

# Town of Tusten



## Comprehensive Plan May 2021

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*Funded in part by a grant from the Upper Delaware Council, Inc.*

### Cover photos:

Fire Department, courtesy Narrowsburg FD Facebook  
Main Street Festival, courtesy Greg Triggs, River Reporter  
Logging Days, courtesy of Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce

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Note from the Comprehensive Plan Committee:

The majority of the process to develop this plan took place during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) fully recognized the challenges associated with developing policies and strategies for the Town's future while risks to public health overshadowed most routines in our lives. In the immediate context, the pandemic necessitated that most meetings (13 of 17) be conducted by means of teleconferencing (Zoom). Although information to access these meetings was posted on the Town's website, it is likely that the absence of the opportunity to attend in-person meetings influenced the lack of public attendance during the process. In April 2021, the CPC and the Town Board each held a public hearing in accordance with Town Law §272-a.

Thinking in the longer-term context, the plan was developed while considering the unfolding effects of the pandemic on the Town. The influx of new residents and the transition of second homeowners to full-time residents were primary influences on some policy making. At the same time, the expectation that the pandemic would eventually be brought under control was factored into the process. There was recognition that although recommendations were developed during the pandemic, these actions could be implemented once the many curtailed aspects of daily life returned to a reasonable and safe degree.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The Town of Tusten is a rural town in western Sullivan County bordering the Delaware River. The hamlet of Narrowsburg is the Town's largest population center, where a bridge connects Tusten with the Pennsylvania. Other hamlets and settlement areas include Beaver Brook, Lava, Luxton Lake, Tusten, and Weiden Lake. The Town's history has been strongly influenced by the presence of the Delaware River and the Erie Railroad, which contributed to the timber harvesting and bluestone quarrying industries. The railroad also spurred tourism in the mid-1800s, as urban dwellers from New York and Philadelphia sought the soothing effects of life in the countryside and along the river. The railroad continued passenger service into the 1900s and remains only as a freight corridor today.

Today, the greater river corridor is part of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, a designated area stretching 73 miles from Hancock to near Port Jervis. The designated corridor is managed by the National Park Service, the Upper Delaware Council, and the municipalities along the river in New York and Pennsylvania. Tourism and recreation, as well as culture and the arts, remain driving forces in the Town's and the region's economy.

### **1.1 Comprehensive Planning**

New York State Town Law §272-a affords statutory authority for towns to adopt a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is an official policy document that identifies the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, and strategies for the growth, development, conservation, land use, and other topics of interest for the future of the community. It serves as a blueprint or a roadmap for the community as it sets policies, such as those related to zoning and building, or addresses patterns of change that will affect long-term interests of the Town. A comprehensive plan recommends ways to achieve the community's desires and outlines the means to reach them.

The statute, which encourages but does not require the development of a comprehensive plan, includes guidance for drafting a plan and a list of topics to consider. An effective plan should involve the public and stakeholders in the community and be an easy-to-use, long-range document. The adoption of a comprehensive plan is the responsibility of the Town Board.

### **1.2 Process**

In January 2020, the Tusten Town Board appointed the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC), including two members from the Town Board and one from the Planning Board. The Town engaged the services of Genius Loci Planning to assist in the development of the plan. The CPC's first few meetings included an overview of comprehensive planning in NYS and the development of a community survey, similar to the survey from the Town's Comprehensive Plan of 2007. The survey and its accompanying press release encouraged participation and informed the public of the regular CPC meetings and the comprehensive plan page on the Town's website. The complete survey results are found in the Community Survey Report in Appendix 1. Select results are integrated within the body of the plan. The technical assistance of Sullivan County Planning with the survey, and the cartographical expertise of the county's Real Property Tax Services office were indispensable to the completion of this comprehensive plan.

The next series of CPC meetings, extending into 2021, took place via teleconference due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Meeting notices were posted on the Town’s website, along with information for joining the meeting on the internet. The CPC reviewed all the recommendations from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, identifying the relevance of each and restoring, amending, or eliminating the recommendations. Members of the CPC then undertook exercises to develop a vision statement. Next, the group developed the topical sections of the plan, including draft recommendations. Each topical section of the plan includes summary descriptions of existing conditions and resources; an overall goal or goals; and a set of recommendations to advance the goals within the overall framework of the community’s vision.

### **1.3 Vision**

Development of this plan’s vision statement involved an exercise undertaken by CPC members. Members were asked to list the Town’s assets and challenges and to describe the characteristics of the “perfect” town 15 years in the future. The Committee also considered the previous comprehensive plan’s vision statement and, in examining both plans’ survey results, noted consistencies which informed the process. The core of the resulting vision is a concise statement similar to the previous plan’s; however, this statement is incorporated within the larger context that includes: a representative list of the strengths and challenges; a summary of these strengths and challenges; and a description of the “ideal” community 15 years in the future.

Primary strengths and assets include:

- Small-town atmosphere
- Recreational opportunities
- Scenic beauty/ natural setting
- Importance of the Delaware River in history, economy, and aesthetic values
- Cultural resource offerings
- Prominent and readily accessible sense of history
- Strong sense of community and civic pride

Identified challenges (listed as areas for improvement) include:

- More full-time employment opportunities
- Upgraded infrastructure – water, sewer, and affordable high-speed internet
- Improved public transportation
- Improved health services
- More activities for youth and seniors
- Affordable housing

The people of the Town of Tusten appreciate its small-town atmosphere, abundant natural scenery, sense of history, and strong presence of culture and the arts. The Town enjoys an advantageous geographical position – within a few hours’ drive to New York or Philadelphia yet nestled in a rural and preserved setting along the shores of the Delaware River. These attributes help drive a tourism-influenced economy and create a mix of full-time and seasonal residents. The Town has retained its historical settlement pattern. A series of small, local businesses, civic institutions, and services are centered in the hamlet of Narrowsburg, while outlying areas remain undisturbed, characterized by abundant forest cover being interspersed with agricultural areas and smaller hamlets.



### **Vision Statement**

**The community envisions balanced growth that reinforces its assets and protects its character while accommodating activity to support and sustain its quality of life and sense of place.**

*The future of Tusten will include an enhanced and more widely distributed system of high-speed internet. This will enable small businesses to develop and operate more efficiently, while also increasing the competitive advantage to attract new employers. High-speed internet will also help meet the interest and demand the Town is experiencing, as the urban population seeks migration alternatives in part due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Water and sewer upgrades will ensure quality service to existing populations and enable expansions to be considered. The future will see an increase in public transportation, affordable housing, and job opportunities.*

*In protecting both its environmental and historical heritage, there will be enhanced awareness and appreciation by residents and visitors of the Town's place-defining resources. Support and action for conserving open space, increasing recreational opportunities, and for preserving and interpreting historical resources will be more widespread.*

*Through increased partnerships among Town, County, State, and Federal Government, volunteer groups, businesses, community organizations, and others, the Town will continue to build upon its assets to enhance its attractiveness as a quality place for families to live, work, and play. There will be more resources available for senior and youth groups; an increase in volunteers for the fire department and emergency services; and even greater popularity of and attendance at local events.*

*The Town's land use regulations will continue to accommodate balanced growth while and conserve Tusten's assets. And the Town will examine the comprehensive plan every five years and update, as needed.*

#### **1.4 River Management Plan Conformance**

In 1978, the US Congress designated the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River as a unit of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and a unit of the National Park System. In the following years, the boundaries of the corridor were established, the Final River Management Plan (RMP) was created, and the Upper Delaware Council (UDC) was established to coordinate implementation of the RMP. Within the plan, the Land and Water Use Guidelines establish a framework for ensuring that actions within the corridor are consistent with the values identified by Congress. These "outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that

"The Upper Delaware and its riverside communities have managed to retain those qualities and values of earlier times which elsewhere have passed into memory, perishing in the onslaught of industrialization, modernization, urban sprawl, and other similar forces of contemporary life." -- Foundation Document, Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River (NPS, 2014)

they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.” (US Wild and Scenic Rivers Act)

“A primary responsibility of UDC is to review development activities and land use regulations of member towns and townships in order for the NPS to determine “substantial conformance” with respect to the Schedule of Compatible, Conditional, and Incompatible Land Uses set out in the Guidelines, the substance of the Final River Management Plan, and the substance of each of the principles and objectives set out in the Guidelines and the Plan, so as to carry out the intent of the Upper Delaware legislation.” (i.) UDC is also responsible for reviewing comprehensive plans. Early in the process of developing this comprehensive plan, the Community and Land Use Planner from NPS explained the substantial conformance review process of a comprehensive plan to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan Committee. (The UDC Resource Specialist position was vacant at the time.)

The review process is also explained in the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Design Review Workbook. The Workbook recognizes that many of the review criteria of the Land and Water Use Guidelines are specific (and more applicable to development projects); for comprehensive plans it encourages both the application of the *principles* that organize the objectives and the inclusion of supporting information. These principles are listed below, and the remainder of this section includes supporting information to facilitate UDC’s review of this comprehensive plan.

- Maintain the high water quality found in the Upper Delaware River
- Provide for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors while also providing for the protection and preservation of natural resources
- Provide for recreational and other public uses while protecting the Upper Delaware as a natural resource
- Provide for the continuation of agricultural and forestry uses
- Conserve river area resources
- Maintain existing patterns of land use and ownership

As a partner in the management of the Upper Delaware River Corridor, the Town of Tusten shares interest and responsibility in preserving and promoting the recognized place-defining characteristics. While the “outstandingly remarkable values” and the boundary of the river corridor are specifically defined, they are shared within the larger, regional sense of place by the municipal members of the corridor partnership. Planning at the municipal level, therefore, plays an important role in reinforcing the principles of the River Management Plan as well as the similar expressions of value at the broader town wide and regional levels. The attributes of the core and greater river corridors bear great similarity and are primary drivers of the planning process. They are intrinsically linked with quality of life and are integral in propelling the economic health of the region.

The surveys conducted for this and the Town’s previous comprehensive plan illustrate the strong appreciation for living in the Delaware River corridor, with its clean air and water, open space and scenery, and small-town atmosphere. Following the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, Tusten’s Natural Resources & Open Space Inventory (2011) identified natural and cultural resources and

provided a basis for further planning actions to strengthen these assets and their relationships to land use change. This comprehensive plan continues these efforts. Likewise, the Narrowsburg Master Plan (2013) focuses on planning principles and actions that are consistent with the RMP. These include enhancing pedestrian activity in the hamlet and along to the river, reinforcing compact historic development, and promoting environmental, artistic, cultural, and touristic values. Additionally, with the assistance of County Planning, the Town received a grant from New York State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to support vision plans and demonstration projects around increased access to the river, historic preservation, and downtown revitalization. On a larger scale, the Corridor Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway reinforces consistencies with the RMP, charting environmentally compatible economic activity.

Many of the policies and recommendations of this comprehensive plan support consistency with the principles of the Land and Water Use Guidelines as well as the foundational processes that resulted in the creation of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. This plan promotes the Town's historical, recreational, natural, and cultural assets and sets forth actions for enhancing these. Examples include improvements to the Ten Mile River Access Point (in furtherance of a baseline study); the undertaking of an open space plan; considering ways to sustain the integrity of large, contiguous tracts that support biodiversity and water quality; the reactivation of the Town Conservation Advisory Council; the adoption of a series of draft land use regulations to help improve water quality; working with other towns on regional tourism; enhancement of heritage tourism and events; and pursuing opportunities to work with NPS to enhance the interpretation of the corridor. In 2019, NPS established a series of related goals in the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Long Range Interpretive Plan. These include: Continue Collaboration with Existing and Establish New Partnerships; Strengthen Community Engagement; Integrate Innovative Interpretive and Social Media; Strengthen Interpretation and Education Programs; Increase Visibility of NPS Identity and Improve Wayfinding; and Expand Staff and Volunteer Capacity.

### **1.5 Connections with Related Plans**

A town comprehensive plan is developed within a web of planning activities. Recommendations in a local comprehensive plan are often related to and complementary of recommendations found in county, regional, and state plans, as well as in other local plans. This comprehensive plan references local plans (Narrowsburg Master Plan, Tusten Natural Resources & Open Space Inventory, Multigenerational Park Plan), county plans (Comprehensive, Transportation, Open Space, Agricultural & Farmland Protection, Hazard Mitigation) and cites important connections with policies and actions. These references are by no means exhaustive.

Consistencies between plans are important because they can help strengthen funding applications and develop synergies for action. The Town should also be aware of planning efforts in adjacent municipalities. Physical resources or the need for services, for example, are often shared by two or more municipalities, transcending municipal boundaries and setting up possibilities for intermunicipal cooperation. This plan includes references to potential partnerships not only between local governments but with organizations that share like needs or visions. Cooperation is a key principle in plan implementation, and as the Town moves forward realizing this plan, it will be considering additional opportunities to accomplish objectives jointly.

## **Chapter 2 - Background**

### **2.1 Brief History of The Town of Tusten**

[The following is an excerpt of Tusten's history as written by Town Historian Art Hawker. The full text can be found in Appendix 3.]

The Town of Tusten's history and commerce has been greatly shaped by the Delaware River and the Erie Railroad.

Before the first European settlement, the Delaware River Valley was inhabited by the Lenni Lenape Indians, an Indian nation formed of many tribes, clans, and families. Earliest white explorers to the river valley were said to be Dutch traders, who had come down river via the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, and Swedes, who had reportedly sailed upriver in 1638. Ten Mile River, or Tusten, as it is now known, was settled in 1757.

As the population increased, so did river commerce and bluestone quarrying. Naturally, harvesting and transporting lumber became an industry, which gave rise to hotels that provided places for food and rest. Rope and later cable ferries plied the river at choice locations.

In 1835, due to concessions made in a re-organization of the Erie Railroad's Delaware Division, the railway was changed to enter Pennsylvania just north of Sparrowbush and return to New York at Tusten, which resulted in the hamlet of Narrowsburg being on the line. From this point, the Erie Railroad contributed greatly to the Town's development.

In 1911, another transportation route was developed when New York Governor John Dix signed a bill authorizing construction of the Delaware River Highway, Route 3A, which was eventually completed and dedicated in 1939 as Route 97.

A decade of building began in Tusten in 1920, which included the construction of St. Francis Xavier Church, the Narrowsburg School and Community Hall. The New York City Boy Scout Council purchased large tracts of Tusten land in 1927, establishing their extensive network of summer camps.

The Depression Era in Tusten saw the vicinity being promoted as an economical and accessible vacation destination to Metropolitan New York, with small hotels and burgeoning boarding houses catering to summertime visitors. During the 1940s, Tusten began to be well represented at the New York City Sportsmen's Show and advertised as not only a summer getaway location, but a year-round vacation spot and retirement community.

The Town of Tusten Centennial in 1953 was reportedly the largest gathering in the Town's history to date. A week-long event was planned from July 26th to August 1st and events were scheduled daily. The capstone of the week's events was the grand parade held on Saturday, at which a crowd was estimated by the New York State Police to be 20,000 people and 9,000 vehicles jammed into Narrowsburg and created an eight-mile traffic jam on Route 97.

In 1966, the last train with passenger service passed through Narrowsburg on the Erie-Lackawana Line.

Tusten celebrated the nation's bicentennial by forming a 26-member commission in March 1975. Among the many events held throughout that year were a Bicentennial Ball; an “instant museum;” and a re-enactment of the Town’s rafting history by several men who constructed a raft and floated down the Delaware River with Philadelphia as their goal. The 1970s also saw the establishment of The River Reporter and the formation of the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance (DVAA).

In 1980, the National Park Service came to the Town as a result of the 1978 Congressional Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the designation of the Upper Delaware as a National Scenic and Recreational River. In that same year, construction began on a municipal sewer system for Narrowsburg, which was finished the following year. In 1983, the DVAA put the Arlington Hotel on the federal and state lists of historic places. This began a movement to restore Main Street in Narrowsburg, and with the leadership of DVAA, the tone was set for today’s strong artistic community.

In the 1990s, the Tusten Theatre (former Park Theater) was renovated to accommodate live music and theatre and the Tusten-Cochecton Library was built adjacent to it.

With an eye to the future and a desire to preserve the past, a local history group of dedicated volunteers was formed, which continues to record local history so that residents might draw upon the examples of Town ancestors to improve the future.

## 2.2 Summary of Town Statistics

This section provides demographical data for the Town and complements other information gathered for the plan, including maps, the results of the survey of residents, and materials from the Town’s 2007 comprehensive plan. Collectively, these sources help inform the Comprehensive Plan Committee’s process of formulating goals and objectives for the community’s future.

Available statistics are issued as part of a decennial census or as part of the American Community Survey (ACS). The latter source is more comprehensive in categories, is conducted on an annual basis, and provides five-year estimates. However, ACS data is accompanied by margins of error. Given these factors, US Census data is used whenever possible, and ACS data is used to illustrate additional statistics not provided in the censuses.

### 2.2.1 Population

The 2010 Census recorded 1515 persons as the Town of Tusten’s total population. Census estimates for 2018 place the total Town population at 1335, marking a 2.6 percent decrease. Since the 1920 decennial census, the Town lost population once, between the 1980 and 1990 censuses (a 10.7 decrease).

	Town of Tusten	Percent Change	Sullivan County	Percent Change
1990	1,271	-10.7	69,277	6.3
2000	1,415	11.3	73,966	6.8
2010	1,515	7.1	77,547	4.8

2.1. Population Change 1990 - 2010, Town of Tusten and Sullivan County (US Census)

Population change comparisons with Tusten’s three adjacent towns illustrate fluctuation (Figure 2.2). For population density, Tusten’s 31 people per square mile places it below the densities of Sullivan County (80) and adjacent towns (Bethel, 50; Highland, 52; Cochecton, 37). Factoring into Tusten’s lower population density is the large amount of undeveloped land owned by the Greater New York Councils of the Boy Scouts of America, comprising more than one-third of the Town’s area.

	Tusten	Bethel	Cochecton	Highland
<b>1990</b>	1,271	3,693	1,318	2,147
<b>% Change</b>	- 10.7	10.7	-0.9	14.3
<b>2000</b>	1,415	4,362	1,327	2,407
<b>% Change</b>	11.3	18.1	0.7	12.1
<b>2010</b>	1,515	4,255	1,372	2,530
<b>% Change</b>	7.1	-2.5	3.4	5.1

2.2. Population and Percentage Change, Town of Tusten and Adjacent Towns (US Census)

In terms of age distribution (Figure 2.4), the Town continues to trend toward an older population with numbers in the workforce age brackets declining. In 2000, the median age of the total Town population was 44.2; in 2010, 48.2; and the 2018 estimates place it at 54.2. The percentage of those in the 18-44 age group saw a decline from 27.1 in 2000 to 23.1 in 2010. This statistic can be partially attributed to the outmigration of youth at the high school graduate age, a pattern exhibited in several counties in upstate New York. Yet, lack of in-migration also factors into this trend (see 3.4.6). Sullivan County’s median age was recorded at 41.7 in the 2010 census. Over ninety percent (90.4%) of the Town is estimated as being of white race, while 2.7 percent is estimated as black or African-American.



2.3. Narrowsburg viewed from the Narrowsburg-Darbytown Bridge (Wikipedia)

The Town’s hamlet of Narrowsburg became a CDP (Census Designated Place) in the 2000 Census, and demographics specifically for the hamlet were gathered for the defined area. As of the 2010 Census there were 431 people (28% of the total Town population), with 190 households, and 119 families residing in the CDP. Narrowsburg’s 2010 population density was 300.7 persons per square mile.

### 2.2.2 Housing

Figure 2.5 shows increases in Tusten’s housing units and the number of people in these units between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses. Ownership and renter percentages remained nearly consistent during the period, as did average household size. Similar trends were exhibited in Narrowsburg, except the number of renters dropped (Figure 2.6).

In the 2000 Census for the Town, the median dollar value for specified owner-occupied housing units was \$92,600. The 2010 five-year ACS estimates for the Town record the median value at \$189,400, while the estimate for the county in 2014-2018 period is \$169,500.

In the 2000 Census, 60 percent of the owners in the Town carried a mortgage with an average monthly mortgage payment of \$1,032; and for renter-occupied units, the average monthly rent was recorded as \$554. In the 2010 ACS 5-yr estimates under Selected Monthly Owner Costs, the median cost for housing units with a mortgage was \$1148; for housing units without a mortgage, \$602; and for occupied housing units paying rent, the median gross cost was \$1020.

In the 2000 Census for the Narrowsburg CDP the median dollar value of specified owner-occupied housing units was \$86,600. Estimates for 2010-2014, place the median price of a house in Narrowsburg at \$163,900 -- lower than the state (\$283,700) and the national (\$175,700) averages.

In the 2000 Census 53.7% of owner-occupied units in the Narrowsburg CDP carried a mortgage with monthly median owner costs of \$975. This percentage increased to 55% according to 2010-14 estimates, with monthly median owner costs of \$1239. Although this figure was less than New York State’s (\$2042) and the United States (\$1522), the \$1239 monthly cost represented a greater percentage of total income (27.7%) than New York State’s (25.3%) and the United States (23.7%). For renter occupied units, the median monthly rental costs recorded in the 2000 Census was \$660. The median monthly rental cost recorded for the Narrowsburg CDP under the 2010-14 estimates was \$1006.

<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,515</b>			
<b>Male:</b>	792	<b>Female:</b>	723	1515
<b>Under 5 years</b>	25	<b>Under 5 years</b>	31	56
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	37	<b>5 to 9 years</b>	35	72
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	45	<b>10 to 14 years</b>	46	91
<b>15 to 17 years</b>	36	<b>15 to 17 years</b>	26	62
<b>18 and 19 years</b>	20	<b>18 and 19 years</b>	5	25
<b>20 years</b>	6	<b>20 years</b>	8	14
<b>21 years</b>	8	<b>21 years</b>	5	13
<b>22 to 24 years</b>	21	<b>22 to 24 years</b>	21	42
<b>25 to 29 years</b>	25	<b>25 to 29 years</b>	23	48
<b>30 to 34 years</b>	24	<b>30 to 34 years</b>	20	44
<b>35 to 39 years</b>	41	<b>35 to 39 years</b>	51	92
<b>40 to 44 years</b>	52	<b>40 to 44 years</b>	47	99
<b>45 to 49 years</b>	80	<b>45 to 49 years</b>	76	156
<b>50 to 54 years</b>	77	<b>50 to 54 years</b>	57	134
<b>55 to 59 years</b>	60	<b>55 to 59 years</b>	52	112
<b>60 and 61 years</b>	27	<b>60 and 61 years</b>	28	55
<b>62 to 64 years</b>	55	<b>62 to 64 years</b>	45	100
<b>65 and 66 years</b>	30	<b>65 and 66 years</b>	19	49
<b>67 to 69 years</b>	31	<b>67 to 69 years</b>	34	65
<b>70 to 74 years</b>	42	<b>70 to 74 years</b>	40	82
<b>75 to 79 years</b>	24	<b>75 to 79 years</b>	22	46
<b>80 to 84 years</b>	14	<b>80 to 84 years</b>	15	29
<b>85 years and over</b>	12	<b>85 years and over</b>	17	29

2.4. Town of Tusten Age Distribution, 2010 Census

	2000	2010
<b>Housing Units</b>	1,008	1138
<b>Total Population in Housing Units</b>	1339	1445
<b># Owner Occupied/ Percent</b>	1061 79.2%	1169 80.9%
<b># Renters/ Percent</b>	278 20.8%	276 19.1%

2.5. Town of Tusten Housing Units (US Census)

	2000	2010
<b>Housing Units</b>	254	266
<b>Total Population in Housing Units</b>	414	431
<b># Owner Occupied/ Percent</b>	143 56.3%	149 56.0%
<b># Renters/ Percent</b>	46 18.1%	41 15.4%

2.6. Narrowsburg Housing Units (US Census)

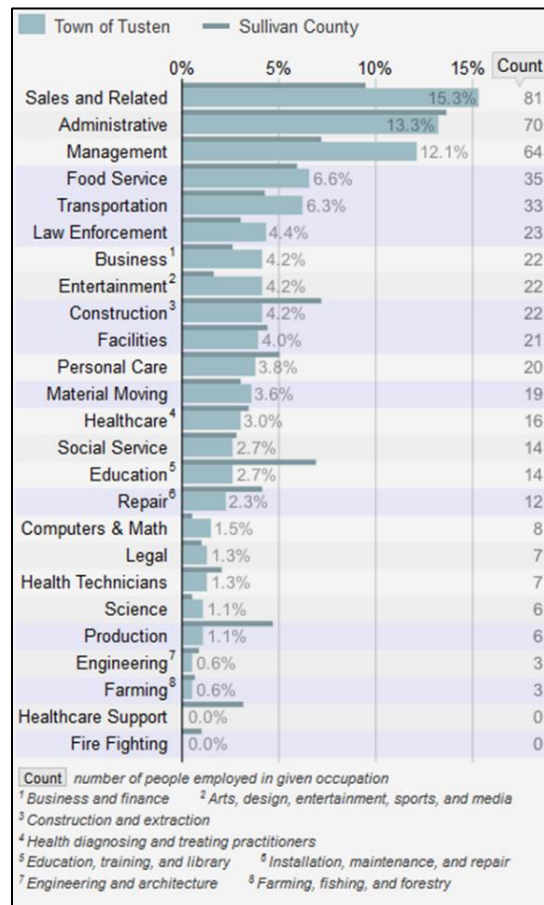
### 2.2.3 Employment

According to 2018 ACS 5-year estimates, 54.7% of the Town’s entire population is in the labor force (the labor force participation rate). The 2000 Census recorded this figure at 63.4%. For Narrowsburg, 56.7% are in the labor force according to 2010-14 estimates, this figure being slightly down from 58.3 in the 2000 Census. These 2010-14 estimates place the employment rate of the Town at 47.1%; Narrowsburg’s at 41.7%, and Sullivan County’s at 53.7%.

As of March 2020, Sullivan County’s unemployment rate was 5.0% according to New York State’s labor statistics. This was the first time the five-percent mark was reached since February of 2018. The county’s average unemployment rate for 2019 was 4.3%.

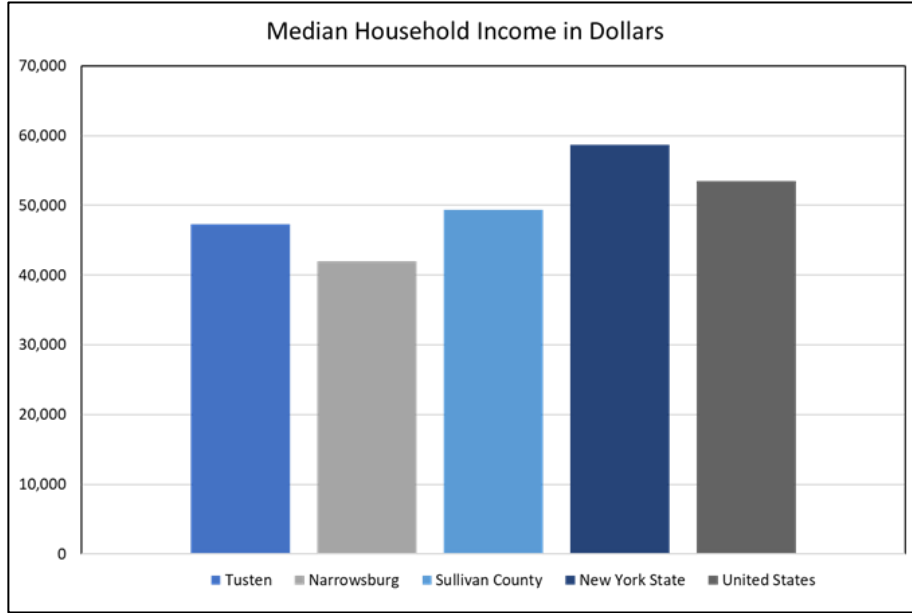
The distribution of the Tusten’s and Sullivan County’s employed individuals within the types of occupations is shown in Figure 2.7.

Median household income estimates and comparisons are shown in Figure 2.8. Among the many interrelated factors affecting income are the geographic range and type of employment opportunities, means of transportation to work, and educational attainment. Figures 2.9-11 assist in illustrating these relationships, which in turn can be compared with survey results and help inform objectives in the plan related to economic development, workforce training, public transportation, and high-speed internet infrastructure. Accompanying the Means of Transportation to Work information are average commute times to work (in minutes): Tusten, 42.3; Narrowsburg, 24.3; and the US, 26.6 (ACS 2018 5-yr estimates).



2.7. Occupations, Town of Tusten and Sullivan County. Percentage of civilian employed population aged 16 and older. (statisticalatlas.com)

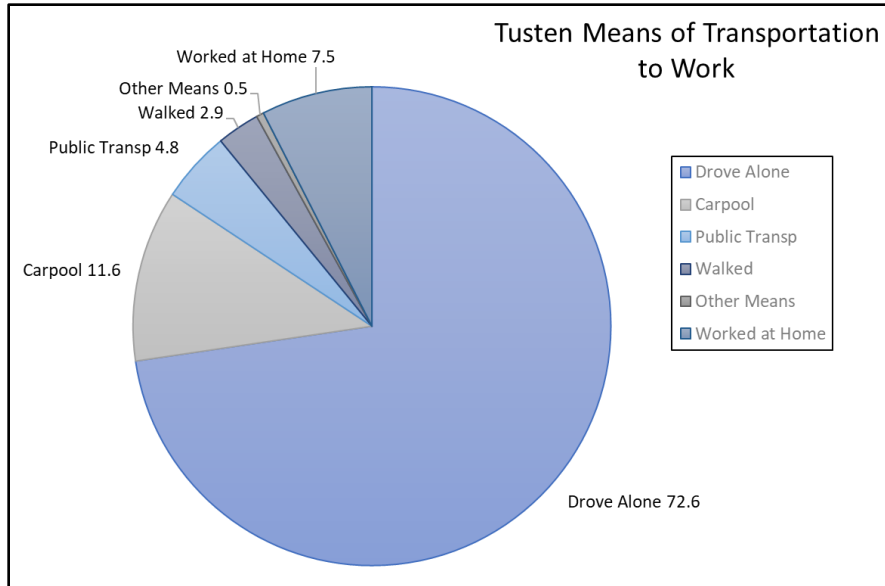




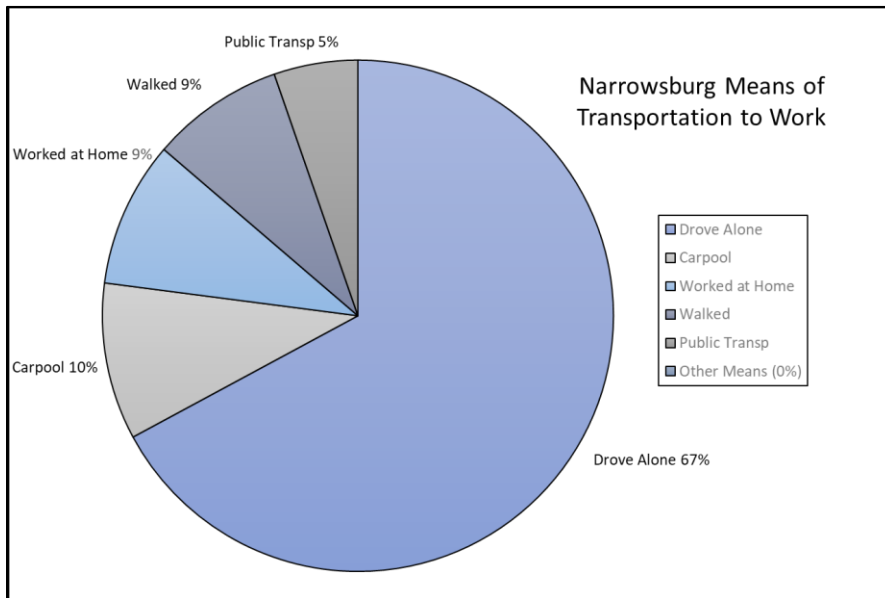
2.8. Median Household Income in Dollars, 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates

Educational Attainment	Tusten	N-burg	Sul Co	NYS	US
HS or equiv. degree	24.5%	18.7%	33.6%	25.9%	26.9%
Some college, no degree	22.5%	28.5%	18.5%	15.2%	20.3%
Associates degree	8.5%	4.9%	10.9%	8.7%	8.6%
Bachelors degree	21.2%	26.2%	13.1%	20.8%	20.0%
Grad . or prof. degree	11.6%	10.9%	10.1%	16.4%	12.6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>88.3%</b>	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>86.2%</b>	<b>87.0%</b>	<b>88.4%</b>

2.9. Educational Attainment, 2018 ACS 5-yr. Estimates



2.10. Tusten Means of Transportation to Work (ACS 2018 5-yr. estimates)



2.11. Narrowsburg Means of Transportation to Work (ACS 2018 5-yr estimates)

## Chapter 3 – Topical Sections

### 3.1 Historical, Cultural, and Recreational Resources

#### 3.1.1 Goals

- Continue to preserve, interpret, and promote Tusten’s historical resources.
- Encourage and support programs, events and partnerships that celebrate and promote the Town’s cultural heritage and the arts.
- Increase and diversify recreational opportunities for all ages.



3.1. *Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River (UDC)*

As described in the Brief History of the Town of Tusten, the Town’s history is strongly influenced by its location along the Delaware River. With approximately 14 miles of shoreline in the Town, the river also relates to the Town’s many cultural and recreational resources. Collectively, these historical, cultural, and recreational resources give expression to the town’s strong sense of place and are integral to the community’s economic vitality. Both the town wide survey and the CPC’s visioning exercise reinforce the critical importance of these resources. This section describes these resources and sets forth recommendations for sustaining a healthy future for the town.

#### 3.1.2 The Regional Context

The Town’s historical, cultural, and recreational sites are part of a larger system of visitor attractions that plays an overarching role in the tourism economy and influences the area’s appeal to existing residents and prospective homeowners.

In 1978 the US Congress passed the Upper Delaware Act establishing the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River (UDSRR) as a unit of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The UDSRR is a 73-mile designated corridor, stretching from Hancock to Sparrowbush, NY (near Port Jervis) and including parts of five counties in New York and Pennsylvania. Through cooperative programs between the National Park Service, Upper Delaware Council, and local governments, “the UDSRR protects, conserves, and enhances the free-flowing character, exceptionally high water quality, and the scenic, recreational, ecological, cultural, and geological values of the Upper Delaware River valley through collaborative partnerships and cooperation

with state and local government entities.” (nps.gov) National Park Management Programs include Cultural Resources and Interpretation & Education.

In 2016, National Geographic joined with the region’s partners to introduce the “Scenic, Wild Delaware River” as a national geotourism initiative. This promotional project builds upon the UDSRR by incorporating it within a much larger region that includes the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic River. A Scenic, Wild Delaware River “MapGuide” and interactive travel website was launched and features landmarks, natural resources, attractions, activities, events, lodging and dining venues nominated for inclusion by local residents, businesses, organizations, public and private land managers, educators, and community establishments.

The Town of Tusten also occupies a central position in the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, which runs 53-miles along Route 97 from Port Jervis to Hancock. The byway was designated in 2002 by New York State. Under the state’s program, scenic byways are transportation corridors that are of particular statewide interest. They are representative of a region’s scenic, recreational, cultural, natural, historic or archaeological significance. In meeting these criteria, the UDSB’s Enhancement Concept Plan describes the corridor’s significance in offering “a myriad of alluring features – historic, natural, scenic, recreational, and cultural – to tempt the visitor to explore and experience the Upper Delaware River Valley.” A scenic byway is an economic development through tourism tool, and byways encourage intermunicipal cooperation in preserving and promoting the corridor’s intrinsic qualities. The UDSB is managed by an organization consisting of municipal representatives. Since inception, the byway has advanced a host of initiatives in the areas of interpretation, education, physical enhancements, and signage. The byway is also part of a designated state bicycle route.

### **3.1.3 Historical**

The **Tusten Historical Society** is housed downstairs in the Tusten-Cochecton Branch of the Western Sullivan Public Library, next to the Town Hall in Narrowsburg. The Society publishes a quarterly newsletter, Tusten Roots, and it is open to the public on a regular basis. Arthur Hawker, Town Historian, is a member of the CPC and author of the Brief History of The Town of Tusten in this plan. The Society received their Absolute Charter from the Board of Regents of the NYS University on September 13, 2011.

**Fort Delaware**, located in Narrowsburg along the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway is an authentic depiction of the life of the Delaware Company Pioneers who settled in the Upper Delaware Valley in 1754. The facility is a museum of colonial history that includes tours and demonstrations of early settlers’ lifestyles and craft-making. Blacksmithing, candle making, farming, cabin keeping, musketry & military drills, and cannon firings are among the featured activities. A gift shop, restroom and picnicking facility are located on the grounds. Each spring, the Fort has been host to over 1000 students who participate in the Student Days program. The Fort is open from Memorial Day to Columbus Day and is owned, operated and maintained by Sullivan County.

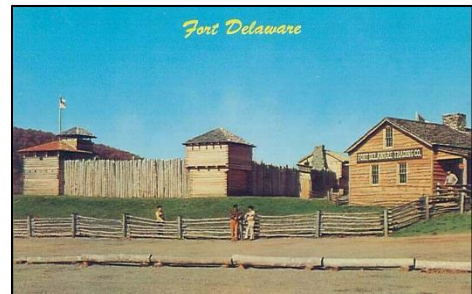
The Town has five sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Tusten Stone Arch Bridge
- Arlington Hotel
- Kirk House
- Narrowsburg Methodist Church
- Ten Mile River Baptist Church

The **Tusten Stone Arch Bridge** was constructed in 1896 by William H. Hankins, a local timber raftsman, stone mason and occasional postmaster. The bridge crosses the Ten Mile River just northeast of its confluence with the Delaware River. It is approximately 52 feet long and 15 feet wide and continues to operate as a single lane vehicle bridge for local traffic. The bridge is named in honor of Dr. Benjamin Tusten, the town's namesake and "an American militia volunteer and physician, who was killed as he ministered to the wounded at the Battle of Minisink on July 22, 1779 less than ten miles to the south of this settlement." (ii.) The surrounding land has been owned by the Boy Scouts of America since 1927 for their use as educational camp. The bridge is publicly accessible from the beginning of the three-mile Tusten Mountain Trail.

The **Arlington Hotel**, originally built in the 1870s and operated by J.G. Gutheil, was rebuilt in 1894, following a devastating fire in 1893. During the 1890s, the hotel accommodated adventurers and explorers including canoer J. Wallace Hoff of Delaware, who later spoke highly of the hospitality and attractive waitresses. During the 1920s, businessman George Oellrich bought the hotel for use as a general store, which later became the first Peck's Market in the area. The building was purchased by Delaware Valley Arts Alliance in 1981 and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

The **Kirk House** is a historic home located off Kirk Road near the Glen Cove Cemetery. The original section was built in the 1840s as a one-story frame schoolhouse. It was moved to its present site in 1875 and a second story was added the following year. It measures 32 by 20 feet (9.8 by 6.1 m), three bays in length and two bays wide. It was coated with stucco in the 1920s. It features a center entrance and full width, one story porch with Italianate style detailing. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.



3.2. *Fort Delaware Postcard*

The **Narrowsburg Methodist Church** is a historic Methodist church on Lake Street in Narrowsburg, Sullivan County, New York. It was built in 1856 and is a frame, Greek Revival style meeting house. The rectangular structure features a pedimented facade and open belfry decorated with finials. It was moved to its present location in 1879 and modified about 1930. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.

The **Ten Mile River (Tusten) Baptist Church** is located off Route 97 near the old Tusten Village. It had its beginnings about 1840 as a place of worship and in 1856 the church building itself was built on lands donated by the Bross family. The church thrived for more than 50 years, but when the demand for (quarry) stone declined, the bulk of the congregation moved on looking

for work. In 1968, the Tusten Settlement Association was founded, and the historic church was restored. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.

There are many other structures and sites of historical interest, e.g. Old Tusten Village, including the following, several of which are listed in the 2011 Natural Resources & Open Space Inventory:

- Excelsior Mill, Weiden Lake
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church - circa 1869
- Odd Fellows Hall, now a private home, was used by the Sons of Liberty; circa 1891
- J.S. Anderson Building - circa 1904
- St. Francis Xavier R. C. Church, circa 1925
- Tusten Theatre (discussed below)
- Narrowsburg School
- Narrowsburg Inn
- Eight historical cemeteries throughout the Town (listed in Appendix 3)

Luxton Lake is also of significant historical interest. Also known as Lucky Lake, Luxton Lake was once two miles long and was the result of a dam placed across the Ten-Mile River in the vicinity of the hamlet of Luxton Lake. The area was a very popular vacation spot among African American New Yorkers in the 1950s and 1960s. Many cabins and homes dotted the shoreline, while a nightclub became a popular spot in the greater area. In the early 1980s the safety of the dam came into question, due to factors including age and weather events. In the interest of public safety and the homes downstream, the dam was removed in 1983, forever changing the character of the area.



3.3. 1923 Map with Luxton Lake (USGS)

### 3.1.4 Cultural

The [Delaware Valley Arts Alliance](#) is the arts council for Sullivan County and was founded in 1976 by a group of citizens and arts professionals who were committed to developing, nurturing, presenting and promoting the arts and artists in the Sullivan County-Upper Delaware Valley region. The Alliance's programs and services include hosting of the annual Big Eddy Film Festival, Riverfest, publication of an area-wide cultural event calendar and newsletter, technical assistance to arts groups and artists, presentation of exhibitions, concerts and readings, and management of three grant programs that support the work of arts organizations and individual artists. DVAA is located in the Delaware Arts Center inside the historic Arlington Hotel at 37 Main Street, Narrowsburg.

The 150-seat Art Deco **Tusten Theatre** is a destination for high caliber jazz, classical, folk, theater and opera. Managed by Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, it is the home base for the Delaware Valley Opera. Originally, the building served as a community house and a fire station. In 1938 it was converted to a movie theater and ceased operations in the 1980s. DVAA

renovated the theatre for accessibility in 1990 in partnership with Sullivan County and the Town of Tusten, and it has remained open since.

The **Ten Mile River Scout Museum** is operated by the Greater New York Councils, Boy Scouts of America and is dedicated to preserving the history and artifacts of the Ten Mile River Scout Camps and the local area. Ten Mile River (TMR) is a 12,000-acre reserve in Tusten that has been serving the Boy Scouts of New York City since 1927. The museum is open to the general public and offers various tours and indoor exhibits, outdoor programs and local history exhibits. A museum store has publications, patches, and collectibles, while a research library includes extensive information on the history of TMR. See [www.tmr-museum.org](http://www.tmr-museum.org) for more information.

#### The **Tusten-Cochecton Branch of the Western Sullivan Public Library**

The library incorporates cultural programming within the many services it provides. The library's programs and services are reviewed in the Community Services and Infrastructure section. A brief history of the library is included on its [website](#).

The Narrowsburg Union is also an active partner in the cultural community (see full description in the Economic Development section).

#### **Annual Events**

The Town has a series of events that showcase the unique heritage of the area and reinforce the strong sense of community.

**Riverfest**, a music, art and environmental festival held annually since 1990, celebrates the artists and musicians who live and work in the Upper Delaware River Valley as well as the Delaware River and the ecosystem that supports it. A highlight of the festival is a live auction of over 60 original art posters by local artists. Riverfest is organized by Delaware Valley Arts Alliance.

Produced by Delaware Valley Arts Alliance and the arts council for Sullivan County, the **Big Eddy Film Festival** aims to advance the traditional art of storytelling by showing the newest and best independent films from around the world and our own backyard. This three-day event, now in its ninth year, is held in the fall and features numerous films at the historic Tusten Theatre.

The **Narrowsburg Honeybee Fest** promotes awareness and education about our struggling honeybee population. Held in the fall, the event has featured a costume parade, a vendor market on Main Street, honey tasting, gardening classes, pollinator workshops, and panel discussions.

The **Fireman's Parade and Chicken Barbeque** is held each July 4<sup>th</sup> by the Narrowsburg Fire Department. This commemorative celebration has been "the thing to do since 1902."



3.4. *Fireman's Parade (NFD)*

Beginning in 2019, **Logging Days** is held on a Fall weekend and features something for everyone. Included are a NYS lumberjack competition at Fireman’s Field, children’s raft making, storytelling, a heritage bus tour, river trips, vendors, music, and more.

The **Empire State Performance Rally** is an automobile race held on the unpaved roads and lands of the Ten Mile River Boy Scout Camp, who grants permission for the use of their land. This late-October competition features several stages totaling 75 miles. The unique event draws specialty racers from afar and many spectators from the region.



3.5. *Empire State Performance Rally (Meegan Media)*

The **Deep Water Literary Festival** is based in Narrowsburg and utilizes multiple spaces, featuring readings and performances by writers, artists, dancers, musicians, and actors. The event is organized by DVAA, One Grand Books, and other community partners.

### 3.1.5 Recreational

The **Ten Mile River Access Point** is a picturesque location within the large tract of land owned by the Boy Scouts of America. This access point accommodates boat launching, fishing and swimming. It is used by nearby liveries for group launches and it is the site of a seasonal NPS ranger station. In addition to river access, the location is adjacent to the Tusten Stone Arch Bridge and the Tusten Mountain Trail.

The Ten Mile Access Point is one of six locations included in a 2014 plan: Site Designs for Six River Access Points -- Upper Delaware River, Sullivan County. The plan was completed by Sullivan County Planning in cooperation with numerous partners. The overall purpose of the project was to help improve existing river access points. Inventories of existing conditions and challenges are noted in the plan, and several recommendations for site improvements are set forth. These include expanded parking, ADA accessibility, a picnic and pavilion area, riverbank stabilization, and boat launch enhancements. A site concept plan is included, and cost estimates are included for individual components of the improvements.

The **NYS DEC River Access in Narrowsburg** is located on De Mauro Lane this large access point includes parking for 24 cars and trailers or 40 cars, a boat ramp, and seasonal sanitary facilities. It’s adjacent to the Lander’s Campground and is maintained by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

The **Tusten Mountain Trail** is a 3.4-mile loop trail beginning at the Ten Mile River Access Point. The hike is considered easy-moderate, gaining about 530’ of elevation and offering a view of the Delaware River. The trail is located adjacent to the Stone Arch Bridge, Boy Scout campsites, and remains of bluestone quarries. The Tusten Mountain Trail is one of six trails

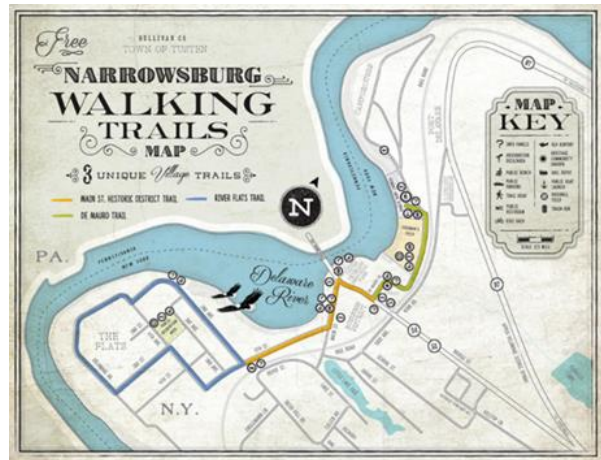


featured in the “Take a Hike!” brochure for the Upper Delaware River Valley. Completion of all six hikes earns the hiker a patch issued by the NPS. The trail is maintained by the National Park Service and is owned by the Ten Mile River Boy Scout Camp.

Located on Bridge Street in Narrowsburg, **Veterans Park** features a gazebo overlooking the river. There is also a monument in remembrance of the NYC terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. This park and its adjacent downtown areas figure prominently into the Narrowsburg 2013 Master Plan, which includes a focus on improving pedestrian connections. The Delaware Valley Arts Alliance was responsible for securing funding to develop the park, which also includes abutments of former old iron bridge.

The **Narrowsburg Observation Deck** is a free gathering space and social hub on Main Street. It’s a popular place to sit and relax and look out at the river. The deck was rebuilt in 2017. Access to the river on this Town-owned property is shown in some design schemes and should be explored during revitalization efforts (see Figure 3.17).

Veteran’s Park, the Observation Deck and many other downtown attractions are featured on the Walking Trails Map, which can be found on the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce website or as a pamphlet in select locations. The route is marked with small signs.



3.7. Map of Narrowsburg Walking Trail  
(welcometonarrowsburg.com)

The **Multigenerational Park (Narrowsburg Playground)** is located on Third Street on the Flats of Narrowsburg. It features a Basketball Court, Baseball Field, Playground, Fitness Trail, and a Children’s Community Garden.

In addition to the resources listed above, numerous businesses and civic organizations within the Town reinforce the appreciation of Tusten’s qualities and sense of place. The Economic Development and Community Services and Infrastructure sections of the plan describe these resources further.

### Recommendations 3.1.6

#### Recommendations – Historical

a) Encourage the preservation of historic structures and sites; explore and pursue repurposing projects for historical buildings.

b) Undertake a historical survey for the Town. Results will provide guidance on priorities and next steps, which could include additional listings of structures on the National Register of Historic Places or the establishment of a historical district.

c) Continue to promote the Town’s history through interpretive materials: interpretive panels at key locations; walking and driving tours; printed brochures; and online information.

d) In partnership with the Tusten Historical Society, explore options for a larger space to house the Society.

e) Encourage additional documentation of the Town’s cemeteries and explore actions to preserve and interpret these historical resources.

**Recommendations – Cultural**

f) Work with Library Board to expand the current space to create more community space, and more space for the collection.

g) Encourage improvements to the Tusten Theatre that will allow for an expanded season, and enhanced amenities for both audiences and participating artists.

**Recommendations – Recreational**

h) Develop access to baseball field flats below DeMauro Lane for occasional public events such as kite flying exhibitions, fishing tournaments, bluegrass festivals, and flotilla regattas. The development could include vehicle access, removable stage, and other improvements that would not interfere with the flood plain or get damaged by flooding. Work in cooperation with the fire department, who owns the property. Pursue installation of electricity.

i) Implement the improvements for the Ten Mile River Access Point set forth in the Site Designs for Six River Access Points -- Upper Delaware River, Sullivan County. Work closely with the NPS and Boy Scouts to develop a phased approach for improvements and pursue related funding opportunities.

j) Continue to develop and implement improvements to better connect Narrowsburg with the waterfront. Focus on pedestrian access and mobility and ensure fire safety. Undertake dialogue with landowners (i.e. Esplanade) to establish agreements with the Town for access and safety. Consult all existing plans and examine individual components for feasibility; set priorities and develop phases.

k) Continue to improve Narrowsburg as a Walkable Community. Adapt the goals and actions of the Narrowsburg Master Plan, rank specific targeted improvements based on feasibility, including costs and associated issues and challenges.

l) Improve Bridge Street sidewalks and identify additional locations for sidewalk improvements, crosswalks, and other Complete Streets components in Narrowsburg.

“Create an atmosphere and physical environment that encourages and reinforces pedestrian activity within the hamlet area, with the understanding that this high quality pedestrian experience will improve the quality of life for Tusten residents, as well visitors to the Town, thereby creating potential economic benefits and economic growth within the Town.”  
- Narrowsburg Master Plan

m) Continue to improve parking in Narrowsburg and install improved signage to promote awareness. As feasible, conduct a downtown parking evaluation to determine needs and opportunities.

n) Continue to ensure that Tusten’s recreational and other attractions are promoted through regional organizations and websites, e.g. National Geographic’s Scenic Wild Delaware River and the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway web maps.

o) Explore the development of more river access points throughout the Town. Develop promotional materials for the two existing access points and their related amenities. Reinforce the concept of the Delaware River as a water trail.

“Working with regional groups, the Delaware River should also be promoted to become a National Water Trail.” NYS Open Space Plan, 2016

p) Explore the interest of developing swimming areas. Develop an implementation committee to work with recreation recommendations in this section and to explore feasibility of lakes within the Town for swimming.

q) Develop and publish more information on cycling routes throughout the town. This will complement the designated route along Route 97 and generate more interest and options for both the casual and avid cyclist.

## 3.2 Environmental Resources

### 3.2.1 Goals

- Balance protection of the Town’s water quality, open spaces, and animal and plant habitats with encouraging economic activities that help conserve the Town’s scenic and rural character.
- Work to create new opportunities for public access to lands and waters to increase recreational and educational options for residents and visitors.

Tusten’s previous Comprehensive Plan (2007) and the Natural Resources & Open Space Inventory (2011) provide excellent baseline information on the Town’s environmental resources. Much of this collected information is adapted for this revision of the comprehensive plan.

*Environmental resources* include both natural resources and environmental assets. Natural resources are defined as materials or substances such as minerals, forests, water, and fertile land that occur in nature and historically could be used for economic gain; whereas environmental assets cover a broader range, inclusive of natural resources and incorporating scenic, aesthetic, recreational, and ecological values. Environmental assets typically have many indirect economic benefits.

The Town of Tusten contains significant environmental resources, which are largely defined by the predominant and contiguous undeveloped spaces. These spaces include some areas of open fields, lakes, small rivers and streams, but the majority of the land cover is forested. Tusten’s western border is defined by approximately 14 miles of shoreline along the Delaware River, with the Town sharing this river boundary with Pennsylvania. As noted in the Historical, Cultural, and

Recreation section, the Town is, in many ways, defined by its inclusion in the nationally designated Wild and Scenic River. The guidelines of the Federal River Management Plan are followed by the Town, and two of the Town's special zoning districts -- "Scenic River" and "Recreational River" -- help ensure the preservation of defining qualities while balancing economic interests. The River's importance as an economic and recreational force cannot be underestimated. It brings thousands of visitors and outdoor enthusiasts to the Town every year, as well as attracts a sizable number of seasonal homeowners into the area. These visitors and homeowners shop in local stores, frequent food and drink establishments, and provide business for the local construction trades.

The Town's environmental resources have historically provided residents and visitors many opportunities for recreation, outdoor education, relief from city heat, fresh air and clean waters, and spiritual renewal. The trend continues to do so today, as reflected in the survey results and ongoing popularity of the Town as a tourist and homeowner destination. People value living in or visiting the Town of Tusten because its natural resources offer them clean water to drink, swim and fish in; woods to go hiking and hunting in; scenic roads to walk, bike or drive on; dark skies at night and quiet spaces to reflect and regenerate.

The Town's landscape largely reflects a traditional land use pattern, with clear delineation between hamlets and surrounding rural areas. The scenic and historical character remains strong and has not been negatively impacted by roadside "strip" development or extensive suburban land consumption. As one moves away from the River, the Town is characterized by mountainous terrain with hills and dales that are largely wooded. In addition to the Delaware River, Tusten has a number of smaller rivers and tributaries, including Ten Mile River, East Branch of Ten Mile River, Grassy Swamp Brook and Beaver Brook. Numerous lakes also dot the landscape including Weiden Lake, Rock Lake, Davis Pond and Turnpike Pond.

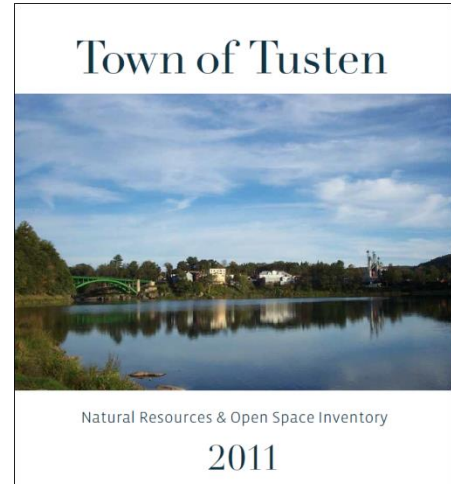
### **3.2.2 Town of Tusten Natural Resources and Open Space Inventory (2011)**

This Inventory is an outgrowth of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, which noted that outside of Narrowsburg there are no publicly protected parks or lands, and that the town has no Natural Resources Inventory or Open Space Plan. The Inventory is a critical step in the development of an open space plan, as it lays the groundwork for a set of actions to protect and conserve the Town's environmental resources.

The purpose of this inventory is to identify the natural resources, open space, the cultural resources and historic sites that make up the Town of Tusten. Environmentally fragile and sensitive areas will be designated and unique plant and animal habitats will be identified. The protection and conservation of the Town's water and hydrologic resources is of prime concern and will be a focus of the inventory.

These resources will then be documented through a series of inventory base maps and other means to provide a useful data base for the Town of Tusten to be used as a resource and guidance for local planning, future sustainable growth and the conservation of important natural resources.

The Inventory emphasizes that it is being developed specifically **to advance the creation of a townwide open space plan**. The document states that it can also assist with advancing other related recommendations of the 2007 comprehensive plan. These include integration of conservation subdivisions into the Town’s zoning and subdivision regulations; and, revisiting ridgeline protection recommendations, which are the subject of a separate report.



### **Biodiversity**

The Inventory describes, identifies, and maps Significant Bird Habitats, Significant Hydrologic Features, and Significant Reptile and Amphibian Habitats. It notes that species in Tusten -- the Timber Rattlesnake and Bald Eagle are threatened in NYS, while the Wood Turtle is a species of Special Concern. (These 2011 listings remain in effect in 2020.) Additional information on these listings is provided on the [New York State Environmental Resource Mapper](#) and the [New York Nature Explorer](#) which show generalized locations of threatened species and significant natural communities, and provide additional details. For example, there are seven species of dragonflies of Special Concern in Tusten, with five of these species being at the highest level of concern (S1). S1 is defined as “Typically 5 or fewer occurrences, very few remaining individuals... or some factor of its biology making it especially vulnerable in New York State.” While the presence of these species in the Town is certainly significant, what’s especially notable is that the Town has “the habitat suitable for propagation of many endangered and threatened species.” (2011 *Natural Resources & Open Space Inventory*)

Both the 2007 Plan and the Inventory make specific reference to the approximately 12,000 acres owned by the Boy Scouts of America, Greater New York Council (Figure 3.10, p. 32). Accounting for more than a third of the Town’s total area, this vast, undisturbed forested area includes isolated ancient bog habitats. A number of unique plant communities and rare species have been located in accessible areas, while the Inventory notes, “There are probably others in the interior of the large wetlands of the BSA property; however they are not readily accessible.” Given the rich biodiversity of this area, as well as its tremendous value as a recreation asset, its future use will have significant influence of the Town.

On the regional scale, the Boy Scout lands and other large holdings, including private hunting camps, are integral in restoring the ecological continuity of the Upper Delaware Highlands. The New York State Open Space Plan identifies the Highlands a priority conservation area. NYS DEC and landowners in the region have a history of partnering to help sustain forest related uses on many of these lands, and the DEC remains interested in assisting these efforts.

### **3.2.3 Conservation Advisory Council**

As noted in the executive summary of the Natural Resources and Open Space Inventory, Tusten created a Conservation Advisory Council in 2008. CACs are created pursuant to NYS General Municipal Law (Article 12-F Section 239-x) and serve advisory roles in a municipality’s

planning responsibilities and initiatives. The Tusten CAC led the development of the 2011 Inventory, which has positioned the Town well for developing an Open Space Plan. An Open Space Plan will expand upon the Inventory by formulating specific actions that will achieve conservation and protection of natural and open space resources over time. Creating an Open Space Plan and assigning this task to the CAC are discussed below. The CAC can also contribute to the development of land use tools and advance conservation strategies, some of which are summarized in the Inventory.

### **3.2.4 Land Use Tools**

The Town’s land use regulations have been amended substantially since the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. In 2011 a comprehensive revision of the zoning law was adapted, in part reflecting environmental recommendations from the comprehensive plan. In 2015, the Town received funding to enhance its zoning and subdivision regulations by adopting measures to improve water quality in the Upper Delaware Basin. Related adjustments to the zoning were adopted in 2017 and the subdivision law was thoroughly revised. Camping regulations were updated and a new section to regulate solar energy facilities was adopted, also in 2017.

The Upper Delaware Highlands is a critical area to protect because it remains one of the last large globally important forest ecosystems within the High Allegheny Plateau that can provide connective wildlife corridors, produce important food crops, preserve water quality and quantity and retain a quickly diminishing unique wild landscape. - NYS Open Space Plan, 2016

Subsequently, numerous zoning amendments to improve the conservation of environmental resources were drafted. These include enhanced provisions and management practices for timber harvesting, lowered disturbance thresholds for Town review of clear-cutting activities and development on steep slopes; a stream corridor overlay district; enhanced landscaping and parking requirements for water quality protection; and adjustments to stormwater protection regulations to be consistent with NYSDEC procedures and requirements. The adoption of these amendments is expected after the completion of the comprehensive plan.

### **3.2.5 Ridgeline Protection**

Preserving scenic quality has remained central to sustaining the Town’s overall rural character. The 2011 Inventory lists the need to “Revisit the Ridgeline Preservation Report and Recommendations Created for the Town by Shepstone Management Company” – echoing statements in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The Town’s zoning law includes a brief “Ridgelines” section, setting forth requirements within the Scenic River (SR) and Recreational River (RR) Districts. The draft zoning amendments related to development on steep slopes (mentioned above) will, once adopted, support the existing Ridgeline provisions.

### **3.2.6 Tusten Energy Committee**

The Tusten Energy Committee was appointed in 2011 by the Town Board. The Committee currently has six members and has been active on several energy-saving fronts. The committee coordinated the installation of a solar array at the highway garage to fully power the equivalent of the highway department, the water and sewer department, and the Town Hall. A soft plastics recycling program has been spearheaded by the Committee, resulting in tons of plastic being

diverted from the waste stream and the environment. For these efforts, the Town has been awarded three recycled-plastic benches by the TREX company, which have been placed on the downtown observation deck and at the town library.

In 2018, Tusten was recognized as New York State's nineteenth and Sullivan County's first Climate Smart Community by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The Town completed 17 actions including a greenhouse gas inventory, lighting upgrades, an electronics recycling program in municipal buildings, a waste reduction education program, and support of a green innovation economy (the Farmers' Market). In recognition of this achievement, the Town received a grant from DEC to support its ongoing efforts. The Town has reduced its carbon footprint to achieve carbon-neutral status.

The Committee's current projects include the conversion of all Narrowsburg streetlights to LED bulbs. In addition to lowering energy consumption, the newer lighting system can also provide the ability for the municipality to dim and brighten lights and monitor outages from a central location. Additional upgrades feature sensors for weather surveillance and noise detection. The



3.8. Biodigester Similar to Tusten's.  
(Impact Bioenergy)

conversion follows the Town's purchase of the lighting district's infrastructure from the utility NYSEG. Once the new fixtures and lightbulbs are installed, computer nodes will be installed in downtown fixtures to bring Wi-Fi internet service throughout Narrowsburg. Tusten has also been awarded a fully funded grant to purchase a state-of-the-art biodigester for food wastes due to the Committee's efforts. This low-maintenance equipment has been installed at the highway department, enabling all restaurant and food merchants to deposit wastes, which will then be

converted to liquid fertilizer. Performance of the new unit will be carefully evaluated, including its efficiency in temperatures below freezing.

The adoption of this comprehensive plan helps reinforce Tusten's status as a bronze-level Certified NYS Climate Smart Community. Under the State's Climate Smart Communities Program, Pledge Element 6 (Adopt a Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements), outlines required and eligible components to meet qualifications within this category. Policies, goals, and recommendations in this plan, along with ongoing activities of the Tusten Energy Committee, the Zoning Review Committee, and other entities in the Town can contribute to Tusten's recertification as a Climate Smart Community in 2023.

Sullivan County has also achieved bronze-level certification and has adopted a [Climate Action Plan](#). The county has pledged to work with local governments to help achieve the overall vision of the Climate Action Plan.

### 3.2.7 Recommendations

#### a) and b) Reactivate the Conservation Advisory Council and Create an Open Space Plan

Building upon the thorough Inventory, an Open Space Plan will give geographic and organizational structure for actions to conserve the Town’s significant biological communities, habitats, and scenic resources. Although the Town is largely without a base of publicly protected land, the core areas within the BSA lands are ecologically extraordinary, and the extent of the contiguous landholdings presents a unique situation. Additionally, throughout the Town, opportunities abound to preserve and create ecological and recreational connections for future generations. Developing a map of specific priority areas for conservation – sometimes called a “greenprint”, will help focus future actions. This works effectively with an accompanying database of parcels that includes input from landowners, reflecting their levels of interest in the various types of conservation practices, e.g. easements, acquisition, management practices, etc. [New York State’s Local Open Space Planning Guide](#), among other resources, incorporates a full range of tools and strategies for municipalities.

An effective Open Space Plan will better inform the application of land use regulations. For example, with conservation subdivision (Town Law §278. Subdivision review; approval of cluster development), an Open Space Plan will first illustrate the envisioned open space network, to which cluster developments can be arranged around. This is quite different than the way conservation subdivision regulations are often developed, which is town wide or for entire zoning districts. In this latter scenario, conserved open space is often viewed as that which is leftover; rather than an addition to the overall planned system of greenspace. In



3.9. Ten Mile River near its confluence with the Delaware

Tusten, the 2017 revisions to the Conservation Subdivision regulations involved a cautious approach. The revisions increased the minimum overall parcel size requirement for conservation subdivision (from 5 to 20 acres); increased the minimum lot size (from 1 to 2 acres); and decreased the required amount of open space to be conserved (from 25% to 20%). Other land use tools, including Overlay Zoning, can be applied with greater precision following the completion of an Open Space Plan.

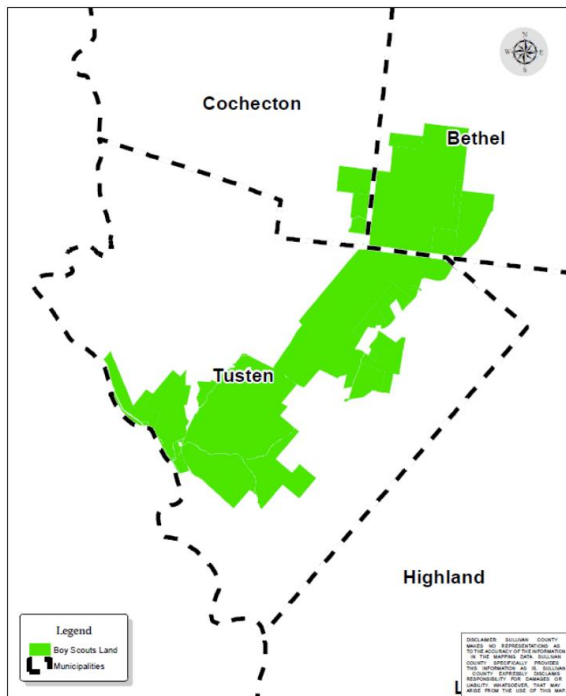
Sullivan County’s Open Space Plan (*Conserving Open Space & Managing Growth*, 2008) offers guidance to the municipalities. It encourages intermunicipal cooperation, recognizing that open space and environmental resources often occupy multiple jurisdictions and require joint approaches to achieve greater success in their conservation. The plan is organized by thematic chapters, and priority areas within each chapter are set forth. In Tusten and adjacent towns, the Ten Mile River/East Branch of the Ten Mile River/Beaver Brook Tributaries are identified priority areas for floodplain management and protection; and the Delaware River Corridor is a priority area for the entire plan. Strategies and actions in the Recreation and Biodiversity



chapters will be especially relevant for Tusten as it undertakes an Open Space Plan. Partnerships and assistance will also play an important role in plan development. Involving Sullivan County Planning; the Delaware Highlands Land Trust; and NYS DEC – to the extent they can provide resources -- will benefit the planning process.

c) Communicate with representatives of the Boy Scouts of America, Greater New York Councils to explore future land-use visions for landholdings.

Engaging in dialogue with the landowners is an early step to consider for the long-term interests of the Town and for the management of the significant environmental resources in this large area. Considering ways to sustain the ecology and the current uses that will benefit both the Town and the Boy Scouts is a strategy that can be developed. Planning to balance land use



Sullivan County Real Property Tax Services  
100 North Street, Monticello, NY 12701 - (845) 807-0221 - Fax: (845) 807-0232  
Aerial photos were taken Spring 2016  
Date: 7/13/2020  
Prepared by: Christopher Knaapp

3.10. Boy Scout Lands in Tusten and Surrounding Towns  
(Sullivan County RPTS)

interests and identifying methods for doing so can put actions in play at an early stage, which can be advanced over time. For example, expanding public access, perhaps more so in the winter season, for recreational and environmental education purposes are avenues that could be pursued. Designating a public park or nature preserve may also be a direction to consider, as there are no public landholdings in the greater Town. Reaching out to other partners, such as the NYS DEC, for resources and assistance can also benefit the communications. The development and adoption of an Open Space Plan will be of great assistance in the communications on the future of this special area and its unique resources.

d) Adopt draft zoning amendments to enhance protection of natural resources and continue to pursue related amendments to land use regulations.

Reactivating the CAC can assist the Zoning Review Committee, who is currently responsible for developing draft land use law amendments and presenting these to the Town Board. Assessing the Ridgeline Protection provisions of the zoning law and exploring the use of other land use tools to encourage conservation of open space, such as Incentive Zoning, are examples of tasks the CAC can aid. Sullivan County Planning also has resources that can support these activities.

e) Continue to support the activities of the Energy Committee and promote Tusten as an environmental leader.

f) Explore funding resources of the William Penn Foundation’s Delaware River Basin Initiative, many of which illustrate similarities with recommendations in this section and in the Land Use

section. Potential projects include those for scientific research, baseline mapping, conservation, and acquisition of lands to protect environmental resources that support watershed protection.

### **3.3 Community Services and Infrastructure**

#### **3.3.1 Goals**

- Continue to provide and sustain quality services for the health and safety of residents.
- Continue to support the vital activities of community groups and volunteers.
- Maintain and improve infrastructure to meet the changing needs of the community.

This section covers: Government Services; Ambulance, Police and Fire Services; Water and Sewer Services; Roads and Highways; Youth Commission; Western Sullivan Public Library, Tusten-Cochecton Branch; Senior Services; Volunteer Groups; Public Schools; and Hospitals.

#### **3.3.2 Government Services**

In addition to the Town Board's leadership role in undertaking and implementing this plan, two recommendations to provide more information to citizens are included in this section.

#### **3.3.3 Ambulance, Police and Fire Services**

In 1969, a volunteer ambulance service was formed to provide medical assistance to the Town. Currently, the Tusten Volunteer Ambulance Service (TVAS) is located in its own facility at 6509 State Route 97, just north of the intersection with Bridge Street. This facility was built by ambulance corps members, Town residents' labor, and financial support from area businesses. It was built over a period of time in the mid-1980s, after having previously been housed in the Town Hall in one of the old Narrowsburg Fire Department bays. (That bay is currently home to the Town offices). The Service currently operates two ambulances for calls in the Town of Tusten and also responds to Wayne and Pike counties in Pennsylvania as well as mutual aid calls to adjoining towns in Sullivan County. The TVAS contracts with the Town of Tusten for service. This contract, along with client billing, fundraisers and grants, allows TVAS to meet its financial obligations which are ever increasing including the necessity of having a paid Emergency Medical Technician on duty for several shifts a week as stipulated by the NYS Department of Health.

In 2001, the TVAS approved the construction of an addition to the building for the purpose of renting space to the New York State Police, who were then stationed in a two-room apartment just north of the ambulance building. That addition was completed by September of that year by a volunteer force from all segments of the community. Currently, the Town of Tusten pays rent to the TVAS for the NY State Police to staff the station with four Troopers. When scheduled, the Troopers start and end their shifts at the Narrowsburg Satellite Office but cover various patrol posts and are not dedicated solely to Tusten. The Town is also served by the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division, which is headquartered in Monticello, NY. All police service in the Town is based on Sullivan County 911's closest car concept.

Fire protection in Tusten is provided through the Narrowsburg Fire District which was extended in 2018 to encompass the entire Town. Previously, the Town had been divided into the Narrowsburg Fire District which was aligned with the Water District boundary while the

remainder of the Town was the Tusten Protection District resulting in two disparate fire protection tax rates.

Tusten is served by the Lava Volunteer Fire Department and the Narrowsburg Fire Department both of which are fully volunteer departments, supported by fire district taxes, fundraising activities, and grants.

The Narrowsburg Fire Department was formed in 1902 by “concerned citizens who wanted to protect Narrowsburg and vicinity.” In 1903, the Narrowsburg Fire District was formed and the Department built their first “engine house” in 1904, a 12’ by 24’ wooden garage situated where the Western Sullivan Library parking lot now exists. In 1926, a new building was constructed by the Narrowsburg members to house the Fire Department and Community Hall. This building was later sold to the Town of Tusten (the sale was approved in 1975) and the department moved into its current quarters, which previously held a Chevrolet garage. The Department currently owns property along the Delaware River on DeMauro Lane, starting just before the NYS DEC boat access and includes land leased by Landers Campground. This property, which had been an active airport, was purchased in 1954. It was home to the Narrowsburg Fire Department’s Fourth of July celebration in past years.

The Lava Volunteer Fire Department was formed in 1929 and incorporated in 1938. The Tusten Protection District was formed in 1945 and existed until 2018. The Lava VFD is located at 7898 State Route 52 in the original quarters put up by the Department. In 1994, due to volunteer constraints, it was made policy that both departments, Lava and Narrowsburg, would be on automatic response to all calls in the Narrowsburg Fire District. In the interests of cost saving to the taxpayers and efficiency of service, discussions are currently on-going between the departments to explore the feasibility of a centrally located firehouse.

### **3.3.4 Water Service**

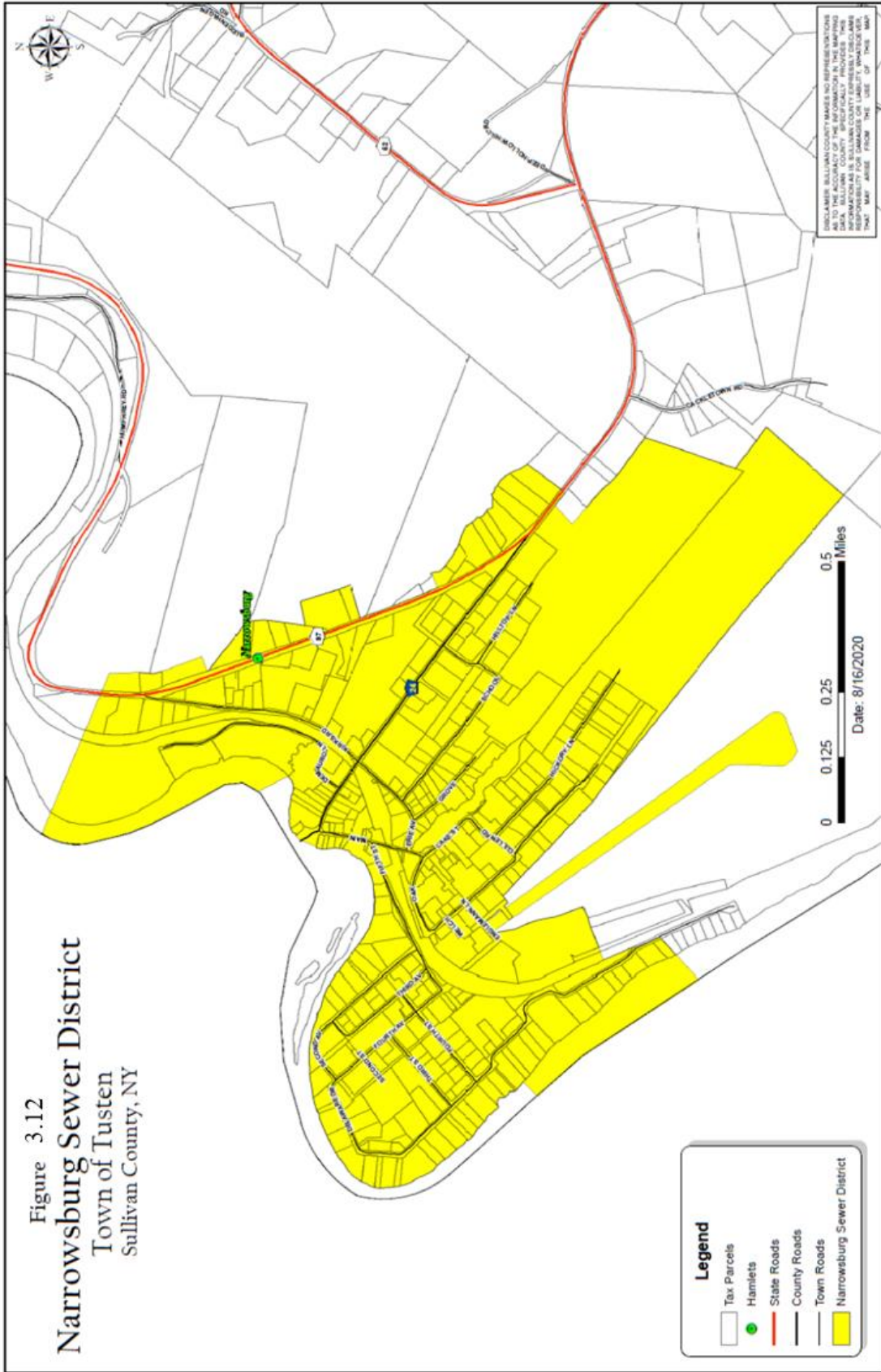
The hamlet of Narrowsburg is served by a municipal water district (Figure 3.11) that brings potable water to approximately 500 Town residents, as well as hamlet businesses. It consists of approximately 410 property parcels and 340 active service accounts. The area of the district is 444.5 acres (slightly over two-thirds of a mile), and includes a portion extending to Hunts Corner (Rtes. 97 and 52.) Supply is drawn from groundwater and includes three wells. Water is stored in a 200,000-gallon tank between Bridge Street and Hilltop Lane.

Originally constructed in 1925, the system has undergone a series of additions and improvements but is currently in need of substantial repair and replacement. A July 2020 report (Narrowsburg Water System Improvements Project Map, Plan, & Report) by Delaware Engineering details the comprehensive and necessary scope of improvements. Preliminary estimates place the cost of the overall project at \$14 million. The Town is focusing on the project’s priority components and is exploring funding through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and other sources. The DWSRF is jointly administered by the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation and the NYS Department of Health. It provides financial incentive for municipalities and privately-owned public water systems to undertake needed drinking water infrastructure improvements.

### **3.3.5 Sewer Service**

The municipal sewer system consists of the delivery system from homes and businesses to settling tanks, pump facilities, filtering beds, and discharge to the Delaware River. The Town maintains a NYS SPDES permit that mandates final water quality standards for discharge into a body of water. The Town's Water and Sewer Department is run by three full-time staff and utilizes two trucks and one tractor. The map of the sewer district is shown in Figure 3.12.





The sewer system is approximately 45 years old. The Town will benefit from conducting an assessment and feasibility study to determine the best course of action for the future of the system. Challenges associated with the aging system include difficulty in conducting infiltration and inflow assessments (due to lack of manhole access); the need for improved pumping and holding facilities; and decreased functionality associated with flooding events. Any expansion of the system cannot be seriously considered until the current system is fully evaluated; however, the Feagle's Lake area east of State Route 97 is one location that could be incorporated into longer-term planning.

Potential funding sources include programs of the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation, e.g. the Engineering Planning Grant Program and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

### **3.3.6 Roads and Highways**

The Town of Tusten is served by a network of state, county and Town-maintained roads totaling 85 miles. Of these, approximately 13.25 miles are state highways, 11 are county highways, and the remaining 61 miles are Town-owned and maintained. The Narrowsburg Bridge is an iconic and important regional connection, linking NY Routes 52 and 97 with PA Route 652, serving as a gateway, and reinforcing the locational prominence of Narrowsburg.

With few exceptions, Town of Tusten roads serve primarily as local roads with relatively low volumes of traffic. In general, they connect rural residences with the state and county systems. Approximately 30 miles or 49% of the 61 miles of Town roads are oil and stone surface treated or paved roads. The other 31 miles of road are gravel and dirt.

Historically, many Town of Tusten roads were originally horse and buggy trails. Most were accepted by the Town without meeting any standard engineering design specifications. Engineering road standards are as critical to the life and safety of a road as standard building codes are essential to the life of a home. The Town's highway maintenance budget reflects the expense of maintaining these gravel/dirt roads. The Department has been upgrading the older roads to meet Town specifications and paving roads incrementally as budget allows. Paving of roads has taken place in the vicinity of newer residential developments, including Royal Oaks. Economically, it is more cost effective to maintain and operate asphalt roads compared to gravel/dirt.

For operation and maintenance of Town roads, the Highway Department has equipment and a crew. Equipment assets include three tandem-axle trucks, one single-axle truck, a one-ton Chevy dump truck, bulldozer, a Gradall, street sweeper, roller, five snow-removal wings, six plows, a roadside mower, backhoe, payloader, and two Ford 150 pick-up trucks – totaling more than \$1,000,000. Personnel includes an elected Highway Superintendent and five full-time highway crew members with significant experience. Highway crew members maintain a CDL class driver's license, clean driver's licenses and are classified as Heavy Equipment Motor Operators.



3.13. *Solar Panels at Town Highway Department*

The Highway Department engages in shared services with adjacent towns and, to lesser extent, shared equipment. Shared arrangements could be explored further for additional cost-saving purposes. Located adjacent to the intersection of State Route 97 and County Highway 25, the grounds of the Highway Department include solar panels to help the Town achieve its carbon neutral status.

In addition to the maintenance and upgrade of roads, bridge and culvert replacements, slope stabilizations, and other repairs can pose additional costs. In 2018, the Town secured a \$921,342 grant from NYSDOT (under the Bridge NY Program) to repair the Lake Erie culvert under Main Street. Originally slated to be under \$200,000, federal requirements necessitated the increase in cost. This project illustrates both the need for resources for small municipalities and the ability of Tusten to apply for and receive the funding.

The Town’s overall goal for roads and highways is to continue to provide a safe, efficient road system for the traveling public and continue to assure that all new roads are constructed based on acceptable specifications and with minimum impact on the environment and adjacent property owners.

### **3.3.7 Tusten Youth Recreational Program and Youth Commission**

The Tusten Youth Commission (TYC) is a non-profit organization designed to provide the youth of our Town with new, healthy experiences. The Commission focuses on education, family activities and builds a sense of community by working with other community organizations. The TYC has collaborated with the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance on an art contest and to provide a live theater experience for children. The commission also worked with the Narrowsburg Beautification Group to improve the playground and build an organic vegetable garden and has participated in the Chamber of Commerce’s annual Logging Days event.

By requiring parent participation in all sponsored trips, the value of family is strengthened. Trips are often linked to education but always include an entertainment aspect. Local history is taught through various activities, e.g. raft building during the Logging Days event.



3.14. *Bill Streeter, Delaware Valley Raptor Center at Birds of Prey Show, 2020. (Tusten Youth Commission Facebook)*

The Commission has received support from the State and the County, and the Town supports related activities through the Tusten Youth Recreation Program. Six members guide the Commission, meeting once a month and organizing numerous events, workshops and community projects. Activities have included a Bird Feeder-Making Workshop with a Birds of Prey Show, the Childrens' Community Organic Garden in the Multi Generational Park, a Water Park Trip, and the Great Lego Challenge, the latter being held during the COVID-19 quarantine.

Following recommendations to reinvigorate the Youth Commission from the Town's previous comprehensive plan, the Commission has been very active and successful, yet there remains a need for more volunteers and funding support.

### **3.3.8 Western Sullivan Public Library - Tusten-Cochecton Branch**

Located in Narrowsburg, the Library is an essential partner in the community, serving all ages through its advanced facility and extensive programming.

As discussed in the Economic Development section, the Library is a high-speed internet hotspot with broadband infrastructure, as well as wi-fi availability outside the building. A full-time technology person provides support through Tech Talks and appointments. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, these services are provided virtually via Zoom. A series of related programs and the Public Computer Center offer the community skills development opportunities and use of the facilities. Numerous online resources offered by the library include free access to streaming movies, e-books, and audio books with a library card. The KANOPY video streaming service offers patrons up to 10 titles per month to stream for free. Patrons can also borrow books (or e-books or DVDs) from the Ramapo Catskill Library System, enabling access the resources of a much larger library system through the small-town library located in Tusten. Online courses, such as Craft Lovers, are delivered on the library's YouTube channel and linked to the Facebook page and Instagram.

The Library has a weekly newsletter and maintains a busy calendar of events on its in-depth website. All programs are free and include Nature Club for Young Adults, Teen Hangout, Robotics Club for young people and teens, Children's Storytime, Virtual Book Discussion, Adult Summer Reading – Book Review Challenge, a Book-Themed Birdhouse Competition, and much more. The library also offers programs for those researching their ancestral roots (Ancestry.com) and Rosetta Stone for those who wish to learn a foreign language.

The Library has an active presence in the community, writing columns in the Sullivan County Democrat and joining radio programming on WJFF, WSUL, and Thunder 102. Library staff participate in many public events and do related outreach at schools. The Library houses the Tusten Historical Society and hosts many programs in its basement space, which can hold approximately 60 people. The Library partners with community organizations and regional entities, including the Delaware Valley Arts Association, Job Corp, local businesses, and the Growing Older Together senior group. On the Library's grounds, the Tusten Heritage Garden thrives through a long-term lease agreement with the Library and has received support from Sullivan Renaissance and Cornell Cooperative Extension.



The Library maintains a five-year strategic plan to support and help guide its mission: “WSPL shall provide welcoming centers of information and discovery and provide our communities with tools for lifelong learning, creativity and enrichment.” One of the plan’s goals is “Evaluate and Enhance Programs to Reflect Community Needs” with the related objective to “Solicit input from general public regarding program content and scheduling.” Library representatives are aware of the many social trends in the region and are sensitive to needs of different segments of the population, such as retaining and attracting youth to the area. The strategic plan was recently completed following some delay caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The resumption of the process will offer the Town the opportunity to discuss topics and avenues of collaboration related to this comprehensive plan. One of the initiatives the Town is exploring is the creation of a community center.

### **3.3.9 Senior Services**

With a growing number of senior citizens in the Town and the region, the need for a variety of senior services continues to increase. In response to the comprehensive plan survey’s housing question, the availability of housing for senior citizens was the most cited issue. Needs of seniors are addressed in part by Sullivan County Office of the Aging and Growing Older Together, which serves western Sullivan County and Wayne County, PA.

The main objective of the Office for the Aging is to be the lead advocate for the county’s older population. A host of programs aim to afford choices to older people with the intention that they will be able to remain in their homes and community as long as possible. While these programs are largely driven by voluntary contributions, the inability or unwillingness to contribute will not disqualify the receipt of services.

The Office provides **case management** services to elderly individuals who are unable to negotiate the human services network without assistance. **Legal assistance** is also available to help seniors resolve issues with Social Security, Medicare, housing rental, and property ownership. **Transportation/Escort services** provide bus service to designated areas in Sullivan County once a week for shopping and medical appointments, with advanced registration. There is also an income-based **Senior Community Employment Program** (AARP) that helps people 55 or older to get temporary, part-time positions with nonprofit community organizations. The **Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program** assists older people who are not eligible for Medicaid with everyday activities to help them remain at home. Other programs and support include **Meals on Wheels**, the **Home Energy Assistance Program**, the **Weatherization Referral and Assistance Program**, and the **Caregiver Resource Center**, a joint program of the Office and Cornell Cooperative Extension that CCE and for the Aging, that provides respite, support groups and information on and referrals to various services.

Growing Older Together (GOT) provides residents aged 60 and older both the practical means and the social connections to live independently in their homes. GOT is a not-for-profit, member-based organization that fosters relationships across generations.

The origins of GOT are rooted in the Upper Delaware Unitarian Universalist Fellowship’s response to helping two of its older members with basic support services. UDUUF then hosted a series of readings and discussions about the realities and limitations of governmental programs

that assist seniors. Taking a grassroots approach, GOT's programs complement those of governmental agencies and are supported by a variety of private and non-profit entities.

### **3.3.10 Public Schools**

The majority of the Town is within the Sullivan West Central School District (a small area in southeastern Tusten is part of the Eldred School District). Sullivan West was created in 1999 by the merger of the Narrowsburg, Delaware Valley, and Jeffersonville-Youngsville Central School Districts. This merger resulted in the closing of the Narrowsburg School, which had significant social and civic reverberations in the community. With an enrollment of 1300 students, the newer district covers over 250 square miles and is bound by the Hancock, Roscoe, and Livingston Manor School Districts in the north, the Monticello, Liberty, Eldred School Districts on the east, and the Delaware River on the west. The Elementary School is located in Jeffersonville, and the High School is located in Lake Huntington.

### **3.3.11 Hospitals**

The Grover M. Hermann Hospital, a branch of the Garnet Health Medical Center, is located at Callicoon, 11 miles north of Narrowsburg on Route 97. The Wayne Memorial Hospital in Honesdale, PA is located 14 miles west of Narrowsburg.

### **3.3.12 Volunteers and Neighborhood Groups**

Tusten is fortunate to have a number of volunteer groups serving the community. The role of volunteers is critical to the character and success of the community and is evident in so many ways. The vitality of the Fire Department, the Youth Commission, the Beautification Group, the Historical Society, and other organizations, events, and services in the community would not be possible without the ongoing dedication of volunteers. Supporters of many of these efforts include local businesses and donors, as well as Town government.

The **Narrowsburg Beautification Group** improves the appearance of Narrowsburg and promotes a sustainable environment through its many efforts. The Group's regular events include the Plant Swap, as well as the Litter Pluck, which is a county-wide initiative held in the spring and fall. The Group has won numerous awards through the Sullivan Renaissance Beautification program including the \$25,000 Golden Feather Award in 2012 (donated to the reconstruction of the Main Street Observation Deck) and the \$10,000 Silver Feather Award in 2015.

In 2016, Narrowsburg competed in America in Bloom's national competition. Judges traveled to the hamlet to consider the hamlet for a blend of criteria including floral displays, landscaped areas, street trees, environmental awareness, heritage preservation, community involvement, and overall impression of the place. The organization recognized the hamlet as "one of the coolest Main Streets" in the US.

Separate from the Beautification Group is the Tusten Heritage Community Garden (located behind the library), which is an edible landscape project designed to create a public green space centered on education and community engagement.

The **Saint Francis Xavier Parish**, located at 151 Bridge Street, has several programs that serve the community on a regular basis. These include the Ecumenical Food Pantry, which is an

agglomeration of five local churches (Unitarian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, and Lutheran). The Pantry distributes food to those in need (financially challenged community members) once a week and is supported entirely by donations from the community. Similarly, 2 Franks Café serves meals, free of charge, once a month (current every third Saturday of the month). As the need for these programs continues to grow, the Parish is exploring relocation options, to include facilities that provide for accessibility for those with disabilities. The Parish has also been integral in coordinating support for the community during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church has continuously served the Tusten community since it was formed by German immigrants in 1869. In addition to meeting congregational needs, the church also sponsors Katie's Cafe, a monthly, non-denominational, free will offering luncheon for anyone who cares to attend. It is named after Katie von Bora, wife of Martin Luther, who also believed that community outreach was an important mission. Congregation members also volunteer at and contribute to the local Ecumenical Food Pantry as well as collecting and donating healthy foods and snacks which are given to the Sullivan West School District's Weekend Food Security program for students in need.

Tusten Hope was a volunteer effort created by Tusten neighbors to help fellow neighbors in surrounding Sullivan County & Wayne County towns severely impacted by the pandemic. This effort provided groceries each week to neighbors in need. Another effort, Neighbors Deliver is a group of community volunteers who deliver necessities to the doorsteps of homebound people in the greater Narrowsburg area during the COVID-19 crisis. Although these community-organized programs are not designed to continue indefinitely, they illustrate the ability of the community to come together and the effectiveness of the results.

### **3.3.13 Recommendations**

#### **Government Services**

a) Develop a page on the town's website that provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of appointed boards and local officials. This webpage will be designed to build greater awareness of the functions of boards and officials, their relationships with one another, and the processes they engage in to serve the public. By collecting and presenting this information in one place, a general understanding of the roles of the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, Code Enforcement and the other appointed bodies and officials will be provided. Information on permitting, approvals, required forms, timelines, procedures, and related guidance documents will better inform the public. Many examples are available through the NYS Department of State, and Sullivan County Planning can also assist. Once posted, the information can be enhanced based on additional input.

b) Provide a breakdown of taxes paid by the town and its residents on the town's website. The complex web of taxing entities and taxed services and programs can be overwhelming. Sharing a summary of this information can improve awareness of the distribution of taxpayer contributions and give a better picture of the return in services and support to the residents of the town. These tax statistics can also support a more informed position from which to advocate for change, for example.

### **Ambulance, Police and Fire Services**

- c) Continue active recruitment of volunteers and help facilitate related training requirements.
- d) Continue to explore the feasibility of merging to a single fire department facility and pursue related funding opportunities.
- e) Explore the NYS Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) for volunteer fire fighters and emergency service providers to help sustain these services in the Town.
- f) Develop an equipment inventory, review and update on an annual basis, and document projected needs.

### **Water and Sewer Service**

- g) Continue to seek funding sources to help offset the cost of the new water system.
- h) Undertake a feasibility study to assess the current sewer system and plan for its future upgrades, replacement, and potential expansion.

### **Roads and Highways**

- i) Adopt a proactive long-term maintenance and improvement schedule to develop appropriate gravel and dirt roads to engineering standards and to pave where appropriate.
- j) Continue to engage in shared service agreements with other municipalities and explore new ways to expand these efforts.
- k) Periodically review the Town's road law, subdivision law and related codes and, as needed, work with the Town Board and Zoning Review Committee to develop road related recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of these laws.
- l) Participate in training workshops for highway department personnel, such as those offered by Cornell Local Roads Program. Explore training opportunities for Complete Streets, Low Impact Development, and Invasive Species Management.
- m) Consider the preparation of a road improvement and maintenance schedule for all Town roads and an equipment purchase schedule based on projected needs. The schedule should be reviewed, updated, and extended on an annual basis.
- n) Ensure the Town Planning Board uses the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process to effectively evaluate potential traffic impacts associated with any new development. When potentially significant impacts are identified, the Planning Board should carefully examine if developers should be required to pay for roadway improvements that are needed to mitigate potential impacts.

o) As feasible, accommodate pedestrians and cyclists along roadways through design improvements, signage or Complete Streets practices. (See also Recreation section, Recommendation q) and Economic Development section, Recommendation p).

p) Participate in state and county highway improvement projects by providing comments on proposed design or maintenance projects to improve the functional or aesthetic qualities of state road corridors for Town residents, including the application of Complete Streets principles.

**q) Adopt a Complete Streets resolution.** Also described in the text box below, a Complete Street is inclusive of multiple user groups and is designed to facilitate safe walking and bicycling. The features that express a Complete Street can extend beyond a single roadway or corridor and, over time, encompass a greater system of connectivity and circulation. Adopting a Complete Streets resolution is a pledge by the municipality to incorporate, as deemed context appropriate, Complete Street practices and principles into the design of town projects. The resolution can also better position the community to encourage and influence the projects of transportation agencies, including the NYS DOT. The DOT maintains [a webpage of Complete Streets resolutions](#) contributed by local and county governments. While many of the resolutions feature similar language, there is a range of depth in the examples. Chesterfield may be considered basic; and Oneonta (City) and Sharon Springs more advanced. Tusten could consider beginning with a simple resolution, followed by the exploration of more integrated policies and guidelines.

A Complete Street is a roadway planned and designed to consider the safe, convenient access and mobility of all roadway users of all ages and abilities. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, and motorists; it includes children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Complete Street roadway design features include sidewalks, lane striping, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders suitable for use by bicyclists, signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signals, bus pull-outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, ramps and traffic calming measures.  
- NYSDOT

### **Youth Commission**

r) Continue to sustain the progressive state of the Youth Commission by involving volunteers to assist with activities and increase participation by residents, including entire families.

s) Continue to explore fundraising options to support the Commission's ongoing activities.

t) Work with the Town Board and other stakeholders to expand opportunities for youth recreation throughout the Town.

u) Continue to build a sense of community by working with other local organizations.

## **Library**

v) Work with the Library to identify and pursue mutually compatible objectives and projects for the benefit of the community

## **Senior Services** (see also 3.5 Housing)

w) Revitalize the Tusten Senior Group

## **Volunteer Groups**

x) As a general policy the Town should continue to encourage partnerships among citizenry and recruit individuals for specialized task forces to plan and implement specific projects. In furtherance of this overall policy and as feasible, the Town can play a greater role in specific efforts. Such efforts might include but not be limited to the creation of a community center, the expansion of space for the Historical Society, or the support of improved access facilities for the Food Pantry or Senior Services.

## **3.4 Economic Development**

### **3.4.1 Goals**

- Build upon the Town's quality of life to attract and retain a diversity of small businesses that fit the character of the community.
- Work in partnership with Town, regional, and state stakeholders to help leverage needed improvements.

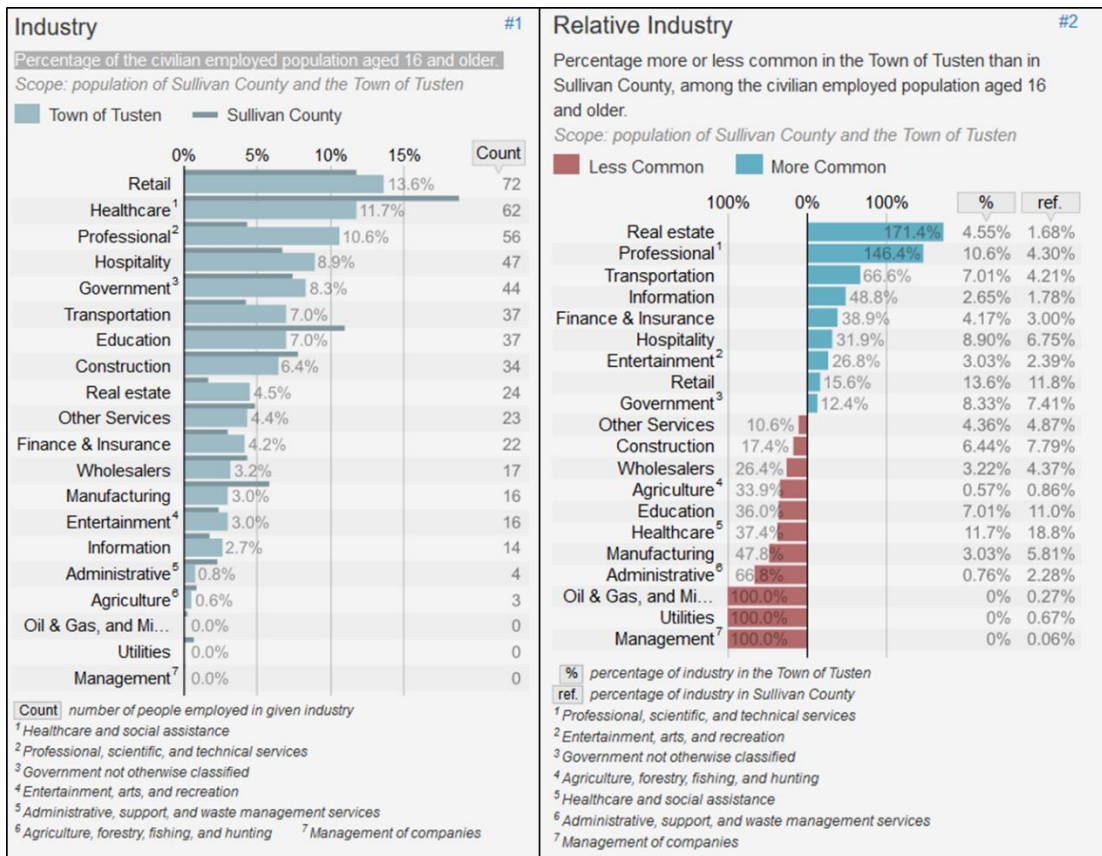
Community survey results emphasize that peoples' choice to live here is largely driven by quality-of-life factors. Clean water and air, open space and scenery, proximity to the Delaware River, recreational opportunities, and "small-town" atmosphere were the top five reasons (of 14) selected by survey participants in response to Question 4. Tusten's economy is very much influenced by tourism and based in recreation, culture, and the arts. The Town's intrinsic qualities have attracted visitors for generations, and these place-based assets reinforce the understanding that retaining the town's sense of place is inextricably linked with its ongoing economic vitality.

The designation of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River has helped ensure the protection of the Town's defining environmental resources. Unlike other Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River designations where government-owned land abounds, the designated corridor of the Upper Delaware is comprised of primarily privately-owned land. This, coupled with Tusten's proximity to the greater New York Metropolitan Area, position the Town advantageously in terms of economic growth in a desirable setting. And within the River Corridor, the River Management Plan is the guiding tool in ensuring that mutually agreed-upon land and river protection measures are met to help ensure the character of the corridor is sustained. A 2018 report issued by the National Parks Conservation Association, [Making Connections -- Roots of Prosperity in New York and Pennsylvania's Upper Delaware River Region](#), integrates the region's assets into a comprehensive outlook for collaborating on a place-based economic future.

Tusten is mainly comprised of small businesses that generally fall into three primary categories: service (building trades, restaurants, auto repair, banks etc.), recreation and entertainment (canoeing, theatre, galleries, etc.), and building and agri-business (lumber company and feed mill). Most businesses are located in the hamlet of Narrowsburg. The Town also has many home (cottage) businesses, owned by artists, designers, writers, and filmmakers, as well as varying types of lodging operations, from hotels and bed and breakfasts to short-term rentals and campgrounds. The growth of box stores (e.g, Wal-Mart, Home Depot) in the neighboring townships of Pennsylvania and other parts of Sullivan County have drawn some consumer activity out of the Town, but have helped Tusten retain its rural character. Consistent with regional trends, the population of Tusten surges in the summer season due to increased activity in tourism, recreation, camps, second homeowners, and agriculture.

“As we forge the future of our region, many of us are eager for economic development that maintains our traditions, enhances the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the landscape, and creates today’s version of vitality in our hamlets and small trade centers. These are the “Roots of Prosperity,” a strong foundation for a prosperous economic future in the region that shares the Upper Delaware River.” – Making Connections, National Parks Conservation Association

The following tables further illustrate percentages of employment by industry and the sectors that are more or less common in Tusten and Sullivan County.



3.15. Town of Tusten Industry Estimates, June 2020. (statisticalatlas.com)

This section's review of the Town's many resources, activities, and organizations that support economic health illustrates the importance of their individual roles and gives insight into their collaborative potential. At the larger scale, the Town shares assets with neighboring communities, and cooperative approaches in promoting the region have demonstrated success. These dynamics help inform this section's strategies, which include suggestions to build upon the Town's strengths through further coordination.

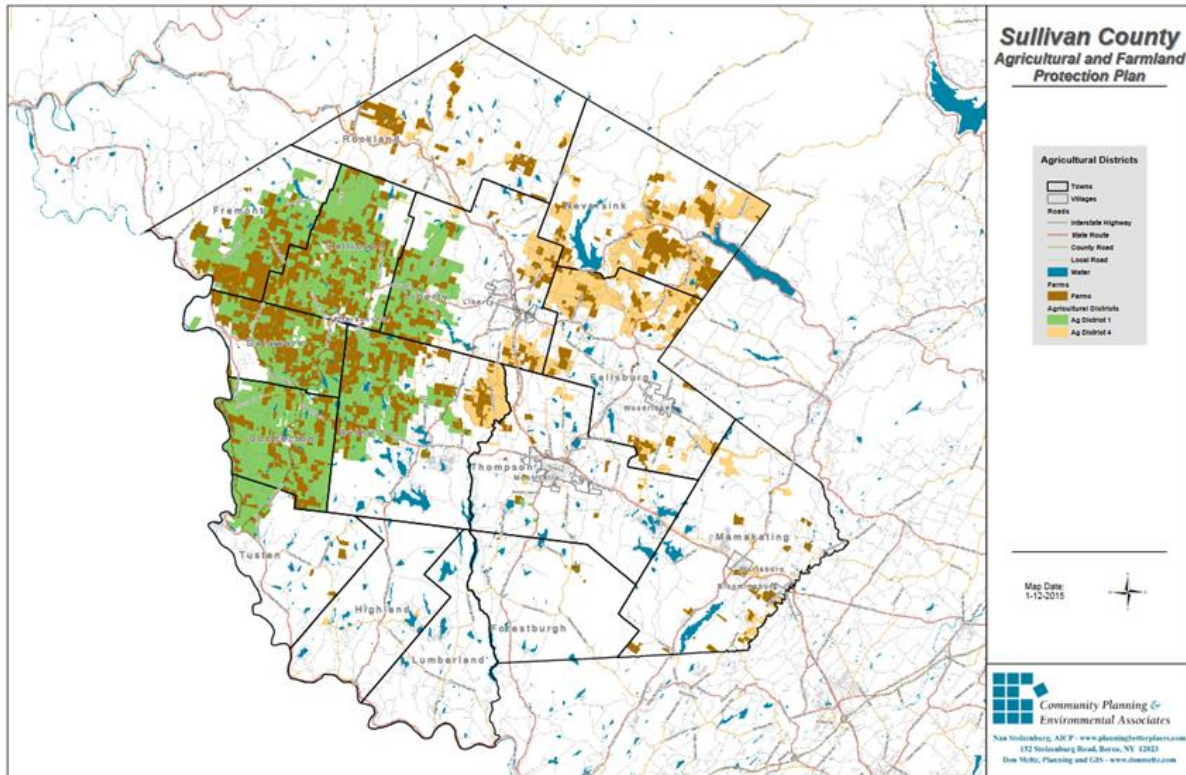
The topics discussed have many important interrelationships that can benefit from a more comprehensive approach to enhance the economic strengths of the Town. This approach is considered complementary to individual projects and focused efforts that have been successful and will remain essential. Topics include: Tourism; Entrepreneurship; Agritourism; Regional Promotion; Annual Events; River Connections; Railroad Connection; Infrastructure Upgrades; Retaining and Attracting Youth; and Business Development and Workforce Training.

The **Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce** website ([welcometonarrowsburg.com](http://welcometonarrowsburg.com)) lists more than 50 businesses in the hamlet area and provides an inviting overview of what's in store for the visitor. The attractions are packaged and presented to encourage the experience of exploring the hamlet and the greater area. Comprehensive information includes where to shop and eat, listings of community services, civic groups, and events, and maps of the hamlet.

The business, cultural, and education resources in the community were enhanced significantly in 2015 with the creation of the **Narrowsburg Union**. This 30,000 square-foot business center is an innovative reuse of the stately Narrowsburg Central Rural School, located at the prominent corner of Bridge and Erie Streets. The repurposed facility features office and event space, a certified commercial kitchen, studios, a gallery, and a conference/ classroom. The Union is home to 17 tenants, including several start-ups, specialty food businesses, a pack-and-ship service, U-Haul, SUNY Sullivan, the Narrowsburg Farmer's Market, and other artisans and professionals. The site also features several electric car-charging stations. The Union project benefitted from tax abatement programs of the Sullivan County IDA, and business tenants can explore incentives through the Start-Up NY Program.

The Narrowsburg Union exemplifies many facets of a creative, local economy and helps direct a collective development vision of the future. The Union encourages entrepreneurship, connects partners, combines disciplines, and helps serve as a physical and social hub for both the adjacent neighborhood and the regional community. It also expresses a pride in place, providing means for niche initiatives and motivated individuals to exhibit skills, create products, and deliver services that reflect qualities of the greater community and landscape. These dynamics have instituted a framework for further success in the community. As of late 2020, a welcome center has been completed in the Union, helping to meet another important need in the community.





3.16. Sullivan County Agricultural Districts. (Community Planning and Environmental Associates)

Located at the rear of the Union property, the **Narrowsburg Farmers' Market** is held every Saturday from mid-May through October, and a Thanksgiving market day in November. Incorporating numerous vendors and other community participants, the market's website explains,

Cooperative marketing is the oldest form of commerce where public spaces are used to allow the community to not only buy goods, but also to gather. The farmers' market movement is the modern form of that public marketplace and the Narrowsburg Farmers' Market is proud to step into that role.

The market draws vendors from Pennsylvania and neighboring NY counties. Sullivan County's agricultural resources represent one of the largest economic sectors in Sullivan County. In 2012, agricultural industries, including agricultural production, support services, and manufacturing, directly contributed \$741.1 million in sales and nearly 1,500 jobs in the county. (iii.) Tusten lies on the southern portion of the extensive Agricultural District #1, which extends into portions of six other towns (Figure 3.16 above).

**Agritourism** in the county is growing and diversifying. Sullivan County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan includes Agritourism Enhancement as one of its priority initiatives, calling for "a need to develop new agritourism products, experiences, and events" and coordinate with existing stakeholders to make the county more "tourism friendly." Cornell Cooperative

Extension of Sullivan County describes how visitors seek experiences that directly connect with the what the area has to offer:

“... people are looking for an authentic experience that might link them to their past, or that teaches them something new. Visitors also want to get away from the stress of everyday routine and experience a seemingly simpler life.” - [sullivancountyculture.org/agritourism](http://sullivancountyculture.org/agritourism)

Tusten offers such visitor experiences with Fort Delaware, canoeing the river, and Logging Days, yet there is always opportunity to continue to diversify and attract new and return visitors. Continuing to highlight local restaurants that feature locally grown or raised products is also a popular draw for tourists and residents. It’s also important for the Town to continue to work cooperatively with other communities, attractions, and organizations to market and incorporate what makes Tusten unique within joint efforts.

The Sullivan County Visitors Association has led the development of several themed touring “trails,” including an Arts & Culture Trail and a Library Trail, both involving Narrowsburg directly. And the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway also operates as an economic development tool through regional packaging and promotion. New ways to expand on these initiatives will continue to present rewarding opportunities. Many New York State funding programs encourage inter-municipal cooperation. For example, Sullivan County Planning received a NYS Homes and Community Renewal award because they “creatively looked at the Scenic Byway (NYS Rt. 97) as a “main street” which allowed these three hamlets [Narrowsburg included] to qualify for the program.” (iv.) Tusten has many notable destinations and resources that contribute to regional strengths and can be incorporated within these larger wholes.

Proposals that are consistent with the State’s regional economic development plans will also increase prospects for funding awards. There are many Goals and Supporting Strategies in the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council’s Strategic Plan that offer direction for the development of projects in the Town. For example:

Goal III - “Leverage the region’s outstanding natural resources, tourism industry, and agriculture (green circle industries) in a “natural infrastructure” strategy that protects agriculture and the environment and recognizes these as important to tourism and as quality-of-life attributes that are critical to attracting and retaining high-quality jobs for all key industry sectors.” (v.)

### **3.4.2 Annual Events**

As described in the Historical, Cultural, and Recreational section, Tusten hosts a series of events that reflect the community’s heritage and enhance appreciation for the Town’s unique qualities. These events bolster economic activity and present opportunities to further leverage the benefits of tourism and community involvement.

### **3.4.3 Downtown River Connections**

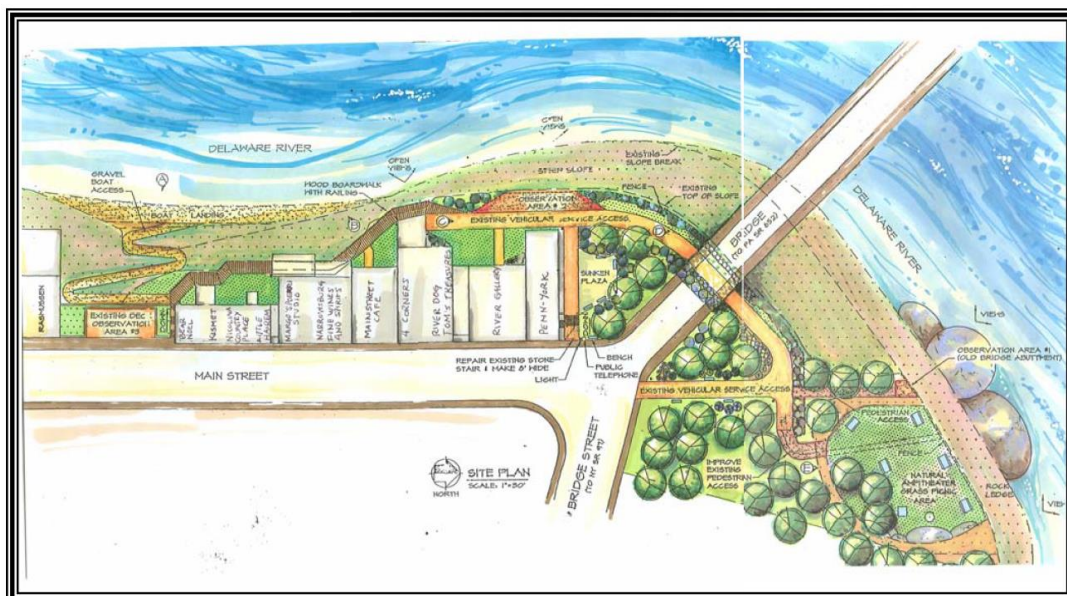
A consistent theme woven through the Town’s planning efforts over the years is to **improve the connections between Narrowsburg and the waterfront**. Specifically, the steep strip of land beginning at the foot of Bridge Street and running south between the row of buildings and the river has been a focal point of various design schemes. Benefits of the improvements include providing pedestrian connectivity between Veteran’s Park and the Observation Deck on Main

Street, creating direct pedestrian access to the river, restoration and stabilization of the riverbank, and increasing the overall attractiveness of the downtown experience.

The Town’s 2007 comprehensive plan incorporated a conceptual site plan (Figure 3.17 below) and a rendered perspective drawing from an earlier study. The Narrowsburg Master Plan (2013) made this pedestrian connection a primary action, against the backdrop of overall goals, including:

Create an atmosphere and physical environment that encourages and reinforces pedestrian activity within the hamlet area, with the understanding that this high quality pedestrian experience will improve the quality of life for Tusten residents, as well visitors to the Town, thereby creating potential economic benefits and economic growth within the Town.

Subsequent site designs included an intricate system of terraces and stone retention walls and a simpler “Riverwalk” facilitated by wooden decks and walkways. With some state grants, plans advanced; however, the project remains partially on private land. The section from Veteran’s Park to the first (northernmost) building is held by the NYSDOT. This section presents the opportunity to extend a pedestrian way adjacent to the vehicular drive to the point of the private boundary. An observation node could be located here. This will benefit the community, whether or not the continuation onto private land is realized. The next proposed section, across the three private parcels, will necessitate dialogue with the landowners to ascertain interest and the furtherance of implementation. At the southern point of this Riverwalk is the recently rebuilt Observation Deck, a popular and downtown gathering space and scenic viewpoint. Below the deck, the slope that connects with the river is not nearly as precipitous as nearby outcrops. The conceptual site plan illustrates a switchback leading to the river on this Town-owned parcel.



3.17. Narrowsburg Riverwalk Schematic Plan (Tusten Comprehensive Plan 2007; Shepstone Management, 1996)

### **3.4.4 Railroad Connections**

The active railroad line running the length of the Upper Delaware Valley (formerly the New York & Erie Railroad) is leased by the Central New York Railroad Corporation from Norfolk and Southern. The line is used for commercial purposes only. Currently, passenger service is not feasible for many reasons. The railroad has two customers in Narrowsburg – Narrowsburg Feed & Grain Company and Narrowsburg Lumber. Cochection also has a feed store served by the railroad. Other than these stops, the rail line operates primarily as a “short line,” or connector, between North Bergen, New Jersey and Binghamton, New York, connecting with Class 1 railroads in both locations. Class 1 is defined as those railroads being in the highest bracket of annual carrier operating revenues.

CNYRR is open to considering new customers and products to transport. Products could be brought into or out of the region. Although any additional customers would use the sidings in Narrowsburg, a company need not be located directly adjacent to the rail line; transloading can be used to move materials to or from other locations. Several factors bear upon economic feasibility, including type of material and availability of land. Increasing awareness of the railroad as a potential economic tool is a strategy that can be activated.

### **3.4.5 Internet Upgrades and Expansion**

The extension of **high-speed internet** into rural areas has been a persistent impediment to economic development. As reinforced in survey results, Tusten has many quality-of-life pull factors, yet the survey also revealed that access to high-speed internet is the service that respondents desired the most. With the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, many push factors have influenced outward migration from more densely populated areas. In considering relocation options, high-speed internet is a critical decision-making component. The pandemic has instituted new methods of telecommuting and conducting business that depend on bandwidth to function effectively. Making high-speed internet more available will give Tusten a competitive advantage.

New York State set forth an ambitious agenda with its New NY Broadband Program, allocating \$500 million beginning in 2015. The program has supported projects to deliver high-speed Internet access to Unserved and Underserved areas of the State. An “Unserved” area is defined as an area where the fastest available advertised Internet download speed offered by a wireline-based provider is less than 25 Mbps. An “Underserved” area is defined as an area where broadband service is only available from a wireline-based provider at advertised Internet download speeds between 25 Mbps and 99 Mbps. (Source: nysbroadband.ny.gov) According to the New York State Residential Broadband Availability Map (accessed 6/20), the vast majority of Sullivan County is underserved. Additionally, the fastest available advertised Internet download speeds often exceed the actual speeds, as confirmed by individual speed tests conducted in the Town. The affordability of costs also factors into the equation of what constitutes “availability.”

State Broadband Program grants to providers serving Tusten have supported upgrades and expansion of high-speed internet. The Tusten-Cochection Branch of the Western Sullivan Public Library (in Narrowsburg) received a federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program award to upgrade its computer facilities. Sullivan County began a wireless broadband pilot

project in 2019, with testing across the county being conducted in 2020. Other advancements include a 2020 bill in the state senate to require the Public Service Commission to assess the availability, affordability and reliability of high-speed internet and broadband in New York State and produce a detailed map on its website that indicates internet access, speeds and cost of service by location. In August 2020, the county legislature created the Sullivan Broadband Local Development Corporation (LDC) to oversee the implementation of the County's Wireless Broadband Access Project, with a goal of providing wireless broadband service Countywide.

Expanding and improving cellular service is also a related need, expressed by residents in the survey and the CPC. Cellular expansion will involve identification of gaps, potential locations of new facilities, and working with landowners to site these facilities. In order to achieve further progress with internet and cellular services, the Town will need to continue to engage in regular dialogue with providers and work closely with elected state representatives to effect the needed changes.

#### **3.4.6 Retaining and Attracting Youth**

As indicated in the Summary of Town Statistics and reflected across many areas in upstate New York, Tusten's 18-44 age group has experienced decreasing percentages while the population continues to age. These trends pose challenges as numbers of people in their prime childbearing and working years continue to decline. Yet population statistic summaries and news reports typically focus on overall trends, in this case *net* migration. Net migration is the difference between the *in-migration rate* and the *out-migration rate*. Net migration loss is not necessarily a sole reflection of high out-migration rates, as it can be influenced by low in-migration rates. Findings in recent years show that Upstate New York experiences very low in-migration rates, while out-migration rates are not unusually high. (vi.) Efforts to retain youth should be active and continue, while strategies to attract younger people should also be employed.

#### **3.4.7 Business Development and Workforce Training**

Survey results indicated that improved job opportunities and more classroom and internet based continuing education would be beneficial for the community. There are many resources that can help the Town identify gaps in job opportunities and orient training programs to help meet related needs.

The **Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development** is a private not-for-profit corporation with a team of economic development professionals that works on attracting larger industries and providing technical assistance and financing options for small business development. "The Partnership is currently focused on attracting businesses that will expand and enhance the existing base of tourism, light manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, agribusiness, and green development industry clusters." The Partnership's funding opportunities complement programs administered by Sullivan County Planning, including the Agri-Business and the Micro-Enterprise Revolving Loan Funds.

The **Delaware Valley Job Corps Center** in Callicoon provides career technical skills training in ten high-growth industry sectors to eligible young people. The on-campus educational and training facility also has academic programs and placement assistance for graduates. The Center

has also worked with area organizations and businesses on employment related training programs.

Employment and computer skills training programs are also conducted by the **Western Sullivan Public Library** [see also Community Services and Infrastructure section] at its branches in Narrowsburg, Callicoon, and Jeffersonville. The library branches have Public Computer Centers with high-speed internet, multiple workstations, and technical support services. Programming is responsive to individual and area needs and can be adjusted accordingly.

These resources are complemented by **the Sullivan County Center for Workforce Development**, which offers a full range of job seeking and career exploration services. And the NYS Office of Workforce Development has been driven by a program that has made grants available to help meet businesses' workforce needs, improve regional talent pipelines, enhance the flexibility and adaptability of local workforce entities, and expand workplace learning opportunities.

### **3.4.8 Recommendations**

#### **Coordination**

a) The town board will establish a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) to assist in carrying out the recommendations of the plan. Given the breadth of recommendations in this section, the formation of a specialized group or task force, within or in addition to the CPIC, is a consideration that could be further explored. Membership could include representation of key partners in the community (Town Board, Chamber, Business) as well as specific individuals, experts, organizations, county staff, or Town-appointed boards. Additional suggested activities of this group (or the CPIC) include engaging with the realty community and learning about the motivations and interests of newcomers; conducting outreach to seasonal and new residents to attract business relocation; and exploring education opportunities for hospitality and retail workers to become familiar with the area's history and resources, so they can be ambassadors to enhance visitor experiences and promote pride of place.

b) Keep apprised of funding programs and other means of assistance that can support the recommendations of this section., Maintain awareness of the current activities of related county and state initiatives, e.g. the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council.

#### **Tourism**

c) Expand upon the excellent information on the Chamber's website by including additional material promoting the Town as a desirable place to live, work, play, and locate a business. Promotional information could be added to the Chamber's website and/or linked to and integrated within the Town's website, which already has some of this type of content. Consider videos and other means to further promote the Town's amenities to attract younger people and families.

d) Explore the development of more off-season tourism and recreation options, including new events or promotional packages in partnership with businesses. For example, businesses can donate to the packages (e.g. an overnight stay or river trip) and participants sign up using email –

and agreeing to receive further information. After winners are announced, the collected email contacts can be used to survey interests and preferences to help develop audiences and tailor future activities.

e) Continue to be actively involved in regional tourism promotion efforts, including those of the Sullivan County Visitor's Association and the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway.

f) Explore and encourage a weekend bus line or similar initiative that brings visitors to the Town on a regular basis. *[After resolution and recovery of current pandemic.]*

### Walkable Community

g) Promote and develop Narrowsburg as a walkable community *[see also Recreation section and Narrowsburg Master Plan]*. Conduct a walking audit to inventory existing conditions, identify priorities for improvements, and pursue funding opportunities and other mechanisms to improve walkability.

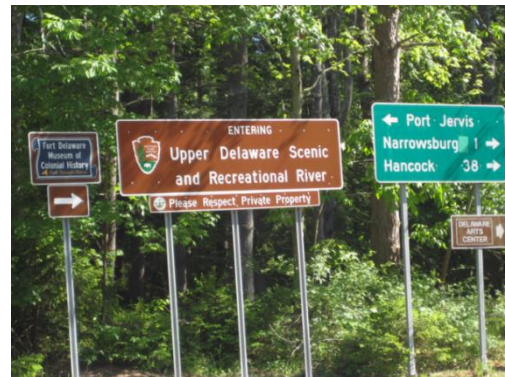
h) Revisit the concept of creating a tunnel beneath the railroad to connect the Pete's Plaza area with DeMauro Lane, this being an important example of establishing important pedestrian connections.

i) Pursue a phased approach in developing improved connections with the river in Narrowsburg. To advance the Riverwalk pedestrian project, consider first developing a physical connection between the observation deck and the riverfront on Town-owned property; then developing a pedestrian connection between Veteran's Park and the south side of the bridge (working with NYSDOT to get land use approval and identify related requirements). During these initial phases, work with landowners and identify incentives and opportunities to complete the connection between the Observation Deck and Veteran's Park in the next phase.

### Interpretation and Events

j) Develop a self-guided heritage tour of the Town, building upon existing efforts, e.g. Logging Days tour.

k) Work with the NPS to develop more interpretive information on the significance of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. Signs for the designated corridor posted at prominent locations will benefit from additional guidance aimed at educating visitors and directing them to key locations.



3.18. Signs at Intersection of State Routes 52 and 97

l) Continue to help sustain annual events by cooperating with organizational partners and exploring ways to enhance related tourism activities.

### Land Use

- m) Encourage context-appropriate small business and home-occupation development in and around hamlets, consistent with the R2 Zone intent.
- n) Examine the home occupation requirements and other sections of the zoning law that might be improved to help facilitate small businesses and encourage mixed use and walkability in hamlet areas.
- o) Explore and encourage the development of low-impact, light industry and commercial businesses and identify appropriate locations; and work with landowners to explore potential sites and develop project readiness.
- p) Explore and develop more options for using Boy Scout Camp lands. The partnership with the Boy Scouts has enabled the Empire State Road Rally to be successful. Other opportunities include opening more trails for public use, including cross country skiing in the winter, or creating a “gravel grinder” cycling event on the vast network of unpaved roads (see Tour of the Battenkill).

### **Infrastructure**

- q) Identify existing high-speed internet broadband areas and work to close service gaps.
- r) Pursue more direct and ongoing involvement with county (Sullivan County Broadband Local Development Corp) and legislative efforts to increase high-speed internet, e.g. status of county wireless experiment, advocacy for state legislation, increased dialogue with providers, and Town membership on task forces.
- s) Expand high-speed locations for new or existing office space and promote telecommuting job opportunities.
- t) Work with economic development specialists to explore and assist the development of business opportunities associated with railroad connections

### **Youth Involvement**

- u) Strengthen partnerships between schools, businesses, the library, the Youth Commission, the Town Board, and others to continue to work together to build awareness of jobs and careers for youth and to help create new opportunities.
- v) Explore and pursue apprenticeships with local businesses.
- w) Participate in and help develop career-oriented events and encourage greater youth participation in civic and community activities to help enhance their appreciation of the Town. Reinforce the message that the Town and region have the resources to assist youth to stay in the area.

### **Business Development**

- x) Identify, encourage, and attract the types of businesses that complement and diversify the Town’s existing businesses.



- y) Encourage and support further entrepreneurship opportunities through training, workshops, partnership dialogue, and highlighting success stories.
- z) Build on the success of the Narrowsburg Union by attracting additional funding and assistance for start-up and small businesses, e.g. business incubator grants.
- aa) Explore further expansion of SUNY Sullivan classes and training programs in the Town.
- bb) Identify and promote office and building space for businesses in the community; maintain an inventory of available business spaces and properties and promote these opportunities.

## **3.5 Housing**

### **3.5.1 Goals**

- Encourage a range of quality housing for all ages and income levels while maintaining the character of the community.
- Address the need for affordable and senior housing through existing programs and by fostering new initiatives and partnerships.
- Continue to accommodate growth through improvements to land use policies, infrastructure, and by implementing the related recommendations in this plan.

As expressed in this plan, the attractiveness of Tusten as a desirable place to live, work, and recreate is a central influence on the Town’s housing. The traveling distance to NY-NJ metropolitan area, the appeal of the hamlet of Narrowsburg, the location along the river, and the overall rural atmosphere are major assets for existing and prospective residents. Recent trends, including those related to the COVID-19 Pandemic, have emphasized the value of these amenities, and therefore have affected the current and future availability of housing in the Town. This section identifies these trends and includes additional census data, complementing the housing information presented in the Summary of Town Statistics. Also contributing to this chapter is residents’ input on housing. “Availability of housing for senior citizens” and “Availability of affordable housing to local residents” were ranked as top issues (of five choices), respectively, under the housing question (Question 9) in the Comprehensive Plan Survey.

### **3.5.2 Occupancy Status**

Of the 1138 housing units recorded in the Town for the 2010 Census, 652 were occupied, and 486 were vacant. In the Narrowsburg CDP, the 2010 Census listed 266 housing units – 190 occupied and 76 vacant.

### 3.5.3 Vacancy Status

The US Census lists a housing unit as vacant if no one is living in it at the time the census is conducted, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. In addition, a vacant unit may be one which is entirely occupied by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere. The seasonal, recreational, or occasional use category includes second homeowners and hunting cabins, which in Tusten and Sullivan County contribute to noticeable fluctuations in seasonal populations. It is noted that April 1 is the reference day (for recording data) used for the US Census. Many of Tusten’s seasonal residents were not in Tusten on this date, so the information submitted on place of residence was not recorded for Tusten.

Vacancy Status	Tusten	N’burg
Total:	486	76
For rent	19	5
Rented, not occupied	0	0
For sale only	38	13
Sold, not occupied	2	1
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	373	47
For migrant workers	0	0
Other vacant	54	10

3.19. Vacancy Status (2010 US Census)

Sullivan County undertook a [comprehensive study on second homeowners](#), which reveals many notable statistics, examines the economic and social roles of this population, and charts their behavioral characteristics. Although this study was completed in 2008, it does provide useful information into this population and its influences on the county’s communities. Recent demographic trends (discussed below) are heavily influencing the real estate market, and there is indication that many second homeowners are transitioning to full-time residency in the Town and the region. Another factor in the composition of housing in the Town is the presence of short-term rentals. The current real estate boom may fuel an increase in the demand for these rentals; however, owners of these homes may be inclined to occupy them on a full-time basis or put them on the market.

### 3.5.5 Tenure

Tenure refers to the distinction between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units.

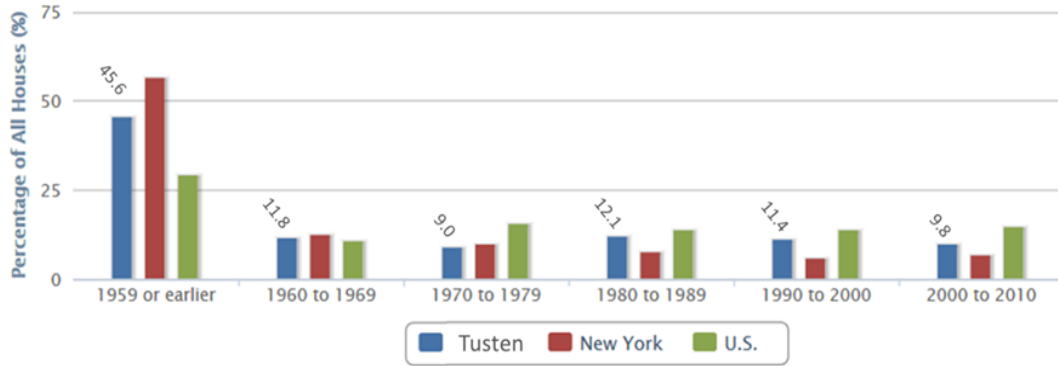
Tenure statistics, along with related information on home values and income, help determine adequacy and affordability of housing and can be instrumental in the creation of and funding for housing related programs.

Tenure – Occupied Housing Units	Tusten	N’burg
Total population in occupied housing units:	1445	431
Owned with a mortgage or a loan	782	255
Owned free and clear	387	90
Renter occupied	276	86

3.20. Tenure -- Occupied Housing Units (2010 US Census)

### 3.5.6 Year Structure Built

This statistic factors into the value of a house, along with the maintenance and remodeling of a home over time when it’s placed on the market. The age of the structure can also contribute to the need for assistance in repairing and upgrading. The Tusten graph (Figure 3.21). illustrates that more than half of the structures in the Town were built prior to 1970 and that construction has been consistent and relatively comparable to the state and the nation.



3.21. Town of Tusten, Year Structure Built Distribution, 2010-2014 (US Census; USA.com)

Data from the Town also shows consistency in the rate of new-home construction over the past decade (Figure 3.22). An increase in municipal searches is also noted. A municipal search is a process to gather information about a particular property, and it indicates real estate transaction activities. In Narrowsburg, however, the data indicate that the majority of buildout has occurred, and future growth will occur predominantly outside the designated hamlet area. (Figure 3.23)

Year	Total Permits	Permits for New Homes	Munic. Searches
2009	112	10	53
2010	91	18	49
2011	105	13	47
2012	93	4	40
2013	94	6	41
2014	95	9	60
2015	86	8	70
2016	97	6	67
2017	77	8	62
2018	113	7	62
2019	143	9	81
2020*	101	4	89

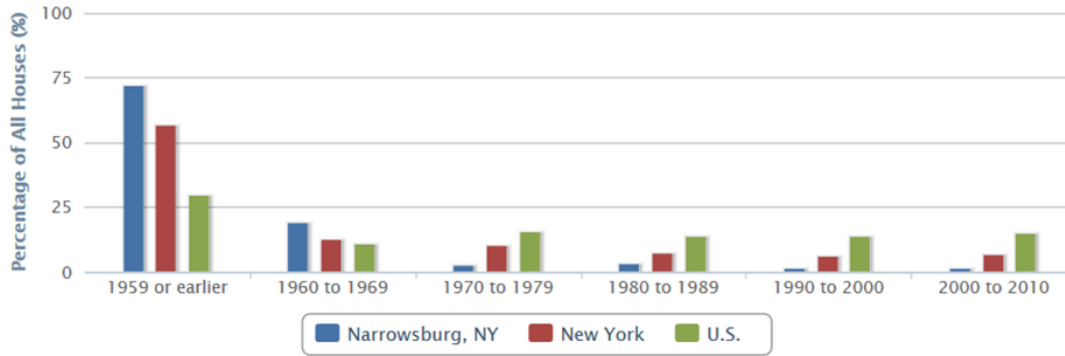
3.22. Select Permit Activities. \*As of Oct. 2020. (Tusten Building Dept.)

### 3.5.6 Affordable Housing

According to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs places these households outside of what is considered affordable.

Housing cost percentages are tracked in ACS (American Community Survey) estimates and are supported by census data related to income. A report, Housing Affordability in New York State (March 2014, NYS Office of the State Comptroller), includes information on trends and factors contributing to affordability, and it provides affordable housing rankings for the state's 62 counties. Sullivan County is recorded as having 51 percent of renters as spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs (the affordability threshold), placing the county the 48th highest out of the state's 62 counties. For owners, 34.9 percent of county households were above the affordability threshold, ranking the county 50th of 62.

More recent data for Tusten (2018 ACS 5-year estimates) show the Town having 34.6 of renter-occupied households and 38.3 percent of owner-occupied households above the affordability threshold. While ACS data includes margins of error, research for previous years in Tusten and searches of comparative data for nearby towns yield consistency in illustrating the generally widespread and ongoing affordability issue. Within the data, income brackets from the 'Less than \$20,000' annual income category to the \$34,999 level typically illustrate the highest percentages above the threshold.



3.23. *Narrowsburg CDP, Year Structure Built Distribution, 2010-2014 (US Census; USA.com)*

### 3.5.7 Senior Housing

As in the Town’s previous comprehensive plan, the provision of senior housing remains an identified need. This need is consistent with region and statewide findings, as it relates to demographic trends of an aging population and the corresponding demand for housing and related services. A report, *Senior Housing in New York State*, notes that an estimated 1 in 5 NYS residents will be aged 65+ by the year 2040, while the 85+ age group will grow by nearly 48% between 2010 and 2040. **(vii.)** The report examines senior housing in depth and includes reviews of innovative housing and services models at the state and national levels.

Tusten recognizes the benefits of locating senior housing in or adjacent to the hamlet of Narrowsburg. The Town’s zoning law defines senior housing and allows it as a special use in the Downtown Business, the General Residential, and the Roadside Business Districts. The Town’s support for senior housing also coincides with the related services reviewed in the Community Services and Infrastructure section. Many of these services support seniors living in their homes, reflecting another finding of the report: that 9 in 10 seniors express a strong desire to remain in their own home and/or in their local community for as long as possible. **(viii.)**

Reasons underlying the desire to stay at home include the need to stay socially active in a neighborhood, where relationships support and enrich the life experiences of seniors. The newer trends in housing for seniors are creating these benefits and moving away from the age-separated arrangements that have long dominated housing options. Mixed age, mixed use senior living, and intergenerational housing are among the terms describing the newer forms of development. These communities, mixing seniors with families and/or students for example, help seniors maintain and strengthen social connections. The addition of complementary uses, such as restaurants, retail, healthcare, pools, and spas, are increasing demand. Mixed use and age-diverse communities can also be supported by utilizing existing building stock in hamlet areas.

### 3.5.8 Recent Trends

In addition to census and ACS data, a series of recent and interrelated influences help portrait current housing conditions and contribute to the development of this plan’s recommendations.

Unquestionably, the COVID-19 Pandemic has created significant demand for housing outside of more densely populated areas. News articles relate stories of the real estate “frenzy” with its skyrocketing prices, bidding wars, and heavy demand. Prospective buyers seek high-speed

internet and cell-service, underscoring the importance of these pre-pandemic needs. Businesses too are actively exploring locations in Sullivan County, with the availability of the aforementioned communication services being paramount in decision-making.

Even before the pandemic, the lack of availability of affordable housing was placing stress on local buyers and renters due to increase in prices. The appeal of the area to those with adequate financial means, coupled with an active real estate market and a challenging local employment setting, are economic factors that are now further complicated by the pandemic. The increase and popularity of short-term rentals also figures into the affordability equation.

The rapid influx of interested buyers is creating a demand for housing that may outpace the area's current ability to build new homes. As the supply of skilled workers and availability of materials matches the demand, this should have positive impacts on the construction industry. Land sales are also increasing. In 2020, regional growth activities between Tusten and the Greater New York City Metropolitan Area include an increase in residential subdivisions and development proposals.

The Town has recently been experiencing an increase in residential building activities and land-use proposals. Retaining rural character will depend on guidance provided by land use policies and regulations that continue to reinforce efficient use of land. Related growth strategies should include incentives and infrastructure to complement growth in and around the hamlet of Narrowsburg. The creation of an Open Space Plan will identify sensitive areas to be protected and help preserve open spaces that will serve as networks to help meet the recreation needs of future residents. There is also opportunity for Tusten to explore artist housing initiatives which can offer affordable options while reinforcing one of the area's cultural strengths.

### **3.5.9 Recommendations**

a) Explore and pursue options for building capacity and improving organization to address housing challenges. Options include increasing communications and activities with key partners, including other towns; elected officials at the county, state, and federal levels; regional employers; county staff; developers; the Sullivan County Land Bank; and state agencies. The Town can host workshops and presentations with experts from assistance-providing agencies or organizations that provide valuable guidance for those with housing related needs.

b) Consider the establishment of a short-term rental registration program. This will enable the Town to have a better understanding of these operations: number, location, impacts on the neighborhood, safety and code compliance, and potential long-term effects on housing in the Town. This information can support the development of strategies and tools that balance housing needs for residents with vacation rental opportunities. Local efforts should be aligned with the county's progress on this topic.

c) Continue to ensure that zoning, subdivision, and related land use laws help meet housing needs and objectives.

The Town's Zoning Review Committee can incorporate adjustments into existing regulations, draft provisions for new sections, and recommend these improvements to the Town Board for

adoption. One area of the regulations to be considered is the density requirements in hamlets. Any potential changes to these provisions in Narrowsburg need to accommodate consideration of water and sewer service in and adjacent to the hamlet. In turn, planning for any potential expansion of these services will be guided in part by the baseline feasibility assessment for each of these services (see the discussion in recommendations for water and sewer services in Section 3.3).

A tool that can assist in facilitating affordable housing is incentive zoning. Incentive zoning is an innovative and flexible technique providing a system of exchanging bonuses for community amenities. Authorized in Town Law §261-b., a town's local law lists both the types of bonuses that may be offered to the developer and the amenities the town can receive in exchange from the developer. (see also land use chapter)

The Town should also encourage housing in and adjacent to hamlets. The Town's zoning map (Figure 3.26) helps provide for a pattern of growth that, over time, will contribute to reinforcing the qualities that define the Town. Facilitating envisioned growth in priority areas can be assisted by incentive zoning, working with landowners, pre-designing specific sites, considering innovative reuse options, and, especially in the case of Narrowsburg, exploring other innovative techniques such as form-based zoning.

d) Encourage and support the development of new senior housing facilities, including age-diverse options as well as programs that assist seniors to live in their homes. Research on these topics will yield an abundance of innovative precedents, zoning techniques, and information from housing organizations, such as Rural Ulster Preservation Co., Inc. (RUPCO).

## **3.6 Regional Transportation**

### **3.6.1 Goals**

- Develop and enhance public transportation opportunities
- Work cooperatively with Sullivan County, adjacent municipalities, and other partners to improve transportation coordination in the greater Tusten area

Tusten's rural location and lower population density pose challenges to the delivery of public transportation options. The Town's distance to major thoroughfares is one contributing factor. From Narrowsburg, the distance to Interstate 84 at Milford, PA is 30 miles; to Rte. 17/ I-86 at Monticello is 26 miles; and the Hancock interchange at Rte. 17/ I-86 is 37 miles. While both State Routes 52 and 97 traverse the Town, the estimated annual average daily traffic on these routes illustrates the area's relatively low volumes. **(viii.)** With the major centers and employers occupying the eastern side of the county, the greater Tusten area does not drive demand and cost effectiveness for public transportation. These characteristics contribute to the Town's position in the "lowest need" category for public transportation (Sullivan County Coordinated Transportation Plan, 2015 (SCCTP). Additionally, no county-operated or private bus services currently serve Tusten.

However, the need for access to employment and other essential services for Sullivan County residents remains strong, while the costs of owning and maintaining a vehicle are significant cost-of-living factors for many individuals and households. Results from the comprehensive plan survey show that 43 percent of respondents are dissatisfied with transportation services and 35 percent are somewhat dissatisfied.

*A major need identified during the development of this plan as well as part of the impetus to prepare the plan is the need for access to employment. Many Sullivan County residents are not able to find or maintain employment because of a lack of transportation.” -- Sullivan County Coordinated Transportation Plan*

The Town’s needs were further articulated by the Tourism Focus Group that was part of the development of the SCCTP. The county plan’s discussion on “working with ShortLine to get a Narrowsburg stop on one of the regional routes” is consistent with this comprehensive plan’s recommendation to consider the reinstatement of a weekend bus line or similar initiative that brings visitors to the Town. While tourism-driven transportation activities are only part of larger needs, they can help spur more transportation services along the river corridor.

In addressing the county’s other transportation needs, the comprehensive SCCTP details the scope of county services and puts forth extensive information and strategies. In addition to county-operated bus routes (which were expanded in 2019), a host of county agencies and organizations help meet the transportation needs of certain population groups, including job seekers and seniors. The Center for Workforce Development, the Delaware Valley Job Corps, and the Sullivan County RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) are among key providers delivering much-needed services. Yet, according to the SCCTP, these services accounted for meeting approximately 10 percent of the need. The report continues, “The greatest gap in service is for those who are not participants in some program. Access to jobs, education, and services is limited for those who do not qualify for the various programs which provide transportation but have transportation needs.”

Given the imbalances of the population distribution in the county and the corresponding levels of services, the development and advancement of solutions to Tusten’s transportation needs can benefit from the formation of new partnerships. Many of Tusten’s challenges and assets are shared by adjacent towns. Connectivity along the Route 97 corridor is already evidenced by the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway and its participating municipalities. The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River involves active partnerships with the National Park Service and Pennsylvania municipalities focused on the river corridor. The Upper Delaware Council offers technical assistance grants and regular convening of stakeholders that share mutual concerns and opportunities. Transportation resources and assistance in Sullivan County are also present, but a focus on the western portion of the county could be better realized to address specific needs and potential solutions. In exploring cooperative success stories, consider the programs and accomplishments of the five-county [Getthere Mobility Management Program](#) (of South Central NY).

The SCCRP devotes significant focus to *transportation coordination*, incorporating its many benefits and putting forth numerous strategies and implementation plans. Much of the plan

serves to illustrate the means by which coordination is applied to reach potential solutions. A *local coordinating council* is one method to explore the implementation of a new service, for example. With many existing resources already in place, the convening of transportation partners to consider opportunities has immediate benefit. As noted in the SCCRP, these benefits include:

- Allows for greater input from the key transportation agencies in the region.
- Allows the members to share information and knowledge on a one-on-one basis.
- Provides greater opportunity to identify possible coordination actions.
- Increase in the integration of transit planning within the region.

Tusten is well positioned to explore transportation options to support the vitality of the Town's future. With a strong base in tourism, recreation, and the arts and the recent surge in real estate interest, improvements in public transportation will help complete what the Town has to offer for its current and prospective residents and visitors. The Town is served by quality highways that can support increased use, and the connection with Pennsylvania at Narrowsburg presents more opportunities to be explored.

### **3.6.2 Recommendations**

- a) Initiate and convene a dialogue with area partners to consider improved public transportation services; examine current county services (e.g. vanpool program for employers) and identify how these services meet, or do not meet, town needs.
- b) Continue to explore increased or new services with Shortline/ Coach USA; Catskill Carriage, and/ or other bus service providers along the Route 52 and Route 97 corridors. Involve B&Bs, short-term rental owners, and part-time residents to help ascertain demand.
- c) Work to improve transportation connections, as feasible, between Tusten and regional hubs, including Port Jervis (Metro North train service), Honesdale, PA, and Monticello.
- d) Continue to support and share information for existing transportation programs for residents, including specialized programs for senior citizens and those with disabilities
- e) Participate in the implementation of the Sullivan County Coordinated Transportation Plan

## **3.7 Land Use**

### **3.7.1 Goals**

- Balance growth of all land uses with conservation of the Town's scenic and rural character and environmental integrity
- Continue to improve land use regulations to meet the objectives of this plan and to help address emerging land use issues
- Explore the use of innovative techniques to help project changes in land use over time and to enhance land use regulations



The Town’s land-use character is evident by the predominant expanses of rural, scenic, and forested landscapes, interspersed with low-density residential development. This pattern is complemented by the densely settled historic hamlet of Narrowsburg, as well as other smaller outlying hamlets. The Town’s sense of place, unspoiled by suburban or commercial development, is a major factor contributing to residents’ appreciation of where they live. Survey results from this plan and the Town’s previous comprehensive plan show strong appreciation in the Town’s assets of open space and scenery; clean water and air; small-town atmosphere; and proximity to the Delaware River.

### 3.7.2 Land Use Regulatory Tools

Factors that contribute to sustaining Tusten’s quality of life include the tools that are in place to help balance these amenities with land-use development. These tools include the Town’s zoning, subdivision, and related local laws, as well as the overlying management structure of the River Management Plan in the Delaware River corridor.

Survey results from the this and the Town’s previous comprehensive plan indicate consistent satisfaction with the zoning regulations. This satisfaction likely stems from the general perception that the zoning regulations are accomplishing their purpose. Yet it is the details that need to be reviewed and amended periodically to help ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the regulations.

	2007	2020
Dissatisfied	13.9 %	11.5 %
Somewhat Dissatisfied	21.1 %	23.6 %
Somewhat Satisfied	56.6 %	52.8 %
Very Satisfied	8.4 %	12.3 %

3.24. Survey Respondents’ Level of Satisfaction with Tusten Zoning Regulations

The zoning law sets the purposes for each of the Town’s seven primary zoning districts, which largely reflect the underlying, historical land uses. The law’s Schedule of District Regulations includes development standards, e.g. allowable uses, lot size, setbacks, as well as the required review processes, including Site Plan Review and Special Use Permit. Administration of the zoning law by Town officials and application of the regulations by the planning board and zoning board of appeals help ensure that the development process is conducted in accordance with the zoning and other applicable state regulations. The zoning map (Figure 3.23) illustrates the location and extent of the districts and shows the two districts corresponding with the River Management Plan: Scenic River (SR) and Recreational River (RR). (See inset.) A zoning map contributes to land-use predictability over time. It is design by general organization, helping to match the land uses and their characteristics with the location where they can grow in accordance with the zoning regulations. A land use map (Figure 3.24) is a spatial representation of the real property classification of each parcel and is used for property tax assessment purposes. The map shows lands owned by the Boy Scouts as Institutional, while many of the Private Conservation Lands reflect enrollment in the New York Forest Tax Law Program (commonly known as “480a” which refers to the section of the state code that governs

#### Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

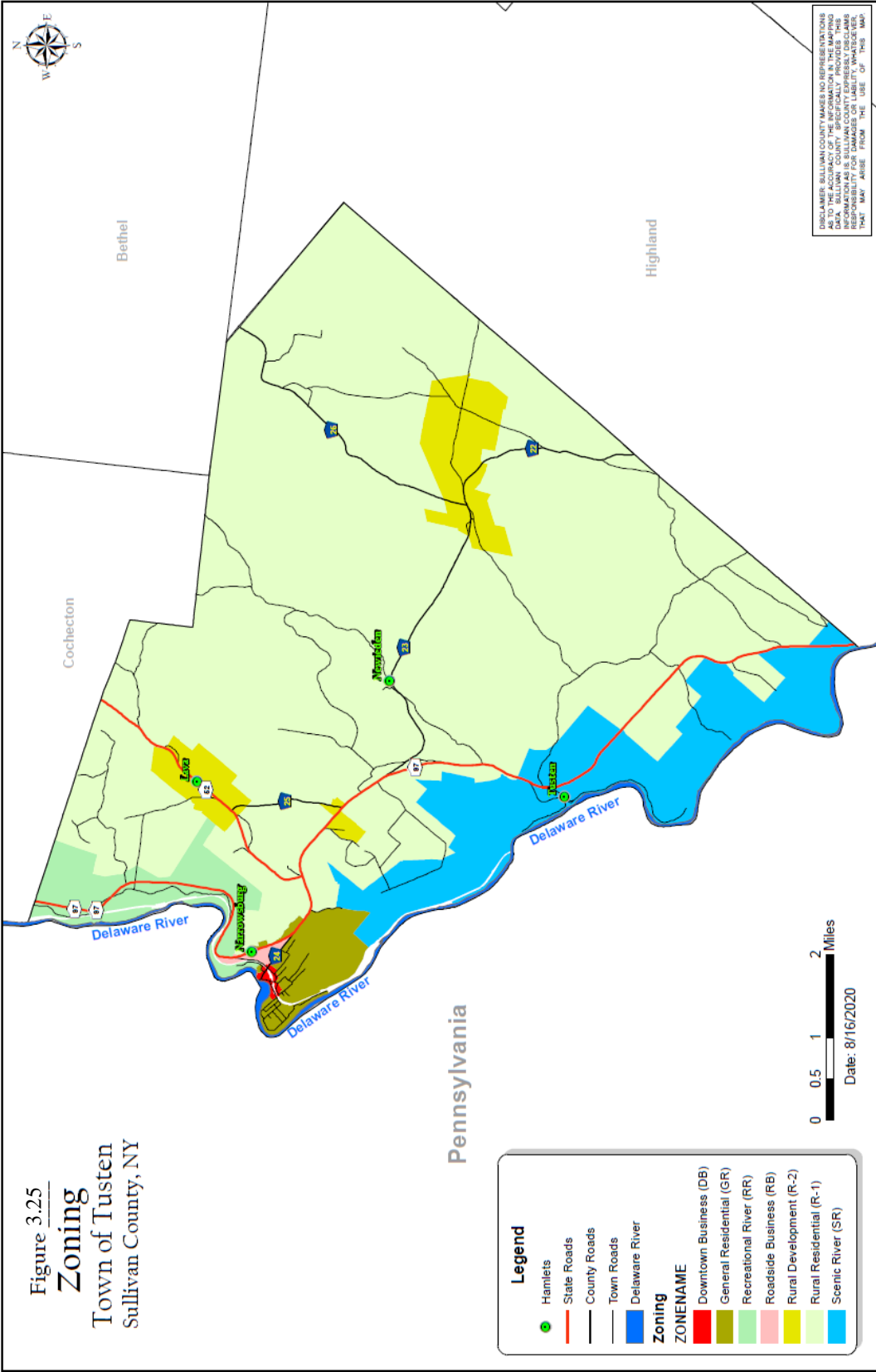
The River Management Plan guides the protection of the river corridor through a partnership involving the National Park Service, the Upper Delaware Council, the Delaware River Basin Commission, and the 13 local governments within the corridor in New York and Pennsylvania. Local government actions, including the adoption and amendment of zoning and comprehensive plans must demonstrate substantial conformance with the Land and Water Use Guidelines (LWUG) that apply to the designated corridor areas. The SR and RR districts act as overlay districts.

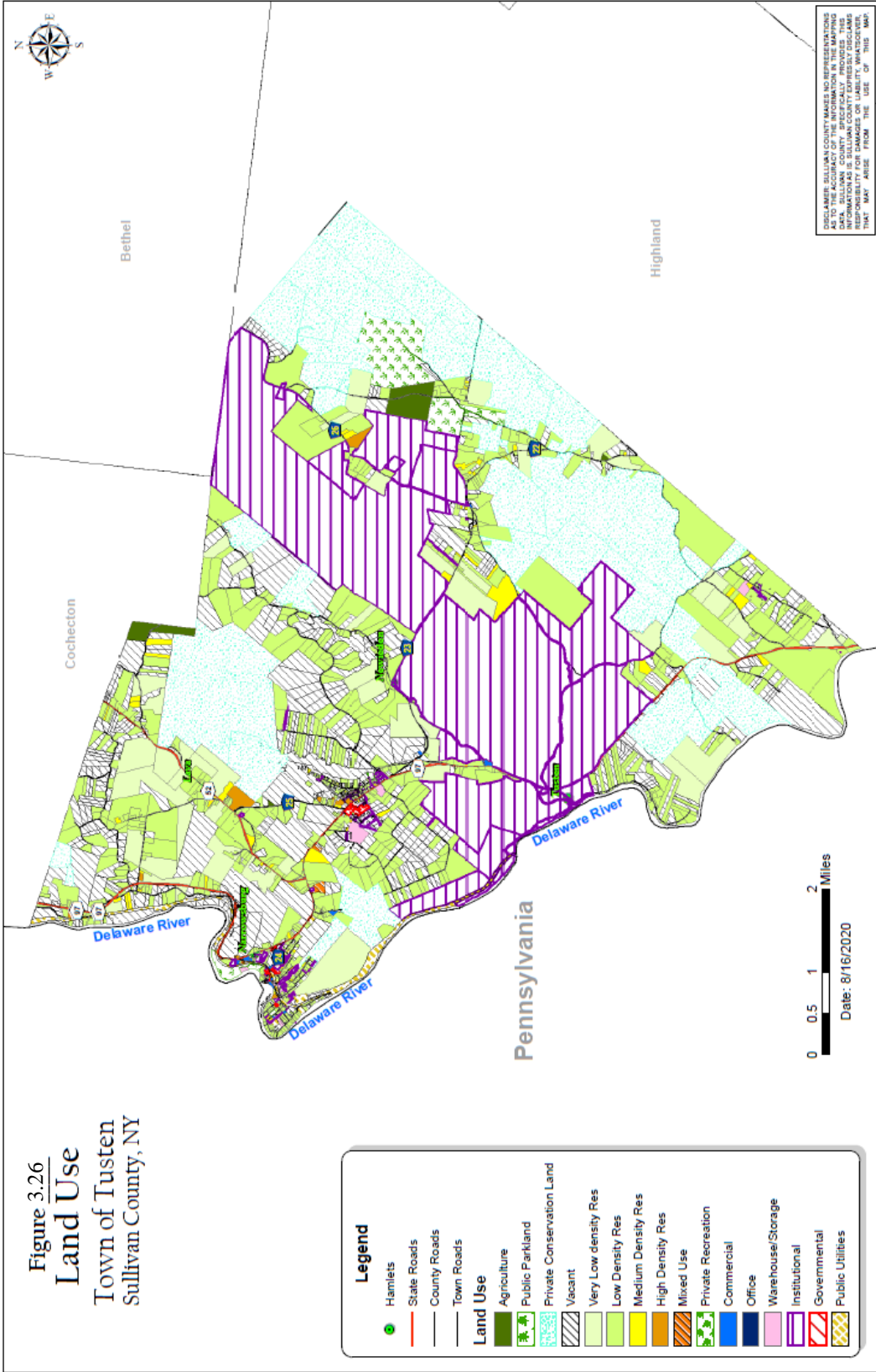
it). The program enables up to 80% reduction in taxes, provided forests are managed as woodlots for a period of ten years. The map also shows parcel sizes, giving a sense of current density and potential growth. Many parcels can be further subdivided, and many are vacant.

When the land use and zoning maps are combined and overlaid with maps of the natural systems (wetlands, forests, aquifers, slopes) and infrastructure systems (roads, drinking water supply, wastewater treatment, stormwater management), a clearer picture of existing land use relationships emerges. Understanding these relationships assists with projecting land use change into the future. A *build-out analysis* can be conducted to project the impact of the current regulations on future development. This exercise illustrates through mapping and charts what the community might look like if all the buildable land were developed in accordance with the regulations. The results of the analysis can be very revealing, and they can be compared to the community's vision. If the results of the projected development are incompatible with the community's vision, then the value of the analysis is realized when land use regulations are adjusted to achieve more balanced growth, in terms of extent, pattern, and conservation of resources.

Although a much fuller build-out may not occur for many years, a statement from the Town's previous comprehensive plan is carried forward as it illustrates the ongoing importance of guiding change through land use regulations.

“It is clear that the Town is rich in open space and natural resources and that it relies on the many ecological functions provided by the natural environment within the Town. It is also clear that the influx of new residents and additional development pressures will reach a point where people, houses, cars and roads will begin to tip the scale away from this abundance. How the Town should proceed in the next 10 years in terms of zoning and subdivision ordinances and in identifying and protecting the Town's natural and ecological resources will be crucial to the success and vitality of the Town in the future.”





### 3.7.3 Zoning Revisions

Since the previous comprehensive plan in 2007, several zoning amendments have been prepared and adopted. In 2011, the Town's zoning regulations were revised and expanded extensively. In 2013, additional amendments were drafted. Although not adopted at the time, they continue to inform ongoing revision efforts. In 2016, the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations were the subject of a complimentary review by the Natural Lands Trust (NLT), NLT's review centered on identifying ways to improve the regulations for water quality protection in the Delaware River Watershed. The Town then received an award via NLT from the William Penn Foundation to undertake the agreed-upon amendments. These included improvements to the conservation subdivision regulations, consistent with the 2007 Comprehensive Plan.

The first phase of the project included adjustments to the conservation subdivision section in the zoning regulations. Provisions of open space ownership, protection, and management were added, among other adjustments to better match the tool with the Town's preferences and land features. It was agreed that the creation of an open space plan (recommended in this and the 2007 comprehensive plan) would better guide the use of the conservation subdivision tool. Identifying and mapping priority conservation areas prior to emergence of proposed development will help design the future of the community by facilitating the location of residential neighborhoods with respect to the protected open spaces. Over time, these neighborhoods can benefit from adjacent *and* contiguous open space that is identified in the plan. Also included in the first phase of the amendment project, which resulted in the adoptions of the amendments in 2017, were numerous revisions to the subdivision law.

The second phase of drafting the water quality protection amendments to the zoning law includes a proposed stream corridor overlay district, lowered disturbance thresholds for Town review of clear-cutting activities, enhanced landscaping and parking requirements, inclusion of standards for best management practices for timber harvesting, and adjustments to stormwater protection regulations to be consistent with NYSDEC procedures and requirements. Clarification of the zoning board of appeals procedures and the addition of several parcels to the Downtown and Roadside Business Districts are also part of these draft amendments. During the process of developing these amendments, other zoning amendment needs arose, and the Town adopted revisions to the camping regulations and adopted a new law regulating the development and operation of solar energy systems. Finalizing and adopting the water quality protection measures remains a task to be completed and is a recommendation of this plan.

Also cited in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan is the concern that there needs better enforcement of unlicensed and unregistered vehicles, illegal signs, eye sore buildings and "junk" accumulating in yards. The survey for this 2020 Comprehensive Plan also included several similar comments. In 2018, draft local laws on Property Maintenance and Unsafe Buildings were drafted, public hearings were held, and numerous residents voiced opposition to the property maintenance law. In the absence of a local law, there are baseline provisions in the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code that can be enforced by the Town. This topic should continue to be monitored, and a local law more tailored to meet outstanding concerns could be considered.

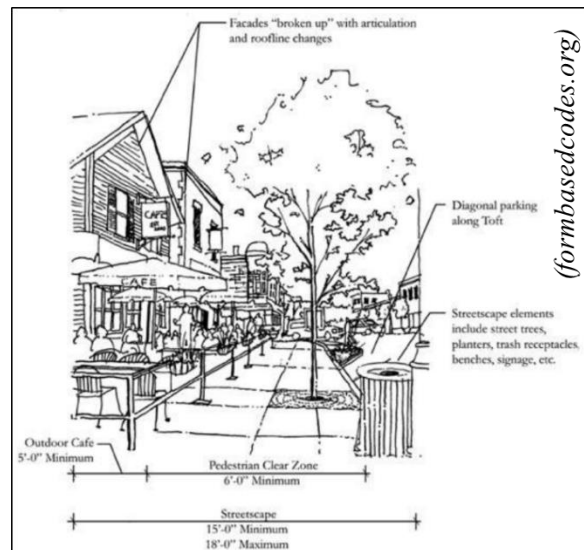
The need to review and adjust land use regulations is a continuing process. According to state statutes, all land use regulations need to be in conformance with a comprehensive plan. The role

of the Town’s Zoning Review (ZRC) has been instrumental in revising the regulations. Revisions to zoning may originate from recommendations in the comprehensive plan, land use related issues that arise in the community, and opportunities to improve procedures and application of the regulations by the planning board, zoning board of appeals, or the code enforcement officer. Presently identified land use topics to be considered for revisions by the ZRC include short-term rentals, small-scale livestock, improvements to the definitions and schedule of uses sections, ridgeline protection, fences, signs, and exploring ways to address the advent of tiny houses.

### 3.7.4 New Techniques

The ZRC has also expressed interest in exploring innovative zoning techniques, including form-based zoning for future commercial development along Kirks Road. Traditional zoning is use-based, meaning it is driven by the types of allowable uses, which are often separated by district. Form-based zoning focuses on achieving quality building forms and public spaces by employing physical dimensions as the organizing principle. By encouraging development that integrates elements reflecting historic downtowns, the resulting streetscape is accommodating of pedestrians, outdoor civic spaces, and mixed uses; as opposed to isolated uses in a more automobile-dependent setting. Form-based codes support the action for this area in the Narrowsburg Master Plan to “Create building massing and scale that captures scale and massing of Main Street.”

The creation and application of form-based codes is a long-term process going beyond the resources of many municipalities and involving experts. However, in the context of this comprehensive plan, it is incorporated to encourage the exploration of innovative techniques and consider potential ways to integrate them over time. Incorporating this type of content within training sessions for planning board members or inviting speakers on such topics are two ways to consider learning more about such topics. Coordination with other municipalities and the county can help further these efforts. In addition to training sessions on specialized topics, both the planning board and the zoning board of appeals should engage in training on core topics on a regular basis. State law requires four hours per year of training for members of these boards, and these requirements can be modified by the town board.



3.27. *Form-Based Codes: A Step-by-Step Guide for Communities. Chicago Metro. Agency for Planning*

Related but simpler efforts to improve effectiveness of project reviews include adopting illustrated design guidelines to support existing regulations. The addition of graphic materials helps articulate the purposes of the regulations and achieve desired outcomes for the community. Illustrations aid the communication process between the planning board and project applicants. Guidelines are often complementary – they are adopted in support of the written provisions of

the regulations and do not contain specific requirements. Design guidelines can support a host of areas including site design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and architecture. They can relate to special use permit, site plan review, or subdivision regulations. Examples of municipal design guidelines abound across New York State and beyond, and Sullivan County Planning can provide examples and assistance.

Form-Based Codes and Design Guidelines are two examples in a host of techniques available to municipalities for achieving built landscapes that reflect *Traditional Neighborhood Development, Smart Growth, or New Urbanism*. These terms refer to applying land use principles from the “toolbox” to encourage or require development that is in keeping community’s landscape character. It’s important to recognize and restate that Tusten’s and the region’s predominant landscape character exhibits, to a great degree, the very ideals envisioned by these tools. The region’s sense of place is greatly valued by residents and visitors and is a driving force in the area’s economic and environmental health. Sullivan County, in its 2020 Comprehensive Plan (2005) encourages cooperative strategies that support practices to sustain the regional sense of place, and it provides many resources for specific land use tools.

<p>Goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish regional cooperation in zoning that encourages mixed-use development with design and scale compatible with the existing neighborhood character, while preserving viewsheds, natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage Mixed Use Development.</li> <li>Ensure compatibility of design and scale with respect to buildings, streets and amenities and the surrounding neighborhood character.</li> </ul>
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Sullivan County 2020 Comprehensive Plan Excerpt

**3.7.5 Flooding and Stormwater Management**

The Town of Tusten has a Flood Damage Prevention Law and is part of the National Flood Insurance Program, managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Ongoing participation and eligibility in the National Flood Insurance Program require that each participating municipality ensures compliance with the local Flood Damage Prevention Law. This law involves careful review of proposed structures and other activities in the designated flood zones. Failure of any individual action to comply with the requirements of the law could result in revocation of flood insurance for the entire town. The Town Code Enforcement Officer serves as the designated administrator of the law and the primary point of contact.

The Flood Zone Map below shows the 100-year flood zones along the length of the Delaware River, the branches of Ten Mile Creek, and Dunn, Cow Swale, and Beaver Brooks. The hamlet of Narrowsburg has experienced significant flooding events, with some of these forcing evacuations, washing out bridges, and resulting in extensive damage to homes, commercial properties, and public infrastructure. The Sullivan County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) (2012) ranks flooding as the top hazard, notes that Sullivan County is one of three counties in NYS that has the highest number of Presidential Disaster Declarations for Flooding Events between 1953 and 2007. (As of 2021, the updated HMP is being completed. The document will be web-based and can be updated as actions are completed and additional needs are identified.)

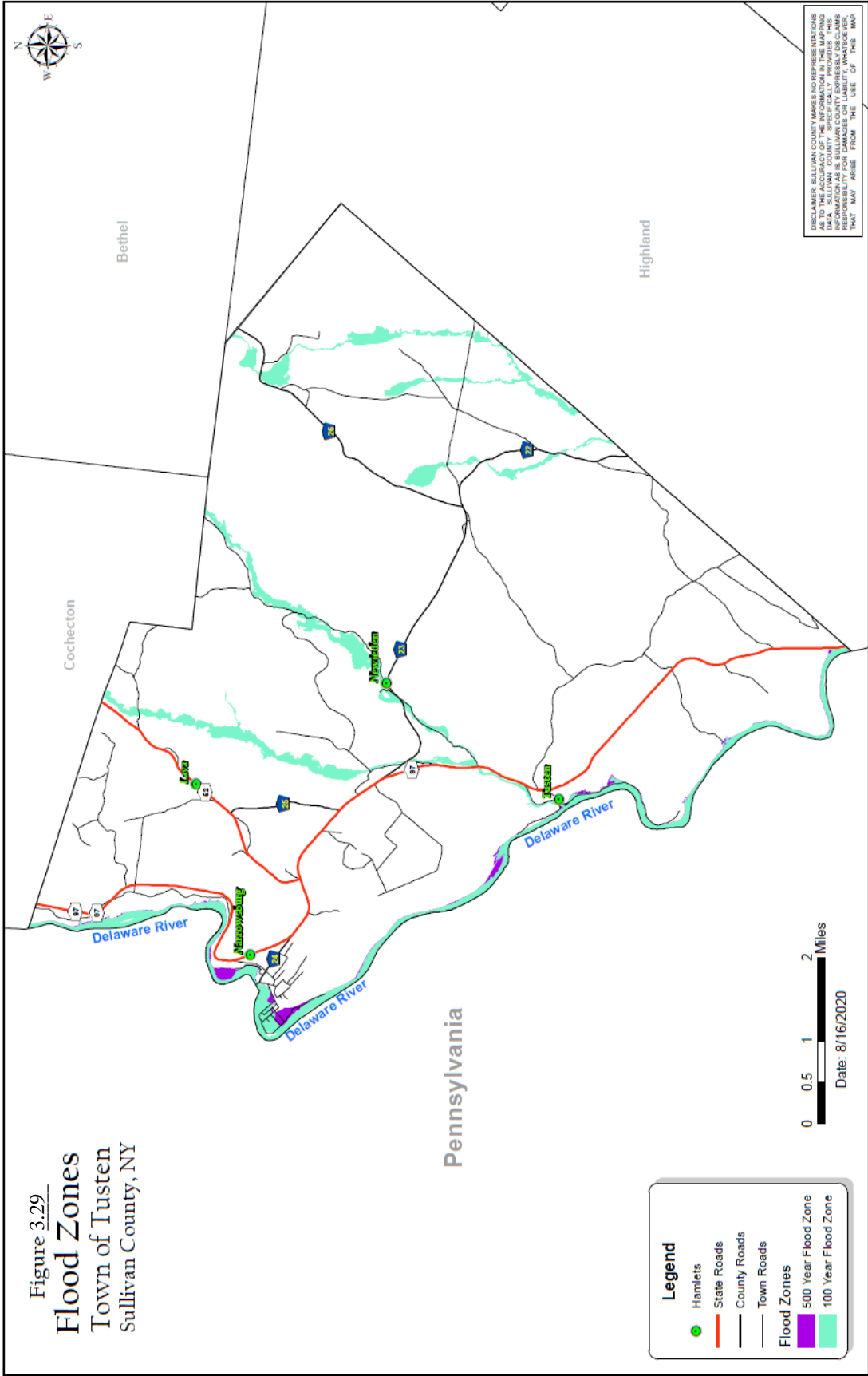
The purposes of the HMP are to effectively reduce future disaster damages, public expenditure, private losses, and community vulnerability to natural, technological, and man-made hazards; to develop a comprehensive multijurisdictional risk assessment; and to outline proposed mitigation actions that would minimize the costs and impacts of future disasters. Tusten's participation in both the 2012 and forthcoming plan included the development of town-specific mitigation actions that are consistent with the plan's overall mitigation goals and actions. These actions are critical in demonstrating need and enhancing preparedness for the Town.

The Town adopted a resolution to accept and adopt the 2012 HMP, agreeing "to reference and/or incorporate the HMP into the future local planning documents, codes, decisions, and regulations." (HMP p. 215) This same type of resolution is expected for the 2021 revision.

In addition to flood mitigation, the town has been active in resiliency planning. Bi-annual meetings involving utility companies, river corridor municipalities, county agencies, and others resulted in a series of actions to strengthen resiliency to hazards. In Tusten, these actions included the designation of the town hall as a command post during emergencies and the purchase of a generator to heat the facility, which serves as a temporary warming station. The regular convening of partners can also result in improvements to cellular service. Other communications included updates on tree-trimming activities along rights of way. These meetings and activities should continue. The town has a record of past meetings, which can support these efforts going forward.

Effective **stormwater management** at the site level requires proper design by professionals and a level of review that often goes beyond the capabilities of the planning board. In 2017, the Town adopted a zoning amendment that included a new Development Review Fees section. The regulation allows the Town to require that monies be deposited in escrow to help ensure that certain land developments "be designed and constructed in a competent and workmanlike manner and in conformity with all applicable governmental codes, rules and regulations..." The Town has also drafted a local law (discussed under Zoning Revisions) requiring that stormwater permit requirements of NYSDEC are met prior to approval of a Special Use Permit or Site Plan Review permit. Adoption of this law, with its other protective measures, will help improve the effectiveness of the Town's stormwater management in the future. NYSDEC's numerous technical resources, including the Stormwater Design Manual, also play an important role in assisting reviewing boards, engineers, and developers that stormwater facilities are properly designed.





### **3.7.6 Recommendations**

- a) Finalize and adopt the 2019 draft zoning revisions and continue regular activities of the ZRC to revise and improve the land use regulations.
  
- b) Integrate special topics within required land use training programs for the planning board and coordinate events with Sullivan County Planning; the Upper Delaware Council; the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway; and other partners. Sample topics include, Walkable Communities, Innovative Zoning Techniques, and Conservation Subdivision. Continue to engage in core training topics for the planning board and zoning board of appeals, in accordance with four hours per year set by state law or as modified by the town board.
  
- c) Pursue resources to assist the Town in conducting a build-out analysis.
  
- d) Consider the development of illustrated design guidelines to support existing land use regulations.
  
- e) In addition to considering the adoption of Incentive Zoning (Town Law §261-b.) to facilitate affordable housing (Housing Section), this zoning tool should be explored to assist other recommendations in this plan. While the statute sets the parameters for adopting the tool, the specifics of zoning incentives and where they can occur, as well as the community benefits and where they are to be provided, are defined by the Town. As with other zoning techniques, existing local laws from other towns are illustrative of the tool.
  
- f) Continue to engage in solutions to provide adequate parking in downtown Narrowsburg, (also an action in the Narrowsburg Master Plan). Achieving this outcome will likely be the result of a combination of efforts. These include Town Board action (e.g. purchase of or easements on property); adjustments to land use regulations; identification of priority locations; communications with specific property owners; and formation of a task force or working group.
  
- g) Evaluate status of Town's recommendations in the Sullivan County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and update and/or implement accordingly.

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Endnotes:

- i. Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Project Review Workbook. Upper Delaware Council. May 2020. Page 1.1.
- ii. Application form for nomination of bridge to National Register of Historic Places.
- iii. Agricultural Protection webpage of Sullivan County Planning:  
<https://sullivanny.us/Departments/PlanningEnvironmental/AgriculturalProtection> (accessed January 2021.)
- iv. Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council 2012 Report. Page 81.  
[https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2018-04/midhudson\\_2012progressreport.pdf](https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2018-04/midhudson_2012progressreport.pdf) (Accessed January 2021.)
- v. Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan. Page 4.  
[https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2017-11/MHREDCSPFINAL11\\_12\\_11.pdf](https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2017-11/MHREDCSPFINAL11_12_11.pdf) (Accessed January 2021.)
- vi. See Stemming the outflow of upstate New York's young people. Aaron Coven. Cornell University Chronicle. December 4, 2014. Accessed at  
<https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2014/12/stemming-outflow-upstate-new-yorks-young-people> (Accessed January 2021.)
- vii. Program on Applied Demographics, Cornell University, projections based on U.S. Census 2000, [Online]. Available: <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/counties/projections.cfm>. [Accessed 30 August 2012]. Cited in Senior Housing in New York State. February 2013. Page 3. Leading Age New York.
- viii. Senior Housing in New York State. February 2013. Page 44. Leading Age New York.
- ix. On Route 97, approximately three miles north of Narrowsburg, the estimated AADT for 2019 is 1261 motor vehicles (both directions). On Route 52, approximately three miles east of Narrowsburg, the estimated AADT for 2019 is 1495 motor vehicles (Source: NYSDOT Traffic Viewer)

## **Chapter 4. Implementation and Action Plan**

The effectiveness of a comprehensive plan is realized as its recommendations are implemented. While governmental agencies and organizations may offer technical assistance, funding, and resources, the Town Board has the overarching responsibility for the plan's implementation. Like the creation of the plan, implementation involves cooperation between town officials, staff, local groups, and members of the community. This process requires regular attention, organization, and communication. Tusten is fortunate to have active citizenry and neighborhood groups, as well as committees appointed by the Town Board that have advanced important projects, including the drafting of this comprehensive plan. To help meet the ongoing needs of carrying out the recommendations of this plan, the Town Board will establish a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC). Details such as setting priorities, the frequency of meetings, and reporting to the town board can be worked out going forward.

The following Action Plan is designed to help guide this implementation process. It establishes short-, mid-, along-term actions, identifies responsible entities, partners, and includes potential sources of funding and technical assistance. While none of the services or involvement of the entities in the Resource category is guaranteed, the listings are included to help advance the progress of implementation. Each of the recommendations in the Action Plan are taken from the body of the plan and should be understood within this full context.

In accordance with Town Law §272-a. the Town Board sets the maximum interval to review this comprehensive plan at five years.

## Action Plan

SCHEDULE: **S** = Short term (< 1 year); **M** = Mid-term (1-3 years); **L** = Long-term (> 4 years); **O** = Ongoing

### ABBREVIATIONS

BSA – Boy Scouts of America  
CAC – Conservation Advisory Council  
CEO – Code Enforcement Officer/ Bldg. Dept.  
CFA – NYS Consolidated Funding Application  
SCLB – Sullivan County Land Bank  
COC – Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce  
CPIC – (Town) Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee  
SCP – Sullivan County Division of Planning, Community Development and Real Property  
DCHR – New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal  
DEC – New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
DOS – New York State Department of State  
DOT – New York State Department of Transportation  
DVAA - Delaware Valley Arts Alliance  
HFA – Housing Finance Agency  
LWRP – NYS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program  
NBG – Narrowsburg Beautification Group  
NFD – Narrowsburg Fire Dept.  
NPS – National Park Service  
NYSCA – New York State Council on the Arts  
NYS CFA – New York State Consolidated Funding Application  
EFC – New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation  
OPRHP – New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
SALT – Sullivan Allies Leading Together  
SCHS – Sullivan County Historical Society  
SCIDA – Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency  
SCP – Sullivan County Division of Planning  
SCPW – Sullivan County Department of Public Works  
SCVA – Sullivan County Visitors Association

TB – Tusten Town Board  
 THD – Town Highway Superintendent/ Dept.  
 THS – Tusten Historical Society  
 TPB – Tusten Planning Board  
 TYRP – Tusten Youth Recreation Program  
 TVAS – Tusten Volunteer Ambulance Services  
 UDC – Upper Delaware Council  
 WSL – Western Sullivan Public Library  
 WSD – Water and Sewer Superintendent/ Dept.  
 TYC – Tusten Youth Commission  
 ZRC – Zoning Review Committee

Category	Recommendation	Schedule	Responsible Entity(ies)	Resources
1. Historical, Cultural, and Recreational	a) Encourage the preservation of historic structures and sites; explore and pursue repurposing projects for historical buildings.	O	TB TPB CEO	
	b) Undertake a historical survey for the town. Results will provide guidance on priorities and next steps	M	THS TB	NYSOPRHP; NY Preservation League
	c) Continue to promote the town’s history through interpretive materials: interpretive panels at key locations; walking and driving tours; printed brochures; and online information	O	THS, COC TB	UDC, NPS, DVAA, WSL, Delaware Company SCHS
	d) In partnership with the Tusten Historical Society, explore options for a larger space to house the Society	M	TB THS	WSL
	e) Encourage additional documentation of the town’s cemeteries and explore actions to preserve and interpret these historical resources.	M	THS	Division of Cemeteries, DOS (see 1.b above)
	f) Work with Library Board to expand the current space to create more community and collection space	O	TB WSL	Sullivan Renaissance
	g) Encourage improvements to the Tusten Theatre that will allow for an expanded season, and enhanced amenities for both audiences and participating artists	M	DVAA TB	NYSCA NY Preservation League
	h) Develop access to baseball field flats below DeMauro Lane for occasional public events	S	NFD TB	

	i) Implement the improvements for the Ten Mile River Access Point set forth in the Site Designs for Six River Access Points -- Upper Delaware River, Sullivan County	M	NPS SCP BSA	SCP, NPS, BSA
	j) Continue to develop and implement improvements to better connect Narrowsburg with the waterfront	O	TB	SCP, NPS, NYSCFA
	k) Continue to improve Narrowsburg as a Walkable Community	O	TB	NBG
	l) Improve Bridge Street sidewalks and identify additional locations for sidewalk improvements in Narrowsburg	O	TB THD CEO	
	m) Continue to improve parking in Narrowsburg and install improved signage to promote awareness.	O	TB COC	Downtown property owners
	n) Continue to ensure that Tusten's recreational and other attractions are promoted through regional organizations and websites	S, O	CPIC COC	Upper Delaware Scenic Byway SCVA, Town Clerk
	o) Explore the development of more river access throughout the town	M	CPIC TB NPS	SCP, NPS
	p) Explore the interest of developing swimming areas	S-M	TB TYC	BSA
	q) Develop and publish more information on cycling routes throughout the town.	S	CPIC COC	
2. Environmental Resources	a) Reactivate the Conservation Advisory Council	S	TB	
	b) Create an Open Space Plan	S	CAC TB	SCP, UDC
	c) Communicate with representatives of the Boy Scouts of America, Greater New York Councils to explore future land-use visions for landholdings	S, O	TB BSA	
	d) Adopt draft zoning amendments to enhance protection of natural resources and continue to pursue related amendments to land use regulations	S	ZRC TB	
	e) Continue to support the activities of the Energy Committee and promote Tusten as an environmental leader.	O	TB	

	f) Explore funding resources of the William Penn Foundation’s Delaware River Basin Initiative for this section and the Land Use section.	S-M	TB CAC	Grant Writer; SCP; Planner
3. Community Services and Infrastructure	a) Develop a page on the town’s website that provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of appointed boards and local officials.	S-M	TB	Planner; SCP; Website Admin
	b) Provide a breakdown of taxes paid by the town and its residents on the town’s website.	S-M	TB	Website Admin
	c) Continue active recruitment of Ambulance and Fire Services volunteers and help facilitate related training requirements	O	TVAS NFD	Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant program (DEC) <a href="#">US Fire Admin Grants</a>
	d) Continue to explore the feasibility of merging to a single fire department facility and pursue related funding opportunities.	O	NFD TVAS TB	<a href="#">DOS Local Gov’t Efficiency Program</a>
	e) Explore the NYS Length of Service Award Program(LOSAP) for volunteer firefighters and emergency service providers to help sustain these services in the town	S-M	NFD TB	
	f) Develop an Ambulance and Fire equipment inventory, review and update on an annual basis, and document projected needs.	S	NFD TVAS	
Water & Sewer	g) Continue to seek funding sources to help offset the cost of the upgraded water system.	S	TB WSD	EFC
	h) Undertake a feasibility study to assess the current sewer system and plan for its future upgrades, replacement, and possible expansion	S-M	TB	EFC
Highway	i) Adopt a proactive long-term maintenance and improvement schedule to develop appropriate gravel and dirt roads to engineering standards and, to pave where appropriate	O	THD	
	j) Continue to engage in shared service agreements with other municipalities and explore new ways to expand these efforts.	O	THD TB	<a href="#">Countywide Shared Services Panel</a> <a href="#">DOS Local Gov’t Efficiency Program</a>
	k) Periodically review the town’s road law, subdivision law and related codes and work as needed with the ZRC and TB to develop road related recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of these laws	O	ZRC THD TB	CEO, TPB



	l) Participate in training workshops for highway department personnel, such as those offered by Cornell Local Roads Program. Consider training opportunities for Complete Streets, Low Impact Development, and Invasive Species Management.	O	THD	<a href="#">Cornell Local Roads Program</a>
	m) Consider the preparation of a road improvement and maintenance schedule for all town roads and an equipment purchase schedule based on projected needs. The schedule should be reviewed, updated, and extended on an annual basis.	S, O	THD	
	n) Ensure the Planning Board uses the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process to effectively evaluate potential traffic impacts associated with any new development	O	TPB	<a href="#">SEQRA EAF Workbooks</a>
	o) As feasible, accommodate pedestrians and cyclists along roadways through design improvements, signage or Complete Streets practices	O	TB THD DOT SCPW	<a href="#">DOT Complete Streets</a>
	p) Participate in state and county highway improvement projects by providing comments on proposed design or maintenance projects to improve the functional or aesthetic qualities of state road corridors for town residents, including the application of Complete Streets principles.	O	TB THD	Regional DOT Office Upper Delaware Scenic Byway
	q) Adopt a Complete Streets resolution	S	TB	SCP; <a href="#">DOT link</a>
Youth Commission	r) Continue to sustain the progressive state of the Youth Commission by involving volunteers to assist with activities and increase participation	O	YC	<a href="#">SALT</a>
	s) Continue to explore fundraising options to support the Commission's ongoing activities.	O	TYRP	<a href="#">SALT</a>
	t) Work with the Town Board and other stakeholders to expand opportunities for youth recreation throughout the town	O	YC	<a href="#">SALT</a>
	u) Continue to build a sense of community by working with other local organizations.	O	YC	<a href="#">SALT</a>
Library	v) Work with the Library to identify and pursue mutually compatible objectives and projects for the benefit of the community	O	TB WSL	
Seniors	w) Revitalize the Tusten Senior Group	S		SC Office for the Aging
Volunteer Groups	x) Encourage partnerships among citizenry and recruit individuals for specialized task forces to plan and implement	O	TB	NBG; <a href="#">Volunteerism Resource</a>

	specific projects. As feasible, provide direct assistance or resources to specific efforts.			
4. Economic Development	a) Consider the development of a specialized group to complement the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee in carrying out the recommendations in the Economic Development and Tourism section	S	TB	
	b) Keep apprised of funding programs and other means of assistance that can support the recommendations of this section. Maintain awareness of the current activities of related county and state initiatives, e.g. the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council	O	CPIC	<a href="#">Sullivan County Partnership</a> <a href="#">USDA Rural Development</a>
Tourism	c) Expand upon the excellent information on the Chamber's website by including additional material promoting the town as a desirable place to live, work, play, and locate a business	S	CPIC COC	See <a href="#">Making Connections report</a> (National Parks Conservation Association)
	d) Explore the development of more off-season tourism and recreation options, including new events or promotional packages in partnership with businesses.	O	COC	Bethel Woods, Resorts World Catskills, DVAA, SCVA
	e) Continue to be actively involved in regional tourism promotion efforts, including those of the Sullivan County Visitor's Association and the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway.	O	COC CPIC	<a href="#">SCVA</a> <a href="#">Upper Delaware Scenic Byway</a>
	f) Explore and encourage a weekend bus line or similar initiative that brings visitors to the town on a regular basis.	S	CPIC	
Walkable Community	g) Promote and develop Narrowsburg as a walkable community [see 1. a) and Section 1 of plan]. Conduct a walkability audit to inventory existing conditions, identify priorities for improvements, and pursue funding opportunities and other mechanisms to improve walkability.	S,O	COC TPB CPIC	Walkability Audit Resources: <a href="#">America Walks</a> <a href="#">CDC</a>
	h) Revisit the concept of creating a tunnel beneath the railroad to connect the Pete's Plaza area with DeMauro Lane.	O, L	CPIC TB	
	i) Pursue a phased approach in developing improved connections with the river in Narrowsburg, including the Riverwalk pedestrian project.	S,O	CPIC TB COC	Riverside property owners; DOT; <a href="#">LWRP</a> via <a href="#">CFA</a>
Interpretation and Events	j) Develop a self-guided heritage tour of the Town, building upon existing efforts, e.g. Logging Days tour.	S	THS COC	

	k) Work with the NPS to develop more interpretive information on the significance of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River.	S, O	CPIC COC	<a href="#">Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Interpretive Plan</a>
Land Use	l) Continue to help sustain annual events by cooperating with organizational partners and exploring ways to enhance related tourism activities.	O	CPIC COC	DVAA, NFD
	m) Encourage context-appropriate small business and home-occupation development in and around hamlets, consistent with the R2 Zone intent.	O	CPIC COC	<a href="#">Sullivan County Partnership SCIDA</a>
	n) Examine the home occupation requirements and other sections of the zoning law that might be improved to help facilitate small businesses and encourage mixed use and walkability in hamlet areas.	S	ZRC	
	o) Explore and encourage the development of low-impact, light industry and commercial businesses and identify appropriate locations; and work with landowners to explore potential sites and develop project readiness	M	CPIC COC	<a href="#">Sullivan County Partnership SCIDA</a>
	p) Explore and develop more options for using Boy Scout Camp lands.	S	TB	
Infrastructure	q) Identify existing high-speed internet broadband areas and work to close service gaps.	S	CPIC TB	<a href="#">Sullivan Broadband Local Development Corporation</a>
	r) Pursue more direct and ongoing involvement with county and state legislative efforts to increase high-speed internet	S	CPIC TB	
	s) Expand high-speed locations for new or existing office space and promote telecommuting job opportunities.	M	CPIC COC	<a href="#">Narrowsburg Union</a>
	t) Work with economic development specialists to explore and assist the development of business opportunities associated with railroad connections	M-L	CPIC	<a href="#">New York, Susquehanna and Western Railway</a> <a href="#">Sullivan County Partnership</a>
Youth Involvement	u) Strengthen partnerships between schools, businesses, the library, the Youth Commission, the Town Board, and others to continue to work together to build awareness of jobs and careers for youth and to help create new opportunities.	O	CPIC COC TB	
	v) Explore and pursue apprenticeships with local businesses.	M	CPIC COC	

Business Development	w) Participate in and help develop career-oriented events and encourage greater youth participation in civic and community activities to help enhance their appreciation of the town.	M	CPIC COC TB	
	x) Identify, encourage, and attract the types of businesses that complement and diversify the town's existing businesses.	O	CPIC COC	
	y) Encourage and support further entrepreneurship opportunities through training, workshops, partnership dialogue, and highlighting success stories.	M	CPIC COC	<a href="#">Sullivan County Workforce Dev.</a> <a href="#">SUNY Sullivan</a> <a href="#">Cornell Cooperative Extension</a> <a href="#">Job Corps</a> <a href="#">Sullivan County BOCES</a>
	z) Build on the success of the Narrowsburg Union by attracting additional funding and assistance for start-up and small businesses, e.g. business incubator grants.	S	CPIC COC	<a href="#">New York Main Street</a>
	aa) Explore further expansion of SUNY Sullivan classes and training programs in the town.	M	CPIC COC	<a href="#">SUNY Sullivan</a>
	bb) Identify and promote office and building space for businesses in the community; maintain an inventory of available business spaces and properties and promote these opportunities.	S,O	CPIC COC CEO	Real Estate Agencies Multiple Listing Service
5. Housing	a) Explore and pursue options for building capacity and improving organization to address housing challenges.	M		SCP DHCR
	b) Consider the establishment of a short-term rental registration program.	S	TB ZRC	SCP
	c) Continue to ensure that zoning, subdivision, and related land use laws help meet housing needs and objectives.	S	TPB ZRC	
	d) Encourage and support the development of new senior housing facilities, including age-diverse options as well as programs that assist seniors to live in their homes.	M	TB CPIC	SCP DHCR
6. Regional Transportation	a) Initiate and convene a dialogue with area partners to consider improved public transportation services	M		<a href="#">Getthere Mobility Management Program</a> (example of cooperative rural transportation program)
	b) Continue to explore increased services with Shortline/ Coach USA and/ or other bus service providers along the Route 52 and Route 97 corridors	M		
	c) Work to improve transportation connections, as feasible, between Tusten and regional hubs, including Port Jervis (Metro North train service), Honesdale, PA, and Monticello.	L		

	d) Continue to support and share information for existing transportation programs for residents, including specialized programs for senior citizens and those with disabilities	O		
	e) Participate in the implementation of the Sullivan County Coordinated Transportation Plan	O		<a href="#">Move Sullivan</a>
7. Land Use	a) Finalize and adopt the 2019 draft zoning revisions and continue regular activities of the ZRC to revise and improve the land use regulations	S	ZRC TB	UDC
	b) Integrate special topics within required land use training programs for the planning board and coordinate events with Sullivan County Planning; the Upper Delaware Council; the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway; and other partners. Continue to engage in core land use training for the planning board and zoning board of appeals in accordance with the state law's requirement of four hours per year, or as modified by the town board.	S	TPB TB ZRC	SCP, UDC; <a href="#">Association of Towns</a>
	c) Pursue resources to assist the town in conducting a build-out analysis	M	TB TPB ZRC	SCP, UDC
	d) Consider the development of illustrated design guidelines to support existing land use regulations.	M	TB TPB ZRC	SCP, UDC
	e) Explore the adoption of Incentive Zoning (Town Law §261-b.) to help implement recommendations of this plan (in addition to Housing)	M	ZRC TB	SCP
	f) Continue to engage in solutions to provide adequate parking in downtown Narrowsburg	S, O	TB CEO	
	g) Evaluate status of Town's recommendations in the Sullivan County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and update and/or implement accordingly	S	TB	

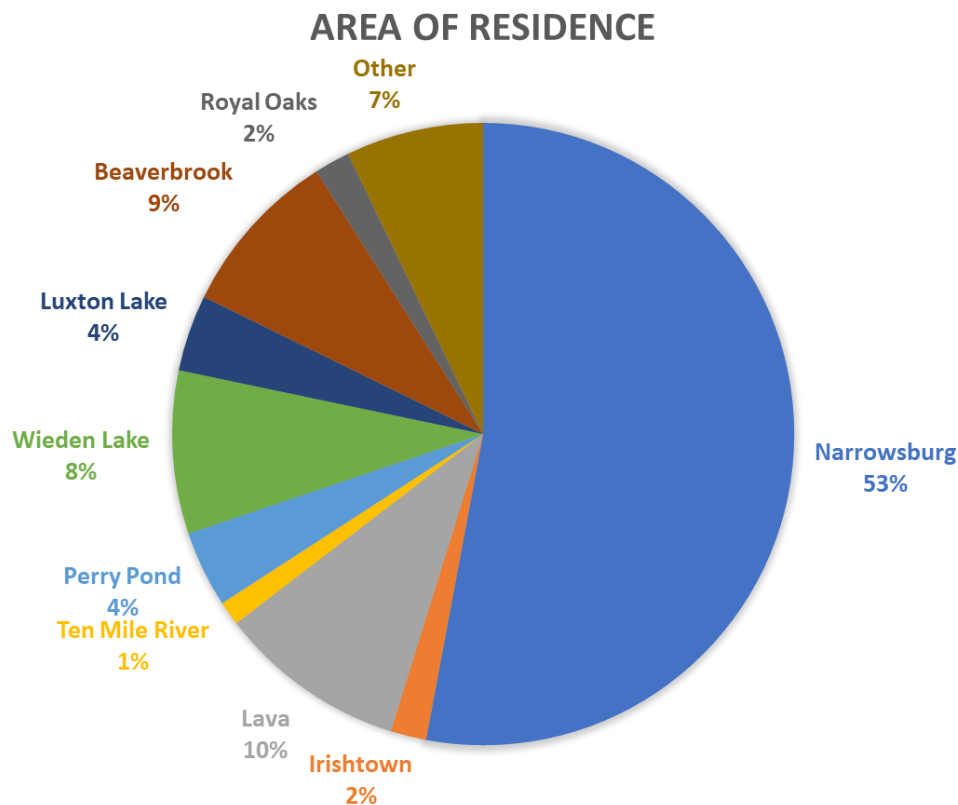
## Appendix 1 - Town of Tusten Community Survey Report

This report illustrates the results of the town wide survey that was conducted as a part of the process of developing this comprehensive plan. The survey was conducted in Spring 2020 and was sent by mail to 1254 listed property owners in the town. The survey was also made available on the town's website for electronic reply. Distribution of the survey was accompanied by a press release issued by the CPC. **The survey is included at the end of this report.**

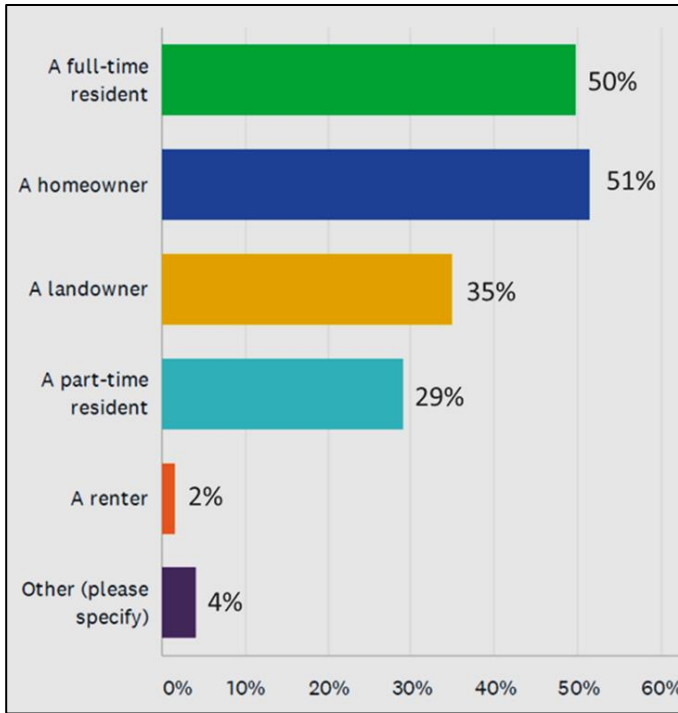
The questions in the survey are similar to those included in the 2006 comprehensive plan survey, which helps maintain consistency over time. However, the CPC made several adjustments and additions to the questions. The survey's questions were aimed at obtaining information regarding residents' level of satisfaction with the current state of their town, what the residents would like to see for their community in the future, and existing concerns that need to be addressed. Survey participants were also asked to provide basic information about themselves, such as age and area of residence. All of this information is vital in identifying key policy areas that will strategically position the Town to address growth and change.

The survey response rate is calculated at 32 percent using the numbers of surveys mailed (1254) and completed (401). Observations are included following the results of some of the questions. These observations are made in support of identifying relationships or patterns that can assist in the planning process; they are suggestive and not conclusive.

1) Where do you live or own property in the town?

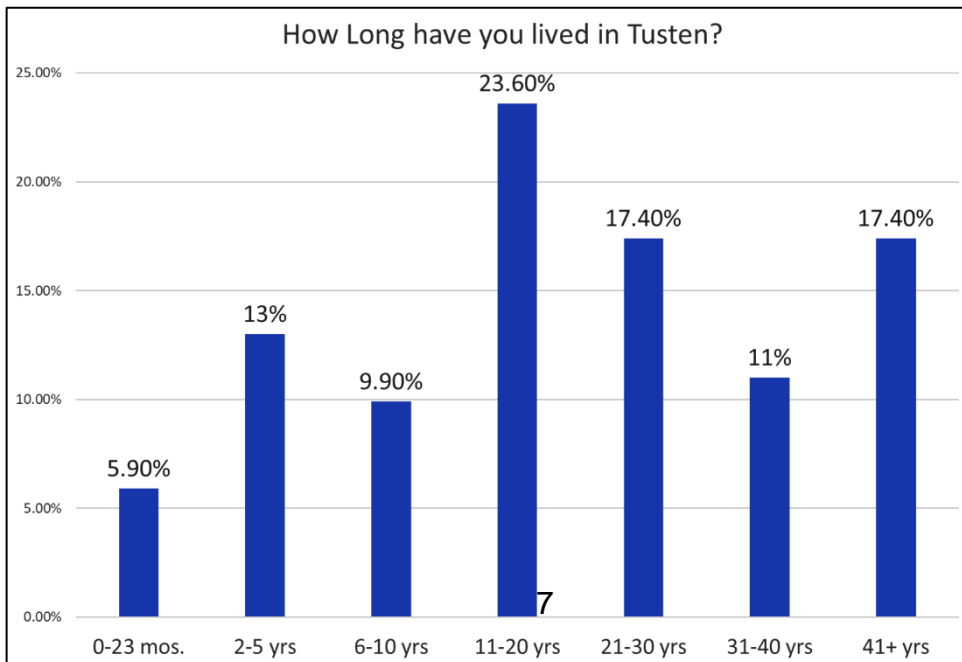


2) Are you: (check all that apply)

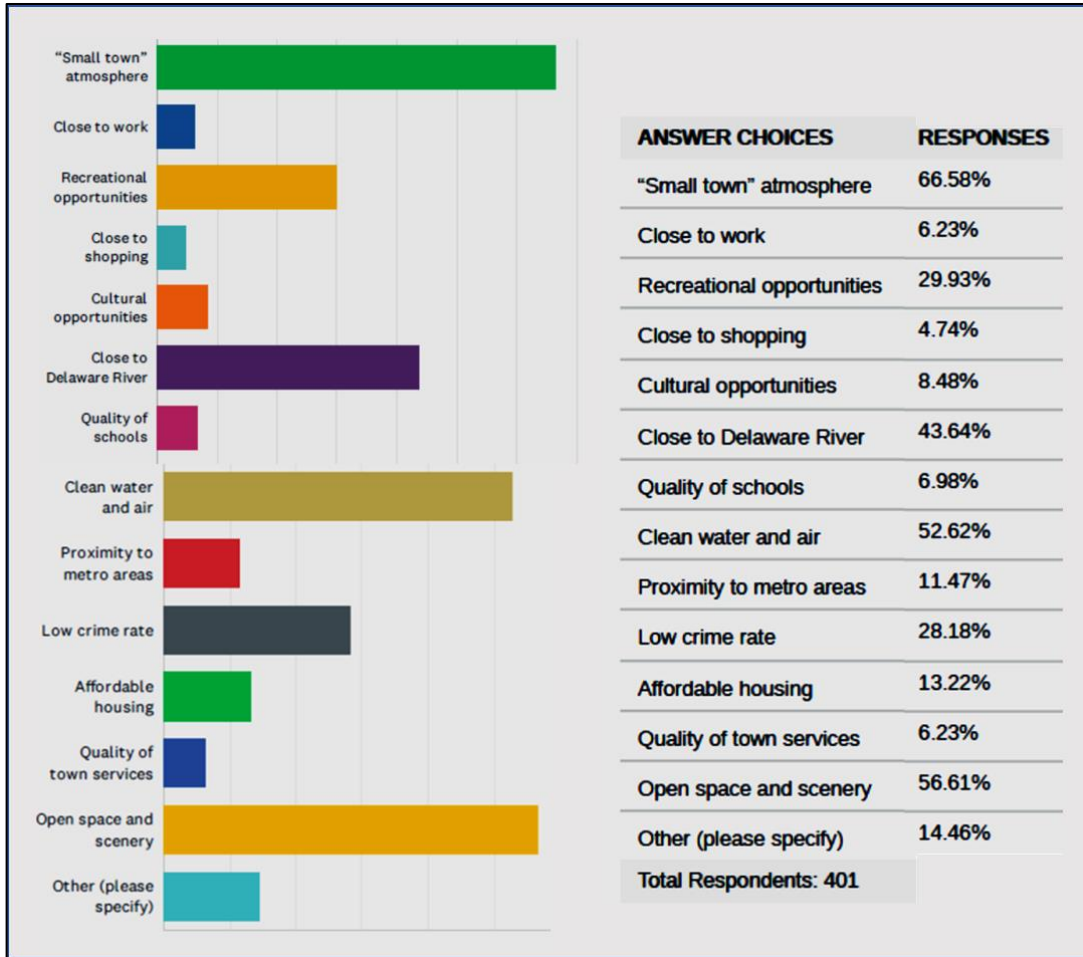


The results of this section have overlap, e.g. homeowners can be both full and part time. The low number of renters participating does not reflect the demographic information for the town, provided in the Summary of Town Statistics Section. Responses under “Other” include variations of the “part-time resident” choice, as well as one homeowner indicating that he/she owns two rental properties.

3) How long have you lived in Tusten?



4) Check the top 4 reasons why you live, own land, or keep a residence in Tusten

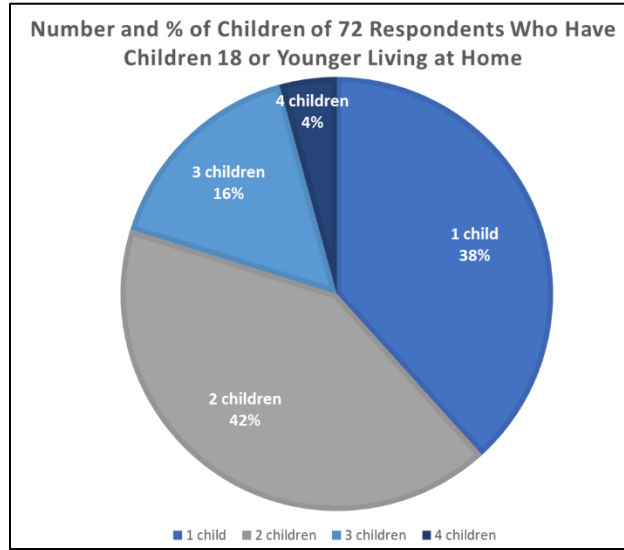
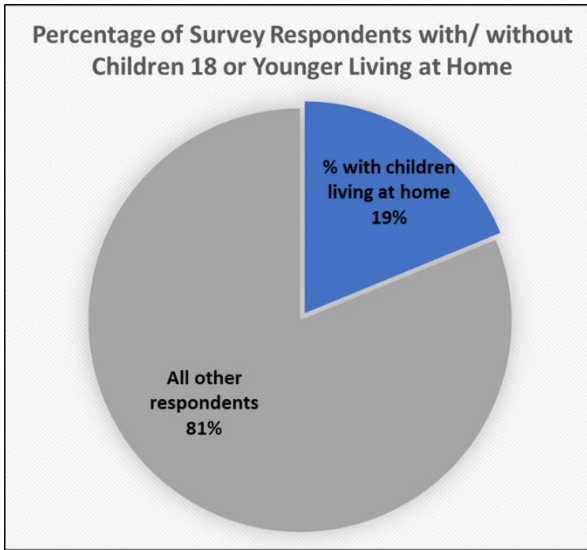


As reviewed in the Vision and Economic Development sections, the results of this question help indicate the values residents place on characteristics of the town. Within the “Other” category, a few respondents stated that they are native residents; while others indicated that hunting was a reason to live in the town.



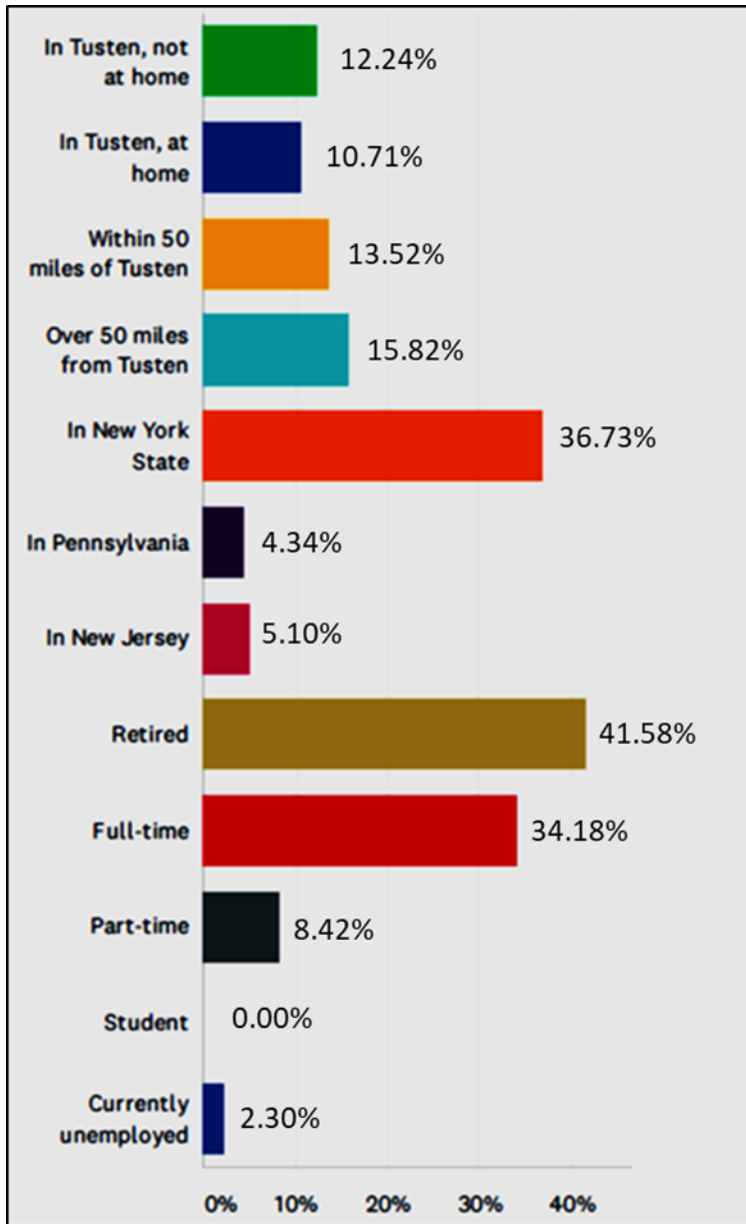
5) How many, if any, children under age 18 live at home with you?

18.8% of respondents have children under 18 living at home (72 out of 383 respondents). Of the 72 who have children under 18 living at home, 26 have one child; 28 have two children; 15 have three children, and 3 have four children.



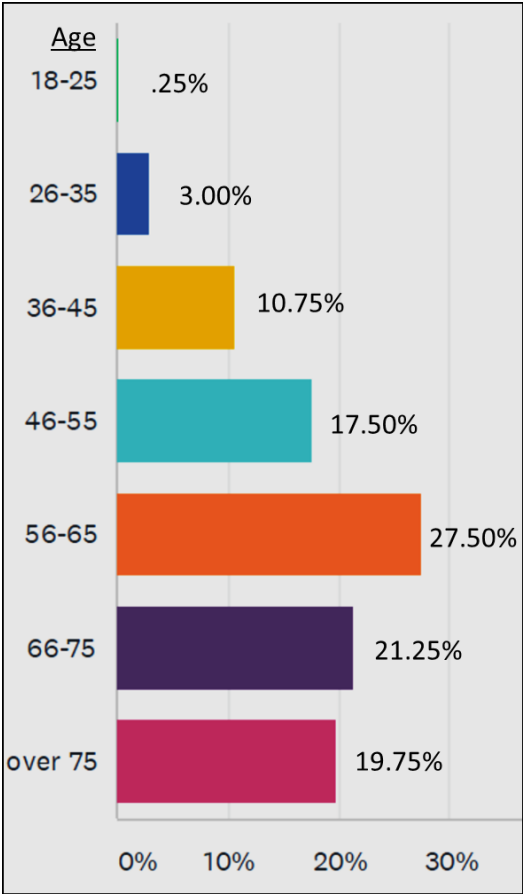
The 19-percent statistic is consistent with the town's (and the region's) trend of an increasingly aging population.

6) Where do you work? (check all that apply)



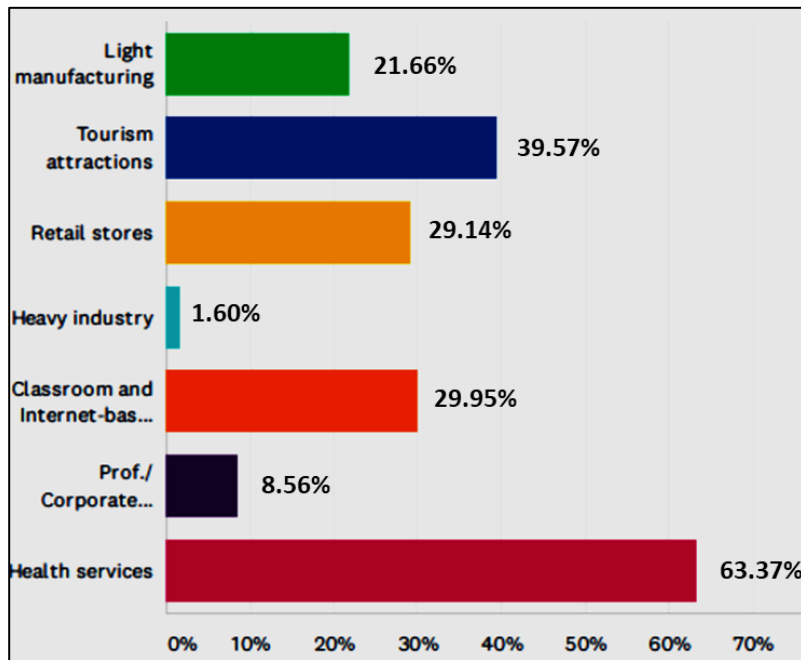
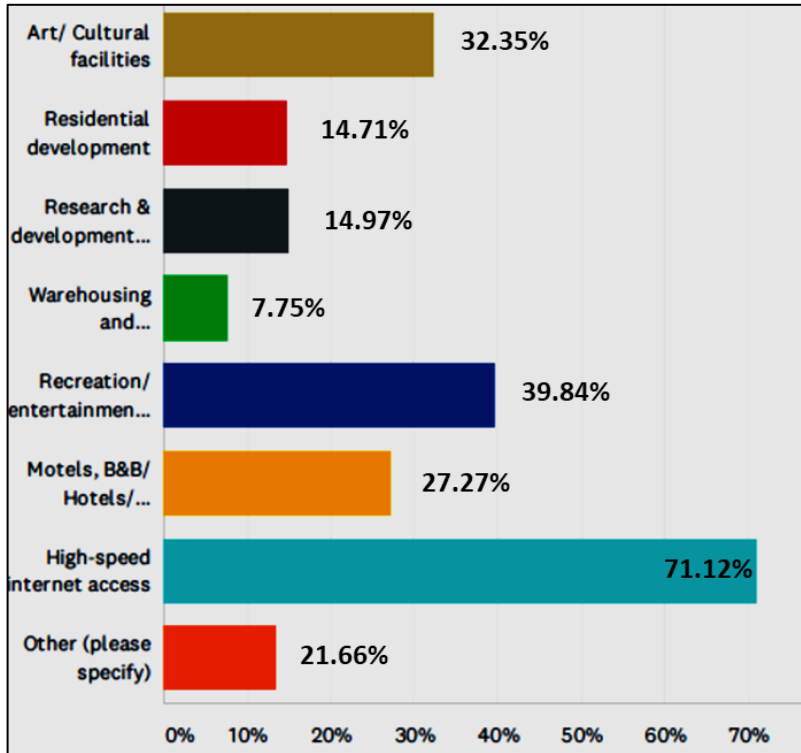
The percentage of retired individuals reflects the town's (and the region's) aging population.

7) Please indicate your age bracket (others in household may participate in the survey online):



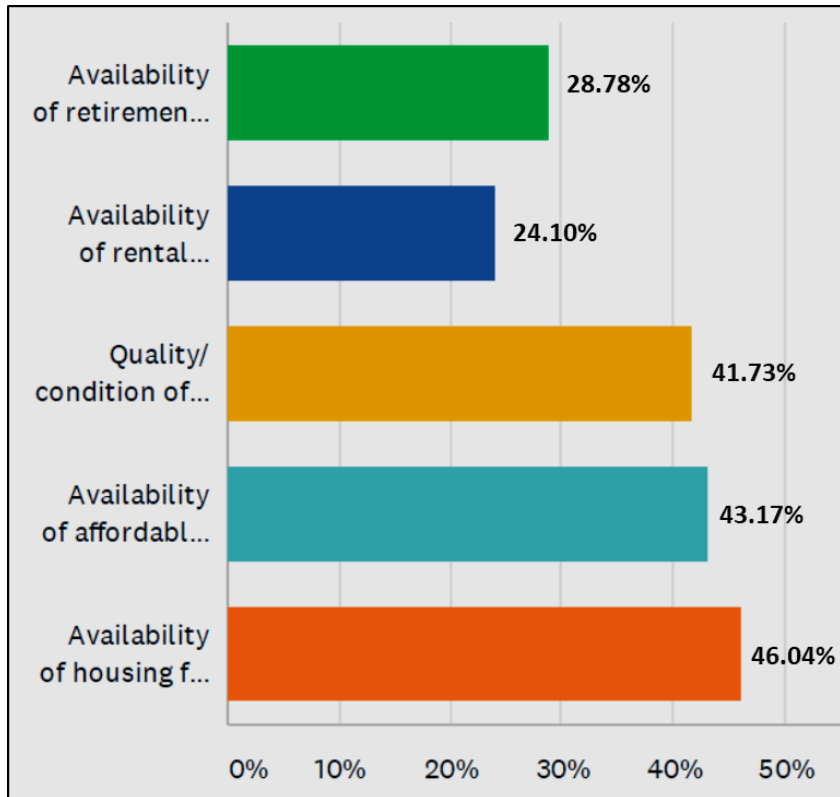
The age distribution of those who participated in the survey generally reflects the age distribution of the town.

8) In your opinion are MORE of these services/ businesses desirable for the Town? (check any that are desirable)

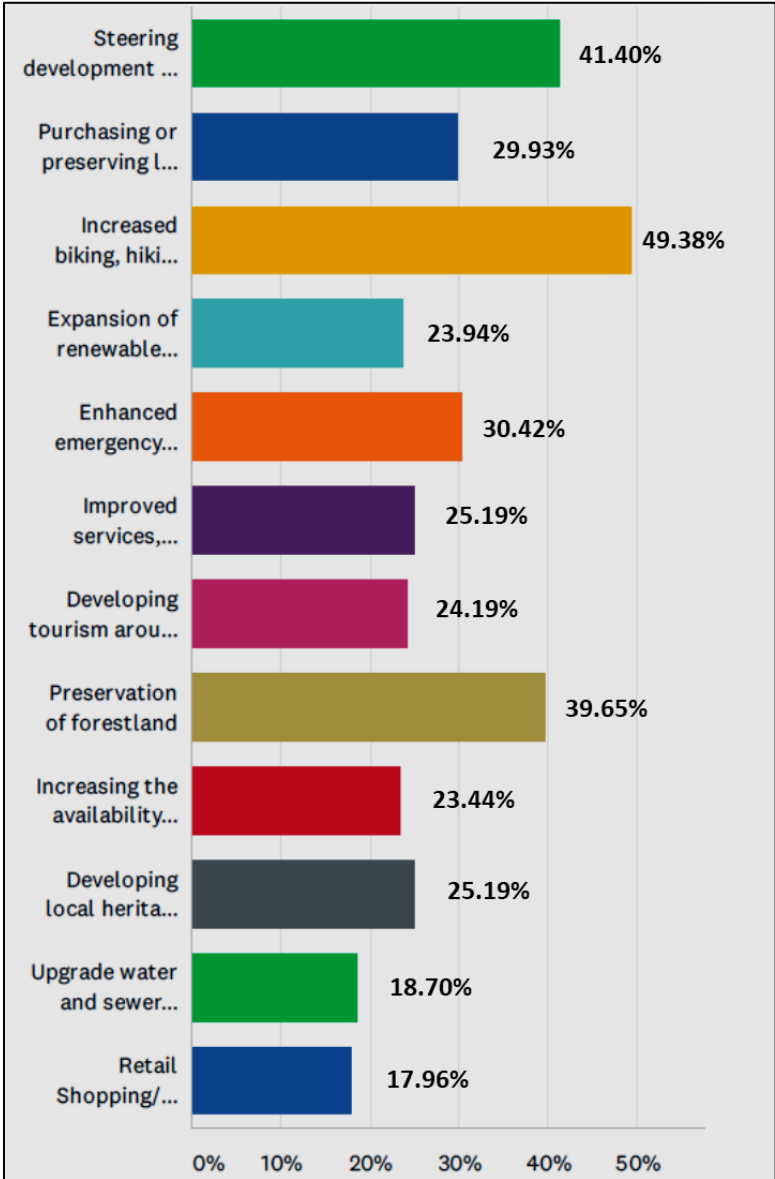


Under the “Other” category, responses included high-speed internet; senior services, including a senior center; a gym; a school, and improved electric services.

9) In your opinion, which of the following are housing issues for the Town? (check all that apply)

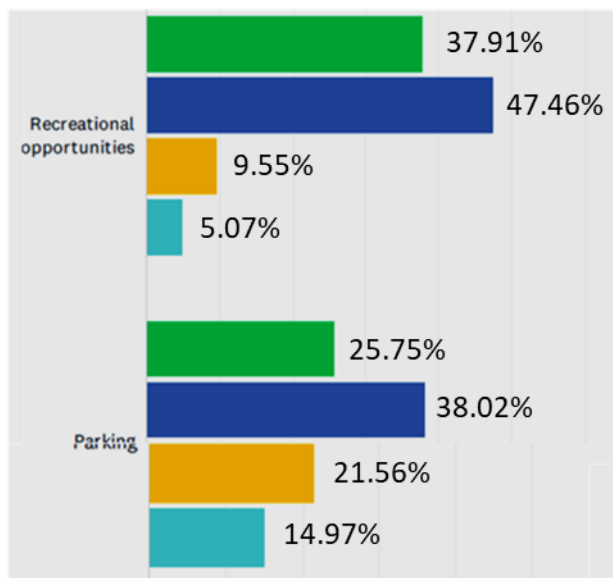
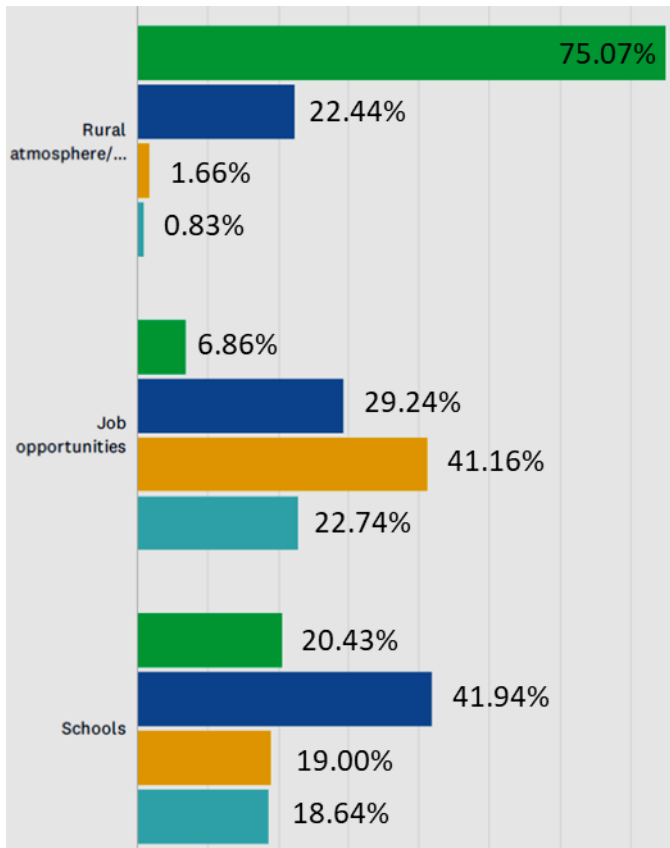
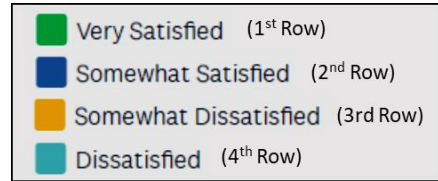


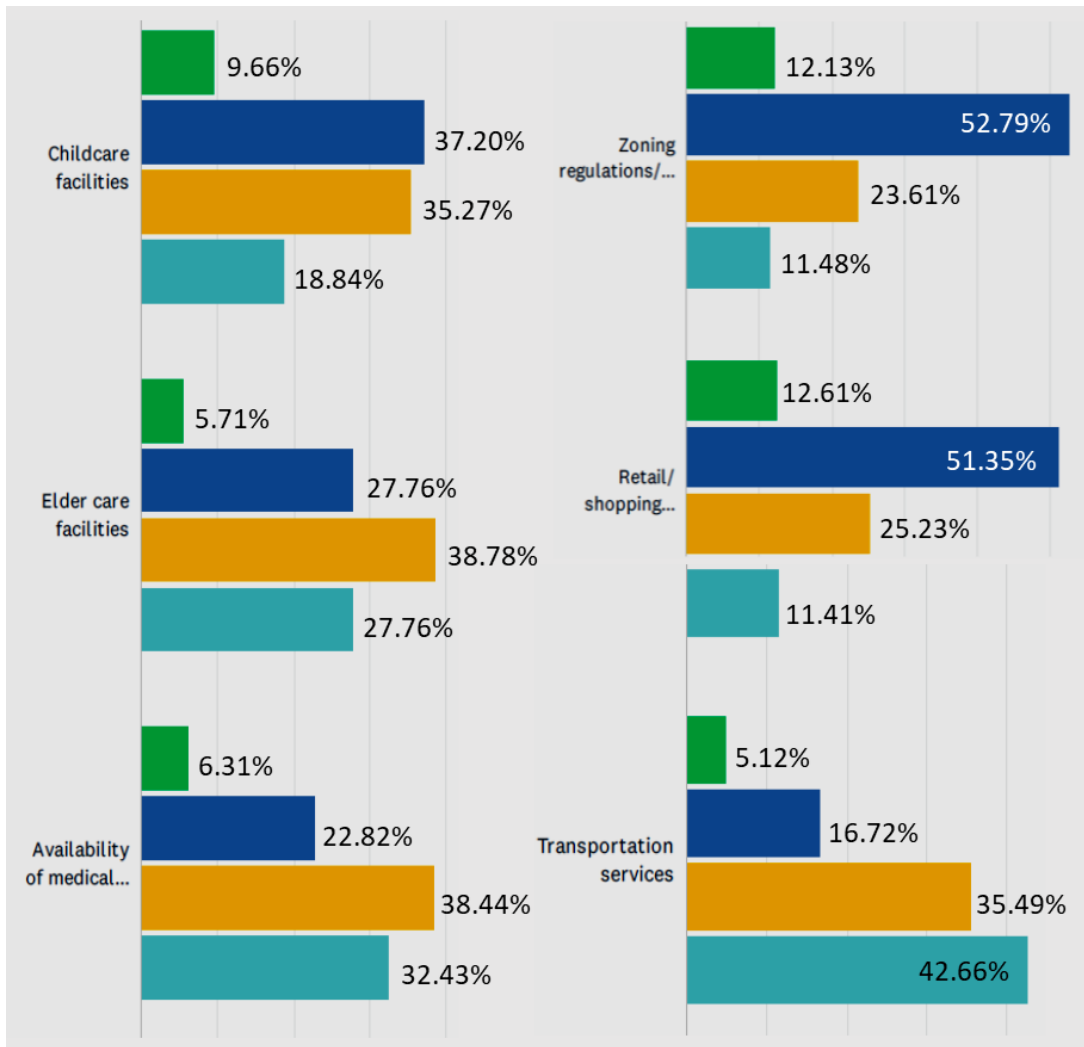
10) Check the top 4 of the following initiatives for the Town that you would SUPPORT



The top three categories for this section (Increased biking, hiking, walking, and waterfront access opportunities; Steering development to current business zones to preserve rural areas; and Preservation of forestland) reinforce the importance residents place on outdoor recreation and the rural character of the town. As discussed in the Environmental Resources section, while there is a large percentage of forested open space in the town, most of this land is privately owned. Loss of this resource to subdivision and development is a threat to the qualities residents cherish. Coupled with the need for public areas offering recreation, the preservation of forestland, lakefront, and shoreline emerge as opportunities.

11) Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the Town:





Some of the results for this question offer strong feedback in certain categories. The highest level of satisfaction is illustrated in the “Rural atmosphere/ open space,” complementing the results of Question 4. “Recreational opportunities” also reflects elevated satisfaction, yet this result is somewhat inconsistent with Question 10, in which “Increased biking, hiking, walking, and waterfront access opportunities” was the most supported initiative. The need for improvements in the availability of public transportation, medical services, elder care and job opportunities are the categories with higher levels of dissatisfaction.

12) Please include any additional comments you have or any issues in the town of Tusten you feel are important to address.

There were 173 responses to this question. The need for improved internet service was the most raised concern. Abandoned/ vacant, and blighted buildings, as well as unkempt outdoor areas of properties, and code enforcement were also brought up by several respondents. Tax rates were also a concern of several respondents. Responses also covered topics in the survey and the plan. These include needs and opportunities in the areas of public transportation; job opportunities; cell-phone service; health, emergency, and senior services; parking, diversity in businesses, and youth programs. Many respondents reinforced the qualities and character of the town, and some expressed appreciation that an update of the plan is being undertaken.



## **Index of Public Comments (Question 12)**

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Internet service 21, 26, 71, 91, 96 (wi-fi in NBG street lights), 100, 121, 125, 126, 130, 165

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Support industrial development 10

Air BnB and rental regulations 15

Support farming 30

Restrictions on ridgeline development 60

Improved electric service 74, Bury power lines 19

Dog park 75

Municipal garbage collection 75

More cultural opportunities 42, 79

Renewable energy 80

More presence of historical post cards on town website 87

Large solar array locations 94

Veterinary services 97

Water quality 122, 168, 170

Bridges Should be fully open and safe for traffic, peds, cyclists, is an eyesore 128, Fix Little Lake Erie Bridge 142

Public safety – multiple 145

More access to TV or cable 155

Sidewalks, condition and lack of 173

**Q12 Please include any additional comments you have or any issues in the town of Tusten you feel are important to address.**

Answered: 173 Skipped: 228

(Begins on following page)

Town of Tusten Comprehensive Plan Survey

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I believe bringing in quality businesses and updating the infrastructure in the community will add to the economic development of the area. This will benefit the local population as well as bringing new life and energy to a beautiful area in our state.	4/21/2020 4:12 PM
2	Wish town would take more proactive approach to abandoned/blighted buildings. Like two on Main Street.	4/21/2020 1:44 PM
3	The town should not be allowing individuals to set up large industry and sizable machinery on their property that becomes a major eyesore, creates much noise all day, every day, causing continuous noise to close by neighbors and has a great potential to devalue home values of others. When one's peace and quiet becomes solely dependent upon another's activities there is definitely something wrong with that picture!	4/21/2020 1:37 PM
4	High taxes- and no access to trails we pay for. Open ATV trails and sell trail passes to raise money for patrol and maintenance. Vermont has done this for 75 years.	4/21/2020 9:39 AM
5	Failure to take any responsibility for road upkeep in Luxton Lake feasting on our tax payments which are assessed using the same formula that is used for homes on our roads.	4/21/2020 12:20 AM
6	Why does the code enforcement officer work not only for the Town, inspecting his own work, but also, performing construction, etc jobs for the Town? Seems fishy.	4/21/2020 12:14 AM
7	codes could be updated for quality- such as junk, dog barking, etc. Thank you.	4/21/2020 12:09 AM
8	I believe more should be focused on the people who live here year round Affordability!!!	4/20/2020 7:12 PM
9	Why do I have to use my stamps?	4/20/2020 7:02 PM
10	Promote jobs thru extraction of oil/gas - industrial development.	4/20/2020 6:59 PM
11	Love the town. great for relaxing and getting away from the city.	4/20/2020 7:19 AM
12	Diversify businesses in downtown. no more expensive boutiques, in fact close a few. A normal gym in the union? do a riverwalk already!!! plus more downtown businesses that cater to NON-rich people	4/20/2020 1:21 AM
13	We need affordable housing for all ages. We have no public transportation, no job opportunities, need more stores.	4/18/2020 12:13 PM
14	Please- How to address the abandoned buildings on Main Street Narrowsburg? Increased taxes for commercial property considered its blighted? These damned & derelict buildings do the town no favors financially or aesthetically. Please open the discussion and push for.	4/18/2020 12:00 PM
15	No Air BnB or Rental Laws	4/18/2020 11:49 AM
16	1. Hard to answer about child care since there weren't enough children to support a school. If there are young children here full time i'm sure childcare would be very helpful. 2. Regarding taxation, seems that certain areas have much higher taxes than other areas, and these areas are often outside of the village and have virtually no services, including sewer, water, there is no local school, etc. That should be considered when determining tax rates. 3. No garbage cans in public river spaces. WHY? causes garbage and trash to be left on the ground.	4/16/2020 9:05 PM
17	I have only recently begun to stay here on a regular basis so need a bit more time to formulate.	4/16/2020 6:36 AM
18	Cell service isn't great everywhere. It's improved but still lacking. Property taxes are too high. P/T residents pay a lot more and it is unsustainable.	4/16/2020 6:30 AM
19	Power failures. I wish NYSEG would bury power lines so we wouldn't have to endure continued outages.	4/16/2020 6:26 AM
20	Main St business owners should park above the bank, not on Main St. Cars are sometimes parked on sidewalk by Tres Amici blocking sidewalk . Residents with too many junk vehicles& junk/trash should be made to clean yards. There is a hoards on OAK St across from the lumber company that looks like a junk yard and has for years. Also a house on the Flats with a lot of cars and trucks. Some look unregistered. Someone from the Town needs to address these issues.	4/16/2020 6:17 AM
21	INTERNET!!!!	4/15/2020 5:12 PM

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22	It's great for older retired people. For younger people there's no jobs, nothing to do, and nowhere to go. You have to go to oMonticells, Port Jervis or Honesdale to see a doctor.	4/15/2020 4:54 PM
23	Qusetion #1 Ten Mile river is under the community of Tuste;where the Township took its name from. Perry Pond is under where the children went to a 1 room schoolhouse (Lava, etc.) Weiden Lake is the community of Newiende. Beaver Brook is 2 words, with capital B's. Royale Oaks is under the community of Luston LAke. Tha is your history lesson for the day. The Ten Mile River region incorporatedthe communities of Beaver , Brook, Lava, Narrowsburg and Tusten to promote the ideal sportsmans rendezvous back in the day, and I'm not talking about the Ten Mile River Boy Scout camp either.	4/13/2020 10:38 AM
24	Lower taxes for senior citizens. More organized activities for adults, clubs, meetings. Better use of the Union.	4/13/2020 10:18 AM
25	see long note attached 12-10, 4/13 10:03 am	4/13/2020 10:13 AM
26	Any commercial with closed spaces need to be addressed like the Stranahans building and Rasmussens. New zoning rules need to be in place. A vacancy tax for unused spaces. More parking, internet WiFi improvements.	4/13/2020 3:00 AM
27	you could have sent a stamped envelope.	4/13/2020 2:50 AM
28	We had Erie Railroad. We had doctor. We had taxi. Certainly could use these services now.	4/11/2020 1:43 AM
29	Sorry, I'm unable to give any feedback since I haven't visited the area in about 40 years.	4/11/2020 1:38 AM
30	We need to support our farmers and encourage them to be proactive in updating their practices to become more efficient and productive while keeping the environment in mind. Invest in vertical farming.	4/11/2020 1:34 AM
31	Frugality and austerity must prevail. Depression coming	4/11/2020 1:28 AM
32	Tax rates are crazy! Make Boy Scouts start paying for all the land they own!	4/11/2020 1:16 AM
33	How does our Town (a handful of shop owners)benefit fro tourism. I don't see a reduction in our taxes.	4/10/2020 3:57 PM
34	Retail sales should be affordable for locals living here. We need medical services.	4/10/2020 3:53 PM
35	It is vert disheartening to call or come to Town of Tusten during the time they are to be there (in the building), only to find out NO ONE is available. signature	4/10/2020 3:50 PM
36	this is a vacation/2nd home. None of these really apply	4/10/2020 3:43 PM
37	I think you are focused on questions more appropriate for the suburbs than a small country town. Let's not make it another planned development instead of growing up to be a refuge for people who want city services in the country! Keep it simple-help people stay close to the land and live independently, enjoying nature as they choose, and obtaining needed goods and services, through personal contact and un-bureaucritic community orgainzations.	4/10/2020 3:40 PM
38	clean air, clean water	4/10/2020 3:30 PM
39	I believe towns in Tustencould become more "complete' w/o becoming sprawling in NBG. We have plenty pf clothing stores but lack sporting goods, we have wine but, no bakery, etc. There is plenty of roon within the logical perimeter to make the nicest most attractive hamlet upstate. We just need to masterplan something that works for everyone& incentivize those develop-ments. I'm happy to help. I'm a part time resident w/ house on the Flats. I'd be happy to shed light on the out-of-towner pov. brennan.McGrath@gmail.com	4/10/2020 3:16 PM
40	.People seem to forget tne Town of Tusten does not mean Main St. I purchased here for its beauty not obscurity. Whether private roads of not, when town issues affect our safety and way of life, problems need to be addressed. Run off water from rt97 has totally destroyed our roads. Our repairs are to no avail. Anonymity only works if one is in the witness protection plan. Luxto Lake -WE ARE HERE!!!	4/10/2020 7:20 AM
41	Would like to see the playground have more exercise, more play gym, benches for citizens and parents to watch their children. The baseball area should do something w/ that. It's a beautiful area. The group of parents are super with the children.	4/10/2020 7:11 AM
42	While we only visit occasionally the town and area are gorgous, but there simply aren't enoughthings to do.	4/10/2020 7:06 AM

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43	1. parking on sidewalks should be taboo, too many, even business owners block sidewalks 2. speeding, mostly cars on Erie Ave and Bridge St 3. Red light violators are numerous in our limited sight area of Bridge and Erie. Our Town should have lower speed limits & be known as a speed trap & v. tourist friendly.	4/9/2020 7:31 PM
44	Taxes TOO HIGH! Way too high Someone is taking the money!	4/9/2020 7:17 PM
45	A quiet small town community kept rural for future generations to enjoy.	4/9/2020 7:14 PM
46	As a none resident I can't comment on question 11	4/9/2020 7:10 PM
47	Need to do more as more and more residents don't care what their property looks like, too many junk vehicles, garbage, etc. Very bad eyesore.	4/9/2020 7:07 PM
48	Mant issues are not relevant because we own land and do not reside here.	4/9/2020 6:57 PM
49	we need a sanitation department. Many residents have unsightly garbage on their property making them are mood depressed.	4/9/2020 6:54 PM
50	I feel that development/repurposing of main street buildings like the Rasmussen and Stranahan buildings would add to the vitality of main st.	4/8/2020 12:19 PM
51	Would like a town constable. Would like a better enforcement of codes pertaining to disheveled properties/homes/cars.	4/8/2020 11:59 AM
52	Increase parking on main st.	4/6/2020 4:43 PM
53	More attention needs to be paid to vacant properties. Owners need to be contacted to ensure homes are not bringing down home values.	4/5/2020 8:11 PM
54	Would be nice to have river access in Town. Plans for such exist, how can it be built?	4/5/2020 7:59 PM
55	Keep up the good work! I feel lucky to live here.	4/5/2020 7:44 PM
56	How can you have affordable housing. Taxes are so high.	4/5/2020 7:41 PM
57	1. Roads in the Luxton Lake development maintenance and repair, fire and emergency access to residence is an issue. Would like to pursue a conversation about the Town taking over these roads, putting dry hydrants, etc. 2.The Town to pursue the esplanade waterfront plan.	4/5/2020 7:37 PM
58	I find most business owners on Main Street do not use parking lot - park on Main Street entire day making in and out parking annoying. Constant double parking on Main Street creating dangerous driving situations. Also, coming into flats both sides of main road parked cars creating issues if there is ever an emergency one small vehicle can pass at one time.	4/5/2020 1:22 PM
59	We need cell towers. Code ref is no good to me if I have no cell service.	4/5/2020 12:42 PM
60	we are retired couple so did not check areas that do not apply. Regarding development in general we strongly support the river management plan especially restrictions in ridgeline development, no building on steep slopes as in original plan and adhering to traditional land uses and scale, i.e. 50 ft restrictions. Small is not only beautiful, it works!	4/5/2020 12:38 PM
61	1. Road conditions safety: Swamp Pond Rd. There needs to be a designated pull off area on either side of the road at the blind spot near and around the exit/entry from/to Swamp pond RT23 at the yellow narrow sign area you can't see approaching vehicles until its too late no time, no place, no room to safely move over to allow another to pass!! Very dangerous!! Thank you for reading More on separate sheet of paper.	4/5/2020 12:25 PM
62	Overall I'm happy to live here. I feel there could be more for youth programs as well as facilities for the elderly. An issue I do have living in Luxton Lake is our taxes. We are taxed as if the lake still exists. The lake has been dry since 1983. I feel it is overdue to revise this issue. We are a private community that receives little to no resources from the Town (water, snow plowing) and we pay very high taxes.	4/5/2020 12:10 PM
63	Thank you for conducting this survey	4/5/2020 11:59 AM
64	N/a	4/5/2020 10:42 AM
65	You don't seem to recognize any people living outside of the town itself... people north and south of Narrowsburg. Nothing pertains to us...this is only a survey for the town.	4/5/2020 10:26 AM

Town of Tusten Comprehensive Plan Survey

66	The property we own has been in thhe family since the late 1940's. It is used only during the deer hunting season for at most 2 weeks and we haven't taken a deer in years! we don't use any of the Town's services, nor do we have children in the schools. That said, your taxes are killing us!! If this continues we will probably donate the lans to a conservation group. That will take care of the tax problem.	4/5/2020 7:22 AM
67	you need to make senior citizen population tio be able to live in their homes with programs to allow them to live in their homes....nursing care, meal on wheels, transportation, grocery availability, bus and car service, food banks. I had to relocate my Mom with me due toAlzhemiers and Father due to ALS.	4/5/2020 7:14 AM
68	Improve the park for our local children Offer a reimbursement to have your pet spayed/neutered.	4/4/2020 7:19 PM
69	We are not really there for any length of time to comment on these conditions.	4/4/2020 7:08 PM
70	I only own land and live out of state.	4/4/2020 7:05 PM
71	We need high speed internet	4/4/2020 7:01 PM
72	Years ago there was a more hometown feel. With the removal of the school, I believe that more people are going elsewhere to meet up with others. Not enough neighborly interaction like there used to be.	4/4/2020 1:20 PM
73	Attitudes still exist that need to be changed from people who may have a second homeowners here to those who are years residents and or are transplants. We really need to work together on respect and set tolerance for overgrown adult bullies. There is a lot of good in this community and some of the viciousness scares off young families.	4/4/2020 1:02 PM
74	Tree trimming on roads Re-open medical office in town Better electric service!!!	4/4/2020 12:18 PM
75	1. A dog park. 2. Improve parking main st 3. Stop the dangerous parking by launderette 4. we need a municipal garbage collection	4/4/2020 12:10 PM
76	more tax breaks for fixed income families.	4/4/2020 12:10 PM
77	We enjoy Narrowsburg very much, Unfortunately we have not been able to get there too often due to health problems.	4/4/2020 12:06 PM
78	It would help to lure more second home residents from urban areas. Campaign with other towns for revitalized rail access.	4/4/2020 12:02 PM
79	Let's keep Narrowsburg beautiful. Develop village streets by renovating and leaseing unoccupies store fronts.More cultural opportunities.	4/4/2020 11:37 AM
80	Lets put Tusten on the map for renewable energy and parks!	4/4/2020 11:29 AM
81	Love Narrowsburg and you all are doing a fine job for the town.	4/4/2020 11:19 AM
82	There should be enforced traffic regulations for all in the area of 97 north and south. Perhaps these regulations would stop motorists going into my fence. Went into my yard and destroyed my property X4.	4/4/2020 11:13 AM
83	To preserve open undeveloped land and forest. Not to allow construction, building and development to take the beautiful undeveloped land or property. To enhance emergency services and programs for our seniors and the youth. Take care of the young and the senior wild keeping open land and forest.	4/4/2020 11:07 AM
84	Protect our elected officials from base-less law suits.	4/4/2020 10:56 AM
85	I feel the cost of taxes too high due to services we have in Sullivan County but most of all due to organization that don't pay when everything becomes a religious property. I think we all should know about how many and how much is lost in dollars. John Cambo 917.974.0430	4/4/2020 10:49 AM
86	necessary road maintance- Tusten Rt22	4/4/2020 10:42 AM
87	upgrade of web size very nice. History society archives need to be available on-line, at least picture postcards.	4/4/2020 10:38 AM
88	Empty buildings in commercially zoned areas should be used and open for business. They should not be boarded or used for storage. Fine should be given if they are not filled in a year.	4/4/2020 9:28 AM

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89	Keep up the social and cultural activities!	4/3/2020 7:59 PM
90	I am concerned about Hasidic development.	4/3/2020 6:19 PM
91	Wishing internet and cell service could be better, especially when needed for emergency service contact. Thank you.	4/3/2020 5:55 PM
92	Very happy with the town. Would like for job opportunities to be posted though so all of the public could have a chance to see and apply. Not just who you know... Also the playground needs to be addressed cause it is a severe hazard to those who play on it. Upgrade maintain. Seriously the town is running okay. Main Street is busy and unfortunately due to this virus we all need to work together. We don't need a new building for certain things. Utilize what we have in town. Most of all take all our responses and not disregard them. Many have ideas but are tired of the town not listening to them and doing what they want. Also has to be done across the board not just to toward certain people.	4/3/2020 1:40 PM
93	None	4/3/2020 12:57 PM
94	Solar fields should be limited to commercial zones and should not be allowed in residential areas.	4/3/2020 12:51 PM
95	Increased availability of cellular coverage and reliable high speed internet access. I feel the town continues to ignore these issues.	4/3/2020 12:43 PM
96	Broadband access is so important for tourism businesses and residents. Please ensure NBG can get wiFi access thru the new LED street light installation. Another imortant qual of life is noise restriction regulation. People come here to enjoy serene, natural beauty. NBG is not Ft.Lauderdale on spring break. Loud gatherings must be controlled and regulated to preserve the peace for all.	4/3/2020 11:40 AM
97	As a part-time resident, considering eventually coming here full-time, medical and veterinary services are crucial, along with better public transportation.	4/2/2020 8:39 PM
98	Efforts should be taken by the town to address long vacant and derelict buildings like the Rasmussen furniture store and funeral home, 113 Main Street and various homes along Route 97 south of town.	4/2/2020 6:54 PM
99	If the zoning laws and comprehensive plan were actually enforced. I would not have a 10 family apartment complex next to me in the R1 district.. Educating words such as any town official, can talk to the department of state for guidance and direction at any time should be stated in the new zoning laws.	4/2/2020 5:31 PM
100	we need speed internet access	4/2/2020 5:16 PM
101	Main Street has turned into what feels like a rich kid club and a place I can't afford. The best a local can afford is the coffee shop, the book store and some of the places to eat. I'm all for the revitalization of Main Street and local businesses but there doesn't seem to be a balance for locals to afford the Main Street lifestyle we know this town needs/needed. It would be a good opportunity to open it up to some other business competition and give some range of jobs available in the area that isn't 30 mins away.	4/2/2020 5:01 PM
102	We respectfully submit grievances. Our way of life and property value feel threatened over past local town board decisions to blatantly ignore residential district zoning laws that are meant to protect a small town country atmosphere with no way to easily undo the damage of such decisions. We feel it's important to have laws written specifically to educate officials and protect homeowners living within residential districts from future attempts of unbridled development in the name of financial gain. As well as laws that will help homeowners that have already been affected. This will allow the Town of Tusten to maintain its important identity and reputation as a premium slice of country life within the Catskills.	4/2/2020 2:47 PM
103	Return weekend bus and rail service to the hamlet [a boost for tourism, Airbnb, revenue] etc. May to Veteran's Day weekend. Urgent Care Dry cleaner [adjacent to the laundromat] Locksmith/iron works combo [ located down where Stranahan's was located] Internet cafe/gaming combo [open until 9P down by the gas station across from the mall]	4/2/2020 2:16 PM
104	I have llives here for 20 years and like it here. I do not wish for changes. Perhaps if I was young with chiddren I would want more for them, wouldn't want to spend 2 hours on the bus	4/2/2020 12:43 AM
105	Rt97 needs 55 mph signs to help those 40mph drivers realize they are impeading those that	4/2/2020 12:19 AM



## Town of Tusten Comprehensive Plan Survey

would like to go 55 but no where to pass. Logging in area so sad to see the waste of firewood left on the ground to rot.

106	Taxes are getting out of hand	4/1/2020 10:15 PM
107	Redevelopment of abandoned storefronts and other properties should be a higher priority than new development, whether residential, commercial or retail.	4/1/2020 8:02 PM
108	New a summer program for younger kids somewhere in town where they can go and have fun so parents can feel safe knowing there kids are safe.	4/1/2020 5:38 PM
109	None	4/1/2020 5:04 PM
110	rail access zoning focus on maintaining rural character and allowing low density low impact development for commercial purposes	4/1/2020 4:40 PM
111	Not much to do as young people, growing up in this town I didn't have much to do and even if I did find something to I would be stop by the local cop and get questioned. This is why young people turn to drugs or leave Narrowsburg. There's nothing here.	4/1/2020 4:40 PM
112	To the point on parking: number one, there is not enough space with larger vehicles and shoddy parking jobs to allow for parking on both sides of Main St. Secondly, the municipal lot and parking should be metered. In other townships of similar feel (example the Berkshires) there are plenty of parking opportunities and they don't cost a fortune. This can be a small, but useful source of income for the town as there are a plethora of visitors from places that charge \$40+ to park for the day.	4/1/2020 4:39 PM
113	I would love to see an expansion of the multi generation park that was started. It would be a great addition to the community and benefit all ages and financial brackets.	4/1/2020 3:09 PM
114	The Town of Tusten needs to come up with a plan to bring jobs into the area. Support our younger generation with education and child care. Keep our younger families flourishing. Without jobs people are forced to leave or live below average. We can still keep the small town feel. Tusten has a natural beauty of its own and is rich in history.	4/1/2020 2:07 PM
115	Poor choice of solar and location of Town solar. Taxes are high. Lower Town budget.	4/1/2020 11:07 AM
116	The Hamlet has become too gentrified. Planning Board has made terrible decisions regarding the Hamlet and has run rough shot over certain businesses.	4/1/2020 10:59 AM
117	Ordinances like noise and smoke are not enforced. State police and sheriff dept will not come out for a complaint	4/1/2020 7:11 AM
118	Most of the recent zoning has contributed to larger house lots, increased cost for residences and loss of these families that grow up in Tusten. I suspect these zoning additions (like the 25 foot side yard) have been the action of a group of new residents who foresee Tusten as an upscale area with more people like them. Not good.	4/1/2020 7:06 AM
119	The Town needs Comprehensive health care services, families with children, in town educational opportunities for all ages, lower taxes	4/1/2020 6:48 AM
120	under transportation services above: train commuter to/from NYC	4/1/2020 6:36 AM
121	Better cell and internet service	4/1/2020 6:31 AM
122	No law enforcement available in town at night Possible greater funding to be put into restaurant, small business IT, solar, wind energies. Need reports on quality of water	4/1/2020 2:55 AM
123	Town needs to continue fostering tourism while at the same time working to attract businesses to locate in the town and Union to increase full-time local employment opportunities	4/1/2020 2:11 AM
124	The Town needs to realize there is more to the Town of Tusten than Main Street.	4/1/2020 1:49 AM
125	River access for boat landing High speed internet Plow Rt.97 sooner Lower taxes Hiking trails ATV trails cell phone service	4/1/2020 1:45 AM
126	High speed internet is becoming more and more vital to everyday live and DSL is 20+ year old tech and needs to be updated.	4/1/2020 1:43 AM
127	So far so good. Thank you.	4/1/2020 1:40 AM
128	The bridge should be fully open and safe for traffic, pedestrian and cyclists. It is an eyesore.	4/1/2020 1:26 AM

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129	Schools and town are very very high. Should be re-evaluated and dropped down.	4/1/2020 1:23 AM
130	The area needs more internet providers to homes. The lack of internet in Weiden Lake keeps my family away as we need it for work from home.	4/1/2020 1:20 AM
131	I don't think any place that goes backwards in time is doing a good job. Town of Tusten was better off in the 1800's.	4/1/2020 1:18 AM
132	No opinion on #11. Thanks for the survey. Hope it helps.	4/1/2020 1:15 AM
133	Less focus on Main St and focus on the Township as a whole!	4/1/2020 1:13 AM
134	as long as you can drive we have it made here	4/1/2020 1:10 AM
135	I have no opinion for #11. Thanks for the survey. I hope it helps.	3/31/2020 7:54 PM
136	Ron and Jane Rasmussen	3/31/2020 7:51 PM
137	Taxes too high. All property including scouts pay taxes	3/31/2020 7:50 PM
138	No public transportation! Local constable to increase town revenue and offset taxes.	3/31/2020 7:24 PM
139	Thank you for the work being done by this committee.	3/31/2020 7:23 PM
140	We have been coming here since 2005 and love the quaintness of Tusten. People have been quite kind. Would love to see the skating rink back behind Narrowsburg Inn. Perhaps a welcome packet at Town Hall with info of Town activities, services along with coupons from various businesses.	3/31/2020 7:19 PM
141	Senior or rental decent homes or apartments are necessary. Rental for younger who can not afford.	3/31/2020 7:18 PM
142	Railroad underpass is a disgrace, fix Little Lake Erie bridge	3/31/2020 7:12 PM
143	Put the new compostor in the multigenerational park. It would be an improvement to the mess and eyesore that exists.	3/31/2020 7:10 PM
144	none residents disturbance of the peace with loud boom boxes visitors come warm weather daytime and evening seniors are moving out due to high taxes	3/31/2020 6:54 PM
145	Public safety-upgrade fire hydrants, require better accessibility of driveways for emergency vehicles, eg. Royale Oaks, Weiden, etc also better posting of 911 markers	3/31/2020 6:53 PM
146	Happy Vito and Mariana Iaffaldano	3/31/2020 6:52 PM
147	spending money foolishly and not finishing projects, ex. playground garden on the flats. Too many employees in water and sewer. contracting too much work.	3/31/2020 6:50 PM
148	need more parking in town, Much more	3/31/2020 6:48 PM
149	limit parking in front of post office	3/31/2020 6:46 PM
150	horrible that people park on sidewalk, dangerous for people to then walk in street, main st merchants park on main st leave no parking for customers	3/31/2020 6:45 PM
151	lower taxes	3/31/2020 6:42 PM
152	support does not necessarily mean town tax dollars ,could be grants, donations and/or volunteerism	3/31/2020 6:38 PM
153	lower taxes	3/31/2020 6:36 PM
154	would like to see more enforcement with speeding, littering and building with proper permits	3/31/2020 6:34 PM
155	Better cell service reception. More access to cable or TV reception throughout Tusten Township.	3/31/2020 6:18 PM
156	Getting people to work. Very laid back, tree cutters, painters, contractors, etc. They don't want to loose benefits by making money.	3/31/2020 5:56 PM
157	The tax burden on local businesses and residents. Empty store fronts indicate the inability to lure businesses to Main Street in Narrowsburg. Incentives should be given to maintain/increase	3/31/2020 9:53 AM

Town of Tusten Comprehensive Plan Survey

occupancy.

158	No town constable has resulted in a huge increase in quality of life crime issues, the cul de sac on Delaware Dr is a drug and sex zone. Code enforcement is non-existent. There are more junk cars in yards than Mississippi. The river towns are the only decent places in Sullivan County. The rest of the big towns in Sullivan are dumps. Don't destroy whatever it is that saved the river corridor from the rest of the county.	3/31/2020 9:42 AM
159	We are really not there for any long period of time to comment on these conditions.	3/31/2020 9:03 AM
160	I think it is important for the town of Tusten to take responsibility for the care and maintenance of ALL roads that provide access for residents to their homes. Currently, my road is privately maintained by the residents here, which is an additional cost to all of us on top of what we pay in taxes to live here.	3/30/2020 5:23 PM
161	Relationships - NPS - create relationship that takes advantage of the fact that we live in a park. Churches - they are a big part of the social safety net but are vulnerable themselves.	3/27/2020 1:55 PM
162	as long as one can drive we have it made here	3/25/2020 8:34 PM
163	Great town and place to live. Preserve its charm	3/24/2020 8:03 PM
164	A weekend bus from NYC that could stop in Narrowsburg would be great	3/23/2020 5:25 PM
165	Tusten needs high speed internet infrastructure set up to attract development opportunities.	3/21/2020 2:46 PM
166	Item 9 should have N/A or Other or Not An Issue Sunday Trash pickup location would be good. Public Transportation is stretch for a town our size. Item 10. Should have included Other. Item 11. Should have included town services such as Roads, Library etc. Thank you to volunteers who work on this survey and for this town. We appreciate it.	3/18/2020 10:24 PM
167	town to highway and fire taxes are very high	3/18/2020 11:08 AM
168	Water quality is not good. Is there something that can be done?	3/17/2020 9:47 PM
169	The current zoning regulations should be enforced. There are many properties where junk has accumulated and nothing is done. What is the point of having zoning laws if they are not enforced? Junk accumulations hurt every single taxpayer in Tusten.	3/17/2020 9:11 PM
170	The town's water system	3/17/2020 3:47 PM
171	I would like to see us work to understand what brings people and their money (as visitors/guests) into our area and ensuring that we don't impair that - if we do things that residents want but makes visitors/tourists who bring a lot of revenue into our town less satisfied it will be bad for the town.	3/17/2020 10:01 AM
172	Local police force would help fight the immense drug problem we have in town and increase revenue for the town.	3/15/2020 6:28 PM
173	Condition of the sidewalks and lack of them	3/12/2020 9:36 PM

*Town of Tusten Comprehensive Plan Survey - 2020*

The Town of Tusten is updating its comprehensive plan and we need your help. A comprehensive plan is a non-regulatory document that describes the town's history and its current conditions, and it sets a framework to help guide the future of the community. The purpose of this survey is to gather public input that will inform the development of the plan. The Town Board appointed a Comprehensive Plan Committee who is overseeing the process. This committee meets regularly, and all meetings are open to the public. For more information about these meetings and to review the town's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, please visit the Comprehensive Plan webpage, accessible from the town's homepage: [www.townoftusten.org](http://www.townoftusten.org). Please return your survey using the enclosed envelope or by dropping it off at the Town Hall by **5:00 PM, Friday April 3, 2020**. (A mailbox is available at the entrance to Town Hall during non-business hours.) Surveys can also be completed online by visiting the Comprehensive Plan webpage via [www.townoftusten.org](http://www.townoftusten.org). Every effort has been made to mail one survey to each household. If you have renters on your property or know of others who may not have received the survey, please encourage them to participate. We need to hear from you. Your input is vital to help us understand your current concerns and your goals for the town in the future. Thank you. The Committee and the Town Board appreciate your participation in this survey.

1) Where do you live or own property in the Town?

