

# **TOWN OF BYRON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting  
November 15, 2016**

## **Meeting Summary**

The first meeting of the Steering Committee for the Town of Byron Comprehensive Plan Update was held on November 15, 2016 in the Town of Byron Town Hall.

### **Attendees:**

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|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Debra Buck-Leaton   | • Fred Klycek                       |
| • Bill Corson         | • Jim Lamkin                        |
| • Jim Cudney          | • Roger Rouse                       |
| • Sue Fuller          | • George Squires                    |
| • Candace Hensel      | • Jeff Thompson                     |
| • Christopher Hilbert | • Peter Yasses                      |
| • Josh Kent           | • Drew Reilly, Ellen Parker, Wendel |

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### **1. Role of the Steering Committee:**

We went over the role of the Steering committee in this effort. Their roles include:

- Provide inventory information
- Periodic meetings to guide project
- Regular status updates
- Provide Input on Goals, Recommendations
- Review Draft Plan
- “Ambassadors” of Plan

It was noted that the Committee will be a very involved partner in this effort, particularly in regard to developing elements of the draft Comprehensive Plan.

### **2. Scope of Work**

The consultant team reviewed the scope of work for the project. The Committee will be preparing elements of the inventory, and obtaining mapping information from Genesee County. The consultants’ tasks are:

- Project Meetings: four meetings with the Committee; two public meetings; and the formal Public Hearing as part of the adoption process
- Community Values Survey: develop and analyze results for a survey questionnaire for residents.
- Plan Document: compile information from the Committee, the public meetings and the survey to develop a Comprehensive Plan update (including edits based on comments)
- SEQR and Adoption: assist the Town with the process to formally adopt the Plan.

### 3. Outreach Plan:

Attendees discussed the public outreach plan for the Comprehensive Plan update. It entails several aspects:

- **Committee:** It was emphasized that the Committee itself is an important component of public outreach. As representatives of the Town, Committee members should talk about the Plan with their neighbors and colleagues, to make sure residents are aware of the plan, and have the opportunity to participate.
- **Survey: Logistics:** there was extensive discussion on the logistics of the community values questionnaire/survey. Wendel will create a “survey monkey” version of the survey, which will be available for residents to fill out on line. We will also provide a version on paper for distribution to residents. It was noted that tabulating the surveys completed online will be automatic; the Town will need to tabulate paper surveys.
- **Survey: Timing:** There was discussion about trying to have the survey completed prior to the first public meeting. It was seen as a way to encourage residents to attend, in order to find out about survey results. On the other hand, there will only be one survey, and we need to get it right. It would be a tight time frame to write survey questions, get agreement on the survey, administer it and obtain results prior to the first public meeting. Also, many residents will hear about it for the first time at the meeting, and may feel left out if they can’t participate. It was determined that the survey will be ready for the first meeting, and results would be summarized at the second public meeting.
- **Survey: Questions:** The questions from the prior survey were distributed. We hope to repeat some questions from the prior survey, to show trends, but not all questions remain relevant. Also, there are new issues that will require new questions. The Committee brainstormed about issues to address in the Plan and perhaps the survey (see below). Also, Committee members are encouraged to provide Wendel with input about questions. Wendel will draft a first version of the survey and distribute to the Committee.
- **Public Meeting:** The date for the Public Information meeting was tentatively set for **January 17, 2017**. Pending approval from the Fire Department, it will be at the South Byron Fire Hall. Wendel will prepare all presentation materials, and work with the Town to get the word out. Wendel will prepare a short article about the project for the Town’s newsletter and provide it to Debra Buck-Leaton by December 1<sup>st</sup> for inclusion in the next edition, and prepare a poster. The Committee was encouraged to let people know about the meeting at places like church, Kiwanis meetings, etc.

### 4. Overview of Plan Document

We went over the proposed format of the Comprehensive Plan Update, and distributed a draft Table of Contents.

### 5. Committee Input on Issues/ Concerns

Throughout the evening, the Committee provided input on major issues and concerns in the Town:

- There is misunderstanding of the County’s policy on water – existing homes are allowed to tie into water systems, but generally there are lateral restrictions prohibiting new

development from access. State and federal policies support this stance in Agricultural Districts. There is an appeal process through the County, but most appeals are denied.

- There was a question about having zoning in conformance with a Comprehensive Plan and the timing of zoning changes. The Town can adopt the Plan without having to address every zoning recommendation. It is recognized that there will be an implementation period. Future zoning changes should be designed to come into compliance with the recommendations in the plan; however, the Town can always make minor amendments to the document if circumstances change.
- Having an adopted plan will improve competitiveness for grant funding; also, State agencies are required to 'consider' recommendations in a Comprehensive Plan when making their investment decisions.
- It was noted that one alignment for the State's High Speed Rail line would cross the Town of Byron.
- When asked what motivated the Town to update the Comprehensive Plan, responses included:
  - It is outdated
  - Improve access to grants
  - Revitalize the hamlet areas
  - Increase tax base
  - Protect farmland
  - Address infrastructure (water, sewer, natural gas, broadband)
- It was noted that there is one sewer district, which encompasses all three hamlets. It is a "graywater" system that takes the load off septic systems that handle sanitary flow. Additional improvements would be necessary to accommodate significant additional development within the hamlets.
- Oxbow is the major industry in Town, with approximately 85 employees. They operate on a private septic system.
- Mobile home parks are an issue.
- There is a need for additional senior housing, and affordable housing. There is one small assisted living center that accommodates six seniors (separate rooms, communal dining).
- There was a Senior/Affordable housing project proposed in the Town, with Town support; however, it did not receive funding and was never built.
- Sue Fuller noted that she owns a small apartment building, and there is always more demand than she can accommodate. In particular, young people are looking for rental units in Town, particularly at affordable rents.
- There is a concern that it is difficult to start a small business in Town. Issues include lack of appropriate properties, and restrictive zoning regulations (e.g. high parking demands). Many projects need to go to the ZBA. There is also the perception that projects don't even get off the ground due to fear of zoning restrictions (don't want to take the risk of going before the ZBA).
- There is strong interest in revitalizing the hamlets as mixed use centers.
- There is a small area zoned industrial near the rail line in South Byron. It has not been developed, despite rail access. Churchville has the advantage of municipal electricity (lower rates).
- There is interest in additional recreational opportunities in the Town. The Town would like guidance on options for the Mill Pond. There is also interest in more recreational opportunities for youth.