

New City Hamlet Center Vision Plan

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Realize the Vision Plan through Continuing Partnerships, Dialogue and Collaboration

Enhancement of New City has been an objective and goal in Clarkstown and Rockland County as far back as the 1960s. To a certain extent, this document represents not only the work over the past several months, but the collective insights of residents, civic groups, community leaders and business people gained over the previous years and decades. More important than the physical document, graphics, maps and reports, the partnerships created for the visioning process have flourished and are the true success story of the process. It is hoped that the vision plan's enduring legacy is not only the improvement of New City, but the formation of long-lasting partnerships, cooperation and communication.

A COLLECTIVE VISION WITH INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vision Plan for the New City Hamlet Center is a guide for the whole community and implementation falls squarely on those who participated in its development. Each group represented on the committee and each individual who participated in a workshop has a role to play including New City residents, business people, town and county staff and elected officials. While the plan represents a collective vision, much of its implementation will be based on individual actions:

- Property owners working with the town and neighbors to provide shared access and eliminate extra curb cuts to enhance the streetscape and make the hamlet safer for pedestrians;



Working together makes the seemingly insurmountable “doable.” Above - Supervisor Gromack addresses participants at a Vision Plan workshop

Town of Clarkstown and County of Rockland

- Business operators maintaining landscaped areas with healthy trees and shrubs and minimizing visual clutter such as excessive signage;
- Developers working pro-actively with neighbors in the project review and site plan process to understand and mitigate concerns prior to finalizing designs; and
- Neighbors participating as partners in the process and support and advocating for the realization of the Vision Plan and enhancement of New City.

MUNICIPAL ROLE

Of course, the Town of Clarkstown is in a position to directly implement the plan through investments in the built landscape (e.g., the streets and streetscape) as well as policy-making such as zoning and development regulations. In addition to these specific efforts, the town should take a leadership role in coordination of the various pieces of the plan in order to limit redundancies, conflicts and frustration. Highlights of the municipal role in implementation of the Vision Plan include:

Short Term:

- Establishment of an implementation task force;
- Encouragement and facilitation of a South Main Street Business Improvement District;
- Modification of zoning regulations along South Main Street;
- Installation of physical improvements including South Main Street streetscape and roadway infrastructure, community park improvements (e.g., Landau Park);
- Marketing of events, promotions and maintenance (e.g., street flower program).

Longer Term:

- Coordinate with County policy and administrative changes such as parking demand management strategies, creation of municipal parking;
- Implementation of economic development efforts including marketing and promotion and establishment of authorities (e.g., Local Development Corp.);
- Establishment of a local development corporation or similar entity.

COUNTY ROLE

Rockland County manages and maintains the most important and visible property in the hamlet – the historic County Courthouse, Demarest Kill Park and County Offices. The county campus is an integral part of the community and integrated into

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the hamlet. Unlike a typical suburban business park or office campus, the county campus is almost a seamless part of the neighborhood and downtown. Its location in the middle of the hamlet encourages walking and strengthens the Central Gateway. However, this location also presents challenges in transportation, parking,, expansion and growth needs. Through a continued campus planning process, the county will have a long-range plan for future structures, growth areas, park and connectivity amenities and a continuing dialogue with neighbors including the town government, residents and businesses in the vicinity.

Major roadways through the hamlet including North Main Street, New Hempstead Road, and New City – Congers Road are owned and maintained by Rockland County. It is important that the dialogue between the county, town and community continue to ensure that modifications to the roadway infrastructure are coordinated with the Vision Plan and the overall concept for the hamlet. In particular, the streetscape elements along the county campus and in front of the courthouse should be consistent with South Main Street designs and intersection alternatives considered for the Main Street and New City – Congers Road intersection that minimize adverse impacts to pedestrian connectivity. Recommended preliminary steps for the county include:

Short Term:

- Continue with New City Vision Plan implementation, participate in the streetscape program with the town;
- Include context sensitive design of New Hempstead Road improvements in the Central Gateway;
- Establish an enhanced pedestrian link between the County Campuses on New Hempstead Road, connecting the north and south sides in a safe manner with improved crossings and signaling;
- Establish enhanced links between the County Campus and Dutch Garden and Main Street;
- Enhance community activities and events like a Rockland County Fair.

Longer Term:

- Create a pedestrian mall with a fountain in front of the County Campus;
- Participate with Town to create parking management strategies and facilities capital plan;
- Investigate the option of an improved connection between the County Campuses with a pedestrian pathway which runs underneath New Hempstead Road;
- Continue campus planning and develop a formal campus master plan.