

# **TOWN OF NEW LEBANON**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2021**

# **APPENDICES**



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# **Appendix A:**

# **COMMUNITY SURVEY AND SUMMARY**

### 2020 NEW LEBANON Comprehensive Plan Alignment Survey

Residents want New Lebanon to provide:	Essential features:	Critical	Important	Less Important
<b>A rural character/protect natural resources</b>	open spaces, active farms, scenic roadways and view sheds, clean air and water, low density housing and commercial structures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>A physically attractive place to live and work</b>	well-maintained properties and structures; zoning rules enforced;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	design standards for structures/signs; create positive "first impression" for travelers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>An enriched lifestyle</b>	community center (senior/youth/recreation center); recreational and social activities; historic and cultural events; entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>A cohesive, caring community</b>	trust, togetherness, tolerance for differing views/lifestyles;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	address varied housing, employment and social needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>A town center</b>	a place to gather, interact, stroll and shop; safe, pedestrian-friendly; attractive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Ready access to the basics</b>	grocery store and (or with) pharmacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Sustainable economic development</b>	serves the needs of the town and its environs; provides job opportunities for town residents, helps to lower property taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>A destination for tourists/visitors</b>	brings in "outside money;" creates jobs; focus on recreational/natural resources; benchmark event; board of tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Efficient, cost-effective and responsive public institutions</b>	listen and respond to resident needs; enforce rules; effective town government & schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Renewable energy opportunities</b>	Facilitate solar, wind and other renewable, non-polluting energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Your name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Did we miss something? Please note it below:

The town should also provide: \_\_\_\_\_

Once survey results are in hand, the committee will hold a series of small focus group discussions to get a more in depth understanding of the direction New Lebanon residents wish the town to take. If you are interested in participating in one or more of these groups, please fill out the following information, including which group(s) you wish to join.

Name

Address

Phone , E-mail

Best availability: days (9-3) , evenings (after 6:30) , weekends

#### Focus Groups

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Owners, including self-employed, artists, creatives, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors & Retirees  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious / Abode  | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor enthusiasts, including hunters, anglers, hikers, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People engaged in agriculture, Arborists, Horticulturists          | <input type="checkbox"/> Students  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speedway enthusiasts   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tradespeople, Hourly Wage Earners, other professionals        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Second home owners/Weekenders                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents of school-aged children                               |

The Town of New Lebanon would also like to know if you do not have access to broadband, high speed, internet service at your home. The town is committed to everyone having access to broadband service!

High speed internet service is not available at the address below:

\_\_\_\_\_

Finished surveys can be mailed to NL Town Clerk, PO Box 328, New Lebanon, NY, 12125 or they can be put into the locked drop box at the entrance to the town hall at 14755 State Route 22. You can also drop your survey at the New Lebanon or West Lebanon post offices or at Country Squire. New deadline: mid-July, 2020.

Thank you for your time, Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

A survey was sent to all New Lebanon residents, was included in the May Town newsletter, and was available at the New Lebanon and West Lebanon post offices. It was also available at Country Squire Hardware store and downloadable from the Town of New Lebanon website. Flyers were hung up in key spots in town to encourage responses to the survey. The original date of May 21 was extended to mid-June to allow for as many respondents as possible. Residents could return surveys directly to Town Hall, either of the post offices, or Country Squire. They could also return them by email as the form was interactive and savable.

In total, 212 surveys were returned and of those, 60 contained volunteers for focus groups. If a survey was filled out by a couple, the responses were counted twice to account for individual resident responses, similar to where couples filled out the forms independently.

### Survey Results

	Residents want	TOTAL	3 pts Critical	2 pts Impt	1 pt Less Impt
#1	Basics - grocery store & pharmacy	537	147	40	16
#2	Rural Character/Protect Natural Resources	513	121	70	10
#3	Efficient public institutions	489	102	85	13
#4	Sustainable Economic Development	480	93	92	17
#5	Cohesive Caring: Trust/Togetherness	456	86	85	28
#6	Physically Attractive: Well maintained properties	448	73	100	29
#7	Renewable Energy Opportunities	428	75	77	49
#8	Cohesive/Caring: Housing/Employment/Social Needs	413	56	105	35
#9	Enriched Lifestyle - Community Ctr	392	42	105	52
#10	Town Center to stroll and shop	388	50	91	60
#11	Physically Attractive: Design Standards, 1st Impression	374	46	86	64
#12	Tourist Destination	366	43	82	73

The survey contained 10 major questions, with two broken out into sub-questions, resulting in 12 topics. This affects response 6 and 11 as well as 5 and 8.

To analyze the data, points were assigned for the three choices with Critical getting 3, Important getting 2 and less important getting 1. When no choice was selected, a score of 0 was given. This score is reflected in the total column. It was also noteworthy to see how many 3's a topic would get and

how many a topic would receive if you combined critical and important columns. All of this is reflected in the above chart.

The overall takeaway from the survey responses is that Town resident priorities focus on access to the basics and maintaining the rural character and natural resources of the area. The least important areas of concern were having New Lebanon be a tourist destination or be attractive to those passing through.

**Pandemic Impact:** As the pandemic has caused significant hardship for many and the survey was distributed during the most severe of the lockdown period, it is not surprising that economics took precedence over such luxuries as a Town community center or a Town center where people could stroll and shop. Both of these could not have been accessed during quarantine.

### Survey Comments

Many survey respondents took the opportunity to add topics or augment questions from the survey. The areas of concern included the following, in order of most mentioned first:

Noise from the Speedway - This was mentioned by 23 residents. In a few cases, that was all that a resident wanted to indicate on the survey. Clearly this is an area of concern that needs to be addressed by the town.

### Health, Wellness & Lifestyle

In addition to wanting a grocery store and pharmacy, many mentioned the need for better medical services, including an ambulance emergency response system. Outdoor enthusiasts mentioned converting railroad trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding, adding a walking path to Shatford Park that would circumnavigate the park, preserving the rural and agriculture nature of New Lebanon, promoting local trails, and emphasizing the need to preserve the air and water quality. Other topics mentioned were senior housing and assistance, daycare, wood burning rules, closing in the Pavilion for year-round use, bringing in cultural events such as films and lectures, and putting more emphasis on the town's environmental and cultural history. Affordable housing for all was also mentioned.

### **Internet**

While there was a general acknowledgment that the Town internet has improved in the last few years, there were 6 respondents who still do not get reliable internet - the town still has many dead zones.

### **Infrastructure**

Comments related to infrastructure were very mixed. Five respondents wanted sidewalks, one person said don't build them. Some advocated for a water/sewer system for the town center. A few emphasized the need to have better road maintenance, more resurfacing of gravel roads and avoiding more traffic lights in town that might change the character of the town.

### **Attractiveness**

Many residents mentioned that zoning laws regarding junk vehicles should be better enforced. A few said that long-vacant buildings should be addressed. Most of these comments were about keeping New Lebanon attractive and not looking like one big junkyard.

### **Garbage**

A few mentioned that New Lebanon should provide more services such as garbage pickup, including recyclables

### **Chief complaints**

The "us" vs. "them" mentality was very much expressed with sometimes a huge disdain for weekenders (including second home owners) and anyone not born in the area. Many stressed how they would not want to encourage tourism and did not like the idea of city people telling them what to do. Many people had major issues with the Speedway and the associated noise. Others felt that New Lebanon government should do a better job of communicating what is going on in the town.



# **Appendix B:**

# **FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES**

Focus groups were compiled from the 60 respondents to the Comp Plan survey who indicated they would be willing to participate. The aim of the focus groups was to flesh out some of the responses to the survey, to get more specific, and to find out other concerns that the survey had not addressed. Seven focus groups were formed, led by a facilitator and a recorder.

