

Town of Middletown  
Draft Profile and Inventory  
(v4)

May 2009

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## Location

The southeast town line is the border of Ulster County, New York, and the northeast town line is the border of Greene County, New York. The eastern part of the town is in the Catskill Park. According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 97.3 square miles (251.9 km<sup>2</sup>), of which, 96.4 square miles (249.7 km<sup>2</sup>) of it is land and 0.9 square miles (2.3 km<sup>2</sup>) of it (0.89%) is water. There are several hamlets and villages within Middletown including: Arkville, Bedel, Denver, Fleischmanns (Village), Grant Mills, Halcottsville, Hanley Corner, Kelly Corners, Margaretville (Village), and New Kingston.

## Historical Overview

The Town of Middletown is one of the oldest towns in Delaware County and once encompassed most of the southern half of the county. The town falls within Great Lots #7, 6, 38, 39 and 40 of the Hardenburgh Patent, an enormous early 18th century land grant that encompassed much of the land between the Rondout and Delaware Rivers. The earliest documented European settlers in the Town of Middletown were Dutch farmers, who arrived around 1763. During the Revolution, the town became a Tory stronghold and most of the early settlers were driven off. Many returned after the war and a permanent settlement was established by the early 19th century. The first church (Reformed Protestant) was formed in 1794. Historical settlements included the Villages of Margaretville, Arkville, and Fleishmanns (originally Griffins Corners), and the hamlets of Clovesville, Solitude, Dry Brook, Halcottsville, Spruceville, New Kingston, Dunraven, Lumberville and Clarks Factory. The old Indian village of "*Pa-ka-tagh-kan*" was situated at the mouth of the Bush Kill.

### Brief History of the Village of Margaretville (adapted from the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce Website)

The village of Margaretville is located on the East Branch of the Delaware River in the south-central part of the Town of Middletown. The Town of Middletown is located in a mountainous area of the Western Catskill Mountains. The earliest European settlers in the Margaretville area arrived just after the Revolution. Once known as Pakataghkan, or 'the meeting of three rivers', the early village was named Middletown Center. In 1850 it was re-named Margaretville in honor of Margaret Lewis, a granddaughter of Robert Livingston, whose family once owned large portions of the Hardenburgh Patent, including the site of the village. Margaretville began to develop as a village in the early 1840's. The village developed rapidly between 1843 and 1869. The Beers map of that year depicts about 80 buildings, mostly along Main Street, and a scattering of buildings on parallel or intersecting streets. While Main Street was laid out on the north side of the East Branch of the Delaware River, a small channel, known as the Binnekill, has been diverted from the river closer to Main Street to serve the village's industrial concerns. Development included a mixture of industrial, residential and civic buildings. In addition to tanneries, foundries, and saw mills, early businesses included a cobbler shop, wagon shop, harness shop, cooperage, cabinet and paint shop, and a blacksmith shop. Social and civic enterprises included a post office and school, several doctor's offices, the Methodist

Church (built in 1851) and the Margaretville Masonic Lodge and the Odd Fellow's Pakatakan Lodge, both organized in 1855. There were still several farms in and around the village, as well as a few hotels and a cemetery.

As with much of the Catskills, the development of Margaretville was influenced by the coming of the railroad. During the 1870's the Ulster and Delaware, one of the major transportation routes connecting the Hudson River (and thus New York City) to Delaware County, traveled northwest from Kingston to Phoenicia and then through Fleischmanns, Arkville, Kelly's Corners, Halcottsville, Roxbury and beyond on its way to Oneonta. Located a few miles west of Arkville, Margaretville was just off the U&D line. However, in 1905 the Delaware and Eastern Railroad, later Delaware and Northern, was developed to extend the U&D line west from Arkville along the East Branch of the Delaware River with major stops in Margaretville, Dunraven, Andes, Downsville and East Branch, where it met the main line of the Ontario and Western. Margaretville was thus now connected with the two major railroads serving the Catskills region. The D&N located its terminal yards and shops at Margaretville and the railroad gave major impetus to both the agricultural and the resort industries in the village. Several creameries were built and, as in the adjacent town of Roxbury, butter was an important product. The Margaretville station also served as the point of departure for the local cauliflower crop. Introduced into the region in the 1890's cauliflower became one of the town's most important exports.

There were hotels and boarding houses in the village as early as the 1840's. The largest boarding house, Briar Cliff Lodge, was situated on a hill overlooking the village. It was built as a sanitarium but never used for that purpose. Others were located in and around the village, including the popular Ackerly House on Main Street. Margaretville had become one of the most popular resort towns in the region and it remains a thriving community today.

A Brief History of Arkville *(adapted from the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce Website)*

Arkville had some of the first European settlers in Delaware County. Four Dutch families moved into the area in 1763, but after learning of an imminent attack by natives, escaped back to the safety of Kingston in Ulster County. In 1887, artist J. Francis Murphy started the Pakatakan Artists colony. It was the first Artists Colony in New York State. Houses similar in style were established in this enclave, many standing to this day and all privately owned. In the late 1800's and the early 1900's the Treyz and later Luzerne Chemical companies operated a large wood acid factory. The U&D hauled charcoal, wood alcohol, and the acid, which was used to make explosives.

The Rondout & Oswego Railroad arrived in Dean's Corners, as Arkville was known, in 1871. Some historians say the station was built on the site of the Tuscarora Indian headquarters. The need to add an extra locomotive to climb Highmount made Arkville into an important stop along what was to become the Ulster & Delaware Railroad.

In 1905, Arkville became even more of a railroad hub when the Delaware and Eastern, later the Delaware and Northern provided a west bound connection to Margaretville, Andes, The Reservoir Towns, Downsville and East Branch.

A Brief History of Halcottsville *(adapted from the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce Website)*

Halcottsville was settled along the banks of the East Branch of the Delaware River which was originally called "Pakakunk" by the Native Americans of the time. During the American Revolution, the hamlet's namesake, Englishman John Halcott defected from the English army and joined up with Washington's patriots where he achieved the rank of Major. After the war, Halcott established a homestead along the banks of the East Branch. In 1805, partnering with fellow veteran and homesteader David Kelly, The two dammed and built the first mill along the river, paving the way for a century of growth amidst the wilds of the Catskill Mountains. It is also said that Halcott opened the hamlet's first store and along with son Mathew a carding and fulling mill. In 1851, honoring this early patriot, the settlement was named "Halcottsville". In later years the Halcott family moved on to other regions, largely vanishing from the area census, while the descendents of David Kelly maintained the family "Empire" and are still a prominent area family.

For 125 years or so the damming and widening of the river created a reliable power source and enabled subsequent industry. Later, this dammed portion became known as Lake Wawaka. In 1871 the newly laid railroad opened more doors to commerce and recreation. By the turn of the century, Halcottsville was thriving as a major trading point for the outlying areas of Bragg Hollow, Kelly Corners, Hubbell Hill and the Denver Valley. In addition to its busy creamery, ice house and mill, Halcottsville was home to several general stores, two churches, a dressmaker, a tailor, a hotel, a dancehall and a two-room school. There was even a 15 seat paddle-wheel launch operated by Burr Hubbell that offered short rides to visitors.

Most Halcottsville and Bragg Hollow families lived and worked on family farms. Although primarily dairy farms, many families also raised sheep for wool, grew cauliflower and produced butter and poultry. The Wawaka grange, opened in 1875 provided support for area farmers for many years. *(Excerpted from As The River Runs – A History of Halcottsville by Diane Galusha)*

Brief History of the hamlet of New Kingston *(adapted from the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce Website)*

New Kingston encompasses a 5,000 acre land grant set aside by Robert R. Livingston in 1799. Livingston conveyed lots within this tract to residents of Kingston who had lost their homes when the British burned the city after the Revolution. The land was divided into 100 parcels, 50 acres each. This orderly, geometric pattern was imposed over an area that was characterized by three deep north-south hollows, thus making settlement within the original patent divisions difficult. Many of New Kingston's initial settlers were

Dutch. Jacob Van Benschoten was the first pioneer and he blazed a trail into the New Kingston Valley in the 1790s. However, between 1807-1830, numerous Scottish immigrants settled in the valley and by 1880, New Kingston's population was largely of Scottish descent.

The hamlet of New Kinston encompasses a 50 acre tract of the patent located in the most fertile part of the valley of the Plattekill, or 'open brook', where the three major hollows intersect and a number of smaller streams and roads branch out to the north. The hamlet developed as a service community for the surrounding agricultural region. In 1828 there was a store in the home of Philip Yapple at the north end of the village. However, the hamlet was virtually undeveloped until the mid-19th century.

An 1869 map of New Kingston shows 13 residences, a store, wagon shop, blacksmith and storehouse, as well as the Presbyterian Church. The school was just outside the village, near the site of a log school that had been established at an early date. In 1864-65 there were 70 children between the ages of 5 and 21 in the district (District #24). Although the predominant occupation in the town was farming, a saw mill and a grist mill existed down the valley (south) from the village. Peddlers were frequent, selling cloth, pots and pans, tonics, fancy goods, etc. They usually spent the night at the home of a willing family.

Brief History of the Village of Fleischmanns (*adapted from the Fleischmanns Museum Website*)

Early settlers came from Germany, England, Holland and Ireland and the original settlement was named Griffin Corners in honor of Matthew Griffin, a prominent lawyer (he was admitted to the bar in 1851) and businessman (he owned a store and later a hotel). He also helped to secure the village's first post office in 1848. Griffin died January 11, 1903. The area known today as Fleischmanns became part of Middletown in Delaware County on March 3, 1789. At that time vast tracts of land were owned by a few individuals and farmed by tenants. All 8,000 acres of Fleischmanns land was owned by General Henry Armstrong. The Anti-Rent War, an uprising of Catskill tenant farmers in 1844-'45, led to reforms which put an end to the unfair lease system, and the area began to grow under private ownership.

According to available local sources, it was in 1883 that Charles F. Fleischmann, (born near Budapest, Hungary, educated in Vienna and Prague, founder of the Fleischmann Company famous for its yeast and whiskey) bought property west of the village near the Ulster & Delaware railroad station from John M. Blish. Soon summer families built beautiful summer homes abounding with porches, turrets, and terraces and costing \$30,000-\$40,000 (an enormous sum in those days). They also constructed a deer park, a riding stable, a heated pool filled with spring water, and a trout pond, all luxuries unheard of by the people in this valley. From 1890-1912, the present community actually went by two separate names. From the east end of the village to Division Street (now Bridge Street) was Griffin Corners and from Division Street to the Ulster & Delaware Railroad was Fleischmann (no "s"). When the village incorporated in 1913 it became Fleischmanns.

Fleischmanns Park, which dominated the north side of Wagner Avenue, was a gift to the village in May 1914 from Julius Fleischmann, son of Charles. Among the many interests of the Fleischmann family was major league baseball. The park, formerly known as the Mountain Athletic Club, was where their players came to get in shape before the start of the regular season.

It was during this period that the little village began to grow. Many rich and famous people built summer homes here, among them: Herbert Lehman (Governor of New York, 1932), the Leibman family (owners of Leibman Brewery), and Anton Seidel (conductor of the Metropolitan opera). Nearby on Highmount were the palatial summer homes of coloratura soprano Amelita Galli Curci and Shakesporean actress Julia Marlowe. Fleischmanns was also home to the beloved Molly Goldberg (Gertrude Berg) of radio and early television.

Wagner Avenue had many lovely homes which were built in the late 1800's. This street, in particular, retains much of its Victorian charm. Lake Switzerland was built not only for boating and swimming, but also for the harvesting of ice during the winter. Skene Memorial Library was founded by Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Skene, a celebrated surgeon and his wife, who were summer residents of Highmount for many years. It was through the influence of Mrs. Skene that a \$5,000 donation was obtained from Andrew Carnegie, making construction of the free public library possible.

Fleischmanns began to prosper as a summer boarding colony in the late 1800's. As more boarders came, more homes and hotels were built or enlarged and they all competed intensely for tourists. It is said that during the 1940's, the permanent population was 500; but by the Fourth of July, there would be 10,000 in town. Over the years, tourists abandoned the Catskills in favor of other locations and many hotels were vacated or sold. Arsonists set fire to many older buildings.

