

PATHWAY TO OUR FUTURE

GUILDERLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose: Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Meeting #8
Date and Time: January 22, 2024, 7:00 pm
Location: Guilderland Town Hall, 5209 Western Turnpike, Guilderland, NY
Attendees: See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
<p>Welcome</p>	<p>Vice Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Jim Abbruzzese welcomed Committee members, Town staff, and members of the public. Mr. Abbruzzese introduced Jaclyn Hakes (MJ Engineering), who identified other members of the planning team in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesse McCaughey (MJ) • Nan Stolzenberg (Community & Environmental Planning Associates) • Ellen Pemrick (E.M. Pemrick & Co.) <p>Ms. Hakes then provided an overview of the meeting agenda, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Schedule & Engagement Update • Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion • Future Land Use Discussion/Exercise 	<p>None.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPUC Open Discussion • Next Steps • Public Comment 	
<p>Project Schedule & Engagement Update</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan Update process, drawing attention to the upcoming steps and required process components prior to the adoption of the Plan Update.</p> <p>Ms. Hakes reiterated the range of completed public engagement activities from earlier in the planning process, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Website Comment Portal • Public Open House/Visioning • Stakeholder Focus Groups • Community Survey • Student Engagement • Public Workshop #2 <p>Ms. Hakes noted that the third public event is envisioned for February, 2024. Ms. Hakes noted that the purpose of the third public event would be to check in with the public about preliminary draft recommendations which have been developed through this Update process.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) provided background information about how the current list of draft recommendations had been assembled:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Topic-based subcommittees submitted input on proposed updates and/or additions to the goals and recommendations in the existing Comprehensive Plan 2. CPUC members reviewed the input from the subcommittees and offered follow-up input 3. Members of the planning team evaluated the resulting list of 	

<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>recommendations for any potential gaps or missing pieces</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Recommendations were augmented, re-worded, and/or re-organized based on input from the CPUC and the planning team members 5. An updated version of draft recommendations was distributed to the CPUC in advance of the meeting for review and consideration <p>Ms. Hakes identified a potential structure for the draft Comprehensive Plan Update document, which would feature sections addressing the following identified topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Economic Growth • Environment, Climate Change & Resiliency • Neighborhoods & Housing • Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Historic Resources • Transportation & Mobility <p>Following these theme-based sections, Ms. Hakes pointed out the usefulness of having sections to address Governance and Implementation.</p> <p>In order to elicit input from the CPUC on the updated list of draft recommendations, Ms. Hakes explained that the following discussion would focus on each separate theme, in turn, and there would be an opportunity to CPUC members to provide input based upon their review of publicly-available advance meeting materials.</p> <p>Nan Stolzenburg of the planning team read the goal for Agriculture aloud to initiate the discussion on the associated draft recommendations.</p> <p>Agriculture</p>	
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<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>Goal: <i>Ensure the long-term viability of agriculture as a vocation and economic pursuit within the Town of Guilderland by prioritizing the preservation of suitable farmland and by promoting agriculture as an important component of the Town's economy and character</i></p> <p>Ms. Stolzenburg noted that the "toolbox" for protecting agriculture in Guilderland needed to be enlarged, which led to the addition of supplemental draft recommendations.</p> <p>One comment added by a CPUC member is that standing committees would be useful for all six of the identified topic areas – not only agriculture.</p> <p>Another CPUC member requested that "dual use" or "agrivoltaic" language be incorporated in the recommendation to facilitate compatible development of solar energy infrastructure in Guilderland.</p> <p>A further CPUC member comment advocated for consolidating those recommendations which deal with updating definitions or the zoning code.</p> <p>Ellen Pemrick read aloud the goal for the Business, Employment, and Fiscal Resources theme (formerly titled Economic Growth), to initiate a discussion of related draft recommendations:</p> <p>Business, Employment, and Fiscal Resources Goal: <i>Establish and promote a diverse and strategic economic base that provides income, employment, and revenue to the community in a manner that is compatible with the future land use plan and unique identity of Guilderland.</i></p> <p>A CPUC member requested that the subcommittee recommendation on the</p>	
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<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>development of Town-owned residential development be added back to the overall list of draft recommendations.</p> <p>Another CPUC member requested a recommendation calling for a standing committee on economic development in the Town.</p> <p>A CPUC member noted a desire to see a recommendation for the Comprehensive Plan Update document and its recommendations to be reviewed on an annual basis after adoption.</p> <p>A CPUC member requested that a recommendation for expedited development review – if certain conditions are met – include more explanation within the text.</p> <p>Nan Stolzenburg read aloud the goal for Environment, Climate Change & Resiliency to initiate a discussion of related recommendations.</p> <p>Environment, Climate Change & Resiliency Goal <i>Protect the natural resources that support quality of life and Town character in Guilderland through strategic hazard mitigation and resiliency measures to mitigate the impacts of a changing climate.</i></p> <p>A CPUC member expressed that a recommendation about development on slopes should not take a “one size fits all” approach but should recognize various factors including soil type.</p> <p>A CPUC member mentioned that maps showing constraints on slope development in Guilderland used to exist many years ago, though the hard copies may not exist anymore.</p> <p>A CPUC member expressed that limiting forest cover in riparian areas along the Normans Kill should be extended to include its tributaries.</p>	
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<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>The Guilderland Town Planner noted that, currently, steep slopes in the Town are only measured when there is a water course at the foot of the slope.</p> <p>A CPUC member spoke in favor of giving high priority to those recommendations pertaining to the Town’s efforts to prepare for climate emergencies, looking at the present capabilities of Town departments. Yearly review will be needed to evaluate the status of implementation. The same CPUC member spoke of the need to establish State/Federal coordination for climate hazard response.</p> <p>Nan Stolzenburg mentioned the important of factoring in planning from the Albany County Resiliency Plan, which covers Guilderland, as well.</p> <p>Ellen Pemrick read aloud the goal for the Neighborhoods & Housing theme to initiate a discussion of related draft recommendations.</p> <p>Neighborhoods & Housing Goal: <i>Provide a balanced blend of quality housing opportunities, including a desirable range of housing types and price ranges, which are affordable and accessible to residents.</i></p> <p>Ms. Pemrick showed a slide demonstrating examples of “missing middle housing,” such as duplexes and other smaller-scale rental units.</p> <p>A CPUC member noted that Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) should be especially promoted near transit lines, to prevent potential issues with parking availability.</p> <p>A CPUC member expressed concerns about the use of ADUs as short-term rentals.</p> <p>A CPUC member recommended consolidating all of the recommendations to modernize the zoning code, enumerating</p>	
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<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>the suggested modernizations within a single recommendation.</p> <p>Jesse McCaughey (MJ) read aloud the three goals for Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Historic Resources to initiate a discussion of related draft recommendations.</p> <p>Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Historic Resources</p> <p>Goal #1 <i>Provide access to a diverse network of well-maintained active and passive recreational facilities for Guilderland residents of all ages and abilities.</i></p> <p>Goal #2 <i>Prioritize the preservation of open space in the Town of Guilderland, particularly where such areas perform critical ecosystem functions and/or contribute to scenic resources that influence the character, aesthetics, economy, health and welfare of the Town.</i></p> <p>Goal #3 <i>Preserve Guilderland’s historic resources and enhance cultural opportunities in the community.</i></p> <p>A CPUC member requested that the issue of “emerging contaminants” such as PFAS in the recommendation targeting water quality in the Watervliet Reservoir and its tributaries. An action plan to address emerging contaminants should be incorporated.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to re-categorize the water quality recommendation(s) under the heading of Environment.</p> <p>A CPUC member suggested broadening the reference to UAlbany to include other higher education institutional partners for cultural opportunities.</p>	
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<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>	<p>For the Open Space category, a CPUC member suggested the need to coordinate with other area organizations that are also working to provide open space in and around Guilderland – trusts, land conservancies, etc.</p> <p>A CPUC member suggested that information about potential funding streams to conduct the necessary studies should be identified in the plan document.</p> <p>Jesse McCaughey (MJ) read aloud the goal for Transportation & Mobility to initiate a discussion on the related draft recommendations.</p> <p>Transportation & Mobility</p> <p>Goal: <i>Provide safe, convenient, and efficient transportation options for people and goods within, through and around the Town of Guilderland, which are supportive of the Town's future land use plan, and which minimize the impact of traffic on the Town's character and quality of life.</i></p> <p>A CPUC member spoke in favor of emphasizing the recommendation to increase NY Thruway access, as an attempt to alleviate traffic congestion on Western Avenue.</p> <p>A CPUC member spoke in favor of addressing the redundancy in the document with regard to bronze-level Climate Smart Communities designation.</p> <p>A CPUC member spoke in favor of creating subcategories for various transportation modes and road jurisdictions – e.g., state highways, local roads, etc.</p> <p>A CPUC member spoke in favor of including bus shelters in the list of recommended street furniture to promote alternative modes of transportation.</p>	<p>CPUC members can submit additional input on goals and recommendations to the planning group prior to the next CPUC meeting.</p>
<p>Refined Draft Recommendations Discussion (Cont'd)</p>		

