

SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

**SCENIC CORRIDOR
VISION STATEMENT
AND
PLAN**

COMMUNITY DESIGN PLAN ELEMENT

MASTER PLAN

January 5, 2006

Revised: January 17, 2006

**Southampton Township Planning Board
And
Environmental Commission**

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INTRODUCTION

What are Scenic Corridors?

Scenic Corridors are major thoroughfares designated by the Township through the Master Plan process. The area designated as a scenic corridor should be developed and redeveloped consistent with the vision statement and plan.

Scenic Corridors visually have the following components:

- Right of Way and Vehicle Travel Lanes
- Scenic Landscape Setback
- Development Edges at Scenic Setback
- Crossings and Intersections

Why does the Township designate Scenic Corridors?

Scenic Corridors are designated to:

- Preserve and encourage the restoration of the natural setting along the thoroughfare
- Provide views of significant landscape features such as agricultural land and associated facilities
- Allow for connectivity in the form of trails/walk system of non-vehicular travel buffered safely from vehicular traffic

Where are the designated Scenic Corridors?

1. Route 206 (from northern Township boundary to southern Township boundary) as shown in Exhibit A.

What are the Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines?

The Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines are a component of the Township Master Plan. The Master Plan is a comprehensive compilation of policies of guidelines used to shape the quality and character of the Township's built and natural environment.

The Scenic Corridor Design Guideline principles represent a design vision articulated through a public process and outline community design expectations and values. The guidelines are policies, standards, details and concepts that are to be used to establish the health, safety, welfare, quality and character of physical improvements along roadways having particular emphasis on retaining the natural environment and cultural heritage of the area.



Who should use the Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines?

The Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines provide an outline of the Township's design expectations for all designated Scenic Corridors and are intended to be used by all participants in the development process including citizens, policy makers, design professionals, developers, and county, regional and state agencies.

VISION STATEMENT

Southampton Township citizens value the rural character and natural setting along the designated scenic corridors. There is a general understanding that these areas should be preserved, developed and redeveloped in a manner consistent with the general policies and goals.

The Route 206 scenic corridor will continue to be the main thoroughfare in Southampton Township, which accommodates local and regional, private and commercial traffic. Traffic volumes will increase which necessitates major roadway and intersection improvements. The rural and natural character of Route 206 should be protected and enhanced. Open space and farmlands should be preserved. Residential and commercial development will be buffered with native plant material and other appropriate screening. Materials and items that detract from the rural nature and scenic qualities will be prohibited.



Recognizing the value of community character, the Township is devoted to protecting the valued resource of natural linear open space from rapidly approaching development. A portion of the Route 206 Scenic Corridor in Southampton Township is located in Planning Area 4 as designated by the State Development and

Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). Southampton Township agrees and adopts the goals and objectives for PA4 districts. The SDRP and community goals include:

- The rural and natural features of the lands on either side of the corridor, including scenic vistas should be protected and enhanced.
- Adequate buffers should be implemented to obscure residential and commercial structures and parking along the corridor.
- New access roads should be permitted only when there are no practicable alternatives.
- When constructing new, expanding existing, and retrofitting roadways designated as Scenic Corridors, design policies and guidelines found in this document should be honored.
- Apply the design policies and guidelines found in this document to public and private development along the edges of the corridor.
- Educate citizens, staff, and the policy makers about the goals and benefits of Scenic Corridors in the community.
- Encourage businesses that are supportive of the agriculture.
- Ensure that development does not exceed the carrying capacity of the land.
- Provide for passage of farm equipment.
- Encourage tourism related to agriculture and the environment.
- Support recreational and natural resource based activities.

- Encourage historical preservation and related tourism

SCENIC CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

The Route 206 Corridor displays two distinctly different types of landscape or design characters. Some areas are suitable for a preservation approach while others have been compromised. The first character is described as a Preservable/Rural/Low Density district, while the second is described in terms of a Comprised/High Activity/Commercial district. Each is discussed in more detail below and depicted on Exhibit A.

