

MEETING SUMMARY – OCTOBER 10, 2012 MEETING  
TOWN OF LANSING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

Members Present: Supervisor Kathy Miller, Chair; Jase Baese; Larry Beck; Tom Butler; Maureen Cowen; Jeremy Dietrich; Dave Ferris; Gerry Friedman; Norman L. Davidson (Lin), Planning Board Chair; Ruth Hopkins, Town Board Member; Lynn Leopold, Village of Lansing Board of Trustees; Susan Miller; Philip Snyder; Amanda Steinhardt; Susan Tabrizi; Sarah Thomson.

Others Present: Jonathan Kanter, AICP, Planning Consultant

Jonathan Kanter called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Chair Kathy Miller arrived shortly after.

Draft Meeting Summary – September 12, 2012: Jonathan referred to the draft Meeting Summary of the September 12, 2012 meeting that he had prepared and asked the Committee if the format and level of detail was okay. The Committee agreed that it was fine. It was also suggested that Committee members take turns taking meeting notes and drafting summaries of future meetings.

Member Comments/Concerns/Announcements: Several Committee members indicated that they like meeting in the Community Center first floor meeting room and asked if it might be available for future meetings. Jonathan said that he would check the calendar.

Review of 2006 Town of Lansing Comprehensive Plan: Each Committee member had been asked to prepare a list of the five most important things in the 2006 Plan that should be updated or revised or items that were not adequately covered in the Plan. A summary of the key points follows:

Larry Beck: (1) permitted uses in industrial zones, what types of industrial uses should be allowed; (2) establish plans for each hamlet area in the Town; (3) prepare a more detailed plan for the proposed Town Center; (4) clarify special permit process, especially in the agricultural zone.

Susan Miller: (1) update demographic data and analysis and summarize the narratives regarding demographics; (2) focus on uses that attract people to the Town from elsewhere (page 22 of Plan); (3) discuss alternative energy approaches, but also how these might impact adjacent uses (page 26 of Plan); (4) how to handle storage of waste (e.g., brine pools); (5) what are the Town's assumptions regarding AES coal plant (e.g., will the plant continue operating, will it be coal-based).

Jase Baese: (1) agrees with updating demographic data and analysis and highlight what has changed; (2) review and update goals and objectives, especially: (a) growth and development – review and see if still appropriate; (b) traffic and transportation - the Town cannot have growth without managing the traffic; (c) sewer and water infrastructure – the Town cannot grow without it, it is a way to manage growth; (d) community life – the Town should stay as nice as it is now or even get better; (e) implementation – be clear about what the Town can do to accomplish its goals and objectives.

Maureen Cowen: (1) implementation is important and should be more of a focus in the Plan; (2) land use; (3) traffic safety – are roads safe, how to handle driveways along roads; (4) water and sewer – where would these go or expand beyond the current plans; (5) community needs (e.g., broad band access).

Susan Tabrizi: (1) town's economy – diversify economic base and tax base, encourage agriculture, retail businesses; (2) environmental protection – protect Cayuga Lake and open space, focus on alternative energy options; (3) Town Center plans – aesthetics, walkability are important, make it a place where people want to go; (4) traffic management; (5) housing – avoid segmentation of neighborhoods, have good connections.

Gerry Friedman: (1) tourism – not covered well in 2006 Plan, needs more of a focus to strengthen economic base of Town; (2) increase opportunities for an arts center (e.g., art trail), festivals, etc.; (3) transportation – combine modes so that people can use two or more forms of transportation on a trip (e.g., bike-to-bus; (4) increase opportunities for broad band, wi-fi.

Lynn Leopold: (1) appreciates the opportunity to participate in the Town's Plan update process and to be a liaison for the Village of Lansing; (2) need for coordination between the Town and Village; (3) focus on greenways, multi-modal transportation.

Jeremy Dietrich: (1) lake and lakefront improvements, create an "aquatic hub"; (2) greenways, improve opportunities for non-motorized vehicles, bikeways with regional connections; (3) environmental issues – conventional gas extraction vs. hydrofracking; (4) Town Center – encourage small businesses, not big box; (5) sewer system adequacy, new sewer plans.

Philip Snyder: (1) hydrofracking – consider outright ban, this should include considering potential impacts of nearby fracking related truck traffic on town roads and other negative impacts; (2) proposed sewer system – need to understand its potential impacts on growth and development in the Town, also what is its impact on the lake – it adds sewage to the lake that doesn't go there now; (3) Town Center – need more specific planning, consider how to integrate Town Center with recreational amenities (e.g., new town trail system), aesthetics – will it have a visual signature that is distinctively Lansing, how does it relate to the overall issue of the Town's character and density; (4) trails, bikeways, recreation – map out a proposal for a future system

of trail and bike corridors and consider links to the Village of Lansing's Greenway Plan; (5) tourism and desirability of the Town as a place to live or visit – develop a more systematic vision of how to support the emerging local food, agriculture, cultural and other things that make the Finger Lakes region an attractive place.

Sarah Thomson: (1) a vision for Lansing needs to be put into words – focusing on things like the area's innate beauty, the importance of supporting agriculture, the arts, etc.; (2) maintain agriculture and agribusiness, diversify the local economy, support eco-tourism, wine trail, cheese trail; (3) identify and protect natural and historic resources, update the inventory in the 2006 Plan; (4) consider alternative energy options, do regulations need to be amended in order to allow these; (5) review the assumptions in the 2006 Plan – what are defining features of the Town.

Amanda Steinhardt: [Thinks that the Plan should be started over, not just updated] (1) Town Center should become core of the Town, residents should be able to live in and walk to Town Center; (2) Town should consider landscape and design standards for development; (3) road and traffic safety – where are truck routes, how do they impact residential areas, can the Town limit where trucks go; (4) connectivity – create parks and trails and a sense of community, make Town more walkable; (5) agricultural land and farming are great assets in the Town – protect them through zoning and other means.

Ruth Hopkins: (1) goals should be linked more to implementation measures, include citizen input into the plan process, do a residents' survey; (2) protect natural resources, consider environmental issues; (3) link demographic trends to goals and objectives, what do the trends mean; (4) Town Center plans; (5) hydrofracking and its impacts on the Town.

Dave Ferris: (1) update demographic information; (2) growth and development – has zoning been carried out the way that the earlier Comprehensive Plans indicated; (3) AES – what is its future and what are the long term impacts on the Town; (4) sewer and water – how does the proposed sewer system impact the overall Town; (5) review the assumptions in the 2006 Plan – how do the assumptions compare with what happened.

Lin Davidson: (1) greenways and trails – add to new developments; (2) support tourism, bed-and-breakfasts, locally grown food and agriculture in general; (3) address lack of broad band services in parts of the Town; (4) truck traffic – NYS could control better; (5) support businesses in lake zone (e.g., wineries, small offices); (6) attract retirees to the Town; (7) emphasize the importance of families in the Town.

Tom Butler: (1) ban hydrofracking in the Town and define what types of industry are appropriate in the Town (Town residents have already said that hydrofracking should be banned); (2) adopt road use agreements to hold companies responsible for road damage and repairs resulting from

gas drilling activities; (3) update Map 3 in the 2006 Plan (wetlands, floodplains, UNA's), consider the establishment of CEA's in the Town, coordinate with Finger Lakes Land Trust to see what areas might be appropriate for conservation easements; (4) include an Executive Summary in Plan update – it makes the Plan easier to understand; (5) do a residents' survey, get as much citizen input as possible.

Kathy Miller: (1) create places for people to gather and meet, create a sense of identity in the Town; (2) consider increasing density in appropriate places in the Town (e.g., Town Center) – this will increase tax revenues for the Town, provide ranges of living options, etc.; (3) be more clear and specific on how to achieve goals and objectives; (4) improve and expand bicycle paths and facilities, make biking safer; (5) add businesses along Town Center corridor, add pedestrian crossings, sidewalks on Route 34.

Jonathan Kanter: Jonathan indicated that he had prepared his own “top ten” list, and it reflects much of what Committee members outlined. It includes: (1) prepare a “vision statement” for the Town; (2) update demographic data and analysis (using 2010 Census, Tompkins County Housing Needs Assessment, building permits, development trends, etc.); (3) expand on Town Center plans and details; (4) discuss how the proposed sewer project fits in with the Town's current thinking on growth and development; (5) consider the impacts of hydrofracking on the environment, natural resources, and infrastructure of the Town; (6) consider possible zoning and subdivision regulation revisions that have been discussed during and subsequent to the 2006 Plan; (7) sustainability and green building options; (8) coordination with Village of Lansing (Village's Comprehensive Plan update, Greenway Plan, etc.); (9) integrate pedestrian and bicycle trails into the planning and development process; (10) agricultural preservation, encourage and support farming and farmers in the Town.

Follow-up Discussion: Gerry Friedman suggested looking at the possibility of compressed gas hydrologic fracturing – it may be safer than hydrofracking. Larry Beck is not sure whether the Town can control what type of fracking is allowed in the Town.

Maureen Cowen asked what happens to the plant and the railroad if the AES plant shuts down. Kathy Miller responded that the Town has little or no control over the railroad. If the plant shuts down, gas companies could potentially use the plant site for extracting water.

Maureen Cowen suggested that the Committee prepare maps of current land use and current development proposals. Jase Baese would like to see a map prepared showing road intersections where improvements should be or have been targeted. Jase also suggested that the new Town Center should have a larger farmers market.

Other Business: Committee members discussed whether the Town should conduct a residents' survey as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process. Possible benefits are to get people in

the community interested and aware of the process and to have direct input into the updated Plan. Possible challenges are costs, time, and figuring out how to conduct a survey. The Committee agreed that a survey is something to think about, but to hold off deciding about a survey until the Committee gets more into the meat of the planning process. Jonathan suggested that information about the Comprehensive Plan update be placed on the Town's website to keep residents informed. Larry Beck said that he would put information on his neighborhood website.

Jonathan read the draft community vision statement in the 2012 Town of Ithaca draft Comprehensive Plan update and indicated that this might be a good example for the Town of Lansing to look at. It is available on the Town of Ithaca website.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. The main agenda item will be for Committee members to draft their "vision" for the Town of Lansing in 150 words or less prior to the meeting for discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Prepared by Jonathan Kanter, AICP