

VILLAGE OF PELHAM  
PELHAM, NEW YORK

MASTER PLAN  
"A Recommendation for the Future"

Prepared for the Planning Board  
and the Board of Trustees  
of the Village of Pelham

by

VILLAGE OF PELHAM  
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

October, 1989

EXHIBIT D

VILLAGE OF PELHAM  
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

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This revised Master Plan is a modification of the Master Plan of 1981 prepared by the Westchester County Department of Planning.

The Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Board on March 5, 1990 after conducting three public hearings; the Board of Trustees adopted the Master Plan on September 27, 1991 after conducting two public meetings.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Village of Pelham Master Plan is intended to serve as a guide for both preserving the unique qualities of this community and directing future development that may occur within the Village. The Master Plan therefore provides a general policy framework within which individual and specific issues/decisions can be considered by the Planning Board, Architectural Review and/or the Trustees of the Village. Recommendations presented in the Plan are not binding on future decisions but are a matter of public record concerning the future of the Village.

This Master Plan supersedes the Plan completed and adopted on December 14, 1981. The 1981 Plan emerged from the need to address a large number of issues resulting from the consolidation of the Villages of Pelham and North Pelham in 1975. One of those needs was to produce a uniform zoning code for the new Village; therefore, much of the Plan focused on land use and issues and zoning classifications specific to each Village. In 1984, the Village of Pelham adopted a new zoning code (Chapter 98) incorporating the two separate codes into a single local law. A large amount of data prepared by the Westchester County Planning Department, including census material and information related to commercial revitalization, was also included in the 1981 Plan. In May 1988, the Mayor and Board of Trustees of the Village decided to

initiate a new planning process, and created a Master Plan Committee. The Committee held 21 meetings over a 17-month period. The draft plan was approved by the Committee on October 30, 1989, and forwarded to the Planning Board.

This new plan begins with two interrelated essential premises. First, the Village of Pelham is characterized by a physical and social environment that should be preserved and that reflects the values of the families and individuals residing in the Village. Second, the Village will and should be responsive to changing demographic economic, social and physical trends that are in evidence throughout Westchester County and the State of New York. The task of the Master Plan is to assure that necessary change can be accommodated within the context of the existing environment. Planning is the process of designing the future; this Master Plan will help guide the future of Pelham in a manner consistent with the needs and aspirations of its citizens.

There are three primary planning themes that run through the various sections of the report. All the themes reinforce the point referenced above: change will be managed within the context of existing strengths.

Theme One: The residential areas of the Village, with their special architectural and topographical features, should be preserved. The necessary regulations, protections, and enforcement required to assure this preservation should be addressed in the Master Plan.

Theme Two: The "downtown" shopping area should be reinforced

as a convenient, attractive, and viable shopping district. The necessary land use, traffic and parking, regulatory, and enforcement provisions required to assure a successful shopping district should be addressed in the Master Plan.

Theme Three: In the few areas of the Village where increased development is feasible and would benefit the economic well-being of the Village (specifically, Fifth Avenue north of Lincoln and Wolf's Lane from the railroad to the Boulevard, and the few vacant residential parcels), the necessary guidelines should be developed to assure that proper design and land use criteria are applied.

This Plan is intended to evolve. Therefore it should be reviewed every three to five years. The report is now organized in the following eight sections:

- \* Planning Assumptions and Goals
- \* Pelham's Setting and History
- \* Existing Land Use
- \* Population, Housing and Economy
- \* Community Facilities and Services
- \* Circulation, Parking, and Transportation
- \* Land Use Plan
- \* Recommendations

## PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS AND GOALS

The first step in the master planning process is to identify the assumptions, or shared perceptions, concerning issues or forces that will influence the future of Pelham. Based on these assumptions, planning goals can be established that should guide discussions of our public officials. When assumptions about the future and selected goals are consistent, minimal interventions are necessary. When assumptions and goals conflict, or create problems, we must consider what actions are necessary to achieve stated goals. Based on background studies, factual observations, and on-going discussions with Village officials and residents, the Master Plan Committee has developed a set of planning assumptions and goals. These assumptions and goals are presented in the first section of the Plan. In subsequent sections, information supporting these assumptions and recommendations as to how to achieve the goals are presented for each major issue area considered by the Committee.

### Planning Assumptions

The assumptions which are presented herein represent an

assessment of the future of Pelham. While some of these assumptions can be considered factual observations, many of them can more accurately be described as subjective policy conclusions about how the Village will probably develop in the years ahead. These assumptions are the parameters of the Master Plan Report and will become the basis for establishing planning goals and criteria and for making recommendations for the future.

1. The population of Pelham may increase over the next five to ten years by about three to five percent. Most of this change would be attributed to the construction of 155 residential units to be known as the Pelham Commons.
  
2. Although Pelham is viewed as a mature suburban community with an established land use pattern and nearly all of its available land under some form of predominately stable development, some opportunities for new land use exist in certain areas of the Village. There are also a number of underutilized buildings which could be upgraded for more productive use.
  
3. In terms of land area and number of dwelling units, the Village will continue to be a predominately low-density suburban community of single-family detached homes.
  
4. The principal function of the Village's primary commercial center will be to continue to serve the retail needs of the Village residents as well as some of those of neighboring communities. The

commercial center should continue to be upgraded in order to more successfully compete with other comparable business districts.

5. Pelham's future economic growth opportunity lies in the development its office/service sector. An expansion of the professional services sector as well as a growth in office construction should be encouraged in designated areas since significant new, large scale industrial development in the Village is not likely due to the lack of suitable tracts of land and to compatibility conflicts with residential neighborhoods.

6. Since it is improbable that significant new revenue sources will be found to diminish the Village's growing dependence upon local property tax revenue, the property tax base of the Village must be increased if the Village is to provide the level of community services required to maintain an attractive, clean and safe environment. Any increase in the property tax base should not be offset by a greater service cost to the Village except where exceptional circumstance mandates.

7. The stability of the tax base and the viability of the local economy are greatly influenced by the financial well-being of the Village's commercial activity centers. Thus, it is of great concern that the Village's primary commercial center, or Central Business District (CBD), has experienced various problems which contribute to its decline. The most serious of these conditions

include the following: unattractive store facades and deteriorating buildings, unsightly signs and advertisements, a changing type and quality of available merchandise, and a generally drab and uninviting appearance.

8. Since the transportation network in the Village has already been established, Pelham must concentrate on improving the efficiency and safety of the existing network and improving public on and off-street parking opportunities.

9. The Village currently provides adequate municipal services to insure the public health and safety of the residential and business sectors of the community. Any improvements which may be necessary as the result of future land use changes should be dealt with on a site-specific basis as the need arises.

#### Planning Goals

A statement of Planning Goals has been developed which is intended to convey the values and preferences of the community with regard to the future of Pelham. These goals represent broad community-wide objectives, and are expected to shape future decisions and activities of the Village's public officials.

The overall objectives of the Planning Goals for Pelham are to preserve the unique residential qualities of the Village, including a diversity of housing opportunities for its residents and an attractive small town flavor, while at the same time broadening the

Village's tax base through development of compatible commercial property in order to limit the residential property tax burden. It is a further objective to have an attractive and diversified retailing sector serving the residents of Pelham. Specific goals supporting these overall objectives are as follows:

Preserve Unique Residential Qualities

1. Encourage retention of the existing single family and multi-family housing stock.
2. Encourage an adequate quantity and variety of sound housing to serve diverse income levels and age groups.
3. Consider the use of cluster/townhouse residences in underdeveloped building lots in the community where topographical features require more flexible site planning.
4. Preserve the historic and natural features of the Village - including its parks, historic buildings, topography, scenic vistas, and attractive community character.
5. Maintain an orderly and attractive appearance in the Village, particularly in areas of high visibility to the passerby.
6. Maintain current building height restrictions in residential areas.
7. Preserve the current policy prohibiting overnight on-street parking.
8. Be responsive to the housing needs of special groups, such as senior citizens, employees of the Village or school district, and group home facilities.
9. Enforce existing zoning and building code requirements.

Broaden the Village's Tax Base:

10. Encourage and promote the development of office facilities and compatible light industry and increased residential density in designated portions of Wolf's Lane and Fifth Avenue.
11. Encourage mixed uses (residential/commercial) in selected portions of Wolf's Lane and Fifth Avenue.

Provide Attractive Retailing Service to Residents

12. Encourage and promote concentration of retailing in the CBD.
13. Maintain a safe, adequate, and efficient network of roads and parking facilities to serve the various types of existing and proposed land use within the Village.

Assume Orderly Growth and Development with High Standards

14. Establish adequate and appropriate land use planning policies and development standards to ensure a balanced and orderly pattern of future growth compatible with the Village's ability to provide adequate community facilities and services.
15. Encourage high standards of environmental quality and attractive appearance in public and private development.
16. Encourage restoration of existing parcels and buildings to better furnish adequate accommodations for commercial or residential uses appropriate to the downtown commercial area.
17. Develop and implement historic preservation and design control policies in commercial and residential districts.

## PELHAM'S SETTING AND HISTORY

by Susan Swanson, Town Historian

Pelham dates its founding from 1654 when Thomas Pell of Fairfield, Connecticut, bought land from the Siwanoy Indians which included all of today's Town of Pelham (plus the Bronx east of the Bronx River and all of Eastchester and New Rochelle). Pell later sold Eastchester to ten families from Fairfield in 1664 and New Rochelle to Huguenots fleeing religious persecution in France. In 1666 Pell received a patent from the Royal Governor of the Colony of New York formally granting the land to him as a "Lorshipp and Manour." According to the Pell family, Thomas Pell named his manor "Pelham" in honor of his tutor, Pelham Burton. His nephew, John Pell, inherited the manor in 1670 and build a manor house near today's Bartow-Pell Mansion. He became the first "Lord of the Manor" to reside in Pelham.

Until the Revolution, Pelham was inhabited only by the Pells and their tenants and included all of today's town plus City Island and Pelham Bay Park. The only roads were the Shore Road and the Boston Post Road (Colonial Avenue) and the old Indian trail which connected them (Split Rock Road and later Wolf's Lane).

During the War for Independence, the British made their first permanent invasion of the American mainland at the Battle of Pelham fought along Split Rock Road and the Prospect Hill area on October 18, 1776. The Manor of Pelham ended when on March 8, 1788, the New York State Legislature incorporated the Town of Pelham. Patriot

Pells bought up the property of their Loyalist cousins. One of these, Sarah Pell Bayley, helped to raise her niece, Elizabeth, at 145 Shore Road. Elizabeth later become Mother Elizabeth Seton the first American saint. Pells also bought the manor house property and built the Bartow-Pell mansion about 1843.

During the 19th century Pelham's population was centered on City Island. The wealthy built large mansions along the Sound Shore. The Reverend Robert Bolton built Bolton Priory, on Priory Lane. The Priory School, run by Nanette Bolton at the Priory, was one of the earliest girls' boarding schools in the nation. The Boltons also built Christ Church in 1843 which contains the first religious figured stained glass windows in America executed by William Jay Bolton. Town Hall was located near the stables on Pelham Parkway not far from City Island.

City Island continued to thrive with shipbuilding and oystering industries while the interior of Pelham was limited to a few homesteads along Colonial Avenue. Wolf's Lane was a dirt road leading to the Wolf farm at todays Third Street and Fifth Avenue. The new Boston Post Road was put through about 1802 and stage service instituted. When the New York, Hartford and New Haven Railroad came through Pelham in 1849, people began to settle near the flag stop (by the post office) in the area known as "Pelhamville." One of the earliest houses still standing is the Old Stone House, built by Alexander Diack at 463 First Avenue in 1851.

The opening of the New Haven Railroad branch line in 1873 led

to the development of the area along the Esplanade. Many early homes from this period still stand along the Esplanade, Prospect and Highland Avenues. The Village of Pelham Manor was incorporated to deliver services to its inhabitants in 1891.

In 1895 New York City annexed City Island and Pelham Bay Park and Pelham became the size it is today. A new town hall was built on Fifth Avenue. The Village of North Pelham incorporated in 1896 including all of Pelham north of the railroad. The Village of Pelham between North Pelham and Pelham Manor incorporated the same year with only nine voters. For a time, the Village of Pelham was the smallest village in the United States. The Villages of Pelham and North Pelham merged into the Village of Pelham in 1975.

After 1900 Pelham developed rapidly. A trolley linked the Manor with the downtown area and became the model for the "Toonerville Trolley" cartoon by Fontaine Fox which was nationally syndicated until 1956. The New York Westchester and Boston Railway, and electric railway, began operation in 1912 with stations in Pelhamwood and at Fifth Avenue. It ran from 132nd Street and Willis Avenue in the Bronx north to Mt. Vernon where it split into one branch which went through Pelham to New Rochelle and eventually to Port Chester and the other which continued north to White Plains. Unfortunately, the Boston and Westchester never made a profit and ended in 1937 the same year that the "Toonerville" trolley was replaced by bus service although other trolleys continued between New Rochelle and Mt. Vernon until the 1950's.

The 1920's was a time of rapid expansion in Pelham. Most of

the business area along Wolf's Lane and Fifth Avenue was built during that period as well as most of the homes in both Pelham Heights and Pelham Manor. Pelham's population grew so fast that Pelham Memorial High School, which opened in 1921 went on double sessions in 1924. Pelham has one of Westchester's finest collection of Colonial, Tudor and Spanish Revival style homes built during the prosperous 1920's.

The Village of Pelham Business area is largely confined to Wolf's Lane and Fifth Avenue. The oldest business building still standing is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and First Avenue. At times it contained both the post office and the office of "The Pelham Sun."

Located at 629 Fifth Avenue is the Sanborn Map Company Building, built in 1900 and expanded in 1930. The Sanborn Map Company has published maps and atlases of more than 12,000 United States town and cities. Originally, Sanborn maps were prepared for the exclusive use of fire insurance companies and underwriters, and during the years of maximum production there were as many as 300 employees in the field and several hundred in the main office and publishing plant in Pelham. The Sanborn Map Company now leases and occupies a portion of the building which it used to own.

