A Guide to Comprehensive Planning for Kingston, NY

Presented to Ward 9 Citizens Committee
on Sept. 20, 2007 by:
Suzanne Cahill, Kingston City Planner
Dennis Doyle, Director, Ulster County Planning
Jennifer Schwartz, Deputy Director, Ulster County Planning

Comprehensive Planning = generating a shared vision

What is Comprehensive Planning?

Laws of New York State
Village Law § 7-722
Town Law § 272-a
General City Law § 28-a

A written document that identifies the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, and strategies for the growth and development of the community.

Purpose
- Basis for all land use regulation
- Guides capital expenditures
- Protects community resources
- Builds public support
- Creates a shared vision in the community

Why do Comprehensive Planning?

- Identify Community Assets and Liabilities
- Establish a Positive, Community Vision
- Recommend Preferred Future Actions
- Identify Actions to Ensure Economic Stability
- Protect and Enhance the Tax Base
- Provide Guidance to Governmental and Non-governmental interests Active in the Community
- Improve Overall Access to Financial and Technical Assistance

Kingston's Plans

- Original City of Kingston Comprehensive Development Plan (1961)

- City of Kingston Zoning Ordinance (Last Comprehensive Update 1985), Subsequent Updates both Map and Text

- Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

- Urban Cultural Park Management Plan (Now known as the Heritage Area Plan)

- Kingston Waterfront Development Implementation Plan

- Midtown East Intensive Level Cultural Resources Survey (CLG)

- Midtown West Intensive Level Cultural Resources Survey (CLG)

Kingston Plans, cont'd

- Empire Development Zone Program (Now Known as the Empire Zone Program)

- City of Kingston Reconnaissance Level Archeological Survey (1990)

- Kingston Economic Base Diversification Master Plan Project (1998)

- Variety of Transportation/Enhancement Improvement Plans (i.e – Washington Avenue Corridor, Greenkill Avenue/Boulevard, Uptown Kingston Area)

- Development standards/design guidelines for Rondout and Midtown

Making Plans That Work

Now is Better than Later

- Shorten time frames – use a 12 month schedule rather than 18-24
- Identify priority issues/areas
- establish long term goals
- Concentrate on short term recommendations
- Focus on the positive – find solutions

Focus Rather Than Fat

- Background is background – or file the facts
- Summarize the process
- Planning principles not lectures
- Put Recommendations on the ground
- Assign implementation
- Find the funds

Know It When You See It

- Be visual – pictures are worth a thousand words

- Charts are better than paragraphs

- Maps force specifics

- Good graphics = good reception

- Reminder – always involve the public, include a representational cross-section

Unite Diversity

- Place plans in context – how to they work together as a system
- Coordinate regulatory approaches, capital investments, community efforts
- Unite built places and open spaces
- Link transportation and land use
- Collaborate with agencies, groups, and stakeholders

Act as a Community

- See Yourself as Other See You
- Neighbors should be Neighbors
- Listen to all Voices
- Find a Voice For Those not Present
- Reduce Fragmentation
- Empower Others
- Take Ownership

Case Example: Alexandria, VA

Includes and informs the public from the start

We're talking about your quality of life—JOIN US!

The City is holding community meetings throughout Alexandria to talk about your ideas for making *your* neighborhood even better.

Upcoming planning sessions this Spring:
- Landmark/Van Dorn
- Braddock Metro Area
- Infill Development
- Historic District Expansion

Visit the website for details. We'll see you there!
www.alexandriava.gov/planningandzoning

Participate in the Historic Preservation Forum this Spring!

Forum Kickoff will feature Keynote Speaker Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., of Charleston, South Carolina. Wednesday, April 26, 2006, 7:00 p.m. Visit our website for location and details.

Help Plan Your City's Future!

City of Alexandria
Department of Planning and Zoning
301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, VA 22314

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Merrifield, VA

Planning
Alexandria's
Future

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA VIRGINIA

walkable
diverse
historic
vibrant
thriving
beautiful!

A Future Rooted in the Past

Preserving Alexandria's diverse history:

- Defines our City's character and unique urban setting
- Provides lessons that guide planning for the future
- Establishes a model for new urban livability

Alexandria has always benefited from its location on the banks of the Potomac River, from its origins as a tobacco center to today's prime location for many Washington-related businesses. The City has expanded dramatically, but the essence of the historic port town has been preserved. Today, Old Town is a model of an urban village that we can emulate in new development, to ensure that residents and visitors can walk to shopping, jobs and home. Thoughtful planning and careful historic preservation will reinforce the early design principles that shaped the City.

A Shared Vision for the Future

Few cities have as many wonderful attributes as the City of Alexandria. Our historic resources, vibrant Old Town and waterfront, diverse residential neighborhoods, arts and cultural activities, parks and recreational opportunities and proximity to the nation's capitol make Alexandria a very desirable place to live, work and play.

It's not a surprise that our City now attracts significant investment interest in new development and revitalization. Our challenge is to ensure that we maintain and enhance the quality of life for all Alexandria residents.

"Alexandria is a vibrant, diverse, historic and beautiful City with unique neighborhoods and multiple urban villages where we take pride in our great community."

—Vision for Alexandria 2015

To achieve that, the City Council and the community created a shared Vision for Alexandria 2015, with common goals and a clear roadmap to the future. Alexandria will be a community with a "sense of place," usable open spaces, a safe and walkable environment, thriving neighborhoods, connection to communities by transit, affordable housing, and a mix of residential, retail and office uses.

The Departments of Planning and Zoning (P&Z), Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Transportation & Environmental Services, Housing, and Code Enforcement are the stewards for the Vision for Alexandria 2015 adopted by City Council. Working closely with neighborhoods across the City, an interagency team led by P&Z prepares Neighborhood Plans and Design Guidelines to achieve a livable community. Plans and guidelines in turn serve as the framework to shape all future development, ensuring high quality projects and the greatest benefits for the community. Together, we can expect the best for our City's future.

Planning Themes for a Livable Community

Preserve our History and Culture
Two historic districts, two review boards, and strong preservation elements in our Master Plan and Neighborhood Plans ensure that we preserve our City's important historic assets. Current initiatives seek to expand the historic districts and preserve 100-year-old buildings throughout Alexandria.

Create Transit-Oriented Development
Plans that optimize transit, such as the Eisenhower East and Braddock Road Plans, concentrate a mix of office, shopping, housing and entertainment with usable open space around existing Metro stations. Safe and active streetscapes encourage people to walk instead of drive, reduce traffic congestion and boost the area's vibrancy day and night.

Create Livable Places with Housing Choices for All Residents
Plans for new urban villages, such as the Landmark/Van Dorn area, convert outmoded, suburban strip centers and car-oriented malls into walkable neighborhoods that blend shopping with residential uses, are conveniently connected to transit corridors and feature a wide range of housing choices for people of all ages and income levels.

Strengthen our Main Streets
Main Street strategies fortify our competitive regional edge by strengthening the historic character and identity of our downtown areas. The King Street Retail Strategy preserves the street's traditional urban feel, creates a vital sidewalk with unique local businesses, initiates public/private partnerships and provides parking and transit options.

Preserve and Enhance Neighborhoods
Alexandria's neighborhoods each boast a distinct local identity. Neighborhood Plans celebrate that community character by enhancing existing strengths, establishing a high level of quality for new development, and ensuring that new buildings are compatible in size and form. In addition, the City provides incentives to stimulate investment in areas needing revitalization.

What Makes a Livable City?

