

Appendix A – Public Input Process

1.0 Steering Committee

A Steering Committee for the New Hartford Comprehensive Plan Update was established comprised of:

Hans Arnold, Planning Board
Jerry Back, Code Enforcement Officer
William Delaney, Citizen
Alexander (Al) V. Forte, Citizen
Ralph Humphreys, Former Supervisor
Michael Jeffery, Parks and Recreation Director
John Kent, Oneida County Planning Commissioner
Fred Kiehm, Zoning Board of Appeals
John Kivela, Citizen
Raymond L. Philo, Police Chief
Nathaniel Richmond, Citizen
JC Waszkiewicz, Town Board Member

It is the function of the Steering Committee to review Plan elements as they are completed and to generally guide and supervise the process.

1.1 November 3, 2005 Kickoff Meeting

The committee met regularly throughout the plan process, beginning with a kickoff meeting November 3, 2005, and continuing with meetings on December 7, 2005, February 1, March 15 and May 10, 2006.

During the first, or kickoff, meeting, a vision session was held to allow steering committee members to give their thoughts and opinions about the Town's current status and visions for the future. A transcript of that session appears below.

Vision Session - In attendance: John Kivela, Fred Kiehm, Alex Forte, Nate Richmond, Roger Cleveland, Kurt Schwenzfeier, Jerry Back, Ralph Humphreys, Hans Arnold, Michael Jeffery, John Kent

In one sentence, describe the character of the Town of New Hartford – e.g. "New Hartford is ... "

- Very commercially developed with a mixture of haves and have-nots
- Economic hub for the area
- Comfortable and convenient
- Clean, friendly, quiet

- Somewhat progressive community with outstanding school system and diverse population
- Diverse community comprised of neighborhoods
- Wealthy, suburban community of professionals with a nationally ranked school system
- Culturally, economically and physically diverse
- Lends itself not only to residential and agricultural development but also to commercial and industrial development
- Rural-type residential character in east; commercial corridor in the west
- Concentration of retail activity for the area
- Commercial neighborhoods, residential neighborhoods
- Desirable bedroom community that also happens to be the economic engine for Oneida County and the Mohawk Valley
- I don't see new Hartford as diverse, it's rather homogeneous; not much racial or cultural diversity, large Asian Indian population but otherwise not a lot of diversity
- Economic and housing diversity there is but otherwise you're right
- Top caliber school system that is the cornerstone of the community which is comprised of residents in a variety of professions
- Attempting to protect its outlying residential character
- Commercial center of Oneida County mixed with some of the most desirable residential neighborhoods

Barring all constraints, including time and money, what is your vision for the Town 20 years from now?

- Neighborhood charm and character
- Better transportation corridors
- Expansion of trail, bike system, growth of industrial segment to match commercial growth
- Planned and controlled development; good network of roadways
- Don't want to see the commercial development overwhelm the elements that make this a comfortable place to be
- Tourism – e.g. Waterworld in Erie
- Adding things that are important to the area without taking things away
- County metro government – more for less cost
- Control growth
- Schools need updating

- Good zoning controls – little league field in the village should be moved; neighbors complain about the noise and traffic; but it's adjacent to the high school field – parking problems
- Signature recreation facility; trails; residential sidewalks; better site design for commercial
- New road similar to 5A between JayK intersection and Route 233 in Westmoreland
- Smart Growth leaves rural character
- Agriculture is what economics dictates, were 100 farms, only six active farms now and only one dairy
- People will say that open space and rural character is important; people will expect that the farms will stay in farming; that's not going to happen. It won't happen through large-lot zoning either; it will have to be through parks and recreation, open space preservation
- A lot of land is abundantly available however something has to happen in order for the owner to continue to pay the taxes
- Part of the town plan needs to be how to protect and save open space
- Sustain level of excellence in community and economic stability
- Quality opportunities for citizens
- More diverse population, better street character, sidewalk system and economic development
- Cohesive mix of commercial and residential development
- High quality of life, industrial development equal to commercial development

What are New Hartford's primary strengths?

- Public schools (6)
- Primary roads (4)
- Village setting
- Fact that we are the hub, good roadway infrastructure coming into the town
- Good talents among the people
- Our size is a strength and we shouldn't outgrow our size (which has happened in Fayetteville)
- Housing stock relatively new and strong; more valuable housing stock is relatively new (3)
- Political unity on important issues
- A lot of good transportation network work has been accomplished
- Commercial tax base (4)

- Status, recognition of being from New Hartford, good reputation
- Our weather – seasonal changes
- Safety and security (3)
- Central location in state and county; proximity to roads
- High per capita income
- Health care facilities
- Water system (2)
- Geography is spectacular (2)
- Town staff
- Location, location, location
- Great volunteer fire departments
- Educated population of professionals (2)
- Population of workers and family people wanting to maintain
- Stable economy
- Parks (4)
- Retail centers (2)
- Police

What are some of the constraints and/or obstacles facing the Town that need to be addressed?

