

Town of Ancram  
Draft Profile and Inventory  
January 2009

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## **Historical Overview** <sup>(1)</sup>

The Town of Ancram is located in the southeastern section of Columbia County. The City of Hudson is approximately 20 miles to the northwest, the City of Albany approximately 50 miles to the northwest and the City and Town of Poughkeepsie approximately 35 miles to the southwest.

The town was founded in 1803, and was originally part of Gallatin. In 1814, Ancram separated from Gallatin and became an independent town. The name was derived from the Livingston homestead in Anchoram, Scotland. Robert Livingston, first Lord of the Manor, was the son of a Scotch clergyman, born in Anchoram, Scotland, in 1654. The town comprises 27,000 of the total 160,000 acres the Livingston family had held from the initial grant by the English Crown in 1686. Philip Livingston, grandson of Robert, founded the first iron works in 1743, the only one of its kind on the banks of the Roeliff Jansen Kill and in the New York Colony. There were four forges, a blast furnace and a refinery forge that employed 75 to 100 men at full operation. Three iron mines and a lead mine in the area supported the iron works.

The Ancram iron works later became important as an early “defense plant.” The Ancram forge produced iron for the cannon balls for the Continental artillery as well as for the links of a great chain that stretched across the Hudson River between Anthony’s Nose and Fort Montgomery to keep the British fleet from sailing up the Hudson to West Point.

This iron works became a paper mill in 1858 and still operates as a paper mill today. It is the longest continuously operating mill in New York State and one of the largest employers in Columbia County.

By 1852, the railroads had come to Boston Corners. There were three, including the Harlem, the CNE and the P&E. At this time, Boston Corners was still a part of Massachusetts, but was isolated from the state by the Taconic Range and was without any effective law enforcement. The combination of access by rail and no effective law enforcement made

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(1) The information in this historical overview was based on an article titled “A History of Ancram” by Hilary Masters in the 1990 edition of *A History of the Roeliff Jansen Area*. Masters’ review was based on materials prepared by Ethel Miller and revised by Clara Van Tassel. For additional information on the history of Ancram, see the History section of town website ([www.townofancram.org](http://www.townofancram.org)).

Boston Corners a favorite spot for illegal boxing, which led to the great boxing match that lasted 38 rounds between “Yankee” Sullivan and John Morrissey. Ten thousand sports fans arrived by railroad and took over the small village for two days. Influenced by the chaos of this incident, the State of Massachusetts ceded Boston Corners to New York in May 1855. Congress ratified the transaction January 1856 and the Town of Ancram annexed Boston Corners on April 13, 1857.

The first residents of Ancram were mostly farmers who arrived here in 1740-1741 when Livingston brought several families over from Scotland. The majority of the farmers grew crops, mainly wheat, on leased land. Part of the crop was paid as rent to the Lord of the Manor.

“Modern” dairy farming came to Ancram with the railroads. In 1872, rail service was extended from Boston Corners to Ancram Lead Mines (Ancramdale). Town supervisor Jacob Miller took cans of milk down to the train station in Ancramdale and shipped them to Boston Corners and then on to New York City on the Harlem line.

In 1875, the railroad arrived in Ancram, providing access to the New York City market for Ancram farmers as well. Stimulated by the ability to ship milk by rail to New York, more farmers focused on dairy farming and created the large dairy herds that have successfully dominated farming in Ancram ever since the railroads arrived in the mid-1870s.

During the second half of the 1800s, Ancram supported stores, blacksmith shops, hotels, milk plants (one of which is now the Town Garage), a tin shop, and carriage makers in town. Four churches were built, and Ancram ranked as a prosperous community.

Telephone service came to town in 1901. Electricity was brought to the Ancram Lead Mines (now Ancramdale) and Ancram around 1924. In 1930, Ancram Lead Mines changed its name to Ancramdale.

There were 14 district schools in Ancram that were centralized in 1930 with Roeliff Jansen Central and Pine Plains Central schools. The two-room schoolhouse in Ancram on Route 7 (District No. 10) remained in service under the Roeliff Jansen School system until 1968 when it closed. In 1975, this building became the Town Hall and Courthouse, and remained as such

until the new Town Hall and Courthouse was built in 2003, and today the building is an antique shop.

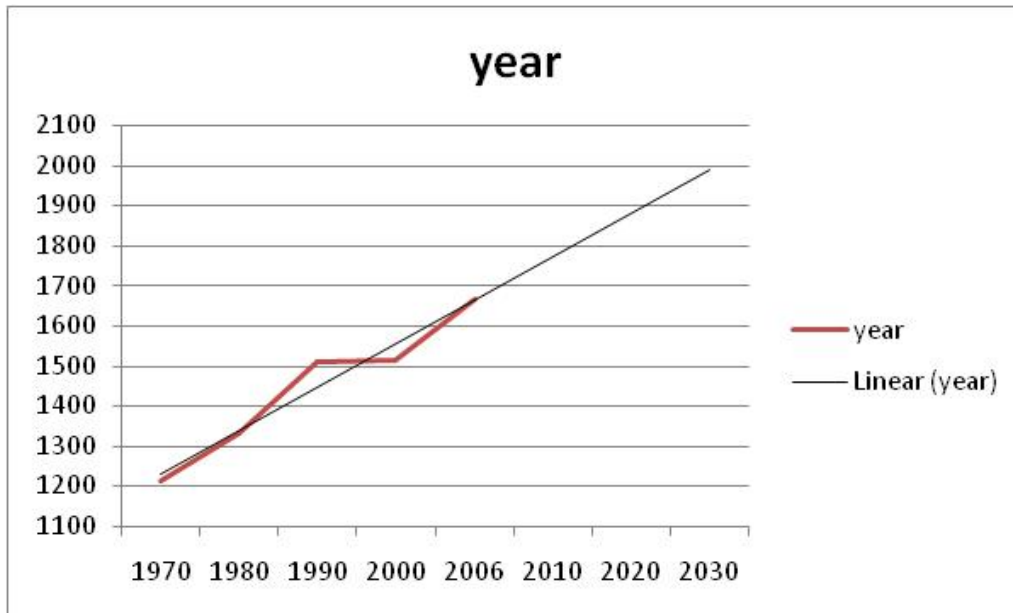
## Population Analysis

The population in the Town of Ancram increased 13.6 percent between 1980 and 2000. However, almost no growth in population occurred between 1990 and 2000. The 20-year increase is twice as high as that seen in Columbia County. It is also much higher than New York State as a whole, but is much lower than the United States as a whole. In 2000, the U.S. Census recorded 1,513 persons in Ancram.

**Table 1: Population Changes from 1980 to 2000**

Area	1980	1990	2000	1980-2000 Change
United States	226,546,000	248,710,000	281,421,906	24.2%
New York State	17,558,165	17,990,455	18,976,457	8.1%
Columbia County	59,487	62,982	63,094	6.1%
Town of Ancram	1332	1510	1513	13.6%

The population of Ancram was estimated at 1,666 in 2006 by the U.S. Census. Using linear trend information since 1970, the population is estimated to grow to about 2,000 people in the year 2030, as shown below. (The original 1970s development plan for Ancram estimated a 1990 population of 1,815 people.)



**Figure 1: Population Changes**

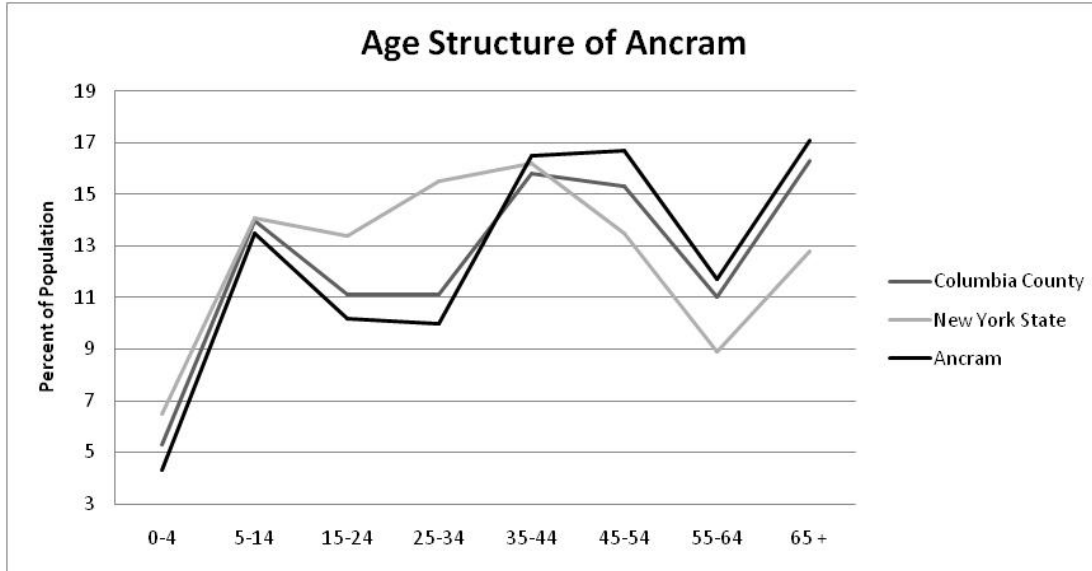
Since 1980, Ancram has experienced a steep decline in the number of very young people (under five years of age) but increases in all other age groups (Table 2). The highest increase is in the 65-year and older group. In 2000, very young children made up 4.4 percent of the population. The median age has risen from 33.7 years to 42.2 years (a common occurrence throughout New York State). About 17 percent of the Town’s population is more than 65 years old. Compared to the County and New York State, Ancram has fewer young people (as a percentage of the total population) and more middle age to older people (Table 3).

**Table 2: Age Distribution 1970 - 2000.**

Age Group	Population			
	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
Under 5 years	98 (8%)	121 (8%)	66 (4.4%)	-32.7%
18 years and older	965 (73%)	1124 (74.4%)	1174 (77.6%)	21.7%
65 years and older	208 (16%)	212 (14%)	259 (17.1%)	24.5%
Median Age	33.7	NA	42.2	25.2%

**Table 3: Comparison of Age Distribution, Percent of Total Population, 2000**

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
Ancram	4.3	13.5	10.2	10.0	16.5	16.7	11.7	17.1
Columbia County	5.3	14	11.1	11.1	15.8	15.3	11	16.3
New York State	6.5	14.1	13.4	15.5	16.2	13.5	8.9	12.8



**Figure 2: Age Characteristics**

Tables 4 and 5 show several other population characteristics in Ancram. While population has increased 13.6 percent since 1980, the number of households in Town has risen at a different rate (28.8 percent). This is another common demographic shift seen in many rural communities where population rises little or moderately, but the increase in households rises faster.

**Table 4: Population Data Town of Ancram**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
<b>Total Population</b>	1215	1332	1510	1513	13.6%
<b>No. of Households</b>	NA	462	559	595	28.8%
<b>Total No. of Families</b>		339	400	431	27.1%
<b>No. of Married Couple Families</b>		301	328	349	15.9%
<b>No. of Female Head of Household</b>		31	49	51	64.5%

Compared to nearby towns, Ancram has the second oldest median age (42.2 years). Table 5 shows that in many ways, there are many similarities and differences between Ancram and its neighbors.

**Table 5: Comparison of Other Demographic Characteristics of the Town of Ancram to Other Adjacent Towns**

	<b>Town of Ancram</b>	<b>Town of Pine Plains</b>	<b>Town of Gallatin</b>	<b>Town of Copake</b>	<b>Town of Taghkanic</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	1,513	2,569	1,499	3,278	1,118
<b>Median Age</b>	42.2	39.9	41.6	41.7	44.9
<b>Percent of Population Over 65 Years</b>	17.1%	14.9%	15.4%	18.3%	19.0%
<b>Number Housing Units</b>	823	1,161	913	2,185	713
<b>Number Vacant** Housing Units</b>	228 (27.7%)	173 (14.9%)	304 (33.3%)	905 (41.4%)	252 (35.3%)
<b>Population 25 years and older</b>	1,096	1,720	1,071	2,377	837
<b>Percent of Population in Labor Force</b>	64.7%	64.8%	62.4%	59.8%	57.8%
<b>Percent owner occupied units</b>	80.3%	70.2%	81.9%	75.0%	84.4%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$45,726	\$43,125	\$42,454	\$42,261	\$45,804
<b>Individuals Below Poverty Level</b>	110 (7.4%)	233 (9.2%)	84 (5.6%)	261 (8.1%)	100 (9.1%)
<b>Median Value Single Family Home</b>	\$118,000	\$116,000	\$115,500	\$106,700	\$134,800

Table 6 illustrates Ancram’s very low density compared to other places. Ancram has the:

- highest percent of owner occupied units,
- the highest median value of housing,
- the lowest unemployment rate,
- the lowest poverty rate, and

- the highest vacancy rate of housing units

compared to the County, State, and country.

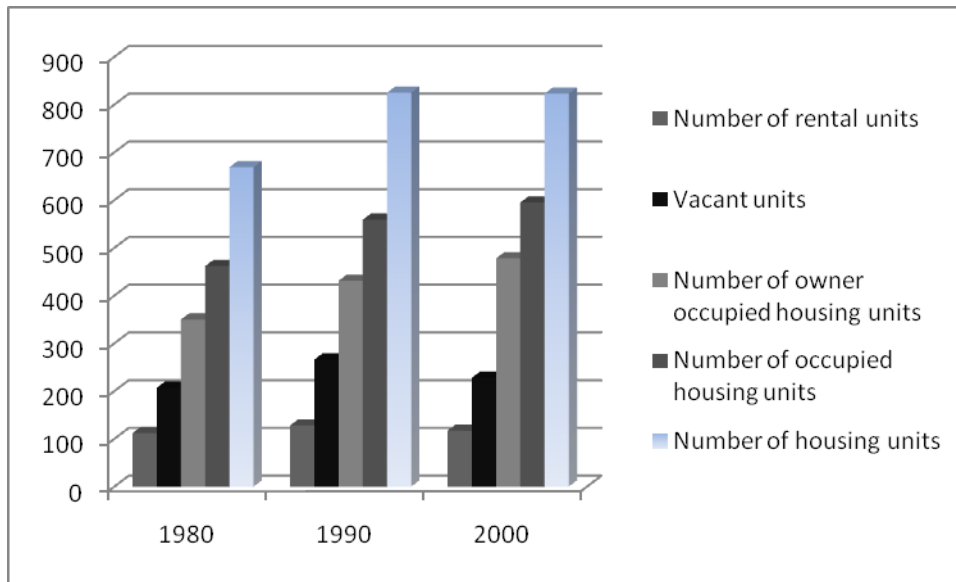
We believe this relatively high percentage of vacant housing units reflects the Town’s high percentage of weekend and part-time residents, who either were not in Ancram when the 2000 census was taken or who listed somewhere else as their primary residence. The Town also has the lowest percent of households headed by females, and the lowest percentage of families as married couples. Still, the majority of families in Ancram are married couples (61 percent).

**Table 6: Comparison of Demographics of the Region in 2000**

	United States	New York State	Columbia County	Town of Ancram
<b>Land Area (square miles)</b>	3,648,399	48,624	648	42.8
<b>No. residents per square mile</b>	77	390	97	.028
<b>Percent married couple families</b>	78%	67.6%	63%	61.1%
<b>Percent female householder families</b>	17%	14.7%	10.3%	7.7%
<b>Percent owner occupied units</b>	64.2%	47.9%	70%	80.3%
<b>Median value of housing unit</b>	\$ 79,100	\$ 82,900	\$ 103,100	\$ 118,000
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	7.4%	8.5%	4.8%	2.8%
<b>Percent of all persons below poverty level</b>	14.2%	24%	17.6%	7.4%
<b>Vacant status of housing units**</b>	7%	8.1%	18.7%	27.7%

\*\*Vacant housing units are believed to be owned by part time residents who were not in residence when the census was taken, or who listed their primary residence as somewhere else.

