

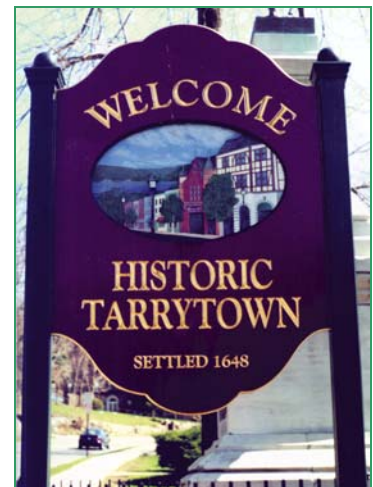
A. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Goal: Enhance the physical and aesthetic appearance of the Town and protect the scenic and historic resources.

1. **Objective:** Maintain and enhance the appearance of the public spaces, roadways, business areas and neighborhoods through tree plantings, flowers, landscaping and other improvements.

Implementation Strategies:

- The Town, local businesses and other interested groups should secure funding for gateway signs and plantings at the key entrances to the Town (including entrances along North State Road, Route 9A, Route 133/Somerstown Road and Route 134/Hawkes Avenue) to define the Unincorporated Area of Ossining and create a positive image of the community. *(Refer to photo examples)*
- The Town should continue to work with the Historic Rivertowns of Westchester and other communities to install consistent directional and informational signage along NYS Route 9 to help define the historic character and identify various attractions along the corridor.



Examples of attractive gateway signs. *(Left: Monroe, NY; Middle: Claremont, CA; Right: Sleepy Hollow, NY)*

- Local civic groups, businesses and residents should volunteer to help the Town with maintenance and care of the gateway plantings, once installed.
- The Town, Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) and/or other civic groups should establish a Tree Planting Program, coordinated with the Villages of Ossining and Briarcliff Manor, to obtain public and private contributions which would be used to purchase trees, shrubs, plantings and flower boxes/baskets — as well as to coordinate dedications and sponsors (with an appropriately scaled plaque or other marker). This initiative should be coordinated with the implementation strategies on the following page regarding new landscaping and plantings to improve the appearance of public buildings and spaces.

[Note: the Village of Briarcliff Manor has been allocating funds in its annual budget to pay for the purchase and installation of trees in the Village.]



*Attractive site landscaping improves the appearance of properties and often provides shade.
(Refer to other examples in the Environmental Resources chapter.)*



(Top left: Greenwich, CT; Top right: North State Rd, Ossining; Bottom left: Mount Kisco, NY; Bottom right: Bronxville, NY)

2. **Objective:** Encourage property owners to incorporate landscaping into their sites, and maintain the physical condition of their properties.

Implementation Strategies:

- Property owners should improve the physical condition of their buildings, maintain and/or add landscaping which will enhance the visual image of their property and have a positive impact on the surrounding areas.
- The Town Planning Board should continue to work with applicants and property owners to incorporate sufficient landscaping within parking lots and along street frontages and/or property lines to help screen the parking spaces, shade parked vehicles and provide visual relief from the asphalt.
- The Town, EAC and local nurseries should provide information about appropriate types of plantings; organic and non-toxic methods of landscaping; how to protect existing landscaping from inappropriate removal or damage; and on-going maintenance of landscaping which can help guide property owners. This information can be posted on the Town's website and/or included in a Guide or Brochure which local businesses and organizations can help distribute.
- The Town and Village of Ossining should work with the Village of Briarcliff Manor's Beautification Committee (and possibly expand the Committee to an inter-municipal one) to more actively participate in efforts to improve the appearance of public spaces, public buildings and other areas throughout Ossining and Briarcliff Manor. The Beautification Committee can plant flowers and landscaping, and possibly give awards for the "best kept property" to residential and non-residential property owners to acknowledge positive initiatives of property maintenance and encourage pride in the appearance of properties.



Landscaping and beautification efforts on public and private properties contribute to a community's image.

3. **Objective:** Amend local regulations which identify appropriate signage (scale, features and location) for North State Road, other non-residential areas and public properties, as well as lighting for illumination of sidewalks, walkways and pedestrian street crossings, public spaces and buildings throughout the Town.

Implementation Strategies:

- The Town should update the sign regulations with standards for appropriate scale, style, illumination, number and location of permitted signs.
- The Town, Villages of Ossining and Briarcliff Manor, Metro-North Railroad, State and County transportation departments and Historic River Towns of Westchester should coordinate efforts to incorporate directional and other signs for the business districts, train stations, major cultural facilities and other attractions.
- The Town, State and County transportation departments, and local businesses should consolidate freestanding signs, where possible, along North State Road, NYS Route 9A and other streets to refine the visual image for pedestrians and vehicular traffic.



Multiple signs along roadways and commercial sites should be consolidated to improve the overall visual appearance.

4. **Objective:** Review and update local regulations relating to site and building attributes in the Town.

Implementation Strategies:

- The Town Board should expand the duties and responsibilities of the Planning Board to include architectural review of new development or redevelopment of buildings and sites in the Town.
- The Town, with input from interested community members, should prepare **design guidelines** which illustrate various design concepts, define architectural terms, specify dimensions for certain features, and indicate visually what is considered to be compatible and consistent with the buildings, structures, signs and other features in the Town of Ossining. The design guidelines would be adopted by the Town Board and utilized by the Planning Board for their architectural and site plan reviews.



Design guidelines identify appropriate façade treatments, signage, lighting and other attributes which contribute to a community's appearance. (Left: Bronxville, NY; Right: Oyster Bay Hamlet, NY)

- The Town should provide copies of the design guidelines to the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Building Inspector, other boards/committees, property owners and consultants for use in their respective duties and responsibilities.

5. **Objective:** Enforce regulations applicable to the physical appearance and attributes of buildings, sites and roadways in the community.

Implementation Strategies:

- Local merchants and property owners along North State Road and other areas should assist with regular clean-up of their properties to remove trash, graffiti or other items which detract from the appearance and character of the community.
- The Ossining Building Inspector should aggressively enforce, including follow-up inspections for compliance and maintenance, the site plan and architectural review requirements approved by the Planning Board, Town Board and/or other boards.
- The Ossining Building Inspector should enforce the Town's site plan requirements, along with other provisions of the Zoning Code, to ensure compliance and maintenance of buildings, parking lots and other site features, buffers and viewsheds. Enforcement should be done on a regular basis to retain and enhance the visual appearance of the roadways and developed properties throughout Ossining.
- The Ossining Building Inspector's enforcement of site plan landscaping requirements and the Tree Preservation Ordinance should identify whether the required trees, shrubs, plantings, berms and property line buffers have been installed and maintained within development projects and along street frontages, as well as in road right-of-ways after construction and improvement projects.

[Note: additional implementation strategies about enforcement of the Town's tree preservation, steep slopes and wetlands regulations are contained in the Environmental Resources chapter of this Plan.]

- The State Department of Transportation, County Department of Public Works and the Town should promote initiatives such as: the "Adopt-a-Highway" and "Adopt-a-Road" programs and expand participation from area businesses, civic groups and other organizations to clean up road corridors throughout the Town and surrounding communities.



Adopt-a-Spot and Adopt-a-Road Programs are used by many communities as a way to get residents, businesses and civic groups involved in helping to plant open space areas and islands with attractive landscaping and keep them well maintained. Acknowledgement of the dedications and sponsors can be done with appropriately scaled plaques or markers. (Left: West Roxbury, MA; Right: Rye Brook, NY)