

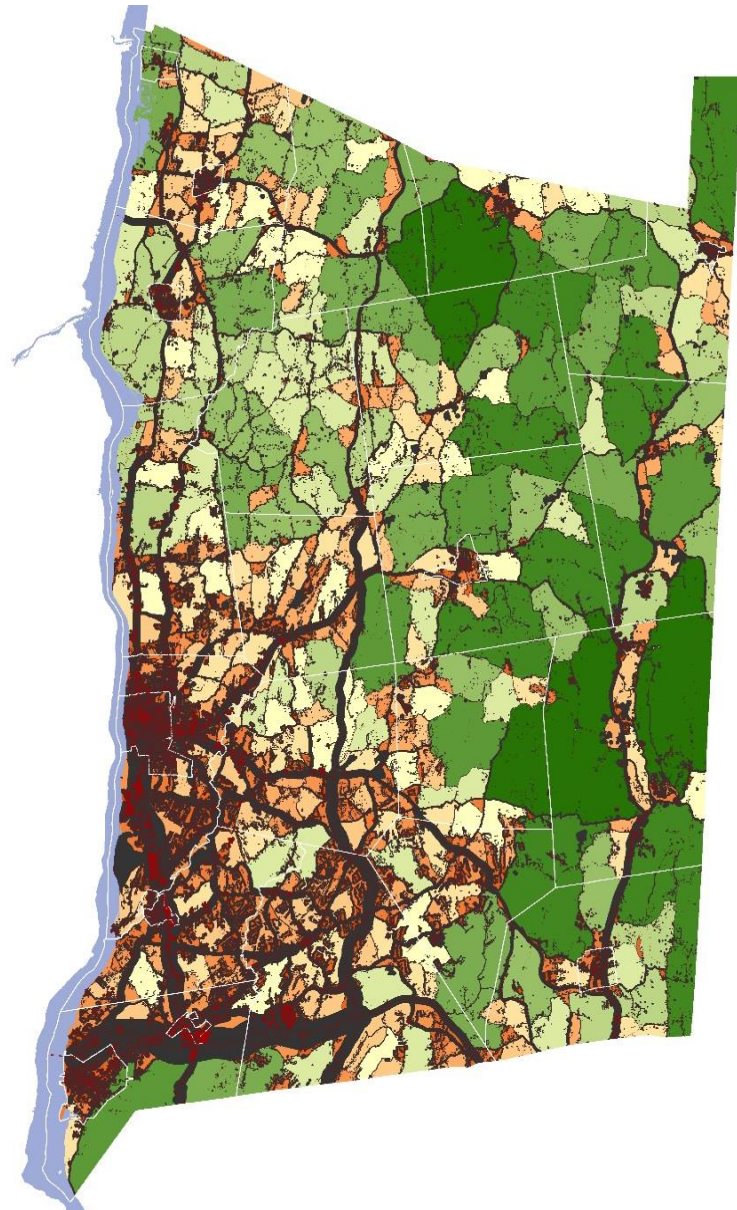


Biodiversity Blocks and the Centers & Greenspaces Planning Principles

Nature Across Boundaries
A Mohonk Consultations Conference

November 6, 2017

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Dutchess County Department of Planning &
Development

