

Town of Westerlo

Comprehensive Plan Committee

Meeting on Wednesday, October 16, 2019

The Town of Westerlo Comprehensive Plan Committee held a meeting on Wednesday October 16, 2019 at the Town Hall located at 933 County Route 401, Westerlo, NY. Committee Chair Dave Lendrum opened the meeting at 7 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Attending Committee members: (all were present)

Dave Lendrum, Dorothy Verch, Steve Cornell, Bill Scrafford, John Sefcik, Sue Fancher, Jill Henck, Kelly Keefe, Tom Della Rocco

Others in attendance: 3 members of the public. The consultant was not present.

Minutes: Bill made a motion to approve the minutes of the Sept 11th meeting and Dotty seconded it. All members voted in favor.

At the start of the meeting, there was a question followed by discussion on the Open Meetings Law.

- The committee needs to ensure our meetings are advertised in the paper. Dotty said she would follow-up with the Altamont Enterprise.
- Dianne Sefcik offered to send a summary document on the Open Meetings Law and conducting public meetings.

The consultant (Charles Voss) was not present. Dave is going to meet with him next week, and other members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee are welcome to attend, as long as we do not have a quorum. Dave will let us know when the meeting will be, and members need to let Dave know if they are interested in attending.

The agenda for this meeting was to develop survey questions, length of the survey, method to distribute it, and a timeline for the survey. However, some members questioned whether it was too early to develop the survey, and whether we needed an overall plan (comprehensive plan steps, timeline, who does what, etc.) first. There were also questions about the number of years that we should plan for in the our comprehensive plan, how much demographic and natural resource information was needed and when, and how much implementation detail we should include. Publicity and how to involve the public and communicate was also a topic of discussion.

There was a short discussion on developing a survey and how we would distribute it. Some of the initial comments were (no decisions were made):

- Likes:
 - Rating scale or numbers for ranking
 - Comment section

- What brought you to Westerlo?
- Short (4 sides)
- Not too many demographic questions
- Dislikes:
 - Open-ended questions
 - Agree/disagree questions

The committee then focused on developing a methodology, which is outlined below.

Methodology for the Comprehensive Plan Committee

Vision Statement:

To develop a plan for the future of the Town of Westerlo that addresses concerns of the community and guides the town in future decisions.

Financial stability of the town should be considered through commercial incentives and development.

Process outline:

- I. Vision Statement Development (November)
- II. Term of Future Plan (table for later)
- III. Development of timeline for drafting process (continually)
- IV. Use existing plan and discussion topics to develop areas and outline key sections to the new plan (November)
- V. Develop open forum events (November)
 - A. Pamphlet or flier for community input
 - B. Potluck dinners
 - C. Other outreach
 - D. Facebook page
- VI. Survey the community to direct the plan

Some specific follow-ups:

- Sue is going to contact Knox and Berne and ask them about their use of comprehensive plan surveys.
- Jill will talk to Bill Bichteman about using Facebook for our Westerlo Comprehensive Plan.

- Tom had some copies of the 2018 update to the Albany County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, which needs to be factored into our comprehensive plan. Some members took copies to review and then pass on to others, and Dave sent out the online link to it
- Meeting next week with Charles Voss that Dave and some members will attend.

Future minutes: It was proposed and decided that we should post our Comprehensive Plan Committee minutes on the town's web site. John will follow-up with Kathy Spinnato. There was a discussion on how minutes would be taken at future meetings. Dave is going to talk to Bill Bichteman about it.

Dotty made a motion to adjourn, and Steve seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

The next meeting is Wed, Nov 20, 2019 at Town Hall.

Submitted by,

John Sefcik
Comp Plan Committee Member