

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING SUMMARY

Date of Meeting: November 26, 2013
Meeting Time: 6:30PM
Meeting Location: Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post
3354 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY
Subject: Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update

ATTENDEES (See attached sign in sheets)

INTRODUCTIONS

Ken Swanekamp welcomed meeting participants, highlighted the purpose of the meeting, identified Town representatives in attendance, and introduced Gary Palumbo from URS Corporation to introduce the project team and commence the meeting.

MEETING INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION

Jocelyn Gordon conducted a presentation to further discuss purpose of the meeting and review the meeting format (which included maps, markers and workbooks provided at each table). She provided a brief overview of the status of the Town, noting examples of how the Town has changed since the completion of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, and how it has not. The goals and objectives that were prepared for the 2005 were briefly discussed, including a handout that summarized suggested revisions to the goals. The meeting participants were asked to review the goal summary and provide their input.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Gordon reviewed the activity workbook provided participants with instructions on how to individually address the statements provided for each subject area, how to collectively use the map provided on each table for group comments and annotation. The subject areas offered for consideration included Community Identity, Transportation and Connectivity, Economic Development, and Land Use and Community Facilities. Time was allotted for the groups at each table to complete the exercises.

Upon completion of the exercises, a spokesperson from each group was asked to present their top three issues/opportunities of concern, as follows:

Group #1

- Redevelopment of the Cherry Farm Park property for public access and recreation
- Development of a multi-use trail (and potentially light rail) along the abandoned rail corridor in the Town, which extends between the City of Buffalo and the City of Tonawanda.
- Closing of the Tonawanda Coke facility to protect public health.

Group #2

- Adoption of a "Complete Streets" policy to ensure that roadway improvements address the needs of all users (not just cars) and improve walkability in the Town.
- Facilitation of "aging in place" in the Town to address the needs of a growing senior citizen population.

- Bringing new life and renewal to Town services to improve overall quality of life in the Town and help to increase/maintain the Town's population.

Group #3

- Make better utilization of the waterfront as a priority to offer greater benefit of this asset to Town residents and others.
- Emphasis on transportation improvements and Complete Streets, recognizing and capitalizing on the urban/suburban nature of the Town.
- Improving the internal connectivity of the Town to connect different sections/neighborhoods to improve ease of access to services and becoming less auto-dependent.

Group #4

- Focus on the importance of neighborhoods and improve quality of life (housing, central business district prosperity, walkability, etc.).
- Improved connectivity and complete streets (including connecting Sheridan to the Waterfront).
- Waterfront access and redevelopment in general, and improvements at Cherry Farm Park.
- Improvements to protect public health (*bonus comment*).

Group #5

- Roadway improvements to address pedestrian safety and improve walkability (Sheridan Drive).
- Provide more grocery stores throughout the community (there are areas where access to these facilities is lacking).
- Waterfront redevelopment to provide greater benefits to the Town.

NEXT STEPS

Gary Palumbo thanked everyone for providing their input. He identified how residents can stay involved in the process and follow the progress of the plan, including visiting the Comprehensive Plan link on the Town's website, using the scan code to reach the website or using the comment forms that were handed out to provide additional input. A second public meeting will be held once the inventory and analysis is completed and draft findings and recommendations are developed. As draft sections of the Master Plan Update are completed, they will be posted on the Town's website for the public to review.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy E. Weber Salvati, AICP