

Chapter 2.5 Cultural Resources and Visual Character

2.5.1 CULTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Historic preservation has become a substantial force of social, economic and aesthetic benefit to communities in New York State and across the nation. Many communities have recognized the importance of preserving the historic character of their communities and have made efforts to preserve and protect individual structures and the historically or architecturally significant neighborhoods in which they exist. The historic resources in the Town of Urbana and the Village of Hammondsport include wineries, a mill, a former school, and the Village's central shopping square and downtown area.

As part of the Comprehensive Plan, a listing and description of the Town's designated historic and archaeological resources was prepared. Becoming knowledgeable about its historic and archaeological resources helps a community to identify and understand the economic, geographic, environmental, social, and cultural forces that shaped its development. It also helps communities to recognize and preserve these important cultural resources.

This section describes the wide range of properties in the Town and Village that are listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places (S/NR). This information can be used should demolition, alteration, or adjacent new construction be proposed in these areas and for projects using state or federal funds. State and National Register properties affected would require review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). In addition, listed properties could be eligible for grant funding from State sources or for federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Other uses for this information could include identification of educational, community identity, aesthetic regulations, tourism, and recreational opportunities.

BACKGROUND HISTORY

Originally, the Town of Urbana was part of the territory of the Senecas, an Iroquois tribe. British settlers came to the area in the mid 18th century. In 1793, Charles Cameron came up the Cohocton River and founded Bath. In 1796, a land office was opened in Bath and John Shethar settled at the southern end of Crooked Lake (the name "Keuka" was not used by the settlers until the late 19th century). In 1807, Judge Lazarus Hammond bought land in the area at the end of Crooked Lake. Soon after, a number of the streets of what became known as "Hammond's Port" were laid out. Pulteney Square became the area's center of commerce and activity.

The 1830 opening of the Crooked Lake Canal between Keuka Lake at Penn Yan and Seneca Lake at Dresden provided Hammondsport with a link to the Erie Canal. This ushered in the lake's steamboat era and bolstered the development of the area. The first steamboat to operate on Keuka Lake (starting in 1835) was the "Keuka," owned by the Crooked Lake Steamboat Company. The Bath & Hammondsport Railroad was opened in 1875, carrying carloads of wine as well as excursionists to the lake.

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Aviation pioneer Glenn Hammond Curtiss, known as “The Father of Naval Aviation,” was born in Hammondsport, N.Y. in 1878. Among other important aviation accomplishments, Curtiss was responsible for the first aircraft to take off and land from the decks of ships at sea.

Hammondsport was the site of Curtiss' bicycle and motorcycle shop. His early experiments in aviation with Alexander Graham Bell, including the Hammondsport flight of the "June Bug" in 1908, won Curtiss the "Scientific American" trophy and later United States Pilot's License Number One. In 1912 on Keuka Lake, Curtiss accomplished the first flight of a “flying boat” (an early seaplane). This, along with his sale of the first aeroplane to the United States Navy in 1911, earned Curtiss his title as the Father of Naval Aviation.

In the early 1900's, Hammondsport was a center of American aviation, attracting people from around the world to engage in the design, manufacture, and flight instruction of flying machines, flying boats, and dirigibles. During World War I, OX5 engines for the renowned Curtiss "Jenny" trainer for virtually all U.S. and Canadian pilots—were produced round-the-clock in Hammondsport. In World War II, the Mercury Aircraft Co. produced tail assemblies in Hammondsport for the famous P40 War Hawk ("Flying Tiger") manufactured by Curtiss-Wright, the successor company.

The Curtiss factory was located on the property containing his home, which is now occupied by the Curtiss School. The building, with its unusual Art-Deco facade, is an interesting example of Depression-era Works Projects Administration (WPA) construction. The field where his early (pre-1908) historic pioneering flights took place is located in the Pleasant Valley area of Urbana west of Route 54.

DESIGNATED HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 2.5-1 lists designated historic and archaeological resources in the Town and Village. The locations of properties that are listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places (S/NR) are shown in Figures 2.5-1 and 2.5-2.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES/LISTINGS

The Pulteney Square Historic District, which covers much of the village center of Hammondsport, is listed on the S/NR. The Mallory Mill, also located in the Village, is also on the S/NR. Outside the Village, properties in the Town of Urbana which are listed on the State and National Registers (S/NR) of Historic Properties include the Pleasant Valley Wine Company complex and the Germania Wine Cellars complex.

