

**9.0 INTRODUCTION\***

Southeast's growth in recent years has meant the planned and actual expansion of community facilities and services. Many of the pressing needs are being addressed by the Town already. For example: the planned expansion of the library, the needs forecasting of fire and ambulance corps facilities and equipment, and land acquisition for new parks and playgrounds. Larger needs are in relation to the construction of more public elementary schools and the creation of water and sewer benefit districts in areas of strong commercial development.

The Town's ability to provide necessary services and facilities, either fully or in a private-public partnership, will shape growth. Its strong tax base enables the Town to move beyond reacting to growth-induced need for municipal services.

**9.1 UTILITIES**

Water and sewer services and solid waste management are the primary utility issues confronting the Town. Poor management of either of these services will degrade Southeast's natural resources, particularly its water, and the overall quality-of-life could be harmed.

**WATER AND SEWER SERVICES**

Southeast residents and businesses have historically relied on individual wells and septic fields for water supply and wastewater disposal needs, respectively. (Some portions of Southeast receive drinking water from the Village of Brewster system.) The New York City Watershed Rules and Regulations were promulgated to protect the water quality in the watershed from any degradation. As a result, it has become more difficult to find suitable locations for new sub-surface disposal of wastewater. The Town recognizes that it is dependent on clean and plentiful groundwater and that protection of the surface and groundwater resources in the town is imperative.

There are 13 public and private wastewater treatment plants within Southeast. Each of these WWTPs must be upgraded to comply with more stringent treatment protocols identified in the Watershed Regulations. The *Croton Plan* addresses the wastewater infrastructure needs of the Town of Southeast and potential water quality benefits from pursuing wastewater and stormwater infrastructure improvements. In addition, the County is preparing additional studies with respect to potential diversion of wastewater from areas in Putnam County to a discharge point outside of the New York City watershed. If the County opts to pursue implementation of a diversion plan, some additional sewage capacity may be created. However, it is not anticipated

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\* Some material from this section was obtained from the January 1992 *Town of Southeast Master Plan* prepared by Buckhurst Fish Hutton Katz & Jacquemart, Inc. Some editing was done to update information and/or clarify certain statements. New material was added to bring this information up to date with respect to the *Croton Plan*.

**Town of Southeast Comprehensive Plan**

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that diversion of wastewater would result in any significant increase in development potential within the Town. Diversion would provide an additional disposal option (beyond on-site sub-surface disposal) but issues of capacity and related infrastructure improvements would still have to be addressed by individual development proposals.

Currently, new wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) would be specifically permitted in only a few instances within the Town of Southeast:

- New surface-discharging plants in Septic Focus Areas to handle existing septic flows;
- New surface-discharging plants under the pilot phosphorus offset program; and
- New surface-discharging plants within the Bog Brook Reservoir basin.

The Town of Southeast currently has two of the three possible WWTPs under the pilot phosphorus offset program. One is under construction, the second is undergoing the Town’s approval process. It is possible that the third phosphorus offset program plant could be located in the Town of Southeast. However, the total capacity of the three plants is not to exceed 150,000 gallons per day (gpd). The two approved phosphorus offset plants have a combined capacity of 80,000 gpd, leaving 70,000 gpd for a third plant.

Other areas where sub-surface discharging plants would, theoretically, be permitted are typically constrained by natural features such as steep slopes, limiting soils, or streams and wetlands. Unfortunately, many of these areas are where existing residential and commercial development activity is located. While the Town of Southeast seeks to balance new commercial development with its rural residential character and water quality protection efforts, the Town would like to see new commercial development occur where new WWTPs are either prohibited or constrained by soil conditions.

The Town identified Growth Focus Areas in its portion of the *Croton Plan* in which new development would be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Table 9-1 identifies the “Growth Focus Areas” where the Town envisions growth to occur.

**Table 9-1  
Growth Focus Areas**

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Growth</b>
FA/HDR/S7	Route 22/Allview Avenue	Possible limited residential growth
FA/C/S1	Route 22: Patterson to Milltown Road	General Commercial Growth
FA/C/S2	Route 22: Heidi’s/Kisawana	Commercial/Campus Growth
FA/C/S3	Route 6: East of Village	Commercial/Warehouse Growth
FA/C/S4	Route 312/I-84, Brewster North	Commercial Office Park
FA/C/S5	Route 6: West of Village	Limited in-fill growth
FA/C/S7	Brewster Road at Route 6	Limited in-fill growth
FA/C/S8	Fields Lane	Commercial/Warehouse Growth
FA/C/S9	Lower Mine Road NB-1 District	Limited in-fill growth
FA/C/S10	Route 22/Croton Falls	Limited in-fill growth

Section 3 of the *Croton Plan* identifies various infrastructure improvements that can be implemented to allow additional growth to occur in these areas. If these infrastructure improvements were not made, the Town’s economic and community character would likely experience negative impacts. The water quality benefits from these infrastructure improvements

are analyzed in Section 3 of the *Croton Plan* and summarized in Section 10 of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

In addition to adequate provision of wastewater treatment, new residential and commercial development must provide adequate treatment of stormwater following Town, NYCDEP, and State regulations. Reservoirs within Southeast are already burdened by excessive phosphorus loading from stormwater runoff. New development cannot cause water quality to decline further.

This *Comprehensive Plan* addresses the water quality aspects of land use planning and suggests specific measures to revise zoning to improve water quality protection measures (see Section 6, “Housing Development” and Section 7, “Economic Development”). These measures will also maintain the Town’s rural character.

### **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

The Town manages a Town-wide solid waste district. All residents participate in the program. The Town continues its efforts to seek composting locations as part of its landfill closure program. The Town will continue to assist its residents in complying with County and State programs to minimize solid waste through recycling.

## **9.2 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

The Town has a variety of municipal facilities, some of which need expansion to satisfy increased use of older buildings. A multi-year program of expansion lies ahead for the Town described below. The Town should consider coordinating the various separate efforts and working jointly with the Village, either under an umbrella ad hoc facilities improvement committee or periodic meeting of the various teams working on the different projects.

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATION**

Central administration of Southeast is located in Town Hall on Main Street in the Village. The building cannot be expanded, but the need for expansion is clear. Certain Town offices are located two blocks away in the Old Southeast Town Hall basement. This building is also inadequate; court is held here in an overcrowded room. Use of the upstairs auditorium is restricted due to building and fire codes. The Town is interested in pursuing opportunities for a new Town Hall and Court complex. Consideration should be given to the appropriate reuse of the historic bank building that is now Town Hall, so that its architectural integrity is maintained.

### **LIBRARY**

There is a public library in the Town of Southeast located in the Village of Brewster. The library needs physical expansion, but the current building affords restricted opportunity for this. As the Town continues to grow, it will be important to augment this significant resource. Some of the same considerations apply as with the Town hall: preservation of the architectural attractiveness of the building, through either its expansion or reuse, and preservation of a library location in the Village. There may come a time when the Town can support a branch library, with the main library at its current location.

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

All ambulances are currently housed in the Town’s original firehouse, located in the Village. A new firehouse is located on Route 312 at North Brewster Road which provides good response time to the developing northern areas of the Town. Future needs are anticipated to center around

Fields Lane and the Milltown Road areas. Fields Lane is a developing commercial area of large mixed warehouse and office buildings. The Milltown Road area has a growing number of housing developments. While a separate sub-station may not be required here, specialized brush-fire equipment may be necessary to handle fire in this area.

## **RECREATION AND PARKS**

The Town owns a little over 200 acres of park land, with most of the acreage geared towards active recreation such as playing fields, swimming, tennis courts, baseball and basketball. This emphasis has tended to counter-balance the quieter recreation (nature study, birdwatching, walking trails) available at State and County parks or in the natural areas of the Town.

The Town's future need will remain primarily the provision of active recreation, but passive recreation needs to be included in the parks and recreation master plan. Open space preservation is one method of acquiring places for passive recreation. While some open space will need to be set aside for animal and vegetative habitat, some acreage can support human use. Therefore, decisions on open space acquisition and management should be made jointly by the Town's recreation department, the several conservation agencies and organizations, and the Planning Board.

Long-term plans call for a Town pool and a recreation center that would allow more programs, including summer camp space.

A parks master plan is currently being prepared for the Town. The following guidelines should be considered in this plan.

- Existing Sites

Some of the small parcels and the larger, newly acquired properties should be left natural and undisturbed. Other parcels should be cleared for small, local neighborhood play area, with playground equipment, picnic tables, stakes for volleyball or badminton, and cleared areas for lawn games.

Prolonging and increasing park usage might be attained through simple measures of night-time illumination or a park attendant.

Old Southeast Town hall should be renovated to meet fire and building codes, to open up this building further to public use. The availability of the auditorium might then encourage local theatrical and musical groups.

- New Sites

If a suitable location is identified, a multi-purpose recreation complex should be constructed which would house sports, dances, play area, meeting area, and a pool. Networks of greenways, bike paths, and hiking horse riding and cross-country skiing trails that could be linked with Putnam County greenway and bikepath improvements should be evaluated. Toboggan and sledding hills should be designated and kept free from development.

