

# *The Edgemont Community Council, Inc.*

Founded in 1947 to determine community opinion on civic matters and coordinate community action thereon and to plan and promote the general welfare of the community embraced within Union Free School District #6.

[www.edgemontcommunitycouncil.org](http://www.edgemontcommunitycouncil.org)

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## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEIGHBORHOOD VISIONING MEETING IN EDGEMONT APRIL 10, 2008

The Edgemont Community Council was founded in 1947 as the umbrella organization for all the Edgemont civic associations.

Edgemont is comprised of seven older neighborhoods, many of which were developed in the 1920's with several homes interspersed that were built prior to the civil war, and a portion of Central Avenue. Its neighborhoods are mostly developed and characterized by narrow streets with aging limited or no infrastructure. The topography, as suggested by its name, consists of steep slopes, rock outcroppings and ledges, and underground streams. Any additional development/major improvement needs to take into account these constraints.

Central Avenue is the central spine bisecting our community. While it is still very much of a mangled mile, it provides our only commercial and office development, which is an important component of our tax base. It is important that we nurture this area as our identity is tied to it and its commercial and office development supports our school district without draining its resources. We would like to see such development encouraged and in such a manner as to create community pride, including pedestrian access, landscaping, burying utility wires and other aesthetic improvements.

We understand that the Central Avenue corridor will be addressed as part of a later study and have included comments under its own section. However, we wish to note that the Central Avenue corridor, as well as the 119 and 9A corridors are important sources of the Town's tax base. Commercial assessments in all three corridors have been steadily eroding, thereby increasing the tax burden of residential property owners. We think that improving the value of the town's commercial tax base has an immediacy in light of this year's substantial tax increase and next year's projected double digit tax increase, and thus should be a major priority in developing a Comprehensive Plan.

Edgemont is also a school district. Development needs to be compatible with the district's resources and has to reflect a balance of types of use so that residents, including retirees who are particularly vulnerable, are not taxed out of the community and properties are not devalued while still maintaining our high educational standards.

The ECC considers the following important factors paramount in developing Comprehensive Plan objectives for the Edgemont community:

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#### Member Associations

The Central Park Avenue Association  
Greenridge Association

The Cotswold Association  
Longview Civic Association

Edgemont Association  
Northern Greenville Association

Fort Hill Association  
Southern Greenville Association

## Land Use

1. Many of the properties in each Edgemont neighborhood are greater than the minimum zoning required for the district and cannot be subdivided because of physical dimensions. These larger lots provide distance among homes and create a sense of open space which has historically been a priority in Edgemont. We therefore would like to revisit the minimum lot size in some areas of Edgemont and where possible increase it in order to preserve the existing character of areas in our community.

In addition, certain properties which may meet dimensional requirements should not be subdivided due to environmental constraints. In instances where properties can be subdivided, we would like the lots created to be consistent with the character of the community.

2. In recent years we have seen significant impacts in terms of water runoff and instability in some of the steep slopes in our neighborhoods. While there are steep slope ordinances, wetland regulations and the like, the Town's application of these environmental provisions have not protected Edgemont enough. Not all adverse impacts of development/major improvements can be engineered around as appears to be the Town's attitude. It is adjacent/nearby homes and streets that bear the brunt of re-directed surface and groundwater runoff due to unsuccessful engineering solutions. Permits for development and improvements have to be reviewed in the context of these constraints, and by necessity some must be denied.
3. As stated above, Edgemont is an older community with narrow streets and limited and aging infrastructure. The Town has made clear that it does not have funds for new infrastructure or improvements. Development/major improvements need to be evaluated in the context of these constraints as well as the environmental ones, and must thereby be limited as well.
4. Hydrology is a subject that needs to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan because it threatens many neighborhoods in unincorporated Greenburgh. The reason it is an issue in Edgemont is simple: most of Edgemont, as noted above, is built on rock, and the surface area is shallow soil. Policies that address hydrology in the context of new development/major improvements need to be a part of the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Open space and parks. Edgemont has only limited community open space and parks. Our schools must serve as our public playgrounds and fields which are way overscheduled. We would like to explore the possibility of creating additional parkland were any of the larger parcels' current uses to cease or to come on the market.

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### Sidewalks/Town Right of Way

1. Residents would like to see sidewalks/walking paths on streets frequently used by pedestrians that link residential neighborhoods to schools, public transportation, retail amenities and to main roads. Streets that have been mentioned for discussion include Ardsley Road (improve portions of the walking path here), Mt. Joy Ave., Seely Place, Hadden Road, Cotswold Way, Underhill Road, Old Colony Road and Fort Hill Road.
2. Residents also would like to see the Town's right of way kept clear of obstructions, so that pedestrians can walk on the shoulder of a road that does not have or need a sidewalk.
3. No more asphalt curbing. It falls apart in about a year, thereby necessitating additional expenditures on the part of the Town or creating stormwater and other problems for the residents. Stone or granite curbing lasts longer, looks better, and creates a distinct reveal delineating the sidewalk from the road, affording pedestrians greater safety.

### Central Avenue

1. There are over 900 apartments in the Edgemont portion of Central Avenue, representing 32% of the total number of residential units in the school district. We would like no further residential development in the Edgemont portion of Central Avenue. Given that the Central Avenue Development Plan will not be addressed this year, we reiterate our request for a moratorium on residential development in the Central Avenue corridor, so that such development can be evaluated in the context of an overall development plan for the corridor.
2. We would like to see the development plan for the corridor focus on improving the value of existing assessables.
3. We would like Central Avenue to be more pedestrian friendly.
4. Traffic flow. The traffic flow along Central Avenue needs to be revisited as there are times when left turns from certain areas are difficult. Congestion will only get worse over time. In addition, people are seeking alternate routes to avoid traffic on Central Avenue sending them into residential streets. Routes often used include Old Army, Fort Hill and Sprain/Underhill Road. These conditions will only worsen over time with additional developments such as Ridge Hill.
5. Aesthetic improvements – bury utility wires. Any new development or significant improvement should require utility wires to be buried on the lot in question.

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## Zoning Code Revision Committee

The Committee is reviewing the Zoning Code to correct inconsistencies, update language and streamline organization. The Committee has specifically acknowledged that it will not make any policy decisions or recommendations and is waiting for the report of the Comprehensive Plan Committee before proceeding with such changes to the zoning code.

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