Village of Hammondsport

Pulteney Square Historic District.

The Pulteney Square Historic District in the Village of Hammondsport consists of Pulteney Square and the surrounding buildings on Pulteney Street to the north, Shethar Street to the south, Mechanic Street to the east, and Park Place to the west. The District is one block west of the Village's Keuka Lake waterfront. The approximately 5.4-acre District contains 18 properties clustered around Pulteney Square. Contributing buildings around the square range from a church dating back to the 1820's to a bank structure from the 1920's.

The Pulteney Square Historic District is an architecturally and historically significant collection of intact commercial and public architecture in Hammondsport. Grouped around Pulteney

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Table 2.5 - 1				
Designated Historic Resources* Town of Urbana and Village of Hammondsport				
Map Ref. Number *	Address	Name	Year Listed on S/NR*	Status/Notes
Village of Hammondsport				
1.	Village Center	Pulteney Square Historic District	1999	S/NR
	Pulteney Square	Bandstand and Roll of Honor	1999	S/NR
	15 Mechanic Street	Veley Residence	1999	S/NR
	26 Mechanic Street	House of Shaw	1999	S/NR
	28-30 Mechanic Street	Business Block	1999	S/NR
	1 Park Place	First Presbyterian Church	1999	S/NR
	3 Park Place	Bank of Hammondsport	1999	S/NR
	74 Pulteney Street	Park Liquor Store	1999	S/NR
	27-33 Shethar Street	Union Block	1999	S/NR
	35 Shethar Street	Grape Vine Restaurant	1999	S/NR
	37-39 Shethar Street	Park Inn Hotel	1999	S/NR
	41-43 Shethar Street	Blue Eagle Block	1999	S/NR
	45-47 Shethar Street	Town-Village Hall	1999	S/NR
	49 Shethar Street	Storage	1999	S/NR
	51 Shethar Street	Storage	1999	S/NR
	53-57 Shethar Street	Hammondsport Hardware	1999	S/NR
	59-67 Shethar Street	G. Frey Opera House	1999	S/NR
2.	Pulteney Street	Mallory Mill	1999	S/NR
Town of Urbana				
3.	County Road 88 (Pleasant Valley Rd.)	Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1911 Annex	1980	S/NR
		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./Great Western	1980	S/NR
		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1867 Annex	1980	S/NR
		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1870 Annex	1980	S/NR

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		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1878 Annex	1980	S/NR
		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1889 Annex	1980	S/NR
		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1891 Annex	1980	S/NR
		Pleasant Valley Wine Co./1910 Annex	1980	S/NR
4.	County Road 88	Germania Wine Cellars - East Block	2000	S/NR
		Germania Wine Cellars - West Block	2000	S/NR
<p>Notes: * Refer to Figure 2.5 - 1 ** S/NR - State and National Registers of Historic Places. Source: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, June 2001.</p>				

Square, a New England-inspired village green, the buildings in the District comprise the Village's historic central business, civic, and religious core.

The structures in the Pulteney Square Historic District provide an intact inventory of styles popular for commercial and institutional structures from the 1820's through the 1920's. These styles include Italianate, Victorian Eclectic, Stick Style, Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, Shingle Style, and others. The structures are significant in and of themselves as examples of the styles, and the district is significant as an ensemble typical of small towns.

The oldest structures are the Park Inn Hotel (originally the Urbana House and then the Park Hotel), the Presbyterian Church, and the former drugstore that originally was located on the Union Block site. The Greek two-story Park Inn Hotel is said to date from 1828, the former drugstore was probably constructed sometime in the 1830's and the Presbyterian Church was built in 1847*. Most of the later structures are examples of the Victorian modes and early twentieth century revival tastes that characterized small-town business structures in the years between the Civil War and the Great Depression.

At the center of the District is Pulteney Square, a half-acre public park. The land was set aside as a public space in 1828, but its current appearance and design dates from the 1890's. The Presbyterian Church, facing the square, was built in a combination of Greek Revival and other historic styles (see Figure 2.5-3). At the east end, at the southwest corner of Shethar and Mechanic Streets, is the Union Block, a three-story brick building with stone foundation from the 1890's (see Figure 2.5-4).