### Housing Characteristics

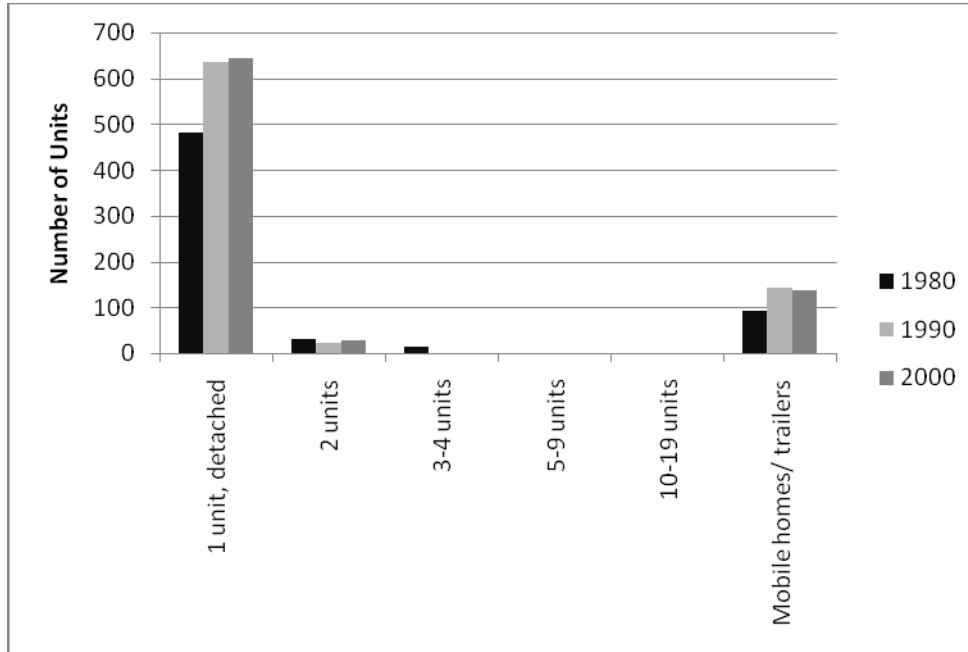


**Figure 3: Housing Characteristics**

The chart above illustrates several trends. The number of housing units increased since 1980. In 2000, there were 823 housing units, compared to 1970 when there were 370 year-round homes along with 80 mobile homes, and 53 seasonal units (totaling 503). Most of these units were owner-occupied, and a much smaller percentage were vacant.

The number of vacant housing units increased between 1980 and 1990 but fell between 1990 and 2000, which may reflect an increasing number of the Town’s part-time and weekend residents deciding to move to Ancram on a full-time basis. If this is the trend, we should expect to see a decrease in the number of “vacant homes” in the next census.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units remained steady. By 2000, almost all housing units in Ancram were single-unit, detached structures.. There were very few two-family and three- to four- family units and no large multi-family units. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of mobile home units in Town remained steady at around 140.



**Figure 4: Type of Housing Units in Ancram**

Only about 14 percent of all housing units in Town are rentals. Both rents and housing values have greatly increased in the last 20 years. For example, since 1980, housing values have increased 181 percent.

Ancram has a relatively stable population. In 2000, some 67 percent of town residents had lived in the same house for five years (Table 7). Twelve percent moved to Ancram between 1995 and 2000 from other Columbia County locations, and about 16 percent moved from other New York State locations.

**Table 7: Housing Data - Town of Ancram**

Housing Characteristics	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
Number of housing units	669	825	823	23.0%
Number of occupied housing units	462	559	595	28.8%
Number of owner occupied housing units	350	431	478	36.6%
Number of rental units	112	128	117	4.5%
Vacant units	207	266	228	10.1%
<b>Numbers &amp; Type of Unit:</b>				
<b>1 unit, detached</b>	482	637	644	33.6%

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Housing Characteristics	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
2 units	32	23	31	-3.1%
3-4 units	14	0	2	-85.7%
5-9 units	0	0	0	0
10-19 units	0	0	0	0
Mobile homes/ trailers	92	142	140	52.1%
Housing value, median	\$42,000	\$104,700	\$118,000	181%
Rental prices, median gross rent	\$245.00	\$444.00	\$705.00	187.7%
No. of Residents living in same house in last five years	740	949	1009	36.4%
- living in same county	120	184	188	56.7%
-living in different county, same state	342	233	243	-30%
- living in different state	49	41	25	-49%

\*In 1980 the categories 5-9 units & 10-19 units were combined.

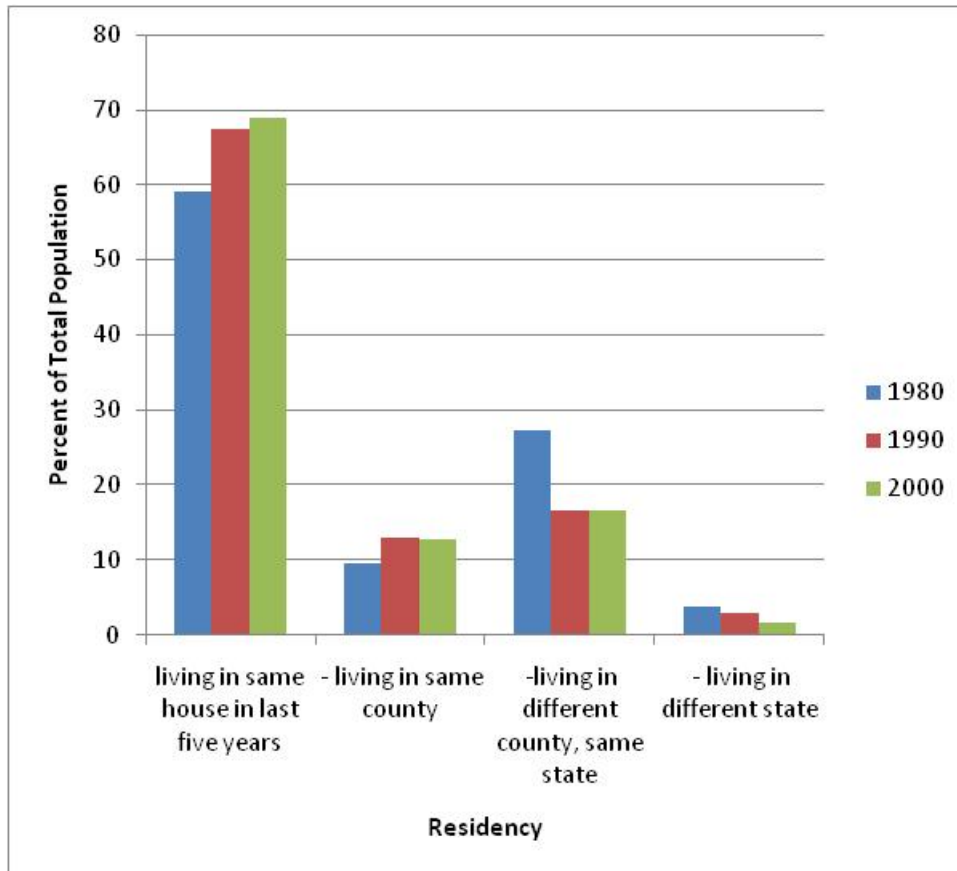


Figure 5: Residency Status of Ancram Residents

## **Housing Affordability**

There are several ways to determine if housing is generally affordable in a community. One method is to determine the *rental index*. This index shows the maximum gross rent a given household can afford. Affordable rental housing is generally considered to be no more than 30 percent of a household's monthly income.

In 2000, the average monthly rental rate in Ancram was \$705, and the median household income was \$45,726, which yields about \$3,810 of income per month. Thirty percent of that income is \$1,143, which means that the average household could afford the average \$705 per month in rent documented in the 2000 census data -- because the average renter is paying less than 30 percent of their income for housing.

Therefore, Ancram renters with income levels close to and above the median income level could find affordable rental housing.. However, 35 percent of the households in Ancram earned less than the median income level in 2000. For very young households, and the very oldest households, rents were not affordable. For example, the average household under the age of 25 earned \$18,750, and a rent of \$705 per month would require 45 percent of their income, which is well above the level considered affordable.

A second method to determine affordability is to look at the ratio between the median value of a single-family house and median household income. Nationally, a ratio of two or less is considered to be affordable. The affordability ratio for Ancram is calculated as: \$118,000 (median value of homes in 2000, from census data) divided by \$45,726 (median household income), or 2.58. This figure is above the desired ratio of two and indicates affordability issues for average income families.

Data from local real estate agents indicated that there were 14 house sales in 2007 in Ancram averaging \$271,000. These prices may reflect the impact of the housing "bubble," which has effectively doubled home prices and assessed values in Ancram over the past 10 years or so. As of early January 2008, there were 14 listings with average asking prices of \$380,000.

No updated household income is available specifically for the Town, but 2005 county data showed a median income of \$47,795, which was a 14% increase. If we estimate Ancram's 2007 income using a similar increase, then the estimated

household income would be \$52,128 (or \$55,000 today assuming 2006 and 2007 were up 3 percent).

A re-calculation of the affordability ratio with this more recent data results in an updated, but approximate affordability ratio of 4.9 (using \$55,000 as household income and \$271,000 as home price). This figure is a dramatic increase from 2000 and indicates a serious lack of affordability for the average family. Homes may be even less affordable if the current \$380,000 average listing price is close to the average median value of a home.

A third method, the *purchase price multiplier*, also gives an indication of affordability. This looks at the maximum mortgage approval amount likely to be given to potential homebuyers, which is usually about 2.25 times annual income. Based on the 2000 median income, this approach indicates the median income household could afford a house costing \$113,000, assuming a 10 percent down payment, which was close to the median priced home in 2000. Using an estimated figure for annual income in 2008, the median income household could afford a \$129,000 home. This is much lower than the price that houses are selling for today, and this scenario also reinforces the concerns about affordability.

For those who earn less than the median income level, however, the situation is more severe. Households earning \$30,000 today could only afford a home costing around \$74,000, illustrating the difficulty that approximately one-third of Ancram’s households could have in purchasing a home in Ancram.

### Affordable Housing Wage Data for New York State vs. Columbia County

The following table details affordable housing and wage data for Columbia County as compared to New York State. This level of detail is not available for towns..

**Table 8: Affordable Housing Wage Data**

	New York	Columbia County
<b>Number of Households (2000)</b>		
Total	7,056,860	24,796
Renter	3,317,613	7,303
% Renter	47%	29%
<b>2006 Area Median Income<sup>1</sup></b>		
Annual	\$67,812	\$61,800
Monthly	\$5,651	\$5,150
30% of AMI <sup>2</sup>	\$20,344	\$18,540
<b>Maximum Affordable<sup>3</sup> Monthly Housing Cost by % of Family AMI</b>		

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	New York	Columbia County
30%	\$509	\$464
50%	\$848	\$773
80%	\$1,356	\$1,236
100%	\$1,695	\$1,545
<b>2007 Fair Market Rent (FMR) <sup>4</sup></b>		
Zero-Bedroom	\$972	\$674
One-Bedroom	\$1,055	\$688
Two-Bedroom	\$1,198	\$811
Three-Bedroom	\$1,482	\$980
Four-Bedroom	\$1,664	\$1,045
<b>Annual Income Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	\$38,870	\$26,960
One-Bedroom	\$42,215	\$42,520
Two-Bedroom	\$47,910	\$32,440
Three-Bedroom	\$59,262	\$39,200
Four-Bedroom	\$66,579	\$41,800
<b>2006 Renter Household Income</b>		
Estimated Median <sup>5</sup>	\$38,199	\$32,680
Percent Needed to Afford 2 BR FMR	125%	99%
Rent Affordable at Median	\$955	\$817
% Renters Unable to Afford 2 BR FMR <sup>6</sup>	59%	49%
<b>2005 Renter Wage</b>		
Estimated Mean Renter Wage <sup>7</sup>	\$21.05	\$9.91
Rent Affordable at Mean Wage	\$1,094	\$515
<b>2008 Minimum Wage</b>		
Minimum Wage	\$7.15	\$7.15
Rent Affordable at Minimum Wage	\$372	\$372
<b>2008 Supplemental Security Income</b>		
Monthly SSI Payment	\$724	\$724
Rent Affordable at SSI	\$217	\$217
<b>Housing Wage</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	\$18.69	\$12.96
One-Bedroom	\$20.30	\$13.23
Two-Bedroom	\$23.03	\$15.60
Three-Bedroom	\$28.49	\$18.85

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	New York	Columbia County
Four-Bedroom	\$32.01	\$20.10
<b>Work Hours/Week at Minimum Wage Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	105	73
One-Bedroom	114	74
Two-Bedroom	129	87
Three-Bedroom	159	105
Four-Bedroom	179	112
<b>Work Hours/Week at Mean Renter Wage Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	36	52
One-Bedroom	39	53
Two-Bedroom	44	63
Three-Bedroom	54	76
Four-Bedroom	61	81
<b>Full-time Jobs at Minimum Wage Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	2.6	1.8
One-Bedroom	2.8	1.9
Two-Bedroom	3.2	2.2
Three-Bedroom	4.0	2.6
Four-Bedroom	4.5	2.8
<b>Full-time Jobs at Mean Renter Wage Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	0.9	1.3
One-Bedroom	1	1.3
Two-Bedroom	1.1	1.6
Three-Bedroom	1.4	1.9
Four-Bedroom	1.6	2.0

	New York	Columbia County
<p><i>Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition – Out of Reach, 2006</i></p> <p><i>Chart Footnotes</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. HUD Area Median Income, 2006</li> <li>2. Annual income of 30% of AMI or less is the federal standard for Extremely Low Income households. Does not include HUD-specific adjustments.</li> <li>3. "Affordable" rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending not more than 30% of income on housing costs.</li> <li>4. HUD, 2006; final as of October 1.</li> <li>5. Census 2000 median renter household income, adjusted to a 2006 value using HUD's income adjustment factor.</li> <li>6. Estimated by comparing the percent of renter median household income required to afford the two-bedroom FMR to the percent distribution of renter household income as a percent of the median within the state, as measured using 2005 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample. States are the most local level for which these data are available.</li> <li>7. Estimated mean renter wage is based on BLS data and adjusted using the ratio of renter to total household income reported in Census 2000.</li> </ol>		

## Physical and Environmental Features

### Water Features and Wetlands

Pieces of eight watersheds can be found in Ancram. The Roeliff Jansen Kill Watershed and the Punch Brook Watershed encompass most of the land mass in Ancram. Others include the Prechey Hollow Brook, Noster Kill, Bashbish Brook, Shekomeko Creek, Suydam Creek, and the Webatuck Creek watersheds. (See Subwatershed Map.)

Both New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and National Wetland Inventory (NWI) wetlands have been mapped in Ancram. Most are found associated with the various creeks, especially along the Roeliff Jansen Kill and the Punch Brook. The Drowned Land Swamp represents a large complex of wetlands found along the Punch Brook. (See Water Features Map.) Many of the small tributaries to these streams also have smaller wetlands associated with them. Many of the mapped 100-year floodplain areas are coincident with mapped wetlands.

Several open bodies of water can be found in Ancram in the north-central part of Town around Long Lake. Other small ponds are scattered throughout the area. (See Water Features Map.)

## **Ground Water Study**

The New York Rural Water Association (NYRWA) prepared a Groundwater Protection Plan in cooperation with Community Planning & Environmental Associates of Berne, New York, and the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Planning Committee. The plan:

- maps the groundwater resources and aquifers of Ancram,
- identifies potential sources of contamination,
- evaluates the susceptibility to contamination and future growth, and
- outlines potential protection strategies.

Ancram straddles two distinct physiographic regions. The western two-thirds of Ancram are located in the Hudson Valley section of the Valley and Ridge physiographic province and are drained principally by the Roeliff Jansen Kill and its tributaries. The eastern one-third of Ancram lies within the more rugged Taconic section of the New England physiographic province. A significant portion of this area is part of the Tenmile River watershed.

More than 90 percent of the residences and businesses in Ancram use bedrock wells. These wells have a median depth of 259 feet and a median depth of casing of 28 feet. Nearly one-half of all Ancram bedrock wells (46%) yield less than five gallons per minute, which ranks as the minimum well yield necessary for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) insured loans for new construction.

Most low-yielding wells are found in areas underlain by the Walloomsac Formation (see Executive Figure 1). This formation consists largely of black slate, and underlies the majority of the upland areas of Town (particularly in the Hudson Valley physiographic section). The median well yield in the Walloomsac Formation is only 3.75 gallons per minute, and approximately one quarter of residents in Ancram with wells in the Walloomsac Formation report that they have insufficient water. Similarly, 27.5 percent of all wells drilled in the Walloomsac yield one gallon per minute or less and would be deemed unsuitable for four bedroom homes according to New York State Department of Health guidelines (see Executive Figure 1). Many residents relying upon the Walloomsac Formation extend the depth of their wells or provide supplemental storage tanks in an attempt to meet peak demand periods.

The other major bedrock unit in Ancram, referred to as the Wappinger-Stockbridge Group carbonates, has a median well yield of eight gallons per minute. This rock type is found across much of the lower elevations in Ancram such as in the valleys of the Roeliff Jansen Kill, Punch Brook, and the Noster Kill (see Executive Figure 1). Only five to 10 percent of residents with wells in the carbonate rocks report water quantity problems and/or yields of one gallon per minute or less. Higher yields are found in the carbonate rocks due to the presence of enlarged openings along fractures, joints, and bedding planes. Documented yields of at least 65 gallons per minute have been found in the Wappinger-Stockbridge Group carbonates in Ancram.

More than 70 percent of households in Ancram report water quality problems, largely the nuisance of hard water. Hard water is particularly common in wells tapping the carbonate rocks. Odor problems are more commonly associated with the Walloomsac Formation, which likely comes from sulfide minerals associated with the rock type.

NYRWA has mapped a number of unconsolidated (sand and gravel) aquifers in Ancram (see Executive Figure 2). Although these aquifers are not being widely utilized for water supply purposes, there are two areas where shallow wells are commonly used: near the Lower Rhoda Pond-Long Lake area and in and around Ancramdale (Executive Figure 2). Wells in these areas produce high quantities of water (in excess of 30 gallons per minute), but are vulnerable to contamination. Deeper sand and gravel aquifer deposits have been documented in the hamlet of Ancram and a few other areas. These deposits are better protected from contamination due to the presence of overlying silt and clay. Subsurface data is lacking in many areas to fully characterize the water-bearing properties of the sand and gravel aquifers. It is apparent that very high yielding wells can be constructed in many of the unconsolidated aquifers if screens are properly installed and developed.

Although the Town of Ancram does not currently own or operate any municipal water system, there are public water systems in Town. These privately-owned systems serve residents in the Long Lake community, as well as employees, patrons, and guests at several other establishments.

No health-based violations have been reported at the nine active public water supply systems in Town. It is important to recognize the presence of public water systems in Ancram and the potential impacts on these water systems

should be considered when making land use decisions. Groundwater resources are susceptible to contamination from a variety of manmade sources that can be associated with present or future land uses. An inventory of regulated facilities and higher risk land uses revealed a number of regulated wastewater discharges in the Roeliff Jansen Kill watershed in Town. In addition, there are several past and present sand and gravel mining operations in Ancram.

Development involves a number of potential groundwater resource issues such as water supply, wastewater treatment, impervious surfaces and storm water systems, and improper waste disposal and spills. Based upon estimated recharge rates, NYRWA recommends that the density of equivalent single family residential septic systems should not exceed an average of one per 3.5 acres. In addition, the distance between on-site water wells and septic systems should be closely observed to ensure adherence with New York State standards and to protect water quality.

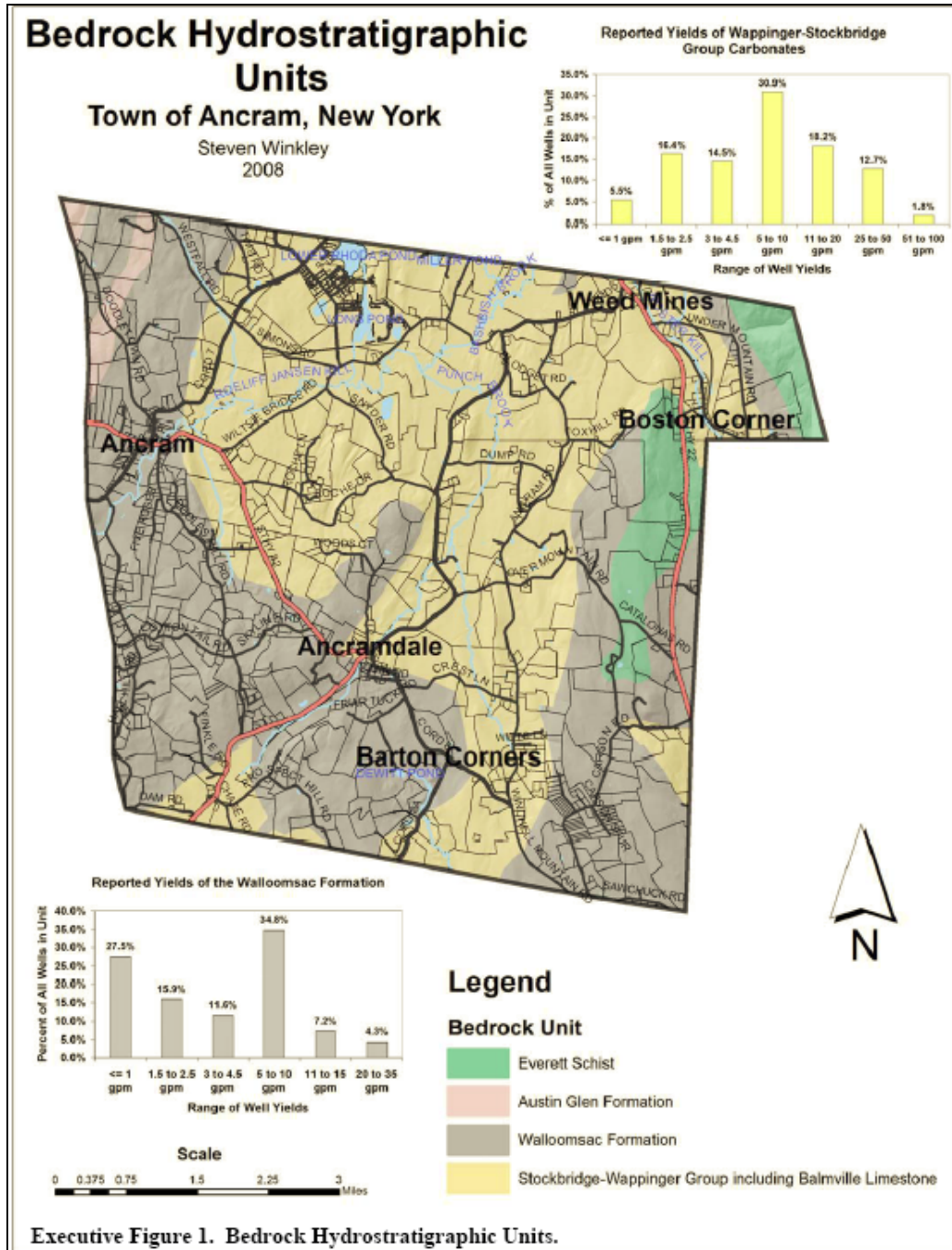
NYRWA delineated areas in Ancram where ground water could be easily and quickly impacted by surface activities (areas with high hydrogeologic sensitivity) (see Executive Figure 3). In order to prioritize subsequent protection efforts, NYRWA further identified privately-held, undeveloped parcels that had areas of high to very high hydrogeologic sensitivity. These areas are at the highest risk of water quality impacts from new development.

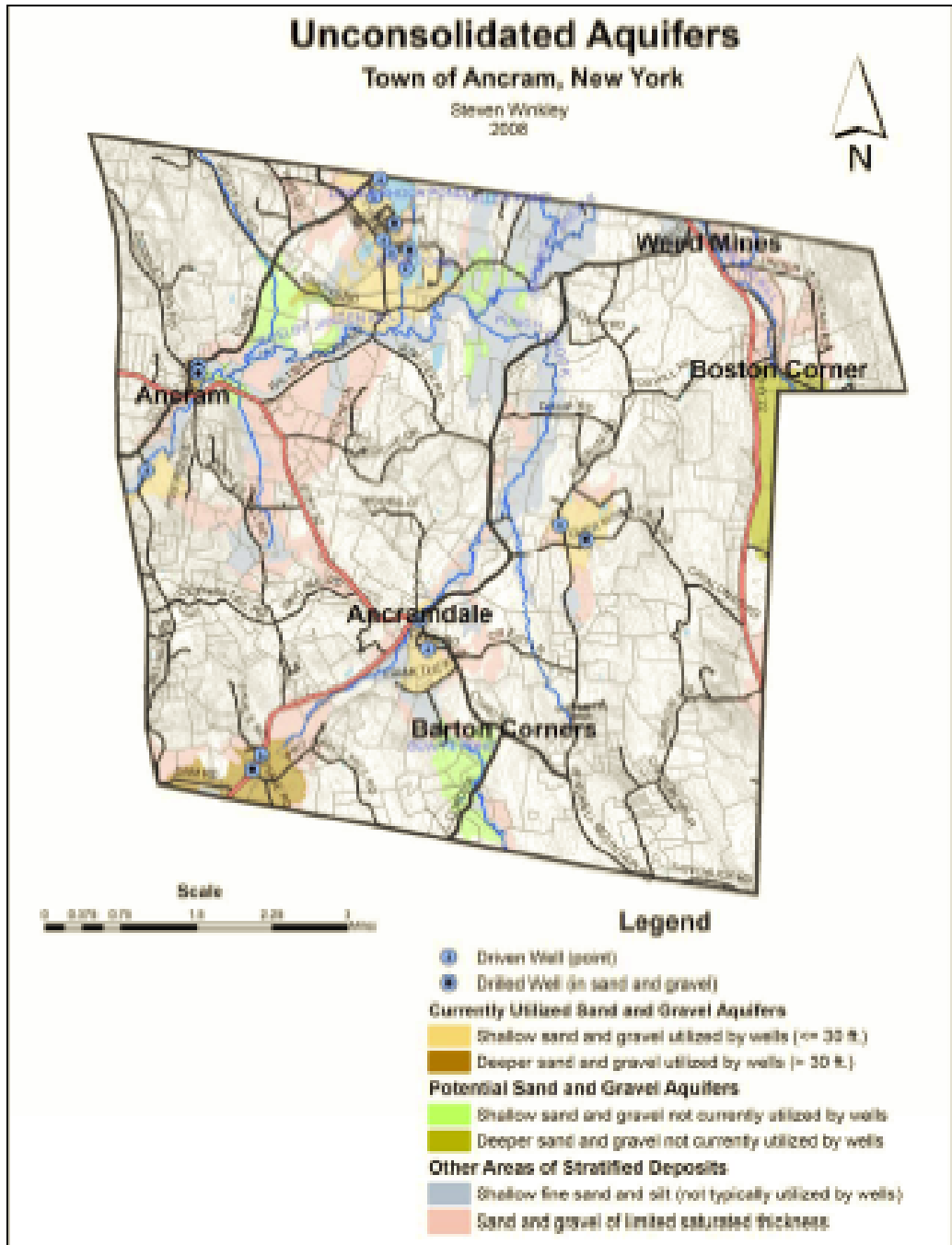
The issue of groundwater supply availability and impact should be addressed early in the land development process. NYRWA recommends that the location, yield, and quality of wells should be considered prior to approval of a new subdivision. Relatively large subdivisions, as well as most subdivisions in the Walloomsac Formation, should have a hydrogeological report completed prior to approval. Another possible approach is to use zoning regulations to require a hydrogeological study and minimum standards for some forms of development. For example, any development that uses at least 1,000 gallons per day of water could trigger more technical review. Ancram may also wish to enact an aquifer and/or groundwater protection overlay to limit high-risk uses, etc.

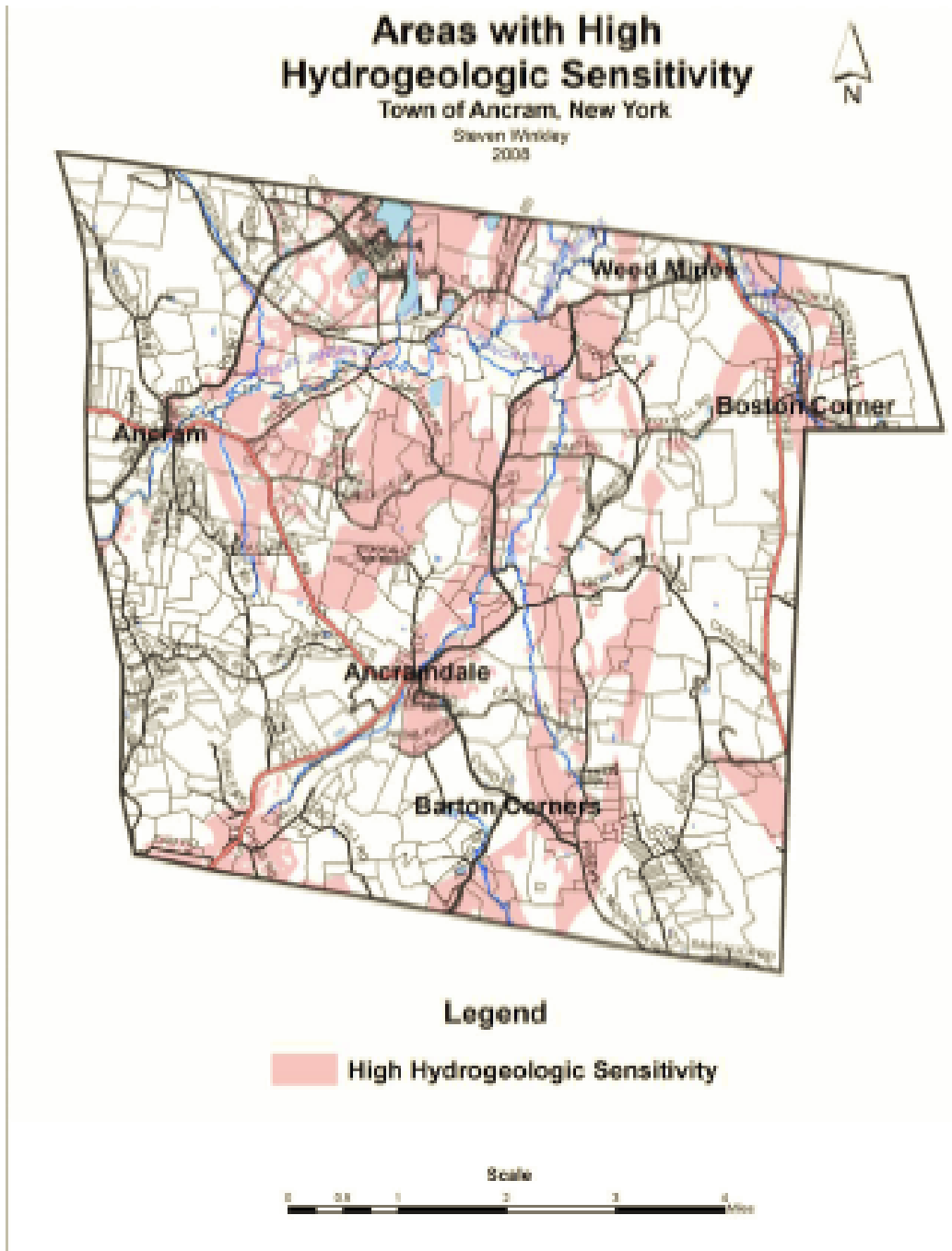
Finally, there are other non-regulatory actions that Ancram can take to protect ground water. These include:

- declaration of Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs),
- purchase of land or conservation easements,

- further study of some at-risk areas (including possible well testing), and public education activities.







## Floodplains

One-hundred-year-old floodplains are found along the entire length of the Roeliff Jansen Kill, Bash Kill, and Noster Kill creeks as they flow through Ancram. Further, the 100-year-old floodplain is designated along the Punch Brook from near where it crosses County Route 3, and through the Drowned

Land Swamp north to the Jansen Kill.

### **Scenic Resources**

The Town of Ancram has a scenic corridor included as an overlay district in the Town zoning law. This corridor is along NYS Route 22 and establishes several development standards to protect the scenic quality of this area. Development standards apply to major subdivisions and require undisturbed buffers along the road.

Among other identified scenic areas include the following:

Fox Hill Road looking west  
Saw Chuck Road looking west  
Cottontail Road looking north  
Taconic State Park  
Drowned Land Swamp  
Round Ball Mountain  
Undermountain Road looking west  
Other locations (See Map of Important Places)

In 2000, the Ancram Scenic Byway Committee completed work on a nomination for an Ancram Scenic Byway. This corridor was proposed as Route 82, Route 8, and Route 3 in Ancram with three smaller “Backway Corridors” along Wiltsie Bridge, Sawchuck, and Undermountain Roads. This Byway Corridor nomination included an inventory of scenic resources, vision statement, goals, public participation and other corridor management planning strategies. This study was followed up in 2003, when the Town of Ancram developed a Scenic Resource Protection Plan. The following list is included as scenic resources in Town:

- Harlem Valley Rail Trail
- Old Croken
- Drowned Lands Swamp and Punch Brook
- Columbia County Route 7
- Old Free Cemetery
- Union Cemetery
- Simons General Store
- Stone Arch Bridge
- Livingston Family Mansion
- Boston Corners

- NYS Route 22
- Ancram Hamlet
- Ancramdale Hamlet
- Saint John's Church
- Columbia County Rt 3 from Ancramdale north to NYS Route 22
- Columbia County Rt 8 (Winchell Mountain Road) from Sawchuck Road north to Ancramdale
- Roeliff-Jansen Kill Trail
- Alander Trailhead
- Ancramdale Presbyterian Church, 1847
- Columbia County Rt 8A from southern Town line (with Northeast) north to County Rt 8

### **Topography, Slopes and Ridgelines**

The topography map clearly shows the major topographic features of the town: There are significant valleys along the Roeliff Jansen Kill, Punch Brook, and Noster Kill, surrounded by increasing elevation.

Highest elevations exist along a ridge along the eastern boundary of Ancram. Valley elevations range from 500 to 600 feet. The ridgelines found in the northwestern corner of town and those in the center between the Roeliff Jansen Kill and Punch Brook valleys range in elevation from 800 to 1000 feet above sea level.

The major ridge bounded by State Highway 22 and East Ancram/Winchell Mountain Roads varies from 700 feet to 1300 feet above sea level. Within these three ridge areas, numerous steep slopes can be found (See Steep Slopes Map.) Most slopes range from 15 to 25 percent slope but there are many hillside areas with slopes in excess of 25 percent. Most of the steepest slopes are found along the eastern boundary of Ancram. The steepest slopes are found east of Under Mountain Road in the eastern corner of Town and are part of the Taconic Ridge. Here, elevations range from 800 to 2000 feet with significant slopes over 25 percent.

Surficial geologic features mirror these topographic features. Soil deposits from streams and from past glaciers (called fluvial and glaciofluvial deposits) follow along the stream channels of the Roeliff Jansen Kill and Punch Brook. A large north-south area of bedrock follows along the steep hillsides in the eastern portion of Ancram. The majority of town is

composed of till (soil deposited beneath the glacial ice that used to cover the area.)

## **Soils**

A major portion of the Town also contains soil types that have been classified as severe regarding their ability to absorb sewage effluent from septic tanks. The soil type problems encountered are rockiness, thin soil mantel or lack of depth to bedrock, or lack of permeability. Wet soils are found associated with wetlands and other locations along the many creeks found in Ancram.

Prime farmland soils and soils of statewide significance are typically not found on steep slopes or in higher elevations. These soils, which make up the most productive farmland soils in Ancram, can be found closely associated with the valley soils of the Roeliff Jansen Kill, Punch Brook, and Shekomeko Creek. There are more than 3,000 acres of prime farmland soils and 7,844 acres of soils of statewide importance.

## **Ecological Data**

Ancram lies within two significant biodiversity areas identified by New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Estuary Program, the Harlem Valley Calcareous Wetlands, and the Taconic Ridge. Tables 1-3 list the known species and ecosystems of conservation concern in the Town.

### **Harlem Valley**

From the Wildlife and Habitat Conservation Framework (Penhollow et al., 2006):

"The Harlem Valley Calcareous Wetlands are composed of the valleys and adjacent ridges in the Taconic Highlands. Wetland communities include red maple-hardwood swamp, floodplain forest, fens, and shallow emergent marsh. These areas contain high quality habitat for a number of wetland-dependent species and some of the best bog turtle habitat in the Hudson River Valley. This area also includes adjacent upland ridge and ledge habitat that is especially important for northern copperhead, timber rattlesnake, and five lined skink." The Eastern half of Ancram to the Taconic Ridge is identified in the report for its significant biological resources. "

Many natural areas and wildlife of conservation concern are found in the

Harlem Valley portion of Ancram. Large wetlands and wetland complexes are found throughout the central part of town, most of which are protected by New York State. Known high quality wetlands include two high quality Red maple tamarack peat swamps (50 and 70 acres), a 69-acre shallow emergent marsh with good diversity, and a 2.8 acre rich shrub fen on the border with the Town of Northeast. Large populations of swamp birch, handsome sedge, and marsh valerian are associated with these wetlands. Wildlife known to use the wetlands include the spotted turtle (in abundance), bog turtle (federally threatened), a rare noctuid moth, and spotted salamander. Timber rattlesnakes (state threatened) are associated with the Taconic Ridge, but use habitat in the Harlem Valley seasonally for foraging on rodents.

### **Taconic Ridge**

The Taconic Ridge runs along New York's border with Massachusetts in Rensselaer and Columbia Counties. The region is identified as significant for its large forest blocks and associated wildlife. The portion of Ancram on the Massachusetts border is part of the Taconic Ridge (Taconic State Park). Four high quality forest types are found here: hemlock-northern hardwood forest, maple-basswood mesic forest, Appalachian oak hickory forest, and chestnut-oak forest. Timber rattlesnakes (state threatened) are known from the Ridge as well.

### **Other**

In eastern Ancram, there are two records of the New England Cottontail, which is a federal candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act and a NYS Species of Special Concern. Additional spotted turtles have been found as well.

### **Historic Records**

Historic records are those plants and animals that were present in the past, but haven't been found in recent years. It is useful to be aware of these plants and animals because the sites are already known to be lost to the town. The NY endangered awned sedge (1936) was found in a pond south of Miller Pond. The handsome sedge (state threatened) was found near the Ancram Lead Mine. And an Indiana bat (federally endangered) hibernaculum was known from a limestone cave near border with Town of Northeast (1939).

Thirty-seven bird species of conservation concern from the 2000-2005 Breeding Bird Atlas are listed for the Town of Ancram. Conservation concern is determined by inclusion on the Audubon NY Responsibility Species for the Hudson Valley (see: [www.nyaudubon.org](http://www.nyaudubon.org)). Of these, six are listed as a Hudson Valley Conservation Priority species: the blue-winged warbler, least bittern, prairie warbler, willow flycatcher, wood thrush, and the worm-eating warbler. In addition, three bird species are listed as a New York State Species of Special Concern: Cooper’s hawk, grasshopper sparrow, and sharp-shinned hawk. The least bittern is also listed as a New York State Threatened Species.

Four species of reptiles and amphibians are listed as Species of Conservation Concern. Conservation concern is determined by inclusion on the list of New York State Species of Greatest Conservation Need or vernal pool indicator species. (Data from New York State Amphibian and Reptile Atlas, see: [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)). The bog turtle is a New York State endangered species and a federally threatened species. The spotted turtle is a species of special concern, and the timber rattlesnake is a threatened species.

Data from the New York Natural Heritage Program database (see: [www.nynhp.org](http://www.nynhp.org)) also lists rare plants, animals, and significant ecosystems, included in Table 9 below. For more information on the species and habitats found in this list, see [www.acris.nynhp.org](http://www.acris.nynhp.org).

**Table 9: Rare Plants, Animals and Significant Ecosystems**

Common Name	Scientific Name	NYS listing	Notes
Rare plants			
handsome sedge	<i>Carex formosa</i>	Threatened	
marsh valerian	<i>Valeriana uglinosa</i>	Endangered	
swamp birch	<i>Betula pumila</i>	Threatened	
Rare animals			
bog turtle	<i>Glyptemys muhlenbergii</i>	Endangered	Federally threatened
New England Cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus transitionalis</i>	Species of Special Concern	Federal candidate species
a noctuid moth	<i>Fagitana littera</i>		

Common Name	Scientific Name	NYS listing	Notes
Timber Rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus horridus</i>		
Significant Ecosystems			
Appalachian oak-hickory forest			high quality common ecosystem
chestnut-oak forest			high quality common ecosystem
hemlock-northern hardwood forest			high quality common ecosystem
maple-basswood mesic forest			high quality common ecosystem
red maple-tamarack peat swamp			rare ecosystem
rich shrub fen			rare ecosystem
shallow emergent marsh			high quality common ecosystem
Historic Records			
Handsome sedge	<i>Carex formosa</i>	Threatened	
Indiana Bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Endangered	Federally endangered

### Biodiversity in Ancram (2)

A team of local volunteers conducted a biodiversity study in Ancram in 2002. Five residents assessed a 3,000 to 4,000-acre area of land along the Roeliff Jansen (Roe Jan) Kill – an important Hudson River tributary with its source in the Taconic Range and outlet in the town of Livingston. This work resulted in a map of ecologically significant habitats using the process outlined by the Biodiversity Assessment Manual for the Hudson River Estuary Corridor (Kiviat and Stevens 2001) in 2001-2002. The study area included riparian corridors, upland meadows, old fields, new woods, mixed mesophytic forests, lakes, ponds, hardwood swamps, and calcareous fens. This work represents an initial assessment of the natural resources in Ancram.

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<sup>2</sup> This section is summarized from information received from the Ancram Biodiversity Report completed in 2002 by several trained volunteers.

Surface and bedrock features influence the type of habitats found in Ancram. The Surficial Geologic Map of New York (Hudson Mohawk Sheet) shows three types of bedrock:

- recent deposits along the Roe Jan,
- sand and gravel outwash, and
- till.

Small kame deposits of sand and gravel are also part of this study area. The Geologic Map of New York (Hudson Mohawk Sheet) shows the majority of the study area to be Copake formation limestone dolostone with small areas (in the south) of Walloomsac formation. There are two fault lines running north - south through the area creating some steep rocky slopes.

Here is a description of the biodiversity in the areas studied:

#### Area 1

A majority of this area is dominated by agriculture. It includes constructed ponds and upland meadows. Much of the area provides old fields transitioning to young woods. Two large areas show beaver activity, and there are several excellent breeding areas for amphibians. An abandoned rail bed runs through the area, and there is a housing development along Four Corners road that is zoned as R-1 hamlet. Clusters of invasive species including purple loosestrife and barberry are found. The area includes a non-tidal hardwood swamp and non-tidal marsh. Beese Pond is a deep spring-fed pond with an outlet flowing into the Roe-Jan Kill.

#### Area 2

This area centers on a riparian corridor 600 to 1,200 feet wide along the Roe Jan Kill. Much of the corridor is undisturbed as it is too wet to plow and is still well protected as it is surrounded by woods. Farmed areas use some of the best farming soil in Columbia County and an organic farm is located here. Young woods with housing exist along with part of the hamlet of Ancram, and the new town hall site is located where the Roe Jan flows into Ancram. Hardwood swamps with intense beaver activity and excellent conditions for trout are found here. An abandoned railroad bed runs through this area. One small area of calcareous fen in transition to wet meadow was found.

### Area 3

This area is dominated by several small lakes and ponds. Housing along Four Corners road is clustered around Long Pond and Lower Rhoda Pond and the area is zoned as R-1 hamlet. Cluster housing also is found in the Long Lake Development. Other land use activities include three summer camps, and a horse farm. There is very little agriculture, but because the outlet from Long Lake flows through a pasture, there is the potential for run-off problems. Habitats include a 30-acre hardwood swamp, stands of pine and cedar, and an 80-acre non-tidal hardwood swamp. The area contains several outlets:

- the outlet of Miller Pond as it flows into the Roe Jan Kill,
- the outlet of Lower Rhoda Pond as it flows into Long Pond, and
- the outlet of Long Pond as it flows into the Roe Jan Kill.

The area has a series of three ridges along a fault line and habitats here include a talus slope, little blueberry bog, and a calcareous fen protected between two ridges in transition to shrubby swamp.

### Area 4

The Roe Jan Kill flows through this area. This riparian corridor includes a mix of wetlands and hardwood swamps. A large area of protected lands is found in Drowned Lands Swamp <sup>(3)</sup> where there is potential habitat for the bog turtle. There are other substantial areas of conservation lands in this area and an abandoned farm is now under a conservation easement. Other land uses include a working dairy farm, the Woodhull Institute, and a railroad bed. An old gravel pit is also located in this area.

### Area 5

This area is slated for future study by the biodiversity team.

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(3) Drowned Lands Swamp is one of the largest wetland complexes in southeastern NY (2000 acres). It has been identified by the New York Natural Heritage Program as one of the most important sites for biodiversity protection in the Hudson River Valley. There are a number of rare, threatened and endangered species that occupy the ecosystem, including swamp birch, handsome sedge, march valerian, and the bog turtle. The Columbia Land Conservancy has been working with willing landowners to protect land within the Drowned Lands Swamp.

## Local Government

In 2007, the total Town of Ancram appropriations budget was \$1,241,990. Of that, \$773,940 was expected to be raised by tax. As shown in the charts below, the highway portion of the budget continues to be the largest expenditure. Since 1997, the relative proportions of the general fund and Ancram Fire District have remained steady. The highway budget has increased from 49 percent of all appropriations in 1997 to 52 percent today. At the same time, however, the total budget amounts have also increased substantially. Appropriations remained fairly steady between 1997 and 2003. Since that time, budgets have increased annually, with the largest increase seen in 2007, again with the Highway Department increasing from about \$351,000 in 2003 to \$641,630 in 2007.

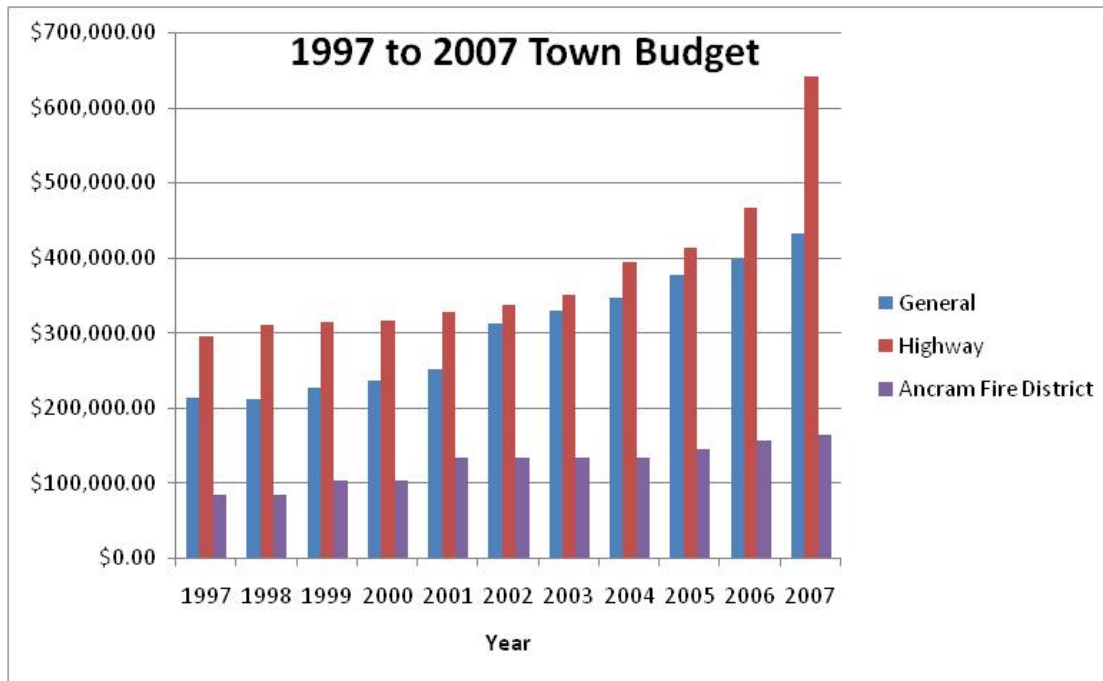
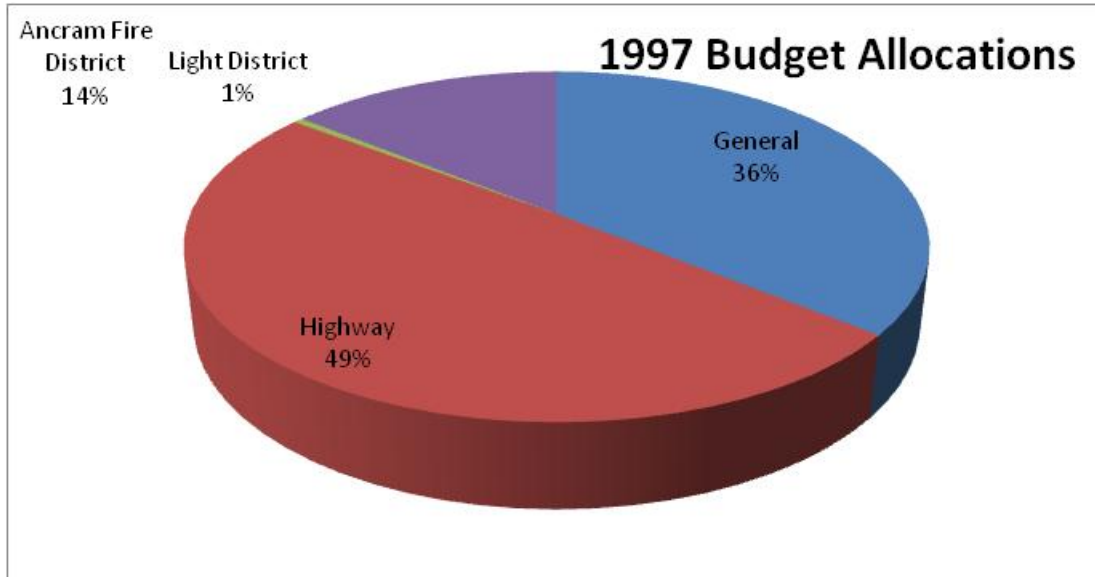
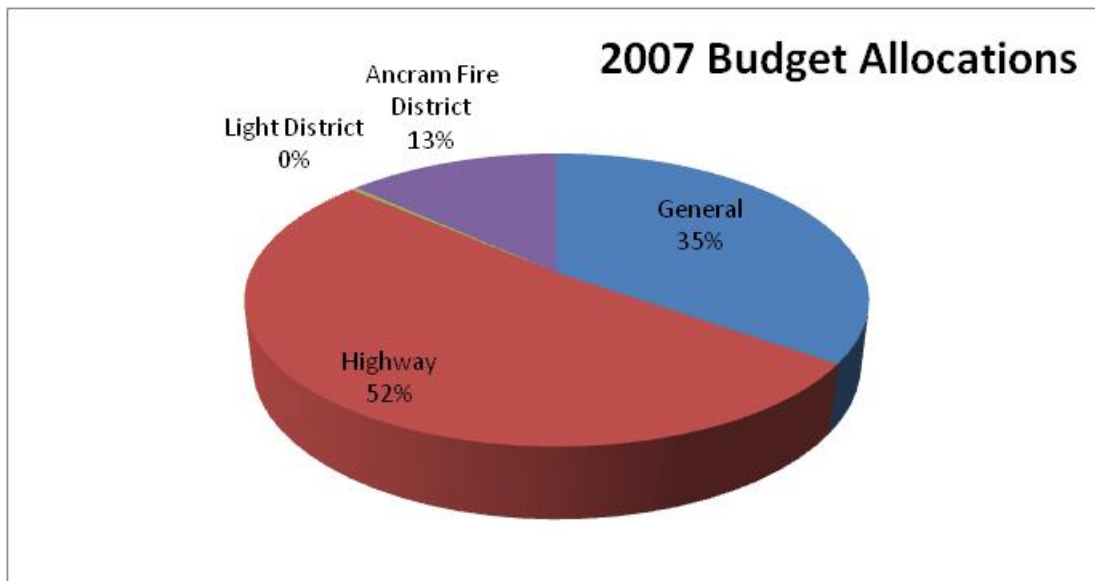


Figure 6: 1007 to 2007 Budget Appropriations



**Figure 7: 1997 Budget Allocations**



**Figure 8: 2007 Budget Allocations**

## **Cultural and Historic Resources**

### **Parks and Recreation**

Town-owned recreational facilities include the Blass Memorial Park which has a ball field, the town pool, and a basketball court located on Route 7. Since its creation in 1961, the pool opens each year from June through August and offers swimming lessons for six weeks of the summer. Other activities at the park include informal basketball games and a summer BBQ and pool party. Ancram does not have an organized youth baseball team and residents participate in programs in Copake or Pine Plains.

Recreational activities in Town include periodic fox hunts conducted by the Rombout Hunt, the Beckenrah Farm Hunter Pace, a Working Landscapes/Gardens tour and a 5K Walk/Run sponsored by the Ancram Preservation Group, and the Bike New York race. Until 2008, the Grey Fox Blue Grass event took place each year for four days in mid-July at the Rothvoss Farm on East Ancram Road in Ancramdale. Several private gardens in Ancram are part of the Garden Conservancy annual garden tour, which is open to the public.

The Columbia Land Conservancy is working to establish Round Ball Mountain on a 106-acre property in Ancram as an outdoor classroom and for non-motorized recreation.

A four-town Community day is sponsored by the towns of Ancram, Gallatin, Taghkanic, and Livingston, held at Lake Taghkanic State Park on the first Saturday of July after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Activities include games, a chicken BBQ, music and fireworks.

The trail head of the Alander Hiking Trail, a part of the Taconic State Park System, and the Harlem Valley Rail Trail both can be accessed from Undermountain Road in Boston Corners.

Undermountain Road also features the nine-hole Undermountain Golf Course. In addition, Ancram has several horseback riding facilities which provide lessons and trail rides, and a paint ball course.

The Ancram Opera House has initiated a series of activities, all open to the public, including yoga lessons, pilates, Latin dancing lessons and a series of concerts and plays.

## Schools

There are no public school facilities located in Ancram. Primary school districts serving the Town of Ancram include Pine Plains, Taconic Hills, and Northeast. The data below comes from the New York State Department of Education annual School Reports.

**Table 10. Enrollment Figures for School Districts Serving the Town of Ancram**

School District	2000 to 2001	2001 to 2002	2002 to 2003	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006
Pine Plains	1491	1491	1472	1420	1393	1334*
Taconic Hills	1885	1868	1874	1871	1833	1762**
Northeast	944	927	876	887	871	891

\*According to an enrollment projection/demographic study for the Pine Plains School District, 2005 to 2006 enrollment was 1346. Data collected from the school district for 2007-2008 had 1,237 students.

\*\*Data collected from the school district for 2007-2008 was 1,675 students.

**Table 11. School Information for Districts Serving the Town of Ancram**

	Pine Plains		Taconic Hills		Northeast	
	2002 to 2003	2005 to 2006	2002 to 2003	2005 to 2006	2002 to 2003	2005 to 2006
Attendance Rate	94.1	94	92.6	94	92.7	94
Suspension Rate	4.9	3	6.7	7	7.8	8
# with Reduced Lunch	8.5	8	10.8	12	11.6	11
# Teachers	99	109	153	156	86	85

**Table 12. Educational Attainment Town of Ancram (25 years and older)**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1980 to 2000 Change</b>
<b>Less than high school diploma</b>	384	232	227	-40.9%
<b>High school diploma</b>	300	347	428	42.7%
<b>College, no degree</b>	63	104	146	131.7%
<b>Associates, Bachelors degree or higher</b>	86	198	29	243%

### **Community Organizations**

The following community organizations provide services in the Town of Ancram:

The Ancram Angels is a small community service organization. Their largest project is a yearly Holiday Party at Ancram Town Hall to celebrate the holiday season, enjoy a potluck supper, sing carols, and, most important, to conduct a fun raffle to raise money for the Community Rescue Squad. Over the past few years, the Angels have raised thousands of dollars for the Squad, and look forward to many more donations. The Angels also provide "Random Acts of Kindness" for the community, such as the commemorative tree planting to honor the late Town Supervisor Gerald Simons, as well as the yearly Easter baskets given to shut-ins and children. The Angels support the Bike New York event by organizing one of their rest stops. In the past, the Angels have provided Thanksgiving food baskets to neighbors in need. The general philosophy of the Ancram Angels is to be resourceful and responsive to community needs.

Ancram Preservation Group (APG) was founded in September 2000. The APG is a private not-for-profit corporation devoted to promoting and advocating the architectural, economic, cultural, and historic vitality of the Ancram Community through historic preservation, as well as cultural and educational programming in partnership with other community groups. APG believes a significant part of the community's identity is embodied in its historical structures. These structures serve as a living testament to the individuals and the shared heritage that created this community.

APG believes there is more at stake in preservation than simply saving old buildings. It maintains that the viability of Ancram as a living and vital community depends upon the continuity that preservation seeks to achieve. APG is a volunteer organization made up of concerned citizens who care deeply about Ancram's history and its future. By coordinating its efforts with the Town's long-term goals and needs and by focusing the energies of its many volunteers, APG seeks to preserve the reality of neighbors helping each other to improve their community.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN), created in September 2006, meets periodically and opens each meeting with a request for names of anyone in need of assistance. Some of the services provided by this volunteer organization include alerting neighbors to emergencies, assisting homebound individuals, raising money and distributing holiday food baskets to needy families not covered by other agencies. For local families in emergency situations, NHN sponsors clothing and household goods donations and communicates with those in hospitals, nursing homes, and private homes. NHN also sponsors a variety of community events and other programs that assist families and individuals. There is a NHN community room at the Ancramdale post office. There are no dues, and one does not need to be a member to ask for or receive assistance of any kind.

Woodhull Institute is a not-for-profit, non-partisan, non-sectarian educational organization that provides training and professional development for women. Located in Ancramdale, the Institute provides training in sensible risk-taking, ethical leadership, and teamwork.

St. John's Lutheran Church was founded in 1847. The historical honor for missionary work in Ancram is due to the Reverend Christopher Hartwick, founder of Hartwick Seminary. From 1746 to 1757, Reverend Harwick was pastor of St. Peter's Church in Rhinebeck, New York. His church records show names of Ancram or vicinity people to whom he administered the Lord's Supper in 1746. The records also show baptisms in Ancram. It appears that Reverend Hartwick attempted to build a Lutheran Church in Ancram, but it was not until a century later that the church was built. The original cost of the church was \$2,400. Improvements were made in 1854 and a parsonage was built in 1853.

Extensive improvements were also made in the 1980s. In 2000, the church joined St. John's Lutheran, Manorton, and Christ Lutheran, Viewmonte, in

the newly formed Lutheran Parish of Southern Columbia County. Church members continue to offer generous contributions for the congregation and church buildings. The Church celebrated its 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2007.

Ancramdale Presbyterian Church was built in the summer of 1847, about two miles northwest of Ancram Lead Mines on Ancram Road (now Route 82). It was built as a Union Church, and the Lutherans were entitled to use the building. It is documented as the first church in the Town of Ancram with a membership of 25 persons.

In 1859, the building was taken down, moved and rebuilt at its present location on land given by William Tanner. This entire project cost \$1,150. The church was rededicated in June 1860 and named the Ancram Lead Mines Presbyterian Church. In June 1887, land was deeded to the church by Mr. and Mrs. William Pulver so that a parsonage could be built. Many revival tent meetings were held between 1877 and 1878 bringing 23 new members to the church.

In 1919 the interior of the church was redecorated and the plain glass windows and shutters were replaced by the present day leaded stained glass windows. Kerosene lamps were also installed for evening services. The last resident pastor was Rev. William Nagle from 1914-1919. Morning and evening services were held during this time. Every three years a July 4<sup>th</sup> supper of cold fried chicken was served in the horse shed, after a thorough cleaning before the event.

The church celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in July 1947. The congregation redecorated the interior of the sanctuary, including the current paint scheme, green carpeting and red upholstery.

In 1956, Floyd Barton offered the church the building known as Barton's Hall. The church tore this building down and all the usable lumber helped construct the fellowship hall and Sunday school rooms. The extra land for the structure was also given by Mr. Barton. On May 19, 1957, the Education and Fellowship wing was dedicated.

In 1997, the session commissioned the restoration of the deteriorating plaster walls in the sanctuary. A special process was used to under grid the walls, then re-plaster and re-paint using the 1948 colors, patterns and stencils. Recently, the Church has accomplished many projects including the painting

of the interior of the fellowship wing, the replacement of all three roofs and the sanding and refinishing of the original Barton Hall floors.

### Historic Structures and Landscapes

According to the New York State Historic Preservation Office, the Simons General Store is the only Ancram structure listed on the national and state historic registers. (See National Register, Recreation Sites and Unincorporated Places map and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas map.) The State has indicated that the Ancramdale General Store, Presbyterian Church, and Post Office, all on County Route 8 in Ancramdale, are eligible for inclusion as a historic district. The Archeologically Sensitive Areas map shows three areas within Ancram including Ancramdale (lead mines), Weed Mines, and Ancram. Several other potentially historic sites have been identified and included on the state listing (see Table 13) but all need further investigation as to their eligibility for inclusion on the historic register.

**Table 13: Other Historical Resources**

<b>Location/Site</b>	<b>Information on Resources According to the New York State Historic Preservation Office</b>
Ancram Opera House	Needs further investigation to determine status
Boston Corners Historic Area	Needs further investigation to determine status
J Strauss Atheneum	Needs further investigation to determine status
Site Of Ancram Iron Works	Archaeology site, needs further investigation to determine status
Weed Mines	Archaeology site, needs further investigation to determine status
Cr 3 Scotchtown Mill West Side; About .5 Mi.	Needs further investigation to determine status
North Of Over Mountain Rd; Punch Brook	Needs further investigation to determine status
Cr 3 Cr 8 Office	Needs further investigation to determine status
7027 East Arcade Rd Michael Satchell Farm	Status undetermined
NY 82mds 1/Site A North Side, West Of Roeliff Jansen Kill	Status undetermined
NY 82 Ancram Paper Co. Bridge Ancram: Spans Roeliff Jansen Kill	Needs further investigation to determine status
NY 82 Ancram Paper Mill, Ancram,	Needs further investigation to determine status

Location/Site	Information on Resources According to the New York State Historic Preservation Office
South Side, Roeliff Jansen Kill; East Side	
Rt 8 Hotel Ancramdale North Side; At Rte 3; East Side	Needs further investigation to determine status
Rte 8 Octagon House West Side; At Maple Ln	Needs further investigation to determine status
Town Rd Ancramdale Milk Receiving Plant Southwest Side; .5 Mi South Of Ancramdale Hamlet	Needs further investigation to determine status

## Community Facilities and Infrastructure

### Transportation and Highway

Town Roads: There are 57.4 miles of Town roads in Ancram. Seventy percent of town roads are oil/stone, and the remainder are gravel. The Department's annual budget for 2007 was \$641,630. The Town Highway Department is managed by an elected highway superintendent. In 2007, there were four regular employees and four additional part-time employees as needed. The Department has two primary buildings at Maple Lane/Town Road. One is in the renovated milk factory; one is an equipment storage/shop building. The Town operates four trucks ranging in age from two to 15 years old, all of which have plows/wings. Two pickup trucks are used as well, and both have plows. Other equipment includes a backhoe, tractor and mower, wood chipper, pay loader, grader, roller, and other various small maintenance equipment.

According to the Highway Department, there is a need to replace large trucks over 15 years of age. Hall Hill Road has had major repairs for erosion problems due to flooding and improvements have been made to Dam Road. The Town has an eight-year maintenance plan for all roads, but this needs updating. The Town has formal agreements with Columbia County for winter snow removal on Route 8 (Winchell Mountain) and informal shared

services for summer highway paving such as sharing trucks and staff with Copake, Pine Plains, Northeast, Taghkanic and Gallatin.

County Roads: Columbia County has recorded traffic counts on County Routes 3, 7, 8 and 8A in Ancram for many years. Although counters have not been placed in exact locations, the data does indicate trends. Except for County Route 7, the other roads all have shown increases in average daily traffic. Route 3 showed 1049 total cars near the Route 22 intersection, and about 677 cars near the Route 82 intersection. More traffic flows east to Route 22 than toward Route 82. Route 7 near Ancram had the highest traffic counts of all county roads consistently over time. Traffic counts on Routes 8 and 7 near Ancram have increased, as has Route 8A. Overall, traffic increases show similarities to those on state roads (below) with increased traffic flows towards Route 22, south into Pine Plains, and towards Route 82.

State Roads: State Routes 22 and 82 pass through Ancram. The following traffic count information was obtained from the New York State Department of Transportation. AADT refers to the average annual daily traffic. All state routes have seen traffic volume increases. However, Route 22 saw much larger increases over time than Route 82.

**Table 14: Traffic Volumes on State Roads**

Route	Location of Count	AADT	Year	%Change in AADT
22	Columbia/ Dutchess County line	2300	1990	72%
		3510	1997	
		3960	2006	
82	Dutchess/ Columbia County line	720	1993	33.3%
		740	1997	
		969	2006	
82	CR 7	660	1991	16.7%
		820	1999	
		770	2006	

## Emergency Services

**Ancram Fire Company:** This fire company serves all of the Town of Ancram and 20 percent of the Town of Gallatin, both of which comprise the Ancram Fire District. Membership includes 70 people, including more than 25 lifetime members with 25 years or more of service. The Fire Company

covers fires, automobile accidents, assists with local rescue squads, as needed, and answers mutual aid calls.

Members are all volunteers, and the Fire Company is supported by donations. They sponsor an annual fund drive, a golf tournament, tractor pull, and Community Day BBQ as fundraisers. The Ancram Fire House, owned by the Ancram Fire District, is at the intersection of County Route 7 and State Route 82. This facility is a six-bay station housing five vehicles and a meeting room.

**Ancram Fire District:** The Ancram Fire District is the local taxing authority responsible for providing the financial resources to operate the Fire Company, and owns the building, trucks, and equipment used by the Fire Company. The Fire District is managed by four Fire Commissioners who are elected by the voters in Ancram.

**Community Rescue Squad:** The Community Rescue Squad based in Copake, New York, serves the Ancram Community. The Ancram Town Council helps support the Rescue Squad with an annual financial contribution.

**Law Enforcement:** Ancram has no town police, but is provided law enforcement support from the County Sheriff's department and the State Police.

### **Utilities, Water and Waste Water**

Gas and electric are provided through Central Hudson, National Grid, and New York State Electric and Gas.

Fairpoint Communications and Charter Business provide telephone and other communication services.

There are no municipal water systems in Ancram.

There are no municipal sewers in Ancram.

All on-site septic systems are approved by the Columbia County Department of Health.

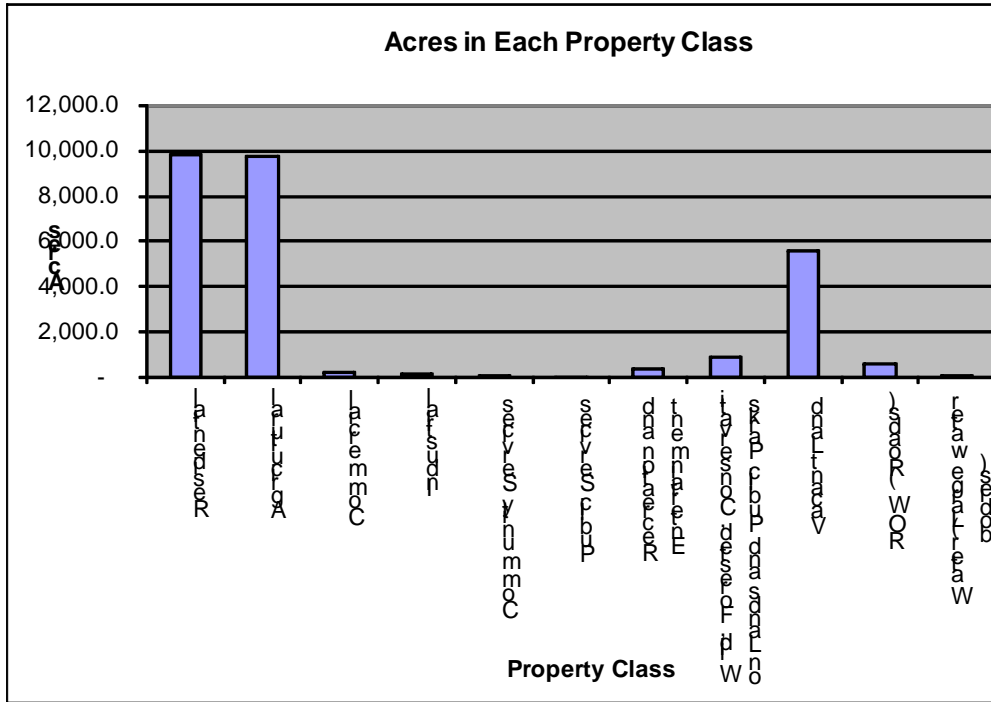
## Land Use

Land uses by number of parcels, acreage, and percent of total land area in Ancram are detailed in the table and charts below. This information comes from data from the local Assessor and gives a general picture of the characteristics of various land uses in Town. Residential, agricultural, and vacant lands make up the majority of land uses in Ancram. Residential uses have the most parcels and acreage in Ancram although agricultural uses are classified as being on the same number of acres, but with far fewer parcels. It is important to note that many residential parcels, as well as some vacant land, may have agricultural activities taking place that are not recognized from the real property classification system. For example, a 100-acre parcel may have a house on it, and is thus classified as residential even if 90 acres are actually rented to a farmer.

**Table 15: Property Classification in Ancram.**

<i>Property Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Residential	832	9,845.3	35.8%
Agricultural	98	9,751.1	35.5%
Commercial	22	203.3	0.7%
Industrial	3	129.7	0.5%
Community Services	12	43.3	0.2%
Public Services	2	0.3	0.001%
Recreation and Entertainment	10	353.7	1.3%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Put	8	879.8	3.2%
Vacant Land	304	5,585.1	20.3%
ROW (Roads)	1	627.5	2.3%
Water (Large water bodies)	1	55.6	0.2%
Grand Total	1,293	27,474.8	100.0%

Residential and agricultural lands uses comprise over 72 percent of the land acreage in Ancram. There is less than one percent of land area in commercial land uses. Twenty percent of the land base is classified as vacant: some of these could be forested lands.



**Table 16. Residential Land Uses**

Residential Sub-Class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Single Family	522	1,299.4	4.7%
Rural Estate	153	7,758.1	28.2%
Seasonal	34	72.0	0.3%
Two Family	12	54.3	0.2%
Multiple	8	112.2	0.4%
Apartment Condominium	1	3.7	0.01%
Mobile Home	101	337.4	1.2%
Other	1	208.2	0.8%
Residential Total	832	9,845.3	35.8%

There are 722 residential parcels in town classified as single family uses on about 1300 acres of land. Although there are just 153 *rural estate* parcels (classified by New York State as being residential parcels over seven acres in size), they comprise 28 percent of the land area (7,758 acres). There is less than one percent of the land base in two-family or multiple dwellings. These residential uses can be found on 46 parcels of land. There were 101 parcels of land classified as having mobile homes.

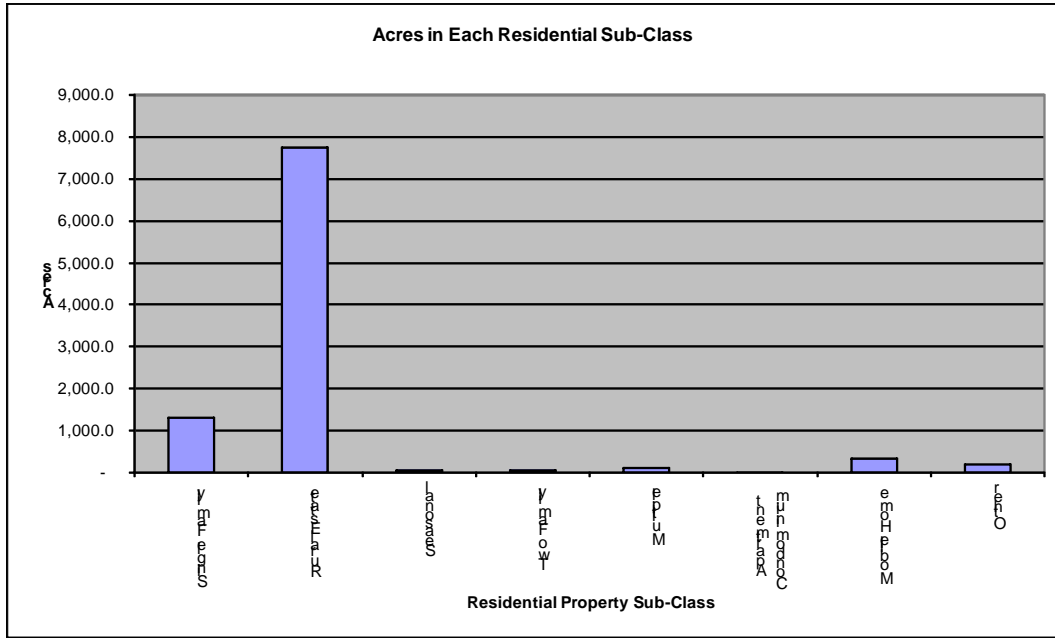


Figure 9: Residential Land Uses

Table 17. Agricultural Land Uses.

Agricultural Sub-Class	Number of Parcel	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Crops	28	3,540.6	12.9%
Livestock	11	1,575.9	5.7%
Horse Farm	9	1,235.8	4.5%
Other	1	22.3	0.1%
Vacant Land	49	3,376.5	12.3%
Agricultural Total	98	9,751.1	35.5%

About 10,000 acres of land in Ancram is classified as agricultural, which represents about 36 percent of the total land area in Ancram. Of this, the majority of parcels are considered *vacant agricultural land*, followed by about 28 parcels, or 3,500 acres of land, as crops. Livestock uses take place on 11 parcels of land, or 5.7 percent of the land base. Horse farms are classified for nine parcels, yet these are quite large totalling more than 1,200 acres of land. These figures are conservative figures, meaning there is much more agriculture taking place in the Town on rented lands classified as residential parcels.

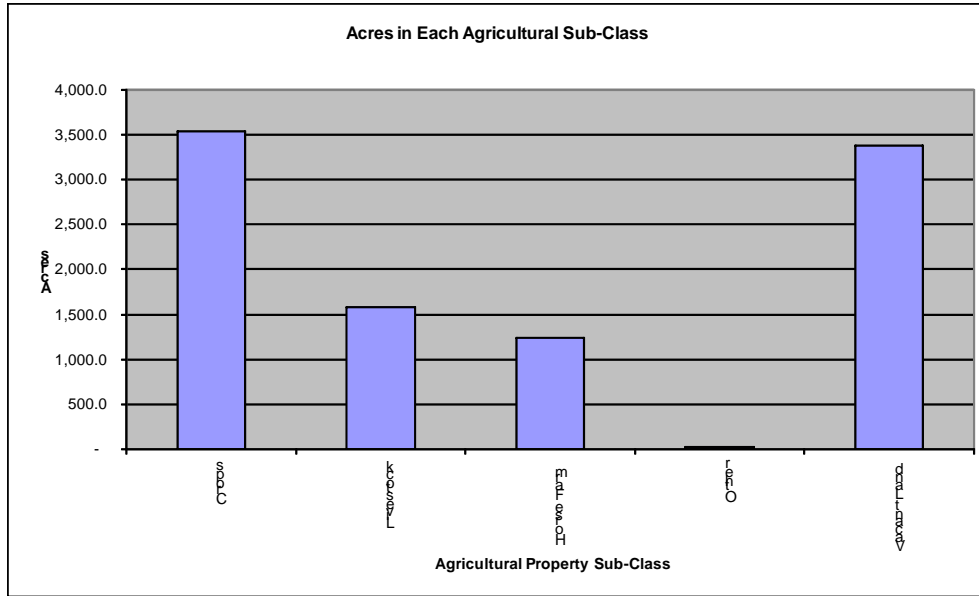


Figure 10: Agricultural Land Uses

**Table 18. Commercial Land Uses.**

<i>Commercial Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Auto	1	3.0	0.01%
Bar	2	4.7	0.02%
Dining	2	7.8	0.03%
Kennel	2	29.4	0.11%
Lodging	2	0.7	0.003%
Multipurpose	10	26.5	0.10%
Storage and Distribution	3	131.2	0.48%
<b>Commercial Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>203.3</b>	<b>0.74%</b>

Twenty-two parcels have commercial uses on them. The total acreage devoted to commercial use is 203 acres or less than one percent of the entire land base in Ancram. Table 19 below details about 130 acres of land on three parcels in Ancram.

**Table 19. Industrial Land Uses.**

<i>Industrial Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Manufacturing	1	35.5	0.13%
Mining	2	94.2	0.34%
<b>Industrial Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>129.7</b>	<b>0.47%</b>

**Table 20. Community Services Properties.**

<i>Community Services Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Government Protection	2	29.6	0.11%
Cultural and Recreational	3	6.3	0.02%
Religious	4	1.2	0.004%
Cemetery	2	6.0	0.02%
<b>Community Services Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>0.16%</b>

Twelve parcels of land are classified as community service and range from cemetery uses to the park. Less than one percent of the land base in Ancram is in community services. Likewise, there is a very small amount of land in public services (about 0.3 acres) as shown in Table 21.

**Table 21. Public Service Properties**

<i>Public Services Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Communication	1	0.1	0.0004%
Electric and Gas	1	0.2	0.0007%
<b>Public Services Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.0010%</b>

**Table 22. Recreation and Entertainment Properties.**

<i>Recreation and Entertainment Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Camp Resort	5	319.6	1.16%
Sports	4	32.3	0.12%
Park	1	1.8	0.01%
<b>Recreation and Entertainment Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>353.7</b>	<b>1.29%</b>

Table 22 and 23 include data for recreational uses and wild, forested, and conservation lands. Ten parcels on 353 acres of land are in recreation uses. A larger category for wild, forested, and conservation lands represents about three percent of the land area in Ancram and includes about 880 acres.

**Table 23. Wild, Forested, and Conservation Lands.**

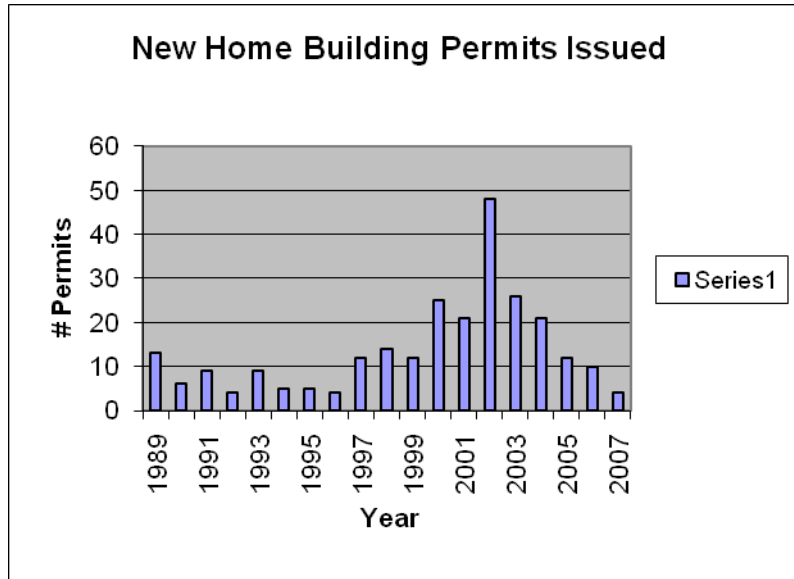
<i>Forested, Conservation Lands and Public</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Public Park	2	643.0	2.3%
Private	4	211.7	0.8%
Wetlands	2	25.1	0.1%
<b>Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Put</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>879.8</b>	<b>3.2%</b>

**Table 24. Vacant Lands.**

<i>Vacant Land Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcel</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Agricultural	1	14.2	0.1%
Residential	299	5,197.5	18.9%
Rural	4	373.4	1.4%
<b>Vacant Land Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>5,585.1</b>	<b>20.3%</b>

The third largest land use category in Ancram is *vacant land*, defined as unimproved lands, mostly woodlots, on 304 parcels adding up to more than 5,500 acres. Twenty percent of the town is classified as vacant.

**Building and Subdivision Activity in Ancram**



**Figure 11: Building Permits Issued 1989 to 2007**

Between 1997 and 2007, some 36 minor subdivisions, seven major subdivisions, and 42 lot line adjustments were granted, representing a total of 92 units. 68 approvals were granted in 1997, reflecting the Long Lake project. No major subdivision has taken place since 2001.

**Table 25. Subdivision Activity in Ancram, 1997 to 2007**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>#units</b>	<b>Lot Line Adjustment</b>
1997	2	1	68	6
1998	5	2	9	1
1999	4	1	5	2
2000	2	1	4	3
2001	3	2	6	5
2002	5	0	0	3
2003	4	0	0	2
2004	6	0	0	5
2005	5	0	0	7
2006	4	0	0	5
2007	1	0	0	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>42</b>

## **Commercial/Economic**

The following information about commercial use for both Ancramdale and Ancram is from the U.S. Census County Business Patterns by zip code. This information excludes data on self-employed individuals, employees of private households, railroad employees, agricultural production employees, and most government employees. Business activity in Town is quite modest with only about 23 establishments in the Ancramdale zip code and 26 in the Ancram zip code. These 49 businesses, however, employed 260 people and contributed over \$11 million in payroll to the area. No one area of industry was dominant, although construction and manufacturing businesses hired the most employees.

## **Industries and Businesses in Ancram**

**Table 26. Business Information for Zip Code 12503, 1998 to 2005**

<b>1998 to 2005 Business Patterns: Zip Code 12503 Ancramdale</b>			
	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>
Number of Establishments	14	15	23
First Quarter payroll in \$1000	502	956	254
Number of Employees	60	104	50
Annual payroll in \$1000	2706	3675	1515

In 1998, the industries represented in Table 26 for zip code 12503, above, included a variety of businesses including construction, retail trade, transporting, finance/insurance, professional services, and health care related businesses. By 2000, one more business had been added to the mix, and the large increase in employees was associated with a health care and social assistance business. In 2000, other business categories in this zip code also included two arts, entertainment and recreation businesses, and an accommodation and food service business. With the exception of the larger health care and social service business, all others were small employers having no more than nine employees. By 2005, there were more businesses – mostly reflected in an increase in the number of construction related establishments. As in other years, most establishments are businesses with a small number of employees.

In zip code 12502, the number of establishments has remained fairly steady between 1998 and 2005, but the number of employees and payroll has increased substantially. Industries represented in this area are similar to those in zip code 12503 in terms of size and variety of activities, but they include more representation of construction-oriented businesses.

**Table 27. Business Information for Zip Code 12502, 1998 to 2005**

<b>1998 to 2000 County Business Patterns for Zip Code 12502</b>			
	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>
Number of Establishments	25	24	26
First Quarter payroll	1541	1666	2130
# of Employees	167	172	210
Annual Payroll in \$1000	6383	7021	9205

An inventory of businesses conducted by the Comprehensive Plan Committee in 2007 gives more detail on a broader variety of commercial enterprises in Ancram that are not likely included in the County Business Patterns. Many are home-based or owner-operated with no employees. Thirty-seven different businesses can be found in the Town of Ancram including several dairy farms, organic livestock and fruit and vegetable farms, horse farms, antique shops, architects, attorneys, beauty salons, general contractors, excavating businesses, gravel mines, graphic designers, photographers, landscape designers, lawn care and maintenance firms, plumbers, electrical contractors, carpenters, massage therapy businesses, realtors, sporting goods, tax preparation, trucking, website design, taverns,

restaurants, caterers, veterinarians, a golf course, a paint ball operation and a gas station.

**Table 28: Industry and Occupations by Number of Employed Persons 16 Years or Older, 2000**

Industry	# of Employed Persons in Town of Ancram
Educational, Health, and Social Services	171
Public Administration	23
Manufacturing	106
Retail Trade	101
Construction	80
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Service	47
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	23
Other Services	19
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative	54
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	21
Information	14
Wholesale Trade	15
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	83

**Table 29: Comparison of Occupations in Ancram to Columbia County and New York State, 2000**

Occupations	% of Employed Persons, Aged 16 and older		
	Town of Ancram	Columbia County	New York State
Sales and Office Occupations	(15.9%)	(23.5%)	(27.1%)
Management, Professional, and Related	(32.4%)	(33.6%)	(36.7%)
Service Occupations	(15.7%)	(16.8%)	(16.6%)
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	(19.7%)	(13.8%)	(11.7%)
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance	(13.1%)	(10.8%)	(7.6%)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	(3.3%)	(1.5%)	(0.3%)

According to the U.S. Census, there has been a 36 percent increase in the

number of Ancram residents in the labor force. Much of this can be accounted for by more women entering the workforce since 1980. The 2000 unemployment rate was very low (2.8 percent) and about 35 percent of Town residents are not in the labor force.

**Table 30: Employment Data for Town of Ancram (for those aged 16 and older)**

<b>Labor force</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1980 to 2000 Change</b>
<b>People in labor force</b>	582 (58%)	709 (60.3%)	791 (64.7%)	35.9%
<b>People Unemployed</b>	27 (3%)	32 (2.7%)	34 (2.8%)	25.96%
<b>People not in labor force</b>	433 (43%)	434 (36.9%)	431 (35.3%)	-.46%

**Income Data for Ancram**

The median income level for families and per capita income levels (Table 31) have increased dramatically since 1980. At the same time, the number of households with Social Security income increased 33 percent. The number of households receiving public assistance and considered to be living below the poverty level has decreased since 1980, but much of that decrease is usually accounted for by changes in the Federal program and definitions for eligibility. Twenty-two percent of households receive retirement income. The number of self-employed households increased between 1990 and 2000. The number of self-employed farm households decreased.

**Table 31: Income Data for Town of Ancram**

	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1980 to 2000 Change</b>
<b>Median Income for Families</b>	\$13,934	\$34,444	\$47,708	242.4%
<b>Per capita income</b>	\$5,467	\$14,165	\$22,541	312.3%
<b>Social Security Households</b>	146	169	194	32.9%
<b>Public assistance households</b>	23	19	9	-60.9%
<b>Retirement income households</b>	NA	96	133	38.5% (1990 to 2000 only)
<b>Self - employment households</b>	82	106	126	53.7%
<b>Farm self - employment households</b>	31	22	NA	-29% (1980 to 1990 only)
<b>Individuals below poverty level</b>	235	133	110	-53.2%
<b>Percent of people living below poverty level</b>	18%	8.8%	7.4%	-58.8%

In 2000, some 264 households earned less than the median income in Ancram, or 35 percent. Some 194 households had Social Security income, nine had public assistance income, and 133 had retirement income. Twenty-two families lived below the poverty level (110 individuals). Of those 110 individuals, 15 percent were older than 75 years, 14 percent were age 65 to 74, and 72 percent were under the age of 65.

Of those households earning less than the median income level, there were:

- 11 households of people age 25 years or younger,
- 25 of people age 25 to 34,
- 63 of people age 35 to 44,
- 44 of people age 45 to 54,
- 34 of people age 55 to 64,
- 49 of people age 65 to 74, and
- 48 of people age 75 and older

One hundred percent of all young households earned less than the median income.

Table 32 compares median household and family incomes to neighboring towns. Compared to these other municipalities, Ancram’s households had about average income levels, but families had lower income levels.

**Table 32: Comparison of Median Family and Household Incomes, 1999**

<b>Town/State</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Median Family Income</b>
<b>New York State</b>	\$ 43,393	\$ 51,691
<b>Greenport</b>	\$ 37,394	\$ 47,452
<b>Kinderhook</b>	\$ 52,604	\$ 61,074
<b>Claverack</b>	\$ 41,647	\$ 50,175
<b>Stuyvesant</b>	\$ 49,904	\$ 51,688
<b>Ancram</b>	\$45,726	\$47,708

## **Agriculture**

Columbia County Ag District #1 has 20,435 acres in the Town of Ancram – a majority of the land base. According to the real property tax information, there are 56 different landowners using 98 parcels of land classified as an agricultural use, totaling 9,751 acres (about 35 percent of the Town's

27,475-acre total land area). Parcels range in size from 1.2 to 427 acres. The average parcel size is 99.5 acres. The amount of land currently farmed in Ancram is significantly smaller than the Ag District #1 boundaries (see Agriculture map). Field crops, horse farms, livestock, and other crops are the major agricultural products in Ancram as follows:

Use	Acres
Field crops	3,540
Horse farms	1,235
Livestock	1,575
Productive vacant land	3,376
Other	22

Both prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance can be found in Ancram as follows:

- 3,056 acres of prime farmland
- 1,071 acres of prime farmland, if drained
- 7,844 acres of farmland of statewide importance

Concentrations of high quality soils occur along the Roeliff Jansen Kill, in the northwestern corner of the town, along the Punch Brook, east of County Route and State Route 82, and in the northeast corner of the town, east of State Route 22.

### **Agricultural Census Data**

The U.S. Agricultural Census is conducted every five years. Data is primarily available by county and by zip code. The two zip codes for the Town of Ancram are 12503 and 12502. Neither of these is exclusively within the Town of Ancram, however, as both overlap with surrounding towns. However, the census does give another snapshot of the type and level of farming going on in and around Ancram.

In 2002, there were 31 farms counted in these two zip codes: seven in Ancram (12502) and 24 in Ancramdale (12503). In Ancram, all seven were 50 to 999 acres in size. Ten of the Ancramdale farms were listed as being 1 to 49 acres in size, with 14 being 50 to 999 acres.

In 2002, each Ancram farm earned less than \$50,000. Sixteen of the Ancramdale farms earned less than \$50,000, six earned between \$50,000 and \$249,000, and two earned over \$250,000 for all their agricultural products. Farms in both areas included full-and part-time owners. In Ancram, nine were farms with multiple operators, and six had women operators.

Of the 31 farms, 22 had land used for cropland, 20 had pasture or grazing land, and 20 had woodland on them. Five Ancram farms had idle land or land in cover crops only. Farm animals included calves, beef cows, ponies, and horses. A small number had pigs or lambs. Crops included primarily grass for forage and hay and corn for silage. A small number of farms grew barley, oats, soybean, potatoes, Christmas trees, and orchard crops. Overall, farming was more profitable and prevalent within the Ancramdale zip code.

### **Conserved Land**

The map entitled Preserved Properties shows the many lands permanently protected in the Town of Ancram. These include public lands managed by the Columbia Land Conservancy and local governments, as well as those with private easements held by either the Columbia Land Conservancy or the Dutchess Land Conservancy. Publically owned and conserved land within Ancram is part of the Taconic State Park in the northeastern corner of Town. Columbia Land Conservancy has 17 parcels with conservation easements, totaling 4,044 acres. They also have two additional parcels that are open to the public (Public Conservation Areas) totaling 222.5 acres. Dutchess Land Conservancy holds easements on 18 parcels, totaling 1,650 acres.

### **Government-owned and Tax-exempt Lands**

In addition to the land included in the Taconic State Park, other government owned or tax exempt lands include:

Camp Anne: summer camp for developmentally disabled adults and children in Ancramdale, owned by New York State

Waste Transfer Station: actually located in the Town of Gallatin on Route 82, is open to Ancram residents as a garbage transfer station and recycling center.

Town Hall on 28 acres of land on county Route 3 in Ancram

Blass Memorial Ball Field, Town Pool, Basketball Court in Ancram

Town Garage in Ancramdale

The Ancram Fire House, owned by the Ancram Fire District, in Ancram

Woodhull Institute, a private not-for-profit in Ancramdale

Ancramdale Presbyterian Church in Ancramdale

St. John's Lutheran Church in Ancram

## **Envisioning Ancram's Future: Community Input Guiding Comp Plan Development**

### **Planning Workshops**

During the fall of 2007, the Town held two workshops to gain input from residents and landowners. A total of 140 people attended two different sessions. The two workshops were designed to involve the community in identifying positive and negative features about the town that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, and to develop a long-term vision statement. The following information summarizes this public input.

### **Workshop Summary: Positive Features of Ancram**

A. The top 10 most commonly expressed positive features in Ancram from both workshops were as follows, in order of priority:

- Community appearance/Character
- Community/People
- Agriculture
- Recreation/Cultural

Location/Access  
Environment  
Infrastructure  
Business/Economic Development  
Traffic/Roads  
Zoning/Land Use  
Government

B. The top 10 positive features of the Town identified at both workshops were as follows:

Community appearance/Character  
Agriculture  
Infrastructure  
Community/People  
Environment  
Business/Economic Development  
Zoning/Land Use  
Recreation/Cultural  
Traffic/Roads  
Government

C. Overall, there were many similarities between the two workshops and within the category; both groups valued these resources similarly. These positive features can be summarized as follows:

**Community Appearance/Community Character:** Rural character, rural and agricultural character, wide open spaces, natural areas, natural beauty, small town feel, quiet and peaceful, historic and historic buildings, sense of community, rural views. This was by far, the single most important positive feature of the Town.

**Traffic and Roads:** dirt roads, good highway network, local control of roads, good roads and well maintained, although another thought was that bad roads slow speeders.

**Business/Economic Development:** lack of big box stores and large businesses was seen as a positive. Year-round attractions are available to bring in business, paper mill.

**Zoning and Land Use:** This was not a highly ranked topic but for people who felt it was positive, they mentioned the scenic overlay zone, lack of large development, 3-acre minimum lot size, diversification of parcel sizes.

**Infrastructure:** fire department and rescue squad seen as very positive feature.

**Agriculture:** farms and open land still exist, a viable agriculture base still exists, good farmland, fresh produce available, good farming opportunities.

**Recreation/Cultural Facilities:** hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation available, access to parks, recreational areas such as ski resort and golf is good.

**Community/People:** people are supportive, have good will, good people, diversity of people, family ties, nice people, sense of community. This was a very positive feature of Ancram.

**Government:** Town government is accessible and willing to look forward to future.

**Environment:** Environmental features such as topography, clean air and water, lakes and waterfronts, wetlands, land preserved already, and abundance of natural resources were important.

**Location/Access:** Access to transportation and cultural centers were important. Proximity to urban areas as well as the Berkshires and Catskills were important.

D. By far, the workshops showed that community appearance and community character were the most important positive features of Ancram. Both workshops rated this the highest. Both workshops also indicated that agriculture was very important. These two topic areas received not only the most mentions, but the most overall attention by participants. There were some differences in other top-10 positive priorities and predominance of issues between the Saturday and Monday workshops as follows (in order from highly rated to less highly rated). The shading below indicates that two categories received the same “score.”

Town of Ancram Draft Profile and Inventory January 2009 (V4)

<b>Monday Commonly Expressed Items</b>	<b>Monday Priorities</b>	<b>Saturday Commonly Expressed Items</b>	<b>Saturday Priorities</b>
Community Appearance and Character	Community Appearance and Character	Community Appearance and Character	Community Appearance and Character
Community and People	Agriculture	Agriculture	Agriculture
Recreation and Cultural	Business/Economic Development	Community and People	Infrastructure
Agriculture	Community and People	Environment	Community and People
Location/Access	Recreation and Cultural	Location/Access	Environment
Environment	Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Business/Economic Development
Infrastructure	Zoning/Land Use	Business/Economic Development	Zoning/Land Use
Traffic/Roads	Traffic/Roads	Traffic/Roads	Recreation and Cultural
Business/Economic Development	Government	Zoning/Land Use	Traffic/Roads
Zoning/Land Use	Environment	Government	Government

## **Workshop Summary: Negative Features of Ancram**

A. The top 10 most commonly expressed negative features in Ancram (both workshops) were as follows:

(In order from most commonly expressed to least)

Traffic and Road Issues

Infrastructure Issues

Business and Economic Development Issues

Community Appearance/Community Character Issues

Community and People

Recreation and Cultural Facilities

Other items

Zoning and Land Use

Taxes

Environment

B. The top 10 negative issues (both workshops) were as follows, in order of importance:

Community Appearance/Community Character

Traffic and Roads

Business/Economic Development

Zoning and Land Use

Infrastructure

Agriculture

Taxes

Recreation/Cultural Facilities

Housing

Community/People

C. Overall, there were many similarities between the two workshops and within the category, both groups had similar concerns. These can be summarized as follows:

**Community Appearance/Community Character:** poorly maintained buildings, derelict buildings, lack of town center, lack of pedestrian opportunities in hamlet, condition of structures in Ancram hamlet, lack of town identity.

**Traffic and Roads:** Truck traffic, speeding, lack of parking, Route 7/82 intersection, lack of senior citizen transportation, road maintenance and conditions.

**Business/Economic Development:** Lack of employment, lack of job opportunities for young people, lack of nearby small businesses to service locals, lack of economic development in Town.

**Zoning and Land Use:** This category had many issues, and there was not one major issue. Some included too large lot sizes and threat of development.

**Infrastructure:** Lack of cell service, lack of police services in hamlets, no sidewalks, general lack of services.

**Agriculture:** Loss of farms and decline of agriculture

**Taxes:** Taxes too high, concerns over accuracy of assessments, land not on tax rolls.

**Recreation/Cultural Facilities:** Lack of recreation for kids and seniors, lack of access to streams, lack of hiking trails, general lack of activities.

**Housing:** Lack of affordable lots

**Community/People:** Lack of communication among citizens, conflicts between part-timers and full-timers and long-time residents and new residents, youth vandalism.

**Government:** Lack of political leadership and no proactive government

**Environment:** Concerns about wetlands, pollution, impact of development on water resources.

**Schools:** Poor schools, fragmentation of town into so many school districts.

D. There were some differences in top 10 priorities and predominance of issues between the Saturday and Monday workshops as follows (in order

from highly rated to less highly rated). Note however, that many of the same issues were top priorities in both groups. Monday had more of an emphasis on traffic/roads, business and economic development and community appearance/character. Saturday’s workshop participant had more of an emphasis on traffic/roads, infrastructure, zoning/land use and community- and people-related issues.

<b>Monday Commonly Expressed Items</b>	<b>Monday Priorities</b>	<b>Saturday Commonly Expressed Items</b>	<b>Saturday Priorities</b>
Traffic/Roads	Community Appearance/Character	Traffic/Roads	Zoning/Land Use
Business/Economic Development	Traffic/Roads	Infrastructure	Infrastructure
Infrastructure	Business/Economic Development	Community/People	Traffic/Roads
Community Appearance/Character	Agriculture	Zoning/Land Use	Taxes
Recreation/Cultural	Government	Community Appearance/Character	Community Appearance/Character
Community/People	Housing	Business/Economic Development	Agriculture
Housing	Infrastructure	Recreation/Culture	Community/People
Agriculture	Recreation/Cultural	Taxes	Business/Economic Development
Zoning and Land Use	Zoning/Land Use	Environment	Housing
Government	Community/People	Housing	Environment

**Vision statements drafted by public participants (Sat)**

The Future Ancram Will Have the Following Characteristics:

1. A vibrant agricultural sector with lots of successful farms and lots of support for farming among citizens and town government. Development is consistent with goals of preserving open space and rural character. Downtown Ancram and Ancramdale have become nice places to walk around and provide basic necessities. Easy and inexpensive communication (cell service, internet) exists. Better schools and activities for children. Elderly assistance programs. Self-sufficient and self-

sustaining. Emergency health access. Provide affordable transportation. Identify, keep and renovate historic houses, barns, and structures.

2. Public access to Roe Jan and have safe walking trails. Maintain and develop agricultural access in Town. Encourage small local business while maintaining historical character of the Town. Fair, equitable taxes. Have a community center and a transportation system for the elderly and facilities for kids. Affordable housing for low income families. Maintain the natural beauty of other area. Have good cell and internet use and service. A recycling center.
3. Maintain a rural character. No commercial development to change rural character. Have equitable taxes. The economy is prosperous and supports the residents. The Town has great communication with the residents. Encourage farming/agriculture/horses, livestock.
4. Maintain a strong and diverse agricultural base. Maintain current housing diversity. Better communication services such as cell phones and internet. The Town has a strong sense of community. Maintain the rural character with safe, well maintained roads. Encourage more small businesses in hamlets by upgrading buildings and increasing parking.
5. Have more Town facilities and recreation for the elderly and the youth. Maintain historic interest. Have nice easy flowing traffic. Better social services like having better internet and cell service. Build a Town center. Keep the farming and agriculture in Ancram. Protect the wildlife and the environment. Mix of rentals affordable and substantial housing with zoning. Support services and facilities for different ages. Ample parking in Town Center with thriving businesses, landscaped, strong with diverse businesses and adequate parking.
6. Ancram is a small thriving small village with a preserved rural character and expansive landscape where both wildlife and farms flourish.
7. The Town has maintained a rural character with more farms than today. Wooded land, streams, and wetlands are protected. The Town has small scale businesses with production and retail that serves the needs of the residents. High quality infrastructure with better communications available. Reliable energy including alternate sources. Variety of houses,

but no derelict buildings. Route 7/82 traffic is improved and all roads are in excellent condition.

