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# TOWN OF SCHROON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2 SUMMARY NOTES

### EVENT SUMMARY

A Public Workshop was held on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at Schroon Lake Central School to gain public input from residents of Schroon regarding the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update. 34 attendees signed in, though there were about 50-60 people present total, including members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC). Two representatives from LaBella Associates and Clothier Planning & Consulting facilitated the event. The event consisted of an open forum during which participants could browse through a series of interactive boards aimed at identifying resident's opinions about the vision, goals, and recommendations formulated by the CPC.

The draft Vision, Goals, and Recommendations were centered around 8 main topics identified by the CPC and based on previous public outreach and research. For each board, community members were asked to place a sticker next to the recommendation that they felt is the highest priority for the Town. Results were then tallied for recommendation to provide a clearer image on what initiatives the people of Schroon want to focus on moving forward. There was also a section on the poster boards which allowed attendees to write comments or concerns that specifically address a topic. These comments were compiled for review and are summarized below.

For individuals who were unable to attend the event or wanted to provide more in-depth feedback, a public survey was made available. The same questions were asked as were displayed on the boards. A total of 2 online response was collected in addition to the feedback received in-person during the event. These responses are summarized below with the in-person feedback.

### SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT BOARD RESPONSES

The public feedback boards included the draft vision statement along with the goals and recommendations for the eight topic areas. The vision statement board asked residents whether they think the draft vision statement matches their view of the Town's future. 15 people indicated yes, while one person indicated no. The person who disagreed with the vision statement wrote a comment that they felt the vision was more of a description of Schroon currently rather than an image of the future. They indicated that they'd like to see the vision statement be more aspirational. Additional comments written on this board:

- One attendee wanted to see an increased focus on a “strong school system” that helps Schroon's well-roundedness and attracts families to Town.
- Another comment focused on incorporating language to address “obstacles of growth” and ensuring that future growth in the Town is properly balanced with residential/neighborhood protections.

The sticker exercise was helpful in establishing what ideas and efforts are priorities for the public. Results for each topic's main priorities are shown and discussed below.

## Housing

The goal displayed for this topic area was:

1. Increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing options for all households.

The following table shows the recommendations for Housing and the amount of support that each received.

Recommendations	Total
Establish an affordable housing committee or task force to partner with regional housing organizations to develop or rehab properties and facilitate implementation of housing recommendations.	9
Commission a housing market study that can be used to attract developers or secure funding/financing for housing development. The study should also identify housing typologies needed in the town and inventory existing underutilized properties and areas that are suitable for residential development.	0
Preserve existing housing stock. Partner with local housing organizations to provide home repair, mobile home replacement, and rehabilitation programs to prevent homes from falling into major disrepair.	2
Increase supply and variety of housing, including single-family homes, small homes for seniors and first-time buyers, and quality long-term rentals.	22
Consider offering discounted application and permit fees for affordable housing, including tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, and manufactured (mobile) homes.	0
Encourage residents to add homes to the Adirondack Community Housing Trust to ensure workforce housing remains perpetually affordable.	0

Utilize the Adirondack Park Agency Community Housing Density Relief to encourage housing development in Moderate and Low Intensity zones outside of the hamlet.	2
Create short-term rental policies that balance tourism and other economic considerations with the need to provide for workforce housing. A variety of regulatory options should be considered as part of a community discussion aimed at limiting the negative impacts of short-term rentals on residents and neighborhoods while encouraging opportunities for local income. Create incentives for creating or retaining long-term rentals.	10

## Arts and Culture

The goal displayed for this topic area was:

1. Establish Schroon as a destination for a variety of visual and performance art events and festivals.

The following table shows the recommendations for Arts and Culture and the amount of support that each received.

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Total</b>
Create an arts alliance to work collaboratively towards implementation of all arts and culture recommendations, including creation of a consolidated arts marketing campaign (possibly combined with outdoor recreation), establishment of a co-op art gallery or storefront, and expansion of local events.	11
Identify or create a year-round, multi-purpose arts venue to enrich access to the arts, attract visitors and spur economic activity. The venue may include gallery space, a stage, classrooms/studios, outdoor exhibition space, and events space.	4
Visually brand Schroon as an arts destination through public art. Commission permanent and/or temporary public art installations to transform public spaces and create points of interest.	0
Explore the feasibility of creating of a local historic district and establishing historic markers for buildings.	3

Explore the feasibility of establishing a historic district in the town center and list it on the National Register of Historic Places. Buildings listed on the National Register or located within a listed historic district are eligible for historic rehabilitation tax credits.	1
Develop a series of historic interpretation signs, kiosks, walking tours, and murals to highlight the local history and culture. Potential locations for signs include the six hotel sites and areas around the main street area.	2
Assess the need for an arts kiosk or billboard in the main street area to advertise upcoming events.	0
Support the wide variety of arts and cultural events and festivals that take place throughout the year (see the Culture, Music & Art subcommittee report for a list of organizations, places, and events in the Town of Schroon).	4
Ensure Seagle Festival remains in Schroon Lake and continues to be an important arts organization and draw for the Town.	19

## Natural Resource Protection and Lake Management

Four goals were displayed for this topic area, as follows:

1. Address stormwater management and erosion control issues.
2. Support Invasive Species Management in Schroon Lake and Paradox Lake.
3. Support continuous water quality monitoring efforts.
4. Support stewardship of local waterways.

One written comment was provided for this topic and reiterated the need to manage boat-wake erosion on lakefront properties. This attendee also referenced concern that increased residential density might worsen the issue of erosion. Another comment stated that it is imperative to perform a comprehensive study of the Schroon River from North Hudson to the Starbuckville Dam in order to learn what is happening within this corridor and to develop strategies for resiliency in order to respond to extreme erosion, sedimentation and high waters due to climate change.

The following table shows the recommendations for Natural Resource Protection and Lake Management and the amount of support that each received.

Recommendations	Total
Follow the guidance and detailed recommendations for stormwater management for Schroon Lake and Paradox Lake as outlined in the Schroon Lake Watershed Management Plan Addendum (July 2019).	2
Follow the guidance and detailed recommendations for erosion control for Schroon Lake and the Schroon River as outlined in the Schroon Lake Watershed Management Plan Addendum (July 2019).	4
Prepare a plan to address the sandbar delta that has built up where the Schroon River flows into northern Schroon Lake.	6
Continue prevention methods including performing aquatic plant survey every five years, annual Asian clam surveys, boat steward program (expand coverage), and Milfoil Scout Program, and boat wash decontamination program. Continue current maintenance plan for hand harvesting and monitoring results for Eurasian watermilfoil control in Schroon Lake.	10
Support the existing Eurasian watermilfoil management strategy in Paradox Lake.	5
Increase boat launch steward coverage as funds allow. Conduct an invasive species survey of all wetlands and inlet areas and map infestations.	3
Expand water quality monitoring program to include e-coli and/or other bacterial assessments.	12

## Town Services, Transportation, and Infrastructure

The goal displayed for this topic area was:

1. Provide high-quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure systems that support the current and future needs of the community, promote public health and safety, and facilitate economic development while minimizing environmental impacts.

Recommendations for Town Services, Transportation, and Infrastructure were split into 4 subsections to address specific issues and topics. These can be seen below, along with the amount of support for each recommendation.

General Recommendations	Total
Create a Capital Improvement Plan, including funding strategies, to ensure that infrastructure systems, such as roads, utilities, and public facilities, are well-designed, properly maintained, and able to meet the community's needs reliably. The plan could be drafted to address all infrastructure related recommendations.	24
Complete a green infrastructure plan to determine how best to intercept stormwater runoff.	0
Continue to work with National Grid on LED streetlight conversion. Ensure all exterior lighting on Town properties is compliant with Dark Sky Guidelines.	9
Conduct a building assessment and develop a plan for upgrading the Boathouse Theater and bandstand.	2
Explore options for generating revenue from visitor use of public amenities.	5
Implement a wayfinding signage system throughout the hamlet that provides direction to key destinations such as public parking, the beach, and boat launch.	6

Transportation Recommendations	Total
Continue to improve walkability and address accessibility barriers by adding accessible crosswalks, benches, trash cans, streetlight banners, historic lighting, seasonal flowers, landscaping, and shade trees throughout the hamlet. Assess the conditions of all sidewalks and identify sidewalk segments in need of repair or replacement. Update the sidewalk inventory as repairs are made.	22
Work with NYSDOT and Town of Chester to provide marked bike lanes on both sides of the Route 9 shoulders and install signage.	5
Consider adopting a Complete Streets Policy to ensure that all modes of transportation are considered in any infrastructure project involving street construction or reconstruction.	1

Improve parking. Maximize on-street parking spaces within the hamlet and explore opportunities to create new public parking lots in the town center. Consider establishing parking time limits and a designated space for commercial deliveries along with enforcement mechanisms.	7
Identify funding and install EV stations in key areas of the town.	0
Place digital radar speed signs on Route 9, including on the curve south of the business district.	1
Coordinate with DOT to change the name of Route 9 to Main Street within the hamlet.	2

<b>Water and Sewer Recommendations</b>	<b>Total</b>
Install stand-by generators for water pumps that fail when power is lost, which happens often, and town staff must manually operate the pumps.	8
Replace the leaking water tower, which may require acquisition of land.	1
Replace the Hillside Avenue water line.	2
Conduct an engineering study to explore options for adding capacity to the collection system south of Rogers Brook to support new development.	6
Identify strategies for protecting or relocating infrastructure that is vulnerable to flooding, including the two miles of sewer mainline along the shoreline and the Horseshoe Pond pump station.	1
Develop rules and regulations regarding septic inspection, regulation and treatments to limit wastewater pollution from getting into the Schroon Watershed.	19
Adopt a local law that requires a full septic system inspection by a qualified inspector upon sale or transfer of a property.	0

The Community Services recommendations received several comments. 2 comments mentioned the need for day-care options within Town, with one specifically mentioning a public/not-for-profit day-care available to residents. Another attendee commented that they do not want to see negative impacts on residents' taxes.

<b>Community Services Recommendations</b>	<b>Total</b>
Continue to allocate funds for the Fire and Ambulance Districts to provide operating resources for the volunteer fire and rescue organizations and support investments in modern apparatus, equipment, and personal protective gear.	29
Consider offering incentives like tax abatement, discounts, or pension plan contributions to attract and retain volunteers for the fire and ambulance districts.	4
Work with local and regional partners to continue to expand and enhance access to high-speed broadband internet and cell service.	11
Work with Essex County to improve the layout and efficiency of the Transfer Station.	3

## Land Use, Growth, and Development

The goal displayed for this topic area was:

1. Develop a land use plan that will encourage economic growth and infill in appropriate locations while protecting the natural resources and social quality of life in the community.

The following table shows the recommendations for Land Use, Growth, and Development and the amount of support that each received.

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Total</b>
Rewrite the Town zoning code as a unified development code.	4



Continue focusing higher density commercial and residential development within the hamlet where there is access to municipal water and sewer infrastructure.	2
Promote mixed-use development within the Route 9 corridor.	3
Encourage a variety of low to moderate density residential development outside of the hamlet.	7
Expand or upgrade the water and sewer districts to accommodate new housing development. Explore potential for hamlet expansion at Pickard Lane and other areas if water and sewer system can be expanded beyond the hamlet.	14
Given the lack of available land and sewer capacity within the hamlet, encourage infill development and redevelopment of commercial properties. Develop incentives for adaptive reuse of buildings within the Route 9 corridor.	3
Consider adoption of design guidelines for the main street corridor to ensure that new development or redeveloped properties are consistent with the community character and promote walkability.	7
Review procedures for enforcement of zoning regulations, property maintenance and building codes.	5
Establish a noise ordinance for the Town that includes enforcement mechanisms.	0

## Parks and Recreation

The three goals displayed for this topic area were:

1. Improve the facilities at Waterfront Park.
2. Improve the current recreational activities and create new outdoor experiences.
3. Address trails use policies and practices.

One comment for this topic area requested permanent pickle ball courts for the future, rather than just the multi-use courts currently available. Another person commented that

the trails behind "Sticks & Stones" between Charley Hill and Exit 27 should be promoted with improved signage, maintenance, trail markings, and trail maps. The following table shows the recommendations for Parks and Recreation and the amount of support that each received.

