

CPC Meeting 8/12/2020

The meeting was called to order by chairman, Dave Lendrum at 7 PM with a Pledge to the flag.

Members in attendance: Dave Lendrum, Bill Scrafford, Barb Russell, Jill Henck, John Sefcik, Kelley Keefe, Steve Cornell

- I. Members of the town and members of the Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board contributed to the SWOT analysis to discuss and identify areas of Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat. Their contributions are shown below:

GENERAL SWOT ANALYSIS 8/12/2020

Internal

Strengths (+)	Weaknesses (-)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low crime 2. Rural character 3. Excellent views/vistas 4. Clean air / water quality 5. Open space 6. Educated population 7. Nice parks 8. Low taxes 9. Diverse population 10. Good schools 11. Hannay Reels (family owned businesses) 12. Commercial tax base 13. Recreational opportunities 14. Relatively close to Albany 15. Good town workforce 16. Community Involvement 17. Regional connections with Rt 32 and 85 18. Lack of light pollution 19. Experienced and knowledgeable community 20. Big uptick in real estate just south of Westerlo providing opportunity. 21. Volunteer fire department 22. Library 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Quality in homes and town 2. Internet coverage and speed 3. Lack of commerce in general 4. Lack of chamber of commerce 5. Poor cell phone coverage 6. Lack of identity (as belonging to Westerlo) 7. Lack of amenities 8. No sidewalks/few sidewalks 9. Lack of commercial tax base 10. Poorly harnessed scientific knowledge (Not enough knowledge to properly serve opportunities) 11. Highway Infrastructure 12. Lack of development at Lake Onderdonk 13. Abandoned homes 14. Aging population 15. Elderly community, lacking and not attracting young adults and families to town. 16. Lack of recreational opportunities (ATVs, boating, City of Albany owns much of the lands ie. Basic Reservoir) 17. Poor community communication 18. Tax assessments 19. Lack of knowledge about available agricultural products and services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Lack of total community benefit from solar 21. Lack of community involvement 22. Us/ them, divisive attitudes and politics 23. Not using resources available in town. 24. Town divided into two separate school districts
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities (+)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intermunicipal cooperation for broadband within the hilltowns. 2. Agritourism 3. Destination businesses such as a pie shop or bakery 4. Farmers markets 5. Increased recreation at Basic Reservoir, Alcove Reservoir, Bear swamp, Town Park 6. Town park space for festivals 7. Community Green and Renewable energy initiatives 8. Hydro Power 9. Wind Power 10. Space for Solar 11. Promote and develop a commercial corridor on 32,143, and 85. 12. Westerlo should become the base for county provided emergency services (preemptive planning) 13. Dark skies make for great star gazing, astronomy setting and an observatory of some kind. 14. Hiking, biking, horseback riding opportunities on pipelines and other paths. Other non motorized use. 15. Address the decommissioning and removal of 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats(-)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aging residential solar panels and there is confusion over their disposal 2. Aging tax base 3. Aging residents 4. Lack of senior housing and services for seniors 5. Loss of Hannay Reels 6. No local urgent care in the area 7. Aging housing stock 8. Vanishing views for various reasons 9. Lack of some types of infrastructure 10. Recession and difficulty attracting economic development and business. 11. Rural decay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Loss of agricultural land to various reasons b. Lack of farmers to maintain farmland c. Aging farmers d. Next generation perspectives on rural land e. Resistance to new farming technologies 12. Fear of development of a new landfill for Albany county. 13. Translocation of youth. 14. Environmentally damaging industries and activities 15. Exclusive vs inclusive attitude towards newcomers and racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse populations

<p>renewable energy projects. (being proactive and ahead of the curve)</p> <p>16. Creating consortiums with other hilltowns. We have neighboring communities that are of like scale and aspect.</p> <p>17. Change taxes and attitudes to be fair to new residents and welcoming to them.</p>	
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External

II. The Implementation Matrix created by Dianne Sefcik was discussed among the group. Chuck Voss (consultant) indicated that the matrix looked complete and adequate, though the comprehensive plan committee is months away from using the matrix itself. The committee discussed tabling the Matrix discussion for later.

III. Barb Russell proposed an alternative arrangement for the editing process. Barb and Bill Bichteman had indicated that the editing process was cumbersome without the ability or time to have a discussion or in-person meeting. Barb suggested that the town clerk could print a physical copy of the revised first draft of each section of the comprehensive plan. Each member could then pick up a copy of the comp plan section to physically write on and edit and then discuss at the upcoming meeting that week.

Discussion suggested that this option was also cumbersome and that an alternative method to this should be identified to ease the editing process. Going to a live document that each person could make suggestions to was suggested. No decisions were made on this topic, though tabled for the 8/26/2020 meeting.

IV. The committee discussed and approved a move to two meetings a month, from one. Chuck Voss suggested that the meetings be held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month as the building was less busy. A motion was made by Bill Scraffort to approve this change to two meetings a month and seconded by Jill Henck. The days of the month will be decided at the next Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting.

Submitted by:
David Lendrum