

2012 Transition Committee Report

Excerpt of Land Use, Planning and Open Space section

The Committee was briefed by Committee member, Deputy Supervisor and Planning Board member John Smolinsky (Appendix C contains the presentation outline). The central finding was that it is a good time to review the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that its goals are being met, broadly shared, and that the public understands how the Plan and land use controls operate. It was generally agreed that people are concerned about growth in the southern part of town, and it might be a good idea to have a public forum or two on this issue explaining what the town can and cannot do to guide growth and manage transportation issues. Most agreed that economic development to broaden tax base is of prime importance. While many agreed that it is important to have a Town Open Space Program, (i.e. selection criteria, funding options, facilitation, stewardship options, etc.) in place, even if no funding source is identified, others did not. Similarly, some supported and some opposed public funding for open space preservation.

Recommendations:

- The town needs to review the goals, recommendations and accomplishments of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, to determine if the Plan continues to accomplish its objectives. This review could use some combination of the following approaches:
 - a) A Committee
 - b) Public Forums
 - c) Focus Groups
- It was noted that the CPOC committee and process has previously been utilized to evaluate the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Town should take proactive approaches for particular development plans in critical areas (e.g., as done for the New Scotland Road Hamlet Plan), as well as to address major emerging needs (example: affordable senior housing in an area in which seniors can walk to small stores, etc.).
- The Town should initiate a planning initiative to consider long-term traffic and circulation patterns in the general area bounded by Rt. 9W on the east, the Delmar By-Pass on the west, Glenmont Road on the north and Elm Ave. on the south. This would supplement traffic planning already underway by private developers and would result in policy consensus for long-term improvements to traffic and circulation in this growing area of the Town.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) emerged as a Tier I recommendation of the Town's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) adopted in 2005. The Town was successful in applying for a grant from the New York State Department of State (DOS), the State agency that has planning jurisdiction over the State's coastal zones including the Hudson River. The purpose of the study is to develop recommendations and policy guidance related to future land use in the riverfront corridor.

To assist the Department of State and the Town in preparing the study, DOS requires that a Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) be organized to assist in the planning process.

Major components of the LWRP study will include the following:

- Inventory and Analysis of natural and man-made resources in the waterfront area
- Identification of issues, conflicts and opportunities in the study area
- Identification of existing roles and responsibilities of federal, state and local agencies in the study area
- Identification of management plan objectives in the study area
- Development of waterfront revitalization policies
- Description of proposed land and water uses necessary to implement the LWRP
- Identification of implementation techniques and methods that can be used to address identified issues
- Determination of Significance and Compliance with the State Environmental Quality review Act (SEQRA)
- Development of a Master Plan for Henry Hudson Park

History and Status: Started 2006; Final Draft delivered March, 2011; comments from DOS received Oct, 2011

Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study

Background/Mission: The Town's Comprehensive Plan recognizes that the Delaware Avenue Hamlet area, as well as the Town's other hamlets, helps to define a "sense of place" in the Town. One of the goals stated in the Comp Plan is to "encourage compact, mixed use commercial and residential development/redevelopment in identified neighborhood commercial centers and hamlet centers throughout the town. Appropriate scale, design, and character, attention to the pedestrian environment, and connections to adjacent neighborhoods are critical to the success of such centers".

The Town was successful in securing a grant through the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) to select a consultant to assist in developing this study. River Street Planning & Development LLC, located in Troy, NY has been selected as the consultant.

Study Objectives:

- Design guidelines/standards including building scale, massing, design and setbacks
- Streetscape guidelines including a typical street cross section
- Access Management
- Parking and circulation for vehicles and bicycles
- Transportation improvements

History and Status: Study Advisory Committee met Sept 2008; Recommendation to adopt guideline expected to Town Board in early 2012

Route 9W Study

The Route 9W Linkage Study emerged as a Tier I recommendation of the Town's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). The Town was successful in applying for a "Linkage" Study grant from the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the region's designated transportation planning organization. To assist CDTC and the Town in implementing the study, the Town Board has appointed a Citizen's Advisory Group (CAG) to assist in building consensus on study recommendations. The 9W CAG is an advisory body that provides advice and recommendations to the study leaders and consulting team.

The purpose of the study is to assess needs and develop preferred alternatives for both transportation improvements and land uses in the 9W corridor. A key element of the study will be a feasibility analysis of a possible "northern alignment" for the Selkirk Bypass

The purpose of the study is to assess needs and develop preferred alternatives for both transportation improvements and land uses in the 9W corridor. A key element of the study will be a feasibility analysis of a possible "northern alignment" for the Selkirk Bypass.

Major components of the study include:

- Review of previous planning efforts in the corridor
- Development of an existing conditions profile for the corridor (land use and zoning, intersection and mainline performance, property access management, Selkirk Bypass alternatives, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and visual environment)
- Development of a 20-year growth scenario and traffic forecast
- Establishment of a vision statement and planning principles for the corridor
- Conducting public workshops on issues identification and Selkirk Bypass alternatives
- Development of a draft plan for the corridor
- Obtaining public feedback on the draft through additional workshops
- Refinement and development of a final plan

History and Status - Committee first met March, 2006; Final Report 12/2008; draft zoning revisions that incorporate the guidelines presented to Town Board May, 2011; approval is pending 12, 2011.

PaTHs 4 Bethlehem - Pathways To Homes, Hamlets and Healthy Hearts

Mission: Help implement recommendations as made by the 2005 Comprehensive Plan regarding pedestrian connectivity throughout the town. Mission also includes bicycle pathways and safety.

Committee Goals 2009:

- 1) Identify and establish a priority list for future pathway investment
- 2) Identify available funding sources and grant opportunities
- 3) Maintain and enhance pedestrian connections to:
 - A. Parks, Recreation and Cultural Facilities
 - B. Create Safe Routes to Schools
 - C. Neighborhoods (within and between)
 - D. Hamlet Centers
 - E. Commercial Districts

ATTACHMENT 2 - Planning Presentation to Clarkson Transition Team

Long Term Goal 2010 - Establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Program addressing the 3 E's, Engineering, Education, and Enforcement, for bicycle and pedestrian mobility – The Committee could work towards the development of this broader program to address bicycle and pedestrian mobility in the Town. (The 3 E's approach to bicycle and pedestrian mobility are recommended in the NYSDOT 2010 Strategic Highway Safety Plan, and the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee 2010 Highway Safety Strategic Plan.)

Paths Accomplishments:

- > Complete Streets Resolution August 2009, adopted by Town Board
- > Evaluation Process for New Pathways Investments
- > Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network
- > Bicycle and Pedestrian Program addressing the 3Es - Engineering, Education, and Enforcement for bicycle and pedestrian mobility
- > Pedestrian/Bicyclist Safety Card - partnered w/ citizen's committee
- > Secured Grants for town bicycle racks
- > Partnered w/ BCSD, YMCA, and RPI on Ped/Bike efforts
- > Developed Sidewalk Maintenance Manual
- > Bike Route/marketing Pilot Projects - In Progress

History and Status - PATHS Advisory Committee started in March, 2009; established as a standing committee November 2010

Agricultural and Farmland Study

Background/Mission: The Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan emerged from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan's recommendation for the development of a Farm and Open Space Protection Plan. The Town was successful in applying for a grant from New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) in the amount of \$25,000 to fund the development of the Protection Plan. The purpose of the study is to work with individuals involved in the Towns agricultural industry to establish strategies that will result in the enhancement, management and continued viability of agriculture and farmland areas and lands in the Town of Bethlehem

Major goals of the study will include:

- Document current farming operations and agricultural businesses to result in a status of agriculture and farming activities in Bethlehem.
- Identify opportunities/strategies to enhance, manage, and continue the viability of agriculture and farming in the Town.
- Analyze the following factors concerning any areas and lands proposed for participation:
 - Value to Bethlehem's agricultural economy
 - Value to Bethlehem's community character
 - Level of conversion pressure
 - Consequences of possible conversion to non-agriculture and farming activities

History and status: Committee meetings initiated June 2008; Final Report presented to Town Board, Nov 2009, several zoning amendments which implement recommendations are pending.

Open Space/ CACC

CACC -The Citizens Advisory Committee on Conservation (CACC) emerged as a Tier I recommendation of the Town's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). The Comp Plan directed the Town Board to appoint an advisory committee, which at the direction of the Town Board, explores conservation projects and opportunities with willing landowners. The CACC has been asked to assist in the development of an integrated pedestrian trail network in the Slingerlands area. It has also been asked to develop information about funding programs that can be used to assist in open space conservation. CACC was also asked to develop recommendations on Open Space Needs and Opportunities.

Status and History: CACC was formed in March 2006 and in 2011 it was noted that the committee's charge from the Town Board had been completed. The committee produced three major products:

Open Space Protection Programs - Funding and Tools (2006)

Slingerlands Pedestrian Network - A Pedestrian Mobility Plan for the Slingerlands Hamlet (2006)

Recommendations on Open Space Needs and Opportunities (2009)

Open Space Program - Based upon CACC's work and the efforts of Bethlehem Tomorrow the Town Supervisor presented a draft structure for an Open Space Program to the Town Board. With the Board's consent, Town staff and volunteers are preparing a more detailed proposal for an open Space Program and to continue a dialogue with interested landowners.

The Open Space Program (OSP) establishes the parameters for the Town to maintain a balance of residential development, commercial/industrial development, and conservation land. As the Town continues to grow and support development, the OSP will ensure the preservation of Bethlehem's character as a community that blends suburban and rural elements.

An effective OSP requires a combination of dedicated public and private funds. The OSP can be funded through a variety of means such as grants, donations, set-aside fee structures, or new revenue streams such as payment-in-lieu-of-tax agreements or general taxation. The Town is committed to supporting the OSP by establishing a dedicated account for the sole purpose of purchasing land or development rights and associated administrative costs. The Town understands that having a dedicated fund for open space is vital to the success of the OSP but there are many tools to assist in preserving open space that will also be a part of the OSP. For example, landowners may choose to make a charitable contribution of land for the purpose of conservation easements in exchange for both Federal and State income tax benefits. The Town is in the beginning phase of establishing the OSP and is considering all available tools for preserving open space.

Comprehensive Plan Assessment Committee (CPAC)

Bethlehem's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2005, resulting in revisions to its zoning and related codes. The Plan identifies goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, and standards for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the Town. In 2007, a Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC) was convened, which issued a variety of recommendations, one of which was to periodically review the Comprehensive Plan. Since CPOC's review, the zoning codes have been revised several times, new studies have been issued, and economic conditions have changed. It is therefore a good time to review the Plan to ensure that its goals are being met, broadly shared, and that the public understands how the Plan and land use controls operate.

Mission: To evaluate progress on the goals and objectives of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and subsequent CPOC report to determine whether changes, additions or deletions are appropriate, considering changes in the community, the economic climate, as well as recommendations from advisory committees and the community at large. Broad subtasks include:

- 1) Review Comp Plan status (report prepared by staff)
- 2) Develop Public Information on Land Use Issues
- 3) Review of overall development patterns and projects
- 4) Identification of development and planning issues
- 5) Development of Public Engagement Process
- 6) Evaluate Planning issues identified by community participation.

Committee Operation: CPAC will involve objective fact-finding as well as broad public participation. The Committee will include Town officials and staff as well as citizens chosen to represent a cross-section of the community (a "focus panel"). The Town staff can provide baseline information, background reporting, etc., with the community members adding their experience and perspective. However, as the primary goal of this effort is to facilitate broad public participation, the Committee will also utilize surveys, public forums and any other appropriate methods to gather public input.

Public Engagement Process: CPAC will develop a public engagement process using local forums, surveys and other tools to provide for public input and public education on the current plan, land use and related issues. CPAC should provide for outreach to community leaders and residents of each neighborhood or area of town and conduct meetings that focus on interests to such areas. CPAC should also incorporate contact with other interested parties in its review: including the business community, industry, agricultural interests, neighboring municipalities and other municipal jurisdictions.

End Product: A report on progress in achieving Comp Plan goals and objectives that establishes a priority for remaining and new goals and initiatives, and identifies next steps and a proposed timetable for implementation.

Town Officials

Supervisor – John Clarkson
Deputy Supervisor – John Smolinsky
Town Board Member – Kyle Kotary
Planning Board Chair – George Leveille
Zoning Board Chair – Dan Coffey
Director DEDP – Mike Morelli

Community Members

David Barnet
James Booker
Jessica Brand
Joseph Castiglione
Mark Hennessey
Linda Jasinski
Edward Kleinke

Jill Knapp
Valerie Newell
John Privitera
Lee Rosen
Loretta Simon
Bruce Smith
Paul Tick
David VanLuven

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary

Adopted August 24, 2005

Over the last several months, the Town of Bethlehem has come together in an effort to define comprehensively a future for the community. What kind of community does Bethlehem want to be? The answer to this question helps to provide a context for the many decisions that the community will make now and in the future. It helps guide and prioritize the investments that must be made to enhance the Town's future.

This is the first comprehensive plan completed by the Town of Bethlehem. As such, many longstanding issues related to change in the community have been discussed and debated. In fact, twelve (12) public workshops, fourteen (14) Bethlehem Planning Advisory Committee meetings, and two written surveys have been conducted thus far to facilitate this discussion. This emphasis on public involvement has improved everyone's understanding of the variety of viewpoints about growth and development in the community. A full description of the public process is located in Section 2 of this document.

The Bethlehem Comprehensive Plan seeks to achieve broad consensus about the development of the town over the next ten or fifteen years. It is understood that not all individual interests can be accommodated through its recommendations. It is further understood that the plan is a living document and must be reevaluated from time to time to address changing circumstances. However, the recommendations within this comprehensive plan do indeed direct the community toward an overall vision to which the most residents of Bethlehem can agree. It has been crafted with the intent of achieving **balance** – balance between urban, suburban, and rural perspectives; balance between the need and desire for economic growth, for tax base expansion and diversification, and for the stewardship of finite land and environmental resources; and balance between the short-term and long-term health, safety, and welfare of the community.

