

PATHWAY TO OUR FUTURE

GUILDERLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose: Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Meeting #4
 Date and Time: May 9, 2023, 7:00 pm
 Location: Guilderland Town Hall, 5209 Western Turnpike, Guilderland, NY
 Attendees: See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
Welcome	Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Cody Betton welcomed Committee members, Town staff, and members of the public.	None.
CPUC Communication	<p>Committee Chair Betton introduced the Town Attorney James Melita, who provided a summary of his memo to the CPUC, dated April 26. All members of the CPUC were furnished with a paper copy of the memo to serve as a reference during the Town Attorney’s summary.</p> <p>In his summary, Mr. Melita noted that – because the role of the CPUC is advisory in nature – Open Meetings Law (OML) requirements would not, technically, apply</p>	

	to the CPUC. However, Mr. Melita emphasized, the Town’s other advisory committees strive to comply with OML to the greatest extent possible.	None.
Project Schedule Update	Jaelyn Hakes (MJ Engineering) provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan Update process, highlighting key milestones such as Public Workshops, development of the Community Profile & Inventory, the creation of Vision/Goals/Strategies/Recommendations.	None.
Public Engagement Update	<p>Jesse McCaughey (MJ) updated the Committee on Public Engagement activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Survey • Public Workshop #2 • Student Engagement <p>Mr. McCaughey noted that, in coordination with representatives of the Guilderland Central School District and Guilderland High School, student engagement for the Comprehensive Plan Update would occur later in the month of May, prior to the conclusion of the academic year.</p> <p>Mr. McCaughey (MJ) then provided an update on the Community Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online via Survey Monkey or hard copies available at Town Hall • Launched on March 13th • Submission deadline extended to May 15 – coordination with the school district, library, senior services department to publicize • Survey responses will inform content of Workshop #2 themes • Consultant Team to prepare summary of survey response highlights 	Submission deadline for Community Survey extended until May 15, 2023.

<p>Public Engagement Update (Cont'd)</p>	<p>The Community Survey was promoted at the Public Open House & Visioning Workshop #1, where QR-code-linked cards were distributed. Visitors to the Project Website also receive an automatic invitation to complete the Community Survey.</p> <p>Mr. McCaughey (MJ) noted that the second Public Workshop event has been scheduled to take place at the Westmere Fire House (1741 Western Avenue) on Thursday, June 1st at 6:00 PM. The Workshop will consist of facilitated, topic-based “speed round” discussions. The event will be publicized via press release, Town website, Project Website, site signage, and the CPUC.</p>	<p>Location and date set for second Public Workshop event: Westmere Fire House at 6:00 PM on Thursday, June 1, 2023.</p>
<p>Housing/Economic Data Overview</p>	<p>Ellen Pemrick, a member of the consultant team, provided an overview of relevant housing and economic data from Guilderland, establishing existing conditions in the Town and highlighting pertinent regional and national trends.</p> <p>Housing data for Guilderland included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16,018 housing units (2020 Census) • >60% of all housing units, and 78% of rental units, were constructed between 1960 and 1999 • 67% of households own their homes; 33% live in rental housing • Housing tenure is linked to income, life stage (age) and household type: • 71% of householders under age 25 rent • 82% of householders ages 45-54 own a home • 86% of married-couple families are homeowners • Single-family homes represent 68% of the housing stock • 24% of housing units are in structures with 5+ units • 8% are in buildings with 2 to 4 units – much less than Albany County (25%) or the Town of Bethlehem 	

