

**Appendix A – Summary of Focus Group and Stakeholder Meetings**

**Village of Chatham Comprehensive Plan Update**

<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Tax Base</b>	<b>Jobs/Economy</b>	<b>Government</b>
<p><b>Parks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crellin Park needs improvements</li> <li>• Need pool at Crellin Park</li> <li>• Stark’s Park improvements</li> </ul> <p><b>Millennials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of opportunities for teenagers</li> <li>• Morris Memorial needs improvements and if stayed open a few nights a week until 9 or 10, it could provide alternative options for millennials (income generated could off-set cost of staff)</li> </ul> <p><b>Fairgrounds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairgrounds – increase diversity of uses, more uses year-round, add lights to allow for use in the evening for walking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidewalks need improvements and there are gaps.</li> <li>• No public restrooms available</li> <li>• Tree canopy is aging – no replanting is occurring</li> <li>• Would like Public transportation</li> <li>• Need for downtown trash receptacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging population</li> <li>• Small tax base</li> <li>• Non-profits on tax rolls</li> <li>• Taxes drive out/do not attract young families – fixed income folks</li> <li>• Need lower taxes</li> <li>• Village size may be a disadvantage</li> <li>• What if taxes cannot support services?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be an economic development group to spearhead community revitalization</li> <li>• Encourage home-based businesses, incubators and art studios</li> <li>• Provide grants for small home-based businesses and to encourage young people to open storefronts</li> <li>• Utilize local history including the train to create new tourist attractions</li> <li>• Would like to see agritourism businesses</li> <li>• Economy dependent on 2<sup>nd</sup> home population</li> <li>• Village becoming less economically viable for some people</li> </ul>	<p><b>Government Cooperation and Efficiency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of cooperation between the Village and the Town of Chatham and Ghent.</li> <li>• Government responsibilities appear diffused, fragmented</li> <li>• Increased collaboration with the Town – Work together</li> <li>• Need more coordination on Ghent/Village Corridor</li> <li>• Consolidating fragmented towns/village – consider options for improving efficiency of services</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Arts and Entertainment</b></p>	<p><b>Housing</b></p>		
	<p><b>Events and Attractions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Art to encourage walking – create interaction</li> <li>• Public sculpture</li> <li>• Live music events at Gazebo</li> <li>• Need more special events</li> <li>• Need more public venues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of single family homes</li> <li>• Lack of middle class housing for seniors</li> <li>• Too expensive for young families</li> </ul>		

<p><b>Trails and Connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider bike and walking trails within the village limits and in coordination with the Towns of Chatham and Ghent.</li> <li>Look for opportunities to integrate pedestrian and bicycle trail connections with adjacent rural areas, river</li> <li>Harlem Valley Rail Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an opportunity to have the trail construction start in Chatham and move south?</li> <li>Need for HVRT to coordinate with CABA</li> <li>Create link - Kinderhook Street to Crellin Park</li> <li>Loop maps for Village walking</li> <li>Bike rentals, racks and jitneys</li> </ul> </li> <li>Bike shop could help promote rail trail</li> </ul>	<p><b>Arts and Entertainment Cont.</b></p> <p><b>Arts as Economic Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would like to see an Arts and Crafts School</li> <li>Arts are a “funding magnet” as a source of community revitalization</li> <li>Would like to see art galleries</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities for Children and Teenagers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of opportunities for teenagers</li> <li>Morris Memorial needs improvements and if stayed open a few nights a week until 9 or 10, it could provide alternative options for millennials (income generated could off-set cost of staff)</li> <li>Need for creative alternatives for children’s activities and entertainment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Zoning and Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of code enforcement</li> <li>No housekeeping law</li> <li>Need to allow projecting signs in zoning regulations</li> <li>Encourage home-based businesses, incubators and art studios</li> <li>Time limits for public comments?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Jobs and Economy Cont.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower income population should not be overlooked</li> <li>Lack of employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Govt. Cont.</b></p> <p><b>Communication by local government:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information flow – what’s happening is not clear</li> <li>Improved collaboration of events</li> <li>Community calendar</li> <li>Activities coordinator</li> <li>Village website</li> <li>Village input to County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Involvement and Participation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan implementation is very important – need to have a process/accountability to ensure recommendations are implemented</li> <li>Community Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apathy</li> <li>Negativism</li> <li>Divisiveness</li> <li>Boring meetings</li> <li>Lack of community participation</li> </ul> </li> <li>Need more diversity in Community Participation</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety</b></p> <p><b>Crosswalks and Safety:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve pedestrian crossings at railroad tracks</li> <li>Enhance crosswalk safety – better traffic enforcement</li> <li>Crosswalk signage needed to alert drivers</li> <li>Truck traffic/deliveries – pedestrian safety concerns (alternative delivery times?)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use existing resources for redevelopment – repurpose vacant properties and buildings</li> <li>Reuse of Middle School Building</li> <li>Blue Seal property – possible location for rock gym, pool, gathering, lodging,</li> <li>Green Shanty</li> <li>Fairgrounds – increase diversity of uses</li> <li>Hazardous materials – Railroad</li> <li>Consider tearing down “non-essential” buildings behind Tracy Memorial Hall and use for parking.</li> <li>Would like to see a satellite community college</li> </ul>	

