

Present:

Town Supervisor: Meg Wood

Councilpersons: Richard Gero, Steve Miller, Lynn Donaldson

Town Clerk: Erica Hedden

Also Present: Dave Williams, Joy Koch, Bob Koch, Roger Friedman, Fran & Skip Mahler, Sue Palisano, Albert May, Lisa Hess Marks, Jamie Konkoski

Supervisor Wood called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. with a salute to the Flag.

Public Participation:

Jamie Konkoski stated: I just wanted to do an overview of the Comprehensive Plan. First, I wanted to recognize everyone who was on this committee. Everyone dedicated so much time and energy into this plan. I have hand outs and a power point presentation; this information is on the website as well.

The project time line. September 2023 to March 2024 was phase one, which was community outreach, then phase two was June – October of 2024 and that was when we had a lot of our workshops. We reached out to the community and got a lot of input and feedback. Then phase three was the public hearing process where we are today.

A quick recap of the outreach we have done. The Webpage, which was kept up to date with our current status and plans, we had the community survey, where we had a really impressive 431 responses. That in an incredible amount of feedback from the community. Then we moved on to the workshops I mentioned earlier, followed by the stake holders' meetings that started in January of 2024. We had 8 committee meetings and subcommittee meetings. The sub committees formed "wish list" that we were able to work on. We reached out to the community with community newsletters as well as continuing to do out public workshops.

At that point we reacted our Visions, Goals and Recommendations and these really form the heart of the plan. There is a vision statement based on public input, the goals and recommendations are there to help us achieve those visions. This is a good road map for the town, this is general guidance on how to implement each action and where we can see the town in the futures. The plan is meant to be flexible, because things change, funding changes, elected official change, grants change, this allows us to shift and change shape as the plan moves forward, to stay relevant. There are nine main focus areas of the plan, each one of those has one to two recommendations and then a list of general recommendations. It is not a step-by-step program. This is a decision-making tool, they can see what the priorities are. Then they can make a choice based on what funding opportunities they have available at the time. That is where the plan being flexible comes into play. The recommendations all align with the smart growth principals.

The implementation strategy, there are a lot of recommendations here. This implementation strategy is our attempt to provide a 'Road Map' of sorts for over the next 10 to 20 years. Successful implementation will really depend on the community and the continued effort to achieve grant funding to help with the town's funds. This is a

recommendation. An implementation committee could be created to help with this. The town board on an annual basis would select priorities or identify funding matches. The committee would support whatever decisions the Town makes.

In terms of next steps for the plan adoptions, the hearing will be open for 30 days so anyone can submit written comments to the Town Clerk. We are waiting for a response from the APA, then in April once we have all that feedback, the Town board can decide if any changes need to be made or not. Then in May at the regular town board meeting, the town can adopt the plan.

Supervisor Wood stated; Ok is there anyone who would like to make any remarks of comments?

Dave Williams stated; thank you to everyone who participated in the program and getting this off the ground. This is a wonderful thing for the town to have and I really do appreciate everyone's hard work.

Joy Koch stated; I have a statement that I have prepared.

First, I would like to thank the Comprehensive plan committee members & the town board for their time and input into this plan, which I believe has been very well thought out. A plan is only as good as its implementation, and I am hopeful the town will move swiftly to begin enacting many parts of this plan, especially the zoning aspect.

As a Dark Sky Advocate, I am thrilled that the town is embracing the Dark Sky Initiative. We are not alone in ADK Park. Lake Placid/N Elba, Tupper Lake & Johnsburg are working to ensure dark skies. Horicon is starting on their comprehensive plan. Members of their committee have added Dark skies to their plan. (this is good news since a major portion of SL is in Horicon)

Implementing the Dark Sky Lighting plan is the first step in getting us recognized as a dark sky community. What that means for us is: we will be put on the map, so to speak. By becoming a Designated Dark Sky Community, we will be able to promote our location for Tourism. We will come up as a dark sky location. Astro tourism is growing worldwide in leaps and bounds.

There are 9 KEY points of the Comprehensive plan. Dark Skies covers 6 of the 9.

- 1) ****Land Use, Growth and Development-** 88% of land in our town is undeveloped...the remaining 12% is creating light pollution at a level 4 (out of 9) on the light pollution scale Bortel Scale. **We can easily reverse this.**
- 2) ****Housing-** (over the past 15 years there has been a 7% increase in new homes, which includes outdoor Lighting) we need to insure proper lighting on new construction and renovations
- 3) ****Natural Resource Protection & Lake Management-** Outdoor lighting contributes to Global Warming. We are losing our view of the stars a global **natural** resource, outdoor night lighting increases algal blooms (APA) & adversely impacts nocturnal animals, pollinators, plants & Humans. We have an obligation to future generations.
- 4) ****Economic Development-** and Downtown Revitalization Market Schroon Lake as a DARK SKY Community and offer Dark Sky Events
- 5) ****Tourism-** Astro tourism = Visitors. Visitors that come to parks for astronomy programs are likely to spend the night, use local services for lodging, food, gasoline, equipment, and other expenditures, which factor into overall visitor spending. More national parks are becoming Dark sky locations...in Utah for example: A recent study found that 62% of Utah's state & national park visitors surveyed had participated in some type of night sky recreation activity. Astro tourism is growing... at a swift pace.
- 6) **Parks & Recreation-** Evening Sky tours., boat tours, stargazing in the park. Every night the stars are there, every month there are new celestial events like meteor showers, lunar eclipses, Planet alignments, comets, shooting stars, we can harness the heavens to our benefit!

From Comp plan: The main obstacle for SL is the relative anonymity of the town.

Getting put on the Dark sky map. Become a Designated Dark sky location with programs supporting astro tourism. In order to be **designated** we need to add Dark Sky Lighting Guidelines to the zoning. I have sent the Dark sky Guidelines to all of you and to Larry Reid. **This first step is free, easy (it's already written) and can be started immediately.**

Lastly: I believe we should also advocate to be a **climate smart community** as recommended in the comprehensive plan.

The benefit to becoming a climate smart community.... There are grants available. As a Dark Sky community we would qualify for a lighting grant which would fall under the climate smart guidelines. To change our light bulbs in the park and on main street from bright white bulbs to lower lumen soft amber bulbs, will cost less than \$1000 AND it will reduce the electric usage saving our town money AND will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. WIN WIN and we can obtain grant money!

FYI...

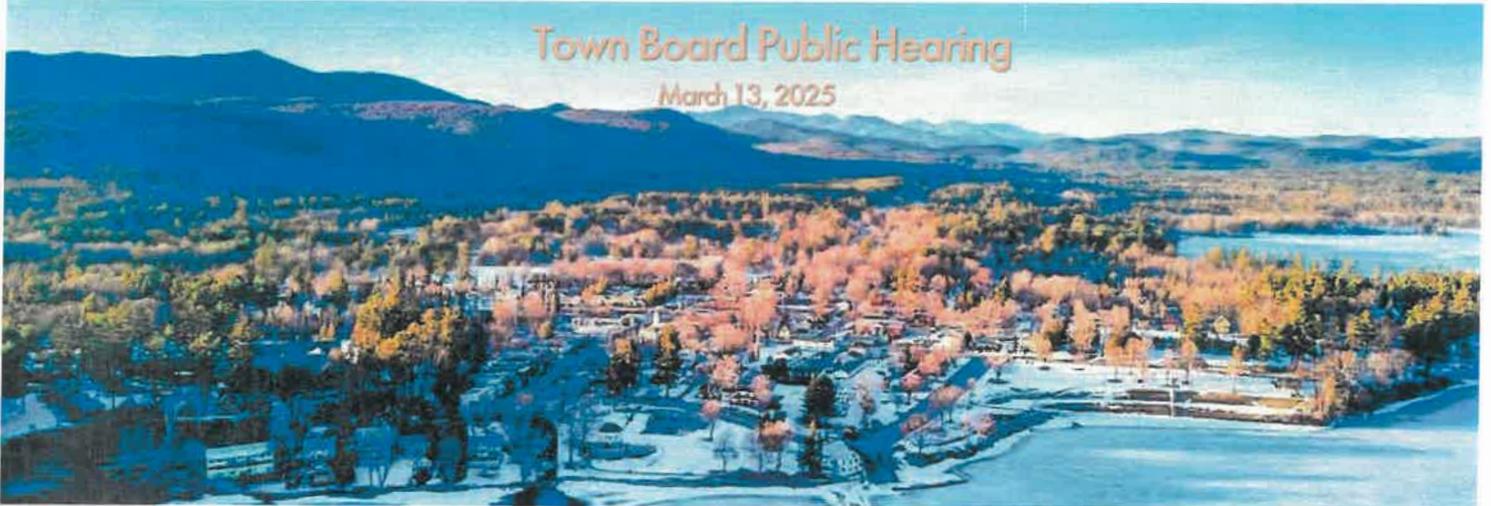
I will be hosting another Dark Sky Education table at our first Farmers Market June 21st. I would love to be able to tell our residents (99% are in favor of responsible outdoor lighting) that our town **has adopted and enacted lighting guidelines. The Comprehensive Plan is great! But it is only great if we SWIFTLY MAKE IT HAPPEN. Thank you.**

Town Clerk stated; Please submit all written comments to myself the Town Clerk. Written comments can be dropped off at 15 Leland Ave, mailed to P.O. Box 578, Schroon Lake NY 12870 or emailed to townclerk@schroon.net.