The first character type, Preservable/Rural/Low Density District, can be identified as areas defined by the presence of natural vegetation, rural open areas, agriculture uses, low intensity development. These areas contain open agricultural farm fields that supply long views. The Preservable/Rural/Low Density area also contains significant vegetation, which contributes to a valuable roadside buffer. Important rural features, which define the community, including but not limited to agricultural buildings, municipal building and facilities, water tower and farmstands are present in this character type. The Preservable/Rural/Low Density are visual assets and require protection and preservation of the existing natural and manmade features and resources.



The other character type, described as Comprised/High activity/Commercial district includes places that have been compromised to the point where there is little to preserve and renovation of the roadside buffer is recommended to buffer existing commercial, industrial activities and buildings and associated parking facilities, signs, intense lighting and excessive asphalt paving. The areas identified as Comprised/High Activity/Commercial are to be avoided in the future and corrected in a manner consistent with the design guidelines.



Although the different intensities of land use require different strategies to achieve similar aesthetic character, general design guidelines should apply to the entire corridor.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

General Design Guidelines

The principle idea driving the general design guidelines is to achieve minimum visual impact of the built environment on the existing rural character. The principles are based on the overall belief that development

should respect and enhance the unique rural character, vegetation, topography and the historical and cultural context of Southampton Township, all of which are considered amenities that help sustain the community and the quality of life.

- The general guideline for the areas identified as Preservable/Rural/Low Density should be preservation or reestablishment of the natural organic setting.
- The general guideline for the areas identified as Compromised/High Activity/Commercial should require the revegetation of native plant materials, reshaping of topography, and implementing more organized, structured qualities of improvements.

Specific Design Guidelines

The components of the Route 206 Scenic Corridor are divided into the following categories:

- Right of Way
- Landscape Setback
- Development Edges at Scenic Setback

Right-of-Way

The elements of this component include:

- R.O.W. width and access
- Landscaped median
- Vehicular travel lanes
- Farm lanes
- Edge Landscaping

- Trails
- Drainage

The Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines are intended to enhance the aesthetical qualities of the right of way component of the corridor.

- *Right-of-Way width and access:* The overall width of the planned ultimate right of way for the Route 206 Scenic Corridor should be a minimum of 150' or a minimum of 75' each side of the centerline.
- *Access onto Right-of-Way:* Access should be limited to the extent possible. The ideal points of access should occur at half mile and quarter mile intervals.
- *Median:* There should be a raised median of a minimum 24' (where feasible) in width (measured from inside face of curb to inside face of curb). The median should be landscaped with native material.
- *Vehicular Travel Lanes:* The ultimate planned section of the travel lane should contain a minimum of two travel lanes in each direction.
- *Farm Lanes:* Farm lanes should be provided at the outer pavement edge for each direction of travel. A minimum width of 12' should be provided (where possible). In lieu of a separate travel lane, periodic turn off stations should be provided

within the right-of-way boundary or scenic landscape setback area.



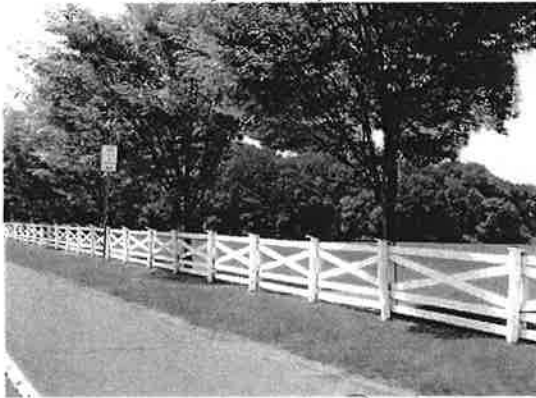
- ***Pavement edge and clear zone:*** A clear recovery zone should be provided with a minimum width of 10 feet. The edge treatment should be landscaped with low groundcover native material and should not contain objects of more than 4" in diameter including but not limited to trees, boulders, utility poles, etc.
- ***Trail:*** A walk/multi-use path should be separated from the vehicular travel lanes by a landscape buffer of at least 10 feet in width. The trail should be 8-10 feet in width and should be composed of crushed stone or asphalt material.
- ***Utilities:*** All new utilities, with the exception of streetlight poles and street traffic signal poles, should be located underground. All existing utilities currently located above ground should be planned to move underground at the next period of upgrade. All utility cabinets, bollards, poles, power pedestals, valves, vaults or other exposed apparatus should

be screened by landscape or other similar method.