The Town's vision for the future is captured in the following statement:

***In the Year 2020**, the Town of Bethlehem is a community of attractive residential neighborhoods, vibrant hamlets, successful mixed-use commercial centers, modern industrial facilities, and productive rural lands. These are well connected by regional highways and local streets, adequately serviced by public transportation, and linked by a network of sidewalks and trails. Situated at the heart of the Capital District, Bethlehem offers convenient access to all that the region has to offer. It is recognized for the excellence of its schools, the quality of its public safety and community services, the abundance of its recreational opportunities, the productivity of its local businesses, ten miles of Hudson River waterfront, and the beauty and health of its natural environment. This exceptional quality of life contributes to the economic growth and prosperity of the town and the region, assuring that the community can continue to meet the increasingly diverse needs and expectations of its residents in a fiscally sustainable manner.

* **Note:** The Vision Statement is written as if it was the year 2020 and one was describing the Town of Bethlehem. This is how we hope to be able to describe Bethlehem in fifteen years.

The Town of Bethlehem developed a set of Guiding Principles to assist the community as it takes steps to achieve the vision articulated above. These principles are over-arching, and should be considered in all decision-making as the comprehensive plan is implemented. The Guiding Principles include: **Adaptability, Diversity, Environmental Sustainability, Fiscal Responsibility, Intermunicipal Cooperation and Community Partnerships, and Respect for Private Property.** These guiding principles are defined in Section 3 of this document.

Finally, to achieve the vision set forth by the community, multiple goals were established to guide decision-making. The goals address a variety of issues, and the recommendations in the comprehensive plan attempt to direct short-term and long-term actions toward achieving these broad goals.

The goals, in no particular order of priority, are to:

- > Achieve a balanced tax base
- > Create a business-friendly environment
- > Encourage compact, mixed-use commercial and residential development/redevelopment
- > Ensure that there is a reliable supply of high-quality water
- > Expand public, private or non-profit active and passive recreational resources and community services available in the town
- > Improve mobility – the ability of people, regardless of age and status, to engage in desired activities at moderate cost to themselves and society - throughout the town
- > Improve the development review process
- > Maintain existing public water and sewer infrastructure in developed areas of the town. Plan for fiscally responsible capital improvements to expand such infrastructure in a manner that is consistent with this plan
- > Manage and protect significant environmental systems
- > Promote commercial and industrial growth in specifically designated locations
- > Promote energy efficiency and conservation, and the use of renewable energy in the town
- > Provide opportunities for the development of a variety of housing options in the town
- > Recognize the town’s significant cultural resources, historic resources, and natural resources
- > Utilize flexible land use regulations and creative land development techniques to retain the economic value of rural land
- > Work with willing landowners to conserve quality open spaces throughout the town

More detail about the community goals listed above is available in Section 3 of this plan.

Plan Priorities

The following summary organizes the plan’s principal recommendations so as to provide clear policy guidance to the Town Board and the Town’s staff related to both the level of priority and timing of

implementation for the various recommendations. More detail about the plan recommendations can be found in Section 4 of this document. The Plan Recommendations Map is located in Section 5. Additional detail about implementation of the plan is located in Section 6. In the event of any perceived ambiguity in any of the recommendations as presented throughout the plan, the construction of the plan will be guided by the intent expressed in this Executive Summary.

Immediate Action:

- > Update the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations to reflect the recommendations set forth in this comprehensive plan; key recommendations include the following:
 - *Hamlet Zones*: mixed use high density zones of a variety of scales and designs; encourage a variety of housing types; and mixed use buildings
 - *In-Town Residential*: high density (6 dwelling units (DU) per acre); traditional residential neighborhoods that border hamlet zones; public water and sewer; and improve pedestrian amenities
 - *Residential*: medium density (3 DU per acre); conservation design density incentive (4 DU per acre); public water and sewer required for new developments (existing developments grandfathered); and minor subdivision permitted (see definition below)
 - *Rural*: low density residential (1 DU per 2 acres); conservation design density incentive (1.25 DU per 2 acres); generally no public water and sewer; minor subdivision permitted (see definition below); specific rural mixed uses permitted as of right, others permitted but require special use permit; and with extension of water and sewer Town to consider re-zoning
 - *Riverfront Rural*: very low density residential (1 DU per 5 acres); conservation density incentive (1.5 DU per 5 acres); minor subdivisions permitted (see definition below); all rural uses permitted; and generally no public water and sewer
 - *Rural Light Industrial*: minor residential subdivision permitted (see definition below); specific light industrial uses permitted; all rural uses permitted except for major residential subdivision; generally no public water and sewer; and buffering and setbacks required when adjacent to residential district
 - *Density versus Lot Size*: provide flexibility in subdivision design by focusing more on the number of dwelling units per acre rather than minimum lot size per dwelling unit; will assist in encouraging conservation subdivision design

- *Conservation Subdivision Design:* utilize flexible lot sizes and density incentives to encourage conservation of land in subdivision design; the required open space set aside will be 50% of total site area in suburban residential zones (with public water and sewer) and 40% in rural and riverfront rural zones (no public water and sewer); and densities will be calculated against total unconstrained land. To make it easier to achieve or exceed the minimum open space set aside, and to promote housing diversity in the town, a mix of attached housing types such as well-designed duplexes and townhomes will be permitted in conservation subdivisions in addition to detached single-family homes.
- *Land Division:* allow in suburban residential, rural, riverfront rural and rural light industrial zones; permit the division of a parent parcel into not more than four lots (exclusive of the parent parcel) during any ten-year period; while there will be no minimum lot size for lots created by land division, it will not be approved without appropriate Health Department approvals for well and septic systems
- *Incentive Zoning:* include in the zoning ordinance a provision for density incentives related to open space protection (the use of conservation subdivision design) and for other negotiated public benefits (trails, utility ROW, road corridor, etc) resulting from the development; can be applied to all major zoning districts.
- *Mixed Economic Development Districts:* allow for a mix of office, light industry, and technology business as primary uses and high-density residential and neighborhood commercial as secondary uses; specific areas include the area to the west of the Slingerlands By-Pass Extension, the east side of 9W from Wemple Rd. to Glenmont Rd., the area near the intersection of Wemple Road and Rt. 9W, and, the lands on the west side of Rt. 144 between Clapper and Wemple Roads
- *Develop zoning to protect stream corridors, wetlands, steep slopes and flood plains:* consistent with existing federal and state regulations, generally accepted engineering and design practices, and the town's current review practices; formally define characteristics of lands constrained for development due to steep slopes, stream corridors, wetlands and other natural constraints; this will form the basis for a site's developable (unconstrained) land area
- *Design Standards:* as a deliverable of the comprehensive plan, design standards will be established for two zoning districts: hamlets and commercial. The Planning Board will be responsible for design review in these districts as part of special use permit and/or site plan review. An additional board (additional layer of review) is not contemplated. In the future design guidelines/standards should be considered for other districts, particularly where mixed uses are allowed.

Priority Actions / Tier 1 Recommendations: These are the primary recommendations of the comprehensive plan for which there is broad consensus and an accompanying near term implementation action item.

