

Town of Plattekill

Comprehensive Plan Update Phase I

Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

Kickoff Meeting Summary Notes



Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 7:00pm
Meeting Location: Town Hall, 1915 Route 44-55, Modena, NY

Meeting Attendees
Committee: **Joe Croce**, *Town Supervisor*
Michael Baum
Derrick Doubrava
Cindy Delgado
Gladys Figueroa
Brian Vanduser
Joseph Lafriandra
Cindy Hilbert, *Committee Chair* (absent)

Public: Approximately 15 people

Consultant: **Bob Murphy, Jr.**, *AICP, Barton and Loguidice (B&L)*

This was the first meeting of the Town of Plattekill's Committee since the Town's contract with Barton and Loguidice (B&L) was approved. It served as the Project Kickoff meeting. The meeting was attended by eight (8) members of the Committee, Bob Murphy from Barton & Loguidice (B&L), and several members of the public.

I. Introductions

Following the welcome, Supervisor Croce introduced the project's objectives and originals. He also introduced Mr. Murphy as project lead from B&L. Each of the Committee members gave their names and described their background in order to provide all with a sense of the expertise and experience represented within the Committee. Mr. Murphy then went through a brief overview of the agenda for the kickoff meeting.

II. Discussions – Project Funding, Roles for Committee, B&L, and the Public

Prior to discussing project scope, schedule, and roles, Mr. Murphy further detailed how funding for the project was pursued and obtained along with grant program specifics. Once the Committee and public attendees were brought up to date on the tasks and phases that the project has already went through, Mr. Murphy transitioned the discussion to the assignment of roles concerning the project. He explained that the Committee's role will be to provide guidance to the development of the Town's Vision, Goals, and Objectives. The Committee, with guidance from B&L, will distill a consensus on what issues are affecting the Town now and will provide insight into the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by the Town.

Mr. Murphy explained that B&L's role will be to facilitate meetings and public engagement, offering a framework for preparing a community Vision, Goals, and Objectives, reviewing plans, performing GIS analysis, and providing a demographic inventory.

Supervisor Croce identified Cindy Hilburt – Town of Plattekill Planning Board Chairperson – as the Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Committee. Ms. Hilburt was unable to attend this Kickoff Meeting, but provided an audio recorder to enable her to be fully apprised of the proceedings.

III. Project Scope of Services

Mr. Murphy next broke down the anticipated scope to be covered under Phase I of the Comprehensive Plan Update Project. These tasks include:

- 1) Analysis of Previous Planning Documents, On-going Initiatives, and Data Collection including GIS Mapping and US Census Bureau Data Analysis.
- 2) Issues Identification / Public Information Meeting (Public Workshop #1)
- 3) Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for the Town of Plattekill
- 4) Draft Community Vision, Goals, and Objectives
- 5) Community Visioning Workshop (Public Workshop #2)
- 6) Composition of a Community Profile and Visioning Report

To fully encapsulate the overall Comprehensive Plan Update scope, Mr. Murphy also explained what tasks would be included in Phase II of the project:

- 1) Develop a Set of Recommended Actions
- 2) Develop Supporting Concept Plans, Cost Estimates, Areas of Further Analysis
- 3) Public Workshop #3
- 4) Compose and Assemble Draft & Final Comprehensive Plan Update Document
- 5) Public Hearing, Compliance with State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Plan Adoption

IV. Schedule

In terms of the schedule, the goal is to have Phase I of the Comprehensive Plan Update completed by August 2019. This would enable the Town to apply for the next round of Hudson River Valley Greenway funding in September 2019 in support of Phase II of the Project.

V. Committee Meetings and Public Outreach

The following is the schedule of Committee Meetings and Public Outreach:

- Committee Meeting #2 – Date: **5/23/19**
- Community Visioning Workshop – Date: **6/4/19**
- Committee Meeting #3 – Date: **6/18/19**
- Committee Meeting #4 – Date: **7/23/19**

NOTE: Edits to the schedule of meetings were made during a conference between Supervisor Croce, Committee Chairperson Cindy Hilbert, and consultant planner Bob Murphy (B&L) on May 1. The amount of public feedback received at the April 16 made conducting an Issues Identification Workshop redundant.

Some potential Partnerships include:

- Rotary Club
- Senior Clubs
- Town Library
- Plattekill Historical Society
- Churches
- Fire Districts
- School Districts

**VI. Preliminary Goals and Objectives &
VII. Public Comment**

With such a significant public presence at the Committee Kickoff Meeting, a Town-Hall style public discussion began. Mr. Murphy first posed the following questions to members of the Committee, then turned to the members of the public in attendance for further discussion and comment:

- What do you like or enjoy most about living in the Town of Plattekill?
- What would you like to see improved about Plattekill? What opportunities are there?

