



*Town of Rotterdam*

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

## MEETING SUMMARY

**PURPOSE:** Public Open House & Visioning Workshop

**DATE/TIME:** November 14, 2019, 6:30-8:30 PM

**LOCATION:** Fire District #6, 6 Old Mariaville Road, Schenectady NY

**ATTENDEES:** See Attached Sign-in

Agenda Item	Discussion
<b>Overview</b>	<p>The Town of Rotterdam is updating its 2001 Comprehensive Plan to reflect the needs of today and identify a vision for the future. The Comprehensive Plan will create a framework for the future for a range of topic areas including but not limited to land use, economic development, infrastructure, transportation, neighborhoods, the environment and housing.</p> <p>On Thursday, November 14, 2019 the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held the first public open house and visioning workshop for the Town Comprehensive Plan update. The event was held from 6:30-8:30 PM at Fire District #6, 6 Old Mariaville Road, Schenectady. Over 70 residents, property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders participated in the event.</p> <p>The schedule included: 6:30 PM to 7:00 PM – Open House 7:00 PM to 7:15 PM – Presentation by Consultant Team 7:15 PM to 8:30 PM – Open House</p> <p>The open house component of the event allowed participants to informally walk through eight (8) activity stations to learn about the project at their own pace and provide input and ideas about the community. A Participant Guide was provided to guide attendees through the stations.</p>

	<p>The activity stations included:</p> <p>Station 1 – Project Overview  Station 2 – Community Profile  Station 3 – Community Vision  Station 4 – Community Hot Spots  Station 5 – Planning Across Generations  Station 6 – Challenges and Opportunities  Station 7 – Idea Station  Station 8 – Other Thoughts and Ideas</p> <p>Additionally, participants had the opportunity to speak with Town staff, CPAC members and the Project Team. Comment cards were also provided to share additional thoughts or ideas.</p> <p>Workshop materials are provided as attachments to this summary. Attachments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participant Guide for Activity Stations</li> <li>▪ Open House Boards</li> <li>▪ PowerPoint Presentation</li> <li>▪ Sign In</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 1: Project Overview</b></p>	<p>This station provided information about the Comprehensive Plan Update, including an overview of the project and its intended purpose, the stages of a Comprehensive Plan update and information about the CPAC and who is facilitating the process.</p>
<p><b>Activity Station 2: Community Profile</b></p>	<p>This station provided an overview of current demographic and socioeconomic trends of the Town displayed in charts, tables and infographics. An overview of the current land use, zoning, agricultural districts, environmental resources, transportation and property ownership were illustrated in maps. Existing Conditions maps are available at <a href="https://rotterdamnyplan.com/maps-reports/">https://rotterdamnyplan.com/maps-reports/</a>.</p>
<p><b>Activity Station 3: Community Vision</b></p>	<p>The Vision station provided an opportunity for participants to share their Vision for the Town of Rotterdam over the next 5, 10 and 20 years.</p> <p><b><i>Ideas expressed through this exercise include (in no particular order):</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Large town park; gathering for community; concert area</li> <li>▪ Have a sense of Town center</li> <li>▪ Mall refresh; west end grocery; small business along Mohawk</li> <li>▪ Hi-rise development along Curry Road</li> <li>▪ Mixed land use for commercial development</li> <li>▪ Dog friendly areas &amp; parks</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Less apartments, more green energy</li> <li>▪ Bring Rotterdam Mall back to life</li> <li>▪ Urban farming</li> <li>▪ Rotterdam “A family place to live”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 4: Community Hot Spots</b></p>	<p>Participants used stickers representing a variety of activities to identify the places they go in the community and what they are doing there. The activities represented education, religious &amp; spiritual, shopping, recreation, socializing, dining, and neighborhood.</p> <p>The following highlights locations for where attendees gather most:</p> <p><b>Education:</b> common locations include the Rotterdam Public Library, Mohonasen High School and Schenectady Community College.</p> <p><b>Recreation:</b> attendees gather for recreation in a number of different locations throughout the Town, including the Moccasin Kill County Sanctuary, Plotter Kill County Nature Preserve, Jefferson Elementary School, Schalmont High School and Fiero Park. Based on the information provided by attendees, there was no distinguishable cluster for recreational activities in the Town.</p> <p><b>My Neighborhood:</b> The majority of attendees who provided input at Station 4 live in the eastern portion of Town. Fewer attendees were from the western portions of Town, but some neighborhoods, including Rotterdam Junction and Lower Rotterdam were represented.</p> <p><b>Shopping:</b> Shopping opportunities tended to be clustered in the eastern portion of Town near the Five Corners area and the Rotterdam Mall.</p> <p><b>Dining:</b> A distinct cluster for dining options was not as clear through this exercise, though most dining options also correlate with areas for shopping and are primarily present in the eastern portion of Town. The only dining option noted in western Rotterdam was in the Lower Rotterdam area along Route 5S.</p> <p><b>Religious &amp; Spiritual:</b> Attendees noted two areas for Religious and Spiritual area. including Our Lady of Peace Church on Princetown Road and Sonrise Bible Church on Dunnsville Road.</p> <p><b>Socializing:</b> Only one participant noted an area for socializing, located at the Five Corners region of Town.</p>

**Activity Station 5:  
Planning Across  
Generations**

This station encouraged participants to share their insight about generational needs. Generations tend to share similar characteristics and have similar needs for services, housing, shopping, learning, healthcare, transportation. The generations are categorized by birth year and include Traditionalists or Silent Generation: Born 1945 and before; Baby boomers: Born 1946- 1964; Generation X: Born 1965- 1976; Millennials or Generation Y: Born 1977- 1995; and Generation Z: Born after 1996.