Downtown Business District / Economic Development	Downtown Business District / Economic Development	Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Cont.	Downtown Business District / Economic Development	Govt. Cont.
<p><b>Businesses and Stores requested::</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>No chain/box stores wanted in Chatham</i></li> <li>• Stores that provide basic needs</li> <li>• sporting goods</li> <li>• furniture store</li> <li>• green grocery store</li> <li>• clothing store</li> <li>• Art galleries</li> <li>• More “imaginative stores”</li> <li>• Craft store</li> <li>• Shops that encourage people to browse.</li> <li>• Office supplies</li> <li>• Italian import store</li> <li>• Museums and antique shops recommended</li> <li>• Lodging, B&amp;Bs, and Hotels</li> <li>• Need to integrate arts and other creative businesses into the local economy – they could be the core of the local economy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Marketing and Promotion of Downtown and Stores:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of branding, marketing and signage</li> <li>• Need more business promotion</li> <li>• First Friday’s – “did not work last summer – maybe not enough time was given to test it out”</li> <li>• Conflicting events</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Ads on TV outside area</li> <li>• Uniform message needed</li> <li>• Village input to County Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• No collaboration between Govt. &amp; business</li> <li>• Information flow – what’s happening is not clear</li> <li>• Need to have draws to the community: rail trail, arts, Pulver House</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sidewalks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidewalks need improvements</li> <li>• Lack of sidewalks in certain locations</li> </ul> <p><b>Amenities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for downtown trash receptacles</li> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Use Art to encourage walking – create interaction</li> </ul>	<p><b>Long Term Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No plan for economic development, lack of continuity – event planner</li> <li>• Need a Plan for Main Street</li> <li>• Discontinuous Main St. There needs to be a visual link to include S. Hudson Avenue into Main Street – signage, arrows</li> <li>• Need to include Hudson Avenue in downtown planning and marketing</li> </ul> <p><b>Railroad:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undeveloped railroad property</li> <li>• Need to clean up railroad area</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian crossings at railroad tracks</li> </ul> <p><b>Pedestrian Amenities and Safety:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance crosswalk safety – need for better traffic enforcement</li> </ul>	<p><b>Govt. Cont.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of community involvement</li> <li>• Division – Us vs. Them, separation</li> </ul> <p><b>Government Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited municipal resources</li> <li>• Better enforcement of traffic laws</li> <li>• Need better accessibility in public buildings</li> <li>• Recommendations to provide grants for small home-based businesses and to encourage young people to open storefronts</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Downtown Business District / Economic Development</b></p>		
		<p><b>Downtown Parking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of public parking</li> <li>• Need directional signage to public parking areas</li> <li>• Could parking stall striping help or hurt?</li> <li>• Consider tearing down “non-essential” buildings behind Tracy Memorial hall and use for parking</li> </ul>		

<p><b>Downtown Business District / Economic Development Cont.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill empty storefronts with art galleries and “pop up food”</li> </ul> <p><b>Restaurants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More diversity of restaurants</li> <li>• Farm to table restaurant</li> <li>• Consider an alternative food business that operated in restaurants in the evening hours (Great Barrington).</li> <li>• Some respondents stated that there was not a need for more restaurants</li> <li>• Lack of Vibrancy</li> <li>• No lodging,</li> </ul> <p><b>General:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Businesses need to stay open later</li> <li>• Vacancies on Main Street need to be addressed</li> <li>• There is a Lack of business diversity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Downtown Business District / Economic Development Cont.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown Merchants unable to compete with malls to serve the full-time population – Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide customer service</li> <li>○ Resident discounts, sales</li> <li>○ 2-fer discounts</li> <li>○ <i>Emphasize uniqueness, community</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Business Competition Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Internet shopping could have negative impact</li> <li>○ Malls and big box stores</li> <li>○ Chatham Plaza?</li> <li>○ Empty stores</li> <li>○ Rt. 66 incompatible development</li> <li>○ Business sprawl</li> <li>○ Closing business</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Downtown Business District / Economic Development Cont.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is serving two populations (year-round and seasonal)</li> <li>• Lack of opportunities for teenagers</li> <li>• Need more foot traffic downtown</li> </ul> <p><b>Downtown Events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live music events at Gazebo</li> <li>• Need for more special events</li> </ul>	<p><b>Downtown Business District / Economic Development Cont.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Truck traffic/deliveries – pedestrian safety concerns</li> <li>• Need for downtown trash receptacles</li> <li>• Lack of public transportation</li> </ul>	
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