The majority of the evening's proceedings was spent on this discussion. Discussion on positive aspect of Plattekill that should be preserved or enhanced frequently blended in with areas in need of improvement and opportunities to change things for the better.

Several members of the Committee and a number of residents expressed strong preferences for the rural character of Plattekill. Specifically, they like the Town's connection to nature, the abundance of greenspace, the views of the Shawangunk Ridge, and that it is a quiet, safe place to live. Mr. Vanduser suggested that the Town has benefited from the fact that development pressures have thus far bypassed it. The lack of an exit on Interstate 87 has helped perpetuate a dampening of the development market. This, he said, will enable the Town to properly plan for desirable Smart Growth development scenarios by learning from the successes and failures of neighboring communities.

The lack of grocery stores in certain areas of Town was seen as a need to be addressed, although the presence of Hannaford in the hamlet of Modena was seen as desirable locally. The Town Park is viewed as a valuable asset already and opportunities to expand and enhance it should be explored.

Overall, the Committee and members of the public expressed a desire to improve the local business climate to create more jobs, contribute more to the municipal tax base, and provide desired services such as dining and lodging to local residents. Those in attendance indicated that they would like to see a hamlet areas in the Town take on a small-scale, walkable downtown character similar to nearby Gardiner. Development patterns in New Paltz were seen as too robust and undesirable for Plattekill. A member of the public expressed a desire for the establishment of an Industrial or Business Park and development of infrastructure and land to support it. He saw that style of business as the only viable way to encourage job growth and commercial property tax base in Plattekill. Other topics included the lack of water infrastructure to support dining, retail and other types of commercial development, improvements needed at Town Hall, and having a better means of getting municipal/public information out to the hamlets of Plattekill and Clintondale.

While the Town contains three hamlets (Modena, Plattekill, and Clintondale), it is the school districts that really act as the communities-within-the community of Plattekill.

Other topics discussed were fire districts and that there are Dollar Generals in two hamlets. When the topic of Agritourism came up, the group discussed how hours of operation, particularly those with associated banquet facilities, have sometimes led to undesirable impacts from lighting, noise, and traffic. Locally, farming regulations have allowed for farmers to build successful businesses like any other industry. The other elements of agribusiness, such as educational components, were brought up along with available state grants.

Other public comment included further preference for the quaint, rural community and familiarity with knowing one's neighbor. One comment appreciated how affordable housing is in Plattekill, thanks in part to that aforementioned lack of development pressure.

There were many comments about the Town's economy. The public sees the importance of creating more jobs and trying to keep young people from leaving. They also want to try and bring more people into the Town – like the Rockinghorse Ranch does – but to also patronize other local businesses for goods and services while they are here. There were also comments on the desire for additional dining options. While there are some options in the Town, dining out now often requires a trip to Gardiner, New Paltz, or Highland.

In regards to infrastructure, there was consensus that incorporating Smart Growth principles in land use regulation and planning is the ideal way to balance the preservation of rural landscapes with economic development and the provision of goods and services.

Regarding transportation, there was a comment about commuter traffic being dangerous on Route 44-55 and Route 32 as motorists drive through Plattekill on their way to work elsewhere. The 'S'-turn in Clintondale by the Post Office is dangerous due to inadequate lines of sight for motorists. Supervisor Croce also mentioned the new sidewalk between Hannaford and the Town Park in Modena and there was a discussion about how this could be extended in the hamlet.

There was also discussion about community aesthetics such as the prevalence of junkyards within the Town. The public expressed that they would like Plattekill to be a 'Welcome Mat', not a 'Doormat'.

In terms of recreation, there were comments about needing more designated green space in the Town. There was mention of 72 acres around the Town Park that could be utilized. There was also discussion about converting old railroad lines to linear parks and exploring a rail-trail purchase. Jogging was acknowledged as a popular hobby in the Town but the state highways and local roads often make this a dangerous activity on their shoulders.

After having discussed the potential for water, sewer, and trash infrastructure expansion, the non-monetary costs of such infrastructure were discussed. These costs included predatory development scenarios and urban sprawl that can accompany infrastructure expansion if it is not coupled with the appropriate land use regulations.

VIII. Next Steps and Adjourn

- Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting #2
 - o Thursday, May 23, 7pm at Town Hall
- Public Workshop #1
 - o Tuesday, June 4, 2019
 - o Location and Time: Plattekill Fire House, 7pm
- Committee Kickoff Meeting Summary
 - o To be distributed to the Committee
- Stay tuned for Facebook posting and promotion of next workshop