Of the fifty some great lodging places within the village and surrounding area, only a few remain: The Regis, Mathes Hotel (Kosher Plaza), Alpine, Lorraine, Fleischmanns Hotel, Meinstein Lodge (the Highland Fling Inn), and the Palace Hotel. Motels and real estate offices now dot our village, but nothing replaced the once bustling summer resort.

## **Population Analysis<sup>1</sup>**

The population in the Town of Middletown has increased 13.9% between 1980 and 2000. The increase is much higher than that seen by Delaware County, whose population decreased slightly. It is also approximately twice as high as New York State, but is much lower than the United States as a whole. In 2000, the US Census recorded 4,501 persons in Town, including village populations.

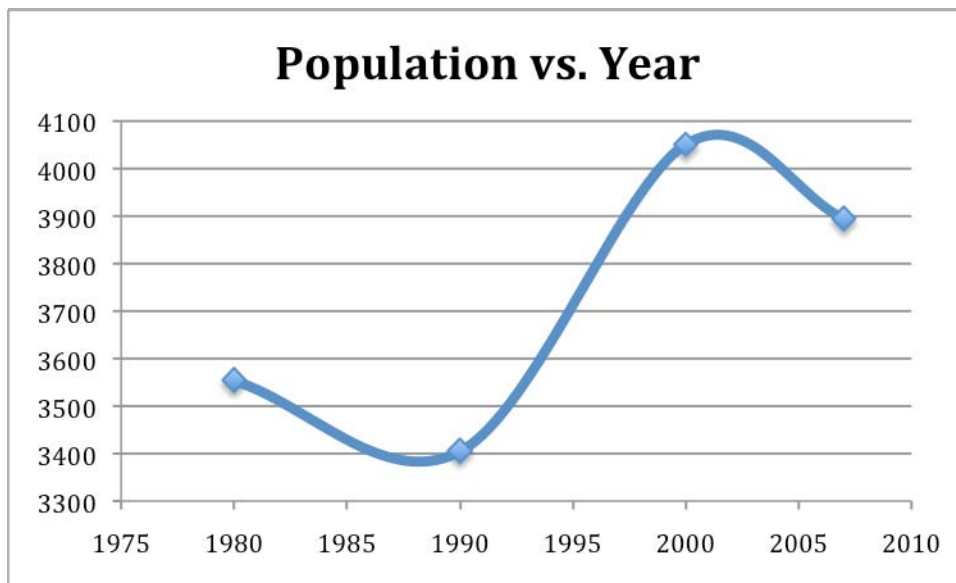
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<sup>1</sup> All information for population demographics was obtained from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census Data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 1: Population Changes from 1980 to 2000**

Area	1980	1990	2000	1980-2000 Change
United States	226,546,000	248,710,000	281,421,906	24.2%
New York State	17,558,165	17,990,455	18,976,457	8.1%
Delaware County	46,824	47,225	46,555	-0.57%
Town of Middletown	3555	3406	4051	13.9%

The population of Middletown was estimated to have decreased to 3,895 in 2007 by the U.S. Census Bureau. Using linear trend information since 1980, population is estimated to increase a small amount by about 18.8 persons every year. These estimates however, are highly variable and given the decrease in population over the more recent past, unclear whether this pattern will continue or not.



**Figure 1: Population Changes**

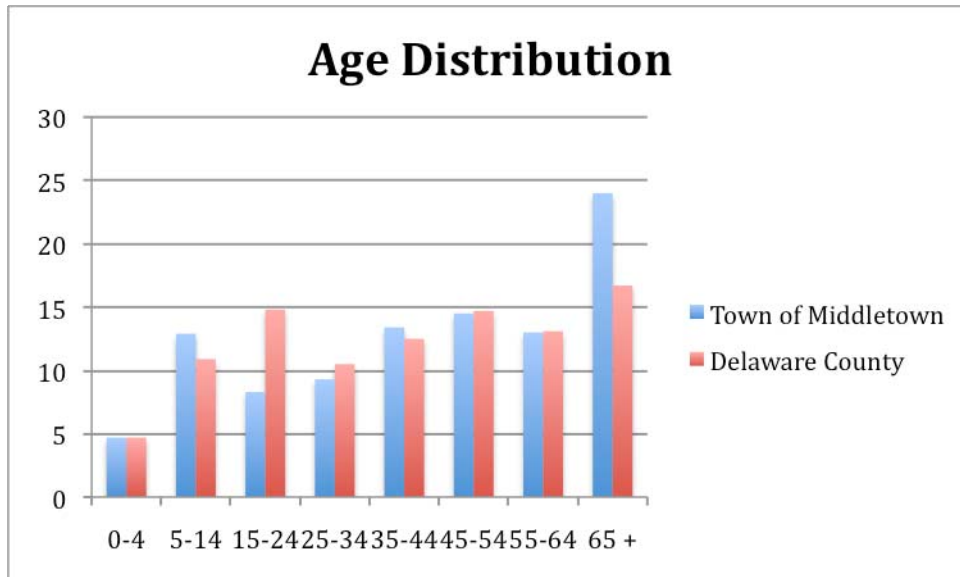
Since 1980, Middletown has experienced substantial increases in most age groups, but a slight decrease in the number of people less than 5 years of age (Table 2). The highest increase is in the 65-year and older group, which has grown by almost 50% since 1980. The median age has risen from 39.1 years to 46.0 years (a common occurrence throughout New York State). About 24% of the Town’s population is over 65 years. Compared to the County and New York State, Middletown has fewer young people (as a percentage of the total population) and more mid to older people, especially people over 65 years of age (Table 3).

**Table 2: Age Distribution 1980 - 2000.**

Age Group	Population			
	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
Under 5 years	196	194	191	-2.6%
5 to 18 years	650	501	201	-69%
19 years and older	2,702	2,655	3,200	18.4%
65 years and older	659	779	973	47.6%
Median Age	39.1	NA	46.0	17.6%

**Table 3: Comparison of Age Distribution, Percent of Total Population, 2000**

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
Middletown	4.7	12.9	8.3	9.3	13.4	14.5	13.0	24.0
Delaware County	4.7	10.9	14.8	10.5	12.5	14.7	13.1	16.7
New York State	6.5	14.1	13.4	15.5	16.2	13.5	8.9	12.8



**Figure 2: Age Characteristics**

Tables 4 and 5 show several other population characteristics in Middletown. While population has increased 13.9% since 1980, the number of households in Town has risen at a different rate of 18.2%. This is another common demographic shift seen in many rural communities where population rises little or moderately, but the increase in

households rises faster. (Households are defined by the US Census as the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residences. A family includes all people living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

**Table 4: Population Data Town of Middletown**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
<b>Total Population</b>	3,466	3555	3,406	4,051	13.9%
<b>No. of Households</b>	NA	1,414	1,450	1,672	18.2%
<b>Total No. of Families</b>		970	920	1,035	6.7%
<b>No. of Married Couple households</b>		344	749	829	10.7% (1990-2000)
<b>No. of Female Head of Household</b>		279	124	140	-49.8%

Compared to nearby towns, Middletown has the highest percent population of persons over 65 years of age (24%). Table 5 shows that in many ways, there are many similarities and differences between Middletown and its neighbors.

**Table 5: Comparison of Other Demographic Characteristics of the Town of Middletown to Other Adjacent Towns**

	Town of Middletown	Town of Andes	Town of Bovina	Town of Roxbury
<b>Total Population</b>	4,051	1,356	662	2,509
<b>Median Age</b>	46.0	47.8	45.9	44.6
<b>Percent of Population Over 65 Years</b>	24%	21.6%	21.9%	19.6%
<b>Number Housing Units</b>	3,013	1,326	525	2,026
<b>Number Vacant** Housing Units</b>	1,341 (44.5%)	722 (54%)	249 (47%)	948 (47%)
<b>Population 25 years and older</b>	74.2%	75.4%	74.5%	72.8%
<b>Percent of Population 16 and over in Labor Force</b>	55.0%	51.4%	62.0%	54.5%
<b>Percent owner occupied units</b>	77.2%	85.8%	83.7%	80.0%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$31,346	\$35,119	\$43,359	\$32,214

	Town of Middletown	Town of Andes	Town of Bovina	Town of Roxbury
<b>Individuals Below Poverty Level (See note)</b>	638 (16.8%)	127 (9.4%)	38 (5.7%)	334 (13.3%)
<b>Median Value Owner Occupied Housing Units</b>	\$86,200	\$94,200	\$94,100	\$84,700

Note: About 12.6% of all families were below the poverty level in 2000. Of those, almost 21% are families with children under the age of 18. For families with a female head of household where no male is present, 34.4% were below the poverty level. Examined by age of individual, 13% of individuals aged 18 and above and 9.6% of those aged 65 years and older were living below the poverty level. The chart below shows the federal guidelines used in 2000 compared to 2009 for determining poverty status:

**Table 5a: Comparison of 2000 to 2009 Poverty Levels Established by the United States Government**

Size of Family Unit	Year 2000	Size of Family Unit	2009
1	\$8,350	1	\$10,830
2	11,250	2	14,570
3	14,150	3	18,310
4	17,050	4	22,050
5	19,950	5	25,790
6	22,850	6	29,530
7	25,750	7	33,270
8	28,650	8	37,010
<b>For each additional person, add</b>	\$2,900	For families with more than 8 persons, add \$3,740 for each additional person.	

**Table 5a: Household Income by Age**

Household Income	Under 25 years old	25 to 34 years old	35 to 44 years old	45 to 54 years old	55 to 64 years old	65 to 74 years old	75 years and over
Total Number of Households	29	211	256	347	307	270	246
Less than \$10,000	0	26	23	20	54	40	47
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2	24	19	26	11	31	43
\$15,000 to \$19,999	10	25	16	20	7	20	27
\$20,000 to \$24,999	5	36	25	18	33	33	17
\$25,000 to \$29,999	0	14	19	19	32	15	20
\$30,000 to \$34,999	9	25	34	18	46	16	14
\$35,000 to \$39,999	0	11	19	9	21	24	2
\$40,000 to \$44,999	0	4	10	22	12	3	18
\$45,000 to \$49,999	0	16	25	9	3	25	9
\$50,000 to \$59,999	3	21	11	52	21	28	18
\$60,000 to \$74,999	0	4	25	52	15	16	9
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0	0	16	30	27	11	11
\$100,000 to \$124,999	0	5	14	37	16	0	0
\$125,000 to \$149,999	0	0	0	0	3	6	11
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	0	0	6	6	2	0
\$200,000 or more	0	0	0	9	0	0	0

**Householder:** The person, or one of the people, in whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented. If there is no such person present, any household member 15 years old and over can serve as the householder for the purposes of the census. Two types of householders are distinguished: a family householder and a nonfamily householder. A family householder is a householder living with one or more people related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. The householder and all people in the household related to him are family members. A nonfamily householder is a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only.

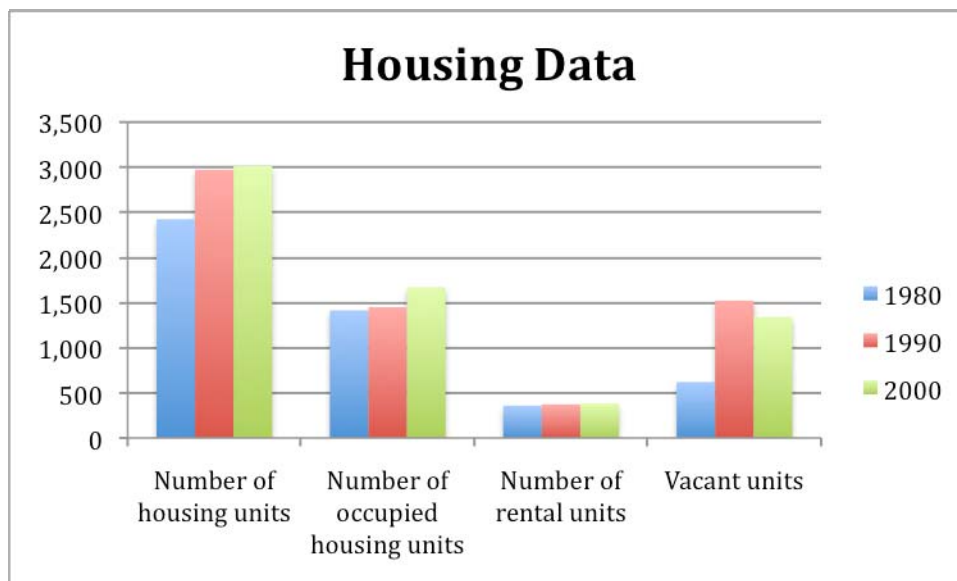
Table 6 illustrates some of Middletown’s demographics compared to other places. Middletown has the highest percent of owner occupied units, an average median value of housing, the lowest unemployment rate, the highest poverty rate (except for the state), and the highest vacancy rate of housing units compared to the County, State and country. This relatively high percentage of vacant housing units reflects the Town’s high percentage of weekend and part time residents, who either were not in Middletown when the 2000 census was taken or who listed somewhere else as their primary residence. The Town also has the lowest percent of households headed by females, and one of the lowest percentages of families as married couples.

