

IMPLEMENTATION

The procedures and methods involved in putting a Master Plan into effect fall into two categories: (1) controls and regulations related to the use of private property, and (2) the practices and procedures related to the use of public property and the provision of public services. Included in the first group are zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, housing and building codes; in the second group are such items as the acquisition and development of land for various public purposes, including parks, playgrounds, streets, bridges, public parking areas and sewage treatment plants, and public services such as police and fire protection, maintenance of streets, public buildings, sewers, water mains and similar facilities, snow removal and street cleaning, the collection of refuse, as well as the administration of these activities.

While most of the activities of the Town and Village are matters of policy arrived at over the years by the Town and Village Boards, several of the over-all elements are matters directly concerned with future planning and recommendations are therefore in order in this planning program report. Included in this section, therefore, are recommendations concerning Zoning, Subdivision Regulations, a Capital Improvements Program and possible assistance to the Village in the proposed redevelopment of the Central Business District through the Urban Renewal Program which involves Federal and State aid.

Zoning

Zoning is one of the more important controls which can be used to guide future growth and development in the direction indicated in the Master Plans for the Town and Village of Herkimer. Zoning also assists in maintaining and improving the existing built-up areas, even though changes in the latter are slow to occur.

Basically, zoning is the division of the community into zones within which only specified land uses are permitted which are considered compatible with each other. All other uses, which are considered incompatible, are prohibited. For example, industry is prohibited in residential zones as industry is generally incompatible with homes, while parks and playgrounds are permitted as they are public facilities in support of the residential uses.

Zoning should be in general accordance with the Master Plan, yet as zoning must recognize existing conditions as well as guide future growth and development, it is unlikely that it will repeat exactly the proposals in the Master Plan for future land use. It should, however, guide development in the directions outlined in the Master Plan.

The Planning Program of the Town and Village of Herkimer includes recommendations for zoning in both the Town and Village. A proposed zoning ordinance for the Town was drafted and submitted separately to the Town Zoning Commission during the planning program prior to this Master Plan Report. It is recommended that this proposed ordinance be enacted as soon as possible for the protection of present Town residents and to guide future development according to the Master Plan.

Upon review, it was decided that it would be best to redraft the existing Zoning Ordinance of the Village in order to incorporate recent advances in the regulation of land use. Consequently, a completely revised zoning ordinance was drafted and submitted to the Planning Board of the Village as a proposed amended zoning ordinance for the Village prior to this report. As in the Town, it is recommended that this amendment be enacted as soon as possible in order for the zoning in effect in the Village to conform to the Master Plan of the Village.

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision of large land areas into building lots is one of the first steps undertaken in development. The pattern of the streets formed as well as the size and shape of lots, once set, remain as laid out for very long periods; in older countries, patterns first laid out by the Romans and even earlier cultures may still be found. It is the responsibility of the community to assure future generations well-designed and carried-out subdivisions, and subdivision regulations enable the community to do this.

Subdivision Regulations generally include provisions concerning the types of streets to be required, maximum and minimum grades, construction to be required, utilities to be installed, minimum curve radii, maximum length of cul-de-sacs and other provisions for the land to be accepted as public rights-of-way. Certain requirements are usually applied to lots to be in private ownership as well including specifications for easements, the general location and alignment of lot lines, the placement of property markers and similar requirements. The regulations also generally list design criteria for use in evaluating the layout of a subdivision and

provide for a series of reviews by the Planning Board to encourage the best subdivision design possible. The regulations are made effective through the power to withhold the privilege of public record from plats not meeting established requirements and standards.

Subdivision control provides the Planning Board with a very useful tool in guiding the growth and development in the directions proposed in the Master Plan. Through their use, sound neighborhood patterns may be provided including the integration of various land uses, the proper provisions for parks, playgrounds, and other public facilities as well as a system of streets suitable for the particular development and which provides continuity with adjacent existing or future development.

Proposed Subdivision Regulations for both the Town and Village of Herkimer were prepared and submitted to their respective Planning Boards as a part of the Planning Program prior to this report with the recommendation that they be adopted by the Planning Boards and approved by the governing bodies as soon as possible. In this way the Subdivision Regulations could be used immediately to assist in the guiding of proper growth patterns.