- > Conduct a Linkage Study for the Route 9W Corridor that includes a feasibility analysis of possible “northern alignment” option for the Selkirk Bypass: The Town has applied for funding to conduct a Rt. 9W Linkage Study to assess needs and develop preferred alternatives for both transportation improvements and land uses in the 9W corridor. If the funding is achieved, the study should be conducted during 2005-2006. The Rt. 9W Linkage Study could result in refined land use recommendations for this important corridor. At the Town Board’s discretion the study may be treated as a comprehensive plan amendment, and it could lead to further zoning amendments impacting lands in the corridor. As a follow-up to the Linkage Study, the Town should consider preparing a Selkirk Hamlet Master Plan once the Selkirk By-Pass location is resolved.
- > Create an Official Map: In accordance with Town Law §270, the Town should develop an Official Map that shows the location of existing and proposed streets and other public facilities. This initiative should track with the Rt. 9W Linkage Study.
- > Develop a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP): The Town has applied for funding from the New York State Department of State to assist in the development of an LWRP for the riverfront area. The LWRP will provide more clarity about future growth and land use preferences in the riverfront area. The LWRP could also result in refined land use recommendations. At the Town Board’s discretion the study may be treated as a comprehensive plan amendment, and it could lead to further zoning amendments impacting lands in the riverfront area.
- > Actively coordinate development of the proposed Vista Technology Park in Slingerlands with planning and development of the proposed New Scotland Road Hamlet: To assist in expanding and diversifying the Town’s tax base, implement Slingerlands By-Pass Extension and development of the VTC. The Town should work with a focus group of stakeholders to develop a build-out concept for the remaining developable lands especially along New Scotland Road.
- > Establish a Citizens Advisory Committee on Conservation (CACC): The Town Board should appoint an advisory committee to explore conservation projects, and opportunities with willing landowners, as identified by the Town Board. In considering appointments to the CACC, the Town Board should identify appointees that are broadly representative of the various neighborhoods and hamlets of the Town so as to ensure a broad cross-section of community viewpoints. The CACC may provide advisory information to the Town Board as

requested, but will not have independent regulatory powers. An immediate opportunity has emerged for the CACC to assist in the development of an integrated network of trails and pedestrian facilities in the Slingerlands area. In addition, the CACC can assist with longer-term activities at the Town Board's request such as exploring funding opportunities for open space protection programs, working to develop a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program, and developing an inventory of open space and farmland resources.

- > Establish a Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee: This committee would assist the Town Board and help guide the plan implementation effort.
- > Update Planning Department and Building Department Information Systems: Current information about the Town's growth helps to form the basis for good decision-making. Bethlehem is a growing community and it is important to track information about this growth. A system should be established to digitally record the progress of development projects from the approval process through to completion. The data included in this system could later be linked to the Town's geography through the development of a Geographic Information System (GIS). The Town's zoning map could also be updated in a digital manner. A Town GIS would also be used to efficiently manage the Town's facilities and infrastructure.
- > Develop a "Citizen's Guide to Town of Bethlehem Land Use and Development Regulations:" This brochure, developed by Town staff, would assist not only staff, but also board members, residents and developers in understanding the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations. This document would make the development process more clear for developers, Town officials and staff. As follow-up to the publication of this brochure, the Town could coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and the Industrial Development Agency to reach out to the development community in an effort to further clarify the development process.
- > Identify locations for infill development and redevelopment activities and encourage the use of such locations: As an alternative to greenfield development, the Town should assist and encourage redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized sites like the Glenmont (Ames) Plaza in Glenmont, the former Blue Cross building in Slingerlands, and the former Daiseytek building on West Yard Road near Feura Bush.

Mid-Term Actions / Tier II Recommendations: (these recommendations relate to important community topics that have emerged through the planning process but for which more focused consideration and consensus building is required for future Town Board implementation; these recommendations are of a more long term nature)

- > Consider development of hamlet master plans for specific hamlets

- > Consider adopting local right to farm and right to practice forestry laws and encourage participation in Agricultural Districts
- > Revive efforts to create a business improvement district demonstration project along Delaware Avenue
- > Conduct a Delaware Avenue Linkage Study
- > Consider reducing street width in new residential developments
- > Consider developing of a Town recreational trail system and identify potential funding mechanisms
- > Consider a Town-wide referendum to create funding for land acquisition and preservation of open space and parkland
- > Consider developing an inventory of farmland, open space, recreational uses and natural resources
- > Consider creating a farm and open space protection program including the purchase of development rights and the use of conservation easements
- > Conduct a Town-wide inventory of historic and cultural resources
- > Consider development of a community center to provide community, youth, and senior programs and activities

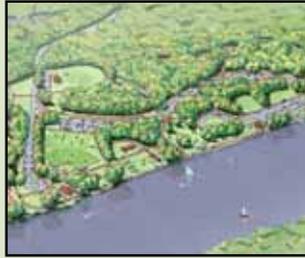
Ongoing Actions / Tier III Recommendations: (these are recommendations that relate to Town administration, programming and ordinary operations)

- > Maintain and enhance pedestrian connections within and between neighborhoods, recreation facilities, and hamlet centers
- > Prepare for and comply with the new Phase II Stormwater Management Regulations
- > Promote the use of alternative, renewable energy sources for public and private buildings
- > Coordinate with fire and emergency services providers regarding long term growth needs and facilities planning
- > Encourage the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for both new and redeveloped buildings in town
- > Assist developers in understanding and identifying available funding opportunities supportive of sustainable design and construction
- > Provide educational services related to septic system maintenance and the prevention of illicit discharges into the Town's storm drainage system
- > Initiate a "buy local" program and develop an agricultural economic strategy
- > Provide adequate bicycle facilities and establish signed system of routes throughout the Town
- > Coordinate with the Bethlehem Chamber to promote local business and employment
- > Establish a Park Master Plan coordinated with community growth projections
- > Coordinate with school districts, neighboring communities, and other community and regional organizations
- > Enhance entranceways and community gateways

- > Investigate the current condition of and improve as necessary, the technology infrastructure available in Bethlehem
- > Encourage continuing education for members of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals

Long-Term Action:

- > Review this comprehensive plan within five to ten years: As the community changes and grows, its needs and desires change. The comprehensive plan should be a flexible and adaptable document that reflects such changes. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the Town of Bethlehem review and update, if necessary, the comprehensive plan. An assessment of the progress achieved on the implementation actions would also be beneficial.



Bethlehem

Comprehensive Plan

Report of the Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC)



Planning for our future

Town of Bethlehem, New York

Autumn / 2007

Web Edition

Letter from the Supervisor Autumn 2007



John Cunningham
Town Supervisor

Just over twenty-four months ago, Town Supervisor Terri Egan and her associates on the Town Board adopted the Town's first-ever Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). This historic moment culminated an intensive eighteen-month conversation among Town residents and stakeholders regarding our future. The Comp Plan is a dynamic document that provides policy guidance regarding the growth of our community and must be periodically revisited and adjusted as appropriate.

Among the Comp Plan recommendations was the establishment of an oversight committee to assist the Town Board in guiding implementation of the plan. In April of this year, the Town Board established the Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC) and directed it to assess implementation progress to date. It also requested that CPOC develop recommendations regarding further implementation activities.

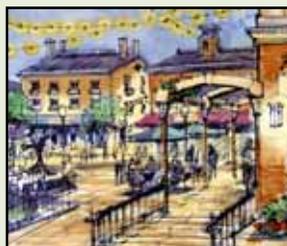
The Town Board accepted the CPOC report at its September 12th meeting and the full narrative report has been posted on the Town's web site. In the interest of reaching as many of Town stakeholders as possible, CPOC has published this summary report for broad distribution throughout the Town.

To be sure, we are very pleased with the progress made to date in implementing the Comp Plan recommendations. We appreciate the active involvement of so many of our residents in plan implementation activities and we encourage continued public participation in the many planning initiatives that are underway in Town. I also want to extend our gratitude to the members of CPOC who have contributed to the development of an excellent report. On behalf of my colleagues on the Bethlehem Town Board, I want to assure you of our commitment to continuing a highly proactive and transparent planning program that will ensure the retention of the unique character of our community and the quality of life we enjoy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John H. Cunningham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "C" at the end.

John H. Cunningham
Town Supervisor



Section I - Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC)

In August 2005, Bethlehem adopted its first-ever Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) as well as substantial amendments to its Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations. The adoption culminated an eighteen-month public process and conversation about the future of the community. Dozens of public meetings were held to gather opinion and achieve consensus on the key elements of the plan. The Plan's recommendations were organized in the following manner:



CPOC

Included as a Tier I recommendation of the comp plan was the establishment of a Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC), to "assist the Town Board and help guide the plan implementation effort." The Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC) was established by the Town Board at its meeting of April 25, 2007. CPOC was charged with preparing a status report on comp plan implementation progress and with developing recommendations for consideration by the Town Board.

The following persons have been appointed to the CPOC:

Karen Beck, *Citizen Representative*

Nicholas Behuniak, *Citizen Representative*

Jack Cunningham, *Town Supervisor*

Erik Deyoe, *Town Engineer*

Howard Engel, *Former BPAC Member*

Mike Hodom, *Zoning Board of Appeals Chair*

Kyle Kotary, *Councilman*

Nan Lanahan, *Parks Administrator*

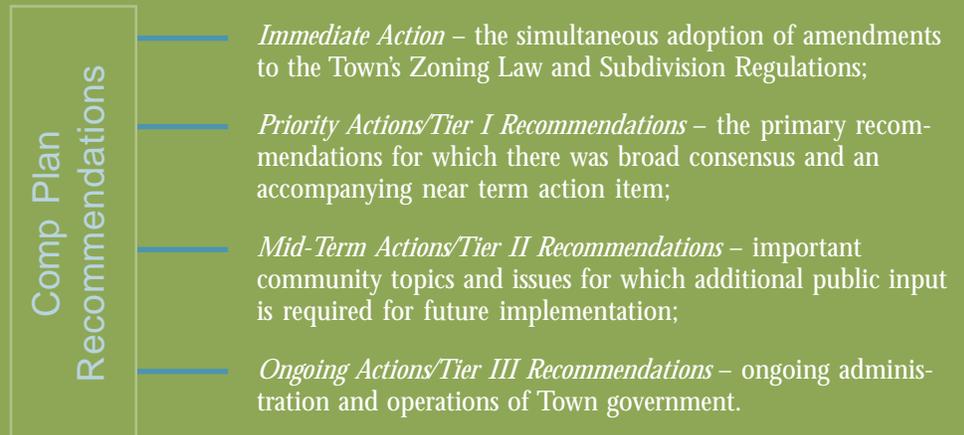
George Leveille, *Director of Economic Development and Planning*

Parker Mathusa, *Planning Board Chair*

Mike Morelli, *Assistant Director of Economic Development and Planning*

Gregg Sagendorph, *Town Highway Superintendent*

Patricia Salkin, *Former BPAC Member*



Section II - Status of Major Planning Initiatives

A) Amendments to Town Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations:

A substantial redrafting of the Town's Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations occurred simultaneously with the adoption of the Comp Plan. Among other things, a variety of new zoning districts were created to implement the recommendations of the Comp Plan. Other highlights include the following:

- Creation of regulations to protect stream corridors, wetlands, steep slopes and flood plains;
- Creation of regulations for grading, erosion and sediment control;
- Introduction of design guidelines and standards throughout the zoning law; and,
- Creation of sign regulations.

A second round of amendments, including the following, were made during 2006:

- Creation of regulations for the overnight parking of commercial vehicles in residential districts;
- Creation of a new residential district requiring large lot (2 acre minimum) residential development; and,
- Establishment of supplementary regulations for senior citizen housing.

B) Route 9W Linkage Study:

The 9W Linkage Study was a Tier I recommendation of the Comp Plan. The purpose of the study is to assess needs and develop preferred alternatives for both transportation improvements and land uses in the 9W corridor. A key element of the study is a feasibility analysis of a possible "north-



Major Planning Initiative
Vista Technology Campus

ern alignment” for the Selkirk Bypass. The Comp Plan process broadened community thinking about the project and expanded its objectives to include traffic mitigation and economic development. The committee and the consulting team lead by Wilbur Smith Associates and Capital District Transportation Committee will be formulating a draft plan for public review and consideration by the Town Board in autumn 2007. In addition to representatives from involved state, regional and local agencies, the following citizens are members of the advisory committee:

Keith Bennett, Mike Daley, Tom Dolin, Linda Jasinski, Nancy Kuivila, Peter Lauricella, Darlene Valet

C) Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP):

The preparation of a LWRP was a Tier I recommendation of the Comp Plan. The purpose of the LWRP is to develop recommendations and policy guidance related to future land use in the riverfront corridor. The adoption of the LWRP and the designation of a Waterfront Revitalization Area (WRA) by the Town will require the consistency review of proposed development projects within the WRA. As part of this initiative, a

master plan concept is being developed for Henry Hudson Park. The draft LWRP will be published for public comment by October 2007. Preparation of the LWRP has been supported by a grant from the NYSDOS. In addition to representatives from involved state, regional and local agencies, the following citizens are members of the WAC:

Charlotte Buchanan, Ken Daves, David DeCancio, Tom Donovan, Lisa Evans, Ted Jennings, Paul Murray, Theresa Pillittere, Howie Vagele, Sr.

D) Vista Technology Campus/New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan:

The Comp Plan established as a matter of Town policy the importance of expanding and diversifying the Town’s tax base. There was strong consensus among community stakeholders and leaders that leveraging the public investment in the Slingerlands By-Pass Extension was a priority and the development of the **Vista Technology Campus** emerged as a Tier I recommendation. The Town Board made its State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) findings in June 2007 and approved the master plan for the project in July 2007. The project

entails the development of 1.4 million square feet of office, technology, research and development, and small-scale retail services on a 400-acre parcel that will have direct access from the Slingerlands By-Pass Extension. The Vista will be submitting the site plan application for the project’s first phase in autumn 2007 and plans to break ground in early 2008.

In conjunction with the Vista environmental review, the Town initiated the **New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan** process in 2006. Utilizing the intensive, interactive workshop methodology known as a planning “charrette”, the Town organized two major public events for New Scotland Road stakeholders in early autumn 2006. Input and ideas were gathered from the public and area landowners and utilized as a basis for a design workshop held over a two-day period. More than 100 residents and land owners participated in the program and an illustrated master plan concept for the hamlet area was developed by the end of 2006. Key features of the master plan concept include mixed-use development (apartments over storefronts), public gathering places, and a pedestrian friendly design and scale.

E) Citizen's Advisory Committee on Conservation (CACC):

The establishment of the CACC was a Tier I recommendation that was implemented in January 2006. The CACC is an advisory body that provides advice and recommendations to the Town Board. It does not have independent regulatory powers, but plays a critical role in the Town's discussion of open space protection and environmental concerns.

