNIZE NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

Streets should be designed based on their function and the character of the area.

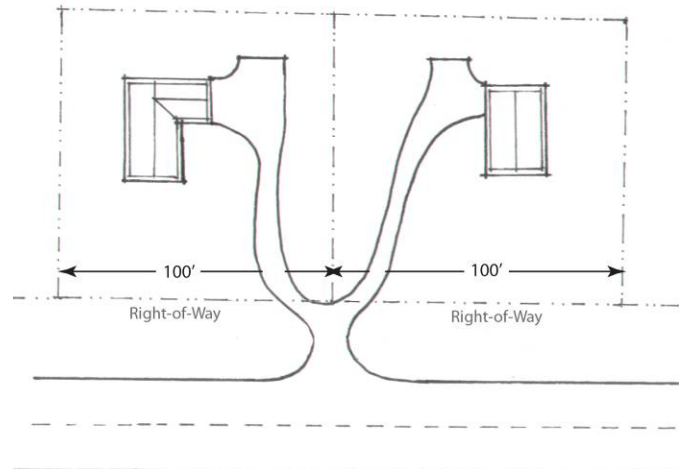
- Streets should be designed to maintain and preserve natural topography, significant landmarks, and trees; to minimize cut and fill; and to preserve and enhance views and vistas on or off the subject parcel.
- Road design should reflect the context and characteristics of the area. The use of narrow roads, similar to existing country routes, is encouraged.



Undesirable design: Pavement widths typical of suburban neighborhoods are inappropriate for a small scale subdivision. Image © Alex S. MacLean/Landslides, used with permission

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- Scenic viewsheds along the roadside should be protected by using site design to appropriately set back and “tuck development into” the landscape (woodlands or hedgerows, for example) or use landscape plantings to shield the roadway from development.
- Minimize the number of curb cuts on existing roads. Utilize shared access points and linked/shared parking where possible.



An example of a shared access point along a roadway

Finding ways to connect to the town’s emerging trail system can help make new homes and neighborhoods better connected to the community as a whole.



The Jim Schug Trail, in the southeast section of Dryden, is an example of a local infrastructure where residential development can tie into a regional context

IV. RESIDENTIAL SITE ANALYSIS PROCESS

BACKGROUND

Site analysis is a systematic approach to clearly articulate unique and important natural and man-made amenities of the property and integrate these into a development plan that preserves and compliments these features. This process should result in the creation of an attractive development that is responsive to and helps strengthen the character of the neighborhood.

The conservation analysis and design approach places the identification and conservation of resources as the primary and leading design component in site planning, layout, and design of the built environment in rural character areas. This approach reverses the typical site planning approach which historically has dictated the laying out of the streets, lot lines and building footprints as the first part of the process. Instead of first identifying development areas, the process begins by analyzing on-site resources and the site's connections to surrounding resources in order to identify important on-site conservation areas. Conservation areas in Dryden may include natural landscapes such as wildlife habitat, streams and forests. These areas may also include working and scenic rural landscapes such as farm fields, farmsteads, and contributing buildings and features.

The conservation analysis process helps identify conservation priorities on a site-specific basis, utilizing an understanding of what and how the site contributes and connects to important local and regional natural resources.

This procedure sets forth a collaborative effort between the planning board and the applicant at the early stages of the design process to better understand existing landscape features and to evaluate the site's most valuable resources before committing to building, street, or development area footprints. While it may not be possible for all on-site resources to be protected, the conservation analysis process helps identify conservation priorities on a site-specific basis, utilizing an understanding of what and how the site contributes and connects to important local and regional natural resources.

This conservation analysis process will help the property owner/developer, the town review board(s), and the public gain a deeper understanding of how proposed change to a site affects the future landscape. This understanding forms the basis for design decisions, which in the end will help to achieve the applicant's objectives while being responsive to the broader goals and responsibilities of the town.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING AND FIELD VISIT

A pre-application meeting with town environmental planner should be held prior to the design of a subdivision project. The town environmental planner (and other staff as appropriate) will listen to the applicant’s objectives and will review the requirements and procedures. This meeting can be conducted prior to any survey or other design work to help establish a clear understanding of the needs and requirements of the conservation analysis and design process between the landowner/developer and town environmental planner. A field visit could also be valuable early in the process to help the town environmental planner and the applicant share observations about the property from an “on the ground” perspective.

Through this pre-application meeting and field visit, the town environmental planner would be able to exercise some level of professional judgment in conjunction with the applicant or developer in determining what level of detail of conservation analysis would be required on a site-specific basis. A minimum of conservation analysis detail as outlined below in the “four-step conservation analysis and design process” should be a requirement for every parcel, no matter how small a parcel is proposed for conservation subdivision or site plan review.

A FOUR-STEP CONSERVATION ANALYSIS AND DESIGN PROCESS

The following section outlines the procedures for conducting a conservation-based analysis and design process for site plans and subdivision plans. The applicant shall utilize this process for site planning, layout and design of the subject parcel.

Conservation Analysis: A Four-Step Design Process

- 1. Create a neighborhood or context-level conservation analysis map which synthesizes the site’s most important resources and features in relation to the surrounding area. (Town and county GIS data should be used for a base map)**
- 2. Create a site-level conservation analysis map which details the site’s most important resources and features to help identify the suitable areas for development and conservation on the building site.**
- 3. Mutually determine the site’s conservation and development areas.**
- 4. Identify a proposed layout for development that complements the conservation areas (conservation design).**

STEPS 1 & 2: CREATE CONSERVATION ANALYSIS MAPS

This important first step is critical to understanding how a parcel relates to town-wide conservation goals, rural character, regional context, and to its immediate neighboring parcels. Existing natural, cultural and scenic resources and features should be identified clearly on a scaled conservation analysis map, with additional supporting maps. This initial inventory will include on-site evaluation of resources, as well as the review of USGS topographical maps, aerial photographs, FEMA flood maps, and other sources of information. An analysis of resources at the site level is required as well as an analysis of the regional influences and major contributing rural character features. This analysis may take the form of several maps and layers of data presented in a meaningful way to the planning board for its review and decision-making in conjunction with the application.

Below is a list of questions that should be answered by the land developer through the conservation analysis:

- How important is this parcel from a town-wide open space perspective? Has this parcel been publicly identified as including an important natural resource or contributing to rural character?
- How does this parcel fit into the rural character of town? What does this parcel and its unique elements contribute to the rural character of the town?
- What are the major natural resources and what contributing elements of rural character and open space resources are exhibited on this site?
- What water resource, vegetation patterns or other connections are there to adjacent parcels and important natural resources?
- Is the parcel adjacent to a municipal border such as a town or village? Identify the subject parcel and the designated future land use of the adjacent parcels within the adjoining municipality to determine how does this location influence the contextual site design.

Step 1 involves a broad analysis of important environmental resources at a town-wide and regional level. This analysis provides a context for the development site as many important resources and conservation goals operate at a town-wide and regional level and results in the creation of a large-scale conservation area map. Step 2 then focuses on the specific resources of the development parcel resulting in the creation of a small-scale conservation area map. It is the responsibility of the developer (or representative) to meet with town staff to accomplish these steps before further consultation regarding their property takes place.

***STEP 1: UNDERSTANDING THE AREA LANDSCAPE CONTEXT:
CREATION OF REGIONAL LEVEL MAP SHOWING MAJOR
RESOURCE FEATURES AND CONNECTIONS IN PROXIMITY TO A
BUILDING SITE***

The purpose of this step is to attempt to understand the environmental context of the development site by analyzing town-wide landscape patterns and resources. The following questions will help to create an understanding of major resource patterns and influences with respect to the development site, and how these patterns contribute to Dryden's rural character.

- What is the relationship of the parcel(s) to open space resources patterns and context?
- Are there major resource features, and connections across the landscape that intersect with or are near the subject parcel(s)?

To analyze the site's relationship within the town and to rural character, the developer shall create a regional level conservation analysis map that addresses the following set of resources for the site in relation to the town as a whole and specifically within the rural character area that the development parcel is located within.

- 1. Identify the parcel's location in relation to existing and future land uses, open space, and existing and proposed recreation lands as identified in Town and/or relevant County planning documents (*Comprehensive Plan, Recreation Plan, Official Map, Tompkins County Unique Natural Areas Inventory, etc.*).**
- 2. Identify whether the development parcel or the resources found there on are listed as a priority parcel or resource for open space protection in the Town's *Open Space Inventory*, if applicable.** Identify any other priority parcels adjacent to the development parcel or within the rural character area.
- 3. Identify the primary rural character areas and features that are present near the site and connecting/intersecting with the site.** These rural character areas and features should be preserved and featured in the site design process on a case-by-case basis. As an example, designing for a property that includes open lands, scenic lake views, and woodlands may include protection of the viewshed of the lake by clustering the residences in the open lands at the edge of the woodlands. In this case, the most important design decision may be to protect the viewshed. However, the goal of protecting the larger cluster of woodlands is also achieved by clustering the homes at the edge of the open lands rather than clearing the woodlands for development.
- 4. Identify the natural ecosystems, habitat patches and corridors and their relation to the site.** Identify stream corridors and other large landscape connections. Identify large woodland patches, networks of old fields, meadows,

hedgerows, wetland complexes, or other significant landscape patterns. Identify smaller habitat patches that may serve as wildlife “stepping stones” between the large patches and complexes. Maintaining connectivity of these patches and corridors should be a major goal of the conservation design process.

STEP 2: ANALYZE THE ON-SITE RESOURCES BY CREATING A SITE-LEVEL CONSERVATION ANALYSIS MAP THAT BETTER SHOWS SUITABLE BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS ON A BUILDING SITE

Step 2 involves conducting a detailed, focused inventory **and analysis** of the on-site natural, cultural and scenic features. The following basic information and resource data must be mapped and illustrated.

OWNERSHIP

All contiguous land owned or under option by the owner and/or applicant.

TOPOGRAPHY AND SIGNIFICANT TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

1. Show steep slopes and ridgelines. Map the site’s topography of a minimum of two-foot intervals to United States Geological Survey datum within the parcel. Identify the areas that have slopes 8 to 15%; and separately, identify the areas that are 15% or greater. Generally, slopes up to 7% are suitable for development, though each sites unique characteristics will dictate the suitable scale and placement of development. Slopes between 8 and 15% are less optimal but may potentially be developed. Slopes greater than 15% are to be avoided if possible since the potential for erosion is greater. Developers should consult with the town planner for analysis of areas with significant slopes.
2. Show distinct geologic formations such as rock outcroppings, cliffs, sink holes, and fault lines.
3. Label hilltops and distinctive geological features, especially if a hill or topographic feature is “known” in town.

WATERCOURSES AND WATERBODIES

Identify all water features to include: rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands, brooks and intermittent water or drainage channels. Include the Department of Environmental Conservation Stream Classification System as applicable.

AQUIFERS AND AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS

Map existing known mapped aquifers and aquifer recharge areas to understand the site’s relationship and drainage connection within the watershed to such resources. If the site exhibits aquifer areas or is immediately connected to such, this should be taken into account in the development of a conservation area of the site. Hydrologic soils should also be mapped and identified by soil group (A, B, C, D) to evaluate infiltration and runoff potential.

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WETLANDS

Map and field delineate both NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Freshwater Wetlands and their associated 100-foot Adjacent Areas, and federal jurisdictional wetlands as regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

FLOODPLAINS

Show 100-year and 500-year flood hazard areas from a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate map or site-specific flood elevation determination data if none is available otherwise through FEMA.

FOREST, MATURE WOODLANDS, AND WOODLOTS

Map large and smaller patterns of intact woodlands and forest areas using aerial photo and land cover analysis. Woodlands should be considered in the overall natural setting pattern, from a habitat perspective, and from a rural scenic setting perspective. In some locations, some development in a wooded area may be more desirable than development in an open area.

FARMS, FARMLANDS, AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS, AGRICULTURAL SOILS

Map the following agricultural features and resources:

- A. Active farms, active farm buildings on the subject parcel or within a ¼ mile radius of the subject parcel.
- B. Farmland within a New York State certified agricultural district in Tompkins County.
- C. Lands within a ¼ mile radius of a New York State certified agricultural district.
- D. Soils classified as soils of Statewide Significance and Prime Farm soils as mapped by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Tompkins County Soil Survey.

EXISTING OPEN SPACE RESOURCES OR RECREATION LANDS

Map the following open space and recreational lands or resources (owned by private not-for-profit conservation organizations, town, county, or state entities) on the subject parcel and within a ¼ mile radius:

- A. Permanently protected open space or recreation lands (local, county, state, federal).
- B. Permanent or term conservation easements.
- C. Priority open space parcels.
- D. Roadways designated as scenic (local, regional, or state designation).

- E. Scenic rural roads as identified in the town's Comprehensive Plan.
- F. Existing and potential trail connections and pathways (as identified in town trail plan; county trail plan; state or federal trail plans; including scenic byway plans).

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC FEATURES

Map the following cultural and historic features:

- A. Lands having scenic, historic or archeological significance as identified in the town's comprehensive plan, or other specific relevant studies.
- B. Existing infrastructure such as streets, driveways, farm and forest roads, buildings, foundations, walls, wells, drainage fields dumps, utilities, fire hydrants, storm and sanitary sewers, cellar holes, graves, etc.
- C. All historically significant sites, or structures on the site and on any abutting site within a ¼ mile radius of the site's property boundary, including but not limited to those sites and parcels identified as locally important historic resources in the Town's Comprehensive Plan, and according to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Resources, State Historic Preservation Office that tracks sites, buildings and parcels identified with state register or federal register historic designation.
- D. Homesteads on farms (farmstead).
- E. Agricultural buildings: barns, silos and other farm activity out-buildings.
- F. Stone walls, hedgerows, wooden fences.
- G. Archaeological and cultural features (historic features, structures, etc.).