Thank you



Town of Schroon Comprehensive Plan Update



Planning Team



Jamie Konkoski, Lead Planner
Matthew Rogers, Project Manager



Tracey Clothier, AICP, CEP

Comprehensive Plan Committee

- Roger Friedman, Chair
- Meg Wood, Supervisor
- Lorraine Stanchich-Brown
- Jessica Deslauriers
- Laura Donaldson
- Lynn Donaldson
- Rick Gero
- Pam Ireland
- Joan Lawless
- Lisa Hess Marks
- Steve Miller
- Bruce Murdock
- Sue Palisano
- David Peterson
- Jenny Pilkin
- Larry Reid
- Glen Repko
- Joe Steiniger
- Ethan Thompson
- Leanna Welch
- Dave Williams
- Darren Woods
- Dan Kelleher

Public Outreach Overview

5. Comprehensive Plan Committee Meetings

- The Town formed a Comprehensive Plan Committee
- Subcommittees formed to create 'wish lists'

7. Public Workshop #2

- Held on June 11, 2024 and supplemented with an online survey
- Attendees provided feedback on draft recommendations

6. Community Newsletters



Topic Areas

- Land Use Growth & Development
- Housing
- Town Services, Transportation and Infrastructure
- Natural Resource Protection and Lake Management
- Sustainability & Resilience
- Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization
- Tourism
- Parks & Recreation
- Arts, Culture & History

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

Smart Growth promotes several land use planning principles that create livable, sustainable and equitable communities, including:

	Develop plans and land use regulations that allow for and encourage mixed-use neighborhoods.
	Enable a diverse mix of housing types, providing opportunity and choice for all.
	Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing buildings to revitalize neighborhoods and downtowns, including areas around public transit.

	Provide well-planned, equitable, and accessible public spaces.
	Encourage compact neighborhood design and re-concentrated development around existing infrastructure.
	Preserve open space, agricultural resources, and natural resources.
	Prioritize transportation options such as walking, cycling, and public transportation.
	Prioritize climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
	Build an unique trail to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.
	Engage in an inclusive, collaborative public planning process that considers the needs and character of the community.

Implementation Strategy

Implementation of the Town of Schroon Comprehensive Plan will depend upon:

1. The will and commitment of the community to provide the momentum and resources needed
2. The active pursuit of appropriate grants and other resources to supplement local funds

1

Organize

Town Board establish an Implementation Committee to facilitate and steer project implementation.

2

Prioritize

Town Board establishes Comprehensive Plan as a regular agenda item and Town Board selects annual priorities; receives updates from Committee.

3

Pursue Funding

Identify grant programs to support implementation of annual priorities and develop a line item in the Town budget for matching funds.

Implementation Plan

Implementation Committee will be responsible for:

- Recording the progress of plan implementation
- Describing the status of current projects
- Identifying projects that need additional information or resources
- Providing updates to the public on the Town's website

Recommendation	Lead	Partner	Reference Plan	Resource
Priority Recommendations				
Rewrite the Town zoning code as a unified development code. The Unified Development Code should combine all regulations related to planning, zoning, and zoning in the Town, including SEQR, Unseal Buildings, Subdivision Rules and Regulations, and Short-Term Rentals.	Town	Planning Board ZEA	Lowville Revitalization Strategy	NYS006 Smart Growth Community Planning and Zoning Grant, DEC Smart Growth, Town Budget
Establish an affordable housing committee or task force to partner with regional housing organizations to develop or retrofit properties and facilitate implementation of housing recommendations.	Town	Lowville Revitalization Committee Development Committee ESD Housing Task Force Housing Center with Hudson County Partnership	Housing	Habitat for Humanity
Write a Capital Improvement Plan, including utility strategies, to ensure that infrastructure projects, 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 needs/needs.	Town		None	DEC Adirondack Smart Growth, COBG Planning (for water), EPG (for sewer)

Funding sources were identified in the Implementation Table. As funding sources and strategies are everchanging, it is important to continually re-examine priorities and to evaluate possible alternatives and implementation strategies to support the projects identified by residents and included in this plan.

Abbreviation	Grant Program	Agency
ANCA	Community and Regional Planning Services (technical assistance)	Adirondack Park County Association (ANCA)
BL	Bioregion Infrastructure Loan	NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (NYEFC)
COBG Housing	NYS Community Development Block Grant Program	Homes and Community Revitalization (HCR)
COBG Planning	NYS Community Development Block Grant Program	Homes and Community Revitalization (HCR)
CLG Funding	Certified Local Government Funding	NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
CSC	Climate Smart Communities	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
DEC Smart Growth	Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Program	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
EPF	Engineering Planning Grant Program	NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (NYEFC)
ESD	ESD Grant Funds	NYS Empire State Development (ESD)
ESD Grant Funds	Empire State Development Grant Funds	ESD (ESD)
ESD Planning	Strategic Planning & Feasibility Studies	NYS Empire State Development (ESD)
ESD Pro-Housing	Capital Improvement Grants for Pro-Housing Communities	NYS Empire State Development (ESD)
ESMA HMP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	ESMA (ESMA)



Next Steps

1. Town Board Public Hearing – open for 30 days
2. A waiting response from Essex County Planning Board & APA
3. Incorporate public and agency feedback (April)
4. Town Board adopts the Comprehensive Plan (May)

RECESS PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:00 PM

INTRODUCED BY: Supervisor Wood

SECONDED BY: Councilperson Gero

With no further business, this meeting was recessed at 6:00PM, carried unanimously

Respectfully Submitted by

Erica Hedden

Town Clerk