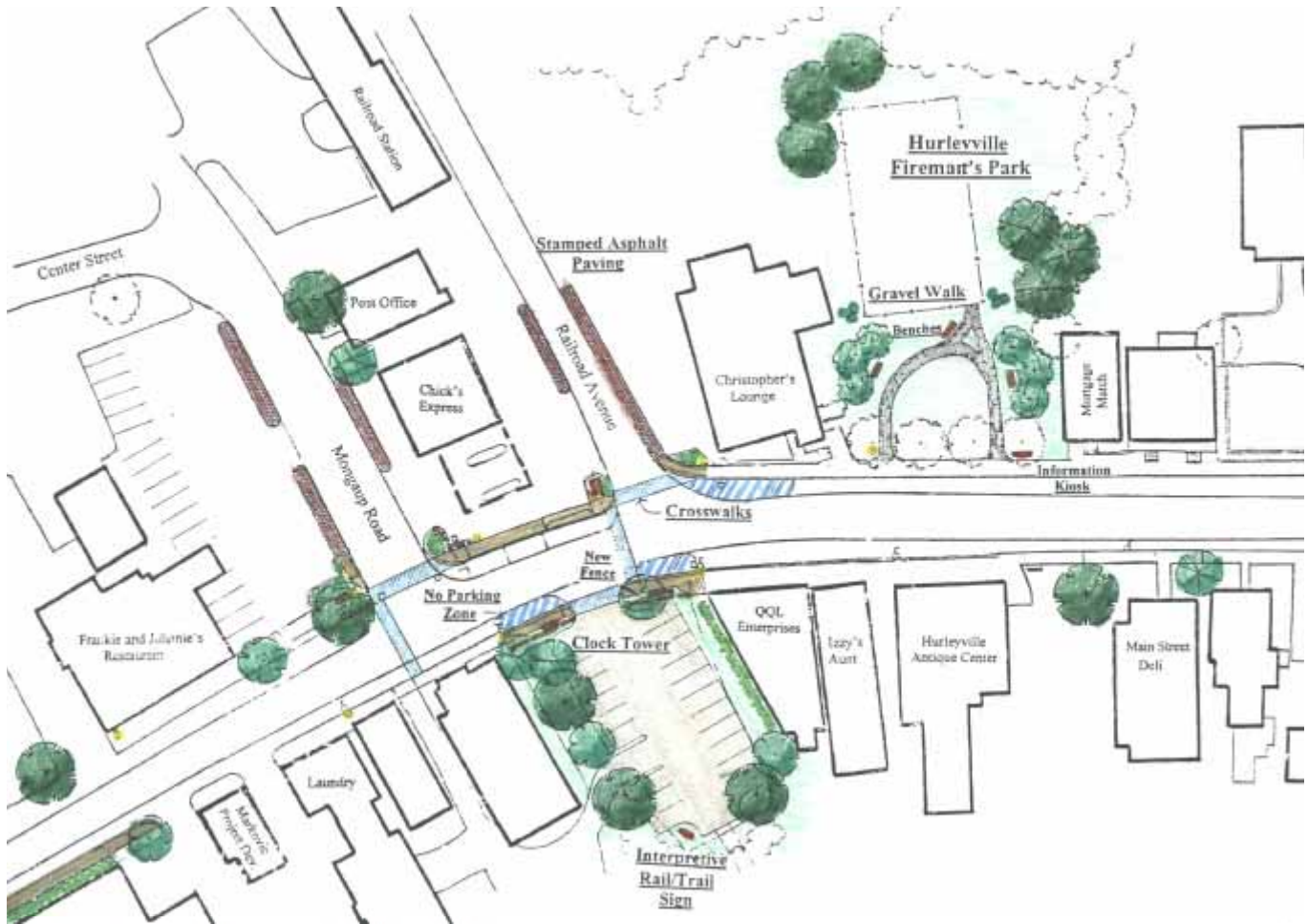


HURLEYVILLE

Downtown Revitalization Strategy



Prepared by:

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In cooperation with:

Sullivan Renaissance

Sullivan County Division of Planning & Community Development

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INTRODUCTION

EARLY IN 2004, a volunteer-based beautification group in the Fallsburg hamlet of Hurleyville approached **The Catskill Center for Conservation and Development** for assistance with their downtown revitalization efforts.



Hurleyville Sullivan First, formally established in 1997 as a local chapter of the “Sullivan First” program, has been engaging in a wide variety of community beautification initiatives for several years. Those included installing new welcome signs, planting flower barrels along Main Street, and organizing litter plucks, among other things. In an effort to take their beautification efforts to the next level and begin thinking about long-term revitalization of the downtown business district, they enlisted the help of The Catskill Center, a regionally-based non-profit organization with expertise in land planning and community development issues.

With help from The Catskill Center, the Town of Fallsburg applied for and was awarded a technical assistance grant from the New York State Council on the Arts through its Architecture, Planning and Design program. This enabled Hurleyville to retain the services of a landscape architect to prepare a **streetscape design plan** for the downtown.

In August 2004, a “design charrette” and walk through of the downtown was organized with the goal of soliciting input from key stakeholders in the community, as well as the general public, with regard to what types of improvements they would like to see take place in Hurleyville. The goal was to focus on the physical appearance of Main Street and to make recommendations about proposed streetscape elements like sidewalks, curbing, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, etc. that would enhance both the appearance and functionality of the downtown.



Over the next six months, the draft streetscape design plan was formulated and revised. Shortly thereafter, the Gerry Foundation began soliciting applications for the latest round of its **Sullivan Renaissance** community beautification program. The new expanded program would include a focus on helping communities develop long-range plans for their beautification and community development activities.

Through this program, four communities — including Hurleyville -- were selected to receive not only financial support, but also technical planning assistance and help developing a professional rendering. Each community had access to a team of professional planners from The Catskill Center and the **Sullivan County Division of Planning and Community Development** who would help them develop a long range community development plan.

The first step in developing such a plan involved organizing and facilitating a “community visioning workshop” designed to help each community take stock of where it stands today, and to develop a vision for where it wants to go in the future. This document summarizes the results of both the design charrette and the community visioning workshop, and outlines Hurleyville’s downtown revitalization strategy.

Vision means not only seeing things as they are, but as they will be...

Description of the Study Area

For purposes of the streetscape design plan, the study area was defined as an area encompassing much of Hurleyville’s downtown business district beginning at the intersection of Main Street and Waldorf Avenue to the south and continuing north to the intersection with Little Pond Road (see diagram below). It is important to note that the information and ideas generated during the community visioning workshop were primarily directed at the downtown business district, but also related to the community as a whole.



DESIGN CHARRETTE

On the evening of **August 26, 2004** a “design charrette” was organized as a basis for the recommended improvements that would eventually be incorporated into Hurleyville’s streetscape design plan. A charrette is an intensive design workshop that involves the collaboration of many stakeholders at the beginning of a project to develop a comprehensive plan or design. It is usually run by a planner, landscape architect or other designer. The purpose of a charrette is to solve a design-related problem facing a community or to help a community focus on creating an overall vision for the future. The charrette was facilitated by registered landscape architect **Birgitta Brophy** and was preceded by an optional walking tour of the downtown.



Landscape architect Birgitta Brophy records comments made during the charrette.

Unique Features & Characteristics

The charrette began with a facilitated discussion of Hurleyville’s unique features and characteristics. Among the items discussed were the fact that Hurleyville is unique in that it is one of the few hamlets in the Town of Fallsburg that is predominantly a year-round community. The downtown eateries and having both the Sullivan County Museum and Catskill Art Society in the community were cited as major assets. Participants felt that access to the O&W rail trail from the downtown municipal parking lot was a plus, as well as the fact that the former railroad station is in relatively good condition, although currently underutilized. Hurleyville’s tree lined streets, variety of architectural styles and mixed use character were embraced as characteristics to be preserved and enhanced. Participants talked about the fact that improvements have recently been made to many commercial establishments and homes – a trend they would like to see continued.



The absence of sidewalks, curbing and landscaping at this critical intersection was identified as a major problem area in need of improvement.

Proposed Improvements

The conversation then shifted to a discussion of proposed improvements and enhancements to the downtown business district. The center of the downtown – an area from the corner of Mongaup Road to the corner of Railroad Avenue and the municipal parking lot across the street – quickly emerged as a top priority. Participants spoke about the need to add sidewalks and curbing in this area to establish more of a “sense of place” to the downtown. At the same time, pedestrian safety was a major issue as well in this area, in part due to the lack of sidewalks. Traffic calming techniques, cross-walks, lighting, and landscaping in this area were all mentioned as possible improvements.

Elsewhere in the downtown, participants stated they would like to see more trees, some hanging baskets, pedestrian-scale light fixtures and improved sidewalks continuing beyond the downtown core into the residential areas. Enhancing the park on Main Street in front of the basketball court owned by the Hurleyville Fire District emerged as an idea, as did the concept of creating a senior/community center close to the downtown.

Designing Downtown Projects

The second half of the design charrette involved participants working hands-on to create a design for the downtown business district by locating some of the ideas discussed on a base map of the study area. Participants were given landscape design symbols including trees, ground cover, plantings and pavement patterns to cut out and place on the base map. They were also given markers and a key with symbols for items such as benches, lighting and other amenities. The remainder of the evening was spent creating a rough streetscape design using the materials provided. The landscape architect used that work product, along with her observations and notes from the walking tour earlier in the day to formulate a draft streetscape design plan for Hurleyville (see following page).



Hurleyville residents participated in a design charrette that formed the basis for the streetscape design plan.

COMMUNITY VISION

Sponsored by Hurleyville Sullivan First and the Town of Fallsburg, the community visioning workshop involved direct participation of residents, business owners and community leaders from throughout the hamlet and was held on **Thursday, June 9, 2005**. Through a series of facilitated group exercises, participants were guided through a process that resulted in a list of possible projects that could be implemented at the local level to beautify and revitalize the downtown business district.



This section summarizes the process that was undertaken and describes the results and recommendations that were generated at each step along the way. It is intended to be used not only as a reference and documentation of the visioning workshop itself, but as a starting point for the gradual implementation of various projects designed to revitalize the community.

It is important to note, however, that the project ideas and information generated through this process are dynamic and ever-changing. The visioning process was designed as a starting-point to stimulate thinking about the future and the qualities of the community that should be preserved and/or changed. As conditions change over time, the vision for the future must change as well. Therefore, this information should not be viewed as a static set of guidelines and recommendations, but rather a fluid document that itself will change over time.



THE FIRST STEP IN THE VISIONING PROCESS was an exercise designed to stimulate thinking about what qualities Hurleyville currently possesses that make it a unique and special, and what conditions could be changed to make it better. In all, over two-dozen residents participated in the workshop, where they were asked to state one thing they love about Hurleyville, and one thing they would like to change.

Included in the **Appendix** is a more detailed summary of the results of the visioning exercise.

What is there to love?

Hurleyville residents had similar opinions about what they love about their community. A few central themes seemed to emerge focusing on a few major characteristics that make Hurleyville so special:

Character of Main Street

Many participants spoke of how they enjoyed the ambience of the hamlet, with its old houses and great architecture. Residents also love being able to walk to the rails-to-trails to bird watch in the marshes or to visit one of the great restaurants. Other things mentioned include the quaintness and peacefulness of the area.

Small Town Feel

Residents spoke fondly about the rural nature and history combined with the small town residential feel of the area. They value the fact that Hurleyville is a “real” community reminiscent of “Main Street USA”.

Strong Sense of Community

Another characteristic of Hurleyville is its strong sense of community and its sense of belonging. Residents love the fact that Hurleyville is a tight knit community where everyone knows each other.

What needs to change?

Residents expressed concern over a number of issues and conditions that, if changed, would improve conditions in the Hurleyville. Most of the concerns brought up revolved around things such as the overall appearance, level of business activity, the need for more activities, and safety concerns.

Improved Appearance

Many people cited the need to improve Hurleyville’s overall appearance, and residents would like to see the area cleaned up with more local pride. They also spoke about having too much pavement in areas and the need for more visual continuity and definition in the center of the downtown.

More Economic Activity

Residents also expressed a desire for more economic activity in general, and more local businesses, specifically more boutiques, restaurants and cafes – building on what already exists. Concern was also focused on the size of the commercial zone on Main St. and would like to see expansion occur with a “village-like” feel. With a large new housing development on its way, residents also expressed concern about sprawl.

More Activities

Concern was expressed over the lack of organized activities in the downtown and suggested developing a reading room or other place for kids.

Safety Concerns

A strong concern was expressed about the speed of vehicles while traveling through the downtown. Also, a need for designated “no parking” areas was spoke of along with a very strong desire by many participants for more sidewalks and better signs. It was expressed that without continuous sidewalks, residents are often forced to walk in the street, creating a safety hazard.

Other Concerns

Many residents talked about how the influx of new residents would affect the area and that a program should be organized to welcome new residents to encourage a strong sense of community pride.

Inventorying Assets, Problems and Needs

THE SECOND STEP IN THE VISIONING PROCESS was to have residents conduct an inventory of the community's **assets, problems** and **needs**. This was done in order to identify what available resources in the community could be put to work for a better future, and what problems and/or obstacles exist that need to be overcome. In this way, a list of positives and negatives in the community were created. This list would serve as the basis for generating and evaluating project ideas later in the workshop.

Summarized below is the list of those assets, problems and needs that were identified by participants at the workshop. They represent a static picture of conditions in the community at a given point in time, and are a reflection of the experiences and personal biases of those who participated in the process. These lists should serve as a starting point and basis upon which future project ideas may be evaluated, and should be updated and changed over time.

Community Assets

Natural Assets that exist within this small town consist of Little Pond, the large Maple trees that line Main Street, and also the view of the area one can experience from the top of Columbia Hill as you descend into the downtown.

Historical Assets are plentiful in Hurleyville. Examples include the Sullivan County Museum (which houses the Sullivan County Historical Society and also the Catskill Arts Society), the old Luzon railroad station, the O&W rail-trail that runs through the center of the town, the old buildings and historic architecture, and the old cemetery.

Community Assets which were mentioned include the people of the community and how friendly they are, also the Fire Department, the Center for Discovery Farm, the local restaurants because of their ability to draw people to the community, and the former St. Mary's Catholic church building.

Problems & Needs

Residents of Hurleyville recognized that problems and needs existed on multiple fronts. Residents talked about ATV use on the rail trail and the fact that the trail needs some work in spots. The lack of parking at the museum was cited as a problem, as was the fact that St. Mary's is closed and underutilized.



Residents also spoke about the need for more and better sidewalks, and streetscape improvements such as lights, benches and crosswalks. Finally, several participants said they would like to see more year-round businesses to keep people coming to the community, as well as a greater police presence.

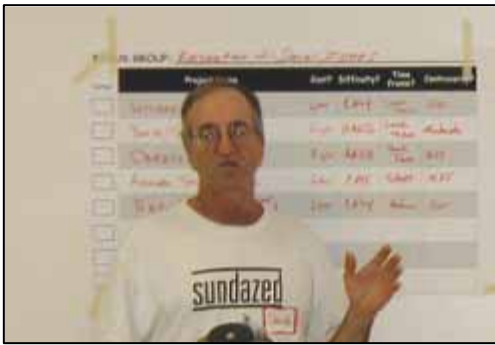
Generating Project Ideas

THE FINAL STEP IN THE WORKSHOP was to review the lists of assets, problems and needs generated in the previous step, and begin to develop specific **project ideas**. Ideas for projects were generated by using the community inventory as a basis for determining how Hurleyville’s existing assets and resources could be used to address some of the problems and needs of the community.

During the last hour of the workshop, participants were asked to undertake a creative thinking exercise within **focus groups** to come up with ideas for projects that could be implemented locally. The groups were divided into the following subject areas:

- ❖ **Community Appearance & Aesthetics**
- ❖ **Business Development and Tourism**
- ❖ **Recreation and Social Issues**

Project idea worksheets were distributed to members of each focus group. The worksheets contained a series of questions designed to help flesh out ideas in more detail. In addition to a description of the project, participants were asked to determine how long the project would take to implement, whether it was realistic, the relative cost, and whether it would be controversial.



A workshop participant summarizes his group’s projects.

Several project ideas were generated by each focus group, and were designed to address one or more of the identified problems and needs in the corridor. All of the ideas were summarized on large sheets of paper posted on the wall. After each group presented their ideas, all of the participants were given five sticky dots to “vote” on which ideas they liked the best and thought should be implemented right away.

In making their selections, participants were advised to take into consideration things like cost, feasibility, and how long the project would take to implement, in addition to how well it addressed the problems and needs in the community. Ideally, a mixture of short-term and long-term projects, with varying degrees of difficulty would be preferred.

It should be noted that this “voting” process was conducted to provide a framework and starting point for prioritizing projects for implementation. The results of the voting process do not necessarily mean that the projects either will or should be implemented in any particular order.

Likewise, the ideas presented on the following pages are intended to be used as a starting point for implementation. As additional project ideas are generated beyond the initial visioning process, they should be evaluated based on whether or not they address any of the problems or needs already identified. This list may then be updated as the need arises.

HURLEYVILLE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
New Business Recruitment	The recruitment would be aimed towards year-round business. Possible a bakery, a grocery store (like Peck's) and a bank	High	Hard	Long	Moderately	4
Sidewalks	Sidewalks should be placed from the bottom of Columbia Hill all the way through town to the blinking light at Mitteer Rd. to promote a more walkable community and help local businesses. More maintenance, especially during the winter is required.	High	Medium	Long	Moderately	7
Advertise Main St.	This project would advertise Main St. "on the road", outside of Sullivan County, to show other communities the culture and history of the town and also to promote little known local attractions (like bird watching)	Low	Medium	Short	None	2
Rail Trail Promotion	This project would advertise the hiking trail through a brochure and/or online resources. The promotion would enable more organized events, make use of a log book, and to establish restrictions (ATV and vehicular restrictions specifically).	Medium	Easy	Short	None	7
Spring/Fall Main St. Events	This project consists of organized annual community events, such as: Street Fairs, Wine tasting, foreign/cultural events, and parades. Also to decorate the town for the holidays.	High	Hard	Medium	Moderately	4
Speed Enforcement	This involves conversing with local police agencies to set up more frequent and more productive speed traps. Also place mobile radar detection stations to inform drivers of their speed.	Medium	Hard	Short	Moderately	4

RECREATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
Welcome Wagon	This project consists of a mobile welcome committee who could give out samples from local businesses, coupons, information, maps, phone numbers (directory of services). Project could be online as well.	Low	Easy	Short	Not	5
Youth/Senior Center	This project would make use of an unused building in town to create a place for seniors during the day, kids during the evening, also for clubs (boy/girl scouts, 4H). It could provide a place for exercise classes, cooking classes, book clubs, quilting, and scrap booking	Hard	Hard	Long	Moderately	8
Daycare Center	This project would provide a service in town for new and current families. The project would create foot traffic in town and help local businesses.	High	Hard	Short	Not	1
Annual Street Fair	This project would give people a reason to come to Hurleyville and help with promotion and marketing. In planning for such an event, resources would be identified along with volunteers for future events.	Low	Easy	Short	Not	3
Rail Trail Development	This project would make the existing trail more user friendly. We could develop an “adopt a trail” theme where local businesses or individuals help to maintain sections, offer horse/ carriage rides, encourage more bird watching, and hikes. Special events like a benefit walk or even a walking club are possible.	Low	Easy	Medium	Not	2

HURLEYVILLE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE & AESTHETICS

Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
New Sidewalks	This project would entail building/continuing the sidewalks throughout the downtown. New sidewalks would be placed in front of Chicks to protect pedestrians.	High	Medium	Medium	No	8
Hurleyville PO Exterior Improvements	This project would try to make the post office building more attractive, possibly with a mural on one of the sidewalks and/or a new façade.	Medium	Medium	Medium	No	1
Beautification and Recognition and Awards	This project would create an incentive for residents to spruce up their homes/businesses and also provide an award (\$1,000 grand prize) and recognition for those who go above and beyond.	Low	Easy	Medium	No	3
Garden Tour Fundraiser	This project would provide more incentive for beautification and could be a fundraiser. It would entail signing up gardeners, creating a map to sell/give out, setting a date, and tying in with the church flea market or other event so patrons could vote for the best gardens.	Low	Easy	Short	No	6
Fishing Access and Picnic Area	This project would develop a small picnic area at the bottom of Columbia Hill for anglers and residents to park and make use of the pond(s). Someone would have to check on ownership of the land.	Medium	Easy	Short	No	2
Dress up Museum	This project installing signs (“History” and “Art”) on 2 sealed up windows at the museum, and a 2-sided banner that could be displayed on a utility pole. Also bench(s) and railroad ties for decorative purposes and plantings.	Low	Easy	Short	No	6
Parking Lot Improvements	This project consists of cleaning up and repaving the entire parking lot, along with striping lines and planting trees/shrubs/flowers.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderately	2

REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

THE IDEAS AND INFORMATION generated during both the design charrette and the visioning workshop form the basis for a long-range plan designed to revitalize Hurleyville and improve quality of life in the community. This plan provides an outline of specific projects and initiatives that could reasonably be undertaken over the next several years to achieve some of the community development goals expressed by the public during the planning process.

Goals and Objectives

Based on input from the public, several overall objectives have emerged that can serve as the foundation upon which a few motivated individuals can change their community for the better. They are the overall goals that the community is trying to achieve through its revitalization efforts, and can serve as a guide in determining what specific projects the community chooses to tackle over the next few years:

- 1 Enhance the quality of life of our residents by improving local economic and social conditions;
- 2 Enhance the appearance and functionality of the community and the downtown business district;
- 3 Market existing businesses and strategically recruit new businesses to Hurleyville;
- 4 Promote the arts, and interpret or preserve local history in and around our community;
- 5 Maintain and/or develop new recreational and community facilities;

**Never doubt that
a small group of
thoughtful
committed
citizens can
change the
world...
Indeed, it is the
only thing that
ever has.**

- Margaret Mead

On the following pages is a year by year description of proposed activities and priorities that, if implemented, will gradually help improve quality of life in Hurleyville. It is the information and tools with which a few motivated individuals can change the community in which they live for the better. The information itself is meaningless. The real power to effectuate change lies in the hands of the people who call Hurleyville home and are committed to making a difference in shaping its future. For only by working together, will residents be able to see their preferred vision for their community become a reality.

2005

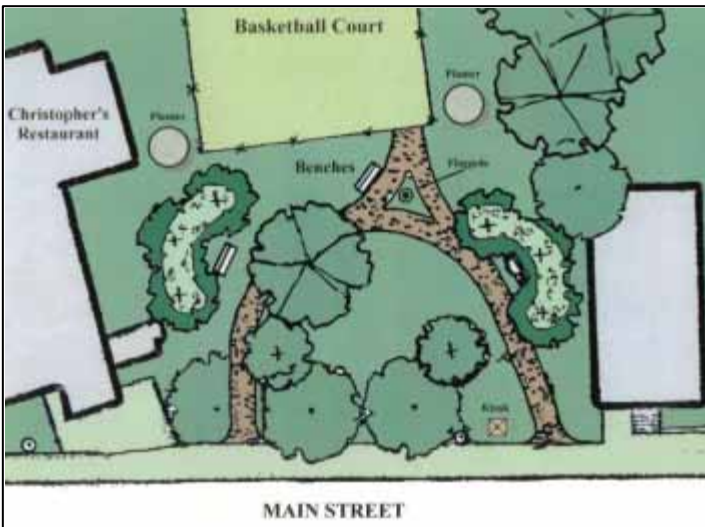
<p>Primary Project: Hurleyville Fireman's Park ❖ Walking paths ❖ Lighting ❖ Landscaping History Kiosk Boulevard Banners Adopt-a-Barrel</p>	<p>Secondary Activities: Begin formation of non-profit Develop fundraising plan/ideas Develop proposal for St. Mary's Organize Fall event Secure sidewalk funding Sign project at Musuem</p>	<p>Funding Sources: Sullivan Renaissance The Catskill Center (Main Street Micro-Grant) Hurleyville Fire Dept. SYDA Foundation Local contributions</p>
<p>Goals: 1 2 4</p>	<p>Goals: 4 5</p>	<p>Cost: \$15,000 - \$20,000</p>

Existing Conditions:



Creating an attractive pocket park from this property on Main Street was identified as a potential project in the streetscape design plan. Its location next to a popular local restaurant makes it ideal for a passive park. Currently, the site contains a basketball court that is maintained by the Town of Fallsburg, but has little else in the way of amenities.

Proposed Improvements:



The landscape architect has proposed creating a park in front of the basketball court, including a horseshoe-shaped walking path that would connect the basketball court to Main Street. Kidney-shaped planting beds and benches would beautify the area and provide seating. Large planters are proposed for either side of the court to block ATV access through the park, and a kiosk highlighting Hurleyville's history would be located close to the sidewalk for passers-by.

2006

<p>Primary Project: West-Side Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sidewalks & curbing at Chick’s ❖ Planters & curbing at corners ❖ Period lighting ❖ Crosswalks 	<p>Secondary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate non-profit Apply for 501(c)(3) status Secure ownership of St. Mary’s Apply for façade grant(s) Initiate “welcome wagon” project Initiate joint marketing of O&W rail trail (brochure/rack card) Organize Spring Garden Tour 	<p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sullivan Renaissance The Catskill Center Bonacic Member Item (DOT Multi-Modal Grant) NY Main Street Grant (DHCR) Historic Preservation Grant SYDA Foundation Local contributions
<p>Goals: 1 2</p>	<p>Goals: 2 4 5</p>	<p>Cost: \$30,000 - \$40,000</p>

Existing Conditions:



The absence of sidewalks and curbing on the west side of Main Street is not only unattractive, but creates a safety hazard for both pedestrians and drivers. Addressing these issues would make the area safer and also create more of a “sense of place” in the heart of the downtown.

Proposed Improvements:



The rendering at left shows what this area could look like with the addition of a sidewalk in front of the gas station, and providing stone planters with period lighting at the four corners. These proposed improvements not only improve the appearance of this critical intersection, but its functionality as well.

2007

<p>Primary Project: East-Side Parking Lot ❖ Continue sidewalks ❖ Pave/stripe parking lot ❖ Add stone planters ❖ Period lighting ❖ Street clock ❖ Benches ❖ O&W interpretive signage</p>	<p>Secondary Activities: Begin renovation of St. Mary's Initiate "Beautification Recognition Awards" Program Develop Advertising/promotion campaign Assist in restoration of 2 facades Develop fishing access & picnic area at Columbia Hill</p>	<p>Funding Sources: Sullivan Renaissance The Catskill Center NY Main Street Grant (DHCR) Historic Preservation Grant (OPRHP) SYDA Foundation Local contributions</p>
<p>Goals: 1 2 4</p>	<p>Goals: 2 3 4 5</p>	<p>Cost: \$20,000 - \$25,000*</p>

Existing Conditions:



Currently, the municipal parking lot in Hurleyville looks empty and undefined. The existing sidewalks end at the street wall, and there is no interpretive information about the rail trail, except for the trailhead sign.

Proposed Improvements:



Continuing the sidewalks to the parking lot entrance and adding stone planters helps to better define the space. The addition of a street clock, period lighting and benches make the area more inviting. Finally, a kiosk with interpretive information and a map of the rail trail is proposed.

* does not include costs associated with renovation of St. Mary's, which are undetermined at this point.

2008

<p>Primary Project: Hurleyville Community Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Complete restoration ❖ Address heating system ❖ Address water/sewer ❖ Address handicapped access 	<p>Secondary Activities: Assist in restoration of 2 facades Explore expansion of rail-trail</p>	<p>Funding Sources: Sullivan Renaissance The Catskill Center NY Main Street Grant (DHCR) SYDA Foundation Local contributions</p>
<p>Goals: 1 4 5</p>	<p>Goals: 2 4 5</p>	<p>Cost: To be determined</p>

Existing Conditions:



The former St. Mary's Catholic Church has been owned by Sullivan County since 1990 and is currently boarded up and used primarily for storage. It was identified during the community visioning workshop as an underutilized asset that could become a community center.

Proposed Improvements:



This rendering depicts how the building could look as a community center with handicapped access at the front of the building. A shared parking lot could also be constructed between the building and the adjacent museum, with access from the rear.