

Town of Plattekill

Comprehensive Plan Update Phase II

Open House / Public Hearing #1 Summary Notes



Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2024, 6:30pm
Meeting Location: Plattekill Town Hall, 1915 State Rte 55, Modena, NY

Committee Attendees: **Cindy Hilbert, Committee Chair**
Dean Depew, Town Board Liaison
Joseph Lafriandra
Derrick Doubrava
Michael Baum
Brian VanDuser

Absent: **Saren Goldner**
Cindy Delgado

Consultant: **Dan Theobald, Barton and Loguidice (B&L)**

Public: **Michael Lembo, James Fazio and a few others**

The Open House and Public Hearing #1 fulfilled task 6 of the Town of Plattekill's contract with Barton and Loguidice. The goal of the Open House was to present the first draft of the vision, goals, objectives, and actions in the updated Comprehensive Plan. Meeting attendees were allowed to view and comment on the vision, goals, objectives, and actions. Following the Open House, the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) held a Public Hearing to solicit additional information about the Comprehensive Plan update. Following the Public Hearing, the CPUC made a resolution recommending the Comprehensive Plan to be adopted by the Town Board.

Open House (6:35pm)

The Open House kicked off at 6:35pm with Mr. Theobald giving a presentation on the development of the comprehensive plan and the implementation of the comprehensive planning process. He reviewed the meeting agenda:

- Project Scope & Schedule
- Funding
- What is a Comprehensive Plan
- Project Methodology
- Open House
- Next Steps
 - Public Hearing
 - SEQR; County Referral; Public Hearing #2
- Adjourn



Committee Discussion

There were no comments during Mr. Theobald's presentation of the project process. Since there was low attendance for the Open House, the Committee had an open discussion about some of the actions that were revised or added since the last meeting.

Mr. Baum was concerned about the language used in action E-1.3: *Develop a voluntary reclassification program offering incentives for property owners to self-report unpermitted multi-family conversions, ensuring proper safety measures, reducing non-conforming uses, and accurate property taxation without penalties, prioritizing community safety and housing transparency.*

Mr. Baum stated that the Town should be more proactive in having guidelines for allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU/s) but should be cautious toward granting leniency toward properties that illegally converted to multi-family. Identifying illegally converted properties can be added to action E-1.2 which is related to increasing code enforcement efforts. The CPUC agreed to having an action related to guidelines for ADUs. The CPUC also agreed that illegally converted properties should be enforced equally. Ms. Hilbert stated that there is a big push from the State for ADUs and they are providing grants and funding for the building of the ADUs. Many of the Towns have already passed new zoning regulations about the enforcement of the ADUs as well as the short-term rentals, Air BnBs and Bed and Breakfasts.

There was also discussion about the concerns of unregulated 'tiny homes.' Mr. Baum stated that he believes Recreation Vehicles (RVs) are currently being used as tiny houses and that people are living in them with no regulations. Mr. James Fazio asked what is the trigger to determine if a structure is considered a tiny home. They think it is listed as 800 sq. ft. in the current Code. Mr. Baum stated that even mobile homes need HUD approval before they can be considered livable. RVs are not dwelling units because they are considered motor vehicles by law. There is some general State Codes for tiny homes, but the Town needs to have stricter codes. We can have stricter codes, but we can't anything less than the State Code. The CPUC would like to add an action related to guidelines for Tiny Homes in the Town Law or Zoning Code section.

The CPUC did not have any further comments on the new actions related to short-term rentals; a Natural Resource Inventory; an updated solar code section; and battery storage system guidelines.

Public Hearing (7:15pm)

Due to the limited input from the audience, the CPUC transitioned to holding the public hearing. The CPUC opened the public hearing up to the audience. There were not comments or statements from the public.

The Public Hearing was closed and Ms. Hilbert read the resolution recommending the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board. It is a conditional recommendation upon revisions to the plan, which were discussed during the open house. Mr. DePew made a Motion to open the Public Hearing with Mr. Baum seconding the Motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Following the meeting, a few community members reached out to Mr. Theobald and provided feedback on the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Below are comments from community members:

Michael Lembo wanted to stress the importance of protecting agricultural land and open space. Assets that he believes make Plattekill unique and attractive to future generations. He supports the idea of



focusing more compact development (multi-family homes and mixed-use) toward the hamlet centers while protecting the less dense areas of the town from over development.

Wendy Sands wrote a letter to the committee. Her letter (attached) stresses the importance of preserving agriculture and open space by prohibiting large-scale commercial development. She noted that references to residents' opposition to large-scale commercial development in the 2024 community survey and this was not mentioned clearly in the Public Outreach section of the Draft Plan. Ms. Sands also suggested edits to the Guiding Framework section of the Draft Plan; she suggests text that specifically mentions the need to prohibit large-scale commercial development in parts of Plattekill.

County Referral / SEQR

In November, the Draft Plan will be sent to the Ulster County Planning Department for feedback. The County's comments will be reviewed and assessed for incorporation. The Town will then start the SEQR Part 1 process. The Town Board will declare themselves as Lead Agency for SEQR. Agencies such as the County and surrounding municipalities will be sent the SEQR documentation. By December, the SEQR window will close and the Plan will be ready for adoption.

Public Hearing #2 / Town Board Adoption

The Draft Comprehensive Plan Update is anticipated to be adopted in December 2024 by the Plattekill Town Board. The Town Board will hold a Public Hearing and decide whether to adopt the Plan Update. They may adopt the Plan conditionally upon reviewing and incorporating comments from the Public Hearing. The next phase of the project will be aligning the Town's zoning code with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Town applied for a Department of State Smart Growth Zoning grant in July and is expected to hear back from the State this December or January. The total project budget for that application was \$84,000, where \$75,000 would be a grant from the State and the Town would provide a \$9,000 match.

Next Steps

- Update Draft Plan based on community and CPUC input
 - Post updated Draft Plan to Town Website
- Prepare SEQR Documentation
 - The Town will declare itself lead agency in November 2024
- Send Draft Plan to County Planning Department for review
- Prepare for the Town Board Public Hearing and Adoption

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30pm

Town of Plattekill Comprehensive Plan Update Phase 2

Open House

October 23, 2024

TOWN OF PLATTEKILL
ULSTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

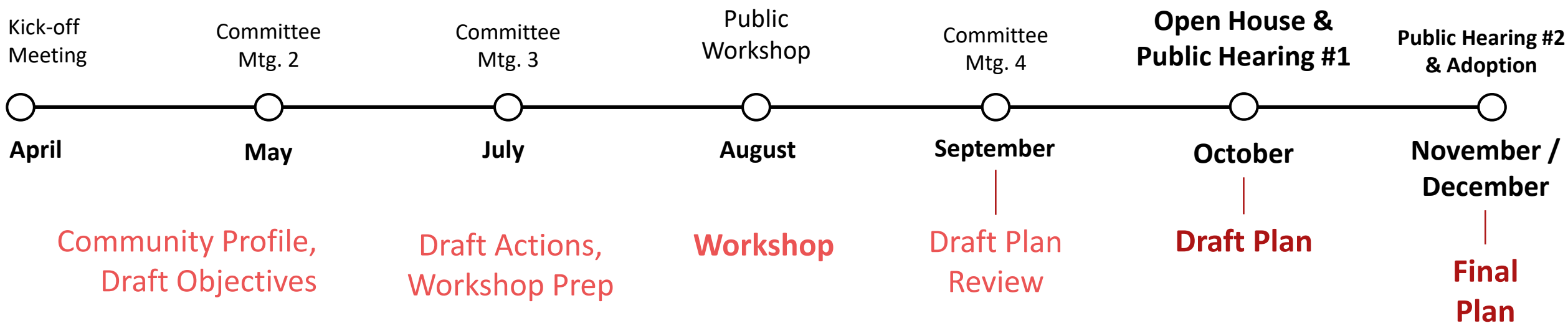




Introduction - Schedule



Survey





Agenda



- **Introduction**
 - Project Team, Scope
 - Funding
- **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**
- **Methodology**
- **Open House**
 - Vision and Goal Review
 - Objectives and Actions
- **Next Steps**
 - Public Hearing





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Introduction - Project Team



Committee Members

- Cindy Hilbert, Chair
- Michael Baum
- Cindy Delgado
- Dean Depew
- Derrick Doubrava
- Saren Goldner
- Joseph LaFiandra
- Brian Vanduser

Department of State

- Lisa Melville

Town Board

- Dean DePew, Supervisor
- Wilfrido Castillo, Jr.
- Joseph Hoppenstedt
- James Fazio
- Stephen O'Flaherty

Barton & Loguidice

- Dan Theobald, AICP, Project Community Planner

Sustainable Planning Design, LLC

- Allison Harrington, Urban Planner / Designer





Funding



Phase I

- Hudson River Valley Greenway
- \$17,500 Budget
- \$10,000 grant, \$7,500 match



**Hudson River
Valley Greenway**

Phase II: Funded by NYS Department of State

- Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Program
- \$30,000 Budget
- 90% State, 10% Local
- Smart Growth Principles



**Department
of State**





Introduction - Scope



Comprehensive Plan Update Phase II: Scope

- Community Profile Updates
- Development of Objectives and Actions
- Adopt Final Comprehensive Plan (Combine with Phase I)





Plan Content – Table of Contents





Agenda



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- **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**
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What is a Comprehensive Plan?



Where are
we now?

Where do we
want to be?

How do we
get there?





What is a Comprehensive Plan?



Where are
we now?

- Demographic Data
- Physical Traits
- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities





What is a Comprehensive Plan?



Where do we
want to be?

- Establishes a Vision
- Goals
- Opportunities





What is a Comprehensive Plan?



How do we
get there?

- Actions / Projects
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Costs & Funding

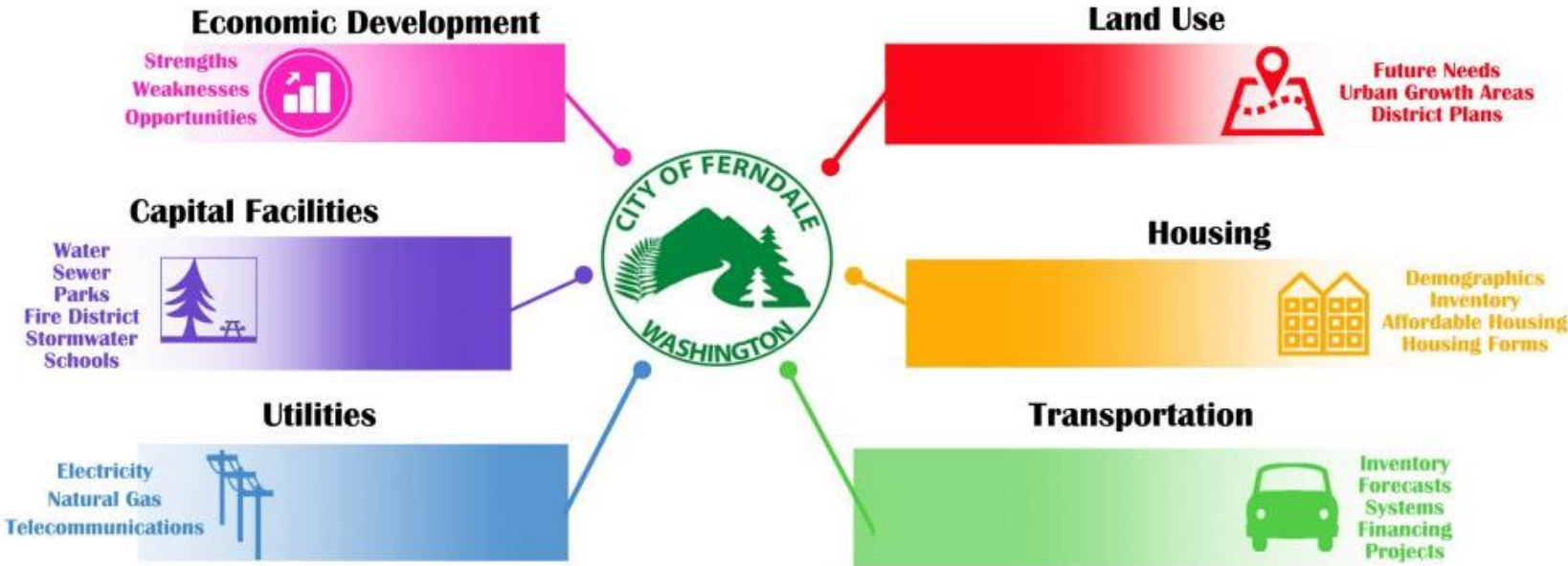




What is a Comprehensive Plan?



Comprehensive Plan



- Represents a statement of policy & priorities by the Town
- Provides direction to decision makers
- Increases chance of funding
- Provides a forum for discussion among residents, businesses, etc.





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Methodology



- **Analyzing Demographic Data**
 - Population
 - Age
 - Housing: Occupancy, Tenure
 - Economic: Income
- **Performing Public Outreach**
 - Surveys
 - Public Workshops
- **Committee Review**
 - Consistent Meetings





Surveys



July 2019 Survey

- 126 Responses
- Served as a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis
- Set the foundation for the Vision and Goals

April 2024 Survey

- 278 Responses
- Focused on the four (4) target topics:
 - Economic Development; Hamlet Center; Infrastructure; and Community Character
- Set the foundation for the Objectives & Actions





Public Workshops



Kick-off Workshop

- April 16, 2019

Public Workshop

- August 14, 2024

Visioning Workshop

- June 4, 2019

Open House

- October 22, 2024





Committee Meetings



Phase I

- 5 Committee Meetings
- April – October 2019

Phase II

- 5 Committee Meetings
- April – October 2024





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Stations



Vision, Goals, Objectives & Actions


Map

Economic Development

Objective 1: Expand housing options to accommodate a growing workforce that attracts a diverse population (professionals, first time homebuyers, seniors, and families).

Action 1.1: Update the zoning code to focus multi-family housing toward the hamlet zoning districts (RR-1, RD-40) and single / two family homes toward the low density zoning districts (RR-1.5, AG-1.5, M-3). **Comments:**


Action 1.2: Increase code enforcement efforts for residential properties to reduce derelict properties. (Provide incentives for property owners to invest in their homes)



Objective 2: Increase employment opportunities across diverse industry sectors such as manufacturing, technology, healthcare, professional services, and tourism.


Action 2.1: Update the zoning code language to specify the types and locations of business allowed in Town. **Comments:**

Action 2.2: Update zoning code to delineate sizes of industrial and manufacturing uses in designated districts to balance economic growth and community satisfaction.



Objective 3: Support the growth of new and local businesses.

Action 3.1: Support small businesses by providing incentives, technical assistance, and infrastructure improvements (highway improvements).




Hamlets

Objective 4: Revitalize Plattekill's hamlets through targeted investments that improve the appearance, accessibility, and infrastructure in Modena, Plattekill, Ardenia, or Clintondale.


Action 4.1: Improve walkability in the hamlets through the installation of sidewalks, specifically in Plattekill and Modena. **Comments:**

Action 4.2: Establish and enforce design guidelines to preserve architectural forms of the hamlets.



Objective 5: Improve access to parks, schools, and libraries (Plattekill Elementary School / library) with new parks and trails or by expanding existing ones.


Action 5.1: Develop a parks and trails plan that locates areas for new parks, expansion of existing parks, and development of new trails. **Comments:**



Objective 6: Encourage mixed-use development projects, incorporating residential, commercial, and recreational components.

Action 6.1: Update the zoning code to focus mixed use development and multi-family housing toward the hamlet zoning districts (RR-1, RD-40) and away from low density zoning districts (RR-1.5, AG-1.5, M-3). **Comments:**

Action 6.2: Focus new development near the public transportation stops (Modena @ Rt 32 & HW 44/55; Plattekill Post Office HW Rt 32 and CR 13).




Infrastructure

Objective 7: Upgrade and modernize public facilities, such as municipal buildings, community centers, parks, and active recreation uses to meet the needs of residents and enhance community engagement.

Action 7.1: Construct a new town hall that will include a community room which will serve as a youth, senior, and recreation center. The new town hall will provide new offices, an updated court room, and integrate the police station. **Comments:**


Action 7.2: Enhance the Plattekill Town Park (Thomas Felton Community Park). Develop a park master plan that examines park improvements such as a new playground, park equipment, active and passive recreational opportunities, trails, and hosting events.

Action 7.3: Maintain a positive relationship with the library to enhance community engagement.



Objective 8: Implement green infrastructure initiatives to improve environmental sustainability and reduce long-term maintenance costs.

Action 8.1: Partner with UCRBA on a residential composting program by providing residents with educational materials and composting options.

