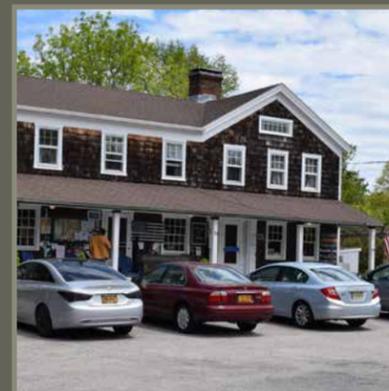


DRAFT

East Hampton
Hamlet Report

Springs



Prepared by:
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Prepared For:
The Town of East Hampton, New York

May 30, 2017

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Introduction

East Hampton is defined by the unique character of its hamlets, villages and countryside. With large expanses of pristine ocean beaches, scenic vistas, preserved farmland, historic landscapes, significant fish and wildlife habitats, and high quality drinking water resources, the unique natural and cultural features of the town are largely intact. This world-class landscape has become the centerpiece of a vibrant summer community, attracting tens of thousands of second homeowners and tourists, as well as the small army of workers and professionals required to serve their needs. As a result East Hampton faces ongoing challenges created by seasonal swings in population and activity, with related impacts on traffic, parking, housing, water supply, wastewater treatment, and a host of other factors.

The commercial centers within each hamlet form the stage on which this dynamic interaction of social, economic and environmental elements plays out over the course of the year. While future change in the town's conservation areas and residential neighborhoods will be relatively modest under current zoning, potential change within the commercial and industrial zones could be more significant – driven by the individual decisions of hundreds of local businesses, each reacting in real time to challenges as diverse as the explosion of on-line retail, labor shortages and rising sea levels.

These trends have been evolving for decades, and were reflected in The 2005 East Hampton Comprehensive Plan. One recommendation of that plan was the creation of detailed plans for the Town's commercial areas and an evaluation of the Town's ability and desire to meet future commercial needs. As a result, in 2016 the Town of East Hampton commissioned the preparation of this Master Plan for the Springs Hamlet Business Districts. At the same time, the Town commissioned the preparation of Master Plans for five additional hamlet centers, together with a town-wide business district analysis and an economic strategy to sustain the hamlet commercial districts



The Springs District Boundary is shown in orange.

in the future. The Town of East Hampton retained a consulting team led by Dodson & Flinker, Inc., Community Design and Rural Preservation Specialists, together with subcontractors LK McLean Associates P.C, Consulting Engineers, Fine Arts & Sciences LLC, Environmental and Community Planning Consultants and RKG Associates, Economic, Planning and Real Estate Consultants. The town-wide Economic and Business analysis is provided in a companion document, though elements pertaining to the economy of Springs have been incorporated into this report.

Springs retains the rural charm and character of its original 19th century community, with historic buildings, commercial fishing operations, scenic harbors and sweeping open vistas. Its relatively remote location has helped insulate Springs from undesirable growth and change. Springs has only small business nodes, and the charming historic center surrounding Pussy's Pond and Ashawagh Hall is characterized by protected areas and community facilities, not commerce.

But Springs is experiencing the burdens of residential growth. Pollutants from road runoff, drainage and on-site septic systems have degraded Accabonac Harbor and Three Mile Harbor. Safe and attractive pathways for walkers and bikers to get to the beautiful resources that define Springs- the beaches, parks, historic areas, scenic

vistas, cultural centers and artists' studios- are insufficient or non-existent. Home based contractor businesses and code violation conditions have disturbed the peaceful quality of life in residential neighborhoods. Thus, although the Hamlet Plan was commissioned to focus on the business areas, the Plan for Springs encompasses the entire hamlet.

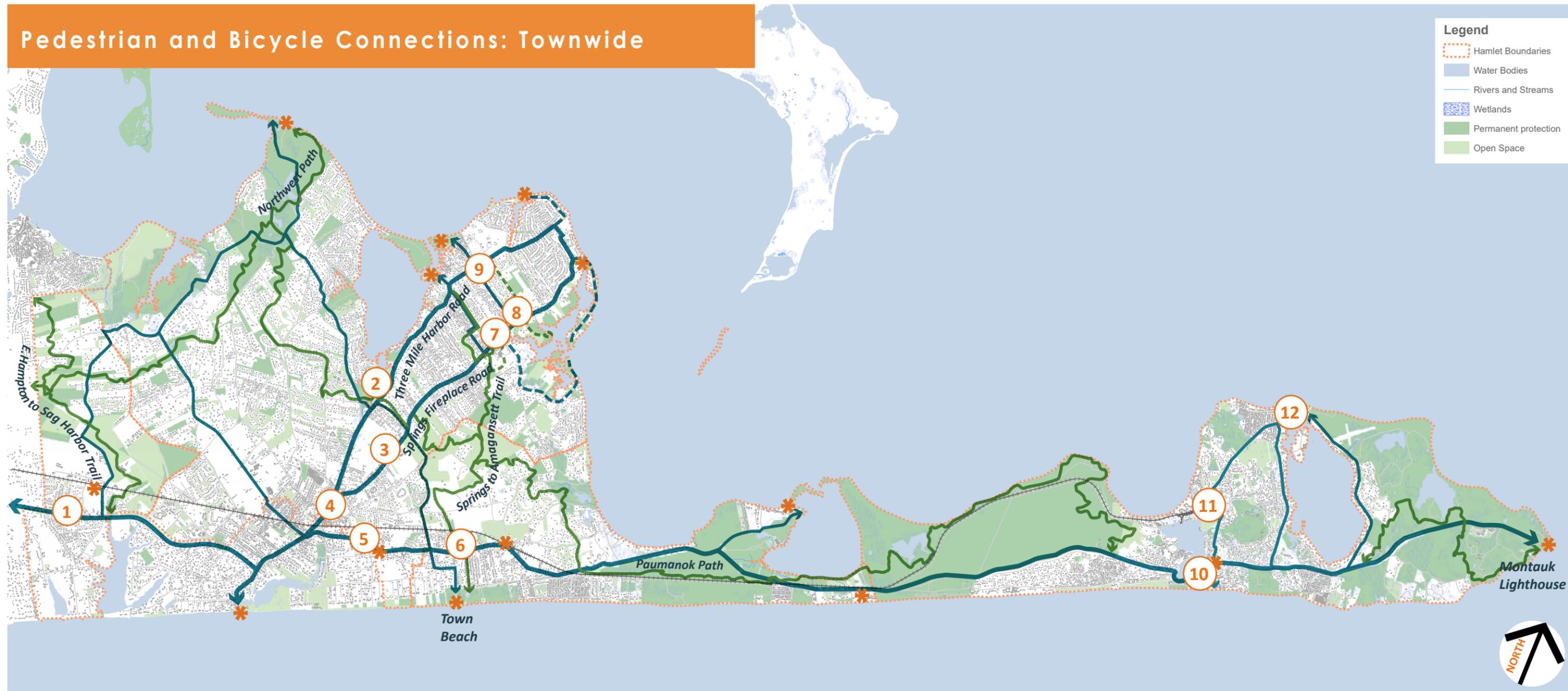
This master plan is designed to help the town understand how Springs looks and functions today, and to explore improvements to better serve the community in the future. The Methodology for the preparation of the Springs Master Plan featured data gathering, detailed analysis and extensive public participation. As described in the following section, an inventory and analysis was conducted with regard to historic and cultural resources, demographics, natural resources and environment, environmental challenges, demographics, zoning, land use, business uses and hamlet economy, residential and commercial build-out, and transportation and infrastructure. Public participation included an intensive two-day charrette process consisting of workshops, focus groups and walking tours which were open and advertised to the general public, business owners, year round residents, second homeowners and other stakeholders. The charrettes provided detailed public input and the opportunity for citizens to work together with town staff and the consulting team to develop creative recommendations for the Hamlet.

Based on the results of the charrettes, the consulting team prepared conceptual master plans for three areas: Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections Hamlet-wide; a Maritime Walking District for Head of Three Mile Harbor; and the Neighborhood Business zone at the East end of Fort Pond Boulevard. Because of its potential impact on Spring residents, plans for the sand pit on Springs Fireplace Road have also been included in this document, even though the property is across the hamlet boundary in the hamlet of East Hampton.

The illustrative master plan for Fort Pond Boulevard East shows a potential way that the commercial district could be redeveloped over coming decades, but it is not the only possible result of any potential changes the Town might make in planning policy or regulations. The purpose of this visioning exercise is not to require a particular use or arrangement of uses on a particular lot. Rather, it is meant to explore and illustrate the fundamental planning and design principles that can protect the character of the neighborhood while gradually shaping the business area into a more attractive, cohesive, vibrant place, complementing the Springs Historic Center.

These Plans are intended to capture the community's shared vision of a high quality place to live, work, enjoy life, raise a family and connect with nature. The ultimate goal of this study is to provide the Town of East Hampton with an inspirational, achievable plan which will enhance Springs' strengths while significantly improving the Hamlet's aesthetics, walkability, functionality and vitality. The 2005 Town Comprehensive Plan Vision and Goals, developed through a consensus building process, is the touchstone for the Springs Master Plan. Specific objectives and recommendations for Springs put forth in this report build on that long-term vision of what it is essential to East Hampton now and in the future.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections: Townwide



1. Wainscott Commercial Center, Wainscott

2. Three Mile Harbor, Springs

3. Future Sand Pit Mixed Use Center and Contractor Park and Ride, East Hampton

4. North Main Street District, East Hampton

5. Pantigo Road Neighborhood Business District, East Hampton

6. Amagansett Commercial Center, Amagansett

7. Springs Historic District

8. East Fort Pond Boulevard Neighborhood Business District, Springs

9. West Fort Pond Boulevard Neighborhood Business District, Springs

10. Downtown Montauk Commercial Center, Montauk

11. Montauk Train Station

12. Montauk Harbor Commercial Center

Existing Conditions

Geography

Springs is bordered by Three Mile Harbor on the west, Gardiner's Bay on the north and east and Abraham's Path, Accabonac Road, Red Dirt Road and Barnes Hole road on the south. It is geographically unique in the town of East Hampton for its lack of frontage on the Atlantic Ocean or Montauk Highway.

The terrain of Springs is shaped by the glacial moraine that forms the rolling topography of the hamlet, particularly in its southern portions. The Accabonac Cliffs, bluffs along the northern shores and Barnes Hole and the hilly terrain north of Red Dirt Road show the greatest effects of the sand, gravel and glacial boulders deposited by the ice sheets 15,000 years ago. Central and northern portions of Springs consist of less dramatic glacial moraine forming a flat to mildly hilly forested terrain, the site of the majority of the hamlet's residential and scattered commercial development. Bluffs facing Gardiner's Bay shape the dramatic northern edge of the hamlet.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Springs' landscape of rural homesteads, waterfront landings and historic homes give the area a unique visual character with roots in the region's 17th and 18th century origins. The physical remnants of the hamlet's history provide a fabric of historic and cultural resources that distinguish Springs from other areas of Long Island. Major settlement in Springs did not occur until the 1730s but the major roads were laid out decades before by East Hampton's earliest settlers seeking access the areas' natural resources. Accabonac Road led to the fertile meadows at the southern end of Accabonac Harbor; Fireplace Road led to the meadows on the west end of Accabonac Harbor and to a boat landing to Gardiner's Island; and Three Mile Harbor-Hog Creek Road led to fertile fishing grounds.

When agricultural settlement commenced, it was located on the discrete pockets of fertile soil adjacent to Accabonac Meadows, Hog Creek, and Three Mile Harbor. Smaller subsistence farms were developed on small scattered lots on less fertile soils. The scattered distribution of good farmland led to a decentralized settlement pattern and the division of all but a few farms into small parcels of land. The relative lack of desirability for farming and distance from the main settlement provided cheap land for the development of additional small lots providing housing for laborers and tradesmen serving the more prosperous East Hampton community and Gardiner's Island. To accommodate this growing need for laborer housing, development began to accelerate in the 1800s and Springs soon had a store, post office, school and some 60 houses. Springs no longer has a post office, and there has not been great expansion in the area of community and commercial uses developed in this earlier era.

The discovery and development of East Hampton as a resort community commencing in the late 1800s did not proliferate in Springs due to the lack of easy access to the rail road and lack of ocean amenities. But six large summer homes with sweeping bay views were built on Louse Point and in Barnes Landing during this time period. Smaller lots continued to be developed with smaller homes as year-round employment for shopkeepers, tradesmen and laborers expanded to serve the resort economy.

Most of the land in Springs was divided into small suburban and urban lot sizes in the early 20th century. Despite this early somewhat haphazard development, Springs gained recognition as a scenic, rural and quiet community with a rich array of natural and cultural resources. In the 1940s, these qualities along with the availability of inexpensive farmhouses and barns suitable for studio space, attracted artists to Springs. Some of America's greatest artists settled in Springs, including Jackson Pollock, Willem deKooning, John Little, Constantino Nivola, Arshile Gorky and others. An artists colony still thrives here today.

The scenic beauty of the hamlet has also been recognized by the state of New York: Three Mile Harbor and Accabonac Harbor are designated Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance. Fireplace and Barnes Hole are designated



The Springs Historic District serves as the social and cultural heart of the hamlet, including religious and community buildings, Springs School and the general store. Commercial development is limited largely to local services in small nodes distributed around the hamlet.

Scenic Areas of Local Significance.

Demographics and Population

Springs is the most populous and densest hamlet in the town of East Hampton. The total population of the hamlet is 6,592, and the hamlet has experienced the largest increase in population in town in recent years, increasing by 1,642 or 33% between 2000 and 2010. The population per square mile in Springs is approximately two to six times higher than any other hamlet in town.

The hamlet is also among the youngest of the hamlets. Springs has the lowest median age (38.5) and the second highest total number of families with children (726). The school-age population includes 733 students pre-K through 8th grade and 291 high school students attending East Hampton High School. Springs bears a heavy tax burden in its school district, having the second highest

number of households (2,318) and families (1500).