All new development should help Alexandria grow in ways that reflect your goals and values. Here's what you've told us is important:

- A range of housing choices for all incomes
- Buildings that contribute to the City's character
- Vibrant, safe neighborhoods
- Attractive, walkable streets
- Easy access to transit
- Multiple transportation choices
- Locally owned businesses
- Economic development that leads to a range of quality job choices
- Usable, public open space
- Green, sustainable buildings
- Pride in a unique community

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Establishing the Framework: Master Planning in Alexandria

The City's Interagency Planning Team works continuously with residents across the City to create Neighborhood Plans, which together make up the City's Master Plan.

Neighborhood Plans:

- Define a livable community where transportation choices, open space, and affordable housing meet residents' needs
- Establish the quality and public benefits expected with new development
- Serve as the fundamental framework to guide us in Development Review

For more information about neighborhood plans, visit:
www.alexandriava.gov/planningandzoning

Legend:
- Current Planning Areas
- Pending Planning Areas
- Green Crescent Open Space

LANDMARK/VAN DORN
Focused on redeveloping the 1960s-style Landmark Mall and nearby strip shopping centers, the Plan features multiple mixed-use activity centers, a range of housing choices and visual and physical enhancements to this important City gateway. A comprehensive transportation strategy, an extensive open space network, improved walking and biking connections and increased transit service support a safe pedestrian experience.

MT. VERNON AVENUE
The Plan seeks to preserve the neighborhood's unique main street character, reinforcing its rich history and strengthening businesses, while attracting new investment and protecting nearby residences. Design guidelines protect the small town feel of the neighborhood and new City-funded improvements will make the Avenue safer and more inviting to walk and bicycle.

ARLANDRIA NEIGHBORHOOD
The Plan builds on the many strengths of this diverse area and encourages redevelopment of underused sites such as the former Safeway grocery store, with a marketing strategy to strengthen and attract businesses, retail guidelines to improve storefronts, and an action plan to address community concerns.
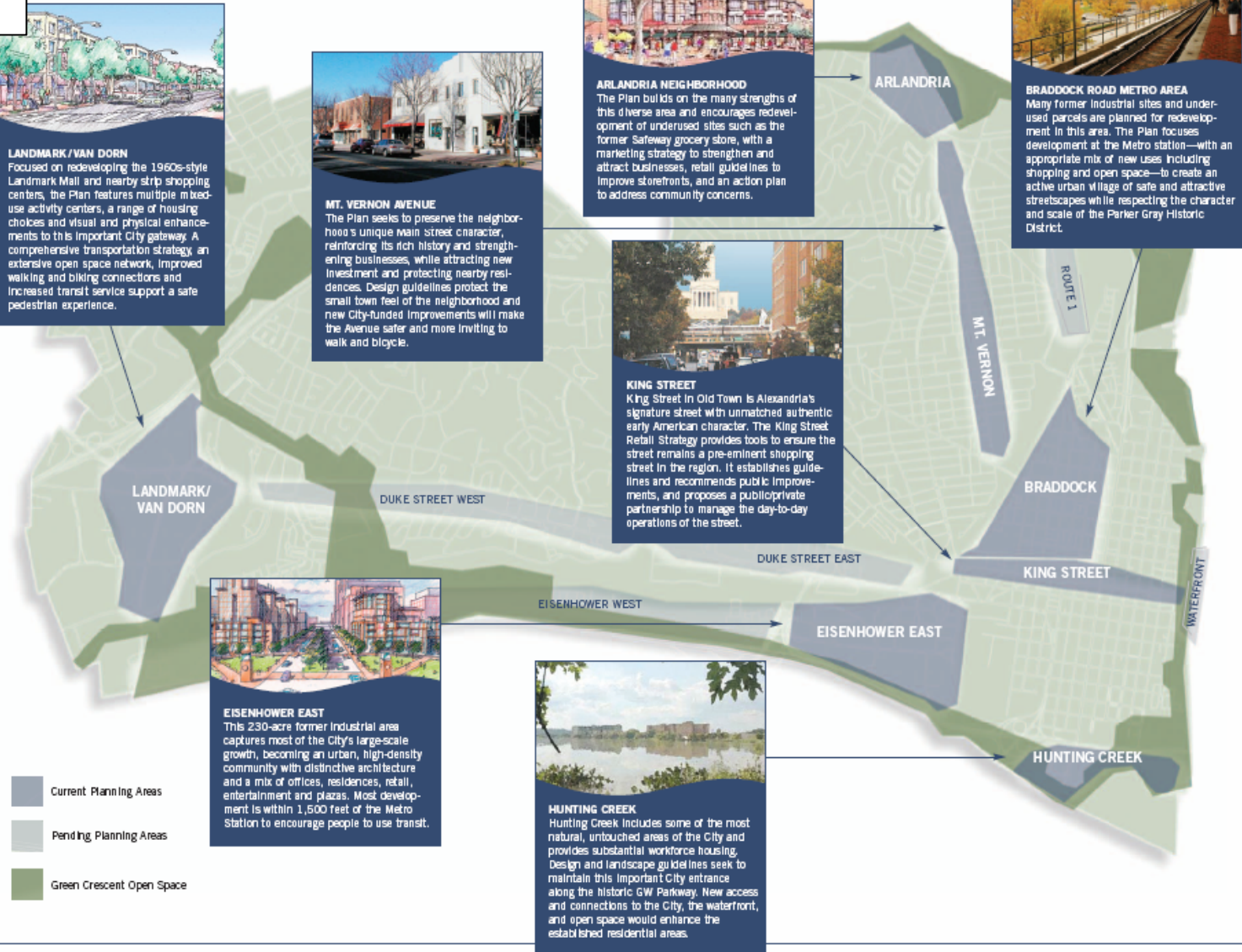
BRADDOCK ROAD METRO AREA
Many former industrial sites and underused parcels are planned for redevelopment in this area. The Plan focuses development at the Metro station—with an appropriate mix of new uses including shopping and open space—to create an active urban village of safe and attractive streetscapes while respecting the character and scale of the Parker Gray Historic District.

KING STREET
King Street in Old Town is Alexandria's signature street with unmatched authentic early American character. The King Street Retail Strategy provides tools to ensure the street remains a pre-eminent shopping street in the region. It establishes guidelines and recommends public improvements, and proposes a public/private partnership to manage the day-to-day operations of the street.

EISENHOWER EAST
This 230-acre former industrial area captures most of the City's large-scale growth, becoming an urban, high-density community with distinctive architecture and a mix of offices, residences, retail, entertainment and plazas. Most development is within 1,500 feet of the Metro Station to encourage people to use transit.

HUNTING CREEK
Hunting Creek includes some of the most natural, untouched areas of the City and provides substantial workforce housing. Design and landscape guidelines seek to maintain this important City entrance along the historic GW Parkway. New access and connections to the City, the waterfront, and open space would enhance the established residential areas.

Map labels: ARLANDRIA · LANDMARK/VAN DORN · DUKE STREET WEST · DUKE STREET EAST · EISENHOWER WEST · EISENHOWER EAST · MT. VERNON · ROUTE 1 · BRADDOCK · KING STREET · WATERFRONT · HUNTING CREEK

Making the Vision a Reality

Quality Development Contributes to the Character of Alexandria

Through good urban design and architecture, new buildings and redevelopment can be a rich addition to our urban fabric, reflecting our community values while creating special places in our neighborhoods. New development can also provide the community with significant public benefits that maintain its strong character and enhance our quality of life.

After establishing a framework for the future with Neighborhood Plans and Urban Design Guidelines, the City's next task is to review individual development applications. An open dialogue is fostered between the developer, the City and the public early and often in the multiple phases of review, ensuring that the project meets community expectations. Staff pays close attention to a project's potential impact on the surrounding neighborhood—both to maximize benefits such as open space and shopping, and to minimize impacts such as traffic and noise.

