

**MEETING SUMMARY – April 09, 2014 MEETING**

**TOWN OF LANSING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION UPDATE SESSION**

**Members Present:** Jase Baese; Tom Butler; Maureen Cowen; Jeremy Dietrich; Ruth Hopkins, Town Board; Kathy Miller, Supervisor; Susan Miller; Philip Snyder; Susan Tabrizi; Sarah Thomson.

**Others Present:** Jonathan Kanter, AICP, Planning Consultant.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Kathy Miller, Town Supervisor. Ms. Miller welcomed the Public for coming and explained to the Public a Comprehensive Plan is an outline or Plan for a Town going forward looking into the future. This Plan is constantly in motion and constantly changing. In September 2012 the Town of Lansing put together a Comprehensive Plan Committee under the direction of Jonathan Kanter, Planner for the Town. This Committee is still in full force and making great progress.

**Jonathan Kanter-Town Planner**

Mr. Kanter expressed to the Public that a Comprehensive Plan is a document or collections of documents that sets forth goals and recommended actions in order to insure that a Community grows in an orderly developed thought out manner. A Comprehensive Plan is based on Resident's vision on how they would like to see their Community. This could include a very wide range of elements such as, types of service, Parks & Recreations facilities, Transportation, Housing, types of Programs, Populations & Demographic trends, economy, etc. In order to prepare the Town for the future and make the right choices, you must establish a Community Visions in order to encourage economic stability and a good tax base, protect environmental resources, to coordinate with other government/regional agencies, and to provide a good Town legal base and foundation for all the regulations the town would like to adopt. In addition, this will also help with Grants and other financial assistance.

Accomplishments of the Committee thus far;

1. Organized where they needed to go
2. Reviewed the 2006 Plan
3. Define Key Issues, opportunities, threats within the Town
4. Completed a Resident Survey
5. Started and made progress on reviewing goals and objectives from the 2006 Plan
6. Data Collection and analysis for a demographic update from the 2010 census

### **Susan Tabrizi, Presenter on Lansing Survey**

Ms. Tabrizi gave an update of her personal work background and how it relates to her work with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Tabrizi is also a vested Lansing resident and is looking at what is best for the town. One of the best ways to get feedback from the residents is to conduct a random Survey. Ms. Tabrizi explained further how Surveys are taken and what is included in them. Such Topics included in the Survey were;

- Why People live in Lansing
- What are people interested in seeing in the Town Center
- Public Investments (Bike Paths, Transportation options, Lakeside Commercial Development)
- Residential , Commercial Development
- Natural Gas Development
- How can we use our Land Use Resources (Agricultural, Natural Area & Historical Sites)
- Town Governance
- What is the likelihood of you living in Lansing in 5 years or so
- How would you feel about taxes

Responses;

Public School Quality gathered the most answers for wanting to live in the Town. Other responses were rural nature of the Town and the roots that people have in the Town.

Most people are satisfied with living in Lansing and will most likely stay longer than 5 years.

People are looking for shopping, services and residential options in a Town Center.

58% of the residents would not mind having their tax dollars go towards road safety such as, sidewalks to connect to neighborhoods or to a Town Center. Also in favor were traffic calming measures to slow traffic. 69% of residents would be in favor of bike trails, designated lanes on

the road for biking, walking paths. Also residents felt it would be great to use tax dollars to upgrade the transportation for the elderly or disabled.

People want multiple housing options brought into the Community, such as Senior Housing, Moderate-Affordable Housing, and Multi-Family residences.

86% of Residents are requesting Tourism.

Residents are in favor of light industrial enterprises coming in to Lansing or further developing. However, people are not as supportive of adding to the heavy industry such as Borg Warner, or Cargill. Residents feel the Town has enough of that.

Residents are not supportive of Hydro fracking/Hydraulic fracking/Shale/oil/gas/development.

Residents are invested in protecting the Agricultural land, Scenic and Natural Areas and Historical sites.

Residents are concerned with erosion and soil control.

As for Town government, the residents responded fair. A variety of ways are how the Town Residents want to hear Communication from the Town Board, such as mail, email and Town Meetings.

### **Further Questions**

Q: Were the Lansing Village Residents included in the Survey?

A: The Survey was done in conjunction with the Village. When the Survey was conducted the Surveyor specifically asked if the party was a Town Resident or Village Resident so they could separate their data. This data is based on Town Residents only.

Q: Where are the Survey Questions?

A: They can be found on the Website or in the Planning Office.

Q: Are the Website Survey answers included in the Survey.

A: No, they are not included.

Q: How did the Surveyor's get residents cell phone numbers?

A: The Survey Research Center obtains.

Q: Why would you have a short term cut off on the Survey, when you are actually talking long term plans for Lansing?

A: They asked people if they were going to be here in 5 yrs.

Ms. Tabrizi thanked everyone for their time and coming out for the Meeting.

Jonathan Kanter further stated the reason for this session is to obtain more fine tuned questions and provide answers for them. Any comments or concerns regarding the information discussed tonight or what is in the information distributed this evening can be put into the Comments Form provided this evening and sent to the Town of Lansing Planning Office.

### **Break Out Groups As Follows;**

#### **Parks, Recreation & Pathways:**

The Parks, Rec and Pathways section had a small number of participants, mostly people already familiar with the revision. There was additional comment with emphasis and discussion on the potential for a trail on the railroad bed from Myers Park to the Cayuga Power Plant. Those folks in attendance want the town to consider a long range plan to adopt this rail bed if and when it is no longer functioning. The group is aware of the long term nature of this suggestion however believed that the plan should start now or be missed out on.

In addition as the Comp plan member who worked on this section I would like to include the following points to be considered for future public meetings.

1. More exposure and comments on the recreation, parks and trails section and other sections could be made at the beginning of the meeting to help attendees choose where they want to spend their time.

2. The area on history remained as having no leadership. Kathy Miller and I obtained info from town historian Louise Bement. I am wondering if the document that Louise Bement submitted can be used. It seems to need a goal statement and objectives but that should not be too difficult to get accomplished.

3. A cultural opportunities section is also missing, those activities do occur in Lansing with the annual Art show, summer opera at CRS growers, music venues, library outreach. I think these promote the town and provide for the sense of community people like and want more of.

This could be tagged on to the history section or stand alone.

Maureen Cowen  
Comp Plan revision committee member

#### **Land Use & Development**

## **Summary of the focus group held at the Comprehensive Planning public meeting held April 9, 2014 at the Lansing Town Hall.**

Twenty to thirty citizens participated in the focus group for approximately one hour. Jase Baese and Susan Miller, both members of the Land Use subcommittee of the Comprehensive Planning Committee facilitated the discussion. Ruth Hopkins recorded the comments on the flip chart. All of the comments were recorded on a flip chart for everyone to see, and correct if they were misunderstood.

The comments from the flip chart have been provided below. In addition some initial observations from the focus group leaders about the comments are noted. Jase, Susan and Ruth hope to review these comments with the entire Comprehensive Planning group in a future meeting so that the entire group can make observations about the comments and their implications for the Comprehensive Plan and the ongoing process and community involvement that inform the plan.

### **The primary questions posed to the group**

1. What do we mean by community character?
2. How can we maintain our community character?
3. How might we incorporate sustainability in our land use policies?

4. What types of housing should be encouraged?
5. What do we mean by commercial and light industrial development?

### **Some observations about the comments**

1. Comments throughout the discussion suggested that the data informing the goals, some from the survey, some from elsewhere, be clearly outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and by the Town as the reasons that have been used for setting those goals. Some said 'outline the data', others said 'use data' etc.
2. Statements during the discussion addressed a desire that the Town be more proactive in guiding our development so we get what we want, and that the guidance provided via the comprehensive plan include the need for this kind of directed guidance from the Town to the developers.
3. Several comments would suggest that the Town set a goal for working across municipal borders to meet our goals.
4. The facilitators observed that comments included the suggestion that the Comp. Plan Committee focus on interconnected relationships particularly the relationship between the Agricultural Plan currently being drafted and the Comprehensive Plan. Additional focus should be addressed to the relationship between the long and short term planning, the Village and Town planning and the School and Town planning.

