

Joint Comprehensive Plan Meeting # 3

Quick recap

The meeting focused on reviewing the implementation schedule of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, with Dean and Frank leading a detailed discussion of each item's status, with support from Peter. The team reviewed approximately all of the priority items which included topics covering agricultural task forces, business planning, development processes, housing standards, open space planning, and recreational facilities. Many items were found to be in progress or completed, such as the \$21 million infrastructure development project on Route 17, skate park completion, and ongoing youth engagement programs. The group discussed challenges with enforcement of property maintenance codes and the need for more realistic timeframes in the implementation plan. Participants also addressed concerns about the town's image following recent negative media coverage and discussed the potential creation of a NYS Catskills economic development region to better compete for state grants. The conversation ended with plans to hold the next meeting on May 13th at 6pm.

Next steps

- Post the 2016 land use regulations review report online for public review. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77adce-385b-11f1-b580-eab09b40e7bd>
- Caitlin: Share contact information with Liberty leadership to receive information about leading the Climate Smart task force/committee; Liberty to be in touch with Caitlin regarding next steps for forming the committee. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77b253-385b-11f1-82b4-eab09b40e7bd>
- All interested participants: Sign up for and/or join advisory and special interest groups for the Comprehensive Plan update; lists are available at the front. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77b41d-385b-11f1-b17f-eab09b40e7bd>
- Liberty/Peter/Dean: Determine and implement a workaround to distribute the community survey, as the county's program is inactive. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77b554-385b-11f1-9818-eab09b40e7bd>

- All group members: Prepare topical presentations for the next meeting based on assigned groups and goals/objectives. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77b797-385b-11f1-8dc0-eab09b40e7bd>
- Liberty team: Post examples of visioning exercise responses on the website for public review. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77b91c-385b-11f1-9d3c-eab09b40e7bd>
- Schedule and hold next meeting on May 13th at 6pm (location TBD, may include other locations like Parksville).
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77ba64-385b-11f1-8ca8-eab09b40e7bd>
- Nick and Liberty leadership: Continue to pursue transfer of O&W Rail Trail properties from the state and update as progress is made.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77bba6-385b-11f1-b9e2-eab09b40e7bd>
- Liberty: Update and post the list of known Airbnbs/short-term rentals on the website for tracking and regulation purposes.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77bd7a-385b-11f1-ab68-eab09b40e7bd>
- Village and Town: Continue discussions regarding water system updates and resolution for outside users in the parks building; update public as progress is made. <https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77c01f-385b-11f1-930c-eab09b40e7bd>
- Liberty: Collect and encourage submission of private well reports from residents to support hydrological analysis for development planning.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77c1c7-385b-11f1-af88-eab09b40e7bd>
- Liberty (or designated group): Begin process to form an ongoing advisory/oversight group to ensure implementation and tracking of Comprehensive Plan initiatives after plan adoption.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77c36b-385b-11f1-920e-eab09b40e7bd>
- All interested: Contact Liberty Rising or Parksville Priorities if interested in leadership roles or board positions for these community organizations.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77c7c3-385b-11f1-b1e9-eab09b40e7bd>

- Village: Organize Main Street cleanup for Memorial Day morning as discussed.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77c9b1-385b-11f1-9013-eab09b40e7bd>
- Liberty: Post updated advisory group roles and expectations document online for reference by all participants.
<https://tasks.zoom.us?meetingId=3dvJFs7MSbOjjuBAqS8STg%3D%3D&stepId=fc77cad7-385b-11f1-9137-eab09b40e7bd>

Summary

2008 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Review

The meeting focused on reviewing the implementation schedule of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Frank and Dean went through the list item by item and provided updates on progress, noting that many items had either been started or completed. The meeting began with introductions of attendees, including Peter Manning, the planner responsible for writing the plan, and various town and village officials.

Priority Task Updates Review

Liberty and Dean reviewed a priority list of tasks, providing updates on their status and next steps. Key updates included progress on creating a business plan with a proposed development on Route 86/ 17 secured over \$21 million for infrastructure, and the development of a new system called Open New York to streamline the development process for new developers. They also discussed ongoing efforts to educate planning and zoning board members, with a state requirement of four hours of training in place. The group also considered the feasibility of continuing to lobby for tax-exempt reform, acknowledging its complexity at the state and federal levels.

Development and Planning Initiatives Update

Discussed were several key development and planning initiatives, including the need for more diligent cumulative impact assessment in specific areas and the development of standards for private water systems. An upcoming meeting with the village to address water system updates was mentioned, including plans to restore the Elm Street well to full capacity. The discussion also covered plans for creating an open space advisory council and developing high-impact development checklists, as well as ongoing efforts to redefine district intent and zoning to promote desired land use. Liberty noted that while the skate park has been completed, a new basketball court will be constructed nearby, and work continues on youth engagement programs through Sullivan 180 and other community partners.

Liberty Housing and Sustainability Initiatives

Discussed were various ongoing and proposed initiatives related to housing, zoning, and sustainability in the town and village. Key points included potential funding opportunities for housing rehabilitation, the need to review and update local land use regulations, and efforts to expand beyond the baseline, state designation of Liberty as a climate-smart community. Also emphasized the importance of creating a Green Liberty Task Force to advance sustainable development and highlighted the need for someone to lead this initiative. Other topics covered included plans for infrastructure improvements, recycling efforts, and promoting youth involvement in municipal processes.

Town Development Projects Update

Discussed were ongoing projects in the town, including efforts to create a youth center, develop a recreational trail system, and establish an economic development task force. Frank highlighted the work of community groups like Liberty Rising and Parksville Priorities in promoting local development and mentioned challenges with building abatement programs. Also addressed specific issues regarding unsafe structures and the need for caution in addressing potentially hazardous properties.

Town Projects and Initiatives Update

Also discussed were several ongoing town projects and initiatives, including property management issues, infrastructure development, and planning efforts. It was explained that the town is working on creating a capital improvement plan with OpenGov, developing design standards for infrastructure, and conducting a pedestrian-vehicular study funded by the county. The town is pursuing a \$4.5 million New York Forward grant and is working on a recreation department plan, though some initiatives like establishing a CDC as a clearinghouse and developing business retention plans remain incomplete.

O&W Rail Trail Project Updates

Also discussed was progress on the O&W Rail Trail project, noting that after 12 years of waiting, the state is working on transferring properties to the town and county, with expected completion within a year. The discussion covered various initiatives including financial incentives for building aesthetics, adaptive reuse of vacant buildings, and the need to regulate short-term rentals like Airbnbs. While Airbnbs can be legal uses, there are concerns about noise and parties affecting neighborhoods. The importance of having accurate information about where these properties are located to potentially enforce future regulations was emphasized.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategies

The challenges and potential approaches for implementing the town's comprehensive plan, emphasizing the need for realistic timelines and sustainable engagement strategies were discussed. Frank highlighted the importance of establishing ongoing advisory mechanisms and leveraging existing active groups, such as Parksville and Liberty Rising, to drive progress. Also addressed were concerns about the plan's focus, with clarification that while it does not directly incorporate zoning changes, zoning is mentioned throughout the document and evolves separately. The group acknowledged the need to update the plan to reflect current priorities and challenges, such as new technologies and infrastructure needs.

Zoning Code and Infrastructure Updates

Frank discussed inconsistencies in the zoning code and emphasized the need to address contradictory sections, particularly regarding shed size permits. He highlighted the importance of attracting residents and businesses to the area, mentioning potential tax and insurance benefits for retirees. He also stressed the need for simultaneous work on beautification, environmental cleanup, and infrastructure development to improve the town's appeal. The group also discussed challenges with enforcing property maintenance laws and cleaning initiatives, with Liberty suggesting the adoption of a road cleanup program similar to the county's "About the Road" program.

Community Planning Project Progress Update

The community survey, originally to be launched by the county, now needs a workaround since the county's program is inactive. It was reported that advisory group roles and expectations have been clarified, with Alyssa's group taking the lead on three topics, and additional groups being formed including History, Culture, and the Arts. The team also addressed recent media coverage that ranked Liberty as the second worst place in New York State, which sparked discussion about improving the community's image and potentially addressing underlying issues like health and crime rankings.

Catskills Economic Development Region Proposal

The group discussed the challenges faced by the Catskills region in competing for economic development grants against wealthier areas, proposing the creation of a separate Catskills economic development region. The current regional boundaries were established through legislation and changing them would require a five-year process involving governor-appointed officials. The group agreed to schedule their next meeting for May 13th at 6pm and discussed potentially holding future meetings in different locations including Parksville.

*Note, these notes were automatically generated by the Zoom program and revised by project leaders.