

East Hampton Hamlet Studies FAQ's

1. What is the Hamlet study?

The Hamlet Study is an intensive evaluation of the unique issues affecting East Hampton Town's major commercial centers. Individual reports for each of the Town's five hamlets have been prepared for Amagansett, East Hampton, Montauk, Springs and Wainscott.

An evaluation of the business economy of the entire town has been synthesized into a companion report called the Hamlet Business District Plan.

The hamlet reports focus on the commercial areas but also provide an inventory and analysis of the entire hamlet with regard to historic and cultural resources, demographics, natural resources, environmental challenges, zoning, land use, economics, residential and commercial buildout, transportation and infrastructure. The hamlet reports provide general objectives and illustrative master plans depicting one potential way that the commercial business areas could be redeveloped over the coming decades, but they are not the only possible results of changes the Town may decide to make in terms of planning policy or regulation. The purpose of the Hamlet Study is not to require a particular use or arrangement of uses on a particular property. Rather, the Plans are meant to explore and illustrate fundamental planning and design principles that can be applied to protect and enhance the Town's major commercial centers into a more cohesive, attractive, functional and economically viable community.

2. How were the Hamlet Plans developed?

The 2005 Town of East Hampton Comprehensive Plan recommended the preparation of more detailed studies to better understand and address the potential changes and challenges facing the Town's business areas. Following up on this recommendation, the Town Board commissioned the preparation of hamlet and business reports by the consulting team led by Dodson & Flinker, together with subcontractors L.K. McLean Associates P.C., Fine Arts & Sciences LLC, and RKG Associates. The development of the plans was a collaborative process with the Town Planning Department, Town Board and the community.

Kick-off meetings for each of the hamlets were conducted in March 2016. Two-day long public workshops called charrettes were conducted in Wainscott, Springs, East Hampton, and Amagansett during the months of May and June. Rather than continue the process into the busy summer season and the September 6 Labor Day Holiday, the Montauk charrettes were conducted between September 14 and 17. Four days were devoted to Montauk due to the large area and amount of business development. The public

workshops included walking tours, visioning sessions, presentations, focus group meetings, modeling sessions and additional opportunities for the public and business owners to meet with the consulting team and Town officials.

In June 2017, draft hamlet reports were presented in several locations in East Hampton, including Montauk. These presentations were televised and posted on the Town website along with the draft reports. The Town Board solicited comments on the draft report through the end of the 2017. The Citizen Advisory Committees from every hamlet submitted extensive written comments as did members of the public, business owners and other stakeholders. The reports were revised and included summaries of the submitted comments as appendices. These revised reports were presented to the Town Board, televised and recorded, and posted on the Town website in February 2018. The Town Board solicited comments on the revised reports and discussed the comments during Town Board work sessions in May and again in August 2018. Five public hearings were conducted between October 4 and December 6, 2018 to solicit public opinion on whether to adopt the Hamlet Plans as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The hearing record was kept open for written comments after the close of the December 6 public hearing or until January 6, 2019.

3. What are the next steps for the Hamlet Plans?

The Town Board is scheduled to discuss the public comments on Hamlet Plans during their February 19, 2019 meeting. During this meeting, the Town Board will decide whether to adopt, modify, or postpone acting on one or all of the Hamlet Plans. Before any plans are adopted, a SEQRA review, i.e. the review required by the State Environmental Quality Review Act, will be conducted and a referral to the Suffolk County Planning Commission will be made.

4. What will it mean if the Hamlet Plan for my community is adopted? Will it mandate what a property owner can do with their land or business in the future?

The Hamlet Plans are aspirational guides for future development but the Plans themselves do not change zoning or carry the mandate of law. In other words, if the Plans are adopted, they will not mandate what any particular property owner or business can do with their property in the future.

Before recommendations or concepts put forward in the Plan are implemented, the Town will solicit additional public input in the form of public hearings, public meetings, citizen advisory committee meetings or other methods. Each Hamlet will move forward separately at their own pace and each area of concern may have its own process for further development. For example, in Montauk, there may be separate committees assigned to further develop and refine the recommendations for transportation housing,

seasonal workforce housing, streetscape and architectural design, etc. Depending on the topic, the committee would invite participation from the Fire Commissioners, Police Department, Town or Consulting Engineers, Planning Department, CAC members, business owners, property owners, existing subcommittees and others.

5. If the Hamlet Plans are adopted, does that mean that all the projects and recommendations will be adopted?

No, it is highly unlikely that all the projects and recommendations in the Hamlet Plans will be implemented. All of the proposals will be further evaluated. After further evaluation, public input, consultation with involved agencies and others, it is likely that some projects will be implemented, some will be modified, some will be put on hold to be considered at a later date and some will be completely rejected. Planning is a continuous process. Additional or new information and technologies may render some of the recommendations in the Hamlet Plans obsolete, unworkable or undesirable.

6. What's the time frame for implementation?

Adopting the reports as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan is not the same thing as implementation. Implementation of the recommendations and concepts put forth in the reports is not proposed at this time. After one or more of the Hamlet Plans are adopted, implementation for each project discussed in the Plans will involve separate, additional meetings, evaluation, hearings and further evaluation.

7. I didn't know about the study, the public meetings, the public hearings, the discussions at the CAC's or anything else about the plans until very recently. Can I still have input?

Yes, the Town Board is pleased that the plans have generated additional public interest and welcomes continued participation from all residents and members of the business community. Adoption of the Plans into the Comprehensive Plan is just a first step. Further refining, revising and developing the concepts put forth in the Plans are the next phase and all public participation is welcome.

8. Some projects listed in the Hamlet Plans, such as the new crosswalks in downtown Montauk, have already been implemented. That action contradicts what you said-that implementation of the Hamlet Plans was not going to happen without further public input.

Certain projects, such as the crosswalks in downtown Montauk and Amagansett were funded as part of a state grant program separate from the Hamlet Study preparation. The proposed crosswalks were reviewed during multiple public meetings and by CACs in a process independent from the Hamlet Study review. To reflect existing and proposed conditions affecting pedestrian circulation, the crosswalk projects were included in the

Hamlet Plans, but, as stated, the projects had a separate review process. Other projects which began before or during the Hamlet Study began 3 years ago may also move forward on a parallel track. Some of the major studies and projects already under review include: the Coastal Assessment and Resiliency Plan (CARP), the Army Corps of Engineers Fire Island to Montauk Reformulation Study (FIMP), the Montauk Beach Re-nourishment Feasibility Study. These in-depth, detailed evaluations of specific topics have been referenced in and will be coordinated with the Hamlet Study.

- 9. Each of the Hamlet Reports include an “Action Plan Matrix” including a timeframe – on-going, short, medium, long- for implementation, which implies that the Town Board has already decided to implement the actions listed in the report. This contradicts the position stated by the Town Board that implementation will not occur until and unless there has been further evaluation, public input and consideration.**

The Hamlet Plans offer an “Action Plan Matrix” as a guide to help the Town Board move forward because not all the recommendations in the report could be implemented immediately even if there was consensus to do so. It is expected that the Town Board will replace the Action Plan Matrix in the reports after priorities are established for each hamlet after further review and consideration with the public.