Village of Patchogue
Downtown Business District Study

November 2002

Suffolk County Department of Planning
Suffolk County # New York

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2001, at the request of the Village of Patchogue, the Suffolk County Department of Planning began a study of the Village of Patchogue's downtown business district. The purpose of the study is to prepare a plan that will improve and protect the viability of the existing businesses in the downtown district and improve the overall condition and attractiveness of the area for the enjoyment and advantage of Village residents, merchants and visitors.

The Department undertook a field survey of the downtown district and analyzed existing development patterns and status of the stores and commercial development along Main Street and Ocean Avenue. The principal findings were as follows:

- The majority of the land use in the study area is commercial with institutional use a distant second.
- The proportion of retail uses versus non-retail uses in the business district declined from 64% in 1989 to 51% in 2002.
- In 2002, vacant storefronts accounted for 18.2% of the 181 storefronts in the business district.
- The area north of Main Street and west of North Ocean Avenue has a 42% vacancy rate, the highest vacancy rate in the study area.
- There are over 3,300 parking spaces in public and private ownership in the business district study area.

Based on research and these findings the report recommends that the Village of Patchogue pursue a four part strategy for the growth and revitalization of the downtown business district:

- ***Encourage retail and destination uses in the downtown core. Destination uses should be focused on arts, entertainment and restaurant uses.***
- ***Encourage non-retail uses outside of the core business area including office, service and institutional uses.***
- ***Encourage development of owner-occupied residential units within walking distance of the downtown, comparable with local conditions.***
- ***Assure that basic services throughout the business district are provided at the highest possible level.***

Recommendations have been grouped into six major categories: zoning and land use; redevelopment; parking, traffic flow and signage; storefront uses; aesthetics; and, pedestrians. Recommendations from each of the categories will advance the improvement strategies stated above.

The ***zoning and land use*** recommendations encourage the village to solidify its vision for the village and subsequently create an amended zoning code that will serve as a blueprint for that vision. The vision should include intensive retail and service uses in the core of the business district with high density, owner-occupied housing units adjacent to the core. A village green park should be created within the core which will provide open space and a focal point for holiday events and outdoor exhibitions in the downtown.

Although much of Patchogue is economically healthy there are portions of the downtown that can benefit from ***redevelopment*** improvements. The area along North Ocean Avenue, which includes the abandoned Swezey's buildings and the awkward intersection at North Ocean Avenue and Lake Street, is prime for redevelopment. Innovative redevelopment, which includes the development of entertainment and restaurant destination uses, will reduce the vacancy rate in this part of the business district. The alignment of Lake Street through to Oak Street will improve the traffic pattern at the Oak Street/ North Ocean Avenue intersection.

Business district ***parking***, including parking lots and on-street parking, comprises a large proportion of the land in downtown Patchogue and provides sufficient parking spaces to assure a healthy downtown. Unfortunately, the entrances to the parking lots are poorly marked and therefore difficult to find, pavement in many instances is in disrepair, and businesses on Main Street are not easily found from the parking lots. Improvements to the parking lots in the village should include: improved maintenance of existing lots with the addition of green spaces whenever possible; provision of obvious and consistent parking signs; consolidation and screening of dumpsters; clearly marked parking lot entrances; and, provision of useful store directories.

Traffic flow within the downtown area is confusing to the uninitiated visitor. In many instances a visitor is greeted with unusual traffic patterns and at the same time is bombarded with a proliferation of unfamiliar and/or worn out signs. The village should commission a traffic flow and parking lot plan that will inventory and analyze existing conditions and recommend traffic patterns for the roads and parking lots in the business district. This plan should consider the alignment of Havens Avenue with Railroad Avenue that will result in additional municipal parking and the continuation of Lake Street across North Ocean Avenue to Oak Street.

Storefront uses for retail purposes have been declining in downtown Patchogue. The decline in retail uses is consistent with the change of uses in Suffolk's other downtown areas. Retail uses are being replaced with service providers, institutional uses and offices.

Successful downtowns must contain businesses that are pliant enough to accommodate the changes dictated by increasing e-trade and big box retailers. Recommendations for retail uses include: provision of personal service; furnishing a desirable mix of businesses that will attract shoppers during the day as well as in the evening; continuation and creation of niche markets, such as the existing bridal/formal retailers and furniture retailers which in themselves are shopping destinations; and, expansion of evening functions including entertainment, arts and restaurant uses.

The general visual appeal of Patchogue is improving but there are still many opportunities for positive change. Recommended ***aesthetic improvements*** include: providing attractive "Welcome to Patchogue" signs at the three main gateways to the downtown; continuation of street scape improvements; replacement of storefronts with windows to allow for at least 70 percent window coverage; cleaning up the litter; creating a comprehensive sign ordinance; creating an architectural review board; improving the appearance of the rear of the stores on municipal parking lots; and, improving the appearance of the Patchogue River visible from Main Street.

Pedestrians are an important factor in the success of the downtown district. The village should consider the following pedestrian improvements: provide sidewalks that are well-maintained, safe and well-lit; provide sidewalks that are attractive, comfortable and provide benches for seating; and, review and improve traffic calming opportunities that will allow pedestrians to cross the streets more safely.

Implementation of the recommendations in this report will help to improve the overall conditions within the Patchogue business district resulting in a stronger, more vibrant community. The report can also serve as a mechanism to involve both residents and business owners in a meaningful discussion of the future of the business district.

INTRODUCTION

Request For Downtown Study

The Village of Patchogue requested that the Suffolk County Department of Planning study the downtown area of the Village. The planning study would cover the area surrounding the intersection of Main Street and Ocean Avenue. The Village expressed concern about the economic health of the business district and asked for recommendations to cure its deficiencies such as suggestions for future businesses, development or redevelopment. This study was undertaken as a result of the Village's request, pursuant to Article XIV of the Suffolk County Charter which specifies that the Department of Planning, as the Planning Commission deems appropriate, at the request of any town or village in Suffolk County may furnish the town or village with requested planning services.

Study Goals

The purpose of this study is to prepare a plan with recommendations for the Patchogue Village downtown business district that will identify actions targeted to the following goals:

- Improve and protect the viability of existing businesses in the downtown district.
- Improve the overall condition and attractiveness of the area for the enjoyment and advantage of Village residents, merchants and visitors.

Implementation of the recommended actions by the Village of Patchogue, its citizens, the private sector and other levels of government will:

- Continue the revitalization of the Patchogue downtown district.
- Improve the economic base of the Village by creating jobs and expanding the tax base.
- Encourage the business district to become a cleaner, safer, more appealing and interesting place to live, walk, work, eat, shop, and do business.

History

Patchogue's recorded history dates from 1664. European settlers were drawn to the area because of the waterpower generated by the flowing streams and the adjacent port which provided safe harbor. Starting in the 1750s, mills (gristmills, sawmills, paper, wool, and cotton mills) were constructed on Patchogue's waterways, and by the mid-1800s, Patchogue was a thriving seaport with oyster, fishing, and shipbuilding industries and mills on both the Patchogue River and Great South Bay. The Army Corps of Engineers dredged the Patchogue River in 1890, making it the only deep-water port on Long Island's South Shore. Patchogue was a U. S. port of entry until 1922, with a customs house on South Ocean Avenue.

The Long Island Rail Road arrived in 1869 and brought thousands of summer visitors from New York City. The first hotel opened in Patchogue in 1808 and was built by the Roe family, which continued building ever-larger hotels for the rest of the 19th century. Patchogue became a summer colony, with hotels accommodating as many as 1,600 guests. Patchogue Village officially incorporated in 1893. The grand 1,800 seat Patchogue Theatre opened on Main Street in 1923, offering films, vaudeville, and theatrical productions. Tourism gradually declined after the 1920s as automobiles allowed tourists to reach more distant destinations.

The Patchogue Lace Works mill employed as many as 1,200 people during World War II, when it manufactured camouflage netting and other war products. Most of Patchogue's mills closed in the 1940s and 1950s, outpaced by competition from manufacturing in the southern U.S. and overseas where labor was cheaper. The Patchogue Lace Mill closed in 1954.

The downtown Patchogue business district was one of the first major commercial centers in Suffolk County and remained a shopping destination for many years. Patchogue Village maintained its premier commercial status until shopping malls and strip commercial development took part of the village's market share, depleting the downtown's viability.

Figure 1 - Main Street in 1998, when Swezey's anchored the center of downtown Patchogue.

The Patchogue Lace Mill languished vacant for years, eventually becoming a burned out eyesore, and was taken

down in the late 1990s. A new flagship Swezey's department store was built in its place in 2000. In 1996, the Patchogue Theatre was purchased by the Village of Patchogue and some local business owners. The theater was renovated and restored, and reopened in 2000 as the Patchogue Village Center for the Performing Arts hosting a variety of live performances.

Study Area

The boundaries of the study area were determined such that they include the entire walkable area of the Patchogue central business district. The study area is approximately one mile long, including the business district along Main Street from Waverly Avenue on the west to the Patchogue Village border on the east. The study area includes lands approximately one block north and one block south of Main Street, including the municipal parking lots. The properties along Ocean Avenue approximately 1 ½ blocks north and 1 ½ blocks south of Main Street are also included in the study area.

The study area is comprised of a central core business area and a non-core business area that is located at the eastern and western fringes of the core. The core of the business district centers at the intersection of Main Street and Ocean Avenue. It is approximately ½ mile long and encompasses businesses located slightly west of Havens and Railroad Avenues and continues along Main Street to Rose and Rider Avenues. There are 157 parcels in the core business area and 48 parcels in the non-core area.

A map of the study area boundary can be found on the following page.

Data Gathering Methodology

Digital maps, aerial photographs, field inspections and published sources were used in gathering information for this study. Digital aerial photographs of the study area from 2001 were overlaid with the digitized tax map parcel boundaries provided by the Suffolk County Real Property Tax Service. Lines depicting the study area boundary and the core area were drawn around the specific land parcels included in the study area.

The study area was divided into 6 sections so that gathering information in the field would be manageable. A field inspection of the study area was performed by walking the downtown. Each parcel within each section was numbered consecutively in walking order. The field work gathered the following information for each parcel within the study area: the street address, type of storefront use, name(s) of business(es), second floor use, building condition, and other notes. Digital photos were taken of the majority of the buildings in the study area as a record of current conditions.

The appendix contains a list of the field notes for all of the parcels within the study area by tax map number (district/section/block/lot) and by section parcel number. The appendix also contains the section maps with the associated section parcel numbers.

Insert Study Area Map

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

Patchogue is a 2.3 square mile incorporated village in the southwest area of the Town of Brookhaven, in central southern Suffolk County on Long Island. According to the 2000 U. S. census, the Village of Patchogue had a population of 11,919. Appendix II contains detailed 2000 census data for the Village of Patchogue. The Long Island Power Authority estimated that by 2001, the population in the Village of Patchogue had grown to 11,947.

The Village of Patchogue has been a population center for more than 100 years. In 1900, the population of the Village was 2,926, which represented 20% of the population of the entire Town of Brookhaven. Patchogue Village's population grew significantly in the 1920s to 6,860 by 1927. Significant population growth took place in the 1950s (a 20% increase) and again in the 1960s (a 31% increase), and the Village's population reached 11,582 in 1970. The population declined slightly in the 1970s (-3%) and 1980s (-2%) as the average household size declined, but total population increased by 8% between 1990 and 2000.

The Village of Patchogue is the most densely populated community in the Town of Brookhaven. In 2000, the Village had a population density of 5,182 persons per square mile, nearly triple the density in the Town of Brookhaven overall (1,730 persons per square mile) and significantly more dense than the neighboring communities of Blue Point (2,448 persons per square mile), North Patchogue (3,726 persons per square mile), or East Patchogue (2,509 persons per square mile).

Households

A housing unit is defined by the U. S. Census Bureau as a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. A household is an occupied housing unit. A household may consist of a single family, or one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

Although Patchogue's total population has fluctuated at between 11,000 and 12,000 residents since 1970, the Village has continued to experience slow growth in the number of housing units and households. In 1980, Patchogue had 4,408 households and by 1990 that number had increased to 4,430. By 2000, the number of households increased 5% to 4,636. The number of households is expected to continue to increase very slowly in coming years as houses are developed on scattered vacant lots, and as redevelopment of older existing residences or other structures may occur.

In recent decades, the number of persons per household has been declining in Patchogue, as it has in most other areas of Long Island. This is the reason why population in the Village declined in the 1970s and 1980s as the number of households increased. The average size of a household in the Village of Patchogue in 1970 was 2.9 persons. Average household size in Patchogue declined significantly in the 1970s to 2.51 persons per household in 1980, and again to 2.45 persons per unit in 1990. There was a turnaround in household size in the Village between 1990 and 2000 as the average household size increased to 2.54 persons per household. The average household size in Patchogue has remained below the average for both the Town of Brookhaven and Suffolk County due to Patchogue's smaller housing units and relatively large number of apartments. However, the average household size in Brookhaven Town declined between 1990 and 2000 while in Patchogue the average household size increased in the same period.

Housing

As of 2000, Patchogue Village contained 4,902 housing units, of which 4,636 (95%) were occupied. The majority of the remainder of the housing units were for rent or for sale, and 59 units were being held for seasonal use. Patchogue has a wide variety of housing types. Fifty percent of all housing units in Patchogue are one-family detached units (compared with 80% in the Town of Brookhaven as a whole). There are also a large number of two family homes, 11% of the total, structures with between five and nine units (14% of the total), and apartments with 20 or more units (10% of the total). The remainder of housing units are in buildings with three or four units, between 10 and 19 units, or in one-family attached housing units.

Figure 2 - Typical housing one block north of downtown Patchogue.

Compared to most communities on Long Island, Patchogue has a very low percentage of owner-occupied housing units. In 2000, the percentage of occupied households that were owner-occupied was 48.6%. This figure compares with 67% in East Patchogue, 79% in the Town of Brookhaven, and 80% in Suffolk County. The only community in Suffolk County with a lower owner-occupied percentage is Moriches (46%). Other Suffolk communities with low owner-occupied percentages were Greenport (55%), Riverhead (58%), Wyandanch (58%), and Bay Shore (60%). Meanwhile, in 1960, 64% of the housing in Patchogue Village was owner-occupied, so the owner-occupied percentage has declined while it has held fairly steady in Suffolk County over the years.

Figure 3 - Tiffany Apartments on Main Street and Maple Avenue, in the study area.

Housing values are relatively moderate in the Village of Patchogue. In 2000, the median value of owner-occupied housing units in the Village was $143,100 but increased dramatically in 2001, along with values in most Suffolk County communities. The median reported home value in 2000 in Brookhaven Town was $159,100 (11% higher than in the Village of Patchogue) and was $185,200 in all of Suffolk County. In 2000, the median number of rooms in a home in Patchogue was 4.7 rooms, significantly below the Town of Brookhaven median of 6.1 rooms and the Suffolk County median of 6.3 rooms per home. The relatively small and affordable nature of Patchogue's housing stock attracts young families, young single persons, and senior citizens.

As of 2000, the largest proportion of housing units in Patchogue Village were built before 1940 (31%), followed by the 1960s (20%) and the 1970s (18%). Twenty-two percent of the housing units in the Village were built in the two decades between 1940 and 1959. Relatively few housing units were built in Patchogue since 1980; just 8% were built in the 1980s and 3% were built since 1990.

Figure 4 - Most of Patchogue's housing was built before 1960.

Income and Employment

Based on 2000 census figures, the median household income in the Village of Patchogue was estimated to be $49,710 in 2001. This figure is 28% lower than Suffolk County's median of $69,013 and 25% lower than Brookhaven Town's median of $66,040. As of the 2000 census, 1,275 or 10.7% of the people in Patchogue had incomes below the poverty level, a higher percentage than in the Town of Brookhaven (5.9%) or Suffolk County as a whole (6.0%). In 2000, the census reported that Patchogue had 172 households having income from public assistance, 3.7% of the total, a figure higher than the percentage Brookhaven Town (1.8%) and Suffolk County (1.5%).

The 2000 census reported that 6,140 of Patchogue's residents were employed. The unemployment rate was 5.5%, higher than Brookhaven Town's unemployment rate (4.3%) and the unemployment rate for Suffolk County (3.9%). The percentage of Patchogue's employed residents working in blue-collar occupations was 27% in 2000, compared to 22% in the Town of Brookhaven and 21% in Suffolk County as a whole.

The 2000 census reported that 4,296 (70%) of Patchogue residents who work drove alone to work. Another 17% car pooled, 8% took public transportation, 3% walked to work, and 2% worked at home or used other means. Compared to Brookhaven Town and Suffolk County as a whole, there is

a higher incidence of car pooling and use of public transportation among residents of Patchogue who work.

Age, Race, and Ethnicity

Typical of Long Island communities, Patchogue's population is aging, but not as quickly as most other communities. The median age in Patchogue was 27.8 in 1970, rose to 30.0 in 1980, increased to 33.1 in 1990 and was 34.9 in 2000. In 2000, the median age was lower than the median age in the Town of Brookhaven (35.2) and lower than Suffolk County's median (36.5). However, in 1990 Patchogue's median age was 33.1, higher than Brookhaven's median of 31.6. So while Patchogue's median age is increasing, it is not increasing as much as other parts of Long Island.

Patchogue Village has a relatively young population. The population younger than five years old comprised 7.3% of the population, compared to 7.1% in Brookhaven and Suffolk County. Meanwhile, the percentage of persons aged 65 and over was smaller in Patchogue (10.5%) than in Brookhaven (10.1%) or Suffolk County (11.8%). In fact, contrary to local trends the population aged 65 and over *declined* by 19% in Patchogue between 1990 and 2000. (Meanwhile, between 1990 and 2000 the population aged 65 and over increased in Brookhaven town and Suffolk County by 16% and 18%, respectively).

Patchogue Village is a predominantly white community, but the Village has become much more ethnically diverse. In 1990, the Village was 90% white and was 81% white in 2000. There were small changes in the other racial groups but the Hispanic population has increased dramatically, from 1,066 in 1980 to 1,544 in 1990 and 2,842 in 2000. The Hispanic population in Patchogue increased by 84% between 1990 and 2000 and comprised 24% of the total population in 2000.

Figure 5 - There is an Hispanic influence in Patchogue Village.

LOCAL RETAIL CENTERS

Many shopping centers of all sizes were built on Long Island starting in the 1950s and construction of new centers has continued through to the current decade. As of 2000 (the latest year the Suffolk County Planning Department performed a detailed analysis), the vacancy rate in retail centers had improved from the high levels of 1996. The percentage of vacant stores in shopping centers in Suffolk County was 12% in 2000, higher than the vacancy rates in the 1980s but below the 19% vacancy rate of 1996. Vacancy rates in Suffolk's downtown shopping districts also improved to 8.1% in 2000 from 11.4% in 1996. Patchogue's downtown vacancy rate in 2000 was 12.9%.

The Patchogue central business district (CBD) is primarily located along Montauk Highway (Main Street), with its center at the intersection of Ocean Avenue. The central business district also heads north and south along Ocean Avenue, north along Havens Avenue, and south along Railroad Avenue. Its major anchor stores are Burlington Coat Factory, Stanley's furniture, and a store vacated by Swezey's department store.

Local Downtown Business Districts

The East Patchogue business district is the only central business district within one mile of the center of the Patchogue business district. This relatively small business district stretches for several blocks along Montauk Highway and contains 55 storefronts. The business district includes a small vacant movie theater and is anchored by a thrift store and a hardware store. In 2000, East Patchogue's downtown had a vacancy rate of 18%, the 7th highest vacancy rate among Suffolk County's 73 downtown business districts.

A very small downtown district in Bayport is two miles southwest from the center of the Patchogue CBD. Bayport has 16 storefronts. Three miles to the east of the Patchogue CBD, there is a small downtown in Bellport village. This business district has 54 stores and a low vacancy rate.

Figure 6 - Bellport has an appealing downtown district.

Local Shopping Centers

The new Swezey's department store located on West Main Street is the only major store or shopping center greater than 30,000 square feet within one mile of the Patchogue central business district. Although the store is very near downtown Patchogue, the Suffolk County Planning Department does not consider the new Swezey's to be part of the downtown since it has its own parking field and it is not easy to walk to the store from the other stores and parking lots of downtown Patchogue. This 108,000 square foot store opened in 2000 on the site of the former Patchogue Lace Mill factory.

There are several significant shopping center clusters between one and three miles from the center of downtown Patchogue. Information about the major shopping centers located near downtown Patchogue can be found in Table 1. These retail centers total nearly two million square feet of space and will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

Figure 7 - Swezey's two-level department store is located west of downtown Patchogue.

Table 1. Major Shopping Centers* Less Than Three Miles From Downtown Patchogue

Center Name	Community	Street	Square Footage	Major Stores	Year Built
Swezey's	Patchogue	Montauk Hwy.	108,000	Swezey's	2000
Gateway Plaza	N Patchogue	Sunrise Hwy.	340,000	Marshalls, King Kullen, Bob's, Michaels	1988, 1992
Home Depot	N Patchogue	Sunrise Hwy.	125,000	Home Depot	1999
Sun Wave Plaza	N Patchogue	Sunrise Hwy.	101,000	Waldbaums, Staples, Duane Reade	1971
Waverly Plaza	N Patchogue	Sunrise Hwy.	99,000	Petco, Sears Hardware, Genovese, Pep Boys	1978, 1997
(Caldor Center)	E Patchogue	Montauk Hwy.	147,000	Genovese	1967
Swan Nursery Commons	E Patchogue	Montauk Hwy.	122,000	Waldbaums, Walgreens, Tutor Time	1990
Home Depot	E Patchogue	Sunrise Hwy.	109,000	Home Depot	1960, 1990
Pathmark	E Patchogue	Sunrise Hwy.	61,000	Pathmark	1997
Sun Vet Mall	Holbrook	Sunrise Hwy.	267,000	Pathmark, Toys R Us, McCrory	1974
Costco, Circuit City	Holbrook	Sunrise Hwy.	143,000	Costco, Circuit City	1993, 2000
Sun Lakes	Holbrook	Sunrise Hwy.	139,000	Stop&Shop, Seamans, JoAnn, Sunrise Fitness	1990
Attias Flea Market	Sayville	Sunrise Hwy.	142,000	Attias Flea Market	1962, 1992
Blue Point Plaza	Blue Point	Montauk Hwy.	38,000	King Kullen	1963, 1984
Bayport Shoppes	Bayport	Montauk Hwy.	32,000	CVS	1988
TOTAL			**1,973,000**		

* Shopping centers or major stores larger than 30,000 square feet.
Source: Suffolk County Planning Department

On Sunrise Highway just north of the village boundary in North Patchogue there is a cluster of large shopping centers. Three large retail centers are on the north side of Sunrise Highway, the 340,000 square foot *Gateway Plaza* built in 1988, the 99,000 square foot *Waverly Plaza* built in 1978 and renovated in 1997, and the 125,000 square foot Home Depot built in 1999. The 101,000 square foot *Sun Wave Plaza* is on the south side of Sunrise Highway in the same area and contains Waldbaums, Staples, and Duane Reade and was built in 1971.

Figure 8 - Gateway Plaza in North Patchogue off Sunrise Highway.

To the north and east of Patchogue Village (in the community of East Patchogue, according to the U. S. Census Bureau) there are four large retail centers within three miles of downtown Patchogue. The forlorn 147,000 square foot former *Caldor* center on Montauk Highway, built in 1967, contains a Genovese drug store and major vacant space. The 122,000 square foot *Swan Nursery Commons* (built in 1990) that has Waldbaums, Walgreens, and Tutor Time is also on Montauk Highway. The 109,000 square foot *Home Depot* (building built in 1960 and expanded by Home Depot in 1990) and the 61,000 square foot *Pathmark* (built in 1997) are along Sunrise Highway near Route 112.

Figure 9 - Free-standing Pathmark on Route 112.

Holbrook to the northwest of Patchogue also has a significant cluster of large-scale retailing. Along the north side of Sunrise Highway, the *Sun Vet Mall* (267,000 square feet) was built in 1974, *Sun Lakes* (139,000 square feet) was built in 1990, and *Costco* and *Circuit City* were built in 1993 and 2000, respectively. In the same area, on the south side of Sunrise Highway in Sayville lies the *Attias Flea Market* shopping center, with 142,000 square feet built in 1962 and expanded in 1992.

To the west of Patchogue, there are two neighborhood shopping centers on Montauk Highway. *Blue Point Plaza* contains King Kullen and is 38,000 square feet in size, and *Bayport Shoppes* has CVS and is 32,000 square feet.

The area surrounding the Village of Patchogue seems very well served by large retailers and supermarkets. Within three miles of downtown Patchogue, there are seven supermarkets, six large drug stores (including the CVS on the south side of East Main Street at the end of Route 112), two large home improvement stores, and a wholesale warehouse club store.

Patchogue lies outside the standard five mile service radius of any large regional shopping center. The closest regional malls to the Patchogue downtown business district are the *Smithaven Mall* in Lake Grove, which is 10 miles away, and the *South Shore Mall* in Bay Shore which is 15 miles away. However, because the South Shore Mall is relatively easy to access via Sunrise Highway and travel times along this corridor are relatively short, Patchogue can be considered to be within a wider trade area of the South Shore Mall. Downtown Patchogue is four miles from the outlet centers in North Bellport off Sunrise Highway. These shopping centers are experiencing high vacancy rates, but they sell comparison shopping goods similar to those found in regional malls.

Figure 10 -
Free-standing CVS just east of downtown Patchogue.

ZONING AND EXISTING LAND USE

Zoning

The Zoning Map for the Village of Patchogue with a revision date of April 30, 1998 contains 12 zoning categories. The downtown Patchogue study area is regulated by the following 7 categories: Residence Districts A and C; Business Districts D1, D2, D3 and D5; and Industrial District E. Appendix III contains a summary of the permitted uses by zoning district for the zoning districts within the Patchogue business district study area. Appendix III also includes a table of zoning requirements for the entire Village of Patchogue.

The Village of Patchogue zoning ordinance is a modified pyramid design whereby the uses allowed in the most restrictive districts are allowed in each of the following less restrictive districts. Thus residential districts allow only residential uses but commercial districts allow both commercial uses and residential uses (except for one and two family dwellings). The industrial district allows industrial uses as well as commercial and residential uses when authorized by special permit from the Board of Trustees.

The core business district is dominated by D3 and D2 Business District zoning. The lots surrounding the intersection of Main Street and Ocean Avenue are predominantly D3 Business zoned. The periphery of the core is regulated by D2 Business District. Table 2, Uses Permissible in the D3 Business District, lists all uses allowed in the D3 zone. This list exemplifies how confusing pyramid zoning can be.

The core business district land uses are generally in compliance with the existing zoning. The Patchogue Village Theater and the Congregational Church on the north side of East Main Street are non-conforming uses in the D3 Business zone, but the D3 district permits flexibility by approval of the Board of Trustees after a public hearing. There are two parcels zoned D5 in the core area; both parcels contain drive-through banks which would require a zoning change by the village if or when physical or use changes are proposed by the owners.

The zoning categories A Residence and C Residence play a minor role in the core area and cover small parcels here. The C Residence category, which is located on the west side of Taylor Lane south of Terry Street, is part of the Village's Skateboard Park. The A Residence parcel is located between Maple Avenue and Rose Avenue and contains parking areas and a church parsonage.

The zoning districts in the non-core areas of the business district include the C Residence, D1, D2 and D5 Business and E-Industrial districts. The western non-core area is predominantly zoned E Industrial and D2 Business. The eastern non-core area contains each of the business district categories.

The uses in the non-core area are generally in compliance with the existing zoning, which is to be expected since most of the existing zoning in these areas is the most flexible. The E Industrial district allows a wide variety of uses with additional uses allowed by approval of the Board of Trustees. The D5 Business district contains the most non-conforming uses in the non-core area. The D5 Business district is designed for businesses that sell, distribute or dispense any goods, wares, merchandise or services to persons while said persons are in automobiles or other motor vehicles. The definition of this zone specifically mentions filling stations. The gas station on the southeast corner of West Main St and River Avenue is in a D2 Business district and the gas station on the north east corner of East Main Street and Medford Avenue (Route 112) is in a D1 Business district. The northeast corner of Rose Street and East Main Street is zoned D5 Business and is a shopping center.

Table 2. Uses Permissible in the D3 Business District

District	Uses
A Residence	~~One-family dwelling~~; ~~Churches, parish houses, convents & accessory buildings of a religious nature[1]~~; Public parks, playgrounds and recreational areas[2.]; Elementary or high schools approved by the NYS Bd of regents, accredited colleges or universities[1.]; Private attached garage as an accessory building; Other customary accessory uses and buildings, provided that such uses are incidental to the principal use, but such uses shall not include any activity conducted as a business.
B Residence	Everything allowed in A Residence District; offices/professional buildings with Board of Appeals approval
C Residence	Everything allowed in A Residence District; ~~Owner-occupied two-family dwellings[1]~~; Garden apartments, apartment house or multiple family dwellings[3.]
D1 Business	Any use permitted in any residence district, ***except for one-family and two-family dwellings***; Garden apartments[3.]; Apartment houses[3.]; Telephone exchanges; Offices and professional buildings for health-related services[1.]; Shops and stores for the sale at retail of consumer merchandise and services, except for those uses permitted in the D5 Business District; Personal service shops, such as barbershops, beauty parlors and like services; Bowling alleys; Banks, ~~theaters~~, restaurants other than drive-in restaurants and offices for other than health-related services; Undertaking establishments; Commercial bathhouses or boathouses; Minor garages; Motor vehicle salesrooms as permanent buildings, and used car lots, together with automobile service facilities other than body shops accessory to same[4.]; Game rooms (2 yr. permits)[1.]; Other uses which, in the opinion of the Board of Appeals, meet the standards set forth in §93-49C of this ordinance and are of the same general character as those listed as permitted uses in this district.; Kennels; ~~Billiard parlors[1]~~
D2 Business	Any use permitted in any residence district and the D1 Business District, ***except for one-family and two-family dwellings***; Golf courses: private, country and yacht clubs[4.]; Shops and stores for wholesale and retail consumer merchandise and services except for those uses permitted in the D5 Business District; Laundromats[4.]; Other uses which, in the opinion of the Board of Appeals, meet the standards set forth in §93-49C of this ordinance and are of the same general characterization as those listed as permitted uses in this district.
D3 Business	Any use permitted in the D2 Business District, ***except:*** ***Churches, Theaters, Places of public entertainment, Places of public assembly, catering and restaurant businesses with seating in excess of 150 persons, Schools: private, public, parochial, business and professional except when approved by the Board of Trustees after a public hearing.; Billiard parlors***

[1.] Authorization required by a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals
[2.] Authorization or operation by a governmental authority
[3.] Approval required by the Board of Trustees
[4.] Permission required by a special exception by the Board of Appeals

Source: Zoning, Chapter 93 from the Code of the Village of Patchogue

Insert Map: Zoning - 2002

Existing Land Use

The land use inventory conducted for the Patchogue business district and surrounding area was prepared on a Suffolk County Real Property Tax Map base and field verified in July 2002. The Suffolk County Planning Department's Geographic Information System (GIS) was employed to link land use data with parcels shown on the tax map. The GIS enabled the staff to develop and plot the existing land use map for the study area showing the land use categories and to generate acreage figures associated with each of those categories. Land use categories are suitable for characterizing community layout and function, determining land available for development, and preparing master plans.

There are 13 general land use categories that are commonly used for regional planning purposes. These categories are: low density residential (one housing unit per acre or more), medium density residential (between one and five housing units per acre), high density residential (five or more housing units per acre), commercial, industrial, institutional, recreation and open space, agriculture, vacant, transportation, utilities, waste handling and management, and surface waters.

Each tax map parcel within the study area was assigned one of the 13 general land use categories. When more than one use was found to occur on a single parcel, the primary use of that parcel was determined and assigned to that parcel. Primary use is based on the relative intensity of the use in comparison with that of the other use(s) in question. For example, if a store occupies the first story of a building and the second floor is used for an apartment, this parcel is classified as commercial, given the relative intensity of the uses in question and the prevailing nature of neighboring retail uses.

Several other conventions were used in assigning land uses to each parcel. Some of those conventions are:

- When structures on improved parcels are unoccupied, the parcels are not classified as vacant. They are classified according to the type of structure present, i.e. commercial, residential, etc.

- The existing zoning designation of a parcel is not a factor in how that parcel is classified as to existing land use.

- The number of housing units on a parcel was used in conjunction with parcel acreage to determine residential density, and hence, the classification of the parcel as low, medium or high density residential.

- Parcels that are adjacent to commercial uses in business districts and are used as parking lots in connection with these uses were classified as commercial.

The transportation category for this land use analysis has been omitted. Limitations of the base information available for the analysis precluded computing the acreage of the roads within the study area. All of the parking lots within the study area support commercial uses and have therefore been included in the commercial land use category.

There are 205 non-roadway tax map parcels in the study area covering 94.6 acres. Table 3 shows the number of parcels and the sum of the acreage contained in each land use category. The table shows only those seven land use categories which presently exist in the study area.