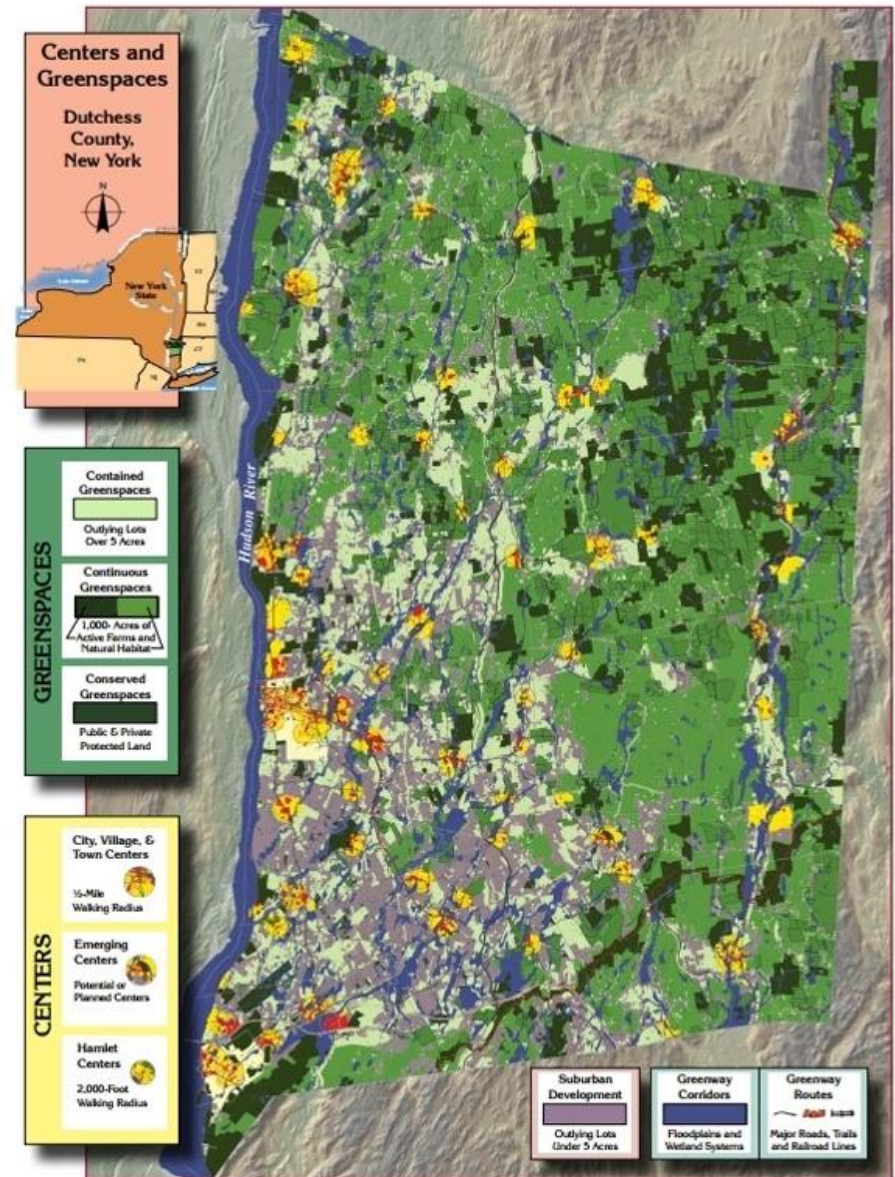




Dutchess County Centers and Greenspaces Planning Principles

A model for counteracting
suburban sprawl.

- Healthy for humans, healthy for nature
 - Preserve Habitat and Farms
- Reinforce traditional settlements and "complete" suburban crossroads
- Define Greenspace in a compelling and understandable science-based way



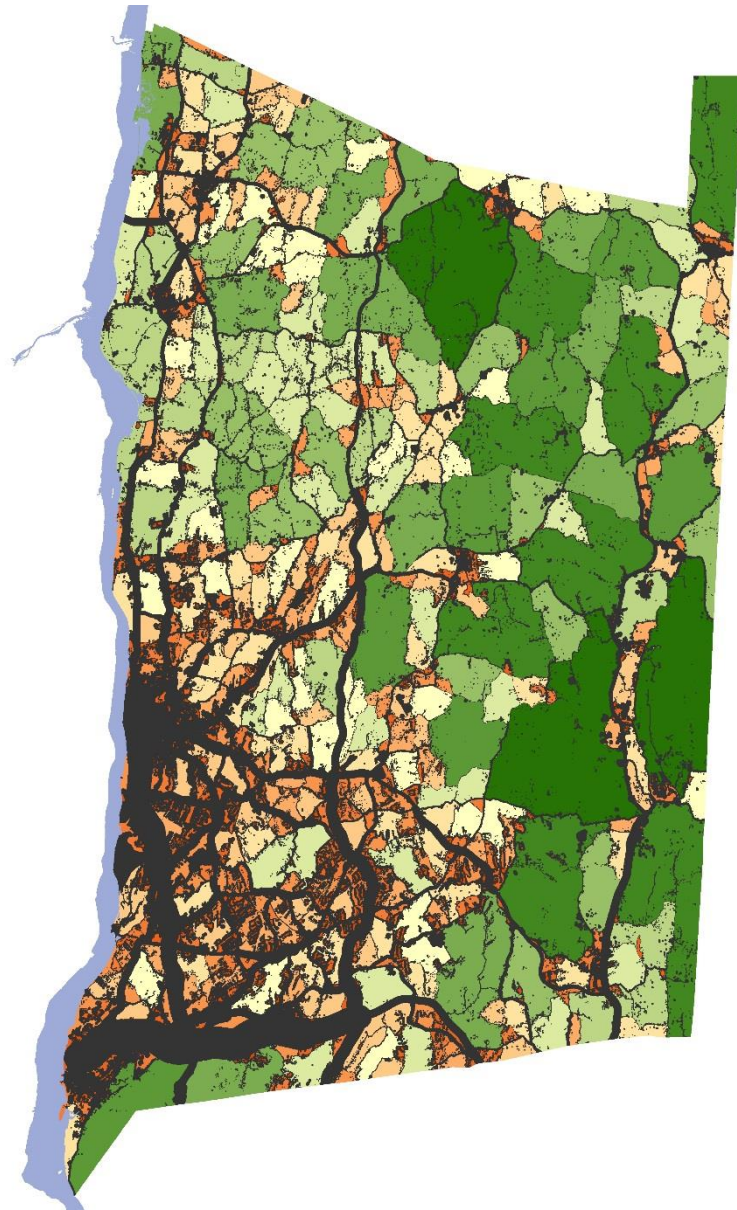


Greenspaces

Can mean anything...
Or nothing

Define Greenspace that is:

- Unambiguous
- Universal
- Emotionally engaging
- Respectful of how nature works
- Informed by science





Traditional Approach to defining Greenspace:

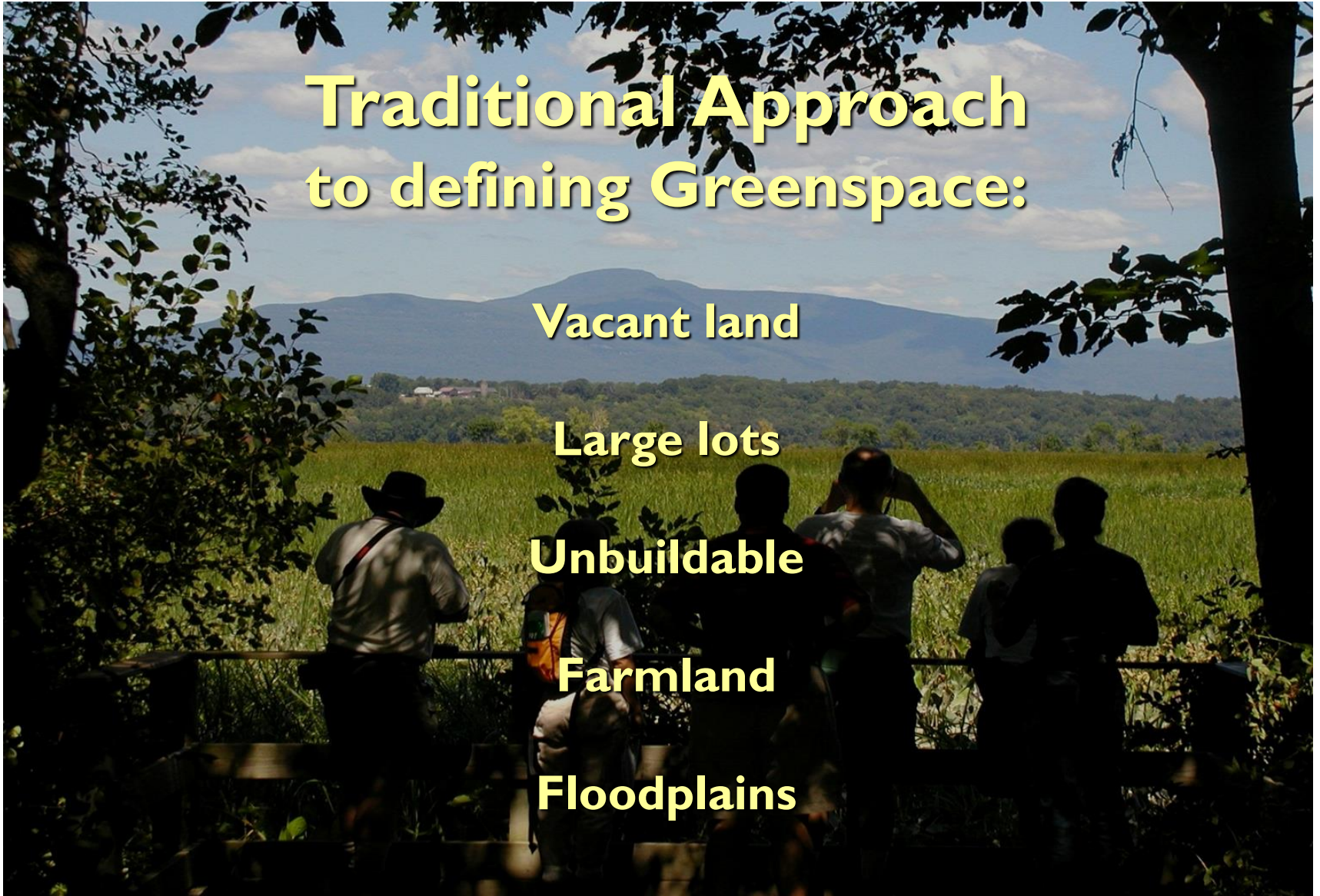
Vacant land

Large lots

Unbuildable

Farmland

Floodplains





Our methods:

**Provide a starting point for
Towns to set their own
priorities**

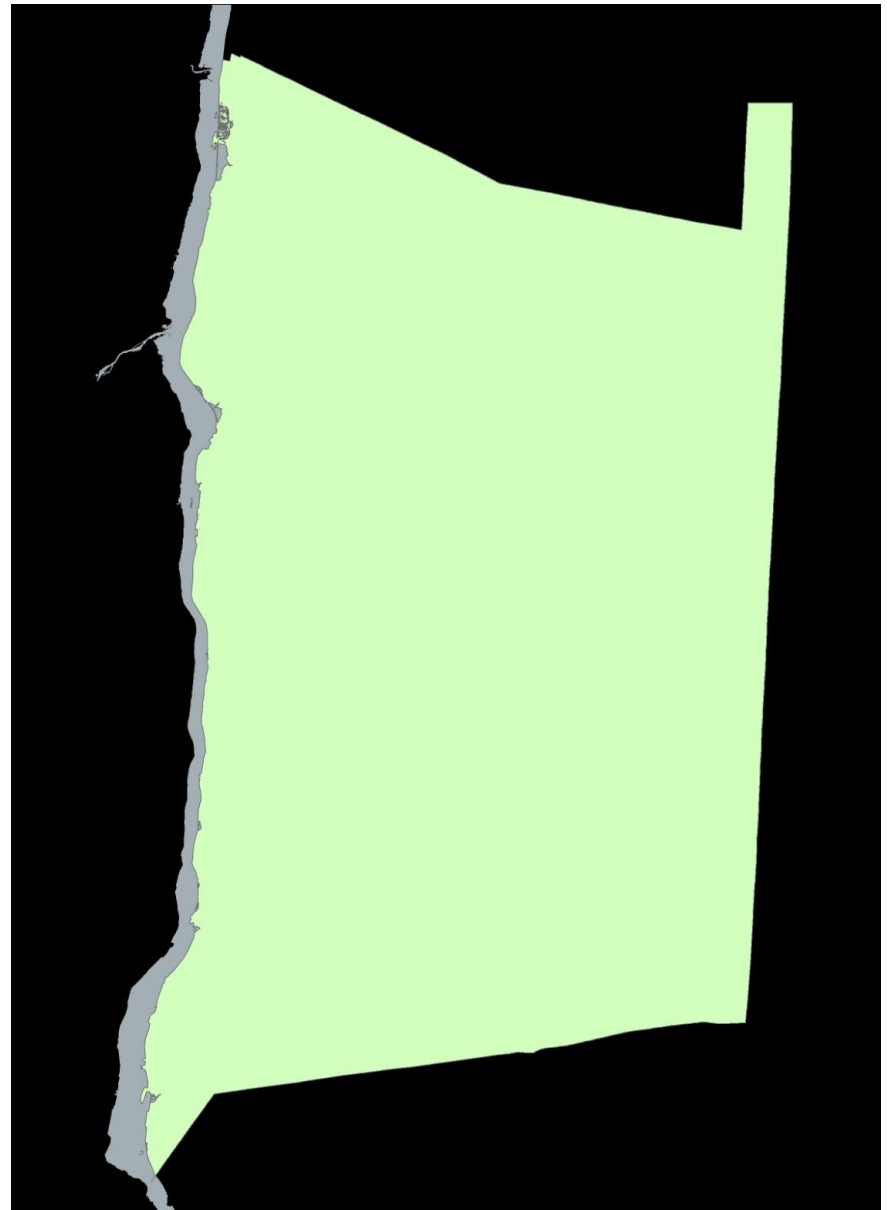
**Everything is important: All
Land is Good Land**





Greenspaces = Biodiversity Blocks

Start with the premise
that “all land is good
land”



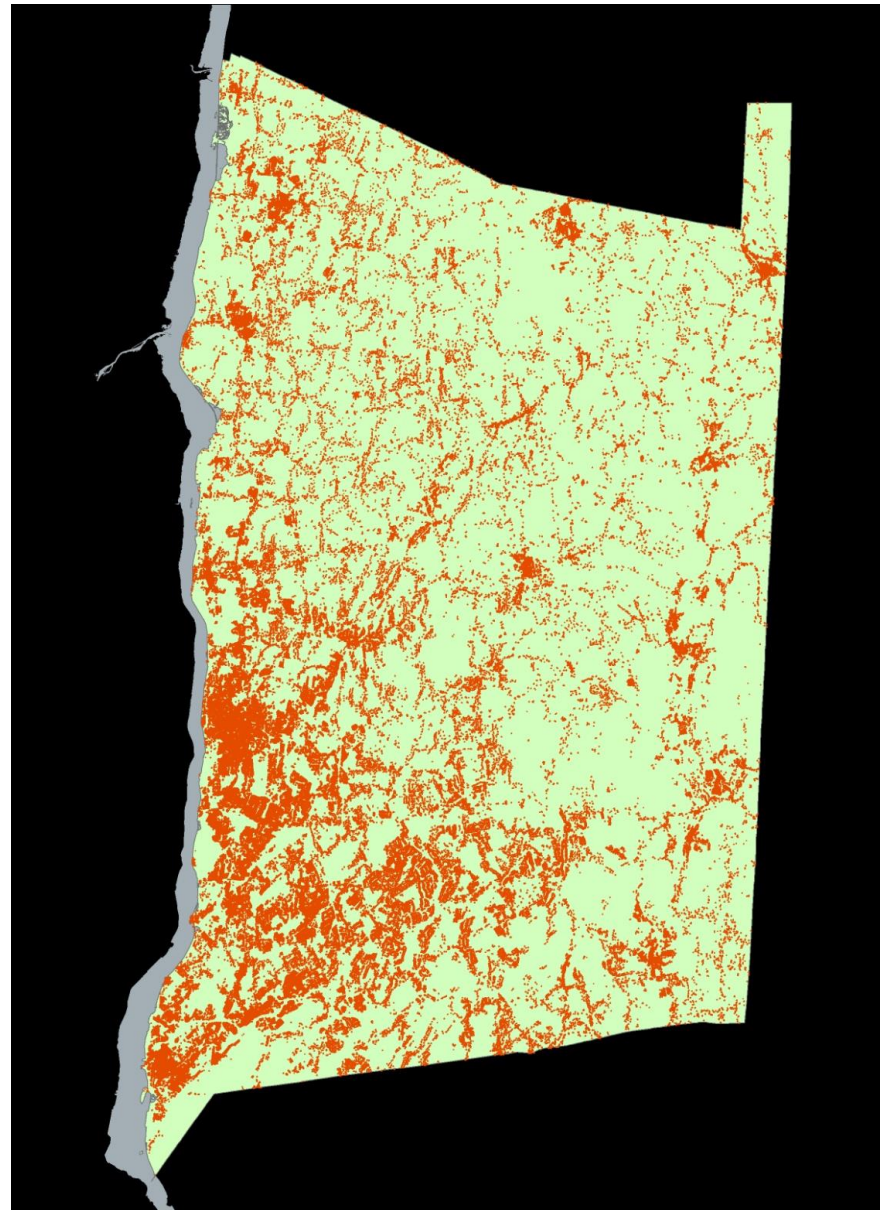


Biodiversity Blocks

Delineate areas of human habitation (Structures and disturbances)

Buffer these in widths related to the magnitude of the disturbance

**More disturbance?
Less biodiversity**





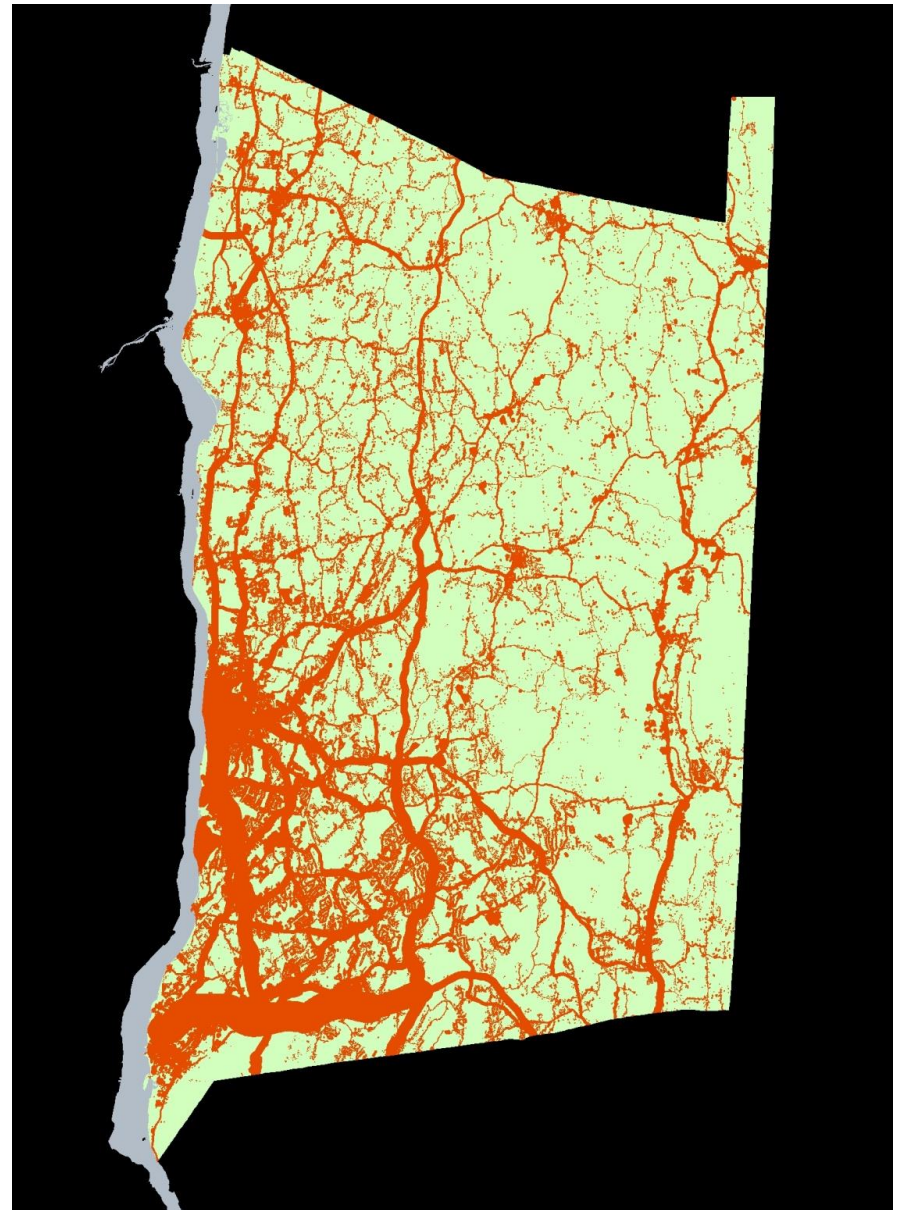
Biodiversity Blocks

Buffer roads of greater than
25 vehicle trips per hour
(less likely to support
biodiversity)

(Dr. Richard T.T. Forman, Harvard
Graduate School of Design)

More disturbance?
Less biodiversity

(Subtract Orange From Green)



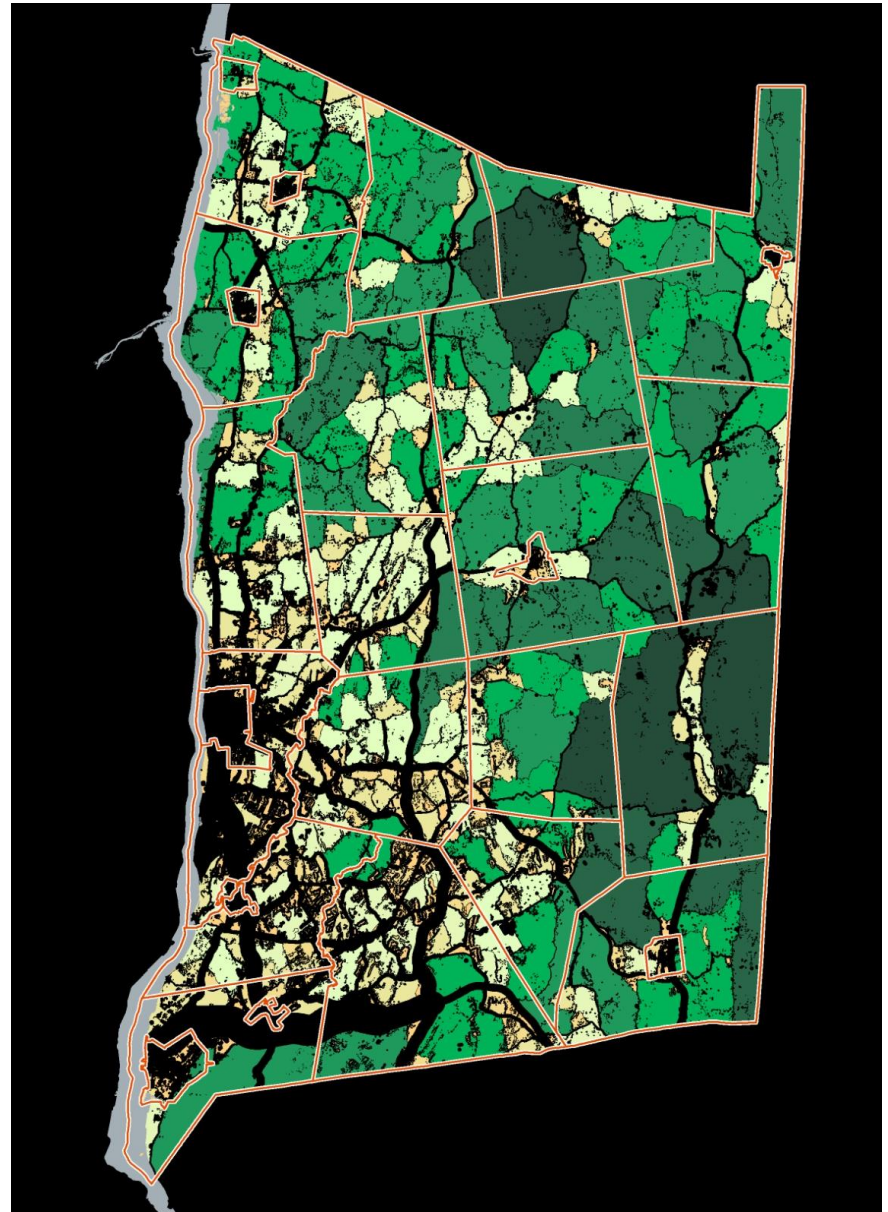


Biodiversity Blocks

What remains are areas which support a rich diversity of wildlife

Areas over 1000 acres are darker green

Cooperation between neighbors – Wildlife doesn't care about Muni Boundaries!



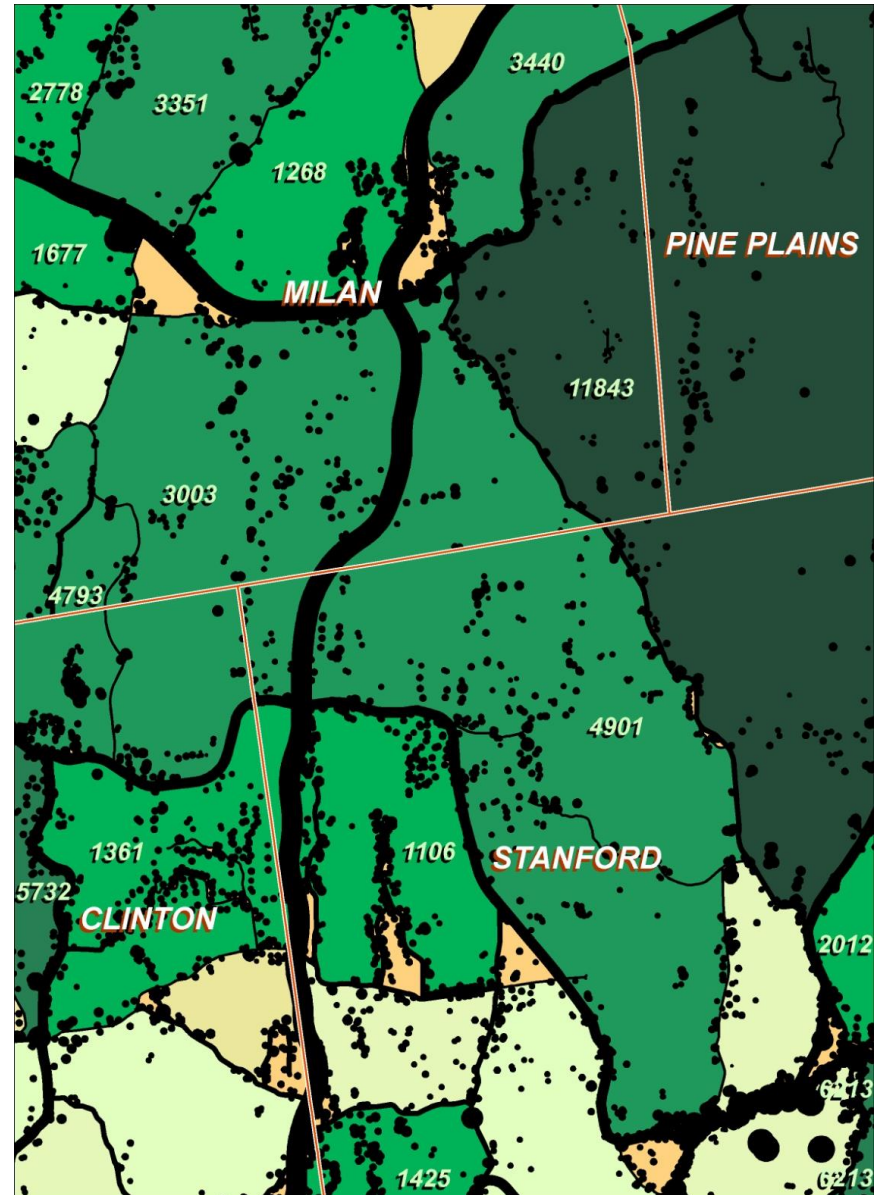


Biodiversity Blocks

Unfragmented habitat

1000 Acres and more supports the greatest biodiversity

Specific protection strategies and priority greenspaces to be determined by municipalities.





Centers and Greenspaces Countywide Map

The **Centers and Greenspaces Map** is designed as a Greenway vision map to be used for larger scale studies across multiple municipalities and so that local plans can consider the surrounding context. The map stresses regional interdependence and the area's primary connectors, including transportation corridors that link together settlement centers, the Hudson River and other waterways, and the continuous greenspaces of forests and farmlands.

Building from the bottom-up, this map began as a compilation of adopted town, village, and city plans, but sought to simplify mapping techniques and enhance common characteristics. It highlights four indispensable patterns, both centered and connected, for complementary natural and human ecosystems:

Centers are concentrated places of community life, commercial exchange, and cultural history, including cities, villages, hamlets, and potential emerging centers.

Greenspaces include natural areas, farms, and parks, combined in a continuous countryside and essential for food, recreation, and diversity of natural habitats.

Greenway Corridors, including waterways, floodplains, and wetland systems, offer critical connections for wildlife movement, recreation, and water quality.

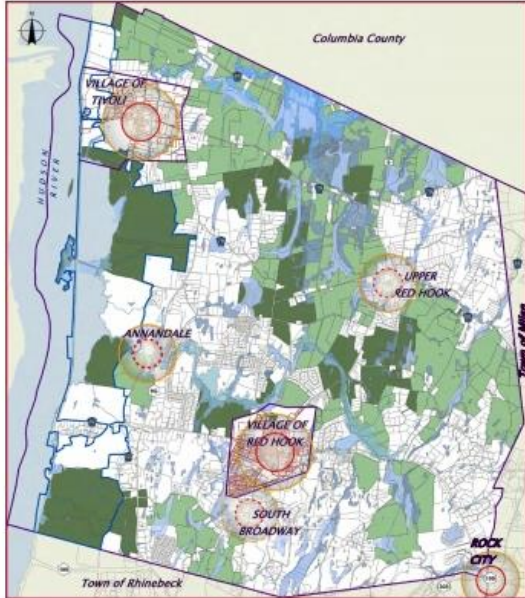


Greenway Routes provide transportation linkages between centers, forming a landscaped network from trails to sidewalks and from parkways to main streets.

Municipalities can use Greenway principles and mapping techniques as a starting point to create local priorities and plans. The Centers and Greenspaces map to the left demonstrates how towns have refined the countywide version into more parcel-specific planning maps.

These locally generated Centers and Greenspaces maps still show larger land use patterns, but also provide detailed decisions on parcels considered a high priority for protection measures and areas targeted for potential new compact development in and around designated centers. See the [Rural Success Story](#) page for additional information.

Combined Centers and Greenspaces Maps from local plans for the towns of Red Hook and Rhinebeck.



Centers and Greenspaces Plan

Red Hook Intermunicipal Task Force

Major Goals of Plan Process:

- Permanently protect important farmland and the rural countryside;
- Strengthen the commercial and residential base of the existing villages and hamlets;
- Transform the South Broadway strip into a traditional village extension;
- Use close-in smart growth to help finance a village sewer system.

Rural Success Story: Town and Village of Red Hook

An appointed Intermunicipal Task Force from the Town and Villages of Red Hook and Tivoli proposed zoning changes to save farms, protect rural character, reinforce traditional village centers, and promote economic development. The plan identified over 50 priority farms to be included in an Agricultural Business District, designed to replace the mostly 3-acre suburban-scale zoning and permit greater business opportunities for farmers. The Town's existing purchase of development rights (PDR) program would also receive extra funds through incentive zoning for development located close to the Village.

The 2011 [Centers and Greenspaces Plan](#) and [adopted zoning](#) included illustrative plans and detailed standards for walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods to ensure compatibility with the existing Village and to provide design guidance for future development proposals. Instead of reacting to random development locations, the plan offers a positive vision for where growth is mutually beneficial, acting as an advertisement for new economic investment and streamlining the review process. A [Fiscal Impact Analysis](#) showed that the proposed strategy could increase the commercial tax base and reduce the potential for town-wide residential development, limiting both sprawl and school tax impacts.

Since the Centers and Greenspaces zoning amendment was adopted, almost 1,000 additional acres of high priority farmland in the Agricultural Business District have been permanently protected through the PDR program. In the Traditional Neighborhood Development district, just south of the Village, the first major development proposal for a mix of 102 houses, attached townhouses, and smaller cottages is now before the Planning Board. If approved under the incentive zoning, this project would contribute an estimated \$660,000 to the Town's PDR fund, proving that **strong Centers save Greenspaces**.



Inset to right shows proposed development on village-scale lots with tree-lined sidewalks, narrow streets, and an entrance green, consistent with the Traditional Neighborhood Development zoning.



Centers and Greenspaces

A plan to protect Red Hook's rural character, reinforce traditional village centers, and promote economic development

Report

January 2009

Task Force Members

Bill O'Neill, Chairman
Former Town of Red Hook Deputy Supervisor

Brenda Cagle
Town of Red Hook Conservation Advisory Council

Tom Cordier
Village of Tivoli Mayor
(Task Force member from Jan. '07)

Brent Kovalchik
Village of Red Hook ZBA (until April '07)
Village of Red Hook Trustee (April '07)

Charles Laing
Town of Red Hook Planning Board

Mike Leedy
Village of Tivoli ZBA

Tim Ross
Town of Red Hook ZBA

Karen Schneller-McDonald
Town of Red Hook resident

David Seymour
Village of Red Hook Trustee (until Jan. '07)
Dutchess Co. Legislator (Jan. '07 - Jan. '08)

Peter Sweeny
Village of Tivoli Planning Board
(Task Force member from Jan. '08)

Jay Trapp
Village of Red Hook Planning Board
(until Feb. '07)
Village of Red Hook Trustee (Feb. '07)

Former Members:

Harry Colgan
Village of Tivoli Planning Board
Town of Red Hook Board Member (Jan. '08)

Marcus Molinaro
Village of Tivoli Mayor
New York State Assemblyman

Report of the Intermunicipal Task Force

The Town of Red Hook's Comprehensive Plan calls for maintaining the Town's rural character "by providing incentives for new development to locate within or adjacent to existing centers while discouraging a land use pattern that uniformly disperses development throughout the Town."

To fully implement this recommendation requires intermunicipal planning since the existing centers (the Villages of Red Hook and Tivoli) are separate municipalities from the Town. To this end, in May 2005, the Town of Red Hook and the Villages of Red Hook and Tivoli began an unprecedented intermunicipal planning effort with the appointment of an eleven member Intermunicipal Task Force. Meeting weekly on Friday mornings from August 12, 2005 to January 9, 2009, the Task Force developed "Centers and Greenspaces," a plan to protect Red Hook's rural character, reinforce traditional village centers, and promote economic development.

The following are the Task Force's recommendations to the Red Hook Town Board to implement the "Centers and Greenspaces" plan. The recommendations consist of a package of zoning and subdivision amendments that would save farmland and direct development towards centers designed as traditional walkable neighborhoods consistent with the historic Village of Red Hook. The proposed amendments are the result of three years of hard work and are unanimously recommended by the Task Force.

Major Goals of the Centers and Greenspaces Plan:

- Permanently protect important farmland and the rural countryside
- Strengthen the residential and commercial base of the existing Villages
- Transform the South Broadway strip into a traditional village entrance-extension
- Use close-in smart growth development to help finance sewer systems

Centers and Greenspaces in Red Hook's Zoning



Dutchessny.GOV
Official website of Dutchess County Government, New York.

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 [Municipalities](#) |
 [Schools](#) |
 [Business & Community](#) |
 [Tourism, Arts & Leisure](#)

County Government >> Departments >> Planning and Development >> Centers & Greenspaces

Centers and Greenspaces Greenway Guide

This new four-page Guide combines a regional perspective with Greenway principles and simple mapping techniques that have been successfully used in multiple local plans. The objective is to prevent commercial strip development along our roadways and residential sprawl into the countryside.

Communities are encouraged to locally identify through a public process natural and agricultural lands for possible protection measures, as well as key centers with positive potential for community growth. Centers and Greenspaces plans also include design concepts and illustrations to show residents and potential investors how new centered and connected development could fit with the existing context.

Get more information on how **Centers save Greenspaces**. You can review the Centers and Greenspaces Guide and countywide map, find out about recent success stories in Red Hook and the City of Beacon, or view larger scale maps and data about your community.

Let's Get Started!

- 1 [Guide Overview](#) (.pdf)
- 2 [Countywide Map](#) (.pdf)
- 3 [Centers](#) (.pdf)
- 4 [Greenspaces](#) (.pdf)
- 5 [Urban Success Story](#) (.pdf)
- 6 [Rural Success Story](#) (.pdf)

Now look at your community
COMING SOON!

Build close-knit, connected centers.....to protect our landscape legacy.

- Reinforce existing centers and main streets;
- Mix uses to promote walking and biking;
- Connect major centers with transit services;
- Locally identify priority growth areas for close-in expansion and conversion of strip districts or subdivisions into new centers.
- Employ a range of protection measures for farmland and natural wildlife areas;
- Adopt policies that support agriculture;
- Plan for continuous greenspace systems;
- Locally identify priority greenspaces for future public or private conservation.

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Accessible through the Dutchess County Planning Webpage



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Links:

Nature in Fragments: The Legacy of Sprawl by Elizabeth Johnson and Michael Klemens

Dr. Richard Ostfeld:

http://www.ecostudies.org/people_sci_ostfeld.html

www.hudsonia.org

<http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/#/people/richard-tt-forman.html>

<http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/Planning/17329.htm>

Thanks!