The CACC has completed three tasks to date. The initial task was to assist in planning for an integrated pedestrian network in the Slingerlands area. CACC assisted the Department of Economic Development and Planning (DEDP) and its consultant Edwards & Kelcey in developing the plan. The report, entitled *Slingerlands Pedestrian Network, a Pedestrian Mobility Plan for the Slingerlands Hamlet* was completed in December 2006. The plan was designed so that it could be incorporated into an application for Federal grant funding for pedestrian improvements.

The second task undertaken by the CACC was the preparation of a report identifying programs and methods to support open space protection projects. The CACC presented its report *Open Space Protection Programs-Funding and Tools* to the Town Board on October 25, 2006. The report is a comprehensive "toolbox" of funding opportunities, methods and techniques for protection and acquisition of open space and also lists several next steps.

In spring 2007, the Town Board assigned a third task to the CACC, the preparation of a map identifying existing recreation and conservation lands in the Town. The CACC completed Task 3 in August 2007.

The following citizens are currently members of the CACC:

Libby Liebschutz, Chairman, Mike DiPaolo, Jeff Freedman, Nancy Heinzen, John Mead, Valerie Newell, Ted Putney, Paul Sieloff, David Erik VanLuven, Mike Waldenmaier, Caleb Wistar

Section III - Development Activity and Trends

In the years leading up to the Town Board's decision to prepare a comprehensive plan in 2004, there was growing sentiment in the community that haphazard growth and the lack of a long term plan for managing growth would compromise the unique quality of life that Town residents had become accustomed to. The Comp Plan identifies the need to diversify the tax base by encouraging quality commercial development in appropriately planned areas of Town. The Comp Plan also recognizes the changing demographics of the Town and encourages a more diversified approach to meeting the community's housing needs by encouraging a variety of housing types including, senior housing, cluster style design and mixed-use housing in hamlet zones. As part of its responsibilities, CPOC reviewed development trends in the Town to see if there are any indications of movement towards the diversification identified in the Comp Plan.

A) Status of Projects Affected by the Residential Building Moratorium:

The establishment of the residential building moratorium in April 2004 affected nineteen prospective residential

development projects. The following are some highlights of the status of the affected projects:

- One project that entailed the development of more than 400 housing units has been reconfigured into an application for a zone change to Mixed Economic Development District (MEDD) and is now proposed as more than 50% non-residential uses;
- Applications for projects entailing more than 900 housing units have been withdrawn;
- Five applications that were originally conceived as single family subdivisions are in various stages of conversion to townhomes, condominiums and courtyard style homes;
- Four applications for single family homes are proceeding, accounting for approximately 150 lots;
- One project is proceeding with the development of 202 senior citizen rental units.

There is a strong indication that these projects as a whole are transforming in a manner that is consistent with the recommendations of the Comp Plan. There is a substantial reduction in the amount of single-family development proposed, and an increase in the variety of housing types as well as an overall reduction in the amount of development proposed.

B) Planning Board Activity:

A review of Planning Board activity since the enactment of the moratorium in 2004 points to some potential trends that support the growth management recommendations of the Comp Plan.

- **Approved Subdivisions:** Since April 2004, the Planning Board has approved nine subdivisions that only account for 34 residential building lots which is less than 12 lots per year.
- **Approved Site Plans:** Since April 2004, the Planning Board has approved 22 site plan applications for what are

Major Planning Initiative Citizens Advisory Committee on Conservation



Development Activity and Trends

principally commercial projects. This accounts for approximately 165,000 square feet of new commercial development.

According to the DEDP, the development community is showing increasingly strong interest in alternative housing types such as townhomes, condominiums and apartments.

C) Building Permit Activity:

CPOC's review of building permit activity demonstrated fairly consistent commercial development activity and a dramatic downward trend in one and two-family housing activity.

- **Commercial Building Permits:** Since August 2002, there has been a slight upward trend in the number of commercial building permits issued on a monthly basis ranging from approximately 4.38 permits per month in the pre-moratorium period to 4.91 permits per month in the post-moratorium period.

- **Residential Building Permits:** Since 2000, there has been a dramatic decrease in residential building permit activity. In 2000, the Town issued an average of 15.17 one and two-family building permits per month. This decreased by 12% to 13.33 permits per month in 2001. In the pre-moratorium period of 2002 until March 2004, permits decreased by 5% to 12.67 per month and then during the moratorium, decreased by another 63.8% to 4.58 permits per month. Since the lifting of the moratorium, permits have increased by 33.8% to 6.13 permits per month, still less than half of the average activity in the early 2000's.

D) Conclusion:

There are clearly positive trends regarding Town growth based on the development activity quantified above. These trends are consistent with the growth policies established in the Comp Plan. However, this data reflects development activity over a relatively short period of time (5-7 years) and is clearly being influenced to some degree by external factors such as a general downturn in the housing market. There is an ongoing need for the continued diligence of the Town in both managing and monitoring growth and development activity to ensure long-term consistency with the Comp Plan.

Town of Bethlehem



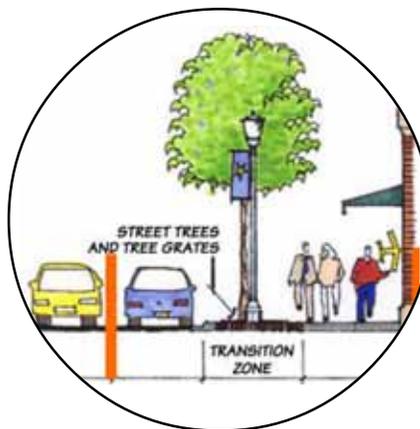
New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan

Key features of the master plan concept include mixed-use development (apartments over storefronts), public gathering places, and a pedestrian friendly design and scale.



