

2021 DRI Application

BASIC INFORMATION

- Mid-Hudson
- Town of Pine Plains
- Hamlet of Pine Plains
- Dutchess
- Darrah Cloud, Town Supervisor
- supervisor@pineplains-ny.gov

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

\$10,000,000 would completely revitalize downtown Pine Plains, a rural, walkable, agricultural community, by paying completely for three large projects: a small, innovative, and affordable central septic system for the business district, the completion of our Sidewalk/Biking Plan, and a new Town Hall located in the middle of our downtown (the current one is 2 miles outside town on a busy highway). These three projects in turn would create the necessary infrastructure for us to attract an affordable housing developer, and new businesses (and to allow current owners to expand their businesses), and to preserve and uphold democracy by making voting and court and licenses accessible to all citizens, regardless of whether they have a car. At a recent focus group with under-40 residents, we learned that they moved here for “the small-town community and the people”. Our Seniors Group members tell us they don’t want to leave but can’t manage the upkeep on their larger homes. We are working to keep people here and business thriving with a revitalized downtown and easy access to all our assets. We have come this far with the help of numerous community-wide meetings at our Community Center and Town Hall, and on Zoom. Just three projects would have a massive impact on Pine Plains.

JUSTIFICATION

Pine Plains is a walkable NYSEERDA-awarded Climate Smart and Clean Energy Community. Two feet or wheels will take you from your front door to our downtown: the grocery store, the bank, the library, two new Inns, an art gallery, a barber shop, a hardware store, a pharmacy, a dentist's office, and the local veterinarian (who still handles large animals!). We have a fine wine store, Veterans Services, 4 churches, and elementary/middle/high schools. And jobs! You can walk to work at Floorings.com where they make and sell custom flooring, Schapirra’s Coffee Roasters, and five great restaurants that serve everything from Oaxacan cuisine to nouvelle French. Finally, our downtown now houses The Stissing Center, our newly renovated concert and arts venue, which has hired 5 new local people in the last year. From the center of our downtown, you can walk to Stissing Mountain and hike up to our fire tower maintained by local group, Friends of Stissing Landmarks. We have a Sewer Feasibility Study, and, with County Planning and the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Development Council, plans for a downtown revitalization and improved sidewalks/bikeways throughout town for neighborhood access to downtown. These

plans are all ready to implement. Our current Town Hall is 2 miles outside town. Bringing it into the downtown area would make our downtown buzz with activity.

Adding to our downtown in the coming year, our old library building is being renovated into a store and education-based business with coffeehouse. Stissing Farms LLC, broke ground this summer on an additional 36 units of condominium housing and the NY Archdiocese is working on a senior living development. The town is working with these developers to help us become a sustainable community with an emphasis on accessibility, agriculture, and the arts.

With the approval of our 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update, the community has spoken about what we need here to get things going: a Town Hall to make voting, licenses, and our court accessible to everyone, updated sidewalks to get there, and a central septic system that would allow new businesses to open and old ones to expand and thrive.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

Boundaries of the proposed DRI area. Boundaries of the essential downtown area grow out of the center of the town, at our intersection of Routes 199 and 82. (AKA, The Light). To the east, downtown stretches to Sunny Meadows Farm and the end of Factory Lane. To the west, downtown stretches to the New Holland Tractor Company, Wheels of Time, and Highway Boulevard just beyond Lake Road. To the north, downtown becomes residential immediately after the municipal parking lot and the American Legion on North Main Street. To the south, downtown extends down to the Stewart's at Route 83. This direction sports a Lighting District with historic lighting all the way down from the crossroads. Hamlet neighborhoods spin off this area like spokes on a wheel.

Past investment, future investment potential. Significant money has been invested in the buildings in our hamlet and now almost every formerly derelict building has been renovated here by entrepreneurs. Recently, an old house was renovated into offices, we welcomed a new hardware store, the Town Park at the corner of 82 and 199 is in the last stages of being completely restored via a legacy to the town, the anchor and historic Stissing House has been bought and is being transformed into a jazz bistro and bakery, and the chef from the old version of that restaurant has moved down the street to a brand-new venue. Our old library is being converted by new owners into an educational business center/coffeehouse/bike shop, and the town has secured the land to build our dream Town Hall adjacent to our municipal parking lot. Our historic weigh station on the south side, where produce and grain used to be carted for weighing, is being renovated with an eye towards becoming a kind of Office/Welcome Station for visitors. This has made the town much more attractive to new businesses.

In 2020 we completed our Comprehensive Plan Update. In 2021 we used that Update to inform a Zoning Review and Revision. Those law changes will be passed in September and October of 2021. In the last 3 years we invested tax dollars and grant money in becoming a NYSERDA Clean Energy Community and won a grant from the State and County to hold a Sewer Feasibility Study

which is now complete. As a result, we now have a brilliant plan for a compact, low-impact central wastewater system. We are partnering with the NY Catholic Archdiocese to build the system on land belonging to them to help them with future development for a senior living project. The Stissing Center, a concert venue and arts center, is now open and flourishing. We have just received \$110,000 in grants to install an all-abilities playground here, and purchase 2 all-terrain wheelchairs for beach and trail access, as well as the District formation funds for a potential wastewater system. All these grants came with enormous public support.

Recent or impending job growth: We have a recent influx of young people who have moved to the town to make a future here farming. They are revitalizing old land, making cheese and milk products, local meat, and vegetables. Ronnybrook Farm, a well-known dairy, and Chaseholm Farm, a dairy and cheese-making operation, both employ farm help, young and old. The Stissing Center, a \$5,000,000 renovation project housing a concert hall, art studios and community kitchen, has hired 5 new positions in the last year. Floorings.com just partnered with a national company to build custom flooring and plan to expand their craftsman workforce to 35 employees in the next 2 years. Roosters Hardware has come to town, and the famous and historic Stissing House is being renovated to house a new bistro and bakery. Its former chef has moved three doors down and just opened a French bistro. And the whole town smells like coffee roasting when Schapirras is doing just that. The school system is our largest employer, making residential growth essential for the town's survival.

Our condominium complex is being expanded to include 36 more units of housing. On the far edge of the town, outside the downtown district, lies the old Carvel Golf Course, bought in 2000 by the Durst Organization. The town is collaborating with them on a development project for a healthy lifestyle eco-sustainable resort which would use the assets of the area to attract visitors and make history as the first of its kind. Hiking and biking, swimming, and a small family golf course are all a part of their passive solar building and landscape design, which will also provide walking and biking trails right into town. This is a true collaboration between the developer and the town and will bring many jobs and opportunities to people here.

Quality of life. We already possess a rare and meaningful quality of life. We need to sustain it.

The downtown area has maintained its historic character for almost 200 years. Sidewalks run through the downtown and more are desired, so that people can safely walk around at night, and kids can better travel to school. We are one of the few walkable towns in Dutchess County. This is how you make diversity work, because in this way people get to know each other. You don't need a car to get to the bank, the grocery store, the pharmacy, the dentist, 3 schools, the library, or any of our restaurants. Concerts, art programs, the Seniors Group, and lectures are easily reached by foot at both our library and The Stissing Center. Our new Trails Zoning Plan allows for trails to be connected on the 32 old rail-beds with owner permission. 21 acres right downtown currently owned by the NY Archdiocese is ideal for a hub of affordable mixed-use housing right next to the library: key to that development is a central septic system. We are in the process of renovating

our town park at the corner of our crossroads so people can pause and sit or play chess. Our recreation fields to the west are easily accessible by walking or biking, and we have a beach next to these with a new bathhouse at Stissing Lake. A boat launch is next to that with kayak rentals. We just won 3 grants totaling \$110,000 for an all-abilities playground, two all-terrain wheelchairs for handicapped access to our trails and beach, and the funds to form a Sewer District in hopes of building a system here.

Stissing Mountain is walkable from the town center and is a landmark you can see all the way from Kingston as you cross the bridge. Thompson Pond attracts as many visitors as it does wildlife. Foxes cross the trail like regular citizens. They are.

Supportive local policies. Life in Pine Plains has been preserved by an updated (2020) innovative Comprehensive Plan that demands care and protection of the environment as well as the agricultural, rural character of the town. Our zoning is the strictest in Dutchess County to preserve that character and we have finished a Zoning Review to update that, as well as made the Zoning Review Committee a standing committee so that zoning law can be a “living document”. We are a Climate Smart Community and a Clean Energy Community, completing our total conversion to LED street lighting in 2019, with an EV Charging Station, and the recent passing of a Unified Solar Permit Law to enhance air quality and promote renewable energy.