Though all 60 were assigned to a specific group, based on their choices, only 20 (???) participated in the seven groups, with an average of three per group. While the Comp Plan Review Committee appreciated all the input received, it also realized that with such a limited response level, based on weather conditions (it was getting too cold to meet at the Pavilion) Pandemic concerns, or just forgetting to show up, we cannot rely too heavily on the limited amount of opinions gathered. Still, the information was interesting and invaluable from those who did participate.

**The groups were as follows:**

**Seniors (two groups):**

- Sept. 17 - attended by Helen Burton, Sarah Conly, Adelia Moore
- Sept. 23 - attended by John Ball, Joyce Baum

**Business owners**

- Sept. 9 - attended by Fiona Lally, Joe Ogilvie, Bob Weber
- Sept 10 - attended by Monte Wasch, Bob Gilson - Second Home Owners
- Sep. 12 - attended by Nina Keller, Abbie Shoop, Bill & Robin Blum, Dianne Christie

**Agriculture**

Sept 3 - attended by Schuyler Gail

**Outdoors**

Sept. 21 - attended by Paul Gavrity, Donald Lamonaca, Barbara Robertson, Karen Ross

The following are the notes from the recorders:

## **SENIORS - Sept. 17 Focus group**

### **CURRENT ASSETS FOR SENIORS IN NEW LEBANON**

- Places to meet neighbors (promoting social interaction)
- Post Office
- Library
- Stewart's (good for food as well)
- Family Dollar (good for food as well)
- Bucky's
- Blueberry Hill
- Farmer's Market
- Roaring 20s
- Clubs like Women's Club & Historical Society
- Outdoors - many empty country roads to walk on once you're out of the center of town, including the rail trail
- Shatford Park (especially the Pavillion)
- Community Meals
- Health Assembly
- Town Newsletter & bulletin boards throughout town
- Churches - with most active being the Catholic Church
- Music in the Park
- Shaker Museum and Darrow School
- Meissner's

### **BARRIERS**

- Can't walk in the center of town
- Need for a car
- Stores are set back from the street
- State highway through town - state rules to follow before change can be made and the habits of drivers, especially the trucks
- Fast speed limit through town (40mph) - if it was slower maybe we could have a crosswalk to get across Rte 20?
- Lack of grocery store (major) and pharmacy (less major)
- Tension between the transplants and the native New Lebanonites
- Difficult for seniors to ask for help
- Isolation (major importance) - more seniors live alone than we know
- Lack of frequent information spreading (town newsletter only quarterly)

- Absence of church as natural meeting place for caring for one another - no one entity that does this by its nature
- No laundromat in town

### **PANDEMIC AFFECTS ON TOWN LIFE FOR SENIORS**

- More isolation - both physical and social
- Mental health issues
- People who are tech savvy are at an advantage, those who are not are more isolated than ever
- More part-timers are now full time up here
- More new residents - but they are middle-aged and seniors
- More physical health risks - people living with a constant risk

### **SOLUTIONS TO MEET THE BASICS**

- Recognize that online access is not for everyone
- Supporting more by giving more transportation options
- People assisting others with online orders
- Neighbors of Columbia County - neighbors helping neighbors
- Shopping network - informed by flyers, email, etc. and newsletters
- Regular times and places to meet
- More B & B's for when people want short-term stays
- Get list of seniors and phone bank them to make sure they are ok - is there a public list or source?

### **SOME POSSIBLE TOWN AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

- Tea time in community room at library - just to talk (like coffee hour)
- Scheduled time for meeting without an agenda
- Use existing space - need people to organize this
- Better communication- newsletter, GTV, bulletin boards - information dissemination
- Postcards to seniors with some info on it
- Attention to make sure this appeals to both transplants and native New Lebanonites
- Events to get people in town together such as:
- Sports (i.e. town Baseball team)
- Square dances
- Community tag sale

- Use the front of the malls in a more creative way - put in grass, seating
- Move the town center to another area?
- Encourage the development of Tilden Plaza or the old train station

## **SENIORS - Sept. 23 Focus group**

### **Assets of New Lebanon that support a good quality of life for seniors**

Rural nature of the town  
 Beauty of the landscape  
 Peace and quiet (except when Speedway is operating)  
 Farmer's Markets (in town and out of town)  
 Best place to unwind  
 Sense of place

### **Changes to New Lebanon that could improve the quality of life for seniors**

- A Town Center, especially for teens (mentoring through Learn & Serve America)
- However, aren't teens a declining segment of the population? Money spent should be allotted carefully.
- High taxes are an issue
- The NLCSD should be more transparent about student enrollments and other indicators that are factored into the annual budget; solid information and less marketing should be shared well before the budget vote
- No competition for gasoline; better to fill up tank in Pittsfield
- Supermarket with a pharmacy would make life easier but the town's population is unlikely to support one with a large footprint
- Status of senior housing discussions?
- NNCC - Neighbors of Northern Columbia County - could be a much greater presence and help in town if townspeople rallied around it
- Barriers to a good quality of life for seniors
- Speedway (the ceaseless vroom, vroom, vroom)
- Choices of places to stay for visitors
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the town and seniors
- Negligible - unlikely to have a lasting impact

## **BUSINESS OWNERS - Sep. 9 Focus group**

### **Assets in New Lebanon**

- Crossroads therefore high traffic
- Young people moving in- how do we develop this more, develop community, help newcomers establish themselves
- Proximity to cultural, recreational, and historic venues  
-Potential to develop further
- Character - laid back, subtle style, freedom expression without retribution, rural, farming, adaptability, 21st century farmers who have successfully adapted, (dairy to specialty products)
- Good internet access for homeworkers

### **Barriers in New Lebanon**

- Lack of walkability - Every shop visit is a destination to be driven to, no central walkable shopping area. Central area with some "essential shops" would be nice
- High taxes and low services
- Sewers? A barrier top attracting high water use businesses
- DOT requirements on state roads.

### **Preservation of Rural and Natural Character**

- If we lose this we lose the ability to attract people,
- Strip malls, big box stores, fast food outlets - Maintain control on these through design, planning and zoning (size and space)
- Better to have independent store and restaurants

### **Access to the Basics - grocery stores, pharmacies and alternatives**

- Development is matched to traffic levels so some stores may not want to develop here- water, sewer, DOT, costs all impact potential for development
- Perhaps nice to have but not so critical now alternatives:
- smaller, independently owned stores and restaurants
- food delivery business to increase
- one can now get many daily items at existing stores, (Stewarts, Dollar store)
- supermarket trips are less frequent
- Develop an approx.. 12K sq. ft independently owned

grocery store- what can the town do to help? PILOT, or other stimulus. (editor's note: School district would need to approve the PILOT for school taxes, the County for their's. Town taxes are probably minimal...)

### **A Tourist Destination**

- Current situation is adequate= welcome visitors, extoll the virtues of the town and the surrounding area.
- NL has low cost and excellent access to tourism activities in other towns
- NL has a good availability of short term rental - AirBnB, BnB
- Do not discourage biker, hikers,
- Do not let the rail trail pass us by!

### **Pandemic Trends**

- Second homes usage is up, real estate sales are hot in this area as more people seek to work from home
- Implications-
- More outside money flowing into the town businesses
- Local service requirements will go up - need access to transportation hubs like the train stations, (Hudson and Wassaic), and perhaps the airport
- Can we learn more about these homeworkers needs to bring more people into the town?
- Social distancing is easier in NL - you can have a life!

