

Infrastructure

Sidewalks

Strengths:

- Walkable downtown
- Most neighborhoods have sidewalks
- Village is small enough that it is fully walkable
- All streets without sidewalks are capable of having sidewalks added

Weaknesses:

- Not all streets have sidewalks and some existing sidewalks are in poor condition
- Width and materials (specs) are inconsistent
- Rt 20 can only be crossed safely and legally at one location
- Sidewalks are not consistently cleared of snow by property owners

Opportunities:

- Grant for tree plantings
- Improve walkability by having village maintenance dept clear snow from sidewalks

Threats:

- Salt
- Weather
- Vacant properties and property owners that do not maintain them

Sewer

Strengths:

- No sewer tax
- No costs for maintaining sewer system

Weaknesses:

- We have none
- Existing septic systems are old – sanitation issue and personal cost issue
- Lack of sewers is a deterrent to business development
- Sanitation issue

Opportunities:

- Funding
- Pressurized sewer system could be more economical to install
- Village owns land that could be used for a sewage treatment facility

Threats:

- County regulations pertaining to private septic systems could change affecting the viability for residents to replacing or repairing their private systems upon failure.
- Environmental threat from failure of neighboring private septic system

Water*Strengths:*

- Excellent quality
- Unmetered
- System has been upgraded and is well maintained. Pump is new and most water mains are newer
- New tank
- Fiere hydrants reduce homeowners insurance.
- Generator back-up for pumps
- An incentive to business development
- An incentive to attracting homeowners

Weaknesses:

- Mains are not standardized. Older mains are smaller than newer mains
- Lack of meters is incentive to waste

- No redundancy of wells
- Water is hard
- cost of operation

Opportunities:

- Connecting to Schodack for emergency back-up
- Selling water to outlying areas
- Marketing opportunity

Threats:

- Poor sub-base condition of Rt 20 creates water main breaks
- Dewey Loeffel Landfill
- Commercial activities and nearby residential properties could pollute wells
- Catastrophic failure of the system

Drainage

Strengths:

- Storm drains and catch basins are generally adequate under normal conditions

Weaknesses:

- Rt 20 drainage is poor near Reformed Church and near Grampy's
- Culverts for creek under Malden St and 203 overflow during heavy rain
- Area near senior housing floods
- Houses on Tremont are lower than the road and houses flood in heavy rain
- Valatie Kill floods in heavy rain
- Area of the intersection of Kaunemeek and Malden often floods

Opportunities:

- Incorporate requirements for accommodating proper drainage into code for future development including on-site containment of storm water drainage

Threats:

- Climate change
- Future development affecting natural drainage

Parking

Strengths:

- Most residential properties have off street parking
- Laws in place restricting parking in emergencies

Weaknesses:

- Minimal municipal parking
- Lack of public transportation results in a greater reliance on autos
- Lack of consistency of parking regulation enforcement
- Overflow parking informally allowed
- High density restricts parking availability

Opportunities:

- There are properties that potentially could be acquired and converted to municipal parking
- Expansion of public transit could reduce the reliance on person automobiles
- Rt 20 redesign could add on-street parking
- Expanding mass transit
- Re-install trolley line
- Village participation in the Capital Region Transportation Committee

Threats:

- Absence of parking is a threat to the viability of existing businesses and a deterrent to new business development

Public Services

Police

Strengths:

- Having a Police presence in the Village deters crime.
- Provides instruction in proper child seat installation
- Provides instruction in proper bicycle operation for young people
- Provides property checks when residents are on vacation
- Provides strong visible presence during Village functions such as, Village wide yard sale, Mischief Night, Halloween, Memorial Day Parade
- DPS events
- Police presence and reputation reduces speeding.
- Low crime rate.

Weaknesses:

- Perceived by some residents as bullies. (Concern was raised concerning the wording of this item.)
- Village is perceived by many as a speed trap.
- Expensive Service and only available part-time.
- Reliance on part-time officers leads to a high turn-over rate.

Opportunities:

- Financial assistance programs for public safety organizations.
- Grants to fund employment and procure capital equipment.

Threats:

- Pressure to eliminate Police Department to reduce budget.
- Lawsuits and liability threats.
- Loss of department may lead to increased crime as County and State agencies are facing their own cutbacks.

Fire

Strengths:

- Having a Fire Department within the Village limits provides a valuable service to Village residents. Shortened response time due to close proximity can mean better out-comes in a rural fire fighting environment.
- Nassau Fire Department provides First Response for Severe Emergency Medical Calls, working with the local EMS agency and law enforcement as necessary helping get patients in need of medical services to hospitals as soon as possible.
- Many of the firefighters are Village residents providing this community service to their neighbors.
- Nassau Fire Department provides a place where residents can learn valuable skills as well as well as introducing them to civic responsibilities.
- Nassau Fire Department provides safety orientation through participation in Fire Safety Week at DPS.
- Lower homeowner insurance costs

Weaknesses:

- Relying on volunteers leads to fluctuating man-power levels as well as levels in training.
- It is it's own taxing entity.

Opportunities:

- Land next to firehouse was recently purchased and provides potential for expansion of facilities in the future.

Threats:

- Fire Departments may be consolidated within the Town leading to longer response times to the scene of an emergency.
- Increased tax burden through expansion and lack of oversight.
- Fire siren could have negative impact on value of neighboring properties

Ambulance

Strengths:

- Having an Ambulance Service within the Village limits provides a valuable

service to Village residents. Shortened response time due to close proximity can mean better out-comes in an emergency medical situation.

- Nassau Ambulance provides BLS (Basic Life Support) medical transport for Emergency Medical Calls, working with the local fire department and law enforcement as necessary getting patients in need of medical services to hospitals as soon as possible.
- Many of the EMS volunteers are Village residents providing this community service to their neighbors.
- Nassau Ambulance provides a place where young adults can learn valuable skills as well as well as introducing them to civic responsibilities.
- *May* positively impact cost of homeowners insurance.

Weaknesses:

- Relying on volunteers leads to fluctuating man-power levels as well as levels in training.

Opportunities:

- None identified

Threats:

- Ambulance Service may be consolidated within the Town leading to longer response times to the scene of an emergency.
- Town of Nassau and/or the Town of Schodack could choose to terminate its contract(s) with the Ambulance company.
- Conversion of the service from volunteer-based to paid service would significantly increase cost.
- Cost to maintain could threaten future viability.

Community Character

Strengths

- The Village of Nassau serves as a hub for the Town of Nassau and Eastern Town of Schodack providing services for limited shopping, fuel services, motor vehicle repair, banking, computer, and personal services.
- The Village projects a rural character.
- The Village is a walkable community comprised of a school, parks and play

grounds, library, synagogue, and four churches.

- Beautification committee.

Weaknesses:

- Poor condition of many buildings
- Ugly multi-family residential buildings
- Lack of knowledge of and organization to pursue grants for improving the community character of the village
- Lack of code enforcement
- Roads and utility infrastructure are unsightly

Opportunities:

- Adopt-a-highway program
- Offer funding or tax breaks for improving building facades
- Tax credits for maintaining properties in historic districts
- Main Street grants
- Use village website and library to provide education to residents regarding funding and tax credit opportunities for property improvement investments.
- Micro-loan program for village property improvement projects.
- Establishment of design standards
- Community volunteer teams to assist residents in completing residential improvement projects.
- Promotional value of low cost housing, country living, convenience, recreational opportunities and low crime rate
- Publicity of innovative community improvement programs could spur further interest and investment

Threats:

- Lack of vision
- Continued deterioration of properties
- Public image of Nassau as a dilapidated, dying village
- Lebanon Valley
- Increased traffic on Route 20

Business District Viability

Zoning

Strengths:

- Long term establishment of zoning
- Provides structure and stability
- Zoning laws have been reviewed and updated approximately 10-15 years ago

Weaknesses:

- No detailed flood plain maps
- Creates confrontation between citizens and government
- Current zoning is inconsistent with the land use at the time the zoning regulations went into effect. (Grandfathered)
- Current zoning may (intentionally or unintentionally) drive commercial property development to a more suburban model with fewer, larger buildings and greater setbacks.
- History land use makes enforcement difficult.
- Several tax parcels are partially in two zones.

Opportunities:

- Alignment of zoning with other recommendations in the master plan (e.g., addition of on-street and/or off-street municipal parking) could vastly improve the viability of the business district.

Threats:

- Continued decline in commercial district may occur if zoning regulations are not aligned with a vision of the future.

PILOTs (Payments in lieu of taxes)

Strengths:

- Senior center.
- Incentivizes development

Weaknesses:

- Creates perception of unfair assessment of taxes among all property owners.
- Sets a precedent.
- Impacts tax base on a long term basis.
- Distributes tax burden to people who do not receive direct benefit.

Opportunities:

- Exploration of creating these incentives could have a significant positive impact on the the viability of the business district.

Threats:

- Other entity could demand further incentives.

Main Street Grants

Strengths:

- None

Weaknesses:

- There currently is none.

Opportunities:

- Main Street Grants could be used to improve infrastructure in the business district which would support greater viability thereof.

Threats:

- None identified.

Village promotion of the village and the business district --convert to recommendation

Strengths:

- None

Weaknesses:

- There currently is none.

Opportunities:

- Comprehensive promotion of the village amenities and businesses could have a significant positive impact on the business district.

Threats:

- None identified.

Open Space & Recreation

Existing Facilities

Strengths:

- Village commons
- Stanley Park
- Many nature preserves within short distance
- Library, churches, etc have programs
- Many special events
- Village borders rural areas

Weaknesses:

- Volleyball court is rarely used
- No basketball court
- No tennis courts

Opportunities:

- Development of Bristol property
- Further develop Village Commons
- Promote rural character
- Pocket part at Speedy Sales location
- Develop vacant land behind St. Marys church
- Expansion of village hall to incorporate community center facilities.
- Development of old trolley right-of-way into a "rail trail."
- Engage Town of Nassau to explore development of rail trail to Columbia County

line.

- Engage Rensselaer County Land Trust to manage development of rail trail.
- Development of walking trails through wetlands, possibly with educational plaques.
- Dog park.
- Improvement of sidewalks would provide greater opportunities for walking and jogging
- Gregory's property across from Village Hall may be appropriate for development of recreational facilities.
- Engaging residents to volunteer to help develop recreational facilities will create a sense of ownership.

Threats:

- Expense of maintaining parks
- Lack of village personnel to maintain parks
- Some residents might find a nearby park to be undesirable

Notes:

- It is uncertain whether use of facilities at DPS school by general public is permitted.
- An engineering study of the rail trail has already been completed by the East Greenbush Planning Dept.

Transportation

Bus

Strengths:

- Commuter bus service

Weaknesses:

- No official park and ride (the park and ride lot is privately owned by the owners of the Homestead)
- No weekend bus service

Opportunities:

- Establish a formal agreement with owner of existing “park and ride” lot to assure continued long-term availability for park and ride use.
- Alternate locations for a park and ride lot include the lot by the pond and Village Hall.
- Create municipal parking lot that doubles as a park and ride.

Threats:

- CDTA could eliminate service
- Private owner of park and ride lot could prohibit further use for that purpose.

Roads*Strengths:*

- All village roads have been paved in the last 10 years
- Dedicated road crew
- Village road maintenance is satisfactory
- Many village roads lead into rural roads providing access to rural areas

Weaknesses:

- Rt 203 is very narrow between Route 20 and Fairgrounds St
- Many village roads lead into rural roads which increase traffic on village streets
- Narrow roads make walking difficult
- Rt 20 foundation problems

Opportunities:

- Re-engineering of Rt 20 & Rt 203 intersection
- Route 20 bypass.

Threats:

- Increased traffic on route 20 and village streets in general

Bicycle lanes

Strengths:

- Promotes public health
- Promotes reduction in automobile traffic
- Improves safety
- Promotes positive image of the village

Weaknesses:

- Widths of existing roads do not provide the space to add bicycle lanes
- Only useful for part of year
- Require maintenance
- Restrict traffic flow

Opportunities:

- Development of a bike trail along old trolley line. Three bridges would be required.
- Grants.
- Reduces traffic
- Increases safety
- Increases health
- Promotes character of community as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly locale.
- Bike racks would accommodate local bikers and encourage long-distance bikers to stop and use village services.

Threats:

- Irrate motorists.

Walking paths and sidewalks

These topics have already been addressed elsewhere.

Housing

Strengths:

- Historic houses.
- Large percentage of owner-occupied homes.
- Residential properties are reasonably priced.
- Relatively low prices drive relatively low taxes.
- No bad areas; i.e., no concentrations of blight.
- Pleasant character of neighborhood streets.
- Not cookie-cutter. Several distinct neighborhoods with individual characters.
- Diversity in residential architecture and size.
- Streets are lit.
- Most houses have good size back yards.

Weaknesses:

- Large percentage of the houses in the village are old and in need of modernization and repair.
- Poor curb appeal in some areas.
- Some absentee landlords.
- Limited income of many homeowners limits ability to maintain or invest in property
- Very few new residential buildings built in recent years.
- Growing number of vacant houses.
- Many commercial properties have been converted to multi-unit residential properties without permits and issuance of certificates of occupancy.
- No effective code enforcement.
- Code enforcement is costly.
- Illegal apartments do not pay for water
- Lack of incentives to maintain properties.
- Commercial/light industrial properties interspersed in residential neighborhoods lowers the property values, curb appeal and desirability of homes.
- Increase in percentage of rental properties.

- No sewers

Opportunities:

- Programs such as weatherization program.
- There are properties that can be revitalized.
- Scale of needed improvements in the village may be enticing to developers.
- Relatively low median income may increase opportunities for grants.
- Development of property across the street from Village Hall.
- Improvement of the commercial district with targeted businesses would provide greater incentive for younger people to buy houses in the village.

Threats:

- People buying homes, and converting them to non-owner-occupied multi-family buildings and then not properly maintaining the properties.

Recommendations:

- Initiate programs and incentives to encourage owners to maintain their properties.

Historical Resources

Strengths:

- 2 registered national historic districts (Albany St and Church St), Contributing buildings within these districts are eligible for historic preservation grants and tax credits (residential 20%, commercial 40%)
- Elm Street is a prime candidate for being designated a national historic district. Process involves evaluation of building stock within proposed district by Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. That office would prepare a nomination form when the proposed district is deemed qualified. The village would need to initiate this process; locally designating an area as an historic preservation district by the village would be an effective means of initiating the process. National Historic Registry does not regulate what can and cannot be done to a property therein. The only regulations pertaining to buildings within a Registered National Historic District are those imposed by the village.
- Nice historic buildings within the business district.

Weaknesses:

- Many historic buildings have so much deferred maintenance that they are perceived by many as detriments to the village rather than assets.
- Cost of upkeep of older buildings is a disincentive to proper maintenance.

Opportunities:

- Tax incentives for historic properties that are improved (e.g., no increase for certain period of years after completion of improvements).
- Tax credits to owners for investing in upgrades to buildings in historic districts.
- Communication to residents of existing credits could spur exploitation thereof.

Threats:

- Possible unwillingness of residents to accept historic designation.
- Lack of historic designation would allow owners to modify buildings in ways that may not be deemed advantageous to the overall character of the Village.
- Traffic on route 20 contributes to accelerated deterioration of buildings on that corridor.
- Historic buildings in proximity to Stewarts that are currently for sale in conjunction with competitive influences could encourage the purchase and subsequent demolition of those proximate historic buildings to make way for expansion by Stewarts.

Cultural Resources*Strengths:*

- 5 Churches and a synagogue
- Library
- Village and Town Historical Societies
- Beautification committee
- Community brass band
- Boy scouts, girl scouts
- Elementary school
- Nassau Resource Center
- New Hope Store

- Nassau Sunshine Fund
- Proximity to numerous cultural venues in Albany, Troy, Western Mass, etc
- Less than 3 hours from New York City and Boston

Weaknesses:

- Lack of community center
- Cultural organizations are typically short-staffed

Opportunities:

- Use of village website, in addition to more traditional media and the village sign, to communicate community cultural events.
- Block parties, St. Patrick's Day parties, etc.
- Events to leverage off Memorial Day parade, Village-wide yard sale.
- Open up yard sale to outside vendors.

Threats:

- Churches are under pressure due to dwindling membership, building maintenance expenses , etc

Environment and Natural Resources

Strengths:

- Village owns over 5 acres of land adjacent to Village Hall.
- Large undeveloped parcel across from Village Hall.
- Large undeveloped parcel at end of and adjacent to Phillips St.
- Valatie Kill floodplain.
- Good soils (w/r/t percolation).

Weaknesses:

- Lack of open land due to dense development.
- Existing floodplain maps are crude.

Opportunities:

- Continue to support Town of Nassau's efforts to enforce Dewey Loeffel Landfill (DLL) cleanup activities and press for implementation of a permanent solution to the cleanup of ground water at DLL as well as removal of contaminants at the DLL site followed by dredging of Nassau Lake.
- Municipal garbage cans.
- Village cleanup event in the spring (consider contests for most trash collected, etc. to encourage results).

Threats:

- Climate change.
- Dewey Loeffel Landfill.
- Nassau Lake is filling in at the rate of as much as 6 inches per year. This reduces the capacity of the lake to act as a buffer to migration of contaminants.
- Sewage from private septic systems.