

**Town of Hamilton - Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing Minutes**  
**Tuesday, September 27, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.**  
**Held at the Hamilton Library, Broad Street, Hamilton, NY**

Present: Eve Ann Shwartz, Peter Darby, Suzanne Collins, Chris Rossi. Absent: David Holcomb. Others Present: Sue Reymers, Harvey Kliman, Greg Owens, Nan Stolzenburg, Darrell Griff, Travis DuBois, Jodi Palmer.

Public: Gwen and Kevin Benedict, Greg Moon, Kathy Hyde, Mike and Beverlee Cappeto, Mike Murphy, Keith Palmer, Susan Barrett, Bill and Mary Nolan, Eileen Augustyn, Neill Joy, RuthAnn Loveless, Sam Cooper, Jim Leach, Ed Sitts.

**Call to order & Welcome:** Supervisor Shwartz called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Greg Owens and Harvey Kliman gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the Comprehensive Plan.

Supervisor Shwartz opened it up to public comment at 7:00 p.m.

Village of Hamilton Mayor, Bob McVaugh complimented the committee on their work. He would like to see an addition in the area of Recreation. There was no discussion on the shoulders of roads around the Village. They are important for both bike and joggers. It's a safety issue.

Supervisor Shwartz replied that some of the roads surrounding the Village are County roads and some are State. There are jurisdiction issues. People do need a safe space for that kind of recreation. It would be a significant investment.

Darrell Griff commented on how industrial solar is a recent development and suggested adding that it where appropriate.

Chris Rossi followed up with that she has been thinking about this, too. It's a good point. There are big solar projects coming in and at the County. We should be fair in the scrutiny that we give all of these projects.

Bill Porta wondered if there were plans to have the libraries open on weekends. He thinks it would be a good thing to invest in.

Supervisor Shwartz responded that the libraries are an important cultural resource and access to broadband, which is highlighted in the plan. A lot of people use the library don't have fantastic access to broadband in outlying parts of the community. It is a priority going forward with the Town and the County. In the meantime, having the libraries open on the weekend would be a big fundraising task. They are pretty

strapped for the times they are open. The Town does support both the Hamilton and Earlville Libraries and has increased their support the last couple of years.

Darrell Griff commented how one of the things mentioned is the increasing enrollment in the Ag Districts. Currently, it's in open enrollment.

Supervisor Shwartz expressed that she hoped that everyone had a chance to read the document. They worked hard to make sure that the comments and feedback from the public hearings were incorporated. She thinks that the tone of the final plan has shifted. It's been softened a bit. It's more difficult to implement the plan itself, especially in terms of zoning. It will be done in small pieces and not everything at once. The town will focus on the most important aspects. A lot of time went into looking at the conservation easement and that whole process of trying to preserve open land. Nan shared that other communities that have been able to successfully do that. It's going to add to the menu of options for the community. Hamilton does not have the development pressures like other communities, which is both good and bad. This can provide a flexible set of zoning laws that work for the community. That will be worked on next year.

Chris Rossi stated that the recommendations in the plan are just recommendations. The matrix at the back of the first part that gives you the idea of how the town might implement them or examine them. The plan is a big toolbox for the town council to help navigate the way forward. Some of them will be implemented, some not but certainly none of them will be in secret or in the dark. The town will be looking for more community help and input.

Karen Hotaling asked about the Hamlet as she was confused. Poolville is the only Hamlet. She asked when do the residents approve the designation of a Hamlet? It looks like in the plan that it's already been approved.

Chris Rossi responded that it was put in there because there is some advantage to have a Hamlet designation for some types of development. During the public meetings in Hubbardsville, it was pretty clear that people are not interested. The committee wanted it to be clear that there is always the possibility that if an area or gathering of residents thought there would be an advantage of having a Hamlet designation, it could happen. Or if the town thought that it would open up business opportunities in Hubbardsville, it could be proposed but it couldn't be imposed. There would have to be meetings in the residential area and there would have to be a sense of what the people in the area wanted. It would not be imposed from above, it would have to be the consensus of the residents. It's in the toolkit. It may not be appropriate today, but maybe someday.

Peter Darby stated that he did not perceive at this stage that the town would propose or initiate it. It would likely come from the residents.

Eve Ann Shwartz said it would have to be a revision of the zoning laws. That has its own set of legal processes including public hearings and meetings.

John Bailey asked the board to speak about the process going into the future. Is it reviewed every 5 years? Will the next town council be obligated to pick it up and use it? What are the legal definitions?

Eve Ann Shwartz asked Nan to answer that question. Nan stated that philosophically, the comprehensive plan is supposed to reflect the community at the time. It's supposed to remain relevant to the community. That's why you have it reviewed by the town board on an annual basis. Things come up, things change. To keep it relevant to help you in decision making. It's supposed to be flexible to meet your needs. At the same time, it's supposed to prevent wild changes in the community from election cycles. If a new town board gets in office and they have different ideas, and they want to take the town in a different direction, really what they should do then is amend the comprehensive plan. They would go through the public process to make sure that it is the direction the community wants to move. That's why the life of the comp plan is to look ahead 10-15 years with these incremental keeping you up to date. From a legal point of view, there is only one requirement in Town Law for adopting a comprehensive plan. In giving the town authority to create a comprehensive plan, it's expected that the town will pull it out and review it and keep it up to date. If a new town board wants to go in a new direction, then they should formulize that through the direction of the comprehensive plan.

Chris Rossi shared that they looked at the previous comprehensive plans and most of the goals of the community have not changed that much. Hamilton is still identified as a rural agricultural area. The values have stayed consistent even though years have gone by. Some of the challenges have changed.

Eve Ann Shwartz commented how that plan was from 1999. The town is a little behind, but the process within a reasonable time frame. The plan provides some confidence that as Supervisor, she can go back to it and make sure that what we are doing fits in with the plan. She has a much better idea of what the community wants. The Comprehensive Plan is there to guide the board and keep the board on track and to know where the community wants to go.

Mike Cappeto commented that there is a bullet about understanding the relationship with Colgate University. He suggested they also look to understand the relationship with Morrisville State College with the Start-up NY Program that Morrisville is working with State Legislators. They have three projects that they are working with: two breweries and a hemp farm.

Eve Ann Schwartz commented that Good Nature Brewing is one of those projects and the Town was behind their project and worked with them. It will bring tourism and economic opportunities. Look around today, there is a new spirit of entrepreneurship. Look at the Partnership for Community Development, which is partners with the Town, Village and Colgate, focused on helping small businesses.

Eve Ann Schwartz and Chris Rossi thanked the audience and the Comp Plan Committee. Written comments or emails need to be sent by October 7, 2016 either by mail or drop off at our new location at 40 Milford Street.

With no further business and all voices heard, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Reymers  
Town Clerk