Red Hook and Tivoli proposed zoning changes to save farms, protect rural character, reinforce traditional village centers, and promote economic development. The plan identified over 50 farms to be included in an Agricultural Business District, designed to replace the current mostly 3-acre suburban-scale zoning and permit greater business opportunities for farmers. The Town’s existing purchase of farm development rights program would receive extra funds through incentive zoning for development located close to the Village.

Instead of reacting to random development locations, the plan offers a positive vision for where growth is mutually beneficial, streamlining the review process. A Fiscal Impact Study showed acting as an advertisement for new economic investment and offers a positive vision for where growth is mutually beneficial, instead of reacting to random development locations. The 2011 adopted zoning included detailed illustrative plans and standards for walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods to ensure compatibility with existing centers and to provide design guidance for future development proposals.

In 2009, an Intermunicipal Task Force from the Town and Villages of Red Hook and Tivoli proposed zoning changes to save farms, protect rural character, reinforce traditional village centers, and promote economic development. The plan identified over 50 farms to be included in an Agricultural Business District, designed to replace the current mostly 3-acre suburban-scale zoning and permit greater business opportunities for farmers. The Town’s existing purchase of farm development rights program would receive extra funds through incentive zoning for development located close to the Village.

The 2011 adopted zoning included detailed illustrative plans and standards for walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods to ensure compatibility with existing centers and to provide design guidance for future development proposals. Instead of reacting to random development locations, the plan offers a positive vision for where growth is mutually beneficial, acting as an advertisement for new economic investment and streamlining the review process. A Fiscal Impact Study showed that the Centers and Greenspaces strategy could increase the commercial tax base and reduce the potential for town-wide residential development, limiting both sprawl and school tax impacts.

**Suburban Development**
- Spread-out, disconnected patterns
- Segregated by use and income
- Entirely automobile-dependent
- More exclusive and expensive lots
- Fewer choices for singles and seniors
- Spreads sprawl/disrupts community

**Traditional Neighborhood Centers**
- Compact extension of existing centers
- Mix of uses, variety of housing types
- Walkable scale, ¼- to ½-mile radius
- More moderate housing alternatives
- Starter housing and downsizing options
- Reverses sprawl/conserves community

**Major goals:**
- Permanently protect farming, important farmland, and the rural countryside;
- Strengthen the residential and commercial base of the existing villages and hamlets;
- Transform the South Broadway strip into a traditional village entrance/extension;
- Use close-in smart growth development to help finance much-needed sewer systems.

**Build close-knit, connected centers...to protect our landscape legacy**

**Regional Pattern**

**CENTERS AND GREENSPACES**

Define smart growth within a traditional and ecological pattern of Centers and Greenspaces, where new development should either:

- **strengthen an existing city, village, hamlet, or town center;**
- **transform a suburban strip or subdivision(s) into a center in the form of a more walkable, mixed-use neighborhood; or**
- **fit gently into the rural countryside as a background element, preserving continuous natural and agricultural greenspaces.**

Most development before 1950 focused around walkable centers, surrounded by expansive rural and natural landscapes. Forming a combined ecosystem, cities and smaller centers concentrated diversity and innovation in commerce and culture, while large areas of farms, woods, and wetlands generated a wide diversity of natural species.

This interconnected pattern of central places and surrounding greenspaces, evolved over centuries and embedded in nature, has now segmented into suburban forms that mandate driving for every major movement. Commercial strips line most highways and residential sprawl spreads far into the countryside, fragmenting both communities and nature. Auto-dependency also fuels a basic contradiction: low-density sprawl creates higher levels of traffic congestion.

Limited land, unlimited traffic aggravation, and escalating local taxes to service all those scattered subdivisions make the continued strip-and-sprawl conversion of outlying areas unsustainable. Global energy and climate concerns make policy changes even more urgent. A Greenway-inspired Centers and Greenspaces approach that re-centers most new development into walkable, mixed-use forms can protect our natural and agricultural heritage, end wasteful land, energy, and pollution practices, and provide a wider range of transportation choices, from walking, biking, and cars to transit alternatives.
The Centers and Greenspaces initiative integrates land use, transportation, and ecological planning to implement Greenway principles and prevent strip-and-sprawl patterns. The goal is to encourage municipalities to identify natural and agricultural greenspaces for possible protection and priority growth centers with positive development potential. The Centers and Greenspaces approach was first applied in the Rhinebeck Town Plan and a Red Hook intermunicipal plan, then with the Towns of Poughkeepsie and Pleasant Valley and the City of Beacon. These plans not only identified growth centers and greenspaces, but also tried to illustrate what new close-in development might look like. The Centers and Greenspaces map builds on these local examples and will evolve on the interactive website as new municipal plans and projects are completed.

The Centers and Greenspaces map is based on compiled local plans, but is designed as a future Greenway vision map, both centered and connected, highlighting four indispensable patterns for interconnected ecosystems:

- **Centers** - Concentrated places of community life, cultural history, and commercial exchange, including cities, villages, and hamlets and traditionally organized within a 1/4- to 1/2-mile walking radius. Priority locations for growth, including infill, redevelopment, extensions, and emerging mixed-use centers by primarily retrofitting existing strips and subdivisions.

- **Greenspaces** - Parks, natural areas, and working farms, combined into a continuous rural countryside and essential for food, recreation, water quality, and diversity of habitats. Priority for possible protection measures, especially the large, continuous "biodiversity blocks" necessary for area-sensitive species (over 1,000 acres and undivided by roads over 25 vehicles per hour).

- **Greenway Corridors** - Floodplains, waterway and wetland systems, hedgerows, stepping stone patches, and other critical connections between greenspaces for natural species, wildlife movement, water protection, and recreation.

- **Greenway Routes** - Transportation linkages between centers, forming a landscaped Greenway network from trails to sidewalk systems and from regional rail lines and parkways to boulevards and tree-lined main streets.

*Greenway principles support reinforcing centers as primary growth areas, fitting any outlying development into the natural landscape to preserve farmland and open spaces, and providing strategies to pull together separated subdivisions and commercial districts into more connected neighborhoods or mixed use centers.* — Greenway Connections, 2000, page 27

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**Land use map shows outlying roadside strips and residential sprawl replacing farmland.
Projection of current trends, based on existing highway commercial zoning and suburban areas under five acres.**

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**LEGEND:**
- Major Centers
- Commercial
- Residential
- Farmland
- Countryside

**GREENSPACES**
- Contained Greenspaces
  - Over 1,000 Acres of Active Farms and Natural Habitats
- Continuous Greenspaces
  - Over 5 Acres
- Conserved Greenspaces
  - Public & Private Protected Land
- Public Open Space

**CENTERS**
- City, Village, & Town Centers
  - ½-Mile Walking Radius
- Emerging Centers
  - Potential or Planned Centers
- Hamlet Centers
  - 2,000 Foot Walking Radius
- Suburban Development
  - Outlying Lots Under 5 Acres
- Greenway Corridors
  - Floodplains and Wetland Systems
- Greenway Routes
  - Major Roads, Trails, and Railroad Lines

**Spreading Strip-and-Sprawl Patterns or the Hudson Valley Green Way.**

A Greenway vision map for local planning initiatives, featuring four indispensable patterns for interconnected ecosystems:
- variety of walkable, mixed-use Centers;
- large natural and agricultural Greenspaces;
- naturally connecting Greenway Corridors;
- transportation network of Greenway Routes.