

Joint Implementable Comprehensive Plan Town of Chautauqua and Village of Mayville

Steering Committee No. 1 – Wed., April 17, 5 p.m.

Notes

WELCOME AND PURPOSE

1. Jenni Easton, Pashek+MTR project manager, thanked the Steering Committee for volunteering for this project and introduced colleagues Jim Pashek, Founding Partner; and Sarah Rizk, Planner. Meeting attendees and committee members introduced themselves and their role.
2. Jenni explained how the implementable plan process differs from a traditional comprehensive planning process. A comprehensive plan is a community's official land use plan and policy framework for future decision-making. An **implementable** comprehensive plan doesn't focus on everything under the sun, but hones in on a handful of issues that are extremely important to a community, areas where there is potential to make real progress within 10 years. We call these "Key Issues." An **implementable** plan also changes the focus of the process from the basic act of creating a plan document/report to one of successfully improving the community. Pashek+MTR will work with the Steering Committee to identify and understand Key Issues, then to provide a specific policy guide with detailed next steps to help implement improvements. This includes making sure the plan is realistic and feasible with regard to local capacity and resources.
3. Jenni explained the role of the Steering Committee and established expectations for the planning process:
 - A. We will convene meetings at decision points in the process (i.e not just for the sake of meeting). The process will require Steering Committee guidance throughout, for:
 - Engaging with the community
 - Promoting the planning process and events
 - Determining whether the process and the contents are on the right track
 - Later, garnering support for the plan so that it gets implemented
 - B. We request honest and timely feedback via your review and comments when we distribute materials for consideration.
 - C. We are thrilled to work with such a deeply knowledgeable and dedicated group, and we will look to you to contribute your professional expertise as well as the perspective you offer as

community leaders. Trust us to lead and facilitate a process that will deliver a successful result.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1. Jim explained that the plan should represent general community consensus, and to achieve that it will need to be rooted in thoughtful public engagement. There is an important difference between *public input*, an exercise limited to the duration of the project in which we ask people what they think, and *public engagement*, in which we get people involved in sustained initiatives and give them agency in improving their community in ways that are important to them. Public engagement ensures that the plan is relevant and vital, and it helps us build buy-in that will be important for implementation.
2. One typical early step in our process is to develop and distribute a community quality of life questionnaire. However, given the fact that the survey already conducted for this project provided a strong foundation to work from, Jim suggested that an additional survey may not be necessary, and efforts may be best focused on pop-up events. Jim asked if anyone had additional information they wished was included in the previous survey and what the key takeaways were. The group discussed:
 - Respondents skewed heavily in the 55+ age group (almost 65% of respondents)
 - The group wondered if there were ways to get youth more involved given the survey respondent demographics.
 - How to share the survey with all members in a household
 - Needing to use social media, particularly to reach the youth of the community.
 - Using the results of the word cloud to find out what was most important to the community
3. Jim asked the group for feedback on other ways to engage the community. The engagement plan typically includes pop-up events where we can find people where they are, promote the planning effort, and collect input. The group discussed ideas for upcoming events:
 - Farmers Market on Thursdays
 - Concert at the school coincides with the elections on May 21
 - Summer festivals, such as the 4th of July, Celtic Festival, and Memorial Day Parade
 - Music in the Park on Thursday nights
 - Burger nights
 - Big Inlet Brewing music nights
 - Rails with Trails Wine Walk
 - Events with the fire department, such as BBQ chicken nights
 - CHQ Institute Sundays (12-2pm)

- Train Depot Saturday evening Market in August
 - Mayville Bluegrass Festival
 - Offering coupons outside the ice cream shop
 - Organizations in the community, such as Senior Citizens Association
4. The project team will also conduct interviews with about 20 Key Stakeholders as another means of collecting information. Jim asked the group to suggest people who have important perspectives and insight. The committee should reach out to contacts to let them know that the project team will be reaching out to them. **Please send ideas for contacts to Jenni.** Initial thoughts included:
- Chamber President, Brian Pender
 - Mayville Village Historian, Devon Taylor
 - Chautauqua Institution Archivist, Jon Schmitz
 - Mayville Library Director, Melissa Bartok
 - Members of the zoning or planning boards
 - Members of the farming community, such as Woods Farm
 - Real estate developers/brokers
 - Liaisons to the Amish community
 - Old Corner Deli
5. Jim asked the committee to help share process updates and engagement opportunities on the websites, and the group shared that the Mayville Community Connections Facebook page is a good way of sharing information. Other public engagement as part of the process might include community engagement forums to be included in the Village's monthly newsletter.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

1. As part of the planning process, the consultant team will create a Community Profile as required by the grant. Jim asked the group what trends the community sees as being important over the 10 years and to the planning process. He explained that this might include changes in housing, population, and businesses. The group discussed the following community trends:
 - *Housing*: single-family homes converted to rental units, the number of "second home" owners, the number of units the Institute owns outside of grounds
 - *Recreation*: mapping open spaces and woodland areas, trail use data

- *Population*: population decline and aging population
- *Economic*: vacant properties, property ownership, and remote workers

KEY ISSUES

1. Jim and Jenni suggested that the committee should consider how to plan for the Village and the Town in the next 10 years. They emphasized that the issues, challenges, and opportunities from this discussion will be the most important factors to consider in the plan. Jim explained that the key issues should be the highest priorities for the community, and limiting their number is crucial for making significant progress in each area. Instead of including numerous recommendations, the plan should prioritize allocating energy and resources toward achieving tangible progress. By limiting the number of key issues to between three and six, the plan can be more focused.
2. Jim asked the steering committee to identify what they believe are the key issues facing the Village and Town. The highlights of the discussion are as follows:

Housing

- Summer homes and Airbnbs comprise a large portion of housing and leave few apartments available for yearlong rent.
- Property maintenance and blight

Rural Character and Development

- Managing the development of rural spaces and creating a vibrant town center
- Protecting land from sprawl
- Agricultural preservation and management
- Managing industrial solar and its impact on agriculture (land preservation)
- Internet connection

Vibrant Businesses

- Vibrant business district with sustainable jobs and addressing the loss of businesses.
- Encouraging business growth year round
- Engaging CHQ Institute visitors and have them invest in the Town and Village without centering or over-emphasizing it

Local Identity

- One of the key factors in retaining young people in a community is the overall quality of life and the involvement of their families and communities. Learning how to market the Town and Village/branding/tapping into the local identity.
- How key issues might have unique solutions in the Town versus in the Village

Recreation and Connectivity

- Development of Lakeside Park and capitalizing on existing recreational opportunities
- Transportation. Right now, the CHQ Institute has transportation available during the active summer season, but they sit the rest of the year. Visitors to the Institute would like transportation to the airport and to get outside of the grounds, which may provide an opportunity for Institute visitors to spend time and money in the Village and Town. Additionally, the lack of transportation options leads to food deserts.
- Connections between uptown and the lake for biking and walking. Active transportation features, such as walking and biking networks, are also a key component of attracting young people to the area.

Other Issues

- Environmental quality and health of the lake
- Drugs
- Addressing overall zoning (businesses, housing, etc.)

WHAT'S NEXT

1. Jenni and Jim provided a brief overview of the project schedule. Phase 1 is “Listening to the community,” via the public engagement strategies. We will identify a handful of Key Issues the plan will tackle. After the committee agrees on the key issues, the public will have a chance to provide input. Phase 2 is “Drilling down for solutions.” This is when the project team does most of the lifting, identifying best practices and specific, realistic solutions to problems. The draft then undergoes an official 45-day review period before elected officials hold an adoption vote.
2. The consultant team will provide the committee with an engagement strategy for moving forward with public engagement. The committee can also expect to see a Community Profile during the first phase of the process.
3. The next Steering Committee with the project team will be scheduled for June, likely via Zoom. The committee acknowledges the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7 pm is an agreeable time.

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