Common themes identified in multiple generations include:

**Traditionalists or Silent Generation: Born 1945 and before:**

- Senior transportation
- Grocery store on west side of town

**Baby boomers: Born 1946- 1964:**

- I agree with market on west side of Town
- Green energy mandated on all new government buildings and a move to make private homes green
- Grocery store closer
- Five Corners improved old CVS. Tear down to be shovel ready
- Old building at Five Corners – a new restaurant
- Playground for Rotterdam Junction/Pattersonville
- More retail shopping
- Anchor store for shopping

**Generation X: Born 1965- 1982:**

- Grocery store on west side of Town-Viaport
- Cell phone tower
- Market
- Moratorium on apartments – no more
- Small, functional park area
- Local market
- Restaurants along Mohawk
- Sidewalk on Curry Road
- Road work on Route 7/Duanesburg Road
- Sidewalks on Curry Road

**Millennials or Generation Y: Born 1983- 2001;**

- Pause apartment growth until further studies on infrastructure
- Grocery store on west side, near Viaport
- Dog friendly facilities and dog park
- Walkable streets
- More/better street lighting

	<p><b>Generation Z: Born after 2002;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chipotle</li> <li>▪ More opportunities for involvement in local government, i.e. internships</li> <li>▪ Olive Garden</li> <li>▪ Do something with the Mall</li> <li>▪ Sidewalks</li> <li>▪ Panera Bread</li> <li>▪ Mental health services!!!</li> <li>▪ Better roads</li> <li>▪ More street lights</li> <li>▪ Chic-fil-a</li> <li>▪ Better Senior Center</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 6: Challenges &amp; Opportunities</b></p>	<p>This station encouraged participants to share their insight about challenges and opportunities for the Town.</p> <p><b>Challenges identified by participants include (in no particular order)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need cell service in west Rotterdam</li> <li>▪ Water recharge area – No more building!</li> <li>▪ Grocery store in Rotterdam</li> <li>▪ More businesses in Rotterdam</li> <li>▪ Closer Senior Center</li> <li>▪ Merge school districts (why two in one town?)</li> <li>▪ Less apartment complexes</li> <li>▪ Less condos</li> <li>▪ More opportunities for work</li> <li>▪ Route 7 road fixed!</li> <li>▪ Grounds upkeep at the old nursing home on Hamburg Street</li> <li>▪ The Town looks ugly</li> <li>▪ Traffic</li> <li>▪ Property upkeep</li> <li>▪ Enforcement of laws</li> <li>▪ Control small pockets of solar units similar to Princetown</li> <li>▪ Traffic</li> <li>▪ Sidewalks needed in all commercial areas for their staff to get to work (especially at height of shift).</li> <li>▪ Better Enforcement of code violations</li> <li>▪ Sidewalks on Curry Road</li> <li>▪ Fix roads by schools (make safer)</li> <li>▪ Number “x” amount of apartment units to require “y” greenspace onsite</li> <li>▪ Rotterdam Junction left behind. Need to integrate; improve community on projects; holistic view on projects</li> <li>▪ Park in Junction</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More Parks</li> <li>▪ Buffer/transition zones between business and retail zones</li> <li>▪ Fill vacant stores at Five corners, Rotterdam Mall, Hamburg Street</li> <li>▪ Areas of very poor property upkeep</li> <li>▪ You have playing fields and sports fields but not real parks with picnic tables, grass, trees and paths</li> <li>▪ More Parks or bigger parks</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities identified by participants include (in no particular order):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote water supply – economic development</li> <li>▪ CDTC</li> <li>▪ Promote authentic restaurants like Little Italy in Schenectady</li> <li>▪ Promote three exists on Thruway</li> <li>▪ Promote variety of housing options</li> <li>▪ Transit hub</li> <li>▪ Community as a whole</li> <li>▪ Family Oriented</li> <li>▪ The community</li> <li>▪ Locks and River frontage</li> <li>▪ Good hiking trails</li> <li>▪ Rural feel but close to everything</li> <li>▪ Natural beauty at the west end</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 7: Idea Station</b></p>	<p>At the Idea Center, participants were asked to share ideas about a variety of topic areas such as recreation, open space and the environment, history, culture and education, infrastructure, transportation and mobility, economic development and community character, neighborhoods and housing types. The following is a summary of comments received at the Idea Station:</p> <p><b><i>Input received about recreation, open space and the environment include (in no particular order):</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Walking path Memorial Park</li> <li>▪ Sidewalks on major transportation routes</li> <li>▪ Bike lanes on more roads or wider shoulders</li> <li>▪ Town park with sports facilities, picnic area, trails, entertainment area</li> <li>▪ More green space throughout Town</li> <li>▪ Scotia – Freedom Park concerts; Schenectady – Central Park concerts; Rotterdam...?</li> <li>▪ A real park, not playing fields</li> <li>▪ Community center</li> </ul>

