

*To Bonnie,
A letter of concern
from Otsego would be
much appreciated!*

OTSEGO 2000

Post Office Box 173, Cooperstown, N.Y. 13326
607-547-8881

August 5, 1994

Memorandum To: All Village, Town and County Officials,
Historic Preservation Associations

Re: Wal-Mart mega warehouse

Otsego 2000 has recently become aware of the serious regional threat that the planned Wal-Mart warehouse on Rt 20 just east of Sharon Springs may pose to Otsego County, specifically Rts 20, 166, and 28.

The proposed warehouse is 30 acres with a 55 acre parking lot, large enough to accommodate 1,100 trailers and 400 cabs plus employee parking and transient truck traffic. Estimates of that traffic vary widely from 10-70 trucks per hour. In fact we don't think Wal-Mart knows how many trucks will be servicing this facility as it is only the second one of its kind in the United States. The first is located in Utah and has only been open a short time. One thing is clear--all westbound traffic will use Rt 20. and at least some southbound traffic will use Rt 166 and Rt 28.

We urge you to review the enclosed material and then WRITE to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in Washington D.C. where this project is currently under review. Tell them:

1. No regional environmental or historical impact of this project has been undertaken, yet many communities are likely to be impacted particularly on Rt 20 where all westbound traffic will travel. Otsego County municipalities should have received a DEIS (Draft Environmental Impact Statement) for review.

2. By agreeing not to use Rt 10, 145 and 30 in Schoharie County traffic is being forced into Otsego County. Schoharie County wants us to foot the bill for their truck traffic. We deserve an explanation!

3. Wal-Mart claims to have looked extensively for a 200 acre site in the Syracuse, Binghamton, Albany triangle yet they refuse to discuss other potential properties. The economic benefits of Wal-Mart would be far better realized if they located along the I-88, I-90 corridor rather than impacting our secondary roads and historic communities. Suggest they look again.

4. Subsidizing the richest company in America with tax exemptions that amount to millions of dollars for 200 \$7 an hour jobs is not a wise use of our tax dollars!

5. The Sharon Springs site has required extensive mitigation including removal of an historic building, relocation of a cemetery, avoidance of archeological sites, construction of detention ponds, filling in of existing wetlands and creation of new wetlands. In the end no one will know until its done if the famous Sharon Springs will be negatively impacted by the enormous amounts of run-off generated by 70 acres of impervious surface. This site should be abandoned.

The communities and counties surrounding Sharon Springs should have received a completed DEIS alerting them to the magnitude of this project and its potential effects on the surrounding municipalities. That did not happen. We are now in the 11th hour and are definitely playing catch-up. Please call or write today and discuss this issue at your next board meeting. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Polly Renckens
Co-ordinator
Otsego 2000

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 809
Washington, DC 20004

Fax 202 606-8672, 8647

The proposed Wal-Mart project--a 35 acre warehouse and 55 acre parking lot--is situated directly on the Great Western Turnpike, NYS Route 20. The road is a rich repository of regional architecture in the original historic context of beautiful pastoral views and increasingly rare rural atmosphere. Walmart intends to throw all of its traffic onto this highway. East, South and Northbound traffic will access I-88 by traveling Rt 20 to 30A to I-88 or Rt 20 to 166 to 28 to I-88. All westbound traffic will travel Rt 20 to Rt 8 to the Thruway. Hourly truck traffic estimates vary widely. Walmart has backed away from its original projection of 60 trucks per hour, but one would have to assume that it will take a LOT of trucks to service a 35-acre facility, and they will be impacting many small communities in Otsego County. Collateral development may very well follow resulting in a Rt 23 look (Southside Oneonta) which would tax our infrastructure and destroy our ambience that is so important to us and our traveling guests without whom we cannot survive. We believe this project deserves regional review by interested municipalities and organizations. Please consider the following analysis of the area and the issue.

Significant Vulnerable Historical Sites

1. The Village of Sharon Springs NY contains a Historic District listed in the NYS and National Register of Historic Places.
2. The American Hotel, on Main St. (Rt. 10) in Sharon Springs listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. The Village of Cherry Valley, within 8 miles of the site, is a National Register Historic District with properties in the environs currently undergoing application for inclusion of these registries.
4. The Village of Cooperstown, within 25 miles of the site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
5. Otsego Lake, immortalized in the tales of James Fenimore Cooper, is within 20 miles of the project and the object of ongoing critical preservation efforts.
6. Hyde Hall, on the shore of Otsego Lake is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is currently undergoing significant physical restoration.
7. The Village of Richfield Springs (Rt 20) is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
8. The Village of Milford--a community with high architectural integrity that is slated to be the subject of a Community Resources study in its bicentennial year 1995.

In addition, Route 20 itself is one of the most beautiful roads remaining in New York State. Once the main artery used by the westward-bound settlers, the road today from Esperence to Sharon Springs and from Sharon Springs west to Cazenovia follows the trail of history and remains virtually intact, unmarred by suburban or ex-urban "sprawl." It is a necklace of traditional villages and hamlets, each gifted with architecturally significant buildings, and each nestled among bucolic unspoiled hills, dramatic and magnificent view, enhanced by the presence of working farms.

Well before the announcement of the Wal-Mart project, concerned residents of the Otsego and Schoharie areas had begun exploring the possibilities of a Great Western Turnpike (Rt 20) nomination from Esperence to Cazenovia for inclusion in the National Scenic Highways system. The Wal-Mart project could have a significant adverse impact upon this nomination, spoiling in one siting and its correlative and ancillary development, the rural character of that route which has been essentially preserved intact for the past 200 years. That will translate to a reduced desirability of our area to potential homeowners from downstate who are seeking a refuge from the very thing we are about to confront. They will go elsewhere.

The Central Leatherstocking Region, in which the above named sites and others are located, is widely regarded as the jewel of upstate New York. Tourism based on the history, beauty, and rural qualities of the area is a primary industry and key source of the economic stability in the region, and a key livelihood for many owners of historic homes offering boarding and lodging, as well as other businesses such as tours, books, antiques, and auction trades which rely on the historic context for a livelihood.

Into this unique and rare region, serviced mostly by two-lane County and Town roads, Wal-Mart proposed to construct a 65-acre warehouse facility on the prime farmland it will acquire, and feed the warehouse with an unprecedented flow of large tractor-trailer trucks and additional worker, service delivery, and private business traffic.

This warehouse, as an intermediate warehouse facility, is central to the retail development of Rt 20, in accord with the Wal-Mart plan for regional expansion and development. A view of the Western segment of Rt 20 beyond Cazenovia will confirm this view with extensive strip mall development including Wal-Mart retail overgrowth.

Traffic on Rt 20 west will exit onto a steep incline well known for its speeding infractions and accident potential. Traffic east into the warehouse will climb that same hill. Air pollution, brake and engine noise will be the adverse impacts affecting both residential quality of life, and the heart of tourism, which in Sharon Springs is the special peace and solitude of the Historic Area which attracts many into a unique active operating historic health spa.

The Sewer project improvements, funded by Farmers Home Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission, providing excess capacity beyond that needed Wal-Mart, have the potential to both increase costs to the citizens, and to lead to further commercial development of Wal-Mart type businesses, further undermining the low-impact tourism that persists within the historic district.

Cherry Valley

Due to Rt 166 Wal-Mart generated traffic, the Cherry Valley Museum in the Village and the historic Cherry Valley massacre site (with its marker on Rt 20) will lose the rural quality which marks that the village. NYS Rt 166 takes a ninety-degree turn at the intersection, then proceeds south. Trucks will have difficulty negotiating this turn. Backup traffic will extend up Main St. to the museum and give the village the feeling of a truck parking lot, especially in the summer when tourist traffic is heavy.

Cooperstown

Rt 20 and Rt 166 are key routes to historic Cooperstown, home of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, the Farmer's Museum, the NYS Historical Association, and scores of other significant historical sites known for their centrality in America's rural past.

Trailer traffic will cause delays, pollution, and degrade the visitor's experience of the area. The link to I-88 through Rt 28 will increase an already degraded route south of Cooperstown and Milford. Rt 28 is the subject of historic preservation concern, and the Otsego County Planning Department is preparing an inter-jurisdictional review of zoning and site planning to assess and protect its unique attributes.

Lake Otsego

Rt 20 passes just to the north of the lake, intersecting county Route and state highway that south along the lake. Historic tourism and recreational users of the lake will encounter unprecedented truck traffic as they attempt to reach their destination.

Significant Public Recreation Facility Impact

Truck going and coming to and from the Wal-Mart warehouse will travel within 4 miles of the entrance to Glimmerglass State Park, the main public recreational facility in the area.

Traffic in and out of the park is significant in the spring and summer, and cars using the Park entrance will unavoidably encounter Wal-Mart related traffic.

Direct Potential Adverse Effects

The communities of Sharon Springs, Milford and Richfield Springs will all be trying to accomodate increased truck traffic in very close proximity to their schools increasing the chances for accidents thus necessitating more paid crossing guards at peak times and greater vigilance all the time.

This increased traffic will bring noise, dust, chemical air pollution, light-halo effects, loss of open space, wetlands, and prime farm land.

Indirect Potential Effects

Suburban patterns of residential and commercial development in previous rural ares; intensification of road use leading to widening, expansion and increased maintenance cost; increased commercial zoning and "strip" development on village and hamlet outskirts. Loss of "Main Street," local, and indigenous trade, increased local business costs, loss of local recycled income, loss of local economic viability. Wal-Mart investors made 20 billion dollars last year. That's all money that went out of the local economies of small rural communities like our own.

Sharon Springs

In Sharon Springs, Wal-Mart proposes a "resurrection" of High St. with access for "emergency" vehicles, and the potential for opening the very short strip at any time in the future. This road will carry "associate" (employee) traffic, delivery service vehicles, and buses. Increased traffic flow will lead to demand for "finishing" High St. to permit direct Wal-Mart access via Washington and Dublin Streets, thus bypassing the difficult Rt 10 "verticle curve" near the intersection with Rt 20.

The rezoning of the High St. contiguous are well likely to lead to additional development increasing significant adverse impacts. Rt 20 rezoning to Commercial-Industrial will open the area to "Industrial Park" type development in the near future, impacts ignore or denies in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Historically significant buildings, namely the Parsons farmhouse and barn, will require complete moving, destroying the historic context. Open space may be visible behind the security fence.

Richfield Springs

Rt 20 passes directly thru the village of Richfield Springs which already has excessive truck traffic. A steepgrade at the eastern end of the Village is a year round challenge for trucks.

Milford

Like Cherry Valley trucks using 166 will have a left hand turn from a two lane road into a two lane road that has already experienced significant traffic increases in the last ten years with the growth of Bassett Hospital and the development on Rt 28. Infrastructure improvements will be next!

Alternative Sites not Sufficiently Explored

According to Wal-Mart's own site selection criteria sites should:

1. not impinges upon wetlands or endangered species
2. avoid historical and archaeological sites
3. have adequate transportation arteries to access interstate systems
4. be flat or gently sloping

The above criteria do not apply to the Sharon Springs site. Problems of access, insufficiency of feeder roads (e.g. Rt 10, Rt 166) and severe winters make the siting problematic.

In addition, Wal-Mart required a zoning change to secure the site, and virtually every important infrastructure system--sewer, water, utilities--is inadequate. Many other suitable sites are available with infrastructure in place and appropriately zoned.

Since Wal-Mart will employ from a 30 mile radius, the regional benefits of the warehouse are projected over this area. Thus the economic benefits could be easily realized by the site along the I-90/I-88 Corridor, within the appropriate infrastructure and zoning context, eliminating most of the marked adverse impact on the historic elements of the region detailed in this letter.

Lack of Public Participation

Public official, elected and appointed, discussed and negotiated with Wal-Mart official for at least 14 months before any public disclosure.

The direct adverse impacts of the proposed site have received cursory discussion, and been answered only from the corporate perspective. Objective review and analysis has been notably absent. Indirect potential impacts have received virtually no discussion. Regional impact discussion is absent.

The region potentially affected has remained isolated from the impacts of suburbanization. In fact, the absence of "strip mall" development in the area might be considered of historical value, so rare have regions like Central Leatherstocking become in America, especially in the heavily urbanized northeast.

We feel the Advisory Council should be called upon to consider the proposed Sharon Springs Wal-Mart project under the National Historic Preservation Act. We further feel that insufficient explanation has been provided as to why obvious alternative sites were not considered. We urge that these alternatives be more fully explored before construction on the present site is approved and commenced.

Otsego County Conservation Association
P. O. Box 931
Cooperstown, NY 13326
December 14, 1994

H. Lee Scott,
Vice-President
Wal-Mart, Inc.
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville, AR 72716-6100

Dear Mr. Scott:

I am writing you as president of the Otsego County Conservation Association. With a paid membership of over 700, we are the area's oldest conservation group, having been in existence for 25 years. Our mandate is county-wide. At the present time, we are very concerned about the indirect effects the Wal-Mart megawarehouse under construction in Sharon Springs, NY will have on Otsego County.

We are aware that this megawarehouse will create needed jobs (principally for Schoharie County residents). However, without any input from residents of Otsego County, the truck traffic south to I-88 is being deliberately routed through Otsego County via Cherry Valley and Milford (Routes 166 and 28).

Also, traffic is being routed away from I-90 in favor of Route 20 West. We are especially worried that this routing pattern will bring, minimally, several hundred additional trucks a week (only a portion of the estimates, based on your figures of approximately 800 additional truck in/outs to the warehouse at full build-out) to the East and West Lake Road intersections -- the gateways to Otsego Lake, a resource we spend a good deal of time and money trying to preserve. The Route 20 access points to the lake are used by thousands of residents, boaters, fishermen, swimmers, and others, especially in summer. The additional traffic at these access points could represent significant inconvenience and possible danger.

We feel it is unfair for us to bear the brunt of the negative impacts we foresee, namely: increased heavy truck thru-traffic, suburbanized traffic patterns, air pollution, noise, disturbance to historic villages and to the rural quality of life we deeply appreciate and on which Otsego County tourism and agriculture depend.

We request that you reconsider your traffic plans and restrict traffic generated by the megawarehouse to Schoharie County roads. This objective may be achieved by:

1) using the shorter and more obvious choices of Routes 10 and 145 and requesting upgrading of these roads from the New York State Department of Transportation.

2) avoiding Route 20 from Sharon Springs to the Marcy Wal-Mart facility by heading east from the megawarehouse to Route 30A, thence north to Route 162 and onto I-90. Though marginally longer, this alternative involves fewer schools, traffic lights and rural intersections than Route 20 and would route large trucks to the interstate highway system built and intended for their use.

In recent years, Wal-Mart, Inc. has realized substantial profits from consumers who have patronized your stores as well as from tax payers, who have conceded to your corporation such advantages as payment in lieu of taxes. In Oneonta, NY, which is in Otsego County, a Wal-Mart "Super-Center" -- from which you will derive considerable profits -- will soon be opening. In return, we ask your cooperation in preserving the open spaces, rural landscape, and tranquility of Otsego County (which are here for both residents and non-residents to enjoy) by limiting the Wal-Mart truck traffic which passes through it.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Canning-Hofmann,
President, OCCA

cc: Kurt Geringer, Wal-Mart Project Manager
David Glass, Wal-Mart CEO
Ralston Cox, Advisory Council, Historic Preservation,
Washington, D.C.
Joan K. Davidson, Commissioner & State Historic
Preservation Officer, Albany, NY

6 December 1994

For discussion

547-4488

1/2

Teresa: Pls. give to Bonnie as soon as you can so she can discuss it with the Board on Thursday night.

Paula D. Penn Thanks

Memo to OCCA Board/Draft letter to Sen. Jim Seward

Dear Sen. Seward,

Thank you for organizing the meeting on December 5 with Department of Transportation officials concerning the Wal-Mart project now under construction in Sharon Springs, New York. We are grateful to you for taking this initiative, particularly since no systematic consultation with communities outside of Schoharie County was conducted as this project unfolded.

We, of course, applaud the creation of jobs and we are aware that the Wal-Mart megawarehouse will create needed jobs over the next few years, the bulk in Schoharie County.

However, we are deeply concerned that Otsego County will bear most of the potentially negative impacts of the project-- increased heavy truck thru-traffic, suburbanized traffic patterns, air pollution, noise, disturbance to historic villages and to the rural quality of life we deeply appreciate and on which tourism and agricultural enterprises depend.

We are especially worried that the proposed major truck route west--namely Route 20--will bring minimally several hundred additional trucks a week (only a portion of the estimates, based on Wal-Mart's figures of approximately 800 additional truck in/outs to the warehouse at full build-out) to the East and West Lake Road intersections, the gateways to Otsego Lake, a resource we spend, as you know, a good deal of money and time trying to preserve. The Route 20 access points to the lake are used by thousands of residents, boaters, fishermen, swimmers, and others, ~~all year long~~ especially in summer. The additional traffic at these access points could represent significant inconvenience and possible danger. ~~not to mention the lake experience for~~
~~the area~~

We are concerned by several key ^{Items} ~~points~~ that emerged at the December 5 meeting:

--DOT has examined only the figures provided by Wal-Mart and not concerned itself with secondary effects outside of Schoharie County.

--Without any consultation in Otsego County, the truck traffic south to I-88 is being deliberately routed through Otsego County (via Cherry Valley and Milford--Routes 166/28) because using Otsego County roads is theoretically less expensive than

upgrading the shorter, more obvious choices--namely Schoharie County Routes 10/145.

--Nor has a viable alternative route that would avoid Route 20 from Sharon Springs to the Marcy Wal-Mart facility (namely east from the mega-warehouse to Route 30A, thence north to Route 162 and onto ~~Route 90~~) been examined at all, either by Wal-Mart or by the DOT. This alternative though marginally longer, involves fewer schools, traffic lights and rural intersections than Route 20 and would route large trucks to the Interstate Highway system built and intended for their use.

--The potentially negative environmental impacts we mention above have not been examined. The DOT explicitly said at the meeting you called that such examination was "not their mandate."

--No regional study of secondary and indirect impacts of the project has been undertaken, and communities outside of Sharon Springs along Route 20 were not consulted because they are not located in the physical "region" of the DOT officials based in Binghamton.

--The "road improvement" plans approved by DOT to accommodate the Wal-Mart project in Otsego County are part of a larger plan to "upgrade rural highways" in the region and yet no consultation about these plans have involved Otsego County environmental and conservation groups.

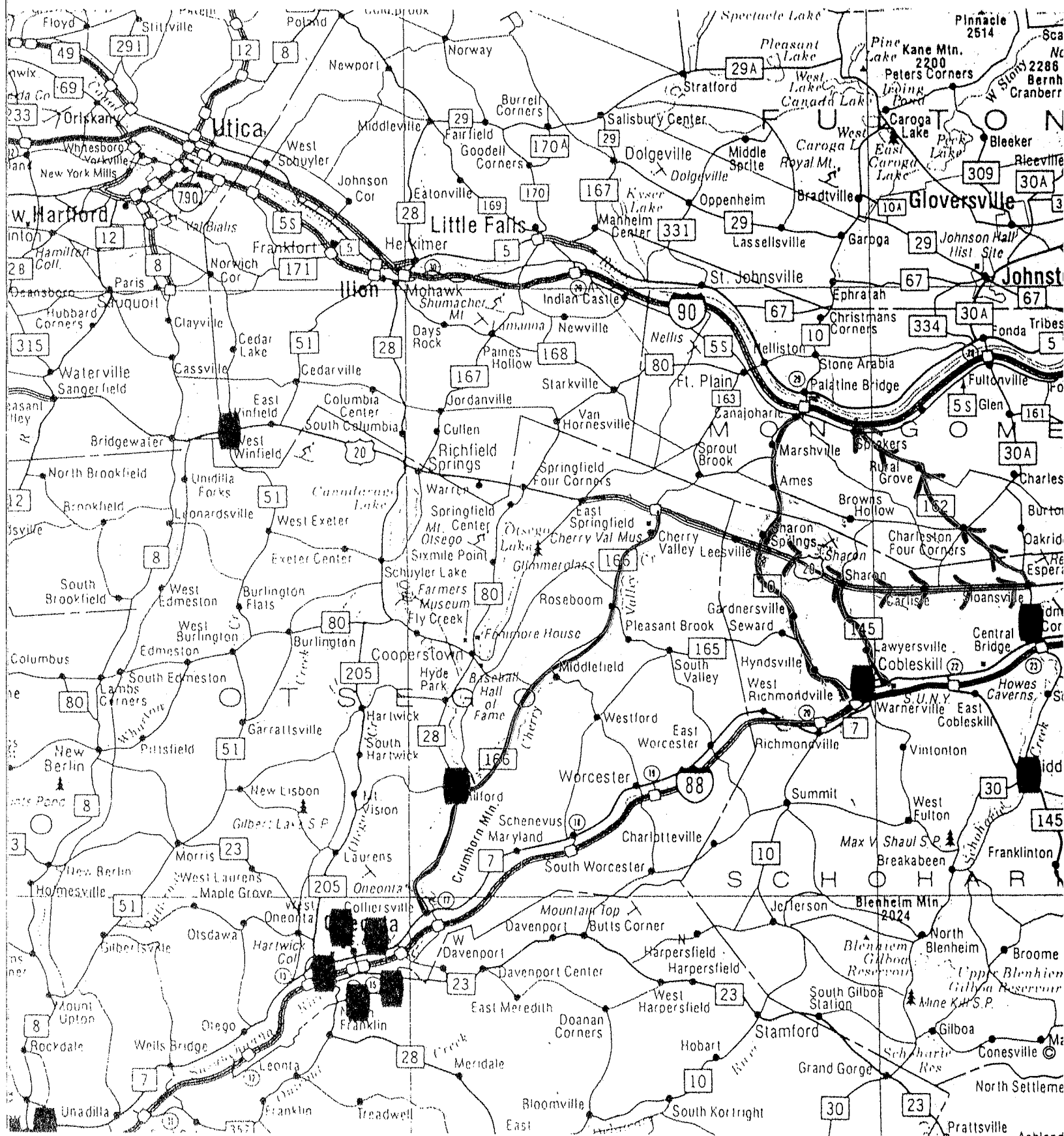
As the area's oldest conservation group, whose mandate is County-wide, we are very concerned about the indirect effects of the Wal-Mart megawarehouse in our County.