Also of note are the Blue Eagle Block, a two-story commercial-style brick building at 41-43 Shethar Street that retains original cast-iron storefront elements; and a wood frame building at 45-47 Shethar Street that originally contained a storefront in the eastern half, the Village/Town Hall in western half (an adaptive reuse of a former academy), and a Masonic Lodge meeting hall on the second story.

At the west end of the square, at 59-67 Shethar, is the Opera House. It is a four-story brick masonry structure built in 1901. Like the Union Block, it is a Romanesque Revival structure with stores on the first floor and offices on the second. The Opera House originally had a 600-seat auditorium complete with a stage on the top floors.

The other three sides of Pulteney Square are not as intact, but they all contain structures that contribute to the historic district. The District also includes several contributing

*The front portion of the church was rebuilt after being destroyed by a lightning strike in 1951.

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buildings that do not face the square or Shethar Street. For the most part they are outbuildings that served the businesses on the south side of Shethar Street.

Pulteney Square itself is an intact example of the 19th century public landscape design. Pulteney Square maintains its historical character with three original elements. The first is the Square's informally arranged grove of trees, which was planted in the 1890's and is generally intact. The second is the walkway system, which was also developed in the 1890's. The third element is the bandstand, shown in Figure 2.5-5. The bandstand is generally Stick Style, with some Shingle Style and Queen Anne Style elements. It is one of the few surviving 19th-century bandstands in the region.

Mallory Mill. The Mallory Mill, located in the Village of Hammondsport at the head of the lake, was built in 1836. It is said to have been, at the time of its construction, the second largest stone structure in New York State after the Capitol Building in Albany. The Glen Winery occupied the building in 1881.

The property is architecturally significant under criterion C as a remarkably intact, large-scale example of an early nineteenth century stone industrial building in New York's Southern Tier. Originally built as a grist mill, it is additionally significant under criterion A for its association with the early industrial history of Steuben County. Later converted for use as a winery, Mallory Mill is also significant for its association with vinaculture in the region. The massive, three-story, gambrel-roofed building is an outstanding example of early nineteenth century, load-bearing masonry construction. Built of roughly hewn stone laid random ashlar, the monumental building illustrates the durability and practicality of this popular vernacular building technique employed all across New York throughout much of the nineteenth century, when skilled craftsman used local stone - unearthed as fields were cultivated or extracted from quarries - to construct sturdy, utilitarian buildings for a variety of uses. According to local tradition, the sandstone used to construct Mallory Mill was quarried from Hammondsport as well as from Stone Quarry Hill in nearby Bath. Although vacant and/or underutilized for decades, the former mill building retains a high degree of integrity to its period of significance and continues to reflect building techniques of early nineteenth century mill construction.

Town of Urbana

Properties in the Town of Urbana which are listed on the S/NR of Historic Properties include the Pleasant Valley Wine Company complex and the Germania Wine Cellars complex.

The Pleasant Valley Wine Company, founded in 1860, is the oldest winery in the Finger Lakes and one of the oldest continuous producers of wine in the country. The winery was Bonded Winery Number One in New York State as well as in the United States. The nine historic buildings in the Pleasant Valley Wine Company complex were listed on the S/NR in 1980.

The historic significance of the property comes from the importance of the Pleasant Valley Wine Company to the oenological history of New York State and its continuous use since 1860. Architecturally significant features include the location of the buildings on a hillside site to take advantage of the natural insulating qualities of the ground, the use of local fieldstone, and period design elements (see Figure 2.5-6).

The Germania Wine Cellars is located on Pleasant Valley Road to the north of the Pleasant Valley Wine Company. Similar to the neighboring wine company, the Germania Wine

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Cellars complex was built in stages between 1881 and 1902. The company, owned by the Frey family, grew to be one of the primary wine producers in the region prior to the Prohibition. There are nine sections in the complex, and most of the buildings are made of local stone. The Germania Wine Cellars complex is significant for its role in the history of agriculture and industry in the Finger Lakes region. The architecture of the complex is notable for its representative examples of Late Victorian Italianate and Second Empire styles. The complex was listed on the S/NR as a historic district in 2000.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROPERTIES/LISTINGS

There are no archaeological sites in the Village of Hammondsport or the Town of Urbana that are listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

OTHER POTENTIAL HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Potential Historic Resources


In addition to the designated historic resources, the following properties may be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The list of potential historic resources is based in part on a partial survey of cultural resources in the Town of Urbana conducted by Cornell University in 1980 and on discussion with the Town Historian. However, this list is not complete and only represents the most readily identifiable resources.

The criteria for listing on the National Register was used as the basis for this evaluation and is as follows:

- A. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and;
- B. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- C. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in or past; or
- D. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- E. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Potential historic resources for which no determination of eligibility for S/NR listing has been made include the following:

The Pulteney Square Historic District is bounded on the south, west, and east sides by predominantly residential areas that have not been surveyed an/or evaluated for S/NR integrity and/or significance. These areas contain numerous historically and architecturally notable structures that warrant further study.

-  The original Taylor Winery, located on Bully Hill Road about one mile north of the Village of Hammondsport. This property includes wine-making operations, a restaurant, and the Greyton Taylor Wine Museum.

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- ✎ The Gold Seal Vineyards property, a complex of eight buildings dating from 1865 to 1912. The Gold Seal buildings include the Main Building (1865), the Brandy Building (1865), the Wine Production Building (1884), the Vat Building (1890), three Annex Buildings (1887, 1902-03, and 1912), and the Storage Building (1909). The complex is located on the west side of Route 54A near the Town of Pulteney (see Figure 2.5-7).
- ✎ The Para Farm house and barn on Longwell Cross Road, on the west side of the lake south of Stephanie G. Taylor Memorial Drive.
- ✎ Sites associated with aviation pioneer Glenn H. Curtiss, including the site of the aircraft landing field, Pleasant Valley cemetery (the site of his grave), and any remaining structures related to his life and work.
- ✎ The buildings, loading dock, rail tracks, rail switches, and equipment at the northwest corner of land where Keuka Inlet meets Keuka Lake that remain as vestiges of the historic Bath and Hammondsport Railroad Company. Another potentially S/NR eligible property is the old Bath and Hammondsport railroad station in Head of the Lake Park.
- ✎ Cemeteries, including the cemetery in Pleasant Valley, which contains the graves of several pioneers of transportation. Buried at Pleasant Valley are Glenn Curtiss, fellow pioneer aviator Harvey Mummert, and Bill Chedeyne, who made what was probably the first coast-to-coast motorcycle trip. It also contains a marker for pioneer aviator Gink Doherty, whose ashes were scattered over the lake.
- ✎ Other historically and architecturally notable properties in the Town of Urbana which may be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places include a number of farmsteads, including farmhouses, barns, and other agricultural structures.

Potential Archaeologically Sensitive Sites

The Town of Urbana and the Village of Hammondsport may possess prehistoric archaeological sites of potential significance. The early industrial, aviation, and railroad heritage of Hammondsport indicates that the potential exists for subsurface archaeological remains related to these historic periods. There is also the potential for prehistoric archaeological (i.e., native American) sites to exist near the lake and major watercourses. An archaeological survey was conducted in recent years by the State University of New York at Buffalo for a limited portion of the waterfront in the vicinity of the boat landing. No comprehensive assessment of potential archaeological sites has been undertaken in the Village or Town.

2.5.2 VISUAL CHARACTER

POSITIVE VISUAL FEATURES

NATURAL FEATURES

The Village of Hammondsport and the Town of Urbana possess several outstanding natural scenic features, the most striking being Keuka Lake. Other natural features which give the community its unique picturesque appearance are Keuka Lake Inlet, Glen Brook, its rolling hills, and its deep gorges. The locations and key scenic features are presented in Figure 2.5-1.

Keuka Lake

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Keuka Lake is a dramatic expanse of water, some 24 miles long. The Y-shaped lake, also known as “Crooked Lake,” consists of two branches. Steeply-sloped lands in the Town of Urbana rise up from the lake bed on its eastern and western shores. Hammondsport is situated at the lake’s southern end, with its charming village square only a few hundred feet from the water’s edge.

Keuka Lake Inlet

The Keuka Inlet and Glen Brook corridors are an important visual resource for the community. The Inlet and Glen Brook run in a north-south direction traversing the Village of Hammondsport and emptying into the lake. The picturesque tree-lined waterways and the adjoining areas of vegetation provide a striking visual amenity winding through the developed streetscape.

Wetlands

The wetlands area located along and south of Keuka Lake Inlet just north of Firemen’s Field and Champlin Beach is a beautiful visual and environmental resource (see Figure 2.5-8). Its scenic elements include the wetland itself, wetland vegetation, adjoining wooded lands, and views of the lake and inlet. Views of the wetlands are also available from the Village-owned undeveloped wooded lands, from viewpoints along Route 54, from Firemen’s Field, and from the abandoned rail line along the Inlet.

Gorges and Ravines

Like its sister Finger Lakes communities to the east, particularly Watkins Glen and Ithaca, the Town of Urbana’s steep topography is home to spectacular ravines, gorges, and waterfalls. With its jagged shale cliffs and curving waterfalls, Hammondsport Glen is an area of unique natural beauty along the Glen Brook corridor. At the time of the development of many of the Finger Lakes State Parks, a series of trails, steps, and bridges like those in Ithaca and Watkins Glen was contemplated for Hammondsport Glen.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

Travelers on the major transportation routes through the Town (New York State Routes 54 and 54A) and other roadways paralleling the lake (County Route 76 and Greyton H. Taylor Memorial Drive on the west side and County Route 87 on the east side) enjoy views of the gently rolling rural countryside, scattered with vineyards sloping gently toward the sparkling waters of Keuka Lake. The scenic vista platform and automobile turn out area opposite the Bully Hill Winery building offers sweeping and long views of the lake. The lands in the foreground, have had the trees removed for the vineyards, resulting in uninterrupted views. The vineyards sweeping over the slopes and blanketing the hillsides lend the Town of Urbana its distinctive character as a wine-producing area. As described in Chapter 2.2, “Parks and Recreational Facilities,” the Finger Lakes Trail winds through many of the most scenic areas of the town, and offers public views of the lake, the vineyards, the ridges, and the charming village center of Hammondsport tucked under the hillsides at the foot of the lake.

Public roads in the Town offer few places for the traveler to safely pull off the road to appreciate the views, which are often much too briefly visible. This is particularly true along Route 54, which has a thick canopy of large trees on both sides of the road, and where vegetation and waterfront homes block most views. This is also true along portions of Route 54A, which runs close to the lake on the west side, and where views are close-

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mid-range and framed by foliage. Lakeside restaurants along the western shore also provide open views of the lake, as do scattered hillside locations on both sides of the town.

Visibility distances along roads higher upon the hillsides, with long, panoramic views of the lake and the rolling farming landscapes in the foreground (see Figure 2.5-9).

In the Village, Head of the Lake Park at the foot of Shethar Street has uninterrupted views of Keuka Lake to the north (see Figure 2.5-10). Lake views from public locations on the waterfront are also available at Champlin Beach Park. Views southeast from Reservoir Hill offer a unique perspective of the 19th century Village of Hammondsport in the foreground with the sparkling lake beyond.

The Finger Lakes Land Trust held a public brainstorming session in the summer of 2000 to identify scenic views and natural areas of importance to the community. A preliminary list of places to target for protection efforts in the Keuka Lake watershed and environs was produced as a result of the meeting.

Within the Town of Urbana, the scenic views and natural areas on the preliminary list include the following:

-  The vehicle pull off area at Esperanza (vista)
-  The list suggested this area as a potential site for a tree management program to protect vista.
-  Birdseye Hollow, comprising 3,500 acres, located south of Wayne Four Corners and North Urbana.
-  The length of Glen Brook from the Village of Hammondsport line north approximately ½ mile. This wild area is characterized by steep cliffsides.

MANMADE FEATURES

Historic Downtown Hammondsport

The Village of Hammondsport possesses a past rich in history and can capitalize on its historic roots to maintain and enhance its own unique cultural and visual identity. To this end, the Pulteney Square Historic District, described above, has been designated a State and National historic resource. The Pulteney Square Historic District contains many of the most notable visual resources in the Village's downtown area. The historic district is a place where people live and conduct business and where children are educated and cultural and public institutions function. The designated district defines a special area within the Village that exhibits characteristics and amenities important to the Village's past.

As shown in Figure 2.5-11, the picturesque visual character of the Village center stems from its traditional "Main Street" design elements, including the village green, the strong street edge definition created by buildings uniformly built up to the sidewalk line, 19th century style lighting fixtures, street trees, the grassy square adjoining the Methodist Church, and appropriately-scaled signage.

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Public statuary provide cultural interest and focal points to the community. These include the 1901 Civil War monument at Town/Hill Hall, the Curtiss seaplane metal sculpture at Champlin Beach, and the half-scale metal June Bug sculpture with Glenn Curtiss at the Curtiss Museum.

Rural Landscapes

Scenic rural and agricultural landscapes characterize most of the Town of Urbana. The rolling hills of the town are covered by a variety of agricultural uses which provide a visual mosaic of pasture lands, vineyards, and cropland. The steeper areas and ridgelines at the top of the hills are generally wooded, resulting in a patchwork quilt of cleared and forested lands of different colors and textures. The open agricultural lands are punctuated by traditional wood frame homesteads and barns (see Figure 2.5-12).

Adding to the pastoral quality of the Town are the many winding dirt roads—with names like Crow’s Nest, Winding Stair, Hungry Hollow, and Cider Hill—which harken back to an earlier era (see Figure 2.5-13). With the exception of Route 54, which has short stretches with three lanes in the Pleasant Valley area, all the roads in the town are two-lane roads. Because of the topography of the glacial valley and environs, the roads are often winding and steep, which adds to the visual interest of the landscape (and the driving skills necessary to traverse it!).

Views of the farms and woods are interspersed with views of the lake, ranging from long, uninterrupted vistas at the crests of hills to fleeting glimpses at gaps in the dense tree cover closer to the lake. Longer views from the hillsides show the dark blue water of the lake set dramatically in the valley between the steeply sloped lands rising up on each side.

NEGATIVE VISUAL FEATURES

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Route 54

New York State Route 54 is a heavily traveled commercial thoroughfare and major entryway to the Town which offers the first views of the community for many travelers coming from points north and south. An approximately one-mile-long portion of Route 54 immediately south of the Route 54A intersection contains some features that signal the beginning of a trend toward typical commercial strip development along the corridor. Negative visual elements in this area include a haphazard development pattern with varying building setbacks, sizes, and styles; large, un-landscaped parking lots fronting on the street; a lack of street amenities such as trees, landscaping, sidewalks, and benches; numerous overhead utility lines and poles; ill-defined and redundant curb cuts; and excessive and unattractive signage including a few billboards and many temporary plastic box signs with removable letters (see Figures 2.5-14 and 2.5-15). Overall, this area does not welcome the visitor driving north from Bath and I-86, nor does it provide an accurate representation of the community’s unique and scenic character.

The Town gravel pit, located on steep slopes on Winding Stairs Road, creates a scar in the landscape which can be seen from public streets to the west in the Village of Hammondsport, from Route 54, and from the lake. A second gravel pit, though somewhat less visible from public viewpoints, is located on the west side of Reservoir Road. The visual impacts are greatest in the winter, when the foliage is off the trees.

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The warehouse immediately east of Head of the Lake Park blocks northerly views of the lake from public streets, particularly from Liberty and Mill Streets, which head north to the lake from the Village. Although overall a positive visual feature for the community, the downtown area contains a few visual shortcomings. One is the overhead utility wires, which detract from the historic character, as shown in Figure 2.5-16.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The public survey conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan process identified the need for housing rehabilitation in certain residential neighborhoods in the Village. As in any community, there are also other scattered homes throughout the Village and the Town which are in need of repair.

The storing of junk and the parking of vehicles in front yards also detracts from the area's visual character. Mobile home development contrasts in style and form with the area's traditional development patterns.

Another visual concern is the trend toward increasingly larger boathouses on Keuka Lake. The over-sized boathouses create a jumbled appearance along the shoreline, are out of scale with nearby structures, and can block views of the lake.

PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Although they provide beautiful views directly down the center of Keuka Lake, both Champlin Beach and Head of the Park contain a number of elements which could be improved to enhance their appearance. These include bent and rusty fencing, un-landscaped and undefined parking areas, graffiti on structures, and old and deteriorating signage (see Figures 2.5-17 and 2.5-18). In addition, the open sand/gravel storage piles at Firemen's Field, adjacent to Champlin's Beach, are located in a highly visible spot near the lake.

OTHER VISUAL FEATURES

GATEWAYS

The major entrance for visitors to the Village is the Route 54/Route 54A (Main Street) intersection. A small landscaped triangular area occupies the northwest corner, and a sign saying "Welcome to Hammondsport: The Cradle of Aviation" clearly announces one's arrival in the Village (see Figure 2.5-19).

Town gateways are less clear, with the official green signs provided by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) providing the only notice that the traveler has entered the community. The signage at Town borders, particularly at its southern border at the City of Bath, is too small and fails to convey the sense that the visitor has entered a special place.

There is no coordinated signage program for the Town and Village which ties the various elements of the community together.