Capital Improvements Programs

A long-range financial program is essential if the Town and Village are to achieve a balanced program of Capital Improvements and Public Services within the limitations of the revenues available to them over a period of years, and such a program will be the determining factor in achieving the goals of the Master Plans. The long-range financial program is composed of three major elements: the Capital Improvements Program, a Public Service Program and a Revenue Program. The Capital Improvements

Programs as outlined in this study should actually be considered tentative, as should the Master Plans themselves, until a long-range financial plan is developed by the Town and Village and a balanced program achieved.

Normally, the time period covered by the Master Plans is twenty years; however, as mentioned earlier, the Master Plans are plans for physical development and the time required for such physical development may vary considerably. Programs that extend over a period of twenty years or more are obviously subject to many uncertainties. It is neither necessary nor possible to be as specific or exacting in programming over a long period as in determining plans for the near future. The Capital Improvements Programs constitute a bridge between the operational programs of the Town and Village on one hand and the Master Plans on the other, and together with the other elements of the long-range financial programs, are required before Capital Budgeting can be set up by the Town and Village.

The recommended procedure is to derive a list of capital improvements from the Master Plan, establish priorities and a tentative schedule for these capital improvements, undertake detailed studies of them resulting in cost estimates, then balancing these capital improvements with the Service and Revenue Programs. After this has been accomplished, the final schedule of capital improvements may be made and the Master Plan revised to reflect the capabilities of the community as finally determined. The portion of this over-all program of capital improvements undertaken as a part of this planning program constitutes the first step in developing the program and includes deriving the lists of needed capital improvements which will be required to carry out the Master Plans, the determination of priorities to be assigned to them and the tentative scheduling of the improvements for the period of the Plan.

The following table summarizes the capital improvements required by the Town, Village and School District, their priorities and a tentative schedule for their accomplishment during the period of the Plans, for three time periods: 0-4 years, 5-9 years and 10-20 years.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM FOR THE
TOWN AND VILLAGE OF HERKIMER

Part I 0-4 Years (1962-1966)

Village

1. Rehabilitation of Present Sewage Treatment Plant or Construction of New Plant.
2. Construction of Water Storage Facilities to serve upper levels of the Village.
3. Park Development--Northwest area.
4. Central Business District Redevelopment--Stage One.
5. Diversion of Taylor Brook and Russia Brook to improve water resources.
6. Improvement of water distribution facilities in the higher levels of the Village.

Town

1. Playground development in East Herkimer. "Look out" park development along the Folts Road.

2. Town Garage Site Acquisition and possible development.
3. Improvement of water distribution facilities in East Herkimer and possible formulation of a Sewer District in East Herkimer.
4. Initial Development for Proposed Residential Community of West Herkimer including the construction of the secondary thoroughfare to provide essential access to the area.

School District

1. Acquisition and Development of additional land adjacent to the Tugar School.
2. Acquisition of land (to be integrated with Park land acquisition) in the Northwest area of the Village for the proposed future elementary school.

Part II 5-9 Years (1967-1971)

Village

1. Central Business District Redevelopment--Stage Two.
2. Construction of new Fire Headquarters Building.
3. Construction of new Fire Station to supplement Fire Headquarters.
4. Central Business District Redevelopment--Stage Three.

Town

1. Acquisition of land for proposed Town Park and initial development of the site.
2. Establishment of Special Water District for the West Herkimer area and construction of primary water storage and distribution facilities, Initial Stage.

School District

1. Acquisition of land for new elementary school in northeastern portion of Village.
2. Construction of a new elementary school in the northwestern portion of the Village.
3. Modernization of East Herkimer School.

Part III 10-20 Years (1972-1982)

Village

1. Construction of New Sewage Treatment Plant if existing plant was rehabilitated during Part I.
2. Acquisition of land for and construction of the Government Center buildings.
3. Water Storage Reservoir at high elevation to provide improved water service for the Village and West Herkimer.

4. New German Street-Washington Street Bridge over the Hydraulic Canal; Rebuilding of Washington Street from State Street to the bridge; Rebuilding of Prospect Street from Park Avenue to Church Street; Rebuilding of Church Street and Court Street from Prospect Street to Washington Street.
5. Central Business District Redevelopment--Stage Four.

Town

1. Completion of Town park development.
2. Further development of Community services in West Herkimer.

School District

1. New Elementary School, Northeast area of the Village.

Again it should be noted that the foregoing schedule should be considered tentative until detailed study by the Town and Village either substantiates the schedule or provides a basis for revisions. It is recommended, therefore, that the Town and Village should proceed with the next step in setting up a long-range financial program which is to make detailed studies of the proposals including the estimation of costs and at the same time to evaluate the Community services to be provided, together with a study of future revenues. It is strongly urged that these steps be taken as soon as possible in order for both the Town and Village to evolve realistic capital budgets for

the future accomplishment of the necessary capital improvements.

Of particular importance in this direction is the initiation of detailed studies for the Redevelopment of the Central Business District. The growth and redevelopment of this area will have considerable impact upon the Village itself as well as upon the surrounding Town. Recommendations for proceeding with these studies will be found in the next section of this report under the heading "Urban Renewal."

Urban Renewal

Planning is not only for the purpose of guiding the future growth and development of land presently vacant, but also should be considered as a guide in the redevelopment of land presently built-up. Though zoning and subdivision regulations will have their greatest effect upon new growth and can assist in attaining the goals of the Master Plans in newly developing areas, they can also assist in the reduction of problem areas in presently built-up portions of the Town and Village where the mingling of incompatible land uses has created difficult problems. It should be noted, however, that zoning and subdivision regulations, together with most other planning tools presently in existence, are essentially negative in approach; thou shalt not do harmful things to your neighbors.

The major exception to the prevalent negative approach in planning tools is the tool of urban renewal. As a result, urban renewal is one of the most dynamic and dramatic forces at work in urban areas throughout the country today. It is desirable, therefore, to investigate the

meaning of urban renewal, and to indicate how urban renewal can be utilized in the Village of Herkimer, as the Village is the most likely to avail itself of the program.

Considerable insight may be gained into the meaning of urban renewal by simply defining the two words involved. Urban means the fabric of the community, in essence it refers to the highly organized aspect of our cultural development we know today as the City. Renewal means the process of renewing, rejuvenation, redevelopment, or simply rebuilding. Combining the two we arrive at City rebuilding, which is what urban renewal means in its broadest sense.

Rebuilding an urban area is obviously a highly complex, and tremendously expensive operation. It is necessary, however, if we are to correct mistakes which have been allowed to accumulate through the years. This is not to imply that past development was or is bad; rather, the important consideration is that the form of our cities is essentially the same as it was sixty years ago and what was reasonable or even desirable at that time may not be so today. The fault lies not with the original development but with the lack of change needed as conditions change. We are now living in a period where new technological advances are occurring at an unprecedented rate. The pattern of our cities in 1900 was oriented toward the horse and buggy; today we live in an era of large and fast automobiles and jet aircraft with rockets apparently just around the corner. The result is the familiar traffic congestion, lack of parking space and obsolete buildings and structures.

These problems have been found to be very expensive in terms of accidents, crime rate, fires, health problems, etc. The Congress of the United States, in recognition of this, has undertaken to assist local governments

in correcting the over-all situation. In 1949 Congress enacted laws to make possible financial assistance to communities involved in eliminating slums and blighted conditions through urban renewal projects. In successive years, Congress has continued to increase the scope of the federal program and to increase the money made available to communities actively engaged in the program. The State of New York also has made assistance available to these communities, again in recognition of the formidable expense involved. The result is that today the actual cost to a locality may be as low as 12.5 percent of the total cost of a project.

With the aid of this Federal and State assistance, communities have the possibility of carrying out an action program to revitalize their most seriously blighted or deteriorated areas, and to do so within their financial means. For example, the downtown redevelopment plan as outlined in the Village Master Plan, might well be eligible, at least in part, for urban renewal assistance. In this case the downtown area would probably be covered by several urban renewal projects over a period of years. It was with this thought in mind that the staging of the redevelopment plan was evolved. Other areas of the Village also may be eligible for assistance under the urban renewal program, and more detailed study should be undertaken to determine what areas may be eligible and the urban renewal actions which would be best suited for each area.

These detailed studies can be carried out with Federal and State financial assistance under the Community Renewal Program. This program is for the purpose of investigating the possibilities for urban renewal in the entire Village and to set up a schedule for undertaking urban renewal activities which are desirable in order to eliminate slums and blighted conditions, to provide public facilities and services, and generally to

improve the physical environment. When this plan for action has progressed to the stage where the capabilities of the Village to undertake urban renewal projects are known, the first actual project can then be initiated.

It should be noted that the urban renewal process is a lengthy one. It will take considerable time, possibly as long as two or three years before the first physical results could be expected. On the other hand, urban renewal promises much for the future of the Village, and these possibilities should not be ignored.