<p>Housing/Economic Data Overview (Cont'd)</p>	<p>(14%)...issue of “missing middle” housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median household income in Guilderland is \$94,606 (\$117,527 among homeowners; \$58,219 among renters • Median gross rent (incl. utilities): \$1,310 compared to \$1,113 in Albany County • Median homeownership costs (incl. utilities, property taxes, insurance): \$1,975 for owners with a mortgage, \$703 for those without • Cost burden: a measure of housing affordability that looks at the extent to which households spend >30% of their gross income on monthly housing expenses • 39% of renter households are cost burdened...of these, 79% earn <\$50K/year • Owners less likely to be cost burdened • 22% of owner households with a mortgage are cost burdened...2/3 of them earn <\$75K/year • Not all cost burdened households have low incomes • Issues arise if housing prices are too high, there’s a scarcity of housing within one’s means, or households experience a change (e.g., job loss, divorce) that reduces their income • 348 units of subsidized affordable housing for income qualified households (includes 96 units restricted to tenants 55 and older) • No new subsidized affordable housing constructed in Guilderland in >10 years • BUT...some households earn too much to be eligible for subsidized housing, but not enough to comfortably afford quality market-rate housing • Demographic shifts: an increasing share of residents age 65+, from 14% in 2010 to a projected 24% by 2030...housing options include aging 	<p>None.</p>
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<p>Housing/Economic Data Overview (Cont'd)</p>	<p>in place, downsizing, assisted living, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household income: >47% of households earn at least \$100K/yr, but 23% have annual incomes below \$50K...need to recognize diverse housing needs • “Missing middle”: housing types that fall in between single-family homes and large multi-family developments; can help expand supply of affordable housing in single-family neighborhoods • Opportunities for first-time homebuyers: Nationally Millennials made up largest percentage of buys 2014-2021, but higher home prices and rising interest rates priced many of them out of the market <p>Economic Conditions & Trends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 20% of jobs are in government and public education, 18% in professional and business services • Retail, health care, and leisure & hospitality are also major employers in Town • 14% of jobholders are Guilderland residents; 27% from other Albany County communities; 25% from Schenectady and Saratoga Counties • Job counts fell in 2020 due to the pandemic – disproportionate impact on leisure & hospitality, retail, and personal services • Highly educated resident workforce; 56% have a bachelor’s degree or higher (vs. 22% in Albany County) • 32% of employed residents hold jobs in the City of Albany, 14% in Town of Colonie, 11% in Schenectady County • Commercial land uses cover 1,227 acres or 3% of Town’s total land area • Storage warehouse, distribution (684 acres) • Retail services (194) 	
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<p>Housing/Economic Data Overview (Cont'd)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office and professional buildings (117) • Industrial land uses cover <1% of Town <p>Recent commercial real estate market trends in the US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office demand affected by adoption of remote and hybrid work; will be most detrimental to older/outdated properties • Growth of e-commerce: 16% of total retail sales in 2020, but “will always be a ceiling” • Retail has become more experiential • Malls reinventing themselves, diversifying tenant mix with dining, entertainment, fitness centers, and other non-retail uses <p>Economic Conditions: Issues to Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible implications of remote/hybrid work: reduced demand for office space; fewer commuters during peak hours • New CDTA BusPlus Purple Line: could increase use of public transit by employed residents commuting to Albany and improve access by Albany residents and college students to employment opportunities in Guilderland • E-commerce: growing market for warehouse and distribution facilities with interstate access...but more delivery vehicles on neighborhood streets • Opportunity to create walkable, mixed-use nodes around existing shopping areas...could address need for housing, while providing a wider customer base for retail 	
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<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) provided an overview of the next steps in the Comprehensive Plan Update process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Workshop #2 – June 1, 2023 6:00 PM at Westmere Fire House • Vision Statement Refinement • Survey Summary • Next CPUC Meeting – July 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. – Guilderland Town Hall 	<p>None.</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>Committee Chair Betton opened the floor to public comment.</p> <p>The following comments were provided by members of the public present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern was expressed that there is limited park space in Westmere • Comment about need for affordable housing in Town – advocating a percentage of units in new developments should be set aside as affordable housing as the City of Albany has done • Comment about potential to reuse mall space for housing and consolidate existing parking • Comment about potential climate resiliency issues in the future • The Town Planner and CPUC Member Ferrante note efforts by the NY Governor to incentivize new housing construction • A second member of the public noted the need for affordable housing and noted the loss of affordable housing that once existed <p>CPUC Chair Betton thanked the public for their input and made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by CPUC Member Lott. All CPUC Members present voting aye, the meeting was adjourned.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:

Jesse McCaughey, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: Consultant Team, Comprehensive Plan Update Committee, Town of Guilderland, File

Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC)

Name	Present
James Abbruzzese	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dominic Rigosu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tara Cristalli	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Richard Brustman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Caitlin Ferrante	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cody Betton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lisa Hart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stephen Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elizabeth Lott	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Town Representatives & Planning Support

Name	Present
Supervisor Peter Barber	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ken Kovalchik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Town Attorney James Melita	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Consultant Team

Name	Affiliation	Present
Jaclyn Hakes, Project Manager	M.J. Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jesse McCaughey	M.J. Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ellen Pemrick	E.M. Pemrick & Co.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>