- ***Streetlights:*** The number of streetlights should be kept to a minimum. The dark skies are valued and all attempts should be made to limit the compromises of this character. The location of streetlights should focus on the intersections of scenic corridors and minor collector streets or greater capacity designated streets. All streetlights should be full cutoff shielded.
- ***Signs:*** Only transportation signage, scenic corridor markers, adopt-a-road markers, municipal entry markers, and safety related signage should be allowed in the right of way.
- ***Right-of-Way Landscape:*** The medians should contain native plant material including groundcover, perennials, grasses, shrubs, ornamental trees, evergreen trees and shade trees matching the surrounding native landscape. The clear zone planting should include native shrubs and groundcovers at densities that match the surrounding rural environment.



- **Drainage:** Stormwater runoff improvements should be concentrated in the shoulder and median areas within the right-of-way. Infiltration should be the focus of the methods employed.
- **Other Design Elements:** All other elements found in the right-of-way should be constructed from materials found in or made from the surrounding landscape or interpret such materials in form, texture, and color.



SCENIC SETBACK GUIDELINES

Scenic Landscape Setback

The scenic landscape setback is void of buildings and other development related improvements. Exceptions of improvements that may be located in this area should be limited to those that are required for regional drainage, general public health and safety, and pedestrian/equestrian/no-vehicular travel.

The future design of the Route 206 corridor should be based on a Parkway design concept. Parkways are generally defined as high-volume, high-capacity facilities that provide for regional mobility and local traffic movements. Direct access should be limited. Parkways have scenic easements that give the added attraction of native

landscaping, trails and cultural signs. The scenic easements are located outside of the defined right-of-way. Although there are some exceptions, the minimum width of the scenic landscape setback easement for all scenic corridors should be 200 feet from the outside edge of the right-of-way on each side of street. It is also an objective of the design guidelines to encourage and provide for safe and comfortable locations for connectivity of trails with other means of pedestrian, equestrian and non-motorized vehicular travel within the scenic landscape setback.

In addition to the expanded scenic landscape setback easement, the method of constructing scenic corridors should differ from standard streets. The outer most lanes of a scenic corridor should be constructed first leaving an oversized median until (or if) additional lanes are required.

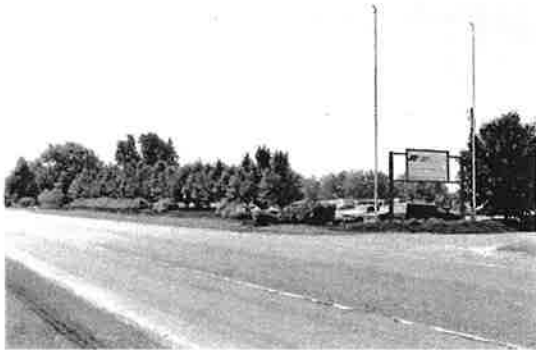
Preservable/Rural Landscape Character Districts:

The natural landscape and landform should be preserved within the scenic landscape setback. Where natural features must be disturbed or recreated, the design principles should be followed. All participants of the development process should focus on the main goal of minimizing the visual impact of development on the natural rural character of the environment. Revegetation should mimic the local surrounding area and should be of native plant material. A combination of young and mature plant material should be used to help blend with the existing surrounding vegetation.

Compromised/High-Activity/Commercial Landscape Character:

Generally these areas either have been or will be disturbed past the point of reasonable preservation. For this reason it is anticipated that the landscape character will need to be re-created.

Because the land use densities adjacent to these districts will be much more intense and of a different nature than those in the Preservable/Rural districts, a slightly different design approach may be used for the landscape setback. The landscape designer may chose to implement the design principles from the Preservable/Rural district. In the alternative the native plant material may be grouped and arranged to create interesting patterns, textures, and other more structured design forms.



Development Edges at Scenic Setbacks

The development edge at the scenic setback should be treated as a transitional zone in a design sense. This zone becomes the background to the scenic setback when viewed from the road.

Wherever possible preserved open space and farmland should be connected visually to the

Scenic Landscape Setback to expand and increase the value of the meaningful open space of the area.

Edge Development Forms should be low and built into the natural topography. Rigid long straight forms parallel to the right-of-way are discouraged. Horizontal and vertical movement of the forms along this development edge is encouraged to strengthen and focus the design emphasis on the natural rural features than on the man made improvements.



Closing Statement

The contents of this document provide a guide to retain what is left and to re-establish what has been lost of the Township's scenic corridors. This document provides our policy makers and citizens with a tool to carry out the goals of keeping the scenic corridors a part of Southampton Township's admirable rural character.

Southampton Township
Scenic Corridor Overlay Zoning District

An ordinance amending and supplementing Chapter 12 of the Southampton Township Code by the Addition of Section 3.14 entitled “Scenic Corridor Overlay District”.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Southampton Township Committee that Chapter 12 of the Southampton Township Code is hereby amended and supplemented by the addition of Section 3.14 entitled “ Scenic Corridor Overlay District”, more specifically set forth as follows:

Scenic Corridor Overlay District

The following provisions shall be known and may be cited as “Scenic Corridor Overlay”;

I. General

A. Short Title

This section shall be known and may be cited as “Scenic Corridor”.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this Ordinance is to further the public health, safety, morals and general welfare and provide:

1. Protection of the valued resource of natural linear open space;
2. Preservation of scenic vistas;
3. Adequate buffers to obscure residential and commercial structures and parking adjacent to corridor;
4. Limited vehicular access points to corridor;
5. Encouragement for business that is supportive of agricultural activities;
6. Passage of farm equipment;
7. Protection of environmentally sensitive lands along the corridor;
8. Provide linear aquifer recharge areas along the corridor; and
9. Maintain and enhance the rural character.

II. Eligibility

The Scenic Corridor Overlay Zoning District will be applicable to all areas in Southampton Township designated as scenic corridors as identified in the “Scenic Corridor Vision Statement and Plan” found in the Township Master Plan as a Community Design Element Plan” dated ?, and as delineated by the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zoning District Map dated ?, which is incorporated herein. The standards provided within the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zoning District shall be considered more restrictive than the underlying zone, as applicable. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is in conflict with any other section, subsection, sentence,

clause, phrase or portion of the Southampton Township Code, this ordinance shall take precedence.

III. Development Standards

- A. **Intent.** The object of the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone is to establish, protect and preserve areas of natural vegetation and areas of scenic vistas along each side of a designated roadway. All development within the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone shall meet the following standards in addition to those required for the applicable underlying zone district:
- B. **Area regulations for Permitted Uses:**
1. **Scenic Setback:** The scenic corridor setback shall be measured from the ultimate right-of-way line of the designated scenic roadway. No buildings, structures, parking facilities or other development shall be allowed within the setback area, which shall equal 200 feet from the ultimate right-of-way line, except for the following:
 - a. Sidewalks
 - b. Bike Paths
 - c. Pedestrian trails
 - d. Landscaping
 - e. Underground utilities
 - f. Driveway access
 - g. Ground mounted lighting
 2. **Scenic Landscape Buffer:**
 - a. A planted scenic corridor buffer area shall be provided within 100 feet nearest to the right-of-way line. Existing vegetation is to be preserved and maintained in its natural state in areas designated as “Preservable/Rural Landscape” depicted on the Scenic Corridor Map. Exceptions shall be permitted for existing agricultural lands or scenic vistas, which shall generally not be required to provide additional landscape materials. Supplemental landscaping shall be required as determined by the reviewing board. Revegetation shall mimic the local surrounding areas and should be of native plant material. A combination of young and mature plant material shall be used.
 - b. For areas designated as “Compromised/High-Activity/Commercial Landscape” on the Scenic Corridor Map shall be required to provide adequate

buffer plantings and screenings in accordance with Section 12-5.2. Exceptions shall be permitted for existing agricultural lands or scenic vistas, which shall generally not be required to provide additional landscape materials.

3. Scenic Corridor Design Regulations:
 - a. No more than one driveway cut shall be permitted per lot.
 - b. Utility installations must minimize visual impact within the scenic corridors. All new utilities shall be located underground.
4. Exceptions: Buildings located within the 200 foot Scenic Corridor, existing on the effective date of this article, may be enlarged and/or renovated provided the building addition is located beyond the existing front façade of the existing building and within the required setbacks. Stormwater management facilities may be located within the 200 foot setback area but not within the 100 feet nearest the right-of-way.