Springs Census-designated Place (CDP) is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse areas of East Hampton. As of the 2010 Census, 83.3% of Springs CDP residents identify as White, 1.7% as Black or African American, 0.7% as American Indian or Alaska native, 1.5% as Asian, 0.0% as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 11.3% as Some Other Race. 1.5% identify as Two or More Races. In terms of ethnicity, 36.6% of the population in Springs CDP identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race). This is the second highest percentage of ethnically Hispanic or Latino people in any census-designated place in town, second only to East Hampton North CDP.

Natural Resources and Environment

The natural resources and geography of Springs provided the foundation for its early development and shape many of the characteristics of the community today. Springs is the only hamlet without ocean frontage and it lacks abundant fertile soils to sustain large farms. However, Springs contains meadows, harbors and bays valuable for salt hay, fishing, boat landings and access to Gardiner's Island. The hamlet also contains environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, critical marine organism and bird habitat areas. Today these resources provide a rich scenic character, abundant recreational opportunities and a high quality of life.

Surface Waters:

Two major water bodies, Three Mile Harbor and Accabonac Harbor, form the eastern and western boundaries of the hamlet. Accabonac Harbor is an environmentally rich and relatively unspoiled coastal estuary surrounded by wetlands, farmland, the historic settlement of Springs and scattered development. Three Mile Harbor is a more intensively developed saltwater pond surrounded by rolling hills of the moraine. A smaller salt pond, Hog Creek, cuts into the northern bluffs.

Groundwater:

In addition to being bounded on two sides by surface waters, Springs also contains important groundwater resources. On the eastern end of long island, fresh groundwater "floats" on top of saltwater groundwater, forming a lens with a maximum thickness landward of about 600 feet which decreases in thickness toward the coastline¹. Mapped groundwater recharge areas exist at Barnes Hole between Neck Path and Red Dirt Road north and west of Abrahams Path and Accabonac Road².

Environmentally Sensitive Areas:

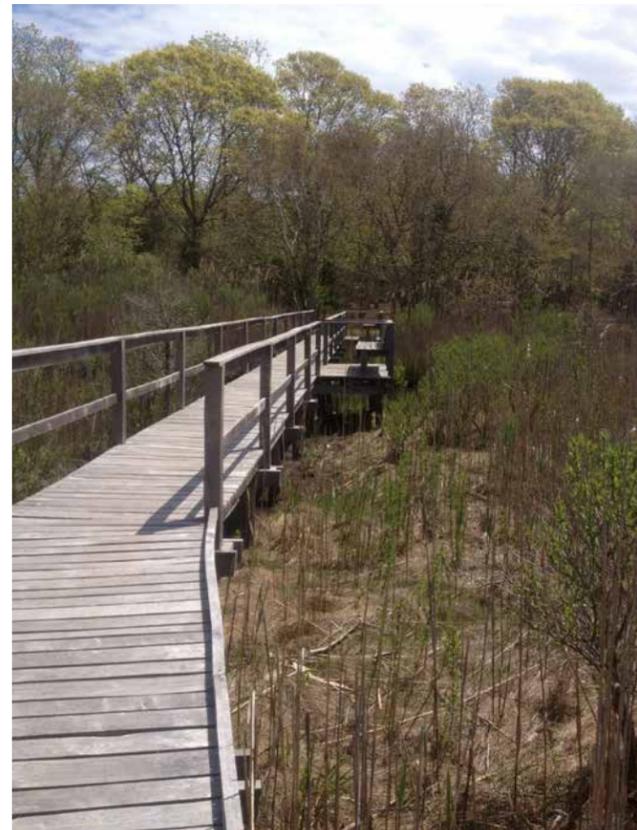
Environmentally sensitive areas in Springs include estu-

1 *East Hampton Town Water Resources Management Plan Final Draft*

2 *Town of East Hampton Comprehensive Plan 2015*

aries, wetlands and ponds. Accobonac Harbor is one of East Hampton's most ecologically diverse and sensitive estuaries. A wide variety of marine organisms, shorebirds and waterfowl are found here. Extensive coastal wetlands characterize the edge of Accabonac Harbor, including a large area of mapped wetlands south of Accobonac Harbor from Shipyard Lane to Louse Point Road. Merrill Lake, Edwards Island, and Kaplan Meadows Sanctuaries provide conservation protection for large areas of Accobonac's coastal marsh complex.

Other important wetland areas include the Three Mile Harbor wetlands systems at Sammy's Beach, Maidstone Park, and at the south end of harbor. Smaller wetland areas also exist, such as those to the south of Pussy's Pond between the pond and Sand Lot Road. These wetlands and sensitive estuarine ecosystems require ongoing conservation efforts and environmental controls.

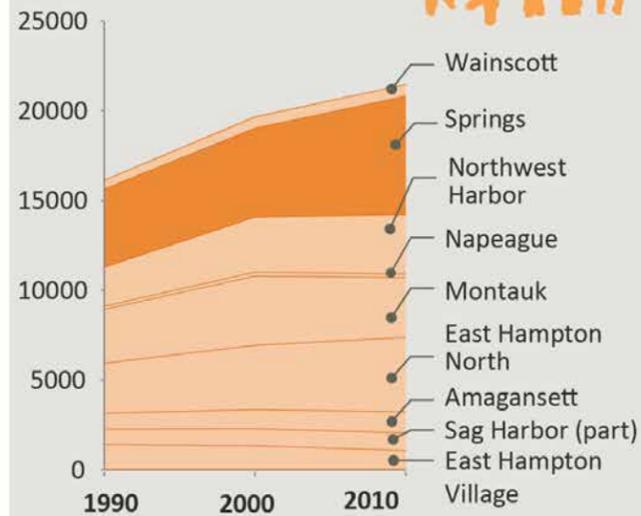


Springs' many estuarine environments are an important aspect of the hamlet's rural identity.

Population & Demographics | Springs

Population: 5,855
ACS 2014

2000-2010: +33%
Census 2010

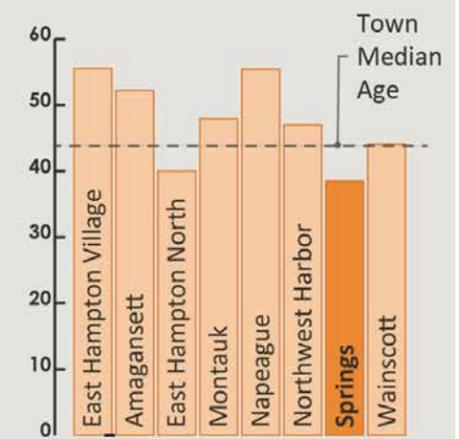


Age

Census 2010

38.5

Median Age



Families and Children

Census 2010

1500

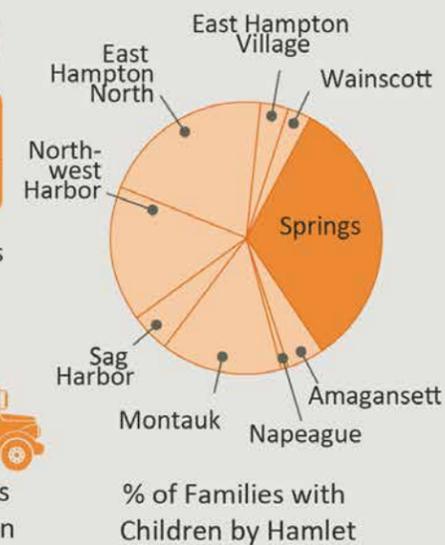


of Families

726



of Families with Children



Household Income

ACS 2014

\$80,303
Median H.I.



Households

Census 2010

2318



Households Total

2.84



Avg Household Size



Springs

Orthophotography

Agriculture and Fisheries:

Springs lacks abundant fertile soils to sustain large farms. Despite these limitations, small pastures and wet meadows are located around Accabonac Harbor. The working waterfront of Three Mile Harbor is the home of small scale commercial fishing, guiding, and recreational fishing. Shell fishing and recreational fishing also take place in Accabonac Harbor.

Environmental Challenges

Today, Springs faces a number of important environmental challenges, including habitat and open space loss, water pollution, light pollution, and the impacts of climate change.

Surface and Groundwater Pollution:

One of the most notable environmental challenges in the hamlet is the impact of surface and groundwater pollution on aquifers and sensitive surface waters. Currently, algae blooms affect the southern section of Three Mile Harbor³. Periodic shellfish closures are common in Accabonac Harbor⁴. Nitrogen from septic systems leaching into groundwater and making its way to surrounding water bodies is regarded as a major cause of these impacts⁴.

Habitat and Open Space Loss:

While many of the hamlet's sensitive areas are currently managed by the town or private not-for-profit conservation organizations such as the Nature Conservancy, further development along the shoreline of sensitive estuaries and wetlands is an on-going challenge. Land uses that increase impervious area inland also potentially degrade riparian and estuarine habitats downstream.

Deer Management:

Increasing populations of white-tailed deer in East Hampton has reached an emergency level in East Hamp-

3 *Lombardo Associates: East Hampton Town Wide Wastewater Management Plan*

4 *NY DEC Sanitary Condition of Shellfish Lands*

ton according to the East Hampton Deer Management Working Group⁵. Over-browsing by deer has begun to shift the species composition of existing forests, nearly eliminating herbaceous plants and saplings and damaging populations of other wildlife that rely on these plants.

Light Pollution:

Unshielded lights in Springs' industrial areas and neighborhoods create glare. Street lights, particularly older ones, also contribute to this light pollution. This light pollution contributes to a gradual decline in the darkness of the night sky.

Coastal Flooding, Climate Change and Resilience:

Low-lying areas of Springs are today at risk of inundation by hurricanes and strong winter storms. According to The Nature Conservancy and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, coastal flooding as a result of a Category 3 hurricane will include areas around Accabonac Harbor and the shores of Three Mile Harbor and Hog Creek.

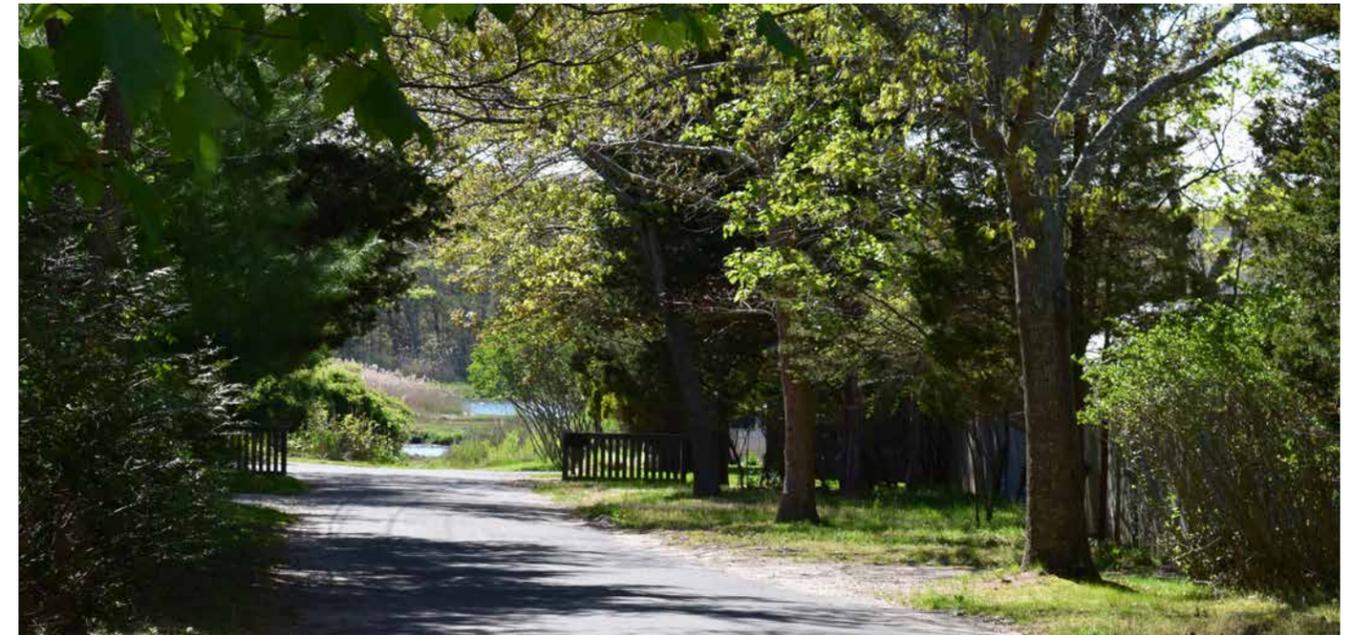
As climate changes, rising seas and more frequent and intense storms will increase the area impacted by coastal flooding. Although the timing and amount of sea level rise is uncertain, scientific models today provide a range of possible sea level rise scenarios.

According to the New York State ClimAID 2014 report, Eastern Long Island can expect between 8" and 30" of sea level rise by 2050 and between 15" and 72" of sea level rise by 2100. This means that by 2050, for example, high tide will be between 8" and 30" above the current high tide⁶.

Coastal erosion and storm surges will provide additional impacts. As sea level rises, coastal erosion will likely

5 *Deer Management Plan 2013*

6 Sea Level Rise projections and information in this report were obtained from the NYS DEC's recommended 2011 ClimAID Report and 2014 ClimAID Supplemental. Storm surge impacts were estimated from the Nature Conservancy Coastal Resiliency Network Digital Modelling Tools.



Residents highly value Springs' quiet residential neighborhoods in close proximity to its rich shoreline environments. However, nitrogen from residential septic systems harms water quality in these sensitive environments.

change the shape of beaches and coastal wetlands. Storm surges from coastal storms and hurricanes, on top of these higher tide elevations, will create flood impacts that extend further inland than the same sized storms today.

Zoning

Most of Springs is zoned residential, either A, A2, A3, A5, A10, or B. A small area near southern Three Mile Harbor is zoned Multifamily.

After residential, the next most common zone is Parks and Conservation.

The Springs Historic District includes the area around Ashawagh Hall, the Springs General Store, and the Pollock-Krasner House.

Springs has no commercial center, but there are a few small areas of commercial zoning. The east and west ends of Fort Pond Blvd are zoned Neighborhood Business, along with the parcel containing the Springs General Store on Old Stone Highway and the parcel containing Damark's Market Deli on Three Mile Harbor Rd.