## EXISTING LAND USE

### Land Use

The Village of Pelham consists primarily of low density, single-family residential areas and some medium density, single and two-family residential areas. The Fifth Avenue/Wolf's Lane corridor is the historical business center of the Village. The shopping area has evolved into a long, strip development. The New Haven Division Railroad transects the Village in an east-west direction.

### Current Land Use Classification

There are twelve zoning classifications currently in Pelham. There are seven Resident Districts (Resident A-1, Resident A-2, Resident A-3, Resident B-1, Resident B-2, Resident M and Resident M-1), two Office Districts (Office 0-1 and Office 0-2) and three Business Districts (Business-1, Business-2, and Business-3).

Only permitted principal use in the Resident A-1 District is single-family detached dwellings. In a Resident A-2 and Resident A-3 Districts, single-family detached dwellings, as well as church, synagogues and houses of worship are permitted. In Resident B-1 District single-family detached as well as semi-detached dwellings, but not more than two families are permitted. Resident B-2 District provides for the same uses as the Resident B-1 plus specifically provides for two family dwellings. The Resident M District allows all uses permitted in a B-2 District, as well as

multi-family houses containing three or more housekeeping units, facilities operated by the Village of Pelham, parking lots and parking structures.

The Office O-1 District permits office buildings and by special permit, product assembly and processing including incidental manufactured. The Office O-1 District permits use in a Resident B-2 District, as well as office buildings. The Business-1 District permits all use allowed in a Resident-M District as well as lodging houses, public library, museum, federal, state or county municipal building primarily devoted to administrative functions, church, synagogue or other house of worship, parish house, Sunday school, school of religious instructions, parochial or other religious schools, private school, business or vocational school, retail store, personal service store, studio, art gallery, shop for custom work, office or office building, bank or financial institution, restaurant with or without a bar, but excluding a fast food restaurant. There are also a series of uses requiring a special permit including parking area or garage, a service station, theatre, club, research institute or laboratory and adult uses. The Business-2 District permits everything allowed in the Business-1 District by right or by special permit and adds a funeral parlor or mortuary establishment, excluding a crematory. The Business-3 District permits any use in a Business-1 District plus publishing and printing plant, dry cleaning plant, laundry, metal working, plumbing or carpentry shops, non-nuisance industry, building, plumbing and electrical contractors. Business-3 Districts also

permit uses requiring a special permit as set forth in Business-1 and Business-2 Districts.

#### Central Business District Uses

The commercial corridor is located in the midst of generally well-maintained and attractive single and two-family residential neighborhoods, with scattered pockets of apartments on Lincoln Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and in the area of Wolf's Lane. On Fifth Avenue between the railroad and Lincoln Avenue, the ground floors of buildings are basically retail and service uses with residential and commercial spaces above. This is the core of the Central Business District. The area north of Lincoln Avenue on Fifth Avenue consists of mostly light industrial development, office buildings with scattered retail uses and some detached residential buildings. The area south of the railroad on Wolf's Lane has predominantly retail and service uses on the ground floors. There are also a significant number of multi-family apartments in this area. The overall commercial corridor also includes public uses, including the Post Office, police and fire stations, parks, Town Hall, Town House and office uses intermixed.

#### Residential Uses

The Village of Pelham is densely settled, and most available land has been developed as single family houses. Pelham's single-family neighborhoods are often park-like clusters. The Village consists of four fairly distinct residential neighborhoods, each

represented by a neighborhood association. The Pelhamwood neighborhood is bordered on the south by the railroad, on the west by Harmon Avenue on the north by Lincoln Avenue and on the east by the City of New Rochelle. Pelham Heights is the entire area south of the railroad to the south side of Colonial Avenue. Chester Park is located in the very northern part of the Village, and encompasses all that area north of Willow Avenue. Pelville is the remaining residential area north of the railroad. There are a number of parks that serve both as buffers between residential and nonresidential uses and as neighborhood parks and recreation areas.

According to the Housing Benchmark Study (1978) prepared for the Village, the residential uses in the Village are categorized as follows:

| <u>Type of Structure</u> | <u>Number of Structures</u> | <u>Percentage of Total</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Single-Family            | 1,124                       | 82%                        |
| Two-Family               | 211                         | 15%                        |
| Multi-family             | 36                          | 3%                         |

The majority of the residential neighborhoods in the Village are settled at a projected density of approximately 4 to 12 dwelling units per acre. This reflects the predominantly low and medium density residential character observed in the Village.

## POPULATION, HOUSING AND ECONOMY

### Population

The estimated 1987 population for the Village of Pelham was 6,667 which represents a household size of 2.90. The Master Plan, adopted in 1981, estimated a population of 6,825 with a household size of 2.96. This represents a decrease of 2.3% since 1981 and a decrease of 8.5% since the peak population of 7,290 in 1960.

Development presently proposed in the Village (Pelham Commons) would add approximately 350 persons and bring the population up to 7,000, still less than the previous peak.

### Housing

Since 1981, 20 dwelling units have been added to the housing stock in the form of one and two family dwellings. This brings the total number of dwelling units to approximately 2,340. According to research by the Westchester County Department of Planning (1987), 30 dwelling units were vacant for a vacancy rate of 1.3%.

Vacant parcels in Pelham, for future construction of one and two family dwellings, are very limited. Any significant future increases in housing would be in new multi-family construction and conversions where permitted.

A recent trend in residential housing has been in the additions to existing homes. Where in the past, homeowners would trade up to a larger house, the dramatic increase in the cost of homes has led to more remodeling and addition of space to existing

homes.

To preserve the architectural quality of existing neighborhoods, it is recommended that additions to houses be brought under review by the Architectural Review Board.

### Economy

The Village's retail business area remains of prime importance to its local economy.

Much has been done to improve the appearance of the Central Business District such as new sidewalks, lighting, tree plantings, etc. Some owners have rehabilitated storefronts and signing to present an attractive and unified appearance. This should be further encouraged.

There is still a relatively high turnover rate in the business district and a number of vacant stores. A marketing report was performed in 1986 at the request of the Division of Housing and Commercial Development of Westchester County Department of Planning. This report was prepared to assist officials and citizens of Pelham in assessing the potential for economical development in the Village Central Business District.

The report identified various types of business establishments which would be in demand due to demographics, purchasing power, lifestyles, etc. Marketing strategies were suggested to attract firms to locate in Pelham. For example, it was suggested that a bookstore had a high potential to attract support. Various possible bookstore firms mentioned were B. Dalton, Barnes & Noble

and Chadwick-Miller.

One of the comments in the report was that no well-organized group exists that is charged with the promotion of the Central Business District. It is therefore, recommended that as a first step a marketing group be formed to further review the report and strategies contained therein. As suggested in the report, the group initially could consist of two or three members representing the business community and Village government.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The following section examines the range and adequacy of public facilities and services available to residents of the Village. The police and fire departments, educational system, health facilities, solid waste disposal, water and sewer should be analyzed to determine their current adequacy and whether the community facilities and services will be able to meet the needs of future development plans.

### Police and Fire Protection

The Village of Pelham Police Department is located currently at Pelham Town Hall on Fifth Avenue. The police force currently consists of 25 men including one Chief, one Lieutenant, three Sergeants, two Detectives and eighteen Patrolmen. Relocation of the Police Department is under consideration at the time this Master Plan is being updated (Fall 1989). There are 7 squad cars currently in use.

The Village of Pelham Fire Department is currently situated in a 3-story brick building, located along the west side of Fifth Avenue just south of Lincoln Avenue. The Fire Department consists of 9 paid firemen and a Volunteer force, having an enrollment of over 100 men, but current reports indicate a sparse turnout at many fires. It would appear that some improvement in the force may be required, whether expanding the number of paid men, hiring a paid captain, or making the roll of the volunteer more attractive and

ultimately more effective.

There are two 500 gallon-per-minute pump trucks and one 750 gallon-per-minute truck. The trucks were built in 1965, 1978, and 1980 respectively. In addition, there is a 1925, 1000 gallon-per-minute pumper which is fully functional, although it is primarily used as a showpiece.

### Library

The Pelham Public Library, available for use by Village of Pelham and Pelham Manor residents is a part of the Westchester Library System. It is currently located on Lincoln Avenue, in the lower level of the Hutchinson Elementary School building. The Library contains approximately 13,000 volumes and has been serving the public since 1916. At the time of this Master Plan revision, a committee has been formed to explore the possibility of establishing a Town Library, which would be available for use by all Pelham Town residents, without charge. Currently, Pelham Manor residents are required to pay a nominal fee for use of the Village of Pelham Library.

### Medical and Health Facilities

Pelham residents use the services of New Rochelle Hospital, Mt. Vernon Hospital and Lawrence Hospital in Bronxville. Additionally, some of the service organizations which were available to all Pelham residents are:

Ambulance Service - available only to New Rochelle Hospital.

Pelham Family Service, 507 5th Avenue

A private, not-for-profit family agency (a United Way agency). Manned by 2 full-time social workers, 5 part-time social workers and approximately 50 home health aides, servicing Pelham and the surrounding areas. The agency offers counseling, including individual, family, marital and group, as well as community outreach programs, summer camp placements for Pelham youth and home care.

Pelham Children's Center, 5th Avenue (Pelham Town House)

A United Way Agency, this private not-for-profit service agency offers day care for small children, primarily as a relief for homes with two working parents. The agency is staffed by social workers.

Pelham Alliance

A group of Pelham residents pursuing adequate housing for senior citizens.

P.U.N.C.H.

(Pelham Parents United for Community Health) A group of Pelham residents serving as a task force for prevention and education of drug and alcohol abuse.

SAFE RIDE

Service provided by Pelham High School students on

weekends to provide rides to students who are unable to do so themselves due to alcohol impairment. The program is monitored by adults and operated from the Pelham Guidance Council office, but is run by students.

#### Senior Advocate

Funded by the Town of Pelham, this individual serves as a liaison between Pelham's senior citizens and local government. Assists with varied senior citizen problems, helps organize trips and social activities. The Advocate operates in the Pelham Town House on Fifth Avenue.

#### A.M.E.N.

Americans Mobilized to End Narcotics Abuse, a group dedicated to the education of Pelham citizens to the dangers of drug abuse.

The preceding list of services is only partial. For further information on required services residents should consult the Pelham telephone directory.

#### Educational System

The Village of Pelham is in the Pelham School District, which consists of four elementary schools, a middle school and high school (the last of which are both located in the same building).

Within the Village of Pelham are two of the four elementary

schools, Hutchinson Elementary School and Colonial School.

The Colonial Elementary School located on Highbrook Avenue contains a small paved play yard which includes a baseball courts, swing set and open play area. This small area occupies approximately 5,000 square feet. The 1989-90 enrollment at Colonial School is 171 students.

The Hutchinson Elementary School located on Lincoln Avenue has a baseball field and a children's play area complete with swings, sandbox, tire climbing structure and a picnic table. In addition, there is a grass area which brings the total open space associated with this school to over 3 acres. The 1989-90 enrollment at Hutchinson School is 210 students.

The Pelham Middle School and Pelham Memorial High School are located on Colonial Avenue. These schools together have approximately 4.5 acres of fields including two baseball diamonds. Across the street from these schools on Franklin Place is Franklin Field which is used primarily as a field hockey and soccer field. Adjacent to Franklin Field on the corner of Wolf's Lane and Boulevard are two Board of Education tennis courts that are used by the middle and high school students.

The 1989-90 enrollment at the middle school is 356 students and 504 students at the High School.

The average class size in the Pelham School District in 1988-89 was as follows:

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Elementary:    | 18.2 |
| Middle School: | 19.4 |
| High School:   | 18.7 |

The School Budget for 1989-90 is \$18,050,201.00 bringing the tax rate to \$185.20 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

#### Solid Waste

Presently, Victory Sanitation, located in Elmsford, a private contractor, collects refuse in Pelham and brings it to a transfer station in Mt. Vernon, where it is then hauled to the Resource Recovery Facility in Peekskill for burning. The current contract will expire in July 1992. The quantity of refuse produced in the Village of Pelham is currently about 8,500 tons annually and is not expected to increase significantly in the immediate future, even with some increase in population. The cost for this service for the three year contract period is approximately 1.7 million dollars or about \$725.00 per household.

#### Water and Sewer Systems

Two separate water systems are maintained in Pelham. Residents in the area north of the New Haven Railroad tracks receive water directly from the New Rochelle Water Co., whose system draws water primarily from the Catskill aqueduct, although it can also draw from the Delaware Watershed and Croton Reservoir. The water system is gravity fed and provides the community with an adequate supply of water. Although the Pelham Heights section of the Village (south of the New Haven tracks) also obtains its water from the New Rochelle Water Co. system, the Village of Pelham has owned its distribution system since 1935.

The total systems more than adequately provide the 1,046,100

cubic feet required by residents. Both water systems are old, dating back prior to 1935. Due to its age, isolated portions of the systems are subject to potential failure. Within 3-5 years, the Village should undertake a comprehensive study of its water system so that water lines in need of replacement can be identified.

While certain portions may need replacement, the system as a whole should be capable of supporting the existing level of population in the Village, with modest increases, which would occur if the building under current consideration adjacent to Sparks Avenue and Wolf's Lane (Pelham Commons) is completed. The Village of Pelham should review the possibility of selling their water system to the New Rochelle Water Co., if such sale would be mutually beneficial. Whether or not such sale is possible, the Village should immediately consider some type of escrow account to anticipate costs associated with the suggested comprehensive study of the systems.

The entire Village of Pelham is currently serviced with sanitary sewer facilities. The Village is located in the Hutchinson Sewer District. Sewage from Pelham flows to a pump station in Mt. Vernon, where it is pumped to the County's Joint Sewage Treatment Plant in Yonkers. Pelham's sanitary sewer system is also old, mostly dating back to the early 1900's and there is very little information available on it. Because of this lack of information, and the importance of the condition and capacity of the sewer system in relation to the future development, it is

suggested that a study be undertaken by the Village to determine the system's adequacy and potential problems. While it appears that the system should be adequate to serve the Village's needs as long as the population remains reasonably stable and sewage generation rates do not increase significantly, a study of the system's adequacy would help the Village to determine whether the system is capable of supporting any proposed development in the future and to determine need for repair and replacement.

Storm drainage is provided separately in Pelham by a system of storm sewers, complemented by the remaining natural drainage system in the area. Future land use changes are not expected to adversely affect this system since most land in the Village is fully developed. Storm runoff has been a problem in several areas of the Village, causing local flooding particularly in the Highbrook Avenue area north of New Haven Railroad tracks and on Sixth Street and Seventh Avenue.

#### Open Space and Recreation

An important element which creates a feeling of openness and a sense of identity in a community is its open space and recreation system. Although large parks are not always appropriate for a village of Pelham's size, small parks, strategically located and properly equipped, can effectively contribute a feeling of openness and create a sense of community. (See Figure 1)

Wolf's Lane Park contains approximately 2.13 acres of open space located on the east side of the Wolf's Lane commercial area. The park land was deeded to the Village years ago with many of the

deeds having the condition that the land remain undeveloped in a park-like condition. The area is a passive, open space area with few recreational facilities. Additional planting of shrubs and flowers would make the park much more appealing. These minimal amenities in the park would make it a more attractive and useful setting and would increase its value to the community. The park provides a visual element in the village, offering a pleasing sense of arrival to the downtown area. Wolf's Lane Park is presently underutilized, however, because of the lack of recreational facilities. The Village should strongly consider the addition of such active and passive recreational facilities.

The playground at Sixth Street and Fourth Avenue owned by the Board of Education and leased to the Town contains about 1.8 acres of well maintained recreational facilities. The park has two tennis courts, a basketball court, and a children's play area complete with a slide, seesaw, sandbox and climbing structure. In addition, the park has an adult sitting area and an open space area of grass, rocks and trees.

Another existing open space area with no facilities is located in the Chester Park area of the Village on Maple Avenue between Walnut and Birch Streets. The Town of Pelham claims ownership, but due to complicated deeding in the late 1890's to property owners in the immediate area, there is no potential for development, nor uses as a Village-wide park.

Additionally, the Village owns three vacant lots, formerly owned/operated by the Boston and Westchester Railroad. These total

approximately 1.93 acres. They are located at Highbrook Avenue and Pell Place, the overpass on Highbrook between Lincoln and Harmon Avenues and areas east and west of the overpass.

There are also three lots along First Street from Nyac Avenue to Highbrook Avenue, totalling 2.13 acres that are also maintained by the Village. These lots consist of open space with some mature trees. The lot between Corlies Avenue and Nyac Avenue has a park bench, flag pole and areas for seasonal plantings. The land adjacent to the Metro-North Railroad tracks along Harmon Place is also park land that is maintained by the Village, as well as by several civic groups in town. This area consists mainly of open space with mature trees and seasonal plantings.

The total open space and recreational area in the Village of Pelham, exclusive of school grounds, is approximately 8.7 acres.

#### Public Buildings

The Village of Pelham contains a small number of buildings used for Village administrative services. The Village Hall, located on Sparks Avenue, is a two-story frame structure, consisting of several offices and a public meeting hall, where Board of Trustee meetings are held. Most of the Village's administrative services take place in this building. Currently located behind Village Hall is the Village Yard, from which the Street Department operates. Included in the plans for the Pelham Commons project is the development and construction of a new public works facility located at 605 Fifth Avenue. The Village rents

space in Pelham Town Hall to accommodate the Village Police Department. Town Hall also houses the Town's governmental administrative offices.

The Village of Pelham Fire Department is located in a 3-story brick building located on Fifth Avenue, just south of Lincoln Avenue.

The Pelham Public Library, available for use by Village of Pelham and Pelham Manor residents, is currently located on Lincoln Avenue, at the street level of the Hutchinson Elementary School building. The Library contains approximately 13,000 volumes and has been serving the public since 1916. The Pelham Public Library is part of the Westchester Library System.

In 1978, the Town of Pelham purchased the building known now as the Pelham Town House from Christ Church. The Town House is located on Fifth Avenue, next to Pelham Town Hall. It is the headquarters for the Senior Citizen's Advocate's and the Town's Historian's office as well as the Pelham Children's Center, located in its lower level. The Town House facilities consist of a large meeting hall, small meeting rooms, efficiency kitchen and restrooms. The Town House is available for use by all not-for-profit groups in the Town of Pelham.

Other public buildings include the schools as described in the "Educational System" Section of this Master Plan, as well as the Board of Education and School District offices at 17 Franklin Place.

## CIRCULATION, PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

As one of the older communities within Westchester County, the circulation and transportation patterns in and around the Village of Pelham have been established for many years and generally parallel the development of the region as a mature suburban community within close proximity to New York City. Generally, while there is some continued growth and additional development within the Village, there is little opportunity for change to the existing circulation and transportation system servicing the community.

There are, however, some modifications which can be completed which may improve the traffic flow, increase the supply and efficiency of parking facilities for not only shoppers but also for employers, employees, merchants as well the commuters within the Central Business District (CBD). The following recommendations are based on general planning criteria:

1. The existing functional arrangement of streets and highways is well established and workable and should be maintained. Shown on Figure 2 is the relationship between functional classification mobility and access. For example, Arterial readings proved a great degree of mobility with few access opportunities. Conversely, on local roadways, where essentially unlimited access is provided, (mobility) speeds tend to be lower.
2. Parking within the CBD has become more convenient in relation to the supply and location. (See Figure 3) It is principally a result of the construction of parking decks located along Fourth Avenue between Third Street and Lincoln Avenue as well as along Sixth Avenue to the north of Third Street. These two decks increased parking capacity by 155 vehicles. The

parking facilities should be organized according to user groups. Competition for parking spaces among shoppers, employees, and in particular, merchants, residents, and commuters should be minimized. Thus, parking facilities should be clearly designated and located in proximity to the functional use they are intended to serve. Signing, for example, particularly on Fifth Avenue on the northbound approach to Third Street should be placed in such a way to inform the public of the existence, location, and parking limitations, i.e., the restrictions within the decks.

3. New commercial or residential development is presently being designed to accommodate adequate parking for the proposed use; this policy should continue with some modification to parking requirements in the business districts. Regions where there is potential for conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular flow with equal attention given to pedestrian needs as well as visual appearance. Lighting on the walkways, signage, and landscaping are all important elements in the design and layout of parking areas.

#### Vehicular Circulation

Pelham's traffic and vehicular circulation system has been established for many years and will continue to provide an adequate roadway network to accommodate the present traffic volume demands. This is principally during off peak periods. During peak hours, however, congestion along the Lincoln Avenue corridor and to a lesser extent along the Fifth Avenue corridor is experienced. The grid pattern of the local circulation system provides easy access to almost all parts of the Village, except for the Third Avenue and Fifth Street (between First Avenue and Third Avenue) region during school days.

