



Amityville

Downtown Opportunity Analysis

August 2015



Acknowledgments



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The Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) is a public benefit corporation of the State of New York. The Suffolk IDA was created to actively promote, encourage, attract and develop job and recreational opportunities throughout the County. The Suffolk IDA is empowered to provide financial assistance to private entities through tax incentives in order to promote the economic welfare, prosperity and recreational opportunities for residents of the County.

The Suffolk County IDA works in synergy with Suffolk County Executive Steven Bellone and the Deputy County Executive and Commissioner of Suffolk County Economic Development and Planning, Joanne Minieri, to foster positive economic development within the County.

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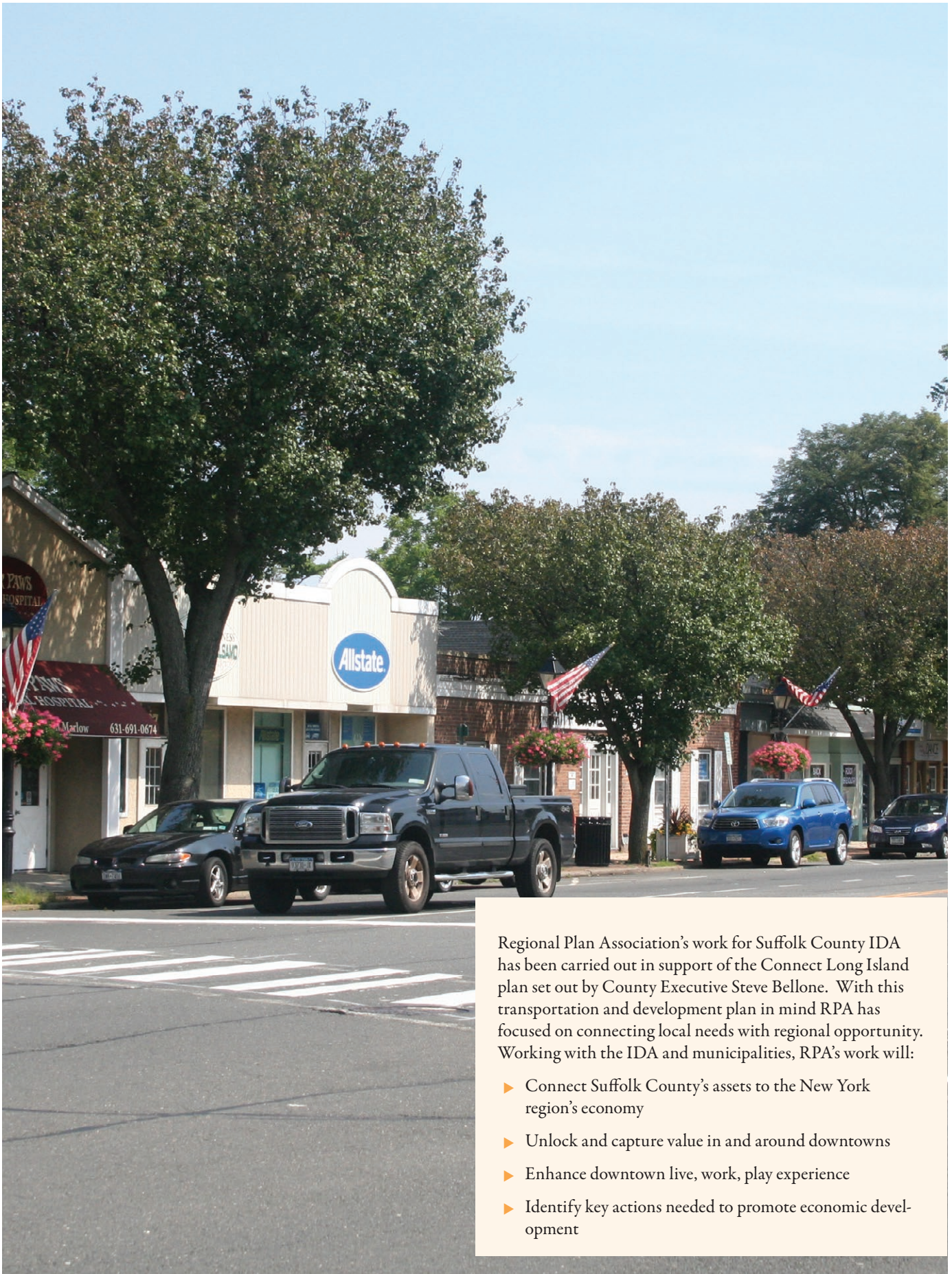
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Regional Plan Association's work for Suffolk County IDA has been carried out in support of the Connect Long Island plan set out by County Executive Steve Bellone. With this transportation and development plan in mind RPA has focused on connecting local needs with regional opportunity. Working with the IDA and municipalities, RPA's work will:

- ▶ Connect Suffolk County's assets to the New York region's economy
- ▶ Unlock and capture value in and around downtowns
- ▶ Enhance downtown live, work, play experience
- ▶ Identify key actions needed to promote economic development

Executive Summary

The Village of Amityville holds great potential to become a destination with improved quality of life and economic opportunity. Its assets are well-aligned with the demands of Long Island's changing economy and demographics, from its compact, walkable downtown to its rich history and multicultural community. Its location by the sea has drawn residents and visitors even before it became a village in 1894. But its location on the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR)'s heavily-used Babylon line and on the southern end of Route 110, one of Long Island's major employment corridors, gives Amityville a unique advantage that is likely to grow even stronger. The LIRR's East Side Access, which will provide service on the LIRR directly to Grand Central Station, will put western Suffolk communities like Amityville within easier commuting distance of over a million jobs in east midtown Manhattan. Planned north-south transit improvements for Route 110 envisioned in Suffolk County's Connect Long Island initiative will make downtown Amityville a more strategic place connecting the LIRR to the corridor. With the right planning and investments, Amityville can increase economic development and business attraction, while providing housing choices and amenities that meet the needs of all Amityville residents.

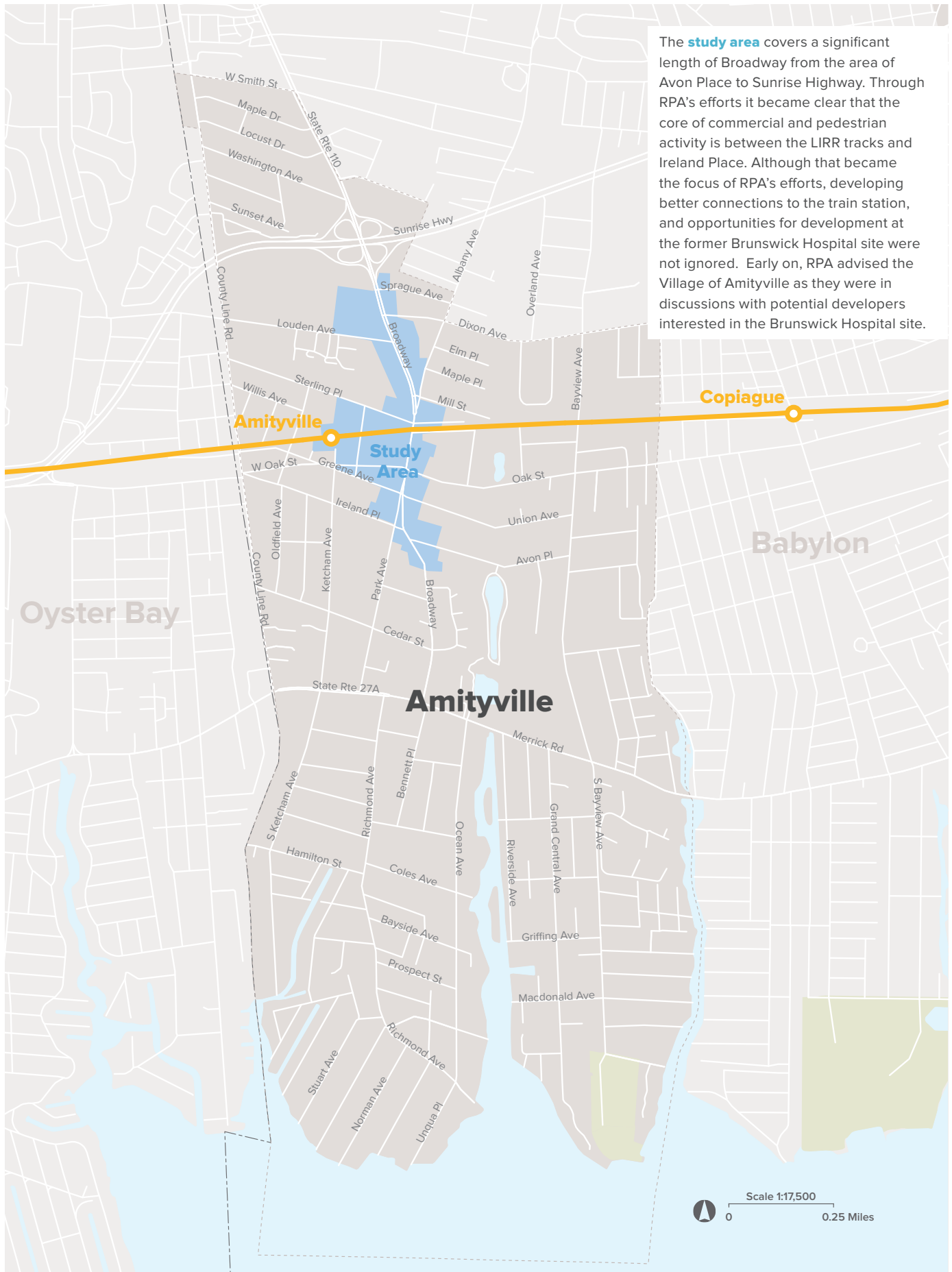
Amityville residents and business owners have identified the revitalization of their downtown as a top priority. The village of Amityville created a Downtown Revitalization Committee (DRC) in October of 2013, composed of residents and business owners, with the goal of creating a plan to help make the downtown a destination that would strengthen existing businesses, expand the tax base and improve quality of life. The village requested and was selected for assistance from the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) to strengthen the county's economy through mixed-use, transit-oriented development. Under a contract to the IDA, Regional Plan Association (RPA) worked with the Amityville DRC and the Suffolk IDA to analyze existing conditions and identify opportunities for revitalization in the downtown. This collaboration led to the identification of several priorities:

- ▶ Promote compact mixed-use development on underutilized parcels around the train station and the larger downtown area, particularly by revising outmoded provisions of the village's zoning code.
- ▶ Create context-sensitive development by using design guidelines that would give developers a clear set of rules that would advance a coherent vision for the downtown.

- ▶ Improve the public realm throughout downtown Amityville by improving pedestrian conditions, by creating new connections within the downtown and from surrounding neighborhoods, and through improved wayfinding.
- ▶ Take advantage of the market with mixed-use development that meets the high demand for rental apartments in close proximity to transportation and employment.

Specific actions were identified to address these priorities, both to prime Amityville to take advantage of appropriate development opportunities, and to ensure that development that does take place is in keeping with making the village downtown an exemplary place where people want to come to socialize, shop, work and enjoy themselves. The recommendations summarized below and detailed in the report are made solely by RPA to the village of Amityville and Suffolk IDA for consideration in the appropriate programs, public meetings and processes.

- ▶ Revise the village zoning code to remove incompatible uses, such as single and two family residences and fast food establishments from the permitted uses in the downtown. Downtown uses should facilitate constant pedestrian activity with a healthy business district. Revise the dimensional standards – front and rear setbacks, height, and lot coverage – to allow for development which encourages infill and greater density in the downtown.
- ▶ Adopt design guidelines that dictate specific requirements to supplement the Bay Village Architectural Theme. The guidelines could cover items such as, but not limited to, building surface materials, architectural treatments on corners, and percentage of window coverage on the ground floor.
- ▶ Create a pedestrian-friendly downtown with safe crossings on Broadway by reducing crossing distances through the implementation of bulb-outs. Create inviting and safe access to rear parking lots, the train station and surrounding neighborhoods
- ▶ Engage developers with a good track record of building mixed-use developments in downtowns across Long Island. Brand and market downtown Amityville to attract business types that are lacking for a downtown Amityville.



Amityville Today

Amityville is an incorporated village in the Town of Babylon located on the Babylon branch of the Long Island Railroad. Its rich history reflects the different eras of Long Island, from a popular tourist destination in the early 20th century, to a growing village for young families and commuters after World War II, and to an increasingly diverse place with the potential to take advantage of the growing desire for walkable, attractive, village living. Yet Amityville is also a distinct place on the Long Island landscape. Its location at the nexus of southern terminus of Route 110 and the Long Island Rail Road's Babylon branch makes the village center the link between one of Long Island's most important employment corridors and the south shore communities that provide many of its workers and customers. Amityville's compact downtown and bay front location are assets that can be leveraged to create an even higher amenity destination.

Downtown Character and Land Use

Amityville's downtown core is located along Route 110/Broadway between the LIRR overpass and Ireland Place. The retail, personal service and office uses found along Broadway are typical for a downtown, but a number of vacancies were apparent. In some places older buildings, such as the former movie theater, have been repurposed. This kind of adaptive reuse should be encouraged.

The LIRR station, does not feel well connected to Broadway, the center of town, even though it is not far away. Commuter parking, residential, office, and industrial uses surround the station area with no mixed-use buildings present. The Amityville Public Library is located on the corner of John St and W. Oak St in between the station and the downtown. The Amityville Post Office is located on the corner of Ketcham Ave and Ireland Place, south of the train station and west of the downtown.

The west side of Broadway has significantly more mixed-use buildings than the east side in the downtown. This is most likely a direct result of the expansion of Route 110 in 1959, which required razing buildings on the east side to expand the roadway. Many of the buildings that were erected after the expansion were only single-story.

Within downtown Amityville and throughout the community there are many commercial buildings and residences that "blend the design of the Village's 19th Century Victorian-style

Population

9,525

Median Age

47

Total Occupied Housing Units

3,480

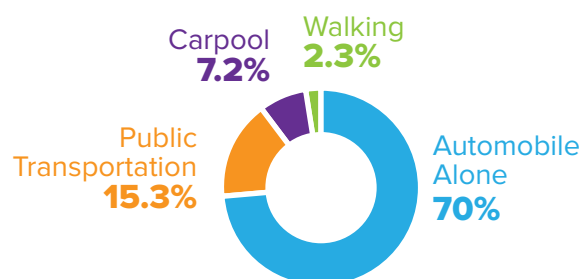
Percent Housing Units Renter Occupied

33.5%

Median Household Income

\$80,345

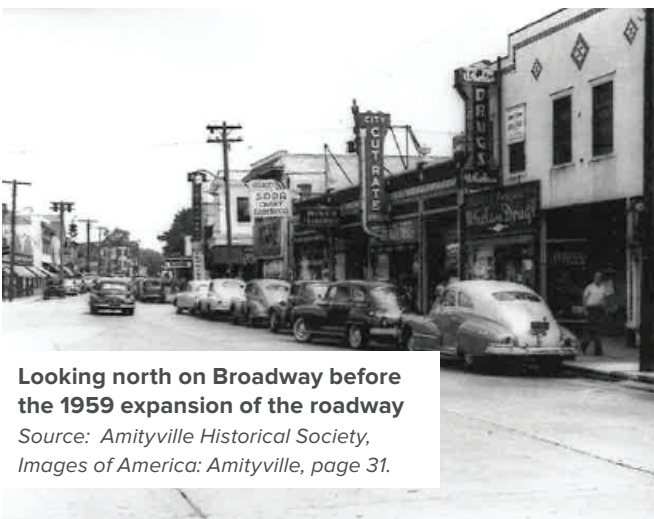
How workers Commute



Average Travel Time to Penn Station via LIRR

1 hours and 2 minutes

Former movie theater re-purposed to offices. Intersection of Broadway and Oak Street looking east



Looking north on Broadway before the 1959 expansion of the roadway
Source: Amityville Historical Society, Images of America: Amityville, page 31.

buildings with the influence of simple, traditional maritime construction.”¹ This is in part due to Amityville’s rich history, but also due to the adoption of the Bay Village Architectural Theme. Preserving and bringing back particular architectural attributes is a goal of the DRC.

The existing land use in the immediate vicinity of the downtown varied with single family residential being the predominate use, mixed with public institutions such as Village Hall on Ireland Place, and some multifamily developments along Union Avenue and further south along Park Avenue. One recent indicator of interest in developing multifamily buildings in downtown Amityville occurred in late 2014. An application for a zoning change for a 12-unit apartment building immediately east of the downtown on Oak St was brought before and approved by the Village Board.



Park Avenue looking west. Example of downtown buildings re-designed with historical elements.

A survey of the type of businesses uses and estimated square footage was conducted for the storefronts along Broadway from the business area just south of Avon Place to Sunrise Highway.

Downtown Business Type and Square Footage

Business Type	North of Station	South of Station	Total
Deli / Bakery / Convenience Store	11,480	5,100	16,580
Hair / Nail Service & Product	650	12,875	13,525
Laundromat / Dry Cleaners	2,400	4,850	7,250
Retail	6,150	23,175	29,325
Diner / Café / Restaurant / Eat in or Take out	1,800	10,250	12,050
Bank / Insurance / Tax / Financial Services	2,700	18,400	21,100
Medical / Law / Unknown Office Use	36,750	48,350	85,100
Personal Services	18,275	7,450	25,725
Large Retail / Grocery / Pharmacy	26,100	6,300	32,400
Unknown	3,000	11,100	14,100
Vacant		18,850	18,850
Self Storage	40,000		40,000

¹ Village of Amityville Zoning Code, Chapter 183 Section 4.1 Establishment of Bay Village Architectural Theme. <http://ecode360.com/6944009> Accessed on April 13, 2015.



The Pedestrian Experience

Downtown Amityville developed along Route 110 (named Broadway south of the Southern State Parkway), a major north-south route in western Suffolk County. As traffic increased so did the size of Broadway in downtown Amityville. The current width of Broadway and vehicle speeds work against the pedestrian experience the DRC would like to create.

Amityville has implemented a variety of streetscape improvements, such as brick pavers, hanging flower baskets, tree pits, planters and trash bins on the sidewalks along the downtown streets. These elements add beauty and encourage cleanliness, but not all of these amenities have been maintained in good condition.

Sidewalk on Broadway south of Avon Place. Beautification of the downtown streetscape is important, as is the on-going maintenance

Intersection of Broadway and Oak Street looking south. Long crossing distances are unsafe for pedestrians.



Intersection of Broadway and West Oak Street.



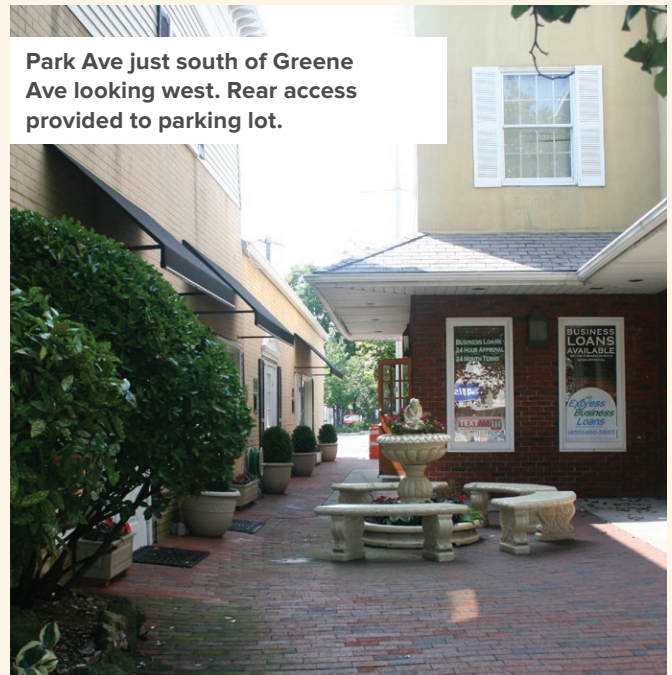
Excessive commercial signage in storefront windows and a lack of building maintenance throughout the downtown works against creating a vibrant pedestrian experience in downtown Amityville.

Looking west from rear parking lot between Oak Street and Union Ave. Access to Broadway is blocked.



Mid-block pedestrian access to rear parking lots was found to be accessible and blocked in several locations throughout the downtown.

Park Ave just south of Greene Ave looking west. Rear access provided to parking lot.



West Oak Street bus shelter.



Bus connections can be made in town, but the bus shelters are in poor condition. Graffiti and the general uncleanness of the bus shelters are factors which discourage users and those who walk/drive by

At John Street looking west at the Amityville LIRR station.



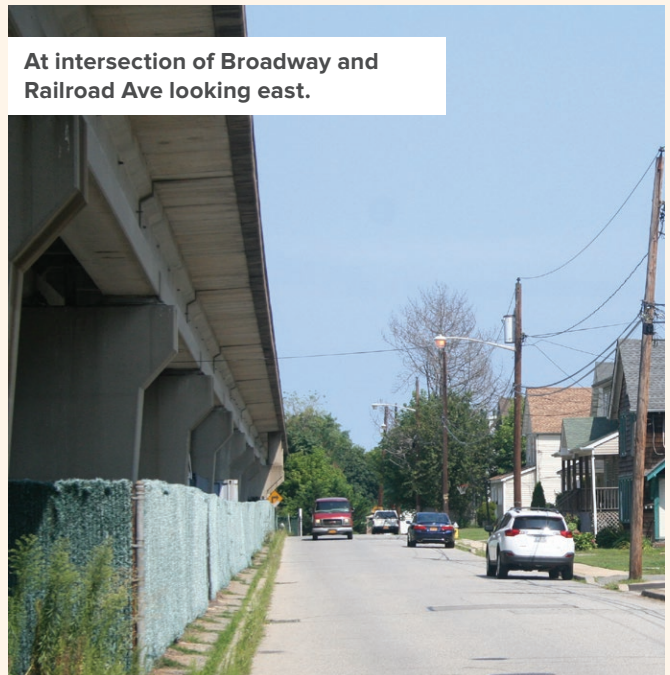
While it is not difficult to walk to the Amityville LIRR station from the downtown, the pedestrian experience at the station is in need of attention. The station is surrounded by a sea of asphalt and priority is given to motor vehicles moving to and from the parking spaces surrounding the station.

At Broadway looking west at the LIRR viaduct (north side)



Most of the space underneath the LIRR viaduct, which transects Broadway, is allocated for parking, while areas east of Broadway are fenced off and used for storage of equipment.

At intersection of Broadway and Railroad Ave looking east.



Managing the Automobile

Managing the automobile is essential to creating a vibrant downtown. While no formal parking study was conducted as part of this initiative, the team made several site visits, during weekday mornings and afternoons, and numerous public parking fields around the downtown were found to be operating significantly below capacity. On-street parking along Broadway was available and continuous turnover was observed. Parking Area 1, a mixture of permit and metered parking north of the Amityville train station, was not considered in the downtown parking survey supplied, but it is worth noting the parking lot was found to have numerous parking spaces available during the week.