<p>Future Land Use Discussion/Exercise</p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) introduced a discussion of future land use by providing an overview of some pertinent public input on topics such as business, housing, recreation, and agriculture</p> <p>Ms. Hakes listed several questions for the CPUC members to consider when thinking about future land use in Guilderland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What land uses should be different moving forward and where? • Should there be any changes in future land uses along Route 20? • Where should commercial development take place? What type? • Where should additional residential development take place? What type? • Where should agricultural lands be protected in the Town? • What should occur at the gateways? <p>Ms. Hakes showed the future land use map from the existing Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2001. Ms. Hakes highlighted several areas on the map and compared those areas with the current land uses in Guilderland, according to land use classification codes used by the Town tax assessor.</p> <p>A CPUC member commented that “strip development,” as illustrated on the 2001 map, was undesirable from his perspective.</p>	<p>Public input on future land use priorities will be sought at the scheduled Public Open House event.</p>

<p>CPUC Open Discussion</p>	<p>No additional topics for discussion were identified by the Committee at this time.</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"> • CPUC Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review Refined Recommendations ○ Identify Top 3-5 Priorities for each topic ○ Provide feedback on future land uses • Public Workshop #3 – February 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. – Guilderland Town Hall • Next CPUC Meeting – March 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. – Guilderland Town Hall <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 Vice Chair Abbruzzese opened the floor to public comment.</p> <p>The following comments were provided by members of the public present:</p> <p>A member of the public support for multi-use developments that incorporate business on the first floor and residential units on higher floors.</p> <p>A member of the public expressed concern that the Town character is resembling the character of Colonie.</p> <p>The Town Planner encouraged members of the public to review the land use map,</p>	<p>None.</p>

Public Comment (cont.)	<p>particularly that 35% of the land area in Town is used for low-density residential, which contributes significantly to traffic/trip generation.</p> <p>A member of the public expressed concern that the unique character of Guilderland had not been adequately reflected in the draft vision.</p> <p>A member of the public expressed that he had concerns about recommendations that facilitated development.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Abbruzzese asked for any further public comment. Hearing none, Chair Abbruzzese adjourned the meeting.</p>	None.
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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	<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 type="checkbox"/>
Lisa Hart	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stephen Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elizabeth Lott	<input type="checkbox"/>

Town Representatives & Planning Support

Name	Present
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"/>
Nan Stolzenburg	Community & Environmental Planning Associates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ellen Pemrick	E. M. Pemrick & Co.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>