

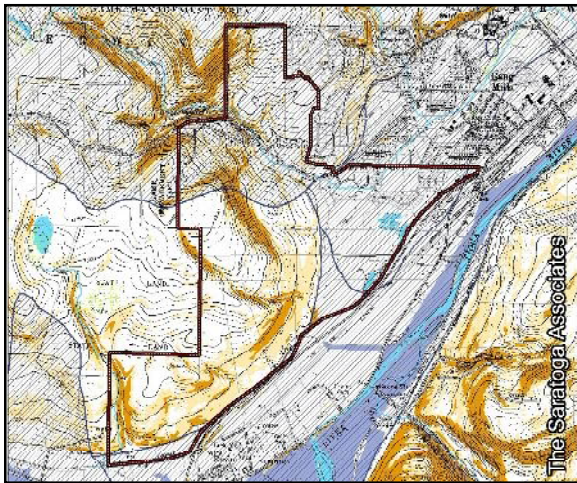
16: Good Design - Gang Mills/Jones Road

Site Introduction:

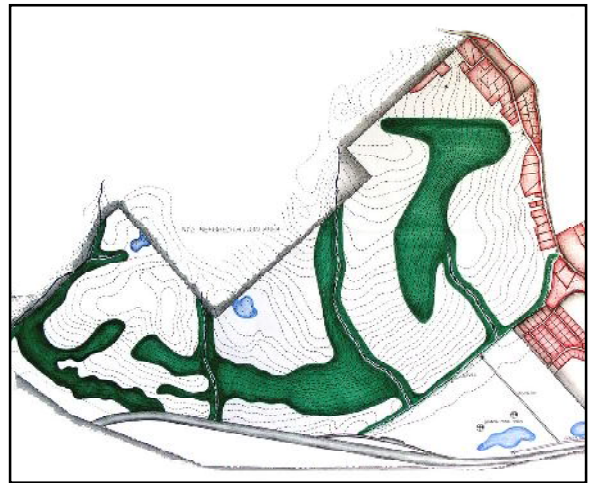
Through the 90's, the pattern of development in the Town of Erwin had been a relatively standard suburban model which built up in small sections, leaving stub suburban roads pointed toward open land beyond with no overall layout in mind. The resulting sense of unfinished community and the haphazard means of development were not truly meeting the Town's goals.

What the Town truly desires is a sense of place, a feeling of connection, and a completion of the Gang Mills community which enhances the whole. This vision is expressed in the Erwin Comprehensive Plan 2010 Update adopted in 2003 which designates the Jones Road area as an "emerging residential area." The students were asked to explore alternatives for managing, organizing, scaling, and directing new development patterns here, paying close attention to connecting the new and existing town fabric in an ecologically-sound way. Their work will be critically important during the development of the Town's proposed Green Infrastructure Plan, conservation subdivision regulations and the Jones Road Coordinated Build-Out Plan due for adoption in 2005.

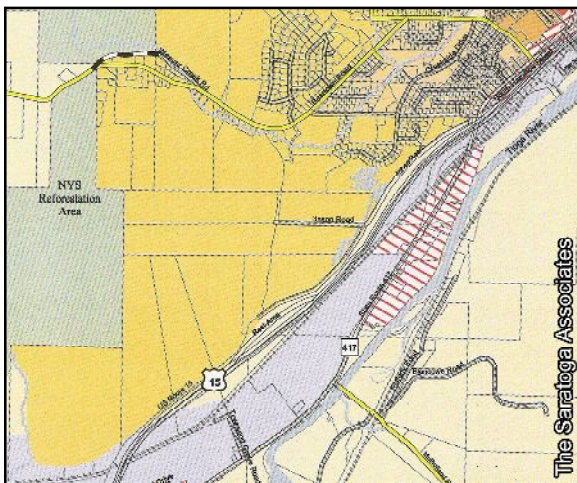
Site Analysis:



Environmental Features



Forested Slopes And Ridges



12,500 SF Residential Zoning District



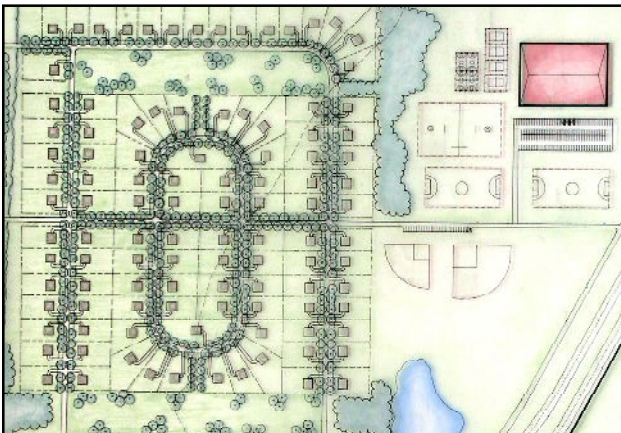
Site near Woods Edge development

Jones Rd. Site: Connections to Green Spaces



Design overview:

In an effort to minimize changes to the land itself, this design proposed developments on only three of the buildable regions of the site. Each of these was designed with a central park space and corridors of greenspace connecting those to the surrounding development, putting all residents within walking distance of green space. The parks and corridors also connect to the outlying areas left in conservation. These then connect to a larger trail system that serves many forms of athletic activity, from hiking and biking to skiing and snowshoeing.



The trail system also connects to a 5-acre Environmental Education Center, sited next to the N.Y.S. Reforestation Area, which also features outdoor learning areas and a ropes course. In addition, along Route 15 nearest to Gang Mills, the project attempts to create a magnet for both new and existing residents through the creation of a new 20-acre sports complex, including an indoor synthetic field, multiple outdoor spaces, and a number of support facilities. These two features combine with the parkland to make the development attractive to new residents.

Number of Lots: 474

Lot Sizes: 12,500 sf

% of Land Conserved: 79%

New Road Length: 29,370 ft.

Road per lot: 62 ft. per lot

(790 acres out of 1000)

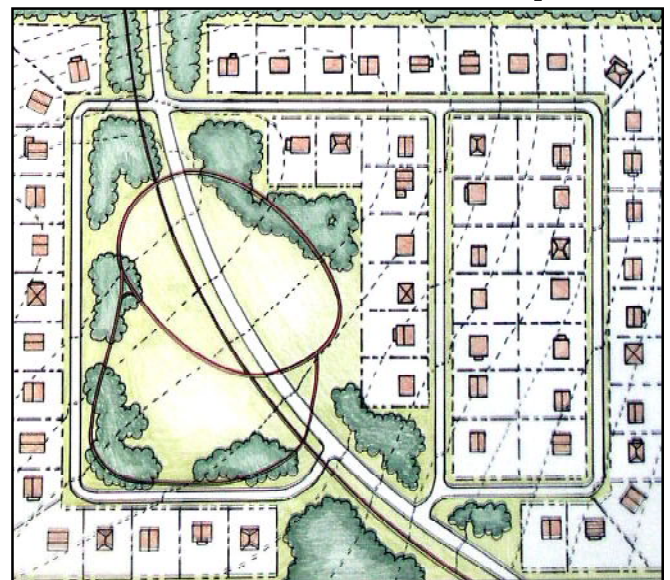
Jones Rd. Site: Sheltered Development off Rural Roads



Design overview:

This design focuses on preserving natural buffers to screen views of development, both within the site and from outside, to create a bucolic road experience that preserves much of the area's rural character. Through emphasizing concentrated communities as an alternative to sprawled out developments, the students have managed to maintain a large portion of the site's open space for trail systems, buffer areas, and pleasant entry drives. By creating individual side streets for the homes themselves and pulling these back slightly from the main connector roads, buffers are maintained on each side of the individual neighborhoods.

With each house in a small community, tucked onto a quiet street and sheltered from both undesirable views and heavy traffic, the sense of community is intimate and small-scale. Meanwhile, the tighter clusters allow for greater shared amenities.



Number of Lots: 423

Lot Sizes: 12,500 sf

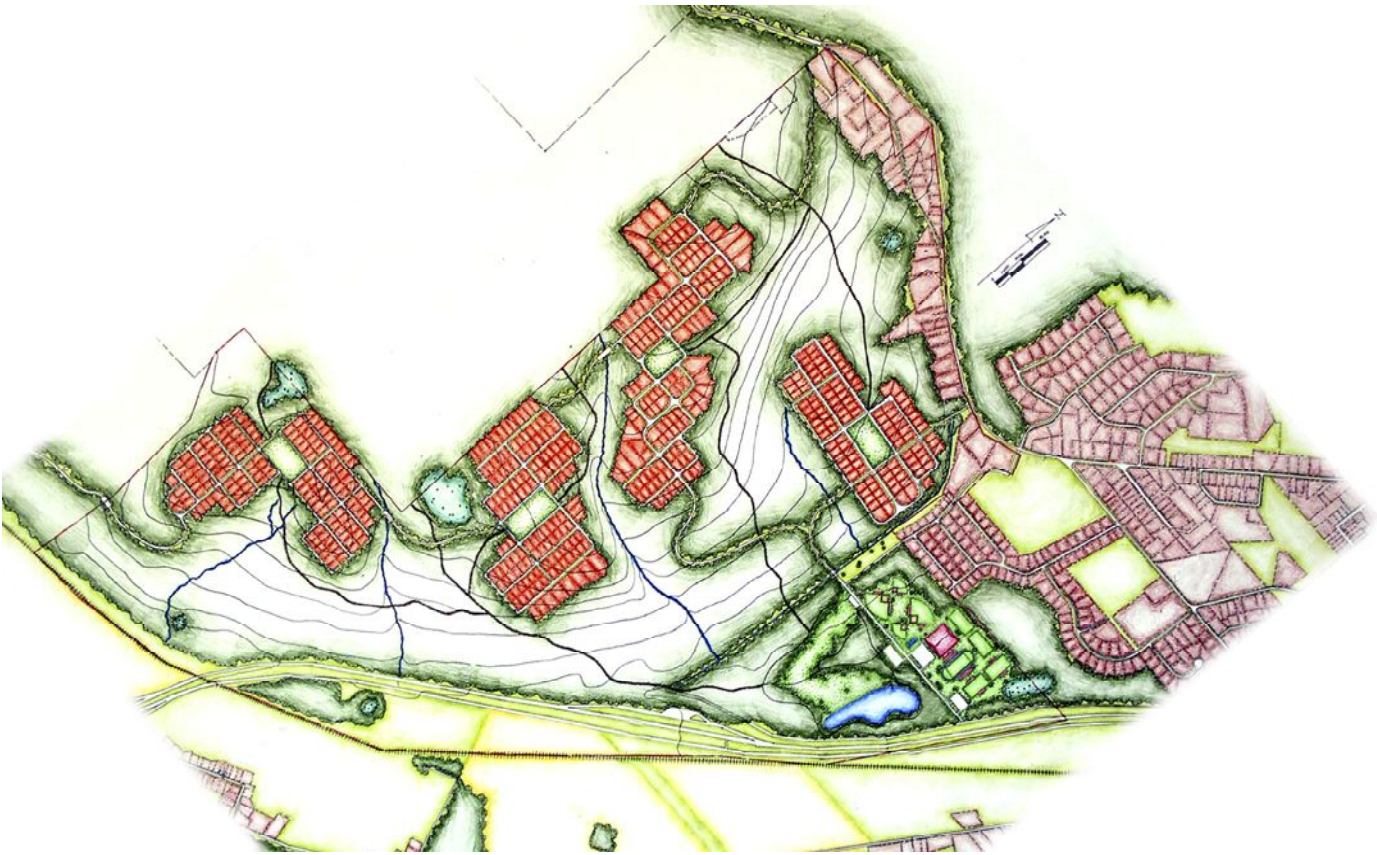
% of Land Conserved: 82%

New Road Length: 68,400 ft.

Road per lot: 162 ft. per lot

(816 acres out of 1000)

Jones Rd. Site: Traditional Grids and Clustered Neighborhoods



Design overview:

The proposed developments here have been held back from Route 15 entirely in order to maintain as much of the rural character of the site as possible, instead forming a system of small developments atop the hills. This approach also allowed the more difficult slopes, highest in biodiversity, and the areas near ravines and wetlands to be kept in conservation. The developments themselves were laid out in a relatively traditional grid format with neighborhood parks, helping to create a sense of community and tradition among the new residents. The regular structure of the developments also creates better sight lines and safety along the roadways for the residents. The neighborhood parks are designed to contain informal activity centers and playground spaces, and serve as gateways to the surrounding woodlands.



Along the lower area of Route 15, where heavy residential development would both be adversely affected by the heavy traffic and also detract from the rural impression, the project proposes instead an athletic area within a 32-acre public park. These amenities would then act as a linkage between the new developments and the adjacent residences in Gang Mills.

Number of Lots: 571

Lot Sizes: 12,500 sf

% of Land Conserved: 75%

New Road Length: 78,100 ft.

Road per lot: 137 ft. per lot

(748 acres out of 1000)

Jones Rd. Site: A Necklace of Linked Communities



Design overview:

This solution incorporates a sequential progression of developments to provide a gradual and logical transition in character from the existing town. The first step was the expansion of the Woods Edge planned development into the site. From there and from the less-dense areas of the adjacent town, three entrances lead into a necklace of linked communities built primarily of lots matching the existing development to create compact neighborhoods and preserve green buffers in between. Development moves west to a pair of less-dense communities organized around a central wetland, and finishes with the creation of neighborhoods with a looser, more naturalized design and lots of even larger sizes (~30,000 s.f.) connected by a web of green space.

The proposed 60-acre public park and trail system connect the various communities together into one community with diverse living opportunities. In addition, the design maintains a large, continuous band of greenspace in the areas where it best serves to protect the rural character and quality of the site and the views in from the surrounding areas.



Number of Lots: 573

Lot Sizes: 14,800 to 30,000 sf.

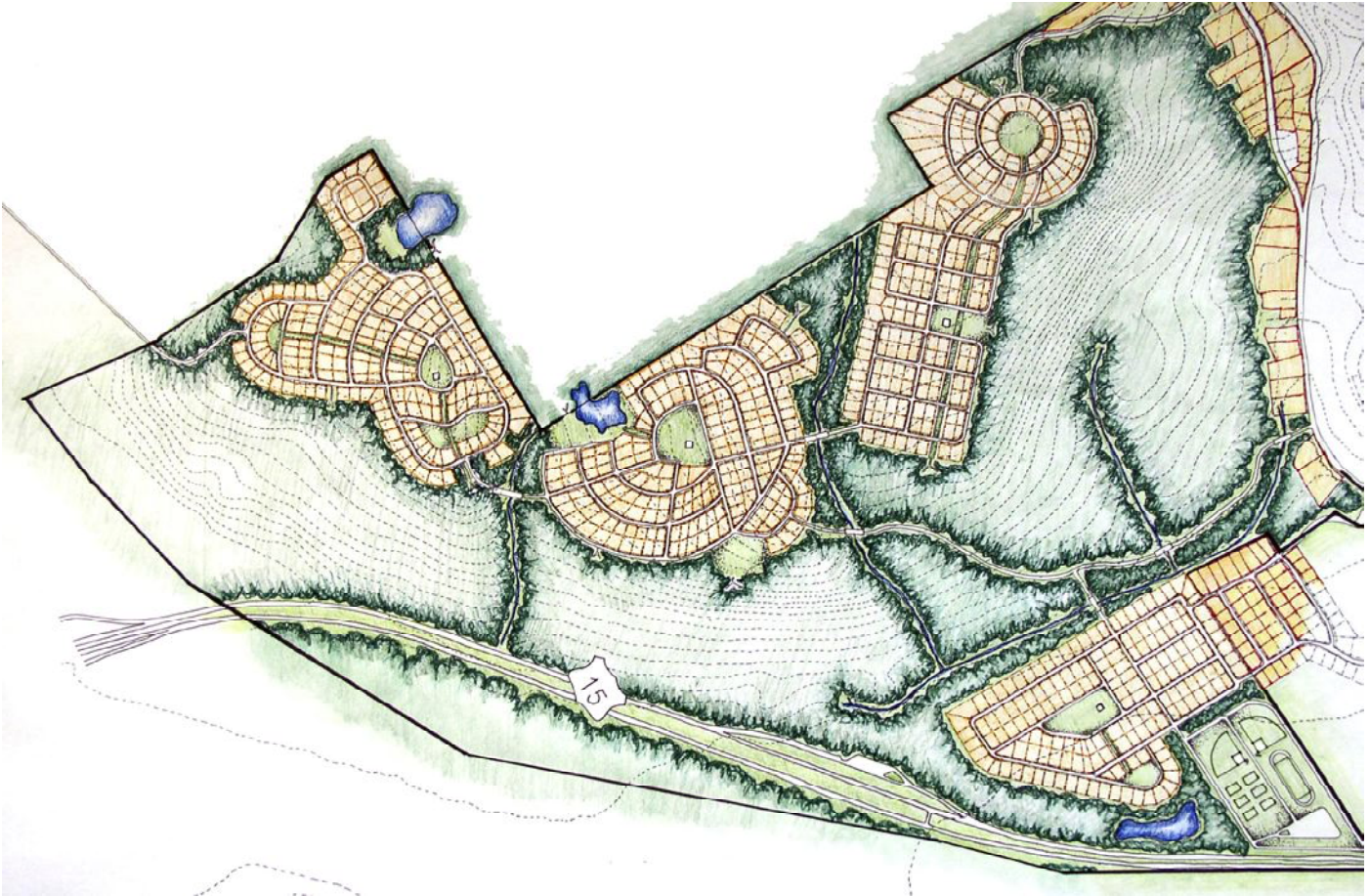
% of Land Conserved: 57%

New Road Length: 67,670 ft.

Road per lot: 118 ft. per lot

(566 acres out of 1000)

Jones Rd. Site: Communities with Centers



Design overview:

This design draws on the principles of New Urbanism movement to create large “cantons” with distinctive 3-5 acre community centres and separate 5-8 acre parks. This produces a series of 4 communities which each maintain their own small-town walkability and feel, having viable public centers for services, gathering, amenities, limited retail, and civic life. With 12-25 acres of greenspace per canton, a 1:5 ratio of green space to housing, and only 40% of the site in development, the proposal also creates a very green and airy expansion to the town.



The community centers serve to promote community unity and provide services, and the greenways integrate the existing greenspace with the new development. The upper portions of the development, which were designed to work with the contours and shape of the landscape, are strongly focused on these features and have a very naturalistic feel. However, even the lower portions, which blend seamlessly into the existing developments along the edges of the site, carry these themes of neighborhood centers and greenspace connections. In addition, the expansion and the existing town both connect to a 20-acre community park.

Number of Lots: 616

Lot Sizes: 14,800 sf

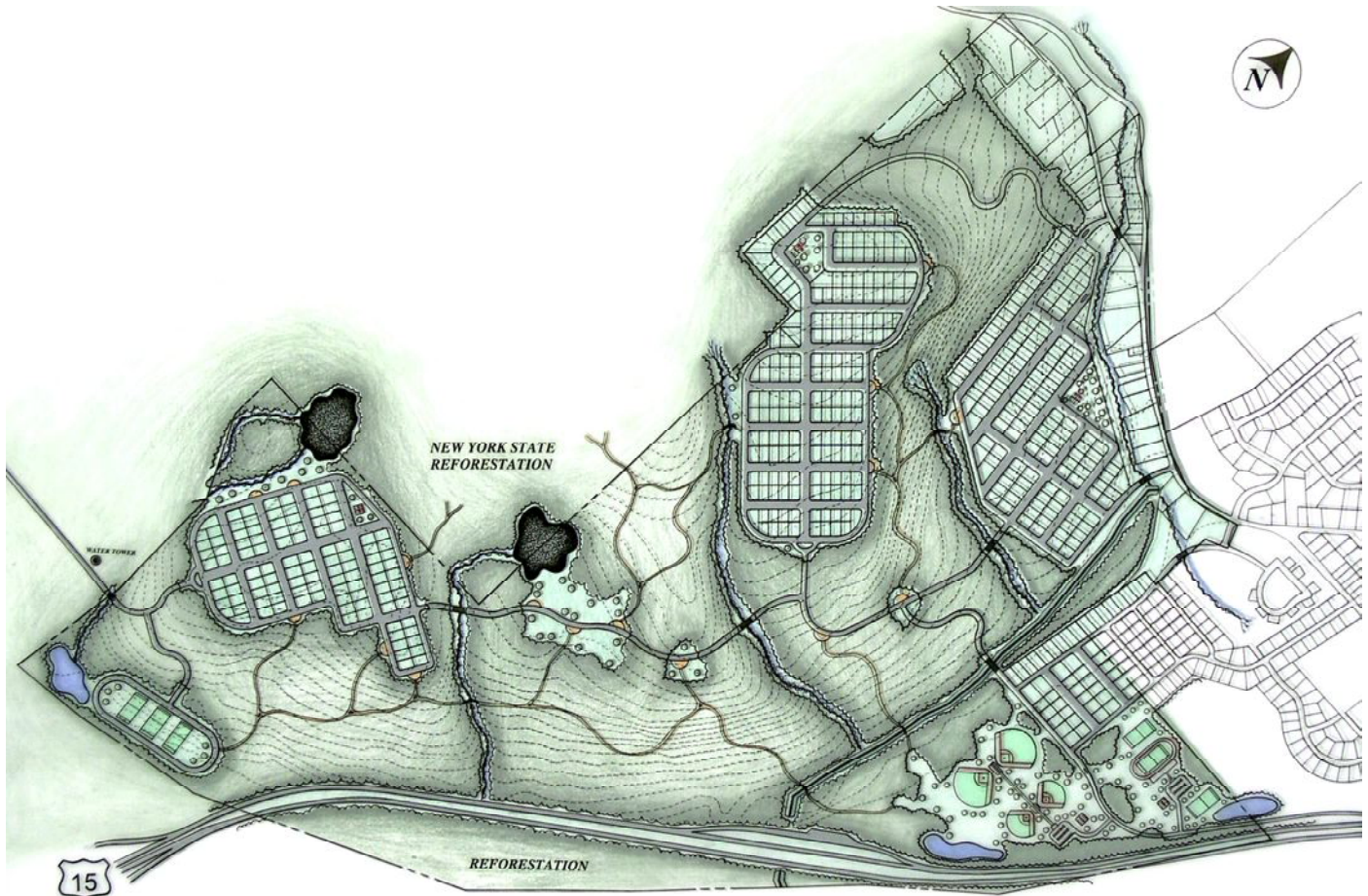
% of Land Conserved: 60%

New Road Length: 70,620 ft.

Road per lot: 115 ft. per lot

(596 acres out of 1000)

Jones Rd. Site: Wide Tree-Lined Boulevards



Design overview:

By reforesting both sides of the corridor along Route 15, this proposal seeks to restore and preserve the rural character by transforming 15 into a drive through the woods, thus improving its own experience while buffering the site from its adverse visual and noise pollution. Two recreational developments are also proposed, one at each end of the site, consisting of a variety of formal and informal athletic and recreational areas and creating usable, attractive public spaces while preserving the character of the forested hillsides through soft, inviting views.

The residential developments offset the regularity and compactness of their grid layout by creating boulevard-like streets throughout, with 20' wide tree lawns to each side of the street, a sidewalk on each side, and another 10' tree lawn outside that. These treelined, parklike corridors will reduce the feeling of density and crowding, and create long, framed, picturesque views along the streets themselves. The result is a series of developments that draw on the boulevard systems of historic neighborhoods by Olmsted and others which form part of the American visual language of genteel, peaceful, and dignified development and blend the urban with the rural.



Number of Lots: 463

Lot Sizes: 13,000 sf.

% of Land Conserved: 68%

New Road Length: 66,800 ft.

Road per lot: 144 ft. per lot

(682 acres out of 1000)