

PATHWAY TO OUR FUTURE

GUILDERLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose: Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Meeting #5
 Date and Time: July 11, 2023, 7:00 pm
 Location: Guilderland Town Hall, 5209 Western Turnpike, Guilderland, NY
 Attendees: See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
Welcome	<p>Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Cody Betton welcomed Committee members, Town staff, and members of the public. Chairperson Betton introduced Jaclyn Hakes (MJ Engineering), who provided an overview of the meeting agenda, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Schedule Update • Public Engagement Update • Agricultural Resources Overview • Vision & Goals Statement • Subcommittee Establishment & Discussion • CPUC Open Discussion • Next Steps • Public Comment 	None.

<p>Project Schedule Update</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) 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.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Public Engagement Update</p>	<p>Jesse McCaughey (MJ) updated the Committee on Public Engagement activities, including completed/ongoing activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Website Comment Portal • Public Open House/Visioning • Stakeholder Focus Groups <p>Mr. McCaughey identified three (3) public engagement activities that had been completed in the intervening time between CPUC Meeting #4 and this meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Survey • Student Engagement • Public Workshop #2 <p>Mr. McCaughey (MJ) also noted future public engagement activities that have been outlined within the scope of the process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop-Up Table • Public Workshop #3 <p>Mr. McCaughey noted that the third Public Workshop event was planned for the fall and would be for the purpose of seeking public input on recommendations generated by the CPUC. The purpose of the pop-up table would be to promote the Public Workshop event.</p> <p>Mr. McCaughey then provided further details on the Student Engagement activity, including:</p>	

<p>Public Engagement Update (Cont'd)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two classes of Public Policy students at Guilderland High School • May 18th, 2023 • Provided brief introduction to the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan • Shared demographic and geographic information with students • Elicited input from students using open-ended questions and small group discussions <p>The open-ended discussion prompts for students were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Your friend or relative is visiting you for the weekend. Where would you take them What would you do?” • “From your perspective, what’s missing in Guilderland?” • “What policy issues/ideas have you learned about that might be important to consider when planning for Guilderland’s future?” • “What kinds of new technologies or ways of living do you think might exist in 2030 or 2035?” <p>Mr. McCaughey provided a brief overview of the most prevalent feedback received during the Student Engagement exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important Places: Tawasentha, Thatcher, Crossgates, swimming holes (also regional attractions including Lake George, June Farms, Jay/Lark Street) • What’s Missing: streetscaping/foilage, BMX/skate/ATV areas, landscaping/green infrastructure, attractions/places to gather • Policy Ideas: services/activities for those 65+, policies to make housing more affordable, requirements for more attractive buildings, opportunities for renewable energy generation 	<p>None.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2030-2035: automation, changes to power grid, AI, EV, climate <p>Mr. McCaughey then shared additional details regarding the second Public Workshop event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held Thursday, June 1, 2023 • In-person event at Westmere Fire House • Publicized via press release, Town website, Project Website, site signage, CPUC • Facilitated, topic-based “speed round” discussions • Each table at the workshop featured a specific theme, informed by Committee and Survey input <p>Mr. McCaughey then provided a brief overview of the Guilderland Community Survey details, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online through Survey Monkey or available in hard copy • Submission window: March 12 – May 15 • 635 Responses • 94% of respondents live in Guilderland; 6% work/attend school in Guilderland or have another connection to the Town • Survey summary available on Project Website <p>Key findings from the Survey data included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most represented zip codes of respondents: 12303, 12009, 12203, 12084, 12159 • 40% of respondent under age 45; 21% were 65% • Identified assets: Access to outdoor recreation (73%), sense of community (61%), access to local businesses (61%) • Prevalent challenges: preservation of rural character and farmland (53%), neighborhood connectivity 	
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	<p>and walkability (46%), property taxes (44%)</p> <p>In response to a prompt about what type of housing survey participants would like to see constructed in the next 20 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47% wanted “mix of housing types and price points to attract and accommodate a variety of income levels” • 30% wanted “Low-density single-family housing development” • 14% wanted “In-law suites and other shared housing to accommodate young professionals and senior citizens” <p>In response to a prompt about what type of future growth respondents would like to see in the next 20 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on sustainability (53%) • Preservation of farmland (53%) • New mixed-use development (36%) • New affordable housing (35%) • New residential single-family homes (33%) • New residential multi-family (25%) • Don’t want to see growth (18%) 	
<p>Agricultural Resources Overview</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) then provided an overview of pertinent information on Agricultural Resources in Guilderland including:</p> <p><i>Benefits of Agricultural Land Uses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to locally-produced food and agricultural products • Contributions to local economy – employment and revenue • Watershed protection • Maintenance of scenic viewsheds • Wildlife habitat for species requiring open space for feeding and breeding 	