8. Maintain the rural and agriculture character. Have more small stores and businesses with more job opportunities. Have affordable housing for the seniors.
9. Preserved historic town center and outlying areas. Have designated historic district and preservation of history. Preserve the scenic beauty and the open spaces by regulating development. Have strong environmental protection with an innovative approach to gravel mining. Develop more recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The Town has improved utility services. The Town has an agricultural economy with specific community based food marketing and regulatory programs to enhance agriculture. Incentives are given to preserve old homes and buildings and barns. Farmers and weekenders work together to preserve the land and beauty. Small businesses and residences centered in hamlets creating sense of community.
10. A Town which embraces and enforces strong environmental protection and fosters historic preservation. A Town with a working, rural landscape and many farms where agriculture prospers. A Town with hamlets that service and support both full time local residents, as well as weekenders, with a spirit of neighborliness. Open space, trails, and nature centers are accessible by the public. A town with safe rural character roads where speed limits are reasonable for the type of roads.

**Vision Categories Identified by Participants --** Each of these areas should be addressed in the Plan in some way and represent broad categories of topics addressed in the various vision statements:

- Environment
- Agriculture
- Community
- Zoning
- Town Development
- Technology
- Children
- Elderly
- Emergency Services

Transportation/Traffic  
 History  
 Housing/Affordable Housing  
 Community Character  
 Cell Phone Use  
 Recycling  
 Community Center  
 Taxes  
 Recreational Facilities/Activities  
 Town Center  
 Communication/Education  
 Visual  
 Infrastructure

Common vision elements listed from most to least common:

Have more small stores and businesses
Have more successful and working farms
Provide more hiking and biking trails
Reconstruct intersection of Route 7 and 82
Maintain a rural character
Have affordable housing
Provide better internet and cell service
Maintain open spaces and land
Preserve and restore old historic buildings
More controlled development
Provide more Town recreation
Build a community center
Have more Town parking
The Town provides public transportation
Sense of community
Build better Town center
Better parklands
Preserve the forest and wetlands
Architecture is consistent with the rural area
No trailer housing
Have more job opportunities
Have less and more flowing traffic
Have quality schools
Have farms provide food for the Town

Alternative energy
Maintain nice and scenic roads
Recognize the historic buildings
Have more livestock
Rail trails

**Vision statements drafted by public participants (Mon)**

The Future Ancram Will Have the Following Characteristics:

1. A small local village center. Viable farming community with large and small family-owned farms. Let hunting be allowed. Scenic, accessible, environmentally friendly open land. The Town is economically viable for rural populations of young and old.
2. The hamlet has sidewalks, water, sewer, parking, restored houses and businesses. A family-friendly community. The Town has more farms and farmers and farms are profitable. Have locally grown products available to purchase. Ancram has small lots and clustered housing available for both affordable and more expensive rates. The Town has many recreational and cultural facilities. Vehicle traffic in hamlets is slow, quieter, and safer. Ancram paper mill is still open and there are more opportunities for local employment.
3. An improved intersection of Route 7 and 82 and a safe and efficient transportation grid. Specific recreational and cultural activities supported by the Town. Mixture of big and little parcels by zoning that preserves the scenic beauty of the Town and which the community also supports. Farms that are financially stable and supports the community. More forms of small businesses and stores. Create tax and other forms of incentives for all businesses.
4. Ancram supports and encourages a variety of economic development. We have protected our rural environment and scenic areas. The Town encourages a variety of housing options. Improve and create more recreational facilities and programs. Foster a considerable and caring community.
5. Have open landscapes with controlled growth. The Ancram paper mill is running at full force. An excellent mix of all economic levels of housing

including senior citizen and affordable housing. A mix of small shops and adequate parking with good traffic flow. A culture center with hiking and biking trails and with ball fields. Small family farms, good mix a dairy, beef, horse, sheep, and small crop farms. Many small businesses throughout Town.

6. A mix of housing that protects the Towns open spaces and revitalizes the Town center. Retain the open space and rural landscape. People of all ages and economic status feel a part of the community. Support thriving agriculture. A functioning, economically vibrant, and safe Town center that retains the local character.
7. A Town that supports rural character and agriculture. More agriculture businesses. More youth recreation and activities. Keep attracting small commercial businesses. Plan for housing for the next generation.
8. Have more youth and senior facilities. Have a historic center and preserve history of the Town. Have economic development. Keep the beauty of the Town. Have better infrastructure. Have more recreational and cultural activities for the Town.
9. Allow for small, clean business development. A community center that delivers more Town services. Provide affordable housing. Limit and control through truck traffic and noise. A developing Town while keeping the rural character. Install a light on the intersection of route 7 and 82.
10. A safe and crime-free Town. Have a way for agriculture and development to coexist and grow. A public park for families and programs for seniors. Balanced zoning laws to give equal opportunities to agriculture, businesses, and residents. Attract suitable businesses to Ancram. Encourage refurbishing of old buildings and create central squares where people gather for services and entertainment.

**Vision Categories Identified by Participants** -- Each of these areas should be addressed in the Plan in some way and represent broad categories of topics addressed in the various vision statements:

Environment

Employment  
 Affordable Housing/Cluster Housing  
 Traffic  
 Social/Cooperation  
 Agriculture  
 Hamlets  
 Historic Preservation  
 Infrastructure  
 Cultural/Recreational  
 Downtown Refurbishment  
 Town Center  
 Business/Industry  
 Housing  
 Rural Character  
 Open Land  
 Social Services  
 Youth Activities  
 Beautification  
 Land Use  
 Unified Community  
 Public Safety  
 Support Systems

Common vision elements from above statements listed from most to least common:

Have more small stores, businesses, and shop centers
Keep rural landscape and character
Affordable housing
Have many working family farms
Remodel and improve Route 7 and 82 intersection
Have a community and Town center
More public parks and ball fields
Restore old and historic buildings
Keep open land and spaces
Less trucks in passing though Town and smooth traffic flow
Have development and cluster housing
More job opportunities
Have a senior center with facilities

Have a Town general store
Keep clean and quiet environments
Maintain better roads
More youth centers and facilities
Have a nice Town library
Build cell towers
Have clean water and good water supply
Offer more services
Build a historic center
Preserve wildlife
Plan housing for the next generation
The Town should support agriculture
More police service
The Town should provide more parking
Have better zoning

## Resident Survey

During the fall of 2007, a survey was mailed to approximately 1,550 residents, voters, and landowners. About 28 percent were returned, or about 434 responses, which is an average response for this kind of survey, and provides a statistically valid sample with a 95% confidence level and a 4% margin of error, which accurately reflects the Community's opinions.

**Where We Live, and for How Long:** The survey represents residents and landowners from all parts of town with about one third from the hamlet areas, one third from the central portion of town, and one third from the eastern portion of town from State Route 82/County Route 3 east. The survey represents both short- and long-term residents. About one third have been residents in Ancram for 10 years or less, one third have lived in Ancram 11 to 30 years, and one third more than 30 years.

**Full-time and Part-time:** The survey represents both full- and part-time residents – about 69 percent were full-time. For those who are now part-time residents, 40 percent are planning on living in Ancram full time, 38 percent plan to continue part-time, and 19 percent don't know. A very small percentage of part timers are planning on moving away.

**Home and Land Ownership:** The vast majority of participants own their

homes. The survey represents both small and large landowners with slightly more people being larger landowners. About 37 percent own three or fewer acres. Sixteen percent are very large landowners (owning more than 50 acres). Some 26 percent of landowners rent their land to farmers or farm it themselves. Acres farmed ranged from one to 700 acres.

**Occupations:** More people indicated they work outside of Columbia County than other places. Some 26 percent are retired or do not work, followed by almost 18 percent who work from their homes. A much smaller percentage of participants work in Ancram (seven percent), in the County (six percent), or outside of New York (seven percent). More of the participants who are not retired said their occupation was in administrative, business, or legal areas. Less than 10 percent were in construction or building trades, medical, or agriculture related occupations. Very few people indicated they were in retail, personal services, at the Ancram Mill, or a homemaker. A large number of people listed “Other.”

**Age:** 62 percent of the respondents were age 41 to 65. Thirty percent were over 65 and about eight percent were under 40 years old. There were no participants under 21 years. In 2000, the Census showed 17 percent of Ancram’s population over age 65 and about 44 percent age 41 to 65, and about 18 percent age 21 to 40.

**Children:** Most participants did not have children under 18 living with them. About 20 percent of participants indicated they had children under 18 living with them. Of these, the majority had one or two children.

*Issues Overall: Of the 21 issues identified at the workshop which were on the questionnaire, there was near unanimous support (90 percent or higher) for encouraging agriculture, maintaining open space, protecting ground water, streams, ponds, and wetlands.*

Protecting Woodlands was considered to be important by 84 percent of participants. All issue areas had at least one third of all participants indicate that it was important except for encouraging residential development and gravel mining.

Some 63 percent said it was not important to encourage residential development. 40 percent said gravel mining was not important while 47 percent said gravel mining was important, but 13 percent of these people

thought gravel mining should be prohibited in Ancram.

For those people who indicated gravel mining was important, they supported town control of gravel mines and identification of parts of town where gravel mining is not OK.

Other topics with about one third of participants indicating the topic was not important were attracting businesses and jobs and supporting hunting and fishing.

When asked to rank the issues listed, the top ranked issues were maintaining open space, encouraging agriculture, protecting ground water, and protecting streams, ponds and wetlands. Other areas ranked in the top three; however, but were not as popular.

**Agriculture:** There was support for town action to limit non-farm development, to provide incentives to preserve farmland, to organize locally to grown products activities, and to encourage development consistent with farmland protection. The majority of participants favored actions to support agriculture except for facilitating the purchase of farmland or development rights, while about 43 percent of participants supported buying land or development rights to protect farmland. The two highest priority actions to protect agriculture were to limit non-farm development in productive farm areas and to provide incentives to preserve farmland.

**Pace of Population and Housing Growth:** Forty percent want to see Ancram's population stay about the same over the next 15 years., followed by 34 percent who want to see a slight increase in population. Some 24 percent wanted a moderate increase. There were very few people who want to see large increases. More people (44 percent) said they did not want to see as many homes built in the next 15 years as in the past 15 years. However, 38 percent indicated a level about the same as the last 15 years would be acceptable. Very few wanted a lot more, and about 17 percent favored slightly more homes.

**Types of Housing Supported:** Survey participants had a great deal of support for single family homes, residential development designed to protect open space, senior citizen housing, and assisted living/continuous care facilities. There was a strong lack of support for large multi-family units and large residential subdivisions. About 57 percent supported additional

dwelling units in existing buildings. A majority of people did not support small apartment buildings, or townhouses, but about one third did support these types of housing. There was a strong lack of support for mobile homes or mobile home parks. There were mixed reactions to duplexes, combined residential/commercial buildings, and clustered subdivisions like Long Lake. The majority felt that there is a need for more housing for those with moderate incomes.

**Lot Sizes:** The majority did not feel that there was a need for smaller lot sizes in the hamlets than current one or two acre zoning or for smaller lot sizes than current three acre zoning outside of the hamlets. The majority also did not feel there was a need for larger lot sizes in the hamlets, or outside the hamlets.

**Attracting Jobs and Businesses:** The majority felt that Ancram should develop programs to attract jobs and businesses to town. Small retail stores and restaurants were felt to be appropriate by more than half of the respondents. Working from home businesses, restricting commercial activities to defined commercial zones, and attracting services and businesses were felt to be appropriate by 30 to 40 percent of participants. People who indicated that the Town should attract jobs and businesses preferred small retail stores and restaurants followed by home-based businesses. Similar to participants as a whole, this group also supported restriction of commercial activities to defined commercial zones.

**Historic Preservation:** The majority of participants felt Ancram should work to preserve and protect its historic buildings and places. The majority felt that historic preservation should be accomplished using a combination of private, town, state and federal funds. Another 43 percent said use private, state and federal grants only. Only four percent indicated they would support town money to preserve historic buildings and places.

**Recreation:** Athletic fields, hiking trails, bike paths, playgrounds, and walking/running paths were favored by over 70 percent of participants. Public swimming pool, community center for all ages, and public picnic areas were also favored by the majority of participants. Snowmobile trails were not favored by a majority. Camping areas, ice skating rink, tennis courts, and public hunting and fishing areas had mixed feelings with less support for each. The majority of survey participants were willing to spend town taxes to support or expand these high ranked recreational facilities.

**Town Centers:** The majority of participants indicated a need to improve the town centers, especially the Ancram Town Center. Favored ways to improve the town centers were to:

- attract shops, stores and small businesses,
- provide incentives to landowners to improve properties,
- impose penalties on those who allow their buildings to deteriorate,
- expand use of town-owned land near the town hall,
- improve traffic flow,
- establish visual appearance guidelines for building exteriors, and
- make the town centers more pedestrian friendly.

Municipal water or sewer had much less support as did moving the fire house out of Ancram and expanding size of hamlets, or establishing new ones.

**Town Government Services:** Snow removal, fire protection, and rescue squad were deemed satisfactory by a large percentage of participants. About half the participants had satisfaction with hours of town hall, police/law enforcement, and road maintenance. There were between 40 to 50 percent of participants who indicated they were not satisfied with building and zoning code enforcement process, building permit process, property tax assessment process, information about things going on in Ancram, and communication on what is going on in Town Hall. Almost half did not have an opinion on the Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals.

***Town Priorities:** Participants felt that the town should pursue programs or activities to preserve farms, farmland and open spaces; forests/wildlife habitats; protect scenic views and landscapes; protect sensitive environmental locations; protect wetlands; have better communication; use alternative forms of energy at town hall; and provide access to cell service. Each of these topics had support from about 70 percent or more participants.*

Between 50 to 60 percent supported town center improvements; programs to attract businesses and jobs; provide affordable housing; provide public parks and playgrounds; provide additional senior services; and support and promote hunting and fishing. More than 50 percent did not support attracting tourists, hiring a town policeman, building a new fire house, providing public water and sewer, providing public transportation, or

installing sidewalks, curbs, and street lights.

**General Positive Comments:** Comments about what people most liked most about Ancram included the area's beauty and charm, farming, the quiet and rural character, the lack of development, the open space, and the peaceful, scenic, small town feel.

**General Negative Comments:** Comments about what people liked least about Ancram included the dilapidated buildings, especially in the Hamlet of Ancram, lack of services and retail stores nearby for day-to-day needs, lack of communication and community togetherness, and development issues. The Route 7/82 intersection was identified as the major traffic safety issue in the Town.

**Ancram's Character Today and in 20 years:** Comments about the character of the town today and how people wanted the Town to be in 20 years were virtually identical. Most often mentioned words describing the current and desired future character of the town included: beautiful, farming and agriculture, low key, natural, open, rural, scenic, small town character, etc.

## **Youth Focus Group**

In December 2007, a planning workshop was held to gain input from the younger residents of Ancram. Twenty-eight high school juniors and seniors, college-age Ancram residents, and Ancram Fire Company members under 22 were invited to attend a Planning Workshop held from 11 AM to 1 PM at the Town Hall on 12/29. Four young people participated. The focus group was hosted by Comp Plan Committee Vice-Chair Barry Chase and Chair Art Bassin. The participants were asked to identify the 10 things they liked most about living in Ancram, the 10 things they liked least, and how they wanted Ancram to be in 20 years.

The things liked the most were:

1. Agricultural environment/rural open spaces (3 mentions)
2. The Town Park, pool, basketball court, Youth Commission (3 mentions)
3. Friendly Community, small town atmosphere, nice people (3 mentions)
4. Nice Town Hall; good highway department

5. Firehouse Activities, Church Dinners
6. Family in the area
7. Outdoor recreational activities –hunting, fishing, camping

The things liked least were:

1. No cell service (3 mentions)
2. No police (2 mentions)
3. Some bad roads (2 mentions)
4. Traffic problems - speeding, not stopping, blind corners (2 mentions)
5. Not much for kids to do
6. A very narrow economic base – weekenders and the Mill were the only sources of income; no gas station
7. High real estate prices
8. Curfew – lights out at the Town Park at 9 PM

In 20 years (or sooner) they wanted Ancram to have:

1. Better roads and more money for the highway department.
2. “Responsible agriculture” and more farming.
3. Affordable homes that are consistent with the Town’s rural setting; no big developments; lower prices. “I want to be able to live here”.
4. More stores for food, gas and other convenience items.
5. More recreational facilities and more activities – baseball/softball field, football/soccer field, skate park.
6. More police and better law enforcement.
7. Good cell service.

## **Youth Workshop Vision Statement**

In conclusion, the four participants were asked what the Comprehensive Planning Committee had to “really get right” to make sure the Comprehensive Plan captured what was most important to them. They said:

1. Protect what we have now; keep things the way they are. We do not want Ancram to become like Lakeville or Millerton, where there are mob scenes most of the time.
2. Make sure we have affordable housing and a balance of housing ranging

from the very expensive to mid to range priced to affordable for individuals just starting out.

3. Protect the “sense of community” we have. Since kids in Ancram go to four different schools, the only way they get to know each other is to have a lot of community activities like the Firehouse dinners and activities, the Youth Commission activities, the church dinners, tractor pulls and things like that. The Town needs to do more to promote this “sense of community” and more Town activities and recreational facilities would help do that. Town should consider doing an annual “Community Day,” or an “Agriculture Day,” or both.