## **BUSINESS OWNERS - Sep. 10 Focus group**

### **Assets in New Lebanon**

- Rural character
- Crossroads of the world therefore high traffic
- Affordable homes
- Proximity to cultural, recreational, and historic venues, Shakers, Tanglewood, others - Potential to develop further- play up on the history of the town
- Good internet access for homeworkers- the new economy

### **Barriers in New Lebanon**

- Lack of a grocery store - due to water and sewer costs
- Infrastructure- resistance to sidewalks and development

- Town needs a facelift - removal of junkyards, clean up signage, make it look nice to attract business and visitors
- Establish more "Welcome to New Lebanon" signs and point out historical or cultural sites

### **Preservation of Rural and Natural Character**

- If we lose this we lose the ability to attract people,
- Strip malls, big box stores, fast food outlets - Maintain control on these through design, planning and zoning (size and space)
- Better to have independent store and restaurants

### **A Tourist Destination**

- Locals vs. Others - businesses like tourism, local residents may not.
- Hiking, biking, hand hollow, speedway, Shakers, rail trail,
- People travel through the town to go elsewhere, how do we get them to stop?
- a nice product in an appealing environment as Blueberry Hill and Mario's (Monte offers to build a true Chinese restaurant)
- Agrotourism - can local farmers participate?
- NL tourism pavilion @ Hess station is good idea.

### **Pandemic Trends**

People working from home more

Loss of light industry over the years- Business pushing against rural character of the town

Town needs to move into the 21st century, encourage some light manufacturing

Renewable energy - look at it for the town

Aging of the population- may get more young people who can work from home, how can the town encourage this activity? How can the town work with realtors to encourage people to come to live in NL? Social media of realtors to promote the town as a wonderful place to live and work from home!

"New Lebanon Neighbors" website, Farmer's Market online

Can a co-working location be developed in NL? Perhaps encourage property owners in town to look into this! Midtown Mall? Tilden plaza?

Artists space to fill empty spaces both commercial and residential



## SECOND HOME OWNERS - Sept. 12 Focus Group

### Big Points:

Privacy, space, older homes w/ good prices, beauty of area, Sports/lake/skiing nearby, culture nearby, activities for young and old, Adults want restaurants, food, farms, culture. Would like to see a book for newbies: things to do, places to go, services. And now -WIFI! Want info on all things in town, feel no info available about anything.

**How long have you owned a second home in New Lebanon? What made you choose NL?** Dianne - 20 yrs, retired school teacher on L.I, have friends in Chatham; Blums - 21 yrs. have sister nearby; Abbie - 3yrs, friends in Chatham, works from home now due to WIFI; Nina - 2005 in Canaan then 2015 here, went to school in Dutchess Co. All said the true beauty of the area.

**Do you participate in local activities and events? Do you even hear or read about them? Might you participate more if you had better access to information about them? Are there activities that you might participate in if they existed in the town, but they don't? Like what?**

All said it is different now that children are grown, used to want things for kids to do -now want to get involved more in town or enjoy sports spots + leisure.

Want access to fresh foods, want grocery of some kind even if more expensive. Involved in Dianne w/ Habitat, Nina on Ethics Board

**For those of you who have been coming here for a long time, are there changes, positive or negative, that you have observed in the town?**

Love the new restaurants - more would be great, grocery needed but used to going elsewhere, would use other businesses if here.

The results of our survey show that the two issues that most concern residents are a wish to bring a grocery store and pharmacy to NL, and an appreciation of and a wish to preserve the towns natural resources, its rural character and its agricultural base. Are these also priorities for you? Is there a place for manufacturing or industry in town? Want a grocery but willing to travel for one. Love the physical beauty and want preserved. Appreciate the farms/local food but no knowledge other than market (market on Friday vs Sunday). Would not

want large mfg but small, medium OK.

**Which local businesses do you frequent? What specific types of business might you patronize if they existed? Or do you find it acceptable to shop/do business in Pittsfield or Chatham, etc?** All restaurants, Meisners, hardware = good. Like what is here, more is better.

**Would you care to be more involved in town activities than you are? Do you have talents you could share?** Norman Rasmussen, a TB member, heads up a volunteer group and is currently putting together a data base of willing residents. Not all wanted to be involved, mainly those already do so.

**Do you have any other thoughts or concerns that have not yet been discussed?**

All wanted a website, of Welcome Wagon sorts, to give info about all things available here. They have no way to find out what is here....weekly newsletter, resource book.

Remarks that town does not look like a town, dark at night w/ no street lights.

## **AGRICULTURE - Sept 3 Focus Group**

Only one person attended: Schuyler Gail (husband Colby, Owners/operators of Climbing Tree Farm - raise pigs/sell pork)

**Q: What is your connection to agriculture in NL? If you are simply interested, that's fine.**

A: We came here in 2011 to farm - purchased a small farm, raising pigs, chicken, sheep. Now raise pigs for pork sales.

**Q: The booklet "Farming in the Lebanon Valley," published last year, documents that farming in NL has changed (the what as well as the how) a great deal over two and a half centuries. In the years that you've lived here, how has the ag scene changed?**

A: There are many more farmers here now than when we came in 2011. Attended Farmers' Market in 2011, which was new and booming as largest in Columbia Co and first in area. In a lull now (do not now attend as a vendor) because many markets in area and too many of the same type in small population towns.

**Q: Does it matter to you what kind of ag we have...small, large, conventional, organic, factory, feedlots?**

A: It matters. It is not ethical to confine animals.

**Q: How do you feel about agritourism? About using farming to bring tourists to NL and bring an additional revenue stream to farms?**

A: The idea is great, but I don't want visitors all the time, interruptions, we're just 2 farmers, so more hours and labor needed if we have to service visitors. Most farmers enjoy being mostly alone, on the land and/or w/ animals. It could work here for sure, IOKA is very successful.

**Q: Is it appropriate for the Town government to actively support local agriculture? If yes, in what ways? If no, can you think of ways that individual residents or existing local organizations might support ag?**

A: Is the Town supporting other businesses in town?? If the Town wants a farming town, then yes, support it. Ways to support =Buy food(via grants) from farmers and give to residents in need.

Richmond, Mass feeds a large % of local nutrient dense food to students. Find a person to write grants for farm projects.

**Q: Various planning documents and studies (the Comp Plan, Behan) discuss NL's "rural character," "rural/country feeling," and "farming culture" as much as they focus on actual working farms.**

Is it possible that the desire for NL to remain an agricultural community is based on nostalgia or aesthetics? Or do you feel that agriculture can again be the economic engine that it once was in New Lebanon? If the latter, how?

A: I don't know. It's not a farm community now. Kids and adults here have no connection to farms. There are more farms here than when we came but they are different types of farms w/ fewer people and operated differently. Big (or what was big) dairies are gone. Farming could be an economic driver again but must use a different based system of raising animals and selling.

## **OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS - Sept 21 Focus Group**

### **TYPES OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ENJOYED**

- Hiking, including the Rail Trail
- Biking, Walking (including long distance), jogging
- Horseback riding
- Paddling
- Skiing - cross country and downhill
- Golf

- Fishing
- Hunting
- Swimming
- Birdwatching
- Tennis
- Picnicking
- Tracking
- Geocaching
- Historical explorations
- Gardening
- Outdoor art
- Sports such as baseball, basketball

### **INDOOR RECREATION**

- Sports complex in Canaan
- Playing cards
- Board games
- Indoor swimming
- Knitting/spinning
- Gyms
- Library
- Basketball in the schools

### **WHAT ABOUT THE AREA OF NEW LEBANON THAT ENABLES OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

- Ready access
- Clubs & groups
- People's attitude & willingness to help - a commitment to the area
- 4-season activities - temperate weather
- Churches make things accessible
- Beautiful spring and fall
- Abode mentioned but not sure in what way they assist
- Geography - mountains, springs, meadows - not as many rocks on the trails or ground
- Rutland Railroad tracks
- Wealth of non-profits to assist, State forests, etc.
- Hiking and biking groups
- Stocking of streams
- Parking access by streams & lakes
- Hunting venues - cooperation with land owners
- Many bodies of water for canoes, kayaks and paddling
- 25 minutes to everything

- Library
- Viewsheds
- Flying Deer programs
- Youth baseball - Little League
- Town government has a real investment in parks and other outdoor areas

