

Comprehensive Plan Committee Minutes
Wednesday, May 13 2020 @ 7:00pm

This meeting was held at the Westerlo Town Hall, 933 County Route 401 Westerlo, NY 12193 and via Zoom.

Dave Lendrum, Jill Henck, Bill Scrafford, and Supervisor Bichteman were present at Town Hall and Kelley Keefe and John Sefcik joined via Zoom. Noah Zweifel of the Altamont Enterprise also joined via Zoom.

- I. Dave made a motion to approve improved minutes provided by John Sefcik, see below, Jill seconded the motion, all members present voted in favor.
 - A. CPC minutes of 12182019
 - B. CPC minutes of 01152020
 - C. CPC minutes of 02052020
- II. Dave suggested getting the community more involved by hosting subcommittee meetings on Zoom. The Committee agreed to schedule all subcommittee meetings ahead of time in order to make them more readily available to the public. It was decided that starting June 3, 2020 there will be a recurring subcommittee meeting every Wednesday for six weeks from 7-8 pm on Zoom. The dates, corresponding topics, and Committee member leaders are as follows:
 - A. June 3 – Agriculture Dave, Tom
 - B. June 10 – Development Bill, Steve
 - C. June 17 – Environment – Jill and John
 - D. June 24- Planning and Zoning – Dotty, Kelly, John
 - E. July 1 – Onderdonk – Dave, Jill
 - F. July 8 – Hamlet – Kelly, Dave
- III. Jill asked about funding. Supervisor Bichteman said the Hudson River Valley Greenway grant, which the Town had been approved for, is no longer available because of Covid-19 related budget cuts. Bill Scrafford asked about the Ag and Markets grant, and Supervisor Bichteman said the Town is no longer moving forward with that process because they aren't going to put together agricultural plan, which the grant requires. Supervisor Bichteman said he would ask the Town Board about funding at their upcoming meeting. After a discussion regarding logistics for mailing the survey, Supervisor Bichteman said tell him what the Committee needs for the mailer and Town Staff can take care of it.
- IV. The Committee analyzed and amended draft survey questions, included below. Jill made a motion to approve draft survey questions and send to Chuck Voss for

review, John seconded, all members voted in favor. Bill made the motion to expedite Chuck Voss's comments to be approved by the CPC chairman for approval and then be sent to Bill and Town staff for formatting and printing. Jill seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

- V. Bill asked if the Town Board should replace Sue on the committee, after discussion there was no opposition to this suggestion.
- VI. For the May 27, 2020 CPC Meeting members would continue working on inventories for old topic areas and assembling questions for designated subcommittee meetings. Jill made a motion to adjourn at 9:10 pm, Bill seconded the motion, all members voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jillian Henck

Town of Westerlo

Comprehensive Plan Survey

The Town of Westerlo is updating its Comprehensive Plan and would like your input. This plan will guide Westerlo's decision making bodies for years to come. As stakeholders in this Town your opinion matters and will be considered when compiling the update. No attempt will be made to identify individual respondents.

Agriculture

1. How can the town support existing farmers and encourage new agricultural development? Circle top three items.
 - a. Farmers market
 - b. Agricultural education days
 - c. Farm to fork initiatives
 - d. Incubator farms
 - e. Farm mentoring
 - f. Agricultural committee
 - g. Agricultural grant writing workshop

Infrastructure and Housing

1. Are you currently a part of the town's water district?
Yes / No
2. Do you support allocating municipal funds to further the development of the Hamlet of Westerlo?
Yes / No
3. Given the small lot sizes around Lake Onderdonk that make it difficult to improve or build upon, should a new zoning district be created to enable streamlined development?
Yes / No
4. Is your access to high speed internet and telecommunications services meeting your current needs?
 - a. Yes

- b. No, not available
 - c. No, it's too expensive
 - d. No, it's too slow
5. Should the Town allow accessory dwelling units to allow for senior housing and affordable housing for young families?

Yes / No

Additional Comments:

Renewable Energy

1. Should the Town of Westerlo encourage commercial solar development?
 - a. Yes, property owners should have free reign to use their land as they wish
 - b. Yes, but with logistical parameters put in place by town code
 - c. Neutral
 - d. No, this use is not appropriate
2. Should the Town of Westerlo encourage commercial wind development?
 - a. Yes, property owners should have free reign to use their land as they wish
 - b. Yes, but with logistical parameters put in place by town code
 - c. Neutral
 - d. No, this use is not appropriate
3. Should the town coordinate with surrounding municipalities to strategically limit the location of renewable energy sites to preserve scenic vistas and maintain rural character?

Yes / No

Economic Growth

1. Should the Town establish a commercial zone along the primary thoroughfares, State route 85 and Route 32, to encourage economic development?

Yes / No

2. If no, where else would you like to see business development?

3. What types of retail or service sector businesses would you like to see in the town of Westerlo?
4. Do you operate a business out of your home? If yes, what type of municipal assistance would be helpful?

Yes/no

6. Should Westerlo encourage a tourist based economy including seasonal RV parks, short term rentals, glamping, and agritourism?

Yes / No

7. What type of unique ideas do you have to bring tourism and recreation opportunities to Westerlo?
8. What could the town do to attract and encourage younger residents to stay in the town?

Open Spaces

1. How important is air, water, and land quality in Westerlo to you?
 - a. Very important
 - b. Important
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Not important
2. How important is open space and rural character in Westerlo to you?
 - a. Very important
 - b. Important
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Not important

Town Government

1. Should the town attempt to minimize tax increases by aggressively promoting commercial development to expand the tax base?

Yes / No

2. Do you feel like your current tax assessment is equitable and fair?

Yes / No

Demographics:

1. What is your age range:

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55+

2. How long have you lived in the town of Westerlo:

1-5 years

6-15 years

16-25 years

25+ years

3. Do you normally work within the Town of Westerlo?

Yes / No

Other: ** These questions were added after the May 13, 2020 meeting adjourned

1. What do you like about Westerlo?

2. What improvements are needed in Westerlo?

Additional Comments: