



MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose: Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) Meeting #5

Date and Time: June 11, 2020 6:30 pm

Location: Due to health and safety concerns related to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the CPAC meeting was held via video conference.

Attendees: See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
Roll Call, Welcome and Agenda Overview	<p>Due to health and safety concerns related to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the CPAC meeting was held via video conference. The meeting was recorded and made available to the public on the project website at www.rotterdamnyplan.com/meetings. The public was directed to send comments to the project email at RotterdamNYPlan@gmail.com.</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting was to discuss a Revised Community Engagement Plan and potential future land uses in Town.</p> <p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) welcomed the members of the committee and provided an overview of the agenda.</p> <p>The following items were included on the meeting agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Roll Call, Welcome and Agenda Overview2. Project Update3. Revised Community Engagement Options4. Future Land Use Discussion by Geographic Area5. Next Steps6. Public Comment	

	<p>Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) members present included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gregory Campoli • Jonathan Tingley • Lynn Flansburg • David Ahl <p>Rotterdam Town staff present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Comenzo, Senior Planner <p>The MJ Team members present included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jaclyn Hakes, AICP, Director of Planning Services • Andrew Gillcrist, Planner 	
<p>Project Update</p>	<p>Ms. Hakes provided a project update of tasks completed and in progress. The project update included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Conditions Inventory and Analysis – In Progress • Public Engagement – In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholder Meetings (8 to date) ○ Public Workshops (2) ○ Pop-up stations (3) ○ Online Community Survey • Plan Vision and Goals – In Progress • Draft Comprehensive Plan Framework – In Progress 	
<p>Revised Community Engagement Options</p>	<p>Ms. Hakes then led a discussion regarding revised community engagement options. It was proposed to hold smaller focus group meetings in each of the geographic areas of Town in lieu of a third public workshop/open house. This decision was based on discussions with the Town and CPAC about organizing the Comprehensive Plan around particular geographic areas. Holding smaller focus group meetings will allow for a more focused conversation about the specific needs and opportunities for each area of Town. This is also an opportunity to re-engage the community with the</p>	

	<p>Comprehensive Plan Update effort in light of the COVID-19 situation.</p> <p>The following was proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap Public Workshop/Open House #3 with Focus Group Meetings to be scheduled July – August • Five Focus Groups Meetings proposed – one in each geographic area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-person, social distanced, self-serve engagement sessions ○ Comply with social distancing guidelines and safety precautions ○ A health and safety plan would be developed for the focus groups and clearly posted at the meeting and in advance ○ Tables with questions or activity (outside if possible) appropriately spaced ○ Hand sanitizer available ○ Masks required ○ Comment box with disposable pencils for written comments • Re-evaluate Public Workshop/Open House #4 at a later time <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee agreed with and confirmed the revised Community Engagement Plan 	
<p>Future Land Use Discussion by Geographic Area</p>	<p>Mr. Gillcrist then led a discussion about future land uses in the Town and the development of a draft future land use map.</p> <p>A future land use map includes a graphic and written representation of potential future land uses in a municipality. Future land use maps provide a framework and direction for future land use regulations and reflects the vision for the community as established</p>	

in the Comprehensive Plan. A future land use map is NOT zoning or parcel specific; however, the map does provide a framework and justification for future updates to the zoning code.

For the purposes of the committee discussion, existing and future land uses were discussed based on each of the geographic areas of Town. This includes Geographic Areas A-E. For each area, the committee discussed the existing land uses in that area, relevant recommendations from past planning documents and additional ideas for future land uses in the Town.

Using information gathered from the Committee discussion, public input, feedback from stakeholders and conversations with Town staff, the Project Team will develop a Preliminary Draft Future Land Use Map.

Following is a summary of existing land uses, challenges and opportunities, past plan recommendations related to future land uses and any Committee discussion for each Geographic Area of Town.

See attached map for an illustration of the Geographic Areas established for this process.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA A

Geographic Area A includes the northeast portion of the Town bordered by the Mohawk River to the east, I-90 to the west, the I-890 interchange to the south and the Town of Amsterdam to the north. This area of Town is characterized by scenic lands that are rich in history with sites like the Mabee House and the historic hamlet of Rotterdam Junction. The area also includes Pattersonville and Lower Rotterdam.

Existing Land Uses

- Vacant Land
- Agriculture/Residential with Acreage
- Residential - Low Density
- Residential - Medium Density
- Industrial

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial <p>Challenges and Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels separate from the rest of the town • Property maintenance challenges • Access to parks and recreational resources • Better utilization of Woestina Park • Environmental constraints • Need more local businesses to provide services • Enhanced river access <p>Relevant Past Plan Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotterdam Junction BOA Nomination Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recreational development ○ Upper Rotterdam Junction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage mixed used development along Route 5s/Main Street ▪ Office residential off Route 5s ▪ Residential zoning should be uniform in the area surrounding wellhead ○ Lower Rotterdam Junction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage small scale mixed-use development ○ Waterfront/Cultural Sub-area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain this streetscape and enhance the recreational features of the area. • NYS Thruway Land Use and Transportation Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preferred Land Use Alternative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain and expand residential/mixed-use pattern currently found in Lower Rotterdam Junction ▪ Provide a mixed-use residential and office-type uses on existing A-1 zoned land adjacent to Lower Rotterdam Junction 	
--	--	--

	<p>Committee Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bike and hike trail is still relevant and helps to tie in the Rotterdam Junction area to the rest of the Town• Maintaining streetscape is important• Recreational opportunities would be helpful here as well.• Encourage mixed-use development• Having a nice Town park in Rotterdam Junction may encourage people from the rest of Town to visit that area• Aquifer regulations create a significant barrier to development and may impact the ability to achieve stated goals for Rotterdam Junction• A lot of environmental constraints identified as part of BOA Nomination Study (Floodplain, wetlands, river, rail line, aquifer, etc.). Any development would have to be on a small-scale basis.• Should be a recommendation in Comprehensive Plan to revisit Aquifer related regulations to see if there are opportunities to allow additional development/redevelopment while maintaining water resources. Town and Intermunicipal Watershed Board• Most projects proposed in this area have been redevelopment of existing buildings. Most development should occur along Main Street• New Sidewalks/streetscape improvements expected over the next year or two.• Town has an additional layer of approval from Town Board for any development projects in Aquifer zones. That process may need to be revisited• School building no longer being used by BOCES could potentially be used as a community space	
--	---	--

GEOGRAPHIC AREA B

Geographic Area B encompasses the northwest portion of the Town and is bounded by I-90 to the east, the Town of Princetown to the west, I-88 to the south and the Town of Fonda to the north. This area is primarily characterized by rural residences, agricultural lands, wooded hillsides, and scenic natural areas. The area includes Plotter Kill Nature Preserve which is a popular hiking area for residents and visitors from nearby towns.

Existing Land Uses

- Vacant Land
- Agriculture/Residential with Acreage
- Parks, Recreation and Conserved Land
- Residential - Low Density

Challenges and Opportunities

- Significant recreational resources
- Abundant open space and scenic resources
- Significant environmental constraints

Relevant Past Plan Recommendations

- Schenectady County Farmland Protection Plan
 - Relevant Goal
 - Retain the viable agricultural land resource (prime/important farmland) for agricultural purposes and ensure that public policy is protecting, promoting, and sustaining agriculture.
 - Relevant Objectives
 - Improve farm-related land use planning and better incorporate farming and farm-related industries into zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans.
 - Clearly define agriculture/farming in local zoning ordinances and give appropriate flexibility to the industry.

- Encourage local governments to establish or participate in programs that promote the retention of farmland.

Committee Discussion

- Protection of existing farmland is important. Still a number of active farms in the community
- Can prioritize the protection of land for agriculture through the Comprehensive Planning Process
- Has some potential for expansion of recreational resources. Plotterkill preserve is a popular destination
- No water/sewer in that area of town

GEOGRAPHIC AREA C

Geographic Area C is centrally located in the Town, bounded by the Mohawk River to the east, I-90 to the west, the I-890 interchange to the north and the City of Schenectady to the south and southeast. This is an area characterized by a variety of land uses including residential neighborhoods, major commercial centers, industrial centers, parks and recreation areas and major transportation and utility corridors. This area is also the location of water withdrawal wells from the Great Flats Aquifer for the Town of Rotterdam and City of Schenectady.

Existing Land Uses

- Vacant Land
- Parks, Recreation and Conserved Land
- Industrial
- Residential - Low Density

Challenges and Opportunities

- Access to I-90, I-88, and I-890
- Affordability of housing
- Via Port Mall – empty stores, but opportunities for business expansion
- Recreational opportunities along the Mohawk River

Relevant Past Plan Recommendations

- NYS Thruway Exit 26 & I-890 Land Use and Transportation Study
 - Mixed-Use development
 - Retail scale shopping and or distribution facilities
 - On areas zoned I-1 and B-2
 - Area noted as having the most traffic growth capacity and potential for expanded capacity

Committee Discussion

- Most of the vacant land in this area is undevelopable. Not a lot of opportunity for additional development. Mostly redevelopment opportunities

GEOGRAPHIC AREA D

Geographic Area D is the southwestern portion of Town and is bounded to the west by the Town of Princetown, the south by the Town of Guilderland, and the east by I-90, Guilderland Avenue, and the City of Schenectady. This area is characterized by a mix of land uses, including distinct residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial centers, agricultural lands, educational institutions and parks and recreation lands.

Existing Land Uses

- Industrial
- Commercial – along major road corridors
- Low-density Residential – primarily single-family homes
- Agriculture and Residential with Acreage
- Parks, Recreation and Conserved Lands
- Community/ Public Services

Challenges and Opportunities

- Route 7 truck traffic
- Freight Corridor Study for Route 7
- Walkability and sidewalk infrastructure

- Five Corners – traffic, walkability, consistent building design, vacant businesses
- Opportunity for Rotterdam Industrial Park to grow as a hub
- Accessibility via I-88 and I-90

Relevant Past Plan Recommendations

- Burdeck Street, I-88 & NYS Thruway Exit 25A Land Use & Transportation Study
 - Alternative 1 – Regional Office
 - Increased commercial/office development
 - Light industrial
 - Alternative 2 – Mixed-Use
 - Mixed-use, village-like development
 - Promote residential, commercial, office and retail uses
 - Alternative 3 – Modified Existing
 - Maintains existing land uses/zoning in rural areas
 - Slight modifications to encourage additional commercial and light industrial growth

Committee Discussion

- Feedback from focus groups about which alternative is preferred would be helpful
- Area D reflects a wide range of land use type. Many smaller character areas in this one Geographic Region
- Need to promote Town as easily accessible to get to. Good chance to draw people to Town
- Residential areas should remain as residential
- Areas where residential uses might change to more mixed-use or commercial are along the main roads like Curry Road
- Traffic Issues

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic improvements will be needed in the area at some point ○ Five corners area needs traffic improvements ● Residents have co-existed with Industrial Park since World War Two and will continue to. In the future it will be about smart building going forwards and improving walkability <p>GEOGRAPHIC AREA E</p> <p>Geographic Area E is the southeastern portion of Town and bounded by the City of Schenectady to the north and east and I-90 and Guilderland Avenue to the west and northwest. This area is characterized by high density residential, commercial corridors, educational institutions, parks and recreation areas and major transportation corridors.</p> <p>Existing Land Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Residential-Low Density ● Residential-Medium Density ● Commercial ● Community/Public Services <p>Challenges and Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vehicular traffic congestion – Altamont Avenue, Curry Road ● Access to major transportation routes ● Need for improved walkability and connectivity, particularly between schools, commercial areas and residential neighborhoods ● Commercial areas along Altamont Avenue, Hamburg Street and Curry Road <p>Relevant Past Plan Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NY 7/NY 146 Land Use and Transportation Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Main Street/Neighborhood Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mixed-use development ▪ High-density development that minimizing land needed for surface parking 	
--	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Corridor Commercial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mix of auto-dependent commercial services ○ Professional Office Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commercial transition zones between commercial and residential areas. ▪ Maintains character and scale of residential neighborhoods <p>Committee Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curry Road in this area has a number of residences. Good location for transition from residential to mixed-use or commercial ● Main Street/Corridor Center makes sense for Hamburg Street ● Altamont Avenue – Traffic moves slow but it is always moving. Other places like Five Corners, traffic often at a standstill 	
Public Comment	Members of the public were able to listen to and view the meeting live by visiting the project website homepage at www.rotterdamnyplan.com . The public was directed to send comments to the project email at RotterdamNYPlan@gmailcom.	
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft Future Land Use Map ● Focus Group Meetings ● Draft Comprehensive Plan ● CPAC Meeting #6 – August 13, 2020 (TENTATIVE) 	
Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 8:00PM	

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:
Andrew Gillcrist

cc: Consultant Team, CPAC, Town Planning & Zoning Department