### **BARRIERS THAT PREVENT ENJOYING OF THE OUTDOORS**

- Private landowners shutting down trails
- Forest fragmentation - broken by landowners, curtails public access, development
- Costs money to conserve more
- Misinformation regarding what would happen if more land was made available by private landowners which prevents them from doing so
- Fear of liability
- Lack of volunteers
- No designated bike lanes & trails
- Development pressure on shore lines
- Poor road conditions
- Lack of sidewalks
- Can't walk the county or state roads for fear of getting hit by a car
- Global warming - lack of snow
- Racetrack drives people away with its noise and other factors

### **HOW COVID-19 HAS AFFECTED OUTDOOR RECREATION**

- More people outdoors
- More outsiders into the area
- Overcrowding of trails and trailheads - and parking
- No groups allowed for outdoor education, music, etc.
- Many activities canceled - no spectators
- Traffic down
- Economic depression - raising funds is tough
- Churches closing
- Groups won't meet indoors
- Limitations at gyms

### **WHAT GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO**

- Can support efforts better
- Town Board can be more proactive in pushing conservation and outdoor efforts

- Show benefits of outdoor recreation
- Town newsletter can bring attention to important issues
- Better communication Town Board and conservation groups
- Information sessions for landowners
- Identify & state the town's recognition of economic benefits of outdoor recreation and easements
- New Lebanon recreational brochure - hike, bike, paddle-ski with map where you can do this
- Save the dirt roads
- Promote how outdoor recreation can improve the Quality of Life for New Lebanon residents
- Management plan for new state forest???
- Tourism - from neighboring towns & counties will bring in more tax revenue
- Trail maps

# **Appendix C:**

# **Community Forums Input**

  

## **September 21 and September 25, 2021**

September 21, 2021

**Attending:**

Committee Members: Newton, Gordon, Carroll, Farren, Murad, Muse, Powers, Fuchshofen and Salem

**Presenter:**

Nan Stolzenburg

**Members of the Public:**

Christine Dreyfus, Silke Fuchshofen

In response to a question, member Fuchshofen noted that encouragement for organic farming practices was encouraged by the plan.

No recommendations for changes to the plan were offered.

September 25, 2021

**Attending**

Committee Members: Gordon, Carroll, Farren, Murad, Powers, and Salem

**Presenter:**

Nan Stolzenburg

**Members of the Public:**

Carol Reichert

Ms. Reichert recommended that the Town should explore what other towns are doing toward achieving goals outlined in the plan and in particular what they are doing to attract young people. She also recommended that the Town should capitalize on its scenic beauty in marketing itself.

In response to a question, Nan explained that public hearings by the committee and the town are required by law and a more formal process. The community forum was optional, more informal, meant to encourage a give and take between the committee and the community.



# **Appendix D:**

# **Public Hearings**

# **Input**

**October 13, 2021**  
**(Comp Plan Committee)**

**November 9, 2021**  
**(Town Board)**

**TOWN OF NEW LEBANON  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE**

**PUBLIC HEARING, OCTOBER 13, 2021**

**Attending:**

Committee Members: Ted Salem (Chair), Deb Gordon, Greg Hanna, Jim Carroll, David Farren, Sharon Powers

Members of the Public: John W. Dax (c), Al Vyssotsky (c), Peg Munves, Steve Powers, Erminia Rasmussen, Norman Rasmussen, Gabriel Bisio, Josh Young (c), Fiona Lally (c) Joe Ogilvie, Christine Dreyfus (c).

(c) = offered comments

Following introduction of committee members, Ted Salem outlined the purpose of the hearing, where it stood in relation to the adoption process and asked speakers to limit themselves to five minutes. He also noted that written comments will be accepted through October 15 after which the committee will assess what changes, if any, should be made to the plan.

**Summary of Comments and Recommendations:**

John W. Dax

- Goals and strategies did not address all of the issues raised in the Profile section; strategies in several cases should be more proscriptive in shaping direction, particularly where the Plan recommends formation of working groups to address issues.
- More detail and direction should be offered in the strategies concerning sewer/water infrastructure and housing;
- More detail is needed on the 2009 housing study: what did we draw from that? The Plan should have directed the proposed workgroup to address the study's findings in its work.
- It may not be factually true that realtors do not support New Lebanon, but if so, there is no strategy to address it.
- It may not be true that the Speedway is an "economic driver." There is no strategy to address noise from the Speedway.

Al Vyssotsky

- It is not clear how the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) elements interact with each other and how they inform the strategies.
- The Plan should have better quantified who needs what services, i.e. did anyone poll seniors to see how many really needed better transportation? Where are the gaps in high speed internet?
- The Plan appears to be "bi-polar"; it should more directly address how to grow the town.

Josh Young

- The method of prioritizing concerns from the survey is not valid; survey findings informed some goals/strategies but not others.

Fiona Lally

- The Plan should address the role of Grow the Valley and other organizations in marshaling volunteers to get things done.
- The term "tourist destination" may be objectionable; the goal related to "Tourism" should

- be relabeled "outside income attraction." Tourism reflects the "bi-polar" attitudes in Town.
- The Plan should recommend a pedestrian crosswalk.
- The Plan should place more emphasis that New Lebanon is a jumping off point for other nearby attractions, even if they do not exist in New Lebanon.
- Although ranked as a high need, it is not clear that residents would support a grocery store.

Chris Dreyfus

- To attract more families with children, there is a need for more affordable housing.
- The Plan should articulate the type of businesses the Town should attract.
- The Plan should recommend more resources devoted to studying infrastructure.

## **WRITTEN COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED FROM THREE COMMUNITY MEMBERS:**

Comments on Draft Comprehensive Plan  
From Fiona Lally  
October 10, 2021

Dear Ted,

Many thanks to you and to the whole committee for all the work that clearly has gone into the draft comp plan. I reviewed the draft and the appendices carefully. Here are the suggestions I have, largely based on my experience in working with Grow the Valley.

I. One thing I'd like to ask is that the document reflect more fully the ways in which Grow the Valley has been involved since the last Comprehensive Plan was written. I can see that this is an historical document, one which clearly appreciates volunteer work and also acknowledges the efforts of the town in bringing about growth.

I see GTV mentioned specifically in relation to the newsletter. It would be good to acknowledge GTV's work in other areas too. This helps readers to really see the impact of volunteer organizations like ours in making town advances. Here are some areas where the historic role that GTV played should be added to the info provided:

Page 22– writing and launching farm brochure

Page 22– launching the farmer's market (back when it was LVBA)

Page 26 – working in conjunction with the town in efforts to reduce town speed limit (by organizing surveys with hundreds of names, joining meetings with DOT and adding info to the newsletter)

Page 34– putting on the Mt. Lebanon HerbFest in 2012, 2013 and 2014

Page 34 – founding the Shaker Swamp Conservancy

II. Here are two areas where I would adjust the way that information is reported in the first section:

Page 26–Town residents rejected an effort to install sidewalks along the west side of the 20/22 corridor. It would be better to say that the town pulled the project after receiving complaints from some residents. There wasn't any actual referendum or vote on the sidewalks, and the public hearing appeared to be 50/50.

Page 38– Although the swimming pool at the Jr/Sr High School is mentioned as being

ordinarily available for public use, it hasn't been for some time. This is because the school needs volunteers to lifeguard and manage the pool use after school hours; let's add that to strategies.

III. A suggestion for an addition to the Profile of New Lebanon:

Page 13– SWOT Analysis: Weaknesses. Add: Lack of local population for supporting big events. (The HerbFest, for example, involved more than 30 speakers, activities and workshops with a slate of vendors over a 3-year period. It was widely advertised and pulled extremely well by local standards, with an average of 250 attendees, but that was not enough to make it sustainable. Coincidentally a very similar kind of herb festival started outside of Boston in the same year on the same June weekend. It attracted several times the crowd size in the first year and was able to take off as a regular event after that.)

IV. There is a lot of effort in the Plan for the creation of strategies and action plans, which is so encouraging. So I've focused comments on what could be helpful with these:

Page 51– Community Appearance. Strategies. Consider implementation of "Industrial" zoning. (This emerged as a missing tool at the RV Storage in Shaker Swamp discussion)

Page 52– Economic Development. Sub-goal: Create crosswalk in town center for pedestrian access to businesses on both sides of the highway.

Page 52. Economic Development. Strategies. Do a study of outside impressions of NL to get understanding of how it is viewed so negatives can be addressed. For example, why realtors don't recommend NL, which is so detrimental for us. Or why a Hudson Town Hall clerk told someone who was applying for permit for a new biz in NL: "you don't want to do that. It's too hard."

Page 52–Economic Development. Strategies. Evaluate average timeframe for approval of new businesses. If average time is fast, we can advertise that to combat misinformation. If slow, we can come up with strategies to improve.

Page 56– Housing. Strategies. Evaluate why landlords don't make more housing available for rentals in NL.

Page 57– Tourism. Strategies. Shift previous emphasis from "tourist destination" to "outside income attraction".

Page 57–Tourism. Strategies. Create a fact-based campaign illustrating the economic importance of outside visitors to the area.

Page 58– Traffic. Sub-goal. Create crosswalk in town center for pedestrian safety when crossing the highway and to slow traffic down.

Page 62– Community Facilities. Strategies. Evaluate the feasibility of using paid firefighters as a way to manage declining number of volunteer firefighters.

Page 65– Historic Resources. Strategies. Consider forming a town partnership with a local nonprofit for the purpose of rehabbing historic buildings (a recommended approach for many grants.)

Page 65– Recreation. Strategies. Create liaison Swim Group with Jr/Sr High School to facilitate pool use by the public.

Page 65– Recreation. Strategies. Assist and support the Corkscrew Rail Trail to pursue State and Federal grants to acquire easements to continue expansion of the trail. Add: Work in conjunction with the County to help clear financial hurdles with rail bed property acquisition, such as old taxes or cleanup costs.

Page 65– Recreation. Strategies to Enhance Recreation Opportunities in Town. Provide support to the Shaker Swamp Conservancy in creating and implementing public access and trails (the other mention in the plan refers just to assistance with grants.)

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S. Frieda Pearce,  
650 Wadsworth Rd,  
East Chatham, NY 12060

October 13, 2021  
Marcie Robertson, Town Clerk  
Town of New Lebanon  
14755 Route 22, P.O. Box 328  
New Lebanon, NY 12125  
Email: townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com

Re: Letter to the Town Board in support of the updated comprehensive plan for New Lebanon

Dear Town Board Members:

I am writing to you in support of the updated comprehensive plan for New Lebanon, which I understand would be in effect a community road map for decision making regarding issues that are important to the community.

As set out in the introduction to the comprehensive plan: "New Lebanon will be an attractive, friendly, and well-maintained community that values its diverse population, rural character, scenic beauty, natural resources, and cultural and historic heritage. In response to the needs of the entire community, it will promote carefully thought out commercial and residential growth, responsible land use, public services, and social and recreational opportunities." - NL Comprehensive Plan Update 2021.

Sustaining the Natural Resources, Environment, and Agriculture, all positive aspects of the town of New Lebanon, is central to the community development plan. Economic Development and Land Use will impact the stated goals and thus the community appearance. Economics will govern housing, recreation, traffic and transportation. Tourism will benefit the area if certain current aspects of the town are maintained, such as natural resources and the environment. Abutting the town of New Lebanon are other forests and lakes that contribute to the natural resources of the surrounding area.

The town's natural resources are one of the most attractive aspects of the town. This should be a protected resource. "Since adoption of the 2005 Plan, the Town has taken several steps to implement the goals and strategies devoted to protecting the Town's rich natural resources and the land". The Natural Resource Conservation Plan for the Town of New Lebanon (NRCP) should

guide the land use decision-making at both the project level by the Planning and Zoning boards, as well as the planning and the broader policy-making level by the Town Board and its sound stewardship of the Town's resources. This is important as it maintains the attractiveness for some younger people to buy property in the town. This affords recreation in terms of walking, hiking and biking and scenic beauty that is unique to this area. The presence of rural roads without congestion and excessive traffic also supports these types of activities. Although there are other resources for outdoor activities in the surrounding area, local attractions and lower housing costs may make New Lebanon more affordable for younger couples and families. "Many people use local roads for recreational walking, jogging, and biking"- pg 38.

"Any new development must be consistent with the very high priority on preserving the Town's rural character" - Issue, pg 21. Industry or business should not only benefit the owner/ proprietor but also the town by employing people and paying taxes. Development or industry should safeguard the town's natural resources and not impinge on the town's rural character. It is important to adhere to the subgoals to sensibly manage the natural resources that exist throughout New Lebanon as outlined on page 43 of the NRCP. This is especially relevant when doing a SEQR review for land use decisions. The involvement of the Climate Smart Communities Task Force to promote resilience in all land use decisions would be of significant benefit in considering future development of rural areas. "The Town will work to protect its environment and safeguard it for current and future generations." This is another goal that should be implemented in the current plan.

There are many small streams and wetlands throughout New Lebanon. These are probably interconnected and will form underground water source. It is relevant to study and extend protections to small streams/wetlands, as these may ultimately affect major water systems. Any development should consider these areas as a potential for contamination and safeguard accordingly.

"Agricultural Goal: Encourage the preservation of existing farms, open farmlands and the creation of new sustainable and economically viable farms." Currently, farmland is used to grow organic plants that are often sold at the farmer's market and in other areas of the region. This goal will encourage organic practices for farming and growth of easy-to-pollinate species. Growing species that are not local to the area should only be encouraged if they have been studied and are deemed not invasive. A subgoal of The Town "actively promotes agroecological cultivation methods to increase environmental sustainability and soil carbon sequestration."

The goal of "Community Appearance: Protect and enhance the Town's natural scenic vistas and the publicly visible aspects of the man-made environment," would attract new residents and businesses that also may support this goal.

If the goal of "Economic Development: Achieve the long-term economic vitality of the Town through constructive growth of existing businesses and attracting appropriate new businesses, consistent with preserving the Town's rural character and environment," is pursued, the town may receive revenue in the form of taxes and industry that will be supported by those who appreciate these values.

My understanding is that the most recent census has shown a growth of population in new Lebanon, a positive trend that I believe will benefit the Town and all who live in it, work in it and patronize its businesses.

I hope that with effort and judicious use of town funds and grants the town can maintain its efforts to make this a model of community cooperation in Columbia County.

Very truly yours,

S. Frieda Pearce

October 13, 2021

To the Members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee:

I wanted to take an opportunity to address my comments on the proposed comprehensive plan as a tax paying private citizen, and not in any other capacity in which I may serve the Town. I am a lifelong resident of the Town, residing on property that was first purchased by my ancestors over 100 years ago.

My first comment is to address the desire to maintain the rural and agricultural feel of the Town. I fully support this goal in the proposal however a recent acquisition of vacant commercial property by the Town concerns me. There has been very little information disseminated to the public about this property being donated (and presumably therefore removed from the tax rolls) and what the Town plans to do with it. One rumor I heard was that the Town desired to turn the land into a conservancy and provide access for recreational uses. Not only will removing this large parcel of property from the tax rolls have a cost impact on residents who pay taxes, it also removes one of the parcels in Town zoned for Commercial and/or Industrial uses.

There are already a number of existing and underutilized conservancies in Town. There are three adjacent to each other in West Lebanon – the Columbia Land Conservancy’s Hand Hollow, the Hand Hollow State Forest, and the Open Space Institute’s property. While all three provide parking and the first two have marked trails, only the CLC’s preserve has sufficient trails and activity opportunities to make it inviting. There is one trail at the Hand Hollow State Forest and none to my knowledge at OSI’s property. In addition, there are other preserves in the eastern part of Town that are also underutilized and under advertised. Instead of removing additional property from the tax rolls and turning it into yet another conserved property that will not be maintained or developed for recreational uses due to lack of volunteers, I would like to encourage the Town to invest the time and energy into recruiting a team of people who can assist in bolstering the opportunities at existing conservations.

Another point I would like to address is the desire to maintain the historic character of the Town in its built environment. As a lover of history with a great appreciation for learning about our roots, I agree that this is an important tenant for our Town to move forward with. However, from a building and zoning perspective, there are very few teeth in the Town with which to do this. As we are seeing with the recent RV Storage application before the Planning Board, there is a precedent for the style of buildings being proposed. Some members of the board can only stand against the application by virtue of its proximity to the Tilden Mansion, the Masonic Hall, and the white Church. If this application was instead being proposed for a site further removed from these historic and architecturally significant structures, I believe the board would have less secure footing to deny the application.

I believe the solution to this lies in developing more specific zoning and building guidelines. At a recent training I attended on Special Use Permits, an example of how this could be done was given (which was used specifically in regards to Special Use Permits but I believe could be applied more generally):

*Example A (nonspecific, open to interpretation): Trash dumpsters must be provided and screened from view.*

*Example B (specific and enforceable): Trash dumpsters must be provided with screening using materials, colors, and a design appropriate in character to the primary building on the lot.*

The difference between the two examples are a chain link enclosure and a vinyl privacy fence with stone corner posts. While I don't agree that we should be strictly limiting the creativity of our landowners in Town, I do think there is a difference between saying "architectural design shall be in keeping with the small-town architectural character of the area" and saying "architectural design shall be in keeping with small-town architectural character of the area and acknowledge, with specific design elements, the historic and significant buildings in the Town including but not limited to the Shaker buildings on the mountain, the Tilden mansion, the Roaring '20s brewery, etc." The latter is much easier to enforce and point to when denying an application than the first. It also provides a specific level of guidance regardless of whomever is currently seated on the Planning Board.

Another comment I have applies to the Economic Development section. There is a strong emphasis throughout the plan on buying local, supporting one-off (non-chain) businesses, and other similar close-to-home economic opportunities. There is a stated desire to prevent fast-food chains or other large commercial chains from gaining a foothold in Town. While I am a big proponent of supporting local businesses, I see a lot of lost opportunities with present businesses. For example, the Farmer's Market looks to be a lovely addition to the Town's center on Sundays. However, it does not open until 10AM which is inconvenient for anyone attending mass services at the Catholic Church which end by 9:15 or 9:30. O'Maddy's Bagel Café is a delicious spot to pop in and grab a quick breakfast but when they don't open until 7AM, it isn't convenient for the number of travelers passing through on their way to work before 7AM on weekdays. Introducing a Dunkin' Donuts or creating operating hours that coincide with other activities in Town would be beneficial to both the end users and the business owners. Gaining a clothing store such as a Peter Harris (which is a smaller chain) would respond to needs identified in the student surveys provided in the appendices. I think the comprehensive plan should be clearer on specific types of chains or larger commercial ventures they do not want to encourage. Is a Dunkin' Donuts or a Peter Harris acceptable? Is a Wal-mart or a Lowe's or a Kohl's acceptable? Is a Hannaford (also a chain) acceptable, but only because it is a grocery store? The same applies to locations of the plan which state simply, Discourage or prohibit heavy industrial uses. Are there any industries that might fit with the Town's character and history which could or should be allowed?

My next comment addresses the Lebanon Valley Speedway. The Speedway has long been a part of life in New Lebanon and often is used as THE landmark to identify where people come from. It is, in my experience, the most recognized landmark I use to describe where I am from. I noted in the comprehensive plan that a number of survey respondents disliked the noise and traffic from the Speedway and would like to see a greater effort to curb and control these issues (page 41.) The Speedway does not hide itself and does not pretend to be something it is not when an out-of-town person comes looking to buy a house in New Lebanon. It should therefore not be a surprise to a new home owner in Town when they can hear drag races or stock car races on the weekends. This shows a lack of research on their part and/or a lack of full disclosure by the real estate agent. I would encourage the committee to list more of the positives the Speedway provides, including but not limited to its



employment of town citizens, as a tax paying entity, and its long history as a business in Town (how many other businesses have survived half a century in business in this town?)

My final comment is in regards to the Town as a whole and looking toward the future. I think the comprehensive plan fails in one significant way and that is defining strategies to reduce the “us versus them” mentality that was highlighted multiple times by multiple survey groups (references all found in the Appendix.) This mentality is not just limited to the second home owners/city transplants versus lifelong residents, but also Democrat versus Republican, conservationist versus business owner, West Lebanon versus Miracle Mile, etc. The Town government, whether conservative or liberal, has rarely performed routine outreach to community members and groups in order to gain insight into how they are feeling about the direction of the Town’s future. The only time I can remember seeing an elected official reaching out directly to me (outside of my service to the Planning Board) is when they are going door to door, seeking election or re-election to a seat. I believe this contributes to the idea that there is no transparency in our Town’s government. I strongly encourage the committee to introduce to the Comprehensive Plan strategies to encourage the governing bodies of the Town to actively engage with people from all corners of our Town, from all backgrounds, from all experiences. Whether those opportunities occur at a planned community gathering or a drop by visit late one evening after dinner, there is a lot that our community members can offer.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on the proposed Comprehensive Plan and I look forward to seeing what goals may be achieved in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth A. Brutsch".

Elizabeth Brutsch

TOWN BOARD MINUTES

PH on Comprehensive Plan Update 2021

November 9, 2021

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**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON  
ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2021  
HELD ON NOVEMBER 9, 2021**

**Present:** Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor  
Norman Rasmussen, Councilmember  
Deborah Gordon, Councilmember  
John Trainor, Councilmember  
Jesse Newton, Councilmember

**Recording Secretary:** Marsha (Marcie) Robertson, Town Clerk

**Others Present:** Sharon Powers, BEDC & Comp Plan Comm Member  
Steve Powers, CAC Member & CSC Chair  
Bob Gilson, CAC & CSC Member  
David Farren, CAC Chair & ZRC Member  
Jim Carroll, PB & ZRC Member  
Ted Salem, ZBA & ZRC Chair

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Public Hearing was called to order at 6:30 PM by Supervisor Houghtling. The meeting was held in person at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 State Route 22 North, New Lebanon, NY 12125 with members of the public also being able to view the meeting at the following link: [https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new\\_lebanon\\_ny](https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new_lebanon_ny)

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:**

Town Clerk Robertson read the following public hearing notice aloud:

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
TOWN OF NEW LEBANON  
COUNTY OF COLUMBIA  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2021**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that a public hearing will be held by the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon on November 9th, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. for public input on New Lebanon's Draft Comprehensive Plan Update 2021.

The meeting will be held at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 State Route 22, New Lebanon, NY, 12125 with members of the public also being able to view the meeting at the

TOWN BOARD MINUTES  
 PH on Comprehensive Plan Update 2021  
 November 9, 2021  
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following link: [https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new\\_lebanon\\_ny](https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new_lebanon_ny)

The purpose of the Public Hearing will be to solicit comments from Town of New Lebanon residents and property owners regarding the Town's Draft updated Comprehensive Plan. The Draft Comprehensive Plan is available to the public for review at the Town Clerk's office at 14755 State Route 22, New Lebanon, during regular business hours and on the Town's website: [www.townofnewlebanon.com](http://www.townofnewlebanon.com).

Participation by the public will be in person at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York. You may also still submit comments regarding the New Lebanon's Draft Comprehensive Plan Update 2021 to: [supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com](mailto:supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com) and they will be included in the record.

By order of the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon

Marcie Robertson  
 Town of New Lebanon Town Clerk  
 10/25/2021

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Supervisor Houghtling opened the floor to public comment and asked if there was anyone that wished to speak regarding the Proposed draft Comprehensive Plan Update.

**Bob Gilson:** Mr. Gilson started by congratulating Ted Salem and his team on doing what he thinks is a really outstanding job. This kind of work takes a tremendous amount of time and effort and given the pandemic and everything that they have had to go through, to do this at this time is particularly impressive. He stated that he thinks in the last few days a couple of things have changed and one of them is that it has been a major infrastructure build passed in Washington and with God's help that means that there is going to be real money coming into the state and hopefully into our community. One of the things that he hopes with the Comprehensive Plan is that we find a way to make it a living document, that we find a way to make this thing work for us. He continued to say, the questions are: How do we use this document to help us out? How do we use this document to get money in to fix our roads and bridges? To provide the things that we need for this town. How do we get money to start to attract young people? We need young people in this town. He stated that he thinks that the Comprehensive Plan provides us with a real opportunity and he thinks that those of us in the community that care and the Town Board need to find a way to take advantage of this and he again thanked the people who worked on the plan.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that there are many things about the Plan that she loves but two things that stand out for her are that the plan does talk about revisiting

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PH on Comprehensive Plan Update 2021  
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it in three to five years because of the COVID changes that are acknowledged and it has an actual action plan in the back and the goal is to create an implementation committee.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that they as a Town Board also need a committee keeping them on task. To check in with them each month to see where they are at, what is their progress, what is their next step. To take some of these goals and creating a timeline and creating actual action step that they can take to get there.

Supervisor Houghtling checked her email for comments. No emails were received.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that the plan did get sent to the Columbia County Planning Department, it is on their November agenda. It has to be reviewed by them before it can be adopted.

The board thanked the group that worked on and completed the Comprehensive Plan Update.

**CLOSING OF PUBLIC HEARING:**

All persons desiring to be heard, having been heard, a motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to close the Public Hearing at 6:37PM. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Newton.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Rasmussen-	Aye
Councilmember Gordon-	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling-	Aye
Councilmember Trainor-	Aye
Councilmember Newton-	Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Marcie Robertson  
New Lebanon Town Clerk

**Appendix E:**

**STATUS OF  
2005 PLAN  
ACTION ITEMS**

**Status as of  
July, 2021**

**APPENDIX E**

**2005 ACTION ITEM SUMMARY AND CHECKLIST -- STATUS OF AS OF JULY, 2021**

The following provides a status update on the recommended actions contained in the 2005 Plan.

Carry forward = Not completed or in process; continue into the Plan Update

Not recommended = Not completed; do not continue into the Plan Update

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
<b><u>Community Appearance</u></b>		
Scenic views	1. Conduct viewshed analysis and create scenic view inventory	Carry forward
	2. Include protection of scenic views in site plan and subdivision review	Carry forward
Signs	1. Inventory signs	Not Recommended
	2. Amend sign regulations to include design standards	Completed
Commercial building appearance	Develop design manual; include landscaped parking	Completed
Sensitive areas	Adopt hilltop/ridgeline overlays	Carry forward
Open space	Authorize and promote use of clustering and conservation subdivisions	Completed
Junk yards	Evaluate junkyard regulations and amend as needed to reduce visibility	Completed
Front yards	Enact property maintenance and screening standards	Completed
Scenic roads	Inventory and rank scenic roads	Carry forward
Highways	Promote landscaping along Routes 20&22 overlap	Completed
<b><u>Natural Resources</u></b>		
Conservation Advisory Council	Appoint council	Completed
Reference materials	Collect and maintain natural resource related publications	Completed

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Aquifers	1. Designate CEA (Critical Environmental Area) around known aquifers	Carry forward
	2. Include protection of aquifers in site plan review	Carry forward
Wetlands	1. Identify wetlands on town map	Completed
	2. Include wetland protection in subdivision and site plan review process	Carry forward
Floodplains	1. Ask FEMA to do a flood study	Not recommended
	2. Regulate proposals to place fill in floodplains through site plan review	Carry forward
Streams	Establish stream buffers	Completed
Ground water	1. Require that salt and sand piles be covered	Completed
	2. Comply with DEC stormwater, erosion, and sediment control management requirements for all Town Highway work and new construction	Completed
	3. Reduce use of paved surfaces for roads, driveways and parking lots	Carry forward
Warm Mineral Spring	Research and develop a plan for restoration and preservation of the Warm Spring	Carry forward
Land and soil	1. Create a steep slope overlay	Carry forward
	2. Regulate timber harvesting	Carry forward
	3. Enforce mining regulations	Completed
Wildlife resources	1. Identify state and federally designated sensitive wildlife habitats on town map	Completed
	2. Include protection of wildlife resources in subdivision and site plan review	Carry forward
Noise pollution	Adopt noise limits	Completed (site plan review)
Lighting pollution	Regulate outdoor lighting to reduce glare	Completed (site plan review)
Farm pollution	Promote use of Best Management Practices for controlling farm pollution	Carry forward

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Burn barrels	1. Phase out use of burn barrels	Completed
	2. Evaluate disposal alternatives	Carry forward
<b>Historic Resources</b>		
Historic Commission	Appoint commission	Not recommended
Historic Resources	Identify historic resources (homes, structures, sites) on town map	Carry forward
Historic District	Evaluate areas for protection via creation of historic districts	Carry forward
<b>Economic Development</b>		
Oversight	Appoint a town board member to oversee eco. dev. activities	Not recommended
Business Liaison	Assign town board member to be liaison with the new Leb. Valley Bus. Assoc.	Completed (BEDC)
Eco Dev. Agency	In collaboration with Bus. Assoc., consider establishing an official entity to formally pursue development opportunities	Carry forward
Strategic Plan	In collaboration with Bus. Assoc., develop a multi-year strategic plan for eco. dev.	Carry forward
<b>Housing</b>		
Oversight	Appoint a member of the town board to oversee housing	Not recommend
Housing study	Commission study of housing needs	Completed
<b>Tourism</b>		
Shaker Museum and Library Project	Appoint a member of the town board to be the liaison with museum administrators	Not recommended
Tourism	1. Appoint a member of the town board to be liaison to tourism efforts	Not recommended
	2. Establish a volunteer tourism committee or task force	Not recommended



Infrastructure for increased tourism	1. Establish an infrastructure project task force	Not recommended
	2. Create an overall infrastructure development plan	Not recommended
	3. Review zoning law to ensure support of tourism	Not recommended
Scenic Byways	Pursue Hudson Greenway Scenic Byways designation	Carry forward
<b><u>Agriculture</u></b>		
Tax assessments	1. Promote increased participation in agricultural assessment program	Completed
	2. Apply "current use" standards	Completed
	3. Reduce assessments on land subject to conservation easements	Not recommended
Liaison	Appoint volunteer liaison between ag. land owners and ag. programs	Carry forward
Community-based agriculture	Compile and disseminate information about grants and programs for community-based agriculture	Carry forward
Farmland protection	1. Implement tax and easement programs	Not recommended
	2. Reconfigure zoning for hamlets and density	Carry forward
	3. Adopt density bonuses	Completed
	4. Amend subdivision and site-plan review laws	Completed
	5. Require buffers between farms and other uses	Not recommended
	6. Urge County to adopt county-wide protection plan	Completed
Right to Farm	Adopt law	Completed
<b><u>Traffic &amp; Transportation</u></b>		
Safety	1. Identify hazards and remedies	Carry forward
	2. Promote speed limit enforcement	Carry forward