### **The comments made during the discussion**

### *What do we mean by Community Character?*

- Rural areas that are not the big farms, the smaller farms and areas with rural homes, some with individual family gardens
- The green areas on this map (pointing to the land use map). Specifically, more than just the brown and yellow areas.
- The wetlands.
- The open spaces
- The scenic view sheds
- Beautiful residential areas
- Diversity of income levels in North Lansing that give it rural feel
- Beautiful shoreline
- Non-polluted streams and waterways
- Quietness, absence of truck noise or traffic congestion

### *How might we maintain character?*

- Identify it then develop guidelines that protect it ex. Wetlands.
- If farmlands are to be protected as “rural character” then we must recognize the cost and figure out how to compensate the owners, e.g. pay for it.
- Recognize need of rural non-farm residents in N. Lansing by identifying the forces that drive them away and addressing them. Determine how they are affected by expanding commercial farms.
- Handle shoreline development carefully. Based on survey results we should protect it and make the lakeshore commercial compatible with these goals.
- Prioritize our goals to be sure we are addressing c citizen priorities while guiding development of residential and commercial areas.

- Rank our priorities for each area before going forward to be sure we have balanced the needs
- Promote mechanisms to buy out farms or open space. Identify all the options used in other communities and make them known to officials and residents
- If Ag. District plan is adopted, take the time to carefully integrate it with the Comprehensive Plan
- Identify where key open space and view sheds exist and best practices for conserving them
- Carefully examine the environmental impacts of the big farms and ways, if any these affect community character. Regulations may be needed to mitigate impacts.
- Explore the advantages and disadvantages of an Agricultural District vs. an Agricultural Area similar to our current area. Become aware of who regulates each kind of designation, who can modify or regulate each kind of area.
- Examine how the number of animals per acre impacts our natural environment and seek mitigation options.
- Identify all wetlands, not just UNAs, as part of the process of managing stormwater.
- Provide for heightened scrutiny of stormwater impact on all development
- Prevent sewage from going to lake
- Pay attention to the mix of different attributes in the development we want in the LONG run in order to know the character is what you want in the end.
- Guide development so we to achieve Town objectives as well as developer objectives.
- Pay particular attention to Comp Plan objectives in guiding the Town Center. Place higher priority on Town Objectives.
- Determine reasons and benefits of new development when encouraging development and offering incentives. Example: For

whom are we providing apartment living? And what kinds of apartments do these people, particularly current residents want? Do apartment dwellers in Lansing want rural type amenities?

- Determine if we are building apartments for needs of our existing residents and their families first.
- Consider impact on schools for all development that will guide and encourage or give special consideration.
- Assess impact of traffic on existing neighborhoods for all development. Not just impact on main roads.
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*How might we incorporate Sustainability in land use?*

- Start by encouraging and supporting smaller farms
- Promote local businesses
- Balance residential development with school capacity and growth objectives. Don't give incentives unless it fits the Town goals.
- Model and plan more of the interconnected impacts of new development on traffic and schools
- Include careful financial analysis of the \$ impact of various scenarios of growth to the long term
- Allow seniors to stay in Lansing as they get older, preferably in their own building not an apartment. Encourage condo and small ECO housing options. Give preference to Lansing residents is Lansing provides incentives for such housing.

*What types of Housing should be encouraged?*

- Sustain open spaces with Cluster housing with surrounding lands for gardens or other neighborhood uses.
- Encourage Elder housing such as ECO or modular requiring little maintenance or shared maintenance costs.

- Encourage more residential neighborhoods in 200k to 400k ranges. Current housing above that level is not affordable.
- Encourage new developments that designed to be more neighborhood friendly with amenities that encourage community in the smaller neighborhood units so people have ways to meet neighbors like walking paths, common space.
- Take more time to ask why we want more housing. If most of us are here because we want a rural environment then why make so many efforts to attract more people? Are local people going to use the affordable apartments? Or will we simply be attracting people from other areas who want affordable housing?
- Find ways to work with the Village as we solve housing needs such as affordable housing.
- Spend time to carefully examine how best to guide growth that connects all these goals.
- Include clear objectives for working with the region and County not just the town. We are interconnected.
- Examine studies and trends to ascertain the expected growth and demand. Determine what the drivers of future demand are likely to be, where growth is coming from. Why will Lansing experience more or less growth than other nearby towns? And what does this mean for the services we provide? Where is evidence of need for senior and affordable housing for young people, what do the numbers tell us?

*How do we see Commercial and light industrial developing in our Town?*

What does Town consider light industrial?

- Use a metric such as “Number of trucks per day” to determine extent of the industrial impact.
- Local industry provides jobs for local people. It also enhances the tax base to support our schools.
- Support locally generated business. Example is the new local food processing plant in Groton.
- Promote local businesses that serve local needs. Promote local businesses even if they ship products elsewhere, it’s still providing local jobs.
- Set impact levels such as traffic, noise, and visual clutter as a way to guide impact of light industrial development. On nearby neighborhoods. Then it is easier to encourage it because the impact will be something the community has agreed on.
- Selectively decide where to put sewer and water because this will determine where development goes. It also then leaves the rest for the things we want to protect. This will likely lead to density in selected areas with open rural areas in other.

### **Town Center & Hamlets**

Town Center and Hamlets Breakout Group 4/9/14

CPUC= Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

Introductory notes: The Comprehensive Plan (2006) includes town center concept, including areas surrounding town government complex. Details of geographic area are available through town website.

### **Hamlets:**

What does it mean to be a hamlet?

Proposed definition: a collection of houses, services, church, grocery store, etc. Participants mentioned Libertyville, Ludlowville, and Myers as residential centers. A survey/assessment of established hamlets was conducted by the CPUC. Major finding was a sense of a community and community ownership of the character of their hamlet – “homegrown”. Perhaps the concept of “neighborhood” helps to define the notion of hamlet.

CPUC Goal: Preserve, maintain and enhance the small neighborhood, historical and natural character of the existing hamlets in the town.

A question was raised about how hamlets are zoned currently. The Libertyville site is primarily B1 and the other two are residential, primarily low density.

### **Town Center:**

2006 Comprehensive Plan

2010 Town contracted with Holt Architects for concept development which resulted in the Request for Proposals process that is currently ongoing. RFP committee has details about current proposals.

Discussion:

Question about how to address potential negative impact of town center (crime, congestion, noise, lighting, quality of life issues and tax burden). Answer: RFP committees are reviewing many but not all of these concerns.

Question about the cost of the town land. Answer: Purchased from the state at a low cost and town paid for release of restrictions on land. Land would be sold to developers at a profit.

Concern about whether town center development will lead to lower taxes or increased need for services and therefore higher taxes. Will it be an economic drain instead of an economic driver?

Question about whether light industrial development will be an enhancement to quality of life.

Comments about how current increased services and conveniences (as have occurred with Lansing Market and banking services) would increase the quality of life.

Other development options are possible and should be entertained as well. Wineries and tourism should be developed. There is so much that we could take advantage of in terms of tourism.

Question of how to develop a town center and support it. Answers: Residential development is essential for support of any town center concept.

Senior citizen concerns about walkable community and services.

How do we balance residential, light industrial, services, and rural character of the town.

Elements of town center need to be planned and developed step by step emphasizing concept of dense pocket of development that preserves the residential and rural character of the town.

Concern about how to gather community input regarding town center. How to be sure we have as much community buy-in as possible. Answer: representative survey supplemented with multiple community meetings, online and written comments. open CPUC process.

How do we prioritize the need for services and other possibilities for economic development such as tourism?

Comment about how development will progress: continued use of rural land for residential development because of cost issues or more dense development to take the pressure off.

Conclusion: Continued community input and conversation as town center development progresses.

Preservation of hamlet identity a priority. CPUC continuing work on plan update.

### **Gas Drilling/Hydrofracking**

The group reviewed numerous maps. The generic Environmental Statement of 2011 shows Marcellus to include parts of Tompkins County. The Fairway which is the most productive area went as far as the Catskills and back into Lansing. Broome County would most likely be the most productive for Shale. Lansing would not be a very good play due to the depth not being thick enough. It's not likely Lansing would be done anytime soon, if ever. The process discussed was to establish a Moratorium in place to find the information the Town needs, with the Comprehensive Plan speaking to that. Once the Comprehensive Plan speaks to that and addresses whether the Town should have a ban, along with the Town Board agreeing to that, the Town can move forward with the NYS highest Court System for Home Rule and get it implemented. The Survey indicated  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the people surveyed were opposed to development of gas. 60% of the Election Districts wanted a ban. Therefore, overall the sense of the Community did not want gas/hydrofracking.

### **Public Comments/Concerns**

Several people requested that future Comprehensive Plan Public Information Meeting Notices be placed on a very large Sign and erected out front of the Town Hall( close to the road) so residents can see it.

Supervisor Kathy Miller and Jonathan Kanter thanked the Public for their time and input on these topics.

