

FALL 2017



Village of Menands, New York

OCTOBER 24, 2017 MEETING NOTES

MRP STUDIO



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INTRODUCTION

On October 24, 2017, University of Albany MRP Graduate students met with several members of the Menands community to discuss thirteen past plans that had been conducted for, or about, Menands to ascertain what the community members felt was still important from these plans. Students extracted elements from these plans and asked participants to rank these elements as Completed (Yes/No); Relevant (Yes/No); and Priority (High/Low). The separate UAlbany student report “Review of Past Plans for Village of Menands” was provided for background information. The list of thirteen plans that were reviewed is included on page 18 of this report. A summary of the results of the participants’ feedback is provided on page 17.

Meeting Participants
Village of Menands Comprehensive Plan
October 24, 2017, 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm @ Menands School

Name	Email Address
Marcia Kees, UAlbany	mkees@albany.edu
Jad Edlebi, UAlbany	jedlebi@albany.edu
Dhaval Dhamelia, UAlbany	ddhamelia@albany.edu
Sean Taylor, UAlbany	staylor@albany.edu
Aneisha Samuels, UAlbany	asamuels@albany.edu
Ketura Vics, UAlbany	kvics@albany.edu
Eric Stotsky, UAlbany	estotsky@albany.edu
Zeynep Tas, UAlbany	ztas@albany.edu
Bill Nevins	billscafe@aol.com
Meg Grenier	mgrenier@yahoo.com
Paul Reuss	paul@hotmail.com
Maureen Long	mlong@menands.org
Aileen Nicoll	anicoll@menands.org
Mary and Jerry Ruppert	ruppertroost@hotmail.com
Kerry Wroblewski	kerrywroblewski@gmail.com
Gavin Klami	gavinklami@gmail.com
Matt Wroblewski	mattski@aol.com
Bill Giering	bjgiering@gmail.com
Sandy Misiewicz	smisiewicz@cdtcmpo.org
Lisa Buoniconto	buoniconto@aol.com
John Bassett	Johnfb42@gmail.com

Plan Assessment Matrix Statements and Responses from Stakeholders

- 1. Enhance Menands’ sense of place and establish it as a destination by bringing shopping, restaurants, and community entertainment space. (MNAFS)**

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	15	0	15	0

- 2. Recommendations for the Broadway corridor: Form-based zoning and mixed-use development, repurposing and redeveloping underutilized properties, seek grants to improve the streetscape, and market the corridor. (BCEDI)**

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	15	0	13	1

Paul Reuss says it was done 10 years ago.

- 3. Perform an assessment of farmers markets to help economic growth in Menands. (MFSCDCFM)**

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
1	1	14	0	4	5

4. Improve the Broadway commercial corridor by implementing strategic sites on Wolfert corner. (BCC)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
5	0	-	-	-	-

Paul Reuss says the study was done ten years ago.

5. Utilize the wetland/tidal estuary area to potentially include a wildlife/educational center. Create a culvert to create a pedestrian passage to the waterfront. Provide access to create a sense of place and destination. (MNAFS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	15	0	10	4

Has there been a study?

This is the Menands area feasibility study that looks at soil and topology of wetlands to determine feasibility of wetland rehabilitation. There are developable parts of the wetlands and it is a very bio-diverse ecology system there. There might be potential for something like the discovery center in Albany. There could be a pedestrian passage under 787.

Mary Ruppert had some questions.

- What are the barriers to development?
- Will there be restrictions?

It is more working within the bureaucracy and the process than just an outright denial or development restriction.

6. Contact DEC Division of fish, wildlife, and marine resources for a search based on the most current database regarding the presence or absence of any race, species, and/or ecological communities in the study area. (ACCTAS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	0	5	1	0	5

Paul Reuss asks if this from a 2002 study.

- Yes, it is. Nobody was sure if it was completed. Many people were shaking their heads in confusion. It is relevant.

Sandy Misiewicz described the context of the study. She said it had proposals for a roadway to access the opposite side of I-787. This was one of the considerations that needed more exploration, between bike path and I-787.

7. Investigate potential for brownfield conditions and possible remediation. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	15	0	13	0

Jerry Ruppert asked, what are brownfields and what are the brownfield conditions? A brownfield is a former industrial site that has any possibility of contamination.

It may or may not be contaminated, but all former industrial sites are considered brownfields, just in case the ground was contaminated. There are two spills on record for 2017, according to Zeynep Tas.

Should we pursue finding out if brownfields are stopping development? If designated as a brownfield, funding and superfund sites are possible.