<p>Agricultural Resources Overview (Cont'd)</p>	<p>Ms. Hakes then provided an overview of the variety of agricultural operations in Guilderland, based on property classification codes. A table was displayed, showing a total of 114 land parcels with agricultural land classifications.</p> <p>Ms. Hakes noted that, as of 2019...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 228 parcels (6,720 acres) in Guilderland were located within an Agricultural District • 258 parcels (5,750 acres) in Guilderland receive Agricultural Tax Assessment <p>Ms. Hakes also displayed a graphic showing areas designated as “priority farmland” in the (2018) Albany Country Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. Patches of land in western and northern Guilderland were identified on the graphic in green.</p> <p>CPUC Member Wilson noted that wood lots represent another category agricultural land to consider for preservation.</p> <p>Town Planner Kenneth Kovalchik provided a brief overview of the Town’s Conservation Easement Program as a tool for preserving open space and agricultural lands, in response to a question from a CPUC member. Mr. Kovalchik noted that Transfer/Purchase of Development Rights programs require municipalities to have funds on hand to compensate landowners, which is a complicating factor in implementation.</p>	<p>None.</p>
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<p>Vision & Goals Statement</p>	<p>Jesse McCaughey (MJ) initiated a discussion of Vision & Goals by first offering a reminder of the key features of a Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes the direction of the community over the next five to ten years • Forms the basis for the Comprehensive Plan • All subsequent recommendations aim to achieve the vision • Use present tense (as if you are ten years in the future) <p>Mr. McCaughey then provided an overview of the Vision development process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with the existing Comprehensive Plan (2001) vision • Takes into consideration the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CPUC Input at CPUC Meeting #3 ○ CPUC Input received after Meeting #3 • Public feedback received via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visioning exercise at Public Open House ○ Community Survey ○ Student Engagement <p>Mr. McCaughey then displayed a slide with the draft Vision statement and read the statement aloud:</p> <p><i>The Town of Guilderland is made up of distinctive, attractive neighborhoods, with abundant recreation, open space, and scenic resources that serve to connect the community and support a high quality of life for all residents. Varied, productive agricultural operations link the Town to its proud agrarian history, while the architectural legacy of Guilderland’s past is honored through preservation and educational initiatives. The Town is home to a balanced array of prosperous and well-loved businesses, whose success generates the economic base necessary to support quality public services. Well-designed</i></p>	<p>None.</p>
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	<p><i>transportation corridors maximize safety for all travelers while facilitating efficient movement and incorporating relevant emerging technologies. Residents of all age groups and backgrounds contribute to the vitality of the Town, each proud to call Guilderland home.</i></p> <p>CPUC Member Ferrante noted the potential to include planning for a changing climate into Guilderland’s vision, perhaps using terminology such as “climate resiliency.”</p>	<p>The draft Vision will be shared with the public during the third Public Workshop.</p>
<p>Subcommittee Establishment & Discussion</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) introduced a series of “goal categories” that had arisen from the current Comprehensive Plan and from public input, thus far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation & Mobility • Neighborhoods & Housing • Parks, Recreation & Historic Resources • Agriculture, Open Space & Environment • Economic Growth <p>Ms. Hakes then read, in sequence, the goals from the existing (2000) Comprehensive Plan that pertain to these thematic areas, along with factors for consideration that had surfaced in public input.</p> <p>Ms. Hakes proposed forming subcommittees to focus on the five aforementioned topic areas during small-group work sessions.</p> <p>In terms of the role and purpose of the subcommittees, Ms. Hakes noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group work sessions (no quorum of CPUC members) • Focus on revising and/or creating 1-3 goals for each topic • Identify preliminary recommendations/action items to achieve goals 	

<p>Subcommittee Establishment & Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>Ms. Hakes then proposed a scope and schedule of subcommittee efforts. Subcommittees would consist of at least one designated CPUC Member. Ms. Hakes noted the collection of public input and other documents available to subcommittees for consideration during their work.</p>	<p>A subcommittee sign-up sheet will be distributed to the CPUC following the meeting.</p>
<p>CPUC Open Discussion</p>	<p>Ms. Hakes asked the CPUC whether there were any other suggested topics to address in future meetings. No CPUC comments were received.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<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"> • Subcommittee Homework • Next CPUC Meeting – Sept. 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. – Guilderland Town Hall • Public Workshop #3 – Fall 2023 <p>Ms. Hakes noted that the consultant team plans to share draft meeting materials with both the CPUC and the public in advance of future meetings, to align with Town practices.</p>	<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"> • Pleased to see progress made at this meeting of the CPUC • Improvements could be made to the user-friendliness of the project website • Discouraged by loss of affordable housing in Guilderland 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question about the extent to which the existing Comprehensive Plan has been implemented. Desire for implementation mechanisms for new plan. • Desire for tree/forest management in Town <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Town staff notes existence of Tree Preservation Committee whose first task will be the development of a forest management plan.</i> <p>CPUC Chair Betton thanked the public for their input and made a motion to adjourn which was seconded. All CPUC Members present voting aye, the meeting was adjourned.</p>	N/A
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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	✓
Dominic Rigosu	✗
Tara Cristalli	✓
Richard Brustman	✓
Caitlin Ferrante	✓
Cody Betton	✓

Lisa Hart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stephen Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elizabeth Lott	<input type="checkbox"/>

Town Representatives & Planning Support

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