

## **4.0 ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY**

This section begins with a general overview of the natural environment and the existing historic landscape of southwestern Chautauqua County, specifically in the Towns of Ripley and Westfield. It includes a summary of existing conditions of the historic building stock in survey area by town.

### **4.1 General Overview of Landscape**

Outside of the villages of Westfield, Ripley and Mayville and the hamlets of Barcelona and State Line Station, the project area is predominantly rural; the majority of the land being agricultural, dense woods, and fields. The gently sloping Erie Lake Plain forming the northern section of the project area along the lake ascends to the Lake Escarpment and the foothills of the Allegheny Plateau to the south. The historic east-west routes US Route 20 and NY Route 5 that traverse the Erie Lake Plain through the towns of Ripley and Westfield are lined sporadically with houses and farmsteads. The fields under cultivation along these routes, as well as along roads further up this side of the escarpment, are predominantly dedicated to growing grapes. As discussed in the historical overview, Concord grapes for eating fresh and making juice are a major crop in Chautauqua County, and especially in these two townships. Wine grape varieties are also grown in the area, supplying both the five local wineries and for sale to wineries outside of the area.

The vineyards are interspersed with cornfields, hay fields, and other fruit growing fields and orchards, but the landscape in this section is dominated by rows of grape vines against the backdrop of Lake Erie to the north and the wooded heights of the escarpment to the south. Interspersed with the farm fields are narrow ravines cut by small creeks and streams that flow off the nearby uplands. The waterways are generally surrounded with trees and some stands of timber remain between the fields, but the Lake Plain area has been predominantly cleared of trees since the nineteenth century. Interstate 90 and the railroad cross this area from east to west, making this section along Lake Erie the primary locus of travel through the county.

In the project area south of the escarpment on the Allegheny Plateau, the terrain is more rural and wooded. Forests and hills rather than farm fields dominate the landscape. Structures are encountered infrequently along these rural roads, which range from well-used historic thoroughfares connecting the villages and beyond to small roads used by local residents. In addition, some unimproved “seasonal” roads that are not maintained in winter are present in this section. These unimproved roads generally have few or no structures along them. On the plateau, grapes cannot be grown and farms have traditional horticultural practices of cornfields, hayfields and dairy pastures. A few properties had rail horse fences, but horse pastures were not a substantial land use. Approaching the Village of Mayville and Chautauqua Lake by the Portage Road (NY 394), the rural scene continues to the north edge of the village where a modern school complex is located.

### **4.2 Existing Conditions of Historic Building Stock**

Buildings in the project area are predominantly residences in the village centers and farmsteads with farm outbuildings ranging from early 1800s to contemporary buildings. While there were a large number of extant buildings from the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, many of these buildings did not have sufficient integrity to be documented for the survey. Vinyl and aluminum siding were frequently present, along with replacement windows and rear or side

additions. Greek Revival, Italianate and Victorian Eclectic buildings were observed in moderate quantities, but the majority of them were sided with vinyl or aluminum.

Despite the prevalence of incompatible alterations of historic buildings, the survey identified intact representative examples of all nineteenth and early twentieth-century historical styles found in the project area, along with a substantial number of historic vernacular houses. Seven Federal style brick houses were documented during the survey in both Ripley and Westfield. They included both front facing and side gable examples, either 3 or 4 bays wide, usually with a fanlight present on the façade above the door and in the gable end. A very early example of a Federal style tavern at 8992 US Route 20 (Oliver Stetson Tavern, Westfield) has previously been determined NRHP eligible and is in poor condition. The former tavern is slated for demolition by the private owner (Personal communication with Michele Henry, Chautauqua County Historian).

The most common style of farmhouse in all three towns is Greek Revival. Examples of Greek Revival style houses identified in the survey included five with front facing gables and side wings, a Greek Revival form most often found in western New York (McAlester and McAlester, 2000: 180). Early to mid-twentieth century buildings surveyed included “Kit” houses in the Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles, which were frequently identified within and nearby the villages of Westfield and Ripley.

Agricultural buildings included notable examples of bank barns, a number of dairy barn complexes with silos, and barns associated with vineyards. Often, the house accompanying these farm outbuildings did not have the same level of integrity as the barn. However, a few properties were identified where both the house and associated outbuildings were over 50 years old and retained their architectural integrity.

### **4.3 Town of Westfield**

In the Town of Westfield, the Lake Plains section is predominantly vineyards and south of the escarpment is heavily wooded, interspersed with hayfields, cornfields and cow pastures. Chautauqua Creek cuts a deep ravine along the east edge of the township. Buildings are most numerous near the village along Routes 5 and 20.

Along NY Route 5, adjacent to the lake, are two enclaves of cottages and houses called Shore Haven and Forest Park. These communities are privately owned and have restricted access. Viewed from the main road, they did not appear to have resources over 50 years old. The hamlet of Barcelona consists of a cluster of streets and homes centered on the National Register Listed Barcelona Lighthouse on Lake Erie. While many of the small houses in this community appeared to have been older than 50 years of age, few had sufficient integrity to be documented for the survey.

Continuing south from Barcelona on the historic French Portage Road (NY 394) is the Village of Westfield, which hosts two National Register Listed Historic Districts (French Road Historic District and East Main Street Historic District). These two districts and 18 individually eligible properties were identified as part of the 1983 Westfield Village Multiple Resource Area NRHP Inventory- Nomination Form (Ross 1983). The Westfield Multiple Resource Area (MRA) encompasses the incorporated Village of Westfield (2,315 acres of land). This multi-phased survey/inventory identified resources that met the National Register criteria that were generally located near, but not limited to, the commercial and residential center of the village. The village

of Westfield includes a diverse array of nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles, building materials, and functional building types that document the evolution of Westfield into the early twentieth century (See Ross 1983).

Almost all of the Village of Westfield is within the project's Zone of Visual Influence. The current survey re-assessed areas in the village not previously documented in the 1983 MRA to: 1) identify significant early- to mid-twentieth century resources that were not 50-years or older when the 1983 MRA was conducted; and 2) identify any other nineteenth century resources not included in the 1983 MRA.

The area south of the Village of Westfield reflects the rural agricultural development as discussed above. There are no extant nineteenth century crossroads communities in the rural southern half of Westfield. One area, known as Volusia was not differentiated from the surrounding rural countryside, except for the presence of the Volusia Cemetery on the northwest corner of Douglas and Pigeon roads. The churches that once existed nearby were not located during the fieldwork and are no longer present. Visible traces of the built environment of these earlier rural communities include abandoned school houses and farmhouses in poor condition, dilapidated outbuildings, or in the form of highly modified farmhouses.

#### **4.4 Town of Ripley**

In the section of the Town of Ripley north of the escarpment, older buildings were abundant, but generally heavily altered, allowing for the documentation of only about 30 properties located in this area. Those buildings that were not altered were frequently in poor condition, and a number were vacant. Barns were also mostly altered or in poor condition, though a few intact examples were found. Three brick schoolhouses from the 1870s were documented along Route 20 in Ripley along with one frame schoolhouse. These schoolhouses are indicated on the 1881 Beers Atlas. Two cemeteries, the Quincy Rural Cemetery est. 1854 and the East Ripley Cemetery est. 1812 on Route 20 remain active.

The hamlet of State Line Station consists of a cluster of buildings just north of the Pennsylvania line; it had few structures with sufficient age and integrity to be documented. The Methodist Church located there is historic but sided with vinyl. A one-room schoolhouse was documented at the intersection of Station Road and Route 20 is indicated as schoolhouse #1 on the 1881 Beers Atlas. The adjacent Italianate farmhouse and its barn were also included in the survey.

The area known as East Ripley during the early nineteenth century is no longer differentiated from the rest of the rural farm scene along Route 20, except for presence of the cemetery. A one-room brick schoolhouse also remains there, but the Presbyterian Church is gone.

In the Town of Ripley section south of the escarpment on the Allegheny Plateau, a number of large dairy barn complexes were documented. These complexes had historic cores with later additions and silos. In general, this area had fewer houses with age and integrity than the section north of the escarpment. In age, many of the farmhouses are historic, but they have been so altered over time that they are ineligible for the NRHP.

Other historic resources documented in this area include the South Ripley Cemetery, still in use. It is set on a hill across a field from Sherman Road. The earliest headstone is dated 1845. This cemetery was associated with the South Ripley Methodist Church built nearby in 1885. A number of the craftsmen who built the church are buried in the cemetery (Ripley

Sesquicentennial, 1966: 36). This church has been vinyl sided and so was not included in the survey.

The Village of Ripley today consists of roughly eight-block section along US Route 20 with cross streets a few blocks long on either side. The railroad is one block south. The center of the village is the intersection of Route 20 and State Street where a number of commercial buildings remain, notably a 1913 bank building eligible for listing in the National Register. Domestic architecture in the village includes a mix of late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings. Based on historic map analysis, earlier houses may be present but many buildings were too heavily altered to date with certainty. According to the Ripley Sesquicentennial booklet, significant flurries of house building occurred in the 1860s, the 1880s and 1890s, and the domestic landscape of the village reflects this fact. In addition, a number of examples of early 20<sup>th</sup> century craftsman homes are present. The most notable residence in town is the Hamilton mansion built in 1924.

#### **4.5 Town of Chautauqua**

The section of the Town of Chautauqua, including the Village of Mayville, in the 5-mile ZVI radius is predominantly in the Zone of Zero Visibility. Only a few areas in the town are within view of one or more turbines. These areas are located in the rural southern and northern portions of the town. The existing historic building stock in rural Chautauqua is comprised of vernacular, nineteenth century, farmhouses that have been heavily modified or in poor condition.