Vista Technology Campus

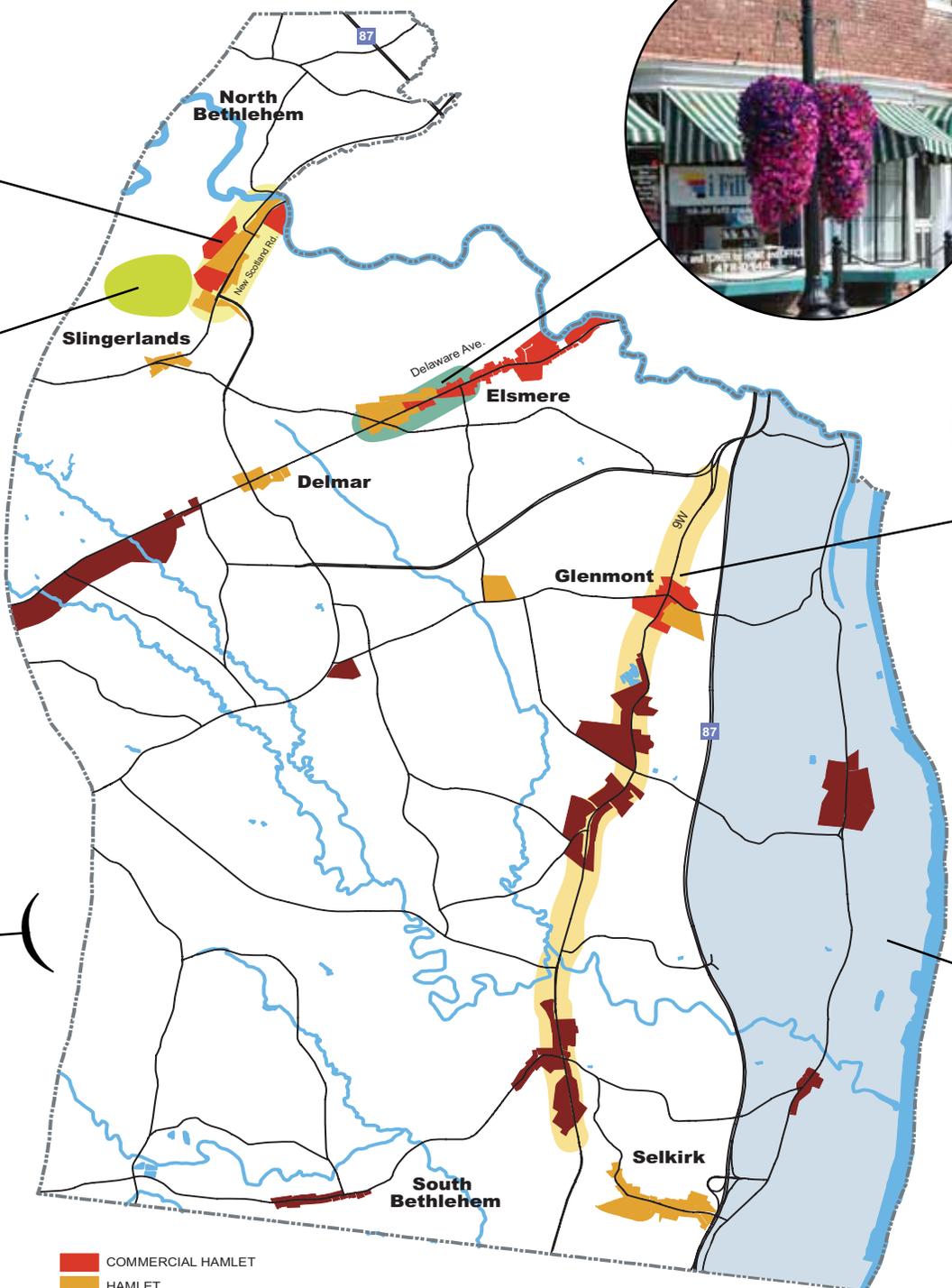
The project entails the development of 1.4 million square feet of office, technology, research and development, and small-scale retail services on a 400-acre parcel that will have direct access from the Slingerlands By-Pass Extension.



Citizen's Advisory Committee on Conservation (CACC)

The CACC is an advisory committee that provides town-wide advice and recommendations to the Town Board related to open space and environmental protection matters.

Major Planning Initiatives Map



- COMMERCIAL HAMLET
- HAMLET
- RURAL HAMLET
- VISTA TECH CAMPUS
- NEW SCOTLAND ROAD
- DELAWARE AVE.
- ROUTE 9W
- LWRP



Delaware Ave. Linkage Study

CPOC recommends the start of this study as soon as possible and to expand the study's impact on areas to the east extending to the municipal boundary with Albany.



Route 9W Linkage Study

The purpose of the study is to assess needs and develop preferred alternatives for both transportation improvements and land uses in the 9W corridor.



Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)

The purpose of the LWRP is to develop recommendations and policy guidance related to future land use in the riverfront corridor.

Section IV - Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Findings

The following is CPOC's assessment of the Town's implementation activities to date:

A) Immediate Action Recommendations: The immediate action recommendation of the Comp Plan was the update of the Town's Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations to reflect the recommendations of the Comp Plan. A substantial re-drafting of both the Zoning Law and the Subdivision Regulations occurred simultaneously with the adoption of the Comp Plan in August 2005. A second update was accomplished during the first eight months of 2006 and adopted by the Town Board in August 2006. CPOC concluded this immediate action recommendation has been substantially accomplished.

B) Priority Actions/Tier I Recommendations: There were nine Tier I recommendations in the Comp Plan. Overall, CPOC finds that substantial progress has been made in implementing the Tier I recommendations. At the forefront of this has been the approval of the Vista Technology

Campus master plan, the establishment of the CACC and its completion of three major tasks to date, the nearing completion of the 9W Linkage Study and the LWRP planning initiatives, and the improvements to the Planning and Building Department information systems.

C) Mid-Term Actions/Tier II Recommendations: There were eleven Tier II recommendations in the Comp Plan. Several Tier II recommendations have advanced including the New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan, which is completed, and a successful application for funding the Delaware Ave. Linkage Study, which will commence shortly. The CACC's work in preparing the report *Open Space Protection Programs — Funding and Tools*, and in assisting DEDP in preparing the report *Slingerlands Pedestrian Network—a Pedestrian Mobility Plan for the Slingerlands Hamlet*, are both critical steps related to implementation of Tier II recommendations. Excellent progress has been made in advancing the Tier II recommendations of the Comp Plan.

D) Ongoing Actions/Tier III Recommendations: In framing the Tier III recommendations, the Comp Plan identified a series of ongoing operational actions that could be taken by the Town government in furthering the goals, objectives and recommendations of the Plan. Among the items advanced to date are the following:

- Maintaining and enhancing pedestrian connections;
- Implementation of Phase II Stormwater Management Regulations;
- Coordination with fire and emergency services;
- Providing educational services related to septic system maintenance; and,
- Coordination with the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce to promote local business and employment.

Overall, CPOC finds that very good progress has been made in implementing the Tier III recommendations of the Comp Plan.

Major Planning Initiative

New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan





Major Planning Initiative
Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

Section V - CPOC Recommendations

A) Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations

1. Continue annual technical reviews commencing in autumn 2007.
2. Re-evaluate the conservation subdivision and incentive zoning regulations.
3. Consider amendments to the MEDD regulations based on the Town's initial experience with the Vista Tech Campus application.
4. Consider extension of design standards to additional districts, especially the hamlet district that will be the subject of the Delaware Ave. linkage study later this year.
5. Request formal input from the Town's Planning Board (PB) and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) regarding their experience with the new land use controls.
6. Consider rezoning lands that are in proximity of the Selkirk By-Pass once the Town establishes the preferred route.
7. Review ZBA and PB procedures and approval documents for consistency with the Comp Plan.
8. Revise and adopt the "General Conditions Applying to Subdivisions" to ensure consistency with the Comp Plan.
9. Continue to refine design guidelines and utilize at an early stage in project review.

B) Route 9W Linkage Study

1. Complete the study and take official action to adopt and proceed with implementation of recommendations including the selection of the preferred alignment of the Selkirk By-Pass, access



management guidelines, intersection improvements, and pedestrian/bike improvements.

2. Commence action to understand and mitigate any adverse impacts on residents and property owners resulting from the establishment of the preferred alignment of the Selkirk By-Pass.
3. Formulate strategies to implement and finance study recommendations including the Selkirk By-Pass and intersection improvements at Feura Bush Road and the intersection of 9W and Rt. 32.

C) Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)

1. Complete the LWRP and take official action to adopt and proceed with implementation of recommendations.
2. Seek financing to implement recommendations of the LWRP including the park master plan for the Town owned land on Simmons Road, and shoreline improvements at Henry Hudson Park.