Mayor Grenier told everyone that the village applied for grant money from the state, but the project failed because of lack of funding. The grant money was not received.

**8. Improve intersection signals, pedestrian walkability, and business entrances.
(32LS)**

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	9	15	0	15	0

9. Conduct a feasibility study for potential sanitary sewer and water system upgrades. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
1		15	0	15	0

Mayor Grenier said that since 2002, Menands has done water system completion and that this has been completed.

A lot has been done and more is yet to come. This water system work has provided a great start. Grant money was 5 million dollars for this plan.

Mayor Grenier said it is also relevant for businesses because paved streets and better infrastructure improve business profits and prospects.

Mary Ruppert asked if this is like the chicken and the egg in relation to which should come first. Should Broadway corridor transportation infrastructure be repaired first, or should businesses come in first.

Mayor Grenier said it does not matter which happens first.

**10. Explore potential reductions in infrastructure maintenance costs over time.
(787/HRCS)**

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
		14	0	0	0

Sandy Misiewicz clarified that this plan is specific to transportation infrastructure and not water and sewer infrastructure.

Mayor Grenier said the road diet was done and sewers and sidewalks were put in on the north side of village. Bus rapid transit from CDTA is also a work in progress. This plan has been started, but it is a work in progress.

Sandy Misiewicz stated further, that this study focuses a lot on access issues between waterfront and Broadway access ramps. One of the ramps is by the Riverview center. The DOT funded 5 million dollars for a bicycle ramp to the Mohawk Hudson Bicycle Path. It will cut across and go over I-787. This will be under construction in 2018 or 2019.

John Bassett wanted to think about infrastructure throughout the whole village, not just main roads.

Everything seems to be intertwined said Jerry Ruppert.

11. Menands needs more lighting, pedestrian sidewalk continuity, bicycle trail connections, redevelopment, and better drainage infrastructure. (32 LS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	8	15	0	9	0

Mayor Grenier said much has already started to be done, but we do not own Route 32. It is tough to create Broadway projects because it is a state-owned road.

12. Position industrial buildings close to the streets with minimal parking between Broadway and the building façade. It is also proposed to connect adjacent parking lots. Shared parking and public parking is encouraged. (BCDG)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
Completed	-	-	-	-	

Mary Ruppert asked if this was just launched last year in 2016?

Mayor Grenier explained that the guidelines are complete, but not the plan.

Marcia Kees explained to all that this plan is specific to the Broadway corridor study but does not include the rest of the village.

13. Promote Smart Growth. Logical pedestrian amenities should be incorporated. The Broadway Business District design intends to promote walkability. Infill neighborhood is intended for residential use and mixed-use districts. Promote green infrastructure development techniques (rainwater, harvesting, permeable pavements, green roofs). (BCDG)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
		15	0	15	0

Paul Reuss stated that the guidelines are in place, but he is having difficulty with the yes or no on all the statements. This, in particular, was a tough one. There are guidelines, but the design is to attract investment. The question is whether it gets implemented.

Mayor Grenier says even with the lighting, put as third project. There are certain things that developers should do, but there has not been much development.

In the last couple years, over 50 million dollars have been invested on Broadway.

- Lofts – 31 million
- Vacant buildings at other end – Williams Press

- North end has Two Guys property which left
 - Columbia Development bought it for millions of dollars
- Mohawk Hudson Human Society
 - 7.2 million spent on new shelter because old one dated back to 1913
- Riverview Center
 - Old Montgomery Wards building
 - Beautiful building purchased for 20 million
 - 2300 people occupy building, at least another 1000 people for workforce will enter building
- Riverview purchased Mid-City Plaza
 - Not looking for grocery store
 - Looking for tenants to occupy space
- Hudson Valley AAA, RAD Soap, Family Dollar, Sky Zone, and more moved in during 2015

Good environmental practices should be promoted.

14. Landscape enhancements and gateway signage should be installed at the three major gateways. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
		13	1	0	15

Mayor Grenier knows the signage is there but is not sure what type. This plan looks for gateway signs, no smaller signs. It is partially done because there are entrance signs, but not larger gateway signs.

15. Implement landscape improvements to the open space between Price Chopper Plaza and Village Center segments. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
3	12	9	0	3	4

Mayor Grenier said there was not as much as what the plan calls for with landscape improvements.

Gavin Klami asked if anything could be done with the National Grid power plant because it is right in front of one of the gateways.

Mayor Grenier stated that Menands was putting a gateway sign somewhere, but a car hit transformer there and ended that project. National Grid will not continue any project there because it is afraid of future accidents at the site. The village will need to reach out to National Grid again someday.