**Table 6: Comparison of Demographics of the Region in 2000**

	United States	New York State	Delaware County	Town of Middletown
<b>Land Area (square miles)</b>	3,648,399	48,624	1,468	97.3
<b>No. residents per square mile</b>	77	390	34	42
<b>Percent married couple families</b>	78%	67.6%	48.5%	49.6%
<b>Percent female householder families</b>	17%	14.7%	11.2%	8.4%
<b>Percent owner occupied units</b>	64.2%	47.9%	74.1%	77.2%
<b>Median value of housing unit</b>	\$ 79,100	\$ 82,900	124,500	83,600
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	7.4%	8.5%	4.3%	3.4%
<b>Percent of all persons below poverty level</b>	14.2%	24%	13.0%	16.8%
<b>Vacant status of housing units**</b>	7%	8.1%	35.5%	44.5%

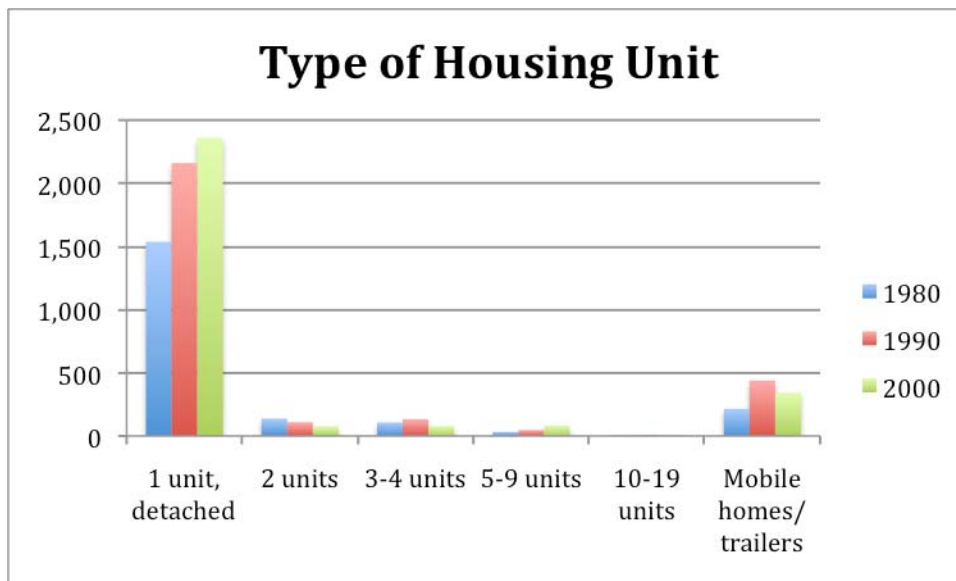
\*\*Vacant housing units are believed to be owned by part time residents who were not in residence when the census was taken, or who listed their primary residence as somewhere else.

### Housing Characteristics



**Figure 3: Housing Characteristics**

The chart above illustrates several trends. There was an increase in the number of housing units since 1980. In 2000, there were 3,013 housing units. The number of vacant housing units increased between 1980 and 1990 but fell between 1990 and 2000, which may reflect an increasing number of the Town’s part time and weekend residents deciding to move to Middletown on a full time basis. If this is the trend, we should expect to see a decrease in the number of “vacant homes” in the next census. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units remained relatively steady (Figure 4). Almost all housing units in Middletown were 1-unit, detached structures in 2000. There were a few two-family and 3 to 4 family units and hardly any large multi-family units. In 1980 about 20% of all residences were mobile homes. In 2000, about 27% were mobile homes. Between 1980 and 2000, the number of mobile home units in Town increased by 59.5%. This increase may be due to the availability and affordability of mobile and manufactured homes.

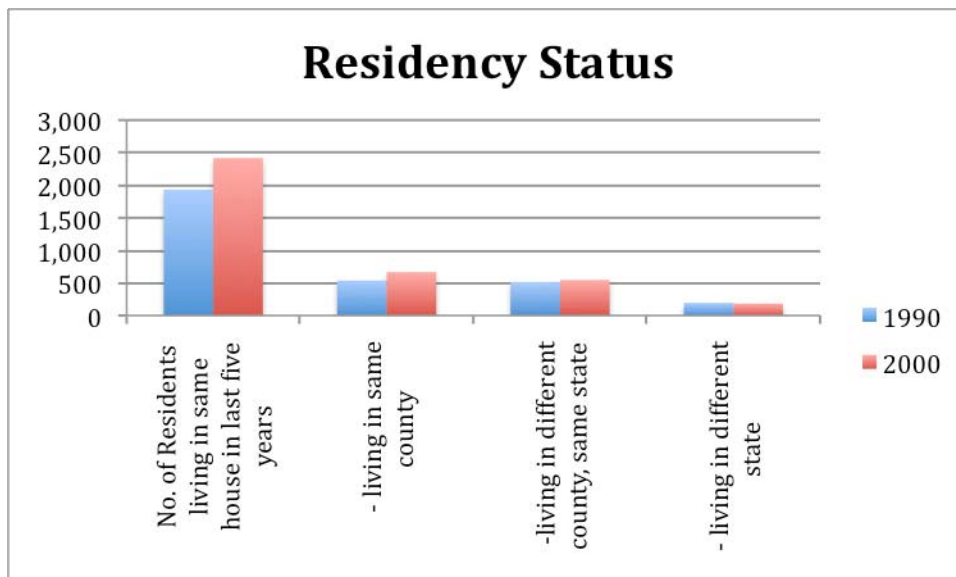


**Figure 4: Type of Housing Units in Middletown**

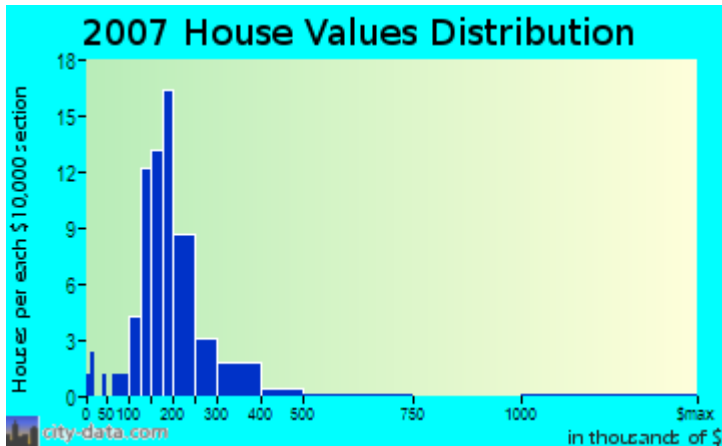
Only about 12.7% of all housing units in Town are rentals. Both rents and housing values have greatly increased. Between 1980 and 2000 for example, housing values have increased 181.5%. Middletown has a relatively stable population. In 2000, 60% of residents had lived in the same house for five years (Table 7 and Figure 5). Sixteen percent moved to Middletown between 1995 and 2000 from other Delaware County locations and about 13% moved from other New York State locations.

**Table 7: Housing Data - Town of Middletown**

Housing Characteristics	1980	1990	2000	1980 to 2000 Change
Number of housing units	2,424	2,972	3,013	24.3%
Number of occupied housing units	1,414	1,450	1,672	18.2%
Number of owner occupied housing units	1,056	1078	1,290	22.2%
Number of rental units	358	372	382	6.7%
Vacant units	620	1,522	1,341	116%
<b>Numbers &amp; Type of Unit:</b>				
1 unit, detached	1,537	2,160	2,360	53.5%
2 units	138	109	77	-44.2%
3-4 units	107	134	80	-25.2%
5-9 units	33	47	82	148%
10-19 units	6	10	9	50%
Mobile homes/ trailers	215	439	343	59.5%
Housing value, median	\$29,700	\$83,200	\$83,600	181.5%
Rental prices, median gross rent	\$150	\$378	\$450	200%
No. of Residents living in same house in last five years	NA	1,932	2,417	25.1%
- living in same county	NA	537	666	24.0%
-living in different county, same state	NA	515	546	6.0%
- living in different state	NA	195	183	-6.2%



**Figure 5: Residency Status of Middletown Residents**



**Figure 6: Housing Value Distribution for Middletown**  
(From city-data.com, uneditable)

## Housing Affordability

There are several ways to determine if housing is generally affordable in a community. One method is to determine the “rental index”. This index shows the maximum gross rent a given household can afford. Affordable rental housing is generally considered to be no more than 30% of a household’s monthly income. The average monthly rental rate in the Town of Middletown (in 2000) was \$450. The median household income was \$31,346 (in 2000). This yields about \$2,612 of income per month. Thirty percent of this is \$784, which means that the average household could afford the average \$450 per month in rent documented in the 2000 Census data because the average renter pays less than 30% of their income for housing. This data indicates that for the renter with income levels close to and above the median income level, rental housing would be affordable. However, about 40% of the households in Middletown earned less than the median income level in 2000. For very young households and the very oldest households, rents were probably not affordable.

A second method to determine affordability is to look at the ratio between the median value of a single-family house and median household income. Nationally, a ratio of 2 or less is considered to be affordable. The affordability ratio for Middletown is calculated as: \$83,600 (median value of homes in 2000, from Census data) divided by \$31,346 (median household income), or 2.67. This figure is above the desired ratio of two and indicates affordability issues for average income families.

Data available from City Data.Com indicates that the median price of a house sold in the Margaretville in 2007 was \$180,000 and \$140,000 in Delaware County. These prices may reflect the impact of the housing “bubble” which has effectively doubled home prices and assessed values over the past 10 years or so.

No updated household income is available specifically for the Town, but 2007 county data had a median income of \$40,032 and for Margaretville of \$34,212. A re-calculation of the affordability ratio with this more recent data results in an updated, but approximate affordability ratio of 5.3 for Margaretville and 3.5 in Delaware County. It would be anticipated that the Town of Middletown’s index would fall within this range. This figure is a dramatic increase over that

in 2000 and indicates a serious lack of affordability for the average family. However, given the housing bubble burst of 2008, housing prices may have fallen to a more affordable level, but it is not likely to be at the level seen in 2000.

A third method, the purchase price multiplier, also gives an indication of affordability. This looks at the maximum mortgage approval amount likely to be given to potential homebuyers. This is usually about 2.25 times annual income. Based on the 2000 median income, this approach indicates the median income household could afford a house costing \$77,581, assuming a 10% down payment, which was lower than the median priced home in 2000 (\$83,600).

## **Physical and Environmental Features**

The Town of Middletown is basically rural in nature. While some farmland is still found along town roads north and east of State Route 28, forestland predominates as a land cover in Middletown. Well over 68% of the town is in woodland cover. A decline over the past decades has left marginal cropland and pastureland to grow into brush and young forest lands. Second home construction and some farm improvements have not kept pace with forest re-growth. New York State owns about 6,700 acres of land classified as forest preserve in Middletown. This is located in the southeastern corner of town and along with many other large tracts of private forest, provides many acres of land for outdoor recreation.

**Water Features and Wetlands:** See the Natural Features Map. The total area of the Town covered by water is about 641 acres, or about 1% of the total land area in Middletown. Several lakes and ponds exist including Wawaka Lake, the Pepacton Reservoir, and several other smaller unnamed ponds. The East Branch of the Delaware River, along with tributaries Batavia Kill, Mill Brook, Huckleberry Brook, Bush Kill, Red Creek, Vly Creek, Platte Kill, Dry Brook, and Bryants Brook are the major streams in Town.

There are few wetlands in town and these comprise only about 38 acres of land. Those wetlands 12.4 acres or larger have been designated by the DEC as regulated wetlands, and state law requires a permit for any alteration or development in a wetland and requires a 100-foot buffer around the wetland boundary. Wetland systems are natural assets for many reasons, including their capacity for flood control, groundwater recharge, as temporary filters of pollution carried by streams, landscape and habitat diversity, education, research, and providing food and shelter for both rare species and economically important fish, birds, and animals.

**Floodplains:** See the Natural Features Map. Official floodplains are mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency along the East Branch of the Delaware River and the Pepacton Reservoir. Floodplains are also mapped along Mill Brook, Dry Brook, Bush Kill, and the Platte Kill streams.

**Topography, Slopes and Ridgelines:** See Slope Delineation and Contour Line Map. Middletown's topography is characterized by large areas of steep slopes (greater than 25%) cut by valleys. Narrow valleys along the streams form most of the level land in Town. To the east of the East Branch, Fleishmann Mountain, Pakatakan Mountain, and

the other hills of the Dry Brook Ridge form a large area of steep slopes and ridges. Much of this land is State-owned. To the west of the East Branch, the topography is less steep (<15%) and gentler terrain. West of the East Branch is where almost all remaining farmland is located and also where NYC lands (owned or controlled with easements) are concentrated.

Soils: The vast majority of soils in the Town of Middletown are severely restrained for septic system development due to shallow soils and wetness. A very small number of locations are classified by the Delaware County Soil Survey as having moderate suitability for septic systems. These small areas are usually located in valley areas. Likewise, soils are quite constrained for agricultural uses as well. Prime farmland soils – those best suited for production of crops, are located only in the narrow valleys of the major streams in Town. See Agricultural Districts Map which shows location of prime soils, and the Soil – Septic Suitability map.

### Ecological Data

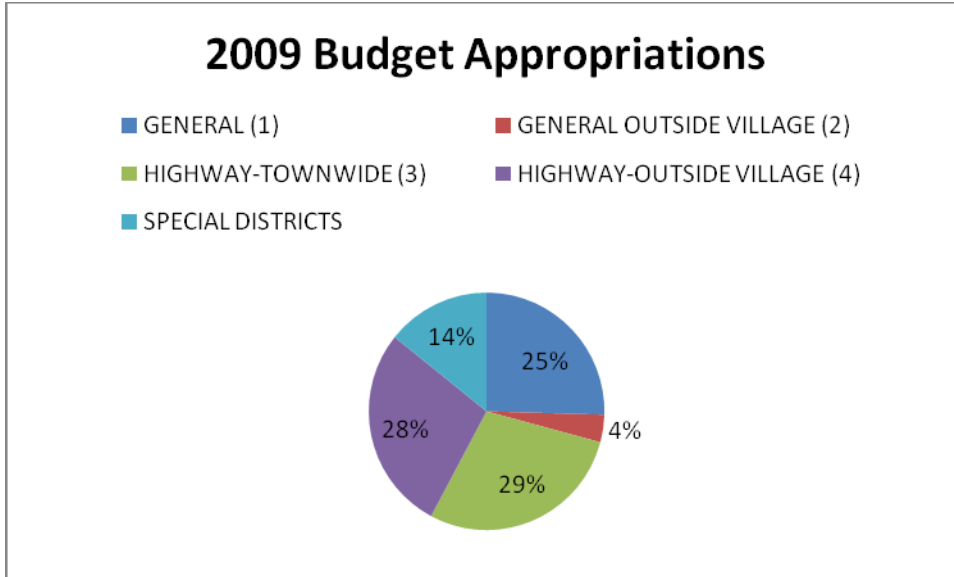
**Natural Heritage Program:** Data from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Natural Heritage for Middletown is as follows:

**Table 8: Rare Plants, Animals and Significant Ecosystems**

Common Name	NYS listing	Notes
Bald Eagle (bird)	Threatened	Breeding along the East Branch of the Delaware, Pepacton Reservoir,
Northern Monkshood (plant)	Threatened	Found on cliff habitats in the vicinity of Dry Brook Ridge
Musk Root (plant)	Endangered	Found on sandstone ledges in the vicinity of Pakatakan Mountain
Historical Records		
Musk Root (plant)	Endangered	Last record 1915
Downy Lettuce (plant)	Endangered	Last record 1915
Jacob's Ladder	Rare	Last record 1975

### Town Budgets

The 2009 Town budget is presented below. Highway expenditures comprise 57% of all appropriates, followed by general expenditures and then special districts. Special districts include water, light and fire districts.



**Figure 7: 2006 Budget Appropriations**

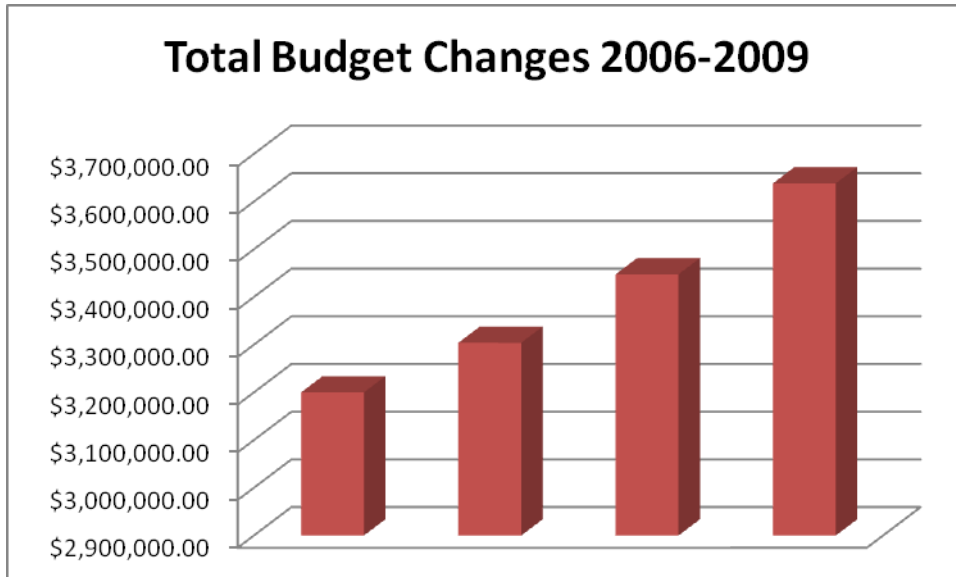
**Table 9: 2009 Summary of Town Budget**

Fund	Appropriations And Provisions For Other Uses	Less Estimated Revenues	Less Unexpended Balance	Amount To Be Raised By Taxes
General	\$951,007	\$218,050	\$100,000	\$632,957
General Outside Village	\$140,796	\$76,000	\$15,000	\$49,796
Highway-Townwide	\$1,067,185	\$100,000	\$40,000	\$927,185
Highway-Outside Village	\$1,047,545	\$283,000	\$106,000	\$658,545
Subtotals	\$3,206,533	\$677,050	\$261,000	\$2,268,483
<u>Special Districts</u>	\$429,766			
Arkville Water	\$48,509	\$18,350	\$3,500	\$26,659
Halcottsville Water	\$11,668	\$11,668	\$0	\$0
Arkville Light	\$8,250	\$200	\$0	\$8,050
Halcottsville Light	\$1,300	\$38	\$0	\$1,262
New Kingston Light	\$780	\$18	\$0	\$762
Arkville Fire	\$30,400	\$0	\$0	\$30,400
Midd/Hard Fire	\$268,505.88	\$0	\$0	\$268,505.88
Arena Fire	\$12,490.12	\$0	\$0	\$12,490.12
Midd Fire #1	\$47,863	\$0	\$0	\$47,863
Arkville Water District				
Returned Water Rents				(\$1,315.75)
Halcottsville Water Dist.				
Returned Water Rents				(\$1,187.11)

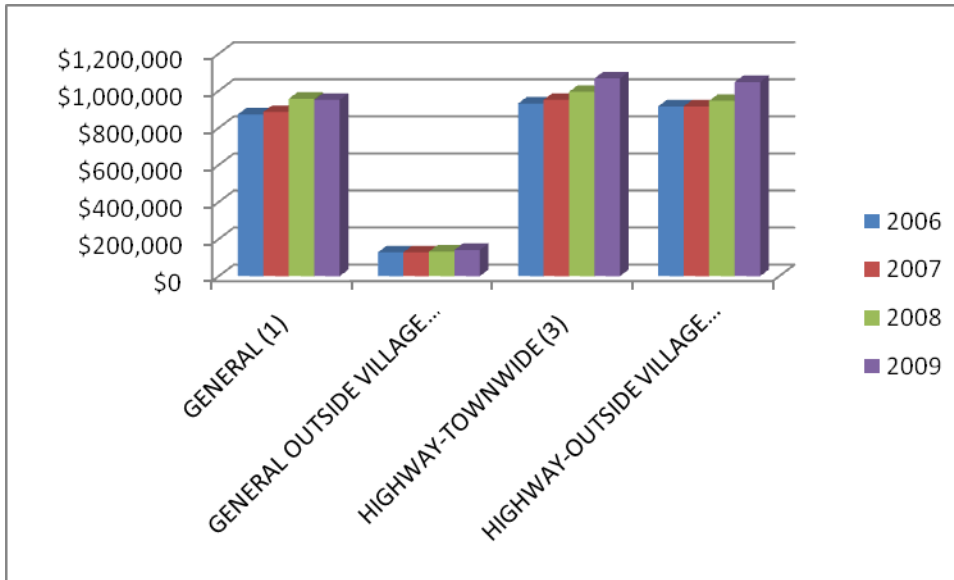
Town of Middletown **Draft** Comprehensive Plan May 2009 (V4)

Fund	Appropriations And Provisions For Other Uses	Less Estimated Revenues	Less Unexpended Balance	Amount To Be Raised By Taxes
Total	\$4,066,065.00	\$707,324.00	\$264,500.00	\$2,664,475.00
Tax Increase Excluding Special Districts			\$147,324	6.9%

Figure 8 illustrates the changes in Town budgets over the past few years. The budget has increased from about \$3,200,000 in 2006 to about \$3,600,000 in 2009. Most of these changes were result of highway increases (Figure 9).



**Figure 8: Budget Changes 2006-2009**



**Figure 9: Changes in Town Budget Categories 2006-2009**

## Schools, Community Organizations, Historic Resources and Recreation

### Schools

School districts serving the Town of Middletown include Margaretville and Roxbury. The data below comes from the New York State Department of Education annual School Reports.

**Table 10: School Information for the Districts Serving the Town of Middletown**

	<b>Margaretville</b>			
	<b>1999 to 2000</b>	<b>2000 to 2001</b>	<b>2004 to 2005</b>	<b>2006 to 2007</b>
Total Enrollment	573	557	544	495
Attendance Rate	94.1%	91.4%	93%	NA
Suspension Rate	1.6%	0.9%	5%	NA
% with Free or Reduced Lunch	50.2%	52%	48%	42%
# Teachers*	NA	NA	44	46
	<b>Roxbury</b>			
	<b>1999 to 2000</b>	<b>2000 to 2001</b>	<b>2004 to 2005</b>	<b>2006 to 2007</b>
Total Enrollment	367	355	342	334
Attendance Rate	94.4%	94.3%	95%	NA
Suspension Rate	4.5%	4.5%	2%	NA
% with Free or Reduced Lunch	32.1%	28.4%	26%	35%
# Teachers*	NA	NA	44	43

\*Teacher count was only available for the 2001-2002 year. The number of teachers in the Margaretville

school district for this year was 47, and the number of teachers in the Roxbury school district for this year was 45. Free or reduced lunch eligibility is based on household income by household size. For example, a family of four with an income of \$39,220 per year would be eligible for the free lunch program.

**Table 11: Educational Attainment Town of Middletown (25 years and older)**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990 to 2000 Change</b>
<b>Less than high school diploma</b>	744	682	-8.3%
<b>High school diploma</b>	946	1,092	15.4%
<b>College, no degree</b>	353	548	55.2%
<b>Associates, Bachelors degree or higher</b>	403	735	82.4%

## Community Organizations

The following organizations provide services in or are located in the Town of Middletown:

- Fairview Public Library
- Skeine Memorial Library
- Fleischmanns First
- German-American Club of Northern Catskills
- Historical Society of the Town of Middletown
- Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce
- Catskill Center for Conservation and Development
- M-ARK Group
- Delaware County Chamber of Commerce
- Water Discovery Center
- Catskill Mountain Christian Center
- Catskill Forest Association
- Catskill Womens Network
- Catskill Watershed Corporation
- Hospital Auxillary
- Central Catskills Collaborative

The CCC is a group of representatives from seven municipalities along the NYS Route 28 Corridor. This intermunicipal coalition formed to protect and promote the assets of the corridor and advance projects for the economic benefit of the Central Catskills Region. In 2008, each municipality adopted a resolution and

designated two members to the Collaborative to begin a regional dialogue. Member municipalities are the Towns of Hurley, Olive, Shandaken, Middletown and Andes, and the Villages of Fleischmanns and Margaretville, covering more than 50 miles of Route 28. They have facilitated the nomination of the Route 28 Corridor Scenic Byway Nomination.

Catskill Revitalization Corporation/DURR  
 Belleayre Conservatory  
 Fireman’s Auxiliary  
 Margaretville Rotary Club

### Historic Resources

According to the New York State Historic Preservation Office, the following locations are listed on the State and National Historic Registers (See Historic Resources Map):

**Table 12: Other Historical Resources**

Listed Location/Site	
Pakatakan Artist Colony Historic District (1)	Brook Studio/Cottage
	Barn/Studio
	Butternut Cottage
	Francis Murphy Studio
	Garden Cottage
	Hathaway Cottage
	Inn Laundry
	Lawrence Cottage
	Lawrence House, Privy & Shed
	Murphy Studio
	Murphy Residence
	Stone Bridge
	Upper Studio
	Buhorn Studio
	Clark Cottage
	Field Studio (Edsden)
	Pakatakan Inn
	Motel
	Roberts Residence
	House of Four Winds
Mann Residence/Studio	
Wyant Studio	
Locke House	
New Kingston Historic District	
Congregation B’nai Israel Synagogue	

Listed Location/Site	
First Presbyterian Church of Margaretville	
New Kingston Presbyterian Church	
Old School Baptist Church of Halcottsville	
District 10 School (Old Schoolhouse)	
Galli-Curci Theatre	
Hubbell Family Farm and Kelleys Corner Cemetery	
Kelly Round Barn	
Skene Memorial Library	
Van Ben schoten Residence and Guest House	

(1) Pakatakan Artist’s Colony Historic District: this historic district has been designated around a small mountainside collection of studios and residences clustered about the original Pakatakan Inn on the southern edge of the hamlet of Arkville. The community overlooks the valley formed by the Dry Brook stream, the Bushkill and the east branch of the Delaware River. It comprises about 65 acres and includes the original property owned by the Pakatakan artists associated with the Catskill Mountain school of landscape artists and is an extremely well-preserved collection of unusual shingle style and other wood frame buildings which provide a physical record of early summer settlement in the Catskill Mountains between 1886 and 1930. The artists colony began with a hotel, the Hoffman House, built in 1886, and eventually comprised artist’s residences and studios. There are 35 contributing features on 13 properties: 16 contributing primary buildings, 17 contributing outbuildings and two contributing structures. There are three non-contributing primary buildings within the district. *(Properties within a historic district fall into one of two types of property: contributing and non-contributing. A contributing property, such as a 19th Century mansion, helps make a historic district historic, a non contributing property, such as a modern medical clinic, does not. The contributing properties are key to a historic district's historic associations, historic architectural qualities, or archaeological qualities. A property can change from contributing to non contributing and vice versa if significant alterations take place.)*

A listing of historical cemeteries includes:

- Arkville Cemetery
- Bedell Cemetery - near Fleischmanns
- Clovesville Cemetery
- Clovesville Cemetery - near Fleischmanns
- Small Clovesville Cemetery - near Fleischmanns
- Dimmick Cemetery
- Gavette Cemetery

- Halcottsville Cemetery
- Irena Streeter - single stone at road's edge
- Eureka Cemetery (Kelly Corners Cemetery)
- Margaretville Annex Cemetery
- New Kingston Cemetery - *aka Faulkner/Archibald Cemetery*
- New Kingston Valley Cemetery
- VanBenschoten Cemetery - New Kingston
- Yapple Cemetery - New Kingston
- Small Cemetery - near Margaretville
- Old Clovesville Cemetery
- Scudder Cemetery
- Taylor Farm Cemetery
- Todd Family Cemetery
- Wood/Avery Cemetery - Arkville
- Woolheater Cemetery

There are several Archeologically Sensitive Areas located throughout the Town of Middletown, often associated with the historic sites, as well as along streams and rivers.

### Recreational Resources

Numerous recreational opportunities exist in and around Middletown. These include a variety of state and New York City owned lands, as well as recreational businesses such as bowling, farmers markets, hiking, skiing, golf, theater, and other tourist attractions. Table 13 outlines recreational access to New York City owned lands within the Town:

**Table 13: New York City Owned Recreation Areas**

Area	Location	Public Access Area	Hike	Fish	Hunt	Acres
Alpaca Ridge	Thompson Hollow Rd.	Yes	-	-	-	390
Arena	Reservoir Rd.	Yes	-	-	-	382
Brook Road	Brook Rd.	No	✓	✓	✓	72
Brush Ridge	Koop Rd.	No	✓	✓	-	66
Cole Hill	Swart Rd.	No	✓	✓	✓	253
Covesville	Hog Mountain Rd.	No	✓	-	-	56
Dunraven North	County Rt. 6	No	✓	✓	✓	202
Huckleberry Brook	Huckleberry Brook Rd.	Yes	-	-	-	82
Red Kill	Big Red Kill Rd.	No	✓	✓	✓	83

Area	Location	Public Access Area	Hike	Fish	Hunt	Acres
Swart Road	Swart Rd.	No	✓	-	✓	111
Weaver Hollow	Weaver Hollow Rd.	Yes	-	-	-	622
Old Dunraven Bridge	Dunraven	Yes	-	✓ Parking and handicapped access for fishing	-	NA

New York City Department of Environmental Protection recently opened up all DEP controlled lands that are adjacent to state-owned lands for hunting and fishing recreation. The reservoir is limited to fishing access.

**Catskill Forest Preserve Lands and Trails**

South of Route 28 and the Village of Margaretville, the Dry Brook Ridge Wild Forest has 6,793 acres of land included in the New York State Forest Preserve system. Within this area, four hiking trails exist:

- Huckleberry North Trail (4135')
- Huckleberry South Trail (8282')
- German Hollow Trail (2500')
- Dry Bridge Ridge Trail (9346')

**Community Facilities and Infrastructure**

**Transportation and Highway**

Town Roads: About 40% of Town roads are gravel. General maintenance activities include snow removal, ditch maintenance, road repair, and culvert maintenance. The Highway Department has an equipment replacement schedule in place. No major issues related to the roads exist.

State Roads: State Routes 28 and 30 pass through Middletown. The following traffic count information was obtained from the New York State Department of Transportation (AADT is the average annual daily traffic). Traffic volume changes were variable through the years, but portions of Route 28 and 30 saw large volume increase. The largest volume increase was on Route 30 between the end of Route 28 to the north line of the Village of Margaretville. Traffic volume increases along Route 30 were larger than those on Route 28.

**Table 14: Traffic Volumes on State Roads**

Route	Location of Count	Average Annual Daily Traffic Volume	Year	%Change in AADT
28	Delaware County Line to Old Rt. 28	2940	2007	16.7%
		2520	1998	
	Old Rt. 28 to County Rt. 38	3970	2007	21.8%
		3260	1993	
	County Rt. 38 to Start Rt. 30	5110	2007	9.4%
		4670	1997	
	Start Rt. 30 to End Rt. 30 (Dunraven)	2120	2007	-0.47%
		2130	1996	
	End Rt. 30 to County Rt. 2 (Extension Andes)	1250	2007	-2.3%
		1280	2000	
30	BWS Rd #4 to Start Rt. 28 (Dunraven)	520	2007	6.1%
		490	1994	
	Start Rt. 28 to End Rt. 28	2120	2007	-0.47%
		2130	1996	
	End Rt. 28 to North Line Village of Margaretville	2360	2007	44.8%
		1630	1996	
	North Line Village of Margaretville to County Rt. 38	2320	2007	34.1%
		1730	1996	
	County Rt. 38 to County Rt. 41 (Roxbury)	1980	2007	-34.9%
		3040	1996	

**Table 15: Traffic Volumes on Town and County Roads**

Road	AADT	Year
Brook Road	40	1998
Crawford Road	30	2005
Dry Brook Road	200	2004
E Hubbell Hill	300	2005
Hog Mountain Road	90	2004
Main Street	900	2004
Old Route 28 Clovesville	400	2004
Van Benschoten	20	2005
Weaver Hollow Road	100	2004
New Kingston Road	900	2002
Vega Road	600	2002
Halcott Center	400	2002
County Route 3	300	2002

## **Emergency Services**

Delaware County coordinates the E-911 service.

**Fire:** Fire emergency services are provided by all-volunteer departments of Margaretville, Arkville, Arena, and Fleischmanns. A major issue related to the fire departments is lack of volunteers. Changes in training requirements by New York State, as well as modern and busy lifestyles have made it difficult for people to commit to the time requirements needed to participate in the fire departments. The Margaretville Fire Department is part of the Middletown-Hardenburgh Fire District which encompasses all of Middletown and a portion of Hardenburgh. The rest of Hardenburgh is served by Arena Fire Department (also located in Town of Middletown) and Beaverkill Valley Fire Department.

**Ambulance:** The Margaretville Memorial Hospital Ambulance Squad is a combination paid and volunteer service located at the Margaretville Hospital and it serves the Towns of Middletown, Hardenburgh, and Halcott as well as the Villages of Margaretville and Fleischmanns. Originally a volunteer service provided by the Margaretville Hospital, ambulance staff are now paid a stipend for each call. The squad is called in to support Belleayre frequently although the ski resort is located in Ulster County.

**Law Enforcement:** Middletown has no town police, but is provided law enforcement support from the County Sherriff's department and the State Police located in Dunraven.

## **Utilities, Water and Waste Water**

Electric is provided through New York State Electric and Gas.

Telephone, cable and internet services are provided by MTC (Margaretville Telephone Company), Verizon or Time Warner.

Margaretville, Fleishmann, Halcottsville and Arkville have public water. Arkville's water system includes the hamlet and has 198 connections (about 450 users). This system was built in the 1980's. Halcottsville has 22 connections (66 users) and was recently completed in 2006. Margaretville and Fleishmanns have their own water systems run by village water departments. All on-site septic systems are approved by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection. DEP has a variety of setback requirements from streams as well as a prohibition on placement of septic systems on slopes >15%.

There is a transfer station for solid waste that is town-owned and run. The County provides the bins. The Town of Hardenburg also uses this location and pays Middletown an annual fee for use of this service.

## Land Use

Between 2003 and 2007, the number of building permits issued each year has ranged from 164 to a high of 196 in 2004. Most of these have been for additions and repairs. The number of new permits issued for homes between 2005 and part of 2008 was 109 residences as shown in Table 16 and 17. See also Property Class Map that illustrates the location of agriculture, residential, vacant, commercial, recreation, community service, public service, and conservation lands in Middletown.

**Table 16: Building Permit Summary – All Building Permit Types**

Type of building permit	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
New Homes	12	18	21	10	10
Trailers	5	10	2	8	6
Doublewides	2	4	2	3	3
Modular Homes	3	5	4	6	3
Garages/Out Buildings	32	32	24	28	26
Alt/Additions & Repairs	107	124	106	131	115
Commercial	6	3	4	0	1
Total Building Permits	167	196	163	186	164

**Table 17: Building Permits for New Residences**

Year	Number of New Houses/Trailers/Doublewides/Modulars
2005	33
2006	27
2007	34
2008 to date	15

Table 18 illustrates the general pattern of land use in Middletown. The largest group of land uses is residential with 2,214 parcels and over 25,000 acres of land. This is followed by vacant land (defined as property that is not in use, is in temporary use or lacks permanent improvements) with almost 20,000 acres of land.

Agriculture has a very small number of parcels (24) and is the predominant land use on 2,585 acres of land used exclusively for farming. However, other residential parcels also have agricultural uses but because there is a house present, the parcel is not counted as such. These lands are likely owned by a non-farmer and rented to a farm operation. Examining the number of agricultural assessments given in Middletown gives a more accurate picture of the level of farming in the community. In 2008, there are 43 parcels on 4,733.57 acres in farming land uses. In 1985, there were 6,862 acres of land in farming.

The US Agricultural Census is conducted every five years. Data is primarily available by county and by zip code. The three zip codes for the Town of Middletown are 12406 (Arkville), 12455 (Margaretville), and 13731 (Andes). None of these is exclusively

within the Town of Middletown however. All overlap with surrounding towns. However, it does give another snapshot of the type and level of farming going on in and around Middletown.

In 2002, there were 41 farms counted in these three zip codes: 19 in Margaretville (12455), 22 in Andes (13731), and no reportable data for Arkville (12455). The majority of the reported farms (33) were 50 to 999 acres in size, with a very small number of the farms being 1-49 acres and 1000 acres or more (no exact numbers were reported). Eighty percent of the farms in 2002 earned less than \$50,000, and only about 5 farms earned more than \$50,000. Farms in both areas included full owners and part owners. In Middletown, 17 were farms with multiple operators, and 18 had women operators. Of the 41 farms, 29 had land used for cropland, 25 had pasture or grazing land, and 30 had woodland on them. Six Middletown farms had idle land or land in cover crops only. Farm animals included calves, beef cows, dairy cows, horses/ponies, and a small amount of sheep. Crops included primarily grass for forage. A small number of farms grew corn for grain and silage, vegetables and melons, and had land in orchards and maple trees. Overall, farming was more profitable and prevalent within the Andes zip code

There are no industrial lands in the Town, and about 1000 acres of commercial land uses. Sixty parcels on 9,781 acres are classified as wild, forested, conservation lands and public parks.

**Table 18: Number of Parcels and Acreage of Land Uses, 2008**

<b>Property Class</b>	<b>Number of Parcels</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percentage of Land in Town</b>
Agriculture	24	2,585.96	4.3%
Residential	2,214	25,428.81	42%
Vacant Land	1,148	19,511.54	32%
Commercial	1,009	1,009.18	1.7%
Recreation and Entertainment	11	273.90	.45%
Community Services	40	260.09	.43%
Industrial	0	0	0
Public Services	18	1,840.05	3%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks	60	9,781.40	16%
No Data	18	N/A	

New York City owns land or controls easements as shown on Table 19. There are 76 parcels of land encompassing 6,459.5 acres. About 48% of these acres controlled lands are owned by the City.

**Table 19: NYC Lands & Easements**

Type	# of Parcels	Acreage
DEP Land (Land Acquisition Program LAP)	59	3,131.07 (5.2% of all lands in Middletown)
DEP Land (other than LAP and owned prior to MOA)	9	1,654.33 (2.7% of all lands in Middletown)
WAC easement*	3	737.22 (1.2% of all lands in Middletown)
CE easement+	5	936.92 (1.5% of all lands in Middletown)

\*Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC): Agricultural Easement done by this organization, funded by NYCDEP

\*Conservation Easement (CE): Conservation Easement done by NYCDEP

Overall, there are 97 parcels of land (2.6%) that are wholly tax exempt on 7,256.42 total acres.

### Land Use Regulations

The Town of Middletown has the following land use regulations in effect:

**Zoning:** Establishes seven different zoning districts (Rural III, Rural V, Business Commercial, Hamlet 1, Hamlet 1/2, Industrial, Development Limitations Overlay, and a Commercial/Industrial Floating Zone. See Zoning Map. R-3 requires a 3 acre minimum lot size, R5 requires a 5 acre minimum lot size. The Development Limitations Overlay District includes flood hazard areas, wetlands, steep slopes >15%, elevations of 2500' or more, and watershed areas that have more than 50% of the land in parcels less than 25 acres. Its purpose is to protect these areas of town from over-development. Minimum lot sizes are doubled in this overlay to protect those resources. Zoning requires special permits for some land uses and includes site plan review for many uses within the Business Commercial District.

**Subdivision:** A subdivision law was adopted in 1984 and has been amended in 1989. It creates minor and major subdivision procedures along with development improvements such as roads, drainage, and utilities. Minor subdivisions are considered those having 4 to 10 lots on a public road, 2 to 4 lots on a private road meeting Town specifications, and 2 lots of 25-acres or more on a private right-of-way. The law also includes specifications for new roads.

**NYC DEP Watershed Regulations:** Some key elements of the Watershed Regulations (from the Catskill Watershed Corporation Website at <http://www.cwconline.org/pubs/moa.html>) include:

Construction of new wastewater treatment plants are prohibited in certain basins, and all existing wastewater treatment plants must install sophisticated wastewater treatment

technology within 5 years, for which the City will pay. In addition, plants are not allowed to discharge effluent into wetlands and may only discharge into intermittent streams subject to NYSDEC standards.

All septic systems installed, repaired or replaced in the Watershed require prior approval by the City, and no septic systems are allowed within 100 feet of a watercourse or wetland or within 300 feet of a reservoir. It should be noted that these standards are state-wide standards, and not exclusive to the Watershed.

No new impervious surfaces are permitted within 300 feet of a reservoir, or 100 feet of a watercourse or wetland. Some exemptions to this rule exist for villages, hamlets, commercially zoned areas, and single family home construction.

Construction of new roads are prohibited within 50 feet of intermittent streams or wetlands, 100 feet of perennial streams or 300 feet of a reservoir. Access roads to subdivisions are allowed within the 100 foot buffer subject to approval by the City of a stormwater pollution prevention plan.

The location of new petroleum storage tanks are restricted. For example, no new gas stations or underground home heating oil tanks are permitted within 100 feet of a watercourse or 500 feet of a reservoir.

No new registered hazardous substance storage tanks are permitted within 100 feet of a watercourse or 500 feet of a reservoir.

Many types of new commercial and industrial projects within the Watershed now require the preparation of a "Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan" (SPPP), which must be reviewed and approved by the City before final project approval may be granted. Examples of projects that would require a SPPP include: the development or disturbance of land greater than 5 acres in size; construction of a subdivision (defined as 5 lots or more of 5 acres or less each), a new paved road or a gasoline station; construction of a new industrial, commercial or multi-family residential project that will create more than 40,000 square feet of impervious surfaces; construction of an impervious surface in a village, hamlet, or commercially or industrially-zoned area in the Watershed; an expansion of up to 25% of an existing commercial or industrial facility's impervious surfaces if it's within 100 feet of a watercourse or wetland.

Provisions in the Watershed Regulations that will affect homeowners most are those that deal with the placement and operation of septic systems, the location of underground fuel oil storage tanks, and the construction of new impervious surfaces (i.e. driveways) on residential property. However, even though a homeowner may live in the Watershed, the revised regulations will have the greatest impact on those homeowners who live near water -- like reservoirs, wetlands and streams.

All existing septic systems that are operating according to federal, state and local approvals, but don't meet the additional requirements of the watershed regulations, are

allowed to continue. However, if a septic system should fail and need major replacement, its repair should be made according to the new standards. If, because of site limitations or other conditions, that is impossible, the owner must work with NYCDEP to determine the most appropriate design and location. In addition, NYCDEP must review and approve any modification, expansion or remediation of an existing septic system. Routine repairs and maintenance are not affected by the regulations.

With regard to new septic systems, the NYCDEP will continue to monitor and approve design, treatment methods, construction, maintenance and operation. New conventional septic systems will not be allowed within 100 feet of a watercourse or 300 feet of a reservoir. When site conditions are unsuitable for a conventional system, raised systems are allowed, with certain restrictions on location.

In addition, DEP regulations:

- prohibit mound systems, intermittent sand filters and evapotranspiration/absorption systems;
- require an additional area of at least 100% of the primary absorption field's area to be set aside as a reserve field;
- prohibit the building of primary or reserve fields under pavement or other impervious surfaces;
- call for at least one percolation test and one deep hole test to be performed;
- prohibit the siting of new septic systems where soil percolation rates are inadequate;
- require a pump system to have a backup storage tank capable of holding one day's flow.

The watershed regulations govern the siting of new impervious (i.e. paved) surfaces such as roads, roofs and parking lots. The regulations prohibit the construction of impervious surfaces within 100 feet of a watercourse or 300 feet of a reservoir, except in the following circumstances: the construction of improvements or additions to an individual residence (as long as they are non-commercial); agricultural activities; the construction of a new road needed to provide access to 2 or more parcels of land or to a subdivision; the paving of an existing dirt or gravel road; the construction of a driveway, where the driveway is needed to provide access to an existing residence.

With regard to limits on new residential construction, impervious surfaces are prohibited within 300 feet of a reservoir. In addition, the construction of new homes within 100 feet of a perennial stream or wetland, in most cases, will be permitted, but will require an "Individual Residential Stormwater Permit" from the NYCDEP.

**Build-Out Analysis:** Delaware County Planning Department conducted a buildout analysis for the Town of Middletown. This study calculated the acreage available for future building taking into consideration slopes >15%, floodplains, wetlands, wetland buffers, and a 100-foot buffer around streams. Total land mass in Town is 59,167 acres of which 42,465 acres are in slopes >15% and 4,849 are in water features. Thus the buildable acres with no environmental constraints available for future development in

town is 11,851 acres of land. This does not include county, state, NYC DEP lands, and town owned or controlled lands. (See Preliminary Analysis of Buildable Land in the Town of Middletown map). Lands included in the 15% or greater slope category would not be developable using conventional septic systems due to NYC DEP regulations. However, they would be developable for engineered systems.

## Commercial/Economic Resources

The following information about commercial use for Middletown is from the US Census County Business Patterns by zip code. This information excludes data on self to employed individuals, employees of private households, railroad employees, agricultural production employees, and most government employees. Business activity in Town includes about 81 establishments in Margaretville. All three zip code areas had slight increases in the number of establishments between 1998 and 2006. Payroll, number of employees and annual payroll for each zip code area also saw increases.

## Industries and Businesses in Middletown

**Table 20: Business Information for Zip Codes 12406, 13731, and 12455, 2006 & 1998**

	12406 (Arkville)		12455		12430 (Fleishmanns)	
	2006	1998	2006	1998	2006	1998
Number of Establishments	22	19	81	79	21	30
First Quarter payroll in \$1000	162	477	4,438	2,890	695	370
Number of Employees	111	122	748	663	77	110
Annual payroll in \$1000	2,700	2,191	18,531	12,757	3,678	1,801

In 1998, the industries represented in Table 20 for zip code 12455, above, included a variety of businesses in 17 different industry classes. The category with the most establishments was retail trade – with 20 businesses. Most of the businesses had between 1 and 4 employees, followed by 17 that had between 5 and 9 employees. There were two businesses that had over 100 employees (health care and social services). Zip code 12406 (Arkville) also had a variety of businesses (10 different types), but none as dominant as retail in Margaretville. The Fleishmanns zip code (12430) also had 10 different business types with six of the 21 establishments being retail trade related businesses. However, in 1998, Fleishmanns had 30 different businesses, eight in retail trade, seven in accommodation and food services, and four in construction. By 2006, Fleishmanns had significantly reduced the number of businesses related to accommodation and food service.

By 2006, there were 11 different classes of businesses in the Margaretville zip code. Retail businesses were still the most common (19 of the total 81), but professional and

technical services were much more prevalent than in 1998 (11 of the 81 businesses). Health care and social services still had over 100 employees in 2006. The business pattern for Arkville was similar as well in 2000. As in other years, most establishments are businesses with a small number of employees.

**Table 21: Occupations by Number of Employed Persons 16 Years or Older, 2000**

<b>Industry</b>	<b># of Employed Persons in Town of Middletown</b>
<b>Educational, Health, and Social Services</b>	391
<b>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Service</b>	219
<b>Retail Trade</b>	172
<b>Construction</b>	167
<b>Manufacturing</b>	165
<b>Other Services</b>	102
<b>Public Administration</b>	93
<b>Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative</b>	90
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	75
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining</b>	66
<b>Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing</b>	65
<b>Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities</b>	62
<b>Information</b>	36

**Table 22: Comparison of Occupations, 2000**

<b>Occupations</b>	<b>% of Employed Persons, Aged 16 and older</b>		
	<b>Town of Middletown</b>	<b>Delaware County</b>	<b>New York State</b>
<b>Sales and Office Occupations</b>	26.0%	22.0%	27.1%
<b>Management, Professional, and Related</b>	29.5%	32.4%	36.7%
<b>Service Occupations</b>	18.1%	19.7%	16.6%
<b>Production, Transportation, and Material Moving</b>	12.4%	14.1%	11.7%
<b>Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance</b>	11.6%	10.2%	7.6%
<b>Farming, Fishing, and Forestry</b>	2.4%	1.6%	0.3%

According to the US Census, there has been a 17% increase in the number of Middletown residents in the labor force: this represents slightly more than half of the population aged 16 and over. Usually, much of this can be accounted for by more women entering the workforce. Unemployment rate was very low (3.48% in 2000) and about 45% of residents are not in the labor force.

**Table 23: Employment Data for Town of Middletown (for those aged 16 and older)**

<b>Labor force</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990 to 2000 Change</b>
<b>People in labor force</b>	1,549	1,814 (55.0%)	17.1%
<b>People Unemployed</b>	203	111 (3.4%)	-45.3%
<b>People not in labor force (including retired)</b>	1,222	1,482 (45.0%)	21.3%

**Income Data for Middletown**

The median income level for families and per capita income levels (Table 24) have increased dramatically since 1990. At the same time, the number of households with social security income increased slightly (7.8%). The number of households receiving public assistance has decreased since 1990, but the number of individuals and families living below the poverty level increased. The decrease in public assistance is usually accounted for by changes in the Federal program and definitions for eligibility. There was a slight decrease in retirement income households, but a 10.5% increase in self-employment households.

**Table 24: Income Data for Town of Middletown**

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990 to 2000 Change</b>
<b>Median Income for Families</b>	\$19,592	\$36,818	87.9%
<b>Per capita income</b>	\$11,285	\$17,635	56.3%
<b>Social Security Households</b>	617	665	7.8%
<b>Public assistance households</b>	98	32	-67.3%
<b>Retirement income</b>	350	345	-1.4%

	1990	2000	1990 to 2000 Change
<b>households</b>			
<b>Self employment households</b>	277	306	10.5%
<b>Farm self employment households</b>	41	NA	NA
<b>Individuals below poverty level</b>	537	638	18.8%
<b>Percent of people living below poverty level</b>	15.9%	16.8%	5.7%

In 2000, 665 households had social security income, 32 had public assistance income, and 345 had retirement income. About 17% of families lived below the poverty level (638 individuals).

Table 25 compares median household and family incomes to neighboring towns. Compared to these other municipalities, Middletown’s households and families had the lowest median income levels compared to all adjacent towns and New York State.

**Table 25: Comparison of Median Family and Household Incomes, 1999**

Town/State	Median Household Income	Median Family Income
<b>New York State</b>	\$43,393	\$ 51,691
<b>Delaware County</b>	\$41,094	\$48,015
<b>Andes</b>	\$35,119	\$39,474
<b>Bovina</b>	\$43,359	\$46,094
<b>Roxbury</b>	\$32,214	\$40,721
<b>Middletown</b>	\$31,346	\$36,818

## Regional Planning Efforts

Town Planning Efforts: The Town of Middletown adopted a comprehensive plan in 1985. This effort included a survey of residents, establishment of a vision, goals and objectives, and a land use study of the Town. An update to this plan was developed in April of 1996, but was never adopted. This update emphasized zoning changes and recommendations for development standards. In 2002, the town did another survey (see Appendix XX for results). Wellhead protection studies have been completed by the County for the Town and a Stormwater Management Plan was developed and adopted for

the Village of Margaretville and Town of Middletown.

**Village Planning Efforts:** The Village of Margaretville has drafted a new comprehensive plan and is currently considering adoption of this.

The Village of Fleischmanns initiated a comprehensive planning process in the summer of 2008.

**Route 28 Corridor Study:** The Town of Middletown will be participating in an upcoming State-funded planning effort with neighboring municipalities to develop a Route 28 Corridor Plan to promote revitalization efforts along this vital economic corridor.

**Town of Middletown Economic Development Plan:** The Town of Middletown will be participating with the Village of Margaretville, Roxbury and Andes in an upcoming State-funded planning effort to comprehensively analyze and plan for economic development.

**County Planning Efforts:** Delaware County completed a county-wide Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan in December 2002. They are currently working on a county Comprehensive Plan, and County Economic Development Plan. The Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District has prepared an extensive Stream Corridor Management Plan for the East Branch of the Delaware River.

**Watershed Related Planning:** NYC DEP sponsored programs include the following:

- Margaretville Central School District bus garage stormwater retrofit (contract complete)
- Village of Margaretville stormwater contracts for sump pumps and various drainage projects
- Village of Margaretville city-owned wastewater treatment plant with proposed sewer extensions.
- Salt Storage Facilities in the Village of Fleishmanns, Town of Middletown, and the Village of Margaretville (and Delaware County)
- Whole Farm Plans (one whole farm plan approved and 1 commenced with implementation. Four farms have signed up for Whole Farm Plan activities. Five Whole Farm Plans were substantially implemented in 2002.
- Stream Management Plan for the East Branch, Delaware River
- Five forest management plans pending and 17 forest management plans are completed.

## Part II: Vision, Goals, Strategies

### Strengths, Weaknesses, and Issues

#### Liabilities

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Identified as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Aesthetic look of businesses – design of franchise buildings	✓		
Clearcutting of land	✓		
Decreasing school enrollments, especially in Margaretville Central School District		✓	
Flooding issues in the Village of Margaretville and other locations in the town		✓	
High housing costs	✓	✓	A YYY
High taxes and cost of public services, especially for highway	✓	✓	Y
Higher number of individuals living below the poverty level compared to surrounding towns		✓	
Lack of affordable housing	✓	✓	A

Town of Middletown **Draft** Comprehensive Plan May 2009 (V4)

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Identified as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Lack of cellular service and high speed internet	✓		AAAAA YYYY
Lack of community center	✓		A
Lack of coordination in planning and communication between Town and villages and various organizations		✓	
Lack of cultural opportunities (possibly coming) This was linked to community center	✓		A Y
Lack of full historic inventory		✓	
Lack of jobs, especially for young people	✓	✓	AAA YYYYYYY
Lack of recreational opportunities or access to recreation – especially on New York City lands along the E. Branch	✓	✓	A YYY
Lack of technology and high skilled jobs	✓	✓	AAA
Loss of farms and farmland	✓	✓	
Loss of very young children in community coupled with a pronounced aging population. Large loss of school-aged children.		✓	
Lower median household incomes compared to surrounding towns		✓	

Town of Middletown **Draft** Comprehensive Plan May 2009 (V4)

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Identified as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Maintenance of non-paved roads	✓		
More services are needed for second home owners, there are fewer volunteers and second homeowners don't participate in community events and activities	✓		
More housing units and households than population increase. This reflects second home ownership patterns.		✓	
New York City buying a lot of land in Town and removing land from the tax rolls is a large issue	✓		AAA Y
New York City regulations	✓		
Not enough stores and businesses; keeping stores in business is difficult; there is need for streamline permitting	✓		A Y
Sprawl along Route 28; aesthetics – need design standards for commercial buildings	✓		
Stream bank erosion and inability of landowner to manage streams on their land	✓		
Transportation difficulties – you can only get around if you have a car	✓		A Y
Volunteer fire departments having difficulty recruiting volunteer members		✓	

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Identified as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Wind, water and gas exploration	✓		

**Strengths**

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Indicated as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Catskill Park and Forest Preserve Trail Systems	✓		
Clean air and water	✓		AA YYYY
Community organizations	✓	✓	
Delaware and Ulster Railroad	✓		
East Branch Delaware River	✓		A Y

Town of Middletown **Draft** Comprehensive Plan May 2009 (V4)

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Indicated as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Effective zoning and land use regulations	✓		A
Environmental resources	✓		
Friendly people	✓		
Hamlets and villages	✓		AA
Historic resources	✓		
Housing is low density	✓		
Improved appearance of community	✓		
Improving Main Street Margaretville	✓		A Y
Increase in ethnic diversity of community	✓		
Libraries	✓		
Low population density	✓		
Margaretville , Arena, Arkville, Fleischmanns, Halcottsville Fire Departments	✓		
Margaretville Memorial Hospital	✓		AA
Mountains and ridgelines	✓		A YYY
Multiple use development initiatives	✓		A
Natural resources (furniture making)	✓		
New York City lands for recreation	✓		

Town of Middletown **Draft** Comprehensive Plan May 2009 (V4)

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Indicated as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Open Space	✓		Y
Peace and quiet	✓		YY
Proximity to recreation and ski centers	✓		A
Recreation Committee exists	✓		
Recreational opportunities	✓	✓	YY
Regional planning efforts are underway including stream corridor management plan, village planning, county comprehensive plan, Route 28 Scenic Byway nomination, etc.		✓	
Road maintenance	✓		A Y
Rural and small town atmosphere	✓		AAAA
Scenic beauty	✓		A YYY
School	✓		Y
Senior services	✓		
Sense of community and community spirit	✓		
Services for people with disabilities	✓		A
Tourism	✓		A
Village parks	✓		

Town of Middletown **Draft** Comprehensive Plan May 2009 (V4)

Feature	Identified Through Public Input	Identified Through Analysis of Profile & Inventory	Indicated as a Priority Issue from Public Input Workshop ("A" indicates one vote from public workshop; "Y" indicates one vote from youth workshop)
Wilderness atmosphere close by	✓		Y
Updated infrastructure such as water/sewer infrastructure in villages, salt shed		✓	

A member of the Planning Board, together with the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development conducted a strengths and weakness workshop with students from the Margaretville Central School District. They identified their top three liabilities and strengths about the town. These are recorded in the above table. As part of this effort, the students also wrote letters to the editor to summarize their thoughts. These letters indicated that lack of jobs for youth was the top concern shared by many youth. Some of the other comments related to liabilities included lack of recreation for youth, poor maintenance of the River Walk, people taking for granted the natural beauty of the area, outdated library, need for more volunteers for the fire department, and trail maintenance. As for strengths, most young people recognized the areas scenic beauty, and its peaceful and quiet nature as being a strong asset.

## **Middletown's Character Defined**

- Beautiful
- Scenic
- Friendly
- Long way from the City but not too far
- Picturesque
- Convenient village walking
- Beautiful mountains
- Economic diversity of population
- Rural with farms, woodlands, open space, small town features, low density, hamlets and villages, barns
- Peace and quiet
- Outdoor recreation
- Artistic and creative community
- Easy for visitors to get to and at the cross roads of two state highways
- People are entrepreneurial and resourceful
- Second homeowners
- A bedroom community
- Has full public services such as hospital and grocery store (these features are here but there is not a lot of variety)

## **Vision Statement**

In the future, the Town of Middletown will be a place where the scenic beauty of the mountains remains a hallmark that defines our community. Open spaces and a clean environment will support outdoor recreation, wildlife habitats, and contribute to a high quality of life for residents. Sustainable and thriving farms and farmland will be preserved and support a diversity of traditional and alternative agricultural businesses that provide fresh and safe local foods year round. Quality housing will be available to meet the needs of people at all income levels. Senior citizens will have many housing opportunities in Middletown that allows them to stay here to age in place and remain active members of our community. Middletown will offer recreational programs and facilities that offer indoor, outdoor, passive and active activities for all ages.

The Town will have beautiful hamlets and villages that are vital and thriving and that are the central focus for shopping and cultural opportunities. Our area will be supported by an excellent school system and we will have a high

quality of life that makes Middletown an attractive location for new year-round employment and residential opportunities. Part time residents will take an active role in all aspects of our community life.

Our villages will be vibrant and remain the economic focus of our community with a variety of retail, service, dining, and cultural opportunities that meet the everyday needs of our residents. Middletown will be home to new, innovative, clean and green light industrial and commercial businesses that are developed and operated in ways that honor our small town and aesthetic character and our desire to remain environmentally sustainable. Jobs for varying skill levels and ages allows for working wages and salaries for all. Workforce training, especially in work ethics and promotion will be available to assist businesses. Modern telecommunication services will be available to all residents and businesses including cellular and high speed internet.

Roads will be well maintained. Accessibility to and within Middletown is improved through a variety of alternative transportation options such as low cost bus or rail road service. Designated byways showcase our scenic beauty and link our villages and hamlets that provide economic opportunities related to tourism and recreational development. Parking will be managed and promoted.

Our natural beauty, traditional villages and hamlets, cultural and historic resources, attractive streets, buildings and roads all contribute to our community character. A small town lifestyle that promotes neighborliness, community spirit, and pride will be vital parts of who we are as a community. Parks and recreation facilities, a diversity of quality retail services, thriving main streets, and active community life defines our community character. We maintain our uniqueness by ensuring that our built and natural environment including signage, buildings, roads, and development patterns reflect these values. Quality public services including a full service hospital will be provided for. The tax burden needed to provide quality local services is supported through fair taxes paid by New York City.

## Goals

Goals describe future expected outcomes. They provide programmatic direction and focus on ends rather than means.

1. To preserve and extend the enjoyment of peace and tranquility of residents on their land and to provide an improved quality of life for the Town.
2. To conserve the land, water, forest, mineral, historic and scenic resources of the Town for the use and enjoyment of all its residents.
3. To prevent degradation of the quality of the surface and groundwater supply.
4. To encourage the properly regulated and soundly built development of housing, business, industry and community facilities according to a master plan of balanced use.
5. To assure that every dwelling and place of work is supported by an adequate supply of potable water, sewage treatment and disposal, solid waste disposal, energy and access.
6. To promote the safe, efficient, and attractive circulation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
7. To provide adequate land and resources for recreation and preservation of the Town's rural character.
8. To maintain a balanced and equitable tax base.
9. To protect buildings and people from the harm of flood, fire, detrimental land use, and impairment of their natural resources.
10. To ensure that this area is a place where you can live, work and thrive spiritually and economically ones entire life.

## **Objectives**

Objectives are clear, realistic, specific, and measurable statements of action which when completed, will move towards goal achievement.

The following objectives, when implemented by the year 2020 support the goals:

### **1. Jobs, Business and Economic Development**

Increase the diversity of industry and commerce in the community. Develop a comprehensive economic development strategy that promotes Middletown as an attractive destination for visitors, home occupations, and new businesses.

Provide for the development of retail and commercial uses in Arkville, in commercial nodes along Route 28, adjacent to the Village of Margaretville, and in other appropriate locations such as hamlets.

Promote cooperative programs that provide area youth job training and with opportunities to learn and offer businesses manpower resources.

Work cooperatively with the area chambers of commerce and the MARK programs to secure and expand appropriate business opportunities in town.

### **2. Open Space and Resource Protection (Land, Water, Forest, Mineral, Historic, Scenic, Wildlife)**

Promote land uses and practices that are consistent with the capacity of the land and other resources. Promote the protection of environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, streams and stream corridors, steep slopes, floodplains).

Participate in watershed and stream protection to minimize the negative impacts of flooding, erosion, sedimentation and storm drainage on natural resources.

Consider scenic resources as an important natural element and minimize negative visual impacts of development on these areas.

Plan for open spaces during project approvals.

### **3. Land Uses (Residential, Non-Residential, Agriculture)**

Manage growth to ensure that development occurs at an appropriate scale and design consistent with the small town and rural character of Middletown, and with adjacent land uses.

Recognize agriculture as an important environmental, economic, and aesthetic component of Middletown and enhance the economic stability of the farming community. Maintain viable and valuable farmland and farm soils and build public support for the area's farms and farmers.

Strengthen existing commercial areas in the Town and encourage new commercial development which would not compromise the community's basic character.

Promote sustainable land use practices and energy efficient development.

Encourage provision of a greater variety of housing styles and types to accommodate a wider range of housing preferences, income levels, and household types. Promote development of housing in a manner that discourages rural sprawl, enables residents to use existing services and infrastructure efficiently, and that protects the environment.

### **4. Infrastructure and Community Services (Internet/Cellular, Transportation, Emergency Services)**

Maintain adequate fire and ambulance services in the Town.

Provide high-quality town facilities and services at an acceptable cost to taxpayers. Foster a balance and diversity of uses within the Town to control the costs of, and need for public services.

Provide for up-to-date communication services.

Ensure that local roads are built and maintained consistent with rural road standards.

Promote alternative and public transportation options.

### **5. Recreation**

Enhance trails and pathways as important recreational resources.

Continue to work with Delaware County, New York State, and New York City to ensure that County, State, and City owned lands contribute to local recreational resources and the local economy.

**6. Quality of Life and Community Development**

Promote, protect and create community gatherings, social interaction and locations that bring people together.

Promote volunteerism.

Initiate education programs for the public on the importance of preserving the towns' culture and heritage.

Provide for the needs of senior citizens to help them remain in the community.

**7. Government**

Promote sharing, cooperation and communication between the Town of Middletown and the Villages of Margaretville and Fleishmanns as well as adjacent towns.

## **Strategies and Actions**

## **Appendix A. Elements of a Vision for Middletown, from Workshop**

During the Public Workshop, the following elements were identified as being important to be a part of Middletown's future:

### **Environment and Open Space**

- Better use of city land and reservoir
- Scenic beauty is intact and recreational opportunities abundant
- Scenic beauty
- Preserved wilderness and wildlife
- Keep the mountains free from exploitation
- Places to swim
- The area is a showcase for environmentally sound farming (including logging) and eco-tourism (including hunting and fishing)
- More development must keep the beauty of the mountains

*Summary: The scenic beauty of the mountains is maintained. Open spaces and a clean environment exist that support outdoor recreation, wildlife, and a quality of life for residents. Environmentally sound farming and eco-tourism compatibly exist in this context.*

### **Agriculture**

- Strong agricultural businesses with strong family ties
- Increase in local farms and sustainable agriculture
- Encourage preservation of farms and farmland
- Alternative agriculture
- Farmers markets
- Thriving agriculture
- Farm market year round

*Summary: Farms and farmland are preserved and support a diversity of traditional and alternative agricultural businesses. Local foods and produce are available year round.*

### **Housing**

- Better balance of full and part time residents
- Include senior housing (not necessarily affordable) within walking distance of village
- Housing for all segments of the economic population
- Housing costs decreased
- Affordable housing for low, middle and senior incomes
- A wide variety of housing at all cost levels
- Better Belleayre project
- Senior housing
- Housing that blends with the existing environment

Senior housing with assisted living

*Summary: Quality housing is available to meet the needs of people at all income levels. Senior citizens have many housing opportunities in Middletown that allows them to stay here and age in place and remain active members of our community.*

**Community**

Ways to connect part time owners

Movie theater

Margaretville Hospital

Public pool

Poor and recreational center

Large town recreational center

Good activities for seniors and teens

As you toured the area meeting people and seeing their offerings, you would feel an energy of life, a zest for living, a can-do attitude

Attractive to tourists and young families

Increase in young families and organizations for children

Improved streetscapes and sidewalks and plantings

Inclusive recreational activities/opportunities

Continue excellent school

Lots of activities every day of the week

Movie theater

Development of the water museum and community recreation park

Beautiful supermarket that sells fresh food at good prices

Good destination restaurant and good family restaurant

Outdoor café

Develop better visible and physical access to trail system

*Part time residents have an active role in our community life. Middletown offers a recreational programs and facilities that offer indoor and outdoor, as well as passive and active activities for all ages. Recreational development promotes and enhances responsible access to our outdoor resources. The Town has beautiful hamlets and villages that are vital and thriving and that are the central focus for shopping and cultural opportunities. Our area is supported by an excellent school system. We have a high quality of life that makes Middletown an attractive location for new year round employment and residential opportunities.*

**Technology**

Cell phone services

Cell phones and other TI technologies

Full cell phone and internet services for all residents

High tech and well paid commercial industry and jobs

Cell service

Innovation partnership with land grant university to global leadership in land use best practices

Cell service  
Some type of new industry/business to create jobs  
Rural access  
Universal cell service

*Summary: Modern telecommunication services are available to all residents and businesses including cellular and high speed internet. As such, Middletown is attractive to high-tech commercial businesses.*

### **Jobs, Business and Economy**

Villages would be vibrantly alive every day of the week during the day and the evening with shopping, dining, and entertainment, recreation  
Incubator for rural sustainability  
Thriving local economy where all essentials (food, clothing, building materials) are available  
Many more retail stores  
Work on improving the villages and not build big resorts  
Diverse shopping facilities  
Two expanded supermarkets  
Local industry  
Industrial development at a minimum  
New retail shopping for all necessary items  
Many small and clean industries  
Professional services  
Training and jobs for young people  
More jobs  
Variety of stores and restaurants  
People would be clamoring to come to the area to work and live here full time  
Encourage business to come here but yet stay within the smallness and scale of the villages  
Place where young people would like to be to work and live

*Summary: Our villages are vibrant and remain the economic focus of our community with a variety of retail, service, dining, and cultural opportunities that meet the everyday needs of our residents. Middletown is home to new, innovative, clean and green light industrial and commercial businesses that are developed and operated in manners that honor our small town and aesthetic character our desire to remain environmentally sustainable.*

### **Transportation and Traffic**

Good maintenance of highways  
Dial a ride taxi service  
Transportation buses or railroad  
Town or county free or low cost bus service like Ulster County  
Local transportation made available to all residents  
Scenic byway designation

Light rail service

Improve the accessibility of getting here – better rail lines

Management of parking and promote availability

*Summary: Roads are well maintained. Accessibility to and within Middletown is improved through a variety of alternative transportation options such as low cost bus or rail road service. Designated byways showcase our scenic beauty and link our villages and hamlets to provide economic opportunities related to tourism and recreational development. Parking is managed and promoted.*

### **Community Character**

Parks and recreational facilities

We don't have to travel 50 miles to shop

Full retail services (butcher, baker, etc.) with balance of tourism related business

Active family farms

Busy Main Street with lots of pedestrians

No empty store fronts of villages

Attractive and inviting entry to Arkville and Margaretville

Unified design of Route 28

Small Town lifestyle and character are intact

Community center

Community events and festivals

Economic diversity – high, middle, and low income families all living in Middletown

Attractive signage

Historical events and fairs and festivals

Coordinated architecture for Main Street businesses

Landscaped parking

Tourist kiosk across from A & P

Small industry that utilize local resources

Retain the beauty of the area, mountains, trees, forests, lakes

Available transportation to nearby cities

Better communication between town and villages

*Summary: Our natural beauty, traditional villages and hamlets, cultural and historic resources, attractive streets and buildings and roads all contribute to our community character. A small town lifestyle that promotes neighborliness, community spirit, and pride are vital parts of our community character. Middletown has parks and recreation facilities, a diversity of quality retail services, thriving main streets, and active community life. Our community character is defined by these features and we express this in attractive and well-designed signage, buildings, roads, and programs.*

### **Taxes**

Lower taxes

NYC pay fair taxes

City pays taxes of all full time residents

*Draft Summary: The tax burden of providing local services is supported through fair taxes paid by New York City.*

**Other**

Expanded cultural activities

Businesses and recreational facilities to keep our young people here

Improve Belleayres ski center

Adequate services

Live theater

A hospital that has complete services

*Summary of items not addressed elsewhere: Quality public services including a full service hospital are provided for.*