D) Planning and Building Department Information Systems

1. The Town has invested in a new automated system of managing projects through the land use approval process. The Town is strongly encouraged to fully utilize this module as an integral part of its commitment to improving the development review process as recommended in the Comp Plan.

Section V - CPOC Recommendations

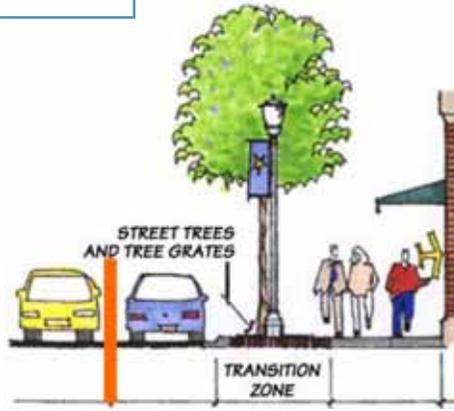
E) Vista Technology Campus and New Scotland Road Hamlet

1. The Town should continue to assist in the implementation of the **Vista Tech Campus Master Plan** project by:

- Assisting the developer in the process of extending, financing and building public improvements for the project.
- Working with the developer and regional economic development and real estate interests to market the property.

2. The Town should continue to advance the **New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan Concept** by:

- Encouraging continued cooperation of the principal landowners in the hamlet in implementing the plan.
- Encouraging consolidation of the site to increase potential for hamlet-wide planning and coordination.
- Encouraging the owners of 1251 New Scotland Road (former Blue Cross Blue Shield Building) to advance redevelopment of the property.
- Considering the development of an incentive program in conjunction with



Major Planning Initiative

Slingerlands Pedestrian Mobility Plan

the Bethlehem IDA to assist in advancing the master plan concepts.

F) Creation of Official Map

1. The Town should consider establishing an Official Map, as recommended in the Comp Plan, as a means of preserving the key transportation corridors for the installation of public improvements.
2. In considering the adoption of an official map, the Town should also consider both short and long term potential impacts on property owners and consider ways to mitigate any negative impacts.

G) Citizen's Advisory Committee on Conservation (CACC)

1. CPOC recommends that the Town Board re-consider Resolution No. 28 of 2005, which defined the limits of authority vested in CACC by the Town Board. The Town Board can clarify and reaffirm the limits or revise them as deemed appropriate.
2. CPOC recommends that the CACC be given more flexibility to independently carry out the tasks assigned to it by the Town Board.

H) Citizen's Guide to Land Use and Development Regulations

1. The Town should continue to educate the community on its land use controls through public meetings and workshops, use of the Town's web site and publications, and through meetings with community organizations, citizens, and the development community.
2. As part of the recommended 2007 technical review, the Town should revisit the notion of a "Citizen's Guide" and recommend methods, perhaps including a glossary of key terms and other publications, to familiarize the public with Town land use controls in a non-technical manner.



Major Planning Initiative

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

I) Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee

1. The CPOC believes that its formation and function are important to the continued implementation of the Comp Plan. It also recommends that it be charged with meeting on a semi-annual basis to monitor progress in implementing the Comp Plan.

2. The CPOC should also be charged with developing an annual progress report and by 2009, it should begin considering the need for a formal Comprehensive Plan update.

J) Identification of Areas for Infill Development and Re-development Activities

1. The Town should continue to identify and encourage new investment where infrastructure capacity and development, including buildings, already exist. With the impending completion of Slingerlands By-Pass Extension project and the development of the Vista Tech Campus, the former Blue Cross – Blue Shield building at the intersection of New Scotland and Maher Roads in Slingerlands is a leading candidate for adaptive re-use.

K) Delaware Ave. Linkage Study

1. With several major planning initiatives nearing completion, CPOC strongly encourages the Town Board to commence the Delaware Ave. Linkage Study as soon as possible.

2. CPOC also recommends that the Town consider further steps to expand the study's impact on areas to the east extending to the municipal boundary with Albany.

L) Hamlet Master Planning

1. The use of an intensive planning charrette (workshop) to develop the New Scotland Road Hamlet Master Plan Concept proved to be a very affordable and effective method of consensus building and idea generation.



CPOC Recommendation Development of Town-wide Recreation Master Plan

CPOC recommends that the Town identify an additional hamlet district for a similar master planning effort during 2008.

M) Creation of a Farm and Open Space Protection Program

1. CPOC recommends that the Town Board take steps to initiate the open space planning process. A Town of Bethlehem open space plan should be uniquely suited to the desires, needs and values of the Bethlehem community. A key element of the plan should be a consensus definition of what the term "open space" means to Town of Bethlehem residents. The process should also carefully consider the Comp Plan's guidance as it relates to the involvement of willing land-owners.

2. As part of the open space planning process, the Town should inventory and map all parkland set aside associated with approved development projects in Town. The Town should also formalize policy with regard to trail and open space corridor objectives, which can provide a guide to the Planning Board in reviewing new development projects.

N) Maintain and Enhance Pedestrian Connections

1. Continue to make pedestrian and bicycle improvements in strategically located areas including, among others, Maple Ave. (Selkirk), Elsmere Ave., Feura Bush Road, lower Kenwood Ave., Rt. 9W, Wemple Road, and Delaware Ave. (from Fisher Boulevard to the Bethlehem YMCA).

2. Consider development of a Town-wide pedestrian/bicycle/bridle path master plan to guide decisions and prioritization of improvement projects. As an initial step, the Town should develop an inventory of existing sidewalks, multi-purpose paths and other similar facilities and digitize any record drawings for future mapping and planning needs.

O) Coordinate with Fire and Emergency Service Providers

1. CPOC strongly encourages continued investigation and implementation of productivity measures related to both Town and related municipal services including fire and emergency services. It remains very important that the Town's fire and emergency service providers consider efficient and effective ways to provide future services tied to the Town's planned patterns of growth.

P) Development of Town-wide Recreation Master Plan

1. Consider development of a town-wide recreation master plan. This Tier III recommendation of the Comp Plan would be timely given the Town's interest in advancing open space and pedestrian facility planning.



CPOC Recommendation Creation of a Farm and Open Space Protection Program

Bethlehem



Bethlehem Town Board: Daniel Plummer, Sam Messina, Supervisor John Cunningham, Joann Dawson, Kyle Kotary

Vision Statement

In the Year 2020, the Town of Bethlehem is a community of attractive residential neighborhoods, vibrant hamlets, successful mixed-use commercial centers, modern industrial facilities, and productive rural lands. These are well connected by regional highways and local streets, adequately serviced by public transportation, and linked by a network of sidewalks and trails. Situated at the heart of the Capital District, Bethlehem offers convenient access to all that the region has to offer. It is recognized for the excellence of its schools, the quality of its public safety and community services, the abundance of its recreational opportunities, the productivity of its local businesses, ten miles of Hudson River waterfront, and the beauty and health of its natural environment. This exceptional quality of life contributes to the economic growth and prosperity of the town and the region, assuring that the community can continue to meet the increasingly diverse needs and expectations of its residents in a fiscally sustainable manner.

Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC)

c/o Town of Bethlehem Dept. of Economic Development and Planning

445 Delaware Avenue

Delmar, New York 12054

518-439-4955 ext. 1159

www.townofbethlehem.org

