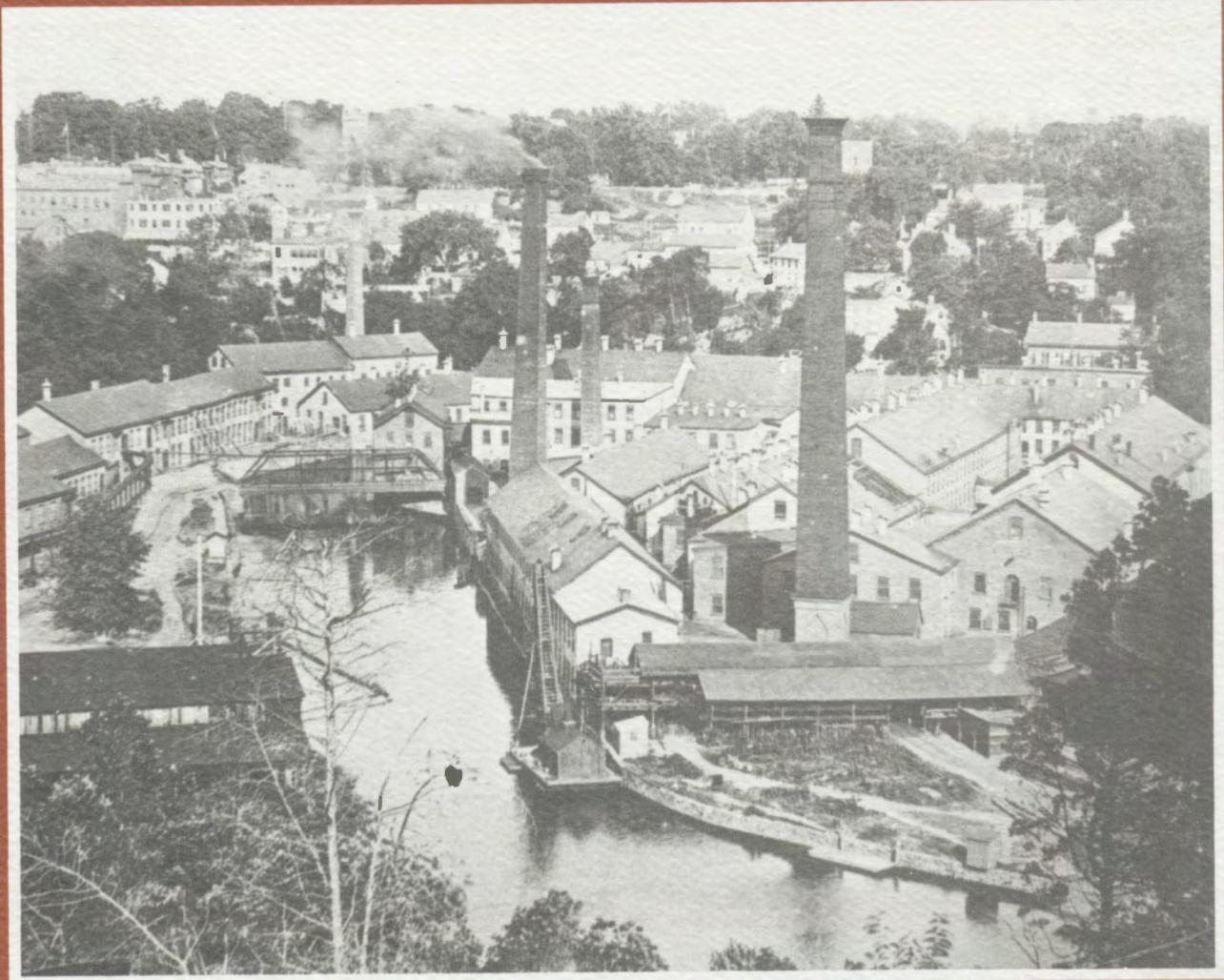


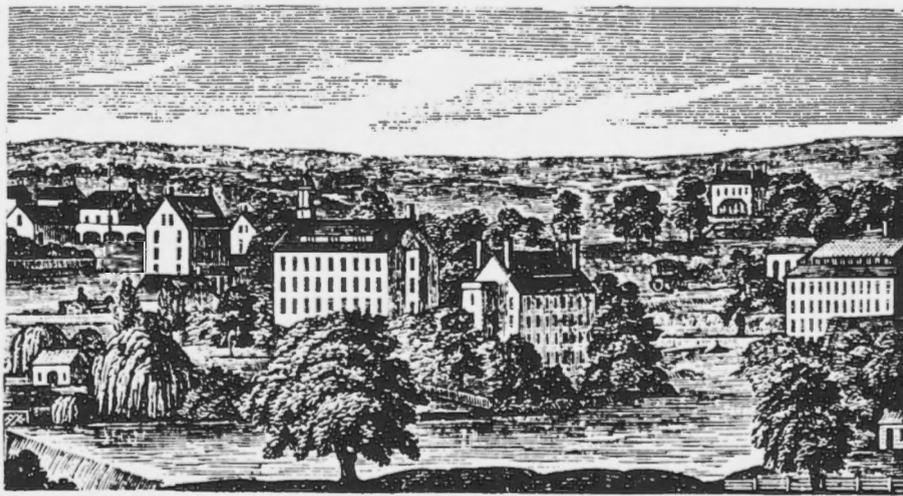
**Building  
in  
Dutchess:**



**Reading  
the  
Landscape**

Cover Photo: Old photograph  
of bleachery in the village  
of Wappingers Falls

# Building in Dutchess: Reading the Landscape



19th Century illustration of factory buildings of Matteawan in Fishkill

PUBLISHED BY  
THE DUTCHESS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Poughkeepsie, New York

Joyce C. Ghee, Historian

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Publication made possible in part by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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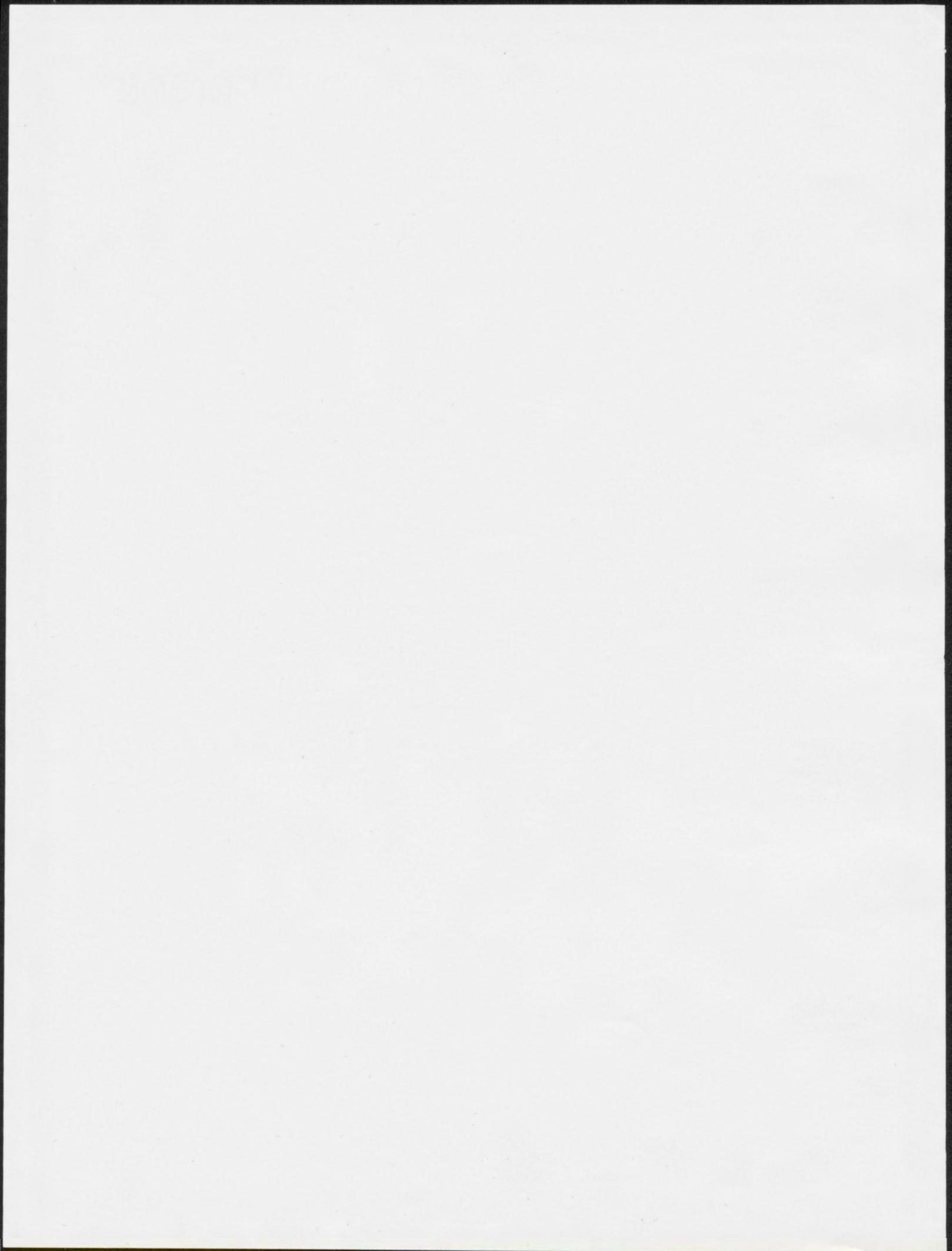
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# Reading the Landscape: An Introduction

Joyce C. Ghee, Dutchess County Historian

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"What's that farm doing there in the middle of that development?"

This off-handed remark by a participant in a recent preservation conference leads to speculation about how our current cultural landscape has evolved and is evolving.

Dutchess is a rapidly changing area whose many new residents often have roots in other parts of the world. There are progressively fewer of us with fond childhood recollections of this landscape as it was in its *more* rural days, with tree-lined streets and neighborly hamlets where every face was familiar and where every detail of local history was common knowledge. If we come from the city, a tract house on its own 1/4 acre seems pretty countryfied. The context has changed. The neighbors have changed. Apartment complexes, shopping centers, and 8-lane highways abound as the Metropolitan area extends into the "country." However, strangely enough, what often has enticed our newer residents is a romanticized vision of a bucolic, picture post-card, up-state setting. And many of us do not really know what we are missing.

Dutchess Countians, new and old, are experiencing culture shock and culture loss as the evidence of former habitation and development is smothered, covered and dismantled. It is happening in every community in seemingly unimportant small ways . . . a farm is subdivided into small building lots . . . Mr. Jones decides to cut down on painting by covering the old family home with one of those new maintenance free sidings . . . a main street that was a mix of homes and businesses is gradually converted to all commercial use . . . the businesses need more parking, so a house or two with no apparent historic or aesthetic value is demolished.

And just what *is* lost when this happens? Nothing . . . except the knowledge of who we are and where we came from. The old vernacular houses, the industrial and mill sites, the country stores, ethnic neighborhoods in larger settlements, the hamlets, scenic roads, farmlands, commercial buildings, churches, public buildings, transportation networks and related structures . . . all tell a part of that history and define what kind of society this is.

History is not just about a few movers and shakers and architectural history is not just about a handful of high-style structures created by the most influential architects. The cultural landscape is a marvelous picture puzzle full of mysteries, lessons and the raw material for new thematic constructions.

What those who preceded us here constructed, why and where they built, what succeeded and what did not become special resources for the one with the educated eye and the open mind. He who knows how to *read* the cultural landscape will know how to work with it best because his foundation is the experience of thousands of builders who have gone before him.

## Architectural Heritage Year a Watershed

The heritage which we celebrate in countless bicentennials with all the fun and excitement of parades and parties and historically based activity becomes meaningless if we fail to recognize and venerate the contributions of ordinary citizens to the flow of history.

Celebration does not have to be superficial. Celebration can and does have some very practical side effects.

Architectural Heritage Year in 1986 gave New Yorkers an opportunity to celebrate the rich variety and history of their architectural heritage. *It also gave them an opportunity to do something about preserving it.*

Here in Dutchess, several preservation-minded groups joined forces in an educational effort directed at the general public and those who unwittingly contribute to the loss of some of the area's most valuable cultural resources. Coordinated by the County Historian who directs the Dutchess County Department of History, the project involved the Dutchess County Historical Society, the Dutchess County Landmarks Association, Dutchess County Cooperative Extension Service and the Dutchess County Planning Department.

An exhibit entitled BUILDING IN DUTCHESS: READING THE LANDSCAPE was mounted by the County Historian and exhibited sequentially in the Dutchess County Office Building where it was seen by thousands. It then traveled to the Dutchess County Historical Society, reassembled as a whole, where it was on view for another six months. It told the story of how people have lived and built within a particular environment, a story which began before European contact with the Wappinger Indians, who were the area's first residents. The exhibit then tracked the 300 year history of building in Dutchess that followed the coming of Europeans. It went on to examine the numerous cultural, aesthetic, political and technological impacts that man's need to construct have had upon a changing landscape and society. It asked the public to view structures *contextually* rather than as single entities.

The theme of looking at the landscape as a cultural

and historical framework was carried through in two public conferences, sponsored by the supporting organizations as a component of the project. *READING THE LANDSCAPE, PART I AND PART II*, provided an intimate and new way of looking at the Dutchess County countryside *contextually* as part of *social, technological, political and aesthetic history*. With the assistance of Dr. Kenneth Walpuck, architectural historian, David Greenwood, local historian and teacher of art and architectural history, and Roger Akeley, Dutchess County Commissioner of Planning, the County Historian led two seminar/bus tours around portions of the county.

This was a fast-paced course in "reading" what exists on either side of almost any road in our own county; structures and groups of structures, landforms, waterways, arrangements of open spaces, placement and relationships of structures, roads, dams, walls, rail beds, building materials . . . for clues to community or structural origins.

Introductory historical and architectural information was presented to conferees to increase the breadth of their vision and pique their curiosity. Check lists were provided to assist in identifying stylistic characteristics and types of commercial, industrial or political activity that may have contributed to the look of an area. Techniques of community revitalization offered by Judy Schneyer of Cooperative Extension, added to preservation and planning tools presented by Commissioner Akeley, offered a means to effect action in the future. Conferees were asked to assign meaning to what they saw, to look beneath recent change for what might be there and to suggest how future changes and adaptations could be done with more sensitivity to community values and traditions. Even neophytes proved surprisingly adept at drawing sensible, well-founded conclusions about what the cultural landscape offered for the future of planning both for individuals and communities.

Many left with renewed enthusiasm about what they had experienced, determined to put new-found knowledge to practical use in future planning board, business or domestic decision-making processes.

Neither a conference nor an exhibit is an end in itself. The need to educate more broadly and continuously is obvious if one is to have any major impact on future development.

Thanks to the support of the New York State Council on the Arts, the materials and information generated by the project will become part of the permanent public record through publication. Thanks also to the generosity of the three principle presenters at the conferences, Kenneth Walpuck, Roger Akeley and David Greenwood, many more persons will have an opportunity to have the veil lifted from their eyes and to learn to "read" the landscape.

The two parts of this publication . . . material from the exhibit in catalog form and conference papers or summaries thereof are supportive of each other. I invite you to glance through the exhibit, to read the papers and then to take a second look at the exhibit visuals.

Then do some thinking.

Architectural  
Heritage  
Year  
New York  
1986



PROCLAMATION



Since the 17th Century, Dutch, German, French, Italian, English, Irish, Jewish, Black and many other immigrant and ethnic groups have brought their distinct cultures to bear upon the landscape of the Empire State. The imprint of these groups is most distinctly and visibly apparent in the architecture of New York State. The dwellings, factories, farmsteads, stores, schools, theaters, gardens and houses of worship of these settlers reflect not only their needs but their aspirations as well.

As diverse and distinguished as the architecture of New York State is, our State's citizens can increase architectural literacy through the enhancement of knowledge of architectural terms, of well-designed structures and of how social changes have altered building forms. The Preservation League of New York State, headquartered in Albany, hopes to educate New Yorkers about their building heritage and to enhance their understanding of the State's architectural past, present and future by presenting and coordinating multi-dimensional programs throughout 1986. This program is known as Architectural Heritage Year 1986: Three Centuries of Building in New York State, and its purpose is to challenge New Yorkers to discover New York and eagerly explore its architectural and cultural history.

Architectural Heritage Year 1986 will be a series of projects and events occurring in cities, towns and villages across the State throughout 1986 which will be designed to teach residents and visitors alike how buildings were and are now made. Nearly 200 organizations from throughout the State have already shown their support by agreeing to co-sponsor Architectural Heritage Year 1986 programs. From Long Island Sound to New York Harbor to Lake Erie and the St. Lawrence River, from the Southern Tier to the Catskills and the Adirondacks and the Hudson Valley, the buildings of New York State tell the story of its people and Architectural Heritage Year 1986 will bring this story to life.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mario M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim 1986 as

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE YEAR

in New York State.



G I V E N under my hand and the  
Privy Seal of the State at the  
Capitol in the City of Albany  
this tenth day of May in the  
year one thousand nine hundred  
and eighty-five.

BY THE GOVERNOR:

*Mario M. Cuomo*

*Michael A. Del Guisic*  
Secretary to the Governor

## Building in Dutchess: Transforming the Landscape

During Architectural Heritage Year (1986) we were invited to take a closer look at the built environment in Dutchess County. It is as informative as any history book about the origins and evolution of our communities.

Structures of all sorts tell a story of the land and the people if we know what to look for and where to find it. Their very appearance speaks of how choices, ideas, traditions and energy have transformed the places in which we live and work.

# The Wappingses

The story begins well before European exploration with the earliest inhabitants of Dutchess County, the Wappinger Indians (Wappingses). Hunters, gatherers, fishermen, and farmers, they lived in family-related villages near the Hudson River and inland creeks. Their shelters were temporary beehive-shaped wigwams or longhouses made of bark covering a sapling framework. Insulation was provided by furs or reed mats.

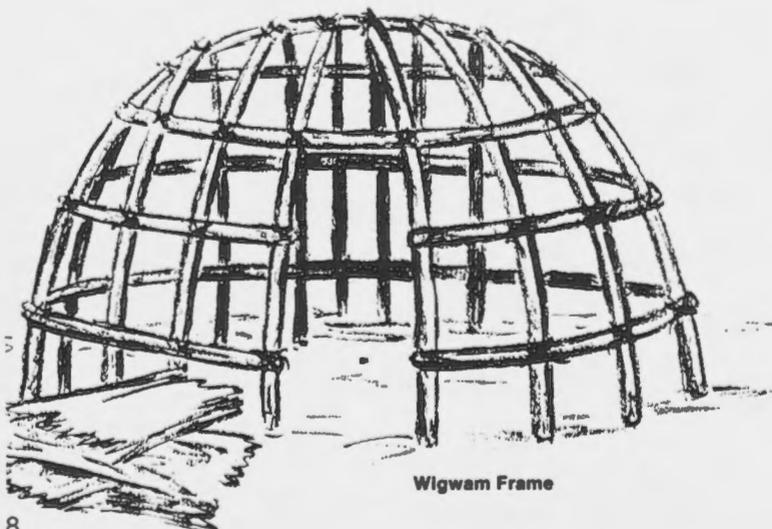
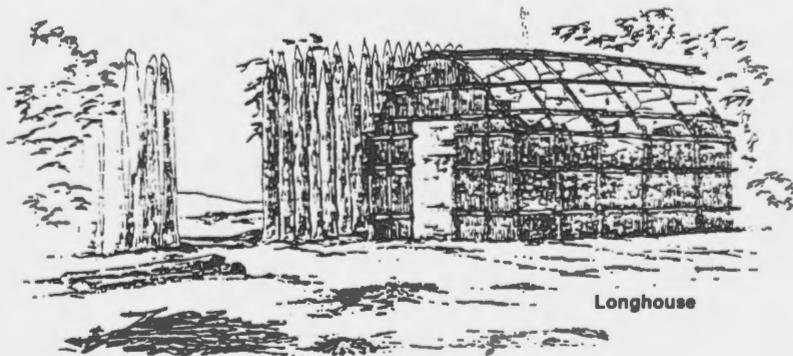
Settlement and shelter were directly related to what the land would support. Communities were moved periodically as available resources dictated. Native Americans saw themselves as part of nature, believing that every living creature and the earth itself were kindred. To maintain the balance of Creation one took no more from the environment than was needed to sustain life.

Although no villages or structures remain, archaeological evidence found in Bowdoin Park and many areas of the County recall this first chapter of "Building in Dutchess."

- △ Sepascoots
- ⊙ Scaticooks
- ▲ Wawgachtonoets:  
3 villages below  
Pine Plains
- Shekomeko  
Weckquaanoek  
Pachgatgoch
- ⊙ Wappinger  
3 villages in  
this area
- × Waoranecks
- ▲ Wiccopees
- Noch Peem
- ⊙ Pasquascheck  
(near Indian Pond)
- ⊗ Keskestkonck
- ⊙ Canopus



## Tribes and Village Sites Dutchess County



### DELAWARE FAMILY

After Peter Mårtensson Lindstrom, 1654  
Illustration in Thomas Companius Holm,  
Kort Beskrifning . . . Nya Swerige, pl. IX

# The Europeans

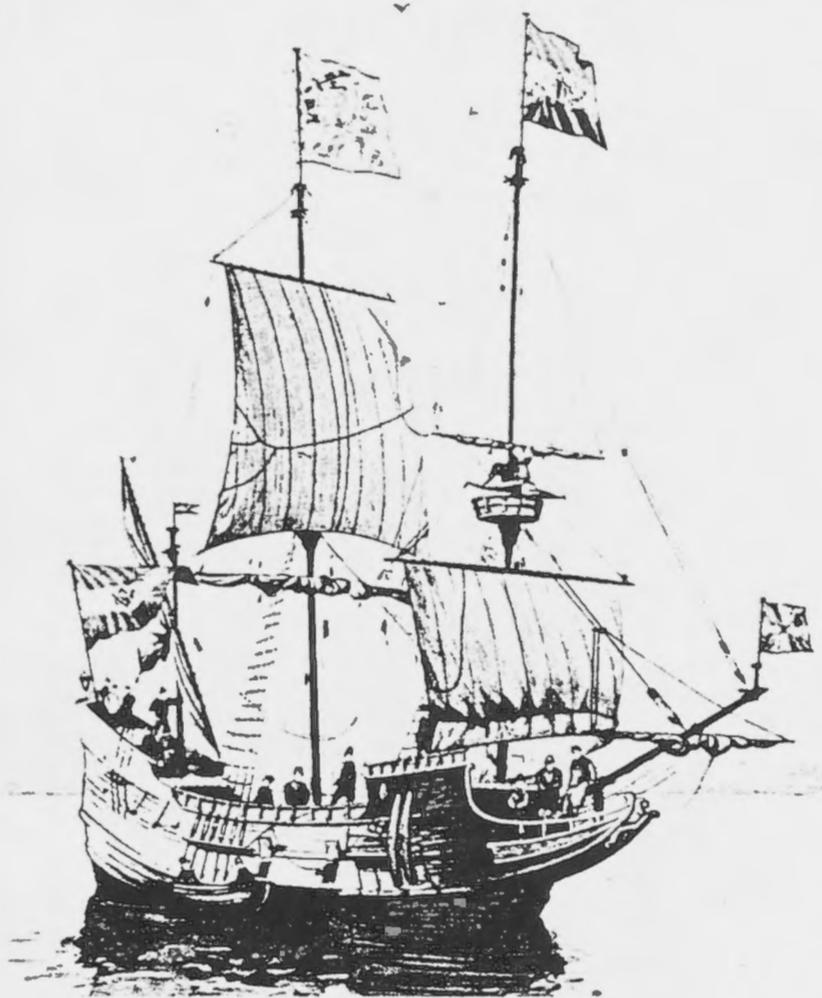
The 17th and 18th centuries brought European thinking to bear upon our environment.

"The five and twentieth was faire weather, and the wind at South a stiffe gale. We rode still and went on Land to walke on the West side of the River, and found good Ground for Corne, and other Garden herbs, with great store of goodly Oakes, and Walnut trees and Chest-nut trees, Ewe trees, and trees of sweet wood in great abundance, and great store of Slate for houses and other good stones."

—Log of Henry Hudson's ship, the "Half Moon," 1609

The Dutch and English saw the land as raw material to be turned to personal ends. Unlike the Indians, they built for permanence. Their homes and the structures they built centuries ago are still part of the landscape. Although often changed by succeeding owners, they are still recognizable.

Dutchess was rich in usable natural resources: water, forests, products of the soils, fish, and game. The river provided easy access to other ports. Early settlement, like that of the Wappinger, was on the Hudson near the mouths of creeks or along a former Indian trail on the heights which came to be called "the King's Highway."



HENRY HUDSON'S SHIP "HALF MOON"



New Amsterdam, About 1630  
Stokes Collection, New York Public Library



VISSCHER MAP — This detail is taken from a c.1682 revision of a large map by Nicholas Visscher of Novi Belgii (northeast coast of United States), which includes Nieuw Nederlandt and Nieuw Jorck. It shows the territory in the Hudson Valley between Nieuw Amsterdam and Fort Orange that would soon become Dutchess.

# Residents and Newcomers

19th CENTURY:

At the start of the 19th century Dutchess presented the picture of an agrarian society little changed from that of the previous century. Descendants of the original patentees held sway over far-reaching trade and business interests, from country seats along the Hudson that were also family farms. Market and mill towns catering to the needs of residents and small, almost self-sufficient family farms dotted the countryside, connected by the beginnings of an internal road system. Dutchmen and Englishmen, through intermarriage and business agreement, had become Dutchess Countians. The residents were in residence.

By mid-century this was changing. Encouraged by the growth of the New York State canal and railroad systems, industry flourished in mill towns. Farmers began to produce not only for themselves but to satisfy the needs of the market place far away. A work force, new to the area, was fed from the ranks of successive waves of European immigration. Towns and villages felt the pressure of growth as services and housing for workers became imperative.

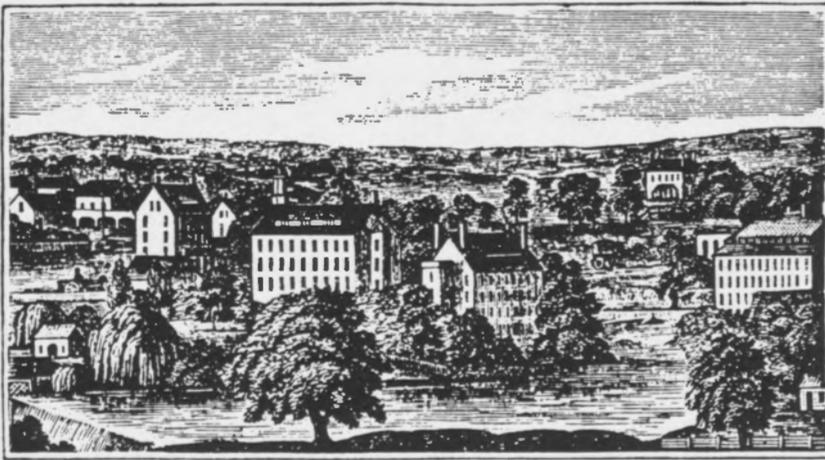
Poughkeepsie became a city, its status as a county seat and the principal market town enhanced by an improved road and turnpike system.

Services and community needs that had earlier been provided on a private or personal basis became institutionalized. Schools, libraries, hospitals, and shelters for the aged, infirm and orphaned were built.

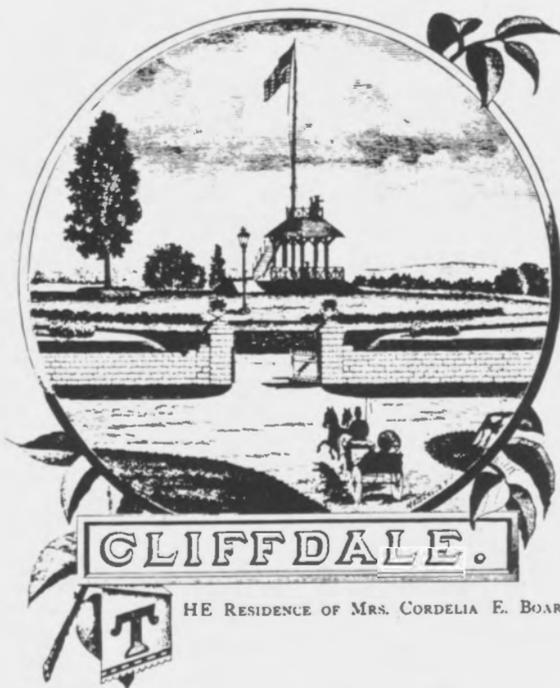
A new class of wealthy residents was drawn to the area. Vast estates, built primarily as weekend or seasonal retreats, were constructed along the Hudson and in the eastern hills.

By the turn of the century, railroads, trolley lines, and ferries made the most remote portions of the county accessible to the outside. Travel to and from farm, village and city was easy and inexpensive. Residents could shop, go to school, attend to business, or enjoy recreational travel in relative comfort and confidence.

The days of an insulated self-sufficient society were gone. Communities were increasingly interdependent.



*Factory Buildings in Matteawan, Fishkill.*



*9 Vassar Street*





FARMERS COOPERATIVE MILK COMPANY — located on upper Main Street, Poughkeepsie, circa 1930.



DUTCHESS COUNTY AIRPORT—New Hackensack Road, Town of Wappinger, 1979. Modernistic. Designed by architect Edmond G. Loedy of Poughkeepsie. Flat roof, asymmetrical balance, smooth unadorned wall surfaces, round and corner windows are features of the modernistic style which first appeared in the 1930's.



WAPPINGERS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL—Village of Wappingers Falls, 1940. Neoclassical revival. Since the 1940's Neoclassicism often appears in essentially simple modern buildings that are given importance by the addition of classic features at entrances, such as this columned, pedimented portico.



## 20th CENTURY:

The twentieth century finds Dutchess no longer remote from any part of the world. The profound changes that have reshaped all of the Western world affect us as well.

Perhaps the single most important factor affecting the built environment was the automobile. By permitting personal preference to become the pre-eminent factor in where we lived, worked and spent our leisure time, the family car encouraged the spread of population.

The 1920s saw the beginnings of suburbia as individuals bought small plots of land for housing on the outskirts of population centers. The Depression, however, prevented many from making the move.

Following World War II, general prosperity combined with the needs of returning service families and an influx of workers for new industry triggered a building boom. It began in the 1940s and continues to the present. Fed by our affection for the car and a growing and more affluent population, it has brought with it:

- the growth of housing developments and a loss of open space
- the creation of Central School Districts
- a greatly expanded highway system
- shopping centers and parking lots
- the decline of "downtown" Poughkeepsie and Beacon as business centers
- upheavals in public transportation
- the loss of old neighborhoods and place names
- urban renewal
- apartments and high-rises

In the past it often took many years for the impact of ideas and technologies to be felt by society or to be visible on the landscape. Since the dawn of the 20th century, such effects are felt more rapidly. Almost overnight, structures that took years to build can be obliterated, or whole new communities raised.

Planning, as preparation for growth and development, is a new but essential tool of government. With preservation and education, it provides the best hope for meeting the challenges we face in preparing for a healthy future environment. Through zoning, reconstruction, restoration, the creation of historic districts, adaptive reuse, and Landmark designation, Dutchess County communities are protecting important aspects of our architectural heritage.

In 1986 we can still "read" our history in the landscape, in stone walls, monuments, Dutch farmhouses, River Family mansions, 19th century commercial and industrial complexes, great institutions, schools, country churches and even in the newest tract housing and shopping plazas. They tell us who we are and where we came from. Will the residents of Dutchess County in 2086 be able to do the same?

# 18th Century Structures & Settlements



**GLEBE HOUSE**—Main Street, Poughkeepsie, English tradition, 1767. Constructed of brick, laid up in Flemish Bond. The oldest brick house in Dutchess County. Built on the "glebe," land set aside for the County's first permanent Episcopal minister, Tory sympathizer John Beardsley.

In the early years there was plenty of space in which to build. Title to the land, however, was in the hands of a small number of patentees (recipients of large land grants) who leased and sold real estate in smaller plots to those who built Dutchess County's first settlements and homes.

Practical considerations led settlers to build where land was made available near their work and access to transportation and market; millers by streams, businessmen at crossroads and farmers at the place where their fields bordered the road. Workplaces and living places were next door. Living complexes reflected owners' occupations and lifestyles. Present day remains of these complexes and communities are often missing vital original parts of the whole, when outbuildings such as barns, stables, wells, outhouses, e.g., have been removed.

Public buildings and houses of worship at crossroads strengthened population centers. The County Courthouse, Bogardus Inn, and the Reformed Dutch Church drew residents to the town center. The First Reformed Church of Fishkill Town and Trinity Episcopal Church at the intersection of Routes 9 and 52 mark the center of another 18th century village.

**PLATT HOUSE**—  
Overlook Road,  
Poughkeepsie, Dutch  
vernacular, c. 1735, c.  
1760. Gilbert Palen, a  
Dutch farmer, built the  
eastern section of the  
house first. The next  
owner, Zephaniah  
Platt, added the  
western section and  
gambrel roof.  
Platt was  
an officer in the  
Continental Army and



delegate to the  
Provincial Congresses. Although  
recent alterations have removed  
or disguised many of the original  
features of the house, the basic  
materials and Dutch design  
elements are still evident in the  
gable ends. It is presently owned  
by the American Legion.



**BEEKMAN ARMS**—Route 9, Rhinebeck.  
Formerly known as the Bogardus Tavern, it  
was a meeting place for many famous  
individuals during the American Revolution  
and later. Although its appearance has  
changed since then, it is one of the oldest  
operating hotels in the country.



**PETER DUBOIS HOUSE**—Old Hopewell Road, Town of Wappinger.  
A good example of how renovations and additions, in response to  
changing circumstances over the years, can disguise the original  
features of a structure.





**BREWER-MESIER HOMESTEAD**—East Main Street, Village of Wappingers Falls. This building clearly shows adaptations and changes by a succession of owners. The rear wing is the oldest portion, c. 1741. It was purchased in 1777 by Peter Mesier, a loyalist and tea merchant. It is presently the headquarters of the Wappingers Falls village police department.



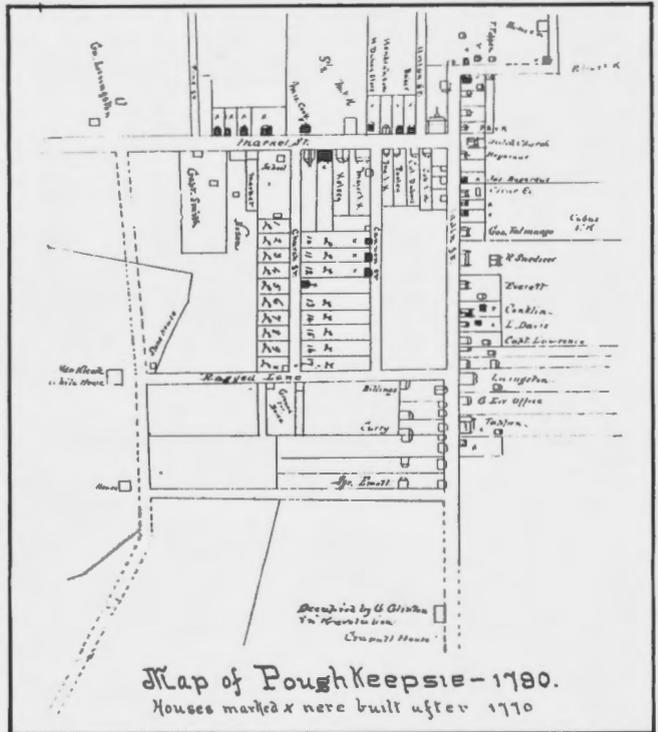
**TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH**—Route 52, Fishkill. English, c. 1760. Known as the "English" church. Served as a hospital during the Battle of White Plains.



**FIRST REFORMED CHURCH OF FISHKILL**—Route 52, Fishkill Dutch, c. 1731, major alterations 1786. The second structure built on the same site by the congregation, formed 1716. New York Provincial Congress met here 1776-1777.



**VAN WYCK BARN**—Route 82, East Fishkill. Dutch style. Tin roof dates from 19th century.



**MAPS**—Later maps show clearly the development present on the 18th century map of Poughkeepsie.

# 18th Century Vernacular Styles

Early structures in Dutchess were built of the materials that were most easily at hand and that cost little except the labor. They were built, without the assistance or influence of architects or professional builders, by the owners with help from slaves or neighbors. Traditional designs and building techniques handed down through families or perfected by experience working with locally available materials were repeated within neighboring communities.

Stone fences, created from the process of clearing fields for planting or pasture, are a Dutchess County trademark. They divided the highway from private property, separated the holdings of one family from another, and identified parcels devoted to special uses.

THE DUTCH favored low, one or one-and-a-half story symmetrical buildings of stone, a raw material easily obtained over much of the county. Slate covered the sloped or gambrel roofs of their houses. Earliest structures were made of untoolled stone laid up as it was picked from the ground, mortared with a mix of clay, straw, horsehair, or feathers. Later stonework is more carefully cut and fitted. Often a coat of white stucco was used to completely cover and protect the stones. A fireplace (or fireplaces) was built into the gable end. Upper stories of the gables, a problem for stone masons, were often finished in wood or brick. Small paned, shuttered windows, thick walls and low ceilinged rooms protected inhabitants from the highly changeable Hudson Valley climate. The two-part divided Dutch door and "stoop" are familiar and friendly details of the entry.



**MORRIS GRAHAM HOUSE**—Route 82, Pine Plains. Dutch tradition, 1772. The gambrel roof shows Flemish influence. The long overhang ("kick") creates a full porch.

**MOUNT GULIAN**—Route 9, Beacon, Gulian Verplanck's 18th century Dutch farmhouse, given an accurate and carefully documented restoration during the nation's Bicentennial, is now a community resource owned by the Mount Gulian Society.



**WILLIAM STOUTENBURGH HOUSE**—Route 9G, Hyde Park. Dutch vernacular, c. 1760. Built by the son of Hyde Park's founding family. A typical 18th century Dutch house, distinguished by fine masonry.

**JOHN BRINCKERHOFF'S HOUSE**—Lomala Road, Fishkill. The 1738 construction date of this Dutch stone house is "written" in black bricks on the west gable, faintly visible in the photograph.



**CLINTON HOUSE**—Main Street, Poughkeepsie. Georgian Colonial c. 1765, 1783 (alterations). Named for the first Governor of New York State, George Clinton. After a fire in 1783, rebuilt by artisans sent by George Washington from the Continental Army.



**OBLONG MEETINGHOUSE**—Quaker Hill, Pawling. Traditional Quaker design, c. 1764. Named for its location in the "Oblong," a disputed, long, narrow tract of land on Dutchess' eastern border, ceded to New York by Connecticut in 1731.



**OSWEGO MEETINGHOUSE**—Oswego and Smiths Road, Union Vale. Traditional Quaker design, c. 1760. The simple, unadorned original structure has been altered by the additions later of a porch, gable louvres, and an asphalt shingle roof.

**GRIFFIN'S TAVERN**—Route 82, East Fishkill. Major Griffin's tavern was used as early as 1775 as a meeting place for patriots, and it was thereafter called the "rendezvous." This 18th century Dutch building is now undergoing extensive renovation.



ENGLISH SETTLERS preferred to build with wood, also in abundant supply. Saw mills along the "kills" (streams) turned raw logs into lumber and shingles. Owners often prepared the frames themselves by merely chopping the trees and stripping the bark. The simple, unadorned one to one-and-a-half story salt box style with clapboard siding and wooden shingled roof is typical of the earliest of these dwellings. By mid-century, brick making and use had become common, and more brick buildings appear.

Evidence of improved fortunes and family growth is seen in later additions or improvements to these initially very plain buildings. Porches, dormers, balustrades, and whole wings which often dwarfed the first structure on a site tell the story. Interior and exterior refinements dating from the mid-18th century on also reflect higher standards of craftsmanship, improved technologies and increased specialization of labor. Classical touches (e.g. Georgian style windows and doors, woodwork and decoration) may be indicators of increased communication with the outside world, the influence of architectural or building trade professionals or a personal preference based on then-current fashion.

Public buildings, businesses, and institutional structures reflect the same influences. As population increased, additions to or replacement of buildings on the same site was a solution to overcrowding. In reading the landscape one must be conscious of these changes and wary of assigning dates to structures without a full examination of construction materials and techniques.



**MAIZEFIELD**—Route 199, Red Hook. Georgian-Federal, c. 1795. Home of General David Van Ness, officer in the Revolutionary War. Aesthetic changes made to the original two-story structure following the war reflect the growing affluence and sophistication of County property owners.

**RICHARD MONTGOMERY HOUSE**—Livingston Street, Rhinebeck. English tradition vernacular, c. 1770. Occupied by General Richard Montgomery, first hero of the American Revolution, who died in the Battle of Quebec. Headquarters of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The addition of 19th century trim and 20th century roofing does not hide the basic structure.

# 19th Century Structures and Settlements

By the beginning of the century major centers had developed in all parts of the county. The road system which connected farmers with markets and enabled travelers to move about more easily also contributed to increased communication of new ideas and trends among the general populace. A sense of national pride was evident in entrepreneurship and the growth of a middle class with money to spend.

A family home was often a statement about personal success and sophistication. Individual and local adaptations of national styles became a factor in the look of our communities. Skilled craftsmen in all areas of the building trades and the introduction of new techniques and manufactured materials enriched the landscape of our county with a wide variety of structures ranging from homes and outbuildings to commercial centers, institutions of all sorts and industrial and transportation complexes. The development of landscape architecture as an aesthetic discipline also contributed to change. By the end of the century the environmental portrait had evolved from forest and isolated farm to urban centers and civilized countryside.



**YOUNG-MORSE HISTORIC SITE—"LOCUST GROVE"**—Town of Poughkeepsie, Tuscan Italian Victorian. Samuel F.B. Morse, inventor and painter, in 1852 made substantial changes to an older Georgian structure in the latest romantic architectural style. The house is covered with a sand paint to resemble stone. Paint colors were chosen to blend with the environment. Round arches, verandah, and Italianate tower carry out the theme.



**MAIN STREET**—City of Poughkeepsie, 1986. More modern store fronts affixed over 19th century entrances seldom go higher than one story. Above can be seen the original building design and occasionally the faint outline of former mercantile business signs painted on the side of the structure.



**COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**—Main Street, City of Poughkeepsie, late 19th century. Innovations related to the structural skeleton of a building made multi-storied brick buildings economical, safe to build, and therefore a popular form of vernacular architecture. Moulded cast iron with great strength was used creatively to replace stone and wood in window and door lintels and for decorative pediments, entablatures, and cornices.

**FLAT IRON BUILDING**—Intersection of Main and Church Streets, City of Poughkeepsie, late 19th century. Demolished in the 1940s. Triangular shaped structures modeled after the Manhattan prototype were found in many cities of the United States.



**HISTORIC DISTRICT**—City of Poughkeepsie. Turn of the century Edwardian by William Beardsley features cylindrical turret with Adamesque classical frieze.

**VICTORIAN HOUSE**—S. Hamilton Street, Poughkeepsie Historic District.





**DELAMATER HOUSE**—Village of Rhinebeck. Carpenter's Gothic Cottage Villa, c. 1844 Architect Alexander Jackson Davis is credited along with Downing with making popular the board and batten gingerbread cottages that grace the Hudson Valley. Originally, Victorian Gothic was carried out in stone, but the invention of the scroll saw soon made it more attractive to use wood.



**PARKER HOUSE**—Hamlet of Hyde Park. 1867 Empire/Mansard style Victorian. Of particular interest is the low cast iron decorative railing (cresting) which adorns the roof line.



**SAINT MARGARET'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**—Staatsburg, Town of Hyde Park. Gothic Revival, 1867. This exquisite small church was inspired by English and European Late Gothic designs. It is noted for the Medieval stained glass windows of its south wall, a gift of Ogden Mills, Sr., who purportedly had them removed from a church in Chartres, France.

**HOWLAND CENTER FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE**—City of Beacon. 1872. Chalet style brick building was designed by Richard Morris Hunt, architect for the base of the Statue of Liberty. The building was given to the community by General Joseph Howland, Hunt's brother-in-law and a benefactor of the Beacon area.



**MONTGOMERY PLACE**—Annandale, Town of Red Hook. 1805 Federal design by celebrated architect Alexander Jackson Davis. He twice remodeled the original unadorned stone structure which was the home of Janet Montgomery, widow of America's first hero of the Revolution, General Richard Montgomery. Davis' additions were done in 1844 and 1862.

**AKIN FREE LIBRARY**—Quaker Hill, Town of Pawling. 1898. Like many Victorian structures, the element of eclecticism is perhaps the most distinguished feature. Romanesque revival and Italianate features are evident in the Roman arches, fortress-like walls and Italian Renaissance-inspired roof details.





**MILLS MANSION**—Staatsburg, Town of Hyde Park. 1895 Beaux Arts remodeling of an earlier structure by famed architect Stanford White of New York City who found his inspiration in High Renaissance European palaces.



**HAMLET HOUSE**—Hyde Park, Greek Revival, mid-19th century. Central "temple" portion is flanked by two symmetrical wings—a typical design for homes.



**PLEASANT PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**—Town of Clinton, 1837 Classic white frame Greek Revival with Doric columns.



Four general stylistic trends were a part of the architectural history of our county during this century: Federal, Greek Revival, Victorian, and Beaux Arts. Within the categories there is great variety and much individual and local expression.

**FEDERAL**— This is a simpler and more classic version of the earlier Georgian style. Symmetry, balance, and use of Greek and Roman decorative motifs is evident. Verticality is stressed in high foundations, buildings of two or more stories and narrow sidelights that flank the front entry of many homes. Brick and wood are most often used as building materials.

**GREEK REVIVAL**—As part of a national trend, based upon reverence for Greek Classical era philosophies and aesthetics, it became popular in the 1820s and 30s to model homes, churches, and public buildings upon the appearance of early Greek temples. For the first time the gable end of a building was turned toward the street. Triangular pediments supported by columns framed entrances. Walls were capped by traditional Greek cornices.

**VICTORIAN**—Hard on the heels of classicism came the romanticism of the Victorian era. A fascination with ancient Greek and Roman ruins soon led to interest in all varieties of historical and architectural expression and a desire to recreate them in new ways. In its many forms throughout the end of the century, Victorian architecture embraced Gothic, French, Italian, German, and English revivals as well as many combinations of styles.

Advances in millwork, metalwork, glass and paint production contributed to the variety. The land around buildings became a focus of attention and an extension of the structural aesthetic with the work of Andrew Jackson Downing, who in the 1830s became America's first landscape architect. Most of us will recognize Victorian elements in what we know as "gingerbread," but that is only the frosting. Look for asymmetry, use of a wide range of materials, colors, quaint, romantic, or exotic touches, nooks and crannies, towers, verandahs, and surprisingly arranged vistas.

**NEW HACKENSACK REFORMED CHURCH**—Town of Wappinger, 1834. Gothic and classic forms combine in the cupola which surmounts the roof.

**CHRIST CHURCH ON QUAKER HILL** (far left)—Town of Pawling. Pointed bell tower, Roman arches and simple square lines give this white frame house of worship a unique look.



*REED AND REED LAW OFFICE—Hamlet of Pleasant Valley, early 19th century vernacular. Half fan lights and the gable end facing the street show both Federal and Greek Revival touches.*



*HUGHSONVILLE—Town of Wappinger. Along Route 9D, the main street of this small hamlet, may be seen fine vernacular examples of all 19th century styles from Federal to commercial Victorian. Dutchess County has many such small communities still intact for the present, with outbuildings including barns, sheds, spring houses, and outhouses maintained within their original contexts and relationships.*

**BEAUX ARTS**— This is a style related to “the Gilded Age” in the Hudson Valley. Grand palaces for the wealthy who made Dutchess their weekend or seasonal home were built at the turn of the century on vast estates bordering the river or tucked among the hills near Pawling and Millbrook. Inspiration for structural and estate design came, as in the case of Victorian architecture, from European sources; medieval and Renaissance palaces, Tudor castles, French chateaux. Farm complexes and outbuildings as well as the main house were done on a grand scale within an architectural theme.

**VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE**— In towns, hamlets and farming communities around the county the influence of major trends is evident, translated by personal need, whim or fortune to more individual styles or combinations. The availability of a variety of commercially developed materials and builders’ pattern books as the century progressed allowed for either personal creativity or for outright copying of desired styles as one chose. As a result, individual properties seldom fit neatly into a pure stylistic niche.

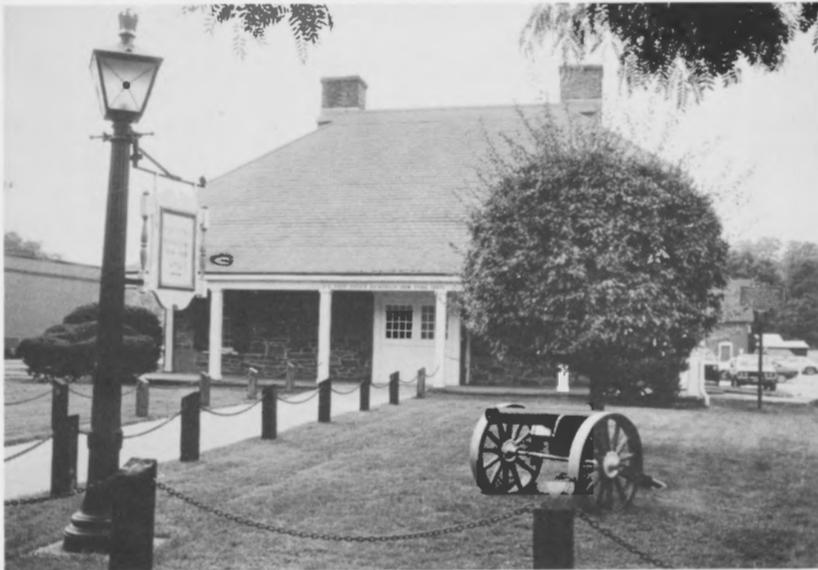


*PLEASANT VALLEY FINISHING COMPANY—Hamlet of Pleasant Valley, c. 1809. A portion of an earlier 19th century mill is visible in the midst of more recent additions. Classical touches are noted in the stone quoins at the corners and in the entablature of the bell tower.*

*DOORWAY (far right, above)—Hamlet house, Pleasant Valley. Classic pilasters, sidelights, and a three light transom frame the opening.*

*FARM HOUSE (far right, below)—Wilcox Park, vernacular, c. 1830, combines elements of Federal and Greek Revival.*





**RHINEBECK POST OFFICE**—Route 9, Village of Rhinebeck, 1938, Architect, Louis A. Sullivan. Under the leadership of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, this fieldstone replica of an early Dutch farmhouse was constructed as a public building. The structure and the historic murals it houses are reminders of our Hudson Valley heritage.

**IBM MAIN PLANT**—South Road, Town of Poughkeepsie, International style. Since its construction in 1942, through several renovations (the latest in 1985) the exterior of the plant has maintained its modern facade, with flat roof and windows set flush with the unornamented outer wall.



**ADRIANCE PLATT COMPANY**—Waterfront, City of Poughkeepsie, turn of the century. Large brick factory complexes like this lined the River through the first decades of this century. As industries were phased out, such structures often stood idle or were turned to other uses. In recent years similar buildings have been converted to apartments.

## 20th Century Structures and Settlements

The twentieth century brought with it great change for Dutchess County. At its start, Dutchess was still primarily an agricultural landscape dotted with small hamlets where residents lived in close proximity to their places of work. The school or general store, the church, the firehouse, the coal yard and the blacksmith were within walking distance of the inhabitants. Large family farms surrounding hamlets looked to them for the services and goods that they could not provide for themselves.

The traditional market day, Saturday, saw the residents of hamlets and farms drawn to larger communities at the hub of rail, trolley and later bus networks. Poughkeepsie, as the county seat, was the most important of these, but Beacon, Wappingers Falls, Rhinebeck, Amenia, Pawling, and Millerton also attracted shoppers and those seeking recreation. Public and commercial structures were to be found clustered together along the main street or crossroad that marked the earliest settlement in these communities. Department stores, clothing shops, hardware and "ten cent" stores competed for business, and restaurants, bakeries, and soda fountains provided a refreshing oasis and a place to rest for a few minutes. Theatres that originally had been built for live presentations became movie houses. Sidewalks and streets were impassable on Saturdays. Congestion became even greater with the growing popularity of the automobile. By the 1920s, vacant lots were being turned by enterprising owners into parking lots which charged by the hour. Industry was located near the waterways and rail centers of the community. At the beginning of the era many employees could still walk to the factory or business where they worked from a variety of lower, middle, and upper class housing choices nearby along paved, lighted sidewalks.



**JULIET THEATRE**—Raymond Avenue, Arlington, Town of Poughkeepsie, Eclectic. In a photo dating from the 1950s one notes the strange eclecticism of this commercial complex. An Art Deco theatre with its name in Victorian style lettering has been inserted into a Tudor revival style structure.



**UNION STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**—City of Poughkeepsie, Vernacular. In 1971, this seven block area of brick and clapboard worker and shopkeeper housing from the 19th century was given National Register status. At the time many of these fine vernacular buildings had deteriorated. Through restoration and adaptive reuse, this is now one of the handsomest residential areas of the city.



**ARLINGTON BUSINESS DISTRICT**—The Flag Shop, Raymond Avenue, Town of Poughkeepsie, c. 1920. Adaptive use of structures is not a new idea. This large, late Victorian residence near Vassar College was converted to a shop early in this century as the neighborhood became commercialized.



**BUNGALOW**—Route 44, Town of Pleasant Valley, c. 1925. Vernacular bungalow with many Craftsman style elements in roof pitch, dormer, porch supports and shingle siding. This area of Route 44 is typical of early 20th century suburban development at some distance from employment and services.



**ROW HOUSES**—Fountain Place, City of Poughkeepsie, Vernacular, c. 1914. Two family row houses of this type were especially popular as builder houses in the early part of the 20th century in the city of Poughkeepsie. Elements of both the Prairie and Craftsman styles are incorporated in square porch supports, roof pitch, window glazing, and asymmetrical designs.

As commercial and industrial centers became more crowded, those who could chose to build on the outskirts, and came to rely first on public transportation to get to work, later on the automobile. This flight away from congestion and nearby services introduced the suburbs to Dutchess. It also weakened the rail network and many municipal centers, as new roads were built drawing people outward and away from traditional settlements.

Since the 1920s and 30s, suburban growth and road building has greatly altered the landscape and social patterns of our county. Farmland in many parts of the county has been subdivided into development parcels. Clusters of housing, public, commercial and industrial buidings, seemingly unrelated to each other physically, now guide the lives of residents and impact the dynamics of every community. Highways and transportation arteries take on new importance as they directly affect the individual's ability to earn a living, get an education, or obtain the wherewithal to sustain life.

Dutchess settlement has become increasingly organized on a sectional rather than a municipal pattern.



**WAPPINGERS FALLS**—Main Street, Village of Wappingers Falls, c. 1925. In the early years of the automobile, its impact was not yet felt.



**POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD STATION**—City of Poughkeepsie, 1918 Beaux Arts. The architectural firm of Warren and Wetmore, who also designed Grand Central Station, was its designer, and many of its features are similar.

# 20th Century Styles



**POUGHKEEPSIE JOURNAL BUILDING**—Market Street, Poughkeepsie, 1943 Colonial Revival. Native fieldstone, a steeply pitched roof and clock tower are combined with classic mouldings and fenestration to reflect our Dutch-English heritage.

Twentieth century architectural trends may be loosely ordered in four general categories: Eclectic, Modern, Vernacular and Contemporary, each of which covers several identifiable styles.

**ECLECTIC** structures mimic classical styles of the past and of other cultures. Designs faithful to specific periods of architecture here and abroad include Colonial, Tudor, Chateausque, Italian Renaissance, Mission, French revival styles and Spanish Eclectic among others. Buildings large and small, public and residential, echo the tastes of the past overlaid upon twentieth century construction methods based upon wooden or balloon framing techniques.

**MODERN** architecture inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie houses, as well as Craftsman and International styles, began to appear in the 1930s. Functional buildings with simpler lines and unique details were the result. Prairie houses often featured hipped rooflines, balconies, broad flat chimneys, massive porches supported by heavy masonry or wooden piers and contrasting wooden trim around window and door openings and between stories. Designs were often asymmetrical.

The one or one and a half story bungalow is probably the most familiar type of Craftsman structure. Trim similar to Prairie houses and reminiscent of Tudor half timbering is often a feature. Low pitched gabled or hipped rooflines, full or partial porches and exposed beams and roof junctions are common. A variety of materials from cobblestone to clapboard and shingles are used for exterior surfaces. Wide, low pitched dormers and balconies suggestive of the Swiss Chalet were popular.

**DUTCHESS COUNTY COURT HOUSE** — Market Street, City of Poughkeepsie, 1902-3 Classical Revival. This monumental brick and stone structure is the fifth County Court House on this spot and the site (July 26, 1788) of New York's ratification of the U.S. Constitution. Classical features include Palladian windows, quoins, engaged columns, stucco floral swags.



**TRACT HOMES**—Town of Wappinger. Contemporary developments similar to this group of raised ranches are being built all over the county. Attempts at individual styling of development houses are usually confined to surface details imitated from earlier eclectic styles. Occasionally, prospective buyers are able to choose from three or four slightly different contemporary designs, e.g., ranch, raised ranch, or Cape Cod.



**MOBILE HOME PARK**—Fuller Road, Town of LaGrange, 1982. The modern mobile home is an outgrowth of the automobile house trailer movement begun in the 1920s and 30s. Present day technology has brought us not only mobile homes but modulars and other factory produced buildings. Such structures, of man-made materials, engineered rather than designed, are not built on the site but transported by truck in sections to the place where they will be set up. Because of their mobility, the ease with which they are erected and their comparatively smaller cost, they are seen by some as one answer to the housing shortage.



*HOUSING PROJECT—Montgomery Street, City of Poughkeepsie. Contemporary solutions to housing needs include public housing complexes. This multi-storied modern structure built during the last decade and similar to those in many larger cities is home to scores of families.*



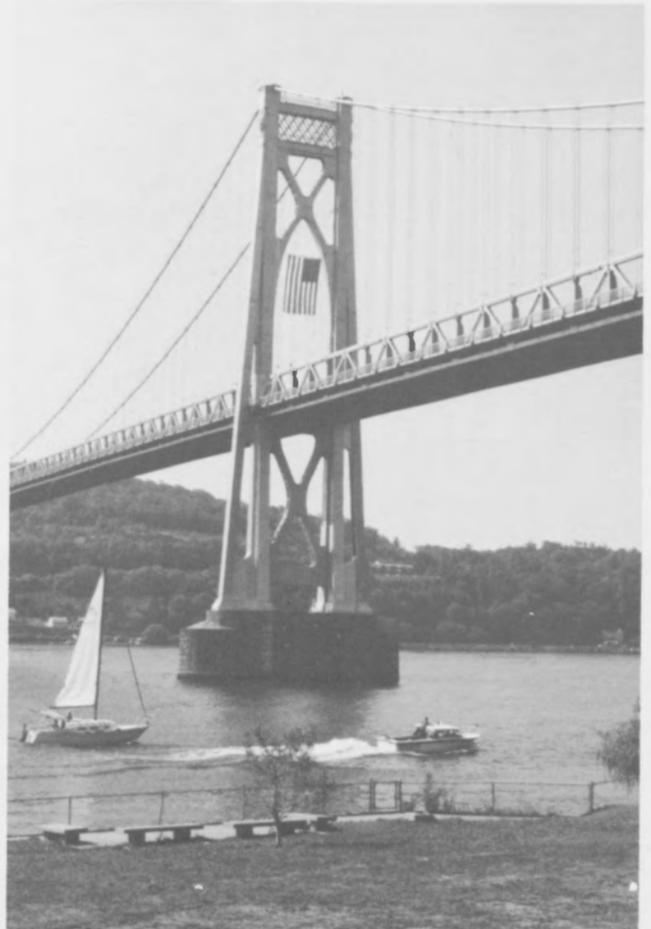
*BOWDOIN PARK—Sheafe Road, Town of Poughkeepsie. The idea of preservation of open space through a County system of Parks is a relatively new one. Wilcox Park in the Town of Milan acquired in 1961, was the first. Bowdoin followed several years later.*

*GREENHAVEN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY—Greenhaven, Town of Beekman, 1941. Constructed as a military prison, function was clearly more important a factor than aesthetics in its design. Nonetheless, its strong geometry and smooth unbroken surfaces make a powerful modernistic statement.*



Modern and modernistic influences are most evident in commercial structures such as gas stations and stores, although a handful of International style buildings were constructed in the area as residences. Roofs were flat. Lines were low and streamlined, and designs were asymmetrical. Such structures originally were built primarily of stucco over concrete block, although stone or terra cotta veneers were occasionally employed. Geometric or Art Deco designs as decoration were used sparsely. New materials such as glass brick or industrial metal framed windows were incorporated into residential structures.

VERNACULAR styles peculiar to this area in the twentieth century are few. Two examples, however, are familiar to most county residents: the one story modest cottage/bungalow and the two story, two family row house. The bungalow is a simpler version of the Craftsman house with a full porch across the gable end. The most notable feature of the row house is the full double porch at both levels on the gable end facing the street. Both styles appeared during the 1920s and 30s as part of suburban growth.



*MID-HUDSON BRIDGE—City of Poughkeepsie, 1930. Suspension bridge. The architectural firm of Modjeski and Moran designed this structure which has been recognized as one of the most beautiful bridges in the United States.*



*RED WING SAND AND GRAVEL COMPANY—Town of Beekman. The growth of the building industry in our county has brought about other landscape changes as former agricultural lands are now given over to soil mining.*

*SHOPPING PLAZA—  
Route 44. Town of  
Poughkeepsie.  
Contemporary  
commercial space is  
often a vernacular form,  
closely related to needs  
of the automobile: flat  
roofed, built of concrete  
blocks set within a large  
parking lot and  
accessible to it.*



*FARM LAND—Near Millbrook. Vistas such as this are becoming increasingly more valuable to Dutchess County as they become rarer. Once an agricultural landscape, Dutchess has since the beginning of the twentieth century become more and more a part of the suburbs reaching out from the metropolitan areas of New York City. Without careful planning and attention to community values and heritage, such vistas may be forever lost.*

**CONTEMPORARY:** Since World War Two there has been a proliferation of new materials, types of structures and construction techniques. Large scale commercial development has made a cliché of the suburban shopping mall with its vast parking lot, fast food restaurants and shops housed in cubicles within a one story, flat roofed structure. The same is true of large scale residential areas filled with variants of the traditional Cape Cod cottage, the split level or the raised ranch single family home.

Relatively new to Dutchess are the garden apartment, town house, mobile home or modular complexes that have sprung up in recent years. While structures such as these answer the need for housing, they make almost no aesthetic statement relative to the area and can be found almost anywhere in the United States.

Neoelecticism based upon further variations of earlier historic architecture has tended to make its statements primarily through cosmetic, surface references to a style or period often imposed over the framework of the basic cottage, ranch or raised ranch. In rare instances, the Hudson Valley Dutch Vernacular farmhouse with its flat dormers has inspired developers.

Government buildings which in former centuries were seen as monuments making a strong statement about the power or communal spirit of a municipality now more often than not are built to satisfy the functional requirements of those using them, essentially as office buildings or work spaces, engineered rather than designed. Stylistically most are similar to modern commercial or office buildings, either one- or multi-storied with flat roof and little decoration, set within or nearby a large parking area.

In recent years, some of the most creative new architectural projects locally have been associated with educational and industrial institutions. In such structures, internationally respected architects have combined the newest technological advances with aesthetics to create environments dedicated to often specific new uses: laboratories, manufacturing, research. The shapes, volumes, materials, and engineering in these buildings defy all historical architectural traditions. As part of an international trend, however, they are not unique to the county.

Another creative aspect of contemporary architecture is seen in the area of preservation and adaptive reuse of older structures that have often outlived original purposes. Former factories, schools, and large nineteenth century single family homes are now apartments, altered sensitively to suit today's smaller families. Old barns and farm buildings have been put to use as commercial space. Such creative renovation along with restoration of still usable existing examples of our attractive older structures adds greatly to the appeal of the area while preserving the best aspects of our historic landscape.

# Conference Papers



THE DR. FINK FARM AND THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE — corner of  
Dr. Fink Road and County Route 47 (Freedom Road).

# Reading the Landscape: Where to Begin

David Jon Greenwood

History has been called the record of human events. The same can be said of the built environment. The distance of houses from the road, their proximity to millponds or their location next to inlets on the Hudson are important clues to the discerning observer. Every old building, every cluster of homes, shops, barns and sheds offers us insight into the history of neighborhoods. By looking closely at details we can begin to understand the process of evolution that has affected each community. We can follow changes in fashion, in design, in technology and in each hamlet's economy if we know what to look at. Visual clues are everywhere.

Place names add another element for investigation. Moore's Mills, Hopewell Junction, Fishkill Landing, Slate Dock and Federal Store all are functional names. Quaker Hill, Hibernia, Shekomeko, Wurtemberg and Rhinebeck tell us about the people who settled there. Other names demand further investigation. What are the original meanings or stories behind Skunk's Misery, Pancake Hollow, Freedom Plains, Little Rest and Sinpatch?

Agriculture and commerce are our two major springboards for growth in Dutchess County. Are there any clues still surviving in *your* community that suggest what might have prompted settlement originally? Rolling, fertile hills, sheltered valleys or coves, fast-moving streams, waterfalls or rapids, and naturally occurring contours for pathways, roads and rivers provide the catalyst for the establishment of most neighborhoods.

Unlike many places in New England, we have few settlements that were founded for strictly religious reasons. We do find areas that attracted people with similar backgrounds, however, such as Quakers, Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian, to name a few of the more common. What is the oldest church in your area? Perhaps it contains information about early settlers, landowners or community history that may help to answer some of the questions that you may have about your hamlet. The location of the meeting house, the church, the cemetery, the manse or glebe may provide valuable clues about early settlement patterns. Visit these sites. Read the names of early settlers. Do the majority seem to hint at similar backgrounds? Quaker settlements have few burial stones or markers until the 1830s, but other groups considered permanent memorials a testament to honor the memories of the departed.

Does your neighborhood have any of its original commercial fabric left? Is there a millpond? A sluiceway? A railroad bed or station? We sometimes overlook the obvious. Abandoned stone walls, overgrown cellar holes, foundation walls or distinctively altered sections of the



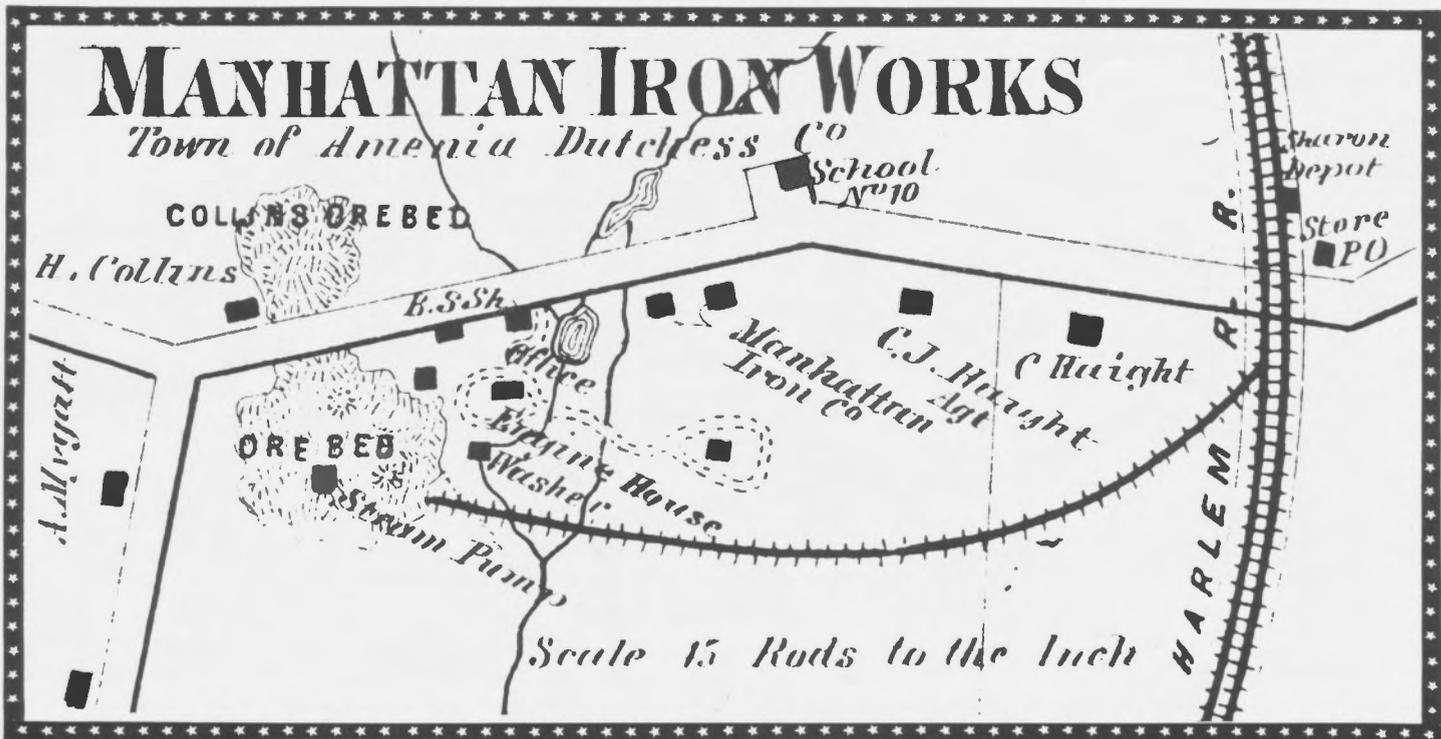


NEW HAMBURG — Several commercial centers prospered along the banks of the Hudson River. Convenient harbors, well situated docking areas and access to established road patterns insured that these communities would prosper as Dutchess County continued to grow.



streams, gradually ascending footpaths, wagon trails that wended up, over and down mountains were seen as an integral part of the communication network among towns, villages and hamlets. These systems were expanded until all of the county was united by a series of footpaths, roads, turnpikes (and shunpikes), ports, harbors, railroads, bridges, and eventually parkways. A surprising number of these early links survive today, though generally in a considerably altered state. Inns, toll houses, horsepounds and other once vital elements of former travel patterns still dot our landscape. Are there any in your community?

Old maps may provide insight into the routines of daily travel a century or more ago. Several collections of county atlases were produced in the nineteenth century. These often feature insets of important villages, crossroads, commercial centers and hamlets. Most of the major features are depicted. Millponds, churches, stores, private homes, even barns and other support buildings are often identified. Each is labelled with the owner's name, or by function, such as B.S. for blacksmith, G.M. for gristmill, W.S. for wagon shop and so on. As with the written works, these maps are available in many places. Try your local library or historical society. Beers Atlas of 1867 has been reprinted and is available through many of our county bookshops that specialize in local materials. Contact your town historian or the Dutchess County Historical Society for further information. It's worth the effort. You may be surprised by what can be learned from this often overlooked source of information. It may tell you what stood on that old foundation hole that's near the pond behind your house.



MANHATTAN IRON WORKS — Some hamlets owed their existence to single assets. They remained viable as long as a need for their products or services continued. Quarries, furnaces, mines and produce are typical examples. What was the major element in your community's growth?



LAGRANGEVILLE — Transportation patterns sparked the growth of many neighborhoods. Main roadways created the need for services. Taverns, blacksmiths and support businesses are often found at the intersection of roads. If there is waterpower for mills as well, then we have all of the ingredients that are needed for a prosperous neighborhood.



You may find that there were *several* mills at the local dam instead of only one. Your neighbor's home — or your own — may have started out as a schoolhouse. Or you may find that the early roadway went *behind* your home, making the present back the original front. Clues! Important tools that help us to *read* and *understand* the landscape.

Brick, stone and wood are our most common building materials. When people arrived in Dutchess from other lands they brought a knowledge of craftsmanship, design and construction techniques which reflected their own building traditions. The location of chimneys and fireplace walls, the pitch of roofs and types of overhangs, the preference for stone rather than wood are all clues to be investigated. Where did the materials come from? Are the bricks made locally? Was the cut stone that was used for your front step from a quarry nearby? Where did the slate that was used for so many of the tombstones in the village cemetery come from? How were these items transported? Some things we'll never know. It is enough to begin asking the questions, though. It gets us thinking about things that we may have overlooked or taken for granted.

Major design elements are also key factors that help us to trace the evolution of a community. Do the majority of buildings appear to have details in common? Are they mostly columned? Do the fronts of the structures seem to be formally arranged? Are they symmetrical? Are there many bay windows or bracketed porches? Are there projecting towers, turrets or cupolas? Are windows rounded on top, squared or pointed? Are walls stone, horizontal clapboard or vertical board and batten? Terms such as Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Gothic and Queen Anne, once they are understood, will become more tools for use in your investigations. Once you begin looking for details you begin seeing important clues that will help you to piece together the fabric of your neighborhood and your community.

Use this pamphlet as a field guide for your area. The illustrations and diagrams have been selected to point out important design differences, period technical innovations and the evolution of building styles. Compare the photographs and diagrams to your community. Look at the road patterns and waterways. Study building details. Investigate stone walls and fences. They should all fit somewhere among the patterns outlined in this book.

The exercise of looking may eventually enable us to see. This is what makes our quest so exciting. Fair warning, however. It may become a consuming passion. Don't be alarmed if it does. There are a lot of people and societies that provide opportunities to share information and interests. Happy sleuthing!

The following material summarizes the history of architectural style from a Dutchess County perspective. The intention is neither to answer every question regarding architectural terminology, nor to cover the entire range of county styles. Rather, it's presented to clarify points that might have eluded the reader in earlier sections and to give the amateur an abbreviated guide that will help to unlock some of the mysteries associated with interpreting historic structures.

Older structures are rarely found in their original state. One of the factors of change is time itself; another is man. Both are instrumental in altering the visual character of structures in the landscape. For example, one-room or two-room houses often outgrow their original functions and require modifications. It is sometimes difficult or even impossible to detect an early structure which has succumbed to change.

The vocabulary of older structures is diverse and one must play the role of detective to discover the hidden architectural truth. Clues may be nothing more than a fragment of original stone or clapboard facing. Perhaps the gable end of a building retains a built-in chimney or one or two windows survive with original sashes.

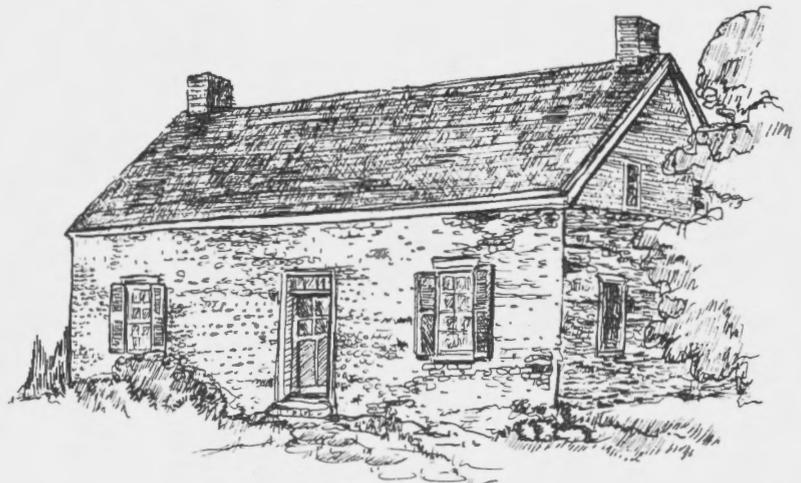
Although many buildings have been lost to urban development and others have been substantially altered, there still exists an appreciable number of historic structures that complement the Dutchess County landscape.

The earliest of the high architectural styles, both public and domestic, is that of the Georgian Colonial popular in England during the reigns of the three Georges (hence the name Georgian) in the early eighteenth century. The origins of this style can be traced to a British reworking of Italian Palladian architecture which exhibited strong interest in Greco-Roman features such as the classical orders, pediments, porticos, cornices, a rigid symmetry and careful placement of architectural detail. This was carried to the colonies in the eighteenth century via a number of well-known architectural handbooks.

Domestic architecture in the high Georgian Colonial style is rarely evident in this county. Public architecture, on the other hand, can be found in many areas, especially churches, often rebuilt. They typify such Georgian features as symmetry, well proportioned arched windows and a prominent centralized bell tower. Two good examples are the First Reformed Church of Fishkill, built by the Dutch, and Trinity Episcopal Church, the clapboarded English church across the street, which has the same features without the tower.

The severity of vernacular Dutchess County structures of the eighteenth century reflects an early need for function; a more formal decorative vocabulary was omitted because it would have been considered frivolous. Settled first by the Dutch and then the English, Dutchess County has an architecture reflecting the building techniques practiced by these people in their native lands. After a period of assimilation, local conditions and cultural integration produced a wonderful blending of structural patterns unique to the Hudson Valley.

## Reading the Landscape: Building On A Theme



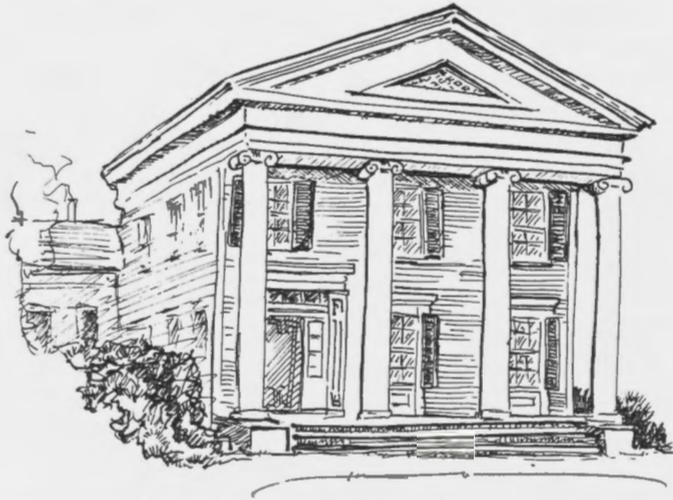
*Vernacular architecture of the eighteenth century reflects the basic function of the building for shelter. This one and a half story example from Poughkeepsie combines stone and brick to produce a stark, no-nonsense farmhouse typical of much of Dutchess County. Many of this type are also found made exclusively of wood.*

The Federal style emerged during the last ten years of the eighteenth century and remained popular through the first quarter of the nineteenth century. This is characterized by a strong reliance on Roman rather than Greek architectural features. The higher styled domestic structures exhibit two full stories rather than the one and a half stories of vernacular buildings. Structures of this period are often placed on an elevated foundation and the rich vocabulary of the preceding style is simplified. Trim around windows, doors and cornices become proportionally lighter than that of its Georgian counterpart, suggesting the strong influence of the British architect, Robert Adam. Preference for the Corinthian order, garlands and similar motifs reflect the current rage of things Roman. In public architecture there is a diminished interest in verticality, as the more sharply pitched towers of the previous style are replaced by truncated cupolas or shallow domes reminiscent of Roman structures.

Federal structures in the vernacular realm rarely employ the gambrel or sharply pitched roof often associated with earlier styles. Instead we find a one and a half story structure on a raised foundation with a moderately pitched roof. Narrow-gauged clapboard and applied porticos with columns and pilasters and other ornamental moldings now appear on the average farm house.



*The Federal period produced many distinctive houses throughout our county. This two story example from the Town of Washington has narrow-gauged clapboard, applied ornamental moldings and panels, elaborate cornice details, pilasters and quarter-round gable windows. The paired-column portico dates from a later generation.*



This splendid example of the Greek Revival style was built in the Town of LaGrange about 1835-40. The gable faces the road and is supported by four evenly spaced Ionic columns that create a combined effect of a classical temple.

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century the architecture of Greece supplants that of Rome as the nation's preferred style. Greek temples such as the Parthenon become models for public and domestic structure alike. Even vernacular buildings tend to reflect the aesthetics of the period. The temple plan, with a pronounced porticoed gable facing the road, becomes commonplace. The roof line again exhibits a shallow pitch and architectural trim becomes heavier and less decorative. The Doric and Ionic orders take precedence over the Corinthian.

By the mid-nineteenth century a profusion of architectural styles are entertained, but the overwhelming favorite is the Gothic Revival. Characterized by its bold verticality, pointed-arched windows and asymmetrical ground plan, it becomes the preferred style for churches. Whether high style or vernacular, the Gothic style dominates the county's landscape. Based upon Andrew Jackson Downing's highly successful "pattern book," *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850), gothic verticality and decoration is achieved in various ways from the picturesque board-and-batten cottage to the ever popular T-shaped ground plan. A style known as Victorian, or Carpenter Gothic, was even coined to underscore a building's opulent usage of milled decoration.

The French-inspired Second Empire style became a county favorite after the Civil War. Dominated by a mansard roof, it was so popular in the domestic realm that many earlier one and a half story structures were raised to two full stories and capped by one.

The use of rusticated stone together with heavily accentuated, rounded arches underscores a late nineteenth century style known as the Romanesque Revival. Popularized by the well-known architect Henry Hobson Richardson, it was often the preferred style for public structures. With residential buildings, an Italianate style referred to as the Tuscan Villa, was favored by the upper middle class.



The overwhelming favorite for mid-19th century style is the Gothic Revival. We are lucky to have the well-known Delamater House in Rhinebeck restored to its original condition. Bold verticality, pointed-arched windows and elaborate trim are typical features to look for.



The distinctive use of the mansard roof helps to date this French-inspired Second Empire style Poughkeepsie home to the post-Civil War period.



*The bungalow was the darling of the first decades of the twentieth century. Small in scale, geared to domestic use and found in every town in Dutchess County, these modest homes are a sharp contrast to the large estates of the wealthy landowners.*

At the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries the hills bordering the Hudson River continued to serve as estates for the wealthy. Several mansions in various Beaux-Arts revivalist styles were designed by prominent architects. There is Stanford White's late Classical Revival Mills Mansion in Staatsburg, and the Renaissance Revival home for the Vanderbilt family in Hyde Park designed by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White.

Dutchess County's architecture remained basically conservative for most of the twentieth century due to the rural character of the region. Expansionism after World War II was slow to reach the county, and it has been only in the last thirty years that the aesthetics of modern materials, together with improved versions of older ones, have, in the majority of cases, been responsible for the diminished interest in applied architectural detail, resulting in the austere look so much in vogue until recently.



*Our county possesses many turn of the century mansions that rival the palaces of Europe. These large and costly structures were built in many revival styles. The Mills estate in Hyde Park was designed by the well known architect Stanford White.*

Places, like people, can show depth of character with qualities that stand the test of time. Individuals seek out and enjoy places, with natural and built beauty, that evoke deep seated and often latent feelings of belonging. When we experience such connectedness with the environment, our sense of well being extends far beyond the place itself — it becomes a kind of relatedness in time and purpose to the greater world in which we live. The visual landscape also:

*"gives shape to our character. The objects and forms in that landscape influence our actions, guide our choices, affect our values, restrict or enhance our freedom, determine where and with what quality we will mix with each other. The landscape molds our dreams, locates our fantasies and, in some mysterious way, even predicts our future."*<sup>1</sup>

Dutchess County possesses a wide variety of landscapes in which a captivating form relates to an understandable function. Its hilltop woodlots, contour stripped fields, views of the Oblong Valley and Catskill Mountains, Hudson River shoreline, diversified architecture, tree lined county roads, solid urban neighborhoods, picturesque hamlets, village and city main streets, barns and silos, stone walls and old bridges, all contribute to a meaningful mosaic of places.

There is currently a separation developing between traditional settlement patterns (form) and the uses of the land (function). Main Street commercial activity is giving way to malls and strip development. Offices are also locating along the highways. Residential development seldom occurs in neighborhood patterns anymore. Instead, people seek to separate themselves from their neighbors through house lots that are one acre or larger. As a result, development in the past four decades, especially, has tended to standardize the environment as the county gives itself over to an increasingly mobile, mass marketed society.

The purpose of this document is to show how we can evaluate our landscape objectively, to discover its strengths and weaknesses, to be explicit about what we value in it, and then, hopefully, to find methods for protecting and enhancing its value.

## How To Take Stock of What We Have

### 1—Identify Assets and Liabilities

The first method to consider in evaluating our environment is to organize its strengths and weaknesses. Most of the factors that we consider will be ones that we have contemplated before. Yet they take on new life and meaning when they are codified and shared with other persons. It is important to list social as well as physical factors. For example, an "unhurried atmosphere" might be a most important strength.

*The list below provides a hypothetical example of how to take an accounting of a particular place.*

# Reading the Landscape: Putting It All Together

### Assets

1. *A river runs through the center of the downtown. This is a beautiful river but is essentially ignored in the orientation of the village and the relationship of the buildings to the river.*
2. *The proximity of the agricultural community to the village is unusual and gives a very rich rural quality to the village.*
3. *The general architectural quality of the village center is very high with very distinctive buildings within the area. (However, new paint and roofing could do a lot.)*
4. *Vistas from the downtown are exceptional, with beautiful views of the mountains across the fields.*
5. *Pulpit Rock to the west of downtown is an unusual feature which is little known.*
6. *The relationship of the village to state parks offers the village the option of taking advantage of them as recreational lands.*

### Liabilities

1. *Although the village has a very strong identity, there is really no one place which is the visual center. The image of the downtown is aging but elegant.*
2. *One can drive by and not know the downtown is there. Although the town "wants" to be low key, it does not reach out to people (which may be a desirable quality). It lacks a strong gateway or entrance.*
3. *Parking for the theater is a problem in the summertime, on-street parking is very relaxed, and there is no provision for the bulk parking required by the theater.*
4. *The population fluctuation between the different seasons is a problem in the village, since the facilities are used very differently at various times of the year. The economic base of the community also fluctuates with the seasons.*
5. *The edge details in the village are poor.*
6. *The recently built bridge in the downtown is of the late 60s "modern" style and does not relate at all to the surrounding community image or scale.*
7. *The aesthetic quality is very delicate and could easily be destroyed by inconsiderate development of either the downtown or its surrounding area.*
8. *It is difficult to find economic housing for either elderly people with fixed incomes or young people trying to start out in life.*

9. *Keeping fields open has become increasingly difficult from an economic standpoint and threatens to change the character of the village.*

## 2—Determine the Boundaries of the Analysis

The more specific the location, the more detailed your analysis will become. Typically, you will be examining a hamlet or a neighborhood. If you want to analyze a whole town, village or the county, the unit of analysis must be subdivided.

Boundaries or edges are important for a community just as they are on one's own land. Frequently, edges are used for hedges, stone walls, gates, road signs, and other features to depict possession and convey meaning. You should ask what message is conveyed by the boundaries that you have selected.

Boundaries need not always coincide with municipal lines. Sometimes a feature such as a hill, or a manufactured feature such as a property line, are valuable ways to determine boundaries. Often boundaries will be visual districts or generally known precincts such as "downtown" areas. Boundaries should include areas of relatedness—architecturally, functionally, historically, or environmentally.

Sometimes there are complex interactions between "here" and "there," such as open agricultural views from a hamlet. If these are essential to how the hamlet is currently valued, then the total composition must be considered. This can be solved by having a dual set of boundaries, one showing the physical precinct and the other depicting a larger area of influence such as viewshed.

## 3—Identify Pathways

How do people move within the landscape? Most special places have many informal pedestrian routes, exclusive of the automobile. Often their charm is in their "substandard" quality — narrow roads, hidden intersections, dirt roads or drives, backyard pathways, and so forth. These should be noted, because most trends are to eliminate special places in the name of traffic safety.

## 4—Determine Historical Importance

Most people have not learned to understand places in terms of their historical significance. History can be understood in several ways. You may emphasize architectural quality, architectural diversity, historic significance of a famous person, historic importance of an event or a way that people lived, architectural integrity, a method of construction, a unique relationship between land and buildings or other themes.

This must be an explicit exercise because historical significance is typically not considered in local decision making. The Dutchess County Historical Society, the Dutchess County Historian, the local historical society, and the Dutchess County Department of Planning are excellent sources of information.

## 5—Humanize the Landscape

You should develop a sense of the whole. The landscape that you are reading may evoke a sense of mystery, intimacy, protection, adventure, peace, hospitality and other qualities. Chances are that your identification of human qualities will coincide with other residents. However, you should be as explicit as possible because they will not be as apparent to those who live elsewhere.

## 6—Identify Special Features

Special features might include mile markers, blue slate sidewalks, cobbles, special signs, lilac bushes, stone walls, an old gas pump, or an afternoon pattern of shadows, use of wood shingles, or an endless variety of other details. Maybe you'll notice that houses are all close to the road, or that they don't seem to follow *any* setback pattern. Maybe you'll notice the sound of a stream. It should be written down if you feel that it contributes to the essential nature of the place you're describing.

## 7—Map Your Responses

An exercise in reading the landscape is assisted by map work as well as writing down impressions. There are many ways to accomplish this. You can simply make your own map, using construction paper and drawing on features as you wish. Or you can visit the planning office in your community or at the Dutchess County Department of Planning to obtain better maps. Useful ones include Property tax maps, Land Use maps, and United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps.

Develop a good base map and then make multiple copies so that it can be used as a work map as well as for a final presentation.

## 8—Look to the Future

What is the future of your special place? Some of the answer is located in the community zoning ordinance which is a kind of blueprint to the future. It may contain elements that could destroy the essential values in your community. If so, you can take measures to direct your local government to develop more constructive policies. If you need to know the import of existing regulations, contact local or county planners.

## 9—Involve Your Neighbors

If you want to do more to protect a special landscape, you must be part of a group effort. There may be several willing to devote time to the project, others who are willing to support you by attending a meeting or two, and still others who might, at least, answer a questionnaire.

A group will allow you to test your assumptions and to feel confident that you are on the right track. Most importantly, it will give you legitimacy as you present your ideas to larger groups, planning professionals, or local officials.

It is important to work cooperatively with local officials. If your group or territory is divided on how to proceed, you are not likely to achieve what you hope to when you ask for official endorsement of your activity. If you have at least the



SPECIAL MAPS MADE BY TRACING OVER AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

- RESIDENTIAL**
-  Single Family
  -  Two or More Families
  -  Mixed (commercial & residential)
- COMMERCIAL**
-  Retail
- INSTITUTIONAL**
-  Public Building or Use
  -  Churches
  -  Other
- INDUSTRIAL**
-  Manufacturing
  -  Utilities

## LAND USE - 1975

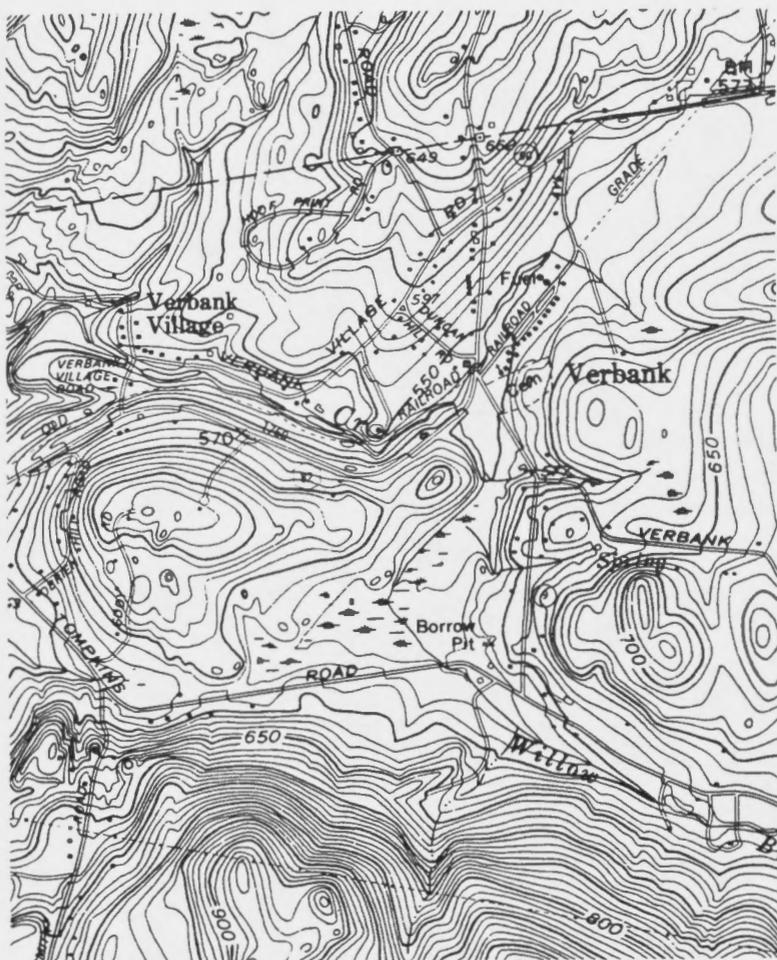
### Central Business District

### Village of Pawling

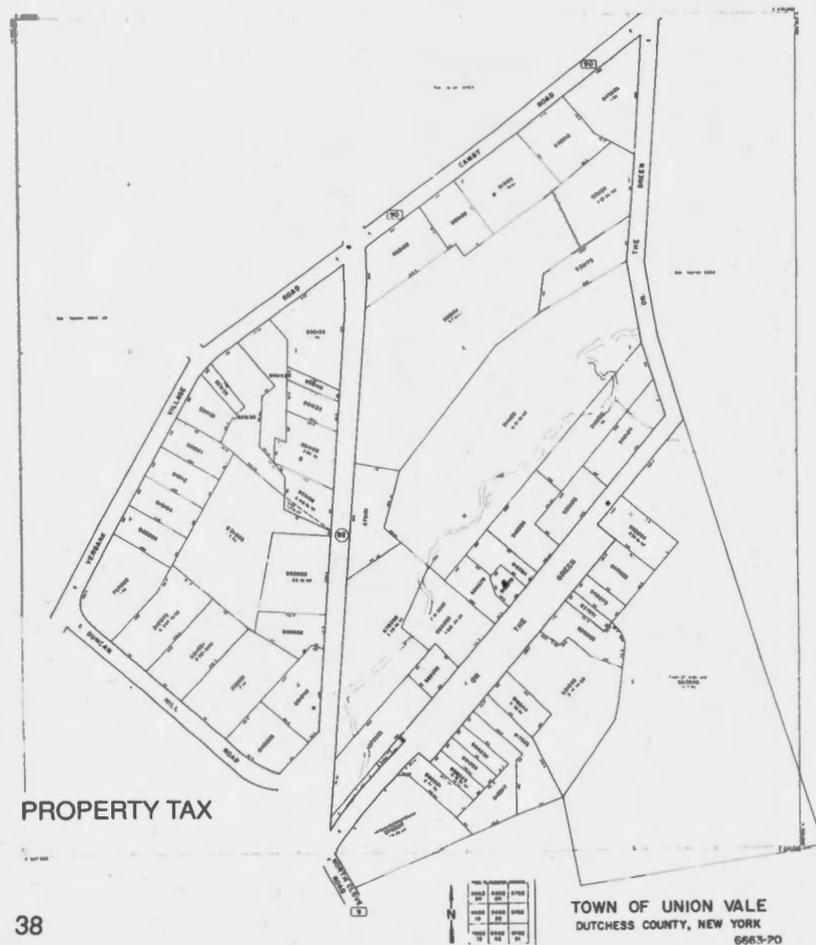
Scale 1"=200'



PREPARED BY: DUTCHESS COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



USGS



tacit support of most people within the bounds of your study, you will prevail because of the logic of your analysis and presentation.

### 10-Make Definite Recommendations

The most important part of your written document is to establish goals. Typically, you will have 5-15 goals, but there is no magic number. There should be direct and clear expression of what you want accomplished. The goals emphasize what you want done, not how you want it accomplished. For example:

- to maintain the quiet, informal atmosphere of the neighborhood; or
- to maintain the architectural integrity of existing buildings.

Then, your recommendations become ways to achieve these goals. You may have several recommendations per goal. The recommendations may be as specific as describing where a stop sign should be placed or suggesting installation of a speed bump.

In step 1, you identified certain problems as you read the landscape. There should be some way to resolve most of these problems. You should examine options and outline the favored of them.

In step 8, you learned what the municipality had in mind for your special landscape. If the official future doesn't coincide with that of your group's, then you should make specific recommendations on what needs to be done to correct the deficiencies. Here are some possibilities:

- Create a historic district.
- Create a special (e.g., hamlet) zone.
- Change the shape or content of existing zones.
- Develop zoning performance standards to protect special features.
- Ask the local government to designate your area as a Critical Environmental Area.
- Insure that future road plans do not destroy the character of the place.
- Seek community development money for special projects.
- Ask the town to develop architectural compatibility standards.
- Seek public funding for infrastructure funding.
- Contact owners or Dutchess Land Conservancy about "limited development" possibilities.
- Ask for official recognition of designated views or viewsheds so that they could be protected in the wake of development.

These alternatives are very technical. Sometimes there is more than one way to skin the cat. But you must become familiar with the alternatives in order to be most effective with local governmental officials. Again, help is available in your local and county planning offices.

<sup>1</sup>Gussow, Alan, "A Sense of Place," *Amicus*, Fall 1979, p. 14.

# Dutchess Design Themes:

Summary check list used on Conference tours. Consider using this for your community.

## Natural Features

- Perennial Brook or Stream
- Mature Deciduous Trees Along Road
- Mature Coniferous Trees Along Road
- Agricultural Fields Within View
- Woods Within View
- Wetlands Within View
- Hilltop Location
- Valley Location
- Mid-distance Views
- Distant Vistas
- Rock Outcroppings

## Geographic and Land Use Features

- Mixed Land Use
- Recreational Land
- General Store
- Other Stores
- School
- Church(es)
- Post Office
- Fire Station
- Other Public/Semi-Public Buildings
- Apartments over Commercial Buildings

## Spatial Relationships

- Short Street Setbacks
- Narrow Lots
- Building Complexes with Barns and Other Accessory Structures
- Bend in the Road
- Trees Frame the Main Road



*Old Dutch Stone Church, Fishkill.*

## Building Styles

- Dutch and English Vernacular
- Federal
- Greek Revival
- Second Empire
- Gothic Revival
- Italianate
- Queen Anne
- Other Victorian
- Colonial Revival
- Tudor
- Mill Housing
- Bungalow
- Vernacular

## Architectural Features

- Brick Exterior
- Stone Exterior
- Board and Batten
- Clapboard or Shingle Exterior
- Buildings Less than 30' in Height
- Predominately Two-storey Buildings
- Gable End to Street
- Roof Slopes 30 Percent and Greater

## Historical Context

- Railroad
- Crossroads Commercial
- Farm
- Estate Support
- River
- Industry

## Special Features

- Stone Walls
- Signs
- Orchards
- Lamp Posts
- Horse Troughs
- Mile Markers
- Greens
- Sidewalks
- Bridges
- Community Water
- Community Sewer

# Notes

# Notes