John Bassett said that the interchange to 378 and open space areas were good locations. Some of this stuff is easy to place trees in.

It is unclear how this plan could be accomplished because there is not much of this open space in Menands.

16. Improve streetscape and/or traffic calming on Broadway between Wards Lane and the Menands/Albany line. (ACCTAS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	14	0	5	5

This plan is specific to streetscape and façade lining the street.

Mayor Grenier acknowledged that there are not a lot of places to put trees with businesses.

Jerry Ruppert said that Menands should take the parking lot out and make a park out of that. Make it a walking park. However, the parking lot is owned via two different companies.

**17. Menands falls on the BRT Blue Line, which will soon be under construction.
(BRT/P&R)**

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
		6	2	1	5

Mayor Grenier said there should be one by the Riverview Center and one by Route 378. That will be happening.

Sandy stated that the Park and Ride might not happen, but the Bus Rapid Transit is happening.

Mayor Grenier said the idea is for quicker transit from Watervliet to Albany because Broadway is a busy road.

There were lots of questions on Park and Ride. There is extreme uncertainty about where locations will be for Park and Ride.

The BRT only stops twice, while Route 22 stops several times.

Do you want an additional park and ride for Menands?

- No, we do not.

Gavin Klami asked if there are any Park and Rides that have a synergy business with them?

Sandy Misiewicz said yes there is an increase in business observed at other locations because businesses are willing to invest where buses are sometimes. She stated an example from somewhere in Schenectady where a bus stop promoted a slight increase in businesses around it.

18. Improve business and transportation access along the Broadway corridor through the use of development nodes. (32 LS)

This statement was not discussed during the meeting.

19. Preserve and manage the Broadway corridor, develop the region’s potential, link transportation and land use plan and build for all modes. (LUIS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	14		13	1

20. Develop an extension to Erie Boulevard from just south of the Albany/Menands line to the I-787 Exit 6 interchange (with access between the extension and interchange ramps). (ACCTAS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	0	8	0	8

Mayor Grenier said the road has already been extended from Erie Boulevard to Simmons Lane.

After Simmons Lane, an extension to the onramp is proposed. This could be good for moving trucks through the village.

Sandy Misiewicz clarified that the thinking on how to handle these projects has changed since the study was done in 2002. This is outdated.

21. Due to higher than average accident rate in the central portion of the corridor, access management improvements should be considered including: consolidate driveways, shared access or cross easement. See table II on pages 28-29 for specific recommendations for each roadway. (BTS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	1	3	1	0	2

The Broadway road diet was done from the bridge to the north entrance.

22. Transform Broadway from a bleak and barren four-lane road to a narrower, pedestrian friendly street lined with trees and a mix of uses that cater to the commuter as well as the village resident. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	15	0	15	0

23. Establish a new access to the Capital Region Market to help make it more visible from Broadway. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	15	0	3	0

24. Reconfigure former Stewart’s intersection (337 Broadway). Reconfigure each of these roadways to a standard four-corner intersection. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	15	0	2	0	2

Stewart’s has moved to the intersection of Menand Road, the access road, and Broadway. The study was referring to the old Stewart’s at the other end of the village. However, the intersection must still be completed because the plan was never implemented.

25. Reduce the amount of pavement in the Riverview Center Gateway area and eliminate many of the free-flowing turn lanes. Undertake heavy landscape enhancements to help create a “green” entry into the corridor. (BCMP)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	14	0	8	0	8

26. Support multi-modal transportation objectives (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle, truck). (787/HRCS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	8	10	0	9	1

27. Account for life-cycle costs of roads and bridges. (787/HRCS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	3	1	4	0	3

28. Create new at-grade railroad crossings. (ACCTAS)

Sandy Misiewicz stated that at-grade railroad crossings are prohibited via the Federal Railroad Administration. This statement was not discussed further.

