



TOWN OF HYDE PARK

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

CGC 41658 HYDE PARK TOWN CENTER

DRAFT

8.1 DESIGN FOR ROUTE 9 IMPROVEMENTS

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Overview:

The Town of Hyde Park developed into an automobile-based suburb during the 20th century, with residential neighborhoods developing around the heavily traveled NYS Route 9 commercial corridor. The Town has been actively planning the creation of a walkable community with a true “town center” for over a decade, and improvements to Route 9, also known as the Albany Post Road, will be critical to advancing this plan for a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly district with dense, mixed-use development, job creation, energy savings, and convenient access to community destinations.

Currently, the stretch of Route 9 within the Study Area presents multiple challenges in terms of existing traffic conditions and streetscape, all of which are addressed within this plan. At the broadest level, the Design for Route 9 Improvements seeks to support the Town Center redevelopment plan by helping to create a “sense of place” that will attract both residents and those passing through. The Design incorporates Complete Streets design, aiming to help transition the Study Area from automobile-centric to pedestrian-friendly, and utilizes traffic-calming measures, both for pedestrian and cyclist safety, and also to create a “neighborhood” feel.

Specific challenges addressed and remedied in this proposal for Route 9 include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lack of on-street parking
- Lack of street furniture and pedestrian amenities (e.g., benches)
- Lack of cyclist amenities (e.g., bicycle racks)
- Uneven, heaved, cracked and narrow, non-ADA compliant sidewalks
- In some areas, no sidewalks at all
- Lack of crosswalks and other measures to ensure safe pedestrian crossings
- Lack of bicycle facilities (e.g., shoulders, shared lanes)
- Lack of bus stops
- Lack of stormwater management devices
- Trip hazards
- Lack of pedestrian street lighting
- Offset (misaligned) cross-streets entering Route 9

The purpose of this report is to serve as the baseline guide for near-term planning and engineering that will result in significant improvements in the safety and ease of use of the Route 9 corridor in Hyde Park for pedestrians, bicycles and motorized traffic sharing this relatively narrow, busy road. It is important to note that Route 9 is under the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and as such, any planning and engineering regarding this corridor will need to be coordinated with the Regional office.

Approach:

The approach taken with this project utilizes the design standards specified by the National Complete Streets Coalition and the NYSDOT Highway Design Manual, in order to maximize safe pedestrian, bicycle and motorized vehicle movement. This proposal incorporates many of the Complete Street recommendations, including sidewalks, wide shared-use lanes, frequent and safe pedestrian crossing opportunities, along with painted and/or textured medians. The overall impact of the Route 9 Improvements will include reducing negative traffic impacts, which currently include speeding cars and traffic jams.

Further, the consultant team reviewed and consulted several previously completed and related studies and documents, in order to incorporate both the suggestions and recommendations of other agencies, and the goals and desires of the Town of Hyde Park. These studies and documents included, but were not limited to:

- *The Town of Hyde Park Comprehensive Plan, 2005*
- *The Hyde Park Town Center Pedestrian Study, 2013*, by the Dutchess County Planning Department
- *The Route 9 Land Use and Transportation Study, 2007*, by the New York State Department of Transportation
- A conceptual “complete street” plan for Route 9, including the Project area, 2014, by NYSDOT
- Albany Post Road Corridor Study, 2002
- Town of Hyde Park local building and zoning codes
- NYSDOT requirements

The consultant team conducted several site visits to the Project area and met several times with the Hyde Park Steering Committee in order to scope the project, to identify challenges and to craft solutions within the existing physical and regulatory parameters of the Project site.

Concept for Reconfigured Transportation System

The two-page **Site Location Plan** (Appendix A) presents the schematic plan for the reconfigured traffic plan within the Study Area. Design elements for improved pedestrian safety and traffic calming include:

- **On-street parking:** More than 20 on-street parking spaces, on both the east and west sides of Route 9, are proposed in this design (illustrated in orange). The addition of on-street parking incorporates NYSDOT’s plans and, most importantly, the Town of Hyde Park’s vision: Creating a “sense of place,” a lively area where people stop and park to shop, visit parks, drop by the library, run errands, dine and live. On-street parking also has the complementary effect of calming traffic, as vehicles must decelerate in order to accommodate cars entering and exiting these spaces.

- **Crosswalks:** The design introduces three new, four-way crosswalks to improve pedestrian safety and to alert drivers to the presence of those on foot; further, single crosswalks have been added at numerous intersections where cross-streets meet Route 9:



And a crosswalk is proposed at the mouth of the Park Plaza entrance, which is currently a wide, visually confusing and potentially dangerous pedestrian route.

- **Sidewalks:** Many new stretches of sidewalk are proposed (in gold) where none existed previously, particularly along the west side of Route 9. The new sidewalks will enable pedestrians to move along Route 9 safely and with a much greater degree of comfort; further, physical sidewalks are also a visual cue to drivers to pay attention and slow down. All sidewalks throughout the Study Area will be protected from opening vehicle doors by grass or hardscaping that clearly creates a visual and physical buffer between pedestrians and parking cars.

Further, some existing stretches of sidewalk needed to be expanded in order to meet safety and ADA compliance. For example, the sidewalk from Watson to Mansion will be expanded from a width of approximately four feet.

The proposal includes replacing all heaving, cracked and noncompliant existing sidewalks, which tracks with the work that the Town of Hyde Park has been undertaking to the south of the Study Area and ties directly into this project.

Lastly, the proposal incorporates the future sidewalk expansion planned for the Pine Woods intersection, for seamless execution.

- **Street markings:** Through careful analysis, the consultant team has designed changes to lane markings across the entire Study Area, identifying shared lanes,

turn lanes and cross walks. Where appropriate, medians have been incorporated to further calm traffic, delineate lanes, and increase safety. The hardscaping for these medians will be textured and colored, to produce both audio and visual cues for drivers, but still can be easily crossed by emergency vehicles when necessary.

- **Signals:** The proposal includes modifying traffic signal timings within the Study Area to optimize traffic flow, and the addition of pedestrian signals with countdown timers at locations of new crosswalks.

Cross-street at Route 9 and Crumwold Place

One element that the consultant team considered, per recommendations by the Town of Hyde Park and NYSDOT, was the creation of a public cross-street on the east side of Route 9 connecting Crumwold Place to Pine Woods Road, and a four-way signalized intersection at this new cross-street at Route 9 and Crumwold Place. However, on June 21, 2017, the Town Planning Board approved an application to redevelop a portion of the existing retail plaza directly opposite the entrance of Crumwold Place. This proposal involves the construction of a new building to house Mavis Discount Tire, enlarging landscaping beds and installing a stonewall-lined pocket garden. As such, a cross-street in that location is no longer possible, as shown in the detail below:



The Master Redevelopment Plan, however, does envision a public street parallel to Route 9 along the existing access road within the plaza, which is anticipated to be tree-lined and

set within a district designed to be shared between pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles (see Appendix B for the Master Redevelopment Plan):



Public Transport/Bus Stops Connecting with Dutchess County Public Transit (DCPT)

As shown above, the Master Redevelopment Plan envisions a street interior to the Town Center “neighborhood” which will accommodate public transportation and a “visitors’ trolley” that will shuttle residents and visitors between key nodes along Route 9, from the Vanderbilt Mansion to the north, to the historic FDR site to the south. While the creation of on-street parking is a priority of this plan, a bus stop for DCPT could be created on Route 9 by repurposing some of the on-street parking spaces. While this Design for Route 9 Improvements does not specifically identify a location for a DCPT bus stop, the Town of Hyde Park may choose to pursue this option directly with DCPT.

Bicycle Right-of-Way Improvements, Amenities

One of the most significant improvements envisioned in this design is new bicycle rights-of-way. Creating full bike lanes along the Study Area of Route 9 is not possible due to the varying and insufficient width of Route 9 in this area. The design team, however, was able to engineer a system of shared lane markings (“sharrows”) to clearly demarcate bicycle lanes, as excerpted here:



Clearly marked sharrows coupled with clearly delineated turn lanes and cross-walks will visually cue drivers to slow down and pay attention for the possibility of cyclists and pedestrians.

The streetscape plan also incorporates bicycle parking equipment through the study area, as shown in the detail below and in the Design Schematic layout:



Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvements

The concept for the Hyde Park Town Center improved streetscape is also patterned on Complete Street Initiative guidelines (see Appendix C for complete details concerning these improvements).

In response to best management practices, the pedestrian zone is separated from the carriageway by a four-foot buffer area. This area would either be textured hardscape or grass to accommodate people exiting their parked cars. Street trees will be incorporated into this space, as illustrated in this detail:



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A materials palette for trees and other plantings is shown here:



Sidewalks are proposed behind the buffer area along the street. They will vary in width and are anticipated to consist of permeable concrete unit masonry pavers which will function as a stormwater management practice. The pavers will continue into the core of the Town Center pedestrian area. The pavers will be accented with various colors and patterns to reflect travel direction and use areas, directing pedestrians from the street corridor to the Town Center structures. Examples of materials may be seen here:



The sidewalks will be expanded at street intersections to accommodate benches, bicycle racks and other street furniture, as illustrated below:



The three major street intersections including Pinewoods Drive/US Route 9, Crumwold Place/US Route 9 and Rogers Place/US Route 9 are the primary pedestrian crosswalk areas. In addition to traditional pedestrian crosswalks at these locations, the entire intersection is proposed to be

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designated with either a color surface on the bituminous pavement or textured paver material. This will suggest to drivers that they are entering a "pedestrian" space which will cause them to safely proceed through the intersection.



Decorative pedestrian scale light fixtures are proposed along the entire length of US Route 9 in the Town Center. They will not replace the tall street lights; however, they will develop a visual ceiling for pedestrians and drivers in the streetscape and will enhance pedestrians' sense of safety and comfort. These fixtures can also be employed to hang decorative banners for festive events.



Utilities

The consultant team has determined that no existing utilities or water service lines will be impacted or disrupted by any of the proposed work, which will take place above existing utility depths. Any new utility needs could be driven, in the future, by development in and around the Town Center.

Energy Efficient Measures

In alignment with Complete Streets recommendations, the elements of the proposed Route 9 Improvements together encourage energy efficiency by promoting pedestrian access and decreased vehicle dependency. Optimized signals will decrease vehicle queuing, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Sharrows will encourage bicycle use, decreasing vehicle use, and the proposed trolley system, and possible bus stops for public transit, will decrease private vehicle use and improve air quality. Lastly, pedestrian-level lighting is anticipated to use LED lighting to further reduce energy consumption within the Study Area.