Our Comprehensive Plan has also resulted in a strong, award-winning Future Farmers of America association in the school, and liaisons there with Bard College and Dutchess Community College to encourage accelerated study to reduce college costs to families and enhance opportunities.

Money talks: we fund our library which serves as a critical focal point for meetings and education. It is imbedded as a priority for the town. We fund a vibrant program for our Seniors which is free to them as well a vibrant recreation program with sports both children and adults can play year-round. Recently we wrote a Police Reform and Revitalization Plan with the help of our police department and a stakeholders committee which codifies our way of keeping people safe here while being diverse and open and knowledgeable about mental health issues, drug addiction, and the foibles of being human. This local government commitment to people has created a compassionate way of handling their problems.

The quality of life in Pine Plains is preserved not always by policies, but by volunteerism and traditions which have been upheld by its diverse citizenry, many of whom arrived here from another country to find something worth preserving. It is diverse because diverse people moved here and made it their home. Immigrants fleeing the pogroms in Russia made their way to Pine Plains and started farms and businesses. African American families here can trace their heritage back to the post-Revolution era. Many Italian families found their ways here after WWII. And now 20% of our school is Latinx. The roots of gender diversity run deep via our children. The atmosphere therefore is accepting and open.

These aspects of life in Pine Plains are not always things that can be upheld by policy but remain through commitment and strong traditions.

Public support Recently, with help from The Stissing Center, the Town raised \$10,000 in 3 days to send its Recreation Program Girls' 10 and Under Softball Team to State Finals. That speaks to the kind of public support we garner here for good things. We were one of the first towns ever to record our Town Board meetings, and our film archive is enviable. This has allowed home-bound people, seniors, and single parents to stay in touch with democracy. Our meetings are almost always packed. The Downtown Revitalization Plan, created by the Town Board with help from Dutchess County Planning, the Comprehensive Plan Update, our Sewer Feasibility Study and Durst's Hudson Valley Project have brought people constantly together at the new high school auditorium and our Community Center in frequent town-wide discussions about the future. When the pandemic curtailed in-person meetings, we figured out a way to get those meetings to everyone online. There is enormous support for revitalization here. Businesspeople re-formed the Pine Plains Business Association to help spearhead this effort, and it is an active presence in town once again. They have launched a driven social media effort since meeting with Dutchess Tourism in 2019. Stakeholders have also been added in the past year, as projects near completion: specifically, The Stissing Center, our concert, arts, and community kitchen venue, is a huge stakeholder, with a lot to gain from improving our downtown. Our restaurant owners have hung on through recession and pandemic and are vital participants in change here in town. Our school system a huge stakeholder, as enrollment is down from all-time highs in the 90s of 1600 to 900 overall. All of these are vital and willing participants in a strategic investment plan. Standing committees have newly avid support, and we now have a vibrant Zoning Review Committee (our Zoning Law is now a "live" document), a hugely effective Broadband Committee, with hands-on help provided to citizens for ensuring internet service, a revitalized Recreation Committee, which is raising considerable money to fund a new all-abilities playground, and lake preservation committees which have taken on active membership on the Wappingers Intermunicipal Watershed Council, working with the EPA and DEC to ensure clean water coming from our headwaters. Our Solar Law Committee has a new Solar Law ready to be passed.

The best leader for the DRI would be the Town Supervisor, and this is for a few reasons: it is best to have someone who is seen as representing landowners, farmers, parents, seniors, children and businesspeople alike, who can speak to all the different stakeholders and knows them, while holding the Comprehensive Plan close to her heart. She has a brilliant team of advisors, and the Town Board is vibrant and participatory.

Transformative opportunities and readiness. We envision 3 projects which, due to the smallness of our town, could be completely built with 10 million dollars at hand, utterly transforming our downtown, and strengthening our ability here to preserve a future for our children. At the heart of these projects would be a new Town Hall, to replace the aging one which is located 2 miles outside of town and was only meant to be a temporary location—20 years ago. This would form

the heart of activity here. The building of a small, innovative central septic system would allow businesses downtown to be owned by regular people, not just the wealthy, and to expand and become sustainable. The lack of a system holds us back economically.

It is the curse of small towns that we can manage to win grants to create studies, but never manage to find the money to implement them. We have the following key completed plans: Downtown Revitalization Plan, Pine Plains Town Center Pedestrian and Biking Plan, and a Sewer Feasibility Study.