- Tax vs. assessment – too heavy on residential; people who live in the town are carrying a heavier tax burden which goes to sustain the commercial corridor and we have the opportunity to raise the assessments and hence taxes on the commercial properties
- Potential for vacant commercial structures
- Zoning needs updating; need more staff in zoning (2)
- Ralph strongly disagrees on the tax issues; Hans: But we house the commercial properties for the entire region
- Negative thinking and short sightedness
- Long range plans, money for projects
- Town is the only one in the county that doesn't have a central building
- Lack of planning; there is a need for a plan to avoid outgrowing who we are because the people we want to attract will leave the area; it's not an easy line to walk
- Consolidation of services needed

- Direct access to Thruway is needed
- Meshing the new zoning with the old zoning is a weakness
- Aging population; we need population turnover (2)
- Volunteer fire department; protection
- Lack of industry
- Loss of young people
- Limit of growth as defined by the limits of sewage system; Sauquoit Creek regional problem
- Interior roads not designed for pedestrian use; bikeways and paths are difficult to develop because they will have to go through private property
- No recreational water resources; canoeing, tourism does not exist
- Infrastructure: N/S roads, Routes 12 and 8 specifically; no airport in the region; poor rail service
- Lack of political leadership in town and regionally; thinking only locally and not regionally; infighting in Utica, Utica feuding with County; everyone feuding with the Indians who are part of the economic engine
- NYS
- Outsourcing
- Need political vision
- Need something to retain our young people
- Development community needs to contribute
- Confusing road system in parts of town
- Lack of capacity of infrastructure; drainage (4)
- Overlap of government services
- Adequacy of current and future zoning in light of fact that people will do what they want to do
- Revolt in NH over tax and assessment issues and there are fundamental misunderstanding about the tax structure on behalf of the public; mindset translates into you should not spend any money on anything for the town
- High cost of energy here, NiMo; Boonville has municipal light; it's an impediment to business
- Need to reuse existing commercial structures

What is the most important thing this comprehensive plan should do for you?

- Anchor for bringing our leaders and residents together

- Majority of people pulling in same direction
- If we are going to plan, we should follow it
- It's all in the follow through
- Implementation
- Guideline for the future
- Roadmap
- Blueprint for strategic development
- Improved comfort level for our residents
- Framework for smart decision making
- Change through time; tool for all three municipal boards: Town Board, Planning, ZBA
- Comprehensive plan fails because it is a product not a process; people use it because they want to support certain agendas; as planners we have to find a way to make the plan a living document; charge: try to find ways to get citizens to embrace
- Tie it in with a GEIS
- We need a way for it to live and be flexible and change
- Municipalities should look at their plans at budget time
- What may be more important than the "product" is the goal that is reinforced with the public all the time so the public is reminded on an on-going basis what to goal is or goals are
- We need to reach the public; that follow through goes beyond us
- Produce a process within the document which is written for the document which is why we put a strong policy element in the plan
- How you evaluate plans; how you approach issues

Also during the kickoff meeting, the schedule , deliverables the public input process for the plan were reviewed.

1.2 December 7, 2005 Meeting

During the December 7 meeting, the following were in attendance: John Kivela, Fred Kiehm, Alex Forte, Nate Richmond, Roger Cleveland, Kurt Schwenzfeier, Jerry Back, Ralph Humphreys, Hans Arnold, Michael Jeffery, John Kent, JC Waszkiewicz

The tasks addressed by the Committee:

- Review Elements of Inventory:
 - Population
 - Housing
 - Parks & Recreation

- Community Survey
 - Review and Approve Survey Instrument
 - Determine Survey Schedule (after the holidays)
 - Discuss Survey Mailing List
- Preview Focus Group Sessions and Participants
- Preview December 8 Public Input Session

1.3 February 1, 2006 Meeting

At the February 1, 2006 Committee meeting, the following were in attendance: John Kivela, Fred Kiehm, Alex Forte, Nate Richmond, Kurt Schwenzfeier, Jerry Back, Hans Arnold, Michael Jeffery, John Kent, William Delaney

The following tasks were addressed by the Committee:

Introductions

- Review Elements of Inventory:
 - Land Use
 - Natural Resources
 - Transportation
 - Infrastructure and Utilities
 - Community Facilities and Services
- Community Survey
 - Final Approval for Survey Instrument
 - Determine Survey Schedule
- Preview March 15 Public Input Session

The Committee determined it would postpone the Public Input Session to the May 9 meeting to allow the committee to focus on a full March 15 Agenda. Also during the meeting, the Committee agreed to ask the Town to fund additional survey distribution so that the total sample size would be representative of one-third of the Town's Census 2000 households or 2,840 households. Parks and Recreation Director Mike Jeffery secured the Board's authorization, and the Committee directed to consultant to complete the mailing.

1.4 March 15, 2006 Meeting

At the March 15 Committee meeting, the following were in attendance: John Kivela, Fred Kiehm, Alex Forte, William Delaney, Kurt Schwenzfeier, Jerry Back, Hans Arnold, Michael Jeffery, John Kent, JC Waszkiewicz. The committee addressed the following tasks:

- Review Elements of Inventory:

- Economic
- Community Survey:
 - Review Survey Process
 - Review Preliminary Results
- Discuss Preliminary Build Out
- Review Goals, Objectives and Policies
- Preview May 3 Public Input:
 - Venue
 - Format

The committee determined that the May 3 Public Input Session and Committee meeting should be moved forward one week so as not to conflict with Town Board meetings.