The parking survey supplied by the DRC focused on available parking spaces (public and private as well as off and on-street) north of Ireland Place and Avon Place (some on street spaces just south of Avon Pl.), south of the LIRR tracks, and on other side of Broadway, but did not consider parking near the train station. The survey found 679 off-street parking spaces (which were evenly split between public/private) and 134 on street parking spaces in the downtown area.

At a parking management workshop and walking tour in Amityville hosted by New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), RBA Group cited a DRC parking survey to report that five out of seven municipal parking lots in downtown Amityville were less than 60% occupied on a weekday afternoon. The most occupied municipal lot was the parking area behind the Park Ave storefronts between Greene Ave and Ireland Pl. The on-street parking along Broadway was 60% to 85% occupied, but the on-street parking on Park Ave was more than 85% occupied. At the LIRR station the north lot was between 60% to 80% occupied, and the south lot was more than 85% occupied. RBA Group noted that the municipal lots which were less than 60% occupied could be a result of more retail and office vacancies in those areas. The available capacity suggests there is a great deal that can be done through “parking demand management” techniques described at the parking workshop.

RBA Group presented numerous case studies, practices and tools for parking management, many of which are contained in this report. A unique way to explain parking management was presented and is worth noting again in this report – 1) Reduce existing and future demand for parking 2) Reuse existing parking supply more efficiently 3) Recycle properties to provide additional supply.

The Village of Amityville currently uses wood signs indicating public parking areas. The signs are small and only provide some of the information. Some instances were found where aluminum signs were needed to accompany the wood sign to provide additional information, or the sign was so small it was not reasonable to believe a motorist could clearly see it. Several road signs were found to have stickers over the lettering which made it difficult to read and made the downtown area feel neglected.



Parking Area 3 on W. Oak Street.



Sign indication additional parking behind storefronts on Park Ave



Commercial and Residential Markets

To put Amityville in the context of Long Island's changing economy and demographics, the project team looked at broader projections and community-specific information such as population, median household income, percentage of people who commute to work by public transportation, and percentage of people with a bachelor's degree or higher. Not surprisingly it was found that the number of senior citizens aged 65 and over is expected to increase dramatically through 2040 across Long Island. In large part because of its greater proximity to Manhattan, a greater percentage of Amityville residents (12.7%) commute to work using public transportation than Suffolk County as a whole.

The market assessment for Amityville began with an evaluation of supply and demand in the residential and commercial markets. After determining existing characteristics, the project team identified opportunities for, and challenges to growth.

The residential assessment revealed that Amityville's rental vacancy rate is lower than Suffolk County and average rental prices are lower than in comparable places. A low vacancy rate is one indicator of a high-demand for rentals.

The commercial office assessment showed that Amityville's office market is small, the vacancy rate is lower than Suffolk

County, and the asking rent per square foot is higher. Amityville's net absorption of office space also has a positive trend. These indicators show that there is demand for office space, even though the volume is low.

The retail assessment indicated higher vacancy rates than comparison locations across Long Island and higher asking rent per square foot. Although Amityville's net absorption of retail square footage was on average negative from 2010 to 2013, it is trending upward. This could point to a retail market that is slowly building momentum, but may be constrained by other factors.

The retail gap analysis had to use the 2007 Economic Census as the source of data because the 2012 Economic Census data was not released across all sectors at the time of this report. The overall retail gap analysis revealed that Amityville had higher sales per establishment than all comparison markets. A more concentrated look into multiple sectors of retail found that clothing and accessories sales were less than comparison locations, and Amityville had the lowest in sales per establishment in the building and gardening sector. The food and beverage sector showed great variability in sales per capita across locations throughout Long Island.



Mixed-use building in downtown Patchogue.

This building, developed by TRITEC Real Estate Company is part of the New Village development, provides office space over ground floor restaurants. Additional floors above ground floor retail should be designed to enhance the historical design of other buildings in and around downtown Amityville.



Mixed-use building in downtown Patchogue with apartments above retail space.

This building, developed by TRITEC Real Estate Company is part of the New Village development, provides apartments over commercial ground floor space.

Amityville Tomorrow

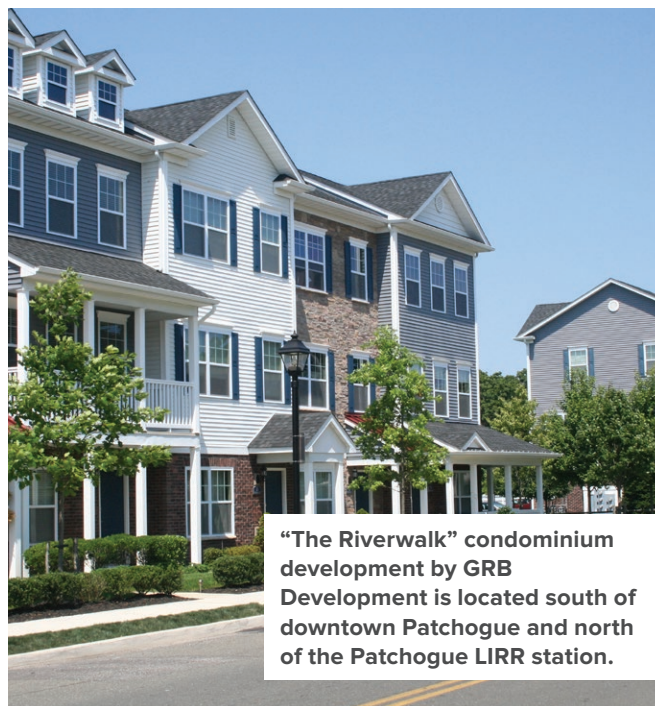
Revitalizing Downtown Amityville

Amityville has the ingredients for an active mixed-use downtown. This “live, work and play” environment ideally has several reinforcing components. A robust shopping environment and a variety of office and personal service businesses can provide a high-level of daytime activity that blend into restaurants, bars, and entertainment in the evening. A train station area with a better connection to the downtown, and increased ridership, creates an environment which is safe, inviting, and active. The development of multi-story mixed-use buildings throughout the downtown will help support Amityville’s current businesses and make the downtown more attractive to new businesses. Downtown residents living directly above the ground floor commercial space could be one component of a more vibrant and revitalized downtown Amityville.

The Village of Patchogue has seen a tremendous growth of business and activity in its downtown as it continues to encourage mixed-use buildings along Main Street and multifamily housing in close proximity to the downtown and train station. Downtown Patchogue is the south shore anchor of Long Island’s future Innovation Zone. This effort has been developed by a regional alliance made up of Suffolk County, Town of Brookhaven, Town of Islip, Village of Patchogue, Long Island Rail Road and other academic and research institutions to better connect key destinations, transportation, and employment and education centers along the Nicolls Road corridor. The Innovation Zone will feature a BRT system, as well as a hike-bike trail, which will run from Patchogue to Stony Brook University.

It is also important to attract and serve residents that do not live immediately around the downtown or in Amityville. Providing convenient and safe parking for these downtown customers should be a main priority. Convenience is developed by providing clear signage to municipal parking lots. The parking should be well connected to other lots and the commercial space along Broadway. Safety is established through ample lighting which not only illuminates the roadway, but also the pedestrian pathways to and from the parking spaces. Signs and road striping should safely direct customers through the parking lot to rear entrances of buildings or alleys to the downtown storefronts.

Efforts should be made to attract more family oriented restaurants and retail to the downtown. Adding diversity to the mix of retail is important in creating an active and healthy downtown. This can be done through additional branding, mar-



“The Riverwalk” condominium development by GRB Development is located south of downtown Patchogue and north of the Patchogue LIRR station.

keting and incentives to encourage particular businesses to locate in downtown Amityville.

Communities, such as Farmingdale and Bay Shore, which have encouraged mixed-use infill development in their downtown and near their train stations, are already seeing improvements in their downtown. Retail vacancies are decreasing in downtown Farmingdale in response to development currently underway. In Bay Shore, there is a similar combination of transit oriented development around the LIRR station and redevelopment in the downtown. Increasingly this type of development has become a primary tool in downtown revitalization across Long Island.

**Rendering of “The Loft”
by Staller Associates, a
mixed –use development
currently under construction
in downtown Farmingdale.**

Image: Staller Associates



**“The Jefferson at Farmingdale
Plaza” a mixed-use development
currently under development
by Bartone Properties at
Farmingdale train station.**

The Bozzuto Group



**“Chelsea Place” apartments
at the Bay Shore train
station developed by
Greenview Properties**



**“Village Place” a mixed-use
development under construction
by Greenview Properties
in downtown Bay Shore**

**Aerial of downtown Amityville
from Avon Place to Louden
Avenue centered on Broadway.**

Image: Google Earth

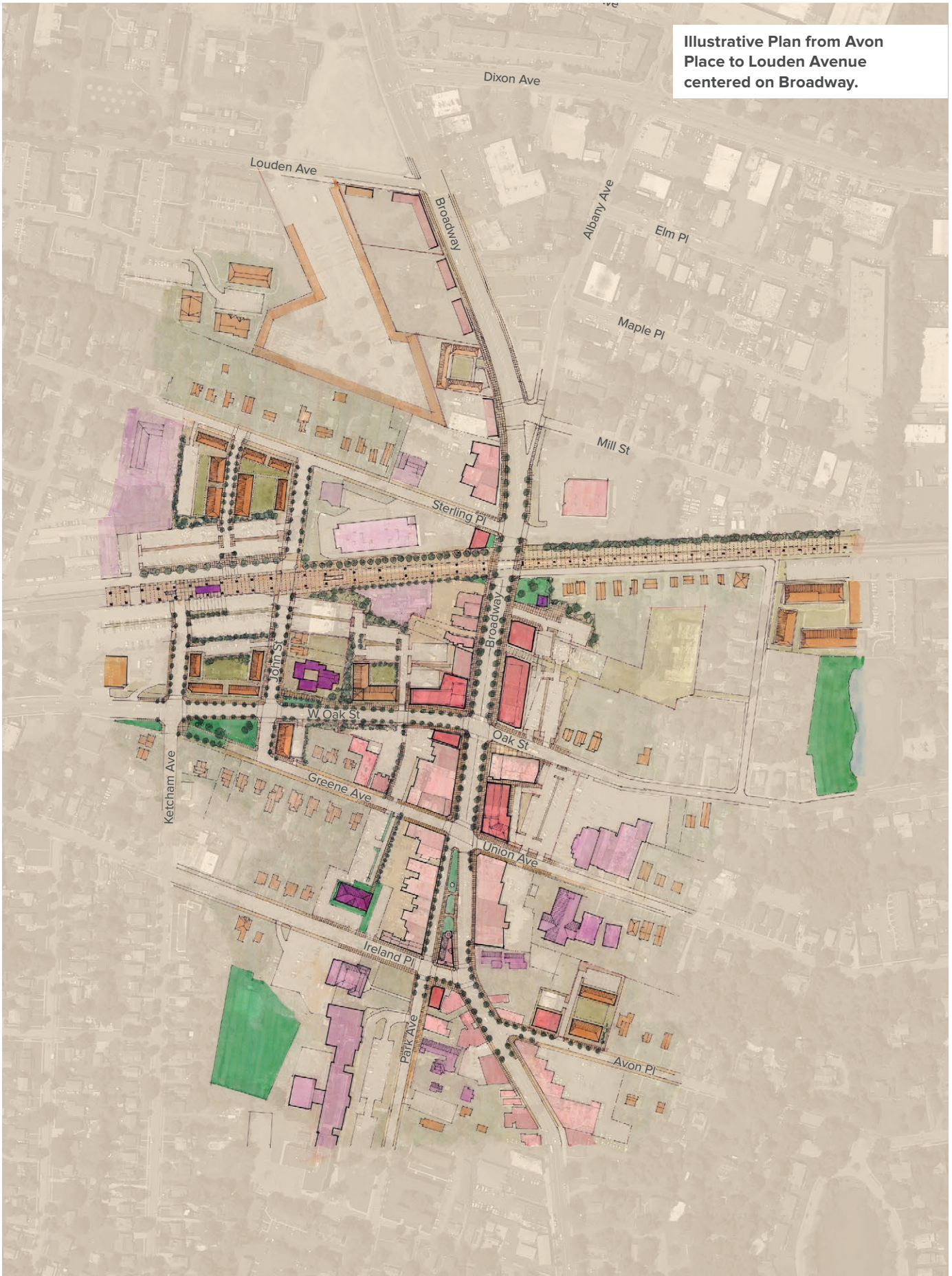


A Vision for Tomorrow

What might Amityville look like if these principles were implemented? In order to understand this, a plan was done of Amityville Tomorrow. This plan was then used to test the existing regulations and to identify the other kinds of policies and investments that would achieve the objectives expressed by the DRC and other stakeholders.

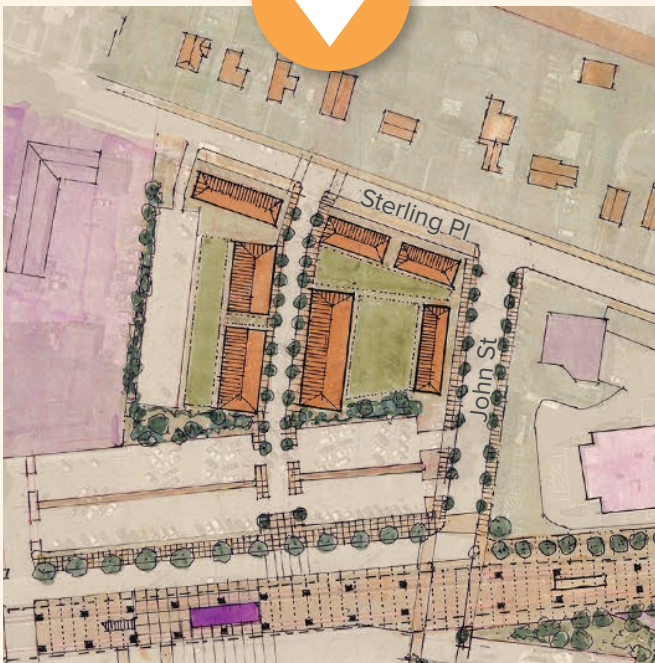
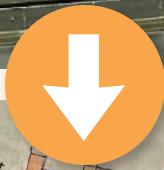
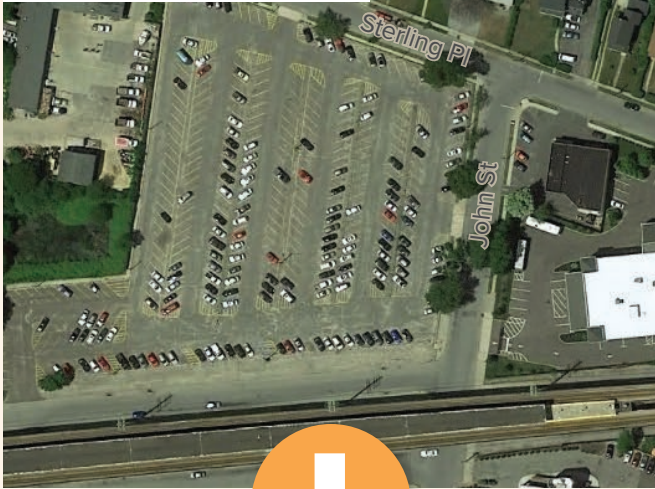
As part of RPA's work an illustrative plan of the downtown was created. The illustrative plans serves as of way of showing a concept for downtown Amityville if the right conditions – zoning, parking, design, parcel assembly, etc. – were met. After site visits, input from the DRC, and gauging the likelihood that sites were subject to change, several sites in downtown Amityville were chosen to show redevelopment potential. Specific sites were also depicted in photo simulations to give a street level perspective of potential change.

Illustrative Plan from Avon Place to Louden Avenue centered on Broadway.



Excess Parking North of Station

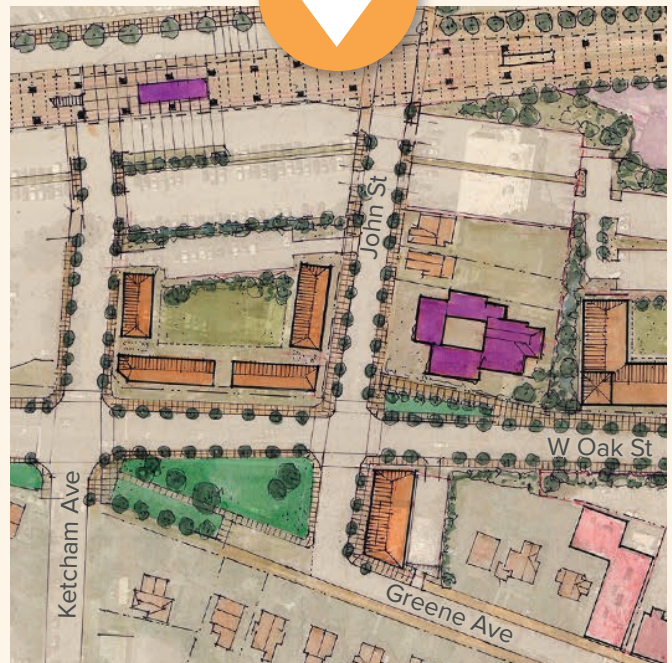
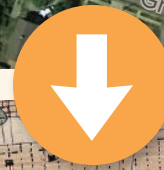
Potential development of area north of the LIRR station, west of John Street and South of Sterling Place.



Excess parking north of the Amityville train station could be transformed into a multi-family development with a mixture of townhouses and apartments. Green space around the buildings and a tree-lined street to Sterling Place would incorporate this development into the fabric of the residential neighborhood to the north and west, and enhance pedestrian connections to the Amityville train station.

TOD Overlay Zone

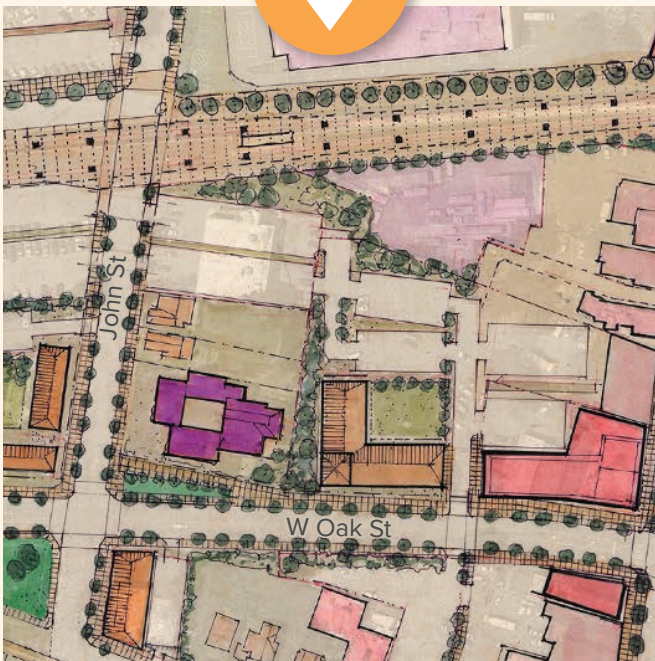
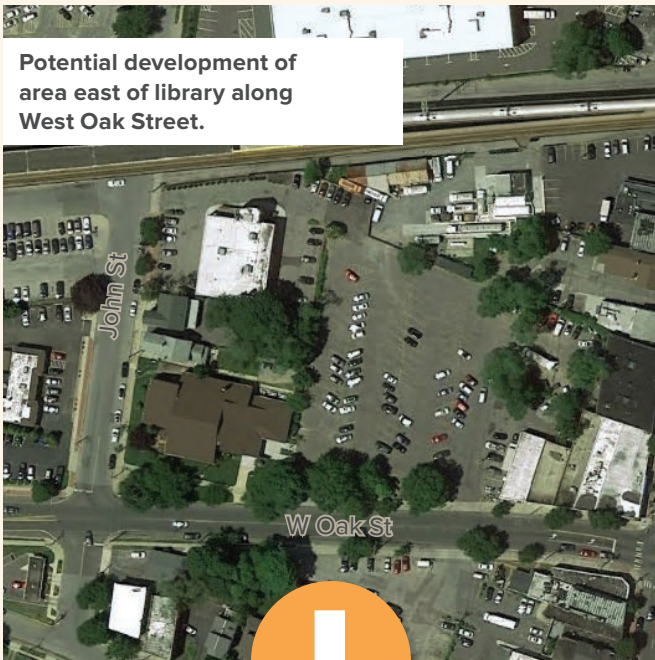
Potential redevelopment of area between Ketcham Avenue and John Street, along West Oak Street.



The option for a TOD overlay zone along with additional recommendations for changes in parking requirements, dimensional regulations, and permitted uses around the Amityville train station would encourage higher density pedestrian-friendly development than what currently exists. South of the station opportunities may be present to strategically relocate parking to make better connections to and from the downtown and to provide area for development of multi-family structures.

Library Parking Lot

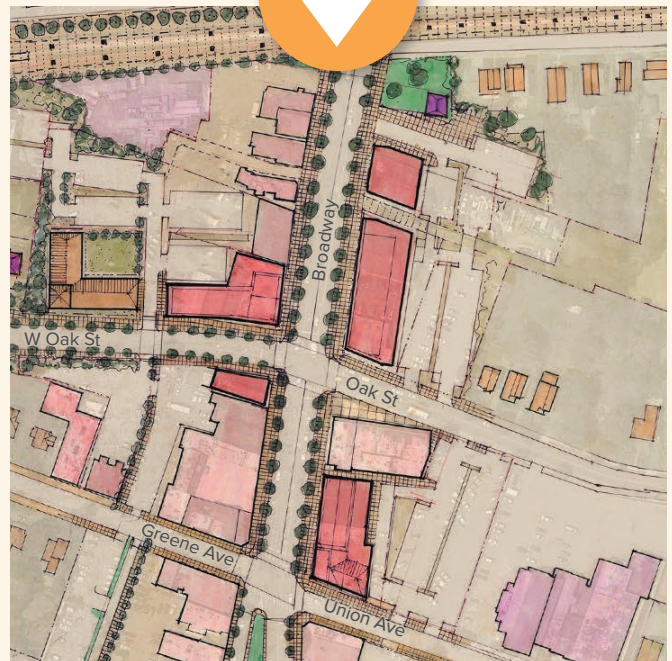
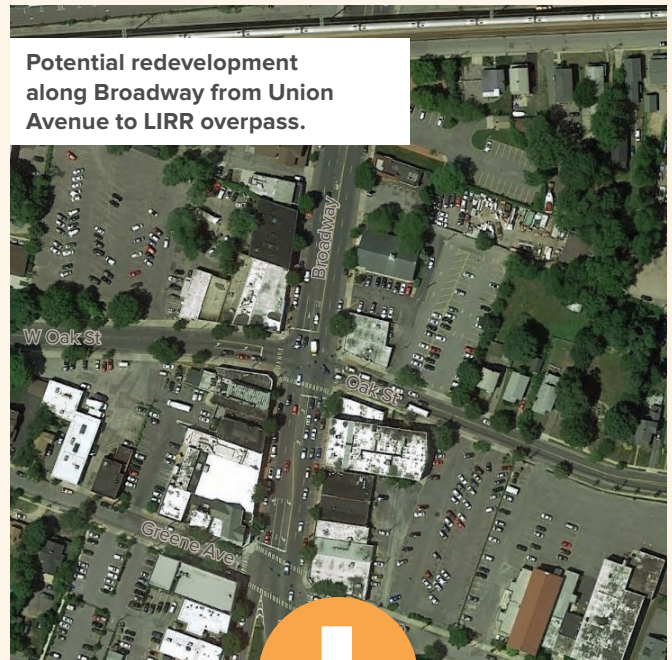
Potential development of area east of library along West Oak Street.



The library parking lot and the surrounding properties present an opportunity for transit oriented development. As depicted in the Illustrative Plan, a restructuring of the parking lot, as well as a new parking lot along John Street close to the station, could allow for the redevelopment of multi-family housing along West Oak Street next to the library. The construction of a new parking lot north of the library would require the purchase of an office building on John Street south of the LIRR tracks. Further potential for residential development or additional parking spaces exists for the property south of LIRR tracks and north of the parking lot which is currently an oil delivery company.

B1 Zoning District

Potential redevelopment along Broadway from Union Avenue to LIRR overpass.



Revisions to the B-1 zoning district which would permit greater lot coverage, establish height minimums and maximums, and reduce parking requirements among other changes, would help create an active mixed-use downtown. Potential infill development resulting in multi-story-mixed-use buildings could attract more people to live in the downtown and put more "street on the feet".

Looking southwest along Broadway at intersection with W. Oak Street.



Looking southwest along Broadway at intersection with W. Oak Street. Rendering of potential infill development and streetscape improvements.



A photo simulation of a building on the southwest corner of West Oak Street and Broadway shows the potential transformation if zoning changes and design guidelines are made. In addition to requiring a minimum of two stories, the zoning code could be tailored to allow for an additional story above the maximum story limit as long as a setback requirement is met for that story.

One way to discourage single story retail development from happening and to encourage mixed-use development of buildings in the downtown is to require a minimum of two or more stories.

Caption: Looking west along Broadway at southwest corner of intersection with W. Oak Street.



Looking west along Broadway at southwest corner of intersection with W. Oak Street. Rendering of potential infill development and streetscape improvements.



The photo simulations represent what potential redevelopment opportunities throughout downtown Amityville could look like. The zoning changes we have recommended for downtown Amityville would encourage infill development above the ground floor commercial space. Creating design guidelines to complement the Bay Village Architectural Theme would give more certainty that future building designs will be aligned with the desire expressed by the DRC for an historical context.



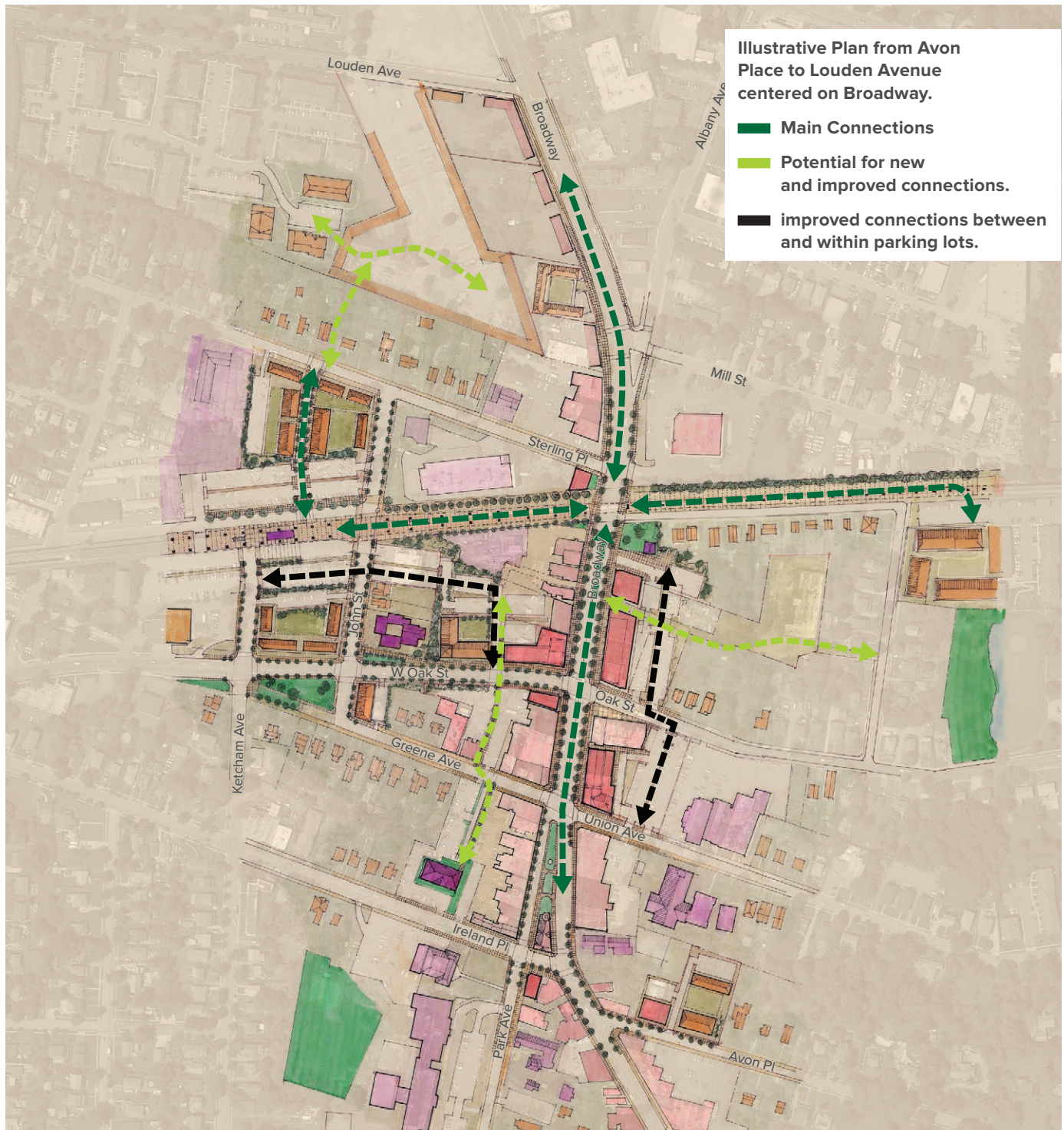
It would benefit the Village to develop unified-design way-finding signage to identify key facilities and businesses, and to direct downtown visitors to those destinations. This is an example of wayfinding in Patchogue.

Connections and the Pedestrian Experience

Providing for safe crossings, easy access to parking lots and mass transit, and developing an attractive pedestrian environment are crucial elements of a healthy downtown. Consideration should be paid to reducing the crossing distances on Broadway and expanding the triangle (formed by Broadway, Park Avenue and Ireland Place) further north to reach the crossing at Green Avenue. Working with NYSDOT to address pedestrian improvements in downtown Amityville is encouraged.

It is vital to health of the downtown, train station, and surrounding neighborhood to develop better connections between the resources and destinations that are already in the larger downtown area. Within the downtown most of the north-south movement is facilitated along Broadway. On either side of Broadway connections within the parking lots should be developed for vehicle and pedestrian access. This can be done by promoting shared access between lots, providing signage and developing pedestrian infrastructure within the parking areas. This creates alternate paths within different parking areas, and to and from the train station and other key facilities (library, Village Hall, school buildings).

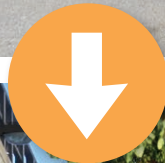
A district-wide strategy for way-finding signage, lighting and streetscape should create a unified theme and design for signage to help direct people to parking, as well as downtown businesses and amenities. The same focus on lighting and streetscape will help develop downtown Amityville as a recognizable destination. A strategy for maintaining and improving these amenities should also be in place.



Access to residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown can also be leveraged with key land purchases or agreements for access. Currently there is no direct pedestrian access between the Amityville LIRR station and Newpointe Estates on Louden Avenue. Future development along Louden Ave is expected and developing a pedestrian connection through to Sterling Ave would encourage residents to walk to the train station and downtown as opposed to driving along Broadway. A unique opportunity to improve connections to the downtown also exists with a large flag lot located between Wellington Place and Broadway.

Connections between and through Amityville's municipal parking lots are also key for automobile and pedestrian movement. Providing pedestrian mid-block access to rear parking lots can be a great downtown feature. An example of this exists on Park Ave just south of Greene Ave. Other opportunities to develop well-lit, attractive and convenient alleyways may be present in other locations throughout the downtown. Maintenance and beautification of bus stops should also be considered. Increased enforcement of codes regulating signs and building maintenance could help improve the downtown environment.

Looking east from LIRR underpass near John Street.



Looking east from LIRR underpass near John Street.
Rendering of potential improvements to underpass.



This idea was confirmed by the DRC as a great opportunity. One of the most strategic opportunities is to better connect the train station to Broadway and the heart of the downtown. This space below the LIRR viaduct could be repurposed as a pedestrian link providing a connection between the area of Peterkin Park and Wellington Park Villas, through the downtown and to the Amityville LIRR station. Any improvements would need to maintain access to LIRR infrastructure and sufficient commuter parking for both current and future needs. Further consideration must be given on how to best implement a pedestrian crossing where the viaduct crosses Broadway, such as with a traffic signal

at Railroad Avenue that may facilitate a safe crossing for a pedestrian connection via the LIRR underpass.

The rendering of potential improvements to the viaduct include landscape treatments around the support columns and along the neighboring properties. Upgrading the current chain-link fence to a decorative wood or other material will go a long way in enhancing this potential community connection. Having a uniform, well-drained and safe surface for both vehicles and pedestrians is essential. Lighting mounted on the bottom of the viaduct allows for this connection to be safely used in the evening.



Example of bulb-out in downtown Patchogue. This traffic calming technique reduces the crossing distance for pedestrians.



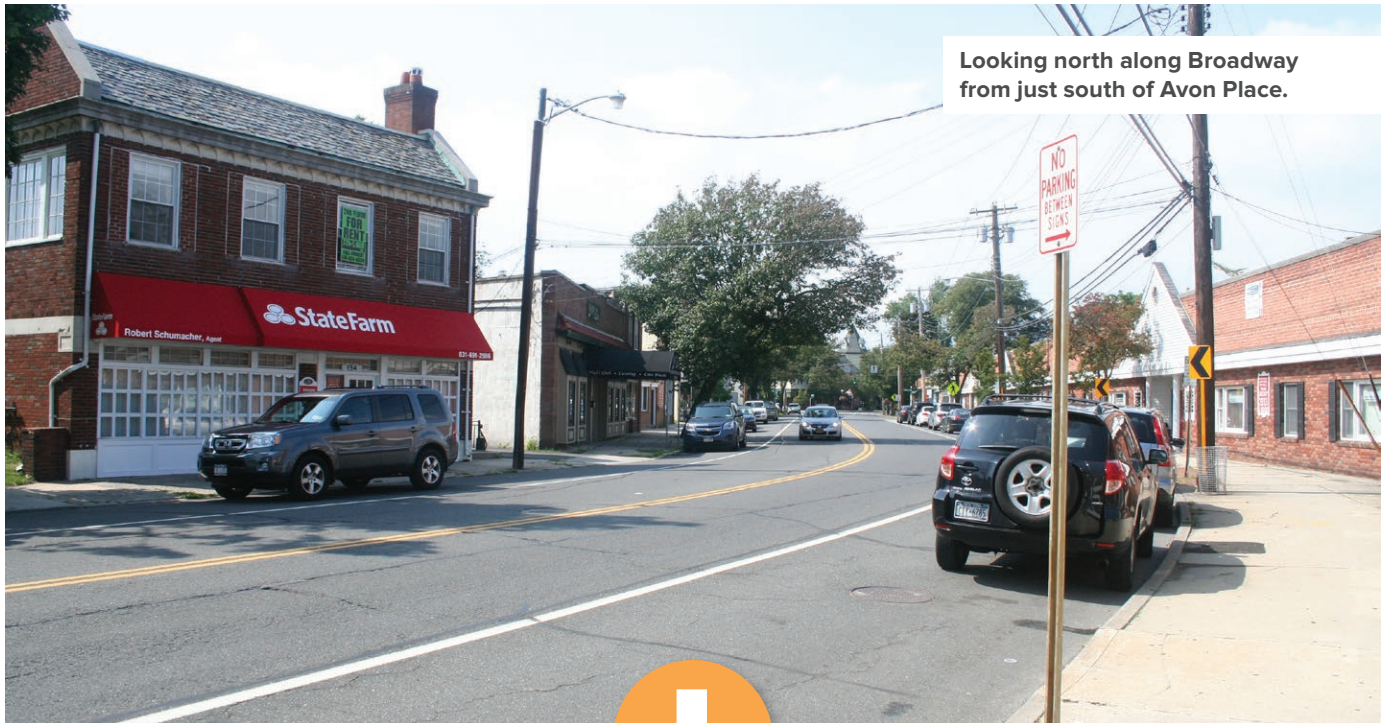
Sidewalk in downtown Patchogue that has been bumped out to provide for more pedestrian space on key corner. This entire corner might have been made into a bulb-out if it weren't for the location of the sewer infrastructure.

Traffic calming techniques such as widening sidewalks, reducing the width of travel lanes, and bulb-outs on downtown corners can help improve the pedestrian experience in downtown Amityville. Since Broadway is a New York state road it is necessary to discuss and suggest changes to the roadway with NYSDOT. NYSDOT states, “traffic calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for nonmotorized street users.”¹ The physical measures that will bring the

most improvement to pedestrian safety and environment should be included in future NYSDOT plans for Broadway.

¹ New York State Department of Transportation. Highway Design Manual, Chapter 25 Traffic Calming, Section 25.2.3. https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/hdm/hdm-repository/chapt_25.pdf Accessed on April 27, 2014.

sign/dqab/hdm/hdm-repository/chapt_25.pdf Accessed on April 27, 2014.



Looking north along Broadway from just south of Avon Place.



Looking north along Broadway from just south of Avon Place. Rendering of potential improvements to streetscape and infill development.

South of Union Avenue, Broadway shrinks from a four-lane road to a two-lane road. Although Ireland Place is recognized as the southern end of downtown Amityville, the business environment continues south of Avon Place in this Historical zone for approximately four hundred and fifty feet. Mostly one-story personal service and medical offices exist on both sides of Broadway in this area. It is also important to note that south of Ireland Place there is no signalized pedestrian crossing on Broadway before Merrick Road, approximately a half mile further to the south.

The photo simulation depicts additional tree pits and a mid-block paved crossing to extend the downtown experience. If the Historical zone was incorporated into a new downtown district or as part of an overlay, the zoning changes we have recommended could be expected to encourage infill development above the ground floor commercial space.

Parking

Parking requirements can be the single biggest obstacle to downtown revitalization. Understanding current parking demand and planning for future needs can be achieved through a parking study and the development of a parking management plan.

The current parking requirements for the B-1 and B-2 zones are calibrated to meet the demand of commercial corridors, not the compact mixed-use downtown the Village seeks to revitalize and further develop. We recommend:

- a. Reduce the residential parking ratio. Consider 1.5 per one bedroom dwelling unit within the downtown and train station area. For each additional bedroom .5 spaces should be added.
- b. Reduce commercial parking ratio. Consider 3 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor space within the downtown and train station area

Parking needs should not be considered on a site by site basis. Instead there is a need for district-wide approach that accounts for an exchange of parking for downtown residents, commuters and shoppers

As part of a parking management plan, parking flexibility strategies can be enacted:

- a. Count on-street overnight parking spaces towards the residential parking requirements for mixed use buildings in the downtown.
- b. Allow remote parking in public lots adjacent or in close proximity to development
- c. Permit shared parking agreements with private lots adjacent or in close proximity to development and between uses.
- d. Provide an option for payment in lieu of on-site parking (PILOP) that will go towards a fund to improve and maintain parking facilities throughout Village

Parking management is key. Having a certain number of spaces is the first part, but providing well-planned time management of metered and non-metered parking, keeping downtown employees out of key parking for shoppers and downtown residents, and clearly and efficiently directing people to available parking are all very important components of parking management. See Village of Dobbs Ferry Parking Table² or the City of Stamford Village Commercial District - Parking, Loading and Vehicle Access (Section 4 page 15)³ for comparison parking requirements.

Design Guidelines

The Village of Amityville has the Bay Village Architectural Theme codified, but there are no design guidelines or well defined criterion for which the Amityville Planning Board can base their consideration of an application against. This can create uncertainty in the design process, as well as delay and additional cost in the application process of a proposed development in the Village of Amityville. Creating design guidelines to complement the Theme would give more certainty as to what the Village is looking for. Because the Theme applies to exterior alteration and new construction in all districts in Amityville it would be useful to consider creating design guidelines that can address specific district types – Residential, Downtown, Business, Historical.

To help direct the character, scale, mix of uses and pedestrian friendly environment that the Village of Dobbs Ferry sought for its downtown, the Village created Downtown District Building Design Guidelines.⁴ The Dobbs Ferry Downtown District Building Design Guidelines should be reviewed for suggestions on ground floor uses, building setbacks, minimum building stories, building facades and more.

“The focus of the Design Guidelines is on the relationship of the building to the street and its surroundings including the sidewalks, open space, building massing and design, and location of parking. The Design Guidelines are divided into 5 main components – Building Design, Public Improvements, Street and Circulation, Pedestrian Circulation, Open Space, Landscaping and Parking.”⁵

The Village of Dobbs Ferry has an Architectural and Historic Review Board (AHRB), separate from their Planning Board. The AHRB has an extensive list of powers and duties, with design review being required on any new construction, reconstruction or exterior alteration of any structure, applications require site plan review and applications for signs. The AHRB is guided in their review by design guidelines specifically set out for their downtown (see attached), their residential areas, and consistency with the Dobbs Ferry Vision Plan and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. In addition their criterion for review or approval uses “the standards of the Secretary of the Interior in its review of development applications involving historic properties.”⁶

² Village of Dobbs Ferry Parking Table. <http://ecode360.com/documents/DO0599/DO0599-300c%20App%20C%20Parking%20Table.pdf> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

³ City of Stamford Village Commercial District. http://www.stamfordct.gov/sites/stamfordct/files/file/city_of_stamford_zoning_regulations15_1.pdf Accessed on February 23, 2015.

⁴ Village of Dobbs Ferry, Downtown District Building Design Guidelines. Introduction; <http://ecode360.com/documents/DO0599/DO0599-300f%20App%20F%20Downtown%20Design%20Guide.pdf> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

⁵ <http://ecode360.com/documents/DO0599/DO0599-300f%20App%20F%20Downtown%20Design%20Guide.pdf>

⁶ Village of Dobbs Ferry, Zoning Code. Article IV Architectural and Historic Review Board, Chapter 300, Section 19 Historical Review; certificate of appropriateness. <http://ecode360.com/10566531#10566543> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

Zoning

The Village of Amityville must revise and update its zoning code in order to revitalize downtown Amityville. Part of the zoning code revision should be focused on prohibiting certain uses and clearly defining permitted uses.

One and two-family dwellings, and fast food establishments should **not** be permitted uses in the downtown or in the immediate area around the train station. Careful attention should be paid to revisions to the definitions in the zoning code. Specifically the definition of mixed-use dwellings should be revised in order to allow more than two families in a mixed-use building. For a local example of downtown permitted uses see the Farmingdale Downtown Mixed-Use District⁷. In that district the permitted uses are also separated by what can occur on ground floor or upper floors. In the Village of Dobbs Ferry where there are three different downtown zones, the Permitted Use Table, Table A-2: Downtown Zoning Districts⁸ shows how uses vary between each downtown zone. Another example is the Village Commercial District in the City of Stamford, which “is intended to reinforce a vibrant village/“main street” area and provide amenities, services, and resources; to advance improvements to the public realm; to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation; and to build upon existing assets and maintain the existing character of the community.”⁹

Zoning is good at describing what can't be done, but not good at describing what one would like to see happen. With well-defined and well-illustrated height, bulk and siting requirements the Village has an opportunity to describe what they want - the scale of development and its relationship with the street. A good example of TOD dimensional requirements which can be considered for around the Amityville train station is the Massachusetts Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District Model Bylaw Section 9 Dimensional Requirements.¹⁰ A good example of downtown dimensional standards which can be considered for Broadway is the Dobbs Ferry Downtown Districts Dimensional Standards.¹¹

For the train station area:

- ▶ Establish minimum lot coverage requirements (40% suggested). Low coverage lots will detract from the pedestrian friendly environment the Village would like to produce around the train station
- ▶ Establish minimum story and height requirement to ensure the scale of development is more than one story buildings. Establish a maximum height requirement

⁷ Village of Farmingdale, Downtown Mixed Use District. <http://www.farmingdale-village.com/LL5-2014%20Amend%20Downtown%20Mixed%20Use%20Adding%20Article%20XIV.pdf> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

⁸ <http://ecode360.com/documents/DO0599/DO0599-300a%20App%20A%20Residential%20Zoning%20Dist.pdf>

⁹ City of Stamford, Village Commercial District. Art. III Sect. 4 pg. 12. http://www.stamfordct.gov/sites/stamfordct/files/file/city_of_stamford_zoning_regulations_0.pdf Accessed on February 23, 2015.

¹⁰ Massachusetts Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District Model Bylaw, Section 9 Dimensional Requirements. http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/by-laws/TOD-Bylaw.pdf Accessed on February 23, 2015.

¹¹ Village of Dobbs Ferry, Table B-8 Downtown Districts Dimensional Standards. <http://ecode360.com/documents/DO0599/DO0599-300b%20App%20B%20Dimensional%20Tables.pdf> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

- ▶ Establish a maximum setback (20' suggested). Define and establish side yard requirements
- ▶ Design guidelines to mandate minimum street wall requirements
- ▶ Design guidelines to explain how to relate to existing building set-backs.

For the B-1 (Downtown) area:

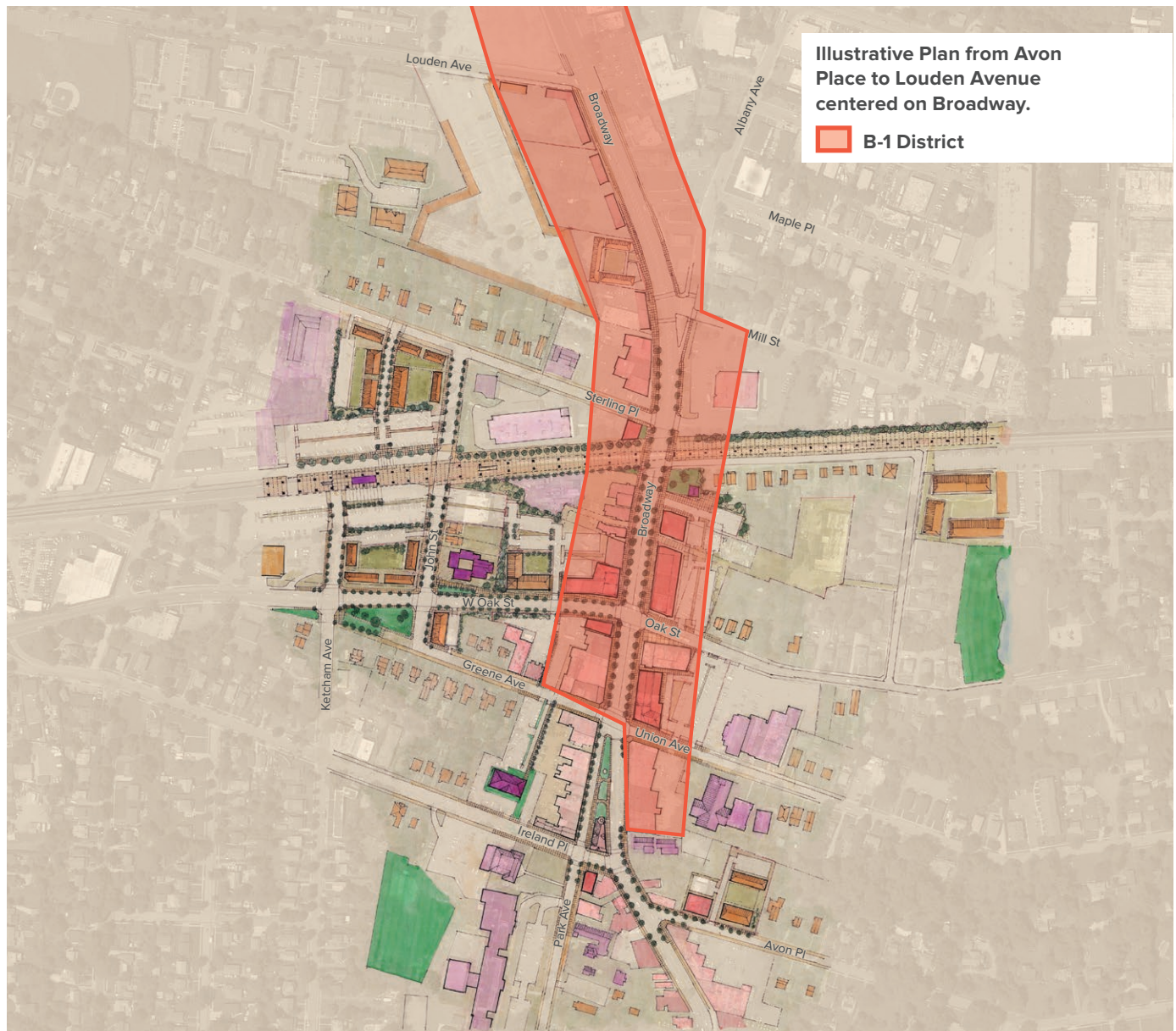
- ▶ Enable site development that is high-coverage. (80% maximum, with impervious cover of 100% suggested).
- ▶ Establish minimum story and height requirement to ensure the scale of development is more than one story buildings (two story minimum suggested). Establish a maximum height requirement.
- ▶ Establish front and side yard setback to encourage a uniform street wall (zero foot suggested)
- ▶ Design guidelines to explain how to relate to existing building set-backs.
- ▶ Establish a system of zoning incentives “to advance the village’s specific physical, cultural and social policies in accordance with the village’s comprehensive plan and in coordination with other community planning mechanisms or land use techniques.”¹²
 - For example the incentives can provide a bonus in density, height, or another zoning provision for meeting a specific requirement to supply affordable housing or incorporate public space into a development

The Village of Amityville has not defined its downtown core in its zoning. Instead of providing clear regulation that defines and creates standards for the type of development the community would like to see in downtown Amityville, the B-1 Retail Business District acts as strip zoning along the Route 110 (Broadway) corridor. This encourages a low and sprawling type of development that does not produce the environment for a healthy, pedestrian-oriented, and active downtown. Additionally, the train station is surrounded by multiple zones which discourage the types of use that would encourage pedestrian activity and a better connection with the downtown. This fails to create the type of business and pedestrian environment that the Village is seeking for downtown.

To address the deficiencies in the zoning of the downtown and train station area three options were developed which provide improvements.

¹² New York State Village Law § 7-703 : NY Code - Section 7-703, Incentive zoning: definitions, purpose, conditions, procedures. <http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/nycode/VIL/7/7-703> Accessed on May 13, 2015.

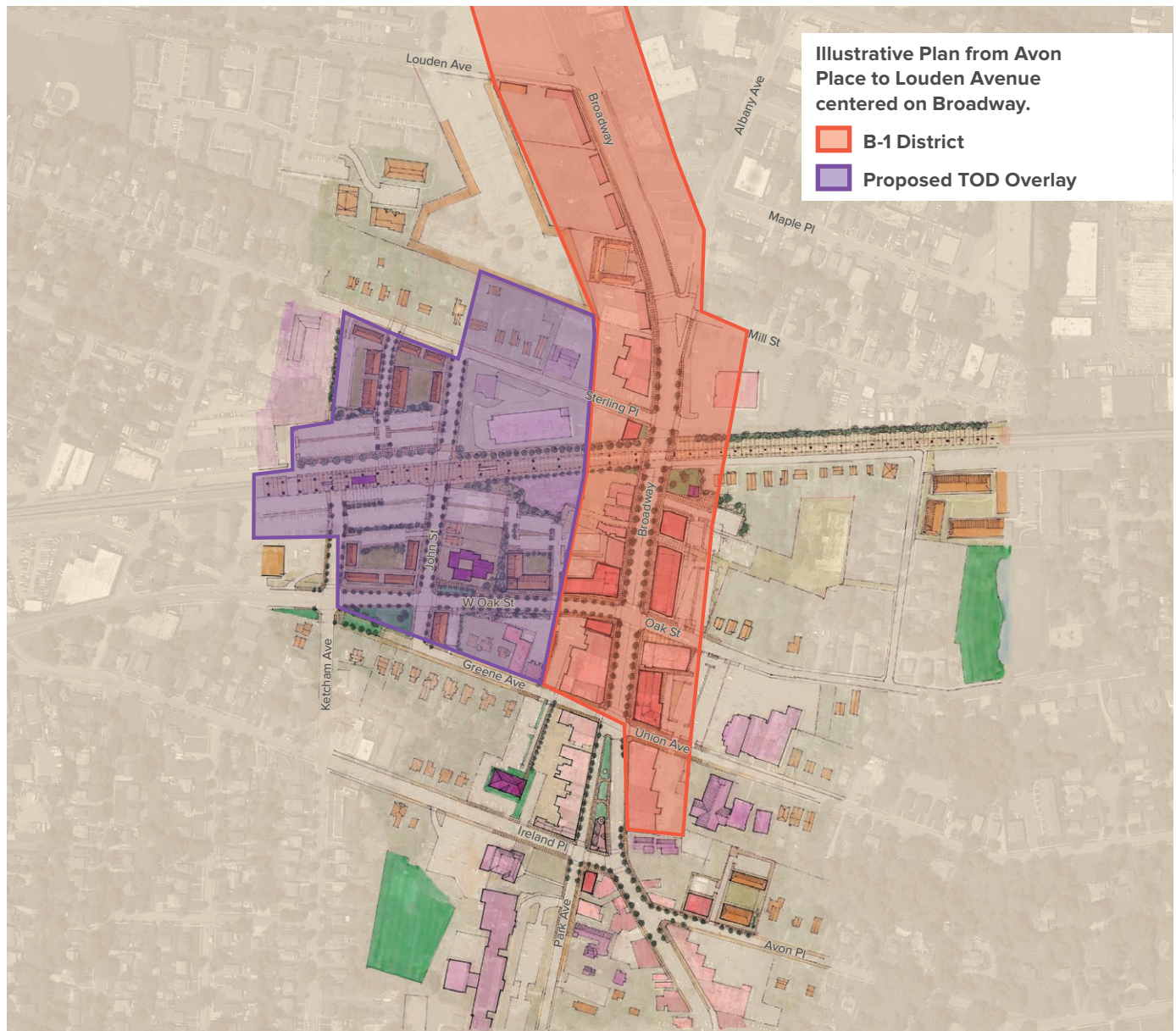
Option 1: Revise B-1 zoning



Through the revision of the B-1 district code, Amityville can achieve the character, scale and mix of uses it desires in a clear and well-ordered manner. Revisions should specifically and clearly define the types of use, scale and character the Village of Amityville desires for the Downtown. Include recommendations to revise parking, use, and dimensional regulations contained in this report.

This district also exists on Montauk Highway at the site of the Stop and Shop shopping center. Consideration should be paid to how this would affect that site.

Option 2: Revise B-1 (option 1) & Adopt Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Station Overlay



The TOD station overlay should encompass the commuter parking lot, industrial zones, and the B-2 Retail Business districts surrounding the train station north of Greene Avenue and along West Oak Street. Through the adoption of a TOD overlay around the train station the Village of Amityville can allow for more density and residential uses that would otherwise not be possible for that area. An overlay is an effective tool which can help encourage desired change without having to change the underlying zones. Specific development requirements and bonuses for greater density can be applied in order to promote the type and size of development the Village desires. The overlay can address more than development issues, and can include requirements for pedestrian improvements, connections between sites and other aspects of a unified and coherent downtown.

This overlay should specifically and clearly define the types of use, scale and character which would encourage a mix of medium to higher density pedestrian-friendly development. The

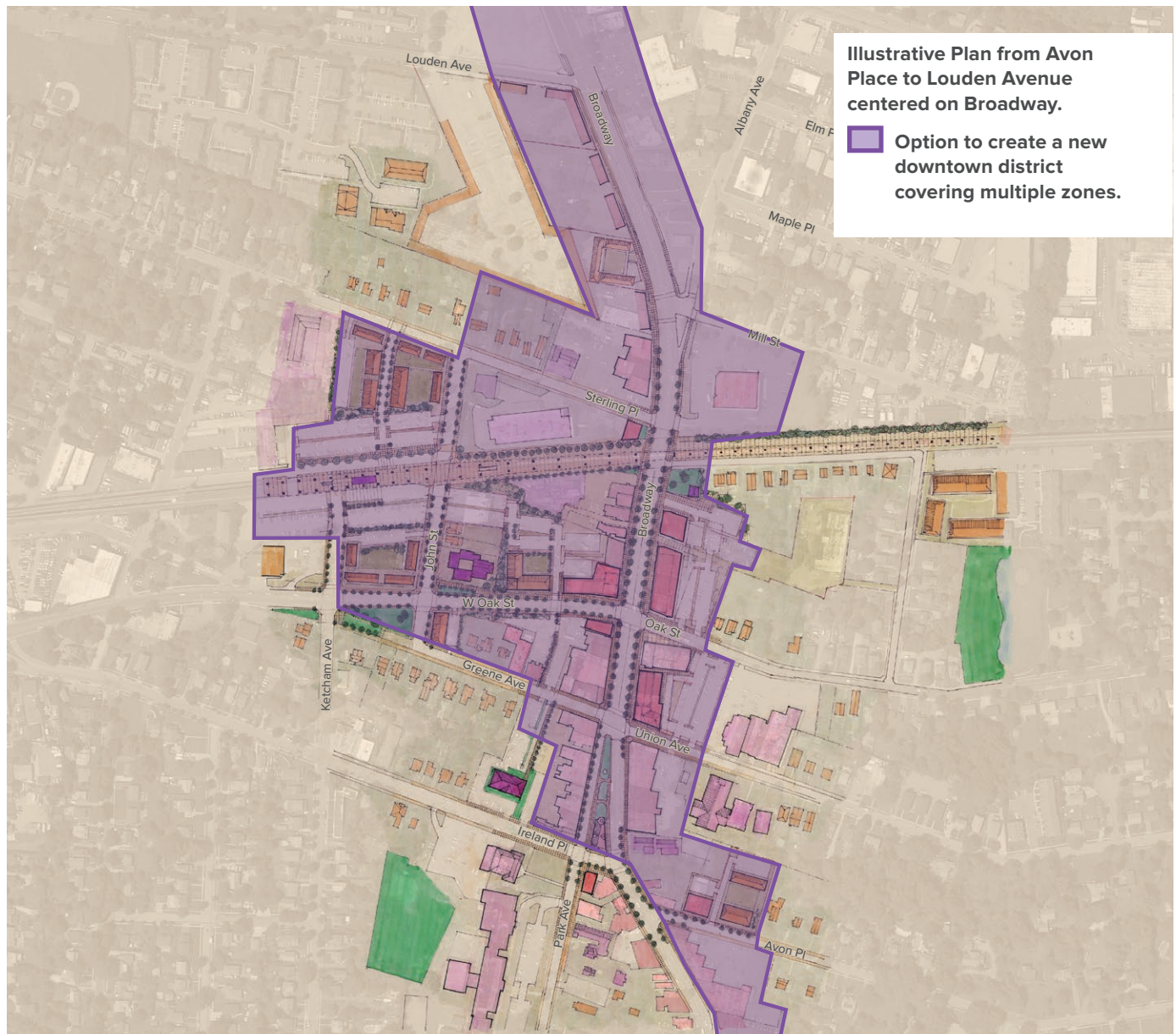
district would permit mixed use and multifamily development and prohibit one and two family development as well as other uses which do not promote pedestrian activity throughout the day and evening. The overlay should include recommendations to revise parking, use, and dimensional regulations as described in this report.

- ▶ See Village of Mamaroneck proposed local law S-2014¹³ and amendment local law A-2015¹⁴ for an example TOD overlay code

¹³ Village of Mamaroneck, Proposed Local Law S-2014. http://www.village.mamaroneck.ny.us/Pages/MamaroneckNY_Attorney/Proposed%20Local%20Law%20S%202014.pdf Accessed on February 23, 2015.

¹⁴ Village of Mamaroneck, Proposed Local Law A-2015. http://www.village.mamaroneck.ny.us/Pages/MamaroneckNY_Attorney/Proposed%20Local%20Law%20A-2015.pdf Accessed on February 23, 2015

Option 3: Adopt Downtown Overlay or Downtown District



Adopt and map Downtown Overlay or new District which encompasses all of Broadway (B-1 corridor), train station area (B-2 and Industrial), and portions of the Historical district. This is by far the most far-reaching of the three options because it proposes a larger area which would come under the code of a new overlay or a new district. The adoption of an overlay would not change the underlying zoning, but would enhance what could occur in that zone. The overlay should also include recommendations for revisions in parking, use, and dimensional regulations contained in this report.

The adoption of a downtown district would change the underlying zoning by creating a new zone with use, parking, dimensional and design regulations calibrated for downtown development. For an example of the adoption of a new downtown district see Village of Farmingdale Downtown Mixed-Use District¹⁵

¹⁵ <http://www.farmingdalevillage.com/LI5-2014%20Amend%20Downtown%20Mixed%20Use%20Adding%20Article%20XIV.pdf>

Accessed on February 23, 2015.

Implementation

1: Identify and Apply for Potential Funding Sources for District Support Infrastructure

In the short term the Village of Amityville can begin to identify and apply for funding for improvements to downtown support infrastructure. This can include, but is not limited to, funding for improved signage as part of a way-finding program, funding for improved pedestrian connections, and funding for streetscape beautification. The Village can also work with the MTA/LIRR and Suffolk County Transit to see that support infrastructure at the train station and bus stops are also a priority for improvement.

Creation of a business improvement district (BID) should be considered as one potential component to raise funds for downtown improvements, including beautification, marketing, and other downtown improvements. The benefits and impacts of the Patchogue Village BID¹ are a good example from which to encourage discussion with property owners and business tenants. The Patchogue Village BID was formed in 1992 and has received millions of dollars in grants in addition to collecting funds from BID participants to improve downtown Patchogue.²

2: Parking Study and Parking Management Plan

While RPA's parking observations and the parking information supplied by the DRC show that there is available parking in and around downtown Amityville, an in-depth review of parking should occur. The goal of the parking study should be a complete understanding of how the parking is being used at peak and off-peak times, where there is availability and where there is not, and how to better manage the current parking spaces and lots. From this study, a parking management plan should be completed which creates a parking district, where parking flexibility strategies (as recommended by RPA) can be enacted.

3: Review and revise zoning

As recommended by RPA, the Village of Amityville should hire consultants to review zoning recommendations and to work with the Village and RPA to write the appropriate zoning code revisions and additions. The Village should consider the following items for scope of work when considering a consultant for this project:

- a. Review all code documents for conformance with vision of DRC/Village of Amityville

- b. Look at existing Village of Amityville code and determine where conflicts arise and changes would need to be made to conform with vision for downtown for Amityville train station
- c. Detailed memo which would explicitly list changes in zoning code and show corresponding changes needed elsewhere in Village code
- d. Go through entire ordinance to coordinate changes
- e. Propose actual code revisions
- f. Draft a proposal for zoning text and corresponding code changes
- g. Create revised zoning map(s)
- h. Advise the Village of Amityville on necessary next steps for adoption of code changes

Possible additional tasks:

- i. Advise the Village of Amityville on providing reserved area(s) within code for design guidelines if the Village of Amityville decides to draft and adopt guidelines

4: Develop a Downtown Amityville Master Plan

Using the recommendations and information from the previous steps, begin to form a Downtown Amityville Master Plan. Integral to the formation of this plan is extensive public outreach which should include charrettes, walking tours, and other methods (surveys, forums, social media) to collect public input.

5: State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR)

As part of New York State's Environmental Conservation Law under the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR), "most projects or activities proposed by a state agency or unit of local government, and all discretionary approvals (permits) from a NYS agency or unit of local government, require an environmental impact assessment."³ The Village of Amityville must follow the steps of the SEQR process and determine the type of action, determine if the proposed action has significance or non-significance, and determine if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary. If necessary the Village should consider creating a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). A GEIS is prepared when a proposed action could have wide-ranging effects in a defined area.

¹ Patchogue Village Business Improvement District, http://www.patchoguebid.com/about_bid.html Accessed on July 20, 2015.

² Official Blog of the Patchogue Village Business Improvement District, "Retrospective: History of the Patchogue Village BID", <https://patchoguebid.wordpress.com/2015/03/27/retrospective-history-of-the-patchogue-village-bid/> Accessed on July 20, 2015.

³ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/357.html> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

The Town of Babylon is currently working through the SEQR process in regards to their proposed zoning changes for downtown Copiague. The Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS)⁴ for the proposed actions may be a good example for the Village of Amityville to review.

Potential Sources of Funding

Attracting private development dollars to Amityville through zoning code revisions is only one component of a revitalized downtown. The Village must be prepared to find additional sources of funding that they control. This will ensure that the public realm through the downtown is rooted in desires of the community as a whole, and not the individual interests of each development. Developers should help offset the additional burdens their projects create on infrastructure and services, but should not be in complete control over creating public spaces in the downtown.

For some sources of funding it may be beneficial for the Village of Amityville to work with a non-profit organization, their Suffolk County Legislator, State Senator, and or Assembly member.

Federal

The procedure for applying for federal funding for transportation projects varies. NYSDOT or this region's municipal planning organization (MPO) may provide training and technical assistance. Those agencies may also be a part of evaluating applications for funding. The MPO for Long Island is the New York Metropolitan Council (NYMTC).

Surface Transportation Program (STP) – potential to work with NYMTC and NYSDOT to secure funds for bicycle, pedestrian and recreational trails.⁵

Bus and Bus Facilities Program – potential to work with Suffolk County Transit to secure funding for new or improved passenger shelters and, bus signage.⁶

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – this is funding for programs and projects for which advance alternatives to automobile transportation.⁷

State

New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) – access to state grants for economic development across multiple state agencies.⁸

Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (LIREDC) – In 2011 Governor Cuomo created ten regional economic development councils to craft an economic strategy for their respective regions and compete for state funding. The

LIREDC created a five-year strategic plan for economic development on Long Island. The council was awarded funding to go towards specific projects and proposals.⁹

Each state has a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator within their respective department of transportation. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) coordinator is Eric Ophardt and inquiries on available funding should be directed to him. His contact info is (518) 457-0922 or Eric.Ophardt@dot.ny.gov¹⁰

County

Suffolk County Downtown Revitalization Grant – Each year Suffolk County's Downtown Revitalization Citizens Advisory Panel awards grants "that will have an important and sustainable impact on downtowns and business districts."¹¹ The Village of Amityville could take this opportunity to partner with a business or community organization to apply for revitalization grants.

Jumpstart Suffolk – Upon identifying specific projects which will promote economic development in downtown Amityville, the Village of Amityville should work with their Legislator and Suffolk County Economic Development in securing Jumpstart Suffolk funds which are allocated "to encourage, foster and enhance the planning, development and/or new construction of regionally significant, vibrant mixed-use transit-oriented development in and around downtowns, light industrial and commercial areas adjacent to downtowns or transit."¹²

⁴ Downtown Copiague DGEIS. <http://www.townofbabylon.com/DocumentCenter/View/1367> Accessed on March, 27 2015.

⁵ Federal Highway Administration, Revised Surface Transportation Program (STP) Implementation Guidance. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidestprev.cfm> Access on May 8, 2015.

⁶ Federal Transit Administration, Bus and Bus Facilities. http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_3557.html Accessed on May 8, 2015.

⁷ NYSDOT, Transportation Alternatives Program. <https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance> Accessed on May 8, 2015.

⁸ State of New York, 2015 Available CFA Resources. https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/2015_RESOURCESAVAILABLE_FINALV2.pdf Accessed on May 8, 2015.

⁹ State of New York, Identifying our Opportunities 2015. https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/2015REDCCGuidebook_FINAL1.pdf Accessed on May 8, 2015.

¹⁰ NYSDOT, Bicycling in New York. <https://www.dot.ny.gov/display/programs/bicycle/contact> Accessed on May 8, 2015.

¹¹ Suffolk County Downtown Revitalization Citizens Advisory Panel. <http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/EconomicDevelopmentandPlanning/DowntownRevitalizationCitizensAdvisoryPanel.aspx> Accessed on February 23, 2015.

¹² Resolution No.801-2013. <http://legis.suffolkcountyny.gov/Resos2013/i1805-13.pdf> Accessed on March 26, 2015



Regional Plan Association

Regional Plan Association is an independent, not-for-profit civic organization that develops and promotes ideas to improve the economic health, environmental resiliency and quality of life of the New York metropolitan area. We conduct research on transportation, land use, housing, good governance and the environment. We advise cities, communities and public agencies. And we advocate for change that will contribute to the prosperity of all residents of the region. Since the 1920s, RPA has produced three landmark plans for the region and is working on a fourth plan due out in 2017. For more information, please visit, www.rpa.org.

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