Alexandria Has Choices and Must Insist on the Best

We Expect New Projects To:
- Provide workforce housing
- Employ greenbuilding technology
- Use highest quality architectural design and building materials
- Create visual interest and add to the City's rich urban fabric
- Provide usable public open space, such as plazas or pocket parks
- Create walkable, safe and beautiful streetscapes with attractive lighting and generous landscaping and street trees
- Incorporate a mix of vital neighborhood uses—shopping, jobs, housing
- Complement existing neighborhoods with buildings of compatible scale
- Participate in comprehensive transportation strategies

Most importantly, new projects must contribute to the character of our extraordinary City.

Mission

The mission of the City's Interagency Planning Team is to involve the community in creating a shared vision for Alexandria's future and to ensure that all new development reflects that vision.

Get Involved!

Master Planning & Development Review

First, the City asks that you participate in helping to shape Neighborhood Plans so that they reflect your community goals with appropriate land use, density and urban design recommendations. Second, the City asks that you provide your neighborhood perspective when we review applications for new development to ensure that new growth meets community expectations. Contact P&Z or visit the website to get involved in these two important phases of our work—the City will provide you with information on current planning initiatives, workgroups and upcoming community meetings.

Represent Yourself or Your Community Group

Do you have suggestions or concerns about your neighborhood or a planned development? Tell P&Z, City Council or the Planning Commission what you think via email, a phone call, a letter, or by testifying at a public hearing. Or, get involved in your local community organization's land use committee and represent your group's views at a public hearing.

Participate in Community Planning Events

The City sponsors community forums on topics relevant to our Vision 2015, such as Smart Growth, Livable Communities, Walkable Communities, the Waterfront and Historic Preservation. We have also initiated a series of workshops in new "Planning Outreach Areas" throughout the City where staff will hear and discuss your neighborhood planning issues. The City meets with the Federation of Civic Associations and other community groups to provide information on current plans and projects, and engages the broader public in our planning process through neighborhood meetings.

Serve On Task Forces/Advisory Boards

The City and community can benefit from your technical knowledge in these groups that are appointed by City Council. For an application, call Citizen Assistance at 703-838-4800.

Visit the Website and stay informed!

The City updates the website regularly with new plans, input from community meetings and upcoming events. You can also subscribe to the City's eNews service to receive planning updates by email.

Visit *www.alexandriava.gov* and click on Planning and Zoning.

To contact us:

City of Alexandria
Department of Planning and Zoning
301 King Street, Room 2100
703-838-4666 (phone)
703-838-6393 (fax)
pnzfeedback@alexandriava.gov (email)
www.alexandriava.gov/planningandzoning

What Kind of City Do You Envision?

❑ Begin the discussion

❑ Investigate needs

❑ Take stock of assets and challenges

❑ Identify areas of opportunity

❑ Develop broad consensus

❑ Set priorities

Areas for Discussion

❑ Neighborhoods

❑ Public Facilities and Recreation

❑ Community Appearance and Aesthetics

❑ Business Development & Tourism

❑ Infrastructure

❑ Social Issues (e.g., "quality of life", crime, safety, education, diversity)