All these plans are for municipal projects. These projects completed would affect private business, affordable housing, and economic diversity in transforming ways. People have been unable to open small businesses here in the past year due to antiquated/inadequate septic systems in our downtown buildings. Department of Health rules are strict and the lots most of our businesses sit on are not large enough to accommodate adequate waste systems for what they need. Important to note here is that wealthy developers can afford to do many things that local entrepreneurs might not be able to do. Business district septic would level the playing field to include local people who want to start a business in their hometown. A new Town Hall could tie into this, and new sidewalk/bikeways would lead to everything.

Administrative Capacity. The Pine Plains Town Board consists of 5 energetic and generous people with a wide range of skills from law practice to civil engineering, landscaping, farming, and creative writing. The Town Supervisor will administrate the budget details of the grant with help from her secretary.

The Planning Board is strong and committed, comprised of new people with energy and skills interested in dealing with new projects. Town Assessors are also well-positioned and experienced in managing projects, as is our Building Inspector. We have strong committees in Pine Plains with capable members willing to take on extra work.

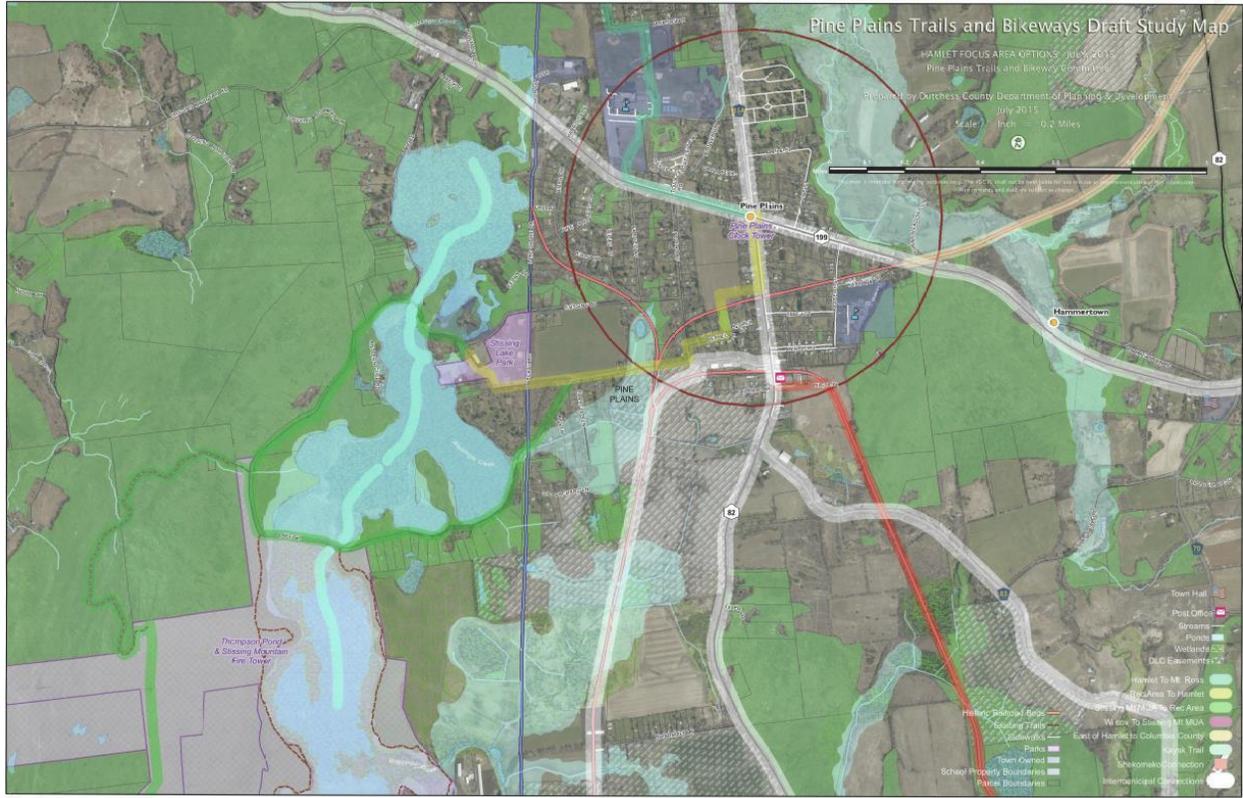
Other. Pine Plains is 94 miles from Manhattan but feels a world away. People come here to shed the stress of city life, and to live a more community-based life. Community know-how and participation is how we've historically survived. This is a place where anyone can afford to live with access to services, necessities, jobs, community life, and life-long learning. But this is threatened. Our Town Hall needs to come back into town to serve as the hub of community activity here along once with our public library and new arts center. It is essential for people to have easy access to government services, to voting, to participating in democracy. We intentionally keep things low-tech and personal so that people are forced to come to Town Hall and get to know us. We need a central septic system to help small businesses expand so they can endure. We need sidewalks and bikeways that are safe for people to use so that our walkability is enhanced, and our air stays clean. We have all the plans to make those things happen. Pine Plains is ready.



Downtown Revitalization Plan



Town Center Pedestrian Plan



Trails and Bikeways Study

July 27, 2021

Re: Town of Pine Plains Sewer Feasibility Study Report

Tighe & Bond, whose services are provided in New York by T&B Engineering and Landscape Architecture, P.C. (Tighe & Bond) is pleased to submit our final report for the Town of Pine Plains Sewer Feasibility Study.

Sewer District Delineation

Tighe & Bond has completed onsite investigations at two properties in Pine Plains and evaluated various wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal options to determine the most appropriate solution for the Town. The enclosed report summarizes our evaluation including a proposed sewer district delineation, an analysis of alternative sewer systems, identification of alternatives, a summary of the recommended project, and anticipated costs for constructing, operating, and maintaining the recommended project.

The wastewater survey provided insight that 1) there are isolated issues with existing sewer systems, 2) a significant number of respondents felt that a wastewater system would be beneficial for the hamlet, and 3) a wastewater system should be focused on the commercial areas in the hamlet and not the residential areas. Other considerations such as soil conditions, depth to restrictive layers, and parcel size and density were also considered and discussed in the report. Ultimately, the proposed sewer district is centered around the Hamlet-Business Zoning District.

Site Investigations

Tighe & Bond, with assistance from the Town, completed onsite investigations at two properties in Pine Plains referred to as the "Church Property" and the "Chase Property" in the report. Both sites were found to have very well drained gravelly soils but deep hole tests at both locations showed signs of the seasonal high groundwater level at depths of only 30"-36" below grade.

Alternatives Considered

The report compares two different collection systems, three different treatment systems, and five different disposal systems options. The analysis focused on alternative technologies which generally have lower construction costs and simplified operation and maintenance compared to conventional sewer systems. Based on the technologies that were considered and the opinions of probable construction cost, five alternatives were identified for further consideration. The alternatives are discussed in Section 7 of the enclosed report and are also summarized below:

- • Alternative No. 1: ○ STEG Collection System
 - ○ Biofiltration Treatment System (at Church Property)
 - ○ GGSF Disposal System
- • Alternative No. 2: ○ STEG Collection System
 - ○ FBBR Treatment System (at Church Property)
 - ○ GGSF Disposal System
- • Alternative No. 3: ○ STEG/STEP Collection System
 - ○ Biofiltration Treatment System (at Chase Property)
 - ○ Surface Discharge to Shekomeko Creek

- Alternative No. 4:
 - STEG/STEP Collection System
 - Biofiltration Treatment System (at Chase/Holada Property)
 - GGSF Disposal System

Proposed Project

The no-action alternative (Alternative No. 5) was not recommended because it would not address capacity restriction issues faced by businesses in the hamlet. Therefore, a life cycle cost analysis and comparison of non-monetary factors was performed for Alternatives No. 1, 2, 3, and 4. The life cycle cost analysis is summarized in Table E.1 below.

Table E.1 – Alternative Life Cycle Cost Analysis Item	Alt. No. 1	Alt. No. 2	Alt. No. 3	Alt. No. 4
Capital Cost	\$3,800,000	\$3,530,000	\$5,413,000	\$4,030,000
Present Day O&M	\$1,579,000	\$1,530,000	\$2,065,000	\$1,627,000
Present Day Salvage Value	(\$171,000)	(\$137,000)	(\$220,000)	(\$175,000)
Net Present Value	\$5,208,000	\$4,923,000	\$7,258,000	\$5,482,000