

10/27/93

GENESEE STREET CORRIDOR

The Town of Manlius governing structure has long been concerned about the changing character of the Genesee Street Corridor. This area extends from the Town line in the west near Onondaga Golf and ~~Courtnry~~^{COUNTRY} Club to Burdick Street or the Fayetteville Village line on the east. The corridor is slightly less than one mile in length. While change is inevitable, it is important that such change be controlled to the extent possible to avoid ~~is~~ harming people, eliminating historic values, and removing structures of significant architectural worth.

Land use along Genesee Street evolved from agricultural and residential during the nineteenth century to predominantly residential. This was a fashionable neighborhood of elegant and spacious homes which continued through the village of Fayetteville. There remain interesting and impressive residential structures which have now acquired historic importance. Despite changes over time, the Genesee corridor today provides an impressive gateway from the west into the village of Fayetteville and the town of Manlius. The single family residential character of the street has gradually changed, particularly on the south side. There now are high density residential, commercial, institutional, and quasi-commercial uses along this corridor.

The ubiquitous automobile has gradually transformed this single family residential street into a busy east-west thoroughfare abetted, of course, by post World War II development in the villages, the town of Manlius and beyond. The advent of the Fayetteville Mall about 1973 marked the beginning of accelerated pressure for change along this corridor. There has been gradual encroachment upon the residential character of the neighborhood through granting of variances for benign commercial activity. Even in hindsight it appears that forthright denial of such variances would not have stemmed the tide of change since it has been amply demonstrated that families could not sell their properties for residential use. There have been at least two instances where estate settlements have been hampered for want of buyers for such residential property.

In June of 1990 the Town recognizing the continuing approach of a chaotic use situation developed a new zoning district, Residential Multiple Use Districts R-M, which was applied to the corridor on the northerly side of Genesee Street from the Town line to Fayette Manor. The district was applied to the northern properties since the linear depth of those parcels was relatively uniform. Since that was not the case on the southern side of the highway, those parcels remain under their original zoning.

The Town's intent for both sides of the Genesee corridor is clearly stated in the preamble to the R-M zone as contained in the zoning ordinance and quoted as follows:

PURPOSE AND INTENT: This district is designed to retain the existing residential character of established neighborhoods, while permitting unobtrusive uses of a commercial nature which are to be regulated in such a manner as to maintain and preserve the residential character of adjacent areas as well as to provide a transition between residential areas and non-residential areas. It is also the general purpose and intent of this zoning classification to encourage the preservation of historical structures.

Concern has been raised in recent years by the Onondaga County Planning Board that inadequate controls exist to prevent the proliferation of additional traffic into this corridor by the conversion of existing residential uses to those with higher potential impact.

The Onondaga County Planning Board has recommended two actions:

- 1) conduct a corridor study.
- 2) develop a policy statement which provides guidance for future use changes.

The Town has, in the application for proposed Country Inn adjacent to Mott Road, received traffic studies from both the proponents and the objectors which detail the traffic impact along the Corridor. Although these studies do not include the entire Corridor they can be extrapolated by the Town's professional staff to provide an adequate picture of the overall traffic matrix.

The Town is acutely aware of both the traffic flow through this Corridor and the structures which are currently there. It has become quite obvious that the natural trend is away from strictly single family residential use. No matter how attractive the residence, living on a well travelled highway is not appealing to the average home buyer. In applications for variances for parcels in the Corridor the inability to market these homes for single family use has commonly been the assertion of the owners.

A small irony exists in that the traffic that has been the instrument of change in this neighborhood is perceived to be the element that mitigates against the actions necessary to control this change.

The quandary faced by the Town is the desire to establish effective controls while at the same time maintaining the aesthetically pleasing historical structures which currently exist in the Corridor. "For sale" signs are prevalent. The pressure for different uses is mounting. The Town's response to these pressures should be reasoned and protective of the "look" of the Corridor.

The Town is vitally concerned that the end of its response not be the elimination of the mansions that comprise most of the southern portion of the Corridor. One need look no further than lower James Street in the city of Syracuse, where large pre-1900 homes were replaced by concrete and glass office buildings, to find the type of result the Town seeks to avoid. It is the Town's intent and responsibility to try to preserve its historical heritage by keeping this Corridor essentially intact. As a result, a certain amount of flexibility must be exercised to achieve that goal.

As a result, the Town will, by adoption of this policy statement impose the following criteria for development along the Genesee corridor as a guide for potential future uses.

1) TRAFFIC: The primary concern with respect to traffic emanates from the use of this portion of Genesee Street as a main thoroughfare from the eastern suburbs to and from the city of Syracuse. In the off-peak hours, the traffic is primarily local and related to employment and shopping and entertainment facilities. The traffic patterns in the eastern suburbs are already well documented. The rush hour traffic from the city of Syracuse and the west divides at Lyndon Corners in the town of Dewitt. Some continues on Route 92 into the village of Manlius towards Cazenovia. The remainder travels the Genesee corridor on its way to the village of Fayetteville and eastward. There is certainly nothing the Town can do about the through flow of traffic on Genesee Street.

The Town can attempt, within reason, not to impede the traffic flow consistent with the rights of its citizens. It will be the intent of these standards that with respect to access to the corridor no additional driveway cuts will be encouraged. Where possible, it will be recommended that interior roads be developed and driveways eliminated ~~wherever practicable.~~

2) SIGNAGE: Consistent with the Zoning Ordinance no free standing signs will be allowed beyond those permitted as a matter of right. Should relief be sought from these requirements it should be granted only in the interest of public safety to provide identification of the enterprize occupying any particular building. Attention must be paid also to the aesthetics of signage to fit with the general character of the properties along the corridor.

Since the purpose of signage will be for identification rather than advertising the use, lighting of signs must be strictly controlled. No lighting of a building facade will be permitted other than as part of seasonal or holiday occasions.

3) PRESERVATION OF STRUCTURES: One of the main goals to be achieved by these guidelines is to preserve the historical and traditional nature of the structures in the corridor. As a result the maintenance of the present facades will be a key element to be considered in ay application.

It is recognized that the abandonment of large homes is not productive and would constitute a threat to the tax base of the Town. Further the demolition of attractive older homes opens the door to the prospect of construction which might be incompatible to those remaining. An applicant may, by economic necessity, wish to expand a current building to provide more adequately for a proposed use. Paramount in the consideration of any expansion or alteration shall be the architectural "fit" of any proposal.

4) BUFFERING: It will be the intent of these guidelines that any parking areas required in the corridor be sufficiently buffered by mature trees and that the properties by landscaped to prevent intrusion upon neighboring properties. Intrusion will not be limited to physical encroachment but will include both the visual effect and the impact of any sounds and smells which may be a part of any proposal.

5) INTENSITY OF USE: Consistent with all of the foregoing, it shall be the intent of these guidelines to restrict the size of any proposed use within reasonable limits. It is realized that separate parts often increase the whole beyond that which is desirable. In considering any project, then, it will be the obligation of the applicant and the corresponding duty of the Town to review each proposal in the context of its impact upon the entire corridor.

617.21
Appendix F
State Environmental Quality Review
NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Notice of Determination of Non-Significance

Project Number _____

Date 11/16/93

This notice is issued pursuant to Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation Law.

The Town of Manlius Town Board, as lead agency, has determined that the proposed action described below will not have a significant effect on the environment and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Name of Action:

Genesee Street Corridor Study

SEQR Status: Type I
Unlisted

Conditioned Negative Declaration: Yes
 No

Description of Action:

Study on the changing character of the Genesee Street Corridor which extends from the Town Line in the west, near Onondaga Golf and Country Club, to Burdick Street. The area is slightly less than one mile in length.
(Study enclosed)

Location: (Include street address and the name of the municipality/county. A location map of appropriate scale is also recommended.)

Genesee Street, Town of Manlius
Onondaga County

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

(See 617.6[g] for requirements of this determination; see 617.6[h] for Conditioned Negative Declaration)

If Conditioned Negative Declaration, provide on attachment the specific mitigation measures imposed.

For Further Information:

Contact Person: Gloria C. Miller, Town Clerk

Address: 301 Brooklea Drive
PO Box 9
Fayetteville, NY 13066

Telephone Number: 315-637-3521

For Type I Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a Copy of this Notice Sent to:

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation, 50 Wolf Rd., Albany, NY 12233-0001

Appropriate Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Conservation

Office of the Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located.

Applicant (if any)

Other involved agencies (if any)