As identified on the "Circulation, Parking and Transportation" Map at the end of this section, Pelham's circulation system can be classified based on three levels of service. (See Figure 4) These

basically correspond to the identification mentioned earlier and correlate closely with the various levels of mobility. These three classifications are: arterial highways, collector streets, and local streets.

Arterial highways: The arterial highway type of facility is primarily developed to move traffic through the region. In this case, it would link the Village with other regional highway facilities and is intended to carry significant volumes of traffic from neighboring communities and/or other regional systems. The only roadway within the Village falling into this classification would be the Hutchinson River Parkway. Although not located within the Village, the New England Thruway (I-95), and the Cross County Parkway would also be considered arterial facilities serving Pelham. In each case, each of these facilities link New York City to the south with areas to the northeast and west via the Cross Westchester Expressway (I-287) to the north.

In 1986, the New York State Department of Transportation completed a highway improvement project on the Hutchinson River Parkway within the Village. Included within this reconstruction was:

- (A) Geometric improvements to the Wolf's Lane entrance and exit. This included new signalization at the intersection of Colonial Avenue and Wolf's Lane as well as at the entrance and exit to the Parkway northbound at Wolf's Lane.
- (B) The elimination of the northbound exit ramp at Sparks Avenue and reconstruction of the entrance ramp.
- (C) The reconstruction of the northbound exit ramp at Lincoln Avenue and the relocation of the northbound entrance to the north side of Lincoln Avenue.

These changes have improved, to a certain degree, the traffic flow in the Wolf's Lane area, but have resulted in the utilization of First Avenue as a collector roadway more so than that which was experienced in the past. Frequently traffic during the p.m. peak hour, will queue significantly southward towards the exit ramp on the First Avenue approach at Lincoln Avenue. As indicated earlier, the heavy volumes experienced on Lincoln Avenue during the peak hours result in congestion during these periods. Restricting of the First Avenue approach to furnish two lanes may assist in minimizing delays and extending queues.

Collector Streets: The collector streets within the Village perform a second level of service, distributing traffic between the arterial highways and the local street system. Identified on the map as collector streets are: Lincoln Avenue, Wolf's Lane/Fifth Avenue, Boulevard, Colonial Avenue, Highbrook and Ancon Avenue. Lincoln Avenue and Wolf's Lane/Fifth Avenue form the axis of the CBD. Lincoln Avenue provides an important east/west link between New Rochelle and Mount Vernon through Pelham, important to the through traffic but certainly not one shared by the residents of the Village. Wolf's Lane/Fifth Avenue and Highbrook Avenue are the only north/south streets in Pelham which traverse the Metro North Commuter Railroad tracks.

Local Streets: The local street system comprises the third level of service within the Village's circulation system. These roadway facilities provide service to the developed residential and

commercial areas. Most of the streets in Pelham are in this category as identified on the map.

Recognizing that Ancon Avenue, South First Avenue, and others, currently function as collector streets, and also recognizing the desire to preserve the residential character of the neighborhoods through which they transverse, and effort should be made via signing and other measurers to modify the use patterns of these roadways and hence revise their functional classification to local streets.

As previously identified, the key problem experienced with the circulation system is the congestion in and around the CBD area due to the location of the railroad station as well as the major traffic generators situated to the east and west, outside of the Village. The commuter traffic during the peak morning and evening rush hours creates the congestion and some inconvenience on Village streets. This problem is magnified because of the location of the railroad station and its relation to the commuter parking. Within the Central Business District some traffic is also generated during the morning peak hour but more significant volumes are experienced on the roadways within the CBD in the afternoon peak hour, adding further to the congestion during these periods. A potential modification to commuter parking should reduce some of the congestion within the CBD area.

Current plans envision the development of a 155 dwelling unit condominium structure along the western side of Wolf's Lane from which access will be provided opposite South First Street. An

additional access to parking facilities which will be located below the condominium complex will have access to Sparks via a driveway adjacent to and west of Village Hall. While condominiums in and of themselves will not generate significant portions of traffic during the afternoon hour, the need for the installation of traffic control on the condominium approach to Wolf's Lane will be necessary. This change will require a splitting of the phase for eastbound and westbound traffic thereby reducing the overall available green time (green light) for traffic on Wolf's Lane. This could increase the congestion within the area of the railroad station and may be significant during peak commuter hours.

#### Pedestrian Circulation

For the most part, Pelham is well served by pedestrian circulation with almost all the streets within the Village bordered by sidewalks on at least one side. In general, these sidewalks are in good condition.

A number of parks and plazas are situated in the downtown area, along Wolf's Lane and Fifth Avenue. Each of these greatly enhance the pedestrian experience within the downtown region. The sidewalks along the shopping area have recently been reconstructed, improving the overall appearance. Further improvement to be completed will be the use of additional trash receptacles, planters, and benches.

Identified in the original Master Plan, one of the main problems within the shopping area as related to pedestrian

circulation is the overall length of the shopping area. Such an expanse makes it difficult for pedestrians to walk from one end of the shopping district to the other. A possible solution lies in the compacting of the Central Business District by concentrating retail and service uses on Fifth Avenue between the railroad tracks to the south and Lincoln Avenue to the north and by restricting new retail uses outside of this compact CBD area. As identified in the original Master Plan, the pedestrian will find a much more manageable scale, enhancing the potential for window shopping and browsing in stores.

While originally identified as one of Urban County's recommendations to convert the side yards and alleyways to pedestrian walkways to connect parking areas with shopping areas, it is difficult to control those lands necessary to complete such a link. This type of system would greatly improve access to the shopping areas and at the same time encourage the use of off-street parking lots, however, at this time no land appears to be available to implement such a system.

#### Traffic Volumes, Speeds, and Vehicle Classifications

As part of the Master Plan update, a program was undertaken to identify base line traffic volumes on certain streets within the Village. In the future information can be collected and compared with this base. Such comparison will identify shifts in traffic patterns within the Village and possibly the utilization of certain of our Village streets by restricted vehicles and increased

enforcement needs. To date, six roadways within the village have been surveyed. Those roadways for which data has already been collected include: Washington Avenue (WA AV), Highbrook Avenue (HB AV) north of the railroad tracks, Harmon Avenue (HA AV) between Highbrook and Pelhamwood Avenue (PW AV), Pelhamdale Avenue (PD AV) between Boulevard and South First Street, Pelhamwood Avenue and Corlies Avenue (CO AV) between South First Street and Boulevard.

Other roadways which will be included in the program in the future and which should be made as part of this study are: First Avenue, Fourth Avenue, Fifth Avenue and Eighth Avenue, as well as Nyac Avenue, Ancon Avenue, the Boulevard and Colonial Avenue.

Samples of traffic volume data, speed, and vehicle classifications were collected during the month of January, 1989. For each of the roadways identified, automatic traffic recorders (ATR) were set up and were maintained for a minimum of 24 hour period. Data recorded during this interval included the volume of traffic using the roadway in each direction, be it east/west or north/south, the speed of the vehicles grouped into three ranges including those speeds up to 30 miles per hour, those between 31 and 36 miles per hour, and those traveling at speeds 37 miles per hour or more. Also included were the classification of vehicles, which includes motorcycles, passenger cars, and 2-axle, 4-tire pick-ups, vans, and motorhomes, including those with recreational or trailers. The second classification includes buses and 2-axle, 6-tire single unit trucks. The third classification includes all vehicles with 3 or more axles.

The figures shown in the appendix of this report are a graphical representation of the traffic volumes over the course of a 24-hour period for each of the six roadways for which data has already been collected. As a review will indicate there is a typical peaking characteristic on most of the roadways recorded, where volume peaks in the morning and afternoon period and most prominent with a smaller peak during the mid-day period. Also worth noting and which can be found on the attached tables are the groupings for the speed classification. It should be noted that a significant portion of traffic traveling on the roadways exceeds the Village speed limit of 30 miles per hour. As a recommendation, where the number of vehicles exceeding 36 miles per hour limit exceeds 50% on a particular roadway section, that those sections should be targeted for increased enforcement realizing the likelihood of observing offenders would be greatly increased.

Closer review of the traffic volume distribution over the course of a day revealed that in some instances certain roadways are being utilized for trips to the rail station in the morning; however, a different roadway will be utilized for a return trip in the afternoon. Such a couple becomes evident in the Pelhamdale Avenue/Corlies Avenue loop.

Relative to traffic volume levels and capacity, review of the traffic volume data indicates that volumes on local streets are all well within capacity limitations, however, perceptions of excessive speeds has apparently been substantiated and neighborhood concerns relative to volume would probably be diminished, to a certain

degree, through increased enforcement of speed regulations. It is strongly suggested, therefore, that speed enforcement on those roadways identified as having a significant problem during certain periods of the day routinely have enforcement implemented. Not only will this make the Village roadways safer, but will also enhance the quality of life for those residents living adjacent to these facilities.

#### Parking

The original Master Plan identified parking as being inadequate in the downtown commercial area. This situation has been resolved to a certain extent through the development of the parking decks as previously mentioned. The vitality of the business community is hinged on the availability of parking for shoppers, merchants, and commuters as well as residents. The competition among these different user types should be minimized. To date, while additional spaces are available in the CBD area, the clear definition of availability to these different users is not evident. Currently, the Village of Pelham uses six off-street parking lots of which five are village owned. (See Figure Three) Total capacity of these municipal lots is approximately 355 vehicles. Of these spaces 20 are metered with an additional 335 as permit spaces. In addition to the office street spaces there are some on street meter spaces along Fifth Avenue/Wolf's Lane commercial corridor with a two hour limit. Additional spaces are also available on First Street, Second Street, Third Street, Second

Street as well as Harmon Place.

A study was conducted by the Master Plan Committee to identify the utilization of the parking within the downtown area. This study was conducted for that area between the railroad crossing Fifth Avenue and Third Street during a typical weekday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. As a result of the study it was determined that better than 95% of the people utilizing meters within this area are for less than one hour. Some 80% to 85% utilize the meters in the Village for less than one 1/2 hour with approximately 60% of the people using the meters for less than 15 minutes. As the data would suggest, parking within the CBD area is used primarily for short trip durations, however, some individuals do utilize meters for periods of two hours or longer.

In order to encourage a "Pay your fair share" system the Village Board of Trustees recently modified the pay structure for the meters upon the recommendations of the Master Plan Committee. While the Committee suggested that a reduction of the two-hour limit to one-hour, in specific areas the Village Board of Trustees maintained the two hour limit, however, a change in the rate structure was made such that parking would be increased to \$.50 per hour with incremental changes in portions thereof. The second hour would be maintained as a \$.25/hour rate.

At present, the utilization of parking spaces within the Village is at approximately 80% occupancy with parking space turnover of 1.65 vehicles per space per hour. A further expansion to the study area is suggested to incorporate the entire Wolf's

Lane/Fifth Avenue region.

In the Pelham Commercial Area Study it was estimated that a total of approximately 2.2 spaces per 1000 square feet of commercial area is available. The original Master Plan indicated that this was low for this type of use and should be increased to at least three spaces per 1000 square feet of commercial area. Though this may seem prudent, it can also be excessive.

Instead of requiring each different commercial or retail property to supply parking to meet its individual requirements according to the zoning law, we would suggest a centralized parking plan. A centralized parking plan would require the selection and, if necessary, the purchase of special sites by either the public or private sectors at which the parking requirements for individual sites within designated areas can be met in the form of "impact fees," for example, the purchase of parking spaces in the centralized parking sites. These parking sites should be within designated areas. This strategy may be effective in the area north of Lincoln Avenue. At this point we would suggest that in lieu of creation of new spaces, better management of our existing spaces to be made. More important and certainly cost effective some of the specific recommendations include:

1. Metered, on-street, time limited parking in the downtown commercial areas should not be discontinued. Many shops are attracted to the types of spaces available within Pelham's area because of the prospect of finding parking spaces on the street closer to their destination. The problem is not the on-street parking but rather its lack of enforcement of the regulations which are currently in place. Frequent misuse by employees and merchants, and in fact, residents who reside in the downtown area exacerbate this problem. We suggest that

- as a supplement to increase signing for the parking decks, that certain areas within the downtown region be set aside as very, very short term parking zones where spaces could be occupied for only 15 minutes maximum with separate meters color-coded. The area around the post office would be a good location to test this concept.
2. A review of the layout of the existing parking lots (except for the new decks) to determine if a more efficient parking stall arrangements to accommodate more vehicles could be made. This review has not been undertaken since the original plan and should be completed as soon as possible. It was originally estimated that 60 additional parking spaces could be created by redesigning existing lots. While this estimate may be high, if the gain exceeds 10 vehicles it would probably be well worth the restriping required.
  3. We suggest the incorporation of additional handicapped spaces within the CBD region. While handicapped parking spaces have been made available within the parking decks and on Second Street as well as on one location on Fifth Avenue, there is still a significant shortfall. Additional handicapped spaces should be located in the vicinity of the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Third Street, Sixth Street and Fifth Avenue as well as to the south in the vicinity of Second Street and Wolf's Lane. Possibly the utilization of existing bus stop areas could be made. Contact with the county relative to the actual utilization of certain bus stops could be made to identify where bus stop utilization is minimal or non-existent, those areas could be converted for use for the handicapped.
  4. As identified earlier, parking within the Village lots as well as within the new decks should be designated differently, incorporating long term/short term day and night uses.

The preceding recommendations are suggested mainly to improve the existing parking additions in and around Pelham central business district. The Village, however, must continue to look for additional means to address parking requirements for current and future needs. Current needs are exhibited, for example, in the northern portion of the Village where no off-street municipal

parking is available for residents, and in the southern portion of the Village where a similar, though less severe, situation exists.

### Transportation Needs

Mass transportation has always played a significant role in the development of the Village of Pelham particularly in the location of the Metro-North commuter railroad. The Village is considered to be in excellent commuting distance to the city with virtually a half-hour commute time. In addition, the railroad provides a direct link between the Long Island Sound Shore communities from Connecticut through Pelham including Mount Vernon. The Village of Pelham is also linked by several county bus routes to New Rochelle, Mt. Vernon, Bronx, and White Plains. The Village should continue in its efforts towards providing quality and efficiency as well as convenience in mass transportation. While this service depends on each transportation entity, location and provision of supporting parking facilities, as described in the preceding section, becomes a Village concern.

Transportation needs assessment should include a review every two years of signing throughout the Village. This inventory could replace signs in poor condition or signs which have been removed as well as update signing to current standards.

In an effort to continue to provide a safe roadway system, the Village should also have a maintenance program continued with a review of surface and drainage conditions, and street striping on an annual basis. Finally, to enhance the quality of life within

the residential areas, the size and number of curb cuts to residential units should be limited.

## LAND USE PLAN

The land use portion of the 1981 Master Plan focused two primary themes:

1. The new zoning code classifications resulting from the merger of the Villages of Pelham and North Pelham in 1975.
2. Recommendations as to the development of different parts of the consolidated Village.

The new zoning law has been in effect since 1984, and certain specific developments and trends have progressed far enough so that the Village may now reassess the general land use plan.

In summary, the land use plan, and zoning law, have been able to preserve the special qualities of the Village. The residential areas have been preserved and the commercial areas retain a small Village character. The general objective of this plan, therefore, is to reinforce the land use patterns now in existence and to limit any modifications to assure that these patterns are effectively maintained.

The land use plan is divided into three sections:

- A. Commercial Areas
- B. Residential Areas
- C. Description of the zoning classifications

Within each area, criteria are presented and where applicable, recommendations for changes are described.

Two general recommendations guide the entire land use plan. First, Chapter 98 (zoning) of the Village Code will need to be

modified in response to specific recommendations. Many of the objectives outlined in the 1981 Master Plan could not be implemented under the existing code. More importantly, the existing code does not allow the Village to adequately address land use issues that appear to be insignificant but can have considerable cumulative impact (e.g. percentage of a lot that can be covered by blacktop, fence heights etc.)

Second, Chapters 77 and 98 of the Village Code, respectively, which regulates the powers and responsibilities of the Architectural Review Board and the Planning Board, will need to be modified to allow these Boards to effectively respond to issues raised in the Master Plan. Shown on Figure 4 are the current zoning districts for the Village of Pelham.

## LAND USE - COMMERCIAL AREAS

If the Village is to maintain its unique character, relating to physical features and social fabric and allow for a commercial center that adequately serves community needs, significant attention will have to be given to zoning and land use policies affecting the business district. (See Figure 5) Several general planning principles guide any specific recommendations that are to follow.

### General Principles

1. The commercial area has three distinctive sub-areas, and as each evolves the zoning code should foster its special qualities. Specifically, Fifth Avenue from the railroad to Lincoln Avenue is the primary retail area (broken up by civic and residential uses). Future retail development should be concentrated in this area. Office uses should be limited to second floor space. Both sides of the street should be zoned at the lowest possible density to maintain the existing low-rise open quality. Fifth Avenue from Lincoln Avenue north to the Sanborn site now has an eclectic mix of uses with several "soft" (likely for redevelopment) sites. This sub-area should continue to develop with office and/or/light/clean industrial uses, with no new retail uses. Multi-family housing should be permissible in this zone and also encouraged. Wolf's Lane from the railroad to the southern edge of the business zone (just below Boulevard) also has an eclectic mix of uses. New retail uses should be excluded. Restricted office/business uses and multi-family housing should be

encouraged. Second/third story residential uses over business uses should also be encouraged and not limited as per section 98-78 B-1 of the zoning code. Zoning on Lincoln Avenue should remain as is.

The specific recommendations are: (See Figure 6)

- a. The north side of First Street from Third Avenue to Fifth Avenue, Fifth Avenue from First Street to Lincoln, and the south side of Lincoln from Fifth Avenue to Fourth Avenue - an area now zoned B-2, should be rezoned B-1.
- b. The Business-2 classification should be integrated with the Business-3 classification and appropriate revisions made to limit use, height allowances, etc., as needed in the different areas designated Business-2/3.
- c. The area south of First Street (adjoining the tracks) now zoned Business-2 and the area north of Lincoln Avenue now zoned Business-2 would be integrated with the new Business-2/3 zone.
- d. The Business-1 classification would be rewritten to reflect more restrictive uses.
- e. Office-1 classification should allow for the same residential density as the new B-2/3 zone.

The above zoning classifications are shown on Figure 5.

2. Design guidelines for the entire commercial area should be developed and made part of the zoning code. The Architectural Review Board (ARB) would have responsibility for assessing compliance with the guidelines and the guidelines should be enforced through Building Department regulations and restrictive penalties. The guidelines should cover: allowable building materials (including texture and color) for the facade, signage, extensions on the facade (awnings, lights, etc.), percentage of the facade required to be transparent, etc. The Village should sponsor seminars on design standards and on window treatments.

3. A historic preservation section of the zoning code should be adopted that responds to the unique attributes of each zoning classification. The ARB or another designated Board should have responsibility for assessing compliance with the ordinance.

4. Additional sites for municipal parking should be developed by the Village along First Street north of the railroad. Tax incentives for private developers providing new publicly accessible spaces should also be considered.

5. All buildings on Wolf's Lane and Fifth Avenue should have clearly marked addresses.

6. Parking requirements in the business districts should be reexamined to reduce the impact of too much land area being used for parking.

## LAND USE - RESIDENTIAL AREAS

In general, it is recommended that low density, single family areas (Resident A-1, Resident A-2 and Resident A-3) and medium density single and two family areas (Resident B-1 and Resident B-2) remain basically unchanged on the new Master Plan Map. Consideration should be given to consolidating some of the residential districts which are now substantially the same for purposes of reducing the number of different zoning districts. Resident A-2 and Resident A-3 Districts permit a church, synagogue or other house of worship. It is recommended that this use either be eliminated from these districts or be permitted as a use requiring a special permit.

The issue of whether to permit the conversion of existing single family dwellings to the two family dwellings (other than in districts where now permitted) and the allowance of accessory apartments in any resident district (either by right or by permit) has been considered and rejected. While recognizing that many of the two family and three family conversions have existed since prior to 1957 and are therefore grandfathered from the present residential zoning restrictions, stricter enforcement of the present zoning district is recommended to eliminate illegal conversion since 1957 and prevent future illegal conversion. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a committee to study the desirability of some type of landmark commission or historic preservation district to preserve the unique qualities of our residential zones.

This Master Plan is not meant to be an all-inclusive document. There will be new issues to consider in the next few years, such as the impact of changing demographics, and there may be existing issues which need more extensive examination, such as consolidation of municipal services and infrastructure repair. As the Village responds to future concerns, the Master Plan will need to be revisited on a regular schedule.