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Congestion and flow	1. Develop a map of locations where shared access drives could be required	Not recommended
	2. Include traffic flow in site plan review	Completed
	3. Limit curb cuts in hamlets	Not Applicable
	4. Develop standards for parking lot size, sharing, locations and access	Completed
Road maintenance and construction	Institute a protocol for decision-making for road paving	Carry forward
Public transportation	Promote expanded and enhanced public bus service and van service for seniors	Carry forward
Oversight/Coordination	1. Designate town board parks & recreation committee	Completed
	2. Develop community recreation plan	Carry forward
	3. Adopt zoning that supports desirable recreational development in hamlet areas	Not Applicable
	4. Plan multi-age, multi-use recreation facility	Carry forward
	5. Expand recreational opportunities at/near schools and Shatford Park	Completed
Recreational trails	1. Map existing/ potential trails and trail heads	Carry forward
	2. Expand trail facilities	Carry forward
Bicycle touring	Work with local/state highway and other agencies to identify, promote and expand bike routes	Carry forward
Fishing and boating opportunities	1. Work with NYSDEC and other agencies to improve and expand public fishing access	Carry forward
	2. Identify potential canoe/kayak areas on Kinderhook and develop parking, access and launch points	Carry forward
<b>Community Services</b>		
Capitol Improvement Plan (CIP)	Appoint CIP committee to develop project list, maps, annual priorities, detailed budget	Not Recommended (Town Bd handles)

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
Develop user groups to develop new public facilities	Appoint commission for study of senior citizens housing, and youth activities	Not recommended
Space needs for town government	Commission study to include needs assessment of space for storage of records, meeting space, and space for judicial proceedings	Done
Municipal trash collection needs	Evaluate need, cost and alternatives	Not recommended
Municipal water and sewer needs	Evaluate cost/benefit in infrastructure planning	Carry forward
Cellular telephone service	Facilitate proper siting of cell tower(s)	Completed
LVPA membership	Assist LVPA by providing recruitment enhancements	Not recommended
Town government communication with public	Evaluate current methods and adopt new methods if warranted	Carry forward
<b><u>Land Use</u></b>		
Consistency of zoning regulation with comprehensive plan	1. Evaluate current regulations	Carry forward
	2. Amend zoning regulations, including overlays, densities, clustered development, and conservation subdivisions	Carry forward
PUD's	Develop specific PUD standards	Carry forward
Site plan review	Develop specific requirements and standards for site plan review	Completed
Enforcement	Ensure enforcement of zoning regulations	Completed
Plan Re-evaluation	Re-evaluate at 10 year intervals	Carryforward

# **Appendix F:**

# **GLOSSARY OF**

# **TERMS**

### **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) details plans for the construction, maintenance, improvement and replacement of physical systems in the community. All capital improvements shall be based on the CIP. These improvements and the CIP shall be consistent with growth patterns established in this Comprehensive Plan. It shall include a project list, map(s) where physical work is to occur, annual priorities, and offer a detailed budget. The CIP is generally developed for 5 years with an annual update.

### **Clustering**

It allows flexibility in lot dimensional requirements to reduce lot size to preserve sensitive environmental features and/or farmland/open space. There is no reduction in the number of lots, only in the size of those lots. The smaller the size of clustered lots the more land is preserved from residential development, and therefore more land is available to the landowner for farmland or open space. Clustering uses the concept of density neutrality rather than lot size and allows the majority of a development to remain as open space.

#### **Conservation Easement:**

A conservation easement is a legal agreement, written in the form of a deed, which allows landowners to permanently protect their land. Through conservation easement a landowner donates the majority—or entirety—of the property's development rights to a qualified nonprofit land trust or governmental entity.

### **Conservation Subdivision**

A conservation subdivision is characterized by open space and occasional clustered compact lots. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland and/or natural resources while allowing for the maximum number of residences under current community zoning and subdivision regulations. In some cases a greater density (density bonus) may be offered in the local ordinance as a bonus to encourage this approach to residential development planning. Houses are strategically located to preserve the open space in a manner where all houses have direct physical or view access.

### **Critical Environmental Area (CEA)**

A specific geographic area designated by a state or local agency, having exceptional or unique environmental characteristics. It is designated pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617 (SEQR) and the specific authorizing regulation for it.

### **Hamlet**

A hamlet is a rural residential settlement that compactly accommodates development. Higher density is permitted in hamlet areas. A hamlet is characterized by a diversity of development options, including duplexes, townhouses, senior housing and mixed residential-commercial uses. The hamlet designation facilitates the construction of quality affordable housing. Hamlet zoning will define the types of retail or service uses allowed, with preference given to businesses that would serve the needs of the immediate community and will include specific standards for development within the hamlet overlay. The delineation between hamlet and other areas will help maintain New Lebanon's rural and small town character.

### **Land Use Tools**

Land use tools are concepts or methods used singly or in various combinations to help guide or plan development or changes within a community. These may include GIS maps, overlay zones, clustering, site plan review, special use permits/conditional use permits, subdivision law, flood damage prevention law, and junk yard law.

### **Manufactured Home**

A manufactured home is a structure that is transportable in one or more sections. In traveling mode, the home is eight feet or more in width and forty feet or more in length. A manufactured home is designed and constructed to the Federal Manufactured Construction and Safety Standards and is so labeled. The term "mobile home" refers to a factory built housing unit built prior to June 15, 1979, the effective date of the federal standards.

### **Overlay Zone:**

An overlay zone is a zone or district created by the local legislature for the purpose of conserving natural resources or promoting certain types of development. Overlay zones are imposed over existing zoning districts and contain provisions

that are applicable in addition to those contained in the zoning law.

### **Planned Unit Development**

The intent of Planned Unit Development is to allow more flexibility in development than is available under the general zoning provisions, to provide for necessary commercial and recreational facilities, to provide for well-located, clean, safe and pleasant industrial sites involving a minimum strain on the environment. PUD's can be used to encourage innovations in residential, commercial and industrial development by allowing for greater variety in type, design and layout of buildings and by the conservation and more efficient use of open space near such buildings. Planned Unit Developments clearly outline the procedures required to relate the type, design and layout to the particular site and to encourage long term, integrated planning. PUD's could allow mixed uses.

### **Rural Character**

The term "rural character" extends beyond "views and aesthetics." It encompasses the built and unbuilt environment, the historical and cultural heritage as well as the social and economic conditions of a place. It is characterized by lower population density where open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment. Other elements include, and are not limited to: use of the land by wildlife and protection of fish and wildlife habitat; avoidance of the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development; and protection of natural surface water flows and groundwater and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

### **Site Plan**

A site plan is a rendering, drawing, or sketch prepared to specifications and containing necessary elements as set forth in the Zoning law. The site plan shows the arrangement, layout and design of the proposed use of a single parcel of land as shown. Elements which may be required include, where appropriate, those related to parking, means of access, screening, signs, landscaping, architectural features, location and dimensions of buildings, adjacent land uses, and physical features meant to

protect adjacent land uses. The Board authorized to perform site plan review may reject, approve or set specific conditions for approval of the site plan.

### **Viewshed Analysis**

A viewshed analysis is a key component of any visual impact assessment study. The common basis of the viewshed analysis is a visual corridor plotted on a topographic map, verified by aerial photographs and by driving along the corridor. The data collected from these activities becomes a visual resource inventory that will add valuable information for visual resource management purposes in the region. The inventory describes the extent of the view within the visual corridor as well as its quality, potential quality, and significance value. The goals of viewshed analysis are to preserve and enhance the quality of the scenic beauty of the rural landscape and to develop the existing rural landscape with minimum impact to the existing scenic values. Guidelines and recommendations for each view in the study area are provided in the analysis of each unit.



# Appendix G:

# NRCP

This Plan Update incorporates the 2017 Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP), and any amendments or updates to it, including its series of maps, and recommended goals and actions.

The NRCP is available on the Town website. Hard copies of the NRCP may be purchased in the Town Clerk's office.