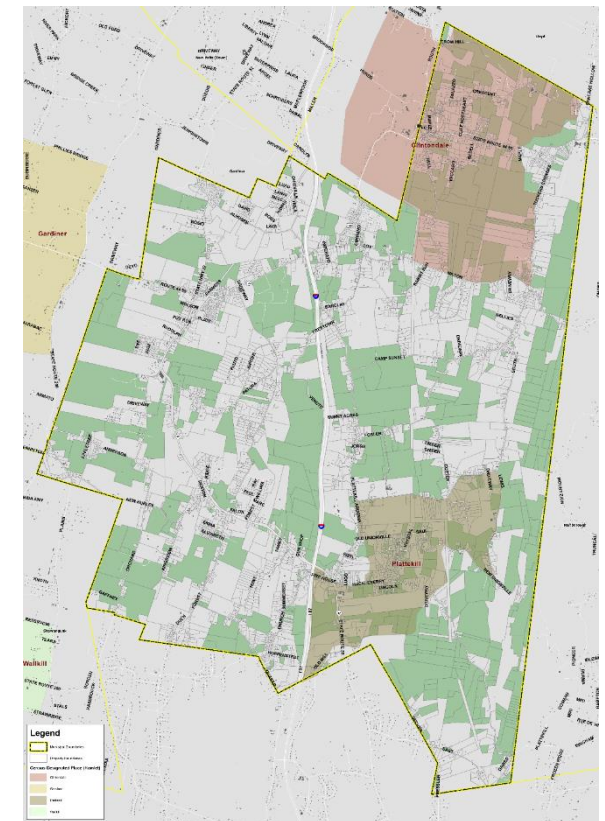


Action 8.2: Support tax rebates for property owners who install solar on existing buildings and require new construction to contain solar or other energy efficiency features.

Objective 9: Enhance electric power and internet capabilities to support new businesses and remote workers, ensuring reliable infrastructure for economic growth and residential needs.

Action 9.1: Expand three phase power, as needed, along designated commercial areas in a way that does not degrade the rural / scenic character of the town. **Comments:**

Action 9.2: Expand broadband internet access to support existing businesses, attract new enterprises, and facilitate remote work for residents.





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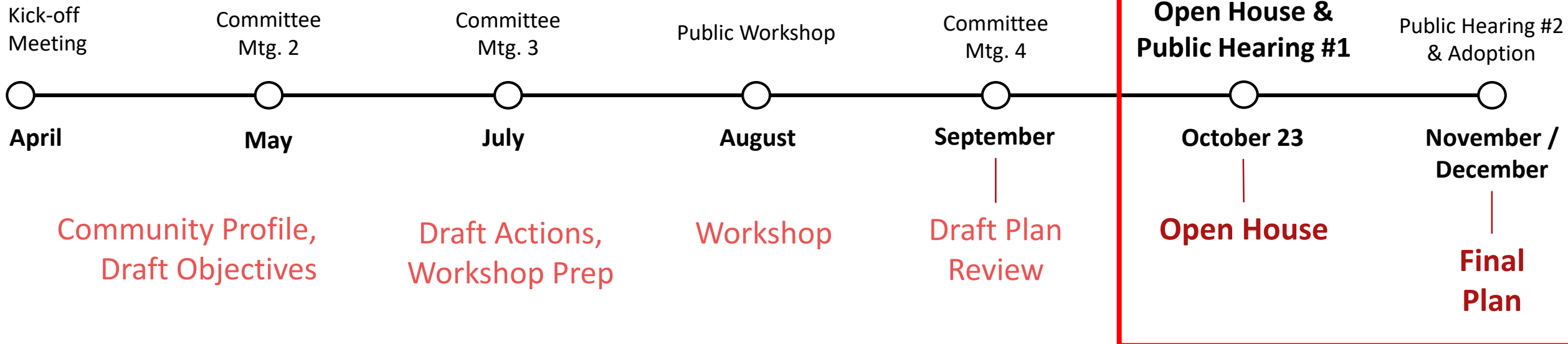




Next Steps



Survey





Next Steps

Thank You!

Questions?

Dan Theobald, AICP – dtheobald@bartonandloguidice.com



November 4, 2024

Dear Supervisor DePew, Mr. Theobald, and Town of Plattekill Comprehensive Plan Committee,

As a resident who has closely followed the efforts to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan, I thank all of you for your work to update the Town's master plan and to ensure that the goals for the future of the Town reflect the community's values and priorities.

As you are aware, in order to obtain input from residents over the course of the comprehensive plan update, the Town issued two community surveys. The survey results, from both 2019 and 2024, showed that residents overwhelmingly want to preserve the rural nature of the Town while incorporating balanced development in focused areas to provide for residents' needs.

It is stated that the 2024 survey was done specifically to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan was "grounded in the latest data" and to capture "the shifts in public preferences" (see October 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan Update, "Draft Plan Update" p. 25). However, the most obvious difference between the two surveys that reflected the changing priorities of residents is not yet addressed anywhere in the Draft Plan Update, and that is opposition to large commercial development that would detract from the very nature of Plattekill that is prioritized elsewhere in the document.

One of the biggest issues that occurred between 2019 and 2024, from the perspective of residents, was the application for a large "warehouse"¹ on Route 44-55 between Route 32 and Route 208. As you know, the warehouse application has generated great community opposition both from within our Town and from neighboring communities. That opposition was strongly reflected in the 2024 survey and in community meetings, including comprehensive plan meetings.

The 2024 survey demonstrates that 78% of the respondents are concerned about "commercial development." Although this was the second top concern, greater than the percentage of respondents concerned about "property taxes" and "illegal drug use," it is missing from page 25 of the October 2024 Draft Plan which states:

. . . the top three concerns highlighted were natural resource degradation, property taxes, and illegal drug use and crime" (p. 25)

In order for this sentence to be accurate it must instead read:

¹ The word "warehouse" is used here as shorthand, although the proposed development does not appear to be a warehouse in the traditional meaning of that word.

. . .the top three concerns highlighted were natural resource degradation, commercial development outside the hamlets (within the town), and property taxes.

To be clear, concern about commercial development was greater than illegal drug use, crime, and property taxes. Since the purpose of the comprehensive plan is to reflect the vision and priorities of the community members, this input must be accurately reflected in the final document. This is especially significant given that the responses to the 2024 survey were “predominantly from long-term property owners.” (see page 25).

Also missing from the Draft Comprehensive Plan is that in response to Question 7 “My biggest concerns about the Town are ...” it appears that at least half of the respondents took the time to write “no warehouse” or otherwise describe their opposition to that type of large-scale commercial development on Route 44-55.

As you know the community-wide alarm about the warehouse was the most salient result of the 2024 survey. Therefore, it must be addressed in the Draft Plan Update. A suggested sentence could be:

The Survey showed strong opposition to the large warehouse proposed for Route 44-55 and broad concern about large-scale commercial development.

Since so many respondents took time to write in their opposition to the warehouse which had been proposed for Route 44-55 between Route 208 and Route 32, the Updated Draft Comprehensive Plan cannot accurately reflect the views of the community until that opposition is explicitly noted in the draft plan.

In fairness to the residents who participated in various stages of your work developing the updated comprehensive plan, the draft comprehensive plan update document has to not only accurately reflect the desires and views of residents, but also has to take that into account their views when the Plan lists long term goals. Therefore, the Future Land Use Plan section of the Draft Plan Update, must also include a prohibition against this type of large-scale commercial development among our farms and homes. For example, E-2.1, on page 30, should be amended to read (suggested language in italics):

Update the zoning code language to specify the types of locations of business allowed in Town, *including prohibitions on large scale businesses that would defeat the overall goal of maintaining a rural feel or that would otherwise unnecessarily degrade our natural resources.*

And E-2.2, also on page 30, should be amended to read:

Update the zoning code to delineate sizes of industrial and manufacturing uses in designated districts to *prevent large scale commercial development near our rural farms and residential homes and otherwise* balance economic growth and community satisfaction.

The 2024 survey results demonstrate that the community is opposed to such large-scale development as the warehouse and any changes to the zoning code should reflect that the community does not want such a development. This would appropriately incorporate the fact that the people of Plattekill value the Town's rural small-town feel, the fact that Town roads are quiet through the evening, and the need to protect the agricultural nature and history of the Town as is detailed in the Draft Plan Update. People were variously opposed to the warehouse due to concerns about traffic, noise, diesel fumes, and damage to the Town's reputation and sight-seeing tourism. A number of people expressed concern about damage to the roads and the danger posed to school buses. People also noted the number of accidents and near misses on Route 44-55. As the surveys showed, this opposition is widespread throughout the Town.

People simply do not want to lose the sense of small-town community. They are looking forward to the enhanced playground, new Town Hall, and improved library.

Any changes to the Town's zoning must protect the Town's agricultural feel which should also be specifically written in the Future Land Use section.

Thank you for considering these requests and for updating the Draft Plan to reflect the views of the residents who participated in this process.

Sincerely,

Wendy Sands
1981 Route 44-55
Modena, NY 12548