29. Promote access from Menands to the offerings of the Mohawk-Hudson Trail. (ACCTAS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	10	12	0	12	0

30. Enhance connections and access to the riverfront. (ACCTAS)

COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
0	12	12	0	7	3

#	COMPLETED		RELEVANT		PRIORITY	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	HIGH	LOW
1	0	15	15	0	15	0
2	0	15	15	0	13	1
3	1	1	14	0	4	5
4	5	0	-	-	-	-
5	0	15	15	0	10	4
6	0	0	5	1	0	5
7	0	15	15	0	13	0
8	0	9	15	0	15	0
9	1		15	0	15	0
10			14	0	0	0
11	0	8	15	0	9	0
12	Completed		-	-	-	-
13			15	0	15	0
14			13	1	0	15
15	3	12	9	0	3	4
16	0	15	14	0	5	5
17			6	2	1	5
18						
19	0	15	14		13	1
20	0	15	0	8	0	8
21	0	1	3	1	0	2
22	0	15	15	0	15	0
23	0	15	15	0	3	0
24	0	15	0	2	0	2
25	0	14	0	8	0	8
26	0	8	10	0	9	1
27	0	3	1	4	0	3
28						
29	0	10	12	0	12	0
30	0	12	12	0	7	3

List of Plan Abbreviations

Key to Past Menands Plans Abbreviation Plan Name

Studio Member

BTS	Broadway Transportation Study 2002	<i>Aneisha Samuel</i>
RCSAA	River Corridor Simplified Alternatives Analysis 2015	<i>Jad Edlebi</i>
LUIS	Transportation Access and Land Use Improvement Study 2008	<i>Eric Stotsky</i>
ACCTAS	Albany Co. Commercial Transportation Access Study 2002	<i>Zeynep Tas</i>
787/HRCS	787/Hudson River Corridor Study (current)	<i>Ketura Vics</i>
BCC	Development Strategy for Broadway Commercial Corridor 2001	<i>Dhaval Dhamelia</i>
MNAFS	Menands Nature Area Feasibility Study 2008	<i>Ketura Vics</i>
MFSCDCFM	Market Feasibility Study Capital District Cooperative Farmers Market 2007	<i>Dhaval Dhamelia</i>
32LS	Route 32 Linkage Study 2011	<i>Eric Stotsky</i>
SRDR	Scenic and Recreational Development Report 1970	<i>Sean Taylor</i>
BCEDI	Broadway Corridor Economic Development Initiative 2009	<i>Jad Edlebi</i>
BCMP	Broadway Corridor Master Plan 2002	<i>Zeynep Tas Aneisha</i>
BCDG	Broadway Corridor Design Guidelines 2016	<i>Samuel</i>

Maps Provided During the Meeting

Village of Menands Environmental Features

- All Roads
- ▭ Menands Civil Boundary
- ▨ Flood Zone Area
- ▨ Wetlands
- 50-Foot Interval Contours

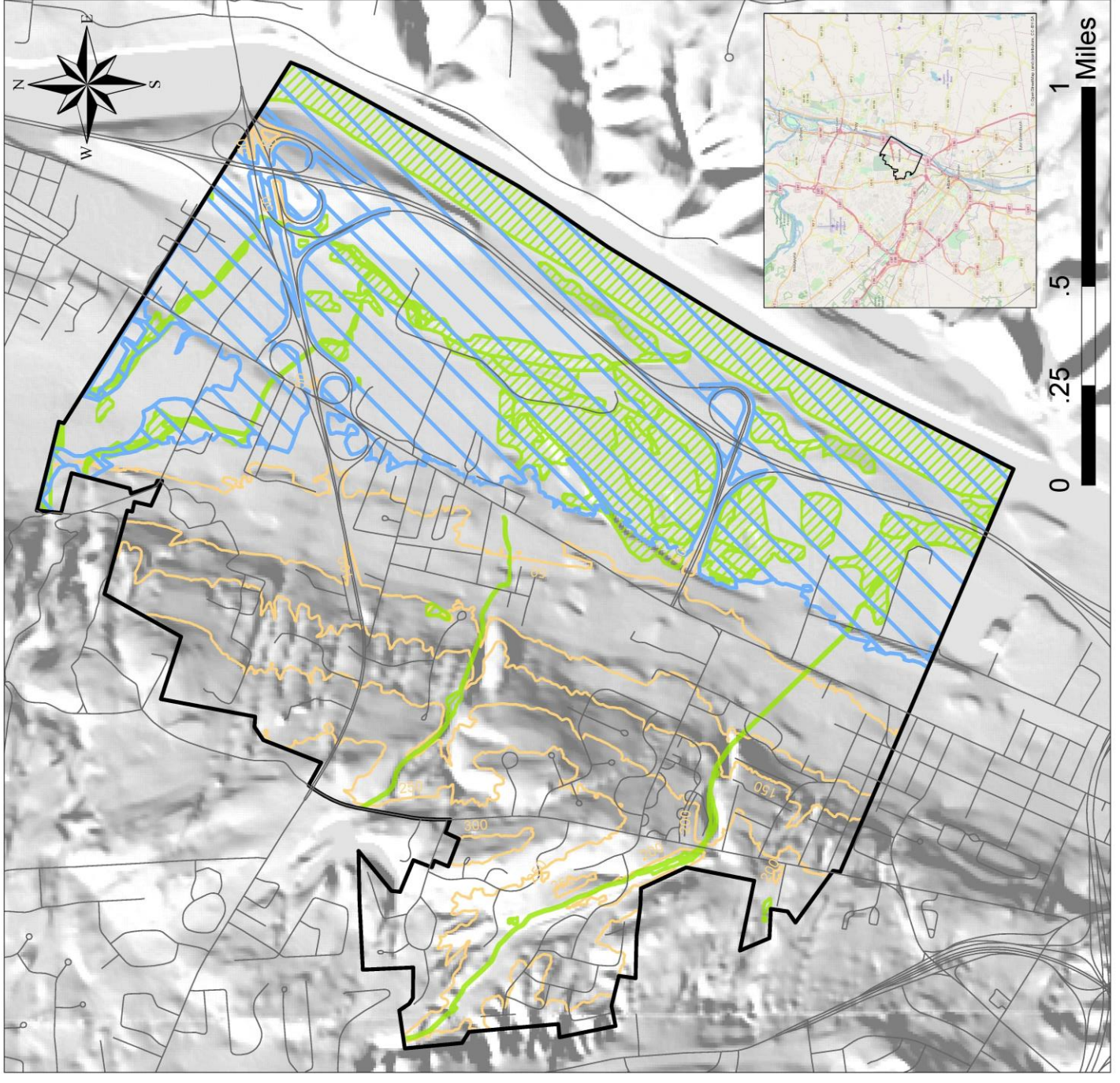
Coordinate System:
 WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
 WKID: 3857 Authority: EPSG

SOURCES

- Menands Civil Boundary:
 NYS GIS Program Office
- Flood Zone Area:
 Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Wetlands:
 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services
- 50-Foot Interval Contours:
 Albany County

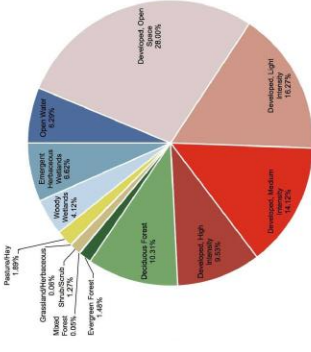


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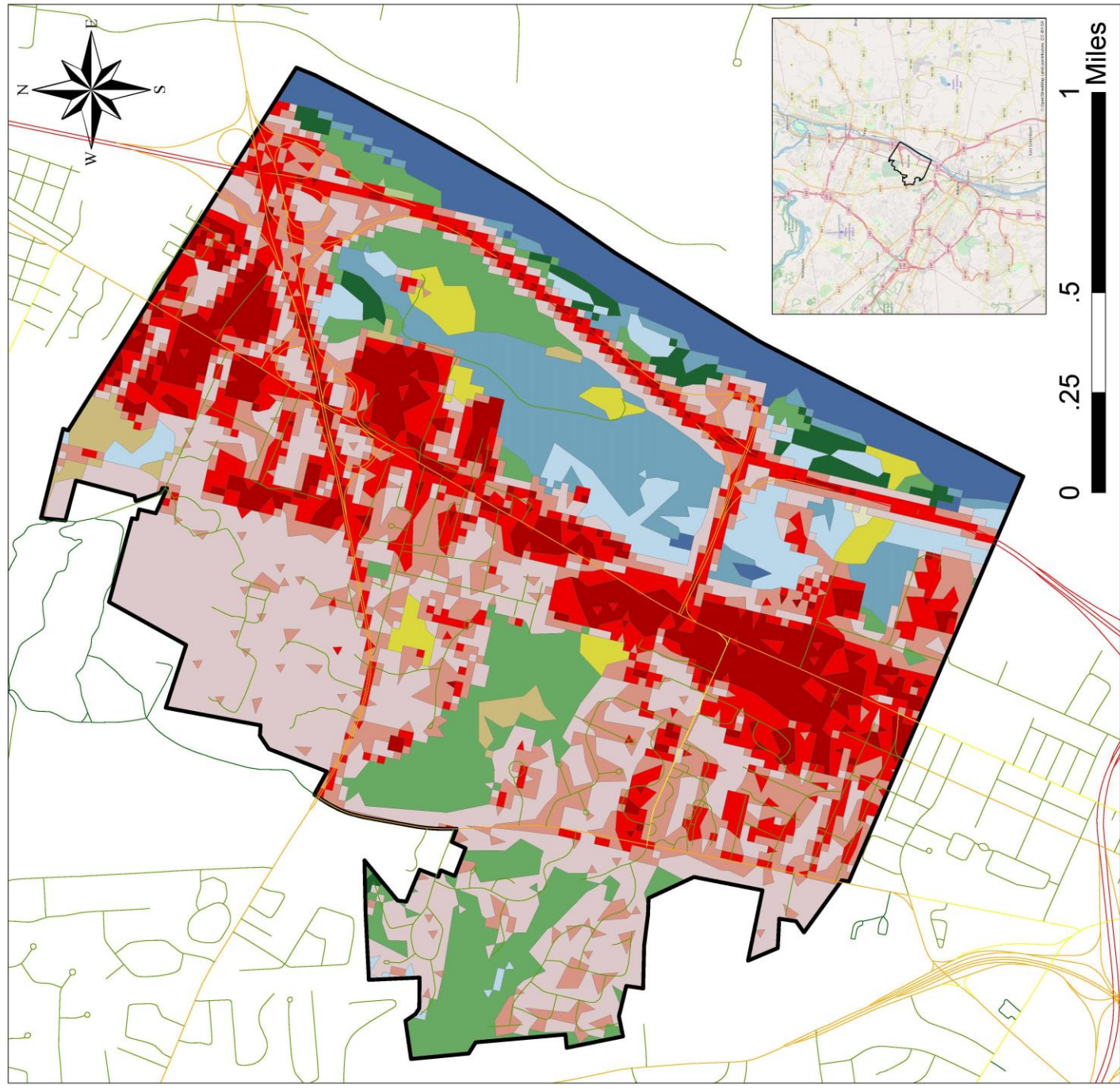
Village of Menands Land Cover Classifications

Land Cover	Acree
Open Water	133.5
Developed, Open Space	594.5
Developed, Light Intensity	345.6
Developed, Medium Intensity	299.8
Developed, High Intensity	202.4
Deciduous Forest	218.8
Evergreen Forest	31.4
Mixed Forest	1.0
Shrub/Scrub	27.0
Grassland/Herbaceous	1.3
Pasture/Hay	40.1
Woody Wetlands	87.5
Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	140.6



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Source: National Land Cover Dataset (2011)

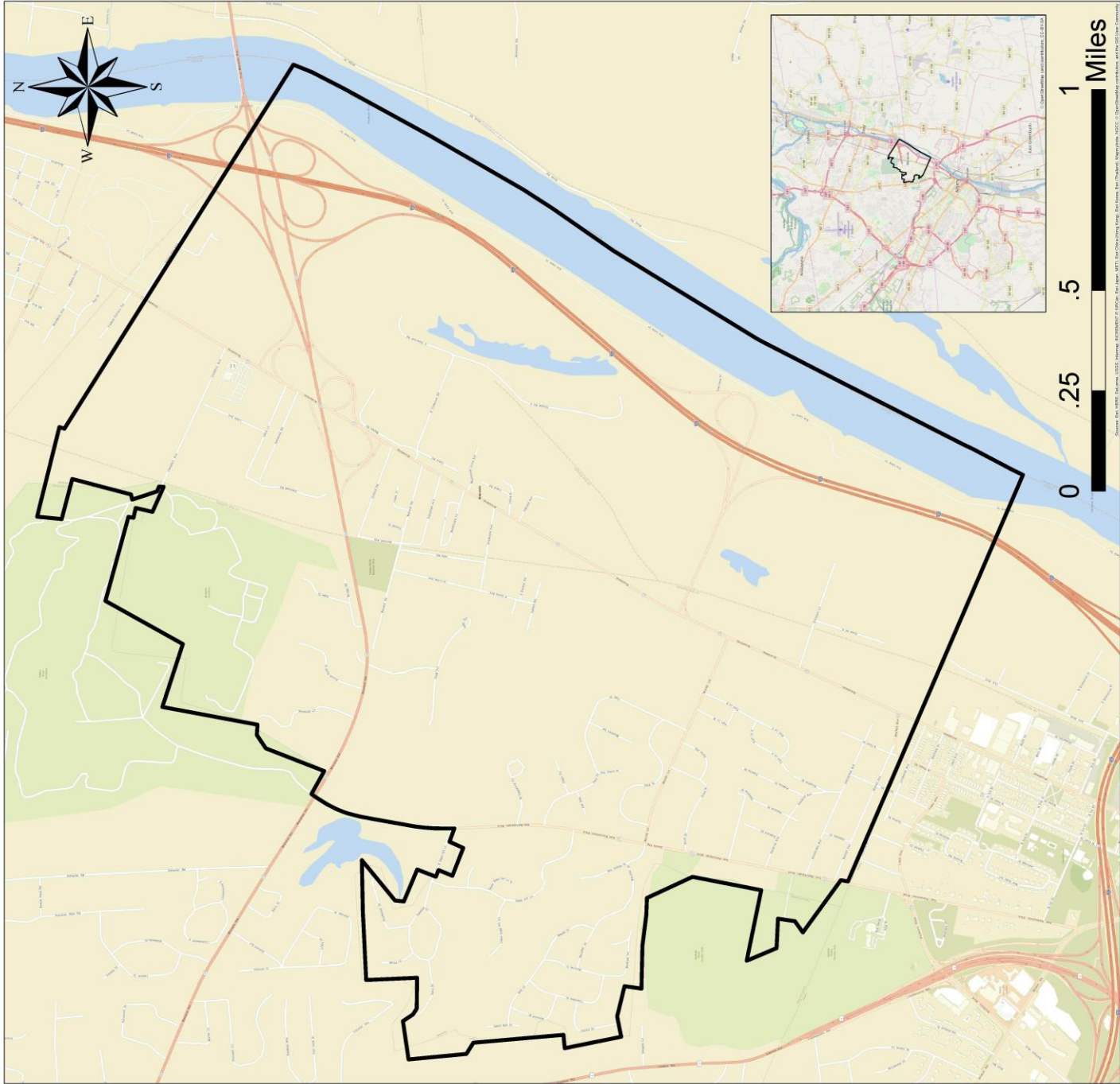


Village of Menands Road Network

 Menands Civil Boundary




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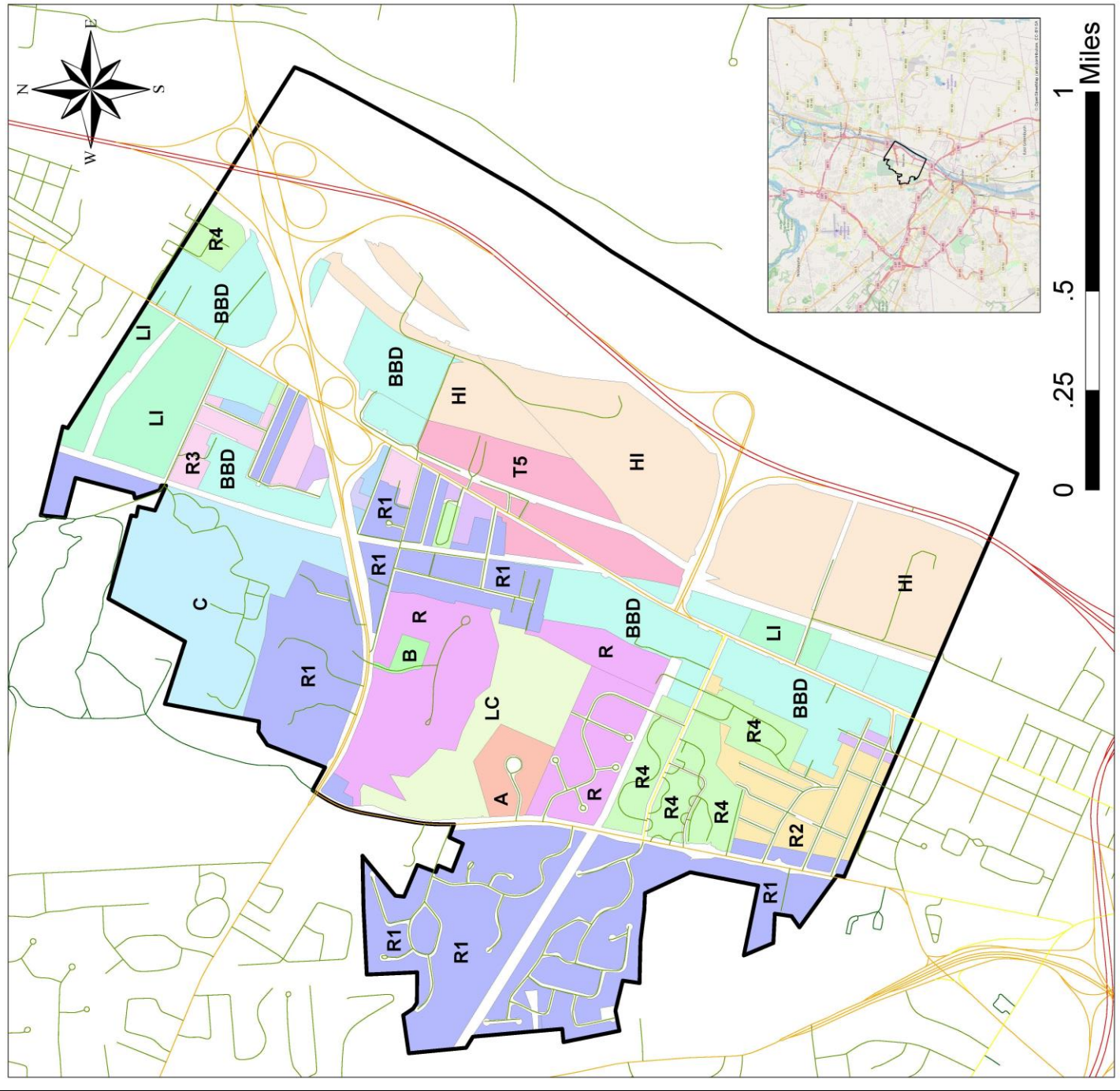
Village of Menands Zoning Classifications

Zone ID	Zone Name
A	One Family Residential
B	Business
BBD	Broadway Business District
C	Cemetery
HI	Heavy Industrial
LC	Land Conservation
LI	Light Industrial
R	One Family Residential
R1	One-Family Residential
R2	One-Family and Twin Villa Residential
R2A	Townhouse Residential
R3	Two-Family Residential
R3A	Four-Family Residential
R4	Multifamily Residential
T4	Infill Neighborhood District
T5	Infill Mixed Use District



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Source: Etan Planning, Design & Landscape Architecture PLLC



Land Cover Map Legend [SOURCE: National Landcover Dataset (2011)]

Class \ Value	Classification Description
Water	
11	Open Water - areas of open water, generally with less than 25% cover of vegetation or soil.
12	Perennial Ice/Snow - areas characterized by a perennial cover of ice and/or snow, generally greater than 25% of total cover.
Developed	
21	Developed, Open Space - areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20% of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes.
22	Developed, Low Intensity - areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 20% to 49% percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.
23	Developed, Medium Intensity -areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 50% to 79% of the total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.
24	Developed High Intensity -highly developed areas where people reside or work in high numbers. Examples include apartment complexes, row houses and commercial/industrial. Impervious surfaces account for 80% to 100% of the total cover.
Barren	
31	Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay) - areas of bedrock, desert pavement, scarps, talus, slides, volcanic material, glacial debris, sand dunes, strip mines, gravel pits and other accumulations of earthen material. Generally, vegetation accounts for less than 15% of total cover.
Forest	
41	Deciduous Forest - areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species shed foliage simultaneously in response to seasonal change.
42	Evergreen Forest - areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.
43	Mixed Forest - areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. Neither deciduous nor evergreen species are greater than 75% of total tree cover.
Shrubland	
51	Dwarf Scrub - Alaska only areas dominated by shrubs less than 20 centimeters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This type is often co-associated with grasses, sedges, herbs, and non-vascular vegetation.

52	Shrub/Scrub - areas dominated by shrubs; less than 5 meters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class includes true shrubs, young trees in an early successional stage or trees stunted from environmental conditions.
Herbaceous	
71	Grassland/Herbaceous - areas dominated by graminoid or herbaceous vegetation, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation. These areas are not subject to intensive management such as tilling, but can be utilized for grazing.
72	Sedge/Herbaceous - Alaska only areas dominated by sedges and forbs, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation. This type can occur with significant other grasses or other grass like plants, and includes sedge tundra, and sedge tussock tundra.
73	Lichens - Alaska only areas dominated by fruticose or foliose lichens generally greater than 80% of total vegetation.
74	Moss - Alaska only areas dominated by mosses, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation.
Planted/Cultivated	
81	Pasture/Hay -areas of grasses, legumes, or grass-legume mixtures planted for livestock grazing or the production of seed or hay crops, typically on a perennial cycle. Pasture/hay vegetation accounts for greater than 20% of total vegetation.
82	Cultivated Crops -areas used for the production of annual crops, such as corn, soybeans, vegetables, tobacco, and cotton, and also perennial woody crops such as orchards and vineyards. Crop vegetation accounts for greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class also includes all land being actively tilled.
Wetlands	
90	Woody Wetlands - areas where forest or shrubland vegetation accounts for greater than 20% of vegetative cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.
95	Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands - Areas where perennial herbaceous vegetation accounts for greater than 80% of vegetative cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.