Therefore, we urge you to use your good offices to:

- 1) facilitate necessary improvements to Route 10/145 in Schoharie County so that the bulk of Wal-Mart southbound traffic will travel through Schoharie County, where most of the benefits will be reaped, thus avoiding Routes 166 and ~~28~~ in Otsego County.
- 2) urge Wal-Mart to accept the Route 30A/162/90 "alternative" described above as the recommended route for trucks headed from/to Marcy from/to Sharon Springs.
- 3) urge that any future projects of this nature be subjected to more detailed scrutiny and analysis of indirect and regional impacts involving all concerned communities.

We know that you share our interest in preserving the unique qualities of our area and to achieving economic development that is also environmentally sensible and sustainable. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

7 = Otsego 2000 alternate Rt.



Ally Taylor

Wal-Mart Primary Designated Truck Route Analysis

Primary designated truck route re: Wal-Mart Environmental Impact Statement – Sharon Springs warehouse site to Utica via Route 20 east to 8 north.

Sharon Springs to Bridgewater via Route 20 east – 34 miles

- Traffic Signals 6 Sharon Springs, Springfield, Richfield Springs (2) West Winfield, Bridgewater
- Reduced Speed Zones 7 Sharon Springs, Leesville, E. Springfield, Warren, Richfield Springs, West Winfield, Bridgewater (2)
- Schools 3 Sharon Springs, Richfield Springs, West Winfield.
Four lane divided highway for 11 miles, two lane undivided highway through three villages for 24 miles.

Bridgewater to Utica via Route 8 – 20 miles

- Traffic Signals 6 Clayville, Utica (5)
- Reduced Speed Zones 2 Bridgewater, City of Utica
Route 8 is a rural two lane highway for 16 miles becoming a four lane divided highway for the next 4.

Total of 54 miles, 12 traffic signals, 9 reduced speed zones and 3 schools

Wal-Mart Alternative Truck Route Analysis

Alternative Route – Sharon Springs warehouse site to Utica via Route 20 west to 162 north to I-90 east.

Sharon Springs to Sloansville via Route 20 west – 13 miles

- Traffic Signals 1 Sloansville
- Reduced Speed Zones 2 Carlisle, Sloansville
- Schools 0
Divided four lane except in Carlisle where it is undivided four lane.

Sloansville to Canajoharie via Route 30 and 162 – 14 miles

- Traffic Signals 0
- Reduced Speed Zones 2 Charleston, Canajoharie Hill
- Schools 0
Two lane newly paved road with wide shoulders and passing lane on hill.

Canajoharie to Utica via I-90 – 41 miles

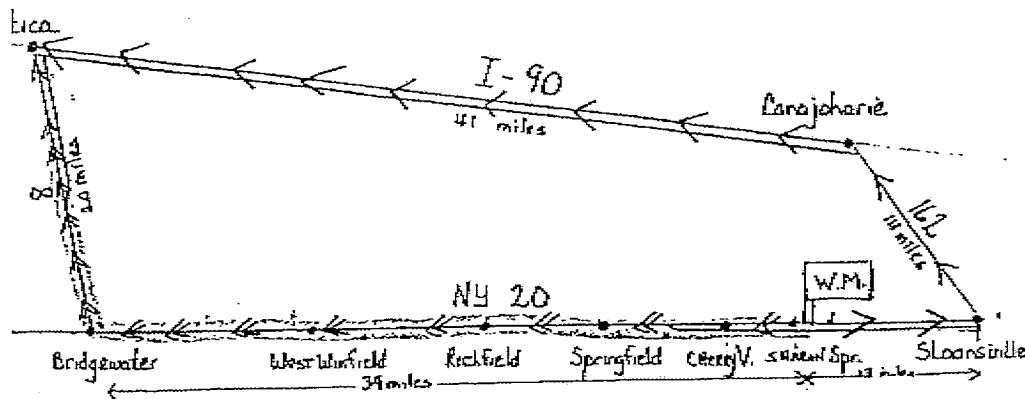
- Traffic Signals 0
- Reduced Speed Zones 0
- Schools 0
Four lane divided interstate highway.

Total of 68 miles, 2 traffic signals, 4 reduced speed zones, 0 schools.

Conclusion

The alternative route is a few miles longer but offers far fewer obstacles to high speed heavy truck traffic. No schools with their attendant bus and vehicular traffic would be impacted. There are far fewer signalized intersections and reduced speed zones. The alternative route has the further of advantage of being primarily four lane divided highway.