- Narrowsburg       Ten Mile River       Weiden Lake       Beaverbrook
- Irishtown       Perry Pond       Luxton Lake       Royale Oaks
- Lava       Other \_\_\_\_\_

2) Are you: (check all that apply)

- A full-time resident       A landowner       A part-time resident       A renter
- A homeowner       Other \_\_\_\_\_

3) How long have you lived in Tusten? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Check the top 4 reasons why you live, own land, or keep a residence in Tusten

- "Small town" atmosphere       Close to Delaware River       Low crime rate
- Close to work       Quality of schools       Affordable housing
- Recreational opportunities       Clean water and air       Quality of town services
- Close to shopping       Proximity to metro areas       Open space and scenery
- Cultural opportunities       Other \_\_\_\_\_

5) How many, if any, children under age 18 live at home with you? \_\_\_\_\_

6) Where do you work? (check all that apply)

- In Tusten, not at home       In New York State       Full-time
- In Tusten, at home       In Pennsylvania       Part-time
- Within 50 miles of Tusten       In New Jersey       Student
- Over 50 miles from Tusten       Retired       Currently unemployed

7) Please indicate your age bracket (others in household may participate in the survey online):

- 18-25       26-35       36-45       46-55       56-65       66-75       Over 75

8) In your opinion are MORE of these services/ businesses desirable for the Town? (check any that are desirable)

- Light manufacturing       Prof./ Corporate Office Parks       Research & development firms
- Tourism attractions       Health services       Warehousing and distribution
- Retail stores       Art/ Cultural facilities       Recreation/ entertnmnt. facilities
- Heavy industry       Residential development       Motels, B&B/ Hotels/ Cottages
- Classroom and Internet-based continuing education       High-speed internet access
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

9) In your opinion, which of the following are housing issues for the Town? (check all that apply)

- Availability of retirement communities       Availability of affordable housing to local residents
- Availability of rental housing       Availability of housing for senior citizens
- Quality/ condition of housing

10) Check the top 4 of the following initiatives for the Town that you would SUPPORT

- Steering development to current business zones to preserve rural areas       Developing tourism around existing attractions
- Purchasing or preserving land for parks       Preservation of forestland
- Increased biking, hiking, walking, and waterfront access opportunities       Increasing the availability of public transportation
- Expansion of renewable energy such as solar on municipal buildings       Developing local heritage (historical sites/ buildings/ communities)
- Enhanced emergency services       Upgrade water and sewer districts
- Improved services, facilities, programs, and organizations for seniors and youth       Retail Shopping/ opportunities

11) Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the Town:

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
Rural atmosphere/ open space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreational opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Childcare facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elder care facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of medical services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zoning regulations/ ordinances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retail/ shopping opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12) Please include any additional comments you have or any issues in the town of Tusten you feel are important to address. You may attach additional pages if necessary.

**Appendix 2 – List of Cemeteries**

<b>CEMETERY</b>	<b>AKA</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>HAMLET</b>	<b>TAX ID</b>
Beaverbrook Cemetery	Neweiden	Off County Rd. 23and Weber Road	Beaverbrook Corner	20.-1-12
Glen Cove Cemetery	Part called Old School District Burying Ground*	Kirk Road	Narrowsburg	8.-2-12
Lava Cemetery		Parker Rd. off Rte. 52	Lava	3.-1-47
Kunkeli Cemetery	Bloomingtondale Cemetery	Off State Route 97 near Highland Border & Delaware River		25.-1-12.4
Mapes Cemetery	Private	In woods nr. Luxton Lake Off Lake Ridge Road		6.A-1-1
Narrowsburg Catholic Cem	Private			
St. Francis Catholic cemetery		Rte. 52	Narrowsburg	10.-3-7 &10.-3-9
Tusten Settlement Cemetery		Rte. 97 nr. Church	Tusten	19.-1-2

\* Other sections are known as Glen Cove 3rd Section, Maple Grove Section, and Maple Grove Partridge Section. (Source: Natural Resources & Open Space Inventory)

History

**Tusten Historical Society**

198 Bridge Street PO Box 18 Narrowsburg, NY 12764

The Tusten Historical Society is housed downstairs in the Tusten-Cochecton Branch of the Western Sullivan Public Library. We have our own staff and hours which are from:

Monday: 11:00am until 1:00pm (except January and February)

Friday: 6:00pm until 8:00pm

Saturday: 11:00am until 1:00pm

Other times by appointment during regular library operating hours.

The history room is closed when the library is closed.

In our collection are pictures, scrapbooks, old store ledgers, tax rolls from 1859 to 1956 and books on history of the Upper Delaware River area.

On microfilm are old newspapers, some early church records and the Sullivan County Federal Census from 1820 to 1920.

We have a growing collection of genealogies of early Tusten residents and other resources for you to research.

Genealogy research is available for a fee. Please write for information on charges and what resources are available. Please note that your genealogy requests will be answered in order received and data compiled will be sent by regular mail.

The Tusten Historical Society can be reached at:

845.252.3360

or

e-mail: [tustenroots@lycos.com](mailto:tustenroots@lycos.com)

***Are your roots in the town of Tusten or Narrowsburg, New York?  
For brief biographies of early settlers to our region please [click here](#).***

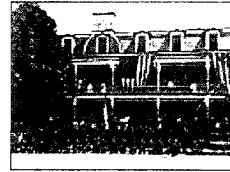
*Art Hawker, Town of Tusten historian, has written two essays on the history of the town of Tusten and the hamlet of Narrowsburg. To read these articles please click on the photos below.*

The Town of

The Town of  
Tusten to  
1900



Tusten from  
1900 until  
the present





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## The history of the Town of Tusten until 1900

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### TOWN OF TUSTEN HISTORY

Before the first white settlement, the Delaware River Valley was inhabited by the Leni Indians, an Indian nation formed of many tribes, clans, and families. The three main tribes were translated as the Turkey, Turtle, and Wolf tribes, with the Wolf tribe of the Minsi being predominant in this area between the Delaware and Hudson Rivers. The arch enemy of the LENAPE was the IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY or SIX NATIONS which had initially been formed some 300 years before in 1450. (During the French & Indian War with Britain 1754 to 1763, this confederation backed the French, who lost, then in the American Revolution they backed the British, who also lost). The IROQUOIS, having depleted their lands of furs, were well armed by the Dutch traders, and had stolen other Indian lands from Albany to Ohio before the Dutch had been run out of the territory by England in 1675.

Earliest white explorers to the river valley were said to be Dutch traders who had come down river via the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, and Swedes who had reportedly sailed upriver in 1638 on the water they called the New Swedeland Stream. These adventurers had been traders and no settlements by them are recorded.

Ten Mile River, or Tusten, as it is now known, was settled according to various sources in 1757, by Connecticut area residents under the auspices of the Delaware Company, a trading business. At the same time, one or two settlers were near present day Narrowsburg, with a larger settlement at Cushetunk, in the present day Milanville - Cochection area.

During this same time, TEEDYUSCUNG, a great Indian statesman and veteran of many Indian conflicts was the acknowledged leader of 10,000 LENAPE tribes. Baptized in 1750 by the Moravian missionaries at Cushetunk, he was also known by his Anglican names of GULIAN and HONEST JOHN. In 1763, he was living in what is now the Wyoming, Pennsylvania, area where the ruling council stayed. On the night of April 13<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>, 1763, he was burned to death in his cabin. Having made numerous enemies over the years, some called his death an assassination by Indian enemies, while some blamed white settlers, and others attributed it to alcohol. Regardless, his son, CAPTAIN BULL, blamed the white man and set out to avenge his father's death. One of his primary targets was the Cushetunk Settlement, which he planned to reach via the Lackawaxen River. At this time, Cushetunk was a threatening white settlement of 30 log homes, a blockhouse, a sawmill and a gristmill. Traveling up the Delaware River from the Lackawaxen, BULL encountered the small settlement at the Ten Mile River and killed an estimated 22 people, burning every structure present and leaving no survivors.

BULL and his war party continued North toward Cushetunk. At this time the first officially recognized resident of Big Eddy, or what was later to become Narrowsburg, was HELKIAH WILLIS, who lived with his family in a cabin on the Pennsylvania side of the river. One August (?) day, his two sons were winnowing buckwheat when they espied the Indian party coming up river. The boys ran to tell their father, who, because of their past exhibitions of

laziness and lying, was somewhat skeptical, figuring they were just telling a tale to get out of work. The boys were adamant, so WILLIS and two others, MOSES THOMAS and EZRA WITTERS went to investigate. Reportedly, they encountered the Indians eating turnips in a turnip patch but were immediately detected themselves. Shots were fired with THOMAS being killed outright, and WILLIS was so badly wounded that he was soon overtaken and killed. [*One written account places this skirmish near the site of the current Methodist church on Lake Erie, but lacks detail as to how this is known and does not mention a crossing of the river*]. WITTERS, through great skill and good fortune, was able to make it back to the Cushetunk blockhouse and give warning. Runners were sent North and South to sound the alarm and get help for the imminent attack. One of those sent South to the Minisink Settlement near present day Port Jervis, was MOSES THOMAS II, whose father had been killed. The Indians soon arrived but did not attack due to WITTERS' ingenuity. He used several voices, it is told, to make the blockhouse sound heavily defended, which made the Indians wary of approaching it. Under the cover of darkness however, one of the brave braves attempted to ignite a pile of hay, which was stored against the blockhouse, but WITTERS shot him for his trouble. After retrieving the body, the Indians engaged in a verbal harangue during the night, and eventually left, retreating to the South.

The lads who had been sent south to the Minisink Settlement, both reportedly under 11 years old, made it safely and a rescue party canoed upriver to bury the dead and take the living to safer environs, and it was at this juncture that one more tragedy took place. This was occasioned by the fact that there was room in the canoes for all but one, who, it was decided must be left behind. This misfortune fell to a mother who had an "idiot daughter". The mother was forcibly placed into a canoe and they sailed off with her moaning and the girl crying on the beach. Upon their eventual return, the girl's bones were found near the blockhouse and buried.

The next notable Indian conflict occurred 16 years later at Minisink Ford. During this interim, not much is written about settlers in the Tusten area. The Battle of Minisink of course, occurred during the Revolutionary War, and it is important to us because of BENJAMIN TUSTEN, who died there and became our Town's namesake. TUSTEN was a Goshen, NY physician, who was also the son of a prominent physician. He was also a Colonel in the Orange County militia. Locally, TUSTEN had been well known for his practice of inoculating people against disease, a medical practice not commonly undertaken in those days, and for his generosity in providing housing for the sick. While Col. TUSTEN was peacefully practicing his profession in Goshen, a Mohawk warrior who had been well educated in Britain, was plying his own trade, TAYADANEEGA (also written Thayendaneegea), holding a Colonel's rank in the British army, was a master at psychological warfare and headed a small army of Indians and Tories (Loyalists), and had gained a reputation for ruthless attacks against American colonists in Pennsylvania and New York. Although the Iroquois Six Nation Confederacy had opted to remain neutral at the outbreak of the Revolution, it was at the urging of TAYADANEEGA that they entered the war in 1777 on the side of the British. We know this warrior better by his Anglican name, JOSEPH BRANT.

On July 19, 1779, as part of a series of raids in this area, BRANT's group crossed the Delaware River at Lackawaxen, leaving a rear guard on the west side of the river. Their goal was to re-provision themselves with an attack on the settlement of Maghaghkamic, or

Minisink, in the Port Jervis area. This was accomplished the following day with several colonists being killed, buildings burned, and captives taken. BRANT's compassionate decision to spare some of the settlers allowed them to make their way to Goshen and alert the authorities there.

On July 21, 1779, 149 members of the militia responded to Col. TUSTEN's call. After some discussion, Tusten felt it prudent that they wait for reinforcements before pursuing their quarry, but a Major MEEKER gave an impassioned speech, challenging cowards to remain behind and for brave men to go forth. This swayed the group and they headed west to their destiny.

The following day (July 22), they were joined by a smaller militia from Warwick, New York, under the command of a Col. HATHORN, who was senior to Tusten and took over command of the combined army. In the vicinity of present day Barryville, the Indians were sighted, moving slowly because of captives and stolen livestock, and Col. HATHORN decided to take a trail along the ridgeline and ambush the Indians as they tried to cross the Delaware. Little did he realize that they too had been spotted. When the terrain allowed the Indians to go out of sight, BRANT, anticipating HATHORN's intent, moved his warriors up present day Dry Brook, knowing that the soldiers would have to cross a ravine in that area. Written accounts vary as to what happened next, but the final results were the same. One popular story goes that BRANT offered the militia a chance to surrender on the terms that no harm would befall them. While he was talking, a militiaman's musket discharged, either by intent or accident, passing through BRANT's belt, and the Battle of Minisink began. According to the Americans' version, the militiamen held out valiantly from 10 AM until sundown, plagued by lack of water and ammunition, before the Indians were able to break through their ranks and massacre those who still remained alive. The dead included Col. BENJAMIN TUSTEN, our township's namesake, MOSES THOMAS II, whose father had been killed in the previously related Narrowsburg raid in 1763, and Major BELEZEEL TYLER, a scout from Cochecton. Ironically, Major MEEKER, whose strong oratory had caused the militia to set out without reinforcements, survived the ordeal by being at the end of the column and escaping.

BRANT's memoirs offer a slightly different version of the battle. He wrote that his group was attacked by the "rebels" while crossing the river. Sizing up the situation, they scattered into the woods while he took some men and went around to the rear of the enemy, to where they had retreated at the top of a rocky hill. Instead of an all day battle, BRANT reports that in 4 hours they took "40 odd scalps", which he estimates was half of the enemy force, plus they took a Captain as captive. He listed his own losses at 3 men.

The bones of the militiamen lay where they had fallen for 43 years before they were retrieved and interred in a common grave in Goshen. Their deaths, however, were avenged within a month of the battle, when Gen. JOHN SULLIVAN, for whom our county is named, began a campaign of retribution in Central and Western New York. Attacking the IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY on their own grounds, he conducted his own massacres under the battle cry of "Civilization or Death to All American Savages". Men, women, and children were slaughtered, their crops and dwellings burned, and their orchards cut down. Many of those who escaped immediate death during the campaign that summer either starved or froze to death that winter. Another tragic consequence of this 1779 campaign was

that two tribes of the Confederacy who had remained neutral, the ONEIDA and the TUSCARORA, were beset upon by the others and destroyed.

From 1743 until 1798, the land that would be named in Col. TUSTEN's honor was part of the Town of Mamakating, Ulster County. In fact, for a period of 101 years, until 1769, it had been part of the territory claimed by New Jersey, a claim that extended northward to present day Cochecton. In 1798, what is now Tusten became part of the Town of Lumberland, Orange County. At this time, Lumberland Township extended north to the Delaware County line, east to the Mongaup River, and northeast to the Town of Rochester, Ulster County. When Sullivan County was formed in March 1809, our township was still encompassed by what was then Lumberland.

It is generally held that the first white settler on the New York side of the river was BENJAMIN HOMANS, who came here around 1770. This locality initially bore his name in the form of Homan's Eddy. Names of other early settlers included the Dexter, Van Winkle, Thomas, Cole, Decker, Corwin, Goldsmith, Cuddeback, and Dunn families among others.

There was also a family named WICKHAM who owned a good deal of our present village, then sold the land to the DUNN family, who had moved here en masse from New Jersey. In these late 18th and early 19th Century times there were cabins on the Flats, then referred to as the "Lower Place", about three near the present Lake Eric, the "Middle Place", and a couple farther north in the "Upper Place".

The family of THOMAS DUNN formed the first cemetery in what is now the Glen Cove Cemetery, and the oldest marked stones are still there, as is a historical marker. The DUNN family also has the dubious distinction of being the only recorded slave holders in our community. It is written that WILLIAM DUNN, returning from New York City, stopped in Cuddebackville, and was entreated by a slave mother to buy her 4 year old son because she was unable to provide properly for him, but wanted him close enough to visit on occasion, which was not uncommon. The lad was purchased and named JAMES B. DUNN. Upon reaching adulthood in 1827, JAMES was declared a free man and settled on the lower part of the Flats where he was still living when JAMES QUINLAN published his History of Sullivan County in 1873. Locally, up until the 1960's at least, Black Jim's Farm was often referred to as that area near the former Tusten dump along the railroad right of way. (The existence of "Black Jim" is confirmed by an entry in a ledger from the Hankins Family General Store, which operated in the community of Tusten from the early 1800's into the twentieth century. A transaction record dated January 14, 1829 refers to "Black James Dunn", with subsequent entries referring to James Dunn, or simply "black man", settling the account of William Dunn)

Having mentioned the railroad, it would be remiss not to discuss the early modes of transportation in the area. Initially the river may have been a hindrance to travel except by canoe, but as the population increased, so did river commerce, which became tied to that growth. Naturally, rafting of lumber became an industry, which gave rise to hotels that provided places of food and rest. Rope and later cable ferries plied the river at choice locations, which included one at Ten Mile River, which had been resettled and was now a prospering community.

In 1810 a charter was granted to the Narrowsburg Bridge Company and a 25' wide bridge was built across the narrows. This, of course, was a toll bridge and the rates of passage were steep for those days: 37 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cents for a one horse wagon, \$1 for 4 horses, and 6 cents by foot, in an age when a laborer earned \$1 for a full day's work. Because of this high tariff, people crossed by other means, including wading across the river wherever practical. Other records, *which appear to be more reliable*, indicate that this charter did not occur until 1830, with the first bridge being built in 1832, and the tolls being somewhat less costly. Whenever built, the bridge became part of a transportation system, which included the Mount Hope - Lumberland Turnpike, chartered in 1812 with Narrowsburg resident ABRAHAM CUDDEBACK as Director. This thoroughfare ran from Orange County to Honesdale, and consisted of a plank road in many places. Ice and high water apparently took out at least two bridges before 1848 saw a covered bridge 250' long and 35' above the low water mark. This in turn was replaced by an iron structure built 54 years later by the Oswego Bridge Company in 1899, which lasted until the present interstate bridge was completed in 1953. It was not until January 12, 1927 that the bridge became *toll free* after being purchased by the New York-Pennsylvania Joint Bridge Commission for \$55,000.

Many changes also occurred during the early 19th century in our community. Although Narrowsburgh appeared on a map as early as 1829, it was still known as Big Eddy and a post office by that name opened on the Pennsylvania side on 6/06/1837. On 9/19/1840, this post office was closed and reopened the same day across the river in Narrowsburgh. ABRAHAM CUDDEBACK, who built the Narrowsburg Hotel (currently Narrowsburgh Inn and formerly Century Hotel) that same year, is credited with having been instrumental in getting the change made. It was not until 11/23/1893 however, that Narrowsburg became the official post office name. Mr. CUDDEBACK had also purchased land along the river at the bridge approach and then got the charter to build the bridge in March 1834.

With growth in the area, the Sullivan County Board of Supervisors met on Nov 17, 1853, and passed legislation creating the townships of Tusten and Highland from Lumberland by a two-thirds vote of the Board. Tusten was formed from Lots 71 & 72 of Great Lot 18 of the Hardenburgh Patent. As legislated, the first official town meeting was held on Tuesday, March 7, 1854, at the home of JONATHAN HAWKS located at the foot of present day Mile Hill. The meeting was presided over by JOHN S. HUGHES, WILLIAM H. MAPES, and JAMES R. HANKINS with another Lumberland resident, CHARLES S. WOODWARD, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, serving as clerk. As the fledgling town government was set up, WOODWARD was voted as the first Tusten Supervisor, serving for one term.

Even before the Town as formed, however, the Erie Railroad contributed greatly to its development. After being first proposed in 1829, the railroad did not receive its incorporation until 1832, at which time a survey was begun by future New York Governor DEWITT CLINTON. In 1835, financial difficulties arose, requiring re-organization of the company. As originally proposed, the railway was going to run from Hoboken to Port Jervis, then to Monticello, not hitting the Delaware River Valley until the Callicoon area. Owing to concessions made in the re-organization, the Delaware Division of the railway was changed to enter Pennsylvania just north of Sparrowbush and return to New York at Tusten, which resulted in Narrowsburg being on the line.

Although the Erie brought greater prominence to the village, it also brought changes. During

the course of 1847, the roadbed had reached Narrowsburg and with it came many German and Irish immigrant laborers. On December 11<sup>th</sup> of that year, owing to reduced wages and probably increased prices of goods, inn keeper JOHN VERSCHAU was attacked by about 100 workers who ransacked his house, destroyed property, and burned a building. Seventeen German workers were arrested and sent to jail in Monticello. Ten of those were found guilty and received sentences of 90 days in jail and \$50 fines.

Later the next summer, in 1848, the locomotive Piermont (some sources cite Piedmont), was disassembled at Piermont, NY and loaded onto a vessel, from which it traveled up the Hudson River to Rondout in Ulster County. It was then shipped via canal to Lackawaxen where it was re-assembled and used on the expanding Erie line to distribute rails and ties. The first appearance of this engine run by engineer WILLIAM VAN DE GRAFF caused quite a commotion. The story is told how he allowed the curious to climb upon the machine to look at it, and then at the opportune time blew the whistle. This caused the inquisitive folk to jump, slide, and push themselves from the beast and run for their lives, much to the amusement of the driver. That fall, the railroad was finished as far as Narrowsburg and it is recorded that the locomotive ELEAZER LORD brought the first passenger train into town. By year's end, there were two trains coming through on a daily basis. During the Erie's early years, Narrowsburg was in consideration for becoming the connection point between two of the railroad's Divisions. Because it was doubted that sufficient land existed, and local property owners, having greedily sensed a windfall, inflated values of available land, the Erie opted for Port Jervis to fulfill that need, and did establish a roundhouse and large rail yard in that city.

The diversity of people employed by the railroad also impacted on the religious needs of the area's residents. The Baptist Church, which served Tusten residents was organized in 1840 and the church built in 1856. Methodists had been holding services on the Flats at the home of COMMODORE C. MURRAY (this was his name and not a military title) since the late 1830's and in 1856 their church was built on a donated lot on the upper part of Irish Hill. This church was moved to its present day site on Lake Street in 1879 on land donated by COMMODORE MURRAY.

To serve the German and Irish Catholics, masses were held at the home of HENRY BUCH, about one mile east of town. With an increase in the size of the congregation, services were moved to the upper floor of a tannery building near Deep Hollow Brook ( now Hunts Corners). The first Catholic church was built in 1862 on lands of WALTER LILLIE, at the top of present day School Street. In 1878 a new church was built on Bridge Street on the land of JOHN ENGLEMAN. By 1925 this structure proved too small, so a lot was purchased from MICHAEL T. CLARK and the present ST. Francis Xavier was built there.

Like the Baptists, the Lutherans did not roam the countryside with their houses of worship. Following the formation of their congregation in 1869, the cornerstone of St. Paul's was laid on August 25th, and it was no longer necessary for the Lutherans to have services at the Methodist church. Services were conducted exclusively in the German language until 1910, at which time one service was given in English. Up until the 1930's however, occasional German services were still given.

Schools were also several throughout the Township. In the 1840's, one was established

across the river in Atco, Pa., and another in town on Kirk Road. It was not until 1928 that the Narrowsburg Central School District was formed, replacing schools in Narrowsburg, Lava, Tusten, New Weiden, Beaver Brook, and Nobody's Switch. High school was at one time held in the old Catholic church building on Bridge Street while the two room elementary school was on the present day playground facing School St. The new school building in 1929 consisted of 12 rooms and the first graduation class was held in 1931. In 1938, the District absorbed Lake Huntington, Cochection, and Cochection Center schools. The "new" addition was built in 1951.

Both Narrowsburg and Tusten prospered and grew from the mid to late 1800's. Tusten's economy was tied heavily to the lumbering and stone quarrying businesses. At its fullest development, Tusten had a saw mill, a grist mill, two stores owned by the CRAWFORD and HANKINS families, a tavern, a school, and the aforementioned Baptist church. One of Tusten's most enduring structures, the stone arch bridge, was built by WILLIAM HANKINS in 1896, and is still in use today. A cable ferry and stone docks delivered goods across the river and back from the railroad. Tusten even had its own post office located in the Hankins Store on Crawford Road, which still stands as a private home. This same structure also served as a stopping place for raftsmen up until the 1880's, when that industry had faded out. With the depletion of lumber resources and less call for quarried stone, Tusten began to decline, and by the 1920's was not the prosperous place it had once been. In its waning days, a plan called the Minisink Company was launched in 1911, which might have resulted in Tusten outpopulating Narrowsburg had the plan come to fruition. This proposal called for development of a two mile stretch of river front property from Crawford Road up to the Number Nine Bridge, encompassing Davis Lake and Rock Lake. The bungalow sized lots were plotted on streets, which included a new railway station on the Pennsylvania side, two bridges across the river, and a main thoroughfare between the two lakes. The advertisements of the time extolled the fresh air of the countryside, reporting to prospective buyers that "*relics of Dutch colonists and Indians are still being found upon the property*", and further touted that the area was accessible by "*numerous highways well graded and in well kept condition*". For whatever reasons, the development plan failed and the land was sold to the Boy Scouts of America in 1927.

Narrowsburg, as early as 1862, due to the railroad and the rafting trade, boasted three hotels, two churches, five stores, 3 blacksmith shops, a carpenter shop, a harness shop, an undertaker, and a ½ mile trotting course. The railway station had been built in 1850, and as Narrowsburg was a designated dining stop, several "eating houses" made good livings until the Erie, not to lose out, put dining cars on its trains in the late 1880's.

Other communities in Tusten also thrived, albeit on a smaller scale, with their own schools and post offices until overtaken by growth or consolidation. Beaver Brook was one of these, as was Lava, which had previously been called "Bloomingdale", a popular spot for summer boarders and home of the J. KOEHLER Brewery (1875). One written account of how Lava got its name states that in an attempt to get its own post office in 1886, LOUIS KELZ (grandfather of RON BODENS) and JOHN ROPKE originally applied for a short simple name of "Java", but received notice that it was already taken. Moving down the alphabet, they picked Lava, which was subsequently approved.

Although fires were common back in those days of candles, kerosene lamps, and wood

frame buildings, two fires of note are recorded in our earlier times. On Sunday, August 18, 1866, a train struck eight tank cars filled with oil, which were parked on a siding where Narrowsburg Feed and Grain stands today. The oil ignited, spilling liquid flame onto the pond below and engulfing several buildings. One of these was the home occupied by the CHARLES WILLIAMS family. WILLIAMS' wife SARAH and their maid escaped to safety by jumping from a porch roof. WILLIAMS tried to make his way down some stairs from the second floor while carrying both his daughters, ROSA, age 5, and JENNIEVEVE, age unknown, dropping one of them. The children, severely burned, lingered for eight days before they died. Mr. WILLIAMS died on the day of the fire; ironically, his wife gave birth to a baby that same day.

A second larger fire occurred December 17, 1893 on Main Street, burning two hotels, the Arlington and the Delaware (1875 atlas), out buildings, barns, a grain mill, stores and houses. For all the danger presented by these blazes, it was not until 1902 that the Narrowsburg Fire Department was formed.

In 1918, the railroad station built in 1850 burned and the now gone freight station, which many of us remember as the train station, was converted for dual use as station and freight storage.

In June 1911, the State Legislature passed funding for the Delaware River Highway, State Route 3A, to be built from Port Jervis to Hancock. It was not until August 1939 that this highway was dedicated as Route 97.

Please see the accompanying article for the history of Tusten from 1900 to present.

Arthur J. Hawker  
Town of Tusten Historian

Please click the sign to continue to the next article - The  
Town of Tusten from 1900 to the present



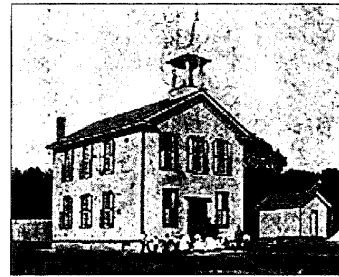
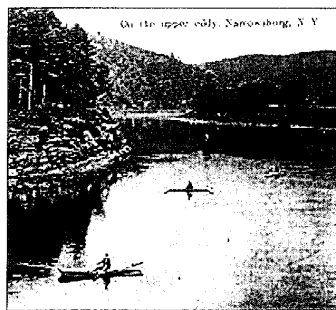


## The History of the Town of Tusten: from 1900 to the present

### MY TOWN IN THE 1900'S

A Historical Outline of the Town of Tusten  
by Art Hawker

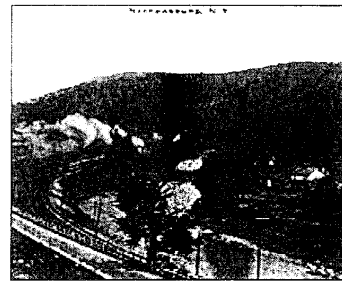
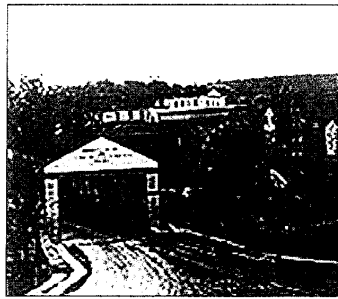
A person who might have lived for the past 100 years in the Town of Tusten would have seen many changes brought about by not only local events, but also by national and worldwide occurrences. While buildings have risen and fallen, businesses prospered and failed, trends come and gone, the enduring strength of Tusten has been the character of its people. It is these citizens, some native born, others transplants, lifetime residents or those whose time is tragically cut short, who have made and continue to make Tusten "my town" for us all. Had one person lived here for the past century, here in part is what she or he would have observed:



In 1900 the Town of Tusten was beginning its 47th year of existence as a governmental entity. Narrowsburg was the prominent commercial hub with Ten Mile River village, Lava and Beaver Brook also formed as communities to lesser extents. 1902 saw the formation of the Narrowsburg Fire Department, as well as a major fire that consumed Englemann's Hotel which stood in the vicinity of today's Narrowsburg Lumber Company. Water was the curse of the following year with a flood in October which completely inundated the "Flats", and in the next year, 1904, the Big Eddy Telephone Company was incorporated to provide fledgling communications to the Narrowsburg area. In 1905, the purchase of John Baird's furniture business by Danish immigrant Niels P. Rasmussen, launched a local business which endures to this day, and 1906 brought the J.C. Branning Feed Mill to Main Street by the present day interstate bridge where it prospered until 1941 when it was moved to the site of the current feed mill so that business could be expanded.

In 1911, Charlie Knapp Sr., father of our current barber, opened for business with 20 cent haircuts, and kept on clipping for another 48 years until his retirement. That same year, New York Governor John Dix signed a bill authorizing construction of the Delaware River Highway, Route 3A, which was eventually completed and dedicated in 1939 as Route 97. The following year brought the death of Joseph "Coxey" Bivins, a local eccentric river guide

who utilized the rock ledges across the river as his abode dubbed "Coxey's Cave". Two years later, in 1913, 114 year old Macajah Weiss of Beaver Brook, then the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, passed away. In 1918 World War I took two Tusten residents, William Brinkman, who died of wounds, and John Englemann who died of disease during their service to the country. The Erie railroad station also burned that year, with operations moving across the tracks' north side to a freight warehouse which many of us now remember as the station. This decade and continuing into the 1920's also witnessed the demise of the village located at Tusten, near the confluence of the Delaware and Ten Mile Rivers to the extent that now only the Baptist Church and a stone arch bridge remain.



1920 began a decade of building with businessman George Oellrich purchasing the Arlington Hotel building to run his General Store with apartments on the floors above. The next year, St. Francis Xavier Church was built on its present site after moving from Bridge Street where the UDC parking lot exists. 1926 saw a spectacular fire in which the Oakland Hotel, situated near the present Kilker residence, was totally consumed. That same year, the Community Hall was built by Narrowsburg firemen, and serves today primarily as the Town Hall and Tusten Theatre. In the year following, the Narrowsburg Lumber Company was organized by Fred Hendrix, E.O. Barnes, and Art Van Schoick. The New York City Boy Scout Council purchased large tracts of Tusten land in 1927, establishing their large network of summer camps. The year of the infamous stock market crash, 1929, brought the construction of a new Narrowsburg school building to replace the two story structure which had been used since 1872, the opening of Peggy Runway Lodge across the Delaware, and the arrival in town of Arthur N. Meyers, editor and publisher of the Narrowsburg News, who also became a prolific writer and recorder of local history among his many and varied accomplishments.

The Depression Era in Tusten saw the vicinity being promoted as an economical and accessible vacation destination to metropolitan New York, with small hotels and burgeoning boarding houses catering to summertime visitors. In 1931, American legion Post #1020 was formed and the first class of seniors graduated from the new high school. On the Boy Scout properties, the Civilian Conservation Corps worked diligently cutting firebreaks and clearing land in 1933. As the decade wore down, in 1938 the toll house at the Narrowsburg bridge, which had been toll free since 1927, was demolished. That same year, the Narrowsburg Central Rural School District absorbed the Lake Huntington, Cocheton, and Cocheton Center schools so that all area students now attended their studies at

Narrowsburg, and the Lava Volunteer Fire Department was incorporated.



The 1940's of course brought World War II and many men and women from Tusten served their country with bravery and honor. William H. Glaab, a Narrowsburg native, was lost in action when the Philippine Islands were invaded by Japanese forces while Ensign H. Russell Kenyon, nephew of Hillside Inn owner Nat Feagles Jr., and part time local resident, was killed piloting a torpedo bomber in the battle of Midway in 1942. In his honor, VFW Post #5808 was established in 1946 in Jeffersonville. From 1941 to 1945, small defense plant operated in Narrowsburg making artillery components, first in a machine shop at the Hillside Inn property, then moving to the present day school bus garage. Also during the war years, citizens headed by Herbert Ropke manned a watchtower on the hill by the Catholic cemetery to scan the skies for enemy aircraft as part of the New York Air Defense Wing. In 1945 a disastrous fire on Main Street destroyed the Gebhart Building, a three story wood frame structure where the bank now stands. Businesses lost were C.L. Tegeler's store, Knapp's barber shop, and Gabel's butcher shop. A new bridge was built over the Erie railroad tracks by the Century Hotel in 1948, the same year in which a new State Police sub-station was built on Route 97. Also during this decade, Tusten began to be well represented in the New York City sportsmen's show and advertised as not only a summer getaway location, but a year round vacation spot and retirement community.

The 50's began with tragedy wrought by the Korean War in which hometown sons William Meyer (1951) and Christian Wieland were killed in action. In 1953, Tusten celebrated its Centennial with a five day celebration which saw the largest parade in the township's history. In the same year, a new firehouse was built in Lava and a new Interstate Bridge over the Delaware was erected. In the following year, historian and visionary James Burbank began to plan an exact replica of the colonial fort which once stood at Cushetunk near Milanville, and three years later Fort Delaware was opened. As this decade closed out, so did daily mail service on the Erie railroad which now saw all local mail taken to and received at Callicoon.



The decade of the 60's began with dial telephone service being initiated by the Big Eddy Telephone Co. on the first of the year, which also saw the Erie RR merge with the Lackawana. In 1963 the Oellrich & Behling market in the Arlington Hotel building was sold to businessman Art Peck and his wife Beth, who bought the entire building two years later. In that same year, 1963, Dr. H.C. Van Keuren retired after serving the residents of Tusten and beyond for 35 years. The following year, a new Post Office was built on Main Street in Narrowsburg. Kelly's Home for Adults was established on Route 97 in 1965. In 1966 the last train with passenger service passed through Narrowsburg on the Erie-Lackawana. In 1969, the year of the Woodstock Music Festival, St Paul's Lutheran Church celebrated its 100th anniversary. MEDICAL CTR AMB CORPS

Renowned newspaperman and writer Arthur N. Meyers passed away in 1971. Profound loss was again experienced in 1975 with the death of writer, artist, and historian James Burbank. Peck's Market moved from Main Street to Kirk Road in 1975, and Narrowsburg had its first shopping plaza. 1976, the year of our nation's Bicentennial, witnessed a devastating fire at the Hillside Ranch Resort, the incorporation of the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance (DVAA), and a huge July 4th celebration. In 1979, Tusten mourned the tragic loss of three Narrowsburg firemen Paul Brock, Brett Hankins, and Jay Laraia, who were fatally injured when their firetruck overturned while returning from a parade in Montrose Pa.

1980 brought controversy and the National Park Service to town as a result of the 1978 Congressional Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The following year, the local railroad station was razed virtually overnight by Conrail, and the DVAA purchased the Arlington Hotel building which in 1983, was named to the National Register of Historic Places. In that same year, a municipal sewer system was begun in Narrowsburg, and finished the following year. 1984 also saw the Kirk house, formerly a one story school building built around 1840, named to the National Register. In 1985 the Lava Lodge, a long time boarding house in Lava, was demolished and passed into history. In 1986, the Delaware Valley Opera was formed and continues to this day to bring musical enrichment to the Delaware River valley. FEED MILL FIRE ?

1990 saw the dedication of the Tusten - Cochection Library, made possible in large part through the generosity of Art and Beth Peck. In 1991, Stranahan's Store closed its doors; it

had served the community as a Main Street business continuously since 1835. The following year, residents of the Water District drank water for several weeks which had to be trucked in, due to contamination of the main well. In 1993, the Superfund cleanup of the former Cortese landfill was completed, ending a 20 year process. 1995 saw the Centennial anniversary of the Arlington Hotel which continues to be restored by its owner, the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance. Installation of water meters in the Narrowsburg Sewer and Water District was also accomplished during this decade, providing for an equitable accounting of usage and promoting better conservation efforts. The Narrowsburg School District faded into history this year as it became part of the newly formed Sullivan West District when it joined with the Delaware Valley and Jeffersonville-Youngsville districts. As the millenium year approaches, Supervisor Richard Crandall is seeking grants to further improve the quality of life and the delivery of governmental services in the Town of Tusten. These improvements include a proposed riverside park and promenade in the Main Street area, participation in a State sponsored scenic byways study, and the promotion of Tusten as an eco-tourism destination. Also with an eye to the future, and a desire to preserve the past, a Local History group of dedicated volunteers continues in many ways to record our local history recent and long past, so that we might draw upon the examples of our ancestors to improve our future.

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