SCENIC VIEWS AND SCENIC LANDSCAPES

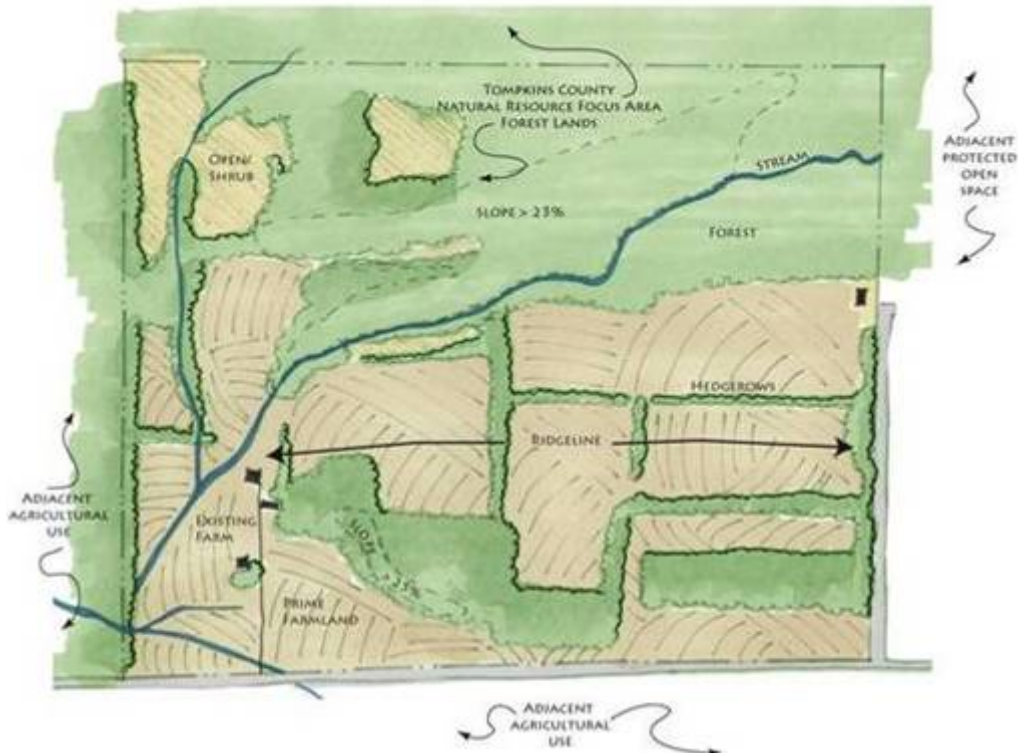
Map the location and extent of views into the property from navigable waterways; public roads and public areas, including parks and forests; and lands with existing conservation easements.

FIELD WALK WITH CONSERVATION ANALYSIS MAPS

Depending on the parcel size and proposed level of development on a site, a field walk should be conducted to review the Step 2 analysis with the developer, the town environmental planner, and the planning board. Ideally, the field visit would include the regional-level conservation analysis map (Step 1), and the site-level conservation analysis map (Step 2) to provide a base for assessment and understanding of the site, its natural and man-made resources, and its connections and role in Dryden's rural character and town open space resources landscape. The goal of a field visit is to address and evaluate the range of conservation values for this site, and to mutually prioritize what are the most important resources and areas of the site to be conserved as

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part of a development project. Again, a field walk is only recommended if there are a significant number of residential units proposed for a site.



An example of a site-level conservation analysis map for a property on Irish Settlement Road. Note the depiction of the existing environmental features on the site.

EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

The depth and extent of the above requested conservation analysis is contingent upon the size of the parcel to be subdivided. It is recommended that a landowner considering subdivision of their property contact the town environmental planner for a pre-submittal meeting. At this time the town environmental planner can also recommend the level of depth for the conservation analysis, dependent upon the size of the parcel to be subdivided and the proposed number of residential units. A qualified land planning professional such as a land planner/designer, landscape architect, or planner who specializes in conservation analysis should conduct the land analysis. Synthesizing all of the information gathered into the form of a conservation analysis map (with supplemental inventory and maps) – will be useful to interpret and weigh the conservation features and values of the parcel.

STEP 3: MUTUALLY DETERMINE THE SITE'S CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Once an inventory and analysis has taken place, and a small scale conservation analysis map has been created, it is recommended that the developer and Planning Board come to an agreement on which natural resources shall be protected and where the logical areas to build on a project site shall take place.

STEP 4: IDENTIFY A PROPOSED LAYOUT FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT COMPLEMENTS THE CONSERVATION AREAS

Based on the previous input, it is recommended that the developer and Planning Board come to a mutual agreement as to a layout that will provide a balance between protecting the most important natural resources on a site, assisting the town in preserving its rural character, and providing the greatest financial gain for the site developer. The proposed layout should also incorporate a stormwater management plan, as necessary and required.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this process should help to establish a greater understanding of the site's key conservation features. This should lead to the identification of key areas and resources for conservation on a development site.

V. RESIDENTIAL DESIGN TYPES AND EXAMPLES

The purpose of this section is to provide insight into conservation design plans and layouts. The first example illustrates how a property in the town might be developed if the landowner were to take a conservation approach. The other examples are from communities facing similar issues as Dryden and are meant to illustrate what conservation design should and should not look like. Also included are examples of more dense development that would be focused in and around any of the town’s hamlets or villages.

CASE STUDY: IRISH SETTLEMENT ROAD PROPERTY – 137 ACRES

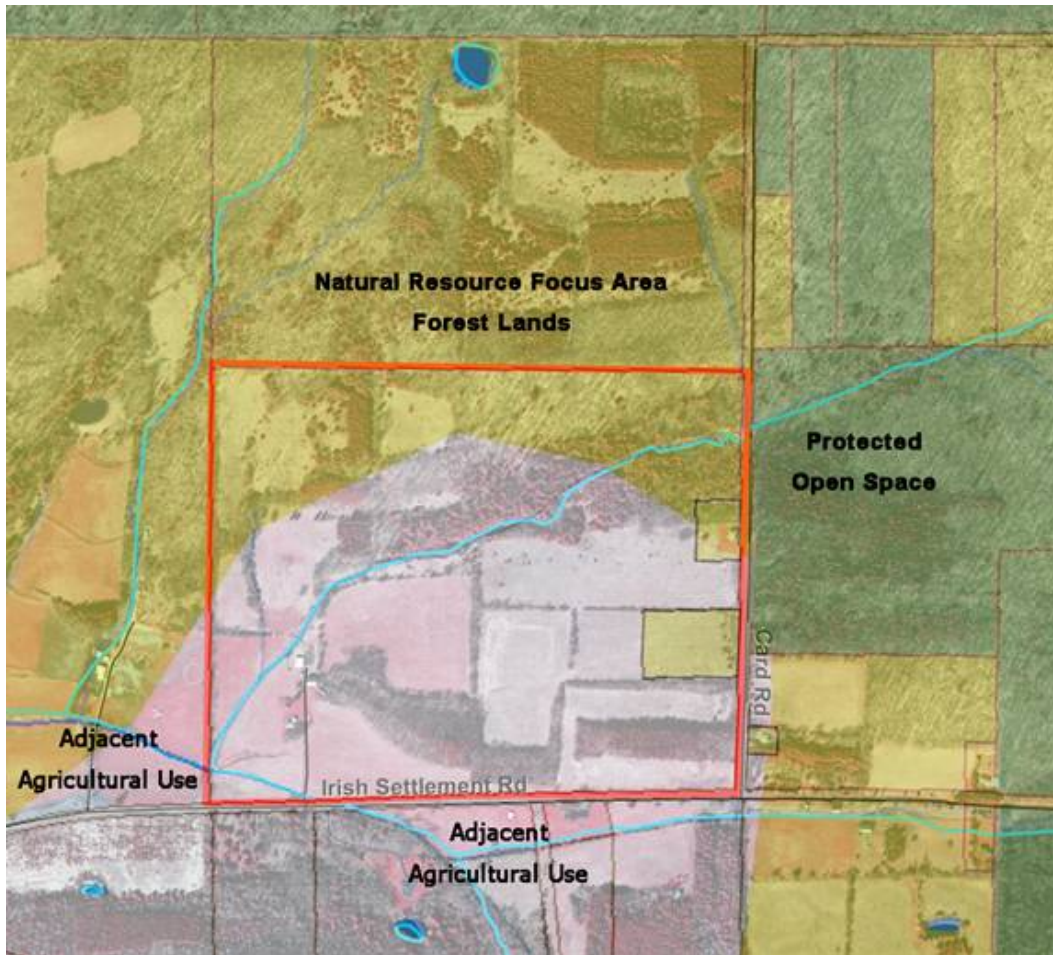
The first example is a hypothetical subdivision proposed for a 137-acre property on Irish Settlement Road. The analysis that follows is based on this specific property, but can be applied throughout the town. While the specific characteristics of individual properties in the town will vary widely, as will the goals of individual landowners, the overlying principles communicated below can be sensibly adapted to fit each unique situation.



A scenic view of the 137-acre parcel on Irish Settlement Road

**CONTEXT LEVEL ANALYSIS: EXISTING CONDITIONS
(PART OF STEP 1)**

The first few images are representative of the existing conditions of the property and adjacent lands and are meant to provide context for how a site should be developed.

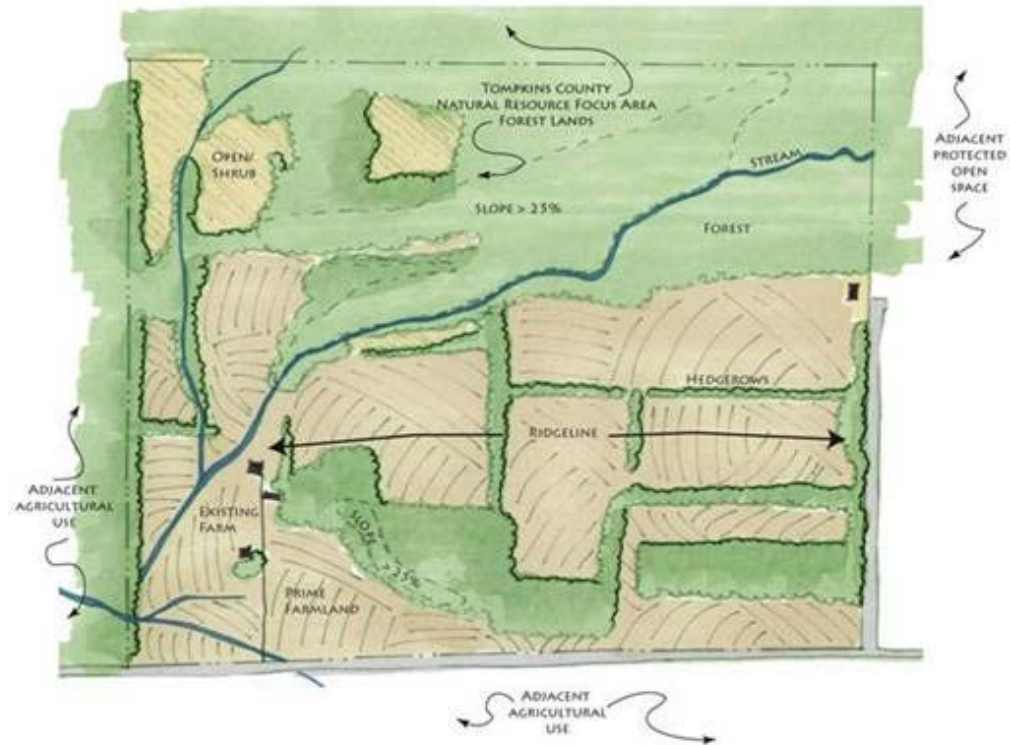


Irish Settlement Road Property: This contextual image allows the landowner to better understand adjacent uses to the property and lends insight into how the parcel might be subdivided.

CONSERVATION ANALYSIS (Step 2)

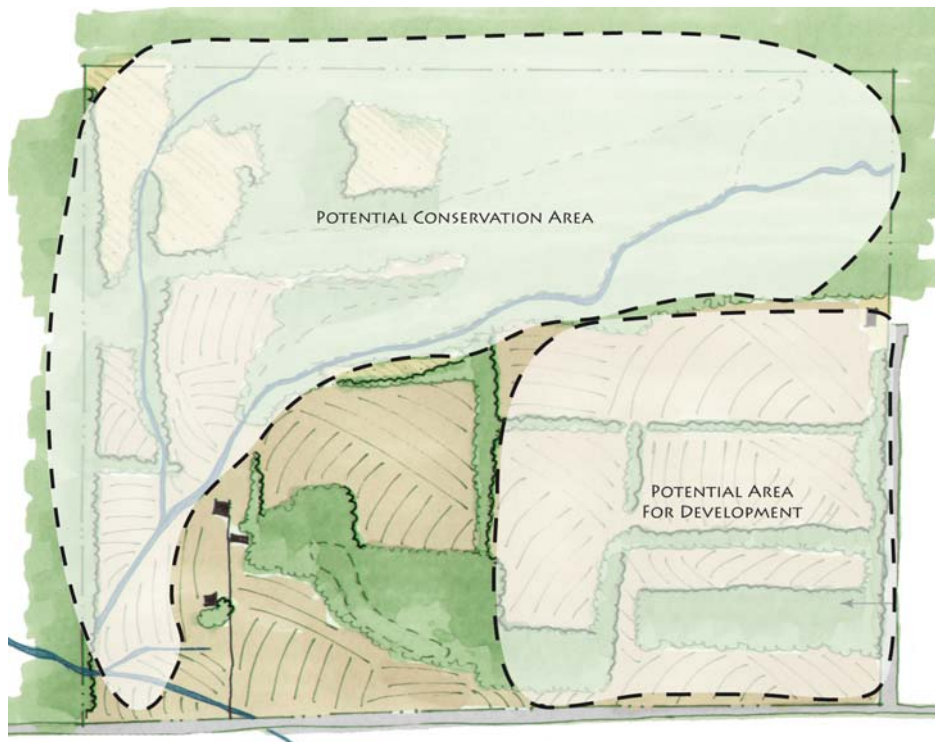
The following renderings depict the existing conditions, natural resources, and identify where development should occur on the site. In addition to identifying natural areas on the site, this conservation analysis lends insight into what locations on the 137-acre parcel are most suited for residential housing and what areas should be conserved for agriculture or open space uses.

Town of Dryden – Residential Development Design Guidelines



Above: Based on the location of the natural resources on and adjacent to the site, the upper portion of the site, with the slope, stream and forest lands, should not be developed.

Below: Conservation and development areas are identified for the parcel.



PHASE I: DEVELOPMENT

The renderings below depict two possible approaches for the first phase of development of the Irish Settlement Road property. The image on the left is an example of an undesirable development pattern; multiple frontage lots with individual driveways creating additional conflict points on the adjacent roadway. The new homes closest to the existing farmstead are also sited on prime farmland, which precludes the land from agricultural use in the future. In the image on the lower right, the existing farmhouse remains separate and while there are four frontage lots, the development is placed away from the existing home, thus allowing for a significant open space between the existing farmstead and the new homes. Moreover, the new homes share two driveways, reducing the number of entry points along Irish Settlement Road.



Left: The rendering shows five new lots during Phase I with four frontage lots and no shared access – this is an undesirable approach.

Right: New homes are placed away from the existing home and share driveways to reduce entry points on the road – this is a more desirable approach.



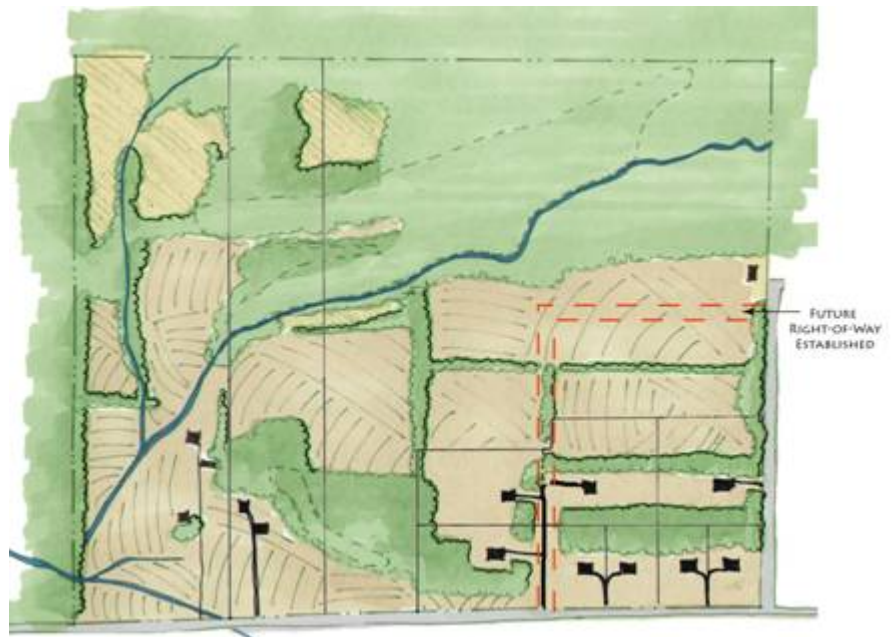
PHASE II: DEVELOPMENT

The build-out of the parcel continues during Phase II of the development. The bottom image depicts larger “mini-farms” on the left hand portion of the parcel and additional single-family lots behind the existing four homes constructed during Phase I. Although two new curb cuts have been added, the new driveways serve five additional homes. The creation of the mini-farm or farmstead supports the continuance of agriculture and preserves open space in town while also meeting the landowner’s needs. The rendering to the left depicts additional frontage lots yielding additional curb cuts, both along Irish Settlement and along Card Road. The scenario on the left is unacceptable due to the loss of farmland and the additional safety concerns.



Left: Undesirable development adds additional frontage lots and diminishes farmland.

Right: Farmland is maintained on the left, future ROW is established to guide future development of the site.



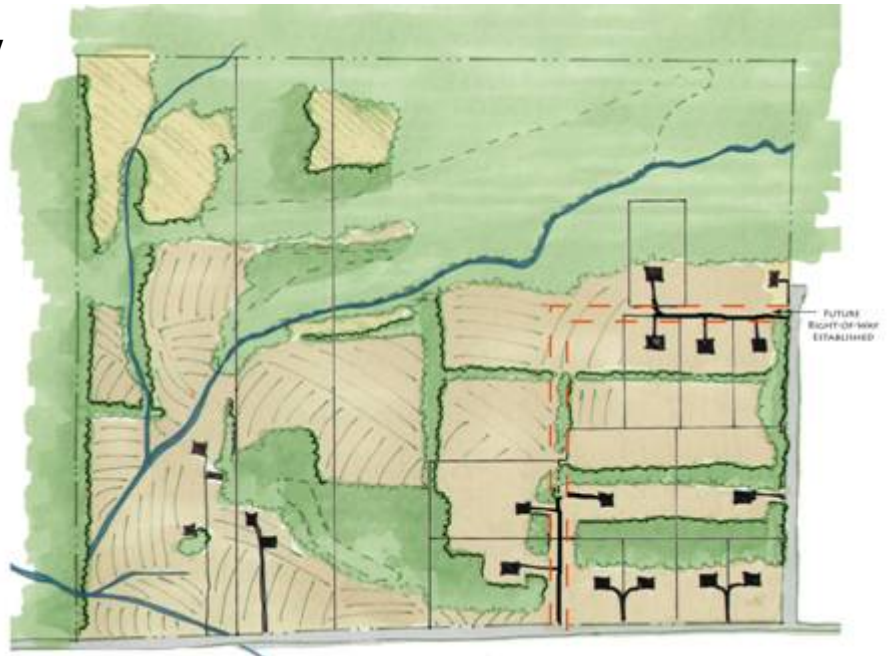
PHASE III: DEVELOPMENT

In Phase III of the development the conservation scenario on the bottom of this page depicts the addition of more homes along the future right-of-way. At this point in the development the landowner still has not invested in any roadways. Although the future right-of-way has been established, thus far the development has been utilizing shared driveways. The top rendering shows the additional parcels, several of which are flag-lots. Also, more entry points have been added along Irish Settlement Road.



Left: Undesirable - the natural and ecological areas of the parcel are being consumed by development.

Right: Desirable - Additional homes are added from Card Road entry using shared driveways.

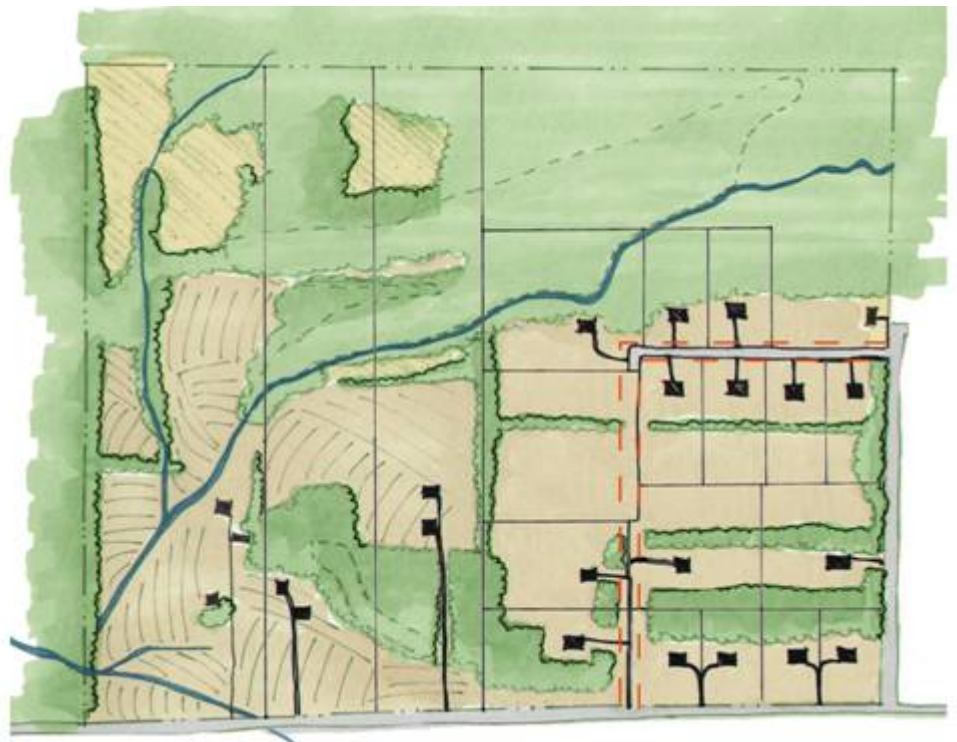


PHASE IV: DEVELOPMENT

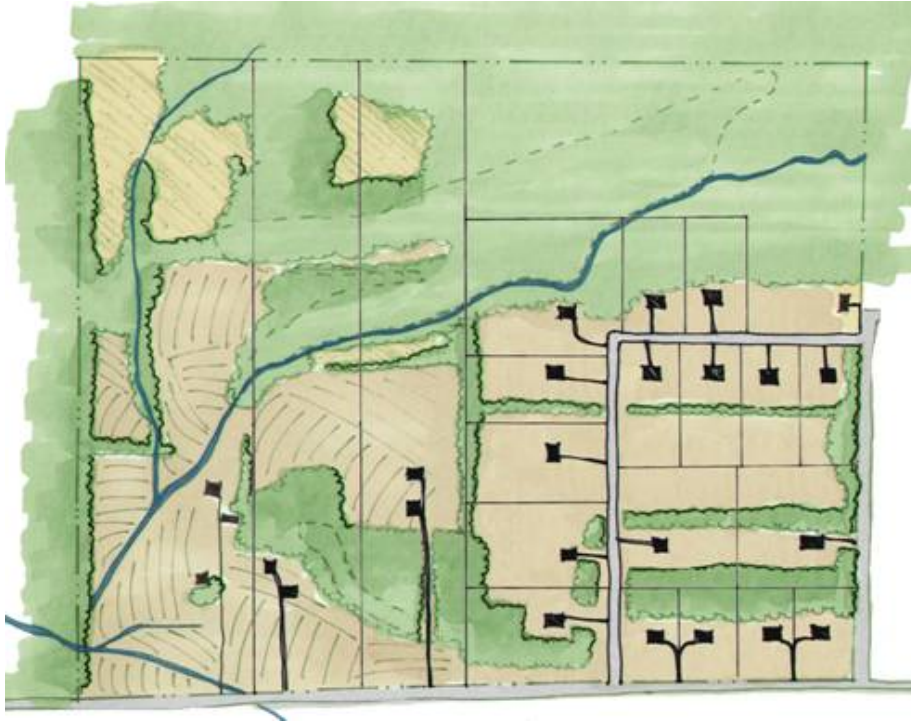


Left: Undesirable - Flag lots with frontage along the road continue to permeate the property. Little of the natural resource areas are left. Several of the flag lots require driveways crossing the stream bisecting the property.

Right: Desirable - An additional mini-farm is created near the original farm and more homes are built by the expansion of a private driveway into a full road from Card Road.

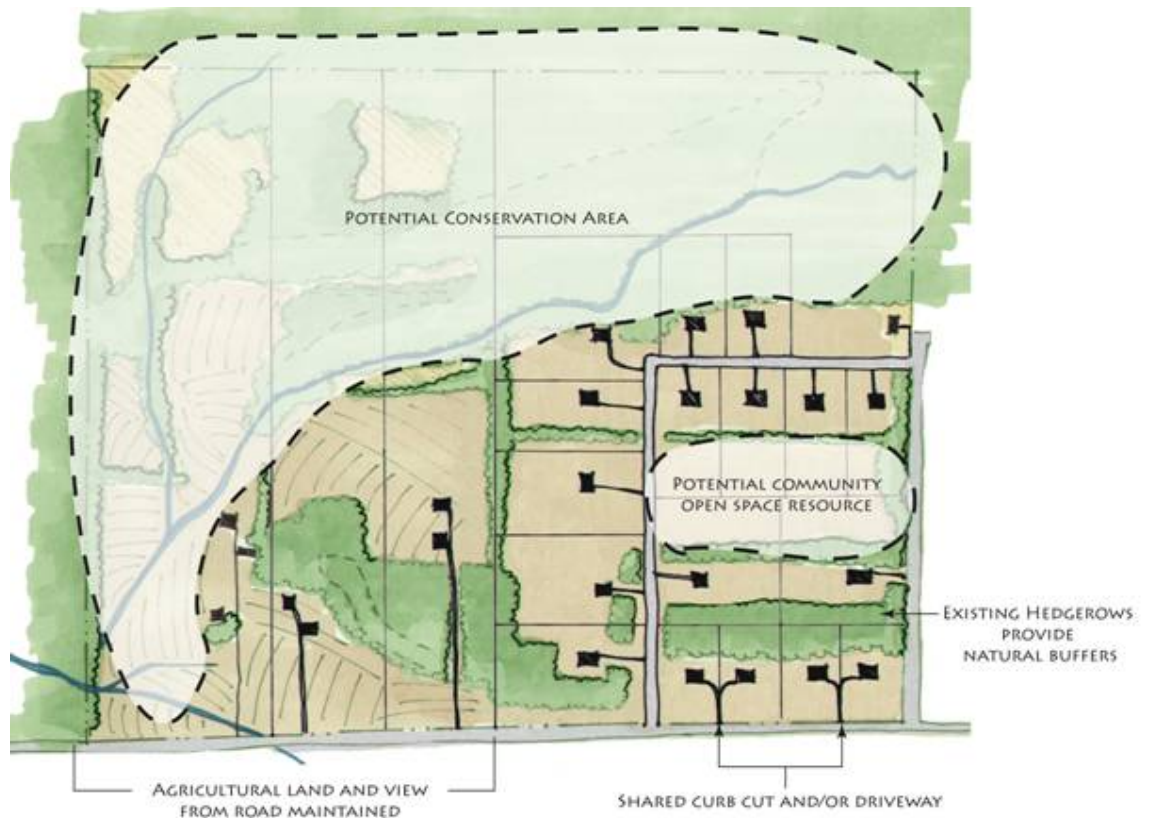


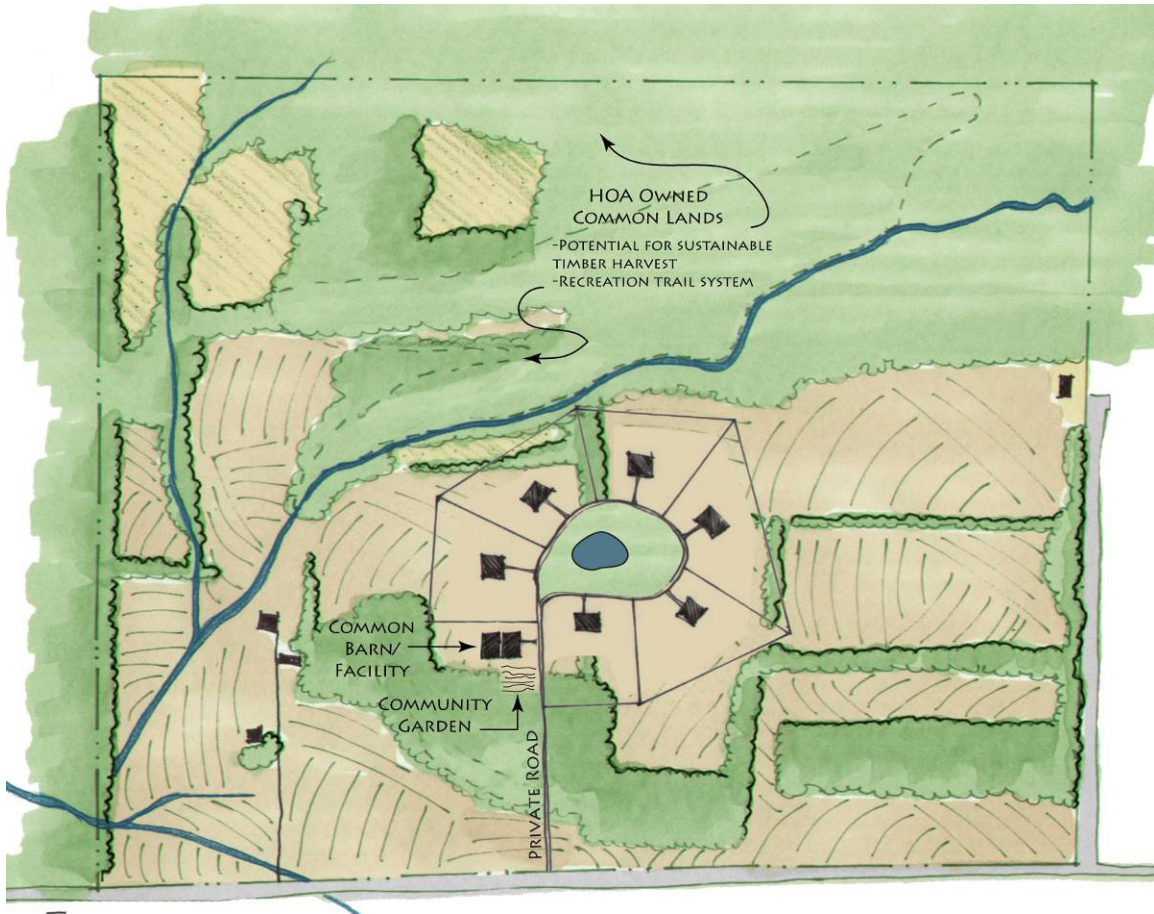
PHASE V: DEVELOPMENT AND FULL BUILD-OUT



Left: What were once shared driveways is now a residential-scale road connecting Irish Settlement and Card Roads. The mini-farms have preserved open space, hydrological, and agricultural uses.

Below: Desirable features of this scenario are illustrated.





ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO: A SMALL-SCALE COOPERATIVE FARM

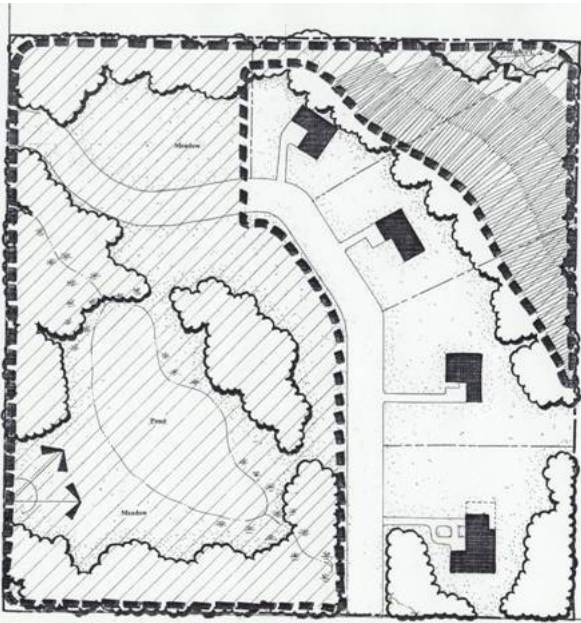
In this alternative scenario for development on the Irish Settlement Road parcel, the existing farm property can be developed in a method that would better promote the preservation of open space and agricultural land. This example also provides additional amenities that could be managed by a homeowners' association. Potential amenities on this site include: recreational space, multi-use trails, equestrian trails and stables, community gardens, or a cooperative farm. This rendering illustrates six 1- to 2-acre lots subdivided from an existing 137 acre parcel located with a common barn or recreation facility. The homes are hidden from the main roadway to create a physical separation from the road and from the existing farmhouse to the south. These homes are accessible from the county-maintained roadway by one private road as opposed to multiple driveways, limiting the number of access points and improving safety. Funding to support common areas in the subdivision can come from a variety of sources, including limited timber harvesting, haying, and limited crop production. The number and size of developable lots could be more or less dependent upon what is economically viable; landowner needs and vision for the property; or the desire to conserve open space.

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

In many cases, a property owner may desire a proposed subdivision to be governed by a Homeowner's Association (HOA). A HOA is a legal entity that is enacted to maintain common areas and to enforce the deed restrictions of a subdivision. Typically, a HOA is set up by a developer to allow control of the development of the subdivision through Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&R's) that are tied to the deed signed by a property owner at property closing and run with the land. In most cases, the developer initially has control over the subdivision, with control gradually being turned over to the property owners as the subdivision is developed. The HOA typically assesses property owners within the subdivision for maintenance costs of roads and stormwater facilities, as well as insurance and legal costs.

OTHER SUBDIVISION CONCEPTS

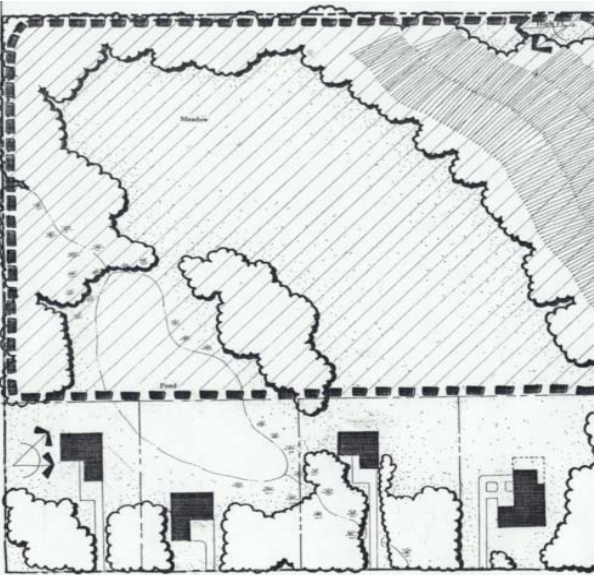
Example 1: Desirable Small-Scale Subdivision Design on a 15 acre parcel



Desirable small-scale subdivision design, Milton, NY.

This design example to the left, from a project in Milton, NY, protects the most significant visual and natural resources on the site -- the meadow, woodlots, pond, and wetlands in the southwest corner of the site. The houses are tucked into the rear of the parcel and are hardly visible from the existing roads. Curb cuts onto the existing roads are minimized and the new road is constructed to town standards.

The bottom lot retains ownership of almost all of the open land created by this subdivision. A conservation easement is utilized to ensure that the conserved lands (including the meadows, pond, and wetlands) will remain permanently undeveloped. The rear portions of the other three lots, which contain steep slopes, are also placed under a conservation easement to ensure that the slopes remain undisturbed.



Undesirable small-scale subdivision design of same site.

In contrast, the rendering to the left also shows a 4 lot subdivision on the same parcel which protects more than 50% of the original parcel. However, this subdivision design displays little regard for the important landscape features of the site. The meadows, woodlands, pond, and wetlands have all been compromised by the location of housing and lot lines. The rural view from the existing roads is diminished, and there are several new driveways accessing the existing road (south) within a short span.

Example 2: Incremental development of a 15-acre parcel

A smaller parcel still presents an economic opportunity for the landowner. This design scenario depicts three lots developed on the interior of a 15 acre parcel and away from the highway frontage, with approximately seven acres remaining for the principal land owner. The goal is to illustrate that development can be designed to limit access points and improve roadway safety, while being able to be built in the typical incremental small-scale development pattern that currently exists in Dryden. While this is one development alternative, site development should be created to suit the specific needs of a landowner while encompassing the larger development goals for the town. The number and size of developable lots can vary dependent on the economic goals of the landowner as well as the timeline for development. Depending on their needs, a landowner might develop their property incrementally with subdivision as needed based on economic necessity.



Step 1: A house with a private driveway and easement for extension of a private road

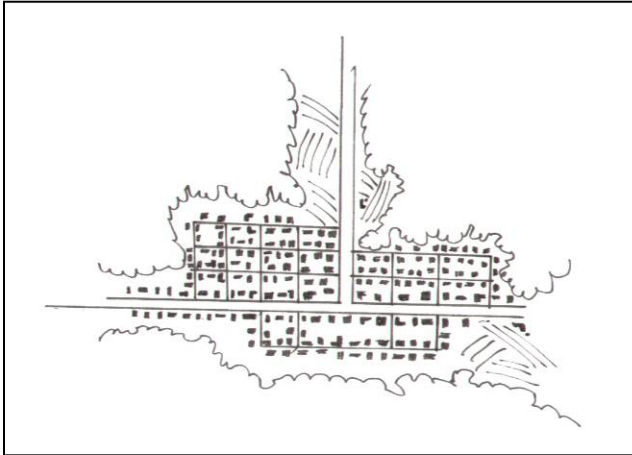


Step 2: A second home with a private driveway off of the private roadway and easement for extension of the private road

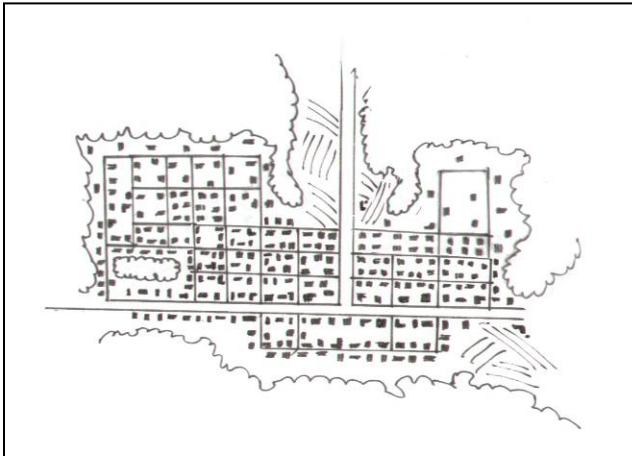


Step 3: An additional home off of the shared driveway. This roadway can be designed in a way to be extended to tie into future development on adjoining parcels.

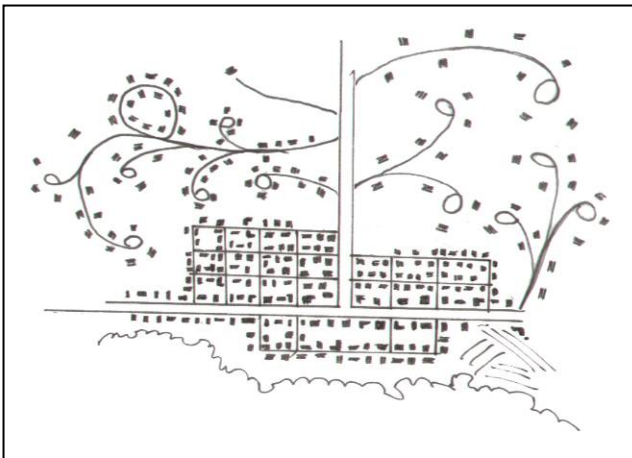
Example 3: Clustered Village Scale Development



Existing Village Area



Desired extension of village scale development



Undesired extension of village scale development

In several areas adjacent to existing village boundaries within Dryden and in areas immediately adjacent to existing infrastructure such as sewer and water, it may be desired to extend village scale development as well as to provide additional open-space area for the town and its residents. In these areas, it may be desirable to limit development on a parcel adjacent to a village boundary or existing infrastructure to no more than 25 percent of the property area while allowing a gross density equal to that allowed for the entire subject parcel. Also, the remaining areas would be placed into open space until such time as the property is annexed into the village. Finally, the street layout of the property shall be required to continue the existing village grid pattern unless it is deemed infeasible by the Town Planning Board due to environmental factors such as, but not limited to, the presence of wetlands, water bodies, or steep slopes.

Example 4: Hamlet Residential Development

Development in and around the existing villages and hamlets in Dryden should respect existing architectural surroundings. With a more established, typically neo-traditional development pattern, hamlets and villages are denser communities with amenities located within. While it is foreseen that the majority of hamlet development will be of a limited infill nature; in some cases, the extensive redevelopment or expansion of hamlet areas could occur.



Setbacks should be minimized, and a common design element, such as a fence should be encouraged.

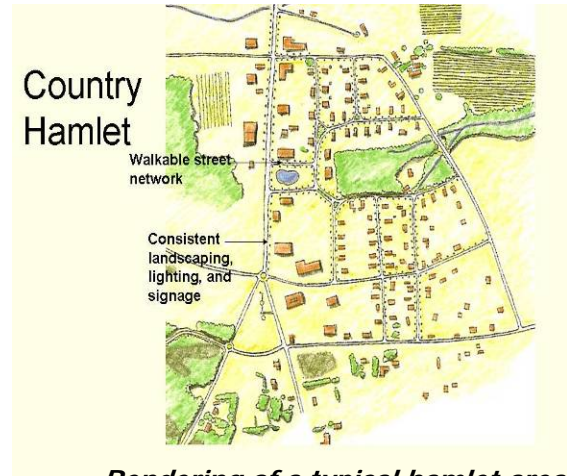


Multi-family housing that is designed to architecturally respect its surroundings.

Hamlets and villages in Dryden should strive toward being pedestrian friendly by introducing pathways and sidewalks where possible. In addition, any new development proposed adjacent to an existing village or hamlet should draw from locally accepted design features so as to create a cohesive aesthetic for the community.



Extension of the existing hamlet pattern should be recommended whenever possible



Rendering of a typical hamlet area

APPENDIX

Useful selected references:

- American Farmland Trust: Guide to Local Planning for Agriculture
http://www.farmlandinfo.org/documents/30379/Guide_to_Local_Planning_for_Agriculture_NY.pdf
- American Planning Association Growing Greener by Randall Arendt, 1999 (From their bookstore, somewhat dated but a classic)
<http://www.planning.org/APAStore/Search/Default.aspx?p=1766>
- Link to “Using Limited Development to Conserve Lands and Natural Resources”
By Jeffrey C. Milder, Spring 2006, Exchange, Land Trust Alliance.
<http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/jcm85/CLDPs/Exchange-LimitedDevelopment.pdf>
- Finger Lake Land Trust, a regional conservation organization, based in Ithaca.
Works on conservation projects in Dryden and throughout the region.
<http://www.flit.org/>

References for preparing plans and construction documents for proposed development:

- Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan
<http://www.dryden.ny.us/compplan.html>
- Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan
<http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/compplan/index.htm>
- Village of Dryden Comprehensive Plan
http://www.thomadevelopment.com/customers/projects/planning_projects/DrydenComprehensivePlan.pdf
- Town of Dryden Open Space Inventory
<http://www.dryden.ny.us/osi.html>
- Town of Dryden Planning Department Web Site
<http://www.dryden.ny.us/ep.html>
- Tompkins County Planning Department Web Site (Maps, environmentally sensitive areas)
<http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/>
- Tompkins County Department of Environmental Health
<http://www.tompkins-co.org/health/divisions/environmental.htm>