



North Castle Comprehensive Plan Update

Banksville Public Workshop: Meeting Summary

Prepared on behalf of:

The Town of North Castle
15 Bedford Road
Armonk, NY 10504

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Meeting Date: June 12, 2017

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Appendix: Banksville Workshop Presentation

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Introduction

As part of the planning process for updating its Comprehensive Plan, the Town of North Castle hosted a public workshop in the Hamlet of Banksville on June 12, 2017. The workshop was attended by approximately 25 people, including most of the Steering Committee; representatives of the Planning Board; and members of the community. Participants were knowledgeable about the Hamlet's existing challenges and plans for new developments. All of the attendees provided ideas that will help to inform the planning process.

Susan Favate, BFJ Principal, opened the workshop with introductory remarks explaining the overall process and recognizing members of the Committee. Next, BFJ Planner Ariana Branchini presented an overview of the existing conditions in Banksville, as well as some issues and opportunities related to open space, business development and retail uses which may inform how the Town can best enhance quality-of-life in the Hamlet.

Following the presentation and a brief refreshment break, the participants joined a Town Hall-style discussion on issues and opportunities in Banksville that the Plan should consider. Content from the discussion is summarized below.

The next steps in the Comprehensive Planning process involve coordination between the BFJ team and the Town to draft chapters of the plan together with the Steering Committee. A final public workshop will be held in November to discuss the first full draft of the Comprehensive Plan.

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Workshop Agenda

1. Welcome

2. Presentation

- Overview of Comprehensive Plan process and elements
- Banksville Assets
 - Bucolic, historic setting
 - Small commercial node
- Banksville Challenges
 - Weak condition of some buildings
 - Lack of water/sewer limits redevelopment
 - Lack of publicly accessible open space, community amenities
- Land Use and Zoning
 - Largely low-density residential with small commercial node near Greenwich border
 - Large green spaces of varying types (some nature preserves, water supply lands, public parks)
 - A number of vacant parcels in the area
 - Zoning is consistent with land use
- Pattern of Development
 - Some important resources (North St. Shopping Center, Banksville Community House) are located in Greenwich
 - Troy's Garden Nurseries is for sale
- 1996 Plan Recommendations
 - Protect natural resources, establish open space buffer along wetlands/streams
 - Add sidewalks where feasible, bury utility wires, use design guidelines for new development
- Preliminary Concepts for Banksville
 - Potential town green development to provide open space?
 - One suggestion for open space adjacent to the firehouse
 - Expand pedestrian infrastructure to promote walkability?
 - Strengthen business uses through zoning, coordination with Greenwich

3. Refreshment Break

4. Town Hall discussion

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Presentation

1. Overview of the Comprehensive Plan Process

Susan Favate, BFJ Principal, gave an overview of the Comprehensive Plan update process, including a description of the project timeline and additional opportunities for public input. Ms. Favate described the concepts that will be addressed in the Plan, summarized previous plans and studies and provided the planning goals from the existing 1996 Comprehensive Plan.

2. Banksville Existing Conditions

Assets and Challenges

Ariana Branchini, Planner for BFJ Planning, discussed the Hamlet's assets, including the area's bucolic and historic setting, and small commercial node. Ms. Branchini also discussed a number of challenges the Hamlet faces. These include the weak condition of some buildings, lack of sewer and water, and limited number of community amenities, such as publicly accessible open space.

Land Use & Zoning

Ariana Branchini, Planner for BFJ Planning, discussed the Hamlet's largely low-density residential land use surrounding the small commercial node located at the Banksville/Greenwich border. The zoning is consistent with this pattern, primarily supporting large-lot residential uses and commercial uses along Bedford—Banksville Road and Banksville Avenue.

3. Preliminary Concepts

BFJ Planner Ariana Branchini presented a number of opportunities the BFJ team has initially explored to address issues in the Hamlet.

"Town Green"

These ideas included potentially creating a "Town Green" area to add a community gathering space to the Hamlet. One initial concept could be located in the open space adjacent to the fire house, which is owned by the Banksville Fire Department.

Sidewalks

Ms. Branchini discussed opportunities to add sidewalks to the Hamlet to improve walkability and promote pedestrian safety. Currently sidewalks are only present on the Greenwich side of Banksville.

Strengthen Business Uses

Ms. Branchini discussed opportunities for improvements to Banksville's business node through zoning and coordination with Greenwich.

The presentation concluded with a discussion of the next steps in the planning process and suggestions for how the public can remain involved. After the presentation, participants took a refreshment break before participating in a Town Hall discussion. The following section summarizes that input.

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Town Hall Discussion

Sidewalks, Aesthetics and Beautification

- Existing sidewalks are only in Greenwich- no need for more in Banksville as long as there is nowhere to walk.
- Garbage pickup is an issue, there is litter along Bedford/Banksville Road, Round Hill Road and the circle in front of Le Cremaier.
- Beautification and landscaping could improve the area. Sweeping and litter pick up; removing weeds and mowing would make the roads safer for bikers as well.

Businesses

- There is interest in adding a gas station and grocery store option in Banksville- gas stations used to be located across from the fire house and at the current Chase Bank location in North Street Shopping Center.
- Need more volunteers for the fire department. Now that there are fewer businesses in the area, there are fewer volunteers. This is an issue for the fire department.
- Troy's nursery- this site is mostly wetland, would be difficult to develop.
- Would be nice to have a food use – grocery store, opportunities to include local food resources (e.g. farmer's market), community garden.
- Farmers Market formerly located at long vacant building at 27 Bedford-Banksville Road, also had fishing vendor, yarn vendor, deli; local goods were available – bringing this back could be a good opportunity to serve need for groceries/food while also creating a community space.

Open Space

- Cat Rock's park is wetland, not ideal for trails and no access- really just intended to serve the surrounding subdivision.
- Mianus River Gorge organization (mianus.org) just purchased additional green space in the Eastern District, space in this area has trails and is already accessible to the public.
- Banksville Eastern District—protect existing resources (natural and historic) e.g. St Mary's, Mianus gorge; should be left alone and preserved

General Issues

- Banksville Ave (by Finch's) northbound traffic several accidents where cars come down the hill to get to parking lot, take bushes down and add curb cut.
- Banksville has changed over time- in the '50s and 60s there were more businesses and open space, fewer people. Businesses stayed open, restaurants, bars were popular and well attended. When more people moved in, they were not as interested in the existing uses, and many of them went out of business. Some workshop participants expressed a desire to create an environment where local restaurants, bars and retailers could thrive again.
- Flooding is an issue during storm events (roads don't drain well, e.g. Bedford/Banksville just south of the Fire station).

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Armonk

- Whippoorwill commons- traffic and safety issues from Verizon down to Main
- Interest in sustainability throughout the town and throughout the chapters
- Increase bus service
- Add a shuttle to North White Plains train station
- Want a dog park integrated into an existing park, within Armonk would be good
- Multifamily housing would be good- look at examples of other towns where they have integrated this in different ways

A photograph of a two-story building with brown shingle siding and a dark roof. The building has several windows and large white garage doors. A sign on the upper part of the building reads "BANKSVILLE INDEPENDENT FIRE CO.". The image is slightly faded to allow text to be overlaid.

Town of North Castle

Comprehensive Plan Update

Banksville Workshop
June 12, 2017

Town of North Castle

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Neal Baumann
Christine Eggleton
Michael Freedman
Jill Greto

Charlene Jacobi
Jim Jensen
Richard Koh
Ed Woodyard

Barbara DiGiacinto, Town Board Liaison
Christopher Carthy, Planning Board Member
Adam Kaufman, AICP, Director of Planning

Consultants

[BFJ Planning](#) | Planning, Urban Design and Transportation

[Kellard Sessions](#) | Engineering, Environment and Landscape

[Urbanomics](#) | Demographic and Socioeconomic Analysis

What is a Comprehensive Plan and Why is the Town Updating It?

States where a community has been, where it is now, and where it wants to go, setting goals and recommended actions to ensure orderly growth.

The plan itself is not a regulation, but any new/amended land use regulation (e.g. rezoning) must be in accordance with a well-reasoned comprehensive plan.

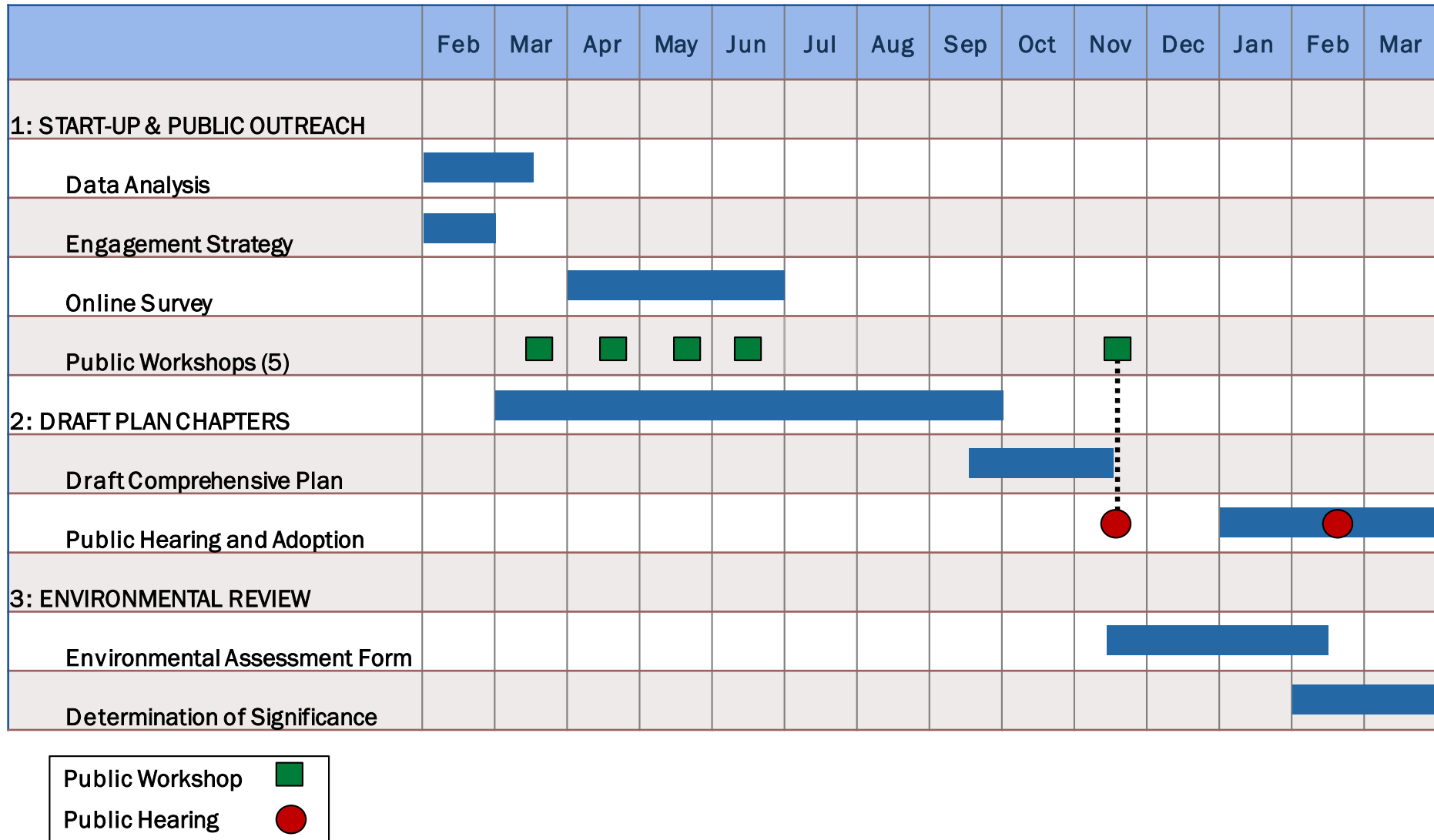
Goal is to update the Plan every 10 years to ensure it reflects current demographics, planning efforts and development context.

Last Plan adopted in 1996; much has changed since.

Work with County on baseline planning studies allows for focus on visioning, public outreach, key issues.

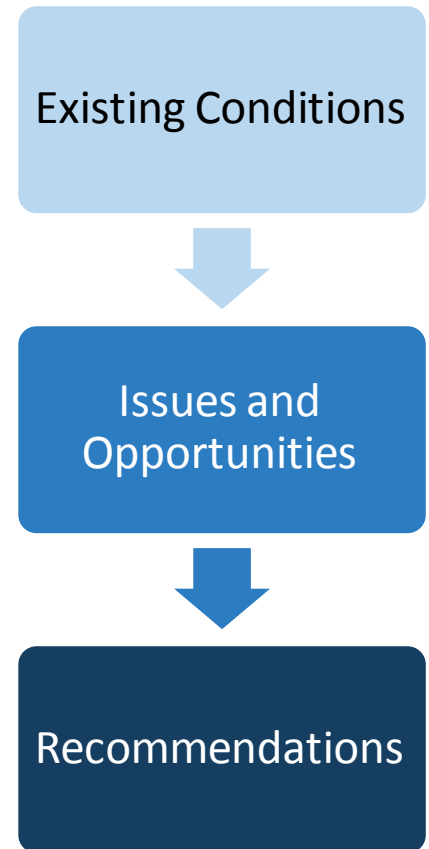


Timeline



Comprehensive Plan Chapters

1. Introduction: Vision and Goals
2. Regional Context
3. Demographics and Growth Trends
4. Land Use and Zoning
5. Natural Resources
6. Transportation
7. Infrastructure and Utilities
8. Commercial Development
9. Parks, Recreation and Open Space
10. Community Character and Historic Resources
11. Hamlet Areas
12. Future Land Use Plan and Implementation



Goals from 1996 Comprehensive Plan

1. Remain an attractive residential community.
2. Maintain the existing hamlet centers as service and higher-density residential areas.
3. Maintain the existing office and industrial tax base.
4. Maintain the delivery of high-quality municipal services.
5. Respect and preserve the environment while striving to achieve the goals above.
6. Maintain and enhance property values through the creation, revision and enforcement of effective ordinances.

Banksville Assets



Bucolic and historic setting at gateway to North Castle



Small commercial node serving key needs of surrounding area

Banksville Challenges

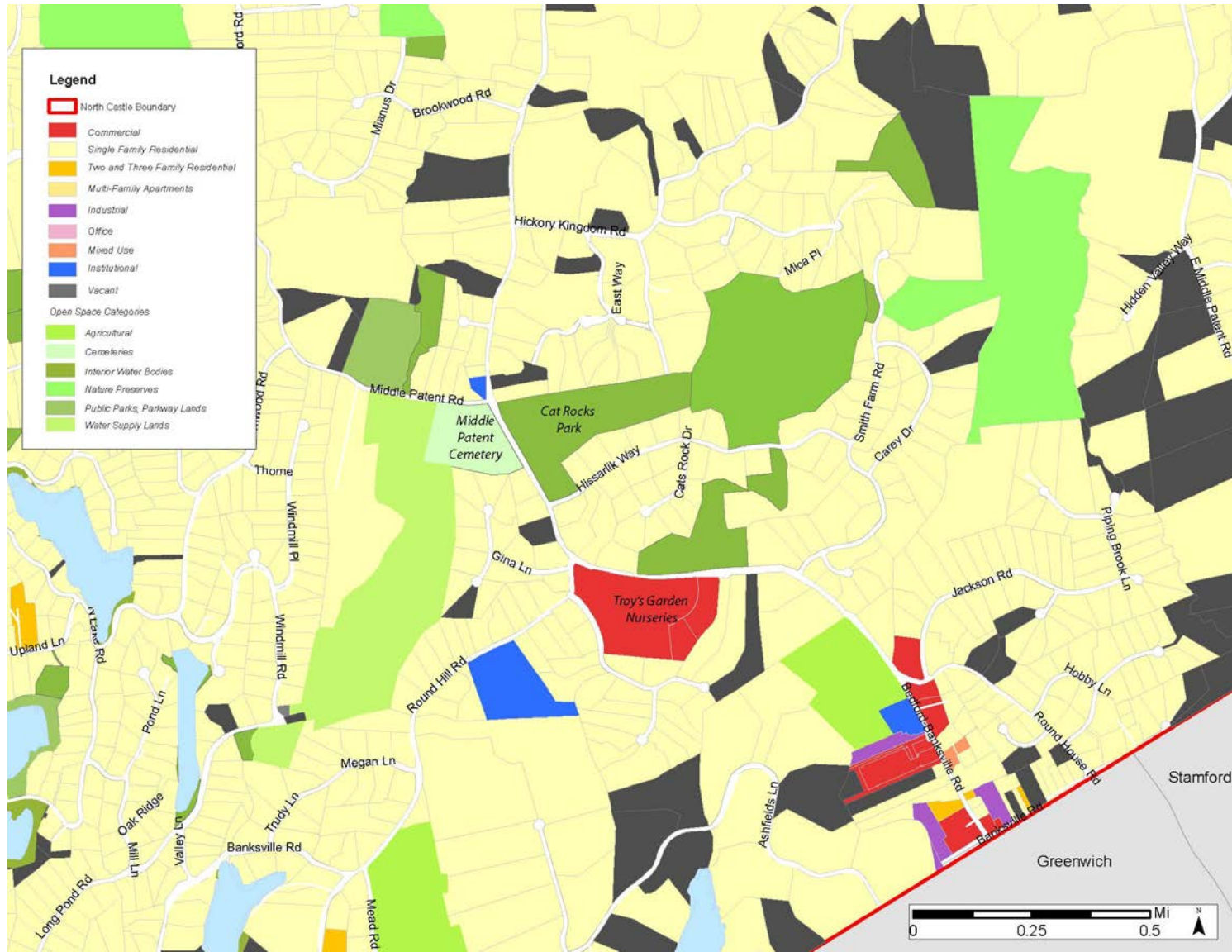


Weak condition of some buildings detracts from overall aesthetic environment, lack of water/sewer limits redevelopment possibilities