- Stop spot zoning and creating “special” zoning that benefits developers and hurts residents that live/buy in Ag/R1 zones!
- Large Town park, more comprehensive
- Extend the Long Path hiking trail
- Large Town park
- Address issues of light pollution
- Large Town park on west side of town, sports fields, dog park, trails

***Input received about infrastructure include (in no particular order):***

- Sewers
- Upgrade water mains
- Sewer developed areas of Town
- End exclusive agreement with spectrum/TWC
- Need to fill vacant building infrastructure sewer line
- Internet communication – FIOS
- More lighting
- Regional wastewater treatment in Schenectady County
- FIOS – end Spectrum monopoly
- Supermarket on West side of Town
- Frequent water main breaks
- Constantly experiencing water main breaks
- Compostable toilets – manure can be valuable
- Adaptation of energy efficient, environmentally friendly, carbon conscious building requirements for future residential/commercial building
- New building is excessive to our present water, sewer, police, fire
- Update water and sewer, get rid of septic systems
- Extend water and sewer; eliminate septic tanks; protect our groundwater

***Input received about transportation and mobility (bicycles, pedestrians, vehicles, transit, accessibility and connectivity, etc.) include (in no particular order):***

- Sidewalks on Curry Road; fix roads
- Not a walking place from home to services
- Sidewalks
- Promote access to the bike trail
- Roundabout at Five Corners
- Protected bike lanes
- Complete streets policy
- Benches at bus stops and trash cans
- LED street lighting
- Wide shoulders where sidewalks are not available for walking/running/biking

- Traffic on Curry Road; sidewalks
- Bicycle lanes on major roads
- Need a traffic circle (roundabout) at the Five Corners
- Yes – a traffic circle at Five Corners
- Need sidewalks on Kellar Avenue
- Sidewalks
- Large park; paths/bike trails

***Input received about history, culture and education include (in no particular order):***

- Take advantage of rich Erie Canal historical sites
- Museum of Town history
- Promote waterfront – Mohawk River/land/history/park/gathering
- Consolidate school districts
- Have history lessons on Revolutionary War and our involvement

***Input received about economic development (retail, commercial, business) include (in no particular order):***

- Encourage small businesses
- Grocery store on west side of Town
- Zone – commercial areas – Don’t spot zone commercial in A-1, R-1
- Need to draw more entertainment venues, restaurants
- No more spot zoning
- Need real jobs
- Any plans for land – North side of Route 7 (Burdeck Street to I-88)
- Need stores for retail shopping
- Fill and expand Rotterdam Industrial Park

***Input received about community character, neighborhoods and housing include (in no particular order):***

- No new development without requiring sidewalks
- Stop taxing our sewer system and water system with apartment complexes
- No more “ugly” apartment complexes
- No more apartments!
- Need a Town Center – too disjointed
- Transitional housing rental, homeowners, elderly in one spot
- No more apartment buildings 3 plus stories, ruining Town character; too much traffic



<p><b>Activity Station 8: Other Thoughts and Ideas</b></p>	<p>This station included an opportunity for any additional thoughts and ideas. The thoughts shared are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age friendly policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Presentation</b></p>	<p>The presentation included a welcome introduction by Project Manager, Jaclyn Hakes from MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C. (MJ). Ms. Hakes also recognized, Peter Comenzo, Senior Planner, Town of Rotterdam representative, the CPAC and the project team. Ms. Hakes lead an overview of the Comprehensive Plan process which included project goals, scope, process, and schedule. The presentation also included a review of the next steps for the project and how the public can stay involved.</p> <p>Attendees were encouraged to continue sharing ideas at the activity stations after the presentation to provide their input and vision for Rotterdam.</p> <p>For more information please visit: <a href="http://www.RotterdamNYPlan.com">www.RotterdamNYPlan.com</a></p> <p>Written comments can be sent to: <a href="mailto:RotterdamNYPlan@gmail.com">RotterdamNYPlan@gmail.com</a></p>
<p><b>Input Provided on Written Comment Cards</b></p>	<p>In addition to gathering input via maps and station boards, participants had the opportunity to provide input on written comment forms. Below is a list of written comments received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For Station 4, add stickers for place of employment</li> <li>▪ Excellent presentation and look forward to the upcoming meetings/updates. Keep us informed, engaged and follow through!</li> <li>▪ Fewer apartment complexes</li> <li>▪ ShopRite at Mall</li> <li>▪ Aldi's at Five Corners</li> </ul> <p>A comment card for children was developed to gather input from the younger generation of Town Residents and included two prompt questions. The questions and comments received follows:</p> <p><b>What do you like best about the Town?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Our Town is safe</li> </ul> <p><b>What do you think needs to be fixed in the Town?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No mean anymore</li> </ul>

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

Submitted by: Andrew Gillcrist, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: CPAC, Town Planning & Zoning Department, Website

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