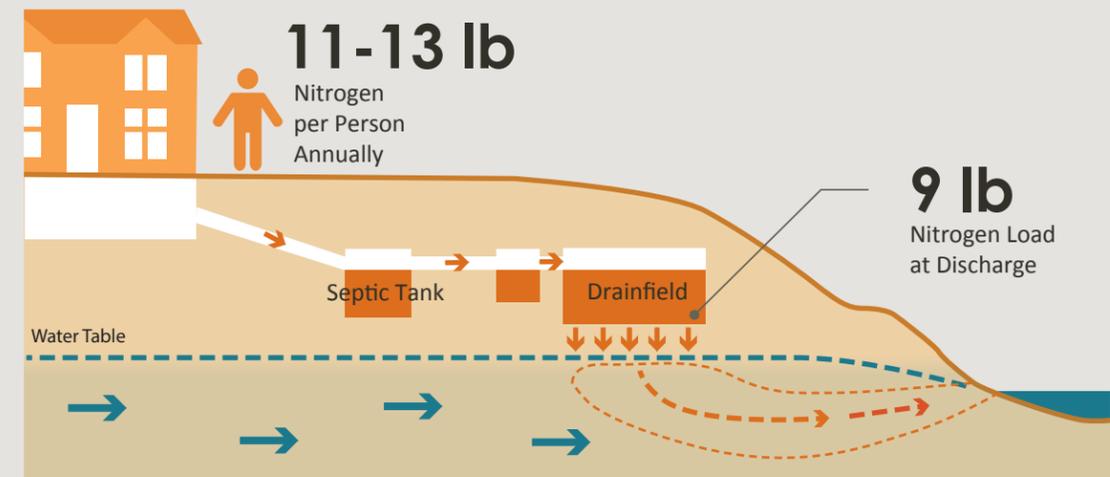
Several parcels along the Three Mile Harbor waterfront are zoned Waterfront. There is no Central Business zone in Springs. Neighborhood Business allows most of the same uses as Central Business, but with different dimensional requirements promoting lower density.

The waterfronts of Three Mile Harbor, Hog Creek, and Accabonac Harbor are within Harbor Protection Overlay District overlay zoning, which aims to protect East Hampton's coastal waterbodies by controlling stormwater runoff, requiring septic system upgrades, protecting vegetation, and controlling the installation and size of fuel storage tanks.

Water Recharge Overlay District covers a large area of land between Accabonac Rd and Neck Path. Most of this land is undeveloped and also protected under Parks and Conservation zoning. Water Recharge Overlay District is an overlay zone intended to protect East Hampton's drinking water aquifer.

In addition to regulations adopted as part of local zoning, East Hampton participates in the states Coastal Management Program (CMP), a voluntary program where towns partner with state agencies to prepare a Local Waterfront

Typical Nitrogen Loading to Septic Systems



From US EPA via Lombardo Associates 2014

Revitalization Plan (LWRP). The recommendations of the LWRP promote water based businesses, commercial and recreational fishing, wetland protection, water quality improvements and wildlife habitat protection. By law, state and federal agencies are required to act only in ways consistent with the approved LWRP.

Land Use

As the only hamlet with no frontage on Montauk Highway or the Atlantic Ocean, Springs lacks two of the main assets contributing to the prosperity of the Town's other commercial centers. The hamlet lacks a significant commercial district or recognizable center and largely consists of medium density residential land uses. As reported by participants in the charrette, however, many residents appreciate Springs quiet character and don't want it to change.

Open Space and Recreation:

Not including Gardiner's Island, Springs has the second lowest amount of open space (8.3%) in the town of East Hampton. This includes extensive, largely privately owned open space surrounding Accabonac Harbor consisting of small meadows, salt marshes, woodlands and

dune fields. Sammy's Beach and Maidstone Park straddle the entrance to Three Mile Harbor. Extensive woodlands on hilly terrain in Barnes Hole north of Red Dirt Road and east of Accabonac Road cover an important groundwater recharge area. Smaller open space areas are located at the entrance to Hog Creek and scattered throughout the hamlet.

Springs includes a mix of active recreation sites under public, private, and non-profit ownership. Public active recreation sites include an actively used dog park, and hiking trails at Maidstone Park and in the town-owned land just south of Three Mile Harbor. The 170.8 acre Nassau County Girl Scout Camp located along Gardiner's Bay is a regional recreation destination for children. Three Mile Harbor and Accobonac Harbor provide recreational boating opportunities. Small bayside beaches like Sammy's Beach provide seasonal swimming, sunbathing and fishing opportunities.

Residential Uses:

A total of 4,340 housing units, primarily single-family detached, exist in Springs⁷. Housing units increased by 12% from 2000 to 2010. The number of housing units

7 2010 US Census

per square mile in Springs is 1.6 to 2 times higher than other hamlets. In addition to having the highest density of residential development in East Hampton, residential land use occupies almost three quarters of the land area, the highest of all the hamlets. Lower density land uses are concentrated in the vicinity of Accabonac Harbor.

The town of East Hampton, like many ocean resort communities, has a large number of seasonally occupied homes. However, Springs contains the second lowest number of second homes in town. More than half of the housing in Springs (53.4%) is occupied year round, with 45.6% seasonally occupied. 76.8% of homes in hamlet are renter occupied while 23.2% of these homes are owner occupied.

Finding affordable housing is a significant challenge in Springs as it is through the town of East Hampton. The average home price in East Hampton Town has risen dramatically since 1999 (215%) relative to the increase in median family income (43%).

Institutional:

Springs has the largest acreage in institutional land uses, with 217.64 acres. Comprised of a school, Community House, Fire House, church, museum and camp. The largest block of institutional land is part of the 170.8 acre Nassau County Girl Scout Camp located along Gardiner's Bay.

Commercial and Industrial Land Uses:

Springs has the lowest acreage and percentage of land area in commercial use. Small commercial nodes exist at Three Mile Harbor, Springs Fireplace Road Sand Pit (in the Hamlet of East Hampton), and the historic center. Institutional land uses are concentrated in the historic center and in the vicinity of Maidstone Park.

Seasonal marinas, restaurants and boat shops along the east side of Three Mile Harbor occupy approximately 50 of the 66 acres of commercial land in Springs. The marina and dock areas are zoned "Waterfront." Three Mile Harbor and its marina uses, Hog Creek, and Accobonac harbor are within the East Hampton Local Waterfront Re-

vitalization Program (LWRP) coastal boundary. LWRP projects and plan recommendations promote water based businesses, commercial and recreational fishing, wetland protection, water quality improvements and wildlife habitat protection.

One unique characteristic of Springs is the large number of unpermitted home occupancy businesses. This trend has had a noticeable impact on traffic and noise in the residential neighborhoods of Springs, as the area has seen an increasing number of large commercial vehicles parked in driveways, running loud engines all night or early in the morning, and making daily trips to and from Montauk Highway. Springs' reputation as the "least unaffordable" hamlet, may explain why many of the town's tradespeople and laborers operate out of this hamlet, often in group housing arrangements that violate occupancy regulations. Of East Hampton's hamlets, Springs has the distinctly highest rate of ordinance enforcement cases of housing violations, including overcrowding of dwelling units and excessive vehicles on properties⁸. Altogether, this trend highlights East Hampton's acute need for affordable housing; as well as space for contractors' vehicles, equipment, and businesses.

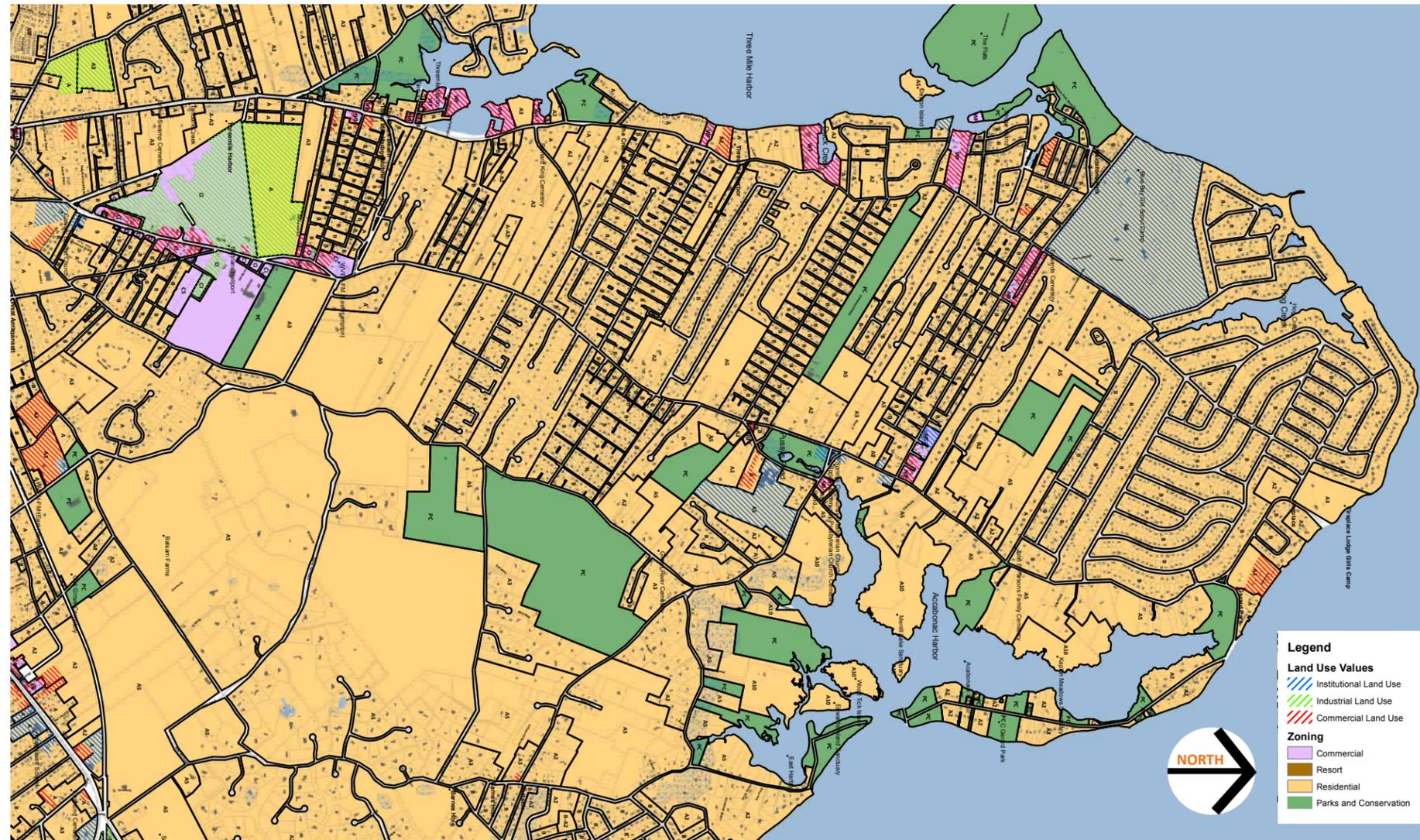
Business Uses and Economic Characteristics

A number of different types of businesses exist in Springs, from private landscaping and construction contractors, to auto mechanics, to restaurants and lodging. RKG Associates has inventoried these businesses as well as analyzed current economic conditions and trends in the hamlet and region. See RKG's Hamlet Business Plan for an in-depth look at their findings.

Springs is impacted by its limited local market for goods and services and its distance from Montauk Highway, Village and business centers. However, the Arts Economy⁹ is a notable feature of the hamlet.

8 2014 Community Housing Opportunity Fund Implementation Plan

9 East Hampton Arts Council correspondence to consultants on April 11, 2016



Springs Zoning and Land Use

Base zoning shown in solid colors, with land use as a transparent hatch. A limited business overlay allows some commercial use in residential zones.

Springs Hamlet Zoning Overview

Residential Districts:

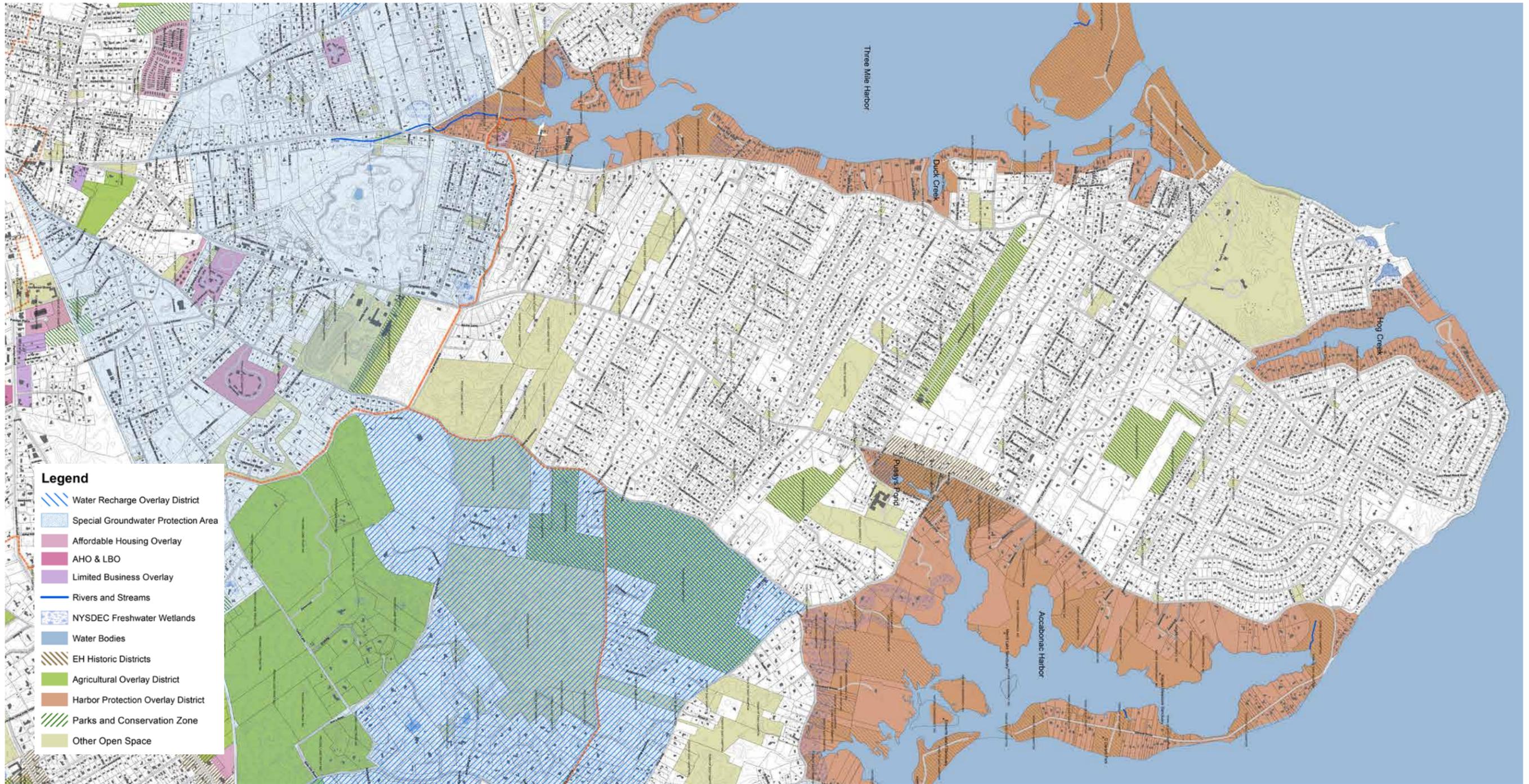
- Residence District A10 (A10)
- Residence District A5 (A5)
- Residence District A3 (A3)
- Residence District A2 (A2)
- Residence District A (A)
- Residence District B (B)

Commercial Districts

- Neighborhood Business (NB)
- Waterfront (WF)

Overlay Districts, Other:

- Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO)
- Water Recharge Overlay District
- Harbor Protection Overlay District
- Special Groundwater Protection Area
- Parks and Conservation Zone



Springs

Overlay Zones

NB: Neighborhood Business Key Zoning Requirements

- 10,000 sf min lot area
- 40% max building coverage on lot
- 2 stories max
- 30 ft max height (35 ft for gabled roof height)
- 25 ft front setback (corner lots have 2 fronts)
- 15 ft side setbacks
- 25 ft rear setback

The town of East Hampton is a mecca for artists and in turn draws tens of thousands of visitors every year who visit the museums, galleries and art fairs. Artists patronize art supply stores, framing shops and printing companies. However, East Hampton poses problems and challenges for artists who live and work in a community where skyrocketing real estate prices make it difficult to find affordable studio, performance and living space. Artists' homes in the Springs historic center include Thomas Moran, Jackson Pollack and contemporary artist Cindy Sherman. As a result Springs has become a focus for the Arts Economy of the town.

Other businesses in the hamlet include accommodations, such as Sunset Cove and East Hampton Point; automotive businesses including Hampton Auto Collision, Kalbacher's, and Springs Auto; various storage, service commercial, and offices; numerous contractors including many businesses which operate unofficially out of residences; easting establishments like Springs Pizza, Wolfie's Tavern, Michael's, Bay Kitchen & Bar, Harbor Bistro, East

Hampton Point, and Harbor Grill; a number of retail businesses such as Springs General Store, Barnes Deli, Old Stone Market, Maidstone Market and Deli, Damark's, Springs Wines & Liquors, and Epic Strength; recreation businesses which include many marinas; and semi-public community facilities like the Pollock-Krasner House, Fireplace Art Project, and Ashawagh Hall.

Build Out

According to a 2011 residential buildout performed by the Planning Department¹⁰, the town as a whole could see a 13% increase in the total number of housing units. A buildout calculates the maximum amount of future homes or other development that could be built under-current zoning. In the Springs school district, the residential buildout is estimated to be 631 additional housing units¹¹. Springs contains the largest number of vacant single family and separate lots one half acre or less in size of any East Hampton Hamlet.

Springs' limited commercial zones are generally built out, but could probably be redeveloped at somewhat higher density. The town's parking requirements, which stipulate a minimum of one space for every 180 square feet of retail floor area, often limits the extent of development - essentially the available space for parking runs out before the amount of building floor area reaches its maximum.

For example, a 10,000 square foot lot could hold a two story building with a 4,000 s.f. footprint. That 8,000 s.f. area would require 44 parking spaces, covering at least 12,000 square feet. However zoning restricts total lot coverage to 7,000 square feet. So without a larger lot, the building would be limited to less than 3,000 square feet in total floor area.

Just south of the boundary of Springs, there is considerable potential for industrial and commercial expansion at the sand pit. There is also the possibility for mixed-use [redevelopment here](#).

¹⁰ 2014 Community Housing Opportunity Fund Implementation Plan

¹¹ 2014 Community Housing Report

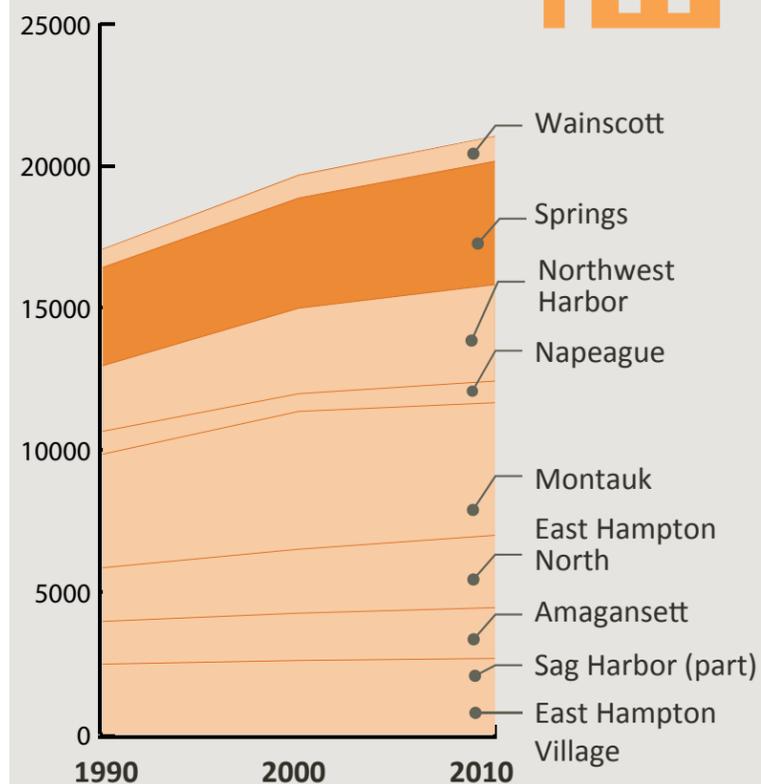
Housing | Springs

Housing Units: 4,340

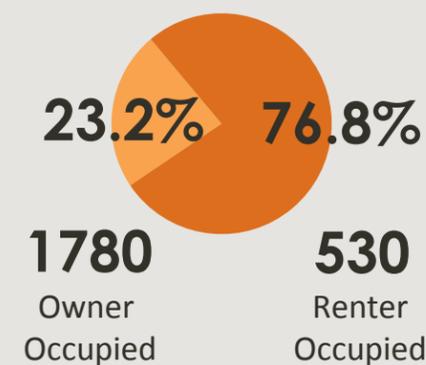
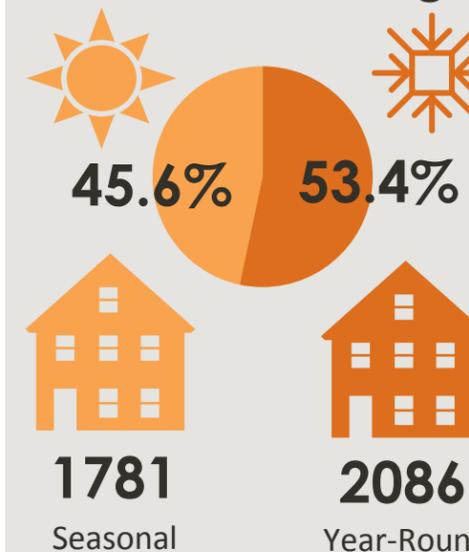
Census 2010

2000-2010: +12%

Census 2010



Seasonal Housing



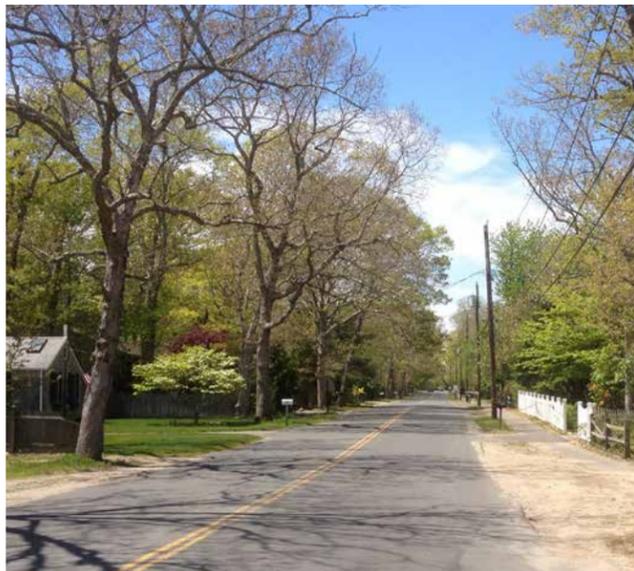
Transportation ¹²

Roadways:

Springs Hamlet is served by two principal roadways emanating within the Village of East Hampton to the south. These are Three Mile Harbor and Springs-Fireplace Roads. Three Mile Harbor Road is maintained by the Suffolk County Department of Public Works (SCDPW) as County Road (CR) 40 from the northern limit of the Village of East Hampton (Cedar Street) to the vicinity of Copeces Lane. Springs-Fireplace Road between CR 40 and Woodbine Drive is maintained by SCDPW as CR 41. Old Stone Highway is a Town road which provides access to Springs from Amagansett. Accabonac Road and Abraham's Path are other Town roads which provide access to Springs from the south. All roads are two-lane roads.

Approximate average daily traffic volumes on these roadways are as follows:

¹² Transportation Element, East Hampton Comprehensive Plan 2005, Based on L.K. McLean Associates 1997 Report



Springs is the only hamlet not along Montauk Highway. The main roadways in Springs only serve the hamlet.

Three Mile Harbor Road:

- 10,300 (near Morris Lane, between CR 41 and Copeces Lane)
- 3,000 (near Washington Street)

Springs-Fireplace Road:

- 9,200 (between Abrahams Path and Woodbine Drive)

Old Stone Highway:

- 6,000 (near Barnes Hole Road)

Heavy traffic, particularly during the summer months, is a significant concern for Springs hamlet, like other areas of Town. Though traffic remains a top concern among residents, there is also perceived public mandate in town to avoid certain traffic infrastructural changes in order to preserve rural character. These include:

- Adding through travel lanes on existing roads
- Constructing bypass roads to congested routes
- Installing traffic signals
- Encouraging the use of existing short cuts or bypass roads
- Widening and straightening roads

The posted Speed Limit on the County portion of Three Mile Harbor Road is 40 MPH; on the Town portion (north of Copeces Lane, which lacks the wide shoulders of the County Road), the speed limit is 35 MPH. The Town portion of Springs-Fireplace Road has a posted Speed Limit of 30 MPH, which extends onto the northern portion of the County Road until the vicinity of Higbee Place. South of that point, the Speed Limit is 40 MPH. The County road is characterized by concrete travel lanes and asphalt shoulders; the Town portion is asphalt and has minimal shoulders.



The Springs General Store is one of a handful of retail businesses in Springs, within the Neighborhood Businesses zone.

A significant amount of commercial traffic utilizes Springs-Fireplace Road northbound from the Village of East Hampton to the large industrial uses, including the "sand pit" and Town Solid Waste and Highway facilities, located on both sides of the roadway. These facilities are located just south of the southern Springs hamlet boundary.

Pedestrians:

With few exceptions, there is a lack of sidewalks along the main roadways serving Springs. Any pedestrians generally walk on the grass area adjacent to the roadway pavement, or on the outside of the shoulder. Despite that, there was no strong support expressed by residents attending the charrette to have sidewalks constructed along most of those roadways.

Bicyclists:

There are no bicycle amenities such as on-road bike lanes or off-road bike paths in the area. There is a designated NY State Bike Route along Montauk Highway; North Main Street/Three Mile Harbor Road/Springy Banks Road and Springs-Fireplace Road (to Hog Creek Road) have been designated as unmarked bike connecting routes to the State route. Despite that, there was a lack of support expressed by residents to have bike lanes constructed along main roads, such as the County portion of Springs-Fireplace Road.

Transit:

Springs is served by Suffolk County Transit's Route 10B, a one-way loop route through Springs which extends as far west to Bridgehampton, with a connection to Route S92 at the East Hampton LIRR Station. Service is from

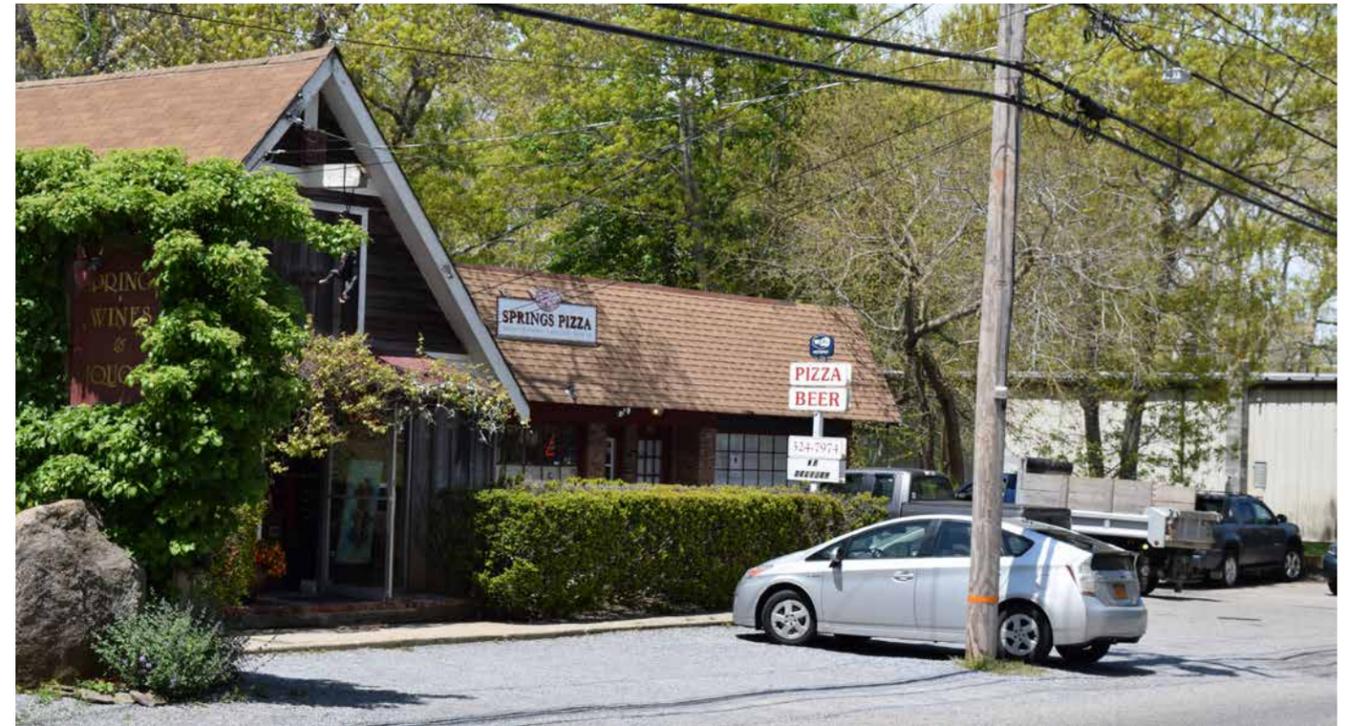


Springs is served by Suffolk County Transit's Route 10B, which connects to other routes at the East Hampton Village Train Station.

Monday to Saturday at approximately 90 minute intervals. Route S92 is a major County route which connects East Hampton with Orient Point by way of Riverhead. See map below:

Parking:

Parking at commercial businesses generally occurs in off-street parking areas. Some businesses have "head-in" parking lots, requiring motorists to back out onto adjacent streets when leaving the lots. To optimize safety all maneuvers into and from off-street parking spaces would ideally be separated from the adjacent roadway; in most cases, lack of sufficient property area precludes this from happening.



Instead of a commercial center, Springs has a few limited areas of Neighborhood Businesses zoning. Small neighborhood-oriented businesses like Springs Pizza and Springs Wines & Liquors at the east end of Fort Pond Blvd are among the few retail businesses in Springs.



Three Mile Harbor is one of Springs' great ecological, recreational, and scenic resources. East Hampton's 2015 Town Wide Wastewater Management Plan recommends a neighborhood waste water system for southern Three Mile Harbor.

Infrastructure and public facilities

Springs is the only hamlet without public water, public well fields or industrial uses. Water supply in the hamlet is exclusively from individual site wells. Wastewater is managed through individual septic systems.

The vast majority of these individual septic systems in Springs provide only secondary treatment of effluent: nitrogen and phosphorous are not removed and therefore enter the groundwater¹³. Old and ineffective septic systems combined with a less than 100' distance between wells and septic systems in many locations create on-going drinking water and surface water pollution concerns. Some specific problem areas include: downgradient of landfill and south side of Harbor View Avenue, Gardiner's Avenue, and Fort Pond Boulevard. Other drinking water and surface water pollution issues include contam-

13 East Hampton Town Wide Wastewater Management Plan 2015 - Lombardo Associates, Inc.

ination from boat and marina discharge.

The town of East Hampton's 2015 Town Wide Wastewater Management plan recommends a neighborhood waste water system for Three Mile Harbor, especially the southern Three Mile Harbor Area. The report also recommends upgrades to septic systems in specific problem areas to achieve Advanced Tertiary Treatment. Nitrex Permeable Reactive Barriers are recommended for specific problem areas, including Three Mile Harbor Road and Springy Banks Road. Alternative treatments, such as Oyster/shellfish aquaculture, have also been proposed in Springs as a nitrogen removal tool.

In addition to wastewater and drinking water infrastructure, the town continues to transition to more sustainable energy sources. Future development opportunities should utilize solar and small-scale wind energy production.

Charrette Process

Overview

A key element of the Springs Hamlet Study public participation process was the use of an intensive, two-day charrette. The purpose of the charrette was to facilitate a discussion of issues and concerns in each hamlet, to provide an opportunity for shared fact-finding and analysis, and to generate and present physical planning ideas specific to the hamlet. The two day charrette consisted of workshops, focus groups, and tours that were open and advertised to the general public, including businesses, stakeholder groups, year round residents, second home owners and traditionally under-represented groups. These events provided the opportunity for local citizens to work together with town staff and the consulting team to develop creative and detailed recommendations for each hamlet. Discussions and questions during the charrette process conveyed community interest in improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and continued protection of the hamlet's sensitive environment through improved wastewater management. Participants also voiced their concerns about development resulting in increased traffic and perceived loss of open space and community character.

Charrette Process

The Springs Charrette took place Wednesday and Thursday, May 18th -19th, with most events held at Ashawagh Hall on Springs Fireplace Road in Springs. Public events included a site tour, a listening workshop, and a final public forum.

Site Tour:

The public site tour, which began at 2:30 PM on Wednesday, was intended as an opportunity for the public to introduce the consultant team to their neighborhood, including key sites, opportunities, and threats. A group of citizens attended the walk, which began at Ashawagh Hall. Before the walk, the consulting team briefly introduced the project and asked for ideas about locations and issues that could be addressed on the walk.

After an approximately half-hour general discussion, the group decided to begin with a walk north on Springs Fireplace Road past the Pollock-Krasner



During the site tour, charrette participants pointed out the lack of safe sidewalks along many of the Hamlet's major roads.

House to the small Neighborhood Business area on Fort Pond Boulevard. The discussion during this walk focused on the need for safe sidewalks and pedestrian/bike trail networks in the area. Other concerns discussed included residential overcrowding and contractor parking in the residential areas of Springs. Next, the group returned to Ashawagh Hall and drove over to the vicinity of the Three Mile Harbor Boat Yard. An idea was presented for a possible Maritime Walking District in this area as well as improved bike and pedestrian connections along the Three Mile Harbor Road corridor. The group walked along Boat Yard Road to Gardiners Cove Road discussing planning opportunities for this area. Finally, the group visited the One Stop shopping center area on 293 Springs Fireplace. The conversation here focused on the potential of adding second story residential units in this area, which is allowed under current zoning.

Other sites discussed but not visited included the Sand Pit (in the East Hampton School District), the Springs Dog Park, Maidstone Park and the area along Girard Drive. Lack of parking and adequate policing of existing parking spaces at Maidstone park was brought up as a concern. Other on-site specific issues from this discussion included public concern about the Springs Tax rate relative to other hamlets and the possibility of consolidating or redrawing school district boundary lines.



At the public listening workshop, charrette participants shared their views on what works well and what needs improvement in Springs.

Public Listening Workshop:

The next public charrette event took place the same evening, Wednesday May 18th at 6:30 in Ashawagh Hall. The purpose of this event was for the public to share ideas and opinions about what is working well and what needs to be fixed in order to make Springs a better place to live and work.

The consulting team began the workshop with an introductory presentation describing key facts and figures about the Springs Hamlet. This presentation was intended to both allow the public to understand the consultants' knowledge of the area and to build a working set of facts about the area to guide subsequent discussion.

After this introductory presentation, attendees were divided into smaller groups at tables. Each group used maps, markers, and sticky notes to record the results of a focused discussion of Springs through the framework of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Discussion at each table was guided by a facilitator from the consultant team.

Strengths were circled or traced on maps with a green marker. These included areas and buildings to be protected, preserved or emulated. Weaknesses were circled on maps with a red marker. These included problem areas in terms of



Small groups gathered around maps of the hamlet to discuss problems and opportunities for the future of Springs.

traffic safety and congestion, access and parking, pedestrian circulation, and aesthetic issues. Economic issues—stores and services used and needed—were marked with a black marker. Connectivity issues—such as areas that need more sidewalks, trails, bike routes, and improved vehicular circulation—were marked in blue.

Next, individual groups organized their top four to five ideas and an individual from the group presented these ideas to the consultants and the other groups. This discussion was followed by a few more general comments and questions from the audience and brief concluding remarks from consultants.

Public Forum:

The next day, Thursday, May 19th, the consulting team worked on concepts during the day. The team met with participants to discuss the Public Listening Workshop and agree on a set of design ideas to develop for a Public Forum to

be held that evening at 6:30 p.m. Based on the feedback from the Listening Workshop, the team decided to develop a range of proposal alternatives for public comment—ranging from large scale connectivity and infrastructure concepts to site-specific limited redevelopment ideas. The consulting team sketched plans and diagrams of these options in the afternoon and organized this material for the evening presentation.

The Public Forum that evening began with a brief introduction by the consulting team. Next, the consulting team presented the ideas, plans and drawings generated that afternoon and responded to questions and comments from the public. Questions and comments were numerous and led to an animated and critical discussion that lasted several hours. The public forum ended with brief concluding remarks from the consulting team.

Charrette Results

Key Problems and Opportunities:

Some prominent themes from the Public Listening Workshop and Site Tour included pedestrian and bike safety, limiting commercial development and preserving open space, improving traffic and limiting contractor vehicles in residential areas; improving wastewater and watershed management, and providing more educational and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors. In the following text, numbers in parentheses correspond to callouts on the Springs Issues and Opportunities Diagram.

Pedestrian and Bike Safety:

One of the major themes of both the Site and Tour and Public Listening Workshop was the need for improved pedestrian walkability and bike safety along major routes and within neighborhoods. Springs Fireplace Road (6) and Three Mile Harbor Road (11) were the primary focus areas of this discussion, with many anecdotal stories of injuries and deaths along Three Mile Harbor Road, in particular. Several people expressed skepticism that Three Mile Harbor could ever be made safe for bike travel, while others expressed a more optimistic desire for dedicated bike lanes, sidewalks, and other infrastructural changes.

Additionally, many comments were made regarding the need for off-road pedestrian trails. There is already a network of trails in the area, including the 45-mile long Paumanok Path, which runs from the Southampton Town line to Montauk Point, and the 4.5-mile Springs to Amagansett Trail. Good portions of these trails are on open space lands currently owned by the Town and Suffolk County, as well as the Peconic Land Trust, one of whose stated objectives is to conserve walking trails, providing recreational opportunities (5). Beyond recreation, many workers in Springs do not drive, and therefore must bike to

work. There is, accordingly, a need for “shared use” bike and pedestrian paths.

Despite the consensus on the need for safer pedestrian and bike routes, charrette participants were divided over the acceptable methods for achieving this end. The focus of this disagreement was the desire to preserve the rural character of Springs. Some suggested that narrow, winding paths could be acceptable but that widening roads for bikes could damage the integrity of the rural landscape. Others felt that wider roads, wider ADA accessible sidewalks, and parallel parking in some places would be acceptable changes to assure safety. A number of people mentioned the need for improved crosswalks and lowered speed limits to improve safety.

Commercial Development and Open Space:

In general, groups expressed a strong preference for limiting additional commercial development and preserving open space. In the Listening Workshop and Site Tour, opinions ranged from absolutely no new development to a cautious interest in very small-scale redevelopment of locations such as Fort Pond Boulevard (1) (13) in order to provide amenities such as a café or small markets within walking distance of residential areas.

Traffic and Parking:

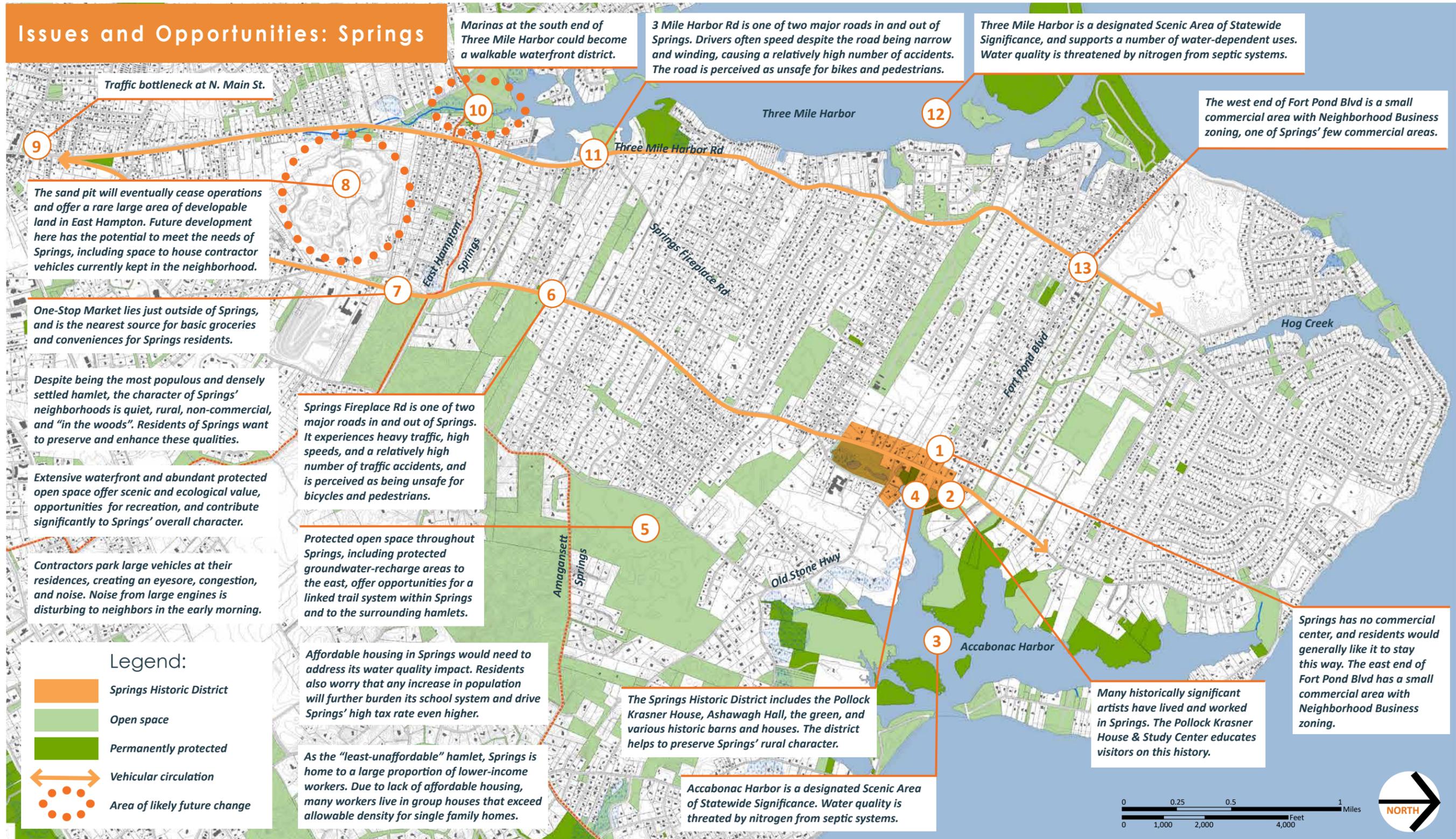
In addition to pedestrian safety improvements such as lowered speed limits and crosswalks, comments from the Listening Workshop also included concerns about traffic and parking in Springs.

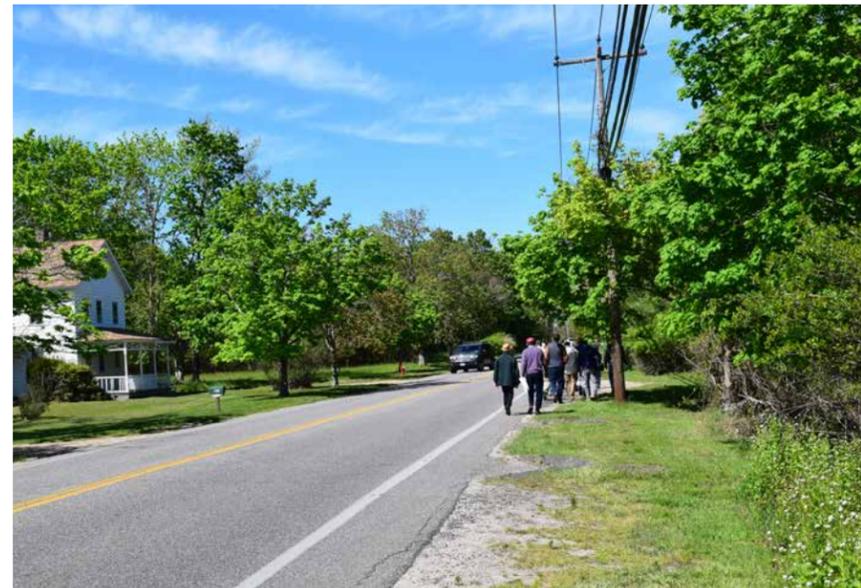
In terms of traffic, a number of comments concerned the number and size of vehicles parked in residential areas by contractors. These people were frustrated by the noise and traffic associated with these vehicles and felt that the town was not adequately enforcing its own policies about commercial/industrial uses in residentially-zoned areas. Other comments included the desire for lowered speed limits and reduced opportunities for left turning. Many comments were made about speeding motorists on Three Mile Harbor and Springs-Fireplace Roads. The offset intersections of Abraham’s Path with Springs-Fireplace Road were also identified as problematic.

It was noted at the charrette that the Suffolk County Department of Public Works is advancing two projects, design of which was begun in 2016, which will improve the County-maintained portions of Three Mile Harbor (CR 40) and Springs-Fireplace (CR 41) Roads. These are essentially pavement and drainage rehabilitation projects, which will also address, in accordance with the County’s Complete Streets legislation, the adequacy of pedestrian and bicycle amenities along the roadway corridors.

One general transit issue identified was the long time intervals between buses.

Issues and Opportunities: Springs





Above: Springs' major roads lack infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists. Left: Connectivity plan from Springs Charrette

Preliminary Design Ideas:

The preliminary design ideas presented by the consulting team at the Public Forum included the following: a pedestrian and bike “connectivity masterplan”, “Complete Streets” alternatives for Three Mile Harbor Road and Springs Fireplace Road; a concept for limited, small-scale redevelopment of the Fort Pond Boulevard Neighborhood Business Area; a concept for new industrial spaces and contractor parking in the Sand Pit; and pedestrian improvements in the vicinity of Three Mile Harbor Boat Yard. These concepts were developed to respond to the key problems and opportunities described in the Public Listening Workshop and Site Tour. Reactions to these preliminary design ideas ranged between support for some and outspoken opposition to others.

Connectivity Masterplan:

The consultant team prepared an overall sketch master plan linking together key shopping, scenic, and recreation areas with safer bike and pedestrian infrastructure. These nodes of activity included proposed and existing amenities and other points of interest. Some of the key nodes included a proposed Maritime Walking District at Three Mile Harbor, a proposed “Contractor Park and Ride” by the East Hampton sand pit, the Springs Historic District, Town Beach, Springs Dog Park, Springs School, and Merrill Lake Sanctuary. Several of the proposed nodes within this connectivity masterplan were further developed through additional preliminary sketches.

Blue lines on the connectivity masterplan represent suggested bike route improvements. Some of these areas already have dedicated bike lanes or shared lanes. The intent is to link these existing amenities with additional bike lanes, shared lanes, or bike paths in order to create safe, continuous bike routes. Major bike routes proposed in the masterplan include a bike route on Abraham’s Path from Town Beach to Three Mile Harbor, and a bike circuit linking Springs Fireplace Road and Three Mile Harbor Road. Other bike improvements include improved East to West bike connections on Fort Pond Boulevard from the Springs Historic District to Maidenstone Park, and a route connecting Gardiner Ave, Springs Park Dog Park, and Gann Road. Another route proposed in the masterplan is a scenic bike route along Gerard Drive and Old Stone Highway.

Green lines in the connectivity masterplan represent proposed walking and hiking routes. These routes include existing trails and sidewalks that could be improved and connected with new paths. As with the bike routes, these corridors are intended as general suggestions. Many options exist for specific pedestrian infrastructure that could be selected to respond to local site conditions and community preferences.

Public reaction to the connectivity masterplan was generally positive. Critical commentary generally highlighted broader concern about infrastructure projects detracting from rural character. Accordingly, participants expressed concern for construction that widened roads or otherwise impacted the rural landscape.

Complete Streets:

Building on the Connectivity Masterplan, the consultant team presented a set of slides intended to show the range of options available to transform existing road right-of-ways into multifunctional corridors safely accommodating bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles — “Complete Streets.” Typical street cross sections, including Three Mile Harbor Road and Springs Fireplace Road, were used to illustrate the amount of space available for improvements and what new functions could fit within the public right-of-ways. Images of road improvements like shared bike lane arrows, pedestrian crosswalks, dedicated bike lanes, and multi-use paths were also presented alongside the cross-sections.

While the broader goal of improving pedestrian and bike safety and connectivity was lauded, participants reacted negatively to photos depicting wide paved multi-use paths and sidewalk improvement projects from denser communities. The comments clearly indicated participants’ concern that any infrastructure improvement projects be compatible with the rural character of the hamlet.



When considering future redevelopment of the commercial area at Ft Pond Blvd and Springs Fireplace Rd, Charrette participants strongly emphasized the importance of preserving the small scale, rural neighborhood character of the hamlet.

Fort Pond Boulevard Neighborhood Business Area:

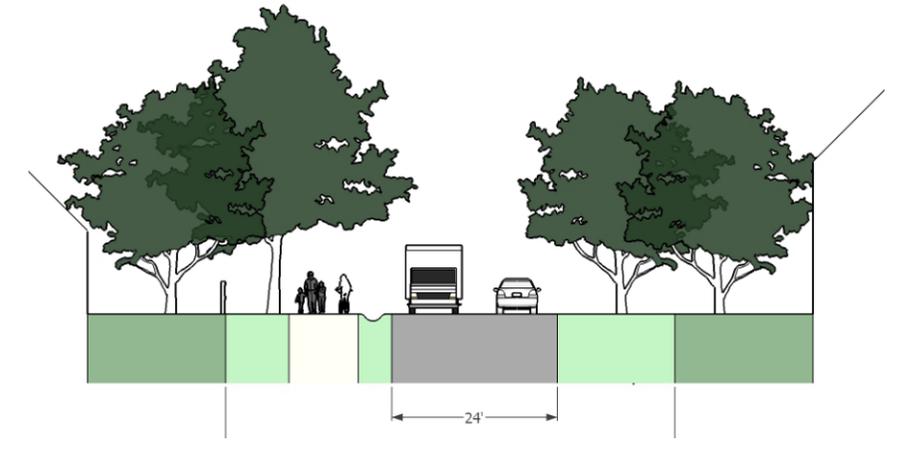
One node from the Connectivity Masterplan that was developed further by consultants and presented in the Public Forum was a concept for limited redevelopment of a small area on the west end of Fort Pond Boulevard, from Malone Street to Springs Fireplace Road.

The sketch plan of this area includes repurposed existing buildings in brown along with proposed buildings in orange. The concept is consistent with the current NB zoning and small business use in this area. The plan shows a compact, mixed use redevelopment of two blocks on the north side of Fort Pond Boulevard. In addition to replacing some of the poorer-condition buildings in this area, the plan reduces curb cuts and provides parking behind the buildings as well as street-parallel on-street parking on Fort Pond Boulevard.

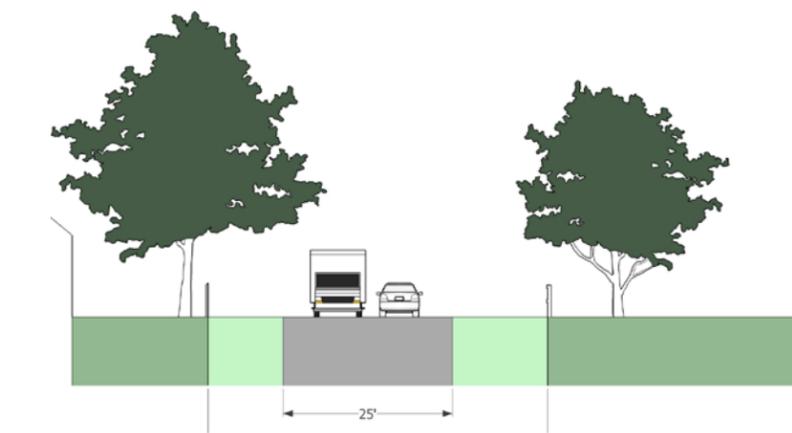
Reaction to the Fort Pond business area plan included strong skepticism about potential changes to the character of the neighborhood. Participants voiced concern that any changes to these areas blend into the existing architectural character and density. At least some of this concern seemed to be fueled by a misunderstanding of the scale and intent of the plan as presented. The consultant team explained that the sketch was intended to illustrate a potential future state for the site as a result of zoning policies, rather than a one-time



Abraham's Path, existing



Abraham's Path with a multi use path



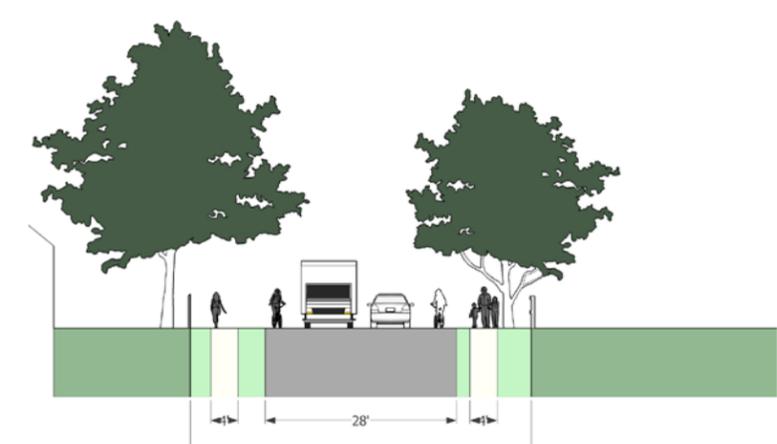
Springs Fireplace Rd, existing



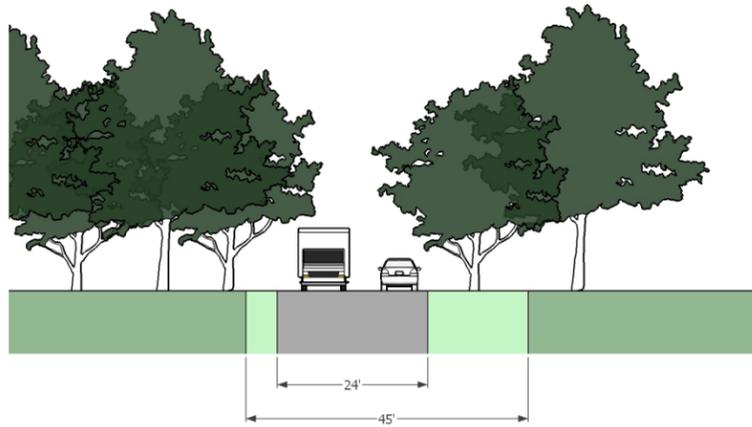
Springs Fireplace Rd with full bike lanes



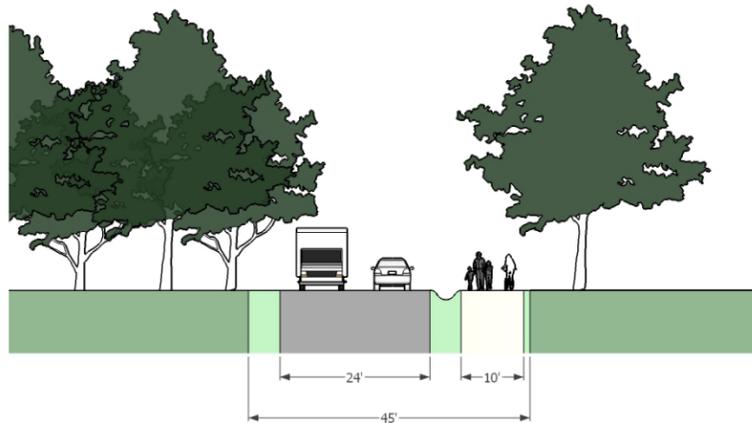
Springs Fireplace Rd with a multi-use trail



Springs Fireplace Rd with sharrows and sidewalks



Three Mile Harbor Rd (north), existing



Three Mile Harbor Rd (north) with a multi-use trail

development. Even with this explanation, it was clear that participants were very interested in limiting development and preserving, as much as possible, existing buildings and the eclectic architectural style of the neighborhood context.

Sand Pit:

Another node that was developed further by the consultant team was area of the Sand Pit along Springs Fireplace Road. The sketch of this area shows a portion of the sand pit redeveloped to provide an area that could cater to industrial and contractor business uses that require garages and parking areas for larger vehicles and equipment.

The concept includes a “Contractor Park-and-Ride” where contractors could park larger vehicles that are not allowed to park in residential areas to the north. Workers could arrive by vehicle (or by bicycle) in the morning, assemble at the site, and board trucks for daily work activities. Public transportation might also allow employees of these businesses to move between this shared parking area and homes throughout Springs. The sketch shows an enhanced green buffer between this redeveloped area and Springs Fireplace road. The buffer includes pedestrian and bicycle improvements supporting the Connectivity Masterplan. The sketch of the area also suggests consolidated curb cuts and a back road to reduce traffic problems caused by inefficient vehicle turning patterns.

In terms of roadway access to the sand pit, there was a positive public reaction to a proposed “park and ride” lot at the site. The lot would provide a place for large trucks to park overnight.

Positive feedback was also received for a proposed extension of Washington Avenue, a north-south street parallel to Springs-Fireplace Road, to the north. This concept would reroute much of the traffic from the industrial parcels south of the sand pit area onto the existing driveway to Springs-Fireplace Road which currently serves the sand pit. This would provide an opportunity

to remove some of the many existing commercial driveways along Springs-Fireplace Road. This would improve traffic safety by reducing the number of “conflict points” along the roadway where motorists must slow (or stop, to await gaps in oncoming traffic) to enter the driveways, and make left or right turns onto the roadway to exit commercial sites.

Southern Three Mile Harbor Marinas:

In addition to concepts for Fort Pond Boulevard and the Sand Pit, the consultant team presented an additional diagram providing more detail to the idea of pedestrian improvements at The Head of Three Mile Harbor. This included a walking loop around the existing harbor and



Ideas for the East Hampton sand mine included places to keep the large contractor trucks and equipment which currently disturb residents in Springs’ quiet neighborhoods.

connecting this area to the walking trails in the adjacent conservation area to the south and west of the marina.

Participants generally responded favorably to the idea of pedestrian improvements, while also voicing concerns about further commercial development of this area. Criticism of the proposal suggested that any development here would open the door for further expansion of commercial uses, jeopardizing the rural character of the area and increasing traffic.



Charrette participants were generally open to the idea of pedestrian improvements in the marina area, as long as it wouldn’t entail expanded commercial development.

Hamlet Master Plan

Overview

Nestled between Accabonac and Three Mile Harbors, recognized statewide for their scenic and natural habitat significance, Springs has a unique rural character with considerable charm and beauty. The cluster of intact historic farmhouses and barns helps maintain the rural character and preserves linkages to its nineteenth century agrarian economy. Inshore fishing and shellfishing activities are important parts of the economy, but also connect Springs to its unique Bonac and cultural character. This rich array of natural and cultural resources along with the availability of inexpensive buildings suitable for studio space, attracted some of America's greatest artists to the area in the 1940s, and an artist colony still thrives today.

Springs has the smallest commercial base of all the hamlets and the central historic Ashawagh Hall area is dominated by community and institutional uses rather than business establishments. Its slightly out of the way location, with no Montauk Highway or ocean frontage, has helped protect Springs from undesirable commercial development pressures, traffic congestion and other changes.

But Springs is experiencing the burdens of residential growth. The relatively lower real estate prices in Springs, compared to other parts of East Hampton, has spurred a 33% increase in population over a ten year period (2000 – 2010). Tax rates are the highest in the Town and with the influx of school aged children, education costs will continue to be an issue. Quality of life problems have also stemmed from the growth of home contractors in residential neighborhoods and the overcrowding of homes for employee housing. The high number of ordinance enforcement cases in Springs reflects the magnitude of the problems and the Town's continuing response. But school tax rates and budgets are not within Town government jurisdiction, and other growth pressures are not easily addressed.

Pedestrians, bicyclists and residents don't feel safe from speeding vehicles and traffic on Springs' two main roads, initially laid out in colonial times. There are no pedestrian or bicycle routes between Three Mile Harbor Road and Springs Fireplace Road, nor are there adequate connections to the beaches, parks, recreation and scenic areas. Pollution from stormwater runoff and septic systems has seriously impaired the water quality and fish and wildlife habitats within the harbors and bays.

Overall Goal of the Springs Plan

The Town of East Hampton Comprehensive Plan is the foundation and the basis for the Springs Hamlet Plan. Within the context of the Comprehensive Plan, the specific goal of this Plan is to provide the Town of East Hampton with an inspired, achievable plan which preserves the extraordinary historic and scenic charm of Springs while improving connectivity, functionality, and the environment.

The conceptual neighborhood plans presented in this report are not growth plans, but concepts which anticipate potential upgrades and redevelopment needs over time. Without increasing density, for example, the plan for the East end of Fort Pond Boulevard illustrates the potential for a gradual reconfiguration and improvement of the area - for consideration if and when owners decide to redevelop their properties. Increased landscaping, outdoor seating opportunities, coordinated parking, and improved circulation are provided. The concept is not a specific blueprint, but an overall guide depicting how changes can be managed to compliment rather than detract from the rural and small town character of Springs.

General Objectives to Meet Issues of Concern

A series of general objectives have been developed to address the issues raised during the public workshops, charrettes and planning process. Each objective is followed by a brief discussion of the specific area of concern.

Objective 1- Preserve and enhance the existing scenic, rural and historic character of Springs.

Springs has a unique character recognized for its bucolic, rural charm and historic features. Many facets of life in the nineteenth century are represented by the mix of historic farmhouses, barns, community and commercial buildings concentrated within the Springs Historic District. With the highest residential density of all the hamlets, future development and growth pressures could spoil the area's charm and rural setting. Preserving Springs largely as it exists today while enhancing and improving the natural environment and residential qualities is a primary concern.

Objective 2- Improve water quality and reduce pollution loading to Accabonac Harbor and Three Mile Harbor

Accabonac Harbor and Three Mile Harbor have experienced shellfish closures, algal blooms and other severe water and habitat degradation problems. Stormwater runoff and nitrogen loading from on-site septic systems have been identified as primary pollutant sources. On-going pilot projects including the installation of permeable reactive barriers to intercept nitrogen rich groundwater before entering the waterbodies and other pollution prevention controls are being evaluated. Innovative alternative systems effective at reducing nitrogen loading from on-site single family septic systems are available. Expanded application and implementation of various water quality pollution prevention controls is a critical need.

Objective 3- Improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists and residents

Springs lacks safe, attractive pedestrian and bicycle paths connecting residents to places they want to go. Three Mile Harbor Road, laid out in colonial days, is a winding, narrow roadway with no place for bicyclists or walkers. Preserving the mature trees, aesthetics and rural character of Three Mile Harbor Road while providing safety improvements is challenging. East-west bike and pedestrian routes between Three Mile Harbor Road and Springs Fireplace Road and safe paths to the ocean and bay beaches, parks, recreation areas, and scenic view-

points are needed. Most shopping and commercial needs are met outside of Springs but there are no shuttle buses or alternative modes of transportation available to get to shopping areas.

Objective 4- Provide alternative vehicle parking options for home contractor businesses

Springs residents have experienced disturbances to the peaceful quality of life from home contractor businesses operating out of their homes. While the physical work such as plumbing or painting is conducted off-site, the overnight parking of commercial and work vehicles at residences has created conflicts with adjoining residents. The conflicts have become acute in the more densely developed neighborhoods where there are limited opportunities to buffer the noise, fumes and associated impacts from adjacent residences.

Objective 5- Protect and enhance the walkability, cohesiveness, attractiveness and functionality of the Head of Three Mile Harbor

The Paumonak Path is a hiker's dream, traversing some of the most beautiful and remote parts of East Hampton. One of the few segments that follows roads and skirts development, just to the east of the boardwalk traversing the Head of Three Mile Harbor, provides the opportunity for enhanced connections to adjacent scenic waterfront views, boating activities, parkland and local eateries. Coordination with the proposal to improve the parking and circulation at Damarks Deli is available. Development of a low key, Maritime Walking District to complement Paumonak Path should be explored.

Objective 6- Protect and enhance the walkability, cohesiveness, attractiveness and functionality of the east end of Fort Pond Boulevard.

Opportunities to stroll and appreciate the scenic and historic center of Springs is restricted by lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities. Walking from the historic center to the cluster of businesses at the intersection of Fort Pond Boulevard and Springs Fireplace Road is not safe. While existing head-in parking and informal architectural style are in keeping with the character of the area,

there is an opportunity to gradually improve both the appearance and functionality of the area.

Conceptual Framework:

The diagrams on the following pages illustrate a conceptual framework for Springs. They show how many of the hamlet's concerns can be addressed through a comprehensive approach to preserving Springs' rural character, improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, providing facilities for home contractor businesses, and coordinating future redevelopment in existing commercial areas. More detailed plans are provided for three areas that were identified as important opportunities in the charter: the Head of the Harbor/Maritime Walking District; the Limited Business zones along Fort Pond Boulevard; and the Springs Fireplace Road Sand Pit. It is assumed that the precise configuration of improvements will vary somewhat from these plans, but that these concepts can be used as a guide to ensure that if and when changes in the hamlet's built environment occur, the rural character of Springs is preserved and enhanced.

Hamlet-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections:

The following diagram suggests a master plan for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout Springs, linking neighborhoods with the various beaches, parks, recreation areas, scenic viewpoints, commercial areas and community facilities throughout the hamlet. It also shows how these local walking and biking routes are tied into the townwide network of trails.

The plan suggests creating primary bike routes on Three Mile Harbor Rd, Springs Fireplace Rd, Fort Pond Blvd, Springs Dog Park via Gardner Ave, and Abraham's Path, connecting to the proposed townwide bike network shown on page 3 of this report. These primary bike routes could be achieved by installing separate multi-use trails parallel with roads, or marked bike lanes along roadways which are sufficiently wide enough to accommo-

date them. In addition to recreation, bike lanes will also serve workers in Springs who bike to work on these major routes. Accommodating bikes while preserving the mature trees, aesthetics, and rural character of the narrow and winding Three Mile Harbor Rd will be challenging, and deserves detailed study. Vehicular speed and accident analyses should be conducted along Three Mile Harbor Rd and Springs Fireplace Rd as part of this effort, to determine the viability of lowering speed limits on these roadways.

The plan suggests creating secondary bike routes on Old Stone Highway out to Louse Point, on Gerard Drive out to Gerard Park, and on King's Point Rd out to Maidstone Park. These secondary connections could be achieved with dedicated bike lanes along the edges of roadways, or with sharrows where roadways are otherwise too narrow. Sidewalks should be constructed along major roadways in order to improve community walkability and to connect residences with neighborhood retail sites. The town should provide input into Suffolk County's projects to improve Three Mile Harbor and Springs Fireplace Roads, as a step towards implementing these improvements.

The plan suggests linking the various trail systems throughout Springs. Additional trail connections can be provided to extend the Springs-Amagansett Trail north to the Town's Springs Park and beyond to the East Hampton Point Marina and the Town Dock on Three Mile Harbor. A secondary East-West trail has been identified just north of Fort Pond Boulevard. Additional North-South neighborhood trails and sidewalks could link each neighborhood block into what could be continuous, interconnected system. Wherever these trails cross roadways, it is important that traffic signs warning motorists of trail crossings are installed.

By its nature, the trail system is geared toward hikers. The surfaces and grades of the trails are not considered accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act and current ADA design standards. Therefore some of the key trail links should be upgraded to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This does not require paving trails with asphalt, but can be accomplished with the use of hard-packed stone dust, organic binding agents, or alternative paving systems using various polymer-based



Springs already benefits from numerous individual trails throughout its parks and open spaces. Springs' overall walkability and access between neighborhoods and places of interest could be enhanced by linking these trails into a hamlet-wide trail network.

binders mixed with aggregate.

The Town should consider upgrading one or two of the major East-West trail connectors to multi-use paths. These shared use paths are typically a minimum of 10-foot wide, with paved surfaces and grades that can be successfully navigated by those with disabilities as well as bicycles. Based on numerous comments about the need for shared use paths, conversion of key portions

of the existing trail system to that type of facility would strongly enhance recreational opportunities for Springs residents.

Transit plays an important role in this hamlet-wide connectivity vision. The town should petition Suffolk County Transit to increase the frequency of the existing bus service on Route 10B, particularly at times when workers are commuting to and from places of employment.

Recommended Masterplan for Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity



Recommended Approach - Three Mile Harbor Maritime Walking District



Three Mile Harbor Maritime Walking District:

Plans have been put forward in recent years for a Maritime Walking District at the head of the harbor, and in general the concept received support at the Spring Charrette. Current zoning divides the area into several districts, including Waterfront (WF) for the marinas, Residential A for the residential lots, and two small Neighborhood Business (NB) zones at the intersection of Three Mile Harbor Road with Soak Hides Road and Gardiner Cove Road.