TRUCK ROUTES



- Two lane
- == Four lane
- - - - - Alternative Route
- > WAL MART Route

December 9, 1994

Senator James Seward
41 South Main Street
Oneonta, NY 13820

Dear Senator Seward,

Thank you for organizing the December 5 meeting with Department of Transportation officials concerning the Wal-Mart project now under construction in Sharon Springs, New York. We are grateful to you for taking this initiative, particularly since no systematic consultation with communities outside Schoharie County was conducted as this project unfolded.

We, of course, applaud the creation of jobs and we are aware that the Wal-Mart megawarehouse will create needed jobs over the next few years, the bulk of which will be in Schoharie County.

However, we are deeply concerned that Otsego County will bear most of the negative impacts of the project: increased heavy truck thru-traffic, suburbanized traffic patterns, air pollution, noise, disturbance to historic villages and to the rural quality of life we deeply appreciate and on which tourism and agricultural enterprises depend.

We are especially worried that the proposed major truck route west (namely, Route 20) will bring, minimally, several hundred additional trucks a week (only a portion of the estimates, based on Wal-Mart's figures of approximately 800 additional truck in/outs to the warehouse at full build-out) to the East and West Lake Road intersections, the gateways to Otsego Lake -- a resource we spend, as you know, a good deal of time and money trying to preserve. The Route 20 access points to the lake are used by thousands of residents, tourists, boaters, fishermen, swimmers, and others, especially in summer. The additional traffic at these access points could represent significant inconvenience and possible danger.

We are concerned about several key items that emerged at the December 5 meeting:

- DOT has examined only the figures provided by Wal-Mart and not concerned itself with secondary effects outside of Schoharie County.

- Without any consultation in Otsego County, the truck traffic south to I-88 is being deliberately routed through Otsego County via Cherry Valley and Milford (Routes 166 and 28) because using the Otsego County roads is, theoretically, less expensive than upgrading the shorter, more obvious choices: namely Schoharie County Routes 10 and 145.

● Nor has attention been given to avoiding Route 20 from Sharon Springs to the Marcy Wal-Mart facility via an alternative route: namely, east from the megawarehouse to Route 30A, thence north to Route 162 and onto I-90. This alternative, though marginally longer, involves fewer schools, traffic lights and rural intersections than Route 20 and would route large trucks to the interstate highway system built and intended for their use.

● The potentially negative environmental impacts we mention above have not been examined. The DOT explicitly said at the meeting you called that such an examination was "not their mandate."

● No regional study of secondary and indirect impacts of the project has been undertaken, and communities outside Sharon Springs along Route 20 were not consulted because they are not located in the physical "region" of the DOT officials based in Binghamton.

● The "road improvement" plans approved by DOT to accommodate the Wal-Mart project in Otsego County are part of a larger plan to "upgrade rural highways" in the region and yet no consultation about these plans has involved Otsego County environmental and conservation groups.

● As the areas oldest conservation group, with a membership of over 700 and whose mandate is county-wide, we are very concerned about the indirect effects of the Wal-Mart megawarehouse in Otsego county. We therefore urge you to use your good offices to:

1) facilitate necessary improvements to Routes 10 and 145 in Schoharie County so that the bulk of Wal-Mart southbound traffic will travel through Schoharie County, where most of the benefits will be reaped, thus avoiding Routes 166 and 28 in Otsego County.

2) urge Wal-Mart to accept the Route 30A/162/90 "alternative" described above as the recommended route for trucks headed from/to Marcy from/to Sharon Springs.

3) urge that any future projects of this nature be subjected to more detailed scrutiny and analysis of indirect and regional impacts involving all concerned communities.

We know that you share our interest in preserving the unique qualities of our area and in achieving economic development that is also environmentally sensible and sustainable.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to hearing from you about this matter.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Canning-Hofmann,
President, OCCA

• **Richmondville Supervisor Betsy Bernocco**, for her work on town issues and also at Eden Park Nursing Home.

• **Rose Surman** of Cobleskill, president of the Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School and active at St. Vincent de Paul's Roman Catholic Church.

• **Christine Dickerson** of Cobleskill, for her energy and leadership at the Cobleskill Public Library, where she is librarian.

• **Mary Beth Vought** of Gallupville, for her work broadening the Schoharie County Arts Council, of which she is director, despite cuts in state funds and other grants.

• **Vena Ray** of Cobleskill, Cobleskill College professor, preacher, singer and puppeteer.

• **Dorothy Garner** of Cobleskill, who works with volunteer tutors in the Schoharie County Literacy Program.

• **Harold Vroman** of Cobleskill, for his work on Vroman's Nose, the Schoharie County Historical Society and Old Stone Fort Museum and Cobleskill College's Travelogue Program.

• **Daniel Hollearn** of Cobleskill, for his longtime work with the Boy Scouts and more recently, the Salvation Army's Red Kettle campaign.

• **Matt Loder** of Cobleskill's Mart Cleaners for his work with the "Coats for Kids campaign".

• **Shirley and Will Shafer** of Middleburgh, volunteers and directors at the Animal Shelter of the Schoharie Valley.

• **Linda Gaydushek**, former Wright supervisor and now Schoharie County Democratic chair.

• **Dodie Cechnicki**, for her work in the home economics department at Sharon Springs Central School.

• **Sharon Aitchison** of Cobleskill for her work at Ryder School and CREST.

terknitting, Ltd., and Darryl Van Dyke, president of the Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce—to name a few.

"Adele doesn't just do her job," she goes out of her way to find people," Ms. Belloise said.

"She has so many ideas, ideas for development ideas on how to implement things. She sees the potential."

With Wal-Mart's Route 20 distribution center expected to open later this year, Ms. Belloise said Sharon is already seeing a

from people interested in opening new businesses there.

"Wal-Mart's going to be the biggest economic boost Sharon is going to see this decade," she said, "but Adele isn't stopping there."

Ms. Hayes, she said, was instrumental in setting up a Sharon Springs Citizens' Council of the Arts and in helping to implement a parking study.

She's also working to match vacant Sharon buildings with potential owners and businesses," Ms. Belloise said.

"She's worked day and night

The nature of Ms. Hayes' job, Mr. MacKay said, is that it's hard to measure and hard to publicize.

"There's a lot you can't talk publicly about," he said. "It's high time we said thank you to Adele."

Mr. MacKay also praised Ms. Hayes for being honest and realistic with would-be developers.

"She doesn't over-promise," he said. "She knows that economic development is important, but so is environmental review. In that, I think she's really a reflection of Schoharie County."

David Handy, Sharon supervi-

if you want to eat breakfast before 4:30am, great," he said. "After that, forget it. There are no seats. There are lines at the gas stations and even the bank is seeing an increase in business."

Ms. Hayes' association with Interknitting Ltd. goes back about 20 years and controller Tim Gaffney said it's long been a positive one.

"In the years I've been here, she's been a tremendous help," he said.

"She's worked hard to help us expand here and she's always been encouraging."

Wal-Mart no cake walk

Hayes put in extra effort to bring center to Sharon Springs

By Jim Poole

Wal-Mart was never in love with Schoharie County as a site for its distribution center.

In fact, Sharon Springs—where the center is being built now—was pretty far down the list of 90-some sites.

But Adele Hayes persisted through two years of research, late hours and weekends to bring Wal-Mart and its jobs to Schoharie County.

It was her work with Wal-Mart that earned Ms. Hayes the Times-Journal Star award this week. (See related story.)

Wal-Mart's search for a site began in February, 1992, and even then Ms. Hayes knew Schoharie County would be competing with every other county in the state and others in the Northeast.

She and Alicia Terry of the county Planning Department prepared information packages for six sites, including the eventual winner, the former Parsons farm.

"We knew what we dealing with, and we didn't want to limit the county to one site," Ms. Hayes said.

When a Wal-Mart rep came to see the sites, Ms. Hayes showed him the

six, but also drove him to potential sites in Otsego and Montgomery counties.

When the rep asked why they were going to other counties, Ms. Hayes had an answer.

"I wanted to show him what might be available," she said. "But I also knew that even if we didn't get the center, there would be enough jobs nearby so that some of our people would get some."

As the search process continued, Wal-Mart demanded information—lots of it on soils, demographics, schools, the economy, job opportunities, history.

Because they had already put in extra time assembling information, Ms. Hayes and Ms. Terry were ready.

"We found out later that one of the ways they judge sites is by how fast they got information back," Ms. Hayes said.

Schoharie County lost out on the first center, a larger one that went to Marcy, near Utica. But the county was still in the running for a "soft-woods" center that would supply other centers.

Still, Ms. Hayes wasn't very con-

fident. She knew the list had been narrowed to 10 sites "and we were near the bottom."

She became more resourceful. She wrote to Wal-Mart for an annual report and found the company had built centers in Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Ms. Hayes called planners, developers and others there to see how they were successful in attracting Wal-Mart.

"They were a wealth of information," she said. "I got an idea of where we stood in the process."

Ms. Hayes didn't stop there. She visited the Pennsylvania and Virginia centers to see what they were like.

"Wal-Mart invited me to go, but I went early," she explained. "I waited in the parking lot for a shift change so I could talk to the employees."

"I had heard so many bad things about Wal-Mart. But the people I talked to loved it, loved working there."

"And you know what I saw in the parking lot? All new cars. Lots of these people had never had new cars before they started working for Wal-Mart."

Armed with new information, Ms.

Hayes now knew that the Parsons farm was one of seven sites left on the list.

In November of '93, Wal-Mart executives came calling again. It was snowy and foggy, and Sharon Springs was their last stop on the tour.

"It was late in the day, getting dark, and I was sure they wouldn't be able to see anything," Ms. Hayes said. "And they also had a car that couldn't get on the site because of the snow. So I just piled them into my car and we went."

That was the trip that clinched the Sharon Springs site. The announcement came a month later, and Wal-Mart broke ground this past fall.

Though she did much of the work, Ms. Hayes credited her "team" for doing just as much. Besides Ms. Terry, those included Henry Lamont and Sandy MacKay of Lamont, Van De Vally Engineers and Henry Whitbeck, attorney for the county Industrial Development Agency.

"They really gave of themselves, and without their work, we wouldn't have gotten it," she said. "It was the only way we could do it."

H. Lee Scott, Senior Vice President
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
702 S.W. 8TH Street
Bentonville, AR 72716-6100

January 6, 1995

Ms. Bonnie Canning-Hofmann
Otsego County Conservation Association
PO Box 931
Cooperstown, NY 13326

Dear Ms. Canning-Hofmann,

Thank you for your letter expressing your concerns regarding truck traffic supporting our Sharon Springs warehouse. We have a vital interest in the welfare of the communities in which we operate, live, and service our customers.

You expressed concern that we have routed truck traffic through Otsego County via Cherry Valley and Milford using Routes 166 and 28. Although our initial studies did propose this as a possible route to I-88, we have since committed to avoiding Routes 166 and 28. We will direct Wal-Mart operated trucks to use Route 30A and urge our suppliers and independent truckers servicing our warehouse to do the same.

We also appreciate your concerns regarding traffic on Route 20 servicing our Marcy facility. Route 20 is in fact a road well constructed and used for truck traffic. Although not on the same scale as an Interstate, this highway was meant to be an east/west arterial road. It is worthy to note that this facility is not accurately described as a "megawarehouse." Its storage capacity will be large, but it is one of a small quantity of specialty warehouses we operate that has minimal inbound and outbound truck traffic. This fact is a primary reason the impact to existing traffic will be small.

Route 10 is a shorter route to I-90 and I-88, however, this road will not safely support truck traffic due to inclines, curves, underpasses, and weight restrictions in some areas. Route 145 to I-88 is similarly unusable. Route 30A to I-90, although used by some trucks, has horizontal and vertical curves without turning and truck climbing lanes. Currently the state has no improvements planned for these highways.

Otsego County and its concerns are important to Wal-Mart. We have committed not to use Routes 166 and 28 as much as possible, and the traffic that will travel east and west on Route 20 will be minimal. Also, the peak traffic level on this route will not be reached for several years. This should allow all parties time to adjust to the new truck traffic and reevaluate and adjust routes or modify roads if and as needed.

I thank you again for taking the time to share your questions and suggestions with us. I welcome any further comments you might have.

Sincerely,



H. Lee Scott
Senior Vice President, Logistics

cc
5/14/97



Roses to Wal-Mart for backing away from a decision to use Route 166 and the village of Cherry Valley as a major truck route for its Sharon Springs distribution center. It was an arrogant, unneighborly plan. We're glad to see Wal-Mart has thought better of it.

"It was in working with the concerns expressed by everyone in Cherry Valley and working with DOT that we decided to make the change," a Wal-Mart spokesperson said. Moreover, they've backed up the decision with specific orders to truckers that warn "utilizing any route other than approved highways will result in immediate action being taken." Good move, but it makes sense for Cherry Valley residents to stay vigilant. Just in case there is slippage.

Wal-Mart makes donation to NSHOF

By **BILL FRANCIS**
Sports Editor

ONEONTA - One of Oneonta's newest residents lent a helping hand to a neighbor last Saturday.

Steve Halter, manager of Wal-Mart of Oneonta, which will soon open, presented two checks to the National Soccer Hall of Fame in a ceremony during the Hall's first ever "open house" on Saturday, July 22 at the Wright National Soccer Campus for area business and government leaders.

A \$350 check covered expenses for T-shirts that went to volunteers of the U.S. Soccer Induction Match held at Hartwick College's Elmore Field between the Under-23 Men's teams from the United States and Chile on July 2 and a \$2,000 check went for general support of the Soccer Hall of Fame.

"We're interested in helping out the Soccer Hall of Fame in their effort towards developing this soccer campus," Halter said. "With expansion on this sight, many children's dreams will come true, and we want

to help out in any way we can."

Halter also added that the local Wal-Mart store will help publicize upcoming Soccer HOF events.

According to Hall of Fame Executive Director Albert Colone, Wal-Mart's generosity will hopefully translate into a stronger relationship between the two in the future.

"This gesture of community spirit prompted by Wal-Mart is very much appreciated, and I hope it builds a closer relationship between the Hall of Fame and Wal-Mart for years to come," Colone said. "Wal-Mart employees also volunteered during the United States vs. Chile game, and all of that is important to us."

The "open house", which was provided in part through a grant from Wal-Mart of Oneonta, was an opportunity for visitors to see how the Hall of Fame works through its activities and events, and how it might impact local businesses. Those invited took part in tours of the campus and heard about the Hall of Fame's tournament programs.

Since 1991, the Hall has attracted more than 1,000 teams to participate in more than 2,200 matches in the "Boys and Girls of Summer Soccer Classic" series. According to the Hall of Fame, almost 80 percent of the teams are from out of the region and require lodging, food and other expenses during their visit to the Oneonta area.

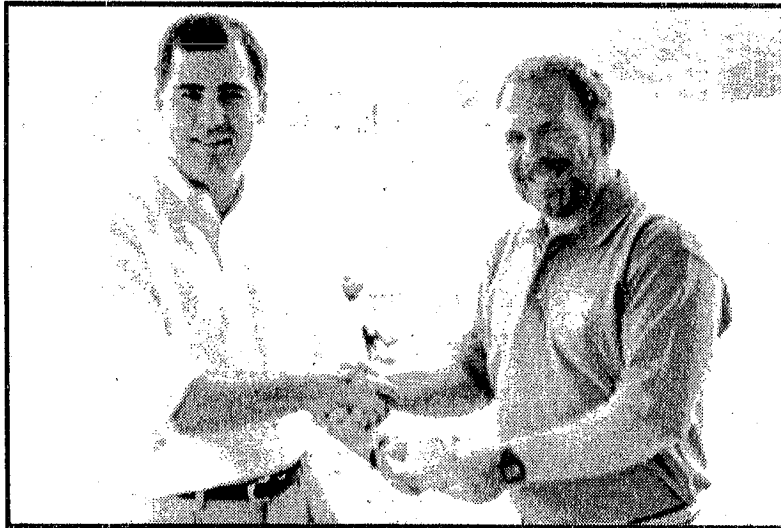


Photo by Bill Francis

Wal-Mart of Oneonta Manager Steve Halter, left, presents two checks to John Briggs, chairman of the National Soccer Hall of Fame, during the Hall's "open house" held last Saturday at the Wright National Soccer Campus in Oneonta.

1995