❑ Arts & Culture

❑ Open Space & Natural Resources

Kingston's Neighborhoods

Public Facilities and Recreation
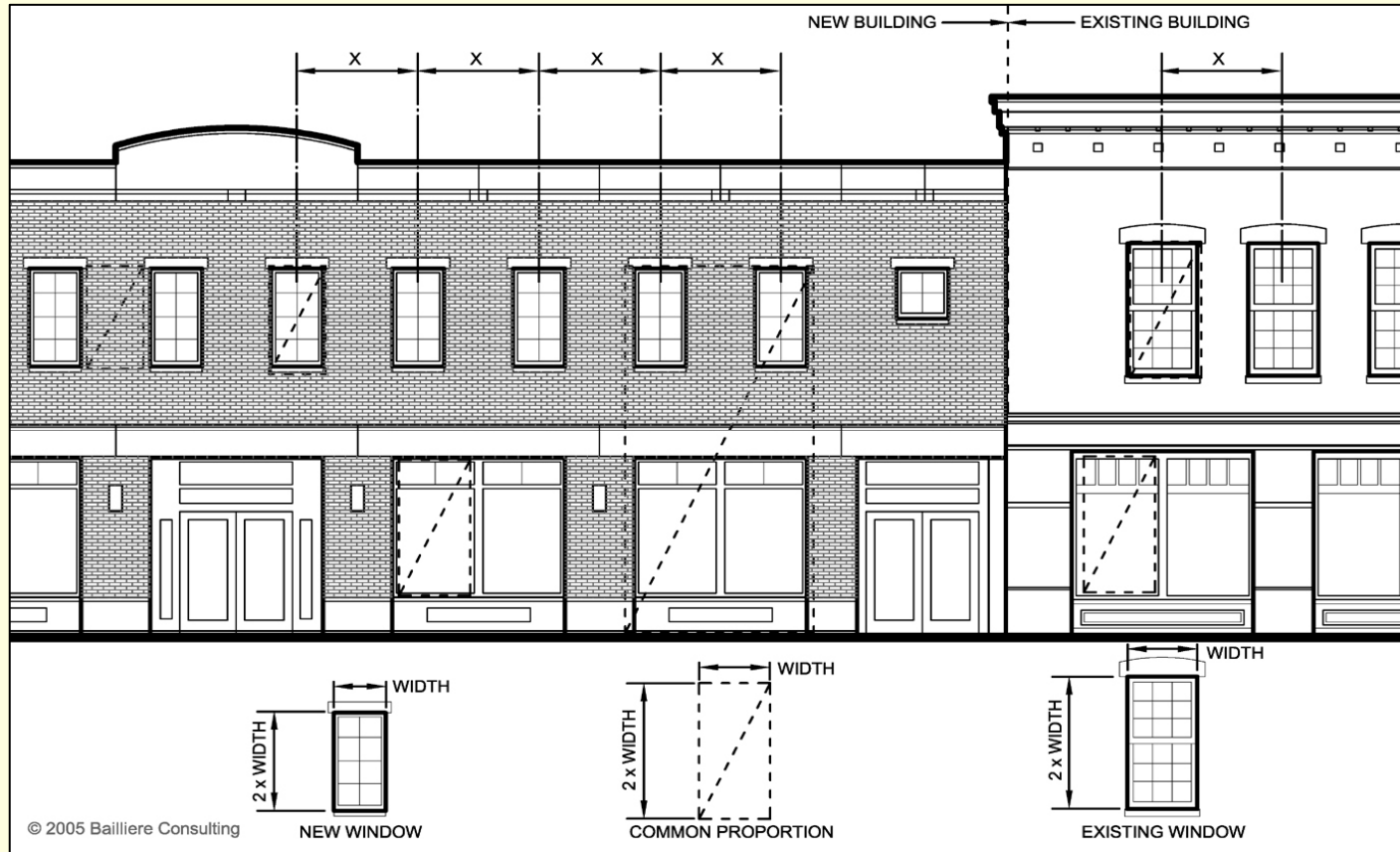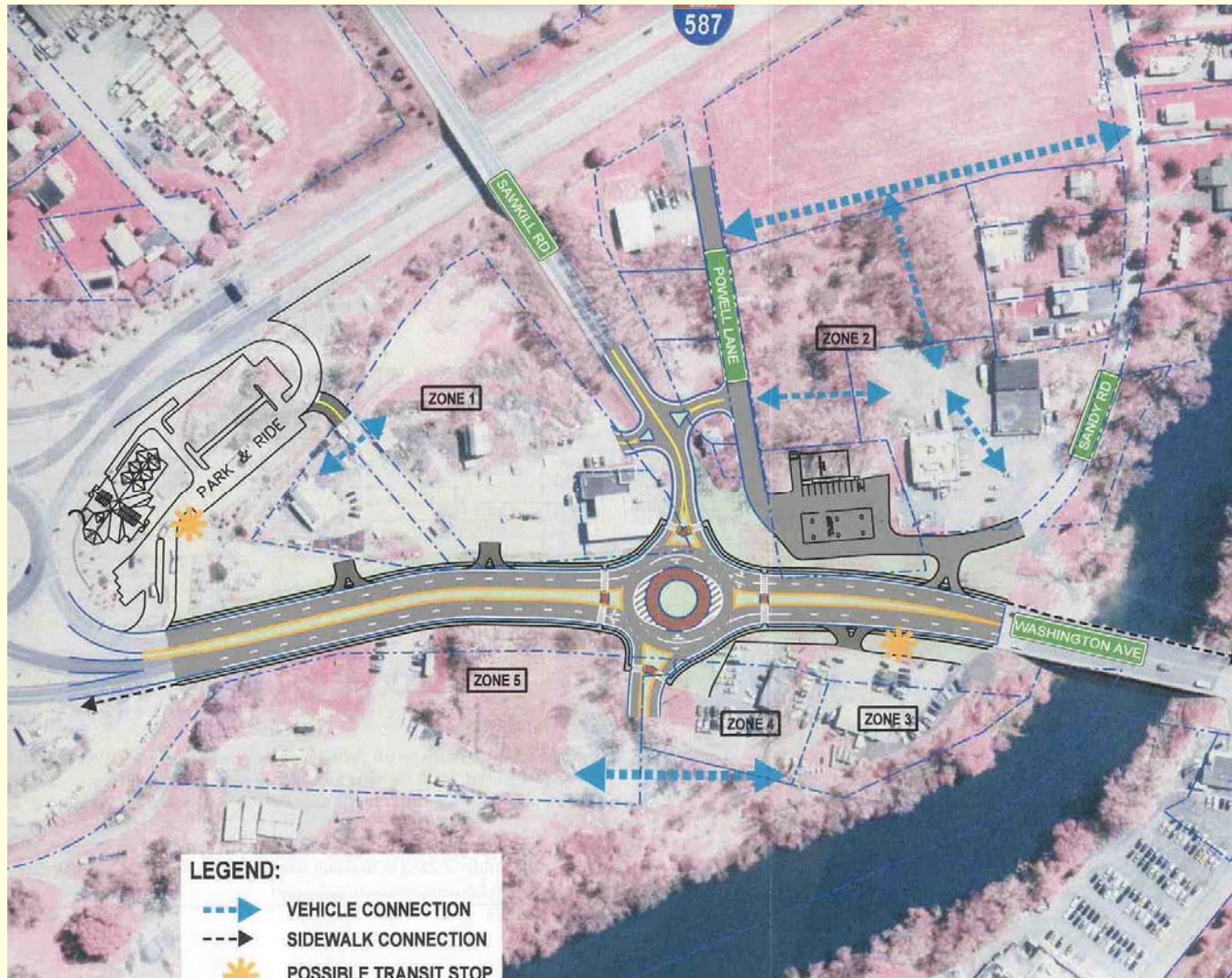
Community Appearance and Aesthetics

Figure 11: Matching proportions and rhythm. The window spacing of the new building matches the spacing of the older building next to it. Both buildings share common proportions too - although the windows are different sizes, they both have the same 1:2 proportion of width to height.
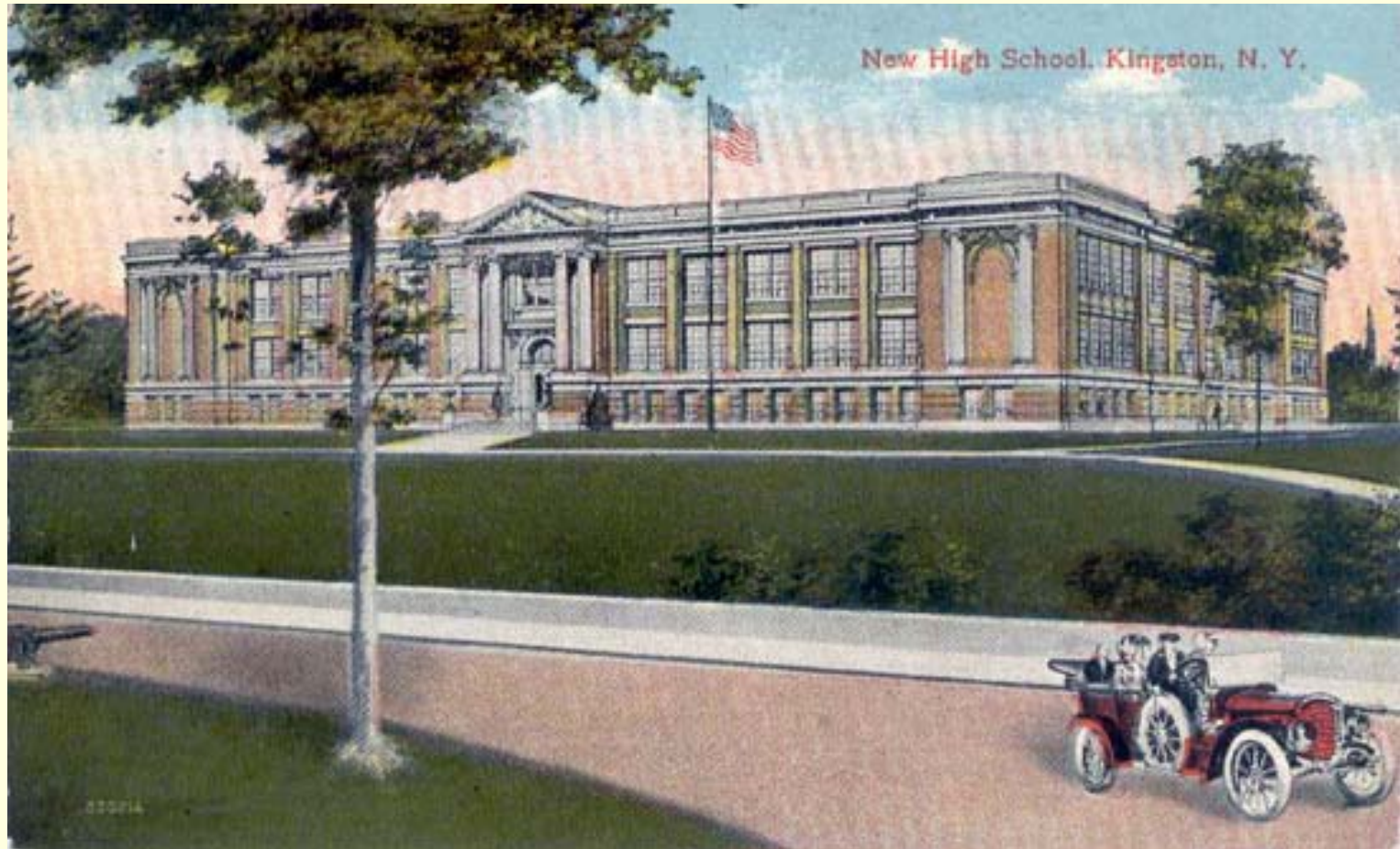
Business Development & Tourism

Infrastructure

Social Issues (e.g., "quality of life", crime, safety, education, diversity)

New High School. Kingston, N. Y.

Arts & Culture

Open Space & Natural Resources

Taking Stock
Community Involvement

- ❏ opinion surveys

- ❏ interactive workshops "charrette"

- ❏ visual preferencing

- ❏ *your town* sessions

- ❏ exchanges

- ❏ *walk around the block*

- ❏ interviews

- ❏ design competitions

- ❏ focus groups

- ❏ interactive websites

- ❏ *working* consensus

Website Info:

www.ci.kingston.ny.us

www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning