

PLANNING AND ZONING

MONTICELLO
NEW YORK

A REPORT BY
RUSSELL VANNEST BLACK

PLANNING AND ZONING
for
THE VILLAGE OF MONTICELLO
Sullivan County, New York

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by
RUSSELL VANNEST BLACK

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>PART ONE - THE VILLAGE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE</u>	<u>1</u>
Early Beginnings	1
Recent Growth	2
Business and Industry.	3
Natural Resources and Assets	4
Growth and Development Prospects	5
Current and Emerging Problems	6
<u>PART TWO - PLANNING AND THE MASTER PLAN</u>	<u>8</u>
The Proposed Master Plan for Monticello	8
The Future Land-Use Plan	9
The Master Plan Map	9
Streets and Roads	9
The Existing Street System	10
Some Proposals	11
Building Setback Lines	13
Improvement of Broadway	13
Street Arrangement and Street Widths	14
Roadway and Right-of-Way Widths	15
Recommendations for Monticello	16
Automobile Parking	16
Schools and Schoolgrounds	17
Other Public Buildings	18
Parks and Playgrounds	18
Airport	19
Water Supply	19
Sewers	20
Housing	20

CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
<u>PART THREE</u> - CARRYING OUT THE MASTER PLAN	22
Normal Procedures In Making Capital Improvements	22
Capital Improvements Programming and Budgeting	23
Suggested Project Priorities	23
Zoning and Similar Regulations	25
Land-Subdivision Guidance and Control	25
Paying for Planned Improvements	26
The Village Financial Situation	27
Continuity of Planning and the Plan	28
Public Understanding and Support	29
<u>PART FOUR</u> - ZONING AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE	31
The Monticello Ordinance	33
Kinds of Districts	33
Allocations for Commerce and Industry	34
Zoned Frontage and Lands vs Occupied Lands	35
Required Yards and Land Area per Dwelling	36
Special Building Setback Lines	37
Exceptions and Special Provisions	37
Ordinance Administration	39
Amending the Ordinance and Map	40

MAPS AND CHARTS

FUTURE LAND-USE PLAN	Following	9
MASTER PLAN MAP	Following	9
TYPICAL STREET CROSS-SECTIONS	Following	15

PLANNING AND ZONING FOR THE VILLAGE OF MONTICELLO

PART ONE

THE VILLAGE -- PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Monticello is a principal trading center in Sullivan County and the County Seat. It is located in the famed Catskill Mountains, a major resort area. Its principal business is service to summer vacationists and its permanent population of around 4,500 swells to an estimated 20,000 during July and August. Among the natural attractions of the locale are a cool summer climate, lakes and streams and extensive woodland. These are augmented by easy accessibility from great populous areas (only two hours from Manhattan Island) and by the many accommodations provided for the visitor's comfort and pleasure. The area of the Village, including recent annexations is about 2.2 square miles.

Early Beginnings.

The first stimulus to settlement of the Village was construction of the Newburgh-Cochecton Pike through the present site. Start was made by the Jones Brothers, in 1804, by erecting a saw mill and proceeding to sell lots on the Pike. The Pike was to become Route 17 and the developed main street was to become present Broadway.

In 1809 the settlement was designated the County Seat of newly-created Sullivan County and in 1830 it was incorporated as a Village. Its development was slow. By 1813 it had only 20 houses. Fifty-five years later, 1868, it had a population of only 659. Its early industrial mainstays were tanning, lumbering and manufacturing

wood products, in that order. Game abounded and sport hunting was an incidental business. The coming of the railroad in 1871 stimulated development somewhat but not until the advent of the automobile and good roads did the community begin to assume its present proportions as a vacation and recreational center. The decade 1920 to 1930 saw a development peak with a population increase of 1120 or 48%.

Recent Growth.

The Village population increased from 3,717 in 1940 to 4,223 in 1950, an increase of 486 or 13.0 per cent. During the same period the population of the Town of Thompson, including Monticello, increased by 858 or 14.1 per cent, indicating that more than half the Town's growth occurred within the Village. The rate of Village growth compares favorably with an increase of 12.8 per cent for Liberty, its nearest sizable neighbor, and with an increase of 7.4 per cent for the whole of Sullivan County.

Comparative Population Increase 1920-1950

Place	1920	1930	Inc.	1940	Inc.	1950	Inc.
Village of Monticello	2,330	3,450	1,120 48%	3,737	287 8.3%	4,223	486 13.0%
*Town of Thompson	4,597	5,950	1,353 29.4%	6,054	104 1.7%	6,912	858 14.1%
Liberty	6,030	6,967	937 15.5%	7,235	268 3.8%	7,979	744 12.8%
Sullivan County	33,163	35,272	2,109 6.3%	37,901	2629 7.4%	40,731	2830 7.4%

* Includes Village of Monticello

The census figures, however, are only a partial indicator of the population situation in Monticello and Sullivan County where, during the summer season, the number of residents is probably more than quadrupled by the influx of summer vacationists all of whom require varying amounts of servicing.

Business and Industry.

Monticello has no considerable manufacturing industry as such. Beyond satisfying its own year-round requirements, its principal business is service to the traveling public and to a large resort area. A great deal of its business activity therefore is seasonal with much the greater part falling in July and August. Some of the transient trade will probably be lost to the Village proper as through traffic shifts to the new Route 17 Bypass. But this may be more than compensated for by the improved shopping conveniences on Broadway resulting from reduced traffic hazards and annoyances.

Other features contributing to local business are the Court House and the recently-built race track. However, because of its seasonal nature and other characteristics, the effect of the race track upon business within the Village is uncertain.

Appropriate manufacturing industry would be locally beneficial in improving the tax situation and in providing year-round employment. Possibly with the right inducements some more or less specialized industries could be attracted to the locality. But the fact that, during the recent years of rapid expansion and dispersal of industry throughout the country, industry has not come of its own accord may indicate that local circumstances are not particularly favorable to industrial development, at least not competitively so. Recognizable handicaps include distance from market and

raw materials and limited labor supply.

Circumstances suggest therefore that by far the greater economic future of Monticello and Sullivan County may well lie in further development of and capitalization upon their exceptional natural recreational resources. These are the area's chief stock in trade. Their development thus far has been without much public guidance or participation and, upon occasion, have tended to be wasteful and destructive. The time has come for a concerted program of conservation, for extending and improving recreational opportunities, and for developing more special attractions to afford larger pleasure to a greater number of people over a longer season of the year. Much of the responsibility for such a program necessarily rests with the Village, the County and the State.

Natural Resources and Assets.

Monticello is peculiarly a product of its environment. It is a part of, and the trading center for, an area having resort and recreational values as its major asset. Timber and other forest products, once the mainstay of the region, have dwindled to small importance. With time and good forest management these may eventually be restored to some extent but this is for the long future. The high elevation, difficult topography and poor soils of the area combine to severely restrict its agricultural possibilities. It is no accident that, after 150 years of settlement, most of the land is still in forest. Mineral resources, as far as they are known, are not an important factor in the present or future economy of the region.

This comes back to what we have already said. The great natural asset of the locality is its attractiveness as a vacational

and recreational resort, coupled with its close proximity to the greatest population concentration in the country.

Growth and Development Prospects.

As the natural assets of a community are nurtured and intelligently developed, so develops and grows the community. Many things contribute to a community's growth but most importantly, for a relatively isolated place like Monticello, it grows by natural increase (the excess of births over deaths), and by increased employment (every new full-time worker in industry, which may be recreational, provides employment for two or three other persons in various services; every new full-time job holder adds three or four people to the population).

Whether a community retains its natural increase depends upon the extent to which it affords satisfactory employment to its young people and maintains living conditions agreeable to them. Providing additional employment, of course, is a matter of making the most of local assets and development opportunities. As said above, Monticello appears to offer little attraction for manufacturing industry. Its greater growth potential is in further development of recreational assets and services in the Village and its trading area.

Such development, once well started in a favorable setting, becomes self-generating; witness the progression in and around Monticello. First came the sportsmen for fishing and hunting and a few summer boarders and seekers of health; then the vacation cottages and hotels; and now, increasingly, such commercial features as ski runs and the race track. With broadening the recreational attractions, is coming an extension of the resort season.

Simultaneously with enlargement of recreational facilities has come improvement of the means of access including modernization of Route 17. There is no reason why this process should not continue. If future development is done under proper guidance and done with a view to conserving and improving natural attractions, the area will become increasingly popular.

Further recreational development in the surrounding area will be reflected in the growth of the Village of Monticello. We make no predictions as to the rate or the amount of this growth beyond saying it is not likely to be less and may well be considerably more than for the past decade. Beyond the effect of unpredictable happenings outside the Village and its jurisdiction much of the Village's future depends upon what the community does to improve its attractiveness and its advantages as a place for living and doing business.

Current and Emerging Problems.

Monticello has grown without plan or regulation. Although there have been accretions of new developments at its edges, the basic character of the Village, as represented by its streets and most of its structures, remains much as in pre-automobile days. Inadequacies and inconveniences, once small and unimportant, have become magnified with the changing times and with the greater size of the community. Facing the community are the problems of correcting accumulated deficiencies to the extent still practicable and of assuring that the mistakes and inadequacies of the past are not repeated in future change and development.

Suggested as among the more serious problems and desirable objectives are:

Improving the conveniences and general attractiveness of the business district to assure its getting its share of the increasing regional trade and to improve its competitive position in relation to outlying places of business.

Improving the community, as appropriate to the center of an increasingly popular resort area, for both economic and social benefit.

Modifying and extending the street system for adjustment to relocated Route 17 and for better communication within the community now and as it develops.

Improving the standards of future development through such regulatory measures as zoning and land subdivision controls.

Providing additional recreational facilities for year-round as well as seasonal use.

PART TWO

PLANNING AND THE MASTER PLAN

In running the affairs of a community, as in any other business, planning for the future is essential to progress. Only by farsighted planning can there be assurance that the right improvements will be made in the right place at the right time. Only by such planning and programming will the greatest community benefit per public dollar expended be obtained. Only in this way can costly and sometimes irrevocable mistakes be avoided.

A primary tool of planning is the master plan showing in broad outline the streets, the schoolgrounds, the recreational areas and other public grounds and facilities, the community should have to correct current deficiencies and will need as it grows. Contrary to the implication of the term, the "master plan" is not intended to be, and is not, a strait-jacket upon community development but rather a guide to be observed in principle. And it is subject to change as circumstances and community requirements may change. The master plan is today's best appraisal of future community requirements, based on study of the community as it has grown, as it is, and as it is likely to develop. But the most informed prediction is not infallible. The plan should be kept under continuous observation and study for adjustment as need be and for expansion with increased public demand.

THE PROPOSED MASTER PLAN FOR MONTICELLO

The master plan is of one piece. The streets, the schools, the parks and other public facilities and the private use of the

land are all inter-related and inter-dependent but, for clarity, each of the several kinds of public improvements and services are separately discussed. Also discussed are numerous related considerations and proposals not appearing on the accompanying plan.

THE FUTURE LAND-USE PLAN.

In addition to existing and proposed public lands and improvements, this plan contains general indication of what is thought to be the most appropriate long-future development and use of private land in and around the Village. In its private-land-use aspect the plan is not subject to official adoption but has its value as a general guide for community change and growth. Its land-use indications are much more generalized than as appearing on the zoning map, and they are not always consistent with the zoning map as adopted. The zoning map is more closely related to conditions and requirements as they now exist. The land-use plan reaches out to the long-future, taking into account the changes that may occur or may be caused to occur in the course of time.

The proposed future land uses are based upon present development trends; a concept of proper balance between residential, commercial and industrial development; and the relative suitability of land for one use or another as determined by location, accessibility, topography and other factors.

THE MASTER PLAN MAP

The master plan map is herein reproduced. Its several features and the more important related considerations are as follows:

Streets and Roads.

The master plan is primarily concerned with streets and roads having or to have some special traffic importance. They comprise

the arterial traffic-way system of the Village and its expansion area. To this end, streets and roads are classified as main thoroughfares, secondary thoroughfares, and others. The main thoroughfares are the principal traffic arteries, usually carrying large proportions of through traffic. The secondary thoroughfares, for the most part, are local streets interconnecting one part of the community with another or collecting traffic for delivery into a main thoroughfare. The "other" streets and roads are the ways of access to residential and other occupied frontage.

The Existing Street System. Only one street, Broadway, extends continuously through the Village in an easterly and westerly direction. None gives direct connection between the areas north and south of Broadway. As a result, most traffic moving from one part of the Village to another is compelled to enter Broadway or pass with much indirection through disconnected residential streets. Broadway, the principal business street, is also State Route 17 and, at times, heavily congested by through traffic.

Of the main thoroughfares, only Broadway has an adequate width. The right-of-way widths of the other main arteries are respectively: Forestburgh Road (State Route 42) 44', Liberty Street (State Route 17) 40'-50', Jefferson Street 40', Pleasant Street 32', Thompsonville Road 32', and St. John Street less than 60'.

The inconveniences, time losses and hazards of this traffic situation are costly and will worsen as the community grows and traffic volumes increase unless drastic remedial actions are taken. The Route 17 By-Pass now under construction should relieve Broadway from most of the east-west through traffic. But a part of the vacuum thus created will be filled by traffic to and from the new

race track. And while relieving Broadway, the By-Pass will have the effect of much greater traffic concentration on Jefferson and Pleasant Streets, leading into the Village from the two Monticello interchanges.

Some Proposals:

The several Plan proposals designed to improve the present situation and to provide an arterial framework for future development are as follows:

1. Southerly Cross-Town via Dillon and Franklin and Oneill Road. By filling in the gaps as indicated, this route would provide a direct way across the breadth of the Village south of Broadway from Port Jervis Road to Waverly Avenue. In addition to its general traffic convenience, it will afford needed access from the intensively-developed southwesterly section of the Village to the new school and planned recreational center east of Spring Street. Already one of the most-pressingly needed street improvements, it will become increasingly important as the lands to the southward are further developed. Securing the required additional rights-of-way is urgent.

2. Extension of Port Jervis Road to Jefferson and Liberty Streets. This would greatly facilitate the movement of north-and-south-bound traffic and give material traffic relief to the westerly end of Broadway. Much the preferred location is shown in Plan as "Alternate A". The substitute location would only partially serve the purpose. Securing the right-of-way for this improvement also is urgent.

3. Northerly East-west The Route 17 By-Pass will hem in the northerly side of the Village. Some good connection

between the sections east and west of Pleasant Street, other than Broadway, is needed and will become increasingly so as the areas served are further developed. A desirable direct connection across Pleasant Street from Thompsonville Road to Crystal Street is no longer economically feasible. Perhaps the best that can now be devised is improvement of High Street for better connection between Liberty and Pleasant Streets, with indirect connection eastward on Thompsonville Road - Rockridge Avenue.

4. Extension of State Route 47 to Rockridge Avenue. This short relocation of Route 47 (Waverly Avenue) to connect with Rockridge Avenue at Broadway would provide a direct circumferential around the easterly side of the Village to Pleasant Street and the By-Pass interchange,- both a large traffic convenience and a Broadway relief.

5. Lounsbury Road - Cold Spring Road Interconnection. This, with the above-proposed relocation of Route 43, completely circumscribes the now-developed Village from Port Jervis Road to Broadway and provides ready access to the proposed high school on Port Jervis Road. It will be an essential through traffic street if and when the area it traverses is developed. The required right-of-way should be acquired in the course of development.

6. Carpenter Street Extension. This is needed for improved local-traffic circulation and for access to the projected new school on Oneill Road.

Other Street and Road Improvements. Other proposals include extensions or realignment of certain of the more important outlying roads, and improvement of a number of existing streets to better serve their functions as main or secondary thoroughfares. In some

instances, such improvement will require eventual widening of both the roadway and the right-of-way.

Building Setback Lines for Eventual Street Widening.

As previously stated, practically all of the main streets and roads in and around Monticello, except Broadway, are much too narrow even for present traffic volumes. It is comparatively simple and inexpensive to get wider rights-of-way in undeveloped or developing areas. Usually they can be obtained in developing areas through free dedication by frontage developers. But the cost of widenings through developed areas at the expense of large damage to existing structures may be prohibitive. Generally, the only practicable solution is to establish building setback lines to keep future construction back from the widening lines and wait until the way is sufficiently cleared so that the needed widening strips can be obtained at little more than the cost of the land. This is a lengthy process but may be the only recourse in Monticello with its limited financial resources and the relatively extensive widening job to be done. Accordingly, special building setback lines have been established, in the zoning ordinance, on certain streets where widening is already needed and may become imperative.

Improvement of Broadway. The width of Broadway eastward from Liberty Street is a mixed blessing. It has saved the Village from intolerable traffic congestion but at the same time it presents an unsightly and uncomfortable expanse of concrete, hazardous and inconvenient as the town's principal shopping street. There are a number of ways the street could be greatly improved, without impairing its traffic function, that would reflect credit upon the community and improve its competitive position as a shopping center.

Perhaps the most effective would be cutting back the excessive sidewalks and using the space thus gained for a wide medial strip planted with grass, trees and shrubbery, augmented by trees on both sides of the street at the outer edge of the sidewalks. This would revolutionize the appearance of the street, reduce traffic hazards, and greatly improve shopper convenience and safety. The very least that might be done would be using a part of the sidewalk space for grass and trees. And with whatever may be done to improve the appearance and the utility of the street itself should be encouragement of improved architectural style in future building construction.

Street Arrangement and Street Widths.

Both the arrangement and the width of streets should accord with the functions they are to serve. The ideal street system is one with properly spaced arterial traffic ways, located and planned with emphasis upon gradient, directness and capacity proportionate to anticipated traffic load. When the arterial ways are sufficient and direct enough the spaces between them are free for undisturbed residential development or for other uses to which heavy and fast traffic may be detrimental. The streets serving such residential neighborhoods or other special-use areas then become merely access ways. They should be relatively narrow and indirect to discourage speeding and the infiltration of through traffic. Such an ideal street system is of course impossible to achieve in already developed areas but it can be approached by designating the streets most suitable in location and width as the traffic arteries and planning future roadway and right-of-way widenings accordingly. The principle can be freely applied in newly-developing areas.

Classifying, building and improving streets according to pre-determined function serves multiple purposes. It facilitates traffic movement. It improves the livability of residential neighborhoods. It can effect great economy in street construction and maintenance. There is no single item of public endeavor in which so much money can be poured down the drain as in inappropriate and inefficient roadway widths.

Roadway and Right-of-Way Widths. Roadway widths should be in multiples of traffic lane widths appropriate to the kind of traffic to be served. For free-moving mixed traffic in urban areas, a 10-foot traffic lane is usually sufficient. As traffic speed picks up in open country, the lane width should be increased to from 11 to 13 feet. For residential streets confined to local traffic the lane width may be reduced to 9 feet. Parking at the curb requires 8 feet.

Any departure from such standard roadway widths, with few exceptions, involves wastage of money for paving construction and maintenance and may cause traffic confusion. As illustration, a 30-foot roadway used for parking at both curbs has only 14 feet left for free-moving vehicles, insufficient for safe passage. A 26 foot roadway will serve the same purpose. Nothing is gained traffic-wise until the roadway width is increased to 34 or 36 feet, giving a traffic lane of 9 to 10 feet in each direction. The 30-foot roadway is 4 feet too wide or from 4 to 6 feet too narrow. The one is wastage. The other is deficient and hazardous.

Right-of-way widths should be sufficient to provide a roadway of the desired width plus curb and plus sidewalk or sidewalk and tree planting space. For a 26 roadway a 50 foot right-of-way is

sufficient. For a 36 to 40 foot roadway the right-of-way should be not less than 60 feet; 66 to 70 feet would be better. For four lanes of moving traffic, an undivided roadway should have a width of from 54 to 56 feet on a right-of-way of not less than 80 feet. As the type of road moves up to divided roadways and high-speed throughways, required rights-of-way increase from 120 feet. The accompanying diagram, "Typical Street Cross-Sections" illustrates the above.

Recommendations for Monticello. Monticello is faced with a considerable paving and repaving program. There is a large potential saving in conforming as nearly as practicable to the above roadway standards in conformity with the street classifications shown on the master plan map.

This will not be too difficult to apply in respect to the purely residential and other minor streets but some compromise will be necessary for most if not all the indicated main and secondary thoroughfares because of their universally narrow right-of-way. Building setback lines established in the zoning ordinance may eventually enable widening the right-of-way of at least some of these streets to from 60 to 66 feet permitting roadways of up to 40 feet. In some instances, the indicated ultimate 60 to 66 foot rights-of-way are in themselves compromises but the best appearing to be feasible under the circumstances.

Automobile Parking.

Monticello suffers from great seasonal variation in parking requirements. During most of the year, present provisions are reasonably adequate. For the summer months they fall short of demand. During this period of intense business activity, shoppers are

inconvenienced and business interests suffer.

At the time of survey, parking space in the business center of the Village included:

Metered curb spaces 240

Parking Lots

North Street, Municipal (metered) .	186
*Oakley Avenue, Municipal (free)....	65
Park Avenue, Municipal (free)	50
Jewish Community Center	50
Various private lots	115

Total spaces 791

Total off-street 551

*The Oakley Avenue lot has since been abandoned, reducing the available off-street spaces to 486.

Undoubtedly some additional off-street parking space is needed during the busy summer season. The amount the Village would be warranted in providing may depend in part upon how much will be supported by parking fees. Municipal parking lots generally should be self-maintaining.

The most practicable and most serviceable locations for additional parking lots if to be constructed are in the interiors of the blocks fronting on Broadway between Oakley Avenue and St. John Street, including the old Oakley Street lot enlarged.

Schools and Schoolgrounds.

The Town of Thompson incorporating the Village of Monticello is one of the five Towns in Central School District Number 1. A professionally-conducted survey of the building requirements of the District, completed early in the course of this study, determined the need for two new elementary schools and a new high school, the first immediate and the other in the near future.

Grounds have been purchased for the two elementary schools,- one on Oneill Street extended and the other on Port Jervis Road. The first was determined independently of this study. With it we do not altogether concur because it is separated from the north side of the Village by Broadway and too far from the center of the present and probable-future school population to be served by it. Although not ideally situated for the convenience of younger children the Port Jervis Road location may be the best available and it accords with our earlier suggestion to combine the elementary school and the high school in this location, which is understood to be the present plan of the District. No additional school buildings or grounds will be required in the foreseeable future unless forced by the obsolescence of the present St. John Street High School, seriously deficient in grounds space, and slated in the new scheme to be used as a junior high school.

Other Public Buildings.

The Village Hall and the fire and police station are amply housed in recently remodeled adjoining buildings. Eventually, it will be necessary to replace or enlarge the Court House. The County already owns or can acquire sufficient land for the purpose in its present location. No better site for the Court House can be found in the Village.

Parks and Playgrounds.

Monticello now has no public playground or park other than the high school athletic ground on Oneill Street, mostly developed for spectator sports. Some such facilities are needed not only for the pleasure and health of the year-round residents but to improve the resort quality of the community.

In many ways the most satisfactory community or neighborhood playgrounds are built in conjunction with schools by enlarging the schoolgrounds sufficiently for general recreational purposes. The two new schoolgrounds mentioned above, especially the combined elementary and high school grounds, are large enough to have considerable community recreational value if properly developed but both are too remote for everyday use by small children. To compensate for this deficiency, two small park-playgrounds are proposed, - one on Dillon Road and the other on Pleasant View Avenue.

Proposed Community Center Park. The low land east of Spring Street, with its stream, could be made into a very useful and attractive park. In conjunction with the adjacent school athletic field and new elementary schoolground, it could become a very creditable community recreational center. Acquisition and development of an area approximately as shown in plan is recommended.

Airport.

There is no commercial air transport service in the near vicinity of Monticello. Until a few years ago, Mohawk Airlines provided a limited service from a small airport located on the old fair grounds at the southerly outskirts of the Village. This airport is now in disuse; would require considerable improvement and expansion if again to be put into operation; and it is doubtful if its location and development potentialities are the most suitable for a regional airport that can be found in the general locality. Determination of an appropriate site is more properly a regional or county responsibility.

Water Supply.

Water is obtained from Klamesha Lake by pumping to two

reservoirs with a total capacity of 1,000,000 gallons and thence into the distribution system by gravity. Recent improvements and additions to the plant have effectively increased the available supply and improved quality and water pressures to a point equal to all foreseeable demand.

Sewers.

The Village has a sewage disposal plant and approximately eighteen and a-half miles of sewer lines. The plant now serves all developed areas within the corporate limits, with considerable surplus capacity. By policy, no extensions are made beyond the Village limits, making annexation a condition of obtaining sewer services. Use of the sewerage facilities within the Village is assured by a prohibition of cesspools and septic tanks.

Housing.

As reported by the 1950 U.S. Census of Housing, Monticello had in that year 2,114 dwelling units of which over a quarter (581) were seasonal. Thirty-eight per cent of the units were in one-family dwellings. Twenty-six per cent were in two-family or semi-detached dwellings. The remainder, thirty-six per cent, were in multi-family dwellings of three or more units. Many of the seasonal dwellings are in closely-grouped bungalow colonies.

Fifty-seven and five-tenths per cent of the dwellings had been built prior to 1920. Forty-six per cent were owner occupied. Eighty per cent had private bath and toilet. Of the rental units, only three and six-tenth per cent rented for less than \$30. Fifty-three per cent rented for from \$50 to \$74; twenty-four per cent for \$75 or more. The reported median value of dwellings, \$13,713, was the highest in the Mid-Hudson area of New York State.

There are few dilapidated dwellings in the Village and no considerable concentrations of them. Among the most disreputable in appearance are some of the seasonal dwellings apparently suffering from a minimum of maintenance of structures and grounds. No areas normally subject to clearance and redevelopment have been observed.

PART THREE

CARRYING OUT THE PLAN AND ITS OBJECTIVES

The Plan is a long-range plan for carrying out over future years as the community grows and develops. Some parts of it would be of immediate benefit and should be built as soon as funds become available. But others can and should be deferred until need arises or until the land affected by them is developed. The important thing now and continuously is to assure the ultimate realization of all plan features by safeguarding the required lands and locations against encroachment and adverse development. This is largely a joint responsibility of the Village Board of Trustees and the Planning Board, with the cooperation of the Town Authorities in respect to plan extensions beyond the Village limits. Further cooperation with and from State and County Authorities will eventually be required in making some of the major thoroughfare improvements.

Among the means available to the Village for carrying out the Plan are the following:

The Normal Municipal Procedures In Making and Financing Capital Improvements.

In the normal course of events, the Village will spend considerable sums on capital improvements. The first rule for plan accomplishment is to make no improvements except in accordance with the Plan. Should circumstances at the time of action suggest or require some departure from the Plan, the necessary change should be worked out with the Planning Board and related parts of the Plan should be adjusted accordingly.

Capital Improvements Programming and Budgeting.

It is only good business to anticipate required improvements and the funds coming available to pay for them, over a period of years, and to make the improvements in the order of their relative need and importance. It is quite customary to extend such a capital improvements program over a 1-5-5 year period. For the first ensuing year, the program and budget is quite definite as to things to be done and the amounts to be expended. The work to be done and capital outlays annually over the next five years is somewhat more generalized. In the subsequent five years of program are lumped the remaining things the Village hopes to accomplish within the near future. Each year the program is reconsidered and advanced by one year, and thus always kept up to date.

The greatest uncertainty attached to such programming is in the amount of capital funds to be available in any future year. Times and circumstances change and with them changes the amount that can and should be spent for improvements. Short of scheduling improvements by future years much will be gained by listing them by priorities, first things coming first as funds may become available.

Preparation of a long-range capital improvements program should be a community project undertaken jointly by the Village Trustees and the Planning Board with the assistance of representative of citizen and business interests.

Suggested Project Priorities.

All master plan proposals are of first priority in the sense that the rights-of-way and other lands required for them should be obtained whenever, and as soon as, becoming available, and in the

sense that all of them should be continuously kept in mind to see that nothing is done to prevent or hinder their ultimate accomplishment. But some of the planned improvements are of more immediate need than others, would serve a more important immediate purpose, and should be built in that order.

The following list of projects is in the order of suggested preference. They are limited to proposals shown on or directly related to the master plan and to those primarily a responsibility of the Village. In financial programming and budgeting they must of course be related to other required expenditures such as for paving, extension or improvement of water and sewer services and municipal buildings.

Streets and Roads:

1. Extension of Port Jervis Road to Jefferson and Liberty Streets. The required right-of-way should be immediately established by ordinance, with construction to follow as soon as possible. This project may be subject to construction by the State or subject to State aid.

2. Widening of Pleasant Street.

3. Southerly Cross-Town via Dillon, Franklin and Oneill Streets. The required right-of-way should be immediately established, with construction to follow as soon as possible.

4. Improvement of High Street.

5. Improvement of Broadway.

Other Projects:

1. Community Center Park east of Spring Street.

2. Playground on Pleasant View Avenue.

3. Playground on Dillon Road.

4. Municipal Parking Lot south of Broadway, if determined that demand is sufficient for its support by parking fees.

The relative priority between new and improved streets and parks and playgrounds is a matter of community desire and for community determination. In their way, they are equally important. Both are needed in Monticello and, desirably, would proceed simultaneously.

Zoning and Similar Regulations.

Zoning comes particularly into play in carrying out the plan in such of its regulations as those relating to off-street parking and building setbacks. The latter, if properly adhered to, will enable the eventual economical widening of the now too-narrow, plan-indicated main streets and roads.

Land-Subdivision Guidance and Control.

The Planning Board's authority to regulate and approve subdivisions of land into streets and lots is perhaps the most fertile means to carrying out the Plan in newly-developing areas. In addition to insisting upon improved standards of land development the Planning Board can require conformity with the Plan in the location and widths of streets and roads and in the reservation of lands needed for such public purposes as schools and parks and playgrounds. When a plan-proposed street or road crosses land proposed to be developed the Planning Board can require, as a condition for plat approval, that the proposed street or road be incorporated in the subdivision plan. When land fronting on a street or road requiring future widening is developed, the Planning Board can require the subdivider to provide the land needed for right-of-way widening on his side of the road.

Generally, such conformity to plan is of as much advantage to the land developer as it is to the community. Failure of developers to take such community requirements into account is more often than not because the community has no plan and the developer has no way of knowing what it needs or wants.

By the progressive guidance of land developments, as they may occur, into the overall pattern of the plan they will eventually fit together like the pieces of a cross-word puzzle. Planned thoroughfare locations and land for right-of-way widenings will be continuous and the need for outright purchase of needed rights-of-way will be minimized.

In order to exercise its subdivision-approval powers properly the Planning Board must have adopted a set of Subdivision Rules and Regulations clearly setting forth the procedures to be employed by the Board and by the developer and the subdivision standards to be observed. A set of rules and regulations adaptable to use in Monticello have been submitted to, and are under consideration for adoption by, the Planning Board.

Paying for Planned Improvements.

There is nothing peculiar about paying for planned improvements. They cost no more than other improvements. In the long run their total cost will be less because, by reference to the over-all plan, it is possible to determine which things should come first and which will produce the greater benefit per dollar expended, thus avoiding premature investments. And by adherence to plan costly outlays for wrong improvements in the wrong places can be avoided. Total outlays for improvements are increased by reason by the Plan, only to the extent that the Plan points up new things needing to be

done and the Village decides to do them. Some such things as additional parking space and recreational areas and putting a better face on the Village for summer visitors will eventually more than pay their way in increased valuations.

As said above, some of the land required for planned new streets and street widenings should be obtained as a bi-product of land-development, without cost to the Village. The proposed new schools and schoolgrounds are a responsibility of the Consolidated School District, with cost spread over the District. The State and/or the County will share largely in the improvement of proposed main streets and roads.

However, even with such aids, a vigorous program of community improvement will in the course of time involve considerable outlay upon the part of the Village. As seen below, the Village is in a fair and improving financial position but its resources are not so great that it will not have to do close-to-the-chest financing to accomplish all the improvements it should have, within the reasonably near future. Indicated is careful advance scheduling of improvements and funds as through the suggested capital improvements program and budget. It is suggested further that consideration be given to financing more improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis, - paying for them out of current tax revenues by moderate increase in the tax rate.

The Village Financial Situation.

The total assessed (taxable) valuations of the Village for 1957-1958 is \$12,884,478. This does not include valuations in the recent race track annexation amounting to around \$2,000,000. Exclusive of the race track annexation figure, valuations have

increased by around \$2,250,000 since 1950.

The total current funded obligations of the Village are \$1,403,904. Of this amount, \$510,598 is for self-liquidating projects and \$893,316 is net indebtedness for general municipal purposes. By law, the net borrowing power of municipalities is limited to 7 per cent of the average of assessed valuations over the previous five years. Accordingly, Monticello has a 1957-1958 net borrowing power of \$1,139,494, and a credit margin of \$246,177. Again this figure does not reflect the additional credit to accrue in future years from the race track annexation, progressively enlarging to something in excess of \$140,000.

Continuity of Planning and the Plan.

The Plan is not a once-for-all thing. Although representing today's best thought as to the direction of the Village's future growth and the improvements and facilities required to serve it, it cannot anticipate all future circumstances. As circumstances change the plan must be changed accordingly. New ideals, new community goals, will be continuously evolving. They too will suggest changes and improvements in the plan.

This adds up to the fact that the planning process, if to amount to much, must be continuous. The plan should be the first reference whenever related public or private improvements are contemplated. It should be periodically reviewed for desirable change and possible improvement. This function is maintained in the larger places by full-time planning staffs. In small communities like Monticello, much of the responsibility for carrying on the planning job necessarily rests with the planning board and the municipal administrative officer or officers with the help of

outside consultants as required.

Public Understanding and Support.

The law and the people leave much of the running of public affairs to the elected officials. But it always helps and it is sometimes necessary to have public understanding and support of things done and things proposed to be done. What may first seem to be arbitrary and needless regulations become generally acceptable when their purpose is known. When extraordinary improvements are proposed it is essential that the people understand their need and be willing to pay for them. Public officials get along well enough by themselves in the conduct of ordinary affairs. It is when they raise the sights to achieve something better for the community, perhaps to make of the community something a little out of the ordinary, that the objectives must be generally understood and that they must have the full cooperation of the citizenry.

Planning is common enough in the conduct of personal affairs. All people use it to some degree in their private lives and in their business. But planning as applied to towns and cities is not generally understood. Although zoning and land-subdivision controls have long been in effect and accepted in most municipalities of the country they are new to Monticello. Public education in these matters is particularly important in this place at this time.

Such education can be advanced in many ways,- by publishing such explanatory reports as this, by newspaper articles, by public talks and, perhaps most effectively, by work in the public schools. Copies of the plan report and related materials should be available in all the school libraries. The subject should be introduced in

the appropriate school courses. Essay contests in community affairs and community betterment subjects can be especially helpful and educational.

PART FOUR

ZONING AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is one of a community's principal means for assuring orderly and healthy change and development. It regulates and directs the use of land and the use and kind of buildings built in the greater interest of neighborhoods and of the community as a whole. Wisely applied it restricts the individual property owner and builder no more than is necessary to achieve some public good or to protect neighbor against neighbor.

It is not the purpose of zoning to prohibit any legitimate business or activity but to direct all things into the most appropriate places,- into places that are not only best for the community as a whole but best for them individually. Homes require one set of conditions; business requires another and industry another. Only under the most ideal circumstances and when building whole communities anew can they be intermixed without serious detriment to one another.

Zoning stabilizes values and protects investments, particularly in homes. And it facilitates better public servicing at less cost. Incongruous uses entering any neighborhood, residential or commercial or industrial, seriously depreciate values. Neighbor can damage neighbor by the selfish or thoughtless act of cutting off light and air or blocking view to the street. Each kind of neighborhood requires its own kind of service facilities; one, wider streets and heavier paving than another, or sewer and water mains of greater or lesser capacity. Establishing the character of

developing neighborhoods in advance enables the municipality to build the right kind of improvements in the right places, avoiding the waste of unnecessary outlays in one neighborhood and the cost of having to build things over again in another by reason of unanticipated service demands.

Not all the ideals of zoning can be realized in old communities and in already established neighborhoods. In such places the most that can be done is to keep things from worsening and to take advantage of change in gradually improving standards. But all communities and all neighborhoods undergo continuous change, for better or for worse. Buildings wear out and are replaced. Business and industry are continuously expanding or shifting to more advantageous locations. Zoning can direct such changes to something better than came before, usually with benefit to the individual builder or enterpriser.

Every community and every part of every community has its own individuality. Zoning must recognize the kind of municipality it is dealing with and must recognize conditions as they exist. Residential standards are different in one place than in another. Land values are different. A skyscraper appropriate in New York City has no place in a country village. Every community has a different mainstay. In one it may be industrial or commercial, in another residential, in another recreational or, sometimes, all of them in one degree or another. Proper zoning will be designed accordingly.

In every community, long grown haphazardly, many things are out of place. Businesses have trickled into residential areas. Industries have intruded upon shopping centers. Houses and small

businesses have usurped good industrial sites. As illogical and inappropriate as these conditions may be they must be recognized in at least some degree in laying down the zoning pattern. For zoning is not retroactive. It cannot be employed to remove or relocate out-of-place buildings or activities unless they are positive hazards or nuisances.

THE MONTICELLO ORDINANCE

The tentative draft of a zoning ordinance for Monticello was submitted to the Village Planning Board in January, 1957. After nearly a year of study by the Board with the Consultant, resulting in a number of changes and adjustments, the ordinance was approved by the Board for public hearings, two of which were held in December, 1957. Further adjustments were subsequently made in both text and map in response to criticisms and suggestions made at the hearings and in subsequent conferences with special groups. As finally revised the ordinance was adopted by the Board of Trustees in May of this year.

The ordinance supplements and accords with the general plan for future improvement and development of the Village. It was prepared after much study of the Village as it is and as it can and may develop. Among other things done in laying the groundwork for the ordinance was making an existing-use map showing the current use of all land and buildings in the Village and for a considerable distance outside the Village, and a generalized future use of land plan showing how the various kinds of land uses may logically expand in the long future.

Kinds of Districts.

The ordinance divides the Village into six classes of districts.

Four are for residential and related uses. One is for commercial or general business use. And the sixth is for the heavier kinds of commercial establishments like coal and lumber yards and light industry.

The four residence districts, termed R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4, are similar in purpose but vary in the required minimum sizes of building lots and in the kinds of dwellings permitted. R-1 and R-2 are for one-family houses. Two-family and multi-family houses and rooming and boarding houses are permitted in the R-3 Districts. The R-4 Districts are opening to bungalow colonies conforming to stated standards and, under certain conditions, to hotels and motels. As finally revised the zoning map contains no R-1 Districts.

The boundaries and locations of all the districts have been determined to a considerable extent by what already exists,- the kind of structures and uses already established. But equally important considerations have been the lands needed for future expansion, as in the cases of commerce and industry, and the peculiar suitability of still-undeveloped land for one purpose or another.

Allocations for Commerce and Industry.

It is essential in setting up commercial and industrial districts to provide enough area for normal expansion and to avoid so restricting available business frontage and industrial sites as to confer monopolies upon the owners. However, it should be understood it is not necessary to provide today all the land that may be needed for commerce and industry fifty or a hundred years from now. Zoning is subject to change. Districts can always be enlarged in pace with increased need and demand. Always when dealing with old communities like Monticello one set of interests and values must be

weighed against others. In such communities generally, the central business district can expand only at the expense of enveloping residential properties. When residential streets and neighborhoods are prematurely opened to commercial usage,- that is, opened before there is any real need for the added frontage, the damage to residential properties from lack of protection far exceeds any commercial gains. Putting already-developed residential frontage into commercial or industrial districts too far in advance of the market is probably the greatest single cause of urban blight and slums.

Zoned Business Frontage and Industrial Lands Versus Frontage and Lands Now Occupied by Business and Industry.

General business of the kind allocated to the Commercial Districts now occupies about 9000 feet of frontage of which a considerable part is in the zoned Industrial District. Our originally recommended 13,350 front feet in the zoned Commercial District was reduced to 10,500 feet by placing a portion of easterly-Broadway frontage in the Industrial District. By subsequent action of the Board of Trustees, placing Pleasant Street and Port Jervis Road frontage in the Commercial District, the total zoned frontage (exclusive of the race track annexation placed wholly in the Commercial District) was brought to nearly 20,000 front feet. Considering the depth of some of this frontage, the land finally placed in the Commercial District (again exclusive of the race track annexation area) is probably sufficient for a business expansion of over 300 per cent. This in our opinion is excessive and will prove detrimental to the presently-established business center, to some of the property affected, and to the community as a whole.

The above relates to the ordinance as first adopted. A

subsequent amendment places the whole of the race track annexation area in the Commercial District. While some commercial classification for the greater part of this area, including that occupied by the race track, is appropriate, such classification for all of it is questionable. And in our opinion, the kind of commercial uses permitted in the annexed area should be more restricted than those permitted in the central shopping district.

Land in the zoned Light Industrial Districts now occupied by all kind of commercial or industrial uses totals 25.4 acres. The total of the land in these Districts is 65.8 acres, thus allowing nearly 130 per cent for future expansion. It is to be expected however that a part of this land will eventually be occupied by general business. By reason of the limited nature of the zoned light industrial lands it is not anticipated that they will be in demand for large industries. Sizable industries if coming to the area would probably locate outside the Village limits, possibly to the eastward.

Required Yards and Land Area Per Dwelling.

Front, rear and side yards, varying in size in the various districts are required in relation to all dwellings and a number of other structures. The purpose, in relation to dwellings, is to assure a healthful access of light and air. The further purpose, in relation to both dwellings and other structures is to reduce fire hazards.

The minimum land area per dwelling or dwelling unit (size of building lot) is also prescribed for new residential structures in all districts. The purpose is as above, to assure proper open space between houses and also to maintain the established character

of residential neighborhoods. Taken into account when arriving at minimum lot sizes and widths was the fact that present-day residential construction with its greater length of house, often with garage attached, requires a much wider lot than formerly.

Although the proposed lot size-and-width standards as finally adopted are not in excess of average performance in the Village, there are some existing, unoccupied lots that do not conform to them. Such sub-standard lots are subject to exceptions written in the ordinance.

Special Building Setback Lines.

Many of the main streets in the Village are too narrow for present traffic requirements and, unless widened, will become intolerably congested to the detriment of both traffic flow and the proper use of frontage. The cost of street widening, with extensive damage to existing structures, is usually prohibitive. If all new structures, as they are built from time to time, are placed back of the required widening, the time will eventually come when the widening can be accomplished at the cost of little more than the land alone. It is with this long-future objective that special building setbacks have been established on certain of the Village Streets.

Exceptions and Special Provisions.

Article IX of the ordinance establishes regulations pertaining to a number of special problems and uses and provides for a number of exceptions to the general rule. They include:

Special Uses Permitted in the various classes of districts. This recognizes that there are a number of border-line uses and structures that are acceptable or non-acceptable in a particular

neighborhood according to how they are placed, designed and operated. The Board of Appeals is given the authority to permit any of the listed structure and uses if conforming to stated requirements.

Motels are required to conform to stated standards in location and design.

Automobile Trailers are limited as to time and place of parking and may not be used as permanent dwellings.

Yard Exceptions. The standard yard requirements are relaxed for large scale housing developments to allow greater freedom in placing houses, the idea being to encourage something more interesting than the usual straight-line arrangement. Also, the yard requirements are relaxed for building on small lots pocketed by other buildings.

Public Garages and Service Stations are subject to special regulations as to minimum distance from such things as fire stations and public gathering places.

Required Off-Street Automobile Parking or Storage Space. This is a relatively new regulation being forced upon municipalities throughout the country by increasing traffic congestion. It requires provision of off-street parking or storage space in relation to every future dwelling or other establishment according to its individual requirement, in all Districts except the Commercial Districts. The need is even greater in these Districts but the space limitations there are such that provision of needed parking space there is thought to be more properly a responsibility of the municipality or group responsibility of the merchants.

Required Off-Street and Unloading Space. Loading and unloading trucks from the street is a large factor in traffic congestion, an

inconvenience and a nuisance. Accordingly all new establishments involving large-volume hauling are required to provide off-street truck stalls.

Signs and Billboards are subject to special regulations as to size and location. None but small signs and those identifying permitted uses are allowed in any of the residence districts.

Minimum Size of Dwellings. No dwelling thought smaller than necessary for decent and healthful family living is permitted in any district. The requirement is reduced for cottages for seasonal occupancy.

Non-Conforming Uses. All structures and uses not conforming to the regulations of the district in which they are located, at the time of ordinance adoption, are termed "non-conforming". As such they are permitted to remain but are limited in the extent to which they can be enlarged or changed from one use to another. And once they are vacated or discontinued they cannot be reoccupied or resumed.

Ordinance Administration.

The ordinance is to be administered by a Zoning Officer and a Board of Appeals, both appointed by the Village Board of Trustees. A part of the administrative machinery is the requirement of a zoning permit for all new structures having a value of more than \$200, and for all changes in the use of land.

The Zoning Officer is the enforcement officer and among his duties are the issuance of permits and checking upon construction in process to see that it conforms to permit specifications. He has no discretion in the matter of issuance of permits. If the subject applied for conforms to the ordinance he must issue the

permit. If it does not, he must deny the permit and advise the applicant that, if he so chooses, he may take his request to the Board of Appeals.

The Board of Appeals is a semi-judiciary body established by law to interpret the ordinance in case of uncertainty as to its meaning, to grant relief in cases of special hardship when doing so would not be in conflict with community interests, and to grant the special exceptions specifically authorized by the ordinance. These and other powers and duties of the Board of Appeals are spelled out in the ordinance.

The effectiveness of any zoning ordinance depends in considerable degree upon how the Board of Appeals performs. The Board is an essential instrument of zoning, particularly in mitigating its rigidity and in relieving individual hardship cases. But if the Board is too lenient or exceeds its powers, it will nullify the effectiveness of the ordinance. Special hardships, for instance, must be peculiar to a particular property to be eligible for a grant of variance by the Board. If the same difficulty applies generally to a number of properties, relief, if justified, should be obtained through a change in the ordinance and not by grant of individual variances by the Board of Appeals.

Amending the Ordinance and Map.

Either the zoning regulations or the zoning map or both can be changed at any time by the Board of Village Trustees after reference of the proposed change to the Village Planning Board and receipt of a report therefrom. However, caution is advised against making changes too many and too often especially during

the first year or two the ordinance is in effect. It takes some time for any new ordinance or regulation to prove its value. All regulations affect some people somewhat. Otherwise there would be no reason for their being. Successful petitions for ordinance changes, as for variances, breed petitions for changes and variances until finally the regulation or ordinance is of no effect. In the case of Monticello, we make one exception. In our opinion, early reconsideration of the excessive amount of land placed in the Commercial District is advisable.