

**Village of Chatham
2013 Comprehensive Plan**

NOTES

Meeting #3

June 26, 7:00 p.m. Tracy Memorial Hall

Attending: K.Ellis, K.Kaczmar, L.Locke, M.Sarris, M. Wollowitz, L.Ponter

Absent: J. Dixon, A. Gaylord, J. DelRossi

-
- Ellen went over the comprehensive planning process and provided some definitions for goals, objectives and actions. Right now the Committee is reviewing the '95 plan in order to consider preliminary goals and to update existing conditions information. The setting of final plan goals, objectives and actions will be done at a later stage, and after consultation with the public. The updating that the Committee is doing should be focused on existing conditions and collected information, without judgment or opinion, at this stage.
 - All should review the composite document with the Committee's updates to the '95 plan, and also make note of any additional changes or new information that should be added. Aaron's sections will be added when submitted.
 - Ellen provided maps of the Village including a large aerial and small maps: USGS topographical mapping, a water resources map showing the extent of the aquifer underlying most of the Village, and a soils map. The Committee spent the majority of the meeting looking at the aerial map in a discussion of undeveloped/developable parcels and their current status.
 - The Committee is unsure of the location of the Village water source; Mike will get that information. The extensive aquifer and free draining soils in the Village could raise issues for water quality. The Village had some conversations with the New York Rural Water Association some years ago but nothing resulted. Ellen will contact NYRWA to see if they can offer any assistance to the Village in the course of the comprehensive plan.
 - Ellen pointed out the Rutland rail corridor and said that groups or individuals in Chatham, New Lebanon, and Rensselaer County are discussing it as a trail corridor. A meeting will be held on Thursday, 6/27 for a preliminary discussion of pursuing a grant for a feasibility study. CLC will attend. The Committee looked at the land ownership adjacent to the rail corridor.
 - Ellen recommended that the Committee look at Town of Chatham and Ghent zoning to understand the implications for the Village's goals. Ghent has been reconsidering the zoning of the Rt. 66 corridor.
 - Karen asked about the ultimate outcome of the planning process and recalled issues raised over the Town of Chatham comprehensive plan, and whether it was ever

adopted. [Note: Chatham's comprehensive plan was adopted in September 2009. A link to the plan can be found on the town's website.]

- The Committee had some questions about current uses on specific parcels. Ellen asked Lael to see if there are any maps from the 1995 plan that could show uses at that time, and that could then be a basis for comparison. Ellen will bring a current land use map to the next meeting. Kevin is also able to access a lot of information for use in meetings by using the County GIS data that he has loaded on his laptop.
 - The questions was asked, "why are we looking at this [map], is this helping us?" Ellen said that it can show the Committee what lands could be developed and allows the Village to consider its own preferences for where, how much, and what kind of development; and to consider that with regard to current and future zoning. Kevin commented that the Village zoning is somewhat large at a quarter acre, typically, and smaller lot sizes could allow for more compact development.
 - To the question of whether the Village wants more residential development, it was noted that the school population has dropped. It was also noted that this is a larger trend, regionally and nationally, and not only a Village or Town issue.
 - It was noted that there are not enough jobs locally. On the other hand, housing prices in the Village are lower than area wide.
- The final discussion was about the loss of retail tenants in the Village, and questions about how to revitalize Main Street, particularly in daytime. Kevin suggested that what the Village and the comprehensive plan need is a theme to coalesce around. Suggestions include a farmers' market, some kind of interior architecture/cabinetmaking emphasis that takes advantage of all the local fabricators (who market in NYC), the Harlem Valley Rail Trail (HVRT) coming into the Village, as well as potential for the Rutland line; themed festivals, more coordination with the fairgrounds; rail as a theme in general – could there be a rail museum? Is there room in the Depot for that? Ellen mentioned Hillsdale's focus on the HVRT in its hamlet revitalization plan.
 - Assignments: Committee should review the composite plan updates, and review the status of goals and recommendations from the '95 plan. Ellen will divide those sections and email the Committee about their assignments. We still need to schedule meetings for the rest of the summer.
 - Meeting adjourned 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by E. Jouret-Epstein, June 27, 2013