Table 3. Existing Land Use, Downtown Patchogue, July 2002

Land Use Category	Number of Parcels	Acreage	Percent of Total Acreage
Commercial	153	60.6	64.1%
Institutional	18	10.5	11.1%
Recreation & Open Space*	7	8.2	8.6%
Vacant	8	6.4	6.8%
Industrial	7	5.4	5.7%
High Density Residential	10	3.0	3.2%
Medium Density Residential	2	0.5	0.5%
Total	**205**	**94.6**	**100.0%**

*includes cemeteries

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

The land use map shows that almost two-thirds of the study area acreage is used for commercial purposes. Eleven percent of the land consists of institutional uses. The recreation/open space category contains another 8.6 % of the land. More than three quarters of the recreation/open space category is made up of the 6.4 acre St. Paul's Cemetery. Without St. Paul's Cemetery, the recreation/open space category would total 1.8 acres, or 1.9% of the study area acreage.

Vacant land makes up 6.8% of the study area, the majority of which is the four acre vacant lot adjacent to the new Swezey's store. Almost 6 % of the land is used for industrial purposes. Medium and high density residential housing comprises the remaining 4% of land in the study area.

Insert Map: Land Use - 2002

Figure 11 - St. Paul's Cemetery, 6.4 acres of the Recreation and Open Space land use category.

Land use acreage was analyzed for the core and non-core portions of the study area. Almost 70% of the core study area is used for commercial purposes. Institutional uses comprise 16% and high density residential uses make up another 6% of the land use in the core. The non-core portion of the study area is made up of 59% commercial land use, followed by recreation/open space with 13%. In the non-core area, industrial uses comprise 10% of the land and another 10% of the land is vacant. The core area contains a higher proportion of commercial, institutional and high density residential uses, while the non-core area has a higher proportion of industrial uses and vacant land. The following table contains detailed land use statistics for the core and non-core portions of the study area.

Table 4. Existing Land Use by Core and Non-Core Areas, Downtown Patchogue, July 2002

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Acres	% of Sub-Study Area Acres	Percent of Total Acres
Core Study Area				
Commercial	123	31.4	69.7%	33.2%
Institutional	16	7.2	15.9%	7.6%
High Density Residential	7	2.7	6.0%	2.9%
Recreation & Open Space*	4	1.7	3.7%	1.7%
Vacant	4	1.3	3.0%	1.4%
Medium Density Residential	2	0.5	1.1%	0.5%
Industrial	2	0.3	0.6%	0.3%
Total	***158***	***45.0***	**100.0%**	**47.6%**
Non-Core Study Area				
Commercial	30	29.3	59.0%	30.9%
Recreation & Open Space*	3	6.5	13.1%	6.9%
Industrial	5	5.1	10.3%	5.4%
Vacant	4	5.1	10.2%	5.4%
Institutional	2	3.3	6.7%	3.5%
High Density Residential	3	0.3	0.6%	0.3%
Medium Density Residential	0	0.0	0.0%	0.0%
Total	***47***	***49.6***	**100.0%**	**52.4%**

*includes cemeteries

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

There are eleven large, specific uses in the study area. The largest specific use (in acres) is the village-owned parking lots (which are on multiple parcels). Village-owned parking lots comprise 15.4 of the 31.4 commercial acres in the core business district. The new Swezey's store is on the largest single parcel within the study area and is also categorized as a commercial use. The next largest parcel is the 6.4 acre St. Paul's Cemetery which falls into the recreation and open space land use category. The 3.8 acre parcel west of the new Swezey's store is in the vacant land use category. Three institutional uses are the next largest, the Sixth District Court, the Brookhaven Hospital Pavilion and the Lutheran Church. The eleven large specific uses total 47.0 acres which comprises half of the study area. Table 5 contains information for each of the eleven largest single uses.

Figure 12 - Village of Patchogue owned parking lot. Village-owned parking lots are the largest single use in the study area.

Table 5. Largest Single Uses, Downtown Patchogue

Specific Use	Location	Acres	Land Use Category
Village-owned Parking Lots	Core Area	15.4	Commercial
Swezey's Department Store	W. Main St.	8.4	Commercial
St. Paul's Cemetery	W. Main St.	6.4	Rec/Open Space
Vac. Parcel adj to Swezey's	W. Main St.	3.8	Vacant
Sixth District Court	W. Main St.	3.4	Institutional
Brookhaven Hospital Pavilion	W. Main St.	2.6	Institutional
Lutheran Church & Parsonage	E. Main St.	2.0	Institutional
Tiffany Apartments	E. Main St.	1.5	High density res.
Baron Honda Pontiac	E. Main St.	1.4	Commercial
Village Plaza	E. Main St.	1.2	Commercial
CVS	E. Main St.	1.1	Commercial

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

The largest specific uses in the core area were analyzed. Large uses within the core study area are generally less than one acre in size except for the parking lots use. The majority of the uses are commercial and institutional.

Table 6. Largest Single Uses in the Core Area, Downtown Patchogue

Specific Use	Location	Acres	Land Use
Village Owned Parking Lots	Core Area	15.4	Commercial
Lutheran Church, Parsonage	E. Main St.	2.0	Institutional
Tiffany Apartments	E. Main St.	1.5	High density res.
US Post Office	E. Main St.	0.9	Institutional
Old Swezeys Store	N. Ocean Ave.	0.8	Commercial
Congregational Church	E. Main St.	0.7	Institutional
Burlington Coat Factory	E. Main St.	0.7	Commercial
Jay's Fabric Strip	S. Ocean Ave.	0.7	Commercial
Fleet Bank Center	E. Main St.	0.7	Commercial
Methodist Church	Church St.	0.7	Institutional
Patchogue Theatre	E. Main St.	0.6	Institutional

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

Figure 13 - The Lutheran Church, the second largest single use in the core study area.

ANALYSIS OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

Analysis of the Business District

Downtown Patchogue is the fifth largest downtown business district in Suffolk County. Only the downtown areas in Huntington, Southampton, Babylon, and Bay Shore have more stores. Central business districts (CBDs) were the only places to shop on Long Island until the early 1950s. The vitality of Long Island's central business districts was reduced starting in the 1960s as large scale shopping centers were built outside of downtown areas. New shopping centers offered new store options and easy parking. CBDs struggled through the 1970s. In the 1980s the retail situation in Suffolk County CBDs began to stabilize, and vacancy rates improved somewhat.

Through the early and mid-1990s, shopping center construction on Long Island continued in full force, despite tepid economic indicators. As a result, store vacancy rates increased in downtown districts and especially in shopping centers. As the local economy continued to improve during the late 1990s and some CBDs underwent aesthetic improvements and became more boutique and service-oriented, vacancy rates in CBDs improved despite continued construction of new large shopping centers. CBDs have begun to accommodate more non-retail uses, many of which are not found in larger shopping centers. These non-retail uses can help keep vacancy rates down in CBDs. Some CBDs have reverted to serving the smaller communities that surround them instead of larger regions.

Types of Storefront Uses

In July 2002, a field inspection was performed to determine the uses of the buildings in the downtown Patchogue business district. The use of the ground floor of an occupied storefront or building was classified as either retail or non-retail. Examples of non-retail uses found in today's downtown areas include: church, bank, theater, travel agency, barber, beauty salon, dry cleaner, laundromat, repair service, fitness center, tanning, dance, karate, photography, printing, insurance office, real estate office, doctor's office, tax preparation office, law office, library, and post office. Downtown areas, with their mostly smaller stores, are more likely to contain these types of uses than are shopping centers.

Figure 14 - Patchogue's post office in the downtown, a non-retail use.

Figure 15 - Institutional and office uses are prevalent in downtown Patchogue.

The percentage of storefronts used for retail purposes was calculated for downtown Patchogue. The percentage of occupied storefronts that were retail stores has been declining significantly in the past decade. The retail percentage was 51% in 2002, down from 56% in 2000 and 68% in 1996. See Table 7.

Table 7. Retail Versus Non-Retail Uses, Downtown Patchogue

Year	Retail	Non-Retail	Total	% Retail
1989	113	64	177	64%
1996	90	43	133	68%
2000	87	68	155	56%
2002	75	73	148	51%

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

The change in the total number of stores in downtown Patchogue over the years does not reflect a change in the number or intensity of buildings in Patchogue, but a change in the number of vacant stores at the time and small changes in the definition of the physical business district. In the 1996, 2000, and 2002 surveys, the same buildings were included in each survey.

There were some interesting findings among types of storefront uses. Most of the uses present in downtown Patchogue lend themselves to daytime activities. There are seven hair salons, two barber shops, two nail salons, and 31 office storefronts which operate during normal business hours and are generally closed after 6 PM. Institutional uses in the area are also predominantly daytime-oriented, including churches and the post office. However, restaurants and the Patchogue Theater are magnets that will tend to attract people in the evenings.

Figure 16 - The Patchogue Theatre and Trio restaurant.

Typically, downtown areas have their share of eating and drinking establishments and various food stores. Patchogue is no exception, having 10 restaurants and 24 other small food or beverage stores. However, downtown Patchogue does not have a bakery and has only two delicatessens.

Figure 17 - Downtown Patchogue has several clothing, accessory, and shoe stores.

Patchogue has a relatively large number of clothing and accessories stores. Clothing stores in downtown areas are becoming less and less common, but Patchogue maintains seven clothing stores. Even more noteworthy, there are four additional stores devoted to formal attire (tuxedos, formal gowns), in addition to three shoe stores. This niche appears successful, attracting shoppers that have a specific need while not competing directly with the malls and large retailers. Patchogue also has four furniture stores, a relatively large number for a downtown district. In addition to the furniture stores, there are two antique stores.

Figure 18 - The library on Main Street is an activity center.

Downtown Patchogue also contains some types of uses that are noteworthy because they are activity centers. The Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts has 1,200 seats, offers frequent live performances and often attracts an evening audience. The main branch of the Patchogue-Medford library is also located on Main Street. This library is not only an activity center for district students and residents, but contains a local history room with historical documents relating to the Long Island and New York City region. Briarcliffe College has a location on Lake Street, and

Figure 19 - Briarcliffe College on Lake Street.

this site is a busy activity center for its students and staff. The Patchogue post office on Main Street and the churches in downtown Patchogue also serve as activity centers at particular times.

A tally of the number and exact type of stores located in downtown Patchogue is located in Appendix IV.

Some types of storefront uses which might be expected in a downtown area are notably absent from downtown Patchogue. The downtown district does not have a bakery, a book store, a pet store, art dealer, sporting goods store, or bicycle shop. There are four medical doctors offices in downtown Patchogue, a number which is surprisingly small given today's expanding health care industry. Also, there is only one dry cleaner which is contained within a laundromat.

Vacancy Rates

Over the years, the Suffolk County Planning Department has undertaken several field inspections of downtown areas on Long Island. The number of occupied stores and the number of vacant stores were noted. Vacancy rates were computed by dividing the number of vacant stores by the total number of stores. These vacancy rates are not based on square footage. A store is defined as vacant if it is not occupied and is not in the process of being re-occupied. A store undergoing renovations or displaying a relatively new sign indicating that a store is "coming soon" are considered occupied. Buildings used simply for storage purposes are considered vacant. Non-traditional buildings along the streets within the downtown area are included in the calculations as storefronts, such as gas stations, office buildings, churches, churches, apartment buildings and other residences.

Figure 20 - Vacant Swezey's a the northeast corner of Main Street and Ocean Avenue.

In July 2002, 33 vacant storefronts or buildings were noted in the downtown Patchogue business district. The vacancy rate in Patchogue's business district was 18.2% in 2002. This figure was less favorable than the 12.9% vacancy rate noted in 2000. The increase in the vacancy rate could be due to the effects of the departure of the main anchor store of the downtown (Swezey's), the economic slowdown, or other factors. Vacancy rates were previously surveyed in the years 1996, 1989, 1982, and 1978. Table 8 shows vacancy rates in downtown Patchogue for each of the six survey years.

The change in the total number of stores in downtown Patchogue over the years does not reflect a change in the number or intensity of buildings in Patchogue, but reflects a slight change in the definition of the physical business district.

Table 8. Vacant Storefronts, Downtown Patchogue, 1978 through 2002.

Year	Occupied Storefronts	Vacant Storefronts	Total	Vacancy Rate	Suffolk CBDs Vacancy Rate
1978	178	18	196	**9.2%**	7.7%
1982	210	28	238	**11.8%**	4.6%
1989	177	23	200	**11.5%**	7.6%
1996	133	33	166	**19.9%**	11.4%
2000	155	23	178	**12.9%**	8.1%
2002	148	33	181	**18.2%**	-

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

The vacancy rate in Patchogue has consistently remained above the county average. Downtown Patchogue's vacancy rate has remained between one and nine percentage points above the Suffolk County average in five field surveys. Of all the field surveys, Patchogue's vacancy rate was highest in 1996, when the County's vacancy rate was above 10%. Patchogue's vacancy rate improved between 1996 and 2000, but by 2002 had worsened to near the high level of 1996. The departure of Swezey's from the heart of the downtown district in 2000, along with a general economic slowdown in the region in 2001 and 2002 may have contributed to the high vacancy rate in 2002.

The core area of the business district has been divided into five segments. The first segment (North West) contains the buildings on the north side of Main Street and the west side of North Ocean Avenue. The second segment (North Central) contains stores on the east side of North Ocean Avenue and the north side of Main Street. The third segment (North East) contains buildings on the north side of Main Street between Maple Avenue and Rose Street. The two remaining segments are on the south side of Main Street. Segment four is the south side of Main Street and the west side of South Ocean Avenue, and segment five is the south side of Main Street and the east side of South Ocean Avenue.

Insert Map: Vacant and Partially Vacant Buildings - 2002

The number of occupied versus vacant stores and buildings was enumerated for the various areas within the study area. Table 9 details the vacancy situation by segment withing the study area. A map showing the five study area segments, and the locations of parcels containing vacant storefronts follows.

Table 9. Vacancy Data by Segment, Downtown Patchogue, 2002.

Street Segment	Occupied Storefronts	Vacant Storefronts	Total	Vacancy Rate
North West	14	10	24	**42%**
North Central	37	7	44	**16%**
North East	7	0	7	**0%**
South West	41	3	44	**7%**
South East	49	13	62	**21%**
TOTAL	**148**	**33**	**181**	**18%**

Source: Suffolk County Department of Planning

In July 2002, parts of the Patchogue business district appeared economically healthy, and other parts of the downtown were clearly not performing well. The highest vacancy rate occurred in the North West segment. There were 10 vacant stores in this area (42% of the total), including the large former Swezey's building on the corner of Main Street and Ocean Avenue, two vacant stores just west of the former Swezey's, and the buildings on the northwest corner of Main Street and Havens Avenue.

Figure 21 - Vacant stores on the west side of North Ocean Avenue north of Main Street.

The next highest vacancy rate occurred in the South East segment, which had 13 vacant stores (21% of the total). Most of the vacant stores were located in a strip of stores in one building on the east side of South Ocean Avenue. Other vacant stores in this segment existed on South Ocean Avenue and on the south side of Main Street closer to Ocean Avenue.

The North Central segment had seven vacant stores, representing 16% of the stores in the segment. Several of the vacancies were clustered near the intersection on the southeast corner of Oak Street and North Ocean Avenue, including a former Swezey's building. Two other vacancies existed on Main Street just east of Ocean Avenue.

Figure 22 - Vacant stores on the east side of South Ocean Avenue south of Main Street.

Fewer vacant storefronts existed in the South West segment of the downtown business district. The vacancies in this segment were scattered throughout. The North East segment had no vacancies. However, this segment has only seven storefronts or buildings, and includes the Tiffany apartment complex and a large church.

Second Floor Uses

Many buildings in downtown Patchogue have second floors, often used as apartments, offices or storage space. In July 2002, an attempt was made to classify the current use of this second floor space for each parcel in downtown Patchogue. Fifty-three parcels in downtown Patchogue were noted having second floor uses. Office uses were the most common, accounting for 27 (51%) of second floor uses, followed by residential or apartment uses, of which there were 17 (32%). Storage was the second floor use five times in downtown Patchogue, and four second floor spaces were currently vacant. Most buildings in downtown Patchogue did not contain a second story.

Figure 23 - Two story building on Main Street east of the Patchogue Theatre.

Business Improvement District

In response to continued increasing competition from regional malls, new large stores and community shopping centers, several Long Island communities formed Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) between 1991 and 1997. These districts are self-taxing, and use their funds to promote the community's downtown business district. The central business district's merchants are organized and promoted cooperatively, and sometimes the BID's funds are used for beautification and festivals.

The BID is still a relatively new opportunity for downtown districts. Bay Shore and Riverhead, two CBDs plagued with high vacancy rates for many years, were the first two Suffolk County communities to create BIDs in 1991. Patchogue established its BID in 1992. Greenport and Huntington established BIDs in 1994. Each of these BIDs offers varying services for its downtown area.

In 1998, the Village Trustees expanded the boundary of the Patchogue BID to the boundaries of the entire Village. (See Appendix V.) The new definition included all properties in the Village except single family dwellings and undeveloped properties which are zoned for single family uses. The expanded BID allows for additional revenue to be generated for building facade improvements, security, code enforcement, open space improvements and promotional activities beyond the previous limit of the BID. The expanded BID also allowed BID tax assessments to be lowered in the original BID. The BID's tax rate is limited to 20% or less of the Village rate. The vast majority of the funds for the BID are raised as a special district tax based on the assessed value of each property. The median tax paid toward the BID was slightly more than $100 per year in 1998.

Attractions

There are several notable attractions and events in and near the Patchogue central business district. There are two ferry terminals on the Patchogue River south of the business district operated by the Davis Park Ferry Company. Approximately 3,000 feet south of Main Street on West Avenue lies the Fire Island National Seashore ferry terminal which serves passengers to the National Park Service area known as Watch Hill [on Fire Island]. One half mile further south lies the ferry terminal serving passengers traveling to Davis Park on Fire Island. According to the *Patchogue River Maritime Center Plan* (Suffolk County Planning Department, 1999), the number of ferry passengers for the Patchogue River was estimated to be on the order of 250,000 to 300,000 per year.

As mentioned previously, the Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts offers frequent live performances. The Miss New York State pageant event was held at the Theatre in 2001 and will return in 2002. The Suffolk Sports Hall of Fame, located on South Ocean Avenue is being established to honor persons, living or deceased, who have gained prominence and have made substantial contributions on behalf of themselves and Suffolk County in the fields of professional and amateur sports. This attraction will serve as a public museum to educate the public with regard to the cultural, historical and human contributions and achievements of the honorees in and out of the world of sports.

Figure 24 - Suffolk Sports Hall of Fame on South Ocean Ave.

Figure 25 - Future home of Suffolk Sports Hall of Fame adjacent to its existing location.

Patchogue's "Alive After Five" annual concert series, every other Friday night during the entire summer from 6 to 10 PM, Main Street is closed to traffic, shops stay open late, and the street is filled with pedestrians, live music and craft vendors. The Patchogue Highland Celtic Festival is an annual festival at Shorefront Park on the Great South Bay, featuring live entertainment through the day, including several bagpipe bands.

Figure 26 - Poster advertising Patchogue's "Alive After Five" program.

PARKING

Parking Spaces Required According to the Zoning Code of the Village of Patchogue

Article IV of the Village of Patchogue zoning code pertains to off-street parking requirements. It mandates the number of parking spaces required for the various uses within the village. The code states that "...parking spaces shall be provided and satisfactorily maintained by the owner...". Table 5 summarizes the numbers of parking spaces required by uses.

The Patchogue zoning ordinance is comparable to surrounding area ordinances regarding the parking space to building square footage ratio. The Village of Patchogue generally requires one parking space for each 150 square feet of commercial (retail and office) space and for second floor uses. Industrial space requires one space per 200 square feet of floor space. Residential parking spaces are based upon the size of the housing units. Uses upon which seating determines occupancy, such as restaurants, schools and churches, have parking space requirements based upon the number of permanent seats in the building. Parking space requirements based upon the number of students or the number of seats in a facility are very difficult to enforce.

The D3 Business district in Patchogue Village requires *no* off-street parking. The zoning code has a requirement unique to the Village of Patchogue. The D3 district supercedes the requirements in Table 3. The D3 Business District encompasses almost the entire core study area and includes most of the publically owned parking lots. The D3 Business district is indicated on the Public and Private Parking Lots by Section map.

Table 10. Number of Parking Spaces Required by Type of Use, Village of Patchogue

Use	Number of Parking Spaces Required
Theaters	one parking space for every seven seats
Multiple Dwellings	Efficiency apartments - 1 ¼ space per apartment One bedroom unit - 1 ½ space per apartment Two or more bedroom unit - 2 spaces per apartment
Churches	one parking space for every seven seats
Office Buildings	one parking space for each 150 square feet of floor area
All structures where offices or living quarters are provided over the first floor	one parking space for each dwelling unit one parking space for each 150 square feet of floor area, in addition to the parking required for the first floor use.
All retail and service businesses	one parking space for each 150 square feet of floor area
Schools and instructional facilities for adults	one parking space for each student, to be determined by the total capacity for students of the school or facility
Restaurants	one parking space for each 4 seats, determined by the total seating capacity for the facility.
All other businesses and industrial buildings	one parking space for each 200 square feet of floor area.
No off-street parking is required in the D3 Business District.	

Source: §93-17. Spaces Required. Zoning, Chapter 93 from the CODE of the Village of Patchogue, General Code Publishers Corp., October 1996.

Existing Parking in Downtown Patchogue

The provision of adequate vehicular parking facilities is an essential element of any downtown center. Parking spaces related to the commercial uses in the Patchogue business district were analyzed for this study. Parking spaces that were constructed for residents of apartment complexes have been excluded from this parking analysis. The number of parking spaces was determined by examining detailed 2001 aerial photographs and counting the number of marked spaces or estimating the number of spaces if spaces were not marked. Parking lot ownership information was based on data from the Suffolk County Real Property Tax Service Agency.

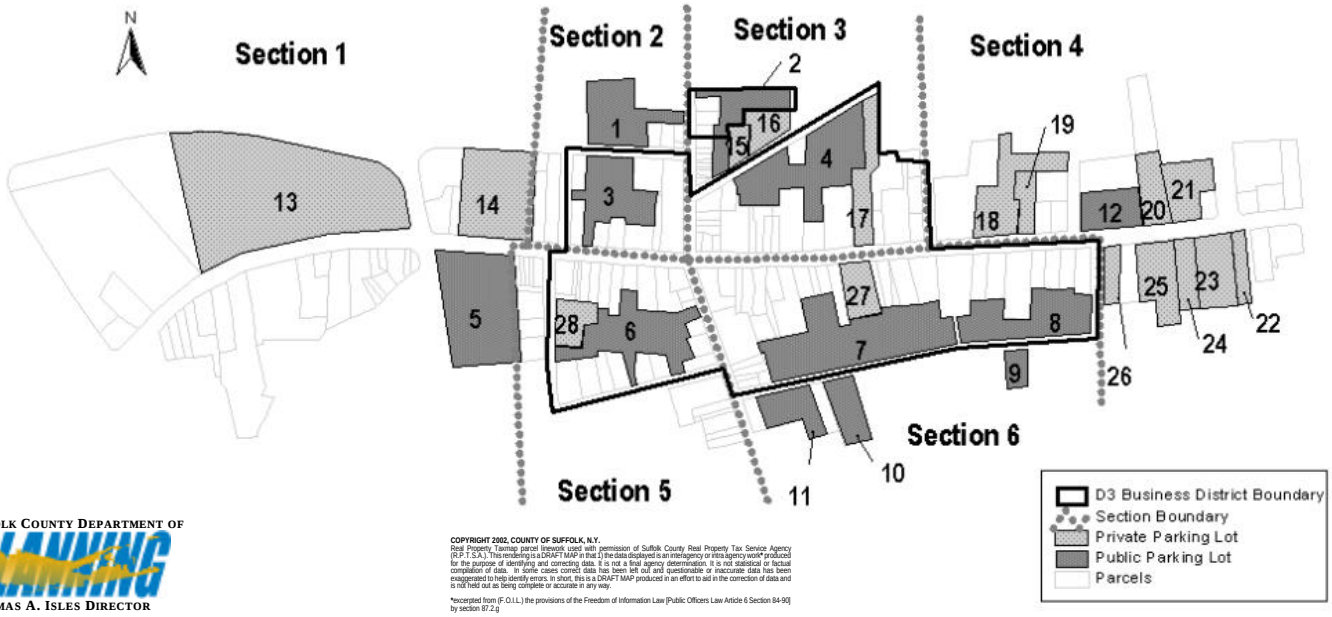
The parking near downtown Patchogue can be grouped into two categories: public parking and privately owned parking. There are 12 municipally owned parking lots containing 1,856 spaces within the study area. All but the parking lot adjacent to the Sixth District Court are owned by the Village of Patchogue. The court parking is owned by Suffolk County. There are also approximately 250 on-street marked public parking spaces located along Main Street, South Ocean Avenue, Church Street and Havens Avenue. Private parking lots associated with commercial uses contain an additional 1,187 parking spaces.

The following table enumerates the number of non-residential parking spaces by type of ownership within the study area. The accompanying map highlights the publicly owned and privately owned parking lots. On-street parking is not highlighted. The lot numbers in the following table refer to the numbers on the accompanying map.

Figure 27 - Entrance to public Village-owned parking off Terry Street.

Figure 28 - On-street parking is an important component of public parking in downtown Patchogue.

Public and Private Parking Lots by Section



SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
THOMAS A. ISLES DIRECTOR

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Real Property Taxmap parcel linework used with permission of Suffolk County Real Property Tax Service Agency (R.P.T.S.A.). This rendering is a DRAFT MAP in that 1) the data displayed is an interlagency or intra-agency work* produced for the purpose of identifying and correcting data. It is not a final agency determination. It is not statistical or factual compilation of data. In some cases correct data has been left out and questionable or inaccurate data has been exaggerated to help identify errors. In short, this is a DRAFT MAP produced in an effort to aid in the correction of data and is not held out as being complete or accurate in any way.

*excerpted from (F.O.I.L.) the provisions of the Freedom of Information Law [Public Officers Law Article 6 Section 84-90] by section 87.2.g

Table 11. Publically and Privately Owned Parking Lots in the Patchogue Village Business District

Public Parking Lots				Private Parking Lots			
Lot No.	Parking Lot	Ownership	Number of spaces	Lot No.	Parking Lot	Ownership	Number of spaces
1	Fire Department	Patchogue V.	133	13	Swezey's Dept Store	private	469
2	Opposite Reeses, adj to Moose	Patchogue V.	107	14	Brookhaven Memorial Hospital	private	170
3	Parking Garage	Patchogue V.	137	15	Masonic Lodge	private	18
4	Lot behind Patchogue Theatre	Patchogue V.	288	16	Office Building	private	33
5	Sixth District Court	Suffolk Co.	171	17	Bank of New York	private	67
6	Adj to Sports Hall of Fame	Patchogue V.	217	18	Lutheran Church	private	44
7	Adj to Library	Patchogue V.	232	19	Parcel adj. To Lutheran Church	private	42
8	West of Post Office	Patchogue V.	124	20	Aid Auto Store Shopping Center	private	42
8	Adj to Burlington Coat Factory	Patchogue V.	177	21	Commerce Bank	private	45
9	across street from Burlington	Patchogue V.	45	22	Avenue Sound	private	26
10	Skate Board Park	Patchogue V.	39	23	CVS	private	68
11	Public Garden & adj Parking	Patchogue V.	86	24	Office Building	private	45
12	Shopping Center PL, east end	Patchogue V.	100	25	Village Plaza Shopping Center	private	56
	Public parking in parking lots		***1,856***	26	Shopping Center	private	22
				27	North Fork Bank	private	14
	Marked on-street parking	***Patchogue V.***	***252***	28	Knights of Columbus	private	26
					Parking in Private Parking Lots		***1,187***
Total Number of Parking Spaces			***3,295***				

Adequacy of Existing Parking

Within the study area, the types of existing uses with their respective square footage were examined to determine whether the amount of existing parking is adequate for the uses within the business district. An estimate of the gross square footage of each building within the study area was obtained using the 2001 aerial photos. The building information was matched with field data gathered in July 2002 to determine the square footage in each category of use. This information was then compared with the number of parking spaces associated with each section within the study area.

Figure 29 - The district court is an institutional use in downtown Patchogue.

The total gross square footage of institutional uses (198,000 square feet) has been excluded from these calculations since most institutional uses occur at non-peak times. Institutional uses include: the Sixth District Court, the Brookhaven Memorial Hospital medical building, Briarcliffe College, the Patchogue Theatre, fraternal organizations, churches and associated buildings, the Sports Hall of Fame, the library and the post office.

Figure 30 - The Brookhaven Memorial Hospital medical building has a large private parking lot.

The Sixth District Court and the Brookhaven Hospital medical building are outside the D3 Business District and have their own parking lots. The Patchogue Theatre, fraternal organizations and the churches are uses which tend to be off-peak (not during regular business hours). The library, the post office and especially Briarcliffe College draw people during peak business hours during the day. The Briarcliffe students fill the public parking lot adjacent to the school when school is in session.

The following table provides the gross square feet of buildings per parking space for each section of the study area. Both public and private parking lots were used in these calculations.

Table 12. Parking Spaces and Total Square Footage of Commercial, Industrial and Second Floor Uses in the Patchogue Business District by Section

Section	Number of parking spaces*	Estimated Total Commercial, Industrial, and second floor uses	
		Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Total Space per Parking Space
1	810	215,000	265
2	270	114,000	422
3	513	152,000	296
4	490	142,000	290
5	243	143,000	588
6	717	270,000	377
TOTAL	3,043	1,037,000	341
On-street parking	252		**315** **

* Associated with each section. **Including on-street parking spaces.

Source: Suffolk County Planning Department

Sections 1, 3 and 4 each have less than 300 square feet of gross area per available parking space. Sections 1 and 4, which are totally outside the D3 Business District, have 265 square feet and 290 square feet of space, respectively, per parking space. Section 3, with 296 square feet of space per parking space, is located north of Main Street and is within the D3 Business District.

Section 2, the remaining section north of Main Street, has a much higher 422 square feet of buildings per parking space. On the south side of Main Street, sections 5 and 6 have averages of 588 and 377 square feet of buildings per parking space, respectively. There are 315 square feet of buildings per parking space in the study area. On-street parking in marked spaces is included in this figure.

A typical requirement of 150 to 200 square feet of buildings per parking space often applies to one-story development that is automobile-oriented and dominated by parking lots. The D3 Business zone in downtown Patchogue has a parking ratio of slightly more than 300 square feet of building area per parking space. Three hundred square feet of buildings per parking space is a reasonable proportion for a compact downtown. Patchogue has the mechanism in place to retain dense commercial development in the D3 Business district while allowing the more auto-oriented uses at the fringes of the downtown area.

Condition of Existing Parking

Adequate, well maintained parking is perhaps the single most important issue impacting the economic viability of a suburban downtown shopping area. Parking lots comprise a very large proportion of the area in downtown Patchogue. The core study area comprises about 60 acres and paved surfaces including public and private parking lots, roads and sidewalks cover 56% of that area.

On-street Parking

The village has at least 250 marked on-street parking spaces. On-street parking is the quickest and most convenient way for customers to access stores. Many shoppers prefer to use these parking spaces, and these parking spaces turn over the quickest and serve thousands of customers daily. It is commendable that the village removed the parking meters in 2001. Patchogue is now on an even playing field with other downtown districts and shopping centers that do not charge for parking.

Publically Owned Parking Lots

While on-street parking is important to the downtown, the municipal off-street parking lots are its lifeblood. Patchogue has done a good job of providing for the parking needs of the downtown area and has 11 distinct parking lots that contain almost 1,600 spaces. The parking lot numbers that follow are keyed to the map titled *Public and Private Parking Lots by Section* on page 44.

Figure 31 - Entrance to public parking (lot #1) off Lake Street.

Parking lot # 1 is adjacent to the fire department building and behind the apartments and stores on the northwest corner of North Ocean Avenue and Lake Street. This lot contains 133 spaces, 99 of which are available for free public parking. The remaining spaces in lot #1 are reserved for fire department personnel. The pavement in this lot is in good condition, the spaces are properly striped and the lot is devoid of trees or landscaping.

Parking lot # 2 is accessible from North Ocean Avenue and from Oak Street. This lot has 107 spaces that serve the businesses on the east side of North Ocean Avenue, north of Oak Street. Parking spaces in this lot are not well-marked and the lot is devoid of trees and landscaping.

Figure 32 - Public parking and parking structure (lot #3) on the south side of Lake Street.

Figure 33 - Ramp to second level of parking structure, currently inaccessible.

Parking lot # 3 is the public parking lot that contains the parking structure. The lot is on the south side of Lake Street with access from both Lake Street and Havens Avenue. This lot contains about 250 parking spaces, approximately 140 of which are currently accessible. In 1977 the Village built the parking structure which added about 100 parking spaces. Due to structural problems, the second level is to be removed by December 2002. The removal of the second level will allow for 10 new ground level parking spaces which will be created where the ramp to the second level now stands. The ground level of the lot is in good condition and the stalls are well striped. There is little landscaping in this lot and Briarcliffe College students heavily use this parking lot when the college is in session.

Figure 34 - Public parking (lot #4) off Oak Street.

Parking lot #4 is located on the south side of Oak Street. This lot is the largest municipal lot in the Village with 288 spaces and is the best situated to serve the retail core on the north side of East Main Street and the Patchogue Theatre. Theatre patrons heavily use this parking lot when shows are being performed. This lot is properly striped and has a few trees.

Figure 35 - View of vast parking lot for Suffolk County District Court from South Street.

Parking lot #5 is the parking lot for the Suffolk County 6th District Court and has 171 spaces. It is located east of West Avenue and north of South Street. This lot is generally underused and can provide adequate parking for the western fringe of the downtown business area. Occupancies are around 10% but can run as high as 60% or more when court is in session, usually Wednesday mornings. There is some landscaping in this lot and the lot is in good condition.

Parking lot # 6 is located behind the stores south of Main Street and west of South Ocean Avenue and contains 217 parking spaces. The lot is accessible from Railroad Avenue, Church Street, and South Ocean Avenue. Historically, this parking lot has been one of the more crowded parking lots. It serves the southwestern core of the business area. The pavement in this lot is cracked with holes and patches and is in need of repair. The lot is devoid of any landscaping, but offers an attractive walkway to Main Street and an appealing entrance from South Ocean Avenue.

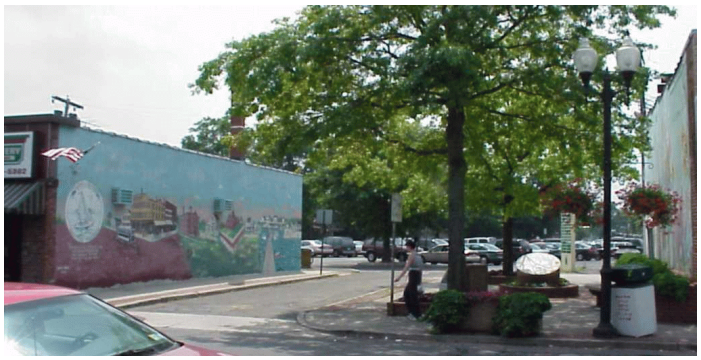

Figure 36 - Entrance to municipal parking (lot #6) from South Ocean Avenue.

Figure 37 - Walkway from parking lot #6 to Main St.

Parking lots #7 and #8, both located off Terry Street, serve the southeast segment of downtown Patchogue. Parking lot #7 has 232 parking spaces and is comprised of two parcels on the north side of Terry Street west of the U. S. Post Office service entrance. It serves businesses on South Ocean Avenue as well as Main Street, including the Patchogue-Medford Library. Additional landscaping makes this lot the most attractive parking lot in downtown Patchogue in spite of its large size.

Figure 38 - Entrance to municipal parking (lot #7) off Terry St.

Parking lot # 8 has 301 parking spaces and is comprised of two parcels on the northwest corner of Rider Avenue and Terry Street east of the U. S. Post Office service entrance. This parking lot is accessible from Terry Street and from Rider Avenue. This lot is one of the more well-used parking lots in downtown Patchogue. It is possible that employees of adjacent businesses use the parking spaces closest to the stores, leaving fewer parking spaces for customers in the western part of this parking lot. The lot has a few trees and a bench on the corner.

Figure 39 - Crowded municipal parking (lot #8) near Burlington Coat Factory.

Parking lots #9, #10 and #11 are three small Village parking lots on the south side of Terry Street between South Ocean Avenue and Rider Avenue. These three lots contain a total of 170 parking spaces that are seldom used. Parking lot #9 has 45 parking spaces and is directly across Terry Street from the Burlington Coat Factory. Parking lot #10 includes the skateboard park, has 39 parking spaces and has no landscaping. The western lot (#11) has 86 parking spaces and is all asphalt except for an attractive small park on the corner of South Ocean Avenue and Terry Street.

Figure 40 - Public parking (lot #10) and skateboard park.

Parking lot #12 is on the northeast corner of East Main Street and Rose Avenue and is the parking lot in front of a small shopping center, but the parking lot is now owned by the Village. There are 100 parking spaces and only about one third of these are occupied on a regular basis. The lot is in good condition and the stalls are well-marked. There is no landscaping in this lot.

Figure 41 - Village-owned parking lot in front of small shopping center east of the core of downtown Patchogue.

Privately Owned Parking Lots

The third type of parking in the village is privately owned parking lots. Almost 1,200 parking spaces are in private lots but the majority of these spaces are outside the core of the study area. The private parking lots are in generally good condition but are devoid of landscaping and trees.

Figure 42 - Private parking owned by the Bank of New York (lot #17) adjacent to municipal parking lot (#4).

More than six hundred privately owned parking spaces were added to serve two relatively new buildings west of the core of the downtown. Parking lot #13 is the parking lot for the new Swezey's Department store which has 468 parking spaces. On one visit to the new Swezey's, only 21% of these spaces were occupied. On the Wednesday before Christmas the Swezey's parking lot was well-occupied but still had excess capacity. Parking lot #14 is the 170 space parking lot behind the Brookhaven Hospital Medical Pavilion on the north side of Main Street.

In the core of the business district there are seven private parking lots with 244 parking spaces. Three of these private parking lots are in the D3 Business zone (107 parking spaces, including 67 spaces in the parking lot owned by the Bank of New York). The core of the business district also contains four other private lots which contain 137 parking spaces. Each of the private lots is directly associated with the business on that particular parcel.

There are 7 private parking lots east of the business core containing 304 spaces. The new CVS (lot #23) has the largest lot with 68 parking spaces, followed by the Village Plaza Shopping Center (lot #25) with 56 spaces.

The parking lot configurations of the parcels west and east of the business core are the type associated with shopping center development where the number of parking spaces is based upon the square footage of the buildings.

Figure 43 - Private parking lot (#19) between the Lutheran church and a commercial building.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The Village of Patchogue has had a long and successful history as one of the most important downtown business districts in Suffolk County. This history includes a time when Patchogue was a tourism destination for visitors from New York City who filled large hotels and seasonal homes to enjoy cool bay breezes and a multitude of social and recreational amenities. The history also includes a time when Patchogue was a major manufacturing center offering thousands of jobs and economic opportunity. Most notably, the history also includes an extended time when downtown Patchogue was a regional retail center for Suffolk County. In this capacity, the downtown served both the local market, enhanced at times by tourism and manufacturing, as well as the regional market. For many residents of central Suffolk County, Patchogue was the place to go for comparison shopping and a night out on the town.

While the tourism market ended after the 1920s and most manufacturing was phased out after World War II, new activities and opportunities have evolved as these activities receded. Patchogue is no longer a regional retail center, but the new District Court and the Brookhaven Hospital facility are examples that illustrate a new and significant service economy taking root in the Village. In addition, Patchogue is no longer a manufacturing center but its role as a gateway to Fire Island has increased.

Figure 44 - Brookhaven Memorial Hospital medical pavilion on West Main Street.

Throughout the history of Patchogue, as with most communities, the only real constant is change. While the physical form of the Village may remain relatively static over the years, the reality is that Patchogue has at times experienced significant change. To its credit, the downtown has adapted to that change as new opportunities have developed. It is in this manner that the future must be approached. The ability of Patchogue to anticipate and adapt to change will determine the future of the Village. This will occur through both public and private sector actions - the public through the administration of government policy, especially at the local level. For the private sector, it will be manifested in the many decisions to open or expand a business, buy a home or otherwise invest in the future of the community.

It is recommended that the Village of Patchogue pursue a four part strategy for the downtown business district:

1. ***Encourage retail and destination uses in the downtown core. The destination uses should be focused on arts, entertainment and restaurant uses.***

2. ***Encourage non-retail uses outside of the core including office, service and institutional uses.***

3. ***Encourage development of owner-occupied residential units within walking distance of the downtown, comparable with local conditions.***

4. ***Assure that basic services throughout the business district are provided at the highest possible level.***

Each of the four strategies is explained in further detail in the following section.

Four Part Strategy for the Continued Revitalization of the Patchogue Village Business District

Encourage retail and destination uses in the downtown core.

- *Modify the zoning code.*
  The existing zoning code should be amended to encourage mixed-use development with an emphasis on retail uses on the first floor. In addition, outside dining should be encouraged to promote an inviting and lively downtown.

- *Encourage in-fill development to close the gaps of the business district.*
  In-fill retail development will help create a continuous, positive experience of street-level shopping.

- *Provide tax relief and incentives.*
  The Village has the authority to provide tax relief and incentives to property owners who are willing to build or make improvements to buildings in the downtown area.

- *Redevelop the vacated Swezey's sites.*
  These sites lie at the heart of downtown Patchogue. Any redevelopment that occurs must reinforce the continuity of a seamless shopping experience by providing nonstop retail on the first floors.

- *Promote Patchogue as an entertainment destination.*
  The BID should consider hiring a professional publicist/ press agent to promote Patchogue, its festivals, theater, etc. More people will come to Patchogue if the Village actively markets itself. A positive reputation will also make it easier to attract prospective retailers.

- *Continue to beautify the Village.*
  There is only one chance to provide a first impression. A clean, properly maintained, and well lit downtown represents the businesses in the downtown as caring, clean, well-run and safe.

Encourage non-retail uses outside of the core including office, service and new institutional uses.

- *Modify the zoning code.*
  The existing zoning code should be amended to encourage office, service and institutional uses.

- *Discourage the construction of shopping centers within a mile of downtown Patchogue.*
  Shopping centers with their associated parking lots tend to sap the strength out of downtown areas.

Encourage development of owner-occupied residential units within walking distance of the downtown, comparable with local conditions.

- *Re-zone areas south of the core business area.*
  Many of the business areas south of Terry Street which are zoned D4 Business are contiguous to properties zoned C Residence. These business parcels should be re-zoned C Residence and the businesses phased out. The parcels could eventually be assembled and higher density, owner-occupied townhouses built. New housing near the core would cause more residents to be within walking distance of the downtown. All residential housing should be appropriately buffered from non-residential uses.

- *Re-zone the parcel to the west of Swezey's to higher density residential.*
  This site seems well-suited for owner-occupied townhouses.

Assure that basic services throughout the business district are provided at the highest possible level.

- *Maintenance*
  The business district must be maintained at the highest possible level. As a pedestrian place, it is imperative that the business district be clean and attractive. This must include regular and thorough street and sidewalk cleaning, trash and litter removal and landscaping maintenance. The Village and the BID should consider these activities among the highest priority. In addition, privately owned spaces must also be well maintained including buildings, signs, lighting and landscaping.

- *Security*
  A safe environment must not only be provided in the business district but must also be perceived by the public. In addition to police and BID security personnel there should also be a presence of street cleaners and similar municipal personnel. Such personnel provide a positive presence in the downtown without an overt law enforcement tone. This technique has been used in many of the business improvement districts in New York with great success.

- *Aesthetics*
  In addition to basic maintenance, the business district must foster a comfortable, attractive environment, one that is conducive to pedestrians. The Village has done an excellent job in creating flowering planters along Main Street that add very positively to the business district. Such efforts by both the public and private sectors should be expanded to include additional street trees and park areas. Equally important, all parking lots and walkways should be well landscaped and maintained.

- *Publicity*
  The Village and the BID have done a very good job promoting the community. This should be considered a basic, permanent activity especially if Patchogue is to capture customers from outside of the local market area, a key to expanding Patchogue's role as a destination location.

- *Administration*
  The day-to-day functions of the Village government and the BID can influence the business district. It is incumbent on these entities to strive to provide prompt, efficient service. This can apply to such services as permitting, code enforcement and public works complaint response.

To implement this strategy, the following sections contain more detailed recommendations for improving downtown Patchogue. Some of the recommendations outlined in the following sections apply to particular parcels of land. In these cases, specific Suffolk County Tax Map (SCTM) numbers are cited.

The recommendations are organized as follows:

- Zoning and Land Use
- Redevelopment
- Parking, Traffic Flow and Signage
- Aesthetics
- Pedestrians

Zoning and Land Use

Downtown business districts are still viable commercial locations because they are close to more densely populated areas and are therefore convenient to many residents. A stable, healthy housing stock surrounding a downtown business district is important to maintain the vitality of the downtown area. When homes are added in or near the downtown area, the vitality of the downtown is strengthened by the additional business generated by the added residents. The prudent addition of other development within a downtown, such as commercial and institutional uses, will also reinforce the identity and vitality of a business district. In this way, a more cohesive, better defined downtown district will result.

Recommendation: Examine the existing zoning code and amend it to agree with the vision for the Village.

The zoning code for a community should represent the vision for its development. The zoning code for the Village of Patchogue provides a blueprint for a significant industrial and commercial center. However, the existing development pattern does not reflect the existing zoning and it is questionable that the existing zoning reflects the vision for the Village.

To encourage mixed-use development in the downtown, the Village may want to create a Downtown Development District in its zoning code, with provisions for development bonuses in certain specified cases. The Town of Islip has created such a district.

Recommendation: Concentrate retail and intensive service businesses in the core central part of downtown Patchogue. Encourage the conversion of marginal businesses outside the core business area to higher density residential use.

When Patchogue was one of the largest shopping destinations in Suffolk County, there was a need for a very large commercial area to serve a large population. Since retailing has changed and downtown Patchogue now serves a somewhat different purpose, there is a diminished need for so much commercial development. Land parcels adjoining the core area of the business district often have a mix of different businesses adjoining residential areas. Land outside the core should eventually be re-used for non-retail uses or preferably residential purposes and the core retail area should be concentrated on Main Street and Ocean Avenue within the core of the business district. Retail should be the primary use for the ground floor in the core of the business district. Higher density residential uses, possibly for senior citizens, would be a good re-use for some marginal commercial sites. The addition of housing near the downtown would increase the number of nearby residents who would patronize local businesses in the downtown area.

The eventual redevelopment of existing businesses outside the core to higher density housing would improve the aesthetics of neighborhoods and at the same time reinforce the unity and solidity of the business district. In particular, zoning on the parcels on the south side of Terry Street between Taylor Lane and Rider Avenue and the parcels in the block between Church Street, Railroad Avenue, South Ocean Avenue and Gerard Street is currently D2 and D5 Business and should be changed to C Residence. The Terry Street parcels abut a C Residence zone to the south.

Figure 45 - Former homes on the south side of Terry Street partially converted to commercial uses.

Figure 46 - Attractive multi-family home on the south side of Terry Street.

One of the houses on Terry St. is an attractive multi-unit Victorian house. It is an example of how other homes on the street might appear if the older homes on the street (now converted to or augmented with unattractive business uses) reverted to their prior residential use.

Recommendation: Re-zone the parcel to the west of Swezey's for owner-occupied townhouses.

The four acre parcel to the west of the new Swezey's store (SCTM# 204-8-9-5.2) is presently zoned E Industrial. There has been discussion about developing this parcel for a supermarket and/or large drug store. While the development of these stores might create a vibrant shopping center at this site combined with Swezey's, the area is already well-served by supermarkets within a distance of three miles, and also heavily served by large drug stores. In addition, developing large retail stores at this location would not positively affect foot traffic on Main Street in downtown Patchogue. This site seems well-suited for a reasonably scaled owner-occupied townhouse development, with its good access to secondary roads, views of Patchogue Lake and proximity to downtown Patchogue.

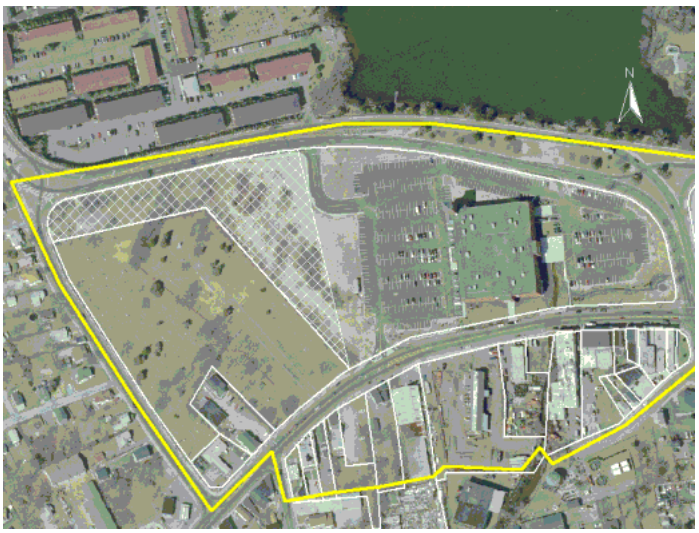

Figure 47 - Vacant parcel between Swezeys and St. Paul's Cemetery. © 2001 Aerial Photography New York State Office for Technology.

Recommendation: Encourage housing above retail uses in the core of the business district.

The downtown area is the ideal location for small apartments with its proximity to shopping, services, and transportation. There remains a growing need to provide moderately priced rental units for single, young married, or senior citizens with walkable access to downtown amenities. Space above stores in downtown Patchogue should be used for apartments with two or fewer bedrooms. Second floor space could also be used as loft space for dwellings and studios for artists. Occupied space above retail space helps strengthen the business of downtown merchants and service-providers. In space above stores in downtown areas, office uses should be encouraged where apartment uses are not feasible. Many existing single-tenant or multi-tenant buildings in downtown Patchogue may be suitable for a second story addition.

Figure 48 - Typical apartments over ground floor retail on Main Street in Patchogue.

Recommendation: Encourage in-fill development to close the gaps in the core of the business district.

Early maps, photos, and drawings depicting downtown Patchogue show most of the buildings parallel with the street line with very few breaks in between. Gaps in a business district discourage pedestrians from venturing beyond those gaps. In-fill commercial development will help create a continuous positive experience of street-level shopping for visitors. Redevelopment or new commercial development in the core of the business district should be ground-floor retail with office or apartment uses above. Any new development on Main Street or Ocean Avenue in the core should have building lines roughly aligned with existing buildings yet should maintain a sufficiently wide sidewalk to allow for easy pedestrian flow and give the appearance of a continuous compact downtown area.

Figure 49 - Gaps in continuous retail street frontage discourage pedestrian exploration of a downtown.

Recommendation: Discourage the construction of shopping centers within a mile of downtown Patchogue.

Aside from the new Swezey's store, there are presently no major retail centers greater than 30,000 square feet within a mile of the Patchogue business district. The residential area surrounding the Patchogue business district is presently well-served by a variety of neighborhood and community retail centers within one to three miles. If a large shopping

center were to be built within a mile of Patchogue's downtown, the area would become over-served by retail centers and the downtown would likely be adversely affected. Within downtown Patchogue itself, significant new floor space of commercial buildings is also unnecessary except to replace outdated or run-down structures.

Recommendation: Create a village green park to provide open space and a focal point to the downtown area.

Downtown Patchogue lacks park and open space acreage. An attractive park area for passive recreation should be provided in downtown Patchogue to enhance Patchogue's image and its reputation as a recreation destination. This public square would be the site of outdoor exhibitions, cultural events, holiday events, and other celebrations. The village green would serve as a focal point for the downtown area, a central gathering spot during Village events and a place for neighbors to meet. The Village of Greenport recently completed its village square in the heart of its downtown area, a successful example of a land acquisition for a vibrant public space.

Figure 50 - This attractive pocket park lies at the southwest corner of West Avenue and West Main Street, but it is outside the core area of downtown Patchogue and is smaller than one-tenth of an acre.

Any village green should contain bike racks to allow bikers to shop or explore the attractions of the downtown. The village green should also contain a booth for police, constable, and security use. Public restrooms in the village green would be beneficial.

A good location for a public square would be the area on the north side of East Main Street, just west of Maple Avenue. This location is on Main Street, it is in the downtown area, and it is not far from activity centers such as the Theatre, the library, and the post office. The area is also close to the large municipal parking lot (#4).

Figure 51 - Poorly functioning small Village owned public space adjacent to the Brickhouse Brewery.

The Village would need to acquire two parcels for park purposes, SCTM# 204-9-7-25.5 and 26.7. These parcels total 1.2 acres. The Village may also want to acquire two additional lots for this village green: the lot to the northwest (SCTM# 204-9-7-23, a roadway owned by the Bank of New York) to allow pedestrian access from the municipal parking lot #4, and the commercial property at the corner of Maple Avenue (SCTM# 204-9-7-13) to extend the village green to the corner. These two lots would add 0.5 acres to the village green. (Regardless of whether a village green is located in this area, the Village should explore the possibility of acquiring lot 23 owned by the Bank of New York, to add 34 municipal parking spaces contiguous to parking lot #4.)

Figure 52 - Possible location for a public square on the north side of East Main Street west of Maple Avenue.

Figure 53 - View of possible public square site from Maple Avenue.

Figure 54 - Attractive gardens at the corner of Terry Street and South Ocean Avenue.

Figure 55 - View of alternative public square site from Terry Street looking west.

An additional or alternative location for a village green lies at Terry Street and South Ocean Avenue. While this location does not have the visibility that a Main Street location would have, it is still easily accessible via South Ocean Avenue and is near the municipal parking lots on the north side of Terry Street. The 1979 Suffolk County Planning Department plan for Patchogue recommended a park in this area, and a small attractive park currently exists here. The existing park (SCTM# 204-13-6-1) is about one-fifth of an acre. The adjoining Village-owned land is paved for a parking lot that is underutilized. Two other parcels to the east (SCTM# 204-13-6-39 and 37) are also owned by the Village and also comprise the underutilized parking lot. If these three parcels were all converted to park use, a 1.1 acre village green park would be created. A privately owned parcel (SCTM# 204-13-6-2) separates the three Village parcels from the Village skate park (SCTM# 204-13-6-26.1). If the Village acquired the privately owned parcel, the combined acreage of the village green would be 2.2 acres.

Redevelopment

Parts of downtown Patchogue are economically healthy, but other portions of the downtown could benefit from redevelopment improvements currently and as situations develop. In certain cases, lots could be assembled, that is, adjacent lots could be combined to allow for better planned commercial or mixed uses. The Village has the authority to provide tax relief and incentives to property owners who are willing to build or make improvements to buildings in the downtown area.

The Village should consider incorporating Smart Growth principals in redevelopment. Community charrettes are part of the Smart Growth processes whereby discussions between residents, design professionals and the Village leaders encourage open design for the area. Charrettes bring together design professionals, discussion facilitators, citizens, business interests, government officials and developers to create a shared vision for the downtown at the earliest possible time in the process. The hamlet of Huntington has used the charrette process to create a vision for a section of the business district. The site http://www.visionhuntington.org shows the visioning process for Gerard Street in February 2000.

The charette process would enable the Village to solidify a vision for the downtown area that will incorporate the ideas of interested parties. Charrette members, in groups of 8-10 people, should be encouraged to make a walking audit of the downtown. People gain perspective by walking, talking and role playing what it would be like to use the space. It is best when groups are diverse, including government officials, business people, realtors and residents.[1.]

Recommendation: Redevelop the area surrounding the intersection of North Ocean Avenue, Oak Street, and Lake Street, including aligning Lake Street with Oak Street.

The area on North Ocean Avenue and Oak Street north of Main Street is the heart of downtown Patchogue and contains several vacant buildings. This area is a gateway to the downtown area since North Ocean Avenue is an exit off the Sunrise Highway and provides easy access to Patchogue from all parts of Long Island. The vacant Swezey's buildings on both sides of North Ocean Avenue provide an opportunity to revitalize this important part of downtown Patchogue.

Figure 56 - Vacant Swezey's building on the southeast corner of North Ocean Avenue and Oak Street.

Figure 57 - Vacant Swezey's building on Oak Street just east of North Ocean Avenue.

Figure 58 - Confusing intersection of Lake Street and North Ocean Avenue.

As motorists travel south on Ocean Avenue they have to stop at the confusing intersection at Lake Street. The Lake Street intersection should be reconfigured by extending Lake Street through to Oak Street and the existing intersection of Oak Street with North Ocean Avenue would be abandoned. This change would displace the buildings on two lots on North Ocean Avenue (SCTM# 204-9-3-21 and 22) and the Masonic Lodge on Oak Street (SCTM# 204-9-3-30) to provide a 46 foot right of way. The Masonic Lodge might move into the vacant Moose Lodge building. The North Ocean Avenue businesses that would be displaced could be relocated to buildings built on North Ocean Avenue on the abandoned part of Oak Street. The remainder of the Masonic Lodge property would be incorporated into the existing Patchogue Village Parking. These changes would greatly improve traffic flow and motorist and pedestrian safety in this area, and would help to revitalize the area.

Figure 59 - Building which could be purchased to connect Lake Street with Oak Street.

Recommendation: Redevelop the old Swezey's site on the north side of Main Street and west side of North Ocean Avenue.

The vacant Swezey's buildings should be refurbished or razed and rebuilt. The first floor of the new buildings should house retail and service businesses with large and interesting windows. Since this site lies at the heart of downtown Patchogue, it is important that any redevelopment that takes place at the old main Swezey's site not change the continuous flow of commercial development along Main Street. If a new building is built, the building lines should be set back from the roads allowing wide sidewalks but the buildings must remain close to the street. A slightly wider sidewalk than what presently exists would be desirable, especially on North Ocean Avenue. Any use of this site should have direct access to the nearby municipal parking lot (#3) through the area behind Briarcliffe College (SCTM# 204-9-5-25.1).

Figure 60 - Vacant Swezey's and other vacant buildings on North Ocean Avenue.

Several possibilities for redevelopment of the old Swezey's site are worth noting. A new hotel would serve the performers and patrons of the Patchogue Theatre and other visitors to the community. This hotel would be within walking distance of the Theatre and the downtown area, and accessible to the marinas and ferries of the Patchogue River. Another possibility for the site is a four to six screen movie theater, especially with a direct connection to the municipal parking lot to the west. Downtown Huntington contains a successful (although ugly) eight screen movie theater on a similar sized lot. A movie theater would compliment downtown Patchogue's entertainment-oriented resurgence.

This site may be appropriate for some type of large retail store, provided the redevelopment allows direct access to the municipal parking lot. If a new building is constructed on this site, a small amount of property could be set aside for a small park, since there are very few parks in this part of the downtown. Such a park should not front on Main Street, as it would interrupt the flow of storefronts there.

Recommendation: If Briarcliffe College desires to expand, it should do so in the vicinity of its main building on Lake Street.

Briarcliffe College occupies an attractive building on Lake Street off North Ocean Avenue. If the college desires to expand, it should consider utilizing one of the buildings across Ocean Avenue or another nearby building. If this takes place, the college's buildings would be clustered, and could possibly be joined by an attractive enclosed walkway spanning the street. Briarcliffe College is currently using a building on South Street off West Avenue outside the business district. The college could also consider transferring the uses in this building to a building in downtown Patchogue near the main college building. The resulting influx of college students and staff to the downtown would be an economic benefit.

Figure 61 - Unappealing view looking north on North Ocean Avenue at vacant Swezey's. If a new building is built here, continuous glass storefronts and a slightly wider sidewalk with trees would be beneficial to attract shoppers.

Parking, Traffic Flow and Signage

Parking lots comprise a huge proportion of the area in downtown Patchogue. The core study area comprises about 60 acres and paved surfaces (including public and private parking lots, roads and sidewalks) cover 56% of that area. Permeable surfaces (areas that have not been paved or built on) comprise only 16% of the core business area. Permeable areas are areas that are easiest to landscape, although paved areas can always be excavated and planted.

Figure 62 - Poorly paved municipal parking lot (#6) in downtown Patchogue.

Adequate parking is a very important issue impacting the economic viability of a suburban downtown shopping area. Parking should be convenient, safe and plentiful enough so that drivers do not have to search for a place to park. Businesses will benefit if stores are easily accessible via contiguous parking areas and via safe, well-lit walking access. Municipal parking lots should be in excellent repair with even pavement, clearly striped and marked, and have pedestrian walkways to increase pedestrian safety.

Figure 63 - Typical shopping center parking lot.

Parking lots in conventional downtown districts have historically been perceived as a utilitarian necessity – a place to park cars so that shoppers can shop, a place that provides loading space for deliveries, and an area for garbage storage and pickup. The shopping mall presents its utilitarian necessities in a more appealing manner. The shopping mall, with its newer infrastructure, provides landscaped medians for customer parking, camouflaged loading docks, and screened and/or contained garbage areas. In order to compete for the finite amount of spendable income available, Patchogue must provide its visitors with aesthetically pleasing vistas, including the views from the parking lots. The Village has enhanced the visual appeal of some of the parking lots but there is still a lot of room for improvement.

Figure 64 - Typical municipal parking lot in downtown Patchogue.

Figure 65 - Attractive new landscaping sits nearly side by side with several dumpsters in a municipal parking lot in Patchogue.

Recommendation: On-street parking should be maintained and reserved for customers.

On-street parking is the quickest and most convenient way for customers to access stores. These spots often turn over quickly and serve many customers daily. The Village should continue to provide free on-street parking in the downtown. Free Village parking helps the Village compete with other downtowns and shopping centers that do not charge for parking. On-street parking should be maintained wherever road widths allow, except in areas where on-street parking creates a dangerous situation. Employees should never park in on-street parking spaces.

Figure 66 - Good on-street parking for customers is essential for a downtown area.

Recommendation: Parking signs should be clear and consistent.

Figure 67 - Parking sign obscured by branches on Terry Street in Patchogue.

Entrances to most of the municipal lots are either unmarked or poorly marked with non-standard signs that say "free parking" and many lot entrances are tucked away on side streets. It is disconcerting for the visitor to pass a parking lot entrance and then have to backtrack to get to the desired parking lot. The entrances and exits to all parking lots should be clearly and consistently signed and signs directing new visitors to municipal parking should be adequate. Municipal parking signs should be the standard green and white with a large eye-catching "P" to start the word "parking."

The Village should adopt a standard municipal sign design and apply that design to all municipal signs including parking signs. The color and font type of all other Village signs should be easy to read and be consistent.

Recommendation: Include more green spaces in the parking lots.

There are very few trees and little shade in the Patchogue municipal parking lots. The addition of trees and landscaping in and around the parking lots improves the ambiance of parking lots, cools the temperature and decreases air pollution. Many communities require that newly constructed or reconstructed parking lots be shaded by incorporating tree plantings into the parking lot design. Requirements for tree planting in parking lots are sometimes enacted through a specific parking lot shading ordinance, but the code may be incorporated into the Village code related to trees, landscaping, parking lots, or elsewhere.[2]

Figure 68 - The addition of trees would improve this municipal parking lot off Terry Street.

Figure 69 - Good use of landscaping at another entrance to a municipal parking lot off Terry Street.

Appendix VI includes the brochure titled *Where are all the cool parking lots?* which was prepared by the Center for Urban Forest Research and the Forest Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The brochure outlines how to increase shade in parking lots by outlining key components in parking lot design and execution including planning, site design, maintenance, and enforcement. The inclusion of permeable surfaces in the parking lots will also decrease runoff and decrease puddling. Site design can also include planted, infiltration islands that serve as mini-sumps to decrease runoff as well.

Recommendation:
Consolidate and screen dumpster locations

Dumpsters are a necessity for any business district. Unfortunately, they are ugly and often smell badly. The merchants in downtown Patchogue use many different waste management firms. The dumpsters are of varying colors, sizes, and conditions. Many of the businesses seem to have dumpsters right outside their back door.

Figure 70 - Multiple dumpsters clearly visible from municipal parking lot off South Ocean Avenue.

Within the core business area, efforts should be taken to consolidate and screen all dumpsters. For example, if consolidated enclosure areas were located 150 feet apart, no business would be more than 75 feet from a receptacle. Various methods can be employed to accomplish consolidation including merchant cooperation, assistance from the BID and the formation of a garbage district.

Dumpsters should be strategically angled and screened from the parking lot and yet still allow for removal by the garbage truck. Ideally, the dumpsters will be screened from view by shrubbery and trees. No dumpsters should be near

the walkways that go from the parking lots to Main Street. All precautions should be taken to avoid loose refuse by requiring all refuse to be bagged or bound. Garbage should be removed frequently to avoid unpleasant odors.

Recommendation: Pave the entrances to the municipal parking lots with a noticeable paving material extending out into the roadway.

In addition to consistent municipal parking lot signs, the Village should consider paving the entrances to the municipal parking lots in a different paving material, such as textured concrete that looks like brick or cobblestone, that extends across the road bed. This street treatment would provide an unsigned visual cue for municipal lot entrances especially if this medium were applied consistently throughout the Village. Where appropriate, a crosswalk could be included as part of the pavement change. Changing the look of the road surface might also calm traffic speeds even though there would be no change in the level of the pavement.

Figure 71 - Attractive but useless store directory in municipal parking lot off Oak Street.

Recommendation: Create useful store directories in the municipal parking lots.

The existing store directories in some of Patchogue's municipal parking lots are nice looking but they do not locate the businesses on a map. It would be helpful to strategically place a "you are here" map with a store and business directory at every walkway to Main Street. This directory would be similar to the directories provided in a mall that list businesses by type of business and are keyed to their location on the map.

Recommendation: Name the municipal parking lots, for easier identification.

In order to help customers remember where they have parked, the municipal parking lots should be named or numbered. Naming the municipal parking lots would strengthen the identity of each of the lots, avoiding confusing nondescript uniformity. The naming convention could be something as simple as a physical feature, providing names such as "Fire Department Lot" and "Terry Street West Lot." Discrete signs should be placed at each walkway indicating the parking lot to which the walkway leads.

Recommendation: Improve the task of parking for the Patchogue Theatre.

The "Theatre Parking" signs pointing motorists toward parking for the Patchogue Theatre are the same color and almost the same size as standard "No Parking" signs. The Theatre Parking signs should be distinctive so that the theatre visitor can easily identify and follow the signs. Theatre goers traveling southbound on North Ocean Avenue might notice a sign encouraging them to make a sharp left turn onto Oak Street. Then once on Oak Street, the parking lot off Oak Street behind the Theatre has several "No Theatre Parking" signs. It is very confusing.

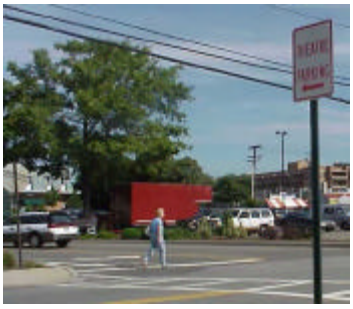

Figure 72 -"Theatre Parking" sign which resembles a standard "No Parking" sign.

Theatre goers traveling south on Route 112 can be directed to turn right on Oak Street to the municipal lots north and south of Oak Street. The Village should consider routing traffic to the theater so that the driver makes as few left turns on heavily traveled streets as possible. Theater traffic traveling south on North Ocean Avenue should be directed straight through the four corners and then directed to make a safer left turn into the parking lots off Terry St.

Figure 73 - Front of Patchogue Theatre which has no sign.

A new visitor to the Patchogue Theatre may have some difficulty finding the Theatre because its name is not found on the building. The front of the building should clearly display the name of the Theatre in an attractive sign, and the back of the building should also have the name of the Theatre somewhere on the large brick building.

Figure 74 - Side and back of the Patchogue Theatre from Oak Street. The building has no sign.

Recommendation: Commission a traffic flow and parking lot plan.

The Village should consider commissioning a traffic flow and parking lot plan. This plan would provide the Village with a blueprint for the maintenance, redevelopment and utilization of existing parking lots and future parking lots. The plan should contain but not be limited to the following data and recommendations:

- Detailed information on current traffic counts, traffic flow patterns, public and private parking lot utilization
- Analysis of parking adequacy
- Analysis of the physical condition and safety of the parking lots
- Recommendation for traffic flow patterns for roadways and parking lots
- Inventory and analysis of existing traffic signs and parking signs
- Recommendation for placement of road signs on roadways and in parking lots
- Recommendation for greening of parking lots with low maintenance plant materials
- Recommendation for safe pedestrian movement through out the parking lots
- Recommendation for the control, collection and maintenance of dumpsters
- Investigate the creation of a garbage district
- Investigate the creation of a parking lot district
- Analysis and recommendations of parking lot lighting, including an analysis of present costs versus purchase of new fixtures and lamps
- Examination of existing public and private parking lots regarding the removal of structural barriers between adjacent lots, regardless of lot ownership
- Examination of the size and configuration of parking spaces and reconfiguration if the current size and configuration of spaces is based upon old standards
- Provision of a multi-stage plan implementation process that include cost estimates for each stage
- Recommendations for alternative funding sources such as community development block grants, and LIPA for lighting improvements.

Figure 75 -Parking lots for office buildings north of Oak Street need to be better coordinated.

Recommendation: Align Havens Avenue with Railroad Avenue and create additional municipal parking.

Havens Avenue and Railroad Avenue do not line up at Main Street. There are two sets of traffic lights at this intersection, and autos travel north-south through the jagged intersection. Havens Avenue can be realigned with Railroad Avenue providing a safer intersection for motorists and pedestrians at Main Street.

Figure 76 - Intersection of West Main Street and Havens Avenue, looking northeast.

On the west side of Havens Avenue, up to three parcels should be acquired by the Village. The three parcels are the vacant bowling alley, the printing business to the west of the bowling alley, and the parcel north of the printing business. (SCTM#

204-9-5-16, 15 and 14). The two large parcels (lots 14 and 16) are currently for sale. The western two parcels (lots 14 and 15) could be developed as a small Village park with the frontage on Main Street sold and commercially developed to provide a continuous commercial front on Main Street. Development of this type would help to anchor the western gateway to the core of the business district. A small office for the police at this location would provide a police a presence on West Main Street. The Village Constable, as well as police foot or bike patrols, could use this location as a base for downtown patrols.

Figure 77 - Vacant bowling alley parcel on the west side of Havens Avenue, looking south. This narrow parcel would contain the new Havens Avenue if the streets were aligned.

Figure 78 - Parcel containing printing business west of the vacant bowling alley.

The lot containing the old bowling alley (lot 16) would become the right of way for a new Havens Avenue, directly aligned with Railroad Avenue. The old Havens Avenue road bed could then become new municipal parking with a landscaped buffer between the new Havens Avenue and the new parking. The building on the east side of the new parking area (SCTM# 204-9-5-17) would be accessible through and served by this parking area.

The small new municipal parking area would add approximately 64 municipal parking spaces. This new parking lot plus the 10 spaces added through demolition of the parking structure would partially compensate for the parking spaces lost when the second level parking structure is demolished. These new parking spaces would be at grade (ground level) and therefore would be more likely to be used than the second tier of the parking structure.

Recommendation: Road signs in downtown Patchogue should be attractive, uniform in appearance and well-maintained.

Uniform and attractive signage (street signs, parking signs and other overhead signs) should be used to create a unified sense of place in the downtown area. One example of the lack of uniformity is the large "Stop for pedestrian in crosswalk" signs overhead on Main Street, which are red. The same sign on North Ocean Avenue is green. Many smaller signs in downtown Patchogue also lack uniformity.

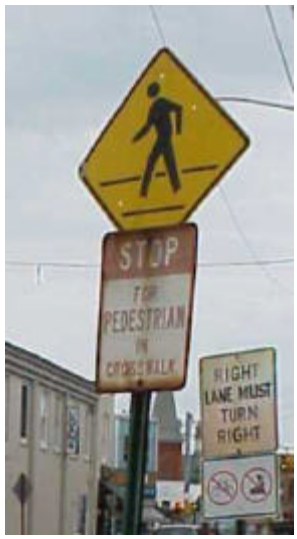

Figure 79 - Example of worn out signs on the west side of North Ocean Avenue.

To be easily legible, traffic signs should be in good repair (clean and not rusty) and the poles should be perpendicular to the ground. In some areas, there are too many signs and many are in disrepair. There are sometimes so many signs along the roadways in Patchogue that the driver may have difficulty discerning which signs need to be read. Signs should be spaced at reasonable distances, because it is difficult to read many signs placed close together. Noticeable directional signs to locate attractions and entrances to municipal parking lots should be installed. These are necessary for informative purposes and for safe traffic flow. Temporary signs should be used temporarily and soon removed. The trailer sign in front of

Figure 80 - Ugly sign in front of Briarcliffe College. Temporary signs should carry a limit on the number of days displayed.

Briarcliffe College is an unnecessary eyesore. A more permanent sign should be constructed for this purpose.

Traffic flow on Main Street in downtown Patchogue can be confusing for motorists and pedestrians. For example, when a motorist travels west on Main Street from East Patchogue, the through traffic lane seems to unexpectedly become a turning lane several times, and traffic often blocks the driver's view of the arrows painted on the pavement. A motorist seemingly has to change lanes each time in order to stay in a through lane. If these lane changes are happening, there is a good chance that a confused motorist will not notice a pedestrian attempting to cross Main Street. If lane markings on Main Street cannot be realigned to provide a more continuous through lane, then overhead signs should be installed to indicate which lanes are through lanes and which are right turn only or left turn only to warn the driver warning about upcoming changing traffic patterns.

Figure 81 - Attractive street signs are sometimes too small and intricate to read easily.

The Village has recently installed new green street signs with black poles and iron ornamentation. While these signs are very attractive, the print on them is rather small and difficult to read. When these signs need to be replaced, the lettering on them should be slightly larger and in an easy-to-read font.

Storefront Uses

A downtown business district such as Patchogue has the advantage over large retailers because the smaller shops are run by the people who own them and they have been providing customer service for years. Successful retailers will continue to provide customers with personal interaction and customer service. Retailers who do not provide good customer service, and some types of retailers, will fade in coming years as the retail climate continues to change. The goods that will continue to be sold in traditional stores are those goods that are either in immediate demand, are locally produced, and/or require some type of personal interaction.

Products that can be in immediate demand are not easily ordered through the Internet. These products are sold at stores such as supermarkets, pharmacies, specialty grocery stores, butcher shops, fish stores, liquor stores, delicatessens, pizzerias, Chinese take-out, full service restaurants, diners, ice cream parlors, bakeries, bagel shops, and video stores. Locally produced items such as agricultural products, bakery items, and locally manufactured goods will continue to be sold locally. Some specialty shops such as Bridal shops and gift stores sell goods that require personal interaction, and for this reason, will remain viable.

Figure 82 - Local food stores should continue to remain viable.

Dramatic changes will occur in the retail industry in the 21st century. Almost every home in the country will have a computer which will be connected to the Internet. The retail industry is going to become more reliant upon electronic retailing via the Internet (known as "e-trade"). Consumers will have computer access to large retailers who will sell merchandise directly from warehouses via "virtual" stores over the Internet. The cost of goods in the virtual stores will generally be lower than at existing shopping malls because existing stores must add the costs of rent, employees, and showroom inventory costs to warehouse costs. Unless the price of goods at these large retailers can compete with the virtual stores, the existence of shopping malls and big box retailers will be threatened by e-trade.

Recommendation: Merchandise retailers should make personal service a top priority.

Because of the increase in Internet-based retailing, existing store retailers will need to become more service and people-oriented than ever before. Retailers can stress personal selling, personal assistance, prompt attention, and providing information to consumers. Retailers should also provide delivery service, either complimentary or fee-based. These characteristics will help distinguish existing goods retailers from more impersonal stores and e-trade. Most store owners should also build an Internet presence, to attract or retain customers who choose to gather information or shop the store through the Internet.

Recommendation: Attract proven successful retail/service uses to the downtown.

To increase shopper and pedestrian traffic, the downtown area should provide a desirable mix of businesses and attractions to make it a unique shopping or visiting experience. This change can only happen incrementally by encouraging certain types of businesses to locate in downtown Patchogue. Most of the activities that take place in downtown Patchogue are daytime activities. In downtown

Patchogue, clothing and accessories are the most common storefront type, and these stores generally close at around 6 PM. Other office and institutional uses in the downtown are closed by 6 PM as well. Other common storefront types in the downtown are also generally closed in the evening, including hair cutters and furniture stores.

Figure 83 - A chain store can sometimes bring a retail dynamic to a downtown area. (Photo taken in downtown Northport.)

Certain types of storefront uses will draw consumers at many times of the day and throughout the year. These activities would increase the downtown's vibrancy at night. The Village may want to attract a coffee shop, a music retailer, a reputable video store, or a four to eight screen movie theater to the downtown. Chain retailers are acceptable, as long as they do not dominate the downtown and detract from its authenticity. Additional restaurants and bars would contribute to an entertainment-centered theme for the downtown. A Hispanic-theme sit-down restaurant would mirror the Hispanic influence in the Village. Outdoor dining, either in front of the restaurant (if sidewalk space allows) or behind the restaurant, creates an added ambiance to the downtown and to the dining experience.

Figure 84 - A bakery is a retail use not found in downtown Patchogue. (Photo taken in downtown Lindenhurst.)

Downtown Patchogue seems to lack even certain daytime-oriented uses that are common in other downtown areas. The Village may want to attract currently absent uses that generate foot traffic such as a book store, drug store, bakery, art dealer, bicycle/sporting goods store, pet store, and dry cleaner. Gift stores and antique stores have seen moderate success in other downtown areas in the region. While there already are a few of these stores in downtown Patchogue, the addition of more of these stores would help create a retail synergy. In addition, a major chain bookstore might be enticed to locate near Briarcliffe College as many colleges have established their college bookstores in major chain bookstores.

Figure 85 - Vacant corner stores at South Ocean Avenue and Terry Street.

The area around North Ocean Avenue at Oak Street, and the east side of South Ocean Avenue have the highest concentrations of vacant stores in downtown Patchogue. The Village should provide economic incentives for desired businesses to relocate to these key areas of the Village.

Recommendation: Where retail uses are not feasible, encourage the introduction of additional non-retail uses to vacant downtown storefronts and buildings.

For the past 40 years, downtown business districts have been undergoing the transition from "traditional" retailing of goods to service sector retailing. Non-retail uses have become more and more common in local downtown areas and are suited to the relatively small sizes of stores in downtown areas.

While it is preferable to retain a core retail portion of downtown Patchogue that will keep the downtown area vibrant, non-retail uses occupy rentable space and attract foot traffic. In cases where storefronts or buildings are chronically vacant, non-retail uses should be encouraged. Specific examples of non-retail uses found in today's downtown areas include: church, bank, theater, travel agency, day care center, barber shop, beauty salon, dry cleaner, laundromat, mail/delivery service, repair service, fitness center, tanning salon, dance studio, karate, photography, printing, insurance office, real estate office, doctor's office, tax preparation office, law office, post office, and government office. Non-retail uses should maintain an attractive street entrance and storefront windows (not dark windows or walls) to maintain traditional

downtown storefronts which lead the pedestrian shopper through the downtown.

Figure 86 - Windows of occupied storefronts that are walled up, darkly tinted, or closed off with blinds or shades are uninviting to pedestrians, shoppers, and visitors.

Recommendation: Promote Patchogue as an entertainment destination.

As Patchogue's planned events take root and attract more visitors, they will help to define Patchogue as a destination for entertainment and cultural activities. The new Patchogue Theatre, the coming of the Suffolk County Sports Hall of Fame, and the new restaurants are the beginnings of a cultural and entertainment rebirth in downtown Patchogue. The Fire Island ferries, the Miss New York State Pageant, "Alive After Five," and the Celtic festival also attract recreational and tourist visitors. The future of downtown Patchogue can now be envisioned as a cultural and entertainment center. Businesses that promote this vision should be actively solicited, such as bookstores, music stores, multi-purpose entertainment businesses such as Jillians, an annex of the NYIT culinary school, day spa, acting school or affiliation with a college that has an acting/stage management curriculum, and a Patchogue historical museum in the downtown. Encouraging restaurants to occupy space in downtown Patchogue is another good way to attract recreational foot traffic. Outdoor dining increases the ambiance and visual appeal of the downtown district.

In order for the downtown area to become more successful, shoppers and visitors must be encouraged to come to Patchogue for its attractions, and then inspired to remain in Patchogue to shop or recreate, to explore and walk the downtown to see the other attractions and stores in comfort and safety. The longer a visitor remains in Patchogue, the more spending will take place in Patchogue, benefitting the local economy. The BID should consider hiring a professional publicist/ press agent to promote Patchogue, its festivals, theater, and other attractions. More people will come to Patchogue if the Village actively markets itself. A positive reputation will also make it easier to attract prospective retailers.

Figure 86 - Outdoor dining increases ambiance in appropriate locations. (Photo taken in downtown Sayville.)

A new village green is an excellent location to host street fairs and community festivals which attract visitors from other communities. Festivals and exhibitions could be held at the village green, but before one exists, the small park off South Ocean Avenue and the adjoining parking lots would be an appropriate location. Huntington's fall festival is an example of a very large festival that has gained Island-wide recognition. The possibility of attracting an art exhibition as one of the cultural events in the Village should be explored. The exhibition would bring economic benefits, would create a positive image for Patchogue, and would serve a cultural need to Patchogue and surrounding communities. To embrace the ethnic diversity of the Village, Patchogue might also consider hosting a Hispanic cultural festival. These various activities can be cross-marketed together in promotions. Cooperation between the sponsors of the events will bring more visitors to the downtown, which will encourage visits to the shops, restaurants, and other businesses in the core of the business district.

The village should consider expanding this new downtown experience by encouraging an active, exterior lighting design for all the businesses in the downtown. Theme parks such as Disney World rely upon night time lighting to encourage visitors to stay after dark. Patchogue can create the same type of well lit nighttime atmosphere. An exterior lighting design can create a unique nighttime downtown experience. The beauty of lighting as a design feature is that it can be turned on or used intermittently, as needed. The City of New York mandates the proliferation of extreme signage in Times Square in the *Special Times Square signage requirements* section of its zoning ordinance. The village may not want to duplicate Times Square but it might consider creating a more subdued type of lighting pizzazz. Spot lights, flood lights and projectors can be used to illuminate and highlight existing structures. A lighting designer who specializes in exterior lighting design can create a lighting plan to achieve extraordinary results.

The "Alive After Five" celebrations show that Main Street can be closed to traffic creating a street fair atmosphere. What better way to introduce visitors to downtown Patchogue than with a continuous light show along Main Street to usher in the New Year?

Aesthetics

Figure 88 - Attractive informational kiosk in downtown Patchogue.

Aesthetics is defined as the general visual appeal of an area. It is desirable to create a pleasant and memorable impression to persons who pass through or visit Patchogue. Attractive and uniform aesthetic elements help to define and unify the downtown area. There are inherent and subliminal effects of positive (or negative) perceptions of an area. A clean, properly maintained, and well lit downtown represents the businesses in the downtown as caring, clean, well-run and safe. Business districts that are charming tend to be more successful and attract more leisure shoppers. Patchogue has a number of attractive early 20th century buildings, but many of the subsequent buildings and building renovations are not attractive.

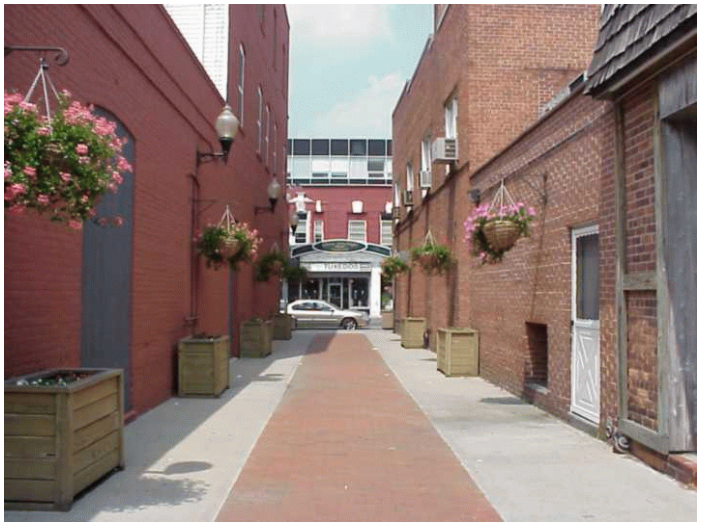

Figure 89 - Attractive alley leading to Main Street, Patchogue.

The Village has enhanced the look of the Village by improving the sidewalks and adding decorative light poles with attractive hanging baskets. Some work has also been done on a few of the parking lots. But there is still more that should be done to street scape elements including the appearance of storefronts, lighting, flowers and shrubbery, sidewalks, street furniture, trash cans, and signage. Street furniture should be updated about once every ten years, to maintain its appearance.

Visual pollution appears quietly and is almost invisible because it becomes the acceptable norm. It takes various forms, including overhead utility wires, destruction of trees,

Figure 90 - The eastern end of the Patchogue business district is visually unappealing, with few trees, many poles, wires, signs, and traffic lights, and unattractive buildings.

varied unattractive signs, poorly maintained buildings and ugly parking lots. The Village of Patchogue should identify areas of visual pollution and take action to eliminate it.

Recommendation: Improve the appearance of downtown Patchogue's three main gateways.

The main gateways to the downtown area are at East Main Street (near Route 112), West Main Street (near West Avenue) and North Ocean Avenue (north of Main Street). These gateways provide visitors with a first impression of downtown Patchogue. Presently, these introductory views of downtown Patchogue are dominated by concrete, a multitude of small signs, telephone poles, wires, and asphalt. Very few trees and little landscaping exist in each of these areas.

Figure 91 - Unappealing gateway to downtown Patchogue on East Main Street at Route 112 looking west.

Near the eastern gateway to downtown Patchogue, there is a closed off street, Rose Avenue, which formerly was a through street off of the north side of East Main Street. While the closing of this street from Main Street may have been desirable, the execution of the street closing is ugly and further hampers the appearance of the eastern gateway to downtown Patchogue. Since the Village still owns the street right-of-way, it should remove the metal gates and improve this property or sell it to adjoining businesses with the stipulation that it be beautified and well maintained.

Figure 92 - Former entrance to Rose Avenue from East Main Street. The Village should remove the gate and improve or sell this property.

The western gateway to downtown Patchogue is also lacking in visual amenities. After driving past Swezey's on Patchogue-Holbrook Road, the traveler is greeted by a vacant wasteland lot (SCTM# 204-9-5-27.1) bordered by the stark white concrete Bargain Bilge building on the corner of the gateway intersection. Improvements to the aesthetics of these two lots (street trees, at the very least) would add greatly to the impression offered to a visitor entering through this gateway.

Figure 93 - Unappealing gateway to downtown Patchogue from the northwest on Patchogue-Holbrook Road, looking south. Bargain Bilge store to left.

Figure 92 - Example of attractive sign which could be placed at the actual gateways to the downtown area.

An attractive welcoming sign with landscaping exists where Patchogue-Holbrook Road splits from Waverly Avenue near the cemetery. Yet this sign is too far removed from the physical beginning of the business district to be associated with the downtown area. A beautiful, noticeable sign at each gateway to the downtown should be installed, simply stating "Welcome to Patchogue." These signs will state to visitors and motorists that they have not simply crossed a boundary but that they have arrived at a place of interest. Such signs beautify the area, clearly identify the community to travelers, and create a sense of place and local pride. The signs should be of a uniform size, shape and color. Attractive landscaping is also important at these locations.

Recommendation: Continue to improve the appearance of the street scape in downtown Patchogue.

Figure 95 -.The prototype for a desirable street scape – wide attractive sidewalk, flowers and street trees, benches, attractive architecture, and plenty of shop windows. (Photo taken in downtown Southampton.)

Improving street scape elements will help create an attractive and unified appearance, which can lead to economic success. Wide, attractive sidewalks are best for pedestrians. Brick pavers add an appealing and inviting element to the shopping district. Attractive street lamps have been installed along Main Street, and should also be installed on all the downtown side streets and in the municipal parking lots. Added streetlights in and near the municipal parking lots would help improve perceived and actual security.

Trees and landscaping help create a beautiful environment. Additional permanent landscaping within the business district will help soften the stark appearance of commercial buildings. For example, East Main Street east of Rider Avenue has absolutely no street trees and appears as a sea of concrete and asphalt. The trees and shrubs selected for planting should be drought-resistant, preferably native, and easy to maintain. All street trees should be monitored and not allowed to deteriorate. They should also be trimmed to prevent them from blocking signs.

Figure 96 - Trees and flowers along parts of Main Street in Patchogue add greatly to its aesthetics.

Figure 97 - Parts of downtown Patchogue would benefit from trees and landscaping.

In addition to the aesthetic improvements, there are many benefits to adding trees to a downtown area. Pedestrians have a great need for green shade and ambiance. Motorists, too, are affected by the presence or absence of street trees. In general, motorists use urban trees to help assess and gauge their speeds. Trees make roads feel more wholesome. When trees are present on streets, motorist speeds were noted as reduced by 10-15 miles per hour. Landscaping is now considered a primary component of traffic calming. Although expensive to maintain, street trees are a major measure to convert and reduced impacts of harmful auto emissions. They tend to cool street temperatures by four to seven degrees, and they help lengthen the life of asphalt where full canopies are allowed to emerge.[3]

Recommendation: Storefront walls should be replaced with walls having large windows.

Figure 98 - A storefront window display on Main Street. Attractive glass window displays are appealing to shoppers and visitors.

A successful downtown area should contain 70 per cent window coverage on its street front. Visitors and shoppers enjoy walking past inviting storefronts. Storefronts that consist of mainly a hard wall are cold and uninviting. These should be replaced by more attractive window fronts, even when the building use is for office or services. Windows should be clear glass, not heavily tinted or blacked out. These windows will encourage shoppers to walk in the business district and explore it further.

Recommendation: Clean up the litter.

Cleanliness should be a priority for the downtown. A storefront's image starts with the sidewalk in front of the store. Within the core of the business district the sidewalks should be washed regularly to remove stains and chewing gum. Litter should be continuously removed and the hiring a street sweeper and purchase of cleaning equipment should be considered. The presence of a person sweeping the streets who is identified with the Village or BID will reinforce to the public that the Village intends to keep itself clean. This person is also a presence in the downtown which enforces a human scale not prevalent in the impersonal mall.

Recommendation: Create a more comprehensive sign ordinance.

Unattractive building signs of varying sizes, shapes, and materials, some in disrepair, detract from the appearance of any area. Requiring consistent signage is an inexpensive way to achieve a big impact. The elements of a sign include: shapes and supports, materials, decorative elements, color and illumination. A Village ordinance or master signage plan could require certain characteristics be fulfilled by all signs in the Village or solely within the downtown district. If a signage plan were implemented, the plan could include an amortization schedule for bringing into conformance, within a certain period of time, all signs not conforming to the proposed plan. Consideration should also be given to requiring a signs in a foreign language be in English also.

Figure 99 - A sign can make a difference in the appearance of a business.

Figure 100 - Downtown Patchogue has several beautiful, century old churches.

Recommendation: Create an architectural review board.

Patchogue has many buildings with interesting and attractive architecture. The downtown's traditional architecture is based in early 20th century forms, and this style is the one that should be reinforced in the Village's codes, to bring back this historical connection. Many aspects of a building's design are regulated through standards for siting, orientation, density, height and setback within a municipality's zoning code. Some municipalities wish to go beyond dealings with the general size and siting of a

Figure 101 - There are many attractive storefront buildings in downtown Patchogue.

building and its physical relationship with adjacent properties, to dealing with the appropriateness of the architectural design of the building. The review may include examining such design elements as facades, roof lines, windows, architectural detailing, materials, and color.[4]

Architectural review generally requires a more subjective analysis of private development proposals than is possible within most zoning codes. To do this, communities often establish an architectural review board, which should be able to offer guidance on design issues to other boards, such as the planning board or zoning board of appeals. Where authorized, an architectural review board may conduct an independent review of the architectural features of a proposed project. Often, a community chooses to link design to historic preservation controls, with a focus on the design of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings within historic districts.[5]

Figure 102 - There are also several buildings having designs that clash with the traditional historical style of the downtown.

The designation of a certain color palate or look for the downtown is one way to create a cohesive design. For example, the Chamber of Commerce building on North Ocean Avenue with walls of sand color, accents of taupe and deep forest green, forest green awnings, signs in deep chestnut with brick red, and gilded gold lettering is an example of a nicely accented older building. The same theme continues at O'Neill's on Main Street around the corner. The addition of the brick red signs compliments the use of all of the actual brick in the downtown. The kiosk on Main St. also continues the color scheme in that it is the forest green with the gilded lettering. The color palette is very flexible since not all colors have to be used or any combination can be used. Accent colors can be approved in moderate amounts upon submission of a rendering of the proposed improvement. Renovation of storefronts could be encouraged through financial assistance from the Village or the BID.

Figure 103 - Chamber of Commerce building on North Ocean Avenue.

Figure 104 - Mural behind a Main Street store.

A few buildings in downtown Patchogue have been improved with murals and trump l'oeil paintings (paintings designed to fool the eye), but these should be designed and used prudently to maintain an attractive appearance. An architectural review should be required for any specialized painting that is done to the exteriors of the buildings.

Recommendation: Improve the appearance of the rear of the stores from the municipal parking lots.

Commercial and residential buildings which front the municipal parking lots make a visual impact on shoppers and visitors who use these parking lots. However, in downtown Patchogue the appearance of the rear parts of the buildings are unattractive and should be improved. A shopper's first sense of the parking lots is the vastness of the pavement and the generally unattractive rears of the stores.

Figure 105 - The backs of many of downtown Patchogue's stores are unattractive.

Most of the backs of the stores in downtown Patchogue are in fairly good condition with clean painted surfaces but provide little visual interest. New trees can screen the backs of some of the buildings which reduces the vastness of the asphalt and concrete. The backs of the stores should be as appealing as the fronts of the stores especially when most shoppers begin their shopping experience in the municipal parking lots. The back fascia does not have to be as

expensive as the front but should be more appealing than a large, flat expanse of wall. Businesses should explore the possibility of opening entrances accessible from the rear municipal parking lots.

Figure 106 - Uninviting alley to Main Street from Terry Street municipal parking lot, with vast expanses of walls and large rambling murals.

A few buildings have been improved with murals or more attractive entrances but more improvements are needed. The backs of the stores are generally ugly, although a few buildings have been improved with murals and trump l'oeil paintings. Paint and imagination are an excellent solution to large expanses of wall but the use of murals and trump l'oeil can be tricky. Architectural review should be required for any specialized painting that is done to the exteriors of the buildings. The Village should consider providing examples of simplified trump l'oeil that can be easily copied and applied to the stark building backs, or the Village could loan reusable stencils to embellish the plain walls.

The Village should consider sponsoring a competition that would encourage participation in improving the look of the stores from the municipal lots. The competition might be a biannual event. The winners could be awarded a two year tax abatement for a certain percentage of their building's property taxes. There might be two or three categories of participants based upon the amount of real estate taxes paid by the contestants or the assessed value of the buildings.

Recommendation: Improve the appearance of the Patchogue River visible from Main Street.

The Patchogue River flows southward from Patchogue Lake through the study area and eventually to the Great South Bay. North of Main Street, the river has been exposed and its beauty enhanced near the entrance to the new Swezey's store. South of Main Street across from the new Swezey's store, the river is not very visible due to heavy vegetation. The vacant land on the western bank of the stream contains several U-Haul vehicles parked as part of a neighboring business. The small parcel adjacent to the river (SCTM# 204-9-6-2) was acquired by Suffolk County in 1998 and transferred to its parks inventory in 2001.

Figure 107 - The Patchogue River in front of the new Swezey's store north of Main Street.

The 1979 Suffolk County Planning Department study of Patchogue mentioned the option of initiating a rowboat concession on this parcel adjacent to the river. The concept is still viable. (The use of this parcel as a U-Haul parking lot should be discontinued.) The brush along the river should be prudently trimmed and cleared, enhancing the view of the river for pedestrians and motorists on Main Street. The bridge guardrail should be improved, the metal pole at the side of the road should be removed from the ground, and landscaping visible from the road should also be improved. A simple, tasteful sign stating "Patchogue River" should be installed at the bridge. The parcel should be properly and attractively fenced, and should appear as a park. An attractive view of the river and a river-oriented enterprise on this parcel can help enhance Patchogue's image as a river-oriented historical community. A visible river would also help tie together the image of the river-oriented ferries to the south with the business district.

Figure 108 - The Patchogue River south of Main Street, obscured by overgrown brush.

Figure 109 - Patchogue River south of Main Street, with adjoining open space parcel containing trucks.

Pedestrians

The large density of people who live locally is an important factor for a downtown business district. Patchogue's relatively compact nature lends itself to being walker-friendly. Many Patchogue residents live close enough to walk to Main Street or Ocean Avenue, the railroad station, and to bus stops. Young families may not have the luxury of

Figure 110 - It is very important to provide safe access for pedestrians in downtown areas.

two automobiles per household and may require transportation alternatives. Older residents become less likely to use automobiles.

The main roads in downtown Patchogue are already lined with sidewalks. Patchogue has several designated crosswalks, some with overhead signs reading "Stop for pedestrian in crosswalk." Designated crosswalks require traffic to stop, giving pedestrians the right of way. These designated walkways encourage pedestrian circulation in downtown Patchogue. However, Main Street and Ocean Avenue are often still difficult to cross on foot.

Recommendation: Make Patchogue walker-friendly.

All sidewalks in the downtown business district should be continuously well-maintained in a safe condition and should always be well-lit. Crosswalks should be noticeable and easy to traverse, yet still be attractive to the eye. Attractive sidewalks, streetlights, landscaping, and benches in all areas of the business district will improve aesthetics and comfort for pedestrians. These elements will also create a cohesive business district inviting people to explore other parts of the business district on foot. The addition of public restrooms and drinking water fountains, and improving and lighting alleyways also help to make an area pedestrian-friendly.

Recommendation: Review traffic calming possibilities on Main Street and Ocean Avenue.

Where crosswalks exist, sidewalks should be redesigned to increase pedestrian safety by extending the sidewalk area slightly out into the street (known as a "neckdown"), reducing the crossing distance for pedestrians and slowing traffic rounding the corner. This and other traffic calming techniques should be used to create landscaped, attractive, narrower streets that actually improve traffic flow and pedestrian access. Many other traffic calming techniques exist and can be found at http://www.trafficcalming.org . The organization Walkable Communities, Inc (http://www.walkable.org) specializes in using smart growth techniques to make downtown areas more pedestrian friendly. The Village of Patchogue should explore its traffic calming options and apply traffic calming measures to assure safety for both pedestrians and motorists.

Figure 111 - This sidewalk on the east end of downtown Patchogue, with weeds, no trees, and uneven concrete, is uninviting to pedestrian traffic.

ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES

Endnotes

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3. Dan Burden, 2001, Building Communities with Transportation [Internet] http://www.walkable.org/TRBpaper.pdf downloaded September 4, 2002., p. 10.

4. Rockland County Planning Department, Chapter XVI: Land Use Planning and Regulation [Internet] http://www.co.rockland.ny.us/planning/documents/Chapter16.pdf downloaded September 6, 2002., p. 11.

5. *Ibid.*

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