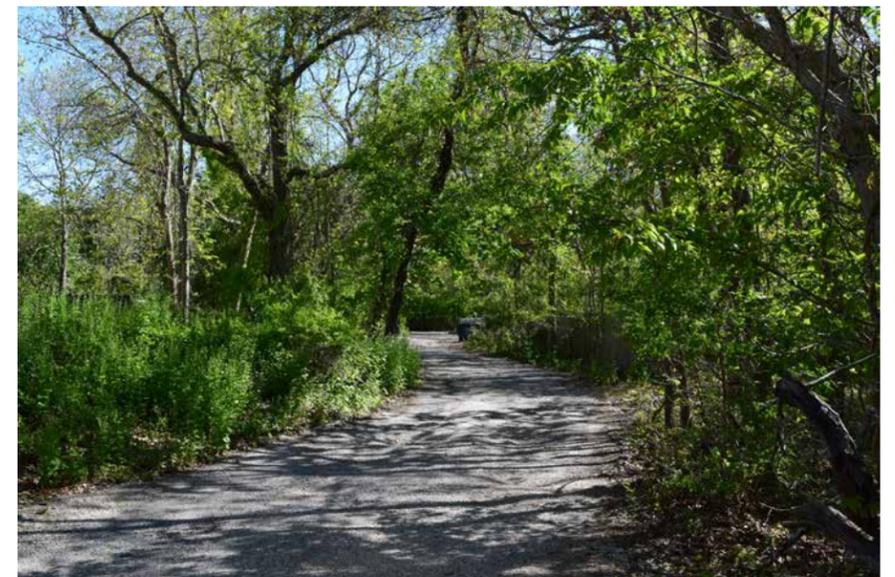
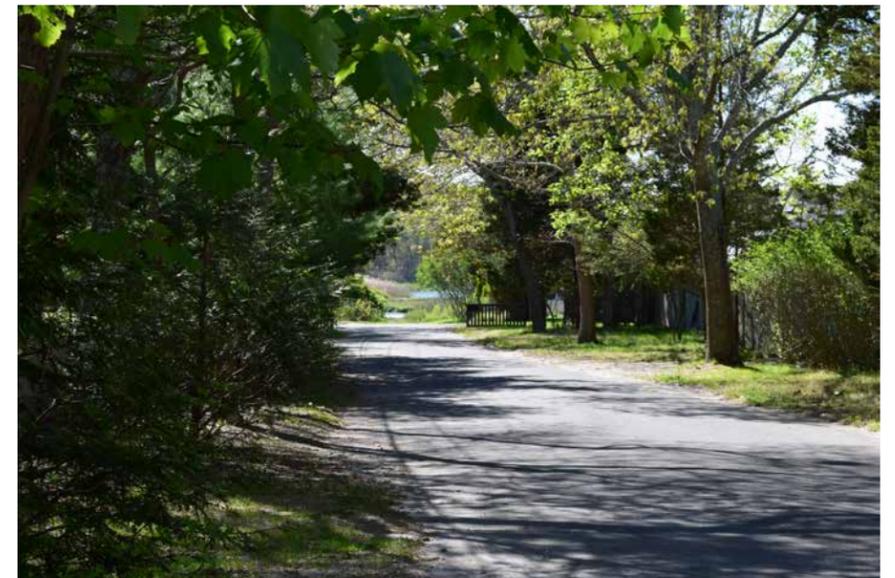
From a conceptual standpoint it makes sense to explore an alternative zoning strategy for the head of the harbor that would allow for a more robust mix of uses and additional homes and businesses. For now, residents are comfortable with the status quo. Further study will be needed to determine how best to deal with existing issues, much less accommodate additional growth. Provision of shared wastewater treatment will need to be addressed, as well as strategies to make homes, parks, marinas and other uses more resilient to the challenge of rising sea levels.

There are many possible improvements to the area that can be made immediately, however. The plan to the left describes a conceptual framework for a maritime walking district at the head of Three Mile Harbor, with a focus on improved connectivity for bicycles, an interconnected system of walking trails, and enhancements to the town park. Today many visitors to the district come for a single purpose - to walk the Paumanok Trail, put a boat in at the town dock, or stop at Damark's for a sandwich - without knowing about other opportunities in the area. A continuous system of pathways, with signage that helps people navigate, would enhance the recreational value of the area.

The centerpiece perhaps would be a continuous path along the waterfront from Gardiner's Marina to the overlook at Cathy Lester Preserve. The path would have to be carefully designed to avoid conflicts with boat launches and other waterfront uses, but could unite the entire area. Improvements to public space at the Town Dock and waterfront could include additional parking, landscaping, picnic shelters, benches and other park amenities.



A plan for a connected system of walking paths and bike routes could help resolve existing conflicts while enhancing the recreational value and quality of life for residents as well as visitors. Waterfront paths already existing along much of the marina frontage; with careful design and management these can be knit together into a walkway along the entire waterfront from Gardiner's Marina to Gardiners Cove Road and the Paumanok Trail. Improvements to existing park facilities at the entrance to the town dock (lower left) could make better use of existing open space. With care, the character of the traditional lanes along Gardiner Cove Road and Boatyard road (below) can be protected while enhancing their use for walking and biking.



East Fort Pond Blvd: Existing Conditions



Phase I



Phase II



Phase III



Fort Pond Boulevard Neighborhood Business Areas:

Two areas on the each and west end of Fort Pond Boulevard are zoned for Neighborhood Business (NB). Existing businesses in the area include neighborhood services such as pizza, wines & liquors, convenience foods, deli, automobile repair and marine services. There are a number of office and storage buildings for local landscaping companies and other contractors. Mixed in among the businesses are single family homes, and the Springs Fire Department occupies a site near the East end of the Boulevard.

Largely built-out under current zoning density, most of the lots have structures on them. The existing Limited Business Zoning allows for development or redevelopment on a minimum 10,000 square foot lot with 70 feet of frontage. Lot coverage is limited to 40% by structures, and 70% overall including driveways and other impervious surfaces. The intent of the zoning - reinforced by those who attended the charrette - is to allow for a modest amount of commercial use in Springs, while maintaining the quiet streets and small-town atmosphere prized by residents.

While there is a clear need and desire to avoid over-development, traffic and noise in what is largely a residential hamlet, many opportunities were identified to make these small business districts work better and look more attractive. Residents like the low height and limited overall size of existing buildings, but much of the architecture is utilitarian in design and has little to do with local history. Many of the businesses have convenient head-in parking along the street, but the resulting spread of pavement, backing out into traffic, and lack of sidewalks is both unsightly and dangerous. The relatively low density allows for trees and other vegetation to flourish, but there is little in the way of public space for walking, sitting or recreation.

The plans shown on the opposite page show one way that these small Neighborhood Business zones could be redeveloped over time to be more functional and attractive. For illustrative purposes, they are focused on the East end of Fort Pond Boulevard, and divided into phases to emphasize that redevelopment is likely to happen only incrementally, if at all. As properties are redeveloped, however, there is an opportunity to make improvements that benefit land owners and businesses, while ensuring that Springs' historic and rural character is preserved and enhanced.

With many different parcels and multiple owners, this vision will likely only be achieved if each landowner and business recognizes the value of the plan and agrees to do their part. The town can help by making appropriate improvements to the streets, sidewalks, landscaping, etc. within the public right-of-way.



Residents appreciate the understated buildings as well as the canopy of trees and other vegetation in the district, but the streetscape is dominated by front yards paved for parking, telephone poles and a tangle of overhead wires.

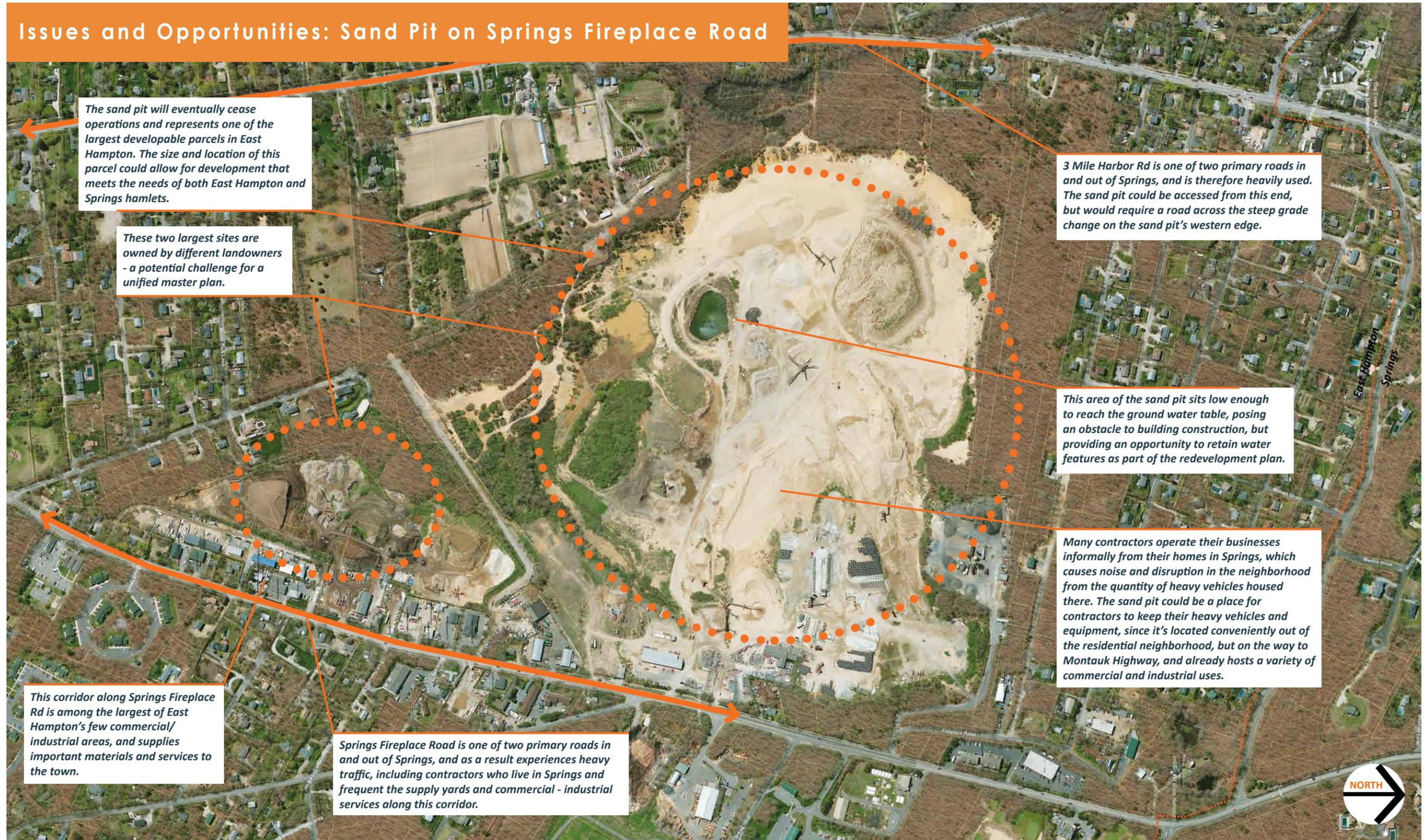


Utilitarian structures provide affordable space for local car repair and other businesses, but have little to do with local traditions.



A small office building does a better job at fitting into the residential character of the neighborhood, but has no sidewalk to connect to the rest of the area.

Issues and Opportunities: Sand Pit on Springs Fireplace Road



The sand pit will eventually cease operations and represents one of the largest developable parcels in East Hampton. The size and location of this parcel could allow for development that meets the needs of both East Hampton and Springs hamlets.

These two largest sites are owned by different landowners - a potential challenge for a unified master plan.

3 Mile Harbor Rd is one of two primary roads in and out of Springs, and is therefore heavily used. The sand pit could be accessed from this end, but would require a road across the steep grade change on the sand pit's western edge.

This area of the sand pit sits low enough to reach the ground water table, posing an obstacle to building construction, but providing an opportunity to retain water features as part of the redevelopment plan.

Many contractors operate their businesses informally from their homes in Springs, which causes noise and disruption in the neighborhood from the quantity of heavy vehicles housed there. The sand pit could be a place for contractors to keep their heavy vehicles and equipment, since it's located conveniently out of the residential neighborhood, but on the way to Montauk Highway, and already hosts a variety of commercial and industrial uses.

This corridor along Springs Fireplace Rd is among the largest of East Hampton's few commercial/ industrial areas, and supplies important materials and services to the town.

Springs Fireplace Road is one of two primary roads in and out of Springs, and as a result experiences heavy traffic, including contractors who live in Springs and frequent the supply yards and commercial - industrial services along this corridor.



Conceptual Framework: Sand Pit - Phase I



Legend:



Sand Pit: Phase I

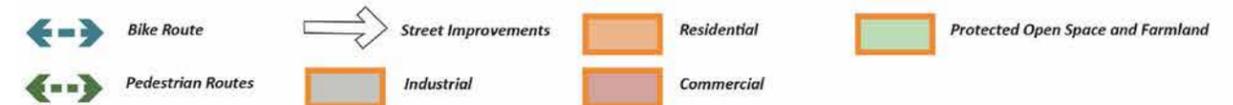
Redevelopment of the East Hampton Sand Pit is considered in detail in the East Hampton Hamlet Report, but a summary of recommendations is provided here as it concerns Springs. Phase I begins a long-term process of reclamation and redevelopment. The sand pit will contin-

ue production on the north half of the study area, while redevelopment begins to the south and west. Phase I also suggest locating sites for truck parking and contractor services adjacent to the sand pit. This could take the form of a “contractor park ‘n ride”, offering a hub to which individual contractors drive, ride, or carpool in the morning to access their parked vehicles and stored equipment.

Conceptual Framework: Sand Pit - Phases II and III



Legend:



Sand Pit: Phase II and III

Phase II allows for a limited area of retail redevelopment along Springs Fireplace Road, with heavier service commercial uses moving back away from the road. Phase III occurs after the sand pit has ceased operation, opening up available space to meet East Hampton’s future needs

for housing, open space, commercial, office and/or continued industrial use. A full description of planning recommendations for the East Hampton Sand Pit is provided in the East Hampton Hamlet Report.