Recommendations	Total
Develop a comprehensive master design and plan for the waterfront park that may include the following Assign a location for a formal canoe/kayak/SUP launch area on the south side of the Boathouse.	2
Conduct a building assessment and develop a plan for upgrading the Boathouse Theater and Schroon Lake Bandstand.	3
Develop a Master Plan for the Golf Course including the Club House and Ski Hill. Consider expanding from 9 to 18 holes, adding snowmaking, and developing trail systems on Town land above the ski hill.	17
Develop a feasibility plan to develop a fitness path and dog park on existing town-owned lands or acquire new land for these purposes.	4
Develop a Townwide Trail Plan that creates an organized network of trails with consistent information about permitted activities, etc. As part of the plan, develop a consolidated map of recreational trails and bicycle routes.	5
Improve conditions and connections and expand opportunities for new hiking and biking trails.	5
Explore the feasibility of utilizing snowmobile trails for public walking and biking in the non-winter seasons when permitted in UMPs.	2
Develop a maintenance plan for abandoned town roads that could be used for hiking, running, mountain biking, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling.	13

## Sustainability and Resilience

The goal displayed for this topic area was:

1. Address stressed or impacted lands and facilities.

The following table shows the recommendations for Sustainability and Resilience and the amount of support that each received.

Recommendations	Total
Appoint a local Task Force to address the sustainability of town resources and develop guidelines for future mitigation and resilience.	4
Conduct an assessment that identifies community vulnerabilities and identifies and prioritizes actions to reduce risks to the community.	3
Identify and map buildings, infrastructure and areas that are prone to flooding after large storm events and assess the need for culvert and other stormwater infrastructure improvements. At a minimum address the following areas that have already been identified as presently experiencing issues: Alder Meadow Road; River Road; Continental Drive; North Shore Road; Emerson Road; Miller Road; Hoffman Road; Johnson Pond Road; and public lands within 100-year flood plain.	18
Consider the benefits of becoming a Climate Smart Community. Climate Smart Communities (CSC) is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The program offers grants, rebates for electric vehicles, and free technical assistance. The first action under the program is for the Town to pass the CSC pledge as a municipal resolution to join the program and become a Registered Climate Smart Community	6
Work with DEC to conduct an assessment of the condition and changes in sediment at the Starbuckville Dam.	6

## Tourism and Economic Development

The two goals displayed for this topic area were:

1. Develop an economic development model that strives to reach new visitors through a strong and distinctive branding message that evokes a unique experience and results in a growing population and economy.
2. Strengthen and diversify the business community.

Several written comments were received for this topic area. One attendee expressed concern about development around the lake. They did not want to see commercial development occur at the expense of residential properties and recommended that any

commercial development in the Town should adhere to strict guidelines, especially on properties around the lake. This was echoed by another attendee. Another comment focused on increasing/strengthening the rules at the Dock and Marina. The following table shows the recommendations for Tourism and Economic Development and the amount of support that each received.

Recommendations	Total
Develop a marketing plan for Schroon's creative economy that blends outdoor pursuits with the fine arts and performing arts venues. Expand signature community events and expand winter events. Create a brand strategy for the Town that highlights Schroon as the place for the "Ultimate American Adirondack Experience."	21
Create and participate in a sub-group of chambers that are working on regionally cooperative tourism initiatives and events that recognize their unique resources and create synergy between communities.	1
Become a Certified Trail Town, a year-round economic development strategy that welcomes short and long-distance hikers, mountain bikers, road bikers, skiers and snowmobilers.	6
Develop a set of trail experiences that draw people to the trails throughout the community. Expand existing trail and water itineraries that cover up to a week of challenging adventures. Provide visitors with detailed information and a comprehensive map of town and state trail systems in the Town of Schroon.	9
Fund a position for an economic development professional that would concentrate on revitalization of the business district.	3
Explore the feasibility of developing a pilot arts business incubator program to attract artists and artisans to vacant buildings in the downtown.	0
Review the viability and function of the Town's existing revolving loan fund. Explore options for providing financial assistance to upgrade existing accommodation businesses through the Business Loan Fund. Identify an entity to provide underwriting support for the revolving loan fund.	2