Satellite parks should be created devoted to single sports uses, such as basketball courts or tennis courts or soccer fields.

All parks should encourage the use by elderly and handicapped Town residents, with appropriate kinds of recreation and parking. All parks should have some quiet areas, with benches and tables, and perhaps a garden.

### 9.3 SCHOOLS

The Brewster Central School District serves most of Southeast, part of Patterson, a smaller part of Carmel, and the entire Village of Brewster. Schoolchildren who live in Southeast but are outside the school district attend either North Salem or Carmel public schools. The Brewster Central school district has a 72-acre campus that houses Brewster High School (grades 9-12), Henry H. Wells Middle School (grades 6-8), C.B. Starr School (grades 4-5), and JFK Elementary School (grades K-3) as well as playing fields. The Garden Street Elementary School (grades K-3) is located in the Village.

The schools within the district are all operating at or above capacities established by the New York State Education Department. School District voters approved a \$27.9 million bond referendum in December 1999 to renovate the High School and add 24 additional classrooms and an auditorium. These improvements were needed to accommodate a projected increase in enrollment from approximately 990 in the 2000-2001 school year to 1,160 in the 2005-2006 school year. The High School currently has a capacity of 732 students and will be expanding its facility.

The need for additional space within lower grade levels is anticipated as a result of revised State performance standards for curriculum and Regents testing. To meet the anticipated level of instruction for these new standards the School District envisions the need for full-day Kindergarten and new pre-Kindergarten instructional space. In addition, the Wells Middle School is currently well over its capacity of 623 students. Project enrollment at this school in 2002-2003 is 869.

To accommodate the need for physical space and any additional recreation facilities (which are currently shared with the Town of Southeast recreation programs), the School District is seeking opportunities to obtain additional land, preferably in the area of the current school campus.

### 9.4 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

#### GOAL AND POLICY

The Town of Southeast is committed to providing its residents with adequate, accessible, and efficient community facilities and services.

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

To accomplish these goals, the Town of Southeast intends to:

- Continue to cooperate with Putnam County in the development of a *Croton Watershed Plan* and any plans for diversion of wastewater outside of the New York City watershed.
- Continue to cooperate with the Village of Brewster to provide shared services and facilities, and to eliminate overlapping or duplicate services.
- Explore opportunities for creating “Rails to Trails” pathways to encourage bicycle and pedestrian mobility within the Town. Coordinate with Putnam County on bikeways and greenways.
- Provide new Town Hall complex to consolidate Town offices and accommodate court space.
- Adopt a master plan for Town recreation needs.

- Increase the recreation fee for residential subdivisions to give the Town the option to pursue acquisition of additional park land or capital improvements to existing Town parks.
- Continue to work with the school districts to improve provision of educational services and to expand physical facilities.

## **9.5 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

The provision of facilities and services by the Town is essential for maintaining its quality of life with balanced new development. The recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan specify ways to accomplish this, without detriment to the natural resources or character of the community.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Natural resources within the community will be protected or enhanced by conservation initiatives and standards applied as the demand for facilities and services change. Most notable will be the preservation or expansion of parks and recreation space. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Plan, amenities for recreational use such as bikeways and pathways would be expanded, supporting the goal for alternate modes of transportation. In addition, through a new recreation master plan, parcels would be earmarked for future incorporation into an expanded open space network. With increased recreation fees, improvements would be made to existing park land, and funds would be applied to purchasing parcels to hold as undeveloped natural public land in perpetuity.

### **WATER QUALITY**

Upgrades and expansions to wastewater treatment facilities in the Town, as required by the Watershed Regulations, would have an immediate benefit on water quality in the reservoirs. Given the potential diversion of wastewater to a discharge point outside the NYC watershed, the Town would work within the guidelines of the new *Croton Plan* and other pertinent plans to ensure that its wastewater would be discharged accordingly. The preservation of undeveloped parcels as designated wetlands, steep slope areas, Critical Environmental Area (CEAs), or recreation sites would ensure that sufficient natural permeable surface throughout the Town would accommodate stormwater run off and allow natural infiltration.

### **COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

The rural character of Southeast is an important attribute to be preserved to maintain the quality of life enjoyed by Town residents. Restricting new development to designated areas, and protecting existing open spaces by expanding public park facilities would play an integral part of rural preservation. To consolidate open spaces and fund land acquisitions for protecting undeveloped land from development, the Town would need to devise a financial strategy to complement its land use goals.

Consolidating community services such as educational facilities and civic offices with the Village of Brewster would increase efficiency in expenditures on duplicate services being offered by both the Town and Village. Savings from eliminating duplication would make subsequent funds available for investment on other important facilities and services. ❖