

**TOWN OF NORTHAMPTON ZONING AND SUBDIVISION UPDATE
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP – AUGUST 12, 2009**

Goals of the Town of Northampton Comprehensive Plan

Goal of the Comprehensive Plan

The goal of this comprehensive plan is to create a framework on which the Town will attain the conditions outlined in the vision statement and successfully achieve the specific goals presented in the following sections.

History

- Preserve, protect and promote those structures, sites and scenes that identify the uniqueness of the Town and are part of our rich heritage.

Social Services

- To expand services within the community and develop a sense of continuity between all of the elements of the Town and surrounding region.

Environment and Natural Resources

- To respect all aspects of the Town's environmental and natural resources to the highest extent possible.

Transportation

- The Town of Northampton should place a high priority on planning, developing, maintaining and enhancing roadways to accommodate large load vehicles with bicycle and pedestrian paths. Bus schedules should be expanded with more runs and access points.

Public Infrastructure: Sewer and Water

- The Town of Northampton should, through upgrading its distribution and collection systems, protect the environment from leakage and/or spillage, investing in new or upgraded plants with modern technology and creating new user districts would also reduce the possible effects of pollution of our environment.

Recreation

- The Town should establish a multigenerational recreation/wellness study group to propose a comprehensive list of activities and government organization and private resources to facilitate them. Examples would include open spaces, recreational parks, ballparks, bicycle and walking trails and the protection of the Sacandaga Golf Course.
 - Develop biking and hiking trail system for residents and tourists.
 - Acquire lands for a multi-purpose playing field and passive recreation complex.
 - The purchase of the golf course is vital for open space, historical value and recreational purposes.
 - Work with the Village to support and maintain an accessible snowmobile system.

Economic Development

- Seek to increase job opportunities and incomes and expand the local property tax base through increased desirable economic development. Facilitate the revitalization of the Town's commercial areas, enhance shopping opportunities in both the Village and town, and attract new firms (possibly from the technology, professional and light manufacturing sectors.)
 - Coordinate the Town's historic, scenic and lake resources with more opportunities for tourism, professional service and technology jobs and new businesses.
 - Encourage business development that provides well-paying, career opportunities
 - Diversify the local economy in part by establishing an economic development program to recruit prospective new community-minded businesses desired by the Town.
 - Ensure that the growth of the Town and Village are coordinated and complementary.

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Preliminary Ideas and Zoning and Subdivision Concepts

Make the Town Sustainable

- Build in attributes that contribute to sustainability such as alternate energy, multi-modal transportation, use of green materials, technology infrastructure for home based work, teleconferencing, telemedicine
- Environmental considerations in site design

Expect Quality Design

- Route 30 Scenic Byway and Sacandaga Park and Fish House
- Design features: influence building location, orientation, design, facades and materials
- Sensitive to historic architecture and surrounding development
- Other Elements: Landscaping and Buffering, Lighting and Signage

Concepts for Hamlet Preservation

- Allow a mix of compatible uses and residential above commercial
- Lot and bulk standards that reflect hamlet scale and streetscape
- Design standards for infill development
- Sidewalks and pedestrian amenities to increase walkability

Concepts for Rural Preservation

- Conservation subdivision to conserve open space and protect natural resources and viewsheds
- Support for agriculture by permitting related accessory uses and “value added” uses such as farm stands
- Open space and conservation on land constrained by natural features and critical environmental features

Concepts for Waterfronts

- Unique waterfront characteristics through base zoning districts or overlay districts
- Protects waterfronts as natural resources and source of economic vitality
- Allow for uses that are water-dependent and water-enhanced
- Lot development and orientation: two front yards

Concepts for Economic Development

- Increase opportunities for new businesses and expand existing ones
- Support live/work uses including home businesses, craft workshops, residential over commercial, accessory agri-business
- Streamline review process for developers – make the right project easy

Concepts to Promote Historic Preservation

- Protect neighborhoods and structures with unique and/or historic characteristics
- Use design guidelines for new development and significant building renovations
- Use overlay or base zoning districts to identify historic neighborhoods
- Establish an official review board to assist with municipal review of projects for design compatibility

Concepts for Housing

- Establish process and standards for the subdivision of land
- Allow for a wide variety of housing types for all incomes, households and stages of life
- Anticipate needs of aging population
- Assist young families to buy a home in Northampton

Concepts for protecting the Environment

- Direct development away from important and sensitive environmental areas (aquifers, waterbodies, unique habitats, prime agricultural soils etc.) by reducing the types and intensity of allowed uses
- Establish watercourse and wetland buffers (also regulated by state and federal agencies)
- Establish an effective project review process