

MOUNT SINAI HAMLET STUDY



HAMLET STUDY - POINTS TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DRAFT

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

January 1996

1. The Mount Sinai Hamlet Study Committee recommends that the Town of Brookhaven explore options regarding school district funding, possibly shifting away from property taxes. Utilizing public hearings and the expert advice at the disposal of the Town government, Brookhaven must take the lead in investigating and exploring alternative ways of supporting our schools on a countywide basis. Once a consensus of opinion within the town is reached, a Home Rule message should be sent to the State government in Albany.

Rationale: Mt. Sinai heads the list of low wealth/high tax school districts on Long Island (Newsday, January 1996). As a result, property taxes in our area have become prohibitively high. To ensure that our district will be able to maintain its current excellent rating state wide, alternative means of funding must be explored.

2. The 34 acre parcel of land currently owned by Robert Worrell, located south of Mt. Sinai Coram Road and east of CR83 (commonly known as Abramowski's farm), and part of the Villages at Mt. Sinai project, should be dedicated to the Town of Brookhaven for Parks/Municipal use and known as Mt. Sinai Central Park.

Rationale: This is in conformance with the stipulation of the Town Board's Resolution that a portion of the property be donated for recreation usage.

This location is appropriate since the Town already owns a recreational parcel contiguous to this one.

This parcel is in an easily accessible location in a predominantly residential neighborhood, and would likely be fully utilized.

This parcel is highly visible, and located at a major crossroads within the community.

3. An active recreational area should be constructed within the confines of the new Mt. Sinai Central Park, with facilities for children, teenagers and adults.

Rationale: Our community does not currently have such recreational facilities available, aside from the Cedar Beach playground and small neighborhood pocket parks.

The survey results indicate a desire for age appropriate recreational facilities in Mt. Sinai.

Mt. Sinai Central Park would serve as a community focus, enabling all residents to further enjoy the natural beauty of our hamlet and its surrounding communities, as well as allow community members to enjoy a "town center" and whatever recreational facilities are eventually provided by the Town of Brookhaven.

4. A community centered farmstand, supported by residents, should be established within the confines of Mt. Sinai Central Park.

Rationale: The rural character of our hamlet is highly prized by its residents, as is evident from the results of our questionnaire. The development of such a "truck farm" would enhance the look of Mt. Sinai, and maintain a historical connection to its agricultural past.

Fresh, locally grown produce would be seasonally available, and the central location of this stand would encourage and enhance the development of a community center.

5. A community center building should be constructed, with the following specifications:

- a) large capacity meeting room, with seating for 300
- b) meeting/class rooms
- c) rest rooms
- d) kitchen facilities

Rationale: Mt. Sinai does not currently have such a facility available for general usage.

This building would enhance our community's Central Park, and enable our residents and the residents of surrounding hamlets to more readily participate in the numerous recreational, civic and philanthropic activities in which they are currently involved.

Rental fees for this building would be collected to offset its cost.

Construction costs for this building may be contributed by builders in our community as part of their Town of Brookhaven recreational fee.

6. A roller blade/jogging trail/bike path should be constructed within the confines of the Villages at Mt. Sinai project, and connect to existing roads and sidewalks in the area.

Rationale: This is the largest tract of land currently undeveloped in Mt. Sinai, and the construction of this trail could be easily incorporated within the site plan here, under the direction of the Town's Planning Department.

The Town has stipulated that Eversoll and Worrell Associates will provide funding for recreational facilities within the Villages at Mt. Sinai project as part of the Resolution approving the project.

Based on the results of the Mt. Sinai Hamlet Study Questionnaire, a roller blade/jogging trail/bike path is something the community is interested in having and would utilize.

7. A nine hole executive golf course with club house facilities should be constructed, to be located on a minimum lot size of 35 acres.

Rationale: According to the Mt.Sinai Hamlet Study Questionnaire, a large percentage of our residents would be in favor of such a facility.

A golf course would provide the sense of open space which is overwhelmingly desired by residents.

This is one of the few commercial ventures which is acceptable to Mt.Sinai residents, and also fulfills the desire for additional recreational facilities within our community.

Townwide, there is a need for additional golf courses.

8. Any future commercial development in Mt. Sinai should be restricted to professional office parks (plan J-4) only.

Rationale: Professional office parks were the only type of commercial development acceptable, based on the questionnaire. Community residents were overwhelmingly against the construction of any more strip shopping centers or large retail facilities.

According to planning experts and past experience, new commercial facilities would have a minimal effect on property taxes, therefore the community would sacrifice quality of life and open space with no discernible difference in their tax burden.

9. The parcel of land currently owned by the NY State DOT, located on the corner of Crystal Brook Hollow Road and 25A, should be deeded over to the Tri-Harbor Ambulance District as the site of their proposed facility.

Rationale: This is the location preferred by the ambulance district, is centrally located and easily accessible for both emergency vehicles and for the speedy response of volunteers.

Other possible uses for this land (DOT storage facilities etc.) would be unacceptable to the community.

10. The proposed site of CR111, located east of Crystal Brook Hollow Road, should be dedicated as a green belt area.

Rationale: According to NYS Department of Transportation officials this road will never be built, therefore it is essential that the land be dealt with in this manner now, to preclude any future conflicts.

11. All existing zoning should be maintained by the Town, unless specifically addressed in the Hamlet Study.

Rationale: Residents have indicated on the questionnaire that they are overwhelmingly opposed to most forms of commercial development, and prefer to see Mt. Sinai developed as a residential community, with single family, owner occupied dwellings as the norm.

This committee has put in hours of exhaustive work investigating our options, researching different scenarios and discussing alternatives for every existing parcel in Mt. Sinai. All of our recommendations, therefore, have been carefully thought out and thoroughly dissected before we agreed to make any changes to the existing zoning.

12. Site plans for all future residential developments should be clustered, maintaining the density as zoned and allowing for the dedication of portions of each tract as open space.

Rationale: Community residents strongly desire open space in Mt. Sinai.

Environmental concerns are best addressed with a cluster development.

13. If practical and funds become available, the parcel of land located on Shore Rd (known as the Chandler property) should be purchased by the Town of Brookhaven, utilized as a scenic view area, and maintained as a passive use area for community residents.

Rationale: This is a uniquely beautiful and scenic area which should be utilized by community members in perpetuity.

14. The Town of Brookhaven should apply a covenant to all future site plans within Mt. Sinai, which would restrict the total numbers of bedrooms permitted per dwelling and /or investigate alternative and creative ways of maintaining an acceptable demographic spread within our community.

Rationale: The attractiveness of our community and the excellence of our school district combine to make Mt. Sinai uniquely attractive for families. This combination may prove detrimental to our tax base unless we are able to have some control over the number of students our schools have to accommodate.

As we are a low wealth/high tax community, it is imperative that we have any and all help available from the Town to try to mitigate the impact of any and all future developments in Mt. Sinai.

15. Bicycle/jogging paths, utilizing safety and planning guidelines provided by the Bicycle Path Advisory Committee, should be constructed along main travel routes (see attached map and guidelines) within Mt. Sinai, in conjunction with any scheduled road improvement work.

Rationale: These paths would provide recreational as well as transportational networks within the hamlet.

Residents expressed a desire for bicycle/jogging paths in their response to our questionnaire.

Construction of these paths could be included in road work or maintenance budgets with a minimal impact on cost.

16. The committee recommends that the existing and current zoning be maintained on the North side of 25A from Mt. Sinai Coram Road west to Crystal Brook Hollow Road. Our only stipulation for this area is that should a zone change application be submitted and approved by the residents and Town for any parcel not currently zoned for commercial usage, the depth of the commercial corridor shall not extend beyond the Lilco right of way. The existing and current zoning should be maintained on the South side of 25A from CR111 (Myrtle St.) east to the print shop, up to, but not including the McGovern Sod farm (see separate recommendations for this parcel), with the stipulation that any new commercial building permitted will conform to the depth and type of the lesser of the adjacent commercial properties.

Rationale: Route 25A has naturally developed as the commercial and business corridor within our community. Any additional commercial development should be encouraged in and restricted to this area.

The depth of the business zone should not be extended beyond the Lilco right of way, as this is a natural line of delineation to the north.

To the south, the business district should be restricted to its existing depth to avoid encroaching on open space and existing residential development.

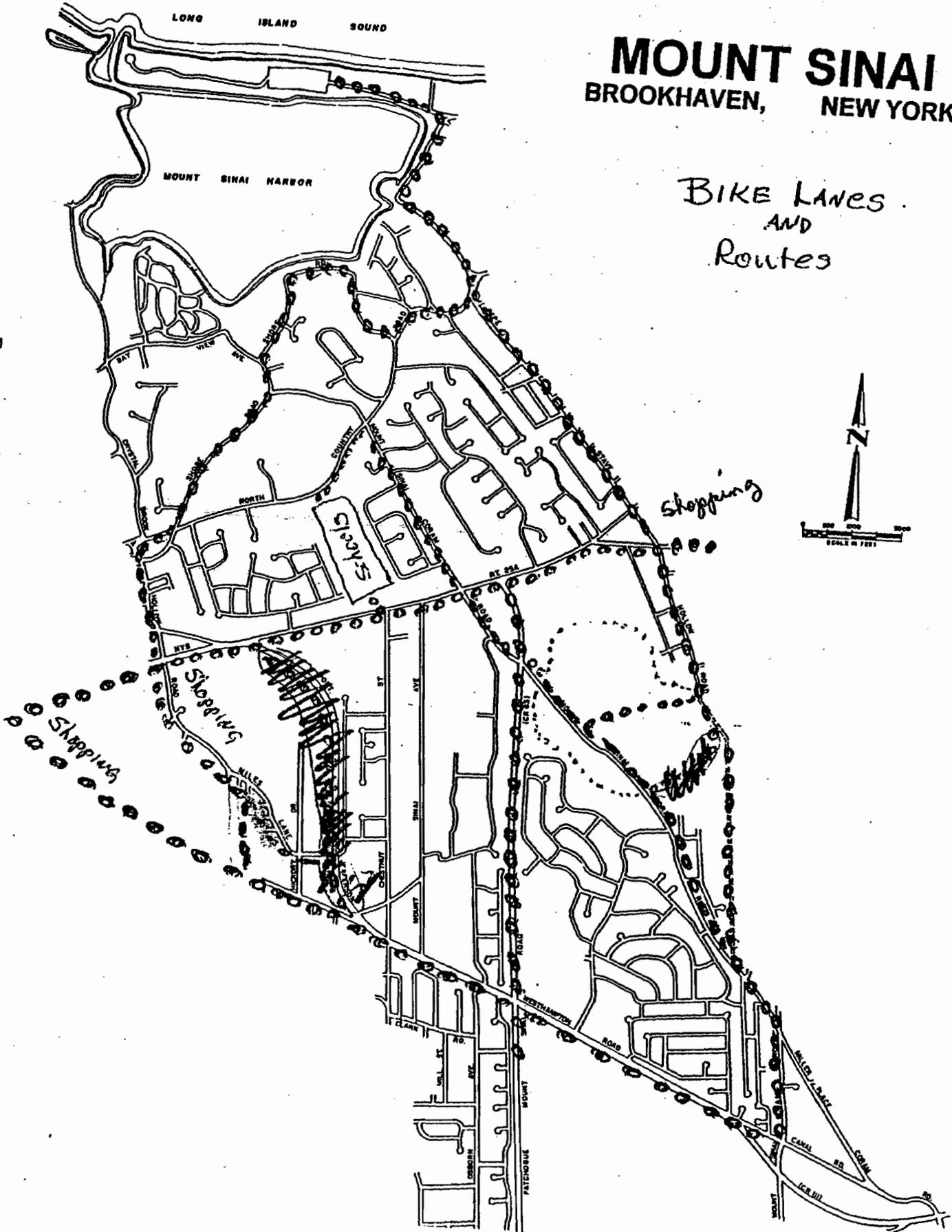
17. Existing and new parking lots along the 25A business corridor, both North and South, should be altered or constructed to allow them to be interconnected.

Rationale: This will allow easy access from one shopping area to another, and possibly encourage local shopping.

Traffic interruptions along 25A will be reduced if customers are able to access additional shops without using the main highway.

MOUNT SINAI BROOKHAVEN, NEW YORK

BIKE LANES AND Routes



It is the primary mission of the bike advisory committee to provide the residents of Brookhaven with a safe, enjoyable, healthy transportation alternative which will allow them to experience their communities on a more intimate level than the automobile. It is further our mission to link important destinations such as parks, and open space, core commercial areas, employment centers, transit centers, schools and other community facilities with a series of interconnecting bike routes.

Goals

1. Primary routes should contain safe consistent shoulders, and should be delineated with signs and stenciled lanes.
2. Selected connector routes should also contain safe consistent shoulders, and should be delineated with signs and stenciled lanes.
3. Funding should be designated for a comprehensive bike awareness campaign.
- 4.

Objectives

1. To provide routes to important destinations.
 - a. Core Commercial Areas.
 - b. Parks and open space.
 - c. Employment Centers
 - d. Schools
 - e. Transit stops
 - f. Other community facilities
2. To provide separated bike paths along selected open space corridors.
3. To establish bike parking facilities within commercial areas, offices, schools and parks.

Criteria for Initial Route Selection:

1. Initial routes should be those which provide a broad coverage of the Town of Brookhaven, and thus, provide the greatest number of residents with the opportunity to engage in cycling.
2. Initial selections should lead to clear identifiable destinations.
3. To allow for the construction of the greatest number of routes, initial selections should be relatively easy to construct.

18. The committee recommends that the parcel of land located on the North side of 25A, East of the Manzoni building, West of the MOD center and South of the Lilco right of way be acquired by the Town of Brookhaven and utilized as an open space/preservation area.

Rationale: The current D-2 zoning is inappropriate and undesirable at this location. Community members are opposed to multi-family housing in Mt. Sinai, as is clear from the questionnaire results.

Our other recommendations would result in an area of open space and greenery directly south of this location, and it was the consensus of the committee that as much green belt area as possible should be concentrated along 25A East of Mt. Sinai Coram Road. This green belt area would provide a sense of the historically rural character of our hamlet, and allow for a "breather" before traveling East through the more commercially developed strips in Miller Place and Rocky Point.

19. The committee recommends that the parcels located East and West of Peachtree Lane on the North side of 25A and South of the Lilco right of way be maintained in a natural state. The Town should utilize a TDR (transfer of development rights) for these parcels and not permit any further development here.

Rationale: The community has expressed an interest in maintaining open space wherever possible, and the committee feels that this would enhance our proposed green belt area along 25A.

These parcels do not have sufficient depth for attractive or usable commercial or residential construction.

20. The Town of Brookhaven should strongly encourage the establishment of a Business Improvement District in Mt. Sinai, and contribute any impact fees generated through additional commercial development or zone changes to the BID for use in improving the appearance of the 25A commercial corridor.

Rationale: The business area along 25A is unattractive and needs vast improvement. Business owners should be encouraged to beautify their individual locations where possible, and to participate in group efforts on the part of local merchants, the Civic Association and community members where possible. A BID, especially if outside funding were available, would result in cosmetic changes which would enhance our local shopping area and encourage residents to patronize their local merchants.

21. The formation of an architectural review board for our community is strongly recommended by the Hamlet Study Committee. The Town Planning Board would be able to consult with this review board when reviewing future site plans.

Rationale: Our Hamlet currently lacks any type of cohesive plan or architectural theme, which results in an unattractive and disjointed appearance. The establishment of a review board would result in an improved look for Mt. Sinai.

22. Attractive, landscaped welcome signs should be erected delineating the entrance and exit points of our hamlet at the following locations:

1. Along North Country Road, at East and West boundaries
2. Along 25A, at East and West boundaries
3. Along Canal Road, at East and West boundaries
4. At the intersection of Canal Road and County Road 83 (Patchogue/Mt. Sinai Road), on the Northeastern corner.

It is recommended that the Town file a Home Rule message with the state requesting these signs, as well incorporate additional beautification efforts into scheduled Town and State road work.

Rationale: The residents of Mt. Sinai are proud of our community and would like visitors to be introduced to our hamlet in an attractive manner.

23. The properties owned by the Town of Brookhaven and New York State and part of the Marine Sanctuary should continue to be dedicated to the use that preserves the natural habitat. These properties are on Cedar Beach, Pipe Stave Hollow Road, Shore Road and Crystal Brook Hollow Road.

Rationale: a) The waters and edges of the harbor are the nursery for the aquatic ecosystem; b) the harbor is a home to various shorebirds; c) the preserved upland areas provide pockets of habitat for various flora and fauna and a haven for migratory song birds; d) the natural habitat is a source of pleasure for citizens who drive by or wander into these areas; e) the shellfish are a source of food and revenue for citizens.

24. The physical facilities on Cedar Beach should be improved to coordinate and deliver recreation services in an enhanced pleasant public park.

Rationale: a) the behavior of people is influenced by the environment around them. Cedar Beach has an "uncared for" atmosphere. Better planned facilities would promote more caring use by citizens. b) Survey results indicate citizens desire to an enhanced park facility. c) Public surveys previously completed indicate citizens value Cedar Beach and that it is a prime recreational area for the citizens of Brookhaven Town.

25. The Town should develop natural habitat road run-off basins along Pipe Stave Hollow Road, Shore Road, and Old Post Road by a restoration ecology project. The Phragmites areas now at the base of Pipe Stave Hollow Road and the base of Rocky Hill Road/Shore Road could well be turned into freshwater marsh areas. These areas, particularly the Pipe Stave Hollow site, could be restored as adjacent development occurs on the "Chandler" property. A filled in "ice pond" is located at the turn of Old Post road west of Shore Road. This place could manage the runoff from Old Post Road. At the

corner of Old Post and Shore Road a small fresh water marsh has been filled with winter road sand. This area should be restored to possibly reduce the coliform runoff into the south part of the harbor.

Rationale: a) Road runoff is a source of coliform bacteria and silt. b) A natural habitat basin could collect any silt or sand runoff and allow for the degradation of coliform bacteria before they enter the harbor.

26. The Town should carefully control the development of lands around the Harbor to safeguard the character of the harbor's environment. The slopes should not be developed, the houses should be clustered, and the access to existing roads should be safe.

The Chandler Property (39.9 acres):

- a. This property, right on the harbor, should be upzoned from one to two acres.
- b. No road cut should be on Pipe Stave Hollow Road but should be via Sea View Lane.
- c. The bluff toward the harbor should be preserved and vegetation restored.
- d. The slope on Pipe Stave Hollow Road should be untouched.
- e. Access to beach along a constructed pathway

Rationale: 1) Citizens view the Harbor and its uplands as open space. A lower density would reduce the visual impact of any development. 2) A lower density would reduce the traffic flow to and from this development. 3) A lower density would reduce the load of inorganic nutrients from septic systems. 4) Pipe Stave Hollow Road is a heavily traveled road. Entry onto that road would negatively impact the slope and "ravine" and would be a danger to citizens. 5) Preservation of the slope will preserve a feeling of open space in this upland wooded area.

St. Francis (18.4 acres) and Poor Clare (46.0 acres)

The "Hill" between Shore Road and Crystal Brook Hollow Road and bound by Old Post to the north.

a) The houses in this area should be clustered to preserve the slopes. b) Road access should be via existing roads; a road cut should not be on Old Post. c) The second growth forest should be cut as little as possible.

Rationale: 1) The wooded appearance of this portion of the hamlet can be preserved if the slopes are not developed. 2) Slope preservation will reduce the stormwater runoff. 3) A road cut to Old Post would be extremely dangerous.

27. The Marine Sanctuary area by Crystal Hollow Brook Pond should: a) remain a low profile use area. b) Be restored to enhance the fresh water seep areas and the fresh water pond.

Rationale: 1) Any attempt to develop this into a heavier use area would require parking facilities. If this were done then the preserve would be negatively impacted and be degraded. 2) The sanding of roads with resulting road runoff into natural seeps and the pond have caused these areas to be filled unnaturally. Freshwater marsh environments would process the nutrients and coliform from road runoff more effectively.

28. The Town should form a "partnership" with the Mt. Sinai and Miller Place School

Districts to develop and run an educational program that would utilize the Marine Sanctuary Facilities more fully.

Rationale: 1) Shared responsibility for creating and maintaining a nature study program will spread out the costs and increase the benefits to participants in the partnership. 2) A creative program provides the opportunity for voluntary community participation by all ages.

29. The properties south of Rt. 25A and between Crystal Brook Hollow Road and Chestnut Streets should retain the present zoning but the community and the Town should reconsider the zoning status of the property if the ownership of the main parcels is consolidated.

Rationale: a) Since the lands (37 acres L-1 changed to A-1 but consider PRC, 30 acres A-1 and 42 A-1) are owned by many different people and since the area has filed maps it is impossible to make recommendations to control or alter the development. b) This area is near a major highway, is close to a shopping area and the hamlet study indicates an acceptance of Planned Retirement Community (PRC). Thus these properties might well be considered for future development into living units for seniors.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MT. SINAI HARBOR

Current stormwater runoff into the Harbor should be mitigated by the Town through the use, where feasible, of "environmentally-friendly" means, such as artificial wetlands. Points of runoff to be addressed should include those at the southern end of the Harbor, coming from Old Post Road, Shore Road (both from the western side and the from the eastern side off Seaview Lane), and Pipe Stave Hollow Road. This mitigation would occur in addition to control measures to be implemented by future development on currently-vacant parcels of land around the Harbor (e.g. the Chandler, Franciscan Brothers, and Little Sisters of Poor Clare properties).

- * Pursuant to the federal Clean Vessel Act, the Town should apply to make the Harbor a No Discharge Zone with respect to sewage from recreational boats. There is currently one operating pump-out station in the Harbor. The Town should supply more if they are required for NDZ designation.
- * The Town should maintain the status of the Harbor as a Marine Sanctuary and should seek to enhance this designation through appropriate habitat restoration projects (e.g. tidal and freshwater wetlands).
- * The Town should post appropriate signage at Cedar Beach, Satterly's Landing and the public and private boat ramps regarding the Marine Sanctuary status, the five-mile-per-hour speed limit within the Harbor, the restrictions on clamming on Sundays, and the prohibition on parking on the boat ramps. The signs should also contain phone numbers which can be called if violations of these laws are noted (for Town Code Enforcement, the bay constable, Suffolk County Marine Police, the Brookhaven Dept. of Environmental Protection, etc.).
- * The Town should seek to better enforce the laws listed in the previous section.
- * The Town should specifically ban the use of jet-skis and water-skis in the Harbor. Although these activities would seem to be precluded by the five mile per hour speed limit, the fact is that these activities frequently occur and a ban might be more effective in preventing them. These activities are particularly disturbing for the wildlife and a ban would more effectively uphold the preservation of the area as a Sanctuary.
- * The Town should seek to implement the recommendations made by the New York State Departments of State and Environmental Conservation in the Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife designation of Mt. Sinai Harbor.
- * The Town should seek to develop an overall environmental management plan for the Harbor which would include recommendations for water quality improvement, restoration of shellfishing in the southern end, tidal and freshwater habitat restoration and protection, and use of the Harbor for a variety of commercial, recreational, and natural preservation purposes.

TRANSPORTATION

Existing conditions: - The most highly traveled east/west and north/south roadways in Mount Sinai are Route 25A, CR83 (Patchogue Mt. Sinai Road), Canal Road, North Country Road, Mt. Sinai Coram Road, and Pipe Stave Hollow Road north of 25A. All of these are two lane roads with the exception of 25A and CR83 which are the major arteries.

Improvements on all of these roads is needed with the exception of CR83. In addition, there are a number of other roads within the hamlet that could be improved in the interest of safety.

Recommendations

1. Route 25A Traffic flow is heavy and exiting from stores and the post office is difficult during many hours of the day. A traffic signal place at West Gate Drive would improve safety for those exiting from that community and would also tend to provide gaps in the traffic flow to easy entry onto 25A from the stores in the area.

2. Old Post Road and Shore Road. Consider making this intersection a three way stop.

Mt. Sinai Coram Road and North Country Road. Consider sequencing the traffic light in the north/south direction to allow turns as this is a staggered intersection.

All of the following roads could use the following improvements: Widen the shoulders to prevent hazardous conditions when vehicles are stopped on the side and to provide an safe lane for bikers and walkers. Add a center stripe to improve night driving safety.

Canal Road

Mt. Sinai Coram Road

Pipe Stave Hollow Road

North Country Road

Shore Road

Harbor Beach Road

Crystal Brook Hollow Road

Chestnut Avenue

Plymouth Avenue (Stripe only)

3 ., The town needs to review the following intersections in regard to safety. In all cases the sight lines are poor and traffic typically moves in excess of the posted limit.

Vidoni Drive and North Country Road

Crystal Brook Hollow Road and Canal Road

Little Harbor Road and North Country Road

Plymouth Avenue and Mt. Sinai Coram Road

North Country Road and the school entrance

North Country Road and the West end of Shore Road