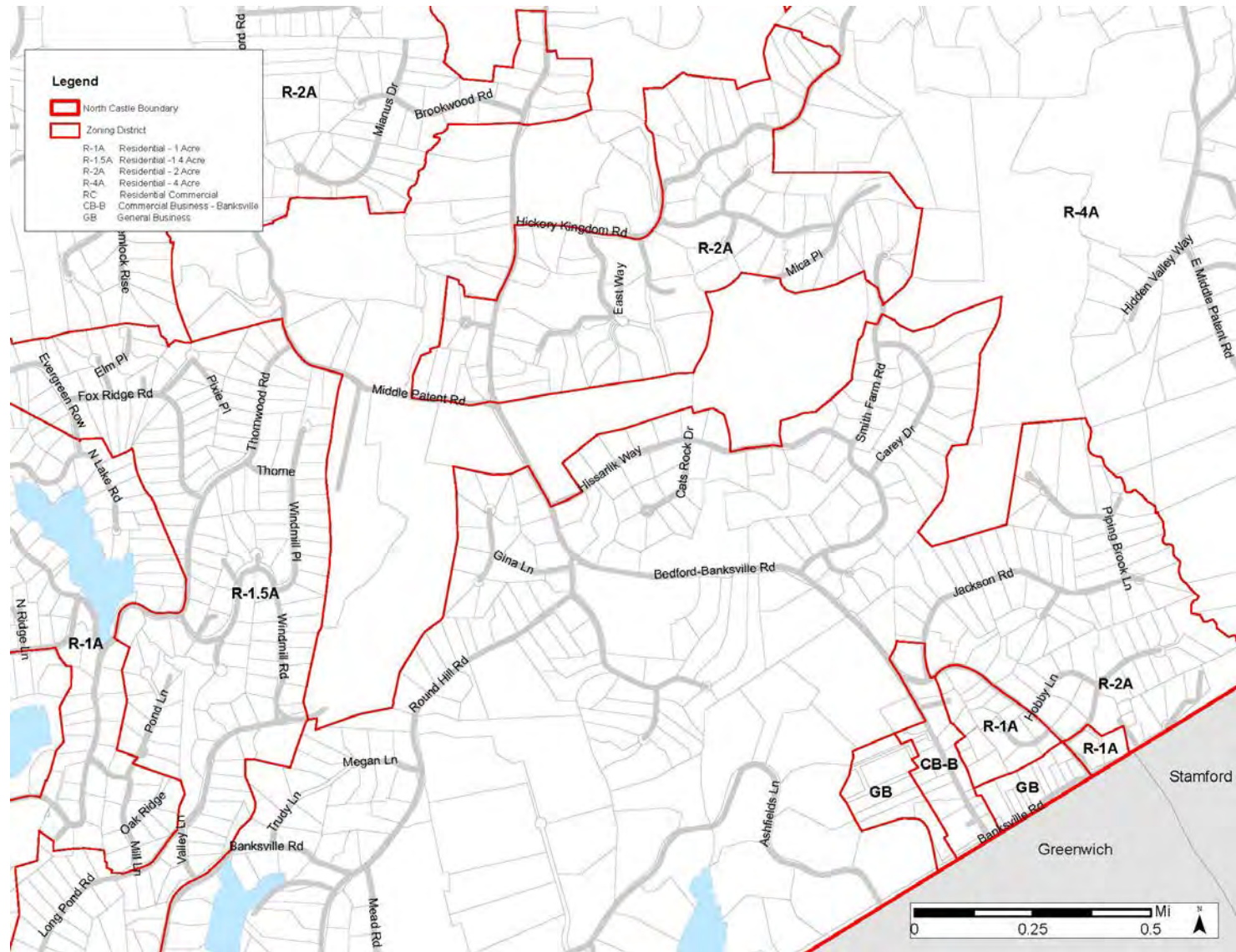


Lack of publicly accessible open space, community amenities

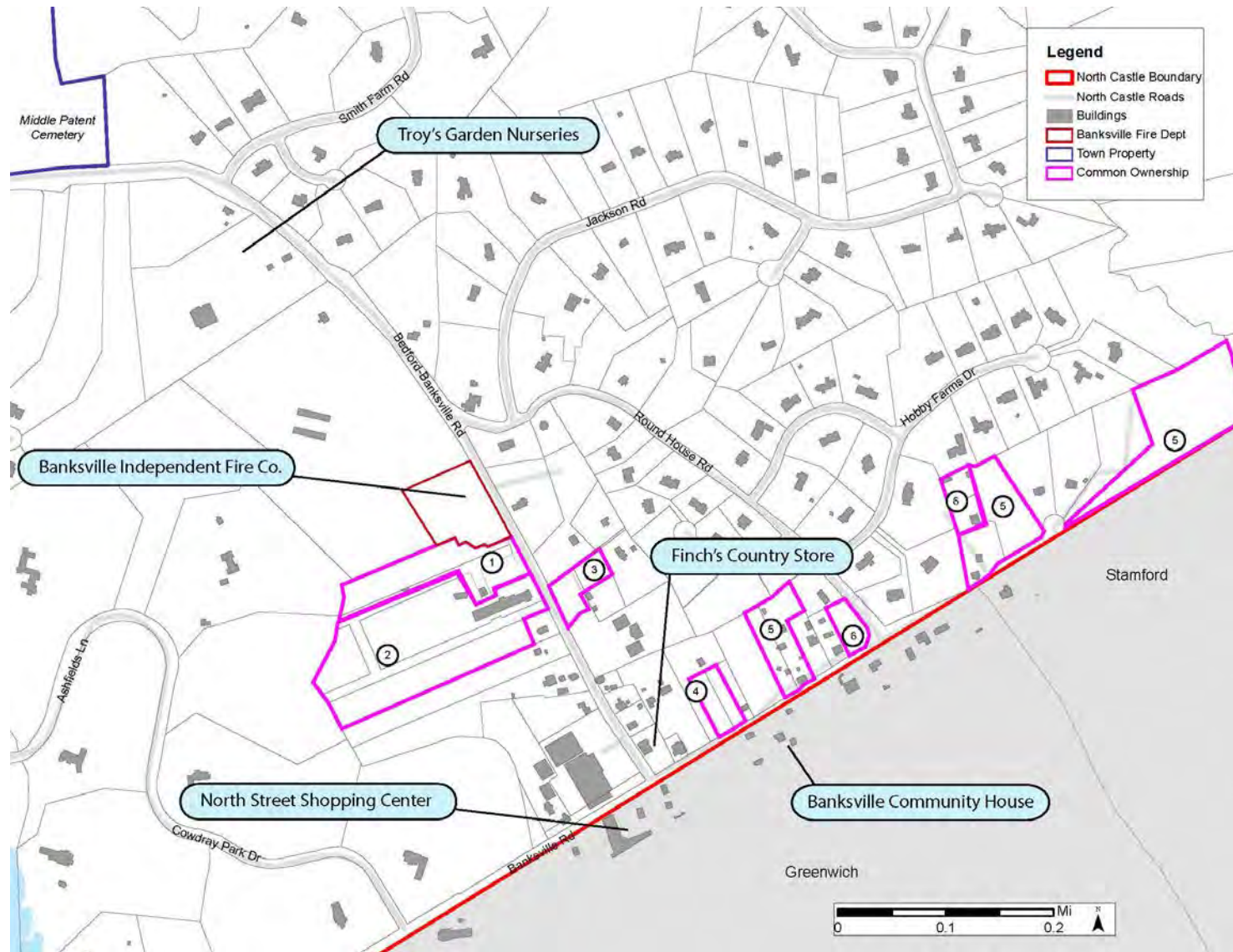
Banksville Land Use



Banksville Zoning



Development Pattern in Banksville Center



Banksville Recommendations from 1996 Plan

- **Protect headwaters of the Mianus River and wetland areas.**
- **Establish permanent open space buffer along stream on west side of Bedford-Banksville Road.**
- **In future development/redevelopment, promote layouts with green space in front of commercial areas, with landscaped parking lots in rear.**
- **Add sidewalks where feasible.**
- **Bury utility wires.**

Preliminary Concepts for Banksville

Potential to create “Town Green” Area?



Open space area adjacent to firehouse

Preliminary Concepts for Banksville

Expand sidewalk network to improve walkability?



Preliminary Concepts for Banksville

Strengthen business uses through zoning, coordination with Greenwich?



How Can You Get Involved?

Attend Future Public Workshops:

- Final workshop on Draft Plan: November

Take the Online Survey:

- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NorthCastleSurvey>
- Hard copies available at Town Hall (Planning Department)



For updates, check Town website:

<http